

2013 Volunteer of the Year Award

As presented by Carol Foss at the New Hampshire Audubon Annual Meeting, September 28, 2013.

The Volunteer of the Year Award has been presented since 1997 and was created to honor those who through their dedication and hard work have made an outstanding contribution to the success of New Hampshire Audubon and its work. This year's recipient is Dr. George Clark



I am so pleased to be able to bestow NH Audubon's Volunteer of the Year Award on one of my favorite people – someone who clearly exemplifies selfless dedication while sharing his passion, and bringing others along with him. Dr. George Clark is a familiar presence in the Upper Valley. He can be found on many early mornings, in all seasons, leading avid groups of birders on treks that are educational and great fun. As a long time New Hampshire Audubon member and active co-chair of New Hampshire Audubon's Mascoma Chapter, George combines professional gravitas (he is Professor Emeritus of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of Connecticut, and a past president of the Association of Field Ornithologists!) and a quiet, soft-spoken but enthusiastic demeanor in his contributions to local communities, and to New Hampshire Audubon.

In the words of Chris Rimmer of the Vermont Center for Eco-Studies:

George has a remarkable energy and love for birds and their habitats, and for communicating their wonders to others. Although his contributions as a professional ornithologist are well known, few may be aware of all George has done to promote conservation in Norwich over the past 10 years. His reach extends well beyond feathered creatures – George is an active member of the Conservation Commission, the Trails Committee, and the Warner Meadows Association. He's as likely to be out lopping branches or pulling invasive weeds on an overgrown trail, or poring over conservation maps at a meeting as he is to be leading a group of rapt children and adults on a bird walk.

George epitomizes volunteerism, in that he gives abundantly of his time, talents and treasure, expecting nothing tangible in return. A lifelong teacher, he's in his element when introducing people to birds and the natural world. Ask him a question, and you'll get a reasoned, succinct answer... and he'll be the first to tell you when he doesn't have the answer!

As a volunteer for the Vermont Center for Eco-Studies, no one volunteered more "blood sweat and tears" for bird conservation than George, as he served as volunteer coordinator for Northern Windsor County's contribution to the Vermont Five Year Breeding Bird Atlas. He also spearheaded a year-long Birding Quest in Norwich, to document the town's avifauna and engage citizen's in exploring Norwich.

New Hampshire Audubon Trustee, Art Mudge of Hanover said this about George:

George is a mainstay of the Mascoma Chapter of New Hampshire Audubon. Chapter programs attract participants from both New Hampshire and Vermont, and he leads weekly bird walks during spring and fall migration seasons, and at least one trip a month during the rest of the

year. He is a frequent presenter for Mascoma Chapter programs at the Howe Library, and is involved with all chapter activities, including the 2013 Annual Meeting!

There is more... much more... I could say about the myriad ways George volunteers for his community, the Twin States, and New Hampshire Audubon. But his actions have, and will surely continue to be louder than any words I might add.

It is particularly fitting that we present this award to George here in the Upper Valley, in his community, where he has made such a contribution! Please join me in congratulating and thanking George Clark, New Hampshire Audubon's 2013 Volunteer of the Year.