



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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March, 2012.

Oh, g'day! Better take a brief break from planning my right-of-center third party presidential candidacy to bring you the latest from your friendly neighborhood bird club.

In this edition:

- the **program** for this month and the **upcoming schedule**,
- an absurdly verbose **trip report**, and coming trips,
- **sign up for the Crown of Maine trip NOW**,
- a proposed **By-Law amendment**,
- a request from the **Conte Refuge**,
- **Hitchcock, Arcadia, and Athol BNC** programs,
- a joke, plus
- a few other tid-bits.

I hope you find some of it useful!

NEXT PROGRAM

Monday, March 12 at 7:30 PM

Geoff Boettner explores the amazing relationships between **Birds and Bugs**

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

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

In the past 125 years Massachusetts has accidentally added over 360 new species of insects, (and purposely released an additional 155 other insects to control those pests). More accidental insects arrive every year, and some, like the emerald ash borer, will likely arrive in the next few years. This talk will explore 25 years in the field studying the ecology of 3 different defoliators (and what drives their populations). I will also discuss what roles birds will play in controlling some of these pests in the future. I hope to generate some fun discussions on what E. O. Wilson calls the "little things that run the world."

Jeff Boettner has a B.A. in Environmental Studies from the University of Michigan-Dearborn. He has been a lab manager/field technician for Dr. Joe Elkinton at UMASS-Amherst for 26 years. Together they have carried out research which ranges from insect conservation (butterflies and moths) to insect control (gypsy moth, browntail moth, winter moth and hemlock adelgid). Their primary interests are in what causes the fluctuations in insect populations (everything from bird and mammal predation to parasites and diseases) and how to use these agents to control insect outbreaks or to benefit rare insect survival. Jeff has banded birds in Michigan and Massachusetts, tagged thousands of small mammals, and rears tens of thousands of caterpillars each year to study parasites. Jeff's current research is toward the goal of controlling winter moth in New England.

Jeff's work has been published in numerous scientific journals, newspapers, and magazines. Some of it has even been translated into Chinese and Spanish.

COMING PROGRAMS

April 9. Gina Nichol. Hummingbirds: Feathered Gems.

May 14. Bret Whitney. Birds of Brazil.

June 11. John Van de Graaff. (to be announced).

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Saturday, January 7, 2012. North Shore. Cape Ann to (Almost) Plum Island!

Participants: Bob Bieda, Sue Emerson, Elaine Pourinski, Joe Wicinski, Harvey Allen, Ed Neumuth, Nidhin Joseph, Eric Huston, Al Richards, David Peake-Jones.

From the Jodrey Fish Pier in Gloucester, we scanned the green sward of nearby warehouse roofs and were rewarded with an **Iceland Gull** and some nice Surf Scoters in the harbor. From Niles Beach we were able to find some Horned Grebes to add to the total as well as a couple of Black Guillemots, a Gadwall, and scatterings of Bufflehead and Long-tailed Ducks far out in the bay. The brave and visually acute amongst us managed to make **Razorbills** out of three plump black-and-white specks far out on the water.

There were an assortment of birds on the shrinking open water at Niles Pond, including American Coot and another Iceland Gull. A burly bird standing on the ice (steadfastly refusing to reveal its wings) turned out to be the first **Glaucous Gull** of the day.

After pressing through an insane parking situation at Brace's Cove, we were rewarded with ultimately good looks at **Black-headed Gull**, another Glaucous Gull, as well as a **Northern Pintail** and several **Bonaparte's Gulls** plying the shallows with their dainty high prows and sterns.

From Granite Pier in Rockport, we were able to make out a Red-throated Loon, some nice **Harlequin Ducks**, and some **Purple Sandpipers** which were at the "limits of conjecture" even for resident conjecturalist Ed Neumuth. Ed, showing a humbling command of winter waterfowl for one from the most western extremes of the state, also found a **Black-legged Kittiwake** at Andrews Cove, where a Black Scoter gave us a clean scoter sweep for the trip.

Abandoning the shore for the 'burbs of Ipswich, we paid a visit to Jim Berry's home, where a **Townsend's Warbler** has been visiting a feeder. Jim, despite having been awoken from a nap by the horde of birders occupying his driveway, was kind enough to spread mealworms on his porch railing. These tidbits eventually did the trick, and the warbler dazzled us for a few minutes while it darted back and forth from a sheltering spruce to the wriggly smorgasbord on the railing.

As the day waned, we made a twilight visit to Cherry Hill Reservoir. Here we found a single **Canvasback**, Hooded Mergansers, a bevy of **Ruddy Ducks**, a Ring-necked Duck, a **Red-winged Blackbird** lingering in the balmy conditions, and a Belted Kingfisher. We failed to locate the Cassin's Kingbird which was the main motivator for our visit. For the day we tallied 65 species.

None of this would have been possible without some quality fuel. For the day, we consumed the following comestibles courtesy of McDonalds Corporation:

Six (6) Fillets of Fish

One Double Quarter Pounder with Cheese

Four (4) McChicken Sandwiches

Three (3) Egg McMuffins

One (1) Sausage McMuffin

Four (4) Sausage Burritos

Two (2) Bacon, Egg and Cheese Biscuits (sans Bacon)

One (1) Hash Brown

Three (3) Medium Fries

Three (3) Large Fries, and

One (1) .salad

This means we stoked up with a total of 10,430 calories, 1645 mg of cholesterol and 19, 845 mg of salt! If you listen hard on some still night, you may hear the collective weeping of participants over the rejoicing of local cardiologists (not to mention the persistent echoes of Dave Spector's Xmas Count owl tapes).

David Peake-Jones

COMING TRIPS

(see also the Winter-Spring Summer Field Trip Schedule)

Please register with the field trip leader(s) and check this schedule's information when a phone number is given. The Field Trip Chair (Michael Locher – 413-585-5864) is always looking for new trip ideas and leaders.

The Hampshire Bird Club recommends carpooling whenever possible, and suggests that all riders share equally the cost of travel.

*marks 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.

***Sunday, March 18. Connecticut River Waterfowl I.** Half day. Mike Locher travels from Holyoke to Hatfield looking for any 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 a.m. (E)

***Saturday, March 24. Connecticut River Waterfowl II.** All day. Joshua Rose scours the Turner's Falls environs for waterfowl bound northward and late gulls. Meet at Stop & Shop on King Street in Northampton at 7 a.m.. (E)

***Saturday, March 31. Plum Island.** All day. Geoff LeBaron braves the weather along the coast to find you the birds! Call Geoff (413-268-9281) for information about when the trip will leave, and where people should meet. (M)

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

FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE CHANGES

There have been some changes that will affect the schedule later in the summer.

Betsy Higgins will now be venturing into the wilds of Knightville Dam on August 18. The latest field trip schedule (Mark 3) is dated March 1, 2012, and is posted at www.hampshirebirdclub.org under "trips."

Welcome, New Members!

Tim Corbin

Paul and Maureen Kane

Janet Lansberry

Susan Tyler

Granby.

Westfield.

Amherst.

Amherst.

We're happy to have you!

Alf snuck off during his lunch break to get a haircut. It took longer than usual and the boss caught him sneaking back in to the office. The boss challenged him, "What, getting a haircut on the company time, Alf?" Alf replied, "Well, it grew on company time, boss."

The boss retorted, "Not all of it did!"

Alf was ready for this and responded, "So that's why I didn't get it all cut off!"

The Crown of Maine

Friday, June 15th, 2012 through Tuesday, June 19th, 2012

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 may close as early as APRIL, 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 especially **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. The cost may drop by up to \$20 as more people sign up.

Additional Costs:

Accommodation

Look to be spending between \$120 and \$200 for the four nights, for accommodations at at the most affordable motel: Russell's in Caribou. Russell's may fill up by mid-March, so it is imperative that you act NOW if you are cost-conscious. 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.

You may also contact Geoff LeBaron: programs@hampshirebirdclub.org; 413 268 9281.

Registration. Registration is open. Contact Mike Locher at fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org or 585 5864. Again, accommodation becomes problematic if you wait till March, so register as soon as possible!

Payments and Cancellations

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

BY-LAW CHANGE

The Board proposes an amendment to the club by-laws.

At present, the club has a number of membership categories, which do NOT include any specific outreach toward students. We would like to do all we can to attract younger folks to our ranks, and as part of this effort, we would like to offer a new membership category with a discounted rate for students.

Article 3.2 of the present By-Laws reads as follows:

“3.2 There are five membership classes:

- a) Individual - single person
- b) Family - two or more persons of the same household
- c) Supporting - an individual or family member making a contribution at or above a minimum level determined by the Board of Directors of the HBC.
- d) Complimentary - conferred annually by the Board to individuals who through their professional activities directly contribute to HBC.
- e) Honorary - lifetime membership conferred by the Board to recognize extraordinary contributions to the HBC or its stated purpose.”

The Board proposes that section 3.2 be amended to read as follows (deleted language ~~struck through~~, new language underlined).

3.2 There are ~~five~~ six membership classes:

- a) Student – a person who is currently a full-time student.
- b) Individual - single person.

etc.

The membership will be asked to vote on this amendment at the April meeting.

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

Where Does Our Recycling Go? MRF Tour: *Justine Fallon, Mass DEP*

Tuesday, March 6, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Free. Meet at Hitchcock Center to carpool.

The Health Of Our Massachusetts Forests: *Ken Gooch, Mass DCR*

Tuesday, March 6, 7-8:30 p.m. *Donation Requested.*

Native New England Orchids Slideshow: *Nancy Goodman*

Thursday, March 15, 7-8:30 p.m. Fee.

Nature Drawing For The Non-Artist: *Elizabeth Farnsworth*

Saturday, March 31, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Fee.

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.

ATHOL BIRD AND NATURE PROGRAMS

Butterflies Near and Far: *Sue Cloutier*

Wednesday, March 14, 7 p.m.

The Wolves of New England: *Michael LeBlanc*

Wednesday, April 11, 7 p.m.

Accompanying LeBlanc will be Denahee, a wolf he has raised since birth.

Note: This monthly meeting will be held at Liberty Hall at the Athol Town Hall (584 Main St.)

For more details, go to www.millersriver.net or call (978) 248 9491.

Unless otherwise noted, programs meet at the Millers River Environmental Center, 100 Main Street, Athol. If weather is questionable on a field trip day, please call the trip leader at least an hour before the scheduled meeting time.

Wildlife Sightings at the Conte Refuge (Moody Bridge Road)

Do you list your bird and other species when you go out on field trips? The staff at Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge would be grateful for documentation of your sightings on refuge lands and other nearby conservation lands of its **Fort River Division**. This division of the refuge is a patchwork of conserved lands including and centered around the **Bri-Mar Stables** property at **69 Moody Bridge Rd.** and is open to the public. It is comprised of hay fields, old field, riverine and forest habitat.

Sightings include Peregrine Falcon, American Kestrel and Bobolink. During the Christmas Bird Count Joshua Rose documented Hermit Thrush, Horned Larks, Belted Kingfisher and even late Eastern Meadowlarks. In May of 2010, Mary Alice Wilson saw, among a list of 47 species, Wilson's Warbler, Blue-winged Warbler, Cooper's Hawk and Orchard Oriole.

If you would like to contribute to our knowledge of the area, please send sightings to refuge biologist **Cynthia Boettner**, (cynthia_boettner@fws.gov). Eventually, an official system of reporting will be developed, but until then, please send a list that includes your name and contact information, the date of observation and notes about the location of the sightings. If you have questions or would like a map of the area, feel free to email a request or call 413-548-8002 ext. 115. Thank you!

Cynthia Boettner

Binoculars Wanted

Club member Zeke Jakub is doing research on bird conservation in urban central America (Panama City, Panama), along with Panamanian high school and college students. Together, they are looking at the viability of urban areas as conservation zones for migratory and resident birds through species richness surveys and landscape/patch analyses. Zeke and *Conservación de Aves Tropicales* (Panamá) are looking for 4-6 pairs of binoculars (in working condition) for the observers to use. If you can help, please contact Zeke care of *Conservación de Aves Tropicales* (Panamá)

U.S. Ph: (413)773-7906

Panama Cell Ph: (507) 6718-9397

Panama Home Ph: (671) 89397

ezekieljakub@gmail.com or ejakub@antioch.edu

HBC ON FACEBOOK!!

HBC online news



Find the
HBC on
Facebook

HBC is, above all else, a community of people. As such, the most essential element of our organization is that we INTERACT. Now, thanks to the efforts of Zeke Jakub, Josh Rose, and others, we have an exciting new way to do it!

Did you ever want to:

- Show off a beautiful picture you took at your feeder?
- Ask an ID question to a friendly *local* audience? or
- Check with others in the club on what optics to buy when the aging Bausch and Lomb finally give out?

All these and more are now much easier to do because

HBC has a Facebook page!

It features:

- the “**Wall.**” Post messages, pictures, video, Internet links and RESPOND to the postings of others. Currently there is a great video Merry Cushing posted of a Hooded Crow being zany, and Janice’s now-famous Ruffed Grouse shot. A great spot to air that tough ID question.
- “**Notes.**” Announcements for the club and other local groups. Already includes Don Kroodsma trolling for bird-song snitches.
- “**Photos.**” Post your own and share those of others, includes monthly bird ID quizzes. HBC membership forms are posted here which gives us an easy way to ~~ensure~~ recruit new members for the club.
- “**Events.**” Programs and field trips for HBC and other local outfits.
- “**Discussions.**” A place to start and take part in conversations on a whole range of things birdy. Currently some great optics links courtesy of Eagle Optics.

The Facebook page will not replace either the newsletter or the Website. It will simply add a new dimension to communication within our club.

So how do I get this Facebook thing? (We hear you cry).

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

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

Oh, and don’t forget, Facebook is PUBLIC. Please do not post member addresses or anything else which would compromise the privacy of others.

Thanks to Zeke Jakub and Dave Gross for help with this announcement.

Helping Out at WFCR

Dave Gross (organizer and *Keeper of the Numbers*, oooohhh.....), **Ann Brooks**, **Sue Emerson**, **Sally Hills**, **Marcia Merithew**, **Elizabeth McAnulty**, **David Peake-Jones** and **Sandy Woodrow** represented HBC, answering phones at the WFCR/WNNZ fund drive on Saturday, March 3. As always, there were thrills and spills, wonderful baked goods, adequate coffee, lots of fun and fellowship in a good cause. We do this annually, so look for Dave’s plaintive appeals again next year!

That’s it for this month.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor

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newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org