Picture yourself birding on a cool, clear June morning in the pristine forests of the Berkshires. You might make out the vivid red splash of a Scarlet Tanager high in the sun-dappled canopy. You might recognize the sound of a squeaky wheelbarrow where no wheelbarrow should be, and pick out a trim Black-and White Warbler working its way over the trunk of a dark, healthy hemlock tree. Further on, a beautiful male Black-throated Green Warbler could be extolling the virtues of “Trees, Trees, Murmuring Trees.” You’d likely be drawn into the ferny depths of a watercourse by the ethereal, flute-like tones of a Veery, regarding you shyly from the other side of a tree. You might eventually find the pair of Brown creepers whose almost imperceptible whisperings have led you on a merry dance through the quiet woods. You might be tempted to leave on this note, to make these gentle and untrammelled moments the memories you will keep of this day.

But you might be beckoned on by the joyous, cascading trills of a tiny bird, surprised as the search for the singer leads you not toward more tranquil depths, but into the harsh glare of the sun, and to within earshot of a road. Stumbling now over fallen trees and tangled brambles, you might ask the still-elusive creature what had possessed it to venture into the devastation of a logging area, and whether it might have considered sparing you this unwelcome reminder of the ways of man. Despairing, ready to turn back, you might suddenly see a small brown bird, not singing now but scuttling back and forth amidst the debris. Fighting the black flies and mosquitoes issuing from stagnant puddles, you might finally discern a pattern in the movements; the urgency so great that the bird, despite its silence, cannot conceal its purpose. As you get beyond the setting, to the real story being told, you might realize that this male Winter Wren is carrying moss and hemlock needles to, of all places, a wheel rut in a logging road. He is lining a tiny spherical opening excavated into the side-wall of the rut. Here, in the spoor of an implacable machine, is an offering this bird is making to its mate. It is one of several nests, amongst which she will choose, and which will allow these creatures to raise young this year.

We would all prefer to have found this bird nesting amidst the roots of a fallen forest giant, in some untouched part of the forest. We would be reassured that at least some part of our planet was “as it should be.” But that is not how the world works. The wren survives not by finding the perfect nest site, but by finding something that works. The redwood cannot endure by living forever: it must find a place to regenerate in the world left to it by man. Birds in the gulf cannot survive the oil, but they will find a way back when it is gone…..

The ancient order of things can still be found in nature from time to time. It is often beautiful, and we can be thankful for it when we find it. But we must be even more thankful for tenacity, adaptability, the ability to make-do. These things are the real miracles of the natural world, its only hope, our only hope.

♣♣♣♣♣

In this edition:
- the program introduction and the schedule for next year (page 2),
- field trip reports and the trips still to come this year, and
- some other items of general interest.

I hope you find some of it useful…. 
NEXT PROGRAM
Monday, June 14 at 7:30 PM
Accompany Geoff LeBaron on The Route to Distant Islands
An Expedition Across the South Atlantic
Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Please join us for an expedition cruising voyage from the southern tip of South America to the southern tip of Africa—4600 nautical miles across some of the most active and un-traveled waters on Earth. Only in recent years have expedition cruising ships had the range to do this amazing trip, filled with seabirds and oceanic wildlife.

We’ll visit the storied Falkland Islands, South Georgia (a fascinating and exceptionally beautiful island filled with the lore of Antarctic exploration, whaling, and immense penguin colonies), and Tristan da Cunha, the most remote human outpost on Earth. We end the voyage visiting many locations in Western Cape Province of South Africa, a region bustling with cultural history and an amazing array of endemic species.

Geoff LeBaron has been the Christmas Bird Count Director for the National Audubon Society since 1987. Prior to that, he has 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 conducting aerial surveys of 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/Antarctica; and Australia/New Zealand. We know him best as an energetic and committed field trip leader, and our outstanding Program Chair.

2010-2011 Provisional Program Schedule

January 10, 2011. To Be Announced.
March 14, 2011. Don Kroodsma. (topic to be determined).
FIELD TRIP REPORTS


Dave Mako.

Black-and-White was the warbler of the day on Mt. Sugarloaf, heard from seemingly everywhere as the morning opened with a fresh wave of migrants. But Worm-eating Warbler was the star - it teed up nicely and sang for the intrepid group of 5 HBC birders. Other warblers were surprisingly sparse, but we did have a good vireo show, including a Yellow-throated Vireo for which Nancy Goodman provided great visual directions: "Look at the sun, and then a little bit to the left..."

We saw a kettle of 5 broad-winged hawks circling past the mountain and a nice variety of other birds. Harvey Allen helped refresh our memories on the calls of a few First of the Year birds that we couldn't find in the early foliage: Great-crested Flycatcher, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Yellow Warbler. Perhaps the most interesting avian interactions were between an adult Bald Eagle that wandered into Mt. Sugarloaf airspace, a Common Raven that raced back to the cliff to guard its nest and a Peregrine Falcon that flew up to intercept the intruder and turn it away. A total of fifty species were logged during the morning walk on a beautiful spring day.

Dave Mako

Moody Bridge Road. Sunday May 16.

Mary Alice Wilson and Sally Hills

Two dozen birders braved perfect weather conditions to visit a former horse farm on Moody Bridge Road – now part of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. We had two goals: (a) to see and hear as many birds as possible and (b) to provide the Conte staff with suggestions for the management of this early-successional shrub land. We accomplished both. Special birds included: Least and Willow Flycatcher, Brown Thrasher, Blue-winged- and Yellow Warblers, Field Sparrow, and Indigo Bunting. Along the forest edge were 2 Red-tailed Hawks in a tree, one briefly-seen Cooper’s Hawk, Wood Thrush and Scarlet Tanager singing, and both Orchard and Baltimore Oriole.

Mary Alice Wilson


Tom Gagnon

Twelve people made the trek up the venerable old hill. We had great looks at Cerulean Warblers: not one but three (two males and a female near the top of the mountain). Not to be content with this, we got eye level views of a singing male Tennessee Warbler and a Hermit Thrush sang right over our heads! There were also great views of a singing Yellow-throated Vireo and a fly-by Black-billed Cuckoo. To add to the color of the day, the male Indigo Buntings were brilliant and vocal along with several Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. Several Scarlet Tanagers came close with one female actually gathering nesting material 12 feet away from us! Wildflowers were of interest to several members on the walk and were enjoyed by all.

Tom Gagnon

Poor Man’s Monhegan (Plum Island). Saturday, May 29.

Bob Bieda.

Six Hampshire Bird Club members tallied seventy nine (79) species on a very nice late spring day on Plum Island. Highlights included both Seaside- and Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrows, Orchard Oriole on and about a nest, Sora calling in the marsh and good views of Piping Plover. Generally the birding was quiet with no fallouts, late migrants or recent rarities (White-faced Ibis, Wilson's Phalaropes, Purple Gallinule) present.

Bob Bieda

COMING FIELD TRIPS

Wednesday, June 9.  Birds and Fishes
Let's check out the Connecticut River at the Holyoke Fish Ladder for some fish eating birds and we will also
check in on the Shad Run.  Hopefully, if we are real lucky, we will get to see an Atlantic Salmon.  Meet at the
"Park and Ride" parking lot in Northampton on Bridge Street near the Northampton Airport at 12:30 p.m. and
car-pool from there. Questions?  Please call Tom Gagnon at 413-584-6353.

Saturday, June 12. Hammonasset Beach State Park, CT.  All day.  Betsy Higgins goes to the coast of
Connecticut to find sparrows, rails, and other seaside denizens.  Call Betsy (413-586-7585) for meeting time
and place as the date approaches. (E)

Sunday, June 13. Atlas Blockbusting trip.  Half day.  Join a team that spends the morning scouring North
Adams 5 (Route 2 and up the slopes of Mt Greylock).  Contact Dave Gross (dgross@biochem.umass.edu or
413-253 2897) if you are interested.  Block-busting provides both a great day of birding and a great contribution
to the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas. (E)

Saturday, June 13. Atlas Blockbusting trip (2).  Half day.  Help collect breeding bird data in a unique
location: North Adams 6 (top of Greylock and east to the edge of Adams).  Contact Mike Locher
(mlocher@yahoo.com or 413-585-5864) if you are interested.  Block-busting provides both a great day of
birding and a great contribution to the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas. (E)

*Saturday, August 7. Knightsville Dam.  Half day.  Betsy Higgins leads a new trip to Knightsville Dam
WMA.  This is a rich habitat where almost anything could turn up.  Call Betsy (413-586-7585) for meeting
details. (E)

Saturday, August 21. New South Beach.  All day.  Bob Bieda leads birders in their quest for late shorebird
migrants, including Curlew Sandpipers and Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits. Bring a lunch, a jacket, and $20
for the boat ride.  Note: the date may change depending on the tides.  Call Bob (413-527-2623) to register. (M)

NEW BOARD

The AGM on May 10 of this year was, as usual, an epic affair.  Egged on by a Red Poll showing he could
Whip-Poor-Will in the primaries, a rather Cross-Bill was quick to Shrike.
“He may have had a Little Stint in office, but the voters are more than a Bitterned off right now.  I never Sora
a politician show so Little Egret for his failed policies.  When it comes to the deficit, voters want a Sharp-
shinned Hawk, not a Mourning Dove.  We don’t need some Scarlet Tanager huffin’ and Puffin his way
through another term.  We want a Greater Sage.  Grouse all you want, then vote for me: Razor Bill!”

After all that, the following were elected to the Board for 2010-2011:

**President:** Scott Surner  
**VP/Program Chair** - Geoff LeBaron  
**Membership Secretary** - Sue Emerson  
**Treasurer** - Janice Jorgensen  
**Communications Secretary** - Elissa Rubinstein  
**Members-at-Large:**  
Jan Ortiz  
Bruce Hart  
David Peake-Jones  
Jaap van Heerden  
Joe Wicinski  
Mike Locher

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 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday. 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.

ATLAS
Your long-suffering Atlas regional coordinator, Mary Alice Wilson, is strangely quiet this month. However, it goes without saying that these are the salad days for Atlas work. You can hardly step outside your door without finding birds procreating. So enjoy the work and push for as much as you can this month!

**Note again the following opportunities to “Bust a Block.”**

**Sunday, June 13.** Half day. Join a team that spends the morning scouring North Adams 5 (Route 2 and up the slopes of Mt Greylock). Contact Dave Gross (dgross@biochem.umass.edu or 413-253 2897) if you are interested.

**Saturday, June 26.** Half day. The group will cover some unique territory: North Adams 6 (top of Greylock and east to the edge of Adams). Contact Mike Locher (mlocher@yahoo.com or 413-585-5864) if you are interested.

BROAD BROOK PROGRAMS
**Non-Native Invasive Species - What’s the Big Deal? Janet Bissell.**
Sunday, June 13, 1 p.m.
Fitzgerald Lake Conservation Area, North Farms Road, Northampton.

Join Janet on a walk around Fitzgerald Lake and explore the non-native invasive plants that have become unwelcome guests in the lake and the surrounding woods and fields. Learn why some non-native plants become invasive and why they are a threat to our native habitats. We will talk about the identification of invasive species as well as their natural histories and some strategies for coping with them.

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS
**Coyotes Are Everywhere! Laura Hajduk, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.**
Thursday, June 10, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

**Herb Walk: Wild Plants and their Roles as Medicines and Foods: Chris Marano, Herbalist.**
Saturday, July 24, 9 a.m. to noon.

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.
Seabird & Whale Tale Trip  
Sunday, June 13th.  8 am - 4 pm  
Departing from Plymouth Town Pier, Plymouth Harbor, MA

This is an all day (rough or smooth) marine excursion aboard a 110' whale-watching vessel to view seabirds, whales, dolphins, basking sharks and ocean sunfish along the Mass coast. It is an annual fundraising event for the non-profit organization, the New England Coastal Wildlife Alliance (NECWA). All proceeds go to support marine wildlife research and education. There will be guided wildlife commentary by David Clapp (Natural History Services), Jim Sweeney (South Shore Bird Club) and Joanne Jarzobski (Capt. John Boats). During the trip, there will be a plankton tow and demonstrations, and chumming for seabirds.

Costs  
Tickets are $90 till May 31 and then $100 after May 31, 2010.

Further Information and Registration  
You can go to www.necwa.org, and look for the link to “Seabird and Whale Tales Excursions”. For yet more trip information, you can call Krill Carson at NECWA directly at 508-566-0009. You will have to download the registration form and mail it to NECWA with your payment. No online registration.

Special Hotel Offer. Stay at Hampton Inn & Suites in Plymouth on Saturday night for only $89 plus tax. Included is an "On the House Hot Breakfast" on Sunday morning as well as shuttle bus service to the boat! If you want to take advantage of this offer, you should call the hotel directly (1-508-747-5000), and make a reservation. Mention the NECWA trip to get the discounted rate.

That is about it for now. I hope you will have a wonderful summer, to which end I offer you a brief but well-earned respite from this publication until mid-August when, as the nighthawks reach the peak of their exodus, hawk migration looms, and the kids get ready to return to school, HBC will swing into action again. We will once again ask you to reach into your wallets to make a small but critical contribution to our coffers, and Mike will once again come up with a tantalizing selection of field trips for the fall. Our first program of the new club year will feature local photographer and naturalist John Green showing us some of his favorite images on September 13.

I will leave you (if you will but turn to the next page) with what seems to me a suitably optimistic interim report from the Bird Atlas.

Till next time, as always, talk softly and carry a big scope!  

David Peake-Jones, Editor  
529 9541  
newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org
The scientific name of the Winter Wren, *Troglodytes troglodytes*, conjures to mind images of a brutish, savage, and primitive creature. Winter Wrens are none of these things; rather, they are tiny and elusive birds whose vibrant and ebullient song has enchanted generations of birders. The Latin name originates from the Winter Wren’s attraction to holes, crevices, and other cavelike openings in their old-growth forest habitat.

Winter Wrens inhabit stands of mature and old-growth conifers wherever they occur. As one might expect, such forests occurred in very few places indeed once the face of the landscape was transformed by farming. For many years, Winter Wrens found refuge in the high montane forests of the Berkshires, but as the woods of Massachusetts have aged, Winter Wrens have reclaimed maturing forests across the state.

The Northern Connecticut River Valley and the northern part of Worcester County are now inundated with Winter Wrens which, though tiny and found within the deepest, darkest woods, can still be found without too much trouble by the prepared Atlaser. The reason for this, of course, is their exceptional song, seemingly far too large to come from such a tiny bird. It is somewhat variable, but is always a high-pitched series of pleasing melodic whistles and trills. The first males arrive in April, but courtship and nest-building are not usually underway in earnest until May. The male leads the female to any one of the several nests he has built, and if she approves of the location, she will accept it and begin work on completing the nest. The nest is often located amongst the exposed roots of a downed tree, but may also be in cavities of standing trees, rotting logs, hanging moss, the banks of a creek, or simply sitting out on the branch of a tree. Nests are quite large and their entrances rather small, with the actual nest cup being lined with soft fur and feathers.

The female lays four to seven eggs and incubates them for a little over two weeks on average. The nestlings are fed mostly beetles found crawling over the fallen, rotting trees that are typical of old growth forests. Their diet is often supplemented with caterpillars, true bugs, ticks, spiders, and the occasional water insect. The young birds fledge after about 19 days, but the parents continue to travel with and feed them for some time after that. Most young and adults alike migrate south for the winter when the weather cools in October, but some hardy individuals do appear in the winter, mostly in the southeast.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winter Wren</th>
<th>Atlas 1</th>
<th>Atlas 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Blocks Possible</td>
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<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td># Blocks Probable</td>
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<td>195</td>
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<tr>
<td># Blocks Confirmed</td>
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<td>56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total # Blocks Occupied</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>410</td>
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