



# Cape Cod Bird Club

VOLUME 24

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ISSUE 4

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Richard D. Hall*

It has been snowing now for nearly 36 hours, and there are sixteen or more inches covering the area around our backyard feeders. This Sunday morning is the winter's meridian. Forty-four days have passed; there are forty-four more to come before the calendar recognizes Spring's arrival. These last half dozen Cape Cod winters have been notably harsh and snowy. But they've made for terrific backyard bird watching.

There is something inextricably cyclical and seasonal about birding. Not only do the birds themselves change in number, species, and plumage month to month, but more subtle climactic conditions exert an influence on what, and when we see birds. Cape Codders are especially fortunate in this respect. Surrounded by bay, ocean, and sound we experience a variety of species almost impossible to come by fifty miles inland. Even the twice daily tidal cycle influences the behavior and availability of most sea and shore birds, irrespective of weather conditions or season.

*As we grow older,  
not everything in life gets better;  
birding may be one of  
the few things which does.*

Mixing all these variables together is, I think, one of the ingredients which makes birding so satisfying to those of us who do it regularly. As we grow older, not everything in life gets better; birding may be one of the few things which does. It is both active and contemplative, competitive and aesthetic. It is certainly cumulative, and endlessly challenging. It is easy and inexpensive to get started, but it takes hours and years of patient diligence to master. Whether a rank beginner, or a seasoned expert, you will be a rare birder if you don't learn or notice something new about nature during a morning in the field. More often than not, birding is also full of surprises. For every disappointing outing, there will be another with sightings you will treasure for years.

There is probably something deeply subconscious in all of this. Although it's risky to generalize, I suspect there is some real gender sorting in how we experience birding.

*Continued on Page 8*

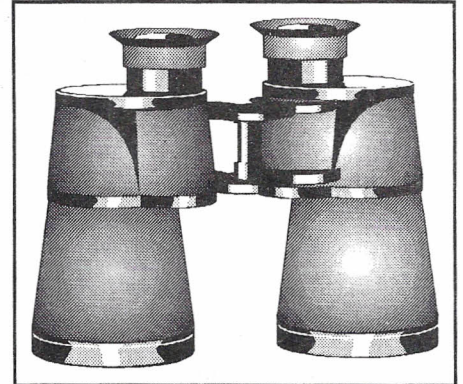
## BINOCULARS FOR BIRDERS

*Jim Talin*

Once again the Cornell Lab of Ornithology has published its rating of the top binoculars, so if you are looking for a new pair of binoculars, read on. Also, try to get your hands on the Autumn 1995 issue of *Living Bird*, which is published by the Lab. But before you start looking for binoculars, be a smart shopper.

"Decide how much you can afford,"

recommends Ken Rosenberg, chief scientist at the Lab and author of the article in *Living Bird*. "And then get the best binoculars you can find in that price range." Also be sure to test binoculars before you buy them.



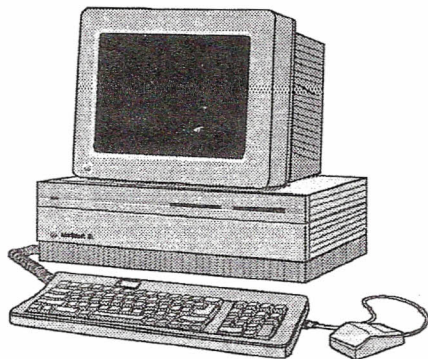
**The Top Price Range** (over \$800). It seems that if you've got the money, you can't go wrong. Tested were the top models of binoculars made by Bausch & Lomb (Elites 10x42 & 8x42), Zeiss (the 10x40 & 7x42), Leica (the 10x42 & 8x42), and Swarovski (the 10x42 & 7x42). This year the panel concluded, "we would be happy to receive any one of them for a birthday present. Each model offers superb optics, providing a bright, clear crisp image to the viewer...as for which model to choose, again that comes down to personal preference." For eyeglass wearers, the Elites, the Swarovskis, and the Zeiss 7x42 were most highly recommended. (Eye glass wearers usually lose the width of field and suffer from a sort of tunnel vision with most binoculars. I know that the first time I looked through another birder's Elite 10x42, I was amazed at their clarity and lack of tunnel vision.)

**The Mid Price Range.** At the high end (\$500-\$800), the Swarovski 8x30 were preferred. In \$200-\$500 range, the Swift Ultra Lite 10x42, along with the Nikon Talons and Wolverines were the winners. Also in this price range, only one set of compact binoculars, the Bausch & Lomb Custom Compacts were recommended.

**The Low Price Range** (under \$200). The reviewers lamented the discontinuation of the Bushnell Birder 7x35, and they found it hard to recommend any binoculars, except the Bushnell Birder 8x40. Even then, the reason for choosing this model was its price, since it would allow you to save for a more expensive pair.

**VIRTUAL BIRDING**

Until recently I did not understand people's fascination with the Internet, partially, I think, because of the on-line service that I used. I decided this year to change providers of electronic service, to see if I could not explore the Internet and the World Wide Web more fully. Part of my desire to change came after having listened to a radio talk show called *Science Friday* with Ira Flatow. The show dealt with the World Wide Web and as a follow up, Ira set up a page listing what he and his guests thought were the best Web science sites. So when I switched from America On-Line to the local internet provider, Cape Internet, I visited this page right away. One of the sites I found there was Washington University's Electronic Zoo which has information on just about every animal species, from amphibian to zoo animals. It includes a bird home page which is a virtual encyclopedia of information. It is comprehensive, dealing with poultry and pet birds as well as wild birds. It can hook you up with the Poultry Science Department at Texas A & M, Ostriches On-Line, or the Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

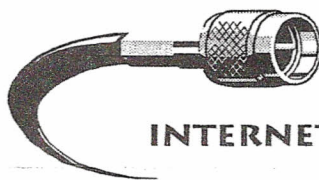


Here I found a page called Jamie Stewart's *Screech Owl Page* that changed my view of virtual birding. This page consists of a series of photographs and a narrative of text that tell the simple story of a two Screech Owls nesting in southeastern Pennsylvania along the Wissahickon Creek. The page features pictures of the mother, father and the

five offspring and seems to embody what is most promising about electronic communication on the WWW and the Internet. Suddenly, a snowed-in birder on Cape Cod clicks on a name in a list of items in an electronic zoo and ends up sharing a meaningful birding experience with a person from Pennsylvania whom he will never meet in the flesh. Significant barriers such as time and space that might have burdened this encounter in the past have been lowered by computer electronics, and people can join others with a mutual interest despite being separated by a great distance of space. I, for one, was surprised, and I do not doubt that we can all benefit from this change.

**ADDRESSES OF SITES MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE**

- Science Friday: <http://www.npr.org/~scifri/>
- The Electronic Zoo: <http://netvet.wustl.edu/ssi.htm>
- The Bird Home Page of the Electronic Zoo: <http://netvet.wustl.edu/birds.htm>
- Jamie Stewart's Screech Owl Page: <http://www.voicenet.com/voicenet/homepages/jstewart/scrchow1/scrchow1.html>



**INTERNET ADDRESSES**

What follows is a random collection of notable stops on the electronic highway.

- Fahy Bygate's homepage: <http://www.tiac.com/users/odes/cottage.html>
- Cape Cod Connection at the Bird Feeder: [http://emporium.turnpike.net/M/mikron/capec\\_re/birds/birdlog.htm](http://emporium.turnpike.net/M/mikron/capec_re/birds/birdlog.htm)
- Elinor Miller's E-mail address is [EAMiller@cms.net](mailto:EAMiller@cms.net)
- Elinor Miller's homepage: <http://www.cms.net/sage>

(Editor's note: I asked Dick Comeau to send a list of Internet sites, and he graciously responded with the following E-mail.)

*Continued on Page 3*



**Cape Cod Bird Club Inc.**

The Cape Cod Museum Of Natural History  
PO BOX 1710, Brewster, MA 02631

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Editor ~ Jim Talin

- Design & Prepress ~ Tom Noonan
- Circulation ~ Barbara Stanton

**The Cape Cod Bird Club**

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

If you are interested in joining, please send a check for \$10 single membership, \$15 family membership to  
**CCBC, Cape Cod Museum of Natural History**  
PO Box 1710, Brewster, MA 02631

## INTERNET ADDRESSES

Dick Comeau's favorite sites on the World Wide Web

**1. University of Pennsylvania**

<http://www.upenn.edu/>

**2. Hotbird**

<http://compstat.wharton.upenn.edu:80001/~siler/hotmail/CNTR.1110752>

**3. Electronic Birding Resources**

<http://www.zender.com/birder/birding/resources.txt>

**4. Birding On The Web**

<http://www.birder.com>

**5. Yahoo**

<http://www.yahoo.com/>

**6. WebCrawler**

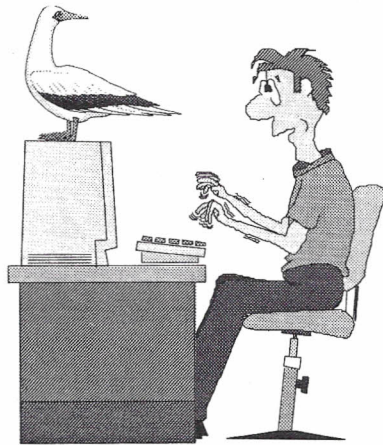
<http://webcrawler.com/>

**7. Alta Vista**

<http://altavista.digital.com/cgi-bin/query>

**8. Elderhostel**

<http://www.elderhostel.org/USCANCAT.html>



Dick Comeau's Favorite Newsgroups

1. BIRDBAND

2. BIRDCHAT

3. BIRDEAST

4. BIRDWEST

To subscribe to the above you need to e-mail to [LISTSERV@LISTSERV.Arizona.EDU](mailto:LISTSERV@LISTSERV.Arizona.EDU)

In the main body of the letter you need to enter exactly:

SUBSCRIBE BIRDCHAT "Your Name" (ie, type in your name, such as Jim Talin)

## ANSWERS TO RIDDLE

1. Shearwater 2. Duck 3. Grouse 4. Rook (European) 5. Gull 6. Crane 7. Lark 8. Quail 9. Hawk 10. Killdeer 11. Parrot 12. Ruff 13. Crow 14. Rail 15. Kite 16. Flicker 17. Snipe 18. Swallow 19. Chat 20. Knot

## RIDDLES-BIRDS AND VERBS

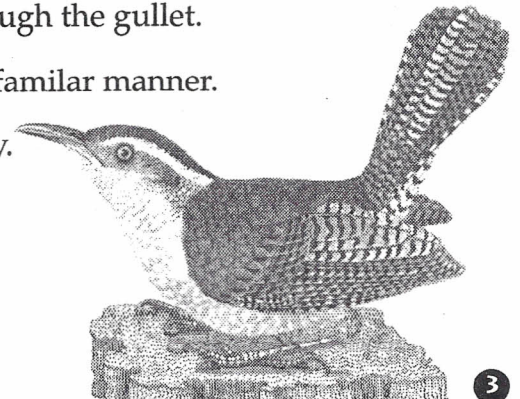
taken from...

### What Bird Is This

by Henry Collins, Jr.

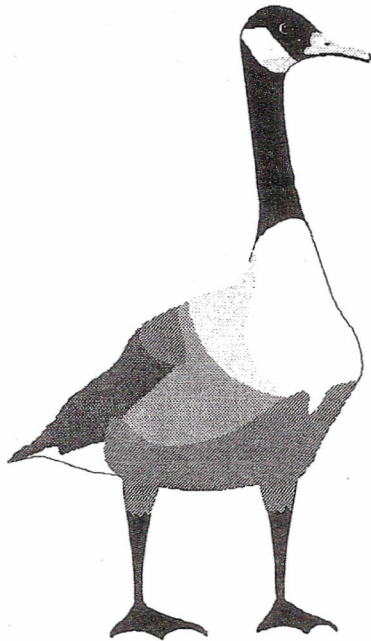
Fill in the blank with the appropriate bird name.

1. To appear to touch water without actually doing so.
2. To bend low to avoid a blow.
3. To complain.
4. To defraud.
5. To dupe.
6. To elongate, as the neck.
7. To engage in frolicsome sport.
8. To flinch.
9. To fly about looking for prey.
10. To hunt venison.
11. To imitate without understanding.
12. To lead a suit that one's partner can trump.
13. To boast.
14. To protest.
15. To raise checks (slang).
16. To scintillate rapidly.
17. To shoot at.
18. To take through the gullet.
19. To talk in a familiar manner.
20. To tie tightly.



## 1995 CAPE COD CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Jim Talin



Thirty nine observers spent 89.5 party hours and traveled a total of 436 miles to see 123 species of birds and 47,724 individual birds on December 17, 1995. This count covers an area extending from Eastham to Harwich. It was a day typical of many this winter with gray, cool weather. One bird was new to the count, the Nashville Warbler. A number of record high counts were set: Eurasian Wigeon (tied), Hooded Merganser, Cooper's Hawk (tied), Merlin (double the previous high), Eastern Screech-

Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl (tied), Red-bellied Woodpecker (tied), Downy Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Shrike, and Northern Cardinal. The lows of the count included the following birds that were missed: Am. Bittern, Ring-necked Pheasant, Killdeer, Common Snipe, and Pine Warbler.

Other highs for the count were Great Cormorant (2nd highest), Canada Goose (highest since 1976), Am. Wigeon (2nd highest), Am. Coot (highest since 1979), Great-horned Owl (2nd highest), Hairy Woodpecker (2nd highest), Am Crow (highest since 1973), Carolina Wren (2nd highest), Eastern Bluebird (1st since 1979), and Hermit Thrush (2nd highest).

Two birds and one spot remain etched in my memory after this count. Our group got about as good a view of a Red-bellied Woodpecker as you could ever want. The male was in a locust tree, as the sun shone on it, displaying all its colors, including the red belly. The colors were highlighted by their contrast with the blue sky behind the bird. One of the first birds I saw, early in the morning was a Yellow-breasted Chat which flashed into view as if to remind me how accustomed I had become to the drab winter colors. Then later in the day when we arrived at a small bog and pond in East Orleans which is one of our habitual stops, not a bird was to be seen. When the first pish was uttered, I was watching the bog which suddenly came alive as 12 Swamp Sparrows, White-throated Sparrows, Cardinals, Catbirds, Chickadees, and other birds all sprang into view in an instant.

## 1995 MID-CAPE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Jim Talin

Twenty six observers in 8 groups gathered on a partly sunny and cloudy day in late December in order to complete the 15th Mid-Cape Christmas Bird Count. Temperatures were 20-35 F with a 5-25 mph wind from the NW. There was a snow cover of 3-5 inches. Peter Trimble, the organizer of the count, suggests that when we look at the numbers tallied on our bird counts, it is important to keep in mind the variables that may affect a species presence or absence. The weather may determine how many raptors are flying, how many ducks have been frozen out, as they were this year, or how long bird counters stay out of their car and cover territory. With ice and snow, Peter points out, certain species may quickly exit our region. With high winds of a certain direction, land birds may be difficult to find, but alcids and other seabirds may be more visible. The number of observers and their efforts may be an important factor.

121 species were seen on this year's count, with a total of 28,282 individual birds. New to the count were American Oystercatcher and Saw-whet Owl. There were record highs for American Bittern, Barrow's Goldeneye, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Merlin, Long-billed Dowitcher (identifiable), Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hairy Woodpecker, Horned Lark, Blue Jay, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Northern Mockingbird, Northern Shrike, Northern Cardinal, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark and Brown-headed Cowbird. The following birds tied their high count: Northern Shoveler, Eurasian Wigeon, Red-shouldered Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Iceland Gull, Eastern Phoebe, White-breasted Nuthatch, Common Yellowthroat, and White-crowned Sparrow. Seen in significant numbers were Virginia Rail, Dunlin, Short-eared Owl, Flicker, American Robin and Sharp-tailed Sparrow.

Lists of birds can sometimes make your eyes blurry trying to read through them, thus losing their significance. For me, I never remember whether a record was set on a count or not. I usually go away from them with the memory of one or two birds that I saw and recall either because I saw them well or they were unexpected. On this count, two birds stand out in my memory. The first is a relatively common winter bird on Cape Cod, the Golden-crowned Kinglet. In a thicket behind the Columns Restaurant, after a Hermit Thrush responded to my pishing, a Kinglet came within arms reach of me, with all its colors displayed. Then later in the day, we spotted a Barrow's Goldeneye on Bass River in what was about as good a view as I've had of that bird. The memory of seeing birds like these is what keeps me coming back to Christmas Counts.

## CAPE COD LAKE & POND WATERFOWL SURVEY

Blair Nikula

### 1995 SUMMARY

The 13th annual Cape Cod Lake & Pond Waterfowl Survey was conducted on the weekend of December 2-3, 1995. For the first time in several years, the weather preceding the count was colder than normal: November's temperatures were more than 3° (F) below average. Forty-seven observers (more than ever!) censused 354 ponds, 11 more than last year's record high! A record-tying twenty nine species of waterfowl were found, totaling 12,186 individuals. This total is about 13% above the survey average.

#### Species Results

Remarkably, *nine* species were found in record high numbers this year: Pied-billed Grebe, Northern Shoveler, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, and American Coot. Two additional species, Green-winged Teal and Ruddy Duck, fell just shy of last year's record levels. No species established record lows, but noticeably down were Mute Swan, Canvasback, & scaup.

#### Noteworthy totals

**Pied-billed Grebe:** This year's record of 179 birds is almost double last year's total, and 2.5 times the 10 year average. This species has been increasing steadily since its 1989 low. **Mute Swan:** A sharp, inexplicable-but not entirely unwelcome-decline for a species that has been increasing steadily throughout the survey's history. **Northern Shoveler:** Although a fairly common bird on the ponds of South Monomoy Island (not covered on this survey), shovelers are a rare bird elsewhere on Cape Cod. This is the first year more than one bird has been found. **Gadwall:** Yet another record high-and by a wide margin-for this rapidly increasing species. As usual, the vast majority (84%) were in the mid-Cape and over a third on just one pond: Swan Pond in Dennis. **American Wigeon:** A record high and more than double the survey average. Virtually all were in Barnstable and Chatham. **Canvasback:** Sadly, another poor showing for this handsome duck, the fifth consecutive year of depressed numbers. **Ring-necked Duck:** A new high, more than double the survey average. **Common Golden-eye:** The second highest count for this late arriving species, perhaps reflecting the colder weather. **Bufflehead:** Numbers of this appealing little anatid are heading off the charts. This year's total is 600 birds more than the previous high, and about three times the numbers recorded in the first two years of the survey! **Hooded Merganser:** Yet another record for this lovely bird; numbers have increased eight-fold over 12 years! As is typical, the bulk were in Falmouth, but Muddy Pond in Eastham hosted what must have been a stunning flock of 125 birds. **Ruddy Duck:** Just a few birds below last year's record, and three times the survey average. **American Coot:** A record shattering total of 296, concluding a remarkable rebound from a decline almost to the point of nonexistence just three years ago.

For the first time in the history of the survey, Bufflehead (2784 birds) topped the list of most common species, and by a wide margin. Scaup (both species combined = 2144 birds) were a distant second, followed by Mallard (1619) and American Black Duck (1067). These five species combined comprised about 62% of the overall total. Among the unusual species found this year were a Red-throated Loon in Sandwich, two Horned Grebes in Mashpee, a Blue-winged Teal in Barnstable, three Eurasian Wigeons in Chatham and Barnstable, and a solitary Surf Scoter in Falmouth.

#### Town Results

Falmouth, the perennial leader, as usual outdistanced all other towns by a wide margin, with 4081 birds or 33% of the Capewide total. Yarmouth was second again this year with 1623 (13%) birds, followed by Barnstable at 1446 (12%) birds and Dennis at 1042 (9%). Barnstable's 24 species was by far the best variety, followed by Yarmouth and Falmouth with 18 species each. Wellfleet, with 34 birds total, regained its position at the bottom of the heap, after losing that cherished position to Bourne last year!

#### Pond Results

As always, those ponds with the highest totals were those with the highest numbers of scaup. Top pond this year, both in number and variety, was one of the perennial best, Salt Pond in Falmouth where 1295 birds of 13 species were counted. Second this year was Swan Pond in Dennis with 938 birds of 10 species. Twelve species were present on Wequaquet Lake in Barnstable, while Upper Shawme Pond in Sandwich and Sider's Pond in Falmouth both hosted 11 species.

#### Participation

As noted above, participation in this worthwhile endeavor established another new record; sincere thanks to each and every one of this year's 47 birders, most of whom have been loyal participants for several years now and some since the very first year. Peter Trimble again took the time to organize the four Upper Cape towns, to the great relief of this compiler! We were joined once again by several off-Cape birders, and we offer special thanks to Steve Arena, Tom Aversa, Dennis Oliver and Polly Stevens.

#### Participants

Steve Arena, Tom Aversa, Elizabeth & John Berg, Carl Bergfors, Frank Caruso, Kathleen Casey, Sally Clifton, Dick Comeau, Ruth Connaughton, Don Dyer, Green Brier Nature Center, Rich Hall, Seward Highly, Kyle Jones, Phil Kyle, George Martin, Gemma Mathews, Kathy & Rives McGinley, Stauffer Miller, Valerie Miller, Blair Nikula, Tom Noonan, Dennis Oliver, Cathy Paris, Alida Pellegrini-Toole, Bob Prescott, John Redfern, Diane Reynolds, Carol & Don Scott, Jackie Sones, Betsey Ann Stepney, Polly Stevens, Marilyn Sullivan, Bill Swift, Jim & Sue Talin, Aurele Thomas, Charlie & Susan Thompson, Jeremiah Trimble, Peter Trimble, Jean Turnbull, Mark Tuttle, and Ellie Winslow.

# CAPE COD POND AND WATERFOWL SURVEY

# 1984-1995 SUMMARY

Species	Year:												Change 10 year 1995	
	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Av.	vs. Av.
Red-throated Loon	0	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	4	0	1	1	-
Common Loon	3	8	5	4	5	13	7	20	6	10	5	11	8	41%
Pied-billed Grebe	9	57	63	160	56	42	43	60	63	80	95	179	74	143%
Horned Grebe	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	-
Tundra Swan	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	-
Mute Swan	64	75	118	177	149	176	137	261	226	247	233	161	169	-5%
White-fronted Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	-
Snow Goose	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	-
Canada Goose	1246	1504	1165	973	1291	1676	961	659	476	757	792	1037	1045	-1%
Wood Duck	0	1	2	2	7	20	0	3	1	0	2	3	3	0
Green-winged Teal	31	38	32	43	47	15	30	11	14	37	56	55	32	71%
Am. Black Duck	1497	1044	1008	1325	1160	1461	2004	1047	668	685	2184	1067	1280	-17%
Mallard	1745	1731	1617	1789	1596	1901	1911	1626	1180	1256	1465	1619	1619	0%
Northern Pintail	49	91	67	61	35	25	42	32	27	5	26	35	42	-16%
Blue-winged Teal	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	-
Northern Shoveler	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	0	-
Gadwall	14	11	18	72	38	95	153	81	56	150	183	261	79	230%
Eurasian Wigeon	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	5	1	1	4	3	1	-
American Wigeon	35	23	38	51	95	159	86	92	63	61	121	176	75	135%
Canvasback	812	1169	983	981	933	486	727	141	213	238	115	175	618	-72%
Redhead	0	2	37	26	14	17	7	6	2	4	0	1	10	-
Tufted Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	-
Ring-necked Duck	201	168	155	175	73	310	109	272	52	295	107	358	174	105%
Greater Scaup	30	151	368	2756	250	322	907	473	293	170	1245	438	633	-
Lesser Scaup	10	6	94	28	15	2	4	12	25	161	46	24	37	-
scaup (species)	1787	2645	3237	1578	3395	3021	1963	1732	2370	1782	590	1682	2191	-
scaup (total)	1827	2802	3699	4362	3660	3345	2874	2217	2688	2113	1881	2144	2861	-25%
Common Eider	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Oldsquaw	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Surf Scoter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	-
White-winged Scoter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	-
Common Goldeneye	145	178	234	241	170	241	267	338	186	322	292	325	238	37%
Bufflehead	939	819	1149	1632	1724	1362	1645	2173	1736	1772	2078	2784	1548	80%
Hooded Merganser	100	324	112	383	381	310	720	567	469	444	718	867	412	111%
Common Merganser	85	291	84	102	171	470	143	515	243	88	424	285	238	20%
Red-breasted Merganser	24	82	62	41	112	191	105	506	86	190	99	287	136	111%
Ruddy Duck	10	18	14	28	7	2	2	13	3	7	59	47	15	217%
Common Moorhen	1	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
American Coot	175	76	38	64	20	45	15	29	3	8	171	296	59	406%
<b>TOTAL NUMBER</b>	<b>9097</b>	<b>10521</b>	<b>10702</b>	<b>12695</b>	<b>11747</b>	<b>12364</b>	<b>11996</b>	<b>10678</b>	<b>8466</b>	<b>8777</b>	<b>11111</b>	<b>12186</b>	<b>10741</b>	<b>13%</b>
# of Ponds	213	239	23	263	284	285	327	317	305	341	343	354	281	26%
Birds/Pond	43	44	45	48	41	43	37	34	28	26	32	34	37	-11%
# of Species	23	29	25	26	26	25	28	27	28	27	26	29	26	10%
# of Observers	25	31	26	32	35	35	39	38	37	39	43	47	34	36%

## PROGRAMS/ MEETINGS

Ruth Connaughton

On Monday evening, **March 11**, at 7:45 pm at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History on Route 6A in Brewster, the Club will hold its *Annual Members' Night*. Please bring your best or worst slides to share with other Club members. Art work or any other bird related item may also be displayed. Call Ruth Connaughton at 432-1580 for more details.

On Monday evening, **April 8**, at 7:45 pm at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History on Route 6A in Brewster, Richard B. Cech of Brooklyn, New York, will present a slide program on *Seabirds and Marine Mammals*. Since childhood, Mr. Cech has been a natural history photographer and has photos published in several leading natural history publications. He has also written many articles on natural history and is currently editor of *The Anglewing*, the North American Butterfly Association publication. In addition, Mr. Cech is a natural history trip leader for both bird and butterfly watching.

## LETTERS

Dominican Republic

*Greetings to All,*

I am well and happy in the Dominican Republic. My best project is being part of a new Club de Observadores de Aves Anabel Dod (she wrote the book on DR birds), helping them get organized and enjoying field trips. I am totally thrilled by the combination of yellowlegs, sanderlings and flamingos. There are also several endemic species to keep things interesting. Greetings.

See you next fall.

Kate Wallace

## NEW MEMBERS

December 1995-February 1996

Ed Lilley, Harwichport; Robert Vander Pyl, Falmouth; Jonathan Carlson & An Marshall, North Chatham; Mary Lou & Sheldon Brier, South Orleans; Laurie Bennett, Belmont; Joanne Harrington, East Sandwich; John Macedo, New Bedford; Dan Crosby, Wilton, CT; Ellen & Charles Ummel, South Yarmouth; Marion Harcourt, Harwich; Laurinda & Paul Morway, North Falmouth; Kathleen Katzenbach, West Falmouth; Diane Boretos, West Falmouth; Joan & Bob Flaherty, East Orleans.

## FIELD TRIPS

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### March

**Saturday, March 9th:** Falmouth. Meet at Locust Street head of the bike path. 1:00 pm. Alison Robb, 540-2408.

**Thursday, March 14th:** Harwich Conservation Area. Meet at Bell's Neck parking lot. 9:00 am. Ruth Connaughton, 432-1580. Marge Marion, 432-0988.

**Friday, March 22th:** Sandwich. Meet at Stop & Shop parking lot, Route 6A. 9:00 am. Bessie Tirrell, 432-9248.

**Tuesday, March 26th:** Pocasset and Monument Beach area of Bourne. Meet at Four Ponds Conservation parking area, Barlow's Landing Road. 8:30 am. Stauffer Miller, 362-3384.

### April

**Tuesday, April 2nd:** Marstons Mills Woodcock Walk. Meet at Crooked Cartway parking lot (across from Old Mill Rd, off Race Lane, west of the airport). Meet one half an hour before sunset as published in the Cape Cod Times. Walk will take about one hour. Mark Tuttle, 362-3015.

**Saturday, April 6th:** Falmouth. Meet at Locust Street head of the bike path. 10:00 am. Alison Robb, 540-2408.

**Friday, April 12th:** Sandwich. Meet at Stop & Shop parking lot, Route 6A. 8:00 am. Bessie Tirrell, 432-9248.

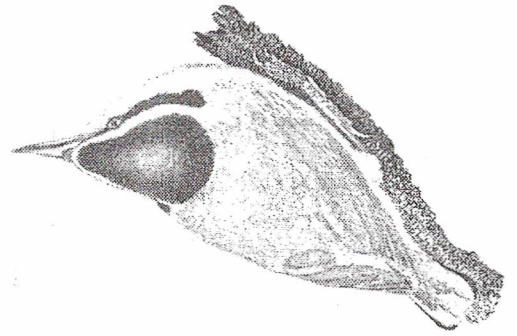
**Sunday April 14th:** Eastham, Fort Hill. Meet in the lower parking lot at 9:00 am. Art King 255-8919.

**Friday April 26th:** Orleans. Meet at the South Orleans General Store on Route 28, 8:00 am. Kathy McGinley, 255-4740.

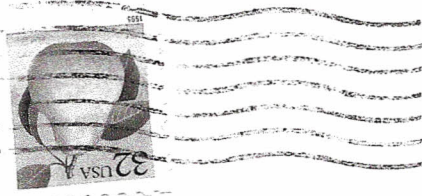
**Saturday, April 27th:** West Barnstable. Meet at John Jenkins Conservation Area, Church Street, West Barnstable. (Church Street begins at West Parish Church on Route 149, or take Parker Rd. off Route 6A.) 8:00 am. Debbie Fitton, 362-5923.

## BREEDING BIRD SURVEYS

Any birder who would like to help Peter Trimble and his students conduct breeding bird surveys in the Sandwich area, please get in touch with him at 477-3847. It is not too difficult, and it is great fun for the students.



Frank Caruso  
Barbara Steller  
17 Freedom Rd  
Forestdale, MA 02644-1725



Cape Cod Bird Club  
The Cape Cod Museum Of Natural History  
PO BOX 1710, Brewster, MA 02631



## MORE ON THE HOUSE FINCH DISEASE

In 1994 bird watchers and wildlife biologists alike noticed a mysterious disease afflicting House Finches in eastern North America. The disease, an eye infection caused by the bacterium *Mycoplasma gallisepticum*, turned out to be harmless to humans but sometimes fatal to the finches.

Concerned for the health of bird populations, scientists wanted to know how fast the disease was spreading. Cornell Lab of Ornithology is trying to gather more facts through its Feeder Watch program. To help you may have to enroll in this program, which costs money. But for more information, or if you would like to help by enrolling in the House Finch Disease Survey, call them at 1-800-843-2473 or 607-254-2440.

*Or write to...*

**Bird Education Program**  
Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology  
150 Sapsucker Woods Road  
Ithaca, New York 14850  
E-mail: [BirdEducation@cornell.edu](mailto:BirdEducation@cornell.edu)

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Richard D. Hall*

For many men, there seem to be elements of the primal hunt, the skill of tracking, and keeping score. For women, the experience may be more sublime, aesthetic or spiritual. Whether or not any of this makes one a better person is, I suppose, highly arguable. At its worst, chasing after birds is enjoyably innocuous. But it most assuredly can be more. When done well, it cannot help but awaken one to the rhythms and harmony of nature's cycles. To have a sense of when the tide is high, the changing angle of the sun, or from which quarter the wind blows, may not at first blush seem like much, but it is a fragile sense, easily lost in the near frantic pace of modern life. To the extent birding enhances this awareness, it is an eminently worthwhile activity. It might even keep those bones and joints feeling younger for years to come.