



Cape Cod Bird Club

VOLUME 28

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1999

ISSUE 1

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Phil Kyle


Good birding is sort of like growing a peach... Yes, you guessed it, the first commentary of my term is a going to be a philosophical one. Birding is an activity which sometimes gets confused as the goal. It's those little birding adventures along the way that count the most. In other words, half the fun is getting there!

It's like a phase of birding I went through. It was really important to me, at the time, to see as many different species of bird as possible (aka, "listing"). I would spot a new bird, no matter what part of the country or what country I was in — a Mountain Bluebird in Colorado, a Northern Lapwing in Wales, a White-winged Tropicbird in Kauai or a Green Mango Hummingbird in Virgin Gorda — positively ID it and quickly move on to the next bird.

The bigger goal of being a "GREAT" birder was more important to me than the observation at some length of the behavior of a particular bird. The pace of modern life, with E-mail, cellular phones and TV, the crunch of places to go, people to see, and things to do distracts most from birding. The rush of life ends up making one forget to slow down and be more observant. Time is relative — one needs to take some time to enjoy a birding moment.

Birds, being the most conspicuous form of wildlife on Cape Cod (next to insects), require one's attention. Now I try to focus on the simple stuff of life. I try to make myself more aware of the birds in my surroundings, and as a result, I'm enjoying myself more.

Be it the flutter of wings, the smell of a rosa multiflora bush or the feel of a Pitch Pine cone, there are many, many wonders to the natural world; one has to slow down in order to appreciate them.

It has been said, "To make a peach, you need a winter, a spring, a summer, an autumn, and a honeybee, so many nights and days, sun and rain, petals rosy with pollen — all that your mouth may know a few minutes of pleasure." It also takes a lot of patience to enjoy birding. 

A TRIP TO VENEZUELA


The Bird Club's annual Natural History-Birding Trip will be to Venezuela (less than 3 hours from Miami) from February 12th to February 20th, 2000. Nearly half — 1300 species — of South America's birds are found in Venezuela. Air-conditioned accommodations and delicious country cooking will make this a remarkable vacation getaway. There are places left on this group tour, so if you are interested and want more information, please call 508 - 495 - 0196 right away. Ask for Phil.

1999 BREEDING BIRD CENSUS

Stauffer Miller

A total of 16 birders in six parties deployed June 12 to conduct the annual Mid-Cape breeding bird census. The weather was cooperative this year as we had a partly cloudy, calm morning with temperatures in the low seventies.

The count area, as in past years, was divided into Barnstable Village-Cummaquid, Yarmouthport-Dennis, West Dennis, West Yarmouth, Centerville and West Barnstable. At noon, with censusing completed, the counters gathered at my house in Cummaquid to tally what we found. Best bird honors went to Tom Noonan and Kathleen Casey who discovered a Little Blue Heron at the end of Cove Road where it meets Bass River. Other birds of interest were Wild Turkeys and a White-eyed Vireo on Great Island in Yarmouth, American Kestrel and Grasshopper Sparrow at the Barnstable Airport, and a Clapper Rail at the Barnstable Great Marsh. A total of 97 species was seen, a little under the average of 100.

I wish to thank all who participated. Try to keep the second Saturday of June of next year open so that you too can join in. The count is only as good as the amount of coverage we can get. 



MEMBERS' NIGHT & SILENT AUCTION

Batbara Stanton

Susan Weliky

After several years on hiatus, the March CCBC meeting saw the triumphant return of Members' Night. In addition to plenty of refreshments that accompanied the artwork and slide shows presented by members of the club, we held our first silent auction.

Ned Hardy, Jim Peck, Phil Kyle and Susan Weliky all showed off their talent of bird carving. Marge Marion displayed her paintings and also shared some of her favorite slides with us. John Melucci, a newcomer to the Cape, had a great display of bird photographs, mainly of tropical birds — a nice escape from the dreary March weather.

Betty Peterson made a video presentation about the Birder's Exchange. This is an organization that she and her husband, Wayne, have been intimately involved with which helps supply South American Birders with badly needed equipment. Other slide presenters included Sue and Jim Talin, Jackie Sones, and Stauffer Miller. The slide show ended with Phil Kyle's audio slide presentation and a round of "stump the members" with his bird calls.

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bird club gift ideas



CCBC Decals	\$1.00
CCBC Checklist	.50
Birding Cape Cod	\$10.00
CCBC Hats	\$15.00
Organizer Packs	\$17.00

The above items are for sale at each meeting.

THE BEECH FOREST, MAY 1999

Stauffer Miller


As field trips coordinator of the bird club, I received completed checklists for most of the walks done at the Beech Forest in Provincetown this past May. I also kept some weather records. With this information, I can give this report.

The club sponsored 10 walks this May, two per weekend. The month began cool with a persistent low in place to the east, with winds from the east. Birding was lackluster for the walks of May 1 and 2, with few warblers or other birds of interest. For the walk of May 8, the wind was from the southeast and again the tally was dull. May 9 saw a change to a south wind with the warmest day thus far; Blair Nikula's count of that day had 2 Blue-headed Vireos, 2 Parulas, 2 Black-throated Greens, 2 Black-and-Whites and 1 Northern Waterthrush as salient species.

May 10, the day of the bird club meeting, the wind for the first time came from the southwest and warbler numbers and variety increased. Fortunate late morning observers that day saw Townsend's and Yellow-throated Warblers, the best rarities of the season. There was also an impressive hawk flight at Pilgrim Heights that day. May 12 was a beautiful day, a continuation of the high, and 17 warbler species were recorded.


The weekend of May 15 and 16 saw conditions peak, and Frank Caruso's walk of the 15th had 16 warbler species with Hooded Warbler the standout. Stellar conditions continued for Kathy McGinley's walk the following day with 15 warbler species and a Summer Tanager.

By the 21st of May it was rainy and reports were poor. However, the southwest wind returned for the May 22nd walk and 15 warbler species were noted. The May 23rd outing had only 10 warbler species, but Acadian Flycatcher and Swainson's Thrush provided some compensation. The warmest weather of the month was in place for the May 29th and 30th walks, but the yield was low. The migration was pretty well over with.

A total of 23 different warbler species was seen on the 10 counts. There were no reports of Blue-winged, Tennessee, Cape May or Mourning Warblers on any of the walks. I wish to thank the leaders already mentioned, as well as George Martin, Jim Talin, Tom Noonan, Susan Weliky, Sue Thompson and Ellie Winslow. 

The 2nd Annual Ludlow Griscom Award was presented in May to Charlotte Smith of Yarmouthport for her outstanding contribution to the success of the club. The Award stated, in part:

"We proudly present to you this award in recognition and appreciation of your many contributions to the Cape Cod Bird Club. In 1972 you were present at the club's first meeting, which was held in the basement of the Cape Cod Bank & Trust. Through the years, you have served our club well, holding positions as a Director, Vice-President, and President. In 1972 you helped to organize the first Christmas Count and in 1977 the Bird Walk Committee. These activities are still carried on today. Also, you helped to create, type, label, and distribute the Bird Club Newsletter, working on it until 1989. In your spare time you acted as a bird guide in the United States and abroad, as well as a volunteer at Mass Audubon's Wellfleet Bay Sanctuary and the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History."

Charlotte was pleasantly surprised and humble in her acceptance of this prestigious award. In her thank you to the club for this honor, she noted some of the innovations that have helped to make the club so successful. 


BIRD CLUB MEETINGS

All meetings, unless otherwise indicated, are held the second Monday of each month, September through May, at 7:30 p.m. at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History on Route 6A in Brewster.

On Monday evening September 13,

Scott Hecker, the director of Mass. Audubon's Coastal Waterbird Program since 1987, will present "The Conservation of Cape Cod's Coastal Waterbirds." He will discuss such birds as Black Skimmers, American Oystercatchers and Piping Plovers.

His slide lecture will present information on the ecology and nesting sites of particular importance on the Cape, the increased threats to their survival and the many conservation measures being taken to protect them. Scott is also a wildlife illustrator, photographer, tour leader and has taught at two colleges.

Our speaker on Monday evening October 18th,* will be Trevor Lloyd-Evans, who has been a Senior Scientist at the Manomet Bird Observatory - Center for Conservation Science since 1972. Lloyd-Evans's program will be on the Ecology of Bird Migration. He has recently spent more than 11 months in Belize training interns on migratory birds. Belize, in case you are not familiar with this country in Central America, is where many of our migrant birds spend the winter. 

* Note change this month!

BIRD SIGHTINGS: JUNE, JULY 1999

Jim Talin

In these sightings you will find evidence that one migration and nesting season have finished, and the great late summer migration has begun. You may wonder where to go to see migrating birds. While it is important to make a trip to Morris Island, South Beach, Monomoy or the Chicken Farm in Truro, just remember to put your binoculars in your car and to watch for birds wherever you may be. For example, one of the rarer sightings listed below is a Mourning Warbler seen July 29 at Horton's Camp Ground in North Truro. Migrating land birds can and will turn up anywhere. They are opportunistic and use the local birds to show them where food can be found, so be sure to watch the birds in your own yard. You may find a Black-throated Green Warbler or a Red-eyed Vireo in with the local chickadees!

Seabirds-Herons: On a trip to Stellwagen bank on July 31, Greater, Cory's, Sooty and Manx Shearwaters as well as thousands of Wilson Storm Petrels were seen. On a Museum trip to Monomoy on July 17, a Wilson's Storm Petrel was spotted. A Parasitic Jaeger was present on Coast Guard Beach on July 29, as was a Cooper's Hawk. A Red-throated Loon was spotted off S. Monomoy on July 27. A Little Blue Heron was on Forest Hill Road in Chatham on July 29. A Yellow-crowned Night Heron was in Mashpee on July 29.

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FIELD TRIPS

SEPTEMBER 1998 - MAY 1999 SUMMARY

Stauffer Miller


Thirty-five field trips, led by twenty different leaders who tallied 176 species, were sponsored by the bird club during this period.

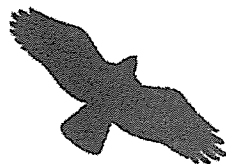
The most frequently encountered bird on these trips was Great Black-backed Gull, found on twenty-eight of the thirty-five outings. Some of the rarer species were the Chuck-will's Widow heard at the Marconi area of Wellfleet on Stauffer Miller's July 14 trip, the Lark Sparrow briefly seen on Bob Vander Pyl's December 13 walk in Falmouth and the Purple Martin, seen also by Bob in Falmouth, on April 26.

Only one individual of several relatively common species was reported on these walks, including a

Red-necked Grebe seen by Mark Tuttle's group at Corporation Beach in Dennis on November 15, a Blue-winged Teal found by Blair Nikula's party at West Harwich on May 12 and the Ruby-throated Hummingbird spotted by Susan Weliky and group at Provincetown on May 22.

Some relatively common species — Merlin, Killdeer, Willet, White-rumped Sandpiper, Common Snipe, Screech Owl, Bank Swallow, Scarlet Tanager, Field Sparrow and Eastern Meadowlark — were not seen on any trip.

I look forward to coordinating the 1999-2000 field trip season and hope to see you in the field, either as participant or leader. 



SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1999 FIELD TRIPS

September

Sunday, September 5th: Coast Guard Beach, Eastham to look for birds of Nauset Marsh and Sand Flats. Meet at the parking lot at 8:00 am. Co-Leaders: Kathy and Rives McGinley, 255-4740.

Saturday, September 11: 9 am, Morris Island. Leaders: Jim Talin, 896-7169 / Tom Noonan, 385-3193.

Sunday, September 12th: Falmouth, 7:00 am. Meet at the Locust Street parking area of the bike path. Leaders: Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb, 540-2408.

Friday, September 17th: Hardings Beach parking lot, 8:00 am. Shorebirds and warblers, Barnhill Road to Hardings Beach Road to east end of beach. Leader, Stauffer Miller, 362-3384.

Saturday, September 25th: Morris Island, Chatham. Meet at the Monomoy NWR Headquarters parking lot at 8:00 am. Leader: Mark Tuttle, 362-3015.

REMINDER: October 11th is part of the Columbus Day holiday, so the CCBC is having its meeting on October 18th.

October



Friday, October 1st. Morris Island, Chatham. Meet at the Monomoy NWR Headquarters parking lot at 8:00 am. Leader: Stauffer Miller, 362-3384.

Tuesday, October 5th. Meet at the West end of West Dennis Beach parking lot at 9:00 am. We'll look for shorebirds there, then land birds at West Harwich. Co-Leaders, Ruth Connaughton, 432-1580, and Nancy Reider, 398-8296.

Sunday, October 17th. Falmouth. Meet at the Locust Street parking area of the bike path at 7:00 am. Leaders: Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb, 540-2408.

Friday, October 29th. Marstons Mills area to walk a cranberry bog. Meet at the Mills Restaurant in Marstons Mills at 7:30 am. Leader: Stauffer Miller, 362-3384.

Saturday, October 30th. Fort Hill, Eastham. Meet at the lower parking lot at Fort Hill at 9:00 am. Leader: Dick Koeppen, 430-1822.


DID YOU KNOW ...

In colonial America, the wood duck is thought to have been the most abundant duck east of the Mississippi?

Members' Night and Silent Auction, Continued

The evening was topped off with a Silent Auction. For this auction members and friends donated items from their attics, bookshelves and overstocked mantels. These items were then displayed on tables and were silently "auctioned" off by using written bids. Some serious counter bidding took place, with prices starting sometimes at \$5.00 and then going as high as \$25.00.

After last call was announced, whoever had the highest bid on the sheet of paper next to the item was the successful bidder. Joy reigned and most went home happy! The auction yielded close to \$300 which the Club donated to Wildcare, a non-profit organization located in Brewster which rehabilitates birds and animals.

Next year's Members' Night and Silent Auction is already in the works. Start gathering your unwanted collectibles and art work. The evening is a lot of fun and the auction helps out a good cause. Think of us! Forget that yard sale! 

Bird Sightings, Continued

Bald Eagles: Immatures were seen in the Punkhorn and on S. and N. Monomoy in June and July. A mature bird was reported at Barnstable Harbor on June 26 by Lilian McLaughlin and at the north end of Seymour's Pond in the Punkhorn on July 27 by Pam Bryant.


Ducks: The Monomoys provided the rarer ducks seen during this period, with 2 Gadwall and 4 Green-winged Teal there on July 27, and 6 Eurasian Wigeon and 2 Pintail on July 22, both found on Museum trips.

Shorebirds. The shorebird migration started in early July with sightings at Wellfleet Audubon: Greater Yellowlegs, July 6; Lesser Yellowlegs July 9; Whimbrels, July 10; Spotted Sandpiper, July 12; Semipalmateds, July 24; Sanderlings, July 18; Short-billed Dowitchers, July 23; Willets; July 26. Marbled Godwits showed up on Monomoy on July 19, and on August 2, 70 Hudsonian Godwits were seen there. A White-rumped Sandpiper was on S. Monomoy July 29.

Red-headed Woodpecker. A pair of apparent resident nesters was found on Cedar Street in West Barnstable by Pam Bryant on June 9. **Wild Turkey.** An adult with young was on Doane Rock Road in Eastham on July 28.

An **Albino Tree Swallow** was noted by a Museum overnight on S. Monomoy on July 8th. A **Meadowlark** was seen by Eric Levy in the Punkhorn on July 14th. **Orchard Orioles** were recorded in June by Jim Talin at Sea Call Farm in Orleans.

The Late Spring Migrants: This year proves that we should not give up on the spring migrants on Memorial Day. On N. Monomoy a Museum trip found a female Black-throated Green and Blackpoll on June 6. On June 10th on a Pleasant Bay trip, the Museum reported a Parula and a Chestnut-sided Warbler. At Wellfleet Audubon, the following birds were reported in the first weeks of June: Hermit Thrush, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Solitary and Red-eyed Vireos, as well as the following warblers: Black-and-White, Cape May, Black-throated Green, Bay Breasted, Blackpoll, Prairie, Palm, Northern Waterthrush and American Redstart.

Mid-summer Migrants. On N. Monomoy on July 29, Palm and Parula Warblers were seen. On July 29 a Mourning Warbler was at Horton's Camp Ground in North Truro. At Wellfleet Audubon, the following were noted: August 1, a Northern Waterthrush; August 2, an American Redstart; August 5, a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and a Black-and-White Warbler; and finally late in July a Swainson's Thrush was at the Sanctuary. 

Reflections

They stand their ground and sing their song,
They let you have a look;
You note their color, voice, and form,
But they're never in the book.
Maybe it's my book of birds,
There's something that it lacks;
Perhaps I need another one,
That shows birds from the back.
I don't always hear them,
When they make their sounds;
And I can never get those birds
To stop and turn around.

--Dick E. Bird

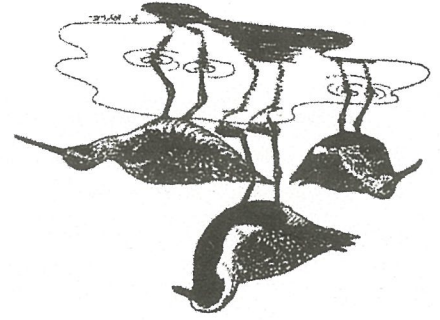
DID YOU KNOW ...

that 80 million Americans watch and feed birds?

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Cape Cod Bird Club

Greetings from your new editor: With not a little trepidation, I have taken on the somewhat awesome task of preparing our bird club's bimonthly newsletter. I hope every member will want to write an account of a bird observation, a bird trip, a good bird book or anything else that would interest the club's readers. In order for me to make this job "do-able," I ask that all submissions be sent to me electronically — no need to format your article, as email serves the purpose just fine. If you don't have a computer or email of your own, your public library can help you with this task. All submissions must be in my hands by the 15th of the month prior to the next issue. Don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any questions. *Elinor Miller, emiller@seepub.com; 362-3384*



The Cape Cod Bird Club Inc.

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

Officers

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Ron Ayotte *Secretary*
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