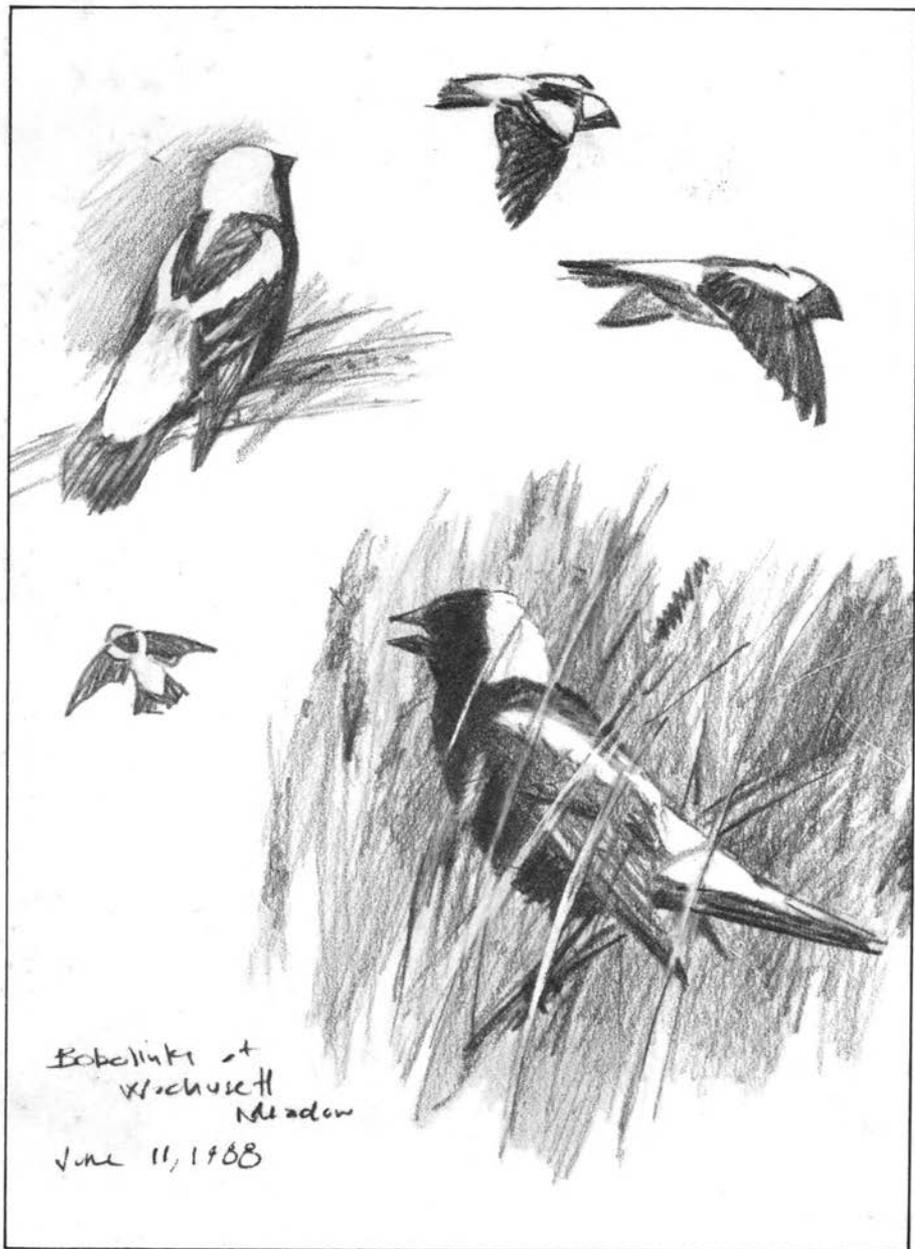


# BIRD OBSERVER



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# CONTENTS

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A WEEK IN THE WHITES WITH WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS .....	Andrew H. Williams	140
MANOMET BIRD OBSERVATORY ENTERS ITS THIRD DECADE: An Update on Research Activities . . . . .	R. Tod Highsmith	145
TOP TEN: A Prediction of Future Vagrants in Massachusetts . . . . .	Richard A. Forster	149
BOOK REVIEW: <i>A Field Guide to Eastern Forests</i> by John C. Kricher . . . . .	David C. Morimoto	155
SIGHTING OF A ROSS' GULL ( <i>Rhodostethia rosea</i> ) AT NILES POND, GLOUCESTER . . . . .	Richard A. Forster	158
FIELD NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE Sighting of a Golden-Crowned Sparrow at Dartmouth . . . . .	George W. Gove and Judy B. Gordon	163
Not A Hag At All . . . . .	Peter Trull	164
FIELD RECORDS: JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1990 . . . . .		165
FIELD RECORDS: MARCH 1990 . . . . .		178
ABOUT THE COVER: BOBOLINK . . . . .	Barry W. Van Dusen, Richard A. Forster	188
AT A GLANCE . . . . .	Wayne R. Petersen	190
Cover Illustration: Field Studies of Bobolinks by Barry W. Van Dusen		

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## ALLEN H. MORGAN (August 12, 1925 - May 13, 1990)

Boyhood interest in birds led to a life devoted to conservation. Much honored, most recently in 1990 by E.P.A. Founded (1953) The Sudbury Valley Trustees, acquiring 1200 acres of wetlands and protecting thousands more. Led by him as Executive Vice President 1957-1980, Massachusetts Audubon Society became New England's foremost conservation group, over twelvefold increase in membership (2500 to 30,000). Formed Wayland's Conservation Commission in 1959. Chaired (1969-71) governor's committee to reorganize Department of Natural Resources. U.S. delegate to U.N. Conference on Human Environment (1990). Graduate of Bowdoin; three honorary doctorates (1975-76); Mellon Fellow at Yale (1980). Elected to Nuttall at 24; North American lifelist over 600; one of three birders to sight first Cattle Egret in North America. D.R.A.

## A WEEK IN THE WHITES WITH WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS

by Andrew H. Williams

We vacationed in 1989 in New Hampshire's White Mountains. We spent all day every day hiking up to treeless summits and down again—my wife's idea of a good time. This vacation was hers to plan, and, incredible as it may seem to *Bird Observer* readers, my wife is not interested in birds.

Boreal birding can be very slow, but in 1989 the White Mountains were host to White-winged Crossbills who entertained me daily, and my total immersion in the outdoors afforded me a wonderful opportunity to get to know them better. The crossbills really made my vacation.

Our first day out was Saturday, August 19. We hiked up to Franconia Ridge, walked north above tree line to Mt. Lafayette, and down. As we hiked up, several flocks of noisy finches passed by overhead, sometimes visible and sometimes not. Finally I got a close look at them and saw prominent wing bars and one electric pink male in the flock. White-winged Crossbills! I was ecstatic. Rarely had I seen them before, and here they were on our first hike. Little did I know that we would be repeatedly seeing them over the next week. On this Franconia day I noticed that they were most common just below tree line, that the flocks traveled quite far, and that the birds were noisy. Three times a flock of about fifteen passed by, and I assumed this was one flock passing three times. Perhaps there were thirty to fifty birds for that day.

Sunday was quite wet, and our hiking was two short walks at low elevations. I found no birds of interest. But Monday was different. I found several worthwhile birds, and all of them were high up on Zealand Ridge. Two Gray Jays were above Zeacliff Pond, and they were happy to perch on my hand to take raisins and peanuts from me. I pished in a group of three Boreal Chickadees nearby. And again, there were White-winged Crossbills: a single bird perched on a low spruce top beside the trail allowed such a close approach that I could see its crossed bill before it flew off. A group of four and another of ten to fifteen White-wings on this day.

On Tuesday, with a forecast of clearing in the afternoon, we hiked up the Ridge of the Caps to tree line and cut across to Mt. Washington's summit. We came back the same way, still waiting for clear skies. Just before we descended into the trees, the sky opened up, and we had some breathtaking views. Again, it was just below tree line that I found the interesting birds of the day: one Common Raven, one Boreal Chickadee, and the White-winged Crossbills. Singles or small flocks were heard going overhead in the fog on five occasions. I saw a flock of eleven twice and then a flock of five—perhaps twenty to thirty birds in all.



*Northern Peaks, White Mountains, NH*

*Photo by Martha McClellan*

Wednesday proved to be my most exciting day. We drove east to Pinkham Notch and climbed up to North Carter Mountain. The hike up was pretty uneventful. It was drizzling a bit, but I did pish in a group of three Boreal Chickadees. The action started when we reached the ridgeline. Five White-winged Crossbills perched on spruce tops above the trail allowed me to come close enough to see their wing bars and crossed bills before they flew. Two others flew by. We decided to walk a short way along the ridgeline despite the fog that eliminated what might have been a view as far as the Atlantic. In a half hour on the ridge we were almost continuously in the presence of crossbills. A flock of about twenty-five. Two heard but unseen flocks passed by. A group of three and another unseen flock. And then about thirty wheeled overhead giving me time to count them. One perched immature allowed my close examination, and I saw its crossed bill and the heavy streaking on its underside. Two others flew by, and the immature joined them. Then a single. Two more unseen flocks. As we descended by the same trail we had come up earlier, five more unseen flocks were heard overhead.

My earlier observation that these birds were common just below tree line was reinforced by this ridgeline experience. Though the ridge is forested, the trees are small. If the ridge were higher, tree line would soon be reached. It

seems these birds fly in highly fissionable flocks—continually breaking apart and reforming. When a flock perches, the birds are quite spread out over the tops of spruces. We noticed two species of spruce with green cones. A long-needed spruce had upright cones on its top, and a short-needed spruce had smaller, pendant cones hanging from its highest branches.

As we descended, we noticed moose tracks preceding us down the mountainside. We approached turn after turn on the trail with the hope of rounding the bend and seeing the animal. But, alas, the tracks stopped, and there was no moose. It had left the trail and entered the surrounding woods, which now were peaceful and seemingly empty of animal life.

Farther down, I did find another Boreal Chickadee, but the big find was a Black-backed Woodpecker! My first experience with this species was here in the White Mountains as a child at camp, when I found several of them working a snag beside the trail on Mt. Washington, an event that highlighted that summer. Now, here again, a Black-backed Woodpecker quietly worked on several snags near the trail. This was at 3400 feet in an area dominated by spruces but with some white birches present. What a reunion!

On Thursday we again climbed up the Ridge of the Caps to Mt. Jefferson's summit. We had hoped for views, but it remained cloudy, wet, and cold; so we came back down almost right away. Again, many crossbills appeared just below tree line. Ascending, we saw a group of about twenty and another of about forty. Descending, we saw several flocks of two and three birds and what I assume was the same flock of about twenty seen when we went up the trail. This large flock was perched when we came upon it the second time, with birds sitting in the spruce tops over a wide area. They flew up and away as we walked among them.

We ate lunch at the parking lot at Jefferson Notch, which at 3009 feet is the highest place on a public road in New Hampshire. Twenty-five feet from our car was a second Black-backed Woodpecker! I walked to within ten feet of it as it worked up and down a living balsam fir.

That afternoon we climbed the sunny south-facing slope of the Webster Cliff Trail in Crawford Notch. Two Common Ravens flew by, but no crossbills. I do not know whether we were not high enough or whether this slightly warmer environment did not suit them.

On Friday we again drove east to Pinkham Notch. We climbed Tuckerman Ravine over to and up Mt. Monroe, back across Bigelow Lawn, and down the Boot Spur Trail, a loop of about eleven miles. Ascending, we found a few crossbills: two unseen flocks, a flock of two, a flock of three. Three crossbills flew over us as we crossed Bigelow Lawn, and these were the only crossbills I saw above tree line. Descending, seven groups passed unseen plus a flock of six. A flock of three was perched on a spruce top beside the trail and included a

bright pink male. At the car, I found several Pine Siskins.

On Saturday we climbed Mt. Adams. The weather was clear but cold and very windy. I could stand on the summit, but I could not walk without being blown over. Because of the cold and the wind, we kept moving. No sensible crossbill would be out in such weather, and I saw none. A Common Raven and two solitary Boreal Chickadees down in the woods were all I found.

On Sunday we hiked up Mt. Willard. This was a short morning stroll up a former carriage road, our last walk before heading home. As we sat on the ledge looking out over Crawford Notch, despite our low elevation, two White-winged Crossbills flew by.

There must have been hundreds of White-winged Crossbills high in the White Mountains that summer. Their presence added immeasurably to my fun hiking there. Had I known they would be there, I might have expected to see them. But one can never expect to find crossbills. Like some other boreal birds, they are unpredictable. A large part of my pleasure at finding them was the surprise.

Very probably they will not be there in the summer of 1990. But some other boreal erratic may be. If you cannot find the time or the cash to go as far as the Maritimes for alcids, to the Dry Tortugas or to Falcon Dam, to the Chiricahuas for parrots, to Salton Sea or the Pribilofs, or if your spouse flatly refuses to vacation at the Brownsville dump, perhaps a short trip north to the Whites will please you. As for me, next year I may skip the hiking and just loiter around Jefferson Notch!

**ANDREW H. WILLIAMS** describes himself as a "Route 128-fast-track-corporate-computer dropout" who became a science librarian at Smith College. A Massachusetts naturalist long concerned about endangered species, Andy left in May 1990 to do graduate work in the field of conservation at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. *Bird Observer* wishes him well.

**Editor's Note.** For birders who find New Hampshire a convenient summer vacation spot and, like the author, are accompanied by nonbirding companions, it may be worthwhile to review the following *Bird Observer* articles about the Granite State.

"Birding on Mts. Clinton and Jackson in the White Mountains of New Hampshire" by Michael S. Greenwald, 1981, 9(2): 53-65.

"A Guide to the Birds of the Squam Lakes Region, New Hampshire" by Beverly S. Ridgely. 1983, 11(3): 125-136.

"Summer Birding in the White Mountains" by Peter H. Yaukey, 1987, 15(2): 56-60.

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## MANOMET BIRD OBSERVATORY ENTERS ITS THIRD DECADE: AN UPDATE ON RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

by R. Tod Highsmith

For twenty years, Manomet Bird Observatory (MBO) has occupied eighteen acres of catbrier thickets, open fields, cranberry bogs, and mixed woodlands on the shores of Cape Cod Bay just south of Plymouth. And for twenty years, a crew of devoted bird banders has patrolled a maze of paths along which fifty mist nets are strung, carefully sampling the waves of avian migrants that pass by each spring and fall. This consistency of effort has paid off well: over a quarter million birds of more than 250 species have been banded and released at MBO since its founding in 1969.

But banding birds is only a process and not an end in itself. Although many members of the New England birding community think of MBO primarily as a coastal banding station, our real mission is the research into bird biology and conservation that techniques like banding make possible. Nor is our mission only local in scope. Two current programs representative of MBO's international research agenda will be described briefly in this article.

As many birders are now aware, the notion that our locally breeding birds fly south each fall for "vacations" on their tropical "wintering" grounds is a misleading one. Not only is the act of migration a dangerous undertaking, but many species actually spend a greater part of their year in the tropics than they do on New England breeding territories. In the mid-1980s, MBO began intensive studies of the nonbreeding-season ecology of birds in the Central American nation of Belize. Although only about the size of New Hampshire, Belize has one of the largest remaining continuous tracts of tropical forest in the western hemisphere and hosts a wide variety of habitats that are rapidly disappearing in other tropical countries.

In the rugged Maya Mountains in the country's southwestern corner, our studies have shown that North American migrants account for more than forty percent of the birds found in human-altered habitats during the winter months, and nearly twenty percent of birds in mature forests. Just as in New England, Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat, and Indigo Bunting are characteristic of second growth, but a more enticing group of migrants is found in the undisturbed rain forests: Wood Thrush, Northern and Louisiana waterthrushes, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and Kentucky, Magnolia, and Worm-eating warblers.

By banding and recapturing birds over the course of several weeks, MBO scientists have found that many males and females maintain winter territories or home ranges and defend them against other individuals. What is more, birds may return to the same territory following their next southward migration, as

evidenced by individuals who are caught at the same mist net locations in succeeding years. This fidelity of some birds to specific areas underlines the threat posed by destruction of habitats. What does a bird do if the rain forest where it overwintered last year is a pasture this year?

In order to help preserve wintering habitats for migrants and year-round habitats for the many resident species, MBO has been working closely with the Belizean government to explore the possibilities for establishing a nature reserve along the Bladen Branch of the Monkey River. MBO's plan, which detailed the economic benefits of tourism over logging in this nearly pristine area, was well received. The Belizean government recently announced that 84,000 acres of tropical forest will be set aside as the Bladen Nature Reserve. The design and boundaries of the reserve are based largely on recommendations in MBO's report. Our efforts are now focused on the Rio Bravo Conservation Area, a large tract of varied habitats under acquisition by the Programme for Belize, a consortium of local and United States conservation groups. In addition to developing a catalog of the plant and animal life, MBO scientists will be evaluating the prospects for low-impact, sustained-yield forestry practices in appropriate areas, thus offering an alternative to the destructive practice of clear-cutting.

One of MBO's coastal research programs has been tracking the environmental health of another group of long-distance migrants. Since 1974 the International Shorebird Survey, launched in cooperation with the Canadian Wildlife Service, has been censusing shorebirds and collecting information on the resting and refueling stops they use in migration. Over six hundred volunteer observers, including a dedicated contingent of New England birders, have helped to assemble the largest data base on shorebird populations in the world.

In 1980 MBO chose a single species, the Red Knot, for more detailed study because of its vulnerable migration strategy and small population size. Using rocket nets to capture large numbers of roosting birds at a time, MBO scientists banded and color-marked birds (dyeing their white breast feathers a brilliant orange) to facilitate their observations. Knots were followed wherever they went: to spring stopovers in Delaware Bay, where they stuffed themselves on freshly-spawned horseshoe crab eggs, and to wintering areas as near as Florida and as far as the coast of Argentina.

The information gathered through these efforts is now being put to work for conservation purposes. Together with the National Audubon Society, MBO initiated the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) in 1987. With cooperation from governments and environmental groups in twelve countries, WHSRN works to identify and encourage the preservation of critical shorebird wintering and stopover sites. More than ten sites in the United States, Canada, and South America have so far been recognized for the enormous

concentrations of shorebirds they support, and hundreds of other sites are being evaluated. At some of these sites, ninety percent of the population of a single species will congregate simultaneously.

MBO's special role in WHSRN has been to offer training workshops for Latin American researchers in the techniques required for shorebird study: use of mist nets, rocket nets, and pull traps; and assessment of the physiological condition of birds in the hand. Together with workshops on conservation policy for individuals in management positions, this training helps to support and build research expertise in Latin American nations. As of the spring of 1990, WHSRN's research and administrative offices are also headquartered at MBO.

MBO's ability to continue these innovative research and education programs requires support from many sources, including New England birders. Individuals are welcome to become members of MBO. You are invited to attend our on-site banding demonstrations in the spring and fall and frequent lectures and slide shows by staff scientists at locations throughout New England. For more information, please call the MBO offices at 508-224-6521.

**R. TOD HIGHSMITH** is Public Information Coordinator at MBO. As a Manomet intern in the early 1980s, he taught school programs, gave bird-banding demonstrations, and took part in field research projects. He received his doctorate at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, studying song use and hybridization in Golden-winged and Blue-winged warblers.

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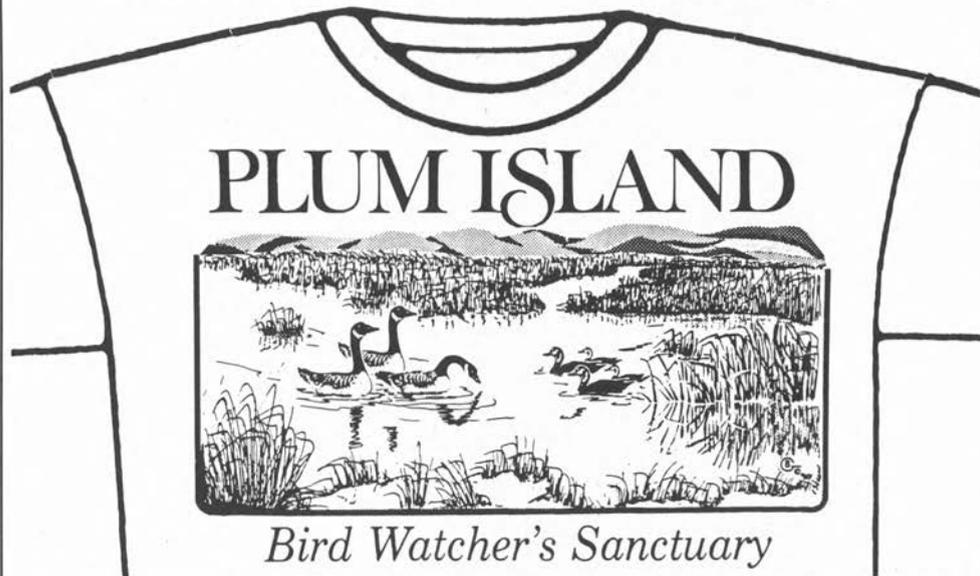
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## TOP TEN: A PREDICTION OF FUTURE VAGRANTS IN MASSACHUSETTS

by Richard A. Forster

In the December 1988 issue of *Birding*, 20 (6): 353, Don Roberson presented an article on the next ten most likely additions to the American Birding Association (ABA) checklist area. Roberson polled ten well-known North American birdwatchers to solicit their responses. The results made interesting reading and prompted thoughts about how this might be applied to Massachusetts.

In years past, I had drawn up a rather comprehensive list of species that I thought would in the future be recorded in Massachusetts. In the early 1980s Dick Veit and I independently selected the ten species most likely to be the next additions to the state's bird records. These two compilations were taped without ceremony side by side on a cabinet door. Although both lists have long since been relegated to the paper shredder, suffice it to say that some species on both lists have since been recorded in Massachusetts.

A number of other states have conducted polls similar to Roberson's, and it certainly seemed reasonable that with a little effort, we could produce such a "dream" list for Massachusetts. Hence, I solicited from a handful of well-known state birdwatchers their speculations (for publication in *Bird Observer*) about the next ten species of birds to be recorded in the state. The lack of an up-to-date "official" Massachusetts state list posed a slight problem. This was dealt with by providing the respondents with an arbitrary list of questionable sightings, fortunately very few in number, that should or should not be considered to have occurred in the state.

The game players were Bruce Hallett, Richard Heil, Blair Nikula, Wayne Petersen, Simon Perkins, Robert Stymeist, Richard Veit, and the writer. Expatriate Massachusetts birders Veit, transplanted to the West Coast, and Hallett, now resident in the Deep South, provided a continent-wide perspective, their participation justified by years of birding in the state (and Hallett's continued loyalty to the Red Sox). Few specific instructions were given the participants except that there was to be no discussion among them regarding possibilities until all "ballots" were in and that they could supply a rationale for their choices. Some chose to list their species according to a decreasing likelihood of occurrence.

Forty species received at least one vote as one of the next ten species to be recorded in the state. An additional fifteen species were mentioned in the runners-up section. With such a diversity of opinion, who is to say what is possible and what is not? The final tally is skewed somewhat by Veit's

selections, his rationale apparently being, if it can occur in California, it can occur in Massachusetts. Our understanding of the nature of vagrancy being what it is, who is to say that he is wrong? Who would have predicted an Azure Gallinule in New York, a Brown-chested Martin (of the southern South American race) in Massachusetts, a Variegated Flycatcher in Maine and Tennessee, or a Cox's Sandpiper anywhere in the Northern Hemisphere? My personal favorite for the off-the-wall vagrant of all time is a Siberian Flycatcher found in Bermuda in September 1980. Too bad it was not seen when it passed through Massachusetts.

The top-ten list is presented here in descending likelihood of occurrence. In cases where different species received the same number of votes for the top ten, the number of runner-up votes determined the rank. If species received the same number of votes for top ten and for runner-up, the rank of these species in the top ten was arbitrarily, perhaps whimsically, assigned. In the results given below, the number of top ten votes is given after the name with runner-up votes in parentheses. Comments, both verbal and written, of the respondents are incorporated in the discussion. The list was finalized as of April 1, 1990.

### Results and Comments

**1. Greater Golden-Plover:** seven. This species (*Pluvialis apricaria*) is the winner, a near unanimous choice as the vagrant most likely to be recorded next in Massachusetts with Veit being the only dissenter. Its selection is based on the frequency of spring occurrences in Newfoundland, most recently in April/May of 1988 when 350+ were seen. However, the unusual and infrequent weather conditions that bring Greater Golden-Plover to Newfoundland in spring may lack sufficient intensity to bring one to Massachusetts. The magnitude of the most recent flight may indicate that 1988 was our best chance. On the other hand, the species may have already occurred in the state. A godwit discovered in Dartmouth, Massachusetts on April 23, 1967, was accompanied by a "Golden Plover." By the time that the godwit's identity was established as a Black-tailed, the plover had already departed and could not be critically identified as to species. Too bad.

**2. Cave Swallow:** five (one). Cave Swallows (*Hirundo fulva*) are expanding their range in Texas and are increasingly recorded in Florida (Caribbean population), where they now breed. It has been recorded at least twice in Nova Scotia and will most probably occur as a spring overshoot.

**3. Redwing:** five (one). *Turdus iliacus* breeds in Iceland and has now occurred on four occasions in Newfoundland. This species has also been recorded in Nova Scotia (fall 1989) and New York (winter 1959) and would most likely be seen in late fall or winter.

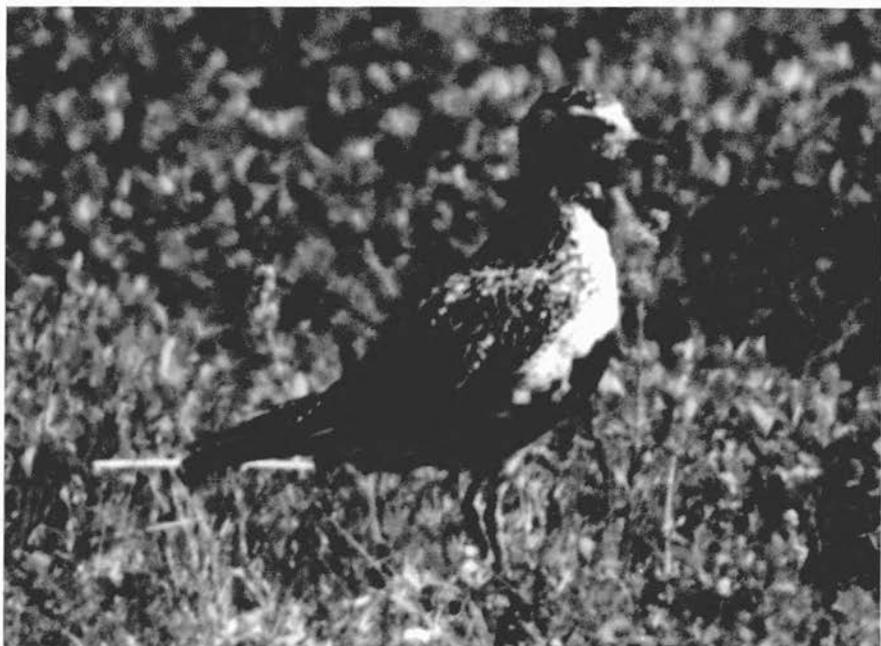
**4. Ross' Goose:** five. There are an increasing number of reports of *Chen*

*rossii* for the eastern seaboard from New Jersey south to Florida. The species was first recorded in New York in spring 1983 and again in spring 1984. It could be found with migrant Snow Geese in either fall or spring—if one would only put down in Massachusetts.

**5. Cassin's Sparrow:** four (one). A nondescript sparrow of the southwest, Cassin's (*Aimophila cassinii*) is occasionally found far out of its range. It has been recorded in Nova Scotia, New Jersey, and four times recently in Ontario. Records seem to indicate that it is most apt to occur in spring, but I would opt for fall, the season of rarities.

**6. Yellow-billed Loon:** four (one). *Gavia adamsii* winters only casually along the Pacific Coast of the United States. In recent years it has been recorded inland south as far as Nevada and Oklahoma. Additional sightings have been made recently in Colorado, Minnesota, Michigan, and Illinois. There is a record of one found dead on Long Island, New York, in 1930. This species will very probably be recorded in winter. The spate of recent extralimital sightings is possibly the result of greater awareness of diagnostic field marks.

**7. Lazuli Bunting:** four. *Passerina amoena* is a species with a widespread breeding range in western North America, including southern Canada. The predominant west-to-east weather flow in autumn would seem to favor this species, which has been recorded in Maine, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.



*Greater Golden-Plover*

*Photo by Wayne R. Petersen*



*Great-tailed Grackle*

*Photo by Richard A. Forster*

**8. Bell's Vireo:** four. Although *Vireo bellii* has been recorded in New York and New Jersey and breeds not too far away in the Midwest, that population has seriously declined so perhaps it is now becoming less and less a viable candidate for vagrancy to Massachusetts.

**9. Great-tailed Grackle:** three (one). The range of *Quiscalus mexicanus* has expanded tremendously in the West and Southwest and continues to do so. Concomitant with the range expansion has been a plethora of extralimital sightings, including reports from Nova Scotia and New York. This one could be right around the corner, but its similarity to Boat-tailed Grackle could prove to be a problem.

**10. Black-capped Petrel:** two (four). *Pterodroma hasitata* occurs in numbers in the Gulf Stream waters off the coast of the Carolinas in late summer and early fall, and there are no barriers to hinder its presence in Massachusetts offshore waters. It is apt to be hurricane-driven as was true in Rhode Island in 1985. There are five specimen records for New York.

That concludes the selection of future vagrants by our panel of experts. It now remains for the sharp-eyed observers of Massachusetts (and visitors) to prove or disprove the merits of these choices.

The following species were tied with Black-capped Petrel with two votes each for placement in the top ten but failed to qualify because they received fewer votes, if any, as runners-up:

**Masked Booby** (*Sula dactylatra*) (two) is now regular in summer off the

Carolina coast and a potential hurricane waif.

**Common Greenshank** (*Tringa nebularia*). One individual wintered in Newfoundland for two consecutive years.

**Violet-green Swallow** (*Tachycineta thalassina*) (two) has been reported from Nova Scotia and New Hampshire.

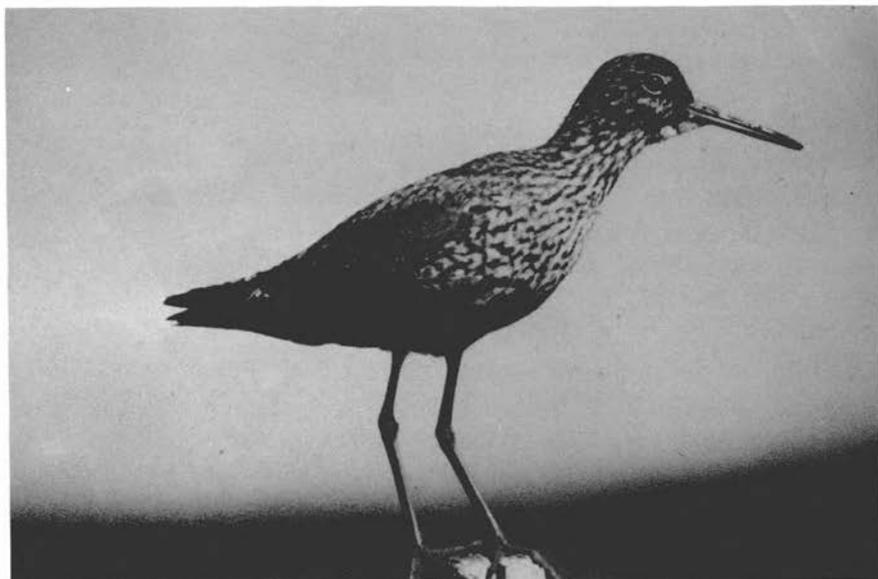
**Band-tailed Pigeon** (*Columba fasciata*) (one) has been recorded numerous times in northeastern North America.

**Northern Lapwing** (*Vanellus vanellus*) (two). There are several early winter records including recent sightings in northeastern North America.

**Common Redshank** (*Tringa totanus*) (one) is unrecorded in North America. It breeds in Iceland but may be recorded in spring migration as a vagrant that overwintered in the Caribbean area.

**Pacific Golden-Plover** (*Pluvialis dominica fulva*) is as yet unrecognized as an official species, but specific status looms imminent. "They seem to occur almost everywhere else in the world" (Nikula).

The following species all received one vote each to place in the top ten, and some received runner-up votes, the number of which appears in parentheses along with the person nominating the species. **Virginia's Warbler** (Forster) (two) has been recorded in Ontario and New Jersey twice. **Shiny Cowbird** (Veit) (two) has undergone rapid expansion in the Gulf states and might be the Cattle Egret of the twenty-first century. **Ferruginous Hawk** (Hallett) (one) has been recorded twice in New Jersey. **Azure Gallinule** (Veit) (one): Was the New York record a fluke? **Common Ringed Plover** (Nikula) (one) is quite plausible but as Perkins states "is in the top twenty, but we'll never know it." **Tropical/Couch's Kingbird** (formerly Tropical Kingbird) (Perkins) (one): Although it has been recorded in Maine, identification is now a real problem. **Calliope Hummingbird** (Heil) is "my 'off-the-wall' long shot. It breeds widely and commonly as far north as British Columbia, making it susceptible to eastern displacement August-September, and recent winter records along the Gulf Coast make it susceptible to reverse migration during strong prolonged southerly airflow November-December." **Laysan Albatross** (Veit). **Soft-plumaged Petrel** (Veit) is seemingly inconceivable, but it breeds in the North Atlantic, and Great Britain recorded its first five (!) sightings in August of 1989. **Dotterel** (Veit). **Long-toed Stint** (Veit). **Elegant Tern** (Veit). **Coue's (Greater Pewee) Flycatcher** (Veit). **Variiegated Flycatcher** (Petersen). **Black-throated Sparrow** (Nikula). **White Wagtail** (Nikula). **Yellow Wagtail** (Hallett). **Smew** (Hallett): Remember the Rhode Island bird? **Slaty-backed Gull** (Hallett): If it can occur in Missouri, why not Massachusetts? Unless we miss it. **British Storm-Petrel** (Stymeist) has occurred in Nova Scotia in August. **Hobby** (Stymeist). **Dusky Flycatcher** (Heil).



*Common Redshank*

*Photo by Peter Alden, Courtesy of MAS*

The following species received no votes for the top ten most likely to occur but were mentioned as runners-up, sometimes by more than one reviewer. Groove-billed Ani (3), Little Shearwater (2), Dusky-capped Flycatcher, Western Bluebird, Bachman's Sparrow, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Whooper Swan, Wood Sandpiper, Mediterranean Gull, Snowy Plover, Temminck's Stint, Common Sandpiper, Vermilion Flycatcher, Common House Martin, and Western Flycatcher (now split into two species).

So there you have it—ten species to anticipate as the most probable vagrants to occur in the state. In all, our eight knowledgeable respondents listed a possible fifty-five species with fully forty of these receiving at least one vote for inclusion in the top ten. A quick perusal of the list reveals that with few exceptions most of these are difficult to detect or to identify. However, if detecting and identifying birds were a simple straightforward pursuit, then most of the fun and excitement of birding would be lacking. Our ever changing world extends to our avian friends. It is easy to predict what is likely, based on past history, but to accurately predict what is likely in the future in this rapidly changing world is an inexact science at best.

**RICHARD A. FORSTER**, who has devoted years to analyzing bird sightings and observing migration, believes he has already seen in Massachusetts two of the species mentioned in this presentation but leaves the guesswork as to what they were to the reader.

## BOOK REVIEW

by David C. Morimoto

*A Field Guide to Eastern Forests* by John C. Kricher (text and photographs) and Gordon Morrison (illustrations), Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1988; 368 pages, 60 color plates and numerous black-and-white illustrations; \$22.95 (hard cover) and \$14.95 (soft cover).

We students of nature enhance our experiences by referring to taxonomically oriented field guides to become familiar with the biota of a particular region. These field guides, while essential for serious nature exploration, traditionally include only limited notes on the natural history of organisms. Inevitably, as we spend more time afield observing things, we begin to ask questions. What determines the structure of a forest? How old is that field? Why do birds forage in mixed flocks during winter? Why are there so many viburnum fruits left on the plant in autumn while spicebush fruits are all gone? Why do redstart males take two years to acquire adult plumage? Why did I have 685 pounds of acorns in my yard? Discovering the answers to questions such as these is the most rewarding aspect of nature exploration. John Kricher facilitates and fuels this process in *A Field Guide to Eastern Forests*, No. 37 in the well-known Peterson Field Guide Series.

This "second generation" guide is a refreshing departure from the traditional field guide. It is, as Kricher states, "a field guide to ecology," focusing on the interactions among the components of forest systems and the resulting structure and dynamics that emerge.

Following an introduction to the book, Kricher takes the reader on a pattern-seeking tour through a forest, calling attention to a number of forest field marks such as stratification, types of trees, indicator species, species diversity, type of soil, plant population patterns, forest age, and forest gaps. He also discusses forest borders, or ecotones, old fields, forest fauna, identification of species, and the forest food chain. The chapter ends with a handy "Forest Field-mark Questionnaire" that is useful in guiding the reader through the forest and toward an understanding of it.

But Kricher does much more than simply point out patterns of field marks; he explains why they exist, i.e., the ecological processes giving rise to them. This approach works very well as I discovered when I recently adopted this book as the required text for a college seminar in field-oriented ecology. My students were genuinely excited by looking for and recognizing patterns and by coming to understand the underlying processes. (They certainly preferred Kricher's colorful writing to the tedium of deciphering the many original research papers I also asked them to read.)

Next, Kricher briefly describes each of the forest communities covered in the book and lists indicator plants and animals for each one. The majority of these twenty-five types of forest fall within the Eastern Deciduous Forest Biome and range from Northern Hardwood to Maple-Basswood and Appalachian Cove forests.

Subsequent chapters cover change on ecological and evolutionary time scales. Kricher first discusses the components and types of disturbance and their effects on ecosystems and follows with a consideration of ecological succession, concentrating on old field succession, its field marks and indicator species, and the general sequence of plant communities from the pioneer community to the perennial herbaceous and woody plant community. One important point made is that although we can predict these broad patterns of plant community change, the species composition of old field plant communities is largely determined by chance. This informative discussion is followed by a detailed description of the plant species of old fields, including both species accounts and, most important, discussions of adaptations of species to old field environments. This section also covers sand dune and riverine zonation and the development of vegetation on the substrate of rocky outcroppings and along power lines. As someone interested in landscape ecology, I was pleased to find a section on pattern and process at the landscape level. Kricher describes landscape components such as various patch types and corridors as well as the effects of forest insularization on species number and composition, focusing on bird species of forest interior and edge habitats—a topic of particular importance, given the increasingly human-modified landscape we live in.

In a chapter on adaptation, Kricher distinguishes between "how" and "why" questions and discusses adaptations such as interactions between plants and insects, hibernation in woodchucks, and migration in birds. Following that is an excellent discussion of the mechanics of adaptation—the differential survival and reproduction in populations of individuals possessing genetically determined traits that allow them to fare better than other individuals under certain environmental conditions. An understanding of natural selection is essential to insight into ecological pattern and process, and the theme of adaptation runs through the entire book.

This guide is generously illustrated with many splendid line drawings and fifty-three plates, forty-one in color, by Massachusetts artist Gordon Morrison. The plates are diverse and include select amphibians and fungi; indicator species of various forest types and successional stages; adaptations of various plants; mimicry, camouflage, defense, and predation in insects and reptiles; milkweed natural history; fruits of different quality; irruptive bird species; and nesting behavior, mixed species foraging, and sexual dimorphism in birds. Also included are seven photographic plates, some with as many as eight small

pictures, of landscape components, wild flower adaptations, forest types, and seasonal and successional patterns.

In the closing chapters, Kricher takes a seasonal approach, focusing on ecological patterns and processes in the four seasons. Topics range widely reflecting the exciting diversity of nature year-round—pollination, bird territoriality, vocalizations, stream habitats, and amphibians in spring; leaf and tree geometry, bird nesting patterns, fruiting and seed dispersal, and insect behavior in summer; and soil and decomposition, flocking, winter adaptations, and irruptions of birds in autumn and winter, to name a few.

Kricher successfully and skillfully applies the "Peterson system" (recognition by combinations of field marks) to the identification of ecological patterns in eastern forests but goes well beyond the usual field guide by explaining how and why. Kricher's well-written, carefully edited, and lively text combined with Gordon Morrison's illuminating drawings results in a book that guides the novice and the more experienced naturalist alike on an enlightening tour of exploration, pattern discovery, and interpretation—a most exciting and rewarding process that feeds on itself and provides a lifetime of enjoyment and fulfillment. I recommend it to anyone who wants to learn the fundamentals of ecology, to know and understand forests and fields, and to broaden and sharpen skills as a naturalist.

**DAVID C. MORIMOTO** is an ecologist who earned his Ph.D. in biology from Boston University in 1989, researching avian community structure in the Massachusetts pine barrens. He now teaches ecology in the biology department of Regis College in Weston and is studying the bird assemblages of Weston's conservation lands. David has been a birder for many years and is a member of Nuttall Ornithological Club. He lives in Weymouth with wife Sandi and two-year-old son Justin, already a budding naturalist.

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**SIGHTING OF A ROSS' GULL (*Rhodostethia rosea*)  
AT NILES POND, GLOUCESTER**

by Richard A. Forster

**Date:** February 1, 1990. **Location:** Niles Pond, Gloucester

**Time:** approximately 11:15 A.M. to 1:24 P.M.

**Observers:** R. A. Forster, D. R. Arvidson; subsequently, m.obs.

*Editor's Note: What follows is Richard Forster's report of the sighting with supplementary comments in brackets by the editor, who was privileged to be a part of the event and finds it difficult to be reticent about the experience.*

While on a birding venture to Cape Ann, we arrived at Niles Pond in the late morning under overcast skies. The eastern portion of the pond was open, but the rest of it was frozen and supported a sizable number of large gulls, most resting in a large, rather compact flock on the ice adjacent to the open water, with a small number of gulls bathing in the open water near the ice. A cursory inspection of these gulls revealed two Glaucous Gulls but only one Iceland Gull—a seemingly small number considering the number of gulls present. Looking back toward the eastern portion of the pond, I noticed a smaller group (a dozen or so) of Bonaparte's Gulls standing on the ice. We decided to move closer to that area to give them a look-see.

The Bonaparte's were standing on the ice next to the open water about a hundred yards distant. Although cloudy, the light was good since it was at our backs. A quick look at the gulls was rewarded with a first-winter Common Black-headed Gull, quite obvious amidst the smaller Bonaparte's Gulls. After Dorothy Arvidson had studied the black-headed through the scope, I resumed scoping the other gulls. *[We were sharing my scope, because Richard had left his in a friend's car. This may be why I was invited along on the expedition. Never mind; I am not ungrateful.]*

My attention was drawn to a gull standing at the front of the Bonaparte's that had a pink blush to the underparts. Focusing my attention on this gull, I immediately noticed its small rounded head, prominent dark eye, short black bill, and short legs and immediately recognized it as an adult Ross' Gull. The initial observation lasted about two seconds before the gull flew. *[At this point, Richard turned around: "I have a Ross' Gull." Earlier, at Eastern Point, he had pointed out a Glaucous Gull flying over the road that had completely escaped my aging eyes. This was the first I had seen in two years and I announced that I would go home very happy. But Richard answered, "No, no; now we're going to find a good bird—a Ross' Gull." Therefore, when he announced he had a Ross' Gull in the scope, my first thought was, "He's kidding. This is some kind of a test to trip me up."]*

Rising from the scope and scanning with binoculars, I was unable to relocate the bird. However, I did notice a number of Bonaparte's Gulls actively bathing in the open water arranged in a loose linear grouping off to the left. After a few minutes, the Ross' Gull was noticed as it flew a few feet and then landed. At this time the pale gray wings and mantle, devoid of any dark markings, and the white trailing edge to the wing were clearly observed. Also, the all-white, wedge-shaped tail was clearly noted. For the next few minutes the bird was seen intermittently bathing and in brief flight sorties. Eventually the Ross' Gull flew and landed with a growing number of Bonaparte's Gulls standing on the ice at the edge of the open water. The Ross' was standing in the front row of the Bonaparte's Gulls, and field marks were clearly observed. The dove-like head, short black bill, mantle paler than Bonaparte's Gull, long wings and tail, and short legs were clearly noted. The short legs, red but not bright red, were very different from the pink legs of the Bonaparte's Gulls. The eye appeared dark and large, perhaps emphasized by the whiteness of the head. A very small black spot, smaller than the eye, was located posterior to and slightly below the eye.

*[Because we had only one scope and groups of gulls were repeatedly taking off, then landing and regrouping, there were some hectic minutes of desperate maneuvering before Richard was able to show me the gull in the scope. Later, we concurred that our chief worry at this tense time was that the bird would vanish before I could see it. But gradually the birds became more quiescent. I then succeeded in getting a brief but memorable view of the Ross' Gull in the scope, easy to pick out because of its shorter stature compared to the Bonaparte's beside it, the pinkish breast clearly visible, its short legs darker than an adjacent gull's, the small bill, the tiny remnant of the black neck band—everything except the tail shape and the underwings. Thereupon the tension broke, and Richard Forster lost his cool, dancing about with gleeful abandon. Thereafter our viewing was more relaxed, and happily for us, the gulls remained fairly quiet. Richard's professional self took over and he made notes while I enjoyed a prolonged and very pleasing look at a bird I had seen only twice before in my life.]*

We left the area about 11:50 A.M. to make a telephone call to alert others to the presence of a Ross' Gull and then returned to the location. During this period Bonaparte's Gulls were arriving in increasing numbers. However, we were able to locate the bird immediately upon our return. During this period of observation, the gulls would periodically fly up as a group and return shortly to resume their position on the ice. The Ross' Gull was often difficult to locate during such panic flights, but when seen, the gray underwing could be discerned as a medium gray, neither dark nor light. The wedge-shaped tail was noted on several occasions during these flights.

After noontime the sky became progressively brighter, and the pink blush became less obvious and harder to discern. Also the number of Bonaparte's Gulls increased to about a hundred and twenty individuals. The Ross' Gull became increasingly more difficult to distinguish as it became concealed in the midst of the numerous Bonaparte's Gulls. *[In the brighter light, the pinkish breast seemed to lose color but still appeared, to my eyes, as a gray shadow, distinct enough to enable me to locate the bird several times.]*

In most respects the Ross' Gull mirrored the behavior of the Bonaparte's Gulls, with one notable exception. When the gulls took flight and returned to the ice, the vast majority of Bonaparte's Gulls would remain standing on the ice, but the Ross' Gull would remain standing for only a short period of time and then would sit on the ice. This behavior is most likely an adaptation to its normal winter range along the pack ice where minimizing heat loss from bare parts is a primary concern. *[This also made it easier to pick out the Ross' Gull; whenever the flock rearranged itself, one looked first at the sitting gulls. Friend Janet Lee Heywood who saw the Ross' Gull later in the afternoon asserts that the gull did not "sedately sit" whenever it landed but immediately "flopped belly-down" on the ice.]*

At 1:24 P.M. the flock again flushed, as had happened on numerous occasions during the viewing period. A small group consisting of four Bonaparte's Gulls and the Ross' departed the pond in a southeasterly direction.

During the viewing period about twenty-five to thirty-five observers were fortunate enough to see this Arctic gem. *[Just before we left to telephone, we had been joined by one couple to whom Richard showed the bird. But when we returned from calling Wayne Petersen at Mass. Audubon, the speed with which other birders joined us was astonishing—Robert Vernon and wife, Herman*



Ross' Gull  
Photo by Richard A. Forster

Newburyport, MA  
March 4, 1975

Weissberg, Kathy Leahy (who went back to pick up a Questar), Robert Buchsbaum, Jim Baird, Jerry Bertrand, Arnold Brown, and Nick Nash, among others. One additional note: I should have known that Richard's remark to me at Eastern Point about finding a Ross' Gull was not just birder's chitchat. Later on I learned that he had commented to another friend sometime in mid-January that it was time to look for a Ross' Gull at Newburyport. Such prescience is not guesswork or mystical inspiration but comes from years of field experience and study, from a thorough training in bird biology, a professional life focused on analyzing bird sightings and bird migration, plus an encyclopedic rolodex of ornithological data that Richard Forster carries around in his head.]

Ross' Gull can be found at a few Arctic locations, including breeding at Churchill, Manitoba, but away from Arctic waters, the species is a bona fide vagrant. This sighting represents the fourth occurrence in Massachusetts. Other notable North American sightings are listed in the accompanying table. [Note carefully in the table Richard has compiled the last bird on the list. Surely, that is "our" bird still going south.] Perhaps Ross' Gull occurs more frequently than supposed in wintering flocks of Bonaparte's Gulls, among which its size and plumage, so similar to Bonaparte's, make it rather inconspicuous.

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**Occurrence of Ross' Gull in North America  
Exclusive of Alaska and Churchill**

British Columbia, Victoria	1 1W	November 9, 1966
Massachusetts, Newburyport	1 adult	January 12-May 9, 1975
Newfoundland, Fogo Island	1 adult	December 18, 1976
Illinois, Chicago	1 adult	Nov. 19-Dec. 2, 1978
Massachusetts, Newburyport	1 adult	April 26, 1981
Colorado, Julesburg	1 1S (or 1W)	April 25-May 7, 1983
Ontario, Moosonee	1 adult	May 14-23, 1983
Connecticut, West Haven	1 adult	April 11-22, 1984
Massachusetts, Newburyport	1 adult	December 3, 1984
Newfoundland, L'Anse-aux-Meadows	1 1S (or 1W)	May 11, 1985
Tennessee, Reelfoot Lake	1 adult W	December 19-28, 1985
Newfoundland, Stephenville	1 (2W?)	January 2-3, 1986
Oregon, Yaquina Bay	1 adult	Jan. 18-March 2, 1986
Newfoundland, L'Anse-aux-Meadows	1 adult	September 22, 1986
Nova Scotia, Canso	1 1W	December 1-4, 1986
New York, Lake Montauk	1 2W	December 11, 1986
Massachusetts, Gloucester	1 adult	February 1-2, 1990
Maryland, Baltimore (Back River)	1 adult	Mar. 3-17, Apr. 13-, 1990

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## FIELD NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE \_\_\_\_\_

### SIGHTING OF A GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW AT DARTMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS

**Editor's Note.** The following field note is transcribed directly from notes made in the field and represents yet another example of a possible format for reporting a rarity.

January 14, 1990, 2:30 P.M.

Description of sparrow seen in Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Smith's Neck Road at the end near Salter's Point.

Bird was first observed by GWG when it flew up from the side of the road to the top of a low stone wall and was tentatively identified as a Golden-crowned Sparrow. It then flew over the wall to the lawn of an octagonal, windmill-type building where it fed with two Song Sparrows.

Observed in good light—sunny—for ten to fifteen minutes by both GWG and JBG. The birds were still on the lawn when we left.

- Sparrow similar in size and aspect to a White-crowned Sparrow; larger than the Song Sparrows.
- Dull gold color from above the bill to the middle of the top of the head and between two dark brown streaks on the head.
- Fine dark streaks through the top of the head.
- Throat under the bill dirty white.
- Nape gray.
- Breast and belly gray.
- Dark brown streaks down the back.
- Light lower mandible seemed to curve upwards.
- One narrow white wingbar.
- Long tail.
- Brown rump.
- Orange legs.

Based mainly on the first two items above, we concluded that the bird was an immature Golden-crowned Sparrow. The bird most closely resembled the immature shown on page 404 of the *National Geographic Field Guide*.

George W. Gove, Ashland  
Judy B. Gordon, Hopkinton

## NOT A HAG AT ALL

Mariners from bygone days called this bird "sea hag." Was it named for the appearance of its plumage during molt or for the bird's ragged, badly worn feathers after months of pelagic wanderings? Or perhaps it was the bird's tuneless voice as it haggled over fish offal discarded by the boats on the Grand Banks. Whatever the derivation may be, its common name shearwater seems more appropriate for this graceful, buoyant species whose evolution has made it solidly adapted to an oceanic environment so vast, the unknowing may look upon it as an avian desert.



Greater Shearwaters breed in the South Atlantic Ocean on three tiny islands (the Nightingale and Inaccessible islands of the Tristan da Cunha group and on Gough Island 225 miles to the south), comprising in combined area less than 38 square miles. From here, just east of the midpoint between southern Africa and South America, about four million of these oceanic gypsies disperse northward in a transequatorial clockwise migration that carries them as far north as southern Greenland.

Recognized by its stiff-winged glides and shallow, rapid wingbeats, the Greater Shearwater is able to take advantage of the slightest updraft off the face of a rolling swell. After rising a few meters above the surface of a calm sea, it tips and glides downward in a wide circle, shearing the fluid plain from time to time with its wing tips, displaying the behavior that gives this nomad its name.

Peter Trull, Chatham

**Addendum.** The word "hag," for which Merriam-Webster's *International Unabridged* supplies several diverse meanings, has its origins in Old English—*haegtesse* ("harpy" or "witch") and *haga* ("hedge"). In modern British dialect the word is used as a verb meaning to *hack*, *chop*, or *hew*, and as a noun to mean a *hedge*, *woods*, *enclosed field*, or *notch*—this last use stemming from *hagga* in Old Norwegian meaning a "chop" or "stroke" as of a sword. Thus, "shearwater" is an inversion of the old name "sea hag" and describes the bird's habit of flight.

The Greater Shearwater pictured here was photographed by the author in July 1985 off Chatham.

# FIELD RECORDS

## JANUARY/ FEBRUARY 1990



© Barry W. Van Dusen

by Richard A. Forster, George W. Gove, and Robert H. Stymeit

January 1990 was extremely mild with frequent rain and snow. The temperature averaged 36.5 degrees, 6.8 degrees above normal and a welcomed 14.7 degrees warmer than the record-breaking cold December 1989. This was the fifth mildest January in 130 years of records for Boston. Precipitation totaled 3.78 inches; measurable amounts fell on thirteen days. Snow totaled 7.0 inches, 5.3 inches less than average. Fog was frequent, and thunder was noted on January 21. Sleet occurred on January 21, 24, and 29.

February 1990 had a variety of weather. The temperature averaged 34.1 degrees, 3.4 degrees above the norm. The unseasonable warmth of January continued well into February, but the final days of the month brought bitterly cold weather. The high temperature was 65 degrees on February 23, and the low of 3 degrees was recorded just three days later. Many suburban areas had subzero readings on February 26 and 27. Precipitation totaled 3.60 inches; measurable amounts occurred on twelve days. Snowfall amounted to 16.9 inches, 5.6 inches more than normal. The heaviest snowfall of 10.2 inches was on February 24-25. The two major snowstorms of the month came on weekends.

R.H.S.

### LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

For the most part this group settled in after the bitterly cold December, and numbers of a great many species were considerably below normal. Loons were scarce with the notable exception of those at Martha's Vineyard. One of the more implausible finds of the winter was a Red-throated Loon on the Sudbury River in Framingham on January 1. Typically, Red-necked Grebes began to build up in February. Better than normal numbers of gannets were present. Considering the season, the number of Great Blue Herons on Martha's Vineyard was noteworthy. Wood Ducks and Northern Pintails were fairly well reported, and a Northern Shoveler on Martha's Vineyard was unique. Eurasian Wigeons wintered in traditional locations with American Wigeons. Redheads were almost totally restricted to Plymouth, and a handful of Lesser Scaups was reported. King Eiders were reported in about normal numbers but thinly distributed, mostly at Cape Ann. Harlequin Ducks were reported only from Martha's Vineyard, Cape Ann, and North Scituate, albeit in fair numbers. Only one Ruddy Duck was reported, possibly a new winter low.

R.A.F.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
<b>Red-throated Loon</b>				
1/1-31	M. V.	34 max 1/17	V. Laux	
1/1, 1/6	Framingham, P.I.	1, 2	R. Forster#, I. Giriunas	
1/20	P'town	25	B. Nikula	
<b>Common Loon</b>				
1/1-31	M. V.	225 max 1/17	V. Laux	
1/2	Salisbury, Gloucester	5, 6	R. Forster#, M. Lynch#	
1/25	P.I.	14	W. Drew#	
2/7, 2/13	P.I., Ipswich	17, 7	W. Drew#, D. Rimmer	
<b>Pied-billed Grebe</b>				
1/27	Marston Mills	1	M. Lynch#	
2/18	Plymouth	1	J. Hepburn	
<b>Horned Grebe</b>				
1/6, 1/13	P.I., Nahant	7, 5	I. Giriunas, J. Berry	
1/16, 1/27	Cape Ann, M. V.	59, 34	R. Heil, M. Lynch#	
2/8, 2/28	Dennis, Swampscott-Marblehead	10, 35+	B. Nikula, R. Forster	
<b>Red-necked Grebe</b>				
1/1-31	M. V.	4 max	V. Laux	
1/1, 1/2	Rockport, Gloucester	2, 5	H. Wiggin, M. Lynch#	
1/2, 1/20	Salisbury, P'town	1, 3	R. Forster, B. Nikula	
1/25, 1/28	P.I., Nahant	2, 4	W. Drew#, R. Kennedy	
2/1-28	Hull	86 max 2/5	R. Abrams	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
Red-necked Grebe (continued)				
2/8, 2/12	Dennis, Marblehead	8, 134	B. Nikula, R. Heil	
2/28	Nahant-Marblehead	208	R. Forster	
Northern Gannet				
1/13, 1/20	Eastham-P'town, P'town	200, 200	W. Petersen, B. Nikula	
1/24, 1/28	Rockport (A.P.)	7, 3	T. Aversa, M. Lynch#	
2/10, 2/17	Duxbury, N. Scituate	4, 10	D. F. Oliver#, E. Nielsen#	
2/17, 2/24	Rockport	8, 3	D. F. Oliver#, J. Brown	
Great Cormorant				
1/6, 1/13	Plymouth-Scituate, Nahant	34, 50+	BBC (B. Howell), J. Berry	
1/14, 1/27	Newburyport, Cape Ann	70+, 50	J. Berry, BBC (S. Bolton)	
2/3, 2/23	Cape Ann, P'town	60, 74	BBC (R. Vernon), R. Titus#	
2/26, 2/27	Salisbury, N. Scituate (Minot)	40+, 145	J. Berry, R. Forster	
Double-crested Cormorant				
1/13, 1/27	Orleans, off M. V.	1 imm, 1	W. Petersen, M. Lynch#	
2/10, 2/11	Newbury, Falmouth	2, 4	BBC (A. Bennett), I. Giriunas#	
American Bittern				
2/1	Nantucket	1	E. + C. Andrews	
Great Blue Heron				
1/1-31	M. V.	55 max 1/22	V. Laux	
1/1-31	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	4 max 1/3	LCES (J. Hill)	
1/1, 1/9	Arlington, Eastham	1, 2	L. Taylor, T. Aversa	
1/6	Framingham, Plymouth	2, 3	K. Hamilton, BBC (B. Howell)	
1/13, 1/14	Hull, Westport	4, 9	P. Thayer, G. Gove#	
2/7, 2/11	Wayland, Falmouth	1, 2	B. O'Brien, I. Giriunas	
2/12, 2/18	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Newbypt	9, 1	LCES (J. Hill), R. Forster	
2/27	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	7	R. Forster	
Black-crowned Night-Heron				
1/1, 1/2	Nantucket, M. V.	2, 6	R. Stymeist, V. Laux	
Mute Swan				
1/1-31	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	96 max 1/6	BBC (B. Howell)	
1/7, 1/14	Falmouth, Westport	81, 36	M. Lynch#, G. Gove#	
1/20, 1/27	S. Dart., Cape Ann	130, 16	R. Stymeist, BBC (S. Bolton)	
2/1-28	Gloucester	12	v. o.	
2/11	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	23	I. Giriunas#	
2/19	Scituate	22	M. Lynch#	
Snow Goose				
1/7, 1/14	Lakeville, Dartmouth	1, 1	M. Lynch#, G. Gove#	
1/28	Westport	1	LCES (J. Hill)	
2/2	Plymouth	1	D. Clapp	
Brant				
1/1-31	Revere (Point of Pines)	250 max	J. Quigley	
1/14, 1/21	Plymouth, Quincy	40, 700	M. Argue#, E. Taylor	
1/28	Newburyport	1	BBC (P. Stevens)	
2/7, 2/12	Revere (Point of Pines), Squantum	425, 1000+	J. Quigley, R. Abrams	
Canada Goose				
1/1-31	P.I.	215 max 1/25	W. Drew#	
1/2, 1/12	Brockton, Lakeville	60, 200+	K. Anderson	
1/7	Falmouth	161	M. Lynch#	
2/1-28	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	484 max 2/12	LCES (J. Hill)	
2/22, 2/27	P.I., Brockton	190, 213	W. Drew#, R. Titus	
Wood Duck				
1/1, 1/14, 1/28	Arlington	3 m + 1 f, 1 m + 1 f, 2	L. Taylor	
1/16, 1/27	Boston (Franklin Park), Marston	Mills 1 m, 1 f	T. Aversa, M. Lynch#	
2/6, 2/10	Framingham, Arlington	1 m, pair	K. Hamilton, L. Taylor	
2/26	Wellesley	4	J. Miller	
Green-winged Teal				
1/13, 1/20	Eastham, Westport	6, 2	SSBC (W. Petersen), R. Stymeist	
1/28	Lexington	1	L. Taylor	
2/7	S. Peabody, W. Roxbury	3, 5	R. Heil, T. Aversa	
2/13, 2/18	E. Middleboro, N. Harwich	4, 2	T. Aversa, B. Nikula	
American Black Duck				
1/1-31	P.I.	230 max 1/25	W. Drew#	
1/17, 1/20	Plymouth, S. Dartmouth	600, 1200	I. Giriunas, R. Stymeist#	
1/28	Westport	450	R. Stymeist	
2/1-28	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	197 max 2/12	LCES (J. Hill)	
2/7, 2/22	P.I.	510, 310	W. Drew#	
2/18	Hanson	250	W. Petersen	
Mallard				
1/7	Falmouth	208	M. Lynch#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
Mallard (continued)				
1/20	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	325	M. Lynch#	
2/1-28	Stoneham	500 max 2/28	T. Aversa	
2/6, 2/27	Lynn (Flax Pd), Brockton	410, 220	T. Aversa, R. Titus	
Northern Pintail				
1/1-31	Gloucester, Stoneham	1, 2 max 1/18	R. Heil, T. Aversa	
1/3	Boston (Franklin Park)	2 m	T. Aversa	
1/21; 1/14, 1/28	M. V.; Westport	4; 5, 42	V. Laux; G. Gove#, R. Stymeist	
1/31	Sandwich	11	P. Trimble	
2/1-28	Stoneham	3 max 2/11	T. Aversa	
2/5, 2/6	Wachusett Res., E. Gloucester	1, 1	E. Salmela, T. Aversa	
2/17	P.I.	2	P. + F. Vale	
Northern Shoveler				
1/1-31	M. V. (Edgartown)	1	V. Laux	
Gadwall				
1/1-31	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	42 max 1/20	M. Lynch# + v. o.	
1/6, 1/13	Framingham, Marston Mills	1, 36	K. Hamilton, B. Nikula	
1/15, 1/23	M. V. (Chilmark), S. Dart.	25, 1	V. Laux, T. Aversa	
1/27 + 1/31	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	5	LCES (J. Hill)	
2/1-28	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	42 max 2/17	G. Gove + v. o.	
2/7, 2/14	S. Peabody	2, 16	R. Heil, T. Aversa	
2/12, 2/17	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Lynnfield	2, 4	LCES (J. Hill), P. + F. Vale	
2/23	Marblehead Neck	3	I. Lynch	
Eurasian Wigeon				
1/1-2/28	Chatham	1 m	v. o.	
1/1-2/28	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	1 m	v. o.	
1/1-31	M. V. (West Tisbury)	1 m	V. Laux	
American Wigeon				
1/1-31	Chatham	12+	B. Nikula	
1/1-31	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	85 max 1/20	M. Lynch#	
1/6	E. Gloucester	2	H. Coolidge	
1/27	Cape Ann, Marston Mills	4, 6	BBC (S. Bolton), M. Lynch#	
2/1-28	Chatham	14 max	B. Nikula	
2/1-28	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	150+ max 2/2	D. Clapp + v. o.	
2/3, 2/19	E. Gloucester, Scituate	4, 9	J. Berry#, M. Lynch#	
Canvasback				
1/12, 1/28	Lakeville	6, 19	K. Anderson, R. Titus	
1/14, 1/27	Falmouth	50, 62	M. Argue#, M. Lynch#	
1/14, 1/28	Westport, S. Dartmouth	40, 140	G. Gove#, R. Stymeist#	
1/13	Weymouth	2	D. Morimoto	
2/1-28	Falmouth	300 max 2/11	I. Giriunas	
2/10, 2/23	Quincy	2, 6	E. Taylor, K. Ryan	
2/11	Lakeville	6	K. Holmes	
Redhead				
1/8, 1/14	Falmouth	2	W. Drew# + v. o.	
1/13	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	12	R. Titus	
2/1-28	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	15 max 2/11	I. Giriunas#	
Ring-necked Duck				
1/6, 1/14	Framingham, Falmouth	10, 175	K. Hamilton#, H. Wiggin#	
1/20, 1/23	Plymouth, Lakeville	170, 6	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
2/11, 2/17	Lakeville, Lynnfield	100+, 11	K. Holmes, P. + F. Vale	
2/18, 2/19	S. Hanson, Arlington	4, 7	W. Petersen, L. Taylor	
2/28	Lynn (Flax Pd)	11	R. Forster	
Greater Scaup				
1/6, 1/7	Gloucester, N: Falmouth	20, 250+	H. Coolidge#, M. Lynch#	
1/13	Winthrop, Revere	65, 70	J. Berry	
1/20, 1/27	Newbypt, Falmouth	15, 120+	BBC (I. Giriunas), M. Lynch#	
2/11, 2/12	Falmouth, Squantum	250, 480	I. Giriunas#, R. Abrams	
2/13, 2/17	Weymouth, Lakeville	150, 200	T. Aversa, W. Petersen	
2/23	Quincy	400	E. Taylor	
Lesser Scaup				
1/7, 1/14	Falmouth, Newbypt	3, 1	M. Lynch#, J. Berry#	
1/28	Lakeville	5+	R. Titus	
2/13	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	6	T. Aversa	
scaup species				
2/18	Harwich	40	R. Rozsa	
Common Eider				
1/6, 1/15	Hull, Plymouth	385, 1400	P. Thayer, I. Giriunas	
2/5	Hull	2200	R. Abrams	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
<b>King Eider</b>				
1/1-31	Rockport (A.P.)	2 imm m + 1 f	R. Heil + v. o.	
1/13, 1/20	E. Orleans, Plymouth	1 m + 1 f, 1 m	SSBC (W. Petersen), M. Lynch#	
1/16	Gloucester	1 imm m + 3 f	R. Heil	
2/3	E. Gloucester	1 imm m + 6 f	v. o.	
2/11	Rockport	2 imm m	M. Lynch#	
<b>Harlequin Duck</b>				
1/1-2/28	Rockport	9	v. o.	
1/1-2/28	N. Scituate	3	v. o.	
1/1-31	M. V.	17 max 1/22	V. Laux	
1/2	Gloucester	3	M. Lynch#	
2/2-17	Gloucester	2-6 max 2/3	E. Taylor + v. o.	
<b>Oldsquaw</b>				
1/6, 1/7	Hull, Woods Hole	47, 500+	P. Thayer, M. Lynch#	
1/9	P.I.	51	W. Drew#	
2/26	Newburyport	50+	J. Berry	
<b>Black Scoter</b>				
1/2	Gloucester, Hull	5, 3	M. Lynch#, P. Thayer	
1/27	M. V.	100+	M. Lynch#	
2/3, 2/7	Cape Ann, P.I.	10, 25	BBC (R. Vernon), W. Drew#	
2/13	N. Scituate	3	T. Aversa	
<b>Surf Scoter</b>				
1/2, 1/13	Salisbury, Nahant	15, 5	R. Forster, J. Berry	
1/13, 1/28	Eastham, Rockport	50+, 5	SSBC (W. Petersen), J. Berry	
2/5	Hull	140	R. Abrams	
2/28	Marblehead-Swampscott	65	R. Forster	
<b>White-winged Scoter</b>				
1/9, 1/14	P.I., Nahant	170, 295	W. Drew#, R. Kennedy	
1/27	M. V.	310	M. Lynch#	
2/5	Hull	700	R. Abrams	
<b>Common Goldeneye</b>				
1/6, 1/7	Framingham, N. Falmouth	21, 90+	K. Hamilton#, M. Lynch#	
1/12, 1/14	Lakeville, Newbypt	15, 100+	K. Anderson, J. Berry	
1/20	S. Dart., Plymouth	160, 375+	R. Stymeist, M. Lynch#	
1/28	Cape Ann	50+	J. Berry	
2/3	Cape Ann	75	BBC (R. Vernon)	
2/18, 2/19	Newbypt, Scituate	150+, 110+	M. Lynch#	
<b>Barrow's Goldeneye</b>				
1/1-31, 2/1-28	Newburyport	1 m, pair	v. o.	
1/1, 1/13-15	Gloucester, Nahant	pair, 1 m	H. Wiggin, J. Berry	
1/17-22, 1/20	M. V., Plymouth	1 m, 1 m	V. Laux, M. Lynch#	
1/28, 1/30	Quincy, S. Dartmouth	1 m, 1	R. Titus, LCES (J. Hill)	
2/1, 2/2	Gloucester, Marshfield	1 f, pair	R. Forster, D. Clapp	
2/19, 2/27	Cohasset	pair	M. Lynch#, R. Forster	
<b>Bufflehead</b>				
1/7	Falmouth, N. Falmouth	369, 220	M. Lynch#	
1/13, 1/20	Wollaston, Plymouth	300, 175+	R. Titus, M. Lynch#	
1/27, 1/28	M. V., Nahant	387, 203	M. Lynch#, R. Kennedy	
2/10, 2/26	Quincy, Newbypt	200, 100+	E. Taylor, J. Berry	
<b>Hooded Merganser</b>				
1/1-31	M. V.	45 max 1/2	V. Laux	
1/1, 1/6	Worcester, Framingham	2, 3	M. Lynch#, K. Hamilton#	
1/7, 1/15	Falmouth, Plymouth	89, 20	M. Lynch#, I. Giriunas#	
1/14, 1/28	Arlington, Medford	5, 13	L. Taylor	
2/1-28	Reports of 2-4 (total 16) from 6	locations.		
2/11, 2/28	Winchester, S. Peabody	6, 23	T. Aversa	
<b>Common Merganser</b>				
1/1-31	Ipswich	8-10	J. Berry	
1/2, 1/6	Amesbury, Framingham	140, 47	R. Forster, K. Hamilton#	
1/12, 1/20	Lakeville, Plymouth	8, 71	K. Anderson, M. Lynch#	
2/1-28	Reports of 11-29 (total 120) from 6	locations.		
2/12, 2/18	Taunton, Harwich	45, 40	K. Ryan, R. Rozsa	
<b>Red-breasted Merganser</b>				
1/6, 1/7	Hull, Woods Hole	68, 100+	P. Thayer, M. Lynch#	
1/20	P'town, Plymouth	1500+, 250+	B. Nikula, M. Lynch#	
1/20, 1/27	Newbypt, M. V.	152, 260	BBC (I. Giriunas), M. Lynch#	
2/1-28	Reports of a total of 75 birds from 3	locations.		
<b>Ruddy Duck</b>				
1/14	Falmouth	1	H. Wiggin	

RAPTORS THROUGH ALCIDS

1990 Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey Results

*Courtesy of William Davis, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife.*

An increase in the overall Bald Eagle population in the Northeast combined with an unseasonably cold December resulted in a record number of Bald Eagles censused in Massachusetts on January 12, 1990. The survey results are as follows:

<i>Survey Site</i>	<i>adults</i>	<i>immatures</i>	<i>total</i>
Quabbin Reservation	16	19	35*
Merrimack River	3	10	13
Connecticut River	6	1	7
Assawompsett Pond	2	0	2
Outer Cape Cod	0	1	1
Martha's Vineyard	1 (on 1/13)	1	2
Great Meadows NWR	0	1	1
TOTALS	28	33	61

\*plus a Golden Eagle at Quabbin Reservation

Other areas surveyed were Nantucket, Westport River, Assonet River, Taunton River, Elizabeth Islands, Plum Island, Wachusett Reservoir, Deerfield River, Sherman Reservoir, Army Corps of Engineers Flood Control reservoirs, Cobble Mountain Reservoir, Westfield River, Housatonic River, and Colebrook Reservoir. A total of 52 observation teams were involved in this year's survey.

Turkey Vultures continued their recent winter presence and arrivals began appearing about mid-February. Bald Eagles were extremely well reported, with the concentration in the Newburyport area receiving well-deserved attention from both birders and laymen. Accipiters, with the exception of Northern Goshawk, were well reported. A few Red-shouldered Hawks were seen away from their stronghold in southeastern sections including one on Cape Cod where the species is exceedingly rare—at Orleans where it has been present in the same location for at least the past ten winters. Rough-legged Hawks were fairly well reported in traditional locations but were rather thinly found elsewhere. Merlin and Peregrine Falcon reports were typical. A Clapper Rail found in Brewster represented one of the few recent midwinter reports. American Coots were confined to the Billington Sea in Plymouth. Shorebirds were routine with the best numbers and variety found on the offshore rocks at North Scituate. Apparently a few woodcocks and Killdeers attempted to rush the season.

Common Black-headed Gulls were scarce as were Bonaparte's Gulls except for an unexplained influx at Cape Ann in late January. This assemblage provided the excitement of the season when an adult **Ross' Gull** in winter attire was found at Niles Pond in East Gloucester on February 1. See article elsewhere in this issue. It was seen that day and the following day by numerous fortunate observers and apparently put in a brief cameo appearance about two weeks later. An adult **Mew Gull** was present in Quincy where it has been found for at least the past six winters. Iceland and Glaucous gulls were found in Gloucester as a result of the lure of the Ross'. Only two Lesser Black-backed Gulls were found, and kittiwakes were sparsely reported from shoreline vantage. Alcids were reported almost exclusively from Cape Ann and Provincetown, with the best variety at Cape Ann.

R.A.F.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
Turkey Vulture				
1/1-31	W. Bridgewater	4 ph	C. Whitmore	
1/14-28	Westport-Dartmouth	singles on 3 dates	v. o.	
2/11, 2/13	Bolton Flats	3, 2	E. Salmela#	
2/11	Easton, Randolph	3, 1	K. Ryan, R. Titus	
2/17	New Braintree	1	M. Lynch#	
2/19	Hardwick, W. Boylston	1, 1	D. F. Oliver	
2/21, 2/23	Lakeville, Middleboro	1, 1	K. Holmes	
2/22	Stoughton	2	R. Titus	
Bald Eagle				
1/1-2/28	Newburyport area	5-14 (5 ad + 9 imm)	v. o.	
1/1-31	Lakeville	total 3	K. Holmes	
1/1-31	M. V.	3 (1 ad + 2 imm)	V. Laux	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
<b>Bald Eagle (continued)</b>				
1/1	flying over Deer Island	2 (1 ad + 1 imm)	F. + M. McClellan	
1/14, 1/27	Quabbin (G40)	10 (5 ad), 16	M. Lynch#, G. Gove#	
1/3, 1/27	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	2, 1	LCES (J. Hill)	
1/7, 1/13	Eastham (F.H.), Orleans	2 imm, 1 imm	S. Clifton#, SSBC (W. Petersen)	
1/26	Salem	1 imm	P. Willis	
2/21-28	Lakeville	3 (1 ad + 2 imm)	plus 1 imm released	K. Holmes + v. o.
2/16, 2/19	Harwich	1 imm	J. Welch, R. Rozsa	
<b>Northern Harrier</b>				
1/1-31	Newbypt-P.I.	5 max 1/7	BBC (R. McHale)	
1/1-31	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	2	LCES (J. Hill)	
1/1, 1/7	E. Middleboro, Halifax	2, 2	K. Anderson, K. Holmes	
1/7, 1/13	Bourne, Nahant	2, 1	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
1/20, 1/27	Sudbury, M. V.	1, 2	R. Forster, M. Lynch#	
2/7, 2/20	P.I.	4, 7	W. Drew#	
2/9, 2/24	Wayland, Middleboro	1, 5	R. Forster, W. Petersen	
<b>Sharp-shinned Hawk</b>				
1/1	Nantucket	2	R. Stymeist	
1/1-31	Reports of single birds from 25 locations.			
2/1-28	Reports of single birds from 11 locations.			
<b>Cooper's Hawk</b>				
1/1-31	Reports of single birds from 12 locations.			
2/11	Milton, Acton	2, 1	R. Abrams, R. Forster	
2/17, 2/22	New Braintree, Bolton Flats	1, 1	M. Lynch#, E. Salmela	
2/23, 2/27	Holbrook, Avon	1, 1	W. Petersen, R. Titus	
<b>Northern Goshawk</b>				
1/7, 1/13	E. Middleboro, Nahant	1, 1 imm	K. Anderson, J. Berry	
1/22, 1/26	M. V., Natick	1 ad, 1 ad	T. Chase, T. Malcolm	
1/28	Concord (GMNWR)	2 ad	J. Cameron#	
2/7, 2/11	MNWS, Bridgewater	1, 1	I. Lynch, K. Holmes	
2/18	Easton, Topsfield	1 ad, 1	K. Ryan, G. Lynch	
2/28	Sharon	1 ad	R. Titus	
<b>Red-shouldered Hawk</b>				
1/5, 1/15	Orleans	1 ad	A. King, P. Trimble	
1/6	Framingham	1 ad	R. Forster	
1/7, 1/28-31	E. Middleboro	1, pr	K. Anderson	
1/27	Easton, Milton	1 ad, 1 ad	K. Ryan, T. + J. Cameron	
1/31	DWWS	1	D. Ludlow	
2/6, 2/9	Framingham, Lincoln	1 ad, 1 ad	K. Hamilton, S. Perkins	
2/13	Sherborn, DWWS	1 ad, 1 ad	R. Forster#, T. Aversa	
2/18, 2/27	Middleboro, Boxford	1, 1 ad	K. Holmes, R. Heil	
<b>Red-tailed Hawk</b>				
1/1-31	Newburyport area	11 max 1/7	BBC (R. McHale) + v. o.	
1/3	Boston (Franklin Park)	4	T. Aversa	
1/4	Canton	4	R. Titus	
1/7, 1/16	Bridgewater area, DWWS	4, 6	K. Holmes, T. Aversa	
1/20	Canton to Fall River	9	R. Stymeist	
1/28	Sudbury River Valley	27	R. Walton#	
2/11	Bridgewater	5	K. Holmes	
1/1-31	Reports of 1 or 2 (total 7) from 5 locations.			
2/1-28	Reports of 1-3 (total 15) from 8 locations.			
<b>Rough-legged Hawk</b>				
1/1-31	Newbypt area, DWWS	4 max, 7 max 1/27	v. o., E. Taylor + v. o.	
1/1-31	Bridgewater	5 max 1/7	K. Holmes	
1/2	M. V., Essex	3, 2	V. Laux, M. Lynch#	
1/27, 1/28	New Bedford, Gloucester	1, 1	P. Trimble, P. + F. Vale	
2/1-28	P.I. area, Middleboro	6 max 2/22, 3 max 2/17	W. Drew#, W. Petersen	
2/3, 2/14	Concord, Bolton Flats	1, 1	W. Petersen, E. Salmela	
2/28	Westboro	1 dk mig	B. Blodgett	
<b>Golden Eagle</b>				
1/1-31	Quabbin (G43)	1 ad	v. o.	
<b>American Kestrel</b>				
1/7	Newbypt and vicinity	4	BBC (R. McHale)	
<b>Merlin</b>				
1/8, 1/9	Falmouth, Truro	1, 1	W. Drew#, T. Aversa	
1/9, 1/16; 1/9, 1/25	Nantucket; P.I.	1; 1	E. + C. Andrews; W. Drew#	
1/16, 1/27	Watertown, Chatham	1, 1	R. Stymeist, P. Trimble	
1/27-28	M. V.	1	M. Lynch#	
2/1, 2/17	Somerville, Marshfield	1, 1	T. Aversa, J. Gordon	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
Peregrine Falcon				
1/1-31	M. V.	3 max 1/15	V. Laux + v. o.	
1/4, 1/9; 1/14	P.I.; Boston	1; 1	W. Drew#; R. Stymeist	
2/8, 2/17	S. Boston, N. Scituate	1, 1	K. Ryan, J. Gordon#	
Ring-necked Pheasant				
1/1, 1/20	Nantucket, Ipswich	12, 7	R. Stymeist, J. Berry	
Ruffed Grouse				
1/6, 1/7	Quabbin (G35), IRWS	7, 3	M. Lynch#, R. Heil	
1/17, 1/27	Bridgewater, Milton	4, 2 or 3	T. Aversa, T. + J. Cameron	
2/7	Stoughton	5	T. Aversa	
Wild Turkey				
1/1, 1/14	Petersham, New Salem	18, 6	M. Lynch#	
1/27	Barre	51	B. Kamp + v. o.	
Northern Bobwhite				
1/1	Nantucket	12	R. Stymeist#	
1/28, 1/31	S. Dart., Sharon	2 heard, 1	R. Stymeist, R. Titus	
2/27	Easton	5	K. Ryan	
Clapper Rail				
1/25	Brewster	1	P. Trull	
Virginia Rail				
1/14, 1/21, 2/3	Ipswich	1	J. Berry	
Sora				
1/14	Ipswich	1	J. Berry	
American Coot				
1/1-2/28	Lynn (Flax Pd)	5	J. Quigley + v. o.	
1/1-2/28	Arlington (Mystic Lakes)	1	L. Taylor	
1/1-31, 2/1-28	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	200 max 1/15, 250 max	2/11 I. Giriunas + v. o.	
1/14, 1/19	Falmouth, Natick	10, 5	H. Wiggin, K. Ryan	
2/1-28	Natick	4	v. o.	
Black-bellied Plover				
1/1-31, 1/20	M. V., Plymouth	14 max 1/17, 1	V. Laux, M. Lynch#	
Killdeer				
1/13, 1/15	Orleans	1	W. Petersen#	
2/11	Hamilton	1	G. Lynch	
2/17&19&22	Newburyport	1	P.+ F. Vale + v. o.	
2/24	Middleboro	5	W. Petersen	
Greater Yellowlegs				
2/11	Eastham	1	F. Bygate#	
Ruddy Turnstone				
1/13, 2/27	N. Scituate	9, 41	R. Titus, R. Forster	
Red Knot				
1/14, 1/24	N. Scituate, M. V.	3, 2	H. Wiggin, V. Laux	
2/17, 2/27	N. Scituate	10-15, 24	E. Nielsen, R. Forster	
Sanderling				
1/3, 1/28	Revere (Point of Pines), Newbypt	66, 8	J. Quigley, BBC (P. Stevens)	
2/10, 2/13	Revere (Point of Pines), Ipswich	87, 2	J. Quigley, D. Rimmer	
2/27	N. Scituate	5	R. Forster	
Purple Sandpiper				
1/1-31	N. Scituate	440 max 1/13	R. Titus	
1/1, 1/9	Gloucester, P.I.	12, 75	M. Argue#, W. Drew#	
1/13, 1/14	Nahant, Winthrop	14, 15	R. Kennedy, P. + F. Vale	
2/3, 2/19	Gloucester, Marblehead	50, 15	E. Taylor	
2/27	N. Scituate	300	R. Forster	
Dunlin				
1/1-31	M. V.	42 max 1/17	V. Laux	
1/3, 1/20	Revere (Point of Pines), Plymouth	30, 17	J. Quigley, M. Lynch#	
1/28, 1/31	Westport, S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	78, 38	K. Griffis, LCES (J. Hill)	
2/5, 2/12	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	44, 22	LCES (J. Hill)	
2/21, 2/27	Revere (Point of Pines), N. Scituate	38, 200	J. Quigley, R. Forster	
Common Snipe				
1/20	Lexington, Newbypt	1, 1	L. Taylor, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
2/7	S. Peabody	3	R. Heil	
American Woodcock				
2/10, 2/17	Westwood, DWWS	2, 1	W. Webb, D. Ludlow#	
2/23	Newton	3	P. Shapiro#	
Common Black-headed Gull				
1/3, 1/9	Saugus	2 ad	J. Quigley	
1/4	Boston (Public Gardens)	1 ad	L. Warner	
1/6, 1/28	Gloucester	1, 1	H. Wiggin, BBC (S. Bolton)	
1/27	Winthrop	3	P. + F. Vale	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
<b>Common Black-headed Gull (continued)</b>				
2/1-17	Gloucester	1 or 2	R. Forster + v. o.	
2/7, 2/10	Revere (Point of Pines)	1 ad	J. Quigley	
2/8, 2/14	Quincy, Danvers	1, 1	K. Ryan, J. Brown	
<b>Bonaparte's Gull</b>				
1/2, 1/13	Revere (Point of Pines), Winthrop	11, 3	J. Quigley, J. Berry	
1/17, 1/20	Gloucester (Niles Pd), Newbypt	40, 31	J. Quigley, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
1/21, 1/28	Rockport (A.P.), Gloucester (Niles Pd)	13, 350+	J. Berry#	
2/1, 2/3	E. Gloucester	125, 4	R. Forster, J. Berry#	
2/7	Revere (Point of Pines)	100	J. Quigley	
2/22	Newbypt, Lynn (Flax Pd)	45, 11	R. Forster, J. Quigley	
<b>Mew Gull</b>				
1/1-2/28	Quincy (Raccoon I)	1 ad	v. o.	
<b>Ring-billed Gull</b>				
1/15	Melrose	150	P. + F. Vale	
2/11, 2/19	Quincy (Raccoon I)	200+, 200+	P. + F. Vale	
2/27	Brockton, Plymouth	550, 800	R. Titus, R. Forster	
<b>Iceland Gull</b>				
1/4, 1/28	E. Gloucester	5, 8 (3 ad)	J. Quigley, J. Berry	
1/7, 1/20	Newburyport	13 (11 ad), 8	R. Heil, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
1/7, 1/13	W. Boylston, Brockton	1, 1	E. Salmela, R. Titus	
1/8, 1/15	M. V., P'town	2 (1 ad), 2	V. Laux, P. Trimble	
1/24, 1/27	Lynn (Flax Pd), Revere (Point of Pines)	1, 1	J. Quigley	
2/4, 2/12	E. Gloucester	4, 9	I. Giriunas, R. Forster	
2/22, 2/23	Newbypt, Quincy (Raccoon I)	9 (6 ad), 3 ad	R. Forster	
<b>Lesser Black-backed Gull</b>				
1/2, 1/10	Rockport (A.P.)	1 (3W)	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa + v. o.	
2/4; 2/7, 2/19	Rockport (A.P.), Lynn (Flax Pd)	1; 1 ad	I. Giriunas; J. Quigley	
<b>Glaucous Gull</b>				
1/1-31	E. Gloucester	1 or 2	v. o.	
1/7, 1/10	Newbypt, Lynn (Flax Pd)	1 (1W), 1 ad	R. Heil, J. Quigley	
1/13, 1/15	P'town, M. V.	2, 1	SSBC (W. Petersen), V. Laux	
2/1, 2/2	E. Gloucester	4, 3	R. Forster#, R. Heil	
<b>Black-legged Kittiwake</b>				
1/2, 1/6	Rockport, Gloucester	70+ ad, 3	R. Heil, H. Wiggin	
1/20, 1/21	P'town, Rockport	15+, 2 ad	B. Nikula, J. Berry	
2/4	Rockport	225	I. Giriunas	
<b>Ross' Gull</b>				
2/1-2, 2/13(?)	E. Gloucester (Niles Pd)	1 ad winter pl	R. Forster, D. Arvidson + v. o.	
<b>Common Murre</b>				
1/16	Rockport (A.P.)	1	R. Heil	
<b>Thick-billed Murre</b>				
1/16, 2/12-17	Rockport, Marblehead Neck	3, 2	R. Heil, R. Heil + v. o.	
<b>Razorbill</b>				
1/2, 1/9	Rockport, P'town	95, 75	R. Heil, T. Aversa	
1/13, 1/18	Eastham-P'town, M. V.	50+, 8	SSBC (W. Petersen), V. Laux	
1/20, 1/28	P'town, Rockport (A.P.)	100+, 1	B. Nikula, M. Lynch#	
<b>large alcid species</b>				
1/20	P'town	1500+	B. Nikula	
<b>Black Guillemot</b>				
1/1-31	Rockport	13 max 1/2	R. Heil	
1/16, 1/20	Gloucester, P'town	10, 10	R. Heil, B. Nikula	
2/3, 2/5	Gloucester	8, 3	J. Berry, D. Rimmer	
2/17-28	Marblehead Neck	11 max 2/18	M. Lynch#	

#### DOVES THROUGH SHRIKES

A Ringed Turtle Dove was reported from Stoughton. Great Horned Owls were noted at many locations, including one on a nest at Bolton. Snowy Owls continued to be scarce, but one or two were regular at Plum Island. Long-eared Owls roosted in the pines in Lexington, and Short-eared Owls were notably in evidence this winter. The Massachusetts Audubon Society held a mid-January survey which yielded 46 Short-ears distributed as follows:

Marshfield (DWWS)	14	Plum Island	3
Nantucket	8	Salisbury	2
Middleboro	8	Newbury (Common Pastures)	1
Logan Airport	5	Dartmouth (Salter Point)	1
Martha's Vineyard	3	Wellfleet	1

None were found at the following survey sites: Bedford (Hanscom Field), Chatham, Dartmouth (Lloyd

Center), Duxbury Beach, East Boston (Belle Isle), Eastham, Ipswich (Crane Beach), North Scituate, Quincy (Squantum), Revere, Rowley (Nelson's Island), and Sandwich (Scusset Beach). Northern Saw-whet Owls appeared at many locations, including dead birds at two places. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were numerous and were seen at other than the usual locations, and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker spent the period in East Orleans. The Horned Lark flock on Little's Lane in Newbury built up to 400 birds.

The Framingham crow roost was estimated at 10,000 American and 1500 Fish crows, up from last year's estimate of 4200 and 200, respectively. Reports of Carolina Wrens included some high numbers at the traditional locations in southeastern Massachusetts and Martha's Vineyard. Many Winter Wrens were reported, and a Marsh Wren was present at Allens Pond through January. Many Eastern Bluebirds were noted with up to 30 on Martha's Vineyard and a flock of 25 seen in Hardwick. The **Varied Thrush** continued in Gloucester, and individual American Pipits were noted at two locations. Bohemian Waxwings were reported from Hardwick and Princeton, and many large flocks of Cedar Waxwings were seen at scattered locations. Individual Northern Shrikes were also noted at many places.

G.W.G.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN/FEB. 1990
Ringed Turtle Dove				
2/14	Stoughton	1 (details)	R. Titus	
Mourning Dove				
1/1-31	Sherborn	60	E. Taylor	
1/2, 1/6	Halifax, Cambridge	25, 80	K. Anderson, R. Stymeist#	
Barn Owl				
1/1-31	M. V.	6 max 1/5	V. Laux	
Eastern Screech-Owl				
1/1-31	Gloucester	1	v. o.	
1/6, 1/7	Framingham, Belmont	9, 5	K. Hamilton, R. Stymeist#	
2/11, 2/18	Waltham, S. Dartmouth	2, 4	L. Taylor, LCES (J. Hill)	
2/23	Middleboro, Halifax	4, 3	W. Petersen	
Great Horned Owl				
1/6	Framingham, Middleboro	3, 2	K. Hamilton, K. Holmes#	
1/7, 1/13	Lexington, Marshfield	2, 2	J. Heywood#, D. Clapp	
1/8-15, 1/27	Ipswich, Hamilton	2, 2	J. Berry	
1/6-20	Reports of individuals from 3 locations.			
2/9, 2/23	Bolton, S. Dartmouth	1 (on nest), 3	E. Salmela, T. Raymond	
2/23	Middleboro, Halifax	3, 3	W. Petersen	
Snowy Owl				
1/1-2/28	P.I.	1 or 2	v. o.	
1/7, 1/10	Westport, Salem	1, 1	LCES (J. Hill), S. Richardson	
Barred Owl				
1/1, 1/6	Quabbin (G41), Middleboro	1, 1	M. Lynch#, K. Holmes#	
1/14	Westport	1	G. Gove#	
2/18, 2/21	S. Dartmouth, Westwood	1, 1	LCES (J. Hill), T. Raymond	
2/23	Bridgewater, Middleboro	1, 1	W. Petersen	
Long-eared Owl				
1/1-31	Lexington	1 or 2	T. Aversa + v. o.	
1/1	Nantucket	3	E. Andrews#	
2/1-22	Lexington	1 or 2	R. Forster	
Short-eared Owl				
1/1-2/28	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1 or 2	LCES (J. Hill)	
1/1-2/28	Eastham	2	v. o.	
1/1-31	M. V.	2	V. Laux	
1/1-20, 1/14	P.I., Salisbury	4 max 1/3, 1	v.o., R. Forster	
1/4, 1/12	DWWS	6, 11	D. Clapp	
1/7	E. Middleboro	4	K. Anderson	
1/14	Nantucket	2	E. + C. Andrews	
2/3-18, 2/24	Salisbury, Middleboro	1 or 2, 2	v.o., W. Petersen	
Northern Saw-whet Owl				
1/1-2/28	P.I.	1 or 2	v. o.	
1/1	Hamilton	1	T. Aversa	
1/1, 1/6	Petersham, Middleboro	2, 1	M. Lynch#, K. Holmes#	
1/13, 1/14	Wellfleet, Hardwick	1 dead, 1 dead	W. Petersen, R. Heil	
1/26	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1	LCES (J. Hill)	
2/19-22	Topsfield	1	J. Berry#	
2/23	Middleboro, Lakeville	1, 1	W. Petersen	
Belted Kingfisher				
1/1-2/28	Plymouth	1 or 2	v. o.	
1/6, 1/13	Framingham, Orleans	4, 1	K. Hamilton, E. Salmela	
1/9, 1/10	Eastham, Newburyport	1, 1	T. Aversa	
1/13	Orleans	1	E. Salmela	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
<b>Red-bellied Woodpecker</b>				
1/1-2/28	S. Dartmouth	1 or 2	LCES (J. Hill)	
1/1-2/28	Gloucester	1	v. o.	
1/1-31	M. V.	4 max 1/21	V. Laux#	
1/11, 1/29; 1/28	Hudson; Plymouth	1; 1	E. Salmela	
2/22	Rochester	1 m	M. Sylvia	
<b>Yellow-bellied Sapsucker</b>				
1/1-2/28	E. Orleans	1	J. + S. Talin	
<b>Northern Flicker</b>				
1/1-2/28	E. Middleboro	3	K. Anderson + v. o.	
1/1, 1/7	Waltham	2	L. Taylor	
1/6, 1/20	Framingham, S. Dartmouth	4, 10	K. Hamilton#, R. Stymeist#	
1/7, 1/27	Falmouth, M. V.	7, 8	M. Lynch#	
2/11, 2/13	Plymouth, E. Middleboro	1, 3	D. F. Oliver, T. Aversa	
<b>Pileated Woodpecker</b>				
1/14	Hardwick, Quabbin (G43)	1, 1	R. Heil, M. Lynch#	
1/28	Manchester	1 f	G. Gove#	
2/18, 2/19	Beverly, Petersham	1 m, 1	M. Lynch#, D. F. Oliver	
<b>Horned Lark</b>				
1/1-2/28, 1/2	Newbury, Salisbury	400 max 2/26, 75	v. o., R. Forster	
1/14, 1/28	Bridgewater, S. Dartmouth	50, 110	K. Holmes#, R. Stymeist#	
2/3, 2/6	Essex, Salisbury	34, 22	J. Berry#, W. Drew#	
<b>American Crow</b>				
1/1-2/28	Framingham	10,000 max	E. Taylor	
1/1-31	Lawrence	4000	E. Taylor	
1/11	Burlington	600	T. Aversa	
<b>Fish Crow</b>				
1/1-2/28	Framingham	1000-1500	K. Hamilton#, E. Taylor	
1/1, 1/5	Sudbury, Milton	60, 10	R. Forster, J. Cameron	
<b>Common Raven</b>				
1/1-2/28	Quabbin	5 max 2/27	T. Aversa + v. o.	
1/7, 2/3	Petersham, Hardwick	1, 4	I. Giriunas#, M. Lynch#	
<b>Boreal Chickadee (from November)</b>				
1/1-31, 2/19	W. Boylston	1	v.o., D. F. Oliver	
<b>Red-breasted Nuthatch</b>				
1/1-31	E. Middleboro, Brookline	6-8, 2	K. Anderson, H. Wiggin	
1/1, 1/14	W. Boylston, E. Quabbin	10, 11	M. Lynch#	
2/1-28, 2/25	Brookline, W. Newton, Hanson	1 or 2, 1, 3	H. Wiggin#, M. Murphy, W. Petersen	
<b>Brown Creeper</b>				
1/1-2/28	Reading	1 or 2	I. Giriunas	
1/3, 1/14	E. Middleboro, Quabbin (G43)	3, 3	K. Anderson, M. Lynch#	
2/10, 2/19	Easton	1, 1	K. Ryan	
<b>Carolina Wren</b>				
1/1-31	S. Dartmouth, Westport	18 max, 10 max	v. o.	
1/7, 1/27	Falmouth, M. V.	13, 16	M. Lynch#	
1/1-31	Reports of 1-3 from 9 locations.			
2/1-28	Sherborn, Natick; Ipswich	1, 1; 1	E. Taylor; J. Berry	
2/4, 2/8	Easton, Bedford	2, 1	K. Ryan, B. Marshall	
2/11, 2/25	Gloucester, Hopkinton	1, 1	M. Lynch#, J. Gordon	
<b>Winter Wren</b>				
1/1, 1/20	Hardwick, Plymouth	1, 1	M. Lynch#	
1/7, 1/8	IRWS, Salem	1, 2	R. Heil	
1/14, 1/28	Westport, Wayland	1, 1	J. Gordon#, K. Hamilton	
2/7, 2/14	S. Peabody	3, 1	R. Heil, T. Aversa	
<b>Marsh Wren</b>				
1/1-31	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1	LCES (J. Hill)	
<b>Golden-crowned Kinglet</b>				
1/3, 1/6	E. Middleboro, Quabbin (G35)	5, 8	K. Anderson, M. Lynch#	
1/17, 1/20	Bridgewater, Newburyport	3, 2	T. Aversa, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
<b>Eastern Bluebird</b>				
1/1-31	M. V., Hardwick	30 max, 25 max	1/27 V. Laux#, E. Salmela + v. o.	
1/5, 1/6	E. Middleboro, Holliston	3, 3	K. Anderson, E. Taylor	
1/14, 1/19	Westport, Sharon	2 m + 2 f, 8	G. Gove#, R. Titus	
2/3, 2/25	Hardwick, S. Dartmouth	10, 8	I. Giriunas#, T. Raymond	
2/18, 2/21	N. Middleboro, Lakeville	4, 3	K. Holmes#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
Hermit Thrush				
1/8, 1/13	Salem, E. Orleans	1, 1	R. Heil, A. Williams	
1/14; 1/20, 1/28	Westport; S. Dartmouth	3; 2, 2	G. Gove#; R. Stymeist#	
1/30, 1/31	M. V., Sandwich	1, 1	V. Laux, P. Trimble	
2/7, 2/27	Salem, Boxford	1, 1	R. Heil	
American Robin				
1/8, 1/14	Salem, Halifax	120, 100	R. Heil, W. Petersen	
1/17, 1/24	Rochester, Sharon	60, 40	K. Ryan	
1/20, 1/25	Ipswich, Wellesley	100, 25	J. Berry, R. Forster	
2/3, 2/7	Newburyport, W. Roxbury	30, 45	R. Stymeist#, T. Aversa	
2/21, 2/25	Shrewsbury, Easton	2, 16	E. Salmela, K. Ryan	
Varied Thrush (from November)				
1/2, 1/10	Gloucester	1	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
Gray Catbird				
1/1-31	M. V.	7 max	V. Laux + v. o.	
1/7, 1/8	Falmouth, Salem	4, 2	M. Lynch#, R. Heil	
1/20-2/28	S. Dartmouth	5 max	R. Stymeist# + v. o.	
1/27, 1/28	E. Orleans, Wayland	1, 1	A. Williams, K. Hamilton	
2/7, 2/11	Salem, Falmouth	2, 2	R. Heil, D. F. Oliver#	
2/17	Rockport	1	D. F. Oliver	
American Pipit				
1/13	Wellfleet	1	C. Pfister	
2/3	Gloucester	1	J. Berry# + v. o.	
Bohemian Waxwing				
1/1, 1/6	Hardwick, Princeton	1, 1	M. Lynch#, J. Johnstone	
2/10	Hardwick	3	D. Ludlow#	
Cedar Waxwing				
1/1, 1/7	Marshfield, Hardwick	260, 100	D. Clapp, D. F. Oliver#	
1/6, 1/15	Framingham, Acton	435, 65	K. Hamilton, R. Forster	
1/14, 1/20	Halifax, Hanson	90, 100	W. Petersen	
1/17, 1/24	Rochester, Sharon	130, 250	K. Ryan	
1/1-31	Reports of flocks from 7 locations.			
2/3, 2/27	Lancaster, Concord	300, 190	R. Forster	
2/3	Hardwick, Newburyport	110, 300	I. Giriunas#, R. Stymeist#	
Northern Shrike				
1/1-31, 2/7	P.I.	1, 1	v. o.	
1/6, 1/7	Rockport, Nantucket	1, 1	I. Giriunas#, E. + C. Andrews	
1/2-16	DWWS	1 imm	D. Clapp + v. o.	
1/6, 1/7	Sagamore, Halifax	1, 1	K. Holmes#	
1/7-28	Reports of individuals from 5 locations.			
2/8	Nantucket	1	fide E. Andrews	
2/27	Easton	1	K. Ryan	

#### WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

A **Yellow-throated Warbler** was present most of January at a feeder in Duxbury; this was the third individual of this species noted this winter season, and all were photographed or videotaped.

Dickcissels were reported from five locations during January. Vesper Sparrows were found in South Peabody and in Middleboro. At Fort Hill in Eastham during a very high tide a Seaside and 15 Sharp-tailed sparrows were tallied. The sparrow highlight of the month was the discovery of a **Golden-crowned Sparrow** in South Dartmouth. See field note in this issue. Also in South Dartmouth two White-crowned Sparrows were found visiting feeders.

The farm fields on Little's Lane in Newbury were an ideal location for finding Lapland Longspurs, Snow Buntings, and Horned Larks throughout the period. Large concentrations of Snow Buntings were also noted in Bridgewater, New Braintree, and at Bolton Flats. Wintering Rusty Blackbirds were reported at feeders in Lexington, on Martha's Vineyard, and at the Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary in Topsfield.

The general arrival of returning blackbirds was in late February, with many reports of Common Grackles at feeders starting February 23. The largest flock of Red-winged Blackbirds was also noted on February 23 when over 500 birds were estimated at Bolton Flats. Northern Orioles continued at feeders on Nantucket, and another was photographed at a feeder in Needham.

Winter finch reports included several Pine Grosbeaks, most of which were noted in the Quabbin area. White-winged Crossbills were also reported from the Quabbin area, and another was found at the Moose Hill Wildlife Sanctuary in Sharon. No Red Crossbills were reported. Pine Siskins were abundant in central Massachusetts, but very few flocks were seen in the eastern part. Three or four Common Redpolls visited a feeder in Essex, and a single bird was found on Martha's Vineyard. Evening Grosbeaks were most common in the Quabbin area.

R.H.S.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
<b>Yellow-rumped Warbler</b>				
1/1-2/28	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	29 max 1/8	LCES (J. Hill)	
1/7, 1/27	Falmouth, M. V.	19, 64	M. Lynch#	
<b>Yellow-throated Warbler</b>				
1/3-23	Duxbury	1 ph	W. Richmond + v. o.	
<b>Pine Warbler</b>				
1/1-31, 1/1-20	Wellfleet, Lincoln	1, 1	S. McNair, S. + J. Holbrook	
1/4-31	E. Middleboro	5 max 1/16	K. Anderson	
<b>Northern Cardinal</b>				
1/1-2/28	Brookline, Ipswich	12 max (feeder),	9 max (feeder)	B. Rielly#, J. Berry
1/1-2/28	Hopkinton, Sherborn	14 max (feeder),	6 max (feeder)	J. Gordon#, E. Taylor
1/7	Falmouth	33	M. Lynch#	
<b>Dickcissel</b>				
1/1-2/4, 1/1	E. Gloucester, Nantucket	1, 2	v. o.	
1/13, 1/15	Orleans, Chatham	1, 1	SSBC (W. Petersen), P. Trimble	
<b>Rufous-sided Towhee</b>				
1/1-31, 1/8	M. V., Salem	4 max, 3	V. Laux, R. Heil	
1/20, 1/28	S. Dartmouth	12, 6	R. Stymeist#	
2/7	Stoughton, Salem	1, 3	T. Aversa, R. Heil	
2/10, 2/11	Lexington, Falmouth	1, 1	H. Wiggin#, D. F. Oliver#	
<b>American Tree Sparrow</b>				
1/6, 1/17	Cambridge, Bridgewater	47, 70	J. Heywood#, T. Aversa	
<b>Field Sparrow</b>				
1/8, 1/9	Peabody, Bolton Flats	16, 6	R. Heil, E. Salmela	
1/31, 2/7	Sandwich, W. Roxbury	5, 5	P. Trimble, T. Aversa	
2/18, 2/27	Sharon, Easton	2, 1	L. Landres, K. Ryan	
<b>Vesper Sparrow</b>				
2/7, 2/24	S. Peabody, Middleboro	1, 2	R. Heil, W. Petersen	
<b>Savannah Sparrow</b>				
1/6, 1/9	Framingham, Eastham (F.H.)	2, 6	R. Forster#, T. Aversa	
1/27, 2/18	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Newbury	2, 1	LCES (J. Hill), D. F. Oliver#	
<b>"Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow</b>				
1/27	M. V.	1	M. Lynch#	
<b>Sharp-tailed Sparrow</b>				
1/9	Eastham (F.H.)	15	T. Aversa	
<b>Seaside Sparrow</b>				
1/9	Eastham (F.H.)	1	T. Aversa	
<b>Fox Sparrow</b>				
1/4, 1/7	Framingham, Bourne	1, 1	K. Hamilton#, M. Lynch#	
1/20	S. Dartmouth	1	R. Stymeist#	
2/4&7, 2/17	E. Orleans, Plymouth	1, 1	E. Williams, G. Gove#	
<b>Swamp Sparrow</b>				
1/1-2/28	DWWS	1	D. Ludlow	
1/20, 2/27	Plymouth	3, 7	M. Lynch#, R. Forster	
<b>White-throated Sparrow</b>				
1/6, 1/8	Framingham, Salem	126, 34	K. Hamilton#, R. Heil	
1/7, 1/20	Falmouth, S. Dart.	32, 55	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
2/4	Brookline, Ipswich	8 (feeder), 13 (feeder)	B. Rielly#, J. Berry	
2/27	Wellesley	7	R. Forster	
<b>Golden-crowned Sparrow</b>				
1/14-26	S. Dartmouth	1 imm	G. Gove, J. Gordon + v. o.	
<b>White-crowned Sparrow</b>				
1/28, 2/1-28	S. Dartmouth (two locations)	1, 1	W. Petersen#, K. Machado#	
2/27	Marshfield	1	P. Fagan#	
<b>Dark-eyed Junco</b>				
1/1-2/28	Brookline, Ipswich	29 max 2/15, 19 max 2/25	B. Rielly#, J. Berry#	
1/21-2/4, 2/3	Hopkinton, Hardwick	1 albino, 80	G. Gove#, M. Lynch#	
<b>Lapland Longspur</b>				
1/1-2/28	Newbury (Little's Lane)	40+	v. o.	
2/6, 2/7	Salisbury, P.I.	4, 8	W. Drew#	
<b>Snow Bunting</b>				
1/1-2/28	Newbury (Little's Lane)	27 max 1/7	v. o.	
1/1; 1/4, 1/6	P.I.; S. Quabbin, Quabbin (G35)	40+; 34, 5	E. Salmela; M. Lynch#	
1/14, 2/6	Bridgewater	25+, 110	K. Holmes#, K. Ryan	
2/1, 2/3	Marlboro, Gloucester	38, 35	R. Graefe, J. Brown	
2/17, 2/23	New Braintree, Bolton Flats	200+, 100+	M. Lynch#, E. Salmela	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JAN./FEB. 1990
<b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>				
1/1, 1/2	Nantucket, M. V.	70+, 45	R. Stymeist#, V. Laux	
1/13, 1/15	Salisbury, Eastham	50, 100	D. F. Oliver#, P. Trimble	
2/10, 2/13	Lincoln, E. Middleboro	25, 25	R. Forster, T. Aversa	
2/23, 2/28	Bolton Flats, S. Peabody	500+, 110	E. Salmela, T. Aversa	
<b>Eastern Meadowlark</b>				
1/1-2/28	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	4 max 1/27	LCES (J. Hill)	
1/1, 1/2	E. Middleboro, W. Roxbury	1, 1	K. Anderson, T. Aversa	
1/9, 1/23	Eastham (F.H.), Middleboro	18, 42	T. Aversa	
<b>Rusty Blackbird</b>				
1/7, 1/27	IRWS, M. V.	2, 1	R. Heil, M. Lynch#	
2/18	Lexington	4	D. F. Oliver#	
<b>Common Grackle</b>				
1/13	M. V., Salisbury	400, 12	V. Laux, D. F. Oliver#	
2/11	Hanover, Worcester	1, 3	R. Forster, M. Lynch#	
2/23-28	Reports of a general arrival at feeders throughout area.			
<b>Brown-headed Cowbird</b>				
1/1&13, 1/1&13	Ipswich, Salisbury	5 or 6, 75-80	J. Berry, D. F. Oliver#	
1/15, 1/24	Malden, M. V.	12, 30	P. + F. Vale, V. Laux	
2/18, 2/28	Salisbury, S. Peabody	16, 25	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
<b>Northern Oriole</b>				
1/1, 1/28	Nantucket, Needham	2, 1 ph	R. Stymeist#, V. Strong	
<b>Pine Grosbeak</b>				
1/1, 1/14, 2/3	Hardwick	3, 6, 4	M. Lynch#, E. Salmela#, I. Giriunas#	
1/6, 1/7	Quabbin (G36), Eastham (F.H.)	1, 1	M. Lynch#, G. Martin	
2/17, 2/19	Quabbin (G41), Petersham	5, 3	M. Lynch#, D. F. Oliver#	
<b>Purple Finch</b>				
1/6, 1/10	Quabbin (G35), E. Middleboro	1, 1	M. Lynch#, K. Anderson	
1/16, 1/21	M. V., Hanson	4, 14	V. Laux, W. Petersen	
2/4	Athol, Ipswich	1, 1	R. Stymeist#, J. Berry	
2/25, 2/27	Hanson, Easton	8, 2	W. Petersen, K. Ryan	
<b>House Finch</b>				
1/1-2/28	Ipswich	22 max 2/4 (feeder)	J. Berry	
1/6, 2/25	Framingham, Ipswich (Great Neck)	403, 51	K. Hamilton#, J. Brown	
<b>White-winged Crossbill</b>				
1/6, 1/14	Quabbin (G41), Hardwick	8, 1	M. Lynch#, R. Heil	
2/28	Sharon (Moose Hill)	1	R. Titus	
<b>Common Redpoll</b>				
1/5, 2/17-18	M. V., Essex	1, 3 or 4	V. Laux, M. Jordan#	
<b>Pine Siskin</b>				
1/1-2/28	W. Boylston	25+ max	v. o.	
1/28, 1/29	Framingham, Milton	2, 25	K. Hamilton, J. Hatch	
2/2-3, 2/8-25	Athol, Westford	600+, 50+	B. Fregeau#, S. Selesky#	
2/3, 2/15-28	Hardwick, Millis	90, 8 max 2/28	M. Lynch#, P. Iarrabino	
2/18, 2/26	Newton	2	M. Murphy	
2/25, 2/27	Ipswich, Hardwick	1, 30+	J. Brown, T. Aversa	
<b>American Goldfinch</b>				
1/1-2/28	Ipswich	19 max 2/24 (feeder)	J. Berry	
1/6	Framingham	182	K. Hamilton	
<b>Evening Grosbeak</b>				
1/1, 1/14	Hardwick	61, 110+	M. Lynch#, R. Heil	
1/6	Petersham, Waltham	70+, 5	M. Lynch#, L. Taylor	
1/13, 1/24	Middleboro, E. Middleboro	6, 8	K. Holmes, K. Anderson	
1/28	Sudbury, Framingham	8, 8	R. Forster, K. Hamilton	
2/3, 2/17; 2/27	Hardwick	66, 6; 10+	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
2/18, 2/19	Sharon, Petersham	1, 6	R. Titus, D. F. Oliver	
<b>House Sparrow</b>				
2/17	Hardwick	125+	M. Lynch#	

# FIELD RECORDS

## MARCH 1990



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by Richard A. Forster and George W. Gove

March 1990 was sunny, dry, and mild. The temperature averaged 40.1 degrees, 1.7 degrees above normal. The high was 73 degrees on March 13, tying the record high for the date set in 1945. The low mark was 12 degrees on March 17. Precipitation totaled 1.71 inches, 2.42 inches less than normal. Measurable amounts fell on eight days. Snow totaled 4.1 inches, 3.3 inches less than average. This brings the seasonal total to 38.7 inches, just 1.2 inches shy of the average. The ground was bare most of the month. Fog was frequent in the middle portion of the month. Southwest winds on March 15 and again on March 24 brought several Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallows, and flocks of blackbirds.

### LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

Red-necked Grebe numbers built up at coastal locations, with more than 200 at Nantucket and at Scituate. The Great Blue Heron rookery in Westboro was active by midmonth. Both Great and Snowy egrets typically appeared by the end of the month, and a Glossy Ibis in Rochester on March 24 established the earliest date for the observer.

Snow Geese appeared in small numbers in Newburyport. In Wayland, a "Richardson's" Canada Goose was noted, possibly the same bird that was seen in the Sudbury River Valley last year. Two Eurasian Wigeons were noted, both carryovers from winter. A count of 85 Redheads was made in Yarmouth. G.W.G.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	MARCH 1990
Red-throated Loon				
12, 24	Ipswich, Scituate	1, 1	D. Rimmer, T. + J. Cameron	
Common Loon				
thr	Ipswich	4-35	D. Rimmer	
10, 16	Sagamore, Plymouth	22, 10	R. Abrams, K. Anderson	
3, 24	Cape Ann, Lakeville	12, 2	BBC (R. Vernon), BBC (D. Davis)	
Pied-billed Grebe				
1, 17	Marston Mills, P.I.	1, 1	T. Aversa, P. + F. Vale	
24, 27	Lakeville, Waltham	1, 1	BBC (D. Davis), R. Forster	
30, 31	Lynnfield, P.I.	2, 1	P. + F. Vale, R. Stymeist#	
Horned Grebe				
3, 10	Gloucester, Dennis	4, 70	M. Lynch#, B. Nikula	
24, 27	Lakeville, S. Dartmouth	1, 15	BBC (K.Holmes), T. Aversa	
Red-necked Grebe				
3	Cape Ann, Marblehead	42, 18	BBC (R. Vernon), I. Lynch#	
11, 28	Winthrop	25, 27	P. + F. Vale, T. Aversa	
12, 24	Nantucket, Scituate	200, 215	B. Perkins, T. + J. Cameron	
Northern Gannet				
3, 10	Cape Ann, Provincetown	12, 500	BBC (R. Vernon), R. Abrams	
10	Dennis	200	B. Nikula	
24, 25	N. Scituate	130, 20	T. + J. Cameron, W. Petersen	
Great Cormorant				
4, 10	Nahant, Provincetown	69, 35	J. Brown, R. Abrams	
24, 27	Lakeville	4, 5	W. Petersen#, T. Aversa	
Double-crested Cormorant				
3, 9	Rockport, Somerset	1, 1	M. Lynch#, K. Machado	
13-31	Falmouth	6 max 3/13	T. Aversa + v. o.	
31	Beverly, Lakeville	3, 2	I. Lynch#, H. Wiggin#	
Great Blue Heron				
8-28	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	2-4	LCES (J. Hill)	
11-28	Westboro	22 max 3/20	E. Taylor	
17-31	Falmouth	3 or 4	v. o.	
24	Lakeville	4	BBC (D. Davis)	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	MARCH 1990
Great Egret 27	Westport	1	T. Aversa	
Snowy Egret 15, 24 27	Lynn, P.I. Westport	1, 1 1	C. Tilley, H. Wiggin# T. Aversa	
Black-crowned Night-Heron 31	Newburyport, Ipswich	1, 1	P. + F. Vale, I. Lynch#	
Glossy Ibis 24	Rochester	1 (early)	W. Petersen	
Mute Swan 8-28 10-31 18, 24	S. Dart. (Allens Pd) Gloucester Scituate	8-10 11 max 31, 27	LCES (J. Hill) J. Berry# + v. o. R. Titus#, R. Forster	
Snow Goose 18-31	Newburyport vicinity.	24 max 3/25	BBC (W. Drummond) + v. o.	
Brant thr 11, 25 25-30	Ipswich Squantum, Marblehead Nahant	180 max 3/18 600, 88 500 max 3/30	J. Berry + v. o. R. Abrams#, R. Stymeist# I. Lynch# + v. o.	
"Richardson"s" Canada Goose 27	Wayland	1	S. Perkins#	
Wood Duck 11; 14, 16 17, 24 29, 31	Wayland; GMNWR, Stoneham Quabbin (G40), (G37) E. Middleboro, GMNWR	3; 7, 7 6, 12 7 m + 4 f, 16	S. Perkins#; T. Aversa M. Lynch# K. Anderson, BBC (B. Wicks)	
Green-winged Teal 3, 15, 22 22, 24	Wayland, SRV, Bolton P.I., Middleboro	3, 28, 140 120, 150	R. Forster W. Drew#, W. Petersen	
American Black Duck 3, 17-24 8-28 18	S. Hanson, New Braintree S. Dart. (Allens Pd) P.I.	250, 160 max 272 max 3/8 205	W. Petersen, M. Lynch# LCES (J. Hill) BBC (I. Giriunas)	
Northern Pintail 3, 24; 24 14; 22	S. Hanson; New Braintree P.I., Ipswich; Bolton	6, 2; 20 10, 34; 10	W. Petersen; M. Lynch# R. Forster	
Blue-winged Teal 21, 26 24	Halifax, Arlington Halifax	2, 2 2	T. Aversa BBC (D. Davis)	
Northern Shoveler 24, 31	Halifax, Ipswich	1, 2	BBC (D. Davis), I. Lynch#	
Gadwall 3, 31; 11	Marblehead, Ipswich; P.I.	10, 15; 2	I. Lynch#; H. Wiggin#	
Eurasian Wigeon thr 17	Plymouth Chatham	1 m 1	v. o. B. Nikula	
American Wigeon 8, 14, 18 10, 11 18, 25	Acoaxet, Lynnfield, Concord Wellfleet, Gloucester Arlington, Plymouth	6, 6, 8 12, 2 15, 60	R. Forster R. Abrams, S. Perkins L. Taylor, W. Petersen	
Canvasback 1, 3 8, 31	Yarmouth, Westport Lakeville, Falmouth	260, 150 9, 2	K. Hamilton, R. Abrams# R. Forster, I. Giriunas#	
Redhead 1, 3, 25	Yarmouth, Westport, Plymouth	85, 1 m, 2	K. Hamilton, T. Cameron#, W. Petersen	
Ring-necked Duck 3, 24 11-25 17 18, 24	S. Hanson Wachusett Res. W. Newbury Holden	150, 75 507 max 3/25 150 158, 138	W. Petersen B. Blodget + v. o. J. Brown B. Blodget	
Greater Scaup 4, 8 8-25 17, 18-25	Acoaxet Lakeville Falmouth, Wachusett Res.	570 max 3/8 400 max 3/24 700, 42 max	R. Forster + v. o. W. Petersen + v. o. BBC (J. Bryant), M. Lynch#	
Lesser Scaup 17 18-31, 24	Chatham Wachusett Res., Lakeville	6 17 max 3/31, 4	B. Nikula M. Lynch#, BBC (D. Davis)	
Common Eider 24	Manomet	200	K. Machado	
King Eider thr	Rockport	1 m + 1 f	v. o.	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	MARCH 1990
Harlequin Duck thr; 10, 17	Rockport; N. Scituate	8 max; 3	v. o.; R. Titus#	
Oldsquaw 17-31 18	Newburyport Ipswich	300 max 3/31 80	P. + F. Vale BBC (I. Giriunas)	
Black Scoter 3, 7	Gloucester, P.I.	7, 2	M. Lynch#, W. Drew#	
Surf Scoter 4; 10	Marblehead, Nahant; Rockport	6, 6; 12	J. Brown; J. Berry	
White-winged Scoter 25	Nahant	450	R. Stymeist#	
Common Goldeneye thr 4, 13 11-31	Newburyport Sudbury, Wayland Wachusett Res.	550 max 3/4 50, 21 32 max 3/11	S. Perkins# + v. o. R. Forster, S. Perkins M. Lynch#	
Barrow's Goldeneye 4, 18 11	Newburyport Framingham	3 m, 2 1 f	S. Perkins#, BBC (I. Giriunas) E. Morrier#	
Bufflehead thr 8, 18 17	S. Dart. (Allens Pd) Lakeville, Newburyport N. Scituate, Falmouth	25-31 51, 117 192, 150	LCES (J. Hill) R. Forster, BBC (I. Giriunas) R. Titus#, BBC (J. Bryant)	
Hooded Merganser 2, 3 10, 11 16	Boston, Halifax Belmont, Bolton Holden	3, 5 6, 3 m + 2 f 19	J. Young, W. Petersen BBC (S. Sanders), M. Lynch# B. Blodgett	
Common Merganser thr 4, 10 18, 22-30	Framingham, Wachusett Res. Braintree, Belmont Norton, Marlboro	20-35, 127 max 3/18 42, 50 66, 38 max 3/27	E. Taylor, M. Lynch# R. Abrams, BBC (S. Sanders) B. Sorrie#, R. Graefe	
Red-breasted Merganser thr 10, 31	Ipswich Rockport, Falmouth	6-100 70, 54	D. Rimmer J. Berry, I. Giriunas	
Ruddy Duck 17, 18	W. Newbury, Arlington	1, 4	J. Brown, L. Taylor	

#### VULTURES THROUGH ALCIDS

Turkey Vultures appeared as migrants in many locations, as did Ospreys with at least 12 near nesting poles in Westport by March 24. Cooper's Hawks were noted in at least six locations, and nesting Red-shouldered Hawks were seen at two or three locations with many other individuals seen. An adult rufous-morph Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) was seen in Sudbury on March 15. The following is excerpted from the reporter's notes:

In checking the Sudbury River Valley on March 15, 1990, the highlight of the day occurred at about 11 A.M. in a brushy field along Old County Road near the Sudbury dump. One of the observers spotted a hawk perched about 15 feet up in a sapling about 100 feet away. The hawk was viewed head on with binoculars.

It appeared as a large buteo with dark breast and belly and rusty chest. A telescope was set up and through it the breast and belly appeared black or dark brown extending to the undertail coverts. The upper breast was very rusty, perhaps getting paler near the head. There was a faint but noticeable superciliary beginning behind the eye. The legs were bright yellow.

We began approaching the bird across the field, stopping several times to wave and clap, but the bird remained. When we got to within about 75 feet of the bird, it dropped off the perch and flew perpendicular to our line of sight for about 100 feet before it disappeared behind some trees. The most obvious field mark in flight was the bright red tail indicative of an adult Red-tailed Hawk. The white scapulars typical of Red-tailed Hawk were not obvious nor noted.

Later the Clark and Wheeler *Field Guide to Hawks* was consulted. The bird matched the rufous-morph Red-tailed Hawk. Further inspection of *American Birds* (Lisk and Voelker, Summer 1986; Kaufman, Winter 1989) and studying skins at the MCZ courtesy of Dr. Raymond Paynter confirmed the supposition. Based on skins examined and the degree of variation described in the literature, it was decided that the bird was a slightly darker than normal rufous-morph Red-tailed Hawk.

The Golden Eagle at Quabbin continued into March, and several Peregrine Falcons were noted in addition to the birds in Boston. Piping Plovers and oystercatchers appeared by mid to late March, and two early Lesser Yellowlegs were noted in the Newburyport-Plum Island area. An early Laughing Gull was seen in Falmouth, and a Little Gull was noted in Newburyport. The Mew Gull continued at Raccoon Island in Quincy. Three Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported from as many locations, and a Glaucous x Herring cross was noted in Gloucester.

G.W.G.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	MARCH 1990
Turkey Vulture				
3, 4	Framingham, Westport	1, 1	L. Tarlow, J. Gordon#	
10, 17	Franklin, Hardwick	4, 5	W. Riley#, M. Lynch#	
16, 19	Canton, Barre	6, 8	R. Titus#, B. Blodget	
22, 24	Bolton, Melrose	5, 4	R. Forster, C. Jackson	
4-31	Reports of 1 or 2 from 18 locations.			
Osprey				
2; 19, 24	W. Harwich; Westport	2; 3, 12	F. Dunford; G. Fernandez, G. Gove#	
17, 24	Falmouth, Lakeville	1, pair	BBC (J. Bryant), W. Petersen#	
23, 28	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1, 2	LCES (J. Hill)	
Bald Eagle				
3-8	Newburyport vicinity	6 max 3/3	v. o.	
4, 19	Quabbin (G43), Canton	9 imm + 3 ad, 1 ad	M. Lynch#, L. Landers	
24	Westport	1 ad	G. Gove#	
Northern Harrier				
8-28	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1 or 2	LCES (J. Hill)	
7, 22; 10, 24	P.I.; Provincetown, Middleboro	3, 2; 3, 4 or 5	W. Drew#; R. Abrams, W. Petersen	
Sharp-shinned Hawk				
3, 4	S. Hanson, Sudbury	1, 1	W. Petersen, R. Forster	
10, 11	Belmont, Newburyport	2, 2	BBC (S. Sanders), (I. Giriunas)	
8, 23	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1, 1	LCES (J. Hill)	
Cooper's Hawk				
4, 10	N. Dartmouth, Worcester	1, 1	M. Boucher, M. Lynch#	
11, 17	Wayland, Halifax	1, 1	S. Perkins#, G. Gove#	
20, 31	Sharon, Fairhaven	1, 1	B. Sorrie#, K. Machado	
Northern Goshawk				
16, 17	E. Middleboro, Concord	1, 1 ad	K. Anderson, R. Forster#	
24	S. Hanson, Middleboro vicinity	pair, 1	W. Petersen, BBC (D. Davis)	
Red-shouldered Hawk				
thr	E. Middleboro	pair	K. Anderson	
11-18, 25	Boxford	3 or 4, 1	J. Berry# + v. o., BBC (W. Drummond)	
15, 17	Middleboro, Holliston	2, 2 ad	B. Sorrie, S. Perkins#	
17, 24	Quabbin (G40), Groveland	2, 1 ad	M. Lynch#, H. Wiggin	
Reports of individuals from 6 locations.				
Red-tailed Hawk				
4, 24	SRV, Middleboro vicinity	21, 8	R. Walton#, BBC (D. Davis)	
15	Sudbury	1 ad rufous morph	R. Forster#	
Rough-legged Hawk				
3-24	Middleboro	5 max 3/18	v. o.	
7, 10, 16	P.I., Ipswich, Sudbury	2, 1 dk, 1 lt	W. Drew#, J. Berry, R. Walton#	
Golden Eagle				
4	Quabbin (G43)	1 ad	M. Lynch#	
American Kestrel				
9, 25, 31	Somerset, Middleboro, Fall River		1, 2, 1 K. Machado	
24	Middleboro vicinity	8	BBC (D. Davis)	
Peregrine Falcon				
7, 10	Fairhaven, Eastham	1, 1 ad	M. Boucher, R. Abrams	
22, 24; 25	S. Monomoy; P.I.	1; 1	D. Houghton#; BBC (W. Drummond)	
Ruffed Grouse				
2-31	E. Middleboro	3 max 3/10	K. Anderson	
11	Ipswich, Canton (F.M.)	2, 3	J. Berry, R. Abrams	
Wild Turkey				
17, 18	Quabbin (G40), New Braintree	7, 7	M. Lynch#, B. Blodget	
Virginia Rail				
31	GMNWR	1	BBC (B. Wicks)	
American Coot				
4	Natick	4	E. Taylor	
Piping Plover				
21-31, 19-31	Ipswich, P.I.	3-10, 3-7	D. Rimmer, v. o.	
27	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	5	T. Aversa	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	MARCH 1990
Killdeer				
9, 11	Somerset, Wayland	3, 2	K. Machado, S. Perkins	
18-31	Wachusett Res.	5 max 3/25	M. Lynch#	
18, 22	Newbypt area, P.I.	18, 14	BBC (I. Giriunas), W. Drew#	
American Oystercatcher				
19, 24	Nantucket	8, 2	K. Hamilton, F. Bouchard	
25	Monomoy	2	B. Nikula	
Greater Yellowlegs				
11, 18	Squantum, Newburyport	1, 2	R. Abrams#, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
24, 27	P. I., Halifax	2, 1	W. Wiggin, T. Aversa	
Lesser Yellowlegs				
22, 31	Newburyport, P.I.	1, 1	P. + F. Vale, W.Drew#	
Ruddy Turnstone				
19	Nantucket	300	K. Hamilton	
Sanderling				
4, 11	Lynn, Newburyport	250, 30	J. Brown, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
12-31	Ipswich	3-7	D. Rimmer	
Pectoral Sandpiper				
21, 31	Halifax, Topsfield	1, 1	T. Aversa, P. + F. Vale	
Purple Sandpiper				
8, 28	Acoaxet, Winthrop	125, 75	R. Forster, T. Aversa	
Dunlin				
3	Westport	520	R. Abrams#	
8, 28	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	45, 35	LCES (J. Hill)	
Common Snipe				
18, 20	Middleboro, Ipswich	4, 61	T. + J. Cameron, J. Brown	
24, 31	Middleboro vicinity, Newbury	11, 8	BBC (D. Davis), P. + F. Vale	
American Woodcock				
10; 12, 15	S. Dartmouth; N. Dartmouth	2; 3, 3	M. Boucher	
10, 16	Middleboro, Lexington	2, 8	W. Petersen, T. Aversa	
16, 18	Ipswich, Millbury	3, 4	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
24	Middleboro vicinity	4	BBC (D. Davis)	
Laughing Gull				
17	Falmouth	1 ad	BBC (J. Bryant)	
Little Gull				
20-22	Newburyport	1	fide W. Drew	
Common Black-headed Gull				
3, 28	Lynn, Winthrop	3, 8 ad	J. Quigley, T. Aversa	
31	Danvers	1	I. Lynch#	
Bonaparte's Gull				
3, 18	Newburyport	40, 40	S. Perkins#, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
Mew Gull				
11	Quincy	1	fide D. Ludlow	
Ring-billed Gull				
17, 23	Bridgewater, E. Middleboro	1000, 500	E. Taylor, K. Anderson	
24	Lynn	197	J. Quigley	
Iceland Gull				
4-11	Newburyport	8 ad max 3/10	M. Lynch# + v. o.	
10-31	Cape Ann	18 max 3/31	R. Stymeist# + v. o.	
10	Provincetown	4	R. Abrams	
Lesser Black-backed Gull				
3, 10	Rockport, Lynn	1, 1 ad	M. Lynch#, J. Quigley	
18	Wellesley	1 ad	C. Quinlan	
Glaucous Gull				
11, 31	Gloucester	6 imm, 1	S. Perkins#, R. Stymeist#	
10, 17	Provincetown, Barre	1 ad, 2	R. Abrams#, B. Blodgett	
18	Fitchburg, Norton	1, 1 (1W)	R. Forster#, B. Sorrie#	
Glaucous x Herring Gull				
11	Gloucester	1 imm	S. Perkins	
Black Guillemot				
3, 4	Cape Ann, Marblehead	9, 2	BBC (R. Vernon), J. Brown	
10	Rockport, E. Gloucester	4, 1	J. Berry	

#### OWLS THROUGH KINGLETS

Resident owls were vocal for those who pursued them. Only a few Snowy Owls lingered after a poor winter showing, but Short-eared Owls were just the opposite with a better than average March showing after a strong winter presence. A movement of Northern Saw-whet Owls occurred at midmonth based on reports from atypical locations. The several Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were unusually early arrivals, and Northern

Flickers arrived in midmonth coincident with warm weather as did Eastern Phoebe. The first Tree Swallows were early in the month and were not numerous until the end of March. The Boreal Chickadee in West Boylston persisted throughout the month. The only Golden-crowned Kinglets were reported from central Massachusetts.

R.A.F.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	MARCH 1990
Eastern Screech-Owl				
10	Middleboro	8	W. Petersen	
Great Horned Owl				
thr	P.I.	1 or 2	v. o.	
10	Middleboro	4	W. Petersen	
	Reports of 1 or 2 (total 8) from 7 locations.			
Snowy Owl				
7, 11	P.I.	2, 1	W. Drew#, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
11	Boston (Logan Airport)	1	R. Titus	
Barred Owl				
4, 10	Newburyport, Middleboro	1, 1	BBC (R. McHale), W. Petersen	
16, 24	Rochester, Bridgewater	1, 1	B. Sorrie, W. Petersen	
Short-eared Owl				
1, 3-4	Eastham (F.H.), P.I.	1, 1	K. Hamilton, M. Lynch#	
3, 18, 24	Middleboro	3, 3, 1	W. Petersen, T. + J. Cameron, W. Petersen	
23 & 28, 24	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), N. Scituate	1, 1	LCES (J. Hill), T. + J. Cameron	
Northern Saw-whet Owl				
4, 17	Hamilton (2 locations)	1, 1	J. Berry	
9, 10, 11	Eastham, Middleboro, Beverly	1, 2, 1 dead	P. Trull, W. Petersen, S. Perkins	
14, 15	Brookline, Boston (Back Bay)	1, 1	H. Wiggin, L. Morgenworth	
19, 24	Concord, Middleboro	1, 1	J. Kenneally, W. Petersen	
Belted Kingfisher				
5, 10	S. Dartmouth, Wellfleet	1, 1	M. Boucher, R. Abrams	
11	Braintree, Wayland	1, 2	R. Abrams, S. Perkins	
17, 24	Quabbin (G40), (G37)	1, 3	M. Lynch#	
Red-headed Woodpecker				
25	Worcester	1 ad	M. Lynch#	
Red-bellied Woodpecker				
3, 24	Lakeville	1 m	R. Titus#, BBC (D. Davis)	
10	Gloucester	1 m (from Dec.)	J. Berry	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				
10, 17, 31	Cambridge, Brookline, Westport	1, 1, 1	A. Bennett, S. Sesling, H. Wiggin#	
Hairy Woodpecker				
3	Westport	3	R. Abrams#	
Northern Flicker				
3, 16	Middleboro, SRV	3, 7	H. Wiggin, R. Forster	
Pileated Woodpecker				
4-24	Quabbin	1	M. Lynch#	
Eastern Phoebe				
8	Milton	1	R. Abrams	
15	SRV, Sharon	7, 1	R. Forster#, R. Titus	
16	SRV	13	R. Forster#	
17, 18	Quabbin (G40), Mt. A.	10, 4	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
24, 31	Middleboro vicinity, GMNWR	4, 14	BBC (D. Davis), BBC (B. Wicks)	
Horned Lark				
thr	Ipswich (Crane Beach)	2-10	D. Rimmer	
3, 14	Ipswich	15, 125	J. Berry, R. Forster	
11, 24	Newbury, Middleboro vicinity	50, 9	BBC (I. Giriunas), BBC (D. Davis)	
25	Quincy	5	R. Abrams	
Tree Swallow				
4, 7	Framingham, Westboro	3, 7	E. Taylor	
13, 17	Wayland, Quabbin (G40)	2, 6	S. Perkins, M. Lynch#	
23, 28, 31	Concord (GMNWR)	250, 750+, 185	T. Aversa, R. Forster, R. Titus#	
24	Middleboro	15	W. Petersen	
American Crow				
1-7, 10	Framingham, Haverhill	10,000, 400	E. Taylor, M. Lynch#	
Fish Crow				
4, 9	E. Middleboro, Sudbury	1, 50+	K. Anderson, R. Forster	
8, 9-31	Watertown, Mt. A.	2, 4-6	R. Stymeist#	
18, 19	Attleboro, Mansfield	10+, 1	B. Sorrie	
22, 27	Needham, E. Middleboro	3, 2	E. Taylor, K. Anderson	
Common Raven				
4	Quabbin (G40)	2	M. Lynch#	
24	Oakham, Barre	2, 1	F. McMenemy, M. Lynch#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	MARCH 1990
<b>Boreal Chickadee</b> thr	W. Boylston	1 (from Nov.)	v. o.	
<b>Red-breasted Nuthatch</b> 1-5, 6-31; 4, 17	Brookline; P.I., Hamilton	2, 1; 2, 2	B. Rielly#; J. Berry	
17, 18-31	Quabbin (G40), Wachusett Res.	9, 6	M. Lynch#	
22, 24	W. Boylston, Middleboro	7, 5	P. Iarobino, BBC (D. Davis)	
<b>Brown Creeper</b> 4, 17	Quabbin (G40)	7, 9	M. Lynch#	
<b>Carolina Wren</b> thr	Ipswich, Sherborn	1, 1	J. Berry, E. Taylor	
1-9, 1-15	Natick, Sharon	1, 1	E. Taylor, R. Titus	
11, 18	Gloucester, Georgetown	2, 1	S. Perkins, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
31	Acton	1	R. Forster	
Reports of a total of 18 from 7 southeastern Massachusetts locations.				
<b>Winter Wren</b> 15, 17	Middleboro, Stoneham	2, 1	B. Sorrie, T. Aversa	
25	IRWS	1	BBC (W. Drummond)	
<b>Golden-crowned Kinglet</b> 17, 24	Quabbin (G40), (G37)	13, 13	M. Lynch#	
<b>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</b> 24	Middleboro	1	BBC (D. Davis)	

#### THRUSHES THROUGH FINCHES

Bluebirds and robins became prevalent in midmonth. A stunning male **Varied Thrush** on Martha's Vineyard was a first island record. Holdovers from winter included a Northern Shrike, an Orange-crowned Warbler, a Dickcissel, and a White-crowned Sparrow. A Vesper Sparrow singing in Sharon was an early arrival, but Fox Sparrows passed through in paltry numbers. A scattering of Snow Bunting sightings is typical for the month. As usual, blackbirds were well represented, especially Rusty Blackbird, and a Yellow-headed Blackbird made a surprise visit to Nantucket. Winter finches continued their poor showing, but a flurry of Red Crossbills and Pine Grosbeaks in mid-March was a surprise.

R.A.F.

<b>Eastern Bluebird</b> thr	E. Middleboro	3	K. Anderson	
3, 10	Lakeville, Bridgewater	2, 1	R. Titus, W. Petersen	
15, 16	Concord, Sudbury	4+, 4+	R. Walton#, S. Perkins#	
17, 24	Quabbin (G40), (G37)	5, 4	M. Lynch#	
<b>Hermit Thrush</b> 24	Middleboro	3	W. Petersen	
<b>American Robin</b> 3, 4	Halifax, Wayland	75, 50	W. Petersen, R. Forster	
8, 18	Acoaxet, Newbypt vicinity	50, 163	R. Forster, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
18	Petersham (one field)	300+	R. Forster	
18-31	Wachusett Res.	66 max 3/18	M. Lynch#	
24	Middleboro vicinity	116	BBC (D. Davis)	
31	Hamilton (one pasture)	150+	J. Berry	
<b>Varied Thrush</b> 8	M. V. (Chilmark)	1 m	W. Manter	
<b>Gray Catbird</b> 3, 24	S. Dartmouth, Bridgewater	1, 1	J. Cameron#, BBC (D. Davis)	
<b>Cedar Waxwing</b> 3, 4	Wellesley, Wayland	55, 35	R. Forster	
11, 25, 31	Ipswich	50+, 45+, 50+	J. Berry	
15, 18	E. Middleboro, Wachusett Res.	20, 55	K. Anderson, M. Lynch#	
24	IRWS, E. Middleboro	40-50, 42	J. Berry, K. Anderson	
<b>Northern Shrike</b> 18	P.I.	1	BBC (I. Giriunas)	
<b>Orange-crowned Warbler</b> 1	Harwich (at feeder)	1	K. Hamilton	
<b>Yellow-rumped Warbler</b> 3, 11, 24	Lakeville, Squantum, S. Hanson	3, 12, 1	W. Petersen, R. Abrams, W. Petersen	
<b>Pine Warbler</b> thr, 1	E. Middleboro, Harwich	5, 1	K. Anderson, K. Hamilton	
<b>Northern Cardinal</b> thr	Ipswich	8 max	J. Berry	
<b>Dickcissel</b> 3/11-12	Weymouth	1	R. Campbell	
<b>Rufous-sided Towhee</b> 3, 17; 17	S. Dartmouth, Milton; P'town	4, 1; 2+	R. Abrams#; B. Nikula	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	MARCH 1990
American Tree Sparrow 18, 25 24, 31	P.I. Middleboro, GMNWR	5, 4 7, 6	BBC (I. Giriunas), BBC (W. Drummond) BBC (D. Davis), BBC (B. Wicks)	
Clay-colored Sparrow 3	S. Dartmouth	1	R. Abrams#	
Field Sparrow 3, 24, 28	Dighton, Boxford, Sharon	9, 1, 1	R. Titus, H. Wiggin#, R. Titus	
Vesper Sparrow 15-16	Sharon	1	R. Titus	
Savannah Sparrow 8, 28	P.I., S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1, 4	BBC (I. Giriunas), LCES (J. Hill)	
"Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow 8	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1	LCES (J. Hill)	
Fox Sparrow 15, 17 18 22, 24 24, 25	Sudbury, P'town Millbury, Wachusett Res. Ipswich Boxford, Jamaica Plain	1, 1 4, 1 2, 1 1, 1	R. Walton#, B. Nikula# M. Lynch# J. Berry H. Wiggin#, J. Young	
Song Sparrow 14 17 18 24, 31	P.I. Ipswich, Quabbin (G40) Newbypt, Wachusett Res. Middleboro vicinity, GMNWR	33 10, 15 23, 19 27, 20	R. Forster J. Berry, M. Lynch# BBC (I. Giriunas), M. Lynch# BBC (D. Davis), BBC (B. Wicks)	
Swamp Sparrow 24	Middleboro vicinity	3	BBC (D. Davis)	
White-throated Sparrow thr, 12, 17	Ipswich, Sherborn, P'town	7 or 8, 14, 20+	J. Berry, R. Forster, B. Nikula	
White-crowned Sparrow thr	N. Dartmouth	1 imm	M. Boucher	
Dark-eyed Junco thr, 11-31	Ipswich, Wachusett Res.	3 or 4, 18 max	J. Berry, M. Lynch#	
Lapland Longspur 24	Middleboro	2+	W. Petersen	
Snow Bunting 2, 14; 18	Barre, P.I.; Ipswich (Crane Beach)	30, 1; 6	R. Forster; J. Berry	
Red-winged Blackbird 2, 3 11, 17 24	Needham, Halifax Bolton Flats, Hardwick Middleboro	75, 1800 91, 63 410	P. Iarrobino, W. Petersen M. Lynch# BBC (D. Davis)	
Eastern Meadowlark 8, 23 14, 17 18, 30	S. Dart. (Allens Pd) Newbury, Halifax Ipswich, Ipswich (Crane B)	6, 1 1, 8 1, 4	LCES (J. Hill) R. Forster, G. Gove J. Berry, D. Rimmer	
Yellow-headed Blackbird 24	Nantucket	1	F. Bouchard	
Rusty Blackbird 3 11 15, 16 17, 25 31	DWWS Wayland, Boxford SRV, Sharon Hardwick, Sudbury Lynnfield, GMNWR	1 8, 2 130, 1 3, 30 3, 20	H. Wiggin# S. Perkins#, J. Berry R. Forster#, R. Titus M. Lynch#, R. Forster P. + F. Vale, R. Titus	
Common Grackle 2, 5-24 11, 13 17, 24	Needham, Natick Wayland, Acton Hardwick, Middleboro	90, 980 max 3/6 400, 2500 mig 50, 135	P. Iarrobino, E. Taylor S. Perkins, R. Forster M. Lynch#, BBC (D. Davis)	
Brown-headed Cowbird 2, 13 17, 18 24, 28	Needham, Concord (Nine Acre Corner) Hardwick, Sharon Middleboro, Sharon	20, 40 56, 200+ 56, 45	P. Iarrobino, S. Perkins M. Lynch#, B. Sorrie BBC (D. Davis), R. Titus	
Pine Grosbeak 11, 17; 18	Worcester, Quabbin (G40); Petersham	7, 1; 2	M. Lynch#; R. Forster	
Purple Finch 3, 16, 18	Sudbury, E. Middleboro, Ipswich (Crane B)	3, 3, 15	R. Forster, K. Anderson, J. Berry	
House Finch 14	P.I.	27	R. Forster	
Red Crossbill 4, 11 11-20 18, 30; 29	Quabbin (G43), Ipswich P.I. Oakham, Holden; Wakefield	4, 1 f 26 max 3/18 4, 1; 6-9	M. Lynch#, J. Berry I. Giriunas + v. o. B. Blodget; J. Young	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	MARCH 1990
White-winged Crossbill				
8, 11-22	Sharon, W. Boylston	1, 4 or 5	R. Titus, v. o.	
18, 18-31	P.I., Wachusett Res.	1, 11 max 3/18	BBC (I. Giriunas), M. Lynch#	
Pine Siskin				
1-13, 8	Millis, Milton	6 max 3/7, 12	P. Iarrobino, R. Abrams	
18-31, 22	Wachusett Res., W. Boylston	5-9, 15+	M. Lynch#, R. Forster	
Reports of 1-4 (total 21) from 9 locations.				
American Goldfinch				
4	Newburyport	42	BBC (R. McHale)	
Evening Grosbeak				
3, 7, 24	Sudbury, Holliston, Petersham	5, 2, 29	R. Forster, S. Perkins, M. Lynch#	

### LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ad	adult	F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge
b	banded	F.S.F.	Federation State Forest
br	breeding	G37 or 40	Gate 37 or 40, Quabbin
dk	dark (phase)	H.	Harbor
f	female	I.	Island
imm	immature	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
ind	individuals	Mt.A.	Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
juv	juvenile	Nant.	Nantucket
loc	location	Newbypt	Newburyport
lt	light (phase)	P.I.	Plum Island
m	male	Pd	Pond
max	maximum	P'town	Provincetown
mi	mile	Quab.	Quabbin
migr	migrating	Res.	Reservoir
n	nesting	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
ph	photographed	S. Dart.	South Dartmouth
pl	plumage	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
pr	pair	Stellw.	Stellwagen (Bank)
S	summer (1S = first summer)	BBC	Brookline Bird Club
thr	throughout	BOEM	Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts
v.o.	various observers	CBC	Christmas Bird Count
W	winter (2W = second winter)	CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club
w/	with	DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
yg	young	DWWS	Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary
#	additional observers	EMHW	Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum	FCBC	Felix Cutler Bird Club
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
B.	Beach	IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	LCES	Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	MAS	Massachusetts Audubon Society
Buzz.	Buzzards Bay	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
C.	cape as in Cape Cod	MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
Cambr.	Cambridge	NEHW	New England Hawk Watch
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford	PRNWR	Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
F.M.	Fowl Meadow	WMWS	Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary

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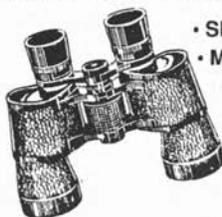
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### **BIRD OBSERVER FIELD RECORDS**

*Bird Observer* monthly field records represent observations from the ten counties of eastern Massachusetts (Essex, Middlesex, Worcester, Suffolk, Norfolk, Plymouth, Bristol, Barnstable, Duke, and Nantucket). Although space does not permit the inclusion of all sightings submitted, the compilers attempt to present sufficient data to document early and late dates for migratory species, maximum counts for migrants, and high or low numbers for the more common species and to note species outside of their normal ranges.

Please send eastern Massachusetts field records of any given month, no later than the 8th of the subsequent month, to Robert H. Stymeist, 98 Boylston Street, Watertown, MA 02172. The basic information that should be submitted is species name, date and place of observation, an accurate count or careful estimate, sex (if determinable), immature or adult plumage, vocalizations (if any), and observers. Species should be arranged in the current A.O.U. (American Ornithologists' Union) checklist order. Reports of species that can be difficult to identify should include details of the diagnostic characteristics observed or heard that led to the identification.

All field records received by *Bird Observer* are archived at the Massachusetts Audubon Society.

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## ABOUT THE COVER: BOBOLINK

by Barry W. Van Dusen and Richard A. Forster

*Editor's Note: Barry W. Van Dusen, who also created our Cox's Sandpiper, Young Least Sandpipers, and Little Egret covers, is an accomplished wildlife artist and illustrator of growing reputation. His paintings and drawings are currently on exhibit, June 17 through July 13, 1990, at the Petersham Craft Center on Route 32 in Petersham, open Tuesday through Sunday from 11:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.; phone: 508-724-3415. Barry's work has appeared in books and periodicals locally and nationally. To learn of future shows, write him at 13 Radford Road, Princeton, MA 01541.*

For me much of the enjoyment of drawing Bobolinks lies in the attraction that large fields and meadows hold especially in June when the grasses and wildflowers grow so rapidly that the scene changes with each passing day. Sitting or standing in one spot, I sometimes focus my binocular on a random segment of meadow and slowly pan through the grasses and forbs. By visually isolating smaller sections of the field, subtle transitions of texture, color, and pattern become more apparent. One grass species gives way to another, and loose colonies of wildflowers add interesting accents and rhythms. Being so exposed, the grassland serves to mirror the summer sky, responding to the slightest shifts in wind, sun, and shadow, bringing to mind the feeling of space and light that one associates with the seashore.

While I admire this intricate tapestry, a striking black-and-buff bird pops into view, asserting itself with startling contrast. No protective coloration here! Leave that to the ladies. This is all show! Male Bobolinks use the same perches repeatedly, favoring low posts or stakes or taller clumps of goldenrod that afford a slight elevation. By positioning myself quietly with several such perches in sight, good views of the birds are only a matter of patience. Even then, I must work fast. The males don't sit still for long. Off they go on another stiff-winged chase over the grasses, pouring out a song that seems to trip over itself in a hurry to burst free.

At Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary, where I did these field sketches, Director Joe Choiniere and a committee of volunteers and biologists have initiated a varied plan of maintaining the fields in hopes of finding an optimum strategy to encourage the breeding Bobolinks and other grassland species. Over the past four years, the various fields (some large, some small) have been mowed at different intervals ranging from once a year to a three-year rotation. In addition, there has been experimentation with different methods of mowing—in some instances using a rotary mower and leaving the cut grass on the fields and in others, cutting, baling, and removing the hay. Each year the number of Bobolinks in each field is carefully monitored.

The early results of these experiments seem to confirm what other researchers have found, namely, that Bobolinks mostly prefer old hayfields—fields that are hayed annually for a number of years. The experiments produced another interesting result as well. One year a large field was allowed to grow uncut for an entire season. The cover and food that this field provided enticed the Bobolinks to remain much later in the year than they had previously. It was interesting to watch this somber tribe (most birds having molted into their fall plumage), roving in a loose flock over the ripe grasses, the responsibilities and pressures of the nesting season all but forgotten.

Barry W. Van Dusen

In precolonial times the distribution of Bobolinks was limited to the grasslands associated with inland river valleys and the drier uplands bordering coastal marshes in eastern North America. With the arrival of colonists and the clearing of forests to plant grasses and grains, Bobolinks (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) spread through much of northern United States and southern Canada. With the decline of agriculture and the advent of modern mowing and haying practices, Bobolinks have become a less familiar sight than formerly in the East. Still, in favorite uplands of inland Massachusetts during the latter part of May and early June, groups of frolicking males spew forth their exuberant song, immortalized in "Robert of Lincoln" by poet William Cullen Bryant: "Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link, spink, spank, spink."

The male Bobolink's plumage is curiously the reverse of typical passerines, being black below and brightly colored above. In contrast, the coloration of the female is a masterpiece of concealment—a heavily streaked pale buff, ideal coloration for her grassland environment. The polygynous males arrive on the nesting grounds a few days ahead of the drab females. Rivalry is chiefly expressed in song and chase, but males also display on the ground by raising the buffy nape feathers, spreading the wings and tail, and gurgling. The female builds a flimsy grass nest on the ground, well concealed within dense vegetation and nearly impossible to detect. In summer Bobolinks feed on insects, seeds of grasses, ragweed, and some grains but during the southward migration are sometimes destructive to rice and other unharvested crops; the specific name *oryzivorus* means "rice-eater." In the 1800s and early 1900s, Bobolinks were slaughtered by the thousands in the rice fields of South Carolina and sold in northeastern city markets as "reed-birds."

Bobolinks migrating north to southern Canada from wintering grounds as far south as the plains of Argentina leave the north coast of South America on a hazardous flight across five hundred miles of open sea to Jamaica, another ninety miles to Cuba, one hundred and fifty miles over open sea to Florida, and then overland to Canada—an annual circuit of ten thousand miles, the longest trek of any North American blackbird.

Richard A. Forster

Seldom do birders have occasion to view a bird exclusively head on as in April's photograph. Indeed, until it is noted that the bird's feet are pointing toward the camera, it may not be immediately obvious that this is even a frontal view. Thus, the visible characteristics must be carefully analyzed and integrated before a correct identification can be made.

The most striking features are, first, what appears to be a white face against an otherwise dark head and body; second, short legs with webbed feet, best noted on the bird's right foot; and third, a slim, slightly decurved, and markedly pale bill. This anomalous combination of characteristics seems at first to bear little resemblance to species illustrated in popular field guides.

Immediate emphasis should be placed on the webbed feet. This feature at once eliminates landbirds. Although loons, tube-noses, cormorants, waterfowl, gulls, and alcids have webbed feet, these can be rejected on the basis of either coloration or bill shape, leaving only jaegers and terns as viable possibilities. Despite their notorious plumage variability, even extremely melanistic jaegers would fail to display an irregular white face patch. Jaegers also possess longer legs.

Only terns remain as web-footed birds with species uniformly dark below. Of this group, the Black Tern, the immature Sooty Tern, and the two tropical noddy terns are solidly dark on the breast. The immature Sooty Tern is uniformly dark. The Brown Noddy and the rare Black Noddy can be eliminated because the white on their heads forms a crown patch rather than an irregular white face patch. Thus, noting the irregular and mottled face patch is tantamount to identifying the bird as a Black Tern (*Chilidonias niger*). The individual in the picture has begun its autumn molt into winter plumage, a process that in many species is initiated on the head, and still retains the solid black underparts of breeding plumage. The light color on the bill can be discounted as an artifact created by glare. Because Black Terns nest in freshwater marshes, it is not uncommon for them to perch occasionally on logs and branches near the water.



Photo by Wayne R. Petersen

The White-winged Tern, an accidental vagrant that has only once been recorded in Massachusetts, cannot be ruled out from the photo. The Black Tern in the picture was photographed in July near its nest in central Maine.

## AT A GLANCE

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Photo by Wayne R. Petersen



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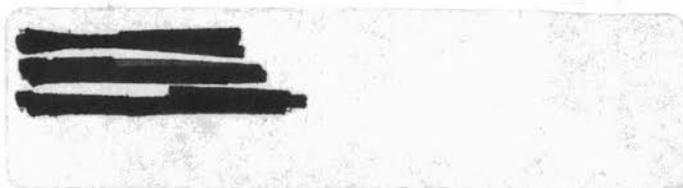
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## **CONTENTS**

---

A WEEK IN THE WHITES WITH WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS .....	Andrew H. Williams	140
MANOMET BIRD OBSERVATORY ENTERS ITS THIRD DECADE: An Update on Research Activities .....	R. Tod Highsmith	145
TOP TEN: A Prediction of Future Vagrants in Massachusetts .....	Richard A. Forster	149
BOOK REVIEW: <i>A Field Guide to Eastern Forests</i> by John C. Kricher .....	David C. Morimoto	155
SIGHTING OF A ROSS' GULL ( <i>Rhodostethia rosea</i> ) AT NILES POND, GLOUCESTER .....	Richard A. Forster	158
FIELD NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE Sighting of a Golden-Crowned Sparrow at Dartmouth .....	George W. Gove and Judy B. Gordon	163
Not A Hag At All .....	Peter Trull	164
FIELD RECORDS: JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1990 .....		165
FIELD RECORDS: MARCH 1990 .....		178
ABOUT THE COVER: BOBOLINK .....	Barry W. Van Dusen, Richard A. Forster	188
AT A GLANCE .....	Wayne R. Petersen	190
Cover Illustration: Field Studies of Bobolinks by Barry W. Van Dusen		

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