



Cape Cod Bird Club

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 1989

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

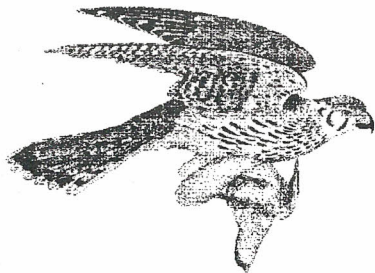
Peter Trimble

The fall is well underway and most warbler and shorebird migrants have passed through. Jeremiah and I went birding the Great Marsh Trail behind Sandy Neck in Barnstable in the beginning of October and saw a few Palm Warblers and 20 or so Yellow-rumped Warblers. For me, these two species represent the fall when birding becomes a little more leisurely on the Cape. One of my favorite ways to relax after a hectic day is to go to the beach. During these next months, spend some time at the beach and watch the sea ducks, loons and grebes fish or fly by.

A not so quiet day at the beach was Sept. 23. Storm Hugo was blowing up the coast and in hope of seeing some different birds (southern and/or pelagic species), we went over to Buzzards Bay near Wing's Neck. We parked in a sheltered area and scanned the bay. During the morning, we observed 1 Skua, 2 Parasitic Jaegers, 1 Manx Shearwater, 150 Laughing Gulls, 200 Common Terns, 1 White-winged Scoter, 1 Common Loon, and numerous birds that were unidentifiable. Later in the Day we stopped off at Salt Pond in Falmouth and observed 2 Caspian Terns sitting amongst the Laughing Gulls. They sat quietly preening about 30 meters from our scope.

November is not only a good time to look for various sea and bay ducks, but with winds from the Northeast, alcids can also be seen. On land, it is time to search for sparrows. The Harwich Gardens, the Marconi Area, The Chicken Farm, as well as a number of fields and farms contain the appropriate habitat. Instead of straining your neck searching the treetops for warblers, scan the grasses and brush for White-crowned, White-throated, Tree and other sparrows.

There are two important club events coming up in December. The annual waterfowl survey and the Christmas Bird Count. Member participation is crucial for both. Not only will you enjoy yourself birdwatching, but you will provide data and information for these ongoing activities. I'd like



to plug the waterfowl survey for those who feel they can't spend an entire day birding. With the many ponds dotting the Cape, if you are able to check the ones in your area, the overall monumental task becomes reasonable. (Details on these activities appear elsewhere in the newsletter.)

Please continue to send your comments and concerns on the bird club to me. I hope to see all of you at our monthly meetings.

REFLECTIONS ON MIGRATION

Jim Talin

When migrating birds surround us in autumn, we witness only one small step of a trip that will take tiny birds such as the 1/3 ounce blackpoll warbler across continents. An arctic tern will fly 10,000 miles from the arctic to the antarctic. A tiny ruby throated hummingbird will make a 600 mile, nonstop 24 hour flight across the Gulf of Mexico. Radar observations have uncovered the following facts. "Over ten million birds, mostly shorebirds and songbirds, may leave Cape Cod alone in a single fall night.... They gather at the coast and wait for a cold front to pass over, so getting the benefit of the strong winds from the north-west behind it. A wave of birds takes to the air and is carried south-east in the direction of Bermuda, a journey taking about 18 hours. They fly at altitudes of around 6,500 feet, dropping slightly over Bermuda as they pass through an area of light and variable winds until they reach the Sargasso Sea, where they meet the northeast trades. They climb again over 13,000 feet, and sometimes as high as 21,000 feet to find the trade winds that will push them south-westwards towards South America, to make a landfall after about eighty hours in the air." (from Bird Behavior by Robert Burton) This flight is one of the longest nonstop flights made by small birds anywhere in the world. It is direct, uses wind to save energy, and is safer than the land route. So next time you see a warbler take off and head straight out to sea, wish it good luck.

Special Thanks

A very special "thank you" is in order to Charlotte Smith, for the time she puts in addressing all of our newsletters, with that personal touch that only she can do! Thanks again we really appreciate your efforts.

FIELD NOTES

Art King

Late July: 4 Willow Flyc catchers at Fort Hill in Eastham.
August: At Wellfleet Bay Sanctuary, Wilsons Phalarope, Black Tern, Golden Plover, Stilt Sandpiper, Rudy Turnstone, Pipin Plover.

September: Little Blue Heron, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Goshawk, Clapper Rail, Parasitic Jaeger, Brown Creeper, Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker, American Bittern, Black-Throated Gray Warbler, Yellow-Throated Vireo (Sept 30), Great Horned Owl.

BIRD FEEDING TIPS

	Chickadees, titmice, nuthatches	Finches	Cardinal, grosbeaks	Sparrows	Blackbirds	Jays	Wood- peckers	Orioles, tanagers	Humming- birds	Pigeons, doves	Quails, pheasants
Sunflower seed ¹	●	●	●	●	○	○	○				
Corn ²		○		○	●	●				●	●
Millet ³		○		○	○					○	○
Thistle		●									
Suet ⁵	●					○	●	○			
Sugar water ⁶								○	●		
Fruits ⁷						○		●			

● preferred ○ readily eaten

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If the birds at your house are like the ones at mine, you probably feel as if you are running a bird cafeteria. If you have any great tips on what to feed certain birds, or on what to do to hoodwink the wily squirrel, or if you have tales of feeder woe, send them in, and we will publish the best of them

Notes on the Food:

Black oil sunflower seed is better for the birds and is also cheaper than the stripped.

Safflower seed, while expensive, is not liked by squirrels, jays, racoons or (in my experience) grackles. Cardinals do like it however. Chickadees, finches and other birds don't seem to mind it.

Cracked corn is for finches and sparrows, while dried whole-kernal corn is for jays, doves, quails.

Suet can become rancid in hot weather, so you should

stop feeding it to birds when the spring days get up into the 60's & 70's. Catbirds, pine and yellow-rumped warblers, and orioles are attracted to suet in the spring.

Catbirds seem to like fruit as much as orioles.

A good idea for attracting hummingbirds is to plant flowers and to hang flowers outside your windows in the summer. An excellent guide for planting to attract birds can be found in *The Bird Watcher's Companion*, by Christopher Leahy. **Sugar water** can ferment in warm temperatures which can cause sickness in Hummingbirds, so it is best to change the water every few days.

Not mentioned in the above table are the birds that feed on birds that feed at feeders, namely the Sharp-shinned and Coopers hawks. You may want to place feeders in an area that allows small birds to duck for cover in thickets or bushes.

Also not mentioned are the biggest public subsidized bird feeders to be found anywhere—municipal landfills.

EDITORIAL

Jim Talin

A recent edition of Harper's Magazine had a cover story about the need to colonize the planet Mars. The theory is that humans could take the things that are threatening forest, air and water here on Earth and use them to create life on Mars. The terrestrial Greenhouse Effect could produce a Martian greenhouse. When I read this, I thought of Thoreau's declaration of cultural independence, "I have traveled a good deal in Concord." And I remembered my reaction when I first saw Walden Pond next to a four-lane highway, located just a short walk from the center of Concord and a short drive from down-

town Boston. "You mean this is it?" I asked myself. Walden could have been any pond in any residential neighborhood. It was Thoreau's celebration of the local that revealed its significance. The fact is that we whiz from place to place in autos, motor boats, and jet planes, and we sometimes forget the value of our own neighbor-

" You don't know what you'll find. "

hoods. We overlook the local. Here on Cape Cod, we have some of the most remarkable places on the east coast just a step beyond our doorways, ample subjects for the enquiring, observant mind. All of this is a preamble to urge you to take that step and celebrate the local by joining a Bird Club or a Museum or an Audubon walk. You don't know what you will find.



Cape Cod Bird Club Newsletter

The Cape Cod Museum Of Natural History
RR 1, Route 6A, Brewster, MA 02631

Editor - Jim Talin

Design - Tom Noonan

PROGRAMS/ MEETINGS

On Monday evening **November 13** at 7:45 pm, *Expedition to Kenya, Africa* will be the presentation. The presentation will be made by Blair Nikula, with supporting comments from fellow members to be sure. The annual Cape Cod Bird Club expedition has been traditionally one of the most popular programs of the year.

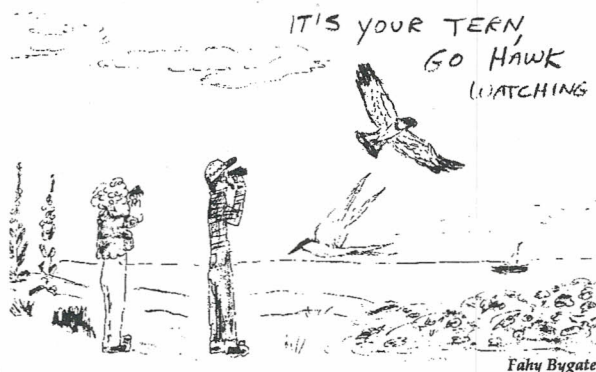
On Monday evening **December 11** at 7:45 pm, Belize will be the subject of a presentation by Scott Hecker, Coordinator of The Coastal Bird Program of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Scott Hecker leads birding trips to Belize in Central America, which he calls "a rich preserve of tropical habitat." His slide show will feature the birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and insects of Belize.

Waterfowl Survey

The Bird Club's 6th annual Lake and Pond Waterfowl Survey will be conducted on the weekend of December 2-3. This is one of our more valuable projects, yet is very easy and enjoyable. We welcome all the help we can get, whether for only an hour or so, half a day, all day, or the entire weekend. If you would like to participate, or wish more information, contact Blair Nikula at 945-2153.

Christmas Bird Count

The Cape Cod Christmas Bird Count, which covers the outer Cape from Harwich and Brewster to Eastham, will be conducted on Sunday, December 17. The tally will be at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History beginning at about 5:00 pm. Anyone wishing to participate should contact Blair Nikula at 945-2153. Feeder-watchers from within the circle (which includes Chatham, Harwich, Brewster, Orleans and Eastham) are also desired.



Texas Trip

The CCBC's next long-distance migration (or is it vagrancy?) will be to Big Bend National Park and the Edward's Plateau of Texas. Scheduled dates are April 13-22 and the cost will be \$1000 (based on current airfares and at least 8 participants), which includes airfare from Boston, but not meals. This is \$300-\$500 less than the professional Tour companies are charging for the same trip. To reserve space, send a \$200 deposit, payable to the "Cape Cod Bird Club" to Blair Nikula, 23 Atwood Lane, Chatham, MA 02633. Interest in this trip is running high, and space is limited to 10 people, so don't delay. For more information contact Blair at 945-2153.

UPCOMING WALKS

Fahy Bygate

November

Wednesday Nov. 1—Falmouth. 9 AM. Meet behind Town Hall, Falmouth Center. Mary Ropes. 548-6068.

Tuesday Nov. 7—Eastham. 9 AM. Meet in the lower parking lot, Fort Hill. Art King. 255-8919.

Saturday Nov. 4—Sandwich. 9 AM. Meet at Angelo's parking lot of 6A in Sandwich. Bessie Tirrell. 432-9248.

Wednesday Nov. 15—Wellfleet Bay Audubon Society. 9 AM. Meet at parking lot. Naturalist will lead.

Thursday Nov. 16—Yarmouth. 9 AM. Meet at intersection of 6A and Union Street. Charlotte Smith. 362-6891.

Thursday. Nov 23—NO WALK ON THANKSGIVING DAY.

Special Walk

Saturday Nov. 11—8 AM-12PM. New and secret birding spots! Explore new habitats in the Mid-Cape area with Sally Clifton. Meet at 8AM at Burger King, Exit 6. Sally 775-4693.

December

Monday Dec. 4—Eastham. 9 AM. Meet in the lower parking lot, Fort Hill. Art King. 255-8919.

Wednesday Dec. 6—Falmouth. 9 AM. Meet behind Town Hall, Falmouth Center. Mary Ropes. 548-6068.

Saturday Dec. 9—Sandwich. 9 AM. Meet at Angelo's parking lot of 6A in Sandwich. Bessie Tirrell. 432-9248.

Wednesday Dec. 20—Wellfleet Bay Audubon Society. 9 AM. Meet at parking lot. Naturalist will lead.

Thursday Dec. 21—Yarmouth. 9 AM. Meet at intersection of 6A and Union Street. Charlotte Smith. 362-6891.

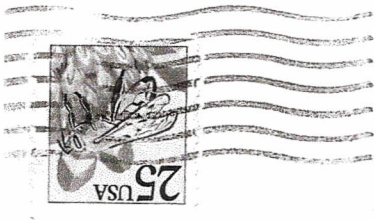
Thursday Dec. 28—Harwich. 9 AM. Meet at Harwich Conservation Area off Bell's Neck Road. John & Ginny Redfern. 432-6426.

Special Walk

Tuesday Dec. 12—All Day. Christmas Excursion to Drumlin Farm. We'll car-pool to Lincoln, meet Wayne Petersen, tour the Farm, walk the trails and visit the gift shop. To sign up call Fahy Bygate. 617-934-6978.

Forestdale MA 02644

Frank Caruso
17 Freedom Rd



The Cape Cod Museum Of Natural History
RR 1, Route 6A, Brewster, MA 02631

Cape Cod Bird Club



MEMBERSHIP WARNING

The mailing list will be revised very shortly. If you have not paid 1989-1990 dues by the end of the year, this may be the last newsletter you receive. We do not like to lose members, but at the same time, we do not want to have a mailing list inflated with names of those no longer interested in CCBC. So please pay promptly. According to our records your dues for 1989-90

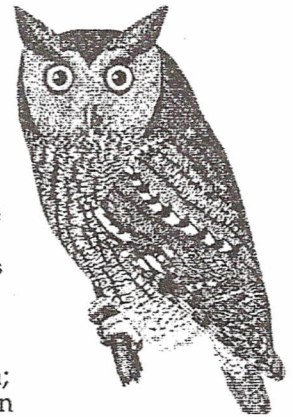
- have been paid
- have not been paid.

Dues are single \$7, family \$10. Checks may be mailed to...

Treasurer, CCBC
Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
Route 6A, Brewster, MA 02631

Bird-A-Thon Results

In our effort to raise some much needed money for the Museum of Natural History and Manomet Bird Observatory, birders were out on the weekend of September 23 & 24 as storm Hugo blew through Cape Cod. 139 species of birds were spotted, many of them common but others rare, such as Greater, Sooty and Manx Shearwaters; Tricolored Heron; Merlins and Peregrines; Golden Plover; Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegar; Skua; Caspian Tern; 18 types of warblers; Wood and Swainson's Thrush; Blue Grosbeak; Indigo Bunting and Rusty Blackbird. "It was a great effort on everyone's part" Peter Trimble observed. "I want to thank everyone who participated and contributed. We raised \$300, which is less than we had hoped, but is money each of the groups involved can use."



Anyone who pledged or who would still like to pledge can mail their contributions to CCBC, c/o the Museum of Natural History, Route 6A, Brewster 02631.