

Winter 1986

HARLEQUIN DUCKS

Winter may be the off-season for fair weather birders, but for those who are willing to dress warmly, and venture out beyond the kitchen window feeder, winter birding can be an enriching pastime.

One advantage to winter birding is that you do not have to be up at the crack of dawn to see birds. Most of them are actively feeding throughout the day, taking full advantage of the relatively few hours of daylight. Although inland birding may not be as spectacular during the winter months as it is in the fall and spring, one can expect to see a great variety of waterfowl and shorebirds, that have come to spend the season in the relatively ice-free environment along our coast.

If you decide to go coastal birding, the the Harlequin duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) is one species you shouldn't miss. It can be found in the surf along the rocky shore off the eastern side of Sachuest Point.

"Harlequin" is a very appropriate name for this sea duck because the coloration of the male, when in full mating plumage from October through May, makes it appear to be dressed in a clown costume. Its body color is a glossy slate-blue, enlivened by a white crescent and dashes of white on its head, neck and scapulars. The sides are chestnut colored, and the feet, though not usually visible, are grayish blue. The females and immatures are less gaudy, and can be easily mistaken for female Bufflehead ducks.

In a few regions within its range, the Harlequin is very abundant, but few bird-watchers will ever see one. Its range is divided into two distinct areas. To the east, it encompasses an area comprising of Ireland, Labrador, and parts of Greenland. To the west it includes the Aleutian Islands, much of interior Alaska, and parts of Wyoming and California. The western population is one hundred times larger than the eastern one.

The fall and spring migrations for most Harlequins consist of only lateral movements from inland breeding grounds to the ice-free environment of the adjacent seacoast. However, a small group of the Labrador population makes its way down the Atlantic coast, as far south as New Jersey. Small flocks from this group spend the winter by the rocky inlets along the Rhode Island coast. Each year a dozen or more can be spotted along the eastern shore of Sachuest Point, diving for mussels, crabs, limpets and periwinkles in the surf.

Occasionally you may see the males charging at each other and performing other courtship rituals in competition for a mate. By the end of April, most of the adults will have paired off before they migrate back to their breeding sites in Labrador.



SANCTUARY VOLUNTEERS

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

You are considered to be one of the sanctuary's most important natural resources. Though we do not often get a chance to show it, we are sincerely grateful to you for all the time and energy you have shared. It is a special person who gets involved.

On Saturday, December 14th, we held our annual volunteer Christmas party as our way of saying thanks. Although the staff has been here only a few months, we attempted to collect the names and addresses of all the people who volunteered this past year.

Shortly after Thanksgiving, we sent out over 200 invitations, hoping (with our fingers crossed) that we had not overlooked a single person. On the day of the party, we learned through the "grapevine" that a few people had not received invitations. We know that we mailed invitations to some of them, others we were not aware of.

Whether it was a mistake on our part or the Postal Service, if you were one of the Sanctuary volunteers who did not receive an invitation, please accept our apology. To all of you who have volunteered we extend our thanks. We hope you will stick with us in the years to come.

In addition to all those who helped with the Harvest Fair, we would like to take this opportunity to thank a few people who have helped us greatly on projects this fall season. To the volunteer group of youths who help take care of the animals: Charles Donald, Narissa Willever, Jeff Davis, Chris Lewia, Jeff Pickering, Jen Chambers and Kim Boiani. For help with boardwalk construction: Skip Fraley, Tucker Carlson and Frank Pritchard. For help with the mailings: Ruth Herndon. Finally, for help with the Halloween and Christmas Parties: Sarah and John Pelletier, Sean McDonald, Travis, Kara Laughlin, Emily O'Connell, Carmen, Chris Lewia, Ken Dolbashian, Ted Mundy, Anne Bev Murphy, Karen Renz, Gini Laughlin, Gary McDonald, Ginny Purviance, Danielle Johnson, Helene Pritchard, Peter Randall, Fran Holmes, and a special thanks to Taff Roberts.

ATTENTION HARVEST FAIR VOLUNTEERS

If you still have in your possession a blue apron that you wore during the Fair, please return it to the Sanctuary.

Dear Member,

Thank you for renewing your membership with the Norman Bird Sanctuary for 1986. Because of your financial support, and the support of more than 1,000 other members, 450 acres of diverse, unspoiled wildlife habitat will be protected and managed for another year.

Your contribution will be used to maintain the beauty of the open fields, the winding woodland trails, the pond, stream and ridges. We know by your support, that you care about the well-being of the sanctuary. We hope that you will visit often.

Each time you do visit, please make it a habit to sign in at the registration desk, and use your membership card. Most importantly, please introduce yourself to us, the NBS staff. As of yet, we have met only a few of you.

Signing in and using your membership card every time you visit may seem a bit formal to those of you who have been coming here for years, and to whom the sanctuary is as familiar as your own back yard. However this small voluntary effort on your part, can be very helpful in sanctuary management and protection.

Last year, over 10,000 people signed in to hike the trails. This does not include all those who came to the Fair, summer camp, education programs or the large number of people who came without registering. Sanctuary visitation, we have learned from our register is growing rapidly (And we welcome it), but so is the pressure that so many people can have on the wildlife habitat here. Accordingly, substantial planning and effort must be directed toward keeping the refuge open and accessible to those who seek its natural beauty, while at the same time minimizing the human impact.

If you and your fellow sanctuary members make it a regular practice to sign in and use your cards, you will help encourage greater compliance with the registration and trail fee system among the more than 9,000 other visitors who come each year. The trail fee system provides the means by which all sanctuary visitors share the responsibility of upkeep and protection for now and future generations.

The Norman Bird Flyer is published by the Norman Bird Sanctuary, a non profit nature preserve established under the will of Mabel Norman Cerio.

Trustees: Louis Lorillard, RI Hospital Trust National Bank
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Director: Lawrence Taft

Education Coordinator: Lisa Pritchard

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PUBLIC PROGRAMS

SUNDAY BIRD WALKS

8:00 a.m.

Begin the week on a good note (a bird note that is). Rise and shine by joining us on our brisk morning walks as we observe wintering land birds and waterfowl! Dress warmly and bring binoculars if possible. Pre-registration is required during the winter months. No fee

WINTER BIRD SLIDE SHOW

Sunday, February 9th, 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

For those of you (zzzz) who have never been able to make it to our 8:00 a.m. bird walks (zzzz) we are offering a winter bird slide show. Andy Provost, a wildlife photographer will show his wonderful slides of the many winter birds you may not have seen. The slide show will begin following our bird walk.

FEE: \$2.00 (NBS Members \$1.00)

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING WORKSHOP

Saturday, February 15. 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Join Ann Truslow, a National Outdoor Leadership Instructor as she discusses basic equipment choices, clothing, winter safety, and demonstrates care, waxing, and skiing techniques. Afterwards, ski the trails at the Norman Bird Sanctuary, observing nature and enjoying the pleasures of this sport. If conditions are not right for skiing, have a cup of hot cocoa and watch Skinny Skiing, a film which portrays cross country skiing in all its moods from peaceful glides through the winter woods to the thrill of competition. The film lasts 30 minutes.

FEE: \$6.00 (NBS Members \$4.00)
Pre-registration is required.

OWL PROWL

Friday, February 28. 7:30 p.m.

Shhh! Listen for the calls of our sanctuary owls. Join us for a night walk as we listen for the calls of the Screech, Barred and Great Horned owls. It's their mating season, so their voices should be heard. Bring a flashlight for owl spotting. Dress warmly!

FEE: \$3.00 (NBS Members \$2.00)

PUDDING STONE, RIDGES, AND

BARRIER BEACHES

Saturday, March 22, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Explore the geology of the Norman Bird Sanctuary with Janet Stroup, a local geologist and naturalist who will lead a hike to the ridges to explain the earth forming processes that shaped our local landscape. Please wear sturdy shoes.

FEE: \$2.00 (NBS Members \$1.00)
Pre-registration is required



WOODCOCK WALK

Saturday, March 15th. 5:30 p.m.

It's a tradition! Every year about this time, the male woodcock, (*Philhela Minor*) makes its ritual courtship flight. Learn about the habits of this wonderful spring reveler, while toasting its return with champagne.

FEE: \$4.00 (NBS Members \$3.00)
Pre-registration is required.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

NATURE CLUB

Saturday mornings, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Is there an alternative to the Saturday morning "nothing to do?". Sure there is! Have your child participate in Nature Club where he or she can safely explore the nature trails at NBS under the guidance of a teacher/naturalist. We will also discover the natural world through crafts, songs, games and films. Each week is designed around a theme. Nature Club is for children in grades K - 4. Children are grouped by age. We will provide a mid-morning snack.

Session #3	Jan. 25	Pioneers
	Feb. 1	Hawks and Owls
	8	Winter Adventure
	15	Helping Wildlife in Our World.

Session #4	Mar. 8	Trees
	15	Weather and Kites
	22	Nature Crafts
	29	The Water Around Us

FEE: \$ 24.00 (NBS Members \$ 20.00)

Pre-registration is required

PRE-SCHOOL NATURE HOURS

Wednesday afternoon, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Because of the great response to our fall series, we are offering a new winter/spring series. Designed to nurture positive feelings toward the natural world, parents and pre-schoolers (ages 3 - 5) can participate in these hour long programs; observing and learning about animals and plants, creating crafts, singing songs and listening to nature stories. Weather permitting, we hope to spend some time outdoors,

FEE: \$8.00 (NBS Members \$6.00)

Pre-registration is required.

Winter Series

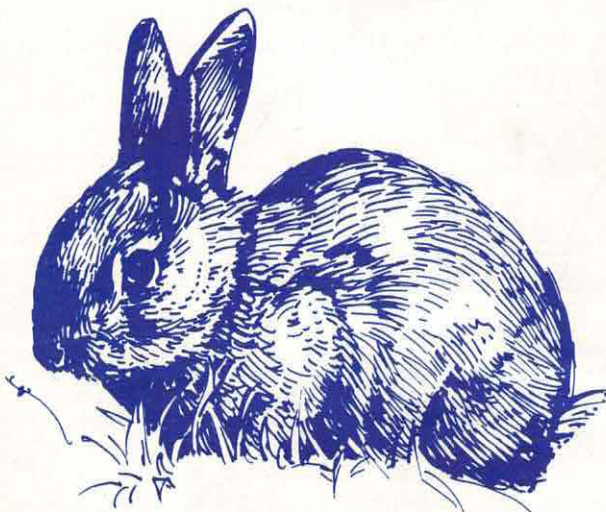
Jan. 22	Winter Birds
29	Tracks, Tracks, and more Animal Tracks
Feb. 5	Winter Senses
12	Weather

Early Spring Series

Mar. 5	Winter Seashore
12	Trees Give Us Many Things
19	Spring is Here
26	Baby Animals

The fee for each series is \$ 8.00
(NBS members \$ 6.00)

Limit 10 children each session
Pre-registration is required.



Winter Week

February 17 - 21 . 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Crafts, hikes, songs, games and nature discovery activities are all part of the fun learning during winter week. Imagine spending your vacation with nature!

For children in grades K - 4

FEE: \$30.00 (NBS Members \$ 25.00)

Pre-registration is required.

GARDEN MEETING

Sunday, March 23. 2:00 P.M.

Any sanctuary member who is interested in having a garden plot this summer **MUST** attend this meeting!

Returning gardeners; you must also attend or we will assume that you do not wish to retain your plot.

During the meeting we will assign plots, review garden regulations, share ideas and have a chance to get to know one another. We hope to have a feature

film or workshop. We will also set aside a time when all gardeners can pitch-in to help spruce up and revitalize the garden area by helping to clean away overgrown vines, remove old fences, rocks, trash and other debris, stabilize the road, mend the stone walls and build gates.

If you want to be part of the sanctuary garden program, mark this date on your calendar!

SANCTUARY STORE

BIRD FEEDERS

We have quality Droll Yankee and Aspect feeders in stock, including tubular feeders, thistle feeders, dome tops, window feeders, pole feeders, suet feeders and more.

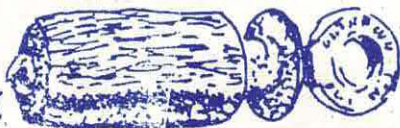


BIRD SONG RECORDS

Relax to the cheerful warbling of summer birds. Listen to the distinct wail of the loon. Learn to identify birds through their songs.

BUG BOX

Clear acrylic box with molded magnifier cover is a favorite with children. Allows close-up observation of insects, shells, flowers, and other treasures.



BIRD CALL

Constructed of birchwood and pewter, Audubon calls attract a variety of song birds, allowing for close observation.



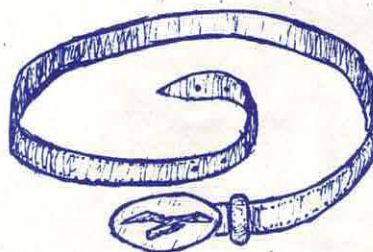
BIRD SEED

We have a wide assortment of seed in a variety of bag sizes. Sunflower, mixed seed, thistle, suet-seed cakes. Some in stock and available by pre-order. Call today!



SANCTUARY BELTS

The bronze buckle which bears the Sanctuary's logo is cast by local artist Jim Breakell. The belt is crafted of high quality split leather. Available by pre-order only. See our sample at the N.B.S. store !



AND MORE!!!

- * Field Guides
- * T-shirts
- * Compasses

Nature Film Series

Sunday afternoons 2:00

Make yourself comfortable near our wood-stove with a mug full of hot cocoa and enjoy these nature films every week. Bring the family, as these films are suitable for all ages unless otherwise noted.

Donation: \$1.00 per adult, \$.50 per child

Jan.26: The Boy and the Snowgoose, The Spider, Water Planet*

Feb.2: The Dead Bird, How Animals Live in the Winter, The Green Sea Turtle*

Feb.9: Beluga Baby: Birth of a Whale, Leaf, The Singing Whale*

Feb.16: Camouflage, Forest Fisherman: The Story of an Otter, Sharks*

Feb.23: Seashore: The Atlantic Coast, The White Seal, Seals*

Mar.2 : Foolish Frog, Water Says, Those Incredible Diving Machines*

Mar.9 : Narragansett Bay **

Mar.16: Following the Tundra Wolf

* from the film series, The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau.

** Suitable for ages High school- Adult.

Animal Milestones

"Freddie", the friendly European Ferret that came to live at the Norman Bird Sanctuary in 1981 has been adopted by Bob Keogh and Dyan Igneri of Jamestown. As wildlife rehabilitators and ferret enthusiasts, Bob and Dyan were looking for a companion for their ferret, "Dweezle". The sanctuary staff decided it was time for "Freddie" to retire. Since ferrets generally live for only eight years we felt it would be better for "Freddie" to live out its remaining years in more comfortable living conditions - in a heated house and in the companionship of another ferret. It was a difficult decision to make especially since so many school children and animal volunteers visited the ferret regularly. To all of "Freddie's" fans, all is not lost as Bob and Dyan are willing to lend both "Freddie" and "Dweezle" for special programs at the sanctuary.



The large brown domestic rabbit that lived here for four years or more, died from an internal illness last November. The rabbit was called "Thumper" by many children who brought it carrots and greens when they came to visit.

"Thumper" warmed the hearts of many and will be sorely missed.



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