

## Goals

The program's primary goals are to:

- develop the ornithological knowledge base of birders,
- demonstrate ways birders can contribute to the scientific study of birds,
- encourage closer collaboration between birders and professional ornithologists,
- develop a cadre of skilled program and trip leaders,
- provide professional development opportunities for Mass Audubon staff, and
- contribute to the conservation of birds and to the protection of the nature of Massachusetts.

## Who Should Take This Course?

The audience for this program includes birders who want to go beyond simple field identification, nature enthusiasts who want to gain an in-depth knowledge of bird life, and natural history program leaders who want to gain scientific insight into their work.

## Structure of the Program

The Birder's Certificate Program consists of eleven required modules and one of two elective modules. All required modules are presented at the Joppa Flats Education Center. Independent study modules and elective courses are offered at various locations, including Joppa Flats.

Each required module is designed to include classroom (3-4 hours) and field (4-5 hours) components to be completed within one day, and a self-study assignment to be completed within two weeks after the module.

## Required Modules

1. Avian Classification and Nomenclature (Systematics)
2. Evolution and Speciation
3. Biogeography
4. Anatomy and Physiology
5. Feathers and Flight
6. Field Identification
7. Feeding Ecology
8. Bird Conservation
9. Migration
10. Breeding Behavior – Part 1: Courtship and Mating
11. Breeding Behavior – Part 2: Nests, Parental Care, and Modes of Development

In addition to the eleven required modules, each student is also required to complete one independent study module: either a self-directed project, or a series of elective courses. In either case, the student must submit a report on the project or courses for evaluation by the faculty.



Bill Lawless

## Schedule of Modules

Modules will be presented approximately monthly, on Saturdays. In order to take advantage of seasonal changes in avian activity, the course year begins on August 15, 2009 (Module 1), and ends in June 2010 (Module 11).

## Registration

The Birder's Certificate Program Director is Dr. David M. Larson. The office is located in the Joppa Flats Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary in Newburyport, Massachusetts. All registration queries and applications should be directed to that office.

Class size is limited to 18 participants.

Birder's Certificate Program  
Joppa Flats Education Center  
P.O. Box 1558  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Fax: 978-462-4143

Telephone: 978-462-9998

E-mail: [dlarson@massaudubon.org](mailto:dlarson@massaudubon.org)

## Tuition

Mass Audubon Members: \$1100

Nonmembers: \$1200

Those registering for the entire certificate program receive priority. Individuals wishing to participate in the certificate program on a per-module-basis may do so, if space is available. The tuition per module is \$100. All prerequisites must be observed.

Checks should be made payable to the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Credit card payments can be taken by telephone at 978-462-9998.

## Instructors

Taber Allison: Vice President for Conservation Science and Ecological Management at Mass Audubon

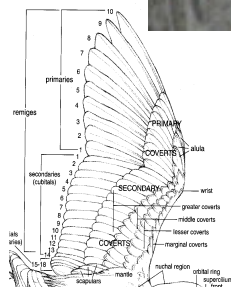
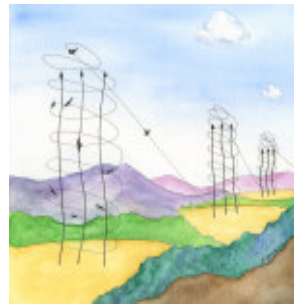
Bill Gette: Sanctuary Director at Joppa Flats Education Center and Wildlife Sanctuary

David Larson: Education Coordinator at Joppa Flats and Director of the Birder's Certificate Program

Chris Leahy: Bertrand Chair of Natural History and Field Ornithology at Mass Audubon

Simon Perkins: Mass Audubon Field Ornithologist

Wayne Petersen: Director of the Important Bird Areas Program at Mass Audubon



Illustrations and photographs by David Larson, Wayne R. Petersen, Gina Kim, Gordon Morrison, and Bill Lawless



## Birder's Certificate Program



Mass Audubon and the Joppa Flats Education Center have developed the Birder's Certificate Program in collaboration with college faculty, experienced birders, and professional ornithologists. The program is equivalent to an undergraduate level ornithology course, with the addition of extensive field time and the opportunity for self-directed study.

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**P.O. Box 1558**

**Newburyport, MA 01950**

**1-978-462-9998**

**[www.massaudubon.org/joppaflats](http://www.massaudubon.org/joppaflats)**

