

COA Bulletin

Winter 1997 NEWSLETTER OF THE CONNECTICUT ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION Vol 12 No 4

1997-1998 Connecticut Christmas Bird Count

by Stephen P. Broker

The 98th Annual National Audubon Society sponsored Christmas Bird Count takes place during the period Friday, December 19 to Sunday, January 4. Connecticut's 17 counts are being conducted in five coastal, 4 mid-state, and 5 northern regions of the state, a pattern which has held for more than a decade. Our bird clubs, ornithological associations, and NAS chapters and affiliates continue the work of organizing these exhilarating events, so be certain to make the necessary contacts and get out in the field and share your talents with others. The list of counts and compilers follows this article.

Readers of National Audubon Society Field Notes know that some changes are in the offering for the Christmas Bird Count and its generated data. National Audubon Society has forged a new alliance with the American Birding Association to "promote together the collection, by active field birders, of data crucial to understanding the population dynamics and conservation needs of North American birds." To that end, NAS continues its coordination of the Christmas Count and the publication of the "Christmas Count issue" that in recent years has changed title from issue 5 of *American Birds* to *Field Notes*. The continued publication of Field Notes becomes the responsibility of the ABA, however, in a transfer of responsibility that occupies the next two years. These changes occur in the context of a larger program developed by the

(continued on page 2)

Features

Christmas Bird Count	1
Black Rail in Connecticut.....	4
Fall Field Day Report	4
Open Space in Connecticut.....	6
Trips and Events.....	7

HOTLINE HIGHLIGHTS

- Wilson's Phalarope Stratford Aug 16-17
- Long-tailed Jaeger West Haven Aug 29
- Parasitic Jaeger Stamford Sept 12
- Northern Fulmar Stamford Sept 14
- Red-necked Phalarope Litchfield Sept 14
- Long-billed Dowitcher Mansfield Sept 28-
Oct 8
- Swainson's Hawk New Haven Oct 1 and
Greenwich Oct 11
- American Avocet Stonington Oct 2
- Sandhill Crane Greenwich Oct 13

RARE BIRD ALERT: 203-254-3665

President's Message

by Dave Provencher

If there is one thing that virtually every birder shares, it is the desire to see new species. For some, it is the competitive drive of listing. For others, it is the thirst for new experiences and greater knowledge. Whatever the manifestation to see new birds takes, it produces the same effect in all of us. We feel like a child who has been given a new present. The excitement of observing a life form which we have never experienced before is very tangible. We all feel richer having seen a new bird. It is just this feeling that makes birders travel all over the world in search of new birds and new experiences. We often visit places in our search for new birds that no tourist would ever dream of intentionally going. Been to a dump lately? How about a sewage lagoon? Somewhere really hot? Really cold? Really windy? Really rainy? How about somewhere a bit dangerous. I thought so. Me too! During all this travel, and all these experiences, we are accumulating knowledge and skill. All too often, this knowledge is in large part kept to ourselves. Many a birder has passed away taking the accumulated knowledge of a lifetime with them. Their appreciation of the natural world and the wealth of experience they have gathered passes from us. This loss of wisdom is to be lamented, just as we lament the loss of a dear and respected friend. Humans have been given a great gift in the ability to learn. We have been

(continued on page 3)

COA Bulletin

Christmas Bird Count

(continued from page 1)

Laboratory of Ornithology and known as BirdSource. NAS Vice-President Susan Roney Drennan writes in the Spring 1997 issue of Field Notes that "BirdSource will build the informational resources required to set the conservation agenda for Audubon as well as the rest of the country."

A major part of what is envisioned involves the ready accessibility of CBC, feeder watcher, migrant bird, geographic distributional, and perhaps breeding bird data on the Internet. ABA is constructing this massive database, which promises significant new opportunities for understanding the biology of our North American birds and their critical requirements for conservation efforts. As one who annually wrestles with more than 300 spreadsheets of CBC data for counts spanning the last 25 years, I have the strong suspicion that the forthcoming Internet database will make available to all of us a level of perception of our birds' migratory patterns, seasonal dynamics, geographic distributions, and habitat preferences which goes far beyond what we have until now been capable of.

We know, for example, that there have been some clear trends in our early winter bird populations. Great Blue Heron, Wild Turkey, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Bluebird, various waterbirds and hawks, and Carolina Wren (this last species at least until the tough winters of the last several years) have exhibited steadily increasing populations according to CBC data. Declining species during this same period have included such wetland species as American Black Duck, Canvasback, scaups, secretive wetland species, Ruffed Grouse, American Kestrel, European Starling (I hesitate to make judgment here), and various grassland birds. Internet access to this data will allow any of us to view these populational changes in whatever regional context we choose to define and over a period of nearly 100 years of data collection. In some instances, species rises will correlate with species declines. National hotspots of population expansion or contraction will become more apparent to us, allowing for more focused conservation efforts. The applications of this information will become

clearer as we gain access to the newly forming data base. In the meantime, count compilers have the option of submitting data on disk or directly from their computer terminals this year, and some of us from Connecticut are sure to try it out in the pilot effort.

The Summer 1997 issue of Field Notes provides additional information about this transition between NAS and ABA. All future issues of Field Notes - Summer 1997 and onward - are being designed and produced by ABA. Matters relating to subscriptions are also coming into the hands of ABA. We subscribers now need to be in touch with NAS for continuation of Christmas Bird Count issues (1-800-690-1669) and with ABA for subscriptions to Field Notes (1-800-850-2473). Confused? Get on the phone and dial the 800 numbers. I've tried it already, and it's pretty straight-forward.

The 98th Annual National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count Schedule in Connecticut

COA members and friends are encouraged to participate in the 98th Annual National Audubon Society Christmas Bird count. The seventeen counts in Connecticut are held on eight different days during this period. Check the listing below for the date of the count in your area, and call your compiler to sign up for this important birding event. If you have a scheduled conflict, join a count in a neighboring area on another day. Many COA members participate in several counts every year, and compilers always welcome another pair of eyes. Join the fun with the more than 1,000 participants!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1997

NEW HAVEN, CT (NH CT) Compilers: Stephen P. Broker, 50 Hidden Place, Cheshire, CT 06410-3723, 203-272-5192, Frank Gallo, New Canaan Nature Center, 140 Oanoke Ridge Road, New Canaan, CT 06840, 203-966-6756, and Chris Loscalzo, 67 Wepawaug Road, Woodbridge, CT 06525, 203-389-6508.

STORRS, CT (ST CT) Compiler: Steve Rogers, 75 Charles Lane, Storrs, CT 06268, 860-429-1259.

WOODBURY-ROXBURY, CT (WR CT) Compiler: Chris Wood, 6 Orton Lane, Woodbury, CT 06798, 203-263-5331.

**The Newsletter of the
Connecticut Ornithological Association
is published quarterly in
February, May, August, and November.**

**Please submit materials for the next
issue by February 1, 1998 to
Dwight Smith, Editor,
241 Shepard Ave, Hamden, CT 06514.**

(continued on page 3)

COA Bulletin

Christmas Bird Count Schedules

(continued from page 3)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1997

GREENWICH-STAMFORD, CT (GS CT) Compilers: Gary Palmer, 34 Field Road, Cos Cob, CT 06807, 203-661-4897, Brian O'Toole, 6 Fort Hills Lane, Greenwich, CT 06831, 203-629-1027, and Pat Bailey, 1435 Bedford Street, Apt. 10H, Stamford, CT 06905

LITCHFIELD HILLS, CT (LH CT) Compiler: Raymond E. Belding, 1229 Winsted Road #30, Torrington, CT 06790, 860-482-4046.

LAKEVILLE-SHARON, CT (LS CT) Compiler: Bob Moeller, P. O. Box 1119, Sharon, CT 06069, 860-364-5936

OXFORD, CT (OX CT) Compiler: Buzz Devine, 18 South Street, Plymouth, CT 06782, 860-283-0744

QUINNIPIAC VALLEY, CT (QV CT) Compiler: Wilford Schultz, 93 Harrison Road, Wallingford, CT 06492, 203-265-6398

SALMON RIVER, CT (SR CT) Compiler: David A. Titus, 278 Court Street #108, Middletown, CT 06457, 860-346-3735

WESTPORT, CT (WE CT) Compiler: Frank W. Mantlik, P. O. Box 3161, Westport, CT 06880, 203-846-8601. Additional contact: Ed Hiestand, 10 Woodside Lane, Westport, CT 06880, 203-227-5997.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1997

BARKHAMSTED, CT (BA CT) Compiler: David Tripp, Jr., 19A Loomis Heights, New Hartford, CT 06057, 860-379-9237

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1997

HARTFORD, CT (HA CT) Compiler: Jay Kaplan, 71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT 06019, 860-693-0157

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1997

STRATFORD-MILFORD, CT (SM CT) Compiler: Steve Mayo, 27 Tuttle Court Road, Bethany, CT 06524, 203-393-0694

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1, 1998

PAWLING (HIDDEN VALLEY), NY-CT (HV NY) Compiler: Sibyll Gilbert, RR1 Box 236, Pawling, NY 12564, 914-855-3266, and Angela Dimmitt, New Milford, CT 860-355-3429 or 212-628-8348

SATURDAY, JANUARY 3, 1998

EDWIN WAY TEALE, TRAIL WOOD, CT (EW CT) Compiler: Marilyn Higgins, Hammond Hill, Hampton, Ct 06247, 860-455-0063.

NEW LONDON, CT (NL CT) Compiler: Robert Dewire, 9 Canary Street, Pawcatuck, CT 06379, 860-599-3085.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 1998

OLD LYME-SAYBROOK, CT (OL CT) Compiler: Patty Pendergast, 112-1 Main Street, Chester, CT, 860-526-4686

President's Message

(continued from page 1)

given a greater gift in the ability to teach.

Thankfully, in every community there are teachers. These individuals unselfishly share the knowledge and experience with others. This enriches the community and makes it stronger and healthier. The birding community is no different, indeed, it is blessed with many individuals who generously share their time and knowledge. One such teacher is Flo McBride. For a number of years now Flo has been teaching the children of Connecticut about birds. She has developed and put into practice a methodology to open our children's minds to the world of birds. Scores of youngsters have been exposed to the beauty of birds and the fascination of the natural world thanks to Flo's system. Nearly all of us have seen her tirelessly leading a group of children around Hammonasset, or at East Rock Park, or

(continued on page 4)

HOTLINE REPORTS

To report sightings of rare, unusual, or migrating birds, call one of the following:

Mark Szantyr 860-429-4038

Frank Gallo 203-966-6756

Frank Mantlik 203-846-8601

COA Bulletin

President's Message

(continued from page 3)

Lighthouse Park. Those of us with children know how much energy something like that can take.

In the United States people usually don't begin birding until they are adults. This is a shame. I personally am saddened by how little most people know about nature, or realize how much a part of the natural world they are and how much they are dependent upon it and affected by it. When I think about people like Flo, who are teaching children about it, I feel much better. Years from now there will be mature birders who were first turned on to birding when they were children thanks to Flo. Perhaps they will be leaders of our community, our state, or our country. Who can say where the seeds she is sowing today will bloom tomorrow?

So to all of you who are giving time teaching others. I dip my binoculars in admiration, gratitude, and respect. What you are doing is an investment in the future, as well as a generous gift. But I think that you already know that!

Fall Field Day Report

by Marilyn "Sam" Higgins

This year's Fall Field Day was a marvelous opportunity to showcase Windsor's Northwest Park. This is a very interesting property along the Connecticut River with trails through many different habitats: fields, grasslands, woods, and the river. There is also a Nature Center, a gift shop, and an historical tobacco barn on the premises.

There were 15 children and 61 adults who attended the many activities that were planned throughout the day. Two founding members of COA returned to join us; one from Arizona and another from Vermont. A member from New Hampshire was also among those who participated.

Carl Ekroth, Paul Desjardins, George Clark, Clark Mosley, and Tom Harrington led walks to various locations at the park. Sam Fried and Alverta and Rob Mirer took people to Station 43, a nearby Hartford Audubon Society sanctuary that is located nearby in South Windsor. Andy Brand and Mike Thomas led butterfly walks and John Coggins and Janet Bystreak held a bird-banding exhibition in the morning. Dave Provencher gave a very informative talk in the afternoon, entitled "Identifying Sparrows, It Doesn't Have to Hurt." Flo McBride led a children's bird walk in the morning. Elayna Grody and her assistant Kate Ferris, an intern at the park, had organized other activities for the children. We are grateful to all these people for the time and effort they gave to make the Fall Field Day such a success.

Among the highlights of the birds seen at Station 43 were: Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, many Wood Ducks, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Green Heron, Great Blue Heron and Great Egret. There were a total of 36 species seen there. Bay-breasted Warbler, Lincoln Sparrow, Hermit Thrush and Rough-winged Swallow were among the total of 52 species seen at Northwest Park. The Hawk Watch at Northwest Park counted 29 Turkey Vultures, 1 Red-tailed Hawk, 2 American Kestrels, 2 Broad-winged Hawks, 2 Sharp-shinned and 1 Merlin. A total of 72 species were seen.

The COA Program Committee would like to express our gratitude to Elayna Grody, the park naturalist, for helping this wonderful day come together. We would also like to thank Dunkin Doughnuts of Clock Tower Mall in Monroe, Stop & Shop at Sand Plaza in Newtown, and Breuegger's Bagels of Trumbull for providing us with food for a continental breakfast. Also thank you to the Friends of Northwest Park for lunch. We hope everyone had a wonderful time and look forward to next year's field day.

Recent Black Rail Sightings in Guilford, Connecticut

by James M. Zingo, Jeffrey A. Spindel, and John G. Haig

The Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) is considered a rarity in Connecticut (Proctor 1994). Proctor (1981) reviewed records of the Black Rail in Connecticut, and in *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Connecticut* (1994) he listed the species only as a possible recent breeder, based on a single bird heard calling at Barn Island in Stonington, New London County, in 1985. There have been sporadic early June records of calling birds from marshes in Cromwell and Old Saybrook in the mid-late 1980s (Proctor pers. comm.), and more recently, a few reports from the Great Meadows marshes in Stratford, Fairfield County, in 1990 and 1991 (Kaplan and Mantlik 1990, Kaplan 1991, 1992). Mackenzie (1961) reported two sightings in Guilford in 1945 and 1947. However, Proctor (1981 & pers. comm.), based on conversations with Mackenzie, felt that the second of these records, lacking substantive details beyond "tiny black rail" at Great Harbor, was questionable and may have been a young Clapper Rail (*Rallus longirostris*). We report two summer sightings of Black Rail along Route 146 in Guilford, New Haven County, Connecticut, the first sightings from this area in nearly 50 years.

(Continued on page 5)

COA Bulletin

Black Rail in Connecticut

(continued from page 5)

While driving on Route 146 just east of Sachems Head Road and Sam Hill Road between 2100 and 2200 hours on 7 June 1991, Spindelow and Haig saw a fully-feathered adult Black Rail run across the road about 20 meters in front of their vehicle. Although it was seen in the bright headlights only briefly, the combination of short black bill, brown "shoulder," and white markings eliminated the possibility of confusion with other species. The adult emerged from the north side of the road and ran to the south side into the cattail-brackish marsh which had been filled with recent rainstorms.

At about 1445 hours on 30 June 1994, Zingo was driving slowly east along Route 146 looking for birds in the tidal inlet and saltmarsh (the northern extent of Great Harbor Marsh) about 0.7 kilometers west of Sachems Head Road, less than 1 km southwest of the above sighting. A small dark rail with a short dark bill was standing by a rock surrounded by water within the inlet about 10-15 m north of the road. The dull black plumage (including the underside of the wings), short rounded wings, short tail, and adult feathers were readily apparent as the bird briefly stepped along the rock, flew about 3 m to the edge of the saltmarsh grasses and mud, and stood on the muddy edge for a short time before sneaking away through the grasses. The bright but even lighting allowed an uncompromised view of the bird and left no doubt concerning the species identification. The size, shape, dull black plumage, walking mechanics, and skulking behavior eliminated confusion with partly similar species, such as a tailless (molting) sparrow or blackbird. The adult feathers and flight eliminated the possibility of this bird having been a downy chick of another rail species. This bird was distinguishable from both adults and juveniles of other small rail species not only by the overall dark plumage but also as follows: from Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*) by its smaller size, short legs, and dark bill shorter than its head; from Sora (*Porzana carolina*) by its dark bill (as opposed to yellow); and from Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*) by its dark bill (as opposed to yellow or greenish-yellow) and lack of white wing patches (Robbins et al. 1966, Peterson 1980, Terres 1980, National Geographic Society 1987, Farrand 1988).

There have been no confirmations of this species nesting in the state since the late 1800s (Sage et al. 1913, Proctor 1994), and even many of the sighting records this century are unsubstantiated (Proctor 1981). The similar season and locations for these two sightings indicate the possibility of the species' regular occurrence and potential breeding in this area of Guilford. While our own research

activities on terns at Falkner Island precluded further investigation, we hope this information will encourage Connecticut birders to investigate this area and, in doing so, perhaps confirm the Black Rail as a recent breeding species in Connecticut.

Acknowledgements

We thank Louis Bevier, George Clark, Deanna Dawson, Mike Erwin, Noble Proctor, Chan Robbins, and Dave Rosgen for their helpful comments.

Literature Cited

- Farrand, J. 1988. Eastern Birds: An Audubon Handbook. McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, NY.
- Kaplan, J. 1991. Connecticut Field Notes, Spring: March 1, 1990 - May 31, 1991. Connecticut Warbler 11:126-134.
- Kaplan, J. 1992. Connecticut Field Notes, Summer: June 1, 1991 - July 31, 1991. Connecticut Warbler 12:28-32.
- Kaplan, J., and F. Mantlik. 1990. Connecticut Field Notes, Spring: March 1, 1990 - May 31, 1990. Connecticut Warbler 10:98-106.
- Mackenzie, L. 1961. The Birds of Guilford, Connecticut. Peabody Mus. of Nat. Hist., Yale Univ., New Haven, CT. 110 pp.
- National Geographic Society. 1987. Field Guide to the Birds of North America, Second Edition. National Geographic Society, Washington, D.C. 464 pp.
- Peterson, R.T. 1980. A Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern and Central North America, Fourth Edition. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, MA 384 pp.
- Proctor, N.S. 1981. The Black Rail: mystery bird of the marsh. Conn. Warbler 1:15-16.
- Proctor, N.S. 1994. Black Rail. pp. 411-412 in L.R. Bevier (ed.). The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Connecticut. State Geol. Nat. Hist. Surv., Bull. 113, Hartford, CT 461 pp.
- Robbins, C.S., B. Bruun, and H.S. Zim. 1966. A Guide to Field Identification: Birds of North America. Golden Press, New York, NY. 340 pp.
- Sage, J.H., L.B. Bishop, and W.P. Bliss. 1913. The Birds of Connecticut. State Geol. Nat. Hist. Surv., Bull. 20, Hartford, CT. 370 pp.
- Terres, J.K. 1980. The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, NY.
- JAS and JGH: U.S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel, MD 20708-4017.
- JMZ: current address: Massachusetts Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Department of Forestry and Wildlife Management, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003-4220.

COA Bulletin

Connecticut Open Space

by Patty Pendergast

Governor Rowland's Blue Ribbon Open Space Task Force started its 90 day charge in early September. This task force was put together in response to legislation passed in June this year for the Department of Environmental Protection to own and manage 10% of the state's surface. Fact finding for the task force has brought these statistics to light.

Connecticut's total land mass is 3,205,760 acres, making the state goal for acquisition 320,576 acres. Currently the DEP owns and manages 210,000 acres. A listing of what those lands are comprised of follows:

Breakdown of DEP Open Space Lands:

(Number/acres)

Parks: 93/29,749 acres

Forests: 31/139,217 acres

Wildlife Management Areas: 57/25,122 acres

Natural Area Preserves: 7/2,053 acres

Water Bodies: 35/5,368 acres

Fish Hatcheries: 5/725 acres

Flood Control: 47/4,893 acres

Water Access: 108/1,379 acres

Other: 9/812 acres

As birders, we are watching prime habitat get consumed through development. While many non profits such as the Nature Conservancy, both Connecticut and National Audubon, and land trusts strive hard to preserve open space for species protection, it really is the state who can afford to buy and manage the very large tracts of land that are open for public use., One of the best examples, Hammonasset State Park mixes prime year round bird habitat with other recreation activities. While the larger state forests, (Nehantic for example) act as nurseries for threatened woodland warbler population and provide opportunities for hunters, fisher folks, hikers and bicyclists. As development breaks up the large privately owned tracts of land, the pressure on existing open space will increase as well. Recreation will impact nesting and foraging areas. It will be harder to balance outdoor activities and sensitive habitat areas unless we increase the amount of open space available to keep pace with active use.

Developed Lands as a Percentage of Connecticut

Areas where population density equals or exceed one person per acre.

1970: 13.8%

1980: 17.3

1990: 23.0

Using forests as an example, there are only 250 private landowners in Connecticut who own more than 500 acres of woodlands, only another 400 more own between 200 and 500 acres. The average age of forest landowners is 62+ years, so you can be sure that many of the tracts we take for granted as open space will be broken up and developed within our lifetime.

The upswing in our state's economy will certainly encourage more development. You only have to look at the changes within the last 25 years to see what the future could be if the state and local municipalities do not become more proactive. By the time you get this your town elections will have already occurred, make the effort to talk to your local officials about open space. In many cases towns know what land should be set aside...the issue is really the funding mechanisms. Although time is a premium to all of us, another solid way to facilitate open space preservation is to sit on a town commission. By any means, this is a very good time to be talking up land conservation for the state and municipalities.

The Governor's Open Space Task Force is holding 3 public hearings the first week of December.

Monday, Dec 1st 7:30 pm at the Easton Public Library

Tuesday, Dec 2nd 7:30 pm at the Windham Middle School

Thursday, Dec 4th 12:00 pm at the DEP HQ Phoenix Auditorium, Hartford

Your input to the Open Space Task force and ultimately Governor Rowland, is critical - not only on which lands to acquire, but HOW to go about acquiring them. Funding is key to any land acquisition plan. For directions and further information call: Patty Pendergast - 860-526-4686, David Sutherland - 860-344-0716, or Lisa Santacrocce at 860-527-8737

COA Membership Survey

The COA Board of Directors feel it is important to hear feedback from the membership concerning our organization and its future. Therefore, every member will be mailed a survey in the near future. We hope that you will take the time to complete it and return it. While no organization can be everything to everyone, we are very interested in what you have to say about where COA is now and where you think it should be headed in the future. This will be your chance to speak up and let us know how you feel. Please be absolutely candid in your answers. The results of this survey will be published in a future issue of the COA Bulletin. Remember, you are the COA! Thank you.

Dave Provencher, President, COA

COA Bulletin

TRIPS & EVENTS

Hartford Audubon Society

HAMMONASSET BEACH STATE PARK, Madison, on Saturday, December 6. Meet at the park entrance at 8:00 am to begin a search for Lapland Longspurs, owls, Snow Buntings, Horned Larks and other winter species. Dress warmly for this trip. For info call leader Kathy Felice, 860-582-5802

BEGINNERS BIRD WALK, STATION 43, on Sunday, January 11. Bring binoculars, field guides, and questions. Meet at the corner of Newberry Road and Main Street at 9:00 am. For info call leader Dave Porter at 860-233-2798

MANCHESTER LANDFILL, on Saturday, January 17. A new trip to search for white-winged gulls and other surprises. Meet at the parking lot at the landfill entrance at 10 am. For info call trip leader Patrick Comins at 860-646-6600.

WESTERN CONNECTICUT SHORELINE, on Saturday, March 14. This trip will check a number of spots along the coast from New Haven to Sherwood Island State Park, in search of wintering waterfowl and early migrants. Meet at Long Wharf, New Haven at 8:00 am. For info call leader Carl Ekroth at 860-872-6372.

BEGINNERS BIRD WALK, STATION 43, SOUTH WINDSOR, on Sunday, March 15. For beginners, bring binoculars, field guides and questions. Meet at the corner of Newberry Road and Main Street at 8:00 am. For info call leader Dave Porter at 860-233-2798.

Wildlife Series: Held at the McAuley Residence Auditorium, 275 Steele Road, West Hartford, CT

SEABIRDS AND MARINE MAMMALS OF MONTEREY BAY, on Tuesday, March 17, 7:30 pm. Debra Love Shearwater, founder of Shearwater Journeys will present this illustrated show focusing on typical seabirds of Monterey Bay. Fee: \$4. For more information call Fran D'Amico at 203-237-2734

COA Waterfowl Workshop

On Saturday, November 22, the southeast Connecticut shoreline will play host to a workshop on finding and identifying some of the waterbirds that winter in our area.

The route will have been thoroughly scouted before hand to find out where the birds are. We will try and see as many species of loons, grebes, swains, geese, and ducks as possible. We will also talk about identification and natural history of the birds we see. The eastern end of Long Island Sound always has the potential for unusual fall/winter visitors like Gannets and Elders, and, while they are very rare, this is the prime time for Kittiwakes and alcids. Meet at the commuter parking lot off Exit 70 on Interstate 95 (at the eastern end of the new Baldwin Bridge) at 7:30 am. We will be stopping at a number of locations and the workshop will conclude at about noon (later if the birding is good). Participants will receive a map of the area with recommended locations for finding waterbirds. Dress warmly as the shoreline can be quite cold at this time of year. For further info call Dave Provencher at 860-885-1239 or e-mail Nightjar@Compuserve.com.

New Haven Bird Club

WARM UP FOR THE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, on Saturday, December 13. Meet at the New Haven Information Booth at Long Wharf at 8:00 am. Bird some shorebird habitat, then to Edgewood Park and on to Maltby Lakes. For info call leader Tom Kilroy at 203-929-6683.

KID'S CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, on Saturday, December 20. From 1:00 to 2:00 pm at Ridge Hill School in Hamden, kids and accompanying adults will count birds on the school grounds. For info call leader Flo McBride at 203-288-6777.

QUINNIPIAC RIVER STATE PARK, on Saturday, January 24. This trip will focus on wintering owls and other woodland residents. Meet at the northbound rest stop on the Wilbur Cross Parkway (Rte 15) in Wallingford at 9:00 am. Call leader Dan Barvir at 203-946-6086 for info.

SAUCHUEST POINT AND RHODE ISLAND COAST, on Sunday, February 1. All day trip for rare ducks and gulls. Call leader Andy Brand at 203-393-2427 for info.

(continued on page 8)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COA encourages local bird clubs to send announcements of field trips and other events to Dwight Smith, Bulletin Editor
241 Shepard Ave, Hamden, CT 06514

COA Bulletin

Trips and Events *(continued)*

MILFORD POINT, on Saturday, February 14. Bird the Wheeler Marsh for ducks and other LI Sound birds. Meet at the center at 8:30 am. Call leader Pat Leahy at 203-393-2427 for info.

PEABODY MUSEUM, YALE, NEW HAVEN, on Saturday, February 28. Learn about this important resource for birds. Entrance fee \$5. Meet in the bird room at 10:15 am. Call leader Celia Lewis at 203-453-5878 for info.

PLUM ISLAND/NEWBURYPORT, MA, on March 7 and March 8 (weekend). Meet in Newburyport, at the motel, on Friday night. Bird Plum Island (weather permitting) and the Newburyport area on Saturday and Sunday and possibly head down to Cape Ann on the way home Sunday. Should get eagles, owls, hawks, ducks, seabirds, seals and? Call leader Frank Gallo at 203-966-8959 for info.

New Canaan Nature Center

THE "BRIG" FOR BIRDS, on Friday, November 28, from 9 am to Sunday November 30 at 8:30 pm. Visit Brigantine National Wildlife Federation in New Jersey with more than 36,000 acres of coastal habitat for waterfowl and other migrants--many rarities among the 289 species listed here. Cost \$345 members/\$365 nonmembers. Call 203-966-9577 for info.

NANTUCKET BIRDING, from Friday, January 16 at 8:00 am to Monday, January 19 at 7 pm. Naturalist Frank Gallo leads this weekend trip for wintering waterfowl, scoters, Oldsquaw, Common Eider, loons, gannets, kittiwakes, other sea birds. Cost \$294 members/\$304 nonmembers. Call 203-966-9577 for info.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, two trips, February 15-25 or October 3-11. Register early, as these trips are filling up. These islands have 430 bird species plus many other wildlife species. For more info call John Himmelman at 860-663-3225 or Frank Gallo at 203-966-9577.

SOUTHEAST ARIZONA BIRDING ADVENTURE, from April 25-May 8. One of the most exotic birding destinations in the USA. Visit the Sonoran Desert Museum, Buenos Aires NWF, remote canyons of the Atascosa Mountains, Madera Canyon, Chirchua Mountains and more. Call Frank Gallo at 203-966-9577 for more info on this trip.

REGIONAL HOTLINES

Connecticut (203) 254-3665

Rhode Island (401) 231-5728

Eastern Massachusetts (617) 259-8805

Western Massachusetts (413) 253-2218

Vermont (802) 457-2779

New Hampshire (603) 224-9900

Maine (207) 781-2332

New York Metro (212) 979-3070

Northern New Jersey (908) 766-2661

Cape May, New Jersey (609) 884-2626

The Audubon Shop

EAGLE WATCHES on the Connecticut River from January 10 through February 28 every Saturday. Meet at the Audubon Shop at 7:50 am and return at 1:00 pm. Fee: \$15 includes lunch at Oliber's Tavern. Carpooling available. Call Jerry at 203-245-9056 for details.

Connecticut Audubon Society

WINTER WATERFOWL ON THE THAMES, on Saturday, January 10, from 9:00 to noon. Waterfowl, loons, grebes, eagles, others. Trip leader Hunter Brawley. CAS members \$8, nonmembers \$19

OWLS AT HAMMONASSET, on Saturday, January 31, from 9:00 to noon. Search for wintering owls with Dan Barvir. CAS members \$8, nonmembers \$10

GREENWICH POINT AND HOLLY POND, on Sunday, February 15, 8:30 am to noon. Join Frank Mantlik to search for ducks, hawks, owls, gulls, rarities. CAS members \$8, nonmembers \$10

WINTER WATERBIRDS, on Saturday, March 7, from 9:00 am to noon with Miley Bull to search for winter residents and rare vagrants.. Meet at the information booth at Long Wharf.

The Fat Robin, Hamden

EAGLE WATCHES ON THE CONNECTICUT RIVER, on weekend dates, January and February. Call Jim or Carol at 248-7068 for details.

COA Bulletin

Field Reports Requested

Birding observations by COA birders form the basis for the seasonal reports on the status of resident and migrating birds in the state which appear in *The Connecticut Warbler* and *Audubon Field Notes*. COA members are encouraged to report their sightings by filling in Species Report Forms. The forms can be obtained by calling Greg Hanisek at 203-574-3636.

Report periods and due dates are; Fall period from August 1 through November 30, report due December 10; Winter from December 1 to February 28, report due March 10; Spring from March 1 to May 30, report due June 10; Summer from June 1 to July 30, report due August 10. Please submit reports to Greg Hanisek, 175 Circuit Ave., Waterbury, CT 06708. Contributors should complete separate forms for each species observed. Sort the forms into phylogenetic order, using the COA *Connecticut Field List* as a guide. Detailed descriptions should be given for species on the *Field List* denoted by * (rare) or # (hypothetical) or for species not on the *Field List*. All reports will be preserved. Comments are welcomed.

Joining COA

The Connecticut Ornithological Association welcomes new members. COA is the only statewide organization devoted exclusively to birds and birding, and its members range from beginning birders to professional ornithologists. Joining COA is guaranteed to improve your knowledge of Connecticut birds and increase your enjoyment of Connecticut birding.

Membership costs as little as \$12.00 per year and includes a copy of *The Ten Best Birding Sites in Connecticut*, the quarterly *COA Bulletin*, the quarterly *Connecticut Warbler*, and invitations to COA events such as field trips and field days. Membership dues also support COA's rare bird hotline, conservation initiatives, and research projects. New members receive a copy of the official *Connecticut Field List* and a COA decal.

Present COA members who have not yet renewed for the current year can use the form below. Check the mailing label on the other side of this page to see whether your membership is current. If not, please send in the form today.

COA Bulletin

COA OFFICERS

President	Dave Provencher, 43 Branch Hill Rd, Preston, CT 06360 860-885-1239
Vice President	Mark Szantyr, 2C Yale Road, Storrs, CT 06268 860-429-4038
Treasurer	Carl Trichka, 65 Glover Street, Fairfield, CT 06430 203-259-2623
Secretary	Andrew Brand, 59 Brooksvale Ave, Hamden, CT 06518 203-230-1718

COA COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Bylaws	Joseph Zeranski, 163 Field Point Rd, Greenwich, CT 06830 203- 661-9607
Conservation	Paul Fusco, 4 Old Country Road, Oxford, CT 06484 203-584-9830
Field Trips	Dave Provencher, 43 Branch Hill Rd., Preston, CT 0606360 860-885-1239
Membership	Lise Hanners, Devil's Den Preserve, Box 1162, Weston, CT 06883 203- 226-4991
Program	Fran D'Amico, 508 Preston Avenue, Meriden, CT 06450 203-237-2734 Rachel Keneally, 290 Silver Hill Rd., Easton, CT 06612 203-268-6904
Publications	Betty Kleiner, 5 Flintlock Ridge, Simsbury, CT 06070 860-658-5670
Rare Records	Frank Mantlik, 261 Chestnut Hill Rd, Norwalk, CT 06851 203-846-8601
Research	Robert Askins, CT College/Biology, New London, CT 06320 860-439-2149
