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BULLETIN

Chapter of Maine Audubon Society

North American Bluebird Society Affiliate

Rockland, Maine

November 2010

Vol. 35 No. 4



Juvenile Peregrine Falcon, Westkeag Marsh,

THE MAJESTIC PEREGRINE FALCON

The meteoric decline of Northeastern Peregrine Falcon populations due to contamination by DDT and other toxins is well documented.

In the decades following the 1960s, however, 35 nations worked diligently to restore this majestic falcon to its rightful place at the top of the food chain.

Charlie Todd, Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife biologist said, "Peregrine numbers plummeted during the 20th century, and the *anatum* subspecies native to this region was virtually extirpated in the eastern US. Captive breeding programs used stock from around the world to supply the recovery efforts."

"In Maine, nesting peregrines were absent for 25 years following the 1962 disappearance of the last breeding pair in Acadia National Park. Releases of one young peregrine at 7 locations across the state during 1984-1987 enabled a second chance for the species.

Memorable "firsts" in the early years of recovery include the first returning falcon to Baxter State Park

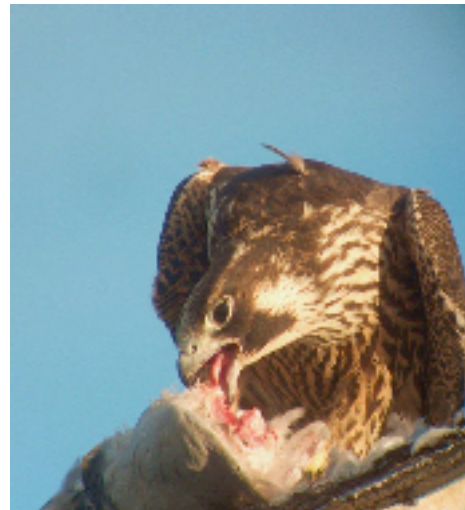
in 1985 and the first successful breeding at Bluff Mountain in 1988."

By 2009, there were 25 known nesting pairs in Maine. Peregrines now reside on 20 cliff sites across Maine and on 5 bridges or urban structures, such as the old Bucksport to Verona Bridge. This represents the state's highest count of resident population in at least 60 years.

Flightless, young peregrines were placed in large enclosures known as hack boxes that were located at traditional cliff nesting sites. The rapidly growing falcons were provided with food daily and then, at fledging age, they were released with the hope of their subsequent return to nesting sites.

The most extensive concentration of nesting pairs occurs in the mountainous regions of Oxford County (10 pairs) followed by Hancock County (6 pairs.) Knox County's single nesting pair reportedly produced three fledglings in 2010.

- Don Reimer



Don Reimer photos

Peregrine eating a Rockland pigeon.

**Our Mission is to promote long term responsible use of natural resources
through an informed membership and community awareness.**



Tazlina
at Runs With Wolves Sanctuary
Limington, ME

PROGRAMS

Thursday, October 28th **Backyard Birds** by Naturalists John Weinrich and Joe Gray at Gibbs Library, Washington, ME 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 18th, **We Can Still Choose To Act** by Paul Kando Camden Public Library 6:30 p.m. FMI 236-3440.

Thursday, January 27th
"Wildlife as I see it in Northern New England" by wildlife photographer Katherine Davis 6:00 p.m. at the Sheepscot Valley Conservation Association office, 624 Sheepscot Rd, Newcastle

in advance. Therefore, please contact John Weinrich at 563-2930 for reservations.

Christmas Bird Counts

Saturday, December 18th
Thomaston-Rockland
Compiler Don Reimer 273-3146

Monday, December 20th
Bunker Hill
Compiler John Weinrich 563-2930

Wednesday, December 22nd
Pemaquid-Damariscotta
Compiler Joe Gray 563-3578

BULLETIN

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The Mid-Coast Audubon
Board meets 6:30 p.m.
the first Thursday
at Medomak Valley H.S.
Waldoboro, ME

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, November 20th **Ducks**
with Don Reimer Rockland/
Rockport Meet at Chickawaukee
Pond parking lot on Route 17 at
8:00 a.m.

Saturday, January 22, 2011
**Rockland Harbor and Spruce
Head** with Don Reimer Meet at
harbor parking area at 8:00 a.m.
dress warm.

February 11 - 12 or 13, 2011.
**Plum Island, National Wildlife
Refuge and surrounding areas.**
Join Dennis McKenna for 2 days of
birding this wildlife nationally
known area and it's surrounds. In
the winter, the Snowy owl returns
to the refuge, taking respite in our
"warmer" climate.

Rough legged Hawk and Short-
eared Owls can also be seen. plus
loons, grebes, scoters, and other
waterfowl also winter along the
refuge shore.

This trip will require an over-
night stay in the area to be arranged

Advance Notice



Audubon Camp in Maine 2011 Hog Island Programs

May 29-June 3 Seabird Biology and
Conservation
June 12-17 Joy of Birding
June 19-24 Field Ornithology and
Maine Coastal Birding for Teens
July 14-19 Sharing Nature: An
Educator's Week
August 15-20 Audubon Chapter
Leadership Program
September 11-16 Bird Biology and
Conservation



ANWR

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, unique among refuges, in that it was established to preserve wilderness values.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, ANWR is again under attack by Alaska's Senator Markowski and the big oil interests.

It is the only part of the entire Arctic Slope of Alaska and surrounding Arctic Seas that is protected by law from oil and gas exploration and development.

The wholeness of the refuge as an entire, intact, natural sub-arctic and arctic ecosystem deserves stewardship as designated wilderness for future generations.

FMI, contact Pamela A. Miller,
Arctic Program Director
Northern Alaska
Environmental Center,
830 College Road,
Fairbanks, AK 99708
Phone 907-452-5021 x24
Cell 907-441-2407
www.northern.org

Coming Chapter-led Programs

Chapter Naturalists John Weinrich and Joe Gray will be instructing several courses this fall and winter on behalf of the Chapter.

Great Salt Bay School Adult Ed
October 19 and 26

Unusual Birds of Maine
November 2 and 9
Mammals of Maine.

Schooner Cove,
the public is invited :
Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
Slide-illustrated nature programs

10/6 **Birds of Field & Forests,**
10/20 **Fire and Ice,**
11/2 **Maine Wildflowers,**
11/17 **Amazon, 1**
2/1 **Maine Hawks & Owls,**
12/15 **Sonoran Desert,**
1/5 **Stone Walls and Rusty Iron**
1/19 **Black Bear of Pennsylvania.**
Call 563-4001 for reservations.

**Exploring the Natural
History of Maine,** Coastal Senior
College at Schooner Cove 8 weeks
9:30 to 11:30 winter Call CSC at
800-286-1594 to enroll.



We need to know
**about successful Eastern
Bluebird nest box nesting,
and bluebirds nesting in
a natural cavity.**
Call 563-3578.

Welcome

New & Rejoined Members

Mr. Lark Blum, South Thomaston
Ms Maki Briggs, Newcastle
Kelly Callahan, Appleton
Lawrence Campbell, Rockland
Ms. Nancy Carter, Thomaston
Craig Curtis, Belfast
Ms. Pamela Curtis, Owls head
Linda Farmer, Cushing
Ms. Genevieve Flanders, Northport
Sandy A. Flint, Pemaquid
Mr. John German, New Harbor
Mr. Mark R. Hoffman, Newcastle
Ms. Elizabeth Humphries,
So. Bristol
Ms. Anna Kessler, Searsport
Mr. David Morse, Newcastle
Christopher Muldoon, Belfast
Mr. Joseph Muldoon, Northport
David & Nancy Richardson,
Pembroke Pines, FL
Mr. Neal Parker, Rockland
William Robertson, So. China
Ms. Margaret Schuler, Newcastle
Charles Thomas, Damariscotta
Arden G. Thompson, So. Bristol
Vera R. Wilt, Newcastle
Mr. Hugh White, Camden
Ms Jacquelin L. Wilen, Charleston, IL

Welcome New Members

Maine Audubon recently
enhanced their membership
sources, immediately resulting
in chapter membership increase.

If you would like to become
active in Chapter affairs and see
what the many ongoing projects
and programs are about, call
Sue at 644-1077

**Chapter membership is
521**

Trips missed . . .

Monhegan Island Trip

Island birding was a bit sporadic on our 9/2425 trip, but some mornings were quite active. In six days I found 115 species including 20 warblers. We photographed fall Blackpoll Warbler; fall Scarlet Tanager; Western Kingbird (missing a tail); a close up shot of the Western Kingbird; Lesser Black-backed Gull (probably a Herring Gull hybrid); Dickcissel., three Black Skimmers on Nigh Duck ledges and an immature Redheaded Woodpecker (first spied by Kristen Lindquist) were nice to see.

- Don

PLUM ISLAND NWR

Dennis McKenna, John Weinrich and 9 others on 9/11 observed some outstanding birds., including American Golden Plover, Marbeled Godwit, three different sandpipers, Northern Shoveler, Western Palm Warbler Golden and Black-bellied Plovers, and 40 more species.

- John



Keith Carver photo

Black Skimmers on Scarborough River

Bradbury Mt.

Ten participants enjoyed two hours of hawk watching atop Bradbury Mountain in Pownal 9/18. Sunny skies and light SE winds. Results: 41 Broadwing Hawks; 1 Red-shouldered Hawk; 4 Sharp-shinned Hawks; 4 Turkey Vultures; 4 Bald Eagles and an Osprey

What Will Happen to Hog Island!



Audubon's **first** camp in the nation was started 74 years ago at Hog Island off Keene Neck in Bremen in 1937. Today, it is Audubon's **last** camp in the nation.

We've been fortunate here in the midcoast to have this treasure in our midst. We've enjoyed lobster bakes on its shores and attended classes.

The island and its buildings were donated in 1936 to National Audubon by Millicent Todd Bingham, who shared a vision with John Baker, Audubon's president at the time. They both saw Hog Island as an ecological educational camp for educators and the general public - a place where educators could be immersed in nature.

Many have stayed on the island and have returned to the mainland with a new understanding of nature and our relationship to it. This year Project Puffin Seabird Restoration took over management of the camp. Steve Kress, Director of Project Puffin, created an innovative program series that partnered with Camp Kieve and Road Scholars (Elderhostel). The program was successful financially and had a wait-list of participants!

Now, a transfer of ownership looms over the camp at Hog Island. Maine Audubon and National Audubon want to shed themselves of this financial burden, despite this year's promising performance.

Hoping to defer this possible transfer of ownership, the "Friends of Hog Island" - former alumni and friends - has reconstituted itself as a 501c3 nonprofit group and plans to provide annual support to the camp and its programs. FOHI hopes that this positive financial step will give the camp the time that it needs to continue the successful programs of 2010.

In 2011, the Audubon Camp at Hog Island will celebrate its 75th anniversary; we hope that it will still be managed and owned by Audubon.

For more information about "Friends of Hog Island" visit www.fohi.org.

- Juanita Roushdy

Bird Reports

Please send bird reports to Doris Balant
563-1216 or DBALANT@roadrunner.com

Large rafts of Com. Eiders 9/10,
Pemaquid Point (BC).



Wild Turkeys, 50+, 9/5 So. of
Hallowell (DR).

“Commuter” loon, all summer,
heard and seen daily flying over
downtown Newcastle to
Damariscotta Lake, (DB), Summer
resident calling nightly on
Newcastle side of D. River below
Damariscotta, (may be the same
bird? (JG).

Occ. Dbl-crested Cormorants,
Newcastle (DB).

Turkey Vulture resided inside a
collapsed cottage, (formerly known
as Buttercup Cottage) nested, near
Owls Head Harbor. 8/26, two
juvenile birds walked around on the
roof, one temporarily hiding behind
the chimney. A neighbor had
noticed the frequent presence of an
adult bird for several weeks. (DR)
3 on 8/27 Waldoboro.

Great Blue Heron through the
period, Newcastle, (DR),. 2 daily at
cove at Schooner Cove,
Damariscotta, (JG).

Bald Eagle 8/27, Warren (DB),
overhead 10/4 at Schooner Cove
(JG).

Peregrine, juv. photographed
chasing pigeons, Rockland, 9/8-10.
The head of the prey is consumed
first (the brain is the most nutrient-
rich part of the body. Next the
breast is eaten as more feathers are
plucked and removed. Then the
backsides. It took the falcon about

50 minutes to finish the entire meal
(DR). (See photo page 1 - Ed)

Golden Plover, Whimbrels, Stilts
9/5, Weskeag Marsh (DR); One lone
Whimbrel 9/26, Tenants Harbor
(AB); imm.. Guillemots 9/2 near
Damariscove Is. (G & AS).

Ruby-throated Hummingbird 7/27,
landed first on a red T-shirt, then a
flowered shirt worn by occupants of
a sailboat near Damariscove
(G & AS), Last seen at Schooner
Cove 9/21 (JG), 10/4 at Bremen.

Red-bellied and Pileated
Woodpeckers calling 9/20, No.
Flicker 9/27, Newcastle (DB));
“lots” of No. Flickers 9/17, Bremen
(LN); Juv. Fem. Downey at peanut
feeder daily, 10/4 Schooner
Cove(JG).

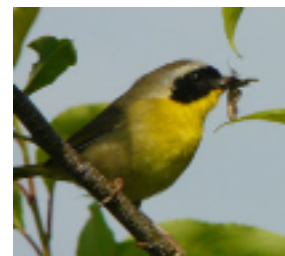
Red-breasted Nuthatch 9/24,
Newcastle (D.B.); Pr white-breasted
Nuthatches daily at peanut feeder
10/4 Schooner Cove (JG).

For the last three yrs. a Robin has
nested, raised young successfully
inside an old barn in S. Thomaston
(LJdoz. Cedar Waxwings 9/3, and
Yellowthroat W. making its usual
late summer appearance in my
garden – looking for late insects?
Newcastle (DB).

Flock Cedar Waxwings 9/3
Newcastle (DB).



Com. Yellowthroat 9/3 making
usual late summer appearance in
garden searching for insects,
Newcastle (DB); 9/22 (LN).



Solitary (Blue-headed) Vireos, Black
and White & Myrtle Warblers, 9/22
(LN).

Lg. flocks White-throated Sparrows
9/22, Bremen (LN); White-
crowned; both species Sharp-tailed
Sparrows 9/5, Weskeag Marsh (DR).
House Sp. collecting nesting
material & feeding young 9/2
Damariscotta (JG).

Juncos, 9/19, Bremen (LN) many
reports by 10/4 (JG).

Purple Finches, Bremen 9/17 (LN).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak, im. 9/17,
Bremen (LN).

Am. Goldfinch, 15 devouring cone
flower seeds 10/1 Schooner Cove
and nyjer seed (JG).

Reporters

DB= Doris Balant
AB=Ann Boover
B.C.= Bruce Campbell
JG = Joe Gray
LJ=Lucy Judecki
LN.= Linda Nevins
D.R.= Don Reimer
G & AS= George and Anna Shaw.

**Catch the Trade Winds
in your sails.
Explore, Dream, Discover!**

- Mark Twain

Nature Corner



Woolly Bear Caterpillar

Weather Predictions

Folklore of the eastern United States and Canada holds that the relative amounts of brown and black on the skin of a woolly bear caterpillar are an indication of the severity of the coming winter.

It is believed that if a woolly bear caterpillar's brown stripe is thick, the winter weather will be mild and if the brown stripes are narrow, the winter will be severe.

In reality, hatchlings from the same clutch of eggs can display considerable variation in their color distribution, and the brown band tends to grow with age; if there is any truth to the aphorism, it is highly documented.

The true woolly bear, is the larval form of *Pyrrharctia isabella*, the Isabella tiger moth.



Oil

I have been listening to what some say about effects of the oil spill in the Gulf --- saying there will be minimal effects on wildlife and ecosystems.

Do you recall the Exxon Valdez spill of 1989? Researchers have been studying the effects of the Alaska spill of ten years ago, and have found there are lasting effects on Harlequin Ducks, Pigeon Guillemots and Barrow's Golden-eyes.

They estimate there are 21,000 gallons of oil buried under rocks along the coast.

Harlequins are linked to the intertidal zones and feed on mussels that store toxins, while mergansers feed in the same areas but feed on fish, which can detoxify and rid themselves of oil toxins.

Harlequins in oiled areas had four times as much toxin-fighting enzyme activity as ducks from clean areas. Harlequins are a long way from recovering their former numbers.



How does this relate to the Deep water Horizon spill? The oil does not disappear. As in Alaska, it can be expected oil will be found in the sand and clinging to the vegetation of the Gulf shores and marshes for decades to come.

Louisiana is the focal point of the Mississippi Flyway. The southern migration of wintering ducks and shore birds, plus the songbirds last stop before heading for the tropics. Birds can't help being affected by the oil spill.

The effects are here to stay --- they will not go away just because a scientist says so. -Ed

Musings ...

from my teak rocker

I have watched the Chapter grow and change over the past 30 years.

Our members developed many positive conservation and environmental projects, ideas and programs. We awarded dozens of scholarships to both youth and adults.

Many of the Chapter's successful ideas and programs have been adapted by other conservation organizations.

But something happened along the way. We did good things but we lost our momentum and many followers when we ceased holding regular monthly meetings.

That, to me, was the turning point in our Chapter's viability.

Change is inevitable. However, more volunteer participation is needed to help the small cadre of officers and members carry out the Chapter's programs. No one is too busy to take on just one new small task. Call 644-1077.

- Ed

**If you
find
an Injured Bird
Call**

AVIAN HAVEN

(207) 382-6761

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or
call John Weinrich 563-2930

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This colorful November 2010
Mid-Coast Audubon BULLETIN
can be found on the
Chapter's web site
www.midcoastaudubon.org