



COA Bulletin

Connecticut Ornithological Association

www.ctbirding.org

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The Saltmarsh Sparrow: A Canary on the Coastline

Jo Fasciolo

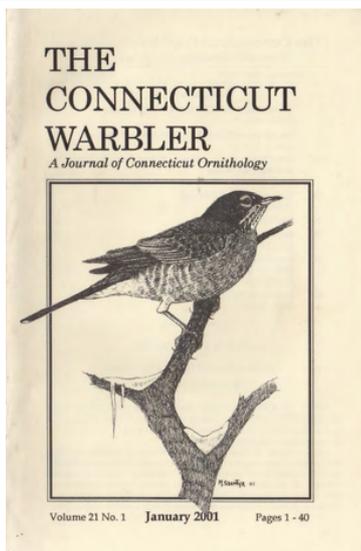
The Saltmarsh Sparrow (*Ammodramus caudacutus*) is one of North America's most specialized and at-risk songbirds. As its name suggests, this species lives almost exclusively in coastal salt marshes along the Atlantic Coast from Maine to Virginia. Unlike many bird species that occupy a range of habitats, the Saltmarsh Sparrow is an extreme habitat specialist, nesting almost entirely in high marsh areas, which are the upper zones of the salt marsh where flooding is rare. In these zones, both nest placement and breeding timing are closely aligned with local tidal cycles.

For most of its evolutionary past, this close alignment with salt marsh conditions supported successful survival and reproduction. Today, however, environmental conditions along the coast are changing far more quickly than the species can adjust. Rising sea levels, more frequent storms, and widespread alterations to salt marshes have made nesting increasingly difficult. Because Saltmarsh Sparrows depend almost entirely on high marsh habitat and have limited flexibility in nest placement or timing, even modest increases in flooding can cause repeated nest failures and sharp population declines.

The Saltmarsh Sparrow is often described as a "canary on the coastline." According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, efforts to conserve the species extend beyond protecting a single bird. Salt marshes are among the most productive ecosystems on Earth, and population trends in Saltmarsh Sparrows provide an important measure of marsh health. Because the species depends so closely on intact high marsh habitat, declines in sparrow numbers often signal that salt marsh ecosystems are



Saltmarsh Sparrow
26 Sep 2024
Southport Beach, Fairfield
Jo Fasciolo



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.

under stress or failing. In many cases, declining populations indicate that marshes are losing elevation or are unable to keep pace with sea-level rise which is a key sign of ecosystem vulnerability.

Salt marshes provide many important benefits that help both nature and people. They serve as nurseries for marine life, offering breeding and feeding grounds for fish such as striped bass and winter flounder, as well as shellfish and crabs. Marsh vegetation also filters pollutants from runoff, improving water quality in nearby estuaries and Long Island Sound. In addition, salt marsh soils store large amounts of “blue carbon,” which means the soil captures and holds large amounts of carbon from the atmosphere, helping to reduce greenhouse gases and slow climate change. Because the soils stay wet, this carbon can remain stored for many years. Finally, salt marshes reduce the impact of waves and storms, helping protect inland communities from coastal flooding.



Early Morning at Hammonasset Beach State Park, Madison
Corrie Folsom-O’Keefe

In addition to flooding, Saltmarsh Sparrows face a range of other challenges that make survival more difficult. Coastal development and infrastructure have further reduced and fragmented their already limited breeding habitat. Roads, shoreline modifications, and altered tidal flow disrupt natural sediment movement and prevent marshes from moving inland, gradually shrinking the high marsh areas essential for nesting. Invasive plants such as *Phragmites australis* can crowd out native grasses, while predation by raccoons, skunks, and other birds, as well as collisions with buildings during migration, add to population losses. Together, these factors compound the challenges Saltmarsh Sparrows face, and without effective conservation action, populations could decline to levels too low to sustain the species across much of its range (Audubon; Massachusetts Government 2023).

If the ecosystem is vulnerable, so is the Saltmarsh Sparrow. Populations have declined dramatically over the past several decades, with monitoring data indicating losses exceeding 70 percent since the 1990s. High rates of nest failure are a primary reason for this decline. The birds build their nests just inches above the highest tides, and rising seas combined with more frequent storm surges often flood nests before chicks can hatch or are able to climb to safer elevations. Population models suggest that these declines are likely to continue if current trends persist (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2023; Atlantic Coast Joint Venture 2023).



Saltmarsh Sparrow Fledgling
Corrie Folsom-O’Keefe

All banding, marking, and sampling is being conducted under a federally authorized Bird Banding Permit issued by the U.S. Geological Survey’s Bird Banding Lab.



Saltmarsh Sparrows
12 Jun 2021
Hammonasset Beach SP, New Haven
Jo Fasciolo



Clapper Rail with chick
24 Aug 2025
Milford Point, CT Audubon, New Haven
Jo Fasciolo

Although a small bird, roughly the size of a typical backyard sparrow, the Saltmarsh Sparrow plays an important role in the ecosystem. It shares its high marsh habitat with a variety of other bird species that depend on tidal salt marshes for breeding, foraging, or migration. Species that breed in the high marsh include Clapper Rails, Willets, and Marsh Wrens, which rely on dense grasses and tidal creeks for nesting. Many shorebirds and wading birds, such as Semipalmated Sandpipers, Dunlins, Great Egrets, and Snowy Egrets, use marsh channels and mudflats for feeding, while American Black Ducks forage along marsh edges. Rarities like the occasional Yellow Rail also inhabit these zones. Nelson's Sparrows use Connecticut salt marshes primarily during migration and winter, overlapping seasonally with Saltmarsh Sparrows. Seaside Sparrows breed in the same coastal marsh systems as Saltmarsh Sparrows, often using slightly lower, wetter portions of the marsh.

It also shares its habitat with plant and animal state-listed species that are either threatened or endangered such as Marsh Pink (*Sabatia stellaris*), Seaside Gerardia (*Agalinis maritima*), and Diamondback Terrapins, as well as numerous fish and invertebrates that serve as prey for larger predators. Protecting Saltmarsh Sparrows helps safeguard the broader biodiversity of coastal ecosystems.

With hundreds of miles of tidal shoreline and some of the most important salt marshes in Long Island Sound, Connecticut plays a critical role in conserving this species. While the sparrow's range extends from Maine to Virginia, the high marshes of Connecticut provide key breeding habitat and act as an important link in regional conservation strategies. Across the state, federal, state, and nonprofit partners are undertaking restoration, mapping, research, and habitat protection efforts to slow habitat loss and give the sparrows a fighting chance.



Great Meadows Salt Marsh Student Steward's Group in Action
Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe

One of Connecticut's most visible efforts has been the restoration of Great Meadows Marsh in Stratford, part of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. Over 30 acres of degraded marsh have been restored to support Saltmarsh Sparrows and other marsh wildlife. Key aspects of the project include re-establishing natural tidal flow by restoring and creating tidal channels, which improves sediment delivery and overall marsh resilience. It also includes elevating "hummocks," raised mounds planted with native high-marsh grasses, which provide nesting sites above high tides with reduced flood risk. Over 155,000 native coastal plants and shrubs have been installed to rebuild habitat structure and support local food webs. Community engagement has also been central, with local high school students serving as seasonal Salt Marsh Stewards, planting vegetation and assisting volunteers. Ongoing monitoring will take place to ensure the restored habitat is being used by Saltmarsh Sparrows and other wildlife, and allow researchers to continue to gather data to guide future restoration efforts (Audubon).



Mist Netting

Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe

Mist netting is a common, non-lethal technique used by researchers to safely capture birds and bats for scientific study. The method uses a fine mesh net that is difficult for flying animals to see, allowing them to be briefly and gently captured. Researchers use mist netting around the world to collect important information about animal health, movement, and populations before releasing individuals unharmed.

While the Saltmarsh Sparrow faces serious challenges, ongoing conservation efforts offer reason for cautious optimism. In Connecticut, better mapping of salt marshes, hands-on restoration projects, and careful monitoring are helping scientists and land managers see which marshes are most at risk and which actions make the biggest difference. Practical approaches, like allowing marshes to move inland where possible or adding sediment to raise their elevation, are helping keep high marsh habitat healthy. By staying engaged and with continued collaboration, reliable funding, and decisions guided by science, these efforts can strengthen marshes and help secure a future for the Saltmarsh Sparrow along Connecticut's coast.

A special thanks to Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe for her consultation and pictures.

Connecticut supports Saltmarsh Sparrow conservation through statewide planning and regional collaboration. In 2025, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection completed a salt marsh mapping project that documented the condition of more than 250 coastal marshes across the state. This work helps identify which marshes are most at risk, where conservation or restoration is most needed, and how marshes are changing over time. Connecticut also works with regional partners through the Atlantic Coast Joint Venture, which brings together agencies, nonprofit organizations, and researchers to coordinate conservation efforts across state lines. These efforts are supported by Connecticut's 2025 Wildlife Action Plan, which identifies salt marshes and the species that depend on them, including the Saltmarsh Sparrow, as conservation priorities and outlines actions to protect habitat, improve management, and track population trends.

Locally, environmental organizations have united to advance the resilience of Long Island Sound's coastal ecosystems. Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe, Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon Connecticut, shared, "the goal of the Coastal Restoration Coalition is to collaborate on and build support, through community engagement, outreach and advocacy, for coastal restoration projects that preserve the resilience and ecological integrity of our coastlines for the benefit of people and wildlife."

COA President's Message

Cynthia Ehlinger



Dear COA Members and Friends,

I am excited to see so many new and renewing members joining the Connecticut Ornithological Association. Your support and participation are vital to reaching our goals.

One of the highlights of each year is to bring members and guests together for the **COA Annual Meeting**. This year's meeting continues the tradition of featuring inspiring speakers that you won't want to miss, a lively raffle, and a delicious lunch. We'll elect new board members and announce the recipients of the 2026 awards, bird-friendly mini-grants, and two teen scholarships to the Hog Island Audubon Camp.

The Annual Meeting brings together birders of all levels to share discoveries, deepen knowledge, and enjoy camaraderie. Due to issues with our former site's availability, we will be holding the 2026 Annual Meeting at a new location – the beautiful UConn Avery Point campus in Groton, CT. I hope you can join us.

While this may be a bit further drive for some, I encourage you to check your maps, it may not be as far as you think and will be worth the extra time. For me, it adds only another 15 minutes to my drive from the Greenwich area and might just be the perfect opportunity to spend the night and get in some great coastal birding the next morning. Our Annual Meeting webpage provides a list of prime birding locations in the area, and we hope to return to a more central location next year.

Meanwhile, COA continues an active agenda supporting communication, education, and community among birders statewide. We have created a **new coalition** of birding clubs and organizations to strengthen our collective voice in support of birding interests for select projects. Our **Big January** event was a rousing success with more categories than ever. We hope you continue to find value in the **CTBirds listserv**, our website with its comprehensive **birding calendar**, and our active presence on **Facebook** and **Instagram**.

Looking ahead, our upcoming April 16 Workshop on Zoom features Frank Mantlik discussing the behind-the-scenes work of the **Avian Records Committee of CT** and what to do when you observe a rare bird. Be sure to sign up when registration opens.

Thank you for being part of the Connecticut Ornithological Association. I hope to see you on March 7 at the Annual Meeting.

Warm wishes and good birding,
Cynthia Ehlinger
President, Connecticut Ornithological Association

COA's 42nd Annual Meeting is Ready for You

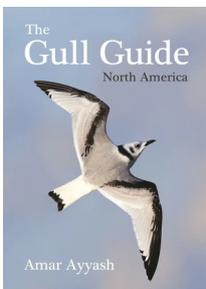


March 7, 2026 9:00am UConn Avery Point Campus

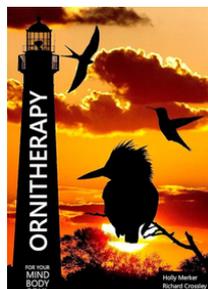
We are excited to once again invite you for our Annual Meeting! **This year it will be held on the beautiful University of Connecticut's Avery Point campus in Groton (1084 Shennecossett Road, Groton, CT).** If you've joined us for an Annual Meeting before, there will be a few changes to the usual program (including a delayed start) but we are stoked to provide another great event for you to enjoy. Tickets are on sale. Keep reading for more info on our speakers, our 2026 sponsors and exhibitors, the schedule, birding spots around campus, and more!

Happy Birding!
Allison and Corey
Annual Meeting Co-chairs

Meet our Speakers



The Gull Guide: North America
Amar Ayyash (Keynote Speaker)



Ornithery: The Power of Birding
Holly Merker



Self-found Connecticut Big Year
Nick Bonomo

[Learn more about our speakers here!](#)

EVENT SCHEDULE

9:00 AM - Registration Opens

9:45 AM - Welcome and COA
Business Meeting

10:30 AM - Nick Bonomo

11:20 AM - Zeiss Presentation

11:35 AM - Lunch

1:00 PM - Holly Merker

1:55 PM - Break

- Book Signings

2:45 PM - Raffle Closes

2:45 PM - Amar Ayyash

3:50 PM - Closing

University of Connecticut
Avery Point Campus
1084 Shennecossett Rd
Groton, CT 06340



eBird Hotspots Near Campus

UConn Avery Point Campus

Eastern Point Road Pond (across from campus entrance)

Eastern Point

Birch Creek

Bluff Point State Park

Haley Farm State Park



Bald Eagle Level Premier Sponsor



Ruffed Grouse Level Lead Sponsor



Belted Kingfisher Level Community Sponsor



Hartford
Audubon
Society



Snow Bunting Level Raffle Sponsor

















Black-capped Chickadee Exhibitor



Visit our exhibitors in the Student Center










Thank You
COA Members

The COA's Avian Records Committee of CT Update

Frank Mantlik, Chairman, ARCC

The ARCC meets annually, usually in late February or March, to review the vote results on the large batch of records of CT rare birds from the previous 12 months. This year our meeting is scheduled for February 22. To view the Committee's past reports, the Review List, or how to write a rare bird report, go to the ARCC pages of the COA website.

Currently the Committee members are busily voting on said records. The present workload consists of 59 current records (Batch 31) which includes a potential first state record (Cassin's Kingbird) and three rare breeding species records. In addition, the Committee is currently voting on the 4th Batch of Historic records, which includes 46 records. These are primarily older museum specimens that have previously never been adjudicated upon by the Committee. That batch includes at least one potential new State record - Mottled Duck.

In this day and age of the internet and digital photography, many rare bird sightings are quickly corroborated by others and often well-documented with photos. As a result, the vast majority of records are accepted by the Committee. Following our upcoming meeting, a report on these findings will be published in a future issue of The Connecticut Warbler.





COA
Workshop

Join us on Zoom for
a presentation led
by ARCC chair,
Frank Mantlik.

What is ARCC, what
part do they play in
Connecticut birding,
and how can you be
involved.

Connecticut Ornithological Association – Spring Workshop

April 16, 2026 @ 6:30pm via Zoom

Join us for a presentation led by the Avian Rare Records of Connecticut (ARCC) Committee Chair, Frank Mantlik as he shares what ARCC is, what role they play in Connecticut birding, the efforts being led by their members to better understand historical rare bird encounters, and how the Connecticut birding community can contribute.

- Registration is required.
- The event is free and open to the public.
- Visit the [Registration Page](#) to receive the Zoom link.

Winter Photo Gallery



Bohemian Waxwing
14 Jan 2026
185 Canaan Mtn. Rd, Litchfield County
Russ Smiley



Bohemian Waxwing
15 Jan 2026
200 Canaan Mtn. Rd.
Litchfield County
George Wallace



Yellow-headed Blackbird
10 Jan 2026
Vibert Road Fields, Hartford County
Alex Greatorex



Red Crossbill
21 Dec 2025
200 Canaan Mountain Road, Litchfield County
Robert Rimkoski



Evening Grosbeak
23 Jan 2026
Great Mountain Forest, Litchfield County
James Quarello



King Eider
9 Feb 2026
Niantic Bay Boardwalk, New London County
Barry Fasciano



Western Meadowlark
24 Jan 2026
Hutton Rd, Somers, Tolland County
Jo Fasciolo

Spring Photo Gallery



Rough-legged Hawk
12 Jan 2026
Durham Meadows--Frederick White Farm, Middlesex County
Celeste Echlin



Black-headed Gull
4 Feb 2026
Captain's Cove, Fairfield County
Angus Wilson



Common Gull (Kamchatka)
5 Feb 2026
Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary, Fairfield County
Ed Bailey



Bonaparte's Gull
11 Jan 2026
Sikorsky Memorial Airport, Fairfield County
David Mathieu



Harlequin Duck
28 Dec 2025
Cove Island Park, Fairfield County
Stefan Martin



Barrow's Goldeneye
3 Feb 2026
Windsor Locks Canal State Park, Hartford County
Jeff Fengler

Twenty-Five Years Ago in *The Connecticut Warbler*

Compiled by Steve Broker
Volume 21, No. 1 (January 2001)

Connecticut's 2000 Fall Hawk Migration, by Neil Currie

In 1971, when birders at many lookouts across Connecticut began to count migrating hawks, an overall picture of the fall migration began to emerge. Since then each year has added to that picture. In Connecticut the hawks pass to the southwest, avoiding the waters of Long Island Sound, and most are migrating during the day or two following the passage of a cold front. After a trickle of hawks in late August and during the first third of September, the migration begins in earnest as Sharp-shinned Hawks, American Kestrels, and Ospreys, passing over inland sites, become concentrated along or near the shore of Long Island Sound. From about September 12 through September 26, Broad-winged Hawks in large numbers (Table 1) move to the southwest over inland lookouts. Late in September there may be a heavy movement of Broad-wings along or near the shore (Table 2). By mid-September large numbers of Sharpies, Kestrels, and Ospreys are also migrating, accompanied by smaller numbers of Northern Harriers, Cooper's Hawks, and Merlins, and even smaller numbers of Peregrine Falcons. Bald Eagles migrate throughout the month and continue to be seen during the rest of the fall. Then in late October and early November, Northern Goshawks, Red-tailed Hawks, and Red-shouldered Hawks will be on the move. The timing of the migration of each species, specifically at Lighthouse Point, and in general across the state, in the year 2000, is shown in Table 2. This is the picture that has emerged from almost thirty years of hawk watching in Connecticut.

[*Editor's Note:* Figure 1 in the article is a map of Connecticut showing the locations of 14 Hawk Watch sites in 2000. Three additional Tables provide data for Lighthouse Point Park and Quaker Ridge Hawk Watches, and the overall results of the 14 Hawk Watches in the state that year. Neil Currie reported on the Connecticut Fall hawk migration from 1991 to 2009. He was the second president of the Connecticut Ornithological Association and the 1995 recipient of the Mabel Osgood Wright Award.]

Identification Notes: But It Has White Wing Bars!, by Mark S. Szantyr

I have spent an enormous amount of time in the past few years studying the juncos at my feeder and responding to reports of "odd" juncos from farther afield. It is amazing how variable these birds are. I have been rewarded by seeing a true "Oregon" Dark-eyed Junco on two occasions but more often than not, am left scratching my head and wondering just how much pink in the flanks is enough. Just how hooded is it really? I urge you [to] all look carefully at these little winter visitors at your feeding stations and start noting how variable they actually are. [D]on't be disappointed if it is "just a Slate-colored Junco." I never am.

[*Editor's Note:* The sighting of an "unusual junco" with two white wing bars at feeders in Hamden (Broken Arrow Nurseries) prompted Mark Szantyr and Greg Hanisek to join Andy Brand a day later for an extended study of the bird. Was this junco a rare vagrant "White-winged Junco" (*Junco hyemalis aikenii*), which breeds in the Black Hills region of the western Great Plains? Was it an unusual form of the Dark-eyed "Slate-colored" Junco (*J.h.hyemalis*)? Mark's excellent line drawings compare typical spread tail patterns of these two subspecies of Dark-eyed Junco. "The distribution of the "Dark-eyed" group of juncos is extraordinarily complex and the range of plumage variations is astounding." Figure 2 in Mark's article states that the "Slate-colored" form of Dark-eyed Junco shows white tips to the greater and median wing coverts in about 1 in 200 birds. Mark Szantyr is the 2000 recipient of the Mabel Osgood Wright Award. Birds of the World recognizes 15 subspecies of Dark-eyed Junco, including 3 subspecies in the Hyemalis Group and 1 subspecies in the Aikenii Group.]

Diet Choice in the American Robin, by John P. Roche

The American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*), North America's largest thrush, is familiar to everyone as it forages for earthworms (e.g., *Lumbricus spp.* and *Helodrilus spp.*) on lawns in the spring and summer. But the robin does more than search for earthworms. It also gleens small invertebrates off plants, and for much of the year [it] eats primarily berries and other small fruits. Also, while robins are thought of as the traditional harbinger of spring, many robins in the continental United States overwinter, relying on fruits to survive through the cold months. The robin also utilizes a wide range of habitats other than lawns. As breeders, they can be found in suburban and agricultural areas where shortgrass habitats are mixed with trees, as well as riparian areas, early successional forests, and partially logged forest stands. In the winter, they prefer forests, and in late winter, they begin to return to more open areas [references given]. The robin is thus a flexible bird, capable of foraging for a wide range of foods in a range of seasonal conditions and habitats. The present paper reviews diet selection in this abundant and highly flexible species, providing both a summary of findings and a call for much-needed further research.

[*Editor's Note:* John Roche's well researched article discusses the importance of avian food selection during the breeding and wintering seasons. "The amount of fruit eaten by robins varies dramatically with the seasons. In the spring, when young are being raised on protein rich insects, the robin's diet can consist of less than 10% fruit; in the fall and winter, when invertebrates are much less available in the temperate zone, its diet can consist of more than 90% fruit [reference given]. Roche calls for further research on robin diet-selection behavior, stating that "We have a good picture of many aspects of how the American Robin forages, including its selection of fruit type, whereas we have a less complete picture of how it selects, and how it locates, invertebrates."]

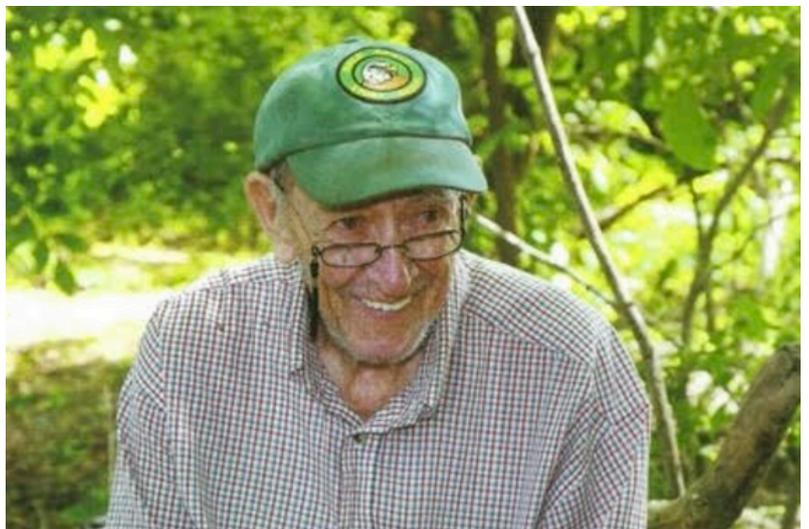
How Are The Eagles Doing?, by Donald A. Hopkins

Because of my interest in Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) I am constantly being asked the question "How are the eagles doing?" I offer here an overview for Connecticut of the progress the eagles have made over the past 25 years that I have been tracking them in the state. These observations for the most part have been published in prior volumes of this journal [Hopkins references given]. Most of these observations, beginning in the summer of 1975, were carried out in the upper Farmington River Valley. In the winter of 1979 I extended the study area to include the Connecticut River around the Enfield Rapids. To assist in these observations I recruited other observers, now numbering more than a dozen, and called the "Bald Eagle Study Group."

[*Editor's Note:* This column has featured Don Hopkins's previous articles in *The Connecticut Warbler*. He wrote in current the article, "There are a number of reasons for this increase in the Bald Eagle population [in Connecticut and eastern North America]."

Thanks to the Endangered Species Act, the eagles are doing well." The Bald Eagle Study Group that Don founded has included Gerry Mercereau and Mike O'Leary. Don Hopkins (1926-1994) was the 1994 recipient of the Mabel Osgood Wright Award. The award was presented by Neil Currie.

Donald Hopkins
Photo by Paul Fusco



Connecticut Field Notes: Summer, June 1 Through July 31, 2000, by Greg Hanisek

It's been a while since summer has been dismissed as the birding doldrums. The state's active birders enjoy sampling the rich diversity of breeding species, and they're well aware of the potential for rare visitors from an array of far-away places. From beginning to end, summer offers the opportunity for exciting finds, but this season was especially rewarding, with two first state records and a couple of very cooperative rarities.

[*Editor's Note:* In addition to being a long-time member of the Avian Records Committee of Connecticut, Greg Hanisek is a keen student of the cyclic and seasonal occurrences of natural phenomena (phenology). He has authored Connecticut Field Notes since 1994. Greg is the 2009 recipient of the Mabel Osgood Wright Award. Highlights of this Summer 2000 Field Notes article include sightings of Wilson's Storm-Petrel (Long Island Sound), an adult Purple Gallinule (Derby), fledgling Northern Harriers (Stratford), the attempted breeding of a pair of Barn Owls (Pomfret), and a sizable Grasshopper Sparrow colony (East Hartford). The first state records are of Red-necked Stint (Milford) and Fork-tailed Flycatcher (Windham). A Chestnut-collared Longspur (Haddam) is a third state record, as noted in the Tenth ARCC Report, published in 2001. "This spectacular bird allowed approach within a few feet."]

See also in this issue of *The Connecticut Warbler*: Bird Behavior Notes: Owl Food of Great Horned Owls, by Dwight G. Smith and Arnold Devine; Owls in My Birdbath, by Roy Zartarian; Book Reviews, by Jamie Meyers ("The Sibley Guide to Birds" by David Allen Sibley; Photo Challenge, by Julian Hough. Cover art of American Robin is by Mark S. Szantyr. The January 2001 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/CTWarblerVolume21.pdf?x24940> pages 1-40.



**RESULTS
ARE IN!**

**Congratulations
to all our
participants!**

**Find out the
results [here!](#)**

Did You Know?



**World Migratory Bird Day 2026: May 9th
Every Bird Counts -Your Observations Matter!**

[World Migratory Bird Day](#) is a global awareness campaign celebrating the incredible journeys of migratory birds and highlighting the importance of conserving the habitats they depend on. It is officially observed twice each year, on the second Saturday in May and again in October, to reflect the timing of migration in the northern and southern hemispheres.

In 2026, the theme is “Every Bird Counts – Your Observations Matter!”, which emphasizes the vital role of community science in bird conservation. This theme highlights how observations from everyday birdwatchers, from backyard sightings to coordinated surveys, contribute to scientific knowledge of bird populations and help inform conservation actions worldwide. By engaging people in recording bird sightings, the campaign builds awareness of migratory birds’ needs and inspires participation in efforts to protect them across flyways and landscapes.

Greenwich Audubon Spring Bird Breakfast

When: Saturday, May 9, 2026 from 8:30 am - 11:00 am

Where: Greenwich, CT, Connecticut

What: Join us for our traditional celebration of Spring Migration with bird tours, bird banding and delicious food! Cosponsored by the COA.

To register visit: [Register at https://greenwich.audubon.org/events/spring-bird-breakfast](https://greenwich.audubon.org/events/spring-bird-breakfast)

 **Audubon**

Greenwich
Audubon Center

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.).

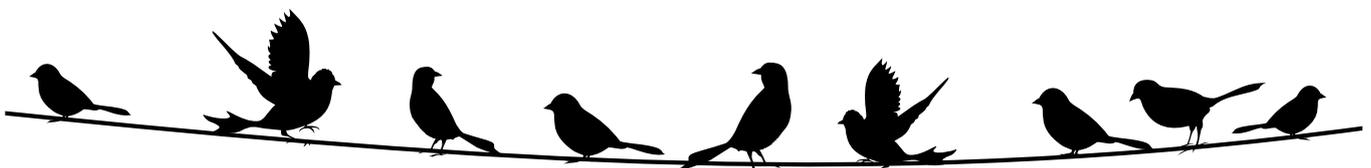
Membership Levels:

Individual	\$35/yr
Student	\$15/yr
Family	\$45/yr
Contributing	\$50/yr
Donor	\$75/yr
Benefactor	\$100/yr
Life	\$1000



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 jofasciolo@gmail.com and let me know your thoughts!





Connecticut Ornithological Association

314 Unquowa Road
Fairfield, CT 06824
www.ctbirding.org

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, Peter Grund
Avian Records	Frank Mantlik
Workshops	Rick Gedney
Mini-Grants	Allison Black
<i>The Connecticut Warbler</i>	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 May 1, 2025 to the editor at jofasciolo@gmail.com