

THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

December 2012

2012 - 2013 CALENDAR

(See inside for details)

November 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013 NHBC 19th Annual Winter Feeder Survey

Saturday, December 1, 2012, 9:00 am Family Bird Walk at Silver Sands State Park, Milford

Wednesday, December 5, 2012, 8:00 am First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Thursday, December 13, 2012, 7:00 pm Larry Fischer In the Eye of an Eagle

Saturday, December 15, 2012 113th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count

Wednesday, January 2, 2013, 7:30 am First Wednesday Walk: Sherwood Island State Park, Westport

Saturday, January 5, 2013, 8:00 am Lake Gaillard, North Branford

Thursday, January 10, 2013 7:00 pm Min Huang, Declining Birds, Declining Dollars: Cause and Effect

Sunday, January 13, 2013, 7:30 am **Stratford/Milford Birding**

Saturday, February 2, 2013, 8:00 am Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Wednesday, February 6, 2013, 8:00 am First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison

Thursday, February 14, 2013 7:00 pm Jacob Musser Feathers Make the Bird, but What Makes the Feathers?

Sachuest Point NWR and Rhode Island Coast Saturday, February 23, 2013, 7:00 am

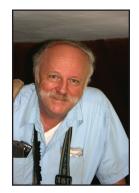
If you take pictures of NHBC events or on NHBC trips, please consider sending one to the newsletter to be included with the report. Send them to Donna Batsford at donnabatsford@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi Folks,

Several Topics:

First Item: We need a new Indoor Program Chair or Co-chairs starting with the 2013 – 2014 Club season. Craig Repasz has done a wonderful job these past several years with all kinds of great



indoor programs – thank you very much Craig – but professional pressures have become increasingly demanding on him, so he has decided to retire from his post.

The new Chair or Co-chairs will have the help of the entire board to draw on. While it is not the easiest job in the Club, the satisfaction level is quite high and you get to meet interesting people, too.

Second Item: I was reading the posts on CT Birds a few days ago and they went something like this.

- 1. RB Nut - -
- 2. Brown Thrasher - -
- 3 Black-bellied Ployer - -
- 4. Mountain Lion vs Bobcat - -
- 5. White - - -

WAIT - WHAT WAS THAT IN NUMBER 4 ?!!!!!!!?

Someone in the Northwest corner of Connecticut MAY have seen another Mountain Lion. That would be the second one in about 2 years. The first one got hit by a car and killed. I read about it in *Connecticut Wildlife*, a DEEP publication.

Third Item: Can anybody think of a new way or two to draw "Twenty Somethings" and "Thirty Somethings" into the Club with or without young families? Send any suggestions you may have to me at: mfhorn@att.net . Put "Young Members" in the subject line.

Regards to all, Mike Horn - President

FROM THE BOARD

The next board meeting is Tuesday, January 15, at 6:45 pm at the Regional Water Authority in New Haven.

The deadline for submissions to the February newsletter is January 21. Send to Donna Batsford: donnabatsford@gmail.com

INDOOR PROGRAMS

Monthly indoor programs start in September and are held on the second Thursday of the month. The social half-hour at meetings begins at 7:00 pm; the meeting and program begin at 7:30 pm. Inclement weather or another emergency may cancel a meeting. For cancellation notices, check TV channels WTNH (New Haven) and WFSB (Hartford). Cancellation notices will also be posted online on ctbird. Starting in September 2012, the meetings will be at The Whitney Center,, Cultural Arts Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden. The facility is wheelchair accessible.

Directions to the Whitney Center (WC)

<u>From I-95 North or South:</u> Exit onto I-91 North in New Haven. Take Exit 6 (Willow St.). At end of ramp turn right onto Willow and proceed to the end (Whitney Ave.). Turn right onto Whitney and go approximately 4 miles. Turn left onto Putnam Avenue. <u>From I-91 South:</u> Take Exit 6 (Willow St.) in New Haven. At end of ramp, turn right onto Willow and proceed to the end (Whitney Ave.). Turn right onto Whitney and go approximately 4 miles. Turn left onto Putnam Avenue. <u>From Wilbur Cross (Rte. 15) northbound:</u> Take Exit 61 (Whitney Ave). Turn left at end of ramp, go 2.4 mi., turn right onto Putnam.

<u>From Wilbur Cross (Rte. 15) northbound:</u> Take Exit 61 (Whitney Ave). Turn left at end of ramp, go 2.4 mi., turn right onto Putnam. <u>From Wilbur Cross (Rte. 15) southbound:</u> Take Exit 61 (Whitney Ave. New Haven). At end of ramp go right. Proceed to Putnam.

On Putnam go approximately .7 mi, (3 traffic lights) and turn right onto Leeder Hill (ATT bldg is at that intersection). Go .6 mi. on Leeder Hill to the South Entrance (big sign) of WC on the left. Turn in and take an immediate left into a raised parking area. Meeting is in the South Building, accessed via the main door of the portico that is in view from the parking lot. Turn right down the hallway. The Cultural Arts Center is a short distance on the left.

Thursday, December 13, 2012 — Larry Fischer In the Eye of an Eagle

This evening's program looks at the history of the American Bald Eagle in Connecticut since its population was decimated by DDT in the 1940s. (September this past fall marked the 50th anniversary of the publication of Rachel Carson's Silent Spring, the book that helped launch the environmental movement and the ban on DDT). Larry will recount a brief history of the reappearance of wintering eagles in the 1970's and the current status of bald eagle breeding in CT since the first successful nest was observed in 1992. And we'll "get up close and personal" as we watch Larry's photo essay "Climbing to an Eagle Nest" in which he describes what it's like to climb some of our state's largest trees—some to the height of 90 feet—to come eye to eye with eaglets in their aerie. Larry is a volunteer for the US Department of the Interior and is president of the Western CT Bird Club. An amateur ornithologist, Larry has been tracking bird activity since the 1980s. He scales the same heights to study hawks and owls too in their nests.

Thursday, January 10, 2013 — Min Huang, CT DEEP Declining Birds, Declining Dollars: Cause and Effect

In tight financial times, many things are impacted in a variety of ways. The environment is no exception. Our speaker tonight will focus on the decline of many of our state's non-harvested birds and the possible causes for those declines. The underlying

discussion of the presentation will be Connecticut's current lack of dedicated funding for non-harvested wildlife and how such a stream of revenue could benefit them. Using 10 other states as conservation models, Min will discuss some of those states' varying degrees of such revenue streams. Dr. Huang is Migratory Game Bird Program Leader for the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, and he heads up the non-game bird program for the state. He is an adjunct Research Scientist with UConn's Department of Natural Resources and the Environment. His projects include chimney swift survival rate estimates, and shrubland and forest interior bird productivity and distribution.

Thursday, February 14, 2013 — Jacob Musser Feathers Make the Bird, but What Makes the Feathers?

Ah, feathers—that source of eternal delight to birders, but these remarkable structures are hardly just "eye candy." Feathers are integral to the lives of birds, endowing them with the capacity for flight, precise control over body temperature, and a showy plumage for use in displays of aggression and affection. But where do feathers come from, and how did they evolve their impressive ability to vary in size and shape? In this talk, Jacob, a PhD candidate in Yale's Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, will discuss how his recent investigations on the genetic instructions for growing feathers have shed new light on their early evolution—and how his research has led him from the laboratory to emu farms and alligator-filled swamps in Louisiana.

BIRDS IN WORDS

Birds in Words is NHBC's book discussion group for people who like to read about their favorite hobby and then discuss the books at casual and thought-provoking sessions. Please feel free to attend any of the meetings. All are welcome! Meetings start at 7:00 pm at The Whitney Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden. *See directions to Whitney Center under Indoor Programs*. Go to main desk, sign in, and get directions to the meeting room. If you have any questions, please email or call Kris Johnson kriswaxwing99@gmail.com or 203.288.3087.

Next Book: *Tales of a Low-Rent Birder* by Pete Dunne **Date:** To be decided

FIELD TRIPS / OUTDOOR EVENTS

The New Haven Bird Club does not charge trip or leader fees for its outdoor programs, but participants are responsible for the cost of their food, transportation, and entrance fees (where charged), unless prior arrangements are made by the Club. Carpooling is encouraged to avoid parking problems at some destinations and to promote conservation of our natural resources. All levels of birders are invited to all field trips, and every effort is made on all trips to help beginning birders. 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. You can check the Club's website www.newhavenbirdclub.org for trip information and watch for emails sent by the Club or contact trip leaders directly.

Cancellation Policy: Inclement weather or another emergency may cancel a field trip. Check the sources listed above or contact the leader of the trip directly if you have any questions about a possible cancellation.

NHBC 19th Annual Winter Feeder Survey November 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013

This is a yearly census to help determine the number and frequency of birds visiting feeders in the Greater New Haven area. You are invited to observe and record the activity at your feeder at least once a week for the entire time period. Contact - Peter Vitali: 203.288.0621, vitali peter e@sbcglobal.net

Family Bird Walk at Silver Sands State Park, Milford Saturday, December 1, 2012, 9:00 am

This walk is oriented toward families that are interested in birds. Beginners are welcome. The park is a great place to see waterfowl, shorebirds, and sparrows. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them, appropriate clothing, and a little bit of curiosity about birds and the natural world. Meet in the parking lot at the end of Silver Sands Parkway. Leader - Corrie Folsom-OKeefe: 203.630.9640 or cfolsom-okeefe@audubon.org

First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison Wednesday, December 5, 2012, 8:00 am

Join us as we explore this birding hotspot for fall migrants. The varied habitat attracts shorebirds, raptors, songbirds, and waterfowl. Meet at the park entrance. The leader is Jerry Connolly. Contact - Tina Green: 203.247.2660, tina@renaissancestudios. com

113th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count Saturday, December 15, 2012

Join other NHBC members in this fun event, steeped in tradition. Participate for a few hours or for the entire day. Results of the count are sent to the National Audubon Society and are included in an international census of early winter bird populations. The compilation dinner, held at Whitney Center, starts at 5:00 pm. Compiler - Chris Loscalzo: 203.389.6508, closcalz@optonline.

First Wednesday Walk: Sherwood Island State Park, Westport

Wednesday, January 2, 2013, 7:30 am

Enjoy a mid-week trip to this fine birding spot on Long Island Sound. We will check the Sound for loons, grebes, goldeneye, and other sea ducks. The park's fields are a good place to look

for Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, and sparrows. Meet at the main parking lot in the park. Leader - Tina Green: 203.247.2660, tina@renaissancestudios.com

Lake Gaillard, North Branford Saturday, January 5, 2013, 8:00 am

Come celebrate the new year looking for birds at Lake Gaillard. We will take a leisurely walk by the dam and Christmas tree plantation to view winter residents. We should be able to find bald eagles as long as there is some open water. Meet at the gate at the top of North Street in North Branford. Leader - John Triana: jtrianal@rwater.com

Stratford/Milford Birding Tour Sunday, January 13, 2013, 7:30 am

Today we visit marshes and beaches in Stratford and Milford. We will be looking for sea ducks including scoters, scaup, loons and grebes, gulls, raptors, and shorebirds. Meet at the commuter lot on Schoolhouse Rd. in Milford just south of Exit 35 on Rte. I-95. Leader - Chris Loscalzo: 203.389.6508, closcalz@optonline. net

Hammonasset State Park, Madison Saturday, February 2, 2013, 8:00 am

Join us as we visit this premier CT birding location for a midwinter excursion. We will be looking for sea ducks, shorebirds, grassland species, and winter finches. Notable sightings on last year's trip included Common Eider, Surf Scoter, Sanderling, Purple Sandpiper, Dunlin, Snow Bunting, and Horned Lark. We'll check out the entire park, including the campgrounds area. Meet at the Nature Center parking lot. Leader - Chris Loscalzo: 203.389.6508, closcalz@optonline.net

First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset State Park, Madison Wednesday, February 6, 2013, 8:00 am

Join us on this mid-week field trip to one of the area's best birding locations. We will look for sea ducks, grassland species, and rarities. We should see loons, grebes, scoters, and, perhaps, eiders. Horned Larks and Snow Buntings may be on the grassy lots if they are not covered with snow. Meet at the park entrance at 8:00 am. The leader is Greg Hanisek. Contact - Tina Green: 203.247.2660, tina@renaissancestudios.com

Sachuest Point NWR and Rhode Island Coast Saturday, February 23, 2013, 7:00 am

This all-day trip includes stops at Sachuest Point, Beavertail State Park, Moonstone Beach, and Trustum Pond, all outstanding Rhode Island birding locations. We should see grebes, loons, scoters, eiders, Purple Sandpipers, and Harlequin Ducks. Highlights on last year's trip included Northern Gannet, Bonaparte's Gull, and Lesser Black-backed Gull. Dress warmly—it's cold and windy on the coast. The hiking is a bit strenuous in places. Bring lunch and a spotting scope if you have one. Meet at the Branford commuter lot at Exit 55, I-95. We carpool from there. Leader - Chris Loscalzo: 203.389.6508, closcalz@optonline.net

Trip Report: First Wednesday Walk: Allen's Meadow

Thirteen participants joined Luke Tiller, Leader and two great assistants, Joe Bear and Frank Mantlik at Allen's Meadow in Wilton on October 13th from 8-11 am for the New Haven Bird Club First Wednesday Walk.

We saw or heard 50 species during the walk and ran to the cars to escape the rain at the end. Of special note we had a Cooper's Hawk chasing an American Kestrel, and special comparisons of Savannah and Song Sparrows on the fences at the Community Garden, as well as Purple and House Finches sitting near each other in the trees or bushes. The number of Purple Finches was unusual and Carolina, House and a Winter Wren were in the thickets, often close to each other, and there were a number of Palm Warblers along the paths.

Species seen: Mallard, Great Blue Heron, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue-headed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, House Wren, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Nashville Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Palm Warbler, Black-and white Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Chipping Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Purple Finch, House Finch, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow --Kris Johnson, Scribe

Trip Report: Osbornedale State Park

There were 11 participants on the New Haven Bird Club walk at Osbornedale State Park in Derby on October 6th. We saw 44 species: Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, Turkey Vulture, Black Vulture, Canada Goose, Mallard, Sharp-shinned, Cooper, Red-tailed, Red-shouldered Hawks, Osprey, American Kestrel, Rock Dove, Northern Flicker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Red-eyed Vireo, American Crow, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren,

Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets, Robin, Catbird, Mockingbird, Starling, Palm Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, White-throated Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, House Finch, Purple Finch, Goldfinch, House Sparrow, Pine Siskin, Cardinal.

-- Maria Stockmal

Trip Report: Hammonasset Beach State Park, October 13th

The very chilly morning brought us a wealth of birds. As we gathered on the entrance road, it was often hard to decide which way to look; the vegetation was alive with birds and many more passed overhead, including flocks of American Robins and a low-flying Osprey carrying a fish. Sparrows, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets, and Eastern Phoebes were foraging busily, as a Carolina Wren sounded off nearby. A couple of Purple Finches and some Pine Siskins alighted at the top of a nearby tree for a brief stay, and a Brown Creeper spent a few moments on the left side of the narrow "No Parking" sign by the side of the road. When we got to the swan pond the two Pied-billed Grebes seen during a brief scouting trip the day before were still there, and quite soon a flock of about 16 American Pipits flew over, landed and walked around in the parking field across the road. The west parking lot area was very productive, with a Red-breasted Nuthatch in the pines along with chickadees and a Downy Woodpecker. The bushes and grass at the west end of the lot were full of sparrows; we had good looks at both adult and immature White-crowned Sparrows as well as more common species. We spent a long time trying to see a mystery sparrow well enough to know whether it really was a Clay-colored, finally deciding to move on since there was so much more ground to cover.

Eight Great Egrets and a Lesser Yellowlegs were at the pool and marsh east of the Nature Center parking lot, along with a lot of Black Ducks and a few Green-winged Teal, and we heard a Greater Yellowlegs calling (perhaps one of those seen by two participants in the pool at the end of Meigs Point). The Dunlin that we later spotted there, and a few Killdeer, were the only other shorebirds we found. We might have tallied more if we had gotten over to the beach and the breakwater, but since the land birding was so good, we decided to do Willards and Cedar Islands in the time we had left. The highlights of that part of the trip were the many looks we had at Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, more Brown Creepers, a Hermit Thrush, and beautiful Goldencrowned Kinglets, so close that their bright yellow crowns were clearly visible. Raptors were represented by Northern Harriers, a Cooper's Hawk, and American Kestrels, one of which perched obligingly on an Osprey nest, where we could easily watch it through a scope. Compared with last year's windy trip, this was a wonderful birding day, and we recorded 55 species as well as seeing a few others so (including two warblers) so fleetingly that they couldn't be positively identified.

--Flo McBride

Trip Report: Branford Supply Ponds

The New Haven Bird Club trip to the Branford Supply Ponds was on Saturday, October 27th. The group particularly enjoyed seeing the Black-throated Blue Warbler, and were frustrated by

repeatedly hearing but not being able to find the Pileated Woodpecker.

33 species were seen: Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, Mute Swan, Gadwall, Mallard, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed



Hawk, Herring Gull, Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue-headed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Robin, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Palm Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Cardinal, Goldfinch.

-- Maria Stockmal

Trip Report: Fargeorge Wildlife Refuge

On Saturday November 3rd, 20 people attended the New Haven Land Trust - New Haven Bird Club fieldtrip to the New Haven Land Trust's Fargeorge Wildlife Refuge. The weather was sunny with a wind out of the north and temperatures ranging from 37° - 51° F. It was low tide at the start of the walk.

The following is a list of the 53 bird species seen and /or heard: Snow Geese, Canada Geese, Mute Swans, American Black Duck, Mallard, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-throated Loon, Great Blue Heron, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Laughing Gull, Ringbilled Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, American Crow, Fisk Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Whitebreasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Grey Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Yellowrumped Warbler, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, House Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.

--Mike Horn

Trip Report: First WednesdayWalk: Silver Sands State Park

On Wednesday, November 7th, in the face of an incoming nor'easter, 12 hardy birders saw a total of 33 species in overcast, chilly and windy conditions at Silver Sands State Park in Milford. Highlights included White-winged scoter, Northern Gannet, Red-throated Loon, Bonaparte's Gull and Sanderling from the beach and Eastern Meadowlark, Red-shouldered and Red-Tailed Hawks, Northern Harrier, White-throated, Swamp, Savannah and Song Sparrows from the fields. Timing of the walk was perfect as the snow began as we departed.

--Bill Batsford

NEW BIRD CLUB – 2012-2013

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	lpbausher@comcast.net		
Yearbook Chair	Betty Zuraw	860.632.1156	
	bz4feathers@gmail.com		

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Birds in Words	Kris Johnson	203.288.3087	
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Christmas Bird Count	Chris Loscalzo	203.389.6508	
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Hawk Watch	Steve Mayo	203.393.0694	
Lighthouse Point	rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net		
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Summer Bird Count	Steve Mayo	203.393.0694	
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Winter Feeder Survey	Peter Vitali	203.288.0621	
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Yahoo Group	Ralph Amodei	203.467.9515	
	ramodei@att.net		



Immature Bald Eagle on Branford River Photo by Emmitt Dove



Clapper Rail Photo by Mike Horn



Barred Owl Photo by Bill Batsford

NHBC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Make check payable to New Haven Bird Club and send to: New Haven Bird Club, PO Box 9004, New Haven CT 06532-0004

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 also for the following 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 your employer 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 preference, or national origin.

If your address, phone or email change, please send that information to the Club address given on the form to the left or contact the Membership Chair, Mike Ferrari: mike.ferrari@att.net or 203.435.5712.

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

The New Haven Bird Club is now on Facebook. So log onto facebook and like the page "New Haven Bird Club." You can post your photos, see other photos, participate in a discussion and check out the upcoming events.

CTBirds is an open discussion email list to discuss birds and birding in the state. To Subscribe, go to:

http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctbirds_lists.ctbirding.org

The CTDailyReport list is used to distribute summaries of rare and uncommon bird sightings. To Subscribe, go to:

 $http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctdailyreport_lists.ctbirding.org$

NHBC website: www.newhavenbirdclub.org