



Cape Cod Bird Club

VOLUME III

NOVEMBER – DECEMBER 1991

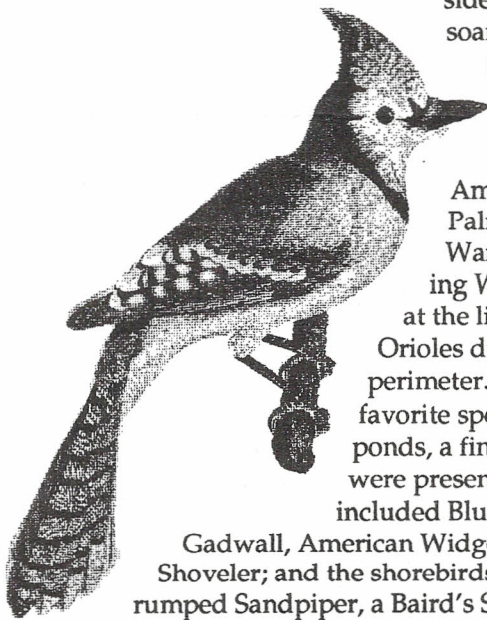
ISSUE 2

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Peter Trimble

November has arrived. Autumn seems to fly by with the promise (and sometimes) fulfillment of migration. I look forward to late fall and early winter with my interests focused on the pursuit of L.B.J.'s (little brown jobs) and waterfowl. By searching town gardens, local farms (with permission), weedy fields and roadsides; an interesting and beautiful assortment of sparrows may be found. The abundance of ponds, lakes, rivers and streams may team with ducks, or at least we hope so during our annual Waterfowl Survey and Christmas Bird Counts.

Earlier this fall, I went birding on South Monomoy. Walking the "ridge" that overlooks the marshes to the south of the lighthouse affords tremendous views. Two bucks, antlers held high, proceed through the bayberry and poison ivy. Thickets on the far side. A Northern Harrier soared up a nearby dune face and veered to the west. A thicket near a pond momentarily held American Redstarts, Palm Warblers, Yellow Warblers and a Mourning Warbler. During lunch at the lighthouse, 6 Northern Orioles did laps around the perimeter. At one of my favorite spots near the station ponds, a fine variety of birds were present. The waterfowl included Blue-winged Teal, Gadwall, American Widgeon, and Northern Shoveler; and the shorebirds included a White-rumped Sandpiper, a Baird's Sandpiper, and a Wilson's Phalarope. A Peregrine Falcon did not go unnoticed.



Our annual birdathon to benefit the Museum, Manomet and the Bird Club occurred on Sept. 21 & 22. Members could have participated by compiling a list of species seen (to be sent to me) and/or by pledging money either for each species seen or a lump sum. Participation in all areas has been poor. I am certain Manomet and the Museum need our support, and at the Bird Club our budget is tight when I consider rent increases, speakers costs, and our fine newsletters. With the many club members, even small contributions would add up. It is not too late.

Please send a pledge to Mark Tuttle Treasurer.

BAYOU BIRDING

Part Two of a Series

Fahy Bygate

We hated to leave the pale green and silver bayous of Louisiana, but Dauphin Island, Alabama was calling. The drive was a long one that took us through some wonderful old towns with elegant homes, some of which were right out of "Gone With The Wind." Long green lawns dotted with magnolias, those gorgeous live oaks again, azaleas, dogwoods and long, low porches with rockers and louvered shutters on the windows to keep out the heat. Had we been able to locate a Dairy Queen, it would have been perfect. When we entered Alabama, the highway sign informed us that we were in the "Hospitality State" and boy, we believed it. The reception we got at the visitor's center was warmer than most New Englanders get from Mom! Well, perhaps I exaggerate. But truly, people everywhere we went were terrible nice and helpful to us, especially after they saw our "Cape Cod Bird Club" signs on our van. One woman offered to entertain us at her house for the afternoon because she had some "very nice birds in the yard." We met a fascinating woman writer who gave us some hot tips about where to find birds. My favorite encounter was with a couple of guys who looked like their portraits should be hanging in the Post Office who offered to show us some Worm-eating Warblers!

At Dauphin Island, we were astonished to see a huge sign reading "Migration Celebration." Our waitress at dinner told us that "thousands of tropical birds come to Dauphin Island every year at this time." They were celebrating spring with parades (we hated to miss the parade especially since it featured the Dauphin Islands Ladies Kazoo Band, Miss Dauphin Island, Junior Miss Dauphin Island and Little Miss Dauphin Island, and something called the Mobile Police Department Yugo-Fuzzette??), with parties and even with special nature walks. Now if only this could just catch on with the rest of the country....

Unfortunately, we missed all the Migration Celebration because we were out actually looking at the "thousand of tropical birds" which was celebration enough. They were plentiful and remarkable. A clear blue sky filled with White Pelicans swirling around above us sheerly for the joy of it...a Prothonotary Warbler that peeked out at me for a millisecond and then disappeared...a Reddish Egret, need I say more?...a field of spiderwort of a blue that I'd forgotten, fringed with so many Indigo Buntings that at first we couldn't tell where the flowers ended and the birds began...a Summer Tanager, a Scarlet Tanager, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak and two Indigo Buntings in my binocs

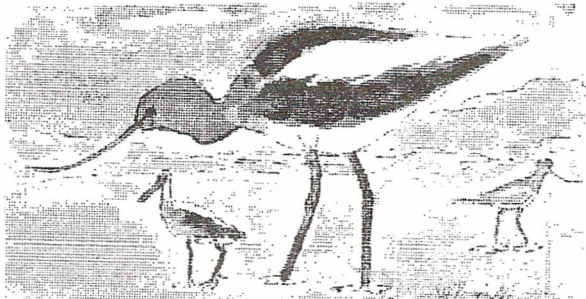
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BAYOU BIRDING

Continued From Page 1

at the same time...a field of White-faced Ibis...long rows of Fulvous Tree Ducks along the edges of the silver

Illustration by the author.



and green rice fields...and the stilts, ah...Black-necked Stilts of "bubblegum legs" fame, bliss...ditto the avocets...brushing Hummingbirds out of our faces like moths...Barred Owl calling very early one morning in a deep green wood in the rain...a Chuck-wills-widow dashing in and out of the bushes in front of us like a neurotic butterfly...a solitary Peregrine who breezed over our farewell party at the airport....

Well, we're home now. Not that we'd actually live in the South; but when you consider the warmth, the flowers, the butterflies and the birds, well we miss it all, especially now that our rosy glow acquired by eating shrimp several times a day has faded. Would we go back? You bet. I'm fixing to go. You should too.

FEEDER CENSUS REPORT 1990-1991

John Redfern

This past year was the start of our second decade of winter feeder census compilations. The average 56.5 birds seen at each feeder this year was on the low end of our ten year average of 59.8 birds, but was not as low as 1982/83

or 1987/88. The same species dominate the top ten rankings, with the Mourning Dove number one, as it has been for seven of the previous ten years. We did have a record number of 60 species reported, but none of them could be considered rare or exotic. A Painted Bunting was reported, but it wasn't seen on a count week-end. As usual, the Chickadee was observed at the most feeders (99.6%...somebody didn't spend enough time watching!). The rankings are listed below.

% of Feeders

1. Chickadee	99.6
2. Mourning Dove	87.5
3. Titmouse	84.3
4. Blue Jay	83.5
5. Downy Woodpecker	82.4
6. Cardinal	80.0
House Finch	80.0
8. Goldfinch	73.7
9. Wh. Br. Nuthatch	65.5
10. Crow	48.6

Birds per Feeder

1. Mourning Dove	6.83	(1)
2. Chickadee	5.17	(2)
3. House Finch	4.60	(3)
4. Goldfinch	4.27	(6)
5. House Sparrow	4.25	(5)
6. Blue Jay	3.31	(4)
7. Starling	3.19	(7)
8. Grackle	2.67	(8)
Cardinal	2.67	(9)
10. Titmouse	2.13	

(Ten Year Averages in parentheses)

EDITORIAL

Jim Talin

WHAT TO DO ABOUT CATS

It is time for the owners of cats to take responsibility for what their cats do. Cats that cuddle and purr indoors are killers outdoors. They kill up to two million birds in Massachusetts each year. Mass Audubon reports that a single house cat ate all the week-old Least Tern babies at Fourth Cliff tern colony in Scituate. While there is nothing wrong with valuing cats for what they offer as pets and as domesticated animals, it is not fair to real wildlife to let cats out. Here are some cat-control proposals that I think should be enacted.

First, cats should be licensed, either voluntarily at town halls, or involuntarily at veterinarian's offices. Fees would be collected that would go toward paying for other control measures. Second, a cat leash law would be enacted. Cats should be restrained, just as dogs are. Any cats found loose would be collected by officials. Fines would be assessed to its owners. No cat would be returned to its owners without being neutered at its owners expense. Any cat discovered to have been loose a number of times would be treated like any dog that is not restrained. Third, cats that are proven to have harmed wildlife would be euthanized, just as dangerous dogs are. Fourth, a limit of two would be placed on the number of cats any individual could own.

That's what I think should be done. Tell us what you think. Send your proposals/reactions to the Bird Club, c/o Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, RR1 Rte 6A, Brewster, MA 02631; and we will print them in the newsletter.



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

Circulation - Charlotte Smith

PROGRAMS/ MEETINGS

Frank Caruso and Mark Tuttle

Monday, November 11, at 7:45 PM at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History in Brewster, June Chamberlain-Auger will present a program entitled "A Glimpse into the Life of Cape Cod Crows." American crows have fascinated humans for centuries and, as a result, have been the subject of numerous tales. In 1983, June began a study of the social and reproductive behavior of crows, concentrating on the role of individuals (through color-banding). Initial results have shown that Cape Cod crows are territorial and live in family groups. Her work is ongoing; she has found crows to be very intelligent, socially complex, and far more intriguing than she ever imagined. If you can get your hands on the Summer 1991 issue of Massachusetts Wildlife, you can get a nice preview of her talk.

Monday, December 9, at 7:45 PM at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History in Brewster, "Nightbirds, Hummers and More From South American" will be presented by Bob Clements. Bob retired a year ago after a career as a mathematics teacher and most recently as Math Dept. Chairman at Phillips Exeter Academy, and he has traveled widely throughout the world with his brother Jim, Davis Finch, and other well-known birders, identifying and photographing birds. His slide presentation will include owls, nightjars, potoos, hummingbirds, and many other rare and exotic species.

RARE BIRD HOTLINE

Mark Tuttle

The Bird Club Board has discussed setting up a rare bird hotline. This will be only for birds sighted that are either not listed on the Cape Cod checklist or are listed as rare. Members who are interested in being included on this hotline, and who have not already signed up for it, should either sign up at the November meeting or contact Mark Tuttle, Box 635, Barnstable, MA 02630 (Tel. 362-3015) prior to that meeting. We hope to have the hotline in operation by mid-November. If you have birding friends whom you would like to have next to you on the list so that you would either call them, or receive their call, let us know.

Such a hotline can work only if every member is fully responsible in getting in touch with the next person further down on the list who answers the call. We will set up the list so that toll calls are at a minimum.

BIRD A THON *Peter Trimble*

Rather than include a description of birds seen, I thought I would describe a walk George Martin, Jeremiah and I took on Sunday morning at Morris Island. Along the beach we observed 2 Common Loons as they preened just after sunrise. Hundreds of Cormorants streamed by, leaving North Monomoy and heading to North/Nauset Beach. Some shorebirds and waders were present on the flats on the south side of the island, but the most interesting sight was the hundreds of Monarch Butterflies perched in shrubs as they warmed in the early morning sunlight. We walked up the path toward the wooded areas of Morris Island and found some songbirds. A Yellow-breasted Chat responded to some pishing and was joined by Yellow-rumped Warblers and Common Yellowthroats. A short time later we spotted a Solitary Vireo up high and a Veery down low. We continued down the paved road birding until we could go no further. On this route, we found Northern Orioles, a Black-throated Blue Warbler, an Oporonis Warbler, another Yellow-breasted Chat, 2 Eastern Wood Pewees, a Magnolia Warbler, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo. Later I found an Orange-crowned Warbler and a Dickcissel. Not bad for a few hours.

FIELD TRIPS

Sally McNair

November

Saturday Nov. 2nd-Wellfleet. 2 pm. Meet at Wellfleet Harbor. Doug McNair. 349-6043.

Wednesday Nov. 6th-Falmouth. 9am. Meet behind Town Hall, Falmouth Center. Mary Ropes. 548-6086.

Saturday Nov. 16th-Mid Cape. 8 am. Meet in the Burger King parking lot at the intersection of Routes 6 and 132. Sally Clifton. 775-4693.

Wednesday Nov 20th- Meet in the back section of the Stop and Shop parking lot in Orleans. Sue Thompson. 255-1451.

December

Saturday and Sunday Dec. 7th & 8th. Land and Pond Waterfowl Survey. Sign up at the Nov. 11th meeting or call Blair Nikula. 432-6348.

Wednesday Dec. 4th-Falmouth. 9 am. Meet behind Town Hall, Falmouth Center. Mary Ropes. 548-6086.

Thursday Dec. 12th-Backyard Birding at Bill and Harriet Dickson's house . 10 am. 176 Quanset Rd, S. Orleans. Get Directions at the Nov. 11th meeting or call 255-0299.

Sunday Dec. 15th-Cape Cod Christmas Bird Count (Outer Cape). Sign up at the Dec. 9th meeting or call Blair Nikula. 432-6348.

Sunday Dec. 22nd-Cape Cod Christmas Bird Count (Mid-Cape). Sign up at the Dec. 9th meeting or call Peter Trimble. 477-3847.

PLEDGE

Our annual birdathon to benefit the Museum, Manomet and the Bird Club occurred on Sept. 21 & 22. Members could have participated by compiling a list of species seen (to be sent to me) and/or by **pledging money** either for each species seen or a lump sum. Participation in all areas has been poor. I am certain Manomet and the Museum need our support, and at the Bird Club our **budget is tight** when I consider rent increases, speakers costs, and our fine newsletters. With the many club members, even small contributions would add up. It is not too late. Please send a pledge to Mark Tuttle, Treasurer.

BIRD-A-THON PLEDGE

I pledge \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

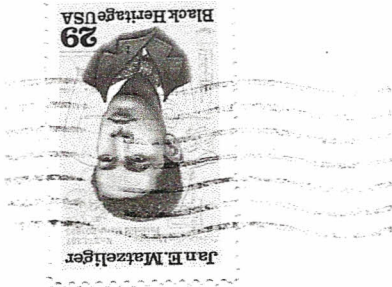
Town _____ Telephone _____

Mail to C. C. Bird Club, C. C. Museum of Natural History, Route 6A, Brewster, MA 02631

Forestdale MA 02644

17 Freedom Rd

Frank Carruso



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



IN MEMORIAM

by Charlotte Smith

As CCBC is nearing its 20th birthday, some of those among the founders are beginning to leave us. First Carl Holdridge, whose late wife Barbara served as president, died Sept. 22. Then, Harold Baines, whose wife Doris was also president, passed away Oct. 4. Both men were very supportive of their wives' interest in birding. When either Barbara or Doris led a walk, as they did frequently, Carl and Harold were right there to drive, round up stragglers, and make sure everyone was enjoying the walk.

Newcomers to CCBC learned a great deal from those trips. Both couples helped to build a firm foundation for the club. We are enjoying the fruits of their interest in birding. We extend our deepest sympathy to Doris in the loss of her husband and to Carl's children on the death of their father.

MEMBERSHIP WARNING

The mailing list will be revised very shortly. If you have not paid 1991-1992 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 1991-1992

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