Dear reader, while we are still in a worldwide SARS-CoV-2 pandemic with new variants appearing with regularity, our avian friends are also dealing with a viral plague: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). In mid-March HPAI was detected in Massachusetts. It has also been found in several locations across the US including Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Connecticut. This outbreak is of the Eurasian H5 viral strain. Waterbirds including shorebirds, gulls and waterfowl, especially geese and dabbling ducks like Mallards, are most likely to carry the HPAI virus. Sick or dead wild birds should be reported to the Department of Fish and Game Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) at 508-389-6300 or Mass.Wildlife@mass.gov. To learn more about HPAI you can do an internet search on “highly pathogenic avian influenza.” You will find that much of the information focuses on commercial or domestic poultry, but there are data on the distribution of infection across the US.

After that slug of bad news which is on top of a lot of other bad news that’s been in the media of late, here’s some good news: HBC field trips are storming back! The list in this newsletter for trips from early April through early June is no less than 14! And those are just the in-person trips. Also, the HBC Board is working on a viable venue for monthly club meetings for the 2022-2023 season. Let’s hope that we are finally on the downward side of this seemingly perpetual pandemic. We truly do deserve it. Last, and certainly least, this is the April issue of the newsletter. There are jokes. Unlucky you.

NEXT PROGRAM
Monday, April 11 at 7:15 pm via Zoom
Susan Fox Rogers presents
Learning the Birds: A presentation and reading

At the age of 49, avid outdoorswoman Susan Fox Rogers fell for the birds. She took to birding with the energy of a convert, learning not just the birds, but the history of birders like Florence Merriam Bailey and the notorious murderer Nathan Leopold. She reveled in the history and natural history, environmental and ethical issues to which the birds led her. Her new memoir Learning the Birds chronicles the first three years Rogers adventured from her home in the Hudson Valley to the Everglades, the desert Southwest, and Alaska in search of winged friends. Susan Fox Rogers will talk of the joys and challenges of becoming a birder mid-age and will show images of the remarkable birds she found—Long-eared Owl, Bristle-thighed Curlew, Baby Boreal Owls—and will read from Learning the Birds.

Susan Fox Rogers is the author of Learning the Birds: A Mid-Life Adventure, and My Reach: A Hudson River Memoir, which explores the Hudson River from the perspective of her kayak. She is the editor of eleven anthologies, including Solo: On Her Own Adventure and Antarctica: Life on the Ice. Her most recent collection, When Birds Are Near: Dispatches from Contemporary Writers, celebrates the birding life. Rogers has taught the creative essay, nature writing and bird-related classes as Writer-in-Residence at Bard College since 2001.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS
May 9, 2022. TBA.
APRIL – JUNE FIELD TRIPS

Field Trip Guidelines
All trips will be limited to ten participants unless otherwise noted and up to two leaders. Note the new trips added since the last newsletter (April 27, May 5 and June 1).

The following additional rules will apply this spring due to the continuing COVID-19 situation:

1. All field trip leaders and participants must be fully vaccinated and boosted, are required to wear a mask when asked (possibly in carpool situations) and should maintain social distancing.
2. Field Trips are for Hampshire Bird Club Members only.
3. Members should use the contact information in the description if they have any questions or would like to register for the trip.
4. Participants will receive specific information about their trip directly from the leader once they register.

Sunday, April 10. Ashley Reservoir. 7:00 am. Half day.
Mike Locher looks for early migrants like Pine and Palm Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Louisiana Waterthrushes, and maybe holdover ducks. Meet in the Holyoke Elks parking lot (250 Whitney Ave.), near Exit 12 (“Holyoke Mall”) off Rt. 91 at 7 am. Contact Mike (413-585-5864) for more information or to register. Note - The Elks have a "donate to park" policy, so it would be good if you could throw a dollar in their box. (M* with one optional S* section to listen for the waterthrushes)

Wednesday, April 27. Park Hill Orchard. 6:30 to 8:30 am.
Join Jim Lafley on a walk around the Park Hill Orchard fields and woods to encounter early arriving migrants, singing resident birds and any others passing through the area. Pine Warblers, Palm Warblers, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, and kinglets are some of the possibilities. We will meet at the Park Hill Orchard store parking lot and walk from there. It is a flat walk, but wear footwear for wet grass and some muddy spots. Contact Jim Lafley if interested at jimlafley@gmail.org or 413-221-1941 (mobile). (E*)

Wednesday, April 27. Bird Photography Trip. 6:30 to 10:00 am.
We’ll bird and photograph late April migrants at a location to be determined. This is a photography trip, so a camera is required. We may stay in one area or move around. Contact Scott Surner to sign up. ssurner@aol.com. Limit of six participants.

Thursday, May 5. Wildwood Cemetery. 6:30 to 10:00 am.
Scott Surner will be looking for warblers, vireos and other early May migrants. Please contact Scott (ssurner@aol.com) to sign up. (E*)

Join Laura Beltran and Jim Lafley as we walk along the Park Hill Orchard fields and woods to encounter early arriving migrants, singing resident birds and any others passing through the area. Pine Warblers, Palm Warblers, Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, and kinglets are some of the possibilities. We will meet at the Park Hill Orchard store parking lot and walk from there. It is a flat walk, but wear footwear for wet grass and some muddy spots. Meet at the Cooke Avenue entrance (the former Moose Lodge) parking area. Contact Laura Beltran at lauraandnature@gmail.com. (E/M*)

Betsy Higgins and Marcia Merithew will co-lead a walk at this conservation area which can feature Prairie Warblers, Eastern Towhees, Ravens and Red-shouldered Hawks, as well as a variety of warblers and vireos. Meet in the parking area at the end of Turkey Hill Road. This will be a moderate walk on uneven ground with some slight inclines/declines. We'll walk the trails around and into the quarry and along the dirt road if time allows. To sign up email mmerithew@comcast.net. (M*)

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Sunday, May 15. Fort River. 6:30 – 8:30 am.
Join Laura Beltran and Steve Winn at the USFWS Moody Bridge Road parking lot near the small pond. We’ll search for Eastern Meadowlarks, Bobolinks, Barn Swallows, Northern Harriers and more. Continuing along the all-persons trail loop through second growth forest, marshy areas, and along the river’s edge we’ll search for songbirds including warblers, Brown Thrashers, Field Sparrows, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and more. The accessible trail is 1.3 miles long with benches to stop and rest along the way. Contact Laura Beltran at lauraandnature@gmail.com (E*)

Saturday, May 21. Mount Tom. 6:30 to 9:30 am.
Join Derek Allard on the (mostly) flat, paved road below the Mt. Tom ridge, which includes the microburst blow down area that has become a favorite spot of Prairie Warblers, Winter Wrens, and Eastern Towhees. Other likely suspects we may encounter include Worm-eating Warblers, Blackburnian Warblers, Tennessee Warblers, and Peregrine Falcons. Meet at the west gate on route 141 (opposite the Tavern on the Hill restaurant). We will walk about 4 miles, so please plan accordingly. For information and to register contact derekallard73@gmail.com (E*)

Sunday, May 22. Mount Holyoke. 6:00 am. Half day.
Mike Locher hikes up the park road to the top of this local peak hoping for some later migrants and deep-woods breeding specialties including Worm-eating and Cerulean Warblers and Yellow-throated Vireos. Meet at the (gated) entrance to Skinner State Park (at the end of Old Mountain Road in Hadley) at 6:00 am. This is an occasionally steep hike on a paved road. For more information or to register contact Mike (413-585-5864). (M/S*)

Saturday, May 28. Hilltown Rambles. 6:30 am. All day.
Join Bob Zimmermann and Dave Gross 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 hilly 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 Cummington Creamery. For information and to sign up, please contact Dave (djgross@gmail.com, 413-687-8161) or Bob (raz@umass.edu, 413-585-0405). (E/M/S*)

Sunday, May 29. Nonotuck Park. 6:30 to 9:30 am.
Join Derek Allard for a tour of Nonotuck Park in search of Blue-headed Vireos, Canada Warblers, Black-throated Blue and Black-throated Green Warblers and Veerys as they sing their sweet song. This walk is about 4 miles and will go through both hilly and potentially muddy terrain. Mud boots are recommended. Meet at the back of the Easthampton High School parking lot. For information and to register contact derekallard73@gmail.com (E/M*)

Wednesday, June 1. Southwick Wildlife Management Area. 5:30 am to noon.
Join Scott Surner in his search for Grasshopper Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Prairie Warbler and Eastern Meadowlark. Last year this location had nesting Dickcissel and possible Blue Grosbeak. Contact Scott to Sign up: ssurner@aol.com.

Saturday, June 4. Knightville Dam. 7:00 am. Long Half Day, often past noon.
Betsy Higgins and Marcia Merithew will co-lead a walk at the Knightville Dam area. The trip starts with an exploration at the top of the dam, then a drive down to the road along the East Branch of the Westfield River. Highlights include flycatchers, Bank Swallows, Spotted Sandpipers, several species of warblers, and cuckoos. Meet in the JFK Middle School parking lot on Bridge Road at 7:00 am. It's about a 20-minute drive to the Knightville area. It will be a combination of walking and driving on dirt roads, moderately uneven terrain. To sign up email mmerithew@comcast.net. (E/M/S*)

Sunday, June 5. Quabbin Reservoir, Gate 8. 6:00 am. Half day.
Mike Locher leads a trip down to the edge of the reservoir. Target birds include Acadian Flycatcher (regular here in recent years) and a variety of warblers (more Ovenbirds than you can count and Blackburnian Warblers, which can be difficult to find). Meet at the parking area outside Gate 8 off Hampshire Bird Club. April 2022. Page 3 of 7
Route 202 at 6:00 am. We will walk from the gate to the water and back which is 5 miles round trip, so bring water, a snack and wear suitable shoes. For more information and to register contact Mike (413-585-5864 (M*)

*Field Trip designations:
(E) – Easy walking conditions, fairly accessible for most, usually flat terrain on improved trails or roads.
(M) – Moderately difficult, more challenging trail conditions, short steep sections, longer hikes involved.
(S) – Strenuous conditions, muddy or rocky trails, steep sections, difficult footing in part.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE
The 2022 HBC Nominating Committee (Derek Allard, Lissa Ganter and Janice Jorgensen) is working on a group of candidates for the upcoming board election. The slate will be announced at the April club meeting. A call for additional nominees from the floor will be made at the April and May meetings. The voting procedure will be announced at the May club meeting and in the May newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS
Please join me in welcoming these new members who have joined since last month: Gail Bielizna, South Hadley; Veronica Bobskill, Agawam; Monique Dumais, West Springfield; Carolyn and John Friedman, Philadelphia PA; Jeff Novick, Northampton; Joseph Sefter, Wilbraham; and Eden Smith, Newton.

Lissa Ganter, membership@hampshirebirdclub.org

BIRD OF PREY REHAB FACILITY
As you may know, Tom Ricardi of Conway, a former Environmental Police officer, is a true hero to birds of prey. At any given time, he cares for some 45 to 50 injured and sick birds at his Bird of Prey Rehab Facility. It is not rare for Tom to be called out in the middle of the night to retrieve a Great-Horned Owl with a wing broken in a collision with a vehicle or to travel long distances to collect a starving Snowy Owl. His goal is to nurse as many birds as possible back to health and release them. (In the 1970s, when Bald Eagles became endangered due to pesticides, Tom aided recovery efforts by successfully breeding them in a captive environment and releasing them.). All these birds require food, shelter and medical care. The most pressing need at present is the repair and, in some cases, replacement of several shelters and enclosures. Despite Tom’s continuous efforts, time and the elements have taken a toll. Some enclosures are the size of a one- or two-car garage, which allow the birds to fly and regain strength. Birds unable to make a complete recovery have a permanent home at the center. Some become integral to Tom’s extensive educational efforts.

The materials needed for immediate needs range from pressure-treated lumber to wire fencing to simple hardware and locks for new doors. We anticipate a total cost of $4,500 to $5,000 in materials to do the work. A generous donation of $1,000 from rkMILES of Hatfield will allow one major enclosure to be rebuilt along with nest boxes, perches and platforms. Other smaller repairs are needed around the facility.

Can you help us help these birds of prey? The rehab facility needs $3,500 in donations from citizens, businesses, and birding enthusiasts throughout the region to complete repairs. Hobie Iselin, George Regmund and Jim Lafley will provide the carpentry work along with Tom’s sons, Tom and Steve. Deb Oakley will chronicle the effort.

The Massachusetts Bird of Prey Rehab Facility is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit, tax-deductible charity. Please send donations to: Massachusetts Bird of Prey Rehab Facility, P.O. Box 26, Conway, MA 01341.

Hobie Iselin and Deb Oakley
EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT AND WORKSHOPS

Our **Do-It-Yourself** trip for March took us to the Sweet Alice Conservation Area in Amherst with target birds Common Grackle, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Robin, and Eastern Bluebird. We'll find out what people saw and announce the next DIY location and target birds at the April 4 Zoom meeting.

Derek Allard's **Birding for Everyone** March program offered a virtual workshop on identifying ducks and a trip to the Quabbin. There is more on this exciting new program below.

March Education Committee workshops included an outstanding presentation on “Birding the Rhode Island Coast” with wildlife biologist and birder Matt Schenck. The workshop sparked interest in organizing a trip for HBC down to Rhode Island sometime this spring or next fall when Matt will be around. We will consult with the Field Trip Committee about that idea. On March 16 Bob Stevens offered a fascinating workshop on “Getting to Know the Saw-whet Owl.” We learned about the Saw-whet’s migratory patterns and its physiological features that enable the owls to thrive.

In addition to currently scheduled April workshops, we plan to offer workshops on Pollinator gardens, bird banding, and volunteer opportunities in the Valley.

**Reminder:** Our programs are now recorded and available on the Hampshire Bird Club website. You can find the links under PROGRAMS or on the EDUCATION page. [https://hampshirebirdclub.org/program-videos/](https://hampshirebirdclub.org/program-videos/).

**April workshops:**
Please register by emailing education@hampshirebirdclub.org with the name of the workshop in the subject line.

**Monday, April 4, 7-8 pm.** Our next Do-It-Yourself Field Trip will be on Zoom. Each month an area is chosen, and a leader describes the location and five 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 meeting the following month. If you’d like to join the April meeting to share your March sightings and learn of the upcoming field trip, e-mail education@hampshirebirdclub.org.

**Tuesday, April 19, 7–8 pm. Spring Warblers with Scott Surner.** Scott will again provide tips to Spring Warbler identification, habitat, and ID tips.

**Wednesday, April 27, 7–8 pm. Black Vultures with Bracken Brown.** Bracken Brown, a naturalist at Hawk Mountain, will give a presentation on the Black Vulture study in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

**Birding For Everyone:**
The Birding For Everyone (BFE) program is geared towards beginner birders and those who, historically, have not been included in the birding community: young people, minorities, the disabled. All events are open to the public and are held on Saturdays. Please spread the word! Those interested in the April offerings should email dallard@hampshirebirdclub.org to register.

**April 16, 10–11 am:** Warbler Identification (Online; 15 minute presentation, 45 minutes for questions, bird ID help, etc.)

**April 23, 8: 8–10 am:** Fort River National Wildlife Refuge, Hadley (In-person accessible walk/sit)

Keep checking the Education page on the Hampshire Bird Club website for more April workshops. We'll post them as soon as they are confirmed.

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Q: How many birders does it take to change a light bulb?
A: Four. One to first spot the bulb, one to identify it, one to change it, and one to report it on eBulb.

Did you hear about the guy who went totally bald? He liked his favorite comb so much that he just couldn’t part with it.
UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary

The following in-person, outdoor programs are being offered through Mass Audubon Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary. Additionally, Mass Audubon is offering many on-line programs about birds throughout this spring. All programs require registration and more information can be found at Arcadia events.

- **Dance of the American Woodcock**
  Park Hill Orchard, Easthampton
  Saturday, April 9, 7 – 8:30 pm

- **Birding By Ear Series**
  Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton
  Saturday, April 9, 23 & 30, 9:00 am - noon

- **Saturday Morning Bird Walks**
  Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton
  Saturday, May 7, 14, and 21; 7:00-9:00 am

- **Spring Migration Bird Walks**
  Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton
  May 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13; 6:30-8:00 am

Registration for Mass Audubon’s 39th annual Bird-a-thon opened on March 30. The Bird-a-thon is Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary’s largest community fundraiser that makes possible the protection of resilient, bird-friendly landscapes, increasing access to nature and environmental education, and mobilizing to fight climate change in the Valley and throughout Western Massachusetts. This year’s 24 hours of birding is from 6 pm on Friday, May 13, to 6 pm on Saturday, May 14. New for this year: Participants who raise $125 by April 20 will get this year’s fabulous lavender T-shirt in time to wear it on Bird-a-thon day! We invite Hampshire Bird Club members to join the West Region Team.

The World According to Sound
On April 24th, The World According to Sound is going to take you on a sonic exploration of all things avian. You will hear the world’s most complex songs, a series of antiphonal duets, slowed down birds, extinct birds, loud birds, quiet birds, and birds that sound like laughter. We will also listen to the human side of things and what makes our relationship to birds so unique. There are over 10,000 bird species and this audio event pays homage to that.

The show is 80 minutes long and live-streamed to people all over the country. Everyone who gets a ticket is mailed an eye mask to wear during the show, which helps focus your attention on the sounds. The program is designed for headphone listening and engineered so you will be totally immersed in the sounds, whether it be a flock of birds taking off all around you or a mated pair duetting back and forth off in the distance. To make this show The World According to Sound teamed up with BirdNote and Cornell’s Lab of Ornithology. After the program, there will be a live Q&A with a member of the lab who will answer any questions you have about birds and sound.

The World According to Sound has shared a discount code with us to get a 25 percent discount on tickets. (The standard ticket price is $25, thus $18.75 with the discount.) Enter the code “BirdsEncore25” when you purchase tickets at The World According to Sound website for the discount. And for a sneak listen to some of the sounds you will hear in the show, listen to any of these radio episodes that The World According to Sound made with BirdNote. Tickets are available at https://www.theworldaccordingtosound.org/tickets/birds-5rn2x.

IT’S BEEN A COLD WINTER!
Wow, it was so cold this winter that my dog got stuck to a fire hydrant.
And speaking of cold, it was so cold that we chopped up the piano for firewood. It made two chords.
Q: How do you know that it’s really cold in Washington, DC? A: The politicians put their hands in their own pockets.
Even though I used to eat a lot of cold meats, I quit cold turkey.
Dan the gardener got so excited about the upcoming spring blooms that he wet his plants.
AGE-APPROPRIATE JOKES


Age 10: Q: Why do ducks have flat feet? A: To stamp out forest fires. Q: Why do elephants have flat feet? A: To stamp out burning ducks.

Age 20: Guy walks into a bar and asks the bartender for a fruit punch. The bartender says “Sure, get in line.” Guy says “But there is no punch line.”

Age 30: Past, Present and Future walk into a bar. The bartender says “Hi folks. Why so tense?”

Age 40: Q: Why do all Swedish boats have a bar code on them? A: So when they get to port, they can scan da navy in.

Age 50: Did you hear about the dyslexic Satanist? He sold his soul to Santa.

Age 60: Did you hear that the man who invented Velcro died? RIP.


JUST PLAIN OLD BAD JOKES

The twelve seasons of New England:
Winter
Fool’s Spring
Second Winter
Spring of Deception
Mud Bath
The Pollening
Actual Spring
Summer
Hell’s Front Porch
False Fall
Second Summer
Actual Fall
← You are here.

In an effort to keep my mind sharp, I ask myself tough questions such as “What day is it today?” and “Now where did I put that cup?”

The cashier said “Strip down, facing me.” By the time I realized she meant my debit card, it was too late.

Q: What did the zero say to the eight? A: “Nice belt!”

I got a very scary prediction from a fortune teller: “You will have a long life.”

My niece’s Chihuahua had to have 13 teeth pulled. I hope they didn’t take his canines. Ed. note: True story!

An older lady was serving dinner to a guest and she encouraged him to eat as much as he wanted. In response he said, "I have dined sufficient."

The lady asked, "Say you went a-fishin’?"

So the gentleman clarified. "I have eaten plenty."

She said, "And you caught twenty?"

The gentleman shook his head and said, "Why you old fool!"

And the lady said, her voice filled with sympathy, "And broke your pole."

The guest said with some disgust, “Well Jesus Christ!”

The lady replied, “And broke it twice!”

Ed note: This was told to me at age 10 by my grandmother. To my recollection it’s the only joke she ever told. She was a lifelong Evangelical Lutheran. There must have been more to her than I realized at the time.

Spoil a good walk: go birding! newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org Dave Gross, Editor

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