



# THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

December 2014

## 2014 CALENDAR

(See inside for details)

- November 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015 **NHBC 22nd Annual Winter Feeder Survey**
- Saturday, December 20, 2014 **115th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count**
- Wednesday, January 7, 2015, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Sherwood Island State Park, Westport**
- Thursday, January 8, 2015, 7:00 pm **John Himmelman Birds: Their Side of the Story**
- Sunday, January 18, 2015, 7:30 am **Stratford/Milford Birding Tour**
- Tuesday, January 20, 2015, 7:00-9:00 pm **Birds in Words: A Feathered River Across the Sky; the Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction by Joel Greenberg**
- Saturday, January 31, 2015, 8:00 am **Hammonasset State Park, Madison**
- Wednesday, February 4, 2015, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison**
- Thursday, February 12, 2015, 7:00 pm **Kevin Burgio The History, Biology, and Extinction of the Carolina Parakeet**
- Saturday, February 14, 2015, 7:00 am **Sachuest Point NWR and Rhode Island Coast**
- Friday through Sunday, February 20-22, 2015 **Sachuest Point NWR and RI Coast: Weekend Retreat**
- Wednesday, March 4, 2015, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Stratford Shore & Great Meadows**
- Thursday, March 12, 2015, 7:00 pm **Tom Stephenson The Warbler Guide: A New System for Identifying and Learning Vocalizations**
- Saturday, March 28, 2015, 10:00 am **Gull and Gannet Frenzy, Stratford Seawall, Stratford**
- Wednesday, April 1, 2015, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: CT Audubon Coastal Center, Milford**
- Saturday, April 4, 2015, 8:30 am **Lighthouse Point to the English Bird Sanctuary, Killingworth**  
**The Richard English Memorial Field Trip**
- Saturday, April 4th, 2015, 8:30 am **Beginners' Bird Walk at Little Pond, Litchfield**
- Thursday, April 9, 2015, 7:00 pm **Patrick Comins Ornithology and Meteorology**
- Saturday, April 11, 2015, 8:00 am **East Rock Birding and Trail Maintenance, New Haven**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I write this message looking over a drab, dreary day during the nor'easter soaking us with heavy rains which together with strong winds and high tides threaten significant flooding and remind us of the supremacy of natural forces. Not a day for birding today – but tomorrow may bring special and unusual species blown in by the storm. One of the many attractions

of birding – tomorrow can always bring a new and welcome surprise.

Looking forward to new days and surprises is exciting and rewarding, but we should honor traditions as well. One of the grand traditions of birding is right around the corner – the 115th annual Christmas Bird Count. In addition to offering a pleasant (weather-permitting) and always enjoyable day in the field and the camaraderie of sharing that day at the compilation dinner, the Christmas Bird Count has provided important comparative information on species occurrence and distribution over an extended period. In addition to the insights this “Citizen Science” has provided, participation in this cooperative project strengthens our awareness of, interest in and commitment to the support of conservation efforts locally, nationally and internationally. As well, press coverage of the Christmas Bird Count reminds the greater community of the beauty of the natural world and the importance of conservation to all of us.

Enough – the Christmas Bird Count is fun! Find a circle close (or not so close) to you and sign up. Everyone is welcome to participate for whatever amount of time they choose. A full listing of the count circles can be found on the COA website, [ctbirding.org](http://ctbirding.org), together with contact information for CBC compilers. Hope to see you in the field or at the dinner – and let's hope for good weather.

--Bill Batsford

**Check the NHBC website for cancellation of a program or field trip.**

[www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org)

## NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB – 2014-2014

### OFFICERS

|                       |  |              |
|-----------------------|--|--------------|
| <i>President</i>      | Bill Batsford<br>william.batsford@yale.edu | 203.787.1642 |
| <i>Vice President</i> | Craig Repasz<br>crepasz@hotmail.com        | 203.230.1697 |
| <i>Treasurer</i>      | Andy Stack<br>ctstacks@optonline.net       | 203.397.0818 |
| <i>Secretary</i>      | Paul Wolter<br>pwolter6@earthlink.net      | 860.681.5548 |

### BOARD MEMBERS

|                           |   |              |
|---------------------------|---|--------------|
| <i>Conservation Chair</i> | Craig Repasz<br>crepasz@hotmail.com       | 203.230.1697 |
| <i>Education Chair</i>    | Winnie Wirth<br>wirthwitte@att.net        | 203.859.2971 |
| <i>Hospitality Chair</i>  | Stacy Hanks<br>flybirdhanks@gmail.com     | 203.283-3898 |
| <i>Indoor Programs</i>    | Craig Repasz<br>crepasz@hotmail.com       | 203.230.1697 |
| <i>Member-at-Large</i>    | DeWitt Allen<br>allendatlow@gmail.com     | 860-949-0995 |
| <i>Member-at-Large</i>    | Mike Horn<br>mfhorn@att.net               | 203.288.1891 |
| <i>Member-at-Large</i>    | Andrea Kerin<br>andrea@kerin.com          | 203-331-6067 |
| <i>Membership Chair</i>   | Mike Ferrari<br>mike.ferrari@att.net      | 203.435.5712 |
| <i>Newsletter Editor</i>  | Donna Batsford<br>donnabatsford@gmail.com | 203.787.1642 |
| <i>Nominating Chair</i>   | Patrick Leahy<br>ptjleahy@yahoo.com       | 203.393.2427 |
| <i>Outdoor Programs</i>   | Chris Loscalzo<br>closcalz@optonline.net  | 203.389.6508 |
| <i>Publicity Chair</i>    | Larry Bausher<br>lpbausher@comcast.net    | 203.389.5918 |
| <i>Yearbook Chair</i>     | Betty Zuraw<br>bz4feathers@sbcglobal.net  | 860.632.1156 |

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

|                                       |  |              |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------|
| <i>The BIG SIT</i>                    | John Triana<br>jtriana1@sbcglobal.net        | 203.758.7203 |
| <i>Birds in Words</i>                 | Kris Johnson<br>kriswaxwing99@gmail.com      | 203.288.3087 |
| <i>Christmas Bird Count</i>           | Chris Loscalzo<br>closcalz@optonline.net     | 203.389.6508 |
| <i>Email List</i>                     | Mike Ferrari<br>mike.ferrari@att.net         | 203.435.5712 |
| <i>Hawk Watch</i>                     | Steve Mayo<br>rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net          | 203.393.0694 |
| <i>Lighthouse Point<br/>Historian</i> | John Triana<br>jtriana1@sbcglobal.net        | 203.758.7203 |
| <i>Summer Bird Count</i>              | Steve Mayo<br>rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net          | 203.393.0694 |
| <i>Web Master</i>                     | Patrick Leahy<br>ptjleahy@yahoo.com          | 203.393.2427 |
| <i>Winter Feeder Survey</i>           | Peter Vitali<br>vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net | 203.288.0621 |

## FROM THE BOARD

The next board meeting is Thursday, January 22, at 6:45 pm at the Regional Water Authority in New Haven.

The deadline for submissions to the February newsletter is January 23. 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

### 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.

### BE SURE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE

We are very excited that we have a revamped way of communicating all of the NHBC affairs with our membership (and non-members) – our updated and newly-launched website [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://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. A series of maps of local “hotspots” will be especially useful for visiting birders while providing a valuable resource for local birders as well. A “What’s New” section allows you to submit items – news, pictures, etc – to Pat Leahy at [ptjleahy@yahoo.com](mailto:ptjleahy@yahoo.com) for posting to the membership.

## 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 24 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](mailto:kriswaxwing99@gmail.com), 203-288-3087

The next meeting of the NHBC Book Group, Birds in Words will be on Tuesday, January 20, 7:00-9:00 pm, in the sixth floor conference room to discuss *A Feathered River Across the Sky*; *the Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction* by Joel Greenberg.

All members of the club are welcome to attend. We hope to see you there.

--Kris Johnson

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## 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 another emergency may cancel a meeting. For cancellation notices, check the website [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org). Cancellation notices will also be posted online on [ctbird](http://ctbird.org). 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-91 North or South: Take Exit 6 (Willow St.) in New Haven. At end of ramp go right onto Willow; proceed to the end (to Whitney Ave.). Turn right onto Whitney; go 1.6 mi. Turn left onto Putnam Ave. (Playwright Restaurant is on left).

On Putnam go approximately .7 mi, (3 traffic lights) and turn right onto Leeder Hill. Go .6 mi. on Leeder Hill to the South Entrance (big sign) of WC on the left. Turn in and take an immediate left into a raised parking area.

Meeting is in WC's South Bldg., 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.

From I-95 North or South: Exit to I-91 North in New Haven. Take Exit 6 (Willow St.). At end of ramp, turn right onto Willow and proceed as above.

From Wilbur Cross (Rte. 15) northbound: Take Exit 61 (Whitney Ave). Turn left at end of ramp, go 2.4 mi., turn right onto Putnam.

From Wilbur Cross (Rte. 15) southbound: Take Exit 61 (Whitney Ave. New Haven). At end of ramp go right. Proceed to Putnam.

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### **Thursday, January 8, 2015 — John Himmelman Birds: Their Side of the Story**

How and why did our best known birds get to be so well known? And what are some of the crazy things they make us do? John will share light-hearted stories of birds and birding, from cuisine to cartoons, ornaments to icons, murmurs to murders. You'll get a whole new look at the avian friends we so admire (and some, not so much!) An author, illustrator, and naturalist, John is a past president of NHBC and the Killingworth Land Trust. He co-founded the CT Butterfly Assoc. and has lectured and led trips throughout the US in search of various flora and fauna. Some of his books for adults and children on a variety of natural history subjects will be available for sale and signing at the meeting.

### **Thursday, February 12, 2015 — Kevin Burgio: The History, Biology, and Extinction of the Carolina Parakeet**

Few would argue that the saddest word in a birder's ID vocabulary is extinction. Yet that's been the fate of too many avian species in the past and the threat ever grows. Kevin will discuss what is known about the history, biology, and extinction of one such vanished bird, the splendidly colorful Carolina Parakeet, described by some as possibly having been the most colorful bird in North America. Kevin will explain how his research, using modern research methods, may help shed new light on the extinction of this fascinating and iconic species. His research focuses on the mechanisms of species range limitations and how disturbance (climate change and habitat fragmentation) influences patterns of species distribution and extinction processes. Kevin graduated summa cum laude from UConn in ecology and evolutionary biology and is now a Ph.D. candidate there. He is a Visiting Scientist at Fairfield University and a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow.

### **Thursday, March 12, 2015 — Tom Stephenson The Warbler Guide: A New System for Identifying and Learning Vocalizations**

Identifying warblers and other species singing in the field is one of the most satisfying aspects of birding, but learning and remembering the important ID points of bird vocalizations can be a challenge. Tom will cover some new techniques that make it easier to identify singing birds. He will cover how to understand and use sonograms to learn what makes a vocalization unique and how to differentiate similar-sounding species. Based on a system outlined in his new book, *The Warbler Guide*, Tom will demonstrate how the vocalization ID process can be sped up by understanding a song's structure, the elements and phrases that make up the song. He'll also discuss how to make a quick ID using the objective, easy-to-hear qualities of a song and will explain a simple 3-step memorization system he has used many times to memorize 300 or more songs for a trip to a new country.

### **Thursday, April 9, 2015 — Patrick Comins Ornithology and Meteorology**

No one escapes the weather, least of all birds. Because they basically spend their entire lives outside, weather has a huge influence on their movements and migration. The more that birders understand about the impact of weather on birds, the more productive their birding decisions will be. From something as mundane as knowing to keep feeders full to invite birds during an impending snowstorm to the nearly endless possibilities that a land-falling tropical storm can bring, weather calls the shots. Patrick will discuss numerous kinds of birding scenarios as he explores the implications of weather patterns for birds—and for birders who want to use weather as a tool for better birding.

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## FIELD TRIPS / OUTDOOR EVENTS

The New Haven Bird Club does not charge trip or leader 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 our natural resources. All levels of birders are invited to all field trips, and every effort is made on all trips to help beginning birders. 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. You can check the Club's website [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://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.

*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.

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### **NHBC 22nd Annual Winter Feeder Survey November 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015**

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 Vitali at 203-288-0621 or [vitali\\_peter\\_e@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net).

### **115th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count Saturday, December 20, 2014**

Join other NHBC members in this fun event. Take part for a few hours or all day. Results of the count are sent to the National Audubon Society for inclusion in an international census of early winter bird populations. The compilation dinner starts at 5:00 pm at the Whitney Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden. Compiler and contact person: Chris Loscalzo: 203-389-6508 or [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net).

### **First Wednesday Walk: Sherwood Island State Park, Westport Wednesday, January 7, 2015, 8:00 am**

Join us on a mid-week trip to this outstanding birding spot on Long Island Sound. We will check the Sound for loons, grebes, goldeneye, and other sea ducks. The fields are a good place to look for Snow Buntings, Horned Larks, and sparrows. Drive into the park and meet at the main parking lot. Leader and contact: Tina Green: 203-247-2660 or [tina@renaissancestudios.com](mailto:tina@renaissancestudios.com).

### **Stratford/Milford Birding Tour Sunday, January 18, 2015, 7:30 am**

Today we visit the marshes and beaches in Stratford and Milford. We'll be looking for sea ducks, including scoters, grebes, loons and scaup, as well as raptors, gulls, and shorebirds. Meet at the commuter lot on Schoolhouse Road, Milford just south of Exit 35 on I-95. Leader: Chris Loscalzo: 203-389-6508 or [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net).

### **Hammonasset State Park, Madison Saturday, January 31, 2015, 8:00 am**

Join us as we visit this premier CT birding location for a mid-winter excursion. We will be looking for sea ducks, shorebirds, grassland species, and winter finches. Meet at the Nature Center parking lot. We will check several areas in the park, including the campgrounds area. Leader and contact person: Paul Wolter: 860-681-5548 or [pwolter6@earthlink.net](mailto:pwolter6@earthlink.net).

### **First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison Wednesday, February 4, 2015, 8:00 am**

Enjoy a mid-week field trip to Hammo, 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. Contact person: Tina Green: 203-247-2660 or [tina@renaissancestudios.com](mailto:tina@renaissancestudios.com).

### **Sachuest Point NWR and Rhode Island Coast Saturday, February 14, 2015, 7:00 am**

This all-day trip includes stops at Sachuest Pt., Beavertail State Park, Moonstone Beach, and Trustum Pond, all great RI birding sites. We should see grebes, loons, scoters, eiders, Purple Sandpipers, and Harlequin Ducks. Dress warmly—it's 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](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net).

### **Sachuest Point NWR and RI Coast: Weekend Retreat Friday through Sunday, February 20-22, 2015**

This very special birding experience will be made available to 15 club members by advance registration. We'll be staying in the recently renovated farmhouse at the Norman Bird Sanctuary in Middletown, RI, near Sachuest Point. We'll go birding each day, starting with a sea watch each morning in search of alcids, Black-legged Kittiwakes, and other pelagic species. We'll enjoy comfortable accommodations and fine dining in the farmhouse. Talks and owl prowls will be held at night. Cost per person is \$250 for the weekend. Organizer and contact person: Chris Loscalzo: 203-389-6508 or [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net).

### **First Wednesday Walk: Stratford Shore & Great Meadows Wednesday, March 4, 2015, 8:00 am**

Join us on a visit to this excellent birding area. We will meet at the Long Beach parking lot and bird the marsh and beach and then visit Sikorsky airport and Frash Pond. We'll look for oceanic birds such as Long-tailed Duck and scoters, as well as raptors and shorebirds. Directions: Exit 30 off I-95, follow signs to Sikorsky Airport. Go past airport entrance, follow the causeway, then turn right onto Oak Bluff Ave to the entrance of Long Beach. Leader: Frank Mantlik. Contact person: Tina Green: 203-247-2660 or [tina@renaissancestudios.com](mailto:tina@renaissancestudios.com).

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**Gull and Gannet Frenzy, Stratford Seawall, Stratford  
Saturday, March 28, 2015, 10:00 am**

We'll look at and study potentially thousands of gulls and dozens of gannets as they feast on the annual plankton bloom along the coast. Meet at the Lordship Seawall at the south end of Washington Pkwy (near Marnick's Restaurant). Leader and contact person: Frank Mantlik: 203-984-9410 or mantlik@sbcglobal.net.

**First Wednesday Walk: CT Audubon Coastal Center,  
Milford  
Wednesday, April 1, 2015, 8:00 am**

Join us on this early spring trip to one of the best local birding spots. We'll look out into the marsh and along the shore for waterfowl, shorebirds, waders, and raptors. Meet at the Coastal Center parking lot. Leader: Steven Spector. Contact person: Tina Green: 203-247-2660 or tina@renaissancestudios.com.

**Lighthouse Point to the English Bird Sanctuary, Killingworth - The Richard English Memorial Field Trip  
Saturday, April 4, 2015, 8:30 am**

Meet at the Lighthouse Point Park hawk watch parking lot and bird the harbor shore for gulls, loons, ducks, and shorebirds. We will then go to the Richard English Bird Sanctuary on Deer Lake in Killingworth, and finish our birding tour with a visit to Hammonasset State Park. This is an all-day trip; bring lunch and dress warmly. Leader: Mike Horn 203-288-1891 or mfhorn@att.net.

**Beginners' Bird Walk at Little Pond, Litchfield  
Saturday, April 4th, 2015, 8:30 am**

Every spring Rusty Blackbirds, a species recognized as globally vulnerable by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, use the grounds of the White Memorial Foundation IBA before moving on to their nesting areas. We will look for this and other species on a walk around Little Pond and enter our sightings into ebird.org to increase awareness about habitats used by this species during migration. This walk is geared to beginners but birders of all levels and families are welcome. More advanced birders not only can enjoy a day out but also provide support and inspiration to the newcomers. Park along South Lake Street at the south end of White Memorial. Please consider carpooling as parking is limited. Leader: Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe: 203-630-9640 or cfolsom-okeefe@audubon.org

**East Rock Birding and Trail Maintenance, New Haven  
Saturday, April 11, 2015, 8:00 am**

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

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**Hammonasset State Park Trip Report**

A lot of people showed up on Saturday, October 18, for this walk, many of them from towns outside the New Haven area. The participants made excellent contributions to the success of the walk, spotting birds, making interesting observations and asking good questions.

While assembling at the park entrance, we had two of our most satisfying sightings: an immature Bald Eagle flew low over us, and a Red-tailed Hawk landed across the road and stayed on the ground long enough for us to get a good look at it before it took off. We then drove to the field across from the swan pond, where a Least Sandpiper was foraging in a puddle, with at least eighteen Killdeer nearby. The Pied-billed Grebe that had been spotted the day before was still at the pond and cooperatively remained on the surface for some time.

Great Egrets were in many parts of the marsh and in the boulder pool, and we also saw a Snowy Egret (but no Little Blue or Great Blue Herons). In addition to the three resident gull species, one Laughing Gull was spotted, and it was interesting to see an American Wigeon flying across the marsh, its white upper-wing patches standing out clearly. Noting where a camouflaged photographer was aiming his lens, we discovered eight Semipalmated Plovers blending in



*Photo by Donna Batsford*

with the rocks of the beach by the moraine trail, along with three Semipalmated Sandpipers. Black-bellied Plovers and one Ruddy Turnstone were added to our shorebird sightings when we saw them from the platform at the end of the Cedar Island trail.

From the same vantage point, we had excellent views of several raptors: Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Merlin, Peregrine, and an adult Bald Eagle seen through our scopes as it perched in a tree beyond the opposite shore. Ospreys were sighted twice during the walk.

A fair number of Tree Swallows flew over during our time at the park, though not the big flocks that have delighted us in some years; but other small passerines were not numerous. Sparrows, which have typically been a highlight of this field trip, were seen in very small numbers, but at least we found Song, White-throated, Chipping, and Field Sparrows. Near the end of the walk, we had a satisfying look at a juvenile Eastern Phoebe, whose yellowish undersides and tail wagging behavior could be clearly seen, and whose liquid chip was a pleasure to hear.

By the end of the walk we had found 51 species.

--Florence McBride:

**Branford Supply Ponds Trip Report**

On Saturday, October 25, 9 people joined Maria Stockmal for a bird walk at the Branford Supply Ponds. 43 species were seen: Red-eyed Vireo, Red-shouldered Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Blue-headed Vireo,



Photo by Donna Batsford

Winter Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Palm Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Swamp Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Black-capped Chickadee, Mallard, Red-bellied Woodpecker, American Robin, Blue Jay, Mute Swan, Tufted Titmouse, Canada

Goose, Downy Woodpecker, White-throated Sparrow, White-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Phoebe, Dark-eyed Junco, Cedar Waxwing, Northern Flicker, Red-winged Blackbird, American Crow, Song Sparrow, Herring Gull, Northern Cardinal, Carolina Wren, Brown-headed Cowbird, House Finch, Common Grackle, Turkey Vulture, Tree Swallow, American Goldfinch, Gray Catbird, Mourning Dove.

### Fargeorge Wildlife Preserve Trip Report

In spite of the raw, 37°F, windy, heavy overcast and intermittent rain conditions, 7 of us went into the New Haven Land Trust's Eugene B. Fargeorge Sanctuary on Saturday, November 1. We saw or heard 51 species. Some of the highlights included: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Towhee and Wood Duck. We had the Sapsuckers and Towhees last year too. We did very well for the conditions but we always do very well at Fargeorge.

The following is a list of bird species seen and /or heard: Canada Geese, Mute Swan, Wood Duck, American Black Duck, Mallard, Hooded Merganser, Double-crested Cormorant, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Laughing Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, American Crow, Fish Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Grey Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Purple Finch, House Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

--Mike Horn

### Sherwood Island State Park Field Trip Report

On November 22nd, 2014, several bird club members and a few other birders met at the entrance to Sherwood Island State Park in Westport for a full morning of birding. We saw a number of interesting birds at the edge of the woods at the entrance to the park while we waited for the gate to be opened. The highlight was a Swainson's Thrush. This is a late date for this fall migrant. Other notable observations there included Brown Creeper, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Northern Flicker. We entered the park and went to the point to look for birds on the sound. Although there weren't a lot of waterfowl, we did see Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Long-tailed Duck, Brant, and Red-breasted Merganser. A flock of Snow Buntings flew around us and landed and



Photo by Donna Batsford

fed on the lawn by the beach. Oddly, a lone Brown-headed Cowbird was in the flock of buntings. We were delighted to see a male Northern Harrier, a "gray ghost," fly over the water on its southward migration. We then went to the western end of the park, where there is a mixture of

woods, fields, marsh, and bay. We saw a variety of birds in this area including: Wilson's Snipe, Red-tailed Hawk, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, and Fox Sparrow. In or by the water we saw American Wigeon, Common and Hooded Merganser, Bufflehead, and Great Blue Heron. A Bonaparte's Gull flew past us as it headed towards the dam to join some other gulls. We stopped by the pine grove and were rewarded with good views of one of the resident Great Horned Owls. We then walked past the open fields and model airplane field. We saw American Tree and Savannah Sparrows there. We walked to the east end of the park but didn't see many birds. We looked, without success, for the Lesser Black-backed Gull that has been a regular winter visitor to that area the past few years. All in all, we had a very nice trip at this fine birding location. We saw a total of 59 species. Late fall is an excellent time of year for birding.

--Chris Loscalzo

### Bombay Hook NWR, Leipsic, Delaware Trip Report

This is the first and LAST time I schedule a fieldtrip on the worst driving weekend of the year – Thanksgiving. The traffic was awful.

The birding on Saturday, November 29, however, was great. We got 86 species including about 15,000 Snow Geese, 60 Tundra Swans, 2 groups of Eastern Meadowlarks – a flock of 5 and a flock of 10 and lots of other flying objects which made the trip great in spite of the traffic. The snow made it as far as Princeton, NJ. Bombay Hook NWR is on Delaware Bay and was unaffected.



Snow Geese Photos by Mike Horn

--Mike Horn

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Bob & Janet Holt  
Monroe

Lori Rossier  
Preston

Tsuneo Tamagawa  
Hamden

## Why Count? Because Counting Counts!



Photo by Bill Batsford

New Haven Bird Club members enjoyed bright clear weather for our second annual litter cleanup at West Haven's Sandy Point Bird Sanctuary on Saturday, September 20, 2014. This is a special cleanup because Sandy Point has been designated by Audubon Connecticut as an "Important Bird Area"- one of the few nesting sites along our shore for piping plovers, and a destination for migrating birds to rest and feed.

Our cleanup netted thirty 33-gallon trash bags, along with construction materials and several televisions, totaling around 1,000 pounds of debris. We found that food/drink packaging (2,768 items retrieved) is the biggest problem at Sandy Point. Food litter attracts scavengers that prey on birds, so clean-



The organizers: Winie Wirth, Bob Marra and Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe with the trash collected.

ing up the beach area is of vital importance to preserve our bird populations.

This Save the Sound event is a part of Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup Day. By participating, we are not only citizen-stewards of the environment, but also citizen-scientists, because we filled out litter checklists for the Ocean Conservancy. With the data collected by hundreds of thousands of ICC volunteers worldwide, environmentalists are able to work on strategies for reducing ocean/beach litter at its source.

Other NHBC events are also citizen-scientist activities. In fact, the upcoming Christmas Bird Count is part of the largest and longest-running citizen-scientist project, administered by the National Audubon Society. It began in 1900 as a conservation event to replace the "side hunt" (a contest to kill the most birds) with twenty-seven participants. Today, with over 70,000 people taking part, scientists are able to study bird population shifts due to, for example, West Nile or climate change. Similarly, our trip or feeder reports posted to ebird.org contribute data to Cornell University ornithologists. Be a part of the solution! Participate in citizen-scientist counts because counting counts!

--Winifred Wirth, NHBC Education Chair

## Volunteer Opportunity

The New Haven Bird Club is looking for volunteers to be stewards for the Great Meadow unit of Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. The commitment will be up to six visits a year.

The goal is to have a presence at Great Meadows to report any issues (to be the eyes and ears of the National Wildlife Service), perform wildlife census, and to interface with visitors at the refuge.

A volunteer will need to go through some training with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, receive an ID card and a uniform

and visit Great Meadow up to six times a year. A simple report will be filed after each visit and will include a bird census. We are looking to have a once a week visit by one of the volunteers throughout the year.

Great Meadow has gone through some great improvements including trailhead parking, a clear trail to two observation platforms looking out to the salt marsh meadow.

We will begin with a handful of volunteers to start a pilot program and then later expand it out to others.

Please contact me if you are interest in volunteering for this important program. [crepasz@hotmail.com](mailto:crepasz@hotmail.com)

--Craig Repasz

## Eagles Safe at Home

The Bald Eagles, on State St Hamden above the railroad tracks and across from the W.B.Mason warehouse, are "Safe at Home". The 39 acres, on which the nest tree and all the roosting trees



The adult male father eating a bluefish  
October 26, 2014

reside, were donated to the Hamden Land Conservation Trust by the Garguilo family. The property is henceforth known as The Henry and Irene Garguilo Wildlife Preserve. Because of the location and sensitivity of the property, it will be posted no hunting, no fishing and no trespassing.

This fall this property has become a magnet for hungry migrating eagles who find lots of fish in the Quinnipiac River. Recently, there have been as many as 15 eagles including the 5 residents. We even had a 4th year banded bird from Princeton, NJ who we named Einstein.

Besides eagles, we have had deer, coyote, fox, turkeys, raccoons and skunks plus lots of migrating birds who stop in for a snack and stay a while....what a little gem this place is!

Again, I would like to thank the good folks at W. B. Mason and Proto Tires for their understanding in this matter along with the Hamden and Amtrak police.

Winter hours are weekends from about one hour before sunset to dark.

--Mike Horn

Volunteer Site Manager  
for the DEEP Wildlife Division



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

## Newsletter December 2014

*The date on address labels is your membership expiration date.*

### NHBC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip +4 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print clearly in block letters)

#### Dues:

Individual - \$15

Couple/Family - \$20 # of family members \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting - \$50 # of family members \_\_\_\_\_

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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer to help the club.

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

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 organization. **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 the Club address given on the form to the left or contact the Membership Chair, Mike Ferrari: mike.ferrari@att.net or 203.435.5712.

**NHBC does not release its membership list** or email addresses 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](http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctbirds_lists.ctbirding.org)

**The CTDailyReport** list is used to distribute summaries of rare and uncommon bird sightings. To Subscribe, go to:

[http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctdailyreport\\_lists.ctbirding.org](http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctdailyreport_lists.ctbirding.org)

**NHBC website: [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org)**