



# Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.

## Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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**November 2020**

Dear reader, snow is falling as I write this. Tomorrow is Halloween. Three days after that is election day. Somehow those two seem to have clear parallels, with scary people and the color orange linked to both. As we enter the winter season, I wish that you be safe and healthy. And remember to wear your mask!

That's all I have this time. As usual, what is below is the product of our great team of birders who have programs and activities planned for us. Enjoy. Talk to you next month.

### **NEXT PROGRAM**

**Monday, November 9 at 7:15 pm via Zoom**

**Anna Lello-Smith** tells us about

#### **Greener pastures: How valuable are restored cattle pastures in Guatemala for tropical resident birds?**

Forest restoration has become an essential part of global biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation strategies, particularly in the tropics. For example, the World Resource Institute's 20x20 Initiative has been supporting country-led efforts across Latin America to bring 20 million hectares of land into restoration by 2020. International enthusiasm for restoration is driven in part by research that suggests that secondary forests can complement remaining mature forest as valuable habitat for many species. However, we still have a long way to go toward understanding which species are likely to benefit from restoration programs, and how exactly species are able to use regenerating agricultural landscapes. Which bird species use restored agricultural lands and which avoid them? How much time does it take for regenerating agricultural lands to be able to support forest-dependent species or species of conservation concern? And, increasingly importantly these days, how do tropical forest fires impact the habitat value of regenerating forests for birds? My talk will explore these questions across a landscape of naturally regenerating cattle pastures in the Maya Biosphere Reserve of Guatemala. Get ready for lots of pictures of beautiful tropical birds!

Anna Lello-Smith is a PhD Candidate with Dr. Amanda Rodewald in the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment and at the Lab of Ornithology at Cornell University. Although one of her favorite activities nowadays is hiking around the Guatemalan rainforest identifying birds by sound, she didn't start studying or watching birds until college, when she landed her first avian field tech job with Saltmarsh Sparrows in coastal Maine. From there she was hooked and spent the next four years traveling around the U.S. and the world doing seasonal fieldwork. From the cool mountains of western Virginia to the Manu Road in Peru, she had the privilege of working on projects that inspired her to care deeply about land use change and its effect on bird communities. At Cornell she studies how regenerating cattle pastures in Guatemala can support forest birds, and how fire and rainfall seasonality affect the value of these habitats for birds.

Zoom connection information and password for the meeting will be emailed to all HBC members shortly before the meeting. If you lose the email or do not get it by the meeting time, send a note to [programs@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:programs@hampshirebirdclub.org) for the information.

## DECEMBER MEMBERS' MEETING

**Send us your photos!** Our December meeting is the time when members are welcome to share approximately 10 slides during the meeting. Because we are not meeting in person, we need to coordinate the slides into one PowerPoint program prior to the meeting. Therefore, if you would like to share slides for this meeting, please send them as an attachment to Laura Beltran at [lauraandnature@gmail.com](mailto:lauraandnature@gmail.com) by **November 30** since Laura will need time to organize and coordinate the slides prior to the December 14 meeting. Thank you.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Our thanks to the many members who have renewed to date, and the number of you who have made additional contributions to the Education Activity fund. We are also glad to welcome these new members who joined HBC over the summer and early fall: Elizabeth Adzima, Belchertown; Patricia Brennan, Amherst; Cory Elowe, Hadley; Susan and Chris Hall, Wilbraham; Harlee Strauss, Northampton; Priscilla and Peter Morrill, Canaan NY; Howard Natenshon, Greenfield; Dan Russell, Easthampton; and Anna Kohlberg, Amherst.

We also thank the members of HBC's Education Committee for organizing virtual opportunities to help keep us all connected in the absence of field trips right now.

If you have not yet renewed your HBC membership, we hope this is just an oversight that you will soon correct. HBC is a *community* of birders that you help to complete. At our secure site, you can find links to download the form for mail-in, or you can proceed to renew and pay online. If you have questions, please contact me at [membership@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:membership@hampshirebirdclub.org). Thanks, Lissa.

The Member Directory for this year will be published in early December. It will include the names of all current members who agree to share their contact information with other members. The Directory is published and mailed only in hard copy, and is not shared outside HBC.

## MANO CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Circle 'round the Northampton (MANO) Christmas Bird Count...we need you! Want to know where we count? Check out [MANO CBC count circle](#).

Brainstorming continues for the December 20<sup>th</sup> event. We've been reaching out to leaders and participants alike to get everyone's ideas on how to cover our 36 territories. A few leaders are adopting new and different ways to cover their areas, and some of the areas are using multiple small parties. We will see more people walk their respective neighborhoods, and/or nearby roads and rail trails. And keep an eye on your feeders! What's *your* top feeder bird? Please let us know if you can help count your feeder birds on December 20<sup>th</sup>. And stay tuned for announcements about workshops for feeder-watchers and new count participants!

Check the HBC website <https://hampshirebirdclub.org/cbc> and [HBC's Facebook](#) page for updates, and please feel free to contact us with questions: [CBC@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:CBC@hampshirebirdclub.org). If anyone is able to help with the CBC web page, please let us know that, too.

Made it to the shore  
Plovers forget that we're here  
We sit in puddles

Haiku by Julie Blue

Rowing through the sky  
The crows sail quietly by  
On their way to roost

Haiku by Jim Lafley

## NEWS FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee sponsored 3 virtual workshops in October, and they were all well attended. The Sparrow workshop by Scott Sumner was so popular that 31 members signed up and he was willing to offer it twice. As usual, he did an excellent job and many of us benefitted from his knowledge of recent experiences in the field. Laura Beltran had so much interest in the iNaturalist app last time she scheduled a second class. She took us through the various features of the app and help us understand them. She was unsure of a couple of items, so she researched them and got back to the participants after the class. She is a very thorough instructor! Dan Ziomek of Wanczyk Nursery offered a popular presentation on Bird Feeders and Food to 14 Club members. Dan showed and explained some new innovations in feeders along with some of the standards while including recommendations for cleaning. He covered many useful bird feeds and others that are wasteful for birds and those purchasing them. He shared some interesting feeding techniques and answered many questions for the audience.

Other ideas for future classes are Bird House design and placement (George Regmund); Winter Irruptions; CBC history and uses (Geoff LeBaron); Bird ID; Young Birders Club; Owls; Bird Brains; Bird Breeding; Dragonflies (Dave Small); Safe Places to Bird; Female Bird Song (Amy Strauss)

The Education Committee is offering 3 more virtual workshops in November:

- Tuesday, November 10 7:00 – 8:00 pm Feathers Robert Mesta  
In 2010, Robert collaborated with the USFWS to establish a feather repository to provide Native Americans with a cost-free source of non-eagle feathers for religious and ceremonial purposes. He will share this project with participants through a slide presentation and entertain questions about his effort.
- Tuesday, November 17 7:00 – 8:00 pm Kestrels Sebastian Moreno  
Sebastian was fortunate in obtaining permission to house and raise an American Kestrel. He will share his experience and discuss these amazing birds.
- Tuesday, November 24 7:00 – 8:00 pm Local Places to Bird Various HBC Members  
Hampshire Bird Club members will share birding spots with participants. Some of these places were featured in the Club's book, Bird Finding Guide to Massachusetts, while others have been discovered since its publication.

If you are interested in attending, please email: [virtualbirding@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:virtualbirding@hampshirebirdclub.org) ]

Phyllis Katz is exploring the possibility of connecting with birders interested in poetry and possibly starting a poetry group among Hampshire Bird Club members. Two poems she suggested HBC members read are “The Darkling Thrush” by Thomas Hardy and “Cardinal Song” by Phyllis Katz. Both poems share the joy and hope found in bird song during dreary or depressing times. She was thinking a poetry writing group could use that theme to work on poems together. If you are interested please contact us through [virtualbirding@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:virtualbirding@hampshirebirdclub.org).

If you are interested in helping the Education Committee implement any of the above ideas or if you have ideas or topics you would like the Committee to consider please either share them or join the Committee by contacting Jim Lafley at [jimlafley@gmail.com](mailto:jimlafley@gmail.com) or [education@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:education@hampshirebirdclub.org). You can also join by indicating your interest on the HBC membership application.

## SIMPLE GUIDELINES FOR BIRDING

- ✓ Subtle colored clothing is less likely to alert or scare birds. (Exception: During hunting season and wear an orange vest or hat.)
- ✓ Sudden movements and pointing scare birds.
- ✓ Remain quiet as birds are alert to noises.
- ✓ Scan those clumps in trees and shrubs, not all are leaves or nests.

## A CHAT WITH DAVID SPECTOR

This is part 2 of the chat I had with David Spector back in August. In part 1 we heard about his introduction to bird watching and his involvement with the Hitchcock Center and the Hampshire Bird Club. You can find part 1 in the October 2020 issue of the newsletter.

**Newsletter:** *I've seen several of your presentations and it seems to me that fairly often you talk about literature and birds together in some fashion. What got you started down that path?*

**David Spector:** I've always been interested, as long as I can remember, in biology, and I have always enjoyed reading literature. This specific connection actually happened in a general education class when I returned to college to finish my undergraduate degree. I took a course in Victorian novels, and the very first novel we read was *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë. It opens with the title character sitting and reading Thomas Bewick's *A History of British Birds*. As I read that novel I realized how much the author Charlotte Brontë incorporated birds into her writing. I did a paper for that course on birds in Victorian novels, and that really triggered what eventually became a major intellectual focus as I paid more and more attention to this issue of how birds are used by authors in their writing. That expanded to an interest in the influence that biologists have in the flow of the understanding of nature to the general public through popular writing.

Scientific information flowing through magazines like *Natural History*, nature centers, field guides, etc., gets to, among other people, novelists, poets, and short story writers. These authors may incorporate some of that natural world information into their work. That flow of information from science into the general culture is something that interests me.

**N:** *Do you have a bucket list for things having to do with bird watching?*

**DS:** I expect to do more bird watching, but what direction that will take I'm not sure. I'm much less of a lister than I was at one time, say 20-30 years ago. I am interested in possibly seeing some new places, seeing some new birds. It may be some months or a couple of years before travel really becomes practical again. Now I'm much more inclined to combine a little bit of bird watching with whale watching. Looking at

architecture and visiting art museums as I travel have renewed interests from an earlier part of my life. I do expect to travel, but exactly what form that will take and what birds I might be chasing where I don't really have a sense yet.

**N:** *Bird watching is a big thing for you, obviously, but I'm sure there are many other things that keep you amused. Want to tell me about something?*

**DS:** Reading literature. And, of course, I read more slowly than many people because I'm always taking notes on birds if I'm reading a novel.

**N:** *On that subject, what are you reading right now?*

**DS:** One of the authors I'm interested in is Ralph Ellison. His classic 20th century book *Invisible Man* incorporates a number of birds. That was the only novel he published during his lifetime, but he worked on drafts of a second novel for the rest of his life, including in his summer home in Plainfield, Massachusetts. After his death editors put together a collection of some of the drafts for the second novel, which is called *Three Days Before the Shooting*. It's a massive book, over 1000 pages, and I'm slowly working my way through that. It's very interesting to see the draft work of a master writer.

I have connections with some of the books that I've had since before I was a bird watcher. For example, a major influence on me and the 1950s and 1960s was Walt Kelly's *Pogo*. In recent years I have returned to some of the books I collected when I was much younger such as some *Pogo* books; I have been delighted to see that Deacon Mushrat was a bird watcher and that there are characters like Miz Limpin, which I wouldn't have noticed when I first read these books. Another book I grew up with, a massive book, is the *Century Dictionary* from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup>, beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It had been my grandfather's and then my father's book, and now it's mine. It is over 8000 pages long. And, again, I now see connections in it that I would not have seen as I was growing up. The

editor was William Dwight Whitney, who grew up in Northampton. He collected birds here in Western Massachusetts. Some of those birds are still in the collection at the Yale museum. His brother Josiah Dwight Whitney has Mount Whitney in California named for him and the scientific name of the Elf Owl is named for him

And as I looked in this *Century Dictionary*, I realized that the zoological entries were written by Elliot Coues, one of the greatest American

ornithologists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many of the zoölogical illustrations are by Ernest Thompson Seton, a very influential bird and general natural history illustrator and author. My book collection, which goes back from well before I was a bird watcher, sometimes allows me to make these connections.

## MORE POETRY

David Spector, Janice Gifford and I went on a hawk watch at the Summit House on Mount Holyoke in mid-September where we saw a number of hawks and also a number of fellow HBC members. David sent me the following poem by Roswell Park. I thought you might enjoy it.

### *Mount Holyoke*

Oh ! who can view from Holyoke's height  
The varied scene below,  
Nor yield to feelings of delight,  
And rapture's deepest glow!

If there be aught upon the earth  
Of beautiful and fair,  
In all the freshness of its birth  
It dwells unrivall'd there.

Grand is the rugged mountain's form  
Beneath the sunbeam's glow,  
Whose rocky brow has faced the storm  
While thunders roll'd below;

And bright the summer-house uprears  
Its pinnacle on high,  
Whose beaming lamp at eve appears  
The watch-tow'r of the sky.

Mount Tom, in endless verdure crown'd,  
Adorns the lovely view,  
While lofty mountains, rising round,  
Grow dim in distant blue;

And rolling on, with swelling tide,  
Majestic to the main,  
Connecticut, thy waters glide  
Along the extended plain.

Fair meadows, crown'd with vernal flow'rs,  
The bushy banks adorn,  
Where morning suns and evening show'rs  
Mature the yellow corn;

And gaily spread beneath the eye  
Are rising village spires,  
And far and near is curling high  
The smoke of village fires.

Here Hadley's long and ancient street  
In loveliness is drest,  
And there Northampton's mansions greet  
The gazer and the guest;

And Amherst, with its college walls,  
In distance melts away,  
Where science lights her lofty halls  
With reason's brightest ray.

Then who can view from Holyoke's height  
The varied scenes below,  
Nor yield to feelings of delight  
And rapture's deepest glow!

If there be aught upon the earth  
Of beautiful and fair.  
In all the freshness of its birth  
It dwells unrivall'd there.

— Roswell Park (1807–1869)

## UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

### Hitchcock Center for the Environment

#### *Nature Trivia Night*

Wednesdays 7 pm-8:30 pm: November 11, December 9

\$50 per team of 1-4 people; please [register online](#) at [www.hitchcockcenter.org](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org)

Join us for a monthly online trivia contest fundraiser for environmental education. The quiz will test you on a wide breadth of science, nature and environmental knowledge. **The winning team will split the award with the Hitchcock Center for the Environment that will help provide 25%-50% discounts on program fees for economically challenged and low-income household.**

### Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary

*Crows, Ravens and Winter Roosts - Online* with Patti Steinman and Kathleen Regan

Thursday, December 3, 7 pm – 8:30 pm

[Register online](#) at [www.massaudubon.org](http://www.massaudubon.org) or call 413-584-3009 to register by phone.

Crows and ravens are considered to be the brains of the avian world. This online presentation will introduce these clever birds, the amazing behaviors they display, and how they demonstrate cognitive thinking. Learn about the intelligence and life history of crows and ravens, including the fascinating phenomena of winter crow roosts, an annual nightly gathering that takes place from October to March. In some places in Massachusetts, these roosts may have up to ten thousand birds! Our special guest for the evening will be a Mass Audubon Animal Ambassador raven, where we'll get up close and personal and see characteristics we discussed in real time.

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary will be offering two in-person field trips to a large crow roost in Springfield on January 3 and 10, as an excellent complement to this program. Register at [www.massaudubon.org/programs](http://www.massaudubon.org/programs).

### Berkshire Botanical Garden

Berkshire Botanical Garden's 5<sup>th</sup> annual *Rooted in Place* Ecological Gardening Symposium will this year be held online, offering access to gardeners, horticulturists and environmentalists worldwide.

The symposium features three informative lectures and a panel discussion offered over the course of two Sundays, November 15<sup>th</sup> and November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 11 am - 2 pm. Sessions will be offered live through Zoom, followed by question and answer periods. In their talks, our expert presenters will examine the intersection of the wild and cultivated landscape while exploring ecosystem services offered by native plantings, including the role they play in our gardens. Key speakers include Heather Holm, Ulrich Lorimer and Dr. Desiree Narango.

Recordings of the lectures can be accessed by registered participants until January 1, 2021—meaning that if your time zone or schedule precludes you from attending any of the lecture livestreams, you will be able to enjoy them later at your leisure.

The registration deadline for this event is 9 a.m. on November 15. Student discounts are available. [Visit the BBG website](#) for more information on the Berkshire Botanical Garden presenters and to register.

## HBC LIBRARY NEWS FLASH

From Henry, Club Librarian:

I now have authorization to go into the Hitchcock Center, so I can return books and get out new ones. Please contact me to return any books you have or to request a book.

Email ([library@hampshirebirdclub.org](mailto:library@hampshirebirdclub.org))

Phone (413-549-3722).

The library list is on the club website: [hampshirebirdclub.org/wp-content/uploads/HBC-library-list.pdf](http://hampshirebirdclub.org/wp-content/uploads/HBC-library-list.pdf)

*Saying that wearing a mask during a pandemic is “living in fear” is like saying that using oven mitts means you’re “afraid” of the oven...*

Anon.

Did you hear about the White House staffer who told President Trump about a dream she had?

*Staffer:* I had a dream that you got the big military parade that you wanted. All the military brass were there and the streets were lined with cheering spectators.

*Trump:* Did I have a smile on my face?

*Staffer:* I couldn't tell. The casket was closed.

If something is thrown at the president does the Secret Service yell “DONALD DUCK!!!”?

Dave Gross, Editor  
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