



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 30, No. 5

## January, 2014.

I wrote this a while back and even though it is not timely at this time of year, I just can't see it to go to waste. Ed.

The following quote is widely attributed to Chief Seattle of the Suquamish/Duwamish people in north-western North America.

*"If all the beasts were gone, men would die from a great loneliness of spirit, for whatever happens to the beasts also happens to the man."\**

Seems to me that some of this loneliness is a fact of our lives now: most of the earth is given over to the works of man, with other species living in the shadows. However, especially if you work at it, you can find places on earth that are less lonely; where you can find other species flourishing, filling some albeit small corner of the earth with their presence, at least for now. If you stand almost anywhere in Addison County, Vermont, on an October/November day, you are almost sure to see Snow Geese descending from their aerial migration to rest and feed in the windswept fields of Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area and surrounds. For most, it is a vision that brings inspiration and joy.

But why, I wonder. I think it goes beyond the startling contrasts of white bodies and dark wingtips as they drift in under breathtaking blue skies. It goes beyond the high, barking chorus of voices speaking of the windswept tundra far to the north. It goes beyond the sense of peace as they descend like a great white bandage over the torn fields of our human landscape.

For me, the inspiration comes from not simply from looking at what they *are*, but in trying to understand what the geese are *doing*. When you look at Snow Geese one at a time, you find stocky birds with short-ish necks which would not look out of place in a farmyard, but these birds are anything but domesticated. Every single one of them is engaged in a dogged struggle which began at birth on the tundra, and which will continue, migration after migration, breeding season after breeding season, across all seasons and the landscapes of an entire continent.

There is a kind of thrumming in the fabric of the universe when one is in the presence of so many souls, all striving to find a way from day to day. To stand with the snow geese is to feel that thrumming in one's own soul.

\*Like many of the great quotes that illuminate our history, the actual origin of this statement is now in question. It may, in fact, have been an embellishment of Chief Seattle's actual words, added by a television scriptwriter in 1971.

In this edition:

- The **program** introduction and the coming schedule. More changes.... See page 2,
- **Field trip reports** and the **Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule**,
- The club's tribute to **Betty Peterson**,
- **Celebratory** news from the **Breeding Bird Atlas**, and
- No other tidbits.

I hope you find some of it interesting.

## NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, January 13 at 7:15 p.m.**

### **Geoff LeBaron delves into Hummingbirds at Home**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

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

This month's program will be all about hummingbirds: introducing Audubon's new *Hummingbirds at Home* program, and a screening of the *Nature* program "*Hummingbirds: Magic in the Air*."

*Hummingbirds at Home* is a new smart-phone app. that enables folks to survey their favorite "patch" and submit data on hummingbird-nectar source interactions. Audubon's long-term goal will be to develop recommendations so people across the continent can make their yards more hummingbird friendly.

The PBS/Nature program "Hummingbirds: Magic in the Air" captures fascinating aspects of hummingbird biology and behavior across the Americas.

**Geoff LeBaron** has been the Christmas Bird Count Director for the National Audubon Society since 1987. Prior to that, he worked for the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, where he was Curator of Collections at Vireo.

Geoff has done field work on birds for Audubon in New Hampshire and Rhode Island, and spent over 3,000 hours documenting marine mammals, turtles, and birds off the eastern coast of North America. He has been an environmental educator in Rhode Island, and led seabird/whale watches off Cape Cod for three years. Geoff has a B.Sc. from the University of Miami in Florida, and a master's degree in Zoology from the University of Rhode Island.

Geoff has led natural history tours to Alaska; Big Bend and the Texas Hill Country; Baja California; Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands; Panama and Costa Rica; the Galapagos Islands and Ecuador; Argentina, the Falkland Islands, and Antarctica; and Australia and New Zealand. We know him best as an energetic and committed field trip leader, and our miracle-working Program Chair.

## COMING PROGRAMS

**February 10, 2014. Robert Jonas & Tom Adams.** Harvey Allen & the Kestrel Land Trust.

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

**April 14, 2014. David Spector.** Amherst's Ornithologist: Margaret Morse Nice.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

**Saturday, November 2, 2013. Saw-Whet Owl Banding, Uxbridge, MA.**

Nine (9) Hampshire Bird Club members traveled to Lookout Rock in Uxbridge, MA to partake in the **mist-netting**, weighing, evaluation, **sexing**, banding and releasing of these elusive little owls. We were very fortunate that the weather was mild (50 degrees) with little wind while we witnessed the capture of 2 owls. As the weather changed in response to an incoming cold front, the crew closed the nets for the night, allowing us an earlier than usual return home (11:30 pm). Many thanks to Strickland Wheelock from Drumlin Farms Audubon and his crew - Beth, Paul & Bob - who made this adventure such a success. We wished bon-voyage to the owls, hoping for their return next year.

Sue Emerson and Janice Jorgensen

*The field trip reports are out of chronological order because this little gem fit so nicely on this page. Ed.*

## October 27. The Halloween Extravaganza: Satan's Kingdom, Hell's Kitchen etc.

Josh Rose led the second annual Hampshire Bird Club pre-Halloween trip to Satan's Kingdom, Hell's Kitchen and various other hellish locations in Northfield and Turner's Falls, accompanied by a suitably demonic cadre including Harvey Allen, Tim Carter, and George Regmund. The trip tallied 52 species. A highlight was a quartet of **Pectoral Sandpipers** at Hell's Kitchen, a new Franklin County bird for Josh. We also crossed paths with two **Osprey**, three **Bald Eagles**, two **Pied-billed Grebes**, a heard-only **Winter Wren**, a couple of massive gobs\* of Cedar Waxwings, a **Palm Warbler**, and James Smith's previously reported **Northern Shoveler** and trio of **Ruddy Ducks**.

Hell's Kitchen was generally our most productive spot of the day, yielding several species we did not see anywhere else. We failed to detect a reported Cackling Goose, but with well over 1,000 Canada Geese across three locations in Turners Falls (roughly 900 at the power canal alone), we easily could have missed it in the crowds. Most of Northfield Meadows was barren and posted with alarming "Do not enter, fumigation in progress" signs, but the south end of this area, around the nursery and not-yet-harvested cornfield, had our only Swamp and Savannah Sparrows of the day and more Song Sparrows than the entire rest of the day put together.

We also snuck in a tasty lunch break at the Wagon Wheel, though with a stiff and chilly breeze picking up at that point, opted to eat indoors rather than watching for more birds from the picnic tables outside...

Mysterious misses included Mourning Dove (absent for the entire day), House Sparrow and Rock Pigeon. I found myself scanning in vain for pigeons on the wires as we were leaving Turners Falls (does this mean that there is something mentally wrong with me?). Nor did we see a Starling until we got back to Hadley right before going our separate ways. Maybe the flock of 40+ Mute Swans in Turners Falls ate all of the other exotic birds in the area...

Some other highlights included:

**Wood Duck** - several at Satan's Kingdom.

**Green-winged Teal** - six at Hell's Kitchen

**Lesser Scaup** - a female at Barton Cove with a flock of geese.

Josh Rose

Josh hereby has the audacity to add a new collective ornithological noun to the lexicon, already replete with such wonders as a *siege* of herons, an *unkindness* of ravens, and a *wisp* of snipe. Now we have a *gob* of waxwings. Ed.



## November 16, 2013. Dead Creek WMA and Addison County, Vermont.

Mike Locher, Andrew Magee and David Peake-Jones made their way through the Green Mountains of our northern neighbor and headed into Addison from the north, on a gorgeous morning. As we did so, a drifting cluster of white forms over the checkerboard farmlands north of the town heralded our first **Snow Geese**, meandering southward toward the refuge. Following them to the viewing area, we scanned across the group of about 3,000 birds for about an hour, taking in the diversity of birds which make up a flock of migrant geese. There were, of course, the clean, white adults with their ink-tipped wings, alternately feeding, and pausing to shake the grass clippings down their esophagi. Mixed in with the elders were many slightly gangly and variably grayish birds, for whom this was the first visit to the farmlands of Vermont. Amongst the white geese was a scattering of blue geese: non-conformist in terms of plumage, but otherwise going about the business-like chores of feeding and resting just like all the rest. We almost certainly saw at least one Ross's Goose in the flock. We just couldn't figure out which one it was!

Continues on the next page ►

### Dead Creek (continued)

As the morning wore on, the geese began getting up in groups and drifting away from the higher fields near the road toward the protected swales where they seem to prefer to spend the middle parts of the day. We spent a while at the end of Gage Road looking at a part of the flock, but eventually, we ourselves drifted off to look at other parts of Addison County. Berilyea Access was almost devoid of waterfowl with only a single female **Northern Pintail** and three **Green-winged Teal** to enliven a tiny group of Black Ducks and Mallards. We had a brief look at a distant **Rough-legged Hawk** plus occasional fly-by's of Horned Larks and **Snow Buntings**. The often windswept, raw shoreline of Lake Champlain was, on this day, stroked by gentle on-shore breezes, with glorious views away to the Adirondacks to the West. We came up with a single Common Loon, a few Common Goldeneye, lots of Horned Grebes, a possible Long-tailed Duck and a possible Lesser Black-backed Gull, but not a lot of waterfowl on the lake.

As sunset fell, we made our way back to the refuge, eventually ending up at the end of Gage Road, looking at dusk falling over the entire group of 3,000 geese with the Adirondacks as a back-drop. There are moments in birding when the binoculars and scope must be let fall; when one must, as the Little Prince entreated, look with the heart. This was clearly one of them.

David Peake-Jones

The **East Quabbin** trip report will appear in the February edition. Ed

## Breeding Bird Atlas Is Ready to Read!!

### *What to do between Christmas Count and the dance of the woodcock?*

Lots of good birding, of course, but there is also the wood stove and the completed Second Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas. There have been lots of BBA announcements since the project started, but this one is a cause for celebration. It only took 650 of us five years (43,000 hours) to collect the data and two years of staff time to turn out the finished document. Why not indulge yourself in a great read?

1. To look at the data for free, go to [www.massaudubon.org](http://www.massaudubon.org), put BBA 2 in the search box and you should find the pages in a bird-by-bird format. It is not an incredibly friendly website, but the atlas data and a free copy of the new version of the State of the Birds is there.
2. To read it in an electronic book format, go to **itunes**, search for Mass Breeding Bird Atlas and you will quickly be able to exchange \$30 for an ebook which should work on whatever device you have.
3. There will be a way to order a print version (about \$100) and to download a pdf version for the non-ebook readers (not sure of cost), but those are not ready yet. Stay tuned and keep that wood stove warm.

Mary Alice Wilson

## Remembering Betty Petersen

The Hampshire Bird Club has given a donation to the ABA's Birder's Exchange in memory of Betty Petersen. Many club members remember hearing Betty talk about the exchange at club meetings - and many have enjoyed time with her in the field. Her contributions to the birds and birders of Latin American through the Birder's Exchange and the translation and free distribution of *The Neotropical Companion* in Spanish was stunning. Members who would like to make an additional contribution in Betty's honor can go to [aba.org/bettypetersen](http://aba.org/bettypetersen) or mail to:

ABA Birder's Exchange, 1618 Colorado Avenue, Colorado Springs, CO 80904.

That's it for this month. Not even room for the full sign off! Happy New Year! David Peake-Jones

**Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.**  
**Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule, 2014**  
**Published 1/6/2014**

*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 25. 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

**Saturday, February 8. South Shore.** All day. Al Richards and Mike Locher scour the coast south of Boston for seasonal specialties like Harlequin Ducks, Short-eared Owls, and other waterfowl and seabirds. Meet at Stop & Shop on King Street in Northampton at 6:00. For further information and to register, call Al (413-665-2761). (M)

### MARCH

**Saturday, March 1. Plum Island, Newburyport, and Salisbury.** 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 15. Connecticut River Waterfowl.** Half day. Al Richards and/or Bob Bieda seek out the ducks and geese migrating up the Connecticut River to their breeding grounds. Meet at Stop & Shop on King Street in Northampton at 6:30. Contact Al (413-665-2761) for more information and to register for the trip. (E)

### APRIL

**\*Saturday, April 12. 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 Holyoke Elks parking lot (250 Whitney Ave.), near Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7 a.m. (E)

**\*Sunday, April 13. Northampton Migrants.** Half day. Betsy Higgins (413-586-7585) goes to Look Park to find waterthrushes and other early migrants. Meet at the JFK Middle School parking lot (100 Bridge Road, Florence) at 7 a.m. (E)

**Wednesday, 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)

## MAY

*\*On Tuesdays in May, there will be informal birding walks through the former Bri-Mar Stables grounds (now part of the Fort River Division of the Silvio O. Conte NWR). Dates, leaders, and start times are as follows: May 6, Janice Jorgensen, 7 a.m.; May 13, Bob Bieda, 7 a.m.; May 20, Al Richards, 6:30 a.m.; May 27, TBA. Meet at the Stables parking area (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley). (E)*

**\*Saturday May 3. Mitch's Way.** Half day. Josh Rose takes a walk along the River looking for neotropical migrant landbirds. Mitch's Way is easy walking; depending on turnout and interest, we could add a more challenging walk into adjacent Skinner State Park or could adjourn to nearby Barstow Creamery for lunch and ice cream. Meet at 7 a.m. at the parking lot of the Hadley Stop & Shop, Route 9 Diner, etc. (440 Russell St., Hadley). Any questions, contact Josh (413-835-0093 or [opihi-at-mindspring-dot-com](mailto:opihi-at-mindspring-dot-com)). (E/M)

**\*Sunday, May 4. Poet's Seat and Highland Pond.** Half day. Mike Locher heads to Greenfield to look for migrating warblers, tanagers, thrushes, and flycatchers. Be prepared for a short hike up to the tower at Poet's Seat, and for some leisurely walking on other (level) trails. Meet at Stop & Shop on King Street in Northampton at 6:30 a.m. (or at the Poet's Seat parking area around 7:15). Call Mike (413-585-5864) for more information. (M)

**Saturday, May 10. Quabbin Park and East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon leads his 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 participate. To register, contact Tom (413-584-6353 or [tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com](mailto:tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com)). Please register with Tom early. (M)

**Sunday, May 11, Orchard Hill +/- Sylvan Woods.** Half Day. Dave Mako leads a stroll through these popular migration hotspots on the UMass campus. Meet at 7 a.m. in the northwestern-most parking lot for the Orchard Hill Residential Area via Orchard Hill Drive. Contact Dave (412-665-2999 or [massmakos-at-yahoo-dot-com](mailto:massmakos-at-yahoo-dot-com)) for more info and the donut count. (E)

**Thursday, 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 Tom (413-584-6353) or email [tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com](mailto:tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com). (M)

**Saturday, May 17. Bartholomew's Cobble.** All day. Mike Locher travels southwest to the unique habitat of Bartholomew's Cobble. We'll look for both grassland birds in the fields and woodland migrants in the forests around the cobble. If I can learn my wildflowers by the time we go, I'll even point out a few of the many species that thrive around the cobble. Meet at Stop & Shop on King Street in Northampton at 6 a.m. and bring a lunch. Call Mike (413-585-5864) for further details. (M)

**\*Sunday, May 18. Mount Auburn Cemetery.** All day. Sharon Dombeck and Stephen Baker explore one of the premier migrant traps within the greater Boston area. On the way home, time and interest permitting, there will be a stop at Great Meadows in Concord. Meet at the Hitchcock Center (525 S. Pleasant St., Amherst) at 5:30 a.m. and bring a lunch and snacks. Contact Sharon or Stephen (413-268-7021) for details and to register. (E)

**\*Saturday, May 24. Hilltown Ramble.** All day. Bob Zimmermann ([rzimmermann@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:rzimmermann@hampshirebirdclub.org), 413-585-0405) and Dave Gross ([dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto: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 31. Fort River Division of Silvio O. Conte NWR (Bri-Mar Stables).** Half day. Josh Rose enjoys one of the best Bobolink shows in the area, hopes to find a few breeding and migrating warblers and sparrows, and enjoys the refuge's newly built boardwalks and observation decks. Optional continuation to the Honey-pot, possibly after lunch and ice cream at Cook Farm. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the stables (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley). Any questions, contact Josh (413-835-0093 or [opihi-at-mindspring-dot-com](mailto:opihi-at-mindspring-dot-com)). (E)

## JUNE

**Saturday, June 7. Westover Air Force Base.** Half day. Bob Bieda and Mike Locher host the HBC's annual trip to New England's premier grassland habitat, looking for Upland Sandpipers, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Bob (413-527-2623) at least two weeks ahead of time to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E)

**\*Saturday June 14. Wentworth Farm.** Half day. Josh Rose leads an easy walk looking for breeding Orchard Orioles, Brown Thrashers, Bobolinks, Green Herons, and whatever else we can find. If the weather is suitable we will also probably look at butterflies and dragonflies. There is an optional continuation into the Amherst College Wildlife Sanctuary nearby, possibly after lunch nearby. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the head of the Harvey Allen Trail, next to the ball fields and park (near 137 Stanley St., Amherst). Any questions, contact Josh (413-835-0093 or [opihi-at-mindspring-dot-com](mailto:opihi-at-mindspring-dot-com)). (E)

## AUGUST

**Thursday, August 7-Monday, August 11. Crown of Maine.** Overnight trip. Geoff LeBaron leads his bi-annual trip to the mixed boreal and agricultural habitats of far northern Maine. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Geoff (413-269-9281) for information, and contact Mike Locher ([fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org)) to register and get cost information. (M)

**Saturday, August 9. Hummingbird Banding.** Half day. Bill Benner and Joe Wiscinski (413-320-4422) host a morning of hummingbird banding at their house. Usually, about 50 hummingbirds are mist-netted and banded. Meet at Bill and Joe's house (55 Webber Road, Whately) at 6 a.m. Parking is limited, so carpooling is appreciated. Raindate: Sunday, August 10. (E)





# **Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.**

## **Amherst, Massachusetts**

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

Volume 30, No. 6

**February, 2014.**

Oh, g'day. No time for pontification, prevarication, obfuscation or antidisestablishmentarianism this month. Just buckets of information about birds, birding, and even other bits of the biosphere. You can read about:

- the **monthly program** and the **upcoming schedule**,
- a **field trip report**,
- **new field trips** including a **new overnight** offering,
- **Nominating Committee help wanted**,
- **Website help wanted**,
- **Hitchcock programs**,
- the **Rusty Blackbird Blitz!** (no blackbirds to be harmed),
- provisional **Northampton Christmas Count** results,
- the annual **MassAudubon Birders Meeting**,
- **entomological digressions** involving two of our members, and
- more besides!

I hope you find some of it useful.

### **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, February 10 at 7:15 p.m.**

**Robert Jonas and Tom Adams**

present

**Harvey Allen and the Kestrel Land Trust**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

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

Harvey Allen is an honorary member of the Hampshire Bird Club. He has been a powerful formative influence in our club since its inception. Chances are, if you have ever been on an HBC field trip, you have found yourself in quiet conversation with Harvey, sharing his unique insights into local birds and their habitats. This program presents the story of Harvey and another organization with whose roots he is deeply intertwined: the Kestrel Trust. Harvey has been at the forefront of land conservation through the trust for decades, to the point where a film has been made about his dedication to the organization and its cause. This is that film and we are honored to bring it to you.

### **COMING PROGRAMS**

**March 10, 2014. Chris Dwyer.** Common Eider Dieoff in MA

**April 14, 2014. David Spector.** Amherst's Ornithologist: Margaret Morse Nice.

**May 12, 2014. Joan Walsh.** Birds and Agriculture.



## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### November 30. East Quabbin

A small group led by **Tom Gagnon** headed into the cold gates of (hell?) East Quabbin on November 30, a date changed by request of the folks at Quabbin. All beaver ponds were frozen but, we were able to come up with 38 species, 2 short of Tom's goal. A bitter cold day but we all had a great time. Here are some of the highlights.

Common Loon - 9  
 Red-necked Grebe - 2  
 Horned Grebe - 5  
 Hooded Merganser - 279  
 Common Merganser - 50  
 Common Goldeneye - 2  
 Bald Eagle - 4

Song Sparrow - 2  
 Ruffed Grouse - 3 heard drumming  
 House Wren - 1 (Craig Allen)  
 Common Raven - 1  
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - 1  
 River Otter - 3

Tom Gagnon

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

The revised **Winter-Spring-Late Summer Field Trip Schedule** (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) is at the HBC Website:

<http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org/trips.html>

*The South Shore (Feb. 8) and Connecticut River Waterfowl (March 15) trips will meet at the HADLEY Stop and Shop, not the Northampton one as previously announced.*

### \*\*\*\*\*Changed meeting place\*\*\*\*\*

**Saturday, February 8. South Shore.** All day. Al Richards and Mike Locher scour the coast south of Boston for seasonal specialties like Harlequin Ducks, Short-eared Owls, and other waterfowl and seabirds. Meet at Stop & Shop (at 456 Russell St.) in **HADLEY** at 6:00. For further information and to register, call Al (413-665-2761). (M)

**Saturday, March 1. Plum Island, Newburyport, and Salisbury.** 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)

### \*\*\*\*\*Changed meeting place\*\*\*\*\*

**Saturday, March 15. Connecticut River Waterfowl.** Half day. Al Richards and/or Bob Bieda seek out the ducks and geese migrating up the Connecticut River to their breeding grounds. Meet at Stop & Shop (at 456 Russell St.) in **HADLEY** at 6:30. Contact Al (413-665-2761) for more information and to register for the trip. (E)

### New Trip

**Wednesday, July 2. Bobolinks and Baltimore Checkerspots at Bullitt Reservation.** Tom Gagnon leads the Massachusetts Butterfly Club and the Hampshire Bird Club to look for birds and butterflies at a 265 acre old New England farm now managed by The Trustees of Reservations. The farmhouse is now open to the public as a showcase for energy-efficient technologies that work for New England homeowners. There should be plenty of Bobolinks and gorgeous Baltimore Checkerspots. Rest rooms available. Contact Tom at (413) 584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com for more information or to register for the trip. (M).

Directions will be published later. If you want them now, go to the Trustees of Reservations Website and look for Bullitt Reservation, or see the revised field trip schedule on the HBC Website.

## OVERNIGHT TRIPS

### Mount Mansfield. Bicknell's Thrushes in Vermont.

Late June (Target dates June 25-26. Actual dates being negotiated with VCE)

Mike Locher and representatives from the Vermont Center for Ecostudies will look for Bicknell's Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler, Sandhill Crane, Black-billed Cuckoo and other species.

Bicknell's Thrush is a threatened species that is facing critical habitat loss in both its breeding and wintering grounds. Research demonstrates that this species has a fascinating life history structure which reflects its tenuous grip on existence. Mount Mansfield is one of a few "sky islands" of balsam fir forest in northern New England which still support breeding populations of this reclusive creature. Our VCE guides will be helping us not only look for the bird in its breeding habitat, but also allow us to spend time with researchers banding and studying the species. We may get to see individuals in-hand.

We will leave the valley early on the first day and bird through the Champlain Valley on the way north, stopping in the area of Dead Creek WMA, in Addison, Vermont, and hoping for breeding Sandhill Cranes in the area of Bristol Pond, Vermont. Upon arrival at Mt Mansfield, we'll check into accommodations in the village of Stowe, and make a late afternoon visit to the banding and research area before retiring for the evening. The second day will begin before dawn as we meet our VCE guides and travel up the mountain for a morning at the banding station, hoping to encounter Bicknell's Thrush and other species of the high altitude fir forests. We will check out of our lodgings around the middle of the day and proceed home, with the possibility of some stops along the way.

Participants will book and pay for their own accommodation and meals. The club will ask participants to pay a fee to cover the leader's accommodation and travel, club insurance, and a contribution to the work of the VCE. This cost is likely to be in the range of \$40-50, and the overall cost (depending on accommodation availability and choice) is likely to be in the range of \$225 – 275 per person.

More details will follow in March. Please contact **Mike Locher** (fieldtrips-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org) if you are interested.

## Nominating Committee: Help Wanted

Each year about this time, a small group of the faithful set about making sure we have a viable board for next year.

The Nominating Committee is active from now until (potentially) the May meeting. It is charged with polling the current membership to determine their plans for next year, then seeking nominees to fill any anticipated vacancies. The ideal committee members have a wide range of contacts within the club and persuasive communication skills. We need at least one person who is NOT on the current board to serve on the committee.

**Bruce Hart** has volunteered to chair this year. Please contact him (brucehart-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org, 584 4176) if you would like to help.

## Website Help Wanted

Hampshire Bird Club is looking to hire professional help in the hosting, design and maintenance of our Website. We need an outfit that is **local**, capable of providing **high quality service** to a small non-profit, and **affordable**. This is NOT a volunteer opportunity.

If you know of such a company or professional individual, please contact **Scott Surner** (president@hampshirebirdclub.org)

## **MassAudubon Birders Meeting: 2014**

### **Extinction is Forever: What Have We Learned?**

*March 8, 2014, Bentley University, Waltham.*

Using the passenger pigeon as an iconic example of what can happen to a super-abundant species in a relatively short span of time, the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Birders Meeting will focus on the extinction phenomenon from a variety of perspectives.

The keynote speaker will be Joel Greenberg with “*A Feathered River Across the Sky: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction.*” Other speakers include:

- *Patrick Comins*
- *Matthew Kamm,*
- *John Kricher,* and
- *Michael Reed*

Co-hosted by Mass Audubon, the Museum of Comparative Zoology, and the Harvard Museum of Natural History. For more information, go to <http://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/birds-birding/birders-meeting>.

### **Friends of the Fort River Division?**

The US Fish & Wildlife Service is scheduling a meeting to organize a Friends of Fort River Division. The Fort River Division is the land on Moody Bridge Road where Bri-Mar Stables was located; it is now is a tract of the Silvio Conte NWR, and volunteers are building new boardwalks, observation decks, and other structures to make the area much more enjoyable for birders and other visitors. There will be a brief presentation and time for questions, followed by a visit to the Fort River Division. Meeting information:

US Fish and Wildlife Service, Westgate Center Drive, Hadley.

Friday, March 7.

Time :TBA

Anyone interested in attending, contact Artie McCollum at [arthur\\_mccollum@fws.gov](mailto:arthur_mccollum@fws.gov) or 413-548-8002 X 119

### **Rusty Blackbird Blitz**

Although scientists have made huge strides in understanding Rusty Blackbirds on their breeding and wintering grounds, we know surprisingly little about the migratory requirements and habits of this species. Are there hot spots where many individuals congregate during migration? Are similar migratory stopover areas used by Rusties each year? Are stopover areas protected, or might availability of these areas be limiting Rusty Blackbird survival?

To address these questions, the International Rusty Blackbird Working Group, in partnership with eBird, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and the Vermont Center for Ecostudies, is coordinating a Spring Migration Blitz for 2014. This Blitz will challenge birders to seek out the elusive Rusty Blackbird throughout its migratory range, from the southern United States, through the Midwest and along the East Coast, and up into Canada. **The Spring Migration Blitz** will kick off in **March of 2014**; each state, province, or territory is assigned target dates for conducting the Blitz based on estimated peak migration periods. To find out more and/or to participate, please go to:

<http://rustyblackbird.org/outreach/migration-blitz/>

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**Green “Dollhouse” Challenge: Model Fun Houses and Sustainable Landscapes:** *Susan Reyes*

*Thursday, February 6, 4:30-6:30pm*

**Finding Place in Nature Based Writing:** *Cheryl Anne Lautner*

*Saturday, February 8, 9am-12pm*

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

*Tuesday, February 11, 6pm-8pm*

**Hitchcock Center Spring Birding Field Trips – 2014:** *Scott Surner*

Scott ‘s wonderful birding class this winter and spring will be entirely field-based, without evening classroom lectures. Saturdays, plus the June weekend. Sign up for the whole series only. Fee. Registration required • Space is limited.

**Moose In Massachusetts:** *Dave Wattles*

*Wednesday, February 26, 7pm-8:30pm.*

**The Native Bee and Native Plant Connection:** *Tom Sullivan,*

*Wednesday, February 26, 6:30-8:30 pm at Nasami Farm, Whately, MA*

**Henry Street Salamander Tunnel Maintenance:** *Ted Watt*

*A weekend in March determined by the weather and snow cover.*

**Naturalists and Novelists: The Birds of the Brontës:** *David Spector*

*Tuesday, March 4, 7pm-8:30 pm*

**Our Avian Neighbors: Birds in Our Local Conservation Areas:** *Melanie Klein and Dave King*

*Wednesday, March 5, 7pm-8:30pm*

**Connecticut River Floodplain: Tree ID Using Bark and Habitat Clues:** *Nancy Goodman*

*Saturday, March 15, 10am - 2pm. South Deerfield*

*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).*

### **Birds of Prey: Their Lives and Challenges**

#### **Julie Collier, Licensed Raptor Rehabilitator**

Birds of prey, like **hawks, eagles, falcons, and owls**, are powerful and fascinating hunting birds. Please join us for a special presentation with these amazing birds known as "raptors" to learn about their place at the top of the food web, the different hunting adaptations each species uses, and how they are faring in a rapidly changing world. Some are doing well, but others are facing declining populations and other serious challenges.

**Sunday, February 23 at 2 p.m.**

**Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary Auditorium**

127 Combs Road, Easthampton, MA 01027

\$8/\$4 donations requested.

## **Puffins and Climate Change**

As many of us who have visited it in the course of our annual pilgrimages to Monhegan Island can attest, Eastern Egg Rock is a tiny symbol of hope in the Gulf of Maine. The Rock was a seabird breeding haven until the 1800s, when fishermen plundered its breeding bird colonies, primarily for eggs and feathers. As a result of their depredations, the Atlantic Puffin had been reduced to a single breeding pair in the waters of the Gulf of Maine by 1901. Eastern Egg Rock was a focus for the Audubon Society's Project Puffin. Starting in 1970's, biologist Steve Kress and others gradually re-introduced puffins to the rock, and, in recent years, the island has played host to an inspiring array of nesting seabirds, including 104 pairs of nesting puffins in 2012.

However, just as the island demonstrates the power of human conservation efforts and the resilience of bird species, the future of puffins, and indeed the whole northern Atlantic ecosystem is increasingly threatened by a far more intractable foe. Last year, ocean temperatures in the Gulf of Maine were the warmest on record, resulting in a cascading series of effects on the food chain. Herring, normally a staple of puffins and vital for their young, never arrived around Eastern Egg Rock at all. In their place were increasing numbers of a southern species called the butterfish - too big for pufflings. Nesting success was reduced and it seems that, for the first time since the inception of the project, puffin success on the islands of the Gulf of Maine may be declining.

Just to be clear, the solution to this problem is no less daunting than to find a solution to global warming itself.

Information Source: National Public Radio: All Things Considered. August 21, 2013 (available at NPR.org)  
More detail at [http://projectpuffin.audubon.org/sites/default/files/documents/eru\\_2012.pdf](http://projectpuffin.audubon.org/sites/default/files/documents/eru_2012.pdf)

### **A Massachusetts Insect Almanac: Josh Rose**

**Saturday, March 8th, 1:30 PM**

Norcross Sanctuary; 30 Peck Road. Monson, MA

Journey through the year and find out how to attract, find, and identify the most conspicuous, charismatic and interesting insects of each month.

Free. Reservations Required. Call 413-267-9654 or email [Lduthie@norcrossws.org](mailto:Lduthie@norcrossws.org).

### **Kestrel Nest Boxes in the Pioneer Valley**

Last year, the **Kestrel Land Trust** installed a number of boxes designed for nesting kestrels around the valley and established a network of monitors, including some HBC members, to keep tabs on the outcomes. The trust plans to report on the progress of the kestrel nest box project and, presumably, plans for the future in the following presentation:.

**Kestrel Nest Boxes in the Pioneer Valley.**

**March 26, 2014, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

**Forbes Library, 20 West Street, Northampton**

### **Northampton Christmas Bird Count, 2013**

Summary results are shown on the following pages. Please be aware that these are provisional only. To get the full Monty, use your search engine with "Christmas Bird Count." Quabbin count next month.

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)

# Northampton Count 2013 and Historical (unofficial)

High counts in bold

New species in bold italics

Unusual Species\*

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

Species	2013	High Year	High Count	Species	2013	High Year	High Count
Gr'ter Wh'-fr'ed Goose	0	n.a.t.		<b>Bald Eagle</b>	<b>11</b>	2009	9
Greylag Goose	0	n.a.t.		Northern Harrier	6	2010	11
Snow Goose	0	n.a.t.		Sharp-s'd Hawk	15	2007	22
Brant	0	n.a.t.		Cooper's Hawk	25	2010	26
Canada Goose	1933	1999	7, 977	Northern Goshawk	1	n.a.t.	
Cackling Goose	0	n.a.t.		<i>Red-s'd Hawk*</i>	3	1957	4
Mute Swan	8	2002	29	Red-tailed Hawk	142	2010	149
Wood Duck	11	2010	19	Rough-l'd Hawk	0	1989	12
Gadwall	0	2012	6	American Kestrel	2	1974	31
American Wigeon	0	10	1999	<b>Merlin</b>	<b>4</b>	2008	4
Am. Black Duck	163	1992	286	Gyr Falcon	0	n.a.t.	
Mallard	874	1994	1,338	<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>	<b>4</b>	2011	4
Northern Pintail	0	1991	10	Virginia Rail	0	n.a.t.	
<i>Green-winged Teal*</i>	c.w.	n.a.t.		American Coot	0	n.a.t.	
Canvasback	0	n.a.t.		Killdeer	0	n.a.t.	
<i>Ring-necked Duck*</i>	1	n.a.t.		<i>Wilson's Snipe*</i>	1	n.a.t.	
Greater Scaup	0	n.a.t.		American Woodcock	0	n.a.t.	
Lesser Scaup	0	n.a.t.		Ring-billed Gull	187	2006	1,088
White-winged Scoter	0	n.a.t.		Herring Gull	20	1986	2,196
Long-tailed Duck	0	n.a.t.		Iceland Gull	0	n.a.t.	
Bufflehead	0	n.a.t.		Lesser Bl'-backed Gull	0	n.a.t.	
Common Goldeneye	20	1992	109	Glaucous Gull	0	n.a.t.	
Barrow's Goldeneye	0	n.a.t.		<i>Great Bl'-b'd Gull*</i>	cw	n.a.t.	
Hooded Merganser	40	2012	60	Rock Pigeon	538	1988	2,778
Common Merganser	111	2012	227	Mourning Dove	1,706	1998	3,904
Red-b'd Merganser	0	n.a.t.		E. Screech-Owl	48	2006	82
Ruddy Duck	0	n.a.t.		Great Horned Owl	37	2003	48
Ring-n'd Pheasant	4	1960	196	<i>Snowy Owl*</i>	cw	n.r.r	
Ruffed Grouse	1	1966	37	Barred Owl	8	2012	19
Wild Turkey	91	2010	187	<i>Long-eared Owl*</i>	1	2004	3
Red-throated Loon	0	n.a.t.		<i>Short-eared Owl*</i>	2	n.a.t.	
Common Loon	0	n.a.t.		N. Saw-whet Owl	1	2006	5
Pied-billed Grebe	0	n.a.t.		Selasphorus sp.	0	n.a.t.	
<i>Horned Grebe*</i>	1	n.a.t.		Belted Kingfisher	18	2001	23
Do'-c'd Cormorant	0	n.a.t.		Red-b'd Woodpecker	145	2010	159
(Great Cormorant)	0	nrr		Yellow-b'd Sapsucker	19	2007	22
Great Blue Heron	10	2006	27	Downy Woodpecker	316	2004	452
Green Heron	0	n.a.t.		Hairy Woodpecker	77	1974	192
Turkey Vulture	0	n.a.t.		Northern Flicker	70	1998	77

Species	2013	High Year	High Count	Species	2013	High Year	High Count
Pileated Woodpecker	29	2010	34	<i>Clay-c'd Sparrow*</i>	2	n.a.t.	
Eastern Phoebe	0	n.a.t.		Field Sparrow	0	1982	58
Northern Shrike	0	1995	15	Vesper Sparrow	0	n.a.t.	
(White-eyed Vireo)	0	nrr		<b><i>Harris's Sparrow</i></b>	<b>1</b>	n.a.t.	
Blue-headed Vireo	0	n.a.t.		Savannah Sparrow	41	2000	46
Blue Jay	1310	1977	1,686	Fox Sparrow	1	1943	20
American Crow	1,124	1997	5,836	Song Sparrow	406	1992	559
Fish Crow	2	2008	6	Lincoln's Sparrow	0	n.a.t.	
Common Raven	11	2010	13	Swamp Sparrow	2	1992	23
Horned Lark	1,056	1993	2,504	White-t'd Sparrow	456	2009	1,008
Black-c'd Chickadee	1,270	2005	2,096	White-c'd Sparrow	4	1999	9
Tufted Titmouse	497	2006	894	Dark-eyed Junco	2,019	2006	3,585
Red-b'd Nuthatch	9	1993	295	Oregon Junco	0	n.a.t.	
White-b'd Nuthatch	357	2005	489	<i>Lapland Longspur*</i>	8	1989	31
Brown Creeper	23	1973	53	Snow Bunting	80	1989	706
<b>Carolina Wren</b>	<b>139</b>	2006	96	Northern Cardinal	449	2004	649
House Wren	0	n.a.t.		Indigo Bunting	0	n.a.t.	
<b>Winter Wren</b>	<b>9</b>	1998	7	Dickcissel	0	n.a.t.	
Golden-c'd Kinglet	52	2001	332	Red-winged Blackbird	26	2008	304
Ruby-c'd Kinglet	0	1973	6	(Eastern Meadowlark)	0	nrr	
Eastern Bluebird	332	2006	474	Rusty Blackbird	7	2008	100
Hermit Thrush	6	2005	9	Common Grackle	2	2006	501
<b>American Robin</b>	<b>9,899</b>	2006	7,555	Brown-h'd Cowbird	204	2006	876
Gray Catbird	2	2005	5	Baltimore Oriole	0	n.a.t.	
N. Mockingbird	137	1999	238	Pine Grosbeak	0	n.a.t.	
Brown Thrasher	0	n.a.t.		Purple Finch	15	1976	221
European Starling	8,072	1985	94,630	House Finch	356	1994	2,215
American Pipit	0	2010	66	Red Crossbill	0	n.a.t.	
(Bohemian Waxwing)	0	nrr		White-w'd Crossbill	0	n.a.t.	
Cedar Waxwing	373	2007	2,194	Common Redpoll	0	1959	1,069
<i>Yellow-r'd Warbler*</i>	2	n.a.t.		Hoary Redpoll	0	n.a.t.	
Palm Warbler	0	n.a.t.		Pine Siskin	20	1993	372
<i>Eastern Towhee*</i>	<b>1</b>	n.a.t.		Amer. Goldfinch	1,019	2006	2,094
Amer. Tree Sparrow	698	1992	2,637	Evening Grosbeak	0	1969	3,000
<i>Chipping Sparrow*</i>	<b>1</b>	1974	11	House Sparrow	1,571	1961	2,662

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

For High counts in 2013, the previous high count and year are shown.

**n.a.t.** = now and then. Recorded in fewer than five (5) years between 1999 and 2013.

Some species seen extremely rarely have been excluded in the interests of space.





# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

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

Volume 30, No. 7

**March, 2014.**

In this edition:

- **this month's program** and the coming slate,
- an **URGENT** appeal for a volunteer on the **Nominating Committee**,
- a **field trip report** and **coming trips**,
- firm dates for the **Mount Mansfield** trip,
- a chance to **volunteer with HBC at WFCR**,
- **Hitchcock Programs**,
- a meeting about **kestrel nest boxes**,
- last chance for the **MassAudubon Birders Meeting**,
- results of the **Quabbin CBC**, and
- a few other tid-bits, including a **guide to bird rehabilitators in the valley**.

I hope you find some of useful!

## **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, March 10, at 7:15 p.m.**

**Chris Dwyer**

presents

### **Common Eider Die-Off in Massachusetts**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

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

## **COMING PROGRAMS**

**April 14. David Spector.** Amherst's Ornithologist: Margaret Morse Nice.

**May 12. Joan Walsh.** Birds and Agriculture.

**June 9. Steve Kress.** Puffins and Other Seabirds.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

### **Help ~~Wanted~~ Needed Urgently**

The Nominating Committee will be in session from the March meeting this year until the Annual General Meeting in May. The committee is charged with finding nominees to replace any members of the current HBC board who are leaving the board at the end of this year.

We **URGENTLY** need one volunteer from the membership at large to join Bruce Hart and Jan Ortiz on the committee. Please contact one of the following if you are willing to serve:

**Bruce Hart:** [brucehart-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org](mailto:brucehart-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org); 413 584 4176

**Jan Ortiz:** [jtortiz-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org](mailto:jtortiz-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org); 413 549 1768

Your bird club thanks you!

## TRIP REPORTS

### Saturday, February 8. North Shore

Al Richards dubbed this trip Mission 004, because as we left Al's house early in the morning, it was 0 degrees, we had 0 species, and there were 4 of us. As we headed east on Route 2, both the temperature and our species count rose steadily, and the weather on the coast was remarkably sunny and windless, if not exactly warm. In fact, the weather may have been too good for some seabirds, but nonetheless we racked up a respectable count of species.

We started on the south coast of Cape Ann, exploring the beach around the Fisherman's Monument in Gloucester. There we got some good ducks, including Gadwall, Common Eider, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Lesser Scaup, and Ruddy Duck. The first four species were found at other stops, and Al commented on how common Gadwall had become. We took our place at the end of the line of three bird clubs circumnavigating the island, and managed to see a few good birds that the quicker clubs had located. We continued through Gloucester, hitting the Granite Pier, Fish Pier, and Eastern Point Wildlife Sanctuary, where we picked up Purple Sandpipers, **Harlequin Ducks**, **Iceland Gulls**, a **Thick-billed Murre**, a **Dovekie**, and a Gray Seal, in addition to many other gulls and ducks.

We then headed north along Atlantic Avenue toward Cathedral Ledge and Andrews Point. At this point the calmness of the sea was striking, and perhaps because of that, the birds had apparently moved away from the shore. We saw a **Red-necked Grebe** at Cathedral Ledge and a probable **Razorbill** around Andrews Point (although we didn't identify it as such at the time). We then went to Plum Cove to try to find the Barrow's Goldeneye that had been reported, but had no luck. Instead, we found a Brant and some Long-tailed Ducks.

We then traveled to Ipswich to see the resident **Red-headed Woodpecker**, which we found without difficulty after we spotted several birders staring at a tree along the road. Most of the rest of the day was spent looking for **Snowy Owls** around Plum Island. We got good looks at three owls, and additionally saw Horned Larks and a **Northern Shrike**. In all, we got 50 species, turning Mission 004 into Mission 30504 (30 degrees, 50 species, and still 4 participants). Thanks to Al for a great trip to the coast.

Mike Locher

## COMING TRIPS

Please note that the Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule (3rd Edition) is now at  
[www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

**Saturday, March 15. Connecticut River Waterfowl.** Half day. Al Richards and/or Bob Bieda seek out the ducks and geese migrating up the Connecticut River to their breeding grounds. Meet at Stop & Shop (at 456 Russell St.) in Hadley at 6:30. Contact Al (413-665-2761) for more information and to register for the trip. (E)

**\*Saturday, April 12. 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 Holyoke Elks parking lot (250 Whitney Ave.), near Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7 a.m. (E)

**\*Sunday, April 13. Northampton Migrants.** Half day. Betsy Higgins (413-586-7585) goes to Look Park to find waterthrushes and other early migrants. Meet at the JFK Middle School parking lot (100 Bridge Road, Florence) at 7 a.m. (E)

## Whoops!

Scores of alert readers noted that there were some mistakes in the provisional Northampton Christmas Count results, published in January. These were entirely the result of some formatting issues during editing. For the official count results from national Audubon, you can go to:

<http://netapp.audubon.org/CBCObservation/CurrentYear/ResultsByCount.aspx>

The code for the Northampton count is MANO.

## OVERNIGHT TRIPS

*We now have confirmed dates for the Mount Mansfield trip in June!*

### **Mount Mansfield. Bicknell's Thrushes in Vermont. Overnight trip.**

**Tuesday, June 17 – Wednesday, June 18.**

**Mike Locher** and representatives from the Vermont Center for Ecostudies will look for **Bicknell's Thrush**, **Blackpoll Warbler**, **Sandhill Crane** and **Black-billed Cuckoo**, amongst other species in the area of Mount Mansfield.

Bicknell's Thrush is a species that looks almost identical to Gray-cheeked Thrush, but whose closest relative is actually the Veery. The species breeds in balsam fir forests across south-eastern Canada, and is still found in shrinking pockets of high-altitude habitat in northern New England. The species is also experiencing severe habitat loss in its winter range in the Caribbean, and numbers are declining sharply. Research demonstrates that this species has a fascinating life history structure which reflects its tenuous grip on existence.

Mount Mansfield is one of a few "sky islands" in northern New England which still support breeding populations of Bicknell's Thrush. Our VCE guides will be helping us not only look for this species in its breeding habitat, but also allow us to spend time with researchers banding and studying the species. We may get to see individuals in-hand.

We will leave the valley early on the first day and bird through the Champlain Valley on the way north, stopping in the area of Dead Creek WMA, in Addison, Vermont, and hoping for breeding Sandhill Cranes in the area of Bristol Pond, Vermont. Upon arrival at Mt Mansfield, we'll check into accommodations in the village of Stowe, and make a late afternoon visit to the banding and research area before retiring for the evening. The second day will begin before dawn as we meet our VCE guides and travel up the mountain for a morning at the banding station, hoping to encounter Bicknell's Thrush and other species of the high altitude fir forests. We will check out of our lodgings around the middle of the day and proceed home, with the possibility of some stops along the way.

Participants will book and pay for their own accommodation and meals. Mike is compiling a list of accommodation options and can share them with you. The club will ask participants to pay a fee to cover the leader's accommodation and travel, club insurance, and a contribution to the work of the VCE. This cost is likely to be in the range of \$40-50, and the overall cost (depending on accommodation availability and choice) is likely to be in the range of \$225 – 275 per person. Please contact **Mike Locher** (fieldtrips-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org); 413 585 5864 if you are interested.

Please note that the confirmed dates for this trip are reflected in the revised Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule (3rd Edition), now at [www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org)

## 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 8, 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 and lots of coffee is provided; all you need to do is bring yourself (and friend if you wish) and answer pledge calls as they come in. If you'd like to join the fun, sign up by calling or emailing Dave Gross at 253-2897 or [dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:dgross@hampshirebirdclub.org).

*Date:* Saturday, March 8

*Time:* 8-11 A.M.

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

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

**Naturalists and Novelists: The Birds of the Brontës:** *David Spector*

Tuesday, March 4, 7 pm- 8:30 pm.

**Our Avian Neighbors: Birds in Our Local Conservation Areas:** *Melanie Klein and Dave King*

Wednesday, March 5, 7 pm-8:30 pm

**Connecticut River Floodplain: Tree ID Using Bark and Habitat Clues:** *Nancy Goodman*

Saturday, March 15, 10 am – 2 pm. South Deerfield

**Hitchcock Center Spring Birding Field Trips – 2014:** *Scott Sumner*

Scott's wonderful birding class this winter and spring will be entirely field-based, without evening classroom lectures. CLASS FULL. Try in January next year!

*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).*

### Kestrel Nest Boxes in the Pioneer Valley

Last year, the **Kestrel Land Trust** installed a number of boxes designed for nesting kestrels around the valley and established a network of monitors, including some HBC members, to keep tabs on the outcomes. The trust plans to report on the progress of the kestrel nest box project and, presumably, plans for the future in the following presentation:

**Kestrel Nest Boxes in the Pioneer Valley.**

**March 26, 2014, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

**Forbes Library, 20 West Street, Northampton**

### MassAudubon Birders Meeting: 2014

#### Extinction is Forever: What Have We Learned?

*March 8, 2014, Bentley University, Waltham.*

Co-hosted by Mass Audubon, the Museum of Comparative Zoology, and the Harvard Museum of Natural History. Using the passenger pigeon as an iconic example of what can happen to a super-abundant species in a relatively short span of time, the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Birders Meeting will focus on the extinction phenomenon from a variety of perspectives.

The keynote speaker will be Joel Greenberg with “*A Feathered River Across the Sky: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction.*” Other speakers include *Patrick Comins, Matthew Kamm, John Kricher and Michael Reed.*

For more information, go to <http://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/birds-birding/birders-meeting>.

That's all for this month. Quabbin Count provisional results follow.

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 2013 and Historical

Species with high counts this year are listed in **bold** and the previous high count is also listed

Species	2013	High Year	High Count	Species	2013	High Year	High Count
Canada Goose	7	1999	193	Black-headed Gull	0	occ.	
Mute Swan	0	occ.		Ring-billed Gull	32	2011	185
Wood Duck	0	occ.		Herring Gull	11	1990	280
American Wigeon	1	occ.		Glaucous Gull	0	unusual	
Black Duck	35	1993	349	Great Black-backed Gull	9	1990	47
Mallard	129	1994	975	Rock Pigeon	10	1999	339
Northern Pintail	0	occ.		Mourning Dove	86	1999	440
Green-winged Teal	0	occ.		Eastern Screech Owl	0	1989	4
Ring-necked Duck	0	2001	41	Great Horned Owl	7	1994	24
Greater Scaup	4	2001	5	Snowy Owl	0	not yet	
Lesser Scaup	0	occ.		Barred Owl	12	1993	21
White-winged Scoter	0	occ.		Long-eared Owl	0	unusual	
Black Scoter	0	occ.		Saw-whet Owl	5	1994	61
Long-tailed Duck	1	occ.		Belted Kingfisher	5	2010	6
Bufflehead	4	1994	28	Red-bellied Woodpecker	33	2010	35
Common Goldeneye	10	1992	105	<b>Yellow-bell'd Sapsucker</b>	<b>3</b>	occ.	
Barrows Goldeneye	0	Occ.		Downy Woodpecker	103	1994	169
Hooded Merganser	49	2006	186	Hairy Woodpecker	31	2012	62
Common Merganser	134	199	1127	Northern Flicker	8	2010	10
Red-breasted Merganser	0	occ.		Pileated Woodpecker	12	2010	61
Ruddy Duck	0	occ.		Eastern Phoebe	0	unusual	
Ring-necked Pheasant	0	1994	16	Northern Shrike	0	1995	10
Ruffed Grouse	5	1994	42	Blue Jay	287	1993	1140
Wild Turkey	127	2009	248	American Crow	122	1995	395
Common Loon	6	1999	23	Common Raven	62	2013	62
Horned Grebe	9	1997	195	Horned Lark	0	1998	59
Red-necked Grebe	0	1995	2	Black-capped Chickadee	845	1993	2516
Double crested Cormorant	0	occ.		Boreal Chickadee	0	unusual	
Great Cormorant	0	occ.		Tufted Titmouse	197	1998	297
Great Blue Heron	0	1991	2	Red-breasted Nuthatch	10	1993	1886
Turkey Vulture	0	occ.		White-breasted Nuthatch	180	2001	303
Osprey	0	occ.		Brown Creeper	17	1996	82
Bald Eagle	37	1994	38	Carolina Wren	10	2011	12
Northern Harrier	0	occ.		<b>Winter Wren*</b>	<b>4</b>	1997	4
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	1993	12	Golden-crowned Kinglet	79	1996	312
Cooper's Hawk	2	2010	6	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	0	1996*	3
Northern Goshawk	0	2007*	3	<b>Eastern Bluebird</b>	<b>65</b>	2011	45
Red-shouldered Hawk	0	occ.		<b>Hermit Thrush*</b>	<b>4</b>	2006	4
Red-tailed Hawk	26	2001	28	<b>American Robin</b>	<b>2501</b>	2009	1878
Rough-legged Hawk	0	occ.		Gray Catbird	0	2008*	1
Golden Eagle	1	1997*	2	Northern Mockingbird	2	1991	45
American Kestrel	0	occ.		European Starling	453	1999	1690
Merlin	0	occ.		Bohemian Waxwing		Not yet	
American Coot	0	occ.		<i>(Continues next page)</i>			
<i>(Continues next column)</i>							

## Quabbin Count 2013 and Historical (continued)

Species	2013	High Year	High Count	Species	2013	High Year	High Count
Cedar Waxwing	78	1997	550	House Finch	29	1992	429
<b>Yellow-r'd Warbler*</b>	<b>1</b>	unusual		Red Crossbill	0	1993	240
Pine Warbler	0	unusual		White-winged Crossbill	0	1993	27
Eastern Towhee	0	2009	3	Common Redpoll	0	1997	1357
American Tree Sparrow	51	1998	611	Hoary Redpoll	0	unusual	
Fox Sparrow	0	unusual		Pine Siskin	0	2008	137
Song Sparrow	43	1994	50	American Goldfinch	125	1994	664
Lincoln's Sparrow	0	Not yet		Evening Grosbeak	0	1989	413
Swamp Sparrow	0	2008	3	House Sparrow	514	2004	1032
White-throated Sparrow	27	2009	584				
Dark-ey' (Slate Co') Junco	372	2009	2297	<b>Write Ins</b>			
<b>Snow Bunting</b>	<b>230</b>	1988	157				
Northern Cardinal	50	2005	123				
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	0	unusual					
Red-winged Blackbird	0	2006	309				
Rusty Blackbird	0	2011	51				
Common Grackle	0	2006	100	Number of Species this year	62		
Brown-headed Cowbird	0	2006	553	# of new species this year			0
Pine Grosbeak	0	2007	154	Cumulative # of Species	120		
Purple Finch	1	1992	169				

\*Most recent high year

Species counted in fewer than five (5) years between 1988 and 2012 are described as "occasional (occ.)."

Species recorded in fewer than three (3) years between 1988 and 2012 are described as "unusual."

This year saw **high counts** for **Common Raven** (62), **American Robin** (2501), **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** (3) and **Snow Bunting** (230).

High counts were **tied** for **Winter Wren** (4), **Hermit Thrush** (4), **Yellow-rumped Warbler** (1) and **Eastern Bluebird** (65)



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

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

Volume 30, No. 8

**April, 2014.**

Oh, g'day. Now that we are done dodging the darn things, it's worth a moment to reflect on perhaps the largest invasion of winter Snowy Owls in living memory.

Reading up a bit about the event, I discovered that this invasion did not result, as many irruptions of arctic species do, from a crash in food resources. To the contrary, the birds moved south in response to a SURPLUS of prey in the northern summer of 2013. There was an explosion in lemming numbers in a relatively small area of northern Quebec. Snowy Owls converged on the region from all over eastern Canada and embarked on a breeding frenzy, rearing clutches of up to 12 eggs, in contrast with the 1-3 young they raise in a "typical" arctic summer. There are several photographs from this area of the tundra showing owl nests surrounded by, in some cases, dozens of lemming carcasses, awaiting the emergence of young from the eggs. Almost all the Snowy Owls seen in the north-east this winter were young birds from this (suddenly overcrowded) area of Quebec. Researchers using satellite tagging have found that some owls move northward in the winter, prowling open polynas in the sea ice of Baffin Bay for wintering sea ducks. WOW!

I hope you had a chance to see at least one of these remarkable birds this year. But don't take too long to savor the experience. It is April and there are already any number of other remarkable migrations in progress. Get out there and see what turns up in your neck of the woods!

In this edition,

- Our **next program** and the remaining programs for this spring.
- The Plum Island **field trip report** and **coming field trips**,
- The **Mount Mansfield trip** draws nigh,
- The **AGM** announcement (including the antics of the Nominating Committee),
- The **library** awaits you.....,
- A chance to help the **Fort River Refuge** and take out your latent frustrations on a nasty weed,
- **Hitchcock Programs**, and
- A few other tidbits.

I hope you find some of it useful.

## **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, April 14 at 7:15 p.m.**

**David Spector** presents **Amherst's Ornithologist: Margaret Morse Nice**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Which woman was born in Amherst in the 19th century, attended Mount Holyoke College, and went on to world-wide fame in the 20th century? For ornithologists the answer is clear: Margaret Morse Nice, a key pioneer in the study of bird behavior. This overview of her life gives glimpses of bird watching in the Connecticut River Valley over a century ago, the foundations of ethology (the study of behavior in a natural and evolutionary context), and of classic studies of behavior, including warbler nesting studies done in Pelham.

David Spector has been a member of the Hampshire Bird Club since its first meeting, is a former board president of the Hitchcock Center, and teaches biology at Central Connecticut State University.



## COMING PROGRAMS

**May 12, 2014. Joan Walsh.** Birds and Agriculture.

**June 9, 2014. Steve Kress.** Puffins and Other Seabirds

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### Saturday, March 1. Plum Island

**Geoff LeBaron** led Peter Allison, Jesse Brownback, Tim Carter, Stephanie Chapco, Devin & Aidan Griffiths (with friend Andre), Marcia Merithew and George Regmund to the birding jewel of Massachusetts on a bright, chilly morning.

From Cashman Park, the group enjoyed ogled shamelessly at courting Bufflehead and Common Goldeneye. A **Wilson's Snipe** skittered off after being flushed by a hunting Northern Harrier.

Lot 1 afforded beautiful views of the ocean. Scoters dashed past along with **Long-tailed Ducks**, **Snow Buntings** buzzed the boardwalk at close range and Wild Turkeys (clearly with ties to Northampton) asserted their pedestrian rights over the traffic on the road.

A partially albino (leucistic, ed.?) American Robin provided interest at Hellcat, and two **Rough-legged Hawks** hunting at Wardens were well worth the price of admission. Crossing the causeway toward the chain bridge, the group got a good look at one of the multitudinous **Snowy Owls** that visited coastal Massachusetts this winter.

As always at this time of year, Great Cormorants sported their under-appreciated breeding plumage by the Chain Bridge. Also in flamboyant spring attire, a wonderful Great Blue Heron. Completing the picture was a host of mergansers, featuring both Common and Red-breasted varieties.

Despite a disappointing absence of owls on the way in to Salisbury State Park, there was a nice variety of sea ducks, including a visiting **Eurasian Wigeon** at the Merrimack River breakwater, which was a life bird for some of the group. Shorebirds, in the form of Dunlin and Sanderling, scurried around in the intertidal, but the day was rounded out by not one, not two, not three, but four **Snowy Owls** on the way out of the park, one of which called: a first for leader Geoff, and, one assumes, most of those present.

Geoff LeBaron/Ed.

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

*See also the Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) now at our Website.*

**\*Saturday, April 12. 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 Holyoke Elks parking lot (250 Whitney Ave.), near Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7 a.m. (E)

**\*Sunday, April 13. Northampton Migrants.** Half day. Marcia Merithew (mmerithew-at-comcast-dot-com) and David Peake-Jones (newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org) (subbing for Betsy Higgins) go to Look Park to find waterthrushes and other early migrants. Meet at the JFK Middle School parking lot (100 Bridge Road, Florence) at 7 a.m. (E)

**Wednesday, 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)

## OVERNIGHT TRIPS

### Mount Mansfield. Bicknell's Thrushes in Vermont. Overnight trip.

Tuesday, June 17 – Wednesday, June 18.

**Mike Locher** and representatives from the Vermont Center for Ecostudies will look for **Bicknell's Thrush**, **Blackpoll Warbler**, **Sandhill Crane** and **Black-billed Cuckoo**, amongst other species in the area of Mount Mansfield.

Bicknell's Thrush is a species that looks almost identical to Gray-cheeked Thrush, but whose closest relative is actually the Veery. The species breeds in balsam fir forests across south-eastern Canada, and is still found in shrinking pockets of high-altitude habitat in northern New England. The species is also experiencing severe habitat loss in its winter range in the Caribbean, and numbers are declining sharply. Research demonstrates that this species has a fascinating life history structure which reflects its tenuous grip on existence.

Mount Mansfield is one of a few "sky islands" in northern New England which still support breeding populations of Bicknell's Thrush. Our VCE guides will be helping us not only look for this species in its breeding habitat, but also allow us to spend time with researchers banding and studying the species. We may get to see individuals in-hand.

We will leave the valley early on the first day and bird through the Champlain Valley on the way north, stopping in the area of Dead Creek WMA, in Addison, Vermont, and hoping for breeding Sandhill Cranes in the area of Bristol Pond, Vermont. Upon arrival at Mt Mansfield, we'll check into accommodations in the village of Stowe, and make a late afternoon visit to the banding and research area before retiring for the evening.

The second day will begin before dawn as we meet our VCE guides and travel up the mountain for a morning at the banding station, hoping to encounter Bicknell's Thrush and other species of the high altitude fir forests.

We will check out of our lodgings around the middle of the day and proceed home, with the possibility of some stops along the way.

Participants will book and pay for their own accommodation and meals. Mike is compiling a list of accommodation options and can share them with you. The club will ask participants to pay a fee to cover the leader's accommodation and travel, club insurance, and a contribution to the work of the VCE. This cost is likely to be in the range of \$40-50, and the overall cost (depending on accommodation availability and choice) is likely to be in the range of \$225 – 275 per person. Please contact **Mike Locher** (fieldtrips-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org); 413 585 5864 if you are interested.

## LIBRARY

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

Hours are those of the Hitchcock Center:

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

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

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

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

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The **Annual General Meeting** of the **Hampshire Bird Club Incorporated** will be held on **Monday, May 12, 2014** at the **Immanuel Lutheran Church** (867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst) at **7:15 p.m.** The meeting will immediately precede the May program.

The agenda for the meeting is to elect the Board of Directors for the year from May 12, 2014 to May 12, 2015.

The **Nominating Committee** comprises:

**Bruce Hart** (Chair), (bhart-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org; 584 4176)

**Jan Ortiz** (jortiz-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org; 549 1768), and

**Marcia Merithew** (mmerithew-at-comcast-dot-net; 584 8874)

The committee has prepared the following slate of nominees, which is subject to change prior to and at the AGM.

**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

Hampshire Bird Club WELCOMES and encourages other nominations for ANY and ALL of the above positions. These may be sent to any member of the Nominating Committee or presented from the floor at the Annual General Meeting. At-meeting nominees must be present at the meeting so as to verify their consent.

## There and Back Again: Satellite Studies of Osprey Migration

**Dr. Rob Bierregaard, noted raptor researcher**

**Monday, April 17, 7:00 p.m.**

**Putney Community Center, 10 Christian Square near the center of Putney.**

Formerly a professor of ornithology and ecology at the University of North Carolina, Dr. Bierregaard is currently a research associate at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University. Dr. Bierregaard has always had a passion for birds of prey and for much of his life has conducted research on ospreys, barred owls, and other raptors. During the 1980's he studied the effects of habitat fragmentation on tropical forest ecosystems. Currently, he focuses his research on the ecology and migration of ospreys in eastern North America.

The Putney Mountain Association is sponsoring this event as a fund-raiser to help PMA acquire and conserve a 144 acre parcel of land in Putney.

There is a suggested donation of \$10. Refreshments will be served.

For more information, call (802) 387-5387.

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

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

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

### **Vernal Pool Exploration:** *Charley Eiseman*

Saturday, April 12, 9:30am-12:30pm

### **Earth Day Film Screening: Green Fire – Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time**

with USFWS at Hadley Regional Headquarters.

Tuesday, April 22, 7pm-9pm

### **The Nez Perce National Historic Trail:** *Pete Westover*

Thursday, April 24, 7pm-8:30pm

### **5th Annual Sustainability Festival**

Saturday, April 26, 10am-4pm on the Amherst Town Common

### **Wildlife Conservation in Kenya:** *Steve Upton*

Wednesday, April 30, 7pm – 8:30 pm

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

Saturday, May 3, 7am-10am

### **Spring Ephemeral Wildflowers:** *Ted Watt*

Sunday, May 4, 9:30am - 12noon

*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).*

## **Friends of Fort River Refuge**

### **Garlic Mustard Pull**

Place: Fort River Division: Silvio Conte National Fisheries and Wildlife Refuge

Moody Bridge Road, Hadley

Date: Saturday, April 27

Time: TBA

Help with removal of invasive plants that are bad for native plants.

Email: [FriendsofFortRiverRefuge@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsofFortRiverRefuge@gmail.com) for more info. and to volunteer.

Stephanie Chapko

George Regmund

### **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!

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

### **“From Valley to Wildlife Havens: The Transformation of the Swift and Ware Rivers”**

**John Burk**

**Wednesday, April 6, 2014, 7:00 p.m.**

**Free and open to all 7:00 PM at Millers River Environmental Center: 100 Main Street, Athol.**

When the Swift and Ware River Valleys were taken for water supply during the 1930s, a secondary benefit was the creation of extensive wildlife habitat. John Burk will show past and present images of these areas, including rare historic photos and discuss the wildlife that are now thriving in these areas. John has authored several books and guides related to New England, including Quabbin Reservoir: America Through Time and The Wildlife of New England: A Viewer's Guide.

#### **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!”

My thanks to co-worker Mike and the collective creativity of the internet for this item.

## **Mass Audubon Volunteers to Work for Wildlife**

**Statewide Volunteer Day!**

**Saturday, April 26, 2014, 9 am to noon**

Find out more and sign up at [www.massaudubon.org/get-involved/volunteer](http://www.massaudubon.org/get-involved/volunteer)

## **Board Meeting**

The next meeting of the HBC Board of Directors will be held at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst on Thursday, May 15 at 7:00 pm

## **Hog Island Camps**

National Audubon offers 11 different 6-day birding and natural history camps in an idyllic island setting off the coast of Maine from June to September.

Learn more and sign up at [hogisland.audubon.org](http://hogisland.audubon.org)

That's it for now.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

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



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

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

Volume 30, No. 9

**May, 2014.**

Oh, g'day. Taking a break from icing my feet after a weekend of birding to pen a few lines for the bird club. Seems like anyone who has been out this week-end will tell you that the floodgates have finally opened. After a week of (literal) flooding and seemingly interminable dampness, the weather finally allowed birds to move and both Saturday May 3 and Sunday, May 4 were some of the best birding I can remember in the valley. I am sure you have your own stories to tell about first-of-the-year encounters and, perhaps, iconic moments in your own birding life.

The spring fervor struck me with force at about 9:30 on Saturday morning, when I finally attained the top of Goat Peak, after walking up from the Stone House with nary a bird to be heard amongst the still-leafless deciduous woods of the lower Mt. Tom ridge, and the increasingly skeletal remnants of the proud hemlock forests which once clothed the ridge. A bit late for hawks, actually, and I only went because I had missed the only good broad-wing days this spring and wanted to at least have a peek at the stragglers. There were a few hawks: 67 Broad-wings between 9:30 and about 12:30, to be precise, but I had a hard time focusing on them. Instead I found myself mesmerized by a continual flow of migrating warblers sifting through the budding tops of the hickories around the tower, and pelting along above the tree-tops in loose groups of up to ten birds. The only time I have seen anything like it was at Higbee Beach on Cape May during the fall migration. I estimate roughly 550 warblers passed within 200 yards of the tower during the 3 hour period, of which I could positively identify only about 150 (Yellow-rumps). Based on the species breakdown of those that stopped in the tree-tops, at least 95 percent of the unidentified were also Yellow-rumps, all trying to make up for lost time in the frantic push to get to the boreal. Amongst the ten percent was a beautiful male Blackburnian Warbler which stopped for a few minutes in the closest hickory.

What I love the most about birding is that, in spite of our sloth and crowded lives, understanding of the miracle of life forces itself upon us almost every time we venture out with our binoculars. I will be on the tower on the first weekend in May from now on, sore feet notwithstanding.....

### **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, May 12 at 7:15 p.m.**

**Joan Walsh presents Birds and Agriculture**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

**Joan Walsh** is best known to us as the coordinator of the second Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas for MassAudubon. Those who have heard her speak will attest that she is no fainting violet, and will, I am sure bring her own brand of humor and passion to the question of how our agricultural communities can not only find a way to co-exist with birds but actively promote the health of bird populations. I have no doubt there will be a role for us, as birders, to play in this vital effort!

### **COMING PROGRAMS**

**June 9, 2014. Steve Kress. Puffins and Other Seabirds.**

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### April 12, 2014. Ashley Reservoir.

I had originally thought to compose a poem as my trip report. Something like:

*On the twelfth day of April,  
The weather was warm.  
In the trees around Ashley,  
The kinglets did swarm.*

*The Pine Warblers warbled  
In the tops of the trees.  
A lone Northern Harrier  
Floated by on the breeze.*

*The tails of the Palm Warblers  
Waived up and down.  
And while a rhyme here seems easy,  
I defy anyone to fit Louisiana Waterthrush into this  
meter.*

*Or Pileated Woodpecker,  
Or especially Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.*

And so I gave up on the poem. But the day was great. There were nine of us who walked around the reservoir, and it was truly a beautiful spring day after our long winter. Among the highlights, there were lots of warblers (Pine and Palm) and kinglets (Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned) in the trees around the water, an Eastern Towhee at the Elks Club parking lot, a lone Common Loon, a Greater Yellowlegs feeding near some Wood Ducks, and over the railroad tracks, one **Louisiana Waterthrush**, a pair of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, a Winter Wren (heard), and a pair of Pileated Woodpeckers. The weather seemed ideal for raptor migration, but aside from one Northern Harrier, a Sharp-shinned Hawk, and two birds that we needed Tom Gagnon to identify, hawks weren't moving over the reservoir. In all, we tallied 48 species of birds (an all-time high for me on this trip), 3 reptiles (Common Garter Snake, Northern Water Snake, Painted Turtle), and 2 amphibians (Spring Peeper and American Green Frog).

Mike Locher

*The editor would like to thank Mike, not only for his sterling leadership on this marvelous birding day, but for establishing a new standard of literary achievement, measured against which my menial prose may seem faintly respectable. Ed.*



### Look Park. Sunday, April 13.

**Marcia Merithew, David Peake-Jones** and some other folks braved the Route 9 Rotary (with the no apparent loss of life) and headed into Northampton's premier rec. and leisure location in search of early season migrants. The forecast sunny skies and warm temperatures were temporarily obscured by clouds and rain, but all the more tantalizing for their promised appearance. Despite the murk and cold, we found the still-bare trees alive with kinglets of both varieties, a goodly smattering of Palm and Pine Warblers and Chipping Sparrows, as well as a couple of recently arrived Yellow-rumped Warblers, hinting at the avalanche of neotropicals soon to descend upon our valley.

The Mill River was a hotbed of frantic duck activity. Several pairs of Common Mergansers zoomed frenetically up and down river, as did one couple of Hooded Mergansers. A pair of Wood Ducks tried unsuccessfully to look disinterested in a patently homey hole in a sycamore, and a couple of Bluebirds prospected for a nest-site in, of all things, a natural cavity! After a good long while peering at what we think was a possum butt poking out of a tree hole behind the pines theater, we made our way out of the park, enjoying a farewell look at a Pine Warbler by the ornamental pond at the gate. In the gathering warmth and clearing cloud, we made our way back to early April domesticity, none the worse for wear.

Ed.

Patience is a quality we value in the person behind us, but not in the person in front of us.

Notice Board, Hampshire College.



### **Mitch's Way. Saturday, May 3.**

Sue Emerson, Juliana Vanderwielen and Josh Rose birded Mitch's way and environs on a pleasant Saturday morning. En route Josh and Sue took the scenic drive down Moody Bridge Road, past the Fort River Division of SOCNWR. One Kestrel was perched right near the corner with Maple Street, and Sue saw another near the nest box further down the road. I heard a few Bobolinks, my first of the year, singing amid the more abundant and noisier Red-winged Blackbirds on the hill, and a Warbling Vireo (also first of year) singing closer to the old stables.

We were actually distracted at first by the spectacular wildflowers of the place, particularly the massive hordes of Trilliums. But eventually we realized that the trees were alive with warblers and other migrants. We had seen or heard 10 warbler species by the time we left, including Chestnut-sided, a few Blue-winged, a group of Palm, Ovenbird, American Redstart, and Parula; plus Least and Great Crested Flycatchers, a few Baltimore Orioles and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, a Hermit Thrush, lots of Cedar Waxwings, and plenty more. We crossed paths briefly with Larry Therrien and Jacob Drucker, who had seen a few more warbler species that we had missed, and showed off a photo of a Worm-eating. Sue had to leave a bit early; just after she parted from us, the sun peeked through the clouds, a Bald Eagle soared over, and a kettle of a dozen Broad-winged Hawks almost instantly coalesced above the eagle! I love spring migration...

Josh Rose

## **COMING FIELD TRIPS**

**See also the Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition)**

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

\*On Tuesdays in May, there will be informal birding walks through the former Bri-Mar Stables grounds (now part of the Fort River Division of the Silvio O. Conte NWR).

May 6, Janice Jorgensen, 7 a.m.

May 13, Bob Bieda, 7 a.m.

May 20, Al Richards, 6:30 a.m.

May 27, TBA.

All walks meet at the Stables parking area (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley). (E)

**Saturday, May 10. Quabbin Park and East Quabbin.** All day. Tom Gagnon leads his 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 participate. To register, contact Tom (413-584-6353 or [tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com](mailto:tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com)). Please register with Tom early. (M)

**Sunday, May 11, Orchard Hill +/- Sylvan Woods.** Half Day. Dave Mako leads a stroll through these popular migration hotspots on the UMass campus. Meet at 7 a.m. in the north-westernmost parking lot for the Orchard Hill Residential Area via Orchard Hill Drive. Contact Dave (412-665-2999 or [massmakos-at-yahoo-dot-com](mailto:massmakos-at-yahoo-dot-com)) for more info and the donut count. (E)

**Thursday, 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 Tom (413-584-6353) or email [tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com](mailto:tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com). (M)

**Saturday, May 17. Bartholomew's Cobble.** All day. Mike Locher travels southwest to the unique habitat of Bartholomew's Cobble. Grassland birds in the fields and woodland migrants in the forests around the cobble. Also wildflowers unique to the area. Meet at Stop & Shop on King Street in Northampton at 6 a.m. and bring a lunch. Call Mike (413-585-5864) for further details. (M)

**\*Sunday, May 18. Mount Auburn Cemetery.** All day. Sharon Dombeck and Stephen Baker explore one of the premier migrant traps within the greater Boston area. On the way home, time and interest permitting, there will be a stop at Great Meadows in Concord. Meet at the Hitchcock Center (525 S. Pleasant St., Amherst) at 5:30 a.m. and bring a lunch and snacks. Contact Sharon or Stephen (413-268-7021) for details and to register. (E)

**\*Saturday, May 24. 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 31. Fort River Division of Silvio O. Conte NWR (Bri-Mar Stables).** Half day. Josh Rose enjoys one of the best Bobolink shows in the area, hopes to find a few breeding and migrating warblers and sparrows, and enjoys the refuge's newly built boardwalks and observation decks. Optional continuation to the Honeypot, possibly after lunch and ice cream at Cook Farm. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the stables (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley). Any questions, contact Josh (413-835-0093 or opihi-at-mindspring-dot-com). (E)

**Saturday, June 7. Westover Air Force Base.** Half day. Bob Bieda and Mike Locher host the HBC's annual trip to New England's premier grassland habitat, looking for Upland Sandpipers, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Bob (413-527-2623) at least two weeks ahead of time to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E)

## OVERNIGHT TRIPS

### **Mount Mansfield. Bicknell's Thrushes in Vermont.**

*Tuesday, June 17 – Wednesday, June 18.*

*Mike Locher*

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

**Mike Locher** and representatives from the Vermont Center for Ecostudies will look for **Bicknell's Thrush**, **Blackpoll Warbler**, **Sandhill Crane** and **Black-billed Cuckoo**, amongst other species in the area of Mount Mansfield.

We will leave the valley early on the first day and bird through the Champlain Valley on the way north, stopping in the area of Dead Creek WMA, in Addison, Vermont, and hoping for breeding Sandhill Cranes in the area of Bristol Pond, Vermont. Upon arrival at Mt Mansfield, we'll check into accommodations in the village of Stowe, and make a late afternoon visit to the banding and research area before retiring for the evening. The second day will begin before dawn as we meet our VCE guides and travel up the mountain for a morning at the banding station, hoping to encounter Bicknell's Thrush and other species of the high altitude fir forests. We will check out of our lodgings around the middle of the day and proceed home, with the possibility of some stops along the way.

Participants will book and pay for their own accommodation and meals. Mike is compiling a list of accommodation options and can share them with you. The club will ask participants to pay a fee to cover the leader's accommodation and travel, club insurance, and a contribution to the work of the VCE. This cost is likely to be in the range of \$40-50, and the overall cost (depending on accommodation availability and choice) is likely to be in the range of \$225 – 275 per person. Please contact **Mike Locher** (fieldtrips-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org); 413 585 5864 if you are interested.

# **The Crown of Maine**

*Thursday August 7 through Monday, August 11*

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

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

Excitement is building for this summer overnight trip, and wonderful weather has already been ordered! The registration window is closing in JUNE, so ACT NOW!!

**Target bird species** will include boreal forest specialties around New Sweden (**Black-backed- and American Three-toed woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied and Olive-sided flycatchers, Gray Jay, Philadelphia Vireo, Tennessee-, Bay-breasted-, Cape May-, and Blackpoll warblers**, etc), wetland, grassland, and shrub-land species around Presque Isle and Aroostook N.W.R. (nesting **Redhead** and **Ruddy Ducks** amid a myriad of other waterfowl, **American Bittern, Upland Sandpiper, and Mourning Warbler**), and possibly **Spruce Grouse** among other boreal species in the Maine North Woods. We also hope to encounter wonderful wildflowers, intriguing large mammals, (editor not included) and the boreal dawn chorus.

**HBC Cost Estimate**: Participants will pay HBC a trip fee of approximately \$90, depending on how many people sign up. Additional costs include lodging, meals and transportation. The cost may drop by up to \$20 as more people sign up.

## **Additional Costs:**

### Accommodation

Look to be spending between \$220 single room or shared \$260 for the four nights for accommodations at the most affordable motel: Russell's in Caribou. Prices will be higher if Russell's is full. See also "Further Information."

### Transportation

We will travel independently to- and from Caribou, Maine. The round trip is approximately 1,000 miles, and we will add an additional 250 miles or so per car while we are up there. Again, to keep costs down, it's important to car-pool and share costs, which will depend on your vehicle and the number of people you share with. See also "Further Information."

### Food and Sundries

Individuals will be responsible for all food costs during the trip, though Bill has a delightful habit of laying on coffee and snacks in the field. Breakfasts in-motel (fridges, microwaves etc. in all rooms) or at local convenience stores. Sack lunches/restaurants for lunches. Dinners will be at home-style restaurants in Caribou. See also "Further Information."

## **Further Information**

A detailed trip description is posted on our Website: [www.hampshirebirdclub.org/trips](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org/trips).

You may also contact Geoff LeBaron: [programs@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:programs@hampshirebirdclub.org); 413 268 9281.

**Registration. *Registration is open.*** Contact Mike Locher at [fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) or 585 5864.

## **Payments and Cancellations**

To ensure your place, you need to register and pay the HBC trip fee (approx. \$90) BY June 30.

At least six (6) people must have PAID by this date for the trip to take place. Fourteen (14) is the maximum trip capacity. Trip fees may be partially or fully refundable after April 30, depending on the circumstances. Full details are available in the trip information on our Website or from the Field Trip Chair.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The **Annual General Meeting** of the **Hampshire Bird Club Incorporated** will be held on **Monday, May 12, 2014** at the **Immanuel Lutheran Church** (867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst) at **7:15 p.m.** The meeting will immediately precede the May program.

The agenda for the meeting is to elect the Board of Directors for the year from May 12, 2014 to May 12, 2015.

The **Nominating Committee** comprises:

**Bruce Hart** (Chair), (bhart-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org; 584 4176)

**Jan Ortiz** (jortiz-at-hampshirebirdclub-dot-org; 549 1768), and

**Marcia Merithew** (mmerithew-at-comcast-dot-net; 584 8874)

The committee has prepared the following slate of nominees, which is subject to change prior to and at the AGM.

**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

Hampshire Bird Club WELCOMES and encourages other nominations for ANY and ALL of the above positions. These may be sent to any member of the Nominating Committee or presented from the floor at the Annual General Meeting. At-meeting nominees must be present at the meeting so as to verify their consent.

### Next Board Meeting

The next meeting of the HBC Board will be held at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst on Thursday, May 15, at 7:00 pm.

#### Not that I'm Preaching....

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.

That's all for this month.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org



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

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

Volume 30, No. 10

**June, 2014.**

### **NEXT PROGRAM**

We at Hampshire Bird Club have a pretty hefty series of programs most years. But even by our standards, this month's offering may be one of the most important conservation-related programs we have offered in years.

We do hope you can join us.

Please note that Dr. Kress' program introduction, printed here, did not arrive in time for the printed newsletter deadline but you, the dedicated on-line viewer, have the benefit of his own words....

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

**Steve Kress presents**

### **Restoring Endangered Seabirds: Lessons from Puffins and Terns**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Humans have devastated seabird colonies in many parts of the world by excessive hunting for food and feathers and by introducing mammals such as cats and rats to otherwise secure nesting islands.

Worldwide, 29% of all seabird species are now globally threatened as marine pollution, coastal development and effects of global warming are growing concerns. Although seabird nesting islands seem safe due to their remoteness, they are intimately connected to human activities. For example, Maine seabird nesting islands are affected by large populations of Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls that benefit from garbage and fisheries waste practices hundreds of miles from nesting islands. As scavenging large gulls increase, they deter smaller, migratory seabirds, such as puffins and terns from nesting on many of their historic nesting islands. And ironically, other wildlife restoration success stories such as the recovery of Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons now threaten rare Maine seabirds such as Great Cormorants and Roseate Terns.

Dr. Stephen Kress, Director of National Audubon Society's Seabird Restoration Program, will review how techniques developed on Maine islands have led to the restoration of puffins and terns to historic nesting islands in the Gulf of Maine. Dr. Kress will also discuss how techniques developed in Maine are helping seabirds worldwide. His lecture includes reviews of several case studies in seabird restoration including restoration of Common Murres in California to relocation of Short-tailed Albatross off of an active volcano in Japan and efforts to save the endangered Bermuda Petrel from rising oceans and increased frequency of hurricanes.

**Stephen Kress** is Vice-President for Bird Conservation for the National Audubon Society, Director of the Audubon Seabird Restoration Program and Director of the Hog Island Audubon Camp. His career has focused on developing techniques for managing colonial nesting seabirds. In this role, he manages 13 important seabird nesting islands in Maine that are home to more than 42,000 seabirds of 27 species. Each year his program trains about 20 interns and hundreds of professional seabird biologists can trace their first interest in seabirds to Stephen Kress's program. Methods first developed in Maine such as chick translocations and social attraction are now standard practice worldwide. Dr. Kress received his Ph.D. from Cornell University and his Master's and undergraduate degrees from Ohio State University.

G'day. Just back from a purely fortuitous encounter with a Brewer's Sparrow on Monhegan Island and realized I'd better get this here newsletter out. As the songbird migration wraps up and those birds who stopped here get down to the serious business of raising families, take a moment to check out the last newsletter of the year.

### In this Edition

- our last **program** for the year,
- **trip reports** from rare and exotic locales,
- the **summer field trips**,
- the new **Board** (same as the old Board, only the beards are different...),
- **Hitchcock** summer programs, and
- A great **volunteer opportunity** right in our back yard.

I hope you find some of it useful.

Enjoy your summer, whatever it may include. Look for another edition of this thing in mid-August.

## COMING PROGRAMS

As in so many things, good things come to those who wait.....

There are some tantalizing offerings on Geoff's program clipboard for next year, but the schedule is not yet final.

Look for details in the September edition of this rag, which will make its way to you some time in mid-August.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### Sunday, May 4. Poet's Seat Tower and Highland Park, Greenfield.

It was cool and overcast as six of us gathered in the parking area of the grandiosely-named Rocky Mountain Park. Instead of hiking up a 14,000-foot peak, though, we set out on our journey up the 492-foot lump known also as Poet's Seat. In spite of its small size, however, the hill is known as a good place to see warblers. Conditions were almost perfect for seeing migrants, with most trees yet to fully leaf out. On the way up the road, we encountered a sprinkling of small migrants, including Blue-headed Vireo, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Ovenbird (great looks as it foraged on the ground), Black-and-White Warbler, Pine Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Black-throated Green Warbler. As we got to the top of the hill, the wind was blowing hard, which made ideal conditions for the three Red-tailed Hawks hanging motionless in the air just off the cliff face. A Common Raven attacked one of the hawks as we watched, and a Broad-winged Hawk sailed by on the breeze.

We then crossed the road to Highland Park. Because of the wind, we kept to the woods and looked (futilely) for thrushes. We did see several small groups of birds, which allowed us to add Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Parula, and Blackburnian Warbler to our tally. We also added two Bald Eagles and a Great Crested Flycatcher. It had started to sprinkle occasionally, so we decided to turn back to our cars and go our separate ways. Overall tally: at Poet's Seat, 21 species; at Highland Park, 18 species.

Mike Locher



### Saturday, May 17. Bartholomew's Cobble, Sheffield, MA.

As the night's showers gave way to a brilliant blue morning, three of us headed out to the southwest corner of the state. Famous for its Black Vultures, wildflowers, and ferns, the cobble is a gem in the holdings of the Trustees of Reservations.

continues ►

### **Bart's Cobble (continued)**

En route, we got our first Common Raven scavenging food at a rest stop on the Turnpike. Our first birding stop was at a muddy field near our destination, where we saw a few shorebirds (Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper, Wilson's Snipe), a few swallows (Rough-winged-, Tree-, and Barn-), and had two Black Vultures soar low right over us, clearly showing us their silvery primaries.

We headed next for the Cobble, where the birds seemed scarce. We detected a fair number of species there (58), but often just one or two of any given species, and the birds were often singing out of sight in the leafy canopy. Among the highlights were six more Black Vultures, at least eight Bobolinks displaying in the field across from the Visitor's Center, a colony of Bank Swallows along the Housatonic River, a Mallard mother with ducklings in tow, a Ruffed Grouse drumming followed immediately by a Barred Owl hooting (we saw neither), two American Redstarts tending a nest, Baltimore Orioles collecting beakfuls of dandelion fluff, and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Perhaps not as many species, nor such clear views as we might have wished for, but the views around the cobble helped make up for the shyness of the birds. Columbine and Mitre's Cap were blooming in profusion, and the variety of ferns was, as ever, astonishing.

Mike Locher

### **Saturday, May 24. The Hilltown Ramble. Cummington, Worthington and Hawley, MA.**

Bob Zimmermann and Dave Gross scared up 69 species. The highlight of the trip was a nearly hour-long viewing of two **Sandhill Cranes** in the field at the intersection of Radiker Road and Old Post Road in Worthington. The birds called to each other, danced, displayed head bowing, and did coordinated grooming using grass blades pulled from the marshy field. It was a sight to behold.

Other lovely sightings and hearings included a set of trees dripping with Least Flycatchers at the Cummington Marsh, at least five singing **Alder Flycatchers** in the marsh along Spruce Corner Road in Ashfield, which seemed like a motel with adjacent rooms for Alders every few hundred yards, and six **Painted Trillium** in bloom just south of the Cummington fairground.

Dave Gross & Bob Zimmermann

## **COMING TRIPS**

### **Saturday, June 7. Westover Air Force Base.**

#### **REGISTRATION CLOSED**

Half day. Bob Bieda and Mike Locher host the HBC's annual trip to New England's premier grassland habitat, looking for Upland Sandpipers, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks.

**\*Saturday June 14. Wentworth Farm.** Half day. Josh Rose leads an easy walk looking for breeding Orchard Orioles, Brown Thrashers, Bobolinks, Green Herons, and whatever else we can find. If the weather is suitable we will also probably look at butterflies and dragonflies. Possible extensions for lunch and/or Amherst College Wildlife Sanctuary. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at the head of the Harvey Allen Trail, next to the ball fields and park (near 137 Stanley St., Amherst). Questions to Josh (413-835-0093 or [opihi-at-mindspring-dot-com](mailto:opihi-at-mindspring-dot-com)). (E)

### **Tuesday, June 17 – Wednesday, June 18**

#### **Mount Mansfield, Vermont. Bicknell's Thrushes in Vermont.**

#### **REGISTRATION CLOSED**

Mike Locher and representatives from the Vermont Center for Ecostudies will look for Bicknell's Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler, Sandhill Crane and Black-billed Cuckoo, amongst other species in a trip which combines traditional birding with a visit to the VCE banding operation on the mountain. continues ►



### Coming Trips (continued)

**Wednesday, July 2. Bobolinks and Baltimore Checkerspot at Bullitt Reservation.** Tom Gagnon leads the Massachusetts Butterfly Club and the Hampshire Bird Club to look for birds and butterflies at a 265 acre old New England farm now managed by The Trustees of Reservations. The farmhouse is now open to the public as a showcase for energy-efficient technologies that work for New England homeowners. This property is a crucial link to almost 3,000 acres of protected lands. We will explore some of the many fields and trails. There should be plenty of Bobolinks and gorgeous Baltimore Checkerspots. Rest rooms available. Contact Tom at (413) 584-6353 or tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com for more information or to register for the trip. (M)

#### From points South

- 1) From I-91, Exit 24, take Route 5 North.
- 2) After 1.1 miles, turn left onto Route 116 West.
- 3) Drive West on 116 approx. 10 miles through Conway and into Ashfield.
- 4) Turn left onto Bullitt Road. Proceed approx. 1 mile to driveway and white buildings on right where road turns sharply left. Note: Do not try to take the impassable North Poland Road to Bullitt Road.

#### From Points North

- 1) I-91 South to Exit 25.
- 2) Turn West on Rt 116, then follow steps 2-4 above.

**Thursday, August 7-Monday, August 11. Crown of Maine. Overnight trip.** Geoff LeBaron leads his bi-annual trip to the mixed boreal and agricultural habitats of far northern Maine. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Geoff (413-269-9281) for information, and contact Mike Locher ([fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org)) to register and get cost information. (M)

**Saturday, August 9. Hummingbird Banding.** Half day. Bill Benner and Joe Wiscinski (413-320-4422) host a morning of hummingbird banding at their house. Usually, about 50 hummingbirds are mist-netted and banded. Meet at Bill and Joe's house (55 Webber Road, Whately) at 6 a.m. Parking is limited, so carpooling is appreciated. Raindate: Sunday, August 10. (E)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Here is the current Board of Directors, elected at the Annual General Meeting on May 12.

**President:** Scott Sumner

**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

## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Birds and Butterflies in Amherst**

Thanks to funding from Fulbright, Canada, funds are available to make a new conservation area in Amherst a destination for birders, school groups and others interested in nature.

Visiting Fulbright scholar Carol Gray is coordinating efforts to install an interpretive trail, butterfly plantings and bluebird boxes in a new five-acre conservation area located along South East Street, Amherst, opposite Mill Lane.

Carol is looking for help this summer in the following areas:

- Bird expertise,
- Plantings for butterflies, and
- Expertise and help to create the interpretive trail.

If you can contribute a few hours this summer, Carol would love to hear from you. Please contact her at: carolgray\_2000-at-yahoo-dot-com or call 413 297 1075

## **LIBRARY**

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

## **HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS**

**New England National Scenic Trail Hike:** *Ted Watt*

Saturday, June 7, 9:30am-12noon. Waitlist Only.

**Native Wildflowers of the Valley:** *Nancy Goodman*

Saturday, June 14 – Poet Seat – Greenfield – 10am-2pm

**Nature for Wellness:** *Cassie Kollman*

Sunday, June 29, 1-3pm

**Growing Our Own: Families Working Together for a More Sustainable Life:** *Rebecca Reid, Michael*

*Dover, Bethany & Seth Seeger, Jess Rocheleau, Jason Rennie*

Saturday, July 12, 1-3pm

**Open Farm at Bug Hill:** *Kate Kerivan*

Sunday, July 20, 11am-1pm (Rain date: Sunday, July 27)

**Tour of Food For All Garden**

Sunday, July 27, 1-2:30pm

F4A Garden UMass Agricultural Learning Center; 911 North Pleasant St., Amherst

**Panel & Potluck: Perspectives on Food Security in Pioneer Valley Food Systems**

Wednesday, July 30, panel 5:30-7pm, potluck @ 7pm

**Workshop: Local Food & Resilience: Preserving the Bounty**

Monday, August 18, 5-7pm. At Not Bread Alone Soup Kitchen, 165 Main St, Amherst

**What Makes a Seed Tick? Biology and Adaptations of Seeds:** *Elizabeth Farnsworth*  
Thursday, August 21, 6:30pm-8:30pm

**Native Wildflowers of the Valley:** *Nancy Goodman*  
Saturday, August 23 – Hitchcock center – Amherst – 10am-2pm

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

### **Backyard Birds**

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

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

The next BOARD Meeting is on Thursday, June 5, 7:00 p.m. at Hitchcock Center.

That's it for this month, and until mid-August  
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 31, No. 1

### September, 2014.

Oh, g'day! The Common Nighthawks streaming over my back yard yesterday evening reminded me that we are poised on the edge of the 2014-2015 HBC membership year.

And we'd like to start off with a BANG!

The HBC Website was first launched in 2001, and, since then, has been through a number of iterations. With the need for a powerful and more functional Website gnawing at us, this spring the Board found a local Web developer to help us, and began working in earnest to build a brand new Website from the ground up. This new Website is due to launch in September. We hope it will usher in a whole new era in communication for the club: allowing us to attract more new members and make participation in our activities more convenient than ever before.

We'd like to express our deepest gratitude to **Merry Cushing** and **David Gross**, Webmasters since 2001, whose hours and hours of patient toil have given us an on-line presence up to now.

Please take a moment to visit [www.hampshirebirdclub.org](http://www.hampshirebirdclub.org) in the next few days, and say a word of farewell to our existing Website, then watch your inbox for details about the new launch!

We think you will be pleased.

### AHEM! A WORD ABOUT MEMBERSHIP.

Well, more than just one actually.

OK, so we have a snazzy new Website, a wonderful (if still developing) line-up of programs for the coming year and a beaut new fall Field Trip Schedule. Lots for you, dear member, to look forward to. But there is, as you well know, a price to pay for all these wonderful bird club offerings, and WE ALL have to pay it!

I refer, my friends, to our **annual membership dues**, unchanged since last year, but no less in need of paying THIS year than they were LAST year. The sooner this financial nonsense is taken care of, the sooner we can all get down to birding, and the sooner I can stop using 70's adjectives.

### Please Join or Renew Your Membership **NOW**

- ☐ 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 8.

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

## NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, September 8 at 7:15 p.m.**

**Sam Fried presents Birding Brazil: The Pantanal and Iguassu Falls**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Take a journey with Sam Fried, deep into the largest freshwater marsh system in the world, enjoying all the wildlife this huge wetland has to offer, including a staggering variety of birds, caimans, capybaras and the jaguars that stalk them! Then travel further south to the border with Argentina to witness one of the great wonders of the world - Iguassu Falls. The broad Rio Cuiaba plunges mightily over an escarpment on both sides of the border, creating a towering waterfall system that is among the largest on earth, at over two miles long and with over 250 separate cataracts!

Sam Fried has had over 1000 photographs and 56 feature articles published in field guides, books, newspapers and magazines worldwide, including *National Audubon*, *National Geographic*, *Birder's World*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *Birding and Living Bird Quarterly*. He wrote several chapters of the Insight Guides book on birding in North America, published by The Discovery Channel. Sam is the founder of Flights of Fancy Adventures, LLC, a birding, photography and natural history travel company offering small group, low cost, high quality trips throughout the Americas and now to Africa. He is also a past president of Hartford Audubon Society.

## COMING PROGRAMS

Here is the provisional schedule for this year.

**October 20, 2014. Bill Burt.** Rare & Elusive Birds of North America.

**November 10, 2014. Ian Davies.** Arctic Shorebird Research.

**December 8, 2014. HBC Members Meeting.**

**January 12, 2015. Don Kroodsma.** Birdsong: The Hour Before Dawn.

**February 9, 2015. Scott Surner.** The Big Chicken Run.

**March 9, 2015. TBA**

**April 13, 2015. John Van de Graaff.** Fabulous birds!

**May 11, 2015. Jonah Keane.** New Visions for Arcadia Sanctuary.

**June 8, 2015. Mario Cohn-Haft.** What's so Special about Amazonian Birds?

## ONLINE NEWSLETTER: FAQ

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

### “Why choose “on-line?”

You can archive our publication digitally, without accumulating paper files, or print at home if you like. You reduce postage and printing costs for HBC, which keeps dues down for all of us.

### “How does on-line access work?”

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

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

The system is pretty easy to use if you have email access, are accustomed to downloading content from the Internet. In the event that you find the system does not work for you, a simple communication with the Membership Secretary will get you back on the “Hard Copy” mailing list.

### “What are the software requirements?”

The newsletter will be posted on the Website in PDF format. This means you will need to have .pdf-reading software on your system. 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! We ask all members to decide each year how they want to receive the newsletter. Regardless of how you got the newsletter last year, please make your choice of how to receive the newsletter this year on this year’s membership form! Thank you!

## No Pun Intended

You can follow Hampshire Bird Club now on Twitter @HampshireBird

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Due to limited space, the **Crown of Maine** trip report will be published in a later issue.

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

Please see the **2014 Fall Field Trip Schedule**.

## LIBRARY

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

Hours are those of the Hitchcock Center:

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

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

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

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

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### Sparrow Identification Workshop

#### Scott Sumner

Sparrows often end up in the “too-hard” basket for many birders. If you have to pretend someone else saw them first, or claim the binoculars fogged up at the critical moment, or if you just avoid weedy fields in October on principle, this is the workshop for you.

There are two (2) sessions:

**Thursday, October 2. 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.** Classroom session (slides and discussion) at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst.

AND

**Sunday, October 5. 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.** Field session in the Hadley area, meeting at Hitchcock.

The **cost** for one or both sessions is \$15 per person.

Participation is **limited to 15 people**.

Registration and prepayment are required to reserve a space.

**Register first** with Scott Sumner at [ssurner@aol.com](mailto:ssurner@aol.com), or (413) 427 8896, then

**Pay** by mailing your check for \$15 (“Hampshire Bird Club Inc.” to:

HBC Treasurer

Hampshire Bird Club Inc.

P.O. Box 716

Amherst, MA 01004-0716.

### Aidans’s Thank-You.

The HBC Education Committee, funded with donations from members like YOU, supported club member Aidan Griffiths to attend an ABA camp for young birders in Colorado this summer. He writes:

*“My trip to Colorado was amazing. Through camp, I met other gifted young birders whom I now call friends. This trip may well have given me opportunities that I will use for my career! I thank the education committee and all of the Hampshire Bird Club members who contributed to my bird-a-thon and gave support and inspiration! Among the highlights of the trip were White-tailed Ptarmigan, American Dipper, Northern Goshawk, and Golden Eagle, all of which were life birds. Hope I can give a presentation on my experience to all of you! Good birding, and I’ll see you all at the next meeting!*

Sincerely,

Aidan Griffiths”

**That’s all for this month. The current Membership/Release/RBA form is attached, along with the Fall Field Trip Schedule and the Member Skills Survey..**

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: 2014-2015

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.

### Required if you will participate in field trips.

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/we 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/we may incur, directly or indirectly, while on field trips run by HBC within one (1) year of the date below.

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▶ .....

## RARE BIRD ALERT FORM: Optional

The Rare Bird Alert is an email-only alert system that informs you when and where rare birds are sighted in the valley, or, in some cases, the broader region. To join, you will need to provide us with at least one (1) active email address.

### To join via this form

Complete the form and return it with your membership form or turn it in at the Sept./Oct. meetings.

### To join online:

Provide name/s and email address/es to [membership@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:membership@hampshirebirdclub.org)

You may provide as many email addresses as you like (within reason, please). Participants automatically receive all RBA announcements. Please email [membership@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:membership@hampshirebirdclub.org) if your email changes.

I would like to receive RBA alerts ☐. email address/es (1) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Return with membership form to HBC, P.O. Box 716, Amherst, MA 01004-0716 or turn in at the September/October meetings.

## Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Fall Field Trip Schedule, 2014

*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 – [mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org)) 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. Please check all information with the trip leaders, and look for updates on our new website (to be launched early this fall).*

### SEPTEMBER

**\*Sunday, September 14. Look Park.** Half day. Betsy Higgins offers a fall version of her usual spring walk as she seeks southbound migrants in Look Park. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) for details. Meet at 7 a.m. at the John F. Kennedy Middle School (100 Bridge Road; Florence, MA). (E)

**\*Sunday, September 21. Hawkwatching at the Mountain House.** Half day. Join Mike Locher on top of Mount Holyoke for what he hopes is a glorious fall day with a wind blowing south. Either meet at 7 a.m. at the main parking area on Route 47 to hike up and look for woodland migrants, or take the easy option and drive to the top after 8:30 to meet us on the deck to look for migrating raptors. Contact Mike (413-585-5864 or [mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org)) for details. (M/E)

**Sunday, September 28. Quabbin Reservoir: Fall Migrants.** All day. Tom Gagnon and Craig Allen head into the Quabbin wilderness to find southbound birds (and residents), late season flowers, butterflies, and mammals. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members. Participation is limited to 12 people in 3 cars, so carpooling is a necessity. Contact Tom (413-584-6353 or [tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com](mailto:tombwhawk-at-aol-dot-com)) well in advance to register, and to get meeting information. (M)

### OCTOBER

**\*Thursday, October 2 and Sunday, October 5. Sparrows!** Thursday evening and Sunday half day. Scott Sumner leads a workshop on sparrow identification to benefit the Hitchcock Center and the HBC's Education Committee. Meet on Thursday evening (6:30-8 p.m. at the Hitchcock Center) for instruction, then test your skill during a field trip on Sunday (meet at the Hitchcock Center at 7 a.m.). There is a fee for this event, and it is limited to 15 participants. Contact Scott at [ssurner@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:ssurner@hampshirebirdclub.org) for information and to register. (E)

**\*Saturday, October 4. Knightville Dam.** Half day. Betsy Higgins and Marcia Merithew explore Knightville Dam for late migrants and local residents. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) for details. Meet at 7 a.m. at the John F. Kennedy Middle School (100 Bridge Road; Florence, MA). (E)

**\*Wednesday, October 15. Fort River Division of the Silvio O. Conte NWR.** Morning. Harvey Allen, Janice Jorgensen, and George Regmund lead birders through the former Bri-Mar Stables property to find late fall migrants (especially sparrows). Meet at 7 a.m. at the Stables parking area (69 Moody Bridge Road in Hadley). This trip is co-sponsored by the HBC and the Friends of Fort River Refuge. Call Janice (413-585-0145) for details. (E)

October (continued)

**\*Saturday, October 25. Halloween Extravaganza: Satan's Kingdom, Hell's Kitchen, and more.**

All day. Joshua Rose birds Massachusetts' northern stretches of the Connecticut River Valley from Northfield to Turner's Falls in his annual Halloween trip. Call Josh (413-835-0093) for details and meeting information. (E)

## NOVEMBER

**Saturday, November 1. Leader's Choice.** All day. Join Geoff LeBaron on this all-day trip. A decision about the destination will be made about a week before the trip. Call Geoff (413-268-9281) to get information about destination(s), to register, and get meeting information as the date approaches. (M)

**\*Sunday, November 2. Donut Run to the Berkshire Lakes (or, Donuts and Ducks).** 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 migrating waterfowl and anything else he can find. Meet at Stop & Shop in Northampton (228 King Street) at 6:15 a.m. Dress warmly and bring lunch and water. (M)

**Saturday, November 15. East Quabbin.** All day. Craig and Harvey Allen lead our 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 Mike Locher (413-585-5864 or mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org) *well in advance* to register, because participation is limited, and to get meeting information. (Sorry, no donuts on this trip.) (M)

**\*Sunday, November 16. Dead Creek WMA and Lake Champlain Valley.** All day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864 or mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org) continues his quest to find the elusive Ross' Goose among the hundreds of Snow Geese at the premier staging area in New England. After the geese, he'll look for other seasonal specialties along the shores of Lake Champlain. Meet at Stop & Shop in Northampton (228 King Street) at 5:30 a.m. for carpooling. (E)

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

Volume 31, No. 2

**October, 2014.**

G'day! Taking a break from deleting political fund-raising emails from my in-box to lay down the latest newsletter.

Can ants be perplexed? If so, I am pretty sure I have seen one.

On September 21, I was wandering along the surprisingly bird-less Easthampton bike-path toward Northampton. I raised my glasses (with a complete lack of enthusiasm) to check a Song Sparrow that had hopped out onto the black top. I found it battling with a large ant and, at first, thought this was a predatory encounter. Several times, the bird grabbed the ant for a split second, only to drop it again. I found myself urging the bird to just get on with it and put the ant out of its misery, but then began to be more curious. Closer examination revealed that the bird was making no attempt to kill the ant at all. Rather, it was virtually standing on its tail while shoving the ant into its tail and/or belly feathers in a movement almost too quick to discern. This happened repeatedly for about a minute before the Song Sparrow retired to the undergrowth, leaving the ant to stagger off into the grass, no doubt muttering in antish about the kinky ways of vertebrates.

A little research revealed that this was likely a case of “anting,” a behavior observed in a wide variety of birds. The goal, it seems, is to infuse the feathers with formic acid, released defensively by the ant, which apparently functions to deter lice and other feather-parasites which typically plague birds. Some birds, it turns out, actually plant ants in their feathers for extended periods, and some will sprawl out on anthills like sunbathers with the little blighters scurrying all over them! I suppose I would expect to see such things if I were birding weird and wonderful places like Ecuador or the Amazon. To see a humble Song Sparrow anting on our very own bike-path on a dreary September day reminds me, once again, what birding is all about.

But back to fund-raising for a moment. HBC will not fill your in-box with alarming adjectives to get money from you. Democracy will not end tomorrow, nor even be very badly wounded, if you fail to send us any of your hard-earned savings. BUT, (bad grammar used for emphasis) our vibrant bird club relies ENTIRELY on your membership dues and donations to fund our activities, so, if there is a Membership Form with this newsletter.....

### **Membership Renewals are now OVERDUE**

**Please renew RIGHT NOW if you need to.**

- ☐ 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,
- ☐ **Mail** the above forms (with your check if needed) to the address on the Membership Form, or bring them along on September 8.

**You can also pay your dues ONLINE at [hampshirebirdclub.org/membership](http://hampshirebirdclub.org/membership), if you like.**

**Psst!! Take a look at the next program and the Coming Programs on Page 2. Just take a look!**

## NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, October 20 at 7:15 p.m.**

**Bill Burt presents Rare and Elusive Birds of North America**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

For 16 years, **William Burt** pursued a stubborn mission: to find and photograph all 20 of the continent's least known and least seen birds. He spent weeks in the field at a time, employing his own hand-built equipment and often visiting sites repeatedly - year after year and/or in the middle of the night in certain cases - to get the picture he was after. The result: his 2001 book (Rizzoli/Universe), and museum exhibition, ***Rare & Elusive Birds of North America***.

Through this presentation the audience will journey to the marshes, plains and prairies, swamps and woodlands of North America, in search of the *rails*, *bitterns*, *nightjars*, and other "mystery birds" that birders long to see.

"William Burt is a perfectionist whose photographs of rails and other shy and elusive birds of our wetlands are unquestionably the finest ever taken. He has set a new standard." *Roger Tory Peterson.*

"Through his stunning visual presentation and his informed narrative, Burt takes us into the mysterious world of America's most elusive bird species - including those that few people have ever observed in the wild. His words and pictures, based on years of field work with these "mystery birds," inspire his audience to come away with newfound desire to protect and conserve the natural environment." *Jim Berry, President, Roger Tory Peterson Institute.*

**William Burt** is a naturalist, photographer and writer with a passion for wild places - especially marshes - and the shy birds within. His photographs and stories are seen in Smithsonian, Audubon, National Wildlife and other magazines, and he is the author of three books: *Shadowbirds* (1994); *Rare & Elusive Birds of North America* (2001); and *Marshes: The Disappearing Edens* (2007). He lectures often, and his traveling exhibitions have shown at some 35 museums across the U.S. and Canada - including The Carnegie Museum of Natural History, The New Brunswick Museum, The Calgary Science Center, The Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, and the Harvard Museum of Natural History.

## COMING PROGRAMS

**The schedule for this year is now complete, a result of some particularly hard slog on the part of our Program Chair, Geoff LeBaron. I think you will agree it has been worth the wait!**

**November 10, 2014. Ian Davies.** The Secret Lives of Shorebirds.

**December 8, 2014. HBC Members Meeting.**

**January 12, 2015. Don Kroodsmma.** Birdsong: The Hour Before Dawn.

**February 9, 2015. Scott Surner.** The Big Chicken Run.

**March 9, 2015. David Sibley.** The New Sibley Guide to the Birds.

**April 13, 2015. John Van de Graaff.** Fabulous birds!

**May 11, 2015. Jonah Keane.** New Visions for Arcadia Sanctuary.

**June 8, 2015. Mario Cohn-Haft.** What's so Special about Amazonian Birds?

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### Crown of Maine: August 7 – 11, 2014

**Participants:** Harvey Allen, Peter Allison, Shawn Lawler, **Geoff LeBaron**, Lizz Morris, David Pritchard, Doug Wilson, with local guide **Bill Sheehan**.

#### Friday August 8<sup>th</sup>

After assembling at Russell's Motel the previous day, and following a civilized 6:00 a.m. departure (with coffee stop), we embarked on two-mile walk along the lovely, flooded woodlands of Muskovic road. We picked up a few goodies, including a very stealthy female Pileated Woodpecker, great looks at a shockingly rusty Winter Wren, and a noisy family of **Gray Jays**.

Next we headed off to the deep woods and bogs around Square Lake, where the hands-down highlight during our walk through a boreal bog was a pair of Ospreys dueling with a young Bald Eagle over a fish one Osprey had caught. The constantly calling Osprey circled higher and higher and higher, and finally it's mate joined it above the harrying eagle and started bombing the aquiline bigger bully—to successful effect.

After lunch at Lakeview Restaurant in St. Agatha, we perused the abundant terns, waterfowl and terns of Long Lake. We then birded our way down through the working forest lands along Blackstone Road, where, much to Bill's shock, we had a family group of **Eastern Bluebirds** in one of the recent clearcuts! We made a quick stop at a boreal woodpecker-free marsh and bog in New Sweden, then returned to Caribou for a well-deserved rest.

#### Saturday August 9<sup>th</sup>

Most of this day was devoted to the diverse habitats of the Aroostook National Wildlife Refuge and Limestone Commerce Park—both included in the former Loring Air Force Base.

Two unseasonably late **Upland Sandpipers** got us off to a good start, landing almost at our feet on the runways at Loring! In transit to the Weapons Storage Area, we encountered a plethora of frenzied feeding songbird migrants, including various species of warblers and Red-eyed-, Blue-headed-, and **Philadelphia Vireos**, as well as abundant Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers! The rest of the morning and into the afternoon was spent perusing the peculiarly interesting former Weapons Storage Area and its associated ponds & thickets, including former bunkers that are now set up to help beleaguered bats over-winter in the region.

Lunch found us back in Caribou at the Burger Boy (late Chimney Swifts chattering overhead), after which we birded the local sewerage ponds (both versions of yellowlegs, plus Least-, White-rumped-, Spotted-, and Solitary Sandpipers, and of course a nice assortment of ducks).

After leaving the Caribou settling ponds we birded the west bank of the river in Caribou (abundant Common Mergansers, an elusive **Gray Catbird**, and Common Loons).

#### Sunday August 10<sup>th</sup>

Heading south from Caribou into the scenic farmland vistas of Presque Isle, we found congregating Bobolinks and Savannah Sparrows. Further on, At the Christina reservoir, we found migrants along the dike and scanned the reservoir for an array of ducks and other waterfowl. A descending dot turned out to be one of several migrating Ospreys.

Post-Christina, we headed to Lake Josephine (or "Lake Jo"), a former industrial settling pond, where we spent much of the day. A bewildering array of immature and eclipse-plumaged waterfowl covered the pond and its associated wetlands, including Mallards, **Gadwall**, **American Wigeon**, both teal, boatloads of Ring-necked Ducks, breeding **Redheads** (in their only known north-eastern location), and other species as well. In the marshy vegetation below the dike, we sighted three hatchling **Virginia Rails**, being called to security by their mother, and also found a myriad of other marsh- and water-dependent species. Our pull of unusual southern species to the region continued with a **Turkey Vulture** soaring overhead!

continues ►

(Crown of Maine, August 2014. Continued)

Even further south, we found a previously reported **Great Egret** (southern vagrant at these latitudes) and a wonderful **Wilson's Snipe** in another cluster of waterfowl. The much sought-after boreal woodpeckers (Black-backed and Three-toed) continued to elude us along another woods road in New Sweden, but we did pick up a **Black Bear** and three **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** to round out a total for the three days of 115 species.

Then it was back to Caribou for a group dinner at the Par & Grill, after which it was dark (sort of...with a full "Sturgeon" moon) and most of us headed across the road for sky-watching and to listen for nocturnal migrants. A mackerel sky occluded the moon for much of the time, but we heard a few migrants and were treated to a great satellite tally, including three "spy" satellites in polar orbit and the International Space Station with supply vessel in trail transiting west to east. It was a fitting and lovely ending for a fantastic trip!

Geoff LeBaron

## Look Park. Sunday, September 14.

On September 14, nine birders led by **Betsy Higgins** set out to bird Look Park in Florence. The day looked promising, with the sun peeking over the horizon, warming the tops of trees that would soon have insects, and thus warblers and vireos, flitting about in them. Unfortunately, the warblers and vireos missed the memo.

Almost immediately we got some of the local residents (House Sparrows, Cedar Waxwings) and a few Common Grackles as well. We saw some activity high in a tree and found Chipping Sparrows, a pair of very disheveled young Eastern Bluebirds (we saw seven Bluebirds altogether), and two juvenile Pine Warblers that stumped us for a few minutes. These juvenile Pine Warblers either reappeared periodically to puzzle us anew, or the park had a large number of them, well-distributed for maximum confusion! They fed on the ground and imitated Chipping Sparrows, they did some fly-catching from low perches and resembled empids, and they sat quietly in the branches and resembled vireos. However, they turned out to be the only warblers or vireos that we saw.

As we walked the park, we found Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, phoebes, catbirds, chickadees, titmice, nuthatches, lots of resident Mallards and Canada Geese, half a dozen Common Mergansers, and even a few raptors (three Red-tailed Hawks, one Broad-winged Hawk, and one Turkey Vulture) after the sun warmed the ground. In all, we got 28 species, and beautiful late summer weather.

Betsy Higgins

## Mount Holyoke Cloud-Watch. Sunday, September 21.

(or, "The Worst Hawk-Watch Ever")

When I awoke on Sunday morning before the hawk-watch I was scheduled to lead, I noted with interest that the fog was so thick that I couldn't even see to the edge of my yard. However, I set out, fortified by several cups of coffee, to my meeting spot on Route 47.

After encountering a few local resident birds, and a mostly-unidentifiable group of warblers (Black-and White being the exception) at the mist-enshrouded meeting spot, I proceeded to the top of the mountain, unencumbered by any other participants!

A few more local birds sounded off during the climb, most being entirely invisible in the stygian gloom. I flushed one thrush (unidentified) that flew a short distance off the trail, then walked into the mist. The only thing that I got a good look at on the way up was a small **Eastern Box Turtle** that was crossing the trail. At the top, clear visibility was about 20 feet, and anything beyond a hundred feet was barely discernible. I actually got a look at a small group of Dark-eyed Juncos near the Mountain House, and a few woodpeckers (Downy and Northern Flicker), but after an hour or so of persistent mist I decided that it was time to go home. The final count was 9 species, and 0 raptors.

Mike Locher

With apologies to Mike, I threw the word "stygian" into this piece because, well, the overall tone was a little too upbeat. ed.



(field trip reports, continued)

### **Quabbin Reservoir. Sunday, September 28.**

Our September trip into the wilds of Central Quabbin yielded very little in the way of birds. About the best of them were a Barred Owl, Common Ravens talking back to us and a few warblers. We did find a Little Brown Bat in a bat house and saw some lovely wild flowers including some Cardinal Flowers and Beechdrops plus a lovely shrub called Smooth Winterberry.

Tom Gagnon

### **Knightville Dam, Huntington. Saturday, October 4.**

The weather report was grim.....100% chance of rain, all day. Nevertheless, at 7 AM, **Betsy Higgins**, Marcia Merithew and the intrepid Harvey Allen set out to spend the morning at Knightville Dam in Huntington. After all, it was not raining YET!

We first drove up to the top of the dam and took in the view. Even in the gray light, the autumn colors were gorgeous. We spent a bit of time peering into a big pine tree at a flock of chickadees, and then headed down the road into the river basin. Things started out slowly, as we were frustrated by poor light and elusive birds flitting ahead of us and hiding in the tall weeds. However, the farther along the road we travelled, the more and more and more birds we saw! There were **birds everywhere!** Flocks of Yellow-rumped Warblers and Palm Warblers, mixed with **Swamp Sparrows**, White-throated Sparrows and Song Sparrows filled the weeds all around us. We had beautiful up-close-and-personal looks at many of them, in addition to a number of other species including **Blue-headed Vireo**, Common Yellowthroat, Black-throated Green Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Kingfisher, Bald Eagle, Common Raven, Pileated Woodpecker and others. We had 32 species in all and in spite of the drizzle and rain that came as predicted, we were all very pleased with our morning outing.

Betsy Higgins

## **NORTHAMPTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**

**Sunday, December 14, 2014.**

The annual Northampton Christmas Bird Count (CBC), sponsored by the Hampshire Bird Club, enlists over a hundred volunteers across Hampshire County to count every bird they see and hear. For more than 80 years the CBC has been a citizen science tradition for the Valley.

This long record of data-keeping provides valuable insight into bird populations and the health of their habitats, helping wildlife organizations implement conservation strategies.

We have walkers, feeder-counters, owlers, snow-shoers: whatever is necessary to get the count done. If you are interested, contact Jan Ortiz or Janice Jorgensen at [cbc@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:cbc@hampshirebirdclub.org). We welcome newcomers to this fun and fabulous day.

### **The Editor Would Like to Thank.....**

.....the September newsletter assembly crew for all the work it took to get that edition to your kitchen table. They are, in approximate order of height\*, **Sally Hills**, **Helga Beatty**, and **Sue Emerson**. They are all maaaa-vellllous!

That's it for now.

Did you check out the Coming Programs, huh? Didja? See, told you it would be worth it!

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

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

\*And yes, this is entirely irrelevant.



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

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

Volume 31, No. 3

**November, 2014.**

In this edition:

- the **next program** and the coming **program schedule**,
- the **remaining fall trips**,
- news from the **Education Committee**,
- the **Northampton Christmas Bird Count**,
- the Christmas Bird Count **POTLUCK**,
- **Birds of the World** at Harvard,
- **Hitchcock Programs**, and
- a few other tid-bits.

I hope you find some of it useful.

## **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, November 10 at 7:15 p.m.**

**Ian Davies** pries into **The Secret Lives of Shorebirds**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Surprisingly robust, tiny sandpipers and plovers fly thousands of miles each fall from areas like northern Alaska to South America, reversing this herculean journey the following spring. During these journeys they pause to refuel in certain crucial stopover areas such as the Bay of Fundy in eastern Canada, and numerous locations in coastal New England. After resting and feeding on the abundant invertebrates in mud and sand flats, the shorebirds take wing again, often flying non-stop for several days to reach their destination.

After witnessing shorebirds in migration, seeing the transformation on the breeding grounds is nothing short of awe-inspiring. The quiet and demure shorebirds that probe along our beaches transform into creatures with spectacular aerial displays and songs that rival any songbird.

This presentation will focus on the lives of shorebirds throughout their summer season, and the following migration southwards to our shores and beyond.

**Ian Davies** is a recent graduate of UMass Amherst. He spent a happy few years birding in the Pioneer Valley during his time as a student. He originally got interested in birding at the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences 10 years ago, and since that time has been lucky enough to travel to over a dozen countries in the pursuit of all things feathered.

## **COMING PROGRAMS**

**December 8, 2014. HBC Members Meeting.**

**January 12, 2015. Don Kroodsma.** Birdsong: The Hour Before Dawn.

**February 9, 2015. Scott Sumner.** The Big Chicken Run.

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

**Saturday, November 15. East Quabbin.** All day. Craig and Harvey Allen lead our 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 Mike Locher (413-585-5864 or [mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org)) *well in advance* to register (because participation is limited) and to get meeting information. (M)

**\*Sunday, November 16. Dead Creek WMA and Lake Champlain Valley.** All day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864 or [mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:mlocher@hampshirebirdclub.org)) continues his quest to find the elusive Ross's Goose among the hundreds of Snow Geese at the premier staging area in New England. After the geese, he'll look for other seasonal specialties along the shores of Lake Champlain. Meet at Stop & Shop in Northampton (228 King Street) at 5:30 a.m. for carpooling. (E)

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

How to attract more young people to birding? Do most HBC presentations really hold childrens' interest? How do we get kids out into the field? What to do when physical issues due to aging, illness or accident won't allow one to participate at meetings or in the field as before?

The Education Committee tries to reach out to people who might otherwise never have a chance to learn about birds and birding.

School presentations, senior walks and programs, live bird interactions (captive and wild), visits to raptor centers, learning about falconry, organizing boy & girl scout merit badge events, member workshops, purchasing and/or reading natural history and bird books to children, these are just a few of the ideas on the table. You can donate to support the work of the committee via your membership form, but just as importantly, we need your input and energy. What ideas do you have? Let us know! Or better still, join the committee!

Contact the committee at [education@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:education@hampshirebirdclub.org)

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### Puffin Raffle

Your chance to have a life-sized Atlantic Puffin perch in your home has arrived. The Education Committee is raffling a hand-carved puffin valued at \$275 to raise funds to support the work of the committee. The carving has been donated by HBC member Janice Doppler. It was amongst the prize-winners at a recent competition sponsored by New England Woodcarvers, Inc.

Raffle tickets can be purchased at the November and December club meetings. Tickets are \$2 for one and \$5 for three. The winning ticket will be drawn at the December meeting. You do not have to be present at the December meeting to win.

Janice has been carving birds in wood for a dozen years. Her goal in each carving is to create a realistic bird that looks soft and lifelike. You can see some of her work at her website at

<http://birdcarvingsbyjanicedoppler.weebly.com/>

or check out her Facebook page about the intersection of bird carving and bird watching at

<https://www.facebook.com/birdcarvingsbyjanicedoppler>.

## NORTHAMPTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

**Sunday, December 14, 2014.**

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This long record of data-keeping provides valuable insight into bird populations and the health of their habitats, helping wildlife organizations implement conservation strategies.

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## CHRISTMAS COUNT POTLUCK

### Contributors Needed

To get a sense of how important the Potluck is, try to imagine the Christmas Count without it! Imagine struggling back to the Hitchcock Center after a day on your feet in the winter weather, with nothing but the prospect of sitting in a cheerless room listening to other groups recount the rarities they found. Thankfully, this is NOT how the CBC works. Instead, we return to the wonderful culinary achievements of our members, ranging from stunning salads to steaming crockpots of chili and melt-in-the-mouth desserts, all washed down, of course, by hot drinks ranging from mulled cider to hot chocolate.

### Please help!

This does not happen by magic. Please email or call Sue Emerson with your promised contribution. Whatever you can provide, we, I assure you, can consume! Volunteer counters thank you!!

## LIBRARY

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

Hours are those of the Hitchcock Center:

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

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

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

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

## BIRDS OF THE WORLD GALLERY

### Harvard Museum of Natural History

A new exhibit opened to the public on September 20 of this year at Harvard Museum of Natural History. On the balcony encircling the museum's Great Mammal Hall, this bright, newly remodeled gallery captures the staggering diversity of birds with many hundreds of stunning specimens, representing over 200 different bird families.

You can find out more on-line at

<http://hmsc.harvard.edu/news/birds-world-gallery>

## HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

### **Tour of Amherst Wastewater Treatment Facility**

Saturday, November 8, 10am-11:30am

### **Green Buildings Tour: *Wright Builders***

Sunday, November 16, 10am-2pm

### **Reading the Forested Landscape: *Tom Wessels***

Full: Wait-List.

Sunday, November 16, 1pm-4pm

### **Wildlife Conservation in Kenya: *Steve Upton***

Tuesday, November 18, 7pm-8:30pm

### **Animals of the North: What Will Climate Change Mean for Them? *Sue Morse***

Thursday, November 20, 7pm-8:30pm

Held at the US Fish and Wildlife Service, 300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley

### **Animal Tracking in the Field: *Sue Morse***

Saturday, November 22

Field Walk 1: 9am-12pm

Field Walk 2: 1pm-4pm

*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).*

## NO SUNDAY HUNTING

At the time this goes to press, HUNTING is still prohibited in Massachusetts on Sundays. A bill to allow bow-hunting on Sundays was passed by the House in June, but did not get passed by the full legislature. Please be aware that there is steady pressure from various groups in the state to allow hunting seven days per week during the various hunting seasons in the Commonwealth. If you have thoughts on the matter, you might consider sharing these with your elected representatives.....

## 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 is all for this month.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

529 9541

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



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

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

Volume 31, No. 4

## December, 2014

December. Birds that, a week ago were scattered across the tawny landscapes of late fall, now eking out a living at feeders and along plough-scarred roadsides. Waterfowl, until recently migrating across our landscape, now bobbing on the billows off the New England coast, accessible only to those of us who are willing to make the trek eastward amidst the frantic rush to prepare for the holidays. This month, we take a break from the high-profile speakers who typically come to our meetings and, instead, take a month to revel in the experiences of our very own members.

### NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, December 8 at 7:15 p.m.**

### HBC Members Meeting

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

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

*This month the entertainment is US!!*

**Please bring some sort of snack to share.**

Sally and Helga are taking a well-earned break this month. If we don't bring stuff, we will go hungry!!

**AND**

**Please bring some slides to share.**

They can be of birding exploits, other adventures in natural history, or even just some scenic wonders you visited during the year. As in past years, please limit your show to 15 or fewer slides and you must 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 or 35 mm format?
- If digital, are the images in Powerpoint format or stand-alone images?

If you bring digital images, please have them on a memory stick or CD-ROM disk.

### COMING PROGRAMS

**January 12, 2015. Don Kroodsma.** Birdsong: The Hour Before Dawn.

**February 9, 2015. Scott Surner.** The Big Chicken Run.

**March 9, 2015. David Sibley.** The New Sibley Guide to the Birds.

Not much room this month. Enclosed, in print only, is the HBC Membership Contact list. This allows our members to make contact with one another in pursuit of birds and birding. Please use the list appropriately, and certainly NOT in pursuit of any commercial objective.

Other than the list there are a few reminders about the upcoming club events, and that's it.

## **NORTHAMPTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**

The National Audubon Society's analysis of 40 years of Christmas Bird Count (CBC) data has revealed alarming declines in the populations of many bird species. During the annual CBC volunteers across the United States, Canada and other Western Hemisphere countries count birds over any 24-hour period from late December through early January and submit the data to the Audubon Society to be compiled.

Join the 81st Northampton (MANO) CBC December 14, 2014. We have 36 teams during the day and about 10 Owling teams. 91 species is our high and this year we expect to beat that. After a great day in the field we sit down to a yummy potluck at the Hitchcock Center and finalize our compilations. Be there or be square. To join a team or be a feeder counter contact Janice Jorgensen and Jan Ortiz at [cbc@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:cbc@hampshirebirdclub.org)

### **The Feeder Watch**

The organizers ESPECIALLY want to increase participation in the feeder watch part of the CBC. If you'd like to be part of the Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 14 but aren't able to be in the field and are within our count area, your help would be appreciated. Please email the compilers at [cbc@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:cbc@hampshirebirdclub.org) or Sally Hills at [sara09@charter.net](mailto:sara09@charter.net).

### **Christmas Count Potluck *Food Contributions Needed!***

It is NOT too late to pledge a contribution to the culinary extravaganza that is the potluck. Please email or call Sue Emerson if you can chip in. Whatever you can provide, we, I assure you, can consume! HBC and all volunteer counters thank you!!

## **QUABBIN COUNT**

The Quabbin Count this year is on December 27.

If you would like to participate, please contact Scott Turner: [ssurner@aol.com](mailto:ssurner@aol.com) or 413 256 5834

## **FIELD TRIPS Trips and Leaders Needed**

Right now, the Winter-Spring-Summer Field trip list for 2015 is an embryonic document, gestating in the fevered mind of our Field Trip Chair, Mike Locher. Our trips are one of the basic components that make this club so vibrant. Twice a year, Mike has to wheedle, cajole, and bribe us all to consider going just that little bit beyond the comfort zone to plan and lead trips. Our trips are one of the three basic components that make this club so vibrant. We have to take COLLECTIVE responsibility for keeping out trip offerings creative and engaging.

If you have an area that you love to bird, or some wonderful birding niche that others would appreciate sharing, please consider leading a trip. We all know the time-honored HBC standards. Your new trip could be the next chapter in that wonderful tradition, but only if you take the plunge and give it a shot! If you have ideas for new trips, please contact Mike Locher: [fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) or 413 585 5864. We have to have the schedule set for the January newsletter!!

That's all for this month.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor  
529 9541

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