



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 27, No. 5

**January, 2011.**

## NEXT PROGRAM

**Monday, January 10 at 7:30 PM**

**Joanna Bailey Hodgman and David Spector  
A Spicing of Birds: Poems of Emily Dickinson**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

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

Internationally-celebrated poet Emily Dickinson lived, as we all should know, in our little town of Amherst, Massachusetts. She had a great love of birds and mentioned them 222 times in her collected works, sometimes as the central theme of a poem. Both our speakers this month will focus on how the birds of New England feature in some of America's best-loved poetry.

Joanna Bailey Hodgman and co-editor Jo Miles Shuman have brought thirty-seven of Dickinson's poems together in the superbly illustrated anthology "*A Spicing of Birds: Poems by Emily Dickinson.*" Joanna will give us an overview of birds in Dickinson's work, using the book as a framework.

David Spector has subtitled his contribution to the program "Bird of Birds: The Meadow's Sorcerer." We can look forward to some of David's own trademark magic as he explores the role of one particular species in the work of Dickinson and her literary contemporaries.

**Joanna Hodgman** was born in Boston in 1932 and raised in Cambridge MA. She earned a B.A. in English at Radcliffe and an M.A. in English from the University of Rochester. She taught middle and high school English for 21 years. She and her husband Christopher, a psychiatrist, live in Rochester NY. They have four adult children and eight grandchildren. Joanna has loved poetry all her life.

**David Spector** has been a member of the Hampshire Bird Club since the first meeting. He is a former president of the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, teaches biology at Central Connecticut State University, and is working on a book on birds in literature.

Joanna will have a number of copies of "*A Spicing of Birds*" with her for us to purchase, and I imagine she will be willing to sign them for those who do. You'll have to wait for David's book, but I bet he'll be willing to flog a few of those off when the time comes.....

## COMING PROGRAMS

**February 14. Tom Bancroft.** The White-crowned Pigeon.

**March 14. Don Kroodsma.** ???

**April 11. Scott Surner.** Yellowstone National Park.

## FIELD TRIP REPORTS

### Plum Island. November 13, 2010.

Participants: **Geoff LeBaron**, Denny Baker, Nancy Baker, Jesse Brownback, Ray Chapin, Carol & Jim Gabranski, Ilene Goldstein, Nora Hanke, Bruce Hart, Betsy Higgins, Leslie Hoffmann, Nidhin Joseph, Andrew Magee.

The group spent all day at **Parker River N.W.R.** There was huge beautiful surf at Lot 1, great waterfowl at The Pannes, mobbed parking lots everywhere, great ocean and marsh views at Lot 7, a tantalizing **Yellow-breasted Chat** only seen by one person, fantastic looks at shorebirds at Sandy Point, and the **mystery shorebird (revealed...)** at the Hellcat Tower/Bill Forward Pool. Highlights included:

Mute Swan (2)	Common Loon (5)	<b>Ruff (1 first year male)</b>
Gadwall (42)	Horned Grebe (5)	Horned Lark (15)
American Wigeon (35)	Red-necked Grebe (1)	Carolina Brant (5)
Northern Shoveler (35)	Northern Gannet (8)	Wren (2)
<b>Northern Pintail (12)</b>	Double-crested Cormorant (2)	Golden-crowned Kinglet (3)
Green-winged Teal (500)	Great Cormorant (5)	Northern Mockingbird (8)
Common Eider (350)	Great Blue Heron (3)	American Pipit (5)
Surf Scoter (55)	Great Egret (2)	Cedar Waxwing (12)
White-winged Scoter (2)	Northern Harrier (4)	<b>Yellow-breasted Chat (1)</b>
Black Scoter (35)	Cooper's Hawk (1)	Tree Sparrow (5)
Bufflehead (25)	Red-tailed Hawk (3)	Savannah Sparrow (3)
Common Goldeneye (35)	Black-bellied Plover (65)	White-throated Sparrow (8)
Hooded Merganser (15)	Sanderling (25)	Snow <u>Bunting</u> (25)
Red-breasted Merganser (15)	White-rumped Sandpiper (2)	
Red-throated Loon (35)	Dunlin (350)	

(66 Species Total—**LOW**, but ok given crowds on refuge)

Geoff LeBaron

## COMING FIELD TRIPS

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

### Sallymeandering

#### The wit and wisdom of Sally Venman.

*“P.S. Well folks, the impossible, the improbable and the downright unbelievable has happened. Your humble scribe and passer-along of important information has surrendered to the passage of time and explosion of technology. No longer able to bear the weight of abuse from my tacky, techy friends I have joined the masses (oh defeat – sad, sad, sad defeat), given up another thread of independence and have registered my name on the great computer network of the sky. I, Sarah G. Venman, succumbing to pressures no longer bearable can now and forever be reached and informed through email!! Let the drums roll!!.....*

*Now, if I can ever figure out how to get into husband Bill's computer where I can read volumes of mail I'll really have this technical phobia thing licked. Right! Don't I wish.”*

From the editorial, February, 1998.

## Northampton Christmas Count

### Pot Luck Thank You

Sue Emerson and her wonderful "elves" wish to thank all who helped with the set up and take down and for all the delicious "pots" that you brought to the compilation. Without all your contributions the dinner would not be as successful. With great appreciation.

On behalf of all the participants, I would like to echo the sentiments expressed by Sue. Can't tell you how much a plate of hot food means at the end of the Christmas Count! (Editor)

### Newsletter Thank You

The first few editions of the newsletter each year take a lot of mailing. We have to include all sorts of forms etc. and we have to tailor the mailings to try to reach those who have drifted from the fold, and gently (one hopes) encourage the tardy to send in their much-needed membership dues.

There is a small group of hardy and accommodating folk who, each year, help shoulder this load and maintain the editor's sanity. This year, that group consisted of Sue Emerson, Sally Hills, Helga Beatty and Mary Alice Wilson. They even brought adult beverages and snacks!

Thank you all!

### OTHER GROUPS WHO ARE ALL ABOUT BIRDS.

This list focuses on groups who provide programs and/or field trips on birds and birding in Massachusetts, and list these on active websites. Addresses given are those for current programs and/or trips. Only monthly programs or special events are listed here (\*\*\*\*).

**Arcadia Sanctuary.** Easthampton, MA. Field Trips/Programs.

Programs/trips at [www.massaudubon.org/PDF/newsletters/Arcadia\\_117.pdf](http://www.massaudubon.org/PDF/newsletters/Arcadia_117.pdf)

**Cape Cod Bird Club.** Brewster, MA. Field Trips/Programs. [www.massbird.org/ccbc](http://www.massbird.org/ccbc)

Programs held at 7:30 PM at Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, 869 Rte. 6A, in Brewster, MA.

\*\*\*\* **January 10, 2011. Wayne Peterson - "Birds, Brooks and other Moving Waters."**

**Brookline Bird Club.** Brookline, MA. Field Trips. [www.brooklinebirdclub.org](http://www.brooklinebirdclub.org)

**Athol Birding and Nature Club:** Athol, MA. Field Trips/Programs.

[www.millersriver.net/events/index/html](http://www.millersriver.net/events/index/html)

\*\*\*\* January 12. 7-9 PM. No topic available.

**Allen Bird Club:** Springfield, MA. [www.massbird.org/allen](http://www.massbird.org/allen)

Meetings held at the Tolman Wing of the Springfield Science Museum (The Quadrangle).

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**Hoffmann Bird Club.** Berkshire County, MA [www.hoffmannbirdclub.org/events/html](http://www.hoffmannbirdclub.org/events/html).

Meetings at 7 p.m. in Pittsfield or Lenox, MA. Check schedule for monthly location.

Updated field trip info available on Website.

\*\*\*\*No January program.

*A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?" they asked as they moved off. "Because I can't stand chess nuts boasting in an open foyer!"*

## Soaring: Not Just for the Big Birds

Many of us spend time in the fall marveling at the sight of raptors migrating southward. Birds of prey are, in many cases, built for soaring, and we can see them using this strategy to good effect. Most songbirds, by contrast, seem built for flapping flight, and their nocturnal migrations are more mysterious. It has been assumed that smaller songbirds must rely on powered flight (i.e. “flapping”) to cover long distances, and the fact that they put on relatively huge amounts of body mass in preparation for migration seems to bear this out.

Scientists from Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the Max Planck Institute for Ornithology expected to confirm the conventional wisdom when they attached tiny radio transmitters to the backs of European Bee-eaters, which migrate seasonally between Africa and Europe. To their surprise, they found that the birds switched between flapping and gliding while migrating, and that the birds used the same amount of energy when gliding as they did when at rest. This is an even greater relative energy advantage for these smaller birds than it is for raptors, which still use 30% more energy when gliding than they do at rest.

Once again, when we look beneath the surface, we find more complexity in the natural world than meets the eye.

Max-Planck-Gesellschaft (2010, December 8). Soaring is better than flapping for birds big and small. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved January 3, 2011, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/12/101208130046.htm>

*How is your winter progressing?*

*Keeping up with those New Year's Resolutions – especially the one about healthy eating and more exercise? I have devised a method that is really working for me and I am happy to share it with you. It involves seeing the problem through fresh eyes. Creative thinking is the secret to creative problem solving.*

*Problem – we are advised to eat at least five fruits and vegetables each day. How do we do this?*

*Solution – French Fried potatoes with catsup account for two fruit and vegetable units. Have this for lunch and dinner (total of four). All you need is one more unit. You can do it!*

*Problem – we are advised to incorporate more beta-carotene (that healthy stuff found in orange foods) in to our diets. How?*

*Solution – this is really quite simple. Pick out the orange jelly beans from the “gourmet jelly bean mix.” This also increases your level of exercise. Plan a jelly bean party (it is very helpful to be in a support group when dieting).*

*Get the idea? Creative thinking is the answer! And there is always the chance that ice cream and chocolate will be listed as health foods under the new Clinton administration.”*

Sally, from the editorial, February, 1993

The Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule follows.

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.**

### **Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule, 2011.**

*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.*

***Note: There are several trips which are likely to occur, but have not been finalized at the time this schedule goes to press. Always check the monthly newsletter for any additions.***

#### **JANUARY**

**Saturday, January 8. North Shore: Cape Ann to Plum Island.** All day. Bob Bieda leads his annual New Year's pilgrimage to the coast in search of wintering specialties like Eared Grebes, Barrow's Goldeneyes, Harlequin Ducks, Purple Sandpipers, and much more. Dress for cold weather. For meeting information call Bob at 413-527-2623. (E)

#### **MARCH**

**Saturday, March 5. Connecticut River Waterfowl I.** Half day. Joshua Rose scours the Connecticut River and environs for migrating waterfowl. Call Josh (413-835-0093) as the date approaches for meeting information. Rain date will be Sunday, March 6. (E)

**Sunday, March 20. Connecticut River Waterfowl II.** Half day. Mike Locher travels from Holyoke to Turner's Falls looking for waterfowl migrating through the valley along the Connecticut River. Call Mike (413-585-5864) for information, or just meet at the Hadley Elementary School parking lot (on Route 47, about a mile north of the Route 9 intersection) at 7:00 a.m. (E)

#### **APRIL**

**\*Sunday, April 10. Ashley Reservoir: Early Warblers.** Half day. Mike Locher (413-585-5864) looks for early migrants like Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Northern Waterthrushes, and Broad-winged Hawks. Meet in the Friendly's parking lot, near the Holiday Inn, close to Exit 15 ("Holyoke Mall") off Rt. 91 at 7:00 a.m. (E)

#### **MAY**

**\*Sunday, May 1. Early Migrants.** Half day. Betsy Higgins (413-586-7585) looks for migrants, starting around Look Park in Northampton. Meet at 6:30 a.m. in the parking lot of the JFK Middle School on Bridge Road in Northampton. (E)

**Saturday, May 7. Return to Greylock.** All day. Mike Locher cleans up the two blocks the HBC busted last year, looking for nesting waterfowl and other species we didn't get before. Contact Mike (413-585-5864) as the date approaches for meeting information. (M)

## Winter-Spring-Summer Field Trip Schedule. 2011 (page 2)

**Saturday, May 28. Mount Auburn Cemetery, Watertown, MA.**  $\frac{3}{4}$  day. David Peake-Jones (413-529-9541) will visit this historic and beautiful garden cemetery which is also a fabled migrant trap. Call David (413 529 98541) to register. (E).

**Friday, May 27 – Monday, May 30. Monhegan Island.** Overnight trip. Betsy Higgins and Andrew Magee lead the Hampshire Bird Club's annual pilgrimage to Monhegan Island. Not only is the island charming, but the numbers and variety of migrating birds can be astonishing. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Betsy (413-586-7585) to register. (E/M)

### JUNE

**Saturday, June 4. Westover Air Force Base.** Half day. Pending permission, Bob Bieda will lead his annual trip into New England's premier grassland habitat, looking for Upland Sandpipers, Bobolinks, Grasshopper Sparrows, and Eastern Meadowlarks. This trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members only. Call Bob (413-527-2623) at least two weeks ahead of time to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E)

**Saturday, June 11. 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 12, Blockbusting in Stephenton 4.** All day. Contact Mike Locher (413-585-5864) to venture into utterly unbirded territory (at least as far the Breeding Bird Atlas is concerned). There should be opportunities for both hikers and drivers. (M)

### AUGUST

**Saturday, July 30. New South Beach (Early). All Day.** David Peake-Jones will look for Red Knots and other early shorebird migrants. We'll be walking a long way over wet sand. Bring sun protection, water, food, and \$20 for the boat ride. Call David (413 529 9541) to register. (M)

**Saturday, August 27. New South Beach (Late).** 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)

### SEPTEMBER

**\*Saturday, September 10. 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)