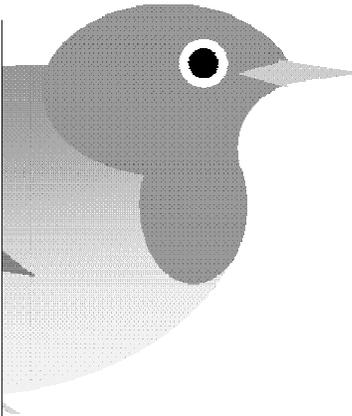
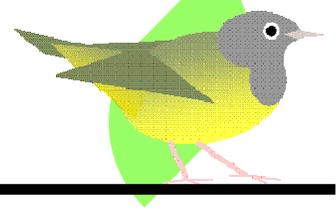


COA BULLETIN



From the editor:

I can always use short articles and announcements of relevant events. So please don't hesitate to provide such material or to suggest a specific topic to be covered in a future issue.

Regards,

Andrew Dasinger

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HELP MAKE THE COA'S NDDDB PROJECT A MAJOR SUCCESS IN 2006!

As some of you know, the COA has been working with the Connecticut DEP to support the state's Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) Project over the past several years. Basically, our involvement has been to try to increase the number of reports of Connecticut's "state listed" avian species (Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern categories) to the NDDDB. We hope that you will join us this year and participate in making 2006 the best year ever for COA member participation. It's really a very simple and easy thing to do and it makes a great contribution to conserving "at risk" bird species in our state!

The Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) is the central repository for information on the biology, population status and locations, and threats to Connecticut's "state listed" species. When the state, towns and private landowners are making land-use plans and decisions, they need to go through an environmental review process that involves consideration of protecting threatened species and their habitats. The NDDDB is the official source on the locations of these threatened species in this environmental review process. If there isn't any data in the NDDDB about a threatened species at a particular location, then this fact isn't considered in the review and the threatened species and its habitat could end up being harmed.

So this is where we, as COA members and Connecticut birders, can really help. By going out birding during the breeding season and reporting our "state listed" species findings back to the NDDDB, we can really help protect the homes and habitats of these important birds. All the details on how to do this can be found in the NDDDB section of the COA website (www.ctbirding.org).

This information has become increasingly important now that Connecticut's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy has been approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. With this approved Strategy, Connecticut's DEP will now have more federal funding to conduct conservation projects and more of this can go to bird conservation if they have better information on where the "state listed" avian species are located. (For more information on the Strategy, visit www.dep.state.ct.us/burnatr/wildlife/geninfo/fedaid/cwcs/home.htm)

(continued on page 2)

NDDB PROJECT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

In order to encourage your participation in 2006, we will be continuing the incentive program that we initiated last year. We are offering \$50 gift certificates to the four COA members who submit the highest number of acceptable reports to the NDDB project in the upcoming breeding season. (A minimum of three reports is necessary to qualify.) These gift certificates will be redeemable at both the Audubon Shop in Madison and Fat Robin in Hamden. Last year's winners were Renee Baade, Buzz Devine, and Paul Cianfaglione.

Unfortunately, last year was not a good one for COA member participation with only six people providing reports to the COA for the NDDB. There are several possible reasons for this and hopefully these have been fixed for the 2006 season. We just hope that it's not due to our members' lack of interest in helping our state's at-risk species. The "bottom line" is that the COA Conservation Committee really needs your help so that we can make 2006 the best year ever for this extremely important joint COA-CT DEP NDDB project! It really is one of the top things that we all can do to conserve Connecticut's threatened birds.

Good birding and many thanks in advance for all your help!

Ben Olewine
COA Conservation Committee Chairman

NDDB COORDINATORS ARE READY TO HELP

Coordinators for the CT NDDB project are Renee Baade and Randy Domina. We want to be able to help anyone interested in collecting and reporting NDDB data. In order to be the most effective, this project, like any other, will take a joint effort from many people. Many of you signed up at the annual COA meeting in March and others have come forward to us directly. We will be mailing out information packets soon if you have not received them already. After personally trying to cover a lot of ground last year alone, we know how much more effective a group gathering data can be. We look forward to working with anyone interested in this project.

Renee Baade, 46 Obtuse Rd, Newtown, CT 06470
Phone 203 270 9953 E-mail: rbaade@juno.com
Randy Domina, 248 Mansion Road, Cheshire, CT 06410
Phone: 203 271 3123 E-mail: rhexp@hotmail.com



I RATHER LIKE IT!

ANOTHER GREAT COA ANNUAL MEETING

The COA annual meeting held at Middlesex Community College on March 21 was well attended by birders eager to hear about a wide range of bird topics from an outstanding lineup of presenters.

Michael Male and Judy Fieth opened the program with an engaging multi-media presentation on their experiences filming bird life across the U.S. They took us behind the scenes, showing how much time and energy is required to capture high-quality images of birds in their habitats. The results are nothing short of amazing. If you missed this presentation, Michael and Judy produce and sell DVD guides to warblers, sparrows, and shorebirds, which can be purchased from local shops or the internet.

Photo credit: Larry Reiter



Jerry Connolly in the marketplace

Photo credit: Larry Reiter



Tim Gallagher at the podium

Tim Gallagher, well-known for his role in the re-discovery of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Arkansas, led the audience through his experience and the continuing efforts to gain additional evidence of the woodpecker's presence, beyond the short, blurry video that was captured by accident. The environmental conditions of the swamps and bayous obviously make for a challenging search process, but it's apparent they are doing everything they can to maximize their opportunities for further confirmation that the world awaits.

Louis Bevier, after receiving the Mabel Osgood Wright award (see accompanying article), covered several topics in his presentation, starting with a scorecard on the accuracy of predictions he and some other CT birders made 10 years ago on which new species would be added to the state list. Toward the end of his talk, he provided a thorough analysis and interpretation of the video recording that was given as conclusive evidence on the existence of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker by the Cornell team. Based on this analysis, Louis and others favor the alternative hypothesis that the filmed bird is actually a Pileated.

Richard Prum of Yale shifted gears to a more academic (but by no means dry) tone and took us into the realm of bird coloration and birds' sensory perception of color. Research shows that birds receive considerably more information than we do when viewing other birds, because they have additional receptors that detect a range of ultra-violet wave lengths. Since we lack these receptors, it is impossible for us to imagine what birds truly are seeing! There is more work to be done to improve our understanding of visual perception in birds, but it's clear that their enhanced vision plays an important role in how birds interact with one another.

Outside of the auditorium, the marketplace provided ample opportunities to socialize and to purchase artwork, books, videos, and equipment. The day concluded with the raffle and silent auction, where the winners returned home with some great prizes. The high attendance confirms that the Annual Meeting has become an event not to be missed. Of course, this success is due to the tireless efforts of a dedicated team of organizers taking care of all the details, all of whom deserve a big thank-you.



The 2006 Mabel Osgood Wright Award

By Betty Kleiner



In 1986, a young man arrived in Connecticut (to be more specific, in the Storrs area) from Santa Barbara, California. Most of us in Connecticut's birding world were not aware of the ornithological knowledge that this man was bringing with him.

Louis was quickly embraced by the birding community in the Storrs area, where, among other things, he assisted Winnie Burkett with her banding station at Lot W. Her recent comment was "that the best part of that was how much information he shared—he knows so much—but never made one feel like they lacked knowledge that they should have had."

Since we were in our last year of gathering information for the Breeding Bird Atlas, George Clark quickly put him to work helping to complete some of those blocks where there was a shortage of workers. During the Hartford Audubon Society's 1986 Christmas Bird Count, Louis spotted a Lesser Black-backed Gull while driving I-84 through East Hartford, and it was reported to the compiler, Jay Kaplan. Since this was a rarity for the Hartford area, Jay - always the skeptic - made the comment "who the heck is Louis Bevier." Louis was contacted and sent Jay a very detailed drawing of the Lesser Black-backed Gull. We also discovered that Louis had written a number of species accounts for the Audubon Master Guide to Birding. Louis became a member of the Connecticut Avian Records Committee and was its Secretary, sharing ideas and information from the California Rare Records Committee, of which he was also a member. He was also appointed to the COA Board to fill a vacancy in 1989.

About this time, *The Connecticut Warbler* was being revamped, and Louis volunteered to work with the Kleiners to incorporate changes and bring in new ideas. His work made the editing process a great deal easier. He also wrote articles and helped get a 10-year index published. In the fall of 1999, he was appointed to the Editorial Advisory Board of *The Connecticut Warbler*, and still serves in that capacity.

As the data had been gathered for the Breeding Bird Atlas, there was an urgent need to get it published, and Louis took on the job of editor—a huge job completed in 1994.

Louis was also a contributor to the book *Birds of Storrs, Connecticut and Vicinity*.

Alas, Louis left Connecticut in 1995, moving to Philadelphia, where he worked on the multi-volume *Birds of America*. He then moved with his family to Maine, where he continued writing and editing the species accounts for *Birds of America*.

It is my privilege and pleasure to present the Mabel Osgood Wright Award to Louis Bevier.

DAVID SIBLEY AT AUDUBON

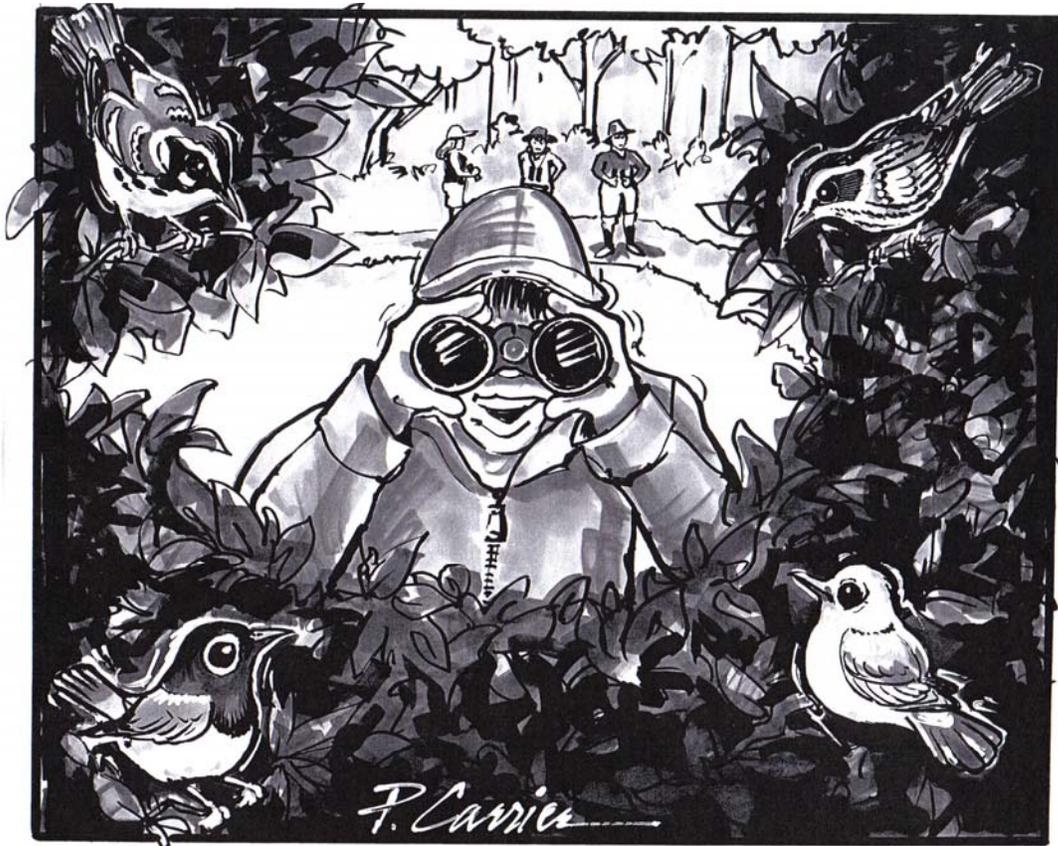
Meet David Sibley!

Bird Watching in the 21st Century

Saturday, June 3, 2006 - 4:00 p.m.

Sharon Country Club, Amenia Union Road

Called the successor to John James Audubon and Roger Tory Peterson, the renowned bird artist and author's highly acclaimed field guides to birds have been praised as "monumental," "far-reaching" and "indispensable." David Sibley will display select pieces of art at a pre-lecture reception and speak on Bird Watching in the 21st Century. Tickets are \$35 and \$50 for the pre-reception and lecture; \$100 for the pre-reception, lecture and post-reception with David Sibley. Seating is limited, call 860-364-0520 ext 18 to reserve. To benefit Audubon Sharon and the Housatonic Valley Association.



NOTHING HERE, LET'S MOVE ON....

CONNECTICUT BIRD-AIRCRAFT STRIKES

BY ANDREW DASINGER

Birds face many natural and manmade hazards during migration, the breeding season, and while on wintering grounds. It's important to collect and use quantitative data to evaluate the relative importance of these hazards, particularly manmade ones that can be mitigated to varying degrees. In most cases, however, these data are unavailable or spotty at best.

One hazard to birds is collisions with aircraft, especially as they take off and land. Unlike other hazards, a substantial amount of data are available due to requirements for data collection established by the Federal Aviation Administration. While these incidents are probably not one of the most important manmade sources of bird mortality (the data are collected to understand risks to aircraft), they still deserve a look. For example, certain rare and uncommon birds find airports and their surroundings attractive nesting, roosting, and foraging areas, so might be at a disproportionately greater risk from aircraft collisions. Data on bird-aircraft strikes in Connecticut for the 10-year period of 1996-2006 are shown in the table below.

CT Bird-Aircraft Strikes—1996-2006

Species	CT Strikes	Total US Strikes	CT % of US total
GREEN HERON	1	5	20%
CANADA GOOSE	29	699	4%
GEESE	9	211	4%
AMERICAN BLACK DUCK	1	12	8%
MALLARD	5	295	2%
DUCKS (unidentified)	3	374	1%
AMERICAN KESTREL	6	1146	1%
MERLIN	1	21	5%
PEREGRINE FALCON	4	72	6%
FALCONS (unidentified)	1	24	4%
NORTHERN HARRIER	1	47	2%
RED-TAILED HAWK	1	631	0%
OSPREY	5	96	5%
HAWKS (unidentified)	5	570	1%
VULTURES	1	149	1%
TURKEY VULTURE	1	208	0%
WILD TURKEY	1	30	3%
AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER	1	25	4%
KILLDEER	3	729	0%
SANDPIPERS (unidentified)	1	98	1%
SHOREBIRDS (unidentified)	2	18	11%
GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL	1	55	2%
HERRING GULL	35	445	8%
RING-BILLED GULL	2	532	0%
GULLS (unidentified)	65	2824	2%
ROCK PIGEON	11	951	1%
MOURNING DOVE	11	1730	1%
SNOWY OWL	1	31	3%
GREAT HORNED OWL	1	52	2%

Species	CT Strikes	Total US Strikes	CT % of US total
CHIMNEY SWIFT	2	148	1%
WOODPECKERS (unidentified)	1	1	100%
WHITE-EYED VIREO	1	14	7%
CROWS	2	123	2%
HORNED LARK	19	584	3%
BARN SWALLOW	3	475	1%
TREE SWALLOW	4	99	4%
SWALLOWS (unidentified)	4	310	1%
WRENS (unidentified)	1	24	4%
EUROPEAN STARLING	19	1176	2%
BLACKPOLL WARBLER	1	3	33%
CARDINALS, BUNTINGS, SPARROWS	1	28	4%
SPARROWS (unidentified)	44	1193	4%
SNOW BUNTING	2	72	3%
GRACKLES	1	44	2%
BLACKBIRDS (unidentified)	5	550	1%
FINCHES (unidentified)	1	32	3%
HOUSE SPARROW	1	35	3%
PERCHING BIRDS (unidentified)	2	307	1%
UNKNOWN BIRD	54	16858	0%
UNKNOWN BIRD - LARGE	4	1128	0%
UNKNOWN BIRD - MEDIUM	22	3639	1%
UNKNOWN BIRD - SMALL	78	10264	1%
TOTAL	481	49187	1%

Source: FAA National Wildlife Strike Database (Level IIIA) - Version 7.7 dated 5-18-06

It's not too surprising that only one woodpecker is listed, since airports generally lack trees, but this is the only documented woodpecker in the entire U.S. that had an unfortunate encounter with an airplane (true, there could be a number of woodpeckers buried in the "unknown bird" data)! Hawks, falcons, and owls are prominent on the list. Although the numbers are low, populations of these species are small to begin with, so six Am. Kestrels and four Peregrine Falcons seem too many. Also, one would hope that the unidentified sparrows were not Grasshopper Sparrows and the unidentified sandpipers were not Upland Sandpipers, grassland specialists that today are most likely to be found only on airports. How are the birds identified, given that some will have passed through the turbines of a massive jet engine? Remains, no matter how small, are sent to the Feather Identification Lab at the Smithsonian for a species determination. Those interested in further information on this topic can find additional details at: http://wildlife-mitigation.tc.faa.gov/public_html/.

SUMMER WORKSHOPS

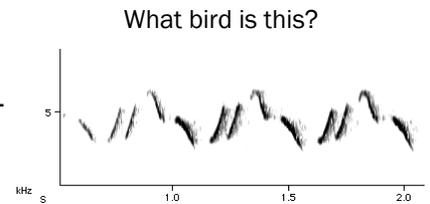
As in past years, COA is sponsoring two summer workshops:

Birding by Ear, 7 AM, June 3, Bent of the River Sanctuary, Southbury, CT
Leaders: Greg Hanisek, Roy Harvey, Randy Domina

Sandy Point



Shorebird Workshop, August 19, starting at Sandy Point, West Haven, CT (see COA web site for additional details as they become available)



COA MEMBERSHIP FORM

JOIN COA FOR THE BEST OF BIRDING IN CT

New Member Renewal Gift

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail address* _____

COA is always in need of volunteer help. If you are interested, please check the areas below that you would like to know more about::

Computer skills Events Field trips Finance Workshops Science

Membership Category:

- Student (\$15)
 Individual (\$25)
 Family (\$35)
 Contributing (\$50)
 Donor (\$75)
 Benefactor (\$100)
 Lifetime (\$1000; payable in 3 annual installments)

The COA Bulletin is the quarterly newsletter of the Connecticut Ornithological Association, published in February, May, September, and December. Please submit materials for the next issue by August 20, 2006, to:

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Download the COA Bulletin in color at www.ctbirding.org

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<i>Electronics</i>	Dori Sosensky
<i>Finance</i>	Fred Schroeder
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<i>Nominating</i>	
<i>Program</i>	Jerry Connolly
<i>Connecticut Warbler</i>	Greg Hanisek
<i>COA Bulletin</i>	Andrew Dasinger
<i>Rare Records</i>	Jay Kaplan
<i>Refuge Relations</i>	Dori Sosensky
<i>Science Advisory</i>	Milan Bull

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