

## THE BROOKLINE BIRD CLUB

by H. Lawrence Jodrey and Gerald L. Soucy

In June of 1913 a group of people interested in wild birds gathered at the Brookline Public Library. This meeting culminated in the founding of an organization whose stated purpose was to "study, observe, and protect native songbirds and to encourage their propagation" -- The Brookline Bird Club. Seventy-five years later, the BBC, as it is commonly known, is possibly the largest bird club in the United States.

A 1930 BBC Bulletin posed and answered the following question:

Why join the Brookline Bird Club? 1. Because of its walks and their opportunities for fellowship and for healthful outdoor exercise. 2. Because of the chance to get better acquainted with birds, through contact with others who are interested in birds and perhaps know more about them than you; and because of the chance to compare notes with other bird lovers and to help each other.

Bird walks have continued to be the main reason for the club's existence. In seventy-five years the club has scheduled more than ten thousand field trips in the course of which all of the species on the Massachusetts Audubon Society Checklist have been recorded plus eighty-three write-ins, making a total of three hundred and eighty-five species on the Massachusetts life-list of the club, including one species now extinct, the Heath Hen, which was added to the club's list on a trip to Martha's Vineyard on April 19, 1931.

Although some adventurous members of the club had embarked on the first of two trips to Europe by ocean liner in 1926, the first all-day automobile trip was held on May 23, 1936, and the announcement in the *Bulletin* was accompanied by an editor's note, "It will be an experiment of course. It may not be a success." Fifty years later, in 1987, two hundred and seventeen morning, afternoon, evening, and all-day trips, primarily by automobile, were scheduled during the year, as well as weekend excursions to Maine, western Massachusetts, Nantucket, and Martha's Vineyard. In recent years there have also been stimulating journeys to Alaska, Texas, Arizona, Canada, Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia.

The Brookline Bird Club has always made a special effort to attract young people and help them develop a love of the out-of-doors and an interest in bird study. Some of these youths have become eminent in the field of ornithology: namely, Richard Pough, Maurice Broun, Roger Tory Peterson, and Peter Alden.

Although the goals of the club have remained simple, time has brought its share of changes: technological improvements in the quality, size, and weight of binoculars and telescopes; an abundance of informative field guides for the

novice and the experienced birder; improved accessibility to remote birding areas by automobile and air travel; local and national "hot lines" that provide up-to-date announcements of rare or unusual birds; more practical and casual clothing that provides all-weather protection with greater comfort and flexibility; and most recently, CB-radio transmission that provides a valuable conduit between trip leaders and their groups, keeping them together and informed about the whereabouts of birds within local receiving areas.

The Brookline Bird Club has always extended an open invitation to members and nonmembers to participate in its activities. The club invites all birders to join the celebration of the club's seventy-fifth anniversary at Bentley College in Waltham on Saturday, November 12, 1988.

**THE BROOKLINE BIRD CLUB  
75th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION  
Field Trips Sunday, November 13, 1988**

**Stellwagen Bank Pelagic Trip:** all-day trip co-sponsored by the BBC, Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS), and New England Aquarium; leaving from Boston; leaders will include Jerry Bertrand, President MAS, and Simon Perkins, Staff Ornithologist MAS.

**Cape Ann/Newburyport/Salisbury:** all-day trip; leader, William C. Drummond; participants supply their own transportation.

**Brookline and vicinity:** a morning trip; leader, Robert H. Stymeist; participants supply their own transportation.

TO OBTAIN A REGISTRATION FORM with conference options and prices, send in the coupon on the next page or call Ms. Sarah Whittum, Marlboro, MA, 617/508 - 485-2537. Preregistration is required.



**BROOKLINE BIRD CLUB**  
**75th ANNIVERSARY**  
**CELEBRATION**  
**November 12, 1988**

**\* Morning and Afternoon Sessions**

Presentations and illustrated talks by Peter Alden,  
Wayne R. Petersen, Paul M. Roberts, Donald and  
Lillian Stokes

"Perspectives, Programs, and Projects" by John L.  
Fillio, PRNWR; Dr. Thomas W. French, MDFW;  
and Linda E. Leddy, MBO

Exhibits

**\* Commemorative Banquet**

Reminiscences

by The Honorable H. Lawrence Jodrey

"The Joys of Tropical Birding"

by Victor Emanuel

*Come celebrate.* Brookline Bird Club members and nonmembers are invited, but please register early. Attendance is limited, and we must confirm arrangements well in advance. To obtain a registration form with conference options and prices, send in the coupon or call Ms. Sarah Whittum, Marlboro, MA, 617/508 - 485-2537.

Yes, please send me a registration form for the BBC  
75th Anniversary Celebration, November 12-13, 1988.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to the Brookline Bird Club, Ms. Sarah Whittum,  
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