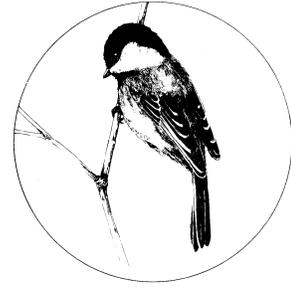


# CHIP NOTES

The Newsletter of  
The Birds of Vermont Museum



Volume 22

Our Twenty-second Year

Fall 2008

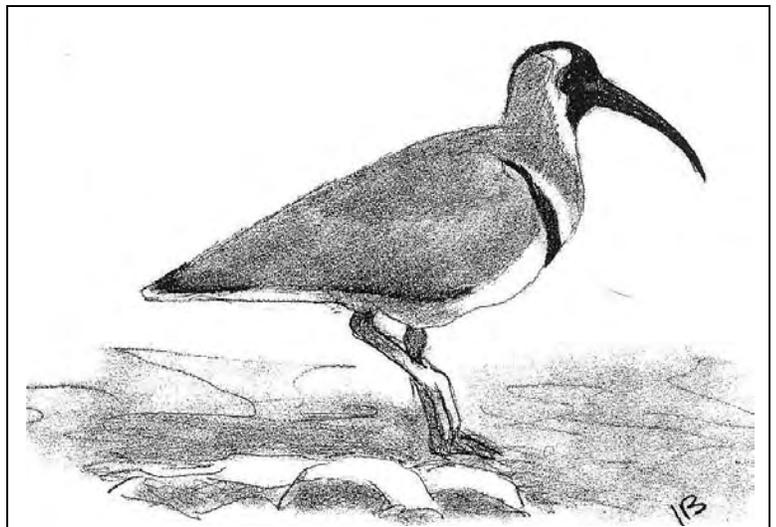
## BIRDING IN KAZAKHSTAN: FIRST PRESENTATION OF THE LUCILLE GREENOUGH LECTURE SERIES SEPTEMBER 20, 2008

Kazakhstan, located in central Asia, south of Russia and northwest of China, is the ninth largest country in the world and is four times the size of Texas. The country covers two time zones and has five climatic regions. The Caspian Sea borders the country on the west, and on the east are the Tien Shan Mountains. With a population of just over 15 million, much of the country is unpopulated. Along with a destination choice due to its cultural history, it is considered one of the top destinations for birding in *Fifty Places to go Birding Before you Die*. The diversity of birds is in part due to the varied habitat found in Kazakhstan. The habitat composed of canyons, pine forests, mountain lakes and forests, steppes, and semi-desert plains host almost 500 species of birds along with rare plants and a variety of other plants and animals.

Hank Kaestner has been a bird watcher for 53 years. He and his brother, Peter, recently had the opportunity to travel to Kazakhstan, and Hank is bringing his slide show to the Birds of Vermont Museum on September 20, 2008. His slide show chronicles their adventures in searching out the 20 or so species of "specialty birds" of this former Soviet Republic. Hank will also include information about the geography, history, and culture of this exotic central Asian birding destination.

Hank Kaestner was director of spice procurement for McCormick and Company for 33 years. His work and his passion for birds guided him around the world. In his travels he has seen over 6,800 species of birds. For more information about Hank's adventures see his profile in March/April 2007 Audubon Magazine or see <http://audubonmagazine.org/profile/profile0703.html>

The Museum will open at 7:00 p.m. Join us for beverages and snacks in front of the viewing window before the slide show. The slide show will start at 7:30. There is a suggested donation of \$10. This is the first annual presentation in our Lucille Greenough lecture series.



Line drawing of an Ibisbill (*Ibidorhyncha struthersii*) by Ingrid Brown. The Ibisbill is found in central Asia and the Himalayas, including Kazakhstan. The legs are bright red in breeding adults. Ibisbills feed by probing their long beaks under rocks along riverbanks. It is often considered a "most-wanted" bird for the serious birder traveling in that part of the world.

## BOARD CHANGES

Our board continues to morph and change as some members retire and new members join.

Robert (Bob) Johnson retired in the last year. Bob had been a board member, and served as board president, for many years. When he wasn't at board meetings we would often see him at the Museum introducing one friend after another to the Museum. His term is being completed by Mae Mayville. Mae was introduced to the Museum by long-time friend and volunteer, Michelle Patenaude. Mae and her husband Bill are often seen both enjoying and volunteering at the Museum. This summer Mae has been helping out the Museum by entering bird sightings into eBird and setting up a Wikipedia page for the Museum.

Sadly, we had to say goodbye and thank you to Jackie Lowe, our Treasurer. She was given a great opportunity at her church that she couldn't pass up. Although she retired from the board she has continued to help advise the Museum on financial matters. Dann Van der Vliet agreed to step up and take on the role of the Treasurer. We are grateful to him for taking on these added responsibilities.

Many of our board members have been active in both board functions and with various projects around the Museum.

Each and every board member offers something unique and we are appreciative of all of them.



Photographs: (top photo) Dann Van der Vliet and son, Rob, help with spring cleaning of the trails. Shirley Johnson, Board President, and Faith Emerson, long-time volunteer, help to clean all the cases (bottom photo).

## THANK YOU EAGLE SCOUTS



From left to right: Atticus Cullinan, Owen Rachampbell, Heidi Racht, Zach Smejkal, Devon Mendocino, Jerome Mendocino, and Kate Reininger-Severin. Not shown: Siobhan and Marie Mendocino.

On August 3, 2008 a group of Eagle Scouts, along with their families spent a very wet summer day pulling white pines from the field above the pond. This is hard work! In addition to removing the pines they put many of them in pots to be given away for free.

A special thanks to Devon Mendocino who organized the day.



Devon Mendocino working in the field above the pond.

## BIRDS OF VERMONT MUSEUM BECOMES A VERMONT eBird AFFILIATE

Each year thousands of bird watchers throughout Vermont carefully record notes on which species they saw, where, and in what numbers. Where will these important and irreplaceable records end up? How will they be used? For the first time in the history of bird watching, these records can now be made immediately available to researchers, educators, conservation biologists, and other birders, thanks to Vermont eBird, an online checklist of Vermont birds.

Created by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and managed by the Vermont Center for Ecostudies, the Birds of Vermont Museum is proud to be an affiliate of Vermont eBird. We hope to help promote and enable birders to submit sightings from anywhere in Vermont at anytime over the internet to a vast database of bird records. The records are stored for easy access by anyone with curiosity about the population status, locations, migratory timing, and many other aspects of a particular bird species' life history.

There are already over 196,866 bird observations from 2,970 locations in Vermont alone! Last winter the eBird database passed the one million bird records mark for the Western Hemisphere!

eBird is not only a warehouse of observational data, it's an online tool that allows you to record, retrieve, and archive your data, all while making your efforts available to scientists interested in using these data for bird conservation. New features include a more comprehensive listing capability found on the "My eBird" pages, which include automated listing capabilities down to the county level in each state. It's

simple, you enter your observations into the database, and eBird keeps all your lists for you. You can even bulk upload data from your personal databases you may already have.

Perhaps you are traveling outside of Vermont this winter? eBird has taken flight across the entire Western Hemisphere. You can enter sightings from Peru, Vermont to Lima, Peru; from Jamaica, Vermont to Kingston, Jamaica!

Birders of all skill levels are invited to use Vermont eBird, from beginners to experts, from school children to professional biologists. The site also features current news items about birds and upcoming birding events. Learn more about Vermont eBird and start entering your sightings at <http://ebird.org/content/vt/>.

*This article was written by Kent McFarland of Vermont Center for Ecostudies.*

Vermont eBird

Home | [About eBird](#) | [Submit Observations](#) | [View and Explore Data](#) | [My eBird](#)

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Welcome to Vermont eBird  
It'll give you wings!

**Birding News and Features**

[eBird & Flickr -- Share Your Bird Photos](#)  
August 04, 2008

We receive many requests from users who would like to be able to upload images of birds that they have photographed. This is particularly true for rarities (birds seen outside their normal range, or at an odd time of year). In the long-run we would like to integrate this feature directly into eBird, but we have come up with a short-term solution. We have created a group within the popular photo-sharing site, Flickr ([www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)). We encourage anyone who has photographs of rare birds to share them with this group (making sure, of course, that you have already submitted the record to eBird!). Our

**VERMONT CENTER ECOSTUDIES**  
UNITING PEOPLE & SCIENCE FOR CONSERVATION

**NORTH BRANCH NATURE CENTER**

**Birds of Vermont Museum**

**Audubon VERMONT**

Welcome page for Vermont eBird. Navigation from this page can bring a birder to a page of general information, a place submit observations, or a page to explore existing data.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### Birding in Kazakhstan: First Presentation of the Lucille Greenough Lecture Series

**September 20, 2008**

**Time:** 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

**Appropriate for:** Adults and older children

**Fee:** Suggested donation \$10.

See page one for more details.

### Shelburne Farms Harvest Festival

**September 20, 2008**

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Appropriate for:** Families

Come celebrate at Shelburne Farms; kids activities, live entertainment, petting zoo, crafters of all kinds, food, food and more food. The Birds of Vermont Museum and the Green Mountain Wood Carvers will have neighboring booths indoors. Come say hello to Museum staff and volunteers, and meet wood carvers showing their craft.

### Museum Day

**September 27, 2008**

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**Appropriate for:** Families

Led by the Smithsonian, The Birds of Vermont Museum has joined 100's of other institutions in using Museum Day as a way to celebrate America's cultural offerings. A printed Museum Day pass is available in Smithsonian magazine and on the Museum Day website. The pass allows for free admission into hundreds of Museum across the country.

### Dead Creek Wildlife Day

**October 4, 2008**

Come celebrate birds and local wildlife with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, along with other state agencies and local non-profits. There will be a wide variety of exhibits and activities, and the Museum will have a booth at Dead Creek Wildlife Management Headquarters, offering bird related books and items for sale. Ingrid will teach soap carving to kids 10 – 11 a.m. and 1 – 2 p.m.

### Open Studio at the Birds of Vermont Museum

**October 11, 2008**

**Time:** 10 – 4, wood carvers on premises 10 – 2 p.m.



Ingrid Brown and Stewart Kirkaldy manning a booth at one of our fall events in 2007.



James Lockhart, President of the Green Mountain Wood Carvers, carving at the Birds of Vermont Museum.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (CONTINUED)

**Open Studio at the Birds of Vermont Museum (continued)** Free admission to the Museum from 10 – 4. The Green Mountain Wood Carvers are holding their annual meeting at the Birds of Vermont Museum at 12 noon. Come visit with them and watch them carve in the workshop before and after their meeting, see them in action, or join the club. Kids activities and soap carving during the day.

### **Big Sit**

**October 12, 2008**

**Time:** Dawn to Dusk

This is the sixth year that the Birds of Vermont Museum is participating in *Birding's Most Sedentary Event*. We sit or stand in a 17-foot circle in the garden behind the Museum, and record every bird species heard or seen. You may leave the circle often, but can't count birds unless you return to the circle. Lots of food, friends, and camaraderie, and hopefully about 30 species of birds! Dress warmly. This is a fundraiser to help support the Museum. Join us for bird watching or sponsor one of our sitters.



The Golden-crowned Kinglet was seen 4 out of the last 5 years during the Big Sit!

### **Sketching Workshop with Artist Kir Talmage**

**October 18, 2008**

**Time:** 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

**Appropriate for:** Adults and older children

**Fee:** \$5.00 for members, \$10.00 for non-members (includes Museum admission)

Using bird carving, and birds at the bird viewing window, Kir Talmage will teach some techniques for sketching birds that will ultimately help you become a better birder. Please sign up by October 17.

### **Museum Open for Thanksgiving Weekend and Gift Shop Sale**

**November 28 and 29, 2008**

**Time:** 10 – 4

The Museum is open to visitors the two days after Thanksgiving, so if you have family and friends around and don't know what to do, come to the Museum! The gift shop is having a sale both days, on everything in the gift shop except consignment items. Members get 20% off, other visitors get 10% off. This is a great time to buy Christmas gifts. If you miss us in November, join us and other local business at the **Richmond Holiday Fair on December 6th**

### **Winter Birds of the Lake Champlain Basin**

**February 7, 2008.**

**Time:** 9:00a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Join Jim Andrews, herpetologist and long-time Champlain Valley birder for another fun day exploring the Champlain Basin for winter birds.



Merlin– a hopeful bird to be seen on our Lake Champlain Basin program

## VISITORS FROM AFAR



A group of primarily forestry professionals visited the Museum from the Ukraine this summer. Above one visitor is giving Bob a decorated egg and a magnet showing a typical field of Ukrainian flowers.



A group of Chinese students with *Green Across the Pacific*, an Environmental Leadership Exchange program, visited the Museum this summer. *Green Across the Pacific* seeks to improve cultural and environmental awareness and cooperation around the world.

## PLANNED GIVING CORNER

In our last issue we discussed the *Charitable Gift Annuity*. This is one of the most simple and popular ways for a donor to make a gift to a charitable organization while allowing the donor a tax deduction and income for life. Another simple way for a donor to contribute to a non-profit organization is to sign over one of the donor's assets. For example, imagine an individual has purchased a life insurance policy to support his or her family. Then imagine 30 years have passed and the family is now self-supportive. The donor could sign over the life insurance, and receive a tax deduction, to a charity of their choice. Donors can also sign over IRAs, or 401Ks to one or more charitable organization. This type of gift saves their heirs income tax that they would otherwise have to pay.

The Museum has partnered with the Vermont Community for managing these and other types of gifts. The Vermont Community Foundation will manage and invest the gift, and pay annuities. For more information please call Erin Talmage at 802-434-2167 or see <http://vermontcf.org/charitable-gift-annuities/>.



### WISH LIST

- LCD Projector \$750
- Educational Materials for School Programs \$250
- On-call local volunteer to help with snow shoveling

**Thank you Sally Robinson for purchasing two more iflyers allowing Museum visitors to enjoy bird songs.**

## CARVING REPORT

The first portion of this summer's big project took a few weeks, and a team of three. Bob decided to tackle a reflection issue on two rows of cases in the Nesting Bird Gallery. Twenty-five cases needed to have their back panels removed and replaced with masonite. Bob's granddaughter, Alaria, who just started college, measured and painted all the new panels, with some guidance from Ingrid on the use of the air brush. Alaria had free rein on the design and did a variety of dramatic backgrounds, including a sunset for the Red-winged Blackbirds. Bob was very pleased that another generation of his family was involved with the creative aspects of the Museum, and felt that Alaria did a great job.

Bob and Ingrid moved each case one at a time, from its place in the row to the workshop, where the panels were removed by hand, and Ingrid did any necessary cleaning. Some cases were too large to move more than a few feet, and these were done in the aisle. Ingrid did some tricky maneuvering on two stepladders, since the tops and fiber optics had to be removed. The improvement was dramatic.

For the second portion of this project, Bob took all the tilted information boards off the cases, about 120 of them, and cut a new angle to reduce glare, and reinstalled them. Bob continues to fine-tune a handful of cases and then he will be finished with this project.

Wood carvings continue to progress this summer. Bob is working on a Pied-billed Grebe and a Cattle Egret. Ingrid continues with her largest carving, the Great Black-backed Gull.

Ingrid just finished taking a three-day carving class with Ken Klingler that was offered through the Green Mountain Wood Carvers, who have a class, banquet, and wood carver's show annually in Morrisville.

Carving demonstrations continue at the Museum every Sunday from 1:00 - 3:00. For children and beginning carvers, join us for soap carving at Dead Creek Wildlife Day on October 4th, 2008 or at the Museum on October 11, 2008.



Current stage of three carvings being worked on at the Birds of Vermont Museum by Bob Spear and Ingrid Brown.



Alaria, Lanphaer, Bob Spear's granddaughter, taking a break from painting the background to the nesting bird displays.

We like to celebrate birthdays and we like cake! This summer we celebrated Bob's 88 1/2 birthday with cake and ice cream. In this picture Alison Wagner is singing Bob a special birthday song. We were all impressed with Alison's singing ability!



## SAVE THESE DATES

Sundays Carving Demonstrations 1:00—3:00  
September 20 Birding in Kazakhstan  
September 20 Shelburne Farms Harvest Festival  
October 11 Open Studio Day  
October 12 Big Sit!  
October 18 Sketching Workshop  
November 28—29 Museum Open 10—4. Thanksgiving  
Sale in Gift Shop  
December 6 Richmond Holiday Market

For additional information, or to register for the class, please call 434-2167 or check out our website [www.birdsofvermont.org](http://www.birdsofvermont.org).

*The mission of the Birds of Vermont Museum is to educate children and adults about the environment through the study of birds and their habitats.*

## Board of Trustees 2008

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Stephen Page	Craig Reynolds	Bob Spear
David Sunshine		

## Museum Staff

Ingrid Brown, Curator  
Bob Spear, Founding Director  
Erin Talmage, Museum Director

Thanks to Northeast Delta Dental for continuing to supporting our newsletter.



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