

## Mark Tuttle 1923-2012

Stauffer Miller

The news of the death of Mark Tuttle (December 29, 2012 in Meredith, NH at age 89) brought back to me a great deal of remembrances. After Ellie and I moved to Keveney Lane in Cummaquid in 1994, Mark was the first person from the Cape Cod Bird Club we got to know. He and his wife Marcia lived just down Route 6A from us at an old house (still there) at the Indian Trail Road intersection. The house came to Mark and Marcia through her side of the family. I often went there to meet Mark for outings. I never got much further than the kitchen. What I could see of the rest of the house gave me the impression of rather dark rooms filled with very old furniture. Outside was a narrow garage, perhaps built for a carriage. How he ever got his Buick into it, I have no idea.

According to my notes, on May 7, 1994 Ellie and I picked up Mark and we went to the Ryder Conservation Area in Sandwich where we located a Kentucky Warbler, first found by other birders. This was perhaps the first of many bird searches I made with him.

Mark very much enjoyed the birdathon. One member of our team came from western Massachusetts and slept in his car in the Wellfleet area so he could hear and record for our team a Saw-whet Owl. Another team I became a part of because of Mark was the December waterfowl count. With Carl Bergfors, we covered the ponds of the Hyannis area. Mark and I were always amazed how well Carl knew the intricacies of Wequaquet Lake.

Mark, Marcia, Ellie and I often used the same bird tour company, Field Guides, and in February of 1996 the four of us went on their Hawaii tour. During the trip, Marcia became quite ill. She looked very bad the last time I saw her, as she was leaving our group for a hospital in Honolulu. She died April 16th in Boston of an aggressive form of leukemia. I remember her well. She was a dark-haired, pleasant, rather quiet person.

On the morning of September 22, 1996, Mark got Ellie and I up for what turned out to be an unforgettable birding day. We went on a whale-watching trip in Provincetown. As we began our trip home and were climbing Rt. 6 at Pilgrim Heights, we saw David Clapp pointing to a soaring bird. I thought it was going to be a Red-tailed Hawk but Mark apparently saw it better and urged us to take a closer look. It was a Black Vulture, a bird that practically had us shaking we were so excited. I'll never forget the moment, standing at the edge of Rt. 6 and viewing this incredible rarity as the traffic whizzed by.

After Marcia's death, Mark sold the house at Indian Trail and moved to Heatherwood in Yarmouthport. I began leading trips over to Rhode Island. One of these was on a frigid January day. Despite the many water birds on the ponds and inlets, the highlight bird was a Woodcock that emerged from a frozen forest and made this strange sort of walk in front of us on a paved road. Everyone in the group saw it well. Some time later, Mark imitated this walk on the stage at a meeting of the bird club. His routine cracked everyone up. I think some who read this will remember that incident.

Mark and I went many places together on the Cape and nearby areas. We had many good times. I wish him good birding in the next life.