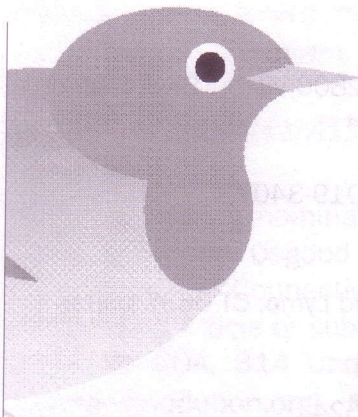
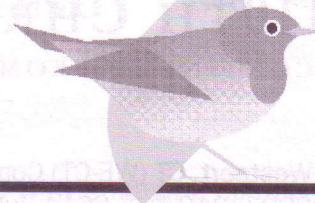


## COA BULLETIN



## THE 110TH NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Connecticut Christmas Bird Count 2009-2010 Schedule

Compiled by Stephen P. Broker

Contact compilers directly for information on participating in a specific count.

\* confirmed by compilers

### Saturday, Dec. 19, 2009

\***Hartford, CT (HA-CT)** Compilers: Jay Kaplan, 71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT 06019 [jkaplan@thechildrensmuseumct.org](mailto:jkaplan@thechildrensmuseumct.org), (H) 860-693-0157, (W) 860-693-0263, and Steve Davis, 860-242-2135

\***New Haven, CT (NH-CT)** Compiler: Chris Loscalzo, 67 Wepawaug Road, Woodbridge, CT 06525 [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net) 203-389-6508

\***Storrs, CT (ST-CT)** Compiler: Steve Rogers, 75 Charles Lane, Storrs, CT 06268 [climbrogers@charter.net](mailto:climbrogers@charter.net) 860-429-1259

\***Woodbury-Roxbury, CT (WR-CT)** Compiler: Ed Hagen, 47 Sycamore Avenue, Woodbury, CT 06798 [elhagen55@hotmail.com](mailto:elhagen55@hotmail.com) 203-263-0618

### Sunday, Dec. 20, 2009

\***Greenwich-Stamford, CT (GS-CT)** Compilers: Brian O'Toole, 203-869-5272; Gary Palmer, 34 Field Road, Cos Cob, CT 06807. Direct e-mail to Brian O'Toole, [otoole29@yahoo.com](mailto:otoole29@yahoo.com)

\***Litchfield Hills, CT (LH-CT)** Compiler: Raymond E. Belding, 1229 Winsted Road #30, Torrington, CT 06790, [hoatzin1@optonline.net](mailto:hoatzin1@optonline.net), 860-482-4046

\***Oxford, CT (OX-CT)** Compiler: Roy Harvey, 32 Wanda Drive, Beacon Falls, CT 06403, [rmharvey@snet.net](mailto:rmharvey@snet.net), 203-888-5757

\***Quinnipiac Valley, CT (QV-CT)** Compiler: Wilhelmina (Billie) Smith, 203-265-5295 [wrst@aol.com](mailto:wrst@aol.com); Contact: Loretta Victor, [lorettavictor@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lorettavictor@sbcglobal.net) 203-634-1911 (Quinnipiac Valley Audubon Society)

\***Salmon River, CT (SR-CT)** Compiler: Joe Morin, 8 West Street Terrace, Cromwell, CT 06416, 860-635-2786; Contact: Alison Guinness, 418 Tater Hill Road, East Had-dam, CT 06423, [wjguinness@snet.net](mailto:wjguinness@snet.net), 860-873-9304

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# 110TH CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

\***Westport, CT** (WE-CT) Compilers: Jim Hunter, [Wstkingbrd@aol.com](mailto:Wstkingbrd@aol.com); Luke Tiller, 33 Irmgard Lane, Wilton, CT 06897, 212-725-6611, [luka.tiller@gmail.com](mailto:luka.tiller@gmail.com) (contact L. Tiller for information) [rain/snow date = Sunday, December 28, 2008]

**Sunday, Dec. 27, 2009**

\***Napatree, CT-RI** Compiler: Shai Mitra, Biology Department, College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd, Staten Island, NY 10314 [mitra@mail.csi.cuny.edu](mailto:mitra@mail.csi.cuny.edu)

\***Barkhamsted, CT** (BA-CT) Compiler: David Tripp, Jr., 53 Country Lane, Canton, CT 06019-3407, [dtrippjr@comcast.net](mailto:dtrippjr@comcast.net), 860-693-6524

\***Old Lyme-Saybrook, CT** (OL-CT) Contact: Potapaug Audubon Society, P.O. Box 591, Old Lyme, CT 06371, Barbara Barron, President, [bbarron687@gmail.com](mailto:bbarron687@gmail.com)

\***Stratford-Milford, CT** (SM-CT) Compiler: Steve Mayo, 27 Tuttle Court, Bethany, CT 06524, [rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net), 203-393-0694

**Friday, Jan. 1, 2010**

\***Pawling (Hidden Valley), NY-CT** (HV-NY) Compilers: Carena Pooth, 22 Brothers Road, Poughquag, NY 12570, [carena@prodigy.net](mailto:carena@prodigy.net), 845-724-3236; Angela Dimmitt, P.O. Box 146, Sherman, CT 06784, [angeladimmitt@aol.com](mailto:angeladimmitt@aol.com) 860-355-3429

**Saturday, Jan. 2, 2010**

\***New London, CT** (NL-CT) Compiler: Robert Dewire, 9 Canary Lane, Pawcatuck, CT 06379, [robertdewire9@comcast.net](mailto:robertdewire9@comcast.net), 860-599-3085

**Unconfirmed dates (contact compiler)**

**Edwin Way Teale, Trail Wood, CT** (EW-CT) Compiler: Sue Harrington, 28D Anton Road, Storrs, CT 06268, [hoo-poe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hoo-poe@sbcglobal.net) 860-429-6257

**Lakeville-Sharon, CT** (LS-CT) Compiler: Bob Moeller, P.O. Box 1119, Sharon, CT 06069, [bob.moeller@snet.net](mailto:bob.moeller@snet.net), 860-364-5936





## How do some North American passerines survive the crossing of the open Atlantic to show up in Northwestern Europe?

By Paul Carrier

With almost predictable regularity during autumn migration, North American passerines show up in parts of western Europe. How do these wayward land birds get so far off course while surviving the rigors of traveling 3,000 miles due east over the open Atlantic Ocean? And, why have so few European passerine counterparts done likewise, showing up on our shores?

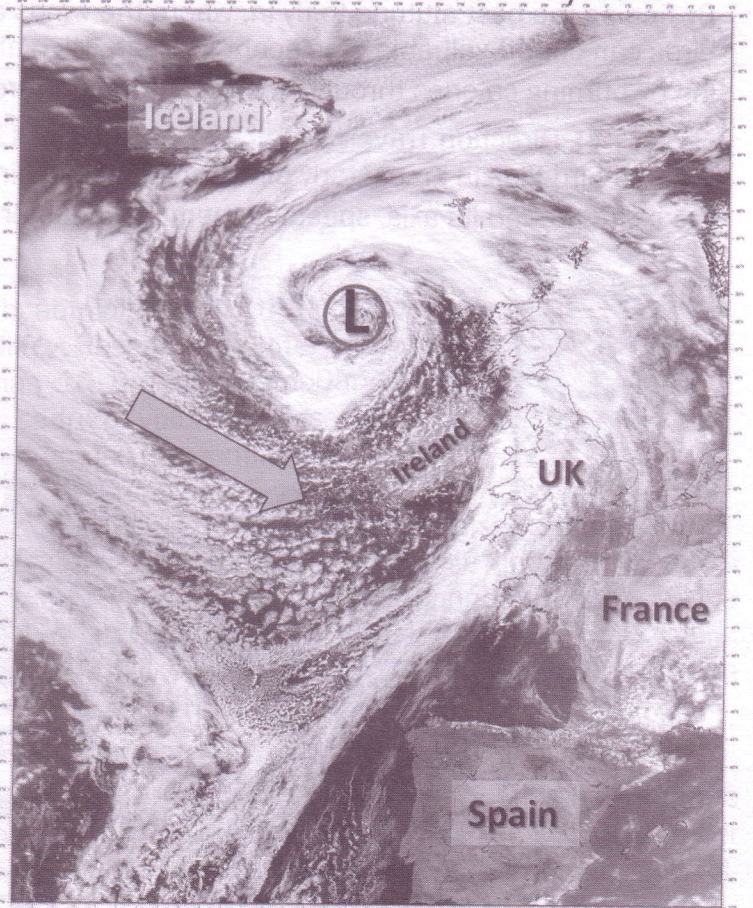
Andy Pay, a friend who lives in Cornwall, UK, has often mentioned to me the many sightings of American passerines found there during and after the autumn migration. A list compiled by the British Bird Rarities Committee includes about 50 North American passerine species that have survived this grueling trip, to the delight of European "Twitchers" who rush to see them. Sightings in the UK since 1958 include 99 records of Red-eyed Vireo, 43 records of Gray-cheeked Thrush, and 32 records of Blackpoll Warbler. Other species, such as Wood Thrush, Philadelphia Vireo, Golden-winged Warbler, and Eastern Towhee are represented by single records. Fourteen warbler species have been detected.

This article provides some facts that might help explain how these fragile, off-course land migrants might survive these flights to northwestern Europe, but first let's review North American passerines' regular migration routes here in America. For an example we will use North American warblers, many of which have turned up in Europe.

As autumn arrives, northern warblers begin their migration, heading due south or south-east, with many arriving on the North Atlantic coast. From here, many continue south, over land, but some pause and fuel up, opting to take a shorter, quicker passage to the south. As these birds feed and add stored fuel, in the form of fat, they wait for a westerly cold front to arrive, which will push them east, out into the open Atlantic. They eventually encounter the northeasterly trade winds, which then push the birds due south, with many reaching landfall at various Caribbean islands and northern South America. Though most passerines opt to travel over land, millions more choose to take this oceanic route east, then south, cutting their time of migration considerably. However, things sometimes do not go as expected, both on land and over the ocean.

As our over-ocean migrants are assisted by the westerly cold front pushing them out and east toward the trade winds, occasionally this front

North Atlantic Low Pressure System





## TRANSATLANTIC PASSERINES (CONTINUED)

will not weaken over the open ocean, compelling many birds to turn back, west, toward the land they just departed from. Many of these birds will perish, but with luck a few might survive by staying with the easterly flow, eventually arriving on the coast of northern Europe. Recently, the records of North American vagrants making landfall in western Europe seem to be turning up more to the north, such as Scotland, its islands, and as far north as Iceland. This might be caused by the more northerly turn of the Atlantic jet stream (British Bird Forum).

Here are some of the possible "luck" factors these birds might require to accomplish this grueling, yet amazing, 3,000-mile flight:

### Factor #1: Weather Conditions

Having continual, favorable west winds at their back will help them arrive on the European coast faster, though having these favorable winds with them the entire distance is not likely.

### Factor #2: Stored Energy

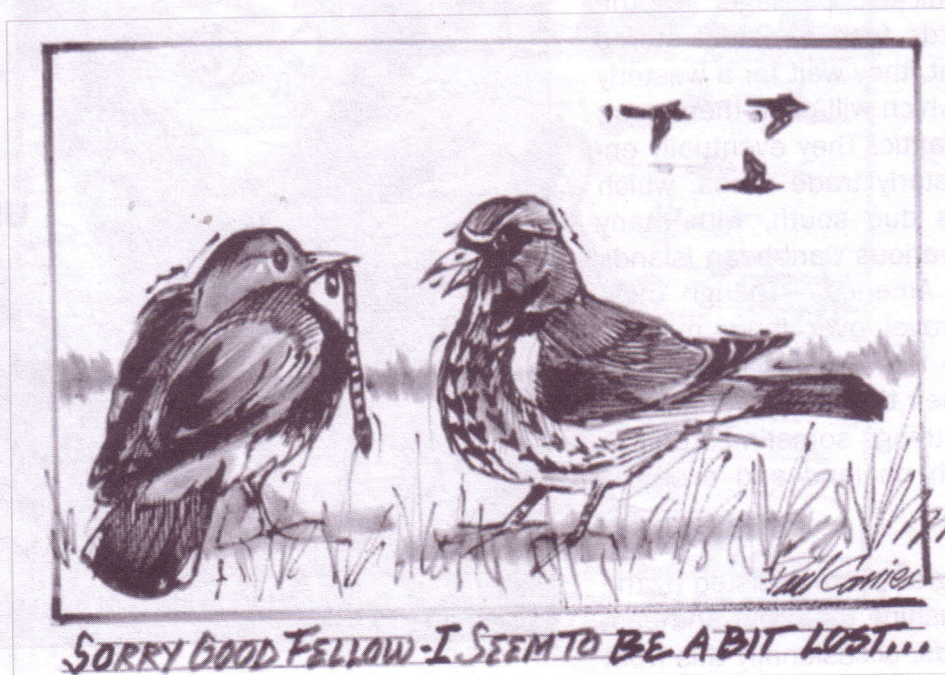
If these birds had stored enough fat for energy (as much as 50% of their weight), this might give them the necessary energy to reach land. The burning of this accumulated fat into energy also reduces weight, making the flight less taxing so they can "throttle back" as time goes on. It has been suggested "small American passerines which regularly reach northern Europe may have adapted this strategy during cross-Atlantic storms" (Mead, 1983).

### Factor #3: Altitude

By finding the best altitude to fly in, where the winds are favorable in direction and speed, these birds can cut off valuable time spent in flight. High altitude can also assist in preventing overheating by burning calories through cooler air temperature.

### Factor #4: Direction Traveled

When a bird flies in an easterly direction, as these birds do, they are aided a bit by the rotation of the earth around its axis, speeding them along faster than if they were flying westerly.





### Factor #5: Landing Options

"During calm weather, migrating ocean birds are known to put down on calm water, waiting for favorable winds to resume their travels" (Burton, 1992). Is it possible that our passerines might do the same? Years ago, the author observed a flock of eight Rock Pigeons land on the calm, glassy waters of a reservoir. They apparently landed thinking it was dry ground, seeing the bottom three feet below. They put down one by one, floated about until realizing their error, and took flight off the water as easily as a flock of ducks. Why then couldn't a passerine make a landing on calm ocean waters for a rest, or to again catch favorable winds?

Though some vagrant North American passerines regularly make landfall in Europe, not many European passerines show up here in North America. It seems the prevailing westerly winds, plus the numerous storm fronts that cross the North Atlantic regularly, keep European birds from flying west to North America. Occasionally, with the right conditions, some European passerines have made this crossing successfully, such as when intense low pressure systems in the North Atlantic produce strong east winds over large areas. The proof of this is the rare arrival of European birds into northern Canada, and the sightings of European birds on the North Atlantic coast (Mead, 1983). However you look at it, Europe seems to be the winner when it comes to seeing vagrant birds arriving from across the Atlantic.

#### References:

- Elphick, J. (editor). 1995. Atlas of Bird Migration. Random House. London, UK.  
Burton, Robert. 1992. Bird Migration. Eddison, Sadd Editions. London, UK.  
Mead, Chris. 1983. Bird Migration. Hamlyn Publishing, UK.  
Griffin, Donald. 1964. Bird Migration. Dover Publication.  
(yes, three different books all titled "Bird Migration")

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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: NORTH AMERICAN BREEDING BIRD SURVEY

By Andrew Dasinger

The North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) is administered in the U.S. by the U.S. Geological Survey's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (see <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs/>). Connecticut has 16 Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) routes, which have been covered by a loyal cadre of volunteer observers since 1966. (Over 4,100 survey routes are located across the continental U.S. and Canada.) Each survey route is 24.5 miles long with stops at 0.5-mile intervals. At each stop, a 3-minute point count is conducted. During the count, every bird seen within a 0.25-mile radius or heard is recorded. Surveys start one-half hour before local sunrise and take about 5 hours to complete. Once analyzed, BBS data provide an index of population abundance that can be used to estimate population trends and relative abundances at various geographic scales. For example, the State of the Birds report for the United States (<http://www.stateofthebirds.org/>) relied heavily on BBS data.



Observers typically stick with a route for a number of years. Bob Moeller, however, stands out from the crowd for his 37 years of service to the BBS. Bob started on the Sherman route in 1972 and never missed a year. Thank you, Bob! Bob ended this run in 2009, so the torch must be passed to a new volunteer.



## BREEDING BIRD SURVEY (CONTINUED)

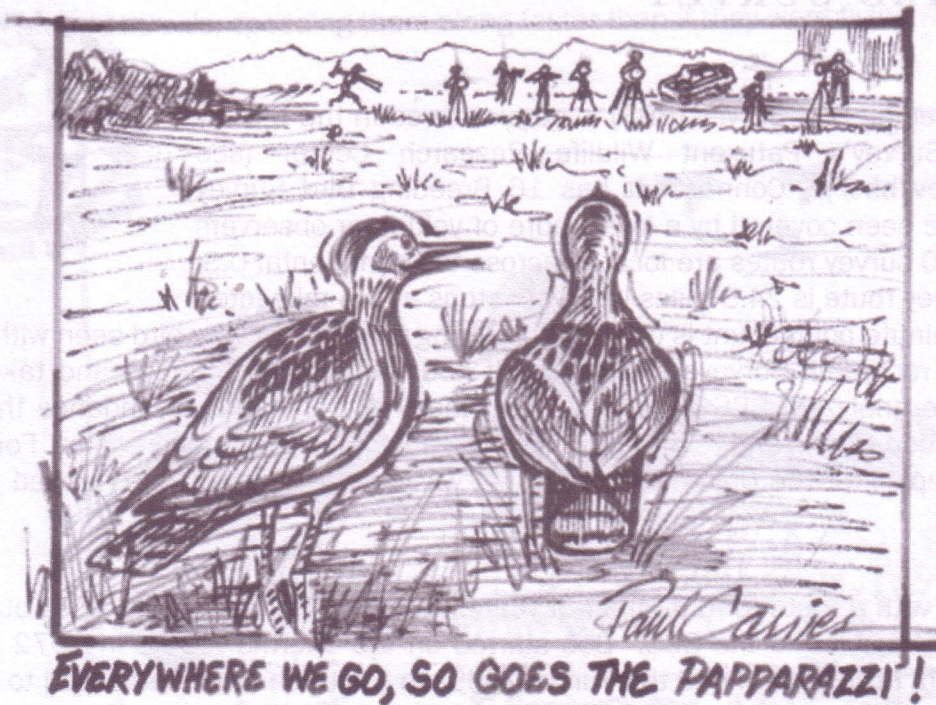
Connecticut currently has vacancies on three of its routes: Westbrook, Sherman, and Long Hill. I would like to get 100% coverage in place for 2010, something we haven't achieved in a number of years. Since there's an initial investment of time to learn the stops on a route, volunteers should plan on a multi-year commitment. In general, it's good to live within reasonable proximity to the route, since you need to be there bright and early to start the survey at 4:45 am. You will also want to set aside some time to drive the route prior to the survey so that you can locate all of the stops, which are at fixed locations. You will receive a list of stops with a description for each one (for example, telephone pole #5722). Each new observer takes a brief on-line training module.

**Route 18-006: Westbrook**—This route originates near the shore in Westbrook, heads west, then goes inland, ending in Guilford. It is one of the few routes covering tidal marsh habitat.

**Route 18-009: Sherman**—This route is at the far west side of the state, parallel to the new York border, passing through Kent. Bob Moeller may have a replacement already lined up, but we are looking for volunteers just in case. Bob describes the route as having changed very little over the 37 years that he covered it, save for construction of a few houses.

**Route 18-013: Long Hill**—This route begins in Long Hill (Trumbull), and heads north into southern Litchfield county.

Please contact Andrew Dasinger, CT BBS Coordinator, at [andrew.dasinger@UTCPower.com](mailto:andrew.dasinger@UTCPower.com) if you are interested in running one of the above three routes.





## SAVE THE DATE—2010 COA ANNUAL MEETING

When: Saturday, March 20, 2010

Where: Middlesex Community College, Middletown, CT

The COA Annual Meeting Committee is planning another memorable event filled with engaging speakers, satisfying refreshments, merchandise from the COA marketplace, and, of course, opportunities to meet with other birders from the region. Details along with the registration form will appear in the next issue of the COA Bulletin.

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

COA is accepting nominations for the 2010 Mabel Osgood Wright and Betty Kleiner Awards. Since 1991, the Mabel Osgood Wright Award has honored the recipient's significant impact on the study and conservation of Connecticut Birds. The Betty Kleiner Award was established in 2007 to recognize an outstanding article or submission to the *Connecticut Warbler*. Submit nominations prior to January 15, 2010, to COA, 314 Unquowa Road, Fairfield, CT 06824. Or, send an e-mail to Patrick Comins (pcomin@audubon.org). All submittals will be forwarded to COA's awards committee.

## GIVE A GIFT OF COA MEMBERSHIP

New Member  Renewal  Gift

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

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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)

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Send this form with your check or money order to:

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314 Unquowa Road

Fairfield, CT 06824

\* COA does not release its membership list to other organizations

Dues are tax deductible as allowed by law

The COA Bulletin is the quarterly newsletter of the Connecticut Ornithological Association, published in February, May, September, and December. Please submit materials for the next issue by February 6, 2010, to:

Andrew Dasinger

Dasingerfamily@cox.net

21 Beechwood Lane

South Glastonbury, CT 06073,

or

Larry Reiter

Reiter.mystic@snet.net

32 West Mystic Ave.

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