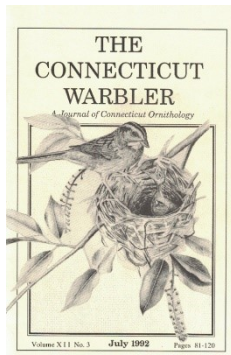


# COA Bulletin



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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 habitats. While COA is not primarily an advocacy organization, we work actively to provide scientific information and to support other conservation organizations in the state.

## Announcing Connecticut Bird Atlas Project Craig Repasz

Mark your calendars! The state birding community will be called on to help conduct surveys for the Connecticut Bird Atlas Project starting in 2018. Broader in scope than its 1980s predecessor, "The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Connecticut," this new project will focus on all of Connecticut's bird life, whether breeding, wintering, or migrating through our state.

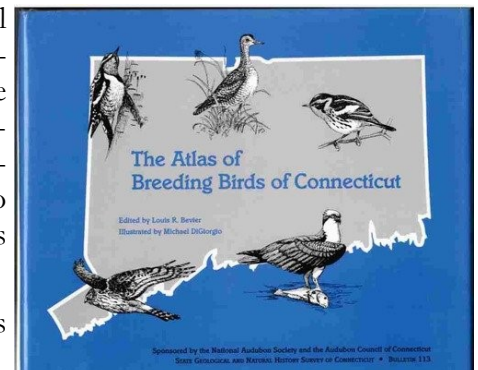
The 2018-2021 atlas will rely on your efforts. Citizen scientists throughout the state will be asked to choose specified sections of the state – "blocks" – and help to survey the bird life of that block. The data will be used to describe the distribution and abundance of breeding birds throughout the state, to document changes since the last atlas, to describe statewide wintering distributions, to identify stopover habitat during migrations, and to establish predictive relationships about where species occur on the landscape that will help us to prepare for future changes in our avifauna. All planning and results will be communicated via a web site where the public will be able to track progress and view results as they are produced.

Preparations have already begun, with the planning team directed by Dr. Min Huang of the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), Professors Morgan Tingley and Chris Elphick of the University of Connecticut, and Craig Repasz as the Citizen Science Coordinator. A steering committee also has been formed, comprised of representatives from the state's birding organizations including the Connecticut Ornithological Association (COA), New Haven Bird Club, Hartford Audubon, Audubon Connecticut, and Connecticut Audubon Society, as well as other land protection organizations.

Funding to launch the project has been procured through CT DEEP, although additional funds will be needed to bring the atlas project to completion.

The project is a huge undertaking that will require considerable help from COA members, but which will provide vast knowledge gains and lay the groundwork for much important conservation work. More information about survey protocols and how to participate will be forthcoming later this year.

If you have questions, please contact Chris Elphick at [chris.elphick@uconn.edu](mailto:chris.elphick@uconn.edu).



The 1982-1986 Atlas

# Lighthouse Point Park Migration Festival

*Celebrating Birds, Butterflies & Dragonflies*

New Haven

Sunday, September 17, 2017

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 Bird Area.**

**Live Bird Shows featuring Hawks and Owls!**

**See wild birds up close at banding demonstrations and visit the live waterfowl exhibit**

**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:**



**New Haven Bird Club  
Friends of Lighthouse Point Park &  
Elm City Park Conservancy  
Connecticut Butterfly Association**



# Lighthouse Point Park Migration Festival

**Celebrating Birds, Butterflies & Dragonflies**

**Sunday, September 17, 2017**

**8:00 am to 3:00 pm**

**(No Rain Date)**

## 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 with Audubon Connecticut
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
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 Live Waterfowl Exhibit
10:00 am to 11:00 am	Creating an Urban Oasis Workshop
11:00 am to 12:00 pm	Horizon Wings– Live Raptor Show
9:00 am to 11:30 am & 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 Demonstration

**This Migration event is funded by the New Haven Bird Club, Audubon CT,  
Friends of Lighthouse Pt. Park & the Board of Park Commissioners**

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



## Update on COA Conservation Initiatives

Kathy Van Der Aue

Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument: As previously reported we lobbied for this and President Obama approved its designation during his final months in office. Click on this link for full information:

<https://www.nrdc.org/experts/brad-sewell/history-made-new-england-ocean-treasures-protected>

The Trump administration is in the process of reviewing 27 National Monument designations under his executive order signed in April, with the goal of undoing the National Monument restrictions and the possibility of selling off the parcels to the highest bidder. Fortunately this idea has generated a national uproar, with 2.7 million people objecting. Senator Blumenthal delivered a speech in Congress further supporting the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts. We wrote another letter to support the Monument. News Flash! Public opinion has prevailed and the designation will remain intact for now.

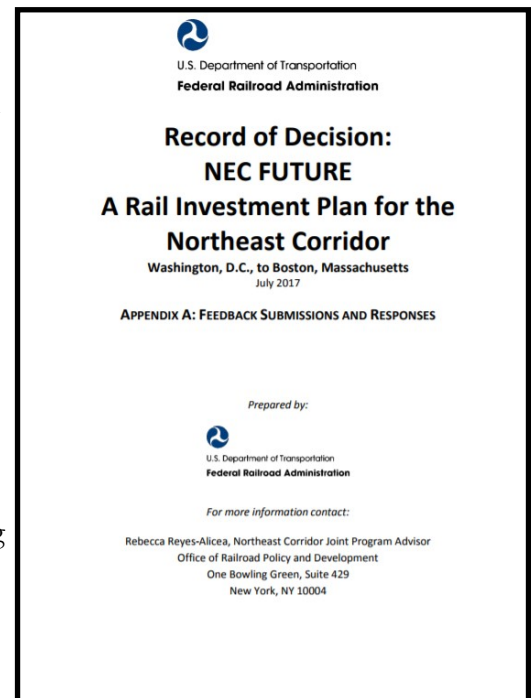


Northeast Corridor Rail System: We objected to this planned expansion of the rail system in Connecticut as the plans indicated that the proposed route passed through a number of environmentally sensitive areas including refuges, sanctuaries and marshlands, not to mention a tunnel across Long Island Sound that emerged on the Charles Island tombolo. On July 12<sup>th</sup> it was announced that the plan has been abandoned for the section from New Haven to Providence as a result of public outcry. They are seeking alternatives further inland.

Bluff Point Clearing for Groton-New London Airport Access: Recognizing the safety issue, out of the three proposals we supported the one that allowed clearing of just a few of the tallest trees, which would allow safe access to the runway while avoiding the clear cutting in the other proposals. To date, no decision has been announced.

Locating Solar Arrays: We attended the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) meeting where they were deliberating on the siting of proposed solar arrays within Connecticut. Parcels being considered were sites with open grasslands such as farms and tobacco fields. Citing the dwindling grassland habitat and the effect on wildlife of this habitat loss, we urged them to consider parcels that are less desirable such as brownfields and rooftops. A partial victory was just announced with the siting of three new facilities, one a brownfield and two landfills. Landfills can also make good habitat but at least they are cognizant of the issue. See an article here: <http://wshu.org/post/connecticut-chooses-new-sites-statewide-solar-plan#stream/0>

(Note: The Council for Environmental Quality is on the Connecticut budgetary chopping block.)



## COA Conservation Initiatives (cont'd)

National Coast Guard Museum: We expressed our opposition to the proposed Coast Guard Museum's plans for the building (nearly all glass surfaces) as they did not specify bird friendly glass. The proposed site is at the mouth of the Thames River, right on the Atlantic flyway used by millions of migrating birds twice a year. The EIS made no mention of this environmental impact. They have now sent notice of a request for a Supplemental EIS which still does not address the issue, so we are objecting to that omission and reiterating our position in favor of bird friendly glass. See animated plan here:

<https://vimeo.com/196586624>



Artist rendering of National Coast Guard Museum

Hammonasset Beach State Park: The "Shorebird Pools" have been an issue as Park staff fills pools being used by shorebirds during their migratory stop-overs. We understand that public safety requires the repairs when pools become dangerous potholes. We have reached an agreement with DEEP to try and locate, possibly even create, pools for shorebirds that will be marked and protected from filling. An observation blind may even be created. We are most fortunate that Chris Elphick, Ph.D. from the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at UConn has offered to lead our team.

Chris is well known to many of you through his extensive work with Saltmarsh Sparrows. He has also studied birds in agricultural settings and waterbirds of conservation interest, all areas which will be relevant to the project. The other member is Terry Shaw, who is on both the COA and the Menunkatuck Audubon Society Boards of Directors. Menunkatuck has intimate knowledge of Hammonasset as a result of their long association and many volunteer projects there. Both have been welcomed by Susan Whalen, Deputy Commissioner of DEEP, who has appointed Shannon Kearney of the Wildlife Division to represent DEEP. This working group has met with Park officials and identified potential areas to be set aside for shorebird pools. They also discussed more bird friendly methods of filling potholes and possible signage. These discussions will continue. We applaud this spirit of cooperation.

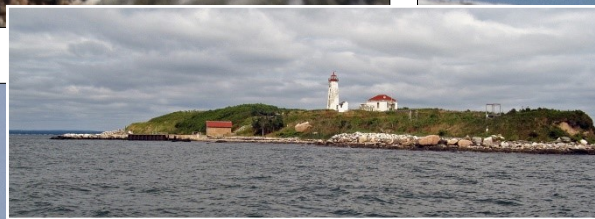
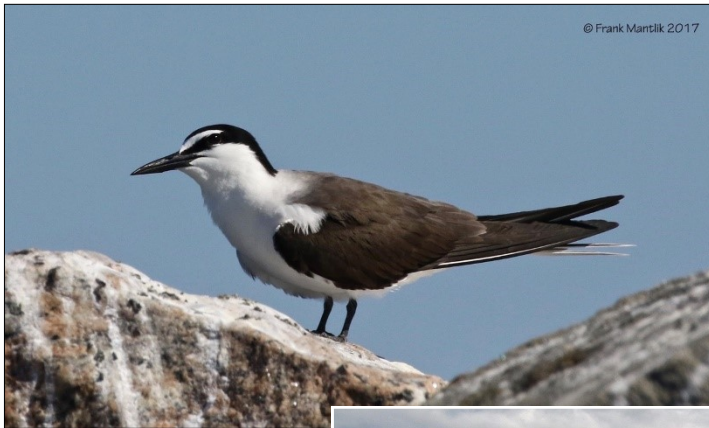


Hammonasset Beach State Park and Baird's Sandpiper utilizing a rain puddle (photo by Anthony Vicciarelli)

COA continues to support bird friendly projects, most recently a grant request by the Connecticut Audubon Society for funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Federation to be used for coastal forest restoration at the Smith Richardson Wildlife Preserve in Westport.



## Unbridled Enthusiasm for Bridled Tern at Falkner Island



These photos were taken by me at Falkner Is., Guilford, CT on 31 July 2017. This extreme CT rarity was present there from July 28 (found by tern researchers Cedric Duhalde and James Heuschkel) - seen almost daily - through its last sighting on Aug 11. The island, home of a large, protected tern nesting colony located 3.5 miles off the coast, is part of the Stewart B. McKinney NWR. Access is very limited (no landing is permitted), and a boat is needed to reach the island. Despite this, many birders found ways - private boats, boats for hire, rental boats, and kayaks - to reach the island in attempts to view this rare bird. It was only the second record of this Caribbean species to be documented in the state; the first was 25 years ago, at this very same island!

Frank Mantlik  
Stratford, CT



**A Gallery of Gruiformes, Spring 2017**



**Common Gallinule at Little Pond, White Memorial  
(Chris Wood, 5/27/17)**



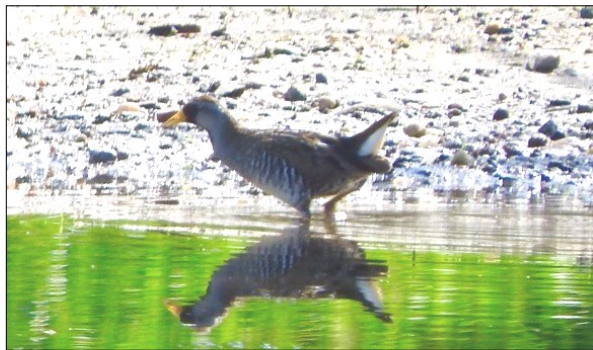
**King Rail at Scalzi Park, Stamford (Patty Morris,  
7/4/17)**



**American Coot at South Cove, Old Saybrook  
(Micky Komara, 4/12/17)**



**Clapper Rail at Hammonasset Beach State  
Park (Chris Howe, 5/4/17)**



**Sora at Glastonbury Meadows (Andrew Dasinger,  
6/10/17)**



**Sandhill Crane at Bent of the River (Chris Wood,  
5/16/17)**



**Virginia Rail at Glastonbury Meadows  
(Andrew Dasinger, 6/10/17)**



## COA Shorebird Workshop, Milford Point and Stratford Point

8/19. Thirty five birders participated in the annual COA Shorebird Workshop in Milford and Stratford. Following an illustrated lecture on shorebird identification by Frank Gallo and Patrick Comins at CT Audubon's Coastal Center, the group walked the beachside sandbar. Common species were well studied, including Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plovers, and Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers. The biggest surprise was a calling Solitary Sandpiper that briefly landed on the sandbar; this a species very uncommon along the sandy beach. Other species seen included Peregrine Falcon and point-blank views of a trio of juvenile Yellow-crowned Night-Herons.

Later the group drove to Stratford Point, on the other side of the Housatonic River mouth. While shorebirds were few, three additional shorebird species were seen, including a trio of flyby Red Knots. In addition, all were treated to a mini-course on Swallow identification, with four species lined up along the utility wires. And the butterfly variety and numbers were fabulous.

In summary, fifty bird species including eleven of shorebirds were identified this morning. Other highlights included 4 summering Brant, 63 American Oystercatchers, a Northern Harrier, and 60 Common Terns.

Frank Mantlik  
COA Vice President  
Stratford, CT



(All photos on this page by Frank Mantlik)

### Save the Date(s)! Upcoming Workshops

9/17—Hawk Flight ID Workshop. 9-10 a.m. at Lighthouse Point, New Haven, CT (in association with Lighthouse Point Park Migration Festival)

10/15—Sparrow ID Workshop. 8 a.m. at Stratford Point. Led by Chris Loscalzo. Starts with an indoor presentation.



### Selected Spring 2017 Waterbird Rarities (plus a Kite)



Red-necked Phalarope at Glastonbury Meadows  
(Andrew Dasinger, 5/21/17)



White-faced Ibis at Downes Marsh, Groton  
(Dylan Pedro, 5/17/17)



Cattle Egret at Stratford (Frank Mantlik, 5/18/17)



Tricolored Heron (one of 3 birds) at Barn Island,  
Stonington (Anthony Vicciarelli, 5/17/17)



Immature Mississippi Kite (one of 2) over West River,  
New Haven (Paul Fusco, 5/21/17)



Eared Grebe at Nathan Hale Park, New Haven  
(Frank Mantlik, 4/10/17)

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

Volume XII, No. 3 (July 1992)

### Mabel Osgood Wright Award Presentation, by Milan Bull.

A 35 year Connecticut resident, Roland [Clement] started his career in ornithology and conservation in the 1930s as a bird bander at the O.L. Austin Ornithological Research Station in Eastham, Mass., on the Cape. After the war, Roland earned a B.A. in botany from Brown University, and a Masters in wildlife conservation at Cornell before becoming the first executive director of the Rhode Island Audubon Society.

In 1958 Roland began a 20 year career with the National Audubon Society that resulted in 3 books, including *The Living World of Audubon*, a successful battle against DDT, work with the California Condor Advisory Committee, and the International Conservation of Birds of Prey/US section.

Roland was president of the Connecticut Audubon Society for three years, a Richard C. Mellon Fellow at Yale's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, and for two years served as the first president of the COA. Therefore, Roland, it is with great pleasure, and sincere appreciation that we present to you the Mabel Osgood Wright Award.



### Escaped and Released Birds in Connecticut, by George A. Clark, Jr.

In Connecticut the number of bird species that have escaped or been deliberately released from captivity is impressively large. Reported examples, either published or preserved in institutional files, cover 66 species and one hybrid. In addition to these known examples, it is likely that many unrecorded species have occurred in the state. The aim of this article is to provide a list of the species involved in known releases or escapes together with an indication of one or more sources for these reports. Information on ten of these species and the hybrid has not been previously published, and new data are included for seven other species. This compilation was undertaken in view of earlier difficulties in attempting to trace information on several of the species listed here. Although an extensive search of museum specimens and published literature was undertaken, no claim is made for completeness of this survey.

[Ed's Note: some of the species listed by George Clark now are included on the Checklist of Birds of Connecticut and are considered wild birds, due to new occurrences and new evidence, including Graylag Goose, Barnacle Goose, Cinnamon Teal, Monk Parakeet, Fieldfare, Painted Bunting, and Jackdaw.]

### Management of Thickets for Yellow-breasted Chat, by Thomas B. Ford.

From the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century through the first four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*) was reportedly a common summer resident in Connecticut and other parts of southern New England [references given]. Forbush (1929) noted that chats were then most numerous in coastal Connecticut and Rhode Island. In the past 30 years, however, chat populations have decreased because much of the preferred habitat, shrub thicket, has matured into forest or has been lost to housing developments.

Currently, the Yellow-breasted Chat is considered rare in Connecticut; the last confirmed breeding record was in Greenwich in 1985, although chats have





been reported in Old Lyme, Groton, Stonington and Waterford during the past ten years (Zeranski and Baptist 1990). It was proposed for endangered status in Connecticut in 1991 (Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection).

[Ed's Note: Thomas Ford describes his censusing of chat territories and his vegetation studies in southeastern Connecticut to determine the characteristics of chat habitat. In *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Connecticut* (1982-86, published in 1994), contributing author Robert Askins listed only two confirmed records of Yellow-breasted Chat in the state.]

These and other articles in the July 1992 issue of *The Connecticut Warbler* can be viewed in their entirety at the following link. Scroll down to pages 81-120.

<http://www.ctbirding.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CTWarblerVolume12.pdf>

### Selected Spring 2017 Passerine Rarities



Summer Tanager at Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven (Chris Wood, 4/29/17) - one of 2 present; several others found elsewhere in the state



Prothonotary Warbler at Edgewood Park, New Haven (Lesley Roy, 4/29/17); reports from several other sites this spring



Vesper Sparrow at Glastonbury Meadows (Andrew Dasinger, 4/30/17)



Immature male Yellow-headed Blackbird at Stratford Point (Chris Wood, 4/14/17)

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Mini-Grants	Kathy Van Der Aue

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