



NORTHEAST KINGDOM AUDUBON

A Chapter Of The National Audubon Society

Spring 2008

The mission of Northeast Kingdom Audubon is to foster the stewardship and enjoyment of birds, other wildlife and natural habitats.

Notes from the President

Birdathon Funds Conservation Camp Scholarships

The mission of NEK Audubon is to “foster the stewardship and enjoyment of birds, other wildlife and natural habitats.” In this spirit, one of our chapter’s most important activities is providing scholarships to local young people to attend high quality conservation camps. For many children this is their first camp experience and a wonderful introduction to the joys and mysteries of the natural world! This year we are sending one camper aged 10 to 13 to the Audubon youth camp at Hog Island off the coast of Maine and a high school student aged 15 to 18 to the NorthWoods EcoExperience in East Charleston, Vermont, to participate in field research with biologists. We believe that these young people will join others in the upcoming generation to cherish, preserve and protect our natural environment

But this costs money! For the scholarships alone, NEK Audubon must raise \$1,900. Our other expenses include publishing and mailing the newsletter, taxes on our Windsong Wildlife Sanctuary in Peacham, insurance and our annual license, and miscellaneous other expenses we incur throughout the year. Our chapter operates frugally and receives no regular money from National Audubon. No one is paid for the many hours of work it takes to keep NEK Audubon alive and dynamic.

Our one and only fundraiser is the BIRDATHON. On May 18th a team of crack birders will lead trips throughout the Northeast Kingdom searching for as many bird species as we can find. We welcome you to join us. (See details in the enclosed flyer.)

Remembering how important it is to encourage young people to gain respect for our natural surroundings, we hope you and many others will contribute generously to support our annual camp scholarships.

—Airie Lindsay

Birding in the Kingdom

Spring Programs Offered by the Fairbanks Museum

The Bald Eagle: A Case Study in Species Ecology

Two Evening Workshops, 6–8 p.m., Wednesday, March 26 and Wednesday, April 2 and two Field Studies, 8–11 a.m., Saturday, March 29 and Saturday, April 5. Pre-registration required: \$50 for Museum members, \$65 for non-members.

The Bald Eagle is the most carefully studied bird species in North America. In this program, combining two workshops and two field trips, participants will explore the natural history of this national symbol, with an emphasis upon its identification, ecology, behavior, and comparison to other raptors. The Upper Connecticut River Valley offers some outstanding year-around habitat for Bald Eagles. Field trips will focus on spotting Bald Eagles and identifying the feeding, roosting, and breeding needs of eagles and the management practices that support their success.

Warbler Watching in the Kingdom: Jewels of the Northern Forest

Two Evening Workshops, 6–8 p.m., Wednesday, May 7 and Wednesday, May 14 and two Field Studies, 7-10 a.m., Saturday, May 10 and Saturday, May 17. Pre-registration required: \$50 for Museum members, \$65 for non-members.

Wood Warblers are renowned for their vibrant colors, distinctive songs, frenetic metabolism, and mixed-species migratory waves. . Over 25 warbler species are found in Vermont. Join us for an introduction to warbler identification, ecology, and lore, and the joy of discovering these beautiful forest denizens in their Vermont habitats. Workshops will include species by species warbler song, migration habits, and habitat needs. Field studies will explore sites rich in warbler diversity.

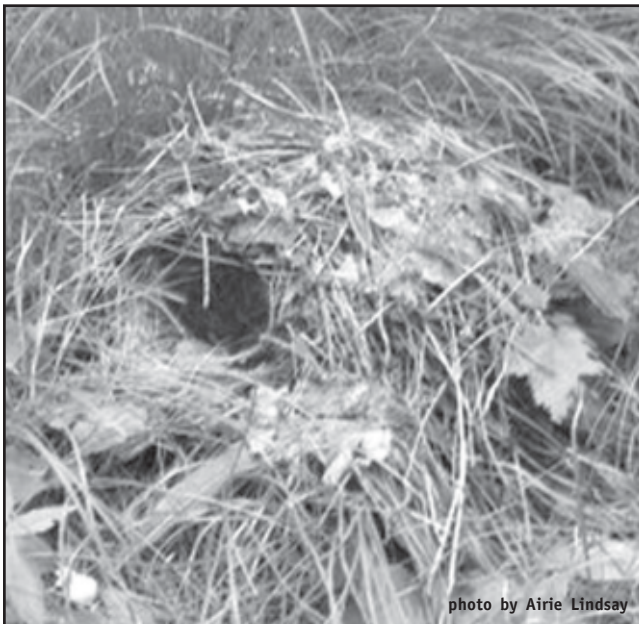
Bird Chatter:

Christmas Bird Count and Glimpses of Spring

The annual Christmas Bird Count gives participants a chance to enjoy the challenges and beauty of winter at its depths in the Northeast Kingdom. With record snowfalls in December, a hiatus in January, and a second coming of accumulated snow by mid-February, we marvel at the endurance and perseverance of our avian friends.

On January 1, 2008, twenty-two participants drove 333 miles, walked over 15 miles, and logged more than 50 hours to see what species were wintering in our northern climes. Four thousand, three hundred-thirty-three (4,333) birds were counted, testing the visual agility of our observers to count “accurately” the swirling clouds of starlings; the ubiquitous chickadees; and the sometimes bold, sometimes timid, flocks of turkeys that invade trench silos filled with corn nuggets and stroll through open woodlands or fields fringed by wooded areas.

“And the winners are” ... 899 European Starlings, 835 Black-capped Chickadees, and 408 Wild Turkeys.



Now, on to thoughts of spring ... We have included a photo (provided by Airie Lindsay) of an Ovenbird's nest that my wife and I found late last spring as a reminder that the invasion of our spring and summer residents is not too far off. This surge of birds along with our hearty winter residents reminds us of the truly remarkable sampling of birds that call Vermont home.

—Bill Marshall

NEK Audubon Annual Meeting: Saturday, July 26 at Nulhegan Basin's Conte Refuge Station

NEK Audubon's ANNUAL MEETING will be held on Saturday, July 26, at the Nulhegan Basin's Silvio O. Conte Refuge Station in Bloomfield, Vermont. At 10:30 a.m. people will meet at the visitor center for a day of interesting exploration and learning about the refuge. The Nulhegan Basin Refuge is a Division of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, protecting important habitat in the Connecticut River Watershed for the benefit of fish, wildlife and people.

The refuge manager for the Nulhegan Basin Refuge will provide background and interpretation of the refuge. Bird banding has taken place on the refuge for the last 3 years and we hope to visit the banding station in the morning. An alternative activity will be a visit to the recent Lewis Pond Overlook, which provides a fabulous view of the basin and the hills that surround it. Along the way there will be opportunities for bird watching as this refuge is a stronghold of neotropical songbirds.

A potluck lunch and brief meeting will follow the morning activities. Our speakers will include the new refuge manager and, hopefully, Prof. Jim Chace who has directed the bird banding program with a particular interest in the Canada warbler. The refuge will be open all day for continued exploration of the more than 40 miles of dirt roads through a mixture of habitats.

The Silvio O. Conte Refuge Station is located 10.8 miles east of Island Pond on Rte 105. It's 36 miles (+/- 50 minutes) from the White Market/Agway parking lot off Exit 23 off I-91 in Lyndonville – a good 1.25 hour drive from St. Johnsbury. If you are interested in carpooling from Lyndonville to the meeting, contact Airie (802) 748-8515.

If you have any questions, please contact Carolyn Boardman at (802) 754-2010.

NEK Audubon Board Of Directors 2007-2008

Officers

Airie Lindsay, President; Howard Pires, Vice President
Robin Rothman, Secretary; Charlie Browne, Treasurer

Board Members

Thelma White, Jim Ashley, Tom Berriman, Virginia Elliott
Bill Marshall, Ken Rower, Carolyn Boardman
Shelly Guy, Laura Tobin, Mary Beth Prondzinski

Audubon Vermont: Douglas Parker, Executive Director (802)
434-3068, dparker@audubon.org

Upcoming Events • March - November 2008

All activities and board meetings are open to the public. We appreciate pre-registration for trips and programs. For trip information and pre-registration contact Tom Berriman at (802) 626-9071 or email thomas.berriman@verizon.net. Events may be updated or changed. Check our website, www.nekaidubon.org for any changes. **A note about our field trips:** We go regardless of the weather (unless the weather would in some way pose a danger); so, dress appropriately! If you have any doubt about the trip being cancelled call Tom at 626-9071. Sometimes the bad weather brings out the best birds.

Proceeds go to our Camp Scholarship Fund. We report all our bird sightings to: www.ebird.org/VINS.

Saturday March 22: Victory Wildlife Management Area. Meet at Damon's Crossing at 8 a.m. We will look for black-backed woodpeckers and gray jays.

Wednesday, March 26, Fairbanks Museum: The Bald Eagle: A Case Study in Species Ecology. Two Evening Workshops, 6–8 p.m., **Wednesday, March 26** and **Wednesday, April 2**. Two Field Studies, 8–11 a.m., **Saturday, March 29** and **Saturday, April 5**. Pre-registration required: \$50 for Museum members, \$65 for non-members. Contact Fairbanks Museum at 802-748-2372

Monday, April 7: Informational/Planning Meeting. 4:30–6 p.m. Fairbanks Museum. Contact Airie at 748-8515.

Sunday, April 20: Wenlock Wildlife Management Area. Meet at White Market/Agway parking lot off Exit 23 of I-91 in Lyndonville at 7 a.m.

Monday, May 5 Informational/Planning Meeting. 4:30–6 p.m. Fairbanks Museum. Contact Airie at 748-8515.

Wednesday, May 7, Fairbanks Museum: Warbler Watching in the Kingdom: Jewels of the Northern Forest. Two Evening Workshops, 6–8 p.m., **Wednesday, May 7** and **Wednesday, May 14**. Two Field Studies, 7-10 a.m., **Saturday, May 10** and **Saturday, May 17**. Pre-registration required: \$50 for Museum members, \$65 for non-members. Contact Fairbanks Museum at 802-748-2372

Saturday, May 10: Hardwick Trails bird walk. Meet at the West Danville Park and Ride (jct of routes 2 & 15) at 6:20 a.m. or at the trailhead behind the Hazen Union School at 7 a.m. We'll look for arriving spring migrants. To pre-register contact: Norma and Ron: r2wie2@yahoo.com (472-6517) or Airie 748-8515 airie@kingcon.com

Sunday, May 18: BIRDATHON. Join one of our "Birding Hotspot" leaders as we comb the Kingdom for birds. This event raises monies for Conservation Summer Camp Scholarships. Please pledge. See enclosed flyer.

Saturday, May 24: Herrick's Cove (on the CT River in SE VT): Meet at the Barnet park & ride, Exit 18 off I - 91 at 7 a.m. We will look for arriving warblers.

Monday, June 2: Informational/Planning Meeting. 4:30–6 p.m. Fairbanks Museum. Contact Airie at 748-8515.

Saturday, June 7: Applicants' Hike: Welsh & Dickey Loop, Waterville Valley, NH. Meet at the Fairbanks Museum at 8:45 a.m. Return 4-4:30. Call Airie at 748-8515 or email airie@kingcon.com to pre-register.

Saturday, July 26: ANNUAL MEETING and potluck lunch at the Silvio O. Conte Refuge Station in Bloomfield, VT. At **10:30**, we will visit the nearby bird banding station and/or the new Lewis Pond Overlook. At **12:30**, we will come back to the Refuge Station for a brief meeting, a speaker presentation and a potluck lunch. To carpool from Lyndonville, contact Airie (802) 748-8515. For more information, contact Carolyn Boardman (802) 754-2010. Pre-registration is appreciated. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**

Sunday, August 3: Plum Island Parker Nat'l Wildlife Refuge: Meet at Exit 44 (rest area) off I-93 at the New Hampshire welcome center at 6 a.m.

Saturday, August 9: Dead Creek Wildlife Refuge. Meet at 7 a.m. at the Joe's Pond Park & Ride at intersections of Routes 2 & 15. We will look for migrating shorebirds.

Monday, September 8: Informational/Planning Meeting. 4:30–6 p.m. Fairbanks Museum. Contact Airie at 748-8515.

Sunday, September 14: Victory Bog Wildlife Mgt Area. Meet at Damon's Crossing at 8 a.m. We will see what birds are hanging out before they head south.

Monday, October 6: Informational/Planning Meeting. 4:30–6 p.m. Fairbanks Museum. Contact Airie at 748-8515.

Saturday, October 18: Dead Creek and Champlain Valley. Meet at the West Danville Park & Ride at Routes 2 & 15 at 7 a.m. We will see the annual **Snow Geese** show and check the refuge for **Rough-legged Hawks**.

Monday, November 3: CAMPER PRESENTATIONS and Informational/Planning Meeting. 4:30–6 p.m. Fairbanks Museum. Contact Airie at 748-8515.



NORTHEAST KINGDOM AUDUBON

1302 Main Street
St. Johnsbury, Vermont 05819

Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID St. Johnsbury, VT Permit No. 5

Two ways to join Northeast Kingdom Audubon

There are two ways to become a member:

1. To join the National Audubon Society (first time) – send \$20 (or more) payable to the National Audubon Society to: Audubon Vermont, 255 Sherman Hollow Road, Huntington, VT 05462.

phone: 802-434-3068 email: vermont@audubon.org; website: www.audubon.org

When you join the National Audubon Society, you automatically become a member of our NEK Audubon Chapter. You may opt for: a) No Audubon magazine; b) No telemarketing calls; c) No national solicitations; d) Local (VT) appeals only; e) Anonymity ... by so indicating on your application.

2. To join Northeast Kingdom Audubon only – Send \$10 or more yearly (honor system!) to: NEK Audubon, Charlie Browne, Treasurer, 1302 Main Street, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

We recommend that you join National Audubon, but no matter how you become a member, you will receive a newsletter three times a year and are welcome to attend our board meetings, which are usually held on the first Monday of each month from 4:30-6:00 p.m. at the Fairbanks Museum. Whether or not you are a member, send your email address to airie@kingcon.com or call Airie Lindsay at 802-748-8515 to receive updated events calendars and notices of board meetings. Please keep us informed of changes in your email address. You can expect about one email notice per month.

For more information on our chapter and birding in the area, visit the NEK Audubon chapter website, www.nekaudubon.org.

Northeast Kingdom Audubon's **BIRDATHON**

Sunday, May 18, 2008

Join us at one of these great birding hotspots in the Northeast Kingdom and see how many species we can find. You will be birding with one of six excellent birders who will help you find, identify and learn about Vermont's unique population of birds. We will explore varied habitats to find what birds are breeding there. With this annual fundraiser, NEK Audubon will sponsor two local children at conservation camps this summer. This is a wonderful, eye-opening opportunity for our young people.

Times/leaders/places are listed on the back of this sheet. At the end of the day, we tally the totals to determine the overall number of species identified. We usually hear or see between 80 and 150 species of birds. Last year, we listed 124.

Please Make a Donation to Support Our Conservation Camp Scholarships.
(Clip and return by May 18th)

I am enclosing a donation of:

\$10_____ \$25_____ \$50_____ \$100_____ \$300_____ Other_____

Name: _____

Phone/email_____

Address: _____

Please mail this form and your donation to:

Northeast Kingdom Audubon
1302 Main Street, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

Thank You For Your Support!

Birding Hot Spots

(Please call "Hot Spot" leaders to confirm)

Coventry Marshes and South Bay Wildlife Mgt. Area: 7 a.m. - Meet at Barton River Fishing Access Boat Ramp, River Road, North of Orleans Village. Hot Spot leader Tom Berriman (626-9071).

Joe's Pond Marshes: 7 a.m. - Meet at Parking Area at the junction of VT 15 and US 2, W. Danville. Hot Spot leader James Ashley (684-3491).

Victory Basin: 7 a.m. - Meet at Damon's Crossing Parking Area, 5.5 miles north of N. Concord on Victory-Gallup Mills Road. Hot Spot leader Paul Bengtson (748-8299).

Nulhegan Basin, Conte Wildlife Refuge and Moose Bog: 7 a.m. - Meet at Wenlock Crossing, 7.3 miles east of Island Pond, Rte. 105, Ferdinand. Hot Spot leader Charlie Browne (592-3545).

Connecticut River Valley and Flood Plains: 7 a.m. Meet at the Fairbanks Museum in St. Johnsbury. Hot Spot leaders Airie Lindsay (748-8515) and Robin Rothman (684-2188).

Beginners to experts are welcome!

No charge.

Contact thomas.berriman@verizon.net (626-9071) for more BIRDATHON information.

Contact airie@kingcon.com (748-8515) to join NEK Audubon or for Upcoming Events.