

Bird Observer

VOLUME 30, NUMBER 2

APRIL 2002



Owls

HOT BIRDS



This **Townsend's Warbler** was a regular visitor to a backyard feeding station in Centerville, MA. David Larson took this photograph on January 3, 2002.

A **Townsend's Solitaire** was found in Essex, MA, by Derek Brown and April Manganello on December 4, 2001. It or another solitaire was photographed at a different location in Essex by Phil Brown on February 6, 2002.



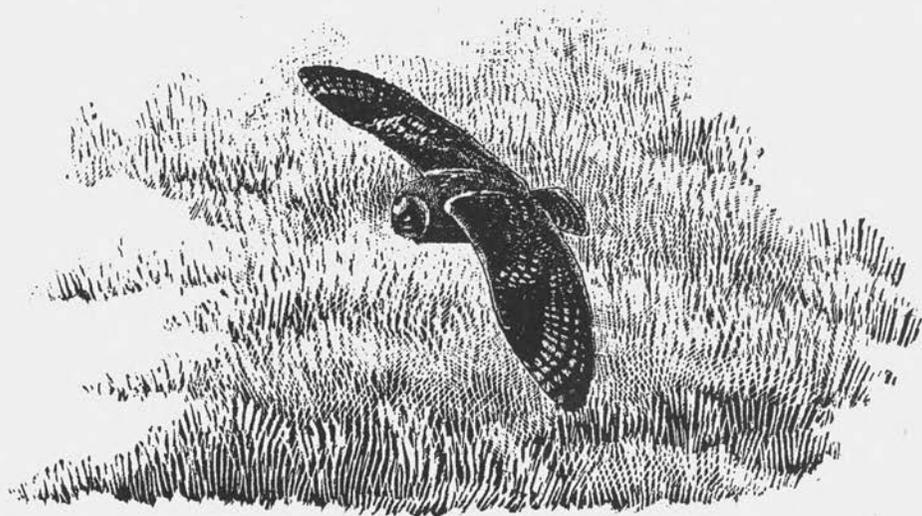
A **Greater White-fronted Goose** spent part of the winter in the company of Canada Geese in Westwood. This photograph was taken by David Larson on February 3, 2002.

The Boston **Gyr Falcon** shown on this page in the last issue is way too hot not to include again. Originally discovered in late December, this falcon has been visited by hordes of birders, including many from out-of-state. This photograph was taken by Shawn Carey on February 16, 2002. For more photographs, see page 110.



CONTENTS

AN URBAN WONDERLAND: THE BOSTON NATURE CENTER	<i>Robert H. Stymeist</i>	83
THE SNOWY OWL SATELLITE TELEMETRY PROJECT	<i>Norman Smith</i>	88
THE SAW-WHET OWL BANDING PROJECT	<i>Danielle Smith</i>	95
NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL	<i>Chris Gentes</i>	103
BOREAL OWLS NESTING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE	<i>Stephen R. Mirick</i>	107
A GYR WINTER	<i>David Larson</i>	110
FIELD NOTES		
Red-tails in Love, epilogue . . .	<i>Henrietta Yelle</i>	112
SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS AVIAN RECORDS COMMITTEE	<i>Marjorie Rines, Secretary</i>	113
THE 102 ND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 12/14/01-1/5/02	<i>Robert H. Stymeist</i>	119
ABOUT BOOKS		
Diversity is the Spice of Life	<i>Mark Lynch</i>	121
BIRD SIGHTINGS: November/December 2001 Summary		127
ABOUT THE COVER: Barn Owl	<i>William E. Davis, Jr.</i>	143
ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST: Nancy R. West		144
AT A GLANCE	<i>Wayne R. Petersen</i>	145



DAVID A. SIBLEY



Bird Observer

A bimonthly journal — to enhance understanding, observation, and enjoyment of birds
VOL. 30, NO. 2 APRIL 2002

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Editor's Note

I like the magazine because it deals almost exclusively with birds. Please don't extend the scope to include conservation issues, birding ethics, or other topics of 'political correctness'.

I have been thinking about this response to our reader survey as I try to tease birding out of its larger context of environmental, ethical, and political issues. This is a journal devoted to birding: we encourage articles on the science of birding and field observations. Bird records are and have always been the core of our publication. Yet the birds we so diligently and passionately track close to home face a host of obstacles that are ours to share. On a bright, icy, and shadow-filled Groundhog Day I drove to the Worcester EcoTarium for the Mass Audubon-sponsored birders' meeting, where an enthusiastic audience of over 200 birders (more than a few of our subscribers included) learned about the latest initiatives and data on bird conservation and biodiversity in the Massachusetts.

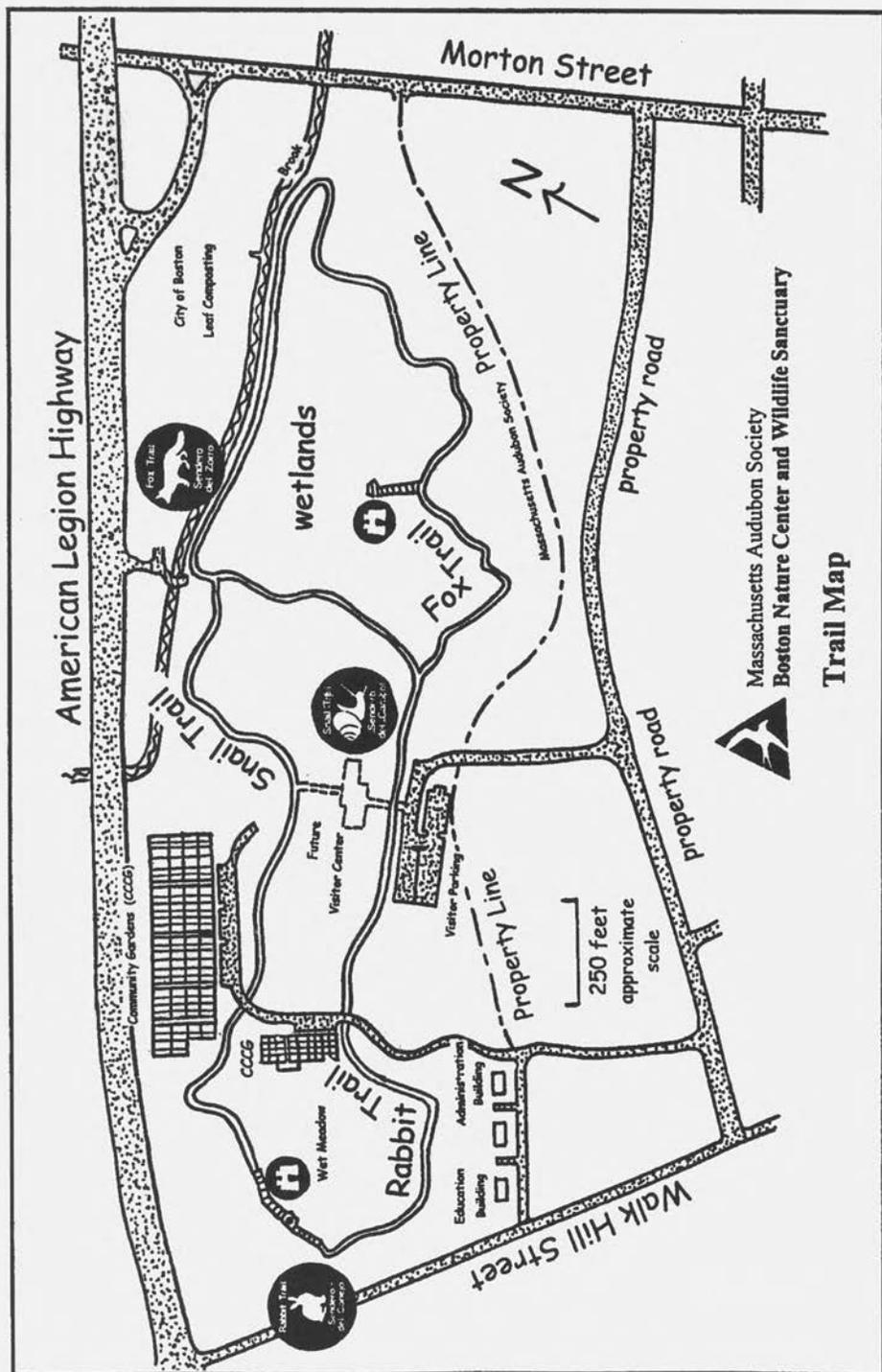
It was an energized, informative, and rewarding forum featuring an audiovisual presentation of our biological riches by Shawn Carey, and illustrated talks on the state's Biodiversity Initiative by Environmental Affairs Secretary Bob Durand and on the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program BioMap by ecologist Henry Woolsey. You can take a look at this impressive conservation planning project on <http://www.state.ma.us/dfwele/dfw/nhsp/nhbiomap.htm>. Robert Askins, author of *Restoring North America's Birds*, focused on the birds of our region, particularly on species sensitivity to habitat fragmentation. Mass Audubon's Wayne Petersen, Andrea Jones, and Scott Hecker provided an overview and update on the progress of the Massachusetts Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program, which meshes with the state's BioMap in providing critical biodiversity habitat information for state and local land use decision makers. David Sibley spoke evocatively on bird watching in the modern world, reminding us of the importance of birders to the future of birds, of birds as agents of conservation.

More recently at a Nuttall Ornithological Club meeting held at the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology, I poured through the museum's bird collection, which contains some 400,000 specimens of most of the world's species. I was in the presence of species I would never hear or see — Ivory-billed Woodpeckers, Carolina Parakeets, Bachman's Warblers, Passenger Pigeons, Eskimo Curlews, and one lone Spix's Macaw. I thought of Mark Lynch's comment in "About Books" (p. 123): "[Is this] the equivalent of gawking at a car wreck? Absolutely not! I believe it is vitally important to always remember what has been lost of the natural world . . . every story of extinction is an environmental lesson that needs to be learned anew." 

Brooke Stevens



WILLIAM E. DAVIS, JR.




 Massachusetts Audubon Society
 Boston Nature Center and Wildlife Sanctuary
Trail Map

An Urban Wonderland: the Boston Nature Center

Robert H. Stymeist



For over twenty years the former Boston State Hospital grounds in the Mattapan section of the city lay vacant, creating a sanctuary for wildlife that responded to the changing landscape. This 175-acre site was the City of Boston's largest publicly owned swath of undeveloped land that, under state controls and the usual bureaucratic factors, went neglected; as a result, a paradise for wildlife sprang from the overgrown fields, woodlots, and marshes. When control of the land shifted from the state to the city, conceptual plans included housing for nearly 750 families, a high school, a youth center, *and* an urban nature sanctuary. Happy to say, the latter is now a reality, and the Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS) has under its control 67 acres containing a wide variety of habitats. The Boston Nature Center is being developed primarily to serve and educate residents from the surrounding urban neighborhoods. The Society already has a Boston Schools Initiative program to teach second- and third-grade students about the outdoor world and is developing programs that offer site tours for everyone, with a strong emphasis on programs for children. If a kid gets the bug (I was a kid once), it will be a lasting passion! The Boston Nature Center also hosts the largest community gardens in Boston, the Clark-Cooper Community Gardens, continuing a history of agriculture that started when ground was broken for the hospital. The State Hospital raised its own produce and maintained a farm that provided meat and dairy products as well.

The sanctuary's new building (the Nature Center), currently under construction, will feature exhibits, classrooms, and a public meeting place. Thanks to a grant from the George Robert White Fund, the Massachusetts Audubon Society is building Boston's most environmentally friendly building. This structure will have a geothermal climate control system, which will pump water from thousands of feet underground, where the temperature is stable, to heat the Center in winter and cool it in summer. On the roof, solar panels will heat water with the sun's rays, and photovoltaic shingles will generate electricity. South-facing windows will heat the building in winter but will be shaded by plant trellises in summer. The wood used for construction has been cut from sustainable forests, and the furniture will be built from recycled materials. This new Nature Center will use about thirty percent less energy than comparable buildings.

Well, let's get out of the building and explore the trails of this wonderful oasis of wildlife in the heart of the City. The Boston Nature Center is located at 450 B Walk Hill Street, Mattapan, MA 02126. The telephone number is 617-983-8500, e-mail is boston-nc@massaudubon.org, and the web site is http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Santuararies/Boston/index.html.

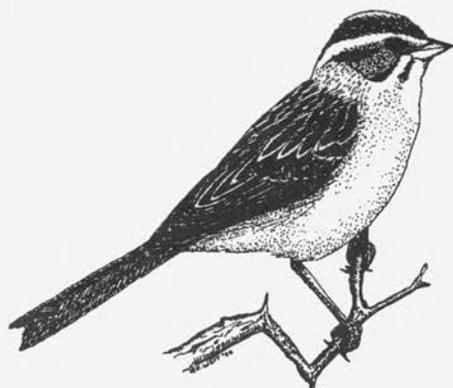
The Sanctuary is within the grounds of the old Boston State Hospital, which is still identified as such on many road maps. The area is bounded by Morton Street (Route 203), American Legion Highway, Walk Hill Street, and Harvard Street.

Directions

From the West and North: From the Fenway area, take the Jamaicaaway South, turn east onto Route 203 at a rotary, go past the Arnold Arboretum, over the overpass, and then straight through another rotary where Route 203 becomes Morton Street. Continue on Morton Street past Forest Hills Cemetery on your right and the Shattuck Hospital on your left. Go under an overpass, and turn right *just* before the next traffic light into the state hospital land. Follow that road past the buildings, and turn right at the Audubon sign to the parking area.

From the South: From the Milton area, follow Blue Hill Avenue North (Route 138, then Route 28) through Mattapan Square. Turn left onto Walk Hill Street, about one-half mile north of Mattapan Square. (Notice a mint-green awning on the left side of Blue Hill Avenue at the corner of Walk Hill Street.) Take Walk Hill Street through the traffic light at Harvard Street past New Calvary and Mount Hope cemeteries on the left. Turn right at the Audubon sign and then take another left into the property to the parking area. Be sure to stop at the set of mailboxes to the left of the three Audubon buildings to register and pick up a trail map.

In my infrequent visits to the property, including some exploration before MAS acquired the site, I have noted 135 different species of birds on the grounds and know of several more that others have seen. I must admit that my most frequent trips have been in fall and early winter, a fantastic time to visit. I have also made a few trips in the spring but have yet to visit in the breeding season. (I hope to correct this situation this year.) Some of the more unusual species that have been seen here include Virginia Rail, Barred and Northern Saw-whet owls, Fish Crow (common), Northern Shrike, MacGillivray's Warbler, Blue Grosbeak, and Clay-colored Sparrow.

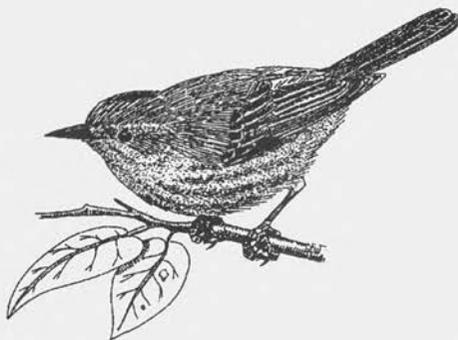


GEORGE C. WEST

More often than not, when I tell fellow birders of all the wonderful and abundant birds that I have seen here, one of the first questions is: Is this a safe place to go? The area surrounding the Nature Center has had a reputation as a rough neighborhood. I have never felt uneasy here, but it is sensible to have a companion or two with you, no matter *where* you go birding. There are always a lot of folks working in the Community Gardens through October, and they are very friendly. Ask them about okra! Some of them also like to learn from you about the birds they are seeing and hearing.

To begin the walking tour of the trails, park at the Community Gardens, which has a small parking area at the first set of gardens on the left and a larger area just ahead and to the right, in front of the larger set of gardens. A portable restroom is also located here at the corner. Eventually parking will be at the future Nature Center building. Start on the Rabbit Trail, which begins to the left of the first set of gardens. This trail traverses a semi-wet meadow. A little "spishing" near the beginning of the trail may entice some of the sparrows that are hiding in among the garden plots to tee up on the small shrubs that border the gardens.

This area seems to be a magnet for Orange-crowned Warblers. On three separate occasions in the fall through early winter I have been able to get exceptional looks. The trails are nice and wide, and the wood chips were specially shredded so that they gradually bind together, making a firm surface suitable for a wheel chair. But please, no bicycles! When the trail reaches the boardwalk, there are more small shrubs and several varieties of fruiting trees. I have seen many robins, Hermit Thrushes, and Cedar Waxwings here. The woodlot to the right of the end of the boardwalk can have several migrants in season. These boardwalks are fun to walk on, since they are very "spongy." They were constructed with several low-impact features, including nonarsenic-containing pressure-treated lumber, recycled deck boards, and special "helical pier" supports that minimize the disturbance of the wetlands.



GEORGE C. WEST

You have now completed the first circuit and are emerging back into the Community Gardens, which during the growing season may be busy with gardeners and would be best avoided, simply so as not to unduly disturb them. Starting in late August, many of these folks have had it up to you-know-where with bolting lettuce, bulging zucchinis, cherry tomatoes, and summer squash, and with fewer gardeners the area will start to entice some migratory birds. These gardens are teeming with sparrows from late September through October. There are untended spaces at both ends of the established gardens which allow the birds to escape into a variety of plants, collectively known as weeds, when people are working in their plots. I hope that the plans include retaining some of these weedy areas and perhaps supplementing them with a variety of wildflowers as well.

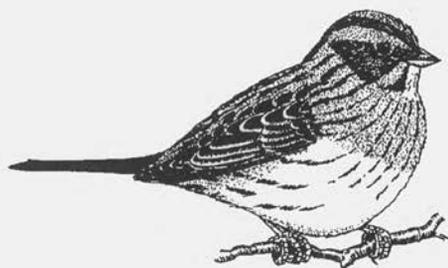
I've noted thirteen species of sparrows here in the following order of abundance, starting with the most common: Song, White-throated, Dark-eyed Junco, Savannah, Swamp, Chipping, Field, Lincoln's, American Tree, White-crowned, Fox, Vesper, and Clay-colored. Other birds that seem particularly fond of these overgrown areas include Bobolink, Indigo Bunting, Blue Grosbeak (one bird remained in the area for

nearly two weeks in the fall of 2001), and several warbler species, notably Nashville, Palm, Common Yellowthroat, and Wilson's. Leaving the gardens, pick up the Snail Trail, which leads you through a small woodlot on both sides of the trail that is good for migrating vireos and warblers; the understory is very brushy with scattered overturned trees, making it ideal for Winter Wrens (seen here three times). Once a Barred Owl was located here on at least two successive days. Unfortunately, this area and the area by the Community Gardens is bordered by the very busy American Legion Highway and at times can be extremely noisy. As you approach the end of the Snail Trail, jog left onto the Fox Trail. If time is short, take the right trail which will lead back to the parking area.

The Fox Trail is the highlight of this sanctuary. I find it hard to imagine that you are in one of the largest cities in America; this could be Concord, Brookfield, or Petersham. The landscape in front of you is peaceful, and the best part is that the noise level from nearby American Legion Highway has virtually disappeared, thanks to the City of Boston's leaf-composting piles that serve as a buffer zone from the highway. It is just at this junction where I, along with Marj Rines, found a MacGillivray's Warbler on December 13, 1998, where it remained through December 16; unfortunately, it was not found on the Greater Boston CBC on December 20, 1998. This was my very first visit to this area, and I was impressed! We found over 140 Tree Sparrows and over 100 Dark-eyed Juncos in the Community Gardens and 2 Gray Catbirds and 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, not to mention 11 Ring-necked Pheasants and over 60 Fish Crows!

The Fox Trail is bordered by a brook on one side and a cattail marsh on the other. Not the prettiest stream of water, but it does attract the birds. I have seen Northern Waterthrushes into early December, and other birds noted on more than one occasion

include Wood Duck, Common Snipe, Winter Wren, and Rusty Blackbird. In summer several pairs of Warbling Vireos, Yellow Warblers, and Baltimore Orioles breed along the brook. As noted above, the City of Boston dumps most of its leaves here for composting, and the area is very active with equipment during the late fall season, even on weekends.



GEORGE C. WEST

These decaying leaves provide warmth and food well into some of the coldest winter days. I have seen seven Eastern Phoebes together here in early November, and it attracts a good number of warbler species, notably Palm Warblers. (This area is not part of the Boston Nature Center.)

Bordering the Fox Trail is, I think, one of the largest stands of jewelweed you may ever see. Many observers feel that this plant is a great magnet for Connecticut Warbler, which is a much-sought-after species. This warbler spends a lot of time hidden in the underbrush in this type of meadow. I was fortunate once to see not one,

but two Connecticut Warblers in the same bush along this trail during a field trip I was leading. It was a life bird for just about everyone and a spectacular long look as well! This same area looks like "chat-a-tat" habitat, and if we could set up a net lane through the meadow, I think you could spend the day pulling chats and Sedge Wrens out of the nets. Alas, I have not seen either of these species here (yet).

Following the trail, you will find a row of tall trees with a lot of understory trees and shrubs. Here I have seen a number of unusual migrants in the fall, notably Philadelphia Vireo, where on one outing four individuals were noted. The trail winds through a mini-forest of crooked old locust trees that lead onto a boardwalk that overlooks the wet cattail marsh. Virginia Rails live here and have been heard calling at midday in the spring. The area to the left of the Fox Trail, a really nice chunk of undisturbed undergrowth and meadow, is great for Ring-necked Pheasants. A dirt road provides the observer a safe distance to "spish" in a Lincoln's Sparrow or an Orange-crowned Warbler, two species I have encountered on occasion. The trail then continues back to the Visitor Center and the parking areas.

You will want to come back to this urban wonderland; I guarantee it, as a commercial states. I have usually found something new or exciting here, and always a surprise, like a fox, a coyote, a deer, a flock of Wild Turkeys. The meadows are excellent for butterflies, especially in late summer. Red-tailed Hawks will scream, and Fish Crows will be calling in their true Boston accent: *cah, cah, cah*. Come to Boston and discover this truly unique sanctuary. 

Bob Stymeist has been interested in birds since 1958. He started "brown bag" birding in 1961 with his first pair of binoculars and boarded the subway in Harvard Square to visit the Arnold Arboretum. His love of urban birding continues today, and he keeps an annual list of birds found in the City of Boston. His other favorite spot is Mount Auburn Cemetery, which he didn't find out about until 1963, even though it was only two miles from his home. He has recorded 213 species in the cemetery. His current project (obsession) is trying to find a Carolina Wren in all 351 towns in Massachusetts; currently he has found them in 228 towns!

Bob is a founding member of Bird Observer and served as its President from 1978-1984. He has been Treasurer of the Nuttall Ornithological Club since 1981, and has been the Statistician for the Brookline Bird Club since 1987.



GEORGE C. WEST

The Snowy Owl Satellite Telemetry Project

Norman Smith

In a collaborative partnership between the Blue Hills Trailside Museum, the USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Center's (USGS-FRESC) Snake River Field Station in Idaho, and Boise State University, this ongoing study uses data collected via satellite telemetry to provide critical information on the physical health and elusive migration patterns of Snowy Owls wintering in Massachusetts.



NORMAN SMITH

Methods

In 1999 we learned two transmitter attachment methods from B. James Dayton, field biologist with the Center for Conservation Research and Technology, Baltimore MD. Both methods called for Teflon tubed ribbon, dental floss for stitching, and Superglue for curing the knots. The first method, as shown in Diagram 1, uses a piece of Teflon ribbon folded to create a two-part tunnel patch. This patch is placed on the

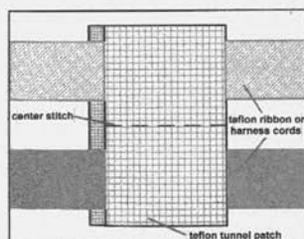


Diagram 1

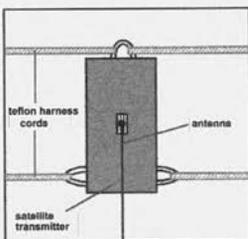


Diagram 2

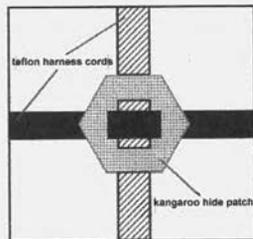


Diagram 3

**Diagram views are not actual size.*

breastbone of the bird, and the harness cords (Teflon ribbon) run through each side of the tunnel. The cords continue around the bird's body to meet in the back where the transmitter is placed. Diagram 2 shows how the Teflon is attached to the transmitter, which is placed on the back of the bird. The second method of attachment, as shown in Diagram 3, uses a pentagonal-shaped patch of kangaroo hide. Kangaroo hide was chosen for its durability. The patch is placed at the breastbone. The harness cords are woven through the patch, crossing in the middle. The rest of the attachment method is the same as previously discussed.

In choosing an attachment method, the comfort and well-being of the bird was the first and foremost consideration. Both methods were tried, and the one using the

kangaroo patch seemed to be the fastest and easiest method for us to apply. Dayton has used these methods on a variety of bird species.

First-Year Results

Snowy Owls usually arrive at Logan International Airport, Boston, in mid-November, and most leave by early April each year. During the five months these birds winter at Logan, we observed them, seeking good candidates for satellite tracking. A good Snowy Owl candidate is a healthy bird with an average to above average body weight and is a proficient hunter.

During the first wintering season of this project (November 1999-April 2000), seven Snowy Owls were observed at Logan. Five of these seven were captured, banded, and color-marked. The first Snowy Owl was sighted on November 13, 1999. Visual observations were made during both day and evening hours using binoculars, spotting scope, and a night vision scope.

Out of the five owls captured, three good candidates were found. These candidates, captured on different dates, were brought to Blue Hills Trailside Museum. Each was held in a secluded outdoor enclosure for one week. This was to ensure their acceptance of the harness and transmitter and to observe each bird's behavior after the apparatus was attached.

The first Snowy Owl (ID #11976), color-marked blue, remained at Duxbury Beach, the release location, for approximately two weeks. It then headed directly to the Boston Harbor Islands, spending the remaining portion of the wintering season between the Harbor Islands and Logan. On March 10, 2000, this bird began its northerly migration.

The bird was tracked to Montreal and on to Annaville, Quebec. The final known movement of this bird was due north to a remote area of the province. We continued to receive low quality signals from the transmitter for three months. Those low quality signals indicated no movement and ambient temperature readings.

The second Snowy Owl candidate (ID #11977), color-marked green, was captured in mid-February. After its release on Duxbury Beach, this bird moved farther south into Barnstable County on Cape Cod. The bird returned to Duxbury Beach before beginning its northerly migration on March 7, 2000. It flew as far as Schuylerville, New York, where the transmitter readings began showing no further movement. We remained hopeful because data sensors on the transmitter suggested the bird was still alive with the equipment intact. Within a few weeks, no more transmissions were received, and it wasn't until November 2000 that we received a few good quality locations again, but unfortunately the data sensors showed local area temperatures, not those associated with the normal body temperature of a bird.



MIKE MCWADE

A 30 g satellite transmitter just attached to a Snowy Owl

Near the end of February 2000, the third and final Snowy Owl candidate for this season was captured and harnessed. This bird (ID #11978), color-marked red, stayed at the release point for approximately one month before traveling southeast to Race Point, the tip of Cape Cod. On April 2, 2000, there were clear indications of trouble in the satellite data we received.

Temperature readings again were those of the surrounding environment.



SCOTT CRIVELLARO

This Snowy Owl has preened the transmitter into its feathers, but the antenna is still visible.

Soon after this discovery, authorities notified us that the transmitter was recovered. We traveled to Race Point, spoke with the National Seashore Rangers, and retrieved not only the transmitter but also the badly decomposed carcass of the bird. After an autopsy, performed by the Tufts Veterinary Clinic in Grafton, MA, it was determined that the cause of death was a gunshot wound. This wound fractured a wing and one leg. Stories of this incident appeared in local newspapers and on Channel 4 News. The Massachusetts Animal Rescue League posted a reward of \$2,000 for information leading to the prosecution of the shooter.

The fates of both birds, ID #11976 and #11977, may never be known. We have not been able to retrieve the transmitters or survey the land areas where the transmitters signaled trouble. We see two scenarios as plausible conclusions. The first scenario is that each bird was able to free itself from the harness and transmitter. The second scenario is that each bird died and the transmitters are still on the carcasses, possibly in some underbrush which hindered the transmissions. If not in underbrush, the antennas could be touching the ground, where the signal is being absorbed. Scavengers could have dragged the carcasses out of the underbrush or moved them in such a way as to allow data transmission to the satellite again.

This first year of the study provided very little data. As it went, the first bird we lost contact with was ID #11978. Although disappointed with losing this research candidate, we felt a sense of closure and understanding of the circumstances upon discovering the fate of this bird.

It was disheartening to then lose contact with the other two research candidates. Because of their remote locations and poor quality of transmission, it is unlikely we will ever know the fates of these birds. Upon reviewing all the data collected, we find that the Snowy Owls in our sample group are local wanderers, more so than we had first hypothesized. We were not fully aware of their meanderings on Cape Cod. Other

than the initial satellite data from the first northerly migration movements, it is impossible to know for sure what routes these birds would have traveled.

Second-Year Results

The second wintering season (November 2000-April 2001) was much anticipated. The first Snowy Owl was sighted at Logan on November 7, 2000. The high count for one day was seven Snowy Owls. The total number of Snowy Owls captured, banded, and color-marked for this season was nineteen.

Out of those captured, four were chosen for our sample group. In contrast to the year before, these birds were not held in an enclosure for one week. The birds were banded, color-marked, and each harnessed with a transmitter before being immediately released on Duxbury Beach. The reason for this change in procedure was to minimize the amount of stress these birds endured for this project.

The first research candidate (ID #11978) was harnessed with last year's refurbished transmitter and color-marked yellow. After release, the bird remained in the area for one week and then traveled south over areas of Falmouth and Barnstable County on Cape Cod. A week later, it returned to Logan before beginning its northerly migration. The bird was tracked over Lawrence, MA; Waterville Valley, NH; Chesuncook, ME; and Labrador City, Quebec. The bird was heading in a north-northwesterly direction.

Snowy Owl Migration Routes

Year 1

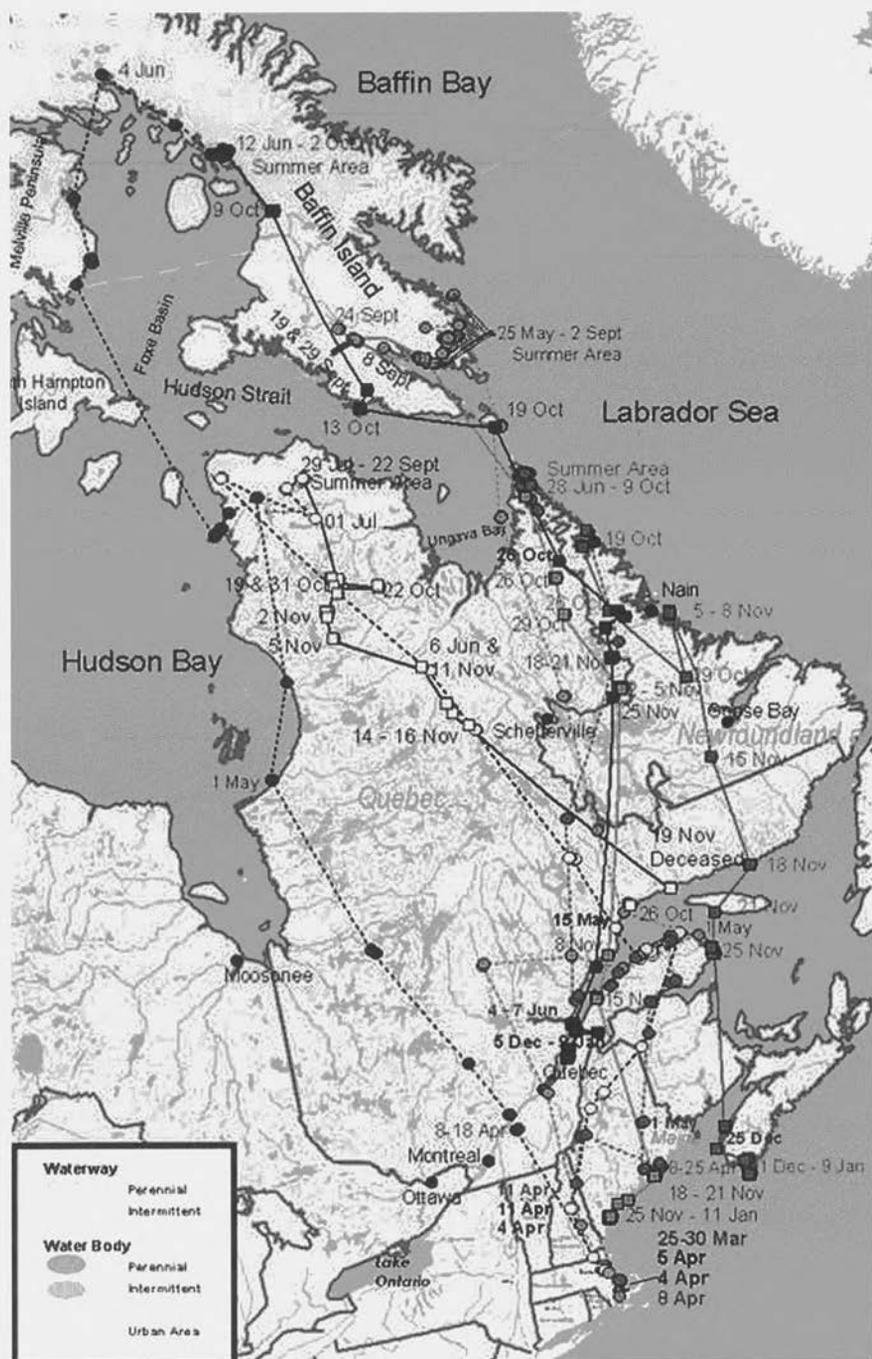
ID#	Release	Migration	2 weeks (direction)	4 weeks (direction)	6 weeks (direction)
11976	01-23-2000	03-10-2001	275 miles (NNW)	365 miles (ENE)	
11977	02-20-2000	04-03-2001	140 miles (WNW)	220 miles (W/S)	
11978	03-05-2001				

Year 2

ID#	Release	Migration	2 weeks (direction)	4 weeks (direction)	6 weeks (direction)
11978	02-02-2001	04-08-2001	535 miles (NNE)	660 miles (SW/NW)	1,020 miles (NW)
3252	02-07-2001				
3253	02-18-2001	04-08-2001	375 miles (NW/N/E)	625 miles (W/N)	800 miles (N/NE)
3254	03-03-2001	03-19-2001	85 miles (NW)	525 miles (NW)	875 miles (E/NE)
3252	04-04-2001	04-05-2001	540 miles (NW/NE)	620 miles (SW)	820 miles (NW)

These tables show the migration routes of all birds tracked so far in this study. All mile measurements are approximated from the release point of Duxbury Beach (example: ID# 11978 traveled 1020 miles from Duxbury Beach in a period of six weeks). The "/" mark denotes a change in direction (example: NW/N/E ID# 11978 was traveling northwest, headed north, and then east).

The second research candidate (ID #3252), color-marked purple, was released on February 7, 2001. This bird followed the same movements as the first one: staying at the release point for approximately one week before heading south to Cape Cod. Once on the Cape, it stayed in Barnstable County for five days before returning to Duxbury Beach. Two weeks later, it flew back to Logan. Over the remaining weeks of the wintering season, the bird traveled back and forth from Logan to the Boston Harbor Islands.

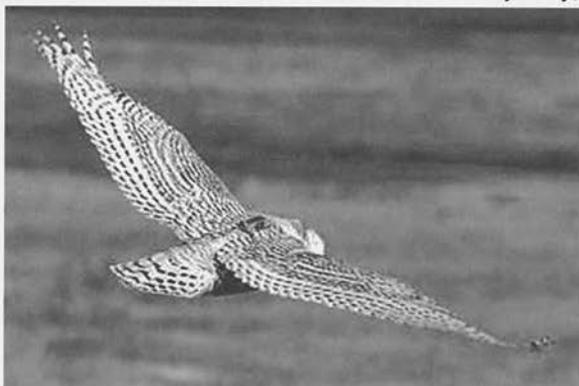


Map of Snowy Owl locations and migration routes up to January 15, 2002. Updates to this tracking map, and other information, are available on the Mass. Audubon web site at <http://www.massaudubon.org/Birds_&_Beyond/Snowy_Owl/index.html>.

In late March, we received some inconsistent data transmissions in reference to the temperature readings of the bird's body. Within days, the Metropolitan District Commission Park Rangers contacted us. A visitor to Lovell Island in Boston Harbor told the rangers that a Snowy Owl carcass was found hanging in a tree. The visitor removed the transmitter and gave it to the rangers. The details, few as we received, gave us cause for concern since Snowy Owls are seldom known to perch in trees. We surveyed the area but were unable to locate the carcass. Unfortunately, without it, the fate of that Snowy Owl may never be known.

Immediately after retrieving the transmitter, we were able to find another suitable candidate for the study. This new candidate began its northerly migration on April 8, 2001. It was tracked over New Hampshire, Vermont, and into Quebec. This bird (ID #3252) is the only study bird so far to have entered the Arctic Circle. From early May, the bird traveled to the northernmost points of Quebec and then farther on to the Melville Peninsula and points on Baffin Island just north of Prince Charles Island.

The third owl (ID #3253), color-marked pink, spent its entire wintering season on Duxbury Beach. It did not wander to other areas or return to Logan. On April 8, 2001, it also began its northerly



SCOTT CRIVELLARO

migration. It was tracked through New Hampshire and Maine. In mid-April, the bird unexpectedly flew east-southeast and then a short distance south-southwest to Cape Rosier, ME. These uncharacteristic direction changes could be weather-related. After arriving in Cape Rosier, the bird then continued its migration almost due north, traveling through eastern Quebec and parts of Newfoundland.

The final candidate for this year (ID #3254) was color-marked green. After release on March 2, 2001, it remained at Duxbury Beach for several days and flew south to Mattapoisett, MA. It returned to Duxbury Beach and began its northerly migration in late March. This bird was tracked through New Hampshire, Maine, and Quebec. It, too, made a drastic direction change in mid-April. It flew from St. Edmond, Quebec, almost due east to the edge of eastern Quebec and then east-southeast to Ste. Felicite-Quest, ME. From there, the bird continued traveling north to Baffin Island, just below the Arctic Circle (see the map on page 92).

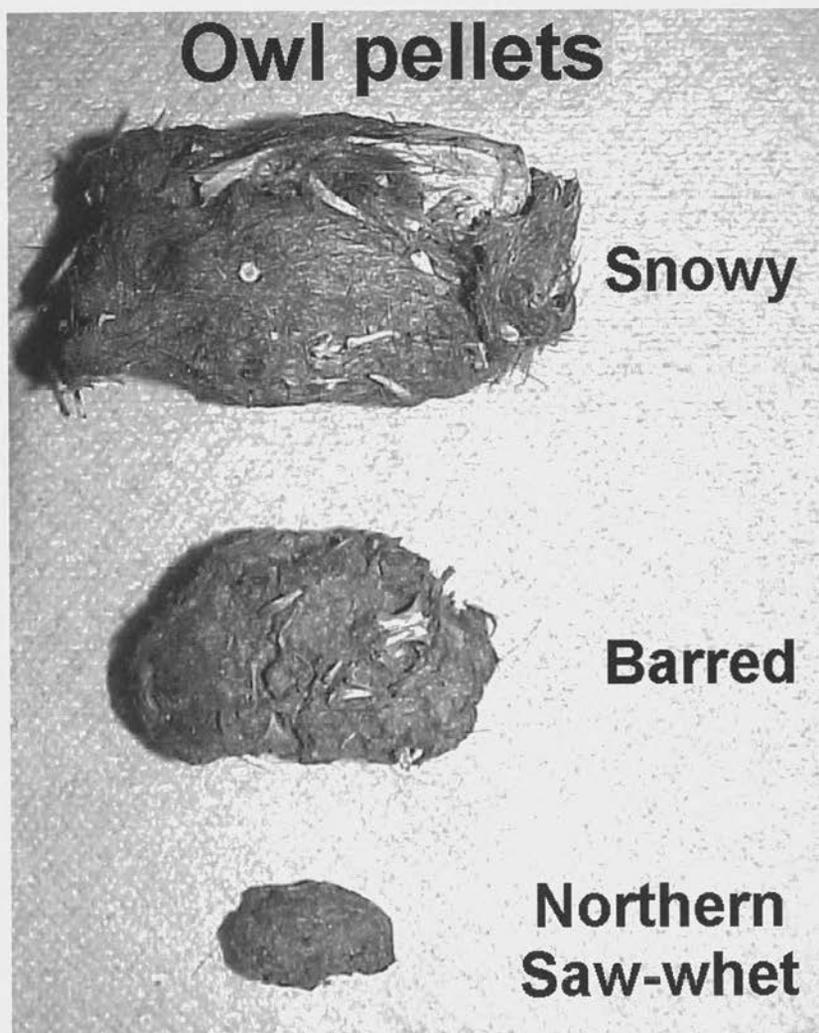
Conclusion

After two years, the Snowy Owl Satellite Telemetry Project is only beginning to provide the critical data we set out to find. Although we received minimal information on the first year's birds, we gained insight into how difficult it is for these birds to survive. The second year's data revealed valuable migration information and seem to

suggest that these birds wander greater distances during their wintering season than we had originally thought. We were also surprised to find that not all birds were in the Arctic Circle by early June, as we had originally assumed they would be. ↗

Norman Smith, director of the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Blue Hills Trailside Museum, has been studying Snowy Owls since 1981 as part of a larger research program of the Snake River Birds of Prey Refuge in Snake River, Idaho. Assisted by his son Josh and daughter Danielle, he caught and tagged the birds, but only recently has satellite telemetry, along with transmitters attached to the birds, offered the opportunity to unveil the mystery of when the owls leave the area, where they go, their migration routes, and habitat needs. During the 2002 season he will be attaching three more transmitters. Follow the continuing project on the web at <http://www.massaudubon.org/Birds_&_Beyond/Snowy_Owl/index.html>.

The original report and diagrams were created by Laura Niabi-Westcott, Special Projects Coordinator (Blue Hills).



Reproduction at life size

DAVID LARSON

The Saw-whet Owl Banding Project

Danielle Smith

Owls are unique birds that have fascinated humans for centuries. Despite their intrigue, there is limited information available about their migration habits. Their mysterious and alluring qualities are, perhaps, due in large part to their nocturnal activities.

This banding project was the first of its kind in New England. It tracks the movement of Northern Saw-whet Owls (*Aegolius acadicus*) through specific areas at the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary and the Metropolitan District Commission's Blue Hills Reservation, seeking to shed light on such questions as:

- What owl species pass through the banding sites?
- How many individuals pass through each night?
- How do these birds respond to the audio lure?
- What length of time do they spend in this area?
- How do weather conditions affect their movements?

Findings for this study were initially collected over a four-year period from November 1994 through March 1998. Information was gathered through the bird banding sites in the two areas mentioned. At the point of capture, the following data were collected: wing and tail measurements, weight, age, sex, overall health, time of capture, net number, shelf in net, direction bird was heading when captured, and weather.

1994: The First Year

Three mist nets were set up in a triangle on the edge of a field at Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary in Marshfield, Massachusetts. A battery-operated audio lure was placed in the center for broadcasting Saw-whet Owl vocalizations. This was played throughout the night on different occasions. Weather data such as wind speed, wind direction, temperature, cloud cover, and frontal movements were recorded.



MIKE MCWADE

The author and assistant (Norman Smith) setting up mist nets at Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary (note audio lure on the ground)

Captures. A total of ten owls were captured and banded: seven Saw-whet, two Screech (*Otus asio*), and one Barred (*Strix varia*). These were the first Saw-whet Owl and Barred Owl records for this wildlife sanctuary. Other owls in the area that were identified but not captured included Short-eared Owls (*Asio flammeus*), Long-eared Owls (*Asio otus*), and Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*).

Improving the Banding Stations. In order to obtain more data, areas of improvement were identified for subsequent study years. We felt we should expand the mist net setup and increase the number of banding locations within this study area. On one very memorable night, a deer ran through our banding station, destroying two of our mist nets. It became obvious that a night vision scope would be needed to monitor the nets and watch for large mammals before they could cause damage to the equipment, as well as observe owl movements in the area.

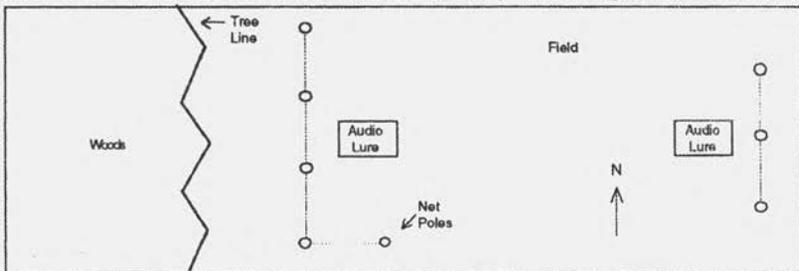
Because of the thick layer of knapweed covering the ground, the delicate mist nets became entangled in this underbrush. They were riddled with holes in the bottom trammels of the nets. Since this is the area of the nets where the majority of owls were captured, mowing of the knapweed was a necessary step before setting up for next year.

1995: The Second Year

In preparation for setting up the banding stations, we were able to use a tractor from Massachusetts Audubon Society's South Shore Sanctuaries. We mowed down the knapweed in the area of last year's banding site and also cleared an area in the field adjacent to this site. Our plan was to set up another banding station there to improve our coverage of the area. Funding from the Nuttall Ornithological Club assisted in the purchase of the necessary night vision scope.

The mist nets for the additional banding site were set up with three in a row and one jutting out perpendicular to this row. The diagram below illustrates this setup.

1995 Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary Banding Station Set Up



Six mist nets were used, all 12m x 2.6m x 60mm.

We began using the banding station in mid-October without a single capture until the end of that month. We believe poor weather conditions and excessive winds were the reason for the lack of movement. At the end of November, a strong cold front approached and stimulated quite a bit of owl migration movement.

Using our new night vision scope, we were able to observe owl migration over the field and also rabbits, deer, and coyotes. On one occasion, we watched while coyotes chased Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) into our mist nets, resulting in destroyed nets and bent poles. Through the use of the night vision scope, we also discovered that a Great Horned Owl spent time perched atop one of our twenty-foot net poles and remained there for most of the evening.

Captures. A total of fifty-three owls were captured during 1995: forty-six Saw-whet Owls (seventeen in one night) plus our first recapture, one Long-eared Owl, one Great Horned Owl, three Barred Owls, and one Screech Owl. All of these captures, except the three Barred Owls, occurred in the original banding site. We were disappointed that no captures were made in our new, second banding area. Our audio lure played vocalizations from several different species of owls, including Saw-whet, Long-eared, Short-eared, and Boreal (*Aegolius funereus*). We found that all the captures this year happened when Saw-whet Owl vocalizations were played.

Improving the Number of Captures. Thus far, we had been tracking fall owl migration, when the birds head south for the winter. We now decided to set up our banding station in March when owls migrate north. Our plans included purchasing a weather station to accurately read the wind velocity and direction at the banding sites. This would improve our current method of recording the temperature at the site and supplementing the data with those collected at the Blue Hills Weather Observatory in Milton, Massachusetts.

1996: The Third Year

Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary

One evening in March we attempted to capture owls migrating north. The lack of success on this damp, cold, and windy night defeated our enthusiasm for this particular idea. With no break in the poor weather conditions in sight, we packed up our equipment and waited for fall to resume our project.

Three mist nets were set up on the west side of the field next to each other. The audio lure was placed between the nets and the field and played only the vocalizations of a Saw-whet Owl. On the east side of the field, two mist nets were set up parallel to the edge of the field. Another audio lure was placed between these nets and the field, broadcasting the vocalizations of a Boreal Owl. We set up two more nets



NORMAN SMITH

The author with her first Northern Saw-whet Owl at Daniel Webster Sanctuary

perpendicular to the two sites, running east to west in the large field adjacent to the Osprey pole. No audio lure was used with these nets. We were trying to determine how important the audio lure was to capturing owls.

Captures. A total of three Saw-whet Owls were captured this year at Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary. This is a poor turnout for the fourteen nights this banding operation was in progress. The owls were captured in the mist nets where the Saw-whet Owl vocalizations were played.

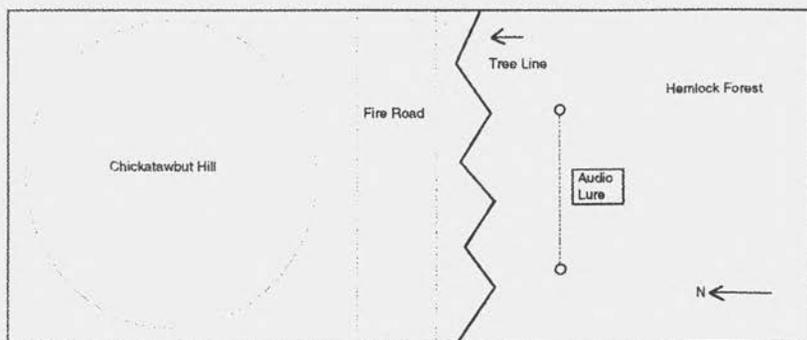
Improving the Number of Captures. The lack of success in Marshfield caused us to wonder whether the owls had an alternative migration route, or if it was a low movement year for owl migration. We decided to set up another banding station in the Blue Hills Reservation and chose a site at Chickatawbut Hill, located in Quincy, Massachusetts. We have used this same location since 1982 to capture and band migrating hawks and thought this location may be a shared migration route for both nocturnal and diurnal raptors. Testing the theory was accomplished by setting up a banding station with an audio lure of Saw-whet Owl vocalizations. After eleven nights, we came to the conclusion that this was an unlikely migration route for owls. The constant hilltop wind kept the mist nets in perpetual motion, which created a whistling noise. No owl captures were made.

A new site was chosen in a hemlock forest, adjacent to a red maple swamp, at the base of Chickatawbut Hill. At this site, only one mist net was set up, and the audio lure played a combination of Saw-whet and Boreal owl vocalizations.

Blue Hill Reservation

Captures. Banding continued successfully at this new site for seventeen nights, with a total of thirty-four owls captured: thirty Saw-whet Owls, one Screech Owl, one Great Horned Owl and two Boreal Owls. The most memorable capture this year was the Boreal Owls. Both flew into the same end of the mist net between 11:30 p.m. and 12:00 a.m. on December 30. The male weighed in at 178 grams, and the female, being

1996 Blue Hills Reservation Banding Station Set Up



One mist net of 12m x 2.6m x 60mm was used.

much larger, weighed in at 195 grams. The female Boreal Owl was extremely aggressive and made it a challenge to remove her from the mist net.

Replacing Equipment. After three years of use, the mist nets had lost their strength and needed to be replaced.

Three audio lures, consisting of cassette players and endless tapes, had also seen better days, after many hours of use and exposure to the elements. At this point, we felt it necessary to replace worn-out equipment for the following year's

operations. To date, our most valuable purchase has been the night vision scope. It has allowed us to observe activity around the banding stations that we would otherwise have missed.



NORMAN SMITH

Female Boreal Owl

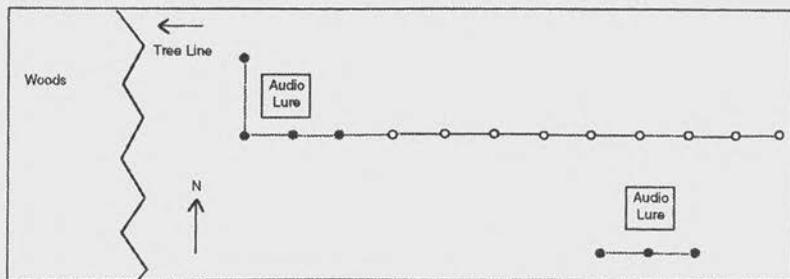
1997: The Fourth Year

Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary

Spring Captures. This year, we again decided to set up the banding station at Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary in the spring and see what owls were moving through the area. One mist net was set up with the audio lure playing only Saw-whet Owl vocalizations. During the five nights of banding, no owls were captured. We feel the wind speed, being more than fifteen miles per hour each night, had an effect on the captures. A Saw-whet Owl was heard on two different evenings, but because we did not capture it, we were unable to tell whether it was the same bird both nights or two different ones.

Fall Captures. In the fall, we set up the banding station with twelve mist nets across the field. We also set up nets on the far west end of the field with an audio lure playing Saw-whet Owl vocalizations. During the twelve nights of operation, a total of

1997 Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary Fall Set Up



Mist nets between the dark-colored poles were 12m x 2.6m x 60mm. Those between the open poles were 12m x 6m x 100mm.

five Saw-whet Owls were captured. Many Great Horned Owls and Screech Owls were heard on a regular basis. Using the night vision scope, we observed as many as seven Short-eared Owls and eleven Long-eared Owls in view at one time during this banding operation.

Blue Hills Reservation

Captures. In the fall of 1997, we set up our banding site in the Blue Hills Reservation. We ran the operation for a total of thirteen nights, and seven Saw-whet Owls were banded. One of these owls was a recapture that was originally banded at the Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary in 1994.

Points of Interest. During our 1997 Blue Hills banding operation, men riding all-terrain vehicles, dressed in camouflage and carrying guns, disturbed us. We witnessed them at all hours of the night, driving vehicles on trails in the reservation. Both of these activities are prohibited so we informed the Environmental Police. This, being a potential threat to our safety and banding equipment, influenced the outcome of this season's operations in the Blue Hills Reservation.

Outside of the owl banding operation this year, we were fortunate enough to have banded some impressive diurnal raptors. At our Chickatawbut Hill banding station we captured our first Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) on November 19, 1997. On January 10, 1998, at Logan Airport, a Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*) was captured and banded.

Conclusions

The success of this study can be measured through the quality of the information we derive from the data collected over the four-year period. Our data suggest that more Saw-whet Owls migrate through this area of New England than had been previously suspected. By adding the alternative location, the Blue Hills Reservation in Quincy, to our study area, we were able to continue collecting data on owl migration

when there was little success with the banding at Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary in Marshfield. The lack of Saw-whet Owls being captured at Daniel Webster in 1996 and 1997 suggests that, perhaps, there were fewer owls migrating during those years, or weather conditions changed the migration routes.

This preliminary research indicates that, indeed, Saw-whet Owls do migrate through this area in varying numbers. The audio lure has proved to be an effective piece of equipment for calling migrating owls into the mist nets. Weather conditions also play an



NORMAN SMITH

Joshua Smith with three Northern Saw-whet Owls

Owl Banding Data, 1994 - 2001

Year	Season One		Season Two		Season Three		Season Four		Season Five		Season Six		Season Seven		Season Eight	
	1994 Spring	1994 Fall	1995 Spring	1995 Fall	1996 Spring	1996 Fall	1997 Spring	1997 Fall	1998 Spring	1998 Fall	1999 Spring	1999 Fall	2000 Spring	2000 Fall	2001 Spring	2001 Fall
NSWO	7		47		30		7		1		79		2		22	
					1		5		1		195		2		83	
											36		9			
											101					
Totals	0	7	0	47	2	31	0	12	2	1	0	411	4	38	0	167
			(1@)		1		(1@)				(5@)					
EASO	2		1								1				1	
											3					
											2					
Totals	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	1
LEOW			1						7		5				1	
											7					
Totals	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	7	0	5	8	0	0	0	1
SEOW									3							
Totals	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GHOW			1						3							
Totals	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
BAOW	1		3								1					
											1					
Totals	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
BOOW					2											
Totals	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

* Erin Street
 # Peaceful Meadows
 @ Retraps, included in total

important role in migration movement from night to night. When we experienced a cold spell, we saw an increased number of migrating Saw-whet Owls. However, when the wind was 15 mph or greater, almost no owls were captured, most likely, due to the movement of the nets. We are not yet able to determine the length of time a Saw-whet Owl spends in this region. Further research in the future using radio transmitters may answer this question.

After completing the initial four years of the project, 1994-1997, we have continued the banding operation through the fall of 2001. In 1999, our best year to date, we banded 406 Saw-whet Owls, including a new site at Peaceful Meadows Farm in Whitman. At the end of the season we placed a mist net and audio lure in our backyard located in downtown Whitman, and to our surprise we captured thirty-six Saw-whet Owls and two Screech owls. Our best night was at Daniel Webster Sanctuary where we captured thirty-seven Saw-whet Owls and two Long-eared Owls. Without this banding operation these owls would have passed through undetected. During these big years Saw-whet Owls are perhaps our most common owl in the fall and early winter.

In conclusion, this research project brings valuable information to the study of owl migration. Our research has shown that migrating owls pass through this area in varying numbers, where no one has observed them in the past. We have been able to capture, band, and observe 771 owls of seven species while comparing the movements with the varying weather conditions. The data to date are summarized in the table on page 101.

When this project began, there were three sites banding Saw-whet Owls along the Atlantic Coast, and now there are more than twenty. This project has answered some questions but generated many more. Since the project began in 1994, we have observed Long-eared Owls at Daniel Webster Sanctuary every fall and occasionally in the Blue Hills and even Peaceful Meadows. It makes you wonder, how common are Long-eared Owls? How frequently do Boreal Owls visit Massachusetts? Little is known about our elusive owl species, but then these are thoughts for a future project. 

Danielle Smith's fascination with Saw-whet Owls was the initiating factor for this study, which was a four-year science fair project for the honors biology course at Whitman-Hanson Regional High School. After competing in the South Shore Science Fair, she was chosen to participate in the Massachusetts State Science Fair, held at MIT, where she placed second in the animal behavior category. Along with her brother Josh, she has assisted her father, Norman, in a long-running Snowy Owl banding and tracking project. Additional information and initial guidance for this project were obtained from David Brinker, Maryland Department of Natural Resources; Patricia Stanko, Braddock Bay Raptor Research, NY; and Katharine Duffy, Cape May Bird Observatory, NJ. She wishes to thank the Nuttall Ornithological Club's Charles Blake Fund for the continued support of this project.

Northern Saw-whet Owl

Chris Gentes

Northern Saw-whet Owls (*Aegolius acadicus*) can be found year-round in Massachusetts. They are perhaps most often encountered during Christmas Bird Counts (CBC), when birders play tapes at traditional locations with the hope of luring them in for census-taking. During the 2000 CBC there were a total of sixty saw-whets counted in thirteen different count circles. The largest number of saw-whets discovered were in three central Massachusetts count circles: Quabbin (23), Athol (18), and Sturbridge (6). This area consistently produces high counts nationwide of Northern Saw-whets <www.birdsource.org, 2001>.

Vocalizations

Northern Saw-whet Owls have a variety of calls and vocalizations. In February, male saw-whets on territory begin their courtship call. This call is a monosyllabic resonant *toot – toot – toot – toot*, repeated at the rate of two or three per second for a few minutes up to several hours. This call is used to establish a nesting territory and attract a female. Steve Sauter (pers. comm.) of Ashfield has observed that, for the past fifteen years, every February and March “has brought a saw-whet to incessant calling.” The call note of the Northern Saw-whet is a metallic *whurdle*, often given in series of threes. It has been likened to the whetting of a saw, and is widely believed to be the source of the owl’s name. Other vocalizations include a whistled flight call, soft rasping calls around the nest, begging calls of owlets, and a variety other calls (Johnsgard 1988).



GEORGE C. WEST

David Spector (Massbird 2000) observes that: “All owls, but especially, apparently, saw-whets have a wide variety of vocalizations beyond the standard, most commonly heard calls. These include a variety of barks and hisses. A bird responding to a saw-whet tape is probably a saw-whet, and if the odd vocalizations are mixed in with the standard tooting the responder is almost certainly a saw-whet. In my experience and that of others with whom I have compared notes, saw-whets respond with something other than the standard tooting roughly half the time that they do respond.”

Mark Lynch (Massbird 2000) describes the many strange vocalizations he heard at a large communal roost in Petersham, during the 2000 CBC: “Twice we had three birds calling in one place. The variety of calls was outstanding and even featured a few I had not heard before. There were the typical toots, yelps, screams, wails, caterwauling, and bill clacking as well as other noises I can’t describe.”

Swengel and Swengel (1997) conducted a ten-year auditory survey of Northern Saw-whets in Southern Wisconsin from February through April. They played tapes of the courtship call along established routes and listened for a response. Their data

showed that saw-whets responded to tapes more frequently around midnight than at sunset. They also had more responses in February-March than in April-May. Listening surveys for calling saw-whets throughout the state during February and March would help add valuable information regarding their breeding status in Massachusetts.

Breeding

There are thirty-two towns in Massachusetts (Appendix A) with breeding records of Northern Saw-whets. The first nest found in the Connecticut River Valley was in Amherst on April 23, 1893 (Bagg and Eliot 1937). A square mile of suitable habitat, food availability, and nesting cavities can support several nesting owls (Johnsgard 1988), and Norman Smith (pers. comm.) knows of at least three locations where saw-whets nest on the Blue Hills in Milton.

Northern Saw-whets breed in a wide variety of habitats and elevations, including open deciduous woodlands, cedar swamps, coniferous forests, and pitch pine barrens (Veit and Petersen 1993). Harrison (1975) observed that the owl's preferred nesting site is in an old flicker nest-hole cavity in a dead tree. Of twelve nests he found, two were in conifers, while ten were in deciduous trees. The owls will also utilize artificial nesting boxes. Egg dates for saw-whets in Massachusetts are from April 4 through May 31 (Veit and Petersen 1993); a single egg is laid every other-day until there are 5-7 eggs. The female incubates while the male hunts. Incubation lasts for 27 days. Eighteen days after the last chick hatches, the female parent bird leaves the nest for good. The brood remains together with the male parent feeding the owlets for up to one month (del Hoyo et al. 1999).

Banding

For some time Northern Saw-whets were thought to be permanent year-round residents in their breeding range. Research by owl banders over the last thirty years has shown that they are in fact migratory. Data also show that the owls are irruptive and may be nomadic, and an increasing number of stations are conducting banding operations at winter roosts and during spring migration. In addition to locating reliable food sources, saw-whet migration may be related to trees losing their leaves in the fall. Saw-whets are preyed upon by larger owls, and with the loss of deciduous leaf cover, the small owls become more visible. They subsequently begin to roost in heavy conifers and thickets where they are more concealed (Brinker et al. 1997). In Massachusetts fall migration occurs in late October, while spring migration occurs in late March and early April.

In 1967 the Cedar Grove Ornithological Station in southern Wisconsin discovered that saw-whets could be captured in mist nets left open at night. In 1986 it was discovered that by playing an audiotape of the owl's mating call in close proximity to the mist nets, the numbers of birds captured increased dramatically. This audiolure is played throughout the night at 100-110 decibels and can be heard up to 1.5 kms away. The average yearly number of saw-whets captured solely by passive mist nets at Little Suamico, Wisconsin (1971-1985) was 57, while the average yearly number captured by utilizing the audiolure at the same station (1986-1990) was 668 (Erdman et al. 1997).

Project OwlNet, founded by David Brinker, an ecologist with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, is the primary organization that unifies the growing number of saw-whet banders. The Project OwlNet website <www.projectowl.net> is designed to improve communication and coordination between saw-whet banding stations in North America. It advocates the use of comparable netting techniques and includes useful information that supports the expansion of a network of migrant owl banding stations. There are approximately fifty banding stations in North America, and through their efforts 2000 to 5000 saw-whets are banded each year (Brinker et al. 1997).

Captured saw-whets are aged and sexed by a discriminant function based on mass and wing length (Brinker et al. 1997). The majority of owls captured have been determined to be female and/or hatch-year birds (Brinker et al. 1997). There are several theories as to why this is the case. One is that females migrate south in the winter months for better hunting grounds, while males remain in more northerly locations to defend their breeding grounds. Another theory is that more female saw-whets are captured because they are responding to the male courtship call being played near the mist nets. Females may be more likely to investigate the call and get captured, while males may be more likely to avoid a competitor's territory. Duffy and Matheny (1997) captured an average of 80-percent female saw-whets utilizing an audiolume (1989-1994), but captured only 65-percent females with passive netting (1980-1988).

One of the pioneers in saw-whet owl banding in Massachusetts is Danielle Smith [see page 95], who has operated banding stations in Marshfield, at the Blue Hills Reservation in Milton, and in a residential neighborhood in Whitman. All three locations have produced good results in attracting migrating saw-whets and demonstrated that their migration routes are diverse, including coastal farmlands and even suburban neighborhoods (Smith 2001).

The autumn of 2001 saw the opening of a new banding station in Williamstown, Massachusetts. This station is run by Andrew Jones and Kenneth Schmidt. Jones has previously banded saw-whets in the Allegheny Mountains of West Virginia. They operated the station for a total of 150 hours from October 18 through November 26, and were successful in banding eighty-six saw-whets. The most they captured on any single night was eleven on October 27. Other nights with notable captures were October 18 (8), October 22 (7), and October 28 (7). The full moon on November 1 coincided with fewer captures, but as it waned in early November, the captures increased slightly. The vast majority of owls they banded were females, and approximately half were hatch-year birds. They didn't have any recaptures of foreign birds, and none of their owls have yet to be recaptured. 

Appendix A

Towns with records of Breeding NSW (Veit and Petersen 1993, Bagg and Eliot 1933, Griscom and Snyder 1955): Adams, Lenox, Greenfield, Ashfield, Chester, Huntington, Worthington, Westhampton, Northampton, Amherst, West Springfield, Springfield, Longmeadow, Ware, Brookfield, Rutland, West Newbury, North Andover, Boxford, Middleton, Topsfield, Ipswich, Salem, Wellesley, Milton, Scituate, Bridgewater, Taunton, Middleborough, Harwich, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket.

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Boreal Owls Nesting in New Hampshire

Stephen R. Mirick

On the morning of Sunday, July 29, 2001, Rob Sawyer was hiking with his son near the summit of Mount Pierce in the Presidential Range of the White Mountains in New Hampshire when he came across an adult Boreal Owl perched along the side of the trail. He and his son approached to within ten feet of the bird several times for about ten minutes while the bird flew short distances down the trail. Fortunately, Rob reported the sighting with a description of the bird and the exact location to the Audubon Society of New Hampshire, and this information was then forwarded to the New Hampshire e-mail bird list.

Six days later, on August 4, I followed up on this report, with the slim hope of finding what would be an incredible summer record of Boreal Owl. Weighed down by a backpack stuffed with my tent, sleeping bag, food, tape recorder, flashlights, and my video recorder, I made the long hike up to the location where the bird was reported. During the afternoon, I searched the area, but could not find any Boreal Owls. I did, however, get great looks at a family of Spruce Grouse and several Gray Jays who enjoyed copious amounts of my trail mix. After a spectacular sunset through ominous clouds, I waited until dark, and at about 9:00 p.m., after playing a taped call of Boreal Owl for about fifteen minutes, a *juvenile* Boreal Owl flew in and perched a short distance down the trail. As it hopped from branch to branch within thirty feet of me, I was able to get some great looks with a flashlight and was able to get a couple of minutes of nice video before a strong lightning storm moved in and forced me back to my tent. I did not see or hear any other owls but this young bird. The bird was clearly a juvenile, but was a strong flyer and was starting to molt into an adult facial pattern. The habitat where I saw the bird was krummholz fir with a few spruce at about 4100 feet elevation. Most trees were less than twenty feet high.



STEPHEN R. MIRICK

Subsequent searches over the next two weeks provided several other birders with observations of at least two juvenile Boreal Owls from this same location, and one more sighting of an adult. A final report was received for an adult Boreal Owl in the same area on October 23.

Remarkably, this was not the only record for Boreal Owl this summer in New England. In Vermont, Brandt Ryder, Kent McFarland, Jim Tietz, and Al Strong had an adult Boreal Owl fly into a mist net while they were banding Bicknell's Thrushes!

The bird was subsequently heard calling into mid-June on Stratton Mountain in Vermont; however, searchers in July could not find the bird and there was never any clear nesting evidence (A. Strong and K. McFarland, pers. comm.).

Boreal Owl sightings are quite rare in New Hampshire. In fact, according to *New Hampshire Bird Records*, there are only five records of Boreal Owl in the state since 1950 and only one record since 1970. All of these records occurred from late fall into early spring, and three of the reports were of the remains of dead birds. Elsewhere in New England, Boreal Owls are also quite rare or at least rarely encountered during migration and winter. Their quiet, nocturnal behavior and propensity to roost in dense evergreens makes their presence difficult to detect.

Historically, summer records of Boreal Owls are essentially nonexistent for New England. The known breeding range of Boreal Owl in eastern North America is limited to southern and central Quebec and northern New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. According to *The Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Maritime Provinces* (Erskine



STEPHEN R. MIRICK

1992), Boreal Owls have been confirmed nesting as far south as Grand Manan Island in New Brunswick during the 1920s and early 1930s, but have not been recorded there since. The only prior summer record for New England that I have found is for a bird near the summit of General Stark Mountain in Vermont on July 18, 1923 (Bent 1961). The New Hampshire

sightings of two fledged juvenile Boreal Owls, and at least one adult, appear to provide the first documented evidence for Boreal Owls nesting in the eastern United States.

The question now remains: is this nest record the result of an incursion of Boreal Owls from the previous winter, or have the Boreal Owls always nested in small densities in the boreal forests of northern New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine? Evidence from Quebec suggests that the fall of 2000 was an irruptive fall for Boreal Owls. At Tadoussac, a banding station located along the St. Lawrence River a little over 100 miles northeast of Quebec City, 113 Boreal Owls were banded, according to *North American Birds* (Bannon et al. 2001). According to Samuel Denault (pers. comm.), this was a record high, and contrasts sharply with zero birds banded in the years 1997-1999! Judy Walker banded one Boreal Owl during the fall at her owl-

banding station in Freeport, Maine, but according to Norm Smith (pers. comm.), none were captured by Danielle Smith at her owl-banding station in Massachusetts. A Boreal Owl made a one-day appearance in downtown Boston on October 21, 2000; however, according to *North American Birds* (Ellison and Martin 2001), no subsequent winter records were reported anywhere in New England.

The nesting may just be a coincidental event, triggered by an incursion of owls and an abundance of food in northern New England; however, it also seems plausible that these birds have nested in northern New England all along, perhaps in low densities in deep stands of boreal forests. In fact, Gregory and Patricia Hayward, in *The Birds of North America* (Hayward and Hayward 1993), suggest that the Boreal Owl's nesting range probably extends into northern New England. The bird's secretive nocturnal behavior and inaccessible nesting areas make the species difficult to detect. Our knowledge of the nesting range of Boreal Owls in central and western United States has also changed dramatically in the last forty years, with the discovery of overlooked populations in several states where the owl was not previously known to nest. These sightings from northern New England just add more pieces to the puzzle! 🦉

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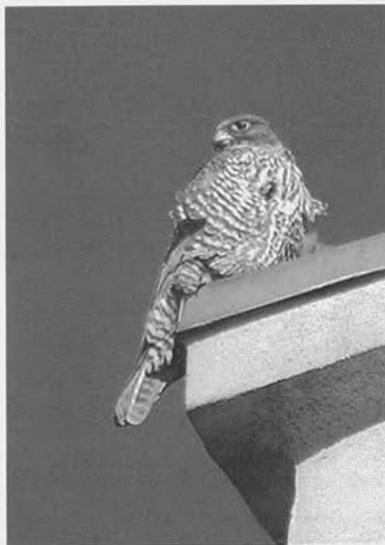


Boston, 1997 SUSAN CARLSON

A Gyr Winter

David Larson

Arguably the Massachusetts birding event of the winter was the presence of a very cooperative Gyrfalcon in Boston. First seen at Logan Airport by Jim Murray on Dec. 3, and then reported by Ronnie Donovan and party during the Greater Boston Christmas Count on Dec. 16, this bird has been regularly seen at Logan and in South Boston in the vicinity of the Boston Design Center on Drydock Avenue and the adjacent Black Falcon Terminal.



ANDREW JOSLIN

Recently I spoke with Norm Smith, Director of the Blue Hills Trailside Museum, who runs a Snowy Owl project from Logan Airport (see page 88) and has had ample opportunity to observe this falcon this winter. In 1998 Norm captured and banded a Gyrfalcon at Logan Airport. He has been trying to capture this Gyr to determine whether the band it wears is his. Obviously, recaptures of irruptive Gyrfalcons are very rare. So far, however, this bird has proved to be extremely trap-shy. On numerous occasions, it has been attracted to lures only to hover and then fly away.

There has been much speculation about the gender of this Gyrfalcon. Norm reports seeing it perched near the female Peregrine Falcon of the Custom House pair, and it is considerably larger, most likely a female. Indeed, Norm has noted many interactions between the Custom House Peregrines (at this time of year, the adults have driven off their offspring and are in sole possession of the territory) and this Gyrfalcon. The Peregrines harass the Gyr; the Gyr harasses the Peregrines. They stoop on each other, and chase each other. Several observers reported that the Gyr struck one of the Peregrines, knocking it apparently senseless onto the roof of the Boston Design Center. Searches of that roof by Tom French from MassWildlife have found no evidence of



DON SOUTHALL

the last thing a black duck sees before . . .
Jane Stein (on MassBird)



SHAWN CAREY

a dead Peregrine, and the continuing presence of the Custom Tower pair seems to suggest that that interaction was not fatal. A report from another observer of the Gyr knocking a gull senseless (the observer could *hear* the impact), and then allowing it to recover and fly off, seems to suggest a behavioral pattern.

A series of interactions with a particularly feisty adult female Snowy Owl at Logan Airport has shown that the Gyr cannot always have her way. According to Norm, this female Snowy Owl is very territorial. On one occasion, the Gyr crossed her boundaries and the owl took off in pursuit. She was still chasing the Gyr when Norm lost sight of them out beyond Deer Island. Apparently undeterred, the Gyr has not given up harassing Snowy Owls and recently almost paid the price. She swooped down on the Snowy with the attitude, who inverted and snagged the Gyr in the wing with a talon. The Gyr managed to pull free, but the outcome of that encounter could have gone either way. (For more gyr images, see <<http://massbird.org/sightings.htm>>. Shawn Carey's photographs are posted at <<http://www.virtualbirder.com/gyr>>). 



SHAWN CAREY

FIELD NOTES

Red-tails in Love, epilogue . . .

Henrietta Yelle

On the morning of November 21, 2001, at 8:15 a.m. at the Cambridge Common Old Burying Ground in the middle of Harvard Square, my husband Chris and I saw two Red-tailed Hawks trying to have a squirrel breakfast. They were working in apparent cooperation, and it was quite a sight. They both appeared to be adults with a significant size difference, and with input given later by more experienced hawk watchers, we'd hazard a guess that this was a mated pair.

When we arrived, the two hawks were perched in a medium-size pine tree with the squirrel trapped on the trunk between them. They were all oblivious to the foot traffic on the sidewalk about fifteen feet away. Squirrel was literally in a pickle. The hawks kept jumping from branch to branch, keeping the squirrel between them, and every couple of minutes one hawk would take a turn at swooping at the squirrel. Neither hawk could get quite close enough to knock the squirrel from the tree, but they got very close, with talons extended toward the tree trunk. The squirrel was small but wily, and just kept scooting up and down and around the trunk, away from those big talons. I thought I was rooting for the hungry hawks, but the pluck of this little squirrel was impressive. Occasionally, one of the hawks – usually the larger one, presumably the female – would fly off to a nearby tree and observe the proceedings and then come back and perch either above or below the other hawk, keeping the squirrel in the middle.

After we had watched for about fifteen minutes, the larger of the two hawks flew off to a tree about fifty yards away. After another fifteen minutes of trying alone, the smaller hawk flew off as well, and landed right next to the larger hawk. They sat together, facing the same direction (away from that annoying squirrel), so close that their wings were practically touching. I could almost hear them muttering to each other “Who knew that little rascal would be so hard to catch!” “Now what do we do?” “I don't know, but I'm starving.” 

Editor's note: In the process of editing this field note for Bird Observer, Harriet Hoffman writes: “I believe this must be the pair that nests in Harvard Yard. They frequently perch on Holyoke Center, and are named Alfred and Georgia!”



DAVID LARSON

Sixth Annual Report of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee

Marjorie Rines, Secretary

The Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (MARC) was formed to evaluate reports of rare and difficult-to-identify species, as designated on its review list <<http://massbird.org/MARC/MARCreviewlist.htm>>. The MARC also evaluates any new state record and records of species that are geographically or temporally rare. Previous MARC reports appeared in the October 1995, August 1997, December 1998, February 2000, and April 2001 issues of *Bird Observer*. Readers may also find copies of these reports at the MARC web site at <<http://Massbird.org/MARC/>>.

Two new species were added this year to the MARC's official state list, bringing the total to 468 species.

Unusual waterfowl reports consistently provoke animated discussion within the MARC due to the difficulty of determining whether a species is a true vagrant or simply an escape from a collector of waterfowl. Reports which have been accepted by the Committee are those which follow an established pattern of vagrancy. A **Cinnamon Teal** seen for two days in March of 2000 was ultimately decided to conform to this pattern, particularly in the light of recent eastern North American records. This decision moved the species from the MARC's Supplemental List to its main list (see below). A **Tropical Kingbird** spent several weeks in Hingham in November of 2000, and only ten months later a **Couch's Kingbird** made a one-day visit to Plum Island. These two species are virtually impossible to differentiate based solely on field marks, but each has a diagnostic call note which allowed eventual identification and acceptance by the MARC.

MARC members include Steve Arena, Jim Baird, Rick Heil, Chris Leahy, Jan Ortiz, Wayne Petersen, Jackie Sones, Richard Veit, and Trevor Lloyd-Evans (Chair). Marjorie Rines is the Secretary.

Accepted Reports

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*) #01-01, Gloucester (Essex), January 18, 2001, J. Smith, S. Lerman; #00-23, Scusset Beach (Plymouth), November 22, 2000, S. and J. Dinsmore. Increasingly, this species is practically an annual winter and spring visitor, occasionally with more than one report per season.

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) #98-22, Attleboro (Bristol), December 23-26, 1998, G. Valade, S. + L. Hennin. A large, black and white grebe discovered on an inland reservoir was identified as a Western Grebe, the details clearly eliminating the previously unrecorded Clark's Grebe as a possibility. Seen by numerous birders, the Committee received written documentation from only one party, but was nevertheless convinced that this was the species involved.

Yellow-nosed Albatross (*Thalassarche chlororhynchus*) #00-17, Penikese I. (Dukes), May 6, 2000, C. Mostello and G. Repucci. Two researchers were observing terns from a blind on Penikese Island when they realized that a large bird that they were watching was an albatross. During the 45 seconds they watched it from the blind, it passed as close as 10 meters from their point of observation, at which point they were able to easily pick out the bird's unique bill and under wing pattern along with "the white top of the head shading to grayish neck and nape," all indicating an adult of the nominate race *chlororhynchus*. Exiting the blind, the observers were able to see the albatross again as it landed on the water, noting its large size compared to the gulls in the area. There were a number of reports of (presumably) this same individual elsewhere along the northeastern seaboard in the spring of 2000. This represents only the third record for Massachusetts.

White-faced Storm-Petrel (*Pelagodroma marina*) #01-14, Hydrographer Canyon, August 27, 2001, M. Sylvia, photographs by S. Mirick. Two individuals were seen by numerous observers on a dedicated birding trip to offshore waters. While no written report was received, excellent photos published on the internet were considered by the Committee.

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) #97-34, Carlisle (Middlesex), September 16, 1997, J. Smith; #01-06, Avon (Bristol), June 19, 2001, R. Titus. The similarity between a flying Anhinga and cormorant is strong, and in the past the Committee has rejected a number of sight records of Anhinga due to insufficient documentation of the differences. Two reports were accepted: the 1997 observation was made by an observer unfamiliar with Anhinga, but was accompanied by an excellent field sketch made at the time of observation which the Committee found compelling. The 2001 record was by an observer who was extremely familiar with the species, and who wrote a detailed and convincing report.

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*) #01-09, Chilmark (Dukes), October 14-22, 2001, T. Rivers, J. Trimble. A single adult Ross's Goose was discovered with a flock of Snow Geese at a farm on Martha's Vineyard. Written details were accompanied by excellent photographs. This is only the second accepted record of this species in Massachusetts, the first being of two birds in Sunderland in 1997.

"Black" Brant (*Branta bernicla nigricans*) #00-26, Mashpee (Barnstable), November 4, 2000, J. Trimble. Subspecies are not on the MARC's review list, but there is nothing to prohibit the Committee from acting on such a report. *B. b. nigricans* is a western subspecies which is rare in Massachusetts. Perhaps soon to be a candidate for species status, partial DNA analysis of Black Brant and Pale-bellied Brant (*B. b. hrota*) has revealed that these two forms are more distinct from each other than are Ross's and Snow Goose. The Taxonomic Advisory Committee of the Association of European Rarities Committees is also currently considering the status of the taxon. This bird, discovered among a large flock of the Atlantic Pale-bellied form (*B. b. hrota*), was well documented in writing, and was accompanied by photographs.

Cinnamon Teal (*Anas cyanoptera*) #00-09, Gloucester (Essex), March 18-19, 2000, T. Raymond et al. A convincing description of a male in alternate plumage gave the

Committee little doubt of the identity of this individual; however, vagrant waterfowl always create a lively discussion within the Committee because of the possibility of captive origin. After carefully examining the pattern of occurrence of this species in the northeast, the MARC voted in favor of accepting the report. Until this report, this species had only been on the MARC's Supplemental List, which states, "The MARC believes that wild individuals of these species may have occurred in the state. However, a captive origin cannot be discounted."

Garganey (*Anas querquedula*) #00-10-A, Plum Island (Essex), August 4-11, 2000, R. Heil et al. A male in eclipse plumage was discovered associating with a flock of Gadwall, and later some Blue-winged Teal. Written details were accompanied by photographs published on the internet and, as with the Cinnamon Teal described above, identification was not in question. Garganey has been on the State List for several years, but the timing of this sighting did not fall into any established pattern of vagrancy, provoking some question of origin. Ultimately, it was agreed that, given the similarity of eclipse-plumaged teals, vagrants could easily evade detection at this time of year, so the report was accepted.

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) #01-03, 01-03, Westport (Bristol), March 18, 2001, M. Lynch and S. Carroll. Tufted Ducks have become almost routine in Massachusetts, with many individuals returning to the same location year after year. This female may well have been the same as one reported from Westport on March 25, 2000. Only female Tufted Ducks are on the MARC's Review List.

Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*) #00-14 Plum Island (Essex), November 18 to December 10, 2000, R. Harlow et al. This northern visitor often stayed out of sight in the Plum Island marshes, but thrilled the many who were lucky enough to see it when it rose to hunt. It was carefully described as a gray morph, but late in its visit there were scattered reports of a dark-morph bird; however, these sightings were early in the morning when the low light put the bird in silhouette, and color could have been very difficult to judge.

South Polar Skua (*Catharacta maccormicki*) #00-16, Stellwagen Bank, July 17, 2000, P. Trull. Clearly photographed by a researcher (and experienced birder) on a whale watch boat, this skua was an exceptional sighting for Stellwagen Bank. The observer attributed the occurrence to the easterly winds off Cape Cod preceding the sighting.

California Gull (*Larus californicus*) #00-19, July 17, 2000, Chatham (Barnstable), B. Nikula and R. Heil. A third-summer bird at South Beach in Chatham was picked out of the masses of other gulls by two experienced observers, who were able to compare it to a number of Lesser Black-backed Gulls in the vicinity. This comprises only the second record of this species in Massachusetts.

Bridled Tern (*Sterna anaethetus*) #00-13, July 17, 2000, Muskeget Island (Dukes), R. Veit. Bridled Terns are rare in Massachusetts, and historically reports have been clustered in August and September, so this individual was doubly exceptional. A group of three observers watched it as it flew over a pond on Muskeget Island, where

it briefly landed, then took off again, affording good views of all the important field marks.

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) #00-20, October 29, 2000, Edgartown (Dukes), M. Pelican. The observer was walking through some agricultural fields when he flushed a small flock of Mourning Doves. One bird instantly stood out by size and the presence of white wing patches. Although the view was brief, the observer was careful to eliminate the possibility of an oddly-marked Rock Dove.

Selasphorus species, #00-21, Worcester (Worcester), October 7 to November 17, 2000, A. Pax and M. Lynch. #01-08, Granby (Hampshire), November 10-December 1, 2001, M. Lynch and S. Carroll. Any hummingbird seen after the end of the Ruby-throat's normal migration in September should be looked at carefully. Both of these individuals were coming to feeders, and were initially thought to be Ruby-throats. Upon investigation by observers, both turned out to be female or immature *Selasphorus*.

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) #01-07, August 30, 2001, Belmont (Middlesex), M. Rines. At least a dozen records of this species have occurred in Massachusetts, but almost all in November or December, so the date of this sighting is highly unusual. It was, however, clearly seen for 20 minutes, with details provided of the bird's small head and bill, pale throat and belly, and, most importantly, its distinctive call note.

Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) #00-11, November 8-30, 2000, Hingham, S. Avery et al. Since the similar Western Kingbird is not uncommon in November, it would have been easy for this first state record to slip by misidentified. Tropical Kingbird is virtually identical to Couch's Kingbird, but the call notes are very different and this bird was obligingly vocal. Photographs and audio recordings were made available on the Internet, thus making the Committee's decision fairly easy.

Couch's Kingbird (*Tyrannus couchii*) #01-10, September 9, 2001, Plum Island (Essex), R. Heil. A mere ten months after the first state record for Tropical Kingbird, this individual made a brief visit to Plum Island. The observer carefully noted the large bill and plumage characteristics to eliminate the possibility of a worn Western Kingbird, and narrowed identification down to either Tropical or Couch's kingbird. After watching the bird for an hour or so, the observer left to make some phone calls, and returned to complete his six-hour vigil, hoping for the bird to vocalize to confirm one or the other species. During this time other observers were able to take photographs which were later made available on the internet. To quote the observer, "the defining moment occurred sometime after 3:00 p.m. when a Peregrine Falcon arrived on the scene, streaking in from the north, and flushing all the shorebirds at the adjacent pool. Immediately upon the Peregrine's arrival the kingbird began calling from its perch, uttering several sharp, brief, spaced 'kip' calls, diagnostic of Couch's Kingbird, four or five in all, clearly and unambiguously heard by all present."

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*) #00-15, October 27 to November 2, 2000, Concord (Middlesex), M. Rines et al. This bird was discovered foraging with a large

flock of Eastern Bluebirds at the wastewater treatment plant adjacent to Great Meadows NWR. Seen and photographed by many, it is only the fifth state record for this species, and the fourth since 1994.

Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Dendroica nigrescens*) #00-12, September 27 to October 2, 2000, Cambridge (Middlesex). K. and T. Kresser (detail M. Rines). A male visiting Mount Auburn Cemetery was seen by many.

Swainson's Warbler (*Limnithlypis swainsonii*) #01-04, May 11-June 6, Naushon Island (Dukes), T. Maloney, A. Jones, S. Storer. Birders participating in the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Bird-a-thon were intrigued by an unfamiliar song, and with difficulty eventually were able to pick out a plain warbler with a brown cap and a large bill. Returning the following day, they were able to get photographs. This is only the second record of this species for Massachusetts.

Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*) #00-24, November 11, 2000, Dorchester (Suffolk), R. Donovan. An observer walking along the edge of the Neponset Marsh at a flood tide inadvertently flushed the bird, and got good, although brief, looks before it scuttled back into the grass. The description was compelling, and the bird's behavior typical of this secretive species.

Reports Not Accepted

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) #01-05, Ashland, July 23, 2001. Although seen by an observer previously familiar with the species, the view from a moving automobile was brief and was unaided by binoculars, which led the Committee not to accept the report for such a rare species in Massachusetts.

Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) #99-24, Dennis (Barnstable), January 16 to February 20, 1999. Seen and photographed by many, this was unquestionably a Pink-footed Goose, but the report was turned down on the basis of questionable origin. A Pink-footed Goose seen in Connecticut in March of 1998 was accepted by the Connecticut rarities committee for the first accepted wild occurrence of this species in the lower 48 states. The MARC took the Connecticut committee's thoughts into consideration, but remained concerned about the behavior of this goose, which allowed people to approach closely, giving cause to doubt it was of wild origin.

Common Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) #01-02, Chatham (Barnstable), May 21, 2001. The details on this report were too sketchy to eliminate a number of other shorebird species.

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus cachinnans*) #00-25, December 28, 2000, Nantucket (Dukes). This 4th winter or near adult-plumaged gull was carefully observed and described by several experienced observers as possibly representing the race *L. c. michahellis* of the Yellow-legged Gull. The gull in question showed streaking on the head and sides of the breast, which ordinarily would not be present in a *michahellis* individual of this age, and the gonydeal spot should have been more conspicuous than as described. Because gulls are notoriously variable, and while none of the inconsistencies noted above categorically eliminate Yellow-legged Gull, the overall

description could also not eliminate a hybrid, most particularly Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) x Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*). The Committee struggled with this report before deciding not to accept it.

Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) #00-22, June 29, 1999, Northboro (Worcester). Neither the description of this bird nor the accompanying photographs could eliminate the very similar Ringed Turtle-Dove. The Eurasian Collared-Dove was introduced to the United States via the Bahamas in the 1980s and rapidly took hold in Florida, and sporadic sightings have been moving relentlessly north. It is undoubtedly only a matter of time before this species is recorded in Massachusetts.

Townsend's Warbler (*Dendroica townsendi*) #00-18, Gay Head (Dukes), September 28, 2000. As the observer commented, this was a "lamentably brief" view, during which several field marks were noted. The two observers believed it to be a Townsend's, largely based on process of elimination, and the Committee was reluctant to accept on this basis. ↗

ABA EMBRACES INTER-AMERICAN BIRD PROJECT

The American Birding Association (ABA) is pleased to announce that it will begin to run the highly-successful bird-conservation project, Birders' Exchange, starting Monday 25 February.

Birders' Exchange collects new and used field equipment and distributes it, free of charge, to conservationists, researchers, and educators working to conserve Neotropical migrant and resident birds in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Birders' Exchange was founded in 1990 by the Manomet Center for Conservation Science (MCCS). In 1996, MCCS partnered with ABA to run the program, and a productive partnership blossomed, building on the extensive birder network of ABA and the conservation links with Latin America at MCCS. Now, MCCS and ABA have reached an agreement to move the program in its entirety to the American Birding Association.

Since 1990, Birders' Exchange has sent 1,800 binoculars, 1,025 field guides, 275 backpacks, 150 cameras, 200 scopes, 150 tripods, and other tools to more than 350 programs in over 30 Latin American and Caribbean countries. This equipment enhances awareness of birds, and it empowers local people to make wise conservation decisions.

For more information go to <www.americabirding.org/bex> or contact Lina Di Gregorio at 1-800-850-BIRD (ex 228) or Betty Petersen at bex@aba.org.



Birders' Exchange



The 102nd Christmas Bird Count 12/14/01–1/5/02

Robert H. Stymeist

A total of 204 species plus the subspecies Ipswich Sparrow were recorded on the thirty-four Massachusetts-based Christmas Bird Counts. Four additional species were found during count period, although not on any count day. The total is fourteen species more than last year, which many of you will remember was just awful weatherwise. This year, December in Massachusetts was the second warmest in 130 years of record, and the counts reflect the great weather.

The Cape Cod CBC recorded 133 species with record high numbers of Red-throated Loons (271) and new high counts for several waterfowl species — Mute Swan, Wood Duck, Green-winged Teal, and Hooded Merganser — reflecting the warmer weather and the fact that all ponds were open. The Martha's Vineyard CBC came in second with 128 species. The bronze medal went to Nantucket with 127 species.

In analyzing the data, it is interesting to note that just fourteen species were seen on all thirty-four counts: Canada Goose, American Black Duck, Rock Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Northern Mockingbird, European Starling, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, and Northern Cardinal. It is also noteworthy to see how many of the 204 species tallied are represented by a single individual. This year there were twenty: Eared Grebe, Northern Fulmar, Cattle Egret, Green Heron, Golden Eagle, Gyrfalcon, Common Moorhen, Sora, Pomarine Jaeger, Atlantic Puffin, Red-headed Woodpecker, Blue-headed Vireo, Sedge Wren, Nashville Warbler, Ovenbird, Wilson's Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Grasshopper, Lincoln's and Clay-colored sparrows.

New England winter bird populations have certainly changed during the last decades, and we have seen a dramatic increase in many species and a decline in just a few species. In the following chart you can see what a difference eleven years has made.

Species	1990 (28 counts)	2001 (34 counts)
Canada Goose	29,879	60,552
Cooper's Hawk	20	153
Ring-necked Pheasant	182	94
Wild Turkey	311	1525
Lesser Black-backed Gull	2	21
Red-bellied Woodpecker	29	586
Carolina Wren	557	1684
Eastern Bluebird	156	1860
Hermit Thrush	44	332
American Robin	2444	35,558
Northern Cardinal	3762	6214

The complete results of all the counts in the country are available on the Birdsource website (sponsored by the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology); you can view the data going back to 1990 by visiting the following URL: <<http://www.birdsource.org>> and selecting Christmas Bird Count. For the Massachusetts results visit the Bird Observer website at: <<http://massbird.org/birdobserver/>>. For those who want a printed copy sent to them, please send a self-addressed envelope with 68-cent postage to Robert H. Stymeist, 94 Grove Street, Watertown, MA 02472-2829. 

News from MassWildlife

Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey

MassWildlife reports a final total of 70 bald eagles wintering in Massachusetts as reported during the January 2-16 Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey. State Ornithologist Brad Blodget has compiled the results from observers across the state and notes a total of 49 adult and 21 immature eagles found at 10 locations. Quabbin Reservoir was the seasonal home to 30 eagles while 16 were seen along the Massachusetts reach of the Connecticut River. Both the Quabbin and Connecticut River were surveyed by a MassWildlife crew riding in a helicopter provided courtesy of National Grid. . . . Nine eagles were reported on the Merrimack and two at Assawompsett Pond in Lakeville. Other Massachusetts water bodies with wintering eagles included Silver Lake in Pembroke (3), Housatonic River in the southern Berkshires (4), Wachusett Reservoir (3), Glen Charlie Pond in Plymouth (1), Cobble Mountain Reservoir in Blandford (1), and Webster Lake in Webster (1). No Golden Eagles were observed during the count window. Massachusetts' figures will be forwarded for inclusion in the national compilation, a database that tracks wintering eagle population and distribution trends in the participating states.

The nationwide Survey was first conducted in 1979, when 8 eagles were found in Massachusetts, and has been used annually to gain insight into the numbers and distribution of wintering bald eagles across the continental United States National Grid, a partner in eagle conservation since 1982, donates helicopter flight time enabling MassWildlife to quickly and efficiently cover the extensive Quabbin shoreline and meandering Connecticut River mainstem. "The National Grid helicopter has been an essential part of the Survey for more than a decade," notes Blodget. "It would be virtually impossible to cover the Quabbin and Connecticut River using people observing from the ground. The data we get from the helicopter team is accurate, complete and comparable to data from previous years. We have a lot of confidence in those numbers thanks to the cooperation of National Grid." Sixty-one eagles were counted in Massachusetts during the January 2001 survey, and the highest Bay State total ever recorded occurred in January 1998 when 76 eagles were tallied. Nationwide, 13,000-16,000 eagles have been censused in recent years.

ABOUT BOOKS

Diversity Is the Spice of Life

Mark Lynch

The Future of Life. 2002. Edward O. Wilson. New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 230 pages.

Extinct Birds (revised edition). 2001. Errol Fuller. Ithaca, New York: Comstock Publishing Associates. 398 pages.

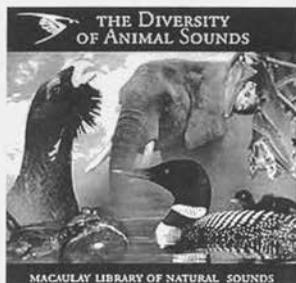
A Gap in Nature: Discovering the World's Extinct Animals. 2001. Tim Flannery and Peter Scouten. New York, New York: Atlantic Monthly Press. 184 pages.

The Diversity of Animal Sounds (CD). 2001. Jack W. Bradbury and Gregory F. Budney, producers. Ithaca, New York: Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the Macaulay Library of Natural Sounds.

I was a geeky grade schooler when I was given a marvelous book for Christmas that would change my view of the natural world forever. This special book was *The Wonders of Life on Earth*, by the editors of Life Magazine. It was the perfect children's introduction to evolution, migration, mating behavior, and even symbiosis. Although the pages were filled with color photographs, what really captured my imagination was the richly detailed artwork. Some of the paintings were even three-page foldout dioramas printed on both sides. These marvelous illustrations were by Walter Linsenmaier, Rudolf Freund, Joseph Sibal, and Guy Tudor. Here were the dark interiors of Brazilian and New Guinean rainforests, the sprawling Argentinian pampas, and African savannas. In every case, the pictures were crammed with life, swarming with insects, teeming with mammals and flocks of birds of every description. There were so many creatures in every painting that they looked like they were being pushed off the pages and onto your lap. I knew that if I ever finally got to these exotic destinations, this is what I would really see: life in myriad marvelous shapes and colors everywhere. I was too young at that point to understand that these dioramas did not represent the actual places, but idealized paintings that included far too many birds, animals, and insects than you would ever really see in one place at one time. But it was too late. I was hooked on biodiversity.

As I grew older and my knowledge of zoology and botany became more sophisticated. I realized that a world of interesting creatures and plants existed in any local yard or sandlot, and my passion for biodiversity grew even deeper. But I still yearned to see some of those fantastic animals I saw in *The Wonders of Life on Earth*, and so I traveled. When I finally did get to see those howler monkeys and Birds of Paradise, I instantly reflected back on the paintings in the book, because those images are forever burned into my memory. But it is interesting that in every case the paintings could not hold a candle to the experience of standing in front of the real thing: to hear the birds, to feel the dampness of the forest, to smell the vegetation, to

watch the mammal behave. The full appreciation of our planet's biodiversity is truly a multisensory experience.



A unique auditory celebration of this wonder of biodiversity is the CD *The Diversity of Animal Sounds*, produced by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and the Macaulay Library of Natural Sounds. Although Cornell's Macaulay Library is best known to birders as housing a vast collection of bird songs and calls, in recent years the collection has expanded to include all sound produced by vertebrates and invertebrates. This stunning CD was originally given as a gift to participants at the American Ornithologists' Union meeting at Cornell in 1999. Soon, Cornell was flooded with requests for more copies of the CD, and they decided to release it to the public.

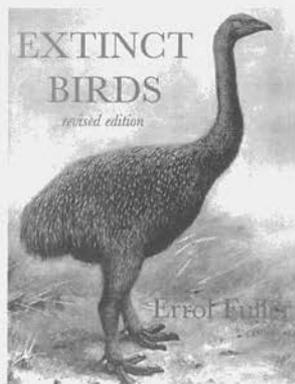
This CD can best be described as the "greatest hits" of the natural world, a compilation of 60 of the most amazing and bizarre sounds that invertebrates and vertebrates can produce, chosen from among the Library's 150,000 recordings. The sounds are grouped by their behavioral significance under such titles such as "display signals of promiscuous males," "territorial and courtship signals in polygynous species," and "group defense and coordination signals." A 26-page booklet included gives an overview analysis of these behaviors as well as all the particulars of the recordings. Birds, of course, are well represented, featuring the calls, songs, and displays of such species as the Satin Bowerbird, Superb Lyrebird, Bearded Manakin, Common Potoo, Great Blue Turaco, and Sage Grouse, as well as more local species like Winter Wren and Common Raven.

But I have to confess it was the nonbird calls that truly captured my imagination. The mournful trumpeting of a group of the huge, rare lemur, the indri, seems to herald their impending extinction in Madagascar. A school of chorusing male plainfin midshipman fish attempting to find mates in Tomales Bay, California, loudly drone just like Tibetan monks. This sound was so unexpected that when I first heard it I thought my CD player was broken. Even more amazing is the drumming of tiny treehopper insects made by rapidly vibrating their abdomens. These sounds were only recently discovered and are normally inaudible to humans. Rounding out all this exotic hoopla are state of the art recordings of sounds more familiar to all of us, like the tail-slapping of a beaver or the wail of a Common Loon.

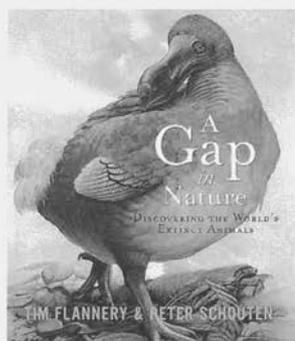
The last two cuts of the CD are calls and sounds made by two now-extinct species, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker and the Kauai Oo. Although I have seen many pictures, mounted specimens, and even photographs of extinct birds, there is something particularly poignant about hearing the voices of these forever lost species. The loss of earth's biodiversity also means, among other things, an awful stilling of the rich and varied voices of the natural world.

Examples of what has already been lost of Earth's biosphere be found in two very good new books about extinction: *Extinct Birds* and *A Gap in Nature*. *Extinct Birds* is

a dramatically revised edition of Fuller's 1987 classic published by Facts on File. The book has been expanded by almost 150 pages, with many more plates added and text sections reedited and rewritten. Even the back cover's collection of Dodo pictures has been expanded. It is truly a sumptuous volume on what is really a very depressing subject. Fuller, a painter as well as a writer, has an artist's eye for choosing fine art and interesting illustrations. The writing remains extremely informative and fairly definitive.



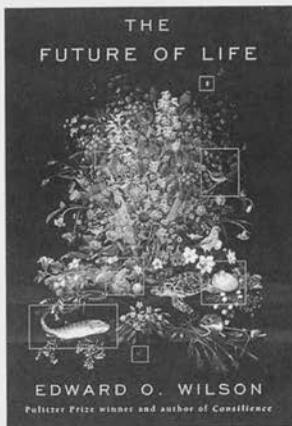
A Gap in Nature is more of a collection of paintings done by wildlife artist Peter Schouten, illustrating extinct birds, mammals, and reptiles, with concise descriptive



passages written by Tim Flannery. Flannery has also written a good overview of the history of extinction that introduces the book. Flannery and Schouten narrowed their choice of subjects by only picking animals that have become extinct between 1500 and 1999. Their subjects also had to be known from sufficient material to allow an accurate illustration to be made. The book thus reads chronologically from 1500 and Upland Moa to 1989 and Atitlan Grebe. Schouten's paintings are consistently bright, bold, and lively, and create a real sense of loss for not being able to see these creatures in the flesh.

Why do we find such depressing books so fascinating? Are these the equivalent of gawking at a car wreck? Absolutely not! I believe it is vitally important to always remember what has been lost of the natural world. Furthermore, every story of extinction is an environmental lesson that needs to be learned anew. While reading accounts of extinction, I do often find myself feeling an odd mixture of fascination with the exotic combined with a deep and wistful longing for what once was and will never be again. After all, a hundred paintings, drawings, plates, and even animation cannot bring the Great Auk back to life. Perhaps we even get a sense of our own folly and mortality by reading these tales of doomed creatures; and knowledge of what has become extinct can foster a deep love and appreciation for what still remains around us.

To understand this human love of the complexity of the living world so many of us feel, and the biological mechanics of the biosphere, one has to turn to the books of Harvard entomologist Edward O. Wilson. To date, no other author has so clearly and passionately written about the meaning and future of the biosphere and our feeling of "biophilia," the seemingly innate love humans feel for the rich diversity of nature (Wilson 1984). His new book, *The Future of Life*, is both a concise summary of the challenges facing the preservation of Earth's biodiversity and a plan for how to go about this Herculean task. I cannot overstate the importance of this slim book.



Dr. Wilson begins *The Future of Life* with a brief but animated discussion of the breadth and variety of organisms that make up this very thin shell of life, or “biospheric membrane,” that exists on our planet. “From Everest’s peak to the floor of the Mariana’s trench, creatures of one kind or another inhabit virtually every square inch of the planetary surface” (p. 3). But this unique living marvel is under an unprecedented onslaught caused directly by humans: “The twentieth century was a time of exponential scientific and technical advance, the freeing of the arts by an exuberant modernism, and the spread of democracy and human rights throughout the world. It was also a dark and savage age of world wars, genocide, and totalitarian ideologies that came dangerously close to global

domination. While preoccupied with all this tumult, humanity managed collaterally to decimate the natural environment and draw down the nonrenewable natural resources of the planet with cheerful abandon” (p. 22).

We are at a crossroads now. Dr. Wilson uses the analogy of a bottleneck, where the growing human population has stretched the use of the natural resources to the limit, and we are teetering on an unprecedented collapse of the biosphere. What makes this book so useful is the straightforward, but passionate way in which Dr. Wilson makes his case. He clearly outlines what is at stake and why the biosphere is important both financially, and even more importantly, morally, aesthetically, and even spiritually. He clearly delineates the scope of this daunting problem and how we got to this chaotic point. Finally, he proposes several clear strategies for passing through the bottleneck to a world where we have both elevated the living standard of the world’s desperately poor and preserved a significant part of what variety of life is left. He is no starry-eyed idealist and knows the problems will require international will and cooperation to solve, yet he remains cautiously optimistic that we will do the right thing. Dr. Wilson also believes that old-style politics has no place in this discussion and that sides have to cease to stereotype opposing camps in order to move toward solutions together.

I have to admit I am not as optimistic as Dr. Wilson even after reading this book. The problems seem far too complex, too far along, and require an international will to change I am not sure humanity can muster at this point in time. But then again, I have always been a bit of a pessimist and even a misanthrope. So, it surprised me that I found hope in Dr. Wilson’s faith that we *Homo sapiens* will eventually solve this crisis. This firm belief in the eventual goodness of humanity as well as Dr. Wilson’s genuine deep love of the diversity of life makes *The Future of Life* touching as well as informative.

A civilization able to envision God and to embark on the colonization of space will surely find the way to save the integrity of this planet and the magnificent life it harbors (p. 189). 🐦

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- Barnett, L. and the editors of Life Magazine. 1960. *The Wonders of Life on Earth*. New York, New York: Golden Press.
- Fuller, E. 1987. *Extinct Birds*. New York: Facts On File.
- Wilson, E.O. 1984. *Biophilia*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Mark Lynch is a teacher and environmental monitor for Broad Meadow Brook in Worcester, a Massachusetts Audubon property. He also hosts Inquiry, an interview show on the arts and sciences on radio station WICN. He teaches and is a docent at the Worcester Art Museum.



News from MassWildlife

Salisbury Salt Marsh Wildlife Management Area

On October 25, 2001, Environmental Affairs Secretary Bob Durand dedicated the 325-acre Salisbury Salt Marsh Wildlife Management Area, the newest addition to MassWildlife's 120,000-acre network of statewide conservation lands. The area includes 306 acres purchased from National Grid using funds generated from the Wildlands Conservation Stamp, a \$5 assessment on each hunting and fishing license used expressly for the protection of open space. Reimbursement from the US Fish and Wildlife Service's National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program was vital to the acquisition, as was the donation of 15 acres by Essex County Greenbelt and 5 acres by the Essex County Sportsmen's Association. There are 265 acres of tidal wetlands and 60 upland acres, providing habitat for terrestrial and aquatic species alike and outdoor recreation opportunities for naturalists, photographers, hunters, anglers and birders. The marsh supports two rare plants, Eastern Saline Sedge (Endangered) and American Sea-blite (Special Concern), along with three watch-listed plants.

Directions: From the junction of Routes 1 and 110 in Salisbury, take Route 1 North for one quarter mile to Beach Road (Route 1A) on right. Follow Beach Road, and take the first right onto Ferry Road. Follow Ferry Road for 1+ mile and turn left onto Sweet Apple Tree Lane. Follow Sweet Apple Tree Lane to the end and the entrance to Salisbury Salt Marsh Wildlife Management Area.

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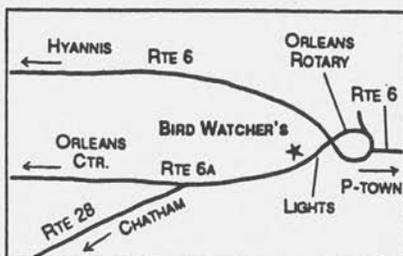
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BIRD SIGHTINGS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2001

Rick Heil, Seth Kellogg, Marjorie Rines, Robert Stymeist

The weather during the last two months of the year could not have been better for birding. Both months were exceptionally mild, sunny, and dry – ideal weather for scouting out Christmas Bird Count (CBC) routes. In Boston, the temperature averaged 48.3° during November, 3° above normal and 4.5° warmer than last November. The average temperature for December was 40.5°, 6.9° above the average and 11.3° warmer than in 2000, making this the second warmest December in Boston in 130 years. The first freeze in the Boston metropolitan area was noted on November 12, five days later than the average, ending a growing season of 223 days, ten days longer than average. Of course, areas north and west of Boston had a considerably earlier freeze. Three temperature records were broken during December in Boston: 71° on the 1st, 66° on the 5th, and on the 6th a high mark of 72° was 21° above normal for that date.

Rainfall was under an inch in the Boston area during November, making it the fourth driest November in 131 years. There was no snow noted in Boston during November, which usually has 1.3 inches on average. A total of 2.83 inches of rain fell in Boston during December, 1.18 inches below average. A storm on December 8-9 brought a rain-snow mix in the southeastern parts of the state, but heavy snow fell with up to nine inches to the northwestern parts of the state. A total of 5 inches fell in Boston during December, which is 2.4 inches below average. There was no snow on the ground on Christmas. *R. Stymeist*

LOONS THROUGH ALCIDS

More Red-throated Loons lingered later into December than usual, with counts of two hundred or more on four Christmas Bird Counts (CBC), including 793 counted at mid-Cape Cod on December 27. At least two **Pacific Loons** made appearances during the period. One was in the Taunton River at Somerset on November 8, and another resided in the vicinity of Race Point, Provincetown, from November 24 to December 6. This species has become almost routine along the Massachusetts coast, with four or five sight records per year since 1997. Interestingly, although most observations fall between October and February (15 records since 1997), May (5 records since 1997) has proved to be as good a time to look for this loon as any winter month. Seventy-five Northern Fulmars, all but three being light morphs, were noted at Jeffreys Ledge during a hagfish survey out of New Hampshire on December 3. A few Greater Shearwaters again persisted into early December, at Jeffreys Ledge, and from shore at Eastern Point, Gloucester.

Thirty Double-crested Cormorants each, on the Cape Cod and Greater Boston CBCs, would have been unthinkable just twenty years ago when mere singles were highlighted and warranted observer citations. Tardy herons included a Great Egret at Longmeadow, December 15-18, undoubtedly a late date for western Massachusetts, and perhaps even for anywhere away from the immediate coast; a Green Heron on the Quincy CBC on December 15; and single Cattle Egrets at Falmouth, December 8, and at West Tisbury, present throughout the period. A count of 107 Turkey Vultures in the Westport area on the CBC there was remarkable. "Buzzards" are now essentially permanent residents in Bristol County, currently the only region of the state where they may reliably be found throughout the entire winter.

A lone adult **Greater White-fronted Goose** of undescribed race was reported from Rochester November 27 and remained in the area at least through December. For the second year running, a flock of Snow Geese began the winter in the Newburyport-Plum Island marshes, numbering 105 on December 23. A "small race Canada Goose," reported to be a Richardson's (*B. c. hutchinsii*), was seen in Gill on December 27. Observers should be mindful that small Canada Geese here may be represented by several possible forms, some of which have been rumored for full species status, including Lesser (*parvipes*), and Cackling (*minima*), as well as Richardson's. All three of these forms have been reported from Massachusetts in the past, although to date most small Canada's in the Bay State have been identified as *hutchinsii*. While typical individuals can indeed be readily identified, and observers are encouraged to do so, intermediate populations are believed to exist, so obvious care should be employed.

Inherently controversial, a single **Barnacle Goose** was reported from Gloucester for one day only, December 7. This bird was just one of a flurry of sightings in the Northeast this winter. Between November and February single Barnacle Geese were noted at ten locations between New Brunswick and Virginia, suggesting a small invasion. In the past, a few Barnacle Geese in the Northeast have indeed been revealed to be escapes, while others have very likely been genuine vagrants from Greenland or Europe, where breeding populations have been increasing for decades (Greenland pop: 8000 in 1959, 33,800 in 1978, 45,000 in 1999. Population increases at Svalbard, Norway, have been equally as dramatic). A 1988 Barnacle in New Bedford, accompanied by two *flavirostris* Greenland White-fronted Geese, was likely wild. We do know for certain that at least *some* Barnacle Geese arrive here on their own. One record, from Newfoundland, was proved to be of wild origin: an individual shot out of a flock of three in October 1981 had been banded in Spitzbergen (Svalbard), Norway. There is now a fairly compelling geographic and temporal pattern for these geese, with a preponderance of the records occurring in the Northeast during the winter season. My own opinion is that most Barnacle Goose records in the Northeast represent genuine vagrants.

The second warmest December in Boston in 130 years of record keeping created conditions that clearly encouraged many birds to forgo migrating farther south, including waterfowl. Greater than normal numbers of Gadwall, American Wigeon, Black Duck, Northern Pintail, and Green-winged Teal remained throughout the period, exploiting predominantly ice-free marshes. As illustrative of this point as any were the late December counts of Black Ducks on two southeastern Massachusetts CBCs, 5243 at Marshfield, and 6633 at mid-Cape, more than double usual recent CBC totals there. Three drake Eurasian Wigeons were a bit fewer than usual and well below last year's high of eleven. On lakes and ponds, December counts of both Ring-necked and Ruddy ducks were also, not surprisingly, well above average. **The drake Tufted Duck**, a monument to site fidelity, continued at the Wachusett Reservoir for a seventh winter. One hundred and two Harlequin Ducks on the Cape Ann CBC on December 16 was easily a new state high and indicative of the species continued increase. The Pontoosuc Reservoir in Lanesborough, at the western edge of the state, enticed a single Brant on November 3 and four Long-tailed Ducks on November 11 to drop in. The evening flight of Long-tailed Ducks at Nantucket, where roughly one out of every fourteen in North America winters, totaled a record 254,302 on this year's CBC, December 30.

Despite the exceptionally mild conditions, Ospreys apparently departed the state early this year. Only a single bird was reported in early November, versus eight during the period last year, the latest on December 16. The 164 Red-tailed Hawks on the Concord CBC was still impressive, even if most of them were counted twice. A total of at least 118 Red-tails were counted migrating past Mount Watatic from just four days between November 4-21, while at nearby Mount Wachusett, 42 were also noted November 21. There were three reports of Golden Eagles from the Quabbin area, where a few routinely winter, but more unusual was one

observed at Salisbury, November 17. An adult dark morph **Gyr Falcon** photographed at South Boston, December 16-17, highlighted this year's CBC there.

Wild Turkey populations continue to thrive and expand in Massachusetts. An impressive 336 were tallied on the Athol CBC December 15, while farther east flocks of 20-30 were observed in several coastal counties. Northern Bobwhite, on the other hand, continue to decline amid increasing suburban development in their depleted range in southeastern Massachusetts. A paltry total of 28 was reported from three CBCs. Always very rare in winter, a Sora was a good find on the mid-Cape CBC, December 27. A juvenile Common Moorhen was present throughout December at Nantucket, where this species has wintered before.

As was the case with waterfowl, many shorebirds delayed or simply did not move on. For the second year in a row, multiple **Lesser Yellowlegs** were found at Newburyport Harbor throughout December. This season a flock of *five*, first detected in late November, remained throughout December, and were enjoyed by stunned CBC participants December 23. A single Lesser Yellowlegs was also found on the Buzzards Bay CBC, December 15. The long list of other late waders included an American Oystercatcher at Nantucket and two Marbled Godwits at Chatham, both on December 2, two **Least Sandpipers** at South Beach in Chatham on December 16, another Least at Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard, to December 22, a Stilt Sandpiper at Plum Island November 4, a Short-billed Dowitcher at North Monomoy November 10, and five Long-billed Dowitchers at Hyannisport December 27. The mild temperatures, unfrozen flats, and open marshes kept prey items accessible, and encouraged much larger numbers of the more traditional wintering shorebird species to linger. Last year I commented that the 900 Black-bellied Plovers at South Beach November 25 "may be one of the highest November tallies ever recorded." Although coming earlier in the month, this season's count of 2600 Black-bellies at the same location November 4 was indeed telling of the season, as were the 1150 Dunlin in the Newburyport-Plum Island area November 23, and the total of 4051 Dunlin on the Cape Cod CBC December 16.

In Cape Cod Bay, gusty northwest winds on December 15 pushed fourteen rather late Pomarine Jaegers past First Encounter Beach in Eastham, while a Parasitic Jaeger at Chatham on December 2 was exceptionally late for that species. The high count of Little Gulls was fourteen at the traditional Low Beach, Nantucket, location December 30. A Black-headed Gull at Quabbin on December 29 was an exceptional find inland on the CBC there. Other *Larid* maxima from Nantucket in December included 1912 Bonaparte's Gulls (which is well below recent years' highs), 41 Iceland Gulls, and 17 Lesser Black-backed Gulls. Also at Low Beach on Nantucket, an adult **Thayer's Gull**, whatever taxonomic bracket is eventually decide upon for this gull, was very nicely photographed, in which the characteristic primary pattern, among other features, is clearly depicted. It was a very good fall for Forster's Tern, which is for the most part an incursive species in the state. Among other reports during November, sixty were still present at Provincetown on November 3, as compared with zero statewide during last November. Two Black Skimmers were a complete surprise at Winthrop November 28. It was an extremely lackluster period for alcids in Massachusetts waters. Only six Dovekies were reported, four in November, and two in December. Razorbill counts were also below average for recent years, with the 740 noted at Provincetown December 15 being by far the highest count.

R. Heil

Red-throated Loon			12/2	Chatham	120	B. Nikula
11/4	P.I.	70	R. Heil	12/16	Cape Cod	271
11/10	Nauset B.	350	G. Hirth	12/23	Marshfield	203
11/13	Edgartown	600+	V. Laux	12/26	Plymouth	129
11/18	Boston H.	77	TASL (M. Hall)	12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	793
11/25	Hadley	1	C. Gentes	12/30	Nantucket	241
11/28	Pittsfield	1	E. Neumuth	Pacific Loon (details submitted)*		
11/29	Rockport (A.P.)	620	J. Soucy	11/8	Somerset	1
						R. Titus

Pacific Loon (no details) *									
11/24-25	P'town (R.P.)	1	S. Mirick + v.o.	11/7	Cape Ann	32	BBC (B. Volkle)		
12/6	P'town	1	M. Sylvia	11/8	Somerset	21	R. Titus		
Common Loon				11/18	Boston H.	29	TASL (M. Hall)		
11/4	P.I.	72	R. Heil	11/22	Truro	15	W. Ellison		
11/4	Barnstable (S.N.)	14	M. Lynch#	11/24	Bourne	24	BBC (R. Stymeist)		
11/10	Salisbury	19	P. + F. Vale	11/25	Westport	72	M. Lynch#		
11/10	Sterling	7	J. Michaels#	12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	30	B. Nikula		
11/13	Edgartown	300+	V. Laux	12/8	P'town H.	85	B. Nikula#		
11/18	Boston H.	17	TASL (M. Hall)	12/16	Cape Ann	501	CBC		
11/18	E. Quabbin	12	T. Gagnon	Double-crested Cormorant					
11/24	Truro	29	W. Ellison	11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	1235+	P. Flood		
11/25	Westport	27	M. Lynch#	12/16	Greater Boston	30	CBC		
11/29	Rockport (A.P.)	40	J. Soucy	12/16	Cape Cod	30	CBC		
12/14	Dennis (Corp. B.)	6	D. Silverstein#	American Bittern					
12/23	Bourne	14	P. + F. Vale	11/3	Newbypt.	2	J. Mann		
12/29	Nant. Sound	27	G. d'Entremont#	11/4	N. Monomoy	1	B. Nikula		
Pied-billed Grebe				11/4	P.I.	2	S. Hedman#		
11/3	Stoughton	5	G. d'Entremont	11/11	Salisbury	3	M. Lynch#		
11/4	Lakeville	9	BBC (R. Finch)	11/25	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	2	E. Nielsen		
11/7	Pembroke	5	W. Petersen	12/1	Dorchester	1	R. Donovan		
11/11	W. Newbury	7	R. Heil	12/31	Nantucket	1	G. d'Entremont#		
11/11, 12/25	Cambr. (F.P.)	3, 2	B. Miller	Great Blue Heron					
11/18	Northbridge	6	M. Lynch#	11/4	Barnstable	14	M. Lynch#		
11/25	Wakefield	6	P. + F. Vale	11/10	Worcester	10	fide M. Lynch		
11/25	Westport	13	M. Lynch#	11/18	Boston H.	11	TASL (M. Hall)		
12/1-2	Cape Cod	57	CCBC	12/31	Nantucket	8	G. d'Entremont#		
12/14	Brewster	4	D. Silverstein#	Great Egret					
12/27	Arlington	2	M. Rines	11/4	P.I.	4	R. Heil		
Horned Grebe				11/10	Ipswitch	6	BBC (I. Giriunas)		
11/1	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	11/16	IRWS	4	C. Leahy		
11/2	Plymouth B.	20	R. Titus	11/21	Newbypt.	1	N. Soulette#		
11/2	N. Scituate	6	R. Titus	12/2	Westport	1	M. Boucher		
11/4	Barnstable (S.N.)	3	M. Lynch#	12/15-18	Longmeadow	1	J. Barnes		
11/18	E. Quabbin	3	T. Gagnon	Snowy Egret					
11/18	Boston H.	357	TASL (M. Hall)	11/12	P.I.	1	H. D'Entremont#		
11/22, 12/25	P.I.	10, 10	P. + F. Vale	11/18	Winthrop	2	P. + F. Vale		
11/24	Truro	17	W. Ellison	Cattle Egret					
12/2	Revere-Winthrop	121	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/8	Nantucket	1	K. Coombs		
Red-necked Grebe				12/8	Falmouth	1	B. Schwarzman		
11/3	Ludlow	1	H. Allen	thr	W. Tisbury	1	A. Keith# + v.o.		
11/3	Salisbury	5	P. + F. Vale	Green Heron					
11/4	Pittsfield (Onota)	1	T. Gagnon	12/15	Quincy	1	CBC		
11/4	Barnstable (S.N.)	1	M. Lynch#	Black-crowned Night-Heron					
11/16	E. Gloucester	5	J. Berry	12/16	Greater Boston	10	CBC		
11/18	Boston H.	89	TASL (M. Hall)	12/23	Marshfield	3	CBC (G. d'Entremont#)		
11/23	P.I.	22	R. Heil	Black Vulture					
11/24	Truro	12	W. Ellison	11/14	Mattapoisett	1	B. Maker		
11/26	N. Scituate	38	D. Peacock	11/25	Westport	2	E. Neilsen		
12/29	Winthrop	76	P. + F. Vale	Turkey Vulture					
Eared Grebe *				11/3	Sutton	3	M. Lynch#		
11/17	Gloucester	1	N. Soulette#	11/4	Falmouth	6	M. Lynch#		
Northern Fulmar				11/4	Mt. Wataatic	39	T. McCullough#		
12/3	Jeffreys Ledge	75	J. Berry#	11/20	Gloucester	2	J. Soucy#		
12/15	Quincy	1	CBC	11/25	Westport	80	E. Neilsen		
Cory's Shearwater				12/5	Maynard	4	L. Nachtrab		
11/6	Eastham (F.E.)	2	B. Nikula	12/15	Newport/Westport	107	CBC		
Greater Shearwater				12/23	Barnstable	4	P. Flood		
11/17	P'town	1	B. Nikula	Greater White-fronted Goose					
11/24	P'town (R.P.)	2	S. Mirick#	11/27-12/30	Rochester	1	M. Maurer + v.o.		
12/3	Jeffreys Ledge	2	J. Berry#	Snow Goose					
12/9	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	J. Young#	11/9	W. Boxford	1	T. Walker		
Shearwater species				11/11	Mt. Wataatic	330	T. Pirro		
11/20	Rockport	6	J. Berry#	11/18-12/31	Waltham	1	J. Michaels		
Northern Gannet				12/6	Wilmington	1	C. Caron		
11/3, 12/15	Rockport (H.P.)	300, 60	BBC (J. Nove)	12/8-15	Randolph	3	G. d'Entremont		
11/4, 24	Chatham (S.B.)	30, 300	P. Flood	12/15	Hadley	1	S. Sumner		
11/5	Salisbury	200	G. Long	12/15	E. Longmeadow	3	B. Kindseth		
11/6	Eastham (F.E.)	1500	B. Nikula	12/19	Rochester	10	M. Maurer		
11/24	Truro	450	W. Ellison	12/23	Newburyport	105	CBC		
11/25	P'town (R.P.)	800+	P. Flood	Canada Goose (small form)					
12/3	Jeffreys Ledge	250	J. Berry#	12/27	Gill	1	R. Packard		
12/9	Dennis	240	B. Nikula	Brant					
12/12	Nantucket	4200	B. Kennedy	11/3	Lanesboro (Pont.)	1	S. Kellogg		
12/15	Eastham (F.E.)	800+	P. Flood	11/3	Wayland	1	L. Parker		
12/30	Nantucket	2,194	CBC	11/9	Dennis (C.B.)	10	D. Silverstein#		
Great Cormorant				11/18	Boston H.	833	TASL (M. Hall)		
11/2	N. Scituate	54	R. Titus	11/19	Duxbury B.	140	D. Furbish		
				11/22	Truro	24	W. Ellison		

Brant (continued)									
11/25	Kingston	174	J. Sweeney#	12/5	Hyannis	20		C. Buelow	
Barnacle Goose				12/9	GMNWR	210		S. Perkins	
12/2	Gloucester	1	T. Allison	12/15	Braintree	50		G. d'Entremont	
Wood Duck				12/20	Hyannis	20		C. Buelow	
11/3	GMNWR	62	S. Perkins	Canvasback					
11/3	Stoughton	7	G. d'Entremont	11/4	S. Boston	1 m	BBC (R. Stymeist)		
11/8	Quabbin	17	E. Labato	11/13, 12/30	Gill	1, 1	H. Allen		
11/10	Worcester	25	fide M. Lynch	11/22	Marlboro	2	S. Moore#		
11/18	Northbridge	14	M. Lynch#	12/1-2	Cape Cod	8	CCBC		
12/1-2	Cape Cod	6	CCBC	12/2	Southboro	2	M. Lynch#		
12/13, 20	Leominster	8, 6	C. Caron	12/19	W. Newbury	1 m	J. Berry		
12/15	E. Longmeadow	6	B. Kindseth	12/25	Cambr. (F.P.)	64	B. Miller		
12/30	Winchester	11	A. Ankers	12/31	Nantucket	40	G. d'Entremont#		
Gadwall				Redhead					
11/3	Ipswich/Essex	138	BBC (T. Young)	11/2	Cambr. (F.P.)	1	B. Harrison		
11/15	Woburn	22	M. Rines	11/10	Stoughton	1	G. d'Entremont		
11/16	IRWS	125	C. Leahy	11/15-16	Arlington Res.	1	T. Kresser		
11/25	Westport	17	M. Lynch#	11/24	Nantucket	2	G. Jackson		
12/15	Braintree	5	G. d'Entremont#	12/12	Plymouth	1	C. Fiorini		
12/25	Gloucester (E.P.)	8	T. Roberts#	thr	Boston	1	G. Tepke#		
12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	155	CBC	Ring-necked Duck					
thr	DWWS	77 max	D. Furbish	11/2	Cambr. (F.P.)	80+	B. Harrison		
Eurasian Wigeon				11/3	Stoughton	493	G. d'Entremont		
11/1	Norfolk	1	G. Valade	11/3-4	Pittsfield	900	v.o.		
12/2	Acoaxet	1	M. Boucher	11/4	W. Newbury	960	R. Heil		
12/23-30	Newbypt. H.	1 m	K. Haley + v.o.	11/9	Stoughton	460	R. Titus		
American Wigeon				12/1-2	Cape Cod	281	CCBC		
11/4	Marstons Mills	36	M. Lynch#	12/1-22	Framingham	160	E. Taylor		
11/7	Sudbury	36	L. Nachtrab	12/2	Southboro	743	M. Lynch#		
11/10	Worcester	26	fide M. Lynch	12/15	Ludlow	100	B. Platenik		
11/11	Carver	85	D. Larson	12/22	Marlboro	200	E. Taylor		
11/16	IRWS	100	C. Leahy	12/27	Centerville	435	CBC (B. Nikula)		
11/21	Arlington Res.	22	J. Forbes	Tufted Duck					
11/25	Westport	48	M. Lynch#	11/thr	Sterling	1	v.o.		
12/1-2	Cape Cod	102	CCBC	12/29-30	Boylston	1	B. Kamp		
12/1-29	Marlboro	32	E. Taylor	Greater Scaup					
12/16	Easthampton	5	B. Bieda	11/3	W. Newbury	12	P. + F. Vale		
12/29	Nantucket	50	G. d'Entremont#	11/4	Falmouth	639	M. Lynch#		
12/31	Newbypt	14	J. Berry#	11/5	Clinton	10	C. Buelow		
American Black Duck				11/18	Boston H.	504	TASL (M. Hall)		
11/4	Barnstable	257	M. Lynch#	11/23	Sterling	45+	P. + F. Vale		
11/23	P.I.	2350	R. Heil	11/25	Westport	180+	M. Lynch#		
11/18	Boston H.	342	TASL (M. Hall)	12/29	Winthrop	104	P. + F. Vale		
11/25	Westport	323	M. Lynch#	Lesser Scaup					
12/23	Marshfield	5243	CBC	11/4	Falmouth	3	M. Lynch#		
12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	6633	CBC	11/4	Pittsfield	3	T. Gagnon		
Blue-winged Teal				11/5	Clinton	2	C. Buelow		
11/10	Southboro	2	E. Taylor	11/10	Charlemont	1	H. Allen		
Northern Shoveler				11/11	W. Newbury	6	M. Lynch#		
11/2	GMNWR	1	R. Veit	11/21	Granville	1	S. Kellogg		
11/8, 21	Boston	2, 5	A. Joslin	11/25	Westport	70+	M. Lynch#		
11/12-30	Arlington Res.	1-2	R. LaFontaine#	12/22	Gloucester	5	G. Tepke#		
11/16	IRWS	3	C. Leahy	12/29-31	Nantucket	9	G. d'Entremont#		
11/22	Pembroke	2	W. Petersen	King Eider					
12/11	Sharon	8	V. Zollo	11/17-12/31	Gloucester	1	S. Hedman + v.o.		
12/23	Ipswich	5 f	J. Berry#	12/2	Salisbury	1 ad m	J. Berry#		
12/29	Marlboro	1 f	E. Taylor	12/16	Eastham	1 m	CBC (W. Petersen)		
Northern Pintail				12/29	Rockport (H.P.)	1 m	J. Soucy		
11/2	GMNWR	8	S. Perkins	Common Eider					
11/10, 12/25	P.I.	27, 15	P. + F. Vale	11/1	Rockport (A.P.)	600	S. Perkins#		
11/11	Duxbury	6 m	D. Furbish	11/2	N. Scituate	900	R. Titus		
11/16	IRWS	5	C. Leahy	11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	1800+	P. Flood		
11/18	Braintree	4	S. Carey	11/18	Boston H.	8025	TASL (M. Hall)		
11/25	Westport	32	M. Lynch#	11/24	Bourne	500+ BBC	(R. Stymeist)		
12/1	Wakefield	4	P. + F. Vale	11/25	Westport	593	M. Lynch#		
12/1-2	Cape Cod	19	CCBC	11/25	Kingston	620+	J. Sweeney#		
12/16	Lee	2	R. Ferren	12/2	Salisbury	1000	J. Berry#		
12/16	Pittsfield (Onota)	2	C. Blagdon	12/15	Nahant	1000+	D. Saffarewich		
12/22-29	Marlboro	13	E. Taylor	12/29	Winthrop	500+	P. + F. Vale		
12/31	Nantucket	5	G. d'Entremont#	12/29	Nant. Sound	665	G. d'Entremont#		
Green-winged Teal				Harlequin Duck					
11/10	Worcester	17	fide M. Lynch	11/6-17	S. Boston	1 m	R. Donovan		
11/11	E. Orleans	45+	B. Nikula	11/10	Nauset B.	3	G. Hirth		
11/14	Longmeadow	31	J. LaPointe	11/25	Plymouth	1	J. Sweeney#		
11/14	P.I.	100+	J. Berry	11/25	Nantucket	25+	J. Shetterly		
12/1-2	Cape Cod	186	CCBC	11/26	N. Scituate	12	D. Peacock		
12/2	E. Boston	37	BBC (R. Stymeist)	12/6	P.I.	1 f	S. Haydock		
				12/16	Cape Ann	102	CBC		

Harlequin Duck (continued)							
12/thr	E. Orleans	8	fide B. Nikula				
Surf Scoter							
11/1	Rockport (A.P.)	150	S. Perkins#				
11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	250+	P. Flood				
11/10	P'town (R.P.)	13	P. Flood				
11/18	Boston H.	154	TASL (M. Hall)				
11/19	Duxbury B.	400+	D. Furbish				
11/24	Bourne	75	BBC (R. Stymeist)				
12/29	Nant. Sound	658	G. d'Entremont#				
White-winged Scoter							
11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	300+	P. Flood				
11/18	Boston H.	557	TASL (M. Hall)				
11/18, 26	Lanesville	150+	J. Berry#				
11/22	P.I.	75	P. + F. Vale				
11/24	Truro	140	W. Ellison				
11/25	Westport	160+	M. Lynch#				
11/29	Rockport (A.P.)	100	J. Soucy				
12/29	Nant. Sound	200	G. d'Entremont#				
Black Scoter							
11/1	Rockport (A.P.)	750	S. Perkins#				
11/3	Hadley	1 f	E. Labato				
11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	26	P. Flood				
12/2	P.I.	28	D. Chickering				
12/2	Gardner	1 f	T. Pirro				
12/14	Eastham (F.E.)	13	D. Silverstein#				
12/29	Nant. Sound	25	G. d'Entremont#				
Long-tailed Duck							
11/11	Lanesboro (Pont.)	4	R. Packard#				
11/18	Boston H.	59	TASL (M. Hall)				
11/19	Duxbury B.	300+	D. Furbish				
11/24	Chatham (S.B.)	47	P. Flood				
11/29	Rockport (A.P.)	220	J. Soucy				
12/7	Cheshire	1	H. Allen				
12/15	Brewster	28	P. Flood				
12/15	Dennis (Corp. B.)	36	P. Flood				
12/22	Westfield	1	A. + L. Richardson				
12/30	Nantucket	254,302	CBC				
Bufflehead							
11/8	Somerset	60	R. Titus				
11/11	Lanesboro (Pont.)	33	R. Packard#				
11/11	Scituate	47	G. d'Entremont#				
11/16	E. Gloucester	58	J. Berry				
11/18	Boston H.	1941	TASL (M. Hall)				
11/22	Newbypt.	70	P. + F. Vale				
11/23	Orleans	2000	S. Mirick#				
12/15	Nahant	500	D. Saffarewich				
12/16	Cape Cod	2,063	CBC				
Common Goldeneye							
11/4	S. Boston	25	BBC (R. Stymeist)				
11/8	Quabbin	8	E. Labato				
11/11	Richmond	5	R. Packard#				
11/18	Douglas	53	M. Lynch#				
11/18	Boston H.	147	TASL (M. Hall)				
11/22	Newbypt.	23	P. + F. Vale				
12/1-2	Cape Cod	94	CCBC				
12/2	Southboro	98	M. Lynch#				
12/29	Winthrop	30	P. + F. Vale				
Barrow's Goldeneye							
11/21	Falmouth	2 m	W. Scott				
11/26	N. Scituate	1 f	D. Peacock				
12/8	Gloucester	1 m	D. Chickering#				
12/15	Buzzards Bay	6	CBC				
12/23	Ipswich	1 m	J. Berry#				
12/30	Nantucket	6	CBC				
Hooded Merganser							
11/5	Sterling	30	C. Buelow				
11/10	Worcester	114	fide M. Lynch				
11/15	Quabbin (G40)	50	C. Buelow				
11/16	IRWS	82	C. Leahy				
11/18	Arlington Res.	62	P. + F. Vale				
11/19	Pittsfield	119	R. Laubach				
11/21	Waltham	60+	J. Forbes				
11/22	Pembroke	150	W. Petersen				
12/1-2	Cape Cod	549	CCBC				
12/2	Southboro	152	M. Lynch#				
12/14	Brookline	35	S. Burgett				
Red-breasted Merganser							
11/4	Falmouth	56	M. Lynch#				
11/4	S. Boston	500+ BBC	(R. Stymeist)				
11/10	P'town (R.P.)	1800+	P. Flood				
11/16	E. Gloucester	71 f	J. Berry				
11/18	Boston H.	1563	TASL (M. Hall)				
11/24	Truro	290	W. Ellison				
11/24	Chatham (S.B.)	265	P. Flood				
11/25	Westport	202	M. Lynch#				
12/1	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg				
12/23	Bourne	100+	P. + F. Vale				
12/25	W. Newbury	69	P. + F. Vale				
Common Merganser							
11/10	Leicester	85	M. Lynch#				
11/17, 12/22	Southboro	20, 180	E. Taylor				
11/18	Waltham	175	M. Rines				
12/1-2	Cape Cod	95	CCBC				
12/2	Worcester	193	M. Lynch#				
12/2	W. Brookfield	88	M. Lynch#				
12/2	Lakeville	150+	J. Sweeney#				
12/4	Ludlow	300	H. Allen				
12/19	W. Newbury	75	J. Berry				
Ruddy Duck							
11/2	Cambr. (F.P.)	50+	B. Harrison				
11/7	Pembroke	315	W. Petersen				
11/11	W. Newbury	440	R. Heil				
11/18	Waltham	86	M. Rines				
11/19	Ludlow	75	H. Allen				
11/25	Westport	166	M. Lynch#				
12/1-2	Cape Cod	67	CCBC				
12/1-20	Melrose	148 max	D. + I. Jewell				
12/2	Marlboro	507	M. Lynch#				
12/3	Pembroke	325	W. Petersen				
12/23	Newburyport	179	CBC				
12/27	Stoneham	145	D. + I. Jewell				
12/29	Boston	74	B. Mayer				
Osprey							
11/3	Ludlow	1	H. Allen				
Bald Eagle							
11/3	P'town	1 imm	B. Nikula#				
11/6	Barton's Cove	1 ad	S. Smolen-Morton				
11/11	Mt. Watatic	1 imm	T. Pirro				
11/12	Stow	1	R. Lockwood				
11/12	New Salem	3 ad	M. Lynch#				
11/18	Quabbin	4 ad, 2 imm	T. Gagnon#				
11/21	Mt. Wachusett	1	T. Carrolan				
11/21	Mt. Watatic	1 imm	T. Pirro				
11/24	Newbypt.	1 ad	J. LaPointe#				
11/24	Agawam	1	L. Montague				
12/23	DWWS	1 imm	S. Shapiro#				
12/27	Northfield	1 3W	R. Packard#				
Northern Harrier							
11/2	GMNWR	2	S. Perkins				
11/4	Falmouth	2	M. Lynch#				
11/11	Cumb. Farms	3	D. Larson				
11/11	Salisbury	5	M. Lynch#				
11/23	Newbury/P.I.	6-7	J. Berry#				
11/23	Truro	3	W. Ellison				
12/23	W. Bridgewater	2	J. Sweeney#				
12/25	Newbypt. H.	2 imm	P. + F. Vale				
12/thr	DWWS	6 max	D. Furbish				
Sharp-shinned Hawk							
11/4	Barnstable	2	M. Lynch#				
11/4	Falmouth	5	M. Lynch#				
11/4	Mt. Watatic	14	T. McCullough#				
11/4	Boston	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)				
thr	Reports of indiv. from	18 locations					
Cooper's Hawk							
thr	Reports of indiv. from	31 locations					
Northern Goshawk							
11/4	Royalston	1	J. Morris-Siegel				
11/4	Windsor	1 ad	D. Small#				
11/6	Danvers	1 ad	G. Wood				
11/11	Ware	1	R. Lockwood				
11/13	P.I.	1 imm	R. Heil				
11/17	Mt. Watatic	1	EMHW (P. Staub)				
11/18	E. Quabbin	1	T. Gagnon				
11/21	Mt. Wachusett	3	T. Carrolan				

Northern Goshawk (continued)				Ring-necked Pheasant			
11/25	Westminster	1	C. Caron	11/3	Woburn	4	M. Rines
12/16	Amherst	1	C. Read	11/11	Petersham	3	R. Lockwood
12/20	Ashfield	1	S. Sauter	11/24	P'town (R.P.)	2	S. Mirick#
Red-shouldered Hawk				Ruffed Grouse			
11/4	Mt. Watatic	5	T. McCullough#	11/3	Woburn	1	M. Rines
11/6	Westminster	1	C. Caron	11/4	Windsor	2	S. Leonard
11/11	Mt. Watatic	3	T. Pirro	11/7	Ashfield	5	S. Sauter
11/11	Lexington	1	M. Rines	11/9	Quabbin (G40)	9	C. Buelow
11/12	Barre Falls Dam	1	M. Lynch#	11/18	Royalston	6	G. d'Entremont#
11/17	Mt. Watatic	9	EMHW (P. Staub)	12/2	Whately	2	M. Williams
11/21	Mt. Wachusett	5	T. Carrolan	12/5	Northampton	1	R. Packard#
12/2	N. Dartmouth	1	M. Boucher	12/8	Hawley	1	R. Packard
12/4	Northampton	1	R. Packard	12/25	Westboro	1	S. Sutton
12/7	Marshfield	1	D. Clapp	Wild Turkey			
12/12	Whately	1	M. Williams	11/2	Plymouth	23	R. Titus
12/15	Longmeadow	1	J. Hutchison	11/3	Sterling	24	S. Sutton#
12/25	Lakeville	1	K. Rodman	12/1	Royalston	30	D. Chickering
12/25	E. Middleboro	1 ad	K. Anderson	12/15	Athol	336	CBC
12/25	Maynard	1 ad	L. Nachtrab	12/21	Gardner	20	C. Caron
12/30	Concord	5	CBC	12/22	Ipswich	28	J. Berry
12/thr	DWWS	1 ad	D. Furbish + v.o.	12/28	Concord	31	R. Lockwood
Red-tailed Hawk				12/30	Templeton	107	R. Stymeist#
11/4	Mt. Watatic	61	T. McCullough#	12/30	Deerfield	48	H. Allen
11/11	Mt. Watatic	21	T. Pirro	12/31	Windsor	12	T. Collins
11/17	Mt. Watatic	17	EMHW (P. Staub)	Northern Bobwhite			
11/21	Mt. Watatic	19	T. Pirro	12/20	Hyannis	7	C. Buelow
11/21	Mt. Wachusett	42	T. Carrolan	Virginia Rail			
12/16	Northampton	113	CBC	11/17	Boston	1	E. Crowley
12/30	Concord	164	CBC	11/18	Northbridge	1	M. Lynch#
Rough-legged Hawk				12/8	Nantucket	5	S. Lange
11/10	Salisbury	1 lt	P. Roberts#	12/23	Marshfield	9	CBC
11/11	P.I.	1 lt	M. Lynch#	12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	8	CBC
11/17-23	DWWS	1 dk	D. Furbish	Sora			
11/19	Gay Head	1	T. Rivers	12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	1	CBC
11/21	Chilmark	1	A. Fischer	Common Moorhen			
11/21	Mt. Watatic	1 imm lt	T. Pirro	11/26-12/31	Nantucket	1	J. Papale + v.o.
12/5	Whately	1	R. Ranney	American Coot			
12/16	Pittsfield	1	T. Collins	11/1-13	Gill	10-17	H. Allen
12/16	Concord	1	L. Nachtrab	11/12	Turners Falls	12	R. Martel#
12/26	Salisbury	1	T. Wetmore	11/13	Framingham	9	L. Nachtrab
12/30	Gill	1	W. + J. Lafley	11/25	Westport	83	M. Lynch#
Golden Eagle				12/1-2	Cape Cod	7	CCBC
11/12	New Salem	1 ad	M. Lynch#	12/16	Greater Boston	121	CBC
11/17	Salisbury	1	BBC (S. Grinley)	12/29	Nantucket	31	G. d'Entremont#
11/18	E. Quabbin	1 ad	T. Gagnon	Black-bellied Plover			
12/29	Quabbin	1	CBC	11/3	Salisbury	75	P. + F. Vale
American Kestrel				11/4, 12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	2600, 200	B. Nikula
11/9	Quincy	2	R. Titus	11/10	P.I.	40	P. + F. Vale
12/2	E. Boston	5	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/10	P'town (R.P.)	75	P. Flood
thr	Reports of indiv. from	15	locations	11/10	Ipswich	30	BBC (I. Giriunas)
Merlin				11/11	Newbypt.	20+	M. Lynch#
11/7	Salisbury	2	N. Soulette#	11/18	Boston H.	10	TASL (M. Hall)
11/7	S. Boston	2	R. Donovan	11/18	Plymouth (Saquish)	25	E. Neumuth
11/23	P.I.	2	J. Berry#	11/19	Duxbury B.	36	D. Furbish
11/24	Chatham (S.B.)	2	P. Flood	American Golden-Plover			
12/30	Nantucket	6	CBC	11/4	Salisbury	1 juv	R. Heil
thr	Reports of indiv. from	25	locations	11/4	P.I.	1	O. Spalding
Peregrine Falcon				11/8	Dighton	1	R. Titus
11/3	Pittsfield (Onota)	1	S. Kellogg	Semipalmated Plover			
11/13	Lawrence	1	J. Hogan	11/2	Plymouth	5	R. Titus
11/13-15	P.I.	3	R. Heil	11/4, 18	Chatham (S.B.)	70, 3	B. Nikula
11/17	Newbury	1	P. + F. Vale	11/17	P.I.	1	R. Bielawski#
11/22	Marblehead	1 juv	R. Heil	Killdeer			
11/25	Braintree	2	S. Carey	11/3	Hadley	1	E. Labato
11/27	Haverhill	1 ad	D. Duxbury-Fox#	11/11	Cumb. Farms	4	D. Larson
11/28	Worcester	1	L. Hennin	11/17	Arlington Res.	4	M. Rines
12/2	Newbypt.	1	D. Allen#	12/5	Newbypt.	1	N. Soulette#
12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	2	B. Nikula	12/15	Buzzards Bay	11	CBC
12/12, 14	Boston	2	G. Tepke	American Oystercatcher			
12/16	Amherst	1	D. Ziomek	11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	9	B. Nikula
12/25-29	S. Boston	1 ad	R. Donovan	11/10	N. Monomoy	12	B. Nikula
12/29	Salisbury	1	S. Sauter	12/2	Nantucket	1	E. Andrews
12/30	Nantucket	4	CBC	Greater Yellowlegs			
Gyrfalcon (details submitted) *				11/3	Ipswich/Essex	14	BBC (T. Young)
12/3	Boston (Logan)	1	N. Smith	11/10, 22	P.I.	22, 5	P. + F. Vale
12/16-17	Boston	1 dk ad ph	R. Donovan + v.o.	11/11	Salisbury	15	M. Lynch#

Greater Yellowlegs (continued)				11/17	Salisbury	300	P. + F. Vale
11/11	Newbypt.	45+	M. Lynch#	11/18	Plymouth (Saqush)	500+	E. Neumuth
11/17	Wakefield	3	P. + F. Vale	11/18, 12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	3000, 4000	B. Nikula
11/18	Boston H.	7	TASL (M. Hall)	11/18, 12/29	Winthrop B.	90, 26	P. + F. Vale
11/18, 12/2	Chatham	9, 5	B. Nikula	11/19	Duxbury B.	150	D. Furbish
11/19	Richmond	1	R. Laubach	11/23	Newbypt./P.I.	1150	R. Heil
12/15	Buzzards Bay	15	CBC	11/25	Eastham (F.E.)	700	B. Nikula
12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	16	CBC	12/16	Cape Cod	4,051	CBC
Lesser Yellowlegs				Stilt Sandpiper			
11/4	Barnstable	12	M. Lynch#	11/4	P.I.	1	R. Heil
11/23	Newbypt. H.	5	R. Heil	Short-billed Dowitcher			
12/15	Buzzards Bay	1	CBC	11/10	N. Monomoy	1	B. Nikula
12/23	Newbypt. H.	5	CBC (K. Haley#)	Long-billed Dowitcher			
Hudsonian Godwit				11/4	P.I.	11	R. Heil
11/3	P.I.	2	M. Harvey	11/18	Winthrop	2	P. + F. Vale
Marbled Godwit				12/2	E. Boston	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/25	N. Monomoy	3	B. Nikula	12/11	Nantucket	2	K. Blackshaw
11/25, 12/2	Chatham	3, 2	B. Nikula	12/27	Hyannisport	5	CBC (B. Nikula)
Ruddy Turnstone				Common Snipe			
11/4, 12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	10, 3	B. Nikula	11/4	Lexington	1	P. + F. Vale
11/7	Cape Ann	8	BBC (B. Volkle)	11/15	Chilmark	1	A. Keith
11/9	Harwich	1	D. Silverstein#	11/17	Boston	1	E. Crowley
11/18	Plymouth (Saqush)	4	E. Neumuth	11/18	Northbridge	3	M. Lynch#
11/18	Boston H.	42	TASL (M. Hall)	11/24	Bourne	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/19	Duxbury B.	1	D. Furbish	12/16	Amherst	1	C. Read
11/23	Rockport (A.P.)	2	J. Barber	12/23	Wayland	1	G. Long
12/8	P'town H.	1	B. Nikula	12/30	E. Middleboro	1	K. Anderson#
12/29	Winthrop	1	P. + F. Vale	American Woodcock			
Red Knot				11/7	Ashfield	1	S. Sauter
11/4	Barnstable	1	M. Lynch#	11/17	Topsfield	1	J. Berry#
11/4	Salisbury	7	R. Heil	11/17	Pittsfield	1	G. Shampang
11/18, 12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	130, 35	B. Nikula	11/20	DWWS	2	D. Furbish
Sanderling				Red Phalarope			
11/18	Plymouth (Saqush)	60	E. Neumuth	11/17	Gloucester	1	N. Soulette#
11/18	Boston H.	467	TASL (M. Hall)	Pomarine Jaeger			
11/18, 12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	1900, 1500	B. Nikula	11/6	Eastham (F.E.)	1	B. Nikula
11/22	P'town (R.P.)	160	W. Ellison	11/29	Rockport (A.P.)	2	J. Soucy
12/16	Greater Boston	525	CBC	12/5	off S. Beach, MV	2	M. Pelikan
12/16	Cape Cod	912	CBC	12/15	P'town	1	CBC
12/25	P.I.	60	P. + F. Vale	12/15	Dennis (Corp. B.)	4	P. Flood
12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	2042	CBC	12/15	Eastham (F.E.)	14	P. Flood
12/31	Nantucket	70	G. d'Entremont#	Parasitic Jaeger			
Semipalmated Sandpiper				11/4, 12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	2, 1	B. Nikula#
11/3	W. Harwich	1	B. Nikula	Jaeger species			
11/4, 18	Chatham (S.B.)	2, 1	B. Nikula	11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	2+	B. Nikula#
11/10	P'town (R.P.)	1	P. Flood	12/3	Jeffreys Ledge	1	J. Berry#
11/13	Newbypt.	11	J. Sweeney#	12/8	N. Truro	1	B. Nikula
11/18	Plymouth (Saqush)	1	E. Neumuth#	12/9	Dennis (Corp. B.)	3	B. Nikula
Western Sandpiper				Laughing Gull			
11/1	W. Tisbury	1	A. Keith	11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	132+	P. Flood
11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	2	B. Nikula	11/10	P'town (R.P.)	28	P. Flood
Least Sandpiper				11/13	Oak Bluffs	6	V. Laux
11/4, 12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	2, 1	B. Nikula	12/1, 23	Wellfleet H.	40, 1	B. Nikula#
11/26-12/22	Oak Bluffs	1	A. Keith#	12/6	P'town	4	M. Sylvia
12/16	Cape Cod	2	CBC	12/9	Eastham	1	B. Nikula
White-rumped Sandpiper				12/9	Orleans	5	B. Nikula
11/4	Barnstable	1	M. Lynch#	12/16	Cape Cod	4	CBC
11/4	P.I.	20	R. Heil	12/30	Nantucket	1	CBC
11/4, 18	Chatham (S.B.)	18, 3	B. Nikula	Little Gull			
11/10	P'town (R.P.)	2	P. Flood	11/10	Chatham	1 ad	B. Nikula
11/17	P.I.	4	P. + F. Vale	11/18	Chatham (S.B.)	1 ad	B. Nikula
11/26	Scituate	2	D. Furbish#	11/25	Orleans	1	W. Ellison
Pectoral Sandpiper				12/27	Barnstable H.	1 imm	CBC (V. Laux)
11/4	P.I.	4	R. Heil	12/30	Nantucket	14	CBC
11/4	Barnstable	36	M. Lynch#	Black-headed Gull			
11/15	Chilmark	1	A. Keith	11/10	Chatham	1 imm	B. Nikula
11/17	Nantucket	2	S. Langer	11/17	Centerville	1	G. Hirth
Purple Sandpiper				11/24-12/23	Wellfleet H.	3	S. Mirick#
11/11	N. Scituate	40	G. d'Entremont#	11/27	Nantucket	2	E. Ray
11/16	E. Gloucester	40	J. Berry	12/16	Harwich	1 ad	CBC (R. Fox)
11/18	Plymouth (Saqush)	2	E. Neumuth	12/27	Hyannisport	1 ad	CBC (B. Nikula)
11/22, 12/25	P.I.	5, 3	P. + F. Vale	12/27	Osterville	1 ad	CBC (R. Jenkins)
11/25	Westport	29	M. Lynch#	12/29	Quabbin	1	CBC (J. Laflay)
11/28	Rockport (A.P.)	60	N. Soulette#	12/thr	Centerville	3 max	G. Hirth
12/29	Salisbury	15	L. Clark#	Bonaparte's Gull			
12/29	Winthrop	6	P. + F. Vale	11/3	Ludlow	1	H. Allen
Dunlin				11/10	Chatham	500+	B. Nikula
11/10	Ipswich	210	BBC (I. Giriunas)	11/11	Newbypt.	200+	M. Lynch#

Bonaparte's Gull (continued)				12/12	Nantucket	33	E. Ray
11/14	Hull	110+	N. Swirka	12/15	Eastham (F.E.)	350+	P. Flood
11/16	IRWS	200	C. Leahy	12/22	Gloucester	6	G. Tepke#
11/18	Boston H.	262	TASL (M. Hall)	Common Tern			
11/29	Rockport (A.P.)	80	J. Soucy	11/3	P'town	60	B. Nikula#
12/2	Salisbury	100	J. Berry#	11/4	Barnstable (S.N.)	2	M. Lynch#
12/4	Woods Hole	70+	S. Sutherland	11/17	Chatham	4	B. Nikula
12/6	Ipswich (C.B.)	71	J. Berry#	11/17, 12/1	Wellfleet H.	15, 1	B. Nikula
12/15	Nahant	350+	D. Saffarewich	Forster's Tern			
12/30	Nantucket	1,912	CBC	11/2	Plymouth	1	R. Titus
Thayer's Gull (details submitted) *				11/3	P'town	60	B. Nikula#
12/31	Nantucket 1 ad ph	F. Gallo, G. d'Entremont		11/4	Newbypt.	5	R. Heil
Iceland Gull				11/17	Wellfleet H.	2	B. Nikula
11/14	P'town (R.P.)	1 1W	P. Flood#	Black Skimmer			
11/23	Chatham	3	S. Mirick#	11/28	Winthrop	2	C. Foley
11/26	Rockport	1 imm	J. Berry	Dovekie			
11/26	Oak Bluffs	1	A. Keith	11/13	P'town (R.P.)	4	R. Titus
12/12	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	G. Leet#	Common Murre			
12/15	P'town	16	CBC	12/6	P'town	3	M. Sylvia
12/20	Gardner	1 1W	T. Pirro	12/23	Truro	3	CBC
12/20	Nantucket	5	B. Kennedy	12/23	P'town (R.P.)	1	J. Young#
12/27-31	Gill	1	R. Packard	Thick-billed Murre			
12/29	Salisbury	1	T. Wetmore	11/28	Gloucester	2	N. Soulette#
12/30	Nantucket	41	CBC	12/2	P.I.	1	P. Savage#
12/30	Agawam	1 1W	J. LaPointe	12/29	Rockport (A.P.)	2	J. Soucy
Lesser Black-backed Gull				Razorbill			
11/4	Boston	1	R. Kelley	11/18	Boston H.	1	TASL (M. Hall)
11/7	P.I.	1 ad	R. Heil	11/24	Truro	18	W. Ellison
11/27	Nantucket	17	E. Ray	11/29	Rockport (A.P.)	400	J. Soucy
11/13	Eastham (F.H.)	1 1W	R. Titus	12/2	P'town	75	B. Gette#
11/13	Newbypt.	1 2W	R. Heil	12/8	Chatham (S.B.)	80+	B. Nikula#
11/23	Truro	1	W. Ellison	12/9	Dennis (Corp. B.)	6	B. Nikula
11/24	P'town	1 ad	S. Mirick#	12/14	Eastham (F.E.)	200	D. Silverstein#
12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	1 ad	B. Nikula	12/15	P'town	740	CBC
12/9	Orleans	1	B. Nikula	12/27	Rockport (H.P.)	30	P. Roberts
12/9	Brewster	2	B. Nikula	Black Guillemot			
12/30	Nantucket	12	CBC	11/1	Rockport (A.P.)	1	S. Perkins#
Glaucous Gull				11/11	N. Scituate	3	G. d'Entremont#
12/2	Gloucester	1	T. Allison	11/16	E. Gloucester	4	J. Berry
12/28	Plymouth	1	T. Maloney	11/17, 12/15	Rockport (H.P.)	5, 3	BBC (J. Nove)
12/29	Salisbury	2	T. Wetmore	11/18	Plymouth (Saquish)	3	E. Neumuth
Black-legged Kittiwake				11/23	P.I.	1	R. Heil
11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	1000	B. Nikula#	11/26	Rockport	4	J. Berry
11/22	Truro	4	W. Ellison	12/7	Brant Rock	38	D. Clapp
11/29	Rockport (A.P.)	20	J. Soucy	12/16	Cape Ann	39	CBC
12/2	P'town	50	B. Gette#	12/30	Nantucket	17	CBC
12/2	Chatham (S.B.)	500	B. Nikula	Atlantic Puffin			
12/3	Jeffreys Ledge	100	J. Berry#	12/23	Truro	1	CBC
12/7	Salisbury	4	S. Haydock	Large acid species			
12/9	Dennis (Corp. B.)	440	B. Nikula	11/6	Eastham (F.E.)	3	B. Nikula

OWLS THROUGH FINCHES

This period is an exciting time for birders as we gear up for the upcoming CBCs, searching areas that are not normally covered. The weather cooperated with a very mild December, the second warmest of record. Every weekend during the count period was nearly flawless. Several unusual species were found, and the numbers of land birds were up significantly.

As many as eleven Snowy Owls were noted on one day at Logan Airport in Boston, and other multiple sightings were recorded from Plum Island, Chatham, and Martha's Vineyard. Of the 13 locations that reported Snowies, the bird in Great Barrington was noteworthy for being just the eighth Berkshire County record since 1972. Long-eared Owls were again found at the Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary in Marshfield, where a minimum of seven were noted. This location is a magnet for owls; the wonderful grasslands there are ideal for hunting and have played host to most of our regular owl species.

A *Selasphorus* hummingbird was discovered in Granby, and thought to be an immature male Rufous with pale buffy brown on the sides and across the belly. There was also some rust color noted in the wings. The report has been submitted to the Massachusetts Avian Records

Committee for evaluation. It should be noted that banding data collected show that a small percentage of Rufous Hummingbirds do winter in the East. Perhaps we are in the midst of an adaptive shift in range expansion. There was another Rufous Hummingbird noted in Yonkers, New York, and two Calliope Hummingbirds were discovered during this period in Manhattan! This was a new record for New York and the only record north of Cape May, New Jersey where singles were recently identified. Keep your eyes open!

Above average numbers of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers again were noted, a trend in recent years. There were four Red-headed Woodpeckers noted in the state as compared with none during the same period last year. Red-bellied Woodpeckers continue to be found in increasing numbers. The mild weather proved to be great for flies and flycatchers. Three separate **Ash-throated Flycatchers** were found in Cohasset, Gloucester, and Edgartown; the latter two were both noted on CBCs. Other Ash-throated Flycatchers were noted in New York; and two, possibly three, individuals were seen in New Brunswick. A total of five Western Kingbirds was noted during the period, the same number that was noted last year, and one individual found near the Cherry Hill Reservoir in West Newbury delighted birders for over three weeks. A few flycatchers flew away without being identified. A possible **Tropical** or **Couch's Kingbird** was found in Chilmark on December 2; the bird never called and could not be relocated despite a valiant search. (Remember the first state record Tropical Kingbird that was discovered last November at World's End in Hingham.) Any *Empidonax* flycatcher after October should be carefully looked at; a bird noted in Topsfield on November 17 displayed a very vigorous jerking of the tail and was only in view for a short time and eluded further identification.

Gray Jays, more so than other boreal species, tend to be fairly sedentary in their movements, rarely moving south of their breeding areas, so the reports of three or possibly four birds are exceptional. The bird found in Windsor was present for nearly all of December and was seen by many observers. Another bird of the northern forests also made the news with many reports. There were at least five individual **Boreal Chickadees** noted during the period. All of these reports were confined to large spruce and fir groves in central and western Massachusetts. Good numbers of Red-breasted Nuthatches were noted during this period as well, ending a four-year run of lackluster results.

There were five reports of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, undoubtedly due to the mild weather. The gnatcatcher noted in Provincetown on December 27 is the latest report for this species in the state. It was a great period for thrushes, with exceptional counts of Eastern Bluebirds, Hermit Thrushes, and American Robins. A **Townsend's Solitaire** was carefully observed in Essex, and a **Varied Thrush** was found in Southwick. Perhaps these western vagrants will occur more frequently in our area, associating with the large numbers of robins that have been observed over the last several years. With all this fruit available to eat, only a mini invasion of **Bohemian Waxwings** was noted. Of the thirteen individuals noted, five of them were found on the Vineyard and Nantucket and the others far inland.

Sixteen species of warblers noted during the period are reflective of the mild weather. A Connecticut Warbler carefully described from Long Island in Boston Harbor on November 25 is by far the latest state record for this species. A **Townsend's Warbler**, one of only a handful of state records, visited a feeder in Centerville. Other warblers of note included three Ovenbirds, two Prairies, a Black-throated Green, and a Yellow-throated Warbler. The snowless fields provided food for unusually high numbers of sparrows. Of note was a **Harris's Sparrow** that visited a feeder in Chilmark, where earlier a Lark Sparrow was noted; two Grasshopper Sparrows and four Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were recorded, including one that chose to feed on the well-manicured lawns of the Boston Public Garden. Fox Sparrows were everywhere!

Finally, it was a good season for winter finches. Siskins and redpolls were reported from feeders statewide, and the crossbill show at Salisbury State Park was enjoyed by hordes of birders. Pine and Evening grosbeaks were mainly confined to the north central and western parts of the state.

R. Stymeist

Eastern Screech-Owl			11/10	Worcester	3	fide M. Lynch
11/21	Melrose	2	D. + I. Jewell	12/1	Belmont	3
12/15	Holbrook	2	G. d'Entremont#	12/1	Medford	3
12/16	Northampton	58	CBC	12/16	Northampton	63
12/22	Melrose	2	D. Jewell#	12/18	Springfield	69
12/31	Southampton	6	R. Stymeist	12/30	Concord	53
thr	Reports of indiv. from 8 locations			Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		
Great Horned Owl			11/10	Worcester	1	fide M. Lynch
11/11	W. Newbury	2	BBC (S. Mirick)	11/26	Nantucket	1
11/18	Williamsburg	2	R. Packard	12/8	Hadley	1
11/23	Ipswich	2	J. Berry	12/15	Chicopee	1
12/1-21	Wayland	2	G. + L. Long	12/16	Eastham	1
thr	Reports of indiv. from 15 locations			12/16	E. Orleans	1
Snowy Owl			12/21	DWWS	1	D. Furbish
11/4	Chatham (S.B.)	1	B. Nikula#	12/22	Westfield	1
11/8	Edgartown	1	G. Daniels#	Hairy Woodpecker		
11/11-12/1	P.I.	1-4	v.o.	11/10	Worcester	3
11/15-12/31	Salisbury	1	J. Soucy# + v.o.	11/12	Quabbin (G40)	10
11/17	Newbury	1	P. Roberts#	11/15	Quabbin (G40)	9
11/17, 12/8	Rockport	1	N. Soulette#	12/2	Southboro	4
11/23	Duxbury B.	2	D. Furbish#	12/31	Southampton	3
11/24, 12/16	Ipswich (C.B.)	2	J. Berry	12/thr	Maynard	3
11/25-12/31	Nahant	1	D. Saffarewich + v.o.	Northern Flicker		
11/27, 12/16	Boston (Logan)	7, 11	N. Smith	11/4	Boston	7
11/29-30	Gr. Barrington	1	J. Johnson	11/25	Westport	5
12/9	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	J. Young#	12/23	Bourne	5
12/16	Greater Boston	12	CBC	12/26	Southwick	3
12/16	Cape Cod	4	CBC	Pileated Woodpecker		
12/thr	Chatham (S.B.)	4 max	fide B. Nikula	11/2	Hardwick	1
12/thr	M.V.	3-5+	v.o.	11/10	Pittsfield	2
Barned Owl			11/10	Royalston	1	S. Moore#
11/18	Cumington	4	J. LaPointe	11/14	Westford	2
thr	Reports of indiv. from 17 locations			11/15	Quabbin (G40)	3
Long-eared Owl			11/17	Topsfield	1	J. Berry#
12/2	Boston (Long I.)	1	R. Donovan#	11/18	Oakham	1
thr	DWWS	7	D. Furbish + v.o.	11/27	Northampton	1
Short-eared Owl			11/28	Lincoln	1	W. Petersen
11/3	P.I.	1	S. Hedman	11/29	Stoneham	2
11/4	Westport	1	M. Boucher	12/19	Westminster	1
11/6, 12/16	Boston (Logan)	1, 1	N. Smith	12/23	Carlisle	1
11/7	DWWS	1	D. Furbish	12/26	Southwick	1
11/15	P.I.	1	R. Heil	Empidonax species		
11/18	Chatham (S.B.)	1	R. Donovan#	11/17	Topsfield	1
Northern Saw-whet Owl			Eastern Phoebe			
11/thr	DWWS	73 b	N. Smith	11/8	Stoneham	1
11/thr	Whitman	13 b	N. Smith	11/12	E. Bridgewater	1
11/thr	Quincy	1 b	N. Smith	11/18	Petersham	1
11/3	Salisbury	1	J. Nelson#	12/16	Wayland	1
11/13	Watertown	1	J. Termini	12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	2
11/18	Leicester	1	M. Lynch#	Ash-throated Flycatcher (details submitted) *		
11/24	Marion	1 dead	M. LaBossiere	11/15-18	Gloucester	1H. + J. Paluzzi + v.o.
12/2	Wellfleet	1	B. Gette#	12/16-22	Gloucester	1 R. Lockwood + v.o.
12/16	Hadley	1	A. Magee	Ash-throated Flycatcher (no details) *		
12/22	Granville	1	K. + M. Conway	11/24	Cohasset	1 N. Swirka, H. Cross
12/thr	Whitman	13 b	N. Smith	12/22-24	Edgartown	1 V. Laux# + v.o.
Selasphorus species (details submitted) *			Western Kingbird			
11/1-11/14	Granby	1	S. Warner	11/1-18	W. Newbury	1
Belted Kingfisher			11/17	Gloucester	1	R. Heil
11/4	Falmouth	5	M. Lynch#	12/2	Chilmark	1
11/10	Worcester	5	fide M. Lynch	12/4	Woods Hole	1
11/24	Bourne	4	BBC (R. Stymeist)	12/5	Nantucket	1
11/25	Marshfield	2	G. d'Entremont	Northern Shrike		
12/8	Braintree	2	G. d'Entremont	11/4	Dorchester	1
12/23	Wayland	2 m	G. Long	11/4-12/31	Windsor	1-4
Red-headed Woodpecker			11/8	Carlisle	1	imm T. Brownrigg
11/11-30	Vineyard Haven	1	R. Culbert	11/9	Quabbin (G40)	1 ad
11/19	Athol	1	R. Coyle	11/10	Lancaster	1
11/27, 12/20	Weymouth	1	S. Smith	11/10	Royalston	1
12/11-31	Melrose	1 imm	D. + I. Jewell	11/25	Bolton Flats	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker			11/27, 12/16	Washington	1	E. Neumuth
11/3	Stoughton	3	G. d'Entremont	12/2	Natick	1
						D. Landry

Northern Shrike (continued)					
12/3	Sunderland	1	M. Williams		
12/14	Westboro	1	C. Buelow		
12/15	Orange	1	M. Taylor		
12/15	Athol	1	M. Polana		
12/16	Pittsfield	2	C. Blagdon		
12/23	Wayland	1	G. Long		
12/28	Northampton	1	R. Packard		
Blue-headed Vireo					
12/1	Mashpee	2	M. Sylvia		
12/23	Truro	1	CBC (M. Lynch)		
Gray Jay (no details) *					
11/9	Barre	1	R. Jenkins		
11/12	Quabbin (G40)	2	J. Offermann		
12/2-12/31	Windsor	1 ph	C. Quinlan		
American Crow					
11/4	Mt. Watatic	570	T. McCullough#		
11/16	Worcester	2500+	M. Lynch#		
11/20	Fitchburg	600+	C. Caron		
11/25	Framingham	8000	E. Taylor		
11/26	Ashburnham	700+	C. Caron		
11/27	Northampton	350	M. Williams		
12/15	Chicopee	4000	T. Swochak		
12/18	Allston	300+	S. Carey		
12/19	Melrose	300	J. Paluzzi		
12/thr	Framingham	8000	E. Taylor		
Fish Crow					
11/4	Boston	67	BBC (R. Stymeist)		
11/16	Worcester	2	M. Lynch#		
11/16	Northampton	1	S. Kellogg		
12/ thr	Watertown	50 max	R. Stymeist#		
12/17	Hadley	1	G. LeBaron		
12/22	Westfield	1	K. + M. Conway		
12/25	Gloucester (E.P.)	3	T. Roberts#		
Common Raven					
11/4	Wrentham	1	M. Grizenda		
11/10	Lancaster	1	R. Lockwood		
11/11	Cheshire	2	R. Packard#		
11/12	Rutland	1	M. Lynch#		
11/12	Pelham	1	M. Lynch#		
11/18	Royalston	2	G. d'Entremont#		
11/18	Pepperell	1	T. Pirro		
11/28	Sunderland	2	M. Williams		
12/8	Hawley	2	R. Packard		
12/9	Sterling	1	G. Tepke#		
12/12	Conway	2	M. Williams		
12/15	Athol	28	CBC		
12/22	Quabbin (G40)	2	R. Lockwood		
12/25	Savoy	1	S. Rayer		
12/27	Windsor	4	T. Gagnon		
Horned Lark					
11/2	Northampton	800	G. LeBaron		
11/3, 12/30	Salisbury	20, 16	P. + F. Vale		
11/4	Mt. Watatic	26	T. McCullough#		
11/8	Worthington	20	R. Packard#		
11/15	Groton	12	T. Pirro		
11/18	Duxbury	36	J. Sweeney#		
11/18	P.I.	30	J. Nelson		
12/4	Gloucester	20	D. Sandee		
12/14	Eastham (F.E.)	30	D. Silverstein#		
12/16	Ipswich (C.B.)	63	J. Berry#		
12/27	Deerfield	50	R. Packard		
12/31	Sunderland	90+	R. Stymeist		
Tree Swallow					
11/24	P'town	2	B. Nikula		
Northern Rough-winged Swallow					
11/11	W. Dennis	1	P. Flood		
Barn Swallow					
11/21	Chilmark	1	A. Keith		
Boreal Chickadee					
11/4	Barre	1	F. McMenemy		
11/11	W. Quabbin	1	D. Small		
12/29	Quabbin	2	CBC (C. Page)		
12/9-14	Stow	1	A. Ceran		
thr	Windsor	1	D. St. James + v.o.		
Tufted Titmouse					
11/8	P.I.	1	R. Heil		
11/thr	M.V. (4 loc.)	4	fide A. Keith		
Red-breasted Nuthatch					
11/4	Newbypt. area	20	R. Heil		
11/12	Quabbin (G40)	15	J. Offermann		
11/14	Hyannis	4	C. Buelow		
11/22	Marblehead	5	R. Heil		
11/24	Bourne	7	BBC (R. Stymeist)		
11/24	Truro	8	W. Ellison		
12/2	Southboro	7	M. Lynch#		
12/5	Hyannis	3	C. Buelow		
12/7	Windsor	8	M. Lynch#		
12/16	Ipswich (C.B.)	25	J. Berry#		
12/25	Salisbury	3	P. + F. Vale		
12/30	Nantucket	110	CBC		
Brown Creeper					
11/15	Quabbin (G40)	7	C. Buelow		
12/1, 25	Medford	4, 6	R. LaFontaine		
12/5	Northampton	4	R. Packard#		
12/14	Stow	3	S. Sutton		
12/20	Windsor	3	M. Williams		
Carolina Wren					
11/3	Woburn	4	M. Rines		
11/4	Boston	7	BBC (R. Stymeist)		
11/9	Stoughton	10	R. Titus		
11/18	Lanesville/Rockport	7	J. Berry#		
11/22	Marblehead	32	R. Heil		
11/25	Westport	10	M. Lynch#		
11/27	Northampton	3	M. Williams		
12/1	Belmont	8	R. Stymeist#		
12/2	Southboro	6	M. Lynch#		
12/15	Buzzards Bay	183	CBC		
12/16	Cape Cod	117	CBC		
12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	154	CBC		
House Wren					
11/18	Northbridge	1	M. Lynch#		
Winter Wren					
11/22	Marblehead	9	R. Heil		
thr	Reports of indiv. from	14 locations			
Sedge Wren					
11/24	Nantucket	2	E. Ray#		
12/30	Nantucket	1	CBC		
Marsh Wren					
11/13	Eastham (F.H.)	2	R. Titus		
11/22	Dorchester	2	R. Donovan		
12/8	Nantucket	6	S. Langer		
12/thr	DWWS	2	D. Furbish		
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher					
11/3	W. Newbury	1	P. + F. Vale		
11/17	Rockport	1	R. Heil		
12/16	E. Orleans	1	CBC (J. Sones)		
12/16	Eastham	1	CBC (D. Clapp)		
12/27	P'town	1	M. Mello		
Golden-crowned Kinglet					
11/6	P.I.	15	J. Offermann		
11/6	Salisbury	14	J. Offermann		
11/10	Lancaster	19	R. Lockwood		
11/12	Wayland	12	G. Long		
11/17	ONWR	10	R. Lockwood		
11/18	Northbridge	22	M. Lynch#		
11/24	Bourne	32	BBC (R. Stymeist)		
11/28	Sunderland	15	M. Williams		
12/5	Hyannis	18	C. Buelow		
12/15	Buzzards Bay	257	CBC		
12/16	Northampton	332	CBC		
12/29	Quabbin	242	CBC		
Ruby-crowned Kinglet					
11/3	Lexington	4	M. Rines		
11/26	Boston	2	C. Floyd		
12/15	Hampden	2	D. Morrison		
12/16	Hadley	2	A. Magee		
Eastern Bluebird					
11/1	Concord	10	M. Rines		
11/6	N. Medfield	16	E. Morrier		
11/10	IRWS	20	J. Nelson		
11/15	Wellesley	30	K. Bornstein		
11/17	Sutton	11	M. Lynch#		
12/14	DWWS	11	D. Furbish		
12/27	Stow	20	S. Furman		

Townsend's Solitaire (details submitted) *			12/30	Nantucket	4	CBC
12/4	Essex	1	thr	Reports of indiv. from 21 locations		
Hermit Thrush			Nashville Warbler			
11/4	Stow	2	11/1, 7	Boston	1	G. Tepke
11/4	Barnstable	2	11/16	Hadley	1	H. Allen
11/7	Boston	6	12/16	Northampton	1	CBC
11/11	Cumb. Farms	2	12/16	Amherst	1	S. Hills
11/17	Topsfield	2	Black-throated Blue Warbler			
11/22	P.I.	2	11/4	Boston	1 dead	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/22	Marblehead	12	11/11	Plainville	1	D. West
11/25	Westport	7	Yellow-rumped Warbler			
12/8	Medford	6	11/3	Salisbury	5	P. + F. Vale
12/15	Buzzards Bay	36	11/3	Barnstable (S.N.)	50	G. Hirth
12/23	Truro	59	11/4	Boston	20	BBC (R. Stymeist)
12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	47	11/4	Falmouth	28	M. Lynch#
American Robin			11/4	Lexington	6	P. + F. Vale
11/3	GMNWR	710	11/10	Worcester	3	fide M. Lynch
11/4	Methuen	1000	11/11	Scituate	14	G. d'Entremont#
11/7	Burlington	1800	11/23	Truro	24	W. Ellison
11/12	Barre Falls Dam	200	11/23	Orleans	75	W. Scott
12/16	Greater Boston	4724	11/24	Essex	8	J. + M. Nelson
12/23	Marshfield	6795	11/24	Bourne	77	BBC (R. Stymeist)
12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	5315	11/25	Marshfield	4	G. d'Entremont
12/30	Concord	3823	11/25	Westport	27	M. Lynch#
Varied Thrush			12/30	Nantucket	1356	CBC
12/22-23	Southwick	1	Townsend's Warbler (details submitted) *			
Gray Catbird			12/28-31	Centerville	1 imm m ph	S. Johnson + v.o.
11/4	Falmouth	6	Black-throated Green Warbler			
11/22	Marblehead	5	11/15	Amherst	1	H. Allen
11/25	Westport	12	Yellow-throated Warbler			
12/15	Buzzards Bay	24	11/28	Nantucket	1	M. Aquir
12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	21	Pine Warbler			
12/30	Nantucket	26	11/21	Woburn	2	M. Rines
thr	Reports of indiv. from 14 locations		11/26	N. Scituate	1	D. Peacock
Brown Thrasher			12/31	Nantucket	1	G. d'Entremont#
11/2	P.I.	1	Prairie Warbler			
11/25	Marshfield	1	11/22	Marblehead	1	R. Heil
11/26	N. Scituate	1	11/26	Rockport	1	J. Berry
European Starling			Palm Warbler			
11/18	Methuen	500,000+	11/2	Cohasset	2	R. Titus
American Pipit			11/3	Salisbury	1	M. Harvey
11/1	Sunderland	6	11/4	Boston	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/1, 12/4	Lincoln	110, 25	11/4	Barnstable	1	M. Lynch#
11/2	GMNWR	12	11/8	Somerset	1	R. Titus
11/3	Halifax	60+	11/12	Scituate	1	D. Furbish
11/4	E. Boston	1	11/13	Wellfleet	2	M. Lynch#
11/4	Nantucket	16	11/17	Orleans	1	M. Taylor
11/10	P'town (R.P.)	1	11/26	Rockport	1	J. Berry
11/17	Boston	7	12/15	Buzzards Bay	20	CBC
11/18	E. Quabbin	7	Blackpoll Warbler			
11/18	Chatham (S.B.)	2	11/3-4	Boston (BNC)	1	M. Kanaracas#
11/26	Northampton	1	Ovenbird			
12/29	Taunton-Middleboro	45	11/14	Boston	1	L. Kaplan
Bohemian Waxwing			11/26	Waltham	1	L. Harvey
11/1	Gay Head	2	12/16	Bourne	1	R. Buckner
11/4	Mt. Watatic	1	12/23	Marshfield	1	CBC
11/4	Royalston	6	Connecticut Warbler (details submitted)			
11/23	Oak Bluffs	1	11/25	Boston (Long I.)	1 imm	R. Donovan
12/22	W. Tisbury	1	Common Yellowthroat			
12/26	Windsor	1	11/3	Northampton	1	R. Packard
12/31	Nantucket	1	12/15	Hamptden	1	D. Morrison
Cedar Waxwing			Wilson's Warbler			
11/3	Stoughton	40	11/1-2	Boston	1	G. Tepke
11/8	Somerset	150	12/15	Buzzards Bay	1	CBC
11/15	Woburn	60	Yellow-breasted Chat			
11/18	Northbridge	60	11/22	Marblehead	2	R. Heil
11/26	Scituate	210	11/23	P.I.	1	R. Heil
11/30	IRWS	40	11/25	Westport	1	M. Lynch#
12/12	Conway	40	11/25	Gloucester	1	D. Brown
12/14	Maynard	50+	11/26	Boston	1	D. Hunneman
12/16	Northampton	1375	12/16	E. Orleans	4	CBC (J. Sones)
12/25	W. Newbury	62	12/20, 22	Rockport	1	J. Soucy#
12/30	Concord	795	12/23	Truro	4	CBC
Orange-crowned Warbler			12/27	Mid-Cape Cod	5	CBC
11/4	Boston	3	12/29	Gloucester	1	D. Brown
11/6-14	Edgartown	2+	12/30	Nantucket	3	CBC
12/15	Buzzards Bay	2	Scarlet Tanager			
12/16	E. Orleans	3	11/16	P.I.	1	S. Haydock

Eastern Towhee				12/23	Marshfield	3	CBC
11/17	Topfield	1 f	J. Berry#	Seaside Sparrow			
11/24	Bourne	5	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/3	P.I.	1	M. Harvey
11/25	Westport	3	M. Lynch#	11/3	Newbypt.	1	J. Mann
12/1	Falmouth	2	R. Lockwood#	Fox Sparrow			
12/15	Braintree	2	G. d'Entremont#	11/7-9	Southwick	10	S. Kellogg
12/15	Randolph	2	G. d'Entremont#	11/8	Lexington	8	M. Rines
12/17	Malden	1	K. Pease	11/10	Pittsfield	5	R. Stymeist
12/25	Ipswich	1 m	J. Berry	11/11	Lancaster	10	S. Sutton#
12/27	Westboro	1	S. Sutton	11/11	Westminster	5	C. Caron
American Tree Sparrow				11/14	Washington	5	E. Neumuth
11/4	Lexington	18	P. + F. Vale	11/15	Groton	6	T. Pirro
11/12	W. Newbury	20	J. Berry#	11/15	Quabbin (G40)	5	C. Buelow
11/17	P.I.	30	P. + F. Vale	11/15	Woburn	5	M. Rines
11/25	Bolton Flats	25+	N. Paulson	11/20	Lexington	5	M. Rines
11/25	Amherst	50	C. Gentes#	11/21	Woburn	5	M. Rines
12/1	Marshfield	39	R. Lockwood#	11/30	Marshfield	5	D. Clapp#
12/8	Halifax	25+	J. Sweeney#	12/1	Belmont	4	D. Lange#
12/16	Northampton	1213	CBC	12/16	Amherst	3	C. Page
12/23	Bourne	20	P. + F. Vale	12/1-30	Reports of 1-2 indiv. from 12 locations		
12/27	Westboro	80	C. Buelow	Lincoln's Sparrow			
12/30	Concord	944	CBC	11/3	Truro	2	B. Nikula#
Chipping Sparrow				11/10	Lexington	1	M. Rines
11/1	Lincoln	2	M. Rines	12/15	Holliston	1	CBC (J. Hoye)
11/13	Wellfleet	23	M. Lynch#	Swamp Sparrow			
12/15	Millis	18	CBC	11/1	GMNWR	28	R. Lockwood
12/18	Shirley	1	T. Pirro	11/11	Cumb. Farms	24	D. Larson
12/22	Westfield	1	H. Allen	11/25	Marshfield	62	G. d'Entremont
Clay-colored Sparrow				12/16	Cape Cod	61	CBC
11/3	Truro	3	B. Nikula#	12/23	Marshfield	50	CBC
12/2	P'town (R.P.)	1	D. Furbish	White-throated Sparrow			
12/12	N. Dartmouth	1	M. Boucher	11/4	Boston	105	BBC (R. Stymeist)
12/15	Millis	1	CBC	11/18	Northbridge	66	M. Lynch#
Field Sparrow				11/22	Marblehead	64	R. Heil
11/3	Stoughton	2	G. d'Entremont	12/14	Westboro	110	C. Buelow
11/12	Stow	4	R. Lockwood	Harris's Sparrow (no details) *			
11/13	Wellfleet	18	M. Lynch#	11/27-12/2	Chilmark	1	A. Keith# + v.o
11/17	Grafton	2	M. Lynch#	White-crowned Sparrow			
12/17	Shirley	10	T. Pirro	11/2-7	DWWS	1	ad D. Furbish + v.o.
12/30	Nantucket	2	G. d'Entremont#	11/3	Arlington	1	M. Rines
Vesper Sparrow				11/3	Marblehead	1	imm K. Haley
11/4	N. Tisbury	1	A. Keith	11/11	Cumb. Farms	2	D. Larson
11/13	Wellfleet	2	M. Lynch#	11/15	Amherst	1	H. Allen
11/18	Chatham (S.B.)	1	R. Donovan#	11/24	Truro	1	W. Ellison
11/26	Chilmark	1	A. Keith	12/1	Brewster	1	S. Finnegan
12/15	Buzzards Bay	6	CBC	12/22	Westfield	1	H. Allen
12/23	Bridgewater	2	J. Sweeney#	12/31	Nantucket	1	imm G. d'Entremont#
Lark Sparrow				Dark-eyed Junco			
11/4	Chilmark	1	A. Keith	11/4	Boston	77	BBC (R. Stymeist)
Savannah Sparrow				11/5	S. Lancaster	57	S. Sutton#
11/1	GMNWR	8	R. Lockwood	11/17	Upton	80+	M. Lynch#
11/1	Lincoln	16	M. Rines	11/18	Northbridge	92	M. Lynch#
11/4	Lexington	36	P. + F. Vale	12/1	Bourne	44	R. Lockwood#
11/11	Cumb. Farms	8	D. Larson	12/16	Northampton	1255	CBC
12/1	Bourne	6	R. Lockwood#	12/16	Greater Boston	1427	CBC
12/14	Eastham (F.E.)	3	D. Silverstein#	12/30	Uxbridge	1382	CBC
12/16	Hadley	15	S. Sumner	12/30	Concord	1814	CBC
12/22	Westfield	3	H. Allen	Lapland Longspur			
12/30	Deerfield	1	D. Case	11/2-16	Northampton	2	G. LaBaron
Ipswich Sparrow				11/3	Salisbury	3	P. + F. Vale
11/10	N. Monomoy	2	B. Nikula	11/4	P.I.	65	R. Heil
11/14	Salisbury	1	J. Berry#	11/6	Mattapoisett	23	F. Smith
11/18	Plymouth (Saquish)	2	E. Neumuth	11/12	Edgartown	2	V. Laux
11/18	Chatham (S.B.)	5	R. Donovan#	11/18	Duxbury	2	J. Sweeney#
12/2	Revere	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/18	Chatham (S.B.)	10	R. Donovan#
Grasshopper Sparrow				12/16	Sunderland	3	A. Richards
11/3	Barnstable	1	G. Hirth	Snow Bunting			
12/23	Truro	1	CBC (B. Nikula)	11/2	Northampton	200	G. LeBaron
Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow				11/3	P'town	250+	B. Nikula#
11/3	Newbypt.	3	J. Mann	11/4	P.I.	110	R. Heil
11/3	P.I.	1	M. Harvey	11/6	Salisbury	75	J. Offermann
12/2	E. Boston	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/11	Scituate	40	G. d'Entremont
12/16	Cape Cod	8	CBC	11/18	Chatham (S.B.)	150+	R. Donovan#
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow				11/20	DWWS	90	D. Furbish#
11/1	Montague	1	J. Strules	11/22	Duxbury	20	P. Guidetti#
11/3	Newbypt.	1	J. Mann	11/25	Bolton Flats	150+	N. Paulson
11/4	Boston (PG)	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)	12/16	Greater Boston	515	CBC
11/22-12/8	Dorchester	1	R. Donovan	12/23	P'town (R.P.)	70	J. Young#

Snow Bunting (continued)				12/30	Westminster	13	J. Sweeney#
12/30 P.I.	45	P. + F. Vale		12/30	Windsor	36	P. Brown
Indigo Bunting				thr	Royalston	50 max	v.o.
11/1-4 Washington	1	E. Neumuth	Purple Finch	11/2	Northfield	4	M. Taylor
11/8 S. Boston	1	R. Donovan		11/3	Woburn	3	M. Rines
Dickcissel				11/4	Royalston	17	J. Morris-Siegel
11/3-4 Essex	1	T. Young + v.o.		11/17	Topsfield	6 f	J. Berry#
11/26 Wasque	1	G. Daniels#		12/14	DWWS	2 m, 1 f	D. Furbish
11/30, 12/7 Marshfield	1	D. Clapp#		12/16	Ipswich (C.B.)	9	J. Berry#
12/16 Boston	1	CBC (H. D'Entremont#)		12/27	Windsor	1 m	T. Gagnon
12/16 Cape Ann	2	CBC		12/29	E. Middleboro	1 m	K. Anderson
Red-winged Blackbird			Red Crossbill	11/4	P.I.	2	R. Heil
11/3 Ipswich/Essex	650+	BBC (T. Young)		11/11	Royalston	2	J. Meyers
11/4 Bolton Flats	300+	S. Sutton#		11/18	E. Quabbin	1	S. Surner
11/25 Marshfield	125	G. d'Entremont#		11/21	Ashburnham	1	C. Caron
12/31 Nantucket	65	G. d'Entremont#		12/12	S. Dartmouth	2	J. Bogart
12/thr DWWS	140+	D. Furbish + v.o.		12/16	Ipswich (C.B.)	3	J. Berry#
Eastern Meadowlark			thr	Salisbury	20 max		v.o.
11/3 Salisbury	8	P. + F. Vale	White-winged Crossbill	11/7	Pittsfield	9	G. Shampang
11/4 Barnstable	10	M. Lynch#		11/11	N. Weymouth	7	T. O'Neill
11/11 P.I.	7	M. Lynch#		11/14	Nantucket	12	K. Blackshaw
11/17 Dorchester	2	R. Donovan		11/16	Swampscott	6	J. MacDougall
11/24 Essex	20	J. + M. Nelson		11/18	Boston H.	10	TASL (M. Hall)
11/25 S. Dart. (A.Pd)	6	E. Nielsen		11/23	Harwich	7	B. Nikula
12/16 Holyoke	1	D. McLain		11/24	Truro	12	W. Ellison
12/23 Marshfield	36	CBC		12/7	Plainfield	6	M. Lynch#
12/27 Mid-Cape Cod	47	CBC		12/8	Windsor	6	S. Kellogg
Rusty Blackbird			thr	Salisbury	50 max		v.o.
11/4 Chatham	6	B. Nikula	thr	Reports of 1-5 indiv. from 32 locations			
11/16 Sudbury	25	L. Nachtrab	Common Redpoll	11/16	Lenox	55	N. Purdy
11/16 Northampton	25	R. Packard		11/21	P'town (R.P.)	30	J. Carlisle#
11/17 Boston	13	E. Crowley		11/23	Worc.(BMB)	32	J. Liller
12/1 Wakefield	10	P. + F. Vale		11/24, 12/16	Ipswich (C.B.)	110, 60	J. Berry
12/8 Randolph	50	G. d'Entremont		11/28	Pittsfield	50	G. Shampang
12/16 Sunderland	13	A. Richards		12/12	Westboro	35	C. Buelow
12/25 Longmeadow	50	G. Kingston		12/14	Cambridge	150	J. Damian#
12/29 Essex	40	P. Brown		12/16	Greater Boston	339	CBC
Common Grackle				12/19	Ayer	45	J. Duprey
11/3 Stoughton	50	G. d'Entremont		12/21	Wakefield	90+	D. + I. Jewell
11/3 Ipswich/Essex	21	BBC (T. Young)		12/23	Newburyport	230	CBC
11/3 Framingham	150	E. Taylor		12/26	Groton	45	T. Pirro
11/4 Methuen	1,000,000+	J. Hogan#		12/28	Melrose	25	D. + I. Jewell
11/5 Ashburnham	2500+	C. Caron		12/29	P.I.	200	S. Sauter
11/16 Westford	60+	S. Selesky		12/30	Westminster	65	J. Sweeney#
Brown-headed Cowbird			Pine Siskin	11/3	Rockport	14	J. Soucy#
11/4 Newbypt.	100	R. Heil		11/4	Amherst	15	D. Norton
11/6 N. Medfield	175	E. Morrier		11/5	W. Townsend	12	M. Ryder
11/10 Dennis	75	B. Nikula		11/19	Middleboro	41	J. Mason
11/11 Worthington	5	R. Packard#		11/29	Washington	60	E. Neumuth
12/23 DWWS	2	D. Furbish#		12/1-21	Easton	20	K. Ryan
Baltimore Oriole				12/15	Athol	222	CBC
11/6-18 Williamsburg	1	G. LeBaron		12/17, 19	Becket	30	R. Laubach
11/15 Nantucket	1	L. Van Dyne		12/19	Royalston	100	B. Stevens#
11/18 Haydenville	1 f	R. Packard		12/28	Westminster	25+	R. Lewis
11/23 Truro	1	W. Ellison	Evening Grosbeak	11/2, 29	Northfield	12, 40	M. Taylor
11/24 Bourne	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)		11/4	P.I.	3	R. Heil
11/29 Chilmark	1	V. Laux#		11/6	Florence	5	T. Gagnon
11/29-12/15 Northampton	1	E. Labato		11/10	Mt. Watatic	3	T. Pirro
12/2 Stoneham	1	B. Allison		11/11	Westminster	22	C. Caron
12/30 Nantucket	1	H. D'Entremont#		11/11	Savoy	8	R. Packard#
Pine Grosbeak				11/14	Washington	50	E. Neumuth
11/7 Turners Falls	2 f	S. Smolen-Morton		11/15	Essex	4	P. Brown
11/10 Mt. Watatic	2	T. Pirro		11/18	HRWMA	16	T. Pirro
11/10, 25 Nantucket	1	J. Van Voorst		11/18	Petersham	9	D. + S. Larson
11/11 E. Orleans	1	B. Nikula		11/23	Quabbin (G40)	8	R. Donovan#
11/12 New Salem	2	M. Lynch#		12/5	Ashfield	30	S. Sauter
11/12 Leicester	1	M. Lynch#		12/8	Royalston	11	J. Morris-Siegel
11/13 Wellfleet	2	R. Titus		12/15	Athol	176	CBC
11/18 Gloucester	1	S. Leonard		12/20	Windsor	150	M. Williams
11/18 Quabbin	3	T. Gagnon#		12/27	Blandford	30	K. + M. Conway
11/18 HRWMA	1	T. Pirro					
11/24, 12/20 Gardner	4, 13	T. Pirro					
11/25 Northfield	1 m imm, 1 f	M. Taylor					
12/8 Hawley	2	R. Packard					
12/15 Athol	78	CBC					
12/29 Ashfield	6	S. Sauter					

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

a	adult	L.	Ledge
alt	alternate	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
b	banded	Mt.A.	Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
br	breeding	Nant.	Nantucket
dk	dark (phase)	Newbypt	Newburyport
f	female	P.I.	Plum Island
fl	fledged	Pd	Pond
imm	immature	Pont.	Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro
ind	individuals	P'town	Provincetown
juv	juvenile	Quab.	Quabbin Reservoir
loc	location	Res.	Reservoir
lt	light (phase)	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
m	male	S.B.	South Beach, Chatham
max	maximum	S. Dart.	South Dartmouth
migr	migrating	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
n	nesting	Stellw.	Stellwagen Bank
ph	photographed	Worc.	Worcester
pl	plumage	Barre F.D.	Barre Falls Dam, Barre, Rutland, Oakham
pr	pair	ABC	Allen Bird Club
S	summer (1S = first summer)	BBC	Brookline Bird Club
thr	throughout	BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester
vid	videotaped	CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club
v.o.	various observers	DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
W	winter (2W = second winter)	DWMA	Delaney Wildlife Management Area
w/	with		Stowe, Bolton, Harvard
yg	young	DWWS	Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary
#	additional observers	EMHW	Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum, Boston	GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	HRWMA	High Ridge Wildlife Management Area,
A.Pd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth		Gardner-Westminster
Arl.	Arlington	IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
B.	Beach	LBS	Local Bird Survey
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	LCES	Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	MARC	Massachusetts Avian Records Committee
Cambr.	Cambridge	MAS	Massachusetts Audubon Society
C.B.	Crane Beach, Ipswich	MBO	Manomet Observatory
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis	MBWMA	Martin Burns Wildlife Management Area,
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford		Newbury
Cumb. Farms	Cumberland Farms, Middleboro-	MDFW	MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
	Halifax	MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	MSSF	Myles Standish State Forest
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	NAC	Nine Acre Corner, Concord
F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham	NBC	Needham Bird Club
F.M.	Fowl Meadow, Milton	NEHW	New England Hawk Watch
F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
F.Pk	Franklin Park, Boston	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
G40	Gate 40, Quabbin	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
G45	Gate 45, Quabbin	TASL	Take A Second Look Harbor Census
H.P.	Halibut Point, Rockport	USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
H.	Harbor	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
I.	Island	WMWS	Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary

Species on the Review List of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (indicated by an asterisk [*] in the Bird Reports), as well as species unusual as to place, time, or known nesting status in Massachusetts, should be reported promptly to the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, c/o Marjorie Rines, Massachusetts Audubon Society, South Great Road, Lincoln, MA 01773, or by e-mail to <marj@mrines.com>.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO BIRD OBSERVER

Bird Observer prints compilations of birds reported in Massachusetts and offshore waters. Our compilers select and summarize for publication reports that provide a snapshot of bird life during the reporting period.

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ABOUT THE COVER

Barn Owl

The Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*) has the most widespread distribution of any owl species — Antarctica being the only continent where it does not occur. A medium-sized owl, it is easily distinguished from all other North American Owls. It is dark above and light below, varyingly tinted with buff-orange and brownish spots. It has a heart-shaped facial disc, no ear tufts, long, rounded wings, and a short tail. It has a buoyant flight, with deep, slow wingbeats. Females are larger and heavier than males, and are generally darker and more spotted below. It is almost exclusively nocturnal.

Up to thirty-five subspecies are generally recognized worldwide, but the taxonomy remains unsettled, with several subspecies considered full species by some taxonomists. In North America Barn Owls are found throughout most of the United States, although they become uncommon and local in the upper tier of states. They are found throughout Central and South America, as far south as Tierra del Fuego. They have been successfully introduced to Hawaii. The Barn Owl is largely a resident species, although some may be migratory in the northern edge of their range. Immature birds disperse widely in all directions, often over great distances, giving the impression of migratory behavior. In Massachusetts, the Barn Owl is considered an uncommon to rare local breeder in scattered localities, including Springfield, Boston Harbor Islands, and Martha's Vineyard. A winter maximum of eight birds has been recorded for the state. Like many owls, they may congregate in winter roosts.

Barn Owls are mostly monogamous, and mate for life. They usually produce a single brood, although sometimes they produce two. Their preferred habitat is low elevation grasslands and farmlands, or other open habitat such as marshes, wherever there are suitable roost and nest sites available, including open farm buildings. They avoid mountains and heavy forest. They are territorial and protective of their nesting area, giving threat displays with head held low and swaying with their wings spread with dorsal surfaces displayed toward the intruder, or shifting from one foot to another while swaying side to side. There is usually hissing and bill snapping, and in extreme cases the owl falls onto its back and strikes with its raised talons. Most calls are some form of scream; the territorial call is described as a gargled scream, usually given by the male while flying near the nest site. Females and chicks give self-advertising or food-begging calls. Courtship displays include the "moth flight," where the male hovers with dangling legs in front of the female. The male often brings food for the female.

Barn Owls nest in tree cavities, caves, cliffs, and in a variety of man-made structures, including abandoned mines, nest boxes, churches, farm buildings, and even drive-in movie screens! The female makes a cup of shredded owl pellets and may reuse a nest site for years. The entrance to the nest must be at least six inches in diameter. The usual clutch is 5-7 white eggs incubated for about a month by the female (only the female develops a brood patch). Incubation begins with the first egg,

so the young hatch asynchronously, often producing chicks of very different sizes, with two weeks sometimes separating the youngest from the oldest. This is likely a reproductive strategy for maximizing the production of young in years of superabundant food. Brooding is also by the female alone, with the male bringing in food for the female. After two weeks the female joins the male in hunting expeditions. Adults may store prey at the nest, sometimes dozens of items, during incubation and brooding. The young grow quickly to more than their adult weight, and then lose weight before fledging. They can fly after about two months, and are independent by about three months.

Barn Owls are awesome predators. They are almost strictly nocturnal, leaving their nest or roost about an hour after sunset and returning an hour before dawn. They have remarkably well-developed low-light sight, combined with hearing so sensitive that they can capture prey hidden by vegetation or snow. They are even capable of memorizing prey noises. They usually hunt flying low over the ground but do hunt from perches. Prey is captured with the talons, and dispatched by a bite through the neck or skull. Prey are usually swallowed whole, with the indigestible portions regurgitated hours later as pellets. They eat mostly small mammals, particularly voles, shrews, mice, and young rats. They will occasionally take a bird and rarely an invertebrate, amphibian, or reptile.

Barn Owls tend to be short-lived, with first-year mortality up to 75 percent. Collisions with cars are a frequent cause of death, but cold winters are devastating in the northern parts of their range. In Martha's Vineyard, for example, the Barn Owl population crashed during the cold winter of 1960-1961, and cold winters may ultimately limit populations in Massachusetts. Elsewhere in their range, populations are generally limited by availability of foraging habitat, nest sites, and rodent populations. Changing agricultural practices, resulting in lowered availability of open farm buildings and lowered rodent populations, are blamed for declines that have occurred in the midwest. In some parts of their United States range, however, populations appear to be increasing, and their vast range worldwide is encouraging for their future. 🦉

William E. Davis, Jr.

About the Cover Artist

Nancy Richards West has been painting professionally since 1971, with a focus on depicting the quiet beauty of wildlife and nature. She enjoys increasing acclaim as an artist, having received numerous honors and awards, including the Ward Foundation's top award for painting. In addition to exhibiting and selling her work in her Chincoteague studio and nearby gallery, Island Arts, Nancy participates in numerous prestigious wildlife and fine arts festivals throughout the East Coast. She is a resident of Chincoteague Island, VA. Her current show schedule is posted on her website <<http://www.nancywest.com>>. 🦉

AT A GLANCE

February 2002



ROGER S. EVERETT

A casual observer of birds can generally recognize a duck, even though there are a number of other waterbirds that can swim like ducks. However, in the case of this month's mystery species, the obviously broad-based and relatively flat bill are a dead giveaway that the bird is a duck, not a loon or grebe, which would either have a dagger-shaped or sharply pointed bill, or an American Coot, whose uniformly gray coloration and striking white bill would at once remove that species as a possibility. Cormorants, which can look superficially like dark, duck-like birds in the water, have long, slender bills with a distinct terminal hook. Alcids, which can swim like ducks, tend to be prominently black above and white below, and never exhibit bills as broad and flat as the bill on the waterfowl in the photograph.

Having established that the bird is a duck reduces the identification possibilities considerably. Clearly, the most obvious feature of the pictured species is the presence of two white spots on the side of the head. These markings, combined with the overall dusky or dark coloration of the body, at once narrow the field to either a female Harlequin Duck, or an immature or female Surf or White-winged Scoter. Female Greater Scaups occasionally show a diffuse, pale patch on the side of the head; however, their foreheads are more abrupt and their heads are more rounded and less flat on top than the duck in the picture. Also, a scaup's bill would likely appear paler in color and would not be as broad at the base as a sea duck like a scoter.

With the knowledge that the mystery bird is a sea duck, head pattern and bill conformation becomes critical to making a positive identification. The female and juveniles of the Harlequin Duck typically exhibit three white spots on the head, one characteristically being small and round and located in the middle of the face. The other two are situated near the base of the bill, one at the base and the other slightly above the base, the two sometimes merging to produce a diffuse white patch when seen from a distance. On the water, Harlequin Ducks of either sex appear quite dark, with tiny bills, and relatively long tails which are often cocked, giving them a rather buoyant or jaunty aspect when swimming. The bird in the photograph is not a Harlequin Duck.

Knowing that the choice is now one between Surf Scoter and White-winged Scoter, it is necessary to concentrate on the exact shape of the bill. Surf Scoters in any plumage possess a bill that is quite broad and deep at the base when viewed from the side. By contrast, the bill of a White-winged Scoter appears slightly smaller and is more attenuated and pointed at the tip. More importantly, the basal portion of the bill is much narrower than in a Surf Scoter, and the face is more extensively feathered above the gape when viewed from the side. In addition, even White-winged Scoters usually display at least a hint of their extensive white wing patches, even when swimming. Using these hints, it should be obvious that the mystery duck is a Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*), almost certainly an immature female, as suggested by the very dark cap and prominent and extensive white face patches.

The Surf Scoter is an abundant migrant along the coast in fall, and large numbers regularly winter in Massachusetts waters, especially off Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. The spring flight is less obvious because most Surf Scoters follow a slightly different migration route in this season than they do in fall. Roger S. Everett photographed the Surf Scoter in the picture on Cape Cod. 

Wayne R. Petersen



Long-eared Owl at Daniel Webster WS, Marshfield

ED SLATTERY

AT A GLANCE



ROGER S. EVERETT

Can you identify this bird?

Identification will be discussed in next issue's AT A GLANCE.

Get Involved!

Bird Observer is created entirely by volunteers: people who want to give something back to the birding community. We have several opportunities available for you to join us. If you have extra time available, however limited, and would enjoy the chance to meet a new group of people, there may well be a position for you.

Managing Editor. Are you good at managing details, deadlines, and follow-up? You could be just the person we are looking for. Our editorial staff is responsible for bringing in and editing articles, but the Managing Editor pulls the pieces together and makes them into an issue of *Bird Observer*. It is definitely time consuming and requires excellent organizational skills. Preference will be given to someone with editorial experience, but it is not a necessity.

Mailing Manager. If you want to get involved but have limited time, this could be the job for you. The Mailing Manager works with the Production Editor, Circulation Manager, printer, and post office to see that each issue gets in the mail. Total time is roughly six hours every other month, and involves lifting heavy boxes of the printed journal. The printer, post office, and potential volunteers to help with the mailing are located in the Cambridge/Belmont area, so proximity is a plus.

Promotion Manager. We would like to see *Bird Observer* receive more attention from potential subscribers, sponsors, and advertisers. This is a new position, and we are looking for someone with imagination and creativity. Experience in promotion or advertising would be useful.

If you want to find out more, call or e-mail Marj Rines at 781-643-6128, marj@mrines.com.

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CONTENTS

AN URBAN WONDERLAND: THE BOSTON NATURE CENTER	<i>Robert H. Stymeist</i>	83
THE SNOWY OWL SATELLITE TELEMETRY PROJECT	<i>Norman Smith</i>	88
THE SAW-WHET OWL BANDING PROJECT	<i>Danielle Smith</i>	95
NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL	<i>Chris Gentes</i>	103
BOREAL OWLS NESTING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE	<i>Stephen R. Mirick</i>	107
A GYR WINTER	<i>David Larson</i>	110
FIELD NOTES		
Red-tails in Love, epilogue . . .	<i>Henrietta Yelle</i>	112
SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS AVIAN RECORDS COMMITTEE	<i>Marjorie Rines, Secretary</i>	113
THE 102 ND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 12/14/01-1/5/02	<i>Robert H. Stymeist</i>	119
ABOUT BOOKS		
Diversity is the Spice of Life	<i>Mark Lynch</i>	121
BIRD SIGHTINGS: November/December 2001 Summary		127
ABOUT THE COVER: Barn Owl	<i>William E. Davis, Jr.</i>	143
ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST: Nancy R. West		144
AT A GLANCE	<i>Wayne R. Petersen</i>	145