



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 35, No. 2

October 2018

When I started birding nearly four decades ago, it wasn't a thing most people did—at least, not most people we knew. And folks looked at you kind of oddly when you told them what you did for fun. “You watch birds?” they'd say, like it was the strangest thing they'd ever heard of. You could almost see the gears turning as they backed slowly away from you. Why, they thought, why on Earth would you *watch* birds?

Well, times have changed, and those of us who remained steadfast in our love for the birds have seen the nation wholeheartedly embrace our passion. There are now some 80 million birders in this country alone, and that number is growing. Every year, more and more people take up binoculars and dive headlong into the obsession. Birding has gone mainstream, and birds are celebrated. A welcome shift indeed.

But times have changed again. When I started birding, climate change was theoretical, habitat was plentiful, and half the species I saw weren't staring into the grinding maw of extinction. Birds today face some pretty grim prospects, and without direct intervention many of them may disappear. It's no longer enough to just be birders, to just sit back and watch. We have to take on the responsibility of conservation. We have to act.

The good news is that we're not at the end game yet. There is still time to save the birds we love. Across the country—and throughout the world—more people are waking up and getting serious about conservation. The chorus of voices in support of the birds is growing louder. Attitudes are changing, and with them, again, so are the times.

We're all here because of the birds, because everything being equal, we'd rather be out with them than anywhere else. For me—and for all of you as well, I'd wager—a world without birds is something too horrible to contemplate. Fortunately, each one of us can help hold this at bay, can prevent the horrible from becoming our reality. In the grand scheme of conservation there are parts for all of us to play, and myriad ways to play them—from donating time or money, to writing letters, to simply changing the way you buy coffee. The challenge is great, but the rewards of action are far greater. If we bring to bear the full measure of our passion, our courage, and our resolve, we just might change the world.

NEXT PROGRAM
Monday, October 15 at 7:15 p.m.
Mark LaBarr presents
What's Buzzing in Vermont:
Golden-winged Warblers in the Champlain Valley
 Immanuel Lutheran Church, 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst

This talk will focus on Audubon Vermont's work with Golden-winged Warblers, from our early surveys in the Champlain Valley to our geolocator work on both Golden-winged and Blue-winged warblers. Also discussed will be current conservation efforts to create and maintain Golden-winged Warbler habitat in the Valley.

Mark LaBarr is Conservation Biologist and Program Manager at Audubon Vermont, the state program of the National Audubon Society. He oversees conservation projects, project staff and volunteers including the Champlain Valley Bird Initiative and the Endangered Species Recovery Project. As a biologist Mark's focus is on the Common Tern Recovery Project as well as efforts to better understand breeding populations of Golden-winged Warblers and other shrubland obligates in the Champlain Valley. Mark is a Master bird bander and runs the bird banding station at the Green Mountain Audubon Center; he is also the Chair of the Scientific Advisory Group on Birds for the VT Endangered and Threatened Species Committee, and served on the Bird Technical Committee for the State's Wildlife Action Plan. He obtained his undergraduate degree in Wildlife Biology from the University of Vermont and a master's degree in Education from St. Michael's College.

COMING PROGRAMS

November 12, 2018. Peter Trull. The Symbiotic Relationship Between Humpback Whales and Marine Birds.

December 10, 2018. HBC Members' Meeting. Celebrate our 35th year with photos of the birds we've found both far and wide and right here at home.

January 14, 2019. Fred Baumgarten, Mount Holyoke College. Who's Buried in Audubon's Tomb? The Artist, the Musician, and the Birds of America.

February 11, 2019. Bruce Beehler. North on the Wing: Travels with the Songbird Migration of Spring.

Field Trips September 2018 – January 2019

Please contact leaders if a phone number or email is listed at least two days in advance of the trip (if possible) to register and if you have any questions. Activity level is indicated as E/easy, M/moderate, S/strenuous. It's always wise to bring snacks and dress appropriately. If you want to keep a list of birds seen during the field trips, Mass Audubon has checklists for each of their sanctuaries and these can also be used as trip lists (<https://massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/birds-birding/bird-checklists>). Finally, at all times, whether on a trip with or without a leader, please follow the American Birding Association guidelines dictating ethical birding behavior (<https://hampshirebirdclub.org/aba-code-of-ethics/>) and those on our website regarding field trips (<http://hampshirebirdclub.org/field-trips/guidelines/>). Thank you.
Carol Mardeusz, Field Trip Coordinator

October

Saturday, October 13, 7:30 a.m., Fort River Refuge. Morning. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks and, has occasional benches for resting. Meet George Regmund (413-255-0628) in the lower parking lot at the Refuge, 69 Moody Bridge Rd., Hadley to look for late fall migrants. (E/M)

Sunday, October 14, 7:00 a.m., Sparrows in Hadley and Environs. Morning. Join Scott Sumner (ssurner@aol.com) as he looks for sparrows in and around Hadley, Amherst, and Northampton. Meet at Stop & Shop (440 Russell St., Hadley). Registration required. (E)

Wednesday, October 17, 5:30 a.m., Plum Island and Newburyport. All day. Join Scott Sumner (ssurner@aol.com) during this midweek romp to one of our favorite birding areas to look for shorebirds, egrets, waterfowl and hawks. Meet at Stop & Shop (440 Russell St., Hadley). Registration required. (E/M)

Wednesday, October 24, 8:00 a.m., Fort River Refuge. Morning. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks, and has occasional benches for resting. Meet George Regmund (413-255-0628) in the lower parking lot at the Refuge, 69 Moody Bridge Rd., Hadley to look for late fall migrants. (E/M)

Sunday, October 28, 7:15 a.m., Turners Falls Halloween Birding Trip. All day. Join Josh Rose as he leads his annual trip to Satan's Kingdom, Hell's Kitchen, and other birding spots in the area of Northfield to Turners Falls in his annual trek through the northern Connecticut River Valley. Meet at the parking area for the Power Canal on Migratory Way in Tuners Falls. Please email Josh (jrose@hampshirebirdclub.org) to register. (E/M)

November

Saturday, November 3, 5:30 a.m., Dead Creek WMA and Lake Champlain Valley. All day. Join Mike Locher (413-585-5864 or mlocher@yahoo.com) as he tries once again to find a Ross' Goose among the hundreds of Snow Geese at their premier staging area in New England. After the geese, he'll look for raptors in the fields and ducks on Lake Champlain. Meet at Stop & Shop in NORTHAMPTON (228 King Street) at 5:25 a.m. for carpooling. (E/M)

Sunday, November 4, 6:20 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Berkshire Lakes. All day. DO NOT RUN. All day trip to look for ducks, loons, and donuts. Meet at Stop & Shop in NORTHAMPTON at 6:20 a.m. Leave at 6:30 a.m. sharp and returning about 4 p.m. Easy trip. Carpool if possible. Contact Tom Gagnon 413-584-6353. (E)

Saturday, November 10, 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Quabbin Reservoir. All day. Rain date November 11th. Moderate trip in search of ducks, loons, and Northern Finches. LIMITED participation. Please sign up early. Dress for cold weather. Meeting place to be determined. You MUST be a member of the Hampshire Bird Club. Call Craig Allen 413-467-3028. (M)

Saturday, November 10, 7:30 a.m., Fort River Refuge. Morning. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks and occasional benches for resting. Meet George Regmund (413-255-0628) in the lower parking lot at the Refuge, 69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley. (E/ M)

Wednesday, November 14, 7:30 a.m., Fort River Refuge. Morning. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks, and has occasional benches for resting. Meet George Regmund (413-255-0628) in the lower parking lot at the Refuge, 69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley. (E/M)

Saturday, November 17, CT shore. All day. Join Devin Griffiths as he searches the CT shore for ducks, shorebirds, and late fall migrants. A little luck might reveal Nelson's and Saltmarsh Sparrows, and maybe something rare. Contact Devin at 413-323-8417 or dcgwriter@gmail.com for meeting time/place. (E/M)

December

Saturday, December 8, 7:30 a.m., Fort River Refuge. Morning. The entire Fort River Trail is fully accessible, including boardwalks, and has occasional benches for resting. Meet George Regmund (413-255-0628) in the lower parking lot at the Refuge, 69 Moody Bridge Road, Hadley. (E/M)

Sunday, December 9, 7:00 a.m., Moran and Peru WMAs. Three-quarter day. Join Mike Locher as he visits the most boreal habitat in Western Massachusetts looking for Northern Shrikes and hoping for an early winter finch eruption. Get warmed up for the CBC! Dress for the weather and choose footwear wisely; snowshoes may be useful. Lunch options are scanty, so you may want to pack something to eat. Contact Mike (413-585-5864 or mlocher@yahoo.com) to register and for further information. Meet at the Stop & Shop in NORTHAMPTON (228 King Street). (M/S)

January

Sunday, January 13, 6:00 a.m. The Third Annual Cape Ann Winter Ramble. All day. Aidan Griffiths makes his triumphant return from the halls of higher learning to co-lead the HBC to birding greatness on the chilly shores of Cape Ann. Join he and Devin for a day of searching the coast for ducks, alcids, gulls, and the near-certain appearance of something odd, unusual, or downright rare. Bring snacks/lunch and dress for the weather (many layers). Contact Devin (413-323-8417) for meeting place or further information. **Note:** This trip is limited, so please get in touch ASAP if you're interested. (M)

CHRISTMAS COUNT

If you haven't already, mark your calendars now! The Northampton Christmas Bird Count is **Sunday, December 16, 2018**. It's a great day of birding followed by a wonderful feast among friends, with plenty of time to regale each other with the day's triumphs and share tales of the ones that got away. If you want to participate please contact cbc@hampshirebirdclub.org.

Call for Help – AV and Meeting Setup

Are you a birder and a techie? After many years of providing AV and practical operations for HBC meetings, the retirement of Jaap Van Heerden has left us in need of a Coordinator (or Co-Coordinators) to carry on this important function. Our speakers need good technical support, and we all enjoy arriving to a welcoming array of places to sit!

What's needed:

- Coordinator(s) with technology skills to oversee the setup of our excellent audio-visual equipment, and with the computer knowledge to assist speakers in hooking up to our system.
- A pool of non-technical volunteers who will come early to set up chairs and clean up after the meeting. The post-meeting pickup goes very quickly because our HBC membership is wonderfully helpful. Several current volunteers, including the refreshments committee, will continue to help but we need more people.

These operations begin shortly after 4:00 p.m. on meeting day, with everything ready to go by 5:30 (if the speaker is coming for dinner beforehand; if not, set up can begin later, ready to go by 6:30). With 3-4 people, setting up the chairs takes about ½ hour. Full details about the AV setup and the other practical operations are available. With enough volunteers in the pool, not everyone will need to respond at every meeting. If you're interested and able, please email the HBC Board at board@hampshirebirdclub.org. We hope to hear from you!

That's all for this month.

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

Devin C. Griffiths, Editor
323-8417
newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org