



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 36, No. 4 - November 2012

Guest Author

Joe Gray reflects on the inspiration for the chapter's scholarship program.

Page 1



Critter's Corner

Don's lawn mower adventure!

Page 2

President's Corner

Home for the Holidays!

Page 2



Calendar

It's Christmas Bird Count time.

Visit our website for our monthly programs.

Page 4

Feathery Fun Quiz

This one is all about bird homes.

Page 5

Photo Contest

Are you up for our next member challenge?

Page 5

Migration - In case you Missed it!

Check out the photos of those lucky enough to see some of the more unusual migrants this fall.

Page 7



One Person Can Make A Difference

For Mid-Coast Audubon, Jean Hamlin was that one person who made a difference. The chapter's Jean Boyer Hamlin Scholarship in Ornithology has awarded scholarships to qualified individuals since 1995. But who was Jean Hamlin to deserve a scholarship fund dedicated to her?

In my 35 years as a chapter member, I may have been one of the people closest to Jean. Together we spent hours birding while walking trails in many habitats. It might be better said, we were "naturalizing," and although Jean was an outstanding self-taught birder by ear and sight, she was also interested, as most naturalists are, in the complete ecosystem and all the plants and animals it contains.

Jean's delightful Australian accent first caught my attention and then her broad knowledge of travel experience. I could tell from our first meeting she was someone with a wealth of personal knowledge that I would enjoy.

Her background was library science and she had travelled widely: the Pribiloffs in Alaska, Northern Canada, Egypt, the

Middle East, the Holy Land, Japan, Fiji and frequent visits to her family in western Australia. She recorded significant places, flowers, birds and animals on 35 mm slides; this collection is in the chapter's slide library and available on loan or presentation.



William Nichols

With her musical ear she studied bird-call tapes during the winter to be ready for the spring migration. Jean was on my teaching staff when I coordinated an Elderhostel program at Snowbird Lodge on Island Pond near Harrison, Maine. One morning while we were birding along the pond, she heard an unfamiliar call from deep in the woods. In her usual fashion, she persevered in the search for that call until we came upon a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker chiseling out a nest cavity, and making those unfamiliar intermittent calls.



Jody Telfair

Jean professionally reviewed new books and accumulated a large library. After her death, many volumes were sold as a Mid-Coast Audubon fundraiser for the ornithology scholarship; a large selection of her books now resides in the

Continued on page 3



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

HOME for the HOLIDAYS!

"Oh there's no place like home for the holidays" . . . so goes the song. Many of "our" birds have left for

their winter homes in warmer places, but some remain here, the stalwart, ready to brave the frigid temperatures with us. They will need shelter!

I'm thinking about this a lot myself, as I struggle to close in our house project before the snow swirls. Fall is a stressful time of year for a northern animal – either the *zugenhue* hits and you head south, you fatten up on nuts for a good long rest, or you plan your strategy and make sure there are places where you can stay warm, dry, and fed 'til spring rolls around again. I look out my window rough-openings (no windows yet) and see a lovely brush pile, which can house any number of sparrows, finches, or small mammals. There are bird houses in the trees, which can make cosy night roosts for chickadees or flying squirrels, and plenty of

dead snags with good cavities for sleeping as well as plenty of insects for breakfast. Hurray! We can strike yard-work off the to-do list!

When you get this newsletter it will likely be holiday shopping time – so here's a great idea. Birdboxes and feeders from your own Audubon Chapter! Create nice shelter and snackbars for your avian friends this winter and nesting spaces for them in the spring. We have beautiful handmade products. Our boxes are certified by the North American Bluebird Society, which are also available as kits (in case you're a homemaker), and with 5-color paint sets for extra fun. Makes a great gift for people of all ages, with the bonus of helping wildlife and supporting local Audubon programming. See the box on page 5 for more information.

Happy home for the holidays!

Sue Schubel



CRITTER CORNER

Imagine my surprise when I started my riding lawn mower one early May and engaged the cutting blades, a bundle of lively gray matter launched itself from the chassis of the rolling mower. It was a female White-footed Mouse with her five nursing babies attached!

As she lay huddled and stunned in the center of my lawn, her nurslings continued to suckle. I took a quick photo before Mother Mouse transferred her young to safe cover. Upon later internal examination of my mower, I found a fist-sized nest of grasses and shredded paper toweling. In these cases, a liberal dose of mothballs is often effective in repelling mice from wintering inside of lawn equipment.

The white-footed mouse is found in wooded and brushy areas throughout the United States east of the Rocky Mountains, except in some parts of the Southeast. They can also reside within a variety of buildings where food items, such as stored seeds, may be available. It's advisable to store bird seed in mouse-proof containers. In nature, these mice

feed on seeds, nuts, acorns, fruits, insects and insect larvae and fungi. Quantities of cached food are stored near their nest sites, particularly in fall. They are good swimmers and climbers who spend a great deal of time in trees.

Female white-footed mice come into heat every fifth day until impregnated. The gestation period is usually 21 to 23

days. Breeding occurs from spring to fall, with two to four litters per year. Mice born in spring or summer may breed that same year. With their huge eyes, white-footed mice are mostly nocturnal. Occupying a home range of 1/3 acre to 4 acres, summer population densities may reach a high of about 15 mice per acre. They spend the winter in family groups in a nest made of stems, leaves, sticks and roots and lined with fur, feathers or shredded cloth.

Mice represent a significant food source for a number of natural predators such as foxes, coyotes, weasels, snakes, owls and hawks. Like all elements of nature, rodents are a vital link in the web of life.

Don Reimer



White-Footed Mouse feeding young.

One Person Can Make a Difference - *cont'd*

science library at the University of Maine Machias.

When Jean was dying of cancer, Carolyn and I often visited her and husband Arthur in their home on the banks of the intertidal Sheepscot River. Within weeks of her death, she remained active; she and I took several slow, short walks near her home, always with frequent stops to allow her to regain her breath, and to listen to the sounds of the woods. Her never-failing ears and eyesight, I think, brought her enjoyment to the end.

Jean served the chapter admirably as president and also served on field trip and program committees, while attending educational seminars and conferences offered by National Audubon in New York and Vermont.

She was constantly exploring the outdoors, and not one to keep new-found information to herself, spoke freely about new sightings to all who would listen. She was always spirited, excited, and anxious to tell about a new bird sighted or a discovery she had made in a magazine article she wanted to pass on.

Jean died on January 10, 1994. Carolyn and I thought so very much of her we wanted to do something long-lasting to honor her and keep her memory alive. We created the **Jean Boyer Hamlin Scholarship in Ornithology** that year with an initial \$1,000. Little did we realize how quickly this seed would grow; the book sale proceeds and contributions from friends soon raised \$20,000. Arthur wanted the fund to reach \$50,000; his will devised funds to reach that goal.

Although the Chapter Scholarship Committee, chaired by Muriel Wilhelm, widely publicized the availability of the Hamlin scholarship, there were no applicants until 1995

when the chapter officer Michael Andrews applied.

Publicity about the scholarship began to take effect and in 1996 two applicants, Sarah Caputo of Belfast, a University of Maine student, and Julie Babb, of Pemaquid, received full ornithology scholarships to the Audubon Camp at Hog Island.

While many recipients may have used, unknown to us, their new-found knowledge to benefit others, an outstanding example of how the week-long ornithology course changed the life of one person is clearly depicted by Julie Babb.

Julie was accomplished in drawing, studied at the University of the Americas in Mexico City, the University of Maine and the Memorial Art Gallery Creative Workshop.

When Julie applied for her scholarship, she was teaching at Round Top Center For The Arts and Great Salt Bay School in

Damariscotta. She told me she wanted to take the ornithology course to develop a feel and learn about the skeletal structure and feather detail of birds. The week-long ornithology course at Hog Island launched Julie into a new career direction, producing beautiful, outstanding award-winning paintings of owls, hawks and wildlife.



Julie Babb

Since 1995, the committee has disbursed over \$12,000 to 16

applicants. Interest in scholarships has increased, consequently a significant draw down of the scholarship funds has occurred without replenishment. To perpetuate Jean's memory and assure scholarship funds will be available in the future for those chapter area residents who wish to take courses in ornithology at any location, we ask your financial help.

Contributions to the chapter are tax deductible. Make your check payable to Mid-Coast Audubon and indicate it is for the "Hamlin Fund" and send to:

Mid-Coast Audubon Society
Jean Boyer Hamlin Scholarship Fund
P.O. Box 458
Damariscotta, Me 04543-0458

Jean Boyer Hamlin Scholarship Recipients

1995 Michael Andrews
1996 Sarah Caputo
1996 Julie Babb
1997 Stephen Wickenden
1999 Donna Seymour.
2001 Pam McKeen
2003 Jack Thompson
2004 Susan Davis
2006 Jody Telfair-Richards
2007 Heather Francis
2010 Suzanna Reed
2010 Sean Hatch
2010 Andrea Perko
2011 Constance Arness
2011 Jody Telfair
2011 Lisa Haag
2012 Phyllis Coehlo
2012 William Nichols
2012 Jane Schroeder

*Do you know
someone who would
like a scholarship?*

*Contact Carolyn Gray,
Scholarship Committee,
at 563-3578.*

Editor's note: Unfortunately we could not locate a photo of Jean.

Joe Gray lives in Damariscotta with his wife Carolyn. Up until 2012, both were active in the Mid-Coast chapter since its inception. Joe continues to write a nature column in the Lincoln County News.

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

NOVEMBER

Thursday, November 15, 7:00 p.m.

Camden Public Library
Seabird Program with Stephanie Martin from Friends of
Maine's Seabird Islands.

DECEMBER

Saturday, December 15, 2012

Damaricotta/Pemaquid Christmas Bird Count
Contact Compiler Dennis McKenna at 563-8439 for details
and assignments.

Tuesday, December 18, 2012

Bunker Hill Christmas Bird Count
Contact Compiler John Weinrich at 563-2930 for details and
assignments.

Saturday, December 22, 2012

Thomaston/Rockland Christmas Bird Count
Contact Compiler Don Reimer at 273-3146 for details and
assignments.

Christmas Bird Counters Take Note . . .

There is no \$5 contribution anymore and, to
save costs, Audubon has done away with the
printed compilation of the Christmas Bird
Count. Results will now be available on-line.

JANUARY

Thursday, January 17, 7:00 p.m.

Camden Public Library
Brian Benedict from the Maine Coastal Islands National
Wildlife Refuge talks about tracking seabirds

FEBRUARY

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

Camden Public Library
Jennifer McCabe from Climate Change Institute speaks
about Habitat Use and Selection in the Gulf of Maine.

*Check our website, www.midcoastaudubon.org for more
information and recently added trips and programs.*

*Did you miss our overnight trip to Monhegan Island and this
Philadelphia Vireo?*

Don't miss next year's trip!



Philadelphia Vireo on Monhegan

History of the Christmas Bird Count



Prior to the turn of the century, people
engaged in a holiday tradition known
as the Christmas "Side Hunt": They
would choose sides and go afield with
their guns; whoever brought in the
biggest pile of feathered (and furred)
quarry won.

Conservation was in its beginning stages
around the turn of the 20th century, and many observers
and scientists were becoming concerned about declining
bird populations. Beginning on Christmas Day 1900,
ornithologist Frank Chapman, an early officer in the then
budding Audubon Society, proposed a new holiday
tradition-a "Christmas Bird Census"-that would count birds
in the holidays rather than hunt them.

So began the Christmas Bird Count. Thanks to the
inspiration of Frank M. Chapman and the enthusiasm of
twenty-seven dedicated birders, twenty-five Christmas Bird
Counts were held that day. The locations ranged from
Toronto, Ontario to Pacific Grove, California with most
counts in or near the population centers of northeastern
North America. Those original 27 Christmas Bird Counters
tallied around 90 species on all the counts combined.

Mid-Coast Audubon is again taking part in the Christmas
Bird Count. This year's will be the 112th! Won't you join
us. You can even participate from the warmth of your
kitchen table by counting the birds you see at your feeder.

For more information on the Christmas Bird Count and how
the data is used go to [http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-
bird-count](http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count).

Attention: Bird Shelter Photo Contest

Our next member challenge is this: BEST BIRD SHELTER PHOTO CONTEST. Submit your digital photos for the categories (1) most lovely shelter, (2) most interesting shelter, and (3) best bird on/in shelter photo. Shelters may be natural or human-made. There will, of course, be fabulous prizes. Two entries per person per category please; send to sschubel@tidewater.net with "Bird Shelter photo contest" in the subject line. **Deadline is January 10, 2013.**

We Have a Winner!

Congratulations to **Sally Woolf-Wadel** of Bristol for having submitted the name selected for our spokesperson. Our spokesperson's name is "Dee-Dee." Sally wins a chickadee or bluebird box!



And now a word from our spokesperson. . .

"Dee Dee's" Shelter Tip!

When mounting roosting boxes for the winter you can orient them to the south, but in general facing east is best for nest boxes. We Chickadees like to have boxes mounted 4-15 feet high, in woodland clearings or the edges of forest.

Nuthatches, Titmice, and Wrens may also appreciate these small boxes (about 4X4X9 inches high) if the door is made slightly larger than 1 1/8 inches.



Home for Sale!

Buy a Home for the Holidays or a Hat . . .

Our board members donate time and materials to make our Eastern Bluebird and American Tree Swallow nest boxes with a reinforced entrance to raise money for the chapter.

Nest Boxes: Eastern Bluebird, Flicker - \$20; Saw-whet Owl, and American Kestrel - \$25. Hardwood hole replacement kit - \$1

Bat Box with *Maine's Bats* booklet - \$15; booklet only - \$5

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

Unassembled nest box kits: \$18; **Paint:** \$4

Hats: \$15

Stop by *Louis Doe Home Center* in Newcastle or call *John Weinrich* at 563-2930 to order.



Feathery Fun Quiz

Match up the bird to the word that best relates to its choice of home. Each word should be used only once.

Birds: Swiftlet, Swallow, Oriole, Siskin, Hummingbird, Hornbill, Purple Martin, Piping Plover.

Words: Gourd, Saliva, Mud, Captive, Sand, Winter food, Spiderwebs, Hammock.

Answers on page 6

Injured Birds!

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

Only seabirds and shorebirds
On the Rush of Wings
 207-832-5044
www.ontherushofwings.org

Thank you Chapter Members!

Thank you chapter members for attending our many programs and field trips. Many of you have supported us since the beginning; some are new. We hope you will continue your support.

As Joe said in his article on page 1, your donations to us are tax-deductible. They will help us to continue giving scholarships and bringing you free programs and newsletter.

Welcome New and Renewing Members!

Lois L. Cross, Thorndike
 Darcy J. Dye, Grand Rapids, MI
 Martin W. Lepow, Lincolnville
 Stephen Porter, Searsmont
 Carl Small, Rockport
 Virginia Swain, Yarmouth
 Ellen Westhaver, Round Pond

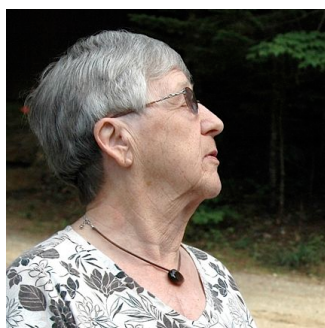


Avian Haven has put together a history of "Bart," the Maine State Eagle, who celebrated his 30th birthday this year. See this fascinating history at http://avianhaven.org/barts_30th_birthday.pdf

A Special Thank you . . .

A huge thank you to our "guest authors": Jeff Wells, Louis Bevier, and Joe Gray.

Thank You, Carolyn, We'll Miss You!



Many thanks to Carolyn Gray for her long service as the chapter's treasurer. Carolyn decided to step down and enjoy more free time for her many other interests..

Carolyn will continue to chair the Scholarship Committee. Thank you Carolyn for your comprehensive treasurer reports and keeping the chapter on track.

Mid-Coast Audubon

Organized December 6, 1969

a 501(c)3 tax-exempt nonprofit organization

P.O. Box 458, Damariscotta, ME
 04543-0458

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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 January 15!** Send to juanitar@tidewater.net

Answers

The *Swiftlet* makes nests completely from *saliva* attached to the wall of caves. They are made into an expensive soup in China.

The colonial *Cliff Swallow* brings small wads of *mud* to stone walls or building overhangs, and builds an enclosed nest with just one small opening.

The *Oriole* weaves an elaborate *hammock* nest of natural fibers, which can be supplemented with lengths of string or yarn cut 8-12 inches long.

The *Pine Siskin* begins courting during the *winter* and will begin nesting then if there is adequate *food*!

The female *hummingbird* makes tiny perfect nests of lichens and *spiderwebs*.

The *Hornbill* is a *capitve* in her cavity nest for up to 4 months, leaving only a small slot through the mud/guano door to receive food from her mate.

The *Purple Martin*, a colonial breeder, is often happy to raise chicks in crowds of hanging *gourds* provided as nest boxes.

The *Piping Plover* lays her eggs in a small scrape in the sand on the beach. Perfectly camouflaged though it is, it is vulnerable to predators and beachgoers.

Some Fall Migration Highlights

We had some unusual birds pass through on their way south. Here are a few photos posted on the Mainebirds listserv, in case you missed them. Many thanks to the photographers for sharing them with us.

Don Reimer's Red-Tailed Hawk was eating and flew off; the Merlin was caught mid-flight with a rodent.

Andrew Aldrich and Ken Janes both snapped the Northern Wheatear - what a treat. Andrew also caught a White-Eyed Vireo

William Nichols while lobstering caught this exhausted Blackpoll Warbler resting on the deck during bad weather. The Northern Gannet was taken in upper Penobscot Bay.

Tom Johnson was on a NOAA research ship in the Gulf of Maine when a fall-out occurred. Here is the Clay-colored Sparrow.

Doug Hitchcox managed to get the Rufous Hummingbird and Le Conte's Sparrow on Monhegan.

Mike Fahay caught the Bell's Vireo at Green Point.

Who knows what surprises we'll find on the Christmas Bird Count!



Northern Wheatear

Andrew Aldrich



Tom Johnson

Clay-Colored Sparrow



Blackpoll Warbler

William Nichols



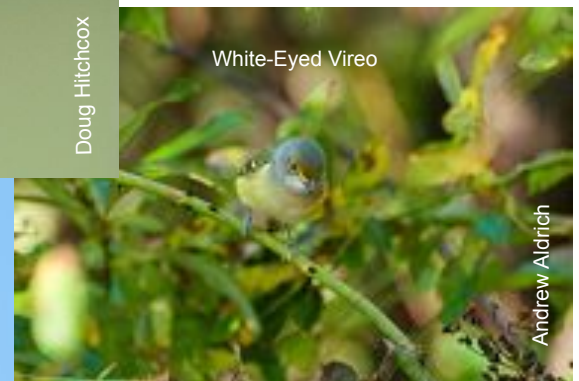
Rufous Hummingbird

Doug Hitchcox



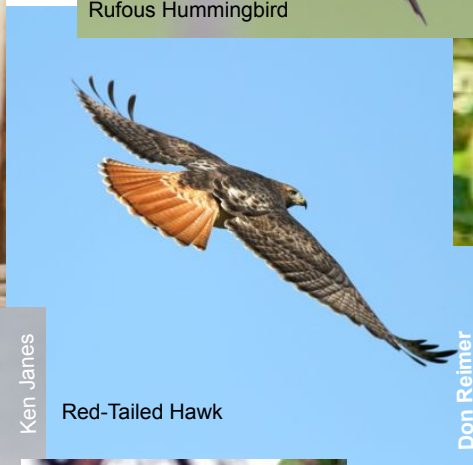
Le Conte's Sparrow

Doug Hitchcox



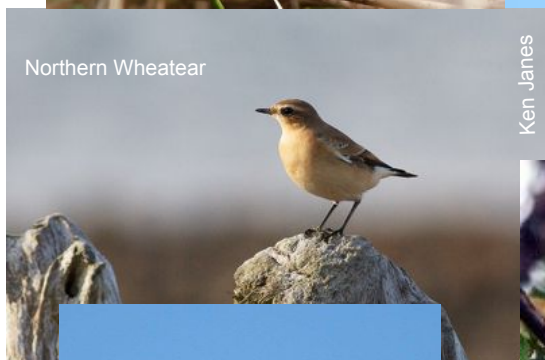
White-Eyed Vireo

Andrew Aldrich



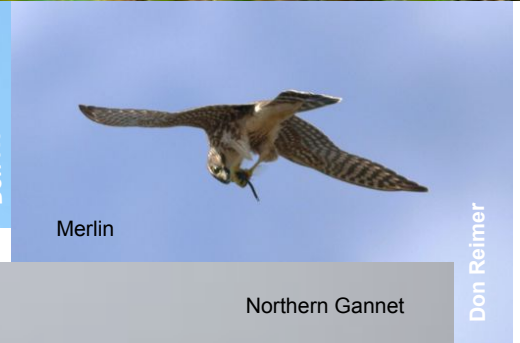
Red-Tailed Hawk

Don Reimer



Northern Wheatear

Ken Janes



Merlin

Don Reimer



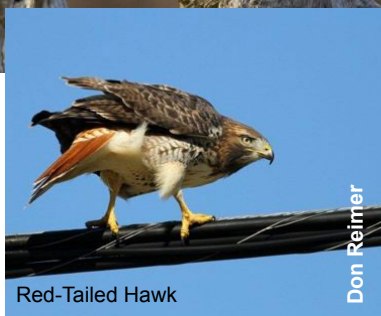
Bell's Vireo

Mike Fahay



Northern Gannet

William Nichols



Red-Tailed Hawk

Don Reimer

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

Join Maine Audubon today Mid-Coast Chapter Membership Form!



Yes, I would like to join Maine Audubon and the Mid-Coast Chapter of Maine Audubon (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 understand that the membership benefits include Maine Audubon's *Habitat: The Journal of Maine Audubon*, The Mid-Coast Chapter *Bulletin*, discounts on field trips and tours, children's programs and at Audubon sanctuaries and nature stores nationwide.

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

___ \$250 Sustaining ___ \$500 Benefactor

___ National Audubon Magazine is available for an additional \$10

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____

Zip _____ E-mail _____

Send with check to: Maine Audubon
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Falmouth, ME 04105