



Cape Cod Bird Club

VOLUME 25

MARCH ~ APRIL 1997

ISSUE 4

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Don Scott

CHANGE!

Few words in the English language have the capability of creating such a vast range of reactions as does this one. To some, change means innovation, excitement, a new perspective. Others view change as a threat, a violation of the status quo.

Over the past 25 years, the Cape Cod Bird Club has continually changed in a variety of ways. It has grown larger, more sophisticated, and become involved in activities at both regional and national levels. The joint effort with Mass Audubon in creating the wonderful guide *Birding Cape Cod* is a classic example of this process. Programs have also changed. The club has moved over the years from mostly local presenters to a wide variety of speakers from an increasingly broader spectrum of the birding world. The regular high attendance at meetings confirms the success of this evolution.

However, one ingredient of our program schedule, Member's Night, has moved in the opposite direction. For years this March program consisted not only of slide presentations by members, but also featured exhibits of items such as carvings, paintings and other crafts. Over the past three years, this aspect of Member's Night has virtually disappeared, placing the burden of presenting a viable program on the shoulders of the same people. Reluctantly, the Board of Directors has decided to change the format and, at least temporarily, place Member's Night on the shelf. No one was happy with this decision, but it was felt that a change, and some time for review of the concept of Member's Night, was appropriate. I would welcome comments from members with ideas which might revive and revitalize this tradition.

Though involvement in Member's Night is on the wane, member participation in producing articles for the newsletter is rapidly on the increase. In the Jan/Feb issue, articles from no fewer than NINE different contributors made this one of the best issues yet. Keep it up! Don't be shy! Let us hear more wonderful stories about your personal bird watching experiences.

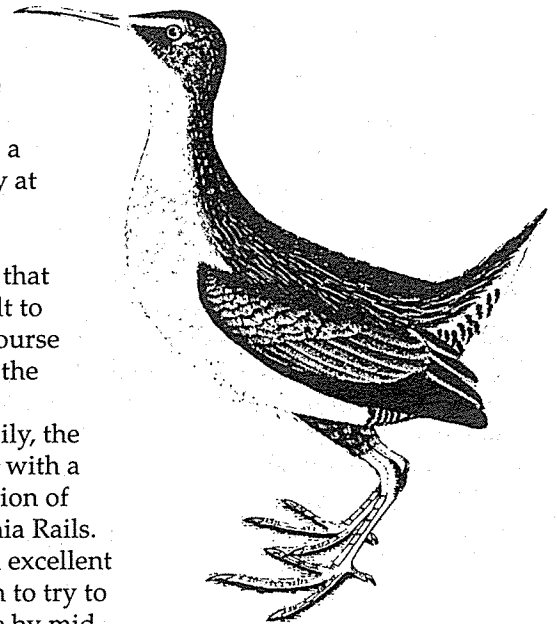
The Club wishes to express its sincere thanks to The Birdwatcher's General Store for a generous contribution. Support of this kind is greatly appreciated.

VIRGINIA RAILS

Stauffer Miller

I have met several local birders who tell me they've never seen a rail. This I find regrettable because rails, I think, add a special dimension to birding. First, one hears a voice from the marsh, and then, with careful watching the reeds and cattails move a little, then a little more, and finally they

part to
reveal a bill,
a face, a whole
bird! The voice
from the marsh
has a body, and a
handsome body at
that!



You may argue that rails are difficult to see. This is of course true. However, the situation is not hopeless. Happily, the Cape is blessed with a goodly population of breeding Virginia Rails. And April is an excellent month in which to try to see one because by mid-month they start to call vigorously as they begin their nesting season. I have occasionally thought that a local Virginia Rail census, done in late April, would be almost equal in interest to the waterfowl census done in late fall. But, that's a different subject.

There are two marshes that I especially enjoy for their Virginia Rails. The first is in Cotuit. From the center of the town, continue south on Main Street a few miles, till the Fuller's Marsh Road intersection is reached. Park there and walk back (east) 50 feet or so to the cattail marsh on the north side of the road. If you can get there at dawn in late April and stand by the side of the road at this marsh, I feel sure you'll hear a Virginia Rail. You may hear a series of tick-tick-tick noises, or maybe a descending oink-oink sort of vocalization. With very quiet watching, you might see the source of the calls walk out into view. Rails are very aware of swaying and similar body movements, so keep as motionless as possible.

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Missing Migrants

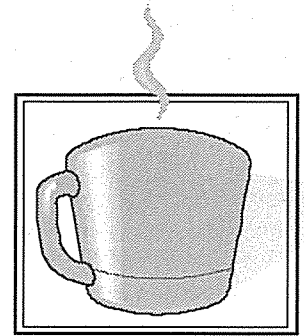
Science November 22, 1996

When caffeine addicts try to cut down on coffee, usually they are concerned about their own well-being, not that of the planet. But new findings suggest that that heady dose of espresso may be taking a toll on more than just your nerves. Fundamental changes in the way coffee is being grown in Latin America and the Carribean may be contributing to the decline of America's songbirds.

The findings implicate a new culprit in a long-running wildlife mystery. Although it is difficult to estimate the continental populations of any of these small, wide-ranging migrants, many once-common species are dwindling. Over 25 years, Wood Thrush numbers have dropped by 40%, and the Golden-winged Warbler and the Orchard Oriole are down 46% and 29% respectively....As agricultural fields have replaced forests throughout the region, the birds increasingly have sought refuge in traditional coffee plantations, where coffee plants are grown under a canopy of trees. "In many parts of the Neotropics, shade coffee is the only forestlike habitat remaining," says Russell Greenberg, president of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center. But now, even this haven is under assault. All across Latin America, farmers are switching to high-yield coffee varieties that are grown in full sun—perhaps cutting further into the thinning ranks of songbirds that make the journey back north each spring....

Naturalists have long observed that coffee farms team with wildlife....In Chiapas, Mexico, Greenberg and his colleagues at times found more migrant birds in coffee farms than in nearby native rain forests. On shade-coffee

plantations...the team counted as many as 150 bird species, most of them forest-dependent migrants from North America....A handful of studies suggest that other vertebrates are also taking refuge in the regions traditional coffee plantations....Recent research shows that arthropods seem to favor traditional grown coffee too....



But that diversity is disappearing. Throughout the Neotropics, traditional coffee growing methods are giving way to new, higher yield methods that rely on dwarf coffee plants grown in full sun....The new farms can cram 3000-7000 plants into one hectare, compared to only 1000 to 2000 plants in the same area in a traditional farm. Plied with chemical fertilizers, the sun varieties can outperform traditional varieties by a factor of 3....But subtracting the structural complexity of traditional plantations and adding large inputs of agricultural chemicals, including petroleum-based fertilizers, herbicides, insecticides, and fungicides, make poor bird habitat, biologists suspect. And some field studies are bearing out their fears....

Greenberg and other migratory bird specialists say the public's affection for the birds may prove to be a potent weapon in efforts to protect them. They hope that by educating people, they will enlist market forces to help preserve traditional plantations. Says Greenberg, "Birders and bird lovers drink a lot of coffee."



Cape Cod Bird Club Inc.

The Cape Cod Museum Of Natural History
PO BOX 1710, Brewster, MA 02631

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The Cape Cod Bird Club

is an organization whose members are interested in the protection and conservation of the bird life and natural resources of Cape Cod.

If you are interested in joining, please send a check for \$10 single membership, \$15 family membership to...

CCBC, Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
PO BOX 1710, Brewster, MA 02631

MAPLE STREET

Bob Pease

One morning I went birding along Maple Street in West Barnstable. This has turned out to be an excellent place for fall migrants—western kingbird, for one—and orchard oriole, to mention just one other.

As I passed a ramshackle house by the railroad crossing a black dog came out and barked and made friends. I suggested that he tag along. He indicated he thought that was a good idea.

A moment later I heard footsteps behind me. I turned and found a large white goat a step away. I scratched his head and asked if he'd like to come along too. He said he'd love it.

And soon after, there was a bleat from a yard we were passing and a second white goat appeared. I paused. This creature nuzzled under my coat as if to ask, "Me too?"

For two miles we walked together, stopping now and then while I checked out a vireo and a warbler and my friends, a black dog and two white goats, waited for me to be through.

We made a circle all the way back to where I had parked my car. We thanked each other for being such good company on a nice walk, told each other we'd do it again. What a pity we never did.

Excerpt from *Cape Cod*, Part IV of *Voyages*, by R. Pease.

SINKING A BIRDIE

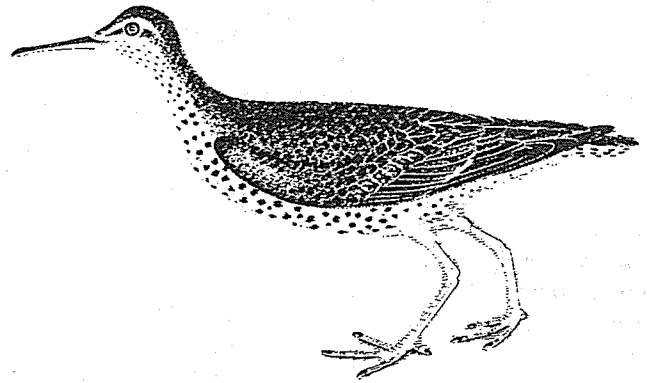
Phil Kyle

The downpour had let up so it was time for another multi-purpose safari. Exercise the dog, get in a run and see if I could observe some of the local wildlife. So it was off to the golf course, my usual area of research and recreation. The puddles were numerous, but it felt good to be forcing some of the damp air in and out of my lungs as Tucker and I splashed our way toward the 4th green. Not even a Robin worked the waterlogged lawn; I guess they knew some bit of earthworm behavior I was unfamiliar with.

Starting down the 5th fairway I could hear a Jay screaming loudly at some unseen aggravator. I headed straight for woods where the Blue Jay continued its raucous scolding. I was hoping to surprise an owl, hawk or even a crow; but by the time I was 20 feet into the scrub oak, all I got a glimpse of was some large dark bird

flapping through the trees. Probably a crow I thought as I startled the jay into flight. Two Mourning Doves, the equivalent of a double bogey, leapt into the air and zigzagged off toward the pond.

This birding on the run was falling far short of my expectations. On the 18th fairway at the edge of a pond, I could see 5 crows drinking from a large puddle. They left abruptly as Tucker and I came into sight. As I looked right



towards the pond, I spied a Spotted Sandpiper making a hasty retreat to the opposite shore. Now this bird was more to my liking. Probably a migrant slowly working from pond to lake to river to pond southwards. As I studied its diagnostic flight pattern, low over the water with rapid but intermittent wing beats, another shape appeared out of no where. My god...its a hawk. A medium sized hawk was quickly closing on this helpless traveler. The sandpiper tried several evasive maneuvers, but the hawk was simply stronger, faster and almost as agile. As I waited for the inevitable to occur, the hawk suddenly veered upward. I strained my eyes for the desperate sandpiper and thought I saw a small splash about mid pond. Amazing....Could it be? This seemingly defenseless bird had a trump card and had played it with finesse. He had waited until the crucial last split second and dove underwater. A Spotted Sandpiper, a shorebird, a wader of shallow waters, just plunged into the pond and disappeared.

Of course this deduction was reached after only 5 seconds of analyzing what I had just witnessed. The pond was still now, and I wondered if I might have been wrong. So I stood there, staring at the still waters at mid pond. I waited and waited. Nothing. The waters were still. Then, as I strained for some glimpse of the sandpiper, I saw a spot. It was far away. Had I created this out of my imagination? But wait, the spot was moving! Then, came the peep-peep, peep-peep, peep-peep to confirm what my eyes could not be sure of. The sandpiper had escaped.

1995-1996 FEEDER CENSUS

Jim Talin

A total of 11,945 birds were seen last year by the volunteers who participated in the Bird Club's Feeder Census, for an average of 55.05 birds each month at each feeding station. This number is 5.3% lower than the historic average of 58.1 birds per feeder, and 16.5% below the historic high of 65.89 recorded in the 1992-93 census. However, 59 species of birds were seen, which is just one species short of the all time high. A list of the most commonly seen birds follows.

species	% feeders seen
Blue Jay	100.00%
B C Chickadee	100.00%
Goldfinch	100.00%
Mourning Dove	97.37%
Tufted Titmouse	97.37%
House Finch	97.37%
Cardinal	92.11%
Downy Woodpecker	86.84%
WB Nuthatch	84.21%
Crow	81.58%
Junco	81.58%
RB Nuthatch	76.32%
Song Sparrow	73.68%
Hairy Woodpecker	68.42%
Red-winged Blkbrd	68.42%
Carolina Wren	65.79%
Flicker	65.79%
White-thrtd Sparrow	65.79%

An interesting addition to this list is the Carolina Wren; 101 individuals were seen at 65.79% of the feeders in the survey. Also interesting is the ascent of the Red-bellied Woodpecker. 30 individuals were sighted at 26.32%, over a quarter of the feeders. Other birds that showed increases above historic averages were White-throated Sparrow and Junco (each double the average), as well as Tufted Titmouse, Cardinal, Crow, Cowbird, Tree Sparrow, Pine Warbler and Golden-crowned Kinglet.

Many birds showed declines in numbers, but notable among them was the decline of the Bobwhite which registered 213 birds at 23.68% of the feeders for an monthly average of .93 birds, well short of the historic 2.04 birds. In another sign of its decline, the Bobwhite was seen at fewer feeders than the Red-bellied Woodpecker. Historically, the House Finch has been the second most commonly sighted bird in the survey, but this year's 3.50 birds per feeder is well short of the historic 5.75 birds seen at each feeder each month. Flickers also showed a decline in numbers from an historic monthly average of 0.52 birds to 0.39 birds. Also showing declines were Mourning Dove, Black-capped Chickadee, Blue Jay, House Sparrow,

Starling, Grackle, Downy Woodpecker, Red-winged Blackbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Mockingbird. What follows is a more complete accounting of the numbers of birds seen.

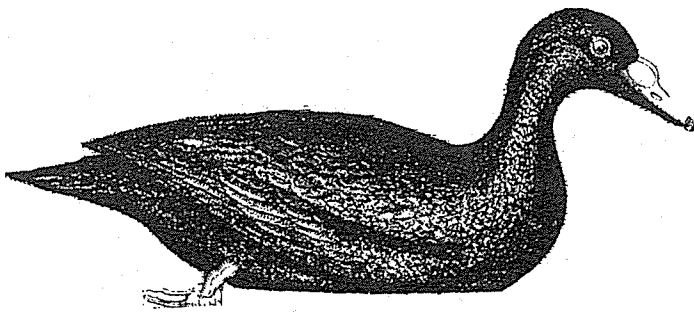
species	total	/month	/feeder
Mourning Dove	1076	179.33	4.72
B C Chickadee	1012	168.67	4.44
Goldfinch	965	160.83	4.23
Blue Jay	822	137.00	3.61
House Finch	799	133.17	3.50
Junco	705	117.50	3.09
House Sparrow	682	113.67	2.99
Starling	608	101.33	2.67
Tufted Titmouse	586	97.67	2.57
White-throated Sparrow	551	91.83	2.42
Cardinal	539	89.83	2.36
Crow	533	88.83	2.34
Grackle	449	74.83	1.97
Robin	303	50.50	1.33
Downy Woodpecker	282	47.00	1.24
Red-winged Blackbird	278	46.33	1.22
Song Sparrow	241	40.17	1.06
Bobwhite	213	35.50	0.93
WB Nuthatch	213	35.50	0.93
RB Nuthatch	131	21.83	0.57
Hairy Woodpecker	122	20.33	0.54
Yellow-rumped Wblr	120	20.00	0.53
Carolina Wren	101	16.83	0.44
Cowbird	100	16.67	0.44
Flicker	90	15.00	0.39
Tree Sparrow	75	12.50	0.33
Cedar Waxwing	51	8.50	0.22
Mockingbird	32	5.33	0.14
Red-bellied Woodpecker	30	5.00	0.13
Pine Siskin	30	5.00	0.13
Pine Warbler	27	4.50	0.12
Golden-crowned Kinglet	25	4.17	0.11
Brown Creeper	22	3.67	0.10
Sharp-shinned Hawk	15	2.50	0.07
Field Sparrow	15	2.50	0.07
Herring Gull	14	2.33	0.06
Mallards	11	1.83	0.05

Also seen were 9 Hermit Thrushes, 7 Evening Grosbeaks, 7 Eastern Towhees, 7 Red-tail Hawks, 6 Cooper's Hawk, 6 Bluebirds, 4 Meadowlark, 4 Canada Geese, 3 Baltimore Orioles, 3 Swamp & Chipping Sparrows, 2 Fox Sparrows, 2 Screech Owls, 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, 1 Kestrel, 1 House Wren, 1 Broad-winged Hawk, 1 Northern Harrier, 1 Pheasant, and 1 Ovenbird.

1996 SUMMARY

Blair Nikula

The 14th annual Lake & Pond Waterfowl Survey was conducted on the weekend of December 7-8, 1996. For the second year in a row, the weather preceding the count was colder than normal: November's temperatures were about 5° (F) below average. However, December began mild, and ice-free conditions prevailed during the survey weekend. 39 observers censused 357 ponds-three more than last year's record high! A record-tying 29 species of waterfowl were found, but the total of 9,652 individuals is about 11% below the survey average.



Species Results

Although numbers overall were down, two species, Ruddy Duck and American Coot, were found in record high numbers this year. On the other hand, four species established record low counts: Canada Goose; Green-winged Teal; Mallard; and Northern Pintail. Some of the most notable changes in numbers this year occurred in the following species.

After 6 years of steady increase, culminating in last year's record high, numbers of Pied-billed Grebe dropped precipitously this year-for no apparent reason. Numbers of Mute Swan have been declining for six years now, this year's total being the lowest since 1990. This decline is puzzling, as the local breeding population seems to be flourishing. Canada Goose almost fell off the charts this year, establishing a record low by a wide margin: only 276 individuals were found! Though not unwelcome, their pronounced paucity is baffling. Though Cape Cod is at the northern limit of the Green-winged Teal's wintering range and this survey has always recorded only modest numbers, this small duck had a record low; as did the Northern Pintail, resulting from the paltry sum of only three at Hallet's Mill Pond in Yarmouth, the traditional stronghold of this handsome species on Cape Cod (outside Monomoy, that is). Gadwall dropped sharply following a record high last year; Scaup (both species)

were the third lowest in 13 years. Mallard had another puzzling record low-and another for which few tears will be shed!

For the second consecutive year, American Coot set a record high. Coot have rebounded strongly from their disturbingly low numbers of just 3-4 years ago. Ruddy Duck not only set a Survey high, but it was three times the previous record! Numbers of this duck have rebounded to what they were in the 1970s. Red-breasted Merganser had the second highest total in the Survey's history for this primarily saltwater duck.

Despite their below average numbers, scaup (both species combined) were the most numerous birds (2041 birds), followed, as usual, by Bufflehead (1926 birds), American Black Duck (1049 birds) and Mallard (1037 birds). These five species combined comprised about 63% of the overall total.

Among the more unusual species found this year were a Red-throated Loon in Dennis, a Horned Grebe in Falmouth, two Northern Shovelers in Barnstable, three Eurasian Widgeon at traditional sites in Chatham and Barnstable, three Common Eider on Long Pond in Harwich (only the second occurrence in the Survey's history), the Survey's first Black Scoter in Mashpee, and single White-winged Scoters in Mashpee and Harwich.

Despite a drop of over a thousand birds from last year, Falmouth, as usual, out-distanced all other towns by a wide margin, with 3065 birds or 32% of the Capewide total. Barnstable was a distant second this year with 1142 (12%) birds, followed by Yarmouth at 1034 (11%). The best variety was found in Falmouth with 19 species, followed by Barnstable with 18 species and Yarmouth and Harwich with 17 species each. Wellfleet, with a paltry 12 birds of just 3 species, retained its perennial position at the bottom of the heap, though it was closely challenged by Truro with 13 birds!

Top pond this year in number of birds was once again Salt Pond in Falmouth, where 1295 birds of 9 species were counted; 1200 of these birds were scaup. Second again this year was Swan Pond in Dennis with 589 birds of 10 species, followed by Hinkley's Pond in Harwich with 458 birds of 11 species (the best variety on any pond).

Sincere thanks to each and every one of this year's 39 birders, most of whom have been loyal participants for several years now, and some since the very first year.

BIRD SIGHTINGS

Jackie Sones

December - January

Seabirds - Dick Forster and Blair Nikula had a good morning at First Encounter Beach in Eastham on December 8th. From the parking lot they observed the following seabirds: Northern Fulmar (4+), large shearwater (1), small shearwater (2), Northern Gannets (60+), Pomarine Jaeger (10+), unidentified jaegers (30), and Black-legged Kittiwakes (200+).

Least Bittern - A Least Bittern was found injured in Cotuit during the middle of January. It was brought into WildCare in Brewster for rehabilitation. American Bitterns are sometimes seen in Cape Cod salt marshes during the winter; it is extremely unusual to see Least Bitterns in this area at any time of year, nevermind during January! (They usually winter from the southern United States to northern South America.)

Waterfowl - From late December through January, two drake Barrow,s Goldeneyes were seen regularly from the end of Seaview Avenue in Osterville. At the same time, from one to three King Eiders (1 drake and 2 hens) were reported from the Cape Cod Canal. Up to 64 Redheads were counted in Falmouth (Eddie Banks), with most sightings coming from Shiverick,s Pond, Sider,s Pond, and Salt Pond. Phil Kyle reported two Harlequin Ducks off Juniper Point in Woods Hole in late December. The Marstons Mills Mill Pond continued to provide good sightings, including Gadwall, Northern Pintails (3), Northern Shovelers (2), and Green-winged Teal (30).

Gulls - George Martin reported a Common Black-headed Gull on North Bay in Cotuit on December 17 and again on January 31. Iceland and Glaucous Gulls were seen at the traditional sites in Provincetown and Truro. One Glaucous Gull was seen at MacMillan Wharf and another at Race Point. George Ellison reported a maximum of 8 Iceland Gulls at Race Point, and up to 3 Iceland Gulls were seen on Pilgrim Lake. Wayne Petersen found one Lesser Black-backed Gull at Coast Guard Beach in Eastham on December 22nd.

Alcids - During early January, a single Dovekie was very active at the Cape Cod Canal in Sandwich. It was seen chasing fish just below the water,s surface, and one time it even came up holding a small fish in its bill! Black Guillemots (maximum of 8 reported by Sally Clifton) were spotted from Race Point and from MacMillan Wharf in Provincetown. George Martin observed 2 Thick-billed Murres and 25 Razorbills at Race Point on January 4th.

Owls - Snowy Owls have been seen here and there during the past couple of months. On the Outer Cape they were reported most consistently from South Beach in Chatham (Peter Trull) and First Encounter Beach in Eastham. Great Horned Owls were calling in mid-January near the West Harwich Conservation Area.

Red-headed Woodpecker - The subadult Red-headed Woodpecker found during the Cape Cod Christmas Count on December 22nd was seen on Locust Road in Orleans until the end of January.

Thrushes - Cape Cod,s first Townsend,s Solitaire (first seen on December 28th) was last reported on January 14th. Did anyone find it after this date? There was a rash of Eastern Bluebird reports during the last week of January. Small flocks were seen in scattered locations across the Cape - some were coming to water baths; others were observed at the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary and the Marconi area in South Wellfleet. In Brewster, Art King reported a pair in his yard, as well as a Hermit Thrush on January 20th.

Bohemian Waxwings - The only reports so far this year come from who else but George Martin! George was lucky enough to have 2 Bohemian Waxwings visit his yard. They were seen with American Robins and Cedar Waxwings on January 10th and 12th.

Northern Shrike - Compared to 1996, this year has not been a good year for shrikes - reports have been few and far between. One individual was noted on the Morris Island causeway in Chatham and another was reported from Scusset Beach in Sagamore. The most recent sighting came from the Provincetown Airport on January 22nd.

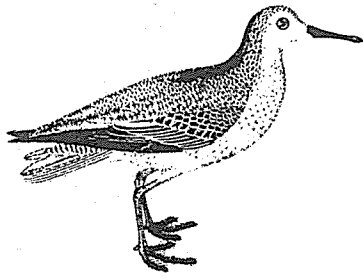
Sparrows and Finches - There was a nice flock (20+) of American Tree Sparrows at a feeder near High Head in Truro in mid-January. Art King counted up to 8 Chipping Sparrows in his yard in Brewster. A Dickcissel spent some time at Jinks Keil's feeder in Centerville during the last week of December.

Thank you to everyone who reported sightings! To do so in the future, please contact Jackie Sones or Blair Nikula at 508-432-6348, 2 Gilbert Lane, Harwich Port, MA, 02646, or odenews@capecod.net.

PROGRAMS/ MEETINGS

Ruth Connaughton

On Monday evening, **March 10, 1997**, at 7:30 PM, at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History on Route 6A in Brewster, Brian A. Harrington, Director of the Shorebird



and Coastal Studies Program at the Manomet Observatory, will present a program on **the migration of the Red Knot**. The research Mr. Harrington led on the Red Knot is chronicled in the Flight of the Red Knot. Mr.

Harrington has been with the Manomet Observatory since 1976 focusing his research on the distribution and ecology of shorebirds between South America non-breeding areas and the Canadian Arctic breeding areas. This research has helped identify sites needing protection and has stimulated the formation of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Network (WHSRN).

On Monday evening, **April 14, 1997**, at 7:30 PM, at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History on Route 6A in Brewster, Maria Burks, Superintendent of the Cape Cod National Seashore, will present a lecture on **the future of the Cape Cod National Seashore**. Ms. Burks has worked in the National Park Service since 1973, in a wide variety of assignments and locations, some of which are Philadelphia, San Francisco, Fredericksburg, and Washington, DC. In addition, she has worked closely with members of the US Congress and their staffs to draft legislation. She has traveled to Russia several times to help Russian conservationists design a system of national parks.

BIRDING HOTLINE

Though few members of the Cape Cod Bird Club participate in the Birding Hotline, those who do not should not hesitate to get in touch with one of the hotline leaders if there is any suspicion that a rare bird (listed as rare on the Cape Cod checklist or not on the checklist at all) has been seen. Area leaders are:

Area 1: Mark Tuttle (362-3015) and Peter Trimble (477-3847)

Area 2: Blair Nikula (432-6348) and George Martin (896-8798)

Area 3: Art King (255-8919) and Aurele Thomas (255-1409)

IF IN DOUBT.....CHECK IT OUT !!!

WALKS & FIELD TRIPS

Kathy McGinley

March

Saturday, March 1st: Fort Hill, Eastham. 9:00 AM. Meet at the lower parking lot. Leader: Jim Talin, 896-7169.

Sunday, March 9, 1997: Falmouth Walk. 1:00 PM. Meet at the Locust St. parking area of bike path. Leaders: Alison Robb, 540-2408; Bob Vander Pyl, 457-0864.

Thursday, March 13, 1997: Saquatucket Harbor, Harwich. 9:00 AM. Meet at the Saquatucket Harbor parking area across from Thompson's Farm Market, Rt. 28, Harwichport. "Bessie's Choice". Leader: Bessie Tirrell, 432-9248.

Thursday, March 20, 1997: Nauset Beach. 8:00 AM. Meet at the parking area at Nauset Beach in Orleans. Leader: Stauffer Miller, 362-3384.

April

Thursday, April 10, 1997: Fort Hill, Eastham, 8:00 AM. Meet at the lower parking lot. Leader: Bessie Tirrell, 432-9248.

Saturday, April 19, 1997: Dennis Pond, Yarmouth. 8:00 AM. Meet at the parking lot on Summer St. Leader: Mark Tuttle, 362-3015.

Friday, April 25, 1997: Wellfleet Bay Audubon. 6:30 PM. A sunset hike, meet at Visitor's center. Leader: Bob Prescott, 349-2615.

Sunday, April 27, 1997: Falmouth, Town Forest. Spring Migration Walk. Early birders: 6:00 AM or late risers: 8:00 AM. Meet at 1st gate on left, north of D.P.W. on Gifford St. Leaders: Alison Robb, 540-2408 and Bob Vander Pyl, 457-0864.

Tuesday, April 29, 1997: John's Pond, Mashpee. 6:30 AM. Rt. 51 to Ashumet Rd, then right onto Hoopole Rd, then right onto dirt road and into parking lot. Leader: Stauffer Miller, 362-3384.



Frank Caruso
Barbara Steller
17 Freedom Rd
Forestdale, MA 02644-1725



The Cape Cod Museum Of Natural History
PO BOX 1710, Brewster, MA 02631

Cape Cod Bird Club



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VIRGINIA RAILS

Stauffer Miller

A second spot is in Mashpee along the Mashpee River. This river has a wide margin of cattails, excellent for the rail. From the Route 28 rotary in Mashpee, go south 1.5 miles on Great Neck Road, then turn left onto River Road. In 0.5 miles, a sand road will be reached. Take the first right after starting north on the sand road. This will be the road to Amos Landing. A walk through the woods will bring one to the cattail edge where again Virginia Rails can be listened and watched for.

I think you'll enjoy experiencing a little of the life of a Virginia Rail. And remember, April is rail month!