

BIRD CONSERVATION

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GEARING UP FOR CENTRAL CONNECTICUT



Forested land in central Connecticut descend to Long Island Sound in coves like this one.

With only a month remaining before the beginning of the summer, 2006 field season, preparations are underway to survey the forest birds of central Connecticut. Because only about 50% of this region is forested, compared with nearly 70% of eastern Connecticut and western Rhode Island, finding suitable unbroken tracts of accessible forests has proven challenging. Based on the size of the region and amount of forest

cover. We have, however, been successful at identified 26 survey sites.

Choosing study sites involves developing a statistical sampling scheme for the region: the Connecticut valley and a triangle of land west of the lower Connecticut River (Old Saybrook, New Haven, Somers, and Granby form the corners of the region). To begin, central Connecticut is divided into 26 parts. Then, within each area a

two mile long sample transect is established, with a location and direction chosen at random.

Because the U.S. Forest Service has recently completed a forest habitat survey of Connecticut, we are able to verify that our sampling of the landscape is representative of habitats actually present. Our earlier data have matched well with this survey.

STUDENTS INTERNS KEEP DATA FLOWING

“The quantities of data gathered during the Forest Bird Survey of Southern New England have been immense”



Students pose for photographs after learning techniques for radio tracking birds and recording their songs.

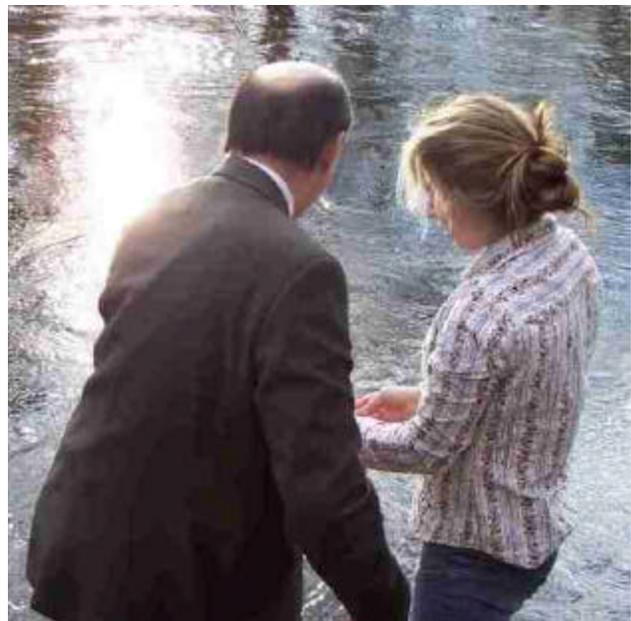
The quantity of data gathered during the Forest Bird Survey of Southern New England has been immense, involving tens of thousands of data points on both birds and habitats. All these data are computerized by student interns employed by BCR.

Interns have assisted not only with data entry, but also analysis. They are presently computing species diversities and population densities for 2004-5 eastern Connecticut data. They are comparing their data with those from the same region gathered during 2001-2.

Interns and student volunteers have as well participated in establishing and surveying forest transects. They have gathered habitat and forest bird data on

these. This spring, students will re-survey transects they established over the winter. Other student activities have included

experimenting with capturing, marking, and radio tracking birds.



In conjunction with Massachusetts Audubon Society, Dr. Craig and a volunteer monitor the quality of water in the Blackstone River.



Ron Tillen scans the immense flocks of scoters swimming off Sachest Point, Rhode Island this past winter.

“Popular interest has culminated in the return of BCR field trips.”

THE RETURN OF FIELD TRIPS

Popular interest has culminated in the return of BCR field trips. These trips were suspended several years ago because of our grueling field schedule, which left little time for organizing trips. However, as we have enlisted additional interns and volunteers to assist with our daunting work load, we have again been able to set aside time for scheduling trips.

Our inaugural trip was to

Hammonasset State Park, Clinton, CT, this past fall. This fine trip produced such finds as Swainson’s Thrush, American Golden Plover, Sharp-shinned Hawk and Northern Harrier.

This winter, we headed out to Sachuest Point and the Norman Bird Sanctuary in Middletown, RI. We were greeted by flocks of over 2,000 scoters of three species. In addition, we observed Gannets, Common

Eiders, Harlequin Ducks, and Snow Geese. A second winter trip to Old Saybrook-Essex, CT produced a variety of wintering ducks.

Our most recent spring trip was scheduled for Napatree Point, RI, but was postponed due to inclement weather. Members will be notified via e-mail of a re-scheduled trip.

Hope to see you on an upcoming trip!

ENDANGERED SPECIES

If you have been searching for the BCR paper on endangered species designation that was reported on in the last newsletter, it has

now appeared in *Avian Conservation and Ecology*. The paper is available online at www.ace-eco.org. Originally scheduled to ap-

pear in the inaugural issue of this journal, administrative delays held its appearance until the present issue, in which it is the lead article.

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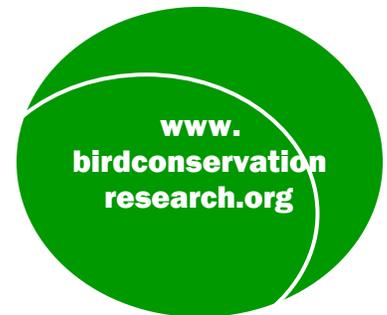
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MEMBERSHIP

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need your continued support..

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