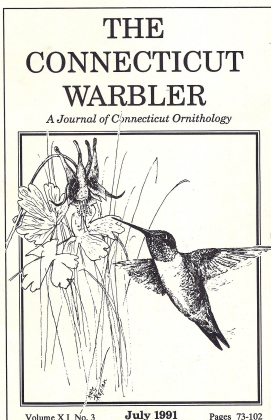


COA Bulletin



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COA is an all volunteer organization with the mission of promoting interest in Connecticut birds, and collecting, preparing, and disseminating the best available scientific information on the status of Connecticut birds and their habitat. While COA is not primarily an advocacy organization, we work actively to provide scientific information and to support other conservation organizations in the state.



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE KATHY VAN DER AUE

In recent months we of the COA Board have felt the need to send letters of protest or support on a number of issues which may affect the birds of Connecticut. We thank all those experts who so generously helped us craft effective, well-reasoned letters. Following are “nutshells” of some of the more important ones.

“Duncan” Amendment to the International Migratory Bird Treaty Act as a part of the appropriations bill: This amendment which was passed by the House substantially weakened the penalties provided in the Act. This would have gutted the Act and literally set us back 100 years in bird conservation. We sent letters in opposition to our Senators. [The amendment was not included in the appropriations bill but a similar amendment is lurking so vigilance is key.]

Federal prosecution involving two pigeon racers who were trapping and killing Red-tailed and Cooper’s Hawks: Letter sent to the US Attorneys and the Judge in the case asking that the penalty be more than a “slap on the wrist” and pointing out the maximum penalties allowed. The two pled guilty and are scheduled to be sentenced in September. The US Attorney asked that our letter be included as a part of his sentencing recommendations.

The creation of the New England Coral Canyons & Seamounts Marine Sanctuary and increased protections for the Cashes Ledge Closed Area, both important undersea areas for marine wildlife: Because of the importance of fisheries to many of our Long Island Sound birds we have sent letters of support on these initiatives. No action has been taken on these as yet. President Obama’s signature would do it.

The Northeast Corridor Future Plan (changes to Metro North, etc.): Review of this lengthy environmental impact statement showed three alternative plans, all of which had various adverse impacts on our environment, state parks and forests. It did not mention the impact on municipal parks or our local conservation lands held by not-for profit groups such as the local Audubon Societies and the Nature Conservancy, many of which also appeared to be involved. The plans were lacking in any detail regarding mitigation proposals or plans to protect sensitive areas during construction.



Continued on page 2.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, CONTINUED
KATHY VAN DER AUE

Our letter applauded the benefits of increased rail travel but stated that we could not endorse any plan so lacking in crucial detail. We anticipate a more detailed proposal will have to be put forward.

Great Thicket National Wildlife Refuge: We enthusiastically supported this proposal by the US Fish & Wildlife Service which would increase and protect the fast disappearing thicket habitat across six Northeast states.

Barn Island WMA Action Plan: DEEP sought comments on the proposed plan and we supported the plan generally with suggestions for improvement, including steps that we felt would help to further protect threatened wildlife there, especially the Saltmarsh Sparrow. Barn Island is a crucial largely unspoiled marshland habitat, important for many reasons, one being that it provides many opportunities for scientific study as sea level rise progresses. It's important that it be very thoughtfully managed. The comment period is closed now and the plan is being reviewed.

Connecticut Wildlife Action Plan: We participated in the informational meetings and commented on this plan which must be revised every ten years. Our focus was on the species of birds which would make up the list of Connecticut Birds of Greatest Conservation Need. Some birds were added, some deleted, some changed from one list to another. We won some and lost some. The elimination of the Black Rail from the endangered list (now declared extirpated here) was a sobering blow. As a result COA has initiated a project to make a focused attempt to listen for the Black Rail. One was reported just over the line in Rhode Island, so it's just possible we can prove them wrong.

Eversource Energy: We sent a letter of protest against the clearing under power cuts, the brushy vegetation of which provides important bird habitat. They have not done the statutorily required mitigation; instead they have made gravel roads.

Silver Sands State Park: We testified and wrote a letter against portions of the plans for improvement. These plans are now being revised. The area of major concern ("sparrow lanes") seems to be subject to excessive pruning, which we have also complained about.

Hammonasset Beach State Park: We have become very involved in this park, first with comments on the improvements, then meetings on the plans. The plans have now been built out and it remains to be seen what the effects on birds will be. Our involvement resulted in a more transparent relationship between DEEP and COA which we hope will continue. Dialogue is the best way to resolve controversy.



Dog walker with dog off leash, Milford Point sandbars, Milford, July 27, 2016. The dog flushed shorebirds resting on the sandbars, including three Whimbrel in a flock of Sanderlings and Semipalmated Sandpipers.
Photo by Paul Fusco.

City of New Haven
Department of Parks, Recreation & Trees
720 Edgewood Avenue, New Haven, CT 06515,
Phone 946-8027, Fax 946-8024

Toni N. Harp, Mayor Rebecca Bombero, Director
DAVID R. BELOWSKY, PRESIDENT, BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
Margaret G. Pastore, President Emeritus, Board of Park Commissioners

Lighthouse Point Park Migration Festival
Celebrating Birds, Butterflies & Dragonflies

Sunday, September 18, 2016 ~ 8:00 am to 3:00 pm (No Rain Date)

A “suggested donation” of \$5.00 per car is requested to help fund next year’s event.
Come celebrate the spectacle and mystery of migration at one of the best places to
see migrating wild hawks in New England!

Lighthouse Point Park is a recognized Important Birding Area.

Live Bird Shows featuring Hawks and Owls!
See wild birds up close at banding demonstrations!
Children’s activities and fun for the whole family!
Ride the Old-Fashioned Carousel!
Tour the Historic Lighthouse!
Live Bluegrass Music!
Hands-on Butterfly Tagging!
Bird walks and more!

Event Partners Include:

- City of New Haven
- New Haven Bird Club
 - Audubon CT
- Friends of Lighthouse Point Park
 - Elm City Conservancy
 - CT Butterfly Association

www.cityofnewhaven.com/parks or www.facebook.com/NewHavenParks

720 Edgewood Avenue, New Haven, CT 06515 | Phone: (203) 946-8027

Lighthouse Point Park Migration Festival

Celebrating Birds, Butterflies & Dragonflies

Sunday, September 18, 2016

Schedule of Events

- 8:00 am – ongoing Hawk Watching (mid field viewing area)
- 8:00 am to 9:30 am Bird Walk led by Chris Loscalzo
- 8:30 am to 11:00 am Bird Banding Demo w/ CAS and Audubon Ct
- 9:00 am to 10:00 am Hawk Flight I.D. Workshop
CT Ornithological Association
- 9:30 am to 10:45 am Children’s Bird Walk led by Flo MacBride
- 9:30 am to 10:45 am Bird Walk led by Mike Horn
- 9:30 am to 3:00 pm Monarch Butterfly Tagging in the Butterfly Garden
- 10:00 am – ongoing Native Wildlife friendly Plant Sale
- 10:00 am to 11:00 am Creating an Urban Oasis Workshop
- 11:00 am to 12:00 noon Horizon Wings– Live Raptor Show
- 9:00 am to 11:30 am Lighthouse Tours
- 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm Lighthouse Tours
- 12:15 pm to 1:15 pm Live Bluegrass music by “5 in the Chamber”
- 11:00 am to 2:30 pm Ride the Historic Carousel
- 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm “Sky Hunters in Flight” – Falconry Demo

This Migration event is funded by Audubon CT,
Friends of Lighthouse Point Park,
the Board of Park Commissioners and donations.

Event partners include: New Haven Department of Parks, Recreation and Trees,
Friends of Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven Bird Club, CT Butterfly Association,
Audubon Connecticut, Menunkatuck and Hartford Audubon Society,
CT Ornithological Association, CT Audubon Society and Elm City Parks Conservancy

Suggested donation: \$5/car. Proceeds go towards next year’s event!

COA WORKSHOPS

CHRISTOPHER LOSCALZO, COA WORKSHOP COORDINATOR

COA workshops are designed to provide detailed reviews of particular groups of birds so that participants can learn how to differentiate between similar species and increase their general knowledge of birds. Most workshops begin with didactic sessions on the birds being reviewed. Often, there are prepared handouts, slide shows, or PowerPoint presentations to enhance the discussions. These are followed by several hours of direct observation of the birds in the field. Workshop leaders review the salient features of the birds, including field marks, vocalizations, behaviors and habitats that aid in their identification. The workshop leaders are often members of the COA board of directors who volunteer their time and share their expertise. Typically, the workshops are attended by 10-40 birders and are well received.

For many years, COA has offered workshops on shorebirds, sparrows, raptors and gulls. In the past few years, we have added a number of new workshops, focusing on many different species groups. We have had workshops on sea ducks, wading birds, flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, and warblers. We have offered workshops on birding by ear, ebird and bird log. Also, we have run joint workshops with the CT Botanical Society and, this year, ran a combined workshop with the CT Butterfly Association. We make an effort to vary the locations of the workshops from one year to the next in order to accommodate birders from all areas of the state and introduce them to new birding hot spots. Of course, workshops are held where the specific birds being studied are most likely to be found.

Workshops are free and open to COA members and non-members alike. We hope that participation in the workshops enhances the birding skills of all of the attendees and inspires those who are not yet members to join COA.

Sparrow Workshop

Saturday, October 8, 2016 at 7:30 am

Bauer Park and Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison

You won't regard sparrows as "little brown jobs" after you've attended this workshop. October is the height of sparrow migration and we'll have a chance to see ten or more species on the day. We'll review how to differentiate between similar species and gain a greater appreciation for this remarkable group of birds. Meet at the parking lot by the community gardens at Bauer Park, 257 Copse Road in Madison. After we've looked for sparrows there, we'll move on to Hammonasset Beach SP at 1288 Boston Post Road to look for salt marsh species. The workshop is free and open to COA members and non-members alike.

Leaders: Frank Mantlik. Contact person: Chris Loscalzo closcalz@optonline.net. and 203 389-6508.



COA Shorebirds Workshop, August 13, 2016, Coastal Center at Milford Point. Leaders: Patrick Comins & Sean Graesser. Photo by Steve Broker.

COA WORKSHOPS, CONTINUED

CHRISTOPHER LOSCALZO, COA WORKSHOP COORDINATOR

Dabbling and Diving Duck Workshop
Saturday, November 19, 2016 at 8:00 am
Mondo Ponds, Milford

Learn how to identify the different waterfowl species that dabble and dive in our freshwater ponds and lakes. After a discussion session, we'll look in the ponds to see what we can find. The workshop is free and open to COA members and non-members alike. Meet at the parking lot at the northeast corner of the school grounds at John F. Kennedy Elementary School at 404 West Avenue in Milford.

Leaders: TBD. Contact person: Chris Loscalzo at closcalz@optonline.net and 203 389-6508.



Dan and Trudy Rottino with son Danny at the August 13, 2016 COA Shorebirds Workshop, Coastal Center at Milford Point. The Rottinos are flanked by COA board member and workshops coordinator Chris Loscalzo (L) and COA board member John Marshall (R). Photo by Steve Broker.

REVITALIZING COASTAL HABITAT AT STRATFORD POINT

by **PATRICK COMINS, AUDUBON CONNECTICUT DIRECTOR OF BIRD CONSERVATION**

Photos by **Scott Kruitbosch**

Stratford Point is a 30-acre site located adjacent to Stratford Point Lighthouse at the junction of the Housatonic River and Long Island Sound. Nearly 300 species of birds have been recorded here, including spectacular rarities. This is a perfect place to view seabirds from land and migrating shorebirds and land birds. Stratford Point is owned by Sporting Goods Inc., a subsidiary of E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company. The Point has been managed by Audubon Connecticut since February 2015 with the mission to improve and restore the habitats of the property and make it one of the best destinations in the state for birds and birding. While work continues on habitat restoration, efforts of past months have led to installation of a pollinator meadow, a bird garden, a nectar garden, and a water garden (a small pond and recirculating cascade), cool season grassland, and coastal scrub/forest transition zone – all providing great structural diversity to the site. [Ed's Note: The full article by Patrick can be found at the Audubon Connecticut website (ct.audubon.org) using the following link.]

<http://ct.audubon.org/conservation/revitalizing-coastal-habitat-stratford-point>



RECENT SIGHTINGS – A SELECTION OF BREEDING BIRDS IN CONNECTICUT



Great Blue Herons, Lyme, CT, June 9, 2016.
Photo by Hank Golet.



Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Stratford Point,
Stratford, July 11, 2016. Photo by Patrick Comins.



Common Mergansers, Pomeraug River,
Woodbury, CT, 2016. Photo by Chris Wood.



Turkey Vultures, Westbrook, CT, June 6, 2016.
Photo by Hank Golet.



Clapper Rails, Silver Sands SP, July 30, 2016.
Photo by Bill Batsford.



Piping Plover, Milford Point, Milford, CT,
July 13, 2016. Photo by Bill Batsford.

RECENT SIGHTINGS – A SELECTION OF BREEDING BIRDS IN CONNECTICUT



Spotted Sandpiper, Morse Point, West Haven, CT, July 2016. Photo by Larry Bausher.



Great Black-backed Gulls, Greenwich, CT, July 10, 2016. Photo by Joe DeMarte.



Great Horned Owls, Mianus River banks, Fairfield County, CT, April 22, 2016. Photo by Joe DeMarte.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Lyme, CT, June 23, 2016. Photo by Hank Golet.



Peregrine Falcon eyasses (chicks), New Haven County, CT, August 2016. Photos by Lesley Roy.

RECENT SIGHTINGS – A SELECTION OF BREEDING BIRDS IN CONNECTICUT



Acadian Flycatcher, Devil's Hopyard State Park, East Haddam, CT, June 26, 2016.
Photo by Bob Dixon.



House Wrens, Byram, CT, July 11, 2016.
Photo by Joe DeMarte.



Wood Thrushes,
Photo by Alan Malina.



Orchard Oriole feeding a Brown-headed Cowbird. Stratford Point, 2016.
Photo by Patrick Comins.



“Hammonasset Beach SP Peeps”:
Erika Kiley, Aidan Kiley, Daniel Field, and Jory Teltser.
Photo by Denise Jernigan.

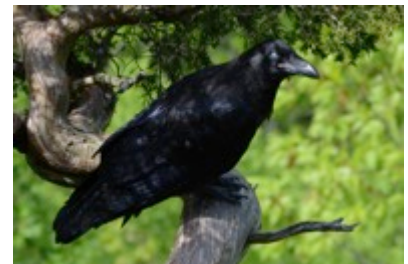
Twenty-Five Years Ago in The Connecticut Warbler Compiled by Steve Broker Volume XI, No. 3 (July 1991)

Common Raven in Connecticut, by Thomas R. Baptist.

The return of Common Raven (*Corvus corax*) to Connecticut has been one of the more interesting ornithological events in the state in recent years. After an absence of about 2000 years, the Common Raven is now a year-round resident and nester in hillier portions of Litchfield and Tolland counties, and the number of sightings continues to increase. The Common Raven is a Holarctic species with the race *principalis* occurring in North America. It resides in a wide variety of habitats from the treeless tundra to desert to forested mountains. In southern New England, ravens favor mountainous or hilly terrain with mature forests of deciduous and coniferous trees.

Sightings of ravens in Connecticut in the 1970s and early 1980s were undoubtedly of birds wandering southward from the Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire populations. The first such sighting was by Mike Root of two birds at Bald Peak in Salisbury on October 21, 1977, and three were seen there one week later (Vickery 1978). On November 2, 1978, Mr. Root observed two birds on Mt. Riga in Salisbury (American Birds 33:157).

Following a handful of sightings in 1983 and 1984, the population expansion in Connecticut began in earnest in 1985 when diligent searches of ridge tops and local landfills in Litchfield County regularly yielded a raven or two (Zeranski & Baptist 1990). [Ed's Note: See Tom's summary list of raven sightings in Connecticut from 1889 to 1989 on page 77 of TCW. Common Ravens were confirmed nesters at Sleeping Giant State Park in the late 1990s (fide Jim Zipp) and at West Rock Ridge State Park in 2002 (fide Steve Broker). They now are commonly found in many portions of the state.] (Photos of West Rock Ridge nesting Common Ravens by Steve Broker)



Site Guide, The Southwestern Connecticut Shoreline – Part 2, by Frank W. Mantlik.

Sherwood Island State Park. This 235-acre park, the second most heavily used state park, is a favorite of beachgoers, picnickers, fishermen and birders alike. Among the rarities recorded here have been Red-necked (annual) and Eared Grebes, Northern Gannet, American and Least Bittern, Tricolored Heron, King Eider, Barrow's Goldeneye, Peregrine Falcon (annual), Whimbrel, Hudsonian Godwit, Upland, Baird's, and Stilt Sandpipers, Ruff, Wilson's Phalarope, Lesser Black-backed and Iceland Gulls, Caspian and Forster's Terns, Barn, Short-eared and No. Saw-whet Owls, Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Wheatear, Philadelphia Vireo, Golden-winged, Orange-crowned, Connecticut, and Mourning Warblers, Blue Grosbeak, Vesper, Lark and Le Conte's Sparrows, and Eurasian Goldfinch." [Ed's Note: Franks' site guide describes more than 20 important birding spots in Westport, Fairfield, and Bridgeport.]

[Ed's note: These and other articles from the July 1991 issue of *The Connecticut Warbler* may be seen in their entirety at the following link to the COA website. Download Volume 11, and view pages 73-102.]

<http://www.ctbirding.org/Warbler/CTWarblerVolume10.pdf>

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Summer Bird Count Compilers	Joe Zeranski & Patrick Comins
Great Backyard Bird Count	Patrick Comins

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