



Cape Cod Bird Club

VOLUME 30 – ISSUE I

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 2001

The Cape Cod Bird Club newsletter is published bi-monthly.

Cape Cod Bird Club meetings are 7:30 PM the second Monday of each month (unless otherwise indicated) at the Museum of Natural History, Rte 6A, Brewster.

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President's Message

After three months of summer, I have to admit I'm unwillingly ready for a change of habits and weather. A lot happened this summer. Some of the highlights were:

- Seeing eight Turkey Vultures in a small "kettle" over Rte. 28 in Bourne.
- Finding a snake skin in my Screech Owl nest box, which probably meant a Great Crested Flycatcher had nested there.
- 15 hikers and I hearing a Virginia Rail "cluck" on a Cuttyhunk Island.
- Having a Cardinal constantly peck at my car's side view mirror every time I parked and ran near Cape Cod Country Club.
- To my amazement, seeing a Black Vulture on Cuttyhunk for 15 minutes with ten other birders.

But with Shorebirds back in the area, I know Summer's almost over and Fall is just around the corner.

Warbler and Hawk migration s peak around the middle of September and then there are those LBJ's, little brown jobs, sparrows ... most of which migrate south in October.

It was then I realized
I love changes!

Phil Kyle



Kenn Kaufman - September 10th Speaker

Nationally known birder and author, Kenn Kaufman, will be our kickoff speaker for the 2001-2002 bird club year. Kenn's topic is "Why Nothing Beats Birdwatching on Cape Cod!"

Last year, Kenn published the field guide *Birds of North America*, to the delight of birders everywhere. This guide cuts through the clutter to focus on the essentials, making bird identification easier than ever before.

Kenn is a legend among birders and

the youngest person ever to win the Ludlow Griscom Award. He is a field editor for *Audubon*, a columnist for numerous magazines, and the author of the *Peterson Field Guide to Advanced Birding* as well as *Kingbird Highway*, which is a fascinating autobiographical account of his one-year odyssey at age 16 as he criss-crossed the country in an effort to set a record of most North American species seen in a year.

Special CCBC Birthday

Ron Ayotte

We Have a Birthday Coming Up: We'll Be Thirty on December 6, 2001!

There they are in the archives, the minutes of the first meeting of the Cape Cod Bird Club, December 6, 1971 – a single page typed in script, probably on a portable typewriter, and signed by Pauline Newell, Secretary *pro tem*.

There were about 45 members in attendance in the Museum of Natural History auditorium and the business meeting, presided over by Mrs. Lucien Rowell, was short: the first field trip was announced for December 11th, future meetings would meet at 7:30 PM rather than at 8, and bird-count procedures were outlined.

Sightings included a Wild Turkey in Brewster, a Gyrfalcon (!) at Monomoy, Western Kingbirds at Chatham Light, Common Redpolls, Common Terns and a large flight of Kittiwakes elsewhere.

Finally, Dick Cunningham, a park ranger at Cape Cod National Seashore, gave an illustrated talk

on "The Birds of Cape Cod."

Even though this was the first regular meeting of the Club, it wasn't the first meeting of those behind its organization.

The very first document in the minutes records a meeting held on

These founders of our Club had only a hazy idea of what a wonderful thing they were doing...

November 20, 1971 at the Cape Cod Bank and Trust Company in Orleans, called by Mrs. Rowell and Mrs. Herbert Whitlock, "for the purpose of forming a Bird Club." It was at this meeting that the essential outlines of the Club were laid down: monthly meetings, bird walks, a newsletter or field notes, participation in bird counts and studies, and a rare-bird alert (now the Hotline). Mr. and Mrs. Harold Baines were to look into meeting space at the Museum of Natural History, and they and Mrs. Bertrand Wellman would be on the program committee. Mr. and Mrs. Randy Bartlett, Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Bailey and

Mr. Lester Walsh would be on the field trip committee.

They all agreed they "had made a good start and that (they) should proceed on this informal basis for three months," and then hold elections of officers and consider by-laws.

It's a cliché to say that these founders of our Club had only a hazy idea of what a wonderful thing they were doing but, as we approach our Club's thirtieth birthday, we are all grateful for their energy, their foresight and their dedication to birding.

BIRD CLUB Gift Ideas	
(on sale at meetings)	
CCBC Decals	\$1.00
CCBC Checklist	.50
CCBC Patches	3.00
<i>Birding Cape Cod</i>	10.00
CCBC Hats	15.00
Binocular/Camera	
Straps	12.50
Oganizer Packs	17.00

Speaking October 15th: Andrea Jones on Grassland Birds

Grassland birds, such as the grasshopper, vesper and savannah sparrows, upland sandpiper and meadowlark, are often overlooked by many who seek more colorful and conspicuous birds.

Andrea Jones, Bird Conservation Biologist at the Massachusetts Audubon Society, who has been studying grassland birds and

their habitats throughout Massachusetts and New England for the past eight years, may change people's minds about these not-so-well-known birds.

Her work within the Grassland Conservation Program has included coordinating a seven state grassland bird survey which culminated in a report on

breeding distribution and abundance of seven species of grassland birds throughout the Northeast. Most recently, Andrea has been managing native grassland restoration projects on several Massachusetts Audubon sanctuaries and the recently launched Important Bird Areas Program.

Summary of 2000-2001 Field Trips

Stauffer Miller, Coordinator

A total of 174 species was seen on the 30 or so field trips sponsored by the bird club during 2000-2001. This is about the average for the past few years. Many of the trips don't exceed 50 species so those that do warrant mention. These were the trips I coordinated to Freeport, Maine October 14 – 15 and the Orleans to Provincetown trip of November 9th, Frank Caruso's circuit of the Beech Forest May 19th, and Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb's Falmouth outing of June 10, which was part of Biodiversity Day.

Some of the more interesting birds seen on the trips were Red-necked Grebes seen by a Mark Tuttle trip November 16th in

Dennis (only ones seen of all the trips), the Peregrine Falcon tallied by Ruth Connaughton and Nancy Reider near West Dennis Beach October 10th (again, only one seen of all trips), and the Sapsucker found by Mike Dettrey and Diane Silverstein April 23rd in Brewster (again, only one).

Getting back to Frank Caruso's May 19th walk at Provincetown, he recorded 6 species of warblers not seen by any other trips (Worm-eating, Tennessee, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, Wilson's and Canada). Frank, you've got the warbler touch.!

As in the past, there were a number of rather common species not found on any trip. This in-

cluded Green Heron, Willet, Short-billed Dowitcher, Least Tern, Horned Lark and Red-breasted Nuthatch. A number of trips were affected by really rotten weather and one was in the teeth of a Nor'easter. So all I can say is a sincere thanks to our stalwart leaders.

I have had several requests to schedule some June-July-August field trips so watch of these next summer. And if any of you out there would like to lead a field trip during summer or any time, let me hear from you. Don't be bashful. I don't care if you feel unskilled with bird-finding and identifying. The important thing is *enthusiasm* and *interest!*

September-October Field Trips

Stauffer Miller

September

Saturday, September 8: Morris Island, Chatham for warblers and shorebirds. Meet at the Monomoy NWR headquarters parking lot at 9:00 AM. Main leader: Jim Talin, 896-7169 and other possible leaders, George Martin and Tom Noonan.

Sunday, September 9: Coast Guard Beach, Eastham. Meet at the main parking lot at 8:00 AM. Look for shorebirds and other birds with an incoming tide. Leader: Mark Tuttle, 362-3015.

Sunday, September 9: 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.

Saturday, September 15: Bourne. Meet at Tedeschi Food Mart at Bourne

Rotary at 8:00 AM. We'll look at Cumberland Farms Fields near Middleboro and, if time, Dartmouth and Westport. Possible all-day trip. Leader: Stauffer Miller, 362-3384 or e-mail emiller@seepub.com.

Friday, September 21: Corn Hill at Truro and other areas of Lower Cape. Meet 8:30 AM at Friendly's Restaurant near Orleans Rotary. Leaders, Diane Silverstein and Michael Dettrey, 398-9484, or mikeanddian@hotmail.com.

Saturday, September 30: Fort Hill, Eastham. Meet at the Lower Parking Lot at Fort Hill at 8:00 AM. Leader: Jim Talin, 896-7169.

October

Sunday, October 14: Falmouth. Meet 8:00 AM at the Locust Street

parking area of the bike path. Leaders: Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb, 540-2408.

Thursday, October 18: Meet at the west end of the West Dennis Beach parking lot at 9:00 AM. Leaders: Ruth Connaughton, 432-1580 and Nancy Reider, 398-8296.

Friday, October 19: Corn Hill at Truro and other areas of Lower Cape. Meet at Friendly's Restaurant near Orleans Rotary at 8:30 AM. Leaders: Diane Silverstein and Michael Dettrey, 398-9484, or e-mail mikeandian@hotmail.com.

Saturday, October 28: Marston's Mills area for some pond and fields birding. Meet at the Marston's Mills Post Office in Marstons Mills at 8:00 AM. Leader: Stauffer Miller, 362-3384, emiller@seepub.com.

Art King is Recipient of 4th Annual Ludlow Griscom Award

At the May 14th Cape Cod Bird Club meeting, Barbara Stanton introduced Peter Trimble who presented the 4th Annual Ludlow Griscom Award to **Art King**.

Art served five years as the Club Treasurer and was highly involved in all aspects of the Club's activities. He was, and still is, a teacher – with the Club and now with the Elderhostel movement.

Art was very pleased but non-plussed. All he could say was, "What if I hadn't come tonight?"

Congratulations, Art!

Your Club Needs YOU!

Ron Ayotte, Secretary

The Cape Cod Bird Club is alive and well. Your attendance at meetings, your support for your elected officers, your participation in walks, and – yes – your dues all go to making the Club a success.

However (there's always a "however"!), there's a wealth of talent and energy in the membership that is still untapped. Over the next few months, your officers will be asking you to help out by volunteering to participate

in Club activities and serve on committees. The most important of these committees is the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee is set up by Article V of the By-laws, and consists of three members: an elected chair, and two members appointed by the Board of Directors. This is the only committee specified by the By-laws and is arguably the most important of our activities, because it fundamentally ensures the Club

is run in agreement with the will of the members.

This May, the current President, Phil Kyle, and Vice President, Barb Stanton, who have each served three terms, will be replaced and it is up to YOU, the members, to see to it we continue the line of outstanding presidents and vice-presidents.

So, please help your Club continue its thirty years of success: **volunteer!**

Your Editor Needs YOU!

Two years ago, Elinor Miller mentioned she felt trepidation as she prepared her first newsletter. I can assure you that I definitely had this same feeling as I began this issue. Under Ellie's trained eye and experienced hand, the CCBC newsletter has been interesting, entertaining, and highly informative. You did such an outstanding job, Ellie, and we all thank you. Yours will be a tough act to follow.

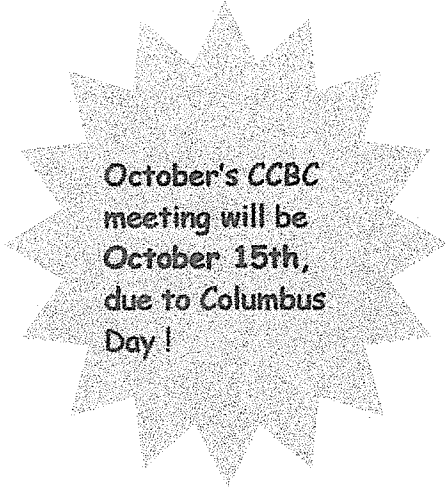
I am now asking YOU (fellow CCBC members) for YOUR help as I work to continue in the fine tradition that has been set for the 'voice' of the Cape Cod Bird Club. If you have a birding experience, a bird

trip, poetry, or something you would like to share with other CCBC members, I would love to hear from you. If you could send your submission electronically (no need to format your article as email serves the purpose just fine), this will help greatly. If you don't have a computer, your local library can help. Or mail a hardcopy to me. Submissions are needed by the 10th of the month prior to the next issue.

If you are artistic – I know that many of you are – and you have artwork that would show nicely in our black and white format that you'd like to share through the newsletter, this would be appreciated.

I am looking forward to hearing from you!

Sylvia Jurkowski (mumjay@earthlink.net) 508-428-8494



**October's CCBC
meeting will be
October 15th,
due to Columbus
Day!**

July in Iceland

Jack Palmer

In July, I visited the two prime birding spots: Myvatn Lake and the Latrabjarg Cliffs. The former, only 37 square miles, contains the world's largest concentration of breeding ducks: 10,000+ pairs, mostly Common Eiders and their young. Black Scoters, Barrow's Goldeneyes, and Red-breasted Mergansers breed nowhere else in Iceland. Eurasian Wigeons, Long-tailed and Tufted ducks were also very common.

I saw Harlequins feeding in

streams with so much current that only with the greatest difficulty could a person wade across. Surpassing the waterfowl's combined number by a thousand times were the midges that the lake was named for. Ugh!

The Latrabjarg bird cliffs, 400 meters high in places, are prime nesting property for alcids. One third of the world's Razor-bills use these cliffs, along with both Murres, Black Guillemots,

Puffins, Fulmars, Black-legged Kittiwakes, and Purple Sandpipers.

A visit there is a paparazzi's delight. In a week's stay I saw 63 species, including White-tailed Eagles, Gyrfalcons, Black-tailed Godwits, and even 32 Red Crossbills that are not even listed for Iceland.

I might also add that restaurant menus contain breast of Common Murre and smoked Puffin!

Sometimes You Need to Look Down .. Not Up!

Dick & Sylvia Jurkowski

We continue to marvel at and enjoy the many special birds paying visits to our home in Marston's Mills.

In mid-June, we noticed a pair of hawks darting around the woods near our house. Secretive and fast-flying, identifying them was difficult but Stauffer and Elli Miller came by and confirmed they were Cooper's Hawks.

We looked for their nest for a week and happened to look on the ground in a leafy area one day and noticed 'white splotches' all around! Only then did we look up and spotted their large nest near the top of a very tall White Pine with two young chicks barely visible. The parents weren't happy but grudgingly let us take looks now and then with our binoculars. Over the next weeks, we enjoyed watching them grow.

Late in July, returning home

from a vacation, we found the parents gone and the young hawks 'on their own.' Barely venturing out at first, they gradually became braver as they widened their area to hunt. We became accustomed to their whistling to each other as they flew about, starting early in the morning and continuing throughout the day.

It has been amusing and fascinating to watch these beautiful young birds harassing the squirrels calmly digging for seeds in the wood chips under our feeder with the hawks circling them – not quite sure of what they ought to do. They would fly at the squirrels causing them to run, but were never successful in catching them. Sometimes, we would see the hawks walking around the bushes trying to catch a hiding squirrel. Frustrated, the hawks seemed to have 'practice

maneuvers' — picking up pine cones, flying up in the air, and then releasing them.

As we watch the young hawks' progress day after day, there's no doubt in our minds they will master their skills and the squirrels will be very sorry. It's just a matter of time.

In the meantime, it's been a most interesting experience for us – although we hope these beautiful birds will eventually settle somewhere else after they've grown – paying our feeder area only an occasional visit.

Be sure to bring any commemorative stamps to the next meeting for Bessie Tirrell.

Did you know that more than 203 raptors have been rehabilitated at the raptor rehab center these stamps help to support??



026444X1725

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

The Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
PO Box 1710, Brewster, MA 02631



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

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Phil Kyle | President |
| Barbara Stanton | Vice President |
| Ron Ayotte | Secretary |
| Ellie Winslow | Treasurer |

Directors

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Betty Erickson | Nancy Reider |
| Dick Jurkowski | Dick Stacey |
| Ellie Miller | Bob VanderPhyl |

Newsletter

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Circulation ~ Ron Ayotte

Nominating Committee Chair

Don Scott