



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.
Amherst, Massachusetts
www.hampshirebirdclub.org
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Dear reader, here we are in 2020. Given that this year is one of those years made up of nice, round numbers, I thought it might be fun to look back into the HBC newsletters past, so I chose January 2005, a full 15 years ago. Here are a few highlights.

Most of the January 2005 newsletter was devoted to the 2004 Northampton Christmas Count. It's no coincidence that this January's newsletter is also heavily devoted to the 2019 Northampton Christmas Count. Our program in January 2005 was by Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll who talked about the Blackstone River Corridor. Our field trip report talked about the Red-Headed Woodpecker that had been seen often that fall and winter in Leverett. The highlights from the Northampton Christmas Count were one or possibly two Greater White-Fronted Geese and a lone Green Heron. Sadly, that heron, which wasn't looking too well on count day, died the day after the count.

In a harbinger of a report that came out this year, the 2005 newsletter had an article about Manomet Observatory scientists reporting a long-term decline in the number of passerines observed there over a 30 year period. The HBC Conservation Committee was looking for new members and new ideas. The HBC President was Dennis McKenna and the Vice President/Program Chair was Geoff LeBaron. The one person who still holds the same position today as he did in 2005 is our club librarian, Henry Lappen. As with the January 2005 newsletter issue, Henry has an article about the library in this issue.

I suppose the moral to the story is that the more things change, the more they stay the same. In some cases, exactly the same. Hats off to Henry for his long and dedicated service to HBC!

NEXT PROGRAM

Monday, January 13 at 7:15 p.m.

Brian Rusnica tells us about

Mount Watatic Hawk-watching

Immanuel Lutheran Church, 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst

Raptor Migration provides birders with the opportunity to experience one of nature's most mysterious and thrilling spectacles. Massachusetts offers several sites to observe diurnal raptor migration during Fall, including the oft-overlooked Mount Watatic. This 1,800 foot peak on the Massachusetts/New Hampshire border rewards visitors with stunning landscape views and rustic charm. Each September, it can also provide a unique vantage point to watch thousands of Broad-winged Hawks on their long migration journey. Brian's talk will introduce Mount Watatic, the dozen species of regular migrant raptors seen there, as well as a handful of irregular ones. He will talk about what makes Watatic so underrated and will answer all your questions about hawk watching – how to count all these birds, where they're going, and how to make sure you don't count the same bird twice.

(continued next page)

Brian Rusnica lives in Cambridge, MA and is originally from Upstate New York. He is a volunteer hawk migration counter and co-coordinator for the Mount Watatic Fall Hawk Watch site and has also contributed as an observer at the Plum Island Spring Hawk Watch site. He has served on the Board of Directors for both Eastern Mass Hawk Watch and North East Hawk Watch since 2017. His hobbies that intersect with birds of prey include photography, graphic design and travel. In 2014, he documented a [state raptor photographic 'big year'](#), and in 2018 documented [breeding Cooper's Hawks](#). He serves as an administrator on the "Raptor ID" Facebook group (endorsed by HMANA and Hawkwatch International). His [raptor photography](#) has been featured in Cornell University's [Living Bird](#) magazine, [Urban Raptors](#) (2018, ed. Boal & Dykstra) and [The Cooper's Hawk](#) (2018, Rosenfeld). In 2019, he launched an [online shop](#) which features his raptor artwork. His freelance design collaborations include work with the Cape May Raptor Banding Project and the Owl Research Institute.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

February 10, 2020. Susannah Lerman. Let's talk about the birds and the bees: backyard habitats in suburban yards.

March 9, 2020. Joan Walsh. Topic to be announced.

April 13, 2020. Ashley Green. MAPS Banding Stations

May 11, 2020. Matt Kelly. Trinidad & Tobago

June 8, 2020. Chris Fisher. Topic to be announced.

NEWS FROM THE HBC LIBRARY

We have a few new books in the library. Check 'em out - *literally!*

- Peterson Field Guide to Birds of Northern Central America, and
- Flight Calls: Exploring Massachusetts through Birds.

Also, if you are traveling, the library might have a guide for that area. If not, I could get it for your trip. Let me know.

Henry, your trusty club librarian

HBC NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The HBC Bylaws require the HBC President to convene a nominating committee for the purpose of proposing to the membership at its annual meeting in May a slate of candidates for club offices and the at-large board. That committee is composed of three club members of whom one must be on the board and one must not be on the board. Please let the President (raz@umass.edu) or another member of the board (board@hampshirebirdclub.org) know by the February members' meeting (Monday, February 10) if you would like to be considered for membership on the nominating committee.

NEWS FROM THE HBC BOARD

At its December 18, 2019 meeting the HBC Board voted to regularize its meeting schedule. Starting with January 2, 2020, the board will meet on the first Thursday of each month from September through June at 6:00 pm at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment. All club members are welcome to attend these meetings, though only Board members may vote on motions made at the meeting. Contact a Board member for the upcoming meeting agenda which is usually available two days prior to meetings. Should a Board meeting be cancelled, every effort will be made to announce the cancellation on the HBC website and on the club's Facebook page.

RARE BIRD ALERT PROCEDURES

If you have been a member of the HBC for more than 15 years, you will recall that signing on for the club's Rare Bird Alert was more than agreeing to get emails from time to time. Back in the day we had a phone tree, and all participants were expected, when given an alert, to make one or two phone calls to fellow alertees when a rare bird was found in the area. We now have an email system in which gatekeepers pass along validated rare bird sightings.

If you signed up for alerts, you have received very few of them in the past year. That is because the gatekeepers have not been alerted to a sighting. If you think you have found or know of a rare bird in the area, you should report it to alert@hampshirebirdclub.org. Email sent there will go to our one current gatekeeper, Josh Rose, who in turn will evaluate the report and, if it appears to be valid and is indeed a rare bird for the area, will initiate the Rare Bird Alert for all club members who have signed up for alerts.

FIELD TRIP REPORT PROCEDURES

There have been only a few reports from HBC field trips in the newsletter of late. We would like to have reports from all trips. A trip leader or participant may write up a brief description of the trip, highlighting whatever they think is interesting. It might be useful to discuss who will write the description when all participants are together. The report for a trip should be sent to the field trip chair, Carol Mardeusz (fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org), or to the newsletter editor (newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org).

MEETING AV SETUP COMMITTEE

There have been multiple calls at meetings and in the newsletter for a volunteer to take over for Jaap Van Heerden who for many years set up and ran the audio and computer systems that we used for our meeting presentations. No one person stepped up, but rather a fluid, ad-hoc group has been hauling, assembling, trouble-shooting and disassembling the AV equipment for our meetings this year.

The Board, recognizing that AV setup is a big job for one person and noting that a group is already working together to get the job done, has formalized this AV-by-committee structure. The goal now is to assemble a group of 3-6 individuals who can help with the various aspects of the AV setup. There are three major parts to the job: 1) storing the equipment between meetings (including transportation to and from meetings), 2) assembling and disassembling the hardware before and after meetings, and 3) troubleshooting problems during the meeting. The first two jobs would entail being at Immanuel Lutheran Church for setup at 4:30 pm on the day of a meeting and being present at the end of the meeting, generally around 8:30 pm. The last job would entail being at the meeting from 7:15 pm to the end of the meeting.

In becoming a member of the AV setup committee you will help when you can, but you will not need to be at every meeting nor will you need to do work that you feel is beyond your physical capability or technical skill. If you are willing and able to help out with the AV setup from time to time, let Lissa Ganter (membership@hampshirebirdclub.org) or any other Board member know.

HBC NEW MEMBER ADVANTAGE PROGRAM

The HBC welcomes new members at any time of the year, but there is a special advantage to joining the club in the new calendar year: First-time membership after January 1, 2020 is valid until *September, 2021*. In other words, new members get a bonus of up to eight additional months for the cost of a single year. Let your non-member friends know about this!

Are you a new or recent member who might have questions about your membership or about participation in club activities? Please feel free to get in touch: Lissa Ganter membership@hampshirebirdclub.org.

NORTHAMPTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 2019

The HBC and several of its members were involved in various aspects of the Audubon Christmas Bird Count within the Northampton MANO count circle on Sunday, December 15, 2019. There are reports below on the count results, HBC-sponsored kids' counts at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment and the Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, and the potluck/compilation on the evening of the count.

Count Results

Participants in the 2019 MANO Christmas Count found 31,616 individual birds within 83 species. The 267 participants, including feeder watchers, covered nearly 1000 miles on foot or in cars within the 75 separate parties of observers, spending over 350 party hours of field observation. The full list of species seen is appended to this newsletter. The unusual sightings found during the count day and count week are listed in the table below.

Unusual/Uncommon Species for Count Day and Week					
Species	Number	Note	Species	Number	Note
Snow Goose		CW	American Pipit		CW
Turkey Vulture	2		Lapland Longspur	1	
Black Vulture	6	FTS	Red Crossbill	3	
Red-shouldered Hawk	1		Pine Siskin	2	
Rough-legged Hawk	1		Yellow-rumped Warbler	6	
American Woodcock	1		Orange-crowned Warbler	1	
Short-eared Owl		CW	Chipping Sparrow	4	
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1		Eastern Towhee	4	HC
Eastern Phoebe		CW	Eastern Meadowlark		CW
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	5		Baltimore Oriole		CW
Brown Thrasher	1				
Notes: CW – count week; FTS – first time found for MANO; HC – new MANO high count					

High Counts

Nearly every year a new high count for a species is achieved in the MANO Christmas Count. This year, there were seven new record breakers including one of the unusual species found. These new high counts are in the table below.

High Counts for MANO in 2019		
Species	High count this year	Previous high count
Black Vulture	6	0
Bald Eagle (adult)	15	14 (2017)
Red-bellied Woodpecker	247	246 (2014)
Northern Flicker	85	76 (1998)
Common Raven	42	33 (2018)
Orange-crowned Warbler	1	1 (1997)
Eastern Towhee	4	1 (1963)
The year in which the previous high count was found is in parentheses.		

(more MANO CBC news next page)

Kids' Count at Hitchcock

The second-ever Christmas Bird Count for Kids at the Hitchcock Center was a success! It took place on Sunday, December 15 from 1-3 pm at the Hitchcock Center. As people were arriving, some kids chose to do a bird craft we had laid out for them on the tables. When everyone was settled, we began with a short introduction from me, followed by Heidi Stemple explaining what the Christmas Bird Count is and reading her book *Counting Birds*. Families loved hearing how she goes owling every year, and that on this particular year, her Hatfield owling group had to rescue the Hadley owling group from the mud! After that, we gave families a choice: 1) stay here and learn a little more about bird ID with Katie and Jan Ortiz before heading outside, 2) head out to the feeders now with Carol Mardeusz and begin the count, or 3) head out onto the trails to count the paper birds we had hanging up. There were so many ages represented (baby to elders) that it was helpful to have a choice for those who had been sitting down too long. The weather outside was sunny, cold, and windy. We counted 11 species. There were 29 participants. There were 5 adults helping coordinate the event: Stephanie Sansoucy (Hitchcock volunteer) – craft; Heidi Stemple (HBC) – story & introduction; Jan Ortiz (HBC) – help with ID; Carol Mardeusz (HBC) – recording the count; and Katie Koerten (Hitchcock staff) – coordinating the event. Families loved it and I recognized at least one family from last year!

Katie Koerten

Kids' Count at Arcadia

On Sunday, December 15th, three of us welcomed families with small children to the first annual family Christmas Bird Count at Mass Audubon Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary in Easthampton. The little ones as well as their parents were delighted to observe closely such a colorful variety of active feeder birds plus squirrel and chipmunk through the viewing window. Several dads started lists with their kids which were augmented during a short bird walk around the parking area nearby. Tree sparrows and juncos were busy in the bushes outside and all were delighted when a Red-tailed Hawk swooped low overhead. Hot cocoa and several bird activities inside added to the experience and all left eager to return another day, another year.

Many thanks to Anne Lombard, Janet Bissell and Devorah Levy for their CBC time spent with these families.

2019 CBC Pot Luck

Thanks to the *dozens* of HBC members and friends who offered such willing and cheerful help to produce another successful CBC Pot Luck this year. We are grateful for the many who contributed the tasty array of foods and beverages; for those who helped to set up the room, including the Hitchcock Center staff, following the kids' own CBC program; for those who helped to re-set the room for the compilation; and for those who stayed to clean up and carry out the remains! It is great to be part of such a community.

Lissa Ganter

2020 MANO CBC

The date for the MANO CBC for 2020 has been set: Sunday, December 20. Mark your calendars and note the proximity to important holidays: last day of Chanukah (Dec. 18), Solstice Celebration (Dec. 21), Festivus (Dec. 23), Christmas Day (Dec. 25) and Kwanzaa (Dec. 26).

For more information about the MANO CBC including many downloadable historical records, go to the CBC page at the HBC website: <https://hampshirebirdclub.org/cbc/>.

WINTER-SPRING-SUMMER FIELD TRIPS

- Wednesday, January 15, 5:00 a.m., All Day, Cape Ann (weather permitting).** Join Scott Sumner for an all day trip to Cape Ann to look for various duck species, scaup, eiders, gulls, loons, and scoters. Please bring lunch and dress warmly. You must be an HBC member. Limit is 12 participants. Please email Scott (ssurner@aol.com) to sign up. (E/M)
- Wednesday, March 25, 5:00 a.m., All Day, Moose Bog, Vt.** Join Scott Sumner on this all day trip to look for boreal species such as the Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Canada Jay, and Boreal Chickadee. You must be an HBC member. Limit is 12 participants. Please email Scott (ssurner@aol.com) to sign up. (E/M)
- Sunday, April 12, 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)
- Saturday, April 25, 7:00 a.m., Half Day, Look Park.** Join Betsy Higgins for a half day trip to Look Park in Florence to look for Louisiana Waterthrushes and other Spring migrants. Meet at 7 a.m. in the JFK Middle School parking lot on 100 Bridge Road, Florence, Ma. We'll walk some paved paths and some wooded, uneven paths along the river and look and listen for anything with wings or fur or any other treats that Spring brings. Please contact Betsy at hignik@comcast.net or 413-586-7585 with any questions. (M)
- Sunday, May 3, 7:00 a.m., Half Day, Mitch's Way.** Join Mike Locher as he searches for vireos, warblers, flycatchers, local woodpeckers, and other Spring migrants. Meet at the Mitch's Marina parking area, near the gate. Contact Mike (413-585-5864) for more information. (E/M)
- Saturday, May 9, 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)
- Sunday, May 17, 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)
- Date TBA, 9:00 a.m., 2-3 Hours, Holyoke Dam and Fish Lift (Robert Barrett Fishway).** Join Harvey Allen to see what birds the Shad Run will bring in. Meet in the parking area at the end of the Fishway entrance road, 1 N Bridge St, Holyoke. From Amherst, take Rt 116 South and after you drive over the Connecticut River via the South Hadley Falls Bridge, take an immediate right into the fishway entrance. To use a navigation system for directions, type in Holyoke Fishway. Call Harvey (413-253-7963) for details.
- Saturday, May 23, 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 24, 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)
- Sunday-Wednesday, May 24-27, 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 15 Hampshire Bird Club members. Contact Carol Mardeusz (fieldtrip@hampshirebirdclub.org) **on or after January 11 to sign up and receive information about expenses.** Contact Scott (413-256-5438) for other information.

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary

Bald Eagles with Patti Steinman

Saturday, January 25, 10 am – 1 pm

[Register online](#) or call 413-584-3009 to register by phone.

It is now quite common to see bald eagles throughout the state. Once rare, these large raptors are a success story, thanks to a reintroduction project that began in the 1980s. Arcadia is proud to be home to one of the several dozen nesting pairs in our state. Come learn about these birds and their reintroduction and take a walk into the meadows to look for eagles.

Winter Nature Walk at Quabbin Reservoir with John Green

Sunday, January 26, 8 – 11 am

[Register online](#) or call 413-584-3009 to register by phone.

Winter is a great time to enjoy the outdoors and all that Quabbin Reservoir has to offer. We'll meet at the Quabbin Visitor Center, then take a walk in search of winter songbirds, bald eagles, animal tracks, and more. Dress to be outdoors.

Birding Plum Island and Surrounding Area with Patti Steinman and John Green

Friday, February 7, 7 am – 6 pm

[Register online](#) or call 413-584-3009 to register by phone.

Plum Island offers spectacular winter birding opportunities. Starting at the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, we'll look for waterfowl, songbirds, and raptors, hoping to see northern harriers and snowy owls. Depending on bird reports, we may visit other productive locations in the region.

Hitchcock Center for the Environment

Owl Prowls with Dan Ziomek

Friday, January 17, 7:30 – 10 pm

Saturday, February 1, 7:30 – 10 pm

[Register online](#)

Dress INCREDIBLY warmly because we'll be standing around in the dark a lot. Bring your sharp ears, a flashlight, and a thermos of something hot to drink. We will meet at the Hitchcock Center at 7:30 and then carpool to the site. *Weather makeup day will be Saturday February 8th if needed.*

Spring Birding Class with Scott Sumner

Evening classes at Hitchcock: Wednesdays, 6:30-8pm, February 12, April 1, April 15, June 10

Fieldtrips: see schedule at the Hitchcock Center website: <https://www.hitchcockcenter.org/programs/>

Registration opens online [HERE](#) January 15 at 9am. Follow the link to set-up a registration reminder!

Join this Hitchcock tradition! Scott has been leading classes since 1979. Space is limited and in high demand.

Dave Gross, Editor
newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org

December 15, 2019 MANO Christmas Bird Count Tally

Number		Species
3076		Canada Goose
5		Wood Duck
123		American Black Duck
1136		Mallard
2		Northern Pintail
22		Common Goldeneye
19		Hooded Merganser
79		Common Merganser
3		Ring-necked Pheasant
1		Ruffed Grouse
81		Wild Turkey
15		Great Blue Heron
4		Northern Harrier adult
5		Northern Harrier-imm
13		Sharp-shinned Hawk
37		Cooper's Hawk
15	HC	Bald Eagle adult
5		Bald Eagle immature
178		Red-tailed Hawk
147		Ring-billed Gull
4		Herring Gull
18		gull sp
344		Rock Pigeon
1124		Mourning Dove
24		Eastern Screech-Owl
14		Great Horned Owl
2		Barred Owl
13		Belted Kingfisher
247	HC	Red-bellied Woodpecker
10		Yell-bellied Sapsucker
360		Downy Woodpecker
96		Hairy Woodpecker
85	HC	Northern Flicker
18		Pileated Woodpecker
3		American Kestrel
3		Merlin
5		Peregrine Falcon
1278		Blue Jay
2606		American Crow
42	HC	Common Raven
437		Horned Lark
1064		Black-capped Chickadee
482		Tufted Titmouse
6		Red-breasted Nuthatch
386		White-breasted Nuthatch
42		Brown Creeper
4		Winter Wren
106		Carolina Wren
176		Golden-crowned Kinglet

Number		Species
368		Eastern Bluebird
3		Hermit Thrush
2154		American Robin
3		Grey Catbird
67		Northern Mockingbird
7345		European Starling
565		Cedar Waxwing
45		Snow Bunting
203		American Tree Sparrow
5		Field Sparrow
1		Fox Sparrow
1791		Dark-eyed Junco
5		White-crowned Sparrow
908		White-throated Sparrow
5		Savannah Sparrow
363		Song Sparrow
4		Swamp Sparrow
535		Northern Cardinal
201		Red-winged Blackbird
CW		Rusty Blackbird
4		Common Grackle
10		Brown-headed Cowbird
588		House Finch
3		Purple Finch
1146		American Goldfinch
1290		House Sparrow

Unusual and Uncommon Species for Count

CW		Snow Goose
2		Turkey Vulture
6	FCS	Black Vulture
1		Red-shouldered Hawk
1		Rough Legged Hawk
1		American Woodcock
CW		Short-eared Owl
1		Northern Saw-whet Owl
CW		Eastern Phoebe
5		Ruby-crowned Kinglet
1		Brown Thrasher
CW		American Pipit
1		Lapland Longspur
3		Red Crossbill
2		Pine Siskin
6		Yellow-rumped Warbler
1		Orange-crowned Warbler
4		Chipping Sparrow
4	HC	Eastern Towhee
CW		Eastern Meadowlark
CW		Baltimore Oriole

Number	Mammals and Critters
16	Eastern Cottontail
9	Coyote
27	White-tailed Deer
17	Red Squirrel
389	Gray Squirrel (Gray morph)
4	Opossum
6	Chipmunk
9	Gray Squirrel (Black Morph)
3	Beaver
1	Raccoon
1	Muskrat
4	Red Fox
1	Bobcat
10	Vole, Meadow, Mouse
1	Striped Skunk
2	Woolly Bear

MANO SUMMARY

<i>Birds</i>	
83	Species not including CW birds
31616	Total Birds
<i>Observers</i>	
183	Observers in the field
86	Observers at feeders
22	Owlers
267	Total participants
<i>Daytime</i>	
75	Parties
234.36	Hours on Foot
120.85	Hours by car
355.21	Total Party Hours
209.63	Total Miles on Foot
763.98	Total Miles by Car
973.61	Total Party Miles by Foot & by Car
<i>Feeders</i>	
79	Feeder Hours
86	Feeder watchers
<i>Owling</i>	
10	Owling parties
29.75	Owling Hours
111.1	Owling Miles
Midnight	Starting Time
6:30 p.m.	Ending Time

Next MANO CBC Sunday, December 20, 2020

CW - species recorded during Count Week HC - Highest Count ever FCS - First Count Ever