



The Kingfisher

VOLUME 34 – ISSUE 1

The Cape Cod Bird Club Newsletter

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER, 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: **October 4th**
Send articles or comments to: capekingfisher@yahoo.com*

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

President's Message

The cycle of our seasons continues to go round and round and Fall is here once again! It is the time when the last of the shorebirds pass through on their way to their wintering grounds ... the hawks migrate over Morris Island ... and the warblers, in their confusing autumn plumages, pass through. We now await the return of wintering waterfowl, alcids, sea ducks, gannets, snow buntings and maybe even a Snowy Owl on South Beach! Welcome back to a new year of the Cape Cod Bird Club!

First, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce you to your new Officers and Board of Directors:

- Ginie Page, Vice President
- Ron Ayotte, Secretary
- Carolyn Kennedy, Treasurer
- Michael Dettrey, Arrangements Director
- Dan Furbish, Walks Coordinator
- Marianne Harris, Publicity Director
- Greg Hirth, Education & Outreach
- Mary Keleher, Programs Director
- Wil Sprauve, Merchandise Sales Director

I also want to thank you for electing me as your Club President and I hope that you'll talk with me (or any board member) about your thoughts for making the club the best it can be.

How can you play more of an active role in the Club? There are many ways!

Our mission is to provide a means for you to get out and bird with some of the best birders on Cape Cod! Walks and trips are offered all months of the year and all birders, novice to experienced, are welcome to join us. If you are new to birding or the Club, please put your hesitations aside and come out on a walk with us! Birders are always willing to share information and sightings! Perhaps you'll even step up and offer to lead a walk! We need new faces and new places for this year – please ask

Dan Furbish, our Walks Coordinator, how you can help.

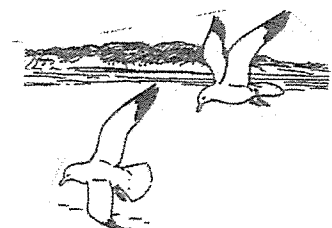
Attend our monthly meetings, September through May, at the CCMNH! Mary Keleher has planned a great year of programs for us. It's a chance to broaden your horizons and learn more about the bird world. Plus, there's a great social hour after the program with delicious sweets, thanks to Mike Dettrey, Arrangements Director, and the members who volunteer to bake each month! Sign up at the refreshment table to bake for an upcoming meeting!

Another role of the Club is to focus on conservation and play an active role in these efforts. Please consider participating in our annual feeder census, the December Waterfowl Census, and one of the Christmas Counts on the Cape. All of this data helps us to understand trends unfolding in the avian world. In the Spring, we need volunteers to help monitor the nest box trail the Club sponsors at Crowes Pasture in E. Dennis. More opportunities will arise as we work on some joint projects with the CCMNH.

Last, but certainly not least, the new and revised edition of Birding Cape Cod, is available for purchase! Buy your new copy at our September meeting! It is the definitive guide to all of the Cape's birding hotspots, with many new locations added! You won't want to be without it!

Again, welcome back and good birding to you all!

Diane Silverstein




PROGRAMS – SEPTEMBER and OCTOBER

Sept. 12, 2005 – 7:30 PM

“Reversing Coastal Bird Declines: Species by Species, Coast to Coast” - Scott Hecker

The goal of the National Audubon's Coastal Bird Conservation Program is to reverse declines of threatened coastal birds in North America. This National Audubon initiative identifies and prioritizes conservation work for the most threatened species of coastal birds at the most critical sites in North America. Scott will discuss how this program works with every interested partner to increase science-based conservation work in the field while promoting long-term protection aimed to conserve these bird populations and their habitats.

Scott Hecker is the Director of Bird Conservation for the National Audubon Society. He oversees conservation efforts aimed to restore threatened populations of Plovers, Terns, Oystercatchers, and other coastal birds throughout the United States. Scott is a graduate of Antioch University where he completed a Master of Sciences degree concerning his work on wetland conservation in Belize. From 1987 to 2003, he directed the Coastal Waterbird Program and the Important Bird Areas Program for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. His dedicated work has played a lead role in the recovery of the federally threatened Piping Plover populations in Massachusetts from 126 pairs in 1987 to 505 pairs in 2001 as well as increasing the number of Piping Plover, Tern, Egret, and other coastal waterbird protected nesting areas from 13 in 1987 to 90 in 2002. Scott also assisted in initiating, negotiating, and drafting “Guidelines for Barrier Beach Management in Massachusetts” which has led to dramatic reductions in damage to beach habitats by off-road vehicles and erosion control projects. 


October 10, 2005 – 7:30 PM

“In Wilderness is the Preservation of the World – Conservation of Wild Parrots” - Marc Johnson

Marc will discuss his ecotourism trips to Ecuador, Chiapas Mexico, Brazil, and ultimately Guyana where his organization, Foster Parrots, Ltd. is involved in a small but significant conservation/eco-tourism project. Marc has put together a film of these trips and the efforts of his organization in Guyana.

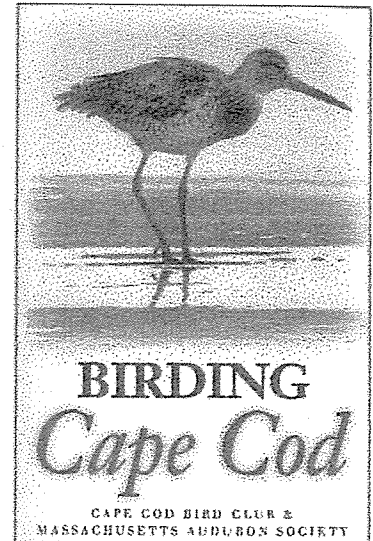
Although Marc has always held a fascination and love for birds, it was not until he bought a 50-year-old parrot that he understood what the true significance of a “bird brain” is! It was not long after Wally, a blue and gold Macaw, came to live with Marc that others started arriving. Unwanted parrots found their way to him and in 1999 Foster Parrots, rescue, sanctuary, and adoption was born.

While caring for these intelligent creatures it became very clear that as truly wild animals, parrots did not belong in our homes and that their conservation in the wild is the only way these intelligent beings can be preserved for the future generations of humans who will appreciate where they belong — wild and free.

Marc's work now focuses on bringing the images and true nature of parrots in the wild to others in hopes that they too will begin to realize the injustice of a caged bird. Come and hear more! 



IT'S HERE



New and revised! With new bird-watching locations and maps added and many revisions, it's THE essential guide to birding on the Cape.

Available now at CCBC meetings and in most regional birding and book stores for only \$15.95! Get your copy today!

Cape Cod Bird Club Programs 2005-2006

Nov 14 – John Rogers – “All About Bluebirds & More”

Dec 12 – Members' Night

Jan 9 – Don Kroodsma – “The Singing Life of Birds”

Feb 13 – Mark & Marcia Wilson – “A Canoe Journey into the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge”

Mar 13 – Sue Finnegan – “Five Years of Bird Banding on Cape Cod”

Apr 10 – Joey Mason – “Keeping Company with Kestrels”

May 8 – Chris Leahy – “Do Birds Have a Future?”

WALKS FOR SEPT & OCT

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

See www.massbird.org/CCBC for any changes or additional trips!

SEPTEMBER 2005

Sept 8 - Thur 8AM: Bourne & Falmouth - Meet at Gray Gables Convenience Store/Market along Shore Road in Bourne at 8:00 AM. We'll walk the cranberry bog on Old Dam Road, then head to Peterson Farm in Falmouth to walk there. Other stops thereafter as time permits. Leader: Stauffer Miller, 508-362-3384, e-mail Stauffer@seepub.com

Sept 12 - Mon 8AM: Coast Guard Beach, Eastham - Shorebirds and seabirds on the marsh, views over the ocean and osprey in residence. Anything is possible! Park at the Coast Guard building. (Arrive early in case of parking problems.) Leader: Mark Tuttle 362-3015

Sept 17 - Sat 8AM: Sandwich area - Stauffer's puddle and the E. Sandwich game farm - Meet at Christy's convenience store in East Sandwich on Rte 6A. We'll travel to Stauffer's puddle for shorebirds. At the game farm, we'll bird the many thickets and discuss the 8 acre seasonal grassland that was established there this spring that attracted Bobolinks, E. Meadowlark and other grassland birds. Leader: Ellie Winslow 508-888-1760 or birderellie@AOL.com, Assisting: Dan Furbish, Barn.Owl@verizon.net

Sept 24 - Sat 8AM: Morris Island, Chatham. Join us to walk the area and look for those 'confusing' fall warblers plus we'll walk to the point and join Don Manchester as he conducts his fall hawk watch. Plan on a few hours out. Our goal is to spend an hour or more (depending upon activity) at the Hawk Watch. Meet at the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge HQ's on Morris Island at 8am sharp! Rain cancels (call if unsure). Leaders: Diane Silverstein and Michael Dettrey (birder526@aol.com or 508-398-9484

Sept 25 - Sun 8AM: Falmouth - Peterson's Farm (migrant songbirds) and Great Sippewisset Marsh (shorebirds) in Falmouth. Meet at the parking lot for the Shining Sea Bike Path on Locust St. in Falmouth (which is on the north side of Locust street near the intersection with Mill Road). Leader: Greg Hirth (508-457-4356) ghirth@whoi.edu

Sept 27 - Tues 8AM: Lower Cape Specialities. Meet at the Wellfleet Town Pier where we will check for any interesting gulls, terns or newly arrived water birds. We will then visit some likely spots for sparrows and shorebirds. If there is interest, we may continue into the afternoon. Leaders: Ginie Page 349-6810 and Dan Furbish 781-837-4975

OCTOBER 2005

Oct 2 - Sun 8 AM: Marstons Mills & Cotuit - Meet at the MM CVS (Rte 28 & Putnam Ave). We'll walk a nearby vegetable patch and cranberry bog, then perhaps venture over to some spots in Cotuit. Leader: Stauffer Miller, 508-362-3384 or Stauffer@seepub.com.

Oct 8 - Sat 7AM: The Mashpee River Woodlands. Meet at the parking lot on Quinaquisset Ave. (From Mashpee Rotary take Rt. 28 heading towards Hyannis. Take first right onto Quinaquisset Ave. The parking lot is on the right.) We will carpool to River Road and walk approx. 2 miles back to the parking area. This area has historically been very productive for many species of birds throughout the years. Leader: Mary Keleher 508-477-1473 or maryeak@yahoo.com

Oct 18 - Tues 8AM: Lower Cape walking trails. Meet at Fort Hill, Eastham lower parking lot to walk and bird looking for fall grassland birds and some marsh and shore species. We will then move out to Wellfleet, Truro and P'Town for some of the nicest birding and walking trails on the Cape. Leader: Ginie Page 349-6810

Oct 22 - Sat 8AM: Sandy Neck and the Sandwich area. Early arrivals of our wintering waterfowl and sea ducks should be in the Cape Cod Bay

at this time. Come along to view these birds and other surprises! Plan on several hours of birding. Meet at the commuter lot (toward the rear), Exit 6 off Rt. 6 at 8AM sharp! Rain cancels (call if unsure). Leaders: Diane Silverstein and Michael Dettrey birder526@aol.com or 508-398-9484

Oct 22 - Sat 8AM: Mid-Cape Community Gardens. Meet at the Rte 132 Burger King (Rte 6 - Exit 6) at 8AM. Join David and Fran Clapp as they visit area community gardens and weed fields looking for dickcissel, blue grosbeak, and other migrants - half day. Leaders: David and Fran Clapp dclapp@massaudubon.org

Oct 30 - Sun 7:30AM-Noon: East Sandwich Game Farm. Beginning Birders welcome! We'll look for fall migrants as well as residents. Meet at Amari's Restaurant parking lot on 6A near Sandy Neck Rd. Leader: Dan Furbish (781) 837-4975 or Barn.Owl@verizon.net

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 * **NEW MEMBERS - WELCOME** *
 * * * * *
 * Don & Susan Babcock - Yarmouth- *
 * port *
 * David & Alice Berry - E. Dennis *
 * Nancy Boston - E. Falmouth *
 * Fred Budreski - Brewster *
 * Pat Coughlan - Dennis *
 * Rene P. Deveau - Melrose *
 * Patricia Elwell - S. Wellfleet *
 * Victor Fillippi - Somerset *
 * Catherine Gelerman - Marstons Mills *
 * Madaline Grabala & George Myers - *
 * E. Harwich *
 * Ginny Iannarone - Boston *
 * Marge & Bill Maynard - Brewster *
 * Barbara & Linda Loren-Murphy - *
 * Provincetown *
 * Jerry Paccassi - Brewster *
 * Margaret Phillips - Poughkeepsie, NY *
 * Bob Woleader - N. Eastham *
 * * * * *

Club Field Walks – April thru Summer

Ron Ayotte, CCBC Secretary

NOTE: This article covers Club field walks from the first of April through the first week of August 2005. Due to the relatively large number of field walks during the period, only selected "highlight" birds are given for each walk. Full statistical summaries for reported walks are available for inspection at each Club meeting. Feedback from members as to format and content is welcome. Unusual species are underlined.

April 2005: There were three field walks reported in April, all on the Cape, two Mid-Cape and one Lower Cape. There were a total of 33 observers in the walks, and 54 (spp) observed. Greatest number reported on one walk was 33, by Ginie Page on April 19.

4/4: Harwich Conservation Area and local beaches; Leaders Ruth Connaughton and Nancy Reider; weather not reported; 2 obs; 32 spp. Common Loon, Great Cormorant, Black-crowned Night-heron, Green-winged Teal, Downy Woodpecker, Summer Tanager, Pine and Palm warblers.

4/16: Harwich Conservation Area; Leader Mark Tuttle; sun, mid-40's; 17 observers; 30 spp. Double-crested Cormorant, Black-crowned Night-heron, Green-winged Teal, Greater Yellowlegs, Wilson's Snipe, Tree Swallow, Pine Warbler.

4/19: Beech Forest, Truro; Leader Ginie Page; clear; 14 obs; 33 spp; Northern Gannet, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Tree Swallow, Golden- and Ruby-crowned kinglets, Pine and Palm warblers, Chipping and White-throated sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco.

May 2005: There were 9 field walks reported in May, seven of them on-Cape. Five of the walks were in the Beech Forest. In all, there were 92 observers, and 113 spp were reported. The greatest number seen on one trip was 70, by Ginie Page at Mt Auburn Cemetery on May 20. A total of 20 warbler spp were reported, 18 spp on-Cape. The most on any walk was 15 warbler spp, by Blair Nikula on May 15.

(NOTE: Beech Forest summaries focus on warblers.)

5/1: Beech Forest; Leader Ed Banks; weather not reported; 7 obs, 30 spp. Yellow, Pine and Palm warblers.

5/4: West Harwich Conservation Area, Leader Blair Nikula; clear, mild; 22 obs; 34 spp. American Bittern, Black-crowned Night-heron, Blue-winged Teal, Greater and Lesser yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's Snipe, Marsh Wren, Yellow and Pine warblers.

5/6: SE Mass and coastal RI; Leader Stauffer Miller; cloudy, 50's, 6 obs; 49 spp. Great Egret, Glossy Ibis, Cooper's Hawk, Greater Yellowlegs, Willet, Chimney Swift, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, House Wren, Blue-winged and Yellow warblers, Am. Redstart, Ovenbird, Indigo Bunting.

5/8: Beech Forest; Leader Susan Thompson; cloudy, misty; 7 obs; 16 spp. Common species, Pine Warbler.

5/14: Beech Forest; Leader Frank Caruso; overcast, 45-50; 15 obs; 44 spp. E. Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, E. Kingbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Nashville Warbler, N. Parula, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine Blackpoll and Black-and-White warblers, Common Yellowthroat.

5/15: Beech Forest; Leader Blair Nikula; m/cloudy, mild; 10 obs; 44 spp: Black-billed Cuckoo, White-eyed, Blue-headed and Red-eyed vireos, Nashville Warbler, N. Parula, Yellow, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, Blackpoll and Black-and-White warblers, Am. Redstart, Ovenbird, N. Water-thrush, Common Yellowthroat, Orchard Oriole.

5/16: Beal Conservation Area, Bourne; Leaders Greg Hirth and Dick Jurkowski; cloudy, damp, 40's; 12 obs; Ruby-throated Hummingbird, E. Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, E. Kingbird, Yellow, Magnolia, Pine, Blackpoll and Black-and-White warblers, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat.

5/16: Beech Forest; Leader Blair Nikula; cloudy, mild; 20 observers, 29 species. Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Pine, Blackpoll, Black-and-white warblers, Am. Redstart and Common Yellowthroat.

5/20: Mt Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge; Leader Ginie Page; p/cloudy, cool; 7 observers, 70 spp. E. Wood-pewee, Willow and Least flycatchers, White-eyed, Blue-headed, Warbling and Red-eyed vireos, Hermit and Wood thrush, N. Parula, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Pine, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll and Black-and-White warblers, Am. Redstart, Wilson's and Canada warblers, Am. Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Song, Lincoln's, White-throated and White-crowned sparrows.

5/22: Beech Forest; Leaders Ginie Page and Jan Kelly; weather not reported; 6 obs; 24N. Parula, Yellow and Pine warblers, Am. Redstart, Common Yellowthroat.

Summer 2005: At newsletter deadline, there were five field walks reported, four in June, one in July, all on the Cape or in local waters. There were 57 observers and 70 spp reported; the greatest number reported on one walk being 49 by Stauffer Miller on July 17.

6/4: Whale-watch from Barnstable Harbor to Stellwagen Bank; Leader Wil Sprauve; 65F, some fog; 21 obs; 19 spp. Common Loon, Sooty Shearwater, N. Gannet, White-winged Scoter, Willet, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Common and Least terns.

6/9: Chatham and S. Harwich; Leader Karen Goggins; fair; 10 obs; 25 spp. Green Heron, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Black-bellied and Piping plovers, Am. Oystercatcher, Gr. Yellowlegs, Willet, E. Kingbird, Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Baltimore Oriole.

6/17: E. Sandwich; Leader Stauffer Miller; clear, 60's; 12 obs; 49 spp. Gr. Blue Heron, Black-bellied, Semipalmated and Piping plovers, Willet,

(Cont'd on page 5)

Field Walks (Cont'd from page 4)

Short-billed Dowitcher, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Tern, Chimney Swift, E. Kingbird, House and Marsh wrens, Cedar Waxwing, Pine Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Orchard and Baltimore orioles.

6/28: Armstrong Kelly Park; Leader Dick Jurkowski; rain; 5 obs; 9 spp (curtailed early by rain). Gr. Crested Flycatcher, Purple Finch.

7/14: Cotuit, Mashpee; Leader Dick Jurkowski; humid, 80's; 9 obs; 35 spp. Gr. Blue Heron, Least Tern, Hairy and Downy woodpeckers, E. Kingbird, Cedar Waxwing, Pine Warbler, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, E. Towhee.

Summary: September 2004 through July 2005:

There were 49 walks reported with a total participation of 506 observers, an average of 10.33 observers per walk. There were 210 species reported.

Most frequently reported species were Am. Crow (92% of walks) and Black-capped Chickadee (82%). Other species reported on more than 50% of walks were: Canada Goose (53%), Mallard (63%), Ring-billed Gull (55%), Herring Gull (79%), Great Black-backed Gull (71%), Mourning Dove (63%), Downy Woodpecker (63%), N. Flicker (51%), Blue Jay (71%), Tufted Titmouse (63%), Am. Robin (63%), Song Sparrow (77%), N. Cardinal (69%) and Am. Goldfinch (80%).

Remarks: There were fewer walks reported this year compared to 2003-04 (49 vs. 81) but more observers per walk (10.33 vs. 8.36). More species were reported last year (230) than this 210).

Hats off to Ginie Page and Dick Jurkowski for encouraging more members to come out for the walks, and to the dedicated walk leaders who kept up the enthusiasm despite a very difficult winter and spring, in terms of weather.

Ron Ayotte, Compiler

BIRDING IN EGYPT



Egypt!
The very mention of this ancient center of civilization conjures up

thoughts of pyramids, temples, mummies, King Tut and Cleopatra. But birds? Is it possible that this historic but bleak landscape could actually harbor birds?

On a memorable trip last April, Carol and I learned that birds do thrive in Egypt and that birds and antiquities blend into a fine combination. Egypt is on a main flyway for migratory birds moving from central and southern Africa into their summer nesting areas throughout Europe and Asia.

After a day in Cairo, a teeming city of 20 million, to shake the jet lag blues, we flew south to Abu Simbel, a town near the border with Sudan. This is the location of the famous and massive Temple of Ramses II which was moved block by block, to higher ground as the newly created Lake Nasser enveloped the area above the Aswan Dam.

Islands on Lake Nasser were filled with migrating warblers. Unlike our colorful migrants, however, most of the warblers heading for Europe – white-throat, oliveaceous warbler, graceful prinia, sedge warbler – to mention a few, are LBB's – little brown birds, all looking much like the other. Thankfully, our skilled leaders knew them well and were able to clearly point out the differences.

LBB's turned into a great variety of waders and shorebirds as we cruised down the Nile for four days with daily stops at memorable historic sites. Purple and grey herons, little egrets, squacco herons, Eurasian spoonbills and the ubiquitous white stork were everywhere. And as we visited nearby wetlands,

Don and Carol Scott


we were met by great numbers of redshanks, greenshanks, a variety of sandpipers, ruff, godwits and whimbrel. The star of this group was a spectacular painted snipe, in full breeding plumage.

Along the Nile, we stopped at many famous sites, all inundated with tourists (mostly European) by the thousands. No site was quite as enthralling as the Valley of the Kings, a desolate location containing countless tombs of pharaohs and their families. It was here that the tomb of King Tut was accidentally found as a horse fell through the sand.

At Luxor, we drove east to the Red Sea, crossed into the Sinai Peninsula, and gradually moved north toward Cairo.

On this leg of the journey, we encountered mass migrations of eagles and buzzards (similar to our buteos) as they moved northward. At times, kettles of as many as 50-75, including common buzzard, honey buzzard, booted eagle, spotted eagle and steppe eagle would be circling overhead.

The trip concluded in Cairo with visits to the pyramids and the sphinx. All along, we had hoped that we might glimpse the elusive pharaoh's eagle-owl. On our next to the last day, at the sight of the famous Steppe Pyramid (built in 4700 BC) our leaders found the bird, nestled in a crevice in the pyramid. As we looked into the scope, one-by-one, a member of the group exclaimed, "There's a chick"! And there he/she was, peering out at us — what a great thrill!

Egypt is well worth visiting, for all the reasons I have mentioned. It is hot and dry but full of sights never to be forgotten. And, unlike the perception created by the media, the people we encountered were as friendly as any we have ever met. 

HUDSON BAY BIRDS

Jack Palmer

A small area surrounding the bleak little town of Churchill, Manitoba (on the west shore of Hudson Bay) consists of fine marine, fresh-water and terrestrial environments. This area is the brief summer residence of a great many bird species. The Churchill River empties into the Bay here and the convergence of waters teams with capelin (small members of the smelt family) and other favored food of bay ducks, mergansers, scoters, gulls and terns – plus Beluga (white whales) that ride the tides in and out. Inland are many shallow lakes and ponds that attract dabblers and shorebirds. The terrestrial habitat is a confluence of boreal forest and tundra. It is easy for a birder to see over a hundred species here in just a few days. I did when I visited during the second week of June. Below are some highlights.

For those of us who live on the Cape, one of our birding treats is seeing shorebirds migrating through. During their brief feeding stopovers, they are dressed in their travel clothes. But those that get to Churchill add sex to subsistence and males assume their best courting outfits and behave in ways quite differently than what we see on the Cape.

To get some idea of what I saw up north, thumb through Sibley or Peterson and check out the breeding colors of male: Ruddy Turnstones, Black-bellied and America Golden Plovers, Short-billed Dowitchers, Hudsonian Godwits, Long-tailed Ducks, the Ruddy Duck's new blue bill, Red-throated Loons, Willow Ptarmigans, Spruce Grouse and Longspurs. Also check out the female Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes. A good deal of the bird life becomes technicolor up north. While the artistry in these books is good, it pales next to seeing the real thing.

Members of the four-legged world also change attire. The huge (two feet long and 8 pounds) friendly Arctic Hare that always seems to be underfoot, is slowly shedding its white fur for a more protective black and, in this transition, looks somewhat like a crossword puzzle. When you approach one, it often sits up and rotates its front paws around each other like people dancing the macarena. The antlerless reindeer are shedding their winter coats and look like disheveled cows – certainly nothing Santa would want to pull his sleigh.

Behaviors change also. The Lesser, is the common Yellowlegs up there. I would have never suspected that this bird's favorite hang-




out could be on the very tops of tall spruce trees! From up there they call, adding a new phrase that sounds like it has been stolen from a Rose-breasted Grosbeak. The Hudsonian Godwit, also very common around Churchill, is another treetop lover. Whodahthunkit!

And speaking of behavior, one day in the forest I came upon a Spruce Grouse. He was apparently ready to mate with anything that happened by and thus went through his entire courtship enticement for me. He snapped his tail open and closed as a flirty woman might do with a folding fan. He flew up to a low spruce branch and then dropped back down and strutted pompously toward me, wings held akimbo. Next, he raised his eyebrows like Groucho Marx used to do on TV but surpassed the old comic's expression because his brows are bright red and now 'inflated' — becoming too large for his head. Then a couple of wing snaps and back up in the tree for another dive. He was still repeating

this routine as I moved away into the woods.

In Churchill, there are birds we seldom, or never, see on the Cape. For instance, the only blackbird there is the Rusty, and the only waxwing, the Bohemian. Both are quite common. I've spent many cold winter days in Massachusetts trying to track down Horned Larks and Lapland Longspurs, most often with little success. But both are common in Churchill, as is Smith's Longspur, the breeding male being one of the most elegant birds there. We even stumbled on a Sage Thrasher, a bird thought to be 'restricted' to South-western United States and Mexico!

Maybe my biggest treat came when I was standing at the highest point of Cape Merry, on the oldest (700 million years) exposed rocks on our continent, looking out at hundreds of Eiders in the bay through my scope. I have searched Buzzard's Bay, bird by bird, for many years without ever seeing a King Eider. Now, having the same bad luck in Churchill, I turned to an old resident fisherman standing nearby and asked, "Ever see one?" "Not for ten or more years," he replied. I scanned another few feet to the left and there were *three* of them swimming together in a line!

The stories are endless, but I'll stop here with a comment about the White-throated Sparrow. Once you've crossed over our northern border, in the name of good international relations, you must pretend that Ol' Sam sings only "Oh Canada." 

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE ABOUT BATS?*

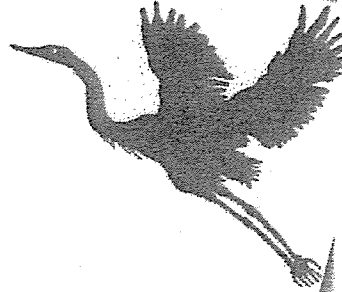
Tuesday, November 1, 2005 - 7:30 PM -
CC Museum of Natural History
Speaker: Thomas H. Kunz is Professor of
Biology and Director of the Center for
Ecology and Conservation Biology at Boston
University. \$5 - \$7 (non-members)

Other Happenings of Interest

The Friends of Cape Cod
Museum of Natural History

Fly with the Heron Auction

Silent & Live



Sunday, September 25, 2005

Captain's Golf Course Clubhouse
Freeman's Way, Brewster

Silent Auction: 4:00pm

Live Auction: 5:30pm Auctioneer: Keith Klinger

Admission: \$10 per person at the door (under 5 free)

Everyone Welcome

Hors D'Oeuvres & Cash Bar

Credit Cards Accepted

For further information please call the
Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
(508) 896-3867 x 129



Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
869 Route 6A, Brewster, MA.

WE'RE LOOKING FOR:

The Cape Cod Bird Club is putting together a Gift Basket to donate to the CCMNH's Silent Auction.

If you have an item or something having to do with Birding or Nature

that you'd like to donate for this basket, please bring it to the September meeting. It can be big or small.

Thanks for your help!

Would That I Could Find A Way

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 each 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

BOOK AUCTION

The following books will be offered by Ellie Miller at the October meeting:

Nests, Eggs, and Nestlings of N. American Birds by Paul Baicich and Colin Harrison (reviewed 7/28 in Ellie's birding column)

Identify Yourself, the 50 most common birding identification challenges by Bill Thompson and the editors of Bird Watcher's Digest (reviewed 5/5)

Kenn Kaufman's updated version of Field Guide to Birds of North America

Gulls of North America, Europe and Asia by Klaus Olsen and Hans Larsson

Coffee table size book Marvelous Colombian Birds by Kjell von Sneidern (not reviewed)

Autographed copy of The Singing Life of Birds by Donald Kroosma

Proceeds to Birder's Exchange

Birding the Cape – Season by Season

Blair Nikula

Several years ago, Blair created a document giving month-by-month birding information on where to go and what you might expect to see here on the Cape.

Whether new to the Cape or not, all birders should find this info helpful.

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER:

The months of September and October offer the best, most consistent birding of the year on the Cape. Species from just about every avian family are on the move and following the passage of a cold front, places such as the Beech Forest in Provincetown, the Wellfleet Bay Sanctuary, Pochet Island in Orleans and the south end of Monomoy Island offer the prospects of warblers, vireos, grossbeaks, kinglets, etc., sometimes in considerable numbers.

From mid-September onward, migrating hawks, especially Merlins, Peregrines, and Sharp-shinned Hawks can be seen at Pilgrim Heights in Truro and the Marconi Site in Wellfleet as well as most any of the barrier beaches.

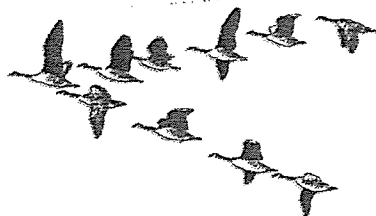
During October, sparrows can be numerous at places such as the Marconi Site in Wellfleet, the dunes near the airport in Provincetown and almost any weedy field or garden (e.g. the community garden in Harwich).

Although the shorebird migration is past its peak, early fall provides

the best chances for some of the rarer species such as Buff-breasted, Baird's and Western sandpipers, Marbled Godwit, and Long-billed Dowitcher. Look for these at Monomoy, Coast Guard beach and Wellfleet Bay Sanctuary.

Some of the most exciting, challenging, and frustrating birding to be found anywhere occurs with the passage of coastal storms during the fall. Easterly blows at this time can produce virtually any species known to occur in the northwest Atlantic and, should a hurricane pass through, the possibilities become mind-boggling.

If the wind is out of the NE, head for Sandy Neck in Barnstable or Corporation Beach in Dennis. As the storm subsides, First Encounter Beach in Eastham is THE place to be, particularly if the wind shifts to NW. Race Point and Herring Cove in Provincetown can be productive during and after a storm, particularly if the wind isn't too strong. Oddly, easterly facing beaches rarely produce much during an easterly gale. 🐦



Chickadees Sound the Alarm

The beautiful *chick-a-dee-dee-dee* from above may not be the black-capped chickadee's happy song. He may be warning his friends about the cat creeping close to the perch, according to a new study.

This study has shown that the number of *dees* in a black-capped chickadee's call can communicate a predator's size and threat to others. A predator, such as a cat on the ground, may trigger a call with 5 to 10 extra *dees*, whereas a more dangerous predator can warrant more than 20 extra syllables.

"With something really dangerous, such as a pygmy-owl perched near some chickadees in our aviary, we heard as many as 23 added *dees*," says Chris Templeton, a biology doctoral student at the University of Washington and lead author of the study.

The birds also altered the sound of the call, though in ways inaudible to humans.

Detailed in the June 24 issue of the journal *Science*, the study was conducted using 15 live chickadee predators, perched or on leashes, in an outdoor, semi-natural aviary.

Considered to have one of the most complex calls in the animal kingdom by scientists, black-capped chickadees have also shown that they know who the most threatening predators are. Calls differed with the approach of a pygmy-owl versus a great horned owl. The chickadees showed more warning with the fast, maneuverable pygmy owl than the large, slow great horned owl. The test chickadees completely ignored the docile bobwhite.

The call can also be a call to arms, bringing a whole flock of birds to mob the sitting predator and drive it away.

~ Jamie Tidd, Bird Watcher's Digest

Cape Cod Bird Club Feeder Census, Winter 2005-06

Directions: Use this form to report birds feeding at your feeders or on natural food in your yard on the first complete weekend in each of the months listed. Watch your feeders on Saturday and Sunday (or two consecutive days near the weekend) and record the highest number of each of the species observed at one time. For example, if on Saturday you see 3 chickadees at one time, record 3. If later that day or the next, you see 5, cross out 3 and record 5. If later you see fewer than 5, leave the 5. Do not accumulate the number seen. Record the dates of observation at the top of each column. If you are gone for a month, leave that column blank and resume the census when you return. Species not on the list can be added on the lines below the columns or on the back if more space is needed. Return the form at the April or May meeting or send it to CCBC, c/o Museum of Natural History, 869 Rte 6-A, Brewster, MA 02631.

	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
Sharp-shinned Hawk						
Cooper's Hawk						
Northern Bobwhite						
Mourning Dove						
Downy Woodpecker						
Hairy Woodpecker						
Northern Flicker						
Red-bellied Woodpecker						
Blue Jay						
American Crow						
Black-Capped Chickadee						
Tufted Titmouse						
Red-Breasted Nuthatch						
White-Breasted Nuthatch						
Brown Creeper						
Carolina Wren						
Eastern Bluebird						
American Robin						
Cedar Waxwing						
Red-Winged Blackbird						
Brown Cowbird						
Common Grackle						
European Starling						
Yellow-Rumped Warbler						
Pine Warbler						
Northern Cardinal						
House Finch						
Pine Siskin						
American Goldfinch						
Dark-eyed Junco						
Song Sparrow						
Tree Sparrow						
White-Throated Sparrow						
House Sparrow						

Name & Address (census location)

Nominating Committee Chair - Dick Jurkowski

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

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				Marianne Harris

CCBC, Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
869 Rte 6A, Brewster, MA 02631
Website: <http://www.massbird.org/CCBC>

If you are interested in joining, please send a check for \$10 single membership, \$15 family membership to:

is an organization whose members are interested in the protection and conservation of the bird life and natural resources of Cape Cod.

The Cape Cod Bird Club Inc.



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

Your dues for 2005-2006

Have been paid

Have NOT been paid