



THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

March 2026

2026 EVENTS & WALKS

Details inside or www.newhavenbirdclub.org

Mar 4. A few hardy souls explored Stratford Shores & Great Meadows with Frank Mantlik.



We had a contest to guess how many Scoters were in a large flock. Answer: 330. Highlights: a pair of Bald Eagles sitting in the marsh, Golden Eyes and an Iceland Gull. (no Snowy Owl, tho'.)

Thu, Mar.12, 7:00 PM **Indoor Meeting – Where Are the Birds, and How Do We Protect Them: Results From the Connecticut Bird Atlas – Dr. Chris Elphick**

NEW! ADDED FIELD TRIP:

Sat, Mar. 14 8:00 AM– 12:00 PM
Hammonasset State Park, Madison-Chris Lascalzo

Sun, Mar 22, 8:00-11:00 AM **Field Trip – Cheshire Hotspots – Melissa Baston**

Sat, Mar. 28, 8:00-11:00 AM **Field Trip – Edgewood Park, New Haven – Chris Howe and DeWitt Allen**

Thu, Apr 9, 7:00 PM **Indoor Meeting – Birds: Their Side of the Story – John Himmelman**

April 18, 2026 @ 8:00 am - 12:00 pm Field Trip – Geology and Birds, Branford – Cheryl Cape and Dan May



Photo by Ann Meacham

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello, my name is Margaret Fikrig. I am the new president of the New Haven Bird Club; this is my first President's Message.

My husband Erol and I have participated in NHBC guided walks for about eight years. With the multiple pairs of binoculars searching the sky, trees, and ground on these walks, we have been able to see many new birds that we very likely would have missed on our own.

Of equal importance, these walks have introduced us to many town and state parks, wildlife preserves, and trails we had never been on before, even though we have lived in Connecticut for over 35 years! It has made us more aware of the beauty of our state and the variety of birds that pass through our state.

So, when our most recent NHBC president, Chris Howe, decided to step down, I felt I owed the club my time and energy in gratitude for all the birding experiences. I was the only person on the ballot, so I am President! I hope that all our NHBC members appreciate their experiences in the club as much as I do, and they recognize that an all-volunteer club always needs volunteers.

I was asked to provide a photo of myself for the President's Message column. Looking through past years, the presidents' photos were smiling, with binoculars on. I did not have a similar photo. I thought this photo demonstrates how much I love birding. We had planned a trip with friends to Shawangunk

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OFFICERS

<i>President</i>	Margaret Fikrig
<i>Vice President</i>	
<i>Treasurer</i>	Celeste Echlin
<i>Secretary</i>	Bobbie Fisher

BOARD MEMBERS

<i>Annual Banquet Chair</i>	Gail Martino
<i>Conservation Chair</i>	Craig Repasz
<i>Indoor Meeting Programs</i>	Gail Martino
<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Glen Cummings
<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Patrick McGovern
<i>Membership Chair</i>	Laurie Reynolds
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Ann Meacham
<i>Nominating Committee</i>	NHBC Executive Bd
<i>Outdoor Programs</i>	DeWitt Allen
<i>Publicity Chair</i>	Emmeline Kaiser
<i>Website</i>	Cheryl Cape
<i>Yearbook</i>	Christine Howe

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

<i>The BIG SIT</i>	Craig Repasz
<i>Bluebird Trail</i>	Pat Leahy
<i>Christmas Bird Count</i>	Chris Loscalzo
<i>Education/Outreach Chair</i>	Christin Arnini
<i>Hawk Watch at Lighthouse Point</i>	Steve Mayo
<i>Historian</i>	John Triana
<i>Hospitality</i>	Joyce Alton
<i>Summer Bird Count</i>	Steve Mayo

Grasslands Wildlife Preserve in early January to see the Short-eared Owls that spend the winter there (they breed in Canada).

Unfortunately, I broke my ankle in late December and needed surgery to repair it, which could not be done until the significant swelling decreased. I had to wear a heavy metal brace and could not walk on that leg. But I really wanted to see those owls!

My husband bought a portable wheelchair, and we arrived at the Preserve before dawn. They pushed and carried me in my wheelchair up onto the viewing platform, and we watched the owls flying low over the grasses, hunting for prey, as the sun began to rise above the hills in the distance. So beautiful, and a new life bird for all of us! As the owls disappeared, a male Northern Harrier began hunting (my first Gray Ghost). I definitely recommend making the trip, more easily done without a broken leg.

~Margaret

Notes from the Board

The next board meeting will be at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 26 on Zoom.

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

If you are not receiving email notifications, contact us at membership@newhavenbirdclub.org to receive an invitation to join this group. Every effort is made to list member information accurately in the yearbook. Please inform us of errors and update us with any changes during the year. Update via the Club website or send an email to membership@newhavenbirdclub.org.

Do you want to know more about what's next for New Haven Bird Club? Come to an Outdoor walk or an Indoor Program and check us out.

Let us know what interests you. Email your comments, suggestions, and photos you'd like to share: annm@newhavenbirdclub.org.

Deadline for submissions to the next *Chickadee* is **March 31**. Email Ann Meacham annm@newhavenbirdclub.org

INDOOR PROGRAMS

Most indoor programs are held in person and virtually on Zoom. Members are automatically sent the Zoom link, as well as information regarding the program start time.

March 12, 2026, Indoor Program 7:00 – 9:00 pm.

Where Are the Birds, and How Do We Protect Them: Results From the Connecticut Bird Atlas – Dr. Chris Elphick



The Connecticut Bird Atlas is a project to map all species of birds that occur in the state of Connecticut. Field work took place between spring 2018 and February 2022, and involved nearly a thousand volunteer birders, who submitted more than 600,000 bird observations.

February 12th Indoor Program 7:00 – 9:00 pm.

Flyway of Life presented by Tomas Koeck, attracted a **strong turnout** with 90 attendees (51 in person and 39 online). The program explored the natural history and ecology of migratory birds and wolves, highlighting how animals, landscapes, and habitats connect.

In addition to the excellent presentation, members enjoyed a warm sense of community in the room. Joyce, our pastry prodigy, generously brought a selection of wonderful treats for in-person attendees, which was warmly appreciated.



Indoor Programs are the **second Thursday of the month** September – May.
in the Whitney Center's Cultural Arts Center
200 Leeder Hill Drive
Hamden CT.

The facility is wheelchair accessible. Enter via the main door of the portico at the front of the building. Turn right down the hallway. The Cultural Arts Center is a short distance on the left.
The social half-hour begins at 7 p.m.; the meeting and program begin at 7:30 p.m. and end about 9 p.m.

Indoor Programs – continued

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

Bird Book Sales are held at EACH indoor meeting in the “Book Nook” area using the honor system and with no set prices. Donation of bird and nature-related books are appreciated. (kids’ books too). Bring them to each indoor meeting to donate, or call Chris Howe, 203-389-1175, to make special arrangements.

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

NOTE: Please check the NHBC website and newsletter periodically for updated information on all programs

BE SURE TO VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE!

www.newhavenbirdclub.org

~There are Google Map links for the meeting places of field trips.

~Special Thanks to **Cheryl Cape** for expertly directing its creation with our new relationship with the web design firm:

(A)Squared Studio, LLC in Middletown, CT.

NHBC Conservation and Education Activities

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

The NHBC has been developing relationships with local public schools and camps to encourage children to embrace birding. We view this activity as directly connected to our Club objectives and usually present a very basic birding skills class followed by a nearby bird walk.

The club has children’s binoculars that can be used during class outings.

The Education Chair also organizes the Club’s representation at various public events throughout the year. Volunteers to help at events are always welcome! Please contact Christin Arnini at cevea55@gmail.com



Gail Martino, Betty Baisden and Margaret Fikrig at Branford Library in December.

GAME NIGHTS

Join us on March 29, 2-4 pm at the Whitney Center.

Wingspan, is a boardgame focused on birds! For players new to *Wingspan*, we will offer an introduction to the game and a guided playing experience. Players already familiar with *Wingspan* are welcome to set up independent games.

Watch for more information in your member emails.



MEMBER PHOTOGRAPHERS

Your high-resolution photographs of local birds or NHBC birding activities are welcome for this newsletter and the NHBC website. Please visit the website for a direct link.

JOIN NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB TODAY!

Birders of all levels are welcome! Every effort is made on all trips to help beginning birders.

As a member, you will also enjoy guided bird walks, educational programs, local conservation opportunities, our e-newsletter, printed Annual Yearbook and timely email notifications for club events.

We welcome you to sign up on our website: newhavenbirdclub.org