



The Kingfisher

VOLUME 31 – ISSUE 1

The Cape Cod Bird Club Newsletter

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER, 2002

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

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The Kingfisher is published bi-monthly.

*Deadline for submissions for next issue is: **October 10th.** Send to: ccbc_kingfisher@hotmail.com*

Website: <http://www.massbird.org/CCBC>
Webmaster: Jane Carter

President's Message

Thank you for your vote of confidence in me as your new President! I will do my best to continue the tradition of presidential excellence with this challenging and exciting opportunity.

I'm thankful too, for the capable people you have also elected to serve with me on your new leadership team. Ready or not...

HERE WE COME!!!!

For the record, I have been a lifelong birder. I grew up in Jamestown, N.Y., where my junior high math teacher introduced the class to birding. It quickly became my #1 hobby, and has delighted my entire family ever since!

Just a few memorable birding highlights over the years.....

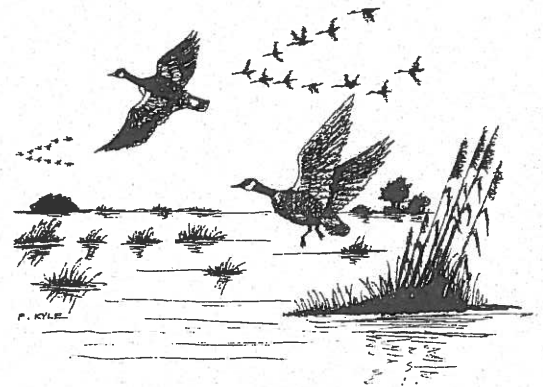
- When I was 15, attracting a Brown Capped (Boreal) Chickadee to my suet feeder and my surprise (and pleasure) to find that experienced birders would journey 100+ miles to see it! Wow... what a hobby!!
- Driving as newlyweds through upstate New York and spotting an American Bittern in a marsh, and realizing happily that my bride was just as excited as I was!
- Seeing colorful Painted Buntings at the Rattlesnake Springs, NM IBA in May.

- Making so many new and special birding friends along the way, especially here on Cape Cod...our dream destination!

Early in 1997, Sylvia and I fell in love with a pondfront property in Marstons Mills after seeing a Kingfisher and several Bufflehead active on the pond. We built our dream home, and then decorated our land with bird feeders and bird houses! We love all the great birds that we see on a regular basis!

I could go on and on, but it's time to wish you all GOOD BIRDING as we enter the Fall Season ... a terrific time to bird here on the Cape! My motto is ... whether you are enjoying the birds at your backyard feeders, on a local field trip, or in an exotic location, have fun birding ... and *let the good times roll!*

Dick Jurkowski



Our New Look ...

Working on earlier copies of the newsletter, it occurred to me that 'Cape Cod Bird Club' is the name of our organization which celebrated its 30th birthday last year. I felt that perhaps our newsletter deserved its very own name and identity.

With the Belted Kingfisher as our club logo, it was suggested that a logical choice would be

"The Kingfisher." This idea and name met with approval by the other members of the CCBC Board.

We hope that YOU, the reader, also approve.



CCBC Programs — September & October

September 9th — Southwest Birding

On Monday, September 9th, **Joyce Leary** will take us on a photographic tour of many of the birding hot-spots in Texas. She invites us to travel with her along the Gulf Coast, through the Rio Grande Valley, up to Texas hill country, into the Davis Mountains and will surround us with the beauty of Big Bend National Park.

For four months this past winter and early spring, Joyce took slides of 70 – 80 bird species including: Black-necked Stilt, Acorn Woodpecker, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Pauraque, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Plain Chachalaca, Phainopepla, Greater Roadrunner and many shorebirds, including the Long-billed Curlew.

Several days were spent capturing images of nesting adults and new chicks in the rookeries on High Island, Texas and in Lafayette, Louisiana.

The beauty of Joyce's photography has thrilled us in the past. You won't want to miss this special evening!

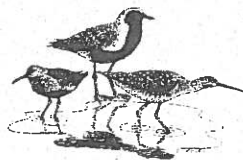
October 14th — Central America

René Laubach, Director of the Berkshire Wildlife Sanctuaries since 1985, has led tours for the Massachusetts Audubon to Belize and Tikal, Mexico, the American Southwest, and the Mid-Atlantic states. Since his first trip to Belize and Tikal in 1992, René has returned annually to this fascinating and wildlife-rich area of Central America.

His natural history interests include birds, bats, and butterflies, and he has been an active bird bander for many years.

He has authored and co-authored five books on natural history, including *The Backyard Birdhouse Book* which he wrote with his wife, Christyna.

Join us as René shares his fascinating experiences with us.



Our Last Walk with Jackie

by *Ruth Connaughton*

(Jackie Sones is now working with the Nature Conservancy in Oregon.)

April 26, 2002 – We come to Beech Forest in many moods. It is Jackie's last walk with us before leaving for Oregon! That realization makes us intensely aware so a couple of Spring Azures, a blue-violet aerial merry-go-round, whirling above the leafy floor, really heightens our excitement! Spring sunshine floods through the shadow-green of the woods where the young leaves are just beginning to unfurl. The melody of the birds, a sign of lengthening light and returning flight, reflects our happier mood. And happiness is the Pine and Palm Warblers back in full voice, their colors dazzling against the blue sky and the emerging buds. One special Palm Warbler flaunts its yellow and brown beauty from a few conspicuous branches and the light reflecting from him gives us a delightful, daring display. A couple of Golden-crowned Kinglets flit in and out of branches and shrubs, all the time singing their high thin notes.

Suddenly Jackie points out the snappy "chick-a-per-weeeoo-chick" of the White-eyed Vireo. Most of us can actually see the yellow spectacles, if not the white eye. Fluttering persistently and singing clearly, this bit of soft yellow and gray reminds me of how my bird list is every bird moment. How much we will all miss Jackie's ear and eye!

Disconsolate for a moment! Then, from a distance, a Phoebe belts out his exuberant song and our longing shifts rapidly to exhilaration. That jubilation lasts for most of the walk and especially when loud cheery warbling announces the Purple Finch. Even before we see it, Jackie tells us what to look for and,

(Continued on page 5)

Ludlow Griscom Award Recipient — Mark Tuttle

At the May 13th CCBC meeting, the 5th Annual Ludlow Griscom Award was presented by Art King to **Mark Tuttle**.

Since joining the Cape Cod Bird Club, Mark has been an involved participant, serving as Treasurer from 1992 until 1996. In the Fall of 1992, Mark also founded the Cape Cod Bird Club Hotline and acted as its Coordinator. In 1995, Mark was the main coordinator for the Club gift to the Wellfleet Bay

Wildlife Sanctuary to help fund a bird-related exhibit.

An active Walk Leader during his years with the Club, Mark is still serving in this role. Congratulations, Mark, on this much deserved award!

A special thank you to everyone who submitted articles, poetry, and artwork for this newsletter.

OCTOBER 10 - Cut-off date for next newsletter submissions! Note the NEW email address.

Report of Field Trips for 2001-2002 *Stauffer Miller*

The bird club offered about 30 field trips over the period September 2001 to July 2002. A total of 187 different species were seen on these 30 plus trips and there were about 20 or 25 different leaders.

For the past few years the composite field trip total has been about 170 species so this particular season excelled.

Some of the more unusual species seen were: Red-necked Grebes (seen only on Mark Tuttle's Corporation Beach trip of March 16), the Snow Geese seen at Plum Island on the writer's October trip to Maine (only ones), the Sandhill Crane at Provincetown seen by Diane Silverstein and Mike Dettrey's trip at the Beech Forest of May 25 and the Fox Sparrow found February 10 in Falmouth by Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb's group.

Some of the higher trip totals were Stauffer Miller's Maine trip which produced 75 species and Bob and Alison's Falmouth outing of May 12 with 52 species, including 9 different warblers. Mike Dettrey's trip to South Beach in Chatham in June contributed 5 species not found on other trips (Wilson's Storm Petrel, Piping Plover, Red Knot, Black Skimmer and Parasitic Jaeger). As always, several relatively common species were not seen at all -- Lesser Scaup, Lesser Yellowlegs, Whimbrel, American Woodcock, Screech Owl, House Wren, Bay-breasted Warbler, Ovenbird and Northern Waterthrush.

Again, I would like to thank all leaders and trip participants who, together, made this a banner field trip season. Good birding and see you in the field.

BIRDWATCHERS

(à la Rudyard Kipling)

If you can keep your mouth shut
While all about you are listening
carefully,
If you can tread lightly while ears
are cupped
and hands are pointing frantically,
If you can point your glasses and
focus immediately,
If you can identify markings and
winter plumage readily,
If you can balance book and scope
to see the wing-tip clearly,
See black-capped, hooded, red-
bellied, long-billed, yellow-legged,
white-throated, checkered or
spotted
thousands of species,
You can be called "a birder,"
my dear.

by Maru Zanfino

Submitted by Jinks Keil

Field Trips--September and October

Stauffer Miller, Coordinator

SEPTEMBER

Sunday, September 8: Falmouth. 9:00 AM. Looking for shorebirds on the Buzzards Bay shore. Meet behind the West Falmouth Post Office on Rt. 28-A. Leaders, Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb, 508-540-2408.

Friday, September 13: Monument Beach and area. Meet at 8:00 AM at Dunkin Donuts inside Gray Gables Food Market on Shore Road in Bourne to visit a variety of sites, including North Falmouth sewage beds. Trip will last till about noon. Leader, Stauffer Miller, 508-362-3384, e-mail stauffer@seepub.com.

Sunday, September 15: Coast Guard Beach in Eastham. Meet at the parking lot at 8:00 AM to walk the beach. The start of the walk coincides with a high tide. Leader, Mark Tuttle, 508-362-3015.

Friday, September 20: Corn Hill in Truro for sparrows. Meet at 8:30 AM in Orleans at Friendly's near rotary to carpool. Leaders, Mike Dettrey and Diane Silverstein, 508-398-9484, email Birder526@aol.com.

Sunday, September 22: Falmouth. 9:00 AM. Fall migration. Meet at Locust Street parking area for the bike path. Leaders, Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb, 508-540-2408.

OCTOBER

Friday, October 4: Meet at Harwich vegetable gardens along Sisson Road in Harwich at 9:00 AM for birding there, then other places. Co-leaders, Nancy Reider 508-398-8296 and Ruth Connaughton, 508-432-1580.

Saturday, October 5: Morris Island, Chatham. Meet at parking lot of Monomoy NWR headquarters in

Chatham at 8:00 AM. Leader, Jim Talin, 508-896-7169.

Friday, October 11: Corn Hill in Truro for sparrows. Meet at 8:30 AM in Orleans at Friendly's near the rotary to carpool. Leaders, Mike Dettrey and Diane Silverstein, 508-398-9484, e-mail Birder526@aol.com.

Sunday, October 13: Falmouth. 9:00 AM. Let's see what's out there. Meet at Locust Street parking area for the bike path. Leaders, Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb, 508-540-2408.

Sunday, October 20: Meet at Marstons Mills post office at 8:00 AM for a walk around Muddy Pond (water levels permitting) and visits to a cranberry bog and other places in "the Mills." Post office is off River Road, near junction with Rt. 149. Leader, Stauffer Miller, 508-362-3384, e-mail stauffer@seepub.com.

What's Around

Ron Ayotte

This article on birds seen on Cape Cod is based on personal observations, supplemented by information from the Rare Bird Alerts (RBAs) of MassAudubon. It covers the period from April to July (when 'The Kingfisher' goes to press) and therefore is more general than usual. The places visited follow, roughly, the outline of Birding Cape Cod, published by the Club and MassAudubon. (Remember, very common birds have been omitted.)

Early April 2002: Brewster, Yarmouth, Dennis: Northern Gannet, Great Blue Heron, Brant, Lesser Scaup, Common Eider, White-winged Scoter, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Osprey, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Dunlin, Lesser Black-backed Gull (!), Tree Swallow, Fish Crow, Cedar Waxwing. **MassAudubon:** Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, Blue-winged Teal, Common Snipe, Killdeer, Piping Plover, American Oystercatcher, Lesser Yellowlegs, Northern Rough-winged Swallow.

Late April 2002: Yarmouth, Dennis, Orleans, Eastham, Chatham, Provincetown (Beech Forest): Common Loon, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Brant, Wood Duck, Surf Scoter, EURASIAN KESTREL, Cooper's Hawk, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Great Horned Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Hairy Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, White-eyed Vireo, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Red-bellied Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Pine Warbler, Palm Warbler, Black and White Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Brown-headed Cowbird. **MassAudubon:** Broad-winged Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Wild Turkey, Black-bellied Plover, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Savannah Sparrow.

Early May 2002: Provincetown (Beech Forest), Harwich, Chatham: Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Eastern Phoebe, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-headed Vireo, Gray Catbird, Yellow Warbler, Black-throated

Blue Warbler, Pine Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Palm Warbler, Black and White Warbler, Eastern Towhee, White-throated Sparrow, Purple Finch. **MassAudubon:** Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk, Common Tern, Least Tern, Chuck-wills-widow, Whip-poor-will, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Ovenbird, Kentucky Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Scarlet Tanager.

Late May 2002: Provincetown (Beech Forest): Wood Duck, Bald Eagle, Osprey, Cooper's Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, Easter Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Cedar Waxwing, Northern Parula, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Black and White Warbler, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Mourning Warbler, Waterthrush sp., Common Yellowthroat, Canada Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee, Baltimore Oriole, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Purple Finch. **MassAudubon:** Sooty Shearwater, Green Heron, American Kestrel, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Ruddy Turnstone, Least Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, American Woodcock, Parasitic Jaeger, Roseate Tern, Black Skimmer, Olive-sided Flycatcher, American Pipit, Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

June 2002: (No personal observations). **MassAudubon:** Wilson's Storm-petrel, Least Bittern, Ruffed Grouse, Hudsonian Godwit, Mississippi Kite, Bald Eagle, Broad-winged Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Black-bellied Plover, Willet, Ruddy Turnstone, Parasitic Jaeger, Arctic Tern, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Black-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Wood Peewee, Common Nighthawk, Whip-poor-will, Cedar Waxwing, Grasshopper Sparrow, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Summer Tanager, Lark Bunting.

Early July 2002: Chatham (South Beach): Snowy Egret, Wilson's Storm-petrel, Black-bellied Plover, Piping Plover, American Oystercatcher, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Whimbrel,

Hudsonian Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Sanderling, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher, Roseate Tern, Arctic Tern, Least Tern, Horned Lark, Savannah Sparrow. **MassAudubon:** Greater, Sooty and Manx shearwater, Black-crowned Night-heron, Blue-winged Teal, Marbled Godwit, Semipalmated Sandpiper, White-rumped Sandpiper, Stilt Sandpiper, Wild Turkey, Little Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Forster's Tern, Royal Tern, Great Horned Owl, Indigo Bunting.

Late July 2002: Chatham (South Beach): Snowy Egret, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Piping Plover, American Oystercatcher, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Willet, Whimbrel, Hudsonian Godwit, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Roseate Tern, Common Tern, Arctic Tern, Least Tern, Barn Swallow, Bank Swallow, Tree Swallow, Savannah Sparrow. **MassAudubon:** Greater, Sooty and Manx Shearwaters, Wilson's and Leach's Storm-petrels, Yellow-crowned Night-heron, Green Heron, Black Scoter, Bald Eagle, White-rumped Sandpiper, Dunlin, Parasitic Jaeger, Gull-billed Tern, Forster's Tern, Black Skimmer, Chimney Swift, White-eyed Vireo, Scarlet Tanager.

Sept. 9th - Books for Auction

Ellie Miller is again offering some books for auction. They're not new but are good books and any opening bid will be accepted:

1. Songbirds in Your Garden by John K. Terres. This is a classic, in excellent condition.
2. 18 full-color Audubon prints (reproductions, needless to say).
3. Chorus, an anthology of bird poems, compiled by Susanne Knowles. Hard cover, near-pristine condition.
4. The National Geographic Society's Song and Garden Birds of North America. Another classic, packed with interesting information.

Twitching* Across Northern Australia

Jack Palmer

* *What northern Australians call 'birding'.*

In July, I birded across the three northern "states" of Australia (Crocodile Dundee country) — from the Kimberly to Cape York. While it was austral winter down under, because I spent all my time between the 10th and 16th parallels, I was subjected to the full heat of the tropics; temperatures being such that birds and birders do not venture out between 1 and 4 PM. There are two seasons here, wet and dry, both easy to identify. During my three-week visit it rained not once, which meant that me, my 4WD vehicle (and probably my lungs) were always powdered with red road dust. However, the plethora of bird life (300 species — one-third of them native to Australia) made it all worthwhile.

The habitat is mostly savannah woodlands but with pockets of monsoon rain forest that persist between rainy seasons. This part of Oz has almost every sort of habitat ranging between coastline beaches and mangrove salt marshes; to freshwater rivers, lakes, lagoons and billabongs.

During my visit, I saw 224 species of birds; many of them endemics. While I obviously record numbers, my main interest is beauty, uniqueness and behavior. With this in mind, here is my short list of those sightings.

Among the largest birds seen were the Southern Cassowary, Black-necked Storks, Brolgas (cranes) and Bustards (the heaviest bird that flies). Among the others: Rainbow Pittas, Azure and Yellow-billed Kingfishers, Gouldian Finches (both the black- and red-headed versions), Rainbow Lorikeets, Wompoo Fruit-doves (who say their name), Spotted Pardalotes, Scarlet Honeyeaters, the very common Rainbow Bee-eaters, and

the pugnacious Splendid Fairy-wrens who seem always willing to fight with their own reflections in something like a hubcap.

One of the cutest birds encountered was the White-throated Grasswren. To find them we climbed 500 feet up a near-vertical cliff side and searched for an hour among large boulders before finding a group of four. They seemed almost glad to see us. They not only refused to flush, with tails up they followed us around for a surprising length of time and two actually ran right between my feet. The most exciting bird was the Southern Cassowary. This is the largest native bird in Australia, standing six feet tall and weighing as much as 150 pounds. It is flightless, but moves rapidly on thick, heavy legs with large clawed feet that appear to have been borrowed from a dinosaur. The body is covered with dark shaggy, hair-like feathers — but it is the head that is really bizarre. The blue-skinned face and neck are featherless, warty and decorated with hanging red wattles. Sticking straight up from the top of its head is a 5-inch keel-shaped bone, called a casque, that may be used to batter the bird's way through the thick tangle of rain forests in which it lives. It is the male that cares for the young. The fledging I saw was a foot tall with brown stripes running lengthwise over its back and side. Had I seen this little thing by itself in the forest, I would never have believed that, in a year's time, it would be as large and as ugly as its father. I got within eight feet of this pair which I learned later was dangerously close; humans have been killed by a single kick from a protective father Cassowary.

A short distance from Cairns is a place called Cassowary House where food is used to attract these big birds.

The owner told me that one day while the family was away, a repairman worked on his back under a kitchen appliance. His job nearly finished, he slid out and saw, just next to his head, the large foot of a dinosaur. (He had left the front door open and a Cassowary walked in looking for a handout.) The man fled and vowed never to come back. His tools had to be returned to him in Cairns.

Gratitude

Would that I could find a way
in words, in verse, in song,
To say a thing I wish to say
and quickly, not be long,
express undying gratitude
for me, for one and all,
for colors in the foliage
surrounding us this fall,
for life and love and fellowship
and for a woodcock's call;
and for the chance to celebrate
just being here at all.

Robert F. Pease

(Continued from page 2)

almost instantly, it flutters through the shrubs revealing its glowing raspberry plumage. The female, too, puts in her appearance so close we can observe the white stripe above her eye and another pair of white stripes running back from her bill. She is prettily patterned and often sings, too.

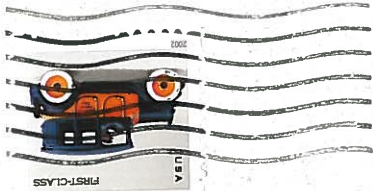
Our minds are teeming with memories of walks with Jackie, filled with twittering movements and present moments. The mood is now mostly magical.

Jackie, you will be missed.

026644+1728 02

026644+1728 02

Frank Caruso and Barbara Steller
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Forestdale MA 02644



Cape Cod Bird Club
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

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Newsletter

Editor ~ Sylvia Jurkowski (ccbc_kingfisher@hotmail.com)
Circulation ~ Ron Ayotte

Nominating Committee Chair

Phil Kyle

FOCUS ON THE FIELD GUIDE
An Extraordinary Day of Bird Watcher Watching
Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences
Sunday, September 22, 2002
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Since the first printing of Peterson's Field Guide to Birds in 1934, the genre of Natural History field guides has exploded. Today, a multitude of field guides on the market is helping millions and millions of people access and understand the world around them. *Focus on the Field Guide* will bring together some of the most recognized field guide authors who will share their personal insights regarding the field guide through a moderated panel discussion.

Imagine adding these seven to your life list at one time!

Peter Alden – Worldwide tour leader, naturalist, and principal author of “National Audubon Society Regional Field Guide” series. Organized first-ever Massachusetts statewide biodiversity movement.

Jim Coe – Artist and naturalist. Authored and illustrated the “Golden Field Guide, Eastern Birds: A Guide to Field Identification of North American Species.”

Noble Proctor – Author, tour leader, and professor of ornithology. Longtime friend of Roger Tory Peterson. Completed fifth edition of Peterson's “Field Guide to the Birds of Eastern and Central North America.”

Herb Raffaele – Author of “A Guide to the Birds of the West Indies” and “A Guide to the Birds of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.” Chief, Division of International Conservation, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

David Sibley – Renowned naturalist, artist, and author of best-selling “The Sibley Guide to Birds” and “The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior.”

Don & Lillian Stokes – Authors of “Stokes Field Guide to Birds,” hosts of “Stokes at Home” public television series, and hosts of cable TV series, “Birdwatching Workshop.”

The program will be moderated by **John Kricher**, Professor of Biology at Wheaton College, and author of “A Guide to Eastern Forests,” “A Guide to Rocky Mountain and Southwest Forests,” and “A Guide to California and Pacific Northwest Forests.”

Admission: \$50.00 per person. Includes a delicious brunch and speaker program at Manomet's facility overlooking Cape Cod Bay, Plymouth, MA. Credit cards are accepted. Seating is limited, and reservations are required. To reserve your space, please call 508-224-6521 by September 13, 2002.

An exhibit of art and photography, and a book signing, will be featured before and after the program. Field guides will be available for purchase. For directions to Manomet, visit www.manomet.org. This program is made possible through the generous support of Swarovski Optik (www.swarovskioptik.com).