Joe, We Thank You!

After a decade of expertly editing the Mid-Coast Audubon newsletter, Joe Gray has, as he put it, resigned to allow “new blood.”

Joe stepped down last November, when he turned 88. But “retired” doesn’t really apply to Joe, who for decades has volunteered in various causes, from Tanglewood 4H Camp and Learning Center in Lincolnville to the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

A naturalist and conservationist, Joe has given freely of his time and knowledge. He currently teaches a Senior College class at Schooner Cove in Damariscotta, where he and his wife Carolyn, MCAS treasurer, have lived for the past few years. Before that they lived in Jefferson. Carolyn’s volunteer activity rivals her husband’s in her various volunteer commitments.

Joe and Carolyn have been with MCAS for over 35 years - shortly after they moved to the area. Joe will continue to contribute to the Bulletin, from time to time and participate in the chapter. He’ll also continue his column in the Lincoln County News.

With all that Joe is involved in, we wonder how he ever found time to produce the Bulletin, but we hope he will now have time to watch more birds!

Steve Cartwright
PRESIDENT’S CORNER

It’s finally winter. Frost on the windows, ice on the paths, dogs peacefully asleep by the crackling wood stove. Today feels cold after weeks of relative warmth, and although the strangely warm weather of the fall and early winter doesn’t translate directly to global climate change, it does make one think.

Exciting things are afoot for MCAS in 2012. The Board of Directors met in November for a retreat, to refresh and refocus our energies. Les Hyde kindly lent his skill as a facilitator, and we enjoyed the venue of the Joe Gray Nature Center at the Tanglewood 4-H Camp and Learning Center.

We decided to focus the next 5 years on habitat protection and restoration. Not only can we protect the 4 preserves that we own, but we can help members enhance the habitats on their properties. Curbing the spread of invasives, planting native species to provide beneficial and well-timed food and shelter for wildlife, and providing good habitat in as many places as possible for migrant and resident birds are some of the projects. We plan to have programs and field trips related to habitat use and protection, and to join with other conservation organizations to accomplish some important work. All this learning, action and fun will certainly engage our membership and encourage new folks to join – another of the goals we have for the near future.

Our focus meshes well with Maine Audubon’s goal of activism – tackle local issues and make a difference. It also complements National Audubon’s exciting new Flyway Initiative – which likens the North American migration routes to superhighways in the sky. We sit under the Atlantic flyway, and provide food, resting places, and homes for birds moving along that route.

Stay tuned, and be ready to take action on behalf of birds. Keep your binoculars and work gloves handy!

Sue Schubel

CRITTER CORNER

During February’s coldest weather, while we humans stay indoors, the familiar Easter Chipmunk is having a winter nap in an underground den somewhere in our snow-covered neighborhoods. Chipmunks have a restless hibernation, waking up every few weeks to dine on their winter food caches.

“Cute” is the most common adjective to describe these diminutive ground squirrels, especially when they overfill their rounded cheeks with nuts or seeds. Their omnivorous diet includes mushrooms, fruits, berries and corn. They also eat insects, bird eggs, snails and small mammals like young mice.

112th Christmas Bird Count Results

One of our favorite times of the year is December, when birders get to do intensive days of birding during the Annual Christmas Bird Count, whether it be in the field or in their chair watching the feeders. MCAS has three count circles in its area: Rockland / Thomaston, Pemaquid / Damariscotta, and Bunker Hill. Each count circle is 15 miles in diameter - a lot of birding. The Rockland count is notable for its Bald Eagles and the surprises often found in Rockland and the harbor. Pemaquid includes the Pemaquid Lighthouse area which can try even the hardiest soul on a cold, blustery, snowy day. Bunker Hill, just north of the Pemaquid circle, includes Damariscotta Lake, Head Tide, and Clary Lake. Over 90 counters and 3 feeder watchers participated in the counts, spotting 86 species, and almost 18,000 birds. Many thanks to the compilers, Don Reimer, John Weinrich, and Dennis McKenna, who recruited the counters and have the arduous job of putting all the figures together for their count circle and reporting them.

The complete list of species and numbers of birds seen in each circle is listed on page 3.
### Christmas Bird Count 2011

**Bunker Hill (BH), Rockland/Thomaston (R/T), Pemaquid/Damariscotta (P/D)**

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<td>Mallard</td>
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Calendar of Events

Bird walks and programs are free; donations are welcome to help defray costs.

Program chair: Kathy Cartwright 832-5584. Field trip chair: John Weinrich 563-2930

FEBRUARY

Saturday, February 4
Harlequin Ducks, Scoters and More
Perkins Cove and Cliff House, Ogunquit
Meet at Hannaford’s in Damariscotta at 7 a.m.

Wednesday, February 15, 6:30 p.m., Waldoboro Public Library, Local Environmental Activism with Bill Pearce.
Bill works with the Green Sanctuary, 1st Universalist Church doing a campaign for window inserts, the Rockland Energy Advisory Committee, Parks Commission to get LED street lights, Cool Communities/ Green Sneakers with Andy Burke, and the RSU School Board and Mid-Coast Technology on other projects. It’s an important time to step up and do something for the environment. Come learn how from a caring neighbor.

Thursday, February 16, 6:30 p.m., Camden Public Library, Local Environmental Activism, with Brian Robinson
Brian will share what he has been involved with. He works with Evergreen Home Performance, is on the Camden Parks and Recreation Committee (and was on the Energy Committee until this was shut down), was one of two representatives for Maine meeting with senators in D.C. on energy, lobbying for the global climate change bill last year. He has been on the 4-H Tanglewood board, organized Mid-Coast Energy Day and a chapter of MoveOn.org. His daughter is involved with Kids for a Green Camden and got a whole street to sign up for not using chemicals on their lawns. He’s excited about the wind turbine project at Camden Rockport high school. His enthusiasm inspires others.

Thursday, February 23, 6:30 p.m. at Belfast Public Library, Snow Amazing with Mike Shannon
Mike is a naturalist, educator and Registered Maine Guide. Whether in the forest prowling for owls or aboard boats scanning for pelagic birds, he continues to lead outings for local groups. He is retired from Unity College where he taught ornithology and ecological education. A former director of the Audubon Ecology Camp in Maine (Hog Island), he has also served as Master Naturalist for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Mike has a long history of sharing his passion and enthusiasm for things natural.

Saturday and Sunday, February 25 and 26
Plum Island National Wildlife Refuge and Cape Ann with Dennis McKenna
Meet at Hannaford’s in Damariscotta at 7 a.m.
Call Dennis McKenna at 207-563-8439 for motel reservations.

MARCH

Thursday, March 15, 6:30 p.m., Camden Public Library, Signs of the Seasons - Coastal Climate Change with Esperanza Stancioff.
Esperanza works for Knox and Lincoln County Cooperative Extension.

Thursday, March 22, 6:30 p.m., Belfast Public Library, Migration with Seth Benz
Seth was the first professionally hired hawk watcher in the U.S. He has worked for Audubon Expeditions and Audubon Camp in Maine.

Saturday, March 24, 6:30 p.m., Gibbs Library, Washington, Puffins with Susie Meadows.
Susie manages the Puffin Center on Main Street in Rockland.

APRIL

Thursday, April 5, 6:30 p.m., Waldoboro Public Library, Wildflowers: What’s Here, Planting for Your Area and Uses with Wanda Garland
Wanda’s roots as an avid naturalist go back to growing up on a farm in Aroostook County, in the small town of Chapman. “We were taught all the plants and the trees and it just grew from that,” she said.

Saturday, April 7, 6:30 p.m., Gibbs Library, Washington, Alewives in the Environment with David Wilkins
David is a boat builder at Pedebco and is on the board of the Davis Anadromous Fish Trust.

Thursday, April 12, 6:30 p.m., Rockland Public Library, Woodcock with Mike Shannon
See notes on Mike above for Snow Amazing presentation.

Thursday, April 19, 6:30 p.m., Camden Public Library, Deep Sea Creatures with Buzz Scott
Buzz worked for the Monterey Bay Aquarium developing an underwater vehicle to take pictures of creatures never seen before. He now lives in Maine and gets kids out on the ocean doing research.

Saturday, April 21
Reid State Park
Meet at Hannaford’s in Damariscotta at 7:30 a.m.

Tuesday, April 24
Pemaquid Point
Meet at the point at 8 a.m.
MAY

Saturday, May 5
Sears Island for Warblers and More with Seth Benz
Meet at Moody's Diner at 6:30 a.m.

Tuesday, May 8
Morse Property and MVLT Preserve, Waldoboro
Meet at SUBWAY in Waldoboro at 8 a.m.

Saturday, May 12
SVCA and MCA Birding through Sheepscot Village with Kristin Pennock
Meet at SVCA in Sheepscot at 7:30 a.m.

Saturday, May 19
Evergreen Cemetery and Cupisic Park for Spring Warblers,
Flycatchers, Orioles and More
Meet at Hannaford's in Damariscotta at 7 a.m.

Saturday, May 26
Vaughn Woods, Belgrade Lakes and Augusta Airport
Meet at Hannaford's in Damariscotta at 7 a.m.

JUNE

Friday and Saturday, June 1 and 2
Monhegan Island
Overnight or single day trip. Call Monhegan Boat Lines for reservations. Boat leaves Port Clyde at 7 a.m. sharp.

More field trips scheduled in June, July, August, September, and October are on the website, www.midcoastaudubon.org and will be included in the May issue of the Bulletin.

THE CHAPTER
STORE IS OPEN!
Spring is just around the corner and the birds will soon be returning to nest. With the roller-coaster temperatures we’ve been having they may arrive early!

Clean out your old nest boxes and start ordering news ones. We have Eastern Bluebird/American Tree Swallow boxes with a reinforced entrance. All our boxes are handmade. Stop by Louis Doe Home Center in Newcastle or call 563-2930 to order.

Nest Boxes: Eastern Bluebird, Flicker, Saw-whet Owl, and American Kestrel $20
Hardwood hole replacement kit $1
Bat Box with Maine's Bats booklet $15
Maine’s Bats booklet $5

Feeders: suet log $10; simple platform $20, platform with roof $40, Oriole fruit $10

Feathery Fun Quiz
Snug in our downy coats and comforters this winter, we can thank the birds for such an amazing technology! Test your knowledge of that evolutionary marvel which separates the birds from the others.

1. Name the soft warm feathers located near the skin of the bird.
2. What color of feather is the strongest?
3. What color of feather changes with diet?
4. Name four functions of feathers.
5. Name 3 birds that use modified feathers to make sounds.
6. Name a bird that uses modified feathers to make no sound.
7. What bird has the most feathers?
8. What are feathers made of?
9. What is the definition of pteryla?
10. How many types of feathers are there?

Answers on page 6.

DON’T FORGET . . . HOG ISLAND
Registration is open for the 2012 programs at the Audubon Camp at Hog Island. New this year are Family Camp and Migration at Monhegan Island. Also, the camp has an exciting lineup of instructors, Bill Thompson of Birder’s Digest, Julie Zickefoose, Don Kroodsma, Pete Dunn, Scott Weidensaul, Lang Elliot, Steve Kress, to name just a few.

Check out the details at www.hogisland.audubon.org and share with friends. If you’d like to volunteer complete form at www.fohi.org.
Answers

1. Down feathers.
2. Dark colored feathers have more melanin, which strengthens them. Black feathers are strongest and resist fraying – look at those wingtips!
3. Red, yellow, and pink feathers are colored by carotenoid pigments in the diet (birds cannot synthesize this pigment). Captive flamingos on a diet which does not contain carotenoids can fade to pale pink or white.
4. Feathers provide warmth, protection from water and sun, camouflage, sending visual signals (come hither, or stay away), and movement (flying, diving, snowshoeing) among other things.
5. The American Woodcock (outer primaries of male whistle), the Broad-tailed Hummingbird (outer primaries of male trill), and the Northern Lapwing (outer primaries make a hum) are three birds that have feathers modified to make sounds.
6. An edge of an owl feather is fringed, not “zipped together” as in other species, lending it a silent flight.
7. Whistling swan. It has 25,000 feathers during the winter.
8. Keratin proteins.
9. Any of the tracts of skin which bear contour feathers.
10. Six. Down, contour, flight, semiplume, filoplume, and bristle.

Bird Reports
Call Doris Balant at 563-1216 or e-mail dbalant@roadrunner.net

Welcome New and Renewing Members!

Bebe Cucinelli, Lincolnville
Evelyn deFrees, Searsmont
Alice Drake, Nobleboro
Robert H. Flory, Damariscotta
Martin Imm, Waldoboro
Alison Macmillan, Newcastle
Michael Moore, Owls Head
Mr. and Mrs. Dana Robes, Round Pond
Juanita Roushdy, Bremen
Mary Jane Smith, Chamberlain
James Soule, New Harbor

Only seabirds and shorebirds

On the Rush of Wings
207-832-5044
www.ontherushofwings.org

Birds of all species
Avian Haven
207-382-6761
www.avianhaven.org

Injured Birds!

Mid-Coast Audubon
Organized December 6, 1969
P.O. Box 458, Damariscotta, ME 04543-0458

OFFICERS
Sue Schubel, President
John Weinrich, Vice President
Phyllis Coelho, Secretary
Carolyn Gray, Treasurer

DIRECTORS
Kathy Cartwright, Jefferson
Dennis McKenna, Damariscotta
Kristin Pennock, Whitefield
Lew Purinton, Somerville
Don Reimer, Warren
Juanita Roushdy, Bremen
John Tobin, Rockland

COMMITTEES

Bird Reports: Doris Balant, 563-1216
Conservation: Joe Gray, 563-3578
Field Trips: John Weinrich, 563-2930
Nest boxes: John Weinrich, 563-2930
Membership: Vacant
Preserves: Bill Goodwill, 354-0669
Programs: Kathy Cartwright, 832-5584
Speaker Bureau: Joe Gray, 563-3578
Special Events: Sue Schubel, 380-1370

Bulletin editor: Juanita Roushdy, 529-2355
The Bulletin is published quarterly in February, May, August, November. News items or photos are welcome. The deadline for the next issue is April 15! Send to juanitar@tidewater.net
Local Preserves of MCAS

Did you know that Mid-Coast Audubon manages four preserves - each a gem in its own right. Take a moment to become acquainted with them and plan a stroll with your friends and family.

Nelson Nature Preserve
Friendship. Ninety-five acres of upland, mixed forest and a Red Maple wetland with trails to Goose River. Located 1 mile from Friendship Village on Rte. 97, with parking lot.

Van Dyne Refuge
Waldoboro. Thirty acres of upland mixed forest, Spruce woods, open fields, hardwoods and salt marsh on the Medowmak River with a trail system. Located 1.5 miles south of Waldoboro on Rte. 220.

Weskeag River Preserve
South Thomaston. Three acres with 300-foot frontage on Weskeag River. A narrow strip of mixed conifers with single trail to river from parking lot on Beach Road. Located 0.1 mile off Rte. 73, Buttermilk Lane in South Thomaston.

Davis Bog Preserve
Morrill. Forty acres of Northern White Cedar swamp is the chapter’s latest acquisition. Access us by a 10-foot right of way over lands of Rudy Hamm on the Higgins Ridge Road about 1 mile off Route 3, east of the state’s Ruffingham Meadow Preserve.

Preserve Committee
Bill Goodwill is chair of the MCAS Preserve Committee. The committee oversees trail and sign maintenance. They are always looking for help and partnerships for these little gems of habitat. Contact Bill at barredowl@juno.com or phone at 354-0669.

Our preserves offer a variety of habitat from river frontage to bog to salt marsh. They are perfect for a quiet walk, for birding, for an exploration of wildflowers in the spring, for a family outing, or to explore in a class outing. We can even provide a guide if you wish. Of course, winter is a magical time for snowshoeing, animal tracking, and more - not to mention the thrill of discovering early spring wildflowers.

A Big Welcome to our newest board member, Lew Purinton, who lives in Somerville. Lew has been a regular on our field trips and our CBC counts so was familiar with what the chapter was all about. He is a life-long birder who is passionate about birds and photography. We thank him for his willingness to help with the chapter’s mission.
Join Audubon today!

Become better informed of legislative and environmental events in the Mid-Coast and Maine. Pay one membership for two organizations: Maine Audubon and Mid-Coast Audubon.

___ $25 Volunteer/Senior  ___ $35 Individual  ___ $45 Household  ___ $65 Contributor

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