



Chickadee Chatter



The mission of the Litchfield Hills Audubon Society is to protect birds, other wildlife, and their habitats, through conservation, education, research, and advocacy.

CALENDAR BRIEFS

**EnCon Police:
Protecting Con-
necticut's Natural
Resources**
November 2
Monday, 6:45 p.m.
Litchfield Community
Center

Duck Ramble
November 8
Sunday, 1 p.m.
White Memorial's
main parking area

**Family Duck
Ramble**
November 15
Sunday, 1 p.m.
White Memorial's
Point Folly

**Things that Go
Bump in the Night!**
December 7
Monday, 6:45 p.m.
Litchfield Community
Center

**Christmas Bird
Count**
December 20
Sunday

*For details and more,
go to pages 4 & 5.*

President's Message

By Karen Griswold Nelson



With the season of thankfulness and giving approaching, I recently had reason to walk my yard picking up storm blowdown after the nor'easter

that struck the East Coast with wind and flooding. I could see that migrating birds had already stripped berries and drupes from my gangly dogwoods, viburnums, and beach plums on their way to safe haven for the winter. I expect the remaining winterberries and chokeberries will disappear soon.

Yes, fall has arrived, and in recent months, LHAS board and committee members have been busy not only attending board meetings to plan for next year but some have also been putting "boots on the ground" to make improvements at our sanctuaries. There is new signage at Boyd Woods, the pollinator gardens at Kalmia and Wigwam have been "winterized," and discussion of wildlife-friendly changes to the former residential part of the Kalmia Sanctuary is ongoing. The board has also approved use of a new system to better communicate electronically with our members, including you.

Birds cannot give thanks for my efforts in my backyard to provide food and safe haven for their benefit, but I can express my



The new sign at Boyd Woods.

Photo: Rich Martin

thankfulness and gratitude for all of you who participate, volunteer, and partner with LHAS and other like-minded organizations to preserve and manage wildlife-friendly sanctuaries, provide much-needed environmental education for citizens of all ages, and offer safe haven in your own backyard for the creatures we hold dear to our hearts.

Wigwam Brook Sanctuary Has New Chairperson

A big thank you to **Debbie Mane** for offering to be our chairperson for Wigwam Brook! Debbie has been helping to maintain the pollinator garden there and now wants to do more. Also thank you, **Rich Martin**, for keeping an eye on things at Wigwam since former chairperson John Baker passed away in 2024.

LHAS Officers

President	Karen Nelson
Vice President	Logan Connor
Treasurer	Dave Tripp, Jr.
Recording Secretary	Diane Edwards
Corresponding Secretary	Beverly Baldwin

Board of Directors

Mia Coats	2027
Gina Decker	2027
George Stephens	2027
Ginny Apple	2028
Carol Kearns	2028
Lynne Williamson	2028
Vickie Dauphinais	2029
Pam Hicks	2029
Harry Schuh	2029

Committee Chairpeople

Boyd Woods Sanctuary Communications & Digital Media	Debbie & Rich Martin
Conservation	Rich Martin
Education	Diane Edwards
Facebook	Vickie Dauphinais
Field Trips	Diane Edwards
Fundraising	David Zomick
Historian	Janice Jankauskas
Hospitality	Janet Baker
Kalmia Sanctuary	Angela Dimmitt
Membership Outreach	Janice Jankauskas
Membership Records	Beverly Baldwin
Newsletter	Harry Ainsworth
Programs	Diane Edwards
Publicity	Angela Dimmitt
Scholarships	vacant
Wigwam Brook Sanctuary	Logan Connor
	Debbie Mane

Research

Summer Bird Count	Dave Tripp, Jr.
Christmas Bird Count	Dave Tripp, Jr.

NEW MEMBERS**By Harry Ainsworth, Membership Records Chair**

Amy, Chris & Noah Alvey	New Hartford
Diana Bozzi	Torrington
Richard Carroll	Watertown
Henry Cooperman	Sherman
Gail Fairclough	Bantam
Debbie Gundel	New Milford
Dean Hills	Litchfield
John Hyland	Lakeville
Sharon Ieronimo	Torrington
David Jabs	Pleasant Valley
Marlene Murphy	New Milford
Al Pirozzolli	Bethlehem
E. Plonka	Bristol
Catherine Stranieri	Bristol
Steven Wilson	Torrington

LHAS membership is 1,052.

If your newsletter is addressed incorrectly, send an email to Harry Ainsworth at hla1@me.com.

Condolences

LHAS extends sincere sympathy to member Scott Mills, whose father passed away in September.

Time for Our Annual Appeal!

You soon will receive our annual appeal in your mail or email. Since the appeal is our major revenue source, your generous support will help us help wild-life and people like you who love nature. Thank you!

Chickadee Chatter is published in January, March, May, July, September, and November. Submission deadline for the **January/February** issue is **December 1**.

Please email items to appear in the newsletter to **Diane Edwards** at edwardsd68@charter.net or mail them to her at **68 Shingle Mill Road, Harwinton, CT 06791**.

Send other business to the appropriate chairperson at **LHAS, P.O. Box 861, Litchfield, CT 06759-0861** or lhasct@me.com.

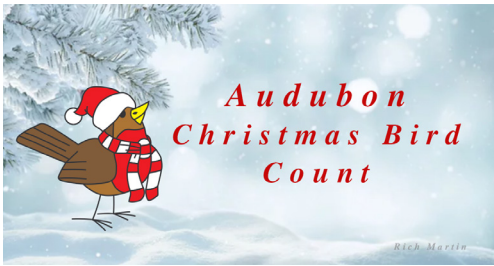
This newsletter and other LHAS features can be seen at lhasct.org.



Scan the QR code at left with your smart phone camera to go to lhasct.org.

Chickadee Chatter was printed by **Photo Arts Printing Company**, Torrington. Special thanks to **Janet Baker** for proofreading this newsletter.

It's Time for Audubon's Christmas Bird Count 2026



Artwork: Rich Martin

The LHAS Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be held on December 20. The Woodbury-Roxbury CBC will be Saturday,

December 19, and the Barkhamsted CBC will be on Saturday, December 26. If you want to help with any of the counts, contact the compiler, Dave Tripp (dtrippjr@gmail.com), and he will put you in contact with the captain for your area or wherever help may be required.

The compilation for the LHAS CBC will take place at Patty's Restaurant, 495 Bantam Road, Litchfield, immediately following the day's birding; doors open at 4 p.m. Hot food and beverages will be available upon arrival to warm up from the day's chilly weather. (LHAS pays the tab!)

National Audubon's CBC is the longest-running wildlife census in the Western Hemisphere. This citizen-science event provides vital information about bird populations and trends, data that alerts Audubon to environmental threats not only to birds but to the larger ecosystems we all depend on.

According to Audubon's website, each count takes place in an established 15-mile-diameter circle and is organized by a count compiler. Count volunteers follow specified routes, counting every bird they see or hear all day. It's not just a species tally — all birds are counted all day, giving an indication of the total number of birds in the circle that day.

Birders of all skill levels are involved in the CBC. If your home is within the boundaries of a CBC circle, then you can stay at home and report the birds that visit your feeder on count day as long as you have made prior arrangement with the count compiler.

For more information about the CBC, visit audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count.

'Climate Watch' Tracks Shifts in Birds' Ranges in Response to Warmer Climate

Audubon's Climate Watch, a community science initiative that tracks where birds go in a changing climate, launched in 2016 with just 75 people looking for bluebirds in four states. In the decade since, it now has more than 1,000 annual participants who count 12 species, including nuthatches, goldfinches, and towhees, in the places where they're historically found — and the places they might be moving to. The initiative is showing that, as expected, some birds are expanding into new areas as local climate conditions shift. "We're identifying which species are keeping pace with climate change and which are lagging behind," says Sarah Saunders, Audubon's senior manager of quantitative science.

The latest findings suggest Western Bluebirds are already relocating — but Eastern Bluebirds have been slower to shift their winter habitats, which could leave them exposed to climate threats. Knowing which birds are struggling to adapt can help scientists prioritize habitats and species that need the most attention.

Want to participate in Climate Watch? It's easy: During winter (January 15 to February 15) and spring (May 15 to June 15) each year, participants conduct 12 five-minute point counts within a designated 10 km x 10 km square in their area, to document the presence or absence of target species. For more information, go to audubon.org/community-science/climate-watch.

Hike to White Memorial's Little Pond

On September 30, Ann Orsillo led a walk at White Memorial to Little Pond and back.



From left: Joe Misner, Carol Perrault, Debbie Mane, Gina Decker, Vickie Dauphinais, JoAnn Neddermann, and Ed Goodhouse.

Photo: Ann Orsillo

LHAS Calendar — Fall/Winter 2026

NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, **General Meetings** are held on the first Monday of each month. When the first Monday falls on a holiday, the meeting is held on the second Monday. Unless otherwise noted, most General Meetings are held at the Litchfield Community Center, 421 Bantam Road (Route 202), Litchfield. **Board of Directors Meetings** are held the third Tuesday of every other month (beginning with January) at 7 p.m. at 28 Russell Street, Litchfield, CT.



GENERAL MEETINGS

NOTE: The meetings will be in person and on Zoom, unless otherwise indicated. To participate on Zoom, go to the Calendar section of our website, lhasct.org, and click on the link provided in the announcement to be directed to our registration portal. Once registered, you will receive a Zoom link on the day of the meeting. Meeting times, shown below, are when refreshments are available. A short business meeting begins at 7 PM, followed by the presentation.

November 2 EnCon Police: Protecting Connecticut's Natural Resources Monday, 6:45 PM

Connecticut's Environmental Conservation Police — known as EnCon — are sworn law enforcement officers with full police authority, though their jurisdiction is uniquely tied to the state's natural resources. EnCon prioritizes enforcing Connecticut's fish and wildlife laws, hunting and trapping regulations, boating statutes, and environmental protection codes across public and private lands throughout the state. EnCon officers are empowered to investigate environmental crimes, respond to wildlife incidents, and hold accountable those who would exploit or damage the habitats and species that make Connecticut's outdoors worth preserving. Tonight, EnCon officer Elise Bouthillier will share a bit about EnCon with LHAS members and guests. Elise holds two bachelor's degrees from the University of Connecticut in wildlife management and animal science, and currently teaches conservation law enforcement at UConn, where she works to prepare the next generation of conservationists, whether in law enforcement or elsewhere.

December 7 Things that Go Bump in the Night Monday, 6:45 PM

Master Wildlife Conservationist Ginny Apple is back with a new presentation! When the sun sets and night is upon us, all sorts of critters, prey and predator, emerge from their hiding places and begin to forage, hunt — even play! From the opossum to the porcupine to the Great Horned Owl, fox and coyotes, these creatures can teach us lots about the animal world if we just watch and listen. Hear more from Ginny as she talks about these animals, their habits, their howls, and their homes. An LHAS board member, Ginny is familiar to us from many wonderful presentations on the wildlife of Connecticut. Living in a house surrounded by Peoples State Forest, she has supplied a wealth of field notes and photographs to the CT DEEP on all kinds of wildlife. Ginny is chair of the Barkhamsted Conservation Commission and on the boards of several like-minded organizations.

EVENTS AND FIELD TRIPS

November 8 Annual Duck Ramble Sunday, 1 PM

Noted birder Fran Zygmunt will lead LHAS' Annual Duck Ramble to help us identify the various ducks and other birds on Bantam Lake and nearby locales. Meet at the White Memorial museum parking lot. **For more information contact Fran at fzygmunt@charter.net.**

December 20 . . . LHAS Christmas Bird Count Sunday, All Day

If you want to help with the CBC, email Dave Tripp at dtrippjr@gmail.com and he will put you in contact with the captain for

continued on page 5

Board Meeting: 7 p.m., Tuesday, November 17, at the LHAS office, 28 Russell Street, Litchfield

Calendar

(continued from page 4)

your area. At the end of the day, we will gather at a local restaurant to compile our results and enjoy a meal. (LHAS picks up the tab!) For more information, see the article on page 3 or visit audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count.

LHAS Nature Explorers — Family Fun!

November 15.....Family Duck Ramble.....Sunday, 1 PM



Bring the kids to learn how to sight and identify waterfowl on Bantam Lake. After scanning the lake for waterfowl, we will walk around White Memorial's Point Folly trail looking for some of our resident birds. Point Folly is located on North Shore Road in Bantam. Meet by the entrance. Bring binoculars if you have them (LHAS will provide if needed). Dress for the weather conditions. *Any questions, call Vickie Dauphinais at 860-805-9167. Pre-registration is appreciated at lhasjunior@gmail.com.*

December 20.....Christmas Bird Count for Kids!.....Sunday, 10 AM



Children and parents are invited to experience this wholesome family-centered citizen science adventure. We will meet at the White Memorial A.B. Ceder Room (lower floor of the museum building) for a brief orientation. Then, we will walk to the feeders outside the museum and around Ongley Pond to count birds by sight, using binoculars, and by sound, using the Merlin app. Afterward, we will gather in the Ceder Room to tabulate the results and enjoy pizza, cookies, and hot chocolate. A great way to spend a winter day and help scientists capture vital information about bird populations. Wear warm jackets and

boots. Binoculars will be provided. Bring your own, if you have a pair. *Any questions, call Vickie Dauphinais at 860-805-9167. Pre-registration is appreciated at lhasjunior@gmail.com.*

How and Why to Clean Bird Feeders

Bird feeders that aren't cleaned regularly can expose our feathered friends to pathogens, such as the eye disease (conjunctivitis) that so badly affected House Finches a few years ago. Here is what Cornell's Project Feeder Watch recommends to reduce or eliminate pathogens that can sicken birds.

"Clean your seed or suet feeders regularly (e.g., every week or two) and more often during periods of heavy use or wet weather. Debris (such as leftover bits of seeds and hulls) can harbor pathogens that make birds sick. To clean your feeders, take them apart, scrub off the debris, and wash the parts thoroughly with warm water and dish soap. Rinse thoroughly. Cleaning bird feeders in a dishwasher works very well, though not all feeders are dishwasher safe. We recommend using a scrub brush or bottle brush for handwashing. Allow feeders to dry completely before refilling. Please do not use bird feeders that cannot be thoroughly washed, such as feeders made of wood."

Want to Participate in Project Feeder Watch?

This citizen science project, sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Birds Canada, provides data that helps scientists determine winter bird abundance and distribution. Participating is easy: After signing up, you decide when and how often to count birds at your feeders or in your yard — preferably two consecutive days once a week. Even if you count only once during the season, your data will be helpful. The entire count period runs from November 1 through April 30. For more details, visit feederwatch.org.



Red-bellied Woodpecker.

Photo: Diane Friend Edwards

2026 Summer Bird Count Results

By Dave Tripp, Jr., Count Compiler

June 13-14 was another great weekend for birding, especially in the mornings. Birds were active, calling and moving around, feeding their young. Every year as I compile data, I am grateful to see the hard work done by everyone who covers an area. We wouldn't have a successful count if it wasn't for all of the captains and their teams, all listed on page 7, counting and recording their efforts.

Great birds counted this year that are often hard to find in our count circle were American Bittern, Least Bittern, and

Bank Swallow. We had very localized species with specific habitats like Mute Swan, American Kestrel, Acadian Flycatcher, Purple Martin (at Lake Waramaug and Little Pond), Cliff Swallow, Brown Thrasher, Prairie Warbler, Savannah Sparrow, and Eastern Meadowlark. Frustrating misses from the list were American Woodcock and Golden-crowned Kinglet.

The "Bird of the Count" goes to the Yellow-throated Warbler that spent the spring on the White Memorial property near Chickadee Bridge.

Our 13 parties of counters tallied more than 14,109 individual birds, representing 130 species. Here is the effort

(continued on page 7)

Birds Tallied

Canada Goose	263	Eastern Wood Pewee.....	139	Chipping Sparrow	240
Mute Swan	3	Acadian Flycatcher	9	Field Sparrow	12
Wood Duck	107	Alder Flycatcher.....	82	Dark-eyed Junco	17
Mallard.....	36	Willow Flycatcher.....	58	Savannah Sparrow	9
Hooded Merganser.....	3	Least Flycatcher.....	62	Song Sparrow.....	507
Common Merganser.....	7	Eastern Phoebe.....	152	Swamp Sparrow.....	143
Wild Turkey	59	Yellow-throated Vireo.....	100	Eastern Towhee	106
Rock Pigeon.....	88	Blue-headed Vireo.....	30	Bobolink.....	218
Mourning Dove.....	204	Warbling Vireo.....	130	Eastern Meadowlark	3
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	5	Red-eyed Vireo.....	602	Orchard Oriole	2
Black-billed Cuckoo	2	Blue Jay.....	95	Baltimore Oriole	74
Common Nighthawk.....	2	American Crow.....	219	Red-winged Blackbird	944
Chimney Swift.....	53	Fish Crow.....	3	Brown-headed Cowbird	113
Ruby-throated Hummingbird.....	40	Common Raven.....	47	Common Grackle.....	243
Virginia Rail.....	47	Black-capped Chickadee.....	154	Ovenbird.....	583
Killdeer	6	Tufted Titmouse.....	168	Worm-eating Warbler.....	5
Double-crested Cormorant.....	8	Bank Swallow	7	Louisiana Waterthrush	33
American Bittern.....	2	Tree Swallow	253	Northern Waterthrush.....	29
Least Bittern.....	3	No. Rough-winged Swallow.....	16	Blue-winged Warbler	14
Great Blue Heron.....	50	Purple Martin.....	32	Black-and-white Warbler	113
Green Heron.....	8	Barn Swallow.....	323	Common Yellowthroat	400
Black Vulture	7	Cliff Swallow	7	Hooded Warbler	6
Turkey Vulture	57	Cedar Waxwing.....	253	American Redstart	450
Osprey.....	9	Red-breasted Nuthatch.....	9	Cerulean Warbler	5
Sharp-shinned Hawk.....	2	White-breasted Nuthatch	81	Northern Parula.....	7
Cooper's Hawk	5	Brown Creeper.....	32	Magnolia Warbler.....	15
Northern Harrier	1	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.....	37	Blackburnian Warbler	38
Bald Eagle.....	7	House Wren.....	164	Yellow Warbler	587
Red-shouldered Hawk.....	46	Marsh Wren.....	58	Chestnut-sided Warbler.....	225
Broad-winged Hawk.....	9	Winter Wren.....	10	Black-throated Blue Warbler.....	27
Red-tailed Hawk	32	Carolina Wren.....	51	Pine Warbler.....	95
Eastern Screech Owl.....	1	Gray Catbird.....	625	Yellow-rumped Warbler	14
Great Horned Owl.....	3	Brown Thrasher	3	Yellow-throated Warbler.....	1
Barred Owl.....	37	Northern Mockingbird.....	6	Prairie Warbler.....	4
Belted Kingfisher	12	European Starling.....	378	Black-throated Green Warbler	67
Red-bellied Woodpecker.....	62	Eastern Bluebird.....	132	Canada Warbler.....	13
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.....	91	Veery	522	Scarlet Tanager.....	116
Downy Woodpecker.....	71	Hermit Thrush.....	44	Northern Cardinal	168
Hairy Woodpecker	37	Wood Thrush.....	188	Rose-breasted Grosbeak.....	52
Northern Flicker.....	38	American Robin.....	651	Indigo Bunting	46
Pileated Woodpecker.....	44	House Sparrow.....	164		
American Kestrel.....	6	House Finch.....	115		
Great Crested Flycatcher.....	66	Purple Finch.....	21		
Eastern Kingbird.....	84	American Goldfinch.....	412		

Boldface = good or uncommon bird

Summer Count

(continued from page 6)

it took to count and find that many: 179 hours of birding in the daylight with an additional 12.5 hours of birding in darkness.

Many thanks to the participants (C signifies captains):

John Anderson, Janet Baker (C), Robert Barbieri (C), Gina Decker, Angela Dimmitt (C), Diane Edwards, Kevin

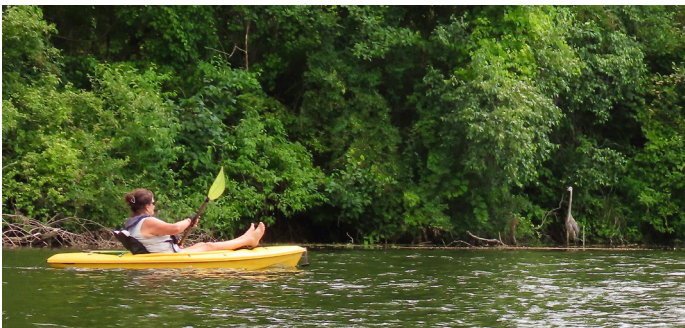
Finnan, Ed Goodhouse, Nicki Hall (C), Greg Hanisek (C), Judy Herkimer, Kim Herkimer, Marie Kennedy (C), Paul Mahler (C), Debbie Martin, Rich Martin, Michelle McDermott, Scott Mills, Russ Naylor (C), JoAnn Neddermann, Ann Orsillo (C), Lisa Roberge, Sam Slater (C), Donna Rose Smith (C), David Tripp, Jr. (C), John Wagenblatt (C), Kate Wong, and Fran Zygmunt (C).

LHAS Kayak Trips 2026

By Ann Orsillo

Housatonic River at the Great Falls

A quiet morning of sunny skies and a slight breeze was the setting for our river paddle on July 14, when we en-



Paddler Approaches a Great Blue Heron.

Photo: Ann Orsillo

countered 30 species of birds. The highlight was a Peregrine Falcon that flew up and down the river just over our heads. As it soared we noticed the level, sharply pointed wings and heavy body. Numerous Cedar Waxwings clung to treetops and hawked insects over the river. A lone Green Heron foraged along the shore.

Jim Gillespie spotted a brown head just above the water surface among vegetation. We glided closer and watched a muskrat eating water plants near the shoreline. A beautiful creature with fur



Muskrat.

Photo: Ann Orsillo

of brown and white streaking, small ears, sharp long nails, and small beady eyes. It always amazes us that we can get close to wildlife while paddling if we are quiet and slow moving. We become a

non-threatening presence. After the two-hour paddle we were ready for a picnic lunch beside the river.

Milford Point Sandbars and Wheeler Marsh

Four paddlers, including a guest from Tolland, met at the boat ramp on Wheeler Marsh at Milford Point on August 25. As we paddled through the tidal river, it was fun to see the Diamondback Terrapin turtles popping their heads out of the water and then diving as we paddled along. Paddling against a strong current and high winds, we were still able to spot Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers, Lesser Yellowlegs, Great Blue and Little Blue Herons, Great Egrets, American Oystercatchers, numerous gulls, and Double-crested Cormorants. Clapper Rails were vocalizing from the marsh.

We counted at least 18 Ospreys flying over the marsh, sandbars, and shorefront. Two Osprey fledglings were continuously begging for food at the nest monitored by the Connecticut Ornithological Association (COA).

After loading kayaks onto our vehicles, we enjoyed a picnic lunch beside the small pond at the Milford Point Coastal Center's garden. A Yellow-crowned Night Heron flew over our heads. A perfect ending to a beautiful day.



Least Sandpiper.

Photo: Ann Orsillo



Lesser Yellowlegs.

Photo: Ann Orsillo

Focus on Birds

Meet the Cedar Waxwing: The 'Drunken Sailor'

By Vickie Dauphinais, Education Committee Chair

On a sunny fall day, I came upon an injured Cedar Waxwing by the White Memorial Museum. He was on



Injured Cedar Waxwing.

Photo: Vickie Dauphinais

the pavement, struggling to fly. I picked him up and gently placed him in a grocery bag, where he sat quietly, looking at me while I figured out the next step. I knew there was a wildlife rehabilita-

tion clinic at Sharon Audubon, so I reached out, and they agreed to admit him for evaluation. I dropped him off and hoped for the best.

Afterward, it occurred to me that I knew little about Cedar Waxwings beyond a few basics: the crest on the head, the distinctive black mask across the eyes, and their love of berries. I can usually hear their high-pitched, thin trill or whistle before I see them. So, I set out to get to know them better. As it turns out, they are the sophisticated, nomadic jewels of the North American avian world, and what sets them apart is their exquisite plumage. The body is covered in velvety, warm, sandy-brown feathers, and the belly is pale yellow. The tail has a bright yellow band, giving it a dipped-in-paint look. The wing tips are often bright red and resemble drops of sealing wax, the unique feature that gives the bird its name. The injured waxwing lacked the red tips, so he was probably an immature bird.

In my research, I learned that Cedar Waxwings are true frugivores, surviving almost entirely on fruit. They collect insects only during the spring and early summer nesting season, when fruit is scarce and nestlings need a high-protein diet. Even so, the young thrive mainly on fruit after the first two days of life. Their favorite berries include juniper, dogwood, wild cherry, red cedar, autumn olive, and pokeweed. As they feast, they inadvertently disperse the seeds of native and non-native plants, which plays an important role in our ecosystem. One interesting fact is that these birds tend to gorge on overripe and fermented ber-



Healthy Cedar Waxwing.

Photo: JoAnn Neddermann

ries and become drunk. As a result, they become disoriented, making them susceptible to injury and predation. This possibly explains what happened to my injured waxwing.

Cedar Waxwings are highly social and usually travel in large flocks. They are great at sharing food and have been

observed passing berries or insects from beak to beak in a remarkable display of cooperation. They are also nomadic, so you never know when you'll come across them. The flock goes where the fruit is, and the only time they stay put is when they are nesting. They remain in Connecticut year-round, but their numbers fluctuate from year to year depending on fruit availability. This was evident in our last couple of Christmas Bird Counts: 134 birds were reported in 2024, but only 39 in 2025.

Cedar Waxwings also collide with windows more often than other species during winter. Why might that be? It's all about the food. Berries that remain on trees ferment in the cold, and the birds that feast on them become intoxicated, fly unsteadily, and suffer unlucky window strikes. We can help reduce these collisions by making glass less transparent with tape, decals, films, or dots. (For more information about this, visit abcbirds.org/solutions/prevent-home-collisions.)

On a positive note, my injured Cedar Waxwing made a full recovery thanks to the wonderful care provided by Mackenzie Hunter, wildlife rehabilitator, and her dedicated volunteers at the Sharon Audubon Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic. A week later, I picked up the little guy and set him free where I found him so he could return to his flock.

If you find an injured bird, put it in a cardboard box with small holes punched on the sides. Keep it in a warm, dark, quiet place for up to an hour. If the bird is injured and unable to recover on its own, call the Sharon Audubon Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic at 860-364-0502, ext. 106.

References

- audubon.org/field-guide/bird/cedar-waxwing
- allaboutbirds.org/guide/Cedar_Waxwing/overview
- <https://lovethebirds.com/cedar-waxwing>
- aiwc.ca/blog/winter-waxwings-and-window-strikes

Conservation News

Northern Tree Swallows Especially Vulnerable to Climate Change

A new study led by Cornell University researchers that analyzed nearly 95,000 nests across five decades found that Tree Swallows in the northern U.S. and Canada face greater risk from climate change despite responding to temperature the same way as Tree Swallows in the southern U.S. The research suggests that climate change vulnerability can arise not just from different sensitivities to warming, but from constraints on the ability to respond effectively. Northern populations face particularly difficult conditions, experiencing both greater warming and increased year-to-year temperature variability during the critical pre-breeding period. Combined with longer migration distances to get to their farther-north breeding grounds, these swallows may be in poorer condition when breeding starts.



Tree Swallow at Hammonasset.

Photo: Diane Friend Edwards

Read more about this at birds.cornell.edu/home/news.

Marathon Trip to Release Rehabbed Chimney Swifts!

What would normally be a 20-minute trip to Woodbury for Sharon Audubon staff to release rehabilitated Chimney Swifts in late August this year turned out to be a 10-hour, 1,000-mile journey to Virginia!

Every year Sharon Audubon's Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic rehabilitates dozens of nestling Chimney Swifts. Staff and volunteers prepare them for a late-August release into a local, wild flock, ideally one of 75 to 100 birds or more. According to Mackenzie Hunter, senior animal care coordinator at Sharon Audubon, "Rehabilitated Chimney Swifts must be released into an established flock. These wild-raised flocks will take our clinic-raised birds under their wing by leading them to feeding areas, showing them their migration staging

chimney, and eventually travelling with them to the Amazon River Basin for the winter.

But this summer, the local flock began migrating in July and was gone by early August. So Mackenzie used e-Bird to find the nearest large group of swifts — which turned out to be in Virginia. "At 6:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, I loaded up our remaining Chimney Swifts along with a tub of mealworms, feeding tools, release supplies, and a prayer, and set out on my drive south. Accounting for regular stops to feed, it was a 10-hour journey one way. ... After this unexpectedly long journey, our rehabilitated juvenile Chimney Swifts are now flying free."

This year the clinic raised and released 36 Chimney Swifts, a species that is in decline across the country. "By rehabilitating, releasing, and raising awareness about these unique birds and their conservation needs, the Sharon Audubon Center works to restore their populations," Mackenzie wrote.

You can read her entire article about this saga at audubon.org/connecticut/news.

U.S. Rule Change Undermines Effectiveness of Endangered Species Act

The National Wildlife Federation has issued a press release stating that interpreting the definition of "take" under the Endangered Species Act to only include intentional acts directed against individual animals would all but eliminate the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's ability to prevent injury and even death to endangered and threatened species. The interpretation, described in an internal memo signed by the director of the Fish and Wildlife Service, follows the administration's recent rescission of the regulatory definition of "harm," which removed important safeguards against habitat modification and degradation that kills or injures protected wildlife. NWF and five of its state affiliates are challenging the unlawful rescission in federal court.

To read more about this, go to nwf.org/Latest-News/Press-Releases.



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Address Service Requested

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Trip Report

Lighthouse Point: A 'Mini Cape May'

By Russ Naylor

On October 3, our stalwart past president Marie Kennedy led us down to New Haven's Lighthouse Point Park for a coastal fall migration extravaganza. Lighthouse Point has been called our state's miniature version of Cape May, New Jersey, as swarms of raptors and other birds follow the coastline on their southward migratoin.

With easterly winds and oncoming rain, bird passage was a tad slow. But we still savored a potpourri of birdlife. Resident Peregrine Falcons flew up at times to display aerial adeptness. A mixed bag of raptors winged by on passage — Ospreys, Bald Eagles, Merlins, a few peregrines, some early Red-shouldered Hawks, late Broad-winged Hawks (which typically migrate in September), and a feisty dash of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks.

At the same time, a steady flow of other migrants passed our eyes — Blue Jays, flickers, Cedar Waxwings, various blackbirds, Palm Warblers, Savannah Sparrows, and even a few Dickcissels bouncing by as an extra treat.

Though usually a resident species, Red-bellied Woodpeckers from points north came through on irruptive flight.

Over New Haven Harbor

went a flow of Double-crested Cormorants and Laughing Gulls. We beheld at least one Black-bellied Plover and Greater Yellowlegs on a stopover visit.

Some local birds added spice to the migration mix — cardinals, a local breeder Black Duck, Fish Crows, a New Haven raven, a few Monk Parakeets, Canada Geese, and Carolina Wrens.

Our 63-species shoreline sortie was a sweet prelude to the upcoming LHAS pilgrimage to Cape May (October 15-18). *Merci beaucoup*, Marie, for getting us ready and pumped up for that annual journey in birding nirvana!



Merlin.

Photo: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service