

## 2025 Goodhue-Elkins Award

*Presented by Robert Quinn at the New Hampshire Audubon Annual Meeting, September 13, 2025.*

The Goodhue-Elkins Award is given annually by New Hampshire Audubon to honor an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the study of New Hampshire birds. The award is named for Charles Goodhue, one of the state's first great birders, and Kimball Elkins, who remains the model for critical observation and insightful record-keeping.

Today we honor George and Andrea Robbins with the Goodhue-Elkins award. I am honored to announce Andrea and George and to share their bird and conservation stories.

Andrea and George Robbins have worked as a birding team for over 50 years. They have consistently submitted detailed records of their bird sightings, particularly from their home bases of Pittsfield and Freedom, New Hampshire. Their dedication to careful documentation has contributed significantly to our understanding of the birdlife of our State. Through their ongoing commitment, they have ensured that valuable data continues to support conservation efforts.

Andrea and George played a pivotal role in the first New Hampshire Breeding Bird Atlas. Their fieldwork yielded the only documentation of a Long-eared Owl during the six-year span of the Atlas project. Beyond collecting data, they both authored species accounts for the Atlas publication. Andrea's artistic talent shines through in her numerous drawings in the Atlas, which enrich the pages of the book. They served as editors of the New Hampshire Bird Records for many years. Andrea continued to fulfill this editorial role when George was unable to devote the necessary time to it, though he continued to offer editorial insight and comments.

For decades, they committed themselves to conducting Breeding Bird Survey routes throughout New Hampshire. Their efforts have greatly contributed to this huge citizen-science dataset. The importance of their work is underscored by the legacy of the Breeding Bird Survey program, which was established on a nationwide basis by George's father, Chandler Robbins. Andrea and George have carried this tradition forward with distinction. In recognition of his father's profound influence on ornithology, George authored four feature-length articles about Chandler, published in the 2018 season of New Hampshire Bird Records. These writings are considered essential reading for anyone interested in the history and advancement of birding in the region.

Throughout the years, Andrea and George have participated in numerous Christmas Bird Counts, with George continuing his tradition of traversing many miles along the Merrimack River each year during



*George (left) and Andrea (right) Robbins accepting the 2025 Goodhue-Elkins award at the Massabesic Center in Auburn.*

*Photo by Zoe Dawson.*

the Concord count. Their commitment to fieldwork is further exemplified by George's leadership in helping to organize and guide dozens of field trips over the decades. Many of these outings became memorable highlights for late fall coastal excursions and late winter or early spring owl prowls, especially for the Capital Area chapter of NH Audubon.

George and Andrea played a pivotal role as founding members of the New Hampshire Rare Bird Committee, established in 1994. Demonstrating their hospitality and commitment to the state's birding community, they generously hosted the early meetings at their home, fostering collaboration and dedication among committee members from the very beginning.

It all adds up to a phenomenal effort of over 50 years of birding, record keeping, and sharing their knowledge and conservation focus for all of us in New Hampshire.

I would like to add a quick note that recently NH Audubon hosted a bioblitz on their sanctuaries, and Andrea and George continue to contribute to conservation by submitting 569 observations of the Watts Sanctuary, the most observations by any team on any sanctuary!

Andrea and George, it is a pleasure to present you with this year's Goodhue-Elkins award.

