

Biologist Programs

NH's Winter Birds

Dr. Pam Hunt

NH Audubon's "Backyard Winter Bird Survey" is a citizen science project that has been collecting data on the state's birds since 1967. In this program, Dr. Pamela Hunt uses the Survey's data to illustrate how populations of our common winter birds have been changing over time. In the process, we'll explore many other aspects of bird biology.

The Whip-poor-will: Biology and Conservation of a Crepuscular Enigma

Dr. Pam Hunt

The Eastern Whip-poor-will was once a familiar bird across much of New Hampshire, but is rare today except in a few scattered locations. To learn more about this poorly-known species, Pam Hunt initiated a monitoring program in New Hampshire in 2003, and followed this with habitat research from 2008 to 2012. In this program she'll provide an overview of whip-poor-will ecology, discuss conservation issues facing the species, and wrap up with some of the results of her research program.

Dragons and Damsels of New Hampshire

Dr. Pam Hunt

Welcome to the fascinating world of the insect order Odonata! You may be familiar with the dragonflies buzzing over your yard in the summer, or the damselflies that land on your kayak, but what do you REALLY know about these ancient insects? This program provides an overview of the biology and ecology of dragonflies and damselflies, from their amazing life cycle (content alert: some pretty crazy reproductive behavior is involved!) to their incredible diversity. It also highlights a few of NH's notable species and their stories, and closes with some results from the "NH Dragonfly Survey," a five year volunteer-based project that documented the distribution of these insects across the state.

The State of New Hampshire's Birds

Dr. Pam Hunt

In the last 50 years, scientists estimate that North America has lost roughly 3 billion birds, meaning that there are only three quarters as many birds around as there used to be. New Hampshire Audubon has been tracking bird populations for almost as long, and in our "State of the Birds" report we present a summary of how birds are doing here in the Granite State. Almost 300 species occur regularly here, and this report outlines general population trends, major threats facing birds and their habitats, and some of the conservation strategies that might help them recover. The bad news is that birds are declining here as well. The good news is that there are things we can do about it.

Effects of Climate Change on New Hampshire's Birds

Dr. Pam Hunt

We are already seeing some of the effects of climate change in New Hampshire, with a trend toward warmer winters, more extreme weather, and drier summers. How will our birds – both breeding and migrant – be affected by these changes as they manifest over the next several decades? In most cases we don't know the answers, but there is often enough information to allow some informed speculation. In this talk, we explore subjects as diverse as range shifts, declining food supplies, and changes in migration patterns as they apply to the birds of New Hampshire. What will birders in the 22nd Century encounter in the Granite States forests, fields, and wetlands? Come learn a little about the possibilities.

Aerial Insectivores: The Who, What, Where, and Why of an Emerging Conservation Issue

Dr. Pam Hunt

Aerial insectivores are those birds that feed primarily on insects captured in flight, and include nightjars, swifts, flycatchers, and swallows. Many of these species, particularly swallows and the Chimney Swift, are experiencing significant population declines both in NH and across the Northeast, and sometimes across their entire ranges. This program provides an overview of these species' biology and population trends, and delves into what we know – or don't know – about the causes of the declines.

Bird Migration: Fun Facts and Shameless Speculations

Dr. Pam Hunt

Why do birds migrate? How do they know where they're going? The phenomenon of bird migration has fascinated people for millennia, and in this program the answers are finally revealed! Pam Hunt will provide an overview of the nuts and bolts of bird migration, including how scientists study it. We'll also discuss examples of migration routes of some familiar (and unfamiliar) species and touch on the conservation issues facing migratory birds.

Purple Martins for the Masses

Dr. Pam Hunt

Purple Martins are unique among our native birds in that populations in eastern North America are completely dependent upon artificial nesting structures provided by people. Despite plenty of available housing, the species is declining over a large portion of its range. This program provides an overview of martin biology and conservation, including some of the things individuals can do to help the species right here in New Hampshire.

Salt Marsh Wildlife of New Hampshire

Dr. Pam Hunt

Salt marshes are a unique habitat found only in a narrow fringe where the ocean meets the land. They are important as nurseries for a variety of marine organisms, and provide habitat for a number of breeding and migratory birds. This talk focuses primarily on the latter, and presents information on their ecology as well as the conservation issue facing their habitat.

Bog, Fen, or Swamp? An Introduction to Peatlands

Dr. Pam Hunt

People are more than willing to toss the word "boggy" about, but how many of them know what they're talking about? In this program, we'll explore the geology and ecology of the wetlands classified as peatlands - often popularly known as bogs. Whatever one is called, these fascinating habitats share a few common features, including low nutrient levels and reduced water circulation. As a result they are often harsh environments, but still manage to support a wide variety of plants and animals that have adapted to their unique conditions. [Note: this talk can incorporate some customization for a venue that has a notable peatland nearby.]

NHA's Wildlife Sanctuaries

Phil Brown, Director of Land Management

Phil will provide an overview of the organization's wildlife sanctuaries, including special features, trails, and ongoing wildlife management. These 39 special locations around the state exemplify how NHA protects NH's natural environment for wildlife and people.

American Pipits on New Hampshire's Highest Summits

Chris Martin

New Hampshire Audubon biologist Chris Martin talks about the American Pipit, a sparrow-sized ground-nesting bird that breeds only in arctic and alpine habitat, including on New Hampshire's Mount Washington, their southernmost breeding site in eastern North America. NHA first studied pipits in the 1990s, and again recently. This program describes efforts to find nests and document breeding success in very challenging field conditions. Better understanding this alpine-obligate nester could result in more informed land management decisions in the state's fragile alpine zone.

Resurgence of Bald Eagles in New Hampshire

Chris Martin

This program examines the dramatic Bald Eagle population recovery in New Hampshire and describes management efforts and partnerships that have helped eagles. Chris Martin has been a raptor biologist for NH Audubon for more than three decades. His work focuses on recovery of the state's endangered and threatened raptors in close collaboration with NH Fish & Game. He recruits, trains, and supervises an enthusiastic corps of NH Audubon volunteer field observers who monitor these species all across the state.

Peregrine Falcon Recovery in New Hampshire

Chris Martin

This program reviews decades of effort to restore Peregrine Falcons in New Hampshire and describes management and partnerships that have helped these aerial predators. Chris Martin has been a raptor biologist for NH Audubon for more than three decades. His work focuses on recovery of the state's endangered and threatened raptors in close collaboration with NH Fish & Game. He recruits, trains, and supervises an enthusiastic corps of NH Audubon volunteer field observers who monitor these species all across the state.

Gray Ghosts and Old Fence Posts: Searching for Northern Harriers

Chris Martin

Sometimes called marsh hawks, state-endangered Northern Harriers hover and glide low over open fields and marshes while hunting voles, snakes, and frogs. Their low buoyant flight, upswept wings, and white rump patch are very distinctive. NH Audubon partners with NH Fish & Game to find harrier breeding areas and document nest outcomes. For more than three decades, NHA raptor biologist Chris Martin has recruited, trained, and supervised an enthusiastic corps of volunteer field observers who monitor state endangered and threatened birds of prey all across the state.

Naturalist Programs

Avian Adventures: Tips and Techniques for Identifying the Birds Around Us

Christian Robinson

Come explore the fascinating world of NH's resident and migratory birds as we dive into the mysteries of bird identification, behavior and communication. You will learn techniques to recognize birds by their appearance and song, so the next time you fill your feeders or take a walk you will be able to recognize your avian visitors!

Clever Corvids:

Willamina Coroka

Did you know that blue jays, crows, and ravens are among the most intelligent bird species in our region? In this program we explore these three clever corvids as well as their cousins to the west whose quizzical, charismatic personalities have intrigued humans for centuries. From making tools to remembering phases, stealing, gifting and building, the life of Corvids is a mystifying realm, complete with folklore and more.

Learning Bird Songs: Who is that singing? Learning Bird Songs

Christian Robinson

Throughout the spring, birds enchant us with their bright feathers and engaging songs. This program will discuss the reasons birds communicate and will demonstrate proven techniques to identify the songs of common bird species.

Winter Mammals: Adapting to a New England Climate

Willamina Coroka

What's going on in our natural world when the ground freezes and the temperatures drop? Winter is an incredible time to sleuth for signs of wildlife in and around the Granite State! Bizarre tracks in the backyard? Mysteriously uniform strips of bark removed from the hardwoods in the local forest? Steam emitting from a nearby beaver lodge? Join us as we discuss the vast and varied ways our native mammals adapt to the frigid temperatures of a New Hampshire winter.

Backyard Bird Habitats: Creating a Wildlife Sanctuary

Willamina Coroka

While feeders may entice our feathered friends, there are many additional things we can do to encourage them to linger longer. From native plants to bird baths and everything in between, this program will cover the wants and needs of a variety of songbird species while offering tricks and tips to convert your current outdoor space into a birding oasis.

New Hampshire Bats

Christian Robinson

Have you ever wondered how many species of bats we have here in New Hampshire? Bats are one amazing mammal, in fact - they are our only flying mammal! In this program we will go over some biology, impacts to our bat species, and talk about each species in detail. Wondering what you can do to improve our bat populations in New Hampshire? Well, join the New Hampshire Audubon in our New Hampshire bat program!