



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://hampshirebirdclub.org>

Volume 19, No. 5

**January, 2003**

## PROGRAMS

*All programs begin at 7:30 PM at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 867 North Pleasant St. in Amherst. Should bad weather force a cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP 1400 AM radio.*

### **Monday, January 13**

We are most privileged to welcome **Dr Robert Ridgely**. Since he invites us to nominate a title, I suggest “**On Tiny Shoulders: The Jocotoco Antpitta and Conservation in Ecuador**”.

After postgraduate work at both Duke University and Yale, Dr Robert Ridgely has made major contributions to the global conservation of birds. He joined the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia in 1982, and worked until 1989 as a research associate. Dr Ridgely became the Senior Research Ornithologist at ANSP in 1989, and the Chairman of the Department of Ornithology in 1996. Dr Ridgely has been closely associated with the RARE Center for Tropical Conservation, and the ICBP-IUCN Parrot Working Group, both since 1978. He was also on the Board of Directors of the Pan-American Section of the International Council for Bird Conservation from 1980 to 1984. More locally, Dr Ridgely has served on the Boards of Trustees at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Nature Conservancy since 1997.

Dr Ridgely has published extensively on the avifauna of southern- and central America. The titles of most interest to birders are, perhaps, *A Guide to the Birds of Panama* (1976), *A Guide to the Birds of Panama, with Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Honduras* (revised edition 1989), *The Birds of South America* (coauthored with Guy Tudor; Vols 1 and 2; 1989 and 1994 respectively), and *The Birds of Ecuador, Vols. 1 and 2* (with Paul J. Greenfield; 2001). Not surprisingly, Dr Ridgely has received numerous major grants and endowments, mostly to study the ornithology of southern- and central America. He is currently the Director of International Bird Conservation, at the National Audubon Society. Not to be confined entirely to the rarified air of the research community, Bob has been a core leader for Victor Emanuel Nature Tours from 1980 to the present.

Dr Ridgely's work has been instrumental in the description of seven new species, including the Oro Parakeet, and the Chestnut-bellied Cotinga. In 1997, Dr Ridgely heard a call he did not recognize in the Ecuadoran rainforest. Investigating, he located the first-recorded Jocotoco Antpitta, which now gives its name to the Jocotoco Foundation. Dr Ridgely founded this organization to preserve the flora and fauna of Ecuador, through the establishment and maintenance of a system of private reserves. Bob will describe for us the circumstances of this discovery, and the journey from so simple a beginning to Fundacion Jocotoco.

### **Coming Up**

**February 10: Dave Stemple** speaks on *Scottish Bird Song*

**March 10: Paul Baisich** savors *Shade Grown Coffee*

**April 7: Tom Litwin** about the *Harriman Expedition*

**May 12: Kenn Kaufmann** muses on “*Migration from the Bird's Point of View*”

**June 9: Geoff LeBaron** sails to the *Galapagos*

## FIELD TRIPS

### Reports

Amidst great anticipation, the annual November **East Quabbin** trip (led by Tom Gagnon), occurred on **November 24**. A major highlight of this trip was being able to drive on the normally-gated roads leading to some well-known Quabbin locations. In addition to local HBC members, we had some nice folks from Cape Cod and Springfield joining our group.

Things seemed to get off to a somewhat slow start and we were getting concerned that our list of mammals might outdo our list of birds! We persevered, and in the end found 40 different species of birds. There were some predictable ducks and water birds - Common Loons, a Horned Grebe, Canada Geese, Black Ducks, Mallards, a Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Ducks, Buffleheads, Common Goldeneyes, and Common Mergansers. It took us a while to notice the Greater Yellowlegs almost right in front of us while visiting Shaft 11. In the raptor department, we saw two Bald Eagles: one immature flying quickly over some trees and one adult perched in a distant tree. We had a nice look at an adult male Northern Harrier above Dana Flats, and saw two Red-tailed Hawks. The explosive flights of three Ruffed Grouse and a flock of 15 Wild Turkeys at the Baffle Dams were a nice treat for some of us. Our land-birds included Northern Flicker, R.B. Nuthatch, W.B. Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Tree Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, and American Goldfinch.

The mammal highlights included a beautiful mink perched on the edge of a beaver lodge, one slow-moving porcupine that proceeded to climb a hemlock tree, one beaver, and one White-footed Mouse that was abruptly awakened from its nest in a bluebird box! At Dana Flats, the spongy ground at the water's edge made us feel like we were on the arctic tundra.

Leslie Breger



The Turkey Trot to Cape Ann was cancelled due to a lack of leaders, but four of us went, leaderless, to the **Quabbin** on **November 29** instead. We didn't see much, very little in the way of waterfowl, but did get great looks at an adult Bald Eagle which flew up close and landed in a tree. Other highlights included a Brown Creeper and a lone Horned Lark.

Henry Lappen

### Coming Trips

*The club requests that all participants share costs with those who travel in the same car. Please discuss this when you start out and make sure everyone understands the system and is OK with it. The recommended system is as follows:*

- 1) Estimate the total travel cost (in \$) of the trip using a rate of \$0.30 per mile. (Calculate number of miles traveled multiplied by three, then divide the result by ten).
- 2) Divide the total travel cost (calculated in step one) by the number of participants in the car, INCLUDING the car owner. This will be the amount owed by each passenger to the car owner for MILAGE.
- 3) Add a share of any tolls and parking fees paid, to arrive at the total contribution of each passenger.

*We also request that someone volunteer or be co-opted to write a trip report for the newsletter, and forward it to the editor.*

Thank you!

**Saturday, January 18. Winter finches.** Three quarters of a day. Shirley Hilborn will lead birders looking for winter finches in Western Massachusetts. Meet at the Hitchcock Center at 8:00 a.m.

*continued*→→

**Saturday, February 8. Plymouth and Falmouth.** All day. Join Shawn Smolen-Morton and Al Richards in this trip to southeastern Massachusetts. Past highlights have included Yellow-breasted Chat, Redhead, Rough-legged Hawk, and both Long- and Short-eared Owls. Dress warmly. Call Shawn (413-863-4569) or Al (413-665-2761) for the time and place to meet.

**Wednesday, February 12. Midweek half day in the Connecticut River Valley.** Harvey Allen (413-253-7963) will seek out early migrants and other seasonal specialties. Meet on the corner of Route 116 and Bay Road, Amherst, across from Atkin's Farms, at 8:00 a.m.

**Saturday, March 1. Plum Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron (413-268-9281) will seek out late winter specialties like Rough-legged Hawks, Barrow's Goldeneyes, Glaucous Gulls, and Snowy Owls. Dress warmly. Call Geoff for information as the date approaches.

**Wednesday, March 12. Midweek half day in the Connecticut River Valley.** Harvey Allen (413-253-7963) will see what he can turn up. Meet at 7:30 a.m. on the corner of Route 116 and Bay Road, Amherst, across from Atkin's Farms. Call Harvey for more information.

## CHRISTMAS COUNT

The Northampton Count was blessed this year with what might be called miraculous weather. Both the preceding and following days were inclement, to say the least. December 19, however, proved to be quite mild, with moderate winds.

Perhaps understandably, given the prevalence of cold weather in December this year, we did not see so many dallying warblers and waterfowl as last year, but at least where I was, we had a good, solid day.

Included are the total numbers of the 84 species which appeared on this year's Northampton count, along with some species which were not recorded this year (count values equal zero). **Numbers equaling previous high counts** are printed in **BOLD** (e.g. "22").

**Numbers exceeding previous high counts** are in **BOLD**, with an asterisk (e.g. "22\*")

Species	Number	Species	Number
Common Loon	1	NHarrier adult	1
Great Blue Heron	0	NHarrier immature	0
Snow Goose	1	Sharp-shinned Hawk	17
Canada Goose	2885	<b>Cooper's Hawk</b>	<b>19*</b>
<b>Mute Swan</b>	<b>29*</b>	N. Goshawk	0
Wood Duck	10	Red-shouldered Hawk	1
American Wigeon	2	Red-tailed Hawk	102
Am. Black Duck	185	Rough-legged Hawk	1
Mallard	981	Amer. Kestrel	7
Northern Pintail	2	Merlin	1
C. Goldeneye	79	<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>	<b>3</b>
Hooded Merganser	14	Ring-necked Pheasant	1
C. Merganser	157	Ruffed Grouse	6
Bald Eagle adult	6	Wild Turkey	40
Bald Eagle immat	2	Ring-billed Gull	388
		Herring Gull	334

Species	Numbers	Species	Number
Iceland Gull	2	American Robin	710
Great Black-backed Gull	155	Gray Catbird	1
Rock Dove	1362	N. Mockingbird	138
Mourning Dove	1743	European Starling	4471
E. Screech-Owl	58	Cedar Waxwing	607
Great Horned Owl	20	Nashville Warbler	0
Barred Owl	3	Yellow-rumped Warbler	1
Long-eared Owl	1	Amer. Tree Sparrow	1175
N. Saw-whet Owl	3	Chipping Sparrow	1
Belted Kingfisher	20	Field Sparrow	4
Red-bellied Woodpecker	64	Savannah Sparrow	33
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	Fox Sparrow	1
Downy Woodpecker	238	Song Sparrow	267
Hairy Woodpecker	60	Swamp Sparrow	16
N. Flicker	38	White-throated Sparrow	222
Pileated Woodpecker	9	Dark-eyed Junco	1516
N. Shrike	1	Lapland Longspur	0
Blue Jay	954	Snow Bunting	0
Amer. Crow	4372	N. Cardinal	346
Fish Crow	5	Red-winged Blackbird	76
C. Raven	10	Eastern Meadowlark	2
Horned Lark	861	Rusty Blackbird	3
Black-capped Chickadee	1186	C. Grackle	0
Tufted Titmouse	381	Brown-headed Cowbird	2
Red-breasted Nuthatch	11	Baltimore Oriole	0
White-breasted Nuthatch	274	Purple Finch	7
Brown Creeper	15	House Finch	499
Carolina Wren	36	White-winged Crossbill	0
Winter Wren	2	C. Redpoll	0
Golden-crowned Kinglet	91	Pine Siskin	0
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	Amer. Goldfinch	723
Eastern Bluebird	193	Evening Grosbeak	0
Hermit Thrush	6	House Sparrow	1027

Each of these records represents a lasting contribution to the understanding and conservation of birds. It also represents the efforts of those who participated on December 19. In particular, we should thank Jan Ortiz and Mary Alice Wilson, without whose tireless organizational abilities, there would be no Northampton count!

### **An Important Thankyou!**

Thank you all for the generous donations of delectable main dishes, salads, breads and deserts. The really amazing thing was that birders managed to prepare foods while spending the day and sometimes the night also in searching for and counting birds and critters. A few, unable to come to the potluck, nonetheless, brought special dishes. An enormous thank you must go to the clean up team who magically returned the room to its original condition. Thanks for very successful party.

Helga Beatty

## FREE BIRD FINDING SERVICE!

The HBC now has an information exchange of people who will advise you on birding in various locales. If you know about the avian life in some near or far off place and want to share it, please call me to get listed.

If you are travelling to:

**Northeastern Vermont**  
**Monhegan Island**  
**Connecticut Lakes**  
**Cape May**  
**South Texas**

**Southeast Arizona**  
**Southern California**  
**Baffin Island**  
**Veracruz, Mexico**  
**or Java,**

just call me and I'll hook you up with the friendly club member who has birded there!

Henry (your trusty librarian): 549-3722

## LIBRARY

HBC has a substantial library at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst. **Hours** are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturdays. 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**.

## CONSERVATION

If you are interested in conservation of birds and birding habitat, you may like to share information and effort with others in the club. **Anne Lombard** is our **Conservation Chair**. She often coordinates breeding-bird surveys, and is involved in various cutting-edge conservation issues. Contact her at **(413) 586 7509**, or [aslombard@attbi.com](mailto:aslombard@attbi.com)

## ARCADIA PROGRAMS

**Field Walk Leader Training:** Mandy Bliss, Education Coordinator

Training Dates: January 9, 10, 16 and 17 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon. Pre-registration required, fee.

**Winter Crows:** Patti Steinman, Education Coordinator

Saturday, January 18 from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Pre-registration required, fee.

**Plum Island Raptors and Other Birds:** Wayne Peterson, Mass Audubon Ornithologist

Saturday, February 1 from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Pre-registration required, fee.

**Eagles at Quabbin:** Dale Monette, Daniel Schell, and Patti Steinman

Saturday, February 8 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Pre-registration required, fee.

**Tracking: Relearning an Ancient Art:** John McCarter, Paul Rezendes Nature Program

Saturday February 15 from 9:45 AM to 3:00 PM

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

## BERKSHIRE NATURAL HISTORY TOURS

**Birding Southeastern Arizona:** Rene Laubach and Simon Geary  
May 3-11, 2003. Pre-registration required, space limited.

**Puffins and Peatlands: Exploring the Upper Coast of Maine.** Gail Howe and Laura Tate Beltran  
June 20-23, 2003. Pre-registration required, space limited.

*For further details and/or to register for **Berkshire Natural History Tours**, and other Mass Audubon programs to the west of us, contact the **Berkshire Sanctuaries** at 472 West Mountain Rd., Lenox MA 01240. Phone (413) 637 0499; [berkshires@massaudubon.org](mailto:berkshires@massaudubon.org)*

## MISCELLANEOUS

Thank you to **Atticus Books** (Main St., Amherst) for donating a copy of Bob Askins book (“Restoring America’s Birds: Lessons from Landscape Ecology”) to the HBC library.

Thank you also to **Sally Venman** and **Sue Emerson** for dual-handedly getting the November newsletter in the mail while I was temporarily unavailable.

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

**PLEASE NOTE THAT A REVISED VERSION OF THE WINTER-LATE SUMMER 2003 FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE IS INCLUDED WITH THIS EDITION. THE UPDATE FEATURES TWO TRIPS WHICH WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE PREVIOUS VERSION, AND EXPANDED TRIP DESCRIPTIONS TO WHET YOUR APPETITE FOR SOME TIME IN THE FIELD.**

That is all for now.  
Until next time, talk softly and carry a big scope!

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