



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.

## Amherst, Massachusetts

### 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

Volume 25, No. 5

**January, 2009**

[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

In this edition;

- Crown of Maine trip announcement. Sign up opens January 17,
- Chapter 4 of the HBC Anniversary History with Trudy Tynning, and
- the Winter-Late Summer Field Trip schedule.

I hope you find some of it useful!

## PROGRAMS

**Monday, January 12 at 7:30 PM**

**Don Kroodsma delves into Birding By the Seasons**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

*Should bad weather force a cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP 1400 AM radio.*

When I left the university in January of 2004, I looked into the future and liked what I saw. I was "retired," free to be and free to go. What I planned was a year-long celebration of bird song, beginning on January 1 and continuing through the winter solstice. And I would write, because "We write to know ourselves," as Jane Yolen concludes in *Take Joy. A Book for Writers*, and I wanted to find out who I was. For this "year" (which stretched to three), I picked about 50 places or events or birds that I hoped to experience. For 24 of them, I captured what I could in writing. Those stories will appear next spring in the book *Birdsong by the Seasons* (with 2 CDs!).

For now, come celebrate with me as we bird through the seasons in North America. Spend a night in January among wading birds in the Everglades! In February it is limpkins and anhingas in south Florida; in March: cranes in Nebraska. Make an April pilgrimage to the tropics. During May and June, listen to the peak of birdsong across North America! In July, stand beneath a Scarlet Tanager as he awakens and sings at dawn! In early September, hear a wood thrush *tut* and *whit* as he goes to roost! In November, listen to the aggressive mockingbirds growl as they defend their winter food supply, and keep smiling through the winter solstice, when the sun begins its comeback, because here it all comes again!

**Don Kroodsma** discovered birds during his last semester in college, back in 1968, and that summer learned how to tape record them. For a Ph.D. at Oregon State, he studied where and when young Bewick's wrens learn their songs. He then spent eight years at Rockefeller University before coming to UMass, Amherst in 1980. Forty years of birdsong pretty well sums it all up—first in an academic setting and publishing in obscure scientific journals, now free and at large, writing for a broader audience and sharing the joy of birdsong (and sonagrams, of course).

## Coming Programs

**February 9, 2009. Mark Lynch/Sheila Carroll.** *Boids and Ahrt*

**March 9, 2009. Scott Weidensaul.** *Return to Wild America*

**April 13, 2009. John Van de Graaff.** *The Galapagos Islands: A Photographic Celebration*

## FIELD TRIPS

*Please see the Winter-Late Summer Field Trip Schedule (attached).*

# Overnight Trip: The Crown of Maine

Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009 through Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009

Leaders: Geoff LeBaron and Bill Sheehan (of Woodland, ME, our local expert).

You must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to go on this trip.

This new HBC field trip will bird the Crown of Maine region, a wonderful area of mixed boreal and agricultural habitats. There is much boreal forest, wooded bogs, farmland, riparian woodlands, human-made ponds that attract unusual breeding waterfowl, and the Aroostook National Wildlife Refuge—the former Loring Air Force Base—complete with large expanses of grassland and shrub land habitat.

We will spend one full day driving to Caribou, Maine, which will be our base of operations. From there we will spend one day in the New Sweden-Woodland-Caribou area, one day at Presque Isle and the Aroostook N.W.R., and the third day birding the Maine North Woods boreal timber forest lands west of Fort Kent, Maine.

**Target bird species** will include boreal forest specialties around New Sweden (**Black-backed and American Three-toed woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied and Olive-sided flycatchers, Gray Jay, Philadelphia Vireo, Tennessee, Bay-breasted, Cape May, and Blackpoll warblers**, etc), wetland, grassland, and shrubland species around Presque Isle and Aroostook N.W.R. (nesting **Redhead and Ruddy Ducks** amid a myriad of other waterfowl, **American Bittern, Upland Sandpiper, and Mourning Warbler**), and especially **Spruce Grouse** among other boreal species in the Maine North Woods. Other wildlife likely to be encountered will be moose, black bear, coyote, and voracious black flies and mosquitoes (the latter two an overwhelming guarantee). Our visit will also likely coincide with the peak of wildflower (and biting insect...) bloom; lupines will be in bloom everywhere, and we have a good chance of seeing up to four species of lady-slipper orchids.

**Lodging:** Participants should make their own room arrangements, and maximize sharing rooms. Preferred lodging is the Russell's Motel in Caribou (207) 493-4658. Donna Murchison, Prop. Rates will vary according to room sharing arrangements. ***Russell's fills up quickly, so we should make reservations before the end of February.***

**Travel:** 500 miles each way to Caribou via I-95; 1000 miles round trip minimum; an additional 250-300 miles birding during the three days. Total trip mileage around 1500.

**HBC Cost Estimates:** \$6/person entry fee to North Maine Woods; \$30/person for HBC trip insurance (based upon \$6 per day per person); \$50/person for leader fees (\$200 for Bill Sheehan; \$35.75/person for GSL)  
Total HBC Cost Estimate: \$86, payable in full by January 31, 2008.

## **Additional Costs:**

- lodging (likely \$120 - \$200 per person for the trip, depending on the room sharing arrangements),
- meals, and
- transportation (car pooling highly recommended)

**Registration Period:** Trip pre-registration opens Saturday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 6 PM. Please call or email Geoff, 413 269-9281 or [glebaron@comcast.net](mailto:glebaron@comcast.net). The trip will be first come, first served after 6pm on 17 January 2009, and participants after 14 will be wait-listed. Full HBC payment will be required by January 31<sup>st</sup> for pre-registrants or wait-listed people (in order of request) will be added.

If you need further information prior to registering, please contact the following:

Geoff LeBaron: [programs@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:programs@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 269 9281; or

David Peake-Jones: [newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 529 9541. (David is a contact till Jan 31 only)

We can either email (preferred) or mail you a full version of this trip introduction.

## Northampton Christmas Count. December 14, 2008

Species shown are:

- those regarded as “***unusual***” (***bold and italics***),
- those for which high counts were recorded this year, and
- some other species the editor regards as groovy.

Species	2008 Count	Historical High Count	Year of Historical High Count
<b><i>Greater White-fronted Goose</i></b>	<b>1</b>	1	2004, <b>2008</b>
<b><i>Snow Goose</i></b>	<b>32</b>	32	<b>2008</b>
<b><i>Cackling Goose</i></b>	<b>1</b>	1	<b>2008</b>
Wood Duck	3	11	1990+96
Northern Pintail	8	10	1991
<b><i>Green-winged Teal</i></b>	<b>3</b>	3	1990, 2008
<b><i>Bufflehead</i></b>	<b>3</b>	1	<b>2008</b>
C. Goldeneye	10	109	1992
<b><i>Double-crested Cormorant</i></b>	<b>1</b>	1	<b>2008</b>
Cooper's Hawk	<b>23</b>	23	<b>2008</b>
Red-tailed Hawk	<b>139</b>	139	<b>2008</b>
<b><i>Rough-legged Hawk</i></b>	<b>1</b>	12	1989
Merlin	<b>4</b>	4	<b>2008</b>
Peregrine Falcon	2	4	2004, 2006
E. Screech-Owl	53	82	2006
Great Horned Owl	32	48	2003
Barred Owl	1	10	1965
N. Saw-whet Owl	2	5	2003, 2006
Northern Shrike	5	15	1995
<b><i>Fish Crow</i></b>	<b>6</b>	6	<b>2008</b>
C. Raven	12	13	2006
Winter Wren	1	7	1998
<b><i>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</i></b>	<b>1</b>	6	1967+73
<b><i>American Pipit</i></b>	<b>26</b>	61	2006
<b><i>Palm Warbler</i></b>	<b>1</b>	1	<b>2008</b>
<b><i>Chipping Sparrow</i></b>	<b>1</b>	11	1974
Swamp Sparrow	3	23	1992
White-crowned Sparrow	3	9	1999
<b><i>Lapland Longspur</i></b>	<b>2</b>	31	1989
Snow Bunting	273	706	1989
Red-winged Blackbird	<b>304</b>	304	<b>2008</b>
Rusty Blackbird	<b>100</b>	100	<b>2008</b>
C. Grackle	1	501	2006
Purple Finch	10	221	1976
<b><i>White-winged Crossbill</i></b>	<b>4</b>	98	1977
Pine Siskin	262	372	1993
<b>Number of species (diversity)</b>	<b>91</b>	91	1999+ <b>2008</b>
<b>Number of individual birds</b>	<b>39,769</b>		

Worthy of note: this year's species diversity ties the historical high recorded in 1999.

## Quabbin Count

The Quabbin CBC. was held on Saturday December 27<sup>th</sup> under less than ideal conditions. The pre dawn hours consisted of light freezing rain, followed by a steady and at times heavy rain. The rain subsided around noon only to be followed by fog. The only weather highlight was the temperature – peaking close to 50 degrees. Access to much of interior Quabbin was restricted due to the ice- and snow-storms of the last couple of weeks. The count did not add any new species, but had a couple of new high counts.

Many, many thanks to the observers who braved and battled the elements.

Some highlights are listed below.

Wood Duck (1) 2 <sup>nd</sup> record	Eastern Phoebe (1) 4 <sup>th</sup> record
Ring-necked Duck (5)	Carolina Wren (8) <b>New High.</b>
Wild Turkey (248) <b>New High</b>	Purple Finch (2)
Great Horned Owl (2)	White-winged Crossbill (21)
Barred Owl (2)	Pine Siskin (137)
Northern Saw-whet Owl (4)	

## POTLUCK THANK YOU!

Sue Emerson and her wonderful "elves" thank you all very much for all the "pot lucks" that you brought to the compilation count. It was a great event and could not have been done without all you wonderful cooks and counters. Looking forward to another great year of birding and next years count. Sincerely, Sue Emerson.

## MEMBERSHIP

Hello to everyone. HBC is still accepting memberships if you know of anyone who would like to join. Anyone who joins for the first time between now and September 1 has their membership paid up till September 2010 for the cost of a single year. You can be added to the Rare Bird Alert anytime: just email [webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org).

## VALLEY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE PROGRAMS

### Comprehensive Sustainability from the Crop to the Cup

**Dean Cycon** (founder and owner of Dean's Beans Organic Coffee Company)

Thursday, January 29: 7:00 PM at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Rt 9, Hadley

Free and open to the public For more information call 413-253-8303..

## Backyard Birds

**17 Strong St., Northampton (near Eastside Grill). Phone 586 3155**

Your local source for birding and bird-feeding supplies, including feeders, optics, gifts, written and audio-materials. Ten percent discount for members of the Hampshire Bird Club. Remember, with local merchants, your dollar stays here!

That's it for this month.

Please enjoy Chapter 4 of Trudy's masterful HBC history, then browse the Winter-Late Summer Field Trip Schedule to plan your birding exploits for the year!

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

[newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB HISTORY**  
**CHAPTER Four: Tributes to Monhegan, Gerry and Rud 1993-1996**  
**By Trudy Tynan**

***The Hampshire Bird Club Anthem***

*HBC we — HBC  
Where's a rarity — we shall be  
Be it hawk or kite — ruff or reeve  
We'll be there — HBC*

*Praise our visual — acuity  
And we document — all we see.  
We are sharp and fast — as can be  
That's us — HBC*

*We will journey — o'er the sea.  
And we have a cute — auxiliary.  
All are welcome — for a fee.  
Gosh we're great — the HBC.*

*We bring cowbirds — to their knees.  
Vireos, to us — are a breeze.  
From our spotting scopes — shorebirds flee.  
We're stupendous — we're HBC.*

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**Composed on Monhegan Island by spirited members, some of whom were more under the influence of spirits than others. It is sung, usually off-key, to the tune of *Kumbaya***

**1993-94** saw the dues raised to \$10 for individuals and \$17 for families. The club library was moved to the Hitchcock Center and Shirley Hillborn took over as librarian. The club got its first iron-on patch, and the by-laws were changed to expand the board to 11 and split the secretary's job into membership and communications. The club also began studying 13 breeding sites in Amherst as part of Cornell University's Project Tanager.

Jan Ortiz continued as president with Pat Lynch as vice president, Al Richards as treasurer, and Sally Venman as secretary. Serving on the board were Bob Bieda, Paul Champlin, Morris Lainer, Jim Marcum, and Scott Surner.

Nationally known photographer Arthur Morris kicked off the year's programs with "Birds as Art" featuring the best of 10,000 images he has taken on cross-continental trips. Noble Proctor gave a presentation on Costa Rica, followed by John Hutchinson on the "Changing Bird Demographics in western Mass.," environmental police officer and rehabilitator Tom Riccardi on raptors, Mark Lynch and Sheila Carrol on Trinidad and Tobago, *Shadowbirds* author Bill Burton on rails, Alvah Sanborn on Sanibel, and Mount Holyoke's Susan Smith on Antarctica. Tom French, who heads the program, concluded the year's presentations with a discussion of the state's endangered species program.

In **1994-95** the club celebrated a decade of annual trips to Monhegan Island with a reunion party. All officers were re-elected. Tom Carpenter was added as membership secretary. Pat Lynch and Mark Mount joined the expanded board.

Photographer Arthur Morris returned in September with a program on shorebirds. Victor Emanuel, founder of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, spoke on Costa Rica in preparation for a July club trip to Costa Rica led by Jim Marcum, and Wayne Petersen of MassAudubon, co-author of the recently published *Birds of Massachusetts*, on changes in the state's bird populations. David Spector returned with a presentation on Grand Cayman, Don Kroodsma treated us to "The Amazing Variety of Birdsong," and Dick Walton, coauthor of the *Birding by Ear* tapes followed with the songs of grassland birds. Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll spoke on Argentina, and Rich Cech, president of the Linnaean Society of New York, spoke on seabirds. The programs concluded with a presentation on owls by Julio de la Torre, author of *Owls: Their Life and Behavior*.

In April, Sally noted the following, *which be of special interest to those born between March 21 and April 19: In 1967, the longest flight by a chicken, 302 feet, was accomplished by a hen born under the sign of Aries.*

**1995-96** opened with Wayne Petersen, field ornithologist for MassAudubon, returning to speak on patterns in migration. October featured popular field guide author Jon Dunn, cosponsored with the Athol Bird Club. State Ornithologist Scott Melvin spoke on the recovery of piping plover as well as grassland bird management at Westover Air Reserve Base and Beth Goettel, of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the newly created Silvio Conte National Refuge. Jan Ortiz and Chris Page described their trip to Baffin Island, master bander and Lyme disease researcher Mark Blazis spoke on "Birds of the Forest Islands of Bolivian Amazonia," and Seth Kellogg, editor of *Bird News of Western Mass.* and a member of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, spoke on breeding birds in Granville. Mount Holyoke's Susan Smith returned to give a program on Alaska and Bob Prescott, director of the Wellfleet Sanctuary spoke on Birds of Cape Cod.

All of the officers and board members were returned for another term in 1995-96. The Forestry and Wildlife Management Department at UMass asked the club's help in collecting data on Canada geese. The club contributed \$100 to help sponsor Blake Geryk, a 14-year-old HBC member from Hatfield, to attend Camp Tejano in Texas, run by the ABA for young birders, and, in a June ceremony, honored **Rud Stone** and **Gerry Bozzo** with life memberships for their role in introducing many young people to birdwatching. (Rud was actually granted a life membership earlier, but had been unable to attend then.)

## OUR INSPIRATION

Before there was a Hampshire Bird Club there was an Amherst Bird Club and a Holyoke Wildlife Club and two men — Gerry Bozzo and Rud Stone — with an interest in youngsters that was matched only by their interest in birds.

Harvey Allen calls Gerry Bozzo “the godfather of the Hampshire Bird Club.” Born in Northampton, Gerry taught science at Amherst Regional Junior High School for 32 years and birding was part of his science lessons. Among the youngsters who found a lifelong interest in those classes were Scott Sumner and Pete Westover just to name a couple HBC charter members. And he didn't stop with students. “That's when I became very interested in birds,” recalls Elissa Rubinstein, a fellow teacher, whose duties to a special needs student took her into Gerry's science class. Before long, she was heading out with the youngsters and Gerry, who often drove his good friend Samuel Elliot, a Smith College professor and coauthor of *Birds of the Connecticut Valley of Massachusetts*.

“He'd be walking along identifying birds by their song with 20 kids, all with cheap binoculars, trailing after him,” Elissa said, adding that Gerry hardly fit the popular image of a birder. “He was this roly-poly Italian guy, who always called Northampton ‘Hamp,’ and whose other passion was gambling. He loved the horses, but he had a way of getting kids to be passionate about birding.”

“We were lucky,” said Scott, pointing out that in addition to teaching an appreciation of nature, Gerry's influence made it socially acceptable for Amherst teens to be birders in the 1960s and 1970s.

“He was very patient,” said Elissa, who still has some of the mimeographed sheets and hand-drawn maps that Gerry handed out with directions to hot spots such as the East Meadows, Barton's Cove and the Rail Trail — when it boasted tracks, not bicycles. And gracious. The elderly Eliot always insisted on paying for the gas. “No matter where they went Sam always gave him a \$1 bill,” Elissa recalled. “It probably had paid for the gas when he started driving Sam. By the 1970s it no longer did, but Gerry never said anything.” Gerry died in October 1996 at the age of 65.

At the same time, Rud, renowned for his ability to identify bird song, his dreadful driving and his inedible (to anyone else) concoctions, was inspiring youngsters at the Holyoke-Springfield end of the Valley. Still, Rud always had his own priorities. According to one often-told story, after rolling his car on River Road in South Hadley, Rud carefully passed a wood turtle that he had in the vehicle to the rescuers who dashed to his aid. Only then did he begin to extricate himself.

“Rud Stone was a hoot, a kook, a fabulous birder-naturalist, and a joyful mentor,” wrote Andrew Magee in a tribute following Stone's death in 2003. “He was also a truly erudite and liberally enthusiastic man.”

“By the time I was ten, in 1957, Rud was already picking me up in the dark to go all-day birding, often with one or two other boys in tow,” he recalled. “We were often accompanied by a venerable doyen of Valley birding: the famous, and by then quite elderly, Professor Eliot ... Eliot never did learn to drive, so we boys got the continuous benefit of his enthusiasm, knowledge, and eccentricity on top of Rud's. Further, we all benefited from Sam's absolute need to get his bird, and Rud's (terrible) driving to get to it.” Rud even inspired verse. Andrew recalled a limerick composed by a boyhood friend, John Briotta, around 1960:

*There once was a birder named Stone,  
Who got lost in the woods all alone,  
Not a problem existed,  
For he nicely subsisted,  
On pea juice and extract of bone.*

## Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule, 2009

*Please register with the field trip leader(s) and check this schedule's information when a phone number is given. The Field Trip Chair (Michael Locher – 413-585-5864) is always looking for new trip ideas and leaders.*

*The Hampshire Bird Club recommends carpooling whenever possible, and suggests that all riders share equally the per-car cost of 50¢ per mile, as well as tolls and parking. See also the "Field Trip Guidelines for Participants" (September newsletter or on the Website).*

*Some trips have been marked with an asterisk (\*), which indicates that they are good trips for beginning birders. All trips have been coded as Easy (E) or Moderate (M) to give a rough indication of the pace and/or terrain. Please check all information with the trip leaders.*

### JANUARY

**Saturday, January 10. North Shore: Cape Ann to Plum Island.** All day. Bob Bieda leads his annual New Year's pilgrimage to the coast in search of wintering specialties like Eared Grebes, Barrow's Goldeneyes, Harlequin Ducks, Purple Sandpipers, and much more. Dress for cold weather. For meeting information call Bob at 413-527-2623. (E)

**Sunday, January 11. Around Moran Wildlife Management Area.** Half day. Mike Locher goes to the almost-boreal habitat in Moran WMA and the surrounding roads to look for Northern Shrikes, crossbills, and other northern species. In the event of difficult snow conditions, the site may be changed. Wear boots, and dress warmly. Call Mike (413-585-5864) to register, and get meeting information and details. (M)

### FEBRUARY

**Saturday, February 21. South Shore: Plymouth and Falmouth.** All day. Al Richards leads birders to the coast south of Boston to find ducks, gulls, owls, and whatever happens to be around. Dress warmly. Call Al (413-665-2761) for meeting information. (E)

### MARCH

**Saturday, March 21. Connecticut River Waterfowl.** Half day. Al Richards looks for waterfowl migrating through the valley along the Connecticut River. Call Al (413-665-2761) for meeting information as the date approaches. (E)

### APRIL

**\*Saturday, April 11. Early Migrants.** Half day. Betsy Higgins (413-586-7585) looks for migrants, starting around Look Park in Northampton. Meet at 6:30 a.m. in the parking lot of the JFK Middle School on Bridge Street in Northampton. (E)

**\*Sunday, April 12. Ashley Reservoir: Early Warblers.** Half day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) hopes to find Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and other early migrants. Meet in the Friendly's parking lot, near the Holiday Inn, close to Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7:00 a.m. (E)

**\*Sunday, April 12. Timberdoodles.** Evening. Mike Locher looks and listens for woodcocks, probably at the Podick Conservation Area in Amherst. Contact Mike (413-585-5864) the week before the trip to get a definite meeting time and place. (E)

**\*Wednesday, April 15. Ashley Reservoir II.** Half day. Tom Gagnon celebrates tax day with a morning walk looking for warblers and waterfowl. The walk will start at 7:30 a.m.; call Tom (413-584-6353) for the meeting place. (E)

**Wednesday, April 22. Goat's Peak.** Half day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) commemorates Earth Day by looking for the first Broad-winged Hawks and butterflies of the spring. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the old Mt. Tom State Reservation park headquarters. Rain will cancel this trip. (M)

## MAY

**Friday, May 8. South Quabbin Park.** Half day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) birds the southern end of the reservoir for vireos, warblers, and whatever else shows up. Meet at the Quabbin Visitor's Center parking lot at 8:00 a.m. (E)

**Saturday, May 9. Spring Migration in the East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon guides birders through the Quabbin woods in search of its migrants. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members. Call Tom (413-584-6353) well ahead of time for meeting information and to register, since participation is limited. (M)

**Sunday, May 10. Connecticut River to Mt. Sugarloaf.** Half day. Dave Mako explores the fields and hills around Mt. Sugarloaf looking for migrants and a few local specialties, including Common Ravens, Peregrine Falcons, and Worm-eating Warblers. Call Dave (413-665-2999) for meeting time and place. (M)

**Saturday, May 16. Mt. Auburn Cemetery.** All day. David Peake-Jones goes to Boston's most historic cemetery, which is also one of the Eastern Massachusetts' birding hotspots, to see what happens to fly in. The numbers and variety beggar the imagination. Call David (413-529-9541) for meeting information. (E)

**Sunday, May 17. Hampshire Bird Club Big Sit.**

Please check newsletters and listen at meetings for details.

**Friday, May 22 – Monday, May 25. Monhegan Island.** Overnight trip. Betsy Higgins leads the Hampshire Bird Club's annual pilgrimage to Monhegan Island. Not only is the island charming, but the numbers and variety of migrating birds can be astonishing. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) to register. (E/M)

**Saturday, May 23. Poor Man's Monhegan.** All day. Bob Bieda takes birders to Plum Island. Past trips have found Wilson's Phalaropes, Piping Plovers, Seaside Sparrows, Orchard Orioles, and Evening Grosbeaks. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register and get meeting information. (E)

## JUNE

**Wednesday, June 3. Mt. Greylock – Birds and Butterflies.** All day. Tom Gagnon hikes around the highest peak in Massachusetts looking for birds and butterflies. Meet at Mt. Greylock State Reservation Headquarters building at 8:00 a.m. Call Tom (413-584-6353) with any questions. (M)

**Saturday, June 6. Westover Air Force Base.** Half day. Pending permission, Bob Bieda will lead his annual trip into New England's premier grassland habitat, looking for Upland Sandpipers, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E/A)



**Saturday, June 13. Hammonasset Beach State Park, CT.** All day. Betsy Higgins goes to the coast of Connecticut to find sparrows, rails, and other seaside denizens. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) for meeting time and place as the date approaches. (E)

**Thursday, June 18 – Monday, June 22. The Crown of Maine.** Overnight trip. Geoff LeBaron leads this special 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary HBC field trip to the mixed boreal and agricultural habitats of far northern Maine. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Geoff (413-269-9281) to register or for information. (M)

## **JULY**

**Tuesday, July 21 – Thursday, July 31. Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons.** Overnight trip. Join Tom Gagnon and Scott Turner on this special 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary HBC field trip. The trip will look for birds, mammals, butterflies, wildflowers, and whatever else this amazing ecosystem has to offer. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only and registration has closed at the time of publication. (M)

## **AUGUST**

**Thursday August 13. Shore Bird Workshop with Wayne Peterson.**  
Hitchcock Center, Amherst. 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

**Saturday, August 15. Shore Bird Workshop Field Session with Wayne Peterson.**  
New South Beach, Chatham ,MA. Please contact David Peake-Jones (413 529 9541; [newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)) to register and for meeting place and time.

## **SEPTEMBER**

**Saturday, September 5. New South Beach, II.** All day. Bob Bieda leads birders in their quest for late shorebird migrants, including Curlew Sandpipers and Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits. Bring a lunch, a jacket, and \$20 for the boat ride. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register. (M)



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## Amherst, Massachusetts

### 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

Volume 25, No. 6  
February, 2009  
[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

In this edition:

- **program information** for this month and the coming schedule (**page 2**),
- field trip reports and a coming trip,
- **Monhegan Island** 2009 trip announcement (**page 4**),
- **Anniversary** information (the Big Sit, our own economic stimulus package, and photographs wanted),
- Hitchcock programs,
- **Breeding Bird Atlas**, Year 3,
- Chapter 5 of the **HBC History** by Trudy Tynan, and
- some other tid-bits. I hope you find some of it useful!

***Provenance.** It can make the difference between an interesting picture and a priceless work of art. A bold and whimsical painting of the night sky might be just that. Yet van Gogh painted “Starry Night” as part of a desperate, life-long search for joy which ended all too soon but has inspired generations. Sometimes, the life of the artist is as important as the brushwork. Without the provenance, it is just a picture.*

*Sometimes, it is provenance that makes a bird special. On January 17, a friend and I drove slowly into a cramped gravel clearing at Eastern Point, Gloucester. There, standing improbably on the icy shore of an inlet, was a small gull: dainty, petite, and as white as snow. We had driven for over four hours through a snow storm to reach this point, and to have the bird waiting next to the parking lot was serendipitous almost to the point of anticlimax. We spent almost an hour with this creature, watching it alternately standing pertly amongst its larger brethren, mincing about amongst the icy boulders of the beach, and even winnowing through the seaweed-laced shallows in search of food.*

*Ivory Gulls make a living at the margins of the arctic pack ice, where the melting sea-ice sustains a plankton-driven food chain of extreme intricacy and fragility. This bird had strayed an almost impossible distance from its world of ice, water and krill. What was it thinking as it flew first over the unaccustomed dark solidity of the tundra, and then the otherworldliness of human habitat? What was it thinking now, as it surveyed us with inscrutable jet-black eyes? What might it tell us about the oceans, the ice, and its future?*

*I suppose as birders we should simply marvel at this emissary from a world most of us will never see. The perils and privations (as well as the abbreviated species list) are enough to keep most birders to the south of the magical world of the arctic, so an Ivory Gull less than mile and a half from the nearest Dunkin’ Donuts, is a lister’s dream. However, the experience of my first Ivory Gull is imbued with majesty and sadness, as well as joy. Needless to say, as the polar icecaps retreat, Ivory Gull habitat is shrinking at a catastrophic rate. This bird could be one of the last of its kind.*

*So I am hoping for Ivory Gulls this winter. I am hoping first that this lonely wanderer may somehow find its way back to the arctic circle. And I am hoping that there will always be a place where ice meets water, where Ivory Gulls belong.*

## PROGRAMS

**Monday, February 9 at 7:30 PM**

**Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll speak about Birds and Ahrt.**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

*Should bad weather force a cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP 1400 AM radio.*

### **Debauchery, Drunkenness, Owls and Bitterns: Bird Symbolism in Hondius' "Rest on the Hunt".**

By examining a single work in the Worcester Art Museum (OK, we will show some others too), we will reveal how a single culture used birds as hidden codes for complex moral, ethical and environmental beliefs. It is also my firm belief that we never get to talk about "debauchery" enough in bird club lectures.

Mark Lynch

**Mark Lynch** teaches advanced level birding classes at Broad Meadow Brook MAS, where he is also an ecological monitor. He is the book review editor for Bird Observer and was the regional editor of the Worcester County section of The Bird Finding Guide to Western Massachusetts. Along with his partner in crime, Sheila Carroll, he is a Regional Coordinator for the Worcester County section of the current Breeding Bird Atlas. Author of a number of Bird Observer "where to go" pieces on Worcester County, currently Mark is working on an ornithogeography of the Blackstone National Corridor. Mark is also a teacher and docent at the Worcester Art Museum, leading the annual Birder's Tour of the Collection. Mark hosts INQUIRY on WICN (90.5FM), an interview show that focuses on the arts and sciences and a good deal of topics of interest to birders.

Sheila did not send us a biography.

## Coming Programs

**March 9, 2009. Scott Weidensaul.** *Return to Wild America.*

**April 13, 2009. John Van de Graaff.** *The Galapagos Islands: A Photographic Celebration.*

**May 11, 2009. Susan Smith.** *Chickadee Research.*

**June 8, 2009. Kenn Kaufman.** *Wings of the Imagination; Why We Need Birds.*

## FIELD TRIPS

### Reports

#### **Moran WMA and Vicinity.**

On **January 11**, **Mike Locher** headed out to Moran WMA to try to confirm a sighting of a Gray Jay, and to see what else was up in the hills. Unfortunately, no Gray Jay was seen, although a young **Northern Shrike** was spotted (across the road from the main parking area), along with a few Black-capped Chickadees and a single desultory Song Sparrow. The going was tough through the fresh snow, so I decided to bird the surrounding roads.

On the roads to the west of Moran were several small flocks of **Common Redpolls**, perhaps 50 individuals in all, but no other winter finches. The only other birds of note were three Pileated Woodpeckers, half a dozen Red-tailed Hawks, and lots of male Northern Cardinals posing against the white snowy background. It was a beautiful winter day, but I couldn't find many birds.

Mike Locher



### **North Shore. Saturday, January 10, 2008.**

**Bob Bieda**, Al Richards, Andrew Magee, Joan Dupre, Larry Dupre, and David Peake-Jones ventured to the Salisbury area and Cape Ann. The experience was upgraded from excruciating to merely frigid by the merciful absence of wind. In fact, as the sun peered out at us during the afternoon, we briefly felt almost comfortable.

The portents looked bleak when Al found only one (1) penny at the first McDonalds on the itinerary. However, when Bob presciently turned back to find Al's lost glove at a rest area, the fates were looking kinder. We made an auspicious start to a day's birding in Salisbury, when we went for the **Yellow-headed Blackbird** which had been reported from a feeder. We were amongst the group of patient observers who witnessed the bird appear amongst a mass of House Sparrows and cowbirds.

Moving on, we cruised the frigid pine barrens of Salisbury State Park, providing a breath-by-breath account of our movements for Bill Drummond. Using the age-old technique of following other birders, we soon located a group of **White-winged Crossbills** feeding industriously in a Pitch Pine, apparently oblivious to our presence. Nearby, we found a group of (**Ipswich**) **Savannah Sparrows** feeding on the ground. We spent quite some time watching a **Short-eared Owl** hunting the dunes, no doubt struggling to find enough calories to fend off the cold. One typically sees these beautiful creatures dancing on the wind in poor light, but every feature of this bird was vividly illuminated by the crisp, clear light of a sunny winter's day. A rare treat!

We were not so lucky in locating a Snowy Owl that had been reported close by, but chose not to reveal itself to us. We found a **Glaucous Gull** at Blake's Cove in Gloucester, and a nice selection of usual winter suspects on the calm waters around Cape Ann. Towards the end of the day, we pulled into the parking lot at Safe Harbor near Rockport, searching for one last good bird for the day. To our delight, a **Northern Shrike**, teed up in a tree, was doing the same thing!! Fifty species in the dead of winter left us quite satisfied!!

David Peake-Jones

### **Coming Trips**

**Saturday, February 21. South Shore: Plymouth and Falmouth.** All day. Al Richards leads birders to the coast south of Boston to find ducks, gulls, owls, and whatever happens to be around. Dress warmly. Call Al (413-665-2761) for meeting information. (E)

Please see also the **Monhegan Island** announcement under "Overnight Trips" on Page 4

## **BREEDING BIRD ATLAS, YEAR 3**

**Some ways to help (alone or with friends):**

### **1. Start an unassigned block.**

In Hampshire County, Blandford 10 is available (in Southampton, has a reservoir, ponds and wetlands). There are more blocks in counties to the west, east, and south.

### **2. Help finish a block** - looking for additional species and confirmations.

### **3. Species-focused trips across blocks** - searching for the more difficult-to-find characters.

Contact **Mary Alice** ([mwilson@umassk12.net](mailto:mwilson@umassk12.net), 413-548-9078) for more information. If you don't she will contact you anyway, so you might as well call early to get the best sites!

## Overnight Trips

### Sign Up Now for

### MONHEGAN ISLAND

#### Memorial Day Weekend (May 22-25), 2009

If you have ever wanted to steep yourself in the spring migration, to relish every sighting, to see birds at absurdly close range, Monhegan Island is for you. This is our flagship field trip, and one you should experience if you have not yet done so, or go again if it has been too long.....

During the Spring, migrant songbirds moving northward up the Atlantic seaboard are sometimes pushed out over the ocean by storms, and have to fight their way back toward the safety of land. Monhegan Island lies about twelve miles off the coast of Maine and is often a haven for exhausted birds to recuperate before resuming the perilous journey northward. We will arrive on the island on the Friday of Memorial Day weekend, without vehicles, and immerse ourselves in the gentle rhythms of island life. We'll find migrant songbirds throughout the tiny village of Monhegan, sheltering in the numerous apple trees, sometimes picking through the sea-wrack on the town beach for sand-fleas, or even hiding in the lobster pots piled almost everywhere. Each day will bring fresh migrants to the island, and a storm could even produce one of the fallouts of birding legend. When the birding slows down, we can venture off on any of the island's numerous walking trails to Lobster Cove, the stupendous seaward cliffs, the Seal Rocks (aptly named), or the Enchanted Forest.

We'll stay at the rustic Trailing Yew, which will lay on breakfast and dinner each day, including a local lobster dinner. This is the perfect opportunity to slow down, REALLY learn the birds, and remember what life *should* be about. This trip is open only to members of the Hampshire Bird Club. **To sign up, or for further details, including an estimation of costs, contact Betsy Higgins ([hignik@comcast.net](mailto:hignik@comcast.net); 586 7585) or Andrew Magee ([andrewfmagee@gmail.com](mailto:andrewfmagee@gmail.com); 586 1509).**

## Call for Volunteers

The HBC will again take a group to help our local NPR station, WFCR, during its February fund drive. We will be taking calls at the station on Saturday, February 7, from 8-11 AM. It's easy (training is provided). It's fun (you get to see radio behind-the-scenes). It's exciting (watching the drive totals increase is great motivation). Breakfast in the form of goodies from Henion Bakery is provided; all you need to do is bring yourself (and friend if you wish) and answer pledge calls as they come in. If you'd like to join the fun, sign up by calling or emailing Dave Gross at 253-2897 or [dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org).

**Date:** *Saturday, February 7*

**Time:** *8-11 A.M.*

**Location:** *WFCR studios, Hampshire House, UMass campus*

## LIBRARY

The HBC Library is located at the **Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst.**

Hours are those of the Hitchcock Center:

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. from Tuesday through Friday, and

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

The collection is catalogued on-line at [www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org).

The library contains birding resources in various media, including field guides, bird-finding guides to almost every major birding destination in the U.S., and overseas, natural histories, periodicals and videos. Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, or longer by arrangement. Our librarian, Henry Lappen, is happy to bring items to meetings, if you give him a few days in advance. You can reach him at [library@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:library@hampshirebirdclub.org) or (413) 549 3722.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

### HBC Announces Economic Stimulus Package

***Don't wait for Congress! Take a chance today! Raffle tickets on a rare Audubon print drop to \$5 each or three for \$10!***

Donated by an HBC member, this circa 1845 hand colored lithograph, of a Townsend's Cormorant, (Plate 418 from *Birds of America*) was part of a series by James Bowen who received permission from John James Audubon to reproduce his engravings in lithography in a smaller size. A representative from Christie's has valued this print at \$500. Proceeds from the April raffle will go towards purchase of new audiovisual equipment for the club.

The print will be available for viewing at all HBC meetings and tickets can be purchased at meetings or by contacting Betsy Higgins at 586-7585.

### Big Sit.

**May 17: 6 AM to 6 PM**

Two organizers are needed for the event.

The YUMMY leader will organize food and beverages for the event. The EARS leader will organize and recruit a set of folks to help visitors throughout the day.

*Please contact **Sue Emerson** ([membership@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:membership@hampshirebirdclub.org); 584 6736) or **Janice Jorgenson** ([treasurer@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:treasurer@hampshirebirdclub.org); 585 0145) if you can fill either of these positions.*

### Photographs Wanted!

If you have **photographs from HBC trips** (especially less recent ones), we are looking to have a showing of these at the April and May meetings. Ideally, they should be mounted on a board that can be stood up for easy viewing, and labeled with the location and year. If you are unable to do this, Trudy Tynan can do it for you. Obviously, the photos will be returned to you after the May meeting.

If you are willing to contribute photographs for the show, please let Trudy Tynan know at the February/March meetings or contact her: [publicity@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:publicity@hampshirebirdclub.org); 348 2037

## MassAudubon 17th Annual Birders Meeting

### "Birds and Birders on our National Wildlife Refuges"

**Saturday, March 7, 2009.** Worcester Technical High School, Worcester, MA

This year's Birders Meeting, co-sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, offers anyone with an interest in birds the opportunity to learn more about the rich resources that comprise the National Wildlife Refuge System, along with some of the challenges and opportunities constantly facing resource managers.

Also, in recognition of the 100-year anniversary of the birth of Roger Tory Peterson ("America's greatest naturalist") this year's Birders Meeting will feature reflections by Lee Allen Peterson, son of the late RTP. Well-known birder and author, Kenn Kaufman, will also be making a presentation.

*For more information on the schedule or to register, go to: <http://massaudubon.org/birdersmeeting> or call Linda Cocca at 781-259-2150.*

Co-sponsored by Mass Audubon and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with support from Houghton Mifflin Company and Birds & Beans Coffee.

## Birds of North America On-Line

Hampshire Bird Club members are eligible for a reduced-rate subscription to Cornell's *Birds of North America On Line* - the most complete/updated set of background papers on North American birds around. (For subscription information contact David Gross.)

For those wanting less complete information, go to Cornell's All About Birds, (free) <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/birding123/>. The site contains selected information on 500 species from Birds of North America On-Line, but is nevertheless remarkably comprehensive.

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**In Praise of the Earth: The Poetry of Wally Swist** (film screening): *Wally Swist and Elizabeth Wilda*  
Thursday, February 5, 2009. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Proceeds to benefit Clara Gardner

**Quabbin Winter Walk:** *John Green*  
Saturday, February 7, 2009. 8 to 10 a.m.

**The Voyage of Charles Darwin: How an Expedition, Scientific Collecting, and Keen Observations Changed the World:** *Steve Sauter and Kate Wellspring*  
Thursday, February 12, 2009. 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Amherst College Natural History Museum

**The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil** (film viewing & discussion): *Hitchcock Staff*  
Tuesday, February 24, 2009. 7 to 9 p.m.

**Spring Birding Course:** *Scott Surner*  
Evening Classes: Thursday, February 26; Wednesdays, March 11, 25, April 8, 15, 22, May 13, 27. All classes run from 6:30 to 8 p.m.  
Field Trips: February 28, March 21, 28, April 18, 25, May 2, 10, 16, 30, June 6. Start times vary between 5 a.m. and 7 a.m.

**Tracking Predators and Prey: Coyotes and Turkeys:** *Alan Emond*  
Saturday, February 28, 2009. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Snow day: Saturday, March 7, 2009)

**Writing from Your Senses: A Winter Writing Experience:** *Kathryn Good-Schiff*  
Sunday, March 1, 2009. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Snow day: Sunday, March 8, 2009)

**What Would Nature Do? An Evening of Biomimicry:** *Tim McGee*  
Monday, March 9, 2009. 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**The People's Pint: A Model of Sustainable Business:** *Alden Booth, Co-owner*  
Wednesday, February 25. 7:00 p.m. This is a Valley Environmental Education Collaborative Program.

*For details and registration for all Hitchcock programs, please contact the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant St., Amherst MA 01002. Telephone (413) 256 6006, or on the web at [www.hitchcockcenter.org](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org).*

Now it's over to Trudy for more HBC History. Till next month, walk softly and carry a big scope.



## HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB HISTORY

### CHAPTER Five: Pete and Jon to Young and Younger Birders:1996-2000

By Trudy Tynan

*I have Rose-breasted Grosbeaks at my feeder. I have Common Yellowthroats and Black-throated Blues at my birdbath. I am awakened each morning by the singing of the Baltimore Oriole. Truth? Fiction? Hallucinations?—Only the analyst knows. — Oh, the sad plight of the aging, snow-bound, winter weary birder. —Sally Venman, HBC Newsletter, March 1997*

In **1996-97** Shirley Hilborn became president, Dennis McKenna moved into the vice presidency, Mark Mount took over as treasurer and Dianne Quilty as membership secretary. Sally Venman continued as communications secretary and Bob Bieda, Sue Emerson, Pat Lynch, David Norton, Jan Ortiz, and Scott Sumner served on the board.

Ann Lombard stayed on as conservation chair and Anne Cann took over the library.

Don Kroodsma opened the year's programs with a presentation on the Falkland Islands, and in October, the club and the Allen Bird Club cosponsored a program by author Pete Dunn, director of the Cape May Bird Observatory, and noted author of *Tales of a Low Rent Birder* and other books.

November featured David Spector on the "Evolution of Field Guides," and January brought photographer Les Campbell with a presentation on the Quabbin. He was followed by Scott Hall, a UMass grad student working on Puffin restoration in the Gulf of Maine, Ethan Temeles of Amherst College, who spoke on his hummingbird research, Jonathan Atwood, director of endangered species at Manomet, on the listing of the California Gnatcatcher, and Geoff LeBaron, editor of the national Audubon Society's Christmas Count on the annual count.

Sally raised such weighty bird and non-bird questions in the newsletter as: *If a parsley farmer is sued, can they garnish his wages? When it rains, why don't sheep shrink? Why are there interstate highways in Hawaii.* To help us get through the winter doldrums she challenged members to change a letter in a non-English phrase and redefine it: *Cogito ergo sum. ( I think, therefore I am a waffle.) Rigor morris. (The cat is dead.) Pro bozo publico (Support your local clown.) Apres Moe le deluge (Larry and Curly got wet.)*

And, without even a twinge of conscience, she introduced us to the woman who entered a local pun contest: *She sent in ten different puns in the hope that at least one would win. Unfortunately, no pun in ten did.*

Birding Western Massachusetts: the Central Connecticut Valley, written mostly by club members, was published. Past president Jan Ortiz was named to the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee. The club contributed \$100 to help 16-year-old Zeke Jakub, a sophomore at Greenfield High School, whose crow research won the top prize at the UMass Science Fair and a grand prize at the state Science Fair, attend Camp Chan Chich in Belize. The club also helped gather data for Cornell's "Birds in Forest Landscapes" project.

**1997-98** saw a dues increase to \$12 for individuals and \$19 for families. Shirley Hilborn and the other officers were re-elected and Elaine Pourinski replaced Pat Lynch on the board.

Internationally known photographer and author Arthur Morris opened the year's programs at the Amherst Middle School with a presentation on ecotourism. The club, having outgrown the available space at the Hitchcock Center, met for the first time in October at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst where 160 people heard Marcia and Mark Wilson's program on owls.



Charlie Duncan, founder of the Institute of Field Ornithology at the University of Maine at Machias spoke on Red-necked Phalaropes. He was followed by Kent McFarland of the Vermont Institute of Natural Science on Bicknell's Thrush, Clif Read on Bald Eagle restoration at the Quabbin, Tom Martin, master die maker and photographer on Monhegan Island, Jennifer Megyesi, of the US Fish and Wildlife Service on seabirds of the northwest Hawaiian Islands, and Al Hinde, who launched raptor banding in Israel, on monitoring the world's largest flyway at Eilat on the Red Sea.

Tom Army set up the club's first Web page in October. Sally got an email account in February, but promised she would still answer the telephone, and Merry Cushing took over the Web page in April. Margaret Brown's daughter donated her late mother's library to the club. A nest box was set up on the roof of the UMass library in hopes of interesting peregrine falcons, and some Northampton members adopted the Lake Trail at Fitzgerald Lake.

**1998-99** saw Jim Marcum take over as president and Mary Alice Wilson move into the vice presidency. Mark Mount continued as treasurer, Dianne Quilty as membership secretary and Sally Venman as communications secretary. Sue Emerson, Shirley Hilborn, Dennis McKenna, Jan Ortiz, Elaine Purinski and Scott Sumner served on the board, while Ann Lombard and Anne Cann continued as conservation chair and librarian, respectfully.

David Holmes of Johns Hopkins, one of the first trainers for the North American Banding Council, launched the year's programs with a program on Maine's Appledore and California's South-East Farallon islands, followed by noted field guide author Jon Dunn on "New England Sparrows." Dan Albano, a doctoral student at UMass, and consultant to David Attenborough's BBC bird programs, spoke on the belted kingfisher, followed by Jan Ortiz on birding southeastern Arizona, Mass Audubon's Wayne Petersen on Trinidad and Tobago, and author Julio de la Tores on "New Perspectives on North American Owls." Sylvia Halkin of Central Connecticut State gave an April program on her Northern Cardinal research, Mark and Marcia Wilson returned with a program on Arctic Summer, and Mass Audubon's Jackie Sones, coeditor of Ode News, finished the year with a program on "Dragonflies and Birds."

In November, Sally traded her Apple II for a Windows 95 machine (October was Jon Dunn. Today is chaos.) Surprisingly, the newsletters continue without interruption. The boutique added heavyweight sweatshirts and "Brakes for Birds" bumper stickers. The club gathered data for a third year for Cornell's "Birds in Forest Landscapes" research, assisted Mass Audubon's Andrea Joyce with point counts in Northampton's West Meadows, and helped the Green River and Deerfield River watershed associations with marsh bird monitoring in the Deerfield watershed.

The **1999-2000** annual Monhegan Island trip tallied 124.5 species (a male Black Duck-Mallard hybrid made it .5). Jim and Mary Alice were re-elected as president and vice president, respectfully. Mark returned as treasurer. Dorothy Barnes took over as Membership Secretary and Sue Fletcher as Communications Secretary with Sally remaining as Newsletter Editor. David Peake-Jones joined the board, replacing Elaine Pourinski.

Tom Alworth, author and executive director of the Hitchcock Center, led off the year's programs with a presentation on House Wrens, followed by internationally recognized artist Barry Van Dusen, on "Travels of a Bird Artist." Our own bird song expert Don Kroodsma, recently returned from Costa Rica, Venezuela, and Brazil, treated us to "Songs and Stories from the Neotropics." James Baird, Mass Audubon's representative to Belize spoke on "Birding Belize." Naturalists and authors Clay and Patricia Sutton, who live near Cape May, gave us hints on "How to Spot Hawks." Mt. Holyoke College's Susan Smith described "Traveling and Birding Papua New Guinea." Bill Barber, columnist and past president of the West Chester, Pa., Bird Club, spoke on birding the Adirondacks, Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll returned with a presentation on "Worcester: Birding an Urban Environment," and Pete Westover, Amherst's conservation director, described some of the "Special Habitats and Open Space in Amherst and Surrounding Towns."

Mary Alice Wilson launched a new field trip series: "Leisurely and Local Saturday Morning Birding" on Jan. 29. The temperature was 2-degrees. Chilled participants tallied 21 species, including a flock of common redpolls in the Hadley honeypot that were being harassed by a male harrier, who, in turn, was harassed by a peregrine falcon.

The club gained 501(c) status from the IRS, thanks to the efforts of Jan Ortiz, Elaine Pourinski and Mark Mount, and a descriptive brochure, thanks to Nancy Buchanan's committee. We also helped promote the state's first Junior Duck Stamp competition, coordinated by Walt Tynan. The club's RBA went digital for the first time with 27 members on the email list and 25 on the telephone tree, and young member Zeke Jakub launched a Greenfield area listserve.

Bluebird enthusiast Haleya Priest completed a 23-nestbox Bluebird Trail from North Amherst to Hadley. Shawn Smolen-Morton took over as Field Trip Chair from Scott Sumner. Sally introduced a newsletter feature on what is being done to encourage young birders with a story on Patricia Redfern's Holyoke Fourth Graders participating in Cornell's Classroom FeederWatch. Other stories highlighted the Rowe Elementary School where bird identification and behavior are part of the science curriculum in grades 4-6, a 4-H Nature Club for 9-11-year-olds in Amherst, and HBC member Betsy Higgins' daycare where even 2-year-olds are introduced to bird identification.

The board voted in April to have HBC be the official sponsor of the Northampton and Quabbin area Christmas Bird Counts. Long-time member Judy Smith answered the board's call for advice on setting up a new bookkeeping system. Marsh bird monitoring continued with 20 wetlands surveyed for birds. Club members also helped census species in South Hadley and Hadley as part of Biodiversity Days. And members Bob Bieda and Harvey Allen were featured on WFCR on their quest to see as many species as possible in Massachusetts.

And that's not all folks. To quote Sally: *Oops—you're not done yet—you need some imagination nudging before you are excused.*

She told us about the busy woman who decided to clone herself so that she could get twice as much work done. *The clone helped a lot, but also gave her a bad reputation because the clone constantly swore. One day, the woman couldn't take her clone's foul mouth anymore, so she took it to the top of a building and pushed it off. Soon after, the woman was arrested for making an obscene clone fall. (Oct. 1999)*

And so the HBC newsletter opunned a new century....

*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, the Mainers enjoyed the antics of the frolicsome insect, so that now Uno's what weevil larks in the hearts of Maine. (April 2000)*

Not with a bang, but ....

*Should Federal Express and UPS merge would we be Fed UP? (Feb. 2000)*

*Two robins flew to the ground and found a nice lot of worms. They ate and ate until 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. "Let's just lie here in the warm sun". They plopped down basking in the sun. No sooner had they dozed off, when a big fat tomcat pounced 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." (May 2000)*

*Suppose Hale Business Systems, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Fuller Brush and WR Grace Co. merge. The resultant name? Hale Mary Fuller Grace. (Feb. 2000)*



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.

## Amherst, Massachusetts

### 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

Volume 25, No. 6

**March, 2009**

[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

In this issue:

- the **March Program** with **Scott Weidensaul** (page 2) and the **Coming Program** schedule,
- a frank **field trip report** and upcoming trips,
- a plug for the long-suffering **Nominating Committee**,
- **Hitchcock and VEEC** programs, plus an **Atlas** announcement.

I hope you find some of it useful!

*"It is sometime deep in the future. Having ended my years on this earth, I am wending my way toward the great beyond. Ahead of me I see what appear to be a set of great gates, of burnished gold with pearl inlay. A gentleman whom I take to be Saint Peter is questioning those at the front of a long line of petitioners, some of whom are being allowed to pass through. The elderly and infirm are being asked to remove their shoes, and more than one seems to be being wanded..... A sign of the times, perhaps?"*

*Finally it is my turn. I move gingerly into position in front of the saint. I am preoccupied with his wings, which I notice have jeweled primary and secondary coverts, and a dandy little set of platinum-tipped scapulars. The clipboard, however, appears to be a budget version from Staples. Again, a sign of the times? Though I am nervous, I am not entirely without hope. It has been an unobtrusive life, law-abiding overall (is there a heavenly Statute of Limitations?), and there was that orphaned rabbit I raised back in childhood. Saint Peter, though physically imposing, seems benevolent and patient. I begin to relax just a little, and it seems he might be going to gloss over the whole 'attendance-at-church' thing.*

*My file is clearly brief. He reviews it nonchalantly, but as his eyes travel to the foot of the page, an almost-imperceptible crease appears in the center of his forehead. My heart slows, then stops. He purses his lips, exhales theatrically through his nose, and then asks with the exaggerated nonchalance of true incredulity,*

**"You really couldn't confirm American Bittern in Chesterfield Seven?"**

\*\*\*\*\*

Over the past couple of year, many of us have put our birding shoulders to the wheel of the second Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas. It's not like the Christmas Count where a disappointing day can be attributed to bad luck or bad weather. The Atlas involves sustained effort and a much more complex skills set. It has the potential to make us feel really exposed and vulnerable alongside the experts. However, both ventures are well worth the consumption of a little (or in my case, a heaping helping of) humble pie.

Both Christmas Counts and the Atlas allow birders to become scientists, and to generate vast avian population databases, which cannot be generated by any other means. Our humble data will bear witness to habitat loss (and possibly regeneration) as well as global climate change (and, perhaps even our efforts to arrest and reverse it). Though the challenges facing bird conservation are daunting, we can take heart from at least one thing as we gear up for the home stretch of the Atlas effort. If we fail to protect and nurture critical breeding bird populations in the Commonwealth, it will not be because of lack of knowledge.

**The Program Introduction is on Page 2**

## PROGRAMS

**Monday, March 9 at 7:30 PM**

### **Scott Weidensaul** chronicles his **Return to Wild America: A Yearlong Search for the Continent's Natural Soul**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

*Should bad weather force a cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP 1400 AM radio.*

In 1955, naturalists Roger Tory Peterson and James Fisher published their best-selling book *Wild America*, describing a now-legendary 30,000-mile trip across North America. Fifty years later, author Scott Weidensaul has retraced their epic journey, to see what we've gained and lost, and to catch a glimpse of what the future holds for wildlife and wild lands. From the great seabird cliffs of Newfoundland to the cypress swamps of Florida, from the cloud forests of the Sierra Madre in Mexico to lonely islands far out in the Bering Sea, Weidensaul searches out the wild heart of the continent - and finds it strong.

**Scott Weidensaul** is the author of more than two dozen books on natural history, including the Pulitzer Prize-nominated *Living on the Wind*, about bird migration, and his newest book, *Of a Feather: A Brief History of American Birding*. Weidensaul writes for such publications as *Smithsonian*, *Audubon*, *Nature Conservancy* and *National Wildlife*. He lives in the mountains of eastern Pennsylvania, where he studies the migration of hawks, owls and hummingbirds.

If you would like to have Scott Weidensaul sign copies of *Return to Wild America: A Yearlong Search for the Continent's Natural Soul* or his new book, *Birds of a Feather: A Brief history of American Birding*, you can purchase copies at Amherst Books (on the Common in Amherst). Copies will NOT be sold at the HBC meeting.

## Coming Programs

**April 13. John Van de Graaff.** *The Galapagos Islands: A Photographic Celebration.*

**May 11. Susan Smith.** *Black-Capped Chickadees.*

**June 8. Kenn Kaufman.** *Wings of the Imagination; Why We Need Birds.*

## FIELD TRIPS

### Reports

**Leaders Choice. January 31, 2009.**

Sometimes we have to recognize sheer grit and determination, even when the outcome is a disappointment.

**Geoff LeBaron** and Chris Ellison found themselves not the windshield, but the bug on this day. The persistent absence of the birds they were searching for was exacerbated by wind chills in the single digits throughout the day. Geoff and Chris made two separate visits to Plymouth Harbor during the day, without finding the Ivory Gull which had been wowing observers right up until that day. In an effort to salvage something from the day, they also visited Duxbury beach (nice selection of winter ocean species including Red-throated Loon, Common Goldeneye, and Bufflehead).

Just to prove that virtue never goes entirely un-rewarded, Geoff and Chris found their way to the Charlestown Breachway in Rhode Island at dusk. They first watched a bevy of Northern Harriers plying the air over the dunes, then witnessed the changing of the guard as a beautiful Short-eared Owl took over for the night shift.

## Coming Trips

**Saturday, March 21. Connecticut River Waterfowl.** Half day. Al Richards looks for waterfowl migrating through the valley along the Connecticut River. Call Al (413-665-2761) for meeting information as the date approaches. (E)

## Overnight Trips

### MONHEGAN ISLAND

**Memorial Day Weekend (May 22-25), 2009**

**Spaces still open! Sign up NOW!!**

If you have ever wanted to steep yourself in the spring migration, to relish every sighting, to see birds at absurdly close range, Monhegan Island is for you. This is our flagship field trip, and one you should experience if you have not yet done so, or reprise if it is has been too long.....

During the Spring, migrant songbirds moving northward up the Atlantic seaboard are sometimes pushed out over the ocean by storms, and have to fight their way back toward the safety of land. Monhegan Island lies about twelve miles off the coast of Maine and is often a haven for exhausted birds to recuperate before resuming the perilous journey northward. We will arrive on the island on the Friday of Memorial Day weekend, without vehicles, and immerse ourselves in the gentle rhythms of island life. We'll find migrant songbirds throughout the tiny village of Monhegan, sheltering in the numerous apple trees, sometimes picking through the sea-wrack on the town beach for sand-fleas, or even hiding in the lobster pots piled almost everywhere. Each day will bring fresh migrants to the island, and a storm could even produce one of the fallouts of birding legend. When the birding slows down, we can venture off on any of the island's numerous walking trails to Lobster Cove, the stupendous seaward cliffs, the Seal Rocks (aptly named), or the Enchanted Forest.

We'll stay at the rustic Trailing Yew, which will lay on breakfast and dinner each day, including a local lobster dinner. This is the perfect opportunity to slow down, REALLY learn the birds, and remember what life *should* be about. This trip is open only to members of the Hampshire Bird Club. Registration is by deposit. For further details, including an estimation of costs, contact Betsy Higgins ([hignik@comcast.net](mailto:hignik@comcast.net); 586 7585) or Andrew Magee ([andrewfmagee@gmail.com](mailto:andrewfmagee@gmail.com); 586 1509).

## Suggestions for Fall Field Trips

We want to make sure that our field trip program remains vibrant and fresh. This means we need new leaders and new destinations to add to the "old reliable" trips and leaders who have served us so well for so long. We need innovators!!

Our field trip chair, Mike Locher, is, even now, turning his furtive (should that be *fertile*?) imagination to the Fall Field Trip Schedule. If you have suggestions for field trips between September 1 and December 31, especially if you are willing to lead them, please contact Mike: [fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) or 413 585 5864.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The HBC Nominating Committee has been formed. Its members are **Bill Benner**, **Mary Alice Wilson** and **Dave Gross**. The committee will bring forward a slate of candidates for the 2009-2010 HBC board including both officers and at-large members. If you are interested in serving on the board or if you would like to nominate someone for the board, please contact one of the committee members. The slate of nominees will be announced in the May newsletter. The election of the new board will be held at our annual meeting on May 11, 2009.

**MassAudubon 17th Annual Birders Meeting**  
**“Birds and Birders on our National Wildlife Refuges”**  
**Saturday, March 7, 2009.**

Worcester Technical High School, Worcester, MA

This year's Birders Meeting, co-sponsored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, offers anyone with an interest in birds the opportunity to learn more about the rich resources that comprise the National Wildlife Refuge System, along with some of the challenges and opportunities constantly facing resource managers.

Also, in recognition of the 100-year anniversary of the birth of Roger Tory Peterson – “America's greatest naturalist” – this year's Birders Meeting will feature reflections by Lee Allen Peterson, son of the late RTP. In addition, a presentation by well-known birder and author, Kenn Kaufman, will make this an event not to be missed.

For more information on the schedule or to register, go to: <http://massaudubon.org/birdersmeeting> or call Linda Cocca at 781-259-2150.

Co-sponsored by Mass Audubon and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with support from Houghton Mifflin Company and Birds & Beans Coffee.

**Breeding Bird Atlas Workshop**

with **Joan Walsh, Director of Breeding Bird Atlas 2 (BBA2).**

**Monday, March 23, 7 PM,**

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton.

The focus of the workshop will be on using the data collected during the past 2 years to make this year's work as *efficient*, and *enjoyable*, as possible. (As I write this, I remember that 2 years ago, Joan's topic was “what is the atlas?” - how far we have come!)

Mary Alice Wilson

Directions to Arcadia

Follow anyone who looks like an intergalactic pilgrim, and, when it is apparent that you are close to the center of the universe, ask any of the helpful and entirely enlightened local residents for the way to the sanctuary.

*The more buttoned-down among us may wish to try these more pragmatic instructions.*

Get onto I-91 and proceed to Exit 18 for Route 5, Northampton. This will involve I-91 South if you are north of Easthampton, and I-91 North if you are south of Easthampton. At the bottom of either ramp, turn RIGHT onto Route 5 South toward Holyoke and the Oxbow. Proceed 1.4 miles and turn RIGHT onto East Street. Follow East Street for 1.2 miles and turn right onto Fort Hill Road at the Mass Audubon sign. Go 0.9 miles and bear right at the next Mass Audubon sign and turn left into the sanctuary.

**VEEC PROGRAMS**

**Quabbin's "Green" Certification: Justification, Impacts, and Challenges in a Changing Rural Economy:** *Thom Kyker – Snowman*

Tuesday, March 24 at 7:00 p.m..

Held at the Quabbin Visitor Center, Belchertown.

For more information call 413-323-7221. A \$5 donation is appreciated.

March 2009. Page 4 of 8.

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**Spring Birding Course:** *Scott Surner*

Evening Classes: Thursday, February 26; Wednesdays, March 11, 25, April 8, 15, 22, May 13, 27, 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Field Trips: February 28, March 21, 28, April 18, 25, May 2, 10, 16, 30, June 6; start times vary between 5 a.m. and 7 a.m.

**What Would Nature Do? An Evening of Biomimicry:** *Tim McGee*

Monday, March 9, 2009, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**Through the Seasons with Wildflowers** (slideshow): *Ted Watt*

Wednesday, March 18, 2009, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**4th Annual Salamander Soiree: A Benefit for the Hitchcock Center for the Environment**

Friday, March 27, 2009, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Lewis-Sebring Commons, Valentine Hall, Amherst College.

Tickets: \$25 (\$30 at the door). Please RSVP by March 20, 2009, by calling (413) 256-6006.

**Working Towards Net Zero Energy:** *Mary Kraus*

Tuesday, March 31, 2009, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**"Mount Toby Poems"** (reading and booksigning): by *Wally Swist*

Tuesday, April 7, 2009, 7 to 8:30 p.m. Proceeds to benefit Clara Gardner.

**An Old Growth Forest Excursion:** *Bob Leverett*

Sunday, April 12, 2009, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mohawk Trail State Forest, Charlemont, Mass.

*For details and registration for all Hitchcock programs, please contact the **Hitchcock Center for the Environment**, 525 South Pleasant St., Amherst MA 01002. Telephone (413) 256 6006, or on the web at [www.hitchcockcenter.org](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org).*

***Backyard Birds*** (on Strong St. in Northampton) offers a wide range of birding books, audio resources, gifts, feeders, and other paraphernalia. They also offer a 10% discount to Hampshire Bird Club Members. Remember, when you shop locally, your money stays here!

That's it for this month. I will leave you in the capable hands of Trudy Tynning, who will take us through another chapter of the HBC History.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

[newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)

## HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB HISTORY

### CHAPTER Six: Sally to David and the *Bird Finding Guide to Western Massachusetts: 2000-2004*

By Trudy Tynan

In **2000**, Mary Alice Wilson took over as president. Stacy Adams moved into the vice presidency, Mark Mount continued as treasurer, David Peake-Jones took over as communications secretary and Joanne Parker became membership secretary. The board included Sue Emerson, David Gross, Jim Marcum, Dennis McKenna, Jan Ortiz, and Scott Sumner. Marion Gorham took over as publicity chair from Nancy Buchanan.

Jan Ortiz opened the year's programs with a presentation on the "River of Raptors" at Veracruz, Mexico, followed by Brian Harrington of Manomet Observatory on the Red Knot, Becky Field of the U.S. Dept. of the Interior and UMass on "Birds and their Habitats in Tundra, Tropics, and Towns." January featured the National Audubon Society and HBC's own Geoff Lebaron on Antarctica, followed by field guide authors Clay and Pat Sutton of Cape May Observatory on "How to Spot an Owl" and David Spector of Central Connecticut State on "How to Spot an Ornithologist." Irene Pepperberg, visiting professor at MIT's Media Lab, described her research on African Grey Parrots, Al and Lois Richardson of Springfield spoke on "Birding Finland and Lapland," and charter member Peter Yaukey, currently teaching at the University of New Orleans, wrapped up the year's programs with a presentation on "Birding Louisiana."

The Rare Bird Alert policy was changed so an alert could be initiated by any member of the HBC board, the club's field trip policy and guidelines were updated and sent to members, and membership topped 230.

Bob Bieda and Harvey Allen were joined by Al Richards in their yearlong quest to see how many bird species they could see in Massachusetts. It all started as Bob's retirement gift to himself and ended (with President Mary Alice presenting the three friendly rivals with containers of mixed nuts) after a gyrfalcon on Plum Island became Bob's 318<sup>th</sup> bird, Harvey's 308<sup>th</sup> and Al's 300<sup>th</sup>.

In November, the Board of Directors of the Hitchcock Center donated \$100 to the HBC library in recognition of David Spector's years of outstanding service. HBC volunteers answered phones at WFCR's annual fundraiser and the club held its first 24-hour Birdathon in partnership with the Hitchcock Center. A potluck supper, hosted by Conservation Chair Anne Lombard, led to formation of a Communications Tower Committee chaired by Ann and Rick McNeil. And Ruffie, a female Rufous Hummingbird, spent her fifth winter in Tom Gagnon's greenhouse.

Sally reminded us in November that a turkey crossing the road is *poultry in motion* and offered this advice for catching a unique rabbit: *You unique up on it*. In May, she asked *Why did the mushroom go to the party? Cuz, he was a fungi, of course*. And *Why did the fungi leave the party? Cuz there wasn't mushroom!* She provided this cautionary tale for summer travelers in June: *Two vultures board an airplane, each carrying two dead raccoons. The stewardess looks at them and says, "I'm sorry, gentlemen, only one carrion allowed per passenger*. And then, she slipped into retirement after 165 newsletters and other HBC communications over 17 years. Or, as she put it in her graceful valedictory, *WORD BOTCHER becomes BIRD WATCHER*:

*The birds and the words are calling me. Thanks all for years of encouragement, support, and terrible puns! Thanks to all those really special people who have been my teachers and have held my hand along the way! I have to admit to having mixed feelings right now. As I believe I have said before, "A pun is its own reward." But have you ever noticed that PUN spelled backward is NUP? Well ...*

*a nup is a nup is a nup.....I'm out of here!*

*Sally Venman, June 2001*



In 2001, Mary Alice continued as president, Geoff LeBaron took over as vice president and program chair, David Gross became treasurer, Sue Emerson became membership secretary, Jan Howard took over as communications secretary and Stacy Adams, Dennis McKenna, Jan Ortiz, Scott Turner, Sally Venman and David Peake-Jones serving on the board.

David also took over the newsletter and ably dunned us for our dues in the first electronic version of the newsletter: *September draws nigh. Immature humans return to the classroom, asking questions such as, "Mom, why do I have to wear this lame outfit?" ... Pretty soon, all the rest of this cicada-thrumming summer indolence will be replaced by the insistent whisperings of migratory hormones...*

His October newsletter opened on a more somber note: *On September 10, Gerry Bertrand [past president of the Massachusetts Audubon Society] delighted us with his account of birding the Peruvian Amazon. I can find little to say here about what happened the next day, and since. I hope that birding has given you, as it has me, some moments of gentleness and joy to hold onto.*

Mark and Marcia Wilson returned to present a program on Nantucket in October, followed by Sam Fried, past president of the Hartford Audubon Society, on birding Bolivia's Noel Kempff Mercado National Park, Dave Small, president of the Athol Bird and Nature Club, on birds and butterflies, and columnist Bill Danielson on bird rehabilitation. Lori Sanders, an educator with UMass Extension, discussed her natural history program on public radio, Andrew Farnsworth, of the National Audubon Society spoke on using radar to track bird migration, followed by professors Jeff Podos, of UMass on Galapagos Finches and Marta Hersek of Northeastern on Ovenbirds.

Thanks to Dave Gross, the club obtained its own URL: <http://hampshirebirdclub.org>. Sally Venman launched a program offering rides to meetings for older members and those with long-term medical problems. The club offered more than 30 field trips during the year, including five new trips, and Henry Lappen took over from long-time librarian Anne Cann. In recognition of Anne's service a copy of Sibley's Guide to Bird Behavior was donated to the library in her name.

It soon became clear that the membership could expect no respite from puns like these:

**Pillage Idiot:** *Viking who could never bring himself to steal. Intaxification:* *euphoria at getting a refund from the IRS which lasts only until you realize it was your money in the first place.* Golden-crowned Kinglets were described with no apologies to The Romantics 1980 hit:

*What I like about you, you're an easy ID.  
With that wing-bar, crown stripe \_ no one else you could be, YEAH.  
Ah, that sibilance in my ear,  
Telling me the Christmas Count is here, well it's true,  
(whisper) That's what I like about you.  
That's what I like about you.  
That's what I like about you, HEY, HEY, HEY, HEY, HEY (a lot of times, loudly)*

When D. Peake-Jones prodded trip leaders to turn in reports with Gilbert and Sullivan, David Spector responded:

*At sunset we waited a bit  
In an Amherst preserve, Podick;  
A woodcock flew low  
And peented "hello"  
To provide our lists a nice tick:  
To bring in an owl we tried—  
We hooted and whistled and cried;  
But no bird was fooled  
Silence then ruled—  
The owls in no way complied.*

**Re-elected in 2002** were President Mary Alice Wilson, Vice President Geoff LeBaron, Treasurer David Gross, Membership Secretary Sue Emerson, Communications Secretary Jan Howard, while Sally Hill, Bob Zimmerman and Mike Locher joined Dennis McKenna, Jan Ortiz, and Sally Venman on the board.

Wayne Petersen of MassAudubon opened the year's programs with a presentation on Iceland followed by UMass graduate student Mara Silver on her research on Bank Swallows in Williamsburg, and Bob Askins of Connecticut College on conservation of birds of open lands. In January, Robert S. Ridgely, director of international bird conservation for the National Audubon Society, described his discovery of the Jocotoco Antpitta and bird conservation in Ecuador. Charter member Dave Stemple spoke on Scottish bird song, Paul Baisich, conservation director for the American Birding Association, on shade-grown coffee, and an April storm forced cancellation of Tom Litwin's talk on the Harriman Expedition. May brought noted field guide author Kenn Kaufmann, who discussed migration from a bird's perspective. Geoff LeBaron wound up the year with a program on the Galapagos Islands.

The post 9-11 world posed some challenges for birders as Janice Doppler reported from a field trip with Al Richards to the Connecticut marshes and Bradley Airport. In Windsor, Conn., the group *found a pair of Least Bitterns that stayed in one area of the marsh for over 45 minutes and a pair of snapping turtles locked in the conjugal act for over an hour. Rails were conspicuously less conspicuous ...*

*After we left the marsh we went to Bradley. We were still on the first leg of our slow trip around the airport when we were surrounded by state police. (actually only two cruisers, but it felt scary). We still managed to locate a small flock of turkeys while we were being escorted from the airport under police guard.*

*Editor's note: Experience suggests it is unwise to gesticulate and yell "Turkey" in the presence of Connecticut's finest.*

The club sadly noted the death of charter member Marnie Price, who served on the board from 1986-1990 and Honorary Life Member Rudd Stone. Henry Lapin established an information exchange to help vacationing members with information on birding in far-off places. Janice Doppler and Peg Army took over the HBC Boutique from long-time storekeeper Sue Fletcher. The conservation committee launched monitoring projects at the East Leverett meadow and Bull Hill and the *Bird Finding Guide to Western Massachusetts*, written and illustrated by club members and edited by Jan Ortiz, David Spector, Pete Westover and Mary Alice Wilson, was published by University of Massachusetts Extension.

**In 2003**, Dennis McKenna took over as president, while Geoff LeBaron, Sue Emerson, Jan Howard and David Gross continued as vice president, membership and corresponding secretaries, and treasurer. Lisa Bertoldi, Betsy Higgins, Marcia Merithew and Leslie Scott joined Mike Locher and Bob Zimmerman on the board.

Deb DeRosier and Victorino Molina Rojas opened the year's programs with conservation of Three-wattled Bellbirds in Costa Rica. Tom Litwin of Smith gave his storm-delayed presentation on the 2001 reprise of the 1899 Harriman Expedition, and Betty Anderson, founding director of the Manomet Bird Observatory and chair of the state's Endangered Species Advisory Committee, spoke on New England's Changing Avifauna. Sam Fried gave a program on birding Kansas, and Dave King of UMass discussed on his research on wintering Golden-cheeked Warblers. Peter Alden, president of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, spoke on the impact of invasive plants on New England birds, followed by Jan Ortiz on Baffin Island, and Harvey Allen on Gambia.

Charter member Don Kroodasma received the Elliot Coues Award from the American Ornithologists Union for his contributions to the study of bird song. A Varied Thrush was spotted at the Quabbin Reservoir and a Thayer's Gull at the composting facility on Burt's Pit Road in Northampton. The mid-winter eagle survey tallied 61 Bald Eagles, including 39 at the Quabbin Reservoir, six along the Connecticut River, and a juvenile on the Westfield River,



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

Volume 25, No. 8  
**April, 2009**  
[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

April is the official anniversary month of our beloved HBC. In trying to describe the genesis of the club twenty-five years ago, I am going to borrow, with few minor changes, an excerpt from the first chapter of Trudy Tynan's history of the club, which has appeared in installments during this year. If you have not yet done so, I recommend you dip into her lively account.

*It all began with a bird, and what a bird! A Great Gray Owl swooped into Hadley around Valentine's Day 1984 and hung around Huntington Road for six weeks.*

*"Sally Venman and I are standing there (watching the owl) and people are just coming out of the woodwork," Scott Sumner recalls. "We were just chatting. Then we thought, 'Look at all these people. We should be able to start a bird club and have it be viable and last.' Of course, some were non birders, (everyone loves an owl), but there were a lot of birders."*

*Within a few weeks, they had a flyer, and were beating the bushes for members. David Spector recalls being recruited by Sally from the window of her car while he was innocently birding a roadside..... The first meeting took place on May 9, 1984 at the Hitchcock Center, and the first field trip was to Plum Island on May 19. By August, the club had 75 charter members. Dues back then were \$7 per year.*

From so simple a beginning, the Hampshire Bird club has grown to its present status. It remains remarkably true to the simple yet durable vision of the founders. It is still, clearly and unambiguously, a bird club, and a darn good one. We are now 25 years old, and going strong. Here's to the next 25 years!

## In This Edition:

- this month's **program** and the list of programs still to come this year (on page 2),
- **field trip** information, (including an update on the **Wayne Peterson Shorebirding Workshop**, p. 5),
- last call for **Monhegan, 2009** (our flagship overnight trip)
- **anniversary** update,
- programs at **Hitchcock** and some other local organizations,
- a first-hand account by the discoverer of the Valley **Ross's Geese**,
- the new **Education and Outreach committee**, and a few other tidbits.

I hope you find some of it useful!

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The HBC Nominating Committee consists of **Bill Benner**, **Mary Alice Wilson** and **Dave Gross**. The committee will announce a slate of candidates for the 2009-2010 HBC board in the May newsletter. If you are interested in serving on the board or if you would like to nominate someone for the board, please contact one of the committee members. The election of the new board will be held at our AGM on May 11, 2009.

## NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, April 13 at 7:30 PM**

### **John Van de Graaff brings us *The Galapagos Islands: A Photographic Celebration***

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Charles Darwin (born 200 years ago) visited the Galapagos Islands for a month in 1835. Although his *Origin of Species* mentions them only briefly, his work and thought are a major source of the islands' legendary aura. Beyond their continuing importance for the theory of evolution, the Galapagos have become a premier international travel destination. They are also a paradise for photographers.

This show brings together the best of many, many images from John's trips to the Galapagos in 2006 and 2008, providing visual portraits of key species and habitats. Among those included are the ubiquitous sea lions, birds such as finches, mockingbirds, boobies, gulls, frigate-birds and albatrosses, and reptiles (iguanas, tortoises and sea turtles). Where appropriate John will comment on their evolutionary status. The islands' recent volcanic origins are evident virtually everywhere, but habitats shown range widely, from beaches and scrub to lava fields and tropical areas.

A native of Boston, **John Van de Graaff** has been photographing birds virtually full-time since 2001 and particularly enjoys traveling to do so. He migrated from New York City to Northampton in 2003 with his wife Marylee Bomboy. John has made presentations to a number of birding and photography groups, including several major bird clubs in Massachusetts. A well-attended exhibition of his bird photos appeared at the Burnett Gallery in Amherst in 2007. He has photographed extensively on the Massachusetts coast, capturing images which have been used by Mass Audubon to support their IBA and Coastal Waterbird Programs. He's an active member of the Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists (PVPA) and the North American Nature Photography Association (NANPA). John's website is easily remembered: [www.birdsbyjohn.com](http://www.birdsbyjohn.com).

## Coming Up

**May 11, 2009. Susan Smith.** *Chickadee Research.*

**June 8, 2009. Kenn Kaufman.** *Wings of the Imagination; Why we Need Birds.*

## FIELD TRIPS

### Reports

On **March 21**, **Al Richards** toured the more aqueous sections of the Pioneer Valley with a selection of the more hydrophilic members of the club. We started at Hadley Cove, where five of the **Ross's Geese** were obligingly present. We pronounced one a Ross's-Snow hybrid. Also present there were a pair of Ring-necked Ducks and one or two other things. We then trekked north, pausing to admire the Peregrine Falcons at the Sugarloaf before continuing up to the Rod and Gun Club in Turners. We had a Bald Eagle encounter almost as soon as we arrived, and also enjoyed looking at numerous Common Mergansers, Hooded Mergansers, Ring-necked Ducks, a pair of Common Goldeneye, and some Bufflehead.

Great Pond in Hatfield, was just in the process of opening up, but there were plenty of Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, and Gadwall to add to the day's tally. The most fun I had all day was with an inadvertent remark made by Al, but that must remain undocumented to protect the innocent (which includes neither Al nor me).

David Peake-Jones

## Coming Trips

*Please register with the field trip leader(s) and check this schedule's information when a phone number is given. The Field Trip Chair (Michael Locher – 413-585-5864) is always looking for new trip ideas and leaders.*

*The Hampshire Bird Club recommends carpooling whenever possible, and suggests that all riders share equally the per-car cost of 50¢ per mile, as well as tolls and parking. See also the "Field Trip Guidelines for Participants" (September newsletter or on the Website).*

*Some trips have been marked with an asterisk (\*), which indicates that they are good trips for beginning birders. All trips have been coded as Easy (E) or Moderate (M) to give a rough indication of the pace and/or terrain. Please check all information with the trip leaders.*

**\*Saturday, April 11. Early Migrants.** Half day. Betsy Higgins (413-586-7585) looks for migrants, starting around Look Park in Northampton. Meet at 6:30 a.m. in the parking lot of the JFK Middle School on Bridge Street in Northampton. (E)

**\*Sunday, April 12. Ashley Reservoir: Early Warblers.** Half day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) hopes to find Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and other early migrants. Meet in the Friendly's parking lot, near the Holiday Inn, close to Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7:00 a.m. (E)

**\*Sunday, April 12. Timberdoodles.** Evening. Mike Locher looks and listens for woodcocks, probably at the Podick Conservation Area in Amherst. Contact Mike (413-585-5864) the week before the trip to get a definite meeting time and place. (E)

**\*Wednesday, April 15. Ashley Reservoir II.** Half day. Tom Gagnon celebrates tax day with a morning walk looking for warblers and waterfowl. The walk will start at 7:30 a.m.; call Tom (413-584-6353) for the meeting place. (E)

**Wednesday, April 22. Goat's Peak.** Half day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) commemorates Earth Day by looking for the first Broad-winged Hawks and butterflies of the spring. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the old Mt. Tom State Reservation park headquarters. Rain will cancel this trip. (M)

**Friday, May 8. South Quabbin Park.** Half day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) birds the southern end of the reservoir for vireos, warblers, and whatever else shows up. Meet at the Quabbin Visitor's Center parking lot at 8:00 a.m. (E)

**Saturday, May 9. Spring Migration in the East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon guides birders through the Quabbin woods in search of its migrants. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members. Call Tom (413-584-6353) well ahead of time for meeting information and to register, since participation is limited. (M)

**When you go on a field trip, please offer to write a dazzling and inventive account for the newsletter. Thank you. Ed.**

## EDUCATION and OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Everyone knows it and very bird club (at least in this part of the world) is seeing it. There are few new birders! This certainly helps make the trips quieter, but the long-term implications are not good for birding, nor for birds. A committee is forming to bring new people to birds and birding. If you are interested, please contact David Gross: [dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org), 413 253 2897.

## OVERNIGHT TRIPS

### Monhegan Island: Memorial Day Weekend (May 22-25), 2009

**Sandhill Crane, White-winged Dove, Prothonotary Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, Pacific Loon, Black Tern.** One or two of these birds would be great on any spring birding trip in the north-east. Last year's Monhegan trip had **ALL OF THEM!!** Monhegan is amazing, unequalled, unforgettable, and there are still vacancies for this year! Only you can rectify this situation, and you will be glad if you do.....

During the Spring, migrant songbirds moving northward up the Atlantic seaboard are sometimes pushed out over the ocean by storms, and have to fight their way back toward the safety of land. Monhegan Island lies about twelve miles off the coast of Maine and is often a haven for exhausted birds to recuperate before resuming the perilous journey northward. We will arrive on the island on the Friday of Memorial Day weekend, without vehicles, and immerse ourselves in the gentle rhythms of island life. We'll find migrant songbirds throughout the tiny village of Monhegan, sheltering in the numerous apple trees, sometimes picking through the sea-wrack on the town beach for sand-fleas, or even hiding in the lobster pots piled almost everywhere. Each day will bring fresh migrants to the island, and a storm could even produce one of the fallouts of birding legend. When the birding slows down, we can venture off on any of the island's numerous walking trails to Lobster Cove, the stupendous seaward cliffs, the Seal Rocks (aptly named), or the Enchanted Forest.

We'll stay at the rustic Trailing Yew, which will lay on breakfast and dinner each day, including a local lobster dinner. This is the perfect opportunity to slow down, REALLY learn the birds, and remember what life *should* be about. This trip is open only to members of the Hampshire Bird Club. Registration is by deposit. For further details or to register, contact **Betsy Higgins** ([hignik@comcast.net](mailto:hignik@comcast.net); 586 7585) or **Andrew Magee** ([andrewfmagee@gmail.com](mailto:andrewfmagee@gmail.com); 586 1509).

## 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

### Anniversary Celebrations at the April Meeting

#### Past Presidents Needed

Prior to the meeting, there will be a photograph taken of all the past presidents we can find. If this description fits you, please plan to arrive by 7:15 PM. Cape and tights optional.

#### HBC Photographs Needed

We are still looking for photographs (digital or actual) for the HBC memories table, which will be at the April meeting. If you can help, please contact Trudy Tynan at [publicity@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:publicity@hampshirebirdclub.org) or 413 534 4770.

#### Raffle Drawing and Cake

Following John's program we will be drawing the anniversary raffle. Three prizes will be awarded, the first being an Audubon print. Once this is done, we invite all members to partake in a slice or two of the HBC Anniversary Cake. Please be prepared to spend a little extra time and consume your share!

#### Other Anniversary News

The HBC Big Sit, previously advertised for May 17, has been cancelled. Instead, the June meeting will be preceded by a potluck supper to celebrate the club anniversary. We will invite Kenn Kaufmann (the speaker for the meeting) to join us, and hope his schedule will permit him to attend. Sign up for the potluck will be at the May meeting.



## Shorebird Workshop with Wayne Peterson

(You can participate in either or both the classroom session and/or the field trip)

The “Classroom” Component will be on **Wednesday, August 12 at 7:00 p.m. at the Hitchcock Center.**

*Cost will be published in the May newsletter.*

The companion **Field Trip to South Beach** (Chatham, MA) occurs on **Saturday, August 15**. The trip (limited to 20 people) will begin from **Outermost Harbor Marine** in Chatham at **8:30 a.m.** We will carpool from the Northampton Bowling Alley at 5:00 AM. Pickups along 91S or the Pike if necessary.

Because we have an outside leader making time for us, it is very important that we fill the trip. Hence, **registration is required** and there will be a **trip fee**, *to be published in the May newsletter*. The trip fee will be paid before the trip as part of the registration process. To register you may either:

- speak with David Peake-Jones at the May HBC meeting (you should pay the trip fee by check at this time), or
- email/call David beginning May 12: [fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org), 529 9541. Under this option, you will need to mail your trip fee to the HBC Treasurer, Janice Jorgenson. Details when you register.

*(We will repeat this announcement, with the missing details, in May and June)*

## LIBRARY

The **HBC Library** is located at the **Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst.**

Hours are those of the Hitchcock Center:

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. from Tuesday through Friday, and

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

The collection is catalogued on-line at [www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org).

The library contains birding resources in various media, including field guides, bird-finding guides to almost every major birding destination in the U.S., and overseas, natural histories, periodicals and videos. Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, or longer by arrangement. Our librarian, Henry Lappen, is happy to bring items to meetings, if you give him a few days in advance. You can reach him at [library@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:library@hampshirebirdclub.org) or (413) 549 3722.

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**“Mt Toby Poems”:** *Wally Swist*

Reading and book-signing.

Tuesday, April 7, 2009, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Proceeds to benefit Clara Gardner

**An Old Growth Forest Excursion:** *Bob Leverett*

Sunday, April 12, 2009, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mohawk Trail State Forest, Charlemont, Mass.

**Presidentials: An Alpine Wildflower and Birding Trek:** *Pete Westover, Ted Watt*

Friday through Sunday, June 12-14, 2009.

*For details and registration for all Hitchcock programs, please contact the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant St., Amherst MA 01002. Telephone (413) 256 6006, or on the web at [www.hitchcockcenter.org](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org).*

## Valley Environmental Education Collaborative Programs

### **Entrepreneurship, Sustainability and Innovation: Stories from the Cutting Edge:** *Chris Lotspeich*

Tuesday, April 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Held at the Holyoke Heritage State Park Visitor's Center, Holyoke, 7:00 p.m.

For more information call 413-534-1723. A \$5 donation is appreciated.

### **Playing With Solar. A Tour of A2Z Science and Nature Store's Solar Array:** *Jack Finn, Owner*

Wednesday, April 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Held at A2Z Science & Learning Store, Northampton at 7:00 p.m.

Sponsored by Massachusetts Audubon/Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary.

For more information and to pre-register call 584-3009. A \$5 donation is appreciated.

### **Distinguished Guests: The Valley Ross's Geese:** *Bob Bieda*

This morning (3/16/09) Lura and I were walking in the Arcadia meadows (page 181, Western Mass. guide), mostly with the idea of checking the increasing number of Great Blue Herons occupying the rookery in Ned's Ditch. As we were returning to Arcadia around 10:30 a.m. we saw hundreds of geese flying into Arcadia marsh. From a distance we could see that a few of these were "white" geese. We decided to try to get a closer look.

When we got to the marsh and got our scope on the first white goose, we saw that it had a round head, small bill with no grin patch and a very white, compact body. The second and third had the same. We decided they were Ross's Geese and called Chuck Horn, who works at the visitor center. He arrived in a few minutes and verified that we were not seeing things. We also discovered that one of the nine white geese was a Snow Goose and when it mixed with the others the contrast was dramatic. In all there were eight full adult Ross's Geese and one sub adult Snow Goose.

More calls resulted in Tom Gagnon, Al Richards and Tom Lautzenheiser joining the group. The nine white geese remained together and were generally surrounded by many, many hundreds of Canada Geese. The geese and the viewers were still there when Lura and I left at about 1:30 p.m.

*Some of these birds were still around a week later and were seen by the HBC spring waterfowl trip at Hadley Cove. At that time, there were four Ross's Geese and one Ross's-Lesser Snow Goose hybrid. Ed.*

## **Raptor Release**

**Sunday, April 19, 1 PM.**

**East Leverett Meadow, Cushman Road, Leverett.**

Julie Collier, (raptor rehabilitator), will release a first year American Kestrel. Sponsored by the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust.

***Backyard Birds*** (on Strong St. in Northampton) offers a wide range of birding books, audio resources, gifts, feeders, and other paraphernalia. They also offer a 10% discount to Hampshire Bird Club Members. Remember, when you shop locally, your money stays here!

Now for some more HBC history with Trudy Tynan!  
Till next month, walk softly and carry a big scope!

David Peake-Jones, Editor  
529 9541  
[newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)



## **HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB HISTORY**

### **CHAPTER Seven: Red-footed and White-tailed Raptors and We Collar a Dove: 2004-2006**

**By Trudy Tynan**

*With the years of patient peering the knowing gradually increases, incorporated into the brain, and, in more important ways, into the soul. Birding is a journey with no end point. It keeps us coming back year after year.* \_\_\_\_\_ David Peake-Jones, September 2005

Fall **2004** saw Dennis McKenna serve a second term as president, while Geoff LeBaron, Sue Emerson, Jan Howard and David Gross continued as vice president, membership and corresponding secretaries, and treasurer. Elissa Rubenstein and Jaap van Heerden joined Betsy Higgins, Marcia Merithew, Mike Locher and Bob Zimmerman on the board. David Peake-Jones continued to entertain us as newsletter editor.

Shawn Carey, founder of Migration Productions and president of the Eastern Mass Hawk Watch, opened the year's programs with "Birding: A Multi-Media Visual Experience." Popular field guide author and artist David Sibley spoke on birders and conservation in October in a meeting held at the Amherst Middle School.

In November, we heard a continent singing as charter member Don Kroodsma shared some the bird songs he recorded during a coast-to-coast bicycle trip with his son. Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll gave a program on birds of the Blackstone National Corridor, followed by Daniel Klem of Muhlenberg College on the hazards glass windows pose to birds, Connecticut State Ornithologist Margaret Rubega, who teaches at UConn, on the biomechanics of plankton-feeding phalaropes, and Geoff LeBaron on birding the Aleutian Islands and Kamchatka Peninsula.

Susan Roney Drennan, a former editor of *American Birds*, and author of *The Birder's Field Notebook*, spoke on albatrosses and the hazards posed by longline fisheries, and Frank Gill, recently retired chief scientist for the National Audubon Society and past president of the American Ornithologist's Union, concluded the year's programs with a talk on the importance of citizen science.

The year **2004-2005** brought some great birds, including the August appearance of a Red-footed Falcon on Martha's Vineyard, and the first state record of an Eurasian Collard Dove. The latter was discovered May 28 on the HBC's annual "Poor Man's Monhegan" trip to Plum Island led by Bob Bieda. The participants saw more than 100 species, including 11 species of warblers, seven species of flycatchers and both Wilson's and Red Phalaropes in breeding plumage on the coastal trip that followed a three-day nor'easter. They also came upon the remnants of a fin whale that had been buried on the beach years earlier and uncovered by the storm. They reported it still smelled bad.

The birding was also good on Monhegan. The 20 HBC members on the Monhegan trip tallied 128 species on the same weekend. The trip, as David observed in the newsletter, was notable, not for its rare species, which were limited to Dickcissal and Red-necked Phalarope, but for numbers of birds and being *perhaps the most complete representation of northeastern migrant songbirds of any trip in recent memory*.

Closer to home, the snow held off long enough for the Northampton area Christmas Count to tally new highs of Great Blue Herons, Hooded Mergansers, Red-tailed Hawks, Eastern Screech-owls, Red-bellied,

Downy- and Pileated Woodpeckers, Tufted Titmice, White-breasted Nuthatches, Carolina Wrens, American Robins, Northern Cardinals, Long-eared Owls and its first Bufflehead.

In February, Al Richards, Shawn Smolen-Morton and Herman Staengle took in the Great Gray Owl show at Ile Bizard, near Montreal. They tallied six Great Grays, including two in the parking lot, and added a Northern Hawk Owl, a Northern Saw-Whet, and a pair of Great Horned Owls before leaving Quebec.

An August trek to New South Beach produced a Curlew Sandpiper and controversy. As David P-J reported from behind a plate of greasy seafood at the Cream 'n Kone: *Those with long memories will recall a long-standing wager between Shaun Smolen Morton and Al Richards, stipulating that, should Al find/see a Curlew Sandpiper on a New South Beach Trip, Shaun would carry him up the stairs to Morris Island. While Al indisputably saw the bird, the protagonists are deadlocked over whether or not he had to be the finder of the bird. Given that Mr. Smolen-Morton appears several years older and not quite so spry as he was when this virtually suicidal pact was first made, this desperate splitting of hairs is perhaps forgivable.*

In May, we joined the Hitchcock Center in helping charter member Don Kroodsma launch his prize-winning book *The Singing Life of Birds* with a bird walk and book signing. HBC members also helped MassWildlife gather information about nesting Common Loons, Canada Geese, and Mute Swans, and the club began sponsoring accessible bird walks as part of Project INSPIRE. The Peregrine Falcons nesting atop the UMass Library fledged three chicks and the pair on Mount Sugarloaf fledged two chicks.

Dave Gross took over as president in **September 2005** and Janice Jorgensen replaced him as treasurer. Geoff LeBaron continued as vice president and program chair and Sue Emerson as membership secretary while Marcia Merithew was elected communications secretary. Dennis McKenna moved from the past president's spot to an at-large post on the board. Elissa Rubenstein, Jaap van Heerden, Betsy Higgins, Mike Locher and Bob Zimmerman continued as at-large members.

Don opened the year's programs with a presentation on *The Singing Life of Birds*, followed by Andrea Jones of Mass Audubon on Namibia and Blair Nikula, former regional editor for *American Birds* and past president of the Cape Cod Bird Club, on Antarctica. In January, Dr. Nancy Weiss spoke on the Bird Conservation Alliance in January, followed by Gregor Yanega, a doctoral student at UConn, on how hummingbirds use their bills to catch insects and charter member David Spector of Central Connecticut State on bird books.

Harry Vogel, executive director of the New Hampshire-based Loon Preservation Committee gave a program on common loon conservation and noted photographer John Van de Graaff on the peregrinations of a bird photographer. Tom French, director of the state's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, concluded the year's programs with a presentation on the recovery of peregrine falcons.

Afranio Torres-Neto completed a major updating of the HBC Web site and John Van de Graaff donated several of his images of local birds for display on the site. In April, Don Kroodsma won the Burroughs Medal for excellence in natural history writing and the report of a Eurasian Collared Dove, discovered during a May 2005 HBC trip to Plum Island, was formally accepted as a first state record by the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee. The HBC members contributing to the record report included

Dave Mako, who first heard the bird, Bob Bieda, who located it, and Al Richards, Janice Doppler, Chris Ellison, Gail Abbott and Deborah Oeky.

Participants in the annual Monhegan Island trip tallied 21 species of warblers and did some warbling of their own. Here's resident bard David P-J:

*In a moment of high drama, we realized that we had forgotten to bring copies of the HBC song. [Editors Note: see Chapter 4 for the worst ... I mean words] It seemed this would be the first trip ever when the graceful strains of this august melody would not send other patrons of the Trailing Yew scurrying for the woods. Rick put his guitar and musical skills to good use in cajoling some new and original verses out of the assembled group on Saturday night. Just when it seemed this jerry-rigged version of the historic song would have to suffice, Marian let it slip that she, as the proprietor of the Yew, had filed a copy away in an earlier year. We were able to sing it after all, much to the delight of the Yew staff, who were some of the most enjoyable folks we have had on any trip in my memory.*

However, the bird of the year appeared on Saturday, April 22, 2006. Here are excerpts from David's story in the May newsletter:

*It begins with Scott Sumner heading past the horse farms on an otherwise-average Saturday morning with his Hitchcock Birding class. As the group proceeded along North Maple Street about 8 AM, Scott stopped to put a scope on what he took to be a cooperative Red-tailed Hawk perched low and close to the road. As Scott noted one field mark after another, he began to realize that this was not, in fact, a Red-tailed Hawk. After some time had passed, the group was able to identify it as a White-tailed Hawk, primarily a bird of Central America, whose most northerly range is the coastal savannahs of Texas. The rest, as they say, is history!*

*As word spread, local birders began showing up along North Maple Street in the rain, and trooping along a track by the field where the bird had been seen...By about 2PM, birders were massed at the end of the road gazing at the bird in a dead tree a few yards from the end of the road.*

*There it sat: a truly miraculous apparition... It had a snowy white tail with a fairly stunning black sub-terminal band... If there is such a color as a rich gray, then that color prevailed across the back, offset by two muted but distinctive chestnut shoulder stripes... When the bird took flight briefly, the full splendor of gray-whitish wing linings was briefly revealed, along with the graceful, elongated hands of this aerial acrobat.*

The bird remained in the same general area for several days until it clashed with a local red-tail. A White-tailed Hawk in the same plumage appeared at the Pilgrim Heights hawkwatch on Cape Cod on April 27 and one was sighted in New Jersey on April 25.

The Massachusetts Avian Records Committee found the Hadley bird was "clearly a White-tailed Hawk," but in a split vote declined to accept the record because of questions about the bird's origin. Instead, MARC placed it on a supplemental list of species that "may have occurred in the state. However, a captive origin cannot be discounted."

And, oh yes, another near breeding plumage curlew sandpiper was spotted during an August HBC trip to New South Beach. *Of course*, P-J noted, *Al Richards reminded us of broken promises by Shawn Smolen-Morten.* Still, it was for naught. For Shawn had successfully defended his doctoral thesis and slipped safely away to South Carolina.



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

Volume 25, No. 9  
May, 2009  
www.hampshirebirdclub.org

In this edition,

- **Program** information,
- the slate of hapless **board** conscripts for next year,
- **field trip reports** (mercifully free of my own contributions) and **coming trips**,
- the absolute last call for **Monhegan** and announcing the **Peterson Shorebirding** extravaganza,
- **Atlas** exhortations, and the **HBC History**,
- a **prestigious potluck**,
- **Hitchcock** programs and kudos for the **Athol Bird and Nature Center**.

I hope you find some of it useful!

## NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, May 11 at 7:30 PM**

**Susan Smith** shares **Thoughts from a Long-Term Study of Local Chickadees**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Susan will tell us about her 30-year study of a single local population of Black-capped Chickadees. She has looked at long-term trends in South Hadley's birds, with each chickadee in her study population individually color banded--she has followed each chickadee's life history over time. We'll learn about how our birds have been doing over the past decades, and hear of the effects of many factors influencing their success. Things such as habitat change, predators, and diseases, plus larger issues including the potential effects of global climate change, all influence the birds we know and love in our backyards.

## Coming Programs

**June 8, 2009. Kenn Kaufman.** *Wings of the Imagination; Why We Need Birds.*

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The HBC Nominating Committee (Bill Benner, Mary Alice Wilson and Dave Gross) is happy to announce the slate of candidates for the 2009-2010 HBC board including both officers and at-large members. The election of the new board will be held at the HBC annual meeting on May 11, 2009. The nominees are:

### Officers

**Scott Surner** , President  
**Geoff LeBaron**, Vice President/Program  
Chair  
**Janice Jorgensen**, Treasurer  
**Sue Emerson**, Membership Secretary  
**Elissa Rubinstein**, Communications Secretary

### At-large members

**Mike Locher**  
**Jan Ortiz**  
**Larry Therrien**  
**Jaap van Heerden**  
**Joe Wicinski**

# FIELD TRIPS

## Reports

### Look Park

Naturally, since it was **Saturday, April 11**, and my Look Park bird walk was scheduled, the temperature was 42 degrees and the forecast called for rain! Nevertheless, and in spite of the weather, three hardy birders joined me in my search for early migrants. Marcia Merithew, Kate Parsons, Rachel Greenwood and I found a grand total of 27 species, including an immature Bald Eagle, 2 Pine Warblers, 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, 2 Common Mergansers, 2 Wood Ducks, Phoebes galore, and a Coopers Hawk eating an unidentified bird. The river was raging, the water was crashing over the dam, the rain held off, and we had a nice walk.

Betsy Higgins



### Once Again, No Waterthrush found at Ashley Reservoir!

**Easter, April 12**, dawned with bright sun and 35° temperatures, and four hearty souls tacked against a stiff breeze as we left the Elks Lodge parking lot and headed down toward the water. By the time we made it to the reservoirs, we had found several of our target species, including good looks at Palm Warblers and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Pine Warblers were singing out of view high in the pines. We scared a pair of Wood Ducks from a pond near the lodge, and that was to be our best look at that species.

The reservoirs were notably devoid of waterfowl. During the entire morning we saw a single Ring-necked Duck, four Mallards, perhaps two dozen Canada Geese, and a few Common Mergansers. We later saw Tree Swallows dipping over the water, and there may have been other swallow species intermixed, but the breeze brought tears to my eyes\* and made identification difficult.

In the middle of the walk we heard a Ruffed Grouse, and later found a single Golden-crowned Kinglet as we vainly sought the mythical waterthrush. An Osprey flew over, as did several Turkey Vultures.

In all, we saw about 35 species and a few signs that spring was finally arriving.

Mike Locher

\*I just hope everyone in the club now realizes the depths of sacrifice that are required of our field trip leaders Ed.



### Woodcocks.

On **Sunday, April 12**, three birders left the parking lot at Wentworth Farm Conservation Area in Amherst, intent on hearing, and perhaps seeing, an American Woodcock. I had had good luck there two of the previous three nights, but the conditions were windy, and I was unsure what to expect from the woodcocks.

On our hike to the first field, we found a Northern Mockingbird, a Song Sparrow, several Eastern Bluebirds, a pair of Belted Kingfishers, several Northern Rough-winged Swallows, and at least one pair of Wood Ducks. Finally, just as it became too dark to see anything, we heard the first faint *peint* of a woodcock off in the distance. When he took to the air, the breeze held him nearly motionless high over us for several seconds, and we all got a look at him.

On the way back to our cars we stopped at a second field where we heard more vocalizations and saw the woodcock careen past us at the end of his flight. I heard one final woodcock (making three in all) near the parking lot as we ended the evening.

Mike Locher.

Since Mike's eyes apparently neglected to water on this trip, I can give my tiny violin a rest. Ed.

## Coming Trips

**Friday, May 8. South Quabbin Park.** Half day Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) birds the southern end of the reservoir for vireos, warblers, and whatever else shows up. Meet at the Quabbin Visitor's Center parking lot at 8:00 a.m. (E)

**Saturday, May 9. Spring Migration in the East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon guides birders through the Quabbin woods in search of its migrants. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members. Call Tom (413-584-6353) well ahead of time for meeting information and to register, since participation is limited. (M)

**Sunday, May 10. Connecticut River to Mt. Sugarloaf.** Half day. Dave Mako explores the fields and hills around Mt. Sugarloaf looking for migrants and a few local specialties, including Common Ravens, Peregrine Falcons, and Worm-eating Warblers. Call Dave (413-665-2999) for meeting time and place. (M)

**Saturday, May 16. Mt. Auburn Cemetery.** All day. David Peake-Jones goes to Boston's most historic cemetery, which is also one of the Eastern Massachusetts' birding hotspots, to see what happens to fly in. The numbers and variety beggar the imagination. Call David (413-529-9541) for meeting information. (E)

**Friday, May 22 – Monday, May 25. Monhegan Island.** Overnight trip. Betsy Higgins leads the Hampshire Bird Club's annual pilgrimage to Monhegan Island. Not only is the island charming, but the numbers and variety of migrating birds can be astonishing. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) to register. (E/M)

**Saturday, May 23. Poor Man's Monhegan.** All day. Bob Bieda takes birders to Plum Island. Past trips have found Wilson's Phalaropes, Piping Plovers, Seaside Sparrows, Orchard Orioles, and Evening Grosbeaks. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register and get meeting information. (E)

**Wednesday, June 3. Mt. Greylock – Birds and Butterflies.** All day. Tom Gagnon hikes around the highest peak in Massachusetts looking for birds and butterflies. Meet at Mt. Greylock State Reservation Headquarters building at 8:00 a.m. Call Tom (413-584-6353) with any questions. (M)

**Saturday, June 6. Westover Air Force Base.** Half day. Pending permission, Bob Bieda will lead his annual trip into New England's premier grassland habitat, looking for Upland Sandpipers, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E/A)

## Suggestions for Fall Field Trips

We want to make sure that our field trip program remains vibrant and fresh. This means we need new leaders and new destinations to add to the "old reliable" trips and leaders who have served us so well for so long. We need innovators!!

Our field trip chair, Mike Locher, is, even now, turning his fertile imagination to the Fall Field Trip Schedule. If you have suggestions for field trips between September 1 and December 31, especially if you are willing to lead them, please contact Mike: [fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org). or 413 585 5864.

## OVERNIGHT and SPECIAL FIELD TRIPS

### Monhegan Island: Memorial Day Weekend (May 22-25), 2009

*Sandhill Crane, White-winged Dove, Prothonotary Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrow, Pacific Loon, Black Tern.* One or two of these birds would be great on any spring birding trip in the north-east. Last year's Monhegan trip had ALL OF THEM!!

Monhegan is amazing, unequalled, unforgettable, and there are still one or two spots left for this year.

Monhegan Island lies about twelve miles off the coast of Maine and is a legendary migrant trap. We will arrive on the island on the Friday of Memorial Day weekend, without vehicles, and immerse ourselves in the gentle rhythms of island life. We'll find migrant songbirds throughout the tiny village of Monhegan, sheltering in the numerous apple trees, sometimes picking through the sea-wrack on the town beach for sand-fleas, or even hiding in the lobster pots piled almost everywhere. Each day will bring fresh migrants to the island, and a storm could even produce one of the fallouts of birding legend. When the birding slows down, we can venture off on any of the island's numerous walking trails to Lobster Cove, the stupendous seaward cliffs, the Seal Rocks (aptly named), or the Enchanted Forest.

We'll stay at the rustic Trailing Yew, which will lay on breakfast and dinner each day, including a local lobster dinner. This is the perfect opportunity to slow down, REALLY learn the birds, and remember what life *should* be about. This trip is open only to members of the Hampshire Bird Club. Registration is by deposit. For further details or to register, contact Betsy Higgins ([hignik@comcast.net](mailto:hignik@comcast.net); 586 7585) or Andrew Magee ([andrewfimagee@gmail.com](mailto:andrewfimagee@gmail.com); 586 1509).

### Shorebirding Workshop and Field Trip with Wayne Peterson

*You can participate in either or both the indoor session and/or the field trip.*

#### Shorebirding Workshop ("classroom session")

- **Wednesday, August 12**, from 7:00 – 10:00 p.m. at the **Hitchcock Center**. Pre-registration details to follow. Workshop will be free for HBC and Hitchcock members, \$5 for others.

#### Field Trip to South Beach (Chatham on Cape Cod, MA) (Whole Day)

- **Saturday, August 15.** The trip (limited to 20 people) will begin from **Outermost Harbor Marine** in Chatham, MA at 8:30 a.m. Those car-pooling from the valley will meet at **Northampton Bowling Alley, at 5:00 a.m.** Pickups along 91S or the pike by arrangement with David.
- The trip involves a short boat ride, then several miles of walking over sand and mud, and likely wading in knee-deep water. Disembarking and re-embarking from the boat at the beach requires wading in water up to thigh-height sometimes. We need to be prepared for high sun-exposure, and carry water and food for the day.
- Because we have an outside leader making time for us, it is very important that we fill the trip. Hence, **pre-registration is required**, including a non-refundable trip fee of **\$20**, which covers the cost of the boat trip to South Beach from Chatham.

To register you may either:

- speak with David Peake-Jones at the May or June HBC meetings (you should pay the trip fee by check at these times), or
- email or call David beginning May 12; [newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org), 529 9541. If you choose this option, David will give you details of how to pay.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

### Potluck with Kenn Kaufman

In the tradition of years past, we will hold a potluck dinner to cap off our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year activities. We will meet and eat at the **Immanuel Lutheran Church** starting at **6 PM on June 8**, just prior to our June meeting. Kenn Kaufman, our speaker for the evening, will join us for dinner. If you want to attend the dinner, you need to sign up to bring a dish (main, side or salad). A sign-up sheet will be available at the May meeting. You can also contact Dave Gross (dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org or 253-2897) to sign up to bring something. We need to have a firm head count for the event, thus, you must sign up by June 1. We will provide utensils, plates, drinks and dessert. Come and join us and see if Kenn likes your tuna hot dish.

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

### **Birding By Ear:** *John Green*

Saturdays, April 18, May 16, and/or June 13, 2009, 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

### **Quigong: Spring Flow:** *Rema Boscov*

Sundays, May 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31, 2009, 9 to 10:15 a.m.

### **Old Growth Forest Excursions:** *Bob Leverett*

Trip 1: Saturday, May 9, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Trip 2: Saturday, May 30, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

### **Birding 101:** *Ted Watt*

Sunday, May 10, 2009, 7 to 10 a.m.

### **The Art and Technique of Landscape Photography:** *Michael Zide*

Thursday, May 28, 2009, 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

### **Fort River Festival:** *at Groff Park, Amherst*

Saturday, May 30, 2009

10 a.m.: Paddle from Kiwanis on Stanley Street to Groff Park (first 50 participants)

Noon to 4 p.m.: Festivities at Groff Park, rain or shine.

### **Slideshow: Alpine Wildflowers of the Presidentials:** *Pete Westover and Ted Watt*

Wednesday, June 3, 2009, 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

*For details and registration for all Hitchcock programs, please contact the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant St., Amherst MA 01002. Telephone (413) 256 6006, or on the web at [www.hitchcockcenter.org](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org).*

## Backyard Birds

**17 Strong St., Northampton (near Eastside Grill). Phone 586 3155**

Your local source for birding and bird-feeding supplies, including feeders, optics, gifts, written and audio-materials. Ten percent discount for members of the Hampshire Bird Club. Remember, with local merchants, your dollar stays here!



## ATLAS

*Woodcocks, owls, siskins, ravens, and hawks, oh my!*

### ***When is a block finished?***

20-hour card complete

at least 70 species recorded ( total from everyone who enters data)

at least 70% PRobable or COnfirmed - or 50% COnfirmed - again by everyone

### ***Status of 143 blocks in Hampshire and Franklin Counties (4/28/09)***

73 blocks are “finished” (see criteria above - you can still add data, of course).

20 blocks have 20 hours done, have someone adding species, PRs+COs.

12 blocks have 20 hours done, NEED SOMEONE to add species, PR+CO.

26 blocks have someone finishing the 20 hours.

12 blocks have someone beginning the 20 hours this year.

### ***What can I do to help?***

If you already have blocks assigned, enjoy (and ask for help if you need it).

If you have not yet done the atlas or are a lapsed-atlaser, offer to help on the not-quite finished blocks or to survey for specific species.

Contact [mwilson@umass.k12.net](mailto:mwilson@umass.k12.net)

## **Athol Bird and Nature Club Wins Prestigious Prize!**

The **Athol Bird & Nature Club** was awarded the **Farnsworth Prize for Excellence in Environmental Leadership** this year by the board of advisors of the **Entrust Fund of Gloucester**. In making the award, a representative of the trust commented:

*“The Athol Bird & Nature Club has no peer within New England for its achievements in advancing the protection of the environment through education and collaboration. The dedication and hard work of its members to a common goal of understanding the nature of the Millers River and New England is the sweat equity that has led this club to such a high level of achievement. It cannot be overstated as to the effectiveness of this club.”*

Receiving the prize were ABNC president **David Small**, club founder and treasurer **Robert Coyle**, and members of the club’s board of directors.

The Athol Bird and Nature Club is an active group of people sharing an appreciation of nature’s many forms. The club manages the Millers River Environmental Center and maintains a natural history collection there, holds meetings featuring members or outside speakers, organizes field trips all over southern New England, offers intensive workshops and institutes on specific natural history topics, and organizes regional biological inventories, including biodiversity surveys, bird counts, and butterfly and dragonfly records.

**CONGRATULATIONS ABNC!!**

That’s all we have room for this month. I leave you in the capable hands of our resident historian, Trudy Tynan.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

[newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)

## HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB HISTORY

### CHAPTER Eight: We Atlas the Breeders: 2006-2008

By Trudy Tynan

*It is one of the ironies of birding that, as we dust off rusty senses after the lethargy of summer, in preparation for the excitement of fall migration, we have to start with the shorebirds. Putting oneself on a mudflat in Chatham in late August with a bunch of sandpipers molting into winter plumage is like asking the Patriots to play the Superbowl in the first week of training camp.*—David Peake Jones

Fall **2006** saw President Dave Gross and all the officers and board members reelected to another term,

Laurie Sanders, host of *Field Notes*, a weekly natural history series heard on WFCR and Connecticut Public Radio, opened the year's programs with birding in Costa Rica, followed by Reuben Yosef, author and director the International Birding and Research Center in Eilat, Israel, and Greg Budney, curator of the Macaulay Library of Natural Sounds at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

Vice President Geoff LeBaron, who has been the Christmas Bird Count Director for the National Audubon Society since 1987, spoke on some recent trends, Elijah Goodwin, a doctoral student at UMass, described his research into song learning strategies in blackbirds and Wayne Petersen of Mass Audubon spoke on the society's Important Bird Areas Program. Sam Fried, past president of Hartford Audubon Society, took us birding on the Yukon's Dempster Highway. Paul Sievert, of the Massachusetts Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at UMass, described his research on the short-tailed albatross, and Joan Walsh, coordinator of Breeding Bird Atlas 2 for Mass Audubon, previewed the second statewide survey of the status of Massachusetts' breeding birds. The first atlas was undertaken in 1974.

The HBC, under Mary Alice Wilson's able leadership, assumed responsibility for Hampshire and Franklin counties in Breeding Bird Atlas 2. Within weeks, she had 89 blocks assigned and 87 folks, most of them HBC members, working as primary and secondary atlasers.

On Nov. 1, Mass Audubon dropped the toll-free phone number for the Voice of Audubon. All four recorded reports from throughout the state continue to be accessible through (781) 259-8805 and transcripts are available on the Web and printed in five western Mass newspapers and the Boston Globe.

The second annual Hitchcock Trivia Night at the Harp in Amherst featured a number of contestants from the ranks of HBC with a self-described "nameless team hastily assembled at the bar," including Ira Band, Patti Steinman from Arcadia, HBC Newsletter Editor David Peake-Jones and Jim Laffley, trumping the "Oldies but Goodies," featuring HBC Newsletter Editor Emeritus Sally Venman, husband Bill Venman, Bob Wilce and Joanne Parker, for first place.

The February issue of Bird Observer magazine was devoted to birding in western Massachusetts and featured articles by Seth Kellogg and Jim Smith on regional rarities; Scott Sumner on the White-tailed Hawk, Mark Taylor and Hector Galbraith on the Northfield Sod Farm. The HBC's Trudy Tynan helped put together the issue

In March, the club sadly noted the death of John Lynes at 97. The retired Smith College professor, who donated his Westhampton farm to Mass Audubon following the death of his wife, Marion, kept an almost daily list of area birds for more than 50 years. Despite unseasonably warm weather, participants in the annual Monhegan Island trip on Memorial Day tallied 120 species, nine more than the Allen Bird Club had counted a few days earlier. And the annual Westover Air Reserve Base trip in June tallied 10 Upland Sandpipers, including a pair with a newly hatched chick.

David Gross returned for another term as president in **2005**, joined by Vice President and Program Chair Geoff LeBaron, Treasurer Janice Jorgenson, and Membership Secretary Sue Emerson. Elissa Rubenstein took over as communications secretary. Bruce Callaghan, Mike Locher, Dennis McKenna, Jaap van Heerden, Lisa Rock, and Scott Sumner served on the board.

Documentary producer Larry Hott opened the year's programs with the making of Florentine Films documentary on John James Audubon for PBS, followed by photographer John Van de Graaff on "Birds Across Europe", and Beth Goethal on the Conte Refuge.

In January, Don Kroodsma returned with "More Fun with Bird Song," followed by member Ed Neumuth on his stint as a seabird volunteer on Palmyra Atoll, and the National Audubon Society's Scott Hecker on coastal waterbird conservation. Chris Elphick of UConn described his research on Sharp-tailed Sparrows, and Rob William, who currently coordinates the Frankfurt Zoological Society's rainforest conservation project in Peru spoke on the birds of the Andes-Amazon wilderness. In June, Conservation International's Bruce Beehler, recently returned from New Guinea spoke on the Foja expedition that discovered dozens of species new to science.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee, chaired by Shirley Hammerschmith, began its celebration planning by surveying members as to their wishes. By January the committee already had contributions of \$1,333 and plans for a book discussion group on Scott Weidensaul's *A Return to Wild America* and Weidensaul lined up as a speaker for the March 2009 meeting.

The Northampton Christmas Bird Count was moved up a day to Dec. 15 because of a threatened blizzard, which did blow in as predicted on Dec. 16. The massive winter finch eruption was in evidence, and despite the 8-to-12 inches of snow already on the ground HBC observers, gently chased into the cold by coordinator Mary Alice Wilson, tallied 160 Pine Grosbeaks, along with a count-high 2,194 Cedar Waxwings. It wasn't just finches. The snow-blown crew also counted a surprising new high of 22 very chilly Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. The previous high for sapsuckers was three in 2001.

David Spector, clearly stuck inside with too much time on his hands, filed this report:

***A Dozen Not-So-Common Redpolls on the Northampton CBC, 15 Dec. 2007***

*With red caps and streaks  
And triangular beaks,  
Some had pink on breast  
But not all, not the rest;  
Paler than siskins,  
Feeding on catkins,  
They were a dozen cute finches,  
Not big, in length just a few inches,  
That found a dozen slender perches  
On just one, not a dozen white birches*

*None, alas, so frosty,  
No rumps so streak-free  
As to suggest Hoary--  
A dozen Commoners they be,*

*But not so common to me,  
Living from redpoll view southerly,  
Delighted to see  
Every few years  
These charming dears.*

*Well, my compilers and editors worthy,  
There's my write up in few words pithy. I know  
details are weak,  
From tail end to beak--  
No tarsal scutellation noted,  
No rictal bristles counted,  
Just impressions of a quick, happy view;  
I hope that they'll pass, I hope that they'll do.*

And Mary Alice patiently replied in kind:

***Coordinator's Response***

*There once was a redpoll description  
That met every Rare Bird restriction.  
The words they did rhyme,  
It was snail mailed in time:  
Your report is accepted as written*

The snow had stopped by the time the Quabbin count was held on Dec. 29. Observers tallied 70 species and compiler Scott Sumner reported new highs of 154 Pine Grosbeaks and 22 Red-bellied Woodpeckers along with 413 Common Redpolls, a Hoary Redpoll and 115 Evening Grosbeaks.

In February, the club participated in the Amherst Winterfest by leading bird walks at the Cherry Hill Golf Course and helped the Amherst Conservation Dept. with bluebird box maintenance. In the spring HBC members helped clear the trail to the bird blind on the Rail Trail.

The club, which for years had been collecting Christmas Bird Count data on the Barstow farm in Hadley with the family's permission, agreed to provide that data to the Barstows when they, like other hard-pressed dairy farmers sought help from the state legislature. They hoped to show the lawmakers the importance of open land and the additional benefits it can provide wildlife and we had the data. *"It worked!"* Sally Barstow wrote in a letter to the club. *"We wanted you to know that it's your support and support of folks like you that did the trick!"*

Similarly, the club received a request from members Kevin Weir and Cynthia Banfield-Weir to help with the annual census of birds on their farm in Shutesbury, Pelham and Amherst so they could qualify for a state conservation grant to do work needed to encourage grassland and shrub land birds.

Mary Alice's year-end update on Breeding Bird Atlas 2 showed just how busy the HBC atlasers had been.

She reported 95 volunteers had started or completed surveying 143 blocks of about nine square miles each in Franklin and Hampshire counties. Only eight blocks in the two counties were still awaiting assignment and atlasers.

With at least a year to go in the count, 151 species had been reported in Franklin County and 156 species had been reported in Hampshire County. Already, 129 species had been confirmed to be breeding within the two counties. All told, the volunteers recorded 7,460 observations during the spring of 2007.



**Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.**  
**Amherst, Massachusetts**  
**25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR**

Volume 25, No. 10  
**June, 2009**  
[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

It is nearly June. The spring migration is winding down, the Atlas is getting into full swing, the club's twenty-fifth anniversary is coming to its official end, and the fall migration begins next month! After June 8, there are no further programs till September, but there are several field trips happening over the summer, and the fall migration begins in late July!

In this edition:

- an introduction to this month's **program**,
- **field trip reports** and the **summer field trips**,
- the **Peterson shorebirding workshop and field trip** (part of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration),
- **last chance** to sign up for the **anniversary potluck**,
- **Hitchcock summer offerings**, and a few other tidbits.

I hope you find some of it useful!

**Please note that pre-registration IS required for the Peterson Shorebirding Workshop (on August 12). Details on page 4.**

**NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, June 8 at 7:30 PM**

**Kenn Kaufman soars on *Wings of the Imagination: Why We Need Birds***

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

If you're reading this, you probably realize already that birds are wonderful and amazing. You may even take it for granted that birds are an important part of our world. But how do you communicate that point to the uninitiated? In this wide-ranging talk, Kenn Kaufman draws on his experiences to deliver a series of examples of the reasons why we really NEED birds. You'll laugh, you'll cry, you may get annoyed and leave the room, but you won't fall asleep during this presentation. And if you happen to be one of those who doesn't yet realize that we need birds, we challenge you to come to this talk and see if you aren't convinced by the end.

In 2008 **Kenn Kaufman** received the American Birding Association's Roger Tory Peterson Award for a lifetime of promoting the cause of birding, although, as he points out, he isn't finished yet. Kenn burst onto the birding scene as a teenager, hitch-hiking around North America in pursuit of birds, and has gone on to travel and lead birding tours on all seven continents. He is a field editor for Audubon and a contributor to every major birding magazine. Most of his time, however, has gone into writing books such as *Kingbird Highway*, *Flights Against the Sunset*, *Lives of North American Birds*, and the *Peterson Guide to Advanced Birding*. His own *Kaufman Field Guide* series now includes volumes on birds (in English and Spanish), butterflies, mammals, and insects. He and his wife, Kim, keep busy with birds and their classic rock band from their base in northwestern Ohio.

## FIELD TRIPS

### Reports

#### **Mt. Auburn Cemetery. Saturday, May 16.**

Ed McKarron, Ray Chapin, Julia Vanderwielen, Hank, and David Peake-Jones met at America's first garden cemetery at the peak of migration with high hopes. To anyone else, the cheerful melange of sounds emanating from the nearby trees would have been a joyous sign of spring. However, for us the harsh sounds of starlings, cowbirds and grackles signaled tough sledding as we made our way along the storied Indian Ridge path, past Longfellow's resting place. We caught glimpses of Northern Parula and Black-throated Green warblers, and enjoyed the sweet notes of Baltimore Orioles, but of the rarer warblers there was neither sight nor sound. Rounding Halcyon Pond, we struck off into the normally-uninteresting north east corner of the cemetery in response to persistent "mweep" calls, which we eventually traced to a pair of **nesting Great Crested Flycatchers**. An equally anonymous thicket along the eastern boundary gave up a **Lincoln's Sparrow**.

Thus, as the morning wore on, we eked out a longer and longer list of sightings from fragments of song and painstaking searching through the spring foliage. In the dell, we found a roosting **Great Horned Owl**, and Scarlet Tanagers and Wood Thrushes in the shadowy depths. But it was at the Laurel Path circle, having given up hope of rarities, that we eventually heard several high pitched songs which signaled paydirt. After a lot of searching we eventually found singing male **Bay-breasted-** and **Cape May Warblers**. In the same neighborhood, just for good measure, we caught glimpses of the **Blackburnian Warbler** which had so successfully eluded us earlier. Hence, as we finally wound our way back to the cars, perseverance had been rewarded, and what we had not found in terms of quantity, had been made up for with quality.

David Peake-Jones



#### **Poor Man's Monhegan (Plum Island). Saturday, May 23.**

Seven people slipped between the peaks of Memorial Weekend traffic to catch the end of migration on Plum Island. Generally the birding was quiet with no fall outs and no remnants of coastal storms\*. In this sense Poor Man's mirrors the real Monhegan; you take what you get.

The day started cool with showers but pollyanna Marcia Merithew guaranteed the sun would be shining soon and it was. David Mako requested a **Bay-breasted Warbler** for a life bird and, being the accommodating club that we are, we provided one at Goodno Woods. (Since David wasn't a charter club member, he had to settle for a female). Our eighty six species included nine species of heron, twelve species of shorebirds and thirteen species of warblers. Highlights included the above mentioned Bay-breasted, two **Cattle Egrets** and a **Greater Yellowlegs almost completely submerging itself as a Merlin flew over (nice)**.

Bob Bieda

\* Bob is alluding to the trip in 2005, which seems to have become the "WOW" standard for all time. Ed.

### Coming Trips

**Wednesday, June 3. Mt. Greylock – Birds and Butterflies.** All day. Tom Gagnon hikes around the highest peak in Massachusetts looking for birds and butterflies. Meet at Mt. Greylock State Reservation Headquarters building at 8:00 a.m. Call Tom (413-584-6353) with any questions. (M)

**Saturday, June 6. Westover Air Force Base.** Half day. Pending permission, Bob Bieda will lead his annual trip into New England's premier grassland habitat, looking for Upland Sandpipers, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Registration deadline Thursday, May 28. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E/A)

continue on next page ►

**Saturday, June 13. Hammonasset Beach State Park, CT.** All day. Betsy Higgins goes to the coast of Connecticut to find sparrows, rails, and other seaside denizens. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) for meeting time and place as the date approaches. (E)

**Thursday, June 18 – Monday, June 22. The Crown of Maine.** Overnight trip. Geoff LeBaron leads this special 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary HBC field trip to the mixed boreal and agricultural habitats of far northern Maine. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only and registration has closed. (M)

**Tuesday, July 21 – Thursday, July 31. Yellowstone and the Grand Tetons.** Overnight trip. Join Tom Gagnon and Scott Sumner on this special 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary HBC field trip. The trip will look for birds, mammals, butterflies, wildflowers, and whatever else this amazing ecosystem has to offer. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only and registration has closed at the time of publication. (M)

**Wednesday August 12. Shore Bird Workshop with Wayne Peterson.**  
Hitchcock Center, Amherst. 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM. Details on pg 4.

**Saturday, August 15. Shore Bird Workshop Field Session with Wayne Peterson.**  
New South Beach, Chatham, MA. Please contact David Peake-Jones (413 529 9541; [newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)) to register and for meeting place and time. Details on pg 4.

**Saturday, September 5. New South Beach, II.** All day. Bob Bieda leads birders in their quest for late shorebird migrants, including Curlew Sandpipers and Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits. Bring a lunch, a jacket, and \$20 for the boat ride. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register. (M)

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The following were elected to the HBC Board for 2009-2010.

<u>Officers</u>	<u>At-large members</u>
<b>Scott Sumner, President</b> <b>Geoff LeBaron, Vice President/Program Chair</b> <b>Janice Jorgensen, Treasurer</b> <b>Sue Emerson, Membership Secretary</b> <b>Elissa Rubinstein, Communications Secretary</b>	<b>Mike Locher</b> <b>Jan Ortiz</b> <b>Larry Therrien</b> <b>Jaap van Heerden</b> <b>Joe Wicinski</b>

We would like to thank **Lisa Rock** and **Dennis McKenna** for their service in 2008-2009.

## LIBRARY

HBC has a substantial library at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst. **Hours** are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday. Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, or longer by arrangement. **Henry Lappen** is happy to bring items to meetings, given a few days notice! Call him at **(413) 549 3722**.



## 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

### Potluck with Kenn Kaufman

In the tradition of years past, we will hold a potluck dinner to cap off our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year activities. We will meet and eat at the Immanuel Lutheran Church starting at 6 PM on June 8, just prior to our June meeting. Kenn Kaufman, our speaker for the evening, will join us for dinner. If you want to attend the dinner, you need to sign up to bring a dish (main, side or salad).

#### Sign Up

Contact **Dave Gross** (dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org or 253-2897) by June 5. We will provide utensils, plates, drinks and dessert. Come and join us and see if Kenn likes your tuna hot dish.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR

### Shorebirding Workshop and Field Trip with Wayne Peterson

*You can participate in either or both the indoor session and/or the field trip.*

#### Shorebirding Workshop (“classroom session”)

- **Wednesday, August 12**, from **7:00 – 10:00 p.m.** at the **Hitchcock Center**. We ask that you pre-register. The workshop will be free for HBC and Hitchcock members, \$5 for others.

#### To Register

Please sign up with Geoff LeBaron at the June meeting, or at [programs@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:programs@hampshirebirdclub.org), or phone (413) 268 9281.

#### Field Trip to South Beach (Chatham on Cape Cod, MA) (Whole Day)

- **Saturday, August 15.** The trip (limited to 20 people) will begin from **Outermost Harbor Marine** in Chatham, MA at 8:30 a.m. Those car-pooling from the valley will meet at **Northampton Bowling Alley, at 5:00 a.m.** Pickups along 91S or the pike by arrangement with David.
- The trip involves a short boat ride, then several miles of walking over sand and mud, and likely wading in knee-deep water. Disembarking and re-embarking from the boat at the beach requires wading in water up to thigh-height sometimes. We need to be prepared for high sun-exposure, and carry water and food for the day.
- Because we have an outside leader making time for us, it is very important that we fill the trip. Hence, **pre-registration is required**, including a non-refundable trip **fee of \$20**, which covers the cost of the boat trip to South Beach from Chatham.

#### To register you may either:

- speak with David Peake-Jones at the June HBC meeting (you should pay the trip fee by check at this time), or
- email or call David; [newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org), (413) 529 9541. If you choose this option, David will give you details of how to pay.

## 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY THANKS!

Thank you to the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee: **Shirley Hammerschmith**, Elissa Rubinstein, Tom Gagnon, Geoff LeBaron, Jan Ortiz, Janice Jorgensen, Sue Emerson, Mike Locher, Jim Marcum, Scott Sumner, and Betsy Higgins for all their efforts in making this special year a success! Thanks also to **Trudy Tynan** for the hours spent compiling the **HBC History** which has made such entertaining reading this year.

### Welcome New Members

**Charles Quinlan.**  
**Sue Cloutier.**  
**Mary Santiago**  
**Connie Lentz**

Cummington  
New Salem  
Amherst  
Amherst

## Nest Watch: A Cornell Citizen Science Program

You're invited to **register your nest box** (or boxes) with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's **NestWatch** program ([www.RegisterYourNestbox.org](http://www.RegisterYourNestbox.org)). It won't cost you a thing but it does yield valuable information about breeding birds and how their natural rhythms may be changing.

Studies are showing that some birds are laying their eggs sooner than they used to--as much as nine days earlier in the case of Tree Swallows. That could spell trouble if the eggs hatch before a steady supply of insects is available for feeding the young. As a NestWatch participant, you'll visit nests once or twice a week and report what you see: Which kinds of birds are using your nest boxes? When were the first eggs laid? How many eggs were laid and how many actually hatched?

You can find instructions for building the best and safest boxes for bluebirds, swallows, chickadees, and other cavity-nesting birds at the Nest Watch website if you like. Good luck!

### HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**Slideshow: Alpine Wildflowers of the Presidentials:** *Pete Westover and Ted Watt*  
Wednesday, June 3, 2009, 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

**Pondering Ponds:** *Micky McKinley*  
Saturday, June 6, 2009, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

**Your Place, Your Words:** *Rema Boscov*  
Sunday, June 7, 2009, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**This is Rotten: Composting for the Home Garden:** *Hans Leo*  
Saturday, June 13, 2009, 10 a.m. to 12 noon

**What Does Nature Do? A Biomimicry Walk:** *Tim McGee and Ted Watt*  
Sunday, June 28, 2009, 1 to 4 p.m.

**Lost and Found: Navigation, Maps and Compass:** *Pandora Judge*  
Sundays, July 19 & July 26, 2009, 1 to 3:30 p.m.

**Mid-Summer Evening Nature Walk:** *John Green*  
Thursday, July 23, 2009, 5:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

**The Night Sky:** *Ron Woodland*  
Thursday, August 13, 2009, 8 to 9:30 p.m. (cloud date, Monday, August 17, 2009)

**Late Summer Evening Nature Walk:** *John Green*  
Thursday, August 20, 2009, 5:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

**Plum Island Family Birding Excursion (Ages 9 and up with adult):** *Ted Watt*  
Tuesday, August 25, 2009, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

*For details and registration for all Hitchcock programs, please contact the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant St., Amherst MA 01002. Telephone (413) 256 6006, or on the web at [www.hitchcockcenter.org](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org).*

## ATLAS

*"There once was an atlas in Massachusetts. . . ."*

no, that won't work

*"'Twas the 10th day of June and all dates were now SAFE. . . ."*

no, not right either

*"Oh, oh, say can you see, that magnolia in the tree . . . ."*

hmmmm.

*"Something there is that does not love a black fly. . . ."*

**OK, enough. Enjoy the birds, the summer AND the atlas.**

Mary Alice Wilson

That's it for this month.

You'll be hearing from us again in August!

Until then, talk softly and carry a big scope!

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

[newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)

*And here is something to think about in the next month.....*

### **Panama Birders: and Panama Wannabebirders.**

I am coordinating a group of folks to go birding in Panama in March of 2010. We are looking at two possible trips. There is a ten-day basic option, and a "Darien extension" that would target a different set of birds including the Harpy Eagle. The guide, Guide Berguido, is a member of Panama Audubon, and I birded with him many times while I lived in Panama.

The basic ten-day option will cost USD \$1,795 per person plus sales tax (5%) from Panama City, based on double occupancy. Single Supplement: USD \$345. The Darien cost is an additional U\$595 based on min. 5 people.

Tour participants should arrive in Panama City by the evening of Wednesday, March 17th, 2010. Birding would be from Thursday March 18<sup>th</sup> to Thursday March 25<sup>th</sup>. People going on the Darien extension would travel into the Darien that same day. They will return to Panama City, the evening of Tue March 30th.

You can find out a lot more at the tour company website:

<http://advantagepanama.com/birdwatchers-paradise-itinerary.html>

If you are interested, please contact me as soon as possible. I will be sending deposits to the company by July 1, 2009. *Remember this is not a Hampshire Bird Club trip. It is a group of us who want to go bird in Panama and utilize local birding folks.*

**Janice Jorgensen**  
janicejorgensen@charter.net



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

Volume 26, No. 1

**September, 2009**

*“Joy in the Universe and a keen curiosity about it all; that has been my religion.”*

*John Burroughs.*

The usual result of trudging out to the ocean beach from the inner mudflats at South Beach, Chatham is a beautiful view of the expansive and decidedly vacant Atlantic Ocean. Some of us who went along on the shorebirding workshop with Wayne Peterson in August were expecting this as we crested the last dune. However, after some minutes of staring at the incoming waves, a shape materialized at the outer reaches of vision: a burly shape with elegant, long wings, gliding effortlessly over the whitecaps. As we watched in astonishment, the bird slid ever closer to the shore till, like some triumphant pelagic conqueror being feted by our assembled group, it sailed majestically across in front of us before vanishing into its natural realm offshore.

For those who care, it was a **Corey's Shearwater**, and in fairness, there has been a good show of these and other pelagic species close inshore off the cape this season. But how many of those assembled would have witnessed this beautiful creature were it not for the Hampshire Bird Club? How many of us would have been at the beach that day, or any other day this summer, if not for the convivial encouragement that our bird club provides? Birding is as individual a passion as anyone could name, yet we often need a prompt from a birding buddy or the gentle whisperings of the field trip schedule to get us up and out there. And who can forget the curiosity and inspiration to be drawn from the speakers who visit us every month?

## **Dues are Due!!**

**The bird club is coming off a wonderful anniversary year, and boldly stepping into its second quarter century. We have no sponsors, no advertising revenues, so we need your membership dues to continue! Your dollars keep the club alive, and we are still a great bargain!**

### **Please JOIN or RENEW!**

If you are not already a member, or if you have yet to renew this year, please send us a membership form and dues. The **Membership Form** is attached to the end of this document, along with the **Field Trip Release Form** (required if you are going to go on any overnight HBC field trips), the **Rare Bird Alert Form**, and the **HBC Fall Field Trip Schedule**.

## **[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)**

As always, the HBC web site has information about upcoming programs, postings of current and past newsletters, and useful links to other birding sites.

All **club officers and activities** chairs can be reached via email that ends in [@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:@hampshirebirdclub.org). For example, to ask a question of the president, mail goes to [president@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:president@hampshirebirdclub.org). All of these new addresses are listed on the “about” link at the HBC web site. You can reach the Webmaster at [webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**NEXT PROGRAM**  
**Monday, September 14 at 7:30 PM**  
**Susan Benoit and Chris Buelow**  
**Habitat Protection and Restoration in Massachusetts**  
**For [More Than Just] the Birds!**  
Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

**Susan Benoit** and **Chris Buelow** will briefly review the history and funding of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife then outline the DFW's current monitoring and restoration work on a variety of species of birds across the state, with additional updates on butterflies, turtles, snakes, dragonflies, and more.

**Susan Benoit** directs promotional activities statewide for the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. She was formerly an independent project and organizational coordinator from the Northampton area and currently works in Shrewsbury. **Chris Buelow**, of Hardwick, is a Restoration Ecology Assistant with the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. He implements and oversees habitat restoration and land management projects across the state, mostly to benefit early-succession-dependent species since these are among the most threatened by habitat loss and/or degradation.

You can provide direct support for habitat protection in this state by donating to the Wildlands fund ([http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/habitat/protection/wildlands\\_funding.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/habitat/protection/wildlands_funding.htm))

or MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program:  
[http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/nhesp\\_support.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/nhesp/nhesp_support.htm)

## **PROGRAMS SCHEDULED**

**October 19. *Greg Butcher.*** Birds and Climate Change.

**November 9. *Chris Davis.*** New England Falconry (with live birds).

**December 7. *HBC Members' Meeting:*** Members' Slideshow.

**January 11, 2010. *Mark Picard.*** The Challenges of the Wildlife Photographer.

**February 8, 2010 *Bill Benner.*** Birding In Thailand.

**March 8, 2010. *Kathy and Miles Conway.*** Kazakhstan Exploration.

**April 12, 2010. *Brandi van Roo.*** Vireo Research.

**May 10, 2010. *John Van de Graaff.*** Birds of the Massachusetts Coast: Piping Plovers and Much More.

**June 14, 2010. *Geoff LeBaron.*** The Route to Distant Islands.

## **FIELD TRIP REPORTS**

**Mt. Greylock. *Wednesday, June 3***

Harvey Allen and I headed up to Mt. Greylock this morning in the cool weather. We stopped in Cummington on the way through and saw a baby otter in the marsh. On Mt. Greylock we saw a **Black-billed Cuckoo**, heard a Ruffed Grouse drumming and saw a mother with 4 little chicks. In various places on the mountain we had 1 male **Mourning Warbler**, 1 **Blackpoll Warbler**, 9 **Blackburnian Warblers**, 1 male Hummingbird and an adult **Goshawk**. The only butterflies we saw were 9 **Canadian Tiger Swallowtails**.

Tom Gagnon

### **Monhegan Island, Maine. May 22-25, 2009**

**Participants:** Sandra Leiser, Leanne Ksiazek, Sandy Woodrow, Marty Espinola, Cailin Xu, Peggy MacLeod, Elissa Rubinstein, Kate Parsons, Leslie Hoffman, Henry Lappen, Holly Bell, Isabel Higgins, John van de Graaff, MaryLee Bomboy, and co-leaders Betsy Higgins and Andrew Magee.

The weather, as I recall, was fair, warm, with only a few small squalls or sprinkles, and all 3 boat rides, including out to see the terns and puffins, were exceedingly smooth, excellent for both stomachs and use of binoculars and cameras. We were fortunate to have two avid photographers with us, John and Marty, so we could oft see what we just saw, or what we missed. The "bird-of-the-trip", nominated by me not for fab rarity but for constancy of availability, super-bright plumage, and indefatigable song, was a male Dickcissel, and next, I would rate a fairly often seen first-year male Blue Grosbeak, very richly cinnamon with some blue; at least two (2) differently plumaged male Summer Tanagers; a rather dull female Prothonotary Warbler that I think was seen by all; and the usual uncommons, the Cape-May, Bay-breasted, and Orange-crowned Warblers and Philadelphia Vireo. Also special, a calling Whip-poor-will, and a Black-billed Cuckoo, and, for waterbirds, a Glaucous Gull, a Brant, and some Long-tailed Ducks. The Puffin island boat ride was the best puffin show ever, with roughly 60 of them available all over, fabulous uprisings of Common, Roseate, and Arctic Tern, and one or two excellent Razorbills perched and in flight really, really close. About 123 or so bird species makes this about even with our top numbers over the years. A show of 5 cetacean species completed the ferry-ride back to the mainland. Thanks to all for a good time. Bless the island's wicked, fat felines.

Andrew Magee.



### **Hammonasset State Park. Saturday June 13.**

The weather report called for "gloom and doom" (clouds and thundershowers), but in spite of that we had good weather for our trip to Hammonasset Beach State Park. Helga and Nidhin joined me and we enjoyed nice looks at our target birds, **Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow**, and **Seaside Sparrow**. We had 46 species including a beautiful **Little Blue Heron**, **nesting Least Terns**, **Northern Pintail**, Purple Martins, Surf Scoter, Common Loons, and the star of the show, an eclipse plumage **King Eider!** A happy surprise and a nice day.

Betsy Higgins

### **Contributors Wanted!!**

*When a leader's not engaged in his employment (his employment)*

*When the small brown jobs have all been soundly taught (soundly taught)*

*He loves to lie a-basking in the sunshine (in the sunshine)*

*Far from his mind is any trip report (trip report)*

(Gilbert & Sullivan, almost)

Field trip leaders have a ton of things to do in preparation for a trip, and the trips themselves can be arduous. The last thing they want to do when the trip is over is sit down and dash off a trip report for the newsletter. Fortunately, there is help available. I refer, of course, to YOU, the bright-eyed and enthusiastic participant. By writing a report, you give us a record for posterity, and help to promote interest in future trips. There is nothing to it. Just keep a record of the good birds you saw, any hilarious thrills and spills, and send it in.

Editor

### **COMING TRIPS**

Please see the enclosed Fall Field Trip Schedule.

## HBC NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE ON-LINE!

The club offers an on-line (or “electronic”) version of the newsletter, as an alternative to the “hard copy” delivered via USPS. You can sign up for it on the membership form.

### “How does that work?”

The newsletter is posted on the HBC website. Participants receive an email notification, whereupon they can view and/or download the newsletter from the website at their leisure. You need to give us an email address on the membership form in order to get the on-line version.

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Sign up in the upper right hand corner of the Membership Form.

### I signed up last year. Do I need to sign up again?

We ask all members to decide each year how they want to receive the newsletter. Regardless of how you got the newsletter last year, please make your choice of how to receive the newsletter this year on this year’s membership form.

## LIBRARY

HBC has a substantial library, located at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst.

Hours are those of the Hitchcock Center:

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. from Tuesday through Friday, and

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

*The collection is catalogued on-line at [www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org).*

The library contains birding resources in various media, including field guides, bird-finding guides to almost every major birding destination in the U.S., and overseas, natural histories, periodicals and videos. Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, or longer by arrangement. Henry Lappen, the librarian, is happy to bring items to meetings, if you give him a few days in advance. You can reach him at **(413) 549 3722**.

*Here, if you have not already tended to these chores, is your “to-do” list for this month:*

- don’t forget the **Membership** and **Field Trip Release** forms,
- sign up for the **Rare Bird Alert** (RBA) if you wish (form enclosed),
- plan your September field trips (**Fall Field Trip Schedule** enclosed)

That’s all for this month.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

[newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)



Date received:	Payment: __ cash, __ check, \$ _____	Release Form signed?	Newsletter Choice?	Data entered:
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*For administrative purposes only*

## HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB, INC. MEMBERSHIP FORM: 2009-2010

Please note that contact information may be shared with other members of the club, unless you request otherwise below.

Name(s):  Address:  City: State:                      ZIP: Home Phone(s): Work Phone(s): E-mail(s): 	or	<b>Please select ONE of the two options below to receive the newsletter:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> I will download the newsletter from the HBC Website (club will send monthly reminders) <input type="checkbox"/> Send me the newsletter via US mail  <b>Please check any activities listed below in which you would like to participate:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally provide refreshments <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Field Trip Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Lead field trips <input type="checkbox"/> Share information on birding locations <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)
---	----	--

☐ Please mark this box only if you would like to **EXCLUDE** your name and contact information from the club membership list (distributed **ONLY** to members). Thank you.

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** (if you itemize your deductions).

### MEMBERSHIP - REGULAR: Tax deductible

Individual @ \$18.00

\$
\$

Family @ \$30.00

### MEMBERSHIP – SUPPORTING: Tax deductible

Downy Woodpecker @ \$40.00

\$
\$
\$
\$

Northern Flicker @ \$60.00

Red-bellied Woodpecker @ \$100.00

Pileated Woodpecker @ \$250.00 or more

*Reminder: Complete and sign the Release Form on the reverse side.*

Please make checks payable to the **Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.** and send (with this form) to:  
**Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. P.O. Box 716, Amherst, MA 01004-0716.**

## RELEASE FORM: 2009-2010

Please 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, directly or indirectly, while on field trips run by HBC during the 2008-2009 membership year.

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

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

Please print names:

## HBC Rare Bird Alert: Where Are the Birds Today?

All of us are interested in knowing what birds are in our area each day. We do this by:

- birding
- talking with other birders
- calling the Voice of Audubon or reading "The Voice" in the newspaper
- checking the Web
- joining the Rare Bird Alert (for those interested in unusual species)

### To check The Voice of Audubon:

Call toll free **1-781 259 8805**

Follow the directions (press 2 to listen to Seth Kellogg, the Western Mass voice). Seth updates The Voice once a week - more often when necessary - so check regularly. (Thanks to Trudy Tynan, the transcript also appears weekly in most of our local papers.)

### To share local sightings with other valley birders via email:

You may wish to join the Allen Bird Club "*Bird News of Western Massachusetts*" network. To join, email Seth Kellogg at [skhawk@comcast.net](mailto:skhawk@comcast.net)

### To check various sources on the web:

Go to the HBC website: [www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org). From the **Related Links** section on the Home Page, you can go to **the Voice** and/or to **Massbird**

### To join the HBC Rare Bird Alert (RBA).

This operates by email ONLY. You will need at least one active email address. Fill in the form below and return (perhaps with your membership form) **by Monday, October 15**. You may turn the form in at the September/October meetings, if you like.

.....

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Rare Bird Alert (RBA) Form: 2009-2010**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

You may provide as many email addresses as you like (within reason, please). Participants automatically receive all RBA announcements.

email address/es (1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

## Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Fall Field Trip Schedule, 2009

*Please register with the field trip leader(s) and check this schedule's information when a phone number is given. The Field Trip Chair (Michael Locher – 413-585-5864) is always looking for new trip ideas and leaders.*

*The Hampshire Bird Club recommends carpooling whenever possible, and suggests that all riders share equally the per-car cost of 50¢ per mile, as well as tolls and parking. See the "Field Trip Guidelines for Participants" (September newsletter or on the Website).*

*Some trips have been marked with an asterisk (\*), which indicates that they are good trips for beginning birders. All trips have been coded as Easy (E) or Moderate (M) to give a rough indication of the pace and/or terrain. However, check all information with the trip leaders.*

### SEPTEMBER

**Saturday, September 5. New South Beach, II.** All day. Bob Bieda leads birders in their quest for late shorebird migrants, including Curlew Sandpipers and Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits. Bring a lunch, a jacket, and \$20 for the boat ride. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register. (M)

**\*Saturday, September 12. East Meadows: Migrating Warblers.** Morning. Bob Bieda and Harvey Allen look for fall migrants (including the elusive Connecticut Warbler) in Northampton's East Meadows. Meet at the commuter parking lot off Rte. 9 (Old Ferry Hill Rd.) 1/2 mile west of Exit 19 off I-91 at 7:30 a.m. This trip is co-sponsored by the Valley Land Fund. Call Bob (413-527-2623) or Harvey (413-253-7963) to register or for information. (E)

**\*Wednesday, September 16. Mount Tom: Raptor Migration I.** Half day. Tom Gagnon goes hawk watching at Goat's Peak, at the Mt. Tom State Reservation. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the old park headquarters, and expect a 20 minute walk to the tower. Call Tom (413-584-6353) for information and to register. (E)

**\*Saturday, September 19. Blueberry Hill: Raptor Migration II.** Half day. Andrew Magee goes to one of the premier local hawkwatching spots (in Granville, MA). Call Andrew for meeting time and place. (E)

**\*Saturday, September 26. Lighthouse Point: Raptor Migration III.** Half day. Andrew Magee goes to another of the prime hawkwatching locations in New England, this time in New Haven, Connecticut. Call Andrew for meeting time and place. (E)

**Sunday, September 27. Quabbin: Fall Migrants.** All day. Tom Gagnon and Larry Therrien lead their annual trip to the Quabbin to see southbound birds, late season flowers, butterflies, and mammals. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members. Call Tom (413-584-6353) well in advance to register, because participation is limited, and get meeting information. (M)

## OCTOBER

**\*Sunday, October 18. Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area: Snow Geese.** All day. Mike Locher heads north to Vermont to see the annual spectacle of thousands of Snow Geese (and with any luck, a Ross's Goose or two) fueling up for their southern migration. We'll meander home along the eastern shore of Lake Champlain. Call Mike (413-585-5864) to register and get meeting information. If the Snow Goose migration is late, the trip may be postponed until October 25. (E)

**\*Saturday, October 24. Plum Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron heads to one of Massachusetts' premier birding spots to see what's flying along the coast. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) to register and get meeting information as the date approaches. (E)

## NOVEMBER

**Sunday, November 8. Berkshire Lakes: Migrating Waterfowl.** All day. Tom Gagnon goes to the lakes and ponds of the mountains of western Massachusetts to find ducks and other migrating waterfowl. Meet at Stop & Shop in Northampton at 6:15 a.m. to arrange carpooling and depart. Call Tom (413-584-6353) to register and get more information. (E)

**Saturday, November 21. East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon and Larry Therrien go to the east side of the reservoir to see what they can find. You must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to go on this trip. Call Tom (413-584-6353) well in advance to register, because participation is limited, and to get meeting information. The rain/snow date is Sunday, November 22. (M)

**Friday, November 27. Cape Ann: Turkey Trot.** All day. Al Richards helps you work off those third helpings by birding along the east coast. Expect sea ducks, Purple Sandpipers, a few alcids, and a cool breeze. Bring snacks and warm clothing. Call Al (413-665-2761) to register and get meeting information. (E)

## JANUARY

**\*Friday, January 1. New Year's Birding.** Half day. Scott Sumner leads the first trip of the year, looking for any birds that haven't been up too late the night before. The trip departs from the parking lot at Sumner Heating (60 Shumway St. in Amherst) at 7 a.m. (Yep, that's what he said.) For more information call Scott at 256-5438.



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

Volume 26, No. 2

**October, 2009**

It is October, and if you can drag yourself away from the parade of sparrows filling every weedy patch in our fall landscape, you might turn your attention briefly to your HBC membership. Your membership status is shown on the front of the newsletter. If you have already renewed, thank you! If you need to renew and have misplaced the form that came in September, you can find a membership form at the club website: [www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org). I hope you will renew if you have not already done so. It does cost money to bring you the blend of stimulating programs and field trips for which we are known, and a strong financial base contributes directly to the quality of both. You can still download a sign-up form for the on-line **Rare Bird Alert** if such is your fancy. It is cleverly concealed in the “read more” link in the “trips/rba” section of the HBC homepage!

In this edition:

- a brief introduction to the **October program**,
- **field trip reports** and coming field trips,
- the HBC **Field Trip Policy** and **Field Trip Guidelines**,
- a plug for the **Library** and the looming **Christmas Count**,
- the **HBC Directory**, and
- **Hitchcock Programs**.

I hope you find some of it useful!

## **PROGRAMS**

**Monday, October 19 at 7:30 PM**

**Chris Davis speaks about New England Falconry  
(with live birds in attendance!)**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

The art of falconry likely originated in Mongolia around 4,000 years ago, perhaps as a method of hunting. It reached its zenith as a signal of status in medieval Europe and Japan since nobles in these feudal societies were drawn to the inherent power of raptors, and had the considerable time and resources needed to pursue the activity.

Chris and other modern falconers are hardly the nobility, though partnering with a hunting bird of prey certainly inspires a sense of awe and privilege in those who invest the necessary energy and dedication in the activity. Since falconers typically emphasize that their relationship with their birds is a business partnership, it is not surprising that modern falconry has pragmatic applications. In many parts of the world, including the vineyards of California, falconers are working with birds of prey to drive starlings and other pest birds from valuable croplands.

**Chris Davis** runs *New England Falconry*, a business devoted to sharing the art of falconry with willing learners. He also works part-time for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and lives in Shutesbury, MA. He has been involved in falconry for the better part of thirty years.

## Coming Programs

**November 9, 2009. *Greg Butcher.*** Birds and Climate Change.

**December 7, 2009. *HBC Members' Meeting:*** Members' Slideshow.

**January 11, 2010. *Mark Picard.*** The Challenges of the Wildlife Photographer.

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## FIELD TRIPS

### Reports

#### **New South Beach. August 15, 2009.**

**Wayne Peterson** led a large group of us to one of the hottest shore-birding sites on the east coast. Not only were we blessed with great birds, but we also had a rare opportunity to learn from one of the premier birders in the region. Not only did Wayne give us great tips on distinguishing the myriad of similar shorebirds, but he gave us great background on the miracle of shifting shoals and sands that is the Chatham-Monomoy region.

Highlights of the day included **Black** and **Forster’s** Terns, and **Hudsonian Godwit**, amidst 25 species of gulls, terns and shorebirds.

Undoubtedly, the WOW bird of the day was a **Cory’s Shearwater**, which came close inshore right in front of us as we stood on the ocean beach.

This was a fitting and spectacular finale to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hampshire Bird Club.

David Peake-Jones

### **New South Beach (Two). Saturday, September 5.**

At 5:10 am, **Bob Bieda**, Betsy Higgins, Dan Marchant, and Mary Lou Splain set off toward South Beach in Chatham. In Chatham, we met Bob Zimmerman, and Sandy and Bob Manceli (from Rochester, NY. who found the HBC trip online). On this beautiful, calm and sunny day, the Outermost Harbor Adventures boat deposited us at the end of South Beach and we happily set about the very serious business of identifying each and every little brown bird on the beach.

While the numbers of birds did not seem to be anywhere near what we have seen in past years, the diversity of species did not disappoint. Of note on the mud flats were **2 Black Terns**, numerous Roseate Terns, **2 Lesser Black-backed Gulls**, 1 lone White-rumped Sandpiper, **9 Hudsonian Godwits**, 6 Piping Plover, **2 American Golden Plover**, 50 Red Knot, 2 Dunlin, a few Whimbrels and Horned Larks and many Black-bellied Plover. We were dazzled when a **Peregrine Falcon** put every bird on the beach up in swirling, shimmering clouds, shifting first white, then dark as they raced for safety. The HBC contingent of folks trekked over to the ocean side and were rewarded with a wonderful Parasitic Jaeger chasing terns. Four Grey Seals watched us as we walked by. The folks from Rochester did not go over to the ocean side. They walked back along the inner shore, and arrived at the boat with a picture of a probable **Wilson's Plover**. (Alas, for Betsy, who may have missed a lifer!).

And, in case anyone is wondering, NO, we did not see the Great White Sharks! We did, however, see the spotting plane and the cluster of boats (at some distance) where the sharks were being tagged. We totaled 45 species, 18 of them shore birds. All in all, a very fine day.

Betsy Higgins



### **Blueberry Hill in West Granville, MA. September 19**

*Participants:* Gladys Nicholson, Bruce Hart and Ilene Goldstein, Justin Baldwin, Elaine Pourinski and Susan Yarmac, Betsy Higgins and **Andrew Magee**.

A pre-dated hawkwatch in migration is a total crapshoot. We lucked out pretty good, with those remaining stalwarts clocking over 800 birds (overwhelmingly broad-wings, of course) kettling and streaming, by the late afternoon. Conditions were ideal. Ten species of raptors including some aberrant storks commonly referred to as New World Vultures were observed, a squadron of four distant **Black Vultures** perhaps being the highlight- the first of the season on Blueberry. Blueberry is not known for a lot of close-ups, yet 2 Bald Eagles, including a gorgeously mottled juvenile, provided that. We also coincidentally hit upon the Allen and Pittsfield birdclubs' annual gourmet picnic, to some of our invited satisfactions (to John H.: SUCH yummy chicken!!). Possibly we could ask about formally joining?

Andrew Magee



### **Lighthouse Point, New Haven, CT. September 26**

*Participants:* Al Grimstad and Nora Hanke, Bruce Hart and Ilene Goldstein, Elaine Pourinski and **Andrew Magee**.

This was the other side of the crapshoot. Ending some 14 hours earlier the day BEFORE, 2300 hawks were counted, (mostly Sharpies), perhaps the highest September record ever at this spot. (Early October is usually peak). OUR left-overs in 4 hours or so came to about 20 hawks. Alas. However, we did see a gorgeous perched adult Peregrine Falcon and a Red-shouldered Hawk. I managed to call out the season's first Red-headed Woodpecker going over, the 7 butterfly species were fun, and we made lemonade from the lemons, as the saying goes.

Andrew Magee



## Coming Trips

**\*Sunday, October 18. Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area: Snow Geese.** All day. Mike Locher heads north to Vermont to see the annual spectacle of thousands of Snow Geese (and with any luck, a Ross's Goose or two) fueling up for their southern migration. We'll meander home along the eastern shore of Lake Champlain. Call Mike (413-585-5864) to register and get meeting information. If the Snow Goose migration is late, the trip may be postponed until October 25. (E)

**\*Saturday, October 24. Plum Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron heads to one of Massachusetts' premier birding spots to see what's flying along the coast. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) to register and get meeting information as the date approaches. (E)

**Sunday, November 8. Berkshire Lakes: Migrating Waterfowl.** All day. Tom Gagnon goes to the lakes and ponds of the mountains of western Massachusetts to find ducks and other migrating waterfowl. Meet at Stop & Shop in Northampton at 6:15 a.m. to arrange carpooling and depart. Call Tom (413-584-6353) to register and get more information. (E)

## LIBRARY

HBC has a substantial library, located at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst.

Hours are those of the Hitchcock Center:

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. from Tuesday through Friday, and

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday.

*The collection is catalogued on-line at [www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org).*

The library contains birding resources in various media, including field guides, bird-finding guides to almost every major birding destination in the U.S., and overseas, natural histories, periodicals and videos. Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, or longer by arrangement. Henry Lappen, the librarian, is happy to bring items to meetings, if you give him a few days in advance. You can reach him at **(413) 549 3722**.

## CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Tired of birding with the valley in full leaf? Do you long to pursue our noble art untroubled by Nature's little carbon fixers? Well folks, you are hereby invited to contribute to the vital cause of citizen science in a season when the bare bones of our happy little valley are laid bare, along with the birds which call this halcyon place their home.

Every December, we get together to count all the birds in a circle of radius five miles around the Northampton GPO. The count circle is divided up into smaller areas, each counted by an experienced leader or leaders, with assistants. Groups plan who will participate, for how long, and how to divide up the count area.

To take part, all you really need is a willingness to cope with the vagaries of December birding, and a willingness to count everything in a scientific manner. The coordinators can hook you up with a team that needs members in your area. The Northampton count culminates in a pot-luck and compilation session at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst during which those still standing come together to exult/comiserate and pool results. The sense of camaraderie and shared purpose is palpable and rarely equaled in birding! And you won't feel the blisters till your feet actually thaw, usually only a matter of a few days!

Believe it or not, there is also a count in the Quabbin region for those who want better birds and cushy weather!

### Mark These Dates!!

**Northampton Count:** Sunday, December 20.

**Quabbin Count:** To Be Announced.

*For further information, watch coming newsletters, or contact **Mary Alice Wilson** (413 549 1768; [mwilson@k12.phast.umass.edu](mailto:mwilson@k12.phast.umass.edu), Northampton Count) and **Scott Surner** (413 253 5999; [ssurner@aol.com](mailto:ssurner@aol.com), Quabbin Count)*

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

### **Fall Birding Trips:** *Scott Surner*

Sunday, October 11, 6am-1pm - Great Meadows/Concord Area-Waterfowl

Saturday, October 24, 7am-noon- Local-Quabbin Reservoir

Sunday, November 8, 6am-2pm- Berkshire Lakes-Waterfowl, Hawks, Sparrows.

Pre-registration required. Fee.

### **Celebrating Amherst Conservation Lands**

October 18. Podick with *Ted Watt*. 2 – 4 p.m.

November 15. Lawrence Swamp with *Harvey Allen*. 2-4 p.m.

Pre-registration required.

### **What Does Nature Do? A Biomimicry Walk:** *Tim McGee and Ted Watt*.

Saturday, October 17, 10am–1pm at Mount Toby. Pre-registration required. Fee.

### **Birds of Prey Live!** *Tom Ricardi*.

Saturday, November 7, 10:30-11:30am. Pre-registration required. Fee.

### **Hike the Holyoke Range:** *Ted Watt*.

Sunday, November 8, 10am–3pm. Pre-registration required. Fee.

### **Forests of Wonder:** *Bob Leverett*.

Wednesday, November 18, 7-9pm. Pre-registration required. Fee.

*For details and registration for all Hitchcock programs, please contact the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant St., Amherst MA 01002. Telephone (413) 256 6006, or on the web at [www.hitchcockcenter.org](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org).*

## Welcome New Members

Gladys Nicholson

John Nove

Nora Papian

Joshua Stuart Rose

Hadley

South Deerfield

Amherst

Amherst

**The HBC Directory is on the following page, followed by the HBC Field Trip Policy, which has been lying fallow for a time but now springs forth again in the full glory of 12 font! Since I can no longer read without optical assistance of some kind, I have decreed that 10 font shall hereafter be banned in this and any other publication over which I have jurisdiction (unless it is stuff I don't actually want you to know). (alert readers will note the font used for the guidelines)**

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

## HBC Directory: October, 2009

**President** – *Scott Surner*: (413) 256 5438; [president@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:president@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**VP/Program Chair** - *Geoff LeBaron*: (413) 268 9281; [programs@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:programs@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Membership Secretary** - *Sue Emerson*: (413) 584 6736; [membership@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:membership@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Treasurer** - *Janice Jorgensen*: (413) 585 0145; [treasurer@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:treasurer@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Communications Secretary** - *Elissa Rubinstein*: (413) 546 5978;  
[communications@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:communications@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Board Members -**

*Bruce Hart*: [brucehart@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:brucehart@hampshirebirdclub.org); (413) 584 4176

*Mike Locher*: [mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org); (413) 584 5864

*Jan Ortiz*: [jtortiz@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:jtortiz@hampshirebirdclub.org); (413) 549 1768

*Larry Therrien*: [larrytherrien@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:larrytherrien@hampshirebirdclub.org); (413) 323 6714

*Jaap van Heerden*: [jvanheerden@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:jvanheerden@hampshirebirdclub.org); (413) 253 5569

*Joe Wicinski*: [jwicinski@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:jwicinski@hampshirebirdclub.org); (413) 320 4422

**Field Trip Chair** - *Mike Locher*: (413) 585 5864; [fielddtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fielddtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Conservation Committee -**

*Anne Lombard* (Chair): (413) 586 7509; *Bob Zimmermann*: (413) 585 0405  
[conservation@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:conservation@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Boutique Proprietor** - *Betsy Higgins*: (413) 586 7585; [boutique@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:boutique@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Librarian** - *Henry Lappen*: (413) 549 3722; [library@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:library@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Publicity Chair** - *Trudy Tynan*: (413) 348 2037; [publicity@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:publicity@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Webmaster** - *David Gross*: (413) 253 2897; [webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Newsletter Editor** - *David Peake-Jones*: (413) 529 9541; [newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Refreshments** - *Sally Hills*: (413) 549 5550; *Helga Beatty*: (413) 253 2410  
[refreshments@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:refreshments@hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Rare Bird Alert** - *Bob Bieda*: (413) 527 2623

*Geoff LeBaron*: (413) 268 9281

*Jan Ortiz*: (413) 549 1768

*Scott Surner*: (413) 256 5438

[alert@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:alert@hampshirebirdclub.org)

## **FIELD TRIP POLICY: 2009-2010**

### **HAMPSHIRE BIRD CLUB, INC. 9/10/2009**

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

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

**Overnight Trips** (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. In the event of a cancellation, if the vacancy can be filled, the trip fee will be refunded, less a 10% processing charge. If the vacancy cannot be filled, the trip fee will be refunded, with the following exceptions:

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

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

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

Continues on Page 2 ►►

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

## **Field Trip Guidelines for New Field Trip Participants and Drivers: 2009-2010 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 or check the "Join" section of the HBC Website
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 \$0.50/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.



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

Volume 26, No. 3

**November, 2009**

## **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, November 9 at 7:30 PM**

**Greg Butcher speaks about Birds and Climate Change**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

The northward and inland movement of North American birds, confirmed by thousands of citizen-observations, provides new and powerful evidence that global warming is having a serious impact on bird populations. Analyses of data from the past 40 years of the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) reveal that 58 percent of the 305 widespread species that winter on the continent shifted their ranges significantly north since 1966, some by hundreds of miles. Range shifts were detected among species of every type, including more than 70 percent of highly adaptable forest and feeder birds. Only 38 percent of grassland species mirrored the trend, reflecting the constraints of their severely-depleted habitat and suggesting that they now face a double threat from the combined stresses of habitat loss and climate adaptation.

We all know that birds, in general are highly adaptable, and that range changes occur in most species, for a variety of reasons. Dr. Butcher, however, questions how far they will be able to move in the face of climate change before they run out of habitat, food or even luck.

"The long term picture is not good for many species, and even in the short term, a single harsh winter could have a devastating impact on birds that have moved too far," he states.

Greg writes in a recent Audubon report on climate change and birds,

"Birds are showing us how the heavy hand of humanity is tipping the balance of nature and causing ecological disruption in ways we are just beginning to predict and comprehend. Common sense dictates that we act now to curb the causes and impacts of global warming to the extent we can, and shape our policies to better cope with the disruptions we cannot avoid."

**Greg Butcher** is *Director of Bird Conservation* for the *National Audubon Society*, working with the *State of the Birds* reports, the *WatchList* of birds of conservation need, effects of global warming on North American bird populations, analysis of Christmas Bird Count data, *BirdLife International*, the *North American Bird Conservation Initiative*, *Partners in Flight*, and policy issues related to migratory birds. He has a Ph.D. in Zoology from the University of Washington. He has previously served as Director of Bird Population Studies at *Cornell University's Laboratory of Ornithology*, Executive Director of the *American Birding Association*, Midwest Coordinator for *Partners in Flight*, and Editor of *Birder's World* magazine. Greg is a Fellow of the *American Ornithologists' Union (AOU)*, past president of the *Association of Field Ornithologists*, and past chair of the nongovernmental organizations and monitoring committees of *Partners in Flight*.

## COMING PROGRAMS

**December 7, 2009. *HBC Members' Meeting:*** Members' Slideshow.

**January 11, 2010. *Mark Picard.*** The Challenges of the Wildlife Photographer.

**February 8, 2009. *Bill Benner.*** Birding In Thailand.

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

*(See also the Fall Field Trip Schedule)*

**Sunday, November 8. Berkshire Lakes: Migrating Waterfowl.** All day. Tom Gagnon goes to the lakes and ponds of the mountains of western Massachusetts to find ducks and other migrating waterfowl. Meet at Stop & Shop in Northampton at 6:15 a.m. to arrange carpooling and depart. Call Tom (413-584-6353) to register and get more information. (E)

**Saturday, November 21. East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon and Larry Therrien go to the east side of the reservoir to see what they can find. You must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to go on this trip. Call Tom (413-584-6353) well in advance to register, because participation is limited, and to get meeting information. The rain/snow date is Sunday, November 22. (M)

**Friday, November 27. Cape Ann: Turkey Trot.** All day. Al Richards helps you work off those third helpings by birding along the east coast. Expect sea ducks, Purple Sandpipers, a few alcids, and a cool breeze. Bring snacks and warm clothing. Call Al (413-665-2761) to register and get meeting information. (E)

## CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Tired of birding with the valley in full leaf? Do you chafe against the visual obstructions created by Nature's little carbon fixers? Well folks, you are hereby invited to contribute to the noble cause of citizen science in a season when the bare bones of our happy little valley are laid bare, along with the birds which call this halcyon place their home.

Every December, we get together to count all the birds in a circle of radius five miles around the Northampton GPO. The count circle is divided up into smaller areas, each counted by an experienced leader or leaders, with assistants. Groups plan who will participate, for how long, and how to divide up the count area.

To take part, all you really need is a willingness to cope with the vagaries of December birding, and a willingness to count everything in a scientific manner. The coordinators can hook you up with a team that needs members in your area. The Northampton count culminates in a pot luck and compilation session at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst during which those still standing come together to exult/commiserate and pool results. The sense of camaraderie and shared purpose is palpable and rarely equaled in birding! And you won't feel the blisters till your feet actually thaw, usually only a matter of a few days!

Believe it or not, there is also a count in the Quabbin region for those who want better birds and cushy weather!

### Mark These Dates!!

**Northampton:** Sunday, December 20. *Mary Alice Wilson* (413 548 9078; [mwilson@k12.phast.umass.edu](mailto:mwilson@k12.phast.umass.edu)),

**Quabbin:** Saturday, December 26. *Scott Sumner* (413 253 5999; [ssurner@aol.com](mailto:ssurner@aol.com))



## ANNIVERSARY DONATIONS

**Thank you to all those who donated to the HBC Anniversary fund.** The money collected was used for the following:

- cake and associated supplies for the 25<sup>th</sup> birthday party,
- supplies for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary displays, assembled by Trudy Tynan,
- copies of Don Kroodsmas's latest book for resale to club members,
- raffle prizes,
- expenses involved in throwing a potluck dinner for Kenn Kaufmann,
- the production of the anniversary T-shirt,
- bringing Wayne Peterson to western Mass. and Chatham for our shorebird workshop, and
- a few other things.

Such was your generosity, oh members, that there was even an anniversary surplus, which currently gathers interest in the club savings account, awaiting other noble uses.

None of the money donated went to bailing out national mortgage clearing houses, or car companies, or providing bonuses for insurance company executives.

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**Celebrating Amherst Conservation Lands: Lawrence Swamp: *Harvey Allen.***

Sunday, November 15, 2 – 4 p.m. No charge.

**Birds Of Prey, Live! *Tom Ricardi.***

Saturday, November 7, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Fee.

**Hike the Holyoke Range: *Ted Watt.***

Sunday, November 8, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Fee.

**Forests of Wonder (Old Growth Forests in Massachusetts): *Bob Leverett.***

Wednesday, November 18, 7-9 p.m. Fee.

**Splendors of the Night Sky: *Ron Woodland.***

Saturday, November 21, 7-9 p.m. Fee.

*Pre-registration is required for all Hitchcock programs. Please contact the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant St., Amherst MA 01002. Telephone (413) 256 6006, or on the web at [www.hitchcockcenter.org](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org).*

That's all for now.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

[newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

Volume 26, No. 4

**December, 2009**

## NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, December 7 at 7:30 PM**

### **Members Meeting: The Members Slide Show and Refreshment Extravaganza.**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

*Should bad weather force a cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP 1400 AM radio.*

Most months, we invite a birding luminary to entertain or inform us with the fruits of their wisdom. By contrast, the entertainment at the December meeting is, well, **us!** Everyone can be involved in one or both of the following ways:

- 1) **Please bring some sort of snack to share.** This gives our regular refreshment stalwarts a break and allows us to uncover new culinary talent from among the ranks of the club, and,
- 2) **Please bring some slides to share.** They can be of birding exploits, other adventures in natural history, or even just some scenic wonders you visited during the year. As in past years, please limit your show to 15 or fewer slides.

#### **If You Would Like to Show Slides**

Please send an email confirmation about your slide presentation to either **Dave Gross**

([webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org)) or **Geoff LeBaron** ([programs@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:programs@hampshirebirdclub.org)) by 6 Pm on Sunday, December 6 (the day before the meeting)

#### ***In your email, please tell us***

- Are your slides digital or 35 mm format?
  - If digital, are the images in Powerpoint format or just stand-alone images?
- If you bring digital images, please have them on a memory stick or CD-ROM disk.

## COMING PROGRAMS

**January 11, 2010. Mark Picard.** The Challenges of the Wildlife Photographer.

**February 8, 2009. Bill Benner.** Birding In Thailand.

**March 8, 2010. Kathy and Miles Conway.** Kazakhstan Exploration.

## Hummingbird Frailty

In the November 2009 edition of National Geographic there is a photograph taken at her hummingbird feeder by Sharon Fulingim of Socorro, New Mexico. It shows a praying mantis capturing a hummingbird. The carcass of the bird apparently showed up beneath the feeder next morning, and the mantis lay in wait for more prey!

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### The Crown of Maine

**Thursday, June 18 to Monday, June 22.**

*This was a new trip, and it deserves a little extra detail!!*

Those taking part included Nancy and Denny Baker, Larry and Joan Dupre, Helga Beatty, Sally Hills, Anne Lombard, Marcia Merithew, Harvey Allen, Scott Turner, Val Miller, Barbara Snook, Rick McNeill as well as Jim and Shirley Hammerschmith and David Peake-Jones.

We were guided by local enthusiast **Bill Sheahan**, but were without our intended leader, **Geoff LeBaron**, who had been forced to withdraw at the last minute. This whole adventure was Geoff's idea, and we felt a little bereft without him, but birded resolutely on anyway.

Our first morning was devoted to exploring varied habitats within the *Aroostook National Wildlife Refuge*, which abuts and includes the old Loring Air Force Base. The base was a cold war B-52 facility, with a sobering ambience, but the woodlands in these environments rang with the songs of ubiquitous White-throated Sparrows, Oven birds, Magnolia-, and Nashville Warblers, Northern Parula, and Northern Waterthrush. We strained (without success) to transform the familiar tones of Red-eyed Vireos into the more deliberate and more prized sound of breeding Philadelphia Vireo, but **Wilson's Snipe** winnowed throughout the numerous marshes.

Around an old gravel pit filled with water we found Pine Siskins, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, and two gangling male **moose**. A pleasant walk toward *Button Brook* yielded a Wilson's Snipe sitting on an Osprey platform, an alder swamp full of Alder Flycatchers, and a **Common Goldeneye** leading a small flotilla of young across a beaver pond. But perhaps the jewel in the crown here occurred when a family of **mink** crossed the road just ahead of us. What a treasure! The group then crossed a grassy marsh, their progress marked by the frantic alarm calls of Red-winged Blackbirds.

Further along the main air base access road, an insistently trilling **Upland Sandpiper** fluttered from perch to perch for some time, before we realized it did not share our enthusiasm for the encounter and we moved on.

Contrasting with the eerie ambience of the old *missile storage area* with its huge bunkers and guardhouses were the intricate calls of a **nesting Lincoln's Sparrow**, which eventually peeked out at us from a thicket. After Bill's magic pickup had yielded a much-appreciated cup of morning coffee/tea, we moved on to the *Loring AFB runway*: a 2-mile stretch of blacktop which hosted distant kestrels, more Upland Sandpipers, and a Northern Harrier.

After leaving the refuge and lunching at the Par and Grill, we moved on to *Josephine Ponds*, artificially created to dispose of potato peelings from a french fry plant. The ponds were, with perhaps a touch of irony, named for the industrialist's mother-in-law. Historically, the potato peelings created a disgusting, smelly pond which, as is so often the case, attracted huge numbers of breeding waterfowl. Since the company is now required to treat the fry tailings, the pond is now cleaning up, and supports far fewer ducks than in its hay-day! Nevertheless, we observed breeding **American Wigeon**, **Northern Shoveller**, **Blue-** and **Green-winged Teal**, **Common Goldeneye**, **Ring-necked Duck**, Double-crested Cormorant, and the now-rare **Redhead**. Displaying **Ruddy Ducks** arched their necks jauntily backward, then pedaled madly with both feet, performing a short and frenetic dash through the water, creating an impressive display of energy and quite a shower of spray. Below the impoundment in a more vegetated wetland, we found a rare **Common Moorhen**, and a female **Great Horned Owl** with a chick.

On Sunday morning we searched in vain for Black-backed- and Three-toed Woodpeckers in the woods of *New Sweden*, but along the shores of aptly named Long Lake, we found foraging **Cliff Swallows**, nesting Common Terns, Osprey and Bald Eagles. During lunch in *St. Agathe*, we recorded a very rare species for Aroostook County: the **Northern Mockingbird**! During the afternoon, again on the miles of logging roads which traverse

this neck of the woods, we found nesting Palm Warblers and **Gray Jays** in regenerating spruce. **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers**, again difficult to distinguish from Least by call, lurked in the murky depths of a Northern White Cedar swamp.

On Sunday we traveled far to the north, through the villages of Woodland and Perham to survey an area of woods owned by the *Irvine Paper Company*. En route we quickly found a **Mourning Warbler** outside the Perham Town Offices, and were treated to a nice display by a singing **Canada Warbler**. Once inside the logging company gate we traveled a long way, pausing occasionally to ask (via tapes) who might be in residence at the time. Some birds, like the sweet-voiced **Fox Sparrow**, answered and spent time with us, but many more failed to live up to the promises they had made during Bill's reconnaissance. We finally found breeding **Cape May** and **Bay-breasted Warblers**, and **Boreal Chickadee**, all emblematic of the boreal, but which had so far eluded us. For many, the highlight of the entire trip was an **American Bittern** which fed avidly on a smorgasbord of aquatic tidbits from a drainage ditch only a few feet away from us.

For most, Monday was a day of travel, either back to familiar climes or further afield. Folks who track these things report that we saw a total of 118 species: surprising diversity for an area with no ocean.

**Bill Sheahan** dazzled us with the depth of his local knowledge, his impassioned love of birds and birding, his endless optimism and good humor, and the array of surprises that his aging pickup disgorged at every stop. There is no better way to see the north woods than with Bill, and if you take the opportunity to do so, you will not be disappointed. The north woods make you work really hard for birds, but as with most things, the harder one works, the greater the rewards!

David Peake-Jones



### **Quabbin Reservoir. November 21, 2009.**

The Hampshire Bird Club trip up the east side of Quabbin began at 7am at the headquarters building. We then went in the east side through gate 45 in Hardwick. Our travels took us to the Baffle Dams, Shaft 11, fishing Area 2, Dana Commons, Pottapaug Pond, Graves Landing, and finishing up the trip by exiting gate 35. We had a total of 51 species of birds, 6 species of mammals, two dragonfly species (and many ticks!). We had some very good sightings with the highlights being a **Great Cormorant** near the Baffle Dams and two **Black bellied Plover** near gate 35. In addition we had the following waterfowl: 30 Common Loons, a Long tailed Duck, White Winged Scoter, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, **Northern Pintail**, Wood Ducks, 55+ Ring Necked Ducks, all three Mergansers, a Scaup (likely Lesser). We also had Barred Owl, 7 Bald Eagles, Horned Lark, two Winter Wrens one of which was singing a partial song, a male Eastern Towhee, Fox Sparrow, etc. A very nice day of weather and a great day for birds.

Larry Therrien

## **COMING FIELD TRIPS**

Please see the **Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule** attached.

## **Bird Note**

Please consider contacting WFCR to ask that they air *Bird Note*. This is a series of two minute snippets of information about birds, published by the non-profit *Tune in To Nature.org*, and free to radio stations. They are quite eclectic and informative. They currently air to the south of us, but not on our local NPR affiliate!! If you are interested in Bird Note, you might like to visit their website at [www.birdnote.org](http://www.birdnote.org). You can listen to recent and archival editions of the series, and even sign up for an email reminder which will tell you what is coming up! Viva la Internet!!

## CHRISTMAS COUNT

Several recent newsletter items (going back only a matter of few years) referred to the radius of the Northampton Christmas Count circle as five miles. The Northampton CBC Coordinator recently started out of a reverie in front of the fire, exclaiming,

“No, the radius of the Northampton Christmas Count circle is 7.5 miles.”

Since not everyone was present at the November meeting to witness the public humiliation of the abject newsletter editor, the correction is produced here for the record.

By the way, this means the **circumference** of the Northampton Christmas Count circle is 47.12 miles, and the **area** of the aforesaid CBC circle is 164.93 square miles. (Funny, my patch always seems that big on its own!) Oh, and the center of the circle is, allegedly, the old Hadley cemetery, near the Honeypot. There, now that my editorial demise is complete, I shall drown my sorrows while leafing through the red-stained remnants of my high school geometry books.

## MORE IMPORTANT CHRISTMAS COUNT

*Please contact the coordinators of these local counts if you would like to participate and have not yet found a group.*

**Northampton Count:** Sunday, December 20. *Mary Alice Wilson* (413 548 9078; [mwilson@k12.phast.umass.edu](mailto:mwilson@k12.phast.umass.edu)),

**Quabbin Count:** Saturday, December 26. *Scott Surner* (413 253 5999; [ssurner@aol.com](mailto:ssurner@aol.com))

## REALLY IMPORTANT CHRISTMAS COUNT

The Northampton CBC Potluck will begin at the Hitchcock Center at 4:30 PM, preceding the compilation, which commences at 6 PM. We are in urgent need of the following:

**Five (5) main dishes** (preferably hot and vegetarian),

**Four (4) desserts,**

**2 gallons of regular cider,** and

**2 gallons of water** (not the two gallons you will be bringing into the Hitchcock Center in your footwear).

Please see **Sue Emerson** (Potluck Coordinator) at the December meeting, or email her with your pledge to help. You can find her at [spe33@charter.net](mailto:spe33@charter.net).

## BREEDING BIRD ATLAS

The Second Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas survey period began in 2007, and is scheduled to run through the 2011 field season. Whether or not you are participating in data collection for the atlas, you can get a sense of the results emerging from this crucial and exhaustive study of the breeding birds of the state. The atlas blog, artfully named “Distraction Displays,” can be found at <http://massaudubonblogs.typepad.com/massbirdatlas/>.

At present, the atlas staff is adding interim reports on one species each week. These give a sense of what is being discovered during this atlas period and how these results compare to those discovered during the first atlas survey, conducted between 1974 and 1979. Here is an excerpt from one of the accounts.

### Interim Report #20: Wild Turkey

While turkeys may have found their way onto our dinner tables since the days of the First Thanksgiving, Wild Turkeys suffered an absence of over 100 years from Massachusetts. The good news is, no re-introduction program in the history of the state has been as wildly successful as that of the Wild Turkey.

(continues next page ►)

The twin pressures of substantial market hunting and rapid loss of forest habitat caused the Wild Turkey to be extirpated as a breeder in Massachusetts in 1851. These birds may travel a dozen miles or so between their breeding grounds and wintering grounds, but they are not truly migratory, so losing the breeding population of turkeys means losing just about all of the turkeys. The loss of these uniquely American birds was more than most Massachusetts residents could bear, though, and restoration programs involving the release of domestic turkeys were undertaken as early as 1911. Finally, in the early 70s, the Division of Fisheries & Wildlife released 37 wild-trapped turkeys from New York.....established a breeding population in western Massachusetts.

As of Atlas 1, Wild Turkeys were just starting to gain a solid foothold in Berkshire, Franklin, and Hampshire counties.

Turkeys are everywhere as of Atlas 2. In less than 50 years, this bird has gone from being locally extinct to being so abundant statewide that it can again be hunted for food and sport. Although their principle natural food source is mast such as acorns and beech nuts, turkeys are not picky eaters and have benefited tremendously from fields of cultivated crops and mounds of birdseed spilled from backyard feeders. In some places, aggressive turkeys are even coming into conflict with suburban residents!

*(\*Our humble publication cannot do justice to MassAudubon's graphics, but this table gives you some idea of the extraordinary resurgence of this bird. Ed)*

Wild Turkey	Atlas 1 (1974)	Atlas 2
# Blocks Possible	4	148
# Blocks Probable	1	93
# Blocks Confirmed	7	338
Total # blocks Occupied	12	579
% Blocks Possible	0.5	20.0
% Blocks Probable	0.1	12.6
% Blocks Confirmed	0.9	45.7
Total % blocks Occupied	1.6	78.2

*(For a full version of this, and other interim reports, go to <http://massaudubonblogs.typepad.com/massbirdatlas/>)*

### **Breeding Bird Survey Route Available (Amherst Conservation Department)**

The Wildwood Route, consisting of twelve specified points primarily along the railroad tracks between Strong Street and Pine Street, is available for a birder with an interest in volunteering for this activity. Responsibility consists of surveying the route on two mornings between June 1 and June 17, starting between 6:00 and 7:00 am. At each point the volunteer will stop and count all birds seen or heard for exactly five minutes. Data sheets are provided for recording counts.

I have surveyed this route for the twenty years the survey has been conducted. However, since my hearing is not as good as it once was, I am seeking someone to take over the route. Please call or email me or with your questions at 413-549-1613 or [marcums@cns.umass.edu](mailto:marcums@cns.umass.edu) if you are interested.

Jim Marcum.

**The Illustrated Bird**  
**Selections from the Richard L. Soffer Ornithology Collection**  
**Amherst College Archives and Special Collections**  
**November 6, 2009 – February 14, 2010**

Highlights include the following:

- *L'Histoire de la Nature des Oyseaux* (Pierre Belon, 1555),
- *A Natural History of Birds* (Eleazar Albin, 1731),
- *American Ornithology* (Alexander Wilson, 1808-1814),
- *Les Oiseaux les Plus Remarquables* (Edouard Travies, 1845 – 1857),
- *Birds of America* (Double Elephant Folio, John James Audubon),
- recent photographic work by Theodore Cross of Amherst, and
- four mounted bird specimens that once belonged to Audubon.

Free and open to the public Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM on the A-level of the Frost Library, on the main Quad at Amherst College.

**Birth of a New Species**

Observations of birds were critical in Charles Darwin's thinking on the subject that would one day be known as evolution. Darwin's "finches" (they are actually tanagers), which he observed and collected in the Galapagos, were famously pivotal in his developing the theory of **natural selection**.

Darwin, found a number of populations of these birds on adjoining islands. They were subtly different in terms of size, bill shape, diet and behavior (including song). Darwin inferred that these groups had been descended from a common ancestor as a result of trans-island migrations, and the differing selection pressures which applied on different islands. We now know that the origin of new species is not only a result of evolution, but in many instances a cause of it. Thus, direct observations of **speciation** (the origin of new species) are the equivalent of capturing lightning in a bottle: the holy grail of evolutionary science.

Hence it is more than fitting that one of the few studies to actually witness and document the origin of a new species in real time involves one of the same species so critical to Darwin's vision. **Peter and Rosemary Grant** have worked in the Galapagos for almost forty years, with much of that time spent studying Darwin's finches. The Grants actually witnessed a hybrid Medium Ground Finch (*Geospiza fortis*) migrate from one island to another, and breed with another hybrid individual. The resultant offspring were sufficiently different from other Medium Ground Finches on the island to begin to isolate themselves reproductively, and when the population went through a drought-induced bottleneck after several generations, the **origin of a new species** was complete.

For the Grants, and for the scientific community as a whole, this is the kind of miraculous observation which confirms centuries of meticulous but less direct evidence-gathering. It is the smoking gun of evolution. Darwin would have been immensely impressed.

Based on the following:

*Birth of a New Species Witnessed by Scientists*. Brandon Kim. Wired Science (Wired.com). 11/16/2009.

*Citation: "The secondary contact phase of allopatric speciation in Darwin's finches."* By Peter R. Grant and B. Rosemary Grant. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, Vol. 106, No. 46, Nov. 16, 2009.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor  
 529 9541

[newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org)



**Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.**  
**Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule, 2010**  
 (Revised. December 1, 2009)

*Please register with the field trip leader(s) and check this schedule's information when a phone number is given. The Field Trip Chair (Michael Locher – 413-585-5864) is always looking for new trip ideas and leaders.*

*The Hampshire Bird Club recommends carpooling whenever possible, and suggests that all riders share equally the per-car cost of 50¢ per mile, as well as tolls and parking. See also the "Field Trip Guidelines for Participants" (September newsletter or on the Website).*

*Some trips have been marked with an asterisk (\*), which indicates that they are good trips for beginning birders. All trips have been coded as Easy (E) or Moderate (M) to give a rough indication of the pace and/or terrain. Please check all information with the trip leaders.*

## **JANUARY**

**\*Friday, January 1. New Year's Birding.** Half day. Scott Sumner leads the first trip of the year, looking for any birds that haven't been up too late the night before. The trip departs from the parking lot at Sumner Heating (60 Shumway St. in Amherst) at 7 a.m. (Yep, that's what he said.) For more information call Scott at 413-256-5438. (E)

**Saturday, January 9. North Shore: Cape Ann to Plum Island.** All day. Bob Bieda leads his annual New Year's pilgrimage to the coast in search of wintering specialties like Eared Grebes, Barrow's Goldeneyes, Harlequin Ducks, Purple Sandpipers, and much more. Dress for cold weather. For meeting information call Bob at 413-527-2623. (E)

**Saturday, January 30. Leader's Choice.** All day. Geoff LeBaron chooses between Coastal Rhode Island, Plum Island, and other interesting locations for his annual winter outing. Call Geoff (413-269-9281) several days before the trip for more information. (E)

## **FEBRUARY**

**Saturday-Sunday, February 6-7. Leader's Choice: Coast of Maine or Cape Cod.** Two days. Scott Sumner will lead a two-day trip to either the coast of Maine or Cape Cod, depending on which appears to be better. Overnight accommodations will be arranged by participants. Call Scott (413-256-5438) for details as the date approaches. (M)

**Saturday, February 20. South Shore: Plymouth and Falmouth.** All day. Al Richards leads birders to the coast south of Boston to find ducks, gulls, owls, and whatever happens to be around. Dress warmly. Call Al (413-665-2761) for meeting information. (E)

## **MARCH**

**Saturday, March 13. Plum Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron goes east to see what's around Plum Island. Dress for cold weather. Call Geoff (413-269-9281) for meeting time and information. (E)

**Saturday, March 20. Connecticut River Waterfowl.** Half day. Al Richards looks for waterfowl migrating through the valley along the Connecticut River. Call Al (413-665-2761) for meeting information as the date approaches. (E)



## APRIL

**\*Sunday, April 11. Ashley Reservoir: Early Warblers.** Half day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) hopes to find Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and other early migrants. Meet in the Friendly's parking lot, near the Holiday Inn, close to Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7:00 a.m. (E)

**\*Saturday, April 17. Early Migrants.** Half day. Betsy Higgins (413-586-7585) looks for migrants, starting around Look Park in Northampton. Meet at 6:30 a.m. in the parking lot of the JFK Middle School on Bridge Street in Northampton. (E)

## MAY

**Sunday, May 2. Connecticut River to Mt. Sugarloaf.** Half day. Dave Mako explores the fields and hills around Mt. Sugarloaf looking for migrants and a few local specialties, including Common Ravens, Peregrine Falcons, and Worm-eating Warblers. Call Dave (413-665-2999) for meeting time and place. (M)

**Friday, May 7. South Quabbin Park.** Half day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) birds the southern end of the reservoir for vireos, warblers, and whatever else shows up. Meet at the Quabbin Visitor's Center parking lot at 7:00 a.m. (E)

**Saturday, May 8. Spring Migration in the East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon and Larry Therrien guide birders through the woods of East Quabbin in search of spring migrants. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members. Call Tom (413-584-6353) well ahead of time for meeting information and to register, since participation is limited. (M)

**\*Sunday, May 16. Moody Bridge Road.** Half day. Mary Alice Wilson and Sally Hills explore new state land on Moody Bridge Road in Hadley. The site is great for grassland birds, and according a website, it hosts "federally endangered dwarf wedgemussels and other rare species. These include the bridle shiner dragonfly and several species of state-protected turtles." Call Mary Alice (413-548-9078) for meeting time and place. (E)

**Tuesday, May 18. Mount Holyoke.** Half day. Tom Gagnon leads a walk up the venerable old hill looking for spring warblers (think Cerulean) and wildflowers. Meet at the entrance at 7:30 a.m. Call Tom (413-584-6353) for more information. (M)

**Friday, May 28 – Monday, May 31. Monhegan Island.** Overnight trip. Betsy Higgins and Andrew Magee lead the Hampshire Bird Club's annual pilgrimage to Monhegan Island. Not only is the island charming, but the numbers and variety of migrating birds can be astonishing. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) to register. (E/M)

**Saturday, May 29. Poor Man's Monhegan.** All day. Bob Bieda takes birders to Plum Island. Past trips have found Wilson's Phalaropes, Piping Plovers, Seaside Sparrows, Orchard Orioles, and Evening Grosbeaks. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register and get meeting information. (E)

## JUNE

**Saturday, June 5. Westover Air Force Base.** Half day. Pending permission, Bob Bieda will lead his annual trip into New England's premier grassland habitat, looking for Upland Sandpipers, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E)

**Sunday, June 6. October Mountain State Forest.** Half day. Ed Neumuth explores the habitat on October Mountain. Recent cutting has made the area a prime spot for Mourning Warblers, as well as a number of other unusual species. Call Ed (413-884-4961) around trip time for meeting time and place. (E)

**Saturday, June 12. Hammonasset Beach State Park, CT.** All day. Betsy Higgins goes to the coast of Connecticut to find sparrows, rails, and other seaside denizens. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) for meeting time and place as the date approaches. (E)

**Sunday, June 13. Blockbusting trip.** Half day. Join a team that spends the morning scouring one atlas block. Each trip will be led by a team leader who has already visited the block to determine prime habitats and how to divide the group for the most productive use of the morning. Detailed information on the block and team leader will be included in a later newsletter, or call Mike Locher (413-585-5864) as the date approaches. Block-busting provides both a great day of birding and a great contribution to the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas. (E)

**Saturday, June 26. Blockbusting trip.** Half day. Join a team that spends the morning scouring one atlas block. Each trip will be led by a team leader who has already visited the block to determine prime habitats and how to divide the group for the most productive use of the morning. Detailed information on the block and team leader will be included in a later newsletter, or call Mike Locher (413-585-5864) as the date approaches. Block-busting provides both a great day of birding and a great contribution to the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas. (E)

## AUGUST

**\*Saturday, August 7. Knightsville Dam.** Half day. Betsy Higgins leads a new trip to Knightsville Dam WMA. This is a rich habitat where almost anything could turn up. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) for meeting details. (E)

**Saturday, August 21. New South Beach.** All day. Bob Bieda leads birders in their quest for late shorebird migrants, including Curlew Sandpipers and Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits. Bring a lunch, a jacket, and \$20 for the boat ride. Note: the date may change depending on the tides. Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register. (M)