

Bird Observer

VOLUME 41, NUMBER 5

OCTOBER 2013

- blue-gray plumage
- bright yellow eye
- pale yellow cere

Harrier,
adlt
molt



w/scope



YINS -
July 16,
2011
Quechee,
VT



HOT BIRDS

What is it with **Lazuli Buntings**? Up until this fall there were only three records of this species in the state, but on September 15 Ian, Ben Lagasse, and Keenan Yakola spotted a possible Lazuli Bunting on Cuttyhunk Island.



Then, on November 2, the same threesome discovered what was clearly a Lazuli Bunting at the Honey Pot in Hadley (above).



Blair Nikula was seawatching on October 12 at Race Point when he spotted this immature **Brown Booby** (left). He got some distant photographs with Northern Gannets for comparison.

Nick Ernst and Brian Harris found a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** (right) on Nantucket on October 14. Brian recorded this western warbler in a few photographs.



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SWAMP SPARROW BY PETER W. OEHLKERS



Bird Observer

A bimonthly journal—to enhance understanding, observation, and enjoyment of birds
VOL. 41, NO. 5 OCTOBER 2013

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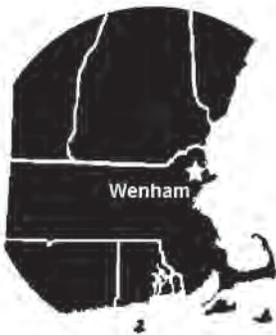
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Birding the Wenham Canal and Topsfield Fairgrounds, with a Side Trip on the Wenham Rail Trail

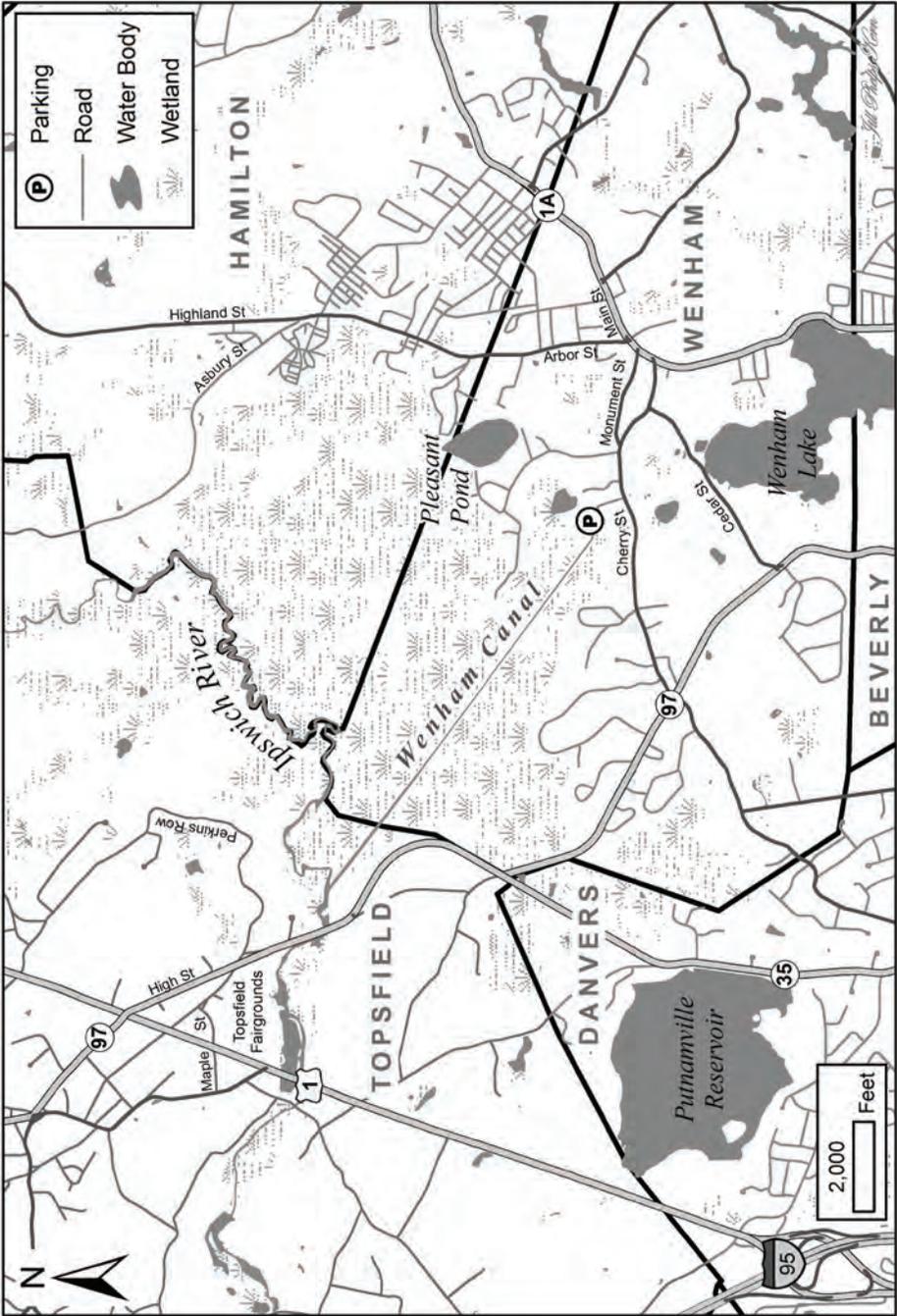
Jim Berry

The **Wenham Canal** is a different kind of place to bird: a linear park, as it were, stretching two miles in a straight line. It runs northwest to southeast and is almost entirely in the narrow town of Wenham, Massachusetts. The canal begins at the northwest end in Topsfield, near the famous Topsfield Fairgrounds—in particular the south end of the fairgrounds, a grassy floodplain along the Ipswich River that holds many kinds of birds when it is wet. The northwest end of the canal is a four-to-five-mile drive from where you park in Wenham at the southeast end to walk the canal. On the other hand, if you can paddle a kayak up the canal, you can continue to the fairgrounds, which is only about half a mile from the northwest end of the canal.



First a little history. The canal is an offshoot of the Ipswich River, dredged out in 1917 by the Beverly-Salem Water Board to divert water from the river, via a pumping station, to Wenham Lake. This large water body straddles the towns of Wenham and Beverly just south of the southeast end of the canal. Water is pumped from the canal to the lake and thence out the south end of the lake to augment the water supply for Beverly and Salem. The canal is flanked by dikes on both sides and surrounded along much of its length by the vast swamps of the Ipswich River wetland complex, also known as the Wenham Swamp, probably the largest inland wetland in Essex County. Walking the dikes in spring is a pleasure, as the place is loaded with migrant and nesting songbirds entirely away from the sound of traffic. The canal can be good to bird in fall and winter as well. In all seasons joggers and dog-walkers use the dikes, but they are not numerous enough to spoil one's pleasure in birding this remarkable spot.

To reach the canal, you must get onto Cherry Street in Wenham (see map). Cherry Street runs east-west for a mile and a half between Route 1A on the east end and Route 97 on the west end. If you are driving north up 1A from Route 128 in Beverly, you can't miss **Wenham Lake**, which you will pass on your left. The boundary sign for Wenham is beside this lake, which, by the way, is a decent place to look for waterfowl and eagles in fall and winter. On the other side of the lake there is a fine property along Route 97 on the Wenham/Beverly line called the **John C. Phillips Nature Preserve**. But I digress, as the lake is beyond the scope of this article. Continue half a mile or so north of the lake until you see Cherry Street on the left, and take it for another half a mile to a small, signed dirt lane on the right called Old Town Way. Turn right and drive a few hundred yards to the end, where you will see the pump house. There is room to park a dozen or so cars on two sides of the pump house.



If you are coming from the north on Route 1A, you will drive through Hamilton to Wenham. About half a mile after entering Wenham, you will come to the police and fire station at a large intersection. The street on the right is Arbor Street. Almost immediately after Arbor Street is a second intersection with a street coming in from the right, and quickly after that, a third such intersection. The second street is Monument, and the third is Cherry. Turn right onto Monument Street, which joins Cherry Street at a sharp angle after about 0.3 mile, and proceed another 0.2 mile (at most) to Old Town Way. If you are coming from the northwest on Route 97, Cherry Street is one of just a few major intersections in Wenham; turn left when you come to it at a traffic light and a general store. Old Town Way will be 0.9 mile on your left, but you will have to watch carefully for the sign. If you get to the split with Monument Street, you have gone too far.

Once you park at the pump house, you have two choices. You will see dikes on both sides of the canal, and you have to choose one, because you can't cross the canal (without swimming, or unless it is frozen) until you get to the other end, and then only on a rickety old bridge. Chances are you will decide to come back on the same side you went up. Two things govern my choice of sides: the position of the sun (I like to walk in the shade as much as possible) and, more importantly, the water level in the canal. The water level is



Pump house. Photograph by the author.

important because on the right, or northeast, side are four depressions in the dike close to the far end of the canal. If the water level is high enough to cover the depressions (the usual case), you will have to get your feet wet to continue unless you are wearing waders. Waders are always a good idea (if it is not too hot) as they allow you to walk up one side to the bridge and back the other side. This works unless the water level is really high, as happens occasionally. I imagine the depressions are for balancing the water level in the canal and surrounding swamp, but for some reason there are no depressions on the other side. I have photos from one winter of the whole canal frozen to the top of the dikes. In that case, of course, you can cross it anywhere you please as long as the ice is strong enough.

The surrounding habitat is mostly deciduous woodland and wooded swamp for the first third of the walk, with a hemlock grove along the left (southwest) side near the end of that stretch. There is relatively little understory here, and you can walk with ease among the hemlocks to see what few quasi-boreal species may be found along the canal, such as Brown Creepers and Red-breasted Nuthatches. At the end of the hemlock grove the level of the dikes on both sides drops three or four feet, and the surrounding habitat begins to get wetter, and thus more open. Walking off the dikes from this point on is almost impossible. For the rest of your walk, however, you will have a better view of your surroundings, which are mostly shrub swamp.

The bird life along the canal is similar to that along the Ipswich River, as seen during the annual canoe trips of the Essex County Ornithological Club. There are lots of Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, Baltimore Orioles, Warbling Vireos, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Great Crested Flycatchers, and occasional Yellow-throated Vireos. In addition to many of the common species not necessarily associated with streams, I have also seen or heard, at various points along the canal, Wood Ducks, Great Egrets, Glossy Ibis, Double-crested Cormorants, Ospreys, Ruffed Grouse (formerly), Spotted and Solitary sandpipers, Virginia Rails, Belted Kingfishers, Barred and Eastern Screech owls, both cuckoos, all the breeding woodpeckers, Willow Flycatchers, Northern Shrikes (occasional), Winter Wrens, Veeries, Wood and Hermit thrushes, Eastern Bluebirds, Blue-headed and Red-eyed vireos, Fish Crows (occasional), Swamp and Savannah sparrows, Rusty Blackbirds (occasional), and Scarlet Tanagers.



Wenham Canal. Photograph by the author.

Warblers seen and heard along the canal include—in addition to the ubiquitous Yellows and Common Yellowthroats—Ovenbird, Blue-winged, Black-and-white, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Palm, Pine, Nashville, Northern Parula, Canada (formerly), and Wilson's. I'm sure I have missed several others. I have saved two species for last: Northern Waterthrush, of which I heard my county record of ten singing on May 4, 2013, and Connecticut Warbler, which I saw once on September 21, 1997, perhaps in one of the many jewelweed thickets that decorate the edges of the canal.

Because many of the species named above breed along the canal, it became one of my primary birding locations in the Salem 4 block during the recent Breeding Bird Atlas project. Woodpeckers were some of the first species to be confirmed, as their nests are among the easiest to find. I'm sure Spotted Sandpipers breed along the canal's banks because of their regular presence there, but despite numerous searches I have yet to find a nest or young. The dikes can also be good for butterflies and dragonflies, but I have found that regular mowing limits the variety of butterflies.

More information on birding the northwest end of the canal is given below where I describe how to get to the canal from that end.

When you have returned to your car, turn right onto Cherry Street and, if you like, visit Mass Audubon's **Cedar Pond Sanctuary**, which is almost across the road on the other side. This is a beautiful property and a great place to bird, but, like Wenham Lake, is not the subject of this article; perhaps another in the future.

Continue west on Cherry Street for 0.9 mile to Route 97 and turn right (north). Drive another 0.9 mile and, at the bottom of a long hill, you will see dirt pulloffs on both sides of the road and a well-marked crosswalk. You have reached the **Wenham Rail Trail**, newly developed to take advantage of the old railroad bed through the Wenham Swamp. Park here on either side and for the best birding walk south (to the left) for about a mile and back. You can see and hear most of the same birds if you walk north, but the trail lies close to Route 97 in that direction, and you can't hear very well due to the constant traffic. By walking south, you escape the noise very quickly. This section of the swamp is also a little less shrubby in parts, with large portions of cattail marsh. Cattails mean rails, and this is a great spot for Virginias and Soras. I have heard both species in multiple numbers here, which makes the place especially attractive to birders. Volunteers have recently completed a boardwalk loop to the right (west) of the main dike, offering more good rail habitat. Otherwise, the species mix is similar to that found along the canal.

Return to your vehicle and continue north on Route 97. Bear right just up the road at the four-way intersection to stay on 97. At 1.4 miles from the rail trail, just after you have crossed the Ipswich River, you will notice another dirt pulloff on your left, next to the river. This is a popular put-in place for canoes and kayaks. People park here for two reasons: to access the river or to walk or jog or ride their bikes on the rail trail, which re-crosses Route 97 at this spot. If you want to enter the Wenham Canal from the northwest end, turn around where you can and park on the southbound side. Then cross the road and walk back south on the rail trail for about half a mile until you see a little, inconspicuous trail going left next to a house. You will soon know if you have taken the right trail (I'm not aware of any others) because you will see the old, broken-down bridge that spans the canal near its northwestern terminus at the river. As I recall, it is posted against crossing, but since there is no dike on the left side above the bridge (the side you are on), you may be tempted to cross. If you are adventurous and careful, you may be able to do it without consequences. Just don't blame me if you fall in, because I warned you.

If you manage to cross the bridge alive, turn left and follow the right-side dike about a hundred yards to the beginning of the canal. There you can look up and down the Ipswich River, but you can't walk any farther. (Of course, if you walked up the right side of the canal in the first place and got past the depressions, you could have gone to the end without crossing the bridge.)

I remember witnessing at least three memorable events in this little stretch. One was watching a Purple Finch in courtship with his mate. If you haven't seen Purple Finches in courtship, you haven't lived. The second was seeing a pair of Spotted Sandpipers also in courtship, but I never could confirm breeding (got them to "probable," though.). The third was finding a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher nest (and almost finding a second one) just over the side of that section of the dike.



Wenham Canal. Photograph by the author

The short trail you came in on from the rail trail actually continues on the other side of the canal for a short distance perpendicular to the canal, and you can walk the floor of the silver-maple forest to the left of that trail if it isn't too wet. Silver maple is a bottomland species, and the place is heaven-sent for gnatcatchers.

Unless you have come here to walk the length of the canal, cross the bridge again, return to your car, and turn around

to head north again. Continue on Route 97 another 0.8 mile to the intersection of 97 with U.S. Route 1. Turn left here to get to the **Topsfield Fairgrounds**. Proceed south past the fairground entrance until you come to the south end of the property at the bottom of a long hill. Turn left at the blinker into the biggest parking lot you've ever seen. Unless you come during the annual Topsfield Fair, which takes place the two weeks preceding Columbus Day, you will have the whole lot to yourself. Park on the dirt anywhere along the Jersey barriers at the right edge of the lot.

Having parked somewhere along the 200 yards or so of dirt edge, take out your spotting scope if you have one and start walking around the ten-plus acres of grassy floodplain on your right. The wetter it is, the better for the birds, though it may mean you need to wear waders. You can scope the whole place from your car, but it's so expansive that you will miss many of the shorebirds skulking in the puddles, where the grass is taller. I normally head straight for the wettest places to see what shorebirds are present. They will flush if you move too fast, but with patience you can see most of them. The distance across the field to the Ipswich River is perhaps 200 yards and the distance from Route 1 to the back of the field is a little longer, maybe 250-300 yards.

Wilson's Snipe is the first species that comes to mind at the fairgrounds. They are numerous here in spring and fall; I have seen as many as 31. I know others have

seen more—Fay and Peter Vale counted 55 on March 24, 2012. Killdeer are also common here; a pair or two nest in the field and they let you know it in no uncertain terms. Another notable shorebird is the Solitary Sandpiper, which is rarely solitary in this place. My personal best count is 18 on May 11, 2011. I recall that other birders have seen 20 or more in spring, and Sue McGrath counted 32 on May 24, 2008. Least Sandpipers are the most numerous of the shorebird migrants. My best counts are 102 on May 15, 2004, and 86 on May 10, 2007. Jonathan Center tallied 120 two days before my count of 102. Rick Heil had 100 Least Sandpipers there on August 14, 2011, and there were two other counts of 80+ in May 1996 by the Jewells and the Vales.

Other shorebirds seen more or less regularly at the fairgrounds are Greater and Lesser yellowlegs and Spotted, Semipalmated, and Pectoral sandpipers. Rarer shorebirds I'm aware of are White-rumped Sandpipers (three recent records, all in May) and one each of Red-necked and Wilson's phalaropes (in May and August, respectively). But shorebirds are not the

only attraction. You may also see Great Egrets, Little Blue Herons, Glossy Ibis, and Green-winged and Blue-winged teal in the shallow pools along with countless Canada Geese and Mallards. American Pipits have been seen some years; I saw one on the early date of March 13, 2012, and five later that month on the 29th. In spring there is usually a pair of Savannah Sparrows around the Jersey barriers along the edge of the field by the parking lot, and I suspect they nest there in the long grass. Tree and



AMERICAN PIPIT BY SANDY SELESKY

Barn swallows often fill the sky or perch on the wires above the floodplain as they forage for insects; the Barn Swallows nest in the many agricultural buildings. Turkey Vultures patrol the skies around the fairgrounds looking for carrion. Finally, if you walk over to the edge of the river, you can hear many of the same songbirds that inhabit the woods and swamps of the Wenham Canal.

This has been a quick trip through Wenham and a little of Topsfield. While writing the article, I realized that there are more places in Wenham that offer good birding, three of which I have mentioned in boldface above. Wenham and Middleton are the two wettest towns in Essex County that I can think of, and Middleton also needs writing up. So many places, so little time! 🐦

Jim Berry has birded most of Essex County and is nearing completion of his annotated checklist of the birds of that county. He is on the editorial staff of Bird Observer.

Chester Albert Reed: Author of the First Field Guide to Birds in 1905

Michel Chevalier

Before Roger Tory Peterson published *Field Guide to the Birds* in 1934, the name of Chester A. Reed was known by all ornithological enthusiasts and scientists in America. And for good reason—he was the first person to realize that appropriately-colored illustrations would facilitate the identification of birds in nature. An accomplished illustrator, Reed was above all a great teacher, and it was in that spirit that he published the first color field guide, *Bird Guide Part 2, Land Birds East of the Rockies*, in November 1905.

Reed's childhood and education

Chester Albert Reed was born in January 1876, the second of four children. From an early age, he showed an interest in nature. He possessed the rare ability to share his discoveries enthusiastically with others. While Reed was still young, his mother encouraged him to persevere with the art of drawing. Chester inherited his father's artistic talents, which would serve the interests of ornithology in his future career.

Education was important in the Reed family. Chester finished high school with high honors. In 1894, he enrolled at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in Worcester, Massachusetts, in the electrical engineering program. This period at the institute was the first turning point in his life. In the first year of the program, he trained in freehand drawing. In the second year, technical drawing (to scale) completed his training. The yearbook of 1896, the year of his graduation, commended Reed's artistic talent, mentioning that when other students compared their own work with Reed's drawings, they had the impression of having produced a rough draft.

Although Reed was president of his class and was enrolled in the athletic and football programs of the institute, nature beckoned him. He spent all of his leisure time observing and drawing birds. It was not surprising that, at the end of his studies, he decided to work in his father's store as a taxidermist; he had practiced taxidermy from a young age. Doubtless to commemorate his graduation and particularly his choice of career, his father gave him a Premo camera in June 1896. It was at that moment, at the age of 20, that Chester Albert Reed's professional career in ornithology began.

American Ornithology for the Home and School: A springboard for the hobby of birding

Reed's career as an author began in 1901. With his father, he published *American Ornithology for the Home and School*—the first ornithological journal for a wide audience—from January 1901 to August 1906. The journal was dedicated to birds and their conservation. Each month, the journal published articles describing the habitats and habits of four or five species of birds. These were accompanied by full-page illustrations, often in color, including life-size photographs of eggs. Each issue also

included stories and observation notes of birds in the region, games, word puzzles, poems, crosswords, photography competitions. The enjoyable aspect of birding took form. Reed intended the journal for a wide audience of adults, teachers, and students who had an interest in the conservation of birds, whatever their level of ornithological knowledge. This journal was Reed's opportunity to express his passion for birds and to accustom people to looking at birds without shooting them down with air rifles in order to identify them.

In the spirit of identifying live birds, Reed first presented a color identification chart in February 1902. The chart grouped birds of similar color on the same page with text that briefly described each species in order to facilitate identification by comparison. It was the first time in the entire history of ornithology that a technical drawing of birds was used in order to identify birds in the field. The originality of Reed's chart included not only the scale drawing, but also information that identified the bird in a few words: the common name, the scientific name, the size, the habitat, nesting habits. It provided all that amateur birders needed to satisfy their curiosity when they identified birds in the field. Not all birding enthusiasts were equipped with binoculars, so Reed described each bird in such a way that a person could identify it at a certain distance without binoculars, which were only gradually beginning to appear on the market of ornithological equipment.



Cover of *American Ornithology for the Home and School*, June 1901.

Perching Birds Marked With Yellow or Orange.



656. Audubon Warbler (*Dendroica auduboni*). L. 5.6. Crown, sides of breast, rump, and throat usually with yellow. *Ad. ♂*. Throat bright yellow; breast black; back blue-gray streaked with black; wing-bars broadly white; outer tail-feathers with white. *Ad. ♀*. Similar to male, but breast grayish; yellow less bright; less white in wings. *♂, Winter*. Like same plumage of No. 655, but throat yellowish; more white in tail. *♀, Winter*. Similar, but less yellow, throat sometimes without yellow, when like No. 655, but white on four or five outer tail-feathers instead of on two or three. Range—Western United States; breeding in higher mountains from southern California and New Mexico north to British Columbia; winters south into Mexico.

Audubon Warbler entry from *Color Key to North American Birds*.

The ornithological professionals of the time immediately noticed the originality of Reed's work. Just a few days after the publication of Reed's first color identification

chart, Frank M. Chapman, Curator of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History, presented himself at the offices of Reed and his father and proposed the production of a book giving a color identification key for the birds of North America. The title would be *Color Key to North American Birds*. Charles K. Reed and Frank M. Chapman signed an agreement in February 1902 for the publication of the book. This agreement named Charles Reed, Chester's father, as the official publisher of the book and Chester Reed as the co-author.

Reed had had another plan for his bird identification cards, but working with Chapman, whose renown was well established in the United States, would enable Reed to acquire national fame in a very short time. *Color Key to North American Birds* was published in November 1903. Reed played a strategic role in the production of the book; his knowledge of ornithology, his understanding of the structure of the book, and his skill in technical drawing made him a perfect co-author and coordinator for the book's publication. Reed became the intermediary between Chapman and the publication team.

Bird Guide Part 2, Land Birds East of the Rockies: the book that revolutionized the practice of birding

Between November 1903 and August 1905, Reed published the book *North American Birds Eggs*, without doubt to take advantage of his new-found fame acquired through collaboration with Chapman. It became a natural complement to the book that they had published together in 1903. The two books had the same format, description of the same number of species, life-size presentations of eggs, and the same cost.

Following the publication of these two books, Reed again took up the publishing project he had had in mind when his color identification chart had appeared in 1902. *Color Key to North American Birds* offered a description of all of the birds in North America, more than 800 species. The book's weight and size, however, were impractical for use in the field. The book that Reed planned to publish would fill the vacuum.

NORTHERN SHRIKE.
621. *Lanius borealis*. 10 inches.

This shrike is larger than any of the species found in summer in the United States and has the breast quite distinctly barred.

Shrikes are cruel, rapacious and carnivorous birds, feeding upon insects, grasshoppers, lizards and small birds. As they have passerine feet, the same as all our small birds, they are unable to hold their prey between the feet while tearing it to pieces, so they impale it upon thorns or the barbs of a wire fence, so they may tear it to shreds with their hooked bill.

Song.—Loud snatches consisting of various whistles and imitations suggesting that of a Catbird.

Nest.—They breed chiefly north of the U. S., placing their rude, bulky structures of twigs and weeds in thorny trees or hedges; their four to six eggs are grayish white with spots of light brown and darker gray (1.08 x .80).

Range.—N. A., breeding chiefly in the northern parts of Canada; winters south to Pennsylvania, Kansas and California.



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Northern Shrike entry from *Bird Guide Part 2, Land Birds East of the Rockies*

Bird Guide Part 2, Land Birds East of the Rockies was published in November 1905. It revolutionized the art of identifying birds in the field. It contributed directly to the teaching and learning of bird identification. In the book's introduction, Reed explained how readers could protect and observe birds close to home, and, most important, it offered an approach for observing and studying birds that would enliven their birding outings. He provided blank pages at the end of the book for readers' own observation notes. The book's species accounts briefly described the nest, egg, distribution range, and song, and provided a color illustration of the bird to facilitate identification. The illustrations were on the edges of the pages which made it easy to locate the birds by simply sliding the fingertips along the pages. Reed presented 187 species of the most common birds in a 3" x 5½" format, close to half an inch thick. That was a feat in itself.

Although Reed used the term "bird guide" in the original title, the term "pocket guide" best suits the book. The innovation of publishing a book that fit in one's pocket provided what no other book of the era offered for bird identification—access to field information in real time. With *Bird Guide Part 2, Land Birds East of the Rockies*, Chester A. Reed wrote a new page of history in ornithological literature.



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ESKIMO CURLEW

266. *Numenius borealis*. 13.5 in.

Bill comparatively short (about 2 in.) and little curved. Above, marked similarly to the last; below white or pale buff, often thickly covered on the breast and sides with streaks and arrow head markings of blackish. Primaries and most of the secondaries plain brownish-black, without the variegation of the last species. A few years ago this was considered the most abundant of the curlews, but so persistently have they been hunted that they are now practically exterminated. When it comes to looking after their safety, curlews are, perhaps, the most stupid of the shore birds for they do not seem to realize the dangerous character of mankind in general, and they have paid the penalty. I trust that all sportsmen will refrain from shooting these birds.

Nest.—Like that of the Hudsonian; eggs similar but smaller.

Range.—Eastern N. A., breeding in the Arctic regions and migrating through the Plains, Mississippi Valley, and to a less extent on the Atlantic coast, to South America. Very rare now anywhere.

Eskimo Curlew entry from *Bird Guide Part 1, Water and Game Birds East of the Rockies*

In May 1906, Reed published a second field guide that complemented the publication of the first. This book, *Bird Guide Part I, Water and Game Birds East of the Rockies*, covered shorebirds, birds of prey, and owls. In a few months, more than 27,000 copies of these two books were sold.

Reed's formula gained popularity. The Audubon Society of New Jersey published its first regional field guide in 1911, co-authored by Chester A. Reed and Beecher S. Bowdish. This field guide, sold exclusively by the society, used Reed's format and structure to increase interest in birding and to establish the educational value of the identification of birds in the field.

It is interesting to note that the format Reed developed in 1905 to describe and illustrate a species is still used today by contemporary authors of bird field guides. Although the evolution in printing technology and the quality of binoculars today far surpass those of the previous century, the fact remains that Reed had defined the structural standards of the field guide.

An untimely death

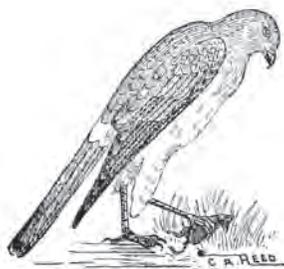
Reed died at the age of 36 on December 16, 1912, from pneumonia. It struck him down in five days. His life was short but prolific. He published 24 books between 1903 and 1912 as well as 67 issues of his journal *American Ornithology for the Home and School* between 1901 and 1906.

Twenty-two years after Chester A. Reed's death, another talented illustrator took up the formula again, improved it, and made it possible for a new generation of birding enthusiasts to immerse themselves in their favorite leisure activity. Roger T. Peterson started birding with Reed's books; following the publication of his own *Field Guide to the Birds* in 1934, Peterson became a source of inspiration for future generations of authors of ornithological books.

Chester A. Reed's life has long been a mystery to historians. The publication of the website www.chester-reed.org fills this void. There one can find Reed's biography as well as those of his father and mother, and complete documentation of his books. The section "Gallery" offers several original documents, including certain illustrations of original designs that have never been previously published. Direct descendants of the Reed family graciously provided all of the original documents.

Chester A. Reed played an important role in the history of birding in America. He must not sink into oblivion. 🦅

Michel Chevalier has been an amateur ornithologist for more than 35 years. In 1976, he purchased his first book by Chester A. Reed, North American Birds Eggs, published by Dover in 1965. In 2009 he began his research on Reed. This project lasted three years and ended in the publication of a web site. The work enabled him to assemble a great quantity of files, which he gave to the American Museum of Natural History. He collected all the first editions of Reed's publications, which are now preserved at the University of Michigan. Michel Chevalier currently lives in Quebec, Canada. The author acknowledges the invaluable contributions of Jean Mayo, a genealogist, and Gail Berkshire, a direct descendent of the Reed family. Without them, this project would not have seen the light of day.



NORTHERN HARRIER BY CHESTER A. REED

The Birding John Nelsons

John Nelson

He was coming my way over a little ridge, stepping gently around the slanted, weather-battered tombstones. I sensed something familiar about him, brotherly, but I couldn't place him. Maybe he was a ghost, a doppelganger. According to the "Strange USA" website, Oak Hill Cemetery in Newburyport is rumored to be a heavily haunted place. A disturbing number of gravestones are unmarked. A mossy granite gate welcomes visitors with the unsettling inscription "until the day breaks and the shadows flee away."

"Have you seen the Blue Grosbeak?" he asked as he approached.

"Yes, about twenty minutes ago." I pointed. "It was down around the bend, singing by the pond. Here, I'll show you."

We walked side by side down a trail beneath towering, bird-busy oaks. He had a friendly face, a birder's calm alertness, nothing noticeably ghost-like about him. A kingfisher rattled across the pond below, and then, moments later, closer, we heard the grosbeak's hoarse, rushed two-note phrasings. Perched high on a snag, the bird was burlier than a bunting but smallish for a grosbeak, with rusted wings and a big silver beak that shrank the rest of its face.

"Nice," he said. "Thanks. I haven't seen one of these in a few years." He turned toward me. "By the way, what's your name?"

"John Nelson."

He chuckled. "Oh, I know about you." He shook my hand. "John Nelson. We finally meet."

"I'm John R. Nelson," I said.

"I'm John R. Nelson," he answered.

"I blame our parents."

I don't much like having such a common name. With no disrespect for my grandfather Johann Nielsen, if I'd been christening myself, I would have been a bit more daring. To make matters worse, my wife is Mary Nelson. Is there any couple in the country with names more white-bread? Granted, I've sometimes profited from confusion over my identity. As a high school freshman, I was elected to student council—and made a leap in social standing—on the strength of many votes no doubt intended for John C. Nelson, a nice guy from a different town with a different circle of friends. But more often it's annoying. Any self-googling requires a carefully worded search, and I've often been misidentified in the field, not only as the wrong birding John Nelson but also as the wrong English professor and twice as a chief of police. It's fortunate that the other birding John Nelson is an honest fellow, for *Birding* magazine once sent him a check for an article I'd written. On another occasion my friend Jim

Berry, a stickler for correct grammar and spelling, sent me an email message entitled “English professor makes rare error!” I’d allegedly confused “site” and “sight.” I assured Jim I would never make such an error, and to gain a bit of payback on behalf of both John Nelsons, I pointed out that, with more careful placement of his adverbs, he could avoid ambiguity in some of his sentences.

Over the years I’ve bonded with the other birding John Nelson. We share knowing grins of recognition whenever we spot each other in the field, or when other birders make unoriginal remarks about multiple John Nelson sightings, and there’s a little added satisfaction when we look at a rare bird together—White-faced Ibis seen by two John Nelsons. Of course, one of us often sees a bird the other has missed. A few years back, Bill Drummond, one of my birding mentors, congratulated me on finding a Dovekie off Plum Island during the Newburyport Christmas Bird Count.

I shook my head. “Wasn’t me, Bill. That was the other John Nelson.”

“Well, that’s a bummer,” Bill answered.

“I suppose.” I noted that there really wasn’t any difference between being a John Nelson who didn’t see a Dovekie and being a Bill Drummond who also didn’t see the bird.

The other birding John Nelson and I have been comingled online as well as in the field. There’s one guy—let’s call him Birder X—who posts regularly on Massbird and has a habit of shooting from the hip. He’ll make impulsive wisecracks about another birder; he’ll be upbraided and chastised by others for his disparaging remarks; he’ll apologize, retract the wisecracks, and insist he was merely joking. Last year I got an indignant email message from Birder X, asking why I was giving him such a hard time. Yes, he’d said foolish things, but he’d apologized, hadn’t he? Why was I still on his case? And hadn’t we sorted this whole thing out a year ago? I assured Birder X that I had no beef with him; in fact, I had no clue what he was talking about. Perhaps the other John Nelson had scolded him, though the other John Nelson doesn’t seem like the scolding type. A month later, my name was mentioned from the podium just before Birder X presented a slide show to our birding club, so naturally he began his talk with a little joke: was that the good John Nelson or the bad John Nelson? Afterwards, I approached him, shook his hand, and said with a smile, “Just so you know, I’m the good John Nelson. But the bad John Nelson is also a good John Nelson. You need to get your John Nelsons straight.”

It’s one thing when mix-ups create moral confusion, making it hard to distinguish between “good” and “bad” John Nelsons. It’s a more serious matter when one’s reputation as a birder is at stake. In my first year of birding, at my wife’s urging, I posted a report of a Great Horned Owl that the two of us saw perched along the Interstate as we drove to Worcester to visit her mother. It seemed unlikely at the time—an owl in broad daylight in the middle of a field—but on our ride home at dusk, the bird was still on its snag, swiveling its head to survey its improbable realm. Within the next few days I received many messages, each kindly—or snidely—suggesting that, given the time and place of the sighting, the owl I’d reported was almost certainly

mechanical. I was flabbergasted, profoundly embarrassed. You mean they make fake owls with moving parts? Chastened, I retracted my report and vowed that in the future I'd restrict my postings to feathered, animate birds. I don't know if my fellow John Nelson was a birder at the time, but if he was, he was surely mortified. Please, please, he must have thought, don't think that was me. Would I be suckered by a phony owl?

Unfortunately, my owl problem didn't stop there. A few years later, during a Bird-a-thon, I checked a tree where I'd seen two Pileated Woodpeckers excavating a cavity. No Pileateds were to be found, but inside the hole there were two, no, three little owlish faces. I was delighted. Any owl in the daytime is a good owl, and here was a whole screech-owl family. I proudly announced my owls at our team's tabulation meeting, and I



NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWLS BY PHIL BROWN

mentioned them again when I posted my Bird-a-thon highlights on Massbird. The next day I got a message with photos attached: three adorable, big-eyed baby owls, not screech-owls but unmistakable Northern Saw-whet Owls, poking their heads out of my Pileated hole. The photographer, Phil Brown, thanked me for finding the birds and graciously omitted the fact that I'd misidentified them. He was going to post the photos on Massbird. I'd have to post a correction of my report, but tried to console myself with the thought that it's really hard to find a saw-whet owl in the daytime, even if you don't know what you're looking at. Still, I felt cheated by these owls. With me they'd been coy, hiding inside their hole, hard to identify. For Phil they'd become exhibitionists, thrusting their cute little faces out into the daylight as if to announce, "We are Northern Saw-whet Owls!"

Luckily, the situation has never been reversed. To my knowledge the other birding John Nelson is a dependable reporter as well as an excellent spotter. But that wasn't the end of doubts about John Nelson sightings. You see, there's a third birding John Nelson in Massachusetts—a man I've never met—and he once reported a probable Eskimo Curlew, a species generally considered extinct. I remember thinking that the report was plausible. This John Nelson had worked for Mass Audubon, and he and his son, an experienced birder, had seen the bird well on Chappaquiddick in suitable habitat. He'd noted its field marks and behavior and explained in detail why the bird shouldn't be a Whimbrel or, for that matter, a Bristle-thighed Curlew, a species almost equally improbable in Massachusetts. Of course, without photographic evidence no report of such an extreme rarity could ever be officially accepted, and many birders no doubt dismissed this report out of hand. Now, ten years later, I'm still waiting for one of them to ask me, "So, Nelson, have you seen any Eskimo Curlews lately?"

Since I started writing about birds, I've often thought about adopting a pseudonym. I'm resigned to being a birding John Nelson, for good or bad, but it's not a name to spark curiosity in a casual reader of birding book reviews. Some sort of birdy name would be ideal. Jay Nelson? Not much of an improvement. Robin Nelson? Too

androgynously British. Raven Nelson? Pretentious. Great Blue Nelson? Sounds like a harmonica player from the south side of Chicago. Killdeer? Too Last-of-the-Mohicans. Creeper, Thrasher? Too sociopathic. Cackling, Dunlin, Loggerhead, Bufflehead? All too self-denigrating. Sharptail-Nelson? That's almost an actual species. Wait, there's a Jeremiah Nelson buried at Oak Hill, one of the first congressmen from Massachusetts. Nice Biblical ring, a Puritan birder. Oh, what the hell.

Lately I've been thinking in a more positive, more ambitious direction. It's a truism that no one birder can see two birds in two different places at the same time, but what about two birding John Nelsons, or three, or four? Imagine the possibilities if we coordinated our efforts: Malaysian Plover in the Philippines, Crab Plover on the Kenya coast, pink-legged Magellanic Plover at a sheltered lagoon in Patagonia, all within five minutes. Think of the potential life list: birds seen by a John Nelson.

If there are any other John Nelsons out there birding somewhere, please come forward and identify yourselves. 🐦

John Nelson, of Gloucester, contributes regularly to *Bird Observer* and has published fiction and nonfiction 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 nonfiction article published in *Shenandoah* during the 2011-2012 season.



WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW BY SHAWN P. CAREY

One Night Only: A Special Viewing of Fuertes's Paintings, Birds of Massachusetts

Nancy Walker

What are almost 90 years old, as vibrant as the day they were conceived, and able to excite a room full of people? The paintings of Louis Agassiz Fuertes in “The Art of Birds” exhibit, a recent benefit for Massachusetts Audubon’s Bird Conservation Initiatives and Museum of Bird Art. The show included about a third of Fuertes’s original watercolor paintings from his *Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States* (1925–1929). The exhibit of 28 paintings was on view for only one night, September 19, 2013. It proved more fleeting than a J.D. Salinger sighting. A collaboration between Mass Audubon and the Massachusetts State Archives, the event took place at the Massachusetts Archives & Commonwealth Museum in Boston. The evening also included a silent auction and a private tour of the Commonwealth Museum.



Photograph by the author

Following a brief introduction by Henry Tepper, President of Mass Audubon, Amy Montague, director of Mass Audubon’s Museum of American Bird Art in Canton, Massachusetts, explained what was involved in mounting the show and more important, described the historical contributions of the many people involved in preserving these treasures. James Baird, then Director of Conservation at Mass Audubon, initiated this journey in the 1970s after he viewed Fuertes’s paintings, which were stored in the basement of the State House

along with the rest of the State Archives. The paintings were in need of restoration as they were mounted on acidic cardboard backings. Luckily, in 1985 Mass Audubon’s president, Dr. Gerard Bertrand, convinced his board of directors to commit \$30,000 for the restoration of the paintings. It was fitting that Dr. Bertrand was in the audience on the night of the exhibition to receive a well-earned round of applause.

Conservation can take many forms, from saving habitat to rescuing something as small as a painting. Preserving culturally significant objects is important for several reasons. Not the least of these is that exceptional nature paintings can inspire succeeding generations to value and preserve the natural world.

Joan Walsh, Coordinator of the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas 2, concluded the evening’s program with the announcement that the new Atlas would be available in mid-November.

Many Massachusetts birders may be familiar with Louis Agassiz Fuertes (1874–1927), whose collaboration with the state ornithologist, Edward Forbush, resulted in three impressive volumes about Massachusetts’s bird life, *Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States, in Three Volumes*. These books remain useful and offer valuable contributions to this day. In the books, each bird species receives an extensive description including measurements, molts, field marks, breeding information, range, distribution in New England, and for many of the species, a portrait by Fuertes. Some of the natural history information in the volume can make readers a bit nostalgic and sometimes a little sad, as I was when I looked at the paintings of extinct species such as the Heath Hen and Passenger Pigeon. Thinking that he was looking at the actual birds as he painted, I felt a mere one degree of separation from the artist, as if Fuertes linked viewer, bird, and a Massachusetts from almost 100 years ago.

As I wandered around the exhibit, I could tell I wasn’t the only one awed by these paintings. Along with his technical accuracy there is something about the way Fuertes depicted his birds that makes their personalities shine. I am guessing that it was the result of extensive field observation, long before the days of Internet image searches and Photoshop. The paintings also act as an interesting counterpoint to John James Audubon’s more dramatically-posed subjects; Fuertes’s birds are quieter, yet if you look them in the eye, they seem to stare back at you. This is particularly true of his raptors.



Photograph of Fuertes painting by the author

Many years ago, the prints alone were enough to draw me in, but it stunned me to see the original paintings up close and personal. Because these watercolor paintings have been archived in the dark, the colors are brilliant. They look as if they were painted yesterday. And speaking of watercolor, I asked a person next to me if he thought Fuertes might be using gouache (opaque watercolor). That person turned out to be none other than our modern-day Fuertes, David Sibley. How could the night have been any better?

This brief showing left me wanting more. It also left me with a feeling of gratitude that, because they are not on permanent public display, the paintings are safely preserved at the Massachusetts State Archives. 🐦

Nancy Walker is active in local land preservation and serves as secretary of BTA/BOLT, Inc., the land trust in her hometown of Boxford. She also loves bird art and is addicted to collecting field guides of all sorts. When not out birding with her husband Tim, whom she met on a BBC shorebird walk, she is sketching, hiking local trails, or substitute teaching.

TWENTY YEARS AGO IN *BIRD OBSERVER*

THE WILD TURKEY: AN UPDATE

by James E. Cardoza

Wild Turkeys (*Meleagris gallopavo*) are uniquely American birds, native to North America from Mexico north through the central and eastern United States to southern Canada. Five subspecies of Wild Turkey are recognized. The Ocellated Turkey (*Agriocharis ocellata*) is found in Central America. Our domesticated turkeys are derived from birds raised by the Incas and other Mesoamerican natives and subsequently brought to Europe by the Spanish conquistadors circa 1524 (Schorger 1966). The appellation "turkey" probably results from confounding the Wild Turkey with peafowl, which were erroneously associated with the Turkish empire.

Turkeys were abundant in the pre-settlement hardwood forests of eastern North America, from the Gulf states to southern New England. In Massachusetts they were probably found throughout the state except on Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket and in the higher areas of the Berkshire and Hoosac ranges, where spruce-fir stands predominated. Based on a potential habitat of 7600 square miles and an estimated density of five turkeys per square mile, Massachusetts may have had as many as 38,000 turkeys around 1600.

Several writers (Forbush 1912; Wright 1915; Allen 1921) have reviewed the historical accounts for Wild Turkey in New England and discussed the turkey's decline and eventual extirpation in the late 1800s. Widespread habitat changes resulting from land-clearing were probably the primary factor in the turkey's extirpation (Miller and Sherro 1987).

Despite its absence, interest in the Wild Turkey remained high among sportsmen and general naturalists, and between 1911 and 1967 at least nine attempts in five counties were undertaken to restore turkeys to Massachusetts (Cardoza 1983). Eight failed, and one (in the Quabbin Reservation area) resulted in a marginal population estimated at fifty to sixty birds and inhabiting less than forty-two square miles twenty years after their release.

In consultation with biologists from other eastern states, the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) began a vigorous effort in the early 1970s to obtain suitable wild stock and to restore this native bird to Massachusetts. DFW staff evaluated brood and wintering habitat, climatic conditions, food availability, and other parameters important to the needs of the Wild Turkey. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation subsequently extended hearty cooperation and agreed to provide wild-trapped turkeys in the interest of regional restoration efforts. In 1972-1973 my assistants and I traveled to Allegany State Park in western New York on three occasions and trapped thirty-eight turkeys (fifteen males, seventeen females, and six young of unknown sex). These birds were released in Beartown State Forest in

southern Berkshire County between March 1972 and September 1973.

Initially the turkey population did not appear to increase, perhaps because of the paucity of hens in the 1972 and 1973 spring releases. From 1972-1974 turkeys were reported only in Beartown State Forest and its immediate periphery. From 1974-1976, however, the success of the release became apparent. Turkeys were now found in most of southern Berkshire County and were expanding their range (Cardoza 1977). Brood counts were high, and public excitement began to grow. Then, from 1976-1978, turkeys were reported in most of Berkshire County, except for the very high elevations, and in adjacent parts of Franklin and Hampden counties. This range expansion was bolstered by nearby releases in New York and Vermont, from which birds moved east and south into Massachusetts. Simultaneously, some of the Massachusetts birds moved into Connecticut. By 1978, we were confident that this restoration effort had been a success, with an estimated fall population of one thousand birds.

Although turkey populations can expand rapidly on their periphery in suitable habitat, the birds are nonmigratory, and range expansion can be stymied by barriers such as urban complexes, major waterways, or large tracts of open land. Thus, in order to expedite the restoration of the Wild Turkey to all suitable habitat in the state, the DFW began live-trapping and transplanting turkeys from the Berkshires to more eastward sites in 1978. About twenty to twenty-four birds (two-thirds female and one-third male) were placed at a single release site, sometimes in two to three bunches over the course of a winter.

Trapping is done during January to March using a rocket-propelled net modified to shoot out of a box. Snowy conditions facilitate trapping because the birds are hungry and readily come to the bait. Cooperative farmers and landowners inform DFW staff when they see large flocks of turkeys. Technicians then set out bait stations and a dummy rocket net box. When turkeys are consuming the bait regularly, the trapping crew sets up the real net box in the early morning hours. Once the equipment is set up, the wait begins. The wait can be long, tiring, chilly, and frustrating. I have waited as little as fifteen minutes and as long as nine hours for turkeys to arrive. Sometimes, they dash to the bait as soon as they come off roost, while at other times they do not show at all or perhaps they sit at the field's edge, pecking sporadically along hedgerows. Sometimes, as many as eighty to one hundred birds have been in sight, while only a handful seek the bait, only to leave and be replaced by other birds. A dozen or twenty birds on bait is excellent; too few are not worth the effort, and too many present a chance of injury. Patience and caution are warranted. If all goes well, when birds are clustered on the bait and are feeding head-down, the rocket-propelled net thrusts up and over the startled turkeys. The trapper rapidly disentangles the birds from the net and places them in darkened, padded crates. Returning to a barn or garage, the birds are examined, banded, and their sex and age determined. Placed back in their crates, they are usually

transported and released the following day. A capture-and-handling protocol (Cardoza 1991) details the methods for accomplishing the transplant while minimizing effects on the birds.

Since 1978 the DFW has captured 558 turkeys and released 479 (most of the remaining turkeys were released at the capture site) at sites in Barnstable (1), Bristol (2), Dukes (1), Essex (2), Franklin (2), Hampden (1), Hampshire (2), Middlesex (3), Plymouth (2), and Worcester (6) counties (number of sites in parentheses). Release sites usually comprise large tracts of hardwood or mixed forest and are normally on public land, such as state forests or wildlife management areas. The transplants have been highly successful. West of the Connecticut River, turkeys are found in every town except the immediate environs of Springfield. Between the Connecticut River and the eastern boundary of Worcester County, turkeys are found everywhere except the immediate vicinity of Worcester and parts of southeastern Worcester County. East of Worcester County, the range is more fragmented, and turkey populations are not and will not be contiguous. While the birds are doing well at the release sites, their ability to pioneer into new habitats is limited both by anthropogenic barriers and by direct human influence. It can be difficult to estimate the size of wildlife populations, and turkeys are no different from deer or grouse in this regard. However, using a simple population model incorporating both known and estimated variables, a fall population of 8000-10,000 turkeys in the five western counties is reasonable.

In conjunction with the DFW, a graduate student from the University of Massachusetts investigated Wild Turkeys in central Berkshire County from 1983-1985. Using radiotelemetry, he determined that the mortality rate for turkeys in Massachusetts was relatively low for a northern population (Vander Haegen et al. 1988). Ninety-three percent of the turkeys survived during the winters because of favorable weather conditions during the study period and an abundant food supply. The nesting rate was ninety-two percent, and fifty-five percent of nesting hens produced broods. Poults survival through summer was twenty-three percent, and recruitment of young females into the fall population was 0.59 per female in the breeding population. These natality and recruitment rates were similar to those in a New York population believed to be at carrying capacity. Predation exhibited the greatest influence on productivity (Vander Haegen et al. 1988), accounting for ninety-two percent of nest losses.

Despite the northerly location of Massachusetts and periodic harsh winters, turkeys have been able to flourish in the state. Telemetry studies (Vander Haegen et al. 1989) indicated that turkeys spent fifty-four percent of their daytime activity in croplands and pastures. During deep snow periods, turkeys limited their movements to less than twenty hectares, used coniferous stands and adjacent farmland, and fed largely on manure spreads. Similarly, critical periods of the breeding cycle were associated with agricultural practices (Vander

Haegen et al. 1991). Most first nests (seventy-six percent) were in forested habitat with an understory of stems and slash. Renests, however, were likely in either forested or open habitats. Broods preferred croplands and old fields during the early brood period and mixed hardwood/softwood stands later. Cropland was used more than any other habitat during both brood periods. Thus, agricultural practices, particularly those associated with dairy farms, are important to turkeys in Massachusetts, and the decline of these farms may adversely affect local turkey populations (Vander Haegen et al. 1991).

Despite their poor track record and their virtual abandonment by conservation agencies, pen-raised or "game-farm" Wild Turkeys are still coveted by some individuals. These birds are physically similar to, but behaviorally different from, wild birds. Sometimes, the incentive is to release these birds on private game preserves for hunting, while in other instances the birds are liberated (often illegally) with the intent of establishing wild flocks. The inimical effects of these semi-wild birds have been reviewed by Rusz (1987). In addition to potential disease implications (Schorr et al. 1988), game-farm turkeys may inhibit the genetic vigor of wild populations, detract resources from wild-trapped restoration efforts, and may be just plain nuisances. Game-farm wild turkeys are subject to the fisheries and wildlife laws in Massachusetts, and they may not be imported, possessed, sold, or liberated without a permit. Such permits are rarely granted except for scientific or educational purposes. Violations are investigated by the environmental police, and illegally held birds are subject to confiscation.

The Wild Turkey's success is not limited to Massachusetts. In 1942 the bird was found only in twenty-one states and was in "critical condition" in much of its occupied range (Mosby and Handley 1943). By 1952 there were only about 320,000 turkeys nationwide (Mosby 1974). Subsequently, conservation efforts brightened the picture. By 1974 there were 1.3 million turkeys (Mosby 1974), increasing to about 3.6 million in 1989 (National Wild Turkey Federation 1992). Turkeys are now found in forty-nine of the fifty states (Alaska excepted), well beyond the limits of their ancestral range. Thirty-nine states sustained a turkey hunting season in 1974; now all forty-nine states do so. In Massachusetts a permit-only spring hunting season has been allowed since 1980, with harvest trends following the growth of the overall population. Despite high interest, the turkey is a challenging prey: only six to eight percent of Massachusetts hunters enjoy a Wild Turkey dinner.

The Massachusetts legislature chose the Wild Turkey in 1991 as the "state game bird," and Governor William Weld proclaimed November 18, 1992, as "eastern Wild Turkey in Massachusetts Day." Yet, turkeys hardly appeal only to the sportsman. The turkey was a strong contender for "state bird" in 1941 (Anonymous 1940), despite its long absence from the state. In a recent survey of 1500 New England residents (Stevens et al. 1990), over eighty-one percent of

respondents ranked the existence of the Wild Turkey as "very" or "somewhat" important. The respondents were also asked questions about their willingness to pay for programs or activities concerning Wild Turkeys. Extrapolating from these responses, the aggregate "existence value" of turkeys to New Englanders was estimated as \$85.7 million annually.

Restoration of the bird to all suitable habitats in the United States is projected to occur by the year 2000, and populations are healthy and abundant throughout the bird's range. What next for the turkey? Can we afford to be complacent? Several questions remain to be answered, and several needs have been identified (Healy 1990; Dickson 1992): 1) synthesize habitat use, home range, and movement data into a generalized habitat theory that can form the basis of management-oriented models to evaluate the usefulness of habitats; 2) institute long-term, large-scale studies of turkey population dynamics; 3) further define the relationship of turkeys with their environment; 4) refine our knowledge of the role of disease, predation, and population genetics as affecting turkey population dynamics; 5) develop broad-scale, consistent means for censusing or monitoring trends in turkey populations; 6) emphasize safe, quality hunting rather than maximum sustained yield; and 7) effectively communicate environmental awareness and resource goals to the public.

Turkeys have long been touted as the "noblest" game bird, wary, keen-eyed, and exotically alluring. Among artists, Audubon strongly admired the turkey, and his "Great American Cock" was the first (and now most valuable) of his famed *Birds of America*. Aside from its recreational value, the Wild Turkey holds a cherished place in the American mythos. Roast turkey is the centerpiece of our Thanksgiving feast, yet turkey was only a passing component of the 1621 Pilgrim harvest festival (Bradford 1908), and Thanksgiving itself was not a national holiday until about 1863. Ben Franklin putatively recommended the turkey as our National Bird, an apocryphal story at best (Tuleja 1987), despite the bourbon ads. Conversely, we deride slow, buffoonish characters or useless artifacts as "turkeys." Turkeys are part of our natural heritage, and we must continue to ensure the Wild Turkey's survival.

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JAMES E. CARDOZA has been a wildlife biologist with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife since 1969. Among other duties, he is the project leader for the Division's Wild Turkey and black bear studies. He has a B.S. and M.S. from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. This article is a contribution of Massachusetts Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project W-35-R. Jim would like to thank R.D. Deblinger for his review and comments.

Decoys, Pelagic Birding and Hope

The Birding Community E-Bulletin

For the past several years, going back to 2006, a wayward Red-billed Tropicbird has been reported around the area of Seal Island, Maine. This individual is a good example of rare birds returning to the same site in multiple years.

<<http://refugeassociation.org/?p=7904/#tip>>

It's gotten so that with a little bit of planning in advance, birders can visit the area around Seal Island in summer to see this beautiful seabird, a species normally found in tropical waters.

Keith Mueller, of Killingworth, Connecticut, did just that in the summer of 2012.

Keith is a birder, but also a creative artist, sculptor, and decoy carver. In the summer of 2012 he and his wife, Jen, went to Seal Island and traveled with John Drury, who runs seabird cruises in the area. The trip also affords a fine opportunity to look for Razorbills, Atlantic Puffins, Arctic Terns, Black Guillemots, and much more. In 2012, Keith Mueller actually attracted the area's star to John Drury's boat, the Red-billed Tropicbird, by using a tropicbird decoy that he had carved.

As a thank-you to John Drury, Keith carefully carved another Red-billed Tropicbird, made of Eastern White Pine from Maine, and sent it to John. The Red-billed Tropicbird had already departed the area of Seal Island last year, but this past July John floated the decoy ... with fantastic results.

This past summer, Keith received a message and photos from John. Not only was the Red-billed Tropicbird attracted to the lovely decoy, it "defended" her from possible rivals... and attempted to mate with the wooden gal. See the whole amazing story here:

<<http://coastalbirds2.blogspot.com/2010/07/a-tale-of-two-red-billed-tropicbirds.html>>

This is clearly almost an example of "Where there's a will, there's a way!"

FIELD NOTES

Play Behavior by Black Vultures?

William E. Davis, Jr.

Play, including practice foraging or aggression, has been reported for at least 14 orders of birds (Fagen 1981). Many immature birds have been reported performing behaviors described as play or practice that mimic adult behaviors, much as kittens tumbling and biting mimics fighting and prey capture in adult cats. For example, an immature Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) was observed mimicking prey capture on inanimate objects (Davis 2001). Many species of juvenile woodpeckers have been observed playing, which may help develop and practice skills essential for survival as adults (Kilham 1974).

On March 2, 2013, about 4 p.m., I was watching birds along Anhinga Trail in Everglades National Park, South Florida. Where the trail dead-ends, a platform overlooks a muddy low bank adjacent to a pond. There were numerous American alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*), wading birds, and Black Vultures (*Coragyps atratus*) on the mud and in adjacent shallow pools of water. Eight to ten Black Vultures occupied the muddy area, picking up short sticks and dropping them and tugging at plant roots. There was considerable aggressive behavior among the vultures with chases involving hopping and sometimes flights—it was a dynamic situation.

My attention was drawn to two immature Black Vultures. One with wrinkled, gray head skin that was still developing stands behind an adult in the foreground in Figure 1. A second one with smooth black head skin is in the foreground in Figure 2. The birds were standing near the snout of an alligator that I estimated to be 11 feet long. The immature birds took turns crouching and slinking forward to within a foot of the alligator's snout and, with a forward lunge of their heads, grabbing a stick and retreating. Figure 1 shows one of the immature birds in a crouch, and Figure 2 shows the same bird as it pulled back the stick after a successful strike. On several occasions the crouched bird leaped back without grabbing at a stick, suggesting that the bird was well aware of the danger its game entailed. The alligator had its eyes at least partially open the entire time, and eventually got up and walked into the water and swam away.

Why did the immature vultures indulge in this hazardous behavior? It might be that they smelled food emanating from the alligator's mouth, but this seems unlikely, because Black Vultures, unlike Turkey Vultures, do not locate carrion by a sense of smell; their brain has less well-developed olfactory bulbs (Buckley 1999). It is tempting to speculate that the two immature vultures were playing chicken, trying to outdo each other in hazardous play, but other explanations are more substantive biologically. For example, Black Vultures commonly engage in aggressive behavior at carcasses where adults are dominant, and sub-adults are dominant over juveniles. Further, aggression tends to be directed against non-kin individuals (Buckley 1999). The feeding of Black Vultures at a carcass includes picking up scraps near the carcass,



Figure 1. Photograph by the author.



Figure 2. Photograph by the author.

picking scraps from the carcass, and pulling out tissues and viscera, all of which, in competition with non-kin birds, may elicit aggression. Certainly an immature Black Vulture at a carcass with non-kin birds is at risk of aggression as it attempts to feed, and the kind of behavior I witnessed might serve birds well as they compete for food as young and later as individual adults. I suggest that the daredevil behavior of the two immature Black Vultures is best described as practice foraging and therefore play. 🦅

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Ted Davis would like to thank John Kricher for helpful comments on the manuscript.

Immature Double-crested Cormorant Fails to Ingest Fish

William E. Davis, Jr.

On March 2, 2013, at 4:25 p.m., along Anhinga Trail at Everglades National Park, South Florida, I approached a group of about 15 people who were watching an immature Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) standing on the paved path attempting to eat an approximately ten-inch walking catfish (*Clarias betrachus*) that it had captured in the adjoining water-filled ditch. I enquired how long the cormorant had been working on the fish and was told about 20 minutes.

The cormorant was pale on the breast and behind the bill, which identified it as an immature bird (Figure 1). The bird repeatedly mandibulated (chewed) the fish, usually grasping it just behind the head in the vicinity of the pectoral fins and associated lateral pectoral spines (Figures 1-2). The rigid, inch-long spines protrude and make it difficult or impossible for a piscivorous bird to swallow the catfish (e.g., Davis 2006, 2011). The cormorant continued to work the fish and every few minutes attempted to swallow the fish but failed because of the protruding spines (Figure 3). During the entire process, three Black Vultures (*Coragyps atratus*) lurked nearby. When the cormorant moved with its fish over to the grass beside the path, one of the vultures approached the cormorant from behind in an apparent kleptoparasitism attempt. The cormorant defended its fish against this and several other vulture advances by bill jabbing and usually a coarse croak. Kleptoparasitism by Black Vulture is common at this location (Davis 2011) but was not reported in the Bird of North America account (Hatch and Weseloh 1999).

I continued to watch the cormorant with its fish and the attendant vultures intermittently until 5:00 p.m., when I left the cormorant standing on the grass over its fish, guarding it with bill jabs at the persistent vultures. If I arrived 20 minutes after



Figure 1 showing an immature Double-crested Cormorant grasping a walking catfish. Photograph by the author.



Figures 2 and 3 showing an immature Double-crested Cormorant grasping and attempting to ingest a walking catfish. Photographs by the author.

the cormorant brought the fish ashore and the bird continued to defend its fish after I left, then the immature bird spent more than an hour expending a great deal of energy in fish processing and defense. Even if the cormorant eventually were able to swallow the fish, it would prove to be an energetically expensive meal. I doubt that it succeeded in swallowing the fish because it did not appear able to break the pectoral spines that would enable ingestion.

I have watched similar situations with an adult cormorant along Anhinga Trail (Davis 2011) and an adult Great Egret (*Ardea alba*) (Davis 2006). In both cases, the adult birds were able to swallow their fish (approximately the same size as the fish of the juvenile cormorant) in more than 4 and 15 minutes respectively—still considerable processing times. The adult birds were able to swallow their fish eventually because they grasped the fish by their pectoral spines and shook the fish, breaking the spines at the base and rendering them harmless. The immature cormorant did not succeed in breaking the spines and thus was not able to swallow its fish.

The first-year survival rate of Double-crested Cormorants is estimated at 0.48, second-year at 0.74, and subsequent years at 0.85 (Hatch and Weseloh 1999). I speculate that the inability of immature birds to perform sophisticated foraging and prey-handling maneuvers (which may have a learned component) or the quick abandonment of prey that they cannot process may contribute to the substantially lower survival rates of juvenile and immature birds of this species. 🐦

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Ted Davis would like to thank John Kricher for helpful comments on the manuscript.



MERLIN BY PETER W. OEHLKERS

ABOUT BOOKS

Going, Going . . . Gone! And Really Long Gone

Mark Lynch

The Kingdom of Rarities. Eric Dinerstein. 2013. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.

The World's Rarest Birds. Erik Hirschfeld, Andy Swash, and Robert Still. 2013. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Extinct Birds. Julian P. Hume and Michael Walters. 2012. London, Great Britain: T & AD Poyser.

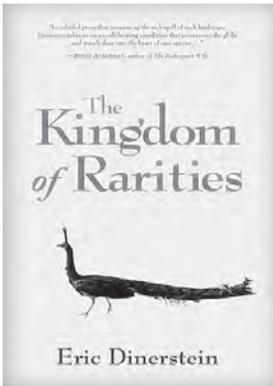
A Field Guide to Mesozoic Birds and other Winged Dinosaurs. Matthew P. Martyniuk. 2012. Vernon, New Jersey: Pan Aves.

“Don’t for heaven’s sake, say ‘rare.’ A bird is only rare if it was ‘reported over Sheppey in 1908 and one shot by Colonel Estrup in 1884.’ No, the rare birds you are looking for, such as the bearded tit, are either ‘infrequent’ or ‘local.’” (Stephen Potter, *One-upmanship*, p. 118)

All birders dream of seeing a rarity. Either a locally rare species, or a species that is rare globally. The search for a rarity is what drives many birders’ trips around the state and the world. We search through umpteen Semipalmated Sandpipers in the hopes of eventually finding that Little Stint. The Holy Grail experience would be re-discovering a species formerly thought to be extinct. It is no surprise, therefore, that books about rarities and extinct species hold a special fascination for birders. When you think about it, these books are real “bummers” (in the ’60s sense). They are grim reminders of what has been lost and how many species are probably about to be lost. They are the ultimate depressing read for a birder. But despite all evidence to the contrary, we still hold onto the slim hope that some rare population will be saved or some species formerly thought to be extinct will be rediscovered. And then, of course, we can hop on a plane and go tick it. Below are four unique books about rarity and extinction.

“Rarity is not just a condition of nature; it is a condition that can be—and has been—imposed on species by human activity.” (*The Kingdom of Rarities*, p. 6)

Why are some species rare whereas others are common? The answers are not as obvious as you might think. Eric Dinerstein is the Chief Scientist for the World Wildlife Fund, and he has spent 25 years working to save rare species around the world. His new book, *The Kingdom of Rarities*, is a marvelous travelogue to the home habitats of some of the planet’s rarest species and a serious investigation into the mechanisms of rarity. This is critically important, because we need to know what species are at the greatest risk of becoming the next Dodo. Tragically, we cannot save all species, so which species need to be saved first?



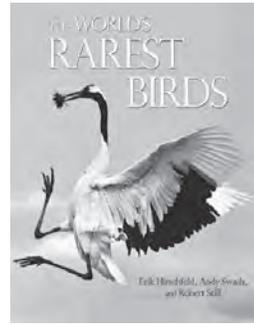
Dinerstein travels to some fairly remote locations to spend time with field researchers and scientists tackling the complex problems involved in trying to “save” a species from extinction. Each location features a species that highlights some of the reasons why species are rare. In the remote Foja Mountains of New Guinea and the southeastern Peruvian Amazon there are species of birds and mammals that are rare because they occur at low densities over a large geographical range. Historically they may have always occurred at low densities, but as choice habitat begins to shrink, the challenges of preserving such species are enormous.

Other species, like the Kirtland’s Warbler in Michigan, are examples of extreme habitat specialization and fidelity. Once that unique habitat becomes reduced in size, that species becomes rare because it has nowhere else to go. Large mammals, like the greater one-horned Asian rhinoceros, have a long-standing ecological role in their habitats. The Indian rhinos are closely linked to the dispersal and growth of *Trewia* trees, the seeds of which pass through their gut and are excreted before they germinate. If the numbers of large herbivores are reduced critically, the entire plant ecology of the forest in which that mammal lives may change. The increasing rarity of a single large species in a habitat can have a domino effect on overall species diversity there.

Human activities, especially “Big Ag,” i.e., industrialized agriculture, can have devastating effects on populations of animals. Dinerstein looks at diminishing populations of the giant anteater, the giant armadillo, and the maned wolf in Brazil’s Cerrado. This unique grasslands habitat is being carved up for soy plantations and cattle ranches. Some species are adapting to this new matrix of wild and cultivated land, but others are not.

Dinerstein even looks at the effects of war on animal and bird populations in Cambodia and Viet Nam. Every place Dinerstein visits presents a different set of challenges for the researchers there, and the reader develops a deep respect for these tireless field scientists. The positive takeaway in every chapter of *The Kingdom of Rarities* is that at least there are people looking into the problems facing these particular rare species. It’s not completely hopeless... yet. Yes we are facing what James Estes and John Terborgh have termed the “the trophic downgrading of planet Earth” (p. 77), but this doesn’t have to occur. *The Kingdom of Rarities* ends with Dinerstein’s rapturous account of a two-week visit to the Kingdom of Bhutan in the Himalayas. Partly because it is a Buddhist country with a deep spiritual reverence for life and partly because it has resisted unbridled development, Bhutan is truly a Shangri-La of rare species, and there is still a lot of habitat for thriving populations of unique species. Dinerstein relishes every moment he has in the field there. After finishing the wonderful *Kingdom of Rarities*, don’t be surprised if you find yourself looking into birding trips to this land of the yeti.

“Let the birds speak for themselves.” (*The World's Rarest Birds*, p.5)



The World's Rarest Birds is a beautiful, sumptuous, colorful, and well-designed coffee table book about a depressing subject. This is a large format popular version of the smaller *Rare Bird Yearbooks* that are supported by BirdLife International, the global partnership of conservation organizations that act as a watchdog over bird species in trouble. *The World's Rarest Birds* is profusely illustrated with state of the art photography of most of the world's rare bird species and also has numerous maps and charts. Thorough species accounts are listed according to geographical regions. Each account contains an estimate of the population at the time of the publication of the book, a small map, an account of why the species is rare and what, if anything, is being done about preserving the species. To sum up the bad news, 197 species of birds are considered “Critically Endangered,” with an additional 389 species listed as “Endangered.” Sixty species are “data deficient” or “poorly known.” This means we don't even know if these species are still extant. An additional four species exist only in captivity. *The World's Rarest Birds* is like a Zagat's of avian misfortune.

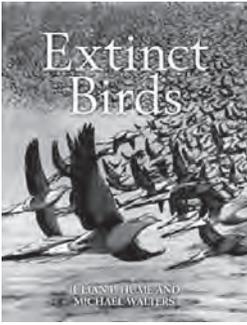
The introductory sections of *The World's Rarest Birds* are wonderful, with features like maps of the distribution of Important Bird Areas and Endemic Bird Areas. There are well written sections on each of the major threats that birds face. This list is sobering and exhaustive and includes: agriculture and aquiculture, logging and plant harvesting, invasives, hunting and trapping, commercial and residential development, fire and fire management, climate change, geological events, human disturbance, pollution, transport and infrastructure, energy production and mining, dams and water abstraction, and commercial fishing. After finishing these depressing sections, the reader will likely feel like re-reading the chapter on Bhutan in *The Kingdom of Rarities* for solace and a tiny ray of hope.

In the appendix there is a complete list of extinct species and a list of globally threatened bird families.

The World's Rarest Birds is an important and engaging book that will appeal to hardcore birders as well as anyone concerned about biodiversity.

“Life on our planet has been a constant series of cataclysmic events, and we are more suitable for extinction than a trilobite or a reptile. So we will vanish. There's no doubt in my heart.” (Werner Herzog, film director.)

Extinct Birds is not a lavish book like *The World's Rarest Birds*. It has no color photography and only an occasional black and white line drawing. Yet it is a fascinating accounting of every bird species that has become extinct in human historical times. The listing is in taxonomic order and each account contains information on what is known about the species, what its range was, why it became extinct and what collections have



specimens. This makes for interesting reading of course, but *Extinct Birds* doesn't stop there.

There is also a complete accounting of "Data Deficient Taxa" and "Doubtful and Invalid Taxa." Every species in these two sections tells a story of the great age of biological collecting and observation and the fate of both. Some birds are known only from vague or poor descriptions, so the exact bird species described remains uncertain. Or the specimens were lost. One wonders in these cases, could these specimens ever be re-discovered or have they been obliterated in some war or natural disaster? In some cases

there is a specimen, but not enough evidence to indicate that it belongs to a unique species. Under Burnaby's Megapode (*Megapodius burnabyi*) we read, "may represent a now-extinct species, at present best regarded as *nomen dubium*, mainly because the holotypical specimens (eggs only) lack determinable characteristics." (p. 360). "*Nomen dubium*" is a phrase with a bit of history itself. Currently the term is defined by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature as a name of unknown or doubtful application.

Some species have been relegated to a "mere" subspecies or determined to be color variations or hybrids. But some cases are unique. The Superb Pheasant (*Phasianus superbus*) is listed as an invalid taxon because it was "known only from Linnaeus's description, which he took from a depiction on a Chinese dish. Perhaps a fabulous bird, a phoenix or some kind of domestic fowl." (p. 361). A dish? Really? My opinion of Linnaeus dropped a few notches after reading that.

There is also a wonderful series of short accounts of "Rediscovered Taxa." These are species that were thought extinct but after many years were happily found to still be alive, if not always thriving. Sadly, this list is short, but it does offer a slender thread of hope for other species.

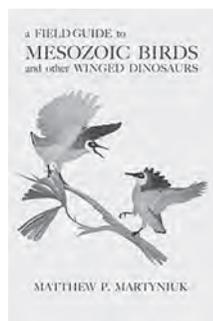
Extinct Birds is a wonderful, thorough if somewhat technical annotated list of all the unique species we have lost, almost never to be seen again. Let's hope that list does not grow.

"In the landscape of extinction, precision is next to godliness." (Samuel Beckett, playwright, novelist, theatre director, and poet.)

A Field Guide to Mesozoic Birds and Other Winged Dinosaurs may be the only "feel good" book about avian extinction because, for once, humans had nothing to do with the fate of these bird and "sort of bird" species.

When we were kids, we learned of the marvelous and detailed fossil *Archaeopteryx* and believed that was the missing link between birds and dinosaurs, and that was the end of the story. Case closed. But for decades now, the topic of avian evolution and birds' taxonomic relationships with dinosaurs has been a hotly debated topic. This debate is still contentious and the beginning chapters of *A Field Guide to Mesozoic*

Birds are not likely to settle it, but this interesting book does summarize some of the critical issues. In recent decades, there have been many new fossil discoveries of feathered birds/dinosaurs particularly in places like the Daohugou Beds and Tiaojishan Formations in China. These fossils are giving us a fuller and more complex picture of avian evolution than we learned as kids gazing at those pictures of *Archaeopteryx*. There are now enough bird and proto-bird fossils known to fill a field guide. But which fossil can be considered “a true bird” is not a simple question. There are now many in-between forms, and it is hard to draw a clean line between where the dinosaur ends and the bird begins. Ah, evolution!



“So what is a bird? As a vernacular rather than scientific term, this is a matter of loose convention rather than scientific precision.” (*A Field Guide to Mesozoic Birds*, p.11)

The evolution of feathers is another one of those contentious concepts, and feathers appeared long before flight or birds. I was surprised at the plumages shown in *A Field Guide to Mesozoic Birds*. Certainly there is a lot of guesswork, but some research is being done on determining feather color of these creatures. Scientists like Jakob Vinther are trying to puzzle out the life coloration of prehistoric birds.

In conclusion, Mesozoic birds would have taken their coloration predominantly from melanin and iridescent structural coloration. This would have resulted in a bird fauna possibly more drab overall than the ones we see around us today, due to the comparative lack of neoavians and their ability to color their feathers with carotenoids. However, like modern ducks, these birds would still have been able to create intricate and dazzling displays of color and pattern using combinations of earth-toned melanins (muted yellow, rusty red, dark grey and off-white) as well as layering of iridescence to create striking, jewel-like feathers in blue, green, purple, and glossy black and white. While they wouldn't have the pinks of flamingos or the bright greens and yellows of bird-of-paradise, Mesozoic birds may have been just as beautiful. (p.51)

The Mesozoic “birds” illustrated in this guide begin with Basal Caenagnathiformes (starting c. 124.5 million years ago [mya]) and ending with the Hesperornitheans (80–78 mya). Their forms are certainly strange and a marvel to see reconstructed. Many of the earlier species look like a crazy cross between a tinamou and a bipedal dinosaur. Many are toothed and don't have beaks like modern bird species. Many have long feathered tails or crazy looking casques. Though most were small creatures, at least one species, *Gigantoraptor erliaensis* was huge and weighed 1.4 tons. That's a lot of bird. Each species has a complete description, details of where the fossil was found, a color illustration, and a silhouette comparison to a human to better show size. Because many of the common names listed are derived from the “scientific names,” there are species

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with names like the Amber-loving Opposite Phoenix, Soundly Sleeping Dragon, Ostrom's Menace-from-the-Clouds Bird, and Rare Hand Lizard. Contemporary bird names like "hoopoe" and "pewee" start to sound positively minimal after reading *A Field Guide to Mesozoic Birds*.

Is this a useful field guide? Not unless you have a time machine. But it is a wonderful way to encounter the newest discoveries in the complex evolution of birds. Put on some music by Birdsongs of the Mesozoic (look them up!) and settle in for some wild birding. 

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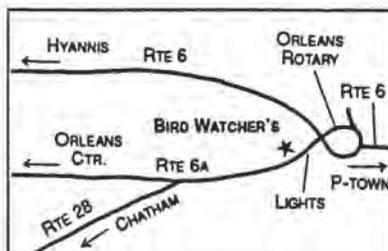
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BIRD SIGHTINGS

May/June 2013

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

May temperatures averaged 58.8°, only a degree above normal and nearly 2° below last May's. The high was 94° on May 31; on May 5 the low was 40°. Rainfall in Boston measured 3.22 inches, 0.27 of an inch below the average. Migration was slow for the first 9 days of May, but on the evening of May 9 radar images showed movement to our south with huge numbers of birds departing from the mid Atlantic areas. On May 10 birds arrived in a big way especially at the coast. On this day Manomet banded 109 Gray Catbirds, and birders on Plum Island reported 60 Black-throated Blue Warblers.

June 2013 was warm and wet. The temperature averaged 70° in Boston; 2° warmer than average. There were four days that reached 90° or better with a high of 95° on June 24. There were 17 days with some precipitation for a total of 10.5 inches of rain in Boston, 6.82 inches more than normal. The most in any one day was 3.07 inches on June 7. A powerful thunderstorm swept through our region on June 18 with the heaviest rain occurring around Shrewsbury, which had 2.09 inches of rain and hail measuring about an inch. Several rivers reached flood stage including the rivers around Great Meadows NWR in Concord. The flooding resulted in many reports of marsh birds seeking higher ground.

R. Stymeist

WATERFOWL THROUGH ALCIDS

Snow Geese occasionally linger into early May, but on May 25 an individual in Hadley was exceptionally late. Other late waterfowl included a Eurasian Wigeon in Chatham and King Eiders in Gloucester and Sandwich.

Only modest numbers of pelagic species such as shearwaters and storm-petrels were reported, and few of these were from whale watch-accessible locations such as Stellwagen Bank and Jeffrey's Ledge. There was only one report of Northern Fulmars. **American White Pelicans** were reported from three locations between May 28 and June 1. Since none of the dates overlapped, it is possible that a single bird was moving around.

Censuses of Boston Harbor and Essex County heron rookeries showed stable populations of most species. There were a number of **White-faced Ibis** reports in Essex County in April, but only a single report in May. Last year there were two White-faced Ibises on Kettle Island in Manchester in late May, but this year's census did not reveal any. The island is overgrown, and a brooding adult could have been easily overlooked.

Swallow-tailed Kite is almost annual in southeastern Massachusetts, but rare elsewhere, so reports from two locations in western Massachusetts were noteworthy. Because **Mississippi Kite** is now expected on the outer Cape in spring, reports on seven dates from that location are probably typical.

As little as 20 years ago, Sandhill Cranes were seen barely annually in the state, but sightings are now almost routine. In 2007 they were nesting for the first time in the state in New Marlborough. This year a group of three birds were seen consistently in Worthington, about 25 miles away. Although there was no evidence of breeding, it is possible they were prospecting for a breeding locale.

On May 20 a sharp-eyed observer picked out a **Common Ringed Plover** among the Semipalmated Plovers on Plum Island. She was able to photograph it for confirmation, and many enjoyed the bird for the next three days. This is only the third record for this species in the state and the first spring record. The first was also on Plum Island on September 5, 1990, and the second was on September 10, 2010, on South Beach in Chatham. Two different **Black-necked Stilts** were seen, one at Allens Pond in South Dartmouth, the other on Plum Island. On May 31 an **American Avocet** was reported on private land in Dartmouth.

Not content to rest on her laurels, the observer who discovered the Common Ringed Plover was scoping some “peeps” on June 27 and picked out an interesting shorebird. She thought at first it might be a Sanderling, but then noticed its rear toe: it was a **Red-necked Stint**. Although it only stayed a couple of days, many saw and photographed the bird.

It has been four years since a **Ruff** made an appearance in the state, so an individual in Rowley on May 14–16 was a welcome sight.

A **Franklin’s Gull** was discovered on May 29 at Bolton Flats. The last time this species was seen in the state was in November of 2008 at Plum Island. Apart from the rarity of the species, the inland location was exceptional. The only other inland location in the past 20 years was at Turners Falls in November of 2005. Another nice inland record was of two Caspian Terns in Westboro.

A **South Polar Skua** was seen from Tuckernuck on June 2, and two **Long-tailed Jaegers** were photographed on a pelagic trip out of Chatham on June 23.

M. Rines

Snow Goose				Greater Scaup			
5/23	Hadley	1	S. Surner	5/4	Randolph	5	G. d’Entremont
Brant				5/5	Nantucket	6	V. Laux
5/7	Duxbury B.	200	R. Bowes	5/18	Longmeadow	1	A. & L. Richardson
5/16	P.I.	175	T. Wetmore	6/1	P.I.	1	v.o.
5/17	Magnolia	192	J. Hoye#	King Eider			
5/26	Plymouth B.	24	SSBC (GdE)	5/18	Gloucester	1	J. Hoye#
Wood Duck				5/19	Sandwich	2	J. McCumber
5/18	C. Hampden	50	Allen Club	Common Eider			
5/20	Waltham	31	J. Forbes	5/13	Boston (Gallops I.)	2 nests	C. Trocki#
6/9	GMNWR	21 ad, 16 juv	S. Arena	5/21	Boston (Sheep I.)	2 nests	C. Trocki#
6/23	Upton	36	N. Paulson#	5/28	Salem (Eagle I.)	11 nests	S. Perkins#
Gadwall				Harlequin Duck			
5/29	Turners Falls	1	J. Smith	5/8	Duxbury B.	1 f	R. Bowes
5/6-15	Longmeadow	1	L. Atkinson, v.o.	5/9	Manomet	1	I. Davies
6/19	P.I.	6 ad, 2 juv	MAS (B. Gette)	Surf Scoter			
6/23	Edgartown	1	S. Whiting	5/5	Nantucket	1500	V. Laux
Eurasian Wigeon				6/1	Westport	22	P. Champlin
5/1-3	Chatham	1 f	B. Nikula#	6/16	Chatham (S.B.)	2	B. Nikula
Blue-winged Teal				White-winged Scoter			
5/3	P.I.	2	T. Wetmore	5/18	Nantucket	13,750	J. Trimble
5/10	Cuttyhunk	1	I. Davies#	5/18	Pittsfield (Onota)	1	C. Blagdon
5/22	Westport	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)	6/16	Chatham (S.B.)	3	B. Nikula
5/24	Bolton Flats	1	M. Lynch#	Black Scoter			
5/27	GMNWR	1	S. Arena	5/5	Nantucket	250	V. Laux
5/31	Ware R. IBA	1	M. Lynch#	5/18	Lynn B.	18	R. Stymeist#
Northern Shoveler				5/23	S. Quabbin	1	L. Therrien
5/17	Easthampton	2	D. McLain	6/30	Wellfleet	24	S. Baron
Green-winged Teal				Long-tailed Duck			
5/3	Concord	12	S. Perkins#	5/15	Newbypt	97	J. Berry
5/6	E. Boston (B.I.)	8	P. Peterson	6/16	Chatham (S.B.)	5	B. Nikula
6/10	P.I.	1 f, 5 juv	L. Waters#	6/19	P.I.	1	v.o.
Ring-necked Duck				Bufflehead			
5/2	Winchester	2	J. Kovner#	5/2	Winchester	8	J. Kovner#
5/12	S. Quabbin	1	L. Therrien	5/5	Pembroke	5	BBC (GdE)
5/12	Turners Falls	1	J. Rose	5/9	Waltham	1	J. Forbes
5/13	Waltham	1	J. Forbes	5/15	Pembroke	1	I. Davies

Common Goldeneye				6/27	Jeffrey's L.	40	T. Robben#
5/24	Duxbury	1 m	R. Bowes	6/30	Gloucester	24	P. + F. Vale
Hooded Merganser				6/30	N. Truro	75	B. Nikula
5/10	Plainville	4	J. Fecteau	Leach's Storm-Petrel			
5/18	C. Hampden	12	Allen Club	6/5	Stellwagen	1	B. Nikula#
6/1	Bolton Flats	9	S. Arena#	6/27	Jeffrey's L.	2	T. Robben#
6/9	GMNWR	8 ad, 9 juv	S. Arena	Northern Gannet			
Common Merganser				5/13	Ipswich (C.B.)	160	J. Berry
5/16	Huntington	4	S. Kellogg	5/22	P'town	1300	B. Nikula
5/18	C. Hampden	14	Allen Club	6/15	Eastham (F.E.)	135	B. Nikula
Red-breasted Merganser				Double-crested Cormorant			
5/4	P.I.	125	T. Wetmore	5/9	Medford	136	M. Rines#
5/5	P'town	600	B. Nikula	5/16	Hingham (Sarah)	179 nests	C. Trocki#
6/8	Manomet	12	G. d'Entremont	6/1	Chatham	290	R. Schain
Ruddy Duck				6/30	P'town	400	B. Nikula
5/10	Gloucester (E.P.)	14	D. Brown	Great Cormorant			
5/18	Pembroke	14	G. d'Entremont#	5/5	N. Scituate	25	BBC (GdE)
5/26	Nantucket	15	K. Blackshaw#	6/22	Manomet	1 imm	R. Harris
5/31	Chestnut Hill	4	P. Peterson	6/30	Duxbury B.	1 imm	B. Bowes
Northern Bobwhite				American White Pelican			
5/5	Nantucket	3	V. Laux	5/28	Chilmark	1	P. Gilmore#
5/15	Falmouth	3	G. d'Entremont#	5/30-31	Sharon	1	V. White + v.o.
5/26	Fairhaven	1	C. Longworth	6/1	Stoneham	1	J. Restivo + v.o.
5/28	Orleans	3	C. Goodrich	American Bittern			
Ring-necked Pheasant				6/1	October Mt.	4	B. Zajda#
5/11	Quabog IBA	1	M. Lynch#	6/1	Bolton Flats	4	S. Arena#
5/11	Cuttyhunk	1	I. Davies#	6/2	Shutesbury	2	B. Zajda#
5/17	Westboro	1	C. Nims	6/15	Tyringham	2	Allen Club
6/19	Falmouth	2	O. Burton	Least Bittern			
Ruffed Grouse				5/11	Topsfield	1	J. Berry#
5/5	Concord	1	E. Nielsen#	5/15	IRWS	1	P. Brown
5/18	Wompatuck SP	2	G. d'Entremont	5/19-6/30	GMNWR	8 max	v.o.
5/22	Falmouth	1	G. Hirth#	5/31	P.I.	2	T. Wetmore
6/2	Quabbin (G22)	1	B. Zajda#	6/15-30	Wellfleet	1	S. Broker
6/29	Ware R. IBA	4	M. Lynch#	6/16	Bolton Flats	3	S. Arena#
Red-throated Loon				Great Egret			
5/10	Westport	140	I. Davies#	5/1	Easthampton	2	B. Bieda
5/12	N. Truro	140	B. Nikula	5/14	Manchester (KI)	201 nests	S. Perkins#
5/18	Nantucket	65	J. Trimble	5/16	Hingham (Sarah)	86 nests	C. Trocki#
6/14	P'town	1	B. Nikula	5/21	Boston (Sheep I.)	2 nests	C. Trocki#
Common Loon				5/28	Salem (Eagle I.)	34 nests	S. Perkins#
5/7	N. Truro	116 migr	B. Nikula	Snowy Egret			
5/9	Wachusett Res.	17	M. Lynch#	5/14	Manchester (KI)	167 nests	S. Perkins#
5/25	Southwick	10	S. Kellogg	5/16	Hingham (Sara)	10 nests	C. Trocki#
6/1	Westport	152	P. Champlin	5/21	Boston (Sheep I.)	23 nests	C. Trocki#
6/20	Manomet	18	B. Harris	5/28	Salem (Eagle I.)	8 nests	S. Perkins#
6/23	E. of Chatham	13	B. Nikula#	Little Blue Heron			
Pied-billed Grebe				5/11	Ipswich	1	S. Grinley#
5/4	GMNWR	1	S. Arena	5/14	Manchester (KI)	6 pr	S. Perkins#
5/5	Nantucket	2	V. Laux	5/25	DWWS	1	S. Carey
Red-necked Grebe				6/6-11	Yarmouth	1	E. Hoopes
5/4	Plymouth	2	B. Black	6/18	Quincy	1 ad	R. Schain
5/5	N. Scituate	1	BBC (GdE)	Tricolored Heron			
Northern Fulmar				5/18-6/30	P.I.	1-2	v.o.
5/2	Tillies L.	5	K. Mueller	6/4	Truro	1	C. Harris
Great Shearwater				Cattle Egret			
6/2	Tuckernuck	20	R. Veit	5/12	Ipswich	1	N. Paulson
6/23	E. of Chatham	15	B. Nikula#	5/19	DWWS	1	E. Nielsen
Sooty Shearwater				5/24-25	Bolton Flats	1	B. Kamp + v.o.
5/28	Chatham	400	B. Nikula	6/21	Plymouth	2	G. Harriman
6/2	Tuckernuck	50	R. Veit	Green Heron			
6/14	P'town	11	B. Nikula	5/1	Worcester	3	M. Lynch#
6/15	Eastham (F.E.)	22	B. Nikula#	5/1	Woburn (HP)	3	M. Rines
6/23	E. of Chatham	300	B. Nikula#	5/12	Longmeadow	4 A. & L.	Richardson
Manx Shearwater				5/18	C. Hampden	13	Allen Club
thr	Revere B.	15 max	v.o.	6/1	Bolton Flats	5	S. Arena#
5/22, 6/30	P'town	4, 25	B. Nikula	6/23	W. Newbury	5	S. McGrath#
6/5	Stellwagen	2	B. Nikula#	Black-crowned Night-Heron			
6/15	Eastham (F.E.)	9	B. Nikula#	5/14	Manchester (KI)	46 nests	S. Perkins#
Wilson's Storm-Petrel				5/16	Hingham (Sara)	158 nests	C. Trocki#
6/14, 30	P'town	5, 160	B. Nikula	5/21	Boston (Sheep I.)	44 nests	C. Trocki#

Black-crowned Night-Heron (continued)				6/2	P'town	12	B. Nikula
5/28	Salem (Eagle I.)	83 nests	S. Perkins#	6/9	Little River IBA	8	Allen Club
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron				6/16	October Mt.	5	SSBC (GdE)
5/14	Rowley	1 imm	P. + F. Vale	6/23	Warwick	6	M. Lynch#
6/10	P.I.	1 ad	J. Bourgnat	Clapper Rail			
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (continued)				5/23	Nantucket	1	K. Blackshaw
6/15	Gloucester	2 ad	D. Markowitz	5/23-6/30	Wellfleet	1-3	S. Broker#
6/23	Newbury	1	S. McGrath	6/15	Westport	1	M. Lynch#
Glossy Ibis				6/17	Orleans	1	K. Yakola
5/14	Manchester (KI)	65 nests	S. Perkins#	6/30	Mashpee	2	M. Keleher#
5/15	DWWS	23	G. d'Entremont#	King Rail			
5/16	Hingham (Sara)	2 nests	C. Trocki#	5/4-09	GMNWR	1	v.o.
5/17	Mashpee	11	M. Keleher	5/12	P.I.	1	S. Arena#
5/28	Salem (Eagle I.)	1 nest	S. Perkins#	6/23-30	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	S. Grinley + v.o.
White-faced Ibis				6/30	Mashpee	1	M. Keleher
5/18	Essex	1	L. Pivacek	Virginia Rail			
Black Vulture				5/4	GMNWR	40	S. Arena
5/22	Westport	9	BBC (R. Stymeist)	5/15	W. Bridgewater	17	I. Davies#
5/22	Pittsfield	2	G. Hurley	5/15	Lynnfield	7	BBC (D. Williams)
6/8	Freetown	2	BBC (L. Abbey)	5/25	P.I.	5	R. Schain
6/17	Douglas	2	T. Ryan	6/8	Quabog IBA	8	M. Lynch#
Turkey Vulture				6/16	Bolton Flats	21	S. Arena#
5/thr	Truro	132	Hawkcount (DM)	Sora			
5/18	C. Hampden	39	Allen Club	thr	Reports of indiv. from 9 locations		
5/22	Westport	19	BBC (R. Stymeist)	5/4	GMNWR	4	S. Arena
6/27	Holyoke	100	S. Desrosier	Common Gallinule			
Osprey				5/1-26	DWWS	1	v.o.
6/6	Rowley/Ipswich	35	J. Berry#	5/10	Cuttyhunk	1	I. Davies#
6/15	Westport	16 n	M. Lynch#	6/13	GMNWR	1	S. Arena
Swallow-tailed Kite				6/16	Bolton Flats	4	S. Arena#
5/17	Hatfield	2	P. Allison	American Coot			
6/11	Dalton	1	J. Morris-Siegel	5/2	P.I.	1	J. Berry#
Mississippi Kite				6/5	GMNWR	2	A. Bragg#
5/13, 27	Truro	1, 2	Hawkcount (DM)	6/thr	Jamaica Plain	1	v.o.
5/27	P'town	1 ph	B. Nikula	Sandhill Crane			
6/1	N. Truro	7	J. Trimble#	thr	Worthington	3	v.o.
6/1, 2	P'town	1, 1	B. Nikula	5/2	Bolton Flats	1	J. Glagowski
6/17	Harwich	1	E. Orcutt#	5/17	E. Bridgewater	1	S. Hedman#
Bald Eagle				Black-bellied Plover			
5/11	P.I.	2	Hawkcount (TG)	thr	P.I.	150 max	v.o.
5/18	C. Hampden	13	Allen Club	5/22, 6/23	Duxbury B.	135, 12	R. Bowes
6/5	Medford	2	R. LaFontaine	5/25	P'town	160	B. Nikula
6/30	P'town	2	B. Nikula	5/26	Plymouth B.	104	SSBC (GdE)
Northern Harrier				5/29	GMNWR	41	J. Restivo#
5/8	Duxbury B.	1	R. Bowes	5/29	Quabbin Pk	26	L. Therrien
5/11	W. Springfield	1	S. Desrosier	5/30	Orleans	500	C. Goodrich
5/15	Cumb. Farms	1	I. Davies#	American Golden-Plover			
5/17	E. Boston (B.I.)	1	M. Brogan	5/16	Westport	1	P. Champlin
6/1	Pelham	1	K. Weir	5/25	Chatham (S.B.)	1	B. Harris
6/1	P.I.	2	T. Spahr	5/29	P.I.	1	C. Leahy
6/21	W. Tisbury	1	S. Perkins#	Common Ringed Plover			
Sharp-shinned Hawk				5/20-23	P.I.	1 ph	S. Sullivan + v.o.
5/thr	Truro	34	Hawkcount (DM)	Semipalmated Plover			
5/13	P.I.	26	Hawkcount (TM)	thr	P.I.	50 max	v.o.
6/1	October Mt.	2	B. Zajda#	5/9, 22	Duxbury B.	6, 19	R. Bowes
Cooper's Hawk				5/26	Hadley	1	L. Therrien
5/4	Southbridge	2	M. Lynch#	6/29	Turners Falls	1	J. Smith
5/13	P.I.	6	Hawkcount (TM)	Piping Plover			
Red-shouldered Hawk				5/1	Duxbury B.	7	R. Bowes
5/4	Rehoboth	pr	K. Bartels	5/13	Ipswich (C.B.)	9	J. Berry
5/26	Plymouth B.	2	SSBC (GdE)	5/17	P.I.	17 pr	USFWS
6/1	Lenox	2	B. Zajda#	5/26	Plymouth B.	8	SSBC (GdE)
6/9	Little River IBA	6	Allen Club	American Oystercatcher			
6/16	October Mt.	2	SSBC (GdE)	5/18	Nantucket	6	J. Trimble
6/22	Cheshire	2	M. Lynch#	5/23	Winthrop	7	D. + S. Larson
Broad-winged Hawk				5/28	Salem	4	J. Berry#
5/thr	Truro	177	Hawkcount (DM)	6/8	Chatham	27	R. Schain
5/5	Ware R. IBA	4	M. Lynch#	6/21	Boston (Rainsfd I.)	5	C. Trocki#
6/1-20	N. Truro	45	Hawkcount (DM)	6/21	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	6	P. Champlin

Laughing Gull (continued)				Arctic Tern			
6/30	P'town	200	B. Nikula	5/25	Pittsfield (Pont.)	1	M. Iliff
Franklin's Gull				5/25	S. Monomoy	6	B. Harris
5/29	Bolton Flats	1	J. Lawson#	5/25, 6/11	P.I.	5, 9	Nielsen, Heil
Iceland Gull				5/26	Plymouth B.	1	SSBC (GdE)
5/7	Chestnut Hill	1	M. Iliff	6/5	Nantucket	2	V. Laux
6/2	Tuckernuck	1	R. Veit	6/19	Falmouth	1	O. Burton
6/2	P'town	1	B. Nikula	Forster's Tern			
Iceland Gull (continued)				5/2	Newburyport	1	BBC (D. Williams)
6/14	Salisbury	1	D. Chickering#	5/16	Revere B.	1	P. Peterson
Lesser Black-backed Gull				6/16	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore
5/17	P.I.	2	S. Sullivan	Royal Tern			
5/18, 6/16	Chatham (S.B.)	3, 1	B. Nikula	6/1	N. Truro	1	J. Trimble#
5/19, 6/30	N. Truro	1, 3	B. Nikula	Black Skimmer			
6/21	W. Tisbury	30	S. Perkins#	5/27	Chatham	1	F. Caruso#
6/23	E. of Chatham	2	B. Nikula#	5/30	Chappaquiddick	3	P. Gilmore
6/30	Westport	2	P. Champlin	6/16	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	S. Grinley
6/20				6/20	Plymouth B.	2	J. Johnson
Glaucous Gull				South Polar Skua			
5/18	Chatham (S.B.)	1	B. Nikula	6/2	Tuckernuck	1	R. Veit
Least Tern				Pomarine Jaeger			
5/1, 6/5	Nantucket	2	E. Ray, V. Laux	6/9	Cape Cod Bay	1	v.o.
5/12	Cuttyhunk	36	I. Davies#	Parasitic Jaeger			
5/12, 6/11	P.I.	3, 105	R. Heil	5/9, 6/3	Westport	7, 3	P. Champlin
5/26	Plymouth B.	40	SSBC (GdE)	5/10	Manomet	1	E. Dalton
6/6	Ipswich (C.B.)	80	J. Berry#	5/10	Cuttyhunk	1	I. Davies#
6/21	Boston (Lovells)	75	C. Trocki#	5/22, 6/14	P'town	9, 6	B. Nikula
6/30	Westport	46	P. Champlin	5/24	P.I.	1	D. Bates#
Caspian Tern				6/9	E. of Chatham	1	B. Nikula
5/2	Manomet	1 ad	E. Dalton	6/16	Cape Cod Bay	1	P. Flood#
5/12, 26	P'town	1, 1	Nikula, Harris	Long-tailed Jaeger			
5/17, 6/12	P.I.	3, 1	Sullivan, Riley	6/23	E. of Chatham	2 ph	B. Nikula#
6/23	Nahant	3	L. Pivacek	Common Murre			
6/26	Westboro	2	J. Hoye#	5/2	Tillies L.	3	K. Mueller
Black Tern				5/5	Gloucester H.	1	M. Emmons
5/25	Pittsfield (Pont.)	1	M. Iliff	5/15	Manomet	1	G. d'Entremont#
5/25	Chatham (S.B.)	1	B. Harris	5/18	Revere B.	1	dead C. Johnson
5/28	Nantucket	3	V. Laux	6/15	Eastham (F.E.)	1	B. Nikula
6/15	P'town	3	J. Hoye	Thick-billed Murre			
Roseate Tern				5/12	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	M. Iliff#
5/7	Marion	10	M. Lynch#	5/12	Revere B.	4	G. d'Entremont#
5/12	Cuttyhunk	14	I. Davies#	5/19	P'town	1	B. Nikula
5/16	Newbypt H.	3	P. + F. Vale	Razorbill			
6/14	P'town	30	E. Orcutt	5/2	Tillies L.	11	K. Mueller
6/30	Westport	4	P. Champlin	5/7	Marion	1	M. Lynch#
Common Tern				5/15	Manomet	1	G. d'Entremont#
5/2	Tillies L.	3	K. Mueller	Black Guillemot			
5/12	Cuttyhunk	450	I. Davies#	5/15	Marshfield	1	G. d'Entremont#
5/26	Salisbury	250	P. + F. Vale	5/18	N. Scituate	1	G. d'Entremont#
5/26	Plymouth B.	1000	SSBC (GdE)	6/2	P'town	1	B. Nikula
5/29	Turners Falls	2	J. Smith	6/16	P.I.	1	M. Clegg
6/25	Chatham	1000	R. Heil				



KING EIDER BY SANDY SELESKY

CUCKOOS THROUGH FINCHES

By early May there were several reports of nesting Great Horned Owls with fledged young, and as many as five Barred Owls were noted from Wompatuck State Park. A single Long-eared Owl was observed in Richmond. The **Chuck-will's-widow** returned to Pochet Island in Orleans for the third year in a row, and another Chuck was heard calling in Falmouth. Plum Island seems to have been a stronghold for Whip-poor-wills; a survey there on May 18 yielded 15 birds. The spring nighthawk migration was one of the best in recent years with several areas reporting multiple birds; 55 were counted over Great Meadows on May 28.

Peregrine Falcons continued to have great success in the state, a new pair in Watertown fledged three young, and another new pair nested under the Sagamore Bridge. Other nests were in Boston, Lawrence, and Woburn.

During the first ten days of the month birders lamented the poor migration, but when the weather finally broke on May 10, many areas, especially along the coast, were filled with birds. Trevor Lloyd Evans reported a banner year for the banding operation at the Manomet Center, as his team banded 1,592 new birds. He reported three eventful days: 185 birds on May 10, on May 14 another 209, and on May 30 an astonishing 248 birds, including 16 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, 56 Traill's Flycatchers, and nine Mourning Warblers.

The Allen Bird Club of Springfield conducted its 50th annual census of Hampden County on May 17–18. Twenty-five observers blitzed the county and found excellent numbers of migrants and breeding birds. Highlights included three Olive-sided Flycatchers, a Gray-cheeked Thrush, and a Golden-winged Warbler. Some of the high counts included 144 Wood Thrushes, 121 Ovenbirds, 163 American Redstarts, and 206 Baltimore Orioles. On June 9 the Allen Bird Club also conducted its tenth annual breeding bird survey of the Little River IBA, which covered the towns of Blandford, Granville, and Southwick. Fourteen participants recorded 113 species, including an Olive-sided Flycatcher, giving hope that it might be breeding in the area. Nineteen species of warblers were seen, including a Tennessee and two Mourning.

A **Lewis's Woodpecker**, only the third Massachusetts record, was photographed in Lunenburg on May 26. The first was found on Naushon Island in May 1966 and the other in West Newbury in June 1969. There was also an unconfirmed report of a Lewis's in Sandwich on May 29. Also on May 26, a Lewis's Woodpecker was photographed at Saranac Lake in New York. This spring there were just two reports of Red-headed Woodpeckers.

On May 27 a **Cave Swallow** was photographed at Great Meadows in Concord, just the third spring record for Massachusetts. The two previous spring sightings were one from Nantucket on May 12–13, 2010, and one in Hyannis Harbor on May 15, 2010. In recent years there have been numerous reports of Cave Swallows in late fall, mostly from coastal locations. A **Mountain Bluebird**, first noted on April 27 at Field Farm in Williamstown, continued into the first two days of May. One other vagrant during this period was the fourth spring record of **Townsend's Warbler** on Nantucket on May 5. Coincidentally the last spring record was also on May 5, 2005, in Ipswich.

Thirty-six species of warblers were noted during the period not including an Audubon's Warbler from Provincetown or the two hybrid Brewster's and Lawrence's warblers. Of special note were three Golden-winged, five Prothonotary, nine Kentucky, nine Cerulean, and three Yellow-throated warblers.

Winter finch reports included continuing good numbers of Red Crossbills and Pine Siskins. Evening Grosbeaks were noted in Royalston as late as June 16. *R. Stymeist*

Yellow-billed Cuckoo				Merlin				
5/13, 6/6	Medford	1, 2	M. Rines#	5/thr	Truro	13	Hawkcount (DM)	
5/14	Canton	2	R. Mussey	5/10	Cuttyhunk	2	I. Davies#	
5/30	Manomet	5	E. Dalton	5/11-16	P.I.	23	Hawkcount (CJ)	
6/16	MBWMA	4	R. Heil	Peregrine Falcon				
Black-billed Cuckoo				thr	Watertown	pr n	v.o.	
5/10	Bradford	1	D. Larson	thr	Woburn	pr n	M. Rines	
5/18	C. Hampden	8	Allen Club	5/thr	Sandwich	pr n	v.o.	
5/19	GMNWR	6	C. Cook	5/16	Lawrence	pr + 4 yg	C. Gibson	
5/30	Manomet	8	E. Dalton	Lewis's Woodpecker				
5/30	P.I.	5	T. Wetmore	5/26	Lunenburg	1	J. Mills	
6/2	Plymouth	3	M. Faherty	Red-headed Woodpecker				
6/11	MBWMA	3	J. Berry	5/19	Plympton	1 ad	T. Lloyd-Evans	
Great Horned Owl				5/31	Sudbury	1	W. Forbes	
5/4	Jamaica Plain	pr, 2 fl	P. Peterson	Red-bellied Woodpecker				
5/4	P.I.	pr, 2 fl	N. Landry#	5/5	ONWR	6	BBC (J. Center)	
5/5	Reading	1 ad, 2 yg	D. Williams	5/18	C. Hampden	105	Allen Club	
5/27	Saugus	1 ad, 1 yg	D. + I. Jewell	5/28	Medford	6	M. Rines	
Barred Owl				6/9	Little River IBA	16	Allen Club	
5/5	Wompatuck SP	5	BBC (GdE)	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				
5/9	Little River IBA	2	Allen Club	5/18	Tolland	13	M. Lynch#	
5/27	Petersham	2	M. Lynch#	6/9	Pittsfield SF	6	M. Lynch#	
6/8	Wayland	2	D. Peebles	6/9	Little River IBA	29	Allen Club	
Long-eared Owl				6/16	October Mt.	19	SSBC (GdE)	
5/16	Richmond	1	J. Morris-Siegel	6/29	Ware R. IBA	6	M. Lynch#	
Northern Saw-whet Owl				Pileated Woodpecker				
5/15	MSSF	1	I. Davies#	5/8	Sterling	2	P. Morlock	
Common Nighthawk				5/11	Topsfield	2	J. Berry#	
5/3	Westfield	3	J. Hutchison	5/18	C. Hampden	10	Allen Club	
5/18	W. Roxbury (MP)	12	M. Iliff	5/28	Milton	pr n, 2 yg	R. Mussey	
5/18	C. Hampden	15	Allen Club	6/9	Little River IBA	5	Allen Club	
5/20	Pittsfield	13	K. Hanson	6/16	Royalston	5	M. Lynch#	
5/20	Northampton	16	T. Gagnon	6/19	Concord	2	P. Peterson	
5/27	Belchertown	14	L. Therrien	Olive-sided Flycatcher				
5/28	GMNWR	55	M. Resch	5/10	New Salem	1	B. Lafley	
Chuck-will's-widow				5/17-6/8	Reports of indiv. from 24 locations			
5/16-6/30	Orleans	1	M. Keleher#	5/28	Gill	2	J. Smith	
5/18-6/30	Falmouth	1	C. Brothers#	Eastern Wood-Pewee				
Eastern Whip-poor-will				5/12	Cuttyhunk	1	I. Davies#	
5/9, 6/9	Southwick	1, 4	S. Kellogg	5/18	C. Hampden	42	Allen Club	
5/18	P.I.	15	N. Landry	5/24, 6/29	Ware R. IBA	16, 10	M. Lynch#	
5/18	C. Hampden	9	Allen Club	5/27	Ipswich	18	M. Brengle	
6/12	MSSF	7	SSBC (GdE)	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher				
6/21	W. Tisbury	9	S. Perkins#	5/17	Hadley	1	L. Therrien	
6/23	Truro	8	J. Young	5/18-6/6	Reports of indiv. from 15 locations			
Chimney Swift				5/27	Pittsfield	2	K. Hanson	
5/8	Watertown	55	R. Stymeist	5/27	Rockport	2	B. Harris#	
5/9	Northampton	48	T. Gagnon	5/30	P.I.	3 b	B. Flemer#	
5/11	Woburn (HP)	120	J. Thomas	5/30	Nahant	2	L. Pivacek	
5/18	C. Hampden	207	Allen Club	5/30	MNWS	6	C. Floyd	
5/26	Pittsfield (Pont.)	75	R. Laubach	5/30	Manomet	16 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	
5/27	GMNWR	220	A. Bragg#	5/30	Salem	3	J. Berry#	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird				Acadian Flycatcher				
5/11	Rehoboth	3	K. Bartels	5/14	Fall River	2	G. d'Entremont#	
5/15	P.I.	47	P. Miliotis	5/22	P.I.	1 b	B. Flemer#	
5/18	C. Hampden	13	Allen Club	5/23-6/3	Manomet	3 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	
6/8	Freetown	12	BBC (L. Abbey)	5/27	Nahant	1	J. Hoye#	
6/9	Little River IBA	10	Allen Club	6/1	Quabbin (G22)	1	L. Therrien	
6/9	Pittsfield SF	8	M. Lynch#	6/4	Springfield	1	J. Cavanaugh	
Belted Kingfisher				6/14	S. Dartmouth	5	M. Sylvia	
5/11	Woburn (HP)	3	J. Thomas	Alder Flycatcher				
5/18	C. Hampden	9	Allen Club	5/15	Northampton	1	L. Therrien	
American Kestrel				5/30	Manomet	5	E. Dalton	
5/thr	Truro	31	Hawkcount (DM)	5/31	P.I.	8	T. Wetmore	
5/5	Concord	3	S. Perkins#	6/1	October Mt.	10	B. Zajda#	
5/8	Westboro	pr	C. Nims#	6/9	Little River IBA	21	Allen Club	
5/13	P.I.	6	Hawkcount (TM)	6/9	Moran WMA	7	M. Lynch#	
5/16	Bolton Flats	2	B. Kamp	6/16	October Mt.	7	SSBC (GdE)	
5/18	C. Hampden	2	Allen Club	6/23	Warwick	3	M. Lynch#	
6/5	Ipswich	pr n	J. Berry#	Willow Flycatcher				
6/15	Falmouth	2	P. Crosson	5/14	Northampton	3	L. Therrien	

Willow Flycatcher (continued)			5/27	Petersham	124	M. Lynch#
5/18	Burlington	2	5/30	P'town	23	B. Nikula
5/27	GMNWR	16	5/30	MNWS	50	C. Floyd
6/6	P.I.	18	5/31	Ware R. IBA	76	M. Lynch#
6/9	Wakefield	7	6/1	October Mt.	62	B. Zajda#
6/15	Tyringham	6	6/9	Little River IBA	305	Allen Club
Traill's Flycatcher			6/15	Mt. Greylock	80	SSBC (GdE)
5/30	Manomet	56 b	6/16	Royalston	108	M. Lynch#
Least Flycatcher			6/23	Warwick	142	M. Lynch#
5/5, 31	Ware R. IBA	6, 24	Fish Crow			
5/12	S. Amherst	3	5/1	Reading	2	D. Williams
5/16	P.I.	5	5/7	Marion	2	M. Lynch#
5/18	C. Hampden	15	5/13	Southwick	3	S. Kellogg
5/27	Petersham	8	5/13	W. Gloucester	15	S. Hedman
6/9	Little River IBA	12	5/14	Braintree	2	J. Sweeney
6/9	Pittsfield SF	19	5/18	C. Hampden	14	Allen Club
6/23	Warwick	7	6/8	Plymouth	3	BBC (GdE)
Eastern Phoebe			Common Raven			
5/18	C. Hampden	82	5/thr	Woburn	pr + 5 yg	M. Rines
6/9	Little River IBA	41	5/1-13	Quincy	pr + 5 yg	G. d'Entremont
Great Crested Flycatcher			5/10	Southbury	pr + 2 yg	A. Scholten
5/4	Wenham	4	5/12	Waltham	6	J. Forbes
5/11	Freetown	9	5/18	W. Roxbury (MP)	5	M. Iliff
5/18	Wompatuck SP	14	5/19	Worcester	pr + 3 yg	M. Lynch#
5/18	C. Hampden	66	5/27	Petersham	5	M. Lynch#
5/20	Ipswich	14	6/9	Little River IBA	4	Allen Club
5/26	E. Brimfield	9	6/16	Carlisle	4	T. Brownrigg#
6/2	Plymouth	12	Horned Lark			
6/9	Little River IBA	15	5/4	Northampton	10	L. Therrien
Eastern Kingbird			5/4	Duxbury B.	5	R. Bowes
5/12	P.I.	25	5/16	Westfield	2	S. Kellogg
5/18	C. Hampden	46	5/18	Plymouth	6	G. d'Entremont#
6/9	Little River IBA	18	5/23	S. Quabbin	20	B. Zajda
White-eyed Vireo			6/12	Northampton	2	D. McLain
5/3	Cambr. (Daneyh)	1	6/12	Westover	3	Allen Club
5/7	Mattapoissett	2	Purple Martin			
5/10	Scituate	1	5/4, 6/9	P.I.	3, 13	Hunt, Berry
5/12	MNWS	1	5/7	Rochester	22	M. Lynch#
5/22	Westport	3	5/11	Hanscom AFB	1	B. Harris#
5/27	Rockport	1	5/12	Cuttyhunk	9	I. Davies#
6/15	Acoaxet	6	5/16	P'town	3	B. Nikula
Yellow-throated Vireo			5/25	DWWS	30	S. Carey
5/8	Westboro	3	6/21	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	4	P. Champlin
5/18	Sandisfield	6	6/30	Mashpee 49 ad + 87 yg		M. Keleher
5/18	C. Hampden	9	Tree Swallow			
5/26	Monson	3	5/17	Quabog IBA	110	M. Lynch#
6/9	Little River IBA	8	5/18	C. Hampden	130	Allen Club
6/23	Upton	3	5/25	Bolton Flats	180	BBC (N. Paulson)
Blue-headed Vireo			Northern Rough-winged Swallow			
5/5, 6/23	Ware R. IBA	13, 16	5/18	C. Hampden	58	Allen Club
5/9	P.I.	10	5/25	Bolton Flats	85	BBC (N. Paulson)
5/10	P'town	11	Bank Swallow			
5/18	C. Hampden	9	5/2	Sterling	28 n	S. LaBree#
6/9	Little River IBA	14	5/10	Cuttyhunk	33	I. Davies#
6/15	Mt. Greylock	7	5/16	Westfield	500	T. Swochak
6/23	Upton	5	5/18	C. Hampden	94	Allen Club
Warbling Vireo			6/6	Ipswich (C.B.)	24	J. Berry#
5/11	Quabog IBA	14	6/10	Concord (NAC)	20	P. Peterson
5/11	Westboro	14	6/11	P.I.	26	R. Heil
5/12	Woburn (HP)	21	Cliff Swallow			
5/18	C. Hampden	138	5/12	P.I.	4	R. Heil
5/25	Bolton Flats	15	5/15	Newbury	7	J. Berry
6/22	Wakefield	15	5/27	GMNWR	6	A. Bragg#
Philadelphia Vireo			5/31	Palmer	10	B. Zajda
5/23	MNWS	1	6/15	Lenox	12	S. Surner
5/23	P.I.	1	6/22	Cheshire	25 nests	M. Lynch#
5/28	Brewster	1 b	6/24	Amesbury	6	P. Brown
Red-eyed Vireo			Cave Swallow			
5/2	Wompatuck SP	1	5/27-28	GMNWR	1 ph	C. Winstanley#
5/3	W. Gloucester	1	Barn Swallow			
5/18	C. Hampden	162	5/10	P.I.	60	J. Berry#

Barn Swallow (continued)			5/20	Ipswich	27	J. Berry
5/18	C. Hampden	48	5/22	Westport	14	BBC (R. Stymeist)
6/8	Quabog IBA	68	6/1	October Mt.	14	B. Zajda#
6/9	Little River IBA	74	6/9	Little River IBA	115	Allen Club
Red-breasted Nuthatch			6/29	Ware R. IBA	49	M. Lynch#
5/1	Reading	6	D. Williams	Gray-cheeked Thrush		
5/5	Ware R. IBA	26	M. Lynch#	5/23	P.I.	1 b B. Flemer#
5/18	C. Hampden	9	Allen Club	5/24	W. Roxbury	1 M. McCarthy
6/16	October Mt.	3	SSBC (GdE)	5/30	Manomet	2 b T. Lloyd-Evans#
6/23	Nantucket	6	K. Blackshaw#	Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush		
6/25	Lincoln	4	J. Forbes	5/18	Agawam	1 S. Kellogg
6/26	Concord	3	C. Winstanley#	5/23	S. Quabbin	1 B. Zajda
Brown Creeper			5/31	Mt.A.	1	C. Floyd#
5/2	Upton	5	N. Paulson	Swainson's Thrush		
5/5	Ware R. IBA	11	M. Lynch#	5/18	Wompatuck SP	4 G. d'Entremont#
5/13	GMNWR	3	A. Bragg#	5/18	C. Hampden	9 Allen Club
5/18	C. Hampden	8	Allen Club	5/22	Boston (F.Pk)	5 P. Peterson
5/27	Ipswich	3	M. Brengle	5/23	MNWS	4 J. Hoye#
6/9	Little River IBA	10	Allen Club	5/23	Medford	6 M. Rines
6/26	Concord	9	C. Winstanley#	5/28	P.I.	8 J. Nelson
House Wren			5/30	Manomet	7 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#
5/1	Worcester	3	M. Lynch#	6/22	Mt. Greylock	3 Allen Club
5/10	W. Gloucester	12	J. Nelson	Hermit Thrush		
5/18	C. Hampden	44	Allen Club	5/12	Ware R. IBA	22 M. Lynch#
6/9	Little River IBA	20	Allen Club	5/18	Wompatuck SP	6 G. d'Entremont#
6/30	Southbridge	13	M. Lynch#	5/24	Mt. Watatic	5 D. Bates#
Winter Wren			6/1	October Mt.	6	B. Zajda#
5/5	Wompatuck SP	5	BBC (GdE)	6/9	Little River IBA	19 Allen Club
5/12	Ware R. IBA	8	M. Lynch#	Wood Thrush		
6/9	Little River IBA	15	Allen Club	5/10	Sharon	7 L. Waters
6/15	Mt. Greylock	3	SSBC (GdE)	5/11	Quabog IBA	19 M. Lynch#
6/16	October Mt.	3	SSBC (GdE)	5/11	Freetown	7 BBC (L. Abbey)
6/26	Concord	5	C. Winstanley#	5/18	C. Hampden	144 Allen Club
6/30	Williamstown	5	R. Laubach	5/18	Tolland	18 M. Lynch#
Marsh Wren			5/18	Wompatuck SP	6	G. d'Entremont#
5/11	Topsfield	6	J. Berry#	5/20	Ipswich	14 J. Berry
5/20	GMNWR	26	A. Bragg#	5/27	Ipswich	10 M. Brengle
5/25	Bolton Flats	8	BBC (N. Paulson)	6/9	Little River IBA	50 Allen Club
6/4	P.I.	24	P. Peterson	6/23	Upton	19 N. Paulson#
6/8	Quabog IBA	8	M. Lynch#	6/26	Concord	17 C. Winstanley#
6/15	Wellfleet	12	S. Broker	Gray Catbird		
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher			5/10	Manomet	103 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#
5/4	Southbridge	11	M. Lynch#	5/11	Quabog IBA	74 M. Lynch#
5/5	ONWR	9	BBC (J. Center)	5/12	Gloucester (E.P.)	40 J. Nelson
5/8	W. Newbury	6	P. + F. Vale	5/18	C. Hampden	371 Allen Club
5/11	Longmeadow	8	B. Zajda#	5/28	Nantucket	60 V. Laux
5/11	Topsfield	10	J. Berry#	6/9	Little River IBA	71 Allen Club
5/11	Quabog IBA	9	M. Lynch#	6/16	MBWMA	36 R. Heil
5/18	C. Hampden	31	Allen Club	6/22	Wakefield	35 P. + F. Vale
5/19	Wompatuck SP	6	BBC (E. Giles)	Brown Thrasher		
6/10	GMNWR	13	W. Hutcheson	5/1	Jamaica Plain	5 P. Peterson
Golden-crowned Kinglet			5/8	Pittsfield	5	K. Hanson
5/5	Nantucket	2	V. Laux	5/8	Woburn (HP)	5 M. Rines
5/5	Ware R. IBA	6	M. Lynch#	5/23	P.I.	10 P. + F. Vale
5/24	Mt. Watatic	2	D. Bates#	6/9	Hadley	6 J. Jorgensen
6/16	October Mt.	3	SSBC (GdE)	6/19	Southwick	4 S. Kellogg
6/22	Mt. Greylock	6	Allen Club	American Pipit		
6/23	Warwick	3	M. Lynch#	5/12	Revere	1 R. Schain
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			5/16	Sunderland	11	B. Emily
5/10	Westport	4	P. Champlin	5/18	Montague	20 J. Young
5/12	P.I.	40	S. Arena#	Cedar Waxwing		
5/12	Cuttyhunk	16	I. Davies#	5/23	Newbypt	120 BBC (S. Grinley)
5/13	Ipswich (C.B.)	2	J. Berry	5/30	P'town	275 B. Nikula
5/28	Salem	1	S. Perkins#	6/9	Little River IBA	186 Allen Club
Mountain Bluebird			Lapland Longspur			
5/1-2	Williamstown	1	G. Hurley + v.o.	5/4	Northampton	1 L. Therrien
Veery			Ovenbird			
5/17	Quabog IBA	27	M. Lynch#	5/5, 6/29	Ware R. IBA	33, 82 M. Lynch#
5/18	Wompatuck SP	19	G. d'Entremont#	5/11	Freetown	30 BBC (L. Abbey)
5/18	C. Hampden	67	Allen Club	5/18	Wompatuck SP	53 G. d'Entremont#

5/16	Westport	20	P. Champlin				
Magnolia Warbler (continued)				Yellow-rumped Warbler			
5/16	Manomet	22 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	5/5	Ware R. IBA	49	M. Lynch#
5/18	C. Hampden	50	Allen Club	5/10	Sharon	42	L. Waters
5/21	Woburn	22	M. Rines	5/10	P'town	50	B. Nikula
5/22	P'town	16	B. Nikula	5/10	P.I.	265	P. + F. Vale
5/25	P.I.	48	R. Schain	5/10	W. Gloucester	40	J. Nelson
6/9	Little River IBA	11	Allen Club	5/14	Boston (F.Pk)	88	J. Young
6/16	October Mt.	6	SSBC (GdE)	5/18	C. Hampden	130	Allen Club
Bay-breasted Warbler				6/9	Little River IBA	19	Allen Club
5/10-5/27	Reports of indiv. from	18	locations	6/29	Ware R. IBA	12	M. Lynch#
5/12	Ware R. IBA	2	M. Lynch#	Audubon's Warbler			
5/21	P.I.	3	T. Spahr	5/22	P'town	1 f	B. Nikula
5/23	MNWS	2	J. Restivo	Yellow-throated Warbler			
5/23	Newbypt	3	BBC (S. Grinley)	5/5	Nantucket	1	V. Laux
Blackburnian Warbler				5/10	Boston (PG)	1	T. Factor
5/18	Tolland	15	M. Lynch#	5/11	Mashpee	1	M. Keleher
5/18	C. Hampden	14	Allen Club	Prairie Warbler			
6/2	Quabbin (G22)	10	B. Zajda#	5/4	Southbridge	6	M. Lynch#
6/9	Little River IBA	43	Allen Club	5/10	Sharon	12	L. Waters
6/15	Mt. Greylock	18	SSBC (GdE)	5/11	Freetown	12	BBC (L. Abbey)
Yellow Warbler				5/19	Milton	15	R. Mussey#
5/7	Marion	36	M. Lynch#	5/22	Westport	10	BBC (R. Stymeist)
5/10	Westboro	48	J. Lawson#	6/29	Falmouth	8	J. McCumber
5/10	Cuttyhunk	41	I. Davies#	Townsend's Warbler			
5/11	Longmeadow	75	B. Zajda#	5/5	Nantucket	1 ph	K. Blackshaw#
5/12	Gloucester (E.P.)	36	J. Nelson	Black-throated Green Warbler			
5/18	C. Hampden	146	Allen Club	5/5	Ware R. IBA	27	M. Lynch#
6/9	Little River IBA	53	Allen Club	5/9	MNWS	14	J. Berry
6/11	P.I.	33	R. Heil	5/10	Sharon	31	L. Waters
6/15	Westport	43	M. Lynch#	5/10	P.I.	20	W. Tatro
Chestnut-sided Warbler				5/18	C. Hampden	47	Allen Club
5/7	Bedford	2	K. Dia#	5/22	P'town	15	B. Nikula
5/12, 24	Ware R. IBA	13, 34	M. Lynch#	6/9	Little River IBA	43	Allen Club
5/18	C. Hampden	19	Allen Club	6/30	Mt. Watatic	10	D. Swain
5/25	P.I.	12	R. Schain	Canada Warbler			
5/30	MBWMA	11	J. Berry	5/10-31	P.I.	28 b	B. Flemer#
6/1	October Mt.	23	B. Zajda#	5/18	C. Hampden	11	Allen Club
6/9	Little River IBA	91	Allen Club	5/30	Manomet	18 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#
6/15	Mt. Greylock	17	SSBC (GdE)	5/30	P'town	6	B. Nikula
6/22	Cheshire	32	M. Lynch#	5/30	MNWS	18	C. Floyd
Blackpoll Warbler				6/16	October Mt.	2	SSBC (GdE)
5/9	Reports of indiv. from	4	locations	Wilson's Warbler			
5/14	Boston (F.Pk)	25	J. Young	5/12	S. Amherst	3	B. Zajda#
5/18	C. Hampden	14	Allen Club	5/15-30	P.I.	24 b	B. Flemer#
5/22	Sharon	14	B. Cassie	5/18	C. Hampden	7	Allen Club
5/22	P'town	30	B. Nikula	5/18	Medford	5	M. Rines#
5/22	Medford	14	M. Rines	5/27	Rockport	3	B. Harris#
5/23	Mt.A.	15	P. + F. Vale	5/30	MNWS	8	C. Floyd
5/23	MNWS	20	J. Restivo	Yellow-breasted Chat			
5/23	Newbypt	18	BBC (S. Grinley)	5/24	P.I.	1 b	B. Flemer#
6/15	Mt. Greylock	15	K. Hanson	Eastern Towhee			
Black-throated Blue Warbler				5/10	P.I.	41	J. Berry#
5/10	P.I.	60	M. Halsey	5/11	Freetown	38	BBC (L. Abbey)
5/10	Medford	16	M. Rines#	5/12	Cuttyhunk	110	I. Davies#
5/11	Mt.A.	21	J. Restivo	5/18	C. Hampden	46	Allen Club
5/18	C. Hampden	20	Allen Club	6/9	Little River IBA	48	Allen Club
5/27	Petersham	16	M. Lynch#	6/22	Milton	37	P. Peterson
6/9	Little River IBA	68	Allen Club	Chipping Sparrow			
6/23	Warwick	12	M. Lynch#	5/4	Southbridge	77	M. Lynch#
Palm Warbler				5/18	C. Hampden	89	Allen Club
5/15	P.I.	1	D. Chickering	6/9	Little River IBA	77	Allen Club
5/16	Roxbury	1	J. Young	6/22	Milton	60	P. Peterson
5/16	Hingham	1	M. Iliff	Clay-colored Sparrow			
Pine Warbler				5/16	P'town	1	B. Nikula
5/4	Southbridge	29	M. Lynch#	5/16	P.I.	1	S. Miller
5/11	Freetown	25	BBC (L. Abbey)	Field Sparrow			
5/18	C. Hampden	51	Allen Club	5/6	Falmouth	10	M. Keleher
6/9	Little River IBA	22	Allen Club	5/10	Sharon	14	L. Waters
6/23	Upton	64	N. Paulson#	5/18	C. Hampden	10	Allen Club
6/26	Concord	25	C. Winstanley#	6/30	Southbridge	4	M. Lynch#
6/29	Ware R. IBA	26	M. Lynch#	Vesper Sparrow			

5/2	Wayland	2	B. Harris	5/18	C. Hampden	10	Allen Club
Vesper Sparrow (continued)				Dark-eyed Junco			
5/4	Sharon	1	J. Baur#	6/9	Little River IBA	5	Allen Club
5/4	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore#	6/15	Mt. Greylock	9	SSBC (GdE)
5/5	Lancaster	3	R. Stymeist#	6/23	Warwick	11	M. Lynch#
5/10	Worthington	1	T. Gagnon	Summer Tanager			
5/10	Worcester	1	M. Lynch#	5/10	Cuttyhunk	1 m imm	I. Davies#
5/13	Cambr. (Daneyh)	1	K. Hartel	5/11-16	MNWS	1	L. de la Flor + v.o.
5/17	Hadley	4	G. d'Entremont#	5/12	Wellfleet	1	M. Faherty
5/27	MBWMA	1	T. Martin	5/13	Gr Barrington	1	D. St James
6/8	Plymouth	5	BBC (GdE)	5/17	Chatham	1	Y. Laskaris
Lark Sparrow				5/19	P'town	1	M. Keleher
5/10	Salisbury	1	B. Harris	5/19	Dartmouth	1	B. Cassie#
5/10	Nantucket	1	T. Pastuszek	5/21	W. Barnstable	1	E. Hoopes
5/18	Rockport (H.P.)	1	C. Leahy#	5/28	Nantucket	2	T. Pastuszek
Savannah Sparrow				6/4-12	Fall River	1	L. Abbey
5/4	Wayland	72	B. Harris#	Scarlet Tanager			
5/4	W. Roxbury (MP)	29	P. Peterson	5/1	Sharon	1	D. Radovsky
5/5	Easthampton	105	B. Zajda	5/10	Sharon	6	L. Waters
5/5	Melrose	25	D. + I. Jewell	5/12	Ware R. IBA	21	M. Lynch#
6/23	Lancaster	10	M. Lynch#	5/18	Wompatuck SP	9	G. d'Entremont#
Grasshopper Sparrow				5/18	C. Hampden	97	Allen Club
5/4	Northampton	1	L. Therrien	5/20	Ipswich	7	J. Berry
5/4	Westfield	1	S. Kellogg	6/9	Little River IBA	53	Allen Club
5/6	Falmouth	3	M. Keleher	6/16	MBWMA	10	R. Heil
5/10	DWWS	1	E. Dalton	6/26	Concord	24	C. Winstanley#
5/12	Turners Falls	2	J. Rose	Rose-breasted Grosbeak			
5/15	Falmouth	4	G. d'Entremont#	5/5	Lexington	7	M. Rines
5/18	Montague	1	J. Young	5/11	Quabog IBA	21	M. Lynch#
5/19	Sutton	1	M. Lynch#	5/14	Braintree	8	J. Sweeney
6/8	Westover	18	BBC (D. Williams)	5/18	P.I.	10	K. Elwell
6/8	Plymouth	2	BBC (GdE)	5/18	C. Hampden	107	Allen Club
6/26	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	5/20	Ipswich	8	J. Berry
Saltmarsh Sparrow				6/9	Little River IBA	20	Allen Club
5/12	Cuttyhunk	1	I. Davies#	Blue Grosbeak			
5/19	E. Boston (B.L.)	1	P. Peterson	5/30	Falmouth	1	J. Hoye#
5/22	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	6	BBC (R. Stymeist)	6/2-5	Plymouth	1 m imm	M. Faherty#
5/30	Chappaquiddick	1	P. Gilmore	Indigo Bunting			
6/15	Acoaxet	4	M. Lynch#	5/9	Westport	1	P. Champlin
6/28	P.I.	28	R. Heil	5/18	C. Hampden	16	Allen Club
Seaside Sparrow				5/26	Monson	11	M. Lynch#
thr	P.I.	2-4	T. Wetmore	6/4	MBWMA	12	J. Berry
5/30	Westport	2	P. Champlin	6/9	Little River IBA	18	Allen Club
6/17	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	25	P. Champlin#	6/13	Concord	7	J. Forbes
Lincoln's Sparrow				6/22	Milton	11	P. Peterson
5/16	Manomet	4 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	Dickcissel			
5/17	Essex	1	J. Berry	5/23	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore
5/17	Amherst	1	J. Rose	Bobolink			
5/18	Montague	1	J. Young	5/4	Rowley	3	D. Jones
5/18	Agawam	2	S. Kellogg	5/4	P.I.	2	T. Wetmore
5/19	Salisbury	2	D. Chickering#	5/18	C. Hampden	30	Allen Club
5/26	Shutesbury	1	L. Therrien	6/8	Westover	45	BBC (D. Williams)
5/30	Manomet	1 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	6/9	Little River IBA	72	Allen Club
5/30	Boston (PG)	3	T. Factor	6/16	Amesbury	33	S. McGrath#
Swamp Sparrow				6/23	Lancaster	30	M. Lynch#
5/4	GMNWR	34	S. Arena	Eastern Meadowlark			
5/11	Quabog IBA	41	M. Lynch#	5/4	Westfield	4	S. Kellogg
5/11	Topsfield	22	J. Berry#	5/17	Bedford	12	P. + F. Vale
5/18	C. Hampden	18	Allen Club	5/18	C. Hampden	5	Allen Club
6/9	Little River IBA	33	Allen Club	6/8	Westover	22	BBC (D. Williams)
White-throated Sparrow				6/19	Amesbury	4	S. McGrath#
5/18	C. Hampden	42	Allen Club	6/27	Falmouth	4	K. Hartel
6/16	October Mt.	9	SSBC (GdE)	Rusty Blackbird			
White-crowned Sparrow				5/4	Wayland	6	J. Forbes
5/10	Holyoke	4	M. Keane-Moore	5/20	GMNWR	1	A. Bragg#
5/10	Westport	3	P. Champlin	5/25	Boston (F.Pk)	1	B. Olsen
5/11	P.I.	9	W. Freedberg	Orchard Oriole			
5/16	Bolton Flats	3	B. Kamp	5/3	Cambr. (F.P.)	3	R. Stymeist
5/16	P'town	4	B. Nikula	5/12	Woburn	5	M. Rines
5/16	Westport	3	P. Champlin	5/15	Falmouth	8	G. d'Entremont#

Orchard Oriole (continued)			5/28-6/2	P'town	1-3	B. Nikula
5/18	C. Hampden	4	5/30	Sudbury	3	T. Spahr
5/22	Westport	3	6/5	Eastham	5	K. Yakola
6/2	Plymouth	3		White-winged Crossbill		
Baltimore Oriole			5/3	Tyringham	7	G. Hurley
5/10	W. Gloucester	22	6/1	P'town	1	J. Trimble#
5/11	Quabog IBA	28		Common Redpoll		
5/12	P.I.	20	5/3	Granby	2	L. Rogers
5/18	C. Hampden	206		Pine Siskin		
6/9	Little River IBA	21	5/6, 29	Rehoboth	6, 5	K. Bartels
Purple Finch			5/6-14	Gardner	6-8	D. Knowlton
5/5	Ware R. IBA	11	5/12	Hanson	15	J. Young
5/10	P.I.	13	5/12	Granby	20	L. Rogers
5/13	Ipswich (C.B.)	3	5/12	Holden	6	M. Driscoll
6/9	Wellfleet	3	5/14	S. Amherst	6	B. Zajda#
6/9	Little River IBA	6	5/15	N. Andover	8	D. Fox
6/15	Mt. Greylock	5	5/16-30	P'town	8 max	B. Nikula
6/16	October Mt.	5	5/27	Gloucester	4	B. Harris#
Red Crossbill			5/30	Belchertown	4	D. Griffiths
5/3, 6/8	P.I.	2, 6	Evening Grosbeak			
5/5	Nantucket	25	5/7	Conway	4	S. Baker
5/5	Quabbin	4	5/26	Orange	2	M. Horman
5/5, 6/8	Wellfleet	6, 17	6/16	Royalston	4	M. Lynch#
5/17	Mashpee	6				

Human-Related Bird Mortality Estimates

Bird Studies Canada

Over the last four years, twenty Environment Canada scientists conducted extensive analyses to produce the first-ever estimates of annual direct bird mortality from human-related sources. Their findings were published in *Avian Conservation and Ecology*, the electronic scientific journal of Bird Studies Canada and the Society of Canadian Ornithologists. The results indicate that human-related activities destroy roughly 269 million birds and 2 million bird nests in Canada each year.

Most human-related bird deaths (about 99%) are caused by impacts of feral and pet cats, and collisions with transmission lines, buildings, and vehicles. Cats appear to kill as many birds as all other sources combined – more than 100 million birds annually in Canada. Species that nest or feed on or near the ground are especially vulnerable to cat predation. Collisions with electricity transmission and distribution lines have been identified as the second-largest human-caused source of bird mortality in Canada, causing between 10-41 million bird deaths per year. Collisions with residential and commercial buildings are the third-highest of the human-related sectors, killing an estimated 16-42 million birds each year – mostly at houses.

To learn more, read the post on the BirdLife Community <<http://www.birdlife.org/americas/news/canadian-scientists-publish-human-related-bird-mortality-estimates>> or explore the special issue of *Avian Conservation and Ecology* <<http://www.ace-eco.org/issues/view.php?sf=4>>.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

Taxonomic order is based on AOU checklist, Seventh edition, up to the 53rd Supplement, as published in *Auk* 129 (3): 573-88 (2012) (see <<http://checklist.aou.org/>>).

Locations		ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
Location-#	MAS Breeding Bird Atlas Block	PG	Public Garden, Boston
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum, Boston	P.I.	Plum Island
ABC	Allen Bird Club	Pd	Pond
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	POP	Point of Pines, Revere
A.Pd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth	PR	Pinnacle Rock, Malden
B.	Beach	P'town	Provincetown
Barre F.D.	Barre Falls Dam	Pont.	Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	Res.	Reservoir
BBC	Brookline Bird Club	RKG	Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston
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.	fide	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
Newbypt	Newburyport		

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

Northern Harrier

The Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) is commonly seen coasting low over grasslands and marshes with its wings raised to a dihedral. Harriers are slim raptors with long wings and tails. The species' sexual plumage dimorphism and tendency toward bigamy are most unusual among birds of prey. Adult males are light grey above and whitish below and females are brown above and heavily streaked with brown below. Females are substantially larger than males and 50% heavier. Juveniles are brown above and rusty below with dark heads. All harriers sport a bright white rump. The typical low-gliding flight behavior and distinctive shape and color pattern separate the harrier from most raptor species except the larger and chunkier Rough-legged Hawk, which has broader wings and tail.

The Northern Harrier ranges across North America and Eurasia. The North American subspecies is *C. c. hudsonius*; the Eurasian subspecies is *C. c. cyaneus*. Both are closely related to the Central and South American Cinereous Harrier. The North American breeding range includes most of Alaska and extends in a broad swath through Canada south of Hudson Bay to Newfoundland. It also includes most of the western United States as far south as Arizona (with a patchy distribution in California) and extends east across the Great Lakes to the Atlantic coast as far south as Virginia.

Northern Harriers winter or are residents throughout most of eastern North America and south through the Caribbean, Mexico, and Central America to Panama. They occasionally wander to Colombia and Venezuela. In the western United States, they range from southern coastal Alaska through Baja. Harriers are partial migrants—only some of the populations migrate, the others are year-round residents—with the most northern populations being long-distance migrants. In Massachusetts, Northern Harriers are fairly common migrants and winter residents. They arrive in April and leave or pass through from September through November, being most common along the coast, Cape Cod and the Islands (Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket). They are considered a rare and local breeder in Massachusetts.

Northern Harriers are generally monogamous but males may have harems of two to five females. They regularly nest in loose colonies. They are territorial near their nest and will chase intruders away. Territorial advertisement includes a gliding flight to the ground with wings held high and legs extended with talons exposed. In winter, females may defend feeding territories and exclude the smaller males.

During courtship both sexes give a series of notes described as *kek*, *quik*, or *ek*. When nesting, females utter a series of screams described as *eeyh*, presumably to encourage their mates to bring food. Males have a courtship display called skydancing that is usually composed of a series of several dozen deep, undulating maneuvers that end near a potential nest site. Courtship also involves the pair soaring together and the male feeding the female.

Either the male or female may select the nest site but the male usually initiates nest construction. The usual placement is in a patch of dense vegetation in a wet area, sometimes on a raised platform over water, presumably to reduce predation. Both sexes collect the grass, reeds, sticks, sedges, and rushes that make up the nest and both help with nest construction, although the female does most of the finishing work. The female, who has a single brood patch, incubates the clutch of four to five dull white eggs for four to five weeks until hatching. She also broods the young for four to five weeks until the young can fly. The male harrier provides all the food for the female during incubation, and also for the chicks until they are ambulatory at about two weeks of age, after which both parents share food provisioning for the five to eight weeks until chick independence. Much of the food is passed to the female in an aerial drop and catch procedure. Adults may utter distress calls and mob intruders, sometimes striking them with closed talons. Juvenile harriers may play, attacking and supplanting each other or pouncing on inanimate objects such as corncocks.

Northern Harriers forage by coursing with a buoyant flight, gliding, and visually locating prey. Their owl-like facial discs aid in locating prey acoustically as well. They take prey by pouncing, and may drown larger prey when circumstances permit. Harriers forage mostly in the open but they may also follow forest edges. On their breeding grounds, they take mostly small mammals and small birds—including passerines, shorebirds, and wildfowl chicks—as well as the occasional reptile or amphibian. Females tend to hunt closer to the nest than males. Harrier diet varies with season and prey availability. In winter, this species may congregate in communal roosts.

As ground nesters, Northern Harriers are subject to nest predation by terrestrial mammals such as foxes and coyotes, and birds such as corvids and owls. During the first half of the 20th century, harrier populations generally declined due to habitat alteration such as the draining of wetlands, the reforestation of agricultural lands, and the shift of grasslands to monoculture farming. The breeding population has declined in Massachusetts during the latter half of the century, probably the result of these factors. They also declined during the DDT era in the mid-20th century. However, harrier populations have been generally stable during the latter part of the century. Because Northern Harriers are somewhat nomadic as well as being habitat and food generalists, they have responded fairly well to habitat changes. This flexibility, together with their wide geographic range, bodes well for the continued presence of this interesting raptor species. 

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. From May 6 to June 17, 2013, Barry's work was on exhibit at Tower Hill Botanic Gardens in Boylston, Massachusetts, and he is 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. Barry continues to enjoy teaching workshops at various locations in Massachusetts. In 2013 he conducted 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>>. 

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AT A GLANCE

August 2013



WAYNE R. PETERSEN

The “At a Glance” species for this issue is obviously a shorebird. Noticing its lack of a short, blunt bill and its rounded head with relatively small eyes, we easily determine that it is a species of sandpiper rather than a plover. Plovers tend to be chunkier with larger, more angular-looking heads and larger eyes than most sandpipers. Most small plover species also have one or more prominent breast rings or other distinctive black markings on the head or underparts that are lacking in most sandpipers.

Features to notice on the mystery sandpiper include its bill, leg length, primary projection relative to its tail, and the feather patterning on the back, wing coverts, and tertials. Especially important is the pale fringing on the wing coverts, scapulars, and tertials of the mystery sandpiper. These pale fringes indicate that the sandpiper is in juvenal plumage—which is important in establishing the correct identity of the bird. The sandpiper’s relatively long, slim, uniformly-curved and pointy-tipped bill is also important. Compared to the Semipalmated Plover in the background, the mystery bird is at least as large as or larger than the plover. This fact alone removes any of the small peep sandpipers as identification possibilities, most notably the Western Sandpiper, which is the only peep possessing a strongly decurved bill even remotely resembling the bill of the mystery sandpiper.

Determining that the mystery sandpiper is not a peep limits the identification possibilities to Dunlin, Curlew Sandpiper, or Stilt Sandpiper. A Stilt Sandpiper would

have longer, yellowish legs (difficult to discern in a black and white photograph) that would make the bird stand noticeably taller than the adjacent Semipalmated Plover. Its bill would be less uniformly curved and less pointy at the tip, and it would typically exhibit a longer and broader supercilium over the eye if it was a Stilt Sandpiper. The overall shape of a Stilt Sandpiper would resemble a Lesser Yellowlegs rather than a smaller sandpiper.

This narrows identification to either Dunlin or Curlew Sandpiper. The fact that the bird is a juvenile is relevant because juvenile Dunlins ordinarily have a scattering of black streaks on their lower bellies when in fresh plumage. The mystery sandpiper is very white and relatively unmarked below. More important, most Dunlin, including the juveniles, initiate their molt into basic (i.e., nonbreeding) plumage before leaving their Arctic breeding grounds. Even a fairly young Dunlin in Massachusetts would show considerable evidence of uniformly gray, nonbreeding feathering on the upperparts along with dusky smudges or light streaks on the underparts, which the mystery sandpiper fails to show.

Finally, look closely at the bird's primary projection relative to its tail. The folded primary tips extend noticeably beyond the tail in the sandpiper in the photograph. Dunlins are short-distance migrants with most individuals wintering in the United States; they have relatively short wings that barely reach the tail tip. Curlew Sandpipers are longer-winged long-distance migrants with most individuals wintering in southern Africa; they have noticeably longer primaries than Dunlins. Combined, these features indicate that the mystery bird is a juvenile Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*).

Curlew Sandpipers are rare migrants in Massachusetts with most reports occurring in May or midsummer when they tend to be in full or partial alternate (i.e., breeding) plumage. Juvenile Curlew Sandpipers, which are more difficult to recognize than adults in alternate plumage, are relatively rare in Massachusetts and are most often reported in September or October. The author photographed this juvenile Curlew Sandpiper at Sandy Point State Park on Plum Island on October 23, 2010. 🐦

Wayne R. Petersen



BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER BY SANDY SELESKY

AT A GLANCE



DAVID LARSON

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

Your Birding Equipment Checklist:

- ✓ *Binoculars*
- ✓ *Field Guide*
- ✓ *Scope*
- ✓ *Camera*
- ✓ *Cell phone*

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