



# THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

August 2010

## 2010 CALENDAR

(See inside for details)

Sunday, August 15, 3:00 pm **Milford Audubon Coastal Center, Milford**

Sunday, August 22, 7:30 am **Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Queens, NY**

Sunday, August 22, 7:30 am **COA Shorebird and Tern Workshop, Sandy Point, West Haven**

Saturday, August 28, 8:00 am **Lighthouse Point Bird Walk and Prep for Migration Festival**

September 1 to November 30 **Daily Hawk Watch at Lighthouse Point Park**

Wednesday, September 1, 2010, 8 am **First Wednesday Walk: Sandy Point, West Haven**

Monday, September 13, 7:00 pm **Birds in Words: *Alex and Me: How a Scientist and a Parrot Uncovered a Hidden World of Animal Intelligence and Formed a Deep Bond in the Process* by Irene M. Pepperberg and *Wesley the Owl: The Remarkable Love Story of an Owl and His Girl* by Stacey O'Brien.**

Thursday, September 16, 7:00 pm **Julie Victoria - The Status of Raptors in Connecticut**

Saturday, September 18, 2010, 8:00 am **Beginners' Walk in Woodbridge**

Sunday, September 26, 2010, 8:00 am - 3:00 pm **Eighth Annual Migration Festival at Lighthouse Point Park**

Saturday, October 2, 2010, 8:00 am **Kellogg Environmental Center/Osbornedale State Park, Derby**

Sunday, October 3, 2010, 8 am - 12 pm (Rain date: 10/17)  
**COA Sparrow Workshop, Silver Sands State Park, Milford**

Wednesday, October 6, 2010, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Osbornedale State Park, Derby**

Sunday, October 10, 2010 **THE BIG SIT!®**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This is the first newsletter of a new New Haven Bird Club season. If you missed the annual dinner in May you missed a short recap of the season.



I would like to take the time to recapitulate last season. We were quite busy behind the scenes besides ensuring that the bird walks and talks go on schedule. We had a few glitches by way of cancellations and rescheduling our indoor programs but all in all it went smoothly as far as I can tell.

Some of the things we have accomplished last year are: allocating monies collected from our raffles and tag sales to the conservation fund. We are increasingly being asked for donations or aid in the form of support letters. If you participate in our raffles and tag sales you also participate in conservation.

We have donated \$1,000 for the purchase of Griswold Airport in Madison. We have donated \$200 to CT Audubon Society in Milford for children to go to camp as well as our Purple Martin house that stood at Lighthouse Point Park in New Haven. We feel the bird house will be better taken care of and used to its potential at the CT Audubon site.

In the past, among other things, we have donated \$100 to the expansion of Barn Island in Stonington and committed to five bird walks over five years. Stonington is, again, seeking to make another addition and is requesting the same commitment which we have already agreed to do.

We have also written a letter against paragliding at Sandy Point in West Haven, and the petitioner has withdrawn his proposal. The West Haven conservation committee is concerned about the "deterioration" of Sandy Point and has asked us to join the Audubon CT Menentauck walk last April to evaluate the area.

We have named our newsletter "The Chickadee" after our logo and are researching transferring the newsletter to an electronic newsletter.

We saw the addition of field trips, our New Haven Bird Club display is making rounds as we are being asked to participate in various events. Recently, we displayed at Peabody Museums' Earth Day event in April.

## New Haven Bird Club - 2010 - 2011

### OFFICERS

<i>President</i>	Maria Stockmal	203.488.3876 m.stockmal@snet.net
<i>Vice President</i>	Mike Horn	203.288.1891 mfhorn@att.net
<i>Treasurer</i>	Gary Lemmon	203.488.7813 lemmon@snet.net
<i>Secretary</i>	Judy Moore	203.387.4582 judymoore@optonline.net

### BOARD MEMBERS

<i>Audubon CT Liaison</i>	Pat Leahy	203.393.2427 ptjleahy@yahoo.com
<i>Conservation Chair</i>	Bill Batsford	203.787.1642 william.batsford@yale.edu
<i>Education Co-Chairs</i>	Natasha Domina	203.271.3123 natashadomina@hotmail.com
	Randy Domina	203.271.3123 rhexp@hotmail.com
<i>Hospitality Chair</i>	Stacy Hanks	203.283.3898 flybird@optonline.net
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<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Peter Vitali	203.288.0621 vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net
<i>Membership Chair</i>	Betty Zuraw	860.632.1156 bzfeathers@sbcglobal.net
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Donna Batsford	203.787.1642 dbatsford@footeschool.org
<i>Nominating Chair</i>	John Triana	203.758.7203 jtriana1@sbcglobal.net
<i>Outdoor Programs</i>	Chris Loscalzo	203.389.6508 closcalz@optonline.net
<i>Publicity Chair</i>	Larry Bausher	203.389.5918 lpbausher@comcast.net

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

<i>The BIG SIT!®</i>	John Triana	203.758.7203 jtriana1@sbcglobal.net
<i>Christmas Bird Count</i>	Chris Loscalzo	203.389.6508 closcalz@optonline.net
<i>Email List</i>	Richard Becker	203.323.0233 rlbecker@songstar.org
<i>Hawk Watch</i>	Steve Mayo	203.393.0694 smayo@sikorsky.com
<i>Lighthouse Point Historian</i>	John Triana	203.758.7203 jtriana1@sbcglobal.net
<i>Summer Bird Count</i>	Steve Mayo	203.393.0694 smayo@sikorsky.com
<i>Web Master</i>	John Triana	203.758.7203 jtriana1@sbcglobal.net
<i>Winter Feeder Survey</i>	Peter Vitali	203.288.0621 vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net
<i>Yearbook</i>	Betty Zuraw	860.632.1156 bzfeathers@sbcglobal.net

We are a participant in the migration festival and coordinate the volunteers and vendors present.

We have honored past presidents at our last annual dinner in May and will continue to do so periodically.

Our bird feeder survey is being revamped and we look forward to it next fall. Please participate in this event as it will give us a sense of what birds are in our neighborhoods and what changes are taking place as far as numbers and species. With weather patterns changing our birds are changing with it. Spring migration was one week early this year and this is a significant change as birds are trying to meet the availability of their food supply.

One of our board members, Larry Baucher, occasionally speaks about birds on the radio.

Note: our biannual elections will take place in April and our next board meeting is August 18<sup>th</sup>.

--Maria Stockmal

The deadline for submissions to the October newsletter is September 24. Send to Donna Batsford dbatsford@footeschool.org

## Welcome to the following new members!

Edward Amarante  
2 Toole Dr.  
Branford, CT 06405

Len & Patti Blumin  
382 Throckmorton Ave.  
Mill Valley, CA 94941  
415.388.4990  
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christopher.clark@yale.edu

Susan Forster  
16 Lincoln St.  
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203 909 6717  
susanfrstr@aol.com

Whitney Gayle, Laurie Pennington  
25 Seneca Rd.  
New Haven, CT 06515  
225 368 7700  
wgayle@tigers.lsu.edu

Mary Hugli  
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203.387.0376  
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Lansing Lamont  
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203.762.7496  
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Robert & Gloria Lapolla  
174 Terrill Rd.  
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203.296.1419

William Riley  
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203.909.6717  
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Paul Smith  
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New Haven, CT 06513  
203.785.1746  
paulsmith29@yahoo.com

Paul Wolter  
8 Sybil Creek Place  
Branford, CT 06405  
860.681.5548  
pwolter6@earthlink.net

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## INDOOR PROGRAMS

Monthly indoor programs run September through April. They are held on the second Thursday of the month (except on holidays) in the Jones Auditorium at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station, 123 Huntington Street, New Haven. The social half-hour at meetings begins at 7:00 pm; the meeting and program begin at 7:30 pm. The facility is wheelchair accessible with a ramp and elevator.

*Directions:* Go north 1.4 miles from the New Haven Green on Whitney Avenue, turn left onto Huntington Street. The entrance to the station is on the right, just past the first cross street.

*Cancellation Policy:* Inclement weather or another emergency may cancel a meeting. For cancellation notices, check TV channels WTNH (New Haven) and WFSB (Hartford). Cancellation notices will also be posted online on ctbird.

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*Please Note: The September meeting will be held on the third Thursday of the month, Sept. 16, rather than the usual second Thursday to accommodate Rosh Hashanah on September 9.*

### Thursday, September 16, 2010 — Julie Victoria The Status of Raptors in Connecticut

As autumn arrives and birders begin to follow hawk migrations throughout the state, we welcome Julie Victoria, a wildlife biologist with 32 years of experience at the Connecticut DEP. She'll discuss the efforts of the DEP's Wildlife Diversity Program in tracking the American Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Osprey, and American Kestrel. Julie will give a brief life history of these birds in CT, using a colorful PowerPoint presentation of bird photographs. The history of these species will show their rise from near extinction, and in the case of the eagle and peregrine will demonstrate the current boom in successful breeding that has allowed the two species to be taken off the federal list of endangered species. Similarly, successful breeding has allowed the Osprey to be removed from the CT state list.

### Thursday, October 14, 2010 — Kevin Burgio Monk Parakeets in Connecticut: What Are They Doing Here?

Some people consider Monk Parakeets pests; others consider them unique and beautiful. But however they are viewed, they're building large stick nests along the coast, often on utility poles, where the nests sometimes cause power outages and fires. Our speaker, Kevin Burgio, an ecology and evolutionary biology PhD candidate at UConn, has been studying Monk Parakeets since his undergraduate days. The goal of his continuing research is to develop a non-lethal, safe, and cost-effective method to prevent Monk Parakeets from nesting on the poles, thus alleviating the clash between the birds, utility companies, and a public concerned with safety. Tonight Kevin will use photographs, graphs, and video footage to illustrate his research. He'll also provide background information on the biology of the parakeets, suggest how they initially came to North America, and describe past and present management tactics. The talk will provide interesting data to help answer the question, "Where will the Monk Parakeets go from here?"

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## BIRDS IN WORDS

Birds in Words is NHBC's book discussion group for people who like to read about their favorite hobby and then discuss the books at casual and thought-provoking sessions. Please feel free to attend any of the meetings. All are welcome! Meetings start at 7:00 pm at The Whitney Center, 200 Leeder Hill Dr., Hamden. If you have any questions, please email or call Sara Zagorski: szagorski@daypitnery.com, 860.721.1814.

*Directions:* From Whitney Avenue northbound, turn left on Putnam Avenue, then right on Leeder Hill Drive. Park on the road and go to main desk, sign in, and get directions to the meeting room. Directions are also available at: <http://www.whitneycenter.com/directions.html>

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### Monday, September 13

We'll discuss 2 books that describe bird behavior as learned through each bird's personal bond with the author: *Alex and Me: How a Scientist and a Parrot Uncovered a Hidden World of Animal Intelligence and Formed a Deep Bond in the Process* by Irene M. Pepperberg and *Wesley the Owl: The Remarkable Love Story of an Owl and His Girl* by Stacey O'Brien.

### Wednesday, November 3

A discussion of *The Feather Quest: A North American Birder's Year* by Pete Dunne, a book about how Dunne and his wife follow the birds around the U.S. throughout the seasons, visiting 22 hotspots during the year. The book includes Dunne's musings on the philosophy and spirit of birding and birders.

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### Wanted: Items for the tag sale at the November meeting.

Do you have a bird book you no longer use? Some avian art you no longer have room for? Bring the items to the September or October meetings; we'll sell them at the November meeting. Items will be priced at \$1, \$5, and \$10. Proceeds go to NHBC's Conservation Fund.

### Volunteers Needed! Sunday September 26 for the 8th Annual Migration Festival

Volunteers are needed to help with such duties as manning the NHBC table, handing out flyers, etc. If interested, please contact Maria Stockmal, 203.488.3876, [m.stockmal@snet.net](mailto:m.stockmal@snet.net)

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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. Car-pooling 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 too: <[www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org)> for trip information and watch for emails sent by the Club or contact trip leaders directly.

*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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### **Milford Audubon Coastal Center, Milford Sunday, August 15, 2010, 3:00 pm**

Please note the afternoon start time (to coincide with high tide). Join us at this birding hotspot where shorebirds concentrate in late summer as they pause during their long journey to their wintering grounds in the southern hemisphere. We may see more than a dozen shorebird species including the large waders, such as Whimbrel and Marbled Godwit. We'll look out into Long Island Sound for terns, search the marsh for herons, and look in the gardens for land birds. Meet at the coastal center parking lot at 3:00 pm. Leader—Chris Loscalzo: 203.389.6508, [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net)

### **Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Queens, NY Sunday, August 22, 2010, 7:30 am**

This birding hot spot is a great place to see a wide variety of shorebirds, herons, terns, and migrating passerines. It is a great place for uncommon shorebirds such as American Avocet, Marbled Godwit, and Buff-breasted, Stilt, and White-rumped Sandpiper. Meet at 7:30 am at the commuter lot in Orange at Rte. 34 and Greenway Road (at exits 57/58 of the Wilbur Cross Pkwy). We will carpool to the refuge, returning in the late afternoon. Bring lunch, water, and bug spray. Consider a cap and sunscreen, and wear shoes you won't mind getting muddy. Leader—Chris Loscalzo: 203.389.6508, [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net)

### **COA Shorebird and Tern Workshop Sunday, August 22, 2010, 7:30 am, Sandy Point, West Haven**

COA field workshops focus on one or two groups of birds with the intent of helping birders improve their identification skills. Today's focus will be on shorebirds and terns. The workshop begins at Sandy Pt. and then moves to Milford Pt. Meet at the Sandy Point parking lot across from the Captain's Galley Restaurant in West Haven. We start with a rising tide; wear footwear you won't mind getting wet. No pre-registration required. The workshop is free and open to the public. We'll divide into groups by ability so participants of all levels will have a program tailored to their ability. Workshop leaders are some of the best birders in the state. Contact—Tina Green: 203.247.2660, [tina@renaissancestudios.com](mailto:tina@renaissancestudios.com)

### **Lighthouse Point Bird Walk and Prep for Migration Festival Saturday, August 28, 2010, 8:00 am**

Ranger Dan Barvir and Arne Rosengren will lead the bird walk.

Meet at the Hawk Watch parking lot at Lighthouse Point on New Haven Harbor. Then, at about 9:00 am, we will perform some light trail maintenance and cleanup. This is a great way both to enjoy looking at birds and help preserve their habitat. Leaders: Dan Barvir: 203 946-6086 and Arne Rosengren: 203 248-2903

### **Daily Hawk Watch at Lighthouse Point Park September 1 to November 30, 2010**

Lighthouse Point Park on New Haven Harbor is one of the premier locations in southern New England for observing migrating hawks, eagles, and falcons, as well as a wide variety of songbirds. The watch starts daily at 7:00 am and continues as long as the hawks keep flying. Stop by anytime. Coordinator—Steve Mayo: 203.393.0694, [smayo@sikorsky.com](mailto:smayo@sikorsky.com)

### **First Wednesday Walk: Sandy Point, West Haven Wednesday, September 1, 2010, 8 am**

Join us as we look for shorebirds and terns at this excellent local birding spot. Black Skimmers, Roseate Terns, and a variety of shorebirds, including Golden Plover, are possible. Meet in the parking lot opposite the Captain's Galley Restaurant on Beach St. Wear footwear that you won't mind getting wet—we may have to wade in shallow water. Leader: Julian Hough. Contact person—Tina Green: 203.247.2660, [tina@renaissancestudios.com](mailto:tina@renaissancestudios.com)

### **Beginners' Walk in Woodbridge Saturday, September 18, 2010, 8:00 am**

This walk is oriented to the beginning birder. We will learn about basic birding techniques and common resident species. We will see birds of the open fields and woods in the 100-acre Fitzgerald Property and Community Gardens. Meet at the gravel lot on Beecher Road, 0.1 mile south of Rte. 114 and the town center. Leader—Chris Loscalzo: 203.389.6508, [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net)

### **Eighth Annual Migration Festival at Lighthouse Point Park Sunday, September 26, 2010, 8:00 am to 3:00 pm**

This festive event is sponsored by the New Haven Parks Dept., the New Haven Bird Club, and other fine organizations. In addition to hawk watching, there will be bird banding demonstrations, a live raptor show, bird walks, and other activities. Check the newspaper and Club newsletter for more details. Organizer—Ranger Dan Barvir: 203.946.6086. NHBC contact—Maria Stockmal: 203.488.3876, [m.stockmal@snet.net](mailto:m.stockmal@snet.net)

**Kellogg Environmental Center  
Osbornedale State Park, Derby  
Saturday, October 2, 2010, 8:00 am**

The park supports a wide variety of birds, from Pileated Woodpecker and Green Heron to Bald Eagle and warblers. Rarities have occurred here, most notably the Western Flycatcher a few years ago, a first state record. Habitat includes two small ponds, meadows, low brush, and trees. Note: It can take up to 2 hours to walk the pond area. An extended bird walk will be offered along the red trail, which can take 1-2 additional hours, depending on activity. This portion of the walk has two steep hills and will take us to an area that can have very good birding. Meet at the Kellogg parking lot: 500 Hawthorne Ave., Derby. Leader—Maria Stockmal: 203.488.3876, m.stockmal@snet.net

**COA Sparrow Workshop, Silver Sands State Park, Milford  
Sunday, October 3, 2010, 8 am - 12 pm (Rain date: 10/17/10)**

Join Frank Mantlik and other top birders to study the finer points of sparrow ID. No pre-registration is necessary. The workshop is free and open to the public. Contact—Tina Green: 203.247.2660, tina@renaissancestudios.com

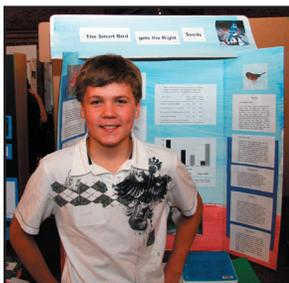
**First Wednesday Walk: Osbornedale State Park, Derby  
Wednesday, October 6, 2010, 8:00 am**

Join us as we visit this fine birding location. Its varied habitat includes freshwater ponds, fields, and woods, and attracts shore-birds, waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds. Rarities have occurred here, most notably the Western Flycatcher, a first state record, found a few years ago. Leader is Roy Harvey. Meet at the Kellogg Environmental Center parking lot, 500 Hawthorne Avenue, Derby. Contact—Tina Green: 203.247.2660, tina@renaissancestudios.com

**THE BIG SIT!®  
Sunday, October 10, 2010**

Established by NHBC, The Big Sit!® has become an international event, with birders participating on four continents. The object is to record as many species of birds as possible in a single day from one 17-foot diameter circle. The circles are located strategically at a number of birding hotspots in the state. Join other birders in one of these circles or create one of your own! You don't have to be a hard-core birder to join in the fun. The event is now run by Bird Watcher's Digest. For details, go to the Bird Watcher's Digest website: birdwatchersdigest.com or contact John Triana: 203.758.7203, jtriana1@sbcglobal.net

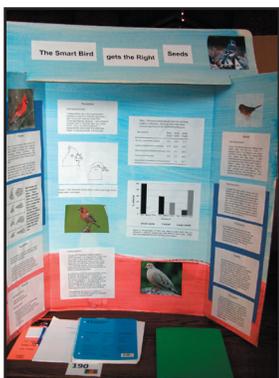
**The NHBC awards its annual prize at the 2010 New Haven Science Fair**



The Bird Club awarded its annual New Haven Science Fair prize to Cameron Schmitz a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at Edgewood Magnet School in New Haven. The judging was held at the dining hall commons attached to Woolsey Hall at Yale on the night of May 11 and with the children present the morning of May 12.

The project title is: "The smart bird gets the right seed." Cameron, a soft spoken 13-year old, wanted to see if the length and width of a bird's bill had anything to do with its choice of seed. At the suggestion of his father, Oswald Schmitz, a professor at Yale School of Forestry, he approached Kristof Zyskowski, curator of ornithology at Yale's Peabody Museum. Kristof allowed him into the study collection where Cameron made measurements of the length and width of the bills on some local birds including Cardinal,

Mourning Dove and Blue Jay. He then made predictions about which bird would eat what size of seed. He then set up an experiment in his backyard to see if his hypothesis would be verified. He did things like sort common birdseed mix by size and present it on 3 different trays at the same time each day and made observations as to which bird ate what. He was able to notice a trend in his data that roughly confirmed his initial hypothesis. He took proper field notes, made his own conclusions and did all the work himself.



The prize is "The Letis Memorial Award for excellence and creativity in the study of bird behavior and habitats." It consists of \$200.00 plus a 1-year membership in the NHBC. The judging was conducted by long-time members Mike and Pat Horn. John Triana is also a judge, but business kept him away this year. \$100.00 comes from the Letis Memorial Fund and \$100.00 comes from Mike and Pat Horn.

--Mike Horn



May 18, 2010  
Dear Mr. Friana,  
I am writing to thank you very much for the New Haven Bird Club Millie Letis Memorial Special Award. I was very pleased to get the honor of this award because I worked really hard and I had lots of fun watching birds and learning their behavior.  
Yours Sincerely,  
Cameron Schmitz

Cameron Schmitz's Thank You Note

## May 1<sup>st</sup> Kids' Walk by the Mill River Report

The parking lot where the 25 participants (from seven towns) gathered gave us some of the most satisfying sightings we had all morning. Two orioles were spotted there by one family, and we all saw the Eastern Kingbird that landed in one of the trees by Whitney Avenue. This walk is always planned for the Saturday closest to May 1 in the hope of easier viewing for children, but we always hear many species that we don't see. That was particularly true this year with the foliage so well advanced. When the leaves obscured the birds we were hearing, an iPod came in handy; the children loved looking at the pictures of the Yellow Warbler and Northern Parula and hearing them up closer. They got a good look at a live Song Sparrow singing persistently, and were especially excited to see a beautiful male cardinal, as well as a huge snapping turtle swimming in the river below the foot-bridge. The adults that joined us were very helpful, and our thirty species, the sunny, warm weather, the beauty of the spring woods and the outstandingly cooperative behavior of even the smallest children all made for a very pleasant morning.

--Florence McBride

## Nehantic State Forest Field Trip Report

On Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, twelve members of the club visited the Nehantic State Forest, a large wooded area east of the CT River in Lyme. The forest is known for its extensive woods, shrub swamp wetlands, lakes, and shrub ponds. We found several interesting bird species in each of these habitats. In the woods, we heard or saw Veery, Swainson's Thrush, Wood Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-throated Green Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, and Baltimore Oriole. The extensive shrub swamp yielded several interesting birds, including a vocal Northern Waterthrush, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Common Yellowthroat, Warbling Vireo, and Yellow-throated Vireo. We had great, extended looks at singing Worm-eating Warblers at two sites in the woods by the shores of Uncus Pond, a 70-acre natural lake within the forest. At the shrub ponds, we saw a Belted Kingfisher, Mallards, and a Wood Duck duckling. Tree Swallows and a few Purple Martins flew over the ponds in search of insects. We encountered a number of interesting birds in the shrubby field adjacent to the shrub ponds, including Great Crested Flycatcher, Blue-winged, Pine, and Prairie Warbler, and Black-billed Cuckoo (heard briefly). As we left the forest at its northeast end, a Broad-winged Hawk soared over our heads. We then took a side trip to Hartman Park in northern Lyme to see if we could find the Cerulean Warblers there. With a lot of effort and with strain on our necks, we were all able to get some views of this beautiful species. The park is a good birding location and I believe we will explore it more thoroughly next year. For the day, we saw a total of 54 species, including 13 warbler species. Not bad!

--Chris Loscalzo



Blue-gray Gnatcatcher  
Mike Ferrari

## Barn Island Field Trip Report

On Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 15 members of the club visited the Barn Island Wildlife Management Area in Stonington for a full morning of birding. The refuge is a large area, with expansive marshes, tidal pools, woodlands, and open fields. We saw interesting birds at each location. In the marshes, we found Great and Snowy Egret, Glossy Ibis, Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plover, Willet, Willow Flycatcher, Marsh Wren, and Saltmarsh Sparrow. In the tidal pools, there were Greater Yellowlegs, Semipalmated and Least Sandpiper, and a few ducks. A Least Tern paid a visit to the pools to plunge dive for fish, and swallows flew over the pools in search of insects. The woodlands were home to many species, such as Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireo, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Veery, Wood Thrush, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, and Baltimore Oriole. It was in the woodlands that we found several migrant warbler species, such as Northern Parula, and Wilson's, Magnolia, and Blackpoll Warbler. At the large open field at the far, eastern end of the refuge, we found White-eyed Vireo, House Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Blue-winged Warbler, Orchard Oriole, and Chipping Sparrow. All in all, we saw a total of 67 species, including Bobolinks in a large hayfield that we visited on our way into the refuge. Our annual trip to this refuge is always a pleasant excursion. The variety of birds is impressive and the possibility for rarities is always there.

--Chris Loscalzo



Yellow-throated Vireo  
Mike Ferrari

## Central CT Birding Tour Field Trip Report

On July 10<sup>th</sup>, 20+ members of the club went on a memorable journey through the central part of our state, visiting several good birding locations along the way. We went in search of uncommon and rare summer residents and found several, and even sighted the first fall migrant of the year.

We started our journey at Rentschler Field, where uncommon grassland species can be found. Good sightings there included American Kestrel, Spotted Sandpiper, Bank Swallow, and Savannah Sparrow. The best bird at this location, though, was a Grasshopper Sparrow, fervently singing from the top of a weedy plant. Unfortunately, much of the field had been mowed, so there were fewer birds than usual to be found there, and we did not see any Upland Sandpipers. The fall migration had its unofficial start for our club with the sighting of two Least Sandpipers at the edge of the small pond there.

Our next stop was Vibert Road and the riverside park there in South Windsor. Notable sightings there were: Willow Flycatcher, Marsh Wren, Swamp Sparrow, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. From there, we went to Station 43, a remarkable location with an expansive

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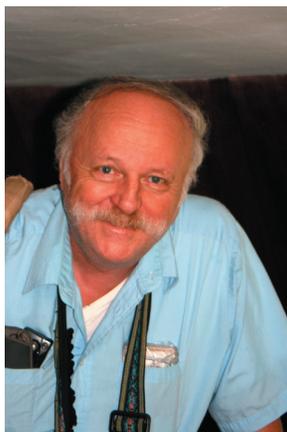
## MEET THE BOARD

### Mike Horn: Vice President

**Mike Horn** currently is Vice President of NHBC and in the past has been Outdoor Program Chair. He has led field trips for the Club and is a longtime participant in Christmas Bird Counts. A State Science Fair Judge for a number of years, he has in recent times served as liaison between NHBC and area schools where students have created bird-related science fair projects.

Mike, a 17-year member of NHBC, is especially interested in Osprey. He and his wife Pat, who is also a Club member, volunteer with the CT DEP as Osprey keepers in the Quinipiac River Marsh. When they started the project more than 20 years ago, there were three nests. Now there are upwards of 30 that produced 65 fledges this year. The job entails everything from observing and recording all aspects of the birds' behavior, to building, installing, and maintaining nests. With such a serious commitment, it's not surprising that the marsh is Mike's favorite birding spot. A close second is his Hamden backyard where he makes sure the feeders are always full.

Mike came to birding as a young boy when his father used birds as an aid for successful fishing. He taught Mike what birds to watch and what their various behaviors meant for finding and catching fish. Birds and fish have proved a winning combo all around. Mike, an avid offshore fisherman, has for many years now routinely provided about a ton of bluefish annually to Wind Over Wings, the bird rehab facility in Clinton. Injured fishing birds needing to reside there can still enjoy fresh or fresh-frozen seafood on their menu. Mike is dedicated to wider conservation efforts too. For 10 years, he has been a Commissioner on Hamden's Natural Resources and Open Space Commission. He currently is chairperson.



A Bridgeport native, Mike earned a BS in physics from Merrimack College (N. Andover, MA). He is chief engineer with a Bristol, CT, manufacturer of pressure, vacuum, and other instrumentation for a wide variety of uses. He has served two terms as president of the CT chapter of the International Society of Automation and has received several professional awards through the ISA. In his early career as a traveling air pollution control engineer, Mike was lucky to be able to indulge his favorite twin pastimes. He got to bird and to fish in all 50 states, all of Canada's provinces, all the countries of Central America, and Colombia.

Mike and Pat have birded all 40 years of their married life and they both love travel and photography. They have visited and photographed widely in the US and Canada; in fact, one of Pat's photos—Black-legged Kittiwakes on Alaska's Gull Island—recently placed in the top 1% in *National Geographic's* annual International Photo Contest. Mike and Pat also actively follow a lifelong love of classical music. They have volunteered for many years with the Orchestra of New England, a large chamber orchestra based in New Haven. Mike currently is the House Manager; Pat has the title of Head Usher.

The Horns have no children but Pat has done a good share for the younger generation: she has two degrees in education and works in the Hamden school system. Mike was a Big Brother for many years. Nor is their household always particularly quiet. They have a rescued Puerto Rican Dingo Dog who has been known to get feisty. The good news is that it can keep the yard—(read: keep all the *bird feeders*)—pretty clear of squirrels. That must be every birder's dream.

--Betty Zuraw

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freshwater marsh. After a little necessary trail maintenance, we made it to the marsh. We encountered a number of interesting bird species there, including Green Heron, Wood Duck, Cedar Waxwing, and a pair of nesting Orchard Orioles. But, the prize bird of the location, and the day, was a Least Bittern that appeared and flew from one end of the marsh to the other, giving all of us extended and excellent views of this elusive species.

Our final stop was the Great Pond State Forest, in Simsbury. We arrived after a brief but heavy rain, and then spent the next two hours relaxing at the south end of the pond, taking in the beautiful scenery and the bird activity before us. We went there with the hope of seeing a Mississippi Kite, as they were reported to be there again this year. But, alas, perhaps because of the weather, none visited the pond while we were there. Fortunately, there were still many interesting birds for us to enjoy. A trio of

Pileated Woodpeckers visited some tall dead trees by the pond near us, while a family of Eastern Kingbirds alternated their time hawking insects and perching on small snags and bushes out on the pond. The pond is full of water lilies, and many birds feed on and around them, including Wood Ducks, Killdeer, Green and Great Blue Herons, and Belted Kingfishers. Scarlet Tanagers, Baltimore Orioles, and several other species were seen and heard around the edge of the pond. For us, it was a peaceful and unhurried way to spend a few hours on a mid-summer's afternoon.

All total, we saw 70 species on the trip and had a great time doing it. I think we're already looking forward to going back again next year!

--Chris Loscalzo



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