

BIRD CONSERVATION

VOLUME 6, NUMBER 3 JULY 2004

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EASTERN CONNECTICUT RE-VISITED



From the summit of Soapstone Mountain in Somers, peaks of the Eastern Connecticut Highlands rise from the edge of Connecticut Valley, simulating in their appearance the oceanic islands that originally gave birth to this terrain.

Field research is not for the faint-hearted. Even after having spent three years gathering data on the forest birds of southeastern New England, our work is not close to being done. The next stage in our investigation is to duplicate the entire study, winter and summer.

Natural processes are inherently variable ones, and the only way to understand the nature of that variation

is to sample again, and again, and again. Birds do not reveal themselves in quite the same way from one day to the next, and they may settle differently across the landscape from one year to the next. Populations also can fluctuate over time. Only after eastern Connecticut is re-surveyed will we turn our attention west to the Connecticut Valley and its trap-rock ridges, which can be seen to the left in the photo above.

One advantage our study has for characterizing patterns in bird communities is that at the grand scale at which we are looking, variability tends to be less. In other words, the processes that drive patterns in bird communities reveal themselves more readily at large scales.

With the first season of re-survey now nearly complete, some general patterns are beginning to ap-

pear. Many species have occurred in numbers similar to those seen in 2001. Species also are showing distributions in density similar to that seen earlier.

Populations of some species, on the other hand, appear to be changing. As predicted in *Forest Birds of the Last Green Valley*,

the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker is invading northeastern Connecticut. Five were recorded at two locations. The Cooper's Hawk is becoming better established in the region as well, and this summer we observed adults and young for the first time.

Common species also experienced population

changes. The White-breasted Nuthatch has undergone a substantial increase at many sites. Moreover, the Pine Warbler is continuing its regional population expansion. We have now found it established at sites where we never observed it previously.

“Forest Birds of the Last Green Valley ... is now available for purchase online”

BOOKS AVAILABLE ONLINE



Publisher Brendan Hanrahan displays the books in the *Road to Discovery Guides*. Photo: DLC

Forest Birds of the Last Green Valley, BCR's compilation of the bird resources of eastern Connecticut, is now available for purchase online at www.birdconservation-research.org. Purchase entitles individuals to a year's membership in BCR. Members renewing at the Contributor level or above (which can be ac-

complishes online) also receive the book as a gift with their membership.

Discover the Critical Habitats of Connecticut is BCR's contribution to the *Road to Discovery Series* of Perry Heights Press in Wilton, CT. The book was authored by BCR Director Robert Craig and illustrated by Connecticut art-

ist Barbara Lussier. It details 16 self-guided field trips in Connecticut, and also examines Connecticut's ecoregions and endangered species. This and other titles in the series (dinosaurs, fish, geology) may be purchased at www.cttrips.com, or at area nature centers and book stores.

BCR RECEIVES GRANT

The Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor (National Park Service) has again teamed with BCR and the Green Valley Institute (Connecticut Cooperative Extension System) to assist with continuing our studies of forest bird distri-

butions.

Funding provided by QSHC will assist not only with carrying out the field studies, but also with making data available to all town conservation commissions across eastern Connecticut.

The present research program will run, winter and summer, through 2006. During this time, BCR will be assisting towns and regional planners with using the data to make land conservation decisions.

PAINTER IN PLEIN AIR FOR CONSERVATION



Douglas Smith paints the Rosa Peckham Manor and gardens. Photo: DLC

On June 12-13, *Northeast Painters in Plein Air for Conservation*, an association of landscape artists, hosted a "paint-out," exhibition and sale of their work for the benefit of BCR and Connecticut Audubon Society. Seventeen of the region's premier artists painted on location at the Rosa Peckham Country House and gardens in Putnam.

With the good fortune of spectacular weather, a crowd of 700 turned out for the event to watch the artists work, to purchase their paintings, and stroll among the hundreds of flowering peonies and roses.

"With the good fortune of spectacular weather, a crowd of 700 turned out for the event to watch the artists ... "

The Newsletter of
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Bird Conservation Research, Inc.

Membership

___ \$10 Electronic member
(e-mail only) \$10
___ \$25 Regular member
(receive mailings also)
___ \$35 Family membership
___ \$50 Sustaining member
___ \$100 Contributor
___ \$ 250 Patron
___ \$ 500 Benefactor
___ \$ 1000 Grand
benefactor

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Watch the birdie ...



MEMBERSHIP

Membership is something that we at BCR are pleased and impressed to see just keep growing. If you haven't yet joined our expanding family, we hope that you will do so soon. We

are funded entirely by memberships, grants and gifts.

Membership applications and payment options are now available online at

www.birdconservation-research.org. Credit cards are accepted.