

# 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.

## 2017 COA Annual Meeting

Kathy Van Der Aue

Our Annual Meeting got off to a somewhat rocky start when there was a problem with the A/V equipment, something new in the history of COA Annual Meetings. This snag gave us time for the business meeting and the awards and extra time for visiting with friends.

The equipment was finally rigged enough to allow John Kricher to present his very informative talk "The Trade Off" albeit in less than optimal video conditions. He is the author of many books notably the highly successful book, *A Neotropical Companion* (second edition 1997). John also has written *Tropical Ecology*, (Princeton University Press 2011), now the leading textbook on the subject of global tropical ecology. In his talk he discussed factors that likely have resulted in some species adapting to long-distance migration and the costs and benefits that ensue. Characteristics such as life span, clutch size, foraging behavior, habitat choice, and wing shape all vary between long-distance migrants and tropical resident species.

Still plagued by A/V gremlins, the schedule was rearranged to have lunch first and the two remaining speakers in the afternoon. The day was saved by new member Jim Bancroft who rushed home and returned with his own projector.

Our second speaker, William Burt, charmed us with his presentation "Water Babies: Young and Adult Birds of Wetlands" in which we saw the fuzzy, stick-legged, often awkward chicks paired with the adults they would become. To photograph these birds, William Burt prowled through their wetland breeding grounds each spring and summer for some 7 years, all over North America, from the Arctic Circle to the Gulf of Mexico. He has authored three books of his remarkable photographs.

David Sibley, our keynote speaker, chronicled his evolution into the author of the foremost bird guide in America through a series of photos of his earliest childhood drawings, to the New York Times bestselling "*Sibley Guide to Birds*." This guide was first conceived in the late 1970s, when David was only a teenager, and took him more than 20 years to complete. We were taken on the long, unconventional but enjoyable journey from idea to finished book.

.Along with his "*Sibley Guide to Birds*" David has authored and co-authored a series of guides including his "*Sibley Guide to Trees*" which he found a little easier to draw as



Julie Victoria, 2017 Mabel Osgood Wright Award recipient (photo: P. Comins)



David Sibley takes us on the journey from precocious child artist to the “Sibley Guide for Birds” (Photo: S. Broker)

they didn’t move.

Meeting attendees had an opportunity to purchase books by our speakers and to have them signed. Delays notwithstanding, the meeting was most enjoyable. For many of us the Annual Meeting gives us a chance to catch up with friends not often seen throughout the year. As one birder told me, “Birders are used to waiting around for something to happen. This time it was with the benefit of good friends to talk to and rest room facilities.”

See pages 5 and 6 for more photos from the annual meeting.

## Eight Reasons To Join Your First Summer Bird Count

Steve Mayo

So, you’ve never participated in a Summer Bird Count (SBC)? Don’t miss out on an opportunity to learn about Connecticut’s birds and have an enjoyable day or two, or hour or two, of birding. Here are eight great reasons to help out on a SBC:

### **(1) It’s your last chance to see ...**

...some rarities and really cool species, at least that is, for a few weeks until they stage a return migratory visit through our State. May migration is long-gone, and late migrants become rare as June progresses. But something interesting always turns up, and this can lead to interesting speculation about breeding status. Also, this may be the last chance to see large numbers of neotropical nesters, which will quiet down as the summer progresses.

### **(2) You’ll experience dawn**

How many times do you get to do that? Even if you already get up every work day at half-past awful, well, you’ll get to experience an early summer dawn in the CT woods. That alone is worth the couple hours of lost sleep.

### **(3) You’ll see things other than (adult) birds**

You’ll get to see a variety of breeding behaviors: territorial displays, chasing, mating, singing on prominent perches. Then there are also, the nestlings, the young woodpeckers and hawks and owlets and terns and turkey poults. If lucky, the latter may scurry just past your footsteps.

### **(4) You’ll see many things other than birds.**

Snakes and turtles are on the move and nesting in early June. Mammals encounters are to be expected, especially if you’re out owling. You’ll see plenty of deer at dawn, while listening to the gobbling of Turkeys. Maybe you’ll encounter a coyote or an otter, or a raccoon who just curled up in the notch of a tree, after a long night on the town. There’ll be insects now. And pause to smell the flowering plants, so to speak.

### **(5) You’ll learn a lot and enjoy birds differently**

Experience helps, but any pair of eyes, turned in a different direction, can get the rest of the SBC party onto a mega-rarity. Also, the more SBC participants the better the coverage, but there’s a different skill set involved in late spring and early summer. The trees are all leafed-out, there’s a lot of ID by ear, you have to pay attention and know a bit more. Tag along with someone a bit more experienced than you. There’s not a better beginners’ bird walk than spending a long morning on an SBC.

## 2017 Summer Bird Count, continued

### (6) You'll hone your skills and be challenged

Participation is lower than on CBCs, and party size is often smaller. Sometimes there's nobody else; you're it. If you don't volunteer, areas may go uncovered. Don't be intimidated. Study audios of as many versions of songs as possible. And if you encounter a call or song you're not familiar with, patiently chase after the source. Learn about ecosystems and habitat preferences. Learn about bird distribution in our State. Connecticut Birds (Zeranski & Baptist. 1990) and The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Connecticut (Bevier. 1994) continue to be extremely useful.

### (7) You'll have the opportunity to get one heck of a workout.

If you so desire you can easily spend 2 consecutive 12+ hour days hiking through beautiful CT habitats. Your legs will be sore on Monday, but what a satisfying effort. With hope, you'll get some sun as well. But, again, you don't have to. SBC area captains welcome any level of participation for any duration. Enjoy the physical activity.

### (8) You'll be supporting Connecticut Bird Conservation

The composition of CT avifauna has changed just in the last few decades. The SBC has provided years of data, a wealth of information about habitat loss, population trends and insight about what needs to be done to support preservation of "our" birds.

## 2017 Summer Bird Count Schedule

### **Barkhamsted, June 24-25**

Area covered: Barkhamsted, Burlington (in part), Canton, Colebrook, Hartland, New Hartford, Torrington (in part), and Winchester. Contact: John Marshall, 60 Wilson Dr., Watertown, CT 06795; 203 232-4393, johnmarshall47@gmail.com

### **Greenwich-Stamford, June 10-11**

Area covered: CT—Darien, Greenwich, New Canaan, and Stamford; NY—Armonk, Bedford (in part), Port Chester, Rye, and White Plains (in part). Contact: Thomas Burke, 235 Highland Rd., Rye, NY 10580; 914 967-4922 tomburke@rmsmus.com, and Gary Palmer, 34 Field Rd., Cos Cob, CT 06830; 203 661-4897, gejlpalmer@yahoo.com

### **Hartford, June 10-11**

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 Rd., Canton, CT 06019; 860 693-0157, jaybrd49@aol.com

### **Litchfield Hills, June 10-11**

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

### **New Haven, June 3-4**

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

### **New Milford / Pawling, June 17-18**

Area covered: CT—Sherman, New Fairfield, and New Milford (portions), NY—Patterson, Pawling, Putnam Lake, Carmel, southern Wingdale, and Poughquag. Contact: Angela Dimmit, PO Box 146, Sherman, CT 06784; 860 355-3429, angeladimmit@aol.com

### **Storrs, June 10-11**

Area covered: Ashford, Chaplin, Coventry, Mansfield, Tolland, Willington, Windham & a small portion of Andover. Contact: Steve Morytko, 288 Varga Rd., Ashford, CT 06278; 860 680-5728, smorytko@yahoo.com

### **Woodbury-Roxbury, June 4**

Area covered: Bethlehem, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Middlebury, New Milford, Newtown, Roxbury, Southbury, Washington, and Woodbury. Contact: Russ Naylor, 44 Church St., Woodbury, CT 06798; 203 841-7779

## Mini-Grant Report



American Bittern at Wimisink Marsh in 2014. Mini-Grant to Naromi Land Trust for habitat improvement. (Photo: Kathy Van Der Aue)

UConn Birding Club \$400.00. The club plans native bird friendly plantings for the Mansfield Community Gardens.

Elm City Montessori \$411.07. This school serves 88 inner city students. As part of their STEM curriculum they have developed a bird identification and food preference project. The money will be used for feeders, bird seed, ID guides and flash cards.

Great Hollow Nature Preserve received \$500.00 toward expenses for a study monitoring the effects of Japanese Barberry on songbird habitat.

Dennison Pequotsepos Nature Center received \$300.00 toward expenses for improvements to their existing Project Feeder Watch program.

Naromi Land Trust received \$838.93 toward expenses for beaver control and marsh restoration. Maybe we'll see those bitterns there again.

Horizon Wings received \$500.00 toward expenses for a raptor rehabilitation aviary to house raptors as they recover from illness or injury.

COA's Mini-Grant program was set up five years ago with the goal of helping projects which provide the most benefit to Connecticut's birds. We've expanded that a little to include some educational programs because, after all we all have a stake in encouraging the next generation of conservationists. We had a bumper crop of applications this year, 15 in all and although we increased the budget to \$4,000.00, sad to say we weren't able to fund all of them. We did fully fund three and partially fund five more. Here are the winners:

Connecticut Audubon's Coastal Center at Milford Point \$650.00. The Coastal Center needs to revamp the PUMA nesting system and add winches for easy maintenance.

Farmington Valley Academy Montessori \$500.00. The school has incorporated Cornell Lab's Project Feeder Watch into their science curriculum and need materials and binoculars.



Connecticut Audubon's Coastal Center at Milford Point improved its Purple Martin housing (photo: Kathy Van Der Aue)

### Scenes from the 2017 COA Annual Meeting



Frank Mantlik thanks Kathy Van Der Aue for her service as COA President (photo: M. Peretto)



Steve Broker congratulates Kathy Van Der Aue as recipient of the 2017 Betty Kleiner Memorial Award (photo: M. Peretto)

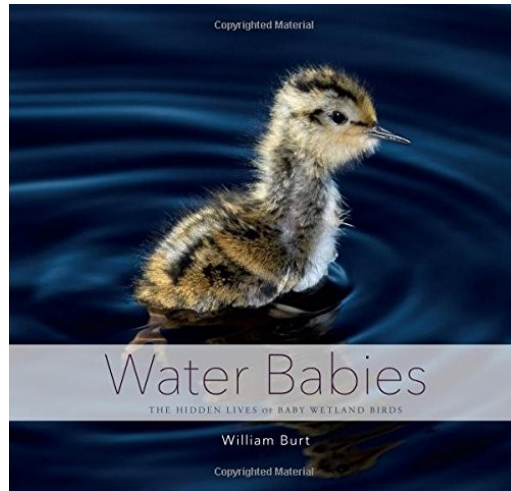
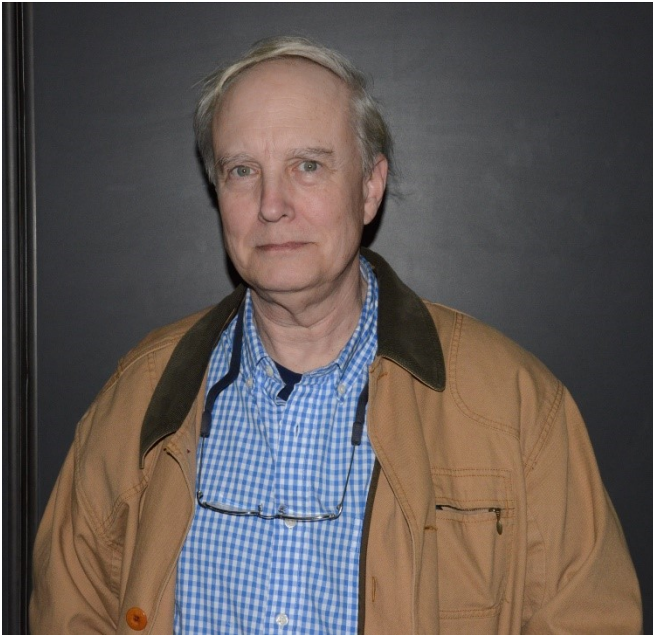


COA President Awards made to Tina Green, Roy Harvey, Chris Loscalzo, Patrick Comins, and Jim Dugan (photo: M. Peretto)



David Sibley chose the career of field guide author at an unusually young age, becoming the highly regarded author and artist he is today (photo: M. Peretto)

## More Scenes from the 2017 COA Annual Meeting



Bill Burt's latest book, appropriately titled *Water Babies*

Bill Burt enchanted the audience with his photos of the downy young of a wide variety of water birds and stories about how the images were captured



A full house of Connecticut birders took in another great slate of speakers (photo: M. Peretto)



We struggled with some persistent technical difficulties, but everyone hung in their as the schedule was rearranged to lessen the impact (photo: M. Peretto)

## Program to Allow Early Access to Hammonasset for Birders Continues This Season

DEEP Director of Parks and Outdoor Recreation Tom Tyler is pleased to announce that the program to allow birders and photographers early access, to Hammonasset Beach State Park mirroring the access currently permitted for fishing. Unfortunately due to the severe budget cuts to Parks and Recreation, the program will only run from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.

Such early access will be permitted to birders in possession of a current (2017) Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation (Duck) Stamp and bird watching gear. The Duck Stamps cost \$17.00 and can be obtained at most Town Clerk's offices and at many retail outlets. The following link has information on the Duck Stamp and a link to outlets for purchase. Note: Do not try to heat laminate this piece of paper as it renders it unreadable!

[http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&Q=492150&deepNav\\_GID=1655%20#History](http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&Q=492150&deepNav_GID=1655%20#History)

This is how it will work:

The gate is manned 24/7 during the summer. Permits are available from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. Due to the fact that beachgoers begin lining up for 8:00 a.m. entry by 6:30 a.m., no entry will be allowed between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. You may leave the park, but not enter. Please note that the pass does not entitle the bearer to entry for recreational use such as beach going.

You must sign in and get a pass each time when entering the park. Each person in the car must possess a Duck Stamp with the exception of children under 16 years of age. You would arrive at the main gate, show your Duck Stamp and bird watching gear, enter the office to sign the log, and receive a pass. You would already need to have purchased a duck stamp (available on-line), as DEEP does not have the capability to sell them anywhere in the park. There is no charge for the permit. This permit is to be displayed on the dashboard of the car.

**Access is limited!** To avoid disturbing campers, access will be limited to the following areas:

Birders will be allowed to stop for bird viewing and photography from the East Beach parking lot, and further east to Meigs Point. For birders accessing East Beach parking area, and also birding along the road from East Beach to Meigs, we will ask that folks remain in the near vicinity of their cars. As previously discussed, we will also authorize birding activities in the general Meigs Point, Willard Island area.

## The 2017 Betty Kleiner Memorial Award Steve Broker

Betty Kleiner served as editor of *The Connecticut Warbler* for 19 years. During this time, Betty and Gil Kleiner handled every aspect of production of Connecticut's journal of ornithology. Since 2007, the Connecticut Ornithological Association has remembered Betty by establishing and presenting an award for excellence in scholarship, literary achievement, and/or graphic design appearing in the previous year of *The Connecticut Warbler*.

The 2017 Betty Kleiner Memorial Award goes to Kathy Van Der Aue, for her insightful article, "The History of Connecticut Audubon Society's Birdcraft Sanctuary and Museum". Kathy's article appeared in the January 2016 issue of *The Connecticut Warbler*.

As Kathy wrote, "It's impossible to understand Birdcraft without knowing something of its founder, Mabel Osgood Wright and her great contributions to ornithology and conservation." Referring to several of Mabel Osgood Wright's books from Kathy's personal library (she wrote 27 books in all), to Mabel Osgood Wright's 1915 article about Birdcraft in the journal *Bird-Lore*, and to a more recent anthology of nature writings, "Birdwatching with American Women", Kathy places Mabel Osgood Wright at the center of American ornithology from the late 1890s to the early 1930s, discussing her passion for birds, her concern for the degradation of the environment, her founding of the Connecticut Audubon Society in 1898, her election to the American Ornithologists' Union, the opening of Birdcraft Sanctuary and Museum in 1914, and her writing of the most popular bird guide prior to Roger Tory Peterson's *Field Guide to the Birds*.

## COA Gull Workshop, Stratford Point, Stratford

Chris Loscalzo, Workshop Chair

On March 26, 2107, 25 birders attended the gull workshop. They were treated to a thorough review of the identifying characteristics of the common and rare gulls found in CT. The slide show of photographs was presented in the classroom at Audubon Connecticut’s Habitat Management area at Stratford Point by Patrick Comins. After the didactic session was completed, the group went to Long Beach in Stratford to apply what they learned. The various cycles of the common gull species were well-represented. Some members of the group continued on to Seaside Park in Bridgeport. Although no rare gulls were observed on this particular day, a good time was had by all and everyone learned something about this most challenging group of birds.



Patrick Comins explains the finer points of larid identification (photo: S. Broker)



Gull workshop participants in the field putting their classroom learning to the test (photo: S. Broker)

**Save the date!**

Shorebird  
Workshop

Milford Point

August 19  
@ 7:30 a.m.

## Connecticut Young Birders Club Excels at World Series of Birding

Brendan Murtha, CYBC President

The Connecticut Young Birders Club (CYBC) Darth Waders, made up of Alex Burdo, Jory Teltser, Preston Lust, and myself, had a phenomenal day on Saturday. We birded within the confines of Cape May County, where our first bird was a Least Sandpiper at 12:03 AM (South Cape May Meadows) and our last bird was a Great Horned Owl at 10:00 PM (The Beanery.) In total, we tallied 162 species. This number put us at third place overall in the youth category, even up against teams who birded the full state. Even though we weren’t technically in the running for Cape May County awards (that division is adult only), we would’ve come in second place in that category had we been eligible, two birds AHEAD of Cornell’s team and just 7 behind the winners. The World Series isn’t just about the competition, however-- more than anything else, its just a crazy fun day of birding in place that is literally overflowing with birds.



The “Darth Waders”, in action somewhere in Cape May County



## Silver Sands State Park Status Update

At our request Deputy Commissioner Susan Whalen has updated us as to the current status of the DEEP improvement project at Silver Sands State Park in Milford. On September 24, 2015 we testified along with a number of you regarding the improvements planned for the park, especially the portion calling for the paving of the overflow parking lot, known as the “sparrow lanes.” Concerns about an addition to the boardwalk were also raised as this boardwalk crosses fragile wetlands habitat. We are pleased to announce that our voices have been heard. Deputy Commissioner Whalen sent the following statement:

### **“Changes made to the final version of the plan as a result of public comment, consultation with staff, and permit condition requirements:**

#### Eliminated paving in the overflow lot referred to by some as the ‘sparrow lanes’

Eliminate the reconfigured paved parking to the west of the paved parking lot and limit that to regrading to provide more positive drainage to the existing swales, and preserving the wildlife habitat value of that area.

Some minimal drainage improvements will be made, and the area will remain natural sand and grasses. (The existing paved lot will be repaved)

#### Great Creek Improvements

Improvements to Great Creek were not initially included in this project, but have been included in the final design.

A mitigation plan will be implemented in the Great Creek that has three elements. The first element is the creation of 5 new pools in the wetland to enhance habitat for foraging wildlife. The second element of the mitigation plan will be the restoration or creation of approximately 2400 feet of tidal channel, which will be constructed to further enhance waterbird habitat in the Great Creek system. The third element of the plan will be further control the Phragmites throughout the Park. This would include managing the Phragmites through a 3-successive-year herbiciding and mowing regime in an area of approximately 80 acres across Great Creek, Fletcher Creek, and Nettleton Creek systems throughout the Silver Sands State Park.

As background, the State Parks Division proposed a plan to mitigate the potential adverse habitat impacts of the new “short-cut” boardwalk at Silver Sands by creating new wetland habitat in the northern section of Fletcher’s Creek, just west of the current boardwalk. During the hearing on the permit for that boardwalk, concerns were raised about the compensatory value of the proposed wetland creation in that area. Additional discussions with the Wildlife Division have resulted in a revised mitigation plan that would shift the proposed habitat enhancement slightly to the east, in nearby Great Creek at Silver Sands State Park. The Wildlife Division has determined that habitat restoration and enhancement in the Great Creek area would be of better utility, as the tidal creeks and pannes with the marsh provide significant habitat for waterbirds and other wildlife with a minimum of human disturbance.

As an FYI, the project will continue protection to the piping plover that might nest on the beaches, and is addressed in the seasonal work closure period between March 15th and September 1st.”

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Deputy Commissioner Whalen also sent a detailed discussion of other elements of the project including an informative history of the site, a former landfill. The project has been put out to bid with several qualified bids having been received. Funding for the project has been approved by the General Assembly and the funding is awaiting action by the Bond Commission.

Deputy Commissioner Whalen’s full response is posted on the COA Blog which is located at <http://www.ctbirding.org/blog/>

## Twenty-Five Years Ago in *The Connecticut Warbler*

Compiled by Steve Broker Volume XII, No. 2 (April 1992)

### **Bird Species Reported in the Northeast But Not in Connecticut, by Jonathan Trouern-Trend and Louis R. Bevier.**

This paper represents an attempt to generate a list of bird species that have been reported in the geographic area surrounding Connecticut, but never in the state itself. The arbitrary geographic area covered includes most of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to northern New Jersey, all of New England, eastern New York, and eastern Pennsylvania as indicated in Fig. 1.

The method used to generate this list was to consult local records in the designated regions in the journal *American Birds* and its predecessor, *Audubon Field Notes*, from 1958 to 1991 for reports of species not on the official state list as accepted by the Connecticut Rare Records Committee (hereafter CRRC). Some records prior to 1958 were included if they were cited in more recent literature. In addition the following state and provincial compilations were consulted: [Ed.: see the full paper for this list of additional references].

This paper is meant as an initial effort and provides a starting point for future compilations. . . Obvious escapees, such as exotic pheasants, flamingoes, and the like, are not included in this list. Also not included are records accepted by the CRRC as hypothetical (reports based only on convincing written details but lacking photographic or specimen evidence). As it stands, this list contains 138 species reported in the Northeast but not in Connecticut, although reports of seven species in this list are currently under review by the CRRC and three species have been reported but not accepted. Thus, a minimum of 519 species have been reported in the Northeast.

This paper is not intended to predict species that might be found in Connecticut at some future time, but to elucidate patterns of occurrence surrounding the state. . . The paper reveals interesting patterns of vagrancy such as the many storm-related species that have occurred on Long Island but have never reached Connecticut, a relatively short distance away. In addition, other patterns may emerge from generally unexplained phenomena apart from major storm movements. In Table 3, we have attempted to list the zoogeographic source regions for the species cited in this paper. . . Continued trends can elucidate interesting distributional, and in some cases, behavioral patterns. Thus, this paper provides a departure point for examining distributional data of vagrant bird species in the Northeast.

[Ed's Note: While the authors stress that their paper "is not intended to predict species that might be found in Connecticut at some future time," it is interesting nevertheless to consider those species that have been accepted by the Avian Records Committee of Connecticut (ARCC) in the intervening 25 years: Pacific Loon, Sooty Shearwater, Audubon's Shearwater, Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, White-tailed Tropicbird, Brown Booby, White-faced Ibis, Ross's Goose, Barnacle Goose, Pink-footed Goose, Cinnamon Teal, Mississippi Kite, Northern Lapwing, Snowy Plover, Black-tailed Godwit, Bar-tailed Godwit, Red-necked Stint, Little Stint, California Gull, Ivory Gull, Sandwich Tern, Bridled Tern, Common Murre, Razorbill, Common Ground-Dove, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Rufous Hummingbird, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Tropical Kingbird, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Cave Swallow, Eurasian Jackdaw, Mountain Bluebird, Fieldfare, Sprague's Pipit, Bell's Vireo, MacGillivray's Warbler, Lazuli Bunting, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, and Brambling.]

[Ed's note: See also The 1991-92 Christmas Bird Count, by Stephen P. Broker; The Fall 1991 Hawk Migration in Connecticut, by Neil Currie; Connecticut Field Notes Fall: August 1-November 30, 1991, by Jay Kaplan; Photo Challenge, by Louis R. Bevier & Frederick Purnell, Jr.. The April 1992 issue of *The Connecticut Warbler* can be seen in its entirety at the following link to the COA website. Download Volume 12, and scroll down to pages 33-80.]

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

## Aiden Kiley Wins The COA Hog Island Camp Scholarship

The COA Hog Island Scholarship for 2017 has been awarded to Aidan Kiley, an active member of the Connecticut Young Birders Club. This is the first time COA has offered such a scholarship and we do so in hopes that the experience will enhance interest in bird study and conservation among young birders. Congratulations, Aidan!

We plan to offer this opportunity again next year. The scholarship covers the full cost (\$1,295.00) of the Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens program at National Audubon's Hog Island Camp, a one week program usually held in June. The cost includes housing, boat travel, and all meals. The scholarship recipient is responsible for the cost of transportation to and from the camp. Applicants must be a Connecticut resident, ages 14-17, and must submit a written application and two letters of reference. Preference will be given to applicants with individual or family COA membership.



(photo by Erika Kiley)

## The 2016 "300" Club, by Bob Dixon

In 2016 four Connecticut birders observed at least 300 species in the state during the calendar year - an amazing feat. I asked each of them if they would answer three questions, Best bird, Best Find and Biggest Miss.

**Tina Green - 314 species** (This is the Connecticut 'Big Year' record on eBird)

"Best Find - Eastern Whip-poor-will at Sherwood Island SP. Sherwood Island SP is part of my patch and I bird the park almost every day if I'm not traveling. I hear this species every year but have never gotten the chance to study and photograph it perched for almost an entire day, which I was able to do.

Best Bird - That's tough to answer because I love seeing and watching commonly found birds as much as a rarity. I'm fortunate to see the Great Horned Owl pair at Sherwood Island every time I go there and they would be tied with seeing the first state record Sprague's Pipit at the park last year. I am very proud of Westport's young birders Preston and Terry Lust for finding this bird which makes it even more special."

**Dan Rottino - 303 species** (Dan was also awarded "eBirder of the Year" in 2016!)

"Best bird - Connecticut Warbler (found by Jeremy Nance). I saw it 9/16 at Trout Brook Valley.

Best Find - Harlequin Duck at Harkness SP 1/9 as it flew directly in front of us. Biggest Miss - any Phalarope.

I couldn't have done it without the gracious help and unique type of specialized field assistance that is characteristic of the birding community. Thank you to all that helped."

**Mark Danforth - 302 species**

"Best Bird - Tough one. I'll go with Say's Phoebe, Hermit Warbler or Black-headed Grosbeak being a close second. Say's Phoebe day was a great birding day for me. It was especially nice being there when Jeremy Nance and Brenda Inskeep discovered it.

Best Find - Didn't have one, nothing rare anyway. Spent too much time chasing to just be out birding and finding things. One of the down sides of chasing.

Biggest Miss - Easy, Sprague's Pipit. I would like to thank the Connecticut birding community for being such a great group of people. All of the rarities I chased were discovered by other birders, and there were several rarities in 2016! I can only hope that I helped someone else find a bird as often as someone helped me. I won't be birding for a number this year but I'll be out there."

**Sara Zagorski - 300 species**

"My best bird and best find - Hermit Warbler. I was with Fran and Phil and some others when they relocated the bird originally found by Dave Rosgen, and could not believe my eyes when I saw it hopping along the bank.

Biggest miss - Black-headed Grosbeak, got there 10 minutes too late.

I did a lot of traveling last year and missed some good birds, such as the Smith's Longspur. I didn't think I would make 300 but did so on Dec. 31 with Common Murre during the ferry crossing in Long Island Sound for the New London CBC."



**CONNECTICUT  
ORNITHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION**

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**COA CHAIRPERSONS**

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Workshops	Bill Batsford
The Connecticut Warbler	Greg Hanisek
COA Bulletin	Andrew Dasinger, Kathy Van Der Aue
Christmas Bird Count Compiler	Steve Broker
Summer Bird Count Compilers	Joe Zeranski & Patrick Comins
Great Backyard Bird Count	Patrick Comins
Mini-Grants	Kathy Van Der Aue

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