



THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

October 2010

2010 CALENDAR

(See inside for details)

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

Thursday, October 14, 7:00 pm **Kevin Burgio**
Monk Parakeets in Connecticut: What Are They Doing Here?

Sunday, October 17, 8:00 am **Evergreen Cemetery, New Haven**

Saturday, October 23, 8:00 am **Hammonasset State Park, Madison**

November 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011 **NHBC 17th Annual Winter Feeder Survey**

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

Wednesday, November 3, 7:00 pm **Birds in Words: *The Feather Quest: A North American Birder's Year* by Pete Dunne**

Saturday, November 6, 8:00 am **Sherwood Island State Park and Pequot Library, Westport**

Sunday, November 7, 8:00 am **Fargeorge Wildlife Preserve, Quinnipiac River, New Haven**

Saturday November 13, 6:25 am **Bombay Hook NWR, Leipsic, Delaware and Eastern Neck Island NWR, Rock Hall, MD**

Thursday, November 18, 7:00 pm **Andrew Griswold**
Birding Cuba: The Migratory Bird Survey Program

Wednesday, December 1, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Silver Sands State Park, Milford**

Thursday, December 9, 7:00 pm **Mike DiGiorgio**
Wildlife Art: A Personal History

Saturday, December 11, 8:00 am **Ora Avenue/Proto Drive/Tweed-New Haven Airport, New Haven**

Saturday, December 18 **111th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count**

Please Consider...

If you indicated that you wanted to receive the newsletter electronically only, you will not receive a paper copy of this issue of the *Chickadee*. Others will receive a copy in the mail soon. The club encourages you to take the "email only" option to receive this newsletter as it saves paper and postage. If you would like to become an "email only" recipient, please contact the Membership Chair, Betty Zuraw, bzfeathers@sbcglobal.net or 860.632.1156.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I like to volunteer. I don't know if I'm motivated by helping others, learning about something that interests me, making a contribution to a good cause, having fun, or getting out. It's probably all of the above.

I assisted as a volunteer at the Shepaug Dam Bald Eagle viewing station. That experience I did for several years has led me to become a Master Wildlife Conservationist for the Department of Environmental Protection.

Volunteering to lead bird walks at the Ansonia Nature Center in Ansonia and at Kellogg Environmental Center in Derby has led me to lead my own walk at Kellogg Environmental Center/Osbornedale State Park for the New Haven Bird Club this October.

Monitoring Piping Plover at Sandy Point in West Haven has helped me hone my shorebird identification skills while keeping track of nests and fledglings. I've come to appreciate the difficulty, obstacles, and perseverance of nesting birds as they try to produce the next generation of species. I have also met many people I never would have.

The hawkwatch has special memories for me. When I was unemployed I frequented the hawkwatch when no respecting observer would go. Some of those dead, calm, warm days with good company were quite nice, peaceful, and a time when bonding came natural. This has led me to fill in as a counter when I can. I currently attend university and am not always available for the extended time it takes.

Being the contact person for the annual migration festival at Lighthouse Point Park in New Haven for vendors and volunteers gives me joy when I see happy people having a good time. The effort is well worth it.

I volunteered at the Peabody Ornithology Department for a while and began to develop some sense for Latin species names which was one of my goals for donating my time. I worked with packing bird eggs that I still think about today. I occasionally look up eggs in a book that was recommended to me, and I am able to answer questions about bird eggs that I would not have been able to do before. When I notice eggs in nests I think about their coloring and the reasons for it.

(continued on next page.)

New Haven Bird Club - 2010 - 2011

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SPECIAL PROGRAMS

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

The NHBC website is www.newhavenbirdclub.org

President's Message (Continued from previous page)

Bird banding is another favorite place I like to frequent, and I volunteer taking birds out of the mist nets or recording. I get to see the birds up close and personal. They look so different than out in the field that sometimes I misidentify them. I also get to hold the birds in my hand and take part in the camaraderie that marks the regular bird banding crew.

And, of course, my volunteer work at the New Haven Bird Club has led me to become its president. I became a member of the bird club two years before I became an active member. The first meeting I attended was to seek more information about the conservation committee that was being resurrected. Not only did I find out information, I attended a board meeting and became the conservation chair. I held that position for several years. Left the board for a time until I became vice-president, and here I am today.

So my message is Volunteer, Volunteer, Volunteer!!!! You never know where it will lead.

--Maria Stockmal

The deadline for submissions to the December newsletter is November 19. Send to Donna Batsford dbatsford@footeschool.org

Welcome to these new members!

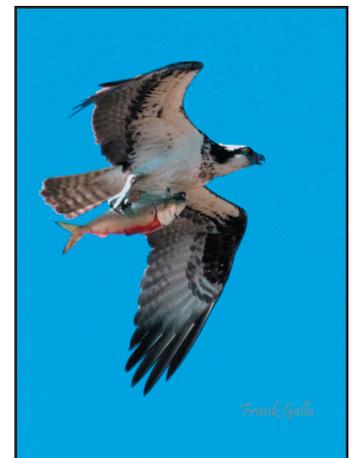
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*Osprey
Photo by Frank Gallo*

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.

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?"

Please Note: The November meeting will be on the third Thursday of the month, the 18th, because Veteran's Day is the 11th.

Thursday, November 18, 2010 — Andrew Griswold Birding Cuba: The Migratory Bird Survey Program

For five years, the Connecticut Audubon Society has participated in a U.S.-led and licensed survey of migratory birds in Cuba. Endorsed by the American Birding Association, the program has a 12-year history as a bird conservation project aimed at understanding Cuba's importance as a wintering habitat for North American migratory birds. In this bird survey, CAS participants travel as a small group of licensed surveyors along with a U.S. ornithologist and bilingual Cuban guides. They move through rarely explored parts of Cuba, and the birding is remarkable. Cuba, in addition to being a wintering habitat for migratory birds, is home to 23 endemic bird species including the world's smallest bird, the Bee Hummingbird. Andy, the well-traveled director of CAS EcoTravel, will delight us with photos of many of the birds unique to Cuba and will also show us much of the ecologically diverse island habitat. You may leave the talk adding Cuba to your list of "must go" birding destinations.

Thursday, December 9, 2010 — Mike DiGiorgio Wildlife Art: A Personal History

Mike has taken his love of birds well beyond simply observing and enjoying them. Interested in birds even as a child, he began to study bird painting about 30 years ago. Now a nationally recognized artist, his style reflects both his wide knowledge of birds and his emphasis on their character and relationship to the environment. He paints from life, traveling widely to sketch his subjects and their habitats. Mike will discuss how he developed as a wildlife artist whose work has appeared in many books, magazines, and journals and in museums and galleries. His bird art was honored in 2004 when he received the initial endowment award from the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Sciences. You'll never view good bird paintings again without appreciating the knowledge, dedication, research, training, and patience it took to create them.

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@daypiterney.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>

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.

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 October meeting so they can be priced ahead of time. We'll sell them at the November meeting. Items will be priced at \$1, \$5, and \$10. Proceeds go to NHBC's Conservation Fund.

Items for the Birders Exchange to be sent out in December. Binoculars or Southern Hemisphere bird books would be appreciated. Please bring to Kris Johnson at the October or November Meeting.

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> 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.

September 1 to November 30

Daily Hawk Watch at Lighthouse Point

Lighthouse Point on New Haven Harbor is one of the premiere locations in southern New England for observing migrating raptors, 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 any time. Coordinator: Steve Mayo: 203.393.0694 or smayo@sikorsky.com.

Sunday, October 17, 8:00 am

Evergreen Cemetery, New Haven

Join us as we look for fall migrants in the historic and serene setting of Evergreen Cemetery. We'll visit the gravesites of several former NHBC members while seeking birds on their way south. We'll also be joined by a guest speaker from the cemetery who will tell us about its history. This is a great trip for all as the walking is easy on flat ground. Meet at the parking lot outside the cemetery's office on Ella Grasso Blvd. Leader: John Triana: 203.758.7203, jtriana1@sbcglobal.net

Saturday, October 23, 8:00 am

Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Visit one of Connecticut's best fall birding spots, where the abundance of some migrants and sightings of less common species can make for a truly memorable trip. The walking is easy, as it is on level ground. Meet at the park entrance (I-95, exit 62). Leader: Florence McBride: 203.288.6777 or j.mcbride@yale.edu.

November 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011

NHBC 17th Annual Winter Feeder Survey

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.

Wednesday, November 3, 8:00 am

First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Join us on this mid-week trip as we explore this birding hot spot for fall migrants. The varied habitat attracts shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds. Meet at the park entrance. Leader: Jerry Connolly. Contact person: Tina Green: 203.247.2660 or tina@renaissancestudios.com.

Saturday, November 6, 8:00 am

Sherwood Island State Park and Pequot Library, Westport

Join us as we visit this fine coastal birding location where we will look for sea ducks, gulls, raptors, shorebirds, and sparrows. After birding in the park, we will go to the library where we will get a private tour and see historic and rare books about birds. Meet at the main parking lot in the park. Leader: Tina Green: 203.247.2660 or tina@renaissancestudios.com.

Sunday, November 7, 8:00 am

Fargeorge Wildlife Preserve, Quinnipiac River, New Haven

This New Haven Land Trust property is always full of surprises. It is a good place to see raptors, shorebirds, and waterfowl. We have had everything from woodcock to eagles to Snow Geese, lots of fall migrants, wintering ducks and more. It is a varied habitat. Directions: Go south on Quinnipiac Ave. from RT 80. Make a right just past the R.R. overpass. Go through the open gate onto the property. Leader: Mike Horn 203-288-1891 or mhorn@att.net.

Saturday November 13, 6:25 am

Bombay Hook NWR, Leipsic, Delaware and Eastern Neck Island NWR, Rock Hall, Maryland

Birding and Photography - Snow Geese and Tundra Swans
The highlight will be on Sunday when we enter the main gate of Bombay Hook NWR at 6:25 am **sharp** and tour the many ponds, pools and fields where you may see and photograph as many as 100,000 Snow Geese as well as many other fall migrants from raptors to shorebirds. We will also visit other spots in the area including Eastern Neck Island NWR where we will find Tundra Swans. There are motels in Dover and Bed & Breakfasts in the area. We recommend the Best Western in Smyrna, DE about 6 miles from Bombay Hook. Please contact the trip leaders for details. Directions: To get to Bombay Hook NWR from Dover, proceed north on either US 13 or DE 1 to Rte. 42. Head east on 42 to Leipsic. From Leipsic go north on Rte 9 to Whitehall Neck Rd. Proceed east down the road to the refuge entrance gate. Leaders: Mike and Pat Horn 203.288.1891 or mhorn@att.net.

Wednesday, December 1, 8:00 am

First Wednesday Walk: Silver Sands State Park, Milford

We will be looking for sea ducks and shorebirds, rare gulls, birds of prey, and uncommon sparrows. Meet at the main parking area at Silver Sands SP, the first large lot on the right. We may visit

(Continued on bottom of next page)

MEET THE BOARD

Kris Johnson: Indoor Program Chair

Kris Johnson currently is serving her second year in one of the Club's liveliest jobs, that of Indoor Program Chair. A 7-year member of NHBC, Kris has also made a number of other important contributions to the Club. For the past 4 years she's been coordinator of the tag sales at the November and March meetings. Her enthusiastic salesmanship has resulted in significant boosts to the NHBC Conservation Fund, the beneficiary of tag sale earnings. And she's been just as masterful at managing the raffles at the May banquets—still more profit for the Conservation Fund. Kris also spearheaded the launch of the popular First Wednesday walks. She coordinated the program in its first year, and in the next year shared the duties with Tina Green, who now manages First Wednesdays.

Kris came to birding 16 years ago when a friend talked her into going on a trip to Cape May. Kris became an instant convert. With a patriotic *See America First* motto, she's covered a lot of birding territory in the US—FL, the NC Outer Banks, Monhegan Island off the ME coast, KS, MI, CO, and ND, over to TX and AZ, and plenty of places in between. Further afield, she's birded widely in Ontario with her brother and has visited the Galapagos. Her favorite birding memory is a venture into a very soggy marsh in MN where she and a few intrepid companions went out at 11:00 o'clock one night looking for—and finding!—a Yellow Rail.

A librarian for 26 years in the CT State Library, Kris first worked in the History and Genealogy Division and retired as head of Acquisitions/Collection Management. Kris remains true to a librarian's proverbial fondness for detailed orderliness. She always writes down every species she sees on every walk she takes and carefully keeps several annotated life lists: yard, yearly



CT, all years CT (320), North America (570). Her favorite bird is the Cedar Waxwing. Watch for the auto license plate WXWING. Her favorite birding spots are Hammonasset and both the upper and lower trails at East Rock.

Kris was born in California but grew up in New Hampshire. She graduated from the Univ. of New Hampshire and some years later earned a Master in Library Science degree at SCSU. Her first marriage, which produced two children, brought her to Glastonbury. Now remarried, Kris has lived for

24 years in North Haven with her husband Jim. Kris's son is a philosophy professor at the Univ. of Nevada-LV. Her daughter in New York, a former math teacher, is a stay-at-home mom who has given Kris two grandchildren, a girl, 11, and a boy, 8. They're the indisputable apples of their grandmother's eye, and Kris's many positive interactions with them have helped make them true nature lovers. Kris also has 3 grown stepchildren.

Always an outdoors person, Kris regularly hiked the White Mountains in NH from early childhood till well into midlife when her knee started giving her trouble. She did get a new knee but by then her allegiance was tied to birding, and there were other outdoors things to do. Kris and Jim, both sailors from way back, owned a 30-foot sailboat for a number of years. They still enjoy windjammer cruises. Though not an ardent birder, Jim enjoys joining Kris on boating/ birding and weekend birding trips.

In keeping with a love of the outdoors, Kris is a devoted gardener. And as might be expected of a librarian, she's a more-than-avid reader. And yes, she's a meticulous lister there too. She keeps a tally and notes on all the books she reads. In Kris's case, it must be, Once a lister, always a lister.

--Betty Zuraw

Field Trips (Continued from previous page.)

other locations in Milford, such as Milford Point, Mondo Ponds, and Caswell Cove. Leader: Charlie Barnard. Contact person: Tina Green: 203.247.2660 or tina@renaissancestudios.com.

Saturday, December 11, 8:00 am **Ora Avenue / Proto Drive / Tweed-New Haven Airport, New Haven**

Meet on Proto Drive near the landfill. This area on the east side of the airport has a great array of late fall migrants and some over-wintering species. Possibilities include hawks (including Rough-legged), several sparrow species (including White-crowned), Eastern Meadowlark, Marsh Wren, and thrushes. With luck we may see a Great Horned Owl or American Bittern. Directions: Take I-95 north, Exit 51 Frontage Road. Go

0.9 mile. Turn right onto Hemingway (Rte. 142). Go about one mile, then turn right onto Proto Drive. Leader: Steve Broker: 203.272.5192, cell: 203.747.6843, or ls.broker@cox.net.

Saturday, December 18, 2010 **11th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count**

Join other NHBC members in this fun event, steeped in tradition. Participate for a few hours or the entire day. Results of the count are sent to the National Audubon Society and are included in an international census on early winter bird populations. The compilation dinner is at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station, starting at 5:00 pm. Compiler: Chris Loscalzo: 203.389.6508 or loscalz@optonline.net.

Summer Bird Count, June 12 and 13, 2010

Great weather, participation and coverage combined for a very successful Summer Bird Count. Saturday weather was mostly cloudy with only a brief period of mid-day light rain. Temperatures were mild (65-74F) and winds were light from the SW. Sunday weather was very similar with sprinkles later in the day and winds mostly NNE 0-10 mph.

Interesting species included a lingering Ring-necked Duck, an introduced Northern Bobwhite, lingering shorebirds, Eastern Meadowlark and Purple Finch.

Intriguing breeding bird candidates included Hooded Merganser and Seaside Sparrow (the latter which must certainly breed in the Q Marsh). Then there are those New Haven specialties that we expect to find every year, but in no means take for granted. These include those that are significant to Connecticut's avifauna (Peregrine, Raven, Willet, American Oystercatcher, Common Nighthawk), and even the Planet Earth's avifauna (Least Tern, Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Blue-winged Warbler).

Missed species included lingering loons, American Woodcock, Great Horned Owl, waterthrushes, Hooded Warbler, the secretive Broad-winged Hawk, Bank Swallow, Black-billed Cuckoo and Bobolink (a historical North Haven rarity - is there any habitat left anywhere?)

Can Goose 602, Brant 13, M Swan 105, Wood Duck 65, Gadwall 2, Am Black Duck 9, Mallard 299, RN Duck 1, Wild Turkey 54, R-N Pheasant 1, N Bobwhite 1, D-C Cormorant 336, Gr-BI Heron 13, Gr Egret 60, Snowy Egret 26, Gr Heron 10, BC Night Heron 26, Glossy Ibis 6, Bk Vulture 3, Turkey Vulture 38, Osprey 104 (High), N Goshawk (count period), R-shouldered Hawk 3, R-tailed Hawk 24, Am Kestrel 1, Peregrine Falcon 3, Clapper Rail 14, B-Bellied Plover 4, Semipalm Plover 15, Piping Plover 12, Killdeer 20, Am Oystercatcher 18, Willet 21, Spotted Sandpiper 21, Ruddy Turnstone 3, Semipalm Sandpiper 60, RB Gull 304, Herring Gull 236, Gr BB Gull 123, Com Tern 33, Least Tern 75, Rock Pigeon 321, Mourning Dove 394, Monk Parakeet 73, YB Cuckoo 1, E Screech Owl 1, Barred Owl 1, Com Nighthawk 2, Chimney Swift 97, RT Hummingbird 13, B Kingfisher 11, RB Woodpecker 89, Downy Woodpecker 90, Hairy Woodpecker 26, N Flicker 73, Pileated Woodpecker 4, E Wood-Pewee 51, Willow Flycatcher, E Phoebe 25, Gr Crested Flycatcher 38, E Kingbird 32, Wh-eyed Vireo 2, Yel-Throated Vireo 7, Warbling Vireo 104, Red-eyed Vireo 80, BI Jay 255, Am Crow 237, Fish Crow 27, Com Raven 3, Purple Martin 4, Tree Swallow 129, N Rough-winged Swallow 46, Cliff Swallow 4, Barn Swallow 289, BC Chickadee 148, T Titmouse 179, WB Nuthatch 59, Car Wren 44, House Wren 38, Winter Wren 1, Marsh Wren 53, BG Gnatcatcher 4, E Bluebird 19, Veery 16, Wood Thrush 71, Am Robin 1465, Gray Catbird 348, N Mockingbird 134, Br Thrasher 3, Euro Starling 1707, Cedar Waxwing 122, Blue-winged Warbler 31, Yellow Warbler 162, Chestnut-sided Warbler 3, BT Green Warbler 3, Pine Warbler 24, Prairie Warbler 18, Bk and Wh Warbler 22, Am Redstart 1, Worm-eating Warbler 16, Ovenbird 73, Com Yellowthroat 72, Scarlet Tanager 46, E Towhee 37, Chipping Sparrow 206, Field Sparrow 7, Saltm Sharp-tailed Sparrow 4, Seaside Sparrow 3, Song Sparrow 242, Swamp Sparrow 4, N Cardinal 236, RB Grosbeak 42, Indigo Bunting 39, RW Blackbird 933, E

Meadowlark 1, Com Grackle 1417, BH Cowbird 163, Orchard Oriole 12, Baltimore Oriole 120, Purple Finch 1, House Finch 123, Am Goldfinch 196, House Sparrow 1212.

--Steve Mayo

Winter Feeder Survey

I want to welcome all members and non members to the 2010 – 2011 Winter Feeder Survey. We had good participation last year and I hope to see more members involved this year. In a nut shell, all that you have to do is to record the largest number of birds of a species that you see at one sighting at the bird feeders during one day of the week and report that number to me. You do not have to do it every day or at the same time of day, but at least one day during the week or weekend.

We had a total of 19 participants, 7 via U.S. Postal system and 11 using email, and me. We were from 13 towns or cities: Branford, Cheshire, Durham, Guilford, Hamden, Killingworth, Milford, New Haven, Orange, Prospect, Wallingford, West Haven and Woodbridge. Five participants were from Hamden, the other towns each having one participant.

We saw a total of 58 species of birds and 6 species of animals. The largest quantity for one week was 628 for Common Grackles. This species from November to February was flying around in large flocks of 100 or more and would invade feeder areas. We had quite a few species where only one individual showed up, namely: Black-poll Warbler, Brown Creeper, Pileated Woodpecker, Pine Siskin, Red-shouldered Hawk and Turkey Vulture. We had a few species show up more than one time as a single bird for a few different weeks, but whether it was the same bird is hard to say since there is usually weeks between sightings or months. It may have also been seen by different participants. A factor in the count of some of the more common birds by (+/- 20) may be due to the birds not being there or due to the participants being off on winter vacation.

This year I am going to change the format of the survey to make it easier for me to compile the data. I am going to change the way we compile the data to a weekly basis instead of a monthly basis. This will make the data smoother since it will be for every seven days instead of having a last week of seven to ten days and ending in the middle of a week. I am also going to group the species according to how often they show up on a weekly basis with those that show up every week at the top. I may also include a column or row for weather, since I noticed that I had larger counts a few days after a rain or snow storm than I did during the rest of the days of the week. In this way we can see if the counts go up because of weather and not because there are more birds migrating through. For the postal participants I am going to change the way the list is printed so that you can have a choice as to how you want to turn the page over (asked for by a participant). There will be an Excel version and a Word version. Also any comments on the forms may end up in the monthly reports or the Newsletter.

For more information you can email me at vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net or phone me at 203.288.0621.

--Peter Vitali

2010 Report on Quinnipiac River Eagles and Ospreys

Section I: Eagles:

The Ospreys took over poor old lonesome Essex's tree nest and chased him off. I haven't seen him in almost 3 months. This became Osprey nest #32 – in a tree – what will they think of next?!

Section II: Ospreys::

Pat and I looked hard for more Osprey nests in our area and found some butes. The prize is the nest Pat found on top of an old railroad mobile crane on the Hamden side of the railroad yard. Some of these "New" nests may have been there for awhile but we just found them.



We had great weather this year with lots of fish available in the Q. We fledged 64 chicks which is a huge jump over last year. I guess

with the right combination of weather and food that the population and success ratio would spike.

Our success ratio, the number of fledges per active (non-teenage) nest, was great this year as well as recruitment.

2001 = 16 fledges / 7 active nests = 2.29
2002 = 23 fledges / 9 active nests = 2.55
2003 = 22 fledges / 13 active nests = 1.70
2004 = 27 fledges / 13 active nests = 2.08
2005 = 31 fledges / 15 active nests = 2.07
2006 = 28 fledges / 18 active nests = 1.55
2007 = 41 fledges / 19 active nests = 2.16
2008 = 38 fledges / 20 active nests = 1.90
2009 = 39 fledges / 21 active nests = 1.86
2010 = 64 fledges / 28 active nests = 2.29

We spent a total of 41 observation hours.

--Mike and Pat Horn

Jamaica Bay Field Trip Report

On Saturday, August 22nd, several club members ventured south to the Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Queens, NY, despite a gloomy forecast and a steady rain in CT. We arrived to find cloudy skies but encountered little rainfall until the end of our excursion. By then, we had seen more than 70 species, including a number of rare and uncommon ones.

We started at the north end of the East Pond, where shorebirds and terns congregate in late summer as they prepare for their journey to South and Central America. There, we saw several Stilt Sandpipers, dozens of Lesser Yellowlegs and Short-billed Dowitchers, and one Long-billed Dowitcher. There were also 15-20 Forster's Terns. As we were completing our survey of the birds at this location, they all abruptly took flight and many left the pond. We soon realized the reason for their departure: a Peregrine Falcon had arrived and flew over the pond. That was our cue to move on to our next stop, which was the south end of the East Pond. The trails for the pond run along the outer edges of the pond, as the water level is lowered each summer to accommodate the shorebirds. We saw many interesting and unusual species along this section of the pond, with the highlights being a White Pelican (that had been at the pond for weeks) and a Common Moorhen. We also saw several White-rumped Sandpipers, giving us an excellent opportunity to study the distinguishing features of this shorebird species. Other noteworthy species seen here (in rough taxonomic order) were: Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Ruddy Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Little Blue Heron, Glossy Ibis, Merlin, American Coot, Spotted Sandpiper, and Black Skimmer.

After a break for lunch, we hiked the trail around the West Pond, including the portion of the trail that goes through the gardens area. On this part of our trip, we found an out-of-season Common Goldeneye, Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, Least Tern, Eastern Kingbirds, an Empidonax Flycatcher, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Brown Thrasher, Cedar Waxwings, and an American Redstart.

We were fortunate that the rain held off until the early afternoon. We saw a lot of good birds before rains came!

--Chris Loscalzo

Beginners' Bird Walk Report

On Saturday, September 18th, 16 club members and friends, ranging from brand-new birdwatchers to experienced birders, took a leisurely stroll through the scenic Community Gardens in Woodbridge. We walked past the hayfields and flower gardens and along the woodland edge. Along the way, we saw a number of interesting birds, ranging from common to rare. Some of the common species that we saw well were: Sharp-shinned Hawk, Mourning Dove, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Downy and Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Chipping Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, and American Goldfinch. The beginning birders among us got good, long looks at these birds and will have an easier time identifying them when they see them again in the future. We got briefer looks at several less common species, including Golden-crowned Kinglet, Northern Parula, and Black-throated Green Warbler. The rarities seen, much to the delight of the more experienced birders in our group, were several Lincoln's Sparrows and a female Dickcissel. Perhaps the favorite



American Kestrel
Photo by Bill Batsford

bird of the day, though, was the male American Kestrel that we found perched on the fence of the chestnut tree farm. He was a beautifully plumaged bird, and he entertained us by alternatively perching and diving into the nearby field in search of insects and rodents. All total,

we saw 38 species in a little more than two hours of birding. A good time was had by the new and experienced birders alike.

--Chris Loscalzo

NHBC Newsletter October 2010

Email Extras: Photos from the Migration Festival



Photo by Mike Horn



Photo by Mike Horn



Photo by Mike Horn



Photo by Pete Vitali



Photo by Pete Vitali



Photo by Mike Horn

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