



# COA Bulletin

## Connecticut Ornithological Association

[www.ctbirding.org](http://www.ctbirding.org)

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A Peregrine Falcon Story	p. 1-4
Hummingbirds in Summer	p. 5-7
President's Message	p. 8
Hawk Workshop	p. 9
Zepko Award Gratitude	p. 10
Spring Photo Gallery	p. 11
25 Years Ago	p. 12-14
COA Membership	p. 15

## A Peregrine Falcon Story from Norwalk's Yankee Doodle Bridge

Jo Fasciolo

Few birds match the might and mystique of the Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)—nature's ultimate aerial predator. It is celebrated for its incredible speed, global distribution across six continents, and dramatic recovery from the brink of extinction. Known as the fastest animal on Earth, Peregrine Falcons have been recorded diving at speeds over 240 mph in exceptional cases, though their typical hunting dive speed usually ranges between 100 and 140 miles per hour (160 to 225 km/h). They exemplify power, precision, and resilience.

It's no wonder we became captivated after my husband, Adam, noticed a pair courting near the Norwalk River Esplanade on March 21, 2025. Peregrines typically mate for life and return to the same nesting sites—called aeries—year after year. The area has long been known as a breeding location and we were compelled to visit as often as we could to watch their story unfold.



Courtship between parent Peregrin Falcons  
Adam Fasciolo, 21 March 2025

Perched high above the Norwalk River on the I-95 Yankee Doodle Bridge sits a modest wooden nest box mounted to the steel beams of the highway bridge. Despite the nonstop rush of traffic overhead, the peregrine pair began to settle in. From this interesting urban vantage point, we observed them over the next three months as they carried out their ancient rituals of courtship, nesting, and raising young—seemingly unfazed by the roar of cars and trucks above.



Peregrine Falcon  
Nest Box

195 Yankee  
Doodle Bridge  
Norwalk, CT



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.

### THE CONNECTICUT WARBLER

A Journal of Connecticut Ornithology



Volume 20 No.3 July 2000 Pages 81 - 128

The female typically lays three to four eggs, which both parents help incubate. On March 25, we observed the female sitting in the nest box while the male perched nearby, feeding. Eventually, the female flew off and the male took her place at the nest—a strong indicator that the nesting process had begun. We logged our first BREEDING & BEHAVIOR CODE: ON - Occupied Nest (Confirmed).

The process of producing each egg takes about 48 hours. Incubation begins after the penultimate egg is laid and lasts about 33 to 35 days, allowing the chicks to hatch around the same time. After hatching, the fluffy white chicks—called eyases—are fed by both parents, with the male often bringing food to the nest. By May 3, we observed this in action: the male delivered prey to the box, and the female began feeding what we assumed were days-old chicks.

We watched this activity from the parking lot of the Connecticut Boat Club on Platt Street, right at the start of the Norwalk River Esplanade. While we couldn't see the hatchlings due to the nest's lip, our distance, and their tiny size, we were confident enough to log a new BREEDING & BEHAVIOR CODE: FY - Feeding Young. Eager to catch a glimpse of the chicks, we returned the following weekend—and were thrilled to spot two hatchlings covered in white down. This time, we officially logged BREEDING & BEHAVIOR CODE: NY - Nest with Young (Confirmed)! At this point, we were hooked and I took a deep dive into learning all that I could about Peregrine Falcons.

It takes about six weeks for Peregrine Falcons to fledge. Between May 10 and June 5, we witnessed an astonishing transformation. The chicks' soft down was gradually replaced by juvenile feathers—a process known as the pre-juvenile molt. By six weeks of age, young falcons are typically fully feathered and beginning to test their wings, even if their flight feathers (primaries and tail) aren't yet fully developed.



25 March 2025



25 March 2025



3 May 2025



25 May 2025



By June 10, we saw them flapping at the edge of the nest box, clearly preparing for their first flight. Their new juvenile plumage—brown with vertical streaks, buffy-edged feathers, and lighter heads—was distinct from adults and served a purpose. I found it fascinating that this coloration signals to adult falcons that the young are not competitors or threats.



June 2025



Juvenile plumage is replaced by adult feathers around 13 months of age. During this transition, “sub-adults” may display a mix of both feather types. When fully grown, peregrines are medium-sized raptors with a wingspan of about 3.5 to 4 feet and a body length of 14 to 19 inches. Their striking appearance includes slate-blue backs, barred white underparts, and a bold black malar stripe. Their hooked beaks and powerful talons are finely tuned for their primary hunting method: snatching birds mid-air.

They are solitary and highly skilled hunters, relying on exceptional eyesight, speed, and surprise. Their diet mainly consists of medium-sized birds—especially pigeons, which are plentiful around the bridge. We were lucky to witness multiple hunting events, watching in awe as they plucked pigeons from the sky with ease and carried them to the bridge’s concrete pillars. There, they meticulously removed the wings, plucked feathers, then used their sharp beaks to consume the nutrient-rich organs before eating the rest of the meat. Watching this was like witnessing a National Geographic documentary live!



As a teacher, I’m especially drawn to how Peregrine Falcons pass on survival skills to their young through a blend of observation, guided practice, and instinct. After fledging, the young follow their parents closely, mimicking flight patterns and watching them hunt. The adults will often drop prey mid-air, encouraging fledglings to catch it in flight—an essential survival skill. Over several weeks, the young falcons sharpen their agility and coordination until they are capable of hunting independently.

We were eager to witness this next chapter for both hatchlings. However, nature had other plans.

Although Peregrine Falcons can live up to 15 years in the wild, an estimated 60–70% don’t survive their first year. Inexperience, predation, collisions, and environmental hazards all take a toll. By June 13, one of the fledglings had disappeared. At the time, we remained hopeful—perhaps it was off somewhere nearby, practicing the skills it would need to survive. The next morning, June 14, the second fledgling was spotted just outside the nest box near the bridge. Still, there was no sign of the first, but we weren’t worried yet. That evening, however, both were gone. In the days that followed, we returned often, hoping we had simply missed them in flight. By June 17, our concern deepened. The female had begun spending time in the nest box again, and the male stayed close.

We continued to visit—sometimes twice a day—still hoping for a sign of the fledglings. Then, to our complete surprise, after five days without a single sighting, one reappeared at the box on June 19, begging the male for the food he had just delivered—a fully prepped, de-feathered meal. After several days of absence, seeing the young falcon back at the nest site was both unexpected and exciting. We named the fledgling Lazo (shortened from Lazarus). Unfortunately, we may never know what happened to the other fledgling, but we remain grateful to have witnessed it in its early days.

It was thrilling to watch Lazo grow and develop into an independent bird. One of our most memorable moments came the day we saw it fly for the first time—a pivotal stage in its life. After weeks of growing in the nest, we had watched Lazo practice flapping at the edge, testing its wings against the wind. Then, to our joy, it stepped to the ledge and launched into the air, circling out and returning straight back to the nest—each wingbeat building the strength and coordination it would need to survive.

The next time we saw it in flight, it was noticeably stronger, even boldly attempting (though unsuccessfully) to take out a nearby herring gull. Throughout the summer, we continued visiting the nest site, though sightings of Lazo grew less frequent. Both parents remained in the area, still keeping watch. It saddened me to think we might never see Lazo again, I felt an enduring sense of pride and privilege to have witnessed the tireless dedication of the parents and the transformation of this young peregrine from a downy chick into a confident, capable bird.



Lazo  
30 June 2025



Lazo  
4 July 2025

The broader story of the Peregrine Falcon remains a remarkable conservation success. In the mid-20th century, peregrines faced near-extinction in North America due to the widespread use of the pesticide DDT, which caused eggshell thinning and reproductive failure. However, intensive conservation efforts—including the banning of DDT, captive breeding programs, and reintroduction initiatives—led to an extraordinary recovery.

By the late 1990s, Peregrine Falcons had been removed from the U.S. Endangered Species List, marking a milestone in wildlife conservation. In Connecticut, they were reclassified from Endangered to Threatened status in 2010, reflecting steady population growth and successful nesting in both urban and natural habitats. Although they remain on the state's Threatened list, their resurgence is a testament to the effectiveness of legal protections, habitat management, and sustained monitoring by the CT DEEP Wildlife Division, dedicated volunteers, citizen scientists, and the Connecticut Audubon Society.

The life of a Peregrine Falcon is a powerful example of nature's resilience and adaptability. As both urban and wild environments continue to evolve, Peregrine Falcons remind us of the critical importance of preserving biodiversity—and of what is possible when science, policy, and public support come together for the protection of a species.

There's something deeply rewarding about following the life of a single bird. If you can, find one to watch regularly—you might be surprised by how much joy and connection it brings.

## Birding Challenge: Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in Summer

Christopher S. Wood

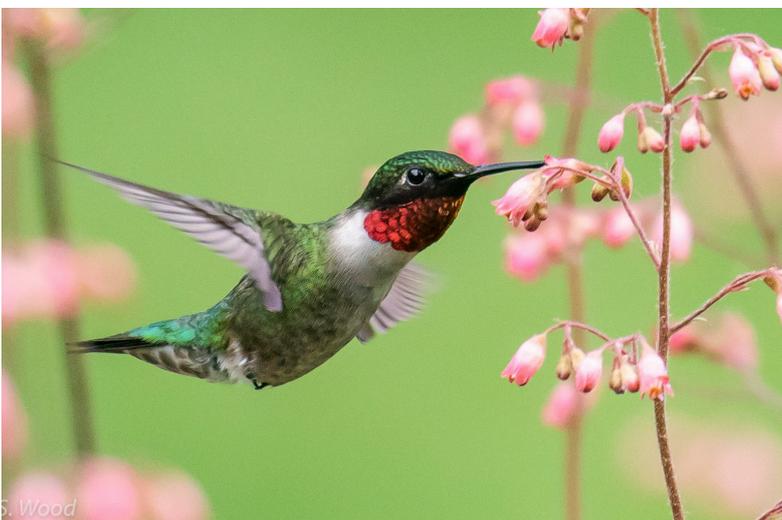
In the mid-summer doldrum days of birding, one delight that continues is watching hummingbirds flit, feed, and fight over our feeders and flower gardens. And you can even hone your observational skills by close study of subtle plumage variations and changes that hummers demonstrate.

We are hummingbird deprived here in the Northeast. Only one of the 360 or so species of hummingbirds (one of the most diverse of all the bird families) regularly occurs here, so we must make the most of our friendship with the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (RTHU for short). And because of their trusting acceptance of our sugar water feeders, they are easy to watch and study.

After many years of watching and photographing RTHUs, I thought I could distinguish juvenile males, juvenile females, and adult females. But after hours of observations, poring over hundreds of photos, and studying the [Birds of the World](#) account (Cornell Lab of Ornithology), I realized I'm not so sure. But here is a start at this ID challenge. Of course, adult males are always easy to ID, with a year-round bright red gorget. But what female and immature hummingbirds may lack in colorfulness they make up for with feistiness, and they provide an enjoyable show as they fatten up for their pending migration.

Juvenile and first basic (winter) plumages in RTHU differ subtly between males and females and from adult female plumage. Adult males, of course, maintain the bright red gorget year-round. Adult and juvenile females are difficult to distinguish, although the presence of noticeable wear on the tips of flight feathers will usually indicate an adult bird during breeding season until they replace the flight feathers that have carried them at least a thousand miles, which occurs after they have left their breeding grounds.

Juvenile males can be distinguished from juvenile females by a few traits that require close looks, and some which require having the bird in the hand. Gray streaking or spotting of the male throats is the most obvious, although occasionally females may show some faint spots. In what is called the "formative" plumage, July through October, bright red throat feathers may appear on males and occasionally one or two pop up on females. Juvenile males show a buffy wash on the flanks while on females the flanks are faint grayish or greenish. Young birds of both sexes show grayish fringe to the green dorsal feathers, but this wears off as summer progresses.



In Connecticut, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds usually arrive from late April to mid-May with bright red-gorgetted males first to appear. (see Fig. 1)

Fig. 1: Adult Male, late May

But soon, the plainer females, who do all of the nest building, egg brooding, and chick feeding, start to dominate the food supplies, reflecting their heavier responsibilities.

About five to seven weeks after hummers first show up here, juveniles start to appear at flowers and feeders. Molting from juvenile body feather plumage starts in late July.

Figures 2 -8 illustrate the plumage variations and changes that hummingbirds demonstrate.



Fig. 2: Adult female, Mid-June. A juvenile at this time would show gray or buffy fringes to the upperpart feathers.



Fig. 3: Juvenile male, early June. Note the grayish fringes to upperpart feathers, spotted throat, and buffy flanks.



Fig. 4: Immature male, late July. Males, and rarely females, may show one or more red gorget feathers as they molt into their first basic (winter) plumage.



Fig. 5: Adult female, mid-July.

Fig. 6: Worn tips to tail feathers, bright fresh feathers on scalp, clear white throat, preening activity imply molting adult female; flight feathers are not usually replaced until on the wintering grounds. Early August.





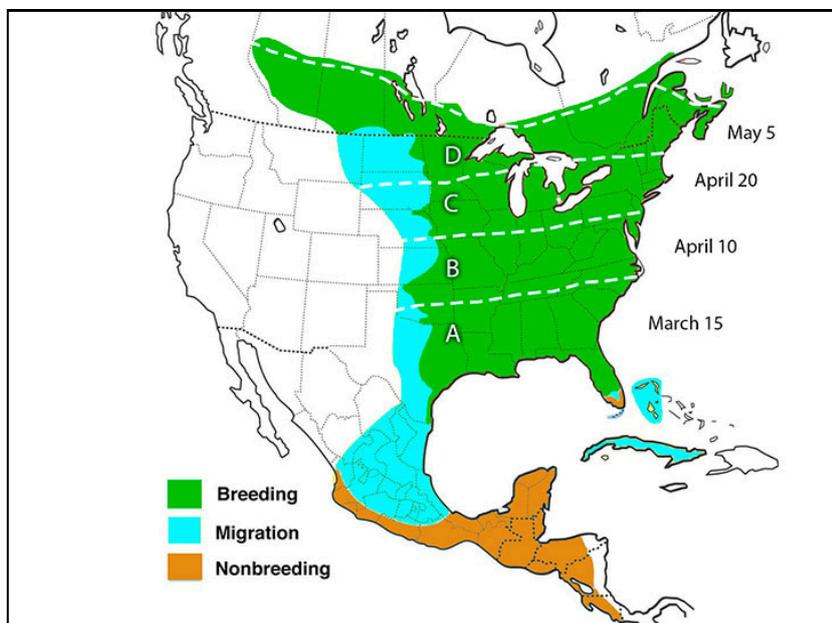
Fig. 7: Same bird as Fig. 6 showing fresh golden green upperpart feathers.



Fig. 8: Finally, one of my favorite RTHU shots, an exhausted female sleeping on the feeder, having finished her nest, laid and incubated eggs, and now feeding young. Adult female, early June.

So make the most of our too-brief encounter with the only hummingbird we are likely to see here in Connecticut by watching closely and following the family development.

**Migration Map and Timeline - Source: [Avian Report](#)**



In Connecticut, you should put feeders out in the spring, a week or two before hummingbirds arrive in your area, and take them down in the fall after migration has ended. One way to remember is to put them up around Tax Day (April 15). You should leave hummingbird feeders up through at least mid-October, potentially until the end of October (Halloween), to catch migrating stragglers. A good rule of thumb is to remove the feeders two to three weeks after you see the final visitor, which could be as late as early November. To make hummingbird nectar, mix one part plain white sugar with four parts water.



## President's Message

### Cynthia Ehlinger



Dear Members,

Now that the daylight is getting briefer and temperatures cooler, the fall migration is in full swing. From cryptic shorebirds and confusing fall warblers to soaring hawks, the challenge of identifying birds passing through can be a never-ending quest. This fall, Connecticut Ornithological Association's Workshop Committee has focused its eagle eye on hawk identification by offering a free in-person [Hawk ID Workshop](#) by hawk watcher extraordinaire Steve Mayo at Lighthouse Point Park in New Haven on Sunday, September 14. To prepare, be sure to view our recorded online Hawk Watch ID video, featuring Ryan MacLean and Steve Mayo, normally viewable only to COA members but now available [here](#) to all for a limited time. More details on the Workshop can be found below. I hope to see you there.

If you can't join us at Lighthouse Point, stop by our COA table at the Greenwich Audubon Hawk Fest on Saturday, September 27. You can find details on this and hundreds of other birding events on our [website](#). A grateful shout-out to our volunteers Sharon Dellinger and Mona Cavallero for keeping the [calendar](#) full of Connecticut birding adventures.

On the topic of migration, we know birds face immense challenges. But there are ways we can help! Many birds migrate at night, and by making thoughtful decisions about lighting, you can help protect them. As a bonus, you'll also save money on energy bills, lower your carbon footprint, and enjoy a better view of the night sky. Learn more at <https://www.lightsoutct.org> and take action – at home or with your town officials – to save birds.

"Wherever there are birds, there is hope."  
- Mehmet Murat ildan

Good birding!  
Cynthia Ehlinger  
Connecticut Ornithological Association, President

## ***COA: Hawk ID Workshop at Lighthouse Point Park***

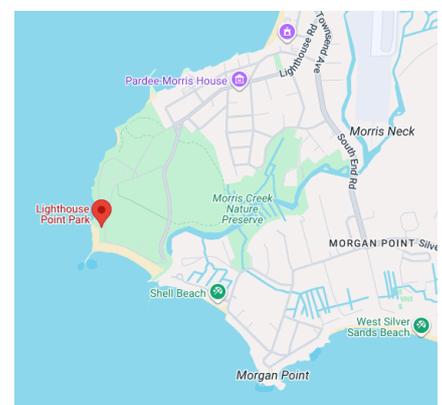
[Lighthouse Point Park, 2 Lighthouse Road, New Haven](#)

*Sunday, September 14, 9:00 to 10:00 am*

*Free, no pre-registration required*

Join Lighthouse Point Hawk Watch Coordinator Steve Mayo for an overview of the Lighthouse Point Park migration season, beginner and advanced raptor ID techniques, and a search for all types of migrating birds. Hawk watchers will be available all day to answer questions and help with IDs.

Meet at the Hawk Watch Area (near the lone tree at the center of the field) near the picnic tables. This workshop will be part of the New Haven Parks Department Migration Festival, held from 8 am to 2 pm.



# Get ready for the workshop and the hawk migration season by reviewing the following:

## Overall Shape

- Broad-winged and stocky → likely a Buteo (Red-tailed, Broad-winged, etc.)
- Slim, long-tailed, short rounded wings → likely an Accipiter (Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, Goshawk)
- Long pointed wings, streamlined body → likely a Falcon (Peregrine, Kestrel, Merlin)

## Wing Shape & Position

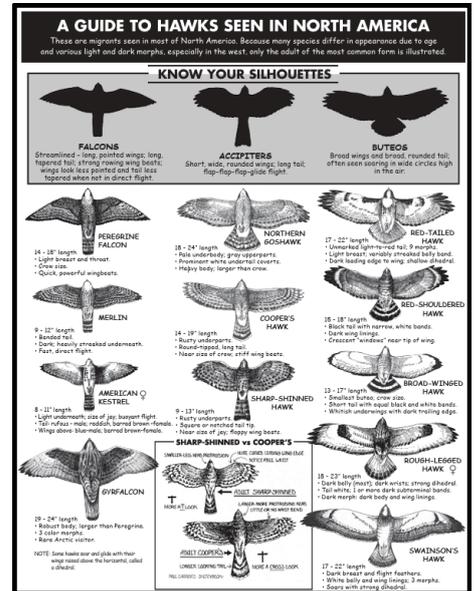
- Broad, rounded wings, often held in a slight dihedral (V-shape) → Red-tailed Hawk, other Buteos
- Short, rounded wings that flap rapidly between glides → Accipiters
- Long, narrow, sickle-shaped wings with powerful wingbeats → Falcons

## Tail Shape

- Short, fan-shaped tail → Buteos
- Long, narrow tail that helps with quick turns → Accipiters
- Medium-length tail, often tapered, aiding in fast pursuit → Falcons

## Flight Style

- Soaring with few wingbeats, circling high → Buteos
- Flap-flap-glide with rapid wingbeats, low over trees → Accipiters
- Strong, steady wingbeats and fast direct flight → Falcons



[Know Your Hawks PDF](#)

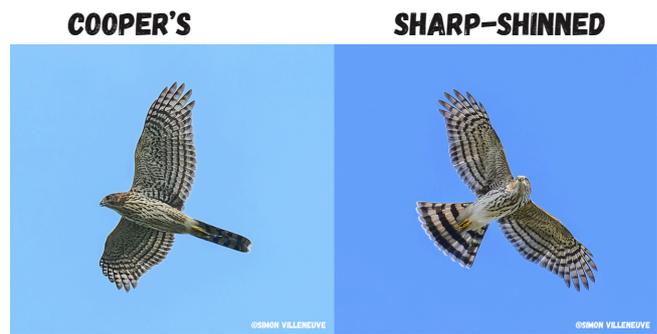


## Be careful with these ID's:



### Flight Style

- Bald: Slower wingbeats, more lumbering, often soars flat-winged like a plank.
- Golden: More powerful, deep wingbeats; soars in a slight dihedral, sometimes rocking in the wind.



### Flight Style

- Cooper's: Smooth, deliberate wingbeats, alternating with long, steady glides.
- Sharp-shinned: Quick, choppy wingbeats, with less predictable gliding patterns.



Prepare for our September Hawk Watch Field Workshop by watching one of our [previously recorded Hawk Workshops](#) presented by COA Board Member Ryan MacLean. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fQLu7Ky7xA&t=1s>

## A Note of Gratitude Hudson Zentz

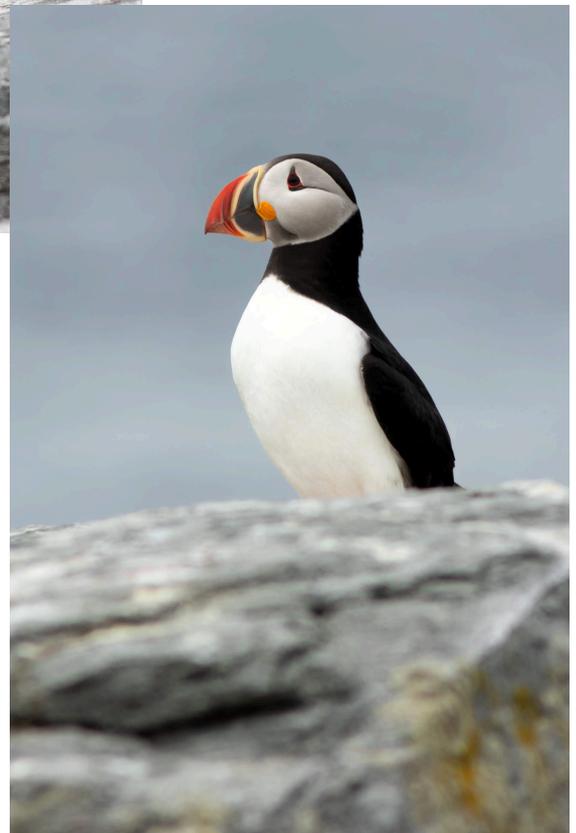
I want to express my gratitude again for choosing me for the 2025 Zepko Audubon Scholarship! My time at Hog Island was simply incredible, allowing me to observe birds in pristine habitats, such as on Eastern Egg Rock or on the island itself. Getting the chance to experience a nesting seabird colony first-hand was truly a once in a lifetime opportunity. Another once in a lifetime opportunity was to see a Tufted Puffin in the Atlantic! With their knowledge about rarities and common species, the instructors at camp clearly have a passion for birding and conservation, teaching us to not just observe the birds but how to get to know them. Overall, getting more connected to the natural world was an incredible experience, and one that I will cherish forever!



*Atlantic Puffin*  
Hudson Zentz



*Common Tern*  
Hudson Zentz



## Summer Photo Gallery



*Loggerhead Shrike*  
Sandy Point, New Haven  
Mary Walsh, 31 May 2025



*Anhinga*  
Lake Whitney, New Haven  
Shori Velles, 17 June 2025



*Franklin's Gull*  
Short Beach Park, Fairfield  
Linda Ankerstjeme Olsen, 28 June 2025



*Swallow-tailed Kite*  
Lake Zoar, New Haven  
Abby Sesselberg, 11 July 2025



*Scissor-tailed Flycatcher*  
Horsebarn Hill, Tolland  
David Mathieu, 12 July 2025



*White Ibis*  
Leetes Island Road, New Haven  
Stinky Byrd, 8 July 2025



*Red Crossbill*  
Great Mountain Forest, Litchfield  
Barry Fasciano, 11 July 2025



*Fork-tailed Flycatcher*  
Maltby Lakes, New Haven  
Alex Creatorex, 8 August 2025

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

Compiled by Steve Broker  
Volume 20, No. 3 (July 2000)

### **Brambling: An Overdue Addition to the Birds of Connecticut. (Or Yet Another Lesson in Humility as Taught to Me by a Bird)**

**By Mark S. Szantyr**

Brambling is a common Eurasian finch that occurs in North America regularly in Alaska, especially on Attu, the outermost island in the Aleutian chain, and less regularly, though probably annually, across the northern-most tier of the Lower 48 states. The first record of Brambling for the Lower 48 was on 15 December 1958 when a bird was seen with House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*), at a Stanton, New Jersey feeder. There have been in excess of fifty records of the species south of Canada since then, with some years showing multiple sightings across the country.

[Editor's Note: The male Brambling was seen coming to Fairfield County feeders from January 4 to March 24, 2000. Mark Szantyr describes a full range of ornithological emotions on hearing the initial report of Brambling in a Weston, Connecticut neighborhood, from being "gobsmacked" to skepticism, then frustration, and ultimately exhilaration on seeing this Eurasian finch known to have a high degree of vagrancy in North America. Brambling has widespread distribution in Russia, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. The Tenth ARCC Report states, "The committee believed its history of vagrancy outweighed the possibility that it was an escaped cage bird." See the *Warbler* cover art, on the first page of this bulleting, by Evangeline LaMore of Weston, who identified the Brambling and generously allowed visiting birders to see it at her home feeders.]

### **The 1999-2000 Connecticut Christmas Bird Count**

**By Stephen P. Broker**

This year's National Audubon Society sponsored Christmas Bird Count was the 100th edition of the longest running annual wildlife census in the world. It was also the 100th year that Connecticut conducted an early winter bird census, our state having been an original participant in the innovative and brilliant conceptualization of 1900 that it would be more productive to go out and count and report birds of the region than to shoot and eat them. . . I offer some comments on the high points of the 17 counts conducted entirely in Connecticut or overlapping somewhat with adjacent New York and Massachusetts.

Most Connecticut Christmas counts were conducted under comfortable to downright balmy conditions. . . Northern Gannet has a new predilection for Long Island Sound. . . Great Blue Heron broke all the northern, mid-state, coastal, and statewide records. . . Black Vulture has become an annual find on Connecticut CBCs. . . Thirty American Kestrels, fairly evenly distributed throughout the state, give little hope that this species is bouncing back from its serious decline of the last 17 years. . . Various observers have reported a pair of Peregrines in downtown New Haven, feeding at Sandy Point, West Haven, and roosting at an undisclosed location elsewhere over the course of the past year, raising hopes that this species will soon be establishing a new breeding site in the state. Last year, New York State recorded 43 nesting pairs of Peregrines, and Connecticut is bound to benefit from dispersal of some of the recently hatched and fledged Peregrines of New York, as the recovery program for this exquisite bird continues.

Both Ring-necked Pheasant and Ruffed Grouse reached their second lowest statewide totals in more than 20 years. . . Early A.M. and late P.M. efforts to record Barn Owl at New Haven (the abandoned incinerator building near I-95 Exit 8) were unsuccessful on count day, but two Barn Owls were observed there the day before the count. . . Common Raven now has nested successfully as far south as Mount Carmel/Sleeping Giant State Park, Hamden and has been seen with increasing regularity at West Rock

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and East Rock, the most coastal of our Central Valley trap rock ridges. The raven observed at Willard Island/Hammonasset [Beach] State Park makes Old Lyme-Saybrook the first coastal count to record this species. Ravens continue their steady expansion in the state.

[Editor's Note: Several of the snippets I list above were selected for personal reasons. The pair of peregrines recorded on the New Haven CBC in 2000 was first found by me at West Rock, Woodbridge on the 1999 New Haven Summer Bird Count. The small, agile male of the pair was unbanded, and his prior history is unknown. The female was a first year bird in 1999, incapable of laying eggs. She carried a color band which at the time had not been reported to the Bird Banding Lab in Maryland. In 2000, I was able to read the nine digits on her silver leg band. Writing again to BBL, I learned that this female was banded on June 4, 1998 on Riverside Church in Manhattan. Her falcon parents were known as Henry Hudson and Henrietta Hudson. She fledged that year, and she found her way to the West Rock cliff face the next year. On March 29, 2000 at 2:45 P.M., I observed the Riverside Church peregrine laying an egg on the West Rock scrape ledge, the first peregrine egg to be laid on a Connecticut cliff face in nearly 60 years. Thus began a quarter century of observing nesting peregrines.

New Haven did not record any ravens on the 2000 CBC, but Common Raven was confirmed at West Rock in spring 2002, and in 2003 I discovered the birds' nest site on a ledge some forty yards north of the peregrine nest site. This serendipitous find led to 16 years of observations of breeding ravens and their behaviors.

The resident Barn Owls that nested in a hollow I-beam at the New Haven incinerator building (since torn down) produced four young that were banded by George Zepko in 1994. For a series of years, New Haven field observers were able to document the presence of Barn Owls at the New Haven Landfill.]

## Sorting Out the Virens Warbler Group

By Greg Hanisek

If you want to know the wood warblers, you've got to master the genus *Dendroica*. This large and varied group includes 21 North American species, most of them eastern. Sixteen of them occur regularly in Connecticut, and ten of them are annual breeders. In addition, some western species occur in the East often enough to warrant our attention. Members of the genus share some common characteristics, such as wing bars and tail spots, but learning all of these sprightly beauties still amounts to quite a mouthful. One approach is to start with bite-sized helpings, which is what we will do in this article.

[Editor's Note: Greg Hanisek discusses the key field marks of the "virens group" (virens is the species name for Black-throated Green Warbler), which includes these wood-warblers: Black-throated Gray, Golden-cheeked, Black-throated Green, Townsend's, and Hermit warblers. He focuses on three of these species: Black-throated Green Warbler (a locally common breeder in northwestern and northeastern Connecticut); Townsend's Warbler (ARCC Review List, today with 2 known state records, each from 2020); Hermit Warbler (ARCC Review List, with 3 state records, the first having been made by Richard English at East Rock Park in New Haven). The article is accompanied by excellent artwork by Mark Szantyr and includes comparisons of adult males, adult females, and immatures.

At the time, the genus *Dendroica* included 27 species (AOU Check-List of North American Birds, Seventh Edition, 1998). Major phylogenetic revisions of the New World Warblers (Family Parulidae, now including 18 genera and 115 species) have taken place in recent years. All previous members of genus *Dendroica* have been reassigned to genus *Setophaga*, which in 1998 only listed American Redstart in the Seventh Edition. In addition, Wilson's Warbler, which previously carrying the scientific name *Wilsonia citrina*, now is in *Setophaga*, and Northern Parula, previously classified as *Parula americana*, has been reassigned to *Setophaga*.]

## Northern Saw-Whet Owl Backyard Breeding Attempt

By Robert A. Dixon

In late February, a male Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*) began calling in and around my yard in Sterling, Connecticut. In previous years, this would last for a few days and then the owl would move on, presumably to some damp, secluded, coniferous forest farther north. But, this owl decided to stay and was heard calling sporadically for the next three weeks.

In mid-March, I found the owl calling from a nest box I had erected in hopes of attracting Eastern Screech-Owls (*Otis asio*). It was while observing this behavior that I discovered a female saw-whet nearby. The male continued to call for the next several nights.

[Editor's Note: Bob Dixon continued his observations of the owls through March and into April. "I spent the next two weeks watching the owls' nightly activities. Usually the female would appear in the nest box entrance at dusk and depart shortly thereafter, returning within a few minutes and going directly inside the box. The male would often call before leaving his roost and would make occasional visits to the nest box during the night." Bob's description of what transpired is poignant and remains one of the most important contributions to field observations of Northern Saw-whet Owl in Connecticut.]

See also in this issue of *The Connecticut Warbler: Books on Birds*, by Jamie Meyers (*Living on the Wind* by Scott Weidensaul, 1999); *Books on Birds*, by Robert Keyes (*The Miracle of Flight* by Stephen Dalton, 1999); *Connecticut Field Notes*, Winter, December 1, 1999 Through February 29, 2000, by Greg Hanisek; *Photo Challenge*, by Julian Hough. Cover art of *Brambling* is by Evangeline LaMore. The July 2000 issue of *The Connecticut Warbler* can be seen in its entirety at the following link to the COA website: <https://ctbirding.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/CTWarblerVolume20.pdf?x80175>. See pages 81-128.



## 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!

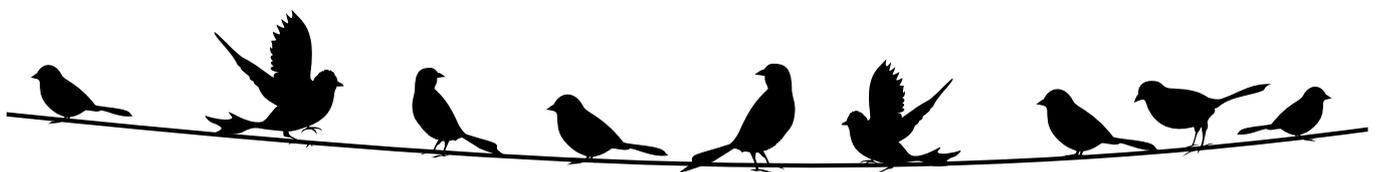
To join COA or renew online visit: <https://www.ctbirding.org/join-us/>

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

Get to know our board members by visiting <https://www.ctbirding.org/about/coa-board-of-directors-2025-2026/>





# Connecticut Ornithological Association

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## COA OFFICERS

President Cynthia Ehlinger, Riverside, CT  
Vice President Allison Black, Norwich, CT  
Secretary Corey Leamy, Chester, CT  
Treasurer Paul Wolter, Beacon Falls, CT

## COA CHAIRPERSONS

Annual Meeting	Allison Black, Corey Leamy
Conservation	Kimberly Jannarone
Membership	Dan Rottino
Avian Records	Frank Mantlik
Research	Tom Robben
Workshops	Rick Gedney
Mini-Grants	Allison Black
The Connecticut Warbler	Greg Hanisek
COA Bulletin	Jo Fasciolo

*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 December 10, 2025 to the editor at [jofasciolo@gmail.com](mailto:jofasciolo@gmail.com)*