



# THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

February 2024

## 2024 CALENDAR

(See inside for details)

- Saturday, February 3, 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. **The Eighth Annual Mega Bowl of Birding**  
*and*  
Sunday, February 4, 5–7 p.m. (Kellogg Environmental Center) **Mega Bowl Compilation Dinner**
- Wednesday, February 7, 8–11 a.m. **First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison**
- Thursday, February 8, 7:00 p.m. (Virtual only) **Diego Calderon – Birds of Columbia**
- Friday, February 16, 6:30 p.m. (Whitney Center, Hamden) **Wingspan Game Night**
- Saturday, February 24, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Sachuest Point NWR and Rhode Island Coast**  
Snow date - Sunday, February 25, same time
- Sunday, February 25, 8–11 a.m. **White Memorial Foundation: Birding and Tracking, Litchfield**
- Wednesday, March 6, 8–11 a.m. **First Wednesday Walk: Stratford Shore & Great Meadows**
- Thursday, March 14, 7 p.m. **Charles Roberto – Québec's Gaspé Peninsula**
- Saturday, March 23, 8–11 a.m. **Edgewood Park, New Haven**
- Saturday, March 30, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. **The Richard English Memorial Field Trip: Lighthouse Point, Richard English Sanctuary, Hammonasset Beach State Park**
- Wednesday, April 3, 8–11 a.m. **First Wednesday Walk: CT Audubon Coastal Center, Milford**
- Thursday, April 11, 7 p.m. **Joel Tolman – Common Ground: Its Mission and Impact**
- Sunday, April 21, 7:30–10:30 a.m. **Kellogg Environmental Center and Osbornedale State Park, Derby**
- Sunday, April 28, 8–11 a.m. **Bent of the River Important Bird Area, Southbury**

**NOTE:** Please check the NHBC website and newsletter periodically for updated information on all programs. **Scheduled events may need to be changed or canceled** and events may be added during the year. [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Exactly one year ago, DeWitt Allen, our New Haven Bird Club President at the time, wrote in this space about a serious issue facing our Club. I cannot improve upon his words and, with his permission, reprint an edited and shortened version of what he said last year.

“The New Haven Bird Club owes its existence – from its founding in 1907 all the way through to today – to volunteers.

Volunteers who loved birds and wanted to help each other experience the joy of “bird study,” or “bird observation,” or just “bird watching.” The volunteers organized the club, put together its founding documents, organized meetings and speakers and social events, and led bird walks, year after year.

Today, the club has more members than probably any time in its history. **But it needs volunteers to step up now.** The same few members have been carrying the load for the rest of us, most of them for many years. Please help lighten that load by volunteering to assist.” – DeWitt Allen, *The Chickadee*, February 2023

Here is my update about the current status of our NHBC Board and Club . . . and how you can help.

After many (many!) years on the Board, both Pat Leahy and Lori Datlow have stepped down from the Board and their leadership positions for our Website (Pat) and our Education Committee (Lori). Their contributions to our Club have been enormous, and we thank them profusely for their good work and dedication. Make no mistake: both Pat and Lori will continue to help with the Club. However, we must face a problem head-on, an issue that, unfortunately, is more and more common with volunteer organizations. **We need help now, or we can't continue to do everything we've been doing and will have to make some hard choices in the near future.** If you have time for an ongoing commitment to a Board position, I'll be happy to talk with you about how your interests might fit into the Club's need for volunteer assistance.

Specifically, we need people who are willing to commit now, or in the future via succession planning, to be responsible for the “jobs” that include but are not limited to Website, Education/Outreach, Newsletter, Yearbook, and Technology. If you can't commit that much time right now, or you have other interests and skills that you think would be helpful, or you're willing to commit even a few hours for specific events, we're developing a list of potential volunteers that we'll get in touch with as the need arises.

(Continued on next page)

## NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB – 2023-2024

### OFFICERS

<i>President</i>	Christine Howe clhowe2@yahoo.com	203-530-1066
<i>Vice President</i>	(vacant)	
<i>Treasurer</i>	Celeste Echlin cechlin151@gmail.com	860-485-2567
<i>Secretary</i>	Michele McDermott mmcdermott1029@snet.net	860-485-3087

### BOARD MEMBERS

<i>Conservation Chair</i>	Craig Repasz crepasz@hotmail.com	203-230-1697
<i>Education Chair</i>	(vacant)	
<i>Indoor Programs</i>	Gail Martino gmm1227@yahoo.com	617-504-7205
<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Albert Laguna albert.laguna@gmail.com	201-401-2684
<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Glen Cummings gmc2@comcast.net	203-228-8072
<i>Membership Chair</i>	Laurie Reynolds warmstove@hotmail.com	203-434-2134
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Donna Batsford donnabatsford@gmail.com	203-787-1642
<i>Nominating Committee</i>	NHBC Executive Board	
<i>Outdoor Programs</i>	DeWitt Allen allendatlow@gmail.com	860-949-0995
<i>Publicity Chair</i>	Emmeline Kaiser emkaiser03@gmail.com	225-368-7273
<i>Website Chair</i>	(vacant)	
<i>Yearbook Editor</i>	Christine Howe clhowe2@yahoo.com	203-530-1066

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

<i>The BIG SIT</i>	Craig Repasz crepasz@hotmail.com	203-230-1697
<i>Christmas Bird Count</i>	Chris Loscalzo closcalz@optonline.net	203-389-6508
<i>Hawk Watch at Lighthouse Point Historian</i>	Steve Mayo scmayo999@gmail.com	203-551-1707
<i>Hospitality</i>	John Triana jtriana1@sbcglobal.net	203-758-7203
<i>Summer Bird Count</i>	Joyce Alton joyceharned@hotmail.com	203-651-9712
<i>Winter Feeder Survey</i>	Steve Mayo scmayo999@gmail.com	203-551-1707
	Peter Vitali vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net	203-288-0621

**New Haven Bird Club Website:**  
[www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org)

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

Yes, because of my own overload, I know I've not yet contacted several of you who already indicated on your membership renewal that you'd be willing to help in some way. For those who already responded on their membership renewal as well as for anyone who is now willing to help in some way, **please confirm your interest** by sending an email with **a) a brief description of how you want to assist**, and **b) the best way(s) to contact you**, to [volunteer@newhavenbirdclub.org](mailto:volunteer@newhavenbirdclub.org). Thanks in advance. I promise we'll be in touch.

--Chris Howe

### **Notes from the Board**

The next board meeting will be at 7 p.m. on Thursday, February 22, 2024.

Deadline for submissions to the next *Chickadee* is March 29, 2024. Send to Newsletter Editor, Donna Batsford, at [donnabatsford@gmail.com](mailto:donnabatsford@gmail.com).

NHBC Objectives: To make available to members and the general public opportunities for recreation, education, and appreciation in the area of birding and to encourage the conservation of natural resources in New Haven and surrounding areas.

If you are not receiving email notifications, contact us at [membership@newhavenbirdclub.org](mailto:membership@newhavenbirdclub.org) to receive an invitation to join this group.

Every effort is made to list member information accurately in the yearbook. Please inform us of errors and update us with any changes during the year. Update via the Club website or send an email to [membership@newhavenbirdclub.org](mailto:membership@newhavenbirdclub.org).

### **Welcome New Members**

Katherine Helmer  
New Haven

Virginia and Walter Corbiere  
Guilford

David Keller  
Naugatuck

Sarah and Diane Kuchta-Humphrey  
Orange

Helen Ward  
Hamden

Jess Zaccagnino  
Hamden

Nina and Ilana Nadelman  
Katonah NY

Margaret Cozens  
Groton

Barry Fasciano  
Cromwell

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## Indoor Programs

**Please check the NHBC website and newsletter for updated information before planning to attend any event.**

Indoor programs start in September and are held on the second Thursday of the month. There are no indoor programs in June, July, or August. This year, we plan to resume meeting at the Whitney Center's Cultural Arts Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden CT 06517. The facility is wheelchair accessible. **The social half-hour begins at 7 p.m.; the meeting and program begin at 7:30 p.m. and end about 9 p.m.**

**Some indoor programs are held only as virtual, online presentations and noted as such in the descriptions.**

Cancellation Policy: Inclement weather or other emergency may cancel in-person meetings. Cancellation notices will be sent via the Club email and posted on the CTBirds listserv when possible.

### The Whitney Center

We hold our monthly meetings in the Whitney Center's Cultural Arts Center, in the South Building, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden CT. Enter via the main door of the portico at the front of the building. Turn right down the hallway. The Cultural Arts Center is a short distance on the left.

**PARKING:** Enter the Whitney Center's South Entrance, marked with a sign. Either make an immediate left into the raised parking lot (park *only* in the upper level and *only* in unnumbered spaces) or follow the main driveway past the front entrance of the building. At the stop sign, turn right into the visitor and employee parking area and walk back from there to the front entrance.

**NOTE:** Please check the NHBC website and newsletter periodically for updated information on all programs. Scheduled events may need to be changed or canceled and events may be added during the year. [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org)

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### **Thursday, February 8, 2024 – Diego Calderon Birds of Columbia (Virtual only)**

Embark on a virtual tour of Colombia's bird species with biologist and tour guide Diego Calderon. He has more than a decade of experience leading bird tours. His adventurous expeditions have taken him to remote areas, including the Pirre and Santa Marta Mountains, where he captured remarkable photographs and voice recordings of elusive birds like the Blue-bearded Helmetcrest and Santa Marta Wren. Diego's expertise extends beyond Colombia; he has guided bird tours in several other countries and has a keen interest in digiscoping and in wild orchid photography. We will not be meeting in person for this presentation.

### **Thursday, March 14, 2024 – Charles Roberto Québec's Gaspé Peninsula**

Join Charles Roberto, birder extraordinaire and esteemed board member of the Teatown Lake Reservation, a nonprofit nature preserve and environmental education center in Westchester

County, New York. He will guide us in an unforgettable exploration of Québec's mesmerizing Gaspé Peninsula. Experience the beauty of this enchanting region through stunning images captured during a trip with the National Audubon Society.

### **Thursday, April 11, 2024 – Joel Tolman Common Ground: Its Mission and Impact**

Join us to learn about Common Ground. Located in New Haven, it is the nation's longest-running environmental charter school, creating the next generation of successful college students and powerful environmental leaders. Our speaker will be Joel Tolman, a passionate educator and environmentalist who currently serves as Director of Community Impact & Engagement at Common Ground.

*NOTE: The April meeting is our Annual Meeting, as specified in the Club's by-laws. Please check the NHBC website and newsletter for any updated information.*

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## Wingspan Game Night

Everything went very well at the Wingspan Game Night on January 19, 2024. We had about 16 people. About half were beginners and several people were there who already knew how to play and just had a good time playing with other people. I am planning to see if I can add another Wingspan event in March in addition to the one already scheduled for February 16th, 6:30 p.m. at the Whitney Center in Hamden.

-- Jack Swatt

## Eagles on State Street in North Haven

As you know, Mike Horn has been keeping track of the eagles on State Street since first finding them several years ago. This year he has seen the eagles but not on the nest. If you know anything about their nesting this year please contact Mike: Mike Horn, 203-288-1891 or [mfhorn@att.net](mailto:mhorn@att.net).

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## Outdoor Programs

The future course of the coronavirus pandemic may continue to affect our schedule of events. Our first priority is protecting the health and well-being of our members and the general public, and it may become necessary to adjust or cancel some events. The recommendations and policies of local, state, and national health authorities will guide all decisions about our schedule. Please check the NHBC website and newsletter for updated information before planning to attend any event.

**Cancellation Policy:** Inclement weather or other emergencies may cancel a field trip. Check the NHBC website *or contact the leader of the trip directly* if you have any questions about a possible cancellation.

Birders of all levels are welcome on all field trips, and every effort is made to help beginners. If you are new to birding or have any special needs, be sure to let the leader know. The Club welcomes everyone regardless of age, race or ethnicity, sex, gender identification, sexual orientation, or national origin. The ending times of walks are approximate.

More details and/or updates on these trips will be given at the indoor meetings. Please check the NHBC website and newsletter periodically for updated information on all programs. **Scheduled events may need to be changed or canceled** and events may be added during the year. *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 the Club makes prior arrangements. Carpooling is usually encouraged to avoid parking problems at some destinations and to promote conservation of natural resources, but check current coronavirus recommendations.

### NHBC Conservation and Education Activities

The New Haven Bird Club routinely works to preserve and restore bird populations and their habitats and to provide opportunities for learning about birds, where to see them, and how to help ensure their future. Additional environmentally-focused, family-friendly walks may be planned and posted on the NHBC website.

The NHBC has been developing relationships with local public schools and camps to encourage children to embrace birding. We view this activity as directly connected to our Club objectives, and usually present a very basic birding skills class followed by a nearby bird walk. The Education Chair also organizes the Club's representation at various public events throughout the year. The Education Chair position is currently vacant.

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### **The Eighth Annual Mega Bowl of Birding** **Saturday, February 3, 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.** *and*

### **Mega Bowl Compilation Dinner** **Sunday, February 4, 5–7 p.m.**

Come join in on a fun and friendly event! Birders of all ages and skill levels are welcome to participate. Go birding for all or part of the day to see how many species you can observe.

Compete against yourself or other birders and win prizes for participating. Teams can bird within a circle with a five-mile radius that includes their residence, or within a town, or in an entire county. Birders can participate alone or in a group of up to five people. We will meet the following day for a celebratory dinner to go over the results, share stories and enjoy a fine meal. The celebratory dinner will be held the next evening, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Kellogg Environmental Center at 500 Hawthorne Avenue, Derby, Connecticut. Registration for the event is required. Checklists will be sent out in advance to all registrants.

Leader: Chris Loscalzo, 203-389-6508 or [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net)

### **First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison** **Wednesday, February 7, 8–11 a.m.**

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 outside the park at the Shoreline Greenway Trail parking area on Boston Post Road, Madison, just east of the park's main entrance road.

Leader: Greg Hanisek, [ctgreg@yahoo.com](mailto:ctgreg@yahoo.com)

### **Sachuest Point NWR and Rhode Island Coast** **Saturday, February 24, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.** **Snow date - Sunday, February 25, same time**

This all-day trip includes stops at Beavertail State Park, Moonstone Beach, Trustum Pond, and other great birding sites along the Rhode Island coast. We hope to 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 can be a bit strenuous. Bring lunch and a scope, if you have one. Meet at the Branford commuter lot, Exit 55 off I-95, or contact the trip leader for time and location of the first stop in Rhode Island.

Leader: Chris Loscalzo, 203-389-6508 or [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net)

### **White Memorial Foundation: Birding and Tracking, Litchfield** **Sunday, February 25, 8–11 a.m.**

White Memorial Foundation is a 4,000-acre nature preserve with mature deciduous and evergreen forests, as well as fields of tall grass, weeds, and shrubs that are managed for various

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stages of succession. One of the best birding sites in the state and an Important Bird Area, White Memorial has approximately 35 miles of woodland roads, trails, and boardwalks. We could observe a variety of sparrows, woodpeckers, possibly winter finches, owls and more. We will be joined by experienced trackers Christin Armini and Gail Cameron. Mammals such as otters, beavers, bobcats, foxes, deer, coyotes, and mink are active in the winter and leave clues about their travels and ways of surviving this most difficult time of the year. Meet in the public parking lot at White Memorial at 80 Whitehall Road in Litchfield.  
Leader: Craig Repasz, 203-745-6683 or crepasz@hotmail.com

**First Wednesday Walk: Stratford Shore & Great Meadows  
Wednesday, March 6, 8–11 a.m.**

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

**Edgewood Park, New Haven  
Saturday, March 23, 8–11 a.m.**

Join Bill Batsford for a late winter walk at this urban park with varied habitat including woodlands, fields, streams, and ponds. Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, Kingfisher, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and Brown Creeper are all possible. The walking is easy and flat with one dirt path through a wooded area. Total distance is approximately 2.5 miles. Meet at the Edgewood Park parking lot next to the tennis courts, entrance off West Rock Avenue, just south of Whalley Avenue, New Haven.  
Leader: Bill Batsford, 203-494-4325 or william.batsford@yale.edu

**The Richard English Memorial Field Trip: Lighthouse Point, Richard English Sanctuary, Hammonasset Beach State Park  
Saturday, March 30, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Join us for all or part of this trip. We first bird the shore at Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven. We proceed to the Richard English Bird Sanctuary at Deer Lake Day Camp in Killingworth, and then move on to Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison. We are out all day *but you may come for any part of the trip*. Dress warmly and bring lunch as appropriate. This trip almost always has a high species count. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Hawk Watch parking, Lighthouse Point Park, 2 Lighthouse Road, New Haven, or at the other locations during the day. Check with the trip leader for approximate arrival time at each location.  
Leader: Mike Horn, 203-288-1891 or mfhorn@att.net

**First Wednesday Walk: CT Audubon Coastal Center, Milford  
Wednesday, April 3, 8–11 a.m.**

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. Meet at the Connecticut Audubon Coastal Center, 1 Milford Point Road, Milford.  
Leader: Jalna Jaeger, 203-246-0885 or jalnabird@gmail.com

**Kellogg Environmental Center and Osbornedale State Park, Derby**

**Sunday, April 21, 7:30–10:30 a.m.**

Osbornedale State Park offers a variety of species in its fields and forest, and around its ponds. It's always a surprise when walking through the park. We may see a flyover Bald Eagle, nesting Bluebirds, early warbler migrants, Green Heron, and Orchard Oriole, as well as Indigo Bunting, Rose-Breasted Grosbeak, and various thrushes. We will explore Kellogg Environmental Center and then walk to Osbornedale Park. Meet at the Kellogg Environmental Center parking lot, 500 Hawthorne Avenue, Derby.  
Leader: Maria Stockmal, 203-305-3728 or m.stockmal@snet.net

**Bent of the River Important Bird Area, Southbury  
Sunday, April 28, 8–11 a.m.**

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 Audubon Connecticut. The walk is open to birders of all levels; families are welcome. More advanced birders can enjoy a day out and also provide support and inspiration for newcomers. Total walk distance should be between 1 and 2 miles with moderate terrain and some uphill. Meet at Bent of the River Wildlife Sanctuary, 185 East Flat Hill Road, Southbury. Take Exit 14 off of I-84. Go north on Route 172, then turn left onto East Flat Hill Road (church on corner). Continue to sanctuary entrance on left.  
Leader: Morgan Evans, 484-347-2332 or morganevans@gmail.com

## Trip Reports

**December First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset Beach State Park Trip Report**

Fifteen folks braved chilly conditions to survey Hammonasset State Park on this December 6, 2023 morning. Though there were no real rarities, we did manage to see a total of 45 species.



Photo by Laurie Reynolds

By far the most numerous were American Robin and European Starling with 230+ individuals each.

Some others noted: Surf Scoter, Long-tailed Duck (1), Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Dunlin, Red-throated and Common Loons, Northern Gannet (1), Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, and Red-tailed Hawks, Bald Eagle (3), Horned Lark (nice flock of 47), Yellow-rumped Warbler (22), and a couple folks had a late Baltimore Oriole on Willard's Isle.

Any day in the field is a good one... or as the great Noble Proctor oft said: "There's always something to see!"

--Jerry Connolly

**East Rock Park Trip Report**

On December 9, 2023, nineteen intrepid birders walked the Mill River trails at East Rock Park for 3 1/2 hours during a pre-

Christmas Bird Count survey. We located a total of 30 bird species and just over 100 individuals.

East Rock Park tends to settle into early winter sameness from day to day. Birds one can expect to find including Mallards, Great Blue Heron, a chatty kingfisher, multiple woodpecker species, jays and crows, chickadees and titmice, nuthatches and wrens, American Robin, House Sparrow and House Finch, sparrows, and Northern Cardinal. We achieved our goal of enjoying these common species. East Rock always has the ability to surprise and occasionally to astound the persistent birder. Our best birds of the day included two Golden-crowned Kinglets, a Pied-billed Grebe seen well from the iron bridge, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, and Swamp Sparrow. What about the ravens and peregrines? Well, the ravens are already in courtship with their tandem flying. Going unseen that day, the peregrines have yet to decide if they will nest again on the East Rock cliff face or return to Yale's Kline Biology Tower. Stay tuned!

--Steve Broker

### January First Wednesday Walk: Sherwood Island State Park Trip Report

On January 3, 2024, with bright sunny skies, moderate temperatures, and light winds, we couldn't have asked for a more perfect day for the New Haven Bird Club's very first 1st Wednesday Walk of this year!

Twenty-seven enthusiastic birders joined me in Westport at Sherwood Island State Park for a fantastic morning of birding and comradery. We got to see and/or hear 59 species in different habitats of the park. Highlights of the trip were



Photo by Laurie Reynolds

Harlequin Duck, 2 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, a very cooperative Yellow-breasted Chat that gave us amazing views, Eastern Meadowlark, and Merlin. Also of note but not seen by our group, Nashville and Orange-crowned Warblers were seen at the model airplane field.

Click on the link below for the entire checklist.

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S157976514>

--Tina Green

### Milford Hotspots in Winter Trip Report



Excited birders viewing the Nashville Warbler at Caswell Cove.

On Saturday, January 13, I was joined by 41 eager birders on my annual New Haven Bird Club "Milford Hotspots" trip. While it was unusually mild (50's), there was dense fog coastally following yet another rain and wind storm the night before. We visited Silver Sands

State Park, Mondo Ponds, and Caswell Cove. (Access to Milford Point was not possible due to super high tides that flooded the road). We tallied 53 species, including 12 species of ducks, with the following highlights:

Silver Sands - Snow Goose, Clapper Rail, 4 Bonaparte's Gulls, 2 Eastern Towhees

Mondo Ponds - 2 Golden-crowned Kinglets, Winter Wren

Caswell Cove - Nashville Warbler

The link to the eBird trip list:

<https://ebird.org/tripreport/194435>

--Frank Mantlik

## 124th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count Report

Wow! We had a great Christmas Count in New Haven this year. Everything lined up for a great day. It was a mild fall season without any real cold days to drive lingering migrants south. The weather on count day was pleasant and without precipitation. Nearly all the freshwater ponds were open. And, as usual, we had a full roster of experienced and dedicated birders out in their respective areas looking for and counting birds. We had a final total of 131 species, the highest total in more than a decade, and we found lots of rarities. Going in taxonomic order, the rarities included the female Tufted Duck on Grannis Pond in East Haven, found the previous day by Paul Smith (demonstrating the value of scouting in advance for the count), a male Harlequin Duck found along the shore in East Haven, the Sandhill Crane (!) found in the Anderson Avenue marsh in Milford by Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe and her team, and the Northern Rough-winged Swallow that surprised and delighted Frank Gallo and his crew in North Haven as it flew over them. Steve Broker found a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Ora Avenue in East Haven (an extremely rare find for this time of year), and Mark Aronson and his team found a House Wren in New Haven. And then there were the birds at the Water Treatment Plant in Branford. Jim Hunter and Courtney Bauknecht found several warbler species there including a Nashville and a Prairie Warbler. And we belatedly realized (after photo review) that they also found a Philadelphia Vireo! The Vireo, Crane and Prairie Warbler were all new additions to our 124-year-old annual census. Climate change has its upsides!

But it is not just about finding rarities. We are conducting an annual census to monitor the ever-changing populations of the bird species in our area in late fall/early winter and we are part of an international project that is carrying out this important work. This year's count was also notable for all the new birders who joined our birding teams. And parts of the compilation dinner and even the field activities were recorded for educational purposes so hopefully more people will become aware of our efforts and join us in the future.

I am extremely grateful to all 98 (!) people who participated in this year's New Haven Christmas Bird Count and most especially to the area captains who work hard to organize their teams and report their data to me in a timely fashion. We are already looking forward to next year's CBC. The complete results of the count can be found on our website The link is:

<https://www.newhavenbirdclub.org/results-from-the-christmas-count-2023/>.

--Chris Loscalzo

# NHBC Winter Feeder Report 2023-2024

## End of Week 11



This year we started with 19 surveyors, 3 via Postal Mail and 15 via email and me. We are located all over New Haven County with one surveyor in Fairfield County and two in Middlesex County. Due to Black Bear problems, three surveyors did not start in Week 1 but started in Week 6.

In the first 5 weeks of the survey, we had 1 Red Breasted Nuthatch, and 2 Purple Finches reported. We did not see the irruptions of these species that were being reported in the weeks before our survey on CTBirds.

### Species seen in weeks 1 to 5:

**Common list:** All species were seen in weeks 1 to 5.

**Semi-common list:** Wild Turkey were not seen in weeks 1 to 5. Seen were Chipping Sparrow, Eastern Bluebird, Fox Sparrow, Northern Flicker, Northern Mockingbird, Purple Finch, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-winged Blackbird, Rock Dove (Pigeon), Sharp-shinned Hawk, and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

**Uncommon list:** The uncommon species seen in weeks 1 to 5 were: Black Vulture, Brown Creeper, Cedar Waxwing, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Red-shouldered Hawk, Turkey Vulture.

**Waterfowl list:** The only waterfowl seen were Canada Goose, Herring Gull, Mallard.

### Species seen in weeks 6 thru 11:

During weeks 6 through 11 of the survey only 1 Purple Finch was reported, week 8 by Dewitt Allen. American Goldfinch numbers have gone down to 2021-2022 levels, which caused many surveyors to ask, "where are the Goldfinches?" With the warmer days, 55°F and above, Bev Proppen has had Honeybees in her feeders.

So far this year American Goldfinch, Black-capped Chickadee, Northern Cardinal, Dark-eyed Junco, and White-throated Sparrow are the lowest for the last 3 years. Common Grackles have been seen in numbers from 2 to 250 a day.

Some data from the sheets for weeks 6 through 11:

**Common Species:** We had 22/22 or 100%. 11 surveyors over the 6-week period have seen Song Sparrows, ranging from 1 to 4 per day. Weekly totals range from 10 to 13 per week.

**Semi-Common Species:** We saw 11/12 or 92%. The only Purple Finch was seen in week 8. Fox Sparrows were seen by 4 surveyors. Again, Wild Turkey was the only species not seen.

**Uncommon Species:** We had 7 of 41 species (16%) seen during weeks 6 through 11. Seen were Black Vulture, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Raven, Red-shouldered Hawk, Turkey Vulture, and Yellow-rumped Warbler.

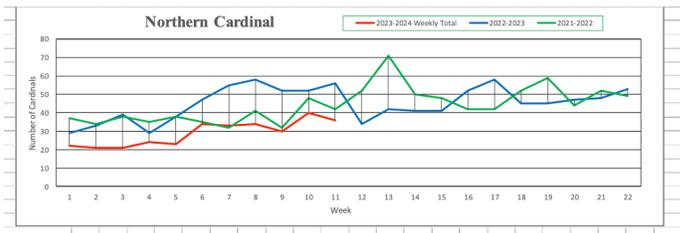
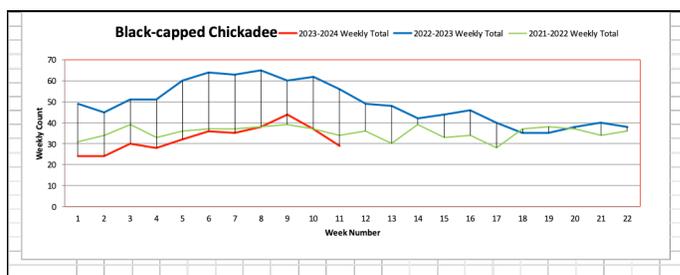
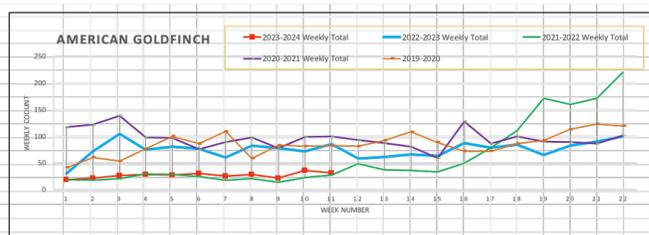
**Waterfowl Species:** We had 4 of 9 (44%) species. American Black Duck, Canada Goose, Great Blue Heron, and Mallard.

**Animal List:** Animals seen weeks 1 to 11: Gray Squirrel, Chipmunk, Bobcat, Feral Cat, Mole, Opossum, Rabbit, Raccoon, Red Squirrel, White-Tailed Deer, and Woodchuck.

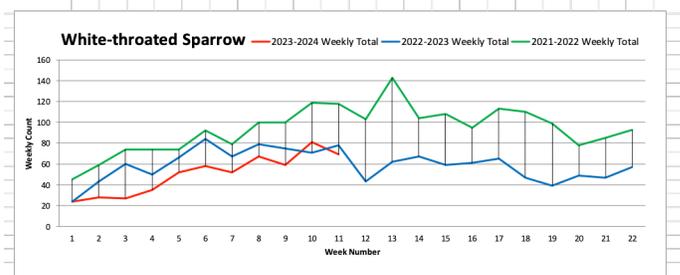
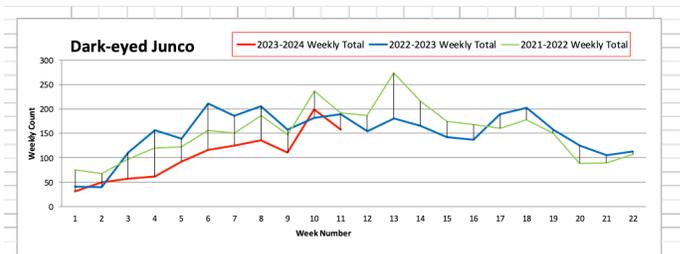
I have also included the graphs of the 5 species I follow for weeks 1 through 11. The RED line is this year.

--Pete Vitali  
Chairman: NHBC Winter Feeder Survey

### Normally Seen all Year Long



### Winter Species





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

**February 2024**

**NHBC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code / Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal

Membership Levels (check appropriate category):

\_\_\_ Individual - \$15                      \_\_\_ Family - \$20  
\_\_\_ Supporting - \$50                    \_\_\_ Student under 18 - Free  
\_\_\_ Life Membership - \$300 for 1 or 2 people at same address.

Additional gift to support NHBC programs: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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 website 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 for the whole next 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 you work for a company that 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 orientation, or national origin.

If your address, phone or email change, please send that information to: New Haven Bird Club, PO Box 9004, New Haven CT 06532-0004 or [membership@newhavenbirdclub.org](mailto:membership@newhavenbirdclub.org).

The NHBC website, [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org), offers information about the Club, its programs, and other Club and member news. If you have any questions, please email us at [ask@newhavenbirdclub.org](mailto:ask@newhavenbirdclub.org).

CTBirds is an open discussion email list provided by the Connecticut Ornithological Association (COA) to discuss birds and birding in the state, <http://www.ctbirding.org>.