



# THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

February 2013

## 2013 CALENDAR

*(See inside for details)*

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

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?**

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

Wednesday, March 6, 2013, 8:00 am **First Wednesday Walk: Stratford: Shores/Great Meadows Marsh**

Thursday, March 14, 2013, 7:00 pm **Florence McBride, A Gallery of Western Birds**

Saturday, March 16, 2013, 8:00 am **Silver Sands State Park, Milford**

Saturday, March 30, 2013, 9:00 am **Family Bird Walk: Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby**

Wednesday, April 3, 2013, 7:30 am **First Wednesday Walk: CT Audubon Coastal Center, Milford**

Saturday, April 6, 2013, 8:30 am **Richard English Memorial Bird Walk: Lighthouse Point to Richard English Bird Sanctuary in Killingworth to Hammonasset State Park**

Thursday, April 11, 2013, 7:00 pm **Robert DeCandido, The Vultures and Migratory Raptors of Nepal**

Saturday, April 13, 2013, 8:00 am **East Rock Birding and Trail Maintenance, New Haven**

Saturday, April 20, 2013, 8:00 am **Ansonia Nature Center, Ansonia**

Saturday, April 27, 2013, 9:00 am **Bird Walk for Kids at East Rock Park, New Haven**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hi Folks,

There are several major items that have taken place since our last board meeting.

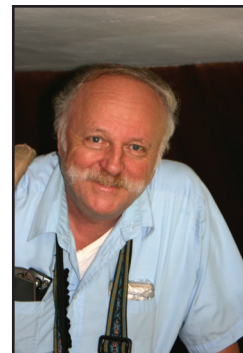
- 1.) We now have a Social Committee whose Chair is Donna Caporaso. Donna will be in charge of arranging the Banquets with all the angels who help us now, except for programs. She will also organize all our raffles, drawings and the like.
- 2.) Craig Repasz has very kindly agreed to continue as Indoor Chairman. He will coordinate our efforts. He plans to have themed indoor programs on Thursdays to match the fieldtrips on the following weekends. This will probably start in a year or so. The details are not yet formed. He has other ideas too.
- 3.) Yahoo Announcement duties are transferred to the Membership committee. The Membership committee currently consists of Mike Ferrari and Pat Leahy. Anybody who wishes to help, please contact them.
- 4.) In other news, Richard Crossley will be the speaker at our May 2014 Banquet. Some of us heard him at the COA meeting in 2012 and thought he was excellent. He's about to release a book on hawks. He also told me he is thinking about a shore bird book.
- 5.) Gary Lemmon is retiring as Treasurer after a quarter of a century. Thank you Gary for your unprecedented long term service. We are all grateful for what you have done for the Club.

We are looking for a new Treasurer. Someone who lives in the area, can do it long term and is good with numbers. Gary will help you learn the job. This is an elected position. Contact Pat Leahy, Nominating Chair, if you are interested.

6.) The possibility exists that we may also need a Secretary. The Secretary takes minutes at Board meetings and writes the occasional letter. This is also an elected position.

Regards to all,  
Mike Horn – President

P.S. Pat and I went to the Florida Keys over the Christmas holidays to visit our Ospreys.



## NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB – 2012-2013

### OFFICERS

<i>President</i>	Mike Horn	203.288.1891
	mfhorn@att.net	
<i>Vice President</i>	Bill Batsford	203.787.1642
	william.batsford@yale.edu	
<i>Treasurer</i>	Gary Lemmon	203.488.7813
	lemmon@snet.net	
<i>Secretary</i>	Nancy Specht	203.248.0247
	naspecht@snet.net	

### BOARD MEMBERS

<i>Conservation Chair</i>	Kris Johnson	203.288.3087
	kriswaxwing99@gmail.com	
<i>Education Chair</i>	Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe	203.630.9640
	jubilee832001@yahoo.com	
<i>Hospitality Chair</i>	Stacy Hanks	203.283.3898
	flybird@optonline.net	
<i>Indoor Programs</i>	Craig Repasz	203.230.1697
	crepasz@hotmail.com	
<i>Member-at-Large</i>	Steve Spector	203.876.7461
	charsjs@sbcglobal.net	
<i>Membership Chair</i>	Mike Ferrari	203.435.5712
	mike.ferrari@att.net	
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	Donna Batsford	203.787.1642
	donnabatsford@gmail.com	
<i>Nominating Chair</i>	Patrick Leahy	203.393.2427
	ptjleahy@yahoo.com	
<i>Outdoor Programs</i>	Chris Loscalzo	203.389.6508
	closcalz@optonline.net	
<i>Publicity Chair</i>	Larry Bausher	203.389.5918
	lpbausher@comcast.net	
<i>Social Chair</i>	Donna Caporaso	203.895.7669
	donnacap@aol.com	
<i>Yearbook Chair</i>	Betty Zuraw	860.632.1156
	bz4feathers@gmail.com	

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

<i>Birds in Words</i>	Kris Johnson	203.288.3087
	kriswaxwing99@gmail.com	
<i>Christmas Bird Count</i>	Chris Loscalzo	203.389.6508
	closcalz@optonline.net	
<i>Hawk Watch</i>	Steve Mayo	203.393.0694
<i>Lighthouse Point</i>	rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net	
<i>Historian</i>	John Triana	203.758.7203
	jtriana1@sbcglobal.net	
<i>Summer Bird Count</i>	Steve Mayo	203.393.0694
	rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net	
<i>Web Master</i>	John Triana	203.758.7203
	jtriana1@sbcglobal.net	
<i>Winter Feeder Survey</i>	Peter Vitali	203.288.0621
	vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net	

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

## FROM THE BOARD

The next board meeting is Thursday, February 28, at 6:45 pm at the Regional Water Authority in New Haven.

The deadline for submissions to the April newsletter is March 22. Send to Donna Batsford: [donnabatsford@gmail.com](mailto:donnabatsford@gmail.com)

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](mailto:donnabatsford@gmail.com)

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Anthony Corso 28 Gould Lane Branford, CT 06405 203 481 9600 <a href="mailto:tony5619@hotmail.com">tony5619@hotmail.com</a>	Nancy Meyer-Lustman 220 Clark Ave Branford, CT 06405-4732 203 887 8070 <a href="mailto:nancymeyerlustman@gmail.com">nancymeyerlustman@gmail.com</a>
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Katherine Ing 7 River Road Branford, CT 06405 203 623 2177 <a href="mailto:kitty.ing@verizon.com">kitty.ing@verizon.com</a>	Jan Prentice 18 Court Street Branford CT 06405 203-488-0353 <a href="mailto:prenticestudio@gmail.com">prenticestudio@gmail.com</a>
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Robert & Shelby Irwin 206 West Todd Street Hamden, CT 06518 203 640 4608 <a href="mailto:the_irwins@yahoo.com">the_irwins@yahoo.com</a>	Dan Spakowicz 125 Nicoll St #2 New Haven, CT 06511 612 807 6316 <a href="mailto:daniel.spakowicz@gmail.com">daniel.spakowicz@gmail.com</a>
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## 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 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 6<sup>th</sup> floor Conference Room. If you have any questions, please email or call Kris Johnson [kriswaxwing99@gmail.com](mailto:kriswaxwing99@gmail.com) or 203.288.3087.

**Next Book:** *Tales of a Low-Rent Birder* by Pete Dunne  
**Date:** March 13<sup>th</sup>, 7-9 pm

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## 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 Whitney Center, Cultural Arts Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden. The facility is wheelchair accessible.

### Directions to the Whitney Center (WC)

From I-95 North or South: 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.

From I-91 South: 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.

From Wilbur Cross (Rte. 15) northbound: Take Exit 61 (Whitney Ave). Turn left at end of ramp, go 2.4 mi., turn right onto Putnam.

From Wilbur Cross (Rte. 15) southbound: 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 Whitney Center 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.

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### 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.

### Thursday, March 14, 2013— Florence McBride A Gallery of Western Birds

In her travels in the Western US, Florence McBride’s camcorders have recorded many species that are hard or impossible to see in Connecticut. This program will present some of her best footage. We’ll appreciate the beauty of birds such as California’s Heermann’s Gull, Colorado’s Mountain Bluebird, and Arizona’s Gambel’s Quail, and we’ll do a lot of behavior-watching. Some of Flo’s favorite shots feature lekking Greater Prairie Chickens in Kansas; in Phoenix, a Cactus Wren building a nest at the Desert Botanical Garden, and avocets and stilts inhabiting a riparian preserve; Dippers dipping and a small group of American White Pelicans foraging in Colorado; plus many other species found in California and the Mountain West. Florence McBride has shown her films at Yale’s Peabody Museum of Natural History, at meetings of the NHBC and other organizations, as well as in

schools. She leads birding field trips for adults and children, and has been active in local conservation efforts. Since 1990 she has worked with teachers, students, and administrators to develop and implement a bird-focused science program in the Hamden Public Schools. Her films have played a useful part in this project; and the activities and materials of her Take Flight! program have been shared with educators in CT and other states through workshops and consultation. Her work has been recognized with awards at the state and national level.

### Thursday, April 11, 2013 — Robert DeCandido The Vultures and Migratory Raptors of Nepal

Nine vulture species occur on the Indian Subcontinent, five of which are globally endangered because of the widespread use of a chemical that treats arthritis in cattle. This evening’s program will show images of eight of the vulture species of Nepal, both in-flight and feeding on the ground. Dr. DeCandido himself has discovered one new vulture species that had never before been seen in Nepal. He’ll discuss conservation efforts that include “Vulture Restaurants” where animal carcasses free of deadly chemicals are provided for consumption by healthy vultures to help insure the precarious future of these huge birds. Our speaker will also cover Steppe Eagles and other raptors making an east to west migration across Asia toward Saudi Arabia and presumably, Africa. The eagles were often just a few meters above the camera, providing photos with excellent views that show the birds’ ages and molt patterns. In addition to studying vultures in Nepal, Robert and photographer Deborah Allen have worked on many raptor, migration, and other bird projects in Malaysia, Borneo, Thailand, and other Southeast Asia countries as well as in Israel. They helped discover a raptor migration watch site of global importance in Thailand. Come prepared for an evening of big, graceful birds and snow-capped mountains.

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## 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](http://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.

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### **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](mailto:vitali_peter_e@sbcglobal.net)

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

Join us as we visit this premier CT birding location for a mid-winter 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:closcalz@optonline.net)

### **First Wednesday Walk: Stratford: Shores/Great Meadows Marsh**

**Wednesday, March 6, 2013, 8:00 am**

Join us on a visit to this fine birding area. We will meet at the Long Beach parking lot and bird the marsh and beach and then visit Sikorsky Airport and Frash Pond. We'll look for sea birds such as Long-tailed Duck and scoters, as well as raptors and shorebirds. Directions: Follow signs to Sikorsky Airport from Exit 30 off I-95. Go past the airport entrance and follow the causeway to the end. Take the first right onto Oak Bluff Avenue and follow it to the Long Beach entrance. The leader is Frank Mantlik. Contact - Tina Green: 203.247.2660, [tina@renaissancestudios.com](mailto:tina@renaissancestudios.com)

### **Silver Sands State Park, Milford Saturday, March 16, 2013, 8:00 am**

Join expert birder and recent retiree Frank Mantlik (ahhh, so much time now for birding!) as he leads a walk at this excellent birding location on the Connecticut coast. We'll be looking for sea ducks, shorebirds, raptors, and all things avian. Meet at the main parking lot in the park. Leader - Frank Mantlik: 203.984.9410, [mantlik@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mantlik@sbcglobal.net)

### **NOTE NEW TRIP LISTING:**

### **Block Island, Rhode Island Thursday, March 21st, 2013, 6:00 am**

This is an all-day trip to this magical island at the east end of the Long Island Sound. We'll carpool onto the ferry from Point Judith in the early morning. We'll look for pelagic birds such as razorbills, murres, and gannets from the ferry and then look for sea ducks, gulls, and shorebirds on the island. After birding the island all morning, we'll dine at a restaurant for lunch and then take an afternoon ferry back to the mainland.

The itinerary is as follows:

Meet at the ferry terminal in Point Judith at 6:00 am.

Leave Point Judith, RI at 6:30 am on the ferry.

Go birding on Block Island from 7:30 am to 1:00 pm.

Lunch at a restaurant/pub on the island from 1:00 to 2:00 pm.

Leave Block Island at 2:30 pm. Arrive at Point Judith at 3:30



People interested in going on this trip should contact the trip leader to register in advance. Carpooling to Point Judith is encouraged. We will take as few cars as necessary onto the ferry to reduce costs.

Drive time from New Haven to Point Judith is about 2 hours. Thus, participants should plan on leaving the New Haven area around 4:00 am and can expect to be back around 6:00 pm. An alternative to leaving so early in the morning would be to rent a motel room in Point Judith.

Species of interest that are likely to be seen on the trip, either from the ferry or the island include:

Common Eider	Horned Grebe	Sanderling
Harlequin Duck	Red-necked Grebe	Dunlin
Surf Scoter	Northern Gannet	Black-legged Kittiwake
White-winged Scoter	Great Cormorant	Bonaparte's Gull
Black Scoter	Northern Harrier	Iceland Gull
Long-tailed Duck	Black-bellied Plover	Common Murre
Common Goldeneye	Killdeer	Razorbill
Red-throated Loon	Am. Oystercatcher	Black Guillemot
Common Loon		

**Family Bird Walk: Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby  
Saturday, March 30, 2013, 9:00 am**

Families and beginner birders are welcome on this ramble through Kellogg's woods, thickets, and meadows in search of birds. We'll keep an eye out for bluebirds, woodpeckers, and sparrows and finish the walk with a stop at the feeders for some up close views. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them, appropriate clothing, and a little bit of curiosity about birds and the natural world. All ages are welcome. Meet at the environmental center parking lot, 500 Hawthorne Ave. Leader - Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe: 203.630.9640, cfolsom-okeefe@audubon.org

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

**Wednesday, April 3, 2013, 7:30 am**

Enjoy an early spring walk at this fine coastal birding location. We'll be looking for early spring migrants such as Yellowlegs, Plover, and more. The park is an excellent place to see rare gulls, waterfowl, sparrows and other species. Rare shorebirds, such as Ruff and Godwits, sometimes show up in April and wintering sea ducks will still be around and should be in breeding plumage. Leader - Tina Green: 203.247.2660, tina@renaissancestudios.com

**Richard English Memorial Bird Walk: Lighthouse Point to Richard English Bird Sanctuary in Killingworth to Hammonasset State Park**

**Saturday, April 6, 2013, 8:30 am**

Meet in the Hawk Watch parking lot at New Haven's Lighthouse Point Park and bird the harbor shore for gulls, loons, ducks, and early returning shorebirds. We will then proceed to the Bird Sanctuary on Deer Lake in Killingworth and we'll finish our

birding tour at Hammonasset State Park in Madison. This is an all-day trip so bring lunch and dress warmly. Leader - Mike Horn: 203.288.1891, mfhorn@att.net

**East Rock Birding and Trail Maintenance, New Haven  
Saturday, April 13, 2013, 8:00 am**

Meet at the Eli Whitney Museum parking lot for a bird walk from 8 to 9 am. Then join Ranger Dan Barvir and help with light trail maintenance along the Mill River from 9 am to noon. Bring pruning shears and work gloves if you have them. Leader - Dan Barvir: 203.946.6086

**Ansonia Nature Center, Ansonia  
Saturday, April 20, 2013, 8:00 am**

Join our past-president as she leads a walk at this fine birding site. The nature center has a small pond, wetlands, thickets, woods, and grassy fields. The woods have had Northern Goshawks and Great Horned Owls nesting there, and there are often other surprises. Meet at the nature center parking lot on Deerfield Lane (off Benz Road) in Ansonia. Leader - Maria Stockmal: 203.488.3876, m.stockmal@snet.net

**Bird Walk for Kids at East Rock Park, New Haven  
Saturday, April 27, 2013, 9:00 am**

On this walk by the park's Mill River, children, accompanied by adults, will search for warblers and other spring migrants. Other interested adults are also welcome to join the walk in this famous spring birding site. Meet at the Eli Whitney Museum parking lot. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them. Leader - Florence McBride: 203.288.6777, j.mcbride@yale.edu

**West Rock Ridge SP: New Haven, Hamden, Woodbridge  
("Aves Antagonistes: The Intertwined Lives of Peregrines and Ravens")**

**Sunday, April 28, 2013, 8:00 am**

We focus on just two species for this trip to West Rock Ridge State Park: the Peregrine Falcon and Common Raven. A pair of Peregrines selected West Rock as their home in 1999, becoming one of the first breeding pairs in CT in the post-DDT era. Since then, 5 different females and 5 different males have occupied the ridge in a collage of combinations. We'll observe their cliff site with the expectation of seeing flying, perching, preening, feeding, antagonistic interactions with the nearby nesting ravens, and incubation of eggs. Common Ravens were confirmed as breeders at West Rock in 2002, and the presumed same pair has nested here annually since then, producing 4 to 5 young in most years. We observe them from unusually close range as they soar, perch, bring in cached food, fight with the peregrines, and attend their young in the cliff nest. Bring binoculars, cameras, and two extra layers of clothing (really!). The wind and cold at cliff top often bear no relation to conditions 450 feet below in the West River valley. Meet at the West Rock Nature Center parking lot on Wintergreen Street, Hamden/New Haven border. Leader - Steve Broker: 203.272.5192 (cell: 203.747.6843) or ls.broker@cox.net

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

Nineteen participants joined our leader, Jerry Connolly today at Hammonasset State Park on December 5 for a productive morning birding along the shore. We were fortunate to see the



Photo by Bill Batsford

Red and White-winged Crossbills that have been frequenting the Japanese Black Pines at West Beach and also along the road near East Beach towards Meigs Point. We saw 34 species birding along the beaches, the Meigs Point field and the Moraine Trail.

Species seen were: Brant, American Black Duck, Mallard, Surf Scoter, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Northern Gannet, Double-crested Cormorant, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Merlin, Black-bellied Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Purple Sandpiper, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Rock Pigeon, Northern Flicker, American Crow, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Red Crossbill, White-winged Crossbill



Red Crossbill  
Photo by Bill Batsford

--Kris Johnson, Scribe

## Trip Report: First Wednesday Walk: Sherwood Island

Seventeen Participants joined our Leader, Tina Green and Assistant Leader, Frank Mantlik on January 2 at Sherwood Island State Park, Westport from 8:00 am to 11:00 am. It was really cold starting out along the shore, but warmed up slightly during the morning. It was a very worthwhile walk and we added a number of new species to our 2013 lists.

52 species were seen:

Brant, Canada Goose, Mute Swan, Gadwall, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Greater Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk,



Photo by Barney Bontecou



Photo by Donna Batsford

Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Great-Black-backed Gull, Mourning Dove, Merlin, Two Species of Owls, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern

Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, American Robin, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, American Pipit, American Tree Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Common Redpoll, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow

--Kris Johnson, Scribe

## Trip Report: Lake Gaillard

On January 5th, about 60 people showed up to ring in the new year by doing some birding at Lake Gaillard in North Branford. The weather was seasonable - about 30-35 degrees with a light wind and about 4-6" of snow on the ground.

The walk up to the lake was fairly quiet. A blue jay called nearby and a large flock of common grackles flew over. A few deer crossed over the dam when we got to the lake. Setting up on the eastern dam, we scanned trees along the shoreline for eagles. At first we could only identify a few mallards, common mergansers and ring-billed gulls out on the water. Then crows sitting on a spit of land in the lake all flew up at once. The reason turned out to be an immature bald eagle that landed on the other side of the spit. After about 5 minutes, it flew up again and perched in a tree far up near the head of the lake. Before we moved on, we also caught sight of the day's first red-tailed hawk and common loon.



Photo by Barney Bontecou

We walked over to the western dam and first caught sight of another common loon that was only 100 yards from shore. Continuing over to the Christmas tree plantation, we saw a small accipiter fly over. Opinions were

mixed as to whether it was a Cooper's or sharp-shinned. In the water here we found bufflehead and ruddy ducks. We also found a red-throated loon with another common loon. A merlin flew in and landed on the shoreline for a couple of minutes and afforded excellent views to all. Close-by four ring-necked ducks and a solitary pied-billed grebe swam in the water. As we were scanning the water, a small flock of snow buntings flew in and landed along the exposed shoreline. As we were looking for birds, one person noticed a healthy looking coyote walking along the shoreline about a quarter mile away. He watched us as much as we watched him. Finally, as we were about to leave, a single





Photo by Barney Bontecou

American pipit flew in and landed about 10 feet from us. It jumped back up and landed again on the other side of the group.

In total we observed 29 species. Ironically, a trip led at the same time and place 8 years ago also tallied 29 species, but with more of the common winter residents than we found this day.

Species list - Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Mute Swan, Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Bald Eagle, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Merlin, Ring-billed Gull, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, American Robin, American Pipit, Cedar Waxwing, Northern Cardinal, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Snow Bunting, Common Grackle

--John Triana

### Trip Report: Stratford/Milford Birding Tour

It was FOGGY!!! At Mondo Pond in the early morning of January 13, the fog was so thick that we could barely make out the Ring-necked Ducks and American Wigeon swimming in the open water on the other side of the pond. The fog was even thicker along the shore, when we went to Long Beach and Stratford Point in Stratford in the hopes of seeing sea ducks and pelagic birds. Despite these challenging conditions, we managed to see a number of interesting and uncommon species. At the warehouse ponds in Stratford, we saw a Great Egret, Hooded Merganser, and American Tree Sparrows. At Long Beach, we saw Sanderlings, including one unfortunate bird that had his foot stuck in a shell. At Stratford Point, there were Black-bellied Plover and Dunlin on the rocky shore and Common Loon and a Long-tailed Duck in the water. At Short Beach, we saw a flock of Common Redpoll (the rarest species seen on the day) as well as Gadwall and a Red-tailed Hawk. The fog cleared slightly at Frash Pond, affording us excellent views of Canvasback, Ruddy Duck, Bufflehead, and Red-breasted Merganser. But, the fog thickened again as we went back to the shore, so that the only birds we could see well at the Birdseye Boat Ramp were the gulls in the parking lot and the American Coots in the nearby marsh. Our stops in Milford at mid-day were greatly hampered by the dense fog. The only species of note seen at the Coastal Center was a Northern Harrier, flying low over the observation platform, and we had even less luck at Silver Sands State Park, with a rattling Kingfisher the most memorable species encountered. We stopped at Beaver Brook Park on our way back to the commuter lot, but saw only Mallards and a Black Duck in the fog. We saw a respectable total of 43 species on the day. There was something timeless about seeing the marshes and shores shrouded in fog. We'll go again if we have the chance.

--Chris Loscalzo

### NHBC Winter Feeder Report 2012-2013 — End of Week 5

This year we have 22 surveyors reporting, 7 via Postal Mail and 15 via email. We are located all over New Haven County. We have finished the first 5 weeks of the survey; the counts started off high and have tapered down. There were 147 **Pine Siskins** reported for the first week but these tapered off to a few after two weeks. Also during week one 319 **Common Grackles** were reported and week three also saw a large number of them but week 4 and 5 only saw less than 10. Also in the forefront this year is the **Red-breasted Nuthatch** with an average occurrence around 8 for the first five weeks compared to 2 for last year.

Some data from the sheets:

We had 34 of the 34 **Common Species** show up for a score of 100%. A few of these were seen only in the first week and not in the other four weeks so I expect this number to change in the next five weeks.



Redpoll at Backyard Feeder

To the **Uncommon Species** List two species were added: **Winter Wren** (Deborah Johnson) and **Wood Thrush** (Nancy Rosenbaum). We had 14 of 33 Uncommon Species show up at the feeders

for a percentage of 42%. The other uncommon species were: **American Tree Sparrow** (Nancy Morand), **Cedar Waxwing** (Deborah Johnson), **Eastern Towhee** (Winie Wirth), **Field Sparrow** (Nancy Rosenbaum, Winie Wirth), **Golden Crown Kinglet** (Dean Rupp), **Hermit Thrush** (Elizabeth Abrams, Bev Proppen), **Monk Parakeet**, **Rusty Blackbird** and **Savannah Sparrow** (Winie Wirth), and **Yellow-rumped Warbler** (Bev Proppen).

The only **Waterfowl** that showed were 2 **Mallards** reported by Dean Rupp.

The **Animal** Column has grown with the addition of: **Gray Squirrel**, **American Holly** by Ellie Tessmer.

The other animals reported during the first five weeks were: **Gray Squirrel**, **Chipmunk**, **Feral Cat**, **Opossum** (Amy Hopkins, Shirley Mangler, Nancy Morand and Ellie Tessmer), **Raccoon** (Amy Hopkins, Nancy Morand, and Ellie Tessmer), **Red Fox** (Rose and Jim Gillian), **Skunk** (Shirley Mangler, and Nancy Rosenbaum), **Vole** (Nancy Rosenbaum), **White Tail Deer** (Nancy Morand, Phil Pivawer), and **Woodchuck** (Edward Sprowson).

Have a Healthy and Happy New Year.

Pete Vitali

Chairman: NHBC Winter Feeder Survey

## 2012 New Haven Christmas Bird Count Summary

This was a very interesting and successful count. A great number of rare and unusual species were found, and several species were seen in unusually high numbers while others were seen in low numbers. The most remarkable aspect of the count, though, was the number of swallow and warbler species observed on count day or in the count week. We found a total of six warbler and three swallow species. Several were found at East Shore Park and the nearby sewage treatment plant in New Haven. This is a microhabitat that supports populations of insects through the late fall and into the early winter, enabling these insectivorous birds to stay in our area later into the year than they otherwise would. Species found at this location included Northern Rough-winged Swallow and Black-and-white Warbler on count day and Tree Swallow during count week (observers were Dan Barvir and John Oshlick). Cave Swallow was the other swallow found on the count, marking the first time ever that this species was observed on count day (observers were Steve Broker, Steve Mayo, and Bob Mitchell). Other warblers found on count day included Nashville Warbler (found by Jake Musser at the Middletown Avenue landfill), two Orange-crowned Warblers (one found by Chris Loscalzo, et al, in Woodbridge and the other by Dan and John), Palm Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and a Yellow-breasted Chat (found during count week). Other notable sightings included Cackling Goose (in two locations), Lesser Black-backed Gull (found by Frank Gallo, et al, at the Middletown Avenue landfill), Razorbill (observed by a perseverant Frank Mantlik on the West Haven coast), two Lincoln's Sparrows, Red Crossbill (also found by the indefatigable Frank Mantlik) and a Clay-colored Sparrow found by Bill Batsford, Larry Bausher et al, at Beaver Ponds Park in New Haven. The best bird of the day, though, was probably the Blue Grosbeak found by Andy Brand at Hansen Farm Park in North Haven. Like the Cave Swallow and Black-and-white Warbler, this species is a new addition to our all-time count list. Given the fact that this was the 113<sup>th</sup> running of the New Haven Christmas Bird Count, it is truly amazing that we added three species to the all-time list.

Species seen in unusually high numbers included Red-throated Loon, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Pied-billed Grebe, Black Vulture, Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, Barred Owl, Fish Crow, Winter Wren, and Dark-eyed Junco. Species seen in unusually low numbers were: Mute Swan, American Black Duck, Canvasback, Hermit Thrush, and Eastern Towhee. Species that fall into the category of formerly rare and now regularly occurring include: Black Vulture, American Oystercatcher and Common Raven. All in all, we recorded 132 species on count day, and three more during the count week. This is an impressively high total that reflects the expertise and dedication of our observers and the diversity of habitat in our area. Participation was excellent overall, with a total of 91 people participating in the count, with most of them in the field and a few at feeders. The results have been entered on the National Audubon Society website and are available to all for review. Steve Broker will publish a report on the results of all of the CT counts in the *COA Warbler* magazine. There are many interesting patterns emerging with regards to bird populations

and movements in our area, possibly related to climate change and habitat alteration. Our efforts to record and report on the populations of bird species seen in our area are immensely helpful to ornithologists and researchers who are trying to understand what is happening to our environment. With this information at hand, it is hoped that habitats can be preserved and species saved.

**The species seen were (with rare birds and high counts in boldface and low counts in italics):** Brant, 774; Canada Goose, 4,127; **Cackling Goose, 2**; Mute Swan, 108; Wood Duck, 3; Gadwall, 250; American Wigeon, 62; American Black Duck, 398; Mallard, 1,552; Black Duck/Mallard hybrid, 3; Northern Shoveler, 4; American Green-winged Teal, 58; Canvasback, 1; Ring-necked Duck, 110; Greater Scaup, 1,350; Lesser Scaup, 30; Surf Scoter, 2; White-winged Scoter, 26; Long-tailed Duck, 130; Bufflehead, 349; Common Goldeneye, 178; Hooded Merganser, 663; Common Merganser, 14; Red-breasted Merganser, 291; Ruddy Duck, 13; Ring-necked Pheasant, 1; Wild Turkey, 63; Red-throated Loon, **83**; Common Loon, 51; Pied-billed Grebe, 22; Horned Grebe, 63; Double-crested Cormorant, 3; Great Cormorant, 29; Great Blue Heron, 57; Black Vulture, **21**; Turkey Vulture, **102**; Bald Eagle, 5; Northern Harrier, 8; Sharp-shinned Hawk, 18; Cooper's Hawk, **25**; Red-shouldered Hawk, 14; Red-tailed Hawk, 79; American Kestrel, 1; Merlin, 2; Peregrine Falcon, 4; Clapper Rail, 3; American Coot, 10; Black-bellied Plover, 7; Killdeer, 48; American Oystercatcher, 2; Greater Yellowlegs, 2; Ruddy Turnstone, 16; Sanderling, 165; Purple Sandpiper, 26; Wilson's Snipe, 1; Ring-billed Gull, 1,871; Herring Gull, 1,784; **Lesser Black-backed Gull, 1**; Great Black-backed Gull, 76; **Razorbill, 2**; Rock Pigeon, 1,045; Mourning Dove, 476; Monk Parakeet, 174; Eastern Screech Owl, 28; Great Horned Owl, 12; Barred Owl, 7; **Long-eared Owl, 1**; Belted Kingfisher, 39; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 71; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 8; Downy Woodpecker, 225; Hairy Woodpecker, 36; Northern Flicker, 34; Pileated Woodpecker, 4; Eastern Phoebe, CW; Blue Jay, 330; American Crow, 5,097; Fish Crow, **8,074**; Crow, sp., 234; Common Raven, 9; Horned Lark, 120; **Northern Rough-winged Swallow, 2**; **Tree Swallow, CW**; **Cave Swallow, 2**; Black-capped Chickadee, 565; Tufted Titmouse, 344; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 41; White-breasted Nuthatch, 176; Brown Creeper, 15; Carolina Wren, 126; Winter Wren, **27**; Marsh Wren, 3; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 37; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 7; Eastern Bluebird, 39; Hermit Thrush, 4; American Robin, 263; Gray Catbird, 5; Northern Mockingbird, 114; Brown Thrasher, 3; European Starling, 5,065; American Pipit, 3; Cedar Waxwing, 79; **Orange-crowned Warbler, 2**; **Nashville Warbler, 1**; Yellow-rumped Warbler, 5; Palm Warbler, 1; **Black-and-white Warbler, 1**; Yellow-breasted Chat, CW; Eastern Towhee, 1; American Tree Sparrow, 102; Chipping Sparrow, 1; **Clay-colored Sparrow, 1**; Field Sparrow, 26; Savannah Sparrow, 15 (Ipswich race, 1); Fox Sparrow, 14; Song Sparrow, 451; **Lincoln's Sparrow, 2**; Swamp Sparrow, 27; White-throated Sparrow, 952; White-crowned Sparrow, 7; Dark-eyed Junco, **1,051**; Snow Bunting, 2; Northern Cardinal, 318; **Blue Grosbeak, 1**; Red-winged Blackbird, 92; Eastern Meadowlark, 3; Rusty Blackbird, 6; Common Grackle, 15; Brown-headed Cowbird, 85; Purple Finch, 6; House Finch, (Continued on bottom of next page)



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## MEET THE BOARD

### Nancy Specht: Secretary

Nancy Specht is currently serving her second year as Secretary of NHBC. With her easy-going manner and conscientious attention to detail she's a perfect fit for the job. Nancy's working career undoubtedly helped hone the organizational skills she brings to her duties as Secretary. For many years she held a variety of management positions at Southern New England Telephone, the last two being Account Manager and Project Manager. Now retired, Nancy has more time for her many interests including, of course, birding.



Conveniently, East Rock Park, one of her favorite birding destinations, is only two miles from her Hamden home. Her other local favorite is West Rock Ridge. Beyond Connecticut, Nancy has birded widely out West, including Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, and Washington and she's also visited Costa Rica and Chile. Some special memories from her foreign travels include walking next to young Magellanic Penguins in their burrows in Patagonia and seeing remarkable numbers and species of dazzling hummingbirds in Costa Rica.

Nancy is a genuine Connecticut native. Born in New Haven and raised in Cheshire, she attended Albertus Magnus College in New Haven, where she earned a BA in psychology. She received an MA from Wesleyan in Middletown and has resided in Hamden for 34 years.

Nancy came to birding through an early interest in nature. Growing up surrounded by woods, fields, and wetlands, she was at first mostly interested in botany, mammals, and amphibians. In addition, a lifelong love of hiking made her want to know all about the plants and wildlife she passed on her walks. In the Wesleyan Liberal Studies Masters program that she pursued 18

years ago, Nancy took as many natural history courses as possible. When the associated field trips sparked an interest in birds too, her obliging husband, though not a birder himself, bought her a pair of binoculars. Nancy birded occasionally with her friend and NHBC member Maura Stavovy who urged Nancy to assist Flo McBride in the Christmas Bird Count. That proved the turning point. Nancy joined NHBC and has been an enthusiastic participant in the CBC ever since. She

also began going on Club field trips even though several years of overtime work pressures limited her birding time. With her early retirement five years ago, however, Nancy eagerly dove into birding. Her favorite birds are waterfowl because "they tend to stay in place for good looks and their plumages are beautiful." Her other favorite is hummingbirds. "So much beauty and personality in a tiny package," Nancy muses.

Nancy and her husband Robert have been married 24 years. He is a retired graphic artist and at one time was Chief Medical Photographer in the pathology department of Yale School of Medicine. The two met in a bicycle club and, being lovers of the outdoors, enjoyed many years of biking as well as skiing. They share an interest in movies, especially indie and other non-traditional films, and they like to visit art museums. Their four pets—one Lab, two Greyhounds, and one cat—keep them pretty busy too. In addition, Nancy likes running, which she has done for 31 years, kayaking, gardening and reading. She has practiced yoga for many years and is currently a yoga teacher. Between involvement with NHBC and her many other interests and activities, Nancy is making very good use of her so-called "retirement."

—Betty Zuraw

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*(Continued from previous page)*

317; **Red Crossbill, 1;** Common Redpoll, 29; Pine Siskin, 7; American Goldfinch, 276; House Sparrow, 1,239. **TOTALS: Species: 132 plus 3 count week. Individuals: 43,164.**

**The participants were:** Marion Aimesbury, Ross Allen, Ralph Amodei, Toby Appel, Margaret Ardwin, Christin Armini, Mark Aronson, Dan Barvir, Bill Batsford, Larry Bausher, Carol Bedworth, Peter Borgemeister, Andy Brand, Stephen Broker, Lauren Brown, Kevin Burgio, Michael Carpenter, Louisa Cunningham, Beth Dock, John Farley, Michael Ferrari, Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe, Frank Gallo, Barbara Gillette, Peter Gloor, Christine Haley, Stacy Hanks, Michael Horn, Jim Hunter, Deborah Johnson, Lynn Jones, Thomas Kelly, Bernice Lattanzi, Pat Leahy, Carol and Gary Lemmon, Donna Lorello, Chris Loscalzo, Alan Malina, Frank Mantlik, Steve Mayo, Florence

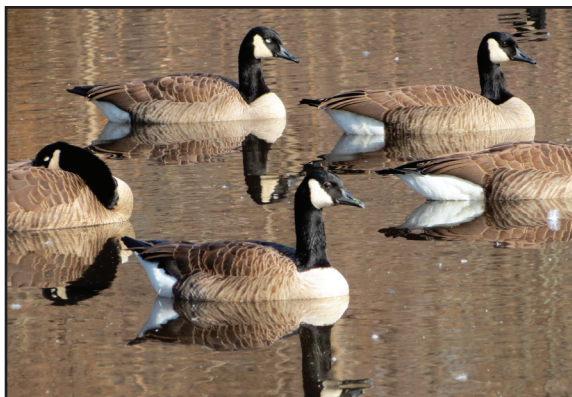
McBride, Roslyn Meyer, Nancy Meyer-Lustman, Vanessa Mickan, Robert Mitchell, Judy Moore, Lori Mott, Brendan and Sean Murtha, Jake Musser, Michael O'Brien, John Oshlick, Philip Pivawer, Mary Porterfield, Noble Proctor, Beverly Propen, Frank and Nancy Ragusa, Linda Rediker, Brian Roach, Nancy Rosenbaum, Arne Rosengren, Paul Rubino, Sam Saulys, Lee Schlesinger, Jeff Severino, Arthur Shippee, Jim Sirch, Daniel Spakowicz, Nancy Specht, Charla and Steve Spector, Andy Stack, Paul and Sandra Stetson, Maria Stockmal, Marge Thomas, Jesus Tirado, Tony Tortora, Jennifer and John Triana, Marianne Vahey, Peter Vitali, Julie Wagner, Lisa Wahle, Bob White, Chris Woerner, Paul Wolter, George Zepko, and Betty Zuraw.

**Thanks to everyone for their participation!**  
Chris Loscalzo

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*Long-tailed Duck at Sherwood Island First Wednesday Walk  
Photo by Donna Batsford*



*Canada Geese on pond in Hamden  
Photo by Pete Vitali*



*Merlin at Hammonasset First Wednesday Walk  
Photo by Bill Batsford*

### NHBC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip +4 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

(Please print clearly in block letters)

#### Dues:

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Couple/Family - \$20 # of family members \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Supporting - \$50 # of family members \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Life Membership: A one-time payment of \$300  
for 1 or 2 people at same address.

\_\_\_\_\_ Additional gift to support the NHBC \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to volunteer to help the club.

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.

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**NHBC website: [www.newhavenbirdclub.org](http://www.newhavenbirdclub.org)**