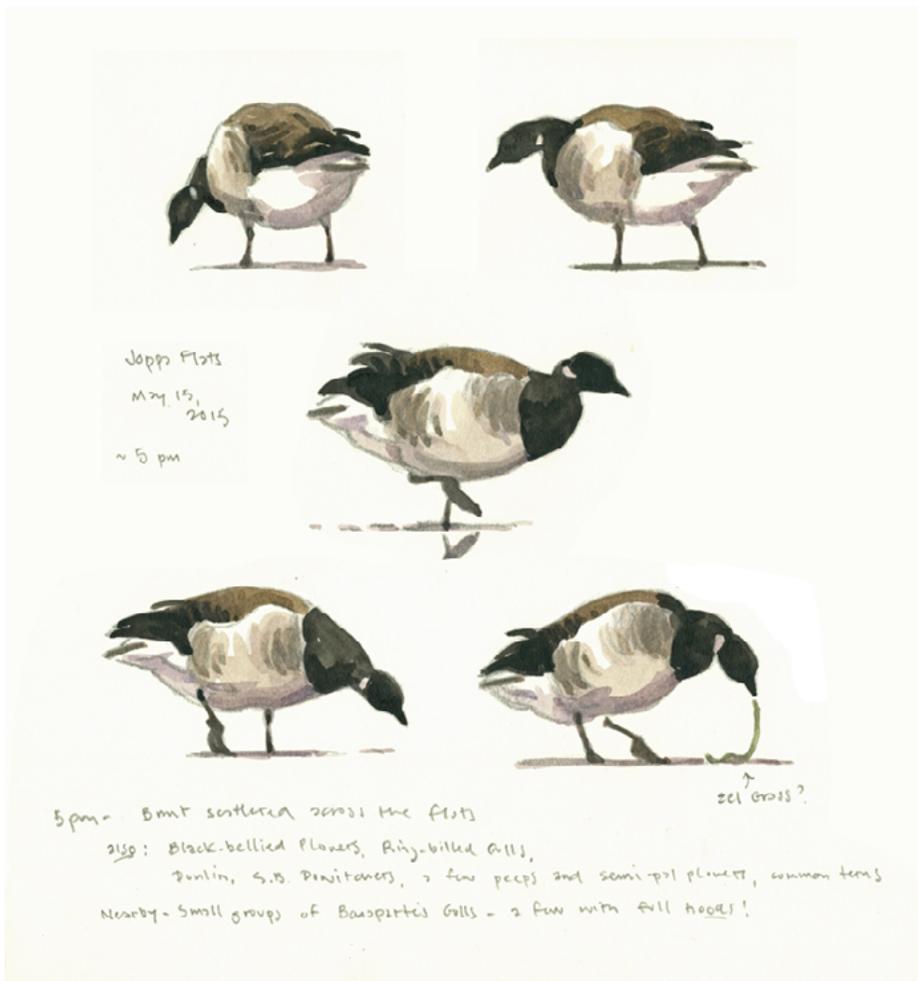


Bird Observer

VOLUME 47, NUMBER 5

OCTOBER 2019



HOT BIRDS

The first **Brown Pelican** of the summer appeared on Nantucket, where Richard Newman spotted it at one end of the island on July 14, then Blair Perkins/Shearwater Excursions, Inc. photographed it at the other end two days later (at right). Not long after the remnants of Hurricane Dorian passed through the state, another pelican appeared off Salem; Andrew Fowlie's initial report came shortly before noon, then Laura de la Flor and friends were drinking wine on the Salem Pier about two hours later when it passed by there.



Dave Adrien took excellent photos of a **Red-necked Stint** in the Bill Forward Pool of Parker River NWR on July 15. After eluding most birders for a couple of days, on July 18 the stint finally cooperated, making dozens of birders happy. After disappearing for a few more days, it was reported on July 24. Dan Prima took the photograph on the left.

Suzanne Sullivan seems to have the **Common Ringed-Plover**'s number this summer! After an initial report August 23 of a bird in less than optimal plumage, she photographed (on the right) a much more typical and clear-cut example of the species on September 13. The former bird was probably resighted two days later by a BBC birding trip, but the latter was more conspicuous and cooperative, and was still being seen at press time.



While competing in the Manomet Bird-a-thon, the team of Sean Williams, Francis Morello, and Max Chalfin-Jacobs encountered a wave of migrant landbirds at a farm in Marblehead that turned out to include a **Townsend's Warbler**! A few groups of birders managed to relocate it later the same day, but attempts to find it the following day were unsuccessful. Sean took the photo on the left.

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Bird Observer

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Birding Mid-Cape Cod from Barnstable to Orleans

David Clapp

When I started contemplating this article on winter birding on mid-Cape Cod, I began by thinking about and reliving the great advice and information provided over the years by the *Bird Observer* “Where to Go Birding” articles that gave step-by-step directions necessary to find the location and, with luck, the birds.



Today, eBird hotspots and various forms of instant communication have created a cultural shift in planning birding trips. Every phone and many cars have GPS and directional apps installed. In this article, I do not include turn-by-turn directions in most cases; that is for your phone to do. The emphasis is to provide you with a big-picture sense of the mid-Cape to help you plan the day or think about getting to a specific beach or bird. Birding the mid-Cape is easily done in a single day for many people. This route provides a round trip with stops at salt and fresh water, sandy beaches, and woodlands.

The saltwater shores of Cape Cod— we have a northern, southern, and eastern shore to bird on this trip—are rarely frozen and can harbor lingering seabirds and shorebirds. There are many bay and sea ducks, including Buffleheads, Red-breasted Mergansers, Common and Red-throated loons, Red-necked and Horned grebes, as well as Iceland and the occasional Glaucous gulls that frequent the shoreline throughout the winter. And those few ponds that do freeze late, or not at all some years, are often havens for freshwater ducks such as Common and Barrow’s goldeneyes, Buffleheads, Redheads, Canvasback, Ruddy, Mallard, and Black ducks, and lots of Hooded Mergansers.

Be Prepared

Remember, Cape Cod is unforgivingly cold and windy in the winter. The mid-Cape isn’t as rugged as the Atlantic shore, but you should always add a waterproof windbreaker, an extra sweater, and a hat that covers your ears to your gear. Pack some food, check the tides, and ballpark your route. The good news is that traffic will not be a problem in the winter, even on Route 28 and the Sagamore and Bourne bridges. Although it is a bit of a challenge to find birding hotspots when wearing gloves and a parka, all is not lost. As a matter of fact, there is an unencumbered feel to winter birding that you don’t get in any other season.

Cape Cod can be really quiet in the winter. Falmouth and Hyannis still pulse with life, but the roads are often empty and the outer Cape is all but abandoned of people. Lunch stops are few and far between. The mid-Cape has more Dunkin’s than the outer Cape, so check your phone for the nearest coffee and restroom stops. On Route 6, there

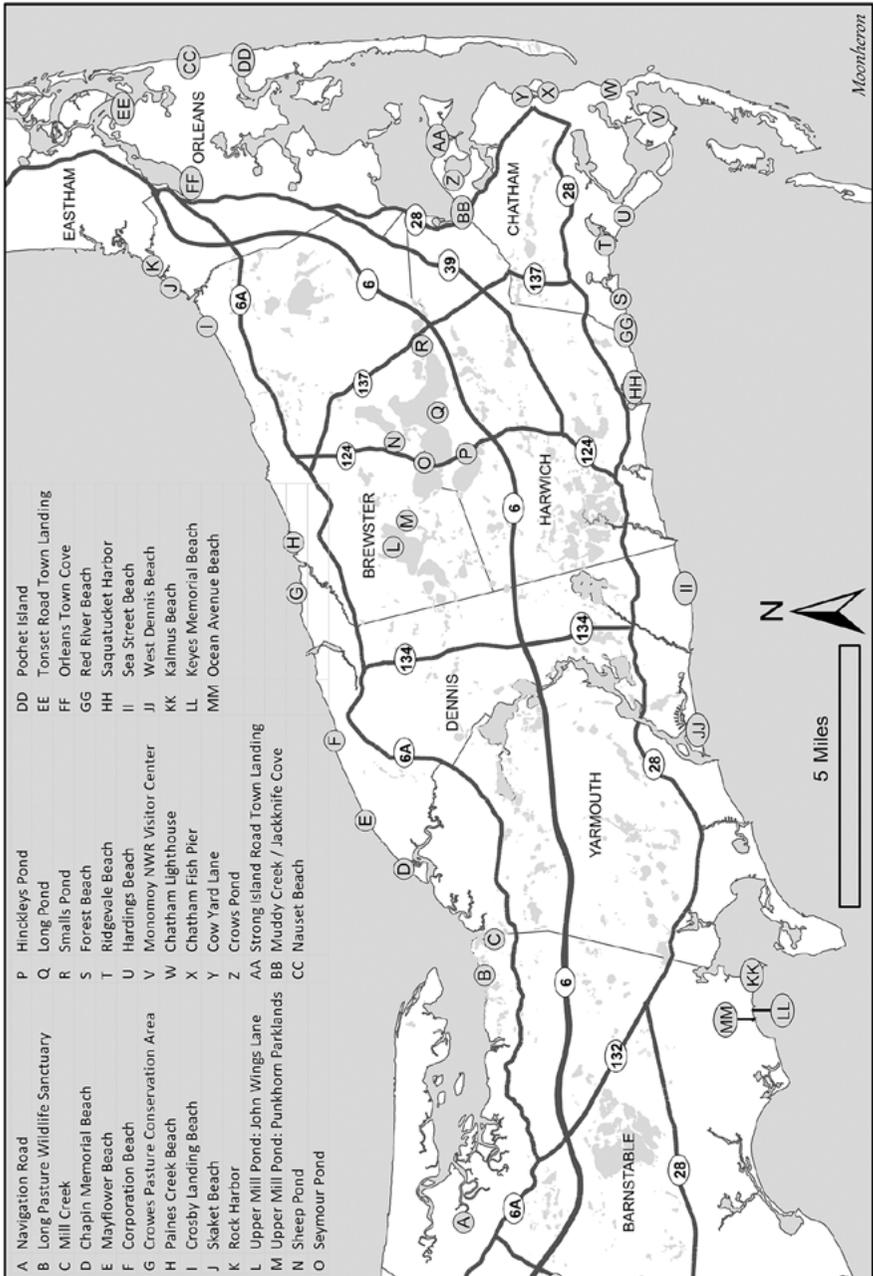


Fig. 1. Mid-Cape Cod Overview



The lighthouse on South Monomoy. All photographs by the author.

is a major rest area off Exit 6—Route 132 with a Dunkin, Subway, Burger King, and an open gas station.

How to Use this Article

A winter outing to Cape Cod can be a day trip or a weekend excursion, depending on how much of the Cape you want to cover. You can combine birding the mid-Cape with Falmouth and the upper Cape, or with the outer Cape from Orleans to Provincetown. Winter birding depends on how much daylight there is between December and March, how much time you have, and how much of the Cape you want to explore thoroughly. The sectional approach of this article gives you the flexibility to decide where you want to end up if you are going to stay for more than one night.

The mid-Cape Cod overview map (Figure 1) covers the area east of Route 149—Exit 5 off Route 6—to the Orleans Rotary and includes most of Barnstable, Dennis, Yarmouth, Harwich, Brewster, Chatham, and Orleans. There are three relatively parallel roads that take you east to west or west to east: Route 6A is on the north or Cape Cod Bay side; Route 6, the main highway and usually the fastest road, runs centrally to the Eastham/Orleans rotary; and Route 28 runs on the southern side nearest to Nantucket Sound, then turns north in Chatham. Because the connecting north-south links are rarely actual north-south roads, it is best to make a plan before starting out; think of mid-Cape birding in terms of the nearest exit off Route 6.

The paramount birding places on the mid-Cape are Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge on Chatham’s Morris Island and Nauset Beach in Orleans, with several stops around them. How and when you get there is up to you, but don’t miss the “elbow”



Gray Catbird in thicket.

of Cape Cod and environs. If you follow these mid-Cape stops in alphabetical and numerical order—the excursion begins on the northern bay side and ends on the southern Nantucket Sound side with a Chatham/Orleans loop in the middle—the round trip route looks a like a three-quarter figure-eight on its side. Morning light will be in your favor if you start along Route 6A and end up on Nantucket Sound; however, if you love winter sunsets over the water, you might want to start in Hyannis and end the day birding the bay beaches from Brewster to Barnstable.

One of the easiest aspects of birding Cape Cod in winter is that you usually do not need to be as attuned to the tides as during spring and fall migration. The winter ducks and gulls will be around at high or low tides. The exception is birding the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) on Morris Island in Chatham, when it is better to be there on a low tide or within an hour or two of low tide. Also, Cow Yard Lane and the Chatham Fish Pier, while not prime winter hotspots, are better at low tide. So plan accordingly. Gray seals are best seen from the Chatham Fish Pier, which is located between Main Street and the Chatham Bars Inn on Shore Road. It is best to park in the upper lot and scope Tern Island (just offshore) from the observation platform—you won't need a scope for the seals. Tern Island is a good loafing area for gulls of all sorts. Glaucous and Lesser Black-backed gulls have been annual at the Fish Pier.

Winter passerine birding is also fairly straightforward on the mid-Cape. Much of the inland Cape is residential with public birding hotspots featured around boat ramps and conservation land. Many towns have websites for their conservation land trails, and this is your best bet if you want to plan specific places to explore woods and thickets. However, on most of Cape Cod, there are countless small thickets that can harbor Hermit Thrushes, Yellow-breasted Chats, Gray Catbirds, Eastern Towhees, Fox



Hooded Merganser.

Sparrows, and lots of “feeder birds.” Pishing at almost any thickety pitch pine spot will yield Tufted Titmice, Black-capped Chickadees, Red- and White-breasted nuthatches, House Finches and Goldfinches, and any of four common woodpeckers: Northern Flicker, Downy, Hairy, and Red-bellied Woodpeckers.

1. Barnstable to Dennis (Cape Cod Bay Side)

Start your mid-Cape birding trip in Barnstable on Navigation Road (A). Take Exit 5–Route 149 North to Route 6A, turn left onto Route 6A (Main Street), then turn right in 0.3 mile onto Navigation Road, a short unpaved street that heads north into the Great Marshes. This is an avenue of potholes and thickets that can produce passerines that are hanging on to their summer homes or sheltering after being caught a bit farther north than they wanted to be. It is a good spot to spend an hour or so. Continuing east on Route 6A, stop at the Long Pasture Wildlife Sanctuary (B), a Mass Audubon property at the end of Bone Hill Road, Barnstable. You can explore 2.5 miles of trails through thickets, tidal flats along the shore, and restored vernal pools, as well as bird the feeders. Like many places on Cape Cod, there are wet swales and drainages here that enhance the thickets; check these whenever you come across them. You can download the sanctuary map at <https://www.massaudubon.org/content/download/8068/145342/file/longpasture_trails.pdf>

Return to Route 6A and head east. A left turn onto Keveney Lane will take you out to the Mill Creek area (C) where Barnstable and Yarmouth share a boundary. When you cross the bridge into Yarmouth, the road becomes Mill Lane and will loop you back to Route 6A. This short diversion can provide tidal pond birds and freshwater and saltwater ducks. Northern Pintails and Green-winged Teal are regular in the fresh water; Red-breasted and Hooded mergansers are easily seen near the bridge over the tidal stream. Add Brant and gulls—as well as a look at a very pretty part of the bayside shoreline. Continue east on Route 6A through Yarmouthport to Dennis, where a couple of bayside beaches may be productive for birds on the sand—such as lingering Black-bellied Plovers and Sanderlings, but more likely small flocks of Dunlin—and in the



Brant flock.

water. This shoreline is best for gulls and water birds that like salt marsh edges, such as Red-breasted Mergansers and Black Ducks. The beaches are located for the most part in residential areas, and you may want to refer to a map or GPS to reach them. For Chapin Beach (D), take a sharp left onto New Boston Road, then take Beach Street and Taunton Avenue to Chapin Beach Road. For Mayflower Beach (E), stay straight on Beach Street to Horsefoot Path, then turn right on Dunes Road.

The best beach on the northern side for windblown winter birds is Corporation Beach (F) at the end of Corporation Road in Dennis. The parking lot is protected by a rock berm, and as you sit there during a storm you will be thankful that the water has been slowed down. Northeast winds funnel their energy here, bringing all sorts of gulls, ducks, jaegers, loons, and occasional alcids and phalaropes. Corporation Beach is a fairly reliable spot on Cape Cod Bay for Dunlin, Harlequin Ducks, and the occasional King Eider. This spot has hosted Ross's Gull—a spring sighting—and Brown Booby in summer. Depending on the wind, temperature, and depth of the season, this shoreline is a great spot for observing Northern Gannets as they work to the south or return to their northern breeding grounds. During and after a winter northeasterly storm, this parking lot may sometimes be closed due to accumulated debris and wave wash.

For a walk in a conservation property that includes a variety of habitats—open space, thickets, beach, and pond—head out to Crowes Pasture Conservation Area (G) in Dennis. Quivett Creek forms the boundary between Dennis and Brewster. In the early part of the winter, a stop here can be productive for lingering land birds such as Yellow-breasted Chats, Gray Catbirds, Baltimore Orioles, and Eastern Phoebes as well as a modest number of Brant, Buffleheads, Black Ducks, Red-breasted Mergansers, and Common Loons. To get here from Corporation Beach, return to Route 6A and travel east, then take a left onto South Street. South Street curves to the right; keep following it into the property. You can download the trail map at https://www.town.dennis.ma.us/sites/dennisma/files/uploads/crowes_pasture_kiosk_grassland_shaded_relief_2018_22.5x38.pdf.

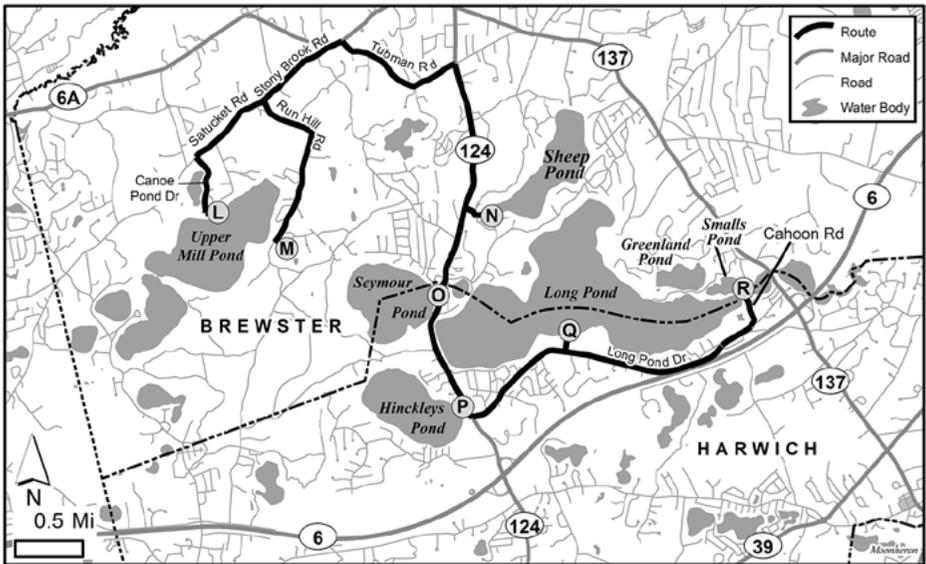


Fig 2. Map of Brewster and Harwich Lakes

2. Brewster to Orleans (Cape Cod Bay Side)

Brewster has seven beaches with small parking lots. None of them are terribly exciting birding destinations, but if you are driving along Route 6A, they make for a nice series of stops. You will add Brant and Dunlin to your day list somewhere along the Brewster shoreline if you haven't already picked them up at Corporation Beach. The two most productive of the Brewster beaches are Paines Creek Landing (H) and Crosby Landing (I). After a northeast storm, the flats near Paines Creek Landing can be good for gulls, phalaropes, and other windblown birds.

The same can be said for Skaket (J) and Rock Harbor (K) beaches in Orleans. They are pretty stops with occasional birds but are rarely exceptional. However, at any of these beaches in Brewster or Orleans, a walk along the bayside edge of the vegetated dunes may yield a Short-eared Owl, Horned Larks, and winter finches, especially Common Redpolls. You can choose to visit several bayside beaches or focus on one or two.

3. The Brewster and Harwich Lakes

Inland, there are several large ponds in Harwich and Brewster between Route 6A and Route 6 that have a modest reputation for birds and can be productive despite limited access. (See Figure 2.) Conveniently, the best way to get from Brewster to Chatham's beaches on Nantucket Sound is through this part of the mid-Cape via Route 124 (Exit 10 N on Route 6) and Route 137 (Exit 11). Rather than give a turn-by-turn route for the lakes section, I am listing the stops from west to east and north to south. You can determine your route based on the direction you are coming from.

Stops (L) and (M) are at Upper Mill Pond in Brewster. A bit off the beaten path,



Bald Eagle.

this large pond offers reasonable birds, but they tend to be spread out, and there are only two viewing spots, so I would consider it a last choice. Stop (L) is from John Wings Lane (from Route 6A, go south on Stony Brook Road, take a left fork onto Satucket Road, then turn right on Canoe Pond Drive to John Wings Lane to Upper Mill Pond Landing). Or you can see the pond from the Punkhorn Parklands parking lot (M), which is along Run Hill Road past the Town Transfer Station (from 6A, go south on Stony Brook Road and turn right on Run Hill Road). You could get Buffleheads, all three mergansers, lots of Common Goldeneyes, and in most winters, a Bald Eagle or two.

The next three stops are off of Route 124, heading south from Route 6A. The first stop is Sheep Pond (N) in Brewster. Turn left on Fisherman's Landing Road and drive to the boat ramp, which is a good spot to look for Bald Eagles, Black Ducks, and Mallards. As Bald Eagles have become more common on Cape Cod, it is regular now to see eagles in the air over any of these ponds. There were at least two nesting attempts by Bald Eagles on the Cape, one near these ponds, in 2019.

Continue south on Route 124, which passes between Seymour, Long, and Hinckley (sometimes called Pleasant Lake) ponds, with good views of open water and the bike path. The access to Seymour Pond (O) is not easy to see; it's on the right just over the Harwich line as the pond comes into view—yes, drive (carefully) over the bike path to reach the small, sandy parking area.

Still north of Route 6, look for the red store (Local Flavor at the Pleasant Lake General Store) on the right. Park here and look at Hinckley's Pond (P) from the bike path. Hinckley's Pond has more birds per acre than the other two ponds. This is a



Greater Scaup with Fresh Water Mussel.

good spot for American Coot, Ruddy Ducks, Greater and Lesser scaup, Ring-necked Ducks, Common and Barrow's goldeneyes, Buffleheads, Red-breasted and Common mergansers, Common and Red-throated loons, and Bald Eagles.

Long Pond is a scaup loafing pond that sometimes includes the scaup-cousin, Tufted Duck; the pond is best observed from the southern end along Route 124. This is usually the best pond for Barrow's Goldeneyes. There is a public boat ramp on Long Pond Road (turn right off Route 124 just south of the red store) that allows a pretty good look at the middle of Long Pond (Q).

There is one more pond with Ring-necked Ducks, Hooded Mergansers, and an occasional Pied-billed Grebe, that is easily reached and worth a quick look. This small but productive site is actually named Smalls Pond (R). It is adjacent to Cahoon Beach Landing, the northern parking lot at Long Pond. (Some people might remember looking for the Tufted Duck that was here for a month or so a couple of years ago.) Get out of your car and take a few steps to the right, away from Long Pond, and look in the back of Smalls Pond. When you are done birding, return to Long Pond Road and head east to Route 137. You can use a map to locate the Hamilton Cartway (off Route 137, usually rutted and bouncy) that takes you to Greenland Pond. This interior pond is usually replete with all three mergansers and other ducks. When you finish birding the lakes section, take Route 137 to get to Route 28 to explore Chatham's beaches.

4. Chatham

The mid-Cape southern Route 28 side may be a bit better than the Route 6A side, but it, too, is usually quiet. The wintering sea and bay ducks seem to favor the wild eastern waters of outer Cape Cod as opposed to the calmer and more sheltered waters of Cape Cod Bay and Nantucket Sound. But driving along this southerly shoreline on Route 28 offers several birding stops with potential that will be discussed later in. The focus now is Chatham (see Figure 3)—the premier destination for a mid-Cape winter birding trip. (You can decide whether to get there from Route 6A, Route 28, or if you

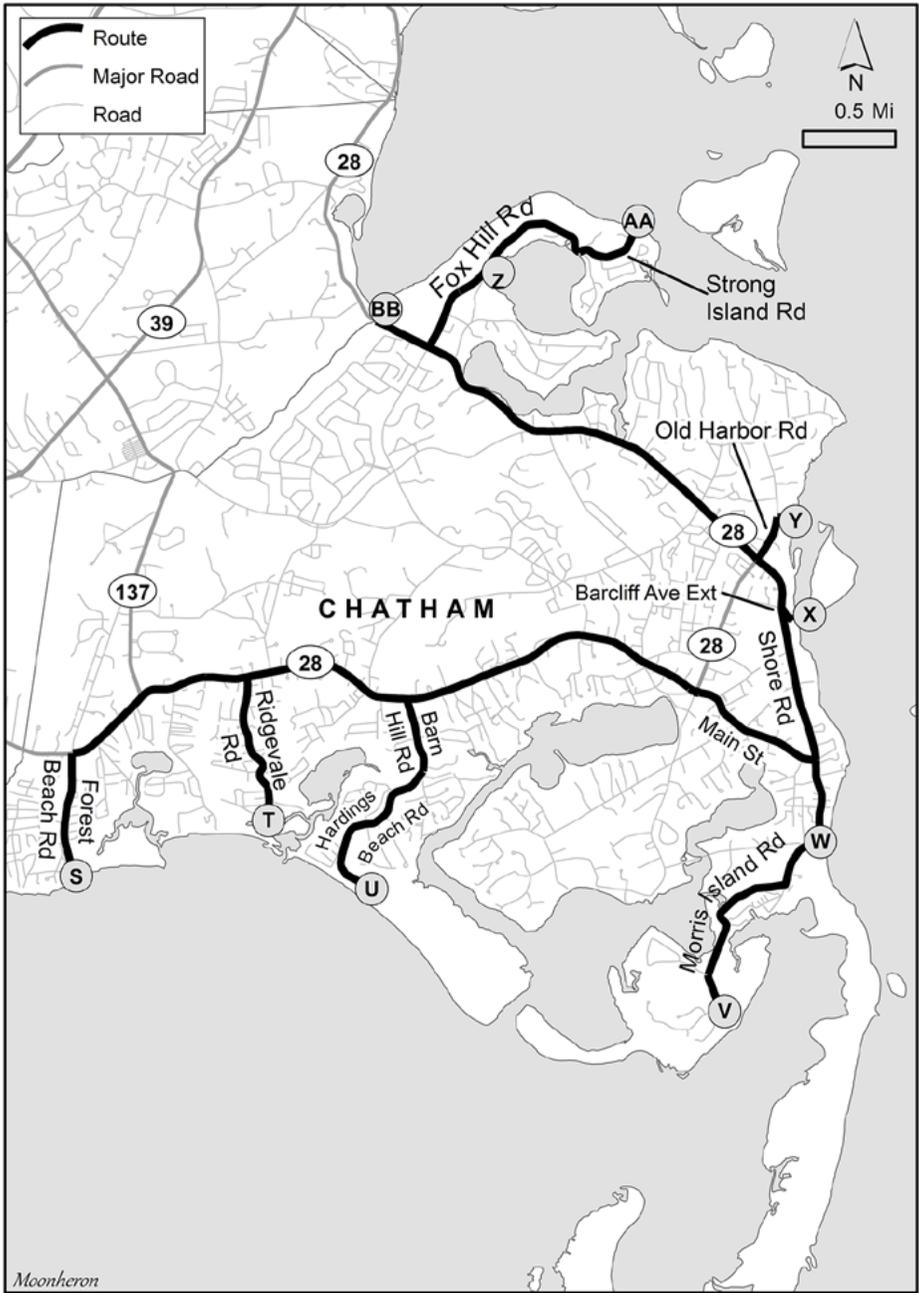


Fig. 3 Map of Chatham

simply want to start your day of mid-Cape birding in Chatham by taking Route 6, to Exit 11—Route 137 Brewster/Chatham.)

Once you enter Chatham things begin to change; there are more beaches exposed to the open ocean and many more wintering seabirds when you start heading north. Forest Beach (S) and Ridgevale Beach (T)—basically a continuation of the other Nantucket Sound beaches—are worth a stop along the southern shore if you have the time. Hardings Beach (U) merits a longer walk along beach to look for Common Eiders, White-winged Scoters, Red-breasted Mergansers, and Common Loons as well as white-winged gulls and the occasional lingering Laughing Gull on the water. On the way back to your car, take the sand road between the dunes—it’s a bit more protected from the elements—and look for Horned Larks. To get to Hardings Beach from Route 28, turn south on Barn Hill Road, and take the right fork onto Hardings Beach Road.

As you travel around the “elbow” of Cape Cod, conditions are dynamic. It is at the far edge of this mid-Cape block of land where you will see the most birds and experience the most significant chill factors. In winter, the northeast wind usually blows along the Chatham coastline, often carrying cold, damp ocean air; but sometimes it shifts to a northern blast from Canada. In either case, there are several birding stops that will make the discomfort worthwhile, but do plan for the most extreme weather and hope that it doesn’t occur.

The barrier beaches are breaking and reforming and access is not predictable from year to year. Shoaling has pretty much eliminated the ferries that we took for decades to North and South Monomoy Islands during the summer and fall. About five years ago, the Town of Chatham stopped putting out channel markers that guided you below North Monomoy along the inside of (then) South Beach to South Monomoy because the shoaling was so unpredictable and the tidal range so great that there was no sure way to keep the inside water routes down to South Monomoy open and safe. There are now channel markers that get you toward the breaks in the beach leading into the Atlantic and also around to the west into Stage Harbor and Nantucket Sound. It is probably best to leave your boat at home and charter a boat locally if you want to get to the Mini and Monomoy. It is a very risky thing to do in the winter, and chartering in the winter is probably impossible anyway. The best and most easily accessed birding now is at the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) headquarters on Morris Island (V), which is the southernmost point from which you can start to look eastward. The refuge includes the various Monomoy islands and all the flats associated with them. In the winter, getting out to the islands would be treacherous. Nowadays with seals, sharks, shoaling, and tides, access is quite restricted even in summer.

The easiest way to get from Hardings Beach to Monomoy NWR headquarters in winter is to go through the center of Chatham (you might take an alternate route during the summer). Take Route 28 into Chatham. At the rotary, Route 28 veers left; be sure you continue straight on what is now Main Street, through town, then turn right at the stop sign to remain on Main Street to Chatham Light. Just past the lighthouse, continue straight down the hill, which is now Morris Island Road. At the fork, take a right to remain on Morris Island Road and follow it across the causeway, where it becomes Tisquantum Road. Follow the signs to Monomoy NWR, turning left onto the very



Lesser Black-Backed Gull.

short Wikis Way, then park at the headquarters (V). There are several signs that might lead you to believe that you are on private roads and not welcome, and that is true once you pass the refuge entrance, so be sure to park only at the refuge headquarters. The bathrooms may be open and there are bird feeders nearby that attract winter visitors and lingering migrants. It is worth stopping here just for the feeders. Redpolls and White-crowned Sparrows are regular as are orioles and Red-winged Blackbirds.

After examining the feeders, follow the boardwalk trail to the overlooks and the stairs to the beach. Scan from here for Brant, Common Eider, all three scoters, Red-breasted Mergansers, Bufflehead, and Common Goldeneyes. There will also be Common and Red-throated loons and the occasional Horned Grebe in the waters just below, which is the shallow expanse between South Beach and Morris Island. From the overlooks, scope the sandy beaches of South Beach to the east for Snowy Owls. To the right of the stairs, you can see North Monomoy and South Monomoy islands across the water; they extend for several miles farther southward. Scope the islands for gulls. You can walk toward North Monomoy on the beach on a low tide. Be sure to get off the beach before half tide, because the water will rise right up to the bank—you will get wet if you misjudge the tides. You don't want to spend too much time on the Morris Island beach in winter.

There can be Great Cormorants anywhere along the Nantucket Sound beaches leading to Chatham and along the eastern beaches as well. In the Monomoy area, they are likely to be on any rocky projection, exposed piling, or simply standing on a sand bar offshore at low or half tide. It is also likely that Double-crested Cormorants will linger on Cape Cod. Size is one of the best field marks, and as winter wanes, Greats begin to develop white feathering around the throat and white thigh patches.

Bird Observer published a detailed article on “Birding Morris Island and Vicinity, Chatham, Massachusetts,” by Ryan Schain that focuses primarily on fall migration from August to November but mentions the other seasons as well. It appears in *Bird Observer* Volume 43, Number 4, August 2015, and online at www.birdobserver.org. The article covers the inland trails on Morris Island, which are worth exploring, as well as the beach.

When you are finished birding Monomoy NWR, drive back to the Chatham Lighthouse (W) and stop and scope from the roadside parking area across the street. There is a lot of sand here and nothing will be close, but all sorts of things are possible. In the winter, there will certainly be gray seals and Common Eiders, and usually lots of other ducks, mostly American Black Ducks.

The next stop is 1.3 miles farther north: the Chatham Fish Pier (X). Stay straight on Main Street, which becomes Shore Road. Park in the upper lot only, please. There are bathrooms (where classical music is piped in). Down the stairs and past the fish storage area there is an observation deck, newly renovated in 2019, that allows for a reasonably close look at Tern Island; North Beach Island, farther out, still has two houses on it (as of this writing, August 2019). There will be gulls here, often including white-winged gulls— Iceland and Glaucous—and occasionally a Lesser Black-backed Gull. The fishing boats will be unloading skate wings (a bit like scallops, don’t overcook) and spiny dogfish (a small shark, exported for fish and chips), and this economy will bring seals right in under your nose. Reasonable photos with a cell phone are possible of gulls and seals both.

Before leaving the observation deck, check out the shoreline of Tern Island, which is a good spot for shorebirds to linger. Most of them will be on the northern side of the island at half tide, but look anyway. This is a pretty good spot for early and late American Oystercatchers.

Head north again on Shore Road, proceed about a mile, and turn right at the traffic light onto Old Harbor Road, then turn right onto the town landing at Cow Yard Lane (Y), a sand road only a hundred yards long. Drive or park and walk to the end and look across the water at the northern end of Tern Island. At half and low tides this area opens into a sand flat and is a choice feeding area for shorebirds. It is, of course, best in the spring and fall but is always worth a look, often with a scope. In winter, you will see Brant, Canada Geese, Black Ducks, Mallards, Common Eiders, White-winged and Surf scoters, Red-breasted Mergansers, Buffleheads, Common Loons, the usual winter gulls with a few Bonaparte’s now and then, as well as Dunlin on the flats. The thickets on the side of the short road will yield winter passerines, and sometimes a Red-tailed or Cooper’s hawk perches on top of one of the eastern cedar trees.

Drive back to the traffic light and turn right; you are now on Route 28 driving north (although the signs say Route 28 south). In 2.2 miles, turn right onto Fox Hill Road. In 0.6 mile, you will see Eastward Ho Country Club on the left. On the right is Crows Pond (Z), a mostly-enclosed tidal pond that can be good for Barrow’s and Common goldeneyes and Black Ducks, as well as Buffleheads and Red-breasted and Hooded mergansers. Drive into the small parking lot and get out and scope the pond.



Eider flock.

When you are done, turn right on Fox Hill Road, which takes you through the Eastward Ho Country Club's golf course where large flocks of Canada Geese graze. Sometimes these flocks yield a Snow Goose or White-fronted Goose. Past the golf course, turn left onto Strong Island Road to the town landing across from Strong Island (AA). The strait between Pleasant Bay (to the left) and Chatham Harbor (to the right) is often teeming with hundreds, if not thousands, of Common Eider. You can also find Buffleheads, Red-breasted Mergansers, and Black, White-winged, and Surf scoters, although not in the impressive numbers of the eiders. King Eider have been mixed in this gathering on several occasions; if you have the time and warm enough clothing, slowly scan for this attractive winter visitor. Turn around and head back down Fox Hill Road to Route 28, checking the geese on the golf course one more time.

Continue driving north. At the Harwich/Chatham town line there is a sandy expanse at the mouth of Muddy Creek called Jackknife Cove (BB) that might hold a few birds. The entrance road—on the right—is difficult to see and is down a steep hill. Park and scan the creek where it enters Pleasant Bay. The sandy road maybe flooded at high tide or icy in winter. If that's the case, or you miss the turnoff, you'll soon come to roadside parking on the right next to Pleasant Bay. You can walk along the small beach and view Jackknife Cove from the other side. There are usually plenty of gulls: Herring, Ring-billed, and Black-backed, as well as Black Ducks. In 2016, the federal and Massachusetts governments, along with several local stakeholders, completed a restoration project of Muddy Creek and its estuary, opening natural tidal flow, which has led to the return of fish and many birds, most of which you'll see in other seasons. But it's worth a look in winter, too. This section of Route 28 is dangerous to walk, so

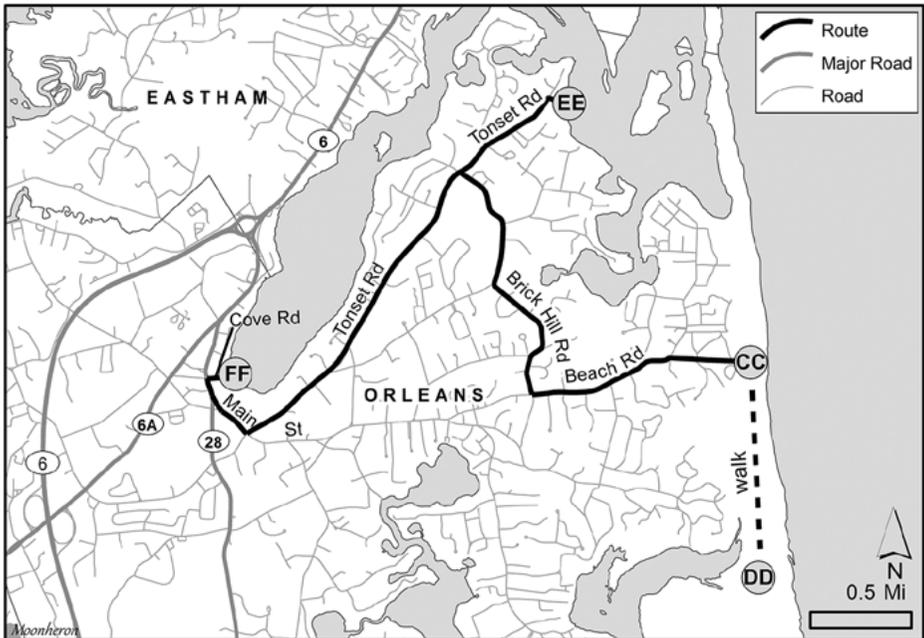


Fig. 4. Map of Nauset

cross the road carefully and scan Muddy Creek. Even if all you see are a single Great Blue Heron, Mallards, and Canada Geese, it is a pretty view.

5. Orleans: Nauset Beach to Town Cove

As you enter Orleans (see Figure 4), the barrier beaches block ocean access in most areas. Keep heading north on Route 28 (South) for 5.2 miles. At the traffic light next to the police station and ball field, turn right on Tonsel Road. At the next light, turn right on Main Street, which becomes Beach Road and will take you to the Nauset Beach parking lot (CC). Storms and significant erosion have wiped out the dunes and part of the parking lot; in 2019, the Town of Orleans built a new long dune between the beach and the parking lot to protect the area for another 5–10 years. You can park here in winter unless the lot has been flooded in a recent nor'easter. There are good seabirds just offshore—Common Eiders, Red-breasted Mergansers, all three scoters, Common Loons—and a short walk to the north at low to mid tide will likely show Harlequin Ducks at a shallow rocky spot just offshore. Often, there are alcids and Northern Gannets in the distance, and the gannets may come close to shore right after a storm. Look for Sanderlings and small flocks of Dunlin along the water's edge. You can see gray seals here, too, watching you as you watch them.

The more adventurous—and optimistic—can walk a sandy mile to the south on Nauset Beach and access the private land called Pochet Island (DD) (the owners pronounce it Po-chee). There is a bridge over the tidal creek that allows you to visit this property. It is private and should be treated with respect. There are thickets and woodlands and overgrown fields. The open wetland in the center can harbor late night-



Black Scoter.

herons and lots of passerines. This island is a little-visited treasure along the beach. Remember, it is a long walk in soft sand with no shelter from the fierce northeast winds. Plan on at least a two-hour round trip, if not longer.

When you are finished birding Nauset Beach (whether or not you go all the way out to Pochet), head out to the town landing at the end of Tonset Road (EE), which a small but more sheltered spot to bird Nauset Harbor with Nauset Beach in the distance. Leaving Nauset Beach, drive on Beach Road for 1.1 miles, turn right on Brick Hill Road, and in 1.3 miles, turn right on Tonset Road. In approximately 0.5 mile, Tonset Road curves to the right. Park at the end of the road and bird from the top of the stairs. You will see most of the ducks and gulls you saw at Nauset Beach, minus the Harlequin Ducks, but you may add Common Goldeneyes and a Great Blue Heron in the marsh. If you are lucky, you might be able to scope a distant Snowy Owl out on the marsh grasses or on the dunes at Nauset Beach across the water.

The final stop in Orleans is the Town Cove (FF). Take Tonset Road for about 2.5 miles and turn right on Main Street at the traffic light. Turn right onto Route 28, then take your first right on Cove Road. You can park next to the Orleans Yacht Club's dock and walk out on the dock to scope the water. Along with the usual ducks and geese and Great Cormorants, you never know what surprises might lurk: American Coot, Barrow's Goldeneye, Redhead, Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, and Northern Shoveler are occasional but annual.

No trip to Cape Cod would be complete without a stop at Bird Watcher's General Store in Orleans, which is on Route 28 between Cove Road and the Orleans rotary. There are also several restaurants and coffee shops in Orleans that are open for lunch year-round: The Yardarm, The Cottage Street Bakery, Hole in One, The Corner Store, and Homeport. If you plan to stay overnight to bird the outer Cape Cod the next day, you will find a few motels in Orleans that are open year-round. To continue the final loop of the mid-Cape section, get on Route 6 West at the Orleans rotary and take the exits to the beaches along Nantucket Sound that interest you.

6. Nantucket Sound Beaches: Harwich to Hyannis

Nantucket Sound offers several small beaches with parking lots that have potential. From east to west, they are in Harwich, Dennis Port, West Dennis, and Hyannis. At these neighborhood beaches you may stumble on Purple Sandpipers, Brant, and a nice range of sea and bay ducks. Any of the small tidal creeks that drain past these beaches can harbor Greater Yellowlegs and Hooded Mergansers along their marshy edges. Red River Beach (GG) (take Exit 11) and Saquatucket Harbor (HH) (take Exit 11 or Exit 10), the two most easterly of the Harwich beaches, are worth a look, particularly after a storm. In Dennis Port, take Exit 9A for Sea Street Beach (II), which is the most productive, though there are half a dozen small overlooks along this shoreline. [Note: do not confuse Sea Street Beach in Dennis Port on Nantucket Sound with the other Sea Street Beach in East Dennis on the bay side.]

The best of the Nantucket Sound birding spots is West Dennis Beach (JJ) (take Exit 9A). This is a long beach along Nantucket Sound that also has extensive salt marsh habitats to look over, as well as dunes and beach grass. It is a regular wintering spot on Cape Cod for Snowy Owls and lingering herons and egrets. The parking lots provide edges that collect wind-blown seeds; redpolls and Horned Larks, along with the Song Sparrows, can sometimes be seen gleaning from these areas.

Finally, Hyannis beaches of note (all accessed from Exit 7) are Kalmus Beach (KK), Keyes Memorial Beach (LL), and Ocean Avenue Beach (MM). Kalmus Beach, at the mouth of Lewis Bay, is a good stop for bathrooms and a quick look at the water. Bay ducks and gulls are often pretty good along these beaches. These beaches are tidal and are best birded at the lower tides. Most of the sought-after species will be on the cusp of winter and include Bonaparte's and Black-headed gulls, Hooded Mergansers, and passerines that use salt marshes. All of the south-facing beaches along Nantucket Sound will have Long-tailed Ducks and all three scoters. There have been good numbers of Black Scoters in these waters. On a ferry ride to Nantucket or Martha's Vineyard from Hyannis, you will often pass by hundreds of scoters, loons, and Long-tailed ducks.

That wraps up the eastern section of the mid-Cape; no matter how you choose to bird the area from Barnstable to Orleans, keep in mind that every beach, thicket, and feeder just might hold another pleasant surprise.

eBird Hotspots in the Mid-Cape Cod Area

Massachusetts has the distinction of having a lot of birders and, hence, many entries into eBird. The downside is that there are many, many hotspots promulgated for Massachusetts—how do you choose? Below, I've chosen several mid-Cape Barnstable County hotspots, some that I discussed in the article and others that I didn't mention. The hotspots that are reasonable to visit in winter are marked with an *. The others may be worth a stop if you have the time but are better in other seasons.

- *Navigation Road (Barnstable)
- *Sea Gull Beach (Yarmouth)
- Bells Neck Conservation Area (Dennis)

- *Corporation Beach (Dennis)
- *West Dennis Beach (Dennis)
- Crowes Pasture (Dennis)
- *Chapin Beach (Dennis)
- Cold Brook Preserve (Harwich)
- *Red River Beach (Harwich)
- Nickerson State Park (Brewster)
- Wing Island (Brewster)
- *Monomoy (5 Chatham spots)
- *Morris Island Causeway (Chatham)
- *Chatham Fish Pier (Chatham)
- Tern Island Sanctuary (Chatham)
- Frost Fish Creek (Chatham)
- Cow Yard Lane (Chatham)
- *Outermost Harbor (Chatham)
- *Forest Beach & Conservation Area (Chatham)
- *Chatham Lighthouse (Chatham)

Cape Cod has been birded by generations of folks: Archie Hagar, Ludlow Griscom, Norman Hill, Bob Fox, Wallace and Priscilla Bailey, Brad Blodgett, Vernon Laux, Dick Forster, Wayne Petersen, Peter and Jeremiah Trimble, Simon Perkins, Pete Flood, Peter Trull, and Blair Nikula—and dozens of others. There is a wealth of bird information that is online and on old daily field lists. For the sake of understanding bird populations and movements and to allow fact-based planning for habitat protection and management, I urge everyone to get their data into eBird. This resource has become the largest bird database around. Please contribute.

Final Comments

If you are traveling on a Sunday morning tune in to *Ray Brown's Talkin' Birds* on WATD 95.9 at 9:30. This is a Marshfield-based radio station with reasonable coverage onto the Cape.

If you are traveling on the second Tuesday of the month listen to an hour of *Bird News* with Mark Faherty on “The Point” with Mindy Todd on Cape Cod’s local NPR station (WCAI 94.3 FM).

Mark is also on NPR (WCAI; 94.3 FM) every Wednesday morning at 8:45 with a local *Bird Report*.

And, of course, plan a stop at Mike O’Connor’s Bird Watcher’s General Store in Orleans near the Orleans rotary. 🐦

David Clapp worked for Mass Audubon and the Smithsonian for 35 years. A Cape Cod property owner since the early 1980s, he has grown to treasure his time on this sandy arm. Aside from those Cape birders mentioned above, he would like to thank others who commented for this article or have birded the Cape with him over the years: Dennis Peacock, David Ludlow, Mike Emmons, Dan Furbish, Chris Dalton, Melissa Lowe, Bob Prescott, Mike O’Connor, and, of course, TLF (The Lovely Frances), his wife and favorite birding companion.

William Brewster: At the Right Place at the Right Time

William E. Davis, Jr.



Fig. 1. William Brewster in 1895 at one of his Concord River cabins. Courtesy of the Ernst Mayr Library, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University.

William Brewster lived most of his life in the greater Boston area and made that area his “patch.” Although he became a nationally known and respected figure through his involvement with the Nuttall Ornithological Club, the American Ornithologists’ Union (AOU), and his numerous publications, and while he did travel three times to Great Britain and once to the European continent, Brewster nevertheless remained at heart a local New England devotee. He was characterized by wealth and ill health, and these two factors played a significant role in the trajectory of his life. But the single most important factor in his life was his consuming love of nature that took on nearly spiritual dimensions. Around 1890, he purchased a tract of land on the Concord River, in Concord, Massachusetts, later added the adjoining Ball’s Hill, and still later added the Barrett farm and another property to bring together about 300 acres that constituted his “October Farm” (Henshaw 1920). He

built several log cabins at the riverbank, and he invited his friends to camp with him and roam the fields and forests of his farm. His other patch was Lake Umbagog on the border between Maine and New Hampshire, to which he returned nearly every year for several decades. His wealth allowed him to do whatever he wanted to do, and that was to wander and camp in the woodlands of his patches. In the process he made contributions to the field of ornithology and became revered by those who knew him—an icon in the local ornithological community.

The Early Years, the Nuttall Ornithological Club, and the American Ornithologists’ Union

William Brewster was born on July 5, 1851. His father, John Brewster, was a successful Boston banker with family roots that traced back to the *Mayflower* (Henshaw 1920). William (“Will”) was the youngest of four children but his sister and two brothers died in childhood, suggesting that Brewster’s fragile health may have had a genetic dimension. The family lived in a mansion on the corner of Brattle and



Fig. 2. A young William Brewster. Courtesy of the Ernst Mayr Library, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University.

Sparks Streets in Cambridge, and there Brewster spent his entire life. He had the normal public school education in preparation for attending Harvard University, but ill health kept him from going to college. He was never robust and suffered from eye problems that prohibited reading for significant periods during his teenage years. He didn't compete in the normal sports but was a good shot and enjoyed horseback riding (Henshaw 1920). As an adult he was over six feet tall and "slow in speech and motion" (French in Brewster 1937). He was something of a recluse, but he made a few local friends; when his father gave him a shotgun at age ten, the open fields and woodlands around Cambridge became the stomping ground for young William and his friends. The father of one of his friends was a sportsman and had mastered taxidermy, so it was natural for young William to be drawn into that sphere.

The collecting of nests and eggs was supplemented by making mounts and study skins of the local birds and through this, Brewster gradually came to know the birds of eastern Massachusetts. Brewster's fascination with nature sprang from his

early days in the field with his friends in what was then a rural area in and around Cambridge. His romantic view of nature developed there:

Here the dandelions and buttercups were larger and yellower, the daisies whiter and more numerous, the jingling melody of the Bobolinks blither and merrier, the early spring shouting of the Flicker louder and more joyous, and the long-drawn whistle of the Meadowlark sweeter and more plaintive, than they ever have been or ever can be elsewhere, at least in my experience. (Brewster in Batchelder 1937, p. 10).

In 1869, Brewster, in an agreement instigated by his father, undertook a year's trial at working in the banking world. At the year's end, Brewster found himself unfit for banking, and as a man of independent means, he was free to pursue his ornithological interests. He apparently was uninterested in social matters and politics, and so devoted himself to his obsession with nature and birds (Mitchell 2005).

In 1871, William Brewster, at the suggestion of one of his field companions, Henry Wetherbee Henshaw, invited his group of bird friends, Ruthven Dean, Henry Purdie, and William E. D. Scott, to meet once a week in Brewster's attic to read aloud from Audubon's *Ornithological Biography* (Audubon and MacGillivray 1831–1839), a companion to his *Birds of America* plates (1827–1838). Two years later an expanded group decided to formalize their meetings through the formation of a club (Davis 1987). A letter of invitation was sent out to eight of Brewster's associates and on

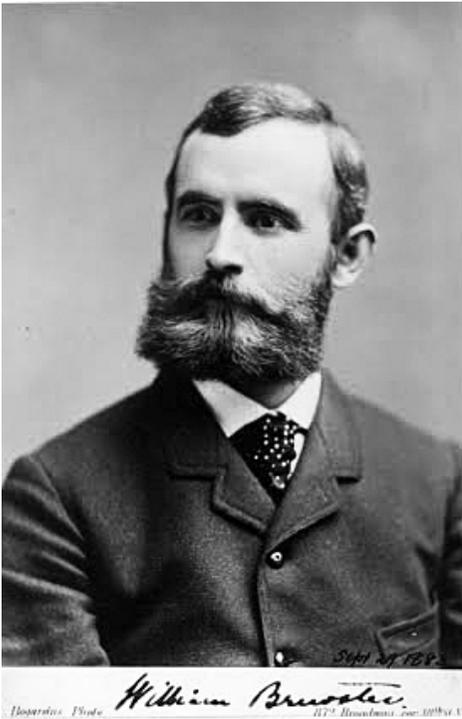


Fig. 3. William Brewster in 1883. Courtesy of the Ernst Mayr Library, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University.

September 23, 1873, Brewster convened a meeting with eight present. They organized a club to be called, at the suggestion of Ernest Ingersoll, the Nuttall Ornithological Club (Club; NOC), with Brewster as President, Purdie as Vice President, Dean as Secretary, and Scott as Treasurer. Thus was formed the first formal ornithological society in the Western Hemisphere.

The Club consisted of Resident and Corresponding Members and quickly acquired national status by recruiting prominent ornithologists as Corresponding Members. By 1877, the number of this group reached nearly a hundred. This base was important in the discussions about starting a journal as a publication outlet for members. The discussions related to this issue, including what should be published and what should not, apparently led to Brewster's resignation as President in March 1875. By February 1876, the matters had apparently been resolved and it was voted to publish a *Bulletin*, and Brewster was elected as President again, a position he held until his death in 1919. After a brief scuffle, J. A. Allen became the *Bulletin's*

editor, which he was to remain until publication of the journal ceased in 1883. The number of Resident Members rose to 23, the number of Corresponding Members continued to climb, and the first issue of the *Bulletin* was issued in May, 1876 (Davis 1987).

Everything went merrily along with the Club until 1880 when a gradual deterioration occurred in attendance, until by 1886 some meetings were not held because of lack of a quorum. In a February 10, 1883, letter to Charles Foster Batchelder, Brewster indicated his despair with the Club's situation and was beginning to think about bigger things:

The home members, with the exception of Purdie and Allen, don't seem to care a hang whether the Club and its organ live or die. We had our third blank meeting last Monday; only four members present. I often feel tempted to work on a plan I have had in mind for some time, one which includes the dissolution of the Club and the organization of a new association which shall consist only of persons who care enough about ornithology to do their share of the work. . . . An American Ornithologists' Union, limited to, say, to twelve members, could, I think, be made up in such a way as to be a very strong institution. (Quoted in Batchelder 1937, p. 46).

Such ideas were in the air, and it was inevitable that ornithologists' thoughts would turn to a national organization. The last half of the nineteenth century witnessed a professionalization of American science. Government-sponsored explorations of the western United States and newly-built railroads aided the establishment of networks of collectors and provided easier access to regions previously impenetrable. Museums and their staff were expanded to handle the influx of millions of new specimens, and the number of natural history journals rose from two in 1870 to nearly 40 by the mid-1890s. The time was ripe for a national organization for professional ornithologists and the huge cohort of serious amateurs.

Brewster, together with J. A. Allen and Elliot Coues (pronounced "Cows"), set about organizing a meeting of prominent ornithologists and issued invitations for the meeting in New York in September 1883. Two dozen of North America's most prominent ornithologists met at the American Museum of Natural History. Brewster called the meeting to order, but was upstaged by Coues, who was elected Acting Chair of the meeting. Brewster was apparently unhappy with this surprise and clearly thought that he would fill that position. Coues, however, was probably a better choice, for his highly aggressive nature if nothing else. The meeting was a great success, and the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) became a reality with the provisional bylaws and constitution presented by Brewster, Allen, and Coues. Six committees were established and memberships of the committees appointed. The last day of the meeting, Brewster reported, when the topic of a journal for the new organization came up, that as President of the NOC, "he was authorized to say, though he could not do so officially" that the NOC would offer the "prestige and subscription list" to the AOU (Barrow 1998). The minutes of the next NOC meeting tell the story:

Mr. Brewster gave an account of the proceedings of the recent convention of ornithologists . . . stating in brief the aims and purposes of the organization called the American Ornithologists' Union . . . Some discussion ensued as to the continuing of the Nuttall Club on its present basis; and in view of the organization of the Am. Orn. Union, and its proposal to issue a quarterly journal of ornithology, which would thereby leave the 'Nuttall Bulletin' in a manner a competitor in the same field, the question of continuing its publication was considered. Upon motion a vote was passed referring the subject to the Council. All the members except one of the Council being present, and having already expressed themselves in favor of discontinuing the 'Bulletin', Mr. Brewster as Chairman of the Council advised to discontinue the publication. . . . the Club voted to stop printing the 'Bulletin' . . . and to offer to the American Ornithologists' Union our good will and subscription list, to place the 'Bulletin' in the Council of the Union, with the tacit understanding that the new serial of the Union shall be ostensibly a second series of the Nuttall 'Bulletin.'

Thus the *Bulletin* became *The Auk*, and J. A. Allen became its Editor and William Brewster was appointed an Associate Editor. The Nuttall Ornithological Club survived giving birth and after 1886–1887, when Brewster had built a museum on his property to house his vast collection of bird skins and mounts, he hosted the meetings of the



Fig. 4. Group of Nuttall Club members near the Brewster Museum in 1889. Listed as present but not identified in the photo, were: William Brewster, H. W. Henshaw, C. F. Batchelder, F. Bolles, H. M. Spelman, J. A. Jefferies, Edward A. Bangs, A. P. Chadbourne, H. A. Purdie, A. M. Frazer, and Outram Bangs. Courtesy of the Ernst Mayr Library, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University.

Club in his museum. Under Brewster's leadership, the Club grew in membership and prestige.

Although Brewster served as President of the new Union from 1895–1898, his greatest influence on the Union and on American ornithology was probably in his service to the most important and influential of the AOU committees, the Committee on Classification and Nomenclature, to which he had been appointed at the inaugural meeting. The Committee's goals were to establish a standardized nomenclature for North American birds and produce a *Checklist* of North American birds. In addition to Brewster, the powerful Committee included Coues, Allen, Henry W. Henshaw (a great friend of Brewster), and Robert Ridgway who was a leading ornithologist at the Smithsonian Institution. Allen and Coues were on a subcommittee to deal with the code of nomenclature, and Brewster, Henshaw, and Ridgway were in charge of determining the status of subspecies and species (Lewis 2012). The Committee was to break with English ornithologists on several major issues including adopting the 1758 version of Linnaeus's *Systema Naturae*, rather than the 1766 version favored by the British, and the adoption of a trinomial system of nomenclature that identified subspecies. Brewster was to be an influential and outspoken member of the Committee, and he remained on this important committee until his death in 1919.

Love of Nature, Brewster's Journals and Publications

“The foundation of William Brewster's life was an intense love of nature. Like some delicately adjusted apparatus, his whole being responded to the influences of the open” (Chapman 1919). Brewster from an early age kept a detailed journal of his excursions into the field that became the basis for many of his publications and for the sometimes lyrical passages that were published posthumously in *October Farm* (French 1936) and in *Concord River* (Dexter 1937). His love of nature is clear in a passage in the former:

It is in the broad woodlands that one may see October to the best advantage. There is a ripe golden quality there that I miss in the open places where the grass is still as green as in midsummer. The dropping of acorns and chestnuts is an ever-present sound there and the squirrels are all busy with their annual harvest. Their chatter, chuckling, and rustle keep perfect accord with the screaming of the Blue Jays and the ceaseless whisper of the falling leaves. (*October Farm*, p. 14)

His journals illustrate the detailed observations that were to typify his professional writings, particularly as he moved progressively to the study of the living bird:

As I watched a Shrike it flew from the topmost spray of a small maple into some alders and alighted on a horizontal stem . . . as I afterwards found, the snow had thawed quite down to the ground, leaving a trench . . . into which the Shrike, after peering intently for a moment, suddenly dropped with fluttering wings and wide opened tail,

Within a second or less it reappeared, dragging out a Field Mouse of the largest size. The moment it got the Mouse fairly out on the level surface of the snow it dropped it apparently to get a fresh hold . . . The Mouse, instead of attempting to regain its run way, as I expected it would do, turned on its assailant and with surprising fierceness and agility sprang directly at its head many times in succession, actually driving it backwards several feet although the Shrike faced the attack with admirable steadiness and coolness and by a succession of vigorous and well aimed blows prevented the Mouse from closing in.

At length the Mouse seemed to lose heart and, turning, tried to escape. This sealed its fate for at the end of the second leap it was overtaken by the Shrike, who caught it by the back of the neck and began to worry it precisely as a Terrier worries a rat, shaking viciously from side to side. (*October Farm* pp. 28–29)

Brewster published his first note in 1868 in the *American Naturalist* on a Red-winged Blackbird sporting an orange crescent on its breast (Brewster 1868). It was the first of more than 350 papers and monographs he would publish in his lifetime, most of them (80%) by the year 1900. Aside from a few mammal, plant, and miscellaneous notes his publications were all bird or ornithologist related. His ornithological work was similar to that of most scientifically-oriented amateur ornithologists—he was



Fig. 5. Nuttall Club meeting at the Brewster Museum, ca. 1900. Front row, left to right: Walter Deane, C. F. Batchelder, Francis H. Allen, William Brewster (Club President 1873–1875, 1876–1919), Glover M. Allen, and Jewell D. Sornborger. Standing, right: Reginald Howe; remainder of standing unidentified. Courtesy of the Ernst Mayr Library, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University.

a product of his times. About 40% of his papers dealt with bird distribution and arrival and departure dates, mostly reports of sightings of vagrants. About 23% dealt with natural history subjects, such as breeding or feeding behavior that reflected observations he made on living birds, for example his extensive natural history study of the Swainson's Warbler (Brewster 1885a) or his study of the feeding behavior of Northern Flickers (Brewster 1893). An additional 15% were systematic papers that involved naming of new species or subspecies, hybrids, or nomenclature problems. Reviews of other peoples work were another 9%. The remaining 13% I classified as miscellaneous, and included the occasional mammal or plant paper, obituaries, letters to newspapers, reports of AOU committees, and a few papers on bird protection that he published near the end of his life. Generally lacking were theoretical papers in the general field of biology or on evolution, a situation in contrast to several of his colleagues including J. A. Allen (Davis 2005). He lacked the formal biological training of colleagues such as Allen and Coues, and this may have been the key to his low output of theoretical work.

There were exceptions, however. His short monograph on bird migration (Brewster 1886) was a landmark paper on this subject and was the first Memoir

published by the Nuttall Ornithological Club (the NOC still publishes them). It was a two-part paper that included a first part in which he reported his observations on nocturnal migration at a lighthouse in the Bay of Fundy and a second part that dealt with theories of bird migrations and the facts available to support them. His 1906 Memoir *Birds of the Cambridge Region of Massachusetts* was regarded as a classic for its long-term intensive study of a small region (Brewster 1906). Some of his short papers were theoretical in nature, for example his 1883 paper on the movements of birds in winter, which included suggested causes for the irregular movements of birds such as Snowy Owls and Pine Grosbeaks (Brewster 1883). Another of his important regional works, on Lake Umbagog, was edited and published posthumously in four volumes (1924, 1925, 1937, 1938). Volumes 1 and 2 were edited by Samuel Henshaw, volumes 3 and 4 by Ludlow Griscom.

It may be that Brewster realized his limitations in the realm of the theoretical. We see a hint of this in the following letter to Frank Chapman:

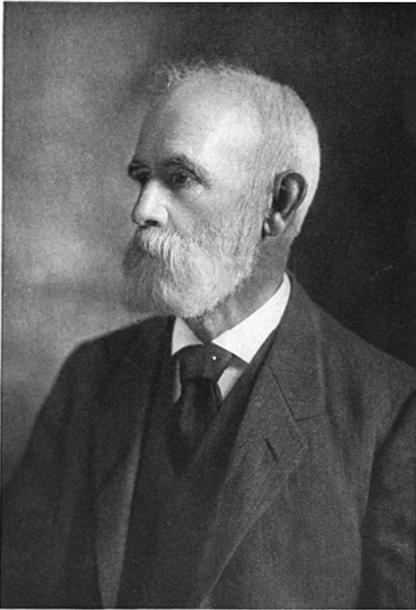
Dear Friend:

I have just read your paper on West Indian birds & bird life with the keenest pleasure and interest. It is far & away the best thing you ever have done and raises you at one bound, I should say, to the plane of such men as [J. A.] Allen and [C. Hart] Merriam and distinctly above that of all other living American ornithologists. Your chapter on the affinities and probable derivation of West Indian bird and mammal life is, of course, what I directly refer to. It is compact, philosophical and convincing to a degree. I have long predicted such progress and development on your part and now that it has come I rejoice exceedingly and congratulate you with my whole heart. . . (2 Jan 1893, Brewster letter to Frank Chapman)

Brewster did pretty much what he wanted to do, and his publications and journals suggest that being in the field was most important to him.

Brewster's Friends, Colleagues, Influence

Many descriptions of Brewster as an austere, formidable, and Jovian character came from people who knew him only late in life and mostly within the formal atmosphere of Nuttall Ornithological Club meetings at his private museum. In his younger years, up to about 1900, when he was most active in the ornithological endeavors, he had close personal friends and relationships with colleagues that indicate a warm personality and a sense of humor. One of his closest professional and personal relationships was with Frank Chapman, head of the ornithology department at the American Museum of Natural History, who, among his many accomplishments, initiated the Christmas Bird Counts near the turn of the twentieth century and founded and edited the journal *Bird-Lore*, which eventually became *Audubon Magazine*. Brewster accompanied Chapman on several collecting expeditions, including those far afield for Brewster, to the Suwannee River of Georgia and northern Florida and to Trinidad. Brewster's correspondence with Chapman indicates a warm and collegial relationship and a sense of humor. For example, in remarking about a trip in which Chapman visited Ball's Hill, Brewster provides evidence of his deep love of being



*William Brewster
December, 1916.*

Fig. 6. William Brewster in 1916. Courtesy of the Ernst Mayr Library, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University.

in the field as well as a friendly and appreciative relationship with Chapman:

. . . It is a pleasure to know that you enjoyed your stay here so much but I am quite sure that you did not enjoy it more than we enjoyed having you with us. . . There are so few who appreciate the woods and birds in just the way that I appreciate them. . . it is a great delight to me to be in the woods with a man after my own heart—when I find him. (26 May 1890, Brewster letter to Chapman)

Brewster made many collecting trips with his friends. In 1874, he collected with Ruthven Deane and Ernest Ingersoll in West Virginia. In 1878, he collected with Robert Ridgway at Mount Carmel in Illinois, and he was part of a group that in 1881 collected in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. In 1882, he joined J. A. Allen in Colorado, and in 1883, he traveled to South Carolina where he was assisted by Arthur T. Wayne while carrying out his studies of Swainson's Warbler. For 20 years he was accompanied in the field at home by his manservant, "Mr. Gilbert," a black man with whom he became good friends

and who in all probability was the photographer who took the more than a thousand glass-plate photographs that are attributed to Brewster (Mitchell 2005). For a decade, Brewster also hired his friend Walter Deane as his personal secretary and museum assistant. These companions in the field contributed to Brewster's high productivity—wealth has its advantages. He also hired professional collectors to work areas for him that he apparently could not or did not wish to visit. For example, Frank Stephens collected for Brewster in Arizona and California in 1881 and 1884, and R. R. McCleod collected for him in 1883–1885 in Arizona and Mexico (Henshaw 1920). These professional collectors not only helped Brewster acquire the largest private collection of birds in the United States, but their specimens became the basis for many of his publications, for example a paper on birds collected by Stephens (Brewster 1885b).

Brewster held several positions that provided him with authority and influence. From 1880–1889, he was curator of the bird and mammal collections of the Boston Society of Natural History, and from 1885–1900, he held the same position at the MCZ. From 1900 until his death in 1919, he curated just the birds. These positions gave him status and connections to powerful people in other museums. For example, he had influence with the head of the Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ), Alexander

Agassiz, who was the son of the Museum founder, the legendary Louis Agassiz. Brewster had influence that affected museum politics on the national level.

Bird Protection and the Conservation Movement

Brewster was always interested in the movement for the protection of birds, which developed into the modern conservation movement. He was well aware of the problems caused by development and wholesale destruction of forests. He did not return to his beloved Lake Umbagog region because of inroads of people and their destruction. He was appointed to the AOU's Committee on Bird Protection. He was the President of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, the first of the regional Audubon societies (Walton and Davis 2010); and he later served as a Director for the National Association of Audubon Societies, the forerunner of the National Audubon Society. He served on the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Fish and Game Protective Association and was its President for two years. He was a member of the Advisory Committee of the American Game Protective and Propagation Association from 1911 until his death (Henshaw 1920). He was an avid hunter throughout his life and steadfastly defended the rights of scientific collectors, but he understood the constraints that would be necessary to produce sustainable harvests.

What Made Brewster the Icon That He Became?

Brewster reaped many rewards for his contributions, including an honorary A.M. degree from Amherst College in 1880 and an honorary A.M. from Harvard in 1889. Why did Brewster become so successful? Part of the answer comes from his personality, part from his wealth, and part from being at the right place at the right time. He was a tall, handsome man with character traits that, at least in last half of the nineteenth century, were considered admirable. He didn't drink tea or coffee, rarely used alcohol, and in today's world might be considered a bit boring. But the people he worked with agree that he was an admirable person. Witmer Stone summed it all up in a 1919 note:

Great as were his attainments as an ornithologist it was not these alone that gained him the wide recognition that he received. His fair and impartial judgment of all questions that came before him created a profound and widespread respect for his opinion; his keen and unconcealed delight in everything out of doors, . . . was contagious and inspiring; while his uniform courtesy and kindness to young student and master alike, endeared him to all with whom he came in contact. . . . Probably he himself never realized the part he played in shaping the ornithological activities of others, and his influence upon the development of American ornithology cannot easily be measured. (Stone 1919)

Even considering the early twentieth century hyperbole, it is clear that Brewster had a powerful personality that had an impact on the lives and careers of those who encountered him. But had he not been born in the right time and at the right place, it seems doubtful if he would have achieved such greatness. He reached early manhood at a time when interest in science and natural history was flooding the American scene.

The American Ornithologists' Union, or a similar one with a different name, would have become reality, probably within a few years, because the time was right and many of America's ornithologists shared Brewster's views. But only Brewster and his cohort of Cambridge friends brought it to reality, through the founding of the Nuttall Ornithological Club and its *Bulletin*, thus forming the backbone of Brewster's success and greatness. 🐦

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- Note: An expanded version of the biography has been published as a chapter in Volume IV of the series Contributions to the History of North American Ornithology, W. E. Davis, Jr., editor, published by the Nuttall Ornithological Club, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Copies of this book can be purchased from Buteo Books at <https://www.buteobooks.com/category/NEW.html> or on their toll free line: 800-722-2460.*

William E. (Ted) Davis, Jr. has been on the *Bird Observer* Editorial Staff for more than three decades and is an Emeritus Professor from Boston University. He is an ornithologist who has done most of his research fieldwork in Australia.

Evening Grosbeaks: Winter Jewels of My Childhood

Melinda S. LaBranche



Evening Grosbeak. Photograph by Sandy Selesky.

Growing up in Grafton, Massachusetts, we had a huge red maple in our backyard. During winter (perhaps all of them as in my memories, but likely just one) we had day after day of enormous flocks of Evening Grosbeaks (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*) that seemed to fill that tree. I know we all tried to count them and I recall that I managed to tally at least 100. This is my first memory of counting birds, still a family passion and a lifelong pursuit for me. The winter of 2019 was the first time that I was graced with their presence in Rochester, Massachusetts, from mid-January to May 14. I spent hours avoiding my grading, copyediting, and doing dishes to watch these spectacular birds, numbering 20 to 40 individuals, so uniquely garbed that I thought I was able to distinguish a few individuals from all the rest.

Evening Grosbeaks, large finches with relatively short tails and big honkin' beaks, were described by Forbush (1929) as "Catbird size but stouter" with bill "sparrow-like, but enormous for size of bird, much larger than that of Pine Grosbeak..." Henry Rowe Schoolcraft sent the type specimen to William Cooper of the Lyceum of Natural History of New York, using the Chippewa name *Pashcundamo* (or *Paushkundamo*) meaning berry-breaker (Farrand 1992). And Harrison (2001) notes that birdbanders handling Evening Grosbeaks wear gloves or risk blood flow. Having banded several other finch species, although not Evening Grosbeak, I think I'd still be a bit more wary of a woodpecker's bill.

Surprisingly for their bill's seed-crushing size and their reputation for emptying sunflower-seed feeders, Evening Grosbeaks prefer spruce budworms (*Choristoneura* spp.) and similar grubs, and also feed on seeds from trees, especially maple (*Acer* sp., Gillihan 2001). They do, however, feed on many seed types and in seed-size experiments they chose larger seeds and ingested more of the seed kernel than smaller-beaked finches (Benkman 1988).

Their range expansion from the Rocky Mountains to the east, beginning in the mid-1800s, is thought to coincide with the planting of boxelders (*Acer negundo*) as

wind blocks and ornamentals. And boxelder's extended retention of seeds may have promoted some birds to forgo migration, leading to the first breeding records in the northeastern United States (Forbush 1929).

Notably, Evening Grosbeaks are more active in morning than in evening, in contrast to their moniker, which stems from accounts by Schoolcraft and later Major Joseph Delafield, both misinterpreted by Cooper (Farrand 1992). Variousy stating that they only sing in the evening and that a roosting flock was disturbed in the evening, in 1825 Cooper named the species Evening Grosbeak and gave the specific epithet *vespertinus* (evening). Despite numerous descriptions of their daytime activities, the evening designation was further amplified in 1903 when the genus *Fringilla* was replaced with *Hesperiphona* (Gillihan and Byers 2001), meaning evening cry. In 1982, it was placed into the genus *Coccothraustes*, leaving only Cooper's original misnomer (Gillihan and Byers 2001).

Evening Grosbeak flocks can't help but attract attention with their colors and constant chatter. Males are conspicuously yellow and black with quizzical yellow supercilliaris (eyebrows). The bright yellow breast and belly contrasts boldly with the black-and-white wings. Females and juveniles are duller than males with brownish yellow bellies and with less boldly contrasting wings (Gillihan and Byers 2001). Evening Grosbeaks' striking sexual and age polymorphism certainly aids in studying their behaviors and distribution.

Reminiscent of the birds at my feeders, Balph and Balph (1976) documented a female-biased sex ratio, on average about four females for every three males. At their location in Logan, Utah, the sex ratio shifted from even more females in winter to a nearly equal sex ratio in spring. But Bekoff and Scott (1989), in Colorado, had sex ratios consistently skewed toward males, on average about three males for every two females averaged over all calendar months. Differential patterns of migration, with females migrating farther than males, may affect local sex ratios, which can be seen in banding records across a wide geographical range (Balph and Balph 1976). Some research suggests that females migrate farther than males due to their smaller body size, making them less tolerant of cold, or due to male aggression at feeding sites (Gillihan and Byers 2001).

Aggression in Evening Grosbeaks, although rare, appears to be mostly within the sexes not between them. In a three-year study, Bekoff and Scott (1989) demonstrated that males were more aggressive than females. Antagonism was mostly intrasexual, more frequent among males than females and correlated with the number of males in a flock. As you might suspect, aggression rates were highest just before the breeding season. Dominance tended to be related to weight and wing length measured at the time of banding, differences that could be maintained in the field (Bekoff and Scott 1989). Despite low levels of aggression between the sexes, males are dominant to females, perhaps also as a function of body size. Interestingly, social dominance may be further complicated by individual recognition in small flocks where intersexual relationships between individuals are maintained through a season (Balph et al 1979).

Another behavioral difference between the sexes occurs in response to predators. Ralph (1977) noted that females were more likely than males to freeze in place upon a “fright.” She suggested that the vulnerability of males due to their bright colors selected for finding cover. Males fleeing from predation also may distract predators from the immobile females.

This chubby bird with its flagrant colors is an irruptive species that wanders in large flocks usually in response to low food supplies (Gillihan and Byers 2001). So I wasn’t surprised that I hadn’t many encounters with them for more than 40 years. But upon further reading, I learned that Evening Grosbeaks appear to have been declining across their range for several decades (Bonter and Harvey 2008, Ralston et al. 2015). I decided to look at the Massachusetts Christmas Bird Count (CBC) data (Pardieck 2019) for myself and was relieved to see that in this century the numbers of observations varied year to year as expected but didn’t appear to be declining (Figure 1A). For some reason I decided to rebuild my graph with an even 20 years and that’s where I was shocked (Figure 1B). The decline at the end of the 1990s was dramatic, showing that the 18 years in my first look were only 25% of 1998–1999. As I looked at the entire CBC data set (Figure 1C) the pattern was clear, counts per party hour in the 50s to 80s were about 4, with peaks of 11 and 17 during my years in Grafton, compared to the twenty-first century average of 0.024 counts per party hour.

What does this decline signify? Given the grosbeak’s nineteenth century range expansion, prior to the first reports of Evening Grosbeaks in the CBC, this may simply indicate a natural range reversal (Ralston et al. 2015). Alternatively, other issues may be at play including forest management practices, urban expansion, or changes in their food availability. The State of the Birds 2014 Report lists a 32% drop in eastern forest-obligate species since 2009 and the report lists development and changes in forests—especially fire and exotic plant species—as the major threats (NABCI 2014). Using Project FeederWatch data, Bonter and Harvey (2008) indicate that the decline in both abundance and range could be related to recent changes in management of Canada’s boreal forests, particularly increased logging. They add that disease and spruce budworm control using pesticides in the United States and Canada also may be contributing factors.

In another evaluation of the plummet in grosbeak numbers, Ralston et al. (2015) documented significant declines in obligate and associated spruce-fir species. Among the species that are not currently listed as of conservation concern, Evening Grosbeak and Canada (Gray) Jay (*Perisoreus canadensis*) demonstrated severe declines. Indicator species for these northern forests—such as two listed as threatened, Bicknell’s Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*) and Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*)—are in significant decline. Ralston et al. suggest habitat degradation as a cause for all of these declines.

For my part, I surmise that range contraction and forest changes such as logging practices and pest control are contributing to the disappearing grosbeaks. I agree with the authors noted that the declines are complex and no one factor is responsible throughout the bird’s range.

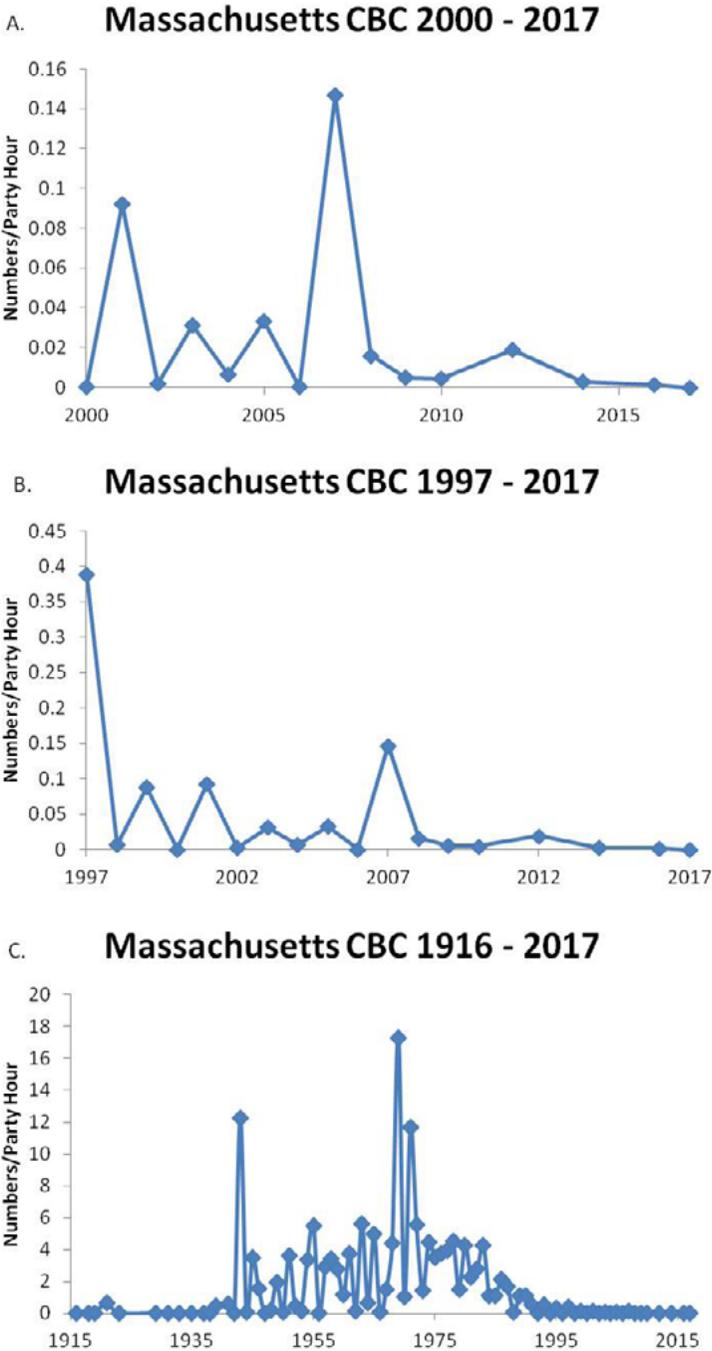


Fig. 1. Christmas Bird Count data for Evening Grosbeaks for a) 2000-2017, b) 1997-2017, c) entire historical data 1900-2017.

Back at home in Rochester, I'm hoping that these beautiful jewels of my childhood will return this winter to decorate my feeders and trees. If not, maybe my Pine Siskins will *zzzzzzip* back after a three-year hiatus. 🐦

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Melinda S. (Mindy) LaBranche is an adjunct professor of biology at Bridgewater State University and Massasoit Community College where she teaches environmental biology, general biology, ecology, and sometimes ornithology. She also is a copy editor for Bird Observer and lives with her husband and large menagerie in Rochester, Massachusetts.

A Birder's Quick Guide to HUNTING SEASONS

Hunting in Massachusetts ramps up in the fall, but that doesn't mean that birders and hunters can't share the outdoors. Learn where and when hunting may be taking place and review these safety tips to enjoy a more relaxed time outside!

2019 Seasons*

Deer	Youth Deer Hunt	Sept. 28
	Archery (Zones 10–14)	Oct. 7–Nov. 30
	Archery (Zones 1–9)	Oct. 21–Nov. 30
	Shotgun	Dec. 2–Dec. 14
	Primitive Firearms	Dec. 16–Dec. 31
Turkey	Youth Turkey Hunt	Apr. 25, 2020
	Fall	Oct. 21–Nov. 2
	Spring	Apr. 27–May 22, 2020
Coyote		Oct. 19–Mar. 27, 2020
Bear		Sept. 3–21; Nov. 4–23; Dec. 2–14
Pheasant		Oct. 19–Nov. 30
Waterfowl†		Sept. 2, 2019–Feb. 15, 2020

*Season dates change annually. Full regulations and seasons can be found at mass.gov/hunting.

†These dates are all-inclusive of waterfowl species. Species-specific regulations are found at mass.gov/hunting.

Tips

- Do what the hunters do! Wear a bright orange vest or hat to stay visible. If your dog is venturing out with you, put bright orange on him or her too!
- If you see someone hunting or hear shots, call out to let them know you're there.
- Hunters and birders both want to reduce unnecessary noise. Once you've made your presence known, avoid making excessive noises.
- MassWildlife-owned lands—Wildlife Management Areas and Wildlife Conservation Easements—allow hunting.
- Most state parks and forests are open to hunting, and many towns allow hunting on municipal lands.
- Hunting is not permitted on Sundays throughout Massachusetts.

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PHOTO ESSAY

Birds of Mid-Cape Cod

David Clapp



King Eider. All photographs by David Clapp.



Ivory Gull.



Peregrine Falcon.



Snowy Owl. 

MUSINGS FROM THE BLIND BIRDER

The Conversation Might Go Like This

Martha Steele

We birders tend to spend a lot of time in our vehicles, often slowly driving along rural or conservation area roads listening for birds. Especially during spring and summer in the Northeast, we may be in our vehicles for hours at a time, periodically jumping out to investigate something we just heard or to walk a trail. So, one might ask, what do we talk about during the many hours in our vehicles?

The conversation rarely strays from birds or birding. We might start the day's vehicle peregrinations by sharing our excitement about what birds we will see during the morning's exploration. But sometimes, the enthusiasm might be tempered by the conditions outdoors. Birding while riding in a car requires open windows to listen for birds. If the temperature is in the upper 30s or lower 40s when you start out on an early spring morning, a cold wind may be blowing through the car in one open window and out the other. These circumstances may necessitate a change in strategy such that one of us might need to close our window to prevent frozen hands, face, or feet. At this point, there is little conversation other than cursing the weather, and optimism falters.

But then, that first Winter Wren starts singing and we focus again on the task at hand: listening, without other birders in the vehicle saying anything to distract our focus. As we move along, we mutter to each other the core of birder conversation in a moving vehicle: "Ovenbird," "Chestnut-sided," "Red-wing," "Black-throated Blue," "Yellowthroat," or "Indigo," and so forth.

As we move along, the driver might speed up a tad, say, from about 10 miles an hour to 15 miles an hour. "Is there someone coming up behind you?" I ask the driver. "No." "So, why did you speed up?" I demand. "You think I am going too fast?" "You could slow down a bit, just in case that peewee calls," I mutter, as we complete our first significant conversation of the morning.

Soon, we reach a busier stretch of road and need to speed up. Before further conversation, one person rolls up the window to be immediately followed by the other window or windows whirring up to close. It is amazing how, in a vehicle with birders, the windows are well synchronized, rolling up or down one right after the other following the cue of the lead window.

We turn onto a dirt road to head into a park of mixed deciduous and coniferous trees. The synchronized windows roll down and we resume our listening. "Red-eye," "Ovenbird," "Scarlet Tanager," "Black-throated Green," and more. I exclaim, "Stop!" and the driver slams on the brakes, and as we lurch forward Alvin lifts his head in the back seat. "What did you hear?" "Listen." The bird calls again. "Oh, I hear that. Let's get out and listen." "It's not a warbler," I surmise. The bird calls again. "Brown Creeper!" "Oh, I don't know that song well. Let me play it on my phone," I say. Like all good birders, I pull out the phone, tap on a bird song app, and find Brown Creeper. I

play the song and nod my head in agreement. We high five each other on getting a new year bird for the county and jump back into the car to continue our snail's pace through the thick forest.

This road, like so many that we all traverse in our birding lives, is a familiar one. We have been on this road several times and have enjoyed good birds. We soon approach one spot on the road. "This is where we had a Swainson's Thrush the last time we were here," I say. So, of course, we expect to hear one again in this very same spot, even though it had been several years since we heard one here. We stop the car in great anticipation but fail to hear the bird. We are disappointed and we wonder if the bird made it back from its wintering grounds. Still, I can guarantee that in future months and years, when we pass that spot, we will tell each other that we saw a Swainson's there and we should listen for this bird right here.

After we come out of the forest and drive onto another busy road to our next destination, the conversation turns to a summary of what we have seen so far that morning. What are we missing for year birds in the county? Where should we go to get what we are missing? What do we need to accomplish for the rest of the day? Should we check eBird to see who has been birding where, and what they have seen this morning? It is all about figuring out where to go next and for what reason, which can include, of course, checking a favored location for whatever birds might be there.

It is also amusing how often birders say "Let's go to the (name the bird) spot." Geographic locations with perfectly good names, such as Indian Ridge Trail at Mount Auburn Cemetery or the corner of Cook and Lakeview roads near our Vermont home are renamed by birders with names of memorable birds that were seen at the referenced spot. For example, after a long walk with Alvin, I might recount to my husband, Bob, that I heard Common Loons flying overhead at the Lincoln's Sparrow spot, and Bob will know exactly where I was. Similarly, a birder in a car may want to describe where he or she thinks we should go next and finds it easiest to say, "Let's go to the Bohemian Waxwing spot," and all in the car will nod their approval. For years to come, even if the bird was seen only once at that spot, it will still be the Lincoln's Sparrow, Bohemian Waxwing, or other bird spot.

Other conversations may include chatting about a bird we just saw, sometimes reminiscing about past sightings or opining about specific characteristics of the bird. Recently, after driving away from a feeder with hummingbirds, Bob launched into an animated monologue about the male Ruby-throated Hummingbird. They are so mean, he proclaimed. The male mates with multiple females, then abandons them to do all the work in raising the young. To add insult to injury, the male repeatedly drives away females from feeders every time a female approaches the feeder. For goodness sakes, Bob fumed, at least allow the female access to easy food, but no, the male wants it all, he indignantly concluded.

When moving slowly along in a vehicle, there is always plenty of conversation to share. We give each other tips for identifying what we just heard, share expertise in photography or smart phone apps to enhance our birding experience, and simultaneously yell with excitement upon the sighting of a good bird. At the

completion of another fun and successful day of birding, we can look back on how much we enjoyed each other's company as we roamed the countryside.

Young, old, or in between, you can be sure that when birders get together to bird, there is plenty of conversation all around and plenty of commonalities in our styles of birding. 🐦

Martha Steele, a former editor of Bird Observer, has been progressively losing vision due to retinitis pigmentosa and is legally blind. Thanks to a cochlear implant, she is now learning to identify birds from their songs and calls. Martha lives with her husband, Bob Stymeist, in Arlington. Martha can be reached at <marthajs@verizon.net>

Calling all Shorebirders!

Manomet is looking for proficient Shorebirders to help with the **International Shorebird Survey** in New England. ISS volunteers have been gathering information on shorebirds and the wetlands they depend on since 1974. The data is used for conservation planning across the hemisphere to aid the recovery of imperiled shorebird populations. But we need your help to keep the project rolling.

For more information about ISS and how to contribute:

<https://www.manomet.org/project/international-shorebird-survey/>

To see if your favorite shorebird spot needs coverage:

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GLEANINGS

Dovekies Hoover It Up

David M. Larson



Left: Dovekie with empty gular pouch. Right: Dovekie with full gular pouch. Photographs by the author.

A couple of years ago, I was one of the guides on a cruise in the Svalbard archipelago, Norway. Most of the passengers were there for the polar bears, but we did visit breeding colonies of alcids. While comfortably seated on a boulder in a Dovekie (*Alle alle*) colony of perhaps 1,000,000 birds at Magdalenefjord, I had time to enjoy the antics of the birds and photograph their comings and goings. Many of the birds arrived in the colony with bulging necks full of food for the young in the nests below the rocks. I knew that Dovekies are planktivorous, feeding especially on *Calanus* copepods. How many of these tiny zooplankters were they bringing to their young? And how did they catch all those copepods?

Dovekies were presumed to catch copepods by raptorial feeding, watching for and then seizing prey in individual attacks. That seems impractical considering the relative size of their prey, nutritional content, and the numbers required for feeding chicks. Several of the largest ocean planktivores—baleen whales and three shark species—consume large numbers of prey by filter feeding—taking in large volumes of water containing prey and then expelling the water while retaining the prey. In seabirds, Broad-billed Prions (*Pachyptila vittata*) have been seen filter feeding at the surface, and this species has bill adaptations for this style of feeding. Harding, et al. (2009), suggested, based on metabolic data, that Dovekies would need to capture a staggering total of almost 60,000 copepods per day to satisfy the caloric needs of themselves and their chicks. That would imply capturing six copepods per second while underwater.

In a recent study by Enstipp, et al. (2018), the researchers tested the hypothesis that Dovekies engaged in filter feeding in order to collect that many prey items. Dovekies were captured at a colony in Svalbard, brought to a 5.5 x 2.7m (1.2m deep) tank at the Ny-Ålesund research station, and recorded by video during subsurface feeding on different concentrations of copepods (450-8300/m³). At no time and at no concentration of copepods did any of the Dovekies employ filter feeding to acquire prey in this environment. Instead, the birds engaged in suction feeding. As shown on their videos, all of the birds detected and swam close to individual copepods, made a head strike (lunge) to within a few centimeters of the prey, opened the bill slightly while suppressing the gular pouch to draw in the copepod, closed the bill, and then expelled the excess water. The typical time interval for capture, from opening to closing the bill, was 40–80 milliseconds. While foraging underwater, the Dovekies captured an average of 1.35 copepods per second, nowhere near the six per second suggested by Harding, et al.

There are, of course, several caveats to the authors' conclusions about feeding rate. First, these studies were carried out in a shallow, well-lit tank, not the open ocean. However, Arctic waters are typically clear, and Dovekies do not dive very deep, 10 meters on average. Second, while the densities of copepods in this study were within the average range at sea, the distribution was uniform. Distribution at sea could feature much higher prey densities due to concentration by hydrographic or other factors, allowing for filter feeding under some conditions. Indeed, the authors suggest that there could be a threshold concentration that triggers a shift to filter feeding—a concentration beyond what they could achieve in the pool. Nevertheless, the lack of any morphological adaptations for filter feeding, such as the palatal lamellae along the edges of the beak of Broad-billed Prions, make it unclear exactly how filter feeding would be accomplished in Dovekies.

So, how is it possible to reconcile the suggestion of 60,000 copepods per day and a capture rate of only just over one per second? If the Dovekies are devoted suction feeders, and do not switch to filter feeding, then it is unlikely that the 60,000 figure is correct. Indeed, Harding, et al., do allow that that number could be an over-estimate.

Enstipp, et al., noted that 60,000 copepods would be 35 food deliveries per day. Those numbers give me an estimate of the capacity of the gular pouch at around 1700 copepods. Thus, my questions from that rock at Alkekongen next to Magdalenefjord were answered. 🐦

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David M. Larson, PhD, is the Science and Education Coordinator at Mass Audubon's Joppa Flats Education Center in Newburyport, the Director of Mass Audubon's Birder's Certificate Program and the Certificate Program in Bird Ecology (a course for naturalist guides in Belize), a domestic and international tour leader, President of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, and a member of the editorial staff of Bird Observer.

FIELD NOTE

Design Improvements for Barred Owl Nest Box

Alfred Maley



Fig 1. Tight Fit for Barred Owllets All photographs by the author.

Experience is the best teacher. While the original design described in *Bird Observer* (Maley 2010, 2015) is good, field experience has shown ways to make it even better.

Seeing an older sibling ejecting a younger sibling from the entrance hole has suggested an eight-inch wide hole to prevent that. Two owlets can be comfortable with that width.



Fig. 2. Old Model, New Model.

Anecdotal evidence from European owl box builders has suggested that wider boxes are better than deeper or even square ones. That's because younger owlets have a better chance of being fed if they are side by side with their siblings rather than at the end of a queue (Figure 1). Accordingly, the box width is now 15 inches instead of 13 inches. To keep the weight down, the box height has been decreased from 24 inches to 23 inches (Figure 2). I had succumbed to making the boxes two feet tall, using a four-foot-wide piece of plywood without any "waste."



Fig. 3. Sealed Edge Fastener.

“Plywood ain’t what it used to be.” I have boxes that are 30 years old that are as good as the day they were made. I also have new boxes that delaminated within three years, causing box failure. It may be the glue, but more likely it is the number of voids in the interior layers of the plywood that allow water to penetrate and cause havoc. To prevent delamination I’ve taken to sealing the voids and then the entire edge with epoxy. Before doing so, I pass the edges of the roof and front and back over a router with a rounding over bit. This not only smooths the corners, it also exposes the small voids that might be hard to detect otherwise. I use either two-part epoxy glue (Weld) or wood consolidant (www.abatron.com).

The last improvement has to do with how to fasten the plywood to the balusters that form the interior battens of the nest box, giving it strength and form. Originally

I screwed #8 1–5/8” stainless steel deck screws into the plywood and the baluster. But sometimes the plywood would splinter, even if I predrilled the hole. So I beveled each hole to accept the screw head, but then I found that the screws would sometimes penetrate the battens and I would have to file the tips off to protect the box occupants.

I then realized that I could use a #10 stainless steel washer on each screw that would solve all these problems (Figure 3). 🦉

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- Maley, A. 2010. Low-Maintenance Barred Owl Nest Boxes. *Bird Observer* 38: 151–155.
Maley, A. 2015. Barred Owl Adventures in Hampstead. *Bird Observer* 43: 294–298.

Alfred Maley is a retired software engineer whose interest in nest boxes began at age 10, when he cobbled together a successful bluebird house with wood from an orange crate. Later came Barn Owl nest boxes and Long-eared Owl nest baskets. When they are not watching raptor migration in Spain or traveling with Danger Tours to Latin America, he and his wife Linda reside in Hampstead, New Hampshire. Al can be reached at alfredmaley@gmail.com.

ABOUT BOOKS

Birding 'Round The Swamp

Mark Lynch

Natural Encounters: Biking, Hiking, and Birding Through the Seasons.
Bruce M. Beehler. 2019. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press.

Every day of the year brings some gift from nature that gives some private pleasure in the environs of the nation's capital. (p. 1)

These days if you mention “Washington, D.C.” in any social situation you will likely get a reaction from the people present similar to that of Moe, of the Three Stooges, hearing the words “Niagara Falls” in the classic film short *Gents Without Cents*. [If you are unfamiliar with this bit of American physical humor, please visit the *Three Stooges* website: <<https://www.threestooges.com/2017/11/01/slowly-i-turned-the-origin-of-the-three-stooges-niagara-falls-routine/>>]

The author of this section quotes Wikipedia:

The routine features a man recounting the day he took his revenge on his enemy – and becoming so engrossed in his own tale that he attacks the innocent listener to whom he is speaking. The attacker comes to his senses, only to go berserk again when the listener says something that triggers the old memory again.

Every time Moe hears the words “Niagara Falls,” he goes berserk and rains blows on the innocent bystanders present. Trust me, it's funnier in the film.]

Never before in our memory has this nation been so divided politically. So much so that just the mention of our seat of government is likely to incite heated discussions, lots of yelling and swearing, and the loss of friends. As part of this antipathy toward Washington, you hear rallying cries to “Drain the Swamp!” in stump speeches by up-and-coming politicians. The “Swamp” in this case is a metaphor for the supposed cesspool of politics that our national government has become. This association between Washington, D.C., and the imagined fetid miasma of a swamp actually goes quite far back in American history. As Ted Widmer writes in his piece for *The New Yorker*, “Draining the Swamp” (January 19, 2017 online), building the nation's capital next to the poor drainage of the Potomac River made the whole area susceptible to boggy conditions and pestilential odors. The numerous complaints about the physical environment of the capital soon carried over to complaints about the politics happening in the capital:

A Massachusetts congressman, Theodore Sedgwick, wrote, in 1789, “the climate of the Patowmack is not only unhealthy, but destructive to northern constitutions.” The smells of the District added fuel to the growing critique of a city that offended Northerners for its adherence to slavery as well as its inaccessibility. To an abolitionist like William Lloyd Garrison, Washington

was a moral swamp: “The District is rotten with the plague, and stinks in the nostrils of the world . . . a fouler spot scarcely exists on earth.” An eyewitness in 1860 cast an eye on the city’s canals and glimpsed “dead cats and all kinds of putridity,” in a stagnant pool “reeking with pestilential odors.” (“Draining The Swamp”)

With so many negative feelings about Washington, D.C., today, it is refreshing to read a natural history book about that area that barely mentions politics and instead focuses on the joys of birding the greater “Swamp” area. Bruce Beehler is the author of last year’s classic account of following spring bird migration, *North on the Wing*. His new book, *Natural Encounters*, focuses mostly on his home turf of Washington, D.C., with extended forays north, south, and west of the capital. Though Beehler has engaged in research over the decades that has taken him to Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Zimbabwe, and Mexico, it is Washington, D.C., and the mid-Atlantic area where he has always hung his hat. He considers himself a Washington-based scientist and conservationist.

I held positions at the Smithsonian Institution, Wildlife Conservation Society, US Department of State, Counterpart International, Conservation International, and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation before I retired to a tiny office in the back of the bird collection of the National Museum of Natural History; which sits on the National Mall across from the red sandstone Smithsonian castle. (p. xi *Natural Encounters*).

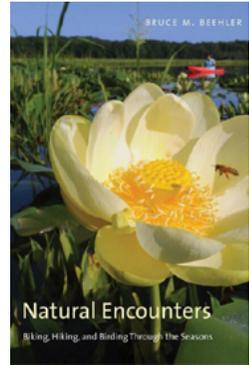
It may seem surprising that good birding can occur within the Beltway. Older birders became familiar with the birding spots of the D.C. area through Claudia Wild’s book *Finding Birds in the National Capital Area* (1983). This book was my guide when, in the eighties, I visited my brother who was a biologist at the Smithsonian. Beehler’s touchstone is a much earlier book, Louis Halle’s *Spring in Washington*, written during the post World War II period in the capital. Though not well known today, Halle’s book deserves to be recognized as one of the classics of American bird literature. Beehler is interested in comparing his contemporary observations with those of Halle: “So, here, I have taken it as my mandate to reexamine the story Halle told in 1947 and to add some dimensions related to the passing of time, the changing world, and our evolving cityscape.” (p. 13)

Beehler structures *Natural Encounters* to track the changes in nature, not just the birds, that occur during a typical year in the mid-Atlantic. Beehler’s natural year and his book *Natural Encounters* begin at the solstice in June with the completion of spring migration and the beginning of the nesting season. For Beehler, spring is the penultimate season: “Spring is nature’s most generous gift to the north temperate zone” (p. 2). He states:

I must get out every spring morning to take it all in and record its annual surprises. For no matter how many times spring is experienced, there is something new to see as well as a hundred familiar things to savor from the past. (p. 7)

It is therefore not surprising to read that Beehler considers summer the “doldrums” (p.7).

Beehler’s observations are enriched by the fact that he has biked to work almost every day. His bike route ran along the towpath of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, from Bethesda, Maryland, to either downtown Washington, D.C., or Arlington, Virginia. Only deep snow or severe icing prevented him from following this route every workday. In winter that means he was biking along this path in the dark worried about the possibility of collisions with deer or beavers. This biking commute gives Beehler plenty of opportunities to stop and savor small changes in bird populations that occur through a year and to enjoy the dawn chorus of birds in the capital.



Not noticing birds in one’s daily environment is like being badly nearsighted as well as profoundly hearing challenged. One misses a whole segment of life on earth that can deliver joy every day. (p. 36)

Beehler writes that, along the Potomac, Eastern Phoebe, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Wood Peewee, Eastern Kingbird, and Great Crested Flycatcher are all common. Warblers reliably found here include Northern Parula, Yellow-throated, and Prothonotary. That’s a dawn chorus that many of us in Massachusetts would love to experience. Beehler also notes other wildlife he comes across in his travels in the D.C. area. He writes about the excitement of finding four huge Hercules beetles while playing tennis, much to his tennis partner’s consternation. He is startled at seeing a gray fox at the intersection of Twentieth and M Streets in D.C. trying to find a way through the heavy traffic. Beehler watches flocks of Black-crowned Night-Herons move to night foraging locations as he waits for the fireworks to start in the capital. Sometimes the appearance of a bird or creature will mark a change in seasons. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers arrive at the end of October. The icing over of the Potomac marks the beginning of the *real* winter in the D.C. area. Fish Crows calling in late February mark the coming of spring. *Natural Encounters* is Beehler’s “personal encyclopedia of the joys of nature” (p. 2).

Natural Encounters takes some fascinating side trips outside the D.C. area. In summer, Beehler drives out to the Allegheny Plateau of western Maryland. Here he finds hemlock forest and Alder Flycatchers. Beehler also notes the giant windmills planted along Backbone Mountain:

We stop and photograph this environmental and visual desecration of the Allegheny front. These tall monstrosities pollute the view for miles around. In addition, the construction of these ridge top wind farms in the region resulted in broad scale devastation of sensitive mountain habitats that deserved state protection. When rotating, the giant devices make a low humming sound that further disturbs the peace of this upland wilderness. We are happy to get away from this unfortunate intrusion of technology on once-sacred mountain heights. (p. 26)

Beehler takes an extended trip up into New England in late August. He stops first to visit friends in the small Massachusetts town of Colrain, a bucolic Garden of Eden. He continues on to Mount Washington, New Hampshire, for a sighting of Black-backed Woodpecker and other northern species. Then, on to Baxter State Park and Mount Katahdin in Maine. On his way back home, he stops by Newburyport and Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, Massachusetts. His last visit here was back in the 1970s, but he remembers the place fondly: “It was there I saw my first Buff-Breasted Sandpiper and Snowy Owl, Iceland Gull and Barrow’s Goldeneye” (p. 61).

Finally, he drives out to Cape Cod to visit Peter and Jeremiah Trimble and takes in some serious shorebirding on Nauset Beach. While on a whale watch out of Provincetown, he savors his views of whales and Great Shearwaters. Finally arriving home, he sees another natural marker of the changing of the seasons: “Back from my trip to New England, I see the first cricket hopping on the rug of my basement office—proof that autumn is on the way in the Mid-Atlantic.” (p. 69)

Other side trips find Beehler surf fishing and savoring some scrapple in Delaware Bay in early November. In midwinter he heads south to Florida and Captiva Island and finds gopher tortoises and manatees. But Beehler is always happy to return to his home in the D.C. area. Even in the frigid days of mid-January, when the birds are few and far between, Beehler celebrates his sightings of Carolina Chickadee, Fish Crows, and the occasional Bald Eagle. Most of the water may be ice covered, but in open spots he finds Hooded Mergansers, Redheads, Pied-billed Grebes, and scaup. There is always something in the natural world to look at and enjoy no matter what the season.

Natural Encounters is a celebration of the natural world found in a place that most people would think would only support feral congressmen and women and the odd wild lobbyist. It is proof of the importance of preserving green spaces and waterways in urban environments and shows how what we see and hear in these places can affect us deeply.

Memory of an encounter with nature can take us to a place of calm and peace. For instance, this morning, along the canal, I watched a big American Beaver make a silent wake across the dark canal waters, its paddle tail trailing on the surface. The experience was but a few moments but now remains timeless in my memory of it. Just recollecting that encounter lowers my heart rate and puts me at ease. By actively seeking out these natural experiences, we give ourselves reserves of tranquility that we can return to from time to time. (p. 264)

Natural Encounters and last year’s *North On the Wing* show that Bruce M. Beehler is an important new voice in contemporary natural history writing. His books track nature through a season or a year from a personal perspective and show how close observation of the natural world can inform and enhance our wider lives. Even in the Swamp.

After thirty-six years here, I am fonder than ever of the Washington, DC, area for its ready access to nature (p. 8). 🐦

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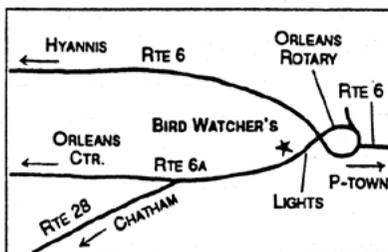
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BIRD SIGHTINGS

May–June 2019

Neil Hayward and Robert H. Stymeist

The dismal, wet weather of April continued into the first week of May. A total of 3.35 inches of rain fell over 19 days which is average for Boston. A pattern of wintery weather settled in mid-month, bringing nearly 2 inches of rain and a low of just 48 degrees on May 14, prompting one Boston television meteorologist to describe May as “the new March.” During that cold snap, some higher elevation areas, such as the Worcester hills and the Berkshire foothills, recorded small accumulations of snow. Only two days in May broke 80 degrees, with the high for the month being 89 degrees set on May 26.

Temperatures during June averaged 68 degrees in Boston, which is consistent with historical data. The high temperature for the month was 87 degrees, recorded on June 23 and 29. Rainfall totaled 5.15 inches in Boston, 1.47 inches above normal for June. The most rain in any 24-hour period was 1.81 inches on the last day of the month, when a number of severe thunderstorms were noted throughout the state.

R. Stymeist

WHISTLING-DUCKS THROUGH HERONS

Nantucket added a new bird to the island list when a **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck** was found at Madaket on June 10. It stayed for three days and represents the tenth record for the state. The eleventh record came just over a week later, on June 19, when six birds were observed in Plymouth. Intriguingly, a flock of six birds had also been recorded in Nova Scotia the previous month—a pattern similar to that of the first sighting of the species in Massachusetts in 2008, when that group of nine birds arrived after first visiting Nova Scotia. Black-bellied Whistling-Duck populations in the south and southeast of the country have been expanding in recent decades resulting in greater vagrancy to eastern states and provinces.

Brant typically depart for their breeding grounds in Arctic Canada by Memorial Day. The only stragglers this year were an amazing count of 162 birds at Bolton Flats on May 31. The species is a regular, albeit uncommon, spring and fall migrant away from the coast (see Figure 1), and this flock represents a new high count for Worcester County. The previous record of 100 birds was at Wachusett Reservoir on May 23, 2011.

Ring-necked Ducks made the birding headlines last year when they bred in the state for the first time since 1979. This year 13 ducks were present at the same site in Royalston, with many seemingly paired up, although breeding was not confirmed. Duck highlights for the period this year were lingering birds. A Harlequin Duck at Rockport and a Common Goldeneye at Plum Island were the first June records for these species since 2014. **King Eiders** were reported from four locations during May, with an immature male at Westport staying long enough to become the first June record for Bristol County. Berkshire County recorded its first June record of Greater Scaup (per eBird.org).

Pied-billed Grebe is a state-listed endangered species. Last year a pair bred successfully at Richmond, close to the New York state line. This year a pair raised two young at nearby Parsons Marsh in Lenox. Despite multiple reports of individuals this period, another state-listed species, the **Common Gallinule**, showed no evidence of breeding. Sandhill Cranes, now a regular

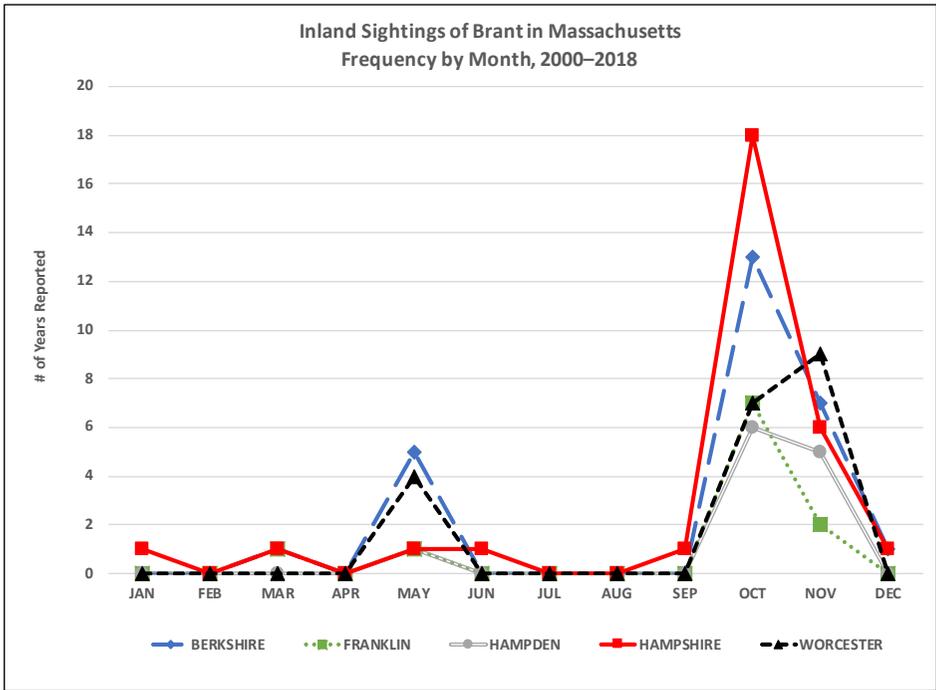


Figure 1. Sightings of Brant from inland counties of Massachusetts (Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire, and Worcester), 2000–2018. Data from eBird.org.

breeder in the state, successfully raised young in Tolland and Burrage Pond. A pair was also found nesting at Worthington, where the species first bred in 2016.

Chuck-will’s-widows were heard calling from five locations. A bird at Plum Island represented the first Essex County record since 2010.

Rare shorebirds this period included a **Black-necked Stilt** at Nantucket, June 20–30, and a **Curlew Sandpiper** at Chatham, May 19–30. The latter is the first record of the species since a one-day wonder at Plum Island on August 11, 2013. This year was unusual for reports of shorebirds that we typically only see on their fall migration. A Western Sandpiper at Plymouth Beach on May 8 is only the fourth spring record this century. Marbled Godwit is an uncommon fall migrant typically observed between July and October. This year was exceptional with spring birds reported in May from Plum Island and Eastham. Two records of Red Phalarope are rare for the spring: a single bird in South Deerfield on May 10, and 27 birds south of Nantucket on May 27. These are the first May records for the state since 2011, with the South Deerfield record being only the third record for Franklin County. On the late side for spring shorebirds were White-rumped Sandpiper and Wilson’s Phalarope, neither appearing until May 16, the latest arrival dates for these species this century.

A **South Polar Skua** photographed from a boat 90 miles east northeast of Wellfleet on May 29 is only the third May record for the state this century. Since the scattering of May sightings is earlier than most dedicated pelagic trips, the early dates in part probably reflect a lack of data for this period. Indeed, when Soviet fishing vessels were once a common sight off the eastern seaboard, skuas (often unidentified or misidentified to species) were a much more common sight. A study by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at the time indicated

that South Polar Skuas were present off our shores from May to October (Powers, 1983). The same vessel that intercepted the skua also logged the earliest record of Cory's Shearwater this century on May 27; the Cory's was 88 miles south of Nantucket. A rare, spring **Long-tailed Jaeger** was photographed at Race Point on June 30. Parasitic Jaegers were also noted from Provincetown, although in lower numbers than have typically been reported in recent years.

Apart from an impressive count of seven **Little Gulls** at Provincetown on May 7, gulls were a disappointment at the tip of Cape Cod this period. Glaucous Gulls have been loafing at Race Point each May since 2014, but were absent this year. In May 2018, up to 30 Iceland Gulls were at Race Point with 35 the year before, and since 2013 birds have lingered into June. This year, the high count was 10 on May 1 with the last one reported on May 17. Black-legged Kittiwakes were similarly thin on the ground although perhaps this is a return to form. These birds usually leave our pelagic waters by mid-April, but in recent years young birds have been spending the summer in Provincetown, though in highly variable numbers and with some evidence of an alternating cycle. Starting in 2015, the May–June maxima have been: 180 (2015), 34 (2016), 200 (2017) and 13 (2018). A similar two-year periodicity of peaks and troughs was observed between 1978–1982. The current cycle seems to have ended; this year only four birds could be found.

June continues to be the best month to see Royal Terns in Massachusetts, with four records from three counties. Caspian Terns were reported from 14 locations this period, covering a record nine counties. A pair of Black Skimmers found on a beach in Edgartown on May 4 were early by about a week.

A **Brown Pelican**, photographed sitting on a sand bar at Morris Island on May 11, is only the second May record for the state. Most of the recent sightings of this southern vagrant have spanned the period June–November.

A **Little Egret** was observed at Rowley on May 4 and June 24. Last period we reported that a bird photographed at Plum Island on April 25 was likely a returning bird to the Portland, Maine area. Since then, it appears there are now two birds in Maine. A bird present in Rye, New Hampshire, between June 8–19 was likely one of these birds, and it may have been this wandering bird that hopped the border during this period to visit Massachusetts. This is the first year Massachusetts has hosted a Little Egret since June 2014. Cattle Egrets and Yellow-crowned Night-Herons each were recorded in five counties. A **White-faced Ibis** was reported in the Essex area, extending the annual streak of this species in Essex County to 13 years.

N. Hayward

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck				5/3	PI	3	P. + F. Vale
6/10-6/12	Nantucket	1 ph	T. Pastuszek#	5/5-6/20	Nantucket	2 1pr	v.o.
6/19	Wareham	6 ph	D. Hollie + v.o.	5/23-5/24	Bolton Flats	3	B. Abbott + v.o.
6/22	Plymouth (Rte 3A)	6	S. Jones + A. Trautmann	6/1-6/16	PI	1	D. Adrien + v.o.
Brant				Gadwall			
5/4	Plymouth H.	30	BBC (G. d'Entremont)	5/3-5/4	Turners Falls	2	P. Gagarin + v.o.
5/11	Nahant	500	S. Zhang	5/3	Southwick	2	D. Holmes
5/19	Amherst	1 ph	J. Lambdin	5/27	Nantucket	2 1pr	M. Sylvia#
5/24	Pittsfield	13 ph	J. Pierce	American Wigeon			
5/31	Bolton Flats	162 ph	J. Bourget#	5/1-5/7	Chatham	2	v.o.
Wood Duck				5/12-5/19	Dedham	1	M. Iliff
5/28	Georgetown	1 ad f+6yg	J. Berry#	6/19-6/26	PI	2 1pr	T. Wetmore + v.o.
6/1	Bolton Flats	50	N. Dowling	American Black Duck			
6/2	GMNWR	45	S. Arena	5/4	N. Scituate	20	BBC (G. d'Entremont)
Blue-winged Teal				6/16	PI	19	J. Berry
5/3	Waltham	2	J. Forbes	Northern Pintail			
5/24-6/8	Bolton	2	P. Sowizral + v.o.	5/1	S. Monomoy	2	K. McOmber
6/6	PI	3	D. Adrien	5/17	Wachusett Res.	1	J. Johnson
6/7	Wayland	1	B. Harris	Green-winged Teal			
6/23	BHI (Snake I.)	2	B. Howard	5/1-6/8	Bolton	31	maxE. LeBlanc + v.o.
Northern Shoveler				5/1	S. Monomoy	4	K. McOmber
5/1	S. Monomoy	1	K. McOmber	5/3	PI	17	T. Wetmore

Green-winged Teal (continued)				Red-breasted Merganser			
5/3	Wachusett Res.	16	M. Lynch#	5/1	P'town (RP)	1300	G. d'Entremont
6/22	Washington	9 4ad+5yg	Z.Adams,R.Wendell	5/3	Turners Falls	7	J. Rose + v.o.
Ring-necked Duck				5/5	Quabog IBA	2	M. Lynch#
5/1	S. Monomoy	4	K. McOmber	5/12	Ipswich (CB)	54	J. Berry
5/2	Randolph	8	G. d'Entremont	Ruddy Duck			
5/3-5/7	Orange	5 max	B. Lafley + v.o.	5/3	Southwick	2	D. Holmes
5/4	Turners Falls	7	T. Gilliland + v.o.	5/5	Chestnut Hill	2	S. Spire#
5/4	Hadley	4	C. Elowe	5/13	W. Newbury	3	MAS (D. Moon)
5/5	Royalston	13	E. LeBlanc	Northern Bobwhite			
Greater Scaup				5/26	Truro	2	J. Young
5/7	Turners Falls2	1m+1f	J. Rose + v.o.	5/27	Eastham (FH)	6	T. Spahr
5/17	Wachusett Res.2	1m+1f	J. Johnson	Ring-necked Pheasant			
6/16-6/20	Stockbridge	1 m	J. Pierce + v.o.	6/1	Rockport (HPt)	1	J. Keeley#
Lesser Scaup				6/1	W. Newbury	1	A. Gurka#
5/4	W. Harwich	2	J. Sweeney#	6/17	DWWS	2	B. Shamgochian
King Eider				6/22	Westport	1	B. King
5/4	Nahant	1 ad m ph	M. Padulo	Ruffed Grouse			
5/5-6/8	Westport	1 imm m ph	M. Liff+ v.o.	5/4-5/30	W. Barnstable	1	E. Hill-Gest#
5/11	Gloucester (BR)	1	S. + J. Mirick	5/12	Mt Wachusett	1	L. Hennin
5/20	BHI (Thompson 1.)	1 ad m ph	S. Jones#	5/19	GMNWR	1	S. Arena
Common Eider				5/31	Quabbin (G8)	1	G. d'Entremont#
5/4	N. Scituate	300	BBC (G. d'Entremont)	6/2	Mashpee	1	K. Miller#
6/2	S. Dart. (APd)	22 15ad+7yg	SSBC (G.d'Entremont)	6/2	Sandwich	1	K. Fiske
6/8	Gloucester	90	J. Berry	6/15	Mount Greylock	2	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)
Harlequin Duck				Wild Turkey			
5/1	Rockport	25	C. Wood	5/3	Ipswich	7	J. Berry
5/4	Chilmark	4	Sean Williams#	5/11	Hardwick	16	M. Lynch#
5/23	P'town	1 f	P. Fang#	6/28	Hawley	9	M. Lynch#
5/25-5/26	Eastham	1 m	K. Dec	Pied-billed Grebe			
6/13	Rockport (AP)	1	N. Dubrow#	5/1-6/1	Fairhaven	1	L. Abbey + v.o.
Surf Scoter				5/8-5/9	PI	1	E. Labato
5/5	Wachusett Res.	1	B. Kamp	5/18-6/22	Wayland	1	B. Harris
White-winged Scoter				6/9	Lenox	4 2ad+2juv	M.Perrin,S.Pedane
5/3-5/4	Turners Falls	24 max	J. Rose + v.o.	6/22	Royalston	1	E. LeBlanc
5/4, 5/17	Pittsfield	4	J. Pierce	Horned Grebe			
5/11	Quabbin Pk	17	M. McKittrick# + v.o.	5/2-5/3	Turners Falls	9	J. Rose + v.o.
5/20	Westboro	70	M. Garvey	5/3	S. Deerfield	4 max	J.Rose,P.Gagarin
5/20	Cambridge	28	J. Trimble	5/5	Wachusett Res.	21	B. Kamp
Long-tailed Duck				5/5	Southwick	4	D. Holmes
5/1	PI	2030	T. Wetmore	5/25	Westport	1	M. Eckerson#
5/3-5/4	Turners Falls	5	J. Rose + v.o.	Red-necked Grebe			
5/3	Stockbridge	3	J. Pierce	5/2-5/5	Turners Falls	3 max	J. Rose + v.o.
5/4	Quincy	14	J. Forbes	5/4	Winthrop	19	M. Iloff
5/5	Wachusett Res.	23	B. Kamp	5/5	Southwick	12	D. Holmes
5/5	Woburn (HP)	2	J. Thomas	5/5	Wachusett Res.	7	B. Kamp
5/12	Ipswich (CB)	33	J. Berry	5/16	Quabbin Pk	3	L. Therrien
Bufflehead				Yellow-billed Cuckoo			
5/1-5/4	Turners Falls	64 max	J. Rose + v.o.	5/10-5/27	Wompatuck SP	2	D. Peacock + v.o.
5/3	Worc.	66	M. Lynch#	5/25	Sharon	4	J. Bourget#
5/3	Richmond	13	J. Pierce	5/28	W. Boxford	2	J. Berry#
5/4	Plymouth H.	58	BBC (G. d'Entremont)	5/31	Amherst	2	G. d'Entremont#
5/5	Southwick	32	D. Holmes	6/1	Bolton Flats	3	J. Bourget
Common Goldeneye				Black-billed Cuckoo			
5/2	Randolph	1 f	G. d'Entremont	5/8	Scituate	1	D. Peacock
5/4	Plymouth	1	E. Lipton	5/24	Amherst	5	L. Therrien
5/4	Wachusett Res.	1	N. Dowling	5/25	Sharon	5	J. Bourget#
5/11	Westport	1	K. Seymour	5/31	Marlborough	4	T. Spahr
6/27-6/30	PI	1	D. Bruestle + v.o.	6/1	Rockport	5	J. Keeley#
Hooded Merganser				6/9	New Braintree	11	M. Lynch#
5/1	Nantucket	2	T. Pastuszak	Common Nighthawk			
5/4	Petersham	2 f	M. Lynch#	5/19	Stow	13	N. Tepper
5/17	Dennis	2 1pr	M. J. Foti	5/20	Florence	30	C. Stern
5/18	Quabbin	4	M. Lynch#	5/22	Newbury	70	W. Freedberg
6/1	Rowe	11 1f+10yg	M. Lynch#	5/25	Bolton Flats	25	S. Arena
Common Merganser				Chuck-will's-widow			
5/1	Plainville	3	M. Noiseux	5/8-5/11	MBO	1 au	E. Lipton
5/3	Wachusett Res.	9	J. Bourget	5/10-6/17	Falmouth	1 au	v.o.
5/3	GMNWR	5	S. Beattie	5/10	Chappaquiddick	1 au	E. Johnson#
5/3	Quabbin (G8)	4	M. Lynch#	5/15	Nantucket	2 au	S. Kardell#
5/5	Brockton	6	M. Dunham	6/8	PI	1 au	D. Young
6/21	Salisbury	3	S. Knapp				

Eastern Whip-poor-will				6/7	S. Dart. (APd)	3	D. Swain#
5/4-6/30	Montague	10	maxB. Packard + v.o.	6/23	BHI (Snake I.)	21	B. Howard
5/4-6/30	Bolton	8	maxN. Tepper + v.o.	6/24	Nantucket	11	T. Sackton
5/9-6/2	Quabbin Pk	15	max L. Therrien	6/26	Rockport	6 2pr+2yg	C. Haines
6/9	PI	21	R. Heil	Black-bellied Plover			
6/12	MSSF	6	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)	5/1	Chatham	66	G. d'Entremont
Chimney Swift				5/8	Plymouth B.	56	L. Schibley#
5/3	GMNWR	48	W. Hutcheson	5/16	S. Monomoy	300	R. Lambert#
5/10	Sudbury	113	B. Harris	5/17	PI	200	P. + F. Vale
5/20	Blackstone	22	M. Lynch#	6/11	Gill	1	J. Smith
6/2	Taunton	16	G. d'Entremont	American Golden-Plover			
6/14	Holyoke	150	B. Lafley	5/23	PI	1	C. Decker
Ruby-throated Hummingbird				Semipalmated Plover			
5/1, 5/15	Sharon	1,10	V. Zollo, M. Waters	5/10-6/6	Bolton	30	maxJ. Johnson + v.o.
5/9	Shutesbury	5	K. Weir	5/11-5/15	Sheffield	6	maxV.Zollo,P.Cosgrove#
5/11	Middleboro	16	H. Levesque#	5/17-6/7	Longmeadow	12	maxM. Moore + v.o.
5/16	PI	9	S. Williams	5/20	Plymouth B.	62	L. Schibley
Clapper Rail				5/23	Ipswich (CB)	110	J. Berry
5/1-5/11	Brewster	1	au S. Finnegan	5/29	Turners Falls	5	J. Smith
5/17-6/15	Nantucket	2	max ph S. Kardell#	Piping Plover			
5/18-6/25	Varnstable (SN)	2	max au S.Finnegan+v.o.	5/12	Ipswich (CB)	26	ad J. Berry
6/30	Fairhaven	7	2ad+5imm ph C. Longworth#	5/26	Plymouth B.	23	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)
King/Clapper Rail				5/29	Monomoy NWR	19	R. Hogg
5/4	N. Truro	1	au J. Trimble#	5/31	Winthrop B.	8	R. Jilek
5/14-5/22	W. Harwich	1	au B. Nikula	6/8	PI	91	44pr+3juv USFWS
King Rail				6/22	P'town (RP)	22	K. Miller#
5/17-6/5	DWWS	1	phC.Whitebread+v.o.	Killdeer			
5/24	MBO	1	ph A. Kneidel#	6/15	Quabbin (G43)	5	M. Lynch#
6/29	GMNWR	1	ph S. Arena	6/27	DWWS	18	MAS (P. Sowizral)
Virginia Rail				Upland Sandpiper			
thr	Bolton	28	max S. Arena + v.o.	5/thr	Plymouth Airport	6	max G. d'Entremont+v.o.
5/1-6/8	Lenox	8	maxZ. Adams + v.o.	5/1-6/23	Westover AFB	4	n S. Sumner + v.o.
5/15	Ipswich	9	5ad+4yg J. Berry	5/2	W. Roxbury (MP)	1	T. Bradford#
6/2	Quabog IBA	13	M. Lynch#	5/11-5/16	Hanscom	1	N. Tepper + v.o.
6/29	GMNWR	25	S. Arena	Whimbrel			
Sora				5/4-5/5, 5/25	PI	2,1	M. Ward, T. Mara + v.o.
thr	Bolton	8	maxE. LeBlanc + v.o.	6/28	WBWS	3	S. Finnegan#
5/1-6/7	Westborough	5	max 2pr B. Robo# + v.o.	Marbled Godwit			
5/1-6/4	Lenox	3	max J. Pierce + v.o.	5/4-5/6	PI	1	ph J. Johnson + v.o.
5/11	Stow	3	N. Tepper#	5/11	Eastham	2	S. Finnegan#
5/18-6/15	Northborough	5	max n S. Arena	Ruddy Turnstone			
5/19	GMNWR	2	S. Arena	5/16	S. Monomoy	300	R. Lambert#
Common Gallinule				5/17	Fairhaven	9	W. Klockner#
5/1-6/27	Pittsfield	2	maxS.Townsend+v.o.	5/20	Plymouth B.	26	L. Schibley
5/1-5/31	Longmeadow	1	phT. Gilliland + v.o.	5/24	PI	75	T. Wetmore
5/3-5/6	Mashpee	1	ph J. Carroll	5/30	GMNWR	1	J. Layman
5/7	Williamstown	1	ph C. Johnson + v.o.	Red Knot			
5/16	Saugus	1	ph C. Martone	5/8	Plymouth B.	1	L. Schibley#
5/22-6/30	Lenox	1	ph K. Hanson + v.o.	5/31	PI	3	D. Williams#
5/24-6/8	Bolton Flats	1	D. Bates + v.o.	6/1	Essex	3	S. Grinley#
6/26	Nantucket	1	ph S. Kardell#	Curlew Sandpiper			
American Coot				5/19-5/30	Chatham	1	ph J. Wagner, D. Clapp
5/1-5/4	Pittsfield	1	S. Townsend	Sanderling			
5/10-6/20	Nantucket	1	v.o.	5/12	Ipswich (CB)	165	J. Berry
Sandhill Crane				5/26	Plymouth B.	25	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)
thr	Worthington	2	1pr nL.Waters,J.Eckerson	Dunlin			
5/4-5/5	Barre	1	A. O'Hare + v.o.	5/16	S. Monomoy	350	R. Lambert#
5/8	Plymouth	1	C. Jackson	5/25-5/29	Bolton Flats	1	T. Pirro + v.o.
5/10-5/17	Bolton Flats	1	T. Swain + v.o.	Purple Sandpiper			
5/11	Montague	1	J. Moran	5/2-5/6	MBO	4	E. Lipton + v.o.
5/11	Nantucket	1	S. Kardell#	5/23	Westport	8	M. Eckerson
5/12	New Marlborough	2	P. Banducci	5/26	Cape Ann	9	B. Harris
5/13	Stow	1	N. Tepper#	Least Sandpiper			
5/18	Wayland	1	B. Harris	5/17	PI	257	A. Eckerson
5/21	Westboro	1	D. Lusignan	5/22	Topsfield	63	P. + F. Vale
6/14	Hardwick	2	A. Barnes	5/25	Concord (NAC)	30	J. Forbes
6/28-6/29	Burrage Pd WMA	4	1pr+2juv C.Whitebread+v.o.	5/31	Bolton	40	J. Bourget#
6/29	Tolland	3	1pr+1juv D. Holmes	White-rumped Sandpiper			
Black-necked Stilt				5/16	Monomoy	1	K McOmber
6/20-6/30	Nantucket	1	ph M. Sayle#	5/19	Nbpt	5	N. Tepper
American Oystercatcher				5/19-5/24	Concord (NAC)	1	T. Spahr + v.o.
5/4-5/18	PI	1	T. Wetmore + v.o.	5/20	Plymouth B.	2	L. Schibley
5/16	S. Monomoy	45	R. Lambert#	5/29	Ipswich	3	J. Berry

White-rumped Sandpiper (continued)									
5/31	PI	10		M. Watson#	Parasitic Jaeger	5/12, 5/14	P'town (RP)	14,9	B. Nikula#
Pectoral Sandpiper					6/27	PI		1	R. Heil
5/4	Ipswich	2		J. Smith	Long-tailed Jaeger	6/30	P'town (RP)	1	1 S ph
5/10	Fairhaven	3		K. Seymour#	Common Murre	5/7	P'town (RP)	3	P. Flood
5/10	Bolton Flats	1		J. Peters	5/7	Stellwagen Bank	1		P. Henson
5/11	Cumb. Farms	1		C. Whitebread#	Black Guillemot	5/5-5/15	Cohasset	1	V. Zollo
5/16	PI	8		S. Williams	5/11	Gloucester (EP)	2		S. + J. Mirick
6/6	Longmeadow	1		D. Holmes	5/19	Marshfield	1		V. Zollo
Semipalmated Sandpiper					6/13	Rockport (AP)	2		R. Heil
5/10	Worcester	1		M. Lynch#	Black-legged Kittiwake	5/11-6/15	P'town (RP)	4 max	v.o.
5/19	Chatham	400		B. Nikula	Bonaparte's Gull	5/2-5/3	Turners Falls	10	J. Rose + v.o.
5/20	Plymouth B.	240		L. Schibley	5/5	Pittsfield	65		G. Hurley
5/21-6/6	Northampton	21	max	L. Therrien + v.o.	5/5	Southwick	16		D. Holmes
5/29	Ipswich	900		J. Berry	5/5	Northampton	11		J. Rose
5/29	PI	400		T. Wetmore	5/7	P'town (RP)	8000		P. Flood
5/29	Turners Falls	54		J. Smith	5/22	Lynn	41		J. Quigley
Western Sandpiper					5/26	MBO	25		E. Lipton
5/8	Plymouth B.	1		L. Schibley#	Little Gull	5/7	P'town (RP)	7 ph	P. Flood
Short-billed Dowitcher					5/11	Nbpt H.	1	ad	C. Floyd
5/9	Fairhaven	1		H. Zimmerlin	Laughing Gull	5/16	S. Monomoy	1000	R. Lambert#
5/10	Bolton Flats	1		J. Peters	5/20	Plymouth B.	243		L. Schibley
5/15-5/17	Northampton	1	ph	J. Oliverio + v.o.	5/29	Ipswich	5		J. Berry
5/20	Plymouth B.	16		L. Schibley	6/19	Kingston	250		A. Kneidel
5/26	PI	60		T. Wetmore	Iceland Gull	5/4	Wachusett Res.	1	B. Abbott
6/27	E. Boston (BI)	2		DCR (S. Riley)	5/5-5/16	S. Dart. (APd)	1		M. Iliff
American Woodcock					5/5	PI	1		S. Miller
5/10	Bolton	15		J. Bourget#	5/11	Rockport (HPt)	1		B. Burke
5/10	Quabog IBA	14		M. Lynch#	5/24	Revere B.	1		D. Bates
5/10	PI	12		T. Wetmore	Lesser Black-backed Gull	5/2	Haverhill	1	K. Wilmarth
Wilson's Snipe					5/2	Wachusett Res.	1		M. Lynch#
5/1	Bolton Flats	3		E. LeBlanc	5/5	Westport	2		M. Iliff
5/1	Lancaster	3		J. Bourget#	5/6	MBO	1		E. Lipton
5/5	Saugus	4		S. Zende#	5/10	Gloucester	1		B. Burke
Spotted Sandpiper					5/17	Marshfield	1		C. Whitebread#
5/20	PI	11		D. Adrien	5/22-5/25	PI	1		J. Bourget + v.o.
5/25	Winchendon	9		M. Lynch#	Glaucous Gull	5/4, 5/26	Nantucket	1	S. Kardell
5/29	Marlborough	10	nfc	T. Spahr	5/11	Rockport (HPt)	1		B. Burke
6/9	Saugus	7		L. Pivacek#	5/20	PI	1		S. Williams#
Solitary Sandpiper					Least Tern	5/4	BHI (Lovells I.)	5	B. Howard
5/11	Easton	8		K. Ryan	5/11	Plymouth B.	60		M. Faherty
5/17	Bolton Flats	24		G. d'Entremont	5/14	Ipswich (CB)	200		J. Berry#
5/18	Wayland	11		B. Harris	6/2	PI	104		M. Watson
Lesser Yellowlegs					6/14	P'town (RP)	425		P. Flood
5/1	Quincy	9		J. Bock	Caspian Tern	5/3	Burrage Pd WMA	8	C. Whitebread#
5/7-5/12	Nbpt H.	10		P. + F. Vale	5/8	PI	4		T. Wetmore#
5/10-5/11	Bolton Flats	65		J. Johnson + v.o.	5/10	Turners Falls	3		M. Fairbrother
5/17	PI	49		A. Eckerson	5/16	Westport	2		M. Iliff
Willet					Black Tern	5/2-5/16	GMNWR	1	K. Dia + v.o.
5/1	Eastham (FE)	19		G. d'Entremont	5/3	Quabbin (G8)	1		M. Lynch#
5/16	S. Monomoy	80		R. Lambert#	5/4	Wachusett Res.	1		T. Pirro
5/26	Plymouth B.	12		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)	5/11	Plymouth B.	1		M. Faherty
6/16	PI	45		J. Berry	5/20	PI	1		D. Adrien
Greater Yellowlegs					5/24, 6/14	P'town (RP)	3,3		S. Arena, P. Flood#
5/2	Medford	1		M. Rines	6/26	Essex Bay	1		M. Brengle
5/6	Worcester	3		M. Lynch#	Roseate Tern	5/4	Fairhaven	2	J. Bogart
5/17	Bolton Flats	30		G. d'Entremont	5/7	Stellwagen Bank	5		P. Henson
Wilson's Phalarope					5/14	Ipswich (CB)	15		J. Berry#
5/15-5/18	Rowley	1		M. Noland + v.o.					
5/23	Nantucket	1		S. Kardell#					
5/29	Fairhaven	1		C. Longworth#					
5/31	E. Boston (BI)	1		DCR (S. Riley) + v.o.					
6/6	S. Monomoy	1		R. Lambert#					
6/7-6/14	PI	3	2m+1f	T. Wetmore + v.o.					
Red-necked Phalarope									
5/11	Stellwagen Bank	5		M. J. Foti					
5/22	South of MV	20		K. Regan					
Red Phalarope									
5/10	S. Deerfield	1	ph	T. Gilliland					
5/27	S. of Nantucket	27	ph	J. Loch					
South Polar Skua									
5/29	Gulf of Maine	1	ph	J. Loch					

Roseate Tern (continued)				Double-crested Cormorant			
5/23	PI	50	D. Adrien	5/2	Wachusett Res.	149	M. Lynch#
6/12	Mattapoisett	1500	D. Hollie	5/3	P'town (RP)	1200	B. Nikula
6/14	Marion	1200	D. Hollie	5/3	Turners Falls	210	J. Rose + v.o.
Common Tern				5/5	Northampton	115	J. Rose
5/2-5/5	Pittsfield	8 max	G. Hurley + v.o.	6/7	Medford	138	R. Stymeist
5/4	Southwick	1	D. Holmes	6/8	Gloucester	140	J. Berry
5/5	Turners Falls	1	J. Coleman + v.o.	Great Cormorant			
5/12	P'town (RP)	1500	B. Nikula	5/4	N. Scituate	5	BBC (G. d'Entremont)
5/14	Ipswich (CB)	140	J. Berry#	5/5	Westport	2	M. Iliff
5/16	S. Monomoy	20000	R. Lambert#	5/12-5/20	Douglas	1	D. Pedro
5/23	PI	200	D. Adrien	5/17, 6/18	MBO	2,1	E. Lipton, A. Kneidel
6/26	Mattapoisett	3500	D. Hollie	6/4	BHI (Green I.)	2	S. Jones#
Forster's Tern				6/17	Manchester	1	R. Heil
6/28	WBWS	2	S. Finnegan#	Brown Pelican			
Royal Tern				5/11	Chatham	1 ph	S. Slik#
5/20	PI	1 ph	D. Adrien	American Bittern			
6/12	Westport	1 ph	M. Iliff + v.o.	thr	Indiv. reported from 14 locations		
6/15	Eastham	3 ph	D. Clapp#	5/4-5/27	Bolton Flats	4	J. Bourget + v.o.
6/16	Ipswich (CB)	2 ph	I. Pepper	5/10-6/2	Quabog IBA	2	M. Lynch#
6/22-6/30	P'town (RP)	2 ph	P. Flood#	5/18	Wayland	2	B. Harris
Black Skimmer				Least Bittern			
5/4	Edgartown	2	Bridget Dunnigan	thr	Indiv. reported from 9 locations		
5/20	Plymouth B.	2	L. Schibley	5/23-6/30	Bolton Flats	4 max	B. Abbott, R. Jenkins#
6/1	Edgartown	23	L. Johnson	6/10-6/14	PI	2	W. Tatro + v.o.
6/4	Mashpee	1	N. Marchessault#	6/14	GMNWR	12	S. Arena
Red-throated Loon				Great Blue Heron			
5/1	P'town (RP)	220	B. Nikula	5/4	Burrage Pd WMA40	BBC (G. d'Entremont)	
5/4	N. Scituate	20	BBC (G. d'Entremont)	6/1	Cambridge14 4ad+10yg	K. Johnson+v.o.	
5/5	PI	82	D. Walters	6/22	Ware R. IBA26 8ad+18yg	M. Lynch#	
5/19	Pittsfield	1	J. Pierce	Great Egret			
Common Loon				5/11	Lenox	1	M. Caron
5/1	P'town (RP)	70	G. d'Entremont	6/6	Lexington (DM)	1	J. Forbes
5/1	MBO	60	A. Kneidel	6/14	Ipswich/Rowley	22	J. Berry#
5/3	Wachusett Res.	465	M. Lynch#	6/16	PI	18	J. Berry
5/3-5/5	Turners Falls	30 max	J. Rose + v.o.	Little Egret			
5/3, 5/19	Stockbridge	7	J. Pierce	5/4, 6/24	Rowley	1 ph	M. Emmons, A. Sanford
5/5	Westport	196	M. Iliff	Snowy Egret			
5/5	PI	55	D. Walters	6/14	Ipswich/Rowley	13	J. Berry#
Northern Fulmar				Little Blue Heron			
6/26	E. of Chatham	1	P. Trull#	5/1-6/15	Indiv. reported from 10 locations		
Cory's Shearwater				5/4	Amherst	3	S. Zhang
5/27	S. of Nantucket	3	J. Loch	5/6-5/26	W. Harwich	2	M. Keleher, v.o.
6/30	N. Truro	4	B. Nikula	6/9	Rockport (HPt)	2	E. Jorgensen
6/30	P'town (RP)	4	B. Nikula	6/10	Manchester	9	N. Dowling#
Sooty Shearwater				Tricolored Heron			
6/16	E. of Chatham	170	N. Dowling#	5/1-5/6	W. Harwich	1	M. Norton#
6/24	Stellwagen Bank	225	P. Trull	5/5	Harwich	1	G. d'Entremont#
Great Shearwater				5/9	E. Boston (BI)	1	M. Mulqueen
6/25	Westport	1	J. Eckerson#	5/17-5/25	N. Truro	1	J. Wagner#
Manx Shearwater				5/29-5/31	Fairhaven	1	C. Longworth + v.o.
5/5	Cohasset	3	V. Zollo	5/29, 6/5	PI	1	MAS (D. Moon)
5/12	P'town (RP)	7	B. Nikula	6/6	Essex	1	C. Marchant
5/13, 6/13	Rockport (AP)	2,3	R. Heil	6/10	Manchester	1	N. Dowling#
5/19	Revere B.	19	M. Watson#	Cattle Egret			
5/31	Fairhaven	1	D. Burton	5/1-5/2	Orleans	1	C. Bates#
6/27	PI	2	R. Heil	5/2	Norfolk	1	M. Noiseux
Wilson's Storm-Petrel				5/3-5/10	Nantucket	1	T. Pastuszek#
6/16	E. of Chatham	350	N. Dowling#	5/11-5/18	Essex area	1	J. Smith + v.o.
6/28	Boston H.	4	E. Keane	5/19-5/22	Dunstable	1	L. Kramer + v.o.
6/29	PI	3	T. Wetmore	Green Heron			
6/30	Cohasset	137	D. Burton	5/12	Bolton Flats	3	E. Kittredge
Leach's Storm-Petrel				5/24	Wayland	6	B. Harris
6/26	E. of Chatham	1	P. Trull#	6/2	Quabog IBA	3	M. Lynch#
6/30	Cohasset	1	D. Burton	6/12	Fairhaven	3	C. Longworth
Northern Gannet				Black-crowned Night-Heron			
5/1	P'town (RP)	1600	G. d'Entremont	5/3-5/11	PI	2	P. + F. Vale + v.o.
5/1	S. Monomoy	1500	K. McOmber	5/6	Worcester	2 ad	M. Lynch#
5/5	Westport	153	M. Iliff	5/10	E. Boston (BI)	9	A. Trautmann#
5/6	MBO	300	E. Lipton	5/17	Salem	4	A. Steenstrup
5/7	Stellwagen Bank	120	P. Henson	6/7	Medford	8	R. Stymeist
6/27	PI	147	R. Heil				

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron			6/22	Wareham	1	R. Todd
5/10	New Bedford	1	J. DiPaolo	Glossy Ibis		
5/11-5/30	Fairhaven	1	D. Zimmerlin + v.o.	5/2-6/23	Essex area	103 maxM. Watson + v.o.
5/17	Barnstable	2	J. Rapp#	5/8	Bolton Flats	3 V. Burdette
5/17-6/10	PI	1	T. + N. Walker + v.o.	White-faced Ibis		
5/17	S. Hamilton	1	A. Eckerson#	5/13-5/20	Essex area	1 P. Brown + v.o.
6/1-6/9	Ipswich	1	A. Steenstrup + v.o.	6/21-6/22	Essex	1 ph S. Grinley + M. Goetschkes#
6/12-6/22	Nantucket	1	T. Pastuszek#			

VULTURES THROUGH DICKCISSEL

The raptor highlight for the period was **Mississippi Kite**, with a surge of reports primarily from outer Cape Cod and Plymouth. Strong southerly winds on May 19–20, which switched to the northwest on the night of May 20, brought the first of at least 24 reports this period as compared with just two reports in 2018 and 2017, and five reports in 2016. This species has experienced a recent population expansion with its range extending northward and is now a regular migrant each spring at the Pilgrim Heights hawkwatch site in North Truro. From May 22–June 23, there were numerous sightings of Mississippi Kites in the Plymouth area. Without photographs, it is impossible to know if these reports involved more than one or two wandering individuals. A **Swallow-tailed Kite** was photographed over the Gay Head Cliffs on Martha’s Vineyard on May 21.

When *Birds of Massachusetts* was published in 1993, the Black Vulture was listed as a rare visitor. Now you can reasonably expect to see a Black Vulture any month of the year. During June, many sightings of this species were reported from across the state, resulting in a “ho-hum” attitude among birders. A survey of nesting Ospreys in the Ipswich and Rowley area found a total of 14 adults and 14 young. Reports of Snowy Owls in June are unusual, but one was noted on Duxbury Beach on June 2. The latest record for a Snowy Owl in the state was from Logan Airport on July 7, 1990.

Many migrants arrived in good numbers in late April and that trend continued into the first week of May, with a major fallout occurring on May 3. Dave McLain, who was birding at Arcadia Sanctuary in Easthampton, noted the following on his Facebook page, “Huge fallout day. Birds everywhere. Get outside. Even in the rain—87 species.” Paul Peterson, birding at Franklin Park in Boston, echoed that excitement by describing the morning as a “Wowie Zowie Wave.” Some of the most productive birding happens in the rain, which was the case again with significant fallouts on the mornings of May 9 and May 11. At Plum Island on May 11, Jeff Offermann tallied 157 Black-and-white Warblers and 143 Northern Parulas.

A total of 33 species of warblers were reported during the period including a **Townsend’s Warbler** found at the Beech Forest in Provincetown on May 5, just the fifth spring record for the state. Other noteworthy reports included four Prothonotary and 11 Kentucky warblers. Four Cerulean Warblers were found in Skinner Park, Hadley, where they have nested in recent years. Significant numbers of northern, boreal species such as Tennessee, Cape May and Bay-breasted warblers were reported, as was the case in the spring of 2018. The favorite food of these species is the larvae of the spruce budworm, an invasive moth that attacks conifers. The last three years have seen an infestation of budworm caterpillars in the northern forests, resulting in an abundance of food for these boreal warblers.

The anticipation of discovering a rare bird is never far from the minds of most birders. We can thus appreciate the excitement felt by Nancy Blake, who was birding at Daniel Webster Sanctuary, Marshfield, on the morning of June 14, when she spotted a **Tropical Kingbird** AND a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** in the SAME tree! The Tropical Kingbird was just the third state record and was very cooperative for the many visiting birders, lingering 20 days until July 4. The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was seen only on June 14 and 15. There were two reports of **Loggerhead Shrikes**, one at Gay Head on Martha’s Vineyard and another at Turners Falls

airport. This was the first report of this species in Massachusetts since a bird at Chatham on September 6, 2012. Red-headed Woodpeckers were recorded in six locations. Reports of Acadian Flycatchers were up from 11 locations last year to 21 this year. Philadelphia Vireo, an uncommon spring migrant, was reported from 11 locations. Other notables included **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** on Plum Island and Nantucket and a **Painted Bunting** in North Truro.

Reproductive success in birds can be measured by complete area surveys during the breeding season. Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll covered the town of Hawley on June 28 and tallied impressive numbers of breeding birds: 103 Red-eyed Vireos, 12 Winter Wrens, 43 Veerys, 22 Hermit Thrushes, and 73 Ovenbirds. Rick Heil conducted a thorough survey of the marsh on Plum Island on June 27 and tallied a total of 71 Saltmarsh Sparrows. Clay-colored Sparrow and Blue Grosbeak were present again this year at the Crane Wildlife Management Area in Falmouth, where breeding is suspected.

Winter finches, especially crossbills, are nomadic and can occur at any time of the year. **Red Crossbills** were reported from at least 16 locations during the period with as many as 20 individuals present at Moose Hill Sanctuary in Sharon. Most of those identified to call type were Type 10, the Sitka Spruce race. Evening Grosbeaks were reported from all areas of the state with a high count of 75 in Royalston. A report of two juvenile Evening Grosbeaks in Hawley indicated successful breeding. 🐦

R. Stymeist

References

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Black Vulture				5/27	Kingston	1	D. Furbish
5/6-5/10	Gloucester	1	C. Haines + v.o.	6/23	DWWS	1	J. Glover
5/6	Boston (McW)	1	S. Jones#	Bald Eagle			
5/7-6/30	Wrentham	2	T. Murray + v.o.	5/10	Quabog IBA	3	M. Lynch#
5/7	Plymouth	2	J. Eckerson	5/11	Ipswich (CB)	2	J. Berry#
5/11	Sheffield	8	V. Zollo, P. Cosgrove	5/18	Quabbin	4 3ad+1imm	M. Lynch#
5/18	Cambr. (FP)	1	E. Wylde#	5/25	Burrage Pd WMA	4	M. Waters#
5/22	Dartmouth	2	M. Iliff	5/26	N. Truro	2	B. Nikula
5/25	Wellfleet	2	M. Faherty	6/4	Medford	2	A. Gurka
6/7	PI	1	P. + F. Vale	6/10	Sharon	2	E. Ganin
6/23	Millbury	3	L. Therrien	6/19	Rowley	2	J. Carroll#
Turkey Vulture				Northern Harrier			
5/19	PI	17	R. Heil	thr	Indiv. reported from 13 locations		
5/22	Dartmouth	25	M. Iliff	5/3-5/21	PI	2	P. + F. Vale + v.o.
6/3	N. Truro	66	D. Manchester	Sharp-shinned Hawk			
6/20	Holyoke	125	B. Lafley	thr	Indiv. reported from 15 locations		
Osprey				5/7	N. Truro	25	D. Manchester
5/2	E. Boston (BI)	4	DCR (S. Riley)	5/8	PI	2	E. Labato
5/3	Brookfield	2	M. Lynch#	Cooper's Hawk			
5/19	PI	12	R. Heil	thr	Indiv. reported from 6 locations		
5/22	Dartmouth	16	M. Iliff	Northern Goshawk			
6/14	Ipswich/Rowley	28 14ad+14yg	J. Berry#	5/3	Brookfield	1 ad	M. Lynch#
Swallow-tailed Kite				5/11	New Salem	1 ad	M. Lynch#
5/21	Aquinnah	1 ph	T. Gilliland	6/21	Shrewsbury	1	D. Miles
Mississippi Kite				Red-shouldered Hawk			
5/18	P'town	1 ph	S. Williams#	5/thr	Easton	2 1pr n	K Ryan
5/21,6/4,6/23	N. Truro	5,2,1 ph	M. Stone, T. Bradford	5/6	MBO	2	E. Lipton
5/22	Aquinnah	3 ph	T. Gilliland	5/22	Winchendon	3	M. Lynch#
5/22	Dartmouth	1 ph	M. Iliff	6/9	Sudbury	3	B. Harris
5/22	Mashpee	1 ph	M. Keleher	6/27	Sharon	3	W. Sweet
5/22-6/23	Plymouth area	6 max	v.o.	Broad-winged Hawk			
5/26	N. Dighton	1 ph	A. Eckerson#	5/21, 6/3	N. Truro	40,61	D. Manchester

Broad-winged Hawk (continued)									
5/22	Dartmouth	4		M. Iliff	6/21	Salisbury	3		S. Knapp
5/25	Wompatuck SP	10		S. Sullivan#	Olive-sided Flycatcher				
5/26	Huntington	3		M. Lynch#	5/15-6/14	Indiv. reported from 26 locations			
5/27	Ware R. IBA	4		M. Lynch#	5/20, 6/1	PI	2,2	S. Williams#	T. Wetmore
6/27	Sharon	5		W. Sweet	5/27	Ware R. IBA	2		M. Lynch#
Eastern Screech-Owl					5/31	P'town	3		B. Nikula
6/3	Concord	4		D. Seibel	5/31	MNWS	2		J. Smith
6/5	Winchester 5 2ad+3juv			P. Devaney	Eastern Wood-Pewee				
Great Horned Owl					5/4	P'town	1		B. Nikula
5/4	MBWMA	3		J. Keeley#	5/4	GMNWR	1		J. Barcus
5/11	PI	3		P. Brown	5/20	Quabbin Pk	14		L. Therrien
6/14	Easton	3		N. Block	5/27	Ware R. IBA	20		M. Lynch#
6/23	Norfolk	3		M. Noiseux	6/18	Ipswich	13 m		J. Berry#
Snowy Owl					Yellow-bellied Flycatcher				
5/2-5/14	Falmouth	1 ph		K. Friel#	5/26-5/31	PI	10 b		B. Flemer#
5/11	Lynn / Revere (POP)	1 B.+C.		Lowder, J. Layman	5/29	Waltham	3		J. Forbes
6/2	Duxbury B.	1 ph		S. T. Chong	5/31	MBO	15 b		T. Lloyd-Evans#
Barred Owl					5/31	Brewster	6 b		S. Finnegan
thr	1-2 birds reported from 14 locations				5/31	MNWS	5		R. Jilek
5/4	Douglas	3		N. Paulson	Acadian Flycatcher				
5/11	Wompatuck SP	4		G. d'Entremont#	5/22-thr	Indiv. reported from 15 locations			
6/19	Dedham	3		M. Iliff	5/22-6/30	Quabbin (G8)	2 max		M. McKittrick + v.o.
6/24	Lincoln	3		C. Winstanley	5/29	MNWS	2		J. Smith#
6/26	Canton	3		O. Cunningham	6/6-6/29	Granville	4 2pr n		D. Holmes
Northern Saw-whet Owl					6/9-6/12	Falmouth	2		M. Iliff#
5/4	Wachusett Res.	1		N. Paulson	6/15	Westport	2		V. Zollo
5/11	Barre	2		M. Lynch#	6/22	Monson	2 1pr n		S. Williams
5/25-6/22	Washington	2 max		J. Pierce + v.o.	Alder Flycatcher				
5/31	Petersham	1		E. Cormier	5/26	Huntington	29		M. Lynch#
6/8	Sterling	1		K. Bourinot	5/27	W. Roxbury (MP)	5		M. Dunham
Belted Kingfisher					5/28	W. Boxford	3 m		J. Berry#
5/4	Petersham	7		M. Lynch#	5/30, 5/31	MBO	18,26 b		T. Lloyd-Evans#
Red-headed Woodpecker					5/30-6/1	PI	8		T. Wetmore
5/1-6/22	Plymouth	1 ph		L. Schibley + v.o.	5/31	Woburn	6		M. Rines
5/6-5/11	Ipswich	2 ph		J. Berry# + v.o.	5/31	P'town	5		B. Nikula
5/12	Brookfield	1 ph		T. Crane	6/8	Hinsdale	14		M. Lynch#
5/14	Hopkinton	1 ph		K. Clifford	6/16	October Mountain	6		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)
5/19-5/21	Tisbury	1 ph		L. Johnson#	Willow Flycatcher				
5/29-6/24	Montague	1 ph		J. Smith, J. Rose + v.o.	5/3, 5/31	PI	1,12		C. Lapite, P. + F. Vale
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker					5/25	Bolton Flats	12		S. Arena
5/1-5/4	PI	11		D. Adrien + v.o.	5/25	S. Dart. (APd)	5		G. d'Entremont
5/4	N. Truro	2		J. Trimble#	5/25	W. Roxbury (MP)	4		M. Iliff
5/18	Quabbin	13		M. Lynch#	5/26	Huntington	7		M. Lynch#
6/15	Mount Greylock	3		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)	6/14	Eastham (FH)	6		T. Spahr
6/16	October Mountain	3		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)	Trail's Flycatcher (Willow / Alder)				
6/28	Hawley	11		M. Lynch#	5/12-5/31	PI	34 b		B. Flemer#
Hairy Woodpecker					Least Flycatcher				
5/19	Quabog IBA	4		M. Lynch#	5/8	Concord	5		L. Hale
6/18	Ipswich	7		J. Berry#	5/16	Ware R. IBA	22		M. Lynch#
Northern Flicker					5/20	PI	26		S. Williams#
5/2	Worc.	8		M. Lynch#	5/26	Huntington	18		M. Lynch#
5/25	Winchendon	8		M. Lynch#	5/26	Boston (McW)	3		S. Jones
Pileated Woodpecker					5/31	P'town	4		B. Nikula
thr	1-2 birds reported from 16 locations				6/1	Rowe	13		M. Lynch#
5/22	Carlisle	3		S. Heinrich	Great Crested Flycatcher				
5/27	Ware R. IBA	4		M. Lynch#	5/11	Wompatuck SP	10		G. d'Entremont#
American Kestrel					5/18	Quabbin	9		M. Lynch#
5/4-5/18	PI	28		Hawkcount (M. Schoene)	5/27	Ware R. IBA	12		M. Lynch#
5/5	Saugus	9		S. Zende#	5/27	PI	9		N. Tepper
5/7	N. Truro	10		D. Manchester	Tropical Kingbird				
5/11	Plymouth Airport	6		G. d'Entremont#	6/14-6/30	DWWS	1 ph		N. Blake + v.o.
5/11	Concord	4		N. Tepper	Eastern Kingbird				
6/22	E. Boston (BI) 3 1pr+1yg			DCR (S. Riley)	5/5	Medford	4		P. Devaney#
Merlin					5/8	W. Newbury	5		J. Parrot-Willis
5/4-5/18	PI	16		Hawkcount (M. Schoene)	5/11	PI	30		D. + T. Swain
5/5-5/16	Pittsfield	2 1pr		K. Hanson, J. Jew	5/19	Quabog IBA	10		M. Lynch#
5/16	N. Truro	5		D. Manchester	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher				
6/2-6/30	Gardner	6 1pr+4yg		S. Erickson, T. Pirro	6/14-6/15	DWWS	1 ph		N. Blake + v.o.
6/30	Nantucket	2		G. Andrews#	Loggerhead Shrike				
Peregrine Falcon					5/24	Aquinnah	1 ph		T. Gilliland
6/1	Watertown 5 2ad+3yg			R. Stymeist#	6/3	Turners Falls	1 ph		P. Gagarin + v.o.
6/3	Nbpt 5 1ad f+4yg			J. Berry#	White-eyed Vireo				
					5/2-6/2	Indiv. reported from 13 locations			

White-eyed Vireo (continued)									
5/2	Yarmouth	3		P. Trimble					
5/11	S. Dart. (APd)	3		K. Seymour#					
5/16-5/20	PI	2		S. Williams					
5/19	Cuttyhunk I.	5		S. Williams#					
Yellow-throated Vireo									
5/2	MBO	2		E. Lipton					
5/7	Seekonk	4		M. Eckerson					
5/19	Quabog IBA	12		M. Lynch#					
5/20	Quabbin Pk	9		L. Therrien					
6/7	Westboro	8		S. Arena					
6/15	GMNWR	2		S. Arena					
Blue-headed Vireo									
5/3	PI	35		E. Labato					
5/3	MBO	10 b		T. Lloyd-Evans#					
5/3-5/23	PI	19 b		B. Flemer#					
5/4	P'town	42		B. Nikula					
5/4	Petersham	16		M. Lynch#					
6/28	Hawley	23		M. Lynch#					
Philadelphia Vireo									
5/11-6/5	Indiv. reported from 11 locations								
Warbling Vireo									
5/3-4,5/11-20	PI	2,1		T. Wetmore + v.o.					
5/20	Blackstone	28		M. Lynch#					
6/2	Quabog IBA	40		M. Lynch#					
6/9	Saugus	8		L. Pivacek#					
6/30	Ipswich	7		J. Berry					
Red-eyed Vireo									
5/26	Huntington	101		M. Lynch#					
5/31	Petersham	139		M. Lynch#					
5/31	P'town	15		B. Nikula					
6/8	Hinsdale	70		M. Lynch#					
6/15	Mount Greylock	63		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)					
6/28	Hawley	103		M. Lynch#					
Fish Crow									
5/6	Worcester	3		M. Lynch#					
5/22	Lawrence	250		C. Gibson					
5/25	Stoughton	75		G. d'Entremont					
Common Raven									
5/4-5/11	Chatham	2 lpr n		M. Faherty#					
5/11	N. Truro	2 lpr n		J. Dekker#					
6/5	Lexington	6 3ad+3juv n		M. Rines					
6/15	Mount Greylock	4		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)					
6/28	Hawley	5		M. Lynch#					
Horned Lark									
5/10	Duxbury B.	2		T. Kuras					
5/11	Ipswich (CB)	1		B. Burke					
5/11	Scituate	1		D. Peacock					
5/16, 5/26	Plymouth B.	5,3		L. Schibley, SSBC (G. d'Entremont)					
5/16	PI	1		S. Williams#					
5/17-6/6	Northampton	2 max		L. Therrien+v.o.					
Purple Martin									
5/8	Seekonk	18		C. Molander#					
5/27	DWWS	30		D. Haan					
5/31	Norfolk	20		L. Eyster					
6/27	PI	30		R. Heil					
Tree Swallow									
5/3	Quabbin (G8)	300		M. Lynch#					
5/4	Burrage Pd WMA	125		BBC (G. d'Entremont)					
5/10	PI	1500		T. Wetmore					
5/10	Quabog IBA	700		M. Lynch#					
5/29	Turners Falls	110		J. Smith					
Northern Rough-winged Swallow									
5/10	Quabog IBA	12		M. Lynch#					
5/11	MBO	25		E. Lipton					
5/15	Salem	25		J. Layman					
Bank Swallow									
5/3	GMNWR	14		W. Hutcheson					
5/17-5/30	MBO	25		E. Lipton + v.o.					
5/22	Dartmouth	15		M. Iliff					
5/29	Turners Falls	45		J. Smith					
6/16	Ipswich (CB)	18		I. Pepper					
Cliff Swallow									
5/3	GMNWR	16		W. Hutcheson					
5/23	Amesbury	12		P. + F. Vale					
6/1	Rowe	12		M. Lynch#					
6/15-6/16	Lenox	4		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)					
Barn Swallow									
5/2	Randolph	75		G. d'Entremont					
5/7	P'town (RP)	60		P. Flood					
6/28	Hawley	54		M. Lynch#					
Red-breasted Nuthatch									
5/1	Sharon	8		V. Zollo					
5/1	WBWS	4		G. d'Entremont					
5/5	MtA	4		R. Jilek					
5/11	PI	4		D. + T. Swain					
5/25	Winchendon	25		M. Lynch#					
6/15	Mount Greylock	3		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)					
Brown Creeper									
5/11	Wompatuck SP	4		G. d'Entremont#					
5/15	Sharon	12		M. Waters					
6/23	Freetown	11		A. Kneidel#					
House Wren									
5/11	Ipswich	9		J. Berry#					
6/2	Newbury	7		G. d'Entremont					
6/9	Berk Wren	22		M. Lynch#					
Winter Wren									
thr	1-2 birds reported from 16 locations								
5/11	Wompatuck SP	5		G. d'Entremont#					
5/31	Petersham	4		M. Lynch#					
6/15	Mount Greylock	3		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)					
6/27	Granville	5		D. Holmes					
6/28	Hawley	12		M. Lynch#					
Marsh Wren									
5/4-6/14	Bolton	20		maxJ.Bourget,N.Tepper#					
5/9	GMNWR	16		J. Stoner#					
5/27	PI	9		N. Tepper					
6/15	Lenox	4		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)					
Carolina Wren									
6/2	Taunton	8		G. d'Entremont					
6/2	Quabog IBA	5		M. Lynch#					
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher									
5/4	P'town	12		B. Nikula					
5/4	Wompatuck SP	8		BBC (G. d'Entremont)					
5/5	Medford	8		M. Rines					
5/20	Quabbin Pk	14		L. Therrien					
6/18	Ipswich	12		J. Berry#					
Golden-crowned Kinglet									
5/4	Douglas	2		N. Paulson					
5/11	New Salem	2		M. Lynch#					
6/15	Mount Greylock	2		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)					
6/16	October Mountain	4		SSBC (G. d'Entremont)					
Ruby-crowned Kinglet									
5/3-5/7	PI	35 b		B. Flemer#					
5/4	P'town	14		B. Nikula					
5/4	Petersham	6		M. Lynch#					
Eastern Bluebird									
5/20	Blackstone	4		M. Lynch#					
6/14	Ware R. IBA	9		M. Lynch#					
Veery									
5/1-5/24	PI	15 b		B. Flemer#					
5/11	Wompatuck SP	12		G. d'Entremont#					
5/27	Ware R. IBA	43		M. Lynch#					
6/18	Ipswich	19		J. Berry#					
6/23	Freetown	44		A. Kneidel#					
6/28	Hawley	43		M. Lynch#					
Gray-cheeked Thrush									
5/20	Quabbin Pk	1 au ph		L. Therrien					
5/21	Westboro	2 ph		T. Spahr					
5/25	Paxton	1 au		R. Jenkins					
5/26	MNWS	2 au		J. Smith					
5/26	PI	2 ph b		B. Flemer#					
5/29, 5/31	Marlborough	1,14 nfc		T. Spahr					
5/30, 5/31	Manomet	1,2 b		E. Lipton#					

Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush				5/4	New Salem	12	B. Lafley
5/20, 5/29	Boston (PG)	1	L. Nichols	5/7	Athol	15	S. Lachance
5/22-5/27	MtA	1	ph J. Offermann+v.o.	5/21	Woburn	24	B. Lee
5/26	Chestnut Hill	1	ph R. Doherty	Eastern Towhee			
5/29-5/30	Boston (FPk)	1	ph L. Nichols + v.o.	5/8	MBO	11	b T. Lloyd-Evans
5/31	Boston (McW)	1	D. Bates	5/18	Quabbin	37	M. Lynch#
5/31	Marlborough	2	nfc T. Spahr	5/19	Cuttyhunk I.	81	S. Williams#
6/1	Gt. Barrington	1	C. Blake	5/20	PI	50	S. Williams#
Swainson's Thrush				5/27	Ware R. IBA	37	M. Lynch#
5/11-5/31	PI	34	b B. Flemer#	6/22	MSSF	19	SSBC (N. Marchessault)
5/18	Ipswich	7	M. Brengle	Clay-colored Sparrow			
5/29	Boston (FPk)	7	S. Jones	6/7-6/28	Falmouth	1	v.o.
5/29, 5/31	MBO	17,28	b T. Lloyd-Evans	Field Sparrow			
5/30, 5/31	Marlborough	400,125	nfc T. Spahr	5/1	PI	6	T. Wetmore
5/31	Boston (McW)	7	S. Jones	5/10	Lancaster	6	M. Lynch#
Hermit Thrush				5/16	Pepperell	6	S. Miller#
5/4-5/8	PI	12	b B. Flemer#	5/28	W. Boxford	6	J. Berry#
5/25	Winchendon	21	M. Lynch#	6/19	Hanscom	34	C. Winstanley
6/16	Plymouth	13	A. Kneidel#	Vesper Sparrow			
6/23	Freetown	8	A. Kneidel#	thr	1-2 birds reported from 8 locations		
6/28	Hawley	22	M. Lynch#	5/4-6/30	Hadley	4	max M. Locher + v.o.
Wood Thrush				thr	Bolton	3	max J. Bourget, N. Tepper
5/4	P'town	2	B. Nikula	Lark Sparrow			
5/11	Wompatuck SP	9	G. d'Entremont#	4/16	N. Brookfield	1	ph D. Lusignan
5/19	Quabog IBA	26	M. Lynch#	Savannah Sparrow			
5/19	Hamilton	4	J. Berry	5/26	Nantucket	30	T. Pastuszak#
6/6	GMNWR	5	A. Bragg#	6/9	Saugus	37	L. Pivacek#
6/22	Freetown	16	J. Eckerson#	6/30	Leicester	12	M. Lynch#
Gray Catbird				Grasshopper Sparrow			
5/1-5/31	MBO	255	b T. Lloyd-Evans#	5/10-5/28	Bolton/Lancaster	5	J. Bourget + v.o.
5/4-5/31	PI	94	b B. Flemer#	5/26	Plymouth Airport	2	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)
5/18	Quabbin	44	M. Lynch#	6/2	S. Dartmouth	3	M. Molander#
5/19	Quabog IBA	111	M. Lynch#	6/7	Westboro	3	S. Arena
5/19	Cuttyhunk I.	76	S. Williams#	6/30	Falmouth	15	J. Pratt
Brown Thrasher				6/30	Rockland	3	D. Burton
thr	Indiv. reported from 5 locations			Nelson's Sparrow			
5/7	PI	5	G. d'Entremont#	5/11	PI	1	S. Benedetto
Cedar Waxwing				5/18	Westport	1	P. Champlin
5/11	Ipswich	16	J. Berry#	5/26	MBO	1	E. Lipton
5/21	P'town	110	B. Nikula	6/4	Brookline	1	ph J. Weinberg
6/7	Quabbin (G8)	17	M. Lynch#	Saltmarsh Sparrow			
American Pipit				5/22	Saugus	8	G. Wilson
5/4	Topsfield	3	M. Emmons	6/14	S. Dart. (APd)	8	R. Jilek
5/5	Concord	23	J. Forbes#	6/27	PI	71	R. Heil
5/11	Cumb. Farms	18	B. Vigorito#	6/28	Quincy	6	J. Bock
5/11	Dover	8	E. Nielsen	Lincoln's Sparrow			
5/11	PI	4	J. Offermann#	5/3-6/20	Indiv. reported from 19 locations		
Evening Grosbeak				Seaside Sparrow			
thr	1-2 birds reported from 16 locations			5/10-5/12	E. Boston (BI)	1	A. Trautmann + v.o.
5/1-5/3	Royalston	75	E. LeBlanc	6/2	S. Dart. (APd)	3	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)
5/1	Plympton	5	T. Lloyd-Evans	6/12-6/14	PI	4	T. Wetmore
5/1	Lexington (DM)	3	J. Forbes	Lincoln's Sparrow			
5/4-5/11	Wellfleet	11	J. Wagner#	5/7-5/18	PI	5	b B. Flemer#
5/8	Scituate	16	D. Peacock	5/15	Ipswich	2	M. Brengle
5/8	Ipswich	4	2m+2f J. Berry	Swamp Sparrow			
5/11	Wareham	7	L. Schibley	5/4	Burrage Pd WMA	25	V. Zollo#
5/11	Wompatuck SP	5	G. d'Entremont#	5/7	W. Newbury	12	P. + F. Vale
6/28	Hawley	9	7ad+2yg M. Lynch#	6/8	Hinsdale	16	M. Lynch#
Purple Finch				White-throated Sparrow			
5/3-5/25	PI	8	b B. Flemer#	5/1-5/13	PI	50	b B. Flemer#
5/4	PI	13	J. Johnson	5/3	New Salem	18	B. Lafley
5/5	P'town	50	P. Trimble	5/4	P'town	35	B. Nikula
5/5	HRWMA	10	T. Pirro	5/11	Ipswich (CB)	25	J. Berry#
5/8	Boston (FPk)	11	J. Young	White-crowned Sparrow			
Red Crossbill				5/5	Orange	3	L. Neely
thr	1-2 birds reported from 11 locations			5/12-5/15	Boston (McW)	2	P. Peterson
5/14-5/24	Sharon	20	max Type 10 V. Zollo+v.o.	5/16	PI	8	S. Williams
5/20-6/19	Montague	8	Type 2 D. Winkler+v.o.	5/16	W. Roxbury (MP)	2	M. Dunham
5/27	E. Bridgewater	9	S. Meuse	Dark-eyed Junco			
5/27	Westwood	8	Type 10 E. Nielsen	6/1	Hadley	3	BBC (M. Burns)
6/9	MSSF	8	Type 10 J. Trimble	6/15	Mount Greylock	8	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)
Pine Siskin				6/28	Hawley	7	M. Lynch#
5/3	Palmer	10	D. Maloney				

Yellow-breasted Chat			5/15-5/18	Northfield	1 ph	P. Gagarin
5/9	Amherst	1		5/16, 6/1-2	Medfield	1 ph E. Nielsen
5/11	Nahant	1		Lawrence's Warbler (hybrid)		
5/19-5/31	Falmouth	1		5/5-5/6	PI	1 ph D. Cooper + v.o.
Yellow-headed Blackbird				5/6	W. Newbury	1 ph P. Swartz
5/8-5/9	PI	1 m ph		5/7	Erving	1 B. Laflay
5/13	Nantucket	1 ph		5/8-5/9, 5/28	Uxbridge	1 ph N. Demers + v.o.
Bobolink				Black-and-white Warbler		
5/8-6/16	Williamstown	35 max		5/3-5/22	PI	73 b B. Flemer#
5/17	DWWS	24		5/4	Douglas	47 N. Paulson
5/26	PI	22		5/8	Medford	32 M. Rines
6/9	New Braintree	50		5/11	PI	157 J. Offermann#
6/9	Saugus	36		5/11	MBO	19 b T. Lloyd-Evans#
6/27	Ipswich	30		5/11	P'town	20 B. Nikula
thr	Hadley	52 max		6/22	Freetown	37 J. Eckerson#
Eastern Meadowlark				Prothonotary Warbler		
5/thr	Plymouth Airport	6 max		5/2	Yarmouth	1 ph P. Trimble
6/8-6/22	Amesbury	5		5/4	Nantucket	1 ph R. Siller
6/17	DWWS	4		5/20	Boston (PG)	1 ph T. Factor
Orchard Oriole				6/1	Foxborough	1 ph J. Glover#
5/7	Hamilton	11		Tennessee Warbler		
5/7	Winchester	5		5/9	MtA	5 R. Jilek
5/7	Seekonk	4		5/23	Amherst	9 L. Therrien
5/11	Ipswich (CB)	9		5/24	MBO	5 L. Schibley
5/11	Hingham	8		5/24	Westboro	5 T. Spahr
Baltimore Oriole				5/27	Medford	5 M. Rines#
5/11	PI	25		5/27	PI	4 T. Wetmore
5/18	Quabbin	47		5/31	Boston (FPK)	5 J. Young
5/21	Boston (FPK)	16		5/31	P'town	4 B. Nikula
5/27	Hamilton	14		Orange-crowned Warbler		
Brown-headed Cowbird				5/1-5/16	Indiv. reported from 11 locations	
5/10	Quabog IBA	17		5/1-5/12	MtA	2 max v.o.
Rusty Blackbird				5/11	Quincy/ Squantum	4 S. Williams#
5/3	Sharon	7		Nashville Warbler		
5/5	S. Hamilton	7		5/4	PI	7 M. Burns
Common Grackle				5/8	Medford	16 M. Rines
6/2	Quabog IBA	121		5/8	Boston (FPK)	10 J. Young
6/8	Hinsdale	31		5/9	MtA	10 C. Floyd
Ovenbird				5/16	Ware R. IBA	6 M. Lynch#
5/7-5/25	PI	24 b		Mourning Warbler		
5/8	Ipswich	66		5/16-6/28	1-2 birds reported from 38 locations	
6/15	Mount Greylock	36		5/17-5/28	Hadley	4 max T. Gilliland+v.o.
6/22	Freetown	130		5/20-5/31	PI	7 b B. Flemer#
6/28	Hawley	73		5/27	Boston (McW)	3 S. Jones
Worm-eating Warbler				5/31	Marlborough	5 nfc T. Spahr
5/5-6/30	1-2 birds reported from 23 locations			6/23	Mount Greylock	5 D. Peake-Jones
5/7-5/30	Falmouth	2 max		Kentucky Warbler		
5/8-5/16	MBO	1 b		5/1-6/17	Indiv. reported from 11 locations	
5/17	Hadley (Skinner SP)	4		Common Yellowthroat		
5/25	Milton (Blue Hills)	2		5/7-5/31	PI	300 b B. Flemer#
6/4	Sharon	3		5/17	Sandwich	26 P. Trimble#
Louisiana Waterthrush				5/26	Huntington	68 M. Lynch#
5/1-5/12	Boxford (CP)	2		5/27	Ware R. IBA	74 M. Lynch#
5/19	Quabog IBA	5		Hooded Warbler		
5/26	Huntington	6		thr	Indiv. reported from 27 locations	
5/29	Holyoke	5		5/11	Medford	2 M. Rines#
6/28	Hawley	7		5/15-6/15	Westfield	3 max 1pr J. Young + v.o.
Northern Waterthrush				5/25	Freetown SF	2 G. d'Entremont
5/4	Douglas	11		5/30-6/20	Williamstown	3 max M. Morales+v.o.
5/7-5/31	PI	36 b		American Redstart		
5/11	Wompatuck SP	10		5/7-5/31	PI	215 b B. Flemer#
5/20	Ipswich	10 m		5/15	Sharon	25 M. Waters
6/22	Freetown	12		5/17	Westboro	35 T. Spahr
Blue-winged Warbler				5/18	Quabbin	67 M. Lynch#
5/7	Seekonk	8		5/20	PI	198 S. Williams#
5/8	Concord	9		5/21	Woburn	21 M. Rines
5/17	Sandwich	5		5/28	MBO	21 b T. Lloyd-Evans#
5/20	Quabbin Pk	7		Cape May Warbler		
5/28	W. Newbury	4		5/8-6/1	1-2 birds reported from 25 locations	
6/7	Westboro	12		5/10	Easthampton	5 D. McLain
Brewster's Warbler (hybrid)				5/11	Boston (AA)	4 S. Williams#
5/7-5/27	Pepperell	1 ph		5/11	Boston (FPK)	4 S. Jones#
5/10	Longmeadow	1 ph		5/13	Westborough	9 N. Paulson

Cape May Warbler (continued)				5/4	Wompatuck SP	57	BBC (G. d'Entremont)
5/16	MtA	4	B. Lee#	5/4	P'town	50	B. Nikula
5/20	PI	12	S. Williams#	5/5	PI	75	D. Walters
5/20	Quabbin Pk	8	L. Therrien	5/5	Chestnut Hill	45	S. Spahre
Cerulean Warbler				Yellow-throated Warbler			
5/11	MtA	1 ph	N. Thakoor	5/4	P'town	1 ph	P. Trimble#
5/11	Hardwick	1 m	M. Lynch#	5/8	Chestnut Hill	1 ph	R. Doherty
5/17	Hadley (Skinner SP)4	3m+1f	G. d'Entremont#	5/21	Boston (FPk)	1 ph	G. Denton
6/9	Warwick	1	G. Watkevich	5/26-5/27	PI	1 ph	M. Waters + v.o.
Northern Parula				Prairie Warbler			
5/7-5/26	PI	41 b	B. Flemer#	5/8-5/20	PI	6	T. Wetmore + v.o.
5/11	PI	143	J. Offermann#	5/28	W. Boxford 4	3m+1f	J. Berry#
5/11	Hingham (WE)	21	M. Iliff	5/31	Petersham	8	M. Lynch#
5/15-5/16	MtA	65	B. Lee + v.o.	6/19	Hanscom	5	C. Winstanley
5/16	Medford	102	M. Rines	6/22	MSSF	17	SSBC (N. Marchessault)
5/20	Quabbin Pk	24	L. Therrien	Townsend's Warbler			
Magnolia Warbler				5/5	P'town	1 ph	P. Kyle#
5/7-5/31	PI	191 b	B. Flemer#	Black-throated Green Warbler			
5/15	Sharon	16	M. Waters	5/4	P'town	10	B. Nikula
5/16	Medford	21	M. Rines	5/8	Medford	13	M. Rines
5/17	Westboro	16	T. Spahr	5/20	PI	21	S. Williams#
5/20	PI	83	S. Williams#	5/25	Winchendon	18	M. Lynch#
5/20	Quabbin Pk	17	L. Therrien	Canada Warbler			
5/24	MBO	26 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	5/15	Longmeadow	5	J. Hutchison
Bay-breasted Warbler				5/19-5/31	PI	38 b	B. Flemer#
5/17	S. Deerfield	12	L. Moser	5/20	PI	13	S. Williams#
5/18-5/24	PI	5 b	B. Flemer#	5/20	Quabbin Pk	6	L. Therrien
5/20	PI	32	S. Williams#	5/24	Westboro	4	T. Spahr
5/22	Amherst	10	L. Therrien	5/29	MBO	7 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#
5/22	Boston (PG)	8	M. Badger	5/31	MNWS	4	J. Layman
Blackburnian Warbler				Summer Tanager			
5/18	Longmeadow	16	J. Hutchison	5/1-5/28	Indiv. reported from 19 locations		
5/20	PI	21	S. Williams#	Wilson's Warbler			
6/1	Colrain	15	M. Lynch#	5/7-5/30	PI	22 b	B. Flemer#
6/15	Mount Greylock	14	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)	5/11	Medford	3	M. Rines#
Yellow Warbler				5/17	Westboro	4	T. Spahr
5/17	Sandwich	28	P. Trimble#	5/20	PI	32	S. Williams#
5/19	Cuttyhunk I.	133	S. Williams#	5/20	Quabbin Pk	3	L. Therrien
5/19	Quabog IBA	40	M. Lynch#	5/22	Boston (PG)	3	M. Badger
5/20	PI	115	S. Williams#	5/31	Marlborough	3 nfc	T. Spahr
Chestnut-sided Warbler				Scarlet Tanager			
5/20	PI	32	S. Williams#	5/17	Hadley (Skinner SP)	12	G. d'Entremont#
5/26	Huntington	75	M. Lynch#	5/18	Quabbin	18	M. Lynch#
5/31	Petersham	51	M. Lynch#	5/27	Ware R. IBA	24	M. Lynch#
6/15	Mount Greylock	14	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)	6/28	Hawley	16	M. Lynch#
6/28	Hawley	36	M. Lynch#	Rose-breasted Grosbeak			
Blackpoll Warbler				5/7	Concord	6	T. Swain
5/17, 5/24	Westboro	13,12	T. Spahr	5/11	Medfield	9	E. Nielsen
5/20	PI	38	S. Williams#	5/15	W. Newbury	8	P. + F. Vale
5/24	Belchertown	16	L. Therrien	5/17	Hadley (Skinner SP)	8	G. d'Entremont#
5/25	Wompatuck SP	8	S. Sullivan#	5/19	Quabog IBA	22	M. Lynch#
Black-throated Blue Warbler				Blue Grosbeak			
5/4	Douglas	14	N. Paulson	5/1	Orleans	1	C. Bates#
5/7-5/22	PI	40 b	B. Flemer#	5/1-5/9	Stow	1 ph	L.Markiewicz# + v.o.
5/11	MBO	6 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	5/1	E. Bridgewater	1	J. Carlisle
5/16	Medford	21	M. Rines	5/1-5/9	DWMA	1	E. LeBlanc + v.o.
6/15	Mount Greylock	12	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)	5/9-5/11	S. Peabody	1 ph	R. Heil
Palm Warbler				5/11-6/30	Falmouth	2 max	v.o.
5/1	Westboro	10	S. Miller#	5/11	Gloucester	1	D. Pelouquin#
5/1	Wakefield	4	C. Martone	Indigo Bunting			
5/7	PI	8	T. Wetmore	5/26	Huntington	26	M. Lynch#
Palm Warbler (Western)				5/31	Petersham	16	M. Lynch#
5/4	Winthrop	1 ph	M. Iliff	6/15	Mount Greylock	7	SSBC (G. d'Entremont)
5/4	W. Yarmouth	1 ph	J.+P.Trimble,J.Offermann	Painted Bunting			
Pine Warbler				5/11	N. Truro	1 f ph	L. Waters#
5/4	P'town	25	B. Nikula	Dickcissel			
5/8	Ipswich	12	J. Berry	5/17	MBO	1	E. Lipton
5/25	Winchendon	38	M. Lynch#	5/24	P'town	1	B. Nikula
6/16	Plymouth	37	A. Kneidel				
Yellow-rumped Warbler							
5/4	Douglas	102	N. Paulson				

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

Taxonomic order is based on AOS checklist, 7th edition, 58th Supplement, as published in *Auk* 2017, vol. 134(3):751-773 (see <<http://checklist.aou.org/>>).

Locations			
AA	Arnold Arboretum, Boston	PG	Public Garden, Boston
ABC	Allen Bird Club	PI	Plum Island
AP	Andrews Point, Rockport	Pk	Park
APd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth	Pont.	Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro
AthBC	Athol Bird Club	POP	Point of Pines, Revere
B.	Beach	PR	Pinnacle Rock, Malden
Barre FD	Barre Falls Dam	P'town	Provincetown
BBC	Brookline Bird Club	R.	River
BHI	Boston Harbor Islands	Res.	Reservoir
BI	Belle Isle, E. Boston	RKG	Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston
BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester	RP	Race Point, Provincetown
BNC	Boston Nature Center, Mattapan	SB	South Beach, Chatham
BR	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	SN	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
BRI Co. seas	Bristol County, offshore	SP	State Park
Cambr.	Cambridge	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
CB	Crane Beach, Ipswich	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club	TASL	Take A Second Look, Boston Harbor Census
CGB	Coast Guard Beach, Eastham	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis	WE	World's End, Hingham
CP	Crooked Pond, Boxford	WMA	Wildlife Management Area
Cumb. Farms	Cumberland Farms, Middleboro	WMWS	Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary
DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary	Wompatuck SP	Hingham, Cohasset, Scituate, Norwell
DM	Dunback Meadow	Worc.	Worcester
DWMA	Delaney WMA, Stow, Bolton, Harvard	WSF	Willowdale State Forest, Ipswich
DWWS	Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary		
EP	Eastern Point, Gloucester	Other Abbreviations	
FE	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	*	first state record (pending MARC review)
FH	Fort Hill, Eastham	!	subject to MARC review
FP	Fresh Pond, Cambridge	ad	adult
FPk	Franklin Park, Boston	au	heard / recorded
G#	Gate #, Quabbin Res.	b	banded
GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge	br	breeding
H.	Harbor	cy	cycle (3cy = 3rd cycle)
HCB	Herring Cove Beach, Provincetown	d	dead
HP	Horn Pond, Woburn	dk	dark (morph)
HPt	Halibut Point, Rockport	f	female
HRWMA	High Ridge WMA, Gardner	fl	fledgling
I.	Island	imm	immature
IBA	Important Bird Area	inj	injured
IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary	juv	juvenile
JBBC	Joint Base Cape Cod	lt	light (morph)
L.	Ledge	m	male
MAS	Mass Audubon	MARC	Massachusetts Avian Records Committee
MBO	Bird Observatory, Manomet	max	maximum
MBWMA	Martin Burns WMA, Newbury	migr	migrating
McW	McLaughlin Woods	n	nesting
MI	Morris Island	nfc	nocturnal flight call
MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary	ph	photographed
MP	Millennium Park, W. Roxbury	pl	plumage
MSSF	Myles Standish State Forest, Plymouth	pr	pair
MtA	Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambr.	r	rescued
MV	Martha's Vineyard	S	summer (1S = first summer)
NAC	Nine Acre Corner, Concord	subad	subadult
Nbpt	Newburyport	v.o.	various observers
ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge	W	winter (2W = second winter)
Pd	Pond	yg	young
		#	additional observers

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO *BIRD OBSERVER*

Sightings for any given month should be reported to Bird Observer by the eighth of the following month. Reports should include: name and phone number of observer, name of species, date of sighting, location, number of birds, other observer(s), and information on age, sex, and morph (where relevant). Reports can be emailed to sightings@birdobserver.org or submitted online at <<http://www.birdobserver.org/Contact-Us/Submit-Sightings>>, or sent by mail to Bird Sightings, Robert H. Stymeist, 36 Lewis Avenue, Arlington MA 02474-3206.

Species on the Review List of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, as well as species unusual as to place, time, or known nesting status in Massachusetts, should be reported promptly to the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, c/o Sean Williams, 18 Parkman Street, Westborough MA 01581, or by email to seanbirder@gmail.com.

BYGONE BIRDS

Historical Highlights for May–June

Neil Hayward

5 YEARS AGO



May–June 2014

A **Eurasian Collared-Dove** was found on Nantucket during the Mass Audubon Bird-a-thon, May 16-17, and a **White-winged Dove** was on Crane Beach, Ipswich on June 27. A **Yellow-nosed Albatross** was spotted by the naturalist aboard the Seven Seas whalewatch boat, just seven miles off Gloucester. At the end of June a pelagic trip to Hydrographer Canyon reported eight **Audubon's Shearwaters**, two **White-faced Storm-Petrels**, and a **South Polar Skua**. Rare shorebirds included **Wilson's Plover**, which was recorded in three locations in May, a **Black-necked Stilt** at Plum Island and in the Rowley area between May 28–June 4, an **American Avocet** at Plum Island and Ipswich for most of June, and a **Ruff** at Plum Island, May 20–22. A **Franklin's Gull** was photographed at Plymouth Beach on June 10, and a **Little Egret** was on Nantucket on May 17 and nearby Tuckernuck Island on May 19. A **Swainson's Hawk** was photographed migrating north over Plum Island on May 3. The following day a **Swallow-tailed Kite** was seen flying over Cohasset. The best of the passerine rarities was a **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** at Mount Auburn Cemetery, May 13–14.

Best sighting: **Fea's Petrel**, Stellwagen Bank, June 25. This bird, photographed on a whalewatch cruise, was a first record for Massachusetts.

10 YEARS AGO



May–June 2009

A **Purple Gallinule** was photographed on Nantucket in June. Shorebird highlights included **Black-necked Stilts** at three locations, an **American Avocet** at Rowley on May 20, and a **Curlew Sandpiper** at Duxbury Beach on May 24. A weather system in mid-June brought rare pelagic species within sight of land-based birders; **South Polar Skuas** were recorded from Rockport and Tuckernuck Island, a **Black-capped Petrel** was seen off Race Point in Provincetown on June 23, and an **Audubon's Shearwater** was seen the same day off Nantucket. Nantucket also hosted an unlikely **Black-**

backed Woodpecker between May 8–17. Three **Swallow-tailed Kites** in Brewster on May 10 represented the first time multiple individuals of this species had been seen together in the state. An adult **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** was a one-day wonder on Nantucket, May 7.

Best sighting: a singing male **Henslow's Sparrow**, Montague, June 27. This was the first potential breeder since a pair successfully bred in Lincoln in 1994.

20 YEARS AGO

May–June 1999



Single **Ruffs** were one-day wonders in Newburyport and East Boston in May. **Mississippi** and **Swallow-tailed kites** passed over the Truro hawkwatch on June 5 and 6, respectively. Two **Scissor-tailed Flycatchers** were found on May 31, on Nantucket and at Turners Falls Airport. A Philadelphia Vireo at Oxbow NWR in Harvard was singing on territory throughout June, and a Fish Crow at Oak Bluffs may have been a first record for Martha's Vineyard. A **Townsend's Warbler** was found in Provincetown on May 10.

Best sighting: a breeding-plumage **Red-necked Stint** at Plum Island, June 26–29. This was the fourth record for the state after the first in 1980.

40 YEARS AGO

May–June 1979



Highlights on Monomoy included three **Gull-billed Terns** on May 28, a **Sabine's Gull** on June 1 and a state high count of over 800 "portlandica" (immature) Arctic Terns. A **White Ibis** was found at Plum Island on June 29. A **Mississippi Kite** was in Chatham on June 1, and a well-watched subadult **Golden Eagle** was present in the Wellfleet area between June 14–21. **Red-headed Woodpeckers** nested in Lynn Woods and two **Black-backed Woodpeckers** were found on the same day—May 8—in Gloucester and South Easton. A **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** was photographed at Fort Hill, Eastham on June 17 and an **Audubon's Warbler** was reported from Mount Auburn Cemetery on May 17.

Best date: May 31 when a **Long-billed Curlew** was found on Monomoy and a **Magnificent Frigatebird** was discovered at Penikese Island. 🐦

ABOUT THE COVER

Brant

The Brant (*Branta bernicla*) is a goose that breeds in the low and high Arctic, migrates long distances, and winters primarily in coastal areas throughout the Northern Hemisphere. It is a relatively small dark goose with a short neck and a small bill and head. It has a distinctive black head, neck, and breast. The neck is highlighted by a series of white striations that form an incomplete necklace in eastern populations. The wings are grayish brown except for black primaries. Belly color varies from light gray to black in different subspecies. In lighter birds, the flanks are darkly streaked. Males are on average larger than females and young birds resemble adults, however they lack the white neck striations and have prominent white feather edgings to the wing coverts. The lack of a white cheek and throat patch separates Brant from the larger Canada Goose.

The Brant is divided into three subspecies, *B. b. bernicla*, *B. b. hrota*, and *B. b. nigricans*, although some researchers lump *bernicla* and *hrota* into one species and separate *nigricans* into a second. The taxonomy of this group requires further resolution. Subspecies *hrota* includes the light-bellied Brant that breed in the low to high Arctic of Canada and in northern Greenland; they winter along the East Coast of the United States and as far east as Ireland. Subspecies *bernicla* is dark bellied, breeds in the Russian Arctic, and winters in Western Europe. Subspecies *nigricans*, which is often referred to as the “Black Brant,” has a black belly, breeds in the Arctic of western Canada and Alaska to Russia, and winters from southern Alaska in coastal patches south to Baja California and northwestern Mexico. Coastal wintering areas are generally distinguished by the presence of sea grasses (e.g., eel grass) and marine algae (e.g., sea lettuce).

In Massachusetts, the Brant is considered a locally abundant winter resident and migrant. They leave their Arctic breeding grounds in early September and form large flocks in staging areas in James Bay, Canada. There, they fatten up for their long nonstop flights to their East Coast wintering grounds, typically arriving each year in November and December. They head back to their breeding grounds in April and May. Brant numbers in Massachusetts decreased from the thousands in 1930 to less than a hundred a few years later, following an eel grass blight in 1931 that functionally eliminated their main food supply. They have steadily increased in numbers since then.

Brant are generally monogamous and usually mate for life. However, extra-pair copulations are not uncommon. They breed at two to four years of age. Both males and females utter a guttural *cronk*. Males are aggressive during territorial establishment and pairs will chase intruders. Both sexes use a threat posture—head held forward and low and bill open—and defend the area around their nest. On staging and wintering grounds, pairs may defend a feeding territory. Goslings stay with their parents through winter and spring. In nonbreeding season, Brant are gregarious, sometimes forming flocks of several thousand birds. Brant generally do not form mixed-species flocks but

may form nesting colonies with other species including gulls, and surprisingly, Snowy Owls.

In the low Arctic, Brant nest in colonies at the upper edge of salt marshes, often on islands, ponds, or deltas. The nests are usually exposed and in short grass. In the high Arctic Brant nesting is more dispersed along river valleys, lakes, and braided streams. Brant are colony-site faithful and sometimes return to the same nest site. The female constructs the nest of grass and other vegetation, which she forms with her breast and feet. Enough vegetation is included to allow covering the eggs when she leaves the nest. The nest is lined with down. Only the female develops a brood patch, and she alone incubates the usual clutch of three to four buff or creamy white eggs tinged olive for the 23–24 days until hatching. Both parents defend their nest against predators, including foxes, and they regularly chase off marauding gulls, ravens, and jaegers. The young are precocial with eyes open at hatching, and they are covered in down. By the end of their first day, they can leave the nest, walk, swim, and feed. The parents accompany the goslings away from the nest and the female broods them for the first two weeks. The young can fly in about six weeks and eventually the young accompany the parents to the staging and wintering areas.

Brant forage along inter-tidal mud flats feeding on eel grass, green algae, and intertidal salt marsh plants. In some wintering areas they also graze upland grasslands, including golf courses and athletic fields. They forage while walking or by dipping or tipping up while swimming. Their diet varies among seasons. Brant have well-developed salt glands and thus can drink salt water, although they generally prefer fresh water.

Brant may experience nesting failure due to extreme spring weather events, flood tides, or nest predation by gulls and jaegers. Adults and young are subject to predation by Snowy Owls, foxes, wolverines, coyotes, and grizzly and polar bears. Human intervention is a major factor in affecting population size. In Alaska, gathering of eggs and flightless Brant by Yupik people is historically important, as is spring and summer hunting by the Cree in James and Hudson bays. Large numbers of Brant are killed in fall hunting on both coasts of the United States. Industrialization has also reduced eel grass communities. The numbers of Brant wintering on both United States coasts declined during the second half of the 20th century, but cooperative management plans involving the United States, Canada, and Mexico have helped stabilize the populations, although there are substantial fluctuations from year to year. This provides some hope that this delightful little goose will winter along our coasts indefinitely. 🦆

William E. Davis, Jr.

AT A GLANCE

August 2019



WAYNE R. PETERSEN

This issue's mystery species features a songbird with a streaked (or possibly spotted) breast, a speckled throat, a prominent supercilium (stripe over the eye), a solid brown cap and back, and a sharp pointed bill. Among the most likely identification possibilities for this mystery species are American Pipit, some kind of warbler, or possibly a sparrow, although the sharp pointed bill is not that of seedeater like a sparrow, so the best bet is probably an American Pipit or a warbler.

Despite a superficial resemblance to a pipit, the mystery species can readily be eliminated as a pipit by its obviously speckled throat, bold whitish supercilium extending in front of the eye to the base of the bill, dark solid back color, and no hint of wing-bars. With a pipit as an unlikely candidate, a warbler is the most likely possibility.

One of the ways that warblers can be separated into groups is to consider those with streaked or spotted underparts and those with plain or unmarked underparts. Assuming that the mystery species is a warbler, then clearly it fits into the group with streaked or spotted underparts. Given that the mystery image lacks obvious wing-bars, the identification options are limited to only two or three possibilities: Ovenbird, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Northern Waterthrush. Ovenbird can readily be eliminated because Ovenbirds lack a broad white supercilium and a spotted throat, and they have a rusty orange crown patch and a bold white eye ring. This leaves the identification of the mystery warbler as a choice between Louisiana Waterthrush and Northern Waterthrush.

Although the two waterthrush species are unlike other warblers in some ways, separation of the two species is often not straightforward. The Louisiana Waterthrush has a broader and wider white supercilium than the Northern species, along with an

unspotted white throat, generally wider and less dense streaking on its breast, and a whiter basal coloration to its underparts. By contrast, Northern Waterthrushes typically have a narrower supercilium than Louisianas, and the supercilium typically narrows behind the eye, unlike the bolder and longer white stripe of a Louisiana Waterthrush, which typically widens behind the eye. Additionally, Northern Waterthrushes have a denser necklace of breast streaks than Louisianas, and when observed at close range the basal coloration of their underparts and the eye stripe coloration of a Northern Waterthrush is often yellowish instead of pure white, although this feature is sometimes variable. Collectively, these features identify the pictured mystery warbler as a Northern Waterthrush (*Parkesia noveboracensis*).

In addition to the plumage features described above, the two waterthrush species can readily be distinguished by their distinctive songs, and during the breeding season the Northern's preference for bogs and swampy forests with standing water versus the Louisiana's affinity for more upland stream sides and running water are helpful indicators of which species is which.

In Massachusetts the Northern Waterthrush is a fairly common spring and fall migrant inland and along the coast, with breeding residents arriving in late April, usually a little later than breeding Louisiana Waterthrushes. In fall Northern Waterthrushes are on the move by mid-August, and most have left Massachusetts by the end of September.

The author photographed this Northern Waterthrush on May 21, 2008, at the bird banding station on Plum Island, Massachusetts. 🐦

Wayne R. Petersen

ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST

Barry Van Dusen

An artist who has created many of our covers, Barry Van Dusen lives in Princeton, Massachusetts, and is well known in the birding world. Barry has illustrated several nature books and pocket guides, and his articles and paintings have been featured in *Birding*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, and *Yankee Magazine* as well as *Bird Observer*. Barry's interest in nature subjects began in 1982 with an association with the Massachusetts Audubon Society. He has been influenced by the work of European wildlife artists and has adopted their methodology of direct field sketching. Barry teaches workshops at various locations in Massachusetts. For more information, visit Barry's website at <http://www.barryvandusen.com>. 🐦

Erratum: Due to a production error, the August 2019 print edition of Bird Observer failed to name Sandy Selesky in the Table of Contents and in the article header as the photographer of the Piping Plover Photo Essay.



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AT A GLANCE



WAYNE R. PETERSEN

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

MORE HOT BIRDS

Adolfo Cuadra photographed a **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** at Quaboag Pond on August 23, but did not recognize the species at first. Once he did, he quickly spread word of his sighting via FaceBook and eBird. Fortunately, the bird stuck around for a few days after that and put on a show. It was the only review-list species in its time period to show up a significant distance inland, rather than at a coastal location. Adolfo took the photo on the right.



Hurricane Dorian apparently pushed a number of terns north of their usual haunts, including **Gull-billed**. Steve Grinley and Margo Goetschkes filed the first sighting, from Ipswich on September 11. The following day, Nick Tepper was chasing a reported Royal Tern on Plum Island, and found both it and a rarer Gull-billed. Once the weekend began and birders gathered at Plum Island, the increased number of observers confirmed that at least **two** Gull-billed were on the island, and that the Common Ringed-Plover was still around as well! Andy Sanford took the photo on the left.



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