



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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Chipping and Fox Sparrows are returning; Tree Sparrow, Junco, and White-throated Sparrow numbers have dwindled. The large, heavy bodies of Turkey Vultures increasingly dot the sky, along with their more delicate Black Vulture cousins. Pine and Palm Warblers—the vanguard of the Great Feathered Invasion—have made their first appearances, while waterfowl are giving the season’s final hurrah. And Grackles and Blackbirds are everywhere. It’s official: spring is here—and it’s all I can do to stop myself from donning my best Colonial garb, jumping on a horse, and racing through the Valley screaming “The migrants are coming! The migrants are coming.”

So in light of that, consider yourselves warned. They’re on their way, and they could show up anywhere. Like those renowned Minutemen of Bay State history, we must be prepared to greet the invasion on a moment’s notice, ready with all manner of guidebooks and gear and optical gadgetry. We may not all survive, my brothers and sisters, but we will bird nobly and with honor, and those who are able will carry the fallen away on a stack of Sibley guides, listening to them as they feebly protest: “Just one more warbler.”

When the call comes, will you answer?

NEXT PROGRAM **Monday, April 8 at 7:15 p.m.** **Sam Fried presents** **Birding Honduras**

Immanuel Lutheran Church, 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst

At the crossroads of the Americas, Honduras offers an amazing array of habitats, including Caribbean coastline, mangrove swamps, lowland dry forests, and mountainous cloud forest. As a result, the variety of bird species is astonishing. On this tour, we visit the mountains of western Honduras near the capital city of Tegucigalpa, the ancient Maya city of Copan, the central Blue Mountains, and world famous Pico Bonito Lodge along the Caribbean in the east. The birding is extraordinary and the scenery is no less spectacular.

Sam Fried is a photographer, writer, and birding tour guide with 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, as well as various golf magazines. Sam wrote several chapters of the Insight Guides book on birding in North America, published by The Discovery Channel; has given approximately 500 photo presentations to a wide variety of organizations; is a regular speaker and field trip leader at The Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival; and is founder of Flights of Fancy Adventures, LLC, a birding, photography, and natural history travel company offering small group, low cost, high quality birding trips. He’s also a past President of Hartford Audubon Society. When not involved in all things birds, he’s been known to eat and sleep. Occasionally. Please join us for what will be a wonderful journey!

COMING PROGRAMS

May 13, 2019. John Van de Graaff. Spirits of Spring: Warblers and More.

June 10, 2019. Tom Ricardi. Raptor Rehabilitation. Our local raptor rehab expert brings his knowledge, his experiences, and his raptors!

HBC 35th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

This year marks the 35th anniversary of the forming of the Hampshire Bird Club. To celebrate this milestone, the club will be hosting a catered buffet dinner at the Northampton Country Club for members and their guests. We will commemorate our club's history, honor our wonderful members and volunteers, and toast to the future of the club. There will be a small donation requested for each adult and half for children.

The celebration will take place on June 10th from 5-7 PM for ticketed attendees, and then the venue will be open to all for our final club meeting of the program year at 7:15—which features Raptor Rehabilitator Tom Ricardi, who will give a presentation with live birds of prey.

You will be contacted by email in the near future with more details about the event and to obtain tickets.

Stephen Baker, for the Board

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Hampshire Bird Club has been asked by MAS Arcadia to display photographs of birds taken by club members. The exhibit will be in the Arcadia Visitor Center for the month of May. If interested please submit an 8”x10” framed photograph by April 24, 2019. Photographs can be dropped off at Arcadia by that date. Also, Jim is willing to collect them at a meeting or make arrangements to get them from the member.

If you would like to submit a photograph, please contact Jim Lafley at jimlafley@gmail.com or 413-221-1941.

VALLEY FAMILY BIRD FESTIVAL

This year’s Festival takes place on Saturday, May 4 at MAS Arcadia Sanctuary in Easthampton from 9 AM to 2 PM. The Festival is co-sponsored by the Hampshire Bird Club. Tom Ricardi will be offering a program and there will also be bird walks, bird crafts, and activities. Contact Patti Steinman at 413-584-3009 or psteinman@massaudubon.org for more information or to volunteer.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Please contact leaders if a phone number or email is listed at least *two days* in advance of the trip 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

Illustrated Owls: A Who's Hoo from the Museums's Vault. Eric Carle Museum, Central Gallery, through April 21. Take an indoor field trip with or without your children and/or grandchildren to the Museum (125 West Bay Road, Amherst, MA) to view this delightful exhibit depicting some of our famous owl characters in children's books. You will find illustrations from Beatrix Potter and A.A. Milne among other favorites. Admission is \$9.00 for Adults and \$6.00 for Seniors or free with a pass from your local library.

Date TBD. Westover Air Force Base. Half Day. Mike Locher will coordinate and lead 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) by **May 1** to register and check on the date and time for meeting. (E/M)

DATE CHANGE: Saturday, April 6, 7:00 a.m., Half Day, Ashley Reservoir. Join Mike Locher as he looks for early migrants like Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Louisiana Waterthrushes. Meet in the Holyoke Elks parking lot (250 Whitney Ave.), near Exit 15 (Holyoke Mall) off Rt 91 at 7 a.m. Contact Mike (413-585-5864) for more information. (E/M with one optional S section)

Wednesday, April 10, 8:00-10:00 a.m., Fort River Refuge. Check out the centrally located Fort River Division of the Conte NWR in Hadley which can produce a wonderful variety of early spring migrant species, including American Kestrel, Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, and Rusty Blackbird—plus Fox and Chipping Sparrows, among others. The 1.2 mile 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. You may also contact Janice Jorgensen (413-585-0145) for details. (E/M)

Wednesday, April 24, 8:15 a.m., Mt. Tom State Reservation. Join Tom Gagnon as he looks for a few early migrants and does a hawk watch on Mt. Tom (125 Reservation Road, Holyoke, Ma.) Contact Tom (413-584-6353 or tombwhawk@aol.com). (M)

Saturday, April 27, 7:30-9:30 a.m., Fort River Refuge. Check out the centrally located Fort River Division of the Conte NWR in Hadley which can produce a wonderful variety of early Spring migrant species including American Kestrel, Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Rusty Blackbird, plus Fox and Chipping Sparrows, among others. The 1.2 mile 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. You may also contact Janice Jorgensen (413-585-0145) for details. (E/ M)

Sunday, April 28, 6:00 a.m., All Day, Coastal CT. Reprising last year's trip (but without his intrepid expert guide), Devin Griffiths will lead a trip to some of his favorite spots along the CT shore. Meeting place TBD. Contact Devin (413-323-8417 or dcgwriter@gmail.com) to register. (E/M)

Saturday, May 4, 6:30 a.m. Station Road Rail Trail. Devin Griffiths will walk the rail trail with a possible extension to Wentworth Farm in Amherst. Meet at the rail trail parking area on Station Road at 6:30 a.m. Contact Devin (413-323-8417) for more information. (M)

Sunday, May 5, 6:30 a.m. Quabbin Gate 5 and Lake Wallace. Devin Griffiths visits two Belchertown hotspots looking for spring migrants and anything else he can find. Meet at Gate 5 (end of Old Enfield Rd. in Belchertown) at 6:30 a.m. Contact Devin (413-323-8417) for more information. (M/S)

Sunday, May 12, 7:00 a.m., Half Day, Mineral Hills Conservation Area. Join Marcia Merithew and Betsy Higgins as they lead birders through one of the lesser-known Northampton conservation areas. This has been a consistent place for Prairie Warblers over the past several years. For information, contact Marcia (413-896-9539 or mmerithew@comcast.net). Meet at the JFK Middle School parking lot (100 Bridge Road, Florence, MA) at 7 a.m. (E/M)

Saturday, May 18, 7:30-9:30 a.m., Fort River Refuge. May is a great birding month at the centrally located Fort River Division of the Conte NWR in Hadley. A nice variety of Spring migrants and breeding species are possible including Northern Harrier, Black and Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Willow, Least and Great-crested Flycatchers, Eastern Kingbird, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos, Barn Swallow, Wood and Swainson's Thrush, Veery, Brown Thrasher, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, Eastern Meadowlark, Bobolink, Indigo Bunting and numerous warbler species. The 1.2 mile 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. You may also contact Janice Jorgensen (413-585-0145) for details. (E/ M)

Sunday, May 19, 6:00 a.m., Half Day, Mt. Holyoke. Join Mike Locher as he hikes up the park road to the top of this local peak hoping for some later Spring migrants and deep-woods breeding specialties including Worm-eating and Cerulean Warblers (both quite reliable in recent years). Meet at the (gated) entrance to Skinner State Park (at the end of Old Mountain Road in Hadley) at 6:00 a.m. This is an occasionally steep hike on a paved road. For more information contact Mike (413-585-5864). (M/S)

Wednesday, May 22, 8:30 a.m., Mt. Holyoke. Join Tom Gagnon on this "Old Timers Walk and Ride" at Mt. Holyoke. Car pool to the top of Mt. Holyoke and then walk DOWN the hill. Then car pool back up the mountain to get cars. Young people are welcome also! We will be looking for warblers and other migrants and will also look for a few wild flowers along the way. Meet at the gated entrance to Skinner State Park (at the end of Old Mountain Road in Hadley) at 8:30 a.m. Contact Tom at 413-584-6353 or tombwhawk@aol.com. (M)

Thursday-Sunday, May 23-26, Monhegan Island. Scott Sumner leads the Hampshire Bird Club's pilgrimage to Monhegan Island. This charming island and the variety of migrating birds can be astonishing. The weekend promises to be memorable and enjoyable. The trip is limited to Hampshire Bird Club members and is currently filled. However, if you would like to be put on a waiting list, contact Carol Mardeusz (camardeusz@yahoo.com). Contact Scott (413-256-5438) for further information.

Saturday, May 25, 6:30 a.m., All Day, Hilltown Rambles. Join Dave Gross and Bob Zimmermann as they ramble around the Berkshire hilltowns to look for those migrants that prefer higher elevations than the valley provides. We'll be on the lookout for American Bittern, Sandhill Cranes, Blackburnian Warblers, and Spotted Sandpipers along with anything else we can turn up. There will be a bit of hiking at the Moran Wildlife Area. Meet at the *Northampton Stop & Shop parking lot* at 6:30 a.m. Pack a lunch or pick one up at our stop at the Cummington Creamery. For information or to sign up contact Dave (djgross@gmail.com 413-687-8161) or Bob (zimmermann@biochem.umass.edu 413-626-3381). (E/M/S)

Sunday, May 26, 7:00 a.m., Half Day, Knightville Dam. Join Marcia Merithew and Betsy Higgins as they visit Knightville Dam looking for Spring migrants and local residents. Contact Marcia (413-896-9539 or mmerithew@comcast.net) for details. Meet at 7 a.m. at the John F. Kennedy Middle School (100 Bridge Road, Florence, MA). (E/M)

Wednesday, May 29, 7:30-9:30 0 a.m., Fort River Refuge. May is a great birding month at the centrally located Fort River Division of the Conte NWR in Hadley. A nice variety of Spring migrants and breeding species are possible including Northern Harrier, Black and Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Willow, Least, and Great-crested Flycatchers, Eastern Kingbird, Red-eyed and Warbling Vireos, Barn Swallow, Wood and Swainson's Thrushes, Veery, Brown Thrasher, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, Eastern Meadowlark, Bobolink, Indigo Bunting and numerous warbler species. The 1.2 mile 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. You may also contact Janice Jorgensen (413-585-0145) for details. (E/ M)

MASS AUDUBON WANTS YOU!

That's right, intrepid birder: You can be a force for good! The 2019 Mass Audubon Bird-a-thon runs from 6:00 PM on Friday, May 10 to 6:00 PM on Saturday, May 11. MAS Arcadia will be using the money raised this year for protection of natural habitats—from grasslands to wetlands to forests—at the various Connecticut River Valley Sanctuaries. The protection effort benefits the birds, supports great places to birdwatch, and helps address climate change. It's 24 hours of birding for a worthy cause.

You can volunteer to be part of this process, not only financially but also in the field. The Arcadia birding teams plan to find all the species they can in Hampshire County and retain first place in the statewide County contest. To learn more about Bird-a-thon or make a secure on-line donation, please visit the MAS website at <http://web.massaudubon.org/goto/ArcadiaBAT>. You can join a team or create your own team by contacting Jim Lafley at jimlafley@gmail.com or Patti Steinman at psteinman@massaudubon.org. I will be at the April Hampshire Bird Club meeting if you would like to learn more about the local event.

If you would like to donate by check instead of through the website, please write the check to Mass Audubon with a memo, "Arcadia Bird-a-thon 2019" and mail to:

Jonah Keane
Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary
127 Combs Road
Easthampton, MA 01027.

Thank you, Jim Lafley

HBC NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee nearly has a full slate of officers to present to the April meeting, thanks to several club members who have volunteered to join the board. We don't have a president yet—the president must be someone who has served on the board—but we're working on it.

If you think you may be interested in joining the board for a future year, please get in touch. It's a good way to get to know fellow club members, you'll have the opportunity to have dinner with monthly speakers—and, with eleven members, it's a pleasant job.

The slate so far is:

President: TBD

Vice President and Program Director: Josh Rose

Treasurer: Stephen Baker

Membership Secretary: Lissa Ganter

Communications Secretary: Elaine Reilly

Members-at-large: Carol Mardeusz, Devin Griffiths, Helen Symons, Sharon Dombeck, Bruce Hart, Janet Howard

See you in April,

Your nominating committee: Scott Sumner, Jan Ortiz, Jan Howard

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