

# COA Bulletin

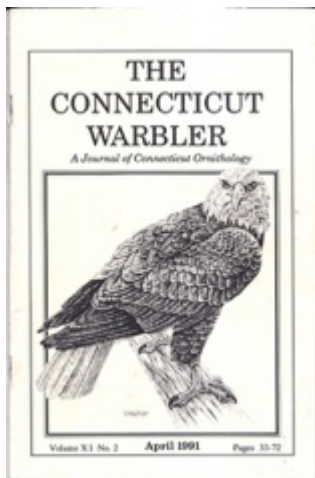


## 2016 SUMMER BIRD COUNT BY JOE ZERANSKI, CO-COMPILER

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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.



[Ed's Note: This article is extracted from "Summer Bird Counts: Their Importance and Application", written by Joe Zeranski and published in the April 1991 issue of The Connecticut Warbler. A further section of the same article is published under the Twenty-Five Years Ago article on page 10 of the Bulletin.]

Summer Bird Counts should play an important role in our growing understanding of Connecticut's avian populations. These counts gather valuable information and are interesting and fun. Intensive coverage during the peak of breeding can also produce exciting discoveries.

A practical method of sampling Connecticut's nesting populations over fairly large areas is to use the existing 15-mile diameter Christmas Bird Counts as models. The compilers and personnel who now conduct these popular counts are the natural nuclei for organizing equivalent summer counts. When two counts are conducted six months apart within the same area, they complement each other.

Having conducted traditional Christmas Bird Counts for years, most Connecticut birders probably know far more about late December bird distribution than they do of the nesting season. Nesting numbers of most species are fairly consistent from year to year. Changes tend to be gradual. There are relatively few rare migrants in June, so they normally play a less important role than they do on Christmas Bird Counts. When rarer nestings occur, the birds are on territories and usually can be relocated for confirmation without great difficulty.

In addition to collecting valuable data, summer counts are popular activities. They challenge birders' field skills in ways that Christmas counts do not. Observers having or developing 'good ears' for bird songs have ample opportunities for utilizing and honing their skills. A June day has 75% more daylight hours than a December count day. The days are usually warm, but not too warm. It's a great time to be looking for birds.

Hammonasset Beach  
State Park. Photo by  
Steve Broker.



**2016 SUMMER BIRD COUNT, CONTINUED:**

A few summer count guidelines should be kept in mind. They are most effectively held sometime in June and before July when few migrants other than shorebirds remain. At this time most species are on nesting territories, and almost all male passerines are still singing. Even during this brief period, different approaches may be considered. In early June, singing is more vigorous, but more migrants are present to complicate the picture. The reverse is true at month's end. Coastal circles may best be covered earlier in the month, as nesting peaks there somewhat earlier than before it does in northern circles, whose counts may best be held later. Areas largely ignored in winter may be searched thoroughly in summer. Productive winter locations may be much less so in summer and deserve little attention. Summer counts, which rely heavily on singing males, are best covered on foot rather than by car. Thus, unlike Christmas counts, areas should be surveyed relatively slowly and intensively. Small field parties are often used to ensure adequate circle coverage.

A two-day counting period provides greater flexibility in coverage and in scheduling field parties, especially during the critical early morning singing hours. It also reduces the likelihood that bad weather will result in insufficient or unrepresentative data for a particular year. As most birds are on nesting territories rather than traveling over large areas, systematically-conducted summer counts produce little duplicate counting, even over a 48-hour period. COA members should certainly enjoy participating, and their contribution to our and their own knowledge of bird distribution during this often neglected season will be meaningful.

**Barkhamsted Summer Bird Count****Count Dates: June 25 & 26 (Sat. & Sun.)**

**Area covered:** Barkhamsted, Burlington (northern edge), Canton, Colebrook, Hartland, New Hartford, Torrington (northeast 1/4), and Winchester.

**Contact:** John Marshall 60 Wilson Drive, Watertown, CT 06795; 203 232-4393 [johnmarshall47@gmail.com](mailto:johnmarshall47@gmail.com)

**Greenwich-Stamford Summer Bird Count****Count Dates: June 11 & 12 (Sat. & Sun.)**

**Area covered:** in Connecticut (65% of area), Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, and Stamford, and in New York (35% of area), Armonk, Bedford (in part), Port Chester, Rye, and White Plains (in part).

**Contact:** Thomas W. Burke 235 Highland Road, Rye, NY 10580; 914 967-4922 [tom.burke@rsmus.com](mailto:tom.burke@rsmus.com) and Gary Palmer 34 Field Road, Cos Cob, CT 06830; 203 661-4897 [gejlpalmer@yahoo.com](mailto:gejlpalmer@yahoo.com)

**Hartford Summer Bird Count****Count Dates: June 11 & 12 (Sat. & Sun.)**

**Area covered:** Avon (in part), Bloomfield, East Hartford, Farmington (in part), Hartford, Manchester (in part), Glastonbury (in part), Newington (in part), Rocky Hill (in part), South Windsor, West Hartford, Wethersfield, and Windsor.

**Contact:** Jay Kaplan 71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT. 06019; 860 693-0157 [jaybrd49@aol.com](mailto:jaybrd49@aol.com)

**Litchfield Hills Summer Bird Count****Count Dates: June 11 & 12 (Sat. & Sun.)**

**Area covered:** (in whole or in part) Cornwall, Goshen, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, Sharon, Torrington, Warren, and Washington.

**Contact:** David Tripp Jr. 180 Funston Ave, Apt 2 Torrington, CT 06790; [dtrippjr@gmail.com](mailto:dtrippjr@gmail.com)

**New Haven Summer Bird Count****Count Dates: June 4 & 5 (Sat. & Sun.)**

**Area covered:** Branford (western), East Haven, Milford, New Haven, North Haven, Orange, West Haven, and Woodbridge (in part). **Contact:** Steve Mayo 27 Tuttle Court, Bethany, CT 06524; 203 551-1707 [rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net)

**New Milford/Pawling Summer Bird****Count Dates: June 18 & 19 (Sat. & Sun.)**

**Area covered:** (Connecticut 1/3 of area): Sherman, New Fairfield, and New Milford (west of route 7); (New York 2/3 of area): Patterson, Pawling, Putnam Lake, Carmel, southern Wingdale, and Poughquag.

**Contact:** Angela Dimmitt PO Box 146 Sherman CT 06784; 860 355-3429 [angeladimmitt@aol.com](mailto:angeladimmitt@aol.com)

**Storrs Summer Bird Count****Count Dates: June 11 & 12 (Sat. & Sun.)**

**Area covered:** Ashford, Chaplin, Coventry, Mansfield, Tolland, Willington, Windham and a small portion of Andover.

**Contact:** Steve Morytko 288 Varga Road Ashford CT 06278; 860 680-5728 [smorytko@yahoo.com](mailto:smorytko@yahoo.com)

**Woodbury-Roxbury Summer Bird****Count Dates: June 5 (Sun.)**

**Area covered:** Bethlehem, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Middlebury, New Milford, Newtown, Roxbury, Southbury, Washington, and Woodbury.

**Contact:** Russ Naylor 44 Church Street, Woodbury CT 06798; 203 841-7779

# COA ANNUAL MEETING ROUNDUP

Photos by Steve Broker



Brad Winn (Director of Shorebird Habitat Management at Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, Plymouth, MA) accepts a cap from COA president Kathy Van Der Aue. Brad presented "Understanding Shorebird Migration to Help Direct Conservation Action".



Neil Hayward set a new ABA record for a North American Big Year. Neil currently is field trip coordinator for Brookline Bird Club. His talk at the annual meeting was "An Accidental Big Year".



Cameron Cox gave a presentation on "Sea watching: The Identification of Waterbirds in Flight". He is a birding and photography guide for Tropical Birding.



Carrie Szwed, Education Director at White Memorial Conservation Center, receives a mini-grant from COA.



New Haven Parks, Recreation, & Trees ranger Dan Barvir expresses appreciation for mini-grant support from COA.



Alison Rubelmann, Director of the Ansonia Nature & Recreation Center, thanks COA for mini-grant support.



## COA ANNUAL MEETING ROUNDUP



The 2016 Mabel Osgood Wright Award recipient is Robert Dewire. Here, Bob is joined by his kids, Michael, Maureen, Kristen, and Susan.



Phil Rusch introduced his friend Bob Dewire at the presentation of the Mabel Osgood Wright Award.



The Betty Kleiner Award goes each year to the author of the best article, artwork, or other contribution to COA's state journal of ornithology. Here, Frank Gallo accepts the award, which recognizes his well-researched article, "The Acceptance of Trumpeter Swan onto the Connecticut State List", published in the April 2015 issue of *The Connecticut Warbler*.

## COA ANNUAL MEETING ROUNDUP



The Connecticut Ornithological Association has met for a number of years at Middlesex Community College in Middletown. COA's main contact with MxCC has been John Coggins, who this year was presented the President's Award for his many contributions to the success of our annual meetings.



COA board members Sara Zagorski (L) and Jan Collins (R) staff the raffle table with COA secretary Denise Jernigan.



Left: Dovekie carving by Keith Mueller. Right: Razorbill painting by Mark Szantyr. Two of the primo raffle items.



Left: Gina Nichol of Sunrise Birding rejoins the COA board. Right: New COA board member Maureen Wolter, shown here with husband and COA treasurer Paul Wolter.



# COA ANNUAL MEETING ROUNDUP



New to the COA board in 2016 is Bill Batsford of New Haven, immediate past president of New Haven Bird Club.



Scott Kruitbosch of Stratford returns to the board of COA for the 2016-2019 term.



COA president Kathy Van Der Aue presides at the annual meeting. Kathy resides in Southport.



Tina Green, immediate past president of COA and current chair of the annual meeting committee, begins her introduction of speaker Cameron Cox.



COA board member Chris Loscalzo and his wife, Marianne Vahey, who reside in Woodbridge, survey the dealer displays and raffle items.



COA board member Tom Robben of Glastonbury pauses during a break at the annual meeting. Tom is chair of the COA Research Committee.

# COA ANNUAL MEETING ROUNDUP



Patrick Comins, COA board member and chair of the conservation committee, demonstrates his approach to a photographic Big Year.



Linda Dixon and donated shirts at the Raffle table. Linda's husband, Bob, is on the board of COA.



DeWitt Allen and Lori Datlow, of Hamden, share a light moment between speaker presentations.



Sharon Dellinger (Colchester) and Elena Coffey (Marlborough) trade stories of shared Salmon River Christmas Bird Counts.

Connecticut Young Birders Club member Jory Teltser, of Westport, polishes up on seabirds during a break in the action at the COA annual meeting.





## COA WORKSHOPS

PHOTOS BY AMANDA KALLENBACH

COA Workshops Committee chairman Chris Loscalzo has arranged a broad array of workshops offered at many localities throughout the state in 2016. COA workshops are in-depth reviews of distinctive groups of bird species. Workshop locations are generally prime areas for finding the birds being reviewed. Workshop leaders go over the finer points in identifying the birds and discuss how to differentiate among similar species. The discussion periods are followed by time in the field looking for the birds. COA workshops are free of charge and open to members and non-members alike. Advance registration is requested when space is limited at the workshop location.

**Gull Workshop, Saturday, March 26, 2016, Stratford Point, Stratford.** Leader Patrick Comins gave a comprehensive overview of gulls in Connecticut for an attentive audience. Participants then viewed the Long Island Sound shoreline from Stratford Point, followed by Long Beach, Stratford. The group then set off for West Haven boat ramp, where they enjoyed remarkable views of a California Gull, new this year to the Connecticut state list.



Above left: COA Gull Workshop participants listen to Patrick Comins at the Stratford Point meeting room.  
Above right: scopes aimed out to foraging gulls at Long Beach, Stratford.



California Gull, photographed on March 26, 2016 at West Haven boat ramp by Jory Teltser.



Short-billed Mew Gull, photographed on March 20, 2016 at Hammonasset Beach State Park by Nick Bonomo.



## COA WORKSHOPS

PHOTOS BY AMANDA KALLENBACH

**Vireo and Thrush Workshop, Sunday, May 29, 2016 at Mohawk Mountain State Park and Mohawk State Forest, Cornwall/Goshen.** Leaders Greg Hanisek and Kathy Van Der Aue led a group of 20 to these prime birding localities for excellent views of Blue-headed, Warbling, and Red-eyed Vireos, Veery, Hermit Thrush, and Wood Thrush, and 12 species of wood warblers. In general, the birds were challenging to locate on this hot, hazy, humid day.



Bill Batsford focuses on the treetops as COA workshop leaders Kathy Van Der Aue and Greg Hanisek provide ornithological commentary.



Greg Hanisek leads a happy workshop group into the Black Spruce bog in search of vireos and thrushes.



Black Spruce, Larch, Highbush Blueberry, Pitcher Plants – but where are all the birds?



Views from the top of Mohawk Mountain. Didn't there used to be an observation tower here?

**Twenty-Five Years Ago in  
The Connecticut Warbler  
Compiled by Steve Broker  
Volume XI No. 2 (April 1991)**

**Summer Bird Counts: Their Importance and Application, by Joseph Zeranski.**

“As far back as we can look into Connecticut’s avian history, bird populations have been changing. Striking alterations in the distribution and abundance of nesting species have occurred even in the last half century (Zeranski and Baptist 1990). Turkey Vulture first nested in Connecticut in 1939, Northern Cardinal in 1942, Tufted Titmouse in 1949, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in 1950, Northern Mockingbird in 1958, Red-bellied Woodpecker in 1962 and Cerulean Warbler about 1968. These species have all extended their nesting ranges northward into the state. Northern breeders moving south into the state include Dark-eyed Junco in 1922, Northern Waterthrush in 1932, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Magnolia Warbler, both by 1934, White-throated Sparrow and Yellow-rumped Warbler, both substantiated in the 1930s, and Common Raven in 1987. Other species have substantially expanded their numbers and extended their ranges within the state.

“A number of species, some of which were common nesters during the last century, have experienced pervasive declines. This is particularly true of marsh, meadow, grassland, open-field and young thicket birds. Among these are Upland Sandpiper, Yellow-breasted Chat, Vesper, Savannah and Grasshopper Sparrows. The numbers of both bitterns, inland rails, Northern Bobwhite, Common Nighthawk, Whip-poor-will, Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark have diminished. Northern Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Sedge Wren, Northern Parula, and Henslow’s Sparrow have either ceased nesting or are in danger of doing so. It is well known that many raptors have undergone great range decreases and later expansions during this period. Some have not recovered while others may yet be declining.

“In many ways changes along the coast have been even more striking. Now a regular nester, Herring Gull first nested in Connecticut in 1943 and Great Black-backed Gull in 1961. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron nested in 1953, Snowy and Great Egrets by 1961. Tricolored Heron, Cattle Egret and Glossy Ibis all initially nested in 1971. More recently, first breedings were recorded for Gadwall in 1972, Double-crested Cormorant in 1979, American Oystercatcher in 1981, and Black Skimmer in 1982. A great many other species continue to undergo less dramatic, yet important changes in nesting range.” [See page 1 of the Bulletin for more of this article.]

**First Mabel Osgood Wright Award Presented**

“On Saturday, March 16, 1991, the first Mabel Osgood Wright Award was presented to Mrs. Ann Gaylord of Niantic, Connecticut. The Connecticut Ornithological Association has created this award to be presented to someone who has contributed immeasurably to Connecticut ornithology, following in the tradition of Mabel Osgood Wright, who was a leader in support of bird conservation, both in Connecticut and elsewhere, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.”

[Ed’s Note: Julie Zickefoose presented the M.O.W. Award to Ann Gaylord at the annual meeting of the C.O.A. at Quinnipiac College in Hamden. Among the contributions Ann Gaylord has made to Connecticut ornithology are: serving on the boards of The Nature Conservancy and the Thames Science Center – as well as the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell; support of Helen Hays’ tern research on Great Gull Island, and placement of Osprey platforms on TNC lands; sponsoring teachers from area schools for the Greenwich Audubon Camp; a lifetime spent in the company of friends – birds and the people who study them.

The April 1991 issue of The Connecticut Warbler can be viewed in its entirety at the following link. Scroll down to pages 33-72.

<http://www.ctbirding.org/Warbler/CTWarblerVolume11.pdf>



## A NEW MEIGS POINT NATURE CENTER AT HAMMONASSET BEACH STATE PARK, MADISON – TOM ROBBERN PHOTOS



Top: Governor Dannel P. Malloy and Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection Commissioner Robert J. Klee receive helpful assistance in the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Meigs Point Nature Center. The Center had its grand opening on May 26, 2016.

Bottom left: Visitors stroll through the new exhibits. Bottom right: COA President Kathy Van Der Aue points out one of several video displays on HBSP birds that she developed for the exhibit committee.

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## CONNECTICUT ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

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### COA OFFICERS

President	Kathy Van Der Aue, 762 Mill Hill Road, Southport, CT 06890
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Secretary	Denise Jernigan, 618 Hopewell Road, South Glastonbury, CT 06073
Treasurer	Paul Wolter, 8 Sybil Creek Place, Branford, CT 06405

### COA CHAIRPERSONS

Annual Meeting	Tina Green, Kathy Van Der Aue, Lisa Wahle
Conservation	Patrick Comins
Finance	Paul Wolter
Membership	Larry Reiter
Avian Records	Jay Kaplan
Research	Tom Robben
Workshops	Chris Loscalzo
The Connecticut Warbler	Greg Hanisek
COA Bulletin	Steve Broker
Christmas Bird Count Compiler	Steve Broker
Summer Bird Count Compilers	Joe Zeranski & Patrick Comins
Great Backyard Bird Count	Patrick Comins

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