



# Newsletter ~ Jan/Feb 2015

*A Birding Club for Northern Maine*

[www.aroostookbirders.com](http://www.aroostookbirders.com)

Volume 24, Pg. 1 of 1

## Upcoming Events:

**February Meeting & Program -**

**Thursday, Feb. 26 at 6:30 pm**

**“Forest, Food & Phenology:**

**Research on Northern Maine Birds”**

**UMPI Campus Center, Alumni Room**

Dr. Jason Johnston, ornithologist and associate professor of wildlife ecology at UMPI will highlight the diverse research he and his students are doing on northern Maine birds.

**Saturday, March 14, begins 8:00 am**

**Duck Box Cleanout Day at**

**Aroostook National Wildlife Refuge**

Join with ‘Friends of the Refuge’ for a conservation excursion out onto frozen ponds to help “give back to the birds” at the refuge in Limestone. For more details visit our website: [AroostookBirders.com](http://AroostookBirders.com).

**March Annual Meeting & Program**

**(Election of Officers)**

**Thursday, March 19 at 6:30 p.m.**

**Location TBA**

**“Seabirds of Maine” - presentation by**

**Bill Sheehan (see details below)**

### Aroostook Birders Officers:

President: Bill Sheehan

Vice-President: Russell Mount

Secretary: Judy Roe

Treasurer: Denise Gagnon

Publicity: Sue Pinette

Membership: Bob Pinette



Dr. Jason Johnston, with student Dan Sheffield, nets a Gray Jay in North Maine Woods, T11 R8, as part of his recent study of food use by forest birds.

Aroostook Birders is an organization whose members share a passion for bird watching and an appreciation of northern Maine’s natural environment through field trips and educational programs.

**Bird enthusiasts of all ages and ability levels are welcomed.**

## **Our Recent Audubon Christmas Bird Counts**

The **Caribou/Limestone Bird Count** on Sunday, Dec. 14, saw 17 birders out for the day counting birds. Weather was overcast, warm with good conditions and 10 inches of snow on the ground. Ponds/wetlands still had ice, but warm temps had cleared streams and rivers. The diversity of species and the numbers of individuals of uncommon species were exceptional. We had 40 different species (five which we’d never previously found), the highest number in the five-year history of Caribou’s count. Most interesting to me was there were 23 species which we had highest numbers of individuals *ever* on the count. Open conditions, abundance of food/fruit, influx of irruptive species and probably the earlier date, all contributed.

We had a really good Jan. 3, 2015, **Presque Isle Bird Count**. Most notable was all the help - a record 37 birders with 27 out in the field! As for the birds, we had lower numbers of total individuals but our diversity (40 species) was second highest ever, plus sighted a Carolina Wren at a feeder the days before and after! Would have been a first-ever species for us! Noteworthy was: highest ever counts of Mallards, Wild Turkeys and Downy Woodpeckers, our second-ever Merlin, plus three “pretty spiffy” Snowy Owls and the first Brown-headed Cowbirds seen on the count in 25 years. Also, finches did well with seven species.



**Common Redpoll, one of the many finch species seen on this year’s Bird Counts.**

*Photo courtesy of Paul Cyr*

Having a big finch irruption and an exceptional fruit year definitely helped with the numbers of species on both counts. The other facet of our success was of course, all the help we had! Our northern Maine counts now regularly have more field and feeder watchers contributing than many counts in more populated spots in southern and central Maine. Thank you all for the help and enthusiasm!" **Bill**

Learn about Maine’s seabirds- from the well-known Puffins, terns, gulls and seabirds to the lesser-known Manx Shearwater, Leach’s Storm-Petrel and Great Cormorant. Want to see a Northern Fulmar or Dovekie? Do you know a “sea pigeon” or “squeaker” when you see one? From the perspective of a pelagic and coastal birding guide, Bill will talk about the diversity of seaside and open ocean birds, and best times and locations to look for them.

Aroostook Birders is now offering lifetime memberships in our birding club. Individuals:\$100 and Family:\$150. Contact Bob Pinette at 764-1801 FMI about this “easy-peasy” renewal option.

E-mail [thearoostookbirders@gmail.com](mailto:thearoostookbirders@gmail.com), call 207-764-1801 for information, or visit us on Facebook.