



# THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

October 2013

## 2013 CALENDAR

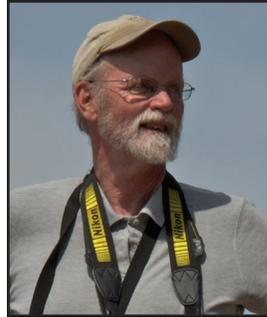
(See inside for details)

- September 1 to November 30 **Daily Hawk Watch at Lighthouse Point**
- Thursday, October 10, 7:00 pm **Audubon Connecticut Staff, New Haven as an Urban Refuge for Birds and People**
- Sunday, October 13, **THE BIG SIT! ®**
- Saturday, October 19, 8:00 am **Hammonasset State Park, Madison**
- Saturday, October 19, 8:30 am **Beginner's Bird Walk at East Shore Park, New Haven**
- Saturday, October 26, 8:00 am **Branford Supply Ponds, Branford**
- November 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014 **NHBC 21st Annual Winter Feeder Survey**
- Saturday, November 2, 8:00 am **Fargeorge Wildlife Preserve, Quinnipiac River, New Haven**
- Wednesday, November 6, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Westport Hot Spots, Westport**
- Sunday, November 10, 6:25 am **Bombay Hook NWR, Leipsic, Delaware and Eastern Neck Island NWR, Rock Hall, MD**
- Thursday, November 14, 7:00 pm **Barry Van Dusen, Travels of a Nature Artist: New England and Beyond**
- Saturday, November 16, 7:00 am **Lake Chamberlain & Cooper and Calabresi Farms, Bethany**  
**Rain date: Sunday, November 17.**
- Saturday, November 16, 7:00 pm **Owl Prowl, Lake Gaillard, North Branford**
- Thursday, November 21, 7:00 pm **Birds in Words: Discussion of *The Birds of Johnson Burroughs***
- Saturday, November 30, 8:00 am **Sherwood Island State Park, Westport**
- Wednesday, December 4, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison**
- Thursday, December 12, 7:00 pm **Gina Nichol, How to Get Close to the Bird**
- Saturday, December 14 **114th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count**

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

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Birding and Photography

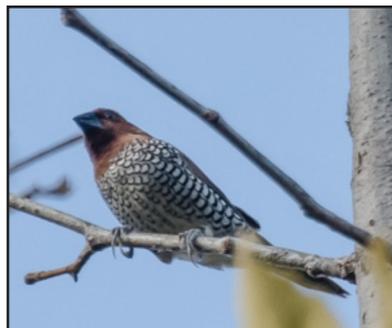


Digital photography has clearly had tremendous impact on our passion – birding. Like many relationships there is always the potential for conflicts and competing priorities. We are instructed to study birds intently, registering field marks and behavior carefully before resorting to a field guide to help us with identification. No doubt that careful

field documentation with notes and sketches are tremendous learning techniques to improve our skills. For many of us digital photographs allow post-hoc careful observation of detail which can then be integrated into our visual data base to improve our field skills. My first appreciation of a Eurasian Wigeon was by noticing a bird in the background of a photo taken of American Wigeon at Lighthouse Point. I had not seen – registered is more accurate – the reddish head until reviewing the photo on the computer later that evening.

The competing priorities: Do I study the bird as carefully as I am able on the spot, or do I try for a photograph, risking getting neither an optimal look nor an identifiable photograph? Am I a birder or a photographer? It is difficult – for me at least – to be both. Thankfully, the skills to get a good photograph are largely the same as those required for bird identification.

Recently, on a visit to southern California, I saw a pair of finch-like birds with a brown head and neck and striking black and white chest and abdominal markings. I had excellent views and fortunately was able to obtain reasonable photos. I perused my copy of Sibley's western birds and could find nothing that resembled what I had seen. On return home a more careful examination of the "big" Sibley showed a picture on the bottom right of page 537 of the exact bird matching my photos – Nutmeg Mannikin. Even better, entering this exotic finch in



my eBird list revealed it had been recently accepted into the ABA list as an established exotic. A gift of a new life bird made possible by digital photography.

Which am I? Does it really matter?!

--Bill Batsford

## NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB – 2013-2014

### OFFICERS

<i>President</i>	Bill Batsford	203.787.1642 william.batsford@yale.edu
<i>Vice President</i>	Craig Repasz	203.230.1697 crepasz@hotmail.com
<i>Treasurer</i>	Andy Stack	203-397-0818 ctstacks@optonline.net
<i>Secretary</i>	Paul Wolter	860-681-5548 pwolter6@earthlink.net

### BOARD MEMBERS

<i>Conservation C0-Chairs</i>	Craig Repasz	203.230.1697 crepasz@hotmail.com	Winie Wirth	203-859-2971 wirthwitte@att.net
<i>Education Chair</i>	Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe	203.630.9640 jubilee832001@yahoo.com		
<i>Hospitality Chair</i>	Stacy Hanks	203.283.3898 flybird@optonline.net		
<i>Indoor Programs</i>	Craig Repasz	203.230.1697 crepasz@hotmail.com		
<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Mike Horn	203.288.1891 mfhorn@att.net		
<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Kris Johnson	203.288.3087 kriswaxwing99@gmail.com		
<i>Membership Chair</i>	Mike Ferrari	203.435.5712 mike.ferrari@att.net		
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Donna Batsford	203.787.1642 donnabatsford@gmail.com		
<i>Nominating Chair</i>	Patrick Leahy	203.393.2427 ptjleahy@yahoo.com		
<i>Outdoor Programs</i>	Chris Loscalzo	203.389.6508 closalz@optonline.net		
<i>Publicity Chair</i>	Larry Bausher	203.389.5918 lpbausher@comcast.net		
<i>Social Chair</i>	Donna Caporaso	203.895.7669 donnacap@aol.com		
<i>Yearbook Chair</i>	Betty Zuraw	860.632.1156 bz4feathers@sbcglobal.net		

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

<i>Birds in Words</i>	Kris Johnson	203.288.3087 kriswaxwing99@gmail.com		
<i>Christmas Bird Count</i>	Chris Loscalzo	203.389.6508 closalz@optonline.net		
<i>Email List</i>	Mike Ferrari	203.435.5712 mike.ferrari@att.net		
<i>Hawk Watch Lighthouse Point Historian</i>	Steve Mayo	203.393.0694 rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net	John Triana	203.758.7203 jtriana1@sbcglobal.net
<i>Summer Bird Count</i>	Steve Mayo	203.393.0694 rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net		
<i>Web Master</i>	John Triana	203.758.7203 jtriana1@sbcglobal.net		
<i>Winter Feeder Survey</i>	Peter Vitali	203.288.0621		

## FROM THE BOARD

Please note that we have rewritten the directions to Whitney Center under Indoor Programs (see next page). We hope they will help you get to our meetings more easily.

The next board meeting is Thursday, October 24, at 6:45 pm at the Regional Water Authority in New Haven.

The deadline for submissions to the December newsletter is November 22. Send to Donna Batsford: donnabatsford@gmail.com

If you take pictures of NHBC events or on NHBC trips, please consider sending one to the newsletter to be included with the report. Send them to Donna Batsford at donnabatsford@gmail.com

## Corrections to Trip Dates in the Yearbook

Bombay Hook NWR, Leipsic, Delaware and Eastern Neck Island NWR, Rock Hall, MD is Sunday, November 10, 2013

Stratford/Milford Birding Tour is Sunday, January 12, 2014

Hammonasset State Park walk is Saturday, February 1, 2014

Sachuest Point and RI Coast trip is Saturday, February 22, 2014

## BIRDS IN WORDS

Birds in Words is NHBC's book discussion group for people who like to read about their favorite hobby. Meetings are at 7:00 pm in the 6<sup>th</sup> floor Conference Room at Whitney Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden. See directions to Whitney Center under Indoor Programs. Please feel free to attend any of the meetings. All are welcome! If you have any questions, email or call Kris Johnson kriswaxwing99@gmail.com or 203-288-3087.

On Thursday, November 21 we will discuss *The Birds of John Burroughs: a Great Naturalist's Meditations and Essays on Bird Watching*.

Anything by John Burroughs would work for this discussion, but his bird essays would be the best.

### **The New Haven Bird Club is 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.

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## INDOOR PROGRAMS

Monthly indoor programs start in September and are held on the second Thursday of the month. The social half-hour at meetings begins at 7:00 pm; the meeting and program begin at 7:30 pm. Inclement weather or another emergency may cancel a meeting. For cancellation notices, check TV channels WTNH (New Haven) and WFSB (Hartford). Cancellation notices will also be posted online on ctbird. Meetings are at Whitney Center, Cultural Arts Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden. The facility is wheelchair accessible.

### **Directions to Whitney Center (200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden)**

From I-95 North or South: Exit onto I-91 North in New Haven. Take Exit 6 (Willow St.). Continue with directions from I-91 (next).

From I-91 North or South: Take Exit 6 (Willow St.) in New Haven. At end of ramp, turn right onto Willow and proceed to the end (Whitney Ave.). Turn right onto Whitney. Drive 1.6 miles then turn left onto Putnam Ave. (Note: Playwright Restaurant is on the left). Then follow starred directions (\*\*) below.

From Wilbur Cross (Rte. 15) North or South: Take Exit 61 (Whitney Ave). If southbound, turn right at end of ramp onto Whitney Ave. If northbound, turn left at end of ramp. Drive 2.4 mi., then turn right onto Putnam Ave. (Note: Playwright Restaurant is on the corner). Continue as follows:

\*\*On Putnam, go approximately 0.7 mi, and at the third traffic light turn right onto Leeder Hill Dr. (Note: AT&T bldg at intersection). Go 0.6 mi. on Leeder Hill to Whitney Center on the left. Turn left at the first entrance, which has a big sign "South Entrance." After turning in, take an immediate left onto a raised parking area.

The meeting is in Whitney Center's South Building. Enter the main door, which is under the portico that is in view from the parking lot. Turn right down the hallway. The Cultural Arts Center is a short distance on the left.

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### **Thursday, October 10, 2013 — Audubon Connecticut Staff "New Haven as an Urban Refuge for Birds and People"**

New Haven Parks are getting a makeover, thanks to the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. In partnership with other groups, the NWR has received funding to promote and enhance these parks and other sites deemed Urban Refuges, places the public can go to enjoy and learn about the great outdoors. The areas also provide essential habitat for wildlife. During this evening's program, Audubon Connecticut staff members Michelle Frankel (Conservation Biologist) and Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe (Important Bird Area Program Coordinator) will share details on project activities including habitat improvements, planting of wildlife-attracting gardens at four area schools, developing and training teachers to implement Schoolyard Habitat lesson plans, and engaging the public through interpretive walks, festivals, and citizen science. So keep an eye on the transformation of the 4 local parks: Beaver Pond Park, West River Memorial Park, Dover Beach, and East Shore Park.

**Special Followup Event:** Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe will lead a Beginner's Bird Walk at East Shore Park on Saturday, October 19, highlighting the habitat improvements to this Urban Refuge.

### **Thursday, November 14, 2013 — Barry Van Dusen "Travels of a Nature Artist: New England and Beyond"**

In this richly illustrated talk, nature artist Barry Van Dusen will take us on trips near and far. You'll see spectacular scenery, meet interesting people, and, of course, see some great birds! Barry will share stories and images of his travels to Monhegan Island off the coast of Maine and report on a field painting trip

to Acadia National Park. Then he'll introduce us to destinations as diverse as the fenlands of England, the coastal forests of Peru, and a bird migration hotspot in Israel. Barry is an internationally recognized wildlife artist whose articles and paintings have been featured in a wide array of magazines as well as natural history books and pocket guides. Elected a full member of London's Society of Wildlife Artists, his work has been exhibited in many European and US galleries. At the invitation of the Artists for Nature Foundation, he has traveled to Europe, South America, and Asia, working alongside other wildlife artists to raise money for conservation of threatened habitats. He will offer some items for sale, including original watercolors, note cards, and prints.

### **Thursday, December 12, 2013 — Gina Nichol "How to Get Close to the Bird"**

One of the most satisfying aspects of birding is getting a good close view of a wild bird, a look that allows us to study plumage features, observe behavior, or simply enjoy the aesthetic experience. Yet getting close to birds is not so easy. Binoculars and spotting scopes help and most birders know not to wear white in the field but what are some other ways to improve our chances of getting a satisfying view of a bird? This program will focus on "fieldcraft," the field practices and specialist skills for observing birds at close range. With the goal of raising gratification and lowering the frustration that sometimes comes in birding, Gina will discuss techniques that advance birding proficiency and get those killer views. Gina is more than qualified to dispense good birding tips. A career as a naturalist and a passion for birds have taken her to all seven continents. She operates Sunrise Birding, which offers personalized and affordable small group birding and wildlife tours to destinations around the world.

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### ***Notice! Donate Books for the Bird Book Tag Sale to Be Held at the November Meeting!***

Here's your chance to clean house. Sort through your bird-related and nature-related books (kid's books too!) that you can part with or no longer need, and bring them to the October meeting. Tag Sale Coordinator Deborah Zale will collect them. Proceeds from the sale go to the NHBC Conservation Fund.

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## FIELD TRIPS / OUTDOOR EVENTS

The New Haven Bird Club does not charge trip or leader fees for its outdoor programs, but participants are responsible for the cost of their food, transportation, and entrance fees (where charged), unless prior arrangements are made by the Club. Carpooling is encouraged to avoid parking problems at some destinations and to promote conservation of our natural resources. All levels of birders are invited to all field trips, and every effort is made on all trips to help beginning birders. If you are new to birding or have any special needs, please be sure to let the leader know at the start of the field trip. You can check the Club's website [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org) for trip information and watch for emails sent by the Club or contact trip leaders directly if you have questions about any of their trips.

*Cancellation Policy:* Inclement weather or another emergency may cancel a field trip. Check the sources listed above or contact the leader of the trip directly if you have any questions about a possible cancellation.

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### **Daily Hawk Watch at Lighthouse Point September 1 to November 30, 2013**

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 anytime. Coordinator: Steve Mayo: 203-393-0694 or [rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net)

### **THE BIG SIT! ® Sunday, October 13, 2013**

THE BIG SIT! ®, established by the NHBC, has become an international event, with birders taking part on 4 continents. The object is to record as many species of birds as possible in one day from one 17-ft. diameter circle. The circles are located at a number of birding hot spots throughout CT. Join other birders in one of the circles or create your own. You don't have to be a hard core birder to join the fun. Bird Watchers' Digest now runs the event. For details, go to the Bird Watchers' Digest website or contact John Triana: 203-758-7203 or [jtriana1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jtriana1@sbcglobal.net).

### **Hammonasset State Park, Madison Saturday, October 19, 2013, 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; it is on level ground. Meet at the park entrance. Leader: Florence McBride: 203-288-6777 or [j.mcbride@yale.edu](mailto:j.mcbride@yale.edu).

### **Beginner's Bird Walk at East Shore Park, New Haven Saturday, October 19, 2013, 8:30 am**

We'll look for songbirds on their fall migration and talk about the importance of parks in developed landscapes as stopover habitats for migrants. We'll search the pines at the park's north end, then visit the Habitat Oases demonstration garden. This walk is geared to beginners, but birders of all levels and families are welcome. Advanced birders will enjoy a day out and can provide support and inspiration to the newcomers. Park entrance is at intersection of Woodward Ave. and Tuttle St. Park in lot north of baseball fields, next to sewage treatment plant. Leader: Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe: 203-630-9640 or [cfolsom-okeefe@audubon.org](mailto:cfolsom-okeefe@audubon.org)

### **Branford Supply Ponds, Branford Saturday, October 26, 2013, 8:00 am**

Visit this great local birding spot to look for fall migrants and resident species. A variety of waterfowl can be found in the ponds. There is varied habitat, with woods and shrubby areas. The walking is easy, although it is hilly in some areas. Meet at the Supply Ponds parking lot on Chestnut Street in Branford. Leader: Maria Stockmal: 203-488-3876 or [m.stockmal@snet.net](mailto:m.stockmal@snet.net)

### **NHBC 21st Annual Winter Feeder Survey November 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014**

This is a yearly census to determine the number and frequency of birds visiting feeders in the greater New Haven area. You are invited to watch and record the activity at your feeder at least once a week for the entire time period. Contact: Peter Vitali at 203-288-0621 or [vitali\\_peter\\_e@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net).

### **Fargeorge Wildlife Preserve, Quinnipiac River, New Haven Saturday, November 2, 2013, 8:00 am**

This is a joint trip with the New Haven Land Trust. Join our past president on the Trust's property along the Quinnipiac River. With its varied habitat, this location is a good place to see raptors, shorebirds, and waterfowl. Sightings here have included Snow Goose, Bald Eagle, and American Woodcock. Directions: Go south on Quinnipiac Ave. from Rte. 80. Turn right just past the RR overpass and go through the gate onto the property. Leader: Mike Horn: 203-288-1891 or [mfhorn@att.net](mailto:mhorn@att.net).

### **First Wednesday Walk: Westport Hot Spots, Westport Wednesday, November 6, 2013, 8:00 am**

We'll visit Compo Beach, Sherwood Mill Pond Preserve, Burying Hill Beach, and the CT Audubon Tree Farm, all excellent birding locations. We'll look for gulls, waterfowl, sparrows, and late fall migrants. Meet at the I-95 Exit 18 Commuter lot. From there we'll carpool to each location. Leader: Tina Green. Contact person: Tina Green: 203-247-2660 or [tina@renaissancestudios.com](mailto:tina@renaissancestudios.com).

### **Bombay Hook NWR, Leipsic, Delaware Eastern Neck Island NWR, Rock Hall, MD Sunday, November 10, 2013 at 6:25 am**

**Birding and Photography - Snow Geese and Tundra Swans**  
We enter Bombay Hook's main gate at 6:25 am SHARP and tour the many ponds, pools and fields where we may see and photograph as many as 100,000 Snow Geese and many other fall mi-

grants, from raptors to shorebirds. We will also visit other spots in the area including Eastern Neck Island NWR where we'll see Tundra Swans. There are a variety of motels and B&Bs in the area. For suggestions about accommodations and other travel details, contact the trip leaders. Directions: To get to Bombay Hook from the south end of Smyrna, go north on US 13 to the Smyrna-Leipsic Road. Take it east for about 5 miles until it joins Rte. 9. Go south about 100 yards to Whitehall Neck Rd. A brown National Wildlife Refuge sign there points down Whitehall Neck Rd. Proceed east down the road through the refuge entrance gate to the headquarters building where we will meet. Leaders: Mike and Pat Horn 203-288-1891 or mfhorn@att.net.

**Lake Chamberlain & Cooper and Calabresi Farms, Bethany  
Saturday, November 16, 2013, 7:00 am.  
Rain date: Sunday, November 17, 2013.**

Join us for this fall walk to see what is wintering at these picturesque spots. Lake Chamberlain has an active bluebird population, many woodpeckers, and a number of waterfowl. They visit the lake before heading to the shore and points further south when the lake freezes over. The walk at Lake Chamberlain is relatively easy hiking. After birding the RWA property, we will visit the adjoining Cooper and Calabresi Farms. Peter Cooper is a noted environmental lawyer in New Haven. Guido Calabresi is a federal judge and past dean of the Yale Law School. More than 40 years ago, Peter, his wife, and his friend purchased a 100-acre farm near Lake Chamberlain. He has maintained the farm fields and woods providing habitat for a variety of woodland, edge and grassland species. We will enter it in the lower farm fields. Hiking to the top field is a strenuous effort. People can choose to stay by the lake if the climb is too difficult. Meet at the parking lot on Sperry Road. Leader: Patrick Leahy at: 203-314-0566 or ptjleahy@yahoo.com.

**Owl Prowl, Lake Gaillard, North Branford  
Saturday, November 16, 2013, 7:00 pm**

Come to look and listen for owls at Lake Gaillard. We will walk to the dam. Wear good shoes and bring a flashlight. Come through the gate at the end of Great Hill Rd. and park by the Christmas Tree Plantation. Leader: John Triana: jtriana1@rwater.com

**Sherwood Island State Park, Westport  
Saturday, November 30, 2013, 8:00 am**

Spend part of the holiday weekend at one of Fairfield County's best birding locations. We will look for a wide range of species from waterfowl to finches and everything in between. Meet at the park entrance. Leader: Tina Green: 203-247-2660 or tina@renaissancestudios.com

**First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison  
Wednesday, December 4, 2013, 8:00 am**

Enjoy a mid-week trip to explore this birding hot spot for fall migrants. The varied habitat attracts shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors and songbirds. Meet at park entrance. Leader is Jerry Connolly. Contact: Tina Green: 203-247-2660 or tina@renaissancestudios.com

**114th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count  
Saturday, December 14, 2013**

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

**Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge Field Trip Report**

We've been going to the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge in Queens, NY, every August for many years to see the shorebirds and other birds that stop there on their southward migration. Some years, it is well worth the trip, as we have seen a number of rare and unusual birds there over the years. Other years, it's been a bit less spectacular. This year was special. First of all, the refuge was impacted significantly by Superstorm Sandy last fall as there were breaches at both the East and West Ponds. So, in going there on Saturday, August 17 we were able to see the resulting changes to the landscape. The West Pond breach is broad and deep and has transformed the large area from a fresh water pond into a tidal saltwater estuary. There were fewer birds there than in past years, but one gets the sense that it will attract many shorebirds in years to come if it is left as is. The breach at the East Pond was under the subway tracks and was repaired quickly so the changes are less obvious.

We started our day by walking through the gardens and out to the West Pond trail. Highlights along that route included at least two Peregrine Falcons, a juvenile Black-crowned Night Heron, dozens of American Oystercatcher out on the mudflats, Greater Yellowlegs, many Laughing Gulls, a lone Black Skimmer resting on the mudflat, and Willow Flycatchers along the trail. We took a break for lunch after that long walk, and then went across Cross Bay Boulevard to the East Pond to see what was there. We started at the south end of the pond, where we quickly found a White-rumped Sandpiper in with a small flock of Semipalmated and Least Sandpiper. We got great looks at this bird. We also saw several Forster's Terns there. The birding got better and better as the day went on, as we saw a number of interesting species at our next stop at the blind at Big John's Pond. From the blind, we saw adult and juvenile Black-crowned Night Herons and Glossy Ibis a few feet from us. We also saw a Spotted Sandpiper and a Northern Waterthrush walking along the pond edge. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo flew over the pond and away from us. But the highlight of the visit to the blind was the Barn Owl we observed intermittently looking out from a nest box at the opposite end of the pond. We all got clear and repeated looks at this elusive and uncommon species. From there, we went to the central portion of the East Pond, where we added Ruddy Duck and Short-billed Dowitcher to our species list. Our last stop was at the north end of the East Pond, traditionally the best place in the refuge to see shorebirds. We weren't disappointed. Almost immediately upon our arrival, we found an American Avocet, still in breeding plumage, feeding and roosting in the pond. This is truly one of the most beautiful of all North American birds. Other uncommon to rare species that we encountered there were: Stilt Sandpiper,

Red Knot, Lesser Yellowlegs, and a Wilson's Phalarope. There were hundreds of Black-bellied Plover and Short-billed Dowitcher roosting on the sandbars in the pond.

When the day was done, we had seen a total of 68 bird species, of which 15 were shorebirds. We'll have to give serious consideration to going back again next year.

--Chris Loscalzo

### Lighthouse Point Bird Walk and Prep for Migration Festival Report

On a beautiful Saturday morning, August 24th, out at Lighthouse Point Park, members of the New Haven Bird Club, hawk watchers and local citizens, joined forces to help clean up Lighthouse Point Park backwoods trails in preparation for the upcoming 11th annual Migration Fest.

The day started with a bird walk at 8am. We sited about 47 bird species. Highlights of the walk included lot of swallows and Chimney Swifts feeding on flying insects. 5 species of warblers were seen and thanks to Nick Bonomo and company we added a Mourning Warbler to the list. Confusing empidonax flycatchers were spotted, but tough to ID, though we had good looks at a Great Crested Flycatcher. Along with the birds, there was a good show of Dragonflies and many colorful Butterflies located around the Butterfly and Bird Garden and the Coastal Grassland field.

At about 9:30 am, the volunteers hit the trails, with trash grippers, buckets, trash bags and lopping shears, to clean up and cut back limbs along the trails. At the same time Park Staff Rangers broke out the chainsaws to cut and clear six trees and large limbs brought down by Hurricane Sandy that were blocking trail access. Volunteers collected 12 bags of trash and removed one large old chair (see attached picture) from the wood trails.



New Haven Bird Members and Park Ranger Dan in action during park clean up

We, at New Haven Parks, would like to thank the New Haven Bird Club and its members for all their support in making our parks a better place for people, our community and all its plants and animals.

--Dan Barvir

### September First Wednesday Walk Trip Report: CT Audubon Coastal Center, Milford

New Haven Bird Club First Wednesday Walk on September 4 at Milford point, led by Renee Baade with Frank Mantlik, Gina Nichol, John Oshlick and more than 28 other birders. We saw 63 bird species. Highlights were adult Caspian Tern, 3 Brant, 1



Photo by Gina Nichol

Common Loon, Peregrine Falcon, and 13 species of shorebirds including 2 Pectoral and 1 Western Sandpiper. Also impressive were the hundreds of Dragonflies (Green Darners, Black Saddlebags) filling the air.

Species seen: Brant

(Lingering group on lower river most of summer), Canada Goose, Mute Swan, American Black Duck, Mallard, Green-winged Teal (One with 3 Mallards in salt marsh. Later a flock of 5 flew west low over Sound and River.), Common Loon (Lingering summering bird on lower River), Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Turkey Vulture, Osprey (including one that dove into River and caught a Sea Robin prey), Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, American Oystercatcher, Spotted Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper [adult resting near end of sandbar, first spotted by John. We studied it's longish bill, largish head, and fresh winter pale gray (with thin central black line) wing coverts. At the time Frank thought it a good candidate for Western. After consulting O'Brien and Karlson's "Shorebirds" guide, the ID was clinched by the wing covert molt. (Semipalmated retains their wing coverts till later in season when they reach wintering ground). Many, but not all, folks got to see this bird through scopes.], Least Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Laughing Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Caspian Tern (Adult flew past us 11am on sandbar, heading west, circling for a while over Housatonic River and Stratford Short Beach. All got to see it.), Common Tern (One lone juvenile on bar; then later a flock of 17 fishing briefly offshore before migrating west.), Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Downy Woodpecker, American Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Kingbird, Blue Jay, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, House Wren, Carolina Wren, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Yellow Warbler, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow

--Frank Mantlik



Photo by Frank Mantlik

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## MEET THE BOARD

### Patrick Leahy: Nominating Chair

**Patrick Leahy**, NHBC's Nominating Chair, was introduced to birding more than 30 years ago when, as a new teacher straight out of college, he was inspired by some in-service nature workshops given by the West Rock Nature Center and CT Audubon. He joined NHBC at about the same time and has served the club in various capacities since then. A Connecticut native and currently a Bethany resident, Pat began as the club's representative to the Audubon Council of CT, a former association of Audubon and other birding groups in the state, and he was NHBC's liaison with the Milford Point Sanctuary when stewardship moved from the club to CT Audubon. Pat has also been a Vice President, a regular bird trip leader, an Area Captain for breeding bird surveys and the Christmas Bird Count and, for upwards of 25 years Pat, an avid cook, and his wife Cathy have prepared the delectable dinners served at the club's annual CBC compilation dinner.

Pat's interest in conservation and his fondness for birds and nature in general have been evident in many of his activities. His involvement with the Milford Point Coastal Center when the property was being developed included participating in the extensive removal of invasive plants and the introduction of native species. More recently he has developed a Bluebird Trail on Water Company properties in Bethany and Woodbridge, and he has installed numerous Bluebird boxes there, 50 of them currently active. He has plans to add 20 more. Pat has also been a dedicated gardener, though the many plant-eating critters in the woods of Bethany have put a damper on his agricultural pursuits in that town. But before moving to Bethany, the Leahys always had a huge garden which provided most of each year's veggies. That meant some serious canning and preserving. They're now involved with two CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) groups in their area. The steady supply of fresh produce fits right in with Pat's special interest in cooking, which he does, as he puts it, following his "mother's Italian heritage."

Pat has visited a wide range of birding destinations in the US,



from numerous western locations that include California's Point Reyes and Colorado's Rocky Mountain NP to Maine's Acadia NP, and from Louisiana's Gulf coast to Wisconsin's Crane Foundation. Pat lists no international bird travel ("so far"), adding with characteristic humor that even his one possible candidate for a foreign venue is "contested"—he birded Machias Seal Island, which he found to be a seabird treasure trove, but because of the island's location at the boundary between the Gulf of Maine and the Bay of Fundy, both the US and Canada claim sovereignty in what has become a longstanding dispute over the island.

Pat is ample evidence that there are as many legitimate styles of birding as there are birders. Though he keeps a yard list (80 species), he's not a lister *per se*, nor does he, in his words, "chase rarities." He prefers to study birds and their behaviors in their habitats, and luckily he has many opportunities to do that right in his neighborhood. His house borders on Water Company property that has become one of his favorite "patches" (access to Water Company properties requires a permit); and various species of woodpeckers, Pat's favorite birds, seem to be especially fond of his wooded backyard.

Pat retired recently after many years of managing systems projects for Pitney Bowes. Prior to that career in Information Technology he was a Special Education teacher in New Haven. Pat and his wife Cathy, married for 41 years, have two grown daughters and four young grandchildren who likely have some wonderful wooden toys because another of Pat's hobbies is woodworking. In fact, most of the furniture in his daughters' homes came from his workshop; he currently is working on projects of his own. Membership in several museums and attendance at furniture history seminars round out Woodworker-Pat's and Quilter-Cathy's interest in the decorative arts. And what a bonus for the birds! Those 50+ Bluebird boxes—with more on the way—that Pat installed in neighboring areas came right out of his woodworking shop.

--Betty Zuraw

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## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Cheryl Cape and Daniel May  
Orange

Andy Verderame and Karen Brown  
Guilford

Anne Pistell and David Kozak  
North Haven

Patty & Andy Towle  
Larchmont

Jack Swatt  
Wolcott

Daniel Mercurio  
New Haven

Valerie & Suzanne Macari  
Milford

Melissa Winders  
New Haven

Pamela Reeser  
Centerbrook

Cheryl & Julie Blum  
Westbrook

# Some Ways to Get Involved

## Volunteer positions at the New Haven Bird club

We see the need for several new volunteer positions for the bird club. First, to get ourselves up-to-date with our web/social networking presence, we would like one individual to become our technical leader. You would update the capabilities of our web page, set up email tools for messaging to club members, and set up social network sites like Facebook. Next, we seek a communications contact for these tools. You would be the person members contact to add a message to our regular email postings about upcoming events. In addition, you would keep our club Facebook page up-to-date, and our email address list current.

Not a techy? Not a problem- there are several other hands-on volunteer opportunities for you. First, the club would like to have a booth at festivals and other events throughout the year in order to outreach to the public. We need volunteers to staff our table, usually in two-hour blocks of time on weekends, to tell people about our bird club activities and conservation issues. Good with kids? A special aspect of our booth will be kids' make-n-take activities to grow our next generation of conservationists and birding nuts. In addition, the bird club would like to assemble a list of people who are interested in organizing, recruiting workers, or participating in hands-on habitat restoration projects like cleanups or planting native shrubs.

People interested in the technical position or working at our table please call or email Patrick Leahy: [ptjleahy@yahoo.com](mailto:ptjleahy@yahoo.com) or 203-393-2427.

If you are interested in the conservation activities or kids' projects, please contact Winie Wirth [wirthwitte@att.net](mailto:wirthwitte@att.net) or 203-859-2971

--Patrick Leahy

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## Attention Hamden Residents

How would you like to make a real environmental difference? The Hamden Natural Resources and Open Space Commission (NROS) has a couple of vacancies. We preserve open space where there are significant natural resources such as wildlife habitat and the like. We meet the last Wednesday of every month at 7:30.

If this sounds like something you want to do, please send a Letter of Interest to: Vera Morrison – Town Clerk, Hamden Government Center, Town Clerk's Office, 2750 Dixwell Av, Hamden, CT 06518. Or – Email your Letter of Interest to: [vmorrison@hamden.com](mailto:vmorrison@hamden.com)

Mention in your Letter of Interest that you have an interest in the environment and that you are in the New Haven Bird Club.

Thank you,  
Mike Horn – Chairman  
NROS Commission

## Winter Feeder Survey 2013-2014



I want to welcome all members and non-members to the 2013 – 2014 Winter Feeder Survey. We had good participation last year and I hope to see more members involved this year. In a nutshell, all that you have to do is to record the largest

number of birds of a species that you see at one sighting at your 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. Anytime you look out at your bird-feeders just record the number of birds of a particular species that you see.

We were 21 surveyors last year up from 16 the year before. Again we were widely scattered around New Haven County: Branford (1), Cheshire (1), Durham (1), Guilford (3), Hamden (5), Killingworth (1), Milford (2), New Haven (1), Northford (1), North Haven (1), Orange (1), Prospect (1), and Wallingford (1). We had 6 using Postal Mail, 14 using email and myself.

We saw 50 species of birds last year, 1 down from the year before. We added 2 to the Uncommon Species list last year, American Woodcock (Week 17) and a Vesper Sparrow (week 11). Added to the animal species list were: Bobcat, Mole and Rabbit. The Pine Siskins started the last year's survey in week 1 with 142 and slowly dropped down to 10 in weeks 7, but then between weeks 8 and 18 the numbers fluctuated from 14 to 33. There were a few species which only showed up once during the whole survey and these were: American Woodcock, Fish Crow, Northern Oriole (Baltimore), Pileated Woodpecker, Ruby Crowned Kinglet, Vesper Sparrow, Wood Thrush.

This year we will start on Monday, November 4th 2013 and finish on Sunday, April 6th 2014. It will run for 22 Weeks. I will try to inform participants at the end of weeks 5, 10 and 15. You will receive a final report after week 22.

For more information you can email me at "[vitali\\_peter\\_e@sbcglobal.net](mailto:vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net)" or phone me at: 203 288-0621.

Peter Vitali  
Survey Coordinator  
Chairman NHBC Winter Feeder Survey



Bobolink



Blue-winged Warbler

Photos by Richard Asarisi



Scarlet Tanager



American Redstart



Wood Duck

### NHBC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print clearly in block letters)

**Dues:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual - \$15

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Student under 18 - Free

\_\_\_\_\_ Life Membership: A one-time payment of \$300 for 1 or 2 people at same address.

\_\_\_\_\_ Additional gift to support the NHBC \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to volunteer to help the club.

Make check payable to New Haven Bird Club and send to: New Haven Bird Club, PO Box 9004,

### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

New Haven Bird Club is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. **All dues and donations are fully tax deductible.** If your employer gives matching grants, please take advantage of the offer. It's free and helps NHBC's program budget.

**The Club welcomes everyone** irrespective of age, race, gender, sexual preference, or national origin.

**If your address, phone or email change,** please send that information to the Club address given on the form to the left or contact the Membership Chair, Mike Ferrari: [mike.ferrari@att.net](mailto:mike.ferrari@att.net) or 203.435.5712.

**NHBC does not release its membership list** or email addresses to other organizations.

**The New Haven Bird Club is now on Facebook.** So log onto facebook and like the page "New Haven Bird Club." You can post your photos, see other photos, participate in a discussion and check out the upcoming events.

**CTBirds** is an open discussion email list to discuss birds and birding in the state. To Subscribe, go to: [http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctbirds\\_lists.ctbirding.org](http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctbirds_lists.ctbirding.org)

**The CTDailyReport** list is used to distribute summaries of rare and uncommon bird sightings. To Subscribe, go to: [http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctdailyreport\\_lists.ctbirding.org](http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctdailyreport_lists.ctbirding.org)

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