



Hampshire Bird Club, Inc. Amherst, Massachusetts

www.hampshirebirdclub.org

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Hope springs eternal! Having been inspired by evidence from the Cache River basin in Arkansas suggesting living Ivory-billed Woodpeckers, it has been with dismay that many of us have witnessed mounting skepticism concerning that body of evidence. Not only did a year-long search by ornithologists fail to find more conclusive evidence for the existence of the bird, but the video evidence that was, for most, the most conclusive part of the original evidence has been called into question by ornithologists as eminent as David Allen Sibley and others.

Those still cupping their hands around a flicker of hope will be heartened by a paper published this month by a group of five authors. They document an impressive body of evidence from the Choctawhatchee River basin in Florida. The authors describe fourteen (14) possible sightings of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers, between May 2005, and May 2006, including two cases where they believe they saw two (2) birds together. The authors have also compiled an impressive body of audio evidence, and documented bark scaling similar to that practiced by the last known living Ivorybills. There are numerous suspiciously large feeding cavities in the study area. These authors do not have any photographic evidence for the bird.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are planning another huge hunt for the ghost bird. I, for one, am waiting with bated breath. A reference to the paper in question and an on-line version will be given at the end of the newsletter.

In the meantime, do not forget that wonderful birds live in, and pass through, our own backyards every day. The bird club offers a great selection of trips all over the region to find these wonderful creatures, and an array of speakers to bring the world of birding to our little valley.

Membership Fees for this year are due by September 30.

Rare Bird Alert Forms are due by October 3.

We need your membership dues to fund the club activities, and the sooner we have your dollars in our coffers, the sooner we can get going. Thanks, in anticipation!

Included in this edition are the Field Trip Policy, Field Trip Guidelines, and the ABA guide to Birding Ethics.

See you on Tuesday!!

PROGRAMS

This month's program occurs unusually early: on Tuesday, October 3. This is to accommodate an extremely exciting speaker, on a topic few will want to miss. Please see Page Two for an introduction to the program, and a brief biography of the speaker.

Coming Programs

November 13, 2006. Greg Budney.

The Stories Behind the Making of the McCauley LNS.

December 11, 2006. Members' Meeting.

Members' Slide Show.

January 8, 2007. Geoff LeBaron.

The History and Future of the Christmas Bird Count.

This Month
Tuesday, October 3 at 7:30 PM
Dr. Reuben Yosef speaks about Birds and Conservation in Israel

Immanuel Lutheran Church; 867 North Pleasant Street, Amherst.

Dr. Reuben Yosef received his undergraduate education in Israel, and did doctoral work in the United States, in the course of becoming a world-renowned authority on birds. He has authored or co-authored over 200 papers and five books on birds, and is currently the director of the International Birding and Research Center in Eilat, Israel. Here, amongst other things, he has overseen the reclamation of a local landfill and its conversion into a large bird sanctuary, providing habitat for millions of migratory birds. Dr Yosef is also involved in bird conservation in India, South Africa, Nigeria, Spain, and Hungary. He is an adjunct Assistant Professor of Ornithology at the Ben Gurion University of the Negev in Beer Sheba, Israel.

Dr. Yosef will examine the decisions that a bird must make while on migration. We will see how Levant Sparrowhawks and Bee-eaters use similar strategies to minimize time and maximize distance covered while on migration, how waders from the Tundra modify breeding behavior and adapt strategies that are similar to temperate zone migrant warbler species, how local predators take advantage of fatigued migrants, and how age and experience enhance survival. Dr. Yosef will touch on recent studies that throw new light on how birds are able to conserve energy *en route*. Dr. Yosef will use the International Birding and Research Center in Eilat to illustrate the importance of conserving staging habitats for migratory bird populations and how the task is actually simpler than realized by most. Each and every one of us can be a part of the global effort to conserve habitat for migrating birds.

HBC NEWSLETTER AVAILABLE ON-LINE!

Renewing Your Membership? You can choose to get the November-June newsletters on-line via the club website, instead of through the mail. We ask that if you have internet access and are even moderately comfortable online, that you consider selecting the on-line option.

“How does that work?”

The newsletter is posted on the HBC website. Participants receive an email notification, whereupon they can view and/or download the newsletter from the website at their leisure. You need to give us an email address in order to get the on-line newsletter reminder.

“What’s the point?”

You can archive our publication electronically, without accumulating paper files. You reduce postage costs for HBC, which keeps dues down for all of us, and you reduce the labor involved in distributing the newsletter.

“What are the computer/software requirements?”

The newsletter will be posted on the Website in PDF format. This means you will need to have Adobe Acrobat Reader software (version 5.0 or later) on your system. If you do not have it already, this software is available FREE via a link at the club Website.

How do I sign up?

Please sign up in the upper right hand corner of the **Membership Form** and make sure you include your email address.

“What if I encounter technical difficulties?”

Most users last year had no difficulty. In the event that you find the system does not work for you, a simple communication with the Membership Secretary will get you back on the “Hard Copy” mailing list.

I signed up last year. Do I need to sign up again?

We ask all members to decide each year how they want to receive the newsletter. Regardless of how you got the newsletter last year, please make your choice of how to receive the newsletter this year on this year’s membership form.

FIELD TRIPS

Reports

Four other birders met **Bob Bieda** in the fog of early morning on **Saturday, September 16** to explore the **East Meadows** for fall warblers. As expected, with fog and a poor night for migration, the first hour or so of the trip was very quiet. As the air cleared and the weather warmed we managed to run into a couple of areas of activity. In the meadows this usually happens as follows. There will be a group of robins and waxwings feeding on berries. Into this group will appear a few smaller birds, a Tennessee Warbler here, a few Red-eyed Vireos there. For a few minutes each person will be looking in a slightly different direction reporting a warbler or two and then, as if a curtain is drawn, all the small birds are gone and the scene returns to a few robins feeding on berries. In this manner our few highlights were a **Wood Thrush** seen by all and seemingly late in the season, one or two **Tennessee Warblers**, a Northern Parula, and **Nashville** and **Wilson Warblers**. Since no Connecticut Warblers were seen, each participant got double their money back.

Bob Bieda

Coming Trips

(See also the Fall Field Trip Schedule. It's Yellow! We sent you one!)

***Saturday, October 7, OR Sunday, October 8. Lighthouse Point: Hawk Migration.** All day. David Peake-Jones identifies all those little specks in the sky around New Haven harbor. Meet at the Northampton Bowl, 525 Pleasant St. (Route 5) in Northampton at 6 a.m. The actual date of the trip will be decided based on weather forecasts, so call David at 413-529-9541 *at least a week ahead of time* to register or for information. (E)

Saturday, October 14. Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area: Snow Geese. All day. Al Richards will lead birders to the annual spectacle of thousands of Snow Geese (and a Ross's Goose or two, with any luck) fueling up for their migration, then explore nearby sites around Lake Champlain. Call Al (413-665-2761) to register and get meeting information. (E)

***Wednesday, October 18. Midweek in the Connecticut River Valley.** Half day. Harvey Allen looks for migrants in his monthly midweek trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. across the street from Atkins Farm, at the corner of Route 116 and Bay Road in Amherst. Call Harvey (413-253-7963) for details. (E)

Saturday, October 21. Coastal Rhode Island. All day. Geoff LeBaron will seek out migrants along the shore of our neighbor to the southeast. For meeting information and further details, call Geoff (413-268-9281) as the date approaches. (E)

NOVEMBER

Saturday, November 4 and Sunday, November 5. Cape Cod. All day. Scott Sumner goes to Cape Cod for late migrants. Join Scott for one or both days (lodging is on your own). Call Scott (413-256-5438) for meeting information and details. (M)

Sunday, November 5. Berkshire Lakes: Migrating Ducks. All day. Tom Gagnon searches out the productive lakes of western Massachusetts. Meet at Stop & Shop in Northampton (228 King St.) at 6:30 a.m. Call Tom (413-584-6353) to register and for further details. (M)

Backyard Birds (on Strong St. in Northampton) offers a wide range of birding books, audio resources, gifts, feeders, and other paraphernalia. They also offer a 10% discount to Hampshire Bird Club Members. Remember, when you shop locally, your money stays here!

LIBRARY

HBC has a substantial library at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst. **Hours** are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday through Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Saturday. Items can be signed out and borrowed for a period of up to one month, or longer by arrangement. **Henry Lappen** is happy to bring items to the meeting on June 14, given a few days notice! Call him at **(413) 549 3722**.

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** and **Bob Zimmerman** make up our **Conservation Committee**. The club is looking for ideas on how we can contribute to habitat conservation in our area. Contact Anne at **(413) 586 7509**, or Bob at **(413) 585 0405**. The committee email is conservation@hampshirebirdclub.org.*

HITCHCOCK CENTER

Recycling Tour: *Justine Fallon*

Wednesday, Oct. 11, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

The Second Annual Amherst Renewable Energy Fair (on the Town Common)

Saturday, October 7, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Green Buildings Open House

Saturday, October 7, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Solar Energy: Own A Piece of the Sun: *Chris Vreeland*

Wednesday, October 18, 7 - 9 p.m. (6:30 registration and refreshments)

Location: Florence Civic Center, Park Street, Florence, MA

Small Scale Wind: *Chris Vreeland*

Monday, October 23, 7 - 9 p.m.

Chester Arches Hike: *Laurie Sanders and Dave Pierce*

Saturday, October 14 (Rain date: Sunday October 15), 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Hiking the Range: *Ted Watt*

Saturday, October 21, 9 a.m. – noon

Living With Wildlife: Forest Insects: *Ken Gooch*

Thursday, November 2, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Wonders of the Giant Hissing Cockroach: *Pilar Boutte*

Saturday, November 4, 10 a.m. – noon

Witches and Skeletons: *Roland "Boot" Boutwell. At Nasami Farm, Whately*

Saturday, Oct. 21, 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

*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.*

ARCADIA PROGRAMS

Basic Nature Photography: *Kevin Kopchynski*

Sundays, October 1 and 15. 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Amazing Mushrooms: *Marty Klein*

Sunday, October 8, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Autumn at High Ledges: *Ron Wolanin*

Sunday, October 15. 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Beaver Ecology Walk: *Bob McMaster*

Saturday, October 21. 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

For more details of these and other programs go to www.massaudubon.org (select "Sanctuaries", then "Choose a Sanctuary: Arcadia") or call the sanctuary at the number below. To register for programs contact **Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary**, 127 Combs Rd., Easthampton MA 01027. Telephone **(413) 584-3009**.

GREAT FALLS DISCOVERY CENTER PROGRAMS

Waterfowl Identification Presentation: *Mitch Hartley*

Thursday, October 5. 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Migratory Journey (Migration in Birds): *GFDC Staff*

Saturday, October 7. 1:00 – 2:00 PM

Know Your Local Refuge (the Silvio O. Conte Refuge): *GFDC Staff*

Thursday, October 12. 7:00 – 8:00 PM

Project Flying Wild Workshop: *Pam Landry*

Tuesday, October 24. 9 AM – 3:30 PM

Bird Walk Along the Power Canal: *GFDC Staff*

Saturday, October 24. 8:30 – 9:30 AM

Great Falls Discovery Center is located at 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA

Open Fridays and Saturdays from 10AM to 4 PM

Phone (413) 683 32212

Editor's Thanks

I would like to thank the following orcs* for their assistance: Sally Hills, Mary Alice Wilson, and Betsy Higgins. They helped me cut, paste, address, fold, and stamp the September edition which, I trust, winged its way successfully to you, dear member. I also want to thank Sue Emerson for allowing us (well, actually we didn't ask) to use her basement while she was in Kenya.

* orcs. Those who read this thing more-or less regularly (you have my sympathy), will remember that I took exception last year to what I see as the unquestioning use of the term "elves" as an affectionate descriptor of those who give voluntary aid to our organization. I reckon other mythical creatures should get a look in as well. In this vein, I mention the orcs, who are after all, as Tolkein tells it, the most mistreated and repressed of all the elven folk. Despite their unquestioning obedience to Sauron and other dark lords of Middle Earth, they are portrayed most unflatteringly in both film and book. Thus, my assistants last month shall be likened unto orcs, and I hope they understand how fondly that term is meant.

Christmas Count!!

Mark Your Calendars! The **Northampton Christmas Count** this year will be on **Sunday, December 17**.
More details in November!!

Dave Stemple Library

Dave Stemple had a considerable library of bird magazines, including the following: Bird Watchers Digest, American Birds, Bird News of Western Massachusetts, Living Bird Quarterly, Field Notes, Bird Observer, Birds (British), Birding, Winging It, and Natural History. His wife has asked me if I could try to find a home for these items. If you are interested, please contact Don Kroodsma at 253 5519. Thank you.

Don Kroodsma

Ivory-billed Woodpeckers in Florida?

Hill, G.E., D.J. Merrill, B. W. Merrill, B. W. Rolek, T. L. Hicks and K. A. Swiston, 2006. *Evidence Suggesting that Ivory-billed Woodpeckers (Campephilus principalis) Exist in Florida*. **Avian Conservation and Ecology** **1(3) : 2**

You can read the full text at www.ace-eco.org/vol1/iss3/art2

Migratory Bird Funding Passes House

Washington, DC (September 20, 2006): The House of Representatives today unanimously passed a revised Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Improvement Act of 2006 (NMBCA, H.R. 518). The legislation was folded into H.R. 4957, the Tylersville Fish Hatchery Conveyance Act. The Act authorizes matching grants to support conservation programs for migratory birds, and when fully implemented, will authorize \$6.5 million per year for projects.

Each year, an estimated 10 billion birds of some 800 species breed in North America. More than one-third have declining populations, are restricted to small ranges, or face serious threats. NMBCA is the only federal funding program designed specifically for migratory bird species throughout North America, and also provides the only dedicated source of funds for migratory birds on their wintering grounds in Latin America and the Caribbean.

From 2002 through 2006, partners in 42 U.S. states and 30 Latin American and Caribbean countries have been involved in 186 Act-supported projects. Projects involving land conservation have affected some 3.2 million acres of bird habitat, and species that are benefiting include the Cerulean Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, Bobolink, Red Knot, and Bicknell's Thrush.

Conservation groups, including American Bird Conservancy and other members of the Bird Conservation Alliance (130 groups collaborating to support bird conservation), have fought to gain passage of the Act, which reauthorizes the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 2000 that expired last year. Once signed into law, it will enable the only significant federal funding source for neotropical migratory birds to continue through 2010.

That's it for this month.

Until next time, talk softly and carry a big scope!

David Peake-Jones, Editor

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