

THE CHICKADEE

Newsletter of the New Haven Bird Club

October 2023

2023 CALENDAR

(See inside for details)

Sunday, October 1, 8–11 a.m. **Great Meadows Unit, Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge, Stratford**

Wednesday, October 4, 8–11 a.m. First Wednesday Walk: Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven Registration required.

Saturday and Sunday, October 7-8 THE BIG SIT! ®

Saturday, October 7, 8–11 a.m. Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison

Thursday October 12, 7:00 p.m. **Ken Elkins – Power of Birds for Dementia**

Saturday, October 21, 8–11 a.m. Quinnipiac Trail, Prospect and Bethany

Saturday, October 28, 8–11 a.m. Fargeorge Nature Preserve; joint trip with Gather New Haven (formerly the New Haven Land Trust), New Haven

Sunday, October 29, 8–11 a.m. Farm River Trolley Trail with Friends of Farm River, East Haven

Sunday, October 29, 7:30–10:30 a.m. **Branford Supply Ponds, Branford**

Wednesday, November 1, 8–11 a.m. First Wednesday Walk: Sherwood Island State Park, Westport

Sunday, November 5, 8 a.m. to noon Cheshire Hotspots

Thursday, November 9, 7:00 p.m. **Dr. Min Huang – 30th Anniversary of the Connecticut "Duck Stamp" Program**

Wednesday, December 6, 8–11 a.m. First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison

Saturday, December 9, 8-11 a.m. East Rock Park, New Haven

Thursday, December 14, 7:00 p.m. (Virtual only) Frank Gallo – South Texas Specialties Trip Report

Saturday, December 16, all day, dinner at 5 p.m. 124th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It is after the equinox and days are getting shorter. My evening walk has all but fallen by the wayside due to the early darkness. I've put a small note on the top of my laptop to "GO OUTSIDE." More often than not, I don't follow my own advice and, instead, sit right down to do various computer-dependent tasks before I have enjoyed my walk. However, I always

take a bit of time to look out my kitchen window to see what birds are visiting my backyard. On days I'm feeling especially adventurous, I also stand and look out my front door!

I love to take long walks in the woods or city parks. For a while my walks or hikes were averaging about 5 miles a day. I almost always have my binoculars and camera handy. If I stop to listen or look for birds there is a trade-off with my walk distance and pace, so sometimes I decide to focus on one activity or the other. Usually, I can manage to do both, alternating a brisk pace with stops if/when I hear or see a bird. I compare it to the winter sport of biathlon. Biathlon combines racing-speed cross-country skiing with stops for accurate target-shooting with a rifle. I've named my personal equivalent sport "birdathlon."

Of course, I also go out solely to bird and don't worry about the mileage. Some of my favorite times have been standing quietly in one place to see what birds come and go. I am very much looking forward to the upcoming Big Sit!® weekend on Saturday and Sunday, October 7 and 8, 2023. The Big Sit! was originated in 1992 by fun-loving members of the New Haven Bird Club. For almost 20 years, Bird Watcher's Digest managed the Big Sit! and turned it into a worldwide event. In 2020, administration of the Big Sit! returned to our Club under the expert guidance of Craig Repasz. For those who have not yet done a Big Sit!, I encourage you to try it! There is no minimum time commitment, you can do it alone or with a bunch of friends, and you may discover the joy and relaxation in seeing what birds come to you. An added benefit: snacks are an almost-essential part of the Big Sit! activity. Details can be found at https://www.thebigsit.org.

--Chris Howe

NOTE: Please check the NHBC website and newsletter periodically for updated information on all programs. **Scheduled events** may need to be changed or canceled and events may be added during the year. www.newhavenbirdclub.org

NEW HAVEN BIRD CLUB - 2023-2024

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SPECIAL PROGRAMS

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Summer Bird Count Steve Mayo 203-551-1707

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Notes from the Board

The next board meeting will be at 7 p.m. on October 26.

Deadline for submissions to the next *Chickadee* is November 17. Send to Newsletter Editor, Donna Batsford, at donnabatsford@gmail.com.

NHBC Objectives: To make available to members and the general public opportunities for recreation, education, and appreciation in the area of birding and to encourage the conservation of natural resources in New Haven and surrounding areas.

If you are not receiving email notifications, contact us at membership@newhavenbirdclub.org to receive an invitation to join this group.

Every effort is made to list member information accurately in the yearbook. Please inform us of errors and update us with any changes during the year. Update via the Club website or send an email to membership@newhavenbirdclub.org.

Welcome New Members

Jim Donahue Middlebury

Laura Landry Dean Irwin
Colchester Guilford

Romeo Baci Kitty Pupedis Forest Gill Plainville Lebanon New Hartford

> Sylwia Rosinska Maryann Krista Branford Branford

> > Linnet Tse Larchmont, NY

Please note that the speakers for the November and December programs as shown in the yearbook have been switched. Dr. Min Huang will present the November 9 program, live at Whitney Center and online. Frank Gallo will present the December 14 program, online only.

New Haven Bird Club Website: www.newhavenbirdclub.org

Indoor Programs

Please check the NHBC website and newsletter for updated information before planning to attend any event.

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. This year, we plan to resume meeting at the Whitney Center's Cultural Arts Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden CT 06517. The facility is wheelchair accessible. **The social half-hour begins at 7 p.m.; the meeting and program begin at 7:30 p.m. and end about 9 p.m.**

Some indoor programs are held only as a virtual, online presentation and are noted as such in the descriptions.

Cancellation Policy: Inclement weather or other emergency may cancel in-person meetings. Cancellation notices will be sent via the Club email and posted on the CTBirds listsery when possible.

The Whitney Center

We hold our monthly meetings in the Whitney Center's Cultural Arts Center, in the South Building, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden CT. Enter via the main door of the portico at the front of the building. Turn right down the hallway. The Cultural Arts Center is a short distance on the left.

PARKING: Enter the Whitney Center's South Entrance, marked with a sign. Either make an immediate left into the raised parking lot (park *only* in the upper level and *only* in unnumbered spaces) or follow the main driveway past the front entrance of the building. At the stop sign, turn right into the visitor and employee parking area and walk back from there to the front entrance.

NOTE: Please check the NHBC website and newsletter periodically for updated information on all programs. Scheduled events may need to be changed or canceled and events may be added during the year. www.newhavenbirdclub.org

Thursday October 12, 2023 – Ken Elkins Power of Birds for Dementia

Ken Elkins will discuss a special program he co-developed called "Bird Tales" for reaching people living with dementia. The program encourages connections with birds on a multisensory level, through sight, sound, smell, and touch. Ken is Director of the Connecticut Audubon Society Coastal Center at Milford Point. Book sale prior to the presentation. Many new books this year from at least six generous donors, over 20 bags and boxes. Bring cash!

Thursday, November 9, 2023 – Dr. Min Huang 30th Anniversary of the Connecticut "Duck Stamp" Program 2023 is the 30th anniversary of the Connecticut Migratory Bird Conservation Stamp Program. Min will review the program and its impacts. Min serves as Migratory Bird Program Leader in the Wildlife Division, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, and is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Connecticut.

Thursday, December 14, 2023 – Frank Gallo (Virtual only) South Texas Specialties Trip Report

Join us for an online presentation showcasing a Texas tour by leader Frank Gallo of Sunrise Birding. Prepare to be transported on a captivating journey through some of Texas' most breathtaking birding destinations, where you'll have the opportunity to encounter numerous remarkable species. We will not be meeting in person for this presentation.

Wingspan Game Night Saturday, October 14 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The New Haven Bird Club will hold another Game Night for anyone who plays, or is interested in learning how to play *Wingspan* on Saturday, October 14 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Whitney Center's Cultural Arts Center (same room where NHBC Monthly Meetings are held).

Wingspan is a board game that debuted in 2019 that uses bird behavior and characteristics to control the flow of the game. An article in *Audubon* summed it up best: "Wingspan players take on the role of bird enthusiasts aiming to attract avian visitors to their wildlife preserve. The heart of the game is its deck of 170 illustrated bird cards, each depicting a North American species. Up to five players take turns placing these cards into their appropriate habitat, collecting food, laying eggs, or drawing new cards, with each action unlocking new resources. It's

what's known in board game parlance as an engine-building game—one in which players try to create an increasingly effective system for generating points. The game lasts about an hour, and the player with the most points wins."

If you own a *Wingspan* game set and would like to bring it so that we have enough sets for all to play, please let me know at jswattbirds@gmail.com. To learn more about *Wingspan*, its rules, or to watch a tutorial video, go to https://stonemaiergames.com/games/wingspan/rules. The many different actions and variables to each round may seem very complex at first, but become easier to remember with each round. We will set up tables with players of different skill levels. For those who have never played before, we will have a learning session. To learn the game, we will play a demonstration round at first, then break up into groups playing open-handed rounds giving participants a chance to learn and ask questions.

-- Jack Swatt

Outdoor Programs

The future course of the coronavirus pandemic may continue to affect our schedule of events. Our first priority is protecting the health and well-being of our members and the general public, and it may become necessary to adjust or cancel some events. The recommendations and policies of local, state, and national health authorities will guide all decisions about our schedule. Please check the NHBC website and newsletter for updated information before planning to attend any event.

Cancellation Policy: Inclement weather or other emergencies may cancel a field trip. Check the NHBC website *or contact the leader of the trip directly* if you have any questions about a possible cancellation.

Birders of all levels are welcome on all field trips, and every effort is made to help beginners. If you are new to birding or have any special needs, be sure to let the leader know. The Club welcomes everyone regardless of age, race or ethnicity, sex, gender identification, sexual orientation, or national origin. The ending times of walks are approximate.

More details and/or updates on these trips will be given at the indoor meetings. Please check the NHBC website and newsletter periodically for updated information on all programs. **Scheduled events may need to be changed or canceled** and events may be added during the year. *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 usually encouraged to avoid parking problems at some destinations and to promote conservation of natural resources, but check current coronavirus recommendations.

NHBC Conservation and Education Activities

The New Haven Bird Club routinely works to preserve and restore bird populations and their habitats and to provide opportunities for learning about birds, where to see them, and how to help ensure their future. Additional environmentally-focused, family-friendly walks may be planned and posted on the NHBC website.

The NHBC has been developing relationships with local public schools and camps to encourage children to embrace birding. We view this activity as directly connected to our Club objectives, and usually present a very basic birding skills class followed by a nearby bird walk. The Education Chair also organizes the Club's representation at various public events throughout the year. Volunteers to help at events are always welcome! Please contact Lori Datlow, Education Chair, at loridatlow@frontier.com.

Great Meadows Unit, Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge, Stratford Sunday, October 1, 2023, 8–11 a.m.

The salt marshes of Connecticut express muted hues of gold and russet in autumn. These colors are the backdrop for the early fall migration. Visit one of the state's largest salt marshes to observe warblers, wading birds, shorebirds, migrating sparrows and swallows, Merlins, and Northern Harriers. Join Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe, Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon Connecticut, and Kris Vagos, wildlife biologist for the Stewart B. McKinney NWR. They will also discuss salt marsh ecology and the marsh restoration project in progress at Great Meadows. Meet in the parking lot, approximate address 600 Long Beach Boulevard, Stratford.

Leader: Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe, 203-233-0535 or cfolsom-okeefe@audubon.org;

First Wednesday Walk: Lighthouse Point Park, New Haven Wednesday, October 4, 2023, 8–11 a.m.

Join us on a visit to this premier local birding location, renowned for its migrating raptors and passerines. If the weather conditions are favorable, we may see hundreds of hawks in flight over the park. Meet at the Hawk Watch parking lot, Lighthouse Point Park, 2 Lighthouse Road, New Haven. If the gate is staffed, just let them know you are there for the Hawk Watch.

Leader: Frank Gallo, 203-644-2163 or peeplo@aol.com

THE BIG SIT! ® Saturday and Sunday, October 7–8, 2023

THE BIG SIT!®, established by the NHBC, has become an international event, with birders from all over the world participating. The object is to record as many species of birds as possible in one day from one 17-foot diameter circle. Local circles are at a number of birding hot spots throughout Connecticut. Join other birders in one of the established circles or create your own circle. You don't have to be a hardcore birder to join in the fun. Visit The Big Sit! website (www.thebigsit.org) for details.

Contact: Craig Repasz, 203-745-6683 or crepasz@hotmail.com

Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison Saturday, October 7, 2023, 8–11 a.m.

Visit one of our state's best fall birding spots, where the abundance of some migrants and sightings of less common species can make for a truly memorable trip. The walking is easy, all on level ground. Meet outside the park at the Shoreline Greenway Trail parking area on Boston Post Road, Madison, just east of the park's main entrance road. Leader: Maria Stockmal, 203-305-3728 or m.stockmal@snet.net

Quinnipiac Trail, Prospect and Bethany Saturday, October 21, 2023, 8–11 a.m.

Join us for a vigorous walk along the Quinnipiac Trail from

Cornwall Avenue in Prospect through Regional Water Authority and Prospect Land Trust property off of Boardman Road. Expect many steep areas with rough terrain. Wear appropriate footwear and bring water. Heavy rain cancels. Meet at the end of the cul-de-sac on Boardman Drive, Prospect. Then we'll carpool down to Cornwall Avenue and walk back to Boardman Drive.

Leader: John Triana, 203-758-7203 or jtriana1@rwater.com

Fargeorge Nature Preserve; joint trip with Gather New Haven (formerly the New Haven Land Trust), New Haven Saturday, October 28, 2023, 8–11 a.m.

Quinnipiac Meadows Eugene B. Fargeorge Nature Preserve, a varied habitat with excellent view of the lower Quinnipiac River, is always full of surprises. We have seen everything from Woodcock to Bald Eagles to Snow Geese, lots of fall migrants, wintering ducks, and more. We will be walking on flat surfaces. Go south on Quinnipiac Avenue from Route 80. Make a right at 1040 Quinnipiac Avenue, just past the railroad overpass. Go through the open gate onto the property. Leader: Mike Horn, 203-288-1891 or mfhorn@att.net

Farm River Trolley Trail with Friends of Farm River, East Haven

Sunday, October 29, 2023, 8-11 a.m.

We will walk the Trolley Museum tracks in East Haven. There are several habitats and we'll look for migrating raptors plus salt marsh and woodland birds. Meet in the back parking lot of the Shore Line Trolley Museum, 17 River Street, East Haven. Leader: Mike Horn, 203-288-1891 or mfhorn@att.net

Branford Supply Ponds, Branford Sunday, October 29, 2023, 7:30–10:30 a.m.

This a good location to look for migrants both in spring and fall. There can be quite a mix including Baltimore Oriole, Pine Warbler, American Coot, Common Raven, Winter Wren, Fox Sparrow, and Red-shouldered Hawk. The site boasts two ponds, a forest area, and a power-line cut. The forest was damaged by severe storms in 2020 and tops of trees are gone. There is much dead wood and the ground is receiving more sunlight. New plants are rising and bird distribution is changing. Meet at the larger gravel parking lot on Chestnut Street off Route 1 in Branford.

Leader: Maria Stockmal, 203-305-3728 or m.stockmal@snet.net

First Wednesday Walk: Sherwood Island State Park, Westport

Wednesday, November 1, 2023, 8-11 a.m.

Join a midweek trip to this outstanding Long Island Sound birding spot. We check for loons, grebes, goldeneye, and other sea ducks. The fields are a good place to look for Snow Buntings, Horned Larks, and sparrows. Meet at Sherwood Island State Park: take Exit 18 off I-95 in Westport and head south on the Sherwood Island Connector. Drive into the park and meet at the main parking lot.

Leader: Tina Green, 203-247-2660 or tina@renaissancestudios.com

Cheshire Hotspots Sunday, November 5, 2023, 8 a.m. to noon

We bird several hotspots in Cheshire. Broad Brook Reservoir annually hosts 200-400 Ruddy Ducks in fall, one of the highest concentrations of this diving duck in the state. It is level walking (100 yards) on leaf-covered paved road. Fresh Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary (Cheshire Land Trust) offers a diversity of bird species through the year. It is level walking (500 yards) with water-resistant boots recommended. Meet at the Route 68 access to Broad Brook Reservoir, north side of the road. Parking is available at a safe pullout opposite the water company gate in the lowest section of Route 68. Look for our cars

Leaders: Steve Broker, 203-747-6843 or stephenpaulbroker@gmail.com; Melissa Baston, 860-995-0656 or mbaston@gmail.com

First Wednesday Walk: Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison

Wednesday, December 6, 2023, 8-11 a.m.

At any time of year, Hammonasset is a true gem. Enjoy a midweek trip to explore this birding hotspot for fall migrants. The varied habitat attracts shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds. Meet outside the park at the Shoreline Greenway Trail parking area on Boston Post Road, Madison, just east of the park's main entrance road.

Leader: Jerry Connolly, 203-710-2011, birdshop@sbcglobal.net

East Rock Park, New Haven Saturday, December 9, 2023, 8–11 a.m.

East Rock Park is deservedly famous for its diversity of colorful neotropical migrants in spring. Early winter brings its own avian delights to the park. We look and/or listen for ducks, hawks, woodpeckers, corvids, wrens, kinglets, thrushes, finches, and sparrows. Expected highlights are mousy Winter Wrens, kronking Common Ravens, and posturing Peregrine Falcons. Meet at the Eli Whitney Museum parking lot, 915 Whitney Avenue, Hamden. We assemble by the covered bridge.

Leader: Steve Broker, 203-747-6843 or stephenpaulbroker@gmail.com

124th Annual New Haven Christmas Bird Count Saturday, December 16, 2023, all day, dinner at 5 p.m.

Join other NHBC members in this fun event, steeped in tradition. Take part for a few hours or all day. Join birders in the field or report what you see in your backyard (if you reside within the count circle). The results of the count are sent to the National Audubon Society for inclusion in an international census of early winter bird populations. The compilation dinner is at 5 p.m. at the Whitney Center, 200 Leeder Hill Drive, Hamden.

Compiler: Chris Loscalzo, 203-389-6508; closcalz@optonline.net

Trip Reports

Shorebirds and Terns at Milford Point Trip Report



Photo by Chris Howe

On Saturday, August 5 Frank Mantlik led about 44 people on his annual New Haven Bird Club walk, "Terns and Shorebirds." It was nice summer weather: 72-83°F, mostly sunny, light onshore breeze, low tide (8:30), rising to mid tide. We learned about shorebird ID, migration

and feeding behavior, tern ID, heron/egret ID, seashells, and bands of garnet sand (thanks Steve Broker). We also saw several nymphs of the invasive Spotted Lanternfly feeding on Virginia Creeper vines on a roadside tree. All in all, a very enjoyable walk at the shore, with old and new friends, delighting in what nature offered us. We had 52 species. The detailed checklist can be viewed at https://ebird.org/checklist/S146524916.

--Frank Mantlik

September First Wednesday Walk: Bauer Farm, Madison Trip Report



Photo by Chris Howe

On Wednesday, September 6, Chuck Imbergamo led the September First Wednesday Walk at Bauer Farm in Madison. The group of 26 people included 7 people who had not been to this site before. They had a great morning and had 43 species to report.

Special Event: Beinecke Rare Book Library Tour of Audubon Prints

Approximately 30 individuals initially expressed their interest and entered the lottery to attend the tour. Out of these, 20 lucky individuals were extended invitations (the maximum allowable number). On September 13, the day of the



event, only 14 attendees were able to make it due to inclement weather and transportation difficulties, as well as jury duty commitments. Fortunately, two individuals from the original list were able to step in and fill the spots of those who could not attend. The event was well-received by all the participants who



were able to attend - we received several emails from attendees expressing their heartfelt gratitude for the opportunity to view rare items from the collections of Audubon, Rachel Carson, and other notable figures.

--Gail Martino

September Indoor Meeting

On September 14 the first indoor meeting of the 2023-24 program year kicked off on a high note with an impressive turnout of 93 attendees (58 in person and 35 online). It was truly heartwarming to reunite with everyone after the summer. We were also delighted to receive great feedback about the presentation.

Our speaker, Dr. Sylvia Halkin, presented "Some Things I've learned from Eavesdropping on Singing Cardinals."





--Gail Martino Indoor Program Chair

NHBC Winter Feeder Survey 2023-2024



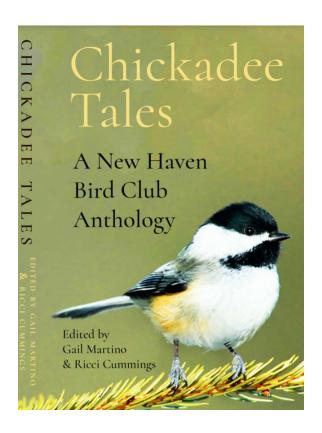
I want to welcome all members and non-members to the 2023–2024 Winter Feeder Survey. We had good participation last year and I hope to see more members involved this year. In a nutshell, all that you must do is to record

the largest number of birds of a species that you see at one sighting at your bird feeders during one day of the week and report that number to me. You do not have to do it every day or at the same time of day, but at least one day during the week or weekend. Anytime you look out at your birdfeeders, just record the number of birds of a species that you see.

This year I am looking for a few more participants since I have been informed by a few of my long-time surveyors that they are not able to participate. There will be 2 Sessions this year due to the increasing presence of Black Bears and their taking down of feeders. The First Session will start on Monday, October30, 2023 and finish off Sunday, March 31, 2024. This is for those who have not had any reports of bears in their area. The session is 22 Weeks long. The Second Session will start on Monday, December 4, 2023, and end on Sunday, March 3, 2024. This is for those who fear bears attacking their feeders. During this period, the bears should be in hibernation and no threat to the feeders. It will be 13 weeks long.

For more information you can email me at vitgoo39@gmail.com or phone me at: 203-988-1841. My phone hast a recorder on it so leave a message and I will get back to you.

--Peter Vitali Survey Coordinator Chairman NHBC Winter Feeder Survey



A New Haven Bird Club Anthology Chickadee Tales

Proud history, active present, hopeful future!

Nineteen pieces in this anthology, written by current members and supporters, cover club history, notable members, key programs, personal stories, and members' impact on birding, locally and throughout the United States.

100% of proceeds support NHBC programming

Price \$19.99

Order on Amazon or order the book through the NHBC and have it sent to you. Please send a check for \$19.99 to New Haven Bird Club, attn. Gail Martino, P.O. Box 9004, New Haven, CT 06532-0004.



October 2023

NHBC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
Nama(a)
Name(s)
Address
City
State Zip Code
Area Code / Phone
Email
New MemberRenewal
Membership Levels (check appropriate category): Individual - \$15
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 pext 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 membership@newhavenbirdclub.org.

The NHBC website, www.newhavenbirdclub.org, offers information about the Club, its programs, and other Club and member news. If you have any questions, please email us at

ask@newhavenbirdclub.org.

CTBirds is an open discussion email list provided by the Connecticut Ornithological Association (COA) to discuss birds and birding in the state, http://www.ctbirding.org.