Throughout my life, birds have been a constant source of inspiration, wonder, and joy. They provide solace and comfort, and connect me to all that is beautiful and sublime. I’ve stood rapt on the shores of the Galápagos among the finches that inspired Darwin, and I’ve been moved to tears by the grace of a backyard sparrow. Through birding, I’ve created lifelong friendships with perfect strangers, and I’ve shared birds with the people closest to my heart. Birding to me is more than a hobby; it’s an abiding passion as necessary as food, water, shelter, and air.

If you’re reading this, you know what I mean. Some time ago—three days, three years, three decades—a bird lit a spark in you, and you’ve been captivated ever since. As with me, your life and the lives of the birds are intertwined, and a world without them is beyond contemplation. Sadly, the birds we love are in trouble. The world over, birds are in the fight of their lives. Many are teetering on the brink, and they need our help.

There is much we can do as individuals, but the roar of our voices is far louder when we raise them as one. Bird clubs like the HBC play a critical role in organizing and amplifying those voices, and focusing the power of their members on the goal of conserving the birds who share their lives with us. But a bird club is only as strong as the people who comprise it. If you haven’t yet renewed your HBC membership, please do so today; if this is your first time with us, we hope you’ll consider joining. It may seem like a small step, but great change is built on such steps. Never underestimate the power of a group of people united in common purpose. Together, we stopped the assault on Santa Ana. Together, we can create a better world for the birds we love, and ensure that they continue to delight us long into the future.

Please Renew Your Membership NOW (or join us for the first time).
- Your membership status is shown on the cover page. Check to see if you owe dues this year.
- Complete the Membership Form. This will involve deciding on your membership contribution for this year, any additional support you may want to provide for the Education Committee, and also keeping us updated with important information about your membership. Please note that even if you got the ONLINE newsletter last year we ask all members to make a choice of newsletter options on the membership form this year as well.
- Fill out the reverse side of the Membership Form, which includes the Field Trip Release Form and Rare Bird Alert sign up,
- Fill out the HBC Member Skills Survey,
- Write a check for the required funds (if any), and
- Mail the forms and check as shown on the Membership Form, or bring them to the first program.

Our first program for this year is on MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 (details p. 2)
The Fall Field Trip Schedule is enclosed, too!!
NEXT PROGRAM
Monday, September 17 at 7:15 p.m.
Mara Silver presents
Aerial Insectivores and Barn Swallows in New England
Immanuel Lutheran Church, 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst

Many species that belong to the group of birds known as aerial insectivores are showing alarming declines in the Northeast, including both Cliff and Barn Swallows. Both species commonly breed in agricultural settings—they use barns and other farm buildings for nesting, forage in open fields, and use mud for nest building. Reasons for population declines include habitat loss, large-scale agricultural practices, and competition from House Sparrows; more recently, pesticide use, climate change, and threats during migration and on wintering grounds have been implicated as well. However, in spite of large population declines, breeding success of both species can increase when habitat is improved at local nesting sites.

Mara Silver has been involved in swallow conservation projects for the past 25 years. She holds a Masters Degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, where she researched characteristics of riverbanks used by nesting Bank Swallows.

COMING PROGRAMS
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.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE: The Mission
The Education Committee is looking to develop school presentations, senior walks and programs, live bird interactions (captive and wild), visits to raptor centers, falconry demonstrations, boy & girl scout merit badge events, member workshops… in fact ANY activities that will bring the wonder of birds to new people. You can contribute with your donation (via the Membership Form) and by sharing your ideas with the committee. You can reach them at education@hampshirebirdclub.org.

That’s all for this month. Please send us your membership renewal NOW!
Until next month, talk softly and carry a big scope!

Devin C. Griffiths, Editor
323-8417
newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org
HAMPShIRE BIRD CLUB, INC. MEMBERSHIP FORM: 2018-2019

Please note that contact information may be shared with other members of the club, unless you request otherwise below.

Name(s):

Address:

City:

State:  ZIP:

Home phone:

Other phone (whose?):

E-mail(s) (Please print clearly in CAPS)

May we publish your contact information in the annual club membership list (sent to members)?☐ Yes  ☐ No

May we contact you via email with time-sensitive information such as cancellations, impromptu trips etc.?☐ Yes ☐ No

How would you like to get the HBC newsletter?
(For the “online” version, we need to have an email address for you).
☐ Download from the HBC Website (club will send reminders), OR
☐ Send me the newsletter via US mail

Please check any activities listed below in which you would like to participate:
☐ Occasionally provide refreshments
☐ Field Trip Committee
☐ Lead field trips
☐ Share info on birding locations
☐ Education Committee
☐ Other (describe)

Please choose a level of membership below. All membership contributions are tax deductible.

MEMBERSHIP - REGULAR: Tax deductible

Student @ $5.00

Individual @ $18.00

Family @ $30.00

MEMBERSHIP – SUPPORTING: Tax deductible

Downy Woodpecker @ $40.00

Northern Flicker @ $60.00

Red-bellied Woodpecker @ $100.00

Pileated Woodpecker @ $250.00 or more

OUTREACH ACTIVITY

Donation to Education Committee (Optional)

Please make checks payable to Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. and send (with this form) to:

Hampshire Bird Club, P.O. Box 716, Amherst, MA  01004-0716.

FIELD TRIP RELEASE FORM

Required if you will participate in field trips.

We need members to share responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others during field trips. The signed release will be filed with the club secretary. For family memberships, all participating members should sign.

Release Of All Demands - Hold Harmless

I hereby acknowledge that as a participant in field trips with the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. (HBC), I may be exposed to significant risks. These may include, but are not limited to, vehicular travel over land and water, foot travel over difficult terrain, and hazardous weather conditions. I may also encounter poisonous plants, dangerous wildlife, and/or disease-carrying insects. In the event of injury, I understand that I may face considerable delays in reaching professional medical help.

I/we fully accept these risks and agree to hold the Hampshire Bird Club, Inc., its officers, directors, volunteers, employees, and agents free from any and all liability for injuries and/or loss which I/we may incur, directly or indirectly, while on field trips run by HBC within one (1) year of the date below.

EXECUTED freely and voluntarily this day:…………., ……………., …………….
(month) (day) (year)

All participating family members, please sign and print name:

1)……………………………………………………print name►………………………………………….
2)……………………………………………………print name►………………………………………….
3)……………………………………………………print name►………………………………………….

RARE BIRD ALERT FORM: Optional

The Rare Bird Alert is an optional email-only alert system that informs you when and where rare birds are sighted in the valley, or, in some cases, the broader region.

To join via this form
Complete the form and return it with your membership form or turn it in at the Sept./Oct. meetings.
To join online:
Provide name/s and email address/es to membership@hampshirebirdclub.org

You may provide as many email addresses as you like (within reason, please). Participants will need to provide us with at least one (1) active email address to automatically receive all RBA announcements. Please email membership@hampshirebirdclub.org if your email changes.

I would like to receive RBA alerts □. email address/es (1) ________________________________
(2)______________________________