

WINTER 2017-18

# NH Audubon Afield

*Notes from the Field Edition*







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## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Welcome to Afield's *Notes From the Field Edition*! This special edition is a new merger of the Afield newsletter and the annual publication, Notes From the Field. It includes summaries of our activities in conservation, lands management and policy for the year 2017. The stories highlight the critical work we do each year to protect, study, monitor, and restore species and their habitats across New Hampshire.

Projects from these three departments are also about people and our influence on the planet. The birds and habitats that you will read about tell a larger story about environmental health—in our state, and on a global scale.

Some species tell an inspiring story of recovery. Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons have recovered remarkably, and we know why. Banning DDT was instrumental in their recovery, and management of their nest sites and



habitats by groups like NH Audubon have also helped their numbers increase.

Some species are declining in ways we do not understand. Aerial insectivores and Rusty Blackbirds are examples of songbirds whose regional numbers paint a bleak picture. Monitoring these species and correlating their decline with other factors, such as climate change and habitat loss, helps us understand what we may need to do to reverse declines.

Our continued efforts to study and steward sanctuary properties keeps close to 8,000 acres of land protected in the state.

I'm proud that NH Audubon's leadership in science and policy tells a larger story. These stories teach our partners, members, and New Hampshire's citizens to be better stewards of our natural environment.

Doug Bechtel  
President

## Contents

Conservation Notes.....	3
Environmental Policy Notes ..	14
Sanctuary Notes.....	15
Events Calendar .....	insert
Christmas Bird Count.....	21
Annual Meeting.....	22
Tributes and Giving.....	23
Holiday Fair.....	back

## Thank You

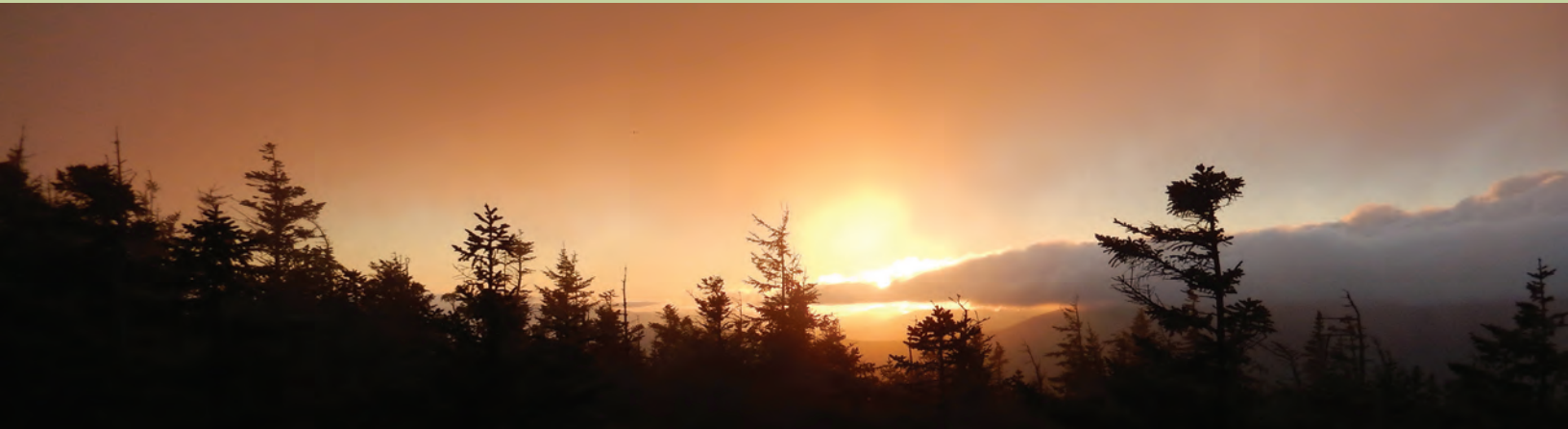
A very special thank you to Joanne and Kevin Jones for helping to make this publication possible.

## Cover Photo:

A feeder full of Eastern Bluebirds taken by Sandra McNeff during the 2017 Backyard Winter Bird Survey. Bluebirds and robins have increased dramatically on the Survey, see page 9.

# Conservation Notes

2017 Summary of Conservation Department Activities



*Early morning Bicknell's Thrush survey in high elevation spruce-fir forest on Cannon Mountain, June 2017. Photo by Laura Deming.*

## From the Director of Conservation

Walking through the woods, listening to the sounds of life all around you is a priceless experience. One that we can all agree we should do more often. For when we do, it brings peace to our heart and calms our mind. I am grateful that there are people who dedicate their lives to conserving our natural world. We do it for many reasons – because we know how interconnected we are with the world around us, because we love animals, and simply because we should. But do you want to know a secret? We really do it for ourselves! I'm proud to say that each and every one of us on the Conservation Department team is passionate about the work that we do. It's a part of who we are - we can't help ourselves! When people align their work with what they really care about then amazing things can happen. Please read on to learn more about how our work in 2017 helped to conserve New Hampshire's natural world.

A big thank you to everyone who helped to support our work this year. Partners, donors, and countless volunteers are critical to helping us achieve our goals, and we couldn't do it without you!

*Vanessa Johnson*  
Director of Conservation



*Conservation staff watch the August 21 eclipse, by Lynn Johnson.*



*Pam Hunt with the Goodhue-Elkins Award. Photo by Dyanna Smith.*

## Congratulations Pam Hunt!

The Conservation Department's own Pam Hunt received the 2017 Goodhue-Elkins Award for her contributions to our knowledge of New Hampshire birds. A well-deserved honor!

Pam has reported thousands of bird sightings, and shared her extensive knowledge of birds through written articles, field trips and many other venues. She began doing this from the time she moved to New Hampshire as a graduate student at Dartmouth in 1989, almost 30 years ago. She has inspired many of us to join her and contribute to our knowledge of the state's birds.



# Conservation Notes

## Rusty Blackbird Breeding Season Summary

by Carol Foss

Rain, rain, and more rain dampened the clothing but not the spirits of the 2017 Rusty Blackbird field crew. Technicians Katrina Fenton, Charlotte Harding, Elizabeth Schatzkin, and Kiah Walker braved cold, hail, (did I mention rain?), and blood-sucking insects to scour the North Country and adjacent areas of Maine and Vermont for Rusty Blackbird activity and nest sites.

Conditions during most of May required sitting out hard showers in the truck and limiting time in the vicinity of suspected, but not yet confirmed, nest sites. Despite these challenges, we managed to locate and monitor nests on 28 of the 56 territories with breeding pairs. Twenty (71%) of the monitored nests were successful, and we observed recently fledged young at another 10 territories where we never found the nest.

Banding efforts were also hampered by weather conditions, but the team captured and banded four adult males, eight adult females, and 35 nestlings. This year, we augmented our efforts to identify previously banded birds by taking and enlarging photographs. This greatly improved our confidence in color band identification. We identified eight individuals with this new technique and observed another seven unidentified banded birds. The oldest individual was a male that had been banded as a nestling in 2012 on a territory about 2.5 miles from its current nest site. Another male was banded as an adult in 2014 and has nested on the same territory every year since.

As readers may recall, we discovered bird blow fly larvae parasitizing Rusty Blackbird nestlings in 2015. Dr. Terry Whitworth in Puyallup, WA, has been dissecting this year's nests post-fledging and analyzing the blow fly puparia. Fourteen of the 27 nests contained puparia – a somewhat lower percentage than for the previous two years. Studies on other bird species suggest that bird blow flies seldom affect fledging success, but heavy infestations may cause anemia and reduce fledging survival.

We are grateful to our cooperating landowners, Seven Islands Land Company, Silvio O. Conte and Umbagog national wildlife refuges, Wagner Forest Management, and Weyerhaeuser (formerly Plum Creek); to the Conservation Biology Research Fund at the NH Charitable Foundation, US Fish & Wildlife Service, and Wagner Forest Management for continuing support of this work; to the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund enabling us to expand our study area in Maine; and to Adrienne Leppold of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for assisting with banding activities.

*Photo: female Rusty Blackbird with a beak full of insects to feed her nestlings, by Carol Foss.*

## NH eBird and New Hampshire Bird Records

by Rebecca Suomala

NH Audubon has been publishing *New Hampshire Bird Records (NHBR)* since 1981 and it has become an umbrella for all things related to bird sighting data, including NH eBird. eBird is now the “go to” place for bird information, whether you’re a birder wanting to find a certain species, or a conservationist like Carol Foss looking for data on Rusty Blackbirds. We are managing the NH eBird web portal and quality control of the state’s data. In spring 2017 there were 132,228 sightings submitted to eBird! We are grateful to the *NHBR* volunteers who review this increasing number

of sightings. They also make the *New Hampshire Bird Records* publication a wonderful source of information on birds and birding in New Hampshire. Funding for *New Hampshire Bird Records* and NHeBird is provided by subscribers, donations, the Milne Fund, and the *NHBR* Endowment Fund.

NH Audubon has a database of 180,000 bird reports from 1986-2009, before NH eBird began. We continue to upload this data to eBird so they will be publicly accessible and viewable on a map. Thanks to a grant from the Blake-Nuttall Fund we completed half of Coos County and a grant from the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund will allow us to complete it.



## Pursuing Pipits in the Presidentials

by Chris Martin

American Pipits add sparkle to a visit to New England's highest alpine summit with captivating flight displays, delicate "pip-pip" calls, and a penchant for tail-bobbing while perched on boulders and trail signs. Pipits are common nesters in the Canadian high latitudes and in the mountains of the western US in arctic and alpine habitat. Only three isolated breeding areas occur east of the Rockies – Quebec's Chic-Chocs, Maine's Mount Katahdin, and New Hampshire's Mount Washington; the latter is the southernmost breeding site in eastern North America. They are state-listed as "Special Concern" and the 2015 NH Wildlife Action Plan lists them among "Species of Greatest Conservation Need."

NH Audubon studied pipits intensively in 1998, finding 11 territories and nine nests, only on Mount Washington, and only between 5,200 to 5,800 feet. But in July 2016, Hector Galbraith reported hearing two males counter-singing on nearby Franconia Ridge, so we wanted to find out if pipits had expanded their breeding range over the last 20 years. With funding from the Waterman Fund, we recruited a few nimble volunteers, used existing hiking trails and roads as transects, and conducted a basic visual and auditory survey for pipits in June and July 2017 in the White Mountains above 5,000 feet.

The summit weather was atrocious in June, so some of our routes went uncovered, even in the slightly better weather we got in early July. We did survey 13.7 trail miles of alpine zone habitat, including all of Franconia Ridge and parts of Madison, Adams, Jefferson, Clay, and Washington. We detected a total of 14 pipits (11 adults, three fledglings) and, just as in 1998, all these detections occurred on Mount Washington.

Our 2017 survey was a first step in updating pipit status information for this insular breeding population and with grant

support from the Robert F. Schumann Foundation and the Blake-Nuttall Fund, we are planning to do far more intensive fieldwork in 2018. Improving our understanding of this alpine-obligate bird could lead to better-informed land management decisions, including those related to recreational activity and development within the alpine zone.

For the 2018 field season, we could use several sure-footed, sharp-eyed volunteers who can endure sitting for long stretches in high wind, mist, and air temperatures below 50°F. If this sounds like you, contact me for more details, [cmartin@nhaudubon.org](mailto:cmartin@nhaudubon.org), 603-224-9909 x317.



*Chris Martin walks the Alpine Garden Trail on Mt. Washington during one American Pipit survey in June, by Vanessa Johnson.*



*American Pipit on Mt. Washington, by Johanna Vienneau.*

# Conservation Notes

## Project Nighthawk – A Disappointing Year

by Rebecca Suomala

We had only one confirmed Common Nighthawk nest in 2017, the second lowest year since we started monitoring in 2007. There were fewer birds in Concord, and birds were missing from Franklin and several other spots where they nested recently. Our Harris Center partners in Keene had one very active location but activity ended abruptly, indicating that if there was a nest, it failed.

We suspect the weather may have been a contributing factor. When we had no confirmed nesting in 2013, we had a wet, cold May and June, similar to this year. The bright spot was the Ossipee-Tamworth pine barrens area, where we had the one confirmed nest, and the highest number of birds on a coordinated watch in Project Nighthawk's history—20! The nest and 11 of the birds were at a relatively new site for our monitoring. These could have been foraging adults from nearby territories or possibly fledged juveniles, although it was early for them to be flying on that date. We are currently seeking funding for next year's monitoring so we can see if the numbers bounce back in Concord and elsewhere, or determine if this was part of the ongoing decline of nighthawks in the state and region.



*It was an exciting start to the season with birds roosting for several days in late May at a new clearing at NH Audubon's McLane Center, and at Pickering Ponds in Rochester, photographed mid-yawn by Len Medlock. Unfortunately both birds moved on and the nesting season was a disappointing one.*

Project Nighthawk was funded by donations, and grants from the Blake-Nuttall Fund and the Meta Alice Keith Bratten Foundation. For the full 2017 summary, check the Project Nighthawk web page. To volunteer, contact me at [rsuomala@nhaudubon.org](mailto:rsuomala@nhaudubon.org), 603-224-9909 x309.

## Cerulean Warbler Missing in Action

by Pamela Hunt

In the most recent revision of New Hampshire's Threatened and Endangered Species List, Cerulean Warbler was added to the Threatened category. This decision was based in part on long-term declines across the species' range, and reinforced by its recent disappearance from its former stronghold at Pawtuckaway State Park. Ceruleans were reliable at the latter location for almost 20 years starting in the early 1990s, but after 2010 were only recorded twice. The other somewhat reliable spot, Mount Wantastiquet in Hinsdale and Chesterfield, has more recent records (e.g., 2016), but coverage is far less consistent. I initiated targeted surveys at both of these historic locations in 2017, visiting each site twice between late May and late June. No Ceruleans were found, despite use of playback of the species' song. Quick visits to nearby sites with suitable habitat (Rhododendron State Park and Tower Hill Pond in Candia, the

latter having multiple records in the early 1980s) also failed to detect any birds.

A bird was reported from the campground at Pawtuckaway State Park, but a follow-up search shortly after failed to find it. The bird in question was heard but never seen by the original observer. Ceruleans are notoriously difficult to identify by voice alone. Black-throated Blue Warblers, in particular, can sing a rapid song that is extremely similar to that of a Cerulean, and I had birds doing exactly this at both Wantastiquet and Candia in 2017.

It is critical to confirm any suspected Cerulean song with a sighting. Cerulean Warbler surveys will continue in 2018-19, and expand to other sites. If you are interested in volunteering, contact me at [phunt@nhaudubon.org](mailto:phunt@nhaudubon.org), 603-224-9909 x328.



## Purple Martin

by Pamela Hunt

There was good news and bad news for New Hampshire's Purple Martins in 2017. Extended periods of cold and wet weather often suppress insect activity and make food less available. In such cases, martins can die from starvation and/or exposure. Cold/wet spells in 1959 and 1972 were directly responsible for regional declines in large parts of New England. May 2017 was cold and wet, and volunteers at the Seabrook colony were dismayed to find ten dead adults over a two week period at the end of the month. The colonies in Hampton and Rye remained unoccupied in early June, and we all feared that the mortality might have significantly impacted the overall Seacoast population.

The news wasn't any better in the Lakes Region, the Purple Martin's former stronghold in the state. A single bird was seen at Fun Spot in mid-May, but it turns out to have been the only record for this long-lived colony in all of 2017, and the site appears to have been abandoned. Whether the birds here also suffered from the weather or simply didn't return after last year's complete failure, we don't know. This leaves the Lakes Region with a single colony in Wakefield, which typically only supports a single pair.

I did say there was good news, however, and back on the Seacoast we had a successful season despite the early mortality.



Three half-grown Purple Martin chicks at the Rye colony in July 2017. Photo by John Cavanagh.

Thanks to another half dozen gourds, the Seabrook colony maxed out at 18 pairs, which produced 61 young. By June, one pair had finally returned to Hampton and another pair to Rye, which produced two and three chicks respectively. Hopefully, these latter two colonies will grow in 2018 (keep your fingers crossed for the weather), and if we're lucky, maybe a couple more new colonies can get started, as well.

## LED Bird Deterrent Research Published

by Carol Foss

Nashua engineer, Donald Ronning and I have been working together to test his newly developed technology that uses high brightness, single wavelength LEDs as a bird deterrent. After early tests on Common Eiders that were preying on mussels at an aquaculture site in Casco Bay, and on Ospreys preying on unprotected trout at the Milford Fish Hatchery, we teamed with raptor bander David Merker of Hanover for tests on Red-tailed Hawks at a Cape May, NJ banding station. We coauthored a paper with our results that was recently published in *The Condor: Ornithological Applications*.

Red-tailed Hawks alter their flight paths to avoid intense light from high brightness, short-wavelength LEDs, suggesting that specialized LEDs could be used to keep birds away from aircraft, buildings and other hazards. Birds are able to see wavelengths of light that are invisible to humans, which provides opportunities to affect bird behavior with minimum human disturbance. Illumination from the lights used in the experiment was invisible in bright sunlight, and barely reflected off nearby vegetation at dusk and on cloudy days.

To obtain the full text of the journal article, *Intense, short-wavelength light triggers avoidance response by Red-tailed hawks: a new tool for raptor diversion?* send a request to [cfoss@nhaudubon.org](mailto:cfoss@nhaudubon.org). The article will be available on line at <http://www.americanornithologypubs.org/toc/cond/119/3> in early 2018.



Red-tailed Hawk at study site. Photo by Don Ronning.

# Conservation Notes

## Bald Eagles Come Off State List!

by Chris Martin



*An adult brings in a fish for the two eaglets nesting on Carthagina Island in the Merrimack River in Manchester. Photo by Peter Gray, June, 2017.*

Substantial progress towards full recovery led the New Hampshire Fish & Game Department to formally remove the Bald Eagle from the state's List of Threatened and Endangered Wildlife in March 2017! The Bald Eagle breeding population in New Hampshire has been doubling roughly every five years since the late 1990s. NH Audubon staff and members have played a critical role in this effort from the very start, and we are all delighted to have reached this goal.

In 2017, we documented 59 territorial pairs of Bald Eagles in the state, a 5% increase from 56 pairs in 2016. We

confirmed 53 eagle pairs incubating, up 26% in one year from 42 incubating pairs found in 2016. We found a record-high 38 successful nests, up 23% in one year from 31 nests in 2016. Each of these breeding metrics sets a new post-DDT era high mark for eagles in New Hampshire, and each category has doubled within the past 5-6 years. We also counted a record-high 59 young fledged, up 16% from 51 fledglings in 2016. Statewide totals for 2017 do not include at least 13 more border-nesting eagle pairs who spend a good deal of time in New Hampshire, but are not counted in our totals since their nest trees are located in neighboring states.

In another sign of strong growth, 11 eagle territories fledged young for the very first time in 2017, and these newly successful sites produced 27% of our fledgling total. Since eagles began breeding here again some 30 years ago, a total of 427 young have fledged from

nests in the state. And more than 25% of all those fledglings (110 fledglings) have fledged in just the past two breeding seasons!

Roughly half of our breeding eagles wear coded leg bands. We positively identified 22 individuals at nest sites in the state in 2017. These birds ranged in age from 4-13 years, and 41% originated from Massachusetts nests, 32% from New Hampshire, 18% from Maine, and 9% from Connecticut.

NH Audubon partners with our state's Nongame Wildlife Program to coordinate eagle monitoring and management. We do this with funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grant program, with support in 2017 from the Dorr Foundation, and with additional assistance from individual donors and field volunteers. Thanks to all for your support!

## Peregrine Falcons

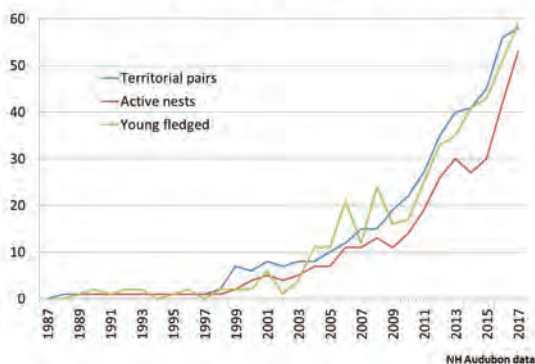
by Chris Martin

Spring 2017 marked the 37th consecutive breeding season for New Hampshire's recovering Peregrine Falcon population. While still listed as state-threatened, our Peregrines continue to expand to new nest sites, albeit quite slowly. NH Audubon continues to play a lead role in their monitoring and management.

In 2017, we documented a state record-high 24 occupied territories. Several other breeding metrics that we track annually were not as strong. We confirmed 19 incubating pairs but only 12 productive sites, down from a record-high 14 in 2016. Yet, we tallied 31 fledglings for an average of 1.63 young per nesting pair, quite close to the state's 37-year average of 1.65 young per nesting pair. Also encouraging is that in the last four breeding seasons 30 or more young have fledged each year—a first for

Continued on page 9

New Hampshire Bald Eagle Productivity, 1987-2017





## 2018 Backyard Winter Bird Survey

### February 10-11

This annual Survey began in 1987 and allows our biologists to see what's happening with New Hampshire's resident bird populations. We've watched the arrival of southern species like the Carolina Wren, and the disappearance of Evening Grosbeaks (could they be coming back?).

Participation by over 1,200 volunteers makes this possible and we need as many participants as we can get across the state. Past participants will receive last year's results with their 2018 forms in the mail in January. You can also report on-line or print out the survey form from the web site.

To receive a packet in the mail, email [bwbs@nhaudubon.org](mailto:bwbs@nhaudubon.org) or call 603-224-9909.

**It's a great way to have fun watching birds and make a vital contribution to our knowledge!**



*The Red-bellied Woodpecker, taken by Sandra McNeff during the 2017 Backyard Winter Bird Survey, is one of the formerly southern species that has increased dramatically on the Survey as it expanded its range northward.*

Peregrine Falcons, cont.

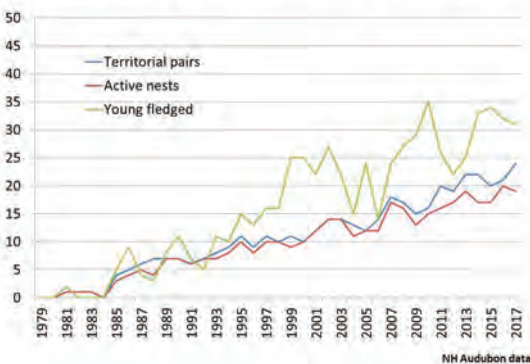
the state since monitoring began in New Hampshire in the early 1980s.

Manchester had two breeding pairs this year, at the I-293/101 Bridge and the Brady-Sullivan Tower. Rumney also had two pairs with one at Polar Caves and one at Rattlesnake Mountain. Workers at the Irving Oil Marine Terminal in Portsmouth discovered a prematurely fledged juvenile who "just dropped in" from the massive I-95 Bridge looming overhead. Diamond Peaks in the Second College Grant fledged young later in August than ever recorded in 378 prior New Hampshire fledging records, dating back to 1981.

Working with Stantec and BioDiversity Research Institute, we caught two more adult female falcons (Walpole's Fall Mountain and Portsmouth's I-95 Bridge) and fitted them with 12-gram, solar-powered satellite transmitters. We are now tracking daily movements of four birds throughout the year.

Peregrine Falcon work is supported by a federal grant to NH Fish & Game and a grant by the Blake-Nuttall Fund. Thank you also to our field volunteers and others who assist with this work, including partners at Appalachian Trail Conservancy, BioDiversity Research, Brady-Sullivan Properties, Irving Oil, MassWildlife, NH DOT, NH Fish & Game, SingleDigits, and Stantec.

NH Peregrine Falcon Productivity, 1980-2017



*In Walpole, Fall Mountain's four Peregrine Falcon chicks being kept safe and warm during capture of the female in May, 2017. Photo by Chris Desorbo.*



# Conservation Notes

## Bird-friendly Windows

by Laura Deming

This year, we began to apply “Bird-friendly Building Design” concepts to our own McLane Center. Any uncovered glass can be dangerous for birds, but the most deadly glass is in the first few floors of a building, where it reflects surrounding vegetation. At the McLane Center, we first targeted the windows and doors facing the courtyard, where trees, shrubs, and flowering plants attract diverse insects and foraging birds.

There are many products that effectively prevent bird collisions, including screens, “curtains” of cord or other line, window film, bird tape, and decals. For a product to be effective in preventing birds from hitting glass, it must be applied to the outside of the glass, and it must be visible to birds, even in low light, when many birds are active. But how do we know what is visible to birds? We know that birds have very keen vision. However, with the exception of owls, birds have poorer depth perception because their eyes are located on the side of their heads, rather than in front. Birds see more wavelengths of color than we do, and many, including most passerines, see into the ultraviolet range. Although, woodpeckers, pigeons, raptors, and hummingbirds—all of which frequently collide with

glass—may not. Finally, birds do not detect contrast as well as we do. These details rule out the ability to use a treatment invisible to humans.

The American Bird Conservancy (ABC) has been testing the effectiveness of various bird-safe glass products. Mist-netted birds are placed in a dark tunnel with side-by-side windows at the far end – one with a bird-deterrent product and one without. Each bird flies toward the glass, but is caught in a safety net and then released. Each window product is tested with 80-100 individual birds, and the number of birds that avoid the window with the pattern provides an index of how visible the product is compared to clear glass. The ABC has found that birds avoid patterns with elements spaced two inches or less apart, and that dots or lines must be at least 1/8th of an inch in diameter.

To date, we have installed a few different glass treatments on first floor windows and doors at the McLane Center. The “zen wind curtain” consists of paracord strung between wooden rails that are attached to the top and bottom of the doors. Cord is spaced every two inches. This structure is based on the “Acopian BirdSaver” available online at: <https://www.birdsavers.com/buildyourown.html>. Other windows are now covered with Solyx Bird Safety film, which has a pattern of horizontal dark gray lines spaced one inch apart. Our goal is to exhibit various products and provide information on their costs, ease of application, and effectiveness preventing

bird collisions.

For more information on the ABC’s Bird-Friendly Buildings program, please visit their website: (<http://collisions.abcbirds.org>).



*An example of a window treatment that prevents collisions at NH Audubon's McLane Center. This “zen curtain” consists of wooden top and bottom rails with paracord spaced two inches apart. It was expertly made by volunteer Tabor Browder.*

## Contract Surveys

The Conservation Department contracts with various groups and agencies to do a wide variety of wildlife surveys, including reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates and birds.



*Top: Spotted salamander found during vernal pool surveys in Strafford, May 2017. Left: Biologists Diane DeLuca and Laura Deming were excited to find a Blanding's turtle near a wetland during spring surveys. Photos by Laura Deming.*



## Conservation Department Funding

by Vanessa Johnson

I hope you enjoy reading about the Conservation Department's work in 2017. Our projects depend on funding from contracts, grants, and donations from people like you. Here at NH Audubon we believe that collaborations and partnerships strengthen the work that we do. In 2017, we worked with or received funding and contracts from many private and public sources, including:

Appalachian Trail Conservancy	NH Department of Transportation
Audubon Vermont	NH Fish & Game's Nongame and
Biodiversity Research Institute	Endangered Wildlife Program
Cornell Lab of Ornithology	Robert F. Schumann Foundation
Lite Enterprises Inc.	Single Digits, Inc.
Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife	Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund	The Dorr Foundation
Margery and Lorus Milne	The Loon Preservation Committee
Endowment Fund	The Blake-Nuttall Fund
Meta Alice Keith Bratten Foundation	The Waterman Fund
Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund	US Fish and Wildlife Service
New Hampshire Bird Records	USA National Phenology Network
Endowment Fund	Vermont Fish and Wildlife
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NH Charitable Foundation's	White Mountain
Conservation Research Fund	National Forest
NH Department of Resources and	
Economic Development	

In many instances our partners and funders can only support a portion of our research projects, and that is when we depend on your donations to help fill the gap. We're sorry we cannot list every donor to the Conservation Department and its projects, but all gifts are important and we appreciate each one. We especially thank the following individuals who gave generously to support the Conservation Department in 2017, including:

George Clark	Joanne & Kevin Jones
David Donsker	Charles Nims
Carol Foss & Flip Nevers	Patricia Niswander
Richard Hughes	Thomas Warren
Betsy Janeway	Mary Wright

There are several ways to fund the work of the Conservation Department. To support the department overall or a specific research project you can visit our website at <http://www.nhaudubon.org/join-donate/research-support/>. For more information about this or to learn about contributing to the Conservation Department endowment please contact Vanessa Johnson at [vjohnson@nhaudubon.org](mailto:vjohnson@nhaudubon.org), 603-224-9909 x327.



*Journalist Laura Poppick and Membership Coordinator Jane Kolias joined Laura Deming (photographer) in June to survey the Bicknell's Thrush Mitigation Area on Cannon Mountain.*

**Thank you  
for your support!**



# Conservation Notes

## A season of Bunchberry (*Cornus Canadensis*)

*A glimpse into the phenophases, or life stages, of this plant and documentation of the timing of each stage. All photos were taken by Diane De Luca at the Deering Wildlife Sanctuary.*

May 13: First leaves unfurling.



May 20: Four showy white bracts (specialized leaves) encircle a central flower cluster in full bloom.



May 20: Each flower is encircled with a whorl of six leaves in full bloom.



May 30: Pollen is released by a filament on each flower that explodes when touched.



July 22: If the flowers are pollinated, bright red clusters of fruit form.

July 22: In a good fruiting year, red accentuates the green ground cover.

## Phenology, Photography and You

by Diane De Luca

Worldwide, citizen scientists are collecting valuable phenology data that will help track changes in the ecology of species in response to global warming. Documenting change requires long term data collection with a wide diversity of species. Since 2012, biologists at NH Audubon have contributed data to the USA National Phenology Network (<https://www.usanpn.org>) database, giving us a strong baseline of data for our properties. In addition to written field records, scientists are also examining historical documentation including photographs and herbarium specimens. It has become increasingly evident that dated, site specific photographs offer a reliable method for documenting changes.

Your photographs can contribute to understanding the impacts of climate change close to home. Make a long-term commitment to documenting and sharing key events such as leaf bud burst, flowering, fruiting, and leaf senescence in an identified species. The photos of Bunchberry, a monitored species on the Deering Wildlife Sanctuary, provide additional, high quality documentation of the seasonal phases of this species.

The USA-NPN is accepting and encouraging photographic documentation of the phenophases of monitored species.

Another opportunity to use your photography skills is through participation in the Picture Post Network (<http://picturepost.unh.edu>). A picture post guides visitors to take a set of standardized 360 degree photographs at an established location. These photos are dated, geotagged and uploaded on the site, creating a time-lapse photo series that will document changes in the landscape—seasonal, annual, and over many years. Picture posts can be found at NH Audubon's Massabesic Center, and will soon be located at the Deering Wildlife Sanctuary and McLane Center. You can add your own and help grow the network!



## Where Have the Swallows Gone?

by Pamela Hunt

Populations of most swallows are declining in both New Hampshire and the Northeast. NH Audubon has been trying to collect data on colony locations since 2011 with mixed success. This year, I took a different approach focusing on two of our most rapidly declining species: Bank and Cliff Swallows, the latter of which was newly listed as Threatened in the state in 2017.

Surveying these two species requires very different approaches. Bank Swallows nest primarily in eroded river banks, and the best way to find their colonies is from a boat. Aided by volunteers, I kayaked six 12-mile sections of three rivers in July, searching for both suitable sand banks and evidence of colonies. Along the Merrimack River in Boscaawen and Canterbury, we located nine suitable banks, but only found colonies at three. In addition, a couple of locations known to be active in the past several years were no longer occupied by Bank Swallows, and one formerly large colony seemed significantly smaller than usual.

The news wasn't good along the Baker and Pemigewasset rivers either. There were lots of banks along the Baker in Rumney, but only one had a colony, and there was no sign that it was active in 2017. The Pemigewasset had less habitat in the section we visited (Thornton and Campton), and no sign of Bank Swallows at all. What we don't have in these cases is historical data for comparison, so there is no way of knowing whether the absence of swallows on those two rivers is a new development.

Cliff Swallows, on the other hand, nest on buildings and bridges. Using a list of sites from the last ten years, I conducted a Cliff Swallow blitz through portions of the



*Cliff Swallows on partially-built nests in Pittsburg, one of the species' strongholds in New Hampshire. Photo by David Forsyth.*

Lakes Region and North Country—the two portions of the state where the species remains relatively common. There wasn't enough time to give both regions a thorough treatment, but once again it seemed that several previously-occupied sites were unused. The largest colonies appear to be in Pittsburg and Tamworth.

Surveys for both species will continue in 2018 and 2019, developing a much better picture of where these two species occur in the state. Observations by the general birding public are welcome, and if you see either of these two swallow species during the summer, consider spending some time trying to find out where they are nesting, since that information is what we need to best conserve them.



*Oct 12: The colors of fall are evident in the Bunchberry leaves which can persist through the winter.*



## by Carol Foss

Senior Advisor for Science and Policy

NH Audubon's Environmental Policy Committee members were frequent visitors to the Legislative Office Building and the State House during the 2017 legislative session. Committee members provided testimony on seven bills, which met a variety of fates (see Table 1). Legislative committees have been working on bills that were retained or re-referred during the summer and fall for reconsideration in the 2018 session. Bills voted "Inexpedient to Legislate" cannot be reconsidered. Full text and docket details for these bills are available through the New Hampshire General Court website [www.gencourt.state.nh.us](http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us). In addition, we signed in on 17 bills without submitting testimony (see Table 2, in the website version).

At the federal level, we signed on to letters supporting continued funding for the Department of Interior's National and Regional Climate Adaptation Centers and urging passage of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (H.R. 2862; S. 1842).

We attended a hearing of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to provide input and submitted written comments on Draft Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden. The menhaden is a keystone species in Atlantic marine ecosystems, playing an important role in maintaining water quality and providing prey for larger fish, eagles, osprey, loons, whales, and porpoises. The early stages of population recovery have already resulted in increased near shore whale and seabird activity in the Gulf of Maine.



*Humpback whale feeds on menhaden near shore at Salisbury Beach, MA. Photo by Mike Laptew.*

We are participating in the Conservation Funding Caucus, which is working for passage of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act. This legislation would make revenues from energy and mineral development on federal lands available for funding state wildlife conservation and restoration programs for fish and wildlife species of greatest conservation concern. The Recovering America's Wildlife Act would make a huge difference in New Hampshire by supporting efforts to conserve declining species, such as bats, for which no funding is currently available.

We are monitoring the status of Portland Pipe Line Corporation's lawsuit against the City of South Portland. South Portland adopted a "Clear Skies" ordinance in July 2014 that banned crude oil exports from the city's port and effectively blocked flow reversal on the 236-mile pipe line between Portland and Montreal. Portland Pipe Line Corporation filed suit in February 2015 to challenge the ordinance. A federal judge put a hold on the suit in May 2017, but denied the city's motion

to dismiss the case in August. Then, in October, TransCanada announced their abandonment of plans to build the Energy East Pipeline, which would have carried bitumen from collection points in Alberta, Saskatchewan and North Dakota to refineries and port terminals on the Atlantic Coast. The effects of this decision on potential incentives to reverse flow on the Portland-Montreal Pipe Line remain unclear. We will continue to monitor this situation closely in the coming months.

A grateful thank you to the following donors for supporting NH Audubon's policy work: Paul Nickerson, Larry Sunderland, and Margaret Watkins.

Table 1. NH Audubon provided testimony on these bills.

Bill Number	Intent	NH Audubon Position	Outcome
HB225	Repeal the electric renewable portfolio standard	Opposed	Re-referred to committee
HB317	Require legislative approval to increase a charge to support strategies that minimize distribution costs for electricity	Opposed	Retained in committee
HB462	Require the Site Evaluation Committee to revise certain rules pertaining to proposed energy facilities	Opposed	Tabled
HB540	Original bill prohibited Department of Health and Human Services from applying for, accepting, or expending federal funds for climate change adaptation; subsequently amended and retitled to repeal the voluntary greenhouse gas reductions registry	Opposed	Enacted, Chapter 0074
HB592	Repeal the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative	Opposed	Retained in committee
HB627	Establish the position of energy efficiency advocate (would eliminate investments in energy efficiency for municipalities and low-income housing)	Opposed	Inexpedient to legislate
SB48	Establish a commission to study changes to the Fish & Game Commission and Department	Supporting	Retained in committee





*Willard Pond. Photo by Phil Brown.*

## From the Director of Land Management

Our wildlife sanctuaries embody all of NH Audubon's major focus areas: conservation research, education, environmental policy, and of course, land stewardship. In this way, they truly represent NH Audubon's mission: to protect New Hampshire's natural environment for wildlife and for people.

Our lands, some well-known and others well-hidden, provide *sanctuary*—a safe place for wildlife. These locations are permanently protected and undeveloped places that harbor a wide diversity of plants, animals and natural environments. Our state's wildlife and human populations are stronger and more resilient because of them, and their significance in the landscape relates to how they connect people to the natural world.

Sanctuary stewardship, or care of these valuable landscapes, is critical to protecting their significance. Along with a strong team of Sanctuary Stewards, numerous volunteer groups contribute hundreds of hours annually to help us provide responsible, low-impact recreation opportunities and access to some 70 miles of trails. Through well-developed partnerships and collaborations, our stewardship of these lands for wildlife habitat is performed with a high level of competency.

The following stories are just a handful of the many examples of how maintaining a vibrant land

stewardship program plays an important role in protecting the state's natural environment. I'm pleased to report on the 2017 season at NH Audubon's wildlife sanctuaries.

*Phil Brown*  
*Director of Land Management*



*Harvest tours were conducted at the Deering Sanctuary in February of 2017 (pictured) and at the Kensan-Devan Sanctuary in July. Between the two tours, about 30 neighbors, friends, and interested members of the public had the opportunity to learn about the management first-hand from foresters, wildlife biologists, and land managers. Photo by Phil Brown.*



# Sanctuary Notes



*Panorama of the Ridgely Platform on the Thompson Sanctuary, by Phil Brown.*

## Thompson Sanctuary Celebration and Ridgely Platform Dedication

On June 22, after the completion of the new accessible boardwalk and trail at the Thompson Wildlife Sanctuary in Sandwich, NH Audubon hosted a grand opening celebration with some of our closest partners and supporters.

In addition to celebrating this multi-year project, it was an opportunity to thank many of the donors who helped make it possible. Phil Brown and NH Audubon President Doug Bechtel, spoke to about 40 supporters and led a leisurely walk from the parking area to the observation platform. NH Audubon also dedicated this platform in honor of the Ridgely family, namely, Drs. Beverly and Robert, the father-son duo who in the words of the permanent sign “loved this marsh more than any other.”

This platform, located at the boardwalk’s end point, has interpretive panels which highlight the bird life and beaver-influenced wetlands, as well as indicate mountain names in the Sandwich Range to the north and Ossipee Mountains to the south. After the walk, Robert and Peggy Ridgely hosted a lovely reception for guests at their home.

In October, NH Audubon hosted a Big Sit birding event at the Ridgely Observation Platform, tallying 51 species including several unusual finds like Short-eared Owl and Pied-billed Grebe. We hope to see this tradition continue for future events on the platform, as many visitors came out to enjoy the views and learn about birds from NH Audubon staff.



*The Ridgely family: left to right, Bihua Chen, Jackson Loomis, Peggy and Robert Ridgely (top); Phil*

*Brown dedicates the boardwalk and platform during June’s celebration (bottom). Photos by Dyanna Smith.*





## Kensan-Devan Forest Management for the Birds

by Chad Witko and Phil Brown

The Land Management Department carefully assesses forest management opportunities on its 7,500 acres of land across the state. Forestry projects on these lands are quite limited: only 5.5% of total acreage has been managed through tree cutting over the past 20 years. These locations are determined through analysis involving location, impact, goals and potential outcomes.

Over the winter of 2016-17, with the help of consulting foresters from Meadowsend Timberlands, NH Audubon implemented forest management on its Kensan-Devan Wildlife Sanctuary in Marlborough. The goals included wildlife habitat, forest health improvement and a sustainable source of revenue from the organization's fourth largest property. The timber harvest focused on strategies developed by the Foresters for the Birds initiative, originated by VT Audubon, to increase habitat quality for a particular suite of bird species of conservation concern including the Black-throated Blue Warbler, Canada Warbler, Scarlet Tanager and Eastern Wood-Pewee. Among other management strategies, the harvest included single-tree and group selections to create small and larger clearings, and targeted an increase in hard and soft mast species like Red Oak and Black Cherry through the creation of a larger shelterwood cut.

In the summer of 2016, in order to establish baseline data for breeding bird populations, NH Audubon partnered with Chad Witko, an Antioch University New England graduate student, to complete a pre-harvest breeding bird survey on the sanctuary. Chad's work assessed not only the diversity and number of bird species, but also the species' associations with different habitat types. In the summer of 2017, Chad completed a second, post-harvest, breeding bird survey of the sanctuary's 600 acres.

Chad surveyed 45 points laid out in a grid across the sanctuary during June and July. He identified 49 species in 2017, 41 of which were also observed in 2016. There was an 18.6% decline in the total number of bird detections from 998 in 2016 to 812 in 2017. This is to be expected in the year following forest management, where a considerable amount of vegetation is removed. Although some of the more common woodland songbirds such as Red-eyed Vireo, Ovenbird and Hermit Thrush saw initial drops in detection, other species such as Canada Warbler and Scarlet Tanager saw marginal increases.

These numbers may be linked to forest management at the sanctuary. For example, Ovenbirds are expected to decline after harvest simply because the habitat has been cut away. However, Chad cautions against drawing conclusions without deeper statistical analyses. His thesis will examine the bird community's initial response to the harvest in the first year. In the years following the initial harvest, such as the fourth or fifth year, the understory and mid-story become



*Scarlet Tanager by Shannon Lewis (top); Chad Witko conducting a bird survey on the Kensan-Devan Wildlife Sanctuary, by Lauryn Witko (bottom).*

prevalent enough that target songbirds respond accordingly. NH Audubon hopes to replicate breeding bird surveys on the sanctuary in future years to better understand how forest management impacts these populations.



# Sanctuary Notes



*Joanne and Kevin Jones receiving NH Audubon's 2017 John Thalheimer Volunteer of the Year Award. Photo by Dyanna Smith.*

## Joanne and Kevin Jones *2017 Volunteers of the Year*

Volunteer Sanctuary Stewards are critical in helping NH Audubon achieve its mission as we own and steward nearly 8,000 acres of land across the state. Joanne and Kevin Jones—recipients of NH Audubon's 2017 John Thalheimer Volunteer of the Year Award—exemplify this role through the high level of attention they give to multiple sanctuaries they have adopted as Stewards.

Through their love of hiking, the Jones' initially came across Pondicherry and they began to do trail work on the Little Cherry Pond Trail. Soon, the Jones' took on the Shore Path and Rampart Path, both along the edge of Cherry Pond, and fully under NH Audubon's ownership.

Eager for more adventure, the Jones' soon found the 100-acre Scotland Brook Sanctuary in Landaff and discovered its wet, brushy trails which seemed more often filled with moose tracks than human sign.

The Jones are excellent communicators about stewardship needs, and they have funded several of the larger improvements at the Scotland Brook Sanctuary over the past two years including bog bridges and trailhead restoration. They helped with NH Audubon's development of the Sanctuary Passport program through writing and photography. They routinely stock trail guides, place signs, and establish relationships with individuals in town in each of these sanctuaries' respective communities. Joanne was instrumental in designing, writing, and laying out a new trail guide for Scotland Brook, which she and Kevin also funded.

In 2015, upon his retirement, Kevin became the Sanctuary Steward of the Silk Farm Sanctuary. He has helped bring the highest level of stewardship to this property in many years. NH Audubon is fortunate to have their continued help, and we must also recognize their support for making this very publication possible!

## Storm Damage Response at the Little Cherry Pond Trail

A powerful coastal storm in late October brought historic damage to many of our treasured natural areas, including several NH Audubon wildlife sanctuaries. Thanks to our team of volunteer Sanctuary Stewards, and other land stewardship partners, we were able to provide a timely response at many of the impacted locations.

Pondicherry was the hardest hit sanctuary with an estimated 700 trees down across the trails! Among these was the national champion Black Spruce along the Little Cherry Pond Trail.

Following the October storm, Sanctuary Steward Dave Govatski and other volunteers including a US Fish & Wildlife Service AmeriCorps team, worked diligently to reopen all of the trails within days of this memorable storm.

Many thanks to our team of stewards at Pondicherry, and *all* of the Sanctuary Stewards and volunteers who work behind the scenes to provide the rest of us with enjoyable experiences on NH Audubon's wildlife sanctuaries around the state.



*Kevin Jones sawing a downed tree on Little Cherry Pond Trail. Photo by Joanne Jones.*



## Sanctuary Trail Improvements

During the summer of 2017, NH Audubon grew its partnership with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) NH Corps. This August, six dedicated young adults worked under the guidance of Phil Brown and an SCA supervisor to complete several technical infrastructure improvements at three sanctuaries.

The crew built two footbridges at the Deering Wildlife Sanctuary, including an impressive 24-foot long timber bridge that allows restored access to the entirety of the Smith Brook Trail that was washed out in a previous storm. They also constructed a canoe rack at the Willard Pond Wildlife Sanctuary in Antrim, where they were based for the duration of their stay with NH Audubon. The canoe rack now allows us to secure several boats that can be used for educational outings. The new rack also addresses erosion issues caused by historic boat storage.

The SCA crew spent their last day working alongside Phil Brown and Sanctuary Steward Jack Gleason, at the Ponemah Bog Wildlife Sanctuary in Amherst. Here, they elevated the boardwalk to increase longevity and improve footing along several hundred feet of the bog boardwalk trail.

At the Pondicherry Refuge in Jefferson a separate crew from the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) replaced the bog bridge along an elevated stretch of the Little Cherry Pond Trail, a National Recreation Trail. This wild and scenic trail leads to one of NH Audubon's most ecologically important places, Little Cherry Pond. Be sure to plan a visit there this summer or fall!



*Deering timber bridge (top); Sanctuary Steward Jack Gleason (far left in photo) with the SCA crew that elevated the boardwalk at Ponemah Bog Wildlife Sanctuary in Amherst (left). Photos by Phil Brown.*

## SPS Sparks Volunteer Day

The St. Paul's School's "Sparks" alumni group teamed up with NH Audubon during their third annual Day of Action this spring. Over 100 alumni and graduating seniors came together for an intensive and fun day filled with several major volunteer projects on the Silk Farm Wildlife Sanctuary. Projects included construction of a boardwalk and observation platform at the edge of Turkey Pond, and planting over 600 native shrubs in a recent forestry patch cut for pollinators and wildlife species.

Volunteers also protected our growing American Chestnut plantation which now has over 20 trees (many of which have been bred to be disease-resistant) by clearing invasive plants and repairing a favorite granite bench. By day's end, almost 500 hours of volunteer service had been devoted to improvements for wildlife and people at our headquarters property. We look forward to our continued partnership with St. Paul's School and the Sparks group.



*The Sparks team sets off from McLane Center during their Day of Action. Photo by Derek Thomson, St. Paul's School.*



## North Country Tour Highlights

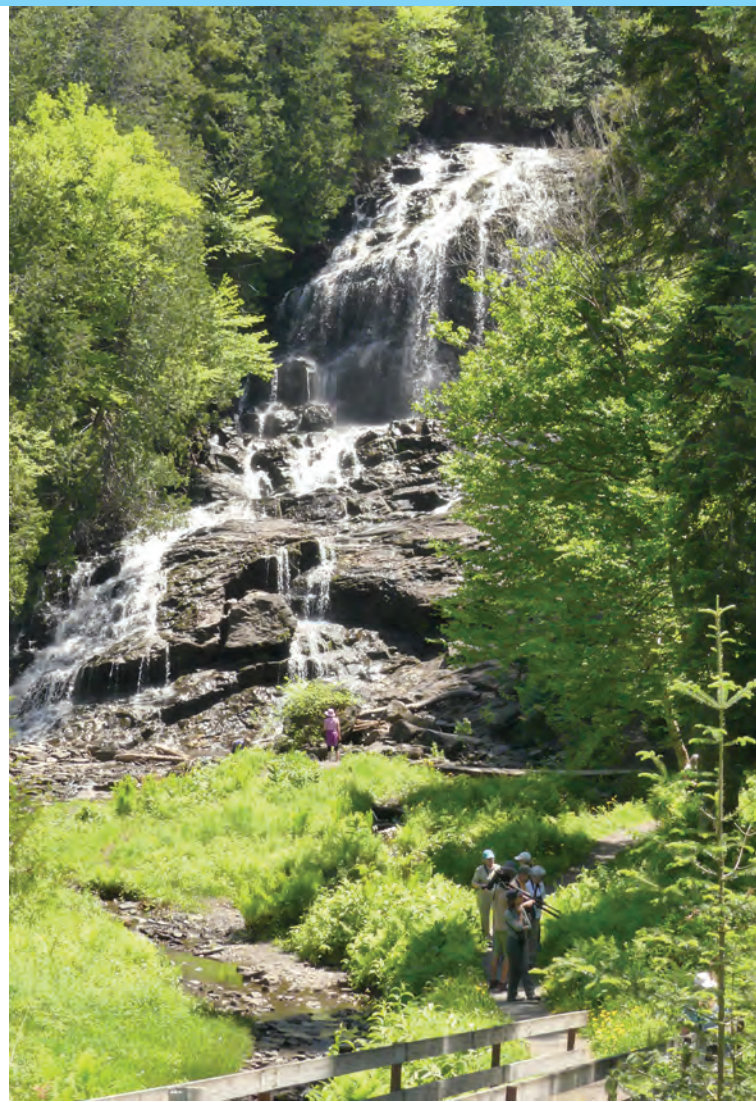
Bears, moose, breeding birds and a stunning alpine wildflower show on Mt. Washington were just a few of the many highlights of the North Country Nature Tour, led by Phil Brown and Bob Quinn, this past June.

This five-day van tour, now in its fourth consecutive year, returned to the border town of Pittsburg for several delightful days. Here 11 tour participants lodged along the shoreline of First Connecticut Lake amidst the stunning scenery and were surrounded by the sounds of calling loons and lapping waves. The group explored diverse conserved landscapes of New Hampshire's northernmost county, including grasslands home to Northern Harriers, spruce dominated woodlands, and some of NH Audubon's own sanctuaries such as the Pondicherry Refuge. A special tour of Mt. Washington by auto road was a thrilling way to experience the wildlife (breeding Bicknell's Thrush and American Pipit), alpine wildflowers (meadows of white-flowering *Diapensia* and pink-flowering Lapland Rosebay), and stunning views, including sunset from the mountain. Special guests included NH Audubon's own Chris Martin, Katrina Fenton, and David Govatski, each of whom spoke about current conservation topics in which the North Country plays a key role.

Some additional highlights of the tour included incredible numbers of Cliff Swallows constructing nests on buildings; stories of land protection and the history of bird research at Pondicherry from those who know them best; and a sow and cub Black Bear munching on buttercups at a NH Audubon sanctuary.

Stay tuned to the Afield newsletter and electronic communications for another opportunity to go north with NH Audubon next summer!

*Dahl Wildlife Sanctuary, by Phil Brown.*



*Beaver Brook Falls, Colebrook, NH. Photo by Bob Quinn.*

## Thank You

Sanctuary stewards, and many individuals and groups, including St. Paul's School Sparks, who have volunteered their time in helping NH Audubon manage wildlife sanctuaries, monitor wildlife, or educate the public.

Many generous individuals contributing through Birdathon/Bloomathon, specific sanctuary projects, memorials, general contributions, and in-kind gifts.

Our land stewardship and conservation partner organizations and agencies.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service—wildlife habitat restoration and stewardship.

The Robin Colson Memorial Foundation—equipment to support stewardship improvements.

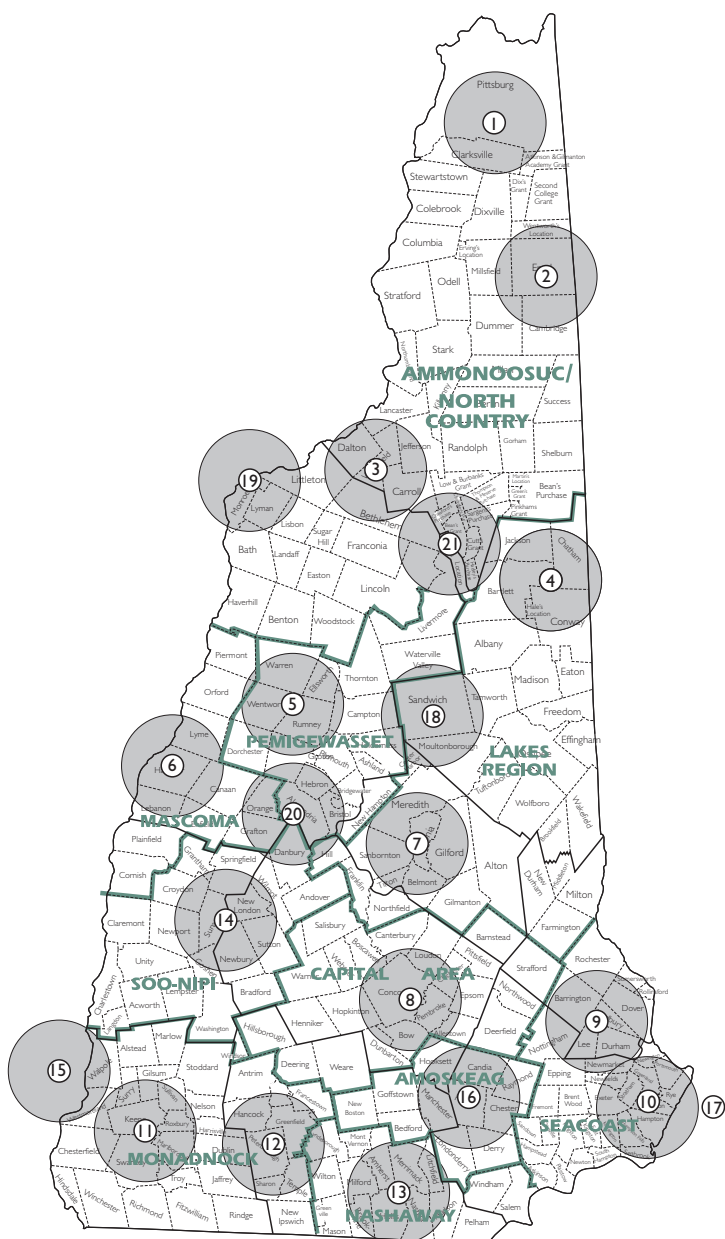


# Christmas Bird Counts 2017

It's time for the annual Christmas Bird Count! There are 21 counts in New Hampshire, and they are open to all interested birders. Many are run by New Hampshire Audubon Chapters. Check the list to the right for a count near you and contact the person listed if you'd like to help.

Each count takes place in a designated "count circle" on a specific day. The coordinator assigns teams to count birds in each section of the circle, but if you live in the circle you can simply count the birds in your backyard. Each count's survey area stays the same from year to year, comprising a circle fifteen miles in diameter around a central point.

International in scope, the Christmas Bird Count is organized and compiled by the National Audubon Society, who coordinates all count circles so they don't overlap. Each count picks its own particular survey day between December 14 and January 5. So join in a 100-year-old tradition and have some winter fun!



- 1. Pittsburg – December 14.**  
Contact: David Govatski (586-7776 or David.Govatski@gmail.com); Phil Brown (pbrown@nhaudubon.org or 224-9909 x334).
- 2. Errol-Umbagog – December 15.**  
Contact: Chris Martin (224-9909 x317 or cmartin@nhaudubon.org).
- 3. Littleton – December 17.**  
Contact: David Govatski (586-7776 or David.Govatski@gmail.com); Mary Boulanger (444-6993 or mboul@roadrunner.com).
- 4. North Conway – December 16.**  
Contact: Nora Dufilho, Tin Mtn. Conservation Ctr. (447-6991 or nbeem@tinmountain.org).
- 5. Baker Valley – December 17.**  
Contact: Stephen Rounds (764-9011 or ullungdo96@yahoo.com); Nory Parr (786-9896 or northparr@gmail.com).
- 6. Hanover-Norwich – January 1.**  
Contact: Dan Crook (448-2544); Walter Ellison (rossgull61@gmail.com).
- 7. Laconia-New Hampton – to be determined.**  
Contact: Pam Hunt (753-9137 or biodiva@myfairpoint.net).
- 8. Concord – December 17.**  
Contact: Robert Quinn (RAQbirds@aol.com [preferred] or 746-2535).
- 9. Lee-Durham – December 17.**  
Contact: Kurk Dorsey (397-5844 or kd@unh.edu).
- 10. Coastal – December 16.**  
Contact: Len Medlock (lenmedlock@comcast.net).
- 11. Keene – December 17.**  
Contact: Phil Brown (pbrown@nhaudubon.org or 224-9909 x334).
- 12. Peterborough-Hancock – December 16.**  
Contact: Dave Rowell (924-8790 or daverowell@myfairpoint.net).
- 13. Nashua-Hollis – December 30.**  
Contact: Richard Bielawski (429-2537 or rbielawski@mac.com).
- 14. Lake Sunapee – December 16.**  
Contact: Gary Stansfield (inuknh@gmail.com [preferred] or 863-8737).
- 15. Saxtons River (VT-NH) – December 16.**  
Contact: Donald Clark (802-843-2347 or sapsbks@gmail.com).
- 16. Manchester – to be determined.**  
Contact: Richard Bielawski (429-2537 or rbielawski@mac.com).
- 17. Isles of Shoals – to be determined.**  
Contact: Ben Griffith (bgriffith@gmail.com [preferred] or 801-1856).
- 18. Sandwich – December 30.**  
Contact: Tony Vazzano (284-7718 or tvazzano@ncia.net).
- 19. Barnet (VT-NH) – January 1.**  
Contact: Charlie Browne (802-592-3545 or ccbrowne63@gmail.com).
- 20. Grafton-Bristol – to be determined.**  
Contact: Bill Belanger (455-3741 or penmen1@metrocast.net).
- 21. Crawford Notch – December 16.**  
Contact: Craig Repasz (203-230-1697 or crepasz@hotmail.com).



# Annual Meeting 2017

New Hampshire Audubon hosted its 103rd Annual Meeting at the beautiful Alnoba facility and grounds in Kensington on a sparkling, sunny September 23rd. NH Audubon members and friends gathered to take part in morning field trips, enjoy good company, and hear ecologist and author Tom Wessels' keynote address.

The Tudor Richards Award was presented to John Harrigan of Colebrook, NH for working tirelessly and effectively for conservation in the Granite State. For over 40 years John Harrigan has been the "voice of the North Country," advocating for wise stewardship of New Hampshire's natural landscape and its wildlife. John was appointed to the Northern Forest Lands Council and the Connecticut Lakes Headwaters Task Force which protected 171,000 acres in northern New Hampshire.

NH Audubon's Pam Hunt received the Goodhue-Elkins Award (page 3) and the Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Joanne and Kevin Jones of Bethlehem, NH (page 18).

The President's Award was presented to David Ries of Warner, NH for outstanding commitment to NH Audubon's mission and success. David has been a trustee for 12 years, serving several terms as Board Chair. He has seen the organization through thick and thin, has helped hire the last two Presidents, has been a guiding force, and a committed and determined leader on the Board.

We congratulate all of this year's award recipients for their many contributions. A full description of their accomplishments is on the NH Audubon web site under the "About" tab.

Thank You to the Annual Meeting sponsors: Normandeau Associates and ReVision Energy.



*Clockwise from top: field trip birding with Phil Brown (carrying scope), by Dyanna Smith; enjoying good food and good company, by Beth McGuinn; Alnoba in Kensington, by Ruth Smith; keynote speaker Tom Wessels interprets the landscape, by Beth McGuinn; and John Harrigan accepts the 2017 Tudor Richards Award, by Dyanna Smith.*



## In Memoriam

New Hampshire Audubon is honored to receive donations in memory of friends and relatives who have passed. These gifts are a valuable contribution to the work we do for wildlife and conservation. Thoughtful gifts were made by the following individuals and groups:

### In memory of Christopher Doerr:

Thayer Academy Parent's Association

### In memory of Lorraine Block:

Diane Newman

### In memory of Muriel Broad:

Irving Backman

Dorothy G. Krasner

Lenore E. Tagerman

Steven D. Jolton

Lee Forgosh

Merton C. Flemings

Brenda W. Thomas

### In memory of Terri Donsker:

Gregory Prazar

William Compton

Exeter Area Garden Club

Linda Van de Car

Richard J. Cohen

## Honorary Gifts

### In honor of Clara W. Butler:

Fred Ludington

### In honor of Sean Gillery:

Dave and Steff McCusker

## Thank You!

*NH Audubon is proud to be supported by the following businesses who contributed \$500 or more this calendar year in support of our programs:*

**Altus Investment Group**

**Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston**

**Foothills Physical Therapy**

**Grappone Automotive Group**

**Maine Drilling and Blasting**

**Meadow Wind Bed and Breakfast**

**Meredith Village Savings Bank**

**Merrimack County Savings Bank**

**Morgan Stanley**

**Nathan Wechsler & Company Professional Association**

**Normandeau Associates, Inc.**

**Nuttall Ornithological Club Inc**

**Plymouth Rotary Foundation**

**Queen City Rotary Club**

**Renaissance Charitable Foundation**

**ReVision Energy**

**SecondWind Water Systems**

**TD Charitable Foundation**

**Venture Print Unlimited**

**Whole Foods**

## February Fun



**February 26-March 2**

Visit [nhaudubon.org](http://nhaudubon.org) for details

## Quarterly Grant Acknowledgements

**TD Charitable Foundation for Beech Street Environmental Education Program**

Beech Street Environmental Education Program

**National Wildlife Federation Strategic Plan**

**The Byrne Foundation General Support**

**Gilbert Verney Foundation Pack Monadnock Observatory**

## TWO GIFTS IN ONE!

**This season, give the gift of membership\* and receive a beautifully hand-crafted glass ornament from Old Hancock Glassworks**

To purchase a gift of membership, and receive a free ornament, stop by the Nature Store at McLane Center or call Membership at 224-9909 x310.

\*Does not apply to membership renewals.







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We are working to streamline our mailing list. If you would prefer to receive electronic communications from NH Audubon, please call 603-224-9909 or email [nha@nhaudubon.org](mailto:nha@nhaudubon.org).

**Fly on over!**



December 9 10am-3pm

# Holiday Fair

Visit McLane Center for a special holiday shopping experience!

**Handmade crafts by local artisans: Botanicals, jewelry, candles, chocolate, greeting cards, photography, pottery, burl wood bowls, soap & more**

**Members receive 20% off Nature Store purchases.**

Kids activities

Live bird exhibit

Refreshments

Great Grey Owl, photo by Walter Keane

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# NH Audubon Winter Afield 2017-2018 • Calendar of Events

Events are free unless noted with \$. FT = Field Trip. R = Registration Required.



## DEC

### Natural Creations: Saturday Nature Seekers

**Dec 2**, 11am-12pm • \$ • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Homes for the Holidays: Wee Wonders

**Dec 6**, 10-11:30am • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn  
Leader: Kim Murphy, Massabesic Center Naturalist

### H.A.M. Extravaganza: Junior Explorers

**Dec 6**, 10-11:30am • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn  
Leaders: Kelly Dwyer, NH Audubon Education Director and Paula Chouinard, Massabesic Center Naturalist

### Holiday Fair

**Dec 9**, 10am-3pm • McLane Center, Concord  
Local artisans, crafts and member discounts at Nature Store

### Natural Creations: Saturday Nature Seekers

**Dec 9**, 11am-12pm • \$ • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Grassland Bird Migration Study

**Dec 12**, 7-8:30pm • Mascoma Chapter Program, Hanover  
Presenter: Jason Hill, Conservation Biologist, Vermont Center for Ecotudies

### The Current Status of White-nose Syndrome and NH Bats

**Dec 13**, 7:30-9pm • Seacoast Chapter Program, Rye  
Presenter: Susi von Oettingen, Endangered Species Biologist, USFWS

### Crawford Notch Christmas Bird Count

**Dec 16**, all or part-day • Ammonoosuc Chapter FT  
Leader: Craig Repasz

### Tracking NH's Animals

**Dec 16**, 10:30am-12pm • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn  
Leader: Angie Krysiak, Massabesic Center Program Manager

### Natural Creations: Saturday Nature Seekers

**Dec 16**, 11am-12pm • \$ • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Littleton Christmas Bird Count

**Dec 17**, all or part-day • Ammonoosuc Chapter FT  
Leader: David Govatski

### Concord Christmas Bird Count

**Dec 17**, all or part-day • Capital Chapter FT  
Leader: Bob Quinn, Merlin Wildlife Tours

### Zulu Nyala Game Reserve, South Africa

**Dec 20**, 7-8:30pm • Nashaway Chapter Program, Nashua  
Presenters: Jane Kolias, Membership Coordinator, NH Audubon, and Sam Townsend

### Fishways Annual Open House

**Dec 28**, 11am-3pm • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Audubon Christmas Bird Count and Dinner

**Dec 30**, all or part-day • \$/Dinner • Nashaway Chapter FT  
Leader: Richard Bielawski

**Check p. 21 for complete list of Christmas Bird Count dates.**

## JAN

### Rascally Rabbits: Saturday Nature Seekers • KIND Program

**Jan 6**, 11am-12pm • \$ • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Ornithology and Birding in Peru: Explorations in One of the Most Diverse Regions on Earth

**Jan 8**, 7-8:30pm • Mascoma Chapter Program, Hanover  
Presenter: Naturalist Phred Benham

### Club Sandwiches, not Seals: Saving the Northern Fur Seal in the early 20th Century

**Jan 10**, 7:30-9pm • Seacoast Chapter Program, Rye  
Presenter: Professor Kurk Dorsey, UNH History Department

### Mid-Winter Bald Eagle Survey, Merrimack River, Hudson to Manchester

**Jan 13**, 8am-12pm • Nashaway Chapter FT  
Leader: Richard Bielawski

### Willard Pond Winter Wildlife

**Jan 13**, 9am-12pm • Sanctuary FT  
Leader: Phil Brown, NH Audubon's Director of Land Management

### Tracking and Snowshoe Workshop

**Jan 13**, 10am-12pm • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn  
Leader: Angie Krysiak, Massabesic Center Program Manager

### Pizza Party with the Painted Turtles • KIND Program

**Jan 13**, 11am-12:30pm • \$ • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Life Under the Ice: Wee Wonders

**Jan 17**, 10-11:30am • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn  
Leader: Kim Murphy, Massabesic Center Naturalist

### Tracks, Scat, and all of That!: Junior Explorers

**Jan 17**, 10-11:30am • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn  
Leaders: Kelly Dwyer, NH Audubon Education Director and Paula Chouinard, Massabesic Center Naturalist

### Trinidad and Tobago – A Birder's Trip

**Jan 17**, 7-8:30pm • Nashaway Chapter Program, Nashua  
Presenters: Rebecca Suomala, NH Audubon Senior Biologist, and Bob Quinn, Merlin Wildlife Tours

### Jordan Tirrell-Wysocki Trio in Concert

**Jan 18**, 7-9pm • \$ • McLane Center • Birds and Beans Coffee House

### Ongoing Events

#### Through Our Eyes: How Nature Journaling Inspires Us

**Nov 1 - Dec 31** • McLane Center, Concord  
Artists: Kimball Jenkins School of Art Students

#### Along the Path Art Show

**Dec 1 - 30** • Massabesic Center, Auburn  
**Dec 1, 5-8pm** • Artists' Reception

#### Snowshoe Rentals

**Dec 1 - Feb 28** • Massabesic Center, Auburn  
Tues-Sat 9am-2pm



### Lakes Region Chapter Program – TBA

**Jan 18**, 7-8:30pm • Lakes Region Chapter Program, Moultonborough

### Winter Bird Walk (an introduction to birding)

**Jan 20**, 10-11:30am • \$/R •

Massabesic Center, Auburn

Leader: Jocelyn Duffy, NH Audubon Naturalist

### State Conservation and Rescue Archaeology Program

**Jan 25**, 7-8:30pm • \$ • McLane Center, Concord

Presenter: Richard Boisvert, Deputy State

Historic Preservation Officer, NH Division of Historical Resources

### Eagles along the Merrimack • KIND Program

**Jan 27**, 10am-12pm • \$/R • Amoskeag

Fishways, Manchester

### Amazing Evergreens: Wee Wonders

**Jan 30**, 10-11:30am • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn

Leader: Kim Murphy, Massabesic Center Naturalist

### Songs in the Sky, Signs in the Snow: Junior Explorers

**Jan 30**, 10-11:30am • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn

Leaders: Kelly Dwyer, NH Audubon Education Director and Paula Chouinard, Massabesic Center Naturalist

### Once in a Blue Moon Snowshoe Hike

**Jan 31**, 6-8pm • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn

Leader: Angie Krysiak, Massabesic Center Program Manager

# FEB

### Winter Tree ID

**Feb 3**, 10:30am-12pm • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn

Leader: Jocelyn Duffy, NH Audubon Naturalist

### Winter Wildlife Watching: Saturday Nature Seekers

**Feb 3**, 11am-12pm • \$ • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Annual Wilder Dam Eagle Watch

**Feb 3**, 10am-12pm • Mascoma Chapter FT, Wilder, VT

### Winter Wildlife Watching: Saturday Nature Seekers

**Feb 10**, 11am-12pm • \$ • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Annual Backyard Winter Bird Survey

**Feb 10-11** • Statewide

## Center Details

### McLane Center

603-224-9909

84 Silk Farm Rd, Concord NH 03801

Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, Sat 10am-4pm

### Massabesic Center

603-668-2045

26 Audubon Way, Auburn NH 03032

Tues-Fri 9am-4pm, Sat 9am-3pm

### Amoskeag Fishways

603-626-3474

4 Fletcher St, Manchester NH 03103

Mon-Sat 9am-5pm

### Newfound Center

603-744-3516

290 N Shore Rd, Hebron NH 03241

closed for the season; trails open

### Impacts of Wind Energy on Birds: What We Think We Know and What Is Uncertain

**Feb 12**, 7-8:30pm • Mascoma Chapter Program, Hanover

Presenter: Dr. Taber Allison, Director of Research, American Wind and Wildlife Institute

### The Current State of the Loon in NH

**Feb 13**, 7-8:30pm • \$ • McLane Center, Concord

Presenter: Harry Vogel, Executive Director, Loon Preservation Committee

### Burrowing Through Snow: Wee Wonders

**Feb 14**, 10-11:30am • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn

Leader: Kim Murphy, Massabesic Center Naturalist

### Waiting to Bloom: Junior Explorers

**Feb 14**, 10-11:30am • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn

Leaders: Kelly Dwyer, NH Audubon Education Director and Paula Chouinard, Massabesic Center Naturalist

### Lake Baikal; Beautiful Birds, Bad Beer, and Buddhist Babushkas

**Feb 14**, 7:30-9pm • Seacoast Chapter Program, Rye

Presenter: Lena Moser, Wildside Nature Tours

### Kettle of One

**Feb 15**, 7-8:30pm • Lakes Region Chapter Program, Moultonborough

Presenter: Eric Masterson

### Let's go ICE Fishing! Part One

**Feb 16**, 6-8pm • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Let's go ICE Fishing! Part Two

**Feb 17**, 9am-1pm • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Live Reptile and Amphibian Show

**Feb 17**, 1-2:30pm • \$/R • Massabesic Center, Auburn

Leader: Angie Krysiak, Massabesic Center Program Manager

### Is Greenland Really Green?

**Feb 21**, 7-8:30pm • Nashaway Chapter Program, Nashua

Presenter: Mark Suomala, biologist and birder

### Wintering Owls

**Feb 24**, 8am-3pm • Nashaway Chapter FT, Nashua

Salisbury Beach State Park/Parker River Wildlife Refuge, MA

Leader: Richard Bielawski

### Winter Wildlife Watching: Saturday Nature Seekers

**Feb 24**, 11am-12pm • \$ • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Games and Sleds: Makerspace Challenge Days

**Feb 27**, 10am-3:30pm • \$ • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

### Fish Ladders, Hydropower and Engineering: Makerspace Challenge Days

**Feb 28**, 10am-3:30pm • \$ • Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester

Find full event details at [nhaudubon.org/calendar](http://nhaudubon.org/calendar).

Tips on searching the Events Calendar from any page:

- ☛ Hover over the "Events and News" menu
- ☛ Select "Calendar"
- ☛ Click the white "Find Events" search bar to open
- ☛ Search by "Date" or enter the title in "Keyword"
- ☛ Click the dark gray "Find Events" button

See all the month's events without searching: click on the light gray "View As" button and select "Month" instead of "List".