Dear reader, there is a wonderful article by Jonny Diamond in the January 2022 *Smithsonian Magazine* entitled “The Old Man and the Tree.” The referenced old man is none other than Bob Leverett from Northampton and, as you are probably aware, the tree reference is about old growth forests, particularly those in the Berkshires. If you don’t know about Bob and his work, or even if you do, this is a must-read. You can find the article at [https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/the-old-man-and-the-tree-180979242/](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/the-old-man-and-the-tree-180979242/).

Several years ago I was fortunate to go on a field trip sponsored by the Hitchcock Center that Bob led. We visited old growth sites around Rowe, MA, most of which were nearly inaccessible. It was a fabulous trip. Two things that stick in my mind about that trip were a ginormous Mountain Laurel with a trunk that was bigger around than my leg and sliding down very steep hillsides on backsides. Seriously, many of the participants had to resort to sledding down on their bottoms in order to be able to follow Bob as he practically ran through the very steep terrain. As he pointed out, such is the way of much of the old growth forest in this part of world since all of the easier terrain was logged in the 18th and 19th centuries.

**NEXT PROGRAM**
Monday, March 14 at 7:15 pm via Zoom
Holly Jones presents

**Seabird Island Restoration and Recovery**
Professor Jones will describe the unique ecosystem-engineering role seabirds play on the islands on which they breed, as well as their conservation plight given global threats, in particular threats due to invasive species. She will discuss how seabirds drive recovery on islands after invasive mammals are removed and ways to increase seabird populations.

Dr. Holly Jones is an Associate Professor in Biology at the Institute for the Study of the Environment, Sustainability, and Energy at Northern Illinois University. She is a National Geographic Explorer and Lead Editor of *Ecological Solutions and Evidence*. She is a conservation/restoration ecologist and uses interdisciplinary, cross-scale methods to answer applied biological research questions both domestically and internationally.

**UPCOMING PROGRAMS**
April 11, 2022. **Susan Fox Rogers**. Learning the Birds
May 9, 2022. **TBA**.
June 13, 2022. **TBA**.

**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**
We welcome these new members who have joined in since last month: David Chapman, Pittsfield; Ellen Finkelstein, Northampton; Ruth Green, Monterey; Jerry Hillman & Donna Lynn, Southampton; Harrison Raycroft, Amherst; Jillian & JP Reardon, Easthampton; Eileen Rice, Easthampton; and Jacob Robinson, Belchertown.

Anxious to get out and enjoy the summer breezes? Then join us for the Hampshire Bird Club spring picnic at Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary's pavilion on Sunday, June 5, 11 am - 1 pm. Bring your own food, a chair, and binoculars. Bathrooms are available in the main building and note that masks are required to be worn indoors. Come early to go birding at Arcadia prior to the picnic. We hope to see you there!

Lissa Ganter, membership@hampshirebirdclub.org
APRIL – JUNE FIELD TRIPS

Field Trip Guidelines
All trips will be limited to 10 participants and up to 2 leaders
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 during the event.
  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*)

Join Laura Beltran and Jim Lafley as we walk along Boggy Meadow Road through mixed hardwood forest, past a large beaver swamp, and to the wildlife blind overlooking a freshwater marsh. We will have an opportunity to observe a large variety of warblers and other songbirds, as well as wetland species like Virginia Rail, Marsh Wren, and American Bittern. The 3-mile round-trip walk is flat, but some areas have large roots and uneven terrain. Also, the trails are often muddy. 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*)

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*)

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*)

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 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.
EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT AND WORKSHOPS

As always, we offered our DIY workshop at the beginning of February. The location was any local wooded area and people found many of the target birds. For more information, see the DIY report below.

Sara Griesemer’s workshop on eBird was well attended. Sara offered guidance on navigating the eBird site online, as well as how to use specific features on both the mobile app and the online site. It was enormously helpful, and we are thinking this might be an annual event.

Derek Allard’s Birding for Everyone program continued this month with a virtual workshop on birding by ear and a trip to Holyoke. There is more on this exciting new program below in this newsletter. For more information, email dallard@hampshirebirdclub.org.

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

March workshops

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

Wednesday, March 2, 7-8 pm. Birding the Rhode Island Coast with Matt Schenck From wave battered rocky coasts to sheltered saltmarshes Rhode Island's South County coastline delivers a big coastal birding experience in a small package. Join naturalist and educator Matt Schenck for an informative talk covering what species can be found and where you might find them along this 30 mile stretch of the Ocean State.

Monday, March 7, 7-8 pm. March Do-It-Yourself Our next Do-It-Yourself Field Trip session is 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. Our February field trip was any place in the woods to find a winter flock, and the target birds were Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Downy Woodpecker, Golden-crowned Kinglet and an extra bird, Brown Creeper. If you'd like to join the March Zoom session to share your sightings and learn of the upcoming field trip, e-mail education@hampshirebirdclub.org.

Wednesday, March 16, 7-8 pm. Getting to Know the Saw-whet Owl with Bob Stevens. The Northern Saw-whet Owl is one of the most elusive birds to see in the wild. They are small, well camouflaged, very nocturnal, and live in oak/pine forests. We will discuss the Saw-whet Owl and its migration, including understanding where it lives and the special features it employs to survive and hunt in the dark forests. We will go over its migration habits which are entirely different than the migrations we are used to seeing, such as that of Canada Geese, and what we have learned by understanding the Saw-whet migration. We also will discuss how we, as birders and citizens, can help our Saw-whets survive.

Check the Education page on the Hampshire Bird Club website for April workshops. We’ll post them as soon as they are confirmed.

BIRDING FOR EVERYONE

The club’s new 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. Each month there is a one-hour online educational session (15 minute presentation, 45 minutes for questions, bird ID help, etc.) and a two-hour, in-person, beginner bird walk at an accessible location. The online sessions take place on the third Saturday of the month at 10:00 am; the in-person walks occur on the fourth Saturday of the month at 8:00 am. Please spread the word. Those interested should email dallard@hampshirebirdclub.org to sign up for the March offerings:

March 19, 10:00-11:00 am: Identifying Ducks (online presentation)
March 26, 8:00-10:00 am: Winsor Dam, Belchertown (in-person walk/sit)
A CHAT WITH HENRY LAPPEN

I had a chat with Henry Lappen in mid-February 2022. Here’s what he had to say about his beginnings in bird watching, some fun trips that he has taken, being the HBC librarian and, of course, juggling.

Newsletter: What brought you to the Hampshire Bird Club?

Henry Lappen: I had been birding for a while. I was part of a group in Burlington Vermont when I lived there, then Audubon Society of Portland [Oregon] and then Southeastern Vermont Audubon in Brattleboro. Then I moved down here to live in cohousing. I just looked for a group and found the club.

N: So going back a little further, what was it that originally got you interested in nature, and particularly in bird watching?

HL: I've always been into nature. I spent lots of time as a kid running through the woods where I grew up near the Blue Bills south of Boston. As I got older I did a lot of camping. Then my sister got into birds. It was the late 70s when I was living in Boston and she took me to the Arnold Arboretum to see a Barred Owl. When we got to the tree with the Barred Owl and I was looking through the binoculars, she described it and said that it didn't have horns. I said “This owl has horns.” She said “No, no, it's a Barred Owl. It doesn't have horns.” I said “Jacki, take a look. This owl has horns.” Sure enough, it was a Great Horned Owl. It had ousted the Barred Owl from that location. Same tree, same spot. That was pretty intriguing.

N: So going back a little further, what was it that originally got you interested in nature, and particularly in bird watching?

HL: Yeah, and my sister was birding so that started my birding that has lasted to today. Soon after that I moved to Burlington, Vermont and then I did a lot of birding up there.

N: So I know you've been on foreign trips and also trips around the US. Can you tell me about one or more of those?

HL: Well, wherever I've gone, since I started birding, I've brought binoculars. Probably the best trip was when I went to South Africa, about eight years ago. I went to perform with Clowns Without Borders South Africa [https://www.facebook.com/ClownsWithoutBordersSouthAfrica] and ended up doing 20 shows for schools and all kinds of community centers in a very rural part of South Africa, which was right next to Kruger National Park. Through birdingpal.org I found a guide who took me into the park. He knew all the birds in South Africa. I got incredible sightings from the day I arrived.

I arrived in South Africa late and got to the place I was staying very late at night, not sleeping the night before on the overnight flight. The guide picked me up at four the next morning, so now it was two nights without sleep. He took me to this amazing place near Johannesburg, a marsh that he knew about. I didn't even know the families the birds were in. I've been to Europe and I can figure out what the birds are there from what I know of birds here. But in South Africa I had no idea what a lot of those birds were.

Then we went on to Kruger and spent three days there. There were crazy birds there and, of course, the mammals were just astounding. The culture and the people were also amazing. I spent a month in South Africa, and it was one of the best months of my life.

N: That does sound like quite a trip. What about around here? Are there particular places you go to? Is it a “whatever shows up” type?

HL: I do less chasing now than I used to. I don’t do a lot in this area. I've already seen a lot of the birds. In the spring I like the core of the migration and in the fall hawk watching is still my favorite. Going anywhere for fall hawk watching is tops for me.

I bird more when I'm on the road like to the Boston area or upstate New York to do shows or when traveling. Right before Covid started my partner and I went to Cuba. That was fantastic birding.

N: Is that something you can just do on your own, or do you have to have a guide?

HL: You have to hire a guide to go into the national parks. I found a guide, again through birdingpal.org, but he didn't respond to my inquiries. I knew I wanted to go to Zapata Swamp, which is the big place for birds in Cuba. There are something like 20 birds named for the swamp like the Zapata Rail and Zapata Sparrow. So we booked an Airbnb and I asked the host before we went if she knew
about bird guides. She said that she knew a guy that could take me who was her next door neighbor. He was a guide, probably the best guide to the area, and we just accidentally lucked into him.

When I got there, before I could even unpack, he said “You want to see a Bee Hummingbird?” That’s the smallest bird in the world and one of the target birds of Cuba. He took me out in the backyard and there were all kinds of feeders including sugar water feeders. There were all kinds of bushes with berries. There were six Black-throated Blue Warblers and six Yellow-throated Warblers and eight Cape May Warblers. I was in heaven. But he was saying “No, no, no, the Bee Hummingbirds are over here.”

We got to see amazing birds, and then he took us into the swamp. I paid him for that, but he also took us to other places to look for other specialties such as a Bare-legged Owl. It's hard to come back from seeing so many warblers six to eight feet away or two Ovenbirds under our feet while we were eating breakfast. Back here spring migration is fun, but it pales, you know.

N: You've been the librarian for the HBC for a long time. Are you a reader, are you a collector of books, or do you have a secret desire to be a professional librarian?

HL: Well, Anne Cann was the librarian before me. She was retiring from the position and she asked if I would do it. I said “Sure.” I like libraries and I don't really buy books. It seems like waste of paper and money. Libraries have all the books anyone needs. I had no secret desire to be a librarian. When I became the club librarian though, I could buy interesting books about the places I was going and then give them to the library.

N: So speaking of work, I know that you are a professional juggler. How did that come to be? How do you become a professional juggler?

HL: It's like most things in my life: it was almost accidental, like me becoming a birder because my sister was a birder. I became a juggler after I learned how to juggle in college. When I moved to Burlington, Vermont I was juggling in the park one day. I didn't have a job at the time and this guy came up and said “Oh, we need a juggler for the opening of a new shopping center.” He hired me and then a week or less later another guy showed up and said, “Hey I need a juggler for my daughter's birthday party.” That’s how it started. I’ve been performing for about 40 years now.

I developed a show on birds using masks of birds. The idea was to do shows in schools, because a lot of schools said that they needed curriculum-based material. I never did the bird show much in schools, though. I still do my juggling show in schools. I have retired the bird mask show now because during the show the masks are shared between the kids and that won’t work since Covid showed up.

N: How do you get most of your bookings, word of mouth or through your website?

HL: It varies. I do get some booking inquiries through my website, henrylappen.com, but probably more word of mouth. A couple agents occasionally get me jobs and then I do some marketing by emailing or calling people.

N: So how do you get gigs in foreign countries? It seems like you do a fair number.

HL: I haven't done a lot of them. There was South Africa and I have performed in Panama, the latter being courtesy of Zeke Jakob. [Ed. note: Zeke was a young member of the HBC for several years. He received a scholarship from the club that helped get him started in his work in Panama on hummingbirds.] I knew him from the club and I had taught him and his siblings to juggle many, many years ago. I saw him at a club meeting. He was living in Panama at the time and he asked me to come down to Panama and do some shows. He did all the arranging.

The South Africa job came through tango dancing. That’s something I do, and through that I met a woman from South Africa whose son went to the same school I went to called The Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre, a school for physical comedy that you’ve probably never heard of. The fact that her son and I had both gone to this obscure school allowed me to meet him. He was running Clowns without Borders South Africa and he invited me to come to perform. I got a grant from a charity that sponsors performers, and I did some fundraising. I wasn't actually paid to go there, but the trip was paid for.

Wherever I travel I give shows. When I was in Cuba I did a show for my Airbnb host and my guide. It's nice to be able to give something back.

N: It sounds like a great job, actually.
HL: When I am performing it's great. Hustling for work on the computer or driving hours to do one show takes most of my time and that's not much fun.

N: In medieval times what you do for a job might have been called being a fool. And then club member Chris Yerlig who is a mime-clown also could fit in that same category. Can you think of any other bird club in the world that has two professional fools within its membership?

HL: No, I can’t. I met Chris at a county fair in Vermont. We were both performing there, and while we were chatting during a break, a hawk flew over. We both looked up and then we looked at each other and said, “You're a birder?” That’s how we became friends.

N: You’ve already said a little about this already, but when you’re not birding or juggling, what is it that occupies your time?

HL: The main thing is tango right now. That’s why I am doing less birding because I’m up late dancing so I’m not getting up at the crack of dawn to bird. That’s why I love hawk watching because I don't need to get up so early.

I have an orchard in my cohousing community that I take care of. I’m on the Amherst tree committee, so I do a lot of tree planting and educating people about trees. Right now I am making maple syrup and I also have nut trees. I love trees, and I have since before my love of birds.

N: Are there other things that the newsletter readers might be amused by or would like to know about you?

HL: I thought you would ask about my favorite bird.

N: I hadn’t planned on that, but I am happy to know what it is.

HL: It has to be a Wall Creeper.

N: OK, go ahead.

HL: A Wall Creeper is a European bird that hangs out on rock faces. It is a drab grey bird with a long, skinny beak. It flicks its wings every now and then and underneath it is bright scarlet. It’s a very unusual bird. I spent a semester in Spain – I did a house swap with a Basque family. The whole time I searched for Wall Creepers and didn’t see them; they’re very hard to find. I even offered to pay my son and his friend who were there with me to find one. I had to offer five euros for a bird because they were getting tired of me stopping every time we passed a rock face. We hadn’t found one, and then the last day I was there, I decided to go for a walk on the beach. I expected no birds on the beach, but it was lovely. Sure enough, there was a Wall Creeper on a rock face next to the beach, and I got to see 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 online programs about birds throughout this spring. All programs require registration; more information can be found at Arcadia events where you can register.

Dance of the American Woodcock
Park Hill Orchard, Easthampton
Saturday, March 19, 6:30-8:00 pm
Saturday, April 9, 7 – 8:30 pm

Waterfowl Migration
Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton
Saturday, March 26, 9:00-11:00 am

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

A wise person told me that there are just enough of the letter “h” in the Valley: Amherst has one too many, Northampton one too few, and Hadley has just the right number.

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