



THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club September 2026

◆ PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



This is the time of year when the birding is so much fun. Early migrants are already on the move. Soon many more will be visiting Connecticut on their way south.

Club activities to satisfy our wish to see birds:

Hawk Watch, at Lighthouse Park is active from early September through the end of November, when thousands of birds fly over before moving W or even, migrating South. Just as I-95 S is an E to W route. They follow the coast to parts of the US and South America. Stop by any time.
(See p.4 for an Update)

The Big Sit! Is a fun way to observe as many birds as possible within a 7-foot circle over Sat Oct 10 & Sun Oct 11th. Some people have called it “a tailgate party for birders.” Check [here](#) to learn more.

Migration Festival at Lighthouse Point includes bird walks, live raptor demonstration, kids activities and our Hawk Watch. (See p.4)

[Click here for more information](#)

For anyone who might prefer an **Indoor activity** come to a presentation about **Bald Eagles** with Jenny Apple, Master Wildlife Conservationist with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at the Whitney Center, 200 Leeder Hill, Hamden 7:00 – 9:00 PM.

[More information on our website](#) (See p.2)

There is more... see the list of the many upcoming bird walks and other activities listed in the rest of the newsletter. I'm looking forward to a great year of birding and camaraderie!

~Margaret Fikrig

◆ UPCOMING FALL EVENTS & WALKS

Click on the blue highlight for details.

- THU SEP 10** [INDOOR MEETING – Bald Eagles – Ginny Apple](#) (see also p.2) 7-9PM
- SAT SEP 12** [Fresh Meadows Preserve, Cheshire](#) – Corrie Folsom-O’Keefe
REGISTRATION REQUIRED! 8-11 AM
- WED SEP 16** [White Memorial Little Pond Boardwalk Trail, Litchfield](#) – Celeste Echlin 8-11 AM
- SAT SEP 19** [Farm River State Park, East Haven](#) – Maria Stockmal 8-11 AM
- SUN SEP 20** [Hanover Pond and Linear Trail, Meriden](#) – Mark Wantroba
- SAT SEP 26** [Edgewood Park, New Haven](#) – DeWitt Allen 8-11 AM
- SUN SEP 27** [Lake Wintergreen, New Haven](#) – Molly Zahn and Peter Grund 8-11 AM
- SUN SEP 27** **Wingspan Game Day**
Whitney Center, Hamden 1-3 PM
(see p 5)
- MON SEP 28** [Birds in Words Book Club](#): “The Feather Wars: And the Great Crusade to Save America’s Birds” by James H McCommons
6:30 – 8:00 PM (see p.2)
- TUE SEP 29** **NHBC Sponsored [Children’s Program](#) – A Place Called Hope: Birds of Prey**
4-5 PM *More on next page . .*

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◆ UPCOMING FALL EVENTS & WALKS

...continued

Click on the blue highlight for details.

SAT [Hammonasset Beach State Park,](#)
OCT 3 **Madison – Maria Stockmal 8-11 AM**

SUN [Great Meadows Unit, Stewart B.](#)
OCT 4 **McKinney National Wildlife
Refuge, Stratford – Corrie Folsom-
O’Keefe 8-11 AM**

WED **First Wednesday Walk:**
OCT 7 [Lighthouse Point Park, New
Haven – Frank Gallo 8-11 AM](#)

WED **INDOOR MEETING: [Twitching](#)**
OCT 8 **([Birding](#)) at the Yale Center for
British Art – Mark Aronson 7-9 PM**

SAT [Fall Migration Festival,](#)
OCT 10 **Lighthouse Point Park, New
Haven 8 AM-3PM (see p.3)**

SAT OCT10 - [The Big Sit!™ 2026](#)

SUN OCT 11 **Give it a try, it’s easy and fun!**

See our [website](#) for more October events.

◆ INDOOR PROGRAM

September 10, 2026, 7-9PM

Bald Eagles in Connecticut

An engaging presentation by
Ginny Apple, Master Wildlife
Conservationist with the CT
Department of Energy and
Environmental Protection.



She will share about Bald Eagles and their
remarkable resurgence in Connecticut.
Through a slide show and discussion, Ginny
will explore the lives of these magnificent birds
of prey, their important role in the ecosystem,
and the conservation success story behind
their growing population in our state.

Location: The Whitney Center

200 Leeder Hill Dr.

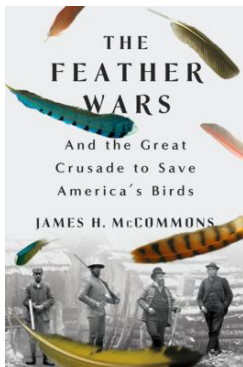
Hamden, CT 06517 + [Google Map](#)

Phone: 203-281-6745

*Members will receive a Zoom link on 9/10 to
join virtually.

◆ **OCT 8 INDOOR PROGRAM:** [Twitching
\(Birding\) at the Yale Center for British Art, Mark
Aronson](#)

BONUS: Oct 13. 12 PM Tour at the Yale Center
for British Art. REGISTRATION REQUIRED!

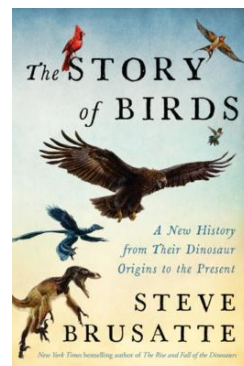


Birds in Words Book Club will meet on Monday,
September 28, 2026, 6:30 to 8:00 pm at the Mitchell
Library, 37 Harrison St New Haven, CT 06515

The club will discuss [Feather Wars: And The Great Crusade
to Save America's Birds](#) by James H. McCommons.

Monday, **November 16, 2026, 6:30 to
8:00 pm** at the Mitchell Library in New
Haven.

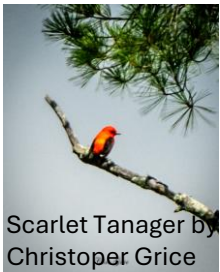
The club will discuss [The Story of Birds:
A New History from
Their Dinosaur Origins to the Present](#) by
Steve Brusatte.



◆ TRIP REPORTS

People's State Forest, July 19, 2026

Twenty-one birders enjoyed beautiful weather for a morning walk along Greenwoods Road, visiting two boardwalks and a viewing platform overlooking Beaver Brook Pond in the heart of People's State Forest. Bird activity was steady throughout the morning, and the group recorded **53 species** over approximately 2.4 miles. Highlights included **two Canada Warblers, four Scarlet Tanagers, and a Winter Wren** that sang repeatedly, giving everyone a chance to enjoy one of the forest's most distinctive songs. Other notable species included **Blackburnian, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Pine, and Black-and-white Warblers, Alder Flycatcher, Brown Creeper, Eastern Kingbird, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Wood Thrush, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.**



Scarlet Tanager by Christopher Grice



It was an enjoyable morning with a great mix of breeding forest birds and great group of birders.

~Michele McDermott and Paul Mahler

Photo by Ann Meacham

Milford Point: Shorebirds and Terns Aug 8, 2026

Our annual Shorebirds and Terns trip resumed on Saturday, August 8, led by Frank Mantlik with the help of Tom Murray. It was a seasonally warm, humid summer morning. The 20 additional participants delighted in seeing a variety of breeding and migrating shorebirds (9 species) including Piping Plovers, Ruddy Turnstones, and 1200 Semipalmated Sandpipers. Besides Common and Least Terns, one Forster's Tern flew in close to us. A variety of herons and egrets was

Milford Point – cont'd

also seen, including terrific views of Yellow-crowned Night Herons roosting in the trees. Also seen were Northern Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, and a couple warblers. A special highlight was seeing a small pod of Bottlenose Dolphins surfacing offshore, and a couple Diamondback Terrapins in the marsh. ~Frank Mantlik with Tom Murray and 20 others

Full Trip report on eBird :

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S381273820>



Ruddy Turnstone
Photo by Jing Chen



Yellow-Crowned Night Heron
Photo by Alan Malina

Branford Trolley Trail Sep 2, 2026

Great birdwalk! Overcast but turned to sun. 17 awesome birders met up at the Trolley Trail in Stony Creek at 8am and had some looks at Spotted Sandpipers, Osprey finishing off their nesting period, Green Heron, Great and Snowy Egrets, migrating Laughing Gulls, a murmuration of Tree Swallows, Barn Swallows, and Great Blue Herons. The group had a beautiful hike across the marsh and back via the Jennie Vedder overlook. Botanist Lauren Brown pointed out some of the flora, including Purple Love Grass and Sea Lavender. Then the group carpooled to the Stony Creek dock to get great views of 12! migrating Royal Terns and the Red-necked Grebe that's been hanging out in the harbor. A lovely outing. ~Linda Meyer



Photo by Ann Meacham



Royal Tern
Photo by Linda Meyer

◆ HAWK WATCH UPDATE September 2026

Lighthouse Park ("Lighthouse") has been closed for cleanup activities following the storm damage on August 13, 2026. This has raised inquiries about other potential hawk watch locations.

The topography at Lighthouse is unique. Southbound Hawks flying west along coastal Connecticut and accumulate over Lighthouse. It's an oversimplification, but the flight path is similar to that of Cape May. New Haven Harbor is certainly no Delaware Bay, but it provides enough open water to change the hawks' direction. The Buteos and accipitrines (Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks) dislike flying over open water, so they head northwest over the Park. Other hawks are more confident and head west over the Harbor or even southwest over Long Island Sound.

Where do the hawks go from there? Watches at Sandy Point (West Haven) or in downtown New Haven have produced only a tiny fraction of the numbers seen at Lighthouse. A watch one mile north at East Shore Park was discontinued in 2010. It counted far fewer hawks, and the flight path was east to west, parallel to that of Lighthouse. If East Shore were counting "Lighthouse's birds," the flight path would have been south to north. Before hawks congregate

.... Continued on p 5.

◆ GOOD TO KNOW

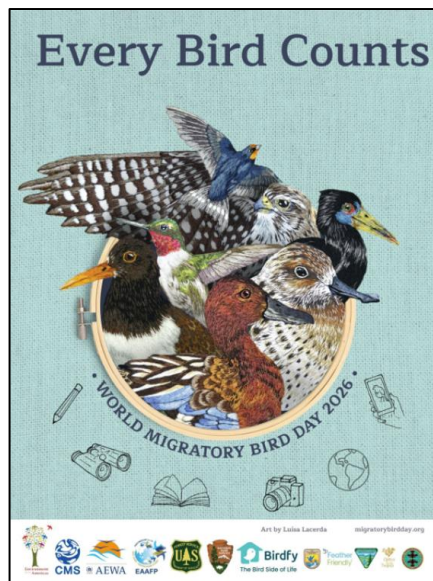
Tips for a pleasant birdwalk.

- ◆ Be aware of the weather and dress accordingly. Wear sturdy footwear and waterproof shoes or boots if it's wet. (Wet feet are so annoying!)
- ◆ Check for possible cancellation.
- ◆ Wear insect repellent – especially around feet and ankles. Tuck pants into socks if walking through grassy areas. Try Permethrin for clothes and gear or Picaridin for skin.
- ◆ Refrain from talking a lot – it can prevent people from hearing the bird songs.
- ◆ Take binoculars or borrow some from the Bird Club.
- ◆ Wear sunscreen if appropriate.
- ◆ Relax and enjoy the outdoors and the birds

CANCELLATION POLICY: 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.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



OCTOBER 10

New Haven Parks will celebrate
World Migratory Bird Day with the
2026 Bird Migration Festival

Volunteers Needed for NHBC Table

- Meet the public
- Tell them about the club
- Engage with youth

Volunteers → Contact Ann Meacham
annm@newhavenbirdclub.org

Where: Lighthouse Point Park
When: 8 AM-3PM

◆ NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB 2026 – 2027

OFFICERS

President	Margaret Fikrig
Vice President	Vacant
Treasurer	Celeste Echlin
Secretary	Bobbie Fisher

BOARD MEMBERS

Annual Banquet Chair	Gail Martino
Conservation Chair	Craig Repasz
Indoor Meeting Programs	Gail Martino
Member-at-Large	Glen Cummings
Member-at-Large	Patrick McGovern
Membership Chair	Laurie Reynolds
Newsletter Editor	Ann Meacham
Nominating Committee	NHBC Exec. Board
Outdoor Programs	DeWitt Allen
Announcement Coordinator	Emmeline Kaiser
Website	Cheryl Cape

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

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

◆ NOTES FROM THE BOARD

The next board meeting will be at 7 p.m. on **Thursday Sep. 24th** on Zoom.

If you need to update your information, email the changes to:

membership@newhavenbirdclub.org

New Haven Bird Club is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. All dues and donations are fully tax-deductible.

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

Hawk Watch update

... cont'd from p.4

at Lighthouse, some pass over Ecology Park (Branford). After Lighthouse, the hawks seem to evaporate!

Many might continue to Kiptopeke (VA) and Cape May (NJ), which in past years had recaptured Lighthouse-banded birds. Then, the accipitrines continue pursuing their migration bird food down to the southern US or even further. Broad-winged Hawks have recently moved slightly west of their traditional southern New England route. They still pass Corpus Christi (TX) and Veracruz (Mexico) in huge numbers and eventually reach Central and South America.

In recent years, Broad-winged Hawks banded in CT have been tracked with telemetry, contributing to our knowledge of this migration. Osprey head to the Caribbean and South America. Young birds actually stay there for several years before reaching sexual maturity and finally returning to Connecticut. Migration is a perilous business, and there's no reason to undertake it unnecessarily. ~Steve Mayo



◆ **Wingspan** Join us for a relaxing game of strategy that is centered around birds.

If you are new to the game, we will offer an introduction and a guided playing experience. Experienced *Wingspan* players are welcome to set up independent games. Click [here](#) for a description of the game.

Upcoming dates at the Whitney Center in Hamden:

September 27

October 25

November 22



Email your comments, suggestions, and photos you'd like to share in the newsletter to: Ann Meacham

annm@newhavenbirdclub.org Deadline for October Chickadee submissions is **Sep 30th**.

***Come to an outdoor walk or an indoor program and check us out .
We'd love to see you in the field.***

◆ **2026 Summer Bird Count** We had yet another year of great weather, area coverage, and participation. On both June 6 & 7 temperatures were warm with moderate SW winds.

*At the risk of pressing our future luck, I will state that there has never been a rained-out SBC!

The “bird-of-the count” goes to **Mississippi Kite**, well-photographed Sunday over the hyper-developed area just west of the Quinnipiac River. A male Black Scoter was present for some time off East Shore Park. A large flock of Red Knots and a Caspian Tern joined an exceptionally large assortment of lingering shorebird species at Sandy Point. A single secretive Broad-winged Hawk was a nice find. A record five Acadian Flycatchers were reported. There weren’t any real significant misses. Among the missed birds were the nightjars, Eastern Screech Owl, Brown Creeper, and Black-throated Green Warbler. Has the latter finally “blinked out” because of the Woolly Adelgid infestation of our Eastern Hemlocks? We’ll have to keep looking.

Additional analysis will be published in a future volume of COA’s Connecticut Warbler. Corrections are always welcome for that report. For some birds additional nestlings have been noted with a “+” to indicate successful breeding.

◆ Thanks everyone, for coming out and participating in this important conservation and bird distribution research.

BIRD COUNT

Brant 2, Canada Goose 216+6, Mute Swan 33+7, Wood Duck 49, Mallard 140, American Black Duck 1, Black Scoter 1, Wild Turkey 20+4, Feral (Rock) Pigeon 199, Mourning Dove 454, Yellow-billed Cuckoo 12, Black-billed Cuckoo (Count Week), Chimney Swift 334, Ruby-throated Hummingbird 11, Clapper Rail 8, American Oystercatcher 45, Black-bellied Plover 2, Semipalmated Plover 4, Piping Plover 25, Killdeer 36, Ruddy Turnstone 12, Sanderling 4, Dunlin 2, Red Knot 22, Willet 36, Least Sandpiper White-rumped Sandpiper 2, Semipalmated Sandpiper 60, Spotted Sandpiper 7, Greater Yellowlegs 6, Laughing Gull 1, Ring-billed Gull 136, Herring Gull 286, Great Black-backed Gull 96, gull, sp. 19, Black Skimmer (Count Week), Least Tern 57, Common Tern 16, Caspian Tern 1, Double-crested Cormorant 193, Snowy Egret 38, Black-crowned Night-Heron 3, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron 2, Green Heron 15, Great Egret 55, Great Blue Heron 69, Glossy Ibis 1, Black Vulture 20, Turkey Vulture 83, Osprey 162, Mississippi Kite 1, Cooper’s Hawk 10, Bald Eagle 12, Red-shouldered Hawk 12, Broad-winged Hawk 1, Red-tailed Hawk 37, Great Horned Owl 1, Barred Owl 14, Belted Kingfisher 7, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 4, Red-bellied Woodpecker 119, Downy Woodpecker 111, Hairy Woodpecker 39, Pileated Woodpecker 21, Northern Flicker 91, Peregrine Falcon 4, Monk Parakeet 4, Great Crested Flycatcher 92, Eastern Kingbird 37, Eastern Wood-Pewee 122, Acadian Flycatcher 5, Willow Flycatcher 37, Willow/Alder Flycatcher 2, Eastern Phoebe 27, Yellow-throated Vireo (Count Week), Eastern Warbling Vireo 151, Red-eyed Vireo 150, Blue Jay 371, American Crow 136, Fish Crow 111, crow species 51, Common Raven 12, Black-capped Chickadee 127, Tufted Titmouse 260, Bank Swallow 39, Tree Swallow 234, Northern Rough-winged Swallow 86, Barn Swallow 324, Purple Martin 50, Cliff Swallow 18, Cedar Waxwing 178, Red-breasted Nuthatch 3, White-breasted Nuthatch 92, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 14, Carolina Wren 90, Northern House Wren 145, Marsh Wren 33, Gray Catbird 513, Brown Thrasher 4, Northern Mockingbird 120, European Starling 743, Eastern Bluebird 48, Veery 24, Wood Thrush 111, American Robin 1147, House Sparrow 1105, House Finch 279, American Goldfinch 367, Chipping Sparrow 150, Field Sparrow 13, Saltmarsh Sparrow 3, Song Sparrow 443, Swamp Sparrow 6, Eastern Towhee 23, Orchard Oriole 35, Baltimore Oriole 171, Red-winged Blackbird 956, Brown-headed Cowbird 145, Common Grackle 889, Ovenbird 123, Worm-eating Warbler 7, Louisiana Waterthrush 12, Blue-winged Warbler 34, Black-and-white Warbler 17, Common Yellowthroat 87, Hooded Warbler 1, Magnolia Warbler (Count Week), American Redstart 23, Northern Yellow Warbler 136, Chestnut-sided Warbler 4, Pine Warbler 43, Prairie Warbler 35, Scarlet Tanager 47, Northern Cardinal 379, Rose-breasted Grosbeak 24, Indigo Bunting 56.

~ Steve Mayo