



## COA Fall Field Day

by Fran D'Amico

COA held its Sixth Annual Fall Field Day at Hammonasset Beach State Park on Saturday, September 23. This year all events were held outdoors and there were programs throughout the day for children. The weather was brisk but cooperative for the more than 170 participants. Bird walks went out to Willard's Island, East Beach and West Beach at three times during the day. Many thanks to trip leaders John Gaskell, Greg Hanisek, Frank Mantlik, Elaine Nye, Dave Provencher and Charlie Rafford. Throughout the day there was a sea watch manned by Sherman Suter and a hawk watch manned by Joe Zeranski. Together, they delivered the 101 species seen within the park. Highlights included Clay-colored Sparrow, Caspian Tern, immature Cape May Warbler and a flyby by a Short-eared Owl. Other notable sightings included a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Northern Pintail, White-winged Scoter, Northern Goshawk, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon and Whimbrel.

There were programs throughout the day for the 28 children who attended, including a kids bird walk led by Flo McBride. It turned out to be so popular that Flo graciously agreed to encore the walk after the lunch break. Seine netting rivited the attention of the children, while Meigs Point naturalists, Colleen Sanders and Kevin Allen braved the Sound, which was warmer than the breezy air. The best finds from this event were a sea star, comb jelly fish, red beard sponge, and a skate.

COA member Ray Schwartz and his assistant, Scott Roxbrough, brought an immature male Northern Harrier

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### HOTLINE HIGHLIGHTS

- Sabine's Gull Windham Sept 5
- Sedge Wren Storrs Sept 27
- Northern Wheatear Windham Sept 18-23
- Clay-colored Sparrow Madison Sept 23
- Black Vulture New Milford Oct 10
- Western Kingbird Greenwich Oct 18
- Swainson's Hawk Storrs Oct 26
- Northern Shrike Simsbury Oct 29-Nov 10
- Bohemian Waxwing Sharon Oct 29
- Thick-billed Murre Madison Oct 31
- Bl-legged Kittiwake Madison Nov 7

**RARE BIRD ALERT: 203-254-3665**

## Christmas Bird Counts-Past and Future

by Stephen Broker

Last year's Christmas Bird Count, the 95th Annual National Audubon Society CBC, brought out 947 birders--779 in the field and 168 at feeders to survey 6 northern, 5 mid-state, and 6 coastal count circles in Connecticut. Our combined efforts totalled 173 birds species seen on count days (CD) and an additional two species seen during Count Week (CW). The 1994-95 count recorded the highest species total in ten years.

Among northern counts, Hartford set the pace with 89 CD and 3 CW species observed while Litchfield Hills was right behind with 88 CD species.

Rare and unusual species were again recorded in good numbers, with Mountain Bluebird, Veery, Cinnamon Teal, Black-legged Kittiwake, Nashville Warbler and Ovenbird being the most remarkable finds.

Let's give CBC season another go with our usual vigor, enthusiasm, dedication, expertise, and disregard of the elements. Beginning on page 2 we provide information on count dates and compilers. Sign up for your favorite count or counts, and consider trying a new count. Spread the word to your friends. Introduce someone to the Bird Count--the world's longest running wildlife population census. And have fun!

# COA Bulletin

## Fall Field Day (continued)

and an immature Cooper's Hawk which had been caught and banded, for participants to see up close, before releasing them. Celia Lewis, John Coggins, and Frank Gallo were disappointed in only netting a half dozen passerines to band, but the audience was satisfied.

Clay Taylor and John Himmelman led an afternoon butterfly walk that many of the youngsters attended. Monarchs dominated in the park and participants in this walk had the opportunity to see one of these hardy migrants in a looking glass.

Many thanks to the Program Committee members who organized the day: Mary Carter, Fran D'Amico, Ethel Follett, John Gaskell, Betty and Gil Kleiner, Alison Oliveri, Frank Pearson and Mark Szantyr. There were also volunteers who came out for the day to help; Paul Fusco, Andy Griswold, Jay Hand and Susan Kirk. Last, and certainly not least, thanks to Greg Hanisek for writing the press release for this event and the great press coverage in his Waterbury Republican column.

## The 96th Christmas Bird Count

The 96th annual National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count is being held from Saturday, December 16, through Tuesday, January 2, 1996. Seventeen different counts are being held in Connecticut on six different count days during this period.

Over the years the annual Christmas Bird Counts have become a major ornithological success story and COA members are encouraged to participate in one or more of these counts. Check the listing beginning on the next page for the date of the count in your area and call up the compiler to sign up for this important birding event. If you have a schedule conflict why not sign up for another count.

Many COA members participate in several counts every year, and compilers always welcome another pair of eyes. Join in the fun with more than 1000 participants, many of them fellow COA members.

**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, 1996 to  
Dwight Smith, Editor,  
241 Shepard Avenue, Hamden, CT 06514.**

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1995

**New Haven, CT (NH CT)**, Compilers: Stephen Broker, 76 Diamond Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1313 and Frank Gallo, New Canaan Nature Center, 144 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan, CT 06840, 203-966-6756

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

**Woodbury-Roxbury, CT (WR CT)** Compiler: Call Chris Wood in Woodbury, 203-263-5331 or Russ Naylor in Woodbury, 203-263-2502.

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1995:

**Greenwich-Stamford, CT (GS CT)** Compilers: Gary Palmer, 34 Field Road, Cos Cob, CT 06807, 203-661-4897 and Brian O'Toole, 6 Fort Hills Lane, Greenwich, CT 06831, 203-629-1027.

**Litchfield Hills, CT (LH CT)** Compiler: Raymond E. Belding, 46 Scoville Street, 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, 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, 860-346-3735.

**Westport, CT (WE CT)**, Compiler: Frank W. Mantlik, 261 Chestnut Hill Road, Norwalk, CT 06851, 203-846-8601. Additional contacts: Ed Hiestand, 10 Woodside Lane, Westport, CT 06880, 203-227-5997.

## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1995:

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

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1995

**Stratford-Milford, CT (SM CT)**, Compiler: Steven Mayo, 27 Tuttle Court, Bethany, CT 06525, 203-393-0694.

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## 96th Christmas Count Schedule

*(continued from page 2)*

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1995:

**Edwin Way Teale, Trail Wood, CT (EW CT)**, Compiler: Marilyn Higgins, Hammond Hill, Hampton, CT 06247, 860-455-0063.

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

**New London, CT (NL CT)**, Compiler: Robert Dewire, 9 Canary Street, Pawcatuck, CT 06379, 860-599-3085.

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1995:

**Pawling (Hidden Valley) NY-CT (HV NY)**, Compiler: Sibyll Gilbert, RR1, Box 236, Pawling, NY 12564, 914-855-3266.

**Old Lyme-Saybrook, CT (OL CT)**, Compiler: Jay Hand, 76 Sill Lane, Old Lyme, CT 06371, 860-434-0213.

## Big Owl Day at Hammonasset Park

Well, it wasn't exactly a parliament of owls that showed up at Hammonasset for the weekend of November 5-6, but birders were sure treated to a nice variety. No fewer than five species were spotted at Willard's Island over that weekend. The big owl count included five Northern Saw-whet Owls, one Barred Owl, one Long-eared Owl, one Barn Owl and three Great Horned Owls. All were spotted in the cedars and shrubby growth that now covers much of Willard's Island.

None of the owls stayed too long however, so if you plan to bird (or owl) Hammonasset, prepare to spend some time searching for owl signs beneath the cedars.

While Willard's Island is probably the most consistent spot to find owls at Hammonasset, don't neglect the pines and cedars along the road near the entrance just inside the park. These have also produced their share of owls over the years.

For tips about finding owls in Connecticut's various habitats, check out Buzzie's article on Winter Owling in this issue of the COA bulletin beginning on page 5.

## Why I Bird

by Robert Winkler

A Connecticut newspaper columnist, in an attempt at humor, once complained in print that birds are noisy, flying nuisances that wake him at dawn and dirty his car. He saw no good reason for birds and suggested that they be eliminated. He ridiculed birders such as me as oddballs who parade around the woods in paramilitary get-ups. Therefore, in observance of the eventual coming of spring, I offer this defense of birds and birders.

Birds are important for a simple reason: they are here. Yes, they control insects, but the measure of their worth is not their benefit to humanity, no more than the pharmacy shelf is the measure of the tropical rain forest.

Wildlife has a right to exist for its own sake. The height of hubris would be to suggest that nature's profound creations must justify their presence to us. As if it were our place to grant birds permission to exist.

Birders are not frail, bookish fanatics in pith helmets and safari jackets. We dress like other people who frequent the woods, adding binoculars and perhaps a field guide.

When I go birding, I usually hike for miles, and I bird several times a week year-round, regardless of the weather. While watching birds, I have learned about them and about me, and I have gained admittance to the secret society of the wild.

Like the best sports, birding challenges the physique, the senses and the intellect.

To see birds in all their wondrous forms, you would have to visit the wetland, the coast, the open ocean, the mountaintop, the desert, the prairie, the jungle, the river rapids, the tundra and the polar regions.

When millions of birds migrate across North America -- returning to northern breeding areas in spring and departing in fall for winter homes as distant as South America -- birders around the country go afield to witness the mysterious and inspiring spectacle.

Why do people go out of their way to find birds? Birds are beautiful to look at, they make an incredible variety of sounds and they exhibit fascinating behavior.

A rare bird is as thrilling as the most precious gem. Birds

### HOTLINE REPORTS

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

Frank Mantlik 203-846-8601

Frank Gallo 203-966-6756

Mark Szantyr 860-429-4038

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come in every imaginable color, and in this country, they range in size from the 3 1/4 inch Calliope Hummingbird to the California Condor with its wingspan of nearly 10 feet. Whether a bird's song is short and sweet or long and musical, virtually all bird songs are memorable and stirring.

Birds, in short, show nature's diversity in all its glory. Watching birds is nothing less than a celebration of life.

But I think that the real fascination with birds is that, more than any other creatures, they embody the freedom and wildness about which we humans can only dream. These colorful, almost mythical feathered sprites defy gravity at will. They go wherever they want, whenever they choose, some at lightning speed. They are more beautiful and exotic than any extraterrestrial being Hollywood could concoct, and yet they are here, at our doorsteps, for us to enjoy.

Living in society's overpopulated, paved-over world--with all of its rules---I think that we envy the bird's wild freedom. We want that freedom and wildness for ourselves. And so we birders watch, listen to, identify, count, list, house, feed and photograph birds.

Admittedly, it's a vicarious experience, but it satisfies a deep natural urge within us. This is the same urge that drives people to hunt. Yet birders can possess nature's freedom and wildness without snapping the chain of life that joins us to other living things.

People who cut themselves off from nature are, at best, indifferent to birds, birders and wildlife as bothersome and unnecessary. They don't care if developers and speculators gobble up wildlife habitat, if pollution poisons the water and air, if birds decline and disappear.

After a visit to China, Roger Tory Peterson remarked that vast areas of the world's most populous country were almost devoid of birds. Tirades against birds disturb those of us who feel close to nature because we fear the rest of the world's birds may be suffering the same fate. In just a few short months, the morning chorus of bird song is ushering in another spring, but each year there are fewer choir members.

*Robert Winkler of Weston is a free-lance writer who often writes about nature.*

## Sea Watching

by Greg Hanisek

Here's some sound advice. Go down to that body of water keeping Long Island at arm's length, set up a scope and see what you can find.

Sea watching is a time-honored method of birding in Britain, as popular and rewarding as hawk-watching in this country. But in Connecticut, we often fall prey to a defeatist attitude when thinking maritime thoughts. That long strip

of New York out there blocks our access to all manner of seabirds, so what's the use of spending any time staring out at the Sound?

There's certainly truth to that. Our coastal points will never be mistaken for Cape Ann or Montauk, but that doesn't mean they aren't worth a few hours of our time. A series of vigils, especially during easterly storms, would add greatly to our overall knowledge of waterbird activity in Long Island Sound.

Recent efforts hint at the possibilities. Sea-watching junkets during October to places such as Avery Point in Groton, Harkness Memorial State Park in Waterford and Meigs Point at Hammonasset Beach State Park, have turned up Common Eider, King Eider, Parasitic Jaeger, Thick-billed Murre, a number of gannets and a bundle of scoters and loons.

While a storm raged in mid-October, Rhode Island birders were watching a Magnificent Frigatebird soar around near Point Judith. It wouldn't have taken much of a glide for that frigatebird to enter Connecticut's airspace, but if nobody's out there looking...

So consider rounding up some friends for a seawatch this winter. It will be cold, but fun. And, it will offer a chance to find hard-to-get Connecticut birds such as alcids, kittiwakes, or maybe a Harlequin Duck. If you're willing to keep some notes, it will also provide valuable information on the numbers and movements of more common birds as well.

The eastern end of the state has the most potential, but it's worth taking a look anywhere along our coast. There's nothing like sitting in one spot and looking to help hone identification skills and increase one's knowledge of seasonal seabird movements. A rarity would be a nice bonus as well.

## Connecticut Warbler Rarities Issue

by the CRRC Committee

The January, 1996 issue of the *Connecticut Warbler* has been dedicated to the Sixth report of the Connecticut Rare Records Committee. The report details the evaluation of records received by the committee during the last three years. The issue is also going to highlight details of some first state records as well as include important notes on how to take field notes and how to convincingly document a rare bird.

The members of the committee appreciate your patience in waiting for this report, as we recognize that it has been a long time in coming. If you have any questions re the reports please contact Mark Szantyr, Secretary, Connecticut Rare Records Committee at 2C Yale Road, Storrs, CT.

## Rare Bird Alert Hotline Changes

Some changes are in store for the Rare Bird Alert Hotline with the addition of new voices. Soon, birders who dial the hotline number for news and info about rare bird sightings will hear the melodious voices of Frank Gallo and Mark Szantyr describing the details. To report sightings of rare birds you can continue to call Frank Mantlik. If you can't get him, call Frank Gallo at 203-966-6756 or Mark Szantyr at 860-429-4038. Many thanks to Milan Bull and Jay Hand for helping our Rare Bird Hotline over the years.

## Winter Owling

by Buzz Devine

It is winter, the weather is cold and dreary and the landscape is leafless and barren, with only an occasional evergreen to brighten the otherwise drab grays and browns. Birders are once again faced with four simple choices; they can walk the woods in search of mixed foraging flocks, check the shorelines for wintering waterbirds and gulls and drive to the sites "most likely" to receive an influx of crossbills and grosbeaks and other winter birds. Or, they can go owling.

For the layman and birder alike, owls are mystical, magical creatures of the dark nights. They are almost always heard, rather than seen and their nocturnal songs echo hauntingly through the woods and over the fields. Yet, during the day the same owls that were so vocal the previous night are usually invisible, or at least seemingly so, as they roost in concealed locations, some in cavities, others hiding in dense vegetation cover, often in remote and rugged locations.

Because of their nocturnal activity patterns and diurnal natural shyness, finding owls at any time of year can seem like a daunting, often exceedingly difficult task but birders have a few tricks to help them in their search. Basically, they have two choices, they can hunt owls by day or hunt them by night.

**Night Owling.** Nightly owl prowls are the tried and true method of finding owls by amateur and dedicated owlers. In many ways, the nocturnal owl prowls is also the easiest time to find owls, especially in winter. Most of Connecticut's owls are strongly territorial from fall through spring and will quickly respond to the presence of another owl in their territory, either by physical confrontation or more commonly, by songs and displays that advertise the fact that the territory is already occupied by a resident pair so it is time for the intruder to move along. Owlers take advantage of

this basic behavior by pretending to be an intruding owl. That is, the owler hoots, or sings or otherwise vocally attempts to convince the resident owls that the owl prowler is now setting up shop in their territory.

Owlers have two choices on their nocturnal owl prowls; they can either vocally mimic the owl's song or use playback of tape recorded owl sound to elicit a response. Some owlers are excellent mimics that sound even better than the real owl. Songs of Barred, Great Horned and Eastern Screech-owls can be imitated fairly easily and besides, most of these owls will respond to a wide variety and quality of imitations. If you plan to imitate owl song, first listen to bird tapes and then practice for a while before auditioning your act in the field. It also helps to have a friend listen to your vocal imitations from a reasonable distance. They (your friends) can be the deciding element in whether you owl by imitation or owl by tape recorder.

Another good trick is to go to an area where you are sure there are owls and try to get them to respond. If you get a response then chances are that you are providing a reasonably good vocal imitation.

Most owlers still prefer to use playback of tape recorded song in their nocturnal owling efforts. Good tape recordings of all of Connecticut's owls that are likely to be picked up on an owl prowls can be obtained from a variety of commercially available records and tapes. When recording owl songs from these commercial tapes, the best system seems to consist of two or three songs followed by a one or two minute period of silence followed by another sequence of two or three songs. The whole sequence should be kept short, totaling not more than three or four minutes of songs and silence. Some owlers like to try to call several owls at the same time at the same location. If you elect to do so, remember to sequence the songs from the smallest to the largest owls, with plenty of time between the finish of one owl species' song and the start of the next song. This is because the larger owls will sometimes key in on small owls when they call, for the purpose of making a meal of them. The small owls are justifiably afraid of this possibility and generally will not respond if they believe that a large owl is nearby.

When you are ready with your tapes or have your vocal imitation well in hand it is time to head for the open road. The best spots for getting owls to respond are the country roads and byways that grid so much of rural Connecticut. Select a quiet route and likely spots at about one mile intervals for your calling sites. When you arrive at the calling sites remember to get out of the car quietly, and don't let the door slam. Place the tape recorder on the roof of the car and begin the playback. We have found that it is best to stand some distance away from the car while the tape is playing,

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just in case an owl responds in the middle of a tape playback song. When an owl responds, stop the tape recorder (or stop imitating its song) and listen. Watch the tops of the nearby trees, or telephone poles or power lines for owls that fly in close. In some cases, the owls will respond by flying in without singing. In other cases they will respond by singing, but only from the protection of the interior woods.

Once an owl responds, it is time to pack up and move along to the next calling site. Don't persist in calling an owl that has responded over and over again. This poses three dangers. First, the owl may abandon its territory, thinking that a stronger and more aggressive individual has taken up residence (or at least that is what we think they think). Second, the owl may become accustomed to your particular taped or vocal imitation of its song and not respond during your next owl prowl. Third, continued calling may alert another predator (usually another owl) to a likely dinner, i.e., the owl that has responded to you.

We suggest that a nocturnal owl prowl should be kept fairly brief, not more than a few hours of the early evening between darkness and perhaps 7 or 8 pm during winter. This gives the owls some time to get out and get hunting, rather than spending the whole night worrying about a possible intruder in their territory. Some owlers prefer to conduct their owl prowl in the middle hours of the morning, shortly before dawn. Again, whichever time you prefer, don't persist in bothering the owls through the night.

**Day Owling.** No doubt about it, finding owls during the day is time consuming but it has its rewards. For one thing, you can get a lot of exercise searching for them and for another, you can often get exceptional views and maybe even some good photographic opportunities. Winter owling in Connecticut is usually the best time to find two otherwise rare and elusive species for the state, the Northern Saw-whet Owl and the Long-eared Owl.

Both owls typically roost in conifer groves or sometimes individual conifers, especially when the conifers are near water. Connecticut owlers are aided by the fact that these owls often roost in the same locales year after year, and the best and most consistent roosting areas are generally well known throughout the state. Saw-whets, for example, can likely be found at Quinnipiac State Park, Chatfield Hollow, Willard's Island or the cedar grove at Hammonasset Beach State Park and Sperry Park at some time or another during the winter months. Long-eared Owls are considerably more difficult to find because they seem to be rarer. They roost in the same locales as Saw-whets and during a good owl winter can often be found only a short distance away.

Techniques for finding the two species are much the same. Simply walk back and forth through a conifer stand checking the base of each tree for pellet accumulations and whitewash. Fresh pellets and whitewash are a sure and

convincing sign of the presence of an owl. Once you have found a likely roosting site, check the foliage carefully for the bird---sometimes they can be extremely difficult to spot so keep looking. We find that it helps to obtain a vantage point where you are looking into the canopy with the sky for a backdrop, whenever possible. Being larger, Long-eared Owls can often be seen fairly easily but the considerably smaller saw-whet is initially glimpsed as a soft brown mass that looks almost like an upturned oak leaf which has caught in the branches.

Once you have spotted an owl consider yourself lucky and leave it alone. Don't attempt to climb the tree or remove branches to get a better look, and don't use flash and strobe lights when photographing the owl. Also, don't delay your departure from the owl's roosting site. Too much time spent admiring the owl can alert a potential predator to the owl's presence. Furthermore, while saw-whets appear quite tame, we don't really know how much they are disturbed and distressed by our attention, so look and leave.

## New Column for *The Connecticut Warbler*

Our journal, *The Connecticut Warbler* will soon include a Letters to the Editor column with Mark Szantyr serving as the editor for this column. If you have any comments, pro or con regarding any of the articles that appear in *The Connecticut Warbler*, or just want to add some additional information or point of view, send them to Mark Szantyr at 2C Yale Road, Storrs, CT 06268

## Volunteer Needed

Betty Kleiner is seeking a volunteer who can pick up *The Connecticut Warbler* at Advocate Press on Chapel Street in New Haven, put the mailing labels on each issue and truck it down to Fairfield to be mailed. This is a four times a year job. If you would like to help please contact Betty Kleiner at 5 Flintlock Ridge Road, Simsbury, CT 06070 or call her at 860-658-5670.

## Birds of Storrs, Connecticut & Vicinity

Word is that the newest edition of this book will soon be available. Much expanded and revised, this book will be an important contribution to the ornithology of the north eastern part of the state and is not to be missed. Plan to reserve your copy early. Watch the bulletin for more details about when and where to obtain a copy of this valuable birding book.

# COA Bulletin

## TRIPS & EVENTS

### The Audubon Shop

**EAGLE WATCHES ON THE CONNECTICUT RIVER**, See Bald Eagles from a variety of locations along the river followed by lunch at Oliver's Tavern in Essex. Saturday dates January 13, 20, 27, February 3, 10, 17, 24. Meet at 7:45 am at The Audubon Shop in Madison. Call leader Jerry Connolly at 203-245-9056 for more info and reservations.

**COSTA RICA FIELD TRIP**, March 15-25 with leader Noble Proctor. Call Jerry Connolly at 203-245-9056 for more info and reservations.

### Menunkatuck Audubon Society

**MIGRATION NAVIGATION**, illustrated talk by Bob Askins on Wednesday, February 7. Talk to be held at the Guilford Community Center. Call Jerry Connolly at 203-245-9056 for info.

### Hartford Audubon Society

**HAMMONASSET FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS**, on Sunday, December 10. Cosponsored by the Menunkatuck Audubon Society. Meet at the entrance to Hammonasset Beach State Park at 8:00 am. Call leader John Gaskell at 203-669-1862 for more info.

**EAGLES, DUCKS AND OTHER WINTER BIRDS AT ESSEX AND EAST OF THE RIVER**, on Sunday, January 7. Dress warmly and bring lunch. Meet at the Goodspeed Opera House parking lot in East Haddam at 8:30 am. Call leader Steve Mayo at 203-393-0694 for info.

**BEGINNERS BIRD WALK AT STATION 43**, on Sunday, January 7. Meet at the corner of Newberry Road and Main Street in South Windsor at 9:am. Call leader Sam Fried at 203-243-2569 for info.

**THIS ISN'T BIRDING, THIS IS WAR**, illustrated talk about Big Day preparations by Mark Szantyr on Tuesday, January 9. Talk to be held at the Elmwood Community Center in Hartford at 7:30 pm.

**CAPE ANN AND NEWBURYPORT, MASS**, on Saturday, January 27 and Sunday, January 28. Birding targets include alcids, sea ducks, Snowy Owl and Barrow's Goldeneye. Dress warm for severe cold. Meet at Fisherman's

Monument in Gloucester at 9:00 am on Saturday, and at the airport near the Plum Island Causeway at 9:00 am on Sunday. Reserve motel early. Call leaders Jim Moore at 860-673-4672 or Fran D'Amico at 860-237-2734 for info.

**THE JAMAICA-CONNECTICUT CONNECTION; THE BIRDS OF JAMAICA AND CONNECTICUT**, illustrated talk by Ben Olewine on Tuesday, February 13. Meeting at 7:30 pm in the Elmwood Community Center in Hartford.

**CAPE COD BIRDING**, on Saturday, February 17 and Sunday, February 18. Winter birding for waterfowl, alcids, winter gulls, hawks and owls. Call leader Jim Moore early for reservations and info at 860-673-4672.

**LAPA RIOS--JEWEL OF COSTA RICA**, on Tuesday, March 12. Illustrated talk on birds and other wildlife of lowland rain forest and other remote habitats. Meet at 7:30 pm at the Elmwood Community Center in Hartford.

### Connecticut Audubon Society

The CAS announces the following field trips and events and has generously offered to extend its member rate to COA members. For more information on these and other trips, call Lauren Brown at 1-800-996-8747.

**HARLEQUIN DUCKS AND THE VANDERBILTS**, on Saturday, January 20 from noon through evening. Trip to Sachuest Point in Rhode Island for harlequins and other ducks, tour includes other area birding spots and dinner at the Black Pearl in Newport. Leader Andy Griswold. Cost is \$35 for members, \$40 others.

**BIRDING EASTON**, on Saturday, January 27 from 10 am to early pm. Leader Judy Richardson, birder and bird bander will show you her favorite birding spots in the Easton and Redding area. CAS members \$5, \$8 others.

**EAGLES AND BRUNCH**, on Saturday, February 3, from 9am to early pm. Eagle birding with leader Milan Bull along the Connecticut River, lunch at Griswold Inn.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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## Trips and Events

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### Connecticut Audubon Society (more field trips)

**WINTER FINCHES AND OTHER NORTHERN SPECIALTIES**, on Saturday, February 10, from 8 am to whenever. A car caravan around northwestern Connecticut with leader Greg Hanisek for ravens, shrikes, evening grosbeaks and other north species. Meet at Route 8, Exit 44 commuter parking lot, junction of Routes 8,4 and 202. Bring lunch. CAS members \$5, others \$8.

**BALD EAGLES AT SHEPAUG DAM**, on Wednesday, February 28, 9 am to noon. Leader Milan Bull. Call for info and directions. CAS members \$5, others \$8.

**CITY DUCKS: BIRDING NEW HAVEN HARBOR**, on Saturday, March 9, from 9 am to early afternoon. Join leader Milan Bull to search for waterfowl, gulls, buntings and other species. Meet at Long Wharf New Haven Information Booth, I-95 exit 46.

Advance Notice: **INTERNATIONAL FIELD TRIP to CORNWALL, ENGLAND**, from Friday, May 3 through Saturday, May 11, 1996. Flora, fauna, history and geology of southwestern England. Cost \$2,150 members, \$2,250 others. Call the CAS Glastonbury Center at 860-633-8402 for details.

### New Haven Bird Club

**PELAGIC BIRDING**, an illustrated talk by Clay Taylor on Thursday, December 14. Clay tells how to avoid seasickness and see the birds of the high seas usually accessible only by boat. Meeting to be held at the Jones Auditorium at the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station on Huntington Street, New Haven. Social hour at 7:30 pm, talk at 8:00 pm. Call Celia Lewis at 203-453-5878 for more information.

**KID'S CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**, on Saturday, December 16, by Flo McBride. Kids and accompanying adults meet from 1:00 to 2:00 pm at the Ridge Hill School in Hamden, where they will count birds on the school grounds. Dress the kids extra warm for winter weather. Call leader Florence McBride at 203-288-6777 for more details.

## REGIONAL HOTLINES

Connecticut (203) 254-3665

Rhode Island (401) 949-3870

Eastern Massachusetts (617) 259-8805

Western Massachusetts (413) 253-2218

Vermont (802) 457-4861

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

**PLUM ISLAND/NEWBURYPORT**, on Saturday, January 13 and Sunday, January 14. Bird for eagles, owls, hawks, ducks, seabirds, seals, etc. Meet in Newburyport, at the motel on Friday night. Call leader Frank Gallo at 203-966-6756 for details.

**SACHUEST POINT & RHODE ISLAND COAST**, on Sunday, January 21. All day trip for Harlequin Ducks, rare gulls and other birds. Bring lunch, spotting scope. Meet at Exit 54 commuter lot off I-95 at 7 am. Call leader Andy Brand at 203-230-1718 for details.

**CT RIVER VALLEY AND EASTERN SHORE**, on Sunday, February 25. Shorebirds, eagles, Rough-legged Hawks and ducks along the shore from Madison to the lower Connecticut River Valley. Meet at Hammonasset State Park entrance at 8 am. Call leader John Himmelman at 203-663-3225 for details.

**SOUTHWESTERN COAST**, on Saturday, March 16. Check western shoreline for waterfowl and rarities. Bring lunch. Meet at the Sherwood Island State Park parking lot (I-95 exit 18) near the large pavilion at 8 am. Call leader Tom Kilroy at 203-929-6683.

**SHORELINE FROM LIGHTHOUSE TO LORDSHIP**, on April 6. Winter gulls, loons, ducks and early shorebirds. Meet at the Hawkwatch parking lot at Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven at 8:30 am. Call leader Dick English at 203-865-8610 for details.

### Hartford Audubon Society

Advance Notice: **BIG BEND AND WEST TEXAS**, from April 26-May 5. From San Antonio, Texas, this birding trip costs \$450, plus meals. Call leader Sam Fried at 203-243-2569 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, available from Greg Hanisek by calling 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 30, 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, 158 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*, a quarterly journal of Connecticut ornithology, *The 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.

### 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 (\$12)     Family (\$18)     Contributing (\$25)     Sustaining (\$40)

\*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

## COA OFFICERS

**President** Jay Kaplan, 71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT 06896 860-693-0157  
**Vice President** Dave Provencher, 43 Branch Hill Rd, Preston, CT 06360 860-885-1239  
**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** Steve Mayo, Tuttle Court, Bethany, CT 0606525 203- 874-1860  
**Membership Program** Lise Hanners, Devil's Den Pres, Box 1162, Weston, CT06883 203- 226-4991  
**Publications** Fran D'Amico, 508 Preston Avenue, Meriden, CT 06450 860-237-2734  
**Rare Records** Betty Kleiner, 5 Flintlock Ridge, Simsbury, CT 06070 860-658-5670  
**Research** Frank Mantlik, 261 Chestnut Hill Rd, Norwalk, CT 06851 203-846-8601  
**Research** Robert Askins, CT College/Biology, New London, CT 06320 203-439-2149

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