



The Kingfisher

VOLUME 33 – ISSUE 4

The Cape Cod Bird Club Newsletter

MARCH – APRIL, 2005

Cape Cod Bird Club meetings are 7:30 PM the second Monday of each month, September thru May, at the Museum of Natural History, 869 Rte 6A, Brewster, MA.

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The Kingfisher is published bi-monthly.

Deadline for next issue's articles: **April 7th**
Send articles or comments to: capekingfisher@yahoo.com

Website: <http://www.massbird.org/CCBC>
Terry Gavin, Webmaster

President's Message

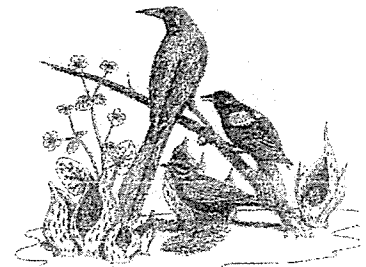
I'd like to share some recent experiences that reminded me, first hand, how special Cape Cod really is. There are so many top quality opportunities available to us all, as birders and natural history buffs, even in the winter! I'm sure many of you could easily add a few examples of your own ... but now it's my turn!

Recently, a friend and I attended one of the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History lectures. It was their series on Ocean Treasures and the topic was the Geology and Meteorological/Oceanographic Challenges of Stellwagen Bank. It was very well presented by experts in their field who were highly qualified and very entertaining. What a terrific evening it was! I highly recommend that you review the upcoming lecture list (elsewhere in this newsletter) and see if there isn't something you would like to learn more about. These lectures run weekly through May.

One of our recent CCBC Field trips went to Cape Ann looking for sea birds ... and I'm so glad I went along! Ten of us had an outstanding day long adventure. We saw so many special birds it was amazing. My favorite was a great look at a beautiful male King Eider in perfect lighting conditions. WOW! I couldn't help but think ... what a wonderful day we had, mild weather, special participants, and lots of birds!

I hope you are taking the opportunity to join in the Cape Cod fun, too — as often as you can. Regardless of the season ... there is a lot going on!

Dick Jurkowski



CCBC PROGRAMS – March and April

March 14th – Andrew Farnsworth: "While You Were Sleeping – The Birds We Miss at Night"

Andrew Farnsworth developed a keen interest in birds at a young age and, by age five, he was birding around his home in Rye, NY. Since that time he has traveled extensively in Europe and the Americas.

He received his B.S. in Natural Resources from Cornell University in 1995 and his M.S. in Zoology from Clemson University in 2001, using surveillance radar and acoustic sensors to study nocturnal bird migration for his thesis research.

At present, Andrew lives in Ithaca, New York where he is a Ph.D. candidate at Cornell University in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology. His main research interest continues to be bird migration, specifically the function of nocturnal calling in migrating birds.

(Cont'd on page 3)

April 11th – Shawn Carey: Multi-image Slide Presentations and Videos

Shawn Carey started watching birds in 1988. With an interest in photography and now birds, Shawn began to combine the two in 1991. By 1994, he and his friend, Jim Grady, started "Migration Productions" as a way to present their multi-image slide presentations to live audiences. Since that time, Migration Productions has been presenting programs to birding organizations and at birding events and is now the premiere bird-related multi-media presentation company in New England.

In 1997, Shawn began teaching bird photography workshops (Fundamentals of Bird Photography) for the Mass Audubon Society.

Migration Production Program Titles: "Birders" (Multi-image Slide Presentation) is a show is about people who bird. Seven

(Cont'd on page 3)

Field Walks – March & April 2005

Ginie Page, Coordinator

All are welcome to join our field trips which are free.
NEW BIRDERS ALWAYS WELCOME! A call or e-mail to leader is appreciated and, in case of inclement weather, check with leader!

See www.massbird.org/CCBC for any additions or changes.

Mar 3 - Thurs - 8AM Bristol County RI and MA. Meet at the Tedeschi's Convenience Store at the Bourne Rotary at 8AM. We'll bird along the Westport River south of New Bedford, then explore backroads near Tiverton, RI with lunch at the Shiver-Me-Timbers Cafe in Portsmouth, RI and, if time, down to Sachuest Wildlife Refuge. Leader: Stauffer Miller 508-362-3384 or Stauffer@seepub.com.

Mar 5 – Sat Eve 4:30 – 8:30PM Barnstable Owling! Dress for cold and bring your binoculars! Meet at Christie's in East Sandwich on 6A (near Ploughed Neck Blvd) to carpool. Rain postpones. Leader: Dan Furbish Barn.Owl@verizon.net

Mar 9 – Wed Eve 5:30 PM Cummaquid. Meet at MAS Long Pasture Sanctuary on Bone Hill Rd. for displaying Woodcocks! This is a reliable site to hear and see these birds in action. Pizza afterwards! Leaders: Mike Dettrey and Diane Silverstein 508-398-9484 or birder526@aol.com

Mar 12 – Sat 9-Noon Mashpee First time "Yard Birds" from a great vantage point overlooking beautiful Poponneset Bay. Up close looks at yard birds (recent sightings: Carolina Wren, Brown Creeper) plus Bay scope views (from the deck) of ducks or seabirds. We may walk to the nearby boat ramp for a look. Leaders: Dick & Shirley Henshall, 24 Captains Row, Mashpee. 508-477-3327.

Mar 13 – Sun 8AM Falmouth Meet at the Locust St parking lot for the Shining Sea Bike Path. We will bird along the shoreline and ponds in the Falmouth area. Leader: Greg Hirth 508-457-4356 or ghirth@whoi.edu

Mar 17 – Thur 9-Noon Marstons Mills Warm & cozy viewing of a variety of "Yard Birds" in a natural habitat! View ducks on Round Pond from the property. Beginning birders always welcome! 68 Liberty Lane, Marstons Mills. Leaders: Dick & Sylvia Jurkowski 508-428-8494.

Mar 22 - Tues - 8:30AM Dennis Meet at Corporation Beach in Dennis to scope for water birds. We will look at several ponds and the ocean as well. There should be good numbers of late wintering and early spring birds. Leader: 508-Mark Tuttle 362-3015

Mar 25 - Fri Eve 4:30PM Falmouth Crane Wildlife Management Area. From Rte 151 take the dirt road between the ballfield and the Nickelodeon Theater to the end. We will walk the fields in search of birds as they prepare for the evening. We will then experience the wonderful courtship flight of the American Woodcock! Leader: Mary Keleher 508-477-1473 or maryeak@yahoo.com

Mar 26 – Sat 9-Noon Muddy Creek in Chatham. First time 'yard birds' for this member who's seen all three types of Mergansers, Black Ducks, Bald Eagles, Red Tails, Buffleheads, Kingfishers, along with common and not-so-common yard birds – from a great vantage point on Muddy Creek. You might also see: River Otter, Coyote, or Raccoons. Come and enjoy! 211 Country-side Drive, Chatham (off Old Queen Ann Rd which is off Rte 137). Leader: Marianne Harris 508-380-7581.

Apr 2 - Sat 7:00AM South Cape Beach, Mashpee. From the Mashpee Rotary, take the Great Neck Road South exit heading toward New Seabury. At the fork in the road, take a left onto Great Oak Rd. Follow the signs to South Cape Beach and park in the 'Town' lot. (The parking lot to the left at the very end of the road.) We will explore this beautiful barrier beach along Nantucket Sound in search of Piping Plovers and Ospreys. Be prepared to walk up to 2 miles in sand. Leader: Mary Keleher 477-1473 or maryeak@yahoo.com

Apr 4 - Mon 9AM W. Harwich onservation Area. Meet at Bell's

Neck Rd. between the two water areas. We'll Look for migrating birds and shorebirds on nearby beaches. Leaders: Nancy Reider and Ruth Connaughton 508-432-1580

Apr 9 - Sat 6-10PM Owling in Mashpee & Falmouth. Meet at the Honey Dew doughnut shop on Rte 28 in Mashpee. Owling can be great family fun – come one, come OWL! Dress for cold and bring your bins and maybe, boots. Leader: Dan Furbish Barn.Owl@verizon.net

Apr 15 - Fri - 8AM Crowes Pasture East Dennis. Meet in the parking area near the Quivett Neck Cemetery (School St off Rte 6A and then a right off South St – follow road to cemetery.) We'll walk approximately 2 miles in this beautiful area. We'll also check out the successful bluebird nest box trail established by the CCBC. Leaders: Diane Silverstein and Michael Dettrey 508-398-9484 or birder526@aol.com

April 16 - Sat 8:30AM Harwich Conservation Land. Meet at Bell's Neck Rd. between the two water areas to scope and then to walk the trails in search of lingering winter species and the new arrivals. Leader: Mark Tuttle 508-362-3015

Apr 19 - Tues 7:30 AM Provincetown, Beech Forest. Meet at the parking lot to walk the loop trail and check out the ponds. Let's see what early birds have dropped into this wonderful migrant trap! Leader: Ginie Page 508-349-6810 or vgpage@juno.com

Try 'On Your Own Birding' in March and April

Hawk Watch: You'll find Don Manchester at the Hawkwatch at Pilgrim Heights in N. Truro. Stop by and check out the flight of returning raptors any decent day until early summer.

Find your own **Woodcock** spot! Try an area with tall shrubs and some damp soil at dusk.

The **Beech Forest** loop is always a nice walk and usually very 'birdy.' Always check the sea and seaside brushy areas after a good storm! Something interesting may have blown in.

March 14 Program (Cont'd from page 1)

Andrew also leads tours for Victor Emanuel Nature Tours in North and South America. Although birds are his true passion, Andrew is also a performing musician and has released three CDs to date with his band, Mectapus.

In this program, Andrew will speak on radar ornithology, acoustic monitoring and nocturnal flight calls.



In May:

May 9: John Kricher – "A Bird's View of Migration"

April 11th Program (Cont'd from page 1)

people discuss why they bird as well as other interesting aspects about their birding. It's a look at the lighter side of this fascinating hobby.

"Massachusetts Wildlife" (Multi-image Slide Presentation) We'll discover some of Massachusetts' fascinating wildlife. as we net butterflies and dragonflies, hunt for mammals, look at birds and get up 'close and personal' with wildflowers, frogs, snakes, and turtles.

"Arizona" (Multi-image Slide Presentation) explores Arizona. We'll visit stunning mountain and canyon sites, take in the Grand Canyon, Sedona, and deserts and meet up with two local characters who know ocotillos from saguaro.

"Looking Skyward - A Passion for Hawkwatching" This video examines why people watch hawks and explores some prime locations for viewing hawk migration (Hawk Mountain and Cape May).

ABA Birders' Exchange Video (New updated 2003) designed to explain how people can help in donating used equipment to people in Central and South America that have little or no equipment. The video explains how the program was started, how you can help, who receives the donated equipment, and why it's so important.

The program in April will be from the above – check massbird.org for title.

Club Field Walks

Ron Ayotte, Secretary CCBC

NOTE: This article covers Club field walks in December and January. Full statistical summaries for reported walks are available for inspection at each Club meeting. Most common species are omitted from this article in the interests of saving space. Unusual and rare species are underlined.

December 2004: There were no field walks reported in December.

January 2005: Four field walks were reported in January 2005, with 50 observers participating. A total of 72 spp. were reported for the month. The highest species count on a single walk was 51, by Mary Keleher and Dan Furbish, covering large ponds and some beaches in the town of Barnstable, on January 15.

1/6: Sandy Neck and Sandwich ponds (walk abbreviated by weather); Leader Ellie Winslow; Cold, snow turning to rain; 2 observers; 9 spp. reported. Gadwall, Ring-necked Duck, Surf Scoter, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser.

1/10: Lower Cape, Wellfleet to Provincetown; Leader Ginie Page; cold, windy; 11 observers; 35 spp. reported. Red-throated and Common loons, Red-necked Grebe, Northern Gannet, American Wigeon, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Common Goldeneye, Common and Red-breasted mergansers, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Purple Sandpiper, Dunlin, Black-legged Kittiwake, Forster's Tern, Dovekie, Razorbill.

1/15: Lake Wequaquet, Loop Beach, Barnstable; Leaders Mary Keleher and Dan Furbish; sun to partly cloudy, 30's; 23 observers; 51 spp. reported. Red-throated and Common loons, Pied-billed and Horned grebes, Eurasian and American wigeons, Greater Scaup, Surf, White-winged and Surf scoters, Common and Barrow's goldeneye, Common and Red-breasted mergansers, Bald Eagle, Black-bellied Plover, Red- and White-breasted nuthatches, Eastern Towhee, Savannah, Swamp and White-throated sparrows, Dark-eyed Junco.

1/22: Marstons Mills (Backyard Birding); Leaders Dick and Sylvia Jurkowski; partly cloudy, little wind, 30F; 14 observers; 22 spp. reported. Accipiter sp., Red-bellied, Downy and Hairy woodpeckers, Northern Flicker, Red- and White-breasted nuthatches, Brown Creeper, Carolina Wren, Savannah Sparrow, Northern Mockingbird.

We have now been collecting statistics on field walks for about 17 months. Over that period there have been 101 walks/events, with a total of 928 participants (an average of 9.19 participants per walk/event).

During that time, a total of 242 spp. have been reported with three rarities included (Bald Eagle on Cape; and Golden Eagle and Pileated Woodpecker, both seen during off-Cape Club events).

- *****
WELCOME - NEW MEMBERS

Judith Caccioli - Centerville
Nancy Clark - Brewster
Janice M. Collins - E. Dennis
Debi Crosby - Eastham
Kathryn Doyon - Plymouth
Hugh Ferguson - W. Barnstable
Marianne Harris - Chatham
Sally & Dave Hudson - Marstons Mills
Matt Malin - Mashpee
Dympno Moore - W. Yarmouth
Eileen K. Nolan - Marstons Mills
Bob & Paula Pariseau - Brewster
Mary Scanlan - Mashpee
Elizabeth Smith - Eastham
David Sullivan - Sandwich
Maria Sylvester - E. Dennis
Karen Washburn - Middleboro

One swallow does not make a summer, but one skein of geese, cleaving the murk of March thaw, is the Spring.
— Aldo Leopold
A Sand County Almanac

Great Gray Owls in Montreal

Ellie and I made a trip to Montreal, Canada over the President's Day weekend to look for some Great Gray Owls we had heard were there. On February 18th, we drove from Cape Cod to Burlington, VT and spent the night there at a Comfort Inn. We were aware of it growing colder as we proceeded north. The fields covered with crisp, white snow were beautiful as were the sheets of blue ice clinging to the rocks in the road cuts.

A fresh coating of snow greeted us as we set out on February 19th. We crossed the border about 8:15 AM and arrived in wintry Montreal around 9:30. At about 10:15, covered in many layers of clothes, we found the two owls and spent about an hour enjoying and photographing them. They were amazingly approachable.

We then started back, making a side trip on some farm roads of southern Quebec where we saw a Merlin, some flocks of Horned Larks and Snow Buntings. But mostly we looked at a snowy expanse devoid of birds. We arrived home on February 20th.

This was a great experience and if anyone wants directions or information, contact us.

Elinor and Stauffer Miller

Backyard Feeder Forms – Are you remembering to fill yours out? Please bring your form/info to the May meeting (or mail). Our tracking information is only as good as the amount of participation given it. Ron Ayotte will carefully analyze the reports and will let us know the results.

Eastern Mountain Sports in Hyannis is holding its Upgrade Your Technology Sale on April 29-30. Everything in the store will be 20% off. Club members can shop Thursday evening, April 28th from 4pm to close to get a jump on the sale before it's opened to the public. Mark your calendars! (Bring proof of membership with you – a newsletter will do just fine!)

The Great Owl Invasion



Great Gray Owl

As Editor, browsing the internet recently, I came across this fascinating article from the (Cleveland) Plain Dealer written Feb. 17th by James F. McCarty entitled "Owl Invasion."

It fits nicely with Stauffer & Ellie's article.

Here's an excerpt:

"While the majority of North Americans plan their vacations around warm beaches, tourist attractions or amusement parks, birders typically head in the opposite direction from the masses.

Most of us have caught the cocked eyebrows and expressions of disbelief when we tell nonbirders we're driving to Niagara Falls to see gulls in December. Or flying to Southeast Arizona to watch hummingbirds in August. Or riding a boat 50 miles into the ocean to search for pelagics.

But this winter, hundreds of birders from across the country truly have distinguished themselves in the world of gonzo birding treks by journeying to the wilds of northern Minnesota to witness what is being hailed as the greatest owl invasion in history.

Hundreds of great gray owls have spent the winter in the sphagnum moss bogs and black spruce fields of Minnesota. Dozens of Northern hawk owls, boreal owls and snowy owls have joined the exodus from the Arctic, where freakish early snow and ice storms left the already inhospitable tundra of the Northwest Territory practically uninhabitable for the rodent-eaters.

To stay alive, the birds abandoned their traditional hunting grounds for familiar-looking habitat offering an abundance of lemmings, voles and mice. They found it on the south shore of Lake Superior near Duluth."

The article goes on to talk about the influx of birders and photographers into the area and the angst caused by their presence.

May CCBC Elections Coming

At the May Annual Meeting, we will be electing new officers and Directors.

Current officers whose terms will expire are: Dick Jurkowski as President and Diane Silverstein as Vice President. Directors whose terms expire are: Joanna Schurmann and Ginie Page. Our by-laws state that the President, Vice President and Directors may only serve 3 consecutive years. They are not eligible for re-election until one year has passed.

The positions of Secretary and Treasurer are also up for election, and these need to be voted upon each year.

This means that each of YOU needs to do some soul searching and thinking about YOUR part in the club. Perhaps being part of the vision and direction of the club is something YOU are interested in. If so, we need to hear from you ASAP. We look forward to your participation.

Send an email to capekingfisher@yahoo.com, call Dick at 508-428-8494, or contact any board member. We'd love to hear from you. You'll work with special people on the leadership team and it'll be a great experience.

McCarty continues, "But the rewards were worth the sacrifice, as (Gary) Meszaros captured owl photographs that he considers some of the best of his career. In the early light of dawn, he focused on great grays 'triangulating' prey, hunting by sound. As they zeroed in on rodents, the owls dove talons-first into snow several feet deep, emerging moments later with a furry creature in their grasp.

The hawk owls hunted by sight during daylight, perching on upper branches and bobbing their tails much like a kestrel until they dove for an unsuspecting lemming.

Birders continued last week to report mind-boggling numbers of owls spotted around Duluth."

To read full article, go to www.cleveland.com or there's a direct link on Massbird.org for Feb. 18th (Sightings / Virtual Birder).

Other Cape Happenings of interest ...

10th Annual Cape Cod Natural History Conference presented by the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

March 19th (SAT) 8:30 AM-4:30PM
Cape Cod Community College
Registration deadline: March 11th
Cost: \$15 (Bring your own lunch)

This is an all-day conference with presenters from environmental organizations across Cape Cod speaking on a variety of natural history topics with Q&A at end of each talk. Participants will hear each talks and will receive a paper summary of each presentation.

Topics include: Strandings on Cape Cod, Vegetation Changes over 20 Years at Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, Grassland Habitat Restorations, Using Fire to Restore the Cape Cod Landscape, Truro's East Harbor - Signs of Recovery, Mice in the Leaf Litter, Aerial Images of Cape Cod Marine Life, Complexity of Molt in Birds, Life at a Cape Cod Coyote Rendezvous Site, Underwater Behavior of Marine Mammals, Short-term Changes in Beaches and Dunes Documented, and Avian Diversity & Management at Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge.

During breaks, there will also be time to review several poster presentations on a variety of topics. Migration Productions will also have a multi-media presentation during the lunch break. For info: Call 508-349-2615.

News Flash: Restoring Endangered Seabirds - Lessons from Puffins & Terns

Stephen W. Kress, PhD.

Monday, March 7, 7:30PM at CCMNH, Brewster - \$8M - \$10NM

Though seabird nesting islands seem safe due to their remoteness, they are intimately connected to human activities. Dr. Kress, Director of National Audubon Society's Seabird Restoration Program will discuss his pioneering work which has led to the recolonization of puffins, murres and terns. He will also share some of the results from other successful restoration projects.

Cape Cod Museum of Natural History and Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary "Ocean Treasure" Marine Lecture Series:

Open to Public. \$8M - \$10NM

Tuesday evenings 6 - 9PM at the Museum of Natural History, Brewster.

March 1 - The Whales of Stellwagen Bank. Regina Asmutis-Silvia, Plymouth Marine Mammal Research Center and Cetacean Research in the Sanctuary. David Wiley, PhD., SBNMS.

March 8 - The Other Marine Mammals: Seals in the Sanctuary. Greg Early, consultant, AIS, Inc.; Vertebrates with Shells: Sea Turtles in Northern Waters. Robert Prescott, Mass Audubon Society Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary.

March 15 - A Garden of Benthic Invertebrates, speaker to be announced; Marine Bioinvasions: The Tunicates are Coming! Judith Pederson.

March 22 - A Rogue's Gallery of Demersal Fish: One Fish, Two Fish, Codfish, Sand Lance, Les Kaufman, Boston University; Sounds at the Seafloor: Vocalization of Fishes, Rodney Rountree, UMass, Dartmouth.

March 29 - Tuna and Sharks: The Large Pelagics of the Sanctuary. Gregory Skomal, Mass. Division of Marine Fisheries; A History of the Stocks: What Do We Mean by the Term Abundance?, Speaker TBA

April 5 - Birds of a Feather: The Summer and Winter Birds of Stellwagen Bank. Wayne Petersen and Simon Perkins, Mass. Audubon Society.

April 12 - Biodiversity and Threats to Biodiversity, Speaker TBA Marine Protected Areas and Marine Reserves. Ben Cowie-Haskell, SBNMS.

April 26 - From Sail to Steam: A Maritime History of Stellwagen Bank, Deborah Marx, SBNMS; Time Capsules on the Seafloor: Shipwrecks in the Sanctuary, Matthew Lawrence, SBNMS. For info: 508-896-3867

In Memory ...

We note, with sadness, the passing of longtime member, **Charlotte Smith** on December 19, 2004.

To say Charlotte Smith was an active member of the Cape Cod Bird Club would be an understatement.

Blair Nikula offered some personal reflections of Charlotte at the January meeting and Ron Ayotte provided the following information about the Club and Charlotte.

The CCBC Founding Meeting was held on November 20, 1971. (Two current CCBC members who were at that meeting are Robert F. Pease and Mrs. Herbert Whitlock.)

Charlotte Smith (along with Blair Nikula and Alan Campbell) became members at the Club's first General Meeting on December 6, 1971. She organized the first mid-Cape Christmas Count - held on Dec. 16, 1972 with a dinner that evening to celebrate the first year anniversary of the club. Charlotte was active from the start - leading walks and organizing the annual dinners. She was involved with the club's newsletter for a number of years.

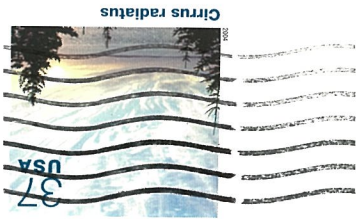
In May 1979, Charlotte was elected as (the sixth) president and served 3 terms, re-elected in May of 1980 and May of 1981. In subsequent years, she was a walk leader, serving on an informal 'walks committee' headed by Sally Clifton. Charlotte pushed for a standard walks checklist. She was the compiler for club reports submitted to Mass Audubon as well as the compiler for Bird-a-thon reports. Charlotte Smith was an early recipient of the Ludlow Griscom award.

As members of a club that now exceeds 500 members, we are grateful to Charlotte Smith (and the others like her) who have actively and faithfully served to preserve the Club's Mission and encourage the love of birds (and nature) in others.

Thank you, Charlotte.

0266401#24016

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Harwich MA 02645



Cape Cod Bird Club
The Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
869 Rte 6A, Brewster, MA 02631



The Cape Cod Bird Club Inc.

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

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

869 Rte 6A, Brewster, MA 02631

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

Officers

Dick Jurkowski	President
Diane Silverstein	Vice President
Ron Ayotte	Secretary
Ellie Winslow	Treasurer

Directors

Ginie Page	Joanna Schurmann
Wil Sprauve	Mike Dettrey
Greg Hirth	Mary Keleher

Newsletter

Editor ~ Sylvia Jurkowski capekingfisher@yahoo.com
Circulation ~ Ron Ayotte

Nominating Committee Chair – Phil Kyle