

COA Bulletin



COA ANNUAL MEETING MARCH 21, 2015

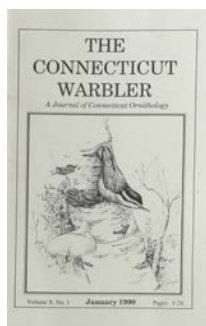
The Connecticut Ornithological Association's 31st Annual Meeting is being held on Saturday, March 21, 2015 at Middlesex Community College, Middletown. Our speakers include Norman Smith, the Snowy Owl expert, Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle, authors of *The Warbler Guide*, and David Sibley, author of *The Sibley Guide to Birds* and also *The Sibley Guide to Bird Behavior*. The Annual Meeting also features 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

Norman Smith is director of the Blue Hills Trailside Museum and Norman Smith Environmental Education Center in Milton, Massachusetts. He has studied birds of prey for more than 30 years, including rehabilitating the injured and successfully fostering over 1,000 orphaned hawk and owl chicks into adoptive nests. His ongoing long-term projects include trapping and banding migrating hawks and owls and doing research on Snowy Owls wintering at Boston's Logan International Airport. Since 1981, Norman Smith has spent countless days and nights, in all imaginable weather conditions, observing, capturing, banding, and color marking Snowy Owls at Logan Airport. Find out what has been learned to date, what questions remain, and how this project developed to include research on Northern Saw-whet Owls in his presentation, **Snowy Owls to Saw-whet Owls**.

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Norman Smith and his granddaughters and assistants, Alexa and Carmella, as they release a Snowy Owl. (Photo by Raymond MacDonald)

COA ANNUAL MEETING

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



Tom Stephenson (L) has been birding since he was a kid under the tutelage of Dr. Arthur Allen of Cornell University. His articles and photographs are in museums and many publications including *Birding*, *Birdwatcher's Digest*, *Handbook of the Birds*, *Handbook of the Mammals of the World*, and *Guide to the Birds of SE Brazil*. As a musician, Tom played concerts and did studio work for many years, working with several Grammy and Academy Award winners, including the Grateful Dead and Phil Collins. Scott Whittle (R) has 20 years' experience as a professional photographer and educator. He has birded throughout the United States, and he lives in Cape May, New Jersey, where he leads workshops and pursues his passion for birds and photography.



With spring migration on our doorstep, Tom and Scott, the authors of *The Warbler Guide* (Princeton University Press), illuminate us with **The Overlooked ID Points that Make Identifying Warblers Easy**. This talk discusses many of the very important but often overlooked identification points, such as overall contrast, subtle facial features, color impressions, feather edging, rump contrast, and foraging style, location, and behavior. Sharpen your warbler ID skills just in time for those arriving warblers!



David Allen Sibley began painting birds when he was seven years old and has continued painting them for more than three decades. *The Sibley Guide to Birds* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York) contains nearly 7,000 original illustrations by Sibley, now recognized as America's leading ornithologist/illustrator.

David's lecture, **The Psychology of Bird Identification**, is illustrated with photos and drawings, and during the talk we are presented with a few tests. David discusses how we perceive the world around us and how our brains both help and hinder our efforts at bird identification. You'll have a whole new perspective on your bird identification skills.

David Allen Sibley
Credit: Erinn Hartman

Credit: Richard Pasley

Connecticut Ornithological Association

31st Annual Meeting

Saturday, March 21, 2015

Chapman Hall, Middlesex Community College

100 Training Hill Road, Middletown, CT

- 8:00-8:45 Registration/COA Marketplace – includes continental breakfast and Birds and Beans© coffee, plus tea.
- 8:45-9:15 Welcome/Business Meeting. Tina Green, COA President, presents a brief overview of the year's activities, followed by election of officers and board members.
- 9:15-10:15 Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle – **The Overlooked ID Points that Make Identifying Warblers Easy.** The authors of *The Warbler Guide* share their secrets to help sharpen your warbler ID skills.
- 10:15-10:40 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 most benefits Connecticut birds.
 - President's Award – presented to individuals who have contributed extensively to the Connecticut Ornithological Association.
- 10:40-11:10 Break – COA Marketplace and *The Warbler Guide* book signing by Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle. A time to socialize, purchase COA Raffle tickets, and check out vendors' offerings of bird-related items.
- 11:15-12:15 Norman Smith – **Snowy Owls to Saw-whet Owls.**
Find out what has been learned to date observing, capturing, banding, and color-marking Snowy Owls at Logan International Airport and how this project developed to include Saw-whet Owls.
- 12:20-1:25 Lunch at Founders' Hall Cafeteria.
Hot buffet lunch including a vegetarian option.
- 1:30-2:30 David Allen Sibley – **The Psychology of Bird Identification.**
Learn how we perceive the world around us and how our brains help and hinder our efforts at bird identification.
- 2:45-3:30 COA Raffle and David Allen Sibley book signing.
The ever-popular Raffle concludes our day with many prizes, including avian artwork and valuable birding equipment donated by generous artists, vendors, and friends of COA. Raffle tickets are available throughout the day.

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

Please bring this copy of the program with you to the Annual Meeting.

Additional copies may be accessed online at <http://www.ctbirding.org>

REGISTRATION FORM

**COA Annual Meeting, March 21, 2015 Middlesex Community College,
Chapman Hall, Middletown, CT**

COA Members: _____ Persons at \$25.00 (pre-pay by March 7) \$ _____

_____ Persons at \$30.00 (at the door) \$ _____

Non-Members: _____ Persons at \$35.00 (pre-pay by March 7) \$ _____

_____ Persons at \$40.00 (at the door) \$ _____

Students: _____ Persons at \$15.00 (pre-pay or at the door) \$ _____

Hot Buffet Lunch _____ Persons at \$17.00 (pre-pay only) \$ _____

Number of vegetarian entrees _____ **Total** \$ _____

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

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Send check made out to "COA" & form to:

Larry Reiter, 32 West Mystic Avenue, Mystic, CT 06355

COA WORKSHOPS



Chris Loscalzo, COA Workshops Chairman and co-leader of the COA Sparrows Workshop, October 2014 at Silver Sands State Park, Milford.

Sparrows Workshop,
Silver Sands State Park,
Milford (below)

eBird/BirdLog Workshop

Sunday, April 26th, 2015 at 8:00am Audubon Center at Bent-of-the-River, Southbury

Learn all about eBird, the preeminent and extremely useful online repository for bird sightings and information. Learn how to use BirdLog, an application that allows you to submit observations in real time, in the field, on your iphone, ipad or Android. Meet at the parking lot by the entrance to the sanctuary at 185 East Flat Hill Road in Southbury. Leaders: John Marshall and TBD. Contact person: Chris Loscalzo at loscalz@optonline.net and 203 389-6508.

Spring Warbler Workshop

Saturday, May 2nd, 2015 at 7:30 am

Racebrook Tract, Orange

Learn how to identify the warblers that visit our state in the spring. For this workshop, we begin with an outdoor discussion of the most common warbler species in CT. We then take a walk on the trails to see what we can find. The workshop is ideal for beginning and intermediate birders. Meet at the parking lot for the Racebrook Tract on Racebrook Road (Route 114) in Orange, 1/10th mile north of Route 34 (Derby Turnpike). Leader: Chris Loscalzo. Contact information: email: loscalz@optonline.net. Phone number: 203 389-6508.

Flycatcher Workshop

Saturday, May 30th, 2015 at 7:30 am

White Memorial Foundation, Litchfield

This workshop focuses on how to identify the flycatcher species frequently found in CT, including the members of the Empidonax group. We begin with an outdoor discussion, followed by a walk on the trails. Meet at the entrance to the Little Pond Trail on Whites Wood Road. Leader: Greg Hanisek. Contact person: Chris Loscalzo at loscalz@optonline.net and 203 389-6508.



Frank Mantlik, co-leader of the COA Sparrows Workshop, at Silver Sands State Park, Milford.



Steve Spector, providing assistance at the COA Sparrows Workshop, Silver Sands State Park – a favorite patch birding site.



RECENT SIGHTINGS FALL/WINTER RARITIES & COMMON SPECIES



Golden-crowned Kinglet, 25 November 2014, East Haddam
(Photo by Jim Costello)



Red-headed Woodpecker, 16 November 2014, Colchester
(Photo by Mark Szantyr)



Cooper's Hawk, 14 November 2014, Mansfield
(Photo by Mark Szantyr)

Snow Buntings, 16 November 2014,
Madison (Photo by Mark Szantyr)



RECENT SIGHTINGS FALL/WINTER RARITIES & COMMON SPECIES



Snowy Egret, 7 December 2014, Stratford/
seen also on Stratford-Milford CBC 21 Dec.
(Photo by Frank Mantlik)



Purple Sandpiper, 20 December 2014, East Haven/
New Haven Christmas Bird Count (Photo by Steve Broker)



Rufous Hummingbird (female), 22 December 2014,
Trumbull/seen also 21 Dec. on the Stratford-Milford
Christmas Bird Count (Photo by Frank Mantlik)



Rufous Hummingbird (immature female), 16 November 2014,
Stratford/seen also during Count Week on the Stratford-Milford
Christmas Bird Count (Photo by Frank Mantlik)

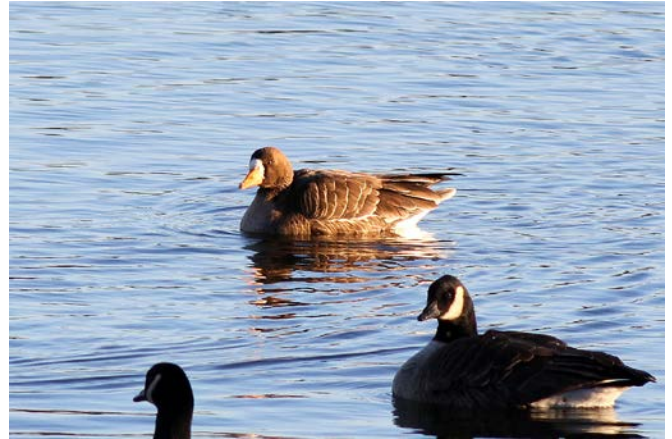


Left & Above - Grasshopper Sparrow,
10 January 2015, Hammonasset Beach
State Park, Madison (Photos by Steve
Broker)

RECENT SIGHTINGS FALL/WINTER RARITIES & COMMON SPECIES



Cackling Goose with Canada Geese, 1 January 2015, Goodwin Park, Hartford (Photo by Bill Asteriades)



Greater White-fronted Goose, 1 January 2015, Wethersfield (Photo by Bill Asteriades)



Mew Gull, 4 January 2015, Southbury (Photo by Keith Mueller)



Eastern Bluebird, 14 December 2014, Quinnipiac Valley Christmas Bird Count (Photo by Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe)



Northern Shrike, 15 January 2015, Haddam Meadows State Park, Haddam (Photo by Russ Smiley)



Painted Bunting (adult male), 10 January 2015, Cove Island Sanctuary, Stamford (Photo by Frank Mantlik)

RECENT SIGHTINGS FALL/WINTER RARITIES & COMMON SPECIES



Eurasian Wigeon with American Wigeon, 30 December 2014, Milford (Photo by Russ Smiley)



Ruddy Turnstone with Purple Sandpiper, 20 December 2014, East Haven/New Haven Christmas Bird Count (Photo by Steve Broker)



Sandhill Crane, 20 January 2015, Stonington (Photo by Frank Mantlik)



Snow Bunting, 14 December 2014, Moodus/Salmon River Christmas Bird Count (Photo by Chris Howe)



IN MEMORIAM: Passenger Pigeons, collected in Connecticut (Photo by Paul Fusco/Biodiversity Research Collection, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Connecticut)

This photo was published previously in the September/October 2014 issue of *Connecticut Wildlife*, published by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Bureau of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division. See Paul Fusco's article, "Deafening Silence from the Incredible Roar: The Passenger Pigeon – 100 Years Later."

Twenty-Five Years Ago in
The Connecticut Warbler
 Compiled by Steve Broker

Volume X No. 1 January 1990

Site Guide: Birder's Guide to the Mohawk State Forest and Vicinity, by Arnold Devine and Dwight G. Smith

"This large, heavily wooded state park contains several surprises: a black spruce bog, a beaver-maintained palustrine wetland and diverse conifer stands. Hiking trails provide access to much of the park. There is even a segment of the Appalachian Trail to hike and bird during your visit to the state forest. A number of lakes, swamps and marshes located near Mohawk State Forest may also be profitably birded for a wide variety of waterfowl and shorebirds while you are in the vicinity.

"Summit: Birding in the clearings and scrub growth at the summit is rather limited, but the panoramic view is splendid. Black Spruce Bog: The bog can be an extraordinary migrant "trap" if you catch the right combination of weather conditions during May, August, and September. On good days the spruces and larches may teem with northern nesting species such as Cape May and Magnolia Warblers, Ruby and Golden-crowned Kinglets, Philadelphia Vireo, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Tyler Lake: Tyler Lake has been one of the "big day" stops in Connecticut for the past five years and has never yet been disappointing. Two of the highlights observed here were a Black Tern and a White-winged Scoter in May 1988. Long Swamp: Sora and Virginia Rails are fairly common and probably breed deep in the marsh. On a still morning the unusual "pumping" sound of the American Bittern can sometimes be heard in the marsh. Although the Least Bittern has not been recorded, its presence is suspected. Peat Swamp: On a particularly good birding day a King Rail was observed hunting along a drainage ditch, and an American Bittern was heard at this location."

Non-Breeding Bald Eagles in Northwest Connecticut During Late Spring and Summer, by D.A. Hopkins

"The Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) formerly nested in Connecticut (Sage et al. 1913:82) as recently as the late 1950s (Grier et al. 1983:12). Subsequently bald eagles were not seen in the state during the breeding season until 12 July 1975 when R. Rhindress (pers. comm.) sighted an adult on the Upper Farmington River. Following his report I began a study to determine the status of eagles in that area.

"Methods: In the summer of 1981, the Department of Environmental Protection's Wildlife Unit, aided by MDC [Metropolitan District Commission] personnel, placed a nesting platform in a large white pine (*Pinus strobus*) on Pond Island in Barkhamsted Reservoir. In late spring of 1988, two additional platforms were placed along the shore of Barkhamsted Reservoir and one at Nepaug Reservoir. . . From 1975 through 1979, 54 sightings were recorded during the spring and summer. In the period 1980 through 1988, observers' time (3350 hours) and days (324) afield were recorded in addition to the number of sightings (220). Over the entire 14-year period, other observers reported 61 sightings.

Results and Discussion: Over the 14 years at least one adult and one immature bald eagle were present in the study area during the normal breeding season of the northern subspecies (Palmer:213). The eagles exhibited no consistent activities to indicate breeding. . . The question arises as to why eagles did not breed in the study area. . . Calculation of the habitat suitability index (Peterson 1986) for breeding eagles in the Barkhamsted Reservoir indicates that availability of prey is the limiting factor, while the factors of nest trees and human disturbance appear to be satisfactory.

Hence, it appears that until the prime nesting habitat of the north becomes filled, there is little chance that Bald Eagles will breed in the study area. Of greater importance here is that non-breeding adults and immatures can enjoy a habitat that is free from antagonistic behavior of territorial eagles. Until breeding activity occurs in this area, the study area is significant in providing a stress-free environment for adults and immatures striving to reach their breeding potential."

[Ed's Note: Don Hopkins has continued his in depth study of Connecticut's Bald Eagles for the past 25 years, and this now 40-year study provides extraordinarily significant information of the return of Bald Eagles as breeding birds in Connecticut. The first successful breeding of Bald Eagles in the state occurred in 1992, not surprisingly at Barkhamsted Reservoir.]

These and other articles from the January 1990 issue of *The Connecticut Warbler* may be seen in their entirety at the following link to the Connecticut Ornithological Association website. Download Volume 10, and view pages 1-24.

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



COA Bulletin's First Selfie! Frank Mantlik and friends on the New London Ferry, New London Christmas Bird Count, 3 January 2015.



*Every time I come to visit . . .
There they are!*

COA OFFICERS

<i>President</i>	Tina Green, 188 Imperial Avenue, Westport, CT 06880
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<i>Assistant Treasurer</i>	Jack Wells, 103 Sheephill Road, Riverside, CT 06878

COA CHAIRPERSONS

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<i>COA Bulletin</i>	Steve Broker
<i>Christmas Bird Count Compiler</i>	Steve Broker
<i>Summer Bird Count Compilers</i>	Joe Zeranski & 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, 2015 to:

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