



# Cape Cod Bird Club

VOLUME 30 – ISSUE 5

SUMMER 2002

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*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.*

**Website:** <http://www.massbird.org/CCBC>

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## ***President's Message***

Okay ... it has been a mild winter and the first part of spring has been normal weather-wise. We didn't really get into the bleak, dreary, dismal state of mind that is associated with the depths of winter.

Regardless, there is always consolation at this time of year no matter what the weather and the winter doldrums have been like. Springtime always means WARBLERS and SONGBIRDS arrive. They are headed north to breed. It's the most exciting time of the year for birders.

Whether it's the Beech Forest in Provincetown, Beebe Woods in Falmouth or Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, warblers and other migrants are definitely around to be seen.

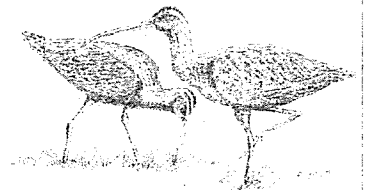
Then there is also the movement north of RAPTORS and SHOREBIRDS. Although this event isn't as impressive as in the Fall, Pilgrim Heights in Truro is the leading spot to catch a glimpse of migrating hawks. Unfortunately,

seeing shorebirds is not quite so predictable and finding them is more of a challenge in the spring. After July 1st, however, the shorebirds begin heading back south and their locations are easier to forecast.

I just realized that this is my last President's message! My term is up June 1st as the President of the Cape Cod Bird Club. The job has been a great learning experience .... a position I'm glad I chose to fill.

As I relinquish my post, it's important that all of you remember ... to spend as much time birding as possible. If you are really fond of an activity, make time to do it as often as possible! Birding like learning .... it goes on and on and on !

*Phil Kyle*



## **May 13th CCBC Program**

### **Birds of Central America**

Dr. David Morimoto is the Associate Professor of Biology at Regis College and he is also an avid Birder. Dr. Morimoto has given many lectures on avian ecology and conservation, tropical rainforest ecology and other environmental topics. He is well traveled and has special expertise in Central and South America.

Dr. Morimoto's focus for the May meeting will be on the birds of Central America — particularly those of Belize.

## **Ludlow Griscom Award**

For the past four years, one of the highlights of the May meeting is the presentation of the Ludlow Griscom Award. The award honors outstanding contributions to the world of birding by that person. Who will be the recipient this year? Come and see!

### **MANY THANKS ...**

A very warm thank you to our 'retiring' President, Phil Kyle. Your thoughtfully written Message in each newsletter always inspired us to see nature and birding anew. Your artwork added beauty to the pages. You did a fine job. Enjoy your summer!

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Your Club Needs YOU – More Than Ever

Back in the September 2001 newsletter, we ran an article on how *vital* MEMBER PARTICIPATION is to the life and health of the Club.

Since then, your attendance at meetings – GREAT! Your support for your elected officers – WONDERFUL! Your participation in walks – SUPER! Your payment of dues – OUTSTANDING!

All have gone to make the Club a resounding success for yet another year. However, the fifth factor, member participation hasn't even come close to the level of the other four. (It would be rated "ho-hum" at best!). **Now is the time for YOU to get involved.**

At the May meeting, we will be electing new officers for next year. This year we will be electing a new

President and Vice-President (Phil and Barb have served the limit of three consecutive terms) — along with two members of the Board of Directors.

In addition, some of our plans for the future will involve more members than just the Board. So, you see, **your participation is vital to the Club's future.**

You will get this newsletter before the May meeting. If you can help the Club by participating in its leadership, step up! It's not too late to volunteer! Get your name to Phil Kyle (508-495-0196, [pkyle1592@aol.com](mailto:pkyle1592@aol.com)), Ron Ayotte (508-888-2164, [ayotterc@cape.com](mailto:ayotterc@cape.com)) or Don Scott (508-432-2528, [scottcape@capecod.net](mailto:scottcape@capecod.net)) and **VOLUNTEER TO SERVE !!**



### More Books for Auction —

Ellie Miller has three more books for auction at the May meeting: The Backyard Birdhouse Book: Building, Nestboxes and Creating Natural Habitats by Rene and Christyana Laubach A Guide to Nests, Eggs, and Nestlings of North American Birds by Paul Baicich Bird Nests – A small second-hand book of various birds around the world with incredibly beautiful photography by Gerry Ellis.

Thanks, Ellie, for your generosity in donating these materials!

**The CCBC Board voted to have the proceeds from these books and the earlier auctions, go to the Binocular Exchange Program at the Manomet Bird Observatory to provide equipment and guide books to support conservation of birds in Latin America.**

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The Cape Cod Bird Club is very pleased to acknowledge the following individuals who have joined the Club since publication of our last newsletter. Welcome and good birding!

- \* Elizabeth Relyea, Dennisport
- \* Marcia Szent-Gyorgyi, Falmouth
- \* Rick and Liz Galat, Woods Hole
- \* Bob Jackson, Barnstable
- \* Ken Merrifield, Provincetown
- \* Mary Keleher, Mashpee
- \* Milly White, East Falmouth
- \* Ruth Langemann, S. Dennis
- \* Joanne M. Baldauf, Eastham
- \* Brian & Ann Marie Hocking, Hatchville

### Correction:

In our last issue, we misspelled the name of a new member. The Club sincerely welcomes Jeri Housley of Sandwich!

### In Memory

The Club is sad to learn of the recent death of a member, Mary Louise Eddy of Brewster. Our condolences to Mary's family.

Nature's Circle – Falmouth  
 For a variety of walks (botany, birds, and butterflies) year-round and occasional lectures, check out our website at: <http://home.cape.com/nature>. Email: [nature@cape.com](mailto:nature@cape.com).

*THANKS – Continued from page 1)*

Thanks go to other contributors of articles: Jack Palmer, Don and Carol Scott, Ron Ayotte, Stauffer Miller, Mary Lou Brier, and Karen Goggins.

Thanks, Ellie Miller, for the wonderful programs! And to Dick Jurkowski for 'getting the word out' via PR.

To Barbara Stanton for VP duties and handling the 'Monthly Sightings.'

To our Leaders and Guides: Mike Detrey, Diane Silverstein, Bob VanderPyl, Alison Robb, Blair Nikula, Dick Koepen, Stauffer Miller, Mark Tuttle, Frank Caruso, Don Scott, Nancy Reider, Ruth Connaughton, and Susan Thompson

To those who baked cookies and got refreshments ready.

To ALL who came each month and enjoyed the meetings! THANK YOU!

**Walks and Field Trips - May – August**

*Stauffer Miller*

**MAY**

**Saturday, May 4 – Fort Hill – 9:00 AM.** Meet at the lower parking lot. Leader, Dick Koeppen, 430-1822.

**Wednesday, May 8 – Harwich – 5:30 PM,** Blair's Evening Walk. Meet at Bell's Neck Road, Harwich Conservation Area. Bring a picnic if you like. Leader, Blair Nikula, 432-6348.

**Sunday, May 12 – Falmouth – 7:00 AM.** Spring migration in full swing! Meet at the Locust Street parking area at the Bike Path. We'll go to our favorite spots. Leaders, Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb, 540-2408.

**Friday, May 17 – Meet 7:30 AM** at the Long Pasture Sanctuary Parking Area along Bone Hill Road in Cummaquid to check this area and some other nearby sites for Warblers and Other Migrants. Leaders, Mike Dettrey and Diane Silverstein, 398-9484, e-mail mikeanddiane@hotmail.com.

**Monday, May 27 – Harwich – Meet 7:00 AM** at Trailhead of Harold and Beatrice Dickey Trail, Entrance on Right off Lothrop Ave, 0.2 mi. South of Great Western Road in Harwich. The Trail goes beside some of the Herring River Cattail Marsh. Leader, Stauffer Miller, 362-3384.

**JUNE**

**Sunday, June 9 – Mashpee – 8:00 AM.** Look for migrants and residents at South Cape Beach State Park. Take Great Neck Road south to Great Oak Road to the State Park. Meet in the Mashpee Town parking lot. We'll walk behind the dunes and on the beach.

Leaders, Bob Vander Pyl and Alison Robb, 540-2408.

**JULY**

**Saturday, July 20 – East Sandwich – Meet 8:00 AM** at the Convenience Store at Rt. 6-A and Ploughed Neck Road to go to nearby Foster Road to look at Gulls and Shorebirds. Leader, Stauffer Miller, 362-3384, e-mail: emiller@seepub.com.

**SOUTH BEACH TRIPS:**

**Wednesday, June 26 – Meet 11:30 AM** (Location to be Announced) for a trip to South Beach in Chatham.

Participants should be prepared for a good deal of walking — approximately an hour to reach the southernmost tip from the Boat Drop-off, and an hour to return to the Boat Pick-up Point.

Bring a lot of water, sunscreen, insect repellent, a lunch and/or snack. We plan to arrive at the Southern Tip in time for high tide and will spend as much time there as needed, based on bird activity, before returning to the Boat Pick-up Spot. Leaders, Mike Dettrey and Diane Silverstein, 398-9484, e-mail: mikeand-diane@hotmail.com.

**Wednesday, July 24 – Meet 10:30 AM.** Again, location to be announced. Same Leaders and Notes as for June 26th trip to South Beach.

**AUGUST**

**Wednesday, August 21 – Meet at 9:30 AM.** Again, location TBA. Same Leaders and Notes as for June 26th trip to South Beach.

**BEECH FOREST WALKS**

As in the past, the Club will have a Walk at the Beech Forest in Provincetown each Saturday and Sunday in May. The Beech Forest is the best spot on the Cape to see and hear migrant warblers and other songbirds. All walks begin at 8:00 AM (with one exception) — at the Parking Lot.

The Walks and Their Leaders are:

**Saturday, May 4 – Don Scott**  
**Sunday, May 5 – Blair Nikula**

**Saturday, May 11 – Nancy Reider and Ruth Connaughton**  
**Sunday, May 12 – Susan Thompson**

**Saturday, May 18 – Frank Caruso**  
**Sunday, May 19 – Stauffer Miller**

**Saturday, May 25 – Mike Dettrey and Diane Silverstein** (Note: This trip begins at 7:00 AM)

**Sunday, May 26 – Ginny Page**

**CCBC Merchandise**  
On sale at every meeting —  
**Get set for Summer !**

CCBC Decals	\$ 1.00
CCBC Checklist	.50
CCBC Patches	3.00
Book: Birding Cape Cod	10.00
Binocular /Camera Straps	12.50
Organizer Packs	17.00
CCBC Knit Hats	Reduced price
<b>CCBC Caps</b>	<b>15.00</b>

## 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. The places visited roughly follow the outline of *Birding Cape Cod*, published by the Club and MassAudubon. (Remember, very common birds have been omitted.)

### February 4, Dennis, Yarmouth:

Great Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Brant, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Sanderling, Dunlin, Belted Kingfisher, Horned Lark, Brown Creeper, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Yellow-rumped Warbler.

**MassAudubon:** Tundra Swan, Barrow's Goldeneye, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Snowy Owl, Merlin, Snow Bunting, Savannah Sparrow

**February 15, Chatham:** Horned Grebe, Great Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Brant, Common Eider, White-winged Scoter, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Northern Harrier, Sanderling, Snowy Owl (!), Carolina Wren.

**February 22, Eastham:** Common Loon, Northern Gannet, Great Blue Heron, Brant, Green-winged Teal (one Eurasian race), American Wigeon, Ring-necked Duck, Common Eider, Black Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Dunlin, Horned Lark, Carolina Wren, Dickcissel (?), Red-winged Blackbird.

**MassAudubon:** Northern Fulmar, Pomarine Jaeger, Black-legged Kittiwake, Bonaparte's Gull, Iceland Gull,

Common Murre, Razorbill, Purple Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, Merlin.

**February 25, Yarmouthport, Dennis:** Pied-billed grebe, Horned Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Northern Pintail, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Sanderling, Northern Flicker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle.

**March 1, Orleans:** Common Loon, Red-throated Loon, Great Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Northern Gannet, Great Blue Heron, Brant, Common Eider, Harlequin Duck (!), Black Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Barrow's Goldeneye (!), Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Sanderling, Dunlin, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle.

**March 4, Wellfleet, Eastham:** Horned Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Brant, Ring-necked Duck, Long-tailed Duck, White-winged Scoter, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Killdeer, Horned Lark, Eastern Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, Redwing Blackbird, Common Grackle.

**March 8, Wellfleet:** Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Great Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Brant, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, White-winged Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Dunlin, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker,

Yellow-rumped Warbler, Eastern Bluebird, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle.

**MassAudubon:** Pacific Loon, Barnacle Goose, Osprey, Peregrine Falcon, Black-bellied Plover, Iceland Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Murre, Thick-billed Murre, Atlantic Puffin, Northern Parula, Snow Bunting.

**March 15, Truro:** Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Northern Gannet, Great Blue Heron, Brant, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, White-winged Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-tailed Hawk, Sanderling, Dunlin, White-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle.

**Mass Audubon:** Osprey, Eastern Meadowlark, Razorbill, Common Murre, Red-necked Grebe, Killdeer, Eastern Bluebird.

**March 22, Provincetown:** Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Northern Gannet, Brant, Green-winged Teal, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, White-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle.

**MassAudubon:** Snowy Owl, Common Redpoll, Piping Plover, Killdeer, Wild Turkey.

**March 25, Harwich, Chatham:** Red-throated Loon, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Northern Gannet, Great Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Brant, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Osprey (!), Sanderling, Northern Flicker, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle.

## An Avian Spectacle in Mexico

*Stauffer Miller*

I was fortunate to be able to spend a week this past March birding the Mayan ruins of Palenque, Mexico. Palenque is approximately where the Yucatan Peninsula meets the Isthmus of Mexico, on the Gulf of Mexico side. Not far from Palenque is a lowland area through which rivers slow and spread out as they near the Gulf. Thus are formed extensive marshes, often called the Usumacinta marshes. Our group visited the marshes one afternoon.

I have been all over the world and have seen all sorts of bird spectacles but, with the possible exception of the Venezuelan llanos, I don't know of any gathering of numbers and varieties of birds that matches that of the Usumacinta marshes.

There is a side road of about 6 miles length which goes through the marshes and, if you go over this road in the

afternoon, especially as you look to the right, the light is beautiful. There are watery fields everywhere to look over and also watery ditches right beside the road. In other areas, there are tree and shrub-lined channels of water. Wherever you look, there are birds — many of them of the showy type.

First, there are the waterfowl — great concentrations of Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shovelers and both kinds of whistling ducks. Groups of White Pelicans are scattered about, as well as Cormorants and Anhingas. Herons are everywhere. Many are Great Egrets, Snowy Egrets and Cattle Egrets, with fewer numbers of Pinnated Bitterns, Green Herons, Tri-colored Herons, both kinds of night herons and a few Bare-throated Tiger Herons. Not to be overlooked are Wood Storks, Limpkins, Purple Gallinules,

Jacanas and shorebirds.

In the skies or perching about are Northern Harriers, Snail Kites, Black-collared Hawks, White-tailed Hawks, Aplomado Falcons, Ringed Kingfishers and various types of swallows. In small shrubs are warblers, gnatcatchers and flycatchers. And the list goes on.

It's easy to get pessimistic about the state of our planet's birds so I believe that a visit to these marshes is a good tonic for that sort of thinking.

All members of the bird club, birders everywhere, and, in fact, a great deal of the general public would thrill to see the spectacle I've described. I wish there was a way to get you there. It's a place you would never forget!

### Is the Ivorybill Back?

(The following is from Audubon.org field notes)

The Ivory-billed Woodpecker, wan ghost of southern woodlands, may actually be flying forth from its niche in extinction. In April 1999, David Kulivan, an undergraduate majoring in forestry at Louisiana State University, walked into the forest to hunt wild turkeys. He emerged with the news that he had seen not one but two ivorybills. This spring, teams of biologists, birders, and students are combing remote areas of eastern Louisiana's 35,000-acre Pearl River Wildlife Management Area. Meanwhile, researchers are fanning across southeastern Cuba's 123,000-acre Sierra Maestra, looking for the large, flamboyant woodpecker, which has been believed to be extinct for several decades.

"We can't ignore the reports," says Frank Gill, president of the American Ornithologists' Union and the National

Audubon Society's vice-president for science. "Experienced professionals in Louisiana agree that the report from the Pearl River area is the most credible in years." There has been no comparable search in response to a possible ivorybill sighting in the United States in 50 years. Alleged sightings are quickly written off as confusion between the ivorybill, a bird which averaged 19 inches in length, and the look-alike pileated woodpecker, which averages 16 inches. But Kulivan knows the woods. "I've been hunting in this area since I was a kid," he says. "That morning, I was sitting at the base of a tree. Suddenly, these two birds were in the trees. I watched them for 15 minutes. The male—the bird with a red crest—seemed to be doing all the calling. I was awfully excited when they flew away. I tried to follow them, but they were gone."

The window of opportunity for spotting ivorybills in the bottomland forest is narrow. The area is often flooded, and

with the arrival of hot weather, search teams encounter hordes of mosquitoes, dense foliage, and impenetrable undergrowth. Drought made this year's well-organized search possible. Some searchers claim to have heard the ivorybills' "tin-horn" calls.

Louisiana has responded to the sighting by putting a two-year moratorium on timber cutting in the area. The National Audubon Society, which sponsored Cornell biologist James Tanner's classic studies on the ivorybills during the late 1930s and hired a warden to guard an area where ivorybills had been seen in the early 1950s, is also helping fund the current search.

Meanwhile, Audubon is supporting efforts to find surviving ivorybills in Cuba, the southernmost part of the bird's historic range. "The Cubans are taking this very seriously," says Gill. "Search teams have already found feeding sites of ivorybills and heard their calls."

--Frank Graham Jr.

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17 Freedom Rd  
Barbara Steller  
Frank Caruso



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The Cape Cod Museum of Natural History  
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**Greetings from your editor:** This is the last newsletter until September. I would like to encourage YOU to send me YOUR article for publication next year. If every member would write an account of a bird observation, a bird trip, a good bird book or anything else that would interest the club's readers, what a wonderful newsletter we would have! Cut-off date for articles for the September issue is **July 30th (or earlier, of course)**. If you don't have a computer or e-mail of your own, your public library can help you with this. No need to format your article. I'll even accept a typed or neatly written copy sent via U.S. mail! Let me hear from you! Until then, have a great summer ... and Happy Birding! *Sylvia Jurkowski, mumjay@earthlink.net; 508-428-8494*



### 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
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Ellie Miller	Bob VanderPyl

#### *Newsletter*

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Circulation ~ Ron Ayotte

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Don Scott