



THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

February 2016

2016 CALENDAR

(See inside for details)

November 1, 2015 through March 31, 2016 **NHBC 23rd Annual Winter Feeder Survey**

Wednesday, February 3, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison**

Thursday, February 11, 7:00 pm **Members' Night**

Note new date

Saturday, February 27, 7:00 am **Sachuest Point NWR and Rhode Island Coast** (Snow date: Sunday, February 28)

Wednesday, March 2, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Stratford Shore & Great Meadows**

Thursday, March 10, 7:00 pm **William Burt – Rare and Elusive Birds of North America**

Tuesday, March 15, 7:00 pm **Birds in Words – *The Thing with Feathers* by Noah Strycher**

Sunday, March 20, 8:00 am **Cromwell Meadows Wildlife Management Area**

Saturday, April 2, 8:30 am **The Richard English Memorial Field Trip: Lighthouse Point to the Richard English Bird Sanctuary**

Saturday, April 2, 11:30 am **Gull and Gannet Frenzy: Southport Beach, Southport**

Wednesday, April 6, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: CT Audubon Coastal Center, Milford**

Saturday, April 9, 8:00 am **East Rock Birding and Trail Maintenance, New Haven**

Thursday, April 14, 7:00 pm **Michele Parrett – Beyond the Scope: The Social Lives of Captive Parrots**

Wednesday, April 20, 7:30 am **Lake Chamberlain, Bethany**

Saturday, April 23, 7:30 am **Ansonia Nature Center, Ansonia**

Sunday, April 24, 10:00 am to noon **East Rock Garlic Mustard Pull**

Saturday, April 30, 9:00 am **Bird Walk for Families at East Rock Park, New Haven**

Sunday, May 1, 7:30 am **Bent of the River Wildlife Sanctuary, Southbury**

Wednesday, May 4, 7:30 am **First Wednesday Walk: East Rock Park, New Haven**

Saturday, May 7, 6:00 am **Big Day Marathon**

Note new date: Saturday, May 7, 8:00 am **East Rock Park with Ranger Dan, New Haven**

Sunday, May 8, 7:30 am **Housatonic River, Kent**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Happy New Year!

How many of us make serious New Year's resolutions? How many of us stay serious about our resolutions beyond Martin Luther King Day or Ground Hogs Day?

I have made little progress on my resolutions. My desk is still cluttered. I have shed no pounds, in fact I may have gained an inch in the midsection. I have not started to read any books on my reading list. In fact my reading list has expanded along with my waistline. The tomes of Melville, Homer, Carlyle and Joyce will languish another year on the shelf. The lottery jackpots have gone to other people in faraway states (which calls to mind the other forgotten resolution...to buy a Powerball ticket!). And I have not saved any hectares of salt marshes or grasslands for birds...yet.

I am off to a terrible start. A self-effacing sense of humor is a prerequisite for this exercise or else a deep depression will ensue and last until the spring migration.

But one resolution is still intact, bird more.

Instead of taking a trip to the convenience store to buy Powerball tickets, I have taken trips to meadows, marshes and cornfields in Connecticut. I recently took a trip to the Windsor area to search for the Pink Footed Goose and the Ross's Goose. While I was standing by the pond scanning back and forth over the flock of Canada Geese and Mallards, a number of raucous flocks of hundreds of Canada Geese descended onto the pond. My pulse raced and the hair stood up on the back of my neck. Such a visceral reaction to such commoners. I talked and quipped about the experience with other birders that were arriving and departing from the pond like the geese but to a smaller scale. We birders are an interesting flock aren't we? We can create instant camaraderie. Such gold in this experience.

Henry David Thoreau took one of his typical walks into a well-known meadow in Concord after a deep October frost. The walking was tough because of the frozen hummocks. He listed "crows, larks, a marsh hawk and dark-colored sparrows." He had recently been reading about how gold miners in Australia were decimating their landscape in their quest. He compared the physical gold that the miners destroyed the land over to the allegorical gold in his Concord meadow and to that in his very being. His journal entry for October 18, 1855 combined

(Continued on next page)

NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB – 2015-2016

OFFICERS

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<i>Secretary</i>	Mike Ferrari mike.ferrari@att.net	203.435.5712

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<i>Yearbook Chair</i>	Betty Zuraw bz4feathers@sbcglobal.net	860.632.1156

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

<i>The BIG SIT</i>	John Triana jtriana1@sbcglobal.net	203.758.7203
<i>Birds in Words</i>	Kris Johnson kriswaxwing99@gmail.com	203.288.3087
<i>Christmas Bird Count</i>	Chris Loscalzo closalz@optonline.net	203.389.6508
<i>Email List</i>	Mike Ferrari mike.ferrari@att.net	203.435.5712
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<i>Winter Feeder Survey</i>	Peter Vitali vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net	203.288.0621

(*President's Message Continued from first page*)

these impressions of the frozen meadow and the wasted lands in Australia and became one of his most renowned quotes:

“Pursue some path, however narrow and crooked, in which you can walk with love and reverence.”

A great pearl of wisdom from one of his regular walks seeing his common birds. I do not have Thoreau's wisdom or genius. I am, however, inspired by his same muses. I can find gold in my common experiences. Yes “to bird more” is a New Year's resolution I can keep.

--Craig Repasz

FROM THE BOARD

The next board meeting is Thursday, February 25 at 6:45 pm at the Regional Water Authority in New Haven.

The deadline for submissions to the April *Chickadee* is March 25. Send to Donna Batsford: donnabatsford@gmail.com

If you take pictures of NHBC events or on NHBC trips, please consider sending one to the newsletter to be included with the report. Send them to Donna Batsford at donnabatsford@gmail.com

Ad Hawk

We are forming an ad Hawk [sic] committee and looking for volunteers.

We would like to redesign and reissue our member application brochure, and create a business card, and a bird checklist. These materials will be given out to people who join us on our bird walks and other events. This is a great way for us to give ourselves a new look and new exposure.

The committee will design, publish and distribute the new material. Contact Vice President DeWitt Allen at allendatlow@gmail.com

BIRDS IN WORDS

Join in on “Birds in Words,” NHBC's gathering of people who like reading books on their favorite hobby. Since the group began, we've read more than 25 books on just about every aspect of birds, birding, and birders and had some lively discussions. Share in the fun. We meet at 7 pm at Whitney Center. For details, contact: Kris Johnson: kriswaxwing99@gmail.com, 203-288-3087.

We are next reading *The Thing with Feathers: The Surprising Lives of Birds and What They Reveal About Being Human* by Noah Stryker and will discuss this book on Tuesday, March 15 from 7-9 at Whitney Center in the 6th floor conference room. Hope to see you there.

--Kris Johnson

INDOOR PROGRAMS

Monthly indoor programs start in September and are held on the second Thursday of the month. The social half-hour at meetings begins at 7:00 pm; the meeting and program begin at 7:30 pm. Inclement weather or other emergency may cancel a meeting. Cancellation notices will be sent via the club email, and will be posted on the club website, and online on ctbird. Meetings are at Whitney Center, Cultural Arts Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden. The facility is wheelchair accessible.

Directions to Whitney Center (WC):

From I-95 North or South: Exit to I-91 North in New Haven. Take Exit 6 (Willow St.). At end of ramp go right onto Willow and proceed on Willow to the end (to Whitney Ave.). Turn right onto Whitney; go 1.7 mi. to Treadwell St. (at Citgo Gas intersection) and make SHARP left onto Treadwell. Proceed 0.7 mi. on Treadwell, turn left onto Leeder Hill Drive (traffic light). Whitney Center is shortly on the right. Enter SECOND drive-way (South Entrance) and take immediate left into raised parking lot.

From I-91 South: Take Exit 6 (Willow St.) in New Haven. At end of ramp, turn right onto Willow and proceed as above.

From Wilbur Cross (Rt. 15-North or South): Take Exit 60. Right at end of ramp (Dixwell Ave./Rt.10). Go about 1 mi. to traffic light at Treadwell St. Left on Treadwell. Go 0.3 mi. to traffic light (Leeder Hill), turn right. WC is shortly on the right. Enter SECOND drive-way (South Entrance), take immediate left into raised parking lot.

Meeting is in WC's South Building, accessed via the main door of the portico that is in view from the parking lot. Turn right down the hallway. Cultural Arts Center is a short distance on the left.

Thursday, February 11 Members' Night

Don't be bashful! Be sure not to miss this opportunity to add another 15 minutes of fame to your birding memoirs. Remember: You'll be among the best of birding friends. Members' Night is a chance to share your favorite photos, stories, birding haunts, and memories of birds and bird club activities with an appreciative audience. We will have slide and Power Point capability. Please contact Indoor Program Chair Andrea Kerin: 203-331-6067 or andrea@kerin.com with details of what you would like to show. Members' Night is always a lot of fun!

Thursday, March 10—William Burt Rare and Elusive Birds of North America

Late on a June night, in the middle of a vast Spartina marsh in eastern Maryland, William Burt achieved his longtime goal to photograph the Black Rail, a mythic, red-eyed bird so rare and deftly elusive in the fine grass of its meadow home that few ornithologists had ever even seen it. But the trip was just the first of many photo quests made by this renowned naturalist, photographer and writer, and the first phase of a mission that would occupy him for some 16 years and take him to marshes, bogs, swamps, and other wild lands all over North America. His mission: To photograph all 20 of the most elusive "ghost" birds on the continent, and to photograph them as never before, close up and undisturbed in their wild and secret haunts. He spent weeks at a time in the field, using his own hand-built equipment and often visiting sites repeatedly, year after year in certain cases—

sometimes in the middle of the night—to get the picture he was after. In tonight's presentation, we journey with William to the remote places he visited in search of the rails, bitterns, nightjars, and other "mystery birds" birders long to see.

Thursday, April 14—Michele Parrett Beyond the Scope: The Social Lives of Captive Parrots

Parrots have enchanted us for centuries. We find their plumage breathtaking, their intellectual abilities intriguing, and their antics amusing. Above all, perhaps we're most fascinated by their ability to talk and by the ways they use words to connect with us. Parrots are highly social by nature, but we usually underestimate their need for attention and interaction when we bring them into our homes. Join us for an inside look at the social and emotional lives and needs of captive parrots. Even if you've never owned a parrot, this presentation will shed intriguing light on how wonderfully complex, intelligent, sensitive, and amusing parrots truly are. Our speaker has pursued a lifelong passion and fascination with parrots. A onetime owner of a parrot store, she now is Director of Humane Education with Foster Parrots, Ltd. and The New England Wildlife Sanctuary in Rhode Island, where she works on behalf of parrots that would otherwise have no place to call home. Her other passion is humane education and through numerous programs she works tirelessly to encourage people of all ages to become thoughtful, responsible stewards of the Earth.

Please Note: As stated in the Club's by-laws, the April meeting is traditionally the Annual Meeting, which includes presentation of a slate of officers and their election.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

David Ackman
Madison

Kathleen Cooney
New Haven

Kevin Leahy
Naugatuck

Donna Pursley
North Branford

Ulla Weekes
Westport

Jan Collins
Somers

John Hagmann
New Haven

Darlene J Moore
Farmington

Debbie Smith
Hamden

Christopher Zurcher
Rachel Heerema
New Haven

FIELD TRIPS / OUTDOOR EVENTS

All levels of birders are invited to all field trips, and every effort is made on all trips to help beginners. If you are new to birding or have any special needs, please be sure to let the leader know at the start of the field trip. More details, if required, and/or updates on these trips will be given at the indoor meetings and in the newsletter. You can also check the Club's website: <www.newhavenbirdclub.org> for trip information and watch for emails sent by the Club. Or contact trip leaders directly if you have questions about any of their trips. The New Haven Bird Club does not charge any fees for its outdoor programs, but participants are responsible for the cost of their food, transportation, and entrance fees (where charged), unless prior arrangements are made by the Club. Carpooling is encouraged to avoid parking problems at some destinations and to promote conservation of natural resources.

Cancellation Policy: Inclement weather or another emergency may cancel a field trip. Check the sources listed above or contact the leader of the trip directly if you have any questions about a possible cancellation.

NHBC 23rd Annual Winter Feeder Survey November 1 through March 31, 2016

This is a yearly census to determine the number and frequency of birds visiting feeders in the greater New Haven area. You are invited to watch and record the activity at your feeder at least once a week for the entire time period. Contact: Peter Vitalii: 203-288-0621 or vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net

First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison Wednesday, February 3, 2016, 8:00 am

Enjoy a mid-week field trip to Hammonasset Beach State Park, one of the state's best birding locations in any season of the year. We will look for sea ducks, grassland species, and rarities. Meet at the park entrance at 8:00 am. Leader: Greg Hanisek: 203-525-1558 or ctgreg@yahoo.com

Note new date

Sachuest Point NWR and Rhode Island Coast Saturday, February 27, 2016, 7:00 am (Snow date: Sunday, February 28, 2016)

This all-day trip includes stops at Sachuest Point NWR, Beavertail State Park, Moonstone Beach, Trustum Pond, and other great birding sites on the Rhode Island coast. We will see lots of sea ducks, including all three scoter species, Common Eider, and Harlequin Duck. We'll look for birds of prey, including Rough-legged Hawk and several owl species. We'll also be on the lookout for alcids and rare gulls. Dress warmly—it's likely to be cold and windy on the coast. The walk is a bit strenuous. Bring lunch and a scope if you have one. Meet at the Branford commuter lot located at Exit 55 off I-95. Leader: Chris Loscalzo: 203-389-6508 or closcalz@optonline.net

First Wednesday Walk: Stratford Shore & Great Meadows Wednesday, March 2, 8:00 am

Join us on a visit to this excellent birding area. We'll look for oceanic birds such as Long-tailed Duck and scoters, as well as raptors and shorebirds. We will meet at the Dunkin Donuts parking lot at 60 Access Rd. near the intersection with Main St. (Rt. 113). We carpool from there. Leader: Frank Mantlik: 203-984-9410 or mantlik@sbcglobal.net

Cromwell Meadows Wildlife Management Area Sunday, March 20, 8:00 am

This WMA in Middlesex County is situated along the confluence of the Mattabeset and Coginchaug Rivers and parallels Rt. 9. A wide dirt/gravel path through the area provides good walking access. Snow or snowmelt may be on the path so wear sturdy, water-resistant boots. The wetland supports large numbers of wintering and spring migrant waterfowl, including Wood Duck, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, and Common Merganser. We also seek views of nesting Bald Eagle, woodpeckers, and Eastern Bluebird. Wood Frogs and Spring Peepers are expected to provide a background chorus. Plan your travel route in advance because access to the site is obscure. One option for directions: From I-91, take exit 22 to 9S, then take exit 19 (Rt 372/West St) in Cromwell. Turn onto 372E, then take the second right onto Hicksville Rd, which becomes South St. The WMA entrance is on the right, opposite 22 Diane Drive. For a "Mattabeset River Canoe Trail Guide" with site map, go to www.conservect.org and click on "Resources." Leader: Steve Broker: 203-747-6843 or Ls.Broker@cox.net

Lighthouse Point to the Richard English Bird Sanctuary The Richard English Memorial Field Trip Saturday, April 2, 8:30 am

Meet at the Lighthouse Point Park hawk watch parking lot (2 Lighthouse Rd, New Haven) and bird the harbor shore for gulls, loons, ducks, and early returning shorebirds. We then proceed to the Richard English Bird Sanctuary at the Deer Lake Scout Camp in Killingworth (101 Paper Mill Rd, Killingworth). We finish our birding tour with a visit to Hammonasset Beach State Park. This is an all-day trip; bring lunch and dress warmly. Leader: Mike Horn 203-288-1891 or mfhorn@att.net.

Gull and Gannet Frenzy, Southport Beach, Southport Saturday, April 2, 11:30 am

Join us as we search for plankton-feeding flocks of gulls, including the rare Little and Black-headed Gulls. We'll also hope to see Northern Gannets plunge-feeding offshore. Wear waterproof shoes for walking on the tidal mudflats, and dress warmly. We may also carpool to nearby sites. End by 2:30 pm. Meet at 11:30 am at Southport Beach, 1505 Pequot Ave., Southport, (at the intersection of Pequot and Sasco Creek Road, along the Westport/Fairfield border). Leader: Frank Mantlik; 203-984-9410 or mantlik@sbcglobal.net

First Wednesday Walk: CT Audubon Coastal Center, Milford Wednesday, April 6, 8:00 am

Enjoy an early spring trip to one of the best local birding spots. We look out into the marsh and along the shore for waterfowl, shorebirds, waders, and raptors. Last year there was a late Snowy Owl. Meet at the Coastal Center parking lot, located at 1 Milford Point Rd. Leader: Stephen Spector: 203-876-7461 (home), 203-928-8089 (cell) or charsjs@sbcglobal.net

East Rock Birding and Trail Maintenance, New Haven Saturday, April 9, 8:00 am

Meet at the Eli Whitney Museum parking lot (915 Whitney Ave., Hamden) for a bird walk from 8-9:30 am. Then join Park Ranger Dan Barvir to help with light trail maintenance along the river until noon. Bring work gloves & pruning shears if you have them. Leader: Dan Barvir: 203-946-6086 or dbarvir@newhavenct.net

Lake Chamberlain, Bethany Wednesday, April 20, 7:30 am

Join Past-president Bill Batsford to check out this excellent birding area. Lake Chamberlain, a Regional Water Authority property, is surrounded by coniferous forest and it has open fields and thickets. Early spring migrants likely to be seen are Palm and Pine Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-headed Vireo, and Eastern Phoebe. Bluebirds and Tree Swallows nest in birdhouses. Meet at the RWA parking lot on Sperry Rd., on the right just past Morris Rd. in Bethany. Leader: Bill Batsford: 203-787-1642 (home), 203-494-4325 (cell), or william.batsford@yale.edu

Ansonia Nature Center, Ansonia Saturday, April 23, 7:30 am

Enjoy a walk at this great birding location. The nature center has a small pond, grassy fields, thickets, wetlands, and woods. The woods have had Northern Goshawk and Great Horned Owls nesting there, and there are often surprises. Meet at the nature center parking lot, 10 Deerfield Lane (off Benz Rd.) in Ansonia. Leader, Maria Stockmal: 203-305-3728, m.stockmal@snet.net

East Rock Garlic Mustard Pull Sunday, April 24, 10 am to noon

Take part in a crucial conservation project. Help remove garlic mustard from East Rock Park, an Important Bird Area that's a vital migratory bird stopover and breeding habitat. This invasive plant is a pernicious, prolific pest that can overrun forested areas, squeeze out native spring flowers, kill butterfly caterpillars, and alter the habitat of our native birds. In 3 years, we've already made a significant improvement at this site! Long pants and sleeves are recommended. Bring work gloves if you have them. Meet at Eli Whitney Museum, 915 Whitney Ave., Hamden. Leader: Winie Wirth: 203-859-2971 or wirthwitte@att.net

Bird Walk for Families at East Rock Park, New Haven Saturday, April 30, 9:00 am

On this walk by the park's Mill River, children, accompanied by adults, will search for warblers and other spring migrants. Other

interested adults are also welcome to join the walk in this famous spring birding site. Meet at the Eli Whitney Museum parking lot, 915 Whitney Ave., Hamden. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them. Leader: Florence McBride: 203-288-6777 or fmc_b_warbler@yahoo.com

Bent of the River Wildlife Sanctuary, Southbury Sunday, May 1, 7:30 am

Explore a prime birding location along the Pomperaug River in Southbury where more than 100 species of birds have been observed in a single day. This beautiful and highly diverse habitat is owned and maintained by the National Audubon Society. Take Exit 14 off Rt. 84. Go north on Rt. 172, then turn left onto East Flat Hill Rd. (church on corner). Continue to sanctuary entrance on left. The trip involves moderately strenuous hiking. Leader: Roy Harvey: 203-888-5757 or rmharvey@snet.net

First Wednesday Walk: East Rock Park, New Haven Wednesday, May 4, 7:30 am

East Rock Park in early May is one of the best places in the state to see migrant warblers. Fifteen to twenty species are possible on a good day. Meet at the covered bridge near the Eli Whitney Museum, 915 Whitney Ave., Hamden. Leaders:

Bill Batsford: 203-494-4325, or william.batsford@yale.edu

Frank Mantlik: 203-984-9410 or mantlik@sbcglobal.net

John Oshlick: 203-584-1955 or john.oshlic@yahoo.com

Big Day Marathon Saturday, May 7, 6:00 am

Take part in all or part of this event. We'll focus on New Haven area hotspots, seeking 100-130 species. We start at East Rock and search several other local migrant traps, as well as the coast from Lordship to Hammonasset. Meet at the Eli Whitney Museum parking lot, 915 Whitney Avenue, Hamden, at 6:00 am. Leader: John Oshlick: 203-584-1955 or john.oshlic@yahoo.com

Note new date

East Rock Park with Ranger Dan, New Haven Saturday, May 7, 8:00 am

Join Ranger Dan Barvir at this premier site for warblers and other spring migrants. We will meet at the Rice Field (baseball field) end of East Rock Park on English Drive. Leader: Ranger Dan Barvir: 203-946-6086 or dbarvir@newhavenct.org

Housatonic River, Kent Sunday, May 8, 7:30 am

Today we enjoy the riparian woodlands along the Housatonic in Kent, CT. We meet at the parking area on the southwest corner of Bull's Bridge Rd and Rt. 7 (Kent Rd.) south of Kent. We car-pool from there, paralleling the Housatonic via Schaticoke Rd, and Skiff Mountain Rd to River Rd, listening and looking for spring migrants. The area is famed for warblers, including Cerulean, Worm-eating, and many others. Veery, Swainson's and Wood Thrushes and Pileated Woodpecker are also possible. Bring lunch or eat in charming Kent. Leader: Renee Baade: 203-526-7667 (cell), 203-270-9953 (home) or rbaade@juno.com

FIELD TRIP REPORTS

December First Wednesday Walk at Hammonasset Report

On Wednesday, December 2, Jerry Connolly led the walk at Hammonasset Beach State Park. The day was foggy with intermittent light rain. 31 species were seen: Canada Goose, American Black Duck, Mallard, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Cooper's Hawk, Accipiter sp., Red-tailed Hawk, Black-bellied Plover, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle), White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, American Goldfinch

Moodus Reservoir, Bashan Lake, Moodus/East Haddam area Trip report

On Sunday, December 13, Steve Broker led a trip to the Moodus Reservoir and Bashan Lake. The day was very warm for December. 38 species were seen: Canada Goose, American Black Duck, Mallard, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, gull sp., Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon), Mourning Dove, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, American Kestrel, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing,



Photo by Amanda Kallenbach

American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow

January First Wednesday Walk to Harkness State Park Report



Photo by Lori Datlow

On January 6, Tina Green led a group of 27 through Harkness State Park in Waterford. 40 species were seen: Brant, Canada Goose, Gadwall, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Mallard, Red-breasted Merganser, Common Loon, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Cormorant, cormorant sp., Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Purple Sandpiper, Ring-billed Gull,

Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle), American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored), White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, House Finch



Carolina Wren

Photo by Félix Sangari Garcia

Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison Trip Report



Photo by Kelvin Cole

On January 9th the first New Haven Bird Club weekend walk of the year saw 25 participants find 43 different species over four hours this morning in the park while negotiating an extremely high tide. The weather

was perfect given the date. Highlights included two first winter Baltimore Orioles, a single Purple Sandpiper and a Dunlin with ten Ruddy Turnstones on the jetty, a Fox Sparrow and a close Northern Harrier.

Species seen: Canada Goose, American Black Duck, Mallard, Surf Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Dunlin, Purple Sandpiper, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull (American), Great Black-backed Gull, Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon), Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted), Blue Jay, American Crow, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Carolina Wren, American Robin, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle), Chipping Sparrow, Fox Sparrow (Red), Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored), White-throated Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Baltimore Oriole, House Finch, American Goldfinch, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, White-breasted Nuthatch, Song Sparrow

--Paul Wolter

BE SURE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.newhavenbirdclub.org

The website is organized to provide a comprehensive listing of our activities as well as useful resources for new and experienced birders in Connecticut.

New Haven Christmas Bird Count Report

On Saturday, December 19th, 2015, the 116th annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count was held. There were several memorable aspects to the count, including the fact that it was run on the coldest day of the warmest December on record. It may be remembered best for its “Western” highlights: the rarest species seen on count day were the Western Tanager at Peat Meadow Park in East Haven (found by John Oshlick and Dan Barvir) and the “Western” Flycatcher on the Branford Hills Elementary School grounds in Branford (found by Jim Cortina and observed by many). The tanager was only the second one ever recorded on the NH CBC. The previous sighting was in 1979. The flycatcher was either a Pacific-slope or Cordilleran Flycatcher. These two empidonax species can be differentiated reliably only by song and breeding range. Either species qualifies as a new species for our all-time count list.

Another, somewhat concerning aspect of the count was that numbers of birds were decidedly low in general, for reasons not fully understood. Other notable species observed on count day included: Snow Goose, all three scoter species, Red-necked Grebe, Northern Gannet, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Razorbill, Eastern Phoebe, White-crowned Sparrow, ammodramus sparrow species, and Baltimore Oriole. A Cave Swallow was noted during count week.

The final results were: Snow Goose, 1; Brant, 634; Canada Goose, 3456; Mute Swan, 57; Wood Duck, 27; Gadwall, 100; American Wigeon, 42; American Black Duck, 316; Mallard, 845; Northern Pintail, 6; Green-winged Teal, 54; Ring-necked Duck, 154; Greater Scaup, 1843; Lesser Scaup, 3; Surf Scoter, 5; White-winged Scoter, 2; Black Scoter, 2; Long-tailed Duck, 37; Bufflehead, 257; Common Goldeneye, 69; Hooded Merganser, 183; Common Merganser, 11; Red-breasted Merganser, 231; Wild Turkey, 56; Red-throated Loon, 18; Common Loon, 16; Pied-billed Grebe, 1; Horned Grebe, 7; Red-necked Grebe, 1; Northern Gannet, 3; Double-crested Cormorant, 3; Great Cormorant, 8; Great Blue Heron, 10; Black-crowned Night-heron, 2; Black Vulture, 19; Turkey Vulture, 41; Bald Eagle, 14; Northern Harrier, 10; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 12; Cooper’s Hawk, 6; Red-shouldered Hawk, 8; Red-tailed Hawk, 73; American Kestrel, 2; Merlin, 1; Peregrine Falcon, 4; Clapper Rail, 5; American Coot, 4; Black-bellied Plover, 2; Killdeer, 1; Greater Yellowlegs, 2; Ruddy Turnstone, 10; Sanderling, 12; Purple Sandpiper, 11; Dunlin, 5; American Woodcock, 1; Ring-billed Gull, 1379; Herring Gull, 1457; Lesser Black-backed Gull, 1; Great Black-backed Gull, 86; Razorbill, 2; Rock Pigeon, 681; Mourning Dove, 437; Monk Parakeet, 39; Eastern Screech Owl, 20; Great

Horned Owl, 9; Barred Owl, 2; Belted Kingfisher, 19; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 105; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 6; Downy Woodpecker, 127; Hairy Woodpecker, 16; Northern Flicker, 28; Pileated Woodpecker, 1; Eastern Phoebe, 1; “Western” Flycatcher, 1; Blue Jay, 333; American Crow, 1641; Fish Crow, 1294; Common Raven, 20; Cave Swallow, CW; Black-capped Chickadee, 359; Tufted Titmouse, 236; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 5; White-breasted Nuthatch, 137; Brown Creeper, 5; Carolina Wren, 33; Winter Wren, 1; Marsh Wren, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 2; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 6; Eastern Bluebird, 45; Hermit Thrush, 5; American Robin, 981; Gray Catbird, 6; Northern Mockingbird, 64; European Starling, 7105; Cedar Waxwing, 28; Yellow-rumped Warbler, 2; Palm Warbler, 1; Western Tanager, 1; Eastern Towhee, 10; American Tree Sparrow, 30; Chipping Sparrow, 1; Field Sparrow, 25; Savannah Sparrow, 6; Ammodramus species, 1; Fox Sparrow, 12; Song Sparrow, 251; Swamp Sparrow, 9; White-throated Sparrow, 531; White-crowned Sparrow, 2; Dark-eyed Junco, 681; Northern Cardinal, 185; Red-winged Blackbird, 78; Common Grackle, 755; Brown-headed Cowbird, 23; Baltimore Oriole, 1; Purple Finch, 15; House Finch, 470; American Goldfinch, 350; and House Sparrow, 1250.
Total Species: 120; Total Individuals: 30,090.

The eighty-three participants were: Marian Aimesbury, De-witt Allen, Ross Allen, Ralph Amodei, Toby Appel, Margaret Ardwin, Christin Armini, Mark Aronson, Dan Barvir, Bill Batsford, Melissa Batson, Larry Bausher, Katie Blake, Andy Brand, Stephen Broker, Lauren Brown, Kevin Burgio, Cheryl and Stephanie Cape, Michael Carpenter, Jim Cortina, Emily Costanza, Louisa Cunningham, Beth Dock, John Farley, Michael Ferrari, Corrie Folsom-Okeefe, Frank Gallo, Stacy Hanks, Mike and Pat Horn, Christine Howe, Jim Hunter, Kimberly Jannarone, Kris Johnson, Amanda Kallenbach, Thomas Kelly, Thomas Kenefick, Thomas Krause, Cathy and Patrick Leahy, Carol and Gary Lemmon, Donna Lorello, Chris and Monica Loscalzo, Frank Mantlik, Stephen Mayo, Flo McBride, Dan and Karen Mercurio, Robert Mitchell, Judy Moore, Gina Nichol, Michael O’Brien, John Oshlick, Frank and Nancy Ragusa, Jason Rieger, Brian Roach, William Root, Nancy Rosenbaum, Arne Rosen-gren, Paul Rubino, Felix Sangari, Sam Saulys, Lee Schlesinger, Jeff Severino, Nancy Specht, Charla and Steven Spector, Howie Sternberg, Maria Stockmal, Tony Tortora, John Triana, Marianne Vahey, Lisa Wahle, Robert White, Chris Woerner, Maureen and Paul Wolter, George Zepko, and Betty Zuraw.

Sincere thanks are extended to all of the participants and especially the area captains, whose tireless efforts make the count the wonderful event that it is.

--Chris Loscalzo
NH CBC Compiler

BIRDERS’ EXCHANGE

The New Haven Bird Club is collecting binoculars, scopes or Neotropical field guides that we will donate to the Birders’ Exchange Program, which is part of ABA. This organization donates all binoculars and other equipment to worthy individuals

involved in crucial bird conservation projects and education work in Central and South America.

At each indoor meeting there will be a box on the sign-in table where you can place your equipment donation.

NHBC Winter Feeder Report 2015-2016

End of Week 10



We have finished the first 10 weeks of the survey and we have had a few Pine Siskins but no Red-breasted Nuthatches. Common Grackles flocks are back again with Dean Rupp having flocks of 100, 200 and 1000 birds

over the ten weeks. Others with flocks of 100 or more are Deborah Johnson, Nancy Morand and Bev Propen. The weekly numbers range from 4 to 1000 with most below 50. Most surveyors are showing 0 to about 20 per week.

Some data from the sheets for weeks 6 through 10:

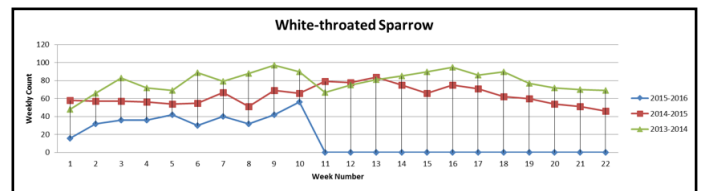
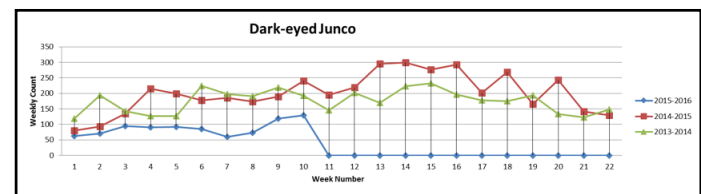
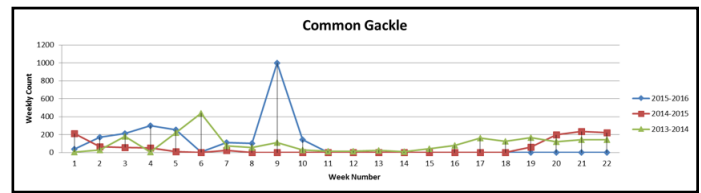
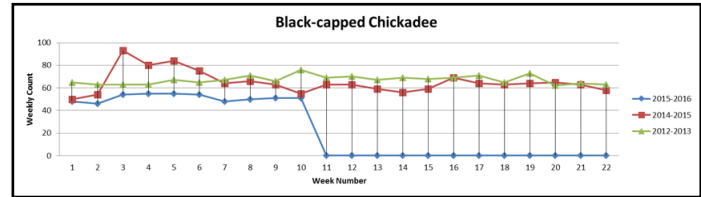
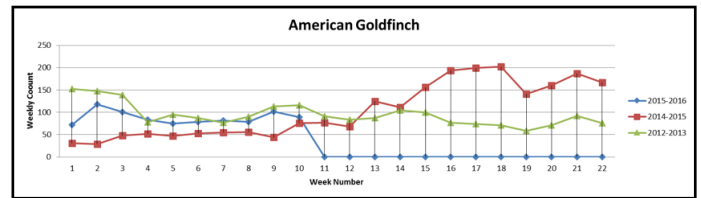
We had 32 of the 34 Common Species show up for a score of 94%. None of the surveyors reported any Wild Turkeys or Rock Doves. American Goldfinch are running between the numbers for the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 seasons. Black-capped Chickadees are steady but below the 2 previous years. The two winter species, Dark-eyed Junco and White-throated Sparrow are both continuing to decline below the previous two years. Only one Fox Sparrow was reported from week 6 thru 10 (Maria Stockmal) and only one Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (Carol Goertz) during this same period.

Uncommon Species list: We had 5 for 36 species (14%) during these five weeks. Species seen were: Brown Creeper (Philip Pivawer and Charlotte K. White), Eastern Towhee (Maria Stockmal), Pileated Woodpecker (Dean Rupp), Pine Siskin (Carol Goertz, Maria Stockmal, and Pete Vitali), and Red-shouldered Hawk (Carol Goertz and Maria Stockmal).

One Waterfowl was seen during this five week: Mallard (Nancy Morand).

From the Animal list the following were seen: Gray Squirrel, Black Squirrel, Brown Rat, Chipmunk, Coyote, Feral Cat, Mole, Opossum, Raccoon, Red Fox, and Skunk.

I have also included the graphs of the 5 species I follow for weeks 1 through 10.



--Pete Vitali

Chairman: NHBC Winter Feeder Survey

Texas Tailgate and the Big Sit!

The Big Sit! is an annual, international, noncompetitive birding event hosted by Bird Watcher's Digest and founded by the New Haven Bird Club. The Big Sit is like a Big Day or a bird-a-thon in that the object is to tally as many bird species as can be seen or heard within a 24-hour period. The difference lies in the space limitation of a circle 17 feet in diameter. The team sits inside the circle for 24 hours, counting all the bird species seen or heard. Some people have called it a "tailgate party for birders."

A North American bird species is selected randomly by the New Haven Bird Club liaison John Triana. All Big Sit! teams that spotted that species are placed in a hat for a random drawing. The team that wins The Golden Bird! Award gets to direct \$500 from Swarovski to a conservation cause or project of its choice.

This year's Golden Bird! turned out to be Yellow-bellied Sap-

sucker (which is the first time a species has been chosen twice – last time in 2006). 38 circles (all in the US) had Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. Of those circles, a circle in Texas was chosen at random to receive the Golden Bird! prize.

The spokesperson for the winning team is Shelia Hargis and has asked that the funds be donated to the Friends of Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge. Shelia would like the funds to be used toward the acquisition of Peaceful Springs for the Refuge.

Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge is a wonderful birding spot. Possible birds are Golden-cheeked Warbler, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Summer Tanager, Painted Bunting, Roadrunner and Black-capped Vireo. The Texas barbeque that can be found in the area is a great way to finish a day of birding before heading back to Austin.

--Craig Repasz and John Triana

MEET THE BOARD

DeWitt Allen : Vice President
Lori Datlow : Education Chair

DeWitt Allen and Lori Datlow (in alphabetical order!) are a birding team in more ways than one. Though fairly new NHBC members—they joined four years ago—they were quick to volunteer their services to the Club. DeWitt (friends call him “De” for short) now is Vice President and Lori is Education Chair. And both have become avid birders especially since they retired from their careers. To round out the teamwork, they’ve also been married for 22 years.



Raised in NY but living in CT most of her life, Lori got into birding after meeting DeWitt. He, a transplant to CT some 30 years ago, had been drawn into it as a young adult in his native CA. While working on his uncle’s farm, they saw a spectacular aerial courtship display of White-tailed Kites. An old *Peterson Guide* they consulted indicated that, at the time, the species was uncommon in northern CA. That made the discovery all the more thrilling and set the stage for De’s lifelong love of birds.

Lori and De enjoy traveling and even when on other destination trips, they try to fit in some birding. And conveniently, they have relatives in areas that offer great birding sites. Lori’s mother lives in southern FL so on visits there several times a year they can enjoy some of that state’s bird abundance. And De’s daughter lives in Montana. On frequent trips there, they get to see not only their three young grandchildren and the active sometime-birder parents (De’s daughter is an evolutionary biologist and son-in-law is in computer services at the Univ. of Montana). De and Lori also get to see the birds in that state and they generally use their visits as a springboard for trips to other western birding venues. Recent extended forays took them to WA State and British Columbia.

These Hamden residents are faithful attendees at NHBC field trips and especially like going to “new” places, but they reg-

ularly take excursions to the ever-popular Hammo and Sandy Point. Closer to home they enjoy visiting Sleeping Giant and Brooksvale Parks and some other less known but productive “neighborhood” spots. Even a small pond near their house offers a surprising number of interesting “passers-through.” Lori won’t commit to a favorite bird—there are too many—but De is particularly fond of Worm-eating Warblers “that go puttering around on business near the ground.”

Though both are now happily retired, they each had long and varied work lives. DeWitt, a UCLA and UC Berkeley grad, had careers in teaching English literature and in writing and editing. Lori, with three SCSU degrees (in Psychology, Public Administration, and Counseling), held various positions in a long career with the CT Dept. of Social Services. And she’s still a student, involved with The Institute of Learning in Retirement (at Albertus Magnus College), a non-credit, continuing education program of courses and study groups covering a wide range of subjects. And she’s not just a student; Lori is Vice President of the organization, on the curriculum committee, and in charge of creating special musical events.

Beyond birds and birding, Lori and De have a wide range of other interests. To indulge their love of travel they try to get to Europe at least once a year. They’ve visited Central and Eastern Europe, favorite destinations, a number of times. Among other activities, they both enjoy gardening, visiting museums and galleries, going to flea markets, reading (De loves American and natural history), and music (Lori has resumed fiddle lessons from previous times). They’ve also owned a string of cats, generally adopted from shelters. A little purring companion might be just the thing to complete the family scene as De and Lori occasionally indulge yet another of their many pastimes: watching Bollywood movies.

--Betty Zuraw

Stewardship Opportunities at Great Marsh, Stratford

The steward program for the Great Meadow Unit of the Stewart B McKinney is expanding. There will be a training session with the US Fish and Wildlife on Feb 6, 2016 from 9-10:00 at the Audubon Ct Stratford Point Facility. After we will go to the GMU Refuge for an orientation Walk Through and some clean up.

US Fish and Wildlife has trained a number of members of the bird club to be volunteer stewards at the Great Marsh area. Our job is to show a presence on the land, enjoy the birds, be welcoming to other people we meet on the refuge, and some habitat cleanup. It is an occasional task that is scheduled at your convenience minimally twice a season on this beautiful property. It is a great excuse to spend time at a beautiful location with great birds and feel like you are helping in the effort to preserve such wonderful habitat. Please think about joining us. If you have questions you can contact Craig Repasz at crepsz@hotmail.com.



NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB
P.O. BOX 9004
NEW HAVEN, CT 06532-0004

Newsletter February 2016

The date on address labels is your membership expiration date.

NHBC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____

State, Zip +4 _____

Phone _____

Email _____

----- New Member ----- Renewal

Dues:

____ Individual - \$15

____ Couple/Family - \$20

____ Supporting - \$50

____ Student under 18 - Free

____ Life Membership: A one-time payment of \$300
for 1 or 2 people at same address.

____ Additional gift to support the NHBC \$ _____

Make check payable to New Haven Bird Club and
send to: New Haven Bird Club, PO Box 9004,
New Haven CT 06532-0004

You can also join or renew membership at the NHBC web-
site with credit card or PayPal.

The NHBC membership year is from July 1 to June 30.
New members joining between January 1 and June 30 are
given full membership for the rest of the current year and
also for the following membership year.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

New Haven Bird Club is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organiza-
tion. **All dues and donations are fully tax deductible.** If
your employer gives matching grants, please take advantage
of the offer. It's free and helps NHBC's program budget.

The Club welcomes everyone irrespective of age, race,
gender, sexual preference, or national origin.

If your address, phone or email change, please send that
information to: New Haven Bird Club, PO Box 9004, New Ha-
ven CT 06532-0004 or contact the Membership Chair, Mike
Ferrari: mike.ferrari@att.net or 203.435.5712.

NHBC does not release its membership list or email ad-
dresses to other organizations.

The New Haven Bird Club is now on Facebook. So log
onto facebook and like the page "New Haven Bird Club."
You can post your photos, see other photos, participate in a
discussion and check out the upcoming events.

CTBirds is an open discussion email list to discuss birds
and birding in the state. To Subscribe, go to:
http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctbirds_lists.
ctbirding.org

NHBC website: www.newhavenbirdclub.org