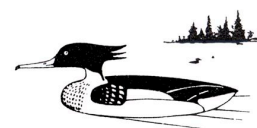


# Bulletin



*Mid-Coast Audubon's mission is to promote long-term responsible use of natural resources through an informed membership, education, and community awareness*

A Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 37, No. 1 - February 2013

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## Change is Inevitable

Propelled by advancing technology, our modern world faces inevitable change. And our Audubon newsletter is the most recent example of changing practices as we strive to present the natural world to our readers. Our board has acknowledged the technological evolution of bird reporting and painfully decided to cease the written quarterly bird reports.

Since 1994, Doris Balant had served as the Newsletter Editor for our Bird Sightings column. She can't recall who recruited her for MCA, but suspects it may have been Joe or Carolyn Gray. She remembers that "after the tragic death of Jean Hamlin, who had been not only a bird reporter, but such a vital member of MCA, I took on the bird reports as my way of honoring her."

In the past, Doris also served as MCA board member and field trip coordinator. She was also Executive Director of Pemaquid Watershed Association and is still teaching the Maine Apprentice Gardener Program as part of their environmental education outreach.



Doris Balant moves on to new things

I sat with Doris at her Newcastle home as we reminisced about the bird scene and discussed her productive stint in recording bird sightings. Doris first became acquainted with birds while living on a wooded country farm in Pennsylvania. With time, her interest grew and broadened. Simply put, she just enjoys birds.

"I guess I liked the phone calls best. Beyond hearing about the bird sightings, I learned a lot about the people who phoned me – it might be folks who were new to the area who would share interesting information about where they had lived. Sometimes people would send photos too; that was certainly helpful to substantiate a given species."

"I always appreciated the folks who would phone to report the chickadees or nuthatches at their feeders. Although these weren't rare or unusual birds, I never wanted to discourage these new birders. The sense of enthusiasm and excitement in their voices was evident and contagious."

"A gentleman once called to report a very rare western hummingbird that was typically found around California.

*Continued on page 2*

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I write this in the midst of the January thaw – an early one they say, after the warmest year on record. But let's not dwell on that. With the warm breezes blowing over the snows left from our last beautiful storm, there has been thick, soft fog in abundance.



accidentally been left out there after the summer and gone feral).

Newborn pups covered in soft white fur, larger gray spotted pups, concerned mothers (dark on light), and huge bulls (light on dark) were everywhere. Fortunately the camera

mission was successful so you too can enjoy this spectacular scene, through the world of live streaming video. Visit the website



The gray fog moving through the wintry gray landscape and over the muddy trails can inspire one to

curl up with a good book, or browse tropical vacations online for a time. But, as often happens a much better opportunity closer to home came my way - a chance to visit Seal Island with a team on a camera repair mission!



[www.explore.org](http://www.explore.org) to see Audubon channel cameras. (Volunteer opportunities are available if you would like to learn how to manipulate the camera online and keep the scene interesting for people around the world! For that, visit [www.fohi.org](http://www.fohi.org) to sign-up). *Sue Schubel*

Right in our mid-coast Maine region is a "spectacle of abundance" as my naturalist friend Mark Garland would call it. This National Wildlife Refuge in Penobscot Bay, a summer nesting island for puffins and terns, in the winter is covered with pupping Gray Seals. It is an amazing sight to see hundreds or thousands of seals spread out across the grassy parts of the island, and upon closer inspection find them scattered among the boulders as well.

The wailing, moaning, growling, and snorting of all these animals is somewhat unnerving as their voices can sound quite human (we wondered if perhaps a puffin biologist had



At least 20 seals are in this photo.

Photos by Sue Schubel

## Change is Inevitable - continued from page 1

When I mentioned this hummer's usual Western home range and the species' extreme rarity anywhere in the East, the man grew more determined. "I am a Judge," he informed me. "I am compelled to tell the truth at all times." Apparently, this situation resulted in a hung jury.

For better or worse, we now live in a fast-paced era of instant information. Those who wish to read almost minute by minute bird sightings can check out online sources such as Maine-Birds ([maine-birds@googlegroups.com](mailto:maine-birds@googlegroups.com).) Nowadays, some birders even send real-time bird

information and photos from the field by way of their iPhone or iPad.

We owe Doris a great debt of gratitude for her years of patient and persistent gathering of bird information and her energy and willingness to share it with us all. Thanks, Doris!

*Don Reimer is board member of Mid-Coast Audubon, leads filed trips, and writes a weekly column for the Free Press about birds in our area.*



## CRITTER CORNER

Last July, we boarded a Bar Harbor whale watch vessel and journeyed 30 miles offshore in search of pelagic birds and summer whales. A pulse of excitement filled the air as a 45-foot male Humpback named Ark acrobatically breached in front of our vessel. How did we know this particular whale was Ark? The animal had a distinctive notch in his dorsal fin area caused by entanglement in fishing gear a decade earlier. Sea rescuers had eventually freed the burdened whale.

The Humpback Whale is one of the most recognized of the whales, identified by its long flippers, almost one-third of their body length, and the hump on their back. The long tail can measure up to 12 feet wide. The gray to black colored upper body contrasts sharply with white markings on their underside. As Ark sounded to the depths below, he revealed an interesting white smiley face design near the tip of his left fluke.

Humpbacks migrate annually from summer feeding grounds

near the poles to warmer winter breeding waters closer to the Equator. Mothers and their young swim close together, touching one another with their flippers. Newborn humpback calves can eat 100 pounds of their mother's milk a day. These whales show considerable size differences depending on their location. Whales living in cooler regions can weigh up to 50 tons while those in the tropical areas are about 30 tons.

Humpbacks produce intriguing songs, which reportedly travel up to 100 miles through the world's oceans. Sequences of moans, howls, cries, and other complex noises

may continue for hours on end. Scientists postulate that humpbacks sing to communicate with others and to attract potential mates. Unlike human beings, humpback whales breathe voluntarily. Since they have to remember to breathe, researchers believe humpback sleep by shutting off half of their brain at a time.

Humpback whales were first protected as endangered animals in 1966. Currently, it is believed 30,000 to 40,000 humpback whales are left or about 30 percent of their original population.

*Don Reimer*

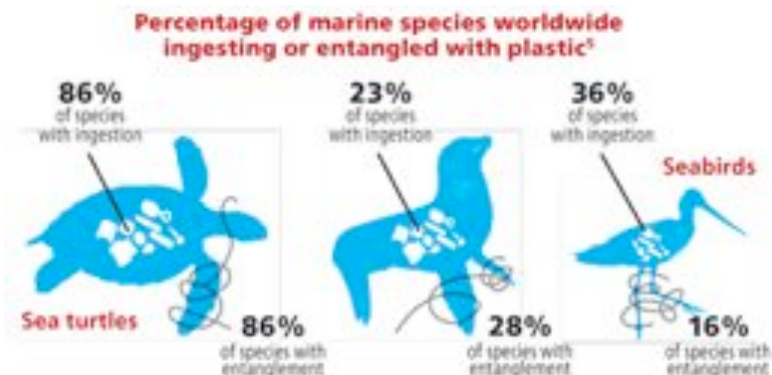


Photos by Don Reimer

## Where are the birds in this issue, you ask.

Remember, our seabirds share the ocean with other life forms. Many of our birds are dependent on the ocean not only as a food source but as habitat.

Plastics constitute 90% of all trash floating in the ocean. It can float for centuries. One estimate is that there is more plastic floating in the ocean than plankton, the tiny drifting plants and animals that form the basis of the ocean's food web.



# Christmas Bird Count Results - 2012

Bunker Hill (BH), Rockland/Thomaston (RT), Pemaquid/Damariscotta (PD)

Species	BH	R/T	P/D
Canada Goose	32	579	439
American Black Duck	79	356	168
Mallard	119	401	166
American Coot	-	129	-
Common Eider	-	310	423
Surf Scoter	-	159	58
White-Winged Scoter	-	1	1
Black Scoter	-	5	20
Long-Tailed Duck	-	203	307
Ring-necked Duck	2 cw	15	1
Greater Scaup	-	(cw)	-
Lesser Scaup	12	(cw)	-
Green-Winged Teal	-	5	-
American Wigeon	-	2	-
Bufflehead	57	484	524
Common Goldeneye	92	105	139
Barrow's Goldeneye	2	-	-
Hooded Merganser	60	21	48
Common Merganser	2	69	3
Red-breasted Merganser	49	139	310
Ruffed Grouse	6	1	2
Great Blue Heron	-	3	1
Wild Turkey	409	128	30
Red-Throated Loon	-	5	9
Common Loon	1	135	135
Horned Grebe	-	66	2
Red-Necked Grebe	-	47	14
Norther Gannet	-	1	3
Great Cormorant	-	6	10
American Bald Eagle	6a2i	11a6i	6a5i

Sharp-Shinned Hawk	-	1	1
Cooper's Hawk	1	-	1
Red-Tailed Hawk	3	10	5
Merlin	-	1	-
Purple Sandpiper	-	4	-
Bonaparte's Gull	-	5	60
Ring-billed Gull	58	201	133
Herring Gull	97	970	427
Greater Black-Backed Gull	-	46	5
Black-Legged Kittiwake	-	-	-
Black Guillemot	-	299	64
Razorbill	-	25	5
Rock Pigeon	38	409	39
Mourning Dove	76	426	81
Barred Owl	1	1	-
Great Horned Owl	-	-	2
Belted Kingfisher	2	-	6
Red-bellied woodpecker	5	2	5
Downey Woodpecker	19	47	9
Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker	-	1	-
Hairy woodpecker	6	23	8
Pileated Woodpecker	3	6	2
Northern Flicker	1	4	3
Northern Shrike	1	4	-
Blue Jay	116	135	89
American Crow	137	427	247
Common Raven	3	15	7
Black-capped Chickadee	560	563	339
Tufted Titmouse	52	34	34
Red-breasted Nuthatch	8	34	36

White-breasted Nuthatch	50	49	38
Brown Creeper	2	10	4
Winter Wren	-	-	1cw
Carolina Wren	1cw	4	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	4	51	30
Eastern Bluebird	15	4	4
American Robin	25	29	50
European Starling	345	620	29
Yellow-Rumped Warbler	-	-	-
American Tree Sparrow	30	61	8
Savannah Sparrow	-	2	-
Song Sparrow	4	28	16
White-throated Sparrow	11	32	25
Dark-eyed Junco	74	23	71
Snow Bunting	-	-	-
Northern Cardinal	37	58	50
Northern Mockingbird	-	7	2
Common Grackle	1	3	-
Brown-headed Cowbird	-	-	-
Purple Finch	-	7	cw
House Finch	-	76	44
White-Winged Crossbill	-	31	13
Pine Siskin	15		5
American Goldfinch	102	94	28
House Sparrow	84	114	51
Baltimore Oriole	-	-	-
<i>Continued on page 5</i>			

Eastern Bluebird, Don Reimer



# 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

### Thursday, February 21, 7:00 p.m.

Camden Public Library

Jennifer McCabe presents *Defining Critical Habitat for Migratory Songbirds in the Gulf of Maine*. Jennifer is a graduate student at University of Maine.

### Saturday, February 23 and 24

Overnight to Plum Island, MA

Depart Hannaford in Damariscotta at 6:30 a.m.

Contact Dennis McKenna at 563-8439 for details

## MARCH

### Saturday, March 16, 6:30 p.m.

Gibbs Library, Washington

Annie Kassler presents *Bats* - why we should care about bats, myths versus facts and more. Cosponsors Damariscotta Lake Watershed Association and Gibbs Library.

### Thursday, March 21, 7:00 p.m.

Camden Public Library

Barney Balch will give a presentation and show a short film on *The Global Challenge of Ocean Acidification* and its effects on marine life and birds. He is a Senior Research Scientist at Bigelow Laboratory in Boothbay.

## APRIL

### Thursday, April 18, 7:00 p.m.

Camden Public Library

Dianne Winn and Marc Payne will talk about their work at *Avian Haven*, a year-round wild-bird rehabilitation center in Freedom, ME and home to Bart, Maine's state eagle. It is the largest avian rehab in New England.

## Tuesday, April 23

Leaders's Choice. Meet at Pemaquid Lighthouse at 8:00 a.m.

## Saturday, April 27

Reid State Park

Shore birds and more. Meet at Hannaford's in Damariscotta at 7:30 a.m.

## MAY

### Saturday, May 4

Joint walk with Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association. Meet at SVCA office in Sheepscot Village at 7:30 a.m.

### Tuesday, May 7

Beech Hill Preserve, Rockport

Joint walk with Coastal Mountains Land Trust. Meet at CMLT office in Rockport at 7:00 a.m.

### Saturday, May 18

Warblers at Evergreen Cemetery, Portland

Bring lunch and meet at Hannaford's in Damariscotta at 7:00 a.m.

### Tuesday, May 18, 3:30 p.m.

Skidompha Library, Damariscotta

John Rogers, Eastern Bluebird expert, will present *All About Bluebirds and More*. Cosponsors: Damariscotta Lake Watershed Association and Skidompha Library

## JUNE

### Thursday, June 6 - Saturday June 8

See "Spruce Grouse" details on page. 7.

*Check our website, [www.midcoastaudubon.org](http://www.midcoastaudubon.org) for updates on trips and programs.*

*Bird Count - continued from page 4*

### Additional species for the 2012 Bird Count

Species	BH	R/T	P/D
Pacific Loon	-	1	-
Ruddy Duck	-	11	-
Double-Crested Cormorant	-	6	6
Northern Harrier	-	1	-
Northern Goshawk	1cw	1	-
Peregrine Falcon	-	2	1

Glaucous Gull	-	1	-
American Pipit	1	5	-
Fox Sparrow	1cw	-	-
Swamp Sparrow	-	7	-
Red-Winged Blackbird	-	1	-
Gray Catbird	-	-	2
Hermit Thrush	-	-	1

Pine Warbler	-	-	1
Pine Grosbeak	-	113	66
Evening Grosbeak	2	-	-
Common Redpoll	143	35	12
Cedar Waxwing	-	cw	10
<b>TOTAL species (cw)</b>	53 (5)	80 (3)	65 (2)



## Welcome New Members!

Sarah L. Baldwin, Belfast  
 Sheryl Bickel, Jefferson  
 John Dickens, Newcastle  
 Mr. & Mrs. Don Howlett, South Thomaston  
 Bayard Littlefield, Bremen  
 James Matlack, Rockport  
 Annelle Miller, Friendship  
 Donald Peckham, Hope  
 Claire Riser, Waldoboro  
 Walt Silva, Newcastle  
 Bernard Slosberg, Chevy Chase, MD  
 Karen Spellman, Newcastle  
 Heidi K. Straghan, Waldoboro  
 Suzanne Trazoff, Round Pond

## ... and Renewing Members

Lauri Adams, Camden  
 Thomas A. Arter, Damariscotta  
 Sarah Bartz, Rockland  
 William Clarke, Port Clyde  
 Edwin Gosnell, Pemaquid  
 Janice Kasper, Belfast  
 Nancy Lipper, Waldoboro  
 Joann Magner, Camden  
 Rachel Riefe, Camden  
 Anita Sandefur, Camden  
 Steven Savitz, Teaneck, NJ  
 Clifton D. Smith, South China  
 Susan Strong, Pittsboro, NC  
 Jody Telfair, Bristol  
 David G. Witham, Camden

## Feathery Fun Quiz

*Put on your best Ethel Murre-man and sing along. . .*

"There's NO Bunting like SNOW Bunting like NO Bunting I know . . ."

**Test your knowledge – all questions linked to SNOW**

1. To which U.S. state was the Himalayan Snowcock introduced?
2. The Common Snow-bird is another name for what species?
3. Name 3 different groups of people that are known as "Snowbirds."
4. The Snowy Egret is readily distinguished from the immature Little Blue Heron by what characteristic?
5. The Snowy Owl is the official owl of what province?
6. What is a colloquial name for the Snow Bunting?
7. The Snowy Plover was long thought to be a subspecies of what species.
8. Snow Geese are not always white. What is the other color morph called?

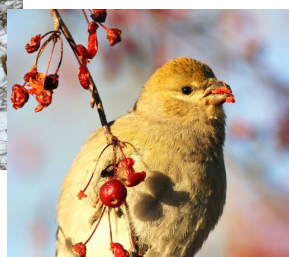
**Answers on page 7**

## Duck Stamps

Don't forget to buy your Duck Stamp and support wildlife refuge conservation. Stamps cost \$15 for adults and \$5 for Juniors. Visit <http://www.fws.gov/duckstamps/> to find out more.



Rain, snow, and wind do not deter Bunker Hill Christmas Bird Counters, Sue Schubel and Kristin Pennock.



Pine Grosbeak,  
 Don Reimer

## Injured Birds!

Birds of all species - year-round  
**Avian Haven**  
 207-382-6761  
[www.avianhaven.org](http://www.avianhaven.org)

Only seabirds and shorebirds  
**On the Rush of Wings**  
 207-832-5044  
[www.ontherushofwings.org](http://www.ontherushofwings.org)

## Mid-Coast Audubon

*Organized December 6, 1969*

a 501(c)3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization  
 P.O. Box 458, Damariscotta, ME 04543-0458

### OFFICERS

Sue Schubel, President  
 John Weinrich, Vice President  
 Phyllis Coelho, Secretary  
 Lew Purinton, Treasurer

### DIRECTORS

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

### COMMITTEES

**Conservation:** Joe Gray, 563-3578  
**Field Trips:** John Weinrich, 563-2930  
**Nest boxes:** John Weinrich, 563-2930  
**Membership:** Juanita Roushdy, 529-2355  
**Preserves:** Bill Goodwill, 354-0669  
**Programs:** Kathy Cartwright, 832-5584  
**Scholarship:** Carolyn Gray, 563-3578  
**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](mailto:juanitar@tidewater.net)

OVERNIGHT TRIP!

## Ah, the Elusive Spruce Grouse



Spruce Grouse



Quoddy Head Lighthouse

Bill Goodwill at 354-0669 or e-mail at [barredowl@juno.com](mailto:barredowl@juno.com)

Join us in searching for this elusive bird. We'll meet Bob Duchesne for a three day, two-night trip from Fields Pond Nature Center to Bob's favorite Spruce Grouse spots and then to Quoddy Head area and Campobello and possibly to the Edmunds Division of Moosehorn National Wildlife area.

The dates are June 6-8. The price, \$320, includes lodging, transportation, and food. Space is limited to 15. For more details or to reserve your spot, call

- Answers**
1. Nevada – the Ruby Mountains in the 1960's.
  2. The Dark-eyed Junco
  3. The Snowbirds Demonstration Team 431
  4. Squadron, comprised of members of the Royal Canadian Forces, puts on thrilling air shows for the public; a number of snowmobile clubs including one in Bowdoinham, ME; and people living in the frozen north regions who journey to the south to spend the winters.
  5. Beautiful golden feet.
  6. Quebec.
  7. Snowflake.
  8. The Kentish Plover.
  9. Blue morph Snow Geese are blue-gray on the body. The whites and blues interbreed.



This Miller school student is about to be surprised at how light the downy feathers of a bird can be and warm.

## Your Chapter Dollars at Work

Our chapter president, "Seabird Sue," has been visiting local schools with Project Puffin programming.

In November 2012, the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Miller School students became experts on a number of different species of seabirds. The Friendship Village School in January will learn about terns and puffins (which is great fun because many Friendship families lobster right out around Eastern Egg Rock, a restored puffin colony).

Each year as many as 690 children from 11 different schools in our Chapter region have had the opportunity to learn more about seabirds and the marine environment due to scholarship money provided by Mid-Coast Audubon.



Seabird Sue checks Miller school student to see if his "waterproof" insulation, webbed feet, etc., are enough to help him survive with a flock of Puffins in the North Atlantic.



Another Miller school student uses fat for insulation. The famous "blubber mitt" experiment compares temperatures of an insulated and an uninsulated glove by dipping them into icy water. The student's face says it all!

### A Note of Thanks . . .

to our CBC compilers, Don Reimer (T/R), John Weinrich (BH), and Dennis Mckenna (P/D) and their many birding teams in the field. Even though it's a labor of love, it's a big task. Thank You.



Mid-Coast Audubon  
P.O. Box 458  
Damariscotta, ME 04543-0458  
[www.midcoastaudubon.org](http://www.midcoastaudubon.org)



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04543



Don Reimer

Common Redpoll



M I D - C O A S T A U D U B O N

## Join Maine Audubon Today



Yes, I would like to join Maine Audubon and the **Mid-Coast Chapter** (this also includes membership in the National Audubon Society). I want to help promote environmental education and advocacy in our communities, and protect and conserve wildlife habitat. I will receive the quarterly publications *Habitat: The Journal of Maine Audubon* and the *Mid-Coast Chapter Bulletin*.

\_\_\_ \$25 Volunteer/Senior \_\_\_ \$35 Individual \_\_\_ \$45 Household \_\_\_ \$65 Contributor \_\_\_ \$100 Patron

\_\_\_ \$250 Sustaining \_\_\_ \$500 Benefactor \_\_\_ National Audubon Magazine is an additional \$10

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Clip and send with check payable to "Maine Audubon" at 20 Gilsland Farm Road, Falmouth, ME 04015



Don't miss our upcoming programs on Bats and Avian Rehabilitation. See page 5, for details.

