



## Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 29, No. 5

### January, 2013.

If someone told you that the word of the new year was “Honeypot”, you might be forgiven for imagining that person to be a *Bear of Little Brain*. But there is no questioning the intelligence of the hordes of birders from points far and wide who are converging on our very own Honeypot in Hadley for some of the best local birding in years.

In case your inbox is no longer accepting messages or the spouse has put you on post-holiday lock-down, the Honeypot is playing host to a diverse assemblage of Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, Common Redpolls, Vesper Sparrows, a Merlin, a Peregrine Falcon, American Pipits, Savannah Sparrows, Snow Buntings and even a Clay-colored Sparrow. Since the snows of late December, these birds are now spending a lot of time foraging along the road verges, where the snow plough has turned up a treasure trove of seed.

And, as if they weren’t enough, the new year has brought renewed reports of a **Gyr Falcon** prowling this happy little corner of the Connecticut River floodplain. It’s one of those times to put on the winter woolies, and cast off the winter blahs. Get out there and give it a shot!

#### In this edition:

- the **program** for this month and **coming programs**,
- some long-overdue **field trip reports**, and a couple of **January trips**,
- announcing **Monhegan Island, 2013**,
- tips for **birding Connecticut** from Arn Krugmann,
- a new arrival at the **library**, and
- a few other tidbits.

I hope you find some of it useful!

### NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, January 14 at 7:30 PM**

**Chris Rimmer** brings us **Bicknell’s Thrush: Conserving a Bird of Two Worlds**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

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

**Bicknell’s Thrush** is one of North America’s most rare and vulnerable songbirds. Nesting only in mountaintop forests of Vermont and other northeastern states, and wintering primarily on the island of Hispaniola (Dominican Republic and Haiti), Bicknell’s Thrush faces numerous threats to its long-term survival. On its breeding grounds, these include acid precipitation, ski area development, communications tower construction, wind power development, mercury contamination, and climate change. The species’ limited winter habitats are under siege from deforestation, caused by human population pressures. Since 1992, Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE) Director **Chris Rimmer** has led efforts to conserve the species and the habitats on which it depends. Chris will discuss this fascinating and rare songbird, VCE’s efforts to study it in New England and the Caribbean, and how Bicknell’s Thrush represents a vital conservation link across international boundaries.

## COMING PROGRAMS

**February 11, 2013. Shawn Carey.** Shorebird Migration Hotspots.

**March 11, 2013. Mara Silver.** Swallows in the Connecticut River Valley.

**April 8, 2013. Joan Walsh.** Breeding Bird Atlas II – the Next Steps.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### **The Beelzebub Birding Bash. October 27, 2012.**

I led a trip for the Hampshire bird Club today (Saturday October 27) with six others to several locations in Franklin County, mainly Northfield and Turners Falls. In the spirit of the season, we visited Satan's Kingdom and Hell's Kitchen in Northfield, noting that Witch Hazel was blooming profusely up there; a suitably gloomy fog clung to the landscape, while I recorded a couple of Killdeer (by their four-letter banding code, KILL) in my field notebook.

During our first stop of the day at Turners Falls, we were very excited to find that a **Cackling Goose** was on the canal amid 350 or so Canada Geese. This bird actually appeared only slightly smaller than the Canadas, but distinctly paler in plumage, including a striking white crescent on its chest below its black neck, as well as the usual short, stubby bill and steep forehead. A Great Blue Heron stood sentinel near the shore.

At Hell's Kitchen we found 20 **Green-winged Teal** and 66 American Black Duck. We searched intently for shorebirds but could find only the aforementioned KILL. The most entertaining bird here was a **Winter Wren** that was singing a quiet song near the road, and eventually came out where we had great looks at it.

After all of the build-up, Satan's Kingdom Wildlife Management Area was actually a bit of a disappointment, with the high points being a heard-only Pileated Woodpecker and several heard-only Golden-crowned Kinglets. But at least the residents on the adjacent road were friendly and had suitably impressive Halloween decorations.

Next we visited Bennett Meadows WMA. At least half a dozen orange-clad hunters and their dogs were seeking pheasants in the fields west of the river, and we discovered - perhaps also in the holiday spirit - a gruesome Ring-necked Pheasant corpse in the woods by the parking lot. Still amongst the living here was an immature **Cooper's Hawk**, but the field east of the river was more productive, as a large patch of wild grapes had attracted an abundance of Cedar Waxwings and American Robins plus a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**. The weeds beneath them harbored a number of sparrows including a couple of immature **White-crowned Sparrows**.

Our remaining group stopped at Rooster's Bistro for lunch, then drove down past the cemetery into what I call the Northfield Meadows, a huge expanse of agricultural fields that lie between the town and the river. Another Cooper's Hawk, this one an adult, met us first. Also striking was that, after we had all but struck out on **Swamp Sparrows** the rest of the day, at this site they were not only abundant but were almost the only sparrow species present! Our last Northfield stop was on Munns Ferry Road where we finally had really satisfying views of **American Pipits**, which we had only heard previously.

Back at Turners Falls power canal, the geese were mostly absent but duck diversity had picked up, including an eclipse-plumage male **Wood Duck**, two Common Mergansers, and two Buffleheads, plus a **Pied-billed Grebe**.

Stops in the Montague Sand-plains and Turners Falls Rod & Gun Club (finding only 23 Mute Swans) were unproductive. With the last of our daylight, we ended our day at Barton Cove with a suitably impressive (though not particularly Halloween-y) adult Bald Eagle.

Josh Rose



## **Berkshire Lakes. Sunday, November 4, 2012.**

They waited. Some had been lurking there, fully formed, even as we lurched out of bed at 6 AM and girded our loins for battle. Others took form in the murky depths of their lair even as we made our circuitous way toward the battleground. But, one way or another, they waited...

Our side featured some pretty battle-tested veterans. Harvey Allen, Bill Benner, Sue Cloutier, Janice Doppler, Sue Emerson, **Tom Gagnon**, Bruce Hart, Sonia Krotkov, Scott Norris, David Peake-Jones, Elaine Pourinski, Jeff Traft, and Joe Wicinski have years of collective experience. Perhaps that explained our complacency.

At Moran, there were twenty thousand naked tree tops. In one of them, a splash of white against the gray fingers of winter trees heralded a **Northern Shrike**, there for some, gone for others, as is their wont. We were rewarded at Cleveland by a loon, some Hooded Mergansers, a calling Pileated Woodpecker, and some wonderful harbingers of winter. Bill Benner alertly picked out eight **Snow Buntings** at close range amongst the jumbled rocks of the shore. First of the year for many, and an absolute delight, as always. A close Coopers Hawk livened up Dalton Pond, and a **Fish Crow** justified our pit stop at Allendale in Pittsfield. It said, "Uh, oh," but no-one heeded the warning..... Still, they waited.

The various micro-habitats of Cheshire Lake gave up a pair of **American Wigeon**, two **Long-tailed Ducks**, four **Ruddy Ducks**, and a **Gadwall**, amongst many more usual suspects. Pontoosuc was relatively quiet, but did support a bunch of Hooded Mergansers, another Gadwall, two **Greater Scaup**, **15 Green-winged Teal** and one **Greater Yellowlegs**, improbably perched on a pole in a cat-tail marsh. Still, they waited, still we did not suspect. They could smell us now.

More usual suspects at Onota Lake, and a **Red-necked Grebe** enjoying the solitude at the northern end of the lake. And now, finally, the trap was sprung. Ignoring the cohort of pro-bono cardiologists pleading with us to turn around, we filed up to the glass case at **Bartlett's**, supremely and pathetically confident in the supremacy of our dental hardware over the foe we found there. Once joined, the battle was strangely quiet; each combatant unaware of the torrid struggle on all sides, and the **donuts** had won almost before it started. Their sugary shock troops, combining in deadly tandem with mercenary bacteria from our own mouths, immediately went to work on the frail enamel of our teeth. Not content with the initial onslaught, they formed a paste of chewed donut which affixed itself cloyingly to the moth-eaten remnants of our dentition and doggedly finished off the surviving molars. The starchy, fatty mass of donut infantry proceeded on down to our small intestines, and thence to our sluggish bloodstreams. Finally, under cover of a carefully orchestrated sugar rush, they secreted themselves around our waistlines and in the linings of our arteries, where the struggle continues....

So, feeling remarkably well, considering, we picked through distant ducks at Richmond Pond to uncover **American Coot**, Surf Scoters, Black Scoters, lots more Ruddy Ducks, and another Red-necked Grebe. There was a late **Osprey** at Stockbridge Bowl to round out the day. Though we lost the battle at Bartlett's (again) this year, never was defeat so sweet.....

David Peake-Jones



## **Champlain Valley, Vermont. Saturday, November 10, 2012.**

**Mike Locher**, Nora Papian, and David Peake-Jones set forth in the wee (meaning early) hours, heading north toward Addison County, Vermont. I would like to gently point out to those who were dissuaded from joining us by the early start that Nora (admittedly being of an age where these things are possible) was up till 1 AM on the morning of the trip at an (entirely decorous) birthday party and CAME ALONG ANYWAY!!

As darkness gave way to dawn, we slipped through the gap between the northern and southern Green Mountains, to emerge on the eastern edge of the Champlain Valley. We made our way onward toward Addison, the glorious big skies and gritty farmlands of the valley spread out before us, and a spectacular view

of the Adirondacks away to the west. Even were it not for what lay in store, this drive was almost worth the price of admission...

Approaching Dead Creek WMA, the questions began. Would they be there, and if they were there, would they be in range? These are time-honored questions for those on this trip and today, the answer was a resounding YES! As we came over a rise in the road, still a quarter mile shy of the viewing area, the ploughed-over cornfield on our left was bedecked with a white carpet of **Snow Geese**. After three quarters of an hour of peering, watery-eyed through scopes and countless rotations of the fine-tuning knobs with our gloved hands, we estimated at least 2,900 of them! We know we were looking at a Ross's Goose, but, as they say in Addison County, we just couldn't figure out which one it was!

The group began to diminish as the birds moved from the muddy field toward the cover of the Dead Creek wash, taking themselves from our sight, but giving us a glimpse of the grandeur of geese in flight.

Satiated, at least for a time, we travelled further afield for a broader sampling of waterfowl and raptors. Along the back roads around and through Panton we came across no fewer than eight (8) **Rough-legged Hawks**, all showing us their distinctive plumage and behavior. There were also at least five (5) **Northern Harriers**, most of which were superb "Grey Ghost" males. At the Brilyea access to Dead Creek itself, we found hordes of Mallard, Black Duck, and Green-winged Teal, all back-lit so early in the day. Button Bay hosted a scattering of Horned Grebes, a Red-throated Loon and Bufflehead. Several **Bonaparte's Gulls** (including one which flirted with us close inshore) and a Bald Eagle graced the waters of Oven Bay and the distant birds at the DAR State Park included **White-winged Scoters** and **Lesser Scaup**, plus a number of **Common Goldeneye**. Heading back to Dead Creek, we spotted a single **Peregrine Falcon** perusing the smorgasbord of ducks in the marsh. We enjoyed much better views of the birds at Brilyea Access (this time, it also gave up a **Ruddy Duck** and three **American Coot**), but we found the geese entirely hidden this time, so we called it a day.

The Champlain Valley is one of the iconic landscapes of the north-east. If you miss the Snow Geese, it's a good day of birding in a wonderful landscape. If you find the geese, it is the experience of a lifetime...

David Peake-Jones



## **The Turkey Trot to (Cape Ann) and Salisbury. November 2, 2012.**

Harvey Allen, Bob Bieda, Ann Bodkhe, Joan & Larry Dupre, Andrew Magee, David Peake-Jones, Elaine Pourinski and Elissa & Bernie Rubinstein, accompanied **Al Richards** on the post-Thanksgiving ramble along the north shore. It was apparent from the start that this was actually the Turkey Trot to Salisbury. Lured by the prospect of crossbills, we ran through the familiar sea-watch spots on Cape Ann in business-like fashion, with Al keeping his eye on the prize and expertly keeping us moving onward. Gloucester Harbor, the fish pier, Niles Beach, Niles Pond, Bass Rocks, the Granite Pier, Cathedral Ledges, Andrews Point and Plum Island were all whistle-stop visits, but by the time we set sail for Salisbury, we had tallied up a wonderful list including **Harlequin Ducks**, numerous **Red-throated Loons**, good numbers of **Red-necked Grebe**, all three **Scoters**, **Bonaparte's Gull**, **Pied Billed Grebe**, **Common Goldeneye**, **Black-legged Kittiwake**, **Northern Gannet** (numerous adults flying along the coast), **Razorbill**, **Green-winged Teal**, **American Widgeon**, **Gadwall**, and **Northern Pintail**.

As dusk approached, we arrived at Salisbury State Park. We first saw the crossbills as a swirling cloud of birds alighting, unmistakably, in a line of pines near the entrance. As we pulled up and began to pick through the foraging birds in the pines, a **Coopers Hawk** dove in out of nowhere and put up the whole lot.

We then set about driving the lanes of the campground, ears peeled, listening for the slightest suggestion of *jit jit*. It was while looking at a single bird teed up near the bathrooms (turned out to be a Red Crossbill) that we relocated the whole flock, which alighted in a tree close to the saltmarsh. Finally, our entire group was able to assemble and get good looks at these voracious and dogged birds feeding both in the trees and on the ground

underneath them (which) made things a lot easier. After a few glorious minutes up close and personal with at least 45 **White-winged Crossbills**, it was raptor time again and the entire group was flushed by a **Merlin**, whereupon they were lost to us.

A great day, capped off by a wonderful experience with winter finches.

David Peake-Jones

## COMING TRIPS

**Saturday, January 5. North Shore: Cape Ann to Plum Island.** All day. Bob Bieda goes east to the coast on his annual New Year's migration 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 26. Coastal Rhode Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron repeats his annual cold-weather trip to the coast of Rhode Island, looking for gulls, ducks, Short-eared Owls, and whatever else may be there. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) for information and meeting details.

## OVERNIGHT TRIPS

### Monhegan Island, 2013.

#### Memorial Day Weekend (Friday, May 24 to Monday, May 27)

You can see the spring migration almost anywhere, but if you have ever wanted to steep yourself in the glorious warblers of May, while losing yourself in the gentle rhythms of an idyllic island, Monhegan is for you.

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 about the trip, contact **Scott Sumner** ([president@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:president@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 256 5438). For cost information and/or to register, contact Mike Locher ([fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 585 5864)

### From the Mouths of Babes

Words of Wisdom from some of the younger denizens of Earth.

*"Countries with sea around them are called islands. Ones without sea are continents."*

## LIBRARY

The library has a new book:

***FEATHERS, the Evolution of a Natural Miracle*** by Thor Hanson.

It's very interesting and easy to read.

HBC has a substantial library at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst. **Hours** are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday. Items are catalogued in the "About" section of the HBC Website and 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 library@hampshirebirdclub.org(413) 549 3722.

Henry Lappen

## Christmas Count Potluck Thank You!

Thank you, everyone for being so generous with your delightful dishes and your assistance with set up & take down of the meeting rooms after the count. It is such a wonderful feeling to have everyone so helpful. Sorry we didn't get a chance to thank you Sunday evening --

Our best wishes for a wonderful year ahead --- Sally Hills, Helga Beatty, John & Merry Cushing, Mary Alice, Jan Ortiz, Janice Jorgensen, Sue & Wayne Emerson.

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**On Top of New England: Nick Shaw**

Thursday, January 31, 7-8:30pm

**Spring Birding: Scott Surner**

**Wednesday Classes, 6:30-8pm: February 6, February 27, March 20, April 3, April 10, May 1, May 22, June 5**

**Saturday Field Trips, start times vary 5-7am: February 9, March 2, March 23, April 6, April 27, May 4, May 11, May 18**

**Plus a special weekend on June 8 & 9 to the Moose Bog region of Vermont**

From winter coastal specialties like Eiders, Scoters, Harlequin Ducks, and Loons to peak warbler migration at Plum Island to Vermont early summer encounters like Spruce Grouse, Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee and everything bird in between. For the final weekend trip participants will be responsible for their own travel, food and lodging. Space is limited. **Registration opens Tuesday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 9am.** Members \$225/Non-members \$250.

**Solar Fuel: Microbial Photosynthesis: Kelly Nevin**

Thursday, February 7, 7-8:30pm

*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).*

### From the Mouths of Babes

"The closest (English) town to France is Dover. You can get to France on a train or you can take a fairy."

## ARCADIA PROGRAMS

**Digital Nature Photography: The Basics. Robert Floyd**

Thursdays, January 10, 17, 24, 31, and February 7. 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

**Nature Photography: Beyond the First Steps. Robert Floyd**

Saturdays, January 12, 26, February 2, 9, 23. 10:30 a.m. – noon.

**Naked Shrubs in Winter: Boot Boutwell**

Saturday, January 19. 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Bird Walk at Montague Plains: Michael Metivier**

Saturday, January 26. 8:00 -10:00 a.m.

**The Birds Downtown: Watching and Documenting or Urban Ecology. Greg Saulmon**

Wednesday, January 30. 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

**Winter Crows: James Sullivan and Patti Steinman**

Saturday, February 3. 2:00 – 6:00 p.m.

*All programs require a fee unless otherwise stated. For more details of these and other programs go to [www.massaudubon.org](http://www.massaudubon.org) (select “Sanctuaries”, then “Choose a Sanctuary: Arcadia”) or call the sanctuary at the number below. To register for programs contact **Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary**, 127 Combs Rd., Easthampton MA 01027. Telephone **(413) 584-3009**.*

### Redpolls

Perhaps no bird has been more emblematic of the winter finch irruption this year than the Common Redpoll. Seems all you have to do is find a weedy field, and there they are! It turns out these diminutive finches have several anatomical and behavioral adaptations which enable them to spend most winters in even harsher climes than we have here.

Firstly, it turns out that the Redpoll has an expanded esophagus, which allows it to ingest large amounts of food (seeds) very quickly in exposed habitats. Having done so, and with the seeds safely sequestered in this expanded storage area, the birds then retire to more sheltered environments, where they then regurgitate the seeds one at a time, remove the husks, and swallow the nutritious kernels.

Redpolls are also known to shake the birch catkins and weed seed heads on which they feed, before dropping to the ground to ingest the fallen seeds: thus minimizing the amount of time they spend exposed to the freezing winds above the ground.

Source: Todd Peterson: **BirdNote**, November 2012.

**Birdnote** is a series of short radio segments about birds produced daily by a non-profit organization in Seattle Washington, and played on radio stations nation-wide. You can listen to programs and find out more at **[www.birdnote.org](http://www.birdnote.org)**

That’s it for this month.

Arn’s tips for birding Connecticut follow in glorious isolation, in case you want to paste them up on the fridge. Look for the Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule in February.

Until then, talk softly and carry a big scope!

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

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

## BIRDING TIPS FOR South-Central and Southeastern CONNECTICUT

*We at HBC have been neglecting Connecticut for years. In an effort to rectify this sad state of affairs, club member **Arn Krugman** offers these insights into birding our southern neighbor.*

The Hampshire Bird Club has regular trips to Plum Island, Cape Cod, and Rhode Island, but Connecticut is closer and there are some good birding spots 1 ¼ -1 ½ hours from Northampton. (**Windsor**, of course, is closer and there's a special place there with which several members are familiar, **Station 43**.)

**Lighthouse Point** in East Haven is one of the best places in New England for the hawk migration. It's better on north wind days, so scheduling a trip in advance has its drawbacks. Many people don't realize that the adjacent meadows there can also be great for fall migrants.

Another special place for the fall migration is **Bluff Point** in Groton, just east of New London. Drive past the airport toward the trailhead and park just beyond the railroad overpass. Walk up the small hill next to the tracks. (Again, wind is a factor.)

**Hammonasset State Park** in Madison is excellent year round. It gets a lot of rarities and they're usually reported because many birders are on the lookout. *Snowy Owls* can be there in the winter. *Saw-whet Owls* have often been seen in the cedars on Willard's Island in the fall. At Cedar Island *Glossy Ibis* are regulars in the spring and rails are often heard there. Hammonasset also has a lot of *Purple Martins* in boxes at different locations.

**East Rock Park** in New Haven is a less famous version of Mt. Auburn. It isn't a botanical garden, but it is a "migrant magnet" city park with a number of trails and it can be phenomenal on a good day in May.

**Milfort Point**, just west of New Haven, often pops up on the rare bird alert and it's the best place to see Monk Parakeets.

**Lyme** is famous for ticks, but it also has several good birding spots in the spring migration. There are many more *Cerulean-* and *Worm-eating Warblers* down there. *Cuckoos* are also much easier to find and the occasional *Redheaded Woodpecker* makes an appearance. The best places are Hartman Park, Nehantic State Forest and Pleasant Valley. Pleasant Valley is also one of the few places where you can find Box, Wood and Spotted Turtles in good numbers. *Hooded Warblers* are hard to find in the preserves, but they're easy to locate if you drive with your windows down and listen on Joshuatown Road, Mount Archer Road (the end closer to Pleasant Valley), and Grassy Hill Road (near Hartman). Pay closer attention when you see large patches of barberry bushes. The Ravine Trail across from the Selden Creek Preserve on Joshuatown Road has an Acadian Flycatcher spot near the far end. A *Prothonotary Warbler* has been making regular stops at a beaver pond in early May in Nehantic near the Beaver Brook Road end. There have been two reliable trees for *Eastern Screech Owls* in the spring on Ely Ferry Road off Route 156 in Lyme.

*White-eyed Vireos* can usually be found near the parking area at the **Walden Preserve** on Hagan Road in Salem, five minutes from Hartman Park. Hagan Road is just east of the junction of Routes 11 and 82, off route 82.

**Great Island in Old Lyme** is the best place for close looks at *Ospreys* on platform nests. *Marsh Wrens* are also abundant. With a kayak you can paddle upstream toward Lord's Cove and see *American-* and *Least Bitterns* (and Diamond-back Terrapins hauled up on the shores of islands at low tide). Great Island is also wonderful for shore birds at low tide in late August.



Roger Tory Peterson, who lived in Old Lyme, said that the most spectacular bird phenomenon he ever witnessed occurred five minutes from his home, when *500,000 Tree Swallows* funneled down onto **Goose Island** at sunset in September.

(If you go down to this part of Connecticut, you might want to check out two places when you're done birding—Gillette's Castle and the waterfall at Devil's Hopyard. There are also excellent restaurants in Essex and Chester.)

Please feel free to call me for more detailed information at 413-446-9727.

Arn Krugman



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 29, No. 6

**February, 2013.**

In this edition:

- the monthly **program** and the **upcoming schedule**,
- plugs for **Monhegan Island 2013** and the nascent **Mt. Mansfield** trip,
- the latest exploits of the **Education Committee**,
- a **WFCR volunteering** opportunity,
- **Hitchcock** and **Arcadia** programs,
- **The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Massachusetts Birders Meeting** (Mass Audubon),
- voluminous results of the **Quabbin Count** (on their own pages so you can save and file),
- the **Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule**, AND
- some other odds and sods.

I hope you find some of it useful!

## NEXT PROGRAM

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

**Shawn Carey** sheds light on **Shorebird Migration Hotspots**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

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

## COMING PROGRAMS

**March 11, 2013. Mara Silver.** Swallows in the Connecticut River Valley.

**April 8, 2013. Joan Walsh.** Breeding Bird Atlas II – the Next Steps.

**May 13, 2013. David Spector.** (To be determined...).

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

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

## OVERNIGHT TRIPS

**Mount Mansfield: Bicknell's Thrush**

On the heels of a wonderful program in January by **Chris Rimmer**, the club is hoping to visit Mount Mansfield (Vermont) in June in search of Bicknell's Thrush. We are hoping to link up with Chris and others from the **Vermont Center for Ecological Studies** to bring the behavior and ecology of this threatened species to life. The trip is currently in the early stages of organization.

Please see the *Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule* for a few more details and keep your eyes/ears on HBC's multiple communication channels for further developments.

## **Monhegan Island, 2013 with Scott Surner**

### **Memorial Day Weekend (Friday, May 24 to Monday, May 27)**

You can see the spring migration almost anywhere, but if you have ever wanted to steep yourself in the glorious warblers of May, while losing yourself in the gentle rhythms of an idyllic island, Monhegan is for you.

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.

After arriving by ferry on the island, we will 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, and the approximate cost of the return boat trip, lodging, breakfasts and dinners will be around \$460

For further details about the trip, contact **Scott Surner** ([president@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:president@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 256 5438).

To register (by deposit), contact **Mike Locher** ([fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 585 5864)

## **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

The HBC Education Committee held another **Birding Applications** program on **December 13, 2012** that was well attended by 15 HBC members. The program was led by **Jamie Bishop** who filled in for the peripatetic **Zeke Jakub**. Zeke had created a short presentation on applications or 'apps' to introduce the evening's program.

We looked primarily at the *Sibleys*, *IBird Pro*, *Petersons*, *Birds Eye* and *Bird Log* apps. For those of you who have not been enticed into the world of "applications," they are computer software programs designed to help the user perform a specific task. Typically these programs are easy to load on your device, and I find that they can greatly enhance ones birding experiences. After Jamie's initial presentation, we broke up into a few groups and some folks explored applications on their own. There was plenty of expertise on hand to help newer players become acquainted with the program or application of their choice.

I for one, was excited enough to buy *Birds Eye* when I got home. This app is affiliated with E Bird and will serve as an additional tool to identify birds and, more importantly, to discover where birds are located when I'm traveling in a new area. Next, I'll buy *Bird Log* to report what birds I've seen, and where and when I've seen them, thus adding to the EBird database. That will also help in bird and habitat conservation. Other members were also planning to buy the applications of their choice when they got home.

Thanks to **Janice Jorgensen** for originally setting this up, **Jamie Bishop** for taking the reins when **Zeke** was called away, **Bruce Hart** for follow-up organization, **Jaap van Heerden** for technical assistance, **Jacob Drucker** and **Galen Bishop** for ably assisting during the program, and **Jessica** at the **Hitchcock Center** for hosting the event. Feel free to contact the Education Committee with any ideas you have for a future program.

Bruce Hart

## Birding Apps for iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad and Android

<http://www.birdwatching-bliss.com/birding-apps-for-iphone.html>

This site reviews some of the latest applications for iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad and Android. Three that stick out among the competition are the *iBird Pro*, *BirdsEye* and the *Audubon Field Guide to North American Birds*. All three have field guide related information, but *BirdsEye* also allows users to see what birds have been recently sighted in specific locations and has an inventory of birding hotspots as well. HBC does not endorse any particular commercial birding product. Happy browsing!

Janice Jorgensen

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

### Spring Birding: *Scott Sumner*

**Wednesday Classes, 6:30-8pm: February 6, February 27, March 20, April 3, April 10, May 1, May 22, June 5**

**Class 1 - Saturday Field Trips, start times vary 5-7am: February 9, March 2, March 23, April 6, April 27, May 4, May 11, May 18**

*(Please note: class 1 is currently filled.)*

**Plus a special weekend on June 8 & 9 to the Moose Bog region of Vermont**

**Class 2 - Saturday & Sunday Field Trips, start times vary 5-7am: February 23, March 10, March 31, April 7, April 21, May 12, June 1, June 15**

*(Space still available for class 2.)*

From winter coastal specialties like Eiders, Scoters, Harlequin Ducks, and Loons to peak warbler migration at Plum Island to Vermont early summer encounters like Spruce Grouse, Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee and everything bird in between. Space is limited. **Registration is open.** Members \$225/Non-members \$250.

### **Solar Fuel: Microbial Photosynthesis: *Kelly Nevin***

Thursday, February 7, 7-8:30pm

### **Amherst's Famous Salamanders: *Ted Watt***

Tuesday, February 26, 7-8:30 pm

### **Cozy Living for Less: *Katelyn Tsukada***

Wednesday, February 27th, 7-8:30pm

### **Evolution in a Toxic World: *Emily Monosson***

Thursday, February 28, 7-8:30pm

### **Salamander Tunnel Maintenance Day**

A Saturday in March determined by the weather.

FREE. Please call 256-6006 to be added to the call/email list to volunteer.

*Fees apply unless otherwise stated. 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!

**Hany Aziz**  
**Keith Carver**  
**Gwen Dwyer**  
**Neil Erickson**

West Springfield  
Hadley  
Leeds  
Amherst

**Miriam & Sidney Moss**  
**Lynn Pelland**  
**David Pritchard**  
**Sarah & Edie Shields**

Northampton  
Turners Falls  
Haydenville  
Shutesbury

## Volunteering for WFCR

Once again this March a group from the HBC will help our local NPR station, WFCR, during its spring fund drive. We will be taking calls at the station on Saturday, March 9, 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**.

*Date:* Saturday, March 9

*Time:* 8-11 A.M.

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

Note: I wonder if we should call this a volunteering "opp." Ed.

## ARCADIA PROGRAMS

**Eagles at Quabbin:** *Patti Steinman and John Green*

Saturday, February 9. 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Meet at Headquarters.

**Tracking at Graves Farm:** *David MacLain*

Saturday, February 9. 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Meet at Graves Farm.

**Berkshire Highland Snowshoe Hike:** *Aimee Galinas*

Saturday, February 16. 9:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Meet at Savoy State Park Camping Area.

**Mountain Lions:** *Sue Morse*

Friday, February 22. 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. (Snow date: Saturday, April 22. 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.).

**Mammal Tracking in the Field:** *Sue Morse*

Saturday, February 23. 9:00 a.m. – noon. (Snow date: Saturday, April 23. 9:00 a.m. – noon).

OR Saturday, February 23. 1:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m. (Snow date: Saturday April 23, same times).

**Digital Nature Photography: Subjects.** *Robert Floyd*

Thursdays, February 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21. 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Ecological Management Conference. David MacLain and John Burk.

Saturday, March 2. 9:00 a.m. – noon. No fee.

**Late Winter Ecology Snowshoe at Windsor Jambs.** *Aimee Gelinas*

Saturday, March 2. 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Meet at Windsor Jambs State Park.

*Fees apply unless otherwise stated. For more details of these and other programs go to [www.massaudubon.org](http://www.massaudubon.org) (select "Sanctuaries", then "Choose a Sanctuary: Arcadia") or call the sanctuary at the number below. To register for programs contact **Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary**, 127 Combs Rd., Easthampton MA 01027. Telephone (413) 584-3009.*

Space has been a little tight this month.

If you read on, dear member, you will likely encounter the results of the **Quabbin Count**, the **Massachusetts Birders Meeting** plug, and the **Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule**.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

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

## Quabbin Count 2012 and Since 1988

Species recorded in fewer than five (5) years between 1988 and 2012 are described as occasional “(occ.)”

Species	2012	High Year	High Count	Species	2012	High Year	High Count
Canada Goose	18	1999	193	Herring Gull	13	1990	280
Mute Swan	0	occ.		Glaucous Gull	0	occ.	
<b>Wood Duck</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>occ.</b>	<b>1</b>	Great Black-b'ked Gull	0	1990	47
American Wigeon	1	occ.		Rock Pigeon	87	1999	339
Black Duck	131	1993	349	Mourning Dove	188	1999	440
Mallard	66	1994	975	Eastern Screech Owl	1	1989	4
Northern Pintail	0	occ.		Great Horned Owl	12	1994	24
Green-winged Teal	0	occ.		Snowy Owl	0	not yet	
Ring-necked Duck	5	2001	41	Barred Owl	9	1993	21
Greater Scaup	0	2001	5	Long-eared Owl	0	occ.	
Lesser Scaup	0	occ.		Saw-whet Owl	6	1994	61
White-winged Scoter	0	occ.		Belted Kingfisher	3	2010	6
Black Scoter	0	occ.		Red-b'lied Woodpecker	27	2010	35
Long-tailed Duck	0	occ.		<b>Yellow-b'd Sapsucker</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>occ.</b>	<b>1</b>
Bufflehead	0	1994	28	Downy Woodpecker	156	1994	169
Common Goldeneye	57	1992	105	<b>Hairy Woodpecker</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>62</b>
Barrows Goldeneye	0	Occ.		Northern Flicker	3	2010	10
Hooded Merganser	85	2006	186	Pileated Woodpecker	23	2010	61
Common Merganser	26	199	1127	Eastern Phoebe	0	occ.	
Red-br'sted Merganser	0	occ.		Northern Shrike	1	1995	10
Ruddy Duck	0	occ.		Blue Jay	141	1993	1140
Ring-necked Pheasant	0	1994	16	American Crow	146	1995	395
Ruffed Grouse	5	1994	42	Common Raven	27	2003	56
Wild Turkey	154	2009	248	Horned Lark	0	1998	59
Common Loon	15	1999	23	Black-c'ped Chickadee	1026	1993	2516
Horned Grebe	10	1997	195	Boreal Chickadee	0	occ.	
Red-necked Grebe	1	1995	2	Tufted Titmouse	292	1998	297
D'ble c'sted Cormorant	0	occ.		Red-br'sted Nuthatch	376	1993	1886
Great Cormorant	0	occ.		White-br'sted Nuthatch	210	2001	303
Great Blue Heron	1	1991	2	Brown Creeper	39	1996	82
Turkey Vulture	0	occ.		Carolina Wren	3	2011	12
Osprey	0	occ.		Winter Wren	3	1997	4
Bald Eagle	11	1994	38	Golden-cr'ned Kinglet	97	1996	312
Northern Harrier	0	occ.		Ruby-crowned Kinglet	0	1996*	3
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1993	12	Eastern Bluebird	45	2011	45
Cooper's Hawk	3	2010	6	Hermit Thrush	1	2006	4
Northern Goshawk	0	2007*	3	American Robin	160	2009	1878
Red-shouldered Hawk	0	occ.		Gray Catbird	0	2008*	1
Red-tailed Hawk	22	2001	28	Northern Mockingbird	6	1991	45
Rough-legged Hawk	0	occ.		European Starling	221	1999	1690
Golden Eagle	0	1997*	2	Bohemian Waxwing	0	not yet	
American Kestrel	0	occ.		Cedar Waxwing	0	1997	550
Merlin	0	occ.		Yellow-rumped Warbler	0	occ.	
American Coot	0	occ.		Pine Warbler	0	occ.	

**Quabbin Count 2012 and Since 1988 (continued) Page 2 of 2**

<b>Species</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>High Year</b>	<b>High Count</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>High Year</b>	<b>High Count</b>
Black-headed Gull	0	occ.		American Tree Sparrow	173	1998	611
Ring-billed Gull	49	2011	185	Hoary Redpoll	0	occ.	
Field Sparrow	0	1999	2	Pine Siskin	0	2008	137
Fox Sparrow	0	occ.		American Goldfinch	124	1994	664
Song Sparrow	22	1994	50	Evening Grosbeak	27	1989	413
Lincoln's Sparrow	0	Not yet		House Sparrow	250	2004	1032
Swamp Sparrow	0	2008	3				
White-throated Sparrow	52	2009	584				
Dark-eyed Junco	714	2009	2297	<b>Write Ins</b>			
Snow Bunting	49	1988	157				
Northern Cardinal	100	2005	123				
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	0	occ.					
Red-winged Blackbird	3	2006	309				
Rusty Blackbird	0	2011	51				
Common Grackle	0	2006	100				
Brown-headed Cowbird	2	2006	553				
Pine Grosbeak	19	2007	154				
Purple Finch	1	1992	169				
House Finch	58	1992	429				
Red Crossbill	6	1993	240				
White-winged Crossbill	9	1993	27				
Common Redpoll	302	1997	1357				

\*Most recent high year

Number of species this year: 67

Cumulative number of species since 1988: 120

Despite the impending nor'easter, the twenty-fifth Quabbin Christmas Bird Count has been recorded safely into the books. Generally, overall numbers were down, but we ended the day with 67 species, along with three new highs or equal highs (Hairy Woodpecker, Wood Duck, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker). The temperature ranged from 16-30 degrees with increasingly overcast skies and late snow.

Scott Sumner and Jim Lafley

**21st Annual Mass Audubon Birders Meeting**  
**Birding: Past, Present, and Future. Challenges and Opportunities**  
**Saturday, March 16, 2013**  
**The LaCava Center, Bentley University, Waltham, MA**

Registration fee (which includes lunch): \$55 Mass Audubon members, \$62 non-members.

***Early Bird Special! Register before March 1 and get \$8 off full price.***

Walk-in registration available. Get a map and directions, view the program schedule and/or register online at [www.massaudubon.org/news](http://www.massaudubon.org/news).

## Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule, 2013

*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 5. 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 26. Coastal Rhode Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron repeats his annual cold-weather trip to the coast of Rhode Island, looking for gulls, ducks, Short-eared Owls, and whatever else may be there. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) for information and meeting details. (E)

### FEBRUARY

**\*Sunday, February 17. Leader's Choice: Winter Birds.** Half day. Mike Locher will look for winter birds, either finches around Royalston, waxwings around Turner's Falls, or shrikes at Moran Wildlife Management Area. Call Mike (413-585-5864) for the destination and meeting details the week before the trip. (E)

### MARCH

**Saturday, March 9. Plum Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron looks for migrants and residents at one of Massachusetts' premier birding locations. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) as the date approaches for meeting time and information. (E)

**Saturday, March 16. Connecticut River Waterfowl.** Half day. Bob Bieda looks for ducks and geese migrating up the Connecticut River to their breeding grounds. Meet at Stop & Shop on King Street in Northampton at 6:45. (E)

### APRIL

**\*Sunday, April 14. Ashley Reservoir: Early Warblers.** Half day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) looks for early migrants like Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Northern Waterthrushes. Meet in the Friendly's parking lot, near the Holiday Inn, close to Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7 a.m. (E)

**Wednesday, April 24. Spring hawk watching at Goat Peak.** Half day. Tom Gagnon climbs the tower on Mount Tom State Reservation and looks for northbound raptors. Meet at the old park headquarters building at 9 o'clock for a 20 minute walk to the tower. Please call Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) or email tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com. (M)



**MAY**

**\*Sunday, May 5. Hilltown Ramble.** All day. Bob Zimmermann (rzimmermann@hampshirebirdclub.org, 413-585-0405) and Dave Gross (dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org, 413-253-2897) visit migrant spots from Cumington through Moran Wildlife Management Area, to Savoy, Plainfield and Hawley. Some hiking will be done. Meet at the Northampton Stop & Shop on King Street at 6:30 a.m. to organize carpools. (M)

**Saturday, May 11. Quabbin Park and East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon and Larry Therrien lead their annual spring trip to the eastern side of the reservoir. Participation is limited and you must be a member of the Hampshire Bird Club. To register, call or email Tom (413-584-6353) or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com. Please register with Tom early. (M)

**Wednesday, May 15. Mount Holyoke.** Half day. Tom Gagnon leads a hike up Mt. Holyoke in search of Cerulean Warblers and other migrants. Plan to stop along the way to look at some of the flora of Mt. Holyoke. Meet at 7 a.m. at the gate of Mt. Holyoke. For information call or email Tom (413-584-6353) or email tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com. (M)

**\*Sunday, May 19. Northfield.** Half day. Eric Huston (734-355-2933) searches for migrating warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other avifauna around the Northfield Public Golf Course and other sites in the area. Meet at the parking lot of the Greenfield Big Y (just west of exit 26 off I-91) at 6:45 a.m. (M)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Overnight Trip</b></p> <p><b>Friday, May 24 – Monday, May 27. Monhegan Island.</b> Overnight trip. Scott Surner leads the Hampshire Bird Club's 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 Scott (413-256-5438) for information, and Mike Locher (413-585-5864) to register. (E/M)</p>
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**JUNE**

**Wednesday, June 5. October Mountain and Tyringham.** All day. Ed Neumuth goes to one of his favorite spots (October Mountain) looking for Mourning Warblers and other local specialties. Bring lunch and be prepared to hike. Call or email Ed (413-844-4961) or eneumuth-at-gmail-dot-com for meeting time and place. The trip is limited to 7 participants. (M)

**Saturday, June 8. 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) at least two weeks ahead of time to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Overnight trip</b></p> <p><b>Mid June, 2013. Dates to be announced. Mount Mansfield, Vermont.</b> HBC hopes to coordinate with the Vermont Center for Ecological Studies in search of Bicknell's Thrush. We <u>hope</u> to drive up to Stowe, VT on a Sunday (might change), and visit the top of the mountain for the evening chorus. The following (Monday?) morning, we will travel up to a VCES study site to observe and participate in banding of Bicknell's Thrush and perhaps find these reclusive birds in the balsam fir woods which clothe the mountain. The trip will wrap up some time on the Monday. Please keep your eyes on the newsletter and your ears open at meetings for further details.</p>
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**Wednesday, June 12. Windsor and Savoy Forest.** All day. Ed Neumuth explores a relatively unbirded part of the Berkshires looking for, among other things, Mourning Warblers. Bring lunch and be prepared to hike. Call or email Ed (413-844-4961) or eneumuth-at-gmail-dot-com for meeting time and place. The trip is limited to 7 participants. (M)

**\*Saturday, June 29. Birding by Ear.** Half day. Back by popular demand, Don Kroodsma will head to a birdy part of Amherst to listen for early morning bird song (and he promises to bring recording equipment too, for anybody who wants to see the master in action). Call Don (413-247-3367) to get meeting details. (E)

#### **A Note About Insurance**

Carpooling is an essential part of a successful field trip. It reduces consumption of fossil fuels, allows the group to more easily stay together while travelling, reduces parking congestion in the field, and reduces delays as the group assembles. As you decide on how to carpool for HBC field trips, you should consider the following.

Hampshire Bird Club does carry liability insurance and our members contribute to the premiums for this insurance through membership dues and fees for overnight trips. However, the policy does not cover individuals who drive during overnight or day field trips. Neither does HBC insurance cover damage to private vehicles used on any HBC trip.



## **Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts**

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

Volume 29, No. 7

**March, 2013.**

In this edition:

- Program and field trip information,
- The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual **Mass Audubon Birders' Meeting**,
- Another chance to sign up for **Monhegan Island, 2013**,
- More than you could ever want to know about **Bicknell's Thrush**,
- A musing on Gyrfalcons, and
- The **Northampton CBC** results!

I hope you find some of it useful!

### **NEXT PROGRAM**

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

**Mara Silver** speaks on **Swallows in the Connecticut River Valley**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

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

Cliff Swallows and, more recently, Barn Swallows have been slowly declining in Massachusetts for decades. Using relatively simple techniques, Mara Silver has successfully attracted both species and encouraged their nesting success at several sites in the state. Come see Mara's presentation about her recent efforts to attract **Cliff Swallows** to a previously-unused site in Shelburne, Massachusetts and to enhance the **Barn Swallow** population there. Spring is around the corner. Get ready for those swallows: they will be here before you know it!

**Mara Silver** studied the same colony of Cliff Swallows in Williamsburg, MA for 20 years. She recently transferred her efforts to another site. She holds an MSc. in Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation from UMass Amherst. For her masters thesis project she inventoried Bank Swallow habitat along the Connecticut River in MA. Mara works as a production editor at a scientific textbook company.

### **COMING PROGRAMS**

**April 8, 2013. Joan Walsh.** Breeding Bird Atlas II – the Next Steps.

**May 13, 2013. David Spector?** (To be determined...).

**June 10, 2013. Joey Mason.** Kestrels.

### **21st Annual Mass Audubon Birders Meeting**

**Birding: Past, Present, and Future. Challenges and Opportunities**

**Saturday, March 16, 2013. The LaCava Center, Bentley University, Waltham, MA**

**Registration fee** (which includes lunch): \$55 Mass Audubon members, \$62 non-members.

[www.massaudubon.org/news](http://www.massaudubon.org/news).

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### Coastal Rhode Island. Saturday, January 26, 2013.

Geoff LeBaron, Stephen Baker, Andrew Magee, and Marcia Merithew braved wind chills around zero degrees this day, and were well rewarded.

#### Stops & Highlights:

1. Driving tour of Watch Hill and Misquamicut: cold & windy; **Hermit Thrush** feeding on the ground with robins, and a **Greater Snow Goose** on the snow with Canada Geese.
2. Quonochontaug Breachway: cold & windy; a **big** flock of **Dunlin** on the flats!
3. East Beach, Charlestown: cold & windy; fantastic looks at **White-winged Crossbills**.
4. Ninigret N.W.R.: cold & windy; the perennial, lovely adult Lesser Black-backed Gull, and a nice assortment of sea ducks.
5. Fort Ninigret, Charlestown: cold & windy; wonderful views of a Northern Flicker (the ground-pecker).
6. Charlestown Breachway: cold & windy; two Sanderlings in the breachway, and a lovely drake **Long-tailed Duck** just offshore.
7. Trustom Pond N.W.R.: cold & windy; wonderful light and great views of a male **Eastern Towhee** and two female-type Purple Finches.
8. Matunuck area: cold & windy; no specialties but the 1661 House was interesting.
9. Succotash Marsh and Jerusalem Harbor: cold & windy, missed crossbills and interesting gulls, but picked out some **Brant** with the Canada Geese.
10. Beavertail, Jamestown Island: cold & windy; gorgeous views of **Harlequin Ducks**, plus a whole "herd" of Brant.
11. Point Judith: cold & windy; amazing full moonrise at sunset, tons of offshore Red-breasted Mergs, and a flyby group of Black Scoter.

The overall species total was a quite respectable 60!!

Geoff LeBaron

### Winter Birds. Sunday, February 17, 2013

Carol and John Gabranski, Andrew Magee, Bruce Hart, and Nidhin Joseph joined **Mike Locher** in birding locally, mostly around Hadley. The Gyrfalcon had been reported several days earlier, and the general lack of interesting bird reports from elsewhere in Western Mass. kept us close to home.

We started the day birding around the Honeypot. We saw two Savannah Sparrows feeding around the transfer station (along with more numerous Song Sparrows), then moved west toward the river. We ran into other sparrows: Dark-eyed Juncos and American Tree Sparrows were out in numbers, but we couldn't locate the Clay-colored Sparrow that had been seen in the area. We found **Horned Larks** along the roadside, and got great looks at a flock of **22 Snow Buntings** that foraged along the road, then sat up on telephone wires for us to ogle. When we got to the river, we found Common Mergansers swimming happily in the chilly water, and saw several raptors (Red-tailed Hawks and a fly-by Cooper's Hawk), but no Gyrfalcon.

Crossing over to Aqua Vitae Road, we found more Horned Larks, and got good looks at a very tame **Vesper Sparrow** sitting in a bush next to the road. We got a few feeder birds at a house there, and saw a coyote walking through the fields, probably looking for hunting grounds that didn't have quite so many humans loitering nearby.

At Flayvor's of Cook's Farm we found a beautiful **American Kestrel** sitting on a roof, and finally got to add Rock Pigeon to our day's list.

From there we headed into North Hadley (where we got some Cedar Waxwings around Lake Warner), then up to Sunderland (several hawks, all Red-tailed), crossed the river to Whately and Hatfield, and finally came home. All told, we had 31 species.

Mike Locher

## COMING TRIPS

*Please note a change to the Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule*

**Trip Rescheduled (from June)**

**Saturday, May 18. Westover Air Force Base.** Half day.

This change is reflected in the Second Edition of the Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule (dated February 20, 2013), which appears on the HBC Website.

**Saturday, March 9. Plum Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron looks for migrants and residents at one of Massachusetts' premier birding locations. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) as the date approaches for meeting time and information. (E)

**Saturday, March 16. Connecticut River Waterfowl.** Half day. Bob Bieda looks for ducks and geese migrating up the Connecticut River to their breeding grounds. Meet at Stop & Shop on King Street in Northampton at 6:45. (E)

**\*Sunday, April 14. Ashley Reservoir: Early Warblers.** Half day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) looks for early migrants like Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Northern Waterthrushes. Meet in the Friendly's parking lot, near the Holiday Inn, close to Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7 a.m. (E)

## OVERNIGHT TRIPS

**Monhegan Island, 2013 with Scott Sumner**

**Memorial Day Weekend (Friday, May 24 to Monday, May 27)**

You can see the spring migration almost anywhere, but if you have ever wanted to steep yourself in the glorious warblers of May, while losing yourself in the gentle rhythms of an idyllic island, Monhegan is for you.

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. 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 about the trip, contact **Scott Sumner** ([president@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:president@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 256 5438). For cost information and/or to register, contact Mike Locher ([fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 585 5864)

## BICKNELL'S THRUSH

*This article is a summary of a talk given to the Hampshire Bird Club by Chris Rimmer of the Vermont Center for Ecostudies. It is intended for readers of the Hampshire Bird Club newsletter and is NOT a peer-reviewed article.*

**Bicknell's Thrush** (*Catharus bicknelli*) was discovered in 1881 in the Catskill Mountains of New York by Eugene Bicknell. The species has very limited winter and breeding ranges, separated by an arduous and perilous migration route, and is the very definition of a species pushed to the edge by the ways of man.

**Bicknell's Thrushes spend the majority of the year in the Caribbean.** An estimated 90% of the world population of this species spends the winter on the island of Hispaniola which is divided between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The broad-leaved forests upon which the species depends in winter have been almost entirely extirpated in Haiti. The remaining habitats, primarily in the Dominican Republic, can be broadly divided into low-altitude forests, which are generally highly fragmented and more disturbed, and higher elevation cloud forests, which are generally more contiguous and of higher quality for the birds. However, even these core cloud forest habitats are dwindling rapidly under pressure from human agriculture.

Biologists find that the ratio of male to female Bicknell's thrushes eking out a living in degraded lowland habitats is about 1:1. The significance of this apparently innocuous sex ratio becomes clear by comparison with another. In the higher-elevation cloud forests, there are four times as many male Bicknell's Thrushes as females (sex ration of 4:1). **It appears that the male BiThs are out-competing the females for the best quality habitats.** This seems to have profound implications for the reproduction and survival of the species.

**Bicknell's Thrushes that survive their first winter migrate northward to a series of coniferous (Balsam Fir dominated) forests across south-eastern Canada, and the sky islands of northern New England, and New York.** The greatest densities of BiThs are found in dense stands of regenerating Balsam Fir. These dense stands often occur as alpine areas recover from "fir waves": areas of frost-caused fir die-off which spread and heal in a dynamic equilibrium on high mountainsides. The preferred habitat is well-nigh impenetrable for all but the thrushes, and the Red Squirrels which are their primary natural nest predator. The species has a skewed sex ratio on the breeding grounds (about 2 males for every female). It is thought that fewer females survive to breeding age because of the poor quality of their wintering habitats, which likely causes mortality on the wintering grounds and in spring migration. BiTh is no longer found in a number of habitat islands formerly on the periphery of the range. Most obvious of these for those of us in Massachusetts is Mount Greylock, where the species has not bred since 1972.

**Bicknell's Thrush is polygynandrous, meaning that both males and females breed with more than one mate in a single season.** Instead of the exclusive territories which most male songbirds defend, male Bicknell's Thrushes have home ranges which overlap those of other males, and the home range of a male may contain the nests of more than one female. Females do have non-overlapping home ranges, but lay clutches of eggs which may be sired by more than one male. Multiple males may assist with the rearing of young in a single nest. This reproductive strategy is thought to be a response to limited food, since the obvious advantage is the increased number of foraging adults supporting each clutch of young.

**Bicknell's Thrush is threatened in its breeding range by a suite of sadly familiar consequences of human activity.** The high mountain environments it requires are shared with **cell phone towers** and **wind turbines** which create direct collision hazards and less direct habitat modifications through road-building. Likewise, **ski area development** threatens to diminish habitat for thrushes, but it is important to note that the edges of cleared ski runs often support dense stands of regenerating fir, and have been shown to be suitable habitat, in some cases, for Bicknell's Thrush. The dangers posed to breeding BiThs by **pollution** are less

intuitively obvious. We tend to think of high alpine environments as amongst the least polluted terrestrial environments on earth, but it turns out that the clouds which clothe our highest mountains are far from pure water. Clouds are acidified by sulfur dioxide and other products of fossil fuel combustion, and this acid precipitation is implicated in decline in some fir species. Add mercury and other heavy metals (largely from coal-fired power plant emissions) and you end up bathing alpine areas in a toxic soup. Bicknell's Thrushes have been found to carry elevated levels of mercury in their bodies and this, presumably, affects survival.

**By far the least tractable threat to Bicknell's Thrush comes from climate change.** Fir species are climate-dependent, and, as temperature increases, appropriate stands of fir are replaced by other species. It is estimated that for every 1 degree (Celsius) increase in mean July temperature, the minimum elevation for breeding BiThs will increase by about 154 metres. As the climate warms, many of the sky islands upon which the species depends will simply be inundated, as it were, by rising temperatures.

A word or two on evolutionary genealogy. Bicknell's Thrush is morphologically almost identical with the Gray-cheeked Thrush, of which it was formerly considered a sub-species. When Bicknell's Thrush was recognized as a species, it was naturally assumed that its closest evolutionary relative was the Gray checked. **However, recent genetic and biochemical studies suggest that Bicknell's Thrush may be more closely related to the Veery than to any other species.** Curiouser and curiouser!

Bicknell's Thrush declined in the southern part of its range by 7% per year between 1993 and 2003. In New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, between 2002 and 2009, the decline was even more catastrophic: around 15-17% annually. **By any measure, this is a species on the brink.** Saving Bicknell's Thrush is, as with so many species, an international effort, addressing habitat degradation in the wintering grounds and multiple threats in our part of the world. **The International Bicknell's Thrush Conservation Group is helping thrushes on multiple fronts. You can read more about these efforts, and contribute to them at [www.bicknellsthrush.org](http://www.bicknellsthrush.org).**

*This article summarizes a talk given to the Hampshire Bird Club by **Chris Rimmer** of the **Vermont Center for Ecostudies**. The text was prepared by the HBC editor. It is intended for readers of the Hampshire Bird Club newsletter and is NOT a peer-reviewed article.*

If you are interested in the recent exploits of our January speaker, Chris Rimmer, you might want to check out <http://vtcostudies.blogspot.com/2013/02/hope-for-haitis-montane-forests.html>

## **Athol Bird and Nature Center Programs**

**Bark: Get to Know Your Trees: Michael Wojtech**

March 13, 7-8:30 p.m. Liberty Hall in the Athol Town Hall, 584 Main St.

**Bark: Get to Know Your Trees: Michael Wojtech (field walk).**

March 16, 9:30am-12:30pm. At Northfield Mountain.

*For more details, including meeting places, go to [www.millersriver.net](http://www.millersriver.net) or call (978) 248 9491.*

*Unless otherwise noted, indoor programs meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol.*

I think, with all the brouhaha over the Gyrfalcon, we could all use a little levity. Hence.....,

### **Arctic Dreams (A Play in One Act)**

*The curtain rises on a bucolic landscape in Western Massachusetts. It is late December, 2012. Two birds are sitting in a cottonwood just west of the Calvin Coolidge bridge.*

*“Aw, c’mon mom, there’s cars from Texas down there! Just let me make one more pass. It’s such fun!”*

“Now Rufous, dear, I think we’ve had quite enough shenanigans for the day. That Maryland couple look about ready to pass out and the Kestrels are starting to talk. Let’s put it away and preen your coverts for dinner.”

*“Aw mom, there’s nothing else to do. The other buteos are so boring and the Sharp-shin kids just wanna hang out at the feeders all day. Besides, I ain’t hungry. If I have to look at another lousy meadow vole I’m gonna throw up.”*

“Rufous, dear, you know the costume was to be used for the Raptor Rampage only. You had your chance to impress that Rough-legged girl from up north, and, from what I hear, you were most ungentlemanly toward the end of the night. No, these endless falcon fantasies are really quite unseemly, and teasing the poor Hoomans like this is quite beneath you.”

*“It’s no fantasy, mom. When I grow up I’m gonna BE a Gyr, just you wait and see. Just take a look down there- I’m famous already.”*

“Rufous! How dare you speak so! You will grow up to be an honest perch-and-drop buteo just like your father and I and all the jamaicensis family. We’ve had quite enough of this hurtling about the Honeypot for one winter. And besides, with your tail feathers starting to turn, you won’t be able to pull it off for much longer. I will *not* have my son the laughing stock of Cemetery Road.

Oh, and it’s pronounced ‘ger-falcon’, dear, not ‘jeer.’ The Harriers are a nice family, but we don’t need to speak like them. And didn’t your father expressly FORBID you to trim your primaries?”

*“I’ll trim whatever I want, mother. I’m running away to the tundra for good. I’m sick of you people.”*

“Well, if you do, you ungrateful little scamp, don’t expect a lemming buffet or anything. The Snowies got first dibs on those, and you do NOT, repeat NOT want to mess with a Snowy. No, young man, you will be just like all the other wannabe Gyrfalcons scratching a living off shorebird chicks and dreaming of trees. I guarantee you will be back here before you can say ‘ptarmigan,’ and if you expect your father and I to postpone our Florida retirement on your behalf, you are sadly mistaken!”

“Harlan, HARLAN! It’s about time you stopped slumming around over the transfer station like some albino Turkey Vulture and started parenting this rotten little miscreant. He’s been going downhill ever since your embarrassing Goshawk impersonation last fall. Oh look, see! He’s off again. Right over the top of that Connecticut Audi. Whitewashed it too, just for laughs!”

“Well that does it. I’m off to mother’s in the West Meadows. Feel free to call if and when you discover a neuron between the pair of you!”

*The birds exit: one stage right and the other stage left as dusk descends.*

*Curtain Falls.*



## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**Cozy Living for Less** (Energy efficient homes): *Katelyn Tsukada*

Wednesday, March 7th, 7-8:30pm.

**Salamander Tunnel Maintenance Day**

*A Saturday in March determined by the weather.*

**What Do Squirrels Do?** *Sarah Partan*

Saturday, March 9, 10am-12pm.

**Henry Thoreau's Journey West: A Travelogue:** *Corinne Smith*

Thursday, March 14, 7-8:30pm.

**Green House Tour:** *Sara Ross*

Saturday, March 16, 10am-12pm.

*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).*

## FACEBOOK

For those hip enough to do social media, don't forget that Hampshire Bird Club is on **Facebook**.

To simply take a look at the Facebook page, you can hit the Facebook symbol on the HBC Website at

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

To begin to interact with the HBC Facebook community, (post, comment etc.) you need to become a **member of Facebook**, which you can do at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com). If you are a member, just search for "Hampshire Bird Club" and press the "Like" button when you get to our page.

That's about it for now.

We will leave you with a summary and lots of detail on the Northampton CBC.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

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

## Northampton Christmas Count

This 79<sup>th</sup> year of the Northampton Christmas Count proved to be exceptional! Totaling 90 species, we fell one short of tying our all time high of 91 (set in 1999 and 2008). However, we had an impressive 5 new count species and high counts for 6 species. A record 133 of us took to the field - 24 owlers ventured out in the early hours of the morning and 8 people added to the tally by watching their feeders. We were pleased to welcome 19 new people to the count.

The new count species were: Ruddy Duck, Red-throated Loon, American Coot, Blue-headed Vireo and Hoary Redpoll. A count week Gyrfalcon was sighted December 13.

New high counts were recorded for Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Eastern Screech-Owl, Barred Owl, Horned Lark, and Savannah Sparrow.

Jan Ortiz and Janice Jorgensen  
(Detailed results follow, compiled by the editor).

# Northampton Count 2012 and Historical (unofficial)

High counts in bold

New species in bold italics

*Unusual Species\**

(Name) = no recent records, hopeful...

Species	2012	High Year	High Count	Species	2012	High Year	High Count
Gr'ter Wh'-fr'ed Goose	0	n.a.t.		Northern Harrier	9	2010	11
Greylag Goose	0	n.a.t.		Sharp-s'd Hawk	5	2007	22
Snow Goose	0	n.a.t.		Cooper's Hawk	21	2010	26
Brant	0	n.a.t.		Northern Goshawk	0	n.a.t.	
Canada Goose	4535	1999	7,977	<i>Red-s'd Hawk*</i>	1	n.a.t.	
Cackling Goose	0	n.a.t.		Red-tailed Hawk	130	2010	149
Red-breasted Goose	0	n.a.t.		Rough-l'd Hawk	0	1989	12
Mute Swan	7	2002	29	American Kestrel	3	1974	31
Wood Duck	9	2010	19	Merlin	2	2008	4
<b>Gadwall</b>	<b>6</b>	2012	6	<i>Gyr Falcon*</i>	<i>cw</i>	n.a.t.	
American Wigeon	0	n.a.t.		Peregrine Falcon	0	2011	4
Am. Black Duck	205	1992	286	Virginia Rail	0	n.a.t.	
Mallard	543	1994	1,338	<i>American Coot*</i>	1	n.a.t.	
Northern Pintail	1	1991	10	Killdeer	0	n.a.t.	
Green-winged Teal	0	n.a.t.		Wilson's Snipe	0	n.a.t.	
Canvasback	0	n.a.t.		<i>American Woodcock*</i>	1	n.a.t.	
Ring-necked Duck	0	n.a.t.		Ring-billed Gull	333	2006	1,088
Greater Scaup	0	n.a.t.		Herring Gull	13	1986	2,196
Lesser Scaup	0	n.a.t.		Iceland Gull	0	n.a.t.	
White-winged Scoter	0	n.a.t.		Lesser Black-backed Gull	0	n.a.t.	
Long-tailed Duck	0	n.a.t.		Glaucous Gull	0	n.a.t.	
Bufflehead	0	n.a.t.		Great Bl'-b'd Gull	1	1994	367
Common Goldeneye	6	1992	109	Rock Pigeon	616	1988	2,778
Barrow's Goldeneye	0	n.a.t.		Mourning Dove	1,990	1998	3,904
<b>Hooded Merganser</b>	<b>60</b>	2004	30	<b>E. Screech-Owl</b>	<b>94</b>	2006	82
Common Merganser	227	1991	180	Great Horned Owl	36	2003	48
Red-b'd Merganser	0	n.a.t.		(Snowy Owl)	0	nrr	
Ruddy Duck	2	n.a.t.		<b>Barred Owl</b>	<b>19</b>	2010	15
Ring-n'd Pheasant	1	1996	196	Long-eared Owl	<i>cw</i>	2004	3
Ruffed Grouse	2	1966	37	Short-eared Owl	0	n.a.t.	
Wild Turkey	197	2010	187	N. Saw-whet Owl	2	2006	5
<b>Red-throated Loon</b>	<b>1</b>	new		Selasphorus sp.	0	n.a.t.	
<i>Common Loon*</i>	1	n.a.t.		<b>Belted Kingfisher</b>	<b>24</b>	2001	23
Pied-billed Grebe	0	n.a.t.		Red-b'd Woodpecker	120	2010	159
Horned Grebe	0	n.a.t.		Yellow-b'd Sapsucker	0	2007	22
Do'-c'd Cormorant	1	n.a.t.		Downy Woodpecker	361	2004	452
(Great Cormorant)	0	nrr		Hairy Woodpecker	101	1974	192
Great Blue Heron	9	2006	27	Northern Flicker	35	1990	77
Green Heron	0	n.a.t.		Pileated Woodpecker	26	2010	34
Turkey Vulture				Eastern Phoebe	0	n.a.t.	
Bald Eagle	10	2009	9	Western Kingbird	0	n.a.t.	
adult	8			Northern Shrike	1	1995	15
immature	2			(White-eyed Vireo)	0	nrr	
				Continues, next page			

Species	2012	High Year	High Count	Species	2012	High Year	High Count
<b><i>Blue-headed Vireo</i></b>	<b>1</b>	2012	1	<b>Savannah Sparrow</b>	<b>61</b>	2000	46
Blue Jay	485	1977	1,686	Fox Sparrow	2	1943	20
American Crow	1,922	1997	5,836	Song Sparrow	222	1992	559
Fish Crow	1	2008	6	Lincoln's Sparrow	0	n.a.t.	
Common Raven	12	2010	13	Swamp Sparrow	2	1992	23
<b>Horned Lark</b>	<b>3,222</b>	1993	2,504	White-t'd Sparrow	329	2009	1,008
Black-c'd Chickadee	1,301	2005	2,096	White-c'd Sparrow	11	1999	9
Tufted Titmouse	403	2006	894	Dark-eyed Junco	3,503	2006	3,585
Red-b'd Nuthatch	52	1993	295	Oregon Junco	0	n.a.t.	
White-b'd Nuthatch	372	2005	489	Pink-sided Junco	0	n.a.t.	
Brown Creeper	21	1973	53	Lapland Longspur	1	1989	31
Carolina Wren	65	2006	96	Snow Bunting	5	1989	706
House Wren	0	n.a.t.		Northern Cardinal	580	2004	649
Winter Wren	5	1998	7	Indigo Bunting	0	n.a.t.	
Golden-c'd Kinglet	78	2001	332				
Ruby-c'd Kinglet	1	1973	6	Dickcissel	0	n.a.t.	
Eastern Bluebird	277	2006	474	Red-winged Blackbird	66	2008	304
Hermit Thrush	6	2005	9	(Eastern Meadowlark)	0	nrr	
American Robin	2,043	2006	7,555				
Gray Catbird	0	2005	5	Rusty Blackbird	0	2008	100
N. Mockingbird	101	1999	238	Common Grackle	0	2006	501
Brown Thrasher	0	n.a.t.		Brown-h'd Cowbird	61	2006	876
European Starling	4,587	1985	94,630	Baltimore Oriole	0	n.a.t.	
American Pipit	25	2010	66	Pine Grosbeak	81	1954	217
(Bohemian Waxwing)	0	nrr		Purple Finch	0	1976	221
Cedar Waxwing	193	2007	2,194	House Finch	427	1994	2,215
Yellow-r'd Warbler	0	n.a.t.		Red Crossbill	7	1969	25
Palm Warbler	1	n.a.t.		White-w'd Crossbill	0	1977	98
Eastern Towhee	0	n.a.t.		Common Redpoll	652	1959	1,069
Amer. Tree Sparrow	856	1992	2,637	<b>Hoary Redpoll</b>	<b>2</b>	2012	2
Chipping Sparrow	0	1974	11	Pine Siskin	1	1993	372
Clay-c'd Sparrow	0	n.a.t.		Amer. Goldfinch	667	2006	2,094
Field Sparrow	3	1982	58	Evening Grosbeak	0	1969	3,000
Vesper Sparrow	0	n.a.t.		House Sparrow	1,577	1961	2,662

In the event of equal high years, the most recent is shown.

**n.a.t.** = **now and then**. Species recorded in small numbers in fewer than five (5) years between 1999 and 2012. Some species (e.g. Pine Grosbeak), occur infrequently, but are not described as "n.a.t." since they irrupt in high numbers. This folksy terminology is used DELIBERATELY to avoid any confusion with official CBC terminology.

Some species seen rarely and not since 1999 have been excluded. These include Northern Bobwhite, Great Cormorant, American Bittern, Osprey, Sora, Black-headed Gull, Barn Owl, Snowy Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Black-backed Woodpecker, Loggerhead Shrike, Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Sedge Wren, Marsh Wren, Varied Thrush, Orange-crowned Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Pine Warbler, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Wilson's Warbler, Green-tailed Towhee, Spotted Towhee, LeConte's Sparrow, Harris's Sparrow, Brewers Blackbird, Bullocks Oriole, and Brambling.



## **Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.**

### **Amherst, Massachusetts**

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

Volume 29, No. 8

**April, 2013.**

Spring is in the air. Maple sugar season is winding down, big-box home improvement retailers are offering free workshops, the thrifty have already swapped out the snow tires (relying instead on prayer), and potholes are flirting shamelessly with our long-suffering front-ends (vehicular, that is). For those with leisure to venture into the outdoors, the lengthening days are bringing the long-dormant world around us to life. The skunk cabbage is up, pussy willows are in bloom, and buds have swelled to the bursting point.

In the wetlands of the valley, migrating waterfowl pause to rest and refuel: dabblers in the shallower sloughs, Wood Ducks in the wooded marshes, and mergansers in the open water. Red-wings and vultures are back, the first Tree Swallows are hawking insects, woodcocks are everywhere, and no doubt someone has already heard a phoebe. Grab the boots and get out there to enjoy it!

In this edition:

- **Programs and field trips**, (**Tom's hawk-watching** rescheduled to April 23, **Westover** to May 18),
- News of an **HBC Scholarship for Young Birders**,
- **Birding the Valley** (a Hitchcock program for young birders),
- **Introduction to Birding** (Hitchcock),
- Other **Hitchcock** and **Arcadia** Programs,
- News from the **Library** and **Nominating Committee**, and
- A few other odds and sods.

I hope you find some of it useful.

### **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, April 8 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Joan Walsh** contemplates **Breeding Bird Atlas II: The Next Steps**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

**Joan Walsh** has been watching and learning from birds since her first year as an intern on Great Gull Island in 1979. After five years working with Common and Roseate Terns on Great Gull, Joan moved on to study Wood Storks in east-central Georgia. The lure of seabirds brought her back to the shore: this time to the left coast. Joan studied a fantastic seabird colony in the Farallon Islands, and managed the Elephant Seal work on the islands. She then came back east to be Research Director at Cape May Bird Observatory, and to shepherd the first New Jersey Breeding Bird Atlas. Most recently, she has come back to her home state of Massachusetts to complete the second Breeding Bird Atlas for Mass Audubon.

Joan's life has all been about bird conservation, and becomes more so with every passing year. She is a travel junkie, yet lives in Concord, MA with her bemused husband, two ruffian sons, their cat Tiger, and a Golden Retriever; Micah Phelps.

### **COMING PROGRAMS**

**May 13, 2013. David Spector** (To be determined...)

**June 10, 2013. Joey Mason.** Kestrels.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### Saturday, March 9. Plum Island

Jesse Brownback, Carol & Jim Gabranski, Betsy Higgins, **Geoff LeBaron** as well as Dianne & Peter Wilkinson headed to the jewel of Massachusetts on the day after one of our major storms of the year. The weather was bright and sunny with lots of snow and strong NE winds in the morning, moderating during the afternoon. The tally for the day was 62 species.

#### Stops & Highlights:

1. **Joppa Flats:** Sunny skies, windy—and amazingly high water in Newburyport Harbor, completely covering the marsh right up to the road and Joppa property.
2. **Parker River N.W.R.:** A nice **Bald Eagle** on the dike at Hellcat, and a lovely if bird-free walk on the snow-covered boardwalk there, but our initial trek to the viewing platform at Lot 1 (where we were the last before everyone was shooed out due to the amazingly high tide and surf) was the most memorable thing of the day.
3. **Newburyport Industrial Park:** We found the spot and crabapple trees...but no Pine Grosbeaks.
4. **West Newbury and environs:** Cruising looking for the Cackling Geese, with no success—but a wonderful lunch stop at Dianne & Peter's house, highlighted by **Common Redpolls** coming in to their feeders just over our shoulders. Thanks guys!
5. **Cashman Park and Newburyport Municipal lot:** Great looks at surprisingly few sea ducks—but gorgeous **Long-tailed Ducks** and an amazing look at a **Red-necked Grebe** right below us from the walkway.
6. **Chain Bridge:** Fantastic views of amazingly pretty **Great Cormorants** in breeding plumage, plus unique looks at Common & Red-breasted mergansers. We were lucky to get in & out of the parking lot in between closures during testing of the swivel bridge!
7. **Salisbury Beach:** No crossbills or owls, but interesting views of an orbiting flock of **Dunlin**, one sentinel **Purple Sandpiper** on the breakwater, continuing enormous surf and the waterfowl exodus (mostly Long-tailed Ducks and Common Eider) through the channel from Newburyport Harbor. Lastly, a truly spectacular sunset.

Geoff LeBaron

#### Rhymes with Pigeon

A workman-like duck is the wigeon,  
 Ostentatious? Oh, no, not a smidgeon.  
 They dabble in muck  
 And have clearly no truck  
 With literature or religion.

Reports continue on Page 3 ►

## **Saturday, March 16. Connecticut Valley Waterfowl with Bob Bieda.**

The trip started on an amazing note. As we were getting ready to leave the Stop and Shop parking lot at 7:00 am, with the sun just starting to rise, two large, dark birds lifted off from behind the MacDonald's across the street. They were **Black Vultures**. They flew in a half circle and landed on the roof of the Potpourri Plaza. There the male began a courtship dance around the female. With wings spread and curved he side-stepped a half-circle around her, first in one direction then the other. She must have been impressed because mating followed. Hard to top that!

From there we went to Arcadia. In the morning light we had about 150 Common Mergansers on the Oxbow, a few **Green-winged Teal**, **Ring-necked Ducks** and Wood Ducks in the marsh. Two of the Wood Ducks were perched in the trees near the road.

At Great Pond in Hatfield there were about 40 Green-winged Teal, 20 **Pintail** and a few Wood Ducks and Hooded Mergansers. We also observed two active Bald Eagle nests, one near Arcadia and one in Hatfield and an occupied Peregrine nest on Mt. Sugarloaf.

On the Turner's Falls power canal there was an immature **Ruddy Duck** and a **Pied-billed Grebe**. The grand finish at Barton Cove in Gill produced many Ring-necked Ducks, Hooded Mergansers and Common Mergansers, a single male Red-breasted Merganser (we almost had all three mergansers in a scope view at once) and two **Lesser Scaup**. There were also three **Iceland Gulls** present.

Bob Bieda

For Coming Trips, please see page 4.

## **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

### **Scholarship for Young Birders!!**

HBC is offering financial help for young birders who would like to attend a conference or camp. Applications for the HBC Education Committee Youth Scholarship can be made by or on behalf of anyone ages 12 to 18 who is, or has a family member who is an HBC member.

For further information, please email the HBC Education Committee:  
[education@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:education@hampshirebirdclub.org)

A link to the scholarship application can be found on the HBC Homepage:  
[www.hampshirebirdclub.org/Application](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org/Application).

The scholarship is made possible entirely through the generous donations of HBC members.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

It takes a lot of work to keep the Hampshire Bird Club flourishing, and we need people to help with this work. The good news is that you don't have to shoulder the whole burden yourself. There are a variety of things that need to be done, and you can ease into it gently. We will be announcing a slate of board members and officers for 2010-2011 in the May newsletter and voting on the slate at the May meeting. The Committee this year is chaired by Scott Sumner. If you, or someone you know, would like to serve on the board, please let Scott know: [president@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:president@hampshirebirdclub.org), or (413) 256 5438.

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

**See also the Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule.**

*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.*

**\*Sunday, April 14. Ashley Reservoir: Early Warblers.** Half day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) looks for early migrants like Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Northern Waterthrushes. Meet in the Friendly's parking lot, near the Holiday Inn, close to Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7 a.m. (E)

Please note: this trip rescheduled from April 24

**Tuesday, April 23. Spring hawk watching at Goat Peak.** Half day. Tom Gagnon climbs the tower on Mount Tom State Reservation and looks for northbound raptors. Meet at the old park headquarters building at 9 o'clock for a 20 minute walk to the tower. Please call Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353) or email tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com. (M)

**\*Sunday, May 5. Hilltown Ramble.** All day. Bob Zimmermann (rzimmermann-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org, 413-585-0405) and Dave Gross (dgross-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org, 413-253-2897) visit migrant spots from Cummington through Moran Wildlife Management Area, to Savoy, Plainfield and Hawley. Some hiking will be done. Meet at the Northampton Stop & Shop on King Street at 6:30 a.m. to organize carpools. (M)

**Saturday, May 11. Quabbin Park and East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon and Larry Therrien lead their annual spring trip to the eastern side of the reservoir. Participation is limited and you must be a member of the Hampshire Bird Club. To register, call or email Tom (413-584-6353) or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com. Please register with Tom early. (M)

Please note also that the Westover trip, originally scheduled in June, has been rescheduled to May 18.

### *A Miss Manners Minute!*

(From the HBC Field Trip Guidelines)

Please call the trip leader at least a few days before the trip. It helps the leader plan the trip and you learn about any special arrangements or any change of plans.

Be **on time** at the meeting place. If you need to meet the group at the birding location, please offer to be early so the group can start promptly upon arrival. If you plan to leave the trip early, inform the leader in advance.

**Carpooling** is essential to allow the group to park when space is limited, reduce delays, reduce the likelihood of auto accidents and to reduce the chances of the group becoming separated. Carpooling from the valley is best. Carpooling once the trip location is reached is the next best option.

The participants (not the leader) are responsible for making all carpool arrangements.

## OVERNIGHT TRIPS

### **Last Chance** for Monhegan Island, 2013 with **Scott Surner** Memorial Day Weekend (Friday, May 24 to Monday, May 27)

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. 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 about the trip, contact **Scott Surner** ([president@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:president@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 256 5438). For cost information and/or to register, contact Mike Locher ([fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 585 5864)

#### **An Actual Courtroom Conversation**

**Attorney:** This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

**Witness:** Yes.

**Attorney:** And in what ways does it affect your memory?

**Witness:** I forget.

**Attorney:** You forget? Can you give us an example of something you forgot?

## LIBRARY

The stork has delivered a couple of brand new editions to our collection. They are:

- *Bird Sense* by Tim Birkhead,
- *Peterson Field Guide to Moths of Northeastern North America* by David Beadle, and
- *Hawks in Flight, Second Edition. The Flight Identification of North American Raptors* by Dunne, Sibley and Sutton.

*Also, we have new shelves in the Hitchcock Center. Check them out!*

**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.



## TWO HIGHLIGHTED HITCHCOCK COURSES

### **Birding The Valley**

#### **A Hitchcock Center Program for Young People**

**Dan Ziomek**, Local Birder, Birding Radio Program Host

For young people ages 8-13

5 Saturdays 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.: **April 20 & 27, May 4, 11 & 18**

Hitchcock Members: \$60/Non-members: \$75. Registration required.

Spring migration is the most exciting time of year to get out and see birds! Each week new species return from the south wearing their spring colors. Come explore some of the birding hot spots in the Valley. Beginners and knowledgeable birders are all welcome. Bring your own binoculars and a field guide if you have one. We will have binoculars available to borrow. Each week we will explore a different local site and meeting locations may vary. Heavy rain cancels a field trip.

AND

### **Introduction to Birding**

#### **A Hitchcock Center Program**

**Jan Ortiz and Katie Koerten**

**Evening Classes:** Thursdays, 7-9pm, **April 25 and May 2**

**Field Trips:** Saturdays, 8:30-11am, **April 27 and May 4** (rain dates: April 28 and May 5).

Hitchcock Members \$55/Non-members \$70. Registration required.

Ever wonder what that bird is at your feeder? Curious about the birds you spot on your favorite walk? This beginner's class introduces the world of birding at a leisurely and comfortable pace designed for everyone, including those with and without disabilities. The only requirement is an interest in learning about birds. Field trips will be held at accessible locations such as the boardwalk at Larch Hill Conservation Area, or on the nearby Norwottuck bike trail. During the evening classes we'll cover topics such as the use of binoculars and spotting scopes, how a field guide is organized, and, of course, how to identify birds. Bring binoculars if you have them. Limited to 12 participants. Members \$55/Non-members \$70. Registration required

## OTHER HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

### **Citizen Science: Henry Street Salamander Egg Mass Survey:** *Ted Watt*

A sunny afternoon in April, date determined by the weather.

### **Invasive Species Panel: A Community Dialogue:** *Various Panelists*

Wednesday, April 3, 7-9 pm

### **Margaret Morse Nice, Pioneer Amherst Ornithologist:** *David Spector*

Thursday, April 11, 7-8:30pm

*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).*

## A HIGHLIGHTED ARCADIA PROGRAM

### Conservation Challenges for Migratory Birds in the Northeast

**Mitch Hartley, USFWS**

Thursday April 4. 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

The life history of most migratory birds includes epic journeys north and south each year, when they face constant and countless challenges to their survival. The impact of human society on the landscapes we share with birds and other wildlife are unmistakable. However, many things we rarely think about can have a major impact on bird populations, including where our cities are located, the windows of our houses, our pets, and whether our food and fiber is produced locally or imported from other countries. We will look at some of the environmental challenges facing migratory birds--including some you may not realize--and ways of working together to help address them.

## OTHER ARCADIA PROGRAMS

**Dance of the American Woodcock:** *Alane Hartley, Russell Braen and others*

Park Hill Orchards, Easthampton. Sunday, April 7. 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

**Bird Sounds: - Songs and Calls:** *John Green and Patti Steinman*

Wednesday, April 10. 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

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

Quabbin Park. Saturday, April 27, 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Graves farm. Saturday, May 25. 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

**Great Blue Herons and Bald Eagles:** *James Sullivan and Patti Steinman*

Saturday, April 13. 3:00 – 6:00 p.m.

**Birding By Canoe:** *David McLain*

Saturday, May 4. 7:00 – 10:00 a.m.

*All programs require a fee unless otherwise stated. For more details of these and other programs go to [www.massaudubon.org](http://www.massaudubon.org) (select “Sanctuaries”, then “Choose a Sanctuary: Arcadia”) or call the sanctuary at the number below. To register for programs contact **Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary**, 127 Combs Rd., Easthampton MA 01027. Telephone **(413) 584-3009**.*

### Just Grouching

A percussive beast, the Ruffed Grouse,  
Musicality rivaling Strauss.  
His amorous thumping  
He hopes will be trumping  
All others, in search of a spouse.

That's all for this month.

Until next time, 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 29, No. 9

**May, 2013.**

### **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, May 13 at 7:30 p.m.**

**David Spector (and friends) present Winging and Singing: Songs for the Birds**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

A program of songs and photographs, inspired by birds and presented by **Kate O'Connor, Rico Spence, John Van de Graaff, Don Kroodsma, and David Spector**. One of us will sing, one will provide instrumental backup to the singer, one will have photographs projected, one will provide recordings of bird songs, and one will discuss the lyrics. Bird club members get only one guess as to who does what! There are birds in the sky, but you've never seen them winging or heard them singing the way you will in this program!

All the presenters are members of the Hampshire Bird Club, with about a century of membership among them!

### **COMING PROGRAMS**

**June 10, 2013. Joey Mason.** Kestrels.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The **Annual General Meeting** of the **Hampshire Bird Club Incorporated** will be held on **Monday, May 13** at the **Immanuel Lutheran Church** (867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst) at **7:30 p.m.** The meeting will immediately precede our program for this month.

The agenda for the meeting is to elect the Board of Directors for 2013-2014. The Nominating Committee has been hard at work and would like to propose the following nominees:

**President:** Scott Turner

**Vice-President/Program Chair:** Geoff LeBaron

**Treasurer:** Stephen Baker

**Membership Secretary:** Sue Emerson

**Communications Secretary:** Sharon Dombeck

**Board Members at large:**

Bruce Hart  
Mike Locher  
Jan Ortiz  
David Peake-Jones  
Josh Rose  
Jaap van Heerden

Other nominations will be accepted from the floor at the meeting.

## THANK YOU

**Janice Jorgensen** is ending her term as our Treasurer, and **Donna Rickerby** will be handing over the reins as Communications Secretary. We are grateful to both of them.

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

**Saturday, May 11. Quabbin Park and East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon and Larry Therrien lead their annual spring trip to the eastern side of the reservoir. Participation is limited and you must be a member of the Hampshire Bird Club. To register, call or email Tom (413-584-6353) or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com. Please register with Tom early. (M)

**Wednesday, May 15. Mount Holyoke.** Half day. Tom Gagnon leads a hike up Mt. Holyoke in search of Cerulean Warblers and other migrants. Plan to stop along the way to look at some of the flora of Mt. Holyoke. Meet at 7 a.m. at the gate of Mt. Holyoke. For information call or email Tom (413-584-6353) or email tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com. (M)

**Saturday, May 18. 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 is now CLOSED.

**\*Sunday, May 19. Northfield.** Half day. Eric Huston (734-355-2933) searches for migrating warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other avifauna around the Northfield Public Golf Course and other sites in the area. Meet at the parking lot of the Greenfield Big Y (just west of exit 26 off I-91) at 6:45 a.m. (M)

### Overnight Trip

**Friday, May 24 – Monday, May 27. Monhegan Island.** Overnight trip. Scott Sumner leads the Hampshire Bird Club's pilgrimage to Monhegan Island. Not only is the island charming, but the numbers and variety of migrating birds can be astonishing. Registration is now CLOSED.

**Wednesday, June 5. October Mountain and Tyringham.** All day. Ed Neumuth goes to one of his favorite spots (October Mountain) looking for Mourning Warblers and other local specialties. Bring lunch and be prepared to hike. Call or email Ed (413-844-4961) or eneamuth-at-gmail-dot-com for meeting time and place. The trip is limited to 7 participants. (M)

### *A Miss Manners Minute*

(from the HBC Field Trip Guidelines)

Please **share costs** with courtesy. We recommend a cost of \$0.50 cents per mile plus tolls and parking to be shared equally among the driver and all passengers, but the rate for your vehicle is entirely up to the driver and passengers. Please agree on a mileage rate or flat contribution BEFORE the trip leaves to avoid misunderstandings. Please bring cash or checks and be prepared to reimburse the driver at the time of the trip.

While birding, please **stay close to the group** unless you have some specific reason to separate, and inform the leader if you are doing so. This reduces delays and distractions for the entire group.

Please **call the trip leader at least a few days** before the trip. It helps the leader plan the trip and you learn about any special arrangements or any change of plans.

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### Help for Young Birders!!

HBC is offering financial help for young birders who would like to attend a conference or camp. Applications for the HBC Education Committee Youth Scholarship can be made by or on behalf of anyone ages 12 to 18 who is, or has a family member who is an HBC member.

A link to the scholarship application can be found on the HBC Homepage:

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

For further information, please email the HBC Education Committee:

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

The scholarship is made possible entirely through the generous donations of HBC members.

### The Quabbbin Eagle Count

During the annual Quabbin eagle count, (part of an annual state-wide Bald Eagle count) on April 5, counters identified 16 adult eagles, one (1) juvenile, and six (6) active nests.

Henceforward, the count will be conducted in the spring, as opposed to its traditional timing of mid-winter.

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**1493: The Columbian Ecological Exchange:** *Charles Mann*

Tuesday, May 14, 7-9 p.m.. Free. Registration required.

**Birding By Ear at Fitzgerald Lake:** *John Green*

Saturday, May 18, 7-10 a.m. Fee.

**Facing the Climate Crisis: Living in Hope:** *Rev. Margaret Bullit-Jonas*

Thursday, May 30, 7-8:30 p.m. Free, donation suggested.

**Morning Nature Walk for Seniors:** *John Green*

Wednesday, June 5, 9-11 a.m. Free. Registration required.

*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 go to [www.hitchcockcenter.org](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org).*

### Check-out\* Peregrines at the Library!

Hi folks.

The UMass library peregrines are nesting. There are four eggs. The webcam has just been activated at:

<http://www.library.umass.edu/falcons>

Enjoy!

Jaap

\*Just want to let you know that Jaap had no part in the title. It is entirely my fault. Ed.

## ARCADIA PROGRAMS

### **Early Morning Bird Walks:** *Guest leaders*

Arcadia: Saturdays, May 4 and 11; 7:00 – 8:30. Monday to Friday, May 13-17; 6:30 to 8:00 a.m.

Arcadia and Graves Farm: Saturday, May 18; 7:00 to 8:30 a.m.

### **Wildflowers at Lynes Sanctuary:** *Connie Parks and Janet Bissell*

At Marion Sherman Lynes Sanctuary. Wednesday, May 8; 9 a.m. to noon.

### **Wildflowers at Graves Farm:** *Connie Parks and Janet Bissell.*

Wednesday, May 15. 9 a.m. to noon.

### **Writers In the Wood: Drawing on a Sense of Place:** *Kathryn Petrucelli*

Saturday, May 18; 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday, May 25; 10 a.m. to noon.

### **Spring Ephemeral Boreal Plant and Tree Walk:** *Aimee Gelinas*

At Tamarack Hollow, Windsor. Saturday, May 18; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Wildflowers at High Ledges:** *Connie Parks and Janet Bissell.*

Wednesday, May 22. 9 a.m. to noon.

*All programs require a fee unless otherwise stated. For more details of these and other programs go to [www.massaoudubon.org](http://www.massaoudubon.org) (select "Sanctuaries", then "Choose a Sanctuary: Arcadia") or call the sanctuary at the number below. To register for programs contact **Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary**, 127 Combs Rd., Easthampton MA 01027. Telephone (413) 584-3009.*

## **Scott Weidensaul: Coffee and Birds**

**Lyman Hall, First Churches, 129 Main Street Northampton.**

**Wednesday, May 8, 2013. 6:30 p.m.**

The impact of coffee farming on neo-tropical migratory bird habitat in Central and South America  
Scott is the author of more than two dozen books on natural history, including "Of a Feather: A Brief History of American Birding" and the Pulitzer Prize-nominated "Living on the Wind" about bird migration,

Coffee will be served at 6:30. The presentation will begin at 7:00. Free.

## **Eyes on Owls: Marcia Wilson**

**Saturday, May 11**

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Office, Hadley**

Everyone loves owls! Yet how many of us have ever seen a live owl up close? Perhaps you've glimpsed the shadowy form of a Great Horned Owl in the headlights as you've traveled a back road at night or squinted at a distant Snowy Owl in a winter field? Noisy crows in a white pine tree? Have they found an owl?

**Where:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Regional Office  
300 Westgate Center Road, Hadley, MA 01035

**When:** The presentation will be offered at 11:30 a.m. AND AGAIN at 1:30 p.m.  
Questions: Call Debra at 313 253 8674

**The following is a paid presentation for the Syri-Sync vocal learning system. Syri-sync is not endorsed by the Hampshire Bird Club, any of its unpaid lackeys, or any part of its Pioneer Valley media hegemony.**

*Hi There. I'm Robin Yewblind and I'm here to talk to all you song-birds about bird-song. Bird-song? That's for the birds, right?*

*No, but seriously birds, I want to tell you about a revolutionary new way of learning bird song that will make you wonder how you ever got along without it. It's the Syri-sync system from Bird Word: the world's first patented song-learning system for fledglings.*

*Now I get at least twenty tweets every day....((aside) "'Tweets'; get it bird friends, 'tweets'").... from birdy moms out there, worried about how the little darlings are going to learn the right tune, so to speak.*

*I mean, who has the time anymore? Let's face it, every year, your kids are being born into an increasingly competitive world. It's not enough to just feed 'em up and tip 'em out anymore, right? You've got the honors avionics group at school, after-school GPS practice, and let's not forget those plumage enhancements that they just don't seem to be able to do without.*

*Ever wonder how they're going to get the song-learning in as well?*

*Now we all know the old way. Listen hard to dad and hope it rubs off., but let's be honest now, show of wings if you have ever wondered, whether dad is really 100% committed to your nest? Is he really around enough for effective learning to take place? Yeah, I know. Nothing against Dad, mind you., but maybe more of a lover than a teacher, right? Now, no judgements here. I mean, a show of wings if you have thought of the odd extra-pair excursion from time to time?*

*OK, OK. Settle down ladies!*

*So, what's the solution? The solution is the new, patented song-learning system of Syri-sync.*

*No tapes, no acoustical isolation labs, just dad's voice but without all the FUSS. Here's how it works.*

*The Syri-sync unit is powerful, compact, and fits over your chick's head with the patented bio-degradable elastic harness. The voice selection unit slides comfortably into the ear canal and the directional mike, solar collector, and harness vanish into the face and crown plumage with the aid of our revolutionary field guide color-matching technology. As soon as Syri-sync picks up Dad's voice print, it locks in and presents that voice and that voice alone to the neonate's developing brain for at least three weeks.*

*Dad meets an untimely demise? Aw shucks. Syri-sync will extrapolate a realistic set of variations to keep the whole thing lifelike and true-to-nature.*

*Problem knowing who dad is? Physique and voice desired from DIFFERENT males? No problem. You can reset up to five times with Syri-sync to the individual of your choice. And resetting looks just like de-lousing, so real Dad need never know.*

*So what are you waiting for? Syri-sync can be yours today. Just send the first of three annual payments of one healthy first-born offspring to the address on your screen.*

*And don't forget to ask about the special deals available on our cow-bird and flycatcher packages.*

*For Syri-sync, I'm Robin Yewblind signing off, and reminding you that with Syri-sync, singing is a cinch!*

*That's all for now.*

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 29, No. 10

**June, 2013.**

June is upon us, and with it, the club takes a bit of a hiatus from programs. Thank you to all who have worked throughout the year to keep our birding community thriving and connected. Field trips will continue through the summer, and, before you know it, the first newsletter of the new year will be upon you. I hope your summer is relaxing and filled with birds, or some other enjoyable diversion. Meanwhile, here is the June newsletter. It has:

- details of the **program** this month, **field trip reports** and the **schedule** for the next couple of months,
- the new **Board of Directors**,
- news from the **Education Committee**,
- **breeding bird survey** and Neighborhood **Nestwatch** opportunities,
- **Hitchcock** programs, and
- a few other excrescences from my hard drive.

I hope you find some of it useful.

## **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, June 10 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Joey Mason** presents **Keeping Company With Kestrels**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Joey will share her extensive research and experiences with American Kestrels in southeastern Massachusetts during the past 23 years. She will describe how she monitors her nest boxes and what she has found in them through the years, including things which were *not* kestrels. She will present evidence about what these raptors eat and why they often prefer to nest in cranberry bog habitats. These small falcons are in decline in Massachusetts, and Joey will provide insight and speculation on why this may be happening. She will mention the projects she is working on to help birds of prey in her area. Her presentation will include a live male Merlin and Kestrel for us to see up close. Take a look at [www.keepingcompanywithkestrels.org](http://www.keepingcompanywithkestrels.org) to read more.

In the early 1980s **Joey Mason** got hooked on watching birds of prey during fall migration after numerous visits to Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania. In 1985 she learned how to band hawks in Cape May, NJ, where she continues to band raptors for the Cape May Raptor Banding Project in the fall. Joey learned much about falcon behavior while working on the peregrine recovery team for the Colorado Division of Wildlife during the summers of 1987 and 1988. With the help of Mike Maurer in 1989 she initiated a nest box project for American Kestrels in southeastern Massachusetts on properties owned by cranberry growers. Joey has been banding young and adult American Kestrels, and monitoring kestrel nest boxes ever since. In 2000, she spearheaded the Raptor Retrofit Project to prevent osprey electrocutions on privately owned utility poles, and has been responsible for placement of numerous osprey nesting platforms. Joey has just completed a report on better management practices for landfills, to prevent raptors from getting injured by methane burners.



## COMING PROGRAMS

Despite the toils of our Program Chair, Geoff LeBaron, a recent cancellation means that the schedule for 2013-2014 is not quite final yet. You'll be able to read the schedule for next year in the September newsletter, which will get to you in August.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### Hilltown Ramble. Sunday, May 5

Five hearty souls, led by **David Gross** and **Bob Zimmermann**, braved spectacular clear skies and lovely spring temperatures for a spin around the hill towns. Five (now reliable) **Fish Crows** made their presence known at the Stop & Shop parking lot as the group assembled. Cummington Marsh produced 100 Red-winged Blackbirds and the absolute highlight birds of the trip: a pair of very cooperative **American Bitterns**. The male (in full breeding plumage) called his wonk-a-chonk song while we were observing the pair for over 20 minutes. Also at the marsh were eight Yellow Warblers plus Swamp and Song Sparrows and a number of other species including the day's only Baltimore Oriole.

At the marsh along Spruce Corner Road the group saw and heard a number of species including a pair of **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers**. At Judy Williams' farm in Ashfield, we found lone Rose-breasted and **Evening Grosbeaks** along with a large contingent of Tree Swallows and two laggard Dark-eyed Juncos. As the day wore on, avian activity diminished, but near Burnett Pond in the Savoy State Forest we heard two Broad-winged Hawks chatting back and forth. Moran Wildlife Management Area was very quiet at 4 in the afternoon, save for three Blue Jays keeping watch over the three remaining trip participants as they beat the bushes for one last Little Brown Job.

David Gross



### Mount Holyoke. Wednesday, May 15.

Twelve people, led by Tom Gagnon, took part in the club's annual walk to the top of Mt. Holyoke via the main road, enjoying birds and butterflies along the way. Highlights included nice looks at a pair of **Barred Owls** that Tom called into view, a **Swainson's Thrush**, a **Winter Wren** singing his little heart out, three **Worm-eating Warblers** and a **Cerulean Warbler**, heard singing near the top of the mountain. On the walk back down the hill we enjoyed looks at our first Eastern Wood Pewee of the season.

Tom Gagnon



### Westover AFB. Saturday, May 18.

This was the first time in several years that the trip was in May instead of June and it was interesting to compare the difference. The activity and numbers of **Bobolink** were greater while the numbers and activity of the **Upland Sandpipers** were much less. **Eastern Meadowlark** numbers were down a little and **Grasshopper Sparrow** activity was similar to that seen in the past.

Upland Sandpiper numbers have steadily decreased over the past several years from 150 adults in 2003 to 81 in 2012 according to official Mass. Natural Heritage June surveys. A possible clue as to the cause was a playful group of mammal pups (either red foxes or coyotes) we observed. I imagine that, as adults, they could cause problems for ground nesting birds. Special thanks to Eric Huston, who worked on Westover surveying birds last summer, for giving us interesting breeding details and to Drew Milroy, of the Westover staff, for coordinating the trip.

Bob Bieda

## **Monhegan Island. May 24 – May 27.**

Wet, cold, windy and warblers on the beach!

105 species for the weekend, 21 species of Warblers. **White-eyed Vireo, Philadelphia Vireo, Summer Tanager** and lots of flycatchers. The big event was lots of American Redstarts, Magnolia, Canada, Wilson's and Blackpoll Warblers...everywhere.!

Scott Sumner

## **COMING TRIPS**

**Wednesday, June 5. October Mountain and Tyringham.** All day. Ed Neumuth goes to one of his favorite spots (October Mountain) looking for Mourning Warblers and other local specialties. Bring lunch and be prepared to hike. Call or email Ed (413-844-4961) or enenumuth-at-gmail-dot-com for meeting time and place. The trip is limited to 7 participants. (M)

**Wednesday, June 12. Windsor and Savoy Forest.** All day. Ed Neumuth explores a relatively unbirded part of the Berkshires looking for, among other things, Mourning Warblers. Bring lunch and be prepared to hike. Call or email Ed (413-844-4961) or enenumuth-at-gmail-dot-com for meeting time and place. The trip is limited to 7 participants. (M)

**\*Saturday, June 29. Birding by Ear.** Half day. Back by popular demand, Don Kroodsma will head to a birdy part of Amherst to listen for early morning bird song (and he promises to bring recording equipment too, for anybody who wants to see the master in action). Call Don (413-247-3367) to get meeting details. (E)

*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.*

## **EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

### **Help for Young Birders!!**

HBC is offering financial help for young birders who would like to attend a conference or camp.

Applications for the HBC Education Committee Youth Scholarship can be made by or on behalf of anyone ages 12 to 18 who is or has a family member who is an HBC member.

A link to the scholarship application can be found on the HBC Homepage:

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

For further information, please email the HBC Education Committee:

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

The scholarship is made possible entirely through the generous donations of HBC members.

## **Board of Directors**

Almost unbeknownst to the assembled membership at Immanuel Lutheran Church, HBC held its Annual General Meeting on May 13 at 7:30 p.m. Not coincidentally, this was only minutes before the wonderful program of songs and photographs presented by David Spector and friends.

There was a single, but critical item of business on the agenda, and this was to elect the Board of Directors to serve during the 2013-2014 club year. A quorum was successfully lured into the auditorium, with the assistance of some stellar refreshments, courtesy of Sally, Helga and those who gave of their time to prepare them. After a threatened filibuster was narrowly averted, and a couple of poison-pill amendments died in committee, the following slate of folks were appointed without opposition.

**President:** Scott Surner

**Vice-President/Program Chair:** Geoff LeBaron

**Treasurer:** Stephen Baker

**Membership Secretary:** Sue Emerson

**Communications Secretary:** Sharon Dombeck

**Board Members at large:**

Bruce Hart  
Mike Locher  
Jan Ortiz  
David Peake-Jones  
Josh Rose  
Jaap van Heerden

Please note that Sharon and Stephen are joining the Board for the first time, and are most welcome.

We say goodbye to Janice Jorgensen and Donna Rickerby. Janice has been our Treasurer for several years and done a superb job of both managing our finances, and presenting the financial picture to the board in a way that allows us to understand its every nuance. Donna has documented our proceedings with reliability and precision, as well as advising us on a number of important issues facing the club.

## **BROAD BROOK COALITION**

**Introduction to the Broad Brook Gap Parcel: Northampton's Newest Conservation Area.**

**Co-Sponsored with Laurel Park**

**Sunday, June 9 at 9:30 AM.**

Laurie Sanders, a naturalist who did an ecological assessment of the Kubosiak property, reported that the land supports seven different habitat types, including one of the most unusual swamp forests in Northampton. The area also includes a marsh that contains some of the best black bear habitat in the state and includes a stretch of Broad Brook that is upstream from known habitat for three state-listed freshwater mussels, including one that is federally endangered, according to Sanders.

The citizens of Northampton, through their Community Preservation Funds, state land grant funds, and generous donations to the Broad Brook Coalition, helped to bring this parcel into the public domain.

Meet at Normal Hall, Laurel Park: Routes 5 & 10, Northampton, near the State Police Barracks, for introductory remarks, then the group will walk across Coles Meadow Road to the new conservation parcel.

## **Backyard Citizen Scientists Wanted**

### **Neighborhood Nestwatch**

### **The Smithsonian Institution and US Forest Service (at UMass)**

The **Neighborhood Nestwatch** citizen science program seeks to partner citizens and scientists to gather data about birds nesting in residential backyards. As urban sprawl reduces bird habitats across the region at an alarming rate, it is important to learn how birds make use of backyards, and how these habitats can best be used to protect them.

The project offers the opportunity to learn about bird biology in your own backyard. If you live in the Springfield, MA area (Westfield, Chicopee, Longmeadow, Amherst, Northampton area), then you are eligible to participate in a mentored experience in which scientists visit your backyard once every summer to band birds and help you find nests. They'll also teach you how to keep track of the banded birds, collect nesting data and monitor year-to-year survival for scientific study. Ultimately, Neighborhood Nestwatch will provide scientific data and public awareness to aid in the associated goals of conservation and responsible growth.

If you are interested in participating in this citizen-science project, email Susannah Lerman: [slerman@cns.umass.edu](mailto:slerman@cns.umass.edu) or call: 413 545 5447.

## **Volunteers Needed**

### **Breeding Bird Survey: Department of Conservation and Recreation**

### **Quabbin Reservoir**

DCR is looking for volunteers to assist with an annual breeding Bird Survey they conduct in the following areas at Quabbin: Gate 40, Prescott Peninsula, and Dana Common.

I imagine that participants need to be able to identify bird song to species. Volunteers will work for two (2) days from about 5 AM to 7:30 AM. The dates are in "early June" but otherwise not specified (perhaps flexible?).

If you are interested, please contact Jillian Pereira. Phone (508) 792-7423 extension 206; or email [Jillian.Pereira@state.ma.us](mailto:Jillian.Pereira@state.ma.us)

Jim Lafley

## **HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS**

### **Citizen Science: Firefly Watch: *Ted Watt***

Wednesday, June 12, 7-9:30pm

### **Ants!: *Elizabeth Farnsworth and Aaron Ellison***

Saturday, June 22, (rain date June 23), 12-2:30pm

### **Massachusetts Walking Tour: Lawn Concert**

Saturday, June 22, 6-9pm

### **Tracking Intensive: *Sue Morse***

(Spans October, 2013 - April 2014)

*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

Klara Grape  
 Linda Abrams  
 Scott Schuark & Roxanne Bogart  
 Deborah Rubin  
 Anne & Rocky Adriance  
 Judy Alfano

Easthampton.  
 Amherst.  
 Amherst.  
 Amherst.  
 Leverett.  
 Ware.

## 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.

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 30, No. 1

### September, 2013.

September draws nigh. For those of us whose lives are rooted in the human rhythms of school, work and vacation, the playtime of summer is narrowing and the serious work of earning, studying and, well, not-vacationing looms. Some, of course, march to the beat of a different drummer. Nighthawks are already on the move, bobbing and weaving their way through the last midge swarms of summer to points south. Young shorebirds have already touched down at South Beach and are on their way to the wild coasts of central- and south- America, only now followed by their sage and more world-weary parents. The hawks will be swirling southward soon, and the warblers are beginning to feel the pull of the tropics.

**Hampshire Bird Club** is girding its collective loins for another year! We have a **new meeting time** (read on, dear member), a wonderful **new schedule of programs**, a great slate of **fall field trips**, and a whole year of shared birding experiences in store. All we need is you and a small portion of your hard-earned wealth. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, the engine that keeps our birding community going is our membership, and the pragmatic expression of your undoubted commitment to HBC is the check you hand to the Membership Secretary at the September meeting, or place in an envelope in response to this missive.

Peruse the Program Schedule and the Fall Field Trip Schedule, follow the handy-dandy Renewal Checklist at the end of this letter, and we will see you on September 9!

### NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, September 9 at 7:15 p.m.\***

**Barbara Volkle** delves into the nooks and crannies of **Massbird**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

**\*New Program Time**

**MassBird** describes itself as follows at [MassBird.com](http://MassBird.com):

*"MASSBIRD is a mailing list dedicated to the interchange of wild bird and birding information relevant to Massachusetts and New England. This list is intended for the discussion of local issues - such as birding locations, local conditions, reports of local rarities and unusual sightings, pelagic trip reports, legislative alerts, events and speakers in the area, and calls for volunteers in research and census activities."*

Maybe MassBird is already an integral part of your birding world and you are curious about what makes it tick. Maybe you visit occasionally and could use some information on how to better use its resources. Maybe you thought Massbird was an ornithological dieting site. Whatever the source of your curiosity, you should come hear **Barbara Volkle**, who IS Massbird, delve into the history and innermost secrets of this extraordinary forum.

## COMING PROGRAMS

- October 21, 2013. Shawn Carey.** Epic Migrations.  
**November 11, 2013. John Van de Graaff.** Birds Across Europe II.  
**December 9, 2013. Members' Meeting.**  
**January 13, 2014. Don Kroodsmma.** Bird by Bird by Bike III.  
**February 10, 2014. Geoff LeBaron.** Hummingbirds at Home.  
**March 10, 2014. Chris Dwyer.** Common Eider Die-off in MA.  
**April 14, 2014. David Spector.** Bird-worthy Authors of the CRV.  
**May 12, 2014. Joan Walsh.** Birds and Agriculture.  
**June 9, 2014. Steve Kress.** Puffins and other Seabirds.

## MEETINGS TO BEGIN AT 7:15

Rumblings began around the club about a year ago about the start times of our meetings. More than a few people could not stay till the end of some of our programs, and we heard concerns from families that the programs ended too late for youngsters to attend.

We looked into this further through a survey sent out one year ago in which we asked you to tell us whether you would be more or less likely to attend if meetings were held earlier. The results were quite clear. One hundred and eight (108) people turned in surveys. Of these folks, 48 (44%) said they would be more likely to attend if meetings were held earlier, 48 (44%) were neutral on the idea and 12 (11%) said they would be less likely to attend.

The board considered this at a recent meeting and decided on a modest change in start-time. We hope this will help the majority of members come to more meetings and stay for longer. We apologize to those who preferred 7:30 and hope you will give the new time a fair go.

## Newsletter: On-line or Hard Copy?

The membership form asks you to select either “on-line” access to the newsletter this year, or the “hard copy” delivered to you via the United States Postal Service.

### “Why choose “on-line?”

The on-line newsletter reduces postage and printing costs for the club, and also the wear and tear upon the editor and his mailing minions.

### “How does on-line access work?”

The newsletter is posted on the HBC Website. Each month, you get an email notification, with a link to the Website, whence you can download our humble publication at your leisure. You need to give us an email address on the membership form in order to get the on-line reminder.

### “What if I encounter technical difficulties?”

If “on-line” does not work for you, a simple communication with the Membership Secretary or Editor will get you back on the “hard copy” mailing list.

### “What are the software requirements?”

The on-line newsletter is in Portable Document Format (.pdf). You will need .pdf-reading software. If you do not have it already, Adobe Acrobat is available FREE via a link at the club Website.

### “How do I sign up?”

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

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

Yes, please! 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! Thank you!

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

Please see the enclosed **Fall Field Trip Schedule**.

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### Please Contribute!

The Education Committee is now well-established activity and thriving. There were a number of community events last club year, and some exciting things in the offing for this for year.

The committee is accepting applications for scholarships to support youth up to 18 years in pursuing bird-related educational opportunities. Please follow the [Application](#) link from the HBC Homepage to download an application form or contact a member of the committee

If you want to participate in the Committee, contact any one of its members: **Janice Jorgensen, Scott Surner, Jan Ortiz, Bruce Hart, and Tom Gagnon**. You can reach them collectively at [education@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:education@hampshirebirdclub.org).

Please consider a financial contribution to the work of the committee, which you can make via the membership form.

## Broad Brook Coalition Celebrates Its 25th Anniversary!

The Broad Brook Coalition, which manages the 800-acre Fitzgerald Lake Conservation Area (FLCA) for the City of Northampton, will mark its 25th anniversary with two special events this month.

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**Saturday, September 21, 2013: 9:30-11:30 a.m.**

**Grande Promenade** through the Fitzgerald Lake Conservation Area, from the North Farms Road Entrance to Coles Meadow Road, via the Dam, the Wildlife Blind, and the New Broad Brook Gap Parcel. Meet at the North Farms Road entrance to the FLCA at 9:30. Rain date: Sunday, September 22, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

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**Sunday, September 29, 2013: 4:00 p.m.**

**"The Social Black Bear"** with **Benjamin Kilham**, bear behaviorist, conservationist and author.

At the Florence Civic Center, corner Main and Park Streets, Florence (near Lilly Library) (no actual bears scheduled to appear, but you never know.....),

*followed by*

**5:00 p.m. Reminiscences and Awards, and**

**5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Reception with Refreshments and Celebratory Beverages.**

**All are welcome!**

## NEXT BOARD MEETING

Board Meetings of the Hampshire Bird Club are open to all members. The next one is on Thursday, September 12 at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst.



**Hawks on Mt. Tom: A Family-Oriented Public Program**  
**September 22, 2013: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
**Mt. Tom Reservation, Holyoke, MA.**

Featured activities:

- **Eyes on Owls:** Mark and Marcia Wilson (Two Presentations),
- **Live Raptors with Tom Ricardi** (12:00 NOON) at the Visitors Center,
- **The WOW Express** traveling educational program from Conte Refuge,
- **Hawk-watching** at Bray Tower and Goat Peak 10 AM to 2 PM, and
- Several other family-oriented activities such as **crafts, face-painting** etc.

For further details, please email Patti Steinman at Arcadia: [psteinman@massaudubon.org](mailto:psteinman@massaudubon.org).

From the North: take exit 18 off I-91 South, and proceed South on Route 5 toward Holyoke. Pass the power station on the left, the Delaney House Restaurant on the right, and then begin looking for Reservation Road on the right (signs for the reservation as well). Proceed through the park entrance and follow signs for the visitors center.

From Easthampton and points WEST, you can enter the park opposite the Log Cabin restaurant on Holyoke Street/Mountain Road (Rt 141) between Easthampton and Holyoke.

**Another Plug for the Saw-whet trip....**

**Saturday, November 2, Saw-whet Owl Banding. Evening.**

Janice Jorgensen and Sue Emerson will join Strickland Wheelock and his crew at Lookout Rock in Northbridge, MA for an evening of netting and banding Saw-whet Owls. Visitors help check the nets for owls every 45 minutes, then observe as crew members weigh, measure, and band the owls. Visitors often participate in the releasing the owls. Bring a camera to record a great evening in the outdoors and, with luck, an owl or two.

More information will be available at the September meeting. This trip is limited to 7 participants (first-timers given preference) and costs \$20 per person. For information and to register call Sue Emerson ( 413-588-6900) and to reserve a place send a non-refundable check for \$20 payable to "HBC" to HBC Treasurer, C/O Stephen Baker, 287 Williamsburg Road , Williamsburg, MA 01096.

**Please Join or Renew Your Membership NOW** using this handy-dandy checklist

- ☐ Your **membership status** is shown on the cover page. Check to see if you owe dues this year.
- ☐ Complete the **Membership Form** (including your membership contribution for this year) and its reverse side (the **Field Trip Release Form**),
- ☐ Throw in a donation for the work of the **Education Committee** if you wish,
- ☐ Fill out the **HBC Member Skills Survey**, and
- ☐ **Mail** the above forms (with your check if needed) to the address on the Membership Form, or bring them along on September 9th.

**Please renew before October 1 by mail, or at the September meeting. Thanks!**

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)

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: 2013-2014

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

Name(s):	<b>How would you like to get the HBC newsletter?</b> (For the "online" version, we need to have an email address for you).  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Download from the HBC Website</b> <b>(club will send reminders), OR</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Send me the newsletter via US mail</b>	
Address:		
City:		
State: ZIP:		
Home phone:		
Other phone (whose?):		
E-mail(s):	<b>Please check any activities listed below which you would like to participate:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally provide refreshments <input type="checkbox"/> Field Trip Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Lead field trips <input type="checkbox"/> Share info. on birding locations  <input type="checkbox"/> Education Committee  <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)	
<b>May we publish your contact information in the annual club membership list (sent to members)?</b>		<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>May we contact you via email with time-sensitive information such as cancellations, impromptu trips etc.?</b>		<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

Please choose a level of membership below. Our supporting membership categories are essential in financing our outstanding programming. **All membership contributions are tax deductible** (if you itemize your deductions).

### MEMBERSHIP - REGULAR: Tax deductible

Student @ \$5.00	\$
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	\$

### OUTREACH ACTIVITY

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

# FIELD TRIP RELEASE FORM: 2013-2014

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 between August 31, 2013 and October 1, 2014.

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

All participating family members, please sign and print name:

- 1)..... print name▶ .....
- 2)..... print name▶ .....
- 3)..... print name▶ .....
- 4)..... print name▶ .....

## Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Fall Field Trip Schedule, 2013

*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

**\*Tuesday, September 17. Mount Tom: Hawk Migration.** Half day. Tom Gagnon goes hawk watching at Goat's Peak, at the Mt. Tom State Reservation. Meet at 9 a.m. at the old park headquarters parking area, and expect a 20 minute walk to the tower. If hawks are moving, the trip could last until 3 p.m., but participants may leave earlier on their own. Bring lunch or a snack if you plan to stay, and dress for the weather. Call or email Tom (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com) for information and to register. (E)

**\*Saturday, September 28. Migrants along the River.** Half day or more. Joshua Rose prowls the farmland of Hadley and Northampton for fall migrants. Meet at the old Bri-Mar Stables (69 Moody Bridge Road; Hadley). Then, depending on interest and energy, progress through the Honeypot, the East Meadows, Aqua Vitae Road, and back to Cook's Farm for ice cream. Contact Josh (413-835-0093) for information. (E)

### OCTOBER

**Saturday, October 12. Quabbin Reservoir: Fall Migrants.** All day. Tom Gagnon leads his annual fall trip to the Quabbin to see southbound birds, late season flowers, butterflies, and mammals. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members. Contact Tom (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com) well in advance to register, because participation is limited, and to get meeting information. Rain date – Sunday, October 13. (M)

**\*Sunday, October 13. Sparrows, sparrows, and more sparrows!** Half day. Scott Sumner beats the bushes of Hadley and Northampton to find migrating and resident sparrows (everybody's favorite little brown birds). Call Scott (413-256-5438) for meeting time and place. (E)

**\*Saturday, October 26. Coastal Rhode Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron travels to Rhode Island to look for migrants, waterfowl, and seabirds along the coast. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) to register and get meeting information as the date approaches. (E)

**\*Sunday, October 27. Halloween Extravaganza: Satan's Kingdom, Hell's Kitchen, and more.** All day. Joshua Rose birds the northern reaches of the valley from Northfield to Turner's Falls. Call Josh (413-835-0093) for meeting information. (E)

## NOVEMBER

**\*Saturday, November 2, Saw-whet Owls.** Evening. Janice Jorgensen and Sue Emerson join Strickland Wheelock and his crew at Lookout Rock in Northbridge, MA for an evening of netting and banding Saw-whet Owls. This trip is limited to 7 birders (first-time participants get preference) and costs \$20 per person. For information and to register call Sue Emerson (413-588-6900) and to reserve a place send a non-refundable check for \$20 payable to "HBC" to Stephen Baker (HBC Treasurer; 287 Williamsburg Road; Williamsburg, MA 01096). (E)

**\*Sunday, November 3. The Apple Cider Donut Field Trip.** All day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com) goes into the hills to find the best cider donuts in Berkshire County and also visits the lakes and ponds of western Massachusetts to look for ducks and other migrating waterfowl. Meet at Stop & Shop on King Street in Northampton at 6:15 a.m. for carpooling. Dress warmly and bring food and water. (M)

**Saturday-Monday, November 9-11. Cape Cod. Overnight.** Scott Surner leads the club on a trip to Cape Cod for late migrants, waterfowl, seabirds, and more. This trip is limited to 12 participants, and you must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to go on this trip. Call Scott (413-256-5438) for details and cost. (M)

**\*Saturday, November 16. Dead Creek WMA and Lake Champlain Valley.** All day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) travels to the premier Snow Goose staging area in New England and looks for other seasonal specialties along the shore of Lake Champlain. Meet at Stop & Shop on King St. in Northampton at 5 a.m. for carpooling. (E)

**Saturday, November 23. East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon leads his annual trip to the east side of the reservoir to look for waterfowl and winter finches. You must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to go on this trip. Contact Tom (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com) well in advance to register, because participation is limited, and to get meeting information. (Sorry, no donuts on this trip.) (M)

## HBC Member Skills Survey

You just might be one of those people with a set of specific technical abilities we need to help HBC thrive. If so, we would love to be able to ask for your help on an occasional basis or even as a board member at some time in the future. With this in mind, we ask that you complete the survey below. In doing so, you are not making a commitment of any kind. The information simply allows us to reach out to you in the future if and when the need arises.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**I have the following skills and could consider volunteering for HBC in the future:**

- ☐ Working with audio-visual technologies such as digital slide projectors, Power-point presentations, PA sound systems, microphones, computer interfaces etc. (Set-up chair)
- ☐ Financial management/accounting/small business management (Treasurer).
- ☐ Financial auditing (small non-profit).
- ☐ Website development and maintenance (Webmaster).
- ☐ Legal and/or insurance consulting (especially with regard to the needs of small non-profits).
- ☐ Spreadsheet data entry and maintenance (e.g. Excel) (Membership Secretary).
- ☐ Ornithology/birding networking (extensive range of contacts amongst potential speakers) (Program Chair).
- ☐ Environmental education/presentations (Education Committee).
- ☐ Newsletter editing and distribution (Newsletter).

Other skills and/or  
comments? \_\_\_\_\_

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Please return this to HBC with your membership form: either in person at the September/October meetings, or by mail to:

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



## Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 30, No. 2

**October, 2013.**

I recently spent a Saturday at a wonderful event: *Hawks on Mount Tom*. The organizers had somehow become convinced that I knew something about birds of prey and asked me to be atop Goat Peak during a family-oriented education day at Mt. Tom State Park. While Tom Ricardi, the Eyes on Owls folks and the Conti Reserve traveling classroom held court at the visitor's center, Dan Russell and I interpreted the hawk migration from Bray and Goat Peak Towers. And here is the thing: over 1,000 people attended this event in some way, shape or form! By three o'clock we had attempted to show dozens of people how to pick a sharpie from a kestrel, and a broad-wing from a red-tail. Can't vouch for the quality of the instruction, but there was no shortage of enthusiasm!

It is startling to discover, in these days of personal communication devices and the creation of virtual reality in so many pervasive forms, that people are increasingly driven to try to find some real connection to the natural world. Whether it is our education committee organizing exciting presentations or we as individuals answering that question at the roadside, "What are you guys looking at?" we in the Hampshire Bird Club are constantly presented with opportunities to share our love for birds and their habitats with people who want to be part of it at some level. I hope we can all find a moment or two for this essential (and enjoyable) mission.

I hope many of you have already **renewed your membership** for the coming year. If not, let me exhort you with as much sincerity as my Shiraz-addled brain can muster to get this pesky but VITAL chore out of the way as soon as possible so we can all focus on birds and birding. The "Bird Sightings" resource sheet is included with this edition. Feel free to sign up for the **Rare Bird Alert** on the form if you would like. The Field Trip Policy is also included for your perusal.

Your membership status is shown on the back of the cover sheet.

PLEASE

**RENEW NOW IF YOU NEED TO**

using the checklist on page 3 of this rag, lest I be forced to declare a NEWSLETTER SHUTDOWN.

Don't say I didn't warn you.

### **ON-LINE NEWSLETTER, ANYONE?**

If you have not yet sent in your membership form and dues this year, why not consider the on-line newsletter? It is 2013, so anything with the words "on-line" in the title is automatically the best choice, right? It means the club sends less of our hard-earned geld to the USPS, and the newsletter-distribution staff deposit fewer of our skin cells in the folds of the paper newsletters. We editorial minions also have more time for watching reality TV, or whatever other guilty pleasures take the place of "newsletter night".

It means you get a reminder every month to download the newsletter from the HBC Website in .pdf format. There are now more on-line users than paper recipients, and, as far as I know, the online folks are no more unhappy with the newsletter than the traditionalists. Well, think about it and sign up on the membership form if you like! You can always retreat back to the good old paper newsletter if it doesn't work out.

**You can read about the next program on page 2.**

## NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, October 21 at 7:15 p.m.**

**Shawn Carey presents Epic Journeys:**

**Tracking the Migrations of Shorebirds in the Western Hemisphere**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Each year, millions of shorebirds make an amazing round-trip journey between the northern and southern hemispheres. Migration Productions' newest video, "Epic Journeys," looks at three shorebird species—Red Knot, Piping Plover and Semi-palmated Sandpiper—and the challenges these species face during each of their monumental annual treks.

**Shawn Carey and Jim Grady** work together as *Migration Productions* to present multi-media presentations, videos, and photographic workshops which have been presented all over the U.S. Shawn moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1986, and started watching birds in 1988. In 1991, he began to combine his love of birds with an interest in photography, and, with Jim, founded Migration Productions in 1994. Shawn's photographs have been published in the *Boston Globe*, *New York Times*, *Sanctuary* (Mass Audubon), *Science*, *Hawk Mountain Sanctuary* and many other outlets over the past 15 years. In 1997 he started teaching photography workshops (*Fundamentals of Bird Photography*) for Mass Audubon.

## COMING PROGRAMS

**November 11, 2013. John Van de Graaff.** Birds across Europe II.

**December 9, 2013. Members' Meeting.**

**January 13, 2014. Don Kroodsma.** Bird by Bird by Bike 3.

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

(See also the Fall Field Trip Schedule)

**Saturday, October 12. Quabbin Reservoir: Fall Migrants.** All day. Tom Gagnon leads his annual fall trip to the Quabbin to see southbound birds, late season flowers, butterflies, and mammals. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members. Contact Tom (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com) to register (well in advance, please, because space is limited) and to get meeting information. Rain date – Sunday, October 13. (M)

**\*Sunday, October 13. Sparrows, sparrows, and more sparrows!** Half day. Scott Sumner beats the bushes of Hadley and Northampton to find migrating and resident sparrows (everybody's favorite little brown birds). Call Scott (413-256-5438) for meeting time and place. (E)

**\*Saturday, October 26. Coastal Rhode Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron travels to Rhode Island to look for migrants, waterfowl, and seabirds along the coast. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) to register and get meeting information as the date approaches. (E)

**\*Sunday, October 27. Halloween Extravaganza: Satan's Kingdom, Hell's Kitchen, and more.** All day. Joshua Rose birds the northern reaches of the valley from Northfield to Turner's Falls. Call Josh (413-835-0093) for meeting information. (E)

Continues on Page 3 ►



### **Coming Field Trips (continued)**

**\*Saturday, November 2, Saw-whet Owls.** Evening. Janice Jorgensen and Sue Emerson join Strickland Wheelock and his crew at Lookout Rock in Northbridge, MA for an evening of netting and banding Saw-whet Owls. This trip is limited to 7 birders (first-time participants get preference) and costs \$20 per person. For information and to register call Sue Emerson (413-588-6900) and to reserve a place send a non-refundable check for \$20 payable to "HBC" to Stephen Baker (HBC Treasurer; 287 Williamsburg Road; Williamsburg, MA 01096). (E)

**\*Sunday, November 3. The Apple Cider Donut Field Trip.** All day. Tom Gagnon (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com) goes into the hills to find the best cider donuts in Berkshire County and also visits the lakes and ponds of western Massachusetts to look for ducks and other migrating waterfowl. Meet at Stop & Shop on King Street in Northampton at 6:15 a.m. for carpooling. Dress warmly and bring food and water. (M)

## **EDUCATION COMMITTEE: A Special Program for (Almost) All Ages**

### **Raptors with Julie Collier**

**Sunday, November 10 at 3 P.M.**

**Immanuel Lutheran Church, Amherst**

HBC Education Committee presents Julie Collier and six of her raptors for a special education program for the club, designed for ages 6 and up.

Julie is licensed both by the federal government and by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to take care of raptors that can't take care of themselves. The program incorporates live birds of prey that are held under her rehabilitation and education permits. They are handled only by the Julie, and are never flown for demonstration. The presentation will last about an hour. We hope to see you there!

## **BROAD BROOK COALITION: 2013 Annual Meeting**

**Sunday, November 17 at Florence Community Center, Florence, MA**

*with*

**Dr. Robert Askins**, Director of the Goodwin-Niering Center for Conservation Biology at Connecticut College

*who will present*

**Restoring North America's Birds: Lessons from Landscape Ecology.**

HBC members are cordially invited.

Time and other details are to be announced. Please see the next edition of this newsletter.

You may contact Bruce Hart: bhart2000-at-aol-dot-com, 584 4176

### **Please Join or Renew Your Membership NOW** if you need to:

- ☐ Your membership status is shown on the cover page. Check to see if you owe dues this year.
- ☐ Grab a hold of the enclosed membership form and choose your membership contribution for this year,
- ☐ Make a donation for the work of the Education Committee if you wish,
- ☐ Complete the Membership Form, and its reverse side (the Field Trip Release Form),
- ☐ Check the "Bird Finding In Western MA" form (sign up for the Rare Bird Alert if you wish), and
- ☐ Mail the above forms (with your check if needed) to the club, or bring them along on Sept. 10.

**Please renew before immediately by mail, or at the October meeting. Thanks!**

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**New England National Scenic Trail Hike along the Holyoke Range:** *Ted Watt*

Saturday, October 12, 9 am- noon.

**Fall Foliage Walk at Bear Swamp:** *John Green*

Saturday, October 19, 8:30am-11:30 am

**Fungi Field Trip:** *Dianna Smith*

Saturday, October 19, 2 pm-4pm

**Bray Lake and Mt. Tom: Tree ID Using Bark and Habitat Clues:** *Nancy Goodman*

Saturday, November 2, 10am-3pm

**Morning Nature Walk for Seniors:** *John Green*

Wednesday, November 6, 9am-11am

*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).*

## LIBRARY: New Books!

*The Crossley ID Guide to Raptors* breaks new ground in the identification of birds of prey. Mark Lynch recently wrote a rave review in the August 2013 edition of *Bird Observer*.

*Bird Song Defined, Decoded, Described* is a new way to look at bird song.

*The Unfeathered Bird* is a new way to see what is underneath (amazing photographs)!

*The Birds of Borneo* is a new locality guide to a place you may not have thought to bird!

**Henry says there are more new books to come!**

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

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

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.

My thanks to **Sue Emerson** and **Sally Hills** for their help with assembling the September edition.

That's all we got room for right 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. FIELD TRIP POLICY 2013-2014

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

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

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

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

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

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

Continues on Page 6 ►►

## **HBC Field Trip Policy 2013-2014. Continued**

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.

## Bird Sightings in Western Massachusetts

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.

To join before October 11:

Fill in the form below. Return it with your membership form or turn it in at the Sept./Oct. meetings.

To join anytime:

Provide name/s and email address/es to the HBC Webmaster at [webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:webmaster@hampshirebirdclub.org)

## Rare Bird Alert (RBA) Form: 2013-2014

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

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.**

### **Amherst, Massachusetts**

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 30, No. 3

## **November, 2013.**

Oh, g'day. Sorry. I was just perusing Tony Abbott's shopping list on the NSA website when I realized it was time to get another newsletter to the press. So here goes.

In this edition:

- The **program** for this month and the coming schedule,
- A **field trip report** and the slate for the remainder of the year,
- An exciting presentation from the **Education Committee**,
- A plug for the **Christmas Count**,
- **Hitchcock** and **Broad Brook Coalition** programs, and
- One or two other tidbits.

I hope you find some of it useful.

**If the cover of this newsletter is orange, we need your membership renewal NOW, (please)!**  
Otherwise, read on.

### **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, November 11 at 7:15 p.m.**

**John Van De Graaff presents Birds Across Europe II**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

John brings us another round of photographs from his travels in Europe. If past programs are anything to go by, both the locations and the subjects will be eclectic and out-of-the-ordinary. There are likely to be landscapes here ranging from grand to bucolic, and images of birds ranging from awe-inspiring to quaint. One thing is for certain: John's photographs never disappoint.

John Van de Graaff began photographing birds seriously in 2001, and has travelled all over the world plying this craft in the years since. He has made frequent digital slide presentations to birding and photography groups, including the CCBC and other major bird clubs in Massachusetts. John's photography has appeared in galleries and other venues all over the valley for many years. We are indeed blessed that he is able to share his unique creations with us on a semi-regular basis. John is a member of Pioneer Valley Photographic Artists (PVPA) and has an easily-remembered website which showcases some of his work: [www.birdsbyjohn.com](http://www.birdsbyjohn.com). John posts one (and only one!) current photo per day, at [www.blipfoto.com/vandegraaff](http://www.blipfoto.com/vandegraaff).

### **COMING PROGRAMS**

**December 9, 2013.** Members' Meeting.

**January 13, 2014. Don Kroodsma.** Bird by Bird by Bike 3.

**February 10, 2014. Geoff LeBaron.** Hummingbirds at Home.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### Saturday, September 28. Migrants Along the River.

Eighteen people joined **Josh Rose**, starting out at the Fort River Division of the Silvio O. Conte NWR. The fields around the old stables were astonishingly birdy in the morning fog, with uncountable gobs of Savannah Sparrows and liberal scatterings of Swamp-, Field-, and White-throated Sparrows and Palm- and Yellow-rumped Warblers. We eventually tore ourselves away from the masses up there and walked down into the woods near the river, enjoying some of the new boardwalks and observation decks. On our way out we stopped to chat with the USF&WS staff and volunteers who were continuing construction of the rest. The birding was slower down there but we added several more species including Wood Duck, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Blue-headed Vireo. We also admired what we think were American Woodcock tracks in some muddy patches and the **Nodding Ladies'-tresses** (orchids) that I had found last week, which were still in bloom. Particularly entertaining was one large tree with three dead limbs sticking up from its crown, which had a different species of woodpecker on each: Northern Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

About half of the group walked up and back on Moody Bridge Road. We crossed paths with an **American Kestrel** in the big field on the hill, then encountered a group of warblers in the woods beyond including Pine, Blackpoll, and Black-and-White, plus another Sapsucker.

Our next stop, with the group only slightly smaller, was Aqua Vitae Road. We spotted our only Red-eyed Vireo of the day here but nothing else of note.

The last few remaining birders straggled over to the Hadley Honeypot. I had a close encounter with a **Vesper Sparrow** but, sadly, it disappeared before the rest of the group came around the corner. We then tracked down some very cooperative **American Pipits** and all had great looks. The last few birders disbanded at that point, though I picked up one more species for the day's list after they left: a **Fish Crow** that was calling from somewhere within a flock of 40+ American Crows. Regrettably, none were left to sample the flavors of Cook farm.

Josh Rose

## COMING TRIPS

**Saturday-Monday, November 9-11. Cape Cod. Overnight.** Scott Sumner leads the club on a trip to Cape Cod for late migrants, waterfowl, seabirds, and more. This trip is limited to 12 participants, and you must be a Hampshire Bird Club member to go on this trip. Call Scott (413-256-5438) for details and cost. (M)

**\*Saturday, November 16. Dead Creek WMA and Lake Champlain Valley.** All day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) travels to the premier Snow Goose staging area in New England and looks for other seasonal specialties along the shore of Lake Champlain. Meet at Stop & Shop on King St. in Northampton at 5 a.m. for carpooling. (E)

**The East Quabbin Trip in late November is full.**

### A Limerick, Dearie

A reclusive thrush is the Veery,  
Of humanity clearly quite leery.  
It denies being shy  
Claiming "It's just that I  
Have been migrating and I am weary."

Ed.

The **EDUCATION COMMITTEE** presents  
**North American Birds of Prey** with  
**Julie Collier of WINGMASTERS**  
**Sunday November 10, 2013 at 3p.m.**  
**Immanuel Lutheran Church, Amherst, MA**

WINGMASTERS is a partnership of two people dedicated to increasing public understanding and appreciation of North American birds of prey. Julie Anne Collier and Jim Parks are both licensed raptor rehabilitators based in Massachusetts. Together they care for injured birds of prey. Most of the birds they rehabilitate can ultimately be released back into the wild, but in some cases the birds are left permanently handicapped. Julie and Jim are further licensed to provide a home for these non-releasable raptors, and to use them for educational programs. Since 1994 WINGMASTERS has presented over 5000 programs at schools, libraries and museums throughout New England.

Further information: WINGMASTERS.net or [education@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:education@hampshirebirdclub.org).

*You are cordially invited to the*  
**BROAD BROOK COALITION**  
**2013 Annual Meeting**

*featuring*

**Dr. Robert Askins**, Professor of Zoology and Director of the Goodwin-Niering Center for Conservation  
Biology at Connecticut College.

*speaking on*

**The Prospect for Birds in the Eastern Deciduous Forest**  
**Sunday, November 17 at 5:00 p.m.**

**Florence Community Center, Florence, MA**

Migratory forest birds are threatened by fragmentation of their breeding habitats in the north, destruction of their winter habitats in the tropics and a variety of other challenges. Understanding the history and ecology of deciduous forests is critical for sustaining their biological diversity, including the large array of birds that are restricted to forests. This talk is based on a book that Professor Askins is completing on the ecology and conservation of deciduous forests.

You may contact Bruce Hart: [bhart2000-at-aol-dot-com](mailto:bhart2000-at-aol-dot-com), 584 4176

A short business meeting, refreshments, and a chance to socialize will follow the talk.

**HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS**

**Morning Nature Walk for Seniors:** *John Greene*

Wednesday, November 6, 9am-11am

**Parenting and Climate Change Discussion:** *Colleen Kelley, Ruthie Ireland, Casey Beebe*

Thursday, November 14, 6pm-8pm

**Natural Heritage Walk:** *Pete Westover*

Sunday, December 1, 1pm-3pm

**Tracking Intensive:** *Susan Morse*

(Spans October, 2013 - April 2014)

*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).*



## CHRISTMAS COUNTS

Look forward for a moment to 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, December 15. The denizens of the Pioneer Valley will be engaged in a variety of pursuits, befitting our diverse little valley. Some of us will be hunkering down for hour five of the Sunday football marathon on TV, some may be fruitlessly cruising the furthest parking lot at the local mall in vain pursuit of a parking space, and some may be just now getting down to fitting the snow tires on the aging Camry.

Eschewing these more mainstream pursuits, there will be a bunch of folks straggling in to the Hitchcock Center in Amherst and slumping into chairs with bowls of steaming chili and mugs of hot cider. They will range in appearance from relatively clean and fresh to mud-spattered and exhausted, but they will all have two things in common.

- 1) They will all have been proud to be part of the largest citizen-science project in the world, and
- 2) They will be glad it is (almost) over.

Every December, participants in the Northampton count get together to count all the birds in a **BIG** circle around some point in Hadley. 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. The die-hards start at night counting owls, the more temperate spend part of the day driving/walking to count diurnal species, and there is even a feeder count to complete the picture. The event concludes with the pot-luck/compilation event at the Hitchcock Center when we tally up the numbers. Believe it or not, there is also a count in the Quabbin region for those who want better birds and cushy weather!

You can be part of one or both of these noble and enjoyable endeavors. Just contact the coordinators and they will put you in touch with a team that needs help.

### **Northampton Count: Sunday, December 15.**

*Jan Ortiz*, 413 549 1768, jtortiz-at-aol-dot-com, OR

*Janice Jorgensen*, 413 585 0145, janicejorgensen-at-charter-dot-net

### **Quabbin Count: Saturday, December 28.**

*Scott Sumner* (413 253 5999; ssumner-at-aol-dot-com

## **Christmas Count Compilation Pot Luck**

### ***Fine Dining at the Hitchcock!***

Just a "heads -up" as we are gathering names and a list of snacks, main dishes, salads and desserts to be consumed on December 15, 2013 at the Hitchcock Center, Amherst at 4:30 pm. before the Northampton count compilation begins. A time to warm up, count your birds of the day and enjoy fellowship as your tummy gets filled!

Please advise me as to what you would like to contribute. I will be asking again at both the November and December meetings -- need to ensure we have plenty to go around. Sue Emerson (413-588-6900 ) or spe33-at-charter-dot-net --- Sue and her wonderful elves.

That's it for now!

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor  
529 9541

newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org

**Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.**  
**Field Trip Guidelines for Field Trip Participants and Drivers: 2013-2014**

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."

**All Participants:**

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.

Please call the trip leader at least a few days before the trip. It helps the leader plan the trip and you learn about any special arrangements or any change of plans.

Please do not bring pets and 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.)

Be on time at the meeting place. If you need to meet the group at the birding location, please offer to be early so the group can start promptly upon arrival. If you plan to leave the trip early, you must inform the leader in advance.

Carpooling is essential to allow the group to park when space is limited, reduce delays, reduce the likelihood of auto accidents and to reduce the chances of the group becoming separated. Carpooling from the valley is best. Carpooling once the trip location is reached is the next best option.

The participants (not the leader) are responsible for making all carpool arrangements.

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.

Please share costs with courtesy. We recommend a cost of \$0.50 cents per mile plus tolls and parking to be shared equally among the driver and all passengers, but the rate for your vehicle is entirely up to the driver and passengers.

Please agree on a mileage rate or flat contribution BEFORE the trip leaves to avoid misunderstandings. Please bring cash or checks and be prepared to reimburse the driver at the time of the trip.

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.

While birding, please stay close to the group unless you have some specific reason to separate, and inform the leader if you are doing so. This reduces delays and distractions for the entire group.

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. Please note that HBC liability insurance does NOT cover individuals who drive or allow the use of their own vehicles on club trips.
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. Headlights on.
  - 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.
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.

American Birding Association's  
PRINCIPLES OF BIRDING ETHICS

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

CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

**1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PLEASE FOLLOW THIS CODE AND DISTRIBUTE AND  
TEACH IT TO OTHERS



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

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

Volume 30, No. 4

**December, 2013.**

In this edition:

- **program information** for this and the ensuing few months,
- a **trip report** from October (November trips later),
- more new books for the **library**,
- **Christmas Count** reminders, and
- The **HBC Membership List**, which is to be used strictly for non-commercial contacts between members.

I hope you find some of it useful!

## NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, December 9 at 7:15 p.m.**

### The Annual Members Meeting

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

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

### Please bring

- some sort of **snack** to share (Sally and Helga are taking a break), AND
- **slides** to show the group.

Slides can be of birding exploits, other adventures in natural history, or even some scenic wonders you visited during the year. As in past years, please limit your show to 15 or fewer slides and be prepared to narrate your own stuff. Please contact either **Jaap van Heerden** ([jvanheerden@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:jvanheerden@hampshirebirdclub.org)) or **Geoff LeBaron** ([programs@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:programs@hampshirebirdclub.org)) by 6 p.m. on Sunday, December 8. Please let them know:

- Are your slides digital (on a memory stick or CD ROM please) or 35 mm format?
- If digital, are the images in Powerpoint format or just stand-alone images?

See you Monday!

### Caw-ny

The Massachusetts Turnpike Authority received a large number of anecdotal reports to suggest that crows were being struck by big-rigs along the Massachusetts Turnpike, but seemed to be avoiding smaller vehicles.

It took years of painstaking observation and several generations of graduate students before the reason for the discrepancy became apparent. It turns out that crows, when feeding on road kill along the sides of the road, would always post a lookout, whose job appeared to be to alert its companions to oncoming traffic. When faced with an approaching passenger vehicle, the crows nearly always managed to shout "Caw!" but were struck dumb when it became necessary to yell "Truck!"

This item replaces a treatise on stapling the paper newsletter for those of you who get the on-line version and so have already had to learn how to staple your own. Ed.

## COMING PROGRAMS

\*Please note that the January and February speakers have swapped places.

**January 13, 2014. Geoff LeBaron.\*** Hummingbirds at Home.

**February 10, 2014. Don Kroodsmma.\*** Bird by Bird by Bike 3.

**March 10, 2014. Chris Dwyer.** Common Eider Die-off in MA.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### October 26, 2013. Coastal Rhode Island.

Peter Allison, Kenley Clark, The Griffiths family (4), **Geoff LeBaron** and Elaine Pourinski took a spin along the intertidal zone of our petite southern neighbor. Here are the highlights:

1. **South Kingstown, East Farm, and Peckham Farm, URI:** in search of, without success, both Northern Wheatear (which we discovered left mid-day yesterday...) and Sandhill Crane. Still good numbers of **American Pipits** and **Horned Larks**, plus **Eastern Meadowlarks**
2. **Richmond Turf Fields:** nothing but an American Kestrel
3. **Charlestown Breachway:** flyover **Peregrine Falcon** on arrival, lots of wind and blowing sand, and a very confiding **Snow Bunting**
4. **Trustom Pond N.W.R.:** very windy but otherwise pleasant; fantastic looks at a diversity of waterfowl, plus an immature **Bonaparte's Gull** and two very late **Blackpoll Warblers**
5. **Charlestown area and Firehouse Pond:** no Eurasian Wigeon, but lovely Wood Ducks
6. **Matunuck area and Moonstone Beach:** no goose flock; lots of wind; moonstones!
7. **Jerusalem and Succotash Marsh:** no joy on the sweater or Clapper Rail, but lots of gulls
8. **Point Judith:** very windy with impressive surf; nice assortment of sea ducks, and some close fly-by **Northern Gannets**.

**Species total for the day was 82.**

Geoff LeBaron

## Computer Applications for Outdoor Educators

The **National Environmental Education Foundation** has created a list of ten recommended **free applications** allowing students and educators to do a wide range of things in the field, ranging from documenting sightings of animals in migration to tracking trash in local watercourses.

You can see the list at

<http://usergeneratededucation.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/technology-outdoors.jpg>

## LIBRARY

### New books!

*"A Field Guide to Mesozoic Birds and other Winged Dinosaurs"* by Matthew Martyniuk. Not exactly useful in the field but thought-provoking to look through.

*"A Kingdom of Rarities"* by Eric Dinerstein. Essays on species that are currently more common than Mesozoic ones and how to protect them.

HBC has a substantial library at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst. You can check books out at Hitchcock or ask our librarian, **Henry Lappen** to bring them to meetings! Contact him at [library@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:library@hampshirebirdclub.org); (413) 549 3722.

## CHRISTMAS COUNTS

### The 80<sup>th</sup> Annual Northampton Christmas Bird Count

### Sunday, December 15

If you haven't yet signed up for a team and want to take part, it's never too late. You are welcome to take part regardless of your birding expertise. Join us after the count for a **potluck** and the **compilation** at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst!

#### Northampton Count

**Sunday, December 15.**

*Jan Ortiz*, 413 549 1768, [jtortiz-at-aol-dot-com](mailto:jtortiz-at-aol-dot-com), OR

*Janice Jorgensen*, 413 585 0145, [janicejorgensen-at-charter-dot-net](mailto:janicejorgensen-at-charter-dot-net)

#### Quabbin Count

This fair weather favorite has not been going on for quite so long, but needs help just as much, p'raps more.

**Saturday, December 28.**

*Scott Sumner* (413 253 5999; [ssurner-at-aol-dot-com](mailto:ssurner-at-aol-dot-com))

### Northampton CBC Pot Luck

### Hitchcock Center, Amherst. December 15 at 4:30 pm

#### Contributions Needed

We are looking for:

- main (hot or vegetarian) dishes,
- salads, and
- desserts.

You can arrange with Sue Emerson for a drop off or call if you will be out in the field until 4 p.m. Her phone numbers are 413-588-6900 (home), 413-336-3535 (cell). You can also reach her by email: [spe33-at-charter-dot-net](mailto:spe33-at-charter-dot-net)

#### The Lame Name Game

The Eastern Screech Owl isn't screeching,  
For a more fitting name p'raps beseeching.  
It whinnies and will  
On occasion just trill.  
But to say that it's screeching is reaching.

**Big** thanks this month to **Sue Emerson** and **Sally Hills** for assembly help with the September, October and November editions, and **Mary Alice Wilson** for formatting the membership list!

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

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