

COA Bulletin

Winter 1993 NEWSLETTER OF THE CONNECTICUT ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION Vol 7 No 4

Field Day Hawks, Talks, and Butterflies

by Steve Mayo

Great weather, plenty of birds and top-notch lectures combined for a successful fourth annual Fall Field Day. The September 25th event was staged at the DEP's Kellogg Environmental Center in Derby and was organized by committee members Frank Mantlik, Steve Mayo and Todd McGrath.

In addition to a successful morning hawk watch, there were four field trips which tallied 80 species. Louis Bevier and Jeff Fengler led short trips around the Osbornedale State Park property. Sightings included Merlin, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Blackpoll Warbler, White-crowned Sparrow and Purple Finch. Naugatuck State Forest hikers, led by Steve Mayo, found very cooperative Nashville and Blackpoll Warblers. A trip to Milford Point with Andrew Brand turned up Peregrine Falcon, Clapper Rail and Rusty Blackbird.

Four morning presentations were also provided at the environmental education facility. Jeff Young presented a photographic site guide to nearby Osbornedale State Park. Todd McGrath led the audience through the identification challenges of shorebirds. Ben Olewine showed the beautiful birds of Jamaica's first terrestrial national park, explained the Nature Conservancy's efforts to support Jamaica conservation efforts, and outlined an upcoming trip to the tropical island. Former

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HOTLINE HIGHLIGHTS

Sandhill Crane Sharon Jul 11 - Nov 4
 Buff-breasted Sandpiper Windham Aug 25
 Wilson's Phalarope Milford Sep 4
 Royal Terns Madison Sep 8 - Oct 17
 Black Vulture New Milford Sep 17 - Nov 15
 Northern Wheatear Groton Sep 19
 Broad-winged Hawks (25,000) Hartland Sep 19
 Orange-crowned Warbler Groton Oct 14
 Hudsonian Godwit Madison Oct 22 - 23
 Snowy Owl Stamford Nov 12 - 15

RARE BIRD ALERT: 203-254-3665

94th Christmas Count

The 94th Annual National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count is being held from Friday, December 17, 1993 through Monday, January 3, 1994. The seventeen counts in Connecticut are being held on six different days during this period. See the list on page 7 for details.

This year's count will extend a tradition which began in 1900 with the first winter bird census, a calculated counterpoint to the Victorian tradition of spending Christmas day shooting everything that fluttered within range.

Last year's Christmas Bird Count produced a state-wide total of 163 Count Day and 3 Count Week species, including five species new to the 10-year state CBC list and seven additional state rarities. A total of 41 species were seen in 10-year-high numbers, and 9 were in 10-year-low numbers. Two species, American Bittern and Common Redpoll, were missed for the first time in 10 years.

Field birders were out in force for last year's count, with 788 participants braving the elements. Feeder watchers, however, were dwindling in numbers, with only 120 people -- a 10-year low -- reporting on their garden birds. COA members can help reverse this trend by enlisting friends and neighbors to keep track of feeder birds.

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Field Day . . .

COA President Frank Mantlik showed how to search for and identify rarities among more common bird species.

The busy Fall Field Day pace continued well into the afternoon. Education specialist Flo McBride showed attendees successful tips on birding for children. The beautiful fields and gardens of the Kellogg Estate provided the backdrop for a popular butterfly identification workshop led by Fred Purnell.

Thanks to DEP's Will Stoddard and his staff, to the speakers, lecturers and to all 58 attendees for making this year's Fall Field Day a tremendous success.

Florence McBride Gets Peterson Award

Congratulations to COA member Florence McBride, who received the Roger Tory Peterson Institute's "Nature Educator of the Year" award in an August 29, 1993 ceremony at Jamestown, New York,

Since the 1990-1991 school year, Flo has been developing an innovative bird observation curriculum for children as part of the Hamden School System's Partners in Science Program. Through outdoor activities, posters, tapes of common bird songs, and over 250 pages of written materials and graphics, children have learned the process of scientific research and gained an appreciation of nature study. To date, over 60 teachers and 1,000 elementary school students have benefited from Flo's program.

The Roger Tory Peterson Institute promotes the study and teaching of natural history through a variety of programs and publications aimed at teachers and young people.

**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, 1994 to
Jay Knox, Editor,
43 Bridge Road, Weston, CT 06883.**

Waterfowl Studies

Your observations can help to improve knowledge of the population dynamics of two significant Connecticut waterfowl species.

Canada Geese The DEP continues to seek data on geese with neck collars for its study of migration patterns and winter distribution. The collars have a unique three or four-digit code (e.g. GN5 or GY#) which can be observed through a scope or binoculars. Anyone who observes neck-banded geese should record the following: neck-band color, code, code color, date, location, habitat, and size of flock. Record only codes that can be clearly read; do not guess! Please send this data, along with your name and address, to Paul Merola, Connecticut DEP Waterfowl Program, Franklin Wildlife Management Area, 391 Route 32, North Franklin, CT 06254 (Phone 642-7239).

Greater Scaup University of Connecticut researchers have found that chemical contamination may be the cause of declines noted in coastal scaup populations. To test this hypothesis, information is needed on where scaup are wintering. Please note the following information about wintering flocks: date and time observed, specific location, species, flock size, sex composition of the flock (i.e. percent male), whether the majority of the flock is active or resting, whether feeding is taking place, distance from shore, weather, and tide. Send this data, along with your name and address, to Matt Tomassone, Box U-87, 1376 Storrs Road, Storrs, CT 06269 (Phone 486-0138).

New Tax Checkoff Will Help Wildlife

Starting in 1994, there will be a new way to raise funds for our only state government programs which seek to preserve Connecticut's biological diversity by protecting our rarest plant and animal species. The Wildlife Income Tax Refund Checkoff Program will allow taxpayers to indicate on their tax forms that they wish to donate all or part of their refunds to support the Endangered Species, Natural Area Preserves, and Nongame Wildlife programs administered by the Department of Environmental Protection.

Because these programs have been chronically

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underfunded, this new source of revenue is badly needed. Results from the 38 other states with similar tax checkoffs, adjusted for population, suggest that Connecticut could raise about \$200,000 annually from its wildlife checkoff.

However, since contributions are voluntary, the amount of revenue generated will depend upon how well the new checkoff and its benefits for wildlife are publicized. COA members can play an important role in getting the word out on this new program. A network of volunteers is needed to distribute promotional material to local town halls, post offices, libraries, and garden centers in January. Also, local newspapers need to be asked to donate ad space, and letters to the editor need to be written to inform people of the checkoff.

If you can devote an hour or more to any of these efforts, please contact David Sutherland at The Nature Conservancy (344-0716), Elaine Hinsch at the DEP (566-5191) or Louise Levy at the Audubon Council of Connecticut (232-1092). Any time you spend promoting the checkoff will yield a big return for Connecticut's endangered plants and animals.

The Magic Pelagic

by Alison Olivieri

We're sure you're sorry now -- now that you've heard about the Trip's Best Bird, the Long-tailed Jaeger that soared over the boat forever; the jaeger that put down on the water and then took off again; the jaeger that prompted leader Wayne Peterson to say that he was leaving the microphone to locate his camera; that jaeger. That was some bird.

For a first time pelagist, though, it isn't just one bird, no matter how extraordinary. The sensation of being on a boat all night and all day -- leaving Port Judith, RI in the evening and arriving at the Continental Shelf at dawn -- is not unlike visiting another planet. For one thing, the ways things look, smell, taste, and sound a hundred miles from shore are temporarily altered by the enveloping water and sky. It's big, it's bright, and it's not at all like watching PBS. Then, of course, there's the issue of balance, which is less apparent on board than it is when you actually get off.

The BIRDS are most decidedly different and the effect is one wherein the ordinary field trip is forgotten: "Look at those shearwaters!" -- there were hundreds and hundreds of them all around the boat, and in the end, all

five species were seen.

Here's a partial bird list: Shearwaters: Sooty, Cory's, Greater, Manx and Audubon's; Wilson's Storm-Petrel; Northern Gannet; Peregrine Falcon; Red-necked Phalarope; Jaegers: Pomarine and Long-tailed; Gulls: Laughing, Herring, Lesser Black-backed and Great Black-backed; Terns: Common and Arctic; Marsh Wren; Blackpoll Warbler and Sparrows: Song and Lincoln's.

Here's another list of interesting life forms: Monarch Butterfly (!), Red Bat, Bottlenose and Common Dolphins, Fin Whale, Portuguese Man-of-war, Ocean Sunfish, File Fish, Blue Shark, Bluefin and Yellowfin Tuna and Mahimahi (the fish dolphin). As they say about the New York Lottery, "Hey, You Never Know."

Well, if you missed this sensational outing run by the Connecticut Audubon Society back in September and led by Massachusetts Audubon's Wayne Peterson, you should think long and hard about petitioning for another trip next year. If you even might be interested, you should call Lauren Brown at 481-0377 or 259-6305 and let her know.

Field Trip Report

Recent COA field trips produced good turnouts of both birds and birders.

The weather for the second annual COA shorebird/gull/tern identification workshop on August 29 at Milford Point was delightful. Led by Todd McGrath and Frank Mantlik, the thirty attendees scoped a wide variety of coastal birds -- 47 species in all. A special effort was made to ensure that everyone had an opportunity to study the various field marks of common and uncommon shorebirds, a difficult group to identify. Noteworthy were an American Oystercatcher, 3 Western and 1 White-rumped Sandpipers, 30 Red Knots, and 3 Forster's Terns among 2,000 or so Common Terns. To top it off, workshop participants collected four

HOTLINE REPORTS

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

Milan Bull 259-6305 or 255-8837

Jay Hand 434-0213 or 771-6755

Frank Mantlik 838-1694

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barrels-full of trash from the beach in an effort to maintain the beauty of this wonderful preserve!

On October 2nd, Steve Mayo and Todd McGrath led an all day trip to Lighthouse Point Park and Hammonasset State Park. Strong southwest winds brought plenty of birds to these coastal hotspots. The twenty participants saw several of the ten Merlin and eight Peregrines reported at the Lighthouse Hawk Watch. Common Loons, Tree Swallows and Bobolinks were among the other migrants streaming by. At Hammonasset, the expected concentrations of sparrows didn't materialize. Instead, falcons (American Kestrel and Peregrine) and shorebirds (American Golden Plover, Pectoral Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, and others) kept the birders very busy. Common Terns and eight Royal Terns (life birds for some) were also observed.

LI Sound License Plate Fund Clarified

After reading an article in the Summer 1993 COA Bulletin which urged members to buy "Preserve the Sound" license plates, Dr. Nicholas Greene wrote a letter to the editor in which he expressed doubts about whether the funds generated by the plate sales were being used effectively. He asked, "How does planting dune grass, building a fishing pier, and erecting 10 observation platforms contribute to the viability and welfare of the sound?" COA sent Dr. Greene's letter to the Department of Environmental Protection with a request for comments and received the following detailed response from Assistant Commissioner Arthur Rocque, Jr.

Dear Dr. Greene:

Needless to say, I was disappointed by your negative reaction to the initial expenditures of funds generated by the Long Island Sound license plate program. Perhaps providing you with an explanation of the purpose of the program will help you understand how this is a valuable and worthwhile fund.

Having read the article in the summer 1993 COA Bulletin on the Long Island Sound license plate program, you are aware that the funds under the program, by statute, can be used for any of four categories of projects: public access, education and public outreach, habitat protection and restoration, and marine research.

Please recognize that the targeting of those four categories for funding is not a reflection of our understanding of the full nature of the problems facing Long Island Sound.

The Long Island Sound license plate program was designed by the legislature to provide funds for projects not otherwise funded or for which there were no available funds. It was not intended to solve the Sound's most pressing problems, for which significant funds are already committed. The license plate program could not solve our water-quality problems because it could not hope to provide the necessary level of funding. For example, this year alone Connecticut will spend approximately \$270 million to improve water quality by upgrading existing sewage treatment plants, building new sewage treatment plants, and eliminating sewer overflow in Long Island Sound. That expenditure, funded by revenue bonds, follows in excess of \$600 million over the last six years.

To put the license plate program in perspective, we hope to raise between four and seven million dollars during the life of the program. This amount is about 10% of the total cost of the new Norwalk sewage treatment plant, only one of several plants needed on the Sound. Rather than get lost as a small percentage of a single big project for which there is already a funding source, the license plate program was designed to provide public access, to help educate people about Long Island Sound and its resources and to provide a better understanding as to how our coastal resources interact to form the Long Island Sound ecosystem. It was designed to enhance our existing water quality, coves and embayments, and coastal wetland restoration programs, not to compete with them.

In your letter to the editor, you refer to the advisory committee's initial expenditure of funds. Specifically, the project about which you are particularly skeptical is the "observation platforms." That project entails principally interpretive signage at ten sites along the coast to educate the public about our coastal resources, the diverse plant and animal species and habitat types, and their place in the natural ecosystem of Long Island Sound. As the signage will be keyed to the resources at each site, a deck or platform attached to existing walkways or trails is needed for viewing out of the line of pedestrian traffic. In short, the press coverage did not paint an accurate picture of the true objective of the project.

You also address the beach grass planting grant

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program in your letter. This program will provide habitat restoration as well as have educational public-outreach benefits. Beach grass will re-establish sand dunes as a measure of flood control and erosion protection along our beaches; it will also provide more of the type of habitat favored by many of our most threatened species.

In addition, other programs have recently been approved. One will provide grants for stenciling notices such as "Don't Dump -- Drains to Long Island Sound" near storm drains in coastal towns. This will publicize the fact that any substances dumped into a storm drain are discharged directly into coastal rivers or into the Sound. Another program allocates funds for special displays and equipment at the recently renovated Meig's Point Nature Center at Hammonasset Beach State Park. The displays will focus on Long Island Sound as a valuable natural resource. It will give visitors, most of whom are children, the opportunity to see and touch some of our more common coastal critters in their natural habitat. This invaluable, hands-on educational experience will help the next generation of citizens to become environmentally-aware coastal protection advocates.

I hope I have alleviated your concerns regarding the benefits of the Long Island Sound license plate program.

Frank Mantlik's Photos in Birdcraft Show

by Alison Olivieri

Some of former COA President Frank Mantlik's most striking bird photographs are on display at Birdcraft Museum in Fairfield, and, if you hurry, you can still see them through January 30, 1994.

Frank's photos are part of an exhibit called "The Changing Birds of Connecticut's Landscape," which illustrates and explains how local avifauna differ now from the turn of the century, when the museum was built by Connecticut Audubon Founder Mabel Osgood Wright. Casual birders, for example, or those who are just starting their journey into the world of birding, may not realize that Northern Cardinals are really southern birds that have, as recently as 30 years ago, joined us at the feeder.

In addition to mounted specimens from the museum's collection, the exhibit includes curiosities like

an *aigrette* from the 1930's (you know, egret plumes from the headbands of fashionable flappers) and a Carolina Wren nest found snugly tucked into a clothes-pin bag.

The attendant Adult Lecture Series is half-finished, but you can still hear Frank describe what a time he has photographing wildlife (on December 7th) or Linda Pearson, head of Monk Parakeet Research for Connecticut Audubon, discuss these tropical aliens (on January 18th). For information call 259-0416.

COA Supports TNC Neotropics Program

by David Sutherland

As part of its mission to preserve biological diversity by protecting the habitats of rare plant and animal species, the Nature Conservancy's Washington D.C. Home Office has formed partnerships with conservation organizations in over 30 Latin American and Caribbean countries. Last year, TNC's Connecticut Chapter committed itself to directly assisting with two of its Home Office's highest priority projects, the Darien National Park in Panama and the Blue Mountain Park in Jamaica.

As the Connecticut Chapter embarks on this new campaign to assist the management of one of Jamaica's first national parks, it is being given an important boost by the Connecticut Ornithological Association. At its October meeting, the COA Board of Directors passed a resolution endorsing TNC's initiative in the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park in Jamaica, and COA has agreed to provide various forms of assistance to this initiative.

Commenting on COA's offer to help, Les Corey, Executive Director of the Conservancy's Connecticut Chapter, said, "Whether working together to help establish and add to the McKinney National Wildlife Refuge or, more recently, to pass the state Endangered Species Tax Checkoff legislation, TNC and COA have been very effective partners. That this relationship is now being expanded to protect Jamaica's many endemic birds as well as those which migrate between Connecticut and the island is very exciting."

Corey went on to point out that "Aside from the remarkable array of habitats needing protection in their

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own right in the tropics, we are also, of course, finding that we can't really save 'our' neotropical migratory birds unless their winter homes are protected as well. The western Caribbean is a major center for New England's neotropical migrants, and in the case of Jamaica, there is also a very important human connection, as Connecticut has one of the largest Jamaican communities outside the island."

TNC's Connecticut Chapter has assisted in the training of park rangers, and has committed itself to raising one quarter of the funds necessary to manage the parks for the next three years -- \$260,000 for Jamaica's Blue Mountain Park and \$440,000 for Panama's Darien Park. COA Directors Dr. Lise Hanners and Dr. Steve Patton, the Chapter's two ornithologists who have been studying the worm-eating warbler and other neotropical migrants at TNC's Devil's Den Preserve in Weston, will be establishing research stations in Jamaica in January to study the winter habitats of these birds.

The Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park consists of 200,000 acres in the eastern end of Jamaica, and has one of the most diverse tropical rainforests, for an area its size, in the world. It is home to many endemic plant and animal species, including the world's second largest butterfly, the homerus swallowtail, which is found in one other area of Jamaica. Rivers flowing out of these mountains provide drinking water for 1.2 million residents.

Unfortunately, this extraordinary park is severely threatened by illegal logging and farming. Most of the communities surrounding the park are very poor, and residents often have few choices for survival other than to destroy critical natural resources. Blue Mountain coffee sells for over \$25 per pound and so provides a powerful incentive to cut down rainforest and farm on very steep slopes. Over 60 rivers in Jamaica have been seriously polluted by such erosion-producing agriculture.

The Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCDT), TNC's partner organization, is working to provide more ecologically-compatible economic choices for local residents. It has assisted various communities with everything from building bridges to developing tourist facilities. It has established local advisory committees, comprised of local farmers, fishermen and community leaders, to direct management of the park. The JCDT is also working with farmers to develop alternative farming methods and to determine the most appropriate parcels for different types of agriculture.

Various efforts are underway to forge links between conservation-minded people in Connecticut and Jamaica. Last October, Dr. David Smith, one of Jamaica's most prominent zoologists and Executive Director of the JCDT, visited Connecticut and met with many conservationists, including COA President Tom Baptist. They discussed many concerns and possible projects, including joint birdbanding initiatives. TNC's Travel Office has designed a Jamaica trip (described below) for Connecticut birders. Next summer, the Chapter hopes to host an exhibition of paintings by Frank Bernal, Jamaica's most noted bird painter.

COA members are urged to participate in The Nature Conservancy's innovative program to preserve neotropical birds and their habitat. Early next year, COA will send a mailing to its members asking them to donate to this important effort. For information on other ways to become involved, please contact David Sutherland of TNC at 344-0716.

Jamaica Birding Trip

by Ben Olewine

Renowned ornithologist Robert Sutton, author of "The Birds of Jamaica," will host a special trip to Jamaica's premier birding spots from March 12 - 19, 1994, for members of Connecticut's birding community.

Jamaica, a Caribbean nation only a little larger than Connecticut, has an immense variety of habitats, with a staggering diversity of plants and wildlife. It has more species of endemic (those found nowhere else) birds than any comparably-sized island in the world.

While this trip, organized by The Nature Conservancy, will focus on birds, Jamaica's best birding areas also host many rare reptiles and insects, including the world's second largest butterfly, the endemic homerus swallowtail. There will also be snorkeling opportunities, a three-night stay at Marshall's Pen, Robert Sutton's 300-acre farm and nature preserve, and a look at conservation work on the island.

The fee for the tour is \$1,900 per person, not including airfare between the participant's home and Jamaica. The fee does include a \$100 contribution to The Nature Conservancy's work in the island's Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park; it also covers all other costs while in Jamaica. For information or an itinerary, call The Nature Conservancy at 344-0716. Don't miss this very special opportunity!

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Christmas Bird Count Schedule

COA members are encouraged to participate in the 94th annual National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count. The 17 Counts in Connecticut are scheduled from Saturday, December 18th to Sunday, January 2nd. 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 scheduling 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.

Saturday, December 18, 1993

NEW HAVEN, CT (NH CT) Compiler: Stephen P. Broker, 76 Diamond Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1313, 203-387-0798 and Frank Gallo, New Canaan Nature Center, 140 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan, CT 06840, 203-966-6756.

STORRS, CT (ST CT) Compiler: Steve Rogers, PO Box 270, Storrs, CT 06268, 203-429-3458.

WOODBURY-ROXBURY, CT (WR CT) Compiler: Ed Hagen, 47 Sycamore Avenue, Woodbury, CT 06798, 203-263-5356.

Sunday, December 19, 1993

GREENWICH-STAMFORD, CT (GS CT) Compiler: Gary Palmer, 34 Field Road, Cos Cob, CT 06807, 203-661-4897 and Brian O'Toole, 203-629-1027.

LITCHFIELD HILLS, CT (LH CT) Compiler: Raymond E. Belding, 46 Scoville Street, Torrington, CT 06790, 203-482-4046.

LAKEVILLE-SHARON, CT (LS CT) Compiler: Bob Moeller, P.O. Box 1119, Sharon, CT 06069, 203-364-5936.

OXFORD, CT (OX CT) Compiler: Buzz Devine, 18 South Street, Plymouth, CT 06782, 203-283-0744.

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, Apt. 108, Middletown, CT 06457, 203-346-3735.

WESTPORT, CT (WE CT) Compiler: Frank W. Mantlik, 17 Seabreeze Place, South Norwalk, CT 06854, 203-838-1694. Additional contacts: Ed Hiestand, 10 Woodside Lane, Westport, CT 06880, 203-227-5997 and Charles Barnard, 94 Gray Rock Road, Southport, CT 06490, 203-259-8994.

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

Sunday, December 26, 1993

BARKHAMSTED, CT (BA CT) Compiler: David Tripp, Jr. RFD-2, Winsted, CT 06098, 203-379-9237.

STRATFORD-MILFORD, CT (SM CT) Compiler: Steve Mayo, 159 Kings Highway/#27, Milford, CT 06460, 203-874-1860.

Friday, December 31, 1993

PAWLING (HIDDEN VALLEY), NY-CT (HV NY) Compilers: Sibyll Gilbert, RR1, Box 236, Pawling, NY 12564, 914-855-3266 and Rochelle Skinner, Sherman, CT, 203-355-5899.

Saturday, January 1, 1994

HARTFORD, CT (HA CT) Compiler: Jay Kaplan, 71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT 06019, 203-693-0157.

NEW LONDON, CT (NL CT) Compiler: Robert Dewire, 9 Canary Street, Pawcatuck, CT 06379, 203-599-3085.

Sunday, January 2, 1994

E. W. TEALE TRAIL WOOD, CT (EW CT) Compiler: Marilyn Higgins, Hammond Hill, Hampton, CT 06247, 203-455-0063.

OLD LYME-SAYBROOK, CT (OL CT) Compiler: Jay Hand, 76 Sill Lane, Old Lyme, CT 06371, 203-434-0213.

Renewal Reminder

With the new year almost here, it's time once again for COA members to renew their memberships. Because COA doesn't have a staff to process renewals every month on the anniversary of the date members join, all memberships are based on a calendar year. Please send in your renewal for 1994 as soon as possible. Thanks!

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TRIPS & EVENTS

COA Field Trips

COA field trips are geared for birders of all levels of experience, from novice to veteran. The trips are led by a group of top field birders who have a talent for education. Trips are open to all and take place rain, snow, or shine. We often bring a snack or a bag lunch. For information, call COA Field Trip Chairman Steve Mayo (874-1860) or Frank Mantlik (838-1694) or Todd McGrath (649-2973).

WATERFOWL IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP on Saturday, November 27, 1993, 8:00 am. Get ready for coastal Christmas counts by learning about plumages, molt, field marks, and other waterfowl identification clues. Beginners are encouraged to take part in this half-day field trip which will cover Waterford to coastal Old Saybrook in search of returning winter loons, grebes, and ducks. Meet at the commuter lot off Exit 70 of I-95 in Old Lyme.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RARITIES CHASE on Saturday, January 8. An all day search for rarities discovered during recent Christmas counts. This is a great way to see some life birds and get a good start on your 1994 year list. Time and place to meet will be announced on the Rare Bird Alert (254-3655).

SUNNY VALLEY PRESERVE in New Milford on Saturday, February 5, 8:30 am. Black Vultures and winter gulls (Iceland, Glaucous, and Lesser Black-backed) are some of the birds we will seek at this western Connecticut hotspot. Meet at the preserve office, which is reached by taking Route 7 north and turning left just after the Federal (Grand Union) Mall onto Sunny Valley Road and then left again onto Sunny Valley Lane to the first house on the right.

ESSEX AND EAST OF THE CONNECTICUT RIVER on Sunday, February 27 at 8:00 am. During this all day trip, we'll scour the Connecticut River for eagles and then head east from Old Saybrook in search of coastal waterfowl and lingering shorebirds. Meet at the Goodspeed Opera House parking lot in East Haddam.

GULL IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOP on Sunday, March 27 at 8:00 am. Learn the basics of gull aging and identification while searching for rare gulls during this half-day trip. Meet at the info booth off Sargent Drive at New Haven Harbor.

Connecticut Audubon

CAS announces the following trips and has generously offered to extend its member rate to COA members. For more information on these trips and others, call Lauren Brown at 481-0377 or 259-6305.

NANTUCKET from February 18 to 20. Leader Milan Bull. \$300.00 includes transportation, lodging, and meals.

TEXAS from April 17 to 26. More than 200 specialties. Leaders Jay Hand and Andrew Griswold. \$995.00 includes all expenses.

CHINCOTEAGUE from April 29 to May 1. Leaders include Lauren Brown and Jay Hand. \$295.00 includes transportation, lodging, and meals.

Greenwich Audubon

GAS announces the following trips. For more information, call Jackie Bruskin at (914) 378-2254 (W) or (914) 667-3928 (H) or Brian O'Toole at 629-1027.

NORTHWEST CONNECTICUT on Saturday, January 8. Search for winter finches with leader Pat Dugan. Meet at 7:30 am at Island Beach parking lot.

ESSEX EAGLES on Saturday, February 5. Leader Steve Potter. Meet at 8:00 am at Island Beach parking lot.

Hartford Audubon

HAS announces the following trips. For more information call Betty Kleiner at 658-5670.

BEGINNER'S BIRDWALK on Sunday, January 16. Leader Sam Fried. Meet at Station 43 in South Windsor.

CAPE ANN AND NEWBURYPORT from January 29 to 30. Leader Betty Kleiner.

New Haven Bird Club

NHBC announces the following free trips. For more information contact Michael Lasoro at 284-9477.

SACHUEST POINT AND THE RI COAST on Saturday, January 22. All day trip in search of Harlequin Ducks, wintering waterfowl, and rare gulls. Meet at 7:00 am at I-95 Exit 54 commuter lot.

PLUM ISLAND AND NEWBURYPORT from February 12 to 13. Seabirds, wintering ducks, hawks, eagles, owls, and seals. Meet at motel in Newburyport on Friday night.

CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY on Saturday, February 26. Shore birds, eagles, and ducks. Meet at Hammonasset State Park entrance at 8:00 am.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COA encourages local bird clubs to send announcements of field trips and other events to Jay Knox, Bulletin Editor
43 Bridge Road, Weston, CT 06883

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Winter Field Report

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 *American Birds*. All COA members are encouraged to report their sightings by filling in Species Report Forms, which are available in convenient pads from Betty Kleiner by calling 658-5670. Betty will also send detailed reporting instructions.

The Winter Field Report period runs from December 1st to February 28th, and all reports should be submitted by March 10th to Betty Kleiner. Contributors should complete one or more separate forms for each species observed. Before submission, the forms should be sorted into phylogenetic order, using the COA Connecticut Field List as a guide. Detailed descriptions should be given for any species on the Field List which is denoted by * (rare) or # (hypothetical) or for any species not on the Field List. All reports will be preserved. Editorial commentary is 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 \$10.00 per year and includes this quarterly newsletter, a quarterly journal devoted to Connecticut birds, and invitations to COA events and field trips. 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 to do so. 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.

JOIN COA FOR THE BEST OF CONNECTICUT BIRDING

Please print or type

New Member Renewal Gift

Name _____ Name 2 _____

(Memberships above the individual level can include a spouse or partner)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ - _____

Telephone* _____ Occupation* _____

Bird Club or Audubon Chapter* _____ Christmas Count Name* _____

Level of Birding Experience* Beginner Novice Intermediate Advanced Expert

Membership Category Individual (\$10) Family (\$15) Contributing (\$20) Sustaining (\$30)

*Optional

Send this application with your check 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 under the law.

MEMBERS: PLEASE GIVE THIS FORM TO A BIRDING FRIEND

COA Bulletin

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Vice President Jay Kaplan, 71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT 06019 693-0157
Treasurer Carl Trichka, 65 Glover Street, Fairfield, CT 06430 259-2623
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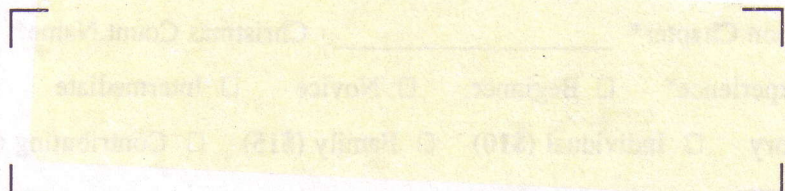
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