

## **\*\* Annual Meeting March 26, 2005 \*\***

The Connecticut Ornithological Association invites you to attend its 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting on **Saturday, March 26, 2005**, at Middlesex Community College in Middletown, CT.

As in past years, the on-campus site will be Chapman Hall (for map and directions, visit [www.mxctc.comnet.edu](http://www.mxctc.comnet.edu) or call: 860-343-5800). To save on printing and postage costs, no separate announcement will be mailed to membership.

*This Bulletin will be your only printed announcement.*

The main theme of this year's meeting is "Migration." Please plan to arrive between 8:00 and 9:00 AM for registration. We will begin with a message from outgoing COA President Steve Oresman and an introduction to the day's events by COA Program Chairman Jerry Connolly. Our speakers for the day include Professor John Kricher of Wheaton College, Trevor Lloyd-Evans from the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, Karen Zyko of the Connecticut DEP, Wayne Petersen of Swarovski Birding, and Connecticut State Ornithologist Margaret Rubega of the University of Connecticut.

The cost for the meeting is \$10.00 for advance registration (received by March 19); walk-in registration on the day of the meeting is \$15.00. A hot and cold buffet lunch is available for \$12.00, and must be paid for in advance. **Details on pages 5-6. Registration on page 7. Please send your check & registration form to COA Director: Renee Baade, 46 Obtuse Rd., Newtown, CT 06470**

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## **From the President**

### *The Conservation Scene in Connecticut*

Two years is the normal term for the President of the Connecticut Ornithological Association, and as I am stepping down early in 2005, effective at the upcoming annual meeting, I thought I might give you some views on the complex, confused and struggling-to-be-effective bird conservation efforts in Connecticut and make a suggestion for improvement.

While I have served as COA's President, Vice President and Chairman of our Conservation Committee at different times in recent years, these views are strictly my own. Knowing our Board of Directors, these views may find some support, as well as generate disagreement and controversy.

*cont'd on page 2*



# COA Bulletin

## From the President (continued)

*cont'd from page 1*

I have lived in Connecticut since 1968, but did not become active in local organizations until my semi-retirement. I have long been a birder and a conservationist but did not much have much time to be active, although I have been on the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Board for almost 25 years. I say this only because I don't have a long history or old scores to settle with state organizations, and my views are a result of personal current experience.

There is little focus for bird conservation efforts in Connecticut. The DEP is badly underfunded, with only two non-game biologists, and we are way down at the bottom end of per-capita funding among the 50 states. The DEP, however, has the official government responsibility for conservation in the State despite the lack of sufficient resources. The non-governmental organizations, all of which do various good works, are largely not focused on bird conservation, their efforts in the area are fragmented and they generally don't work well together.

- The Connecticut Audubon Society, the oldest and original Audubon group in the State is largely concentrated on environmental education using its sanctuaries and nature centers around the State to this end. The CAS has a lobbyist in Hartford; however, the focus is broad, covering air pollution, bottle bills and the like. (In the spirit of full disclosure, I have just joined the CAS Board.)
- The National Audubon Society has fairly recently decided that Connecticut is a fertile field for their endeavors and has set up here as Audubon Connecticut, which has caused more than a little name confusion. Their agenda in Connecticut is not clear, and although they are interested in bird conservation, it has to fit with their national, political and fundraising agendas. In Connecticut they run sanctuaries, have a conservation staff and a lobbyist. They could be in a position to provide real leadership and be a catalyst for cooperation.

- There are also numerous local bird clubs and Audubon Society Chapters. Some of these are independent, and others are loosely affiliated with National Audubon and come together in a group called the Audubon Council. But as a group they are not a strong voice for bird conservation and have no staff.

- The Nature Conservancy is committed to bird and environmental conservation. However, its focus has historically been land acquisition rather than conservation programs or policy. They have staff and a large membership

- The COA is largely an organization of birders, although its charter is much broader. Its objectives are "To promote an interest and an appreciation of birds; to disseminate accurate scientific information about birds and their habitat; to help facilitate understanding and cooperation between the ornithological community and the general public; to encourage through research the advancement of avian knowledge; to maintain and publish ornithological records; and to promote the protection and preservation of important bird habitats." Quite a task!

- There are of course other national organizations that do outstanding bird conservation work, such as The American Bird Conservancy, Partners in Flight, and Cornell, just to name a few. However their focus is national and international in scope and only overlaps into Connecticut occasionally.

Where then does Connecticut get bird conservation leadership that deals with local issues and is based on sound science rather than emotion, can elicit strong public support, can work with DEP, and is an effective lobbying voice in Hartford? At the moment this leadership is sorely lacking.

*cont'd on page 3*



# COA Bulletin

## From the President (continued)

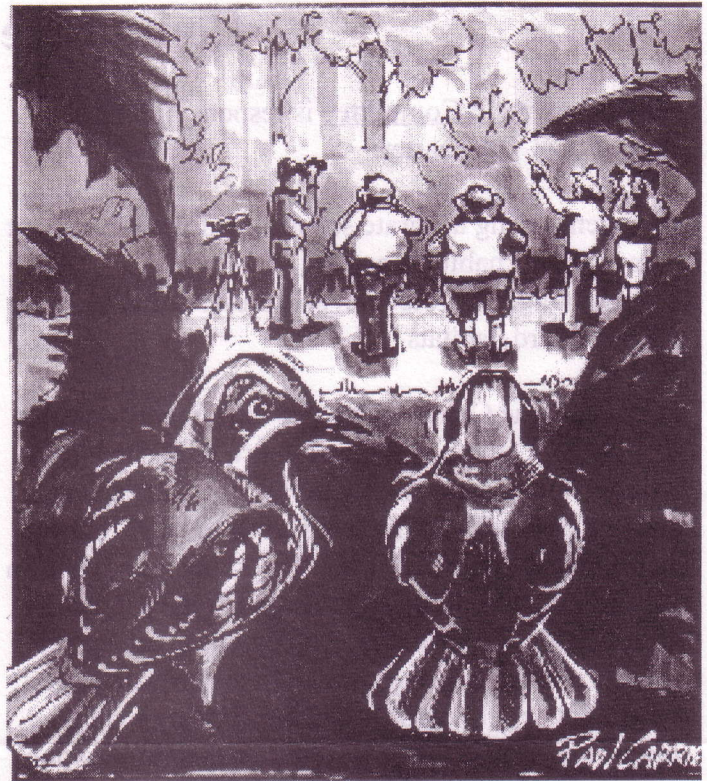
*cont'd from page 2*

The COA should be in a good position to help. Many of the most knowledgeable birders are our members, and our charter calls for taking a lead in providing the best available scientific information on birds and the environment to the general public. We have recently worked with other organizations on a number of specific bird conservation issues, including our threatened grassland birds and the tern colony at Sandy Point.

However, we have not been able to mobilize our membership to provide the citizen science on the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology model to support, for example, the DEP's Natural Diversity Database or to lead statewide bird conservation research or programs. Of course the COA is an all-volunteer organization, but we have the membership and skills to bring together quality monitoring, reporting and field work on bird populations. We have the independence and the vehicle in "The Warbler" to publish sound science and to be a voice for bird conservation. However, we have to energize our membership and work together cooperatively with all of the organizations in the State to provide the needed funding and political clout. The COA role should be "Citizen science in the service of bird conservation." This fits well with our charter objectives. However, we cannot do this alone.

To that end, I propose a Connecticut Bird Conservation Coalition including COA, The Connecticut Audubon Society, National Audubon, The Audubon Council and The Nature Conservancy. The objective would be to fund and carry out research on bird conservation issues, work with and support the DEP, develop plans and programs and lobby for legislation and support in Hartford.

**Steve Oresman**



I Just sing one song over there,  
then fly over here - and you get  
complete privacy once again.

*Paul Carrier*

## Workshops

### **April 2 (tentative): Gull and Waterfowl Workshop**

See COA web site, [ctbirding.org](http://ctbirding.org), for details as the date nears.

### **June 4: Birding by Ear**, The Audubon Center at Bent of the River, Southbury

Leaders: Patrick Comins and Carolyn Longstreth.

Assisting: Ellen Turner and Randy Domina.

Now that you have seen them all, learn what they sound like. Join the annual COA/Audubon Center "Birding by Ear Seminar." Registration, coffee and donuts start at 7:30 at the Center's parking area and listening/identification shortly thereafter. Light rain or showers are a go; heavy rain cancels. For information and directions, please call (203) 264-5098.

### **August (tbd): Shorebird & Tern Workshop**, Sandy Point, West Haven

**September 17: Lighthouse Point Hawk Festival**

**September 24: COA-CAS Swallow Cruise**, Essex



# COA Bulletin

## Committee Information

The Conservation Committee is responsible for two areas of the COA charter:

- (1) disseminating accurate scientific information about birds and their habitats; and
- (2) promoting the protection and preservation of important bird habitats.

To this end, the Committee's two most recent projects have been: (1) the Least Tern Report, published in the January 2004 Connecticut Warbler, and subsequent efforts at Sandy Point in West Haven to help improve their habitat/population; and (2) working together with the Connecticut DEP to provide breeding bird data on Connecticut's endangered, threatened, and special concern species for the Natural Diversity Data Base, the official central repository for information on the state's rare animal and plant species; this information is utilized to help improve the quality of the state's land and water-use decisions.

Ben Olewine, Chairman COA Conservation Committee

Publications: Betty Kleiner, a long-time Director on the Board of the Connecticut Ornithological Association, has recently stepped down as Editor-in-Chief of *The Connecticut Warbler*, the quarterly journal of COA. With her husband Gil, who handled layout duties, the Kleiners set a high standard for this journal, and their efforts should be applauded by all COA members and birders statewide. Betty will remain a member of the Publications Committee. Fortunately, other COA Board members have stepped up to ensure a seamless transition with "The Warbler." Greg Hanisek has agreed to take on the duties of Editor-in-Chief, and he will be recruiting, editing and writing some articles. Current Board nominee Manny Merisotis will become the Managing Editor, handling the layout duties for this publication.

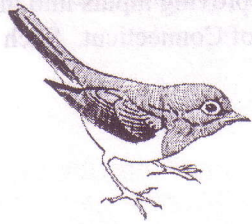
Manny has been coordinating the layout and printing of the *COA Bulletin*, this quarterly newsletter, for many years, and his expertise will be a welcome addition to the COA Board's Publications Committee. In other Publications Committee news, Board members Andrew Dasinger and Larry Reiter will be the new team handling the Bulletin, replacing Manny and David Gumbart; Dave will be stepping down from the Board at the end of his term in March, 2005. Andrew will be the Editor-in-Chief of the Bulletin, with Larry taking on the Managing Editor duties. Also volunteering his services to the Publications Committee is current COA Secretary, Steve Broker. His knowledge and involvement with birds and the birding community in the state will be helpful in bringing up-to-date news and information to each of our publications.

It is a challenge to bring both *The Connecticut Warbler* and *COA Bulletin* to the COA membership four times a year, and Greg, Manny, Andrew, Larry, Betty and Steve are to be commended for all the volunteer work they provide to the organization. Thank you!

**The Newsletter of the Connecticut Ornithological Association is published quarterly in February, May, September, and December. Please submit materials for the next issue by April 15, 2005, to:**  
**Andrew Dasinger at [dasingerfamily@cox.net](mailto:dasingerfamily@cox.net)**  
**21 Beechwood Lane,**  
**South Glastonbury, CT 06073 or**  
**Larry Reiter at [reiter.mystic@snet.net](mailto:reiter.mystic@snet.net)**  
**32 West Mystic Ave., Mystic, CT 06355**



# COA Bulletin



## Connecticut Ornithological Association

### 21st Annual Meeting

### Migration

Saturday, March 26, 2005

Chapman Hall • Middlesex Community College, Middletown, CT

#### Schedule of Events

8:00 - 9:00     **Registration**

9:00 - 9:10     **Welcome**     Steve Oresman, COA President; Jerry Connolly, Program Chairman

9:10 - 10:10   **John Kricher**     *Migration From a Bird's Point of View*

Migration is a widespread adaptation of diverse kinds of animals and has likely been so for many millions of years. In a richly-illustrated lecture, John will discuss not only how migration occurs but also why it occurs, all from what he imagines is a "bird's point of view." Reviewing some historical as well as contemporary studies, John will outline what we know about bird migration as well as some questions the answers to which birds are still "keeping a secret." In looking to the future, John will suggest how potential changes in Earth's climate and ecosystems will affect bird migration patterns.



John Kricher is an author, tour leader, and professor of biology at Wheaton College, Norton, Massachusetts. Dr. Kricher teaches courses in ecology, ornithology, and evolutionary biology. His most recent book is Galapagos, published by Smithsonian Institution Press in 2002. Other books include A Neotropical Companion, and three ecology field guides: Eastern Forests, Rocky Mountain & Southwestern Forests, California & Pacific Northwest Forests in the Peterson series.

10:10 - 10:30   **Break - COA Marketplace**

A time to socialize, purchase COA Raffle tickets and check out vendors' offerings of bird-related items.

10:30 - 11:30   **Trevor Lloyd-Evans**   *Passerine Migration in New England: Habitat Selection and Changes in Numbers of Migrant Songbirds*

Migration is the "missing link" between the breeding and wintering areas for New England's passerine birds. Using 35 years of standardized banding data, Trevor presents changes in populations of migrating songbirds from the SE coast of New England. These long-term changes are compared with Breeding Bird Survey data from the northeast. Habitat selection during this migration is discussed using preliminary data from the 2002 - 2004 Connecticut Migratory Bird Stopover Habitat Survey.

Manomet Senior Staff Biologist Trevor Lloyd-Evans has led landbird research and education in: avian migration, breeding ecology, physiology, taxonomy, evolution and conservation biology. He has headed the long-term Migration Banding program on the Manomet property since 1972, publishing on migration timing, population change, molt and physiology research.



# COA Bulletin

11:30 - 12:00 **Karen Zyko**

*Natural Diversity Database*

Karen Zyko of the DEP will present an overview of the NDB and discuss ways of streamlining / improving inputs into the database. COA member fieldwork and database assistance are important contributions to the State of Connecticut. Such data, for example, can be critical in making development decisions in Connecticut towns.

12:00 - 12:15 **Business Meeting**

A brief overview of the state of COA, followed by elections of officers and board members

12:15 - 1:15 **Lunch at Founder's Hall Cafeteria**

1:15 - 1:30 **Mabel Osgood Wright Award Presentation**

1:30 - 2:30 **Wayne Petersen** *Avian Vagrancy in the Northeast*

Vagrants often represent the spice on a birder's list, whether it is an annual list, state list, or a life list. By its very nature, vagrancy is difficult to discuss scientifically; however, there are aspects of the phenomenon that can be addressed with some degree of confidence. In this presentation the phenomenon of avian vagrancy will be considered from several perspectives, including an attempt to offer some of the probable causes of vagrancy in birds. Vagrant trends and the seasonal occurrence of vagrants in New England will also be discussed, along with hints for finding vagrants in the six-state region.



Wayne R. Petersen is employed by Swarovski Birding, prior to which he served as Field Ornithologist for the Massachusetts Audubon Society for 15 years. Throughout his career he has led trips and tours, lectured, and conducted birding workshops across North America.

2:30 - 2:45 **Break - COA Marketplace**

2:45 - 3:45 **Margaret Rubega** *Feeding in Fluids: The Biomechanics of Feeding in Aquatic Birds*

Aquatic birds are faced with an interesting set of problems while trying to secure food in a dense, fluid medium like water, while they themselves are largely operating in air. Shorebirds are particularly interesting because they display an array of lifestyles that vary from almost fully aquatic to completely land-based. This program will address the interaction of form and function in the feeding systems of aquatic birds, with a focus on phalaropes, a group of shorebirds that have evolved a highly aquatic way of life, and a planktivorous feeding habit.



Margaret Rubega is the Connecticut State Ornithologist and is currently an Assistant Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Connecticut.

3:45 - 4:00 **COA Raffle and Silent Auction**

The ever-popular Raffle will conclude our day with many prizes, including avian artwork and valuable birding equipment donated by artists and vendors. Raffle tickets will be available throughout the day.

In addition, there will be a Silent Auction of a signed Roger Tory Peterson Bald Eagle Print (magnificent!) donated by COA member Patrick Dugan.

For map and directions: [www.mxctc.comnet.edu](http://www.mxctc.comnet.edu) or call: 860-343-5800

**Registration Form Next Page**



# COA Bulletin

## COA Annual Meeting Registration Form March 26, 2005

Middlesex Community College • Chapman Hall • Middletown, CT

Early Registration: \_\_\_\_\_ Persons @ \$10.00 (pre-pay only) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Must be received by March 19)  
[Registration at the door: \$15.00]

Hot and cold buffet lunch: \_\_\_\_\_ Persons @ \$12.00 (pre-pay only) \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please **print** name(s) as you would like to have it(them) appear on name tag(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Send check payable to COA & registration form to:  
Renee Baade, 46 Obtuse Rd, Newtown, CT 06470

## COA MEMBERSHIP FORM

JOIN COA FOR THE BEST OF BIRDING IN CONNECTICUT

New Member [ ] Renewal [ ] Gift [ ]

Please Print or Type

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

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State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \* \_\_\_\_\_

*COA is always in need of volunteer help. If you are interested please check the areas below that you would like to know more about:*

Computer skills [ ] Events [ ] Field Trips [ ] Finance [ ] Workshops [ ] Science [ ]

Membership Category Student \$15 [ ] Individual \$25 [ ] Family \$35 [ ] Contributing \$50 [ ]  
Donor \$75 [ ] Benefactor \$100 [ ] Life \$1000 (payable in 3 annual installments) [ ]

Send this application with your check or money order to:

Connecticut Ornithological Association, 314 Unquowa Road, Fairfield, CT 06430

\*COA does not release its membership list to other organizations. Dues are tax deductible as allowed by law.



# COA Bulletin

## COA OFFICERS

**President** Steve Oresman, 49 Sunswyck Rd., Darien, CT 06820 (203) 656-3907  
**Vice President** Greg Hanisek, 175 Circuit Avenue, Waterbury, CT 06708 (203) 754-4401  
**Treasurer** Peter Bono, P.O. Box 1047, Niantic, CT 06357  
**Secretary** Steve Broker, 50 Hidden Place, Cheshire, CT 06410-3723

## COA COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

**Conservation** Ben Olewine, Redding, CT  
**Electronics** Dori Sosensky, dori.sosensky@yale.edu  
**Finance** Fred Schroeder, West Redding  
**Membership** Roy Harvey, 32 Wanda Drive, Beacon Falls, CT 06403 (203) 888-5757  
**Nominating** Greg Hanisek, 175 Circuit Avenue, Waterbury, CT 06708 (203) 754-4401  
**Program** Jerry Connolly, Madison  
**Publication** Dave Gumbart, Killingworth  
**Rare Records** Dave Provencher, Preston  
**Refuge Relations** Dori Sosensky, dori.sosensky@yale.edu  
**Science Advisory** Milan Bull, Fairfield

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**COA Annual Meeting Announcement and Registration Form**