

Hampshire Bird Club, Inc.  
Amherst, Massachusetts

<http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~hampbird/>

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September draws nigh. Immature humans return to the classroom, asking questions such as, “Mom, why do I have to wear this lame outfit?”, “But why does my navel have to be covered?” and “Well, what if all my friends have it pierced?” Meanwhile, immature birds wander about the landscape asking questions like, “Why do I have to wear this lame outfit?”, “Why isn’t my navel showing?” and “Do I even have one?”. Pretty soon, all the rest of this cicada-thrumming summer indolence will be replaced by the insistent whisperings of migratory hormones. The shorebirds are already well on their way and songbirds will soon begin to sift silently through our overgrown valley. Hawks will begin their wondrous dance with the rising air.

This newsletter is to welcome you to the new club year. Please remember to send us your membership dues, using the enclosed form. (Stimulate the HBC economy by using part of that pesky tax refund which is burning a hole in your wallet!). We also need the release form on the back, if you plan to go on field trips. If you joined for the first time after April 30, 2001, the dues you paid are good through August 31, 2002. Check the enclosed field trip schedule ASAP- they will fill up fast. Sign up also for the rare bird alert, if you are serious about chasing rarities in the valley or beyond. *Oh, and don’t forget to keep the evening of Monday, September 10 free for our first program (see below)!!*

After all that, you are free to strap on the binocs. and enjoy the bounty of fall birding with a clear conscience!!

### **HBC Newsletter Goes on Line!**

**This is the inaugural on-line edition of the newsletter. For those of you with access to the Internet, each newsletter will now be available at the club’s website.** We urge all who can to avail themselves of this option.

***“What’s the point?”***

Well, of course, you will also hear first word of the illuminating programs, tantalizing field trips, and, of course, salacious gossip for which the club is known. The real point is that, if the club can save on the costs of printing and mailing, we can keep membership fees down, and provide other things to our membership. Rest assured, the traditional hard copy, delivered via USPS, will continue to be available for those who choose it.

***“But how will I remember to download the newsletter??”***

An email will arrive reassuringly in your in-box, advising you that the newsletter is up on the website.

***“How do I sign up?”***

Please sign up on the membership form. Thank you.

### **An Editors (apologetic) Moment.....**

Some of you probably like columns. In fact, some of you are probably wishing “Why can’t there be columns in this newsletter?” Well, rest assured that no one likes columns more than I do. I really like columns. However, just at this moment, columns do not seem to like me. So, until the columns learn who is boss, there are not going to be any columns. Maybe next time. Sorry.

## PROGRAMS

*All meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. at the Immanuel Lutheran Church, 867 North Pleasant St., Amherst. Should bad weather force a cancellation, it will be announced on WHMP 1400 radio.*

On **Monday, September 10**, Dr. Gerard Bertrand will present a program entitled, “**Amazon Adventure: The Peruvian Amazon**”.

Dr. Bertrand was the president of Massachusetts Audubon Society from 1980 to 1999 and is currently president emeritus of that organization. He received a B.A. in zoology from the University of New Hampshire, an M.S. in biological sciences from Florida State University, a Ph.D. in biological oceanography from Oregon State University, and a J.D. in environmental law from the University of Wisconsin.

From 1977 to 1980, Dr. Bertrand served as Chief of International Affairs for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Prior to that, he served as senior scientist for the President’s Council on Environmental Quality under Presidents Nixon, Ford and Carter. Still earlier, Dr. Bertrand was an ecological adviser to the chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and was influential in forming the Corp’s environmental policies and guidelines. In 1994, Dr. Bertrand became Chairman of Birdlife International. He is a trustee and co-founder of World Land Trust, and a trustee of the American Bird Conservancy. He is also Vice-President of Fauna and Flora International, based in London.

Dr. Bertrand lives in South Hamilton, Massachusetts, and is most welcome amongst us at HBC.

### **Coming Up.....**

October 15: Mark and Marcia Wilson on birding Nantucket

November 12: Sam Friede on the Bolivian Amazon

December 3: Members meeting

## TRIP REPORTS

Stacy Adams and two others toured **Mt. Greylock** on **June 9**. Amongst forty-six species observed were Chestnut-sided Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Indigo Bunting and Scarlet Tanager. A Louisiana Waterthrush plied the air with song, but eluded all three pairs of eyes. Three Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers made a lot of noise. A female Rose-breasted Grosbeak coquettishly fanned her tail for two amorous males. The birding highlight was a beautiful male Mourning Warbler, which serenaded the group *in the open* for some four minutes. Stacy surmises that this bird finally took pity on its pursuers, after avoiding them for at least half an hour. This trip has found Mourning Warblers for several consecutive years now.

Butterflies seen included two Early Hairstreaks, Spring Azure, White and Red Admirals, and Red-spotted Purple. An Eight-spotted Forrester (moth) completed the lepidopterans on show.

Bob Bieda led about 20 birders to **Westover Air Force Base** on **June 9**. This is one of the most significant grassland habitats left in the northeast. We spotted our first Upland Sandpiper within yards of the road, and estimate that we had at least 12 individuals in all. At least one bird made its beautiful burbling flight-call. Meadowlarks in good voice were conspicuous, and the group found at least eight Grasshopper Sparrows. In the cranberry bog we speculated over a five-six foot snake skin (unoccupied) sampled last years cranberry crop (still remarkably good), and teased sundews (with no apparent loss of life or limb). Despite some trepidation over managerial changes at the base, it seems that, for now, at least, this unique habitat remains open for birds, and birders.

***Shawn Smolen-Morton and the field trip leaders have put together a scintillating set of field trips for the Fall. Please see the enclosed list, and sign up!!!***

### **LIBRARY**

*Your mom always said "Neither a borrower or a lender be." Right?*

**WRONG!!** HBC has a substantial library, located at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst. **Anne Cann** maintains a collection of birding resources including field guides, bird-finding guides to almost every major birding destination in the U.S., and some overseas locations, natural histories, periodicals and videos. Why *buy* for that once-in-a-lifetime trip to the Rio Grande valley, when you could *borrow*?

Hours are those of the Hitchcock Center (9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturdays). Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, either from the library, or from the selection of items Anne brings to meetings. Anne welcomes questions about the library contents, or suggestions for future additions. Call her at **(413) 253 7753**, or send email to [cann@uhs.umass.edu](mailto:cann@uhs.umass.edu)

### **CONSERVATION**

*If you are interested in conservation of birds and birding habitat, you may like to share information and effort with others in the club. **Anne Lombard** is our conservation chair. She often coordinates volunteers in breeding-bird surveys, and is usually involved in various cutting-edge conservation issues. Contact her at **(413) 586 7509**, or [annelombard@mediaone.net](mailto:annelombard@mediaone.net)*

The next meeting of the Cellular Towers group will be a potluck at 6 p.m. on Monday, August 27 at the home of Lola Reid; telephone 584 9463. These are active folks who have already presented a great deal of information at club meetings.

### **Hitchcock Center**

Our very own **Scott Sumner** is teaching the **Fall Birding** course at the center this year. Classes will consist of Saturday field trips and Wednesday evening classroom sessions, from Wednesday August 22 through November 28 (with some days and evenings off). Venues will include Plum Island, Berkshire Lakes, Great Meadows Wildlife Refuge in Concord, as well as assorted locations in Hampshire and Hampden counties. Scott is a wonderful birder and teacher. Both Fall and Spring courses at Hitchcock have given many club members a solid start to birding, or a mid-career boost, for a bargain price.

*For details and registration for all Hitchcock programs, please contact the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, 525 South Pleasant St., Amherst MA 01002. Telephone **(413) 256 6006**, or on the web at [www.hitchcockcenter.org](http://www.hitchcockcenter.org).*

*To preserve confidentiality, we have excluded contact information for new members from this e-edition of the newsletter.*

**Please remember to go to the other links on the newsletter web page to get the Membership Form/Release Form, and the Rare Bird Alert Sign-up**

**Thank you!**

## HBC Directory

**President:** Mary Alice Wilson: (413) 548 9078; [mwilson@k12s.phast.umass.edu](mailto:mwilson@k12s.phast.umass.edu)

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David Peake-Jones (see below)

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### *Stream Of Consciousness....*

For those who want the latest on birds being seen in the valley and beyond, there are two options. The **Voice of Audubon** maintains a report on birds being seen statewide. Call **1-888-224-6444** for a synopsis of interesting birds being seen, organized by region. Jan Ortiz maintains the report for Western Massachusetts. She tries to create a comprehensive picture of what is being seen in the region, meaning all reports are welcome. Jan asks that you include the numbers of birds seen in your reports, not just the species list. Jan prefers to be reached by email at [jtortiz@aol.com](mailto:jtortiz@aol.com). Alternatively, you may call her at (413) 549 1768, or leave a message in the Western Mass. section of The Voice.

For hard-core chasers, the **Rare Bird Alert** is an email/phone tree run by HBC. Please see the cautions on the RBA form (enclosed) if you are considering being part of it.

**Backyard Birds**, at 17 Strong Ave., Northampton offers members a 10% discount on all purchases from their stock of birding books, feeders, birdhouses, and numerous other items.

**Arcadia Sanctuary** is hosting several bird-walks and hawkwatches in September. Saturday walks will be from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at the following times and places:

**September 8** at Arcadia Sanctuary; **15** at M.S Lynes Wildlife Sanctuary; **22** at Graves Farm; **29** at Arcadia Sanctuary.

Hawkwatches at Mt Tom will occur from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, **September 15** and Tuesday, **October 2**. For further information, please call Arcadia at (413) 584 3009.

For **crane enthusiasts**, Dr. George Archibald of the International Crane Foundation will speak about the **Black-necked Crane** of high altitude Tibet and China on Thursday, September 6 at 6pm. The event is hosted by the Harvard Museum of Natural History, and will take place in the Geological Lecture Hall, Harvard University, 24 Oxford St., Cambridge. For further information, please call Kyle Roberts at (617) 496 8204.

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