



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.

Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

Volume 37, No. 9

May 2021

Dear reader, yes, we really didn't cancel the newsletter. I'm afraid you still have more issues coming. Pity that. (If you don't read this rag very often – and why would you? – then you should review the editorial comments for the April 2021 issue for this to make sense.)

Here we are in the big migration month of May. You'd better get out there and get some glimpses of those colorful passerines while the leaves aren't such a bother. There are some in-the-flesh field trips this month, and there are the virtual ones from our Education Committee, too. Just do it.

And finally, I'm not sure if Dolly Parton is a bird watcher, but she is a clever woman. When she was asked what she thought of dumb blonde jokes, she replied "I don't mind 'em. I know I'm not dumb and I know I'm not blonde." Happy spring!

NEXT PROGRAM

Monday, May 10 at 7:15 pm via Zoom

Utku Perkaş presents

Phylogeography, species limits, phylogeny, and classification of the turacos

The bird family Musophagidae, commonly known as Turacos, are found only in sub-Saharan Africa. We used DNA sequences to examine patterns of evolution in the subfamily ([American Museum Novitates 2020\(3949\), 1-61](#)). Phylogeographic analysis revealed multiple instances of unexpectedly large divergences and cryptic taxa. Within both montane and lowland species, fixed haplotypes were found in disjunct portions of the ranges, suggesting evolutionarily independent populations with negligible recent gene flow. Two taxa originally described as subspecies, but not recognized for over 50 years, were found to be 100% diagnosable based on mitochondrial sequences. The data also revealed the existence of two polyphyletic traditional species as well as the polyphyly or paraphyly of all traditional superspecies complexes involving members of the genus *Tauraco*. Overall, our analyses of genetic and morphological variation revealed substantial and unexpected geographic diversity. We recognize 33 phylogenetic species and used DNA sequences to infer relationships among them. The results include all the phylogenetic species and, for the first time, nuclear data. We present a new classification of the Musophagidae based on our phylogeographic and phylogenetic results. We allocate the 33 species to seven previously recognized genera.

[Utku Perkaş](#) is an ornithologist and evolutionary biologist, a faculty member at the Faculty of Science in Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey, manager of the Biogeography Research Laboratory, and for 9 years a research associate in the Department of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History. His work incorporates practical and theoretical experience ranging from field research and museum-based studies to molecular-based laboratory and analytical techniques. Much of his recent research uses DNA sequences to reconstruct phylogeographic hypotheses of vertebrate species, particularly birds. His latest interest is how past responses to climate changes may affect the history of species, and how this knowledge can be used for conservation.

COMING PROGRAM

June 14, 2021. **Aparajita Datta**.TBA.

2021 HBC BOARD ELECTION

The recent change to the HBC Bylaws, approved in March, leads to a change in the voting procedure for the HBC Board of Directors. Starting this year, individual candidates will be elected for two-year terms. The candidates as of this writing are Derek Allard, Ruth Garbett, Jim Lafley, Val Miller and Josh Rose. Nominations from the floor for other candidates can be made at the May members' meeting. Such nominations require a second. Voting will open the day after the May meeting and will remain open through May 25. All members who provided email addresses with their membership form will receive an email with a link to the ballot. If you prefer to complete a mail-in paper ballot, please request one no later than May 14 by emailing or calling membership@hampshirebirdclub.org or (413)512-0849.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT AND WORKSHOPS

The Education Committee held three successful virtual sessions in April. Over 20 birders attended the Birding Hampden County session where Michele Moore, Mike Locher, Lois Richardson, and Derek Allard featured some excellent birding areas. Dave Small gave an excellent presentation on Dragonflies and Damselflies to a very enthusiastic group. His photographs were amazing. Dan Ziomek's program on Plantings for Bird and Bees was attended by 25 HBC members who had many questions that he deftly answered. His talk featured yard plants that benefit wildlife.

Our programs are now recorded and available at the Hampshire Bird Club website at: <https://hampshirebirdclub.org/program-videos/>.

We are featuring three sessions in May on **Tuesday nights**. If you are interested in attending one, please register by sending a message to virtualbirding@hampshirebirdclub.org and **mention the workshop** you would like to attend in the subject line of your email. **Deadline for registering is 8 pm on the Sunday before the workshop.**

Tuesday, May 4, 7:00 – 8:00 pm

Identifying Warblers

DJ McNeil

Early May is a great time to look for warblers as they travel to their breeding grounds! This program is designed to help birders identify Northeastern warblers using sight and sound. DJ McNeil is visiting us from the University of Maryland where his research is on forest bird conservation.

Tuesday, May 11, 7:00 – 8:00 pm

Spring Wildflowers

Connie Parks

While you are out birding in the spring, take a break from "warbler neck" and look at the ground around you to observe the amazing wildflowers found in our woodlands, fields and marshes. Connie will introduce you to some of these special species.

Tuesday, May 25, 7:00 – 8:00 pm

Foresters for Birds

Jeff Ritterson

Jeff is a forester with extensive experience in forest habitat for birds and wildlife. He will be speaking about realizing habitat and broader conservation goals in forest management.

30-Day Sitspot Challenge: Following an informative session on what a Sitspot is, the 30-Day Sitspot Challenge has been poppin! HBC members participating in the challenge have been carving out 20 minutes a day to sit quietly outside and notice what is going on around them. Many people are sharing experiences through poems, photos, sound recordings, and observations. If you haven't participated yet and want to, feel free to jump in now – you can access the informational Zoom session recording on the HBC website: <https://hampshirebirdclub.org/program-videos/>. We will be having a follow up Zoom meeting on Monday May 17 to make time for reflections from the 30 days. All are welcome!

Our next **Do-It-Yourself Field Trip** meeting will be on Monday, June 7 at 7 pm on Zoom. Each month an area is chosen, and a leader describes the location and 5 target species for that area. Anyone interested has a month to visit the area on their own, record the species they see, and report back at the Zoom event the following month. For May, the location is Mitch's Way in Hadley. The target birds are Eastern Wood-Pewee, Veery, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler and Bank Swallow. If you'd like to join the June zoom and report your findings at Mitch's Way, e-mail virtualbirding@hampshirebirdclub.org.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We welcome these new members who have joined in the past month: Beth Rogers, Northampton; Amanda Pachomski, Northampton; and Jane & James Wing, Gilsum NH.

Diversity and Inclusiveness

Our club joined the AMBC (Association of Massachusetts Birding Clubs) in 2016 shortly after it was founded. The AMBC now has 22 member clubs. Its mission is to provide a forum for clubs to communicate with and learn from each other on a variety of matters pertaining to birds and the birding community. AMBC meets quarterly (now by Zoom) and also maintains a Google Group. Each club sends a representative to the meetings and any individual member of any member club is also welcome to attend and also to join the Google Group. AMBC also voices support for bird conservation legislation and other measures that protect birds. I am the temporary representative from HBC.

The main topic on the agenda for the recent AMBC spring meeting on April 6 focused on diversity, inclusion and safety within our clubs. The Anti-racist Collective of Avid Birders, Pioneer Valley and the Feminist Bird Club, Boston gave a joint presentation covering the basics of diversity, inclusivity and accessibility within their own organizations. They stressed the need for bird clubs to adopt a code of conduct that covers birding ethics but that *also* includes person-to-person behavior and a policy to address grievances. AMBC is working on a change to its own mission statement to address inclusivity and safety, as are many clubs. If you are interested in being part of a committee to work on a code of conduct for HBC please let me know at membership@hampshirebirdclub.org. There are many resources we can use.

Another presentation at the AMBC meeting was from coordinators Jeremy Spool, Kit Straley and Evan Dalton who spoke about the progress of the Massachusetts Young Birders Club (MYBC; www.massyoungbirders.org/). HBC helped to support MYBC's initial organization and it now operates under the aegis of Manomet. MYBC's goal is to make birding safe and accessible for young birders across the state. They offer online events and socially-distanced trips at locations throughout the state. In December they held a program in at the Holyoke Boys & Girls Club as part of the Christmas Bird Count.

Lissa Ganter

A CHAT WITH JANICE JORGENSEN

In April Janice Jorgensen and I talked about her work with indigenous groups in Panama, organizing the Northampton Christmas Count, her start with bird watching, and her friendly grouse. The part of the chat about Panama is here. Part two will follow in the next newsletter.

Newsletter: What got you interested in birding?

Janice Jorgensen: I had a former partner who was a birder. We lived in Belchertown at the time, and we put up feeders. A zillion Evening Grosbeaks came to it. There were Grosbeaks everywhere. The feeder was a plant tray on some plywood. I just dumped seed in it, just what the Grosbeaks like. I said, "Oh my god, look at this!"

I come from a family of hunters, so it wasn't like I didn't know what wildlife or birds were. My dad was a duck hunter, so I knew all about them, and that made it easy to get going in birding. I just have continued haphazardly without much training. Early on I took a class at Hitchcock with Steve Stanne and I just have continued.

N: I know that you go to Panama a lot. Tell me about that.

JJ: I was the Peace Corps country director from 1997 to 2002. That's how I started going to Panama, although I was there in 1971 to travel through Central America. One of the things I did while I was there was to begin formal agreements with six or seven indigenous groups. One by one I'd go meet the Chief or the King – they had different titles – to have them begin to identify the needs of their communities and learn how a Peace Corps Volunteer could assist them. During my tenure we created mutual agreements with five of the indigenous groups, approving placement of Peace Corps Volunteers within their "comarcas" or "propriedad colectivos". In

2004 I joined a board of former Peace Corps volunteers working with one indigenous group that was originally from Colombia and that crossed over into the Darién Province of Panama. I go back there over and over again to do my volunteer work. We have a nonprofit called Native Future (<https://nativefuture.org>).

We started by trying to help them get title to their land. Most of the Panamanian indigenous groups have a reservation. In essence, this group does not, so they're trying to get collective title to the land. That involves working with people and the government, and it's not exciting. I said that I didn't want to do that anymore, so I said "Why don't we do birding?" It's more fun and involves more people and we could do it as a community. I thought we could do a Christmas Bird Count there. So that's how we started.

First we had to go to the Chiefs and tell them what we were thinking of doing. They already knew us but they didn't know us in the birding element. We said here's what we do, and they said 'Yes, come to the National Congress and explain your project'. They have the Congress meeting every two years, so our President went and explained the project. Two or three communities said that it sounded interesting and that they wanted to do it. I said that we needed to pick the community that is the easiest to reach if we're going to bring our people there. It needs to be safe and, if somebody is injured, we need to be able to get them out of there. One of the communities that volunteered was one that I had visited. In 2000 I set up one of the first agreements with one of the indigenous groups, the Wounaan.

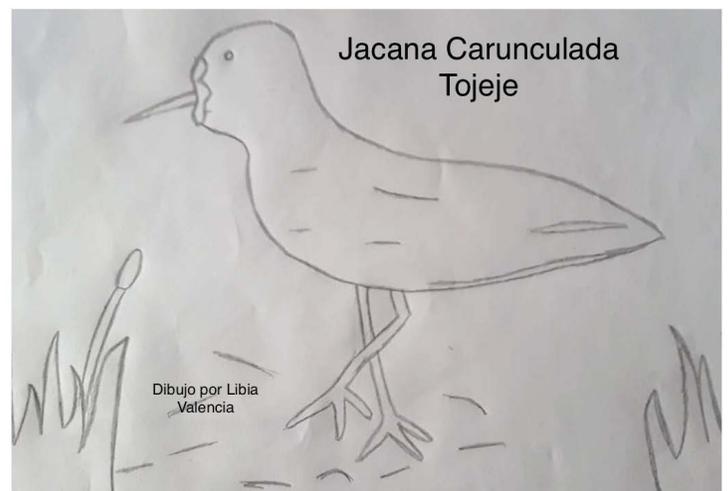
In 2017 another member of our group and I went to the community that had said yes at the National Congress meeting. We held community meetings to explain what we're doing and what birding is along with the potential benefits to the community. (Puerto Lara has many talented artisans in basket making along with carving tagua and rosewood.) We tried to explain how this potentially could bring some income to the community and what was the value of the Christmas Bird Count. I'm sure that they thought we were crazy. But ten young people volunteered to participate, and so the next day we started a training class for it. We started with

the way to identify a bird: look at its beak, look at its feet, and so on. Then we went out with a local guide who I knew from a previous trip. He lived nearby and he agreed to come once a month and work with the group.

And that's how it began. The first year we did a pretend, dry run CBC. We've done them every year since. We did one this year despite Covid, and everyone said "How can you do it?" I said "Because they're trained they know how to do it."

About seven months after we started – we were not there – a group of ten women went to the mayor of the town of about 450 to 500 and said "We want to do this, too, we want to learn too". And so they formed a group. I love going back and working with these women. When I started, I was training the women every day for two or three hours-whenver they were available. They were busy feeding kids, cooking, harvesting, and so on. I gave the women pads of paper and pencils and told them to come back the next day with a drawing of some bird that they had seen around their house. And what I learned is that one of the women is good at drawing. (Her Wattled Jacana picture is below.) I added the bird's name in Spanish and in their language. They wanted to work with kids – they wanted to teach kids what they were learning. They're delightful to me. I just have the best time with them.

What we decided was that they didn't need to go off into the trails in the mountains. We would talk about birds breeding around their homes in the community because they had lots of



responsibilities and not much time. What we did for the Christmas Count was to go to each one's home as a group, and then the home person would tell us what they saw around their house. That made them queen for a day. We all would travel from one home to the next with the kids and other community people and they would be the star. I think they like it because several of them said "I'm learning something new."

Building community is an important part of this. One of the things that we talked about with them was their folklore stories. When I'm with them, they go back and forth in both Spanish and Woun-meu, their native language. I don't need to know what they're saying – it's not important for me. Not all of them knew the folklore stories. So

I said "Well, why don't we see and how we can share stories so that you can learn the ones that you don't know?" That has not been easy, but that's the next little piece that we're working on. We are getting outside of bird folklore to folklore in general, which is something that they're losing. As they become more modernized these stories aren't being written down and people don't pass them along.

It's so much fun. That's why I keep going back twice a year. A couple of the women aren't literate. I have collected old iPhones and iPads which I have cleaned out and put in the songs of the birds and some free apps and then given to the women to study and learn. Some of the women have never had anything like that.

FIELD TRIP NEWS

In order to be as safe as possible during a field trip, please be sure to wear your mask, social distance, and bring your own scope as sharing is not safe as yet. All HBC field trips are limited to no more than ten participants and two leaders unless otherwise indicated in the descriptions. These restrictions may change as the CDC revises its Covid recommendations. Please check the website or with the trip leaders.

Thursday, May 13, 6:30 – mid/late morning, Orchard Hill, Amherst. Join Scott Sumner as he looks for early spring migrants. This trip is limited to ten people. Please contact Scott by email at ssurner@aol.com to register and get the meeting location. (E)

Thursday, May 20, 6:45 – noon, Quabbin Gate 35. Join Janice Gifford and Dave Gross for this new park and walk field trip at Gate 35 in New Salem. A forested canopy, open areas, and open shoreline provide opportunities to see a variety of species. The path is wide for social distancing and is flat for easy walking. We will walk about 4-5 miles round trip and aim to be back at the cars by noon. Bring water and a snack. For information and to sign up please contact Dave at djgross@gmail.com or 413-687-8161. (E)

Saturday, May 22, 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 am. Pack a lunch or pick one up at our stop at the Cumington Creamery. For information and to sign up, please contact Dave (djgross@gmail.com or 413-687-8161) or Bob (raz@umass.edu or 413-585-0405). (E/M/S)

Carol Mardeusz, Field Trip Chair

Red throat whirring wings
feathered frenzy near flowers
quickly sips nectar

Haiku by Laura Beltran

female mergansers
shake their spiky head feathers
like wild punk rockers

Haiku by Marcia Merithew

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary

Mass Audubon Bird-a-thon

May 14 - 15

This May bird lovers, climate champions, and nature enthusiasts from all over Massachusetts will participate in Mass Audubon's Bird-a-thon fundraiser. The birding will take place from 6 pm Friday May 14 to 6 pm Saturday, May 15. This year is particularly special because Mass Audubon is celebrating its 125th anniversary. Our goal will be to match our team's species count from last year: 153.

There will be special perks and prizes for those who fundraise at different levels, including a special event with David Sibley and Joan Walsh. For more details visit web.massaudubon.org/goto/west.

Ready to sign up for the Western Mass Bird-a-thon team? Email Patti Steinman at psteinman@massaudubon.org.

Bring Back Birds Policy Initiative Webinar

A landmark 2019 *Science* study found that bird populations have declined by close to 3 billion birds since 1970. There is urgent need to address habitat loss and other threats so we can reverse this decline. We need a suite of actions that foster on-the-ground protection, mitigation of losses, and restoration of bird populations and the habitats they need to thrive. Accordingly, American Bird Conservancy and National Audubon Society have identified [policy options](#) needed to meet this challenge, address threats, and build capacity to deliver bird conservation on a much larger scale. A webinar will be held on May 18 at 4 p.m. Register for the webinar at the <https://act.audubon.org/a/bring-birds-back-policy-overview>.

Bird Observer

Bird Observer, the birding journal of New England, has two staff openings. These are volunteer positions. One is for a **Where to Go Birding editor**.

Key Responsibilities:

- Identify and recruit authors for bimonthly *Where to Go Birding (WTG)* articles about places to bird throughout New England.
- Work with authors and ensure that they meet deadlines.
- Review draft articles for accuracy and content before submitting them to the editor.
- Assist the mapmaker with creation and review of maps.
- Check all directions for accuracy.

This is a position that requires communication and organization skills, as well as great attention to detail. The WTG editor must be able to work independently to recruit authors, maintain schedules, and keep contact with authors prior to deadlines, as well as work collaboratively with the author, editor, and mapmaker from draft article to publication. Knowing birders throughout the New England area is helpful, but not a prerequisite. To inquire about this position, contact Marsha Salett at mσαlett@gmail.com.

buffeted by wind they twist and roll, tuck and dive ravens dance in air Haiku by Marcia Merithew

FISHING WITH EAGLES

Another Eagle memory! This one from the Missouri River in Montana while fishing with my older son Steve.

Both men are fly fishing. Here, the object is to catch a fish with an artificial insect attached to a line. Other types of attractions are also used. These patterns – all referred to as 'flies' – are composed variously of feathers, animal hair, threads, and fabrics.

On this day, Steve and I are walking quietly upstream in the river, close to the edge. It is a beautiful river surrounded with large sky, this being Big Sky Country, low and high mountains, forests, open fields, cattle ranches, and small towns. The expedition of Lewis and Clark passed through this area in 1805.

We are walking single file watching for rising fish, that is, fish that are rising to the surface to eat insects. These are fish that we will try to attract with our flies. Fish face upstream to see insects floating to them. When we cast to a fish, we throw our fly upstream and it will float to the fish – where it could be consumed.

The fishing situation is perfect. Large trout are rising to the surface to eat insects. Each of us has caught one or two fish. We return them to the water. As one man catches a fish, we change positions, so the other has the best chance. We continue to move forward quietly. I am watching a large trout eating insects and I am preparing to cast my fly to this fish.

Suddenly there is a surprising SWOOSH sound just above our heads. And with that an eagle catches a fish before our eyes, quite close to us. The eagle uses its claws to catch the fish and it does not land on the water. It continues to fly with the fish held in its claws. We stare as it flies to a tree and has a fine lunch of fresh trout! Perhaps this was MY trout! But no matter, this was a wonderful spectacle. And we learned to Fish With Eagles!

M. J. Fournier

A BIRD PUZZLER

This slightly modified puzzle is in *Bird Brain-Teasers* by Patrick Merrell from Storey Publishing (ISBN 978-1-60342-080-8). I obtained a copy from the micro library at Village Hill in Northampton. Answers will follow in the next newsletter issue. Unscramble the letters in each equation to spell a bird's name.

A + GLEE = _ _ _ _ _

B + IRON = _ _ _ _ _

C + EARN = _ _ _ _ _

D + CROON = _ _ _ _ _

E + HAT SNAP = _ _ _ _ _

F + CHIN = _ _ _ _ _

G + TREE = _ _ _ _ _

H + HURTS = _ _ _ _ _

I + RED BULB = _ _ _ _ _

J + BUY ALE = _ _ _ _ _

K + SORT = _ _ _ _ _

L + DEAN GRINS = _ _ _ _ _

M + TRAIN = _ _ _ _ _

N + FOCAL = _ _ _ _ _

O + OILER = _ _ _ _ _

P + ARROWS = _ _ _ _ _

Q + A BUS = _ _ _ _ _ (one bird's young)

R + HONE = _ _ _ _ _

S + ATLAS ORB = _ _ _ _ _

T + CHOIRS = _ _ _ _ _

U + OGRES = _ _ _ _ _

V + NEAR = _ _ _ _ _

W + BARREL = _ _ _ _ _

X + IN HOPE = _ _ _ _ _ (myth)

Y + ROPES = _ _ _ _ _

Z + ILL ARBOR = _ _ _ _ _

Dave Gross, Editor

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