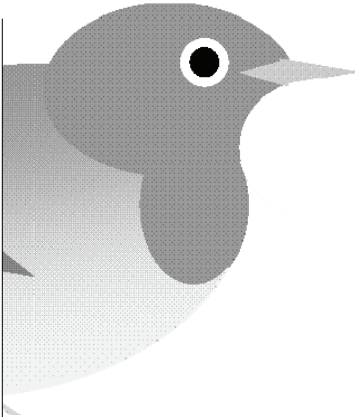
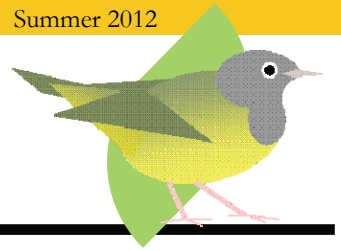
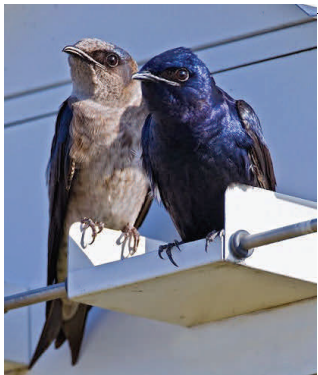


COA BULLETIN



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Purple martins at Hammonasset Beach State Park.
Photo by Jack Faller.

2012 SUMMER BIRD COUNT JOE ZERANSKI, COMPILER

The Summer Bird Count gives birders and anyone who enjoys the natural world the chance to get outside, look and listen for birds, and contribute to valuable scientific data. In 2011 one hundred and ninety-one species were reported statewide by 229 observers on the Summer Bird Count. Each observer on the average contributed about 440 birds to the overall total. Cattle Egret was reported for the first time in ten years, while **Anhinga** was an all-time first ever record.

Summer Bird Counts are traditionally held on the following weekends. Please contact the compilers below for more details on their respective counts.

FIRST WEEKEND OF JUNE (JUNE 2-3):

Woodbury-Roxbury Count Russ Naylor: 203 263-2502

Bethlehem, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Middlebury, New Milford, Newtown, Roxbury, Southbury, Washington

SECOND WEEKEND OF JUNE (JUNE 9-10):

Greenwich-Stamford Count Thomas W. Burke: tom.burke@mcgladrey.com

In CT: Greenwich, Stamford, western Darien and New Canaan

Hartford Count Jay Kaplan: jaybrd49@aol.com

Bloomfield, East Hartford, Farmington (in part), Hartford, Manchester (in part), Newington (in part), Rocky Hill (in part), South Windsor, Wethersfield, and Windsor

Litchfield Hills Count Robert J. Barbieri: 860 489-0033

(In whole or in part): Cornwall, Goshen, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, Sharon, Torrington, Warren, and Washington

New Haven Count Steve Mayo: rsdmayo@sbcglobal.net

Branford (western), East Haven, Milford, New Haven, North Haven, Orange, West Haven, and Woodbridge (in part)

THIRD WEEKEND OF JUNE (JUNE 16-17):

New Milford/Pawling Count Angela Dimmitt: angeladimmitt@aol.com

In CT: Sherman, New Fairfield, New Milford (west of Route 7) and parts of Brookfield and Danbury

Storrs Count Steve Morytko: smoytko@yahoo.com

Ashford, Chaplin, Coventry, Mansfield, Tolland, Willington, Windham

FOURTH WEEKEND OF JUNE (JUNE 23-24):

Barkhamsted Summer Bird Count David Rosgen: ctbluebird1020@gmail.com

121 Laurel Way, Winsted, CT 06098

Colebrook, Winchester, Hartland, Barkhamsted, New Hartford, and (in part); Torrington, Harwinton, and Burlington

COA Workshop Schedule: Mark Your Calendars



Wilson's Warbler
Photo by Bill Asteriades

COA Birding by Ear Workshop

Sunday, June 3rd, 2012 at 7:00 am

Audubon Center at Bent of the River, Southbury.

Learn how to identify birds by their songs and call notes. Learn the songs of the common and less common birds in our area. Meet at the Audubon center parking lot. The sanctuary is located on East Flat Hill Road, off route 172, north of I-84, exit 14. Free and open to the public. Leader: Ken Elkins, COA President and Education Program Manager, Audubon Center at Bent of the River. Contact Ken at: kelkins@audubon.org or 203-264-5098 X301.

COA Long-legged Waders Workshop

Saturday, July 21st, 2012 at 9:00 am

Barn Island Wildlife Management Area, Stonington.

Learn how to identify herons, egrets, and ibis. Learn how to differentiate between similar species, such as juvenile Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night Heron. Learn about their feeding and nesting habits. The workshop will be geared towards beginner and intermediate birders. Meet at the gravel parking lot opposite the Marsh Viewing area, just north of the boat launch. We'll spend some time discussing the different waders, then go out on the trail to see what we can find. Barn Island WMA is located at the end of Palmer Neck Road in Stonington. Bring plenty of bug spray and sunscreen. Free and open to the public. Leader: Chris Loscalzo at loscalzo@optonline.net or 203-389-6508.

COA Shorebird Workshop

Saturday, August 18th, 2012 at 9:00 am. **TENTATIVE**

Connecticut Audubon Coastal Center, Milford

Learn how to identify the many shorebirds that nest along our coast or stop by during fall migration. Learn how to differentiate between Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Black-bellied and Golden Plover, Short-billed and Long-billed Dowitcher, the various "peeps" and other shorebird species. The workshop will begin indoors, in the meeting room at the center. Then, the group will go to the beach and marsh to see what they can identify. Leader: TBD.

COA Raptor Workshop

Saturday, September 15th, 2012 at 9:30 am

Raindate: Sunday, September 16th, 2012

Boothe Memorial Park, Stratford

Learn how to identify raptors, including eagles, vultures, buteos, accipiters, and falcons. Watch for raptors in flight as they pass over this excellent CT hawk watch site on their fall migration. Boothe Memorial Park is on Main Street in Stratford, off Route 110, just south of the Wilbur Cross Parkway at Exit 53. Meet at the hawk watch site, between the clock tower and rose garden. Free and open to the public. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Leader: Scott Kruitbosch, et al. Contact person: Chris Loscalzo at loscalzo@optonline.net or 203-389-6508.

Birding by Ear	June 3	7:00 am	Bent of the River, Southbury
Long-legged Waders	July 21	9:00 am	Barn Island WMA, Stonington
Shorebirds	August 18 (tentative)	9:00 am	CT Audubon Coastal Center, Milford
Raptors	September 15	9:30 am	Boothe Memorial Park, Stratford

Check the [COA Birding Events Calendar](#) for updates or changes to these workshops, and for lots more birding opportunities and bird-related events.

ON THE BENEFITS OF BIRDING ONE'S LOCAL PATCH

BY CHRIS LOSCALZO

Over the years, I have come to appreciate the value of birding one's local patch. A local patch is any area near your home that has birds. It can be as small as a few acres or as large as several square miles. It can be an open field, a forest, an estuary, or any other kind of habitat. I have adopted several areas in my home town of Woodbridge as my local patches. The Fitzgerald property, with its community gardens, is a mixture of open fields, woods, and shrubs. It is an excellent place to see birds year-round, but most especially during fall migration. I have been visiting the property on a regular basis for several years, and have planted native shrubs and fruit trees there for the birds to enjoy. Notable species that I have observed there include Northern Shrike, Philadelphia Vireo, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Vesper, Lincoln's, and White-crowned Sparrow, Dickcissel, and nesting Orchard Oriole. Konold's Pond is another one of my local patches. It is a large, shallow freshwater pond that is a good place for dabbling ducks and wading birds. Notable species seen there have included Trumpeter Swan, Redhead, Eurasian Wigeon, and Iceland Gull. Great Blue Heron, Green Heron, and Wood Duck nest there. By visiting these sites on a regular basis, I have improved my birding skills and made important contributions to the environment in direct and indirect ways. Birding one's local patch brings rewards to the individual birder and benefits the entire birding community. Beginning birders hone their skills at their local patches and seasoned veterans find their best and most memorable birds there. Valuable information is collected about local breeding populations and movements of migrants that can be today and tomorrow. Birding one's useful thing a birder can do.

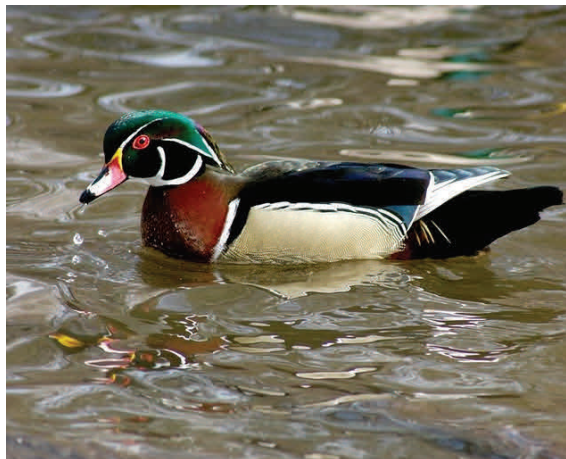
Birding one's local patch affords you know the common birds in your habits, and behaviors. You come to easily. You see how they feed, nest, how they interact with one another of just learning how to identify a deep and intuitive understanding of tendencies. And when you are and their haunts, you are more apt when it visits your area.

Birding one's local patch teaches that migration is a year-long phenomenon constantly coming and going. You for certain regular migrants and for conditions favor movements of birds into your area. Winds, cold fronts, and precipitation take on new meaning. You see what migrants feed on as they fuel up before continuing on their journey and you know better where to find them.

Birding one's local patch benefits the local birding community. You can submit your sightings on *eBird*, so that they become part of a worldwide database of avian populations. Local birders learn from your knowledge and experience, and find and bird local patches of their own. Your observations can be included in Christmas count data and breeding bird censuses. There is, in addition, the potential for your sightings to aid in land preservation, as the information you collect about endangered or threatened species that breed in or visit your birding site could persuade government officials to preserve the land and spare it from being developed or sold. This happened to me, as several years ago I conducted a survey of the birds on a 200-acre property in town that was for sale. Based partly on my report, the townspeople voted in favor of purchasing the land as open space, rather than allowing it to be sold to a developer.

Birding one's local patch is even good for the environment. You use less gasoline when you drive to and from your local patch than you would use to get to a more distant, popular birding spot. You might even walk or cycle to your local birding site and not use any gas at all. And your activities may influence others in your community to become concerned about wildlife and habitat preservation, raising environmental awareness in the region.

From enhancing your skills as a birder, to making important contributions to the expanding database of bird observations, to helping preserve our natural world, birding one's local patch brings great rewards to you, the birding community, and the birds themselves. So, go ahead and bird your local patch today!



Wood duck photo by Bruce Finnan

the opportunity to really get to area. You learn their songs, recognize them quickly and and raise their young. You see and with other species. Instead number of species, you obtain a their various plumages and familiar with the common species to find a rare or unusual bird

you about migration. You learn nomenon, with different species come to know the arrival dates summer residents. You see what

COA ANNUAL MEETING ROUNDUP

PHOTOS BY STEVE BROKER

Please thank and support these COA Raffle donors:

The Audubon Shop &
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The 2012 COA Annual Meeting featured three well-known, engaging, and entertaining speakers. Richard Crossley (left), author of the *Crossley ID Guide*, delighted the audience with his stories of teaching Americans how to bird like Brits; Wayne Petersen (middle), the Director of Mass Audubon, taught us some very interesting facts about birds we thought we already knew; and Alvaro Jaramillo (right), flew in from Chile to keep us informed and enthusiastic about looking for and at gulls. Their presentations were an important part of one of the largest and most successful annual meetings ever. It looks as if they enjoyed it as well!



Scott Kruitbosch (left) accepts the 2012 Betty Kleiner Award from Steve Mayo. Scott and Nick Bonomo authored "Irene Hits Connecticut: Searching for Hurricane Birds in the Digital Age," (*Connecticut Warbler* Volume 31 No. 4, October 2011), an account of tracking and analyzing the effects of the August 2011 hurricane on birding prospects and results in the state, using the latest weather and communications technology.

COA ANNUAL MEETING ROUNDUP

PHOTOS BY STEVE BROKER

Florence McBride (below) was honored with the Mabel Osgood Wright Award for her long-standing and enthusiastic commitment to bringing the joy and adventure of birding to young people. Full details of this award will be in an upcoming issue of the *Connecticut Warbler*.



COA President Ken Elkins (right) opened the meeting with a summary of COA activities and accomplishments and a preview of projects and programs in progress. New COA Board members for the 2012-2015 term include: Robert Dixon (Sterling); Frank Mantlik (Stratford); John Marshall (Watertown); and Sara Zagorski (Wethersfield).



COA's long-time and treasured Treasurers Jack Wells (left) and Fred Schroeder share a smile at the registration table. The 2012 Annual Meeting, with over 150 attendees, ranks among the most successful in the organization's history.

AUDUBON ALLIANCE FOR COASTAL WATERBIRDS WORKS TO PROTECT NESTING SHOREBIRDS BY SCOTT KRUITBOSCH

A new alliance of Connecticut conservationists is working together this spring and summer to provide increased protection for vulnerable beach-nesting birds along the shores of Long Island Sound. The Audubon Alliance for Coastal Waterbirds is working with the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to train dozens of volunteers who will walk Connecticut's beaches, monitor at-risk species such as Piping Plovers and Least Terns, and educate the public about helping to protect these rare birds.

The effort is supported by a Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Long Island Sound Study, Cross Foundation, the Community and the Jeniam Foundation. The Alliance Audubon Society, an independent 1898, and Audubon Connecticut, the Audubon Society – are contributing a funds. Both Audubon organizations and improve wildlife habitats on Long support and expand species protection efforts by the state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, and the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Coastal Program.



\$117,000 grant from the National Island Sound Futures Fund, administered along with matching support from the Foundation for Greater New Haven, the Alliance's coordinators – the Connecticut conservation organization founded in 1988, and Audubon Connecticut, the Audubon Society – are contributing a combined \$82,300 in matching funds. Both Audubon organizations have worked extensively to conserve and improve wildlife habitats on Long Island Sound. The Alliance project will

Piping Plovers (which are listed as a threatened species by the federal and state governments), Least Terns (a state-threatened species), American Oystercatchers, and other sensitive species use Connecticut's beaches during migration or for nesting and raising their young. Each summer they face tough odds to safeguard their eggs and nestlings from high tides, predators, and throngs of beach-goers, dog-walkers, and boaters. In addition to patrolling beaches, stewards participating in the Alliance program will help to monitor herons, egrets and other birds that nest on Long Island Sound's islands. If you would like to volunteer for this effort please email ctwaterbirds@gmail.com.

► Scott Kruitbosch is the Conservation Technician for the Connecticut Audubon Society and a former COA Board member. He took the photo of the piping plover.

COA AWARDS 1ST ANNUAL MINI-GRANTS

COA is pleased to announce the first award recipients of its new Mini-grant program which was established "to help fund and support initiatives within the state of Connecticut which specifically benefit the avian wildlife in our state." In this inaugural year we received applications to fund many worthy projects. Two stood out as providing the most direct benefit to Connecticut birds. Both requested the funds for purchasing native bird friendly plants for the purpose of habitat restoration. With two similar projects to choose from, the Committee decided to split the \$500.00 grant money between them.

One recipient is Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary. The money will be used for a native rose thicket which will be installed where a long standing patch of phragmites has been removed. The rose flowers and hips will provide food for many species and the thicket will provide shelter and nest sites for birds.

The other recipient is Connecticut Audubon Society for their work at Stratford Point where controlled burns have recently opened up areas for restoration planting. The money will be used to help purchase native trees and shrubs which will create foraging, stop-over and breeding habitat.

While we wish both endeavors could have been fully funded, COA is proud to be able to assist in two such worthwhile projects.

The deadline for 2013 Mini-grant applications is January 15, 2013. Forms are available on the [COA website](#)

**TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO IN
THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER
COMPILED BY STEPHEN P. BROKER**

THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER, VOLUME VII, NUMBER 2 (APRIL 1987)

The Connecticut Environment – Part One, by Roland C. Clement

“[M]ost . . . systems of classification agree in dividing Connecticut into two roughly equal regions, the coastal half being rather typical Central Hardwoods deciduous forest dominated by a variety of oaks and hickories and including the Tulip Tree. Dice (1943) calls this the Carolinian Biotic Province and its affinities are linked to those of the Central Atlantic States. The Mockingbird, Cardinal, and Tufted Titmouse were once considered typical Carolinian species, but they jumped the open boundary, and are now well established in what used to be called the Transition (or Alleghanian) Zone. It is tempting to credit these changes in distribution to the increase in winter bird feeding, but the causes are probably more complex. The Mockingbird is not a feeder species, for example, and probably benefits more from the extensive planting of multiflora rose by farmers and sportsmen. Like the Cardinal, it is a “suburban” species, and both may have been assisted in moving northward by the opening up of woodlands, the planting of conifers and forsythia edges, etc. What about the influence on vegetation and birds of milder winters in mid-century? Here is a good project in field ecology awaiting some enterprising researcher, amateur or professional.”



Northern Mockingbird
photo by Bruce Finnan

Unusual Piping Plover Nesting, by Dennis Varza and Ray Schwartz

“On May 28, 1986 while censusing Piping Plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) and Least Terns (*Sterna antillarum*) along the Connecticut shore we found a pair of Piping Plovers at Fenwick Point. This area of beach, on the west side of the Connecticut River near its mouth, has not previously been used as a plover nesting site. Since both birds were banded, interest in their origin was great. Trapping at the nest on June 17, approximately 18 days after the start of incubation, resulted in the rapid capture of both birds. One (971-25014) had been banded as a nestling at Sandy Point, West Haven on May 30, 1985; the other (971-25046) at Long Beach, Stratford on June 10, 1985. All four eggs hatched and at least three of the chicks fledged.

“The Sandy Point and Long Beach sites are both productive plover areas and each has 3-4 nesting pairs. All other sites in Connecticut have only 1-2 pairs. The Fenwick Point site is similar to many other small sand beaches not used by Piping Plovers and this 1986 nesting requires some rethinking of what constitutes suitable nesting habitat. It differs from the other birds’ natal sites in not having a salt marsh area immediately behind the nesting beach, in being more open, and in being a relatively small beach. This nesting is unusual for many reasons and raises many questions that can only be answered by continued banding and study.”

Nesting Sharp-shinned Hawks in Connecticut, by D.A. Hopkins, G.S. Mercereau, and L. Fischer

“In the past 20 years only three probable nestings [of Sharp-shinned Hawk] have been reported to the Connecticut’s Natural Diversity Data Bank: New Milford in 1967, Canton in 1982 and Hartland in 1983. No nests were found but fledged young and attending adults were observed.

“In 1983 and again on May 18, 1986 S. Kellogg located a pair of territorial Sharp-shinned Hawks in Tunxis State Forest in Hartland. He reported the latter sighting to the authors who searched the area and found a nest with five freshly laid eggs on May 25. Eggs were still present June 14, and by June 28 hatched young were present. The five young were banded on July 6 by Mercereau and sexed as four females and one male.

“The nest was 16.9 m up in a White Spruce (*Picea glauca*) and measured 33 cm X 51 cm. The nest tree, not the largest tree in the area, had a diameter at breast height of 76 cm and was located in a thick stand of spruce, near an open area. . . Sharp-shinned Hawks are definitely nesting in the State and may be overlooked by birders unfamiliar with their nesting habits. We encourage you to follow up late May sightings of Sharp-shinned Hawks and check for possible nesting. How rare a nester is this accipiter?”

COA OFFICERS

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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 15, 2012 to:

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