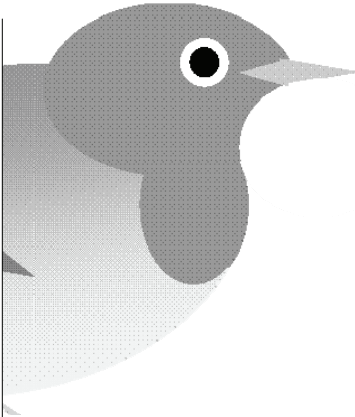
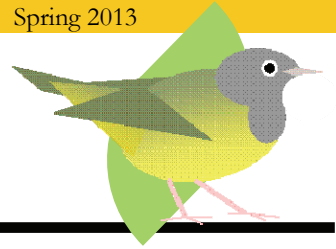


COA BULLETIN



COA ANNUAL MEETING MARCH 23, 2013

The Connecticut Ornithological Association's 29th Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 23, 2013, at [Middlesex Community College](#) in Middletown, CT. The program will feature three well-known and entertaining speakers, the presentation of COA awards, the Association's business meeting and election of officers and board members, vendor exhibits, and the ever-popular COA raffle.

FEATURED SPEAKERS



Dr. Stephen Kress
Photo by Bill Scholtz

Dr. Stephen Kress is Vice-President of Bird Conservation for the [National Audubon Society](#), Manager of the Society's Maine Coast Seabird Sanctuaries, and Director of the Seabird Restoration Program. He oversees the 13 coastal islands from Cape Elizabeth to Mount Desert Island, home to more than 42,000 seabirds of 27 species. Through methods he has developed, Dr. Kress has successfully re-established seabird colonies along the Maine coast for Atlantic Puffins, Arctic, Common and Roseate Terns, and Leach's Storm-Petrel. Each year his program trains about 20 interns, and hundreds of professional seabird biologists can trace their first interest in seabirds to 'Project Puffin' and living with seabirds off the Maine coast.

Dr. Kress received his Ph.D. from Cornell University and his Master's and undergraduate degrees from Ohio State University. He is currently a Visiting Fellow at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology where he teaches a popular course in ornithology. Dr. Kress' program is

Restoring Endangered Seabirds: Lessons from Puffins and Terns

Humans have devastated seabird colonies in many parts of the world by excessive hunting for food and feathers and by introducing mammals such as cats and rats to otherwise secure nesting islands. Dr. Stephen Kress will review how techniques developed on Maine islands have led to the restoration of puffins and terns to historic nesting islands in the Gulf of Maine, and how these techniques are helping seabirds worldwide.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Annual Meeting	1-2
COA Workshops	3
Sterling Yard Bird-scaping	4
Meeting Schedule	5
Registration form	6
25 Yrs ago in <i>Warbler</i>	7

**Complete
Annual
Meeting
Program
Schedule
is on Pages 5+6**

Continued on page 2 →

COA ANNUAL MEETING

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

"Birdchick" aka Sharon Stiteler

Sharon Stiteler was given a *Peterson Field Guide to Birds* when she was seven years old, and snapped. She loves birds, it's just the way she's wired. Since 1997, she has made it her goal to get paid to go birding. She runs the popular birding blog Birdchick.com and has been in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and on *NBC Nightly News* as well as making regular appearances on Twin Cities' TV and radio stations. She's an internationally known professional speaker and storyteller and her writing can be found in several publications including *Wild Bird Magazine*, *Birds & Blooms*, and *Birding Business*. She wrote the books *Disapproving Rabbits* and *City Birds/Country Birds*; and worked as a National Park Ranger. When she's not digiscoping or banding birds, she's an Avian Field Ecologist and award-winning beekeeper. Follow her on Twitter @Birdchick.

Today's Office

Sharon's goal is to get paid go bird watching and her office can be in the middle of a corn field watching eagles or flying 100 feet above the Mississippi River counting ducks. Some of the topics covered include the Horned Guan Death March (climbing 4 hours up a volcano in Guatemala to search for a rare tree chicken), trying to find a reasonable bathroom while birding in Kazakhstan, or misadventures searching for an Ivory-billed Woodpecker with Cornell Lab of Ornithology in 2005. Learn about a day in the life of Birdchick!



Marshall Iliff

Marshall Iliff started birding at age 11. After attending Bowdoin College, he traversed the continent on various field jobs (including four months studying bird migration on an oil platform off New Orleans) before taking a job as a professional tour guide. As a guide he travelled to all 50 states, Mexico, Panama, Belize, Greenland, and Kenya. In 2007, Marshall was hired as eBird Project Leader by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Since then, the project has expanded worldwide and collected over 110 million observations! Among the most exciting projects is seeing millions of birdwatcher observations come together using new modeling techniques that show animated maps of bird migration, species-by-species, at the continental scale. Marshall lives with his wife and two dogs in West Roxbury, Massachusetts, and gets out eBirding whenever he is not behind the computer.



Bird Migration through the Lens of eBird

Bird migration is one of the great miracles of the natural world. Millions of warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other birds stream north from the tropics and back south in fall, and birders flock to migrant traps to catch a glimpse of this miracle in action. Recently has it become possible to piece together birdwatcher observations from across the country to see migration in action and Marshall will begin by sharing this amazing imagery, discussing the ebb and flow of migration and what we are learning by seeing migration in this way. From these amazing results, Marshall will then discuss where they came from and take us on a tour of eBird, what it is, and how it has been built into such a powerful tool for birders and scientists alike. eBird makes all this information available through a suite of maps, graphs, and other tools that can be used by birders to find more birds, plan trips, and become a better birder. This is all driven by the contributions of thousands of birders, who maintain their personal bird records and bird lists in eBird and thus become a part of this fast-growing community that is revolutionizing the study of birds and making eBird one of the largest biodiversity data resources in existence. Come learn how easy it is to use this powerful tool, and see how your bird records can be joined with those of birders around the World to see bird migration in action!

COA WORKSHOPS

Not entirely sure what kind of gull this is?
What field marks to take note of?

Make plans now to attend the **COA Gull Workshop**
at the [Windsor/Bloomfield landfill](#)
on Thursday, February 21 from 10 am–1 pm

This workshop will help birders learn how to identify the common gulls in all of their different plumages and recognize the uncommon and rare species such as Glaucous, Iceland, Lesser Black-backed, and even Thayer's and Slaty-backed Gull.

The landfill is the premier site in the state in winter to see rare gulls and to examine all of the gull species in their varied plumages.

Meet at the landfill entrance at 500 Huckleberry Road
(off of Prospect Hill Road) in Windsor.

Carpool, if possible, to reduce
the number of cars entering the landfill.
Bring a scope if you have one.

Snow/rain date: Friday, February 22nd.

Leaders: Patrick Comins and Mark Szantyr.

Contact person: Chris Loscalzo at 203 389-6508 or
closalz@optonline.net.



What better way to spend a winter's morning than gulling at the landfill?



Glaucous Gull
Photo by Patrick Comins



Hybrid Herring X Lesser Black-backed Gull
Photo (and ID) by Patrick Comins

UP NEXT:

WARBLER WORKSHOP
Saturday, April 27, 2013

Watch the COA Web
Site and [Events](#)
[Calendar](#) for details,
coming soon.

Contact:

closalz@optonline.net



Pine Warbler photo by
Bruce Finnan

FROM LANDING STRIP TO SANCTUARY: THE TRANSFORMATION OF A BIRDER'S YARD

"Sterling Yard: Yellow-headed Blackbird"

"Sterling Yard: Rufous Hummingbird"

"Sterling Yard: Evening Grosbeak"



Anyone who consults CTBirds, COA's listserv for sharing bird sightings and observations, has taken note of the impressive variety of species reported from one particular yard in Sterling. And no doubt wondered, Where is this place? And what makes it so special? The answer to the first question is not hard, given the many online map options available these days, but the reason this yard is so attractive to so many birds is the result of many years of hard work.

When COA Board member Bob Dixon and his wife Linda first moved to Sterling, about 25 years ago, the back yard looked like, in Bob's words, "an air strip." There was not a tree, not a shrub, not a bush. Since then, every single flower, tree, shrub, feeder, bird bath, and winding path has been selected and installed with birds in mind.



Dixon feeders in May, and in January.
All photos by Bob Dixon

except January photo by D.Jernigan

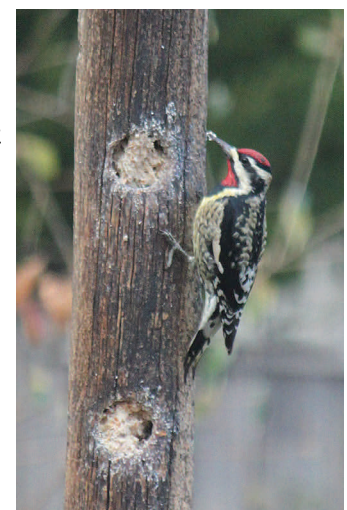
Bob and Linda have created what many consider the most welcoming and attractive bird habitat in eastern Connecticut. Their yard list is now at a very impressive 169 species, with such highlights as White-winged Dove (the first documented record for the state), Western Tanager, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Connecticut Warbler, Dickcissel, Clay-colored Sparrow, and both Red and White-winged Crossbills, as well as the three notable species mentioned above. Bob keeps impeccable daily notes of the birds which visit his yard, and has also photographed a good many of them.

When the Rufous Hummingbird's visits to the yard in late 2010 became regular enough to anticipate, Bob invited birders to come to the yard to see it. Those who made the trip to Sterling were welcomed with generous and gracious hospitality in addition to the chance to see a life bird. Since then, many birders look forward each year to a visit to Sterling to boost their January lists, or just to enjoy watching the feeders with a cup of tea and one of Linda's delicious homemade scones.

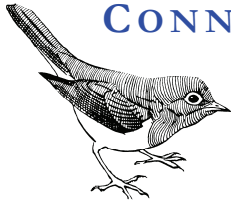
Keeping all of these birds well-fed comes at a cost, of course. Bob estimates that, during the winter months, he uses an average of 400 pounds of seed (black oil, millet, thistle, sunflower hearts and mixed seed) per month, plus peanuts and suet. The feeders are kept immaculately clean and full, no matter how cold, wet, windy, or hot the weather is. The reward for all of this effort is looking out the back window to see a Rufous Hummingbird or a plateful of Purple Finches.



A plateful of Purple Finches



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at the peanut and suet feeder



CONNECTICUT ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
29TH ANNUAL MEETING
SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2013
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

8:00 – 9:00 **Registration / COA Marketplace** – includes continental breakfast and Birds and Beans coffee!

9:00 – 9:30 **Welcome / Business Meeting**

Ken Elkins, COA President will present a brief overview of the year's activities followed by elections of officers and board members.

9:30 – 10:30 ***Bird Migration through the Lens of eBird* – Marshall Iliff**

Bird migration is one of the great miracles of the natural world. Millions of warblers, vireos, thrushes, and other birds stream north from the tropics and back south in fall, and birders flock to migrant traps to catch a glimpse of this miracle in action. Recently has it become possible to piece together birdwatcher observations from across the country to see migration in action and Marshall will begin by sharing this amazing imagery, discussing the ebb and flow of migration and what we are learning by seeing migration in this way. From these amazing results, Marshall will then discuss where they came from and take us on a tour of eBird, what it is, and how it has been built into such a powerful tool for birders and scientists alike.

10:30 – 10:50 **Presentation of COA Awards**

* Mabel Osgood Wright Award - presented annually to a person or persons in Connecticut who have made a significant contribution to the knowledge, study, and conservation of birds.

* Betty Kleiner Award - honors the memory of Betty Kleiner, whose name is synonymous with *The Connecticut Warbler*, COA's flagship publication. The award recognizes a deserving author or artist in the field of ornithology.

* COA Mini-grants Award - awarded annually to the applicant(s) whose project(s) most benefits Connecticut birds.

10:50 – 11:05 **Break - COA Marketplace**

A time to socialize, purchase COA Raffle tickets and check out vendors' offerings of bird-related items

11:05 – 12:05 ***Today's Office* – Spend a Day with the "BirdChick" aka Sharon Stiteler**

Sharon's goal is to get paid to go bird watching and her office can be in the middle of a corn field watching eagles or flying 100 feet above the Mississippi River counting ducks. Some of the topics she may cover include the Horned Guan Death March, trying to find a reasonable bathroom while birding in Kazakhstan or misadventures searching for an Ivory-billed Woodpecker with Cornell Lab of Ornithology in 2005. Sharon runs the popular birding blog Birdchick.com and has been in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and on *NBC Nightly News* as well as Twin Cities' TV and radio stations.

12:10 – 1:15 **Lunch at Founder's Hall Cafeteria** Hot buffet lunch; vegetarian option available

1:25 – 2:25 ***Restoring Endangered Seabirds: Lessons from Puffins and Terns* - Dr. Stephen Kress**

Dr. Kress will review how techniques developed on Maine islands have led to the restoration of puffins and terns to historic nesting islands in the Gulf of Maine, and how these techniques are helping seabirds worldwide. His presentation will also include the restoration of Common Murres to a historic nesting island near San Francisco following an oil spill, and efforts to save the endangered Bermuda Petrel from rising oceans and increased frequency of hurricanes.

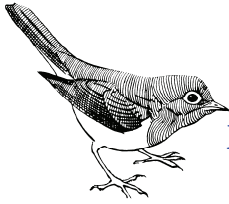
2:35 – 3:05 **COA Raffle**

The ever-popular Raffle will conclude our day with many prizes including avian artwork and valuable birding equipment donated by generous artists and vendors. Raffle tickets will be available throughout the day.

For map and directions: www.mxctc.commnet.edu or call: 860-343-5800

Please bring this copy of the program with you to the Annual Meeting. Additional copies can be accessed on-line
<http://www.ctbirding.org/2013docs/MeetingSchedule2013.pdf>

CONNECTICUT ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
29TH ANNUAL MEETING
SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2013
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE



REGISTRATION FORM

COA Annual Meeting March 23, 2013
Middlesex Community College • Chapman Hall • Middletown, CT

Early Registration: _____ Persons @ \$20.00 (pre-pay only) \$ _____
(Must be received by March 16) [Registration at the door: \$25.00]

Hot buffet lunch: _____ Persons @ \$17.00 (pre-pay only) \$ _____

Please check here if you are requesting a vegetarian entrée

TOTAL

\$ _____

Please print name(s) as you would like to have it appear on name tag(s) :

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Send check (made out to COA) & form to: Larry Reiter, 32 West Mystic Ave, Mystic, CT 06355

WINTER VISITORS



This young Bullock's Oriole has been enjoying the well-stocked feeders at a private yard in Ellington since mid- November 2012. Photo by Joseph Cala



Among the hundreds of Common Redpolls at a feeder in Winchester was this one Hoary Redpoll, photographed by Bill Asteriades on January 1.



All of the activity behind a hockey rink in Simsbury could not keep 5 Pine Grosbeaks from enjoying crab apple fruits. Photo by Russ Smiley

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO IN
THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER
 COMPILED BY STEPHEN P. BROKER

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER, VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 1 (January 1988)

Editorial, by Fred Sibley

“ . . . neither the Roseate Tern nor any other species is assured of sunny skies, a full crop and ample nesting beaches just because it receives endangered status. Rather than jubilation, we should show a little shame for allowing this tern to decline to the extent it has. Might we also get more involved in its future?”

“The Roseate Tern, unlike the Piping Plover, was well enough studied in Connecticut that a number of management ideas might have been implemented. Each however, required more than a little political maneuvering, considerable initiative by some individual and a genuine concern for the future of Roseate Terns (i.e. work that would do nothing for your resume nor engender much appreciation). These management ideas remain viable. As the species is now endangered and since a state non-game program has been established, pressure can be exerted to force action on behalf of the terns. Let’s do it!” [Editorial note: Fred’s editorial continues with reference to Roseate Tern colonies on Tuxis Island, off Madison, Duck Island, off Westbrook, and Falkner’s Island, off Guilford. Fred cites the work of Jeff Spendelow on Falkner’s Island to enhance nest sites by using tires and sheets of plywood. SPB]

Status and Hybridization of Clapper and King Rails in Connecticut, by Anthony H. Bledsoe

“The Clapper Rail (*Rallus longirostris*) and the King Rail (*Rallus elegans*) comprise a pair of closely-related species distributed widely in the New World. Throughout most of their ranges, the species segregate ecologically into salt and fresh-water marsh populations. The Clapper Rail occurs in coastal salt and brackish marshes . . . The King Rail breeds primarily in fresh-water marshes i . . .

“In this paper, I review the historical and current status of these two rails in Connecticut. Because populations of the King Rail in the middle Atlantic states are apparently declining (Tate 1986), an assessment of the local status of the King Rail is needed to determine whether the Connecticut populations are likewise decreasing. In addition, the status and interactions of Clapper and King rails in Connecticut, and particularly the evidence for local hybridization, are of interest for the study of the systematics of the *R. elegans/longirostris* complex.”

1984 Shorebird Survey at the Mouth of the Housatonic River, by Dennis Varza

“The shorebird migration in Connecticut is a conspicuous spring and fall phenomenon, eagerly awaited by the state’s birders. Despite this, there is little documentation that could be used to detect changes in abundance and timing a decade from now. This survey provides such a reference point for the mouth of the Housatonic River as well as documenting Stratford south of the Connecticut Turnpike including Milford Point and Silver Sands State Park. The area was covered once every other week in winter and every third day during the migration. Counts were planned to cover the best tide and habitat for each species. Birds in the marshes and on the outer sandbars were counted from shore without the aid of a canoe. . . Thirty-four species of shorebirds were observed during the year (Table 1).”

[Editorial note: readers of the [CTBirds listserv](#) know that Dennis Varza continues his coastal shorebird surveys to this day. SPB]



The Great Backyard Bird Count is a terrific way to get your children, grandchildren, or neighborhood children involved in birding!

Explore some options just for kids at <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/kids>

COA OFFICERS

<i>President</i>	Ken Elkins, 43 Park Street, Shelton, CT 06484
<i>Vice President</i>	Tina Green, 188 Imperial Avenue, Westport, CT 06880
<i>Secretary</i>	Steve Broker, 50 Hidden Place, Cheshire, CT 06410, 203-272-5192
<i>Treasurer</i>	Fred Schroeder, 215 Lonetown Road, West Redding, CT 06896, 203-938-9165
<i>Assistant Treasurer</i>	Jack Wells, 103 Sheephill Road, Riverside, CT 06878

COA CHAIRPERSONS

<i>Conservation</i>	Milan Bull
<i>Finance</i>	Fred Schroeder
<i>Membership</i>	Larry Reiter
<i>Workshops</i>	Chris Loscalzo
<i>Annual Meeting</i>	Tina Green, Kathy Van Der Aue, Lisa Wahle
<i>Connecticut Warbler</i>	Greg Hanisek
<i>COA Bulletin</i>	Denise Jernigan
<i>Rare Records</i>	Jay Kaplan
<i>Christmas Bird Count Compiler</i>	Steve Broker
<i>Summer Bird Count Compilers</i>	Joe Zeranski and Patrick Comins
<i>Great Backyard Bird Count</i>	Patrick Comins

The COA Bulletin is the quarterly newsletter of the Connecticut Ornithological Association, published in February, May, September, and December. Please submit materials for the next issue by April 15, 2013 to:

Denise Jernigan
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South Glastonbury, CT 06073



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