

# CONNECTICUT COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL

## December 11, 2002 Update

Thanks to all the help from individuals, bird clubs, nature centers, CVB staff, town officials, news reporters and others, our trail project has made great progress in the six weeks since our public meetings to launch it. Already over forty people have been put on our distribution list for these updates. The project has gotten major news coverage in the New London Day and the New York Times, plus smaller articles in other newspapers, including USA Today, and mention on some local radio and TV stations. Connecticut Wildlife did a feature article on the trail. We are grateful for all your support and we encourage you to continue. We need you.

The Coastal Fairfield CVB and Frank Gallo of the New Canaan Nature Center are exploring ways to provide tours and guides to hotels and other tourism businesses. The Mystic & More CVB is discussing similar opportunities with Maggie Jones at the Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center. The Greater New Haven CVB is working with Michael Mercuriano, Director of the Economic Development Commission in West Haven, to attract nature tourists to their shoreline sites and enhance facilities for parking and viewing. Milan Bull, Director of the Connecticut Audubon Coastal Center in Milford, has offered his support. Maria Stockmal of the New Haven Bird Club will help prepare site nominations and participate in evaluations. Dan Barvir, of the New Haven Parks Department has nominated their major parks. SuZanne Botta of Menunkatuck Audubon is working with Al Di Marzio of the Guilford Tourism Commission to identify sites for the trail and for the Important Bird Areas project, led by Patrick Comins of the Connecticut Office of the National Audubon Society. If you know of more activity, please let us know so we can report it to all.

What more can you do to help? You have nominated 30 sites so far, and we are aware of efforts underway to nominate still more. There are plenty of good birding sites along the trail corridor, so please keep looking and nominating. We are especially interested in possible commercial sites with existing tourist amenities, such as restaurants, hotels or B&B's overlooking good birding sites. If you know of any, please encourage them to nominate their sites. Perhaps you could assist them in completing the nomination form.

It would also be helpful if you could suggest site enhancements at nominated sites that are familiar to you, even if you didn't nominate them. What might make them better? Safer parking? Viewing platforms or blinds? Toilet facilities? Other? Click on the **Sites Under Consideration** label on our webpage ([ctbirdingtrails.org](http://ctbirdingtrails.org)) to see the names of sites already nominated.

We also need suggestions for themes to label our driving loops that will connect sites in each area. What are the distinctive stories and theme elements to be told about your tourism district? Please help us identify them. See our Nov 1 Update (under Reports on our website) for more details on how these themes might work. Send your suggestions to the CVB in your area using the links on our website ([ctbirdingtrails.org](http://ctbirdingtrails.org)).

CVB staff could encourage marketing folks in hotels and restaurants that they need not wait until the trail is in full operation to offer local trips, led by staff from nature centers or birding clubs. The birds will be there, and the Connecticut Coastal Birding Trail is coming!

Thanks for your interest in this project. We welcome your assistance and support. Please keep checking our website for more news and the growing list of nominated sites. These e-mails may be infrequent, so you will learn most developments sooner by looking at the website for news.

Frank Haviland  
Connecticut Coastal Birding Trail  
(860) 651-3225