



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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Dear reader, have you noticed that, no matter what, things change? I've been around long enough that you'd think I knew that. Which brings me to our good old Hampshire Bird Club. You probably have noticed that lots of things about the HBC have changed in the past few years. The names of board members, the names of field trip leaders, and the ways in which we do club business are all quite different than they were just a few years ago. Some of that is the usual turnover as members move on and off committees. However, there has been a conscious commitment by the board and committees to change the face and the direction of the club. We now have a very active monthly program to bring new folks from diverse backgrounds into birding and the club. We have multiple ways to get together with other club members. And now the Conservation Committee is well on its way to reviving its work in one of the stated purposes of the HBC: to conserve birds and bird habitat. I can't help but think that we'll be watching birds together for many years to come.

On a completely different note, I have to share a fabulous bird sighting that happened last week while I was sitting in my living room. There are a few bushes next to the windows, one of which is our "bird bush", a lilac planted a few years ago that regularly attracts birds of all description. I noticed a Red-breasted Nuthatch in the bird bush, a sighting that was a regular event this winter season. This bird was uncharacteristically stationary. Then I noticed movement on the ground under the bush. It was another RB Nut, but he was vibrating his dropped wings and wiggling his backside. This he kept up for 30 seconds. She, in the bush, was admiring him. I can only hope that they set up household somewhere in view from my windows.

NEXT PROGRAM

Tuesday, May 9 at 7:15 PM

Joan Walsh presents

Full life cycle conservation of Roseate Terns

Wesley United Methodist Church, 98 North Maple Street, Hadley; also via Zoom

NOTE: BYOB (non-alcoholic) to the meeting if you want a beverage

Joan is Mass Audubon's Gerard A. Bertrand Chair of Natural History and Field Ornithology. She has been watching and learning from birds for 40 years and was the [Director of Bird Monitoring at Mass Audubon](#) from 2006 to 2017. During her career she has focused on research that has direct implications for bird conservation. This interest led to enlisting hundreds of citizen scientists for the creation of the highly regarded [Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas 2](#) and two [State of the Birds of Massachusetts](#) reports.

She was a [Farallon Island](#) biologist where she studied Elephant Seals, Tufted Puffins, Brandt's Cormorants, Western Gulls, and even did a little Great White Shark work. She went to graduate school in Georgia, where she studied Wood Storks, and was the former Director of Research at [Cape May Bird Observatory](#). Her formative years as an ornithologist were spent on [Great Gull Island, NY](#), home to the largest colonies of Common and Roseate Terns in the North Atlantic.

Joan has traveled in the U.S. (missing only OK, HI, and KY), Canada, Costa Rica, Belize, Mexico, Ireland, Europe, South America, South Georgia Island, and the Falklands (Malvinas). While being particularly keen on seabird and wading bird ecology and behavior, Joan has never met a bird she didn't love. She travels with an eye for culture as well as nature and can think of no better way to spend a day than to be in a new place, with new friends, simply watching birds.

UPCOMING PROGRAM

Tuesday, June 13: BYO Picnic (Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary)

BIRDS OF PREY REHAB UPDATE

Response from bird clubs, businesses, and private individuals was swift and substantial after news broke about damage to enclosures at Tom Ricardi's Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Center in Conway. A massive pine tree had fallen, slicing a raptor enclosure in half. Another enclosure also was damaged. Later that month, a 30-inch snowstorm crushed more enclosures in the same area.

That's when an all-volunteer crew comprising Hobie Iselin, Brian Kuzmeskus, and Mark Fortier got to work, ordering materials and a dumpster, and making a plan. Tom worked right along with the others when he wasn't off doing an educational program or caring for the 45–50 recovering raptors. George Regmund and Jesse Harrison also contributed.

The group set and poured new concrete footings (with great difficulty) and built the framework for a bank of six sturdy new enclosures. As of this writing, screened openings and doors are ready to install. Clear roofing will be placed the last week of April. Debris cleanup and painting will occur at a later date.

These enclosures would not have been built without the generous donations of bird clubs, businesses, and private individuals throughout the region. Special thanks to you, Hampshire Bird Club members, for your immediate financial response. Tom has been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support. "Unbelievable," he says.

I will provide a wrapup, along with a couple of raptor stories (good ones!) soon.

Deb Oakley



Six new enclosures take shape at Tom Ricardi's Birds of Prey Rehabilitation Center. Tom is in the forefront, Hobie Iselin and Brian Kuzmeskus, from left, work on the roof.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome to all who joined us in April—Jill Meyers, Marcia Wolff, and Ashley Bernard (Northampton); Andrew Wnuk, Kate Dahlstedt & Ed Tik, and Paula Christian (Belchertown); Adrienne Wax & Leslie Andrews (W. Palm Beach, FL); Genevieve Van de Merghel and Cheryl Pelland-Lak & Robert Lak (South Hadley); Terri Skill (Chicopee); Ann Fisher (W. Springfield); James J. Neeley (Shelburne Falls); Ian & Henry Raphael (Sunderland); Ezekial Jakub (Greenfield); and Sue & Ed Lewis (Worthington). We look forward to greeting you on the trail or at a meeting or program!

Donna Lee Ubertalli, Membership Secretary

BIRDING FOR EVERYONE

The Birding For Everyone (BFE) program is geared toward beginner birders and those who, historically, have not been included in the birding community: people young in age, or those from underrepresented minority groups or who have disabilities that make birding difficult. A one hour online educational session (half presentation, half discussion) is held prior to a two hour, in-person bird walk at an accessible location. All events are free and open to the public. Please help spread the word! The online presentation requires no registration (check the HBC website for the Zoom link). Those interested in attending the walk can register at bit.ly/2023bfe. Upcoming sessions are:

May 20, 2023, 10–11 AM: Warblers and the Importance of Focusing on One Bird at a Time (Talk)

May 27, 2023, 7:45–10:00 AM: Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton (Walk)

WE NEED A BOUTIQUE VOLUNTEER

Betsy Higgins has kept the HBC boutique in business for years. She needs to step away now. Would you be willing to step up and help? If you are interested and would like to know more, you can contact a board member (board@hampshirebirdclub.org) or Betsy (higgins.elizabetha@gmail.com and 413-320-2026).

HBC BOARD ELECTION

The HBC bylaws amendments passed in the online voting after the April meeting, with 77 members voting in favor of adoption and zero voting against. The revised bylaws are available on the HBC website under the “About” tab. These changes now allow us to officially offer the board election via online balloting and the Nominating Committee is free to nominate club members who have not yet completed a full year of membership. The goal of the changes is to provide broader representation of club members in the voting process and to broaden representation on the board.

Four of the current board members are at the end of their two-year terms. They are Derek Allard, Ruth Garbett, Jim Lafley, and Josh Rose. Ruth and Jim have decided to step down from the board. Derek and Josh are willing to run for another two-year term. The Nominating Committee, peopled by Carol Fournier, Dave Gross, and Kalpesh Krishna, have assembled a slate of candidates: Derek Allard, Cory Elowe, Michealle Lar-kins, Bill Randolph, and Josh Rose. You, the discriminating reader, will note that there are five candidates for four board openings. Thus, for the first time in the history of the HBC, this will be a real election! To assist your voting analysis, the candidates have produced short summaries of their views of the HBC and why they are interested in serving on the board. You can review the statements at hampshirebirdclub.org/wp-content/uploads/Board-candidate-statements-May-2023.pdf. The candidate statements will also be included with the online ballot.

The election will open on Wednesday, May 10, will be online, and will be available for a week. Current members will receive an email on May 10 with the link to the ballot. If you prefer a paper ballot, please contact newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org, and one will be dispatched to you posthaste.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT AND WORKSHOPS

Our April workshops, *Birding New Hampshire* and *Birding with Bioacoustics in Conway, MA*, were fascinating and well attended by HBC members and members of the Allen and Hoffman Bird Clubs.

THANK YOU for using our registration form. On the [Education Workshops page](#), click on the link in the workshop description: “To register, click [here](#).” You will receive an email with the Zoom link the day before the workshop. PLEASE register *before* the day of the workshop. We do not monitor the registration after noon on the presentation day. Thank you! Questions? Email us at education@hampshirebirdclub.org.

New member bird walk—open to all: We had to cancel the April 23 bird walk due to rain, but please join us for our usual new member bird walk before the June HBC picnic at Arcadia. *Directions will be posted at <https://hampshirebirdclub.org/education-committee/>.*

Do-It-Yourself Field Trip: Our next DIY Field Trip will be on ~~Monday, May 1~~ **Tuesday, May 16**, 7 PM 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 April field trip location was Bray Lake, Mt. Tom Reservation in Holyoke, and the target birds were Blue-headed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Brown Creeper. If you'd like to join the May Zoom session to share your April sightings and learn of the upcoming field trip, please register as described above. (Date changed after newsletter press time.)

May workshops:

- Tuesday, May 2, 7–8 PM. Female Bird Song: She sings, too! with Katie Schroeder and Monique Dumais
- ~~Monday, May 1~~ **Tuesday, May 16**, 7–8 PM. DIY

If you have an idea for a workshop or are interested in joining the Education Committee, email us at education@hampshirebirdclub.org.

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: hampshirebirdclub.org/program-videos/.

SPRING FIELD TRIPS

Field Trip Guidelines

1. Field trip participant numbers are determined by the field trip leader.
2. All field trip leaders and participants must be fully vaccinated, are required to wear a mask when asked, and must be aware of maintaining a safe social distance during the event.
3. Participants should use the contact information in the trip 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 after they register. Please do not show up for a trip unless you have registered for it.

Remember that we encourage carpooling. We ask that riders share costs with drivers as a matter of courtesy. The HBC recommends using the current federal mileage reimbursement rate, shared by all occupants, but the rate for a vehicle is entirely up to the driver and passengers and should be determined before leaving.

Monday, May 15. Fannie Stebbins Wildlife Refuge, 6–11 AM. Aaron Hulsey and Joe Oliverio will co-lead a walk at Fannie Stebbins to look for a variety of spring migrants and nesting birds. Joe will be able to answer any photography questions participants may have. The walk will be around three miles on flat trails through forest and wetland habitats. Trails can be muddy, so wear appropriate footwear. We will be meeting at the paved parking area on West Road. For information or to register email Aaron at thomas.hulsey487@gmail.com. (E)

Wednesday, May 17. Wildwood Cemetery, Amherst, 7-10 AM. Join Aaron Hulsey, Lesley Farlow, and Steve Winn as they search for warblers, thrushes, and other spring migrants in and around this historic site. Cemetery staff may also stop by to tell us about how the “cemetery movement” of the last century resulted in beautifully designed cemeteries like Wildwood. For information or to register call Steve at 413-530-3256. (E)

Saturday, May 20. 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 contact Dave (djgross@gmail.com or 413-687-8161) or Bob (raz@umass.edu or 413-585-0405). (E/M/S)

Sunday, May 21. Mt Holyoke, 6 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 AM. This is an occasionally steep hike on a paved road. For more information or to register contact Mike (413-585-5864). (M/S)

Sunday, June 4. Exploratory Field Trip to Fog Hollow, Southampton. 7–9 AM. Bird club members are invited to this exploratory field trip at Fog Hollow in Southampton. An exploratory field trip directs members to a location to both explore the location and discover what bird species are there without a designated leader. Fog Hollow, in the Southampton Wildlife Management Area, is located off Cook Road, Southampton. If you are traveling south on Cook Road, a parking area is on the left near the power lines. (E)

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.

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

Quabbin Park, March 21: A group of thirteen HBC members assembled at the Quabbin Park visitor's center at 7:30 AM for a 2 ¼ hour walk and drive around the southern end of Quabbin. We spent a bit of time at Winsor Dam looking at ducks and gulls a very long way up the reservoir at the edge of an ice sheet. As the ducks and gulls woke up, and after much discussion, the ducks turned into Mallards and the gulls were thought to be

Ring-billed. There were many American Robins along the south face of the dam, and by the end of the trip we had counted 115.

We also visited the spillway and Goodenough Dike, locating a grebe at the latter. Once again, much discussion arrived at an assignment of Horned for the grebe, but later examination of photos taken by Harlee Strauss magically converted the Horned into a Red-necked Grebe. In another interesting example of birds converting from one species to another, a raptor viewed at a distance from the dike alternated between Red-tailed Hawk and Bald Eagle. It was a dramatic sight to behold! In all the group found 24 species, including Common Loon, Common Merganser, (common) American Crow, and (uncommon) Red-breasted Nuthatch.

Dave Gross

Easthampton Community Gardens, March 24: About 20 minutes after sunset, HBC members Sally Hills, Donna Lee Ubertalli, Patricia Eagan, Carol Fournier, and sharp-eyed Robin White joined Jim Lafley and were treated to some very close and entertaining American Woodcock displays both on the ground and in the air for about 30 minutes. A couple of birds flew close enough that a few of us ducked. Overall this was a very successful and rewarding trip.

Jim Lafley

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary

The following programs are offered by Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary in Easthampton. More programs can be found at www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/wildlife-sanctuaries/arcadia.

Saturday Morning Bird Walks—May 6, 7:00–8:30 AM

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton

Spring Migration Bird Walks—May 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12; 6:30–8:00 AM

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton

Mass Audubon Bird-a-thon—May 12–13

[Registration](#) is open and fundraising has begun for the 40th anniversary Bird-a-thon! This year's 24 hours of birding is from 6 PM on Friday, May 12, to 6 PM on Saturday, May 13. Our 2023 goal is to raise \$20,000 to make Arcadia and the West Region's work possible. We are competing to retake both the [County Cup](#) and the [Sitting Duck Award](#) for Hampshire County! Register at the Mass Audubon website.

Help us achieve your goals by signing up as a fundraiser and/or birder on our West Region [team page](#) and clicking the blue "Join Team." You'll be prompted to set a fundraising goal and set up a page and/or sign up to be a competitive birder. This year's [rules](#) can be found on the Mass Audubon website.

There are rewards for fundraising! Raise \$125 and receive a Bird-a-thon T-shirt. Raise \$500 by the end of Bird-a-thon and you can go birding with David Sibley and Joan Walsh in September.

Just want to make a donation? That's great! Visit the West's [team page](#) and click the orange "Donate Now" button or send a check payable to "Mass Audubon" and include "Bird-a-thon" in the memo, to Arcadia, 127 Combs Road, Easthampton, MA 01027.

Questions? Get in touch with Carolyn Cushing, cecushing@massaudubon.org or 413-276-7620.

Hitchcock Center for the Environment

The annual **Flora and Faunathon** to support the Hitchcock Center will be held on May 6 and 7. You can enter yourself or as a team, you can raise pledges for the center, and you can pledge to a team. You can get a fanny pack! There are contests and prizes! There is a culminating event at the center on Sunday the 7th! To read more about the event, to enter, or to pledge to a team you can visit hitchcockcenterfortheenvironment.sal-salabs.org/floraandfaunathon2023/index.html. [Ed. note: I am on David Spector's team. We'd be happy to have your support. (Blatant self-promotion.)]

Spoil a good walk: go birding!

newsletter@hampshirebirdclub.org

Dave Gross, Editor