

CAPE COD BIRD CLUB - NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER - 1988

It takes a crusty mourning dove to make the flight from North Beach to Morris Island, or in this case, across Pleasant bay from what is now South Beach to Morris Island. Especially in early October at the time when Peregrine Falcons are cruising the area hammering everything in sight!! But such was the case as we stood on the platform over at the refuge on Morris Island in Chatham. I spotted the young Peregrine first, moving casually over the North Monomoy flats, heading north towards us. Suddenly it kicked into overdrive - four wingbeats and the falcon had flown right out of my field of view. I had to take my binoculars down, pick up the bird with my naked eye, then raise my optics again to the bird. Incredible acceleration. It stooped at a Mourning Dove which was now about halfway across the bay, also picking up speed in anticipation of what was about to happen. Morris Island must have appeared miles away. The falcon missed its first attempt. Flying at top speed, the dove reeled on its side as the peregrine missed and shot straight up like a winged missile. The mode was so low over the water that its belly was wet. The young falcon stooped and missed again, once more the dove rolled over on its side, never slowing down, never missing a wingbeat. Had this Mourning Dove been through this before? Experience against inexperience. The frantic dove hit the pokeweed bush at full speed. I'm still not convinced it didn't stick into the side of the cliff face where the vegetation grew. The plant was no more than a few feet in diameter and the dove didn't slow down before it entered. So the frustrated falcon turned and headed back across the bay, but not before it flew down at an unsuspecting fledged Laughing Gull and literally drove it beneath the surface. Never missing a wingbeat, the immature peregrine headed toward Monomoy. Redirected aggression.

PROGRAMS: Monday, November 14, 7:45 PM Cape Cod Museum of Natural History. Mr. Peter Alden will present his lecture entitled: "A Tradition of English Bird Names: Past, Present and Future". Peter has travelled the world, been around the world several times birding and leading tours both privately and for organizations. He has a style all his own. He wrote the book on birding the world and has a deep knowlege of his favorite subject. Bring a friend.

Monday, December 12, 7:45 PM Cape Cod Museum of Natural History. Mr. David Clapp, Director of Mass Audubon's South Shore Sanctuary in Marshfield will present his lecture: Birding the British Isles. David has birded England more than once and will show the highlights of his journeys through a slide lecture. Don't miss it. I love the English countryside.

WALKS:

NOVEMBER

Wednesday, November 2, Falmouth. 9 AM. Meet at the town hall, Falmouth center. Mary Ropes.548-6068

Monday, November 14, Eastham, 9 AM. Meet at the lower parking lot at Fort Hill. Art King 255-8919.

Tuesday, November 15, Wellfleet, 9AM. Meet at the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. 349-2615

Thursday, November 17, Yarmouth, 9 AM. Meet at the playground at the intersection of Route 6-A and Union Street. Charlotte Smith, 362-6891.

Saturday November 19, Middleboro-Lakeville. 8 A.M. Off Cape trip to look for ducks and other waterfowl. Meet at Burger King, Exit 6, Route 6. Sally Clifton. 775-4693

DECEMBER

Saturday & Sunday, December 3&4. Waterfowl Survey (see below)

Wednesday, December 7, Falmouth. Same as November.

Monday, December 12, Eastham. Same as November except Aurele Thomas will lead.

Tuesday, December 13, Wellfleet. Same as November.

Thursday, December 15, Yarmouth. Same as November.

The 1988 Cape Cod Bird Club Lake and Pond Waterfowl Survey will be held the weekend of December 3&4. We need as many volunteers as possible - this is after all one of the clubs most vital projects. If you're willing to participate, please bring a friend. We don't mind if you only do 1 or 2 ponds in your neighborhood. We need help.

The 1988 Christmas Bird Counts will be held on Sunday 12/18 and on Tuesday, 12/27. The outer cape count will be held on the first date and the mid-cape count on the 27th. For more information call Blair Nikula and Peter Trimble respectively.

OK, For those of you who have been on a trip with Blair Nikula you know how great they are. Certainly we've seen how wonderful his trips are through the slide programs he and trip members have shown us. Now he's planning a trip for next summer. Destination KENYA. The tentative dates are August 9 - 30. Sounds good to me! The all inclusive price will be somewhere around \$4,000. Please call Blair at 945-2153 after 5:00 PM.

I hope you are all keeping track of the birds at your feeder. Starting November 1, John Redferns project - The Cape Cod Bird Club Annual Feeder Census. will be underway. Your form accompanies this newsletter. If you live off cape and didn't get a feeder census form, its OK - we only sent them to cape residents.

Don't forget to listen to WFCC each day at 8:45 for my report of interest to bird watchers. Its at 107.5 on your FM dial.

Well, our total number of species on the Bird-a-thon was only 96. So those of you who wish to support MBO and the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, please contribute generously. 10c, 25c, \$1.00 per species, whatever you can afford. Make your check payable to Cape Cod Bird Club and send it to Peter Trull, Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, Drawer R, Route 6-A, Brewster, MA 02631

During November and December be on the lookout for a good number of northern species. Northern Gannet, Black, Whitewinged and Surf Scoters, Common Eiders, Goldeneye, Buffleheads, Iceland Gulls, Bonaparts Gulls, Black legged Kittiwakes, Great Cormorants, Old Squaw, Red Breasted Mergansers, Canvasback, Brant, Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs, Evening Grosbeaks, Rough-legged Hawk and of course, the beautiful Snowy Owl. See you later, good birding.



Frank Caruso
17 Freedom Rd
Forestdale MA 02644