



**GEOFFREY S. LEBARON**

Christmas Bird Count Director

Geoff LeBaron has served as Christmas Bird Count Director at the National Audubon Society since 1987. In this position he coordinates [citizen science](#) efforts for the annual Christmas Bird Count, the annual census begun in 1900 which has grown into the longest running database in ornithology, as well as Audubon's signature program. "Each of the citizen scientists who brave snow, ice, wind, or rain to take part in the Christmas Bird Count is making an enormous contribution to conservation," says LeBaron.

Last year, more than 58,000 statistical observers counted nearly 70-million birds in all 50 states and beyond. The counts occur in a designated circle, 15 miles in diameter. Ongoing results played a key role in Audubon's State of the Birds reports which made headlines nationwide and inspired two New York Times editorials.

The count began on Christmas Day in 1900 when scientist Frank Chapman posed an alternative to the traditional holiday "side hunt," when teams competed to see who could shoot the most birds and small mammals. Instead, Chapman proposed they "hunt" birds to identify, count, and record their numbers. "Counting is the first step in learning how environmental threats are affecting our birds," said LeBaron. The proverbial "canaries in the coal mine," birds provide an early warning indicator of the health of the world we all share.

An experienced field ornithologist and marine biologist, Geoff is also involved with many aspects of Audubon's Science and Ornithology efforts including development of the 2007 WatchList, the [Great Backyard Bird Count](#), eBird, and the [Important Bird Areas \(IBA\)](#) insert hyperlink program, where he is serving on the Massachusetts IBA Technical Committee.

LeBaron also serves as a consultant to *AUDUBON* magazine for natural history accuracy, as a guide for Audubon Nature Odysseys, Audubon's global history travel program, and has conducted ornithological field work for the Audubon Society of New Hampshire and the Audubon Society of Rhode Island.

Previously, Geoff spent five years on staff in the Ornithology Department at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia and served as Collection Manager for two of those years at VIREO (Visual Resources for Ornithology), the world-wide bird photograph collection which holds the world's most comprehensive collection of ornithological images.

LeBaron has logged over 3000 hours aerial observation time counting marine mammals, turtles, and birds encompassing the entire east coast of the United States and has spent three seasons during and immediately following Grad School leading whale and seabird watching trips on Stellwagen Bank off Cape Cod.

Geoff holds a bachelor's degree in Biology from the University of Miami in Florida and a Master's Degree in Zoology from the University of Rhode Island. He works from his home office in Williamsburg Massachusetts, where he lives with his wife Heidi Johnson and their indoor cat Katie. They all enjoy the amazingly wide variety of wildlife that visits their yard from the neighboring hill town areas of the Berkshires.