



Bird Notes

From Northeast Kingdom Audubon
1302 Main Street, Saint Johnsbury, Vermont 05819

For Immediate Release

Misty Mornings

Many of you have been experiencing some wet weather lately. Foggy mornings block the view until the sun burns off the mist. A mist net is something entirely different. Dr. Jim Chace’s bird research depends on the mist nets he uses at the Nulhegan Basin Refuge in Brunswick, Vermont. These nets are typically made of very fine nylon mesh and resemble an oversized volleyball net yet are virtually invisible. Mist netting is an efficient method of capturing wild birds in flight especially during the early misty morning hours of first light. Dr. Chace with trained helpers, checks the nets at dawn and every hour afterwards until late morning when bird activity slows down. With minimal risk of injury, the birds wait in soft bags to be processed at the banding station. Jim Chace, professor of Ecological Studies in RI, is studying the Canada warbler.

Of course mist netting captures other species of birds in the refuge, such as the red-eyed vireo, a common inhabitant of the forests and strong singer at this time of year. The male will continue to sing through most of the breeding period, but can be hard to see, staying in the tops of broad-leaved trees. If you find one, (brown and white with red eye and white eye stripe) follow him to his mate who stays in the understory and does not sing. Then follow her to the nest and enjoy the show. She will sit motionless on the nest during incubation. He sings a song something like: taree, tareo, talio, tarit, pausing in between each phrase, repeating it over and over, about thirty phrases per minute. If you want to find this bird, you do not have to get up at dawn as the male sings most of the daylong.

Another summer singer recently heard is the wood thrush. Its flutelike phrases coming from the shady woods where it breeds are so melodious and lovely. Early morning and early evening are the best times to hear these. If you are lucky enough to spot them, you will notice a robin resemblance with a spotted rather than red breast, and tail/wing flicking behavior. Check your field guide and listen for the characteristic: “eeoolay, ahohlee” sound.

If you are interested in seeing more birds up close at Dr. Chace’s bird banding station (back of his pickup truck), contact Rachel or Tom at the Nulhegan Basin Refuge at 802-962-5240. Here is the schedule for mist netting for the rest of the summer.

June 30 – July 9	05:10	Tue Jul 7	Wed Jul 8
July 10 – 19	05:10	Mon Jul 13	Tues Jul 14
July 20 - 29	05:20	Wed Jul 22	Thurs Jul 23
July 30 – August 8	05:30	Sat Aug 1	Sun Aug 2

You can also meet Jim at the Fairbanks Museum program entitled “An Evening with Dr. Jim Chace” on Saturday, July 11th at 7:00 PM. For more details, go to www.nekaudubon.org.



photo by John Blackmer



photo by Jim Chace

Carolyn E. Boardman is a board member of NEK Audubon living in Brownington, Vermont. NEK Audubon is one of 8 chapters of Audubon Vermont and part of the National Audubon Society. NEK Audubon is a non -profit organization that encourages everyone’s enjoyment of birds, wildlife and natural habitats through field trips, programs and publications. For more information about meetings, field trips and special events visit www.nekaudubon.org. Art work by Robin Rothman.