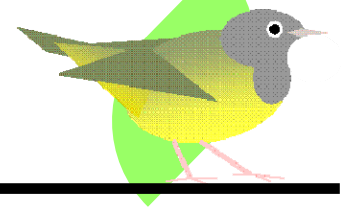


COA BULLETIN



CTBIRDS:

ELECTRONIC FORUM IS FLYING STRONG

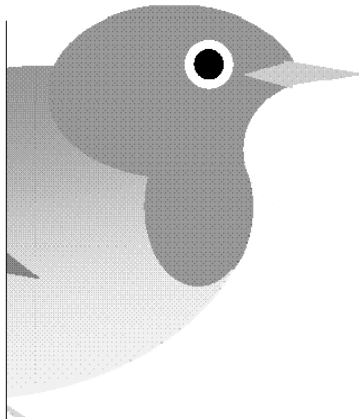
BY ANDREW DASINGER

CTBirds is an e-mail-based forum launched by COA on February 23, 2007. It allows users to:

- Share information about bird sightings in Connecticut
- Review recent bird sighting reports and rare bird alerts from across the state
- Learn (and ask) about places to look for birds in Connecticut
- Discuss and debate the occurrence, distribution, identification, and ecology of Connecticut birds.

Since its inception, CTBirds has proven to be very popular among Connecticut's birding community, with users engaging in thought-provoking discussion and debate on a variety of subjects, notifying birders of rare and uncommon sightings, sharing tips on where to find birds, announcing events, alerting others of conservation and data needs, and discussing some of the finer points of identification, among other things. Currently, over 330 individuals subscribe to CTBirds.

Based on the archives through September 11, which correspond to the first 200 days of activity, a grand total of 2911 postings were made to CTBirds. During the week of April 30 to May 6, which coincides with what many consider to be the start of neotropical songbird migration and also happened to feature the appearance of some interesting birds (such as a Purple Gallinule), there was a peak of 256 postings. Predictably, some of the summer



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12 Sep **Westbrook Yellow-breasted Chat** ["COMINS, Patrick"]
 12 Sep **Red-headed Woodpecker** ["Greg Hanisek"]
 12 Sep **CAS Milford Point** []
 12 Sep **Inland Stilt Sandpiper, plus** ["paul cianfaglione"]
 12 Sep **Possible Parasitic Jaeger at Lighthouse** [Roy Harvey]
 12 Sep **Re: Hawkwatch Forecast - Excellent** ["COMINS, Patrick"]
 11 Sep **Hawkwatch Forecast - Excellent** [REBECCA I HOROWITZ]
 11 Sep **Re: Birding - the enjoyment of...** []
 11 Sep **Hammonasset 9/11** []
 11 Sep **Re: Red Knot** []
 11 Sep **Re: 9/11 - Sandy Point** []
 11 Sep **9/11 - Sandy Point** ["Nick Bonomo"]
 11 Sep **Re: thoughts on guides** ["Peregrine Information Consultants"]
 11 Sep **thoughts on guides** [Carrier Graphics]

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months have seen lower levels of activity, but not a day has gone by without at least several interesting postings.

One can always see what's been posted to CTBirds without subscribing by visiting such sites as www.birdingonthe.net or www.virtualbirder.com, but subscribers have the advantage of being able to receive the postings by e-mail as soon as they are issued as well as being able to contribute postings of their own and becoming actively engaged. All the information on subscribing to and using CTBirds is at http://lists.ctbirding.org/mailman/listinfo/ctbirds_lists.ctbirding.org. There's also a convenient link on the COA home page (www.ctbirding.org).

CTBirds is clearly here to stay, an invaluable resource to birders of all skill levels and degrees of interest. Special thanks to Roy Harvey for setting up this service and serving as moderator of CTBirds.

TWO HABITAT CONSERVATION PROGRAMS: USDA WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM AND CT DEP LANDOWNER INCENTIVE PROGRAM

2008 Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), administered by the USDA, is intended to help landowners implement practices to maintain or establish wildlife habitat. It will reimburse participants up to 75% of the cost for planned conservation practices. Typically, contracts are 5 to 10 years long. At least one cost-share practice must be started within the first 12 months after signing the contract. There is no maximum funding cap. Applications are funded on a competitive basis, statewide, and are dependent on available funding. Applications are being accepted until November 2, 2007.

Additional information on requirements and who to contact are available at:
<http://www.ct.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip/whip.html>

CT DEP Landowner Incentive Program

The Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) provides technical advice and cost assistance to landowners for habitat management that will result in the protection, restoration, reclamation, enhancement, and maintenance of habitats that support fish, wildlife and plant species considered to be at risk. Interested landowners will need to apply to the Wildlife Division using the LIP application form. The LIP Program Coordinator will review all applications for program compliance. Applications will be ranked based on an on-site project/habitat evaluation conducted by the Wildlife Division, considering the current value of the property for wildlife and the potential of the project to benefit LIP designated at-risk species, priority habitats, and imperiled natural communities. Funds will be committed based on rank, funding availability, and the recommendations of the LIP Project Committee. LIP can fund up to 75% of the cost of an approved project, and the landowner and/or partnering conservation group must provide the matching funds and/or in-kind services.

Additional information at: http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2723&q=325734&depNav_GID=1655

WINTER IRRUPTIVE FORECAST: GROSBEAKS, PURPLE FINCHES, AND REDPOLLS EXPECTED TO PUSH SOUTH

ANDREW DASINGER

Ron Pittaway of Ontario Field Ornithologists has been issuing winter finch forecasts for the past seven winters, and has recently published his 2007-2008 forecast (see <http://ca.geocities.com/larry.neily@rogers.com/pittaway-new.htm>). In these informative forecasts (the full text is full of interesting details), he carefully reviews the status of food crops across the ranges of winter finch species, other irruptive passerines (for example, Red-breasted Nuthatch and Bohemian Waxwing), and northern owls, based on input from Canadian birders and the staff of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Considering expected food availability and current reports on irruptive species, Ron analyzes what each species might do in the coming winter.

As stated in the title, Grosbeaks (Pine and Evening), Purple Finches and Redpolls are expected to move south, suggesting that Connecticut might see these species in greater numbers this year. Most coniferous and deciduous trees have very poor seed crops in much of Ontario and western Quebec.

Pine Grosbeaks are an infrequent winter visitor to Connecticut; however, crops of native mountain ash berries are poor across the boreal zone, so they are expected to wander, potentially south of the Canadian border, seeking crabapples or planted European mountain ash berries. At feeders, they prefer sunflower seeds.

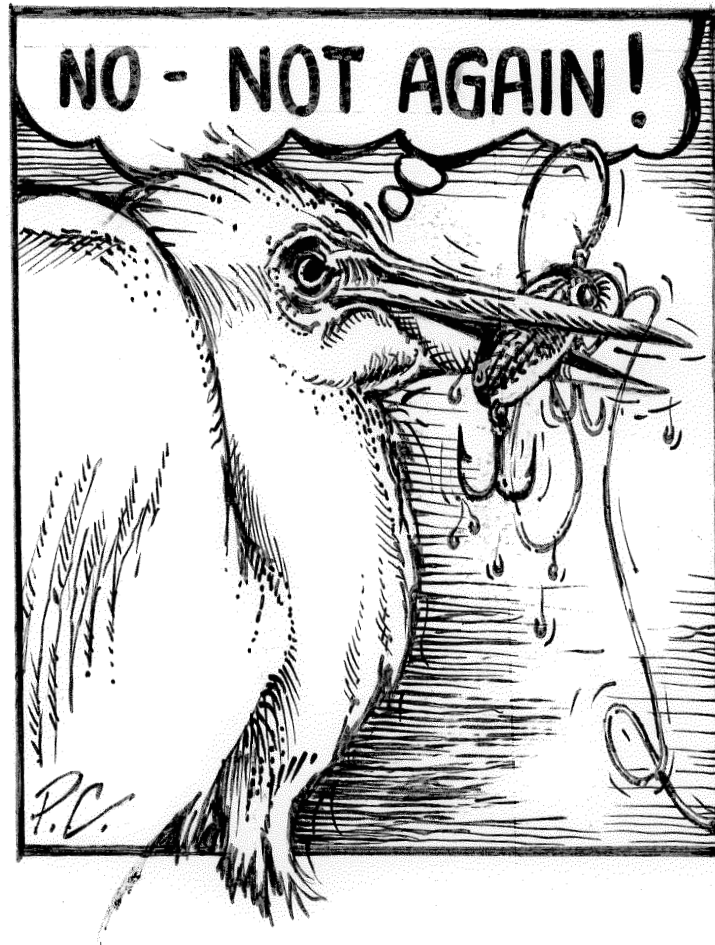
Evening Grosbeaks used to be regular winter visitors in Connecticut, but not so today. It is thought that their decline is related to the decrease in large outbreaks of spruce budworm since the early 1980s. Again, according to the 2007-2008 winter finch forecast, due to poor tree seed crops in the boreal forest this year, they are likely to wander south in search of food. (Note: a probable Evening Grosbeak was reported on 9/16 at Booth Hill in West Hartland, along with 3 Pine Siskins).

Purple Finches are being reported by numerous observers this fall, so the movement of this species seems to be well underway. Whether these birds stick around for the winter is a different question. Ron Pittaway suggests that few Purple Finches will stay behind in southern Ontario. The same scenario could apply to Connecticut.

Redpolls are expected to have a big flight this year, since birch and alder seed crops are very poor in most of Ontario. Check your thistle feeders!

The report suggests that crossbills and siskins are not likely stage a significant southward incursion, since many have already headed west or east where cone crops are abundant. However, it's worth noting that there have been a couple of reports of Red Crossbills in Connecticut in the past few weeks.

Of the non-finch irruptive passerines, we are clearly seeing a large movement of Red-breasted Nuthatches this year. I heard one at my house in South Glastonbury on the 4th of July, and I now see that they have reached all the way to the Gulf of Mexico (Dauphin Island). As winter progresses, we should also be on the lookout for Bohemian Waxwings, which are also expected to wander this year due to poor berry crops up north.



COA SPARROW WORKSHOP - OCTOBER 6TH

Where: Barn Island Wildlife Management Area

When: Saturday, October 6, 8–11 a.m.

Attend the COA Sparrow Workshop to learn the basics as well as the finer points of sparrow identification. Look for additional details on this workshop on the COA web site. The variety of habitats at Barn Island should result in a high diversity and numbers of sparrows (plus other good birds at this coastal hotspot).



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Although we have no confirmed Asian H5N1 in North America, we did have a number of Low Path H5N1 on the Continent, including some in CT. This year we are putting added emphasis onto targeted surveillance of mortality events. To that end, we have delineating a number of 'high risk' areas throughout the state that we will be conducting weekly surveys of for dead birds.

Be on the lookout for dead birds (gulls, shorebirds, waterfowl), and report those dead birds to me or through the CTFluwatch dead bird website <http://www.cfwwildbirdmortalityreporting.ct.gov>

WE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN SONGBIRD MORTALITIES FOR THIS. We will make every effort to come and get any dead birds, BUT THESE NEED TO BE IN REASONABLE CONDITION.

Min T. Huang, Migratory Gamebird Program Leader CT DEP min.huang@po.state.ct.us
391 RT 32
N. Franklin CT 06254
860-642-7239, ext 118 (p)
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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 November 15, 2007, to:

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

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<i>Finance</i>	Steve Oresman
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<i>Workshops</i>	Randy Domina
<i>Annual Meeting</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

Visit COA on the web
at www.ctbirding.org

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