



# COA Bulletin

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Winter 2023

## Connecticut Ornithological Association

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Allen's Meadow	p. 1-2
COA Mini-Grants App.	p. 2
President's Message	p. 3
COA Annual Meeting	p. 3
The Museum Twitch	p.4-5
Hawk Watching	p. 6-7
Photo Gallery	p. 7
Christmas Bird Count	p. 8-9
Announcements	p. 10
25 Yrs Ago in TCW	p. 11-12
Membership	p. 13

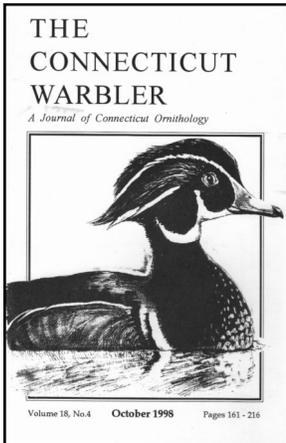
### Allen's Meadow - Not Just for the Birds

Joe Bear

If you're reading this article, you're undoubtedly aware of Allen's Meadow in Wilton, CT being a birding gem. I've been fortunate to call it my local patch for the last 22 years. My hope is that someday it will also be known for its native pollinator meadow and the insects, birds, and other wildlife it attracts.

The Pollinator Pathway movement was an idea created in 2007 by Sarah Bergmann of Seattle, WA, and the first of these Pollinator Pathway projects began in Wilton in 2017. Since then, "pathways" have been established in over 300 towns in 11 states and the list keeps growing. A Pollinator Pathway project is typically organized by volunteers from town conservation organizations working together to establish pollinator-friendly habitats and food sources for bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and other pollinating insects and wildlife along a series of continuous corridors.

In 2020 I became a community gardener at Allen's Meadow. The first thing that struck me was this very large (3/4 acre) and unsightly monoculture of an invasive weed from Eurasia called Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) just opposite my garden plot. That is when the idea occurred to me. Wouldn't it be amazing if somehow I could turn that into a native pollinator meadow? So, I embarked on that journey by putting together a plan for our Town's approval, raising money, and getting to work (which was delayed a year due to Covid). You can read more about this journey, here: [A Wilton Man's Mission to Turn Allen's Meadow into a](#)



COA is an all volunteer organization with the mission of promoting interest in Connecticut birds, and collecting, preparing, and disseminating the best available scientific information on the status of Connecticut birds and their habitats. While COA is not primarily an advocacy organization, we work actively to provide scientific information and to support other conservation organizations in the state.



[Pollinator Magnet](https://goodmorningwilton.com/a-wilton-mans-mission-to-turn-allens-meadow-into-a-pollinator-magnet/) (https://goodmorningwilton.com/a-wilton-mans-mission-to-turn-allens-meadow-into-a-pollinator-magnet/). A quick shout-out to COA and Hartford Audubon for their initial mini-grants, and CT Audubon for generously contributing to my personal fund-raising campaign which was matched 1:1 by Sustainable CT.

My approach to eradicating the Mugwort has been a process called occultation, which is just a fancy word for smothering. To smother the Mugwort, I used 6-mil black sheeting held in place by slab wood sourced from a local sawmill. I tested various durations of tarping for effectiveness and after 8 months, a small test plot was 90% free of Mugwort. This was not good enough for this very aggressive rhizomatous (horizontal underground stem) weed so I decided to wait another year. On Sunday, Nov. 5th, with the help of the local Wilton Boy Scouts Troop 125, the tarps were removed (and reused elsewhere) after being down for 23 months. A couple of days later, with the use of a seed slicer, I seeded the entire meadow with a native mix of 35 forbs and 4 grasses that I had developed while waiting for the tarps to do their thing. I looked for a favorite grass seed of Golden-crowned Sparrow but came up empty!

So the next time you're birding at Allen's chasing a Harris's Sparrow or searching for a reliable Vesper Sparrow in mid-October, please wander down the end of the gravel roadway and check out the soon-to-be native pollinator meadow. To find out more about the pollinator pathway movement or how to create a pollinator friendly yard visit [pollinator-pathway.org](http://pollinator-pathway.org).

### **COA Mini-Grant Call for Applications**

**Do you need funding to support a project that will benefit avian wildlife in Connecticut? If so, apply for a COA Grant!**

COA awards small grants for projects that directly benefit Connecticut birds. Details on the COA Mini-Grant program and the application form can be found on the COA web site at this link: <https://www.ctbirding.org/resources/coa-mini-grant/>

Applications for our 2024 round of funding are due January 15, 2023. Final decisions are made at the March COA board meeting.

The purpose of the COA mini-grant committee is to help fund and support initiatives within the state of Connecticut that specifically benefit the avian wildlife in our state and opportunities for public observation and enjoyment of those natural resources. It has always been part of COA's mission to reach out to all of those in Connecticut who appreciate our state's birds and support bird management/conservation initiatives whenever possible.

## President's Message

**Chris Wood**



Just a brief message this time around, mostly to rejoice about our upcoming LIVE AND IN-PERSON Annual Meeting. Our Annual Meeting Committee has spared no effort in organizing our get-together (details below). Thank you Abby Sesselberg, Tina Green, Cynthia Ehlinger, Laurie Reynolds, and Kimberly Jannarone as well as Steve Morytko and Dan Rottino for your hard work.

The cause of our Annual Meeting hiatus – the COVID epidemic – has also been an impetus for many people to take up birding, or, for those already hooked, to use birding as an

escape from both voluntary and mandated quarantines. I'm sure we all have stories of COVID-induced adventures and travails that we look forward to sharing with birding friends, and that's one of the best parts of the Annual Meeting.

COA members will be given first opportunity to register for the limited number of spaces available so be sure your membership is up to date. With our new enrolment system, you can renew anytime to add a full year to your membership.

One other business note concerning our recent change to our dues schedule. COA dues have been the same since 2006 while our expenses, and frankly our ambition, have grown. So we have instituted a nominal increase in the individual and family membership dues categories and we hope you will agree that COA's contributions to birds and birding in Connecticut is worth your support. Here's the [Top Ten Reasons to be a COA Member](https://www.ctbirding.org/wp-content/uploads/TOP-TEN-Reasons-COA.pdf?x65221) (https://www.ctbirding.org/wp-content/uploads/TOP-TEN-Reasons-COA.pdf?x65221)

But enough business, read on for the interesting and informative stuff about birds and birding that Editor Jo Fasciolo has pulled together for us. And be sure to put the Annual Meeting on your calendar!

### COA's 40th ANNUAL MEETING 2024

**Saturday, March 9, 2024 • In-Person at CT State Community College, Middlesex**

**Keynote Speaker:** Mike Webster, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Director of the Macaulay Library, and professor in Cornell University's Department of Neurobiology and Behavior, presents "Can Birding Save Birds?" Also presenting are Marshall Iliff, project leader of eBird, and Rosemary Mosco, science writer and naturalist.

**Morning Refreshments and Lunch included—Raffle items and COA merchandise**

**COA Business Meeting—COA 2023 Awards**

Betty Kleiner Award (author or artist in the field of ornithology), Mabel Osgood Wright Award (contribution to the knowledge, study, & conservation of birds), George Zepko Audubon Camp Scholarship Award – for teen, President's Award, Mini-Grant Recipients 2024, COA 2023 Report, Election of COA Officers and New Board

**The Museum Twitch**  
***Woodcocks At Dusk, Francis Barlow***  
**Mark Aronson**



Francis Barlow, 1622–1704, British, *Woodcock at Dusk*, ca. 1686, Oil on canvas, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection, B1981.25.26.

It's raining, it's pouring and my binoculars are fogged. On days when going into the field seem impossible, one can still see birds – in museums. Early bird representations, such as those in neolithic cave painting, are schematic and concerned with the idea of a bird rather than an accurate picture. Medieval and Renaissance artists delivered enough information on shape and color to allow identification, but do not often capture such detail as feather morphology. Francis Barlow (1622 – 1704) was among the first British painters to take his painting to a higher level, not only observing specific accurate feather details, but also including habitat and behavioral information in his pictures.

*Woodcock at Dusk* in the collection of the Yale Center for British Art is one such painting. It depicts three Eurasian Woodcock, one in flight and two on the ground. They are tightly framed in a landscape bordered by grass-like reeds and bushes. The sky above is dark and obscure, and several wisps of clouds streak across the sky.

Barlow seems to show the birds during courtship, a twilight affair, during which the male plummets high from the sky, arresting his descent just before the hen of his fancy. The birds were likely painted from life, or maybe death, as they were likely painted from hunted birds, perhaps just before the artist's dinner.

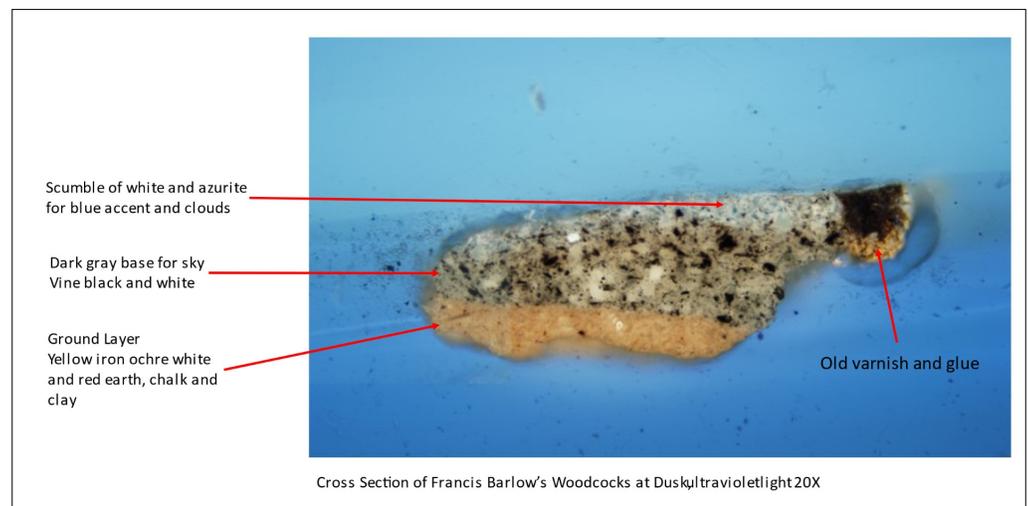
Barlow chose to paint on a fine linen canvas so that the fabric texture would not compete with his smoothly laid brushstrokes. The canvas was prepared with a thin ground or priming layer composed of yellow iron oxides, bits of red, even less vine black, and some lead white. Chalk and clay were likely added to the ground as inexpensive filler. The overall ground color – a warm yellow imparted a warm tonality across the entire canvas, which allowed Barlow to use thin, sparing strokes of ink-like oil paint to add detail.

The overall brown tone of the birds was economically added by using the ground color to stand as overall mid-tone of the bird's bodies. A sparing amount of iron ochre earth tones were then laid in to create darks and shadow the volumes. Finally fine strokes of black paint were used to add the woodcock's breast feather pattern, the delineation of the wing feathers, head, beak and eyes.

Thicker paint, or impasto, was only used to add the details of the facial pattern, a bit of the swelling breast of the bird on the right, some of the primary flight feathers, and to model the clouds in the sky. Rather than use a lot of paint mixed on the palette and then juxtapose them on the canvas, this painting was done more as one would approach a watercolor – using the base ground color for the overall tone, and then using line to define forms. It is an economical and rapid way of painting.

The sky is painted to reflect the dusk Barlow had observed. Rather than wasting a lot of expensive blue pigment, such as ultramarine blue made from ground lapis lazuli, Barlow created what ornithologists might call a structural blue. He laid on a thick layer of dark gray made of vine black and lead white paint. On top of this he scumbled a thin wash of white. Rayleigh scattering (the scattering of sunlight off the molecules of the atmosphere) created a cool effect, much like how smoke streaking across a dark room appears blue. Barely evident in the topmost layer of paint, is the thinnest layer of costly azurite, a mineral blue. Barlow was watching both nature and his wallet as he created this picture, which was likely not done as a commission but on speculation that someone might buy it.

The result is a true sense of dusk, matching the tone of activity for woodcock mating displays, which this painting depicts.



## Hawk Watching - It Counts!

Harry Wales

Hawk watching is an amazing experience on so many different levels. It can provide you with a beautiful visual experience. Watching the hawks glide through the air is breathtaking and sharing this experience with your fellow birders is an additional bonus. Hawk watching also provides us with valuable data on hawk populations and migratory patterns. This data is crucial for long-term research on various raptors.



Some hawk watches can see thousands of raptors migrating through their area in one day. Those days are not the norm, but they are certainly memorable and exciting. In order to see large numbers in one day you will need all the weather components to line up perfectly. Nearly all hawk watches are wind dependent. Hawks do not want to fly against the wind, they want to fly with the wind. Flying in the same direction as the wind allows the hawks to minimize their flapping and conserve energy while traveling. During migration, hawks travel a great distance. Some hawks are going from the northern states all the way to Central and South America for the winter, following their food source.

At the Quaker Ridge Hawk Watch in Greenwich, CT, we see a variety of different raptor species, but approximately 90% of the hawks that pass our site are Broad-winged Hawks. These beauties are the only hawks that form unique kettles. They soar on thermals, which are hot pockets of air, to and from their winter breeding grounds. When the conditions are right on a September day, some

kettles hold thousands of birds! When a kettle of Broad-winged Hawks travels past our site we need all the help we can get to count and record these hawks. Big kettles provide hawk watchers with a great deal of excitement. On September 9th of this year we had a count of 12,123 Broad-winged Hawks and as of mid November, have had a total of 32,108 this fall alone!



Throughout the season, we are also busy scanning the skies for other species, including: buteos, accipiters, osprey, harriers, falcons, vultures, and eagles. Oftentimes, these beauties are in the distance. In order to properly identify these hawks, we need to study their size, shape and behavior. We look closely at the length and shape of the tail, rounded vs. pointed wings, and if the hawk is flapping or soaring. With these clues, we can usually narrow down to just a few species. It helps to discuss our observations with our fellow birders to confirm the species.

The best tool to practice hawk identification is to observe hawk watches during peak migration time which is mid-September to mid-late October. Mid-September is the best time to see Broad-winged Hawks, but in October you can see more variety. Early November is best for the Golden Eagle. We are lucky because there are many hawk watches in our area and the birding community is very welcoming to newcomers. In addition to Quaker Ridge in Greenwich, there are hawk watches at Lighthouse Point in New Haven, Chestnut Hill in Litchfield, and more. The more people we have scanning the skies and observing the hawks the better. Come join us and be a part of this valuable work! If you want to take a deep dive into hawk count data and follow the stats for Connecticut and all of North America, check out [hawkcount.org](http://hawkcount.org).



Fall Photo Gallery



**Western Kingbird, Wequetequock Cove Sanctuary**  
(Dennis S Main, 13 Nov 2023)



**Rufous Hummingbird, Greenwich**  
(Ruogu Li, 12 Nov 2023)



**Swainson's Hawk, Lighthouse Point Park**  
(Abby Sesselberg, 12 Nov 2023)



**Lark Sparrow, Westport**  
(Jo Fasciolo, 11 Nov 23)



**Barnacle Goose, Enfield**  
(Jamie Meyers, 31 Oct 2023)



**Bell's Vireo, Cove Island**  
(Mary Walsh, 21 Oct 2023)



**124th ANNUAL  
NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY  
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT  
2023-2024 SCHEDULE**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2023**

**New Haven, CT (CTNH)** Compiler: Chris Loscalzo, 67 Wepawaug Road, Woodbridge, CT 06525  
closalz@optonline.net 203-389-6508 (New Haven Bird Club)

**Storrs, CT (CTST)** Compiler: Steve Morytko, 288 Varga Road, Ashford, CT 06278  
smorytko@yahoo.com (M) 860-680-5728 (Natchaug Ornithological Society)

**Woodbury-Roxbury, CT (CTWR)** Compiler: Ken Elkins, Milford Point Road, Milford, CT, 06460  
kelkins@ctaudubon.org 203-623-6625 (cell) (Western Connecticut Bird Club)

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023**

**Greenwich-Stamford, CT (CTGS)** Compiler: Cynthia Ehlinger, 27A Sheephill Road, Riverside, CT 06878  
cynthia.ehlinger@gmail.com 203-219-1963 (Audubon Greenwich)

**Hartford, CT (CTHA)** Compiler: Jay Kaplan, 71 Gracey Road, Canton, CT 06019 jaybrd49@aol.com  
860-693-0157 (H), 860-707-5246 (cell) (Hartford Audubon Society)

**Litchfield Hills, CT (CTLH)** Compiler: David Tripp, Jr., 97 Hunter Court, Torrington, CT 06790  
dtrippjr@gmail.com (Litchfield Hills Audubon Society)

**Lakeville-Sharon (Trixie Strauss CBC), CT (CTLS)** Compiler: new compiler to be announced shortly, Sharon Audubon Center/National Audubon Society, 325 Cornwall Bridge Road, Sharon, CT 06069  
<http://sharon.audubon.org/> 860-364-0520 or 717-926-3926

**Oxford, CT (CTOX)** Compiler: Roy Harvey, 320 South Meriden Road, Cheshire, CT 06410-2962  
rmharvey@snet.net 203-651-9818 (cell)

**Quinnipiac Valley, CT (CTQV)** Compilers: Melissa Baston, mbaston@gmail.com 860-995-0656 and Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe, cfolsom.okeefe@audubon.org 203-233-0535 (Quinnipiac Valley Audubon Society)

**Salmon River, CT (CTSR)** Compilers: Sharon Dellinger, rsdell@comcast.net 860-803-1626, and Doreen Jezek, dajezek@gmail.com 859-492-1656 (Mattabeseck Audubon Society)

**Westport, CT (CTWE)** Compilers: Mardi and Townsend Dickinson, 20 Blake Street, Norwalk, CT 06851-3007 mardid1d@gmail.com 203-846-0359

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2023**

**Barkhamsted**, CT (CTBA) Compiler: David Tripp, Jr., 97 Hunter Court, Torrington, CT 06790  
dtrippjr@gmail.com (Litchfield Hills Audubon Society)

**Norwich**, CT (CTNO) Compiler: Allison Black, NorwichCBC@gmail.com, 860-334-9959

**Stratford-Milford**, CT (CTSM) Compiler: Steve Mayo, 27 Tuttle Court, Bethany, CT 06524  
rds mayo@sbcglobal.net 203-551-1707

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2023**

**Guilford-Long Island Sound**, CT (CTGU) Compiler: John Picard, Madison, CT  
johnpicardiwcc@aol.com 203-645-8959 (Menunkatuck Audubon Society)

**New London**, CT (CTNL) Compiler: Lisa Wahle, 38 North Main Street, Chester, CT 06412  
lcwahle@gmail.com, 860-304-6184

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2023**

**Bristol**, CTBR Compiler: Jack Swatt, 209 Deerfield Terrace, Colchester, CT 06415  
jswattbirds@gmail.com 203-592-4686

**Edwin Way Teale**, Trail Wood Sanctuary, Hampton, CT (CTEW) Compiler: Sue Harrington, 28D Anton Road, Storrs, CT 06268 hoopoe@sbcglobal.net 860-429-6257. (Natchaug Ornithological Society)

**Old Lyme-Saybrook**, CT (CTOL) Compiler: Matt Bell, mbell@ctaudubon.org, mjbelle1214@gmail.com

**MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2024**

**Pawling** (Hidden Valley), NY/CT (NYHV) Compilers: Carena Pooth, carena@prodigy.net and Angela Dimmitt, P.O. Box 146, Sherman, CT 06784 angeladimmitt@aol.com, 860-355-3429 (Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club)

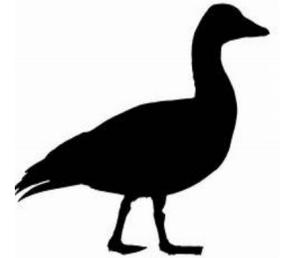
**UNDECIDED**

**Napatree**, RI-CT-NY (RINT) Compilers: Shai Mitra, Biology Department, College of Staten Island, 2800 Victory Blvd, Staten Island, NY 10314 shaibal.Mitra@csi.cuny.edu and Glenn Williams, 221 Pequot Avenue, Mystic, CT 06355 gswilliams9@yahoo.com

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### A Wild Goose Chase: Connecticut's Wintertime Geese (Jan/Feb 2024)

Connecticut has recorded a number of different geese species, with wintertime being the best time of the year for rare and unusual species such as Pink-footed, Greater White-fronted, Cackling, Barnacle, Snow, And Ross's Goose. This new field trip will stop at a few known spots to look for flocks of Canada geese, mostly throughout central Connecticut, to search for rarer geese within the flocks. Binoculars, cameras, and especially scopes are recommended to best enjoy this trip.



Details to come on traveling specifics. Stay tuned!

### Seeking Authors and Ideas for the COA Bulletin!



Do you have an idea for a COA Bulletin article you would like to have published? Or, is there something related to birds you would like to learn about and wish there was an article about it? If so, reach out to me at [jo\\_fasciolo@msn.com](mailto:jo_fasciolo@msn.com) and let me know your thoughts!

### Opportunity for Young Birders!

#### Zepko Audubon Camp Scholarship for Young Birders

The Connecticut Ornithological Association is pleased to announce that we will again offer one Zepko Audubon Camp Scholarship to nurture interest in bird study and conservation among young birders. The 2024 Scholarship will cover the full cost (\$1,790) for Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens. The cost includes housing, boat travel and all meals. Scholarship recipient will be responsible for transportation costs to and from camp.



This intensive 6-day, 5-night program on Hog Island allows enthusiastic young birders to work with some of the country's best known birders and ornithologists on field identification, bird ecology and conservation. Occurring concurrently with the adult Field Ornithology and Hands-on Bird Science sessions, and sharing many of the same instructors, this program includes the unique opportunity to see Audubon's seabird restoration work in action.

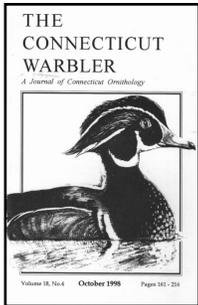
Applicants must be a resident of Connecticut, ages 14-17, and must submit a written application along with two letters of reference. Preferences will be given to applicants with individual or family COA memberships. Completed applications and references must be received by the COA by Jan. 31, 2024 .

If you know a young birder who may be interested please pass this information along.

Visit <https://hogisland.audubon.org/bird-studies-teens> for more information about Hog Island.

Visit <https://www.ctbirding.org/resources/zepko-audubon-camp-scholarship-for-young-birders/>

for COA Scholarship information. Or contact Jo Fasciolo at [jo\\_fasciolo@msn.com](mailto:jo_fasciolo@msn.com) for more information.



## Twenty-Five Years Ago in *The Connecticut Warbler*

Compiled by Steve Broker Volume XVIII, No. 4 (October 1998)

**Eighth Report of the Avian Records Committee of Connecticut**, by Frank Mantlik, Mark Szantyr, Greg Hanisek, Julian Hough, and Christopher Wood

[The Avian Records Committee of Connecticut] principal aim is to provide a complete and accurate record of rare birds reported in Connecticut. A rare records committee can neither verify nor invalidate any records, but can provide a judgment on the adequacy of the evidence presented in support of unusual sightings. In other words, this committee, in its rulings, is not concluding that a person did or did not see a particular rare bird. Instead, it is ruling on the adequacy of the written documentation and other evidence.

This report contains 86 records of 49 species, plus two subspecies and one hybrid, reviewed by the ARCC. . . Significant Connecticut records in this report include the following: first record for Pink-footed Goose and Cinnamon Teal; first and second records for Bullock's Oriole; second record for Northern Fulmar, Anhinga, Mississippi Kite, Thayer's Gull, Gull-billed Tern, White-winged Dove, and Bohemian Waxwing; second and third records for White-faced Ibis; third record for Rufous Hummingbird; fourth record for Long-tailed Jaeger.

[Ed's Note: The individual species reports are a rich source of information on field marks, habitat preferences, impacts of weather systems, and the circumstances under which these rare birds were found. Following the eighth report of ARCC, the Checklist of the Birds of Connecticut stood at 401 species. By 2023, the list had been expanded to 451 bird species. Twelve rarities are pictured in the central color pages of the issue, including Ray Schwartz's photo of the Cinnamon Teal mounted specimen collected at Nell's Island, Milford (accepted, origin uncertain). Eighteen of the species discussed in this article have been removed from the Review List because of the increased frequency of their occurrences in the state. George Clark is acknowledged as providing "his final editing of this report."]

Identification Notes: The Western Hat Trick: Black-headed Grosbeak, Bullock's Oriole, and Western Tanager, by Mark Szantyr and the Avian Records Committee of Connecticut

These three species, Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*), Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*), and Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*), are all very beautiful, well-marked, and distinctive as adult males. The females and first basic plumage males, as well as some adult males not in definitive alternate plumage, are a different story. To fully explore these identification challenges could take volumes. The Avian Records Committee of Connecticut thought that by providing some straightforward analysis of the plumage in question and by making comparisons to possible confusing identification contenders, we might all be better prepared to score "the Hat Trick."

[Editor's Note: The article compares the various plumages of Black-headed and Rose-breasted grosbeaks, Bullock's and Baltimore orioles, and Scarlet, Summer, and Western tanagers. It serves as a highly informative workshop on male, female, and immature seasonal plumages. Connecticut records of Bullock's Oriole range from late October to early April. Most Western Tanager reports are from mid-November to mid-May. Black-headed Grosbeak has occurred in the state from mid-December to late February. The article is accompanied by Mark Szantyr's outstanding color illustrations.]

**First Bell's Vireo for Connecticut**, by Frank Mantlik

While doing some local birding and bird photography on Columbus Day, October 14, 1991, between 2 and 4:30 PM, I visited the brush dump at the town-owned Longshore Club Park, Westport, a proven autumn site for seeing a variety of sparrows and other passerines. About 2:30, a small warbler-like bird, actively foraging among the low weeds, popped up in front of me about 25 feet away.

Description: General size, shape, and color pattern like that of a warbler (such as a Tennessee). Upperparts, back and wings, olive-green; back unstreaked. Two whitish wing bars, lower one more prominent. Head grayish. Ill-defined though complete white eye ring and spectacles, not at all prominent or bold as in Blue-headed Vireo. Iris color dark. Bill fairly long but stout and vireo-like; upper mandible dark, lower mandible pale (as illustrated in photos). Underparts, including throat, chest, and belly, unstreaked white, but with pale yellowish wash on flanks and undertail coverts. Tail long, olive, no tail spots noticed.

[Editor's Note: Frank Mantlik provided notes on behavior, weather conditions, and species with similar overall appearances, including four vireo species (immature White-eyed, and Hutton's, Blue-headed, and Philadelphia, as well as Tennessee and Pine warblers and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. A brief review of the literature was given, and multiple references were consulted. "Two weeks later, the photos arrived, which clearly indicated the field marks more indicative of Bell's Vireo. . . The Connecticut [Rare Records] Committee accepted the sighting as a first record for the state and published it in its Fifth Report (CW 13:8). It also represented, at that time, only the second record for New England."]

#### **A Connecticut Birding Year** - Part 4, by David Provencher

This is the fourth and last installment of this series dedicated to enhancing the knowledge and success of beginning and intermediate birders in Connecticut. The time period we will cover in this final article will be October through December. We will revisit the phenomenon of Fall Migration and so will discuss the month of September a little as well. This period is full of "little brown jobs," that is to say sparrows. It also is the best period of the year for rarities. We will of course discuss the birding opportunities and strategies of the period. We will also cover Christmas Bird Counts, tips for advanced birders, and the informational resources available for Connecticut birding.

[Editor's Note: Dave Provencher writes, "When I understood this effort I didn't truly appreciate how difficult it was going to be to cover an entire year in four short installments such as these." It has been equally challenging for the Twenty-Five Years Ago in *The Connecticut Warbler* editor to distill 45 pages of birding wisdom into a small number of paragraphs. Suffice it to say that the entire series of articles by Dave is well worth the return visit. Following are a few gems from the fourth installment.

"If you think nocturnal navigation by birds is a miracle, imagine landing in a tree in the dark without skewering yourself!" "Knowledgeable birders eagerly anticipate these [peak migration] days and often call in 'sick' to work when they occur, or so I've heard." "Predicting the years when irruptions occur is currently less scientific than astrological." "October: While the warblers are passing by you always seem to be looking upward but when the sparrows arrive you always seem to be looking down." "However, a good rule of thumb is that when you are sure you have seen every bird in an area, you haven't!" "November: Hello Old Man Winter. . . bundle up and let's go see what we can find." "November is also the month for irruptions and rarities. . . Open coastal habitat may even turn up a Gyrfalcon. If you find one of these, buy a lottery ticket on the way home since your luck is running so high!" "December: It is possible to routinely exceed 270 [species] in Connecticut, but this requires quite a commitment. The real measure of success is whether you had fun birding this year. If when all is said and done you are happy with your effort, then what difference does it make if you saw 100 species or 250? When listing becomes too stressful because of the species you haven't seen, you are birding the wrong way!"]

See also in this issue of *The Connecticut Warbler*. Message From the President, by David F. Provencher; Thayer's Gull in Manchester, Connecticut: Second State Record, by Julian Hough; Connecticut Field Notes, Spring, March 1 to May 31, 1998, by Greg Hanisek; Photo Challenge, by Julian Hough. Cover art of a drake Wood Duck is by Paul Carrier. The October 1998 issue of *The Connecticut Warbler* can be seen in its entirety at the following link to the COA website. Download Volume 18, and view pages 161-216.

<https://ctbirding.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CTWarblerVolume18.pdf?x82746>.

## COA Membership

The Connecticut Ornithological Association is the only statewide organization devoted to birds and birding in Connecticut. Since its founding in 1984, its membership has grown to well over 500 people who range from beginning birders to professional ornithologists. COA does not release its membership list to other organizations. Contributions and donations are tax deductible as allowed under law. COA is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization.

The only requirements for membership in COA are interest in birds and an ability to enjoy yourself. Does that sound like you? Then join us!

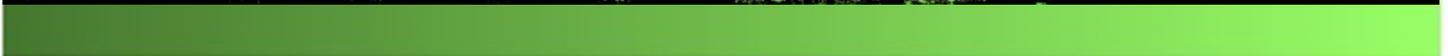
To join COA or renew online visit: <https://www.ctbirding.org/account-help/>

The link will take you to a page describing the account creation process with a link to start it. You will need to use a credit card, debit card, or PayPal account to purchase a membership.

After purchasing a membership option, your COA account reflects your level of membership. COA members receive copies of COA's two quarterly publications, *The Connecticut Warbler* and *COA Bulletin*. Members also enjoy early notification of events and access to our growing Members-Only content (mostly instructional videos). Membership funds support COA's many services and activities (CTBirds, workshops, mini-grants, annual meeting, etc.).

### Membership Levels:

- .....,
- Individual \$35/yr
  - Student \$15/yr
  - Family \$45/yr
  - Contributing \$50/yr
  - Donor \$75/yr
  - Benefactor \$100/yr
  - Life \$1000 (payable in three annual installments)





# Connecticut Ornithological Association

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Fairfield, CT 06824  
www.ctbirding.org

## COA OFFICERS

President	Chris Wood, Woodbury, CT
Vice President	Cynthia Ehlinger, Greenwich, CT
Secretary	Tom Robben, Glastonbury, CT
Treasurer	Paul Wolter, Beacon Falls, CT

## COA CHAIRPERSONS

Annual Meeting	Tina Green
Conservation	Open
Finance	Treasurer: Paul Wolter
Membership	Dan Rottino
Avian Records	Frank Mantlik
Research	Tom Robben
Workshops	Allison Black
Mini-Grants	Melissa Baston
The Connecticut Warbler	Greg Hanisek
COA Bulletin	Jo Fasciolo

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