



# THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

February 2018

## 2018 CALENDAR

(See inside for details)

Saturday, February 3, 7:00 AM **The Second Annual Mega Bowl of Birding in New Haven County**

Wednesday, February 7, 8:00 AM **First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison**

Thursday, February 8, 7:00 PM **Christine Peyreigne - History of Falconry and Wildlife Rehabilitation**

Saturday, February 24, 7:00 AM **Sachuest Point NWR and Rhode Island Coast**

Wednesday, March 7, 8:00 AM **First Wednesday Walk: Stratford Shore & Great Meadows**

Thursday March 8, 7:00 PM **Peter Picone - Songbirds and Plants Are Inextricably Linked**

Tuesday, March 13, 7:00 PM **Birds in Words - The Hidden Life of Trees by Peter Wohlleben**

Saturday, March 17, 7:30 AM **Edgewood Park, New Haven**

Wednesday, April 4, 8:00 AM **First Wednesday Walk: CT Audubon Coastal Center, Milford**

Saturday, April 7, 8:30 AM **The Richard English Memorial Field trip: Lighthouse Point to the Richard English Bird Sanctuary**

Saturday, April 14, 8:00 AM **East Rock Birding and Trail Maintenance**

Thursday April 12, 7:00 PM **John Triana - The New Haven Bird Club at 110**

## BIRDERS' EXCHANGE

The New Haven Bird Club is collecting binoculars, scopes or Neotropical field guides that we will donate to the Birders' Exchange Program, which is part of ABA. This organization donates all binoculars and other equipment to worthy individuals involved in crucial bird conservation projects and education work in Central and South America.

At each indoor meeting there will be a box on the sign-in table where you can place your equipment donation.

## BE SURE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org)

There are Google Map links for the meeting places of trips.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



I hope everyone had a great holiday season.

January seems to be one of the low points in the birding calendar. The New Haven Bird Club has just a few events on the calendar. The COA has their "Big January Challenge" and in the last half of the month we start to form teams and start our scouting for the Megabowl of Birding on Feb 3.

Nothing like a little friendly competition to spice things up.... I still feel the happy sting of the resounding defeat we took at the hands of the Connecticut Young Birders' Club.

January stood frozen after the New Year and soon we were in an early thaw. The weather has not been conducive to leisurely, comfortable birding by most people's standards. However, over the holidays I had a few books given to me as Christmas presents. One book, the *Nordic Cookbook* by Magnus Nilsson really caught my attention. My wife stated that it was a good thing that it didn't need batteries, or I would have burned out a high number of them by now. It is 768 pages of food and cultural descriptions, history, rich photographs and, of course, recipes.

I do consider myself a foodie and had worked as a chef throughout New England, New York City and California for many years. I try to combine local flavors when I go birding abroad: gumbo, etouffee and jambalaya when I made a trip to Atchafalaya National Wildlife Refuge; Texas barbeque and Tex-Mex during a trip to Balcones National Wildlife Refuge and Big Bend National Park (although the excitement of a Colima's warbler made me forget what I had eaten the night before). And then there was last spring's trip to Finland. The trip to the Nordic region has had me enthralled with the birds and obsessed with the food. The variety and excitement of the owls and grouse did not cause me to forget the names of the dishes I was savoring. I simply could not remember the native names in the first place, such as the reindeer (Poronkärästys), the salmon soup (lohikeitto), or the many permutations of cold smoked herring (savusilakka). Not to mention (or pronounce) Karjalanpiirakka.

My new cookbook combined two of my passions, food and birds, in a startling way I did not expect. I found pictures of dead puffins on their way to the kitchen, a man tied to his truck dangling off a cliff looking for fulmar eggs, piles of guillemot eggs, and woodcocks skewered ready for the roasting pit. I understand most of us eat birds. Chicken and turkey and an occasional duck, and our egg consumption is limited to those

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## NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB – 2017-2018

### OFFICERS

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<i>Secretary</i>	Alan Malina Alm5565@msn.com	203.248.5754

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<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Laurie Reynolds warmstove@hotmail.com	203.434.2134
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<i>Outdoor Programs</i>	Bill Batsford william.batsford@yale.edu	203.787.1642
<i>Publicity Chair</i>	Peter Vitali vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net	203.288.0621
<i>Webmaster</i>	Patrick Leahy ptjleahy@yahoo.com	203.393.2427
<i>Yearbook Editor</i>	Christine Howe clhowe2@yahoo.com	203-389-1175

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

<i>The BIG SIT</i>	John Triana jtriana1@sbcglobal.net	203.758.7203
<i>Birds in Words</i>	Kris Johnson kriswaxwing99@gmail.com	203.288.3087
<i>Christmas Bird Count</i>	Chris Loscalzo closcalz@optonline.net	203.389.6508
<i>Email List</i>	DeWitt Allen allendatlow@gmail.com	860.949.0995
<i>Hawk Watch</i>	Steve Mayo rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net	203.393.0694
<i>Lighthouse Point</i>	John Triana jtriana1@sbcglobal.net	203.758.7203
<i>Historian</i>	Stacy Hanks flybirdhanks@gmail.com	203.283-3898
<i>Hospitality</i>	Steve Mayo rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net	203.393.0694
<i>Summer Bird Count</i>	Peter Vitali vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net	203.288.0621
<i>Winter Feeder Survey</i>		

(President's Message Continued from first page)

coming from chickens. The irony is I have travelled to Maine to take a boat ride to see Atlantic Puffins whereas people in the Faroe Islands just need to go to the dinner table. (I wonder if it tastes like duck marinated in cod liver oil.)

For Americans, dead seabirds are hard to look at. We have had great laws enacted to protect birds so that we do not see piles of wild eggs and birds in the markets. The Lacey Act passed in 1900 protects both plants and wildlife by creating civil and criminal penalties for those who violate the rules and regulations. The law authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to aid in restoring game and migrating birds in parts of the U.S. where they have become extinct or rare. It also regulates introduction of birds and other animals to places where they have never existed before. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act was passed in 1918. "The MBTA provides that it is unlawful to pursue, hunt, take, capture, kill, possess, sell, purchase, barter, import, export, or transport any migratory bird, or any part, nest, or egg or any such bird, unless authorized under a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior." In other words, it protects birds from humans.

Our native tribes can still lawfully hunt migratory birds and gather their eggs. In fact, while on a tip to Alaska I saw a dance by an Aleut that depicts hunting for murre eggs on a cliff. This has been an important and traditional source of food. Although harvest rates seem like they have gone down recently, it has also been reported that these American Tribes are facing food insecurity in the future. They may need to turn to seabird bird eggs for sustenance. What choice do they have? The opposite seems to be happening in the Nordic Countries. They are decreasing their harvests with the understanding that their birds are suffering from global population declines. There are very complex factors that impact the birds that we love.

I can't say if my travels will bring me to Iceland or the Faroe Islands. I can't say if I would try roasted puffin. But flipping ahead to the pastries section in my cookbook I find that the Norwegian cardamom twist pastries look like a straight forward and almost guilt free option.

--Craig Repasz

## Notes from the Board

The next board meeting will be Thursday, February 22 at 6:45 PM at Whitney Center.

Deadline for submissions to the April *Chickadee* is March 23. Send to Newsletter Editor, Donna Batsford, at [donnabatsford@gmail.com](mailto:donnabatsford@gmail.com).

**Photos Wanted** (for a presentation at our annual dinner) – During NHBC events, please take photos of your fellow birders and send them to Donna Batsford ([donnabatsford@gmail.com](mailto:donnabatsford@gmail.com)) or Laurie Reynolds ([warmstove@hotmail.com](mailto:warmstove@hotmail.com)).

NHBC is offering a **Ride Share Program** for members who need a ride to the Indoor Programs. We are also looking for members to pick up a non-driving member. Contact: Laurie Reynolds: 203-434-2134, [warmstove@hotmail.com](mailto:warmstove@hotmail.com).

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## Indoor Programs

Indoor programs start in September and are held on the second Thursday of the month. There are no indoor programs in June, July, or August. The social half-hour at meetings begins at 7:00 pm; the meeting and program begin at 7:30 pm. Inclement weather or other emergency may cancel a meeting. Cancellation notices will be sent via the club email, and will be posted on the club website, [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org), and online on ctbirds, <http://www.ctbirding.org/calendar.htm>. Meetings are at Whitney Center, Cultural Arts Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden. The facility is wheelchair accessible. Meeting is in Whitney Center's South Building, accessed via the main door of the portico that is in view from the parking lot. Turn right down the hallway. Cultural Arts Center is a short distance on the left.

### ***Parking at Whitney Center (WC):***

We may park on the upper level of the parking garage at the Whitney Center in any unmarked parking place. We may not park on the lower level of the parking garage. If no parking places are available please drive to the employee parking lot. Follow the driveway past the front entrances of the building. At the stop sign take a right into the employee parking area. There are no entrances at the side or back of the building so please walk around to the front. This area is well lit.

### ***Directions to Whitney Center:***

From I-95 North or South: Exit to I-91 North in New Haven. Take Exit 6 (Willow Street). At end of ramp go right onto Willow and proceed on Willow to its end at Whitney Avenue. Turn right onto Whitney; go 1.7 mi. to Treadwell Street (at Citgo Gas intersection) and make SHARP left onto Treadwell. Proceed 0.7 mi. on Treadwell; turn left onto Leeder Hill Drive (traffic light). Whitney Center is shortly on the right. Enter SECOND driveway (South Entrance) and take immediate left into raised parking lot or continue on to the employee lot.

From I-91 South: Take Exit 6 (Willow Street) in. At the end of the ramp, turn right onto Willow and proceed as above.

From Wilbur Cross (Rt. 15-North or South) Take Exit 60. Turn right at end of ramp (Dixwell Ave./Rte.10). Go about 1 mile to traffic light at Treadwell Street and turn left. Go 0.3 mi. to traffic light (Leeder Hill), turn right. WC is shortly on the right. Enter SECOND driveway (South Entrance); take immediate left into raised parking lot or continue on to the employee lot.

**Remember to check the Club's website for updated information on all programs: [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org).**

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### **Thursday, February 8 - Christine Peyreigne History of Falconry and Wildlife Rehabilitation**

Christine Peyreigne's talk will include live birds, artifacts and photos. To discuss falconry, her falconry bird, Theron, will perform a small flight demonstration on a creance line. To discuss wildlife rehabilitation, several non-releasable residents will accompany Christine to help tell their stories. Christine Peyreigne is a licensed falconer, wildlife rehabilitator and bird of prey exhibitor. Christine founded Christine's Critters – a nonprofit organization dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of birds of prey, as well as conservation through educational outreach programs to all ages. In addition to rehabilitating wild raptors, the organization houses 15 permanent, non-releasable residents. These residents are trained ambassadors of their species and are the stars of the show during educational programs.

### **Thursday March 8 - Peter Picone Songbirds and Plants Are Inextricably Linked**

Mr. Peter Picone, DEEP Wildlife Biologist, will share with us his talk centered around insights on creating and enhancing

seasonal wildlife habitat. He will describe his experiences in enhancing habitat both on state land and private land. Listeners will come away with several ideas about how to enhance the landscape on both a small and large scale. Integrated into this talk will be Mr. Picone's videos demonstrating the seasonal food and cover value of Connecticut's native plants to our diverse bird life.

### **Thursday April 12 - John Triana The New Haven Bird Club at 110**

Members of the New Haven Bird Club are part of an extraordinary group of people dedicated to birds and their conservation. The New Haven Bird Club started in 1907 with a few dozen members, including school teachers, prominent citizens, and high school students. Over the last 110 years, there have been ups and downs. Our history includes some of the biggest names in ornithology, many authors, a pioneer in nature photography, the "Father of the Everglades," and the beginnings of bird banding in the United States. Ten years have passed since the New Haven Bird Club's centennial. John Triana, Club Historian and past President will come in to refresh everyone on the Club's past 110 years.

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## Birds in Words

Join in on "Birds in Words," NHBC's gathering of people who like reading books on their favorite hobby. Share the fun! We meet at 7 pm at Whitney Center. For details, contact: Kris Johnson: [kriswaxwing99@gmail.com](mailto:kriswaxwing99@gmail.com), 203-288-3087.

We will be meeting from 7-9 PM at Whitney Center in the 6th Floor Conference Room on March 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben

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## Welcome New Members

Asher Holton  
Hamden

Karen Prendergast  
Cheshire

Jason Rieger  
Wallingford

Thomas & Elsie Vrabel  
Stratford

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## Outdoor Programs

All levels of birders are invited to all field trips, and every effort is made on all trips to help beginners. If you are new to birding or have any special needs, please be sure to let the leader know at the start of the field trip. More details, if required, and/or updates on these trips will be given at the indoor meetings and in the newsletter. Watch for emails sent by the Club. You can also check the Club's website: <[www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org)> for trip information and a Google Map link to the meeting place. Contact trip leaders directly if you have questions about any of their trips. The New Haven Bird Club does not charge any fees for its outdoor programs, but participants are responsible for the cost of their food, transportation, and entrance fees (where charged), unless the Club makes prior arrangements. Carpooling is encouraged to avoid parking problems at some destinations and to promote conservation of natural resources.

### NHBC Conservation Activities

The NHBC routinely works to preserve and restore bird populations and their habitats, and this year the Conservation Committee will highlight several events in which we partner with city, state and private conservation and education organizations to enhance birding habitats while simultaneously enjoying the birds seen on these properties. Partners include the City of New Haven, local Land Trusts, Friends' organizations (as Friends of East Rock Park and Friends of Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge), and the Urban Oases program. The Conservation Committee also provides information and displays at several local events.

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#### **The Second Annual Mega Bowl of Birding in New Haven County**

**Saturday, February 3, 7:00 AM**

This fun and friendly event involves birding in teams of 3-4 people anywhere in New Haven County. The teams try to see as many species as they can on the day of the event. Each species observed has a point value, with one point for the most common species to five points for the rarest species. At the end of the day, everyone meets to share stories, enjoy a delicious dinner, and tabulate the results. Prizes are given out to all participants, with special prizes going to the team accumulating the most points on the day. Advanced registration is requested: birders should register for the event by Sunday, January 28, 2018. The end of the day celebration will be held at the Kellogg Environmental Center in Derby. To register: contact the Mega Bowl Coordinator: Chris Loscalzo at [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net) or 203 389-6508.

#### **First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison**

**Wednesday, February 7, 8:00 AM**

Enjoy a mid-week field trip to Hammonasset Beach State Park, one of the state's best birding locations in any season of the year. We will look for sea ducks, grassland species, and rarities. Meet at Hammonasset Beach State Park parking area on Boston Post Road, Madison, just left (east) of main entrance road. Leader: Greg Hanisek, [ctgregh@gmail.com](mailto:ctgregh@gmail.com).

#### **Sachuest Point NWR and Rhode Island Coast**

**Saturday, February 24, 7:00 AM**

This all-day trip includes stops at Sachuest Point NWR, Beavertail State Park, Moonstone Beach, Trustum Pond, and other great birding sites on the RI coast. We will see lots of sea ducks including all three scoter species, Common Eider, and Harlequin Duck. We'll look for birds of prey, including Rough-legged Hawk and several owl species. We'll also be on the lookout for alcids and rare gulls. Dress warmly—it's likely to be cold and windy on the coast. The walk is a bit strenuous. Bring lunch and a scope, if you have one. Meet at the Branford commuter lot, Exit 55 off I-95. Snow date – Sunday, Feb. 25.

Leader: Chris Loscalzo, [closcalz@optonline.net](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net), 203-389-6508.

#### **First Wednesday Walk: Stratford Shore & Great Meadows**

**Wednesday, March 7, 8:00 AM**

Join us on a visit to this excellent birding area. We'll look for oceanic birds such as Long-tailed Duck and scoters, as well as raptors and shorebirds. Meet at the Dunkin Donuts parking lot at 60 Access Road, Stratford, near the intersection with Main St. (Rt. 113); we carpool from there. Leader: Frank Mantlik, [mantlik@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mantlik@sbcglobal.net), 203-984-9410.

#### **Edgewood Park, New Haven**

**Saturday, March 17, 7:30 AM**

Join Bill Batsford for a late winter walk at this urban park with varied habitat including woodlands, fields, streams, and ponds. Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, Kingfisher, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, and Brown Creeper are all possible. An Eastern Screech-Owl used a Wood Duck box in 2017. Meet at the parking lot next to tennis courts; entrance off West Rock Avenue, New Haven. Leader: Bill Batsford, [william.batsford@yale.edu](mailto:william.batsford@yale.edu), 203-787-1642, 203-494-4325 (cell).

#### **First Wednesday Walk: CT Audubon Coastal Center, Milford**

**Wednesday, April 4, 8:00 AM**

Enjoy an early spring trip to one of the best local birding spots. We look out into the marsh and along the shore for waterfowl, shorebirds, waders, and raptors. Meet at the Coastal Center parking lot. 1 Milford Point Road, Milford. Leader: Kathy Van Der Aue, [kathyvda@gmail.com](mailto:kathyvda@gmail.com), 203-259-2426, 203-331-7517(cell).

#### **The Richard English Memorial Field trip: Lighthouse Point to the Richard English Bird Sanctuary**

**Saturday, April 7, 8:30 AM**

We first bird the harbor shore for gulls, loons, ducks, and early returning shorebirds. We then proceed to the Richard English Bird Sanctuary at the Deer Lake Scout Camp in Killingworth.

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We then drive to Hammonasset Beach State Park. This is an all-day trip; bring lunch and dress warmly. This trip almost always has a high species count. Meet at the Hawk Watch parking lot, Lighthouse Point Park, 2 Lighthouse Road, New Haven. Leader: Mike Horn, [mhorn@att.net](mailto:mhorn@att.net), 203-288-1891.

### **East Rock Birding and Trail Maintenance Saturday, April 14, 8:00 AM**

Meet for a bird walk from 8 - 9:30 AM. Then join Park Ranger Dan Barvir to help with light trail maintenance along the river until noon. Bring work gloves & pruning shears if you have them. Meet at the Eli Whitney Museum parking lot, 915 Whitney Avenue, Hamden. Leader: Dan Barvir, [dbarvir@newhavencnt.net](mailto:dbarvir@newhavencnt.net), 203-946-6086.

## **Trip and Activity Reports**

### **First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset Beach State Park Trip Report**

On December 6 Jerry Connolly led the First Wednesday Walk to Hammonasset Beach State Park. 37 species were seen: Canada Goose, Mallard, American Black Duck, Surf Scoter, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-throated Loon,



*Photo by Chris Howe*

Common Loon, Northern Gannet, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Black-bellied Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Dunlin, Purple Sandpiper, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Rock Pigeon, Northern Flicker, American Crow, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, European Starling, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

### **Lake Wintergreen Trip Report**

On December 17, 8 brave people met out at Lake Wintergreen in Hamden despite the forecast of the winter's first snow. This was to be a scouting walk for area C of the following week's Christmas Bird Count. The woods seemed pretty quiet due to the oncoming weather, but our first treat was multiple ravens flying overhead. The lake was open so there were a handful of mallards and a couple of hooded mergansers hanging out. There were only a few of the normal winter woodland birds around including chickadees, nuthatches, and waxwings. Since the weather was holding out, we decided to climb the hill to the top of West



*Photo by Chris Howe*

Rock Ridge to an overlook above Konold's Pond. Flakes started coming down as we got to the top of the ridge. Peering down we could see a handful of waterfowl in the northern half of the lake. A few minutes later we found out why as a hunter on the island took two shots at mallards flying over the pond. Among the waterfowl seen from above were mute swan, ruddy duck, mallards, and ring-necked ducks. We could also see a handful of coots. In all we saw 18 species – Common Raven, American Crow, Dark-eyed Junco, American Goldfinch, Mallard, Hooded Merganser, Song Sparrow, Cedar Waxwing, American Robin, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Mute Swan, American Coot, Blue Jay, Ring-necked Duck, Ruddy Duck, Red-bellied Woodpecker.

--John Triana

### **First Wednesday Walk: Sherwood Island State Park Trip Report**

On January 3 Tina Green led the First Wednesday Walk to Sherwood Island State Park in Fairfield. 52 species were seen: Canada Goose, Gadwall, Mallard, American Black Duck, Greater Scaup, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed



*Photo by Chris Howe*

Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Common Loon, Great Blue Heron, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Dunlin, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Great Horned Owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, American Pipit, American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Northern Cardinal, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, House Finch, House Sparrow.

### **Milford Hotspots Trip Report**

New Haven Bird Club "Milford Hotspots" field trip led by Frank Mantlik, with 20 others on January 20. We met at Exit 35 commuter lot, and visited Caswell Cove (Housatonic River), Milford Transfer Station, Old Oronoque Road, Mondo Ponds, Silver Sands State Park, Walnut Beach, and Milford Point. 42 species were seen: Ross's Goose, Brant (Atlantic), Canada



*Photo by Laurie Reynolds*

Goose, Mute Swan, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, American Black Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser,

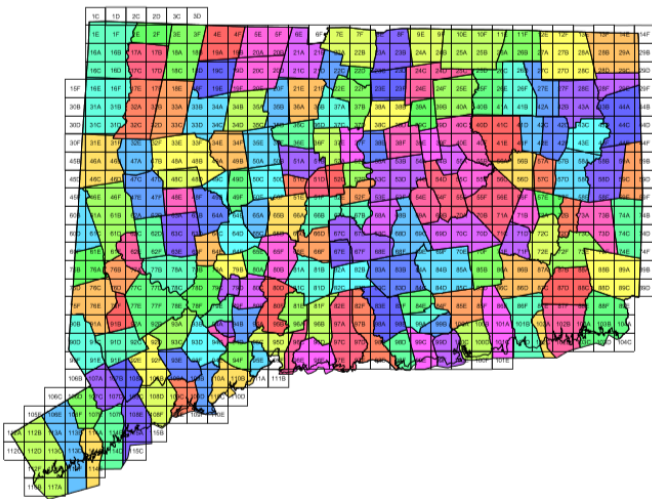
Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Common Loon, Great Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Dunlin, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Iceland Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon), Mourning Dove, Snowy Owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Peregrine Falcon, American Crow, Fish Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, European Starling, American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored), Song Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, House Sparrow.

--Frank Mantlik

## CT Bird Atlas Update

The CT Bird Atlas Project has been working diligently to build the website in time to facilitate the block adoption process before the start of the breeding season. All eight Regional Coordinators have been recruited. Several New Haven Bird Club Members will be serving as Regional Coordinators: Sara Zagorski will cover the Harford County area, Frank Mantlik will cover Lower Fairfield County and Steve Broker is covering New Haven County. These regions, which are comprised of 74 blocks, do not strictly follow county lines. The Regional Coordinators will approve block adoption requests. The hope is to have a primary adopter for each block although anyone can submit data from any block.

The map shows the outline of Connecticut Towns with the block grid overlaid.



Volunteers will record the species that they can identify, sight and sound, and their breeding behavior. The eBird breeding codes will be used. Please see:

<http://help.ebird.org/customer/portal/articles/1006850-breeding-codes-behavior-codes>

The Project team hopes to have all of the website functionality built, tested and rolled out by mid February.

Please contact [ctbirdatlasvol@gmail.com](mailto:ctbirdatlasvol@gmail.com).

--Craig Repasz

## NHBC Budget

The New Haven Bird Club has a modest annual budget of \$12,800. This covers our indoor speakers, our annual meeting, yearbook, newsletter and donations to local conservation efforts. Our income is generated by our \$15 membership fee, new \$300 lifetime memberships, donations from members and a grant from Community Foundation for Greater New Haven. This grant is from an endowment from Richard English which is distributed to nonprofits in New Haven managed through the Community Foundation. The annual distribution we receive is around \$2,600. We also have a robust balance to meet expenses at \$17,000

Annually the NHBC supports events and causes that are within our scope of birding, education and bird conservation. In the past year we made around \$3,300 in donations which is about 25% of our budget. We have donated \$200 to the New Haven Science award (this amount includes a matching donation), \$100 to the Connecticut Fund for the Environment, \$500 to Lighthouse Point Migration Festival to sponsor the Livingston Ripley exhibit, \$350 to Trust for Public Land and a \$1,500 donation to Common Ground High School to pay for the summer wages of a high school student supervising work crews at the Urban Oasis sites around New Haven. This past year we also paid to replace an education placard at Lighthouse Point that was sun damaged.

We also have general budgets to cover minor expenses of our Conservation and Education Committees.

Projected donations for 2017-2018 in addition to our annual contributions will be a donation of \$500 to support the CT Bird Atlas Project and plans to do so over the next two years. We will also support a matching grant for additional plantings at the West River IBA.

The NHBC with the dedication of its members has also contributed countless hours to clean up some of our birding areas, to monitor nesting areas and other sensitive areas through various programs, conducted surveys to contribute important data and many education outreach efforts.

We hope you are pleased with the continued efforts and commitments of the NHBC. Please offer your feedback to me or any of the members of the Board.

We hope that you can further support our efforts through your donations to the club and by renewing your membership. Please watch for this year's membership renewal.

--Craig Repasz

## National Geographic: The Year of the Bird

"If you take care of the birds, you take care of most of the big problems in the world." This quote from Thomas Lovejoy is being used as the launchpad for what *National Geographic* is calling the Year of the Bird. Partnering with the National Audubon Society and other birding organizations, throughout the year the magazine will examine how the changing environment is impacting bird species around the globe, and what we can do about it. The magazine is available in print as well as online. Check it out!

--Laurie Reynolds

## The 118<sup>th</sup> Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count Summary

On December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017, seventy-six members and friends of the New Haven Bird Club set out to record all of the birds within the boundaries of the New Haven Christmas Count circle. As is often the case, weather played a prominent role in the outcome of the census (as it did last year when we endured snow and rain). This year, the count day was mostly sunny and unusually cold, with a moderate northerly wind. In the days leading up to the count, it was cold and snowy. This led to the freezing of much of the still water in the interior portions of the count and the covering of the ground and trails throughout the area. So, birds that prefer fresh water were less plentiful and hiking was slower and more deliberate.

One of the important aspects of the Christmas Count is to recognize trends in the populations of the bird species that we are observing. Some notable results of this year's count included low numbers of Mute Swan, American Black Duck, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Field Sparrow, and House Finch. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and White-breasted Nuthatch were seen in all-time high numbers. Irruptive species from the north were almost entirely absent, as there is a bumper crop of conifer seeds in the boreal forest this year. We recorded only one Red-breasted Nuthatch, two Purple Finches and no other "winter finches."

Rarities found on the count included: Cackling Duck in Woodbridge, Common Eider, American Oystercatcher, and Snowy Owl, all at Brazos Road in East Haven (clearly the hot spot for the count period, there was even a Barrow's Goldeneye observed there on the day following the count), Red-necked Grebe in Lake Saltonstall, Clay-colored Sparrow in Woodbridge, and Lincoln's Sparrow in North Branford. Other notable finds were: Snow Goose, Canvasback, Northern Gannet, Black-crowned Night-heron, Clapper Rail, Virginia Rail, Dunlin, American Woodcock, Iceland Gull, Eastern Phoebe, Marsh Wren, Brown Thrasher, Snow Bunting, and Orange-crowned Warbler (during count week).

The ten most abundant species seen on our count (in descending order) were: Canada Goose, European Starling, Ring-billed Gull, Common Grackle, House Sparrow, Mallard, Brant, Herring Gull, Greater Scaup, and Rock Pigeon. It is interesting (and perhaps a bit disturbing?) that three of these species are non-native or introduced species. Overall, we counted nearly 27,000 individual birds in our count circle on count day; an impressive number to be sure, but well below our 20-year average of ~ 40,000 individuals.

The final results were (with rare birds in **boldface**): Snow Goose, 10; Brant, 1306; **Cackling Goose, 1**; Canada Goose, 3680; Mute Swan, 68; Wood Duck, 12; Gadwall, 125; American Wigeon, 139; American Black Duck, 253; Mallard, 1312; Northern Pintail, 6; Green-winged Teal, 41; Canvasback, 3; Ring-necked Duck, 81; Greater Scaup, 922; Lesser Scaup, 22; **Common Eider, 1**; Surf Scoter, 7; White-winged Scoter, 6; Long-tailed Duck, 120; Bufflehead, 254; Common Goldeneye, 117; **Barrow's Goldeneye, CW**; Hooded Merganser, 321; Common Merganser, 48; Red-breasted Merganser, 53; Ruddy Duck, 15; Wild Turkey, 45; Red-throated Loon, 24; Common

Loon, 33; Pied-billed Grebe, 15; Horned Grebe, 8; **Red-necked Grebe, 1**; Northern Gannet, 2; Great Blue Heron, 24; Black-crowned Night-heron, 1; Black Vulture, 29; Turkey Vulture, 56; Northern Harrier, 17; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 14; Cooper's Hawk, 18; Bald Eagle, 15; Red-shouldered Hawk, 13; Red-tailed Hawk, 96; Clapper Rail, 2; Virginia Rail, 1; American Coot, 6; **American Oystercatcher, 1**; Black-bellied Plover, CW; Killdeer, 5; Ruddy Turnstone, 2; Sanderling, 121; Dunlin, 1; Purple Sandpiper, 26; American Woodcock, 2; Ring-billed Gull, 1502; Herring Gull, 1257; Iceland Gull, 1; Great Black-backed Gull, 53; Rock Pigeon, 886; Mourning Dove, 467; Eastern Screech Owl, 23; Great Horned Owl, 7; **Snowy Owl, 1**; Belted Kingfisher, 17; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 112; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 23; Downy Woodpecker, 150; Hairy Woodpecker, 21; Northern Flicker, 39; Pileated Woodpecker, 7; American Kestrel, 1; Merlin, 7; Peregrine Falcon, 3; Monk Parakeet, 7; Eastern Phoebe, 1; Blue Jay, 415; American Crow, 607; Fish Crow, 241; crow, sp., 204; Common Raven, 19; Horned Lark, 15; Black-capped Chickadee, 216; Tufted Titmouse, 220; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 1; White-breasted Nuthatch, 219; Brown Creeper, 6; Winter Wren, 8; Marsh Wren, 1; Carolina Wren, 71; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 34; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 4; Eastern Bluebird, 41; Hermit Thrush, 6; American Robin, 654; Gray Catbird, 7; Brown Thrasher, 1; Northern Mockingbird, 78; European Starling, 3638; American Pipit, 16; Cedar Waxwing, 137; Snow Bunting, 7; **Orange-crowned Warbler, CW**, Yellow-rumped Warbler, 9; American Tree Sparrow, 38; **Clay-colored Sparrow, 1**; Field Sparrow, 8; Fox Sparrow, 17; Dark-eyed Junco, 498; White-throated Sparrow, 681; Savannah Sparrow, 16; Song Sparrow, 440; **Lincoln's Sparrow, 1**; Swamp Sparrow, 31; Eastern Towhee, 1; Northern Cardinal, 285; Red-winged Blackbird, 413; Rusty Blackbird, 14; Common Grackle, 1447; Brown-headed Cowbird, 127; House Finch, 186; Purple Finch, 2; American Goldfinch, 283; House Sparrow, 1439. Total Individuals: 26, 896. Total Species: 121 + 3 CW.

The participants were (with area captains in boldface): Marian Aimesbury, **Dewitt Allen, Ralph Amodei**, Margaret Ardwin, Christin Arnini, Mark Aronson, **Dan Barvir**, Bill Batsford, **Larry Bausher, Andy Brand, Stephen Broker**, Lauren Brown, Cheryl Cape, Stephanie Cape-May, Michael Carpenter, Nancy Clark, Louisa Cunningham, John Farley, Michael Ferrari, Bobbie Fisher, Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe, **Frank Gallo**, Alfred Green, Ed Haesche, **Stacy Hanks**, Michael Hanson, Michael and Pat Horn, Christine Howe, **James Hunter**, Deborah Johnson, Kris Johnson, Lynn Jones, Tom Kelly, **Pat Leahy, Carol and Gary Lemmon**, Donna Lorello, **Chris Loscalzo**, Pat Maturo, Steve Mayo, **Flo McBride**, Dan Mercurio, Linda Meyer, Robert Mitchell, Judy Moore, Gina Nichol, Genevieve Nuttall, Michael O'Brien, John Oshlick, Karen Pendergast, Frank and Nancy Ragusa, Laurie Reynolds, Jason Rieger, Brian Roach, William Root, Nancy Rosenbaum, Jeff Severino, Arthur Shippee, James Sirch, Paul Smith, Nancy Specht, Charla and Steve Spector, Howie Sternberg, Maria Stockmal, Charles Strasser, Jennifer Triana, **John Triana**, Marianne Vahey, Tom Vrabel, Chris Woerner, Maureen and Paul Wolter, and George Zepko.

Thanks to all of the participants!  
Chris Loscalzo, NH CBC Compiler



## NHBC Winter Feeder Report 2017-2018 End of Week 10

We have finished the first **10 weeks** of the survey and during weeks **6 through 10** we had 1 **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, 1 **Purple Finch**, and no **Pine Siskins**. **Common Grackles** are here but with low numbers, with a flock of 50 being the largest.

This year we have approximately the same number of surveyors as the previous two years with the majority having been reporting for the last 5 years or more. So why do we have such low numbers this year? Was it the weather? It can be seen from the graphs at the bottom of the report the **American Goldfinch**, **Black-capped Chickadee** and the **Common Grackle** numbers are below the previous two years. The **Dark-eyed Junco** and the **White-throated Sparrow** numbers are between the two previous years.

### Some data from the sheets for week 1 through 5:

**Common Species List:** We had 22 for 22 or 100% over the first 5 weeks. By removing those species that were classified as semi common, there were fewer species with empty weeks which made compiling easier for me and it shortened up the list.

**Semi-Common List:** This is a new list composed of species that 7 or less surveyors have seen during a five-week period, and they cannot be seen every week by the same surveyor. The list includes: **Chipping Sparrow**, **Eastern Bluebird**, **Fox Sparrow**, **Northern Flicker**, **Northern Mockingbird**, **Purple Finch**, **Red-tailed Hawk**, **Red-winged Blackbird**, **Rock Dove (Pigeon)**, **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, **Wild Turkey**, **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**. The list will change yearly based on the previous year's counts. For this 5-week period we had 11 for 12 or 92%. There were **no Purple Finches** reported during this period.

**Uncommon Species List:** We had 5 for 39 show up at the feeders for a percentage of 13%. The uncommon species were: **Brown Creeper** (Laurie Reynolds), **Cedar Waxwing** (Tim Rodgers), **Red-shouldered Hawk** (Amy Hopkins, Dean Rupp), **Rusty Blackbird** (Charlotte White), and **Turkey Vulture** (Martha Asarisi).

The only **Waterfowl** that showed were **Mallards** and a **Northern Pintail** reported by Nancy Morand.

**Animals** reported during the first five weeks were: **Gray Squirrel** (majority); **Chipmunk**, **Feral Cat**, **Opossum**, **Rabbit**, **Raccoon**, **Red Fox**, **Red Squirrel**, **Vole**, **White Tail Deer** and **Woodchuck**.

### Some data from the sheets for weeks 6 through 10:

**Common Species:** We had 22/22 or 100%. **American Robin** and **Brown-headed Cowbird** were seen by less than 5 surveyors while the rest of the species had 10 or more surveyors see them.

**Semi-Common Species:** Surprisingly, we had 12/12 or 100% of the semi-common species seen. 11 Surveyors saw **Northern Flickers**, and 7 saw **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**. 1 surveyor saw a **Purple Finch**.

**Uncommon Species List:** We had 9 for 39 species (17%) during these five weeks. Species seen were: **American Tree**

**Sparrow** (Pete Vitali), **Black Vulture** (Deborah Johnson), **Brown Creeper** (Laurie Reynolds and Andy Stack), **Pileated Woodpecker** (Martha Asarisi and Andy Stack), **Red-breasted Nuthatch** (Ellie Tessmer), and **Turkey Vulture** (Deborah Johnson and Andy Stack).

**Waterfowl list:** Two Waterfowl were seen during these five weeks: **Northern Pintail** and **Mallards** (Nancy Morand).

**Animal List:** From the **Animal** list the following were seen: **Gray Squirrel**, **Chipmunk**, **Coyote**, **Feral Cat**, **Flying Squirrel**, **Gray Fox**, **Mole**, **Opossum**, **Rabbit**, **Raccoon**, **Red Fox** and **White-tail Deer**.

I have also included the graphs of the 5 species I follow for weeks 1 through 10. The RED line is this year.

Pete Vitali

Chairman: NHBC Winter Feeder Survey





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## Consequential Conservation

It's likely not often that a competition arises for a seat on the board of a non-profit organization, even an efficient one like the New Haven Bird Club. But there we were, Charles Strasser and I, both expressing interest in serving on the conservation committee. Thankfully the board did accede to the considered view of our president ("Hey, a two-fer? Why not?"), and it was agreed that we share the role as co-chairs with a single vote on issues. We are your conservation co-chairs, here to serve in any ways we can to preserve and restore bird populations and their habitats – Charles, replete with youthful enthusiasm, a degree in wildlife studies and a laser-sharp interest in conservation and important environmental issues, Deborah with devoted enthusiasm and life-experience.

As we took office the preparation of the next year's programs and field trips was well underway, so we blindly dove in and developed new field trips for the 2017-2018 year that focused not just on birds but also on important food plants for birds, invasive plant species, and land and water conservation, partnering with educators and local and State organizations. You will see these in the current yearbook. Spring is always a busy time for birders, and we sacrificed a few good birding days to be present at the Earth Day festival at the Hamden Middle School and at the Spring Migration Festival at East Rock Park's College Woods Trowbridge Environmental Center; both events were fun for us and for the people who visited our table and the Education Committee table, and well worth the effort in developing interest in birds and the environment in young citizen-scientists. Charles immediately established an Instagram account for the club, and photos can be sent to him via email for posting; already there are more than 100 followers of our Instagram page! Other events included the walk at Long Wharf Urban Oasis and Nature Preserve, for which 21 people came, none of whom had been to the site before and none of whom were bird club members! Charles led a walk at the little-known Farm River State Park, and added at least 2 new species to the life list for that park.

We've taken advocacy steps on several environmental issues including adding NHBC to the letter supporting the current strength of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which is under unprecedented threat. We have responded to the State's draft Water Plan, and attended the Climate Summit on Water this past July. Thanks to Charles, the club has signed on to the Karo Act (HR 3979) to re-authorize the Volunteer, Community Partnership & Education Programs in the National Wildlife Refuge System. As I write this, he is busy initiating a campaign asking members to contact their State legislators and urge signing Resolution SJ39 approving an amendment to the CT constitution restricting the State's authority to sell real property held or controlled by the State.

We've had a chance to do a lot of fun things, too. Deborah participated in three BYOBoat cleanups in the West River (yes, it was fun, if disgusting), and has become an active participant in both the West River Watershed Coalition and the Urban Oasis Advisory Council, and completed a program in Environmental Leadership sponsored by the Neighborhood Housing Services for Greater New Haven. Charles put in several workdays completing the new blind at the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge at Great Meadows. Deborah joined several community work-nights at Beaver

Ponds Park. We both participated in the ICC coastal cleanup, working at Sandy Point (while also getting in some schmooze time with new Sound Keeper Bill Lacey). We were able to thank and congratulate the four organizations and home owner for teaming up to remove a dumpster stuck in the mud of the Oyster River Marsh since Super Storm Sandy. We delighted in being part of the Migration Festival at Lighthouse, though the work of the day was really done by others. And we were present when the NHBC recognized the efforts of the students of Common Ground High School in working all summer maintaining several urban oases. Just this past week Charles was at the Peabody Museum of Natural History in New Haven celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and promoting awareness of and inviting people to visit the cluster of Stuart B. McKinney Wildlife Refuges.

Most of these fun things we've done were done as well by other NHBC members. It lies in the advocacy and collaborations we've established to tease out the real work of the Conservation Committee. By working with other organizations and being mindful of opportunities to help further their mission we spread the word and the work of the club beyond bird walks and speaker meetings. Working with the students at Common Ground High School and providing a summer stipend for the group leader was an important step for the club to take. It brought grateful recognition to the club for community participation, and we benefitted from contact with the students and learning of their developing interests in conservation (the club will continue its support of Common Ground this coming summer). In the next month or so, NHBC will co-sponsor a community event featuring water resources and storm water management in the showing of the film *Water Blues Green Solutions* at the Barnard Nature Center; during the summer we will co-sponsor the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Water Festival at West River. We have offered assistance to Beaver Ponds Park in recognition of their tremendous efforts in restoring that park and in recognition of ongoing needs to further their work. As I write this column for the *Chickadee*, I am putting final touches on a grant proposal to AudubonCT for educational materials for encouraging greater attendance at the West River Urban Oasis and Memorial Park. It is in providing financial support to important projects like the urban oases, child education for developing scientists or citizen scientists, community programs and student work programs that the NHBC does perhaps its most important work for the future of birding and conservation. Members of the NHBC know the value of birds and bird habitats; we extend that value by taking our knowledge and enthusiasm into the wider community, especially when our resources can be shared to help meet the needs of other conservation efforts.

--Deborah Johnson, Conservation Committee Co-Chair

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## *The NHBC can now be found on Instagram*

To submit photos please include the following information:

1. Species of bird
2. Area where the picture was taken (Backyard, city park, State Forest, etc.)
3. When the picture was taken
4. Your name and whether or not you would like to be credited as the photographer.

--Charles Strasser, Conservation Committee Co-Chair

[crstrasser@gmail.com](mailto:crstrasser@gmail.com)

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**NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB**  
**P.O. BOX 9004**  
**NEW HAVEN, CT 06532-0004**

**Newsletter February 2018**

#### **NHBC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

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

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City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Area Code / Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal

**Membership Levels (check appropriate category):**

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual - \$15

\_\_\_\_\_ Family - \$20

\_\_\_\_\_ Supporting - \$50

\_\_\_\_\_ Student under 18 - Free

\_\_\_\_\_ Life Membership - \$300 for 1 or 2 people at same address.

**Additional gift to support NHBC programs: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Make check payable to New Haven Bird Club and send to:**

**New Haven Bird Club,**

**PO Box 9004**

**New Haven CT 06532-0004**

**You can also join or renew membership at the NHBC website with credit card or PayPal.**

**The NHBC membership year is from July 1 to June 30. New members joining between January 1 and June 30 are given full membership for the rest of the current year and for the whole next membership year.**

#### **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

New Haven Bird Club is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. All dues and donations are fully tax deductible. If you work for a company that gives matching grants, please take advantage of the offer. It's free and helps NHBC's program budget.

The Club welcomes everyone irrespective of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin.

If your address, phone or email change, please send that information to: New Haven Bird Club, PO Box 9004, New Haven CT 06532-0004 or contact the Membership Chair, DeWitt Allen: 860.949.0995 or [allendatlow@gmail.com](mailto:allendatlow@gmail.com).

NHBC does not release its membership list or email addresses to other organizations.

The NHBC website offers information about the Club, its programs, and other Club and member news. The web address is [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org). If you have any questions about the Club, you can send an email to: [ask.nhbc@gmail.com](mailto:ask.nhbc@gmail.com).

The New Haven Bird Club is on Facebook. Please like the page "New Haven Bird Club." You can upload your photos, discuss Club events, and post your recent sightings.

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