

CAPE COD BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER

November - December 1985

Now that the last of the summer and fall holidays have passed, parking lots are empty, beaches are deserted, and Cape Cod is more readily available to birders. Too, the weather on the Cape this time of year usually cooperates by remaining mild well into December. So, polish up your lenses and go birding!

For those who like the challenge of bird counts and surveys, we will be conducting our annual waterfowl survey and bird counts in December. You are urged to participate in one or more of these events. For those who must stay home, feeder sitings are needed for the counts. Details are listed below.

PROGRAMS:

Monday, **November 11th - 7:45 P.M.** Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, Brewster. "OYSTERCATCHERS OF MONOMOY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE"

This program will be presented by Mr. Robert Humphrey, who has been a biotechnician for Monomoy NWR and is preparing his graduate thesis on the Oystercatcher.

Monday, **December 9th - 7:45 P.M.** Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, Brewster. "PELLAGIC BIRDS AND DUCKS AT SEA"

Mr. Steve Morello, who has worked six years with the Ranger whale watching boats, and has done research in Maine, will present this program.

WALKS:

- . Wednesday, November 6 - 9 AM - Falmouth. Meet behind the town hall in the center of Falmouth. Julie Nelson (540-1103)
- . Tuesday, November 12 - 9 AM - Outer Cape. Meet at the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary parking lot. Bob Prescott (349-2615)
- . Thursday, November 21 - 9 AM, Yarmouthport. Meet at playground at Rt.6A and Union Street, Yarmouthport. Charlotte Smith (362-6891)
- . Sunday, November 24 - 9 AM, Falmouth. Meet behind Falmouth town hall. Peter Trimble (477-3847)
- . Saturday & Sunday, December 7 & 8. LAKE AND POND WATERFOWL SURVEY. See details below.
- . Tuesday, December 10 - 9 AM - Outer Cape. Meet at Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary parking lot. Bob Prescott (349-2615)
- . Saturday, December 21 - 8 AM - Outer Cape. Meet at Friendly's in Orleans (near Rotary). Bessie Tirrell (432-9248)
- . Sunday, December 22. OUTER CAPE COD CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS. See below for details.
- . Saturday, December 28. MID-CAPE CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS. See below for details.

LAKE AND POND WATERFOWL SURVEY: On the weekend of December 7th and 8th, we will be conducting a census of the waterfowl on the ponds of Cape Cod. This is the third year for this census. The first year, it was done early in November, and this was considered too early for a representative sampling. Last year, the census was moved to December and resulted in a count more than double that of the year before. It is believed that by repeating this December count on an annual basis, meaningful data will be generated for future evaluation. If you wish to participate, contact the coordinator for your area:

FALMOUTH, MASHPEE, BOURNE: Julie Nelson (540-1103)

SANDWICH, BARNSTABLE, YARMOUTH: Sally Clifton (775-4693)

DENNIS: Alice Tait (385-2339)

BREWSTER, HARWICH: Dick Comeau (432-9033)

CHATHAM TO PROVINCETOWN: Blair Nikula (945-2153)

CHRISTMAS COUNTS: On Saturday, December 28th, the Bird Club will be conducting its annual Mid-Cape Christmas Bird Count. This count is now recognized by the National Audubon Society, and the results are published in "American Birds" (for a small fee, participants can have their name listed). Last year we counted 104 species (a record) and over sixteen thousand birds. After a full day of counting, the results will be tallied at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, starting at 5:00 P.M. Those club members who cannot participate in the count are, nonetheless, cordially invited to join in the tally. Bring some snacks if you can, liquids will be provided by board members. It is not required that all counters be in the field from 5 AM to 5 PM. So, if you can give any part of that day, you are invited to join in the action. Just call Janet Aylward (362-9078) or John Redfern (432-6420). Feeder watchers are also needed. If you live in the Mid-Cape area, record the birds you see at your feeders on the 28th, and call in your results to the Museum after 5 PM (896-3867), or call Janet the next day.

The 54th Annual Outer Cape Christmas Bird Count will be held on Sunday, December 22nd. This count covers the Chatham, Harwich, Brewster, Orleans, and Eastham area. If you would like to help on this count, contact Blair Nikula (945-2153). Feeder watchers are also needed. The tally will be at the museum at 5 PM.

BLAIR'S PREVIEW:

November is a transition month for both birds and birders. Migration for most species is pretty much over and many of the winter residents begin to arrive. Sea ducks, gannets and kittiwakes become abundant in Cape Cod Bay and along the ocean shore. Northeasterly blows can produce lingering shearwaters and jaegers, and the first of the arriving alcids. This is the month when some of the more northerly species such as Northern Shrike, Rough-legged Hawk and the "winter" finches begin to appear, if they are going to appear at all. Early indications are that it may be a fairly good finch winter as Evening Grosbeaks and Red Crossbills have been widely reported across northern New England, so watch for these species (and stock up on seed!).

By December, the winter residents have pretty much settled into their traditional haunts, but there are always a few surprises to be found as a few oddballs always seem to linger much later than prudence would dictate. The latter half of the month is dominated by the many Christmas Bird Counts, one of the most enjoyable and important birding events of the year. Won't you participate on one or more this year?

FEEDER CENSUS:

Feeder census forms are enclosed with this edition of the newsletter (not for off-Cape members). We would like to see greater participation in this census. It is not necessary to be at home all winter to take part. Neither is it required that you sit at your window for two whole days watching chickadees gobble your high priced seeds. Easy to follow directions are on the form. Try it...you'll like it!

NEW BOARD MEMBER:

In accordance with the bylaws, the board of directors has elected Bessie Tirrell to serve the term vacated by the resignation of Allan Lyford. Bessie is a former board member whose experience and enthusiasm will be a welcome addition.

BIRD-A-THON RESULTS:

Although most participants reported "poor", or "only fair" birding, the Bird-A-Thon established a record 168 species. I suppose the problem was that there were no super rarities such as last year's Eurasian Curlew to sweeten the count. Nevertheless, approximately \$1,425 was raised, to be divided equally between MBO, The Museum of Natural History, and the museum's Capital Fund Drive. Thanks to all who pledged and/or birded!

BOOKS:

Kathy Baker, the museum's book buyer, has graciously agreed to have the book store open on Bird Club meeting nights. A 15% discount will apply to all books purchased.

LAST CHANCE FOR DELINQUENTS!

PAY UP OR ELSE! Charlotte says that this is the last newsletter for those who haven't paid their '85-'86 dues.

If you are among the endangered, hurry your check to:

Bob Scott
2 Rowley Lane
Yarmouthport, MA 02675

Your dues are still \$5 for individuals, and \$8 for couples and families.

