



# THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

October 2011

## 2011 CALENDAR

(See inside for details)

September 1 to November 30 **Daily Hawk Watch at Light-house Point Park**

Sunday, October 9 **THE BIG SIT!®**

Thursday, October 13, 7:00 pm **Shannon Kearney-McGee - Ugly Places for Beautiful Birds** (Meeting at Peabody Museum)

Saturday, October 15, 8:00 am **Hammonasset State Park, Madison**

Saturday, October 15, 8:00 am **Evergreen Cemetery, New Haven**

November 1, 2011 through March 31, 2012 **NHBC 19th Annual Winter Feeder Survey**

Wednesday, November 2, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Silver Sands State Park, Milford**

Sunday, November 6, 8:00 am **Fargeorge Wildlife Preserve, Quinnipiac River, New Haven**

Thursday, November 10, 7:00 pm **Jerry Connolly - Namibia and Botswana: A Spectacular Birding Safari**

Saturday, November 12, 6:25 am **Bombay Hook NWR, Leipsic, DE and Eastern Neck Island NWR, Rock Hall, MD**

Tuesday, November 29, 7:00 pm **Birds in Words - The Big Year**

Saturday, December 3, 9:00 am **Family Bird Walk at Silver Sands State Park, Milford**

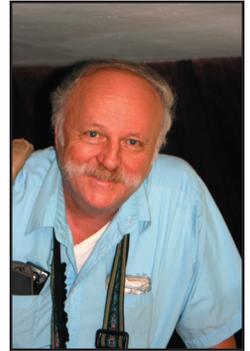
Wednesday, December 7, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison**

Thursday, December 8, 7:00 pm **Chris Rimmer - Bicknell's Thrush: Conserving a Bird of Two Worlds**

Saturday, December 10, 8:00 am **Ora Avenue/ Proto Drive/ Tweed-New Haven Airport, New Haven**

Saturday, December 17 **112th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



As most of you know, The Club is now giving folks the option of getting newsletters plus meeting and fieldtrip notifications via e-mail as part of a "Yahoo Group" instead of by regular mail. This has many advantages. Some are: instant notification of changes in fieldtrips, instant notification of meeting changes, alerts to special events plus extra newsletter content in the electronic version such as color pictures and other things that are too expensive to put into paper. Paper newsletters are nice but obsolete a very short time after you receive them. Paper newsletters are also very expensive, costing between \$2.00 and \$3.00 each. E-mail notifications and newsletters cost nothing at all. The savings to the club are major.

I realize that some folks do not have computers or simply want a paper copy for whatever reason. You will always get a paper copy if you want one; it is your right. I would like to encourage all of you who have not already done so to change to the electronic version. This is easily done by contacting Donna Batsford at [donnabatsford@gmail.com](mailto:donnabatsford@gmail.com)

--Mike Horn

## FROM THE BOARD

### Second Notice of Suggested Wording Change in the By-Laws

- The Board is recommending that the wording in the Club By-laws be changed from "the authority of Robert's Rules of Order" to "the guiding authority of Robert's Rules of Order." The membership will vote at the next meeting.

The next board meeting is Thursday, October 27, at 6:45 pm at the Regional Water Authority in New Haven.

The deadline for submissions to the December newsletter is November 29. Send to Donna Batsford: [donnabatsford@gmail.com](mailto:donnabatsford@gmail.com)

Join us now on [facebook](#)

Birding has come to popular culture. In October young actors Owen Wilson and Jack Black play birders in the movie "The Big Year," and the New Haven Bird Club is now on Facebook. So log onto facebook and like the page "New Haven Bird Club." You can post your photos, see other photos, participate in a discussion and check out the upcoming events.

--Craig Repasz

## New Haven Bird Club - 2011 - 2012

### OFFICERS

<i>President</i>	Mike Horn mfhorn@att.net	203.288.1891
<i>Vice President</i>	Bill Batsford william.batsford@yale.edu	203.787.1642
<i>Treasurer</i>	Gary Lemmon lemmon@snet.net	203.488.7813
<i>Secretary</i>	Nancy Specht naspecht@snet.net	203.248.0247

### BOARD MEMBERS

<i>Conservation Chair</i>	Kris Johnson krisjohnson99@snet.net	203.288.3087
<i>Education Chair</i>	Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe jubilee832001@yahoo.com	203.630.9640
<i>Hospitality Chair</i>	Stacy Hanks flybird@optonline.net	203.283.3898
<i>Indoor Programs</i>	Craig Repasz crepasz@hotmail.com	203.230.1697
<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Ralph Amodei ramodei@att.net	203.467.9515
<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Steve Spector charsjs@sbcglobal.net	203.876.7461
<i>Membership Chair</i>	Betty Zuraw bz4feathers@gmail.com	860.632.1156
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Donna Batsford donnabatsford@gmail.com	203.787.1642
<i>Nominating Chair</i>	Patrick Leahy ptjleahy@yahoo.com	203.393.2427
<i>Outdoor Programs</i>	Chris Loscalzo closcalz@optonline.net	203.389.6508
<i>Publicity Chair</i>	Larry Bausher lpbausher@comcast.net	203.389.5918

### 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
<i>Yahoo Group</i>	Ralph Amodei ramodei@att.net	203.467.9515
<i>Hawk Watch</i>	Steve Mayo rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net	203.393.0694
<i>Lighthouse Point Historian</i>	John Triana jtriana1@sbcglobal.net	203.758.7203
<i>Summer Bird Count</i>	Steve Mayo rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net	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 bz4feathers@gmail.com	860.632.1156

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

Visit the NHBC Website at [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org)

The site has a lot of useful information and links:

- Information about the NHBC and the people to contact with specific questions or ideas
- The calendar of events for the club, both outdoor activities and indoor programs
- A list of species seen on the club field trips
- Back copies of *The Chickadee*
- Links to sites of interest and use to birders
- Link to the site that sells clothing, hats and totebags with the NHBC logo.

**Call for input:** As your new Conservation Chair, I am asking the membership if they have any particular conservation organization or issue in the New Haven area that you feel the NHBC should be more involved with. If you know of something, please send me an email, [krisjohnson99@snet.net](mailto:krisjohnson99@snet.net), and I will investigate options for involvement.

--Kris Johnson

### **Plan Ahead! Birder Tag Sale Coming Up in November!**

Do you have bird books you don't use? Avian art removed from walls to make room for...what else, more avian art? Clean house! Bring the items to the September or October meetings. We'll sell them at the November meeting. Proceeds go to our Conservation Fund.

## 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 Drive, Hamden. If you have any questions, please email or call Kris Johnson [krisjohnson99@snet.net](mailto:krisjohnson99@snet.net) or 203.288.3087.

*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. Also available at: <http://www.whitneycenter.com/directions.html>

**Tuesday, November 29, 7:00 pm - *The Big Year* by Mark Obmascik.**

The movie, *The Big Year* with Steve Martin, Jack Black and Owen Wilson is opening this October, and we hope readers will try to see the movie as well as read the book. We are anticipating a lively discussion comparing the two.

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## INDOOR PROGRAMS

Monthly indoor programs start in September and are held on the second Thursday of the month 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.org](http://ctbird.org).

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### Thursday, October 13 — Shannon Kearney-McGee Ugly Places for Beautiful Birds

**Please Note:** *The October meeting will be held in room ECS-110 of the Peabody Museum Environmental Science Center, 21 Sachem Street, New Haven (corner of Sachem and Whitney Avenue). Enter ESC through the main entrance on Sachem Street. Park on Sachem Street or in the Peabody Visitors Parking section of Yale Lot 22, entered from Whitney Avenue.*

Nobody likes to see a rough clear cut in a forest or enjoys being pricked by brambles in a field—except, that is, the Golden-winged Warbler! Unfortunately, the “ugly” shrubland places that some birds need are often prime targets as development pressures rise or these areas are left to grow into forest. As a result, more than 80% of the birds in the Northeast that rely on shrubland habitat—among them the Golden-winged Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Brown Thrasher—are in significant decline. Tonight’s speaker will discuss recent CT DEP research to estimate the abundance and distribution of shrubland habitat that is currently protected and managed. The goal is to determine how many shrubland birds we can hope to support in the future. Shannon’s entire career focus has been the research and monitoring of bird species in greatest conservation need. Employed by DEP for 6 years now, her 12 years of research prior to that took

her as far west as California (seabirds) and as far east as Cape Cod (grassland birds). In Connecticut she has studied woodland raptors, owls, Whip-poor-wills, Chimney Swifts, Nighthawks, shrubland birds, and West Nile Virus in birds.

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### Thursday, November 10 — Jerry Connolly Namibia and Botswana: A Spectacular Birding Safari

Namibia, the dry southwestern corner of Africa, plays host to all three of southern Africa’s great desert systems: the Karoo in the south, the Kalahari in the east, and the driest of the three, the Namib, sprawling along the west coast. So it’s not surprising that Namibia has, arguably, the world’s best desert birding. When you add the teak woodlands and riparian habitats of the Caprivi Strip and the waterways of Botswana’s Okavango Delta, the world’s largest oasis, you do indeed have the makings of a fabulously birdy trip. And Jerry’s safari took in more than abundant and diverse avifauna. There were also breathtaking “up close and personal” views of many of Africa’s most spectacular mammals—lions, elephants, giraffes, and rhinoceros, among others. In short, this safari had it all, and with his gorgeous photos, tonight Jerry will take us on an awesome trip. Jerry has been organizing trips to Latin America and Africa since 1996. He and his wife Janet opened The Audubon Shop of Madison in 1986.

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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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### Daily Hawk Watch at Lighthouse Point Park September 1 to November 30, 2011

Come join us at Lighthouse, for our 42nd season. In addition to hawks, September brings a variety of migrants including hundreds of Cedar Waxwings, Bobolink, Ruby-throated hummingbirds, swallows, warblers, Monarch Butterflies and Dragonflies (eg., Green Darners and Saddlebags). Strong north or northwest morning winds are ideal, but a rarity. Stop in at any time. For further information, contact Steve Mayo at [rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net). We hope to see you there!

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### THE BIG SIT!® - Sunday, October 9, 2011

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 for the event 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](http://birdwatchersdigest.com)> or contact John Triana: 203.758.7203, [j triana1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:j triana1@sbcglobal.net)

**Hammonasset State Park, Madison  
Saturday, October 15, 2011, 8:00 am**

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, j.mcbride@yale.edu

**Evergreen Cemetery, New Haven  
Saturday, October 15, 2011, 8:00 am**

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 Boulevard.  
Leader—John Triana: 203.758.7203, jtriana1@sbcglobal.net

**NHBC 19th Annual Winter Feeder Survey  
October 31, 2011 through April 1, 2012**

This is a yearly census to help determine the number and frequency of birds visiting feeders in the Greater New Haven area. You are invited to observe and record the activity at your feeder at least once a week for the entire time period. Contact Peter Vitali: 203.288.0621, vitali\_peter\_e@sbcglobal.net

**First Wednesday Walk: Silver Sands State Park, Milford  
Wednesday, November 2, 2011, 8:00 am**

Today we'll 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 other Milford locations, such as Milford Point, Mondo Ponds, and Caswell Cove. Leader—Steven Spector. Contact—Tina Green: 203.247.2660, tina@renaissancestudios.com

**Fargeorge Wildlife Preserve, Quinnipiac River, New Haven  
Sunday, November 6, 2011, 8:00 am**

Joint Field Trip with the New Haven Land Trust. Fargeorge Preserve is always full of surprises. 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 Av 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, mfhorn@att.net

**Bombay Hook NWR, Leipsic, Delaware  
Eastern Neck Island NWR, Rock Hall, Maryland  
Saturday, Nov. 12, 2011, 6:25 am SHARP**

This is The President's Trip. It features Birding and Photography - Snow Geese and Tundra Swans. We will meet at the refuge headquarters building just past the main gate at 6:25 AM SHARP (Bathrooms open 24/7) 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 shore

birds. We will also visit other spots in the area including Eastern Neck Island NWR where we will find Tundra Swans. There are loads of motels in Dover and there are Bed & Breakfasts in the area close by. We recommend the Best Western in Smyrna, DE about 6 miles from Bombay Hook. It is at exit 114 on DE Rt 1 off of US Rt 13 near the exit on the South side of Smyrna. Phone 302-659-3635. Please contact the trip leaders for details. Pat and I will be staying at a Bed & Breakfast in the countryside on the Delaware - Maryland line. There are some lovely B&Bs in the area too. Directions: To get to Bombay Hook NWR from the South end of Smyrna, proceed North on US 13 to the Smyrna - Leipsic Road. Take it East for about 5 miles until it joins up with Rt 9. Go South about 100 yards to Whitehall Neck Rd. You will see a big Brown National Wildlife Refuge sign pointing down Whitehall Neck Rd. Proceed East down the road to the refuge entrance gate where we will meet at 6:25 SHARP. Leaders: Mike and Pat Horn 203-288-1891 and mfhorn@att.net

**Family Bird Walk at Silver Sands State Park, Milford  
Saturday, December 3, 2011, 9:00 am**

This walk is oriented toward families that are interested in learning about birds. Beginners are welcome. The park is a great place to see waterfowl, shorebirds, and sparrows. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them, appropriate clothing, and a little bit of curiosity about birds and the natural world. Meet in the parking lot at the end of Silver Sands Pkwy. Leader—Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe; 203.630.9640, jubilee832001@yahoo.com

**First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison  
Wednesday, December 7, 2011, 8:00 am**

Join us as we explore this birding hotspot for fall migrants. The varied habitat attracts shorebirds, raptors, songbirds, and waterfowl. Meet at the park entrance. Leader—Jerry Connolly. Contact—Tina Green: 203.247.2660, tina@renaissancestudios.com

**Ora Ave./Proto Drive/Tweed-New Haven Airport, New Haven  
Saturday, December 10, 2011, 8:00 am**

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 Rough-legged Hawk, White-crowned Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Marsh Wren, and even Great Horned Owl and American Bittern.

Directions: Take I-95, Exit 51 Frontage Road. Go 0.9 mi. Turn right onto Hemingway (Rte. 142). Go about one mile, turn right onto Proto Drive. Leader—Steve Broker: 203.272.5192 (cell: 203.747.6843), ls.broker@cox.net

**112th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count  
Saturday, December 17, 2011**

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

## Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Field Trip Report

On Saturday, August 20th, eleven intrepid birders set out for the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge in Queens, NY. We knew in advance that the water level was high in the East Pond. This meant that there wouldn't be any shorebirds on the pond edge, nor would we be able to walk along the edge of the pond to look for birds. So, we focused our attention on the West Pond and the surrounding marsh, bay, and woods and made only a brief visit to the East Pond after lunch. Our efforts paid off, as we saw a wide variety of water and land birds as we explored the waterways and woods of the refuge. The highlights in the water bird category included a Black Tern flying over the marsh, Forster's Tern, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Great Blue, Little Blue, and Green Heron, Great and Snowy Egret, Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, and Glossy Ibis. There were relatively few shorebirds, but we did see Semipalmated Sandpiper and Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, and Short-billed Dowitchers. The noteworthy land birds included Peregrine Falcon, Eastern Kingbird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Brown Thrasher, Baltimore Oriole, Boat-tailed Grackle, American Redstart, Canada Warbler, and Northern Waterthrush. The rarest bird of the day was a Brewster's Warbler that we found in the wooded area just north of the visitor's center. Unfortunately, the bird was visible only briefly and was seen by only a few members of the group. Since we didn't use up any time walking the perimeter of the East Pond, we had the time and opportunity to check out nearby Floyd Bennett Field, an abandoned airport that is home to the last remaining vestiges of prairie that used to make up much of Long Island in centuries past. Although we didn't see many grassland species as the breeding season was over (we did see a few bobolinks in non-breeding plumage, however), we did find several flocks of shorebirds in the small pools on the abandoned runways. Earlier in the week, a Red-necked Phalarope had been seen in one of these pools. Although we didn't find anything nearly that rare, we did get great views of Least Sandpipers, Semipalmated Sandpipers, and Semipalmated Plovers as they foraged in the shallow water.

Our day done, we headed back to Connecticut satisfied that we had enjoyed another fine day of birding. We saw a total of 60 species, with many of them being species that we don't get to see often or well. We'll be going back to this birding oasis in New York City again next year!

--Chris Loscalzo



Shorebirds at Floyd Bennett Field Photo by Bill Batsford

## Trip report for Family Bird Walk, Lighthouse Point Park

Checking the National Weather Service radar on Friday night I had my doubts that Saturday, October 1st's Family Bird Walk would run; a strip of precipitation stretched from CT to MD and was headed northward. But come morning, I was delighted to see the southern edge of the storm was just off the coast. At 9am, five walk participants met me at the hawk watch station at Lighthouse Point Park. Immediately a pair of Peregrine Falcons flew over, one of which perched on the light house. Then, numerous Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks glided into view and flying low overhead, provided opportunities to study the differences between the two. Four Common Loons flew across the field and continued out over New Haven Harbor. Along the shoreline, the youngest walk participants (9 and 11 years old) were captivated by a Greater Blacked-back Gull trying to swallow whole a very large fish. In the woods, we found Common Yellowthroats, a Black-and-White Warbler, Red-eyed Vireo, and an Eastern Pheobe. Over the course of the walk hundreds of Blue Jays passed over the park and called loudly when accipiters ventured too close. In the end, an adult Bald Eagle soared over the hawk watch station, delighting participants. Thank you to Randy and Natasha Domina for pointing out raptors to us!

--Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe

*When you have a picture of a bird or a NHBC activity you would be willing to share, please consider sending it to be used on the Club website or in the newsletter.*

## First Wednesday at Osbornedale State Park Trip Report

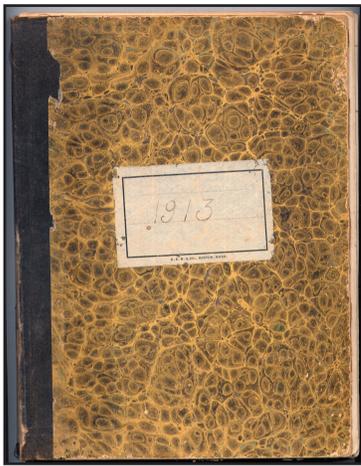
Seventeen Participants joined Roy Harvey (our excellent substitute leader) at Osbornedale State Park on October 5 for a nice morning of birding. We had 46 species but were unable to relocate the Yellow Breasted Chat or Vesper Sparrow seen here yesterday. We had 10 species of warblers including an ovenbird.

The list of birds: Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Double-crested Cormorant, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Swainson's Thrush, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Palm Warbler, Ovenbird.

--Kris Johnson, Scribe

## 1913 Bird Journal

In March 2011, I received notice through Patrick Comins of Audubon Connecticut about a notebook filled with bird observations around the New Haven area from 1913. The book was in the possession of Don Beimborn of Minnesota. Don scanned the cover and a couple of the pages with notes. He also noted that there were notes from the author's trips to New Hampshire and South Dakota. Don said that a friend gave him the notebook a few years ago since they knew he was a birder. The friend was more interested in the glass case that held the journal. From what they recalled, the glass case and notebook were not originally together. Finally, he noted that there was no name in the journal. As the historian of the New Haven Bird Club, I was immediately interested in seeing more and digging into the mystery of whose it was. Don agreed to send me the notebook and I eagerly gave him my address.



1913 Journal - cover

Once I received the journal, I started combing through the details. The journal didn't just have a few notes about some hikes to look for birds. This was a complete daily record of each and every bird the author saw in 1913. It also listed the author's location each day and the weather. In addition to the observations from New Haven, the author went to Middletown (CT), South Dakota, New York, and Tilton (NH). Some patterns emerged from looking at his travels. The author started the year in Tilton, then came down to Connecticut where he would spend weekends in Middletown and weekdays in New Haven. Once the summer arrived the author took the trips to South Dakota and New York. He made a quick trip back to New Hampshire in September before returning to the Middletown/New Haven pattern. Finally, the author made his way back to Tilton for Christmas.

My first instinct was to assume that a NHBC member was the author. This seemed logical since so many of our members took trips looking for birds. I started looking through our archives and elsewhere for clues about where likely candidates were in 1913. If they were in one or more of the locations mentioned in the

MAY 1913												JUNE 1913											
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday			
1. Chickadee																							
2. Blue Jay																							
3. American Crow																							
4. Star																							
5. Red Eagle																							
6. White-throated Sparrow																							
7. Starling																							
8. Meadowlark																							
9. White-crowned Sparrow																							
10. White-throated Nuthatch																							
11. Downy Woodpecker																							
12. Song Sparrow																							
13. Tree Sparrow																							
14. Hairy Woodpecker																							
15. Swamp Duck																							
16. American Cuckoo																							
17. Belding Kinglet																							
18. Golden-crowned Kinglet																							
19. Gold Finch																							
20. Brown Creeper																							

1913 Journal - page 12

journal, that would be a good sign. However, if they were in a place NOT mentioned in the journal, it would be even better since I could eliminate that person from contention. That was the beauty of a notebook with so much detail.

I ran through the big names...Herbert K. Job - took pictures in Manitoba in July....nope. Dwight Pangburn - rode his motorcycle out to Buffalo and Kansas City....not him. Louis Bishop, Freeman Burr, Clifford Pangburn, Edgar Stiles, Orville Petty, Philip Buttrick, Aretas Saunders, Albert Honywill, William Prentiss....none of them could be the author since there was evidence they were in other places during 1913 that were not mentioned in the journal.

While I was going through the NHBC names, I was also reaching out to people in South Dakota to see if I could attack the problem from another angle. Several people responded, but it was clear that they were either interested in history or birds, but not both. Finally, I found someone who had an interest in both fields. Ricky D. Olsen of Ft. Pierre, SD didn't just express a general interest in the topic. He put in many hours looking through old hotel ledgers, newspapers, and other records. I promised that I would supply him a copy of all the South Dakota records in the journal.

By mid-April, we couldn't find any solid lead in Connecticut or South Dakota. When it looked like all roads were blocked, I had a thought....if this guy was so into birds, did he participate in the 1913 Christmas Bird Count? And if so, where? I checked the journal's December 25th record. He was in Tilton, New Hampshire. I checked the 1914 Bird Lore edition that gave the 1913 CBC results and....there was one record for Tilton, NH. Ding! Next, I cross-referenced that record with the journal....Canadian

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### Bird - Lore

**Tilton, N. H.**—9.30 A.M. to 1.30 P.M. Cloudy; above five inches of snow on ground; wind, none; temp. 36°. Goldeneye, 15; Canadian Ruffed Grouse, 3; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Blue Jay, heard several; Redpoll, 6; Tree Sparrow, 13; White-breasted Nuthatch 1 (heard); Chickadee, 34; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 1. Total, 10 species, 75 individuals. Crows, Brown Creepers, a Song Sparrow, and an Acadian Chickadee have been present within a few days.—GEORGE L. PLIMPTON, ERNEST R. PERKINS and EDWARD H. PERKINS.

**Wilton, N. H.**—Dec. 25; 8 A.M. to 11 A.M. Cloudy; ground covered with two inches of snow; no wind; temp. 38°. Ruffed Grouse, 2; Blue Jay, 3; Tree Sparrow, 15; Northern

Ruffed Grouse...CBC-3, journal-3, Redpoll...CBC-6, Journal-6, and on it went. Perfect matches. There was no doubt. The 1913 Tilton, NH CBC was done by three men – George L. Plimpton, Ernest R. Perkins, or Edward H. Perkins. In an instant, I whittled down the list of possible authors from millions to three.

Now that I had three names, I had to learn more about these men. They were all in Tilton, NH at Christmas 1913, but could I figure out if one of them went to South Dakota that summer? Could I determine if one of them attended Yale, but stayed with family in Middletown over the weekends?

First I tried to track down George L. Plimpton. He was not the famous author. That George Plimpton would not be born until 1927. Through census records, I found that George Lincoln Plimpton was a teacher and head master at a seminary/prep school in Tilton. In 1913, he had a wife and three kids. Lastly, one more important fact....he was an 1891 graduate of Wesleyan. That was a nice connection to Middletown, but I couldn't find any connection to Yale and New Haven. Next was Ernest R. Perkins and Edward H. Perkins. Again from census records, I learned that Ernest and Edward were brothers living in Tilton. In 1913, Edward would have been 26 and Ernest would have been 19. Both were good indicators that they were at or near college age. I couldn't find any link to Wesleyan through online records for either brother. However, I did find a record of an Edward H. Perkins getting a graduate degree from Yale in 1919.

After more effort on Ernest turned up nothing, I aimed my sights on Edward. Could the Edward who earned a degree in 1919 have been the same guy from Tilton? My first find was that this Edward got his degree in geology and then went briefly to Rhode Island State College. After that, I found him teaching geology at Colby College in Maine. I found an article in the May-June 1922 edition Bird Lore from the same Edward H. Perkins. The author spoke about a chickadee taking a dust bath in an old robin's nest in Tilton, NH several winters previous. That cinched it! The Edward who got a degree in geology at Yale in 1919 was the same guy who grew up in Tilton, NH.

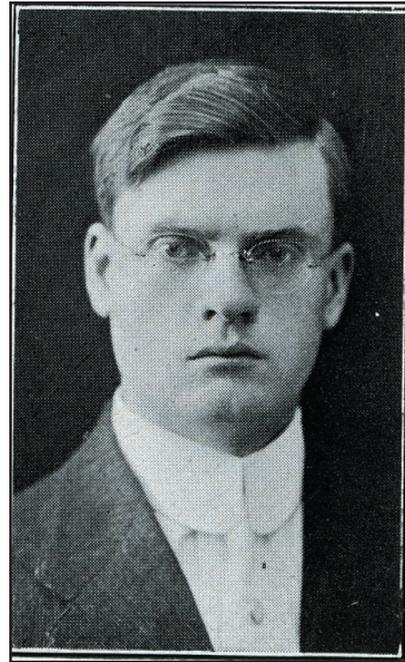
All signs now pointed to Edward, but what about the Middletown connection? George had a Middletown connection through Wesleyan. Maybe the Perkins brothers did as well. I sent an email inquiry to the Wesleyan alumni office. That was forwarded to Suzy Taraba, the Head of Special Collections and University Archivist. Her email closed the case:

Dear Mr. Triana,

Your inquiry to the alumni office was forwarded to me.

As luck would have it, all three men you name are Wesleyan alumni. We don't have much information about any of them, but I can tell you what each was doing in 1913.

1. George L. Plimpton, Class of 1891 – from 1896 on, he was the principal of the Tilton Seminary, Tilton, NH.
2. Edward H. Perkins, Class of 1912 – in 1913, he was a graduate student at Yale; he spent his whole career teaching geology.
3. Ernest R. Perkins, Class of 1917 – in 1913, he was a freshman at Wesleyan; after graduation he went into the



*E Perkins '12*

*Photo Courtesy Wesleyan University  
Library, Special Collections and Archives*

army and later became a journalist and, later still, after receiving a master's degree from Clark University, taught history and economics.

Edward was definitely the author of the journal. In 1913 he was a graduate student at Yale, but spent the weekends, probably with his brother, in Middletown. In the summer of 1913, he took a trip out to South Dakota. During the holidays, he went back to see his family in Tilton, NH. On Christmas Day 1913, he participated in the Christmas Bird Count in Tilton with his brother and the headmaster of a local school.

Since I could never find any connection between Edward and the NHBC, I decided that the journal should go back to the family....if I could find them. I got back into the genealogical research searching for any living descendants. I hit pay dirt when I found the obituary of Elizabeth Perkins Stanley, daughter of Edward. Unfortunately, she passed away in July 2003. However, her obituary noted that she was survived by a husband and five kids. Current information seemed to indicate that her husband, Walter C. Stanley, was still alive in Maryland with a couple of their kids. I wrote letters to them. No response. I tried again. A few days later I was rewarded with a phone call from Walter C. Stanley of Gaithersburg, Maryland. We had a great and long conversation. He stated that he never met his father-in-law, since Edward died in 1936 and he didn't meet Elizabeth until 1949. Walter noted that he had Connecticut roots, growing up in Connecticut and attended Yale. He also mentioned that there was a bird sanctuary at Colby College named after his in-laws.

Having found everything I needed to find, all the mysteries were solved. I put the journal into the mail, heading back to the family of Edward Perkins. The circle was now complete.

--John Triana



**NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB**  
P.O. BOX 9004  
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## Newsletter October 2011

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(Please print clearly in block letters)

New Member     Renewal

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Make check payable to New Haven Bird Club and  
send to: New Haven Bird Club, PO Box 9004,  
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**The Club welcomes everyone** irrespective of age, race, gender, sexual preference, or national origin.

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