

Remembering Chuck Huntington. . .

Chuck Huntington, a quintessential “birder”, teacher, family man and friend passed away on January 2. He was an extraordinary human being who, because of his father’s affiliation with the National Geographic Society, grew up with a global childhood: central Asia, the Middle East, and New Zealand, with intervening stays in the United States. This traveling set a significant tone for his leisure activities in later years.

With a B.S. in Biology and a Ph.D. in Ornithology from Yale, he got his first and only job teaching evolutionary biology, ecology and ornithology at Bowdoin College. His early morning bird-watching field trips, in all weathers, were legendary.

He served as director of Kent Island—Bowdoin College’s ornithological research station in the Bay of Fundy—where he eventually conducted over five decades of research into the habits of Leach’s



Chuck Huntington was the Founding Father of the Merrymeeting Audubon Chapter.

Storm-Petrel, a small oceanic bird that nests in burrows on the island. His expertise on this topic was renown.

He traveled extensively with his family, courtesy of two sabbaticals from Bowdoin, along with other opportunities. Travels, and life in general, were inspired and shaped by love of the outdoors, and sparked by chances to observe birds in their natural habitats, Chuck’s first love. We are also deeply grateful that his love of avians moved him to become the Founding Father of our own Merrymeeting Audubon Chapter.

Chuck Huntington’s life and legacies touched the lives of so many people—colleagues, friends, students, fellow birders—really too many to mention. Following are some of the memories or stories shared by those whose lives changed because they knew Chuck Huntington.

Chuck: Mentor and Friend

by Andrew Gilbert

To say that Chuck Huntington had influenced generations of budding ornithologists would be an understatement. As one of those budding ornithologists, I could easily sense the profound effect he had on those fortunate enough to spend time in his company. Where birding was concerned, Chuck was the quintessential teacher and friend.

See **MENTOR**, page 7

A simple man, a legendary legacy

by Liz Pierson

I met Chuck in June 1973, at the Portland airport. He told me I’d know who he was when I arrived—and I did. He was the only guy in the airport with binoculars around his neck. He packed me and three other students into a Bowdoin van, and we headed for Kent Island. I had no idea Chuck was driving me straight into my future.

See **SIMPLE MAN**, page 2

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Like us on FACEBOOK!

Merrymeeting Audubon now has a Facebook page with upcoming events as well as field trip reports, photos, and other information of interest to Merrymeeting members.

If you do not have a Facebook account, you can find the page via our web address <https://www.facebook.com/MerrymeetingAudubon/>.

If you do have a Facebook account, type in "Merrymeeting Audubon" in the "find Friends" search box at the top left of your Facebook home page. When you "like" the Merrymeeting page, future posts should appear on your home page.

SIMPLE MAN, from page 1

Over the next 10 weeks Chuck opened one new window after another for me—windows into birds, scientific research, natural history, island living. Two weeks into that semester, when I had to miss a class and was wondering whom to ask for the class notes, it was Chuck who said, "Do you know Jan Pierson? He's an excellent student."

Chuck, it turns out, was an excellent matchmaker!

Chuck was full of charms. "Weez" (Louise, Chuck's wife) once told me, "Chuck could sell freezers to the Eskimos," and I think she was right.

One of the things I loved best about Chuck was that he always had time for other people. At Bowdoin, his office door was always open, and whatever Chuck was doing, instantly became secondary. You were now his priority. When you left, he made you feel as if you'd done him a favor by stopping by.

Retirement for Chuck meant he had even more time for family and friends.

Jan and I, living just down the road from the Huntingtons, loved Chuck's impromptu visits, to borrow plastic jugs when he was tapping his maple trees, offering us peaches from his bumper crop, or sharing photos of his grandkids. But one day it dawned on me: Chuck wasn't stopping by because he didn't have anything else to do. He was stopping by because he didn't have anything more important to do.

For Chuck, nothing was more important than tending to his family and friends.

Over the past 44 years, Chuck taught me countless lessons—everything from how to design a homing experiment for Leach's Storm-Petrels, to how to make the best granola. But I think the most important lessons he taught me were about friendship.

For many of us today, especially those of us who were students at Bowdoin or on Kent Island, Chuck was a profoundly influential figure. In so many ways, large and small, he set the course of our adult lives. He did it by being our professor and our mentor. Above all, I think he did it by being our friend.

What a rich legacy Chuck left us all. We are so lucky to have been his friends.

"There need be no lasting sorrow for the death of any of Nature's creations, because for every death there is always born a corresponding life." John Muir



Though he might not be in the airport waiting for his students, Chuck was predictably identifiable by the binoculars and camera hanging around his neck. Always in pursuit of his first love, birds in their natural habitats, Chuck rarely went anywhere without his "loyal companions".

MENTOR, from page 1

My fondest memories of Chuck come from the many Merrymeeting Audubon field trips and Christmas Bird Counts. For instance, when a winter trip began before dawn, his undaunted commitment to navigating the iciest slopes—despite his difficulties walking later in the light—terrified us all, but gave him no pause. Such determination helped us overcome the cold temps and the dark, pre-dawn hours!

I think of all my good times with Chuck, the best was the trip I made to Kent Island in the fall of 1996, my first time there. Chuck had already been there for a month or



Chuck exploring the world of Kent Island, in search of Leach's Storm-Petrels' burrows.

so continuing his long study on the demography of Leach's Storm-Petrel. He worked tirelessly plucking adults and fat chicks from burrows with an uncanny knack, that only someone who had been doing the same task for 50+ years could. Given all

the memories from early in my career, that day of checking burrows with Chuck ranked as one of the finest.

After navigating an active burrow, and the "prize" was near, Chuck would roll up his sleeve and impossibly stick what looked like his entire body into that burrow. His reach was legendary. He rarely came up empty-handed, often just barely holding on. **Always** smiling at his success, I know that that was one of his life's real pleasures and something that kept him returning year after year.

The Leach's Storm-Petrel was Chuck's "holy grail" that kept him youthful for a long time. His work with these avians sparked my interest in seabirds, and I have since



Leach's Storm-Petrel

returned to work with them. I will forever cherish that day, and many others, with Chuck doing what he loved best—being with the birds. Thank you Chuck, you will be missed.

Family Birding/Nature Observation Program at Hamilton Sanctuary



Making observations in Hamilton Sanctuary's Back Cove through a spotting scope.



Success! at the "Sneaky Pat Challenge", part of the Family Birding/Nature Observation Program at Maine Audubon's Hamilton Sanctuary".

Do you believe in "magic moments"?

Do you recall a moment, perhaps the moment, that solidified your love of birds? Was there someone or somewhere that launched your insight into the natural world? Folks recall with joy or deep satisfaction those first magic moments when they became aware. Often these folks carry on, throughout their lives, the critical conservation and education work of Audubon.

A major function of the Merrymeeting Chapter of Maine Audubon is to provide opportunities for such formative moments. Through the Chapter's Camp Scholarship Program, approximately 30 local people per year receive financial assistance to attend residential, environmental education camps. The chapter sends younger children to Tanglewood 4H Camp, older children to Bryant Pond 4H Camp, and teens and teachers to Hog Island Camp. Details of the scholarship program and application procedures are available at <http://maineaudubon.org/merrymeeting/camp-scholarships/>.

These scholarships are funded through donations, both business and individual. The Scholarship Committee's reach is dependent upon donations from people like you. Won't you help? Your contribution could help launch this year's several budding naturalists and a motivated teacher to carry on the important conservation work of Audubon.

Please send your tax-deductible scholarship donations to Merrymeeting Audubon, c/o Steve Spear, 9 Livernois Drive, Topsham, ME 04086. Your generosity could create a lasting "magic moment" for a local child, teen or adult. Thank you.

Kathy Claerr



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www.maineaudubon.org/merrymeeting

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Reserve Now!

MMA Annual Meeting

**Monday, April 24
5:00 p.m.**

St. Charles Borromeo Church
132 McKeen Street, Brunswick

\$15 per person

**Refreshments catered
by Marie Dufresne**

**Reservations must be received
by April 20th.**

Please make checks out to:
Merrymeeting Audubon
Mail your check to:
Karen Carlisle
14 Hannahs Cove Rd.
Harpwell, ME 04079

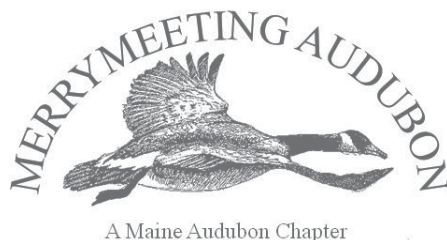
FMI call Karen Carlisle at 841-1608



Guest speaker: Steve Morello, the Traveling Nature Photographer, has been a professional nature photographer for over 30 years. His work has appeared in such prestigious publications as National Geographic, The New York Times, and World Wildlife Fund. This is a rare opportunity to enjoy Steve's photos and gain tips to enhance your own photography skills.



If you are unable to attend the Annual Meeting, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the **Merrymeeting Audubon Scholarship Fund**. Mail your donation to: MMA Scholarship Fund, c/o Steve Spear, 9 Livernois Drive, Topsham, ME 04086. Thank you.



Upcoming Field Trips and Nature Programs

(See the full trip descriptions inside)

APRIL

Saturday, April 1	Waterfowl of Bowdoinham
Saturday, April 8	Scarborough Marsh
Sunday, April 16	Reid State Park
Sunday, April 23	Brunswick Landing
Monday, April 24	ANNUAL MEETING
Saturday, April 29	Whiskeag Creek
	Work Day: Hamilton Sanctuary

MAY

Tuesday, May 1	Board Meeting hosted by Jane Robinson
Sunday, May 7	Great Pond Preserve
Thursday, May 11	Crystal Spring Farm
Saturday, May 13	International Migratory Bird Day
Sunday, May 14	Morse Mountain & Seawall Beach
Friday, May 19	Viles Arboretum
Saturday, May 20	Green Point Farm
Sunday, May 21	Evergreen Cemetery & Capisic Pond
Tuesday, May 23	Bradley Pond
Wednesday, May 24	Florida Lake
Saturday, May 27	Thorne Head
Sunday, May 28	Capt. William Fitzgerald Recreation & Conservation Area

JUNE

Saturday, June 10	Cathance River Preserve
Sunday, June 11	Brownfield Bog
Saturday, June 17	Hidden Valley Nature Center
Saturday, June 24	Work Day: Hamilton Sanctuary

JULY

Saturday, July 1	Hamilton Sanctuary: Family Birding/ Nature Observation Program and the "Sneaky Pat Challenge"
Sunday, July 9	Capt. William Fitzgerald Recreation & Conservation Area
Saturday, July 29	Hamilton Sanctuary: Family Birding/ Nature Observation Program and the "Sneaky Pat Challenge"

AUGUST

Tuesday, August 1	Board Meeting hosted by Glenn Evans
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“ It is seldom that I experience much difficulty in leaving civilization for God’s wilds. . . . ” **John Muir**





Field Trips & Nature Programs 2017

www.maineaudubon.org/merrymeeting

April

SATURDAY, APRIL 1

Field Trip: Waterfowl of Bowdoinham

Join Merrymeeting on this outing to Brown Point in Bowdoinham in search of early waterfowl migrants. The area has been a good site in the past for unusual species such as Eurasian Wigeon and Eurasian Green-winged Teal, as well as more common treats such as Snow Goose, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, and Blue-winged Teal.

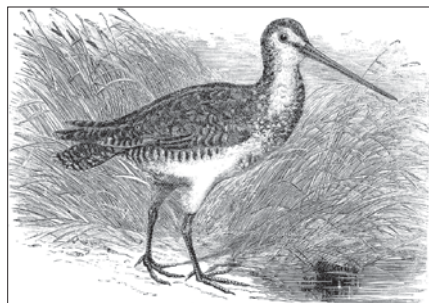
➤ Meet at the Bowdoinham Town Landing at 8:00 a.m. or 7:15 at Hannaford to carpool. Trip is dependent on the ice being out. Please check www.maineaudubon.org/merrymeeting for trip status updates; or call John Berry at 632-7257.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8

Field Trip: Scarborough Marsh

On this annual welcome-to-spring outing we hope to see Brant and other migrating waterfowl. Wilson's Snipe, sandpipers, herons, egrets, Glossy Ibis, and sparrows. Bring lunch or a snack.

➤ Meet at the Bath CVS at 7:00 a.m. or at the Brunswick Hannaford at 7:20 a.m. FMI Maurice Dauphin at 389-2585.



Wilson's Snipe

SUNDAY, APRIL 16

Field Trip: Reid State Park

Reid State Park includes habitats for coastal waterfowl, freshwater ducks, and

marsh birds. We also expect to see early migrants in the woodlands and open areas of the park. Bring a lunch or a snack.

➤ Meet at the Bath CVS at 8:30 a.m. to carpool; or at the Park bathhouse parking lot at 9:00 a.m. FMI Gordon Smith at 725-0282.



Buffleheads

SUNDAY, APRIL 23

Field Trip: Brunswick Landing

Among the grasslands and forests we can expect to find early returning migrants.

➤ Meet at the parking lot inside the entrance off Bath Rd. at 7:30 a.m. FMI Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

MONDAY, APRIL 24, 5:00 P.M.

Annual Meeting, Refreshments & Guest Speaker: Steve Morello, *Photography Through A Positive Lens*.

➤ Location: St. Charles Borromeo Church, McKeen St., Brunswick

Steve Morello, the Traveling Nature Photographer, has been a professional nature photographer for over 30 years and has photographed for many prestigious publications including National Geographic, The New York Times, and World Wildlife Fund. Steve is a photo instructor for Lindblad/National Geographic Expeditions and teaches at the National Audubon Society's Camp at Hog Island in Maine. Come share his images from around the world and learn how having the right attitude about your photography is just as important as knowing about

F-stops and shutter speeds. Some of the topics explored will be telling a story with your images, and making your images a reflection of your vision. Please join us for this fascinating evening with an exceptional naturalist. ♦ *Please mail in your check to reserve a spot. See the back page of this Call.*

SATURDAY, APRIL 29

Field Trip: Whiskeag Creek, Bath

Join Merrymeeting Audubon and the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust (KELT) to explore Whiskeag Creek where it empties into the Kennebec River at Thorne Head. The targets for this trip include: Canada Geese, Black Ducks, Mallards, Blue and Green-winged Teal, Common Mergansers, as well as early arriving songbirds.

➤ Meet at the Bath CVS at 7:30 a.m. or at Sewall Woods on Whiskeag Road at 8:00 a.m. FMI Ted Allen at 729-8661.

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 9 A.M. - 12 P.M.

Work Day: Hamilton Sanctuary

Clear trails, repair erosion damage, remove invasives and spruce up the memorial garden. We will be putting up bird boxes. Call Glenn Evans at 443-9652 if you plan on coming.

May

TUESDAY, MAY 1, 7:00 P.M.

Board Meeting, hosted by Jane

Robinson Directions: 833-6675.

SUNDAY, MAY 7

Field Trip: Great Pond Preserve, Cape Elizabeth

Discover the Great Pond Preserve, a hidden gem in Cape Elizabeth. In addition to the 130-acre pond and surrounding marsh, the preserve features an 800-foot elevated walkway along a portion of the property.

➤ Meet at Hannaford in Brunswick at 7:00 a.m. FMI Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

THURSDAY, MAY 11

Field Trip: Crystal Spring Farm, Brunswick

This trip is run jointly by MMAS and BTLT. This walk is through a variety of habitats, including fields, forests, and ponds. We hope to see sparrows, Bluebirds, Bobolinks, and several species of warblers.

➤ Meet at Crystal Spring Farm on Pleasant Hill Road in Brunswick at 7:30 a.m. FMI Ted Allen at 729-8661.

SATURDAY, MAY 13

Field Trips: International Migratory Bird Day

Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day at River Point in West Falmouth with the Biodiversity Research Institute. Activities include guided bird and nature walks, bird banding demonstrations, a learning trail with stops staffed by BRI naturalists, as well as activities for children. Join the fun. Pack a picnic lunch and meet at the Brunswick Hannaford's at 6:45 a.m. FMI Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

SUNDAY, MAY 14

Field Trip: Morse Mountain & Seawall Beach, Phippsburg

The Bates-Morse Mountain Conservation Area is a great spot for migrants and nesting woodland birds. We will also see shorebirds, gulls, and nesting Piping Plovers.

➤ Meet at the Brunswick Hannaford parking lot at 7:00 a.m.; or at Morse Mountain parking lot, off Rte. 216 in Phippsburg, at 7:30 a.m. FMI Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

FRIDAY, MAY 19

Field Trip: Viles Arboretum, Augusta

The 224-acre arboretum includes woods, fields, and ponds that are easily reached. A twenty-warbler day is not uncommon in May. Wetland species found in May include Sora and Virginia Rails.

➤ Meet at the kiosk in the Arboretum parking lot at 7:00 a.m. or meet at the Brunswick Hannaford at 6:00 a.m. to carpool. FMI Doug Suitor at 841-1951.

SATURDAY, MAY 20

Field Trip: Green Point Farm, Dresden

Expect a wide variety of migrant birds in the woodlands, fields, and wild-rice flats of this diverse area. Warblers and other woodland birds, sparrows and other field birds, waterfowl, and raptors may be seen on this walk. Waterproof footwear is recommended.

➤ Meet at Bath CVS at 6:30 a.m. to carpool; or at Green Point Farm by the green shed, at 7:00 a.m. FMI Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

SUNDAY, MAY 21

Field Trip: Evergreen Cemetary and Capisic Pond, Portland

Evergreen is one of the best places in southern Maine to see a wide variety of songbirds at very close range, particularly warblers.

➤ Meet at the Brunswick Hannaford at 6:15 a.m. FMI Doug Suitor at 841-1951.



Black-Throated Green Warbler

TUESDAY, MAY 23

Field Trip: Bradley Pond, Topsham

This relatively easy walk passes through a conservation easement surrounding a privately-owned working farm. The easement includes varied habitats. We'll focus on migrating land birds: warblers, flycatchers, blackbirds, vireos, sparrows, and an occasional raptor.

➤ Meet at the Brunswick Hannaford at 7:30 a.m. or at Bradley Pond, 2nd parking lot at 8:00 a.m. FMI Ted Allen at 729-8661.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24

Field Trip: Florida Lake, Freeport

While small by State standards, this undeveloped pond is Freeport's largest freshwater body. It provides prime waterfowl and wading bird habitats, and a stopover point for many migratory species. American Bittern, a species of special concern in the

northeast, breeds in the area—a rich mix of forested wetlands, seasonally flooded shrub-swamps, and aquatic vegetation.

➤ Meet at the Brunswick Hannaford at 7:00 a.m. to carpool. FMI Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

SATURDAY, MAY 27

Field Trip: Thorne Head, Bath

This trip is run jointly by MMAS and KELT. Thorne Head overlooks Whiskeag Creek (see April 29) and is located on the Maine Birding Trail. The preserve is rich in vireos and warblers. The paths provide easy walking under a canopy of mature trees.

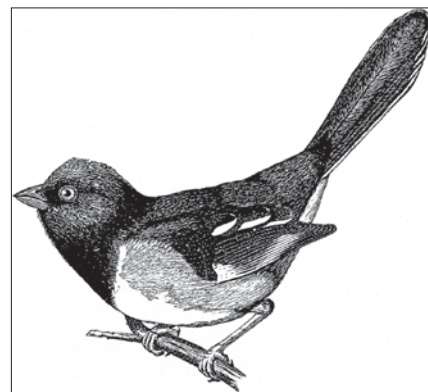
➤ Meet at Bath CVS at 7:30 a.m. to carpool; or at the Preserve parking lot at the north end of High Street at 8:00 a.m. FMI Ted Allen at 729-8661.

SUNDAY, MAY 28 & SUNDAY, JULY 9

Field Trips: Capt. William Fitzgerald Recreation and Conservation Area, Brunswick

These two easy walks proceeding along sandy paths are on one of the few sand-plain grasslands remaining in Maine. Join us as we explore this rare natural area for Prairie Warblers, Eastern Towhees, Field Sparrows, and the rare Clay-colored Sparrow. On the July 9 trip, ripening blueberries may be in abundance.

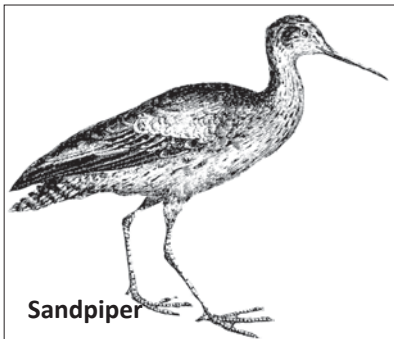
➤ Meet at the iron gate on Lindbergh Crossing Road at 6:30 a.m. From Cook's Corner intersection, take Bath Road to the stoplight at Lowe's. Turn left (northeast) on Old Bath Road, go approximately 1.3 miles and look on your right for Lindbergh Crossing (identified by a street sign). Park along the road before the iron gate. FMI Gordon Smith at 725-0282.



(Male) Towhee



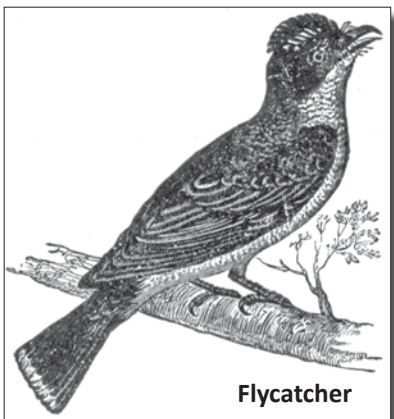
Virginia Rail



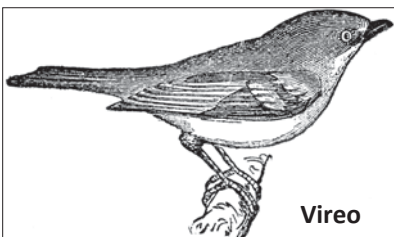
Sandpiper



American Bittern



Flycatcher



Vireo

June

SATURDAY, JUNE 10

Field Trip: Cathance River Preserve, Topsham

We will walk the trails looking for Towhees, sparrows, warblers, woodpeckers, and other birds. Wildflowers, ferns, and mosses grow in the moist woods by the river. Take Rte. 196 and turn into the Highland Green Community on the north side of the highway. Drive in about 1/2 mile and meet in the parking lot of the golf course, on the left, at 7:00 a.m. FMI Andrew Gilbert at 329-7525.

SUNDAY, JUNE 11

Field Trip: Brownfield Bog

This is a pristine wetland of almost 6,000 acres located along the Saco River. Its various habitats are bursting with wildlife. Bring a lunch and bug repellent! ➤ Meet at Brunswick Hannaford at 6:00 a.m. FMI Gordon Smith at 725-0282.

SATURDAY, JUNE 17

Field Trip: Hidden Valley Nature Center, Jefferson

Enjoy a kettle bog, Dyer Pond, and miles of woods trails. ➤ Meet at Bath CVS at 7:00 a.m. FMI Gordon Smith, 725-0282.

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 8:00 - 11:00 A.M.
Work Day: Hamilton Sanctuary

Cut back trails and remove invasives. Help prepare Sanctuary for the family birding program. Please call Glenn Evans at 443-9652 if you plan on coming.

July

SATURDAYS, JULY 1 & JULY 29

Field Trip: Hamilton Sanctuary; Family Birding/Nature Observation Program and the "Sneaky Pat Challenge"

This program is well-suited for interested 2nd to 6th grade children with a parent, but all family members are welcome. Participants will have the opportunity to observe summer resident birds and other nature at Hamilton Sanctuary, and have birds light upon a tray held by their gloved hands to eat seed. Participants should have jeans

and a visored cap for the "Sneaky Pat Challenge". See photographs of the first year's happy participants on Page 5 in this "CALL".

➤ Meet at Hamilton Sanctuary parking area at 7:30 a.m. Registration is limited. To register, or for more information, contact Glenn Evans or Marianne Warner at 443-9652 or e-mail warnerevans20@yahoo.com.

SUNDAY, JULY 9

Field Trips: Capt. William Fitzgerald Recreation and Conservation Area, Brunswick

See Trip Description for **May 28**.

SATURDAY, JULY 29

Field Trip: Hamilton Sanctuary; Family Birding/Nature Observation Program and the "Sneaky Pat Challenge"

See Trip Description for **July 1**.

August

TUESDAY AUGUST 1, 5:00 P.M.

Board Meeting hosted by Glenn Evans
Directions: call 443-9652.

“*Our task must be to free ourselves... by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its' beauty.*”

Albert Einstein

PHOTO ATTRIBUTIONS: WILSON'S SNIPER & BUFFLEHEADS: ELLIOT COUES, "Key to North American Birds"; BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER: WILLIAM & ROBERT CHAMBERS, "Encyclopedia: A Dictionary of Universal Knowledge for the People"; TOWHEE: EDWARD HOWE FORBUSH, "Useful Birds and Their Protection"; VIRGINIA RAIL: WILLIAM DWIGHT WHITNEY, "The Century Dictionary and Cyclopedia"; VIREO: B.P. HOLST, "The Teachers' and Pupils' Encyclopedia"; SANDPIPER: LOUIS FIGUIER, "Reptiles and Birds"; FLYCATCHER: BUEL P. COLTON, "Zoology: Descriptive and Practical"; AMERICAN BITTERN: S.G. GOODRICH, "Animal Kingdom Illustrated Vol. 2".