

Bird Observer

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 6

DECEMBER 2012



HOT BIRDS

So many birds, so little space!

On October 7, Mona Tighe and Sue Malspei located a **Purple Gallinule** (right) in the marsh at Stony Brook Mass Audubon Sanctuary in Norfolk. Bob Stymeist shot this photograph of the bird on October 12.



On October 11, Diane Reynolds and Bob Prescott discovered a **Northern Wheatear** (left) on Skaket Beach in Orleans. It was still there on October 12 when it was photographed by Mark Faherty.

A fourth continental US record and the first for the east coast (not to mention Massachusetts)! On October 18 Jeremiah Trimble, Simon Perkins, and Peter Alden found a **Gray-tailed Tattler** (right) on Nantucket. Peter Trimble and Peter Alden relocated the bird the next day and Jeremiah took this photograph.



This was the autumn of the pelicans, with reports from mid-October into November of multiple **American White Pelicans** and **Brown Pelicans** from a variety of locations, including Whites at Plum Island and Wellfleet (above right, photograph by Mark Faherty) and Browns at Nantucket (above left, photograph by Bob Stymeist), Provincetown, Mattapoisett Harbor, Chilmark, Brewster, and Harwich. At least some of these birds were likely assisted by Super Storm Sandy.

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FEMALE HOODED MERGANSER BY DAVID LARSON

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Bird Observer

A bimonthly journal—to enhance understanding, observation, and enjoyment of birds
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Birding Quabbin Park (South Quabbin)

Mark Lynch

This article originally appeared in the Bird Finding Guide to Western Massachusetts (2003) but has been updated, revised, and greatly expanded.



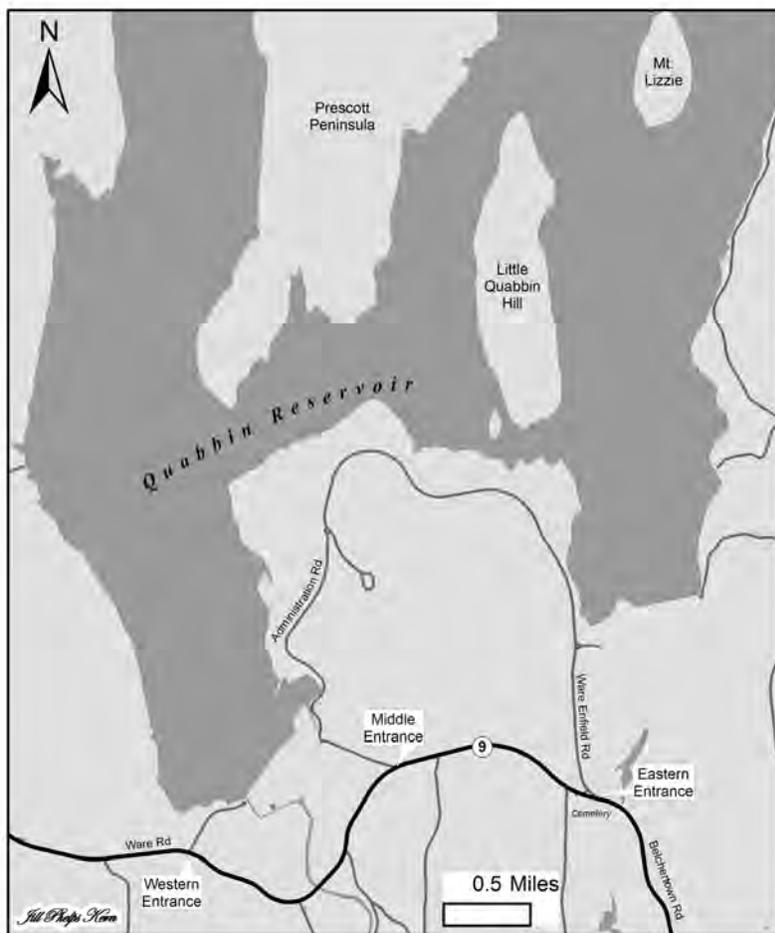
The largest bodies of fresh water in Massachusetts are the Quabbin and Wachuset Reservoirs. The history of the creation of these two reservoirs illustrate how the lives and livelihood of small-town people in interior Massachusetts villages have been dramatically changed by the decisions of a small group of urban people many miles to the east. Today, Quabbin, holding 412 billion gallons, is the largest body of freshwater in the state. The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) now manages Quabbin as the prime water supply for Boston.

Geologically, the entire Swift River Valley was originally part of a mountain range that was slowly worn down by erosion, like almost all of New England. The hills and islands that you can see from Quabbin Park today are composed of igneous gneiss. The last glaciers (11,000 years ago) scoured out the softer minerals in the valleys but the harder gneiss domes remained.

The original human inhabitants of the area were the Nipmuc tribes. The Nipmuc word *qaben* means meeting of the waters. As European colonists moved west from the settled areas around Boston and Worcester, four towns sprang up in the valley: Dana, Enfield, Greenwich, and Prescott. There were many farms, gristmills, and small industries that made products like hats, scythes, whetstones, carriages, cloth, and cheese. There was a hotel near what is now the island called Mount L, and even a racetrack on what we now call the Dana flats.

The ever-growing population of Boston has always needed water to grow. Thus began a long history of Boston acquiring land and water farther and farther from the city to satisfy this need. Jamaica Pond was taken in 1795 followed by Lake Cochituate in Natick in 1848. In the 1870's, the Sudbury River was diverted and dams built. Then, sections of Boylston, West Boylston, and Sterling were bought and flooded, and the Wachuset Reservoir was created in 1908.

In 1919, the State Board of Health and the newly created Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) commenced another water study. Their 1922 report recommended diverting the Ware River and flooding the Swift River Valley to create a huge reservoir despite the fact that there were four towns in the area that would be under water. The report was debated in the legislature for four years, and in 1926 the Ware River Act was passed. This provided for the "construction of an aqueduct and the impoundment of the Ware River." The villages of West Rutland, North Rutland,



White Valley (Barre), and Coldbrook Springs (Oakham) were also affected by the land acquired for this project. This large area became the Barre Falls Dam/Rutland State Park area, which from a birding perspective is now known as the Ware River Watershed IBA.

In 1927, the Swift River Act was passed, which provided for the construction of a reservoir in the Swift River Valley.

Construction of what was to become Quabbin Reservoir began in 1928. Two earthen dams were built in Enfield. The main dam was named after project chief engineer Frank Winsor, the smaller dam after planning engineer X. Henry Goodnough. Twenty-eight people lost their lives during the construction of the reservoir and 3500 residents were displaced. The project cost \$60,000,000. This may seem a modest sum when you compare it to the cost of projects like The Big Dig, but at the time this was a very expensive investment. Construction was completed in

1939; the reservoir then took seven years to fill. As the valley was flooded the former hills became islands. Boston may have gotten the water, but central Massachusetts gained an amazing large parcel of managed forest, swamps, and a huge freshwater lake to enjoy.

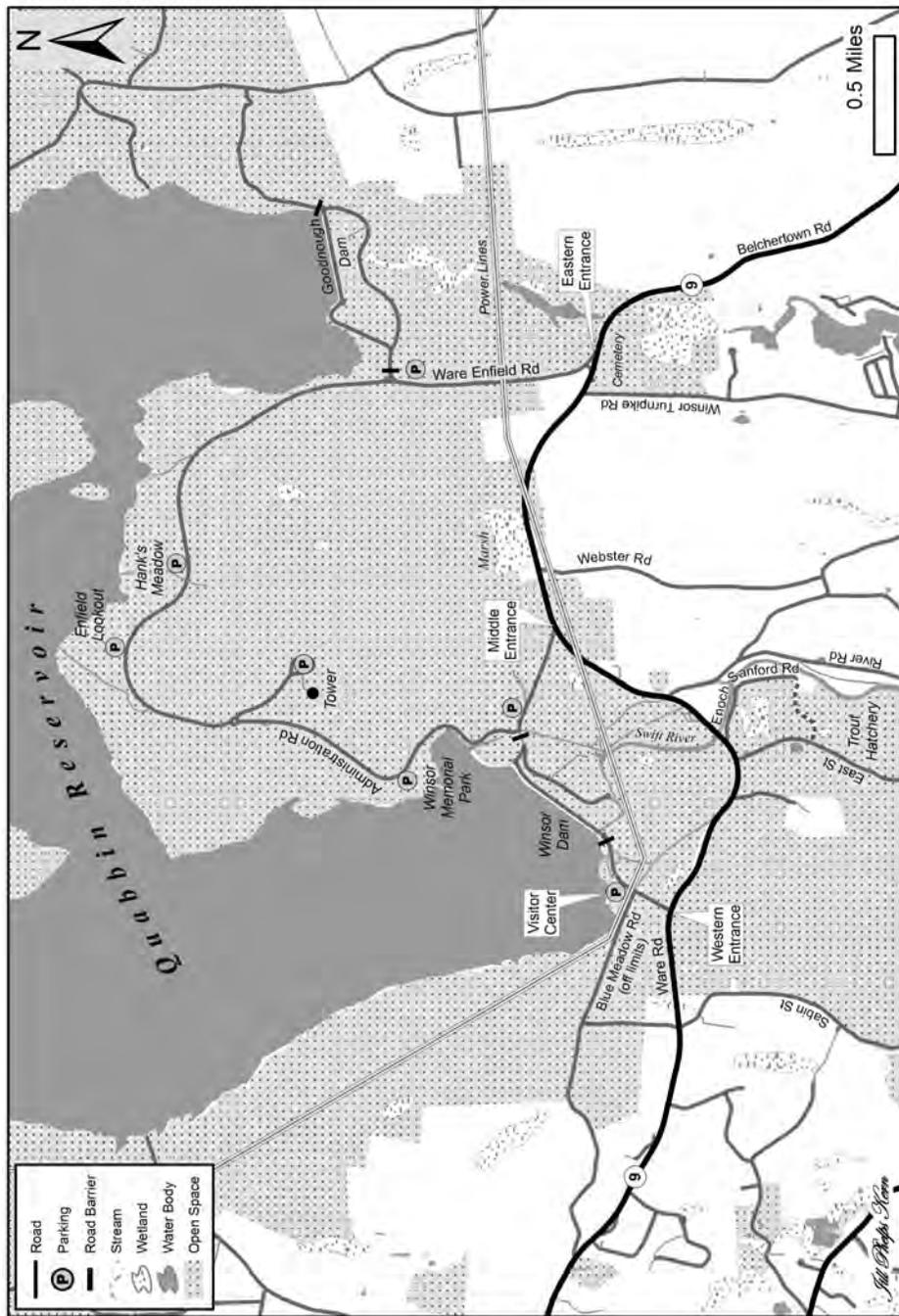
The reservoir as it exists today is 18 miles long with a water surface of 38.6 square miles and a shoreline of 118 miles. The maximum depth of water, just behind Winsor Dam, is 150 feet. An additional 100+ square miles of surrounding land also makes up the watershed. Traditionally, the Prescott Peninsula has been off limits to visitors, though it has now been opened to deer hunting (by permit only), university researchers (permit only), and occasional controlled visits by birders.

Quabbin Park is the most accessible area of this huge and complex state property. Most of the Quabbin Reservation can be birded only on foot through a number of gates. But much of Quabbin Park is accessible by car, although there are also numerous trails in the park. The Administration Building and Visitors' Center at Quabbin Park is adjacent to a State Police Headquarters. (Note: it is important to report immediately any infringement of the Reservation rules here either by phone or in person.) The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) offers programs for the public at the Visitors' Center, and there is a display of photographs of the history of Quabbin, maps of the entire reservation, and mounted specimens of the birds and mammals of the area. If you have never hiked Quabbin before, this is *the* place to ask questions and get your bearings.

Overview: Birds of Quabbin Park

An interesting variety of warblers, vireos, and thrushes breed here. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Pileated Woodpeckers, Eastern Wood-Pewees, Red-eyed and Yellow-throated vireos, Pine Warblers, American Redstarts, Scarlet Tanagers, Eastern Towhees, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks are regular breeders. In the last two decades, a pair of nesting Bald Eagles has been visible from some spots in the park. In this same time period, pairs of Common Ravens, Acadian Flycatchers, and Cerulean Warblers have also bred, but only the ravens are to be expected. Worm-eating Warblers may breed in some years and have been found in spring migration with some regularity.

Spring and fall migrations bring large numbers of passerines moving along the ridges where they can be seen to advantage. Migrant waterfowl include scoters, goldeneyes, and Long-tailed Ducks as well as loons and grebes. These can be seen from the Administration Building overlook or the Winsor Dam and Goodnough Dike. Quabbin Park is also a very good spot to enjoy hawk migration in spring and fall from either the base of the Lookout Tower or the Enfield Lookout. In late fall and winter, birds can be scarce, especially after the reservoir freezes (typically by mid-January), but Bald Eagles are regularly spotted from the Administration Building and Enfield Lookout, and occasionally winter finches are found. On occasion, rarities show up in the park. A Gyrfalcon was seen in Quabbin Park in January 1982, and a Varied Thrush spent some weeks near the tower starting in January 2004.



Directions

There are three entrance roads to Quabbin Park, all of them along Route 9 in the towns of Ware and Belchertown. The **eastern entrance** is 4.2 miles west of the intersection of Route 9 and Route 32 south in the center of Ware. The **middle entrance** is 5.5 miles west of the Route 32 intersection, and the **western entrance** is 7.3 miles west of the Route 32 intersection and three miles east of the intersection of Route 9 and Route 202 in Belchertown. These gates are generally open from dawn until dusk but may be closed during periods of snow, an ice storm, or extreme weather like a hurricane. The western gate is always open to the State Police headquarters. By mid-morning at any time of year, expect numbers of non-birding visitors because this is a popular driving, bicycling, and walking spot, especially at the peak of foliage season. At that time, if you cannot arrive on a weekday or by dawn on a weekend, think about giving Quabbin Park a pass. In spring and fall migration, and even during summer months, you can easily spend a full morning birding Quabbin Park, longer if you hike the trails. Food and gas can be found either in Ware or at the intersection of Routes 9 and 202 in Belchertown.

Birding the Marsh on Route 9

Before you enter the park proper, a great stop early in the morning in spring, summer, and fall is the small marsh cut by Route 9. This marsh is found between the easternmost and middle entrances of Quabbin Park, 5.1 miles west of the Route 32 intersection in Ware.

Approaching from the east (Ware), you will notice on the right (the reservoir) side a dirt pull-off for two cars at the edge of the marsh. Park here. Because cars often speed along this section of road, be sure to pull completely and quickly off the road. Be sure not to slow down in your car when on the road, and do not walk in the road. Because the noise of passing cars can be frustrating when listening for certain species, a better bet is to hike the short distance (about 70 feet) down the narrow path that begins at the pull-off and ends near a beaver dam. This brings you to a vantage point to view the marsh from under the trees. It is quieter here, and there is cover from which to watch for wildlife.

From this corner vantage point, scan the marsh for Wood Ducks, Great Blue and Green herons, and Belted Kingfishers. Tree Swallows, Red-Winged Blackbirds, and Common Grackles are obvious in the breeding season. Virginia Rails also breed regularly but are more difficult to find. Hooded Mergansers and Pied-billed Grebes have also bred, the latter rarely. Spotted and Solitary sandpipers, Ring-necked Ducks, and even an occasional Great Egret have been found in migration. As of this writing, only one Wood Duck nesting box remains standing. Pileated Woodpeckers often make flyovers, and a variety of passerines like Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and Yellow-throated Vireo breed in the area. Otters and beavers are often seen here. In winter, when the marsh is frozen and bleak looking, give this spot a pass.

A Tour of Quabbin Park

To sample the birding locations of Quabbin Park, we will start our car tour from the western gate.

The Headquarters Building and Winsor Dam

Shortly after entering Quabbin Park, you will see a sign stating the rules and the regulations of the Park. Please read this thoroughly. For instance, you cannot fish in Quabbin Park, and dogs and alcohol are not allowed. As you drive into an area of power lines, check the lines and the nearby lawn area. In migration, look for swallows and Eastern Bluebirds, flocks of Chipping Sparrows, and migrants that occasionally feed on the lawn. In recent years Wild Turkeys have often been seen near the entrance.

After a quarter mile you will come to the DCR regional headquarters, the Quabbin Visitor Center, and the State Police Headquarters buildings. Park in the lot west of the buildings. This is a convenient place for bird trips to meet and carpool. All bird trips should carpool. Whenever you park anywhere in Quabbin, make sure your valuables are stowed away and out of sight. In spring migration I have seen small groups of migrant warblers in the shrubs and trees near the back of the lot. If you just want to make a quick pass and you are alone, you can pull your car around to the scenic view in front of the building and park briefly. Otherwise, walk the short distance from the lot to the overlook.



View of the Winsor Dam and South Quabbin from the Visitor Center (all photographs by Sheila Carroll.)

Situated right at the front of the Administration Building, the overlook offers a grand view of this southwest corner of Quabbin. To the left is the long shoreline of western Quabbin, mostly accessible by gates along Rt. 202. With a scope, look for a sandy piece of shoreline. This is the Gate 8 boat launch area. The shoreline to the right is the tip of the Prescott Peninsula (also visible from the Enfield Lookout) and the northwestern shore of Quabbin Park.

Some of Quabbin's deepest water is found in this area and is the last to freeze in winter, so ducks may linger here into January. In season, scan for migrating ducks, grebes, loons, and eagles. Common Mergansers and Common Loons are often seen in summer. Bald Eagles have bred in a large pine on the shore far out to the right and are best seen with a scope. If gulls seem surprisingly scarce, realize that the DCR has an active program to keep gulls off this section of the water. Despite this, an occasional Bonaparte's Gull or Black Tern has been seen from here in late summer into fall. The small fruiting trees in this area have hosted Pine Grosbeaks and Cedar Waxwings in some winters, but not lately. Northern Mockingbirds, not a common species in the Quabbin proper, are usually seen around the buildings, and Chimney Swifts breed in the chimney. Heated bathrooms are located on either side of the overlook pull-off and also in the Visitor Center when it is open. Even if at first glance there seems to be little on the water, spend some time carefully scoping far out on the water. In the dead of winter, look for a deer carcass on the ice. The presence of a carcass will attract eagles and ravens. The DCR staff in the Visitor Center will often know if a carcass is visible from somewhere in Quabbin Park. When the reservoir is frozen, watch for a white-tailed deer or an eastern coyote to cross the ice. I have also seen beavers, mink, and river otters from this spot.

If a hurricane comes barreling up the coast and tracks well inland, this is one of the best spots to see some hurricane-driven rarities like Leach's Storm Petrel, terns, and shorebirds. A White-tailed Tropicbird flew in and set down on the water during Hurricane Irene on August 28, 2011, and a number of other seabirds were tallied during that storm from Quabbin Park. An alternative place to watch during a hurricane is out on Winsor Dam (see below).



Bonaparte's Gull at South Quabbin

Since September 11, 2001, the road over Winsor Dam has been blocked to car traffic and is now a quiet place to hike and bird. Walking the dam offers great views of this section of the reservoir and of the field and woodlots on the other side of the dam. You can either walk across the dam and back again, or spot another car near the barriers at the spillway at the opposite side of the dam and do a one-way walk across. Be sure to park in a designated area. Walking across the Winsor Dam early on a morning during migration can be rewarding; just plan on bringing your scope with you to scan the water. Sometimes migrants like Savannah Sparrows or a meadowlark



Wild Turkey at South Quabbin

will perch on the low wall. Check the low shrubs among the rocks on the waterside of the dam for occasional migrants like kinglets or Palm Warblers. American Pipits are regular in small numbers around these rocks in fall, and Snow Buntings sometimes find the area attractive in late fall into winter. A Northern Wheatear put in an appearance here on September 6, 1978. Wild Turkeys are often seen on the grassy fields on the landside of the dam. Keep an eye

skyward for hawks and migrating geese, including Snow Geese. At the northeastern end of the dam, at what used to be a small rotary, check the reservoir one last time for waterbirds and eagles. Walk down the paved road toward the spillway and, eventually, a set of barriers.

After the road crosses the dam, it swings to the right. In short order, you will see another road coming in sharply from the right that goes behind the dam. This power station spur road ends shortly at a parking area that used to be favored by fishermen as an access point for the Swift River, which exits the reservoir here. This area is no longer accessible by car, but if you are up for a bit of a walk, hike down to the lot and the forest. A walk into the pines will often turn up Red-Breasted Nuthatches and Golden-Crowned Kinglets in winter. On rare occasions I have found a Boreal Chickadee on this ridge. This area can be good for migrant land birds. The bushes near the former parking lot may have a Ruffed Grouse in any season. Since this spur road is now accessible only on foot, most birders give this location a pass.

Still on Foot After Crossing the Dam

Be sure to bird the area where the Administration (Winsor Dam) Road meets the spur road and quickly leads to the bridge over the spillway. This area usually has migrant warbler activity in the spring and fall, in the trees and in the shrubbery. Watch and listen for species like Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Gray Catbird, Hermit Thrush, Pine Warbler, American Redstart, and Eastern Towhee. From this spot, walk to the bridge over the spillway. Common Ravens have nested here in the last few years. Look for their nest along the rock face from the north side of the bridge. Generally ravens are finished nesting by the middle or end of May. Also look for Northern Rough-winged Swallows from the south side of the bridge. You can also access this area near the spillway by driving down the middle entrance road to Quabbin, parking, and walking a short distance through the barriers to the spillway.

The Middle Entrance of Quabbin Park to the Tower

Pick up your car at the Administration Building lot and drive back to Route 9 and head east (left) to the **middle entrance** road. The short stretch of road between the entrance and the right turn at the spillway can be great to bird, especially in spring

migration when breeding species like Eastern Phoebe, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Blue-Headed Vireo, Chestnut-Sided Warbler, and Ovenbird are in full song. Listen for the occasional Louisiana Waterthrush near the small stream. The area of the power lines can be particularly productive for migrants.

Administration Road takes a sharp bend to the right (north) at the spillway bridge. The road originally continued straight over the spillway to Winsor Dam, allowing cars to drive over the dam to the Administration Building. Now, post-9/11, you will see a series of barriers across the road to the dam; walking traffic only is allowed. Take the right turn and soon you will pass a scenic little inlet of the reservoir on your left and a pulloff for two or three cars at the iron gate to the DCR boat area. Park here and scan the inlet for Great Blue Herons and an occasional grebe or loon. Be sure to scope the main body of the reservoir too. In winter an eagle can sometimes be seen perched on the small point of land across the inlet. It was from this spot on January 16, 1982, that I saw my life Gyrfalcon perched across the spillway. It was being mobbed by two Red-tailed Hawks.

From here, Administration Road (Quabbin Hill Road on Google Maps) passes an area of dead red pines on the right (being cut as I write this); these trees have been infested with red pine scale. As you scan the shorelines of Quabbin, you will see other patches of dead pines that have also been killed by this insect. The road rises as it swings to the left and passes an area of oaks and maples for the next mile. This stretch is superb in spring and fall for viewing breeding warblers and migrant species because the road runs along the side of a hill. This area is best done on foot in the early morning. The walking may be tough for some as the road climbs from here until it reaches the rotary. If you decide to stop, be sure to pull far off the road as there is always some traffic, and be extra alert for cars while walking along the road.

A good spot to leave the car is the parking area at the Frank E. Winsor Memorial (note the small monument marker with a likeness of Winsor), a bit farther along on the reservoir side of the road. Be sure to walk up and down the slope from here. In spring listen for Eastern Wood Pewees, Least Flycatchers, Wood and Hermit thrushes, Red-eyed and Yellow-throated vireos, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Scarlet Tanagers, Eastern Towhees, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.



Winsor Memorial

Warbler species commonly seen along this ridge in migration include Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian, Pine, Chestnut-sided, Black-and-white, Yellow-rumped, Ovenbird, and Common Yellowthroat. American Redstarts are common breeders, and their song is one of the most frequent vocalizations you will hear in spring and summer. In the last several springs, Cerulean Warblers have shown up along this stretch of road and have sometimes stayed to breed. Watch and listen for them anywhere along the “warbler ridge.” These birds can be frustratingly tough to

see as they often remain downslope high in the canopy, but once you have picked out the song, patience is often rewarded with at least a quick view of this beautiful warbler. Never use tapes.

From the Rotary to the Tower

At the rotary you have several options, all of them interesting. If you take the first road to the right, it will lead up Quabbin Hill to a one-way road. This circles a large parking area adjacent to the gated short road that runs uphill to the Lookout Tower. There are bathrooms in the small building near the parking lot that are open in the summer, and recently a portable toilet was added on the opposite side of the lot. The area around the base of the tower hill is good for breeding Eastern Bluebirds, Prairie Warblers, Eastern Towhees, Field Sparrows, and Indigo Buntings as well as migrants. As the brush has matured in the last few years, Prairie Warblers and Field Sparrows have become less common breeders.

A walk up the small hill to the tower, and perhaps to the top of the tower if it is open, offers dramatic views of the reservoir and the chance to do some first-class hawk watching. The windows at the top of the tower, however, cannot be opened, and the interior of the tower can get quite hot in summer. Be sure to watch for Black Vultures anywhere near the tower area. This species is increasing its presence in central Massachusetts and has been confirmed breeding not too far to the south on the Warren-Palmer line. I have seen Black Vultures circle the tower lot and also have seen them a number of times over the nearby town of Ware. Beginning in January 2004 a Varied Thrush, sometimes in the company of a Red-bellied Woodpecker, spent some weeks feeding on crushed acorns and other tidbits on the plowed road that circles the tower parking lot.

Back at the rotary itself, look for a gated path under some pines and a parking area in front of the gate. During migration, check this path for migrant warblers and, especially, thrushes. About 40 yards past the gate, look for a small trail on the right that runs under some trees and up a small rise. This trail leads to a wonderful old orchard, which has nesting House Wrens, Tree Swallows, and Eastern Bluebirds as well as migrant warblers in season. Non-birders often walk in here looking for deer.

From the Rotary to Goodnough Dike

There are birds to be found along the Administration Road through to Goodnough Dike, so listen, watch, and stop where it looks good. There are several traditional stops. Note: mileage is now given starting from the Rotary.

The Enfield Lookout

Continue driving north and eventually east down Administration Road from the rotary. The road will run downslope for a while. At 0.4 miles on the left you will see a parking area with a dramatic overlook of Quabbin to the north. This is the famous Enfield Lookout, where many people come to view Bald Eagles. The Enfield Lookout is worth a stop at any time of the year, but it can get downright crowded during fall foliage season and even during the winter eagle-watching season. From this spot you



Bald Eagle from Enfield Lookout

are looking north over the southern terminus of the Prescott Peninsula. The prominent hill in front of you is Ram Hill or Mount Ram. To your right is Little Quabbin Hill, an island, although it looks like an extension of the mainland, and in the distance is Mount Lizzie.

Scan the taller pines on Ram and the whole end of the Prescott Peninsula for Bald Eagles. They have nested in the past in a large pine along the shore near the southwestern terminus of the peninsula. If there is an active nest, there will usually be a dedicated eagle watcher or two who will point out its location. If the reservoir is frozen, check the ice, especially to the east, for a deer carcass, which will attract numbers of eagles as well as crows, ravens, and coyotes.

This is also a good hawkwatching spot. Look north over the Prescott and along the far western ridges, not just for eagles, but also for Turkey Vultures, Red-tailed Hawks, and other raptors. Be patient. Golden Eagles are rare but regular in Quabbin Reservation. Typically they stay far to the north from late fall into winter. Your best bet, albeit a slim chance, for seeing a Golden Eagle from Quabbin Park is to carefully and diligently search the length of the Prescott from the Enfield Lookout during late fall migration.

Eagles and other raptors are not the only species to look for while at the Enfield Lookout. Scope the water carefully, especially in the cove of the peninsula, for loons, grebes, and ducks. Wild Turkeys can sometimes be seen walking along the Prescott shore. A great variety of migrant land birds will either fly over or put down briefly in the surrounding trees. I have had a number of interesting sightings from Enfield Lookout. While leading a well-attended Brookline Bird Club trip on a very cold

January 9, 1983, we all had great views of three geese as they flew back and forth at eye level over the water and Prescott. The only problem was that none of us could identify these weirdly colored geese, which were clearly “not from around here.” Fortunately, we came across them perched on the shore later in the trip and finally identified them as Egyptian Geese, obviously escapes. A more countable experience occurred on April 1, 2006, when Sheila Carroll and I had great views of an adult male Yellow-headed Blackbird as it flew by the Enfield Lookout at eye level heading west.

Hank’s Meadow, formerly the Blueberry Patch

One mile from the rotary you will notice a large grassy picnic area on the left. This was traditionally known to older birders as the Blueberry Patch but in recent years has been christened Hank’s Meadow. Years ago, the Hank family had its house where the picnic area is now located. Go to the Visitor Center to see a picture of this house, which is now located in Dorset, Vermont! In late spring, summer, and fall, the gate is open and you can drive down to the picnic area and park. In summer, there are portable toilets here. In winter, when the gate is closed, park along the road and hike down. From the picnic parking area you will see a broad gated trail that leads gently



Chestnut-sided Warbler

down about 150 yards to the water. You can see Prescott Peninsula on the left and Little Quabbin Hill on the right. This is a great spot to scan for loons, grebes, waterfowl, and eagles. In migration, warblers and other land birds are attracted to the thickets along the path; included are uncommon species like Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and Orange-crowned Warbler. Uncommon sparrow species like Lincoln’s and White-crowned

have been seen on rare occasions feeding on the path itself. Tree Swallows and bluebirds are also often found and sometimes nest in this area. In winter, be sure to check the tops of the trees and bushes for a Northern Shrike. Several butterfly species may be found in the small meadow. In migration season be sure to bird the thickets near the portable bathroom.

Opposite the Blueberry Patch entrance road on Administration Road, you will see a broad walking trail. This is a great spot in spring and fall for migrant thrushes, warblers, Black-Billed Cuckoos, and occasionally a Pileated Woodpecker. Watch for the patch of dangerous-looking Devil’s Walking Stick on the right, just off the trail.

Gate 52

At 1.5 miles from the rotary, on your left you will see a small parking area in front of a numbered gate. Be sure not to block the gate. A short walk (less than a quarter-mile) leads gently downhill to an isolated cove across from Little Quabbin Hill. This is another place to check in migration for loons, grebes, and waterfowl and try your luck for eagles. I have seen Pileated Woodpeckers, Ruffed Grouse, and Barred Owls here on several occasions. Land birding can be good here in spring and

fall, though in winter you may find only the typical permanent residents. It was from this vantage point that the BBC trip finally got good looks at the perched Egyptian Geese.

An Interesting Unnumbered Gate

At 1.7 miles, watch for an unnumbered gated path on the left that leads down into pines. This is a pleasant hike through conifers and mature mixed forest. Be sure to bring your scope. When the trail shortly intersects another trail, head left (north). After about a half a mile you will come to a pleasant overlook of Little Quabbin Hill and the southeastern section of Quabbin. Looking to the right along the shoreline, you will see the intake building of Shaft 12 in the distance. This is another great spot to search for migratory water birds of all kinds as well as eagles. Be sure to look for scoters and Long-tailed Ducks in late fall. The trail also hosts several breeding species of warblers like Pine and Yellow-rumped, as well as Blue-headed Vireos and Hermit Thrushes. In migration, a Winter Wren is often found here and may linger until the first measurable snowfall.

Goodnough Dike

Two and a half miles from the rotary you will come to an intersection. If you head straight (i.e., bear right), in 0.9 miles you will exit Quabbin Park onto Route 9 at the eastern gate. Instead, park your car in the obvious lot and hike through the car barriers on the left. In less than half a mile you will come to a fork in the road. This is the Goodnough Dike loop road, which runs for 1.8 miles. If you take the left fork, it will bring you to Goodnough Dike, about a 15-minute walk. If you take the right fork, you will descend through interesting and birdy mixed forest and eventually pass a large open area of short grass on a steep slope that is obviously the back of the dike. Note the small marsh of Beaver Brook. Sometimes in winter a Red-tailed Hawk or even a Bald Eagle will be perched in the trees along the upper reaches of the marsh. Watch for lingering blackbirds, waterfowl, Winter Wrens, Swamp Sparrows, or even snipe in late fall into early winter.

Continue along the road as it loops up to the dike. Bluebirds and other land birds are sometimes found in this area, so it is worth a check, particularly in migration. As you walk along, listen and watch for warblers, woodpeckers, vireos, and thrushes until you are finally on the road that crosses the dike. The dirt road with the barrier on the eastern end of the dike eventually joins the road in from Gates 47 and 49, which runs north along the southeastern shoreline of Quabbin. Hiking this dirt road can be great in migration and summer, but it is also long and extremely buggy and not to be attempted without a good trail map of the Reservation. Sheila Carroll and I covered this entire area extensively for the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas II and found a bull Moose close to the dike on September 17, 2011. Continue your walk along the dike. From it, scope the water out past Little Quabbin Hill and Mount Lizzie for loons, grebes, waterfowl, Turkey Vultures, Red-Tailed Hawks, and Bald Eagles. Mount Lizzie has breeding eagles, ravens, and Common Mergansers.

Back at the Goodnough Dike parking area, get in your car and drive the last stretch of road back to Route 9, making sure to bird along the way. (This section of the road is labeled Old Ware-Enfield Road on Google Maps.) On April 25, 2011, Sheila and I watched a fisher tear apart a squirrel's nest here. At the power line crossing, pull off and bird the area for towhees, Pine Warblers, and Red-breasted Nuthatches. Listen and watch for Red Crossbills, which have shown up in the pines here for the last few summers.

The State Trout Hatchery, Herman Covey Wildlife Management Area, and Other Locations South of Route Nine

An interesting stop while birding Quabbin Park is to visit the state-run McLaughlin Fish Hatchery. Take East Street south of Route 9 (between the western and middle entrances to Quabbin Park) for about half a mile. The trout hatchery is on the left (look for the gated chain-link fence) and is open 9 AM–3:45 PM. Drive through the gate and park in the designated area on the right. There are long descending cement troughs filled in season with rapidly growing trout. You can get some trout feed by putting a quarter in the small food pellet dispenser near the building. It may be a cheap thrill throwing a handful of feed pellets into a trout trough and watching the ensuing feeding frenzy, but it is also fun. Children love it, and serious trout fishermen are often spotted gazing wistfully at the scene.



Killdeer at the fish hatchery

At the bottom of the rows of trout pools is an aerated pond that is fenced in. At first glance this may seem to be a strange place to bird, since it appears to be nothing more than a truckload of kept trout and a cement lot. But Killdeer find the area attractive. They will sometimes begin arriving here at the end of February, depending on the winter, and on occasion linger until early December. I have often seen my first inland Killdeer of the year here, and from

August until mid-October good numbers of them are found. My personal daily count high for this location is 46 birds. I am not sure why Killdeer find this spot so attractive; perhaps it's the trout food around the edges of the pools.

With all the fattening trout swimming languorously in the pools, it's no surprise that Bald Eagles are regularly seen here, often perched among the boughs of the tall pines around the aeration pools. They can be partially hidden when perching, so carefully check the trees with a scope from the edge of the lot. In late fall and winter, if I have missed seeing Bald Eagles in Quabbin Park, I check at the trout hatchery. When in the area, always keep an eye out for circling hawks as well as Turkey Vultures. Great Blue Herons are also regular visitors, and there is a small rookery nearby. Ring-billed Gulls in small numbers roost here, especially near the aeration pond. Spotted Sandpipers and Least Sandpipers are sometimes found during

migration, particularly among the rocks of the aeration pool. Eastern Bluebirds and Tree and Barn swallows breed nearby and are common visitors in season.

If Quabbin Park is too crowded and you are up for a hike and some woodland birds, drive south just a bit more on East Street and note the State Wildlife Management signs on the right side all the way until East Street forms a T with Cold Spring Road (two miles). The Massachusetts Wildlife Connecticut Valley District Office is found on the east side of East Street. Typically this is gated but open to foot traffic and leads to a popular fishing spot. The Herman Covey WMA is on the west side of East Street, and there are a few small parking areas with trailheads leading well into in the forest. In breeding season a wide variety of forest species are found here including Pileated Woodpecker, Hermit Thrush, Blue-headed Vireo, and warbler species including Pine, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Ovenbird. Wood Ducks and Swamp Sparrows breed in the marsh. In deer hunting season, give this location a pass for obvious reasons.



Barred Owl at the WMA off East Street

Just to the east of East Street, Enoch Sanford Road runs from Route 9 close along the western shore of the Swift River. In spring, summer, and fall this dead-end road hosts a number of trout fishermen, but in winter it is a good place to look for Common and Hooded mergansers and an occasional Bald Eagle.

The Quabbin Park Cemetery is almost opposite the junction of Route 9 and the eastern entrance (Old Ware-Enfield Road). Most of the graves and memorials of the four Quabbin towns were moved here. If you are interested in Quabbin history, this is an good place to stop. Although the graves are difficult to sort out in terms of who lived in what Quabbin town or in Ware, there are a number of memorials and even cannons at the end of the entrance road that are clearly labeled as to origin. This small cemetery has most of the common breeding species and can be quite good during the April and May migration.

Learning More About Quabbin: Suggested Reading

The Swift River Valley has a long and rich history, and there have been a number of books written about the area. Here are just a few. J.R. Greene has written several small-press books about the history of Quabbin, though many are now out of print. *An Atlas of the Quabbin Valley Past In Present* (1983, Athol, Massachusetts: Transcript Press) is an interesting collection of maps showing the locations of the Swift River Valley towns and what parts of them are now under water. *Historic Quabbin Hikes* (1994, Athol, Massachusetts: Highland Press) is a nice guide to the many historical sites in the reservation.

The Massachusetts Audubon Society published a wonderful small book by Thomas Conuel of the history and natural history of Quabbin, complete with photographs, titled *Quabbin: The Accidental Wilderness* (1981, Brattleboro, Vermont: The Stephen Greene Press). If you can find a copy, I strongly recommend this book.

A more current and complete guide to hiking all over Quabbin is Michael Tougias' *Quabbin: A History and Explorer's Guide* (2002, Yarmouth Port, Massachusetts: On Cape Publications). This book should be read by anyone visiting the Quabbin area and wanting to do some hiking.

The Bird Finding Guide to Western Massachusetts, edited by Jan Ortiz, David A. Spector, Pete Westover, and Mary Alice Wilson (2003, Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Extension) is an invaluable guide to birding locations of western Worcester County to the Berkshires. This guide has an entire section on birding almost all locations in Quabbin. Now out of print, it can still be obtained by searching on Amazon.com and other websites that deal in out-of-print books. This guide is highly recommended to all birders who venture west of Worcester, although it needs a thorough revision since all the pieces were written before 9/11.

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South Quabbin in the spring

The Brookline Bird Club: 1945–1988

John Nelson

In 1945 Douglas Sands, just out of the Army, entertained Brookline Bird Club members with a slide show on the “Fauna and Flora of the Galapagos Islands.” Two years later, speakers used “moving pictures” to illustrate lectures on rare American birds and an Alaskan mountain climb. The traditional boat trip to Provincetown—with binoculars again allowed—resumed in 1946. Wartime was over.

The first two decades after World War II were a plateau period for the BBC. Membership dipped from 386 in 1943 to 325 in 1947, then slowly climbed to 465 in 1963 (including 30 from 9 states beyond Massachusetts)—still below the 558 in 1928. Club trips dropped to a low of 97 in 1961. In 1960, one bulletin listed several trips with “leader to be chosen from among those present” and declared that the club could no longer provide reliable train and bus directions “because of drastic curtailment of public transportation and frequent changes in timetables” (BBC 1960). In 1945 the BBC had relied on public transportation for almost all trips, but by 1960 auto trips were heading for Essex County, the South Shore, Westport, and Mount Greylock.

Though trips declined, the BBC species total per year gradually rose to a high of 275 in 1962. The club bought a spotting scope, which moved about from leader to leader. With the impetus of Roger Tory Peterson’s classic field guide and the rigorous example set by Ludlow Griscom, members became more adept at field identification. Rarities found on club trips included a Chuck-will’s-widow at Mount Auburn Cemetery in 1952, a Black-headed Grosbeak in Beverly in 1958, a Tufted Duck in Newburyport in 1959, a Brown Booby in Newburyport in 1961, a Black-throated Gray Warbler at a Winchester feeder in 1962, and a Green-tailed Towhee in Magnolia in 1963.

More striking were the misses and write-in status of birds now far more common in Massachusetts. In 1988 Larry Jodrey recalled: “We had to go a long ways to find a Cardinal or Mockingbird. . . .House Finches! Nobody ever heard of a House Finch” (Jodrey 1988). A BBC legend has it that Henry Wiggins “blew” a House Finch across the Rhode Island line to add it to his state list. Write-ins on BBC year lists included a Red-bellied Woodpecker in Rockport in 1953, nesting Carolina Wrens in Orleans in 1959, and a dozen-plus Harlequin Ducks in Magnolia in 1963. Missing from some lists were Mute Swan, Snow Goose, Gadwall, Great Egret, Snowy Egret, Willet, Wilson’s Storm-Petrel, all three jaegers, Eastern Screech Owl, Whip-poor-will, Winter Wren, and Orchard Oriole. The BBC seldom saw more than four owl species a year. Great Horned was missed as recently as 1969.

The 50th anniversary gala at the Museum of Science in 1963 featured a talk by club member John Kieran—once described by *The Boston Globe* as “the most widely-known birder in the nation” (Murphy 1974) and surely the only inductee in the Baseball Hall of Fame (as a sportswriter) with a bird sanctuary in Rockport named after him. Larry Jodrey reflected on BBC history, “Few bird clubs in the nation can

boast of such a continuous and full program of field trips.” Since its inception the BBC had sponsored 5243 trips and seen all 282 species on the Mass Audubon checklist, 57 write-ins, and more birds out of state. Jodrey encouraged members to keep working for the recognition of birds as an “important part of our national heritage” (Jodrey 1963) and the protection of birds for their own sake and for future human generations.

The years after 1963 witnessed a steady surge in BBC membership and activity. Club membership nearly tripled from 548 in 1966 to over 1600 in late 1977. The club expanded its range to include regular trips to Nantucket and the Boston Harbor islands, camping on Cape Cod and in the Berkshires, out-of state trips to the Isles of Shoals and the Maryland shores, and hawk watching on Mount Tom and Hawk Mountain. Walks at Mount Auburn Cemetery became a club institution. In a 1970 bulletin piece, Bob Stymeist, who led Mount Auburn walks almost daily that spring, described “Sweet Auburn” as “probably the best place in Eastern Massachusetts to observe the migration of land birds” (Stymeist 1970). *Boston Globe* articles on “bird chasers and meadow haunters” in 1975 and 1986 noted his “regular surveillance” (Bruno 1986) of the cemetery and called it “one of the most persistently birded areas in the country,” with BBC walks sometimes drawing an “unwieldy 100 or more” participants (Murphy 1975).

Club highlights during this period included a presumed-escapee American Flamingo at Plum Island in 1964; Peregrine Falcons at the Parker River refuge after towers were erected in 1965; six Henslow’s Sparrows at Plum Island and a “strange shorebird” that led to “unanimous indecision” (Barnett 1967) in 1967; a Saw-whet Owl found by a Gloucester librarian and two teenage girls on their first bird walk in 1970; a BBC life bird Common Raven at the Quabbin Reservoir and the first known nesting Barn Owls on Nantucket in 1971; a Painted Bunting in Barre on New Year’s Day in 1972; a two-day-wonder Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in Newburyport in 1973; a Sabine’s Gull on Nantucket in 1974; Western Meadowlarks three different years; and an “old friend” Eared Grebe at Bass Rocks in Gloucester for eight straight seasons. Birds missed by the BBC in one or more years included Harlequin Duck, Little Blue Heron, Glossy Ibis, Cooper’s and Sharp-shinned hawks, Bald Eagle, Pileated Woodpecker, Carolina Wren, and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher.

Meanwhile, more members were drawn to the lures of the list and the chase. In the early 1970s the BBC instituted an annual Century Run, or Big Day, typically traveling from Great Meadows to Plum Island and “NOT recommended for beginners” (BBC 1974). The 1974 Run found 162 species. The next weekend, the team of Bob Stymeist, Terry Leverich, and Tad Lawrence set a state Big Day record of 173. In 1971 Jerry Soucy began listing individual checklist totals in his annual Year in Review. Eight BBC members saw 300 or more species that year. Trip leader David Brown often topped the list, reaching a record high of 336 in 1983.

The club’s outings were recorded in vivid detail by Mary Lou Barnett, quoting field card comments that were often “witty, poetic, and occasionally philosophical,” (Barnett 1966) though she had to admonish some leaders—like one who reported 125

Loggerhead Shrikes—to proofread their cards. In 1975, stepping down from a “labor of love” as bulletin editor, Barnett said that nothing had enriched her life as much as birding and the BBC.

One recurring image in her reports is that of “indefatigable” and “doughty” birders up against the elements: gale-blown at Crane Beach, frostbitten at Mount Auburn, in snow up to the knee at Plum Island, and, in Marblehead, finding fog, heavy surf, and surfers—but no birds. In 1966, an eager “sheriff’s posse” of more than 40 braved ice, soaking mist, and blinding sleet, “beat the bushes and crawled in the snow” to find “sweet victory” (Barnett 1966)—a Rock Wren in Rockport. In 1969, another sizable group, frozen but “lighthearted with exuberance,” found 13 turkeys (a life bird for 13 participants) at the Quabbin Reservoir on the BBC’s first Wild Turkey Hunt. Some days brought more exuberance than others. One frigid March morning in 1972, Larry Jodrey expressed a feeling known to all leaders of winter Cape Ann trips—the hope that no one will show up. Another trip leader proposed that the BBC “ban winter birding.”

Birds, beasts, birders, and non-birders all conspired to add comedy to Barnett’s reports. In 1970, an overexcited member, trying to help his comrades see a Cattle Egret in Rowley, set up the group’s only scope in a manure pile. In 1974, club president Eliot Taylor whistled at dusk for a Whip-poor-will in Sherborn. A donkey responded. And in 1975, on a Greylock campout led by Steve Grinley, a member was asked to move his car so someone could jump off the mountain. The member obliged. Six hang gliders appeared and jumped. The last one flailed into a bush but took flight with the assistance of birders, who carried on to find the Mourning Warbler they were after.

1975 was the year of “the find of the century,” (Soucy 1975) a Ross’s Gull, first glimpsed in January at Newburyport Harbor by BBC directors Phil Parsons and Herman Weissberg, then, almost two months later, re-found and verified in Salisbury by Walter and George Ellison. A first record for the Lower 48, the Ross’s made the front page of *The New York Times* and was seen by thousands of birders and curiosity-seekers from across the country—more than 500 observers on one day in March.

Some wondered if the bird was a harbinger, or a BBC recruiting agent, because the Ross’s was followed by a spectacular string of rarities: a Northern Wheatear on Nantucket; a Black-browed Albatross out of Rockport; an Ivory Gull in Salisbury in December 1975 watched by a thousand birders the first weekend (and was fed bologna sandwiches but did not beg); Black-backed, Red-headed, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers on the same day in Gloucester in December 1976; a Steller’s Eider in Scituate in March 1977; a Northeast-record McCown’s Longspur in Bridgewater that same year; a Boreal Owl in Salisbury on the last day of 1978; a Great Gray Owl in Rowley, 79 Sooty Terns after Hurricane David, and a Lucy’s Warbler in Ipswich in 1979; Eurasian Cuckoo, Redwing, and Spotted Redshank (all state records) in 1981; Brown-chested Martin on Monomoy and Jackdaw on Nantucket (both state records) in 1982, as well as an unrecognizable dead bird that was carried home by a cat, taken to Manomet, and determined to be a Marbled Murrelet (a first East Coast record); a

Western Reef Heron on Nantucket in 1983 (voted the year's most expensive bird by members); Long-billed and Eurasian Curlews on Monomoy and another Ross's Gull in Newburyport in 1984; and many other state-record birds.

With rarities came intensified efforts to find certain birds and, when targets or rarities were found, to get the word out quickly. A big step had been taken in the 1960s with *The Voice of Audubon*—for years, the voice of Ruth Emery, known for her helpfulness and graciousness to all callers, whether expert or clueless, even the woman who indignantly insisted that the bird she'd just seen was a Passenger Pigeon. In 1982, the club supplemented the VOA with a Bird Alert Hot Line. The Hot Line helped many members see, among other birds, an Ivory Gull in Salisbury in 1983 (after 18 inches of snow) and, in Concord in 1986, a Fieldfare, the fourth record in the Lower 48. BBC directors, well aware of the need for well-documented sightings, struggled with the question of how and who to verify rare bird reports. Another innovation was the club's CB radio patrol.

One major development in finding birds and documenting sightings was the founding of *Bird Observer*, first published in January 1973. The journal provided detailed articles on birding destinations and ornithological studies, documented major finds like the Ross's Gull and Steller's Eider, and became the most comprehensive source of field data in New England. *Bird Observer* sponsored the annual Take a Second Look Boston Harbor census led by BBC members Soheil Zendehe and Craig Jackson, organized workshops like Wayne Peterson's "Fundamentals of Birding" in 1985, and, with the BBC, co-sponsored regular pelagic trips to Pollock Rip and Hydrographer Canyon. *Bird Observer* and the BBC cross-fertilized; club leaders like Bob Stymeist, Steve Grinley, and Herman d'Entremont were also editors or writers for the journal. In 1978 Stymeist and Leif Robinson compiled and edited *Bird Observer's* groundbreaking publication *Where to Find Birds in Eastern Massachusetts*.

As the BBC grew larger and more complex, leaders engaged in regular self-examination. Overall, they believed, the club remained fundamentally sound. The BBC offered the "pleasures of group birding, the opening of doors on the world of nature with no strings attached." The club was growing because newcomers were "not intimidated but welcomed" (Albee 1970). But there were causes for concern, especially the dwindling role of young birders. From its founding the BBC had cultivated "junior" birders. In 1966 Mary Lou Barnett praised the "tenacity and bravado of our more youthful leaders" (Barnett 1966). In 1988 Larry Jodrey recalled when Dick Veit, Chris Leahy, Peter Alden, and Simon Perkins—all prominent figures in Massachusetts birding—were young club members, looking "quite innocent in those days, full of wonderment" (Jodrey 1988). The BBC continued to offer novice walks to teach identification skills and John Andrews' birdsong workshops at Mount Auburn, while individuals made it a point to recruit and mentor beginners. Yet by the 1970s, active young members were scarce in the club. Rick Heil, who led his first BBC trip as a teenager in 1975, recalls that he rarely met club members near his age.

Another ongoing concern was the necessity of good public relations. Club leaders encouraged members to adhere to ethical standards of birding, avoid trespassing, and

maintain strong bonds with conservation groups (especially Mass Audubon), refuge managers, and residents in popular birding areas. When complaints about inconsiderate birders threatened access to prime spots like Mount Auburn and Plum Island, officers responded quickly, reminding members to observe birding etiquette and meeting with Parker River refuge managers to resolve problems. The BBC also worked frequently on joint projects with *Bird Observer* and other bird clubs like the Essex County Ornithological Club and the Forbush Bird Club's annual photo contest.

Bird conservation was also a recurrent issue. In the 1920s Raymond Talbot had announced "his ambition to make the club an active force in conservation," (BBC 1958) and over the years the BBC worked to make that ambition a reality. In the 1940s the efforts of Mass Audubon and the BBC helped establish the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge to provide feeding, resting, and nesting habitat for migratory birds. In 1963, after the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, the BBC joined the campaign to oppose indiscriminate use of pesticides. In 1968 the club formed a conservation committee, chaired by Joe Kenneally, who urged members to lobby to influence pending legislation such as a state Endangered Species bill, the establishment of a Non-game Wildlife Fund, and attempts to rescind the Wetlands Protection Act.

Locally, the BBC contributed funds for Least Tern research and protection projects on Plum Island and Crane Beach, Purple Martin houses in Ipswich (with the Trustees of Reservations), Barn Owl nest boxes on Martha's Vineyard and the Boston Harbor islands, Osprey platforms at Belle Isle Marsh and Plum Island, and the Manomet Operation Recovery and bird-banding station. The club also strived to preserve habitat at such places as Dwyer Farm in Marshfield, Common Pasture land in Newburyport, and shorelines targeted for dredging projects. Members participated in a five-year Cardinal-Titmouse survey, annual Christmas Bird Counts, and the nation's first statewide Breeding Bird Atlas, started by Mass Audubon in 1974. Paul Roberts headed up volunteers for the Eastern Mass Hawk Watch, with watches at Mount Wachusett, Mount Watatic, and Plum Island. Roberts also helped to organize the annual New England Hawk Watch Conference and, with David and Dennis Oliver, launched an American Kestrel nest box program. Nationally, the BBC supported conservation initiatives in San Francisco, the Everglades, and Alaska.

Despite these efforts, there was a gradual shift in emphasis from the overriding concentration on bird protection in the club's first few decades. Since 1913, the first sentence of each blue book had announced that the BBC was "open to all who are interested in birds and their protection," but in 1965 the phrase "birds and their protection" was changed to "birds and nature." In 1977, the Argo Merchant oil tanker disaster triggered a debate over the club's conservation role. Some club leaders believed that conservation required political activism. Others argued that the BBC "should stick to birding" (Albee 1977) and not ally with specific political causes. Directors resolved that the BBC would take no action on political controversies but that members could choose to be politically active as individuals.

Looking back, the club also celebrated some of its stalwarts, granting merit awards or honorary life memberships to leaders who had enabled the BBC to thrive

and enhanced the culture of birding in Massachusetts and beyond. Lillian Files, the leader of the American Bluebird Society, and Elizabeth Cushman, founder of the Student Conservation Association, were granted special recognition. Ruth Emery received a tribute for her knowledge and dedication as a *Bird Observer* editor, Mass Audubon's record compiler, and liaison between Mass Audubon and the BBC. Longtime bulletin editor and statistician Barnett; longtime corresponding secretary Natalie King; Virginia Albee, recording secretary for over two decades; and Dick and Dora Hale, who were club hosts, financial managers, and befrienders of new members, were all honored for keeping the BBC going strong. Larry Jodrey was thanked as a former club president, club historian, and ongoing source of wisdom. In 1975 he organized a surprise party at the Big Enuf cottage in Nantucket in honor of Jerry Soucy, who was commended for setting a "standard of excellence" as bulletin editor, author of the annual Checklist Summary, coordinator of roughly 3000 field trips, poet, philosopher, and teacher of countless birders.

Meanwhile, new members were responding to pleas for trip leaders and then emerging as leaders of the club. Bob Stymeist led his first BBC trip to Nahant in 1966 and went on to become compiler for the Greater Boston CBC and Breeding Bird Count, author of the Checklist Summary in 1984, club president in 1985, and statistician from 1987 to the present. Steve Grinley (first trip in 1965 to Mount Auburn and Fresh Pond) led innumerable trips for the next four decades, became president in 1979, and was instrumental in maintaining good relations with the Parker River refuge. Herman d'Entremont (first trip in 1966 to Newburyport) carried on the tradition of Martha's Vineyard trips and became the club's program coordinator. Ida Giriunas (first trip in 1968 to Reading and Wakefield) organized the Hot Line, made Downeast Maine a regular club destination, became president in 1999, and continues to organize trips that make the BBC a leader in East Coast pelagic birding. Bill Drummond (first trip in 1972 to Newburyport) became bulletin editor and field trip coordinator in 1977, president in 1987, reached out to novice birders, and pioneered BBC trips across the country. When he stepped down as bulletin editor, his successor, Doug Resnick, praised his "monumental" contribution to the BBC, while Drummond acknowledged a debt to forerunners like Stella Garrett and the Hales, who exemplified the club's "spirit of sharing." Paul Roberts (first trip in 1976 to Great Meadows) became the dean of Massachusetts hawk watching and then club president in 1983. David Oliver (first trip co-led with brother Dennis in 1979 to Plum Island) took over the demanding role of bulletin editor/field trip coordinator in 1986. Many others, like club presidents Leslie Vaughan, Warren Harrington, Herbert Murphy, Richard Holman, Lawrence Cyr, Tom Tomfohrde, Eliot Taylor, Joe Kenneally, Peter Alden, and Alden Clayton, played invaluable roles in guiding the BBC.

The BBC continued to find great birds in the late 1970s and 1980s. "The winter of the owl" (Soucy 1979) in 1979 brought at least eighteen Great Gray Owls into the state, along with ten Short-eared and four Long-eared owls at Salisbury and Plum Island. Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Brewster's, and Lawrence's warblers were all seen on one day in West Newbury. In 1983 a White-faced Storm-petrel was found on a BBC/*Bird Observer* trip to Hydrographer Canyon, and "sea trips became the year's

sensation” (Barnett 1983), Bob Stymeist’s 1986 Checklist Summary was titled “The Tropicbird and 360 Others.” A Red-billed Tropicbird at Gay Head and the Fieldfare in Concord were both state records. In 1987, what Stymeist called “The Thunder from Down Under” appeared—a rare Australian Cox’s Sandpiper (eventually determined to be a hybrid) that drew thousands of birders to Duxbury. In 1988, Stymeist’s Checklist Summary headline read “The 1988 Election: Sprague Tops Swainson.” In the 1980s club trips regularly found over 300 species in the state each year, and the BBC life list was inching toward 400.

For club members the most memorable birds were often rare, sometimes not: an Ivory Gull that “floated by on an ice flow” with “Cleopatra-like” (Soucy 1975) dignity; the “terrible beauty” and drama of a Snowy Owl that captured a Ring-necked Pheasant one New Year’s Day on the South Shore; a Gray Catbird imitating a Gadwall on Plum Island; a Chuck-will’s-widow floundering over Stellwagen Bank; a Cerulean Warbler landing on a boat headed for Hydrographer Canyon; a Burrowing Owl that lived under a plastic bag on Martha’s Vineyard; an escaped Chilean Flamingo found on Monomoy; a Gyrfalcon chasing two Red-tails across the Quabbin Reservoir; a rare Sutton’s Warbler subspecies that generated “spirited discussion” at Mount Auburn; and a “crazy gull” cited by Stymeist as Kamikaze Bird of the Year for sitting on the head of a Humpback Whale and trying to extract a fish from its mouth.

The Checklist Summaries for these years also noted changes in bird distribution. By 1975 Harlequin Ducks had become regular in Rafe’s Chasm in Magnolia. In 1979 Wilson’s Phalaropes first nested in the state at Plum Island, but “thrushes were alarmingly down” (Soucy 1979). Bald Eagles returned to the Merrimack River in 1980 for the first time in years, and the next year was notable for “the diversity and number of Bald Eagle reports statewide,” (Soucy 1980) but Roseate Terns and Golden-winged Warblers were declining. Missing from BBC lists in one or more years between 1975 and 1988 were Razorbill, Greater Shearwater, Redhead, Eastern Bluebird, and Connecticut and Worm-eating warblers. Several club members lamented missing Whip-poor-will in consecutive years.

When club members look back upon their early days in the BBC during the 1960s and 1970s, they talk about the gracious welcome they received from the club regulars, the fun they had on club trips, and the opportunities they were given to find new birds, new birding locations, new bird behavior, and new birding companions. They never fail to mention those who reached out to become their mentors and friends. Jane Lothian recalls how Dick and Dora Hale would welcome “bedraggled birders” on Cape Ann into their Rockport home to eat their bag lunches out of the wind. When the Hales asked her to sign a guest book filled with comments from past BBC trips, Jane felt she’d become part of a club tradition—a tradition of hospitality that continued for years even after it became difficult for the Hales to join trips themselves. Steve Grinley fondly remembers the camaraderie of Greylock campouts, when BBC groups would gather around campfires, cook their own dinner, share wine and stories to a chorus of thrushes, and relive the excitement of finding Bicknell’s Thrushes nesting on the summit at Bascom Lodge. Some longtime members worry that, while it may now be easier to target birds and share information in the era of the

Internet and digital birding, the club, and birders generally, may be losing some of the companionship, the personal communication, and the spirit of sharing that have always marked the BBC. Yet these same members share a sense of pride in the club's contributions to ornithology and bird conservation, and they all express gratitude for the many ways in which the club has elevated their lives and introduced the delights of birding to thousands of others.

In 1988, club president Bill Drummond presided over a BBC 75th anniversary celebration at Bentley College, attended by over 350 members and guests. Victor Emanuel, a pioneer in guiding international birding tours, was the featured speaker. In his address to the club, Larry Jodrey recalled his first encounter with the BBC at Andrew's Point in Rockport in the early 1950's. A "horde" in all sorts of winter plumage descended upon him and handed him a blue booklet. The dollar he paid to join the club was "the best investment I ever made." Jodrey reminded members of their debt to their forebears and their obligation to carry on the heritage of conservation and the encouragement of youth. "Generations go swiftly," he said. "Others will take our place. We only share our heritage; we share the earth, for a brief bit" (Jodrey 1988).

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John Nelson, of Gloucester, contributes regularly to Bird Observer and has published fiction and non-fiction about birds in Birding, Birdwatching, The Gettysburg Review, The Harvard Review, and the British journal Essex Birding. His essay on birds and dance, "Brolga the Dancing Crane Girl," was awarded the prestigious Carter Prize for the best non-fiction article published in Shenandoah during the 2011-2012 season. He is a director of the Brookline Bird Club as well as the Essex County Ornithological Club.



[**Ed. Note:** This article has been abridged from part two of a three-part history of the Brookline Bird Club. The history is being written for its 100th anniversary in 2013. The complete history will be published on the BBC website.]



THE 1975 ROSS'S GULL IN A PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER ALDEN

Wonders and Surprises of Birding at a Young Age

Miles A. Brengle

Ever since I was five years old, birds and their mysterious habits have intrigued me. I'm not quite sure what it is about them, but birds give me a constant sense of joy when I see them. Whether it's an excited Killdeer, calling nervously and dragging its wing on the ground to distract me from its nest, or even a Black-capped Chickadee flying to and from the feeder time and time again, fattening up for the long winter ahead, it delights me to see birds act out their lives. The fact that some birds such as warblers and sandpipers, some only five or so inches in length and weighing an ounce or two, migrate thousands of miles twice a year is nothing short of astonishing. From the perilous migrations to the extra step birds must take to be able to breed, it all is a sensational experience that I hope to continue to observe for many years ahead.

The birds that got me into birding were the intricately colored shorebirds that I would see on family vacations to Sanibel Island in southwest Florida. The variety was endless. You could see the mottled brown Marbled Godwit probing its bill deep into the sand for small invertebrates or the blue and maroon Reddish Egret dancing around the shallows, corralling baitfish into groups in a comical scene. If I can remember, the bird that really set the hook for me was the Roseate Spoonbill. With dazzling pink and red feathers combined with the inquisitive spatulate bill, it is a bird that combines beauty and evolution into one. That's when I first said, "Wow, that is one cool bird!" I knew I was hooked.

In the first few years, my birding wasn't very serious, mostly consisting of feeder watching, walks around the yard, and the occasional birthday trip to Joppa Flats Education Center in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Towards the beginning of sixth grade, my birding started to become serious after meeting Jim Berry, a well-known birder from Ipswich. A friend of my mother's is a good friend of Jim's and thought we should meet and go birding together. We first walked the trails of Appleton Farms, where he showed me how to identify a Common Yellowthroat and also what an Eastern Wood-Pewee sounded like.

We continued birding for the next couple weeks, moving on to Parker River National Wildlife Refuge to watch the migrating shorebirds. I remember walking on Sandy Point where he showed me how to distinguish the White-rumped Sandpipers from the Semipalmateds and Dunlins. We also watched a Saltmarsh Sparrow bathe in the open for a minute or two, a rare sight. The real star of the day was a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher that was flying around the driftwood on the beach. Jim has been very helpful, teaching me how to identify species that can be confusing, what their calls sound like, and most importantly, the nesting behaviors of different birds in Essex County. He has also made my life list skyrocket since we started birding together. Jim and I have had many highlights in our time together, a few of which I will describe in this article.

This May, I made it a mission to find a few species of birds I had never seen before. I'm disappointed to say that I did not get out birding much that month. That made me determined to find some sort of hidden jewel around my house. I had taken three or four walks out in the field behind the house, which revealed a few Magnolia, Blue-winged, and Chestnut-sided warblers. These were good birds, but not great. As I was going to school one morning I heard a loud, sharp song that sounded distantly familiar. I didn't think much of it and hopped in the car to go to school. The next day was a Saturday, which gave me the whole day off. I heard the song once again and was utterly confused. What could that odd song be? Northern Waterthrush? No, this was too sharply pitched and much louder than a Northern Waterthrush. The bird continued to sing throughout the day, and I was determined to track it down.

I hauled myself through thick brambles and soaking mud in search of this curious song. I arrived at a clearing with a few saplings around the site. I felt like the bird song was blaring in my face, but I could not see the bird! Then like a flash it appeared out of the thicket and into one of the saplings. There, gleaning the leaves for insects, was a Tennessee Warbler at eye level. The bird stayed put for a minute or so, showing off its sharp beak and green-gray coloration, adding a bit of muted color to the scene while continuing to sing. He then flew off, never to be seen again. Too bad I had a case of poison ivy the next day, but it was worth it.

This next highlight will stick with me throughout my life because it was quite a motivating experience. Jim and I were birding a part of East Gloucester called Dikes Pasture Road this past June. The habitat consisted of tall grass fields, hemlock woods, and mixed deciduous forests. We both heard the alarm call of a Spotted Sandpiper ahead. Jim and I decided to check out the sandpiper, and as we walked down the trail, we came across a spillway from a reservoir into a small pond. In this spillway, we saw a Spotted Sandpiper nervously teetering and calling from next to a hole in the spillway floor. All of a sudden, the sandpiper dove into the hole and came back out again, repeating its nervous behavior. Jim believed the sandpiper had just entered a nest so he sent me down to investigate.

I slowly walked over to the nest hole, and inside sat huddled together four downy chicks. Since this hole was eighteen inches deep, we figured the chicks would have no chance of getting out and would die of starvation. We made the decision to free the chicks from the hole that the parent had so absent-mindedly picked as a nest site. These fuzzy puffballs were ready to go as I lifted them out one by one and they skipped up the spillway, already showing the diagnostic Spotted Sandpiper bobbing motion. We continued to watch from above as the chicks explored their new environment, even scaling near-vertical surfaces! The father (Jim had told me that male Spotted Sandpipers usually do all the incubation and caring for the young) brooded the chicks often, showing his concern for them. The spillway had a section with water and plants that we thought would create a suitable habitat until the chicks were able to fly, so we left happy.

The last highlight that I'll describe is from one of my most recent bird outings with Jim. I find that this story really defines how birding can flip from boring to

exhilarating in a matter of seconds and the ways birds can surprise us with such great effect. In the second week of November, Jim and I headed over to Good Harbor Beach in Gloucester in search of Snow Buntings, Horned Larks, and Lapland Longspurs. I never said this aloud, hoping not to jinx my idea, but I had a thought in the back of my mind that a rare bird would pop up in our travels that day. Little did I know that this feeling would be realized within the next half hour.

We walked around the parking lot on this dull, cloudy day, but no birds were in sight besides a few House Finches and a flock of Starlings. Missing your target birds is not the best way to start off a morning of birding! As we were watching a flock of House Finches fly into a small tree, Jim and I noticed a bluebird in with them. Jim said, "There's a bluebird in with those finches," not thinking much about it. I trained my binoculars on the bird, looking at its blue back and wings. This bird seemed abnormally different. The blue on the back just seemed too light for an Eastern Bluebird. "Jim, that looks like a Mountain Bluebird," I exclaimed. Just as I said those words the bird flew down to the ground, displaying its sky-blue coloration. We both cried out in surprise, "It's a Mountain Bluebird!!!" The two of us watched in disbelief as this bird, which should have been in the southwestern U.S., hunted and flew around the parking lot. There was an expletive or two in our remarks about the bluebird, but I will leave those out of this essay. As one might imagine, hordes of birders came within the next few days to see this gem of a bird. This experience has taught me to always be prepared to see anything when birding, because you never know what you're going to discover out in the field.

Experiences like these are what make birding so enjoyable for me. You never know what the next day will bring. Birding is full of surprises and things you never thought you would see. I find that observing birds for the first time at a young age is exciting because it is a new, original experience. Birds continue to amaze me with their baffling behaviors and complex ways of life. I hope to discover many more surprises and behaviors in my future birding career. 🐦



Miles Brengle, 13, lives in Ipswich and attends Ipswich Middle School. He enjoys playing soccer and baseball for the town as well as hiking and traveling. He tries to get out birding as much as he can, fitting it in between schoolwork assignments. Miles hopes to join a bird club in the near future.

The author feeding a Gray Jay at Crawford Notch, NH., in a photo courtesy of his family

Attracting Barn Swallows and Cliff Swallows to a New England Site: A Two-year Progress Report

Mara Silver

Introduction

Since 1990, I have endeavored to use simple, systematic steps to attract and maintain Barn Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*) and Cliff Swallows (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) at sites that were either historically known to harbor these species or apparently suitable but not populated by them. I have achieved some success at two sites. The first of these was the focus of yearly efforts from 1990 to 2010 (Silver 1993, 1995), and work has been ongoing at the second site since 2011.

Natural History

Barn Swallows

The Barn Swallow is the most widely distributed and abundant swallow in the world (Brown and Brown 1999). Originally nesting in caves, this species currently nests almost exclusively on human-made structures. The preferred habitat is agricultural lands, marshes, lakes, fields, and residential areas. In New England they are commonly found in agricultural settings, where buildings provide nesting opportunities, and there are open fields for foraging. Even though Barn Swallow numbers are high compared to other swallow species in North America, Barn Swallows have been showing declines across the greater portion of their range (New Hampshire Audubon 2010). In many parts of Massachusetts, the Barn Swallow population has declined as urban and suburban sprawl replaces farmland and, thus eliminates prime feeding and nesting areas (Mass Audubon 2010a). According to Breeding Bird Atlas 2 (BBA 2), it appears that a decline in the Barn Swallow population in Massachusetts has begun (Mass Audubon 2010a).

Barn Swallows arrive in New England from their wintering grounds in South America to breed in early- to mid-April. The nest is cup-shaped, constructed of mud and vegetation, and most commonly placed on the framework inside buildings that allow the birds access. They prefer to reuse old nests. Even when reusing nests, Barn Swallows will add new mud to the rim of old nests annually (Brown and Brown 1999). Barn Swallows are loosely colonial. Clutch size is two to six eggs; the incubation period is approximately 12–15 days, and young fledge approximately 15–24 days after hatching.

Cliff Swallows

The Cliff Swallow is a Neotropical migrant that has been gradually declining in New England since about 1880. The primary factors contributing to the decline are the same as those for Barn Swallows with the additional threat of introduced House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*), which aggressively usurp nests. Cliff Swallow

populations, however, are stable in the western United States, where they nest on natural sites and cliffs and readily use bridges. In the East, they are almost exclusively confined to buildings—it is unclear why they do not use bridges as they do in the West. It is not known what the status of this species was in pre-settlement times in the East, but it is clear that this species benefited greatly from human settlement here. Cliff Swallow numbers probably reached their peak in the eastern U.S. around 1840–1860. In Massachusetts today, the Cliff Swallow occupies less than half the distribution it held in 1979 (Mass Audubon 2010b) with most colonies in the western part of the state. BBA2 found that the combined threat of habitat loss and competition from invasive birds has reduced the already modest population to less than a third of its BBA1 size (Mass Audubon 2010b). In 1992, a Massachusetts survey found approximately 399 pairs among 34 colonies in the state (Silver 1993). These trends are similar throughout the eastern U.S.

Cliff Swallows arrive in New England from their wintering grounds in South America in mid- to late-April until mid-May. Once established at a nesting site, they construct nests resembling mud “bottles” under the eaves of buildings. Old nests are readily re-used. Nests are composed of mud and constructed one pellet of mud at a time, which is carried in the beak from a nearby mud source. Cliff Swallows are probably the most colonial swallow in the world (Brown and Brown 1995), and nesting activity within a colony is highly synchronized. Compared to western colonies, which can reach up to thousands of birds, colonies in Massachusetts are small, ranging in size from two to 200 pairs, with few exceeding 100 pairs. Clutch size is one to six eggs, (usually three or four). The incubation period is approximately 14 days, and young fledge about 21–23 days after hatching.

Work at Graves Farm, Williamsburg, MA, 1991–2010

The barn at Graves Farm, built in two sections (one in 1875, and a smaller, right-angle addition in 1915), provided ample nesting opportunities for both Cliff and Barn Swallows. Cliff Swallows used the eaves, and Barn Swallows were plentiful in the haylofts, which were accessible year round due either to open (or broken) windows or to hay mow doors being carefully blocked ajar. By 1990, the Cliff Swallow population at the farm was dwindling, although the Barn Swallow population seemed to be doing better. At that time, I made successful overtures to the elderly farm owners, John and Dwight Graves, to allow me to address the then-poor state of the Cliff Swallow population there. In 1991, the Massachusetts Audubon Society acquired this defunct dairy farm from the owners and thereafter cooperated with me in restoring the Cliff Swallow population. In 1996, the main (1875) barn and all outbuildings were taken down, leaving only the house and the 1915 barn. In c. 2002, the house and barn were sold to a private party.

Barn Swallows

Subsequent to the 1996 demolitions, approximately 10 to 15 pairs of Barn Swallows nested annually at Graves Farm in the 1915 barn’s hayloft. Although, unfortunately, precise data are unavailable, there were more pairs nesting on the premises prior to the demolition. The removal of these buildings likely affected Barn

Swallows more than Cliff Swallows, as Barn Swallows are much less colonial and their nesting sites are more scattered. Before the 2010 nesting season the owners replaced the hayloft windows, thereby excluding Barn Swallows. Barn Swallows were observed perching in front of the windows, singing, and trying to gain access. At that time the sole places left for them to nest at Graves Farm were two garage bays. It is unknown whether those sites are still available.

Barn Swallows appeared to benefit from the enhancement of the mud puddle at the farm (see below), and during nesting time they were often observed gathering mud there rather than flying to a nearby wetland.

Cliff Swallows

In 1990, I commenced management and monitoring of the colony of Cliff Swallows, which had dwindled to six pairs. Graves Farm had, at one time, hosted one of the largest Cliff Swallow colonies in the state as well as plentiful Barn Swallows. In *Birds of the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts* (1937), Bagg and Eliot called the farm “swallow mecca.”

The main obstacles to the colonies’ success at the farm were 1) House Sparrows usurping nests; 2) nests falling from the eaves of the barn; and 3) the lack of a quality, reliable mud source. I enlisted help to 1) control House Sparrows; 2) install 150 ceramic nest ledges (supports I fashioned from stoneware clay and fired for durability that mimic beginning Cliff Swallow nests); and 3) mix about 30 five-gallon buckets of clay into the puddle and closely regulate the puddle water level. The Cliff Swallow population grew and stabilized, averaging 20–30 pairs a year for the next 20 years. Management and monitoring continued annually until 2010, with primary activities being ongoing control of House Sparrows and, just as important, maintenance of the mud source.

In 2010, the owners informed me of the designation of the mud puddle as a wetland. Because this precluded control of the puddle’s water level to maximize mud availability, it was no longer practical to directly manage this resource for swallows at Graves Farm.

Work at Patten Hill Farm, Shelburne, MA, 2011–2012

In 2011, work moved to Patten Hill Farm in Shelburne, Massachusetts. I attempted to attract Barn Swallows in 2011 and, in 2012, both Barn and Cliff swallows. In 2012, I created a mud puddle to provide nesting material for both species (see Figure 1). The puddle, approximately four by five feet, was lined with vinyl lake liner and filled with mud and 8–10 gallons of soft clay. The clay was kept wet by filling the puddle daily with a hose and working



Figure 1. Mud puddle at Patten Hill (all photographs by the author)

the mud/clay mixture to soften and expose it. The puddle was maintained through the nesting season, even though swallows were no longer building nests. During the third week of May, a three-foot high chicken wire fence was installed to separate the puddle from the barnyard and so protect it from the local cat. Grass was mowed in the entire barnyard, not just the area surrounding puddle. Barn and Cliff swallows more readily use the puddle if the area surrounding it is kept open and predators can be easily spotted.

Barn Swallows

By 2002, all openings (windows, doors, etc.) of the Patten Hill barn had been secured, thus excluding Barn Swallows from the main barn, including the hayloft, where they had formerly nested in the greatest numbers. For the following nine years Barn Swallows had access solely to a horse shed, and the numbers at the farm declined to just a few pairs.

In the spring of 2011, before the nesting season, the hayloft windows were re-opened. Social attraction had been developed by Steven Kress to lure Atlantic Puffins (*Fratercula arctica*) to previously used but vacant nesting sites. This process is useful in the case of social birds that nest in close proximity to one another. It works by tricking birds into thinking there are conspecifics using the site. We used this technique by broadcasting recordings of Barn Swallows' breeding calls from one of the open hayloft windows at the beginning of May. That year, Barn Swallows were observed at Patten Hill, but none nested. One male explored the hayloft and called from the hayloft window, but did not attract a female. The recording was turned off a few days after the lone male arrived, as it seemed to be agitating him.

In 2012, the Barn Swallow recording was again played from May 1 until May 15, when once again a male Barn Swallow entered the hayloft. This male did attract a female, and this pair nested in the hayloft. In 2012, a total of three pairs of Barn Swallows nested at Patten Hill, the pair in the hayloft, one in the horse shed, and one on the porch of the farmhouse adjacent to the barn. The pair in the hayloft and the pair in the horse shed reused old nests, and both successfully fledged four to five young. The pair on the porch built a new nest using mud from the puddle. This pair did not successfully fledge young. The female disappeared right after the chicks hatched, and the male abandoned the nest. Barn Swallows were seen collecting mud from the puddle in late May during the 2012 season.

Cliff Swallows

Prior to 2012, there were no records of Cliff Swallows nesting on the Patten Hill Farm barn, and they had not been observed there for the past 50 years. Patten Hill Farm has many features that make it appear ideal for nesting Cliff Swallows, with a large barn surrounded by open fields for foraging. In 2012, efforts to attract Cliff Swallows to the farm began. Thirty nest ledges were installed on the barn adjacent to the barnyard before the nesting season (Figure 2). Most were small ledges, and a few were circular, more complete "beginnings" of nests. Most were installed facing the building, under the eaves. Unlike the situation at Graves Farm, the eaves of the Patten Hill barn were covered, so the ledges were attached to a separate board and attached

to the barn's fascia board, facing inward, to match the configuration found at Graves Farm. Three of the circular ledges were also attached to the outside of the barn facing outward to experiment with a different setup. Finally, as had been done for Barn Swallows, Cliff Swallow breeding calls were broadcast into the barnyard through a barn window that was close to the mud puddle and the nesting ledges. Broadcasting started on May 24, and on May 28, a timer was installed that turned the recording on at 6:00 a.m. and off at 8:00 p.m. The recording ran until July 8, 2012.

One pair of Cliff Swallows built onto one of the outward-facing circular nest ledges between the evening of June 22 and the morning of June 24, using mud from the puddle. Although these circular ledges were intended to be the beginning of a nest "bottle," this pair built on top of this nest ledge and did not complete the bottle. This pair successfully reared three chicks, which fledged during the first five days of August (Figure 3). On August 6, the nest was empty.

Discussion of Work at Patten Hill Farm, 2011–2012

Barn Swallows

The first two seasons at Patten Hill Farm were very encouraging. In 2011, after I simply opened the hayloft windows and played the Barn Swallow vocalizations, one male Barn Swallow entered the hayloft and attempted to attract a female. It may be that Barn Swallows did not nest that year because of weather; there was long wet, cool stretch during the nesting season. Swallows, as insectivores, are particularly vulnerable in this type of weather.

The addition of the mud puddle in 2012 appears to have been important for drawing more Barn Swallows to the farm. With other requirements met (barn windows open and fields for foraging) the missing variable appeared to be a mud source that would attract swallows and provide nesting material. Barn Swallows were seen flying over and collecting at the puddle in 2012. Since the Barn Swallow is a somewhat colonial species, broadcasting the breeding song vocalizations appeared to have played a role in attracting them; in 2011 and 2012, Barn Swallows investigated

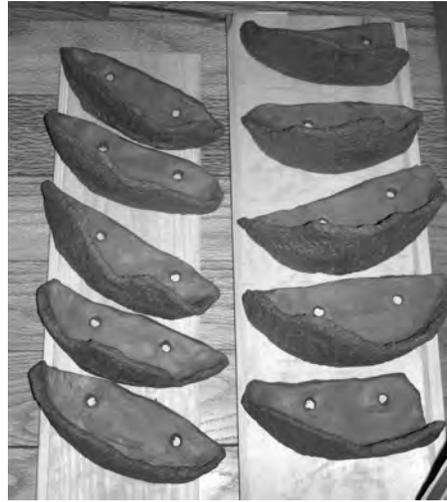


Figure 2. Cliff Swallow nesting ledges before installation.



Figure 3. First and only Cliff Swallow nest at Patten Hill Farm. Three young successfully fledged from this nest!

the barn while the recording was playing. Because adults and juveniles prospect for potential nesting sites for the following year, it is important to keep the barn windows open until the swallows leave on migration and to maintain the puddle beyond the nesting season. Barn Swallows were seen prospecting on July 22 and July 28. On July 28, Tree Swallows (*Tachycineta bicolor*) and Bank Swallows (*Riparia riparia*) joined the Barn Swallows, and all were observed flocking on the peak of the barn at the end of July.

Cliff Swallows

In the case of Cliff Swallows, broadcasting breeding calls and creating the mud puddle and the nest ledges appeared to make the farm attractive enough for at least one pair to nest there. Progressively more Cliff Swallows were observed at the farm during the season, even though only one pair took up residence. On July 1, a third Cliff Swallow was seen flying in the barnyard, and three birds continued to be seen flying over the farm. On July 22, six Cliff Swallows were seen flying in the vicinity of the farm. The presence of other Cliff Swallows is especially attractive to this highly colonial species. Mud gathering is also an intensely social activity for Cliff Swallows. In light of these characteristics, it is interesting to note that the Cliff Swallow nest at the farm was built just above the audio player and the mud puddle, although this may have been due, at least in part, to the initial placement of the ledges. When such specific nesting requirements are met, it appears Cliff Swallows can be attracted to a new site.

It should be noted that there is a farm with a Cliff Swallow colony approximately five miles from Patten Hill. It may be that the Cliff Swallows that came to Patten Hill were from that farm, which has a high resident House Sparrow population. Patten Hill Farm is not an active Farm, and there are no House Sparrows in residence. A pair was seen in the barnyard in July of 2012 for a few minutes, but none were observed before or after that date. One reason swallows may be attracted to defunct farms is that House Sparrow populations tend to be lower there. On active farms, grain in the livestock feeds and manure attracts House Sparrows, and Cliff Swallows find it nearly impossible to compete with them. 

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Mara Silver studied the colony of Cliff Swallows at Graves Farm in Williamsburg, Massachusetts, for 20 years. In 2011, she transferred her efforts to Patten Hill Farm and was thrilled when she successfully attracted a pair of Cliff Swallows and several pairs of Barn Swallows to that location. Mara holds a Masters Degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation from UMass Amherst. For her masters thesis project she inventoried Bank Swallow habitat along the Connecticut River in light of bank stabilization projects. Mara works as a production editor at a scientific textbook company.



BARRED OWL AT FRESH POND BY SHERRY LEFFERT

FIELD NOTES

The Accidental Fledgling

Richard Graefe

Hosting nesting Tree Swallows for 35 years has taught me much about the behavior of this species. In a typical season, they arrive at the nest box around April 1 here in Rhode Island. Sometime within the next week or so, they begin nest building. When the nest is several days from completion, the adults begin mating to produce fertile eggs. At fledging age, the entire brood fledges within a short time when called from the nest by the parents with an “It’s time to fledge” call heard at no other time. The fledglings and their parents then generally leave the area quickly, and any nestlings too weak to fly are left behind to starve.

But the 2012 nesting season was anything but typical. An unusually warm March brought the first Tree Swallow to one of my nest boxes on March 18, with a pair present by March 20, the second earliest arrival date I’ve ever seen. Then the weather turned colder and rainy, and the onset of nest building was delayed. I was surprised, therefore, to see the adult pair mating near the nest box on May 5, 10, and 11—before any nest building activity had begun. In fact, nest building did not begin until May 14. So, were these early matings a wasted effort, since the first egg was not laid until May 19? Not necessarily, since such behavior would enable the adult pair to engage in intraspecific brood parasitism at other Tree Swallow nests. I had documented brood parasitism among Tree Swallows in my 2002 Bird Observer article, “Tree Swallow Nesting Success at a Construction Site.”

The biggest surprise of the season, however, was what I will call “the accidental fledgling.” I had heard that many early nesting pairs had failed in Massachusetts due to cool, steady rains, and even my Rhode Island brood was reduced from six to five by an almost all-day rain on June 14. Perhaps nest failures elsewhere were the reason that every morning from June 25 through June 27 the resident pair had to fend off a swarm of up to seven other adult Tree Swallows attempting to take over the nest box.

Much to my surprise, at 9:00 a.m. on June 2, I observed one fledged young perched on top of the nest box, while its four nest-mates remained in the box. These four continued to take turns sitting in the entrance hole. All day, the parents fed the four nestlings in the box and the one fledged bird, which spent the day going back and forth between the roof of the nest box and the nearby utility wires. At 6:00 p.m. I took a supper break and returned at 6:30 p.m. to find that all the young had fledged and left.

The behavior I observed was unusual but understandable. I presumed that the accidental fledgling had been pulled or knocked from the entrance hole by one of the swarm of competing adult swallows. Had the bird been unable to fly, any attempt by the parents to feed the grounded fledgling would have had a low probability of

success. But to feed a healthy flight-worthy fledgling that accidentally left the nest eight hours early was adaptive. The early fledging did not cause the remaining nestlings to immediately fledge. They still waited for the parental call. But the flexible, uncommon behavior of the parent birds toward the accidental fledgling had enabled them to successfully fledge five instead of four young. 🦉



LONG-EARED OWL PORTRAIT BY SANDY SELESKY

2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation Final National Report Released

United States Fish and Wildlife Service

More Details on Participation and Expenditures

Wildlife-related outdoor recreation increased dramatically from 2006 to 2011. The national details are shown in the final report (Final Report) of the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation released today by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

The Final Report, which follows the August 2012 Preliminary Review and the September 2012 State Overview, provides more information on the types of activities and money spent for fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching.

Highlights of the Final Report include:

More than 90 million U.S. residents 16 years old and older participated in some form of wildlife-related recreation in 2011; that is up 3 percent from five years earlier. The increase was primarily among those who fished and hunted.

Wildlife recreationists spent \$144.7 billion in 2011 on their activities, which equated to 1 percent of the Gross Domestic Product. Of the total amount spent, \$49.5 billion was trip-related, \$70.4 billion was spent on equipment, and \$24.8 billion was spent on other items such as licenses and land leasing and ownership.

The number of sportspersons rose from 33.9 million in 2006 to 37.4 million in 2011. The data show that 33.1 million people fished, 13.7 million hunted, and 71.8 million participated in at least one type of wildlife-watching activity such as observing, feeding and photographing wildlife.

Other key findings include:

Fishing and Hunting

Of the 13.7 million hunters that took to the field in 2011, 11.6 million hunted big game, 4.5 million hunted small game, 2.6 million hunted migratory birds, and 2.2 million other animals. Of the 33.1 million anglers that fished, 27.5 million freshwater fished and 8.9 million saltwater fished.

While 94% of the U.S. population 16 years of age and older resided in metropolitan areas (50,000 and over populations), 89% of all anglers and 80% of all hunters were metropolitan residents. 73% (24.2 million) of all anglers were male and 27% (8.9 million) were female. 89% (12.2 million) of all hunters were males and 11% (1.5 million) were females.

Wildlife Watching Highlights

71.8 million U.S. residents observed, fed, and/or photographed birds and other wildlife in 2011. Almost 68.6 million people wildlife watched around their homes, and 22.5 million people took trips of at least one mile from home to primarily wildlife watch.

Of the 46.7 million people who observed wild birds, 88% did so around their homes and 38% on trips a mile or more from home. Other types of wildlife also were popular for trip takers: 13.7 million people enjoyed watching land mammals such as bear, squirrel, and buffalo. 4 million people watched marine mammals such as whales and dolphins; 6.4 million enjoyed watching fish; and 10.1 million enjoyed watching other wildlife such as butterflies.

People spent \$54.9 billion on their wildlife-watching trips, equipment, and other items in 2011. This amounted to \$981 on average per spender for the year.

At the request of state fish and wildlife agencies, the Fish and Wildlife Service has been sponsoring the national survey every five years since 1955. It is viewed as one of the nation's most important wildlife-related recreation databases and the definitive source of information concerning participation and purchases associated with hunting, fishing and other forms of wildlife-related recreation nationwide.

The U.S. Census Bureau selected over 48,600 households across the country to obtain samples of sportspersons and wildlife watchers for detailed interviews. Information was collected through computer-assisted telephone and in-person interviews. Starting in December 2012 through May 2013, the State reports will be prepared for release on a rolling basis. The survey is funded by Multi-State Conservation grants under the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs which celebrates 75 years of conservation success in 2012.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <<http://www.fws.gov>>.



GULLS AND TERNS BY WILLIAM E. DAVIS, JR.

ABOUT BOOKS

The Man with the Slightly Crazy Plan

Mark Lynch

Half An Hour A Day Across Massachusetts. John J. Galluzzo. 2012. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

“Everywhere is walking distance if you have the time.”
Steven Wright



There is a story, probably apocryphal, about the Ancient Greek philosopher Diogenes of Sinope (circa 404 BC to 323 BC), founder of the Cynics. When someone proposed that motion was unreal, Diogenes got up and walked away. Much later, a Latin phrase became popular that captured the elegance of Diogenes' response: “*solvitur ambulando*” meaning “it is solved by walking.” Some have attempted to translate this phrase into more idiomatic English as “you’ll find the answer as you go.” In later literature, *solvitur ambulando* has been cited by authors as diverse as Saint Augustine, Lewis Carroll, Dorothy L. Sayers, Henry David Thoreau, and Paul Theroux. I firmly believe John Galluzzo should have *solvitur ambulando* tattooed somewhere on his body because it is certainly his credo.

John Galluzzo is a rare person. He is as knowledgeable talking about birds as he is about fungi, reptiles, local naval history, old farms, and lighthouses. He has written more than thirty-five books on a variety of subjects, many of them focusing on local South Shore history, and has for many years worked as a tour leader for Massachusetts Audubon. He is also the Executive Director of the United States Life-Saving Service Heritage Association. Every time I get a post from John on Facebook, he has just finished teaching a class or giving a lecture somewhere in New England. He is married with two children. To state the obvious, his work schedule is a nightmare—which is why his project for 2011 seemed absolutely insane.

In 2009, Galluzzo decided to walk for a half an hour a day, every day, mostly in the South Shore. This was both for his health and to promote the green spaces of his area. Even when he was out of Massachusetts that year, he made sure to walk thirty minutes somewhere. He battled atrocious bad weather, hordes of insects, and a severe bout with pneumonia. But he trudged on. He published two accounts of his adventures. This seems like the kind of obsessive, time-devouring project that you do once in a lifetime. But not Ole Ramblin’ John.

“In 2011, I vowed to take things 351 steps further. I would walk Massachusetts. Not east to west, not north to south, but the whole damned thing, thirty minutes in each town, and I would do so in wildlife sanctuaries, state parks, even cemeteries if they were my only option.” (from the Introduction)

So, on January 1, 2011, Galluzzo found himself standing in a freshly manured field in Dighton at the Bristol County Agricultural High School. To make matters even more insane, Galluzzo did not take this year off from his work; he continued to teach, lead trips, and give lectures while he was attempting this Herculean task. It seems Galluzzo himself did not fully comprehend the scope of the project till he finally visualized the geography.

“Then I looked at the map” (from the Introduction). Heading every monthly chapter, a state map showing the borders of the all the towns in Massachusetts marks John’s progress through the year. In the chapter “January” the map is blank and this helps the reader grasp the difficulty the task John had set for himself.

The reader may be surprised to learn that Galluzzo had no real advanced plan on how he was going to visit each of the 351 towns in only a year. But once he immersed himself in the project he started to figure out a skeleton of schedule bit by bit. If he had a lecture or a class somewhere in the state, he would travel early to the area and knock off a few adjacent towns. As the state map became more filled in, it was then obvious where he had to go. Galluzzo used Google Maps and other resources to help find the sanctuaries and parks in any one town, but this strategy did not always work out. Sometimes there simply was no green on the town map. Sometimes the parks indicated were just urban grassy spaces with swings and monkey bars and a soccer game in progress. There were towns that looked as if they still had open space, but when John arrived, he found that it had been developed recently. Sometimes the forest was there, but Galluzzo could find no trailhead, no way into the woods. When all else failed, Galluzzo found a local cemetery and walked his thirty minutes there. You can read Galluzzo’s summary of his project in “Birding All 351 Towns in One Year” in *Bird Observer*, June 2012.

Galluzzo’s thorough knowledge of the South Shore helped him immensely as did his previous project there. As an atlaser for the Breeding Bird Atlas II project, he learned where the hiking areas were in several blocks across the state. He is also an active volunteer for the SEANET project, in which volunteers walk areas of the coastline to search for dead seabirds. This effort is coordinated by Tufts University and seeks to identify and quantify threats to our coastal seabirds. See <<http://www.tufts.edu/vet/seanet>> for a complete description of this continuing worthwhile project. Several of Galluzzo’s towns were ticked off the list performing SEANET surveys.

As in 2009, weather was a constant challenge through all of the seasons, but Galluzzo doggedly persevered like some monomaniacal postman. One of the worst situations arose when he decided to hike the wonderful Keep Homestead Museum property in Monson after the tornado had devastated the area. Trees were down everywhere he looked, but amazingly he found a clear trail through the sad mess. Insect hordes of Biblical proportions haunted John at every step into the forests, particularly in the central and western areas of the state. Besides the mosquitoes and deer flies, he also had to reckon with the scary scourge of black-legged ticks and Lyme disease. His father was taken seriously ill and hospitalized as the project neared

its finish and John faced a terrible decision. Should he quit and go his father's side or continue on this quest which was almost finished and that he had dedicated so much time and effort to complete?

It is always interesting to find out what John Galluzzo has to say about his hiking experiences in your town or your local patch or favorite birding areas. Because of all his previous experience, reading Galluzzo's opinion of a place is like checking some natural history Zagat Guide. I was delighted that he chose some of my favorite birding spots in Pittsfield, Hancock, Mount Washington, New Marlborough, and throughout Worcester County. Some of the spots he found are truly unique. He hiked the Caratunk Wildlife Sanctuary in Seekonk, which is actually a property of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. He found the highest pond in the state in Hancock. Along the way, Galluzzo finished yet another hiking project he had always wanted to complete: to hike all the Massachusetts Audubon properties in the state.

"There are some paths that are just old friends. You don't walk them. They walk you." (p. 77: John Galluzzo on Wompatuck State Park in Hingham, May 10)

For the reader, John Galluzzo is great company as we follow along on his peregrinations. Not only does he talk about the birds and other wildlife he finds in each spot, but he also mentions any interesting local historical anecdotes. The reader gets to know John as a walking companion with certain tastes in where he hikes. He has a special love of old farms and rock formations, and has a deep respect for the land and the people who treat it well. He is also a funny guy, and the book is sprinkled with references to *The Simpsons*, *The Three Stooges*, *Seinfeld*, *Monty Python*, and *Blazing Saddles*.

"Perhaps walking is best imagined as an 'indicator species,' to use an ecologist's term. An indicator species signifies the health of an ecosystem, and its endangerment or diminishment can be an early warning sign of systemic trouble. Walking is an indicator species for various kinds of freedom and pleasures: free time, free and alluring space, and unhindered bodies."—Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*

Half an Hour a Day Across Massachusetts is a personal celebration of the basic joy of walking and exploring this state. Too often, as birders we go to the same places time and again, or flock to some rarity someone else has found. We tick the bird, linger a few moments, and then it is on to the next tick. We don't take the time to look at what else can be found there, the flowers, the herps, the butterflies, the rock formations. Rarely do birders explore the full breadth and width of the state unless someone has been there before and reported back on what they have found. When I participated in the Breeding Bird Atlas II, I had to explore many nooks and crannies of towns I likely would never have birded before and I discovered dozens of great new birding spots along the way. That experience has changed the way I bird. This is what *Half an Hour a Day Across Massachusetts* does. It encourages the reader to get out a map, find some odd green space, and go see it and walk it for himself.

This is an inexpensively published book and the cover tends to curl; there are a few spelling errors, and one does wish there was an alphabetized list of the towns visited with corresponding page numbers. But these are minor quibbles compared to the enjoyment you find exploring the state through John's eyes.

Early on the reader may wonder why a person would do such a complicated labor-intensive project. As the days, months, and towns pass by in his book, Galluzzo gradually reveals his reasons to the reader. His project is about promoting the enjoyment of what little open space there is left in the state and to encourage people to support the preservation of what is not yet saved. He mentions the few other people who are 351ers, dedicated to visiting all the towns of the state over the years.

“When I see them, I’ll tell them the same thing I tell everybody else I meet. Get out and enjoy Massachusetts! Open space surrounds us—for now—and it’s there for us to use. Bike it. Walk it. Hike it. Kayak it. Surf it. Photograph it. Film it. Smell it. Touch it. Hear what it has to say. See it before it’s gone.”
(p.232)

Solvitur ambulando! 🐦

Literature Cited:

Solnit, Rebecca. 2001. *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*. New York, New York: Penguin Books.



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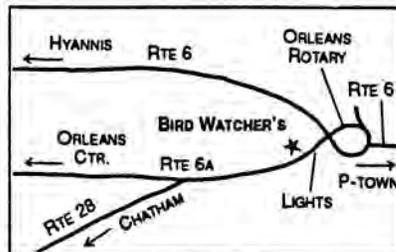
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BIRD SIGHTINGS

July/August 2012

Seth Kellogg, Marjorie W. Rines and Robert H. Stymeist

The first half of July was warmer than normal; the last half was cooler. The mercury rose to 91° in Boston on July 1 and was followed by eleven days of readings in the 80s. On July 13 the temperature hit 90° and continued in the 90s for three days.

A severe thunderstorm with torrential rain pelted many areas on July 18. The North Shore was hit especially hard as heavy rain flooded several neighborhoods. Some communities reported golf-sized hailstones. A funnel cloud was spotted in Lynn, and a microburst in Arlington toppled over 100 trees. Berkshire County was under a tornado watch for two days. About 30,000 people were without power at the height of the storm.

August 2012 weather was more favorable than August 2011, when Hurricane Irene raised havoc with widespread flooding and extensive wind damage. Boston recorded only seven days of measurable rain, although severe thunderstorms on August 10 caused street flooding and tree damage in Hampden and Hampshire counties. *R. Stymeist*

WATERFOWL THROUGH ALCIDS

In 2008 a flock of nine **Black-bellied Whistling Ducks** was discovered on the grounds of the New England Biolabs in Ipswich; this was the first record of this species to be accepted by the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (MARC). In 2011 a flock of five was discovered in Duxbury on April 29, and on May 3 the same flock (as determined by the MARC) was found at Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge (GMNWR). A scant two previous records of this species hardly prepared us for three separate sightings in July and August of 2012. A single bird remained at GMNWR for nearly the entire period; two were seen on a single day in the Fenway section of Boston on July 22, and a single was seen on Plum Island on August 4.

The Brookline Bird Club (BBC) runs a series of pelagic trips every summer and fall that consistently seem to produce rarities. The highlight of a one-day trip to the Continental Shelf on July 21 was a **Black-capped Petrel**. The two-day trip to the offshore canyons on August 25–26 produced a breathtaking array. **Audubon's Shearwater**, **White-faced Storm-Petrel**, **Band-rumped Storm-Petrel**, and **Bridled Tern** were somewhat expected in these waters, but a **Red-billed Tropicbird** and a **Little (Barolo) Shearwater** were extraordinary. The first Massachusetts record for Little Shearwater was on this same trip August 25, 2007.

A subadult **Brown Booby** was photographed from a research vessel south of Martha's Vineyard; the bird stayed with the vessel for three days allowing the observer leisurely views.

Although there have been summer reports of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons for many years, there has been no confirmation of breeding for a half a century. It was therefore exciting when Rick Heil was able to document a breeding pair in East Gloucester. Unlike Black-crowned Night-Herons, which are colonial, Yellow-crowns are solitary nesters, making the discovery of nesting birds difficult. An immature **White Ibis** was photographed flying over the Morris Island (Chatham) hawkwatch site on August 29.

A pair of Merlins nested successfully on Nantucket this year. Merlins nested for the first time in Massachusetts in Edgartown in 2008, followed by a pair in Florence in 2009.

In Eastham an **American Avocet** was seen for one day on July 29. On August 13 one was spotted at Pilgrim Lake in Truro, where it lingered for five days. The **Bar-tailed Godwit** discovered on June 21 at South Beach in Chatham lingered throughout this reporting period. The shorebird of the season was undoubtedly the **Little Stint** discovered by Blair Nikula on South Beach on July 21. This is the first sighting of this species since 2005, also at South Beach, and prior to that there are only five records for Massachusetts. On August 25 a **Curlew Sandpiper** was discovered on Tern Island in Chatham and lingered until the end of the month.

On July 1 a **Sandwich Tern** was photographed on South Beach in Chatham; this species is an uncommon but annual visitor. **Long-tailed Jaegers** were unusually well reported, including one seen from Provincetown on August 7. An **Atlantic Puffin** at Andrews Point in Rockport was an uncommon summer sighting. Most of the previous August sightings have been from this location and by the same observer.

M. Rines

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Black-bellied Whistling-Duck | | | | 8/21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 15 | G. d'Entremont# |
| 7/3-8/27 | GMNWR | 1 ph | R. Doherty + v.o. | 8/29 | P.I. | 11 | R. Heil |
| 7/22 | Boston (Fens) | 2 ph | A. Barker | Black Scoter | | | |
| 8/4 | P.I. | 1 ph | B. Harris | 7/thr | Rockport | 17 | M. Flor |
| Brant | | | | 7/8 | Westport | 3 ph | K. Bartels |
| 7/14-31 | WBWS | 2 | E. Orcutt# | 8/18 | Wellfleet | 1 ad m | S. Perkins |
| 8/5 | Newbypt | 1 | S. Butler | Long-tailed Duck | | | |
| Wood Duck | | | | thr | P.I. | 1 | v.o. |
| 7/4 | Northampton | 49 | L. Therrien | 7/28 | Gloucester H. | 1 m | C. Haines |
| 7/8 | Wakefield | 30 ad, 37 juv | P. + F. Vale | Hooded Merganser | | | |
| 7/31 | Belchertown | 98 | L. Therrien | 7/2 | GMNWR | 2 imm | A. Bragg# |
| Gadwall | | | | 7/8 | Plainfield | 4 | J. Williams |
| 7/5 | P.I. | 65 | R. Heil | 7/27 | Belchertown | 4 | L. Therrien |
| 8/7 | Ipswich | 32 | J. Berry | 8/24 | Rutland | 7 imm | M. Lynch# |
| 8/29 | Westport | 1 | M. Iliff# | 8/25 | Williamsburg | 3 | R. Packard |
| American Wigeon | | | | Common Merganser | | | |
| 8/27 | Marstons Mills | 1 | M. Keleher | 7/18 | Florence | 15 | T. Gagnon |
| American Black Duck | | | | 8/9 | W Springfield | 9 | J. Zepko |
| 7/31 | Quabbin | 5 | L. Therrien | 8/11 | S. Quabbin | 16 | L. Therrien |
| 8/29 | P.I. | 95 | R. Heil | 8/26 | Huntington | 18 | R. Packard# |
| Blue-winged Teal | | | | Red-breasted Merganser | | | |
| thr | P.I. | 23 max | 8/29 v.o. | 7/thr | P'town | 9 | B. Nikula |
| 8/10-23 | Sterling | 3 max | v.o. | 7/12 | P.I. | 1 | W. Tatro |
| 8/11 | DWWS | 1 m | G. d'Entremont | 8/18 | Chatham | 1 f | G. d'Entremont# |
| 8/19 | S. Monomoy | 3 | B. Harris# | Ruddy Duck | | | |
| 8/23 | Waltham | 1 | J. Forbes | 7/1 | P.I. | 2 m | M. Goetschkes# |
| 8/29 | Eastham (F.E.) | 25 | B. Nikula | 7/27-31 | Melrose | 1 m | D. + I. Jewell |
| 8/30 | Longmeadow | 5 | R. Packard | Northern Bobwhite | | | |
| 8/31 | Southwick | 4 | S. Kellogg | 7/8 | Truro | 1 | R. Stymeist |
| 8/31 | Belchertown | 10 | L. Therrien | 7/14 | Chatham | 1 | R. Schain |
| Northern Shoveler | | | | 7/21 | Falmouth | 1 | M. Keleher |
| 8/12 | Clinton | 1 | M. Clegg | Ring-necked Pheasant | | | |
| 8/31 | P.I. | 6 | P. + F. Vale | 7/2 | Southwick | 2 | S. Kellogg |
| Northern Pintail | | | | 8/21 | Groveland | 1 | D. Chickering |
| 7/9 | P.I. | 1 | R. Stymeist | 8/26 | Cumb. Farms | 1 | G. d'Entremont# |
| 8/26 | Chatham | 1 | B. Lagasse | Ruffed Grouse | | | |
| Green-winged Teal | | | | 7/12 | Falmouth | 1 | T. Green |
| thr | P.I. | 171 max | 8/29 v.o. | 8/4 | Quabog IBA | 4 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/22 | GMNWR | 3 | C. Turnbull | 8/18 | Oakham | 1 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/3 | Sterling | 2 | T. Pirro | Red-throated Loon | | | |
| 8/14 | Truro | 3 | F. Atwood | 7/1 | Chatham (S.B.) | 2 | E. Orcutt# |
| 8/28 | Sudbury | 3 | D. Swain | 7/2 | Stellwagen | 1 | J. Frontierro |
| Ring-necked Duck | | | | 7/21 | Plymouth B. | 1 | SSBC (GdE) |
| 8/27 | W. Newbury | 1 m | K. Elwell | Common Loon | | | |
| Common Eider | | | | 7/15 | Wachusett Res. | 12 | K. Bourinot |
| 7/15 | Gloucester | 60 | J. Berry# | 7/19 | Leominster | 4 ad, 2 juv | T. Pirro |
| 7/15 | S. Monomoy | 64 | B. Harris# | 7/22 | E. of Chatham | 6 | B. Nikula# |
| 8/21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 75 | G. d'Entremont# | 7/31 | Quabbin | 29 | L. Therrien |
| Surf Scoter | | | | 8/21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 6 | G. d'Entremont# |
| 8/29 | P.I. | 1 | R. Heil | 8/24 | N. Truro | 6 | B. Nikula |
| White-winged Scoter | | | | Pied-billed Grebe | | | |
| 7/7 | Duxbury B. | 2 | R. Bowes | 7/14 | GMNWR | 2 ad, 2 juv | S. Arena |
| 8/21 | P'town | 2 | B. Nikula | 8/27 | Fairhaven | 2 | C. Longworth |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|--|----------------|
| Black-capped Petrel | | | | 7/28 | Longmeadow | 19 | | T. Gagnon |
| 7/21 | Continental Sh. | 1 | BBC Pelagic | 8/12 | GMNWR | 40 | | N. Paulson |
| Cory's Shearwater | | | | | | | | |
| 7/14, 26 | N. Truro | 55, 75 | B. Nikula | thr | P.I. | 125 max | | v.o. |
| 7/21 | Continental Sh. | 24 | BBC Pelagic | 7/20 | Lenox | 11 | | G. Hurley |
| 7/24 | P.I. | 8 | | 7/28 | Longmeadow | 22 | | T. Gagnon |
| 7/25 | Eastham (F.E.) | 175 | B. Nikula | 7/28 | Duxbury B. | 50 | | R. Bowes |
| 7/29 | Stellwagen | 70 | P. Trull | 8/3 | Westport | 92 | | M. Lynch# |
| 7/29 | Chatham | 52 | F. Atwood | 8/12 | Saugus | 24 | | S. Zende# |
| 8/1, 21 | P'town | 200, 40 | B. Nikula | 8/17 | Barnstable | 57 | | P. Kyle |
| 7/31 | N. Truro | 100 | B. Nikula | | | | | |
| Great Shearwater | | | | | | | | |
| 7/8, 8/3 | E. of Chatham | 300, 600 | B. Nikula# | thr | P.I. | 250 max | | v.o. |
| 7/21 | Continental Sh. | 77 | BBC Pelagic | 8/2-29 | GMNWR | 1 | | v.o. |
| 7/25 | Eastham (F.E.) | 900 | B. Nikula | 8/7 | E. Boston (B.I.) | 22 | | R. Stymeist |
| 7/29 | off P'town | 700 | B. Nikula | 8/21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 116 | | B. Lagasse |
| 7/29 | Stellwagen | 470 | P. Trull | 8/21 | W. Gloucester | 48 | | S. Hedman |
| 8/19 | Rockport (A.P.) | 7 | R. Heil | | | | | |
| Sooty Shearwater | | | | | | | | |
| 7/8, 8/3 | E. of Chatham | 350, 325 | B. Nikula# | 7/12 | DWWS | 1 | | M. Bornstein |
| 7/24 | P.I. | 2 | R. Heil | 7/14-8/18 | Chatham | 2 | | v.o. |
| 7/25 | Eastham (F.E.) | 45 | B. Nikula | 7/26 | Plymouth | 3 | | I. Davies |
| 7/29 | Stellwagen | 95 | P. Trull | 8/2 | W. Gloucester | 3 | | D. Chickering# |
| 7/29 | off P'town | 125 | B. Nikula | 8/14 | GMNWR | 1 | | M. Rines |
| | | | | 8/15 | P.I. | 2 imm | | F. Vale |
| Manx Shearwater | | | | | | | | |
| 7/8, 8/3 | E. of Chatham | 15, 40 | B. Nikula# | 7/2-4 | Northampton | 1 | | L. Therrien |
| 7/24 | Revere B. | 11 | P. Peterson | 8/14-17 | Salem | 1 imm ph | | S. Weston |
| 7/24 | P.I. | 102 | R. Heil | | | | | |
| 7/25 | Eastham (F.E.) | 460 | B. Nikula | | | | | |
| 7/29 | Stellwagen | 135 | P. Trull | | | | | |
| 7/29, 8/19 | off P'town | 120, 25 | B. Nikula | | | | | |
| Audubon's Shearwater | | | | | | | | |
| 8/14-16 | off Nantucket | 1 | T. Johnson | | | | | |
| 8/25-26 | Offshore canyons | 3 | BBC Pelagic | | | | | |
| Little Shearwater | | | | | | | | |
| 8/25-26 | Oceanographer C. | 1 | BBC Pelagic | | | | | |
| Wilson's Storm-Petrel | | | | | | | | |
| 7/8, 8/3 | E. of Chatham | 500, 800 | B. Nikula# | 7/2 | S. Quabbin | 5 | | L. Therrien |
| 7/15 | Stellwagen | 94 | J. Berry# | 7/10 | W. Newbury | 20 | | K. Elwell |
| 7/20 | E. Gloucester | 125 | R. Heil | 7/10 | Fairhaven | 4 | | C. Longworth |
| 7/21 | Continental Sh. | 602 | BBC Pelagic | 7/21 | Wayland | 7 | | B. Harris# |
| 7/28 | Duxbury B. | 27 | R. Bowes | 7/21 | Medford | pr + 4 yg | | M. Rines# |
| 7/29 | Winthrop | 84 | M. Iliff | 7/30 | Waltham | 4 | | J. Forbes# |
| 7/29 | P'town | 600 | B. Nikula | 8/4 | GMNWR | 5 | | S. Arena |
| | | | | 8/10 | Belchertown | 8 | | L. Therrien |
| | | | | 8/11 | Palmer | 12 | | M. Lynch# |
| | | | | 8/18 | Grafton | 10 | | E. Kittredge |
| | | | | 8/19 | Belchertown | 8 | | L. Therrien |
| Black-crowned Night-Heron | | | | | | | | |
| 7/11 | Wayland | 6 | | | | | | B. Black |
| 7/26 | Deerfield | 3 | | | | | | L. Therrien |
| 8/7 | Ipswich | 8 | | | | | | J. Berry |
| 8/19 | P.I. | 14 | | | | | | S. McGrath |
| 8/20 | Eastham | 42 | | | | | | D. Clapp |
| Yellow-crowned Night-Heron | | | | | | | | |
| thr | P.I. | 1-4 | | | | | | v.o. |
| 7/thr | E. Gloucester | pr n, 5 yg | | | | | | R. Heil# |
| 7/20 | Edgartown | 1 | | | | | | P. Sowizral |
| 7/26 | MNWS | 1 imm | | | | | | D. Noble |
| 8/thr | WBWS | 1 | | | | | | v.o. |
| 8/9-22 | Duxbury | 2 | | | | | | v.o. |
| 8/19-29 | Cuttyhunk | 1 imm | | | | | | I. Davies# |
| 8/20 | Eastham | 3 | | | | | | D. Clapp |
| White Ibis | | | | | | | | |
| 8/29 | Chatham | 1 imm ph | | | | | | D. Manchester |
| Glossy Ibis | | | | | | | | |
| 7/12 | Fairhaven | 8 | | | | | | C. Longworth |
| 8/3 | Acoaxet | 14 | | | | | | M. Lynch# |
| 8/7 | P.I. | 75 | | | | | | D. Chickering |
| 8/7 | E. Boston (B.I.) | 19 | | | | | | R. Stymeist |
| 8/14 | Otis | 1 | | | | | | W. Rodgers |
| Black Vulture | | | | | | | | |
| 7/4 | Ware | 3 | | | | | | M. Lynch# |
| 7/6 | Barre | 6 | | | | | | M. Lynch# |
| 7/12 | Mashpee | 1 | | | | | | M. Keleher |
| 8/17 | Northampton | 1 | | | | | | T. Gagnon |
| 8/25 | Barnstable (S.N.) | 1 | | | | | | E. Hoopes |
| Turkey Vulture | | | | | | | | |
| 7/17 | N. Carver | 35 | | | | | | B. Lessard |
| 7/21 | Cumb. Farms | 58 | | | | | | S. Arena |

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|----------------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------------|------------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| Turkey Vulture (continued) | | | | 8/18 | Oakham | 7 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/22 | Barre | 68 | M. Lynch# | Sora | | | |
| 8/28 | Braintree | 10 | P. Peterson | 7/7 | P.I. | 1 | S. Riley |
| Osprey | | | | 7/17 | Ipswich | 1 | P. Peterson |
| 7/3 | P.I. | 10 | R. Heil | 7/20 | Lenox | 2 | G. Hurley |
| 7/17 | Nantucket | 26 | V. Laux | 7/21 | W. Bridgewater | 1 ad, 2 imm | S. Arena |
| 8/3 | Westport | 56 | M. Lynch# | 8/21 | Wellfleet | 3 | S. Broker |
| 8/27 | Fairhaven | 17 | C. Longworth | 8/27 | GMNWR | 1 | K. Dia# |
| Bald Eagle | | | | Common Gallinule | | | |
| 7/6 | Quabog IBA | 1 | M. Lynch# | 7/4-8/12 | GMNWR | 1 | v.o. |
| 7/16 | Saugus | 1 | F. Vale | 7/8 | Bolton Flats | 7 | S. Arena |
| 7/19 | Stoneham | 1 ad | J. Kovner | 7/20 | Lenox | 3 | G. Hurley |
| 7/21 | Lakeville | 1 ad | S. Arena | American Coot | | | |
| 7/26 | N. Quabbin | 2 ad | B. Lafley | 7/14 | GMNWR | 2 | S. Arena |
| 7/29 | Waltham | 1 | J. Forbes | Sandhill Crane | | | |
| 8/18 | P'town (R.P.) | 1 | B. Harris# | 7/14 | New Marlboro | 3 | S. Kellogg |
| 8/25 | Quabbin (G39) | 1 | B. Lafley | Black-bellied Plover | | | |
| 8/29 | Wakefield | 1 | F. Vale | 7/6, 8/17 | Chatham (S.B.) | 350, 1000 | B. Nikula |
| Northern Harrier | | | | 7/25 | Duxbury B. | 67 | R. Bowes |
| 7/15 | S. Monomoy | pr n | B. Harris# | 8/22 | P.I. | 390 | R. Heil |
| 7/17 | Nantucket | 4 | V. Laux | 8/26 | Saugus | 100 | S. Zende# |
| 8/4 | Chatham (S.B.) | 3 | BBC (GdE) | American Golden-Plover | | | |
| 8/29 | P.I. | 7 | R. Heil | 8/18 | Chatham (MI) | 1 | B. Harris# |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk | | | | 8/18 | P'town (R.P.) | 1 | B. Harris# |
| 7/10 | Sharon | 1 | L. Waters | 8/19-27 | P.I. | 1 | v.o. |
| 7/21 | Dunstable | 1 | C. Sheridan | 8/21 | Worcester | 1 | P. Morlock |
| 8/20 | GMNWR | 1 | A. Bragg# | Semipalmated Plover | | | |
| 8/26 | P.I. | 1 | D. Narango | 7/6, 8/25 | Chatham (S.B.) | 20, 1475 | B. Nikula |
| Cooper's Hawk | | | | 7/16, 8/9 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 70, 1200 | D. Williams |
| 7/5 | Woburn (HP) | 4 yg fl | J. Harrison | 8/7, 22 | P.I. | 2000, 2900 | R. Heil |
| 7/29 | S. Quabbin | 3 yg | M. Lynch# | Piping Plover | | | |
| 8/30 | Longmeadow | 2 | R. Packard | 7/6 | Chatham (S.B.) | 30 | B. Nikula |
| Northern Goshawk | | | | 7/9 | Plymouth B. | 21 | P. Peterson |
| 7/3 | Groveland | 2 | J. Berry# | 7/14 | Revere B. | 32 | R. Stymeist# |
| 8/18 | Oakham | 1 ad | M. Lynch# | 7/15 | Duxbury B. | 17 | R. Bowes |
| Red-shouldered Hawk | | | | 7/19 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 32 | D. Williams |
| 7/7 | Marion | 3 | M. Lynch# | 7/21 | P.I. | 30 | S. Grinley# |
| 7/21 | W. Bridgewater | 4 | S. Arena | Killdeer | | | |
| 8/19 | Mashpee | 2 | M. Keleher | 7/7 | P.I. | 26 | R. Heil |
| 8/24 | Wakefield | 2 | P. Devaney | 7/22 | Newbury | 36 | P. + F. Vale# |
| Broad-winged Hawk | | | | 8/3 | Acoaxet | 52 | G. Gove# |
| 7/2 | W. Gloucester | 1 | J. Nelson | 8/12 | Belchertown | 34 | L. Therrien |
| 7/22 | Barre | 7 | M. Lynch# | 8/20 | Norfolk | 85 | E. LoPresti |
| 7/29 | GMNWR | 1 | S. Perkins# | American Oystercatcher | | | |
| 8/20 | Waltham | 1 | J. Forbes | 7/7 | Marion | 6 | M. Lynch# |
| American Kestrel | | | | 8/4 | Chatham (S.B.) | 20 | BBC (GdE) |
| 7/1 | Westboro | pr, 1 juv | G. Kessler | 8/14 | Winthrop | 13 | P. Peterson |
| 7/2 | Southwick | 3 | S. Kellogg | 8/18 | Chatham | 65 | I. Davies |
| 7/4 | Bedford | 4 | A. Bragg# | 8/30 | Squantum | 4 | P. Peterson |
| 7/24 | Melrose | 3 | D. + I. Jewell | American Avocet | | | |
| 8/12 | Saugus | 4 | S. Zende# | 7/29 | Eastham | 1 | E. Achtenberg |
| 8/18 | Worcester | 13 | P. Morlock | 8/13-19 | Truro | 1 ph | E. Hoopes# |
| 8/27 | GMNWR | 2 | K. Dia# | Spotted Sandpiper | | | |
| Merlin | | | | 7/15 | Wachusett Res. | 11 | K. Bourinot |
| 7/20 | Williamstown | 1 | D. Smith | 7/25 | Longmeadow | 10 | B. Bieda |
| 7/21 | W. Bridgewater | 1 | S. Arena | 7/31 | Quabbin | 6 | L. Therrien |
| 7/30 | Nantucket | pr w/1 yg | S. Langer | 8/3 | Wellfleet | 6 | C. Harris |
| 8/20 | Melrose | 1 | D. + I. Jewell | 8/19 | Cuttyhunk | 7 | I. Davies# |
| 8/21 | Squantum | 1 | P. Peterson | 8/29 | P.I. | 6 | S. Santino# |
| 8/25 | P.I. | 2 | G. d'Entremont# | Solitary Sandpiper | | | |
| 8/31 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 1 | J. Berry | 7/11 | Wayland | 5 | B. Harris |
| Peregrine Falcon | | | | 7/14 | GMNWR | 5 | S. Arena |
| 7/26 | E. Boston (B.I.) | 2 | P. Peterson | 7/27 | Longmeadow | 6 | P. Desjardins |
| 8/29 | P.I. | 4 imm | R. Heil | 8/2 | Sterling | 10 | B. Kamp |
| Clapper Rail | | | | 8/5 | Lexington | 4 | J. Forbes |
| 7/4 | Fairhaven | 1 | C. Longworth | 8/10 | Sterling | 4 | P. Morlock# |
| 7/23 | WBWS | 2 | T. Green | Greater Yellowlegs | | | |
| 8/19 | Westport | 1 | M. Lynch# | 7/6, 21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 20, 170 | B. Nikula |
| Virginia Rail | | | | 7/7 | Duxbury B. | 17 | R. Bowes |
| 7/8 | Bolton Flats | 9 | S. Arena | 7/12 | P.I. | 60 | T. Wetmore |
| 7/14 | GMNWR | 13 | S. Arena | 7/15 | GMNWR | 3 | J. Forbes |
| 7/20 | Lenox | 4 | G. Hurley | 7/21 | Newbypt H. | 50 | S. Grinley# |
| 7/21 | W. Bridgewater | 7 | S. Arena | 8/30 | Squantum | 42 | P. Peterson |

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|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------|
| Willet | | | | White-rumped Sandpiper | | | |
| thr | P.I. | 45 | v.o. | thr | P.I. | 150 max | v.o. |
| 7/6, 21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 80, 200 | B. Nikula | 7/2, 25 | Duxbury B. | 1, 5 | R. Bowes |
| 7/15 | Duxbury B. | 67 | R. Bowes | 7/6, 8/4 | Chatham (S.B.) | 1, 4 | B. Nikula, GdE |
| Western Willet | | | | 8/7 | Revere B. | 2 | P. Peterson |
| 7/6, 21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 7, 18 | B. Nikula | 8/19 | Cuttyhunk | 2 | I. Davies# |
| Lesser Yellowlegs | | | | 8/30 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 7 | D. Williams |
| 7/3 | P.I. | 33 | R. Heil | Baird's Sandpiper | | | |
| 7/5, 8/28 | Newbypt H. | 160, 145 | R. Heil | 8/21-31 | P.I. | 1 | v.o. |
| 7/17 | Northampton | 1 | L. Therrien | 8/24 | Harwich | 1 | J. Hoye# |
| 7/29 | Lexington | 1 | J. Forbes | 8/26 | Longmeadow | 1 | B. Bieda |
| Upland Sandpiper | | | | 8/28 | Hatfield | 1 | B. Lafley |
| 7/14 | Otis AFB | 2 | P. Trimble# | Pectoral Sandpiper | | | |
| 7/19 | Carlisle | 1 ph | T. Brownrigg# | thr | P.I. | 1-6 | v.o. |
| Whimbrel | | | | 7/30 | Plymouth B. | 2 | I. Davies |
| 7/25 | Eastham (F.E.) | 60 | B. Nikula | 8/31 | Lexington | 2 | J. Forbes |
| 7/28 | Duxbury B. | 2 | R. Bowes | Dunlin | | | |
| 7/31, 8/29 | P.I. | 21, 9 | R. Heil | thr | P.I. | 1-2 | R. Heil |
| 8/15 | WBWS | 23 | B. Lagasse | 7/6 | Chatham (S.B.) | 8 | B. Nikula |
| 8/16 | Westport | 4 | D. Bernstein | White-rumped Sandpiper X Dunlin | | | |
| 8/19 | Cuttyhunk | 2 | I. Davies# | 7/6-28 | Chatham (S.B.) | 1 ph | B. Nikula |
| 8/21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 21 | G. d'Entremont# | 8/26 | P.I. | 1 ph | S. Arena |
| 8/27 | Fairhaven | 3 | C. Longworth | Curlew Sandpiper | | | |
| 8/28 | Rockport (H.P.) | 3 | J. Berry# | 8/24-31 | Chatham | 1 ph | E. Orcutt + v.o |
| Hudsonian Godwit | | | | Stilt Sandpiper | | | |
| 7/6, 8/17 | Chatham (S.B.) | 12, 28 | B. Nikula | 7/7-8/30 | P.I. | 24 max | v.o. |
| 7/17-25 | Newbypt H. | 1 | v.o. | 7/16 | E. Boston (B.I.) | 2 | P. Peterson |
| 8/8-13 | Squantum | 1 | P. Peterson | 8/9 | Squantum | 1 | P. Peterson |
| 8/11 | P.I. | 1 | S. Sullivan# | 8/19 | Cuttyhunk | 1 ad | I. Davies# |
| Bar-tailed Godwit | | | | Buff-breasted Sandpiper | | | |
| thr | Chatham (S.B.) | 1 | B. Nikula# | 8/29 | Chatham (S.B.) | 1 | G. Kessler |
| Marbled Godwit | | | | 8/30 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 3 | D. Williams |
| 7/6 | Chatham (S.B.) | 1 | B. Nikula | 8/30 | P.I. | 2 | B. Peters |
| 8/19 | S. Monomoy | 4 | B. Harris | Short-billed Dowitcher | | | |
| 8/27 | Gloucester | 1 juv | K. Elwell | thr | P.I. | 447 max | v.o. |
| Ruddy Turnstone | | | | 7/6, 21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 1400, 2800 | B. Nikula |
| thr | P.I. | 6 max | v.o. | 7/21 | Plymouth B. | 110 | SSBC (GdE) |
| 7/25 | Duxbury B. | 67 | R. Bowes | 7/25 | Duxbury B. | 118 | R. Bowes |
| 8/16 | Westport | 25 | D. Bernstein | 8/7 | Winthrop | 34 | P. Peterson |
| 8/19 | Cuttyhunk | 11 | I. Davies# | Long-billed Dowitcher | | | |
| 8/21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 110 | G. d'Entremont# | 7/19-8/31 | P.I. | 4 | v.o. |
| 8/25 | Longmeadow | 1 | T. Gagnon | 8/19 | S. Monomoy | 4 | B. Harris# |
| Red Knot | | | | Wilson's Snipe | | | |
| 7/15 | Duxbury B. | 8 | R. Bowes | 8/27 | GMNWR | 2 | K. Dia# |
| 7/21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 450 | B. Nikula | 8/29 | P.I. | 2 | R. Heil |
| 8/7 | P.I. | 4 ad | R. Heil | American Woodcock | | | |
| 8/30 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 2 | D. Williams | 8/26 | P.I. | 5 | S. McGrath# |
| Sanderling | | | | Wilson's Phalarope | | | |
| 7/19, 8/9 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 325, 800 | D. Williams | 7/1-21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 1 | v.o. |
| 7/21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 350 | B. Nikula | Red-necked Phalarope | | | |
| 7/21 | Plymouth B. | 500 | SSBC (GdE) | 8/18 | P'town (R.P.) | 12 | B. Harris# |
| 7/25 | Duxbury B. | 755 | R. Bowes | 8/19 | E. of Chatham | 6 | B. Nikula# |
| 7/27 | Longmeadow | 1 | S. Kellogg | 8/19 | Rockport (A.P.) | 17 | R. Heil |
| 8/4 | Nahant | 710 | L. Pivacek | 8/25 | Stellwagen | 20 | J. Frontiero |
| 8/16 | Westport | 300 | D. Bernstein | 8/25 | Wachusett Res. | 7 | K. Bourinot |
| Semipalmated Sandpiper | | | | Red Phalarope | | | |
| thr | P.I. | 6400 | v.o. | 8/25-26 | Offshore canyons | 2 | BBC Pelagic |
| 7/6, 21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 800, 5000 | B. Nikula | Phalarope species | | | |
| 7/25 | Duxbury B. | 5673 | R. Bowes | 8/23 | Stellwagen | 15 | J. Frontiero |
| 8/4 | Nahant | 2150 | L. Pivacek | Sabine's Gull | | | |
| 8/13 | Northampton | 9 | L. Therrien | 7/8 | E. of Chatham | 1 1S | B. Nikula# |
| Western Sandpiper | | | | 8/9 | Stellwagen | 1 | B. Nikula |
| 7/21, 8/17 | Chatham (S.B.) | 2, 3 | B. Nikula | 8/26 | P'town | 1 | D. Clapp |
| 8/4-24 | P.I. | 1-2 | v.o. | Bonaparte's Gull | | | |
| Little Stint | | | | 7/19, 8/9 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 22, 175 | D. Williams |
| 7/21-22 | Chatham (S.B.) | 1 ph | B. Nikula# | 7/23 | Dennis | 4 | B. Nikula |
| Least Sandpiper | | | | 7/27, 8/20 | Nahant | 350, 500 | L. Pivacek |
| 7/6, 21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 350, 600 | B. Nikula | 7/31 | Quabbin | 4 | L. Therrien |
| 7/7 | P.I. | 235 | R. Heil | 8/28 | Newbypt H. | 425 | R. Heil |
| 7/11 | S. Dart. (A.Pd) | 100 | P. Champlin# | Black-headed Gull | | | |
| 8/12 | Lexington | 27 | J. Forbes | 7/5 | P.I. | 1 ad | R. Heil |
| 8/19 | Longmeadow | 62 | S. Surner | Little Gull | | | |
| | | | | 7/22-27 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 1 | v.o. |

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|--------------------------|------------------|---------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------|-------|---------------|
| Laughing Gull | | | | Arctic Tern | | | |
| 7/21 | Plymouth B. | 700 | SSBC (GdE) | 7/6, 21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 2, 2 | B. Nikula |
| 7/29 | off P'town | 400 | B. Nikula | 7/14 | S. Monomoy | 2 1S | B. Harris# |
| 8/16 | Squantum | 80 | P. Peterson | 8/18 | P'town (R.P.) | 1 | I. Davies |
| 8/24 | Winthrop | 12 | P. + F. Vale | Forster's Tern | | | |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | | | | 7/5 | P.I. | 3 | J. Sender |
| 7/8-8/17 | Chatham (S.B.) | 2 | B. Nikula | 7/21 | Acoaxet | 5 | G. Gove# |
| 7/14 | P'town | 1 | B. Nikula | Royal Tern | | | |
| 8/19 | S. Monomoy | 1 1S | B. Harris# | 7/8, 8/4 | P.I. | 1 ph | S. Sullivan |
| 8/27 | P.I. | 1 ph | S. Sullivan | 8/14 | Nantucket | 1 | W. Hutcheson |
| Bridled Tern | | | | Sandwich Tern | | | |
| 8/25-26 | Offshore canyons | 1 | BBC Pelagic | 7/1 | Chatham (S.B.) | 1 ph | E. Orcutt# |
| Least Tern | | | | Black Skimmer | | | |
| thr | P.I. | 100 max | v.o. | 7/7 | Duxbury B. | 3 | R. Bowes |
| 7/9 | Plymouth B. | 90 | P. Peterson | 7/7 | Plymouth B. | 3 | S. Fenwick |
| 7/12 | Waltham | 2 | J. Forbes | 7/15 | S. Monomoy | 4 | B. Harris# |
| 7/17 | Nantucket | 800 | V. Laux | 7/15 | Chappaquiddick | 15 | P. Gilmore# |
| 8/9 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 49 | D. Williams | 7/21-24 | P.I. | 1 | v.o. |
| Caspian Tern | | | | 8/29 | Revere B. | 1 | T. Factor |
| 7/22 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 2 | A. Manganiello# | Pomarine Jaeger | | | |
| 8/25 | Newbypt H. | 2 | S. Grinley# | 7/11 | E. of Chatham | 2 | B. Nikula# |
| Black Tern | | | | 7/21 | Continental Sh. | 2 | BBC Pelagic |
| 7/17 | Nantucket | 12 | V. Laux | 7/25 | Eastham (F.E.) | 2 | B. Nikula |
| 8/8 | Chatham | 87 | F. Atwood | 8/25-26 | Offshore canyons | 4 | BBC Pelagic |
| 8/19 | Westport | 102 | I. Davies# | Parasitic Jaeger | | | |
| 8/19 | Cuttyhunk | 177 | I. Davies# | 7/2 | Stellwagen | 2 | J. Frontierro |
| 8/25 | S. Quabbin | 1 | L. Therrien | 7/6, 8/1 | P'town | 3, 7 | B. Nikula |
| 8/28 | Rockport (H.P.) | 9 | J. Berry# | 7/16, 8/27 | Chatham (S.B.) | 2, 12 | B. Harris# |
| Roseate Tern | | | | 8/19 | E. of Chatham | 3 | B. Nikula# |
| 7/7 | Marion | 35 | M. Lynch# | Long-tailed Jaeger | | | |
| 7/17 | Nantucket | 150 | V. Laux | 7/21 | Continental Sh. | 3 | BBC Pelagic |
| 7/24 | P.I. | 11 ad | R. Heil | 8/3, 19 | E. of Chatham | 1, 2 | B. Nikula# |
| 8/18 | Wellfleet | 125 | S. Perkins | 8/7 | P'town | 1 | B. Nikula |
| 8/19 | Cuttyhunk | 9 | I. Davies# | 8/25-26 | Offshore canyons | 1 | BBC Pelagic |
| 8/19 | Rockport (A.P.) | 31 | R. Heil | Razorbill | | | |
| Common Tern | | | | 7/7 | Stellwagen | 1 | SSBC (Emmons) |
| thr | P.I. | 240 max | v.o. | Black Guillemot | | | |
| 8/3 | Acoaxet | 225 | M. Lynch# | 8/17 | P.I. | 1 | A. + G. Gurka |
| 8/3 | E. of Chatham | 600 | B. Nikula# | Atlantic Puffin | | | |
| 8/9 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 475 | D. Williams | 8/19 | Rockport (A.P.) | 1 juv | R. Heil |
| 8/18 | Wellfleet | 250 | S. Perkins | Large alcid species | | | |
| 8/19 | Cuttyhunk | 218 | I. Davies# | 7/6 | P'town | 1 | B. Nikula |

DOVES THROUGH FINCHES

A **White-winged Dove** was seen and photographed as it flew over Gooseberry Neck in Westport on August 23. This species is still relatively rare in Massachusetts, although it now occurs almost annually. Common Nighthawks were on the move beginning in mid-August, but veteran nighthawk watcher Tom Gagnon characterized 2012 as yet another poor year. Tom has been monitoring nighthawk migration from the same Northampton site for 35 years. This year he saw 383 on his best night, which he says would have been an average night 20 years ago.

Chuck-will's-widows were still calling into August in Truro and Orleans, and as many as eight Whip-poor-wills were heard on Plum Island on August 25. An adult male **Rufous Hummingbird** was photographed at a feeder in Randolph, and another **Rufous** was photographed in Orleans. One other *Selasphorus* hummer was coming to a feeder in Chatham, but photos could not determine its identification other than Allen's or Rufous. These reports appear to be the first summer records of *Selasphorus* hummingbirds.

Radar images picked up significant bird migration on the last days of July. Tree Swallows were up over 20,000 on Plum Island, and on July 29 there were reports of Eastern Phoebe, Chipping Sparrow, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Since none of these species nest on Plum Island, they were presumed migrants or part of a post-breeding dispersal. One of the earliest returning migrants was the Olive-sided Flycatcher. There were six reports of Olive-sided in August, with one as early as August 17. Twenty-nine species of warblers were seen during the

period including a Prothonotary photographed in Chatham. Migrant Philadelphia Vireos were reported from two areas late in August.

Perhaps the biggest news this period was the invasion of Red-breasted Nuthatches. Mark Lynch tallied over 150 in the Ware River Watershed on August 24, and large numbers were noted elsewhere. This species, as well as other winter finches, are often described as “irruptive” species, which refers to movements out of their normal areas, most often due to a failure of their food source. A scattering of Red Crossbills was also on the move from late July through the end of August, with most reports coming from the Quabbin area. Reports from the north indicate poor spruce and birch seed crops, which may mean more crossbills, siskins, and redpolls heading our way this fall.

There was good news in Purple Martin breeding this year with good results in the Mashpee, Rehoboth, and Plum Island colonies. Golf courses have become friendly to Purple Martins; the Crestwood Country Club in Rehoboth had 32 breeding pairs and fledged 129 chicks, and the Willowbend and New Seabury Country Clubs on Cape Cod fledged 67 young.

R. Stymeist

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------|--|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------|--|------------------|
| White-winged Dove | | | | Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird | | | |
| 8/23 Westport | 1 | | M. Iliff | 8/31 Chatham | 1 m ph | | A. Fulcher |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo | | | | Belted Kingfisher | | | |
| 7/4 Southwick | 1 | | J. Hutchison | 7/8 Easthampton | 5 | | J. Hoye# |
| 7/20 Windsor | 1 | | G. Hurley | 7/18 Ipswich | 4 | | J. Nelson |
| 8/7 P.I. | 1 | | T. Wetmore | Red-headed Woodpecker | | | |
| 8/12 Belchertown | 1 | | L. Therrien | 7/15-8/21 Ipswich | 1 ad | | L. Holton + v.o. |
| Black-billed Cuckoo | | | | Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | | | |
| 7/1 Southbridge | 2 | | M. Lynch# | 7/14 Quabbin (G10) | 8 | | SSBC (GdE) |
| 7/19 Cummington | 2 | | T. Gagnon | 7/21 Mt. Washington | 9 | | M. Lynch# |
| 8/11 Belchertown | 1 | | L. Therrien | 7/22 Barre | 8 | | M. Lynch# |
| 8/20 Pittsfield | 1 | | G. Hurley | Hairy Woodpecker | | | |
| Eastern Screech-Owl | | | | 7/1 Southbridge | 5 | | M. Lynch# |
| 7/5 Winchester | 2 | | R. LaFontaine | 7/14 Quabbin (G10) | 3 | | SSBC (GdE) |
| 8/1 Stoughton | 3 | | G. d'Entremont | Northern Flicker | | | |
| 8/29 Dedham | 6 | | B. Cassie | 7/8 Easthampton | 11 | | J. Hoye# |
| Barred Owl | | | | 7/25 Mt. A. | 7 | | R. Stymeist |
| 7/2 W. Gloucester | 2 | | J. + M. Nelson | 8/30 Winchester | 8 | | P. + F. Vale |
| 7/29 Quabbin (G46) | 2 | | N. Paulson | Pileated Woodpecker | | | |
| 8/24 Goshen | 2 | | R. Packard | 7/10 DFWS | 4 | | P. Sowizral |
| Northern Saw-whet Owl | | | | 7/17 Ipswich | 2 | | P. Peterson |
| 8/17 Chatham | 1 | | B. Harris | 8/24 Ware R. IBA | 3 | | M. Lynch# |
| Common Nighthawk | | | | 8/25 Quabbin (G39) | 2 | | B. Lafley |
| 8/16-31 Northampton | 1889 total | | T. Gagnon | Olive-sided Flycatcher | | | |
| 8/19 W. Boylston | 300 | | J. Holm | 8/17 Belchertown | 1 | | L. Therrien |
| 8/20 Sutton | 367 | | M. Joubert | 8/19 Lexington | 1 | | J. Forbes |
| 8/21, 31 Leicester | 337, 101 | | M. Lynch# | 8/23 Southwick | 1 | | S. Kellogg |
| 8/23 Westwood | 124 | | S. Arena | 8/24 Ware R. IBA | 1 | | M. Lynch# |
| 8/28 Belchertown | 165 | | S. Sumner | 8/25 Waltham | 1 | | J. Forbes |
| Chuck-will's-widow | | | | 8/25 Quabbin (G39) | 1 | | B. Lafley |
| thr Truro | 1-2 | | v.o. | Eastern Wood-Pewee | | | |
| 7/1-8/18 Orleans | 1 | | v.o. | 7/10 Ipswich | 6 | | J. Berry |
| Eastern Whip-poor-will | | | | 7/15 Wachusett Res. | 13 | | K. Bourinot |
| 7/2 Quabbin | 2 | | L. Therrien | 8/5 S. Quabbin | 12 | | M. Lynch# |
| 7/7 Truro | 6 | | S. Motyl | 8/18 Oakham | 10 | | M. Lynch# |
| 8/25 P.I. | 8 | | S. McGrath | 8/20 GMNWR | 7 | | A. Bragg# |
| Chimney Swift | | | | Alder Flycatcher | | | |
| 7/15 Clinton | 88 | | K. Bourinot | 7/8 Plainfield | 2 | | J. Williams |
| 8/20 Sutton | 75 | | M. Joubert | 7/8 Easthampton | 3 | | J. Hoye# |
| 8/29 W. Newbury | 100 | | S. McGrath# | 7/21 Wayland | 1 | | B. Harris |
| 8/31 Waltham | 40 | | J. Forbes# | 7/31 Belchertown | 1 | | L. Therrien |
| Ruby-throated Hummingbird | | | | Willow Flycatcher | | | |
| 8/19 Cuttyhunk | 20 | | I. Davies# | 7/1 Southbridge | 6 | | M. Lynch# |
| 8/19 Lexington | 11 | | C. Cook | 7/24 P.I. | 9 | | R. Heil |
| 8/23 Westport | 10 | | M. Iliff | 7/28 Fairhaven | 6 | | J. Sweeney# |
| 8/24 Sharon | 13 | | L. Waters | Least Flycatcher | | | |
| Rufous Hummingbird | | | | 7/4 S. Quabbin | 6 | | M. Lynch# |
| 7/25-29 Randolph | 1 m ph | | L. Buchanan | 7/6 New Braintree | 6 | | M. Lynch# |
| 8/14-15 Orleans | 1 m ph | | C. Itzler | 7/29 Quabbin (G46) | 2 | | N. Paulson |

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|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Least Flycatcher (continued) | | | | 8/11 | DWWS | 12 | G. d'Entremont |
| 8/21 | Lexington | 2 | M. Rines# | 8/20 | Mashpee | 3 | M. Keleher |
| 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 3 | I. Davies | | Tree Swallow | | |
| Eastern Phoebe | | | | 7/27 | Gloucester | 1250 | J. Nelson |
| 7/15 | Falmouth | 9 | V. Zollo | 8/12 | Fairhaven | 1500 | SSBC (J. Sweeney) |
| 8/4 | Groveland | 9 | P. + F. Vale | 8/12 | Barnstable (S.N.) | 2000 | B. Nikula |
| 8/11 | P.I. | 15 | S. Sullivan# | 8/15 | P.I. | 30000 | J. Berry# |
| 8/24 | Ware R. IBA | 33 | M. Lynch# | 8/19 | S. Monomoy | 5000 | B. Harris# |
| Great Crested Flycatcher | | | | 8/23 | Westport | 2400 | M. Iliff |
| 7/9 | GMNWR | 6 | K. Dia# | 8/26 | S. Quabbin | 680 | L. Therrien |
| 7/20 | P.I. | 5 | D. Chickering | | Northern Rough-winged Swallow | | |
| 8/25 | Medford | 3 | M. Rines# | 7/1 | Southbridge | 6 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/29 | Amherst | 1 | L. Therrien | 7/25 | Ipswich | nest/2 yg | J. Berry |
| 8/29 | Mt.A. | 1 | R. Stymeist# | 8/9 | W Springfield | 50 | J. Zepko |
| Eastern Kingbird | | | | 8/20 | Agawam | 10 | S. Kellogg |
| 7/8 | Brimfield | 17 | M. Lynch# | | Bank Swallow | | |
| 7/15 | Wachusett Res. | 21 | K. Bourinot | 7/11 | Plymouth B. | 15 | R. Stymeist |
| 7/21 | Falmouth | 11 | M. Keleher | 7/16 | Ipswich (C.B.) | 45 | BBC (D. Williams) |
| 7/28 | P.I. | 18 | G. d'Entremont | 7/21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 25 | B. Nikula |
| 7/29 | S. Quabbin | 15 | M. Lynch# | 8/18 | Hadley | 65 | L. Therrien |
| 7/31 | P.I. | 38 | R. Heil | 8/26 | S. Quabbin | 28 | L. Therrien |
| 8/31 | Belchertown | 2 | L. Therrien | 8/29 | P.I. | 60 | R. Heil |
| White-eyed Vireo | | | | | Cliff Swallow | | |
| 8/3 | Acoaxet | 2 | G. Gove# | 7/7 | Williamstown | 4 | R. Stymeist# |
| 8/17 | Mattapoisett | 1 | M. Lynch# | 7/28 | Chatham (S.B.) | 1 | B. Nikula |
| 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 4 | I. Davies | 8/4 | P.I. | 3 | B. Harris |
| Yellow-throated Vireo | | | | 8/10 | Newbury | 2 | P. + F. Vale |
| 7/1 | Southbridge | 5 | M. Lynch# | 8/20 | Sterling | 4 | B. Kamp# |
| 7/7 | Lenox | 2 | R. Stymeist# | 8/21 | Deerfield | 1 | Z. Jakob |
| 7/8 | Brimfield | 5 | M. Lynch# | | Barn Swallow | | |
| 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 2 | SSBC (GdE) | 7/8 | Wakefield | 24 | P. + F. Vale |
| Blue-headed Vireo | | | | 8/4 | P.I. | 30 | P. Cooney |
| 7/14 | Mt. Watatic | 2 | D. Swain | 8/11 | Wakefield | 32 | P. + F. Vale |
| 7/15 | Wachusett Res. | 1 | K. Bourinot | 8/18 | Chatham | 75 | SSBC (GdE) |
| 7/21 | Mt. Washington | 2 | M. Lynch# | 8/28 | Belchertown | 8 | S. Sumner |
| 7/22 | Barre | 6 | M. Lynch# | | Red-breasted Nuthatch | | |
| 8/26 | Ashburnham | 4 | M. Lynch# | 8/13 | MSSF | 7 | G. d'Entremont |
| Warbling Vireo | | | | 8/24 | Ware R. IBA | 157 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/1 | Southbridge | 13 | M. Lynch# | 8/24 | Sharon | 16 | L. Waters |
| 7/9 | GMNWR | 13 | K. Dia# | 8/25 | S. Quabbin | 43 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/30 | Longmeadow | 8 | R. Packard | 8/25 | Waltham | 25 | J. Forbes |
| 8/30 | Medford | 4 | P. + F. Vale | 8/26 | Quabbin (G39) | 41 | B. Lafley |
| Philadelphia Vireo | | | | 8/29 | P.I. | 32 | R. Heil |
| 8/26 | Southwick | 1 | S. Kellogg | | Brown Creeper | | |
| 8/29 | P.I. | 1 | R. Heil | 7/15 | Wachusett Res. | 2 | K. Bourinot |
| Red-eyed Vireo | | | | 7/22 | Barre | 5 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/14 | Peru | 68 | M. Lynch# | 8/24 | Sharon | 2 | L. Waters |
| 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 43 | SSBC (GdE) | 8/24 | Ware R. IBA | 4 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/24 | Ware R. IBA | 51 | M. Lynch# | | Carolina Wren | | |
| 8/25 | Medford | 7 | M. Rines# | 7/7 | Marion | 13 | M. Lynch# |
| Fish Crow | | | | 8/4 | MNWS | 6 | R. Stymeist |
| 7/4 | Newbypt. | 2 | R. Stymeist# | 8/17 | Mattapoisett | 20 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/8 | Wellfleet | 6 | R. Stymeist | 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 26 | I. Davies |
| 8/14 | Carlisle | 44 | T. Brownrigg | | House Wren | | |
| 8/17 | Mattapoisett | 2 | M. Lynch# | 7/15 | Douglas | 18 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/30 | Longmeadow | 2 | R. Packard | 8/4 | Quabog IBA | 61 | M. Lynch# |
| Common Raven | | | | 8/21 | Lexington | 12 | M. Rines# |
| 7/21 | Mt. Washington | 3 | M. Lynch# | | Winter Wren | | |
| 7/24 | Melrose | 2 | D. + I. Jewell | 7/11 | Hamilton | 4 m | J. Berry |
| 8/16 | Concord | 2 | S. Perkins | 7/14 | Peru | 3 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/19 | Salem | 2 | J. Paluzzi | 8/26 | Quabbin (G39) | 2 | B. Lafley |
| 8/24 | Ware R. IBA | 3 | M. Lynch# | | Sedge Wren | | |
| 8/24 | Milton | 2 | E. Lipton | 7/6 | Quabog IBA | 1 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/25 | Quabbin (G39) | 2 | B. Lafley | | Marsh Wren | | |
| Horned Lark | | | | thr | P.I. | 57 max | v.o. |
| 7/11 | Plymouth B. | 7 | R. Stymeist | thr | GMNWR | 27 max | v.o. |
| 7/15 | S. Monomoy | 6 | B. Harris# | 7/27 | W. Harwich | 17 | F. Atwood |
| 8/21 | Chatham (S.B.) | 12 | G. d'Entremont# | | Blue-gray Gnatcatcher | | |
| Purple Martin | | | | 7/27 | GMNWR | 5 | R. Stymeist |
| 7/thr | Rehoboth | 32 pr, 129 yg | R. Marr | 8/4 | Groveland | 4 | P. + F. Vale |
| 7/7 | Rochester | 25 | M. Lynch# | 8/7 | Borderland SP | 2 | G. d'Entremont |
| 7/7 | Mashpee | 55 ad, 67yg | Keleher | 8/19 | Cuttyhunk | 2 | I. Davies# |
| 7/17 | P.I. | 25 | P. + F. Vale | 8/30 | Lexington | 1 | C. Cook |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|------|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------|---------|--------------|
| Golden-crowned Kinglet | | | | 8/29 | Amherst | 1 | L. Therrien |
| 7/9 | Greylock | 2 | R. Laubach | Nashville Warbler | | | |
| 7/29 | Quabbin | 2 | L. Therrien | 8/27 | Greenfield | 1 | Z. Jakub |
| 8/13 | Falmouth | 3 | G. Hirth | 8/29 | Montague | 1 | J. Strules# |
| Eastern Bluebird | | | | 8/29 | Amherst | 1 | L. Therrien |
| 7/5 | DFWS | 18 | P. Sowizral | 8/30 | Lexington | 1 | M. Rines |
| 8/26 | Winchendon | 10 | M. Lynch# | Mourning Warbler | | | |
| Veery | | | | 7/14 | Peru | 2 m | M. Lynch# |
| 7/1 | Southbridge | 36 | M. Lynch# | 8/12 | Pittsfield SF | 3 imm | M. Lynch# |
| 7/3 | Groveland | 7 | J. Berry# | 8/30 | Ipswich | 1 imm m | J. Berry |
| 7/7 | Lenox | 7 | R. Stymeist# | Common Yellowthroat | | | |
| 7/10 | Ipswich | 10 | J. Berry | 7/1 | Southbridge | 42 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 18 | SSBC (GdE) | 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 23 | SSBC (GdE) |
| 8/26 | Quabbin (G39) | 4 | B. Lafley | 7/31 | P.I. | 35 | R. Heil |
| Swainson's Thrush | | | | 8/26 | Lexington | 20 | M. Rines |
| 7/9 | Greylock | 3 | R. Laubach | 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 33 | I. Davies |
| Hermit Thrush | | | | Hooded Warbler | | | |
| 7/4 | S. Quabbin | 7 | M. Lynch# | 7/1 | Quabbin | 1 | L. Therrien |
| 7/8 | Truro | 2 | R. Stymeist | 7/15 | Heath | 1 | D. Potter |
| 7/10 | Ipswich | 2 m | J. Berry | American Redstart | | | |
| 7/11 | MSSF | 11 | G. d'Entremont | 7/4 | S. Quabbin | 12 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/26 | Quabbin (G39) | 2 | B. Lafley | 7/31 | P.I. | 11 | R. Heil |
| Wood Thrush | | | | 8/17 | Waltham | 5 | J. Forbes |
| 7/6 | New Braintree | 17 | M. Lynch# | 8/19 | Westport | 39 | I. Davies# |
| 7/8 | Easthampton | 4 | J. Hoye# | 8/25 | Medford | 7 | M. Rines# |
| 7/10 | Ipswich | 4 m | J. Berry | 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 14 | I. Davies |
| 7/15 | Wachusett Res. | 9 | K. Bourinot | Cape May Warbler | | | |
| 8/25 | Medford | 1 | M. Rines# | 8/29 | Westport | 3 | M. Iliff# |
| Gray Catbird | | | | 8/29 | P.I. | 3 | R. Heil |
| 7/6 | New Braintree | 103 | M. Lynch# | 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 1 | I. Davies |
| 7/8 | Wakefield | 27 | P. + F. Vale | Northern Parula | | | |
| 8/29 | P.I. | 82 | R. Heil | 7/7 | Lenox | 1 | R. Stymeist# |
| Brown Thrasher | | | | 7/21 | P.I. | 1 | J. Hoye# |
| 7/31 | P.I. | 25 | R. Heil | 8/26 | Westfield | 3 | J. Hutchison |
| 8/24 | Milton | 2 | E. Lipton | 8/29 | Amherst | 5 | L. Therrien |
| 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 2 | I. Davies | Magnolia Warbler | | | |
| Cedar Waxwing | | | | 8/18 | Oakham | 2 imm | M. Lynch# |
| 8/12 | Pittsfield SF | 52 | M. Lynch# | 8/24 | Lexington | 1 | M. Rines |
| 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 72 | I. Davies | 8/24 | Milton | 1 | E. Lipton |
| 8/29 | P.I. | 39 | R. Heil | 8/29 | P.I. | 3 | R. Heil |
| Ovenbird | | | | Bay-breasted Warbler | | | |
| 7/6 | New Braintree | 12 | M. Lynch# | 8/29 | Westport | 1 | M. Iliff# |
| 7/7 | Lenox | 5 | R. Stymeist# | 8/30 | Belmont | 1 | J. Forbes |
| 7/10 | Ipswich | 9 m | J. Berry | Blackburnian Warbler | | | |
| 7/11 | Hamilton | 6 m | J. Berry | 7/14 | Hinsdale | 2 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 8 | SSBC (GdE) | 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 3 | SSBC (GdE) |
| 8/7 | Borderland SP | 4 | G. d'Entremont | 8/26 | Quabbin (G39) | 2 | B. Lafley |
| Worm-eating Warbler | | | | Yellow Warbler | | | |
| 7/21 | Mt. Washington | pr | M. Lynch# | 7/1 | Southbridge | 31 | M. Lynch# |
| Louisiana Waterthrush | | | | 7/31 | P.I. | 72 | R. Heil |
| 7/31 | Belchertown | 1 | L. Therrien | 8/25 | Medford | 2 | M. Rines# |
| 8/27 | Amherst | 1 | L. Therrien | 8/30 | Lexington | 1 | M. Rines |
| Northern Waterthrush | | | | Chestnut-sided Warbler | | | |
| 8/4 | MNWS | 2 | R. Stymeist | 7/4 | S. Quabbin | 14 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/5 | Arlington | 2 | K. Hartel | 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 8 | SSBC (GdE) |
| 8/5 | Foxboro | 2 | J. Fecteau | 8/20 | Waltham | 3 | J. Forbes |
| 8/23 | Westport | 4 | M. Iliff | 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 2 | I. Davies |
| 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 5 | I. Davies | Blackpoll Warbler | | | |
| Blue-winged Warbler | | | | 7/9 | Greylock | 3 | R. Laubach |
| 7/1 | Southbridge | 2 | M. Lynch# | 8/29 | P.I. | 1 | R. Heil |
| 8/2 | Westboro | 2 | T. Spahr# | Black-throated Blue Warbler | | | |
| 8/19 | Lexington | 2 | J. Forbes | 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 16 | SSBC (GdE) |
| Brewster's Warbler | | | | 7/22 | Barre | 14 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/2 | Westboro | 1 ph | T. Spahr | 8/27 | Lincoln | 1 | M. Rines |
| Black-and-white Warbler | | | | 8/31 | Lexington | 2 | C. Cook |
| 7/6 | Bedford | 2 | A. Bragg# | Pine Warbler | | | |
| 7/31 | P.I. | 4 | R. Heil | 7/7 | Marion | 153 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/24 | Ware R. IBA | 16 | M. Lynch# | 7/7 | Southwick | 7 | S. Kellogg |
| 8/25 | Medford | 2 | M. Rines# | 7/10 | Ipswich | 8 m | J. Berry |
| Prothonotary Warbler | | | | 7/21 | Falmouth | 13 | M. Keleher |
| 8/4 | Chatham | 1 ph | F. Atwood | 8/20 | Wellfleet | 20 | D. Clapp |
| Tennessee Warbler | | | | Yellow-rumped Warbler | | | |
| 8/27 | Greenfield | 1 | Z. Jakub | 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 6 | SSBC (GdE) |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|--------------|------------|------------------------------------|--------|----------------|
| Yellow-rumped Warbler (continued) | | | | 8/1 | Hingham | 1 | M. Iliff |
| 7/15 | Wachusett Res. | 2 | K. Bourinot | | Dark-eyed Junco | | |
| 7/21 | Mt. Washington | 13 | M. Lynch# | 7/14 | Peru | 5 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/21 | Lexington | 1 juv | M. Rines# | 7/21 | Mt. Washington | 5 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/29 | P.I. | 1 | R. Heil | | Scarlet Tanager | | |
| Prairie Warbler | | | | 7/6 | New Braintree | 12 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/2 | Southwick | 7 | S. Kellogg | 7/7 | Lenox | 5 | R. Stymeist# |
| 7/6 | Bedford | 2 | A. Bragg# | 7/10 | Ipswich | 6 m | J. Berry |
| 8/19 | Cuttyhunk | 3 | I. Davies# | 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 4 | SSBC (GdE) |
| 8/24 | Milton | 6 | E. Lipton | 7/15 | Wachusett Res. | 9 | K. Bourinot |
| 8/29 | Montague | 4 | R. Packard# | | Rose-breasted Grosbeak | | |
| Black-throated Green Warbler | | | | 7/6 | New Braintree | 15 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 13 | SSBC (GdE) | 7/8 | Belmont | 4 | J. Forbes |
| 7/14 | Peru | 10 | M. Lynch# | 7/31 | P.I. | 7 | R. Heil |
| 7/14 | Mt. Watatic | 6 | D. Swain | 8/19 | Lexington | 18 | C. Cook |
| 8/24 | Milton | 5 | E. Lipton | | Indigo Bunting | | |
| 8/31 | Lexington | 4 | C. Cook | 8/23 | Woburn (HP) | 8 | M. Rines |
| Canada Warbler | | | | 8/26 | Cumb. Farms | 7 | G. d'Entremont |
| 7/1 | Southbridge | 1 | M. Lynch# | 8/26 | Lexington | 12 | M. Rines |
| 7/14 | Peru | 1 | M. Lynch# | | Dickcissel | | |
| 7/29 | Quabbin | 1 | L. Therrien | 8/11-31 | Reports of indiv. from 9 locations | | |
| 8/14-30 | Reports of indiv. from 12 locations | | | 8/13 | GMNWR | 2 | D. Sibley |
| Wilson's Warbler | | | | 8/19 | Westport | 2 | I. Davies# |
| 8/14 | Savoy | 1 | T. Gagnon | 8/25 | Newbypt H. | 2 | B. Harris# |
| 8/19-29 | Reports of indiv. from 5 locations | | | 8/29 | P.I. | 2 | R. Heil |
| 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 2 | I. Davies | | Bobolink | | |
| Yellow-breasted Chat | | | | 7/31 | P.I. | 97 | R. Heil |
| 8/24 | P.I. | 1 b | B. Flemer# | 8/25 | Northampton | 1748 | T. Gagnon |
| Eastern Towhee | | | | 8/26 | Cumb. Farms | 50 | GdE |
| 7/7 | Marion | 36 | M. Lynch# | 8/30 | Woburn (HP) | 45 | P. + F. Vale |
| 7/14 | Quabbin (G10) | 27 | SSBC (GdE) | | Eastern Meadowlark | | |
| 7/21 | Falmouth | 29 | M. Keleher | 7/3 | W. Gloucester | 2 | J. Nelson |
| 7/31 | P.I. | 67 | R. Heil | 7/29 | Leicester | 3 | M. Lynch# |
| 8/29 | Cuttyhunk | 78 | I. Davies | 8/22 | Worcester | 4 | M. Lynch# |
| Field Sparrow | | | | | Orchard Oriole | | |
| 7/2 | Southwick | 10 | S. Kellogg | 7/8 | Amherst | 3 | L. Therrien |
| 7/21 | Falmouth | 27 | M. Keleher | 7/19 | Rowley | 3 | G. Gove# |
| 7/31 | P.I. | 8 | R. Heil | 7/21 | Falmouth | 18 | M. Keleher |
| Vesper Sparrow | | | | 8/13 | Wayland | 1 | B. Harris |
| 7/4 | Southwick | 1 | J. Hutchison | 8/18 | WBWS | 1 juv | SSBC (GdE) |
| 7/30 | P'town | 1 | P. Champlin | 8/19 | Westport | 1 | I. Davies# |
| Lark Sparrow | | | | | Baltimore Oriole | | |
| 8/23 | Westport | 1 | M. Iliff | 7/31, 8/29 | P.I. | 25, 11 | R. Heil |
| 8/29 | Tuckernuck | 2 | R. Veit | 8/24 | Sharon | 8 | L. Waters |
| Grasshopper Sparrow | | | | | Purple Finch | | |
| 7/2 | Southwick | 2 | S. Kellogg | 7/6 | New Braintree | 4 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/2 | Palmer | 1 | L. Therrien | 7/31 | P.I. | 21 | R. Heil |
| 7/6 | Amherst | 2 | D. Griffiths | 8/29 | Amherst | 3 | L. Therrien |
| 7/21 | Falmouth | 12 | M. Keleher | 8/30 | Boston (A.A.) | 1 | M. Iliff |
| Saltmarsh Sparrow | | | | 8/31 | Lexington | 1 imm | C. Cook |
| 7/6, 8/17 | Chatham (S.B.) | 25, 20 | B. Nikula | | Red Crossbill | | |
| 7/20 | Revere | 18 | P. Peterson | 7/22, 29 | Quabbin | 9, 26 | L. Therrien |
| 7/28 | Fairhaven | 5 | J. Sweeney# | 8/5 | Shutesbury | 2 | M. Lynch# |
| 7/31 | P.I. | 24 | R. Heil | 8/5 | Belchertown | 3 | L. Therrien |
| 8/28 | Newbury | 7 | R. Heil | 8/5, 25 | S. Quabbin | 3, 1 | L. Therrien |
| Seaside Sparrow | | | | 8/15 | W. Quabbin | 2 | E. Dalton |
| thr | P.I. | 5 max | v.o. | 8/19 | Gill | 1 | J. Smith |
| Swamp Sparrow | | | | 8/24 | Sharon | 6 | V. Zollo |
| 7/6 | Quabog IBA | 29 | M. Lynch# | 8/29 | New Salem | 6 | B. Lafley |
| 7/8 | Wakefield | 14 | P. + F. Vale | | Pine Siskin | | |
| 8/12 | GMNWR | 12 | N. Paulson | 8/28 | Groveland | 1 | D. Chickering# |
| White-throated Sparrow | | | | | | | |
| 7/14 | Peru | 8 | M. Lynch# | | | | |

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

Taxonomic order is based on AOU checklist, Seventh edition, up to the 52nd Supplement, as published in *Auk* 128 (3): 600-13 (2011) (see <<http://checklist.aou.org/>>).

| | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Locations | | Newbypt | Newburyport |
| Location-# | MAS Breeding Bird Atlas Block | ONWR | Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge |
| A.A. | Arnold Arboretum, Boston | PG | Public Garden, Boston |
| ABC | Allen Bird Club | P.I. | Plum Island |
| A.P. | Andrews Point, Rockport | Pd | Pond |
| A.Pd | Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth | POP | Point of Pines, Revere |
| B. | Beach | PR | Pinnacle Rock, Malden |
| Barre F.D. | Barre Falls Dam | P'town | Provincetown |
| B.I. | Belle Isle, E. Boston | Pont. | Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro |
| B.R. | Bass Rocks, Gloucester | R.P. | Race Point, Provincetown |
| BBC | Brookline Bird Club | Res. | Reservoir |
| BMB | Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester | S.B. | South Beach, Chatham |
| BNC | Boston Nature Center, Mattapan | S.N. | Sandy Neck, Barnstable |
| C.B. | Crane Beach, Ipswich | SRV | Sudbury River Valley |
| CGB | Coast Guard Beach, Eastham | SSBC | South Shore Bird Club |
| C.P. | Crooked Pond, Boxford | TASL | Take A Second Look, Boston Harbor Census |
| Cambr. | Cambridge | WBWS | Wellfleet Bay WS |
| CCBC | Cape Cod Bird Club | WE | World's End, Hingham |
| Corp. B. | Corporation Beach, Dennis | WMWS | Wachusett Meadow WS |
| Cumb. Farms | Cumberland Farms, Middleboro | Wompatuck SP | Hingham, Cohasset, Scituate, Norwell |
| DFWS | Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary | Worc. | Worcester |
| DWMA | Delaney WMA, Stow, Bolton, Harvard | | |
| DWWS | Daniel Webster WS | Other Abbreviations | |
| E.P. | Eastern Point, Gloucester | ad | adult |
| F.E. | First Encounter Beach, Eastham | b | banded |
| F.H. | Fort Hill, Eastham | br | breeding |
| F.P. | Fresh Pond, Cambridge | dk | dark (morph) |
| F.Pk | Franklin Park, Boston | f | female |
| G40 | Gate 40, Quabbin Res. | <i>fide</i> | on the authority of |
| GMNWR | Great Meadows NWR | fl | fledgling |
| H. | Harbor | imm | immature |
| H.P. | Halibut Point, Rockport | juv | juvenile |
| HP | Horn Pond, Woburn | lt | light (morph) |
| HRWMA | High Ridge WMA, Gardner | m | male |
| I. | Island | max | maximum |
| IRWS | Ipswich River WS | migr | migrating |
| L. | Ledge | n | nesting |
| MAS | Mass Audubon | ph | photographed |
| MP | Millennium Park, W. Roxbury | pl | plumage |
| M.V. | Martha's Vineyard | pr | pair |
| MBWMA | Martin Burns WMA, Newbury | S | summer (1S = 1st summer) |
| MNWS | Marblehead Neck WS | v.o. | various observers |
| MSSF | Myles Standish State Forest, Plymouth | W | winter (2W = second winter) |
| Mt.A. | Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambr. | yg | young |
| NAC | Nine Acre Corner, Concord | # | additional observers |

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO BIRD OBSERVER

Sightings for any given month must be reported in writing by the eighth of the following month, and may be submitted by postal mail or email. Send written reports to Bird Sightings, Robert H. Stymeist, 36 Lewis Avenue, Arlington, MA 02474-3206. Include name and phone number of observer, common name of species, date of sighting, location, number of birds, other observer(s), and information on age, sex, and morph (where relevant). For instructions on email submission, visit: <<http://massbird.org/birdobserver/sightings/>>.

Species on the Review List of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, as well as species unusual as to place, time, or known nesting status in Massachusetts, should be reported promptly to the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, c/o Matt Garvey, 137 Beaconsfield Rd. #5, Brookline, MA 02445, or by email to <mattgarvey@gmail.com>.

ABOUT THE COVER

Winter Wren

The Winter Wren (*Troglodytes hiemalis*) is a magnificent songster with a voice that was described by Arthur Cleveland Bent using a string of superlatives, “Wonderful . . . charming . . . marvelous . . . startling . . . entrancing . . . copious . . .” The Winter Wren is a small dark wren with a short cocked tail. It is dark brown with black barring on its wings, tail, and underparts. It can be distinguished from the House Wren by the latter’s longer tail.

The taxonomy of the Winter Wren group is highly complex with major changes occurring as recently as 2010. Until then, as many as 43 subspecies were recognized across America, Eurasia, and North Africa, all representing subspecies of *Troglodytes troglodytes*. Many believe that this “species” encompassed multiple biological species (reproductively isolated from other gene pools). In 2010, the American Ornithologists’ Union’s Check-list Committee decided to split the North American populations from the Eurasian populations. Additionally, they split the North American populations into two species: the Pacific Wren (*Troglodytes pacificus*) of the West Coast, and the Winter Wren (*Troglodytes hiemalis*) of most of the rest of North America. The splits were based primarily on the basis of DNA and song differences. Because the line of demarcation between the two new species is not well known, the range descriptions that follow are rather vague, however the breeding biology sections apply to both species. Since the wren family, Troglodytidae, evolved in the New World, the question arises of whether the Eurasian forms reached Eurasia from eastern or western North America. A similarity of calls suggests that they emigrated across the Bering Straits during one of the interglacial periods, but there are competing hypotheses.

Pacific Wrens breed from the Aleutian Islands (including the Pribilof Islands) south along the coast to central California and inland to Idaho and Utah. They winter on their breeding grounds and south to southern California and Arizona. The Winter Wren breeds in suitable habitat from Northeastern British Columbia across Canada to Newfoundland and south through the Great Lakes and the Appalachians south to Georgia. Winter Wrens winter from Massachusetts to northern Florida and the Gulf Coast to Texas. The migration patterns of the two new wren species are poorly known.

In Massachusetts the Winter Wren is considered an uncommon and local breeder. It is most common in the western part of the state, where its preferred nesting habitat, deep coniferous forest, is most widespread. It does not breed on the Cape or the Islands and is generally an uncommon migrant and a very uncommon winter resident. Winter Wrens arrive in Massachusetts from mid-April to mid-May and depart from October through December. A few hardy souls overwinter.

Winter Wrens are generally monogamous, but some studies report that as many as 44% may be bigamous. The highest densities of breeding birds occur in old-growth coniferous forests, but the breeding habitat is remarkably varied, from sea level to

11,000 feet, and includes treeless islands as well as deciduous and riparian forest. Male Winter Wrens belt forth a remarkably loud, vehement, beautiful song; a tumble of phrases that serve as territorial advertisement and mate attraction. The male points his cocked tail toward his head and swings his head back and forth as he sings. In territorial conflict the male's song is harsh, and he flicks his wings. He sometimes leaps on the back of a rival or chases him, wings quivering, head down, and tail fanned. Males may defend their territory year-round.

The male selects the nest site and may build multiple domed nests. The female chooses among the nests and ultimately lines the selected one with hair, grass, or feathers. Nesting substrate is highly variable, and includes old woodpecker holes, mossy creek banks, roots of upturned trees, and decaying logs. The nest of moss, bark, twigs, and rootlets is molded into the substrate. Nests may be reused in subsequent years. Only the female develops a brood patch, and only she incubates during the 14–16 days until the hatching of the usual clutch of five to seven white eggs. The young are altricial (helpless) with closed eyes and little down. Only the female broods for the 16 days until fledging. She also feeds the young birds more frequently than the male does. After fledging, both parents feed the young within the male's territory, and the family group roosts together at night until the young are independent. The time to independence is not known.

Winter Wrens feed mostly on the ground or in the shrub layer. They specifically forage on bark, foliage, ground litter, and logs. They glean, probe, hover, and snatch invertebrates from these substrates. They occasionally even hawk insects. Their diet consists largely of invertebrates, such as beetles, caterpillars, ticks, flies, bees, and spiders. They occasionally take small tadpoles, tiny fish, and amphipods, and in the fall they will eat juniper berries..

Nest predation is a problem for Winter Wrens since most of their nests are near the ground. Their preference for nesting in old growth or mature forests is also a problem because these habitats are declining due to the voracious maw of the timber industry. Harsh winters can cause severe crashes in Winter Wren populations. Although available data suggest stable overall populations, habitat alteration may cause population declines in the future, at which point their glorious song will likely be heard less frequently. 

William E. Davis, Jr.

About the Cover Artist: Barry Van Dusen

Once again, *Bird Observer* offers a painting by the artist who has created many of our covers, Barry Van Dusen. Barry is well known in the birding world, especially in Massachusetts, where he lives in the central Massachusetts town of Princeton. In July 2011 Barry was *Artist-in-Residence* at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens in Boothbay, Maine, and in autumn 2012 he had a one-man show at the Petersham Art Center in Petersham, Massachusetts. From May 6 to June 17, 2013, Barry's work will be on exhibit at Tower Hill Botanic Gardens in Boylston, Massachusetts, and he will be the Artist-in-Residence at Tower Hill for the 2013 season.

Barry has illustrated several nature books and pocket guides, and his articles and paintings have been featured in *Birding*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, and *Yankee Magazine* as well as *Bird Observer*. Barry is currently at work on illustrations for the second volume of *Birds of Brazil* by John Gwynne, Robert Ridgely, Guy Tudor, and Martha Argel, published by Comstock Publishing, a division of the Cornell University Press. For this work he is illustrating the shorebirds and their allies along with the gulls and terns.

Barry's interest in nature subjects began in 1982 with an association with the Massachusetts Audubon Society. He has been influenced by the work of European wildlife artists and has adopted their methodology of direct field sketching. His skill as a field artist has enabled Barry to participate in projects abroad sponsored by the Netherlands-based Artists for Nature Foundation. With this organization he has traveled to India, Peru, England, Ireland, Spain, Israel, and Holland to raise funds for conservation of threatened habitats.

Barry continues to enjoy teaching workshops at various locations in Massachusetts. In 2013 he will conduct workshops at Fruitlands Museums, Concord Art Association, and Tower Hill Botanic Gardens. More information on these is posted on Barry's website at <<http://www.barryvandusen.com>>. 



MALE HOODED MERGANSER BY DAVID LARSON

AT A GLANCE

August 2012



WAYNE R. PETERSEN

Many readers will find this month's mystery species either obvious or disconcertingly puzzling. A superficial glance may suggest that the bird is a Swallow-tailed Kite or possibly an immature frigatebird. Any species of frigatebird, however, can be readily dismissed because frigatebirds have black wing-linings. Unlike the bird in the photograph, a Swallow-tailed Kite would not have a dark neck and chest. Additionally, a close look at the mystery bird reveals that what superficially resembles a long, forked tail is in fact a pair of long trailing legs. Once we recognize the legs, we are helped considerably in identifying the mystery bird; only cranes, herons, and their allies possess legs as long as these. Regrettably, however, there's one thing not obvious in the photograph—the bird's head! Never fear, the head is there.

Once we have established the mystery bird as a long-legged wader, the only species exhibiting a combination of white under-parts and white wing-linings is Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*). The apparent absence of a head is due to the angle of the image and the fact that like all herons, the bird's neck is drawn back in flight and not extended out straight like that of an ibis or a crane. What appears to be a white stripe down the chest is actually the white, longitudinally marked foreneck of the Tricolored Heron.

Although straightforward in many ways, this photograph is indicative of how photos can occasionally be deceiving if they are not carefully examined or thoughtfully analyzed. No doubt many readers will recall the hugely controversial video images that surrounded an alleged Ivory-billed Woodpecker sighting in Louisiana in 2004.

The Tricolored Heron is a rare coastal nesting species in Massachusetts and a very uncommon to rare non-breeding visitor along the coast in spring through early fall. The author photographed this Tricolored Heron in August 2007 at South Beach in Chatham. 

Wayne R. Petersen



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AT A GLANCE



WAYNE R. PETERSEN

Can you identify the bird in this photograph?
Identification will be discussed in the next issue's AT A GLANCE.

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