

2018 Goodhue-Elkins Award

Presented by Steve Mirick at the New Hampshire Audubon Annual Meeting, September 15, 2018.

The Goodhue-Elkins Award is presented annually by NH Audubon to an individual or individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the study of New Hampshire birds. The award is named for Charles Goodhue, one of the state's great pioneer birders, and Kimball Elkins, the model of critical observation and insightful record-keeping.



NH Audubon is presenting the 2018 award to three educators, in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the education of young people about birds. Each has devoted decades of their lives to educating children through their enthusiasm and love of birds. This year's Goodhue-Elkins co-recipients are Rich Aaronian, Paul Lacourse, and Peggy Meyette.

2018 Goodhue Elkins Award recipients – (left to right) Peggy Meyette, Paul Lacourse, Rich Aaronian.

Photo by Dyanna Smith.

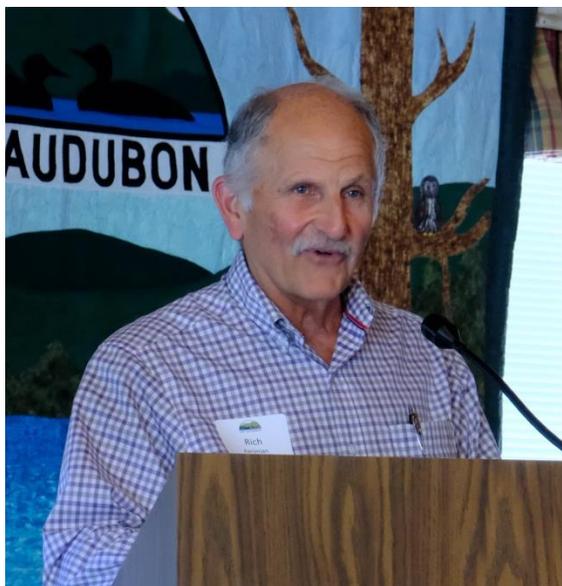
Rich Aaronian has been teaching at Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter for an amazing 46 years. He developed an Ornithology class in 1975 and continues to teach that class today! The 24/7 nature of the boarding school experience has allowed Rich the opportunity to work with students beyond the classroom and he is constantly bringing his Ornithology students out into the field to experience and learn more about birds. Rich has been an active member of NH Audubon's Seacoast Chapter, a contributor to *New Hampshire Bird Records* for over 40 years, and a contributor to the NHBirds email list since 1999. Rich has also been a regular participant on the Coastal NH and the Lee-Durham Christmas Bird Counts.

Paul Lacourse taught at Winnacunnet High School in Hampton from 1985 until he retired in 2016. Beginning in 1993, he taught science to his students through an Ornithology class that he developed for his school. Paul even traveled with his students to Costa Rica and took the Science Club on camping trips in 1998 and 1999. He still returns to Winnacunnet to help his wife who now teaches Ornithology. He says it's like being a grandfather... all the fun with the kids and none of the responsibilities! He also taught adult education classes in Ornithology and spent many years helping with the Seacoast Chapter of NH Audubon, serving as president, leading field trips, and giving programs. Paul is an avid hawkwatcher and has spent many afternoons hawkwatching with his students on the high school grounds. His proudest moments are when he sees former students birdwatching, particularly when he sees them at Cape May, NJ, one of his favorite birding spots. Paul has also been a regular participant on the Coastal NH and the Lee-Durham Christmas Bird Counts.

Peggy Meyette lives in Plainfield and is a past-President of the Meriden Bird Club – the oldest bird club in the United States. She began a teaching program for Meriden's Junior Bird Club in 1972 and also taught classes on birds at the Plainfield School for many years, beginning in the late 1970s. According to Betty Ann Heistad, the teacher Peg worked with, it all started with Peg helping in the classroom once a

week. She brought coloring sheets and calendar pictures of each bird to help children learn and remember the local birds. When Peggy eventually retired, Betty Ann continued her legacy, volunteering in the school using the materials, outlines, and artifacts Peggy came up with years ago. In Betty Ann's words, students are "still being influenced by Peg's love of birds." Peggy also financed field trips for the older grades to places such as Odiorne Point State Park and arranged for local children to attend nature camps in the summer. According to Steve Beaupres, former Principal and teacher, the schoolchildren loved having Peg come into the classroom, and grew up being well-versed in their local flora and fauna, especially birds, thanks to her. Peggy also installed and monitored bluebird boxes around town, and was a stalwart volunteer for NH Audubon during the days of the Breeding Bird Atlas and other field projects such as the annual Osprey count at Lake Umbagog.

All three of these individuals have introduced countless children of all ages to birds and left a lasting legacy of knowledge and caring about birds among the youth of New Hampshire. New Hampshire Audubon is honored to present the 2018 Goodhue-Elkins Award to Rich Aaronian, Paul Lacourse, and Peggy Meyette.



*Rich Aaronian (top left),
Paul Lacourse (above), and
Peggy Meyette (left).*

*Photos by Beth McGuinn (top) and
Rebecca Suomala (left).*

