

# BIRD OBSERVER



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# BIRD OBSERVER

• a bimonthly journal •

To enhance understanding, observation,  
and enjoyment of birds.

VOL. 20, NO. 6 DECEMBER 1992

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# CONTENTS

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BIRDING BOSTON: THE COMMON TO THE FENS	Kenneth Hudson	296
IS WINTER BIRD FEEDING GOOD FOR BIRDS?	Erica H. Dunn	308
A SELECTIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE NEWBURYPORT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT . . . . .	Jim Berry	314
BOOK REVIEW: <i>Masterpieces of Bird Art: 700 Years of Ornithological Illustration</i> by Roger F. Pasquier and John Farrand, Jr. . . . . .	William E. Davis, Jr.	323
BIRD SIGHTINGS: JULY 1992 SUMMARY . . . . .		326
BIRD SIGHTINGS: AUGUST 1992 SUMMARY . . . . .		335
INDEX TO VOLUME 20, 1992. . . . .		346
ABOUT THE COVER: Great Horned Owl . . . . .		348
MEET OUR COVER ARTIST: Gordon Morrison. . . . .		349
AT A GLANCE . . . . .	Wayne R. Petersen	350
Cover Illustration: Great Horned Owl by Gordon Morrison		

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## CONGRATULATIONS TO MARK BLAZIS

Congratulations are in order for Mark Blazis, an occasional contributor to *Bird Observer*, who was recently named Nature Educator of the Year by the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History. For four years, Mark's seventh grade classes at Auburn (Massachusetts) Middle School have produced and published field guides to trees, birds, reptiles and amphibians, and butterflies of Auburn and southern Worcester County. They are the first student-produced, locally comprehensive field guides in the United States. The guides then become resources for use in the classroom and in school and public libraries. They also serve as an inventory of local life forms for the conservation commission and for those who oversee open space planning and habitat preservation. An important criterion for the award, given annually to one public or private school teacher and one community nature educator, is that the approaches used by the educators can be easily replicated by other educators in similar settings. For more information on the award-winning programs, contact the Education Director at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute, 110 Marvin Parkway, Milham House, Jamestown, New York 14701.





## BIRDING BOSTON: THE COMMON TO THE FENS

by Kenneth Hudson

My purpose in this article is twofold: to document the surprising wealth of birdlife found close to downtown Boston and to prompt readers to visit the city and enjoy its natural attractions. In order to encourage readers to use public transportation, I describe how to reach all the locations mentioned in this article by the MBTA Red or Green lines or buses.

### Boston Common

*Get off at the MBTA Park Street station (Green or Red lines) or the Boylston Street station (Green Line).* Let us begin at Boston Common. The oldest public park in the United States offers more to the discerning birder than mere pigeons. But please do not disdain the humble Rock Dove; it is the preferred prey of the Red-tailed Hawks that regularly patrol the Common and other urban parks in winter.

Starlings commonly mob soaring Red-tailed Hawks, a convenient behavioral trait for the birder. A large flock of starlings wheeling to and fro is more easily noticed than one drab buteo, however big, sluggishly circling high overhead. I have also seen Ring-billed Gulls repeatedly swooping at Redtails in flight. Do not be surprised if most of the Red-tailed Hawks you find in town have a brownish-gray tail: adults seem to be in the minority locally. Although this is not the only raptor found at the Common, it is the one most likely to be noticed by the general public. In 1991 and 1992 a pair of these birds nested at Franklin Park, only a few miles from downtown Boston.

Smaller in size but vastly more abundant is the Ring-billed Gull, a prominent denizen of the Common and the adjacent Public Garden for much of the year. When I first visited Boston in the early 1950s, there were very few gulls in the parks and virtually none of them were Ringbills. But relatively recent range expansion has drastically altered the complexion of urban birding. Almost as tame as pigeons and squirrels, Ring-billed Gulls will crowd closely around anyone dispensing edible largesse and loudly demand their share. Should this dubious honor befall you, pull out your copy of *A Field Guide to Advanced Birding*, and find the illustration showing successive stages in the plumage of the maturing Ring-billed Gull. Compare the drawings in the book with the flesh-and-feather reality of the fowl raising hell at your feet. If the ground is damp and the season other than winter, watch them pause every few steps to gobble earthworms.

On a sunny spring afternoon on the Common, few objects stand out more prominently than a Ring-billed Gull in gleaming adult plumage. But on an overcast winter day after snow flurries have dusted the sere grass, that same gull

(now in less pristine garb) will be almost invisible. More than once I have found myself standing right in the middle of a flock of these birds without having been aware of them until one gull suddenly moved or cried.

Due to the dearth of bushes and shrubs on Boston Common, small landbirds tend to be scarce except during peak migration periods. At such times you should check out the burying ground along Boylston Street. (Note: at the time of writing this place is closed to the public. Be content with surveying it from outside the wrought-iron fence. You will not miss much.) This and other burying grounds in the downtown area are good places to find Eastern Phoebes and thrushes. They will often perch on the gravestones where you can get a good look at them. Dark-eyed Juncos and several kinds of sparrows also turn up at the appropriate seasons, but they are more easily viewed along the chainlink fence surrounding the nearby ballfields. Presumably they are attracted by the seeds of various herbaceous plants that grow by the fence. Yellow-shafted Flickers pause during migration to feed on ants on the ballfields.

When the year's first crop of dandelions has flowered and is just beginning to set seed, notice the House Finches gorging themselves among the fading blooms. This species, a relative newcomer to Boston, is one of the first birds to resume song after the winter solstice. Some are already tuning up before the end of January. House Finches are now well entrenched in our urban habitat. You can find them almost everywhere from the financial district to the remoter public parks and residential neighborhoods. Not bad for a transplanted Westerner that never naturally occurred east of the Rockies! If I had the time, I would very much like to do a careful nesting census of this species within some manageable area of the city. This would be a worthwhile project for an interested amateur looking for something to do next spring.

### Public Garden

*The Public Garden is adjacent to the Common. Get off at the MBTA Arlington station (Green Line).* Crossing Charles Street, we come next to the Public Garden. Unlike the Common, the Public Garden is blessed with enough shrubs (including evergreens) to attract a fairly wide array of birds. It also boasts that other *sine qua non* of good birding, plenty of water. This tends, alas, to freeze solid in winter. Many sharp-eyed locals are unaware of the surprises afforded by the Garden. For instance, not too many years ago a pair of Northern Orioles built a nest in one of the huge elms that make this park so lovely. A Northern Mockingbird has been resident for several years, but only drew general notice when it started singing and found a mate in 1992. The pair subsequently behaved as if they were nesting in the park, although I was not able to locate the nest or fledged young.

It is not unheard of to find a stray Red-winged Blackbird or Song Sparrow at the Garden in the breeding season. I would like to believe that they nest here,

but they are more likely nonbreeding stragglers from the nearby Charles River Esplanade. Several pairs of American Robins nest in the Public Garden and in the Common every year. Common Grackles are strongly suspected of doing likewise. On two occasions I have found Downy Woodpeckers nesting here, and in 1992 Mourning Dove was added to the short list of known nesters.

Chimney Swifts, often seen chasing insects or drinking on the wing from the lagoon, are presumed to nest not far from this park. Swallows present a puzzle; at least three species (Tree, Barn, and Rough-winged) occur at the Garden in May. This is only to be expected. However, they are also liable to turn up at almost any time in June. I do not know what to conclude from this, except of course that "more study is needed."

In spring, when terns are migrating northward along the coast, the alert and lucky birder could spot one circling the lagoon at the Public Garden. On one or two occasions I have seen a tern actually dive into the water, which (believe it or not) has fish. More frequently noted are Black-crowned Night Herons, often heard squawking overhead and sometimes observed roosting in a tree or standing at the water's edge. In recent years visits by Double-crested Cormorants have become increasingly frequent. I have photographed these birds catching hornpout here in the Garden.

Fish have already been mentioned in passing. Although sunfish, goldfish, and hornpout are found in the lagoon, nobody knows exactly how they got there or where they came from. Since the water is drained twice a year for routine maintenance, it is doubtful that self-sustaining breeding populations have become established. Ergo, either someone is deliberately reintroducing them year after year, or they are finding their own way in via some underground connection with the Charles River.

In any case, despite the fish and some aquatic insects, the lagoon does not regularly attract the smaller wading birds. Once in a while when the water has been drained, a migrating Killdeer might drop in, and Spotted Sandpiper must be a twice-yearly visitor in very small numbers. Mallards and Black Ducks almost exhaust the list of dabbling ducks at the Public Garden, although Green-winged Teal, Wood Duck, and American Widgeon have been found a few times (usually in autumn).

The many trees and bushes throughout the Garden attract an array of warblers, vireos, flycatchers, thrushes, finches, and other migrants in spring and fall. In years when Cedar Waxwings are abundant, there might be a flock of them lispering and flycatching at the Garden for several weeks at a stretch in late summer and early autumn. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker shows up every year during migration. This silent unobtrusive species is easy to overlook in fall, but in April you can probably find it by keeping an eye on a certain birch tree in the northeastern quadrant of the park, not too far from the Parks Department shed. One of the magnolias in the northwestern quadrant is positively covered with

hundreds of sapsucker holes. As spring draws to a close after the May warbler waves, the Public Garden is a good place to find tardy stragglers among the usual late-season migrants: Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Swainson's Thrush, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, and one or two others are among the birds heard almost until mid-June.

### Commonwealth Avenue Mall

*The Commonwealth Avenue Mall is adjacent to the Public Garden. Get off at the MBTA Arlington station (Green Line), walk two blocks north on Arlington Street. To get good afternoon light, start at the MBTA Kenmore station (Green Line): the Mall is just east of Kenmore station.* Continuing westward, we leave the Public Garden and stroll along the Commonwealth Avenue Mall, which bisects the residential core of Back Bay. At first glance, and perhaps for some time thereafter, this beautiful but nonetheless very urban neighborhood would seem unlikely to support much birdlife. But appearances can be deceptive. For instance, the House Finch thrives here, and ivy growing on the sides of brick buildings affords it many suitable nesting sites. There are also Blue Jays, American Crows, and American Robins. The former is presumed to nest in the neighborhood, while the latter two are known to do so. In 1991 and again in 1992 two pairs of crows nested in elms on the Mall. American Kestrel nests in cavities under the eaves of residential buildings and can also be found in winter. As with many other year-round species, it is hard to say whether the individuals that breed here are the same ones that spend the winter. Common Nighthawks are believed to breed on flat graveled roofs in Back Bay. Their nasal cries on summer evenings are as characteristic of the city as the chirping of House Sparrows in daylight.

During migrations it is possible to find the occasional American Woodcock under the trees on the Mall, probably drawn there by the abundant earthworms. One winter I found a Song Sparrow singing in the shrubbery of a front yard facing the Mall. Also in winter it can be worthwhile to scan the sky for Red-tailed Hawks commuting between the Common and the more outlying parks. On several occasions a Merlin has been seen perched in a tree or on a rooftop television antenna here in the heart of Back Bay. (The reader is urged, between late autumn and early May, to take a second look at any "aberrant kestrel" found hereabouts.) Other raptors seen over Back Bay in recent years include Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, and Peregrine Falcon. As Paul Roberts stated a number of years ago, "Hawks are where you find them" [Roberts, P. 1977. Where to Watch Hawks in Massachusetts, *Bird Observer* 5(4):109].

I would not wish to give the impression that Back Bay is another Drumlin Farm or Plum Island, because obviously it is not. But neither is it the Sahara Desert. There is always something to see and think about. In my book, birding is

not so much a matter of what a particular locale has to offer. Rather it hinges on what the birder brings to that locale. Experience, perceptivity, curiosity, originality, and being alive to the possibilities are the essential ingredients. There will be some days when you will not see many species in Back Bay. But you never need to feel bored. When you reach the point at which "What is that bird?" begins to pall, ask instead, "What is it doing? And how and why? What does it mean?" Pretty soon you will not have time to read articles such as this one; you will be too busy writing your own.

### Charles River Esplanade

*From the Public Garden cross Beacon Street at Arlington Street, turn north, and the pedestrian overpass leading to the Esplanade is a few paces in front of you. From the MBTA Charles/Mass General Hospital station (Red Line) take two elevated pedestrian ramps just south of the station. From the MBTA Auditorium station (Green Line) take the Harvard Square bus three short blocks north to Beacon Street, walk a few paces to the bridge, and take the ramp down to the Esplanade. Or skip the bus and just walk from the station. It only takes five minutes. There are also two pedestrian ramps linking the Esplanade with the alley between Beacon Street and Storrow Drive. These are convenient if for any reason you wish to shorten your hike.* After sauntering along Back Bay's charming residential streets, we turn north to try our luck at the Charles River Esplanade. It is a refreshing change of pace. First, however, a word of warning: beware of joggers! Hordes of them are always galloping along the Esplanade. Indeed, there is no longer a footpath or public sidewalk anywhere in or near Back Bay that has not been overrun by joggers, skateboarders, rollerbladers, and the like. You are more likely to be knocked down by one of these folks than robbed by a mugger. The authorities, needless to say, do not give a hoot. In this sense, Boston is a hostile town for birders. And it is positively dangerous for many senior citizens and the physically challenged.

Aside from that, birding the Esplanade can be most uncomfortable in midwinter when gale-force winds, howling unobstructed across a vast expanse of ice, hurl stinging clouds of powdery snow crystals into your eyes. But if there is any open water, be sure to check for diving ducks. Over the past twenty years I have recorded many of the common species. One year it will be mostly Common Goldeneyes, another year Buffleheads, the next year scaup and Ring-necked Ducks. Recently, Red-breasted and Hooded mergansers have been fairly regular. Be on the lookout too for Double-crested Cormorant. Although usually thought of as a summer resident, this bird does winter locally in small numbers.

In fall and spring Horned or Pied-billed grebe might sometimes be seen. Once in a great while a Northern Shoveler or Gadwall or some other interesting surface-feeding duck may be found, but unless you carefully study each flock of Mallards and American Black Ducks, you will overlook the infrequent visitors.



It is also very easy to miss hybrids, the natural tendency being to dismiss the duller-looking ones as Mallards. So make a conscious effort to slow down and really look at these birds. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred the questionable individual will indeed prove to be a Mallard; the hundredth time it will surprise you.

A few Common Terns have appeared at the Esplanade, mostly in late summer. Keep an eye peeled for them and listen for their cries. You will also find Double-crested Cormorants and Black-crowned Night Herons fishing here, the spring shad run drawing rather surprising numbers of them, up to a hundred and forty cormorants at the end of May or in early June.

Red-winged Blackbird, Gray Catbird, and Song Sparrow probably nest at the Esplanade. At least one pair of Cedar Waxwings attempted to nest near the Hatch Shell in 1992, and Eastern Kingbirds were discovered nesting in the same area several years earlier, remarkably far intown for a traditionally rural species to breed. Various other small landbirds can be found during migration and in winter. The Otis Grove, halfway between Community Boating and the Massachusetts Avenue bridge, is a good place to look for them. One of my most memorable days at the Esplanade was in winter; a pair of Snow Buntings materialized out of thin air and settled in a small bare shoreline tree. It is hard to say whether I was more surprised by their mere presence there at the edge of Back Bay, or by the fact that they perched in the tree instead of alighting on the ground.



*Mourning Dove on nest in the Fens.*

*Photo by Kenneth Hudson*

Much more could be said about the Esplanade but we still have a lot of ground to cover, and we must move right along. Let us make a quick detour through Charlesgate before proceeding to the Fens for the grand finale.

### Charlesgate

*Follow the Commonwealth Avenue Mall one block west from Massachusetts Avenue, or from the MBTA Kenmore station (Green Line), walk one block east.* Situated between Massachusetts Avenue and Kenmore Square, Charlesgate consists of a short stretch of smelly stream (much of it mercifully hidden by the streets beneath which it flows) bordered by sickly pine trees and deteriorating brick walkways. The latter are often liberally strewn with old soggy newspapers and magazines. Broken glass from discarded liquor bottles lends a touch of—er—distinction to the general ambiance of decay and neglect. This already charmless panorama is further blighted by a big, ugly, heavily used elevated traffic ramp running directly overhead. A textbook case of mismanaged parkland, Charlesgate nevertheless merits your consideration because of the birds that (in a mind-numbing display of poor taste) continue to appear there year after year.

Dark-eyed Juncos and White-throated Sparrows vie with the two species of kinglets for the Most Numerous Regular Migrant prize. Hermit Thrush and Brown Creeper show up reliably every year. A number of warblers and other small landbirds can be found with minimal effort at the proper seasons. Downy Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, and Mourning Dove might turn up at any time. American Robin and Cedar Waxwing have nested here. For such an eyesore, Charlesgate affords much of interest to the naturalist.

### The Fens

*From Charlesgate walk one block south, being careful of traffic when crossing streets. If the narrow sidewalks are unplowed in winter, start at the MBTA Auditorium station (Green Line), walk a few steps south to Boylston Street, turn west, and walk two and a half short blocks to the Fens.* The bizarre paradox of Charlesgate now safely behind us, we trudge up the sloping traffic ramp and pass over the turnpike extension and railroad tracks to fetch up at last in the Fens. A hundred-odd years ago the local topography and corresponding neighborhood nomenclature differed considerably from what we find today. At that time the Fens was indeed part of what people knew as "Back Bay." Since then, however, things have changed. Now the Fens is considered to be in the Fenway. Nonetheless, the tradition has persisted on most street maps of labeling this park the "Back Bay Fens." In order to avoid confusing the reader, I shall call the place simply "the Fens."

The reader is advised to keep two things in mind concerning the Fens: (1) it is a fine place to bird, and (2) it would be exceedingly unwise to venture into the



*BIRDS OF  
THE FENS*



*Green-backed Heron*



*Double-crested Cormorant*



*Black-crowned Night Heron*

*Photos by Kenneth Hudson*

park alone at night. (Most of Boston's public parks are officially closed between 11:30 P.M. and 6:00 A.M. except for walk-through traffic.) In broad daylight the Fens is about as safe as anywhere else in town. Rule of thumb: if you see gardeners working in their plots when you arrive, it should be safe for birding. If the park is deserted (and dark), think twice.

If possible, begin your study of the Fens in February. It is quiet then, and you will not feel overwhelmed by an abundance of subject matter clamoring for your attention. Among the Mallards and Black Ducks on the stream are usually Hooded Mergansers in flocks numbering from half a dozen to twenty. It would be hard to imagine anyone who could behold a drake Hooded Merganser in crisp breeding plumage without experiencing a frisson of esthetic delight. Listen for their peculiar ventriloquial growl or purr, an incongruously colorless voice for such a handsome little fowl. Bufflehead, American Wigeon, Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, and Red-breasted Merganser are also possibilities, but you will not find all of them on any given day, or even every year. In spring and fall, if you visit frequently, you can also see Pied-billed Grebe, American Coot, Wood Duck, and Green-winged Teal. In winter I have found as many as six Double-crested Cormorants at the Fens, depending on availability of open water.

Check the tall phragmites reeds lining the streambanks for Great Blue Heron and Black-crowned Night Heron. Both species often winter here. The reeds provide shelter and food for many other species, too. Since most of these birds are rather small, they have to be looked for with some care.

If you arrive at the Fens just after dawn on a mid- or late-winter morning, you will find up to a hundred robins flying out of the reeds, generally in a westward or southerly direction, heading for their daytime feeding areas. Do not be fooled by the flocks of starlings apparently doing the same. Most of these birds are actually coming from downtown night roosts. For some reason best known to themselves, they fly at very low altitudes just skimming the tops of the reedbeds at the Fens. This gives the illusion that they are flying up from within the reeds, an illusion that is especially convincing for an observer stationed south of the Victory Gardens. Shift your position to the Boylston Street bridge, just north of the Victory Gardens, and you can see the starlings coming over the roofs from the east.

Several sparrow species take to the phragmites in winter and during migration. I have even seen Downy Woodpeckers assiduously hacking away at dead reedstalks. A complete list of birds found in these reeds would run to dozens of species.

In the breeding season Tree and Rough-winged swallows nest at the Fens, as does Warbling Vireo. This is thought to be the closest to downtown Boston that these three species have regularly nested in recent decades. Other nesting birds at the Fens include Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, American Robin, Red-winged Blackbird, Northern Oriole, Eastern Kingbird, Mourning Dove,

House Finch, Downy Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwing, and Song Sparrow. The Song Sparrow is known to be victimized by the Brown-headed Cowbird at the Fens; it is possible that other species are also parasitized. Northern Cardinal and American Kestrel are believed to nest close to the Fens, the former possibly within the park itself.

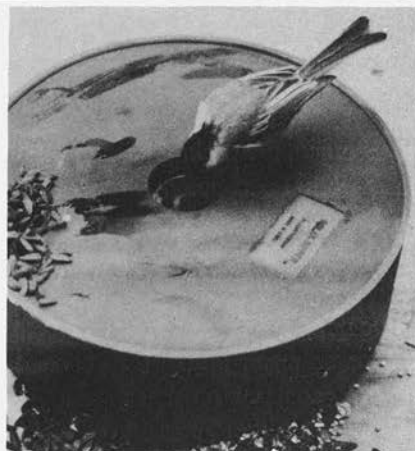
Across the stream from the Agassiz Road bridge, near the War Memorials, is a shallow muddy area thickly covered with cattails. Check this spot carefully from spring through autumn. Not only do Red-winged Blackbirds nest in the cattails; various waders, large and small, frequent the surrounding mudflat. Among the birds I have found here are Killdeer, Semipalmated, Least, Spotted, and Solitary sandpipers, Lesser Yellowlegs, dowitcher species, Sora, Green-backed Heron, and Great Egret.

Rarities occur just often enough to add spice to the local birding without turning the Fens into a four-star tourist attraction. For several years in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Orchard Oriole turned up every spring. In 1986 a pair nested less than a mile from here, at the Riverway. One recent autumn I secured some fine photos of the notoriously hard-to-photograph Lincoln's Sparrow at the Victory Gardens. Two White-throated Sparrows spent the summer of 1991 at the Fens. That same year I noticed a pair of Osprey soaring overhead on July fourth, a decidedly unusual date for this species in Boston. Merlin, too, has been seen at the Fens. Whatever the birder's level of skill, time spent exploring this park will be amply rewarded.

For those whose interests are more catholic, fishes, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals galore abound here. For a free comprehensive checklist write to the Center for Vertebrate Studies, Department of Biology, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115.

This article has touched on the highlights of Boston's in-town avifauna. Rather than go into excessive detail (and risk spoiling the thrill of discovery that awaits the reader who decides to study the area in person), I have purposely kept the survey short in length, broad in scope, and vague in a great many particulars. I hope the reader will now want to go out and get better acquainted with a very attractive part of Boston and its equally attractive wildlife. Good birding!

**KENNETH HUDSON** has been a naturalist and birder for many years. After moving to Boston twenty years ago, he became seriously interested in the urban habitat. He has written several reports and articles on Boston's birds, including "Birding the Muddy River" in *Bird Observer* (volume 13, number 1, February 1985). Mr. Hudson's wildlife photographs have been exhibited at various institutions in Boston, and his slide programs have been well received by senior citizens in the Back Bay area.



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## IS WINTER BIRD FEEDING GOOD FOR BIRDS?

by Erica H. Dunn

*Editor's Note. This article is an expanded version of an article that appeared in SEASONS magazine, Winter 1992.*

Every person who feeds birds on a regular basis wonders occasionally about possible negative effects. Might birds become dependent on feeders and lose their natural foraging skills? Do feeders lure bird to areas where predation and disease are more likely? Alternatively, bird feeding might be too much of a good thing. Some authors have suggested that some species, such as Blue Jays and Brown-headed Cowbirds, benefit so much from bird feeding that their nest-robbing and nest-parasitic habits are putting increased pressure on other, less common species.

Despite the incredible food bonanza provided to birds by the estimated fifty million North Americans who purchase bird food annually, remarkably little research has been carried out on the impact of feeding birds (Shaw and Mangun 1984; Fillion et al. 1985). One of the best North American studies was done by Margaret Brittingham, then a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin (Brittingham and Temple 1988). She followed Black-capped Chickadees wintering in woodlots with similar characteristics except for differing availability of feeders.

Chickadee flocks without feeder access had lower overwinter survival than did chickadees with supplemental food. However, the effect was seen only in winters with prolonged, severe cold snaps. This suggests that feeding in areas with a milder winter climate would have no effect. Moreover, the density of breeding birds did not differ between Brittingham's study areas. If the "extra" birds that survived because of bird feeding bred at all, it must have been through dispersal to other, perhaps less suitable, areas. Overall, then, the impact of bird feeding on chickadees remains obscure.

Other studies also have generated equivocal results (van Balen 1980; Desrochers et al. 1988; Kallender 1981; Orell 1989). Each research project takes intensive effort over a period of years, and results accumulate slowly. Even when we have solid and clear results, any effect of bird feeding that is documented might apply only to the species studied or to a particular geographic location.

We can get around the limitations of single-species studies by looking at continent wide population trends in feeder birds. If feeder species have increased or decreased as a group in directions that differ from trends in other bird populations, we would have strong suggestive evidence that feeders play a role. I recently carried out this very analysis.

For a definition of a "feeder species," I turned to Project FeederWatch,

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**Table 1. Population trends of feeder species: 1966-1989.**

Percent of Feeders Visited	Number of Species	Percent Species Increasing	Percent Species Decreasing
greater than 25%	48	40%	56%
greater than 50%	29	31%	70%

Based on the Breeding Bird Survey. Data from S. Droege, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Laurel, MD, unpublished.

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which compiles information from participants throughout North America about birds appearing at their feeders (see biography below). Any bird that was reported by at least twenty-five percent of FeederWatchers within its winter range during a winter was considered to be a feeder bird. I then mined the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) for information on population trends during the period 1966-1989. The BBS consists of over two thousand roadside counts of birds conducted annually during the breeding season, and has been running since 1966. BBS is not infallible, but it is the best source of data we have on continent wide trends in bird populations over the past twenty-five years.

If nothing in particular is happening to bird populations, we expect about fifty percent of species to have increasing trends and fifty percent to be declining, simply by chance. It is quite rare for a population trend to show no change at all. Of the forty-eight feeder species in my analysis, forty percent were increasing, and fifty-six percent declined over the past twenty-five years, according to BBS (Table 1). These figures did not differ in a statistical sense from the fifty:fifty ratio expected by chance. But when the analysis was restricted to the most widespread species, those visiting at least fifty percent of feeders in a region, the results showed that significantly more feeder species declined than increased (seventy percent versus thirty-one percent, respectively). When I considered only population changes that were so large or persistent over the twenty-five-year period that the trends could be considered biologically important (as opposed to chance events), I got the same results. Only among the most widespread species was there a difference from the fifty:fifty ratio. Of the thirteen widespread species with important population changes, twenty-one percent increased, while seventy-seven percent declined.

All the feeder species with significant population trends are listed in Table 2. It is apparent that the more woodland-dependent birds, such as nuthatches, woodpeckers, and chickadees, are on the increase side of the ledger, while the



**Table 2. Feeder species with statistically significant population changes: 1966-1989.**

Percent of Feeders Visited	Increasing Populations	Decreasing Populations
> 75%	Black-capped Chickadee	Blue Jay European Starling American Goldfinch House Sparrow
50-75%	Hairy Woodpecker White-breasted Nuthatch	Northern Flicker Northern Mockingbird Rufous-sided Towhee Song Sparrow Common Grackle Pine Grosbeak
25-50%	Scrub Jay Red-breasted Nuthatch Varied Thrush	Black-billed Magpie Brown Thrasher White-crowned Sparrow

Data from S. Droege, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Laurel, MD, unpublished.

declines include more open-country and suburban species. Moreover, most of the "pest" species are among the decliners, including nest-robbers (Blue Jay, grackle, magpie) and nest-site competitors (House Sparrow, European Starling). One of the more serious pests in terms of its impact on other species is the Brown-headed Cowbird. This bird is not included in the table, because its declining trend was not significant in statistical terms.

If we assume that the population changes shown in Table 2 resulted from winter bird feeding, we might conclude that feeding is a bad thing. But when we put the data in a broader context, this seems less a concern. Compilations of BBS data for all species show that ninety-two percent of grassland-nesting birds have declined since 1966, along with sixty-two percent of scrub-nesters (Droege unpublished). Many of the declining species in Table 2 (e.g., grackle, sparrows, thrashers) are members of these groups that are decreasing across the board, whether or not the constituent species visit feeders.

Further evidence that bird feeding does not cause excess mortality came from a special inquiry undertaken by Project FeederWatch. Participants recorded any deaths observed in their yards over one winter, providing details on causes and surrounding circumstances. The aim was to discover whether



feeding exposed birds to unusual danger from window collisions, disease, and predation.

Window strikes accounted for more deaths near feeders than any other factor (close to half of the more than two thousand deaths reported). A full analysis of this data set (to be published in the *Journal of Field Ornithology*) suggested that between one and ten birds might be killed annually by striking windows at every building in North America. As high as this number sounds, it probably represents less than one or two percent of all birds alive each fall.

Predation came a fairly close second in the Project FeederWatch study, causing about one-third of reported deaths. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks were the culprits in about fifty-one percent of kills witnessed, and cats in twenty-nine percent. Bird-eating hawks make about one to three prey captures daily (Palmer 1988), but most FeederWatchers who witnessed predation at all saw only one or two cases over the whole winter. We conclude that the majority of hawks use feeders opportunistically and not as a primary food source. In one European study, bird-eating hawks were estimated to kill about ten percent of all finches passing through a particular migratory stopover site in autumn (Lindstrom 1989). Compared to this level of risk, bird feeders are positively safe havens!

Relatively few of the deaths observed in the FeederWatch study were attributed to disease. Most of these were probably the result of salmonella infection, in which birds appear lethargic, fluff up their feathers, and have difficulty breathing for a few days prior to death (Terres 1981). Passed through the feces, the disease can spread readily through contaminated bird seed. It is seen most often in flocking species when stressed by severe weather or food shortages.

Summing up all the sources of mortality reported in this FeederWatch study, we found that only one bird death was reported over the winter for every two feeder sites. There is no doubt, of course, that many dead birds were not found or reported. Nonetheless, natural mortality rates in songbirds of thirty-five to fifty percent annually would lead us to predict at least four to five bird deaths over a winter at each FeederWatch home. Actual figures were one-tenth of that prediction. Even if under-reporting was a severe problem, therefore, it appears that feeders do not draw birds into an environment that is far more dangerous than the one they face in the wild.

These analyses suggest that bird feeding has not had blanket effects on populations of all feeder species. More subtle effects may exist, perhaps varying among species (positive for some, negative for others). It will take detailed studies on individual species, however, to demonstrate such effects. In the meantime, you can continue to feed birds with a clear conscience. All current evidence suggests you are not unduly upsetting natural ecological systems.

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ERICA H. DUNN is the coordinator of Project FeederWatch, which generated most of the data in the accompanying article. Project FeederWatch is a continent wide survey of birds at feeders. Each winter over seven thousand participants from throughout North America record feeder activity for one or two days, every second week from November to April. Observations are submitted to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology for analysis. Participants receive two newsletters annually. The newsletters discuss up-to-date FeederWatch results and contain articles on bird feeding and on the winter ecology of species that commonly visit feeders. Special inquiries into subjects such as food preferences and effects of weather on use of feeders provide data for further articles. Over two hundred bird species have been recorded taking food from feeders, along with more than seventy mammals.

FeederWatch can generate summaries for any region, giving a profile of the prospects for local feeder-owners. Year-to-year comparisons document range changes and show how populations fluctuate over time. FeederWatch needs more participants everywhere, and you are invited to join. Participants do not need to be expert birders and can conduct their "field work" while relaxing in a warm living room. To subscribe, send \$14 to Project FeederWatch, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, NY 14850.

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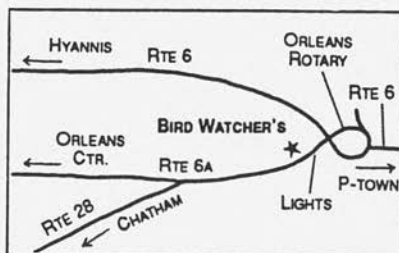
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## A SELECTIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE NEWBURYPORT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

by Jim Berry

The Newburyport, Massachusetts, Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is middle-aged, as CBCs go. It was founded in 1938 by Don Alexander of Rowley, who compiled it through 1976, a total of thirty-nine years. Rick Heil was compiler from 1977 through 1984, and passed it on to me in 1985. Since then I have looked at the years of data from many angles and have written several historical summaries for the participants, most of whom gather after each count in the barn at the Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary in Topsfield.

This article attempts to present some of the CBC data for a wider audience. Some numbers and averages are given, but nothing should be construed as necessarily statistically significant. It is simply one compiler's way of looking at a database for information and trends that might be of interest to CBC participants anywhere. There are many other ways to look at CBC results, and my hope is that this summary will serve a heuristic purpose by encouraging other compilers to publish comparable summaries.

By way of background, CBCs are systematic bird censuses conducted in defined fifteen-mile-diameter circles throughout North America during a three-week period before and after Christmas. They began in 1900 and are organized by the National Audubon Society, which publishes the results of all 1500-plus counts in the CBC issue of *American Birds*. Counts are conducted primarily by groups of people called parties. A party-hour is one party observing in the field for one hour. A party-mile is one party traveling one mile. The parties have to quantify the hours and miles on foot versus those traveled in a car. A feeder-hour is a person (or family) counting birds at a feeder for one hour. The object of the count is to record as many birds of as many species as possible, as recorded by parties in the field and additional observers at their feeders.

### Effects of Observers and Party-Hours on Species Recorded

The Newburyport count began with eleven field observers in 1938 and had as many as seventy in 1990. In reviewing the number of observers in relation to the number of species recorded, the count fell into four periods, shown in Table 1.

For the first thirteen years all species totals for the count were in the fifties and sixties. For the next seventeen years they rose into the seventies and eighties, only once dipping below seventy while twice rising into the nineties. Beginning in 1968 and continuing through 1983, the totals were routinely in the nineties, falling below that number only four times and rising to a then-incredible 108 in 1979 when the count record was smashed by a full ten species.

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**Table 1. Newburyport, Massachusetts, Christmas Bird Count.**

Period	Average # of species	Average # of field observers	Average # of party-hours
1938-50	62	23	*
1951-67	80	26	*
1968-83	93	26	78*
1984-91	103	51	153

\* No data available until 1972.

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But from 1984 to the present, totals of over one hundred species have become the norm, and the record was broken again in 1990 with 109.

By now any reader familiar with Christmas counts will already be drawing some conclusions from these escalating species totals. I suspect that many, if not the vast majority, of CBCs have experienced a similar phenomenon for three obvious and mutually reinforcing reasons: better birders using better optics and better field guides. There can be little question that species totals would have increased significantly over the years for these reasons even if all other factors had been constant.

But other factors have not been constant, such as the numbers of observers, parties, party-hours, party-miles, and feeders. There is also weather, which is extremely difficult to correlate, and the birds themselves, which have a way of being at different latitudes or altitudes from year to year on the same date. No one even knows how many factors there are, let alone how to quantify and correlate them.

Numbers offer the best hope of correlations, of course, and at least we can quantify the things we ourselves control, like observer statistics. (This assumes that observers are correctly reporting their hours and miles to the compiler, which can be a shaky assumption, knowing how many of us wing these figures.) But Table 1 offers only partial correlations. While the numbers of species were increasing over the years, the numbers of observers were remaining fairly constant until the mid-1980s. And with no data available on party-hours until 1972, one can only assume that with constant observers, there must have been relatively constant party-hours. Only when the numbers of observers and party-hours doubled starting in the mid-1980s can any relation be drawn between observer effort and species tallied.

My own hypothesis is that greater observer effort is more critical for increasing species totals when the saturation point for a count is being reached than it is before that point is reached. As long as there are plenty of species not

being recorded, a given level of effort can keep increasing the species tally as observers learn where the occasional stragglers like to hang out and consequently find them more quickly. But when the species potential is largely reached, coverage must be significantly increased to squeeze out any more species. I believe that the data in Table 1 give evidence of this.

### Party-Miles as a Measure of . . . Nothing!

While party-hours have always seemed a useful tool to measure level of observer effort, the same cannot be said for party-miles. In fact, party-miles have always struck me as useless. To test this, I looked at the figures within one of the above periods (1968-1983). I have no data for 1968-1971, but the party-miles showed a big jump from an average of 164 from 1972-1976 to an average of 440 from 1977-1983. This was probably due to the change in compilers and the recruitment of new observers, many of whom, living farther away and being less familiar with the territory, walked less and drove more, perhaps to try to cover more of their large sectors.

The rise in species totals during this time was not impressive, although there was an increase from 89 to 96 for the two subperiods. But observers and party-hours also rose during this time (Table 1 shows only the average for the whole period), and the increase in species totals could be attributed to these factors. My own impression is that party-miles are simply an offshoot of party-hours, and that party-miles have no particular significance. I may economize on my driving time to maximize my time on foot, which is when I see and hear most of the birds I am counting. Or I may be driving to places farther apart, perhaps even retracing certain routes, and then getting the same results on foot. In either case I am not adding significantly, if at all, to the species total while driving. Rather, I am simply able to add a flock of starlings here and a few jays or crows there. The payoffs come when my party and I are on foot.

Perhaps this is why I cannot recall reading any CBC analyses that considered party-miles, while many have used party-hours. Thus I think that party-miles are virtually irrelevant to CBCs, at least in terms of data analysis.

I asked *American Birds* about this a couple of years ago when sending in my count results, but I never received an answer. I also asked them why we are required to separate hours and miles by foot versus car, which seems equally pointless, but I remain in the dark on that too. Finally, I asked for clarification on why we need to record feeder-hours, which seem much less important than party-hours afield and are harder to measure. I suspect that relatively few feeder watchers, especially those who watch intermittently, have a clear idea of how much time they actually spend counting their chickadees. Inaccurate data are of little use and are inconsistent with pleas by CBC organizers for accurate records. If *American Birds* cannot define a purpose for or ensure a reasonable degree of accuracy of the data collected by the CBCs, they should not ask compilers to



collect the data.

### **Numbers of Individual Birds Counted**

It is ironic that the interest of CBC participants in the number of species overwhelms our interest in the total number of birds counted. In fact, I cannot recall ever meeting anyone who expressed more interest in the total biomass than in an arbitrary number like the species total; hence my attention in the above section to the variety of species. If I am going to sell you on the value of total numbers of birds, I have to get your attention first!

Although these are clearly important, I do not have as much to say about the total number of birds counted. To be sure, the trend on the Newburyport count has been up over the years. For the first thirty years, the grand total varied within a range of 7000 to 28,000. Starting in 1968, totals began reaching 30,000 and 40,000 with regularity, although there were still years in the mere tens of thousands until 1980. The last eleven counts have averaged 34,000 birds, with a high of almost 57,000 in 1988.

What is one to make of these wildly fluctuating totals? Do they have any relation to the actual populations of early-winter birds within the 177 square miles of the count circle? Perhaps. But once again all those pesky variables force themselves into view. Weather, for instance. A look at some of the lower totals and the weather patterns on those count days shows that northeasters, with their nasty precipitation, keep the numbers down, as do strong northwest winds on otherwise beautiful days. Such conditions suppress birds and depress birders.

Of more importance are the long-term trends, since weather conditions presumably "average out" over the years. But I am not sure that I can draw any conclusions other than the rather obvious one that the increase in observers is almost certainly related to the increased totals of birds. What else is new? Logic tells us that more observers mean that more territory can be covered. I would have to look at many more CBCs than Newburyport to attempt an analysis of whether the avian biomass in December has genuinely increased over the years, and that is beyond the scope of this article. Meanwhile, we can perhaps conclude that growing numbers of observers, augmented by growing numbers of starlings, are having a salutary effect on the total numbers of birds counted at Christmas time.

### **The Effects of "Onesies" on Species Totals**

Inevitably I must return to the variety of species recorded on CBCs, for that is ultimately what we are most interested in. The species total is an artificially inflated number for a very simple reason: a whopping percentage of the species tallied are represented by a single individual. In one recent seven-year period, an average of sixteen species were in this category: sixteen species that would not have been tallied had it not been for the skill, diligence, or pure luck of a single



observer or party. If you also consider the number of species represented by two or three individuals, the species total takes on an even less exalted status.

Nonetheless, the species total, the Holy Grail of every Christmas count, is the primary reason that people are willing to endure ridiculous discomforts. The desire to set a new count record, and for some the competition associated with that quest, represent the fun of Christmas counts, something that will never be challenged. It is our permanent lowest common denominator.

At the same time, while the species total may have meaning only to CBC participants, the "onesies" nevertheless help to establish range limits for many species of birds. Any student of CBC data for the continent, or any part of it, has an excellent understanding of winter bird ranges. And while we delight in Essex County, Massachusetts, at finding an occasional Pine Warbler on a CBC, we are set straight when we open a CBC issue of *American Birds* to find that counters in the Maritimes are starting to find them "routine" (*American Birds*, 1991, 45(4), page 528). And while we locals suspect that Dunlins, Sanderlings, and Purple Sandpipers are the only common winter shorebirds in Massachusetts, a look at the other coastal CBCs shows that species like Red Knot, Ruddy Turnstone, and Black-bellied Plover are regular from Boston to Cape Cod and the islands. Nothing like a little perspective.

I have looked at the cumulative Newburyport data since 1938 to see which species we have found only once or twice over the fifty-four years, and thus the extent to which our cumulative total of 192 species and five subspecies ("Blue" Goose, "Kumlien's" Gull, "Ipswich" Sparrow, "Oregon" Junco, and "Bullock's" Oriole) is dependent on such rarely seen species. For fun, I have also thrown in the species Newburyport has never or seldom missed.

Listed below (with the year recorded) are the twenty-three species and one form that have been recorded only once. I did not inherit any documentation of these species with the CBC records, so I cannot verify the authenticity for any but those since 1985, with two exceptions.

Arctic Loon (1979), Eurasian Wigeon (1983), Redhead (1972), a well-known Tufted Duck (1976), Osprey (1943), Broad-winged Hawk (1951), Common Moorhen (1971), White-rumped Sandpiper (1979), a widely observed Ivory Gull (1976), Forster's Tern (1952), Thick-billed Murre (1986), Barn Owl (1980), Boreal Owl (1942), Great Crested Flycatcher (1963), House Wren (1988), Varied Thrush (1977), American Pipit (1963), Blackpoll (1939), Black-headed Grosbeak (1954), Vesper Sparrow (1979), Grasshopper Sparrow (1967), Harris's Sparrow (1946), "Bullock's" Oriole (1957), and Hoary Redpoll (1968).

Six species and one form have been recorded twice. My comment on documentation applies here as well.

Western Grebe (1984, 1987), "Blue" Goose (1954, 1957), Blue-

winged Teal (1973, 1983), Long-billed Dowitcher (1977, 1978), Mew Gull (1955, 1976), Black-backed Woodpecker (1957, 1962), and Swainson's Thrush (1963, 1976).

At the other end of the spectrum, twenty-five species have never been missed, although the lowest total, shown in parentheses, shows how close we have come.

Common Loon (low of 4), Horned Grebe (1), Black Duck (522), Mallard (1) (!), Oldsquaw (3), White-winged Scoter (6), Common Goldeneye (264), Bufflehead (3), Red-breasted Merganser (11), American Kestrel (1), Herring Gull (146), Great Black-backed Gull (6), Downy Woodpecker (3), Hairy Woodpecker (1), Horned Lark (2), Blue Jay (9), American Crow (121), Black-capped Chickadee (114), Golden-crowned Kinglet (1), European Starling (234), Tree Sparrow (130), Song Sparrow (3), Dark-eyed (slate-colored) Junco (5), American Goldfinch (9), and House Sparrow (25).

The reason that some species are as low as one is that the first count in 1938 had only eleven observers and fifty-one species. Several of the single observations were from 1938 and were never that low again.

Fifteen species have been missed only five or fewer times (shown below with number of times or years in parentheses).

Canada Goose (5 times, 1938-1948), Greater Scaup (1981, 1984), Rough-legged Hawk (5), Ruffed Grouse (4), Ring-necked Pheasant (3), Bonaparte's Gull (1938, 1989), Ring-billed Gull (1939), Common Flicker (1966), White-breasted Nuthatch (1942), Brown Creeper (1983), American Robin (1945), Yellow-rumped (myrtle) Warbler (1980), White-throated Sparrow (4), Snow Bunting (3), and Purple Finch (1938).

Thus Newburyport has at least forty species we can bet money on, but about thirty we are lucky to have at all. Our 54-year cumulative species total stands at 192, plus five forms, if the Clapper Rail and Lincoln's Sparrow documented in 1991 are accepted by the CBC regional editor. Even if we subtract the thirty or so that we rarely find, we have a working universe of well over 150 species. Yet the count has never managed to find 110 of them on the same day. This is something to think about. We are lucky to find as many species as we do given the number of single-bird species, yet we could have much greater species totals given the universe of species previously counted.

### Trends

Counts of the following five species have decreased steadily and noticeably over the last half-century on the Newburyport CBC: Black Duck, Greater Scaup, Red-shouldered Hawk, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Evening Grosbeak.

By comparison, the following twenty-eight species have increased noticeably: Canada Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Common Eider, Common Merganser, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Mourning Dove, Eastern Screech-Owl, Great Horned Owl, Downy Woodpecker, Horned Lark, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin, Northern Mockingbird, Cedar Waxwing, European Starling, Northern Cardinal, Song Sparrow, House Finch, and House Sparrow.

The ratio seems favorable, but two caveats are in order. First, feeders may be important contributors to the counts of those species that use feeders. However, more feeder watchers are also participating in CBCs, so we are probably seeing the results of both greater observer effort and greater numbers of surviving feeder birds. Second, some of the increases result directly from the increase in field observers and observer effort. This is clearly the case with the owls, because Newburyport hours owling have catapulted since the mid-1970s. It is also probably true of such species as the larks, jays, crows, robins, waxwings, and starlings, whose increased numbers may or may not represent bona fide population increases.

The other species changes, however, by and large represent real population trends. The explosions of doves, titmice, mockingbirds, cardinals, and House Finches in New England are well documented, as are the increases in Ring-billed, Herring, and Great Black-backed gulls, Canada Goose, and Mallard. The decreases, on the other hand, are alarming, because increased observer effort is getting fewer and fewer results. Fortunately there are few major decreases.

### A Word About Owls

A few years ago I researched all twenty-plus Massachusetts CBCs for the most recent four-year period (1985-1988) for owling hours and owling results. To my surprise, I found only six CBCs that showed consistent efforts before sunrise. These efforts clearly paid dividends: the six counts averaged between thirteen and thirty hours owling, between twenty and forty-two Eastern Screech-Owls, and between six and twenty-seven Great Horned Owls. (I can modestly add that Newburyport tallied, with no apparent duplication, a total of sixty-two Great Horned Owls on a very still night in 1986.) Most of the other Massachusetts counts showed very few hours owling and considerably fewer owls. Thus, the tallies of these birds often do not reflect their populations, whereas with a little extra effort (read a little less sleep), we could have a much better picture of owl numbers in Massachusetts.

Thus, if I can plant any seeds in this article, I would exhort other compilers to routinely organize their parties for at least two hours of owling before daylight, given reasonable weather. (First light is generally the best time to hear them.) If results are not forthcoming, perhaps a few of the hardest (or craziest)

can volunteer to put in another hour after the evening festivities.

### Final Thoughts

I conclude with two observations. The first concerns the validity and reliability of Christmas count statistics and records. CBC regional editors (until their reports were inexplicably edited out of last year's CBC compendium, an unfortunate degradation of that much-awaited issue of *American Birds*) were forever reminding compilers and participants how critical it is to document rare, out-of-range, and out-of-season species, so that CBC data can be reliably used in research—and the data are used in a lot of research. I think that many CBC participants are particularly reluctant to document otherwise easily identified species that are nevertheless in need of details because they are out-of-range or out-of-season, particularly the latter.

For example, Ruby-crowned Kinglets are common birds in Massachusetts during migration. They are not common in winter and, to my knowledge, are nonexistent as nesting birds. Few would question the need to document a nesting record in this state, yet many have questioned the need to submit details on this and similar species that, while not highly unusual to record in CBCs, are at the northern end of their winter ranges here. I cannot overemphasize how important I think it is for participants observing marginal species for their count areas to provide written details to their compilers for the record. The point, as regional editors have pleaded with us for years, is not to question anyone's credibility. There is nothing personal about it. Rather it is simply to satisfy regional editors and all posterity that a bird reported by some complete stranger can stand the test of time. If we are going for species records, which is what provides us with much of the joy of the count, let us be sure that our totals are credible.

My second observation concerns *American Birds* itself: namely, the format of the Christmas count issue. From a researcher's standpoint, the editors made a mistake in returning to the old narrative format to publish the counts after developing and using, in the 1987 issue for the 1986 count, a method of presenting the data that made comparative analysis of CBCs a thousandfold easier than it had ever been.

Many readers will remember the 1987 issue, where the numbers of each species were laid out in tabular format across the pages for all the counts in a given state. This made comparing the numbers for any species across a whole state easy. What a pleasure it was to be able to see how many Ruby-crowned Kinglets were found in Massachusetts that year (fifteen); to compare shorebird numbers up and down the coast at a glance; and to see that my boldfaced numbers of 1443 Blue Jays and 68 Red-breasted Nuthatches were the highest counts in the state. It would have taken me ten, twenty, thirty times as long to dig those facts out of twenty-five separate count summaries.

That was not the only advantage. Just before the species tables for the state were the statistical and weather summaries for each count, once again making comparisons instantaneous. These were followed by the list of participants in alphabetical order for the entire state. It looked forbidding at first, but you could look up a given friend in seconds and know instantly every count that person participated on. When you know a lot of Christmas count junkies, that in itself can be interesting.

Alas, readers of *American Birds* apparently flooded the editors with protests. I was stunned the next year, after heaping praise and gratitude upon them, to see that the old format had been disinterred. "Last year's issue earned its hard-won oblivion," the editor said. ". . . no one can complain that we've this year lost the 'integrity' of an individual count," whatever that meant. Thus because people would rather see their counts treated separately, *American Birds* abandoned a huge step forward. The narrative format not only makes comparative analysis astronomically more difficult, it also hinders analysis from even taking place because of the phenomenal amount of time required to pull out desired data. The tabular format, by contrast, literally offers ideas for analysis because of its logical presentation. If ever there were a case of emotion, reaction, and provincialism triumphing over practicality, progress, and perspective, this was it.

I hope the various concepts discussed in this article will stimulate additional contributions in the years to come. There are many ways to analyze and present CBC data. Perhaps *Bird Observer* can make this kind of article a feature each December. Who wants to be next?

**JIM BERRY** is chief of personnel for Region I of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Boston. In addition to compiling the Newburyport CBC, he is particularly fond of breeding-bird atlas work and finding nests. He is a member of the Nuttall Ornithological Club and department head for "where to go birding" articles for *Bird Observer*.

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### **BIRD OBSERVER MAILING LIST**

*Bird Observer* occasionally receives requests from other organizations for its mailing list. Over the years *Bird Observer* has declined such requests with few exceptions. At the October 1992 Board of Directors meeting, however, the Board voted to sell the mailing list to birding-related organizations only. If you would not like your name to be released on the mailing list, please notify David Lange, Subscription Manager, *Bird Observer*, P. O. Box 236, Arlington, MA 02174.



**BOOK REVIEW: *Masterpieces of Bird Art: 700 Years  
of Ornithological Illustration***

by William E. Davis, Jr.

*Masterpieces of Bird Art: 700 Years of Ornithological Illustration* by Roger F. Pasquier and John Farrand, Jr., Foreword by Roger Tory Peterson; Abbeville Press, New York, 1991; 261 pages; \$85.

In the past fifteen years, a number of books on bird art and bird illustrators have been produced, such as *The Bird Illustrated: 1550-1900*, by Joseph Kastner (1988, New York: Harry N. Abrams) and *The Great Bird Illustrators and Their Art 1730-1930*, by Peyton Skipwith (1979, New York: A&W Publishers). No recent book, however, can compare to the elegant treatise by Pasquier and Farrand, *Masterpieces of Bird Art: 700 Years of Ornithological Illustration*. The book is comprehensive, tracing the history of bird illustration back to ancient times, large (11.125 x 13.25 inches) and lavishly illustrated, with about 250 illustrations, mostly in color and some occupying a two-page spread.

The book is divided into an introduction and four chapters. The introduction and first chapter (by Farrand) deal with bird representations from antiquity. They begin with frescoes from Egyptian tombs and trace the development of bird art through the handmade illustrations of the Psalters and illuminated manuscripts of the thirteenth century, where bird art was mostly symbolic or decorative. Thereafter, printing was introduced, followed by woodcut prints that made illustrations available to a broader audience and that showed more realistic and informative representations of the birds. To those familiar with the history of ornithology, the names of Pierre Belon, Konrad von Gesner, and Ulises Aldrovandi, who used woodcuts in their ornithological books, will be familiar. For others this will be a fascinating first glimpse into the origins of ornithology and bird art. The wood engraving of Thomas Bewick in the early nineteenth century represented the culmination of techniques using wood as a medium for producing bird illustrations.

Chapters 2 and 3 (by Pasquier) feature the ages of engraving and lithography, respectively, and Chapter 4 (also by Pasquier), titled "Feel of the Feathers," features the modern age of bird illustration and art. Chapters 2 and 3 feature artists known to most of us, such as Catesby, Edwards, Wilson, Audubon, Lear, and Gould, but also some who may not be as familiar, such as Reinhold, Knip, and Levaillant, who fabricated birds by drawing composites from other birds. Jacques Barraband, whose cosmopolitan efforts included motmots and parrots from the New World, hornbills from Africa, and birds-of-paradise from New Guinea, receives extensive attention. The authors were very selective in their choice of subjects for the twentieth century, and many readers will no doubt be offended by their omission of a favorite artist, such as Robert

Bateman. But they generally use several illustrations for each artist discussed, and their choice of Robert Verity Clem, who lives on Cape Cod, ". . . where the light reflecting off the sand and water has a distinct intensity," should add a touch of warmth for New England readers.

Throughout this scholarly treatise the authors provide a wealth of historical and biographical information. Both authors are ornithologists as well as art experts, and thus provide an unusually broad perspective and insight in their analysis and historical treatment. The book is thus an important contribution to the history of ornithology as well as to the evolution of bird art. They even provide some interesting etymology. For instance, do you know where the bird names, "jacamar," "tanager," "jabiru," and "toucan" come from?

The artwork is accompanied by captions that contain interesting information about the bird subjects, including behavioral notes, historical anecdotes, and charming critique: ". . . his 'albatross'—more like a goose with wings that only a pterodactyl could have managed—showed how little scientific material he had to work with." The text is analytical and insightful and draws the reader into the analysis: "Their powerful impact [Francis Lee Jaques's work] comes from a viewer's recognition of the skies, atmosphere, and land so vividly like one's own experience and memories." The analysis is often subtle, such as when the authors discuss the impact of Bruno Liljefors, ". . . Liljefors' style reflects the differences between nineteenth-century ornithological illustration, which attempted to portray birds as they are, and a goal of many twentieth-century artists, to show birds as they appear."

Did you ever wonder, when thumbing through a book dealer's catalogue, what the words "folio," "quarto," "Octavo," or even "thirty-twomos" meant? These terms, reflecting how many times a sheet of paper was folded to form equal-size pages, are explained as well as the various processes for making prints. Woodcut, wood engraving, the difference between engraving, etching, and aquatint processes, and lithography are all explained and put into a historical framework that suggests the impact each process had on bird art and illustration. For example, the fact that copperplate engraving necessitates printing the page separately from the text led to the use of full-page illustrations.

I found little to fault in this superb book. The selection of artwork, the layout, and the design are all excellent. It is well written throughout and editorially clean. I was bothered a little by not knowing the size of many paintings, although I could usually get an approximation by looking up the book size, and I would have appreciated a clearer description of when hand coloring of plates was replaced by color printing.

The bottom line, however, is the elegance and general excellence of this book. It is not your typical coffee-table book. Although it is large, heavy, and profusely illustrated with magnificent artwork, all coffee-table desirables, it is much more. It contains a wealth of information, loaded with history and



tradition, and should be read and savored as well as admired. If you have room for only one oversized book for your shelves or table, I strongly recommend that you consider this one. It is truly a masterpiece of bird art literature.

**WILLIAM E. DAVIS, JR.** is president of Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts, Inc. Ted is a professor at Boston University and a frequent contributor to *Bird Observer*.

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## BIRD SIGHTINGS

JULY 1992

## SUMMARY

by Glenn d'Entremont, Marjorie W. Rines and Robert H. Stymeist

July 1992 was very cool, cloudy, and rainy. The temperature for the month averaged 69.5 degrees, 4 degrees below normal. This ranks as the eighth coolest July in eastern Massachusetts in 112 years. It was also the coolest July since 1914, which had a 68.6 degree average. The high was only 89 degrees on the 18th, the first July since 1967 with no 90-degree reading in Boston. The low mark was 54 degrees on July 23 which was a record for that date. Rainfall totaled 2.66 inches, just .02 inch below normal. Twelve days had measurable rainfall, and only 9 days had no rain. Thunderstorms occurred on 4 days in Boston. No heavy fog was reported, although light fog was fairly frequent.

R. H. S.

### LOONS THROUGH CUCKOOS

A summering adult Red-throated Loon continued in a small pond in Leicester throughout the month, while two nonbreeding Redthroats entertained Chappaquiddick birders with their feeding skills. The presence of both Horned and Red-necked grebes in midsummer is more unusual than Red-throated Loon at this season. Pelagic birds on Stellwagen Bank were few and far between, although Rick Heil reported two groups of Manx Shearwaters from the Stage Island Pool tower at Plum Island, flying south off the beach into Ipswich Bay. The other two of the more common shearwaters were seen at Provincetown on only one day.

A subadult **Brown Pelican** was observed at Bird Island, Marion, in Buzzards Bay. The report is not as surprising as it might first appear. The species is consolidating breeding areas on the mid-Atlantic coast with increased breeding productivity. In recent years there has been post-breeding dispersal northward in summer, and just prior to the Massachusetts report numerous individuals on Long Island in New York were sighted.

The highlight of the month was the appearance of an immature **Reddish Egret** at Cape Poge, Chappaquiddick Island, on July 5. This is just the third Massachusetts record. The first was May 30-June 3, 1953 at Monomoy, and the second was May 1991 at the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. This bird remained on Chappy until July 29 and was rediscovered on Nauset Beach off Chatham July 30. As of September 20 it was still present on South Monomoy.

The **Little Egret**, first noted on May 14, was still present on Nantucket. At midmonth the bird moved from Eel Point to Nantucket Harbor. Other heron specialties included a Tricolored Heron and two Yellow-crowned Night-Herons on Plum Island. As many as six Least Bitterns were found at Wash Brook in Wayland, and three were noted from Salem. Surprisingly no Least Bittern reports were received from Plum Island. Summering nonbreeding waterfowl included a Brant and a Bufflehead from Squantum. At Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in Concord 89 Wood Ducks were tallied at midmonth.

An unusual report was that of a **Black Vulture** in Randolph. The four recently-fledged (June 24) Peregrine Falcons were all still enjoying the city at month's end. A Common Moorhen was found in Grafton.

Preliminary estimates of Piping Plover nesting success in 1992 show 213 breeding pairs, up from 160 pairs in 1991. Habitat conditions changed during last year's severe coastal storms, resulting in ideal conditions for the plovers. Scott Melvin of the Natural Heritage Program also credits intensive management of nesting sites for Piping Plover nesting success. Wire fences protected nests from predators such as foxes, skunks, gulls, and night-herons. In addition, many beaches were closed to off-road vehicles.

Other shorebird highlights included 50 American Oystercatchers, 200 Willets, 595 Whimbrels, 55 Hudsonian, 2 Marbled and 2 Bar-tailed godwits, a Curlew Sandpiper, a Ruff, and 2500 Short-billed Dowitchers, all at Monomoy. A first-summer **Franklin's Gull** was photographed feeding in the plowed fields at Katama, Martha's Vineyard, on July 23-24. Martha's Vineyard was the place to be for unusual

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1992
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southern terns. There were several reports of Royal Terns and a single sighting of the much rarer **Sandwich Tern**. On Plum Island a Forster's Tern nest with three eggs was found in the salt marsh between Pine Island Creek and Jericho Creek. An adult **Sooty Tern** was well seen and photographed at Scituate. Most records of Sooty Tern are hurricane related; thus this report is even more unusual.

R. H. S.

Red-throated Loon thr	Leicester, Martha's Vineyard	1 ad, 2	R. Bradbury, V. Laux + v. o.
Common Loon 4, 25 26	Quabbin (G37), N. Monomoy Stellwagen, Wachusett Res.	pr + 1 yg, 11 1, 2	L. Taylor#, B. Nikula# W. Petersen, M. Lynch#
Pied-billed Grebe 20	P.I.	1	BBC (W. Drew)
Horned Grebe 1	Squantum	1 br pl	R. Abrams
Red-necked Grebe thr	Gloucester	1 br pl	G. Soucy
Greater Shearwater 12	Provincetown	2	P. Champlin
Sooty Shearwater 12	Provincetown	14	P. Champlin
Manx Shearwater 7, 9 12	S. Monomoy, P.I. Provincetown	1, 13 1	J. Sones, R. Heil P. Champlin
Wilson's Storm-Petrel 16, 26	Stellwagen Bank	300+, 80	S. Arena, W. Petersen
Northern Gannet 26	Stellwagen Bank	1	W. Petersen
<b>Brown Pelican</b> 20	Marion	1 subadult	I. Nisbet
Great Cormorant 16	Orleans	1	E. Pierce
Double-crested Cormorant 3, 25	Manchester, Manomet Pt.	230+, 100	M. Lynch#, K. Anderson
American Bittern 11, 23	P.I.	1, 1	R. Heil, W. Drew#
Least Bittern 1-12, 2 4, 7	Wayland, GMNWR Salem, S. Monomoy	6 max, 1 3, 1	v. o., D. Burke I. Lynch#, J. Sones
Great Blue Heron 12, 26 27, 31	GMNWR, P.I. Rowley, S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	9, 13 3, 7	G. d'Entremont#, M. Lynch# J. Berry, LCES (J. Hill)
Great Egret 4, 18 19, 20 29, 31	W. Boylston, Essex Lincoln, P.I. N. Monomoy, S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1, 3 1, 30 8, 14	R. Bradbury, T. Young A. Benjamin, BBC (W. Drew) B. Nikula, LCES (J. Hill)
<b>Little Egret</b> thr	Nantucket	1	v. o.
Snowy Egret thr, 5 10, 25 27, 31	Saugus, Squantum P.I., N. Monomoy Rowley, S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	35 max, 15 119, 25+ 12, 19	J. Berry, S. Arena S. Arena, M. Lynch# J. Berry, LCES (J. Hill)
Little Blue Heron 3 16, 31 19, 26; 25	Manchester, Essex S. Dart. (Allens Pd) P.I.	3, 2 5, 5 1 "pied", 1 ad; 1 imm,	M. Lynch# LCES (J. Hill) J. Berry; W. Petersen
Tricolored Heron 7-11, 14	P.I., Martha's Vineyard	1, 1	G. Soucy + v. o., V. Laux
<b>Reddish Egret</b> 5-29, 30-31	Martha's Vineyard, Chatham	1	V. Laux + v. o., D. Reid
Cattle Egret 1, 9	Ipswich, Essex	6, 1	J. Berry, T. Young
Green-backed Heron thr, 4 12, 19 20 24, 30	Boston, Salem Wayland, Hopedale Walpole, P.I. WBWS, Hanover	1 or 2, 4 5, 2 2 ad + 3 yg, 3 2, 1	K. Hudson, I. Lynch# G. d'Entremont#, M. Lynch# K. Holmes, BBC (W. Drew) E. Pierce, G. d'Entremont#
Black-crowned Night-Heron 4, 10 19	Salem, P.I. Eastham	5, 9 10	I. Lynch#, S. Arena E. Pierce
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron 11; 23, 28	Martha's Vineyard; P.I.	1 ad; 1, 1	V. Laux; R. Heil, W. Drew#

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1992
Glossy Ibis 8, 8-31 10, 11 20, 27	Middleboro, N. Monomoy S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Norfolk P.I., Rowley	1, 7 max 8, 1 35, 5 or 6	T. Aversa, B. Nikula# LCES (J. Hill), C. Walker BBC (W. Drew), J. Berry	
Brant 26	Squantum	1	S. Arena	
Wood Duck 5, 12 18, 28	Quabbin (G40), GMNWR Ipswich, Salem	3, 89 8, 6	M. Lynch#, G. d'Entremont# J. Berry, I. Lynch#	
Green-winged Teal 2, 3	P.I., Bolton	9, 1 m	R. Heil, R. Bradbury	
Blue-winged Teal 10, 28	P.I., Salem	3, 1	S. Arena, I. Lynch#	
Gadwall thr, 10	P.I., S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	89 max, 1	v. o., LCES (J. Hill)	
Common Eider thr, 3 16, 21 26	N. Monomoy, Manchester S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Chatham Woods Hole	60, 10 9, 15 20	B. Nikula#, M. Lynch# LCES (J. Hill), E. Pierce G. d'Entremont#	
Black Scoter 25	N. Monomoy	5	v. o.	
Surf Scoter 1-8, 8	Gloucester, S. Dartmouth	1, 1 m	G. Soucy, T. Aversa	
White-winged Scoter 23, 25 26	P.I., N. Monomoy Gloucester	2, 4 8	W. Drew#, B. Nikula# W. Petersen	
Bufflehead (details) 1-5	Squantum	1 f	R. Abrams + v. o.	
Red-breasted Merganser 12, 17-29	Martha's Vineyard, P.I.	2, 1 f	M. Lynch#, v. o.	
Black Vulture 7	Randolph	1	K. Hamilton	
Turkey Vulture 2, 9	Essex, Plainville	3, 2	T. Young, K. Anderson	
Osprey 12 16, 21	Martha's Vineyard S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Chatham	10+ 8, 5	M. Lynch# LCES (J. Hill), E. Pierce	
Bald Eagle 11	Chappaquiddick I.	1 imm	V. Laux#	
Northern Harrier 10, 11 12, 23 25	P.I., W. Roxbury M. V., Provincetown N. Monomoy	1, 1 1, 1 2 f	S. Arena, T. Aversa M. Lynch#, E. Pierce B. Nikula#	
Cooper's Hawk 9, 22 26, 27	Annisquam, Boxford N. Dartmouth, S. Natick	1 imm, 1 ad + 3 yg 1, 1 juv	H. Wiggin, T. Aversa M. Boucher, C. Quinlan	
Red-shouldered Hawk thr, 31	E. Middleboro, N. Middleboro	pr, 1	K. Anderson, K. Holmes	
Broad-winged Hawk 3, 8 10, 16 18, 28	Hamilton, E. Middleboro Avon, Abington Gardner, W. Roxbury	1, 1 1, 1 4, 1 imm	T. Young, K. Anderson G. d'Entremont, K. Anderson R. Stymeist, T. Aversa	
American Kestrel thr, 28 29	Marlboro, W. Roxbury Essex	1 or 2, 3 2	R. Graefe, T. Aversa T. Aversa	
Peregrine Falcon thr	Boston	2 ad + 4 yg	v. o.	
Ruffed Grouse 2, 12	Milton (F.M.), Ipswich	1, 2	G. d'Entremont, J. Berry	
Wild Turkey 20	Bridgewater	1 f (dead)	K. Holmes	
Northern Bobwhite 12, 26 26, 30	Gloucester, Marshfield Andover, Plymouth	1 m, 3 1, 2	H. Wiggin#, M. Boucher D. Williams, G. d'Entremont#	
Clapper Rail 13, 15	Squantum	1	R. Abrams + v. o.	
Virginia Rail 4, 9 12	Salem, P.I. GMNWR, Wayland	2, 2 6 (inc 4 yg), 1	I. Lynch#, R. Heil G. d'Entremont#, M. Boucher	
Sora 4	Salem	1	I. Lynch#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1992
Common Moorhen 25	Grafton	1 ad	M. Lynch#	
Black-bellied Plover thr 11, 12 23	N. Monomoy, Ipswich P.I., Martha's Vineyard S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	200 max, 1-5 11, 10+ 6	B. Nikula#, D. Rimmer + v. o. M. Lynch#, LCES (J. Hill)	
Semipalmated Plover 11, 28 12, 25 22, 30 31	P.I. N. Monomoy Barnstable (S.N.), Ipswich S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Quincy	2, 73 40, 250 250, 225 32, 75	BBC (D. Deifik), W. Drew# B. Nikula# R. Scott#, D. Rimmer LCES (J. Hill), S. Arena	
Piping Plover thr 2, 14 22, 25	Ipswich (C.B.) S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Eastham Barnstable (S.N.), N. Monomoy	30 ad + 45 yg 20, 10 22, 9	D. Rimmer + v. o. M. Boucher, E. Pierce R. Scott#, M. Lynch#	
Killdeer 8, 13 25, 28	Middleboro, W. Roxbury Concord, P.I.	12, 13 8, 12	T. Aversa J. Center, W. Drew#	
American Oystercatcher thr, 12 31	N. Monomoy, M. V. S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	50 max 7/21, 15 2	E. Pierce + v. o., M. Lynch# LCES (J. Hill)	
Greater Yellowlegs thr thr 12, 25 28	P.I. S. Dart (Allens Pd) N. Monomoy Squantum	40 max 7/26 13 max 7/31 25, 80 53	v. o. LCES (J. Hill) B. Nikula# T. Aversa	
Lesser Yellowlegs 2, 28 12, 25 14, 25 26	P.I. N. Monomoy Eastham, Concord Newburyport	11, 132 30, 100 24, 1 500	W. Drew# B. Nikula# E. Pierce, J. Center W. Petersen#	
Solitary Sandpiper 12, 25	GMNWR, Concord	1, 4	G. d'Entremont#, J. Center	
Willet thr thr, 14	P.I., N. Monomoy S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Eastham	66 max, 200 max 35 max, 5	v. o., B. Nikula# v. o., E. Pierce	
"Western" Willet 8-31	N. Monomoy	8 max	B. Nikula#	
Spotted Sandpiper 2 11, 22	S. Dart (Allens Pd) P.I., Arlington	4 ad + 4 yg 12, 3	M. Boucher R. Heil, M. Rines	
Upland Sandpiper thr, 8 12	Newburyport, Middleboro N. Monomoy	4 max, 2 1	v. o., T. Aversa B. Nikula#	
Whimbrel 23, 24 25, 29; 26	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), WBWS N. Monomoy; P.I.	6, 52 410, 595; 27	LCES (J. Hill), E. Pierce B. Nikula#; W. Petersen#	
Hudsonian Godwit 8-31, 17-31	N. Monomoy, Newburyport	55 max, 23 max	B. Nikula#, v. o.	
Marbled Godwit 8-31	N. Monomoy	2 max	v. o.	
Bar-tailed Godwit 8-31	N. Monomoy	2 (1 alt, 1 basic pl)	B. Nikula# + v. o.	
Ruddy Turnstone 10, 27 28, 31	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Ipswich Quincy, Newburyport	1, 1 2, 2	LCES (J. Hill), D. Rimmer T. Aversa, M. Rines	
Red Knot 8, 18, 25 8, 24	N. Monomoy S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Ipswich	35, 130, 400 3, 1	B. Nikula# T. Aversa, D. Rimmer	
Sanderling thr 8, 18, 25	Ipswich N. Monomoy	250 max 7/30 2, 10, 600	D. Rimmer + v. o. B. Nikula#	
Semipalmated Sandpiper thr, 13-31 8, 18, 25 26, 31	Ipswich, P.I. N. Monomoy Marshfield, Squantum	1000 max 7/30, 800 max 7/28 100, 400, 1200 35, 250	D. Rimmer, v. o. B. Nikula# M. Boucher, S. Arena	
Western Sandpiper 11; 11, 25	P.I.; N. Monomoy	1 ad; 1 or 2	R. Heil; B. Nikula#	
Least Sandpiper 8, 18, 25 11-31, 16 25, 27	N. Monomoy P.I., Orleans Concord, Rowley	20, 300, 250 14 max, 50 14, 40	B. Nikula# v. o., E. Pierce J. Center, J. Berry	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1992
White-rumped Sandpiper 12, 18; 25	N. Monomoy	3, 3; 2	B. Nikula#; M. Lynch#	
Pectoral Sandpiper 19, 23 26	P.I., Squantum Marshfield	2, 1 1	J. Berry, S. Arena M. Boucher	
Dunlin 8-18, 11	N. Monomoy, P.I.	1, 1 br pl	B. Nikula#, R. Heil	
Curlew Sandpiper 24-31	N. Monomoy	1	B. Nikula# + v. o.	
Stilt Sandpiper 6-31, 26	P.I., Marshfield	1-3, 2	v. o., M. Boucher	
Ruff 11	N. Monomoy	1 f	B. Nikula#	
Short-billed Dowitcher thr 2, 28 8, 18, 25 13 13, 26	Ipswich, S. Dart. (Allens Pd) P.I. N. Monomoy Squantum Eastham, Marshfield	8 max, 40 max 9, 353 1500, 2500, 2000 20 200, 7	D. Rimmer, LCES (J. Hill) W. Drew# B. Nikula# R. Abrams E. Pierce, M. Boucher	
Long-billed Dowitcher 25	P.I.	1	W. Petersen#	
American Woodcock 2, 8 26	Milton (F.M.), Plymouth Marshfield	1, 2 1	G. d'Entremont M. Boucher	
Wilson's Phalarope 10	P.I.	pr + 3 yg	S. Arena	
Laughing Gull 13, 22 28, 30 31	Eastham, Barnstable (S.N.) Squantum, Lynn S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	100, 220 37, 1 2	E. Pierce, R. Scott# T. Aversa, J. Quigley LCES (J. Hill)	
Franklin's Gull 23-24	Katama, M. V.	1 (1S) ph	V. Laux	
Little Gull 3, 22	Orleans (New I.), Barnstable (S.N.)	1 (1S), 1 (1S)	D. Reid, B. Nikula#	
Bonaparte's Gull thr, 11 22, 26	Ipswich (C.B.), P.I. Lynn, Wachusett Res.	10-20, 18 90+, 2 ad	D. Rimmer, BBC (D. Deifik) I. Lynch#, M. Lynch#	
Ring-billed Gull 22	Barnstable (S.N.)	350	R. Scott#	
Great Black-backed Gull 18	S. Carver	50	K. Anderson	
Royal Tern 1, 6, 8, 14 2, 21	Martha's Vineyard P.I., N. Monomoy	1, 1, 2, 3 3, 1	V. Laux R. Heil, E. Pierce	
Sandwich Tern 16	Martha's Vineyard	1	V. Laux	
Roseate Tern 11, 14	Ipswich, Martha's Vineyard	2, 120	D. Rimmer, V. Laux	
Common Tern thr, 12 16, 25 25, 31	Ipswich, Martha's Vineyard S. Dart. (Allens Pd), P.I. N. Monomoy, Quincy	1-10, 100+ 6, 50+ 30+, 10	D. Rimmer, M. Lynch# LCES (J. Hill), P. + F. Vale M. Lynch#, S. Arena	
Forster's Tern 8, 11 12, 22	Martha's Vineyard, P.I. S. Dartmouth, Barnstable	1, 1 ad at nest (ph) 1, 1	V. Laux, R. Heil T. Raymond, B. Nikula#	
Least Tern thr thr, 12 18	P.I., S. Dart. (Allens Pd) Ipswich, Martha's Vineyard S. Carver	12 max, 5 max 75-100 pr, 300+ 3	v. o., LCES (J. Hill) D. Rimmer, M. Lynch# K. Anderson	
Sooty Tern 31	Scituate	1 ad (ph)	M. Aliberti	
Black Tern 8-31, 29	N. Monomoy, Newburyport	2 max, 1	B. Nikula + v. o., T. Aversa	
Black Skimmer thr, 8 8-31, 12	Orleans, P.I. N. Monomoy, M. V.	6 pr, 1 3 max, 2	fide S. Hecker, G. Soucy B. Nikula#, M. Lynch#	
Black-billed Cuckoo 3 5, 12 12, 25	W. Bridgewater, Easton Quabbin (G40), E. Middleboro Ipswich, Newburyport	1, 1 pr, 2 1, 1	S. Arena M. Lynch#, K. Anderson J. Berry, W. Petersen	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo 1, 3	Annisquam, W. Bridgewater	1, 1	H. Wiggins, S. Arena	



DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1992
Yellow-billed Cuckoo (continued)				
19, 24	Carlisle, E. Middleboro	1, 1	J. Center, K. Anderson	
25, 31	Easton, Boston (Fens)	1, 1	S. Arena, K. Hudson	

#### OWLS THROUGH FINCHES

A pair of Barred Owls with two young were reported from Newbury, and a single Barred Owl was noted in Dover. Only one Common Nighthawk was reported, while Whip-poor-wills held their own in Plymouth. Of great interest is the rediscovery of probable nesting **Chuck-will's-widows** on Martha's Vineyard. Several miles from the original Chappaquidick site, these birds are on private land, and it is not known how long they have been present. Up to ten calling birds were noted!

Hummingbirds were scattered across the region, and a pair of Red-headed Woodpeckers were observed with two young in Sherborn. Up to 95 Purple Martins were counted on Plum Island. "Thousands" of Tree Swallows were gathering by month's end in Rowley. Several Northern Rough-winged Swallows were seen, and an outstanding 650+ Bank Swallows were observed at Plum Island. In contrast, only two Cliff Swallows were noted. Some Red-breasted Nuthatches must have summered in the area, as many were reported. **Sedge Wrens** were discovered in Brookfield; at least two territories with three individuals were observed.

A good count of 22 Veerys in Ipswich was encouraging. A Yellow-throated Vireo was noted in Norton, and a "Brewster's" Warbler was reported from Newbury. Twenty-seven Yellow Warblers were seen on Plum Island, and 73 Common Yellowthroats were counted at Fowl Meadow in Milton. One observer located two singing male Yellow-rumped Warblers in Ipswich where no recent breeding records exist. One pair plus another male Cerulean Warbler were reported from the Gate 40 area of Quabbin. Most other warblers were reported from normal areas in somewhat normal numbers.

Up to nine Indigo Buntings were observed in West Roxbury on the site of the old landfill. One Vesper Sparrow was reported from Easton, and healthy numbers of Sharp-tailed and Seaside sparrows were noted. At an unusual location for the date, although not unprecedented, was a White-throated Sparrow on July 22 along the coast. A little late was an Orchard Oriole at the West Roxbury landfill on July 11. A small number of Purple Finches was reported, and Evening Grosbeaks were noted from Quabbin and High Ridge in Gardner. G. d'E.

Barn Owl				
thr	M. V.	25 prs	G. Ben David	
Eastern Screech-Owl				
1	Chelmsford	1	J. Center	
Great Horned Owl				
5, 10	Quabbin (G40), W. Newbury	2, 1 juv	M. Lynch#, R. Heil	
17, 19	Ipswich, Eastham	1, 1	J. & N. Berry, E. Pierce	
Barred Owl				
thr, 23	W. Newbury, Dover	pr w/2 yg, 1	S. Bontemps, W. Petersen#	
Common Nighthawk				
30	Salem	1	I. Lynch	
Chuck-will's-widow				
thr	Martha's Vineyard	10+	V. Laux	
Whip-poor-will				
8, 16, 30	Plymouth (MSSF)	23, 13, 9	G. d'Entremont#	
Chimney Swift				
thr, 20	Sherborn, Framingham	15, 14	E. Taylor	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird				
Reports of ten individuals from nine locations.				
Belted Kingfisher				
18	Essex	pr w/nest	T. Young	
Red-headed Woodpecker				
thr, 17	Sherborn, W. Tisbury	pr w/2 yg, 1 ad	E. Taylor, E. Medeiros	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				
5	Quabbin (G40)	pr	M. Lynch#	
Pileated Woodpecker				
5	Quabbin (G40)	1	M. Lynch#	
Eastern Wood-Pewee				
thr, 18	E. Middleboro, Medford	pr w/2 yg, 6	K. Anderson, M. Rines	
Willow Flycatcher				
12; 17	Wayland, GMNWR; P.I.	3, 2; 2	G. d'Entremont#; BBC (D. Deifik)	
18, 28	N. Middleboro, Salem	1, 2	K. Holmes, I. Lynch#	
Least Flycatcher				
5	Quabbin (G40)	4	M. Lynch#	
Eastern Phoebe				
5, 26	Quabbin (G40), Concord	3, 5	M. Lynch#, P. + F. Vale	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1992
Great Crested Flycatcher 5, 23, 24	Quab. (G40), P'town, Medford	3, 3, 3	M. Lynch#, E. Pierce, M. Rines	
Eastern Kingbird 20, 26	P.I., Concord	14, 8	BBC (W. Drew), P. + F. Vale	
Horned Lark 12, 13, 20	M.V., Eastham, P.I.	3, 1, 1	M. Lynch#, E. Pierce, BBC (W. Drew)	
Purple Martin thr	Plum Island	95 max	v. o.	
Tree Swallow thr 27	P.I., S. Dart. (Allens Pd) Rowley	500 max, 370 max "thousands"	v. o., LCES (J. Hill) J. Berry	
Northern Rough-winged Swallow 1-3, 3 3, 10 17	Wayland, Boston Manchester, Wakefield Chatham (Morris I.)	2 ad + 1 juv, 7 2, 3 2	S. Arena, K. Hudson M. Lynch#, P. + F. Vale E. Pierce	
Bank Swallow 3, 5 9, 27	W. Bridgewater, New Braintree Plum Island, Rowley	10, 75+ 650+, 6	S. Arena, M. Lynch# R. Heil, J. Berry	
Cliff Swallow 3, 5 26	Rowley, Brookfield Gloucester	1, 1 3	G. d'Entremont# W. Petersen	
Barn Swallow thr, 16; 20	Sherborn, Boston; P.I.	15, 15; 18	E. Taylor; BBC (W. Drew)	
Black-capped Chickadee 2	Milton (F.M.)	20	G. d'Entremont	
Red-breasted Nuthatch 7-31, 5 8, 12	Lincoln, Quabbin (G40) S. Middleboro, Ipswich	1, 3 4, 3	W. Petersen, M. Lynch# T. Aversa, J. Berry	
Brown Creeper 12	E. Middleboro	1	K. Anderson	
Carolina Wren 22; 24	Nahant, MNWS; W. Newbury	1, 6; 5	I. Lynch#, T. Aversa; R. Heil	
House Wren 1, 18 26	Annisquam, Medford Marshfield	1, 3 2	H. Wiggin, M. Rines M. Boucher	
Winter Wren 5, 8	Petersham, S. Middleboro	1, 1	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
Sedge Wren 5	Brookfield	3+	G. d'Entremont#	
Marsh Wren thr, 1 3, 12 20, 21	Wakefield, Wayland Bolton, GMNWR P.I., Needham	8 max, 35 6 m, 25 10, 1	P. + F. Vale, T. Aversa R. Bradbury, NBC (G. d'Entremont) BBC (W. Drew), T. Aversa	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 5	Quabbin (G40)	3	M. Lynch#	
Eastern Bluebird thr, 1 4, 6 19, 24	E. Middleboro, Sudbury Natick, Newbury Easton, Medford	pr, pr pr, 2 pr, 1 ad w/ 1 yg	K. Anderson, T. Aversa BBC (E. Taylor), BBC (S. Charette) S. Arena, M. Rines	
Veery 3, 5 9, 12	Hamilton, Quabbin (G40) E. Middleboro, Ipswich	5, 10 6, 22	T. Young, M. Lynch# K. Anderson, J. Berry	
Hermit Thrush thr 5, 12	Plymouth (MSSF), Sherborn Quabbin (G40), Wachusett Mt.	6, 6 12, 7	G. d'Entremont, E. Taylor M. Lynch#, L. Taylor#	
Wood Thrush 2, 3 6, 12	Milton (F.M.), Hamilton Newbury, Ipswich	9, 3 ad + 1 juv 3, 11	G. d'Entremont, T. Young BBC (S. Charette), J. Berry	
American Robin 2	Milton (Fowl Meadow)	25	G. d'Entremont	
Gray Catbird 2	Milton (Fowl Meadow)	40	G. d'Entremont	
Brown Thrasher 3, 24	Plum Island, Medford	7, 2	M. Lynch#, M. Rines	
Cedar Waxwing 7, 24	Newbury, E. Middleboro	27, 1 n	BBC (S. Charette), K. Anderson	
Yellow-throated Vireo 5, 10	Petersham, Norton	1, 1	M. Lynch#, N. Komar	
Warbling Vireo 2, 3, 3	Milton (F.M.), Newbury, Rowley	2, 1, 1	G. d'Entremont	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1992
Red-eyed Vireo				
thr, 3	Sherborn, Easton	10, 5	E. Taylor, S. Arena	
5, 12	Quabbin (G40), Ipswich	15, 11 m	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
12, 18	Wachusett Mt., Medford	18, 5	L. Taylor#, M. Rines	
Blue-winged Warbler				
6; 19, 22	Newbury; W. Roxbury, MNWS	4; 1, 1	BBC (S. Charette); T. Aversa	
"Brewster's" Warbler				
6	Newbury	1	BBC (S. Charette)	
Yellow Warbler				
2, 3	Milton (F.M.), P.I.	12, 27	G. d'Entremont, M. Lynch#	
19, 24-28	Eastham, E. Middleboro	3, 2	E. Pierce, K. Anderson	
Chestnut-sided Warbler				
5, 6, 9	Quab.(G40), Newbury, Essex	5, 3, 1	M. Lynch#, BBC(S. Charette), T. Young	
Black-throated Blue Warbler				
12	Wachusett Mt.	1	L. Taylor#	
Yellow-rumped Warbler				
5, 12	Quabbin (G40), Ipswich	8, 2 m	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
Black-throated Green Warbler				
5, 12	Quabbin (G40), Ipswich	4, 12 m	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
12	Wachusett Mt.	2	L. Taylor#	
Blackburnian Warbler				
5	Quabbin (G40)	3	M. Lynch#	
Pine Warbler				
5, 12	Quabbin (G40), Ipswich	11, 4 m	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
12	E. Middleboro	1 f	K. Anderson	
Prairie Warbler				
3, 5	Wayland, Petersham	1, 3	S. Arena, M. Lynch#	
6, 18	Newbury, Medford	8, 1	BBC (S. Charette), M. Rines	
Cerulean Warbler				
5	Quabbin (G40)	pr + 1 m	M. Lynch#	
Black-and-white Warbler				
5, 10	Quabbin (G40), Boston	4, 1 m	M. Lynch#, K. Hudson	
12, 23	Ipswich, P'town	1 m, 1	J. Berry, E. Pierce	
American Redstart				
3, 5, 11	Easton, Quab. (G40), P.I.	1, 7, 1	S. Arena, M. Lynch#, BBC (D. Deifik)	
Ovenbird				
5, 8	Quab. (G40), S. Middleboro	16, 21	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
12, 12	Ipswich, Wachusett Mt.	13, 9	J. Berry, L. Taylor#	
Northern Waterthrush				
5, 8	Quab.(G40), S. Middleboro	1, 1	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
12, 29	Ipswich, MNWS	1-2 m, 3	J. Berry, T. Aversa	
Common Yellowthroat				
2, 5	Milton (F.M.), Quab.(G40)	73, 24	G. d'Entremont, M. Lynch#	
11, 12	Plum Island, Ipswich	23, 13	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
Canada Warbler				
8	S. Middleboro	1 f	T. Aversa	
Scarlet Tanager				
5, 6	Quabbin (G40), Newbury	11, 9	M. Lynch#, BBC (S. Charette)	
12, 24	Ipswich, Medford	11, 2 yg	J. Berry, M. Rines	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak				
2, 11	Milton (F.M.), Hamilton	10, 3	G. d'Entremont, T. Young	
12, 14	Ipswich, Wayland	2, 1 f + 2 yg	J. Berry, S. Arena	
Indigo Bunting				
thr, 6	W. Roxbury, Newbury	9 m max, 8	T. Aversa, BBC (S. Charette)	
11	Hamilton	1 m	T. Young	
12, 20	Ipswich, Worcester	1 m, 1 m	J. Berry, M. Lynch#	
Rufous-sided Towhee				
6, 18	Newbury, Medford	14, 10	BBC (S. Charette), M. Rines	
Chipping Sparrow				
12, 24	Ipswich, Medford	7, 5	J. Berry, M. Rines	
Field Sparrow				
3, 18	Newbury, Medford	6, 4	G. d'Entremont#, M. Rines	
25, 26	Falmouth, Sherborn	4, 12	S. Arena, E. Taylor	
Vesper Sparrow				
19	Easton	1	S. Arena	
Savannah Sparrow				
11, 12	P.I., Martha's Vineyard	6, 6	M. Lynch#	
19, 26	Easton, Plum Island	2 ad + 2 juv, 1 m	S. Arena, J. Berry	
Grasshopper Sparrow				
25	Falmouth	1	S. Arena	
Sharp-tailed Sparrow				
thr	P.I., S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	40+ max, 26 max	v. o., LCES (J.Hill)	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1992
Seaside Sparrow thr	P.I., S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	8+ max, 9 max	v. o., LCES (J.Hill)	
Song Sparrow 2, 12	Milton (F.M.), GMNWR	39, 17	G. d'Entremont, NBC (G. d'Entremont)	
Swamp Sparrow 2, 12	Milton (F.M.), GMNWR	6, 8	G. d'Entremont, NBC (G. d'Entremont)	
White-throated Sparrow 22	MNWS	1	T. Aversa	
Dark-eyed Junco 12	Wachusett Mt.	4	L. Taylor#	
Bobolink 11, 27	P.I., Rowley	12, 3	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
Eastern Meadowlark thr, 6	Marlboro, Sherborn	1 or 2, 2	R. Graefe, E. Taylor	
11	Newburyport	3	M. Lynch#	
Northern Oriole 2, 6	Milton (F.M.), Newbury	3, 6	G. d'Entremont, BBC (S. Charette)	
Orchard Oriole 11	West Roxbury	1 f	T. Aversa	
Purple Finch 3, 5; 25	Hamilton, Ipswich; P.I.	1, 1; 3	T. Young; P. + F. Vale	
House Finch thr	Wayland	50 max 7/13	S. Arena	
American Goldfinch 2	Milton (F.M.)	14	G. d'Entremont	
Evening Grosbeak 5, 18	Quabbin (G40), Gardner	1, 2	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist	

#### HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO BIRD OBSERVER

This publication prints monthly compilations of reports of birds seen in eastern Massachusetts. Space does not permit the inclusion of all material submitted. However, bird sightings sent to Bird Observer are archived at Massachusetts Audubon Society. Our compilers select and summarize for publication sightings that document early and late dates for migratory species, maximum counts of migrants, high or low numbers of some common birds, and species found beyond their normal ranges.

Sightings for any given month must be reported in writing by the eighth of the next month. Send to Bird Sightings, Robert H. Stymeist, 98 Boylston Street, Watertown, MA 02172. Organize reports by month and by species in current A.O.U. checklist order. Include name and phone number of observer, common name of species, date of sighting, location, number of birds, number of observers, and information relevant to age, sex, morph, etc.

Reports of difficult identifications, vagrants, and rarities should include, in addition to the above information, time of day and light available, wind and weather conditions, the optics used and approximate distance from the bird, length of observation, the observer's prior experience with the species, and field guide or other reference used. Provide a description of the bird based solely on personal observation. Comment on the distinguishing field marks (observed and unobserved), vocalizations, activity, general behavior, the habitat in the immediate vicinity, and other birds present. Include with your report documentation such as copies of the observer's field notes and sketches.

*Thick-billed Murre  
Race Point Beach  
Provincetown, MA  
August 20, 1992  
Photo by Kyle Jones*



## *BIRD SIGHTINGS*

### *AUGUST 1992*

### *SUMMARY*

by Richard A. Forster and Marjorie W. Rines

August was cool and wet but with near normal sunshine. The temperature averaged 70.4 degrees, 1.5 degrees below normal, the sixth month in a row with below average temperatures. The low of 57 degrees was on the 21st, and the high of 91 degrees was on the 11th, the only day to hit the 90s. In a 5-day stretch (August 14-18) the temperature never hit 70 degrees, the longest August stretch since 1905 with such low temperatures. The end of the month finally brought more typical warmth and humidity. Rainfall totaled 4.25 inches, 0.57 inch above normal. Measurable amounts fell on 10 days, including a stretch of 6 days in a row, very unusual for August, but one day short of the 7-day record set in 1911. Some rain fell on 11 consecutive days from August 9-19. This is a new August record, exceeding the 9 days recorded in 1933. The remnants of Hurricane Andrew brushed the area in the early hours of the 29th, bringing varying rain totals to Eastern Massachusetts communities from none to over a quarter of an inch. Andrew also brought strong winds, averaging 18.9 MPH and gusting to 39 MPH from the south. Strong winds were also noted on the 1st (39 MPH westerly gusts) and the 30th (39 MPH southwesterly gusts).

M. W. R.

#### LOONS THROUGH ALCIDS

Pelagic birding remained bleak on Stellwagen Bank. Most pelagics reported were from Cashes Ledge, located approximately 70 miles northeast of Cape Ann, and consisted mostly of Greater Shearwaters and both storm-petrel species, including high counts of Leach's Storm-Petrels. A Red-necked Grebe continued in Gloucester from July. A few Pied-billed Grebes and American Bitterns filtered in from unknown breeding locales. The heron scene was similar to that of July. The Nantucket **Little Egret** apparently departed, but the **Reddish Egret** continued for the entire month in the vicinity of the Monomoy Islands. The egret roost on Plum Island continued its spectacular evening display. Small groups of Little Blue Herons were found, and other specialties, such as Tricolored Heron, Cattle Egret, and Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, were found at traditional locations.

The number of late summer sightings of Cooper's Hawk continues to be encouraging. Since the relatively few migrant Cooper's Hawks do not normally appear until a month later, it is presumed these are local individuals. Cooper's Hawk was virtually unknown in summer just 15 years ago. The tail end of the month brought a flurry of early Merlin sightings. A **Sandhill Crane** appeared in the Ipswich/Plum Island area, where it has appeared at this time of year routinely for several years, suggesting that it may be the same individual returning.

In August migrating shorebirds reach peak abundance in Massachusetts, and shorebird reports were carefully reviewed for unusual sightings or trends. The only oddities were noted at North Monomoy, and all were carry-overs from July—a Curlew Sandpiper, and one Marbled and two **Bar-tailed godwits**. There was a general lack of shorebird sightings at inland locations, reflective of high water levels. Possible deviations from expectations include a poor showing of Stilt Sandpipers at Plum Island, with the exception of a flock at midmonth, and good peaks of Semipalmated Plovers on the 28th-29th. Sightings of both Baird's and Buff-breasted sandpipers in the last few days of the month signaled the beginning of the period when observers assiduously seek uncommon shorebirds with a more western affinity. The only pelagic phalarope reported was Red Phalarope from both Cashes Ledge and Stellwagen Bank. Red Phalarope is typically found farther offshore than Red-necked Phalarope, which is often confined to the near shore waters and is the species to be expected on Stellwagen Bank. Thus the Red Phalarope report from Stellwagen in the absence of any sightings of Red-necked Phalarope is decidedly unusual.

The same situation holds true for jaegers, with Pomarine occurring farther offshore than Parasitic. Thus the presence of Pomarine Jaegers seen from land at Sandy Neck in Barnstable in nonstorm-related circumstances is unusual. Three Great Skuas were seen at Cashes Ledge on the 31st. Great Skua may be regular at this location and at this time. The only unusual gulls were a Common Black-headed Gull at Plum Island and an adult Lesser Black-backed Gull in Provincetown. Royal Terns were seen on Cape Cod, and Black Terns staged a very good movement at the end of the month. A Sooty Tern put in a cameo appearance at Scituate where it was previously seen at the end of July. An unseasonal Thick-billed Murre was found beached but alive in Provincetown.

R. A. F.

Red-throated Loon thr	Leicester	1 ad	v. o.
Common Loon thr, 2	Wachusett Res., P.I.	4 ad + 2 yg, 4	M. Lynch#, G. d'Entremont#
2, 14	N. Monomoy, E. Gloucester	11, 6	B. Nikula#, T. Aversa
Pied-billed Grebe 2, 22	P.I., GMNWR	2, 4	G. d'Entremont#, E. Taylor
Red-necked Grebe thr	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	G. Soucy
Cory's Shearwater 31	Cashes Ledge	1	R. Abrams#
Greater Shearwater 31	Cashes Ledge	400+	R. Abrams#
Manx Shearwater 31	Cashes Ledge	1	R. Abrams#
Wilson's Storm-Petrel 31	Cashes Ledge	1200	R. Abrams#
Leach's Storm-Petrel 31	Cashes Ledge	220	R. Abrams#
Great Cormorant 29	N. Scituate	1 imm	S. Perkins
Double-crested Cormorant thr, 8	Wachusett Res., N. Monomoy	89 max, 500	M. Lynch#, G. d'Entremont#
15, 23	Newburyport, Rowley	120+, 150	M. Lynch#, J. Berry
American Bittern 10, 15	GMNWR, Newburyport	2, 1	J. Center, M. Lynch#
23, 28	Rowley, P.I.	1 or 2, 1	J. Berry, W. Drew#
28	Canton (F.M.)	1	N. Komar
Least Bittern 2	Wayland	1	BBC (B. Howell)
Great Blue Heron thr, 10	P.I., GMNWR	15 max, 10	W. Drew#, J. Center
20, 23	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Rowley	10, 13	LCES (J. Hill), J. Berry
Great Egret 2, 7	P.I., S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	112, 21	W. Petersen#, LCES (J. Hill)
20, 23	Lancaster, Rowley	1, 25	E. Salmela, J. Berry
Snowy Egret thr, 2	Saugus-Revere, P.I.	50 max, 637	J. Berry, W. Petersen#
8, 20	N. Monomoy, WBWS	80, 41	BBC (G. d'Entremont), K. Jones
23, 31	Revere, Eastham	175, 200	P. + F. Vale, W. Petersen#
Little Blue Heron 13, 15	S. Monomoy, Rowley	6, 9	B. Nikula, M. Lynch#
20, 23	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Ipswich	4, 1	LCES (J. Hill), K. Disney#
28, 30	P.I., Truro	5, 1 imm	W. Drew#, J. Young
Tricolored Heron 13	N. Monomoy	1	P. Whitlock#
Reddish Egret 1, 2, 1-31	N. Monomoy, Chatham, S. Monomoy	1 imm	v. o.
Cattle Egret 23, 30	Essex, Ipswich	15, 35	S. Arena, S. Perkins
Green-backed Heron 9, 10	Bourne, GMNWR	5, 4	S. Arena, J. Center
12, 15	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Newburyport	3, 4	LCES (J. Hill), M. Lynch#
28, 29	P.I., Wayland	5, 5	W. Drew#, J. Hoye#
29	Scituate	5	S. Perkins
Black-crowned Night-Heron 2, 8	Worcester, N. Monomoy	3, 8	R. Bradbury, BBC (G. d'Entremont)
8, 23	GMNWR, Arlington	3, 5	S. Perkins, M. Rines
27, 29	Cambridge (F.P.), Wayland	5, 5	M. Rines, J. Hoye#
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron 2, 28; 17	P.I.; Newburyport	1, 1; 1	W. Petersen#, W. Drew#, N. Nash



DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	AUGUST 1992
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (continued)				
22	N. Monomoy	1 imm	M. Lynch#	
Glossy Ibis				
2	P.I., N. Monomoy	29, 5	W. Petersen#, B. Nikula#	
13, 30	Squantum, Rowley	1, 4	J. Hoye, R. Stymeist#	
Mute Swan				
21	Westport	119	M. Rines	
Wood Duck				
2, 8	Wayland, GMNWR	6 w/yg, 55	BBC (B. Howell), S. Perkins	
2, 16	Quabbin (G37), Holden	16, 9	M. Lynch#, M. Lynch#	
18	Concord (N.A.C.)	5 w/12 downy yg	S. Perkins	
21, 30	Milton (F.M.), Bolton	2, 11	G. d'Entremont#, M. Lynch#	
Green-winged Teal				
3, 28	P.I.	3, 125	W. Drew#	
13, 23	S. Monomoy, Wachusett Res.	40, 4	B. Nikula, M. Lynch#	
30	Ipswich	6	S. Perkins	
Northern Pintail				
13, 22	S. Monomoy, P.I.	25, 1	B. Nikula, G. d'Entremont	
Blue-winged Teal				
13, 18	S. Monomoy, Concord	18, 2	B. Nikula, S. Perkins	
28, 30	P.I., Rowley	61, 45	W. Drew#, R. Stymeist#	
Northern Shoveler				
13, 18	S. Monomoy, Concord (N.A.C.)	3, 1 f	B. Nikula, S. Perkins	
Gadwall				
13, 28	S. Monomoy, P.I.	1, 44	B. Nikula, W. Drew#	
American Wigeon				
27, 28	Cambridge (F.P.), P.I.	2, 3	M. Rines, W. Drew#	
30	Rowley	8	S. Perkins	
Common Eider				
thr, 9	N. Monomoy, P.I.	60, 4	B. Nikula#, S. Perkins	
23	Manomet Point, Rockport	25, 8	G. d'Entremont#, J. Berry	
23, 31	Cuttyhunk, Westport	30, 150+	P. Trimble, M. Boucher	
White-winged Scoter				
14, 22	E. Gloucester, N. Monomoy	12, 3	T. Aversa, S. Arena	
23	Manomet Point, Rockport	7, 5	G. d'Entremont#, J. Berry	
Hooded Merganser				
23	Wachusett Res.	1 f	M. Lynch#	
Red-breasted Merganser				
1-9	P.I.	1	BBC (J. Center) + v. o.	
Osprey				
20	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	7	LCES (J. Hill)	
23	Cuttyhunk, Lakeville	2, 3	P. Trimble, G. d'Entremont#	
Reports of individuals from 7 locations.				
Bald Eagle				
5, 31	Mansfield, Hanson	2, 1 ad	K. Holmes, J. Markiewitz	
Northern Harrier				
12, 23	Eastham (F.H.), Rowley	1, 2	T. Aversa, J. Berry	
23	Cuttyhunk, DWWS	1, 1	P. Trimble, G. d'Entremont#	
28, 29	P.I., N. Monomoy	2, 3	M. Rines, J. Brown#	
Sharp-shinned Hawk				
7, 23	Wellfleet, DWWS	1 imm, 1	T. Aversa#, G. d'Entremont#	
30	Paxton, Bolton Flats	1, 1	M. Lynch#	
Cooper's Hawk				
21, 23	N. Dartmouth, Rowley	1, 1 imm	M. Boucher, J. Berry#	
23, 28	Middleboro, Raynham	1, 1	G. d'Entremont#, N. Komar	
30, 31	Harvard, Medford	1, 1	M. Lynch#, M. Rines	
Northern Goshawk				
14	E. Middleboro	1	R. Brissette	
Red-shouldered Hawk				
thr, 28	E. Middleboro, Newbury	3+, 1	K. Anderson, M. Rines	
Broad-winged Hawk				
6, 8	Dover, Plymouth	2, 1	E. Taylor, S. Arena	
16, 23	Fall River, Arlington	2, 3	R. Stymeist#, M. Rines	
23	N. Scituate, Cuttyhunk	1 imm, 1	G. d'Entremont, P. Trimble	
23, 28	Wakefield, Boston	1, 1 imm	P. + F. Vale, T. Aversa	
American Kestrel				
1, 11	P.I., Wayland	2, 2 ad + 3 juv	BBC (J. Center), S. Arena	
Merlin				
27, 29	Squantum, P.I.	1, 2	R. Abrams, E. Salmela	
30	Ipswich	1	T. Maloney	
Peregrine Falcon				
6	Boston, Danvers	3, 1	T. French#, J. Brown#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	AUGUST 1992
Peregrine Falcon (continued)				
21, 26	Provincetown, Newburyport	1 imm, 1	K. Jones, W. Petersen#	
29	P.I., Scituate	1, 1 imm	M. Lynch#, S. Perkins	
Ruffed Grouse				
23	Sherborn	1	E. Taylor	
Northern Bobwhite				
20	Plymouth (MSSF)	2	G. d'Entremont#	
Virginia Rail				
2, 13	Wayland, Walpole	2, 1	BBC (B. Howell), K. Holmes	
23, 27	Cuttyhunk, Bolton	1, 1	P. Trimble, J. Hoye	
Sora				
2, 9	Wayland, Bolton	2, 1 or 2	BBC (B. Howell), J. Center	
Sandhill Crane				
15, 25-26; 28	Ipswich; P.I.	1, 1; 1	M. Lynch#, D. Rimmer; W. Drew#	
Black-bellied Plover				
15	Newburyport	350+	M. Lynch#	
16	N. Monomoy/South Beach I.	1500	B. Nikula#	
18, 20	Concord, S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	6, 31	S. Perkins, LCES (J. Hill)	
29	Revere, Ipswich (C.B.)	50+, 24	P. + F. Vale, D. Rimmer	
29	Halifax	300+	S. Perkins	
Lesser Golden-Plover				
20, 29	Martha's Vineyard, Halifax	1, 4	V. Laux, S. Perkins	
Semipalmated Plover				
thr	Ipswich, P.I.	1150 max 8/29, 1616 max 8/28	D. Rimmer, W. Drew#	
thr, 6	N. Monomoy, Barnstable	550 max 8/13, 650	B. Nikula, R. Scott#	
15	Newburyport, Rowley	300+, 30+	M. Lynch#	
20, 29	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Revere	93, 600+	LCES (J. Hill), P. + F. Vale	
Piping Plover				
4, 7	Ipswich, S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	14, 2	D. Rimmer, LCES (J. Hill)	
8, 22	N. Monomoy	2, 2	BBC (G. d'Entremont), M. Lynch#	
Killdeer				
5, 7	Southboro, P.I.	18, 16	T. Aversa, W. Drew#	
18, 23	Concord (N.A.C.), Paxton	144, 54	S. Perkins, M. Lynch#	
29	Halifax	25	S. Perkins	
American Oystercatcher				
thr	N. Monomoy	100 max 8/27	D. Holt#	
2, 23	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Cuttyhunk	2, 5	M. Boucher, P. Trimble	
Greater Yellowlegs				
thr	N. Monomoy	200+ max 8/22	M. Lynch# + v. o.	
7, 13	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Ipswich	14, 13	LCES (J. Hill), D. Rimmer	
15, 29	Revere, Newburyport/P.I.	48, 200+	P. + F. Vale, M. Lynch#	
Lesser Yellowlegs				
thr, 2	N. Monomoy, Newburyport	70 max 8/2, 800	B. Nikula, W. Petersen#	
15, 18	Revere, Concord (N.A.C.)	16, 5	P. + F. Vale, S. Perkins	
23, 28	S. Dartmouth, Northbridge	2, 3	M. Boucher, R. Bradbury	
Solitary Sandpiper				
12, 18	Bolton, Concord (N.A.C.)	4, 7	R. Bradbury, S. Perkins	
23, 25	Belmont, Topsfield	7, 6	L. Taylor, S. Arena	
Reports of 12 individuals from 8 locations.				
Willet				
thr, 2	N. Monomoy, P.I.	100 max 8/2, 14	B. Nikula#, G. d'Entremont#	
7, 23	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Rowley	2, 1	LCES (J. Hill), J. Brown#	
Willet ( <i>inornatus</i> )				
thr	N. Monomoy	8 max 8/2	B. Nikula#	
Spotted Sandpiper				
1, 7	Boston, P.I.	2, 3	K. Hudson, W. Drew#	
8, 22	Arlington, Plymouth	5, 2	M. Rines, S. Arena	
23, 30	Wachusett Res., Cuttyhunk	3, 8	M. Lynch#, P. Trimble	
Upland Sandpiper				
2, 12	Newburyport, M. V.	4, 8	W. Petersen#, V. Laux	
16, 20	Concord, S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1, 1	E. Salmela, LCES (J. Hill)	
Whimbrel				
1, 2	N. Monomoy, P.I.	500, 14	B. Nikula#, W. Petersen#	
8, 12	WBWS, Scituate	106, 28	B. Nikula#, S. Perkins#	
30, 31	Cuttyhunk, Westport	3, 16	P. Trimble, M. Boucher	
Hudsonian Godwit				
thr, 12	N. Monomoy, Scituate	200 max 8/20, 4	v. o., S. Perkins	
15, 22	Eastham, Barnstable	2, 1	K. Jones, H. Ferguson	
29	Newburyport, Revere	41, 11	M. Lynch#, P. + F. Vale	
29	E. Boston	8	T. Aversa	
Bar-tailed Godwit				
thr	N. Monomoy	2	v. o.	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	AUGUST 1992
Marbled Godwit 1-6, 15-20; 8 29	N. Monomoy; Eastham Scituate	1 or 2; 1 1	B. Nikula#; K. Jones S. Perkins	
Ruddy Turnstone 11, 13 15, 19 22, 30 30, 31	Scituate, Squantum Ipswich (C.B.), Revere N. Monomoy, Cuttyhunk Andover, Westport	90, 9 10, 7 75+, 10 1, 34	R. Abrams, J. Hoye D. Rimmer, P. + F. Vale M. Lynch#, P. Trimble J. Brown#, M. Boucher	
Red Knot thr, 11 12 28, 29	N. Monomoy, Ipswich Scituate, Eastham P.I., Revere	900 max 8/6, 2 700, 1000 4, 6	B. Nikula, D. Rimmer S. Perkins, M. Smith# W. Drew#, P. + F. Vale	
Sanderling thr thr, 12 16-18, 29 29	P.I., Ipswich (C.B.) N. Monomoy, S. Dartmouth Wachusett Res. Revere	310 max, 537 max 1400 max 8/13, 31 1, 2 300+	W. Drew#, D. Rimmer B. Nikula, M. Boucher R. Bradbury, M. Lynch# P. + F. Vale	
Semipalmated Sandpiper thr thr, 6 9, 12 27, 29	P.I., Ipswich N. Monomoy, Barnstable Newburyport, Eastham Squantum, Revere	1202 max 8/28, 1356 max 8/15 1500 max 8/6, 500 2500, 2000 1200, 500+	W. Drew#, D. Rimmer B. Nikula, R. Scott# S. Perkins, M. Smith# R. Abrams, P. + F. Vale	
Western Sandpiper 11, 29; 27	Scituate; Squantum	1, 4; 1	R. Abrams#; R. Abrams#	
Least Sandpiper thr 8, 9 20, 29	P.I., N. Monomoy Northbridge, Bourne S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Concord	80 max 8/9, 200 17, 15 7, 9	max 8/2 v. o., B. Nikula R. Bradbury, S. Arena LCES (J. Hill), J. Center	
White-rumped Sandpiper 22, 23 29; 30	N. Monomoy, S. Dartmouth Newburyport, P.I.; Ipswich	10, 5 25, 10; 8	M. Lynch#, M. Boucher M. Lynch#; D. Rimmer	
Baird's Sandpiper 29	P.I.	1	M. Lynch#	
Pectoral Sandpiper thr, 13 21, 23 23, 30	N. Monomoy, S. Monomoy P.I., S. Dartmouth Halifax, Ipswich	5 max 8/6, 4 4, 2 16, 15	B. Nikula M. Lynch#, M. Boucher K. Anderson, S. Perkins	
Dunlin thr	N. Monomoy	3 max 8/13	B. Nikula#	
Curlew Sandpiper 2	N. Monomoy	1	B. Nikula#	
Stilt Sandpiper 13, 15 22	S. Monomoy, P.I. N. Monomoy	21, 15 2	B. Nikula, J. Center S. Arena	
Buff-breasted Sandpiper 29, 30	P.I., N. Monomoy	1, 2	M. Lynch#, W. Petersen#	
Short-billed Dowitcher thr, 7 18, 28	N. Monomoy, S. Dart. (Allens Pd) Wellesley, P.I.	800 max, 31 22, 216	B. Nikula, LCES (J. Hill) C. Quinlin, W. Drew#	
Long-billed Dowitcher 2 6, 14-16; 22 13 20, 30	P.I. N. Monomoy S. Monomoy Martha's Vineyard, Rowley	40 1, 1; 1 1 1, 10	W. Petersen B. Nikula#; M. Lynch# B. Nikula V. Laux, S. Perkins	
Common Snipe 18	Concord	10	S. Perkins	
American Woodcock 20	Plymouth	2	G. d'Entremont	
Wilson's Phalarope 2, 28 6, 13, 22, 29	P.I. N. Monomoy	1, 2 1 or 2	v. o. v. o.	
Red Phalarope 10, 31	Stellwagen Bank, Cashes Ledge	16, 6	P. Trimble, R. Abrams#	
Pomarine Jaeger 4, 31	Barnstable (S.N.), Cashes Ledge	3, 14	P. Trimble, R. Abrams#	
Parasitic Jaeger 11, 31	Gloucester, Stellwagen Bank	2 dk, 1 ad	C. Leahy, R. Abrams	
Great Skua 31	Cashes Ledge	3	R. Abrams#	
Laughing Gull 13, 19 28, 30	Squantum, Revere P.I., Cuttyhunk	12, 2 2, 80+	J. Hoye, P. + F. Vale W. Drew#, P. Trimble	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	AUGUST 1992
Laughing Gull (continued)				
23	S. Dartmouth	45	M. Boucher	
Common Black-headed Gull				
7	P.I.	1	W. Drew#	
Bonaparte's Gull				
2, 17-18	Newburyport, Wachusett Res.	250+, 2	W. Petersen#, R. Bradbury	
29	Winthrop	175	T. Aversa	
Lesser Black-backed Gull				
26	Provincetown	1 ad	K. Jones#	
Royal Tern				
2, 7	N. Monomoy, Eastham	1, 1	M. Smith#, K. Jones	
12	Martha's Vineyard	2	V. Laux	
Roseate Tern				
8, 12	P.I., S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1, 2	W. Petersen#, M. Boucher	
12, 15	Martha's Vineyard, Chatham	200+, 500	V. Laux, B. Nikula	
20, 28	N. Monomoy, Ipswich (C.B.)	375, 2	H. Ferguson, D. Rimmer	
Common Tern				
7, 15	P.I., Newburyport	21, 50+	W. Drew#, M. Lynch#	
2, 30	Nantucket (Smith Point)	150+, 300+	E. Andrews#	
22, 30	N. Monomoy, Cuttyhunk	150+, 110	M. Lynch#, P. Trimble	
Arctic Tern				
7, 20	N. Monomoy, M. V.	1, 1	T. Aversa#, V. Laux	
30	Nantucket (Smith Point)	1	E. Andrews#	
Forster's Tern				
8, 29	N. Monomoy	1, 6	BBC (G. d'Entremont), J. Brown#	
6, 12	Barnstable, Scituate	3, 1 juv	R. Scott#, S. Perkins	
15, 22	Newbury, P.I.	1, 1	M. Lynch#, W. Petersen	
23, 30	S. Dartmouth, M. V.	3, 6	M. Boucher, V. Laux	
Least Tern				
2, 30	Nantucket (Smith Point)	74, 1	E. Andrews#	
8, 30	N. Monomoy, Cuttyhunk	25, 6	BBC (G. d'Entremont), P. Trimble	
Sooty Tern				
8	N. Scituate	1 ad	R. Abrams	
Black Tern				
thr	N. Monomoy	3 max 8/16	B. Nikula# + v. o.	
6, 19	Barnstable (S.N.), Orleans	3, 3	R. Scott#, M. Smith#	
22, 28	Truro, Ipswich	1, 2	J. Young, D. Rimmer	
29	Newburyport, P.I.	7, 5	M. Lynch#	
30	Martha's Vineyard	9	V. Laux	
Black Skimmer				
6, 15	N. Monomoy, Chatham	3, 2	B. Nikula#, B. Nikula	
22	Barnstable (S.N.)	1	H. Ferguson	
Thick-billed Murre				
20	Provincetown	1 alt pl (ph) (beached but alive)	K. Jones	

#### CUCKOOS THROUGH FINCHES

Barn Owls nesting in Newbury were very unusual for the location. This is one of the few recent breeding records away from their stronghold on Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. A good nighthawk migration was noted during the last week of the month in Worcester. Migrant flycatchers were extremely poorly represented. The bulk of the flycatcher migration passes through by the end of the month, so the lack of reports was surprising and merits watching in coming years.

Fish Crows were reported only from the southeast, a typical distribution at this time of year. A Common Raven at Wachusett Reservoir was somewhat east of its normal haunts. A **Sedge Wren** was located by voice in the field across from the Plum Island airport. This diminutive wren is renowned for its inexplicable, nomadic wanderings, and its presence is revealed to those familiar with its distinctive song that is frequently uttered, even in fall migration. A Golden-crowned Kinglet at Marblehead Neck was an unseasonal migrant. Although Hermit Thrushes were numerous, all were reports of resident birds. Only a single migrant Veery was reported. Reports of vireos and warblers represented lingering residents for the most part as evidenced from the Quabbin and Fall River reports. Notable exceptions were Philadelphia Vireos at Martha's Vineyard and Marblehead Neck and the only significant grounding of migrants at the latter location on the 26th. In light of the general paucity of warblers reports, two Kentucky Warblers clearly stand out.

Among the seedeaters a **Yellow-headed Blackbird** at North Monomoy was notable.

R. A. F.

Black-billed Cuckoo			
4, 30	E. Middleboro, Wachusett Res.	1, 1	K. Anderson, M. Lynch#
Yellow-billed Cuckoo			
7, 13	Boxford, E. Middleboro	1, 1	K. Disney, K. Anderson

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	AUGUST 1992
Barn Owl				
19	Newbury	2 ad + 4 yg	T. French#	
Eastern Screech-Owl				
16, 23	Fall River, Braintree	1, 2	R. Stymeist#, G. d'Entremont#	
27	Oxbow NWR	1	J. Hoyer	
Great Horned Owl				
23	N. Scituate (Glades)	1	G. d'Entremont#	
Short-eared Owl				
30	N. Monomoy	1	W. Petersen#	
Common Nighthawk				
18, 24	Worcester, Belmont	350, 19	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist	
25	Arlington, Haverhill	87, 124	D. F. Oliver, J. Hogan	
22, 23, 24, 28, 29	Worcester	1550 total	F. McMenemy#	
Whip-poor-will				
6, 20, 23, 27	Plymouth (MSSF)	9, 5, 3, 2	G. d'Entremont#	
Chimney Swift				
10, 30	Sherborn, Worcester	100, 27	E. Taylor, M. Lynch#	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird				
thr	E. Middleboro, Boxford	2+, 5 max	K. Anderson, J. Brown#	
2, 3	Wayland, N. Dartmouth	2, 2	BBC (B. Howell), M. Boucher	
12, 30	Bolton, Newbury	2, 1	R. Bradbury, S. Arena	
Belted Kingfisher				
1, 22	Wachusett Res., Boston	2, 2	M. Lynch#, K. Hudson	
24, 30	Wayland, Bolton Flats	2, 2	S. Arena, M. Lynch#	
Red-headed Woodpecker				
2	Sherborn	2 ad + 2 imm	E. Taylor	
Hairy Woodpecker				
thr, 13	Boxford, Worcester (BMB)	5 max, 1	J. Brown#, M. Lynch#	
21, 31	E. Middleboro, Medford	1 f, 1	K. Anderson, M. Rines	
Northern Flicker				
thr, 19	Sherborn, Worcester (BMB)	7, 23	E. Taylor, M. Lynch#	
Olive-sided Flycatcher				
12, 19	Princeton, Worcester (BMB)	1 ph, 1	R. Bradbury, M. Lynch#	
Eastern Wood-Pewee				
2, 16	Quabbin (G37), Fall River	6, 9	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
19, 31	Worcester (BMB), Medford	10, 6	M. Lynch#, M. Rines	
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher				
12, 20, 25	Princeton	1 ph	R. Bradbury	
Willow Flycatcher				
2	Newburyport, Wayland	1, 6	W. Petersen, BBC (B. Howell)	
Least Flycatcher				
19, 22	Worcester (BMB), MNWS	3, 1	M. Lynch#, G. d'Entremont#	
31	Hamilton	1	J. Berry	
<i>Empidonax</i> species				
23	Waltham	1	L. Taylor	
Eastern Phoebe				
thr, 19	Boxford, Worcester (BMB)	4 max, 5	J. Brown#, M. Lynch#	
22	Newbury, West Newbury	3, 3	G. d'Entremont	
27	Bolton Flats, ONWR	5, 5	J. Hoyer	
Great Crested Flycatcher				
2, 12	Quabbin (G37), Provincetown	2, 1	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
16, 31	Fall River, Medford	5, 2	R. Stymeist#, M. Rines	
Eastern Kingbird				
2, 15	Wayland, P.I.	8, 24	BBC (B. Howell), BBC (S. Bolton)	
20	Lancaster	70	E. Salmela	
Horned Lark				
7	Wellfleet	19	T. Aversa#	
Purple Martin				
8, 29	P.I.	15, 1	J. Berry, M. Lynch#	
Tree Swallow				
15, 23	P.I., Rowley	3100, 1000+	BBC (S. Bolton), S. Arena	
Bank Swallow				
1, 12	P.I., S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	3, 50+	BBC (J. Center), M. Boucher	
Cliff Swallow				
15, 18	Newbury, Halifax	1, 1	M. Lynch#, K. Anderson	
American Crow				
12	Bolton	100+	R. Bradbury	
Fish Crow				
thr, 30	E. Middleboro, Eastham	3-20, 1	K. Anderson, W. Petersen	
Common Raven				
2, 30	Quabbin (G37), Wachusett Res.	1, 1	M. Lynch#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	AUGUST 1992
Red-breasted Nuthatch				
2, 22	Quabbin (G37), MNWS	10, 4	M. Lynch#, G. d'Entremont#	
30, 31	Waltham, Sudbury	2, 3	L. Taylor, P. Ward	
Brown Creeper				
2, 26	Quabbin (G37), Boxford	6, 1 singing	M. Lynch#, J. Brown#	
Carolina Wren				
16, 19	Fall River, Worcester (BMB)	4, 3	R. Stymeist#, M. Lynch#	
21, 26	Westport, MNWS	17, 5	M. Rines, T. Aversa	
House Wren				
16, 19	Fall River, Worcester	5, 9	R. Stymeist#, M. Lynch#	
Winter Wren				
2, 16	Quabbin (G37), Fall River	1, 1	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
Sedge Wren				
15	Newbury	1	S. Kellogg + v. o.	
Marsh Wren				
2	P.I., Wayland	10, 7+	G. d'Entremont#, BBC (B. Howell)	
Golden-crowned Kinglet				
21	MNWS	1	I. Lynch	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher				
2, 5	Quabbin (G37), E. Middleboro	4, 1	M. Lynch#, K. Anderson	
24	Manomet	18	T. Lloyd-Evans#	
Eastern Bluebird				
8, 19	Sherborn, Worcester (BMB)	2 ad + 1 imm, 8	E. Taylor, M. Lynch#	
Veery				
16, 26	Fall River, MNWS	3, 1	R. Stymeist#, T. Aversa	
Hermit Thrush				
1-23, 2	Sherborn, Quabbin (G37)	6, 8	E. Taylor, M. Lynch#	
6, 23; 16	Plymouth; Fall River	4, 1; 13	G. d'Entremont#, R. Stymeist#	
Wood Thrush				
16, 19	Fall River, Worcester (BMB)	1, 1	R. Stymeist#, M. Lynch#	
21	Milton (F.M.)	2	G. d'Entremont#	
American Robin				
30	Annisquam	45	H. Wiggin#	
Gray Catbird				
16, 19	Fall River, Worcester (BMB)	64, 33	R. Stymeist#, M. Lynch#	
30	P.I., Waltham	29, 29	R. Stymeist#, L. Taylor	
Northern Mockingbird				
30	Worcester	17 flying to roost	M. Lynch#	
Brown Thrasher				
9, 23	P.I., DWWS	2, 1	BBC (M. Rines), G. d'Entremont#	
29	Medford	2	M. Rines	
White-eyed Vireo				
30	Martha's Vineyard	2	V. Laux	
Solitary Vireo				
2, 29	Quabbin (G37), Wayland	6, 1	M. Lynch#, J. Hoye#	
Yellow-throated Vireo				
2, 22	Quabbin (G37), ONWR	2, 1	M. Lynch#, R. Bradbury	
Warbling Vireo				
2, 6	Wayland, Boston	2, 1	BBC (B. Howell), K. Hudson	
21	Milton (F.M.)	1	G. d'Entremont	
Philadelphia Vireo				
22, 29	MNWS, Martha's Vineyard	1, 1	G. d'Entremont, V. Laux	
Red-eyed Vireo				
2, 12	Quabbin (G37), Provincetown	14, 3	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
16, 26	Fall River, MNWS	24, 2	R. Stymeist#, T. Aversa	
29, 30	Medford, Cuttyhunk	3, 3	M. Rines, P. Trimble	
Blue-winged Warbler				
15, 16	ONWR, Fall River	6, 3	R. Bradbury, R. Stymeist#	
19, 21	Worcester (BMB), Westport	6, 5	M. Lynch#, M. Rines	
23, 26	Waltham, MNWS	3, 3	L. Taylor, T. Aversa	
Golden-winged Warbler				
30	Martha's Vineyard	1	V. Laux	
"Brewster's" Warbler				
15, 23	ONWR, Waltham	1, 1	R. Bradbury, L. Taylor	
Tennessee Warbler				
20, 30	Princeton, Wellfleet	2, 1	R. Bradbury, J. Young	
30	Martha's Vineyard	1	V. Laux	
Nashville Warbler				
20, 21	Princeton, MNWS	2, 2	R. Bradbury, I. Lynch	
23	Belmont	2	L. Taylor	
Northern Parula				
26, 31	MNWS, Medford	2, 1	T. Aversa, M. Rines	



DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	AUGUST 1992
Yellow Warbler				
2, 26	P.I., MNWS	14, 4	G. d'Entremont#, T. Aversa	
23, 30	Scituate, Cuttyhunk	1, 1	G. d'Entremont#, P. Trimble	
Chestnut-sided Warbler				
16, 26	Fall River, MNWS	1, 1	M. Rines#, T. Aversa	
30, 31	N. Scituate, Medford	1, 1	G. d'Entremont, M. Rines	
Magnolia Warbler				
16, 26	Fall River, MNWS	1, 2	R. Stymeist#, T. Aversa	
Cape May Warbler				
30	P.I.	2	R. Stymeist#	
Black-throated Blue Warbler				
25, 26	Princeton, MNWS	2 m, 1 f	R. Bradbury, T. Aversa	
Yellow-rumped Warbler				
2, 16	Quabbin (G37), Fall River	6, 3	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
20, 30	Princeton, MNWS	1, 1	R. Bradbury, P. + F. Vale	
Black-throated Green Warbler				
2, 22	Quabbin (G37), Carver	7, 1 m	M. Lynch#, K. Anderson#	
29	Medford	1	M. Rines	
Blackburnian Warbler				
2, 20	Quabbin (G37), Princeton	1, 1	M. Lynch#, R. Bradbury	
Pine Warbler				
2, 16	Quabbin (G37), Fall River	3, 11	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
Prairie Warbler				
16, 26	Fall River, MNWS	2, 2	R. Stymeist#, T. Aversa	
Bay-breasted Warbler				
26	MNWS	5	T. Aversa	
Blackpoll Warbler				
30	MNWS	1	P. + F. Vale	
Black-and-white Warbler				
12, 16	Provincetown, Fall River	ad + yg, 3	T. Aversa, R. Stymeist#	
20, 26	Princeton, MNWS	6, 3	R. Bradbury, T. Aversa	
American Redstart				
15, 16	ONWR, Fall River	5, 8	R. Bradbury, R. Stymeist#	
19, 23	Worcester (BMB), P.I.	6, 7	M. Lynch#, S. Arena	
26, 29	MNWS, Medford	10, 8	T. Aversa, M. Rines	
Ovenbird				
8, 16	Plymouth, Fall River	2, 5	S. Arena, R. Stymeist#	
19, 26	Worcester (BMB), MNWS	1, 3	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
Northern Waterthrush				
thr, 8	WBWS, Plymouth	7 max 8/8, 2	K. Jones, S. Arena	
12, 26	Provincetown, MNWS	3, 2	T. Aversa	
Reports of individuals from 6 locations.				
Kentucky Warbler				
23, 29	Yarmouthport, M. V.	1, 1	M. Tuttle, A. Keith	
Mourning Warbler				
27	Oxbow NWR	2	J. Hoye	
Common Yellowthroat				
2, 16	Quabbin (G37), Fall River	11, 22	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
19, 23	Worcester (BMB), Cuttyhunk	41, 16	M. Lynch#, P. Trimble	
Wilson's Warbler				
22, 26	ONWR, MNWS	1, 4	R. Bradbury, T. Aversa	
Canada Warbler				
12, 22	Princeton, Raynham	2, 1	R. Bradbury, K. Anderson#	
23	Boxford, Boston (F.Pk)	1, 1	J. Brown#, T. Aversa	
26, 29	MNWS, Medford	6, 1	T. Aversa, M. Rines	
30	N. Scituate	1	G. d'Entremont#	
Scarlet Tanager				
2, 16	Quabbin (G37), Fall River	12, 2	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
23	E. Middleboro	1 m	K. Anderson#	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak				
2	P.I., Quabbin (G37)	1, 2	G. d'Entremont#, M. Lynch#	
19, 26	Worcester (BMB), MNWS	9, 2	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
27	ONWR	1 imm m	J. Hoye	
Indigo Bunting				
2	Ipswich, Wayland	pr, 1	J. Berry, BBC (B. Howell)	
19	Worcester (BMB)	1	M. Lynch#	
Rufous-sided Towhee				
16, 19	Fall River, Worcester (BMB)	33, 16	R. Stymeist#, M. Lynch#	
Chipping Sparrow				
thr, 2	Boxford, Quabbin (G37)	16 max, 16	J. Brown#, M. Lynch#	
16, 23	Fall River, N. Dartmouth	22, 18	R. Stymeist#, M. Boucher	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	AUGUST 1992
Field Sparrow 2, 19	P.I., Worcester (BMB)	1 juv, 10	W. Petersen#, M. Lynch#	
Sharp-tailed Sparrow 7, 15 22, 29	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Rowley N. Monomoy, P.I.	12, 25+, 5+, 70	LCES (J. Hill), M. Lynch# M. Lynch#, E. Salmela	
Seaside Sparrow 2, 29	P.I.	1+, 8	G. d'Entremont, E. Salmela	
Swamp Sparrow 2 21, 30	Wayland, Quabbin (G37) Milton (F.M.), Bolton	8+, 4 10, 6	BBC (B. Howell), M. Lynch# G. d'Entremont#, M. Lynch#	
Bobolink 15, 27 29, 30	Newburyport, Wayland Middleboro, Bolton Flats	40+, 160 35, 66	M. Lynch#, J. Hoye# S. Perkins, M. Lynch#	
Red-winged Blackbird 1, 2	Wachusett Res., GMNWR	50+, 50	M. Lynch#, E. Taylor	
Yellow-headed Blackbird 22	N. Monomoy	1	S. Arena#	
Brown-headed Cowbird 28	Newbury	100+ (flock)	M. Rines	
Northern Oriole 12, 15 16, 19 21, 26	Provincetown, ONWR Fall River, Worcester (BMB) E. Middleboro, MNWS	6, 5 10, 12 8, 8	T. Aversa, R. Bradbury R. Stymeist#, M. Lynch# K. Anderson, T. Aversa	
Purple Finch thr, 13 22	Boxford, E. Orleans Kingston	3 max, 1 m 2	J. Brown#, A. Williams# K. Anderson#	
House Finch 9	P.I.	600+	S. Perkins#	

#### CORRIGENDUM FOR MAY 1992 BIRD SIGHTINGS (VOL. 20, NO. 5)

Philadelphia Vireo (page 272) 23, 24	N. Monomoy, P.I.	1, 1	B. Nikula + v. o., R. Stymeist#
should read 23, 24	Provincetown, P.I.	1, 1	B. Nikula + v. o., R. Stymeist#

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ad	adult	I.	Island
alt	alternate	L.	Ledge
b	banded	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
br	breeding	Mt.A.	Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
dk	dark (phase)	N.A.C.	Nine Acre Corner, Concord
f	female	Nant.	Nantucket
fl	fledged	Newbypt	Newburyport
imm	immature	P.I.	Plum Island
ind	individuals	Pd	Pond
juv	juvenile	P'town	Provincetown
loc	location	Quab.	Quabbin
lt	light (phase)	Res.	Reservoir
m	male	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
max	maximum	S. Dart.	South Dartmouth
mi	mile	S.F.	State Forest
migr	migrating	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
n	nesting	S.P.	State Park
ph	photographed	Stellw.	Stellwagen Bank
pl	plumage	Worc.	Worcester
pr	pair	BBC	Brookline Bird Club
S	summer (1S = first summer)	BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester
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	DLSP	Demarest Lloyd State Park
#	additional observers	DWWS	Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum	EMHW	Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	FCBC	Felix Cutler Bird Club
B.	Beach	GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	LCES	Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies
Buzz.	Buzzards Bay	MARC	Massachusetts Avian Records Committee
C.	Canyon	MAS	Massachusetts Audubon Society
Cambr.	Cambridge	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
C.B.	Crane Beach, Ipswich	MDFW	MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis	MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford	MSSF	Myles Standish State Forest
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	NBC	Needham Bird Club
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	NEHW	New England Hawk Watch
F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
F.M.	Fowl Meadow	PRNWR	Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
F.Pk	Franklin Park, Boston	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
F.S.F.	Federation State Forest	TASL	Take A Second Look Harbor Census
G40	Gate 40, Quabbin	USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
G45	Gate 45, Quabbin	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
H.	Harbor	WMWS	Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary

# INDEX TO VOLUME 20, 1992

Issue Number, pages: 1, 1-64; 2, 65-124; 3, 125-176; 4, 177-236; 5, 237-292; 6, 293-352

<b>About the Cover</b> . . . . .	William E. Davis, Jr.	
American Robin . . . . .		288
Atlantic Puffin . . . . .		172
Black-capped Vireo . . . . .		60
Great Horned Owl . . . . .		348
Manx Shearwater . . . . .		232
Red-winged Blackbird . . . . .		120
Anything But Barren: The Search for Patterns in the Breeding Bird Community of the Massachusetts Pine Barrens . . . . .	David C. Morimoto	77
Anything But Barren, Part II: The Search for Patterns Continues . . . . .	David C. Morimoto	141
Are Accipiter Populations in Winter Affected by Bird Feeders? . . . . .	William E. Davis, Jr.	253
<b>At a Glance</b> . . . . .	Wayne R. Petersen	
Arctic Tern . . . . .		62
Bonaparte's Gull . . . . .		123, 174
Evening Grosbeak . . . . .		63, 122
Gray Jay . . . . .		175, 234
Louisiana Waterthrush . . . . .		291, 350
Red-necked Phalarope . . . . .		235, 290
<b>Bird Sightings: Summaries</b>		
Glenn d'Entremont, Richard A. Forster, George W. Gove, Marjorie W. Rines, and Robert H. Stymeist		
September 1991 . . . . .	32	April 1992 . . . . . 220
October 1991 . . . . .	46	May 1992 . . . . . 262
Nov./Dec. 1991 . . . . .	98	June 1992 . . . . . 277
Jan./Feb. 1992 . . . . .	160	July 1992 . . . . . 326
March 1992 . . . . .	212	August 1992 . . . . . 335
<b>Book Reviews</b>		
<i>Birds of Prey in Connecticut</i> by Gene Billings . . . . .	H. Christian Floyd	94
<i>The Feather Quest</i> by Pete Dunne . . . . .	John Kricher	251
<i>Flight Strategies of Migrating Hawks</i> by Paul Kerlinger . . .	Paul M. Roberts	206
<i>Masterpieces of Bird Art: 700 Years of Ornithological Illustration</i> by Roger F. Pasquier and John Farrand, Jr. . . . .	William E. Davis, Jr.	323
<i>On Watching Birds</i> by Lawrence Kilham . . . . .	William E. Davis, Jr.	152
<i>A Parrot Without a Name</i> by Don Stap . . . . .	Dorothy R. Arvidson	146
Christmas Bird Count, 12/14/91-1/2/92 . . . . .	Robert H. Stymeist	110
<b>Cover Illustrations</b>		
<i>American Robin in Winterberry</i> by Barry W. Van Dusen . . . . .		No. 5
<i>Atlantic Puffin</i> by Paul Donahue . . . . .		No. 3
<i>Black-capped Vireo</i> by Rick Frey . . . . .		No. 1
<i>Great Horned Owl</i> by Gordon Morrison . . . . .		No. 6
<i>Manx Shearwater</i> by Barry W. Van Dusen . . . . .		No. 4
<i>Red-winged Blackbird</i> by Barry Van Dusen . . . . .		No. 2

Entanglement of Common Eiders in Clam Culture Nets . . .	Edwin M. Hoopes	258
<b>Field Notes from Here and There</b>		
Cormorant and Clam . . . . .	Jeremy J. Hatch	156
The Dance of the Ring-billed Gull . . . . .	John C. Kricher	210
Eurasian Wigeon Pair in Uxbridge . . . . .	Robert C. Bradbury	260
Territorial Blue Grosbeak at Broad Meadow Brook . . . . .	Robert Bradbury	97
Unusual Prey Attainment of an Immature Red-tailed Hawk . . .	Steven Arena	155
Forest Fragmentation and the Decline of Migratory Songbirds		
. . . . .	Robert A. Askins	13
The Great Gannet Wreck of '91 . . . . .	Blair Nikula	84
Henslow's Sparrow and Grasshopper Sparrow: A Comparison of Habitat Use in Finger Lakes National Forest, New York		
. . . . .	Donald J. Smith and Charles R. Smith	187
Index to Volume 20, 1992 . . . . .		346
Is Winter Bird Feeding Good for Birds? . . . . .	Erica H. Dunn	308
A Key Link in Greater Boston's Wildlife Habitat:		
Metropolitan State Hospital . . . . .	John Andrews and Lee Taylor	246
The Massachusetts Avian Records Committee . . . . .	Wayne R. Petersen	158
<b>Meet Our Cover Artist</b> . . . . . Martha Steele		
Paul K. Donahue . . . . .		173
Rick Frey . . . . .		61
Gordon Morrison . . . . .		349
Barry W. Van Dusen . . . . .		121, 233, 289
Nesting Success of Eastern Bluebirds in Myles Standish State Forest . . . . .	Josette Carter	196
The Piping Plover in Massachusetts: Status of Recovery and Research Efforts . . . . .	David W. Rimmer	22
Predation by a Peregrine Falcon on Common and Roseate Terns on Bird Island . . . . .	Ian C. T. Nisbet	137
A Selective Analysis of Data from the Newburyport Christmas Bird Count . . . . .	Jim Berry	314
Skua Identification . . . . .	Simon Perkins	91
Some Observations of the Breeding Behavior of Least Terns . .	Alan E. Strauss	202
Summer-Fall Workshops 1992 . . . . .		128
Tape Review: <i>Western Birding by Ear: A Guide to Bird Song Identification</i> by Richard K. Walton and Robert W. Lawson . . . . .	Bruce Hallett	29
<b>Where to Go Birding</b>		
Birding at Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary		
. . . . .	Christopher Phillips and Mark Lynch	68
Birding Boston: The Common to the Fens . . . . .	Kenneth Hudson	296
Coastal Birding in Rhode Island . . . . .	Alan E. Strauss	129
Concan on the Edwards Plateau, Texas		
. . . . .	John C. Kricher and William E. Davis, Jr.	4
Monhegan: Island of Possibilities . . . . .	Scott Surner	180
Waterfowl in the Berkshires . . . . .	Bartlett Hendricks	240

## ABOUT THE COVER: GREAT HORNED OWL

The Great Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) is the most fearsome predator among North American birds. Ernest Thompson Seton described Great Horned Owls with such phrases as "untamable ferocity," and ranked "these winged tigers among the most pronounced and savage of the birds of prey." Ill-tempered and dangerous as pets, in the wild they will attack anything that approaches their nest, as the innumerable accounts of injuries from people who have attempted to climb to their nests attest. If you want to investigate Great Horned Owl nests, you had better have a flak jacket and hard hat.

Identification of the Great Horned Owl should not be a problem. It is our only large "horned owl," and its heavy barring below and white bib readily distinguishes it from other North American species. In flight the feather-tuft horns are pressed back and not visible, but the squat, bull-headed appearance identifies it. Sexes are similar in appearance, although the female is much larger. First-winter birds are similar to adults, but the white bib is less conspicuous, and they have shorter ear tufts.

Great Horned Owls are found throughout the Western Hemisphere from Alaska to Argentina, and have been divided into as many as eleven geographic races or subspecies. Most birds prefer deep forest, but they are also found in more open country and inhabit more habitat types than any other owl species. In North America they are largely nonmigratory, although arctic birds tend to move south during the winter and become an irruptive species when arctic hare populations collapse. These owls tend to be solitary except during the breeding season (in captive pairs the female often kills and eats the male) and often roost in deep coniferous forests. They elicit mobbing behavior from jays, crows, and small passerines, and are frequently located due to the ruckus caused by mobbing birds.

The low-pitched hootings of the Great Horned Owl are well known to most, with the "who . . . whoo-who . . . who . . . who" heard most often in New England in January and February during the initiation of breeding. The males have generally lower pitched and more varied calls. Aggressive situations may elicit growling notes, and various cries and screams have been reported, especially from young owls. The early nesting, often while snow covers the branches and nest, is probably related to their prolonged nesting period. The usually two or three grainy white eggs are incubated, mostly by the female, for about a month. Because the eggs hatch asynchronously, the owlets vary in size. They fledge six to seven weeks later but may not fly until nine to twelve weeks of age. They do not achieve their first-winter plumage until about twenty weeks, and the parents may feed them for several more months.

Great Horned Owls generally commandeered or use abandoned nests of Red-tailed Hawks, crows, or even squirrels, and generally do very little refurbishing beyond a lining of downy feathers. The nests are usually thirty to seventy feet



above the ground, often in pines, but they can also be in hollow logs, stumps, or tree cavities. I have seen them nesting on power line stations. The birds are probably monogamous. Courtship displays by the male include bowing and dancing with half-open wings, as well as calling and bill snapping and clicking. They engage in mutual caressing with their bills. The male usually brings food to the female. The owlets do not open their eyes until a week old, and soon are clothed in fluffy white or tan down, an age at which these savage birds are very cute and endearing.

Great Horned Owls attack virtually anything that walks, crawls, flies, or swims and is not too large for them to kill. They hunt primarily in the evening and before dawn, where they usually fall with nearly closed wings or glide silently down upon their prey. Rough-edged first primary wing feathers reduce vortex noise. This characteristic combined with deeply fluted primaries help produce their silent flight. They have spectacular vision and asymmetrical ear cavities that aid them in locating prey. They prefer rabbits and rodents but kill larger mammals, including domestic cats, opossums, porcupines, and skunks. I remember well my mother complaining that the stuffed Great Horned Owl that my father had in his study smelled of skunk. My in-laws from Nebraska swear that their small dog fell prey to the Great Horned Owls that lived in their bottomland cottonwoods. These aggressive owls kill and eat Red-tailed and Red-shouldered hawks, turkeys, and bitterns, and have been recorded killing Barred and Barn owls. They catch fish and amphibians by wading into water, and invertebrate prey includes scorpions. They are known to cache food and thaw frozen food in winter by "incubating" it.

Great Horned Owls have few if any predators except for man. They have been widely hunted and are frequent victims of power lines and automobiles. Despite habitat alteration it remains a common owl with surprising population densities. The 1986 Newburyport Christmas Count reported, for example, sixty-two Great Horned Owls. This sole American representative of the world's eagle owls is one of our most interesting, ferocious, and exciting birds. W. E. Davis, Jr.

### MEET OUR COVER ARTIST

Gordon Morrison's last cover portrait for *Bird Observer* appeared on the June 1991 issue. With two other artists, he has just completed a mural entitled, "North Attleboro Through the Years," now in place in the North Attleboro town hall. Gordon is also illustrating *A Field Guide to Ecology of Western Forests*, authored by John Kricher and due to be released in the spring of 1993. Gordon is writing and illustrating a series, "Birds in the Garden," appearing in *Horticulture Magazine*, and featuring such species as the Purple Martin, Northern Cardinal, and Eastern Bluebird. Gordon can be reached at 52 Bulfinch Street, North Attleboro, MA 02760.

M. Steele

The At A Glance photograph for October depicts a nondescript stripe-breasted bird with a prominent supercilium and a slender, pointed bill. This combination of features eliminates otherwise superficially similar thrushes, pipits, sparrows, and finches. The only Massachusetts birds sharing the characteristics shown in the photograph are two warblers in the genus *Seiurus*: Northern Waterthrush and Louisiana Waterthrush.

Waterthrush identification is a classic example of a case where two sibling species are so similar that only by using a series of comparative features is it possible to safely separate them in the field. With waterthrushes, the critical identification features are the supercilium, throat pattern, appearance of the breast streaks, and the presence or absence of a flank patch.

The waterthrush in the photograph has a long supercilium that is continuously broad from the eye back to the nape. The streaks on the underparts are broad and widely spaced, and they stop short of the throat, which is unmarked. Especially important to notice is a well defined dusky flank patch that contrasts with the white background coloration of the underparts. These characteristics all indicate that the pictured bird is a Louisiana Waterthrush (*Seiurus motacilla*).

By comparison, the Northern Waterthrush has a smaller bill and a shorter and narrower supercilium, especially behind the eye, and the typical individual's throat is distinctly spotted. Ordinarily the ventral streaks are more sharply defined and coalesce across the yellowish-washed upper breast, thus producing a distinct necklaced effect. Most importantly the Northern Waterthrush does not have a contrasting flank patch. During the breeding season, the Northern Waterthrush prefers wooded swamps with standing water, while the Louisiana Waterthrush is ordinarily found along running streams in rich woodlands.

Photo by Hal H. Harrison. Courtesy of MAS.



## AT A GLANCE

Photo by Ralph E. Lawrence. Courtesy of MAS.



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## CONTENTS

BIRDING BOSTON: THE COMMON TO THE FENS	Kenneth Hudson	296
IS WINTER BIRD FEEDING GOOD FOR BIRDS? . .	Erica H. Dunn	308
A SELECTIVE ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM THE NEWBURYPORT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT . . . . .	Jim Berry	314
BOOK REVIEW: <i>Masterpieces of Bird Art: 700 Years of Ornithological Illustration</i> by Roger F. Pasquier and John Farrand, Jr. . . . . .	William E. Davis, Jr.	323
BIRD SIGHTINGS: JULY 1992 SUMMARY . . . . .		326
BIRD SIGHTINGS: AUGUST 1992 SUMMARY . . . . .		335
INDEX TO VOLUME 20, 1992 . . . . .		346
ABOUT THE COVER: Great Horned Owl . . . . .		348
MEET OUR COVER ARTIST: Gordon Morrison . . . . .		349
AT A GLANCE . . . . .	Wayne R. Petersen	350
Cover Illustration: Great Horned Owl by Gordon Morrison		