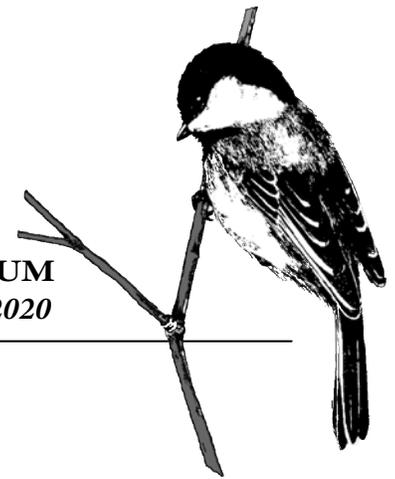


# Chip Notes

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE BIRDS OF VERMONT MUSEUM  
Volume 33

Fall 2019 – Winter 2020



## DAVE TUTTLE: CREATING A NEW GENERATION OF CARVERS



With a small knife in hand, Dave Tuttle took up woodcarving when he was a Boy Scout. After a few shavings, a life-long delight was born. He whittles, chip carves, and uses other techniques to create small and large projects. While Dave primarily uses knives and hand tools for carving, he takes advantage of power tools when needed, and has one of the largest knife sharpening tool collections we have ever seen. Dave teaches, exhibits at carving shows, and sells some of his creations.

In 2010, David Tuttle offered a one-day woodcarving workshop here at the Museum. Since this first session—they carved and painted a Northern Cardinal and you can find a photo in this issue—Dave has taught classes here at the Museum several times each year. Both new and seasoned students make small, charming, realistic woodcarvings. The class spends the morning working with hand tools like knives and gouges; the afternoon is spent painting, with almost everyone going home with a finished work. Although most classes involve a bird, the students have in the past chosen to make a turtle, a bear, and even a moose.

One class with Dave, and his talents as a carver and teacher will have you hooked on a hobby to last a lifetime.  
—Elizabeth Spinney

Dave's carving skills and amicable teaching style have inspired me to pursue the art form for years, and he has helped me connect with the wooden blocks I hold in new and exciting ways. —Amy Alfieri

Dave tells me, "Your carving is looking good!" Then there is always a pause ...and he'll tell you what you need to do to make it better. He is a great teacher. And the Birds Museum is a great place to go. —Albert Sanborn

Each year more carvers join in, and we often ask him to teach "just one more" class. Dave has developed quite a following, and several of the students try to attend each and every class. What a testament to his teaching skill!

In addition to all this, Dave has carved over 50 "comfort birds" from trees that fell down in the 2013 flood. We sold these as part of our Bridges to Birds fundraiser. Dave also carved the Brook Trout on display in the Wetland Diorama, as well as some bird pins and ornaments for the Museum's gift shop.

Dave's wife of 61 years, Lynn, joins him for most classes. She almost always brings an apple kuchen to share. The combination of Dave's great teaching and Lynn's cake could turn anyone into an accomplished and contented wood carver.



## POLLINATION SEASON

From May through October, 4-8 year olds explored, in real time, the places and players serving as key factors in the fascinating process of pollination. The Museum gardens were especially lush and vibrant this summer, which attracted an amazing variety of pollinator species to watch and wonder about as we regularly visited the different plots. The Museum's Nestlings program introduced everyone to the parts of flowering plants and the roles of male and female structures in pollination.

We examined flower parts under the microscope and modeled the mechanisms of pollination with engaging activities. We learned about and observed nectar-loving species responsible for cross-pollinating flowers and thought about ways flowers attract bees, beetles, butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds. We crafted bumblebee sound makers, which produced a chorus of buzzing rhythms when spinning at the end of a string. We performed the "waggle dance" used by certain bees to communicate locations of favored pollen-laden flowers.

Examples of the products of pollination such as fruits, vegetables, and seeds, which provide food for



*Examining the intricate and diverse details of different flowers with the aids of magnifying glasses, a stereoscope, and a full microscope.*

foraging animals (that's humans too!), helped us realize the importance of pollination to all life. We are reminded to celebrate flowers and pollinators with every bite of our colorful, fragrant, variety-rich foods.

It was a great pollinator summer!



## DIANE KLEMENT, SUMMER INTERN

Coming to us from Georgia, Diane Klement spent several weeks with us during the summer of 2019. Diane enthusiastically welcomed visitors to the Museum with a ready smile and introductions to the carving displays. She creatively fashioned examples of pollinator insects from natural materials and paper for installation in our pollination library display.

Diane took it on herself to expand the work of a previous intern, Lynn Sipsey, shaping and painting additional eggs—of many different species—for us to use in teaching programs and for visitors to touch and hold.

Thank you Diane, for all your help this summer, and we look forward to seeing all you accomplish in the future.



## THE CARVER'S DAUGHTER

### *Part 18: My Father and the Meteor*

So, it's helpful to have a wise person to call on the phone when something really weird happens. And I'm kind of a magnet for weird things. My theory is that everyone is a magnet for weird things, but some of us notice them more than others do. I think that being both a birder and a writer contribute to this. I'm always looking around me for little flitting things, so I notice other stuff going on. And then the writer part of me wants to make a story out of it. Of course, having a lot of imagination makes everything more interesting.

Anyway, my father was used to me calling him every time I saw something cool like a moose ("it just walked across the front lawn! In broad daylight!"), a bobcat ("from my doctor's office in Williston, can you believe that!"), or coyotes ("why do they surround my house and howl? They sound really scary!") But there was only one time I didn't wait until a decent hour of the day to call.

My bedroom faces east, and I have a set of three windows aimed at Mt. Mansfield, carefully placed in the wall so that I can see the mountain from bed. When my husband and I were designing the house, that was an important consideration, far more so than, for example, where the refrigerator would go in the kitchen. Through those windows, I can also see the moonrise, or a brilliant field of stars, or the lovely lavender-pink wash on the clouds just before the sun comes up. I'm a very light sleeper and

will often roll over to look out and check on things, like to see if there are deer under the apple trees.

One spring morning before sunrise, I was lying in bed looking up at the sky. The clouds had the pre-dawn luminosity that only happens early in the morning. I could just barely make out the cloud surfaces, some lighter, some darker, all of them with the raggedness that spoke of strong wind aloft. And then I saw a small, bright, round object come down out of the clouds. It travelled slowly, parallel to the bottom edge of the clouds, from east to south. Behind it was a little tail that was sparking and flickering, not like a long, smooth comet's tail, but like a cartoon of a small, round bomb with a lit fuse.

I jumped out of bed without taking my eyes off the ball of light and ran to the windows. It kept moving at a slow, constant speed. I remember thinking, "Don't land, I don't want to be taken prisoner by tall, pale creatures!" and at the same time, thinking, "Land, land, I want to see you!"

And then the really weird thing happened. The bright object went back up into the clouds and disappeared!

So I called my father. It took him a while to answer, but I didn't notice it was four in the morning until he picked up, sounding alarmed. But all that mattered was that he was awake.

... continued on page 7

### *Thank you, supporters, partners, and friends*

- » Alison Wagner
- » Ann Day
- » Ariel Burgess
- » Audubon Vermont
- » Ben Wang & Vermont Commons students
- » Brian Machanic
- » Bridget Butler
- » Charlie Frazier
- » Dave and Lynn Tuttle
- » Donald and Deborah Lauper
- » Erny and Darlene Palola
- » Fred Aldrich
- » Front Porch Forum Communicators
- » Ingrid and Graeme Rhind
- » Jeff Landa and Northeast Delta Dental
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- » Meg Guilfooy and Huntington River Vineyard
- » Pat Spielman and Jim Morris
- » Raven Davis
- » Roland Wilbur
- » Rosemary Mosco
- » Shirley and Bob Johnson
- » Thomas Corrigan

## THE BIG SIT!

Team Loonatics gathered at the Museum on Sunday, October 13, 2019 to take up their positions, with binoculars in hand, to record all bird species sighted or heard in the near vicinity of the feeding station.

Led by our #1 Big Sit! birder, Jim Osborn, this annual, open-to-all, fundraising event documented a grand tally of 30 species during the 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. challenge. Below is the official checklist:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Canada Goose <i>Branta canadensis</i>               | 16. Red-breasted Nuthatch <i>Sitta canadensis</i>        |
| 2. Mourning Dove <i>Zenaida macroura</i>               | 17. White-breasted Nuthatch <i>Sitta carolinensis</i>    |
| 3. Turkey Vulture <i>Cathartes aura</i>                | 18. Golden-crowned Kinglet <i>Regulus satrapa</i>        |
| 4. Red-tailed Hawk <i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>            | 19. Ruby-crowned Kinglet <i>Regulus calendula</i>        |
| 5. Barred Owl <i>Strix varia</i>                       | 20. Hermit Thrush <i>Catharus guttatus</i>               |
| 6. Red-bellied Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes carolinus</i>  | 21. American Robin <i>Turdus migratorius</i>             |
| 7. Downy Woodpecker <i>Picoides pubescens</i>          | 22. Cedar Waxwing <i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>             |
| 8. Hairy Woodpecker <i>Picoides villosus</i>           | 23. American Goldfinch <i>Spinus tristis</i>             |
| 9. Pileated Woodpecker <i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>       | 24. Common Yellowthroat <i>Geothlypis trichas</i>        |
| 10. Blue-headed Vireo <i>Vireo solitarius</i>          | 25. Yellow-rumped Warbler <i>Setophaga coronata</i>      |
| 11. Blue Jay <i>Cyanocitta cristata</i>                | 26. White-throated Sparrow <i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i> |
| 12. American Crow <i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>         | 27. Dark-eyed Junco <i>Junco hyemalis</i>                |
| 13. Common Raven <i>Corvus corax</i>                   | 28. Red-winged Blackbird <i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>      |
| 14. Black-capped Chickadee <i>Poecile atricapillus</i> | 29. Brown Creeper <i>Certhia americana</i>               |
| 15. Tufted Titmouse <i>Baeolophus bicolor</i>          | 30. Gray Catbird <i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>           |



## VOLUNTEERS

The Birds of Vermont Museum would not be here if it wasn't for the great group of people who volunteer in myriad ways to help keep the place running.

Volunteers welcome and engage visitors, help us run the gift shop, weed the garden, maintain trails, cut trees, remove invasive species, dust the carvings, assist with projects, conduct programs, feed birds, record data, organize office space, shelve books, carve birds, enter data, deliver brochures, proofread grants, and lead walks. Our board is entirely volunteer and they spend hours looking at financial documents, planning programs and activities, and preparing for the future.

For all of those who have helped us in 2019, **THANK YOU!** Let's give a special extra shout-out to Dick Affolter, Abi Barnes, Lauren Bostwick, Zac Cota-Weaver, Becky Cozzens, Anne Dannenberg, Debbie Duvall, Linda Gionti, John Gergely, Spencer Hardy, Kerry and Linda Hurd, Tom Jiamachello, Bob Johnson, Marie, Erik, Lachlan, and Kassel Johnson, Shirley Johnson, Diane Klement, Ginger Lubkowitz, Bill Mayville, Mae Mayville, Jim Morris, Louanne Nielsen, Jim Osborn, Erny Palola, Darlene Palola, Michele Patenaude, Rita Sloan, Steve and Levi Smith, Kari Jo Spear, Elizabeth Spinney, Patrick Spinney, Debra Sprague, Magnus Stien, David Sunshine, Van Talmage, Nat and Karen Van der Els, Brian and Abe Valentine, Alison Wagner, Brenda Waters, Brian Werneke, and Shirley Zundell.

We wouldn't be here without you.



## COMING TO YOU

### *Out-reaching from the Museum*

Although we often have our closed sign out in the winter, it doesn't mean things are quiet around the Museum. We are open by appointment and welcome visitors; there are still birds at the feeders and volunteers helping us with winter projects. This is also the time of year we take the show on the road with our Outreach Programs! We visit libraries, senior centers, and community groups. We set up month-long exhibits at libraries, give talks, or engage in an activity, all towards the deeper and broader understanding and appreciation of birds in all their dimensions.

What is it like to do an Outreach Program for the Museum? Our educational outreach programs often grow from ideas shared with us, questions visitors have asked, conservation issues in the news, and our personal interests and passions. If you were to eavesdrop on us during a planning session, you'd hear us imagining our audiences, their skills, interests, habits of mind, and then looking for ways to both connect and stretch. Once we commit to a new program, we take the seed idea, the people it's for, and our reasons why we do this, then start assembling the information, materials, and ways to teach all that. Do we need photographs, maps, carvings, sound, slide show, paper and pencil? What questions are we likely to get? What biological scope are we working from/to: an individual bird, a habitat, a conservation movement? What human connection are we fostering?

Our programs are typically 45 minutes. Some present images and charts with a talk; others involve the audience using pen and paper, making bird sounds, or tasting coffee. This winter, our Museum Educator, Allison Gergely, is delivering a series called *It's a Bird's Life* to several senior centers, sharing a different species each month. Our Outreach Coordinator, Kir Talmage, led two different programs about how drawing (no prior skills needed) can help us see birds in a deeper way. Erin Talmage, our Executive Director, will be giving presentations about Citizen Science, and the relationship between birds and the coffee you drink. In addition, you can see our displays at some local libraries.



We're out there, and we invite you to consider which of our programs might work for a group you're involved in. For details about the current available programs, take a look at our website. Adult programs are listed on <https://birdsofvermont.org/education/programs-for-adults/>; ones tailored for kids are on <https://birdsofvermont.org/education/programs-for-children/>. Available Library programs are at <https://birdsofvermont.org/education/traveling-displays/>.

Allison Gergely explains the life cycle of birds to an attentive audience.

### *Wish List*

- » Vivitek Qumi portable projector for presentations
- » A better telephone system
- » 3-4 iPads to install in exhibits (for bird sounds, etc.)
- » Kiosks to hold iPad(s)
- » Donations for Solar Panels
- » Donations for updating computers
- » Snow shoes
- » Hiking sticks
- » Funding for a summer intern
- » Pulk (a Nordic sled for hauling)
- » Stereoscope
- » Trail cams
- » Pedestrian counters for trails / outdoor use
- » Binoculars for public programs
- » Gift cards to Guy's Farm and Yard
- » Wood chips for trails and gardens

Please contact us if you can help with any of these items, and we can provide more details.

## WHAT TO DO THIS WINTER

### CALL-TO-VISIT SEASON

*Friday, November 1 — Thursday, April 30*

Visitors welcome ... but do call ahead by a day or three so we can unlock the door and ensure the Museum is ready for you or your group.

### IT'S A BIRD'S LIFE (*a series*)

*Various days*

Our own Allison Gergely heads out to a variety of retirement communities to share special birds with residents and friends. If you'd like to have your group or library experience these in-depth 1-hour programs, please call.

*Fee applies*

### WRAP BIRD BOOKS AND MORE

*Saturday, December 21 • shifts available 10:00am – 8:00pm*  
Phoenix Books, Essex Junction

Complement your gift-giving with wrapping done by us! Call us to volunteer.

*Donations welcome • Volunteers needed*

### BIRD MONITORING WALKS

*Last Saturdays, December 28, January 25, February 29, March 28 • 8:00 – 9:00am*

All birders welcome on the monthly monitoring walk. Coffee and conversation afterwards. Please bring your own binoculars.

*Free, donations welcome*

### GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

*Friday–Monday, February 14 – 17*

A perfect citizen science experience for beginners of all sorts. Discover more at <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/> or come



Check our website for updates and additions:  
<https://www.birdsofvermont.org/events>

to the Museum on Saturday, February 15, and count with us.

### CARVING WORKSHOP

*with David Tuttle*

*Saturday, February 15 • 9:30am – 3:30pm*

Carve and paint a small project during this one-day carving class! Materials and coffee provided.

*\$30 members (Museum or GMWC), \$40 non-members*  
*All levels, Limit: 10 • Must pre-register*

### POTLUCK LUNCH and BOARD GAMES

*Saturday, February 29 • 11am – 2pm*

Have you played Wingspan yet? We want to, too! Bring a dish to share, and get in touch with a game suggestion if you want to. We have a selection of bird-related / bird-friendly games we're excited to play!

### SEE IT. SKETCH IT. BIRD IT.

*Tuesday, March 10 • 6:30 – 7:30pm*  
Russell Memorial Library, Monkton

What do you look for when you look at a bird? How do you remember for later? We'll show you. Register by contacting the Russell Memorial Library in Monkton.

### CITIZEN SCIENCE 101

*Tuesday, April 28, 2020 • 6:30 – 8:00pm*  
Milton Public Library, Milton, Vermont

Beginner? Expert? Great! Discover a research project that fits your interests, and see how your data can be used to monitor and measure changes over time and space.

### LOOKING FORWARD

March • *Deadline* for our 2020 Art Show. The Call to Artists will be emailed and posted on our website.

April • *Volunteer Work Day*

May • *Open for the 2020 Season*  
*Early Birders Morning Walks*

And stay tuned for

*Bees of Vermont* with Kent McFarland

*Raptors, Raptor Banding, and the NABBP* with P. Brian Machanic

*Carving with Power Tools* with Jim Mitchell

*The Carver's Daughter*

continued from page 3

"I just saw a UFO!"

"Hmm," he said. That was his usual response to an odd statement.

"No, I did! It was a bright round ball, and it was going really slow, and it had a sparking tail, and it went BACK UP INTO THE CLOUDS!!!"

"Hmm."

"No, I'm wide awake! I didn't dream it."

He was quiet for a moment, and then I could almost hear him nodding. "I saw something like that once. Little flashy tail, not like a comet. Going slowly. Bright enough to show up in broad daylight."

Now I wanted to say, "Hmm." It was one thing to see a UFO. It was another thing to hear my father say that he had seen one.

"Yeah?" I asked.

"Yeah. I was canoeing down near the mouth of the Lamoille River in the middle of the afternoon, years ago. It was a meteor. Usually they burn up in the atmosphere with a flash. A shooting star, you know? When they get low, they can look like little balls of really bright light with short, sparky tails. The one I saw went slower than I thought it should, too. It might have landed somewhere."

I was shaking my head. "No, it went back up!" I still had

my eyes on the jagged hole in the clouds. "I saw it!"

There was a pause and I heard him pull back a curtain. There was another pause. Then he said, "It's pretty windy. Suspect some of the clouds are lower than others."

Oh.

Duh.

It had just disappeared behind a lower cloud.

"Well, it really looked like it went up."

"Yeah, I imagine so."

We were quiet a minute, thinking it over. Then he said, "Kind of cool things. Meteors. Never forgot the one I saw."

He'd probably never forget the one I saw, either.

"So no aliens?" I had to ask.

"Probably not."

"Darn."

He laughed, and then we went back to bed, and I don't think it ever occurred to me to apologize for waking him up.

Because we were like that.

Hmm.

— Kari Jo Spear 

**Kari Jo Spear**, daughter of Bob Spear, is a blogger and author of young adult novels. She can be found online at <http://karijospear.blogspot.com/>. Earlier stories in the *Carver's Daughter* series are on our blog, at

**Winter Birding**

This time of year is great for citizen science and birding. We encourage you join a **Christmas Bird Count** (December 14 – January 5) or **Feederwatch** (November 9 – April 3).

The CBC is the longest-running citizen science project we know of. This year is the 120th Christmas Bird Count! For info, and to contact a nearby Circle coordinator, visit <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count>.

Feederwatch is terrific for beginners and those who prefer to be "indoors-mostly". You can get started at <https://feederwatch.org/>.



**Birds of Vermont Museum**  
900 Sherman Hollow Road  
Huntington, Vermont 05462  
[www.birdsofvermont.org](http://www.birdsofvermont.org)

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### SAVE THE DATES

December	Wrap Bird Books and More
January	Volunteer for Feederwatch
February	Bird Games
March	See It, Sketch It, Bird It
<i>Last Saturdays</i>	Bird Monitoring Walks

Details inside and on our website. To register,  
call (802) 434-2167 or email [museum@birdsofvermont.org](mailto:museum@birdsofvermont.org)

*Volunteers always needed*

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### Museum Staff

Erin Talmage, Executive Director  
Allison Gergely, Museum Educator  
Kir Talmage, Outreach & IT Coordinator

*Please send comments or changes of address to*

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*The mission of the Birds of Vermont  
Museum is to provide education, to nurture an  
appreciation of the environment, and  
to study birds and their habitats using  
woodcarvings and other Museum resources.*