



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.
Amherst, Massachusetts
www.hampshirebirdclub.org
Volume 34, No. 9
May, 2018.

In this edition,

- The **next program** and a reminder about the **last program** of the year,
- A couple of **trip reports**,
- The voluminous list of **coming trips**,
- The agenda for this year's **Annual General Meeting**, including the **slate of Board nominees** from the Nominating Committee and a trio of **bylaw amendments**,
- A **thank you** from Sue Emerson, and
- **Hitchcock** and **Arcadia** programs and a reminder about **Birdathon 2018**.

I hope you find some of it useful!

NEXT PROGRAM

Monday, May 14 at 7:15 p.m.

Sam Fried presents Birding Cuba

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Just 90 miles from Key West, Cuba has been a “lost world” to American travelers for almost 60 years. Despite its political isolation from the USA, Cuba is still a large Caribbean island with a highly diverse bird population including numerous endemic species. This program chronicles my 10-day visit to the island, in search of birds and a sense of what Cuba is really like today.

Sam Fried is the founder of *Flights of Fancy Adventures, LLC*, a birding, photography and natural history travel company offering small group, low cost, high quality birding trips. Sam 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* and various golf magazines. He wrote several chapters of the *Insight Guides* book on birding in North America, published by *The Discovery Channel*. Sam has made approximately 500 photo presentations to a wide variety of organizations, including several to Hampshire Bird Club! He is a regular speaker and field trip leader at the Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival and a past president of Hartford Audubon Society.

Sam just happens to mention that his North American life list includes 763 birds seen and 747 photographed!!

COMING PROGRAMS

June 11, 2018. Lois & Alan Richardson. Adventures in Papua-New Guinea.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Valley Waterfowl. Saturday, March 17.

Mike Locher and some other anatophiles took a spin through the valley on a mild and pleasant day.

Hadley Cove was crowded with Mallards, Canada Geese and Black Ducks with only one **Green-winged Teal** to provide some variety. The northern reaches of Great Pond in Hatfield gave up 10 Wood Duck, one (1) **Gadwall**, nineteen (19) Green-winged Teal, three (3) Ring-necked Duck, 16 Hooded Mergansers and 21 Common Mergansers.

At the Hatfield marsh we found one Bald Eagle sitting on the nest, and some happy Eastern Bluebirds told (optimistically, it turned out) of the impending spring. Leader Mike made, it turns out, an inspired detour through the Montague Sandplains, where we found the pair of reported **Red Crossbills** working energetically on a new nest right above the road. It was great to meet a pair of decidedly young and decidedly avid photographers there, and the Hitchcock birding class showed up to join the party as well.

At the Road and Gun Club in Turners Falls, we added a pair of **American Widgeon**, several **Northern Pintail** and a Bufflehead to the days tally. Barton's Cove hosted 19 Common Goldeneye, a continuing **female Redhead**, which eventually showed itself, more Ring-necked Ducks, four (4) **Greater Scaup** and several Bald Eagles. The Power Canal in the middle of the day was a goose farm, but we did spy one (1) Sharp-shinned Hawk searching for the unsuspecting tweety birds of late winter. Finally, after a long jaunt through the river-adjacent farmlands on the western side of the Connecticut, we stopped off at Bridge Street in Hatfield where there were a few additional Wood Ducks and Hooded Mergansers but not the Rusty Blackbirds for which we had hoped.

A good day in our very own valley, with just enough novelty to keep us engaged throughout.

David Peake-Jones

Ashley Reservoir. Sunday, April 8 with Mike Locher

This year's version of the Ashley Reservoir trip ran on April 8, which seemed early this year, given the unrelenting cold we were experiencing. Checking eBird before the trip, ducks were scarce, hawks were scarcer, and warblers were almost unmentioned.

On the morning of the big event, our small group set out in the chilly breeze with high hopes and cold noses. On the way down to the reservoir we found a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. We had our first real action crossing between the Ashley Pond and Wright Pond, looking at the stand of pines that catches the morning sun. Tree Swallows were perched on the distant fence line, occasionally getting flushed, then returning to their perches. In the pines we spotted a mixed group of **Palm Warblers**, **Pine Warblers**, **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, and Yellow-rumped Warblers actively feeding. Several of them gave us great looks, although the breeze made it difficult to keep the binoculars from shaking and the eyes from tearing. So we headed onward. Soon thereafter we had **Brown Creepers** singing, but the back side of the reservoir was pretty quiet. We found a patch of hepatica preparing to bloom, but no water snakes on the rocks near the outflow. By then the sun was warming us a bit, and a few raptors were starting to take to the air. We crossed the railroad tracks and, after much toil and trouble, located a **Louisiana Waterthrush**, chipping and bobbing its tail about twenty feet above the stream.

On the way out, we found Ring-necked Ducks in the back of Connor Reservoir, and picked out a few Northern Rough-winged Swallows among the Tree Swallows. All told, we tallied 45 species, which isn't too bad for a day in early April.

Mike Locher

COMING TRIPS

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 – suitable for people who can walk on level ground at a relaxed pace), Moderate (M – suitable for people who can walk over uneven ground at a relaxed pace), or Strenuous (S – suitable only for people who can walk over uneven or difficult terrain at a quick pace) to give a rough indication of the pace and/or terrain. Please check all information with the trip leaders.*

Tuesday, May 8. QDMB: Hadley Transfer Station. Morning. Mike Locher looks for migrants around one of the (perhaps justifiably) underappreciated parts of the Honey Pot. Meet at the turnaround just past the transfer station (end of North Branch Road, Hadley) at 6:00 a.m. (E/M)

***Tuesday, May 8. Fort River Refuge.** Morning. George Regmund, Ted Gilliland, and Laura Beltran look for warblers, vireos, grosbeaks, tanagers, flycatchers, and other spring migrants. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks and occasional benches for resting. Meet in the lower parking lot at the refuge (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley) at 7:30 a.m. (E/M)

Saturday, May 12. Mineral Hills Conservation Area. Half day. Marcia Merithew and Betsy Higgins lead birders through one of the less-known Northampton conservation areas. This has been a consistent place for Prairie Warbler over the past several years. For information, contact Marcia (413-896-9539 or mmerithew-at-comcast-dot-net). Meet at the JFK Middle School parking lot (100 Bridge Road, Florence) at 7 a.m. (E/M)

Sunday, May 13. Mt Auburn Cemetery, Watertown, MA. All day. David Peake-Jones heads to this legendary garden cemetery and migrant trap in Watertown, MA, which can play host to a dazzling array of warblers on a good day, and is a beautiful and sometimes moving place to bird. Depending on weather and interest we may make an optional stop along the way home. We will meet at the Northampton Bowling Alley at 5:45 AM to carpool. Contact David Peake-Jones (newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org) before the end of Friday, May 11 to register. (M)

***Tuesday, May 15. Fort River Refuge.** Morning. George Regmund, Henry Lappen, Stephen LaValley, and Devin Griffiths look for warblers, vireos, grosbeaks, tanagers, flycatchers, and other spring migrants. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks and occasional benches for resting. Meet in the lower parking lot at the refuge (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley) at 7:00 a.m. (E/M)

Wednesday, May 16. Montague Plains WMA: Whip-poor-wills. Evening. Al Richards searches the unique habitat around the Montague Plain for whip-poor-wills and other local specialties (like Towhees and Prairie Warblers). Contact Al (413-665-2761) to register and get meeting information. (E)

Saturday, May 19. Hilltown Ramble. All day. Bob Zimmermann (413-585-0405) and a co-leader to be named later visit migrant spots from Cummington 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)

Sunday, May 20. Montague Sandplains. Half day. Jeremy Coleman leads a daylight trip into this unique habitat. Expected birds will be Prairie, Black and White, Blue-winged, Chestnut-sided, and Pine Warblers, Redstart, Ovenbird, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush, Eastern Towhee, Brown Thrasher, Grasshopper and Field Sparrow, and many other breeding species, with the possibility for late migrants such as Mourning or Canada Warbler. And there's the possibility of Red Crossbills. For information, contact Jeremy (jcolemanarch-at-gmail-dot-com). (E/M)

Tuesday, May 22. QDMB: USFWS Northeast Regional Headquarters. Morning. Mike Locher looks for Willow Flycatchers, orioles, and warblers. Meet at the visitor's lot (300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley) at 6:00 a.m. (E)

***Tuesday, May 22. Fort River Refuge.** Morning. George Regmund, Stephen LaValley, and Devin Griffiths look for warblers, vireos, grosbeaks, tanagers, flycatchers, and other spring migrants. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks and occasional benches for resting. Meet in the lower parking lot at the refuge (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley) at 7:00 a.m. (E/M)

Thursday-Sunday, May 24-27. Monhegan Island. Overnight. Scott Surner leads the Hampshire Bird Club's 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 12 Hampshire Bird Club members. Price will depend upon the number of participants. Contact Scott (413-256-5438) for information, and Mike Locher (413-585-5864 or fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) to register or for questions about the cost of the trip. (E/M/S)

***Saturday, May 26. Knightville Dam.** Half day. Marcia Merithew and Betsy Higgins visit Knightville Dam, looking for spring migrants and local residents. Contact Marcia (413-896-9539 or mmerithew-at-comcast-dot-net) for details. Meet at 7 a.m. at the John F. Kennedy Middle School (100 Bridge Road; Florence, MA). (E/M)

Sunday, May 27. Mt Holyoke. RESCHEDULED to Sunday, June 3.

Tuesday, May 29. QDMB: Orchard Arboretum. Morning. Mike Locher looks for warblers around this hidden conservation area. Meet at Russett Lane in Amherst at 6:00 a.m. (M)

***Tuesday, May 29. Fort River Refuge.** Morning. Devin Griffiths, Henry Lappen, and Stephen LaValley look for warblers, vireos, grosbeaks, tanagers, flycatchers, and other spring migrants. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks and occasional benches for resting. Meet in the lower parking lot at the refuge (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley) at 7:30 a.m. (E/M)

Saturday, June 2. Westover Air Force Base. Half day. Mike Locher hosts 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. Contact Mike 413-585-5864 or fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) at least two weeks ahead of time to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E/M)

Sunday, June 3. Mt Holyoke. Half day. **RESCHEDULED from May 26.**

David Peake-Jones will lead birders on a hike up the park road to the top of this local peak hoping for some deep-woods breeding specialties including Worm-eating and Cerulean Warblers (both quite reliable in recent years). We will meet at the (gated) entrance to Skinner State Park (at the end of Old Mountain Road in Hadley) at 6:00 am. This is a steep hike on a paved road. Contact David Peake-Jones (newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org) before the end of Friday, May 25 to register. (M/S)

***Saturday, June 9. Fort River Refuge.** Morning. George Regmund, Laura Beltran, and Josh Rose look for warblers, vireos, grosbeaks, tanagers, flycatchers, and other spring migrants. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks and occasional benches for resting. Meet in the lower parking lot at the refuge (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley) at 7:00 a.m. (E/M)

Sunday, June 10. Mt Greylock. Full Day. David Peake-Jones will lead us up the state's tallest peak by car, stopping frequently to sample the changing avifauna as we gain altitude. The wind-dwarved spruce habitat at the top of the mountain still supports (dwindling) breeding populations of Blackpoll Warbler, Purple Finch, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and White-throated Sparrow, amongst other sky-island breeders. We will meet at the Northampton Stop and Shop (228 King Street) to carpool at 6:00 AM. Contact David Peake-Jones (newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org) before the end of Friday, June 8 to register. (M)

***Saturday, June 23. Fort River Refuge.** Morning. George Regmund, Laura Beltran, and Josh Rose look for warblers, vireos, grosbeaks, tanagers, flycatchers, and other spring migrants. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks and occasional benches for resting. Meet in the lower parking lot at the refuge (69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley) at 7:00 a.m. (E/M)

Check the website and newsletter for possible additions to the schedule, including Quabbin, Southwick WMA, and Milford Point, CT, among other possibilities.

Thank You

Sue Emerson was recently recognized by the club with a small gift for her years of service as the potluck coordinator for the annual Northampton Christmas Count. Here is her response.

"Dear Hampshire Bird Club members,

I cannot begin to thank all of you for the Saw-Whet Owl painting. It is an unexpected and very much appreciated gift. The success of the annual compilation pot-luck evening is due in no small part to the assistance and generosity of all of the members, and especially my "elves". Thank you."

Sue

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The **Annual General Meeting** of the **Hampshire Bird Club Incorporated** will be held on **Monday, May 14, 2018** 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 2018-2019, and to vote on three (3) proposed By-law amendments.

The **Nominating Committee** includes **Mike Locher, Scott Sumner and Marcia Merithew** and has nominated the following for election to the Board of Directors for 2017-2018:

President: Scott Sumner

Vice-President/Program Chair: Geoff LeBaron

Treasurer: Stephen Baker

Membership Secretary: Lissa Ganter

Communications Secretary: Jan Howard

Board Members at large:

Bruce Hart

Mike Locher

Carol Mardeusz

Jim Lafley

David Peake-Jones

Josh Rose

We are deeply grateful to two current Board members: **Sharon Dombeck** and **Jaap van Heerden**, who are stepping down at the end of this year.

Bylaw Amendments

Three bylaw amendments were presented at in the March and April meeting and have been described in detail in the March and April newsletters. A detailed handout will be available at the AGM for members to again review the details prior to the vote. Here is a basic outline of what each bylaw amendment means for the club.

Bylaw Amendment 1 would expand the stated purpose of the club to include the conservation of birds and bird habitats.

Bylaw Amendment 2 would require the Nominating Committee to actively consider diversity (in, for example, age, gender etc.) when nominating individuals to serve on the HBC Board of Directors.

Bylaw Amendment 3 would disallow nominations for the Board at the AGM but would establish a process for any qualified member to run against the Nominating Committee nominee for any position on the HBC board. This process would involve the nomination being made much earlier in the electoral process.

HITCHCOCK PROGRAMS

Wildflower Walk at Bear Swamp, Ashfield: *Nancy Goodman*
Saturday, May 12, 10 am-1 pm

Book Club: *Braiding Sweetgrass* : *Rae Griffiths and Casey Beebe*
Wednesday, May 23, 7-8:30 pm. Free. Please register

Morning Nature Walk for Seniors: *John Green*
Thursday, May 24, 9-11 am. Free. Please register

Season of Dreams: A Book Launch Reading and Slide Show: *Jonathon Wright*
Sunday, May 20, 4-6 pm. Free. Please register.

Edible Wild Plants Presentation : *John Root*
Tuesday, June 12, 7-8 pm. Fee.

An evening with Conservation Law Foundation (CLF): *Brad Campbell*
Thursday, May 31, 6-8 pm. Free. Please register.

Gathering Rain: 3-Season Rainwater Collection for Outdoor Use: *Kris Walter*
Saturday, June 9, 2-4 pm in Greenfield.

For details and registration for all Hitchcock programs, please contact the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 845 West St., Amherst MA 01002. Telephone (413) 256 6006, or on the web at www.hitchcockcenter.org.

ARCADIA PROGRAMS

Bird Camp for Ages 11-16
June 25-30, 9:00 am-3:00 pm

Bird Walks at Arcadia
Monday-Friday, May 7-11, 7-8:30 , meet at Arcadia

Bird Walk at Graves Farm: *John Green*
May 26, 7-10 am

For more details and/or to register for all Arcadia programs, go to www.massaudubon.org/arcadia

*You may also contact **Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary** direct at 127 Combs Rd., Easthampton MA 01027 or telephone (413) 584-3009.*

BIRD-A-THON 2018
MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON
CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY SANCTUARIES

Bird-a-thon Supports Arcadia's Climate Change Center

Climate change is the biggest environmental threat to both people and wildlife. Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary will be one of three statewide pilot Climate Action Center sites. As a Climate Action Center, Arcadia will expand our education for youth and provide a speakers series on climate change for adults. The center will also feature interpretation, and networking on the topic. There has never been a better time to support this effort as a booster or an individual contributor.

For more information or to give, please go to

www.massaudubon.org/Arcadia, then look for Bird-a-thon 2018.

Alternatively, you can simply write out a check to Mass Audubon with a memo "Arcadia Bird-a-thon 2017" and send it to "Jonah Keane, Arcadia Sanctuary, Mass Audubon, 127 Combs Road, Easthampton, MA 01027".

Bird-a-thon Birding, Saturday, May 12:

To reduce our carbon footprint, we are birding just the three CRV Sanctuary counties. Beginning birders are encouraged to join us. We will try to saturate Hampshire County, but we will also need data from Franklin and Hamden Counties. Please contact one of our Bird-a-thon team leaders if you would like to participate. It has always been a fun day of birding.

Birdathon team leaders (alphabetically): Phil Doyle, Chuck Horn, Janice Jorgenson, Jonah Keane, Anne Lombard, and Patti Steinman.

Chuck Horn

That's all for now.

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

David Peake-Jones, Editor
newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org