

Bird Observer

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HOT BIRDS

As Hurricane Irene was blowing through Nantucket on August 29, Vern Laux found a **Band-rumped Storm-Petrel** (right) floundering on a dirt road on the island. He kept it overnight and released it the following day, and took this photograph as the bird flew off.



Ben Flemer was banding birds at the Joppa Flats Banding Station on Plum Island on September 4, when he extracted a vireo from the net that was way off the charts. After careful measurements and examination, he and his team confirmed it as a **Yellow-green Vireo** (left; photograph by Ben; see page 279).

Joyce Van Vorst was on her way to work on Nantucket on September 19 when she spotted a **Northern Wheatear** (right) on Polpis Road. She got the word out and Vern Laux digiscoped the bird.



On October 8, Ryan Schain, Jeff Offerman, and Ian Davies visited Cuttyhunk Island and found a juvenile **Purple Gallinule** (left) which Ryan photographed.

Brian Harris spotted this **Lark Bunting** (right) on Good Harbor Beach in Gloucester on October 8. It was still there the next day when Erik Nielsen took this photograph



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AMERICAN COOTS BY DAVID LARSON

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Bird Observer

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Bare Meadow Conservation Area, Reading, Massachusetts

Dave Williams

Background

The Bare Meadow Conservation Area is a 125-acre site located in the northeast area of Reading and is protected by Conservation Commission jurisdiction. It is abutted on the north by Fairbanks Marsh (32 acres), owned by the Reading Open Land Trust, and on the east by the North Cedar Swamp (429 acres). These swamps provide flood control, groundwater supply, and wildlife habitat.

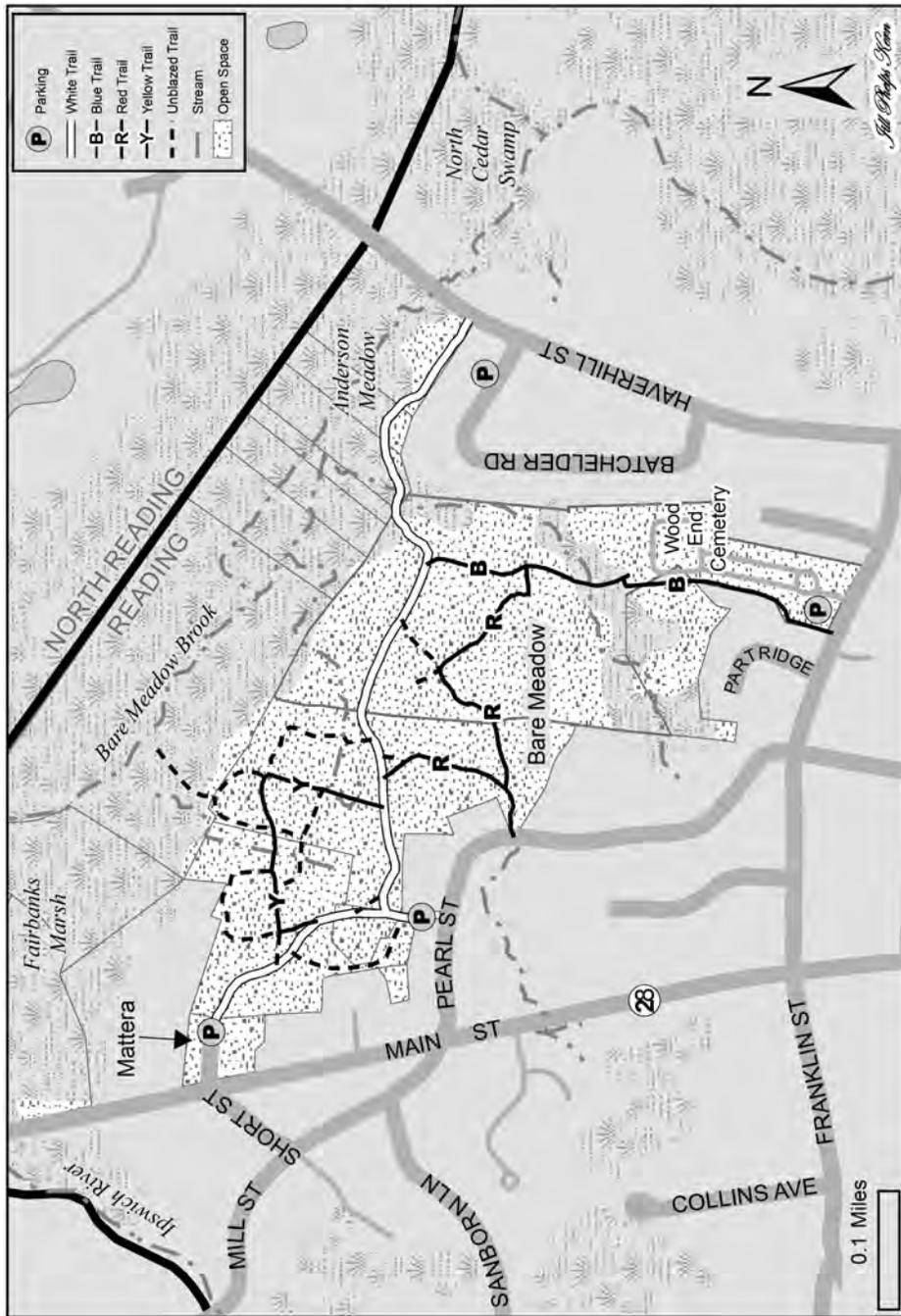


Bare Meadow includes a wonderful variety of terrain and plant communities. At the western end are two small open meadows with long grasses and the remnants of an apple orchard. In the center are beautiful wooded areas of primarily white pine and red and white oak with a network of trails. The topography is fairly flat, with a few small knolls. Glacial erratics (boulders) are common, especially on and near these hills. Many stone walls mark earlier farming uses of this land. In 2007, the Town of Reading acquired the Mattera Cabin and the land surrounding it. This acquisition provided additional off-street parking and access to Bare Meadow.

Bare Meadow Brook flows through red maple swamps and open marshes on the northeastern side and joins the Ipswich River at the northern end of the conservation lands. There are six certified vernal pools in Bare Meadow. Many plant species can be found here including Atlantic white cedar, lady's slippers, partridgeberry, marsh marigold, prince's pine, cardinal flower, trout lily, witch-hazel, trillium, maple-leaf viburnum, and many types of ferns and club mosses. Wildlife is plentiful. Mammals include white-tailed deer, red fox, coyote, raccoon, and eastern cottontail.

The Town of Reading has an active Trails Committee, which has made many recent improvements to Bare Meadow. These include the construction of a handicapped-accessible trail running approximately 150 yards from the parking lot at the Mattera cabin to a new viewing platform constructed at the highest point overlooking the meadow. In addition, the trails have been cleared and improved with new blazes, boardwalks, signage, and maps.

There are four entrances to Bare Meadow, all marked by large brown signs. The two primary entrances are off Pearl Street next to #717 and at the Mattera Cabin at 1481 North Main Street. Both have ample off-street parking. The third is off Haverhill Street north of Batchelder Road. Parking is available on Batchelder Road. The fourth is off Franklin Street next to the Wood End cemetery. Parking is available in the cemetery and on Partridge Road.



The Trails

When planning a walk, please note the following distances. All distances are one-way: white trail 0.8 mile, blue trail 0.4 mile, red trail 0.4 mile, and yellow trail 0.3 mile.

Starting at the Mattera Cabin property on Main Street (Route 28), park in the lot and scan the area. Eastern Phoebes nest here under the eaves of the cabin. Broad-winged Hawks nest in the vicinity; in the spring of 2011, they nested in a white pine next door to the cabin. The white pines here in the parking area always have Pine Warblers in early spring. Opposite the cabin are gardens and a grape arbor, and both are worth checking out.

At the end of the parking area you will see the beginning of the handicapped-accessible trail, blazed in white. The white trail is the main trail through Bare Meadow with clearly-marked spurs off of it. As you work your way along this trail, watch and listen for the seasonal birds of a mixed deciduous woodland. At the end of this 150-yard trail segment, you will come to the head of Bare Meadow and a viewing platform. There are half a dozen bluebird boxes in this meadow. Eastern Bluebirds have nested here as well as Tree Swallows, House Wrens, and House Sparrows. This is the highest point of the meadow and many birds can be seen and heard from here. Also in the spring, be on the lookout for the courtship flight of the Ruby-throated Hummingbird here in the meadow.

This is a favorite spot to observe warblers migrating in the spring. They'll be in the oaks and maples that surround the meadow as well as in the copse that separates the two meadows. Off to your right is an unblazed trail that heads towards a home. This short trail is often very productive. The home owner whose property you'll be close to has feeders and they are worth a look in the winter. This trail circles the previously-mentioned copse and can be very birdy during migration. During the winter, this is a good spot to see Red-breasted Nuthatches and Pine Siskins if they are about.

One of the highlights of the meadow is the American Woodcock. These birds have nested here for many years, and this is a wonderful place to observe their



Bare Meadow as seen from the viewing platform, photograph by the author.



Scanning the meadow from the viewing platform, photograph by the author.

courtship flight. On an early March evening at dusk, you may see and hear several woodcocks displaying over the two adjacent meadows. As you wait for the display, you may see Wood Ducks and Mallards fly into the marsh for the night as well as flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles.

An enjoyable way to bird here is to sit on one of the benches on the platform and let the birds come to you. Sitting here offers a good opportunity to see fly-over birds including gulls, Turkey Vultures, hawks, and others. Common Nighthawks have also been seen here occasionally in the fall.

Leaving the viewing platform, head down the hill toward the signpost and turn right onto the yellow trail, which soon merges with the white trail. Follow this trail into the adjoining meadow. You will then pass through a gap in the rock wall and into the next meadow. (As mentioned earlier in the article, there are two small, adjoining meadows.) Stop here and listen and look. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Baltimore Orioles, Carolina Wrens, American Goldfinches, and many other species can be found in and around the meadows. Depending on the season, this is also a good spot for sparrows, including White-throated, Tree, Song, and Chipping sparrows. Soon you will see the Pearl Street parking lot in front of you. Scan the trees surrounding this parking lot, especially the dead ones. Hairy and Downy woodpeckers as well as Northern Flickers frequent these dead trees. Red-bellied Woodpeckers have nested across the street and also frequent this area, as do Great Crested Flycatchers.

Turn left and continue on the white trail into the woods. You will pass through thickets on both sides of the trail and some judicious pishing can often pull birds out of them. Several of the homes along the right side of the trail have bird feeders that are worth a quick peek.

You will soon see the yellow trail bear off to the left and then the red trail bear off to the right. Both of these trails are enjoyable and productive. But for now continue straight on the white trail, listening and looking for Ovenbird, Black-throated Green Warbler, Hermit and Wood thrushes, Scarlet Tanager, and other spring migrants. This trail is also a good place to see Brown Creepers. During December and January, there is a good chance of seeing or hearing a Great Horned Owl along this trail. They have nested in and around Bare Meadow for the past several years.

After you pass the junction for the red trail, you will see a vernal pool off to your left and an unblazed trail that travels by it. This unblazed trail will take you to the yellow trail loop and back to the meadow. During the spring and fall migration, this trail can be productive. Winter Wrens have been recorded here during several Christmas Bird Counts. Veeries are heard here in the spring and Barred Owls at various seasons.

Continue straight on the white trail. There will be a mixed-forest upland on your right and a classic woodland swamp on your left. You will see a few Atlantic white cedars in here. Downy, Hairy, and Red-bellied woodpeckers as well as Northern Flickers can be seen along this trail. Continue along the white trail past the junction of the blue trail. The area will become wetter but the trail has been recently improved

and a new boardwalk built that spans a seasonal stream. This stretch from the boardwalk to Haverhill Street can be very enjoyable during all seasons. Anderson Meadow, with Bare Meadow Brook passing through it, offers excellent habitat for birds year-round.

As you return along the white trail, turn left onto the blue trail. The first part of this trail will bring you through primarily white pines, with several hemlock groves on your left. When you reach the junction for the red trail on your right, continue straight and enter into wetlands. You will cross over a boardwalk that spans a seasonal stream. This area can hold many migrants in spring and fall, especially the part of the trail that parallels the Wood End Cemetery. Woodcocks display over the cemetery in the spring as well.

As you return along the blue trail, turn left onto the red trail. You will go up an incline and then wind your way along the trail. In winter, this is a good place to look and listen for Great Horned Owls. Screech and Barred owls have been seen and heard in this area over the years as well. In addition, you can usually come across a roving flock of winter birds such as White-breasted Nuthatches, Tufted Titmice, Black-capped Chickadees, Downy and Hairy woodpeckers, and Golden-crowned Kinglets. You will pass by several old witch-hazel trees and then the trail will turn sharply left. Continue on and then make a sharp right turn, staying on the red trail. You will soon arrive back at the white trail.

Turn left onto the white trail, and then make a quick right onto the yellow trail. Check the trees on both sides of this trail for warblers in the spring. Hermit Thrushes and Ovenbirds frequent this area. As you walk along this section, you will notice how extensive the overhead canopy is. Carefully scanning these treetops can be very productive. The yellow trail will take a sharp turn to the left. In front of you, you will notice an unblazed trail. If you'd like to do some "off-trail" birding, this trail might be for you. It will eventually bring you to Bare Meadow Brook, but be forewarned, this track is rough and wet. Continuing on the yellow trail will bring you to a short boardwalk that takes you over another seasonal stream. During spring migration when this stream holds water, this area can be alive with birds. Follow the yellow trail back into the meadow and then back to the parking lot at the Mattera Cabin.



Informational kiosk at the beginning of the yellow trail, photograph by Mary Williams.

If you enjoy birding while cross-country skiing or snowshoeing, Bare Meadow is a wonderful place. Not only can you ski or snowshoe along the well-marked trails, but you can bushwhack out into Fairbanks Marsh if there is enough snow. You can ski or snowshoe through the marsh, paralleling Bare Meadow Brook, and into Anderson

Meadow. Caution should be taken, as the marsh ice is not solid and the skiing or snowshoeing through a marsh can be unpredictable.

Getting there

From Interstate 93, take the Concord Street exit, # 39. Go 1.8 miles east. Concord Street merges into Park Street, and shortly after, Park Street will come to Route 28. Turn right and the entrance to the Mattera Conservation Area (Bare Meadow) will be 0.2 mile on your left.

From Route 128 (Interstate 95), take exit 38B and travel along Route 28N through Reading for 3.8 miles. The same entrance will be on your right as you start down a hill. 🦋

Dave Williams is a middle-school science teacher who has lived and birded in Reading for more than 30 years. He is an active member of the Town of Reading Trails Committee. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Ipswich River Watershed Association and has served on the IRWA Reading/ North Reading Stream Team for 16 years.

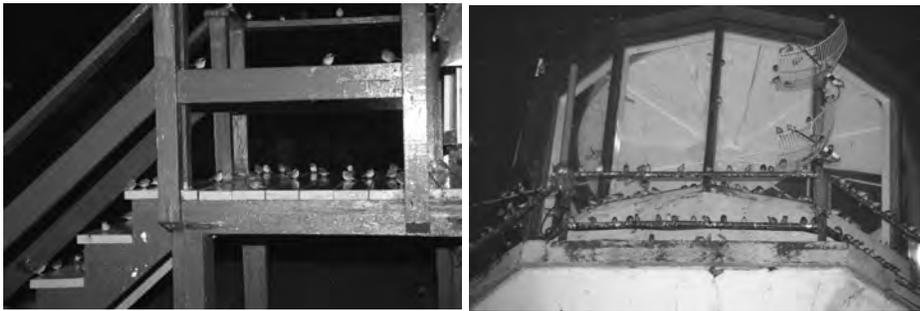


WILD TURKEY IN TREE WITH BERRIES BY SANDY SELESKY

The Warden of Machias Seal Island: A Lighthouse Keeper's View of Birds in a Disputed Land

John Galluzzo

On May 25, 2011, Canadian lighthouse keeper Ralph Eldridge raised eyebrows and even dropped a few jaws. Lucky to be positioned in the right place at the right time, that exact spot where all birders want to be, he was able to witness a major warbler migration fallout on Machias Seal Island on May 24. During a spring storm hundreds of birds dove desperately for the jumble of rocks off the coast of Jonesport, Maine. His photographs, posted on Mainebirds.net and later forwarded to subscribers of the Massbird listserv, showed dozens of individual birds of numerous species clinging to the lighthouse's window ledges, perching on fence rails, and finding any available space on the ground. Some, he noted in his brief posting to [Mainebirds](http://Mainebirds.net), grasped onto his beard and clothing.



Photographs of the fallout of Neotropical migrant birds on Machias Seal Island on May 24, 2011, taken by Ralph Eldridge.

It wasn't the first time Ralph Eldridge had witnessed this phenomenon on Machias Seal Island, known to many New England birders for its alclids rather than its songbirds. When he's on the island, Eldridge is the guy who gives birders an orientation for use of the blinds. Dealing with songbird fallouts is not in his job description; it's a role he's taken on himself. Migration is a big thing on the island.

"You can't take the trees with you," he said one sunny day on the island in the summer of 2011, as he noted the scarcity of regular food sources on some of the smaller islands of the Maine coast. "I've had Ovenbirds running over my feet. Where else are they going to feed?" Peregrine Falcons, eagles, kestrels, and Ospreys all use the island as a stopping point. Despite the absence of trees on the island, flickers and sapsuckers land here as well.

The big fallout moments come when weather conditions cause the birds to make a plunge for solid ground. "All it takes is contrary winds," he said. "It doesn't necessarily have to be a storm, just anything that's going to cause them to expend a lot of energy. What do you do when your gas tank is empty?" Fog and rain can



Machias Seal Island by David Larson

compound the problem, and exhaustion will even cause the birds to land on boats far at sea. At times, the water around the island is littered with dead songbirds.

When it comes to the vagaries of songbird migration along the coastal islands of Maine and New Brunswick, part of the Songbird Superhighway, Eldridge subscribes to the well-known designation of the three types of stopping points: five-star hotels, convenience

stores, and fire escapes. (See “Faculty Highlights: Songbird Superhighway,” <<http://nsfa.umaine.edu/faculty-research/songbird-superhighway/>>.) He adds his own twist to these categories. Instead of five-star hotels, he sees the larger islands of Atlantic Canada as supermarkets for songbirds. Smaller islands, his included, he sees as the convenience stores. And while other birders consider the smallest islands as the fire escapes, he considers boats at sea for that role, emergency stopping points for reorientation and rest.

But Machias Seal Island isn't all about rough weather. It's pretty temperate, actually. “Take the Boston weather report, and we get that a day or so later,” he said. Following the weather reports can lead to a wealth of bird sighting opportunities on the island. Despite his position in the high-speed lane of the Songbird Superhighway, however, Eldridge does not always keep his eyes on the traffic; that is not necessarily the first thing on Eldridge's mind each morning. He claims that he is “a bad birder, I don't keep lists,” he said. Once he told the author, “you could put a flamingo down at the other end of the island, and I wouldn't leave the house to go and see it. There are some things I've taken a little more interest in, just out of curiosity. Shorebirds I've learned . . . by osmosis.”

Eldridge has also kept his eye on the Arctic Tern colony on the island. When asked how long it's been since the terns went away, he becomes demonstrative,



Arctic Tern incubating on Machias Seal Island. Photograph by David Larson.

shaking his head. “They never left,” he said. “It's a misconception.” The birds still return to the island each year, he said, but their nesting success rate has diminished. In the past, Eldridge pointed out, nest failure rates were 10 percent, 20 percent. Now they're 100 percent. Nesting, however, does take place.

“There's some egg laying, some incubation,” he said. “And there's some predation. But it's the threat of predation that's a big problem. It's like a garrison standing on full alert, all the time, due to

a constant threat. They can't spend time incubating, no more than a half an hour a day, maybe." After a few days, the nests fail, and the terns go into self-preservation mode, seeking their own sustenance and discontinuing all efforts at reproduction for the year. Great Black-backed and Herring gulls will continue to menace the community unless a solution is found. "There's been no culling [of gulls] for quite a few years," he noted.

The role of the lighthouse keeper has long been part of the story of birds along the East Coast of the United States. During his time as Assistant Secretary and later Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, Spencer Fullerton Baird utilized the help of lighthouse keepers to report not only bird sightings, but also marine mammal strandings. Around 1900, the American Ornithologists' Union requested the help of light keepers and Life-Saving Service station keepers as game wardens to watch over critical colonies of nesting birds, including those on several Maine Islands. (For more on this topic, see "Faculty Highlights: Songbird Superhighway," <<http://nsfa.umaine.edu/faculty-research/songbird-superhighway/>>.)

Ornithologists, however, no longer have access to lighthouse keepers in the maritime provinces of Canada or in the United States, save for a few locations. Staff has been removed from all Canadian lighthouses in the Northeast, except for Machias Seal Island. Maintaining a lighthouse keeper there is done "for sovereignty reasons because it is claimed by both Canada and the United States," according to the Canadian Parliament. (See "Study On Issues Relating To Federal Government's Current And Evolving Policy Framework For Managing Fisheries And Oceans. Sixth Report of Fisheries and Oceans Committee—Debate Continued." March 9, 2011. <<http://sen.parl.gc.ca/nraire/pdf/lighthouses-e.pdf>>.)

The dispute grew out of an international dispute over fishing rights on George's Bank. This was settled by the Hague in 1984 but left an eight-mile ellipse of ocean undetermined. In the 1940s, pioneer Barna Norton of Jonesport rushed out to Machias Seal Island to claim it for the United States. Norton argued that despite the presence of the Canadian lighthouse since 1830, his family had left him the island in 1865. For years he stood before an American flag on Machias Seal and reiterated his claim, "I declare this island belongs to the United States." (See "A Maine Man's War with Canada,"

<<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/1998/06/05/national/main11125.shtml>>.)

Eldridge countered by saying, "I could go to Boston and buy a piece of land, and it wouldn't become Canada." The problem, he says, will never change. Canada will keep the island's lighthouse staffed to hold onto its claim, and the United States State Department will always stand behind the Norton's claim,



Ralph Eldridge (right) explaining the rules of the island to visitors. Photograph by the author.

despite the fact that both Barna and his son John are now gone. The U.S., however, has never given financial support nor made a physical effort to back the claim.

“If I came to your house, clipped your hedges, and mowed your lawn, would you throw me out?” asked Eldridge. “It may be a chip in a trade down the line,” he pondered, but until then, life will go on.

In the meantime, Ralph Eldridge will continue as lighthouse keeper and reluctant expert on the birds of Machias Seal Island. 

John Galluzzo is the adult education and citizen science coordinator for Mass Audubon's South Shore Sanctuaries in Marshfield. He is also the author of more than 35 books on the history and nature of the Northeast. He visits Machias Seal Island once a year to introduce birders to the wonderful world of puffins.

[**Ed. note:** Following the death of John Norton, Nortons of Jonesport is no longer in operation. The only access to the island for visitors is via Bold Coast Charters (Andrew Patterson) out of Cutler, Maine <<http://www.boldcoast.com/>>.]

From Mass Wildlife: Drivers, Brake for Moose and Deer this Fall!

Because fall is the breeding season for both moose and white-tailed deer, the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) reminds motorists to be mindful of increased deer and moose activity, especially during early morning and evening hours. September and October is the peak of the breeding season for Massachusetts' small but expanding moose population in central and western Massachusetts. The breeding season (also known as “the rut”) for white-tailed deer closely follows the moose breeding season from late October through early December. Because moose have no natural predators in Massachusetts and are protected by law from hunting, these large (500-1000 lbs) members of the deer family are unconcerned as they move through populated areas. During the mating season this indifference is magnified by the “tunnel-vision” created by the urge to reproduce.

Be aware and heed “Moose and Deer Crossing” signs erected by highway departments. Motorists are advised to slow down and drive defensively should a moose or deer be spotted on or by the road. Moose are less likely to move from the road than deer; braking for moose is your best policy! Police and other departments involved in moose or deer/car collisions are reminded that while drivers are allowed by law to keep white-tailed deer they have hit, only the DFW or the Environmental Police can make decisions regarding the disposition of moose involved in vehicle collisions. All moose or deer/vehicle collisions should be reported to the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife District offices. The Environmental Police Radio Room can be reached at 1-800-632-8075.

Birding Through Vision and Hearing Challenges

Martha Steele

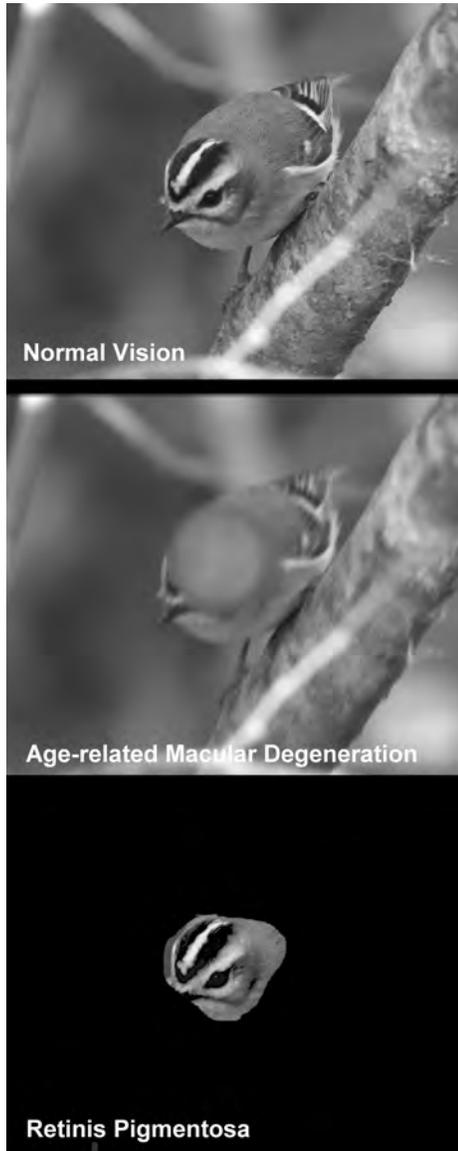
This is a personal story about my journey through stages of birding defined by progressive vision loss and hearing challenges. I have Usher syndrome, an inherited disease that combines retinitis pigmentosa (RP) and hearing loss. RP is characterized by a progression of night blindness, increasing peripheral field loss (tunnel vision), and finally central vision loss, all the result of the retina's rods and cones dying off. The rate of vision loss varies from person to person, with some individuals nearly completely blind by early adulthood while others have some functional central vision for life. Hearing loss seems to be relatively stable in Usher, although some progressive loss occurs.

I was diagnosed with severe hearing loss as a young child and have worn hearing aids since I was about four or five years old. But through my early adult years, I did not realize that I had any significant vision issue. I could not see well at night, but it seemed normal to me until a day in Colombia, South America, where I was teaching at a junior high school. Two friends noticed how often I bumped into things and wondered why. One friend spread her arms wide apart and gradually brought them closer together, asking me to stare at her face and tell her when I saw her hands out of the corners of my eyes. Her hands were practically touching before I saw them. At that point, we knew something was wrong.

When I returned to the US, I saw an ophthalmologist in my home state of Vermont. He came into the examination room after a series of tests, looked at my retina, sat back, and said, "I think you have retinitis pigmentosa. You will be blind in ten years, so I would advise that you not try to be a truck driver." Ok, bad news, really bad news (about going blind, not the truck driver part), stunning and devastating actually. That was back in 1977. I learned shortly after his blunt diagnosis that the vision loss would be much more gradual and that I could expect reasonably good central vision for many years.

Fast forward to May 1989. My friend, Martha Vaughan, was leading early morning bird walks in Mount Auburn Cemetery for anyone at our work place in Cambridge who cared to join her. I showed up for one of her walks without binoculars, of course. She had an extra pair. I have a distinct memory of Martha walking through the front gates, and immediately raising her arm to the sky and exclaiming, "A parula!" I didn't hear the parula nor any other bird, only her and other birders' excitement at all of the songs filling the early morning air. However, I saw warblers, lots of warblers, and I was hooked. I asked Martha where I could get binoculars, and I opted for 10 power Zeiss binoculars because I wanted to see as well as possible, given my vision issues.

Early in my birding avocation, I had good central vision, so I could see birds well if I managed to get binoculars on them. But I could not hear most birds due to their



Images depicting visual impairments

ability to survive, whether during migrations over thousands of miles or finding habitats sufficient for their needs. I cannot look at a Blackburnian Warbler and not say, “good luck, little fellow” or a Black-throated Blue Warbler and not marvel at its beauty. But one thing I never could enjoy was bird song. Until now.

high-pitched vocalizations because my hearing loss was particularly acute. A few species, such as Mourning Dove, have lower-pitched vocalizations that I could hear. I always marveled at the ability of birders to identify birds by sound, a totally unimaginable and unreachable experience to me.

My birding strategy was to walk behind other birders, waiting until they stopped and raised their binoculars in a certain direction to find what they heard or saw. I stood behind them, looked in the general direction they were looking, and tried to see some movement before bringing the binoculars up to my eyes.

As the years went by, this strategy worked less and less as my vision continued to decline. My peripheral field became more and more narrow, making it increasingly difficult to detect movement of small, distant birds. I tried to contain my frustration at not being able to locate a bird despite everyone’s best attempts to describe where the flitting bird was. I relied more and more on someone, most recently my husband, Bob Stymeist, getting the bird in a scope.

Today, I can’t recognize faces five feet away, never mind a dark bird on a dark branch in a dark understory 25 feet away. Going blind may be one thing for a birder, but it is even more challenging for me because I never could hear the birds either. So why do I bird? The simple answer is that the birds are extraordinarily beautiful and I am constantly profoundly moved by their

I would walk behind Bob, who barely looked up from the ground, and wonder why isn't he looking around to find birds? Suddenly, he would stop and locate what he had just heard. Or sometimes he would simply pull his notebook out, write down "CAWR," and move on, never missing a beat. I always thought that strange, though I was well aware that birding is largely by ear.

With the continuing decline in my vision, I decided to explore whether I should get a cochlear implant, not for bird songs, but to better understand speech. Hard-of-hearing people use lipreading extensively to help them understand what is being said. I can no longer see well enough to lipread, so I knew I would lose more ability to understand speech, a sort of double whammy. After a lot of research, encouragement from other cochlear implant recipients, and evaluations at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, which found me to be eligible to receive an implant, I took the plunge.

The surgery involves drilling a small hole in the mastoid bone of the skull directly behind the ear and inserting an electrode into the cochlea, or inner ear. Then, an indentation is made in the mastoid bone to set the main receiver of the implant on the skull before the incision is closed up. The external component, the processor, is like a minicomputer that can be programmed and updated with new software as technology improves. A wire extends from the behind-the-ear processor to a magnet that attaches to the internal receiver. Sound is received by the microphone in the processor, digitized, transmitted via the wire/magnet to the internal receiver, converted to electrical impulses, sent to the electrode, and the electrical impulses are then sent to the auditory nerve, which goes to the brain.

The surgery usually destroys all residual natural hearing in the implanted ear, leaving one completely deaf in that ear. So, the decision to do the implant cannot be taken lightly. There is no guarantee that one's hearing will be better after the surgery than it was before, and indeed, it may be worse. But I knew my hearing was getting worse anyway, and I knew with the declining vision, this would become more problematic with time, so the choice in the end was clear.

On April 9, 2010, I had surgery for a cochlear implant in my right ear (the left ear continues to have a hearing aid). The surgery was a day surgery. Forty-eight hours later, the bandage came off, and I was back at work in a week. On April 29, the implant was activated.

When the implant was first activated, everything sounded the same and very tinny or high-pitched. I couldn't decipher distinguishable words. It takes time and practice for the brain to learn the new sounds and for the tinny sounds to eventually become words and then sentences. Within a couple of weeks, I could understand speech vastly better than before the implant, and time would only show continuing improvement. The implant enabled me to hear, for the first time, many consonants that are high-pitched and beyond many hearing-impaired people. I could actually hear the difference between Chicago and change; tap and map; go and toe.

What I did not bargain for was BIRD SONG. I was stunned, absolutely stunned, by the fact that I was hearing birds everywhere. Not just a little, but a din of bird

song. How have you all put up with House Sparrows all your birding lives? They are so annoying! I had never heard them. How were you able to tell the difference between a Red-eyed Vireo and a Blue-headed Vireo, a Scarlet Tanager and an American Robin? To my computerized sense of hearing, these are still challenging, but I think I am getting a little better at it.

Just imagine if you could not hear bird songs, how much more difficult and perhaps less enjoyable birding would be for you. I now know how you might feel. Not long after my implant was activated, a Kentucky Warbler showed up at a small park near Boston College in Chestnut Hill. Bob and I went over to try to see it in the early evening hours on a weeknight. We were alone in a small oasis of dense vegetation, tall trees, small ponds, and thick underbrush looking for the bird. Then it started singing. The song echoed in the forest, sublime, melodic, and all encompassing. I couldn't move. I didn't care to see the bird. I only wanted to stand there, close my eyes, and listen. For those of you who know me, you can probably guess what happened next. Yes, I cried. Birds, especially the little songbirds, have a tendency to move me to my core, but the added dimension of hearing them left me feeling overwhelmed with joy.

Since then, Bob and I have gone on many walks as I try to learn the songs with this bionic ear. I am hearing songs while the car is moving at 40 miles per hour; I am hearing them from some distances; I am hearing them when songs are on top of each other; and I am hearing songs that some of you, because of age, perhaps can no longer hear, such as the Brown Creeper, Blackpoll Warbler, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, or Golden-crowned Kinglet. Every time I hear a Northern Parula, I am reminded of that first image of Martha raising her arm to the sky, as I, too, raise my arm and, for good measure, do a little hop, to give body language to the song's rising *zeeee-up!*

In June 2010, Bob and I visited Ed Neumuth in Washington, Massachusetts, for a wonderful visit and day of birding at October Mountain. We got up at 5:00 a.m. and Ed was the expert guide for a tally of 76 species, including Mourning Warbler, which I caught a brief glimpse of. But what I most remember about that day, and probably always will, was a moment when a Winter Wren was singing its heart out very close to the road. As we stood there marveling at its song, Ed related the story of a birding friend who was dying of brain cancer. His friend wanted to go birding one last time. Ed took him to October Mountain. They were stopped at one place when suddenly a Winter Wren perched on a bare branch just yards directly in front of them and started singing. The bird sang for several minutes, and the men were mesmerized. When it flew away, Ed's friend turned to him and said, "Let's go home now; nothing can top that."

Nothing can top what the cochlear implant has given me. I can walk in the woods looking down at the ground—like Bob and all of you—and know that it is quiet or know that a Black-throated Green just sang. I am satisfied, deeply satisfied, to just hear the bird. I feel no urgency now to see the bird, and perhaps strangely, no particular loss at not being able to see most birds any more. It is the song that now gives me immense joy, it is song that now enables me to more deeply share my

passion for birds with Bob and my birding friends, and it is song that now connects me to the birds that I love. Yes I, too, was mesmerized by the beautiful song of a Winter Wren on October Mountain. Good luck, little fellow. 🐦

Martha Steele is a past editor of Bird Observer and lives in Arlington with her husband, Bob Stymeist. She is a native Vermonter, and she and Bob frequently bird the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, including competing in the 2011 Vermont County Quest (sponsored by Birds&Beans) for most bird species seen in specific counties (in their case, Essex, Orleans, and Caledonia counties). Martha has spent most of her professional career at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. In addition to birding, she volunteers in the Boston chapter of the Foundation Fighting Blindness and serves as the chair of the October 29, 2011, Boston VisionWalk. Martha and Bob's team, Strides for Eagle Eyes, has raised nearly \$60,000 for research on blinding diseases since 2009.



HUDSONIAN GODWIT BY DAVID LARSON

Widening the Circle: Integrating People with Disabilities into Nature Programs

Marcy Marchello



Five out of the six people shown in this birding program have disabilities. Wheelchair accessibility and the use of portable folding chairs help to include everyone. All photographs by the author.

Birding for Everybody

On a sunny mild February day, a group of individuals met in the parking lot at the Great Falls Discovery Center in Turners Falls, Massachusetts, for a birdwatching program. Introductions were quickly made, along with visits to the restroom, and a plan was laid out for a short trip to a local spot where waterfowl congregate and a screech owl had been reported. So far, this sounds like a typical start of a birding program; however, there was a significant component added right from the planning stages—inclusion.

The promotional information that people had read described the program as “wheelchair accessible” and “gentle paced for people of all ages and abilities”. In the mix of participants who arrived were two women with knee problems, one woman using a power wheelchair, a young man with autism and his aide, and a man with a mild cognitive impairment. In addition, one of the program leaders could not walk far due to a past leg injury. The needs and limitations of these individuals were identified through advance registration and the program was modified to accommodate everyone.

The outing was sited in a wheelchair-accessible location in which easy-to-view birds could be seen in large numbers without having to walk far. Luckily the day was

warm enough for people to be physically comfortable in the outdoors, and snow on the site was properly groomed to allow wheelchair passage from the parking lots to the building and the birding area. The program leaders avoided abstract language and worked with individuals on a one-to-one basis to help them with their birding skills. They supplied viewing scopes and lightweight binoculars; two models that are easy to see through and use are Swift Ultra Lite Binoculars 8 x 42 and Canon Image Stabilizing Binoculars 8 x 25. *Peterson's Field Guides: Eastern Birds, Large Format Edition* [ISBN 0-395-96371-0] was available as a teaching aid and folding chairs were brought along so people could take turns sitting throughout the program. Had it been needed, a listening kit was also available for use.

These factors, in combination with the positive attitude of the program leaders towards people with disabilities, set the stage for successful inclusive interpretation. As people found their niche in the group experience and grew excited by the presence of many birds on a nice day, any issues about disability faded from consciousness. People delighted in leisurely views of an Eastern Screech Owl sunning itself in a tree cavity. Other highlights included comparing dabbling and diving ducks, watching gulls bathing and swans feeding, and using a scope to identify a Great Cormorant by its white chin patch. Although the young man with autism was too restless to focus on birds and his aide elected to take a walk on their own, this was seen as a viable choice. No expectations were placed on participants to stay for the full program and it was understood that autism could require repeated visits to a program before a new activity will be attempted.

A Holistic Approach

This birding program was an idyllic inclusive experience. With advance planning and the right tools and training, many nature programs could be just as accessible to people with a wide range of disabilities. Of course, some people with disabilities are highly independent, mobile, and social and can easily be spontaneously integrated. Often, there are many challenges that can become awkward when a person with a disability calls or shows up. How can we balance the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act—that all Americans should have equal access to public facilities and programs—within the limitations of budget, staff, and operations so prevalent in our times?

The answer lies in advance planning, readiness, and a holistic approach that relies not just on staff abilities, but on the entire organization or agency creating greater accessibility for all, one step at a time.



A good inclusive birding program will take advantage of predictable locations where birds are easy to view. These birders are observing an Eastern Screech Owl napping in the cavity of a dead pine tree. Using a birding scope from a wheelchair is much easier with an angled eyepiece.

First, it is vital to address the basics of accessibility on site and maintain functional access. Knowing your site's accessibility and being able to communicate this effectively will help callers and visitors gain an accurate understanding of what to expect. Locating and learning how to use accessible features on site is also critical for staff readiness. Activate the captions for videos. Know how to operate wheelchair lifts and request American Sign Language interpretation. Make sure audio elements or listening devices are charged and working properly. Assess your teaching resources for their inclusion potential. Are there books or resources with larger print and pictures? Are there tactile objects, listening opportunities, ways to engage all the senses? What route is the most accessible for people using wheelchairs or canes? Are printed materials available in large print, Braille, and audio formats?

The spectrum of disability is so broad that any organization or agency must begin to develop and implement a wide range of inclusion strategies into all core functions, from the development of publications to the delivery of programs. Whether an entity is a place-based nature center or an agency with land holdings across the state, there should be an ongoing intention and plan under implementation to address accessibility. This plan should address not only people with mobility impairments, but also those with visual, hearing, and cognitive impairments. Ideally, people with disabilities should have a part in shaping an inclusion plan for any organization.

Inclusion training for staff is vital, preferably training that will expose staff to people with disabilities and increase their sensitivity, comfort level, and range of response. Seek out disability service providers for recommendations on trainers. Staff should know how to be a sighted guide for someone who is blind. They should know how to communicate effectively and respectfully with people who have severe or multiple disabilities, who are hard of hearing or deaf, and who have cognitive impairments. With basic disability awareness and etiquette skills in place, staff will be able to respond more confidently when they meet individuals with disabilities at their programs.

Consider your program calendar. Which programs are already scheduled in wheelchair-accessible locations? Which programs might be relocated to an alternate site or route and still be able to fulfill the objectives should someone show up in a wheelchair? Which programs are introductory and could accommodate people moving at a slower physical or mental pace? Could an intermediate program draw upon an additional staff person or volunteers to work with beginners or people moving at a slower pace? Can you allow people to drop out of the program early or leave and return to the program as they need too? If so, you'll be able to accommodate people who are managing pain, fatigue, or behavioral issues. If a program can allow for individuals to be present even though they may not participate fully, people with severe or multiple disabilities may benefit.

People with disabilities can be referred to programs that have this type of flexibility. You can also invite people to meet you at the site fifteen minutes prior to a program to get familiar with their needs and goals for the experience.

You might invite people to consider meeting you for a separate custom tour if the program format is unable to accommodate them. You can also refer people to similar programs at a more accessible site or programs offered by organizations that specialize in inclusive recreation. It is worth finding out who is offering inclusive programs nearby and draw upon them as a resource for your own facility. Investigate the possibility of collaboration with other organizations to provide greater opportunities for access. Inclusive recreation providers make great partners for canoeing and hiking programs and may be able to provide adaptive equipment to support a wider variety of participants getting deeper into natural areas.



Most people with disabilities are ambulatory. DCR park interpreter Gini Traub (left) meets with a group from a school for students with disabilities prior to going out on a nature walk.

Above all, you need to determine what is realistic for your own organization to accomplish. What is a reasonable accommodation and what is not? If including a particular individual is going to change the fundamental nature of a specific program so that the program will no longer be what it was advertised to be, then inclusion is not viable. If a given program can be modified to include everyone with minimal disturbance, then a reasonable accommodation is possible and should be made.

Inclusion is a means of widening the circle of who can attend, and it may well be happening already in your programs. Assume that some people with hidden disabilities will simply not self-identify. If you are using good interpretation—activating all the senses, using simple clear language, engaging participants to share observations and make comparisons—you will be doing a lot to support inclusion. Add some additional supportive techniques—the ability to be a sighted guide, or a portable assistive listening device that allows individuals to adjust the volume of your voice, or another staff person or volunteer to provide walking support – and you’ve widened the circle of inclusion even further.

Challenges and Creative Responses

Compromise is always easier to accept if we are treated with the same friendliness and respect as everyone else. Attitude is everything in inclusion – it can enhance the quality of experience for all participants and sometimes even transcend the physical limitations on site. Program staff can role model an inclusive attitude just by being friendly and respectful and by addressing everyone present equally, even if some group members avoid eye contact or drool or are difficult to understand. Doing so will help everyone feel more comfortable and accept each individual as part of the group. If the program leader also responds with willingness, flexibility, creativity, and

patience to accommodate everyone present, then inclusion is truly alive in the mission of the organization.

Environmental educators also need to know their limits – to communicate what is and isn't possible accurately and with authority in order to be good program leaders. One leader can only do so many things during a program. If more than one or two individuals with a disability are present, depending on the nature of their disabilities it is likely that additional support staff may be needed to ensure a successful experience for everyone. If only one staff person is available to facilitate the program, his primary responsibility is program delivery, and individual support has to be secondary. In some cases it may be possible to draw upon another participant in the group to help out.

Some people with disabilities may attend with an aide or companion who will support their presence and help manage their situation. Many disability organizations or groups often sponsor outings. These groups will typically show up with support staff that will push wheelchairs, provide communication assistance, tend to personal needs, be the sighted guide, and manage behavior. Any large group on a nature trail benefits from additional interpretive staff to work with people in smaller clusters—a strategy that works quite well for disability groups. If such groups have called in advance, it will be easier to prepare for accommodating their outing. If additional interpretive staff are not available, tap into your community and identify volunteers who have experience with people with disabilities. Students and retirees are classic volunteer material and many may either be studying or have years of experience in a related field. Recently I co-led an inclusive bird walk with a woman from a local bird



Tactile opportunities enhance everyone's learning experience. The author shows tree scars from lightning and a Pileated Woodpecker to a blind participant on a nature walk.

club who had just retired from the field of psychiatric care. I had no worries about addressing any unusual or unexpected behavior from participants that day!

Learning how to make successful program accommodations is a vital asset to serving a broader public, and an individual's or organization's ability to stay fresh and receptive will depend upon the frequency of attendance by people who need accommodations. Committing to inclusion means being willing to meet and flex with the ever-changing flow of who comes in the door. Advance planning, staff training, good interpretive techniques, developing an additional staff

plan, and knowing your site well will help you succeed. Nevertheless, people with disabilities and the people who serve them may not even know about the door to your programs unless you provide the appropriate cues.



The use of accessibility icons—whether standard or modified—on program calendars, flyers, site maps, and other publications allows people to quickly understand access to programs.

To complete a widening circle of inclusion, you'll need to indicate accessibility in your promotional materials. Use standard icons to indicate programs that are accessible. Use the phrase "Reasonable accommodations available upon advance request" followed by a phone number to welcome inquiries from people with disabilities. If your facility is on public transportation or available via special transportation services, indicate this on press releases and flyers. Draw upon standard phrases to describe accessibility at your site, such as "850 foot wheelchair-accessible boardwalk through wetland to viewing platform with bench". Be creative! Make sure that the public is getting the word about accessible programs at your site through all publicity channels. Then, make sure your publicity gets out into the disability community; put disability agencies and service organizations on your mailing list. Develop a contact list for disability groups in your area and keep them informed of upcoming programs. In this way, you'll draw toward you the very people you are preparing to serve. 🐦

List of Resources

Equipment used in Birding Program

Portable folding chairs: <<http://www.GCIOutdoors.com>>

Assistive Listening Devices:

Easy Listener by Phonic Ear: <<http://www.phonicear.com>>

Sonic Ear (bat detector) Acorn Naturalists: <<http://www.acornnaturalists.com>>

Sonic Ear (personal sound amplifier): <<http://www.amazon.com>>

Accessible Birding

Comfortable Birding for All <<http://www.comfortablebirdingforall.com>>

Site Assessments throughout New England

Everyone's Invited, Laura Grunfeld, 413-229-2476, everyonesinvited@aol.com

Deborah Ryan & Associates, 617-268-9423

Disability Awareness Training and Information

Massachusetts Office on Disability, One Ashburton Place, Room 1305, Boston, MA 02108, 617-727-7440, 800-322-2020 (V/TTY), <<http://www.mass.gov/mod/>>

Outdoor Explorations, 98 Winchester Street, Medford, MA 02115 781-395-4999, <<http://www.outdoorexplorations.org>>

Inclusive Environmental Education Specialists

Kathy Amberosini - Director of Education, Mohonk Preserve, New Paltz, NY -
NatureAccess: proactive inclusion in environmental education for school groups since
1995. 845-255-0919 x 233 or kamberosini@mohonkpreserve.org,
<<http://www.mohonkpreserve.org/index.php?natureaccess>>

Marcy Marchello - Accessible Recreation Program Coordinator, DCR Universal
Access Program, Amherst, MA, Accessible Recreation in Massachusetts State Parks -
<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/universal_access/>, marcy.marchello@state.ma.us,
<<http://www.everyoneoutdoors.blogspot.com/>>

All Out Adventures, Easthampton, MA, 413-527-8980,
<<http://www.alloutadventures.org>>

Northeast Passage, Durham, NH, 603-862-0070, <<http://www.nepassage.org>>

Outdoor Explorations, Medford, MA, 781-395-4999,
<<http://www.outdoorexplorations.org>>

Outdoor Access, Amherst MA, Brenda Kennedy Davies, Director, 413-259-0009,
Brenda@outdoor-access.org

Accessible Guidelines for Educational Facilities

Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibitions and Publications (with useful
accessibility icons) <<http://accessible.si.edu/>>

*Marcy Marchello has worked with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and
Recreation since 1995. She teaches inclusion techniques to park interpreters and coordinates
year-round accessible recreation opportunities in Massachusetts State and Urban Parks.*

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photographs were taken by Marcy Marchello.]



GREEN HERON WITH FROG BY SANDY SELESKY

Accessible Birding Sites in Massachusetts

Marcy Marchello and Marsha Salett

From the shores of Cape Cod to the top of Mount Greylock, bird and wildlife enthusiasts who use wheelchairs—or have family members or friends who use wheelchairs or have disabilities—can find great accessible viewing in Massachusetts.

Many environmental organizations and communities, from the local to the federal level, have successfully integrated accessibility into outdoor settings. Woodlands, wetlands, beaches, waterways, and summits are all within range of people with disabilities in Massachusetts if you have transportation. Some places are reachable via public transportation. If a site is wheelchair accessible, it will also be suitable for people using strollers, walkers, and other devices. The following locations offer a range of possibilities whether you prefer viewing from your vehicle, keeping your feet and wheels clean on boardwalks and paved trails, or trekking into the open landscape.

Rail trails offer an amazing ribbon of possibility for wheelchair users. At least two dozen trails in Massachusetts are advertised as wheelchair accessible on the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy website: <<http://www.trailink.com/state/ma-trails.aspx>>. Rail trails have multiple access points, are often paved, cover significant distances, and pass through a variety of habitats over relatively flat terrain. If they pass through a city or town, chances are they will be accessible by public transportation. Rail trails are great places for hand cycles as well as wheelchairs. Viewing can be optimal on spring and fall mornings and evenings, when there may be less bicycle traffic and more wildlife activity.

The Norwottuck Rail Trail traverses the Connecticut River Valley agricultural landscape, wooded areas, and beaver-created wetlands for ten paved miles between Northampton and Amherst. The 8-foot-wide trail is mostly shaded and is good for songbirds and hawks with greater variety including herons, ducks, and woodpeckers at the eastern end of the trail, where beaver are active.

The Cape Cod Rail Trail covers 22 miles between Dennis and Wellfleet. It passes through sandy pitch pine-scrub oak woodlands and salt marshes, where such charismatic avifauna as Osprey, Great Egrets, and Great Blue Herons can be seen. The trail passes through forested Nickerson State Park and links to a variety of paved trails looping through the park where accessible camping is an option. In Eastham, a side trail to Cape Cod National Seashore is filled with singing Prairie Warblers in early June and takes you through a low marshland with great birding before it reaches Coast Guard Beach. You can also park at the beach and stroll down the bike path into the marsh. Beach wheelchairs are available. At the Cape Cod National Seashore Visitor Center, you'll find the 0.25-mile "Buttonbush Trail", a self-guided trail designed for users with visual impairments that emphasizes a multi-sensory experience. This trail has a boardwalk over Buttonbush Pond and is wheelchair accessible most of the way beyond the boardwalk.

The 10 foot-wide Ashuwillticook Rail Trail passes by the Cheshire Reservoir with views of Mount Greylock and surrounding mountains. It starts at the Berkshire Mall in Lanesborough, which is accessible via public transportation, and travels 11.2 miles to Adams. In Cheshire a small park has accessible parking, Clivus toilets, and picnic tables. Osprey, herons, egrets, and many species of waterfowl can be found around the reservoir. Migration time can offer great viewing of waterfowl and hawks. Ravens nest on nearby cliffs to the west. The trail meanders with the Hoosic River. Watch for warblers, woodpeckers, and other small birds on sunny edges of woods and wetlands.

For a peak experience, never underestimate the power of a mountaintop! In the Berkshires, be sure to drive to the summit of Mount Greylock. At the top, Bascom Lodge has accessible restrooms and accommodations, and there is a short loop trail on Massachusetts' highest summit offering spectacular views. You may see passing hawks and a few unusual breeding birds in this tiny patch of boreal forest such as Blackpoll Warbler or Swainson's Thrush.

Other accessible peaks in Massachusetts are Mount Sugarloaf in the Connecticut River Valley and Mount Wachusett in the central part of the state. These two mountaintops can be great for fall hawk watching. The Broad-winged Hawk migration in mid-September can bring hundreds of hawks over Mount Wachusett, which has a rough parking lot at the top. Mount Sugarloaf is a scenic bump along the Connecticut River with a short paved road to the summit. The summit building is not accessible for elevated viewing, but the views from the mountaintop are great facing east, south, and west. The building has accessible restrooms on the first floor.

The northeast corner of Massachusetts is a coastal mecca for bird-watching and great for viewing seals. Plum Island, near Newburyport, provides spectacular birding any time of year. A 6.4-mile road travels the length of the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge on Plum Island, with several parking areas and some noteworthy accessible features.

Just past the refuge gate at the main parking lot, a boardwalk is accessible up to a viewing platform overlooking the beach and a wide expanse of ocean and dunes. There is a long grade to the platform and most people may need someone to assist them to the top, where sand may have blown over the boards. From here, the eastern view may reveal shorebirds, sea ducks, loons, grebes, and, sometimes, pelagic birds. A viewing scope is a great asset here.

While birding can be fantastic anywhere on the island from your vehicle, two points farther south are essential for the wheelchair viewer. The Bill Forward Pool features a short accessible pathway to a viewing blind. This spot is nestled in a pine grove and looks out onto open water and marshland. Known as a night roost for herons and egrets in the summer, it can be rich with waterfowl any time of the year. Morning and midday viewing is best, as the blind faces west.

On the southern tip of Plum Island, at the last two parking areas you have officially left the Refuge and have entered Sandy Point State Reservation. One of the Clivus toilets in the front lot here is accessible. Farther along the road to the right is a

second lot, with an accessible boardwalk that brings you out onto the sand with a broad view of a flat expanse of beach where Piping Plovers nest. Behind you, the densely thicketed knoll of Bar Head can offer up a variety of songbirds. Across the water are Crane Beach and the town of Ipswich, and farther to the east is Cape Ann's rocky shoreline. This is another good spot for a viewing scope.

If you want to get onto the sand beyond the boardwalk at Sandy Point, call in advance and request a beach wheelchair from Salisbury Beach State Reservation, which has several chairs available for use in both locations. Beach wheelchairs require someone to push them, but they are better suited for travel across the sand and can get you closer to the water's edge. Check the area called Emerson's Rocks at the southeastern tip of Plum Island in winter and spring for seals at low tide. Seals can also be found at Salisbury Beach State Reservation in the Merrimack River near the campground.

Many state parks in Massachusetts have beach wheelchairs available for free use. For further information, check the DCR website:

<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/universal_access/>. Beach chairs are prevalent on Cape Cod at many, but not all, town beaches. The Cape Cod Disability Access Directory provides an up-to-date listing of beach accessibility, as well as restaurants and other tourist amenities: <<http://www.capecoddisability.org>>.

Nature centers are another wonderful resource that people with disabilities can tap into for wildlife experiences. In Newburyport, the Joppa Flats Education Center, operated by Massachusetts Audubon, is an accessible facility on the road to Plum Island. It offers restrooms, viewing decks, use of scopes in the facility, use of binoculars in programs, exhibits, a nature shop, and friendly staff. The center offers a wide variety of year-round birding and nature programs in the vicinity. People with disabilities are welcome and some programs are tailored to individual needs.

In Boston and nearby suburbs, accessible Mass Audubon sanctuaries are the Boston Nature Center in Mattapan and the Broadmoor Sanctuary in Natick. The Boston Nature Center is close to public transportation, but does require a lengthy walk to the facility. The nature center and restrooms are accessible; trails that have been impacted by heavy rains are currently being resurfaced to make them accessible again. Broadmoor's 0.25-mile All-Person's Accessible Trail and Boardwalk runs along the bank of Indian Brook and across a marsh; it has two seasonal multi-sensory audio tours, Braille guides, and a tactile map.

Other Mass Audubon Wildlife Sanctuaries with interpreted, accessible trails include Attleboro Springs, Attleboro; Arcadia, Easthampton; and Stony Brook, Norfolk. The trails have a post/rope guiding systems, audio tours, Braille and tactile signs, and tactile maps.

Mass Audubon is planning accessible interpreted trails with post/rope guiding systems (where practical), audio tours, Braille signs, and tactile maps for Drumlin Farm, Trailside, Wellfleet Bay, Pleasant Valley, Broad Meadow Brook, and Boston Nature Center, all of which are to be completed by 2013. For up-to-date information

about all of Mass Audubon's accessible trails, refer to its accessibility section on the web: <http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/accessibilitytable.php>.

In Lexington, the Teresa & Roberta Lee Fitness/Nature Path provides a 680-foot boardwalk through a swamp maple wetland. In addition to being wheelchair accessible, it features interpretive signage in large print and Braille, a sensory garden, and various tactile cues for people with vision impairments. The trail is located in Lincoln Park off Worthen Road and is not far from a public bus stop.

The Riverbend Visitor Center in Uxbridge, an accessible facility that is part of the Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park, offers guided walks and wildlife programs. A mile-long, naturally accessible trail, packed with the history of industry and transport in the 1800s, was once used for towing barges along the canal next to it and is known as "the towpath." It traverses wooded wetlands and open fields. Deer, fox, raccoons, muskrats, otter, and other wildlife are regularly seen along the towpath. Bird life is prolific.

In Amherst, don't miss the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, an independent environmental education center. Along with an accessible facility, you'll find an 850-foot accessible trail through woodland thickets and wet areas, which leads to an outdoor teaching shelter. Half of this trail is a boardwalk, with wheel stops along the edge and a sitting area. The Hitchcock Center is a five-minute walk from a public bus stop. This is a fantastic location for migrating songbirds in spring and fall.

Another great area in the Connecticut River Valley is Turners Falls, a small town near Greenfield on Route 2. The mile-long Migratory Way of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge is a paved roadway that parallels a wide canal, which is a favorite place for both local and migrating waterfowl. The gated roadway is usually open during the week for cars, bicyclists, pedestrians, and wheelchairs. When the gate is locked, walkers and people in wheelchairs can park outside and use the roadway. Down the street, Great Falls Discovery Center, an accessible facility with breathtaking exhibits, awaits those interested in an indoor education about the Connecticut River from source to sea. When the Bald Eagles return in the spring, you can view the eagles' nest on closed circuit TV. The Bald Eagles nest in nearby Barton's Cove and can be viewed outdoors from Unity Park, and a state boat ramp on Route 2. The Canalside Rail Trail connects Unity Park in Turners Falls, the Discovery Center, and Migratory Way.

If you'd like something a bit more challenging, an accessible trail that leads to a location with a wilder feeling, consider the "Friendly Trail" at Wendell State Forest, 25 minutes east of Greenfield. Park at the headquarters and take the trail downhill at grades that go beyond code but traverse the hillside with greater ease than a straight run downhill, especially if you have an ambulatory friend along. After about 0.33-mile, you reach the pavilion field, where there is a shallow pond. You may find Wood Ducks, otter, or even a beaver lodge. A more rugged trail circles the pond, a good hour and a half walk for those who are ambulatory.

Many state parks have trails that are either naturally accessible or accessible by design for independent or program use. The Department of Conservation and

Recreation's (DCR) Universal Access Program offers accessible hiking programs at selected parks statewide for those who would like to try rugged wheelchairs on conventional hiking trails with support. Other year-round accessible activities include canoeing, kayaking, cycling, cross-country skiing, camping, fishing, and bird watching. These programs use adaptive recreation equipment and support staff to ensure an enjoyable experience for all. DCR has an extensive network of seasonal nature interpreters who offer free programs to the public, many of which are on accessible sites. Call the parks nearest you and ask about accessibility and the current program schedule. For more information, call the DCR Universal Access Program: 413-545-5353.

The following is a list of birding locations that offer general accessibility; telephone numbers have been updated through 2011. You can find in-depth descriptions and directions to many of these sites—with the caveat that the information is several years old—from these three resources: *Comfortable Birding For All*: <<http://www.comfortablebirdingforall.com/MassachusettsSites.html>>; *ABA Bird Finding Guide to Eastern Massachusetts*, and UMASS Cooperative Extension Service's *Bird Finding Guide to Western Massachusetts*.

Before you visit any outdoor location: rail trail, state park, or nature center, call ahead for real-time information. Weather conditions, erosion, and other factors can change accessibility conditions or necessitate closure of a facility. Hours may change seasonally.

Greater Boston Area

Nahant Causeway, Lynn Shores Reservation, Lynn: Two-mile coastal bike and walking path that hugs the urban shoreline. Not everyone will be able to access the beach along the causeway due to rocks, but for those who can, a scope is a necessity for serious birding. Parking lot with accessible parking spaces at regular intervals. Benches in the northern half, but not on the actual causeway. Parking fee during the summer season. Bathhouse does not yet offer accessible restrooms. 781-485-2803.

Belle Isle Marsh Reservation, Chelsea: This popular spot off Route 1A in Chelsea is a delight if you don't mind large planes flying overhead every five minutes to nearby Logan airport. Three accessible parking spaces, benches throughout the circular wheelchair-accessible loop trail; no restrooms. A short side trail leads to an accessible viewing station with benches and great views of the marsh, tidal river, and pools. A viewing tower at the north end is not wheelchair accessible but solidly built with minimal steps to each landing. Dogs are welcome and people do a good job of picking up after them. 617-727-5350. Comprehensive website with regularly published bird lists: <<http://www.friendsofbelleislemarsh.org/>>.

The Fenway, Boston: On the north side of the Museum of Fine Arts; part of the Muddy River Reservation; managed by Boston Parks and Recreation. Paved and accessible pathways circle the river on both sides with a crossing at Agassiz Road over a bridge. A smaller footbridge behind the Museum may require assistance for some wheelchair users due to the slightly slippery metal grid of the bridge. Benches abound but no facilities. Public transportation (MBTA stop).

Spectacle Island, Boston Harbor: From Long Wharf in Boston, take a wheelchair-accessible ferry. The only Boston Harbor island with universal access: docks, visitor center, and paths around the island, all navigable by wheelchair; assistance will be required for those who normally need support. Benches and picnic tables. Nature and other educational programs. Call park ranger line for ferry and other information: 617-223-8666. Harbor Express ferry: 617-222-6999.

Pope John Paul Park, Dorchester: A wheelchair-accessible walkway circles an open grassy mown hill with views into a tidal river marsh for common shoreline birds and possible migrant songbirds. Sun shelters and benches. Portable toilets may not be accessible. Biking is not allowed. Park here to access the adjacent Neponset River Bike Trail. 617-727-5290.

Neponset River Bike Trail, Dorchester: Artistically embellished 2.2-mile urban bike path. Park at Hallet Street lot or Pope John Paul II Park. From Pope John Paul, a mural depicting birds and bicyclists marks the entrance at a tunnel under Interstate 93. At Granite Avenue, the push of a button instantly stops all traffic for an easy crossing of a very busy road. From here the wide trail turns to hard packed dirt for roughly 150 yards as it passes through tidal river and woodland edge. Good birding from this vantage point. 617-727-5290.

Squantum Point Park, Quincy: Popular for fishing with easy access to views of harbor birds. Paved and dirt pathways are reasonably accessible; stone benches overlooking the shoreline. Large parking lot; paid admission in the summer season; no facilities. 617-727-5290.

Blue Hills Reservation, Milton: Large reservation with extensive hiking trails. The most accessible part is Houghton's Pond with a wheelchair-accessible visitor center and restrooms. 617-698-1802.

Eastern Massachusetts (north to south)

Salisbury Beach State Reservation, Salisbury: popular campground facility on the mouth of the Merrimack River. Beach wheelchairs available. 978-462-4481.

Joppa Flats Education Center, Newburyport: Plum Island Turnpike between Newburyport and Plum Island. Mass Audubon. Complete building accessibility. Elevator to second-floor bird observatory. Optical equipment available for use in building and to loan. 978-462-9998.

Plum Island, Newburyport: Parker River National Wildlife Refuge and Sandy Point State Reservation. The 6.4 mile paved road turns to gravel halfway down. Can reserve beach wheelchairs. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service operates the refuge and has a fully accessible facility just off-island on Plum Island Turnpike. 978-465-5753.

Theresa and Roberta Lee Fitness and Nature Path, Lexington: boardwalk trail is wheelchair accessible with Braille signage. Located in Lincoln Park off Worthen Road. Town of Lexington Recreation Department: 781-862-0500 x 262.

Drumlin Farm, Lincoln: Mass Audubon. Accessible nature center, restrooms, trails, Audubon Shop. 781-259-2200

Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary, Natick: Mass Audubon. Accessible All-Persons Trail and boardwalk with seasonal audio tours. Accessible nature center and restrooms. 508-655-2296.

Boston Nature Center and Wildlife Sanctuary, Mattapan: Mass Audubon. Accessible nature center and restrooms. Trails are being resurfaced for full accessibility. 617-983-8500.

Blue Hills Trailside Museum, Milton: Mass Audubon. Accessible outdoor exhibit trail, nature center and restrooms. Public transportation. 617-333-0690.

Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary, Marshfield: Mass Audubon. Accessible trail segment from parking area to a bird blind. 781-837-9400.

Attleboro Springs Wildlife Sanctuary, Attleboro: Mass Audubon. Half-mile, fully accessible, interpretive Reflection Trail. Public transportation. 508-223-3060.

Nickerson State Park: Brewster: Inland park with campground; accessible yurt sites; miles of paved trails through forest, by cedar swamp and to freshwater ponds. 508-896-3491.

Cape Cod Rail Trail, Dennis to Wellfleet: 22-mile rail trail through the towns of Dennis, Harwich, Brewster, Orleans, Eastham, and Wellfleet; passes through Nickerson State Park and Cape Cod National Seashore's Salt Pond Visitors Center. Beach wheelchair available at National Park Service Coast Guard Beach. Some hand cycles available for rent at bike concessions. Rail trail information: 508-896-3491. Cape Cod National Seashore: Headquarters 508 771-2144; Salt Pond Visitor Center 508 487-1256.

Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, South Wellfleet: Accessible All-Persons Trail to Goose Pond; accessible nature center and restrooms. 508-349-2615.

Cape Cod Canal Bikeway, Sandwich to Bourne: 8-mile bike path and access into Scusset Beach State Reservation. Accessible fishing/viewing platform. Reserve a beach wheelchair at 508-888-0859. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Cape Cod Canal Visitors Center: 508-833-9678.

Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, Norfolk: Mass Audubon. Accessible Sensory Trail with post/rope guide and audio tour; accessible nature center and restrooms; partially accessible boardwalk through ponds. 508-528-3140.

Central Massachusetts (north to south)

Nashua River Rail Trail, Ayer-Dunstable: 12.3-mile rail trail Ayer, Groton, Pepperell, and Dunstable; crossing the New Hampshire border to Nashua. Accessible parking and restrooms in Ayer; public transportation to Ayer on Boston-Fitchburg commuter line. 978-597-8802.

Silver Lake, Athol: glacial kettle-hole pond near downtown Athol with resident and migrating waterfowl. Excellent car birding on road that circles the pond. 978 249-4819.

Mt. Sugarloaf State Reservation, South Deerfield: Drive to summit from Route 116 for aerial views of hawks and other birds in spring and fall. Accessible picnic area and restrooms. 413 665-2928.

UMass Campus Pond, Amherst: Ducks, swans, geese abound all year. Next to the Fine Arts Center.

Hitchcock Center for the Environment, Amherst: Accessible boardwalk and nature center; disability friendly. Closed weekends. 413-256-6006.

Norwottuck Rail Trail, Amherst to Northampton: 10-mile trail of agricultural/forest/wetland views. Trailhead at Elwell State Park in Northampton; parking at Southeast Street or Station Road in South Amherst. 413-586-8706.

Mt. Tom State Reservation, Holyoke: Lake Bray Accessible trail is a 0.5-mile forested trail with views of Lake Bray. Drive the summit roads for hawk watching in the fall. Family and disability-friendly birding programs. 413-534-1186.

Fitzgerald Lake Conservation Area, Northampton: 0.25-mile paved trail into a forested wetland with a boardwalk to a viewing dock with bench—all wheelchair accessible, though the end of the dock is sometimes flooded due to beaver activity.

Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary, Easthampton: Mass Audubon. Accessible nature center, restrooms, and All Person's Sensory Trail with post/rope guide and audio tour. Braille and tactile signs on trail; tactile map available. Some birding programs are accessible. Disability friendly. 413-584-3009.

Forest Park, Springfield: Easily accessed from Interstate 91 at Exit 1. With multiple ponds, pathways, and benches, this city park is good for viewing migrating songbirds, herons, nesting hawks, and a local duck population that is visited by wood ducks, gadwalls, and sometimes rarities in winter and during migration. \$3.00 entrance fee. 413-750-2652.

Fannie Stebbins Wildlife Refuge, Longmeadow: Floodplain of the Connecticut River with extensive marshy ponds that host wading birds, waterfowl, and songbirds. Great birding along the roads, especially during migration. Be cautious of muddy roads and flooded trails.

Robinson State Park, Agawam: Forested roadway through park with small pond next to the Westfield River. Drive through day use area to the gate and stroll in from there. 413-786-2877.

Berkshires (north to south)

Clarksburg State Park, Clarksburg: Accessible picnicking area with pond views. Trails around the pond are partway accessible for wheelchair users and worth exploring. Park open during summer season only. 413-664-8345.

Mount Greylock State Reservation, Lanesboro/Adams: The visitor center and the summit are the most accessible parts of this extensive mountain complex. Short excursions are possible from both locations with panoramic views and interesting

Branch Bridge, Athol and New Salem: Long causeway over the “Branch” of Millers River that makes up the Lake Rohunta complex. Visited by hundreds of waterfowl mid-March through spring. Access from Route 202 via Fay Road.

Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary, Princeton: Mass Audubon. Building and restrooms are accessible; great birding from the parking lot. 978-464-2712.

Barre Falls Dam, Hubbardston: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers site off Route 62; popular for hawk watching during migration; also known for Ravens and songbirds. Accessible picnic area and restrooms. 978-928-4712.

Quabbin Reservoir and Park, Belchertown: Main entrance and visitor center off Route 9. Roadways through park provide interesting views of the reservoir; diverse variety of year-round and migrating birds. 413-323-7221.

Broad Meadow Brook Conservation Center and Wildlife Sanctuary, Worcester: Mass Audubon. Accessible trails, nature center, deck, viewing blind, restrooms; disability friendly; dynamic nature education programs. Public transportation. 508-753-6087.

Riverbend Farm, Uxbridge: Part of Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park. Wheelchair accessible visitor center; disability friendly; year-round nature programs. Trail along the canal is reasonably accessible with slight grades and surface changes. 508-278-6486.

Connecticut River Valley (north to south)

Bennett Meadow, Northfield: Off Route 10 next to the Connecticut River. Great birding in the parking area in spring. Fairly level for walking, essentially a farm field road with open views; muddy at times. No benches.

Canalside Rail Trail, Turners Falls-Deerfield: 3.27-mile rail trail begins at Unity Park, Turners Falls, runs behind the Great Falls Discovery Center, and ends in Deerfield. Park at Unity Park or at the end of Masonic Avenue in Turners Falls, or off McClelland Farm Road in Deerfield.

Barton Cove, Gill-Turners Falls: Route 2 between the DCR public boat ramp and the Turners Falls Bridge. Public side streets provide easy access to resting waterfowl during the spring and fall migration. Large flocks of gulls often gather on the ice floes; the savvy observer may find specialty species of gulls among the more common birds. A special treat each spring is the return of the nesting bald eagles; bring a spotting scope. Other good viewing locations: Unity Park in Turners Falls and the Barton Cove Recreation & Camping Area in Gill, day use area: 413 863-9300.

Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls: Fully accessible; view the eagles’ nest on closed circuit TV. 413-863-3221.

Migratory Way Canal, Turners Falls: Park next to a gate for the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge. Gate is open during the week for driving along the canal; when gate is locked on weekends, pedestrians and wheelchair users are allowed. No benches. 413-863-3676.

birding potential. Accessible overnight accommodations at Bascom Lodge; reservations mid-May to late October: 413-743-1591. Visitor center in Lanesboro: 413-499-4262.

Ashwillticook Rail Trail, Lanesborough to Adams: Fully-accessible, 10 foot-wide rail trail runs 11.2 miles through Lanesborough, Cheshire, and Adams. Benches, restrooms, parking along trail.

Berkshire Lakes, Pittsfield: Series of lakes and reservoirs in the Pittsfield area accessible by road for car birding: Pontoosuc Lake, Cheshire Reservoir, Onota Lake, Richmond Pond, and the Stockbridge Bowl. For detailed descriptions, consult the ABA Bird Finding Guide to Western Massachusetts. Viewing scope recommended for best birding.

Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, Lenox: Mass Audubon. Fully accessible education center and classrooms, restrooms, All Person's Trail. 413-637-0230.

For further information on any of these sites, or if you have a site to add, contact DCR's Universal Access Program at 413-545-5758. 

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Other Resources

Cape Cod Disability Access Directory: www.capecoddisability.org/

Comfortable Birding For All:

<<http://www.comfortablebirdingforall.com/MassachusettsSites.html>>.

Massachusetts Audubon Society. 781-259-9500, 800-AUDUBON (283-8266);

<<http://www.massaudubon.org>>; Universal access page:

<http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/accessibilitytable.php>.

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR):

<<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/>>; Universal Access Program: 413-545-5758.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy website: <<http://www.trailink.com/state/ma-trails.aspx>>.

Marcy Marchello has worked with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation since 1995. She teaches inclusion techniques to park interpreters and coordinates year-round accessible recreation opportunities in Massachusetts State and Urban Parks.

Marsha Salett is a writer, editor, and environmental educator. She has been a teacher/naturalist at Mass Audubon's Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary for more than 20 years and serves on Broadmoor's Advisory Board. Marsha wrote the audio tours for Broadmoor's All-Person's Trail.

Convalescence

John Nelson

I can't see the bird, but I can feel it. It's pecking, no *sucking* on my index finger with pressure, like a baby mammal at a nipple. The bird is warbler-sized, but the bill doesn't feel right for a warbler. Can you ID a bird by the heft of its beak on your finger?

I slip in and out of Oxycodone dreams, restless, thrashing, twisting the sheets into knots. My legs can't find a good position. "Everything went fine," the surgeon said. "You're doing terrific," says the physical therapist. But the pain pills won't tolerate sleep, or clarity. Thoughts spiral like vultures that never feed. Dreams are abrupt. I try to still my body. The bird is at my finger again, under the blankets. It's hurt. It seeks my warmth. It's here for comfort. I need new lists: birds known only in dreams, birds felt while on drugs. I rely on my wife for reports. I moaned a bit. I snored. I must have slept.

Between attempts at sleep, to regain strength, I patrol our hilltop street on crutches, up and down, up and down. Each day I pick up the pace. Last year, a fused ankle. This year, a new hip, with a "revision" of the other hip soon to follow. I'm getting pretty good at this. True, I've got no cartilage, but I also don't have cancer. Geezer logic: arthritis reminds us that we're lucky enough to have outlived whatever evolution had in mind for our bodies. One day, out on patrol, I hear an Osprey's punctuated whistle. I scan the sky, but can't find the bird. I crutch my way down the street to get a less obstructed look. There it is, like a fierce, shaggy gull, whistling again as it floats over our house. New list: yard birds chased on four legs.

In bed, under the blankets, the bird is at my finger again, snuggled, convalescing. The moment feels nakedly intimate. I sense another bird, at another finger—the same species, I'm sure, but with a lighter touch to its beak. A fledgling? How did these birds get here? It must have been on the flight back from England. They were cold, wind-broken, they needed help. They nestled under my jacket and hid themselves until we were safely in the air. I think these birds are goldfinches.

Something taps beside my head. This is no dream. Sunlight floods the bedroom window. More tapping. This time I tap back. It's a Downy Woodpecker. "Go away!" I shout. "We feed you suet. We don't cut down dead trees. Why must you eat the house?" The tapping resumes, across the room. I can't guard every wall.

I'm on crutches again, inside the screen door to the deck, about to embark on my morning patrol. At my feet are the corpses of two birds, one brilliant yellow, the other washed out, but both American Goldfinches. I feel set back, relapsed, trapped by inexpressible sorrow. How limp they look; how forlorn. But no, I think, it can't be: there are no American Goldfinches in England. Then I realize: I haven't been to England in years. Thank goodness, I didn't post a report on Massbird. How embarrassing: to confuse the goldfinches of different hemispheres. Why do birds have to die in my dreams?

I'm on my back, wide awake—an interlude between bouts of spinning my body into a sleepable spot. If I can't bird, why torment myself? Why read the reports on Massbird? Brown Booby in Provincetown, Brown Pelican in Chatham, White Ibis at Plum Island, terns and teal and tropicbirds blown clear across the state by a hurricane. I've seen all these birds, somewhere, but never in Massachusetts. Yes, it's annoying, so annoying—I picked a bad time to get a new hip. A few years back, a woman reported a Brown Pelican from her hospital bed in South Boston. I chased the bird but never found it. My hospital list: twelve House Sparrows, five American Crows, one Herring Gull. Oh, lists produce envy and regret. What, after all, is Massachusetts?

I'm out again, in again. I have lucid moments. It was Peru, not England. We just took a trip to Peru. Astonishing things we saw there: Pale-winged Trumpeters scrambling round a bend on a tight forest trail; an Andean Potoo swooping, screaming in the dark—uncanny sound—then zooming over our heads, then perched, a rigid ghost, on a snag in a spotlight. But these aren't the birds in my dreams. I dream of local woodpeckers tap-tap-tapping. I dream of cardinals and crossbills. My dreams are finchy. They're back—whatever the species—one last nibble at my fingers, and they're healed. They flutter, they fly, they're gone. They don't look back. Someone must have opened the window.

I'm at the screen door again. No corpses are at my feet. Two weeks out of surgery, and I'm off narcotics. It's now just plain old white-bread Tylenol. I can walk without crutches. I can dance. It's a miracle! With fledgling uncertainty, I step on to the deck. It's a beautiful day. A Downy Woodpecker gnaws at a cedar shingle. I salute him. Go ahead. What the hell. It's only a house. Across the street, a Northern Flicker works on a neighbor's gutter.

At our thistle feeder, six-eight-ten American Goldfinches gather around, spacing themselves. They have their hierarchies, their squabbles, but they seem remarkably forbearing and willing to share. *Tristis*, their Latin name, refers to their sad song, but they don't sound the slightest bit sad. Beneath them, the Mourning Doves aren't mourning either. In a few days, I may be able to drive again, or at least sit in a car as far as Provincetown. The booby's still there. But wait, I'm getting ahead of myself. Walk before you run.

Crutch-free, I hobble across the yard. Somewhere a radio blares—“... love the one you're with”—and silences the flicker. A stupid lyric, I've always thought, at least as applied to humans, as if a love that easy could mean anything. But it may be true of birds. The music fades. The flicker starts up again. I make my way up the street. Behind me, sweet goldfinches are chirping at the feeder. 

John Nelson, of Gloucester, is a regular contributor to Bird Observer and has published fiction and non-fiction about birds in The Gettysburg Review, The Harvard Review, Shenandoah, Snowy Egret, the ABA publication Birding, and the British journal Essex Birding. He is currently working on a comprehensive, historical study of the birds in American literature.

Yellow-green Vireo *Vireo flavoviridis* banded at Plum Island, Massachusetts

Benjamin Flemer, William O. Gette, and David M. Larson

On September 5, 2011, banders at the Joppa Flats Bird Banding Station on the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge on Plum Island found a very odd-looking vireo in net 10. Ben Flemer, Station Manager, extricated the bird in a state of high excitement. As he and Banding Station volunteers Candace Martinez and Ganson “Jock” and Nancy Purcell examined this bird in the hand, it was clear that this was not one of the usual Red-eyed (*V. olivaceus*), Warbling (*V. gilvus*), or Philadelphia (*V. philadelphicus*) vireos. First, it was too big for Warbling or Philadelphia vireos. While Red-eyed Vireo-sized, it showed extensive yellow on the under-tail coverts and flanks – not a characteristic of the Red-eyed. The yellow color extended into the auricular region of the head but did not converge across the breast. The head markings (supercillium, eye line, and lateral crown stripe) and upper mandible color were also paler than in Red-eyed Vireo. Finally, the bill was very large (14.75mm exposed culmen length, which is 1.15mm longer than the longest Red-eyed culmen length) (Pyle 1997).



Left-side view of the Yellow-green Vireo. Note large bill and low contrast of facial markings. All photographs by Benjamin Flemer.

Suspecting that they had, in fact, netted a Yellow-green Vireo, however ridiculous that might seem, they called in Bill Gette, Joppa Flats Sanctuary Director and Master Bird Bander. Bill arrived and quickly confirmed the identification based on his experience in the Neotropics and in reference to a Panama field guide. The bird was processed, banded as a Yellow-green Vireo, photographed, and released.

The bird

This individual was aged as AHY (after hatch year, so an adult) by the eye color and presence of complete symmetrical molt of remiges and retricies (tail and flight feathers). It was of unknown sex, with evidence of moderate body molt. Other measurements are shown below.

<u>Wing Cord</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Exposed Culmen</u>	<u>Bill Length</u>	<u>Bill Width</u>	<u>Bill Depth</u>	<u>Tarsus</u>
79mm*	19.9g	14.75mm	10.24mm	4.53mm	4.75mm	17.1mm

*extensive primary molt evident



Right wing of Yellow-green Vireo. Note evidence of molt in tail and flight feathers.

Yellow-green Vireo

This species breeds from extreme southern Texas (Rio Grande Valley) through Mexico and across Central America, usually from March to June. It spends the non-

breeding season (approximately October to February) in South America in the eastern and northern Andes and in western Amazonia. Yellow-green Vireos are birds of open woodlands, gardens, and forest edges from sea level to 1500m. They are primarily insectivorous but also eat small fruits and berries. Their conservation status is Least Concern according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (BirdLife International 2009).

In the United States, Yellow-green Vireos have been reported from southern tier states (California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, and Florida, (Holder, 1996)). Hence, a banding record from Massachusetts is unprecedented. In the flurry of emails that arrived after the announcement of this bird, Oliver Barden (pers. commun.) mentioned a record for Yellow-green Vireo in Québec. Apparently, the bird in question was found dead on May 13, 1883 (Merriam 1883). The specimen was identified as a Yellow-green Vireo and sent to Robert Ridgeway at the Smithsonian who agreed that it was *V. flavoviridis*, though unusually small. The bird was preserved in alcohol and subsequently dried and is kept at the National Museum of Natural History (USNM 109920) in Washington, D.C. Questions arose as to whether the specimen could have been a hybrid Red-eyed x Philadelphia vireo (Phillips 1991). Holder examined the specimen again in the 1990s and discusses why he thinks it is a Yellow-green Vireo (Holder 1996). Yellow-green Vireo now appears on the official list of Quebec birds (David 1996) on the strength of this record. Measurements on this specimen by Peter Pyle (pers. commun. via David Sibley) a few years ago included wing (70.5mm), exposed culmen (14.9mm), and tarsus (17.1mm) numbers that are again suggestive but inconclusive. There are still plenty of uncertainties about this specimen. Perhaps someone will be able and willing to perform DNA testing on this specimen.

For now, we can conclude that the Yellow-green Vireo banded on Plum Island is either the first or second east coast record of this species north of Florida, definitely the first northeastern record in over 100 years, and absolutely the first Massachusetts and New England record.

Another interesting aspect of the Plum Island bird is the timing of its capture. The Florida and Louisiana records of this species cluster in the spring—perhaps the birds arrived with migrating Red-eyed Vireos returning from South America (Holder, 1996). Western U.S. records are more variable, but seem to be concentrated in the fall, perhaps birds that migrated north instead of south after breeding. The Quebec bird is another spring record. The Plum Island bird was captured in early September, which is out of the patterns (though the patterns are pretty skimpy). However, this vireo was molting its flight and tail feathers, suggesting that it could have been around for weeks before capture. Yellow-green Vireos molt earlier than Red-eyed (Pyle 1997), suggesting that they might complete outer primary molt on the breeding grounds before migrating. Could it have arrived in the spring on Plum Island and stayed through the breeding season? We will never know.

The authors benefited greatly from correspondence with Trevor Lloyd-Evans and David A. Sibley. 🐦

Benjamin Flemer is the Station Manager at the Joppa Flats Bird Banding Station on the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. He has been banding birds at stations and for projects across North America for 12 years. **William Gette** is the Sanctuary Director at Joppa Flats and a Master Bird Bander. He has years of experience with Neotropical birds, and he and Ben Flemer have taught bird banding in Belize. **David Larson** is the Education Coordinator at Joppa Flats and the Director of the Birder's Certificate Program and the Certificate Program in Bird Ecology (taught in the Neotropics).

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WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER BY DAVID LARSON

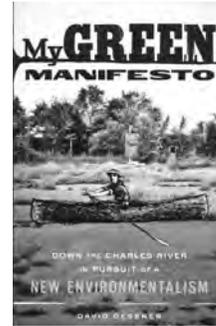
ABOUT BOOKS

Writing That Punk Osprey Tribute

Mark Lynch

My Green Manifesto: Down The Charles River In Pursuit Of A New Environmentalism. David Gessner. 2011. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Milkweed Editions.

It makes me long for a new sort of music, a music with energy, irreverence, and drive, a punk osprey tribute sung by say, the Sex Pistols. (p. 26)



These are tough times to be an environmentalist. Global climate change looms over everything like a cosmic Sword of Damocles. Sprawl, suburbanization, and forest fragmentation are in front of our eyes at every turn, particularly if you have been working on the *Breeding Bird Atlas II*. No sooner did I “Confirm” breeding Sedge Wren in one block than within months a McMansion was built on the very spot. I have many stories like that. What in the 1970s were farm fields with healthy populations of bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlarks are now housing developments or malls. Species that were once commonly found during the creation of the 1970s atlas are now local or gone. To add insult to habitat fragmentation, the public increasingly just doesn’t care anymore. We live in a culture in which a vocal and powerful segment regards environmentalism and science as a kind of sham, a shill. With our economy in the toilet, laws protecting endangered species or the environment are thought of as being in the way of progress and recovery. See for instance Motoko Rich and John Broder, “A Debate on Job Creation vs. Environmental Regulation.” *The New York Times*, Monday September 5, 2011, p. B1.

And where are the environmentalists? Although the situation has radically changed both socially and politically, calling for new and more dynamic approaches to encourage preservation and conservation, many environmentalists, like hoary green Dead Heads, keep preaching the same earthy crunchy over-earnest message from twenty years ago. For the average person with a family to raise, a job to attend to, and bills to pay, constant gloom and doom nagging about the state of nature is not appealing and is easy to ignore.

Many of us understand that the things environmentalists have long told us are right. Though we don’t actually do it, we know that we should eat and drive less. And on a deeper level, we know that we should conserve. We the people need to move away from our obsession with growth at all costs toward a dependence on local economies and obviously away from slurping down oil and gobbling resources like a bunch of drunken gluttons. Yes, we *know*, we *understand*. But all these *shoulds* and *needs*. What about *wants* and what about *fun*? We are Americans for God’s sake! (pp.7–8)

David Gessner, in *My Green Manifesto*, attempts to diagnose what is wrong with today's environmental movement and make some not so modest suggestions on what needs to be done to make it vital, necessary, and fun again. He accomplishes this while simultaneously recounting a canoe and kayak trip down the length of the mighty Charles River with his friend from Ultimate Frisbee, Dan Driscoll. Dan is pretty much what I would call "a regular guy" but one who dearly loves the natural world of the Charles River and who helped preserve many green spaces along its banks. Unlike what you may have read in other eco-manifestos, cigars are smoked in *My Green Manifesto*, many beers are drunk, the "f-bomb" is dropped, stupid things are done, and hilarity ensues. All of this is very much central to Gessner's thesis.

Over the course of only a decade, David Gessner has become one of the most interesting and important writers in America whose work often focuses on the natural world and the people who enjoy it. I hesitate to call him an environmental writer, a moniker he is often saddled with in the press, because he rebels mightily against being so easily pigeonholed. After his breakthrough book, *Return of the Osprey*, many readers wanted Gessner to forever remain that scruffy "osprey guy." Though Gessner has written one other book about ospreys, even these books were never just about the bird, but also about the life of a writer and, most of all, about place. As well as writing, he has taught unique university-level classes on Thoreau and Darwin. He has written passionately about Ultimate Frisbee and even dabbled in graphic novels.

My Green Manifesto is an articulation of ideas and concepts Gessner has been thrashing about previously in books like *Sick of Nature* and *The Prophet of Dry Hill: Lessons From a Life Lived in Nature*. Yes, the environmentalists are right, the world is doomed, so now what? And, if the world is indeed doomed (and Gessner believes it is), why are the majority of environmental writers and speakers so easily ignored? What can we do to make the love of the natural world vital again?

To start with, Gessner finds the tone of much of what passes for environmental writing to be too strident, too portentously grim, too preachy, and too Bolshevik. Environmentalist Derrick Jensen writes to Gessner, "You ask me what I think about so-called nature writing? I think the same about it that I think about any beautiful writing. There is no time for it. There is time for only one thing: *saving the earth*." (p. 62)

Eerily, this reminds me of a moment in the 1965 film of *Dr. Zhivago* when Red Army loose cannon Strelnikov (Pasha) talks to Zhivago about how he used to admire his poetry, "I shouldn't admire it now. I should find it absurdly personal. Don't you agree? Feelings, insights, affections... it's suddenly trivial now. You don't agree; you're wrong. The personal life is dead in Russia. History has killed it."

Gessner knows this attitude cannot motivate anyone for long. "What I am against, I suppose, is an environmentalism that feels like the intellectual equivalent of a panic attack." (p. 30)

Gessner is looking for what he terms a "sloppier" kind of passion about the natural world, one that acknowledges our human foibles and at the same time is wild and spontaneous and joyful. Though we all cannot live the life of Thoreau, we can at

least try to fall madly in love with nature again. Not just the “Big Nature” of the Rockies and Alaska and the jungles of South America, but our own backyard green spots. Local natural areas like the Charles River that have their own special and very accessible sense of wildness despite their imperfections. Gessner feels it is important to explore and learn to love a special place close to us, a place we can often visit and hopefully fall in love with. Gessner quotes one of his touchstone writers, John Hay:

John deeply believes that there isn't one box called NATURE and another box called HUMAN BEINGS. “Many people write about saving the environment,” he said in a 1978 speech to the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History. “But you can't save a thing unless you feel you are part of it.” And this is hard if the place is an abstracted wilderness far away. (p. 102)

Throughout *My Green Manifesto* is a running critique of Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger's *Breakthrough: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibilities*. Though this book is often touted as providing the next step in thinking about the environment, Gessner instead finds the book entirely lacking in any love or appreciation of the natural world. Gessner describes the book as if it had been written by two joyless Spocks aboard an Enterprise in orbit high above earth, never having set foot on the planet. This realpolitik antiseptic environmentalism is anathema to Gessner's belief, which is that you have to be out in the natural world as much as possible. You need to get dirty, develop a real passion for a place, and maybe go a little mad. Gessner wants an environmentalism that will anger people, ruffle feathers, and shake up the status quo. Gessner has a real desire to be the literary equivalent of Bob Dylan's electric set at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival.

But *My Green Manifesto* isn't simply a polemic. The story of David and Dan's buddy trip down the Charles River is by turns lyrical, historical, and comical. This is a book celebrating the places along the river many of us know: Nahanton Park, Cochrane Dam, Mount Feake Cemetery, Blue Heron Bridge, and the Esplanade. The trip is also filled with birds.

Just before launching into a celebration of the marvel of watching Black Skimmers feed, Gessner writes, “I am trying to be hardheaded and practical in the sort of environmentalism I'm putting forth here, but birds keep getting in the way.” (p. 130) Gessner's love and fascination with birds is found throughout *My Green Manifesto*, and there is nothing so important that even his manifesto can't wait to stop and appreciate an Osprey or a Great Blue Heron.

My Green Manifesto has two endings. One of these is Gessner's ending to his environmental polemic: a short list of how he wishes his book would affect the reader.

My fantasy reader would do three things.

1. Have a small love affair with something in the world.
2. Get in a fight.
3. Launch a larger project of self and the world. (p. 207)

Though these neatly summarize Gessner's ideas for a new environmentalism, you will have to actually read this enjoyable book to fully understand his second message.

My Green Manifesto is a plea for some genuine passion and humanity amidst all the rancor and stridency in the voices of many of today's environmentalists.

My Green Manifesto's postlude describes Gessner and his daughter, Hadley, canoeing to a small tidal island he often visits that is near his current home in North Carolina. Here they relax, enjoy the mud, the fiddler crabs, the sky, the herons, egrets, ibises, and skimmers. It is certain that this tidal island will not always be there, and world's environment may indeed be going to hell in a handbasket, but Gessner's message in the face of all this gloom is to tenaciously hold on to hope, and to enjoy and fight for the wild treasures in front of us. 🐦

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From Mass Wildlife: Updated Plant List of Massachusetts Published

Experienced and budding botanists, restoration ecologists, environmental consultants, foresters, land managers, conservation commissioners, and wildflower enthusiasts will be interested to learn that *The Vascular Plants of Massachusetts: A County Checklist* has been recently revised and is now available for purchase either as a hard copy or CD. Authored by former and current DFW botanists Bryan Connolly, Melissa Dow Cullina, Paul Somers, and Bruce Sorrie, the 270-page booklet includes 319 new taxa and 676 new county-level records since the first *Checklist* was published in 1999. A hard copy of the *Checklist* is \$25 and includes a CD. The CD alone can be purchased for \$5. Make checks payable to: NHESP—DFW and mail the check to “Plant Check List Booklet”, NHESP, 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA, 01581. Among the new and updated features of this revision are current Massachusetts Endangered Species status, invasive rank categories, and a function on the CD allowing for searches by older scientific names.

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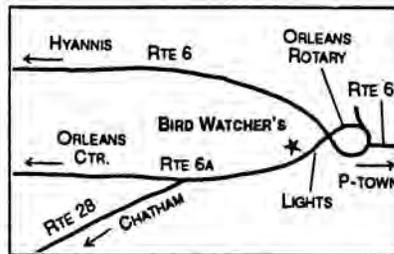


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BIRD SIGHTINGS

May-June 2011

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

The month of May was warm with an average temperature of 59.2° in Boston. The high reached 87° on May 27 and again on May 29 while the low of 44° was recorded on May 2. Measurable rain was recorded on 13 days with trace readings on three additional days leaving 15 days with no rain. The total precipitation was typical at 3.24 inches in Boston. Winds were from the south on May 3, 6, 23, 26, and 27 and from the southwest on May 24, 29, 30, and 31. A period of east and northeast winds from May 8 through May 22 resulted in grounded migrants, some of which could be seen for multiple days.

June's weather will long be remembered in western and central Massachusetts, as tornadoes tore through the area on June 1. A state of emergency was declared as winds created a destructive path, especially in the Springfield area. Strong tornadoes are rare but not unprecedented in Massachusetts. They include the Worcester tornado in 1953, which caused massive destruction and killed more than 90 people. The eastern half of the state escaped damage with less than an inch of rain and a peak gust of 38 mph from the southwest the day of the tornado. The high temperature in Boston for the month was 92° on June 9, and the low was 49° on June 5. Rainfall totaled 4.76 inches in Boston for the month, 1.54 inches above normal

R.H. Stymeist

Waterfowl through Alcids

Five **Black-bellied Whistling Ducks** spent the night at Great Meadows NWR in Concord on May 3. The initial observer was able to get a handful of other observers on them in the evening, and the following morning a few others were lucky to hear and see them at dawn. There are only two previous records of this species in Massachusetts, the most recent being a flock of five reported from Duxbury on April 29 of this year, almost surely the same flock. The first record accepted by the MARC was a flock of nine seen for one day on a pond in Ipswich on June 6, 2008. Other nice waterfowl included Greater White-fronted Geese in Winthrop and Waltham that lingered into May, which is unusually late for this species. Pacific Loons were reported from Provincetown, Manomet, and Rockport.

On April 26, a group of ornithology students were admiring a **White-faced Ibis** in Rowley when a Peregrine Falcon flew in and killed it. The killing was captured on video and posted to the Internet, removing any possible question that the ibis might have survived. It was then clearly a second White-faced Ibis that was seen in nearby Ipswich through the second week of May. Since 2003 this species has been reported almost annually in Essex County, and two individuals have been seen together intermittently since 2007. Because Tricolored Heron is unusual outside of Essex County, sightings in Chatham several weeks apart were interesting. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron is regularly seen in coastal counties, but an adult photographed in Lancaster was an unusual find.

Mississippi and **Swallow-tailed kites** have become an almost annual occurrence in the spring, particularly as flyovers from the Pilgrim Heights hawkwatch site in North Truro. This year, Pilgrim Heights seems to have struck the jackpot with seven individuals in a single day on May 26. But on May 29 a birder in Falmouth could scarcely believe his eyes when he spotted both Mississippi and Swallow-tailed kites overhead. Visitors over the next five days saw as many as nine Mississippi Kites.

A Rough-winged Hawk on May 14 was exceptionally late. One would think that the kite show on Cape Cod would be the raptor highlight of the May–June period, but on May 18 Ian Davies was eating lunch at Bartlett Pond in Manomet when he spotted a **Eurasian Hobby**. Although the bird left after only a few minutes, he got the word out and went to Manomet Point where he hoped to see it again. Luck was with him, and he was able to get unambiguous flight shots. Quoting Marshall Iliff, “There have been rumors and unconfirmed sightings from New Jersey and New York, but there is no indication that these were identified correctly or even reported with confidence by the observers. Ian’s bird (great find, Ian!) thus represents both the second record for the Lower 48 and the second for the East Coast (but the first for the Lower 48 on the East Coast).”

There were a reasonable number of reports of the two large rails, and reports of Sora were encouraging. **Common Moorhens** were reported from five probable breeding locations. A **Sandhill Crane** in central Quabbin may have been too early for a possible breeder.

American Oystercatchers were well-reported in Essex County as they continue to move their breeding territory farther north. A pair of **Black-necked Stilts** stayed at Allen’s Pond in South Dartmouth for five days, allowing a number of birders to enjoy them. Marbled Godwit is a regular fall migrant in Monomoy/South Beach area of Chatham, but June visits are uncommon. Stilt Sandpipers are also more typically seen in fall migration so sightings from two locations were noteworthy.

White-winged gulls were unusually well-reported for May; there are always a few stragglers along the coast, but inland sightings are rare for this time of year, making a sighting in Northampton on May 24 noteworthy. A flock of 17 Caspian Terns on Plymouth Beach on May 11 was extraordinary.

South Polar Skuas were reported from two locations, and an unidentified skua species from a third.

M. Rines

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck				6/thr	P.I.	1 m	v.o.
5/3-4	GMNWR	5	J. Trimble + v.o.	6/4-07	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1 m	M. Malin
Greater White-fronted Goose				6/12	Nantucket	2	T. Pastuszak
5/1-5	Winthrop	1	v.o.	Northern Shoveler			
5/1-28	Waltham	1	v.o.	5/13	P.I.	2	J. Berry#
Brant				5/23	W. Roxbury (MP)	1 ad m	M. Iliff
5/5	Eastham (F.E.)	100	B. Nikula	5/27	Bolton Flats	1 m	B. Kamp
5/6, 6/11	P.I.	232, 1	v.o.	6/13	Tolland	1	J. Weeks
5/14	Otis	1	W. Rogers	Northern Pintail			
5/23	Wachusett Res.	133	T. Pirro	5/30	P.I.	3	J. Berry
6/30	Chatham	1	B. Nikula	Green-winged Teal			
Wood Duck				5/1	Topsfield	15	P. + F. Vale
thr	GMNWR	32 max	v.o.	5/6	P.I.	32	R. Schain
5/14	Springfld Area	66	Allen Club	5/21	Chatham	3	B. Nikula
6/12	Wakefield	31	D. + I. Jewell	6/19	October Mt.	3	SSBC (GdE)
6/17	Newton	44	P. Peterson	Ring-necked Duck			
Gadwall				5/1	Southwick	6	S. Kellogg
5/28	W. Harwich	2	B. Nikula	5/14	Wompatuck SP	1 f	SSBC (GdE)
6/4	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	pr	M. Malin	5/14	GMNWR	1 m	S. Perkins#
6/22	P.I.	35	D. Chickering	5/15	Gloucester (E.P.)	2	S. + J. Mirick
6/23	Fairhaven	3 ad + 1 yg	Langevin	5/29	Lenox	1	S. Surner
Eurasian Wigeon				Greater Scaup			
5/16	E. Boston (B.I.)	1 m	R. Stymeist	5/5	Revere B.	1	P. + F. Vale#
American Wigeon				5/14	Wellfleet	1	M. Iliff
5/16	E. Boston (B.I.)	1 m	R. Stymeist	5/22	P.I.	2 f	G. d’Entremont#
American Black Duck				6/6	Lunenburg-8	1 ph	C. Caron
5/5	Chatham	120	B. Nikula	Lesser Scaup			
5/13	P.I.	47	R. Schain	5/22	P.I.	2	BBC (J. Center)
5/20	S. Quabbin	10	G. d’Entremont#	King Eider			
Blue-winged Teal				5/1-6/15	Gloucester (B.R.)	1 m ad	v.o.
5/4	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	Common Eider			
5/9	Bolton Flats	5	N. Paulson	6/7	Cape Ann	340 ad, 62 juv	R. Heil
5/21	Wachusett Res.	2	B. Kamp	6/14	Revere B.	57	P. Peterson

Common Eider (continued)				5/22	P.I.	60	V. Zollo
6/24 Nahant	62 (44 yg)	R. Stymeist#		Pacific Loon			
Harlequin Duck				5/14	P'town	1	B. Nikula
5/14 N. Scituate	1 pr	SSBC (GdE)		5/27-28	Manomet	1	J. Trimble#
5/15 Nantucket	1	E. Ray		6/7	Rockport	1 ad ph	R. Heil
5/15 Rockport (A.P.)	3 f	S. + J. Mirick		Common Loon			
5/19 Manomet	6	E. Nielsen		5/15	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	750	N. Paulson#
Surf Scoter				5/15	Tuckernuck	50	R. Veit
5/6 Gloucester (E.P.)	45	J. Nelson		5/19	Southwick	8	S. Kellogg
5/22 Truro	40	B. Nikula		5/20	Petersham	15	M. Lynch#
5/25 Nahant	2	L. Pivacek		6/18	Quabbin Pk	4	M. Martin
6/11 Duxbury B.	3	R. Bowes		6/25	Wachusett Res. pr.	2 juv	B. deGraaf
6/23 Nantucket	1 ad m	S. Perkins#		Pied-billed Grebe			
White-winged Scoter				5/19	Washington	1	E. Neumuth
5/10 Rockport (A.P.)	470	R. Heil		5/19	IRWS	1	S. Santino
5/19 Waltham	4	J. Forbes#		5/21	Topsfield	1	J. Berry#
5/19 Turners Falls	7	J. Smith		6/1-23	Fairhaven	1	C. Longworth
5/21 Wachusett Res.	17	B. Kamp		6/12	GMNWR	1	G. d'Entremont#
6/19 P.I.	10	T. Wetmore		Horned Grebe			
Black Scoter				5/5	Revere B.	1	P. + F. Vale#
5/10, 6/14 Rockport (A.P.)	46, 1	R. Heil		5/9	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore
5/21 Nahant	52	L. Pivacek		5/11	Wachusett Res.	1	T. Pirro
6/5 P.I.	42	T. Wetmore		5/20	S. Quabbin	1 br	M. Lynch#
6/8-19 Duxbury B.	1 m ad	R. Bowes		Red-necked Grebe			
Long-tailed Duck				5/4	Southwick	3	S. Kellogg
5/12, 6/5 P.I.	800, 2	T. Wetmore		5/7	N. Scituate	2	BBC (GdE)
5/19 Ipswich (C.B.)	6	J. Berry		5/9	Manomet	5	J. Johnson
6/30 Chatham	4	B. Nikula		5/15	Rockport	2	S. + J. Mirick
Bufflehead				Northern Fulmar			
5/5 P.I.	4	S. Santino		5/3	N. Stellwagen	3 lt	J. Frontierro
5/13 Oak Bluffs	1	J.M. Nelson		5/15	Tuckernuck	2 lt	R. Veit
5/21 Wachusett Res.	1 f	N. Paulson		5/22	Jeffries L.	1	K. Hartel
Common Goldeneye				5/22	N. Truro	1	B. Nikula
6/27 Newbyrt H.	1	MAS (D. Larson)		6/25	Nant. Shoals	2	BBC (N. Yusuff)
Hooded Merganser				Cory's Shearwater			
5/22 GMNWR	2 f, yg	D. Bates#		6/23	Nantucket	10	S. Perkins#
6/1 Dedham	3	V. Zollo		6/25	Nant. Shoals	12	BBC (N. Yusuff)
6/3 Westboro	1 f, 6 juv	S. Arena		6/28	P'town	2	B. Nikula
6/16 Belchertown	7	L. Therrien		Great Shearwater			
6/19 Sterling-10	2	C. Caron		6/12	Stellwagen	200	SSBC (Petersen)
Common Merganser				6/25	Nant. Shoals	376	BBC (N. Yusuff)
5/15 S. Dart. (A.Pd)	4 f	N. Paulson#		6/27	Jeffries L.	167	MAS (D. Larson)
5/23 S. Quabbin	7	L. Therrien		6/28	N. Truro	3	B. Nikula
5/30 Petersham	pr	M. Lynch#		Sooty Shearwater			
6/20 Ashburnham-6	1	C. Caron		5/15	Tuckernuck	6	R. Veit
Red-breasted Merganser				5/21, 6/28	P'town	2, 45	B. Nikula
5/12, 6/15 P'town	600, 43	B. Nikula		5/21, 6/27	Jeffries L.	3, 28	Front., Larson
5/14 Manomet	220	I. Davies#		5/22, 6/28	N. Truro	4, 20	B. Nikula
6/8 Duxbury B.	6	R. Bowes		6/12	Stellwagen	450	SSBC (Petersen)
Ruddy Duck				6/25	Nant. Shoals	1303	BBC (N. Yusuff)
5/7 Pembroke	41	BBC (GdE)		Manx Shearwater			
5/10 Waltham	2	J. Forbes		5/15	N. Truro	1	B. Nikula
5/20-6/30 Chestnut Hill	2	v.o.		5/18	P'town	6	B. Nikula
5/21 Wachusett Res.	1	B. Kamp		6/12	Stellwagen	13	SSBC (Petersen)
Northern Bobwhite				6/25	Nant. Shoals	2	BBC (N. Yusuff)
5/12 Cumb. Farms	1	M. Iliiff		6/27	Jeffries L.	9	MAS (D. Larson)
5/15 Nantucket	2	J. Van Vorst		6/30	Revere B.	17	R. Stymeist
5/16 Truro	4	G. d'Entremont#		Wilson's Storm-Petrel			
5/22 Chatham	1	M. Keleher		5/13	Manchester	3	J. Nelson
Ring-necked Pheasant				5/15	Tuckernuck	500	R. Veit
5/15 Saugus (Bear C.)	3	S. Zende#		5/18, 6/28	P'town	10, 85	B. Nikula
6/4 Woburn	1	P. Ippolito		6/25	Nant. Sound	200+	S. Perkins#
6/14 Nantucket	2	B. Harris		6/27	Jeffries L.	950	MAS (D. Larson)
Ruffed Grouse				6/28	N. Truro	40	B. Nikula
5/1 C. Quabbin	18	L. Therrien		Leach's Storm-Petrel			
5/7 Lancaster	2	T. Pirro		5/21	Jeffries L.	2	J. Frontierro
5/29 W. Barnstable	1	M. Keleher		6/15	P'town	1	B. Nikula
6/18 Alford	6	J. Young		6/25	Nant. Shoals	8	BBC (N. Yusuff)
Red-throated Loon				Northern Gannet			
5/11 Eastham (F.E.)	38	B. Nikula		5/7, 6/11	Duxbury B.	3, 35	R. Bowes
5/15 Tuckernuck	100	R. Veit		5/10, 6/14	Rockport (A.P.)	79, 105	R. Heil
5/17 Rockport (A.P.)	314	R. Heil		5/10	Dennis (Corp. B.)	720	B. Nikula
5/18, 6/5 P'town	14, 1	B. Nikula		5/11	Eastham (F.E.)	535	B. Nikula

Northern Gannet (continued)				6/18-21	E. Boston (B.I.)	1	P. Peterson
5/15	Tuckernuck	2500	R. Veit	White-faced Ibis			
5/22, 6/14	P'town	950, 450	B. Nikula	5/8-16	Ipswich	1 ad ph	Iliff + v.o.
6/12	Stellwagen	125	SSBC (Petersen)	Black Vulture			
Double-crested Cormorant				5/8	P'town	1	B. Nikula
5/12	P.I.	500+	T. Wetmore	5/16	Lee	2	R. Laubach
5/14	Springfld Area	52	Allen Club	5/22	Sheffield	2	J. Forbes#
5/25	Westport	135	BBC (R. Stymeist)	5/28	Westport	2	J. Hoye#
6/7	Cape Ann	730	R. Heil	6/15	Westminster	1	T. Pirro
Great Cormorant				Turkey Vulture			
5/14	Manomet	2 1W	I. Davies#	5/thr	N. Truro	228	Hawkcount (DM)
5/14	N. Scituate	2 imm	SSBC (GdE)	5/25	Westport	26	BBC (R. Stymeist)
5/25	Westport	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)	6/26	Georgetown	12	P. + F. Vale
5/25	Manchester (KI)	1 imm	J. Berry#	Osprey			
American Bittern				5/6	Duxbury B.	6	R. Bowes
thr	P.I.	1	v.o.	5/25	Westport	18	BBC (R. Stymeist)
5/7	N. Truro	2	B. Nikula	6/4	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	8	M. Malin
5/9	Bolton Flats	3	N. Paulson	6/16	Rowley-Ipswich	14	J. Berry#
5/13	GMNWR	1	F. Vale	Swallow-tailed Kite			
5/14	W. Bridgewater	1	S. Arena#	5/29	Chatham	1	J. Kaar
5/17	E. Boston (B.I.)	1	M. Garvey	5/29-31	Falmouth	1 ph	B. Porter + v.o.
6/11	Westboro	1	C. Caron	Mississippi Kite			
6/19	October Mt.	1	SSBC (GdE)	5/25	Brewster	3	D. Clapp
Least Bittern				5/26	Warren	1 ph	Mark Pearson
5/15	Cumb. Farms	2	N. Paulson#	5/26	N. Truro	7	Hawkcount (DM)
5/15	P.I.	2	R. + E. McClure	5/29	P'town	1	B. Nikula
5/31	Wayland	2	B. Harris	5/29	Westwood	1	E. Nielsen
6/19	W. Bridgewater	3 pr ph	S. Arena	5/29-6/3	Falmouth	4-9 ph	B. Porter#
6/20	E. Boston	2	J. Hoye#	5/30	Chatham	1	D. Schain
6/29	GMNWR	2	A. Bragg#	6/2, 17	N. Truro	2, 1	Hawkcount (DM)
Great Egret				6/3, 6	Nantucket	1, 2	LoPresti, Blacks.
5/4	Lanesboro	1	M. Kelly	Bald Eagle			
5/12, 6/12	Salisbury	27, 61	S. McGrath	5/6	Truro	4	E. Hoopes
5/25	Manchester (KI)	181 nests	S. Perkins#	5/11	Lunenburg	pr, 2 juv n	D. Martin
5/14	Edgartown	7	J.M. Nelson	5/26	Wachusett Res.	pr n	K. Bourinot
5/29	Winthrop	9	P. + F. Vale	Northern Harrier			
Snowy Egret				5/1	Cumb. Farms	3	W. Webb#
5/5	Winthrop	5	P. + F. Vale#	5/6	P'town Airport	2	B. Nikula
5/25	Manchester (KI)	234 nests	S. Perkins#	5/6	P.I.	10	Hawkcount (PR)
6/7	P.I.	40	S. Ramos	5/8	Westboro	1	S. Arena
Little Blue Heron				5/8	Hadley	1	L. Therrieng
5/4	Squantum	1	BBC (Ferraresso)	5/14	Agawam	1	S. Kellogg
5/16-6/25	DWWS	1 ad	v.o.	5/15	Saugus (Bear C.)	1	S. Zende#
5/25	Manchester (KI)	15 prs	S. Perkins#	Sharp-shinned Hawk			
6/13	Harwich	1	M. Faherty	5/thr	N. Truro	144	Hawkcount (DM)
6/20-26	Sterling	1	K. Bourinot + v.o.	5/1	Barre Falls	4	Hawkcount (BK)
6/28	Nantucket	1 ad	B. Harris	5/6	P.I.	115	Hawkcount (PR)
6/30	Chatham	1	B. Nikula	6/4	Granville	1	S. Kellogg
Tricolored Heron				6/4	Woburn	1	P. Ippolito
5/22, 6/12	Chatham	1	Keleher, Grant	6/7	Nantucket	1 imm	K. Blackshaw
5/30	P.I.	1	S. Grinley#	6/19	Sutton	1	M. Lynch#
Green Heron				Cooper's Hawk			
5/14	Springfld Area	8	Allen Club	5/3	Mt.A.	2	P. + F. Vale
5/15	S. Peabody	3	R. Heil	5/6	P.I.	8	Hawkcount (PR)
5/25	P'town	4	B. Nikula	5/6-31	Medford	pr n	M. Rines
6/4	Fairhaven	3	C. Longworth	6/25	Monterey	2	M. Lynch#
6/13	W. Roxbury	4	P. Peterson	Northern Goshawk			
6/15	N. Andover	pr	J. Berry#	5/1-6/18	Groveland	2	K. Elwell
Black-crowned Night-Heron				5/7	Williamstown	1	C. Jones
5/8	W. Harwich	11	B. Nikula	6/4	Russell	1	A. + L. Richardson
5/25	Manchester (KI)	47 nests	S. Perkins#	6/19	October Mt.	2	SSBC (GdE)
5/29	Nantucket	6	K. Blackshaw#	Red-shouldered Hawk			
6/7	Arlington	20	M. Rines	5/12	Upton	pr	N. Paulson
6/13	Harwich	10	M. Faherty	5/20	Milton	3 juv	C. Corey#
6/21	Salem (Eagle I.)	8 (7 juv)	J. Berry#	5/25	Westport	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron				5/31	Falmouth	4	C. Gras
6/17	Lancaster	1 ad ph	R. Lavergne	6/4	Fitchburg-8	2	C. Caron
6/27	Plymouth H.	1 ad	S. Fenwick	6/18	Groveland	2	J. Offermann
Glossy Ibis				Broad-winged Hawk			
5/11	Squantum	1	BBC (Ferraresso)	5/thr	N. Truro	120	Hawkcount (DM)
5/15	S. Peabody	6	R. Heil	5/1	Westboro	3	S. Arena
5/25	Manchester (KI)	88 nests	S. Perkins#	5/1	Reading	pr n	D. Williams#
6/2	Duxbury B.	24	R. Bowes	5/12	Upton	pr	N. Paulson

Broad-winged Hawk (continued)				5/22, 6/11	Chatham (S.B.)	350, 60	B. Nikula
6/4	Blandford	5	M. & K. Conway	5/29	Plymouth B.	50	SSBC (GdE)
6/5	Rehoboth	2	K. Bartels	American Golden-Plover			
6/19	October Mt.	3	SSBC (GdE)	5/7	Duxbury B.	2 ph	R. Bowes
Rough-legged Hawk				5/14	Edgartown	1	J.M. Nelson
5/14	Rowley	1 dk	D. + S. Larson	5/21	Bolton Flats	1	N. Paulson
American Kestrel				Semipalmated Plover			
5/thr	N. Truro	88	Hawkcount (DM)	5/1	Duxbury B.	1	R. Bowes
5/1	Carlisle	pr	A. Ankers#	5/5	Falmouth	7	I. Nisbet
5/1	Cumb. Farms	4	W. Webb#	5/5, 5/22	Chatham	4, 40	B. Nikula
5/1	Saugus (Bear C.)	5	S. Zende#	5/12-6/22	P.I.	127 max	v.o.
5/6	P.I.	49	Hawkcount (PR)	5/14	Plymouth H.	25	SSBC (GdE)
5/10	Concord	2	S. Perkins#	5/23	Turners Falls	8	M. Fairbrother
5/14	W. Bridgewater	2	S. Arena#	5/23	Bolton Flats	14	T. Pirro
Merlin				Piping Plover			
5/thr	N. Truro	19	Hawkcount (DM)	5/19	Ipswich (C.B.)	21	J. Berry
5/6	P.I.	6	Hawkcount (PR)	5/29	Plymouth B.	14	SSBC (GdE)
5/12	Concord	1	S. Perkins	6/29	P.I.	20	MAS (D. Larson)
5/18	Manomet	1	I. Davies	6/30	Revere B.	12	R. Stymeist
5/23	Medford	1	P. Peterson	American Oystercatcher			
6/4	Windsor	1	J. Rose	thr	Duxbury B.	pr	R. Bowes
Eurasian Hobby				5/26	G. Brewster I.	6	R. Stymeist#
5/18	Manomet	1 ph	I. Davies#	5/26	Boston (Snake I.)	10	R. Stymeist#
Peregrine Falcon				5/28	Gloucester H.	4	D. Marchant
5/9	P.I.	3	M. Iliff	6/3	Newbypt H.	2	D. Larson
5/14	Holyoke	3	D. McLain	6/21	Salem	pr w yg	J. Berry#
5/18	Longmeadow	2	B. Hodgkins	6/21	Marblehead	nest/3 eggs	J. Berry#
5/21	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	2	P. Champlin	Black-necked Stilt			
5/29	Woburn	pr	M. Rines#	5/30-6/4	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	2	B. Loughlin + v.o.
Clapper Rail				Spotted Sandpiper			
5/20	W. Barnstable	1	J. Trimble	5/9	Bolton Flats	30	N. Paulson
5/31-6/25	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	P. Champlin	5/14	Springfld Area	17	Allen Club
6/3	Westport	1	J. Hoye#	5/15	Saugus (Bear C.)	5	S. Zende#
6/22-26	P.I.	1	D. Chickering#	5/19	Longmeadow	5	T. Gagnon
King Rail				5/21	Newton	6	P. Gilmore
5/13, 6/19	W. Bridgewater	2, 2	S. Arena#	5/24	P.I.	8	R. Heil
5/22	Bolton Flats	1	R. Jenkins	Solitary Sandpiper			
6/11	GMNWR	1	S. Perkins#	5/3	Concord (NAC)	11	S. Perkins#
6/17-23	E. Boston (B.I.)	1	R. Schain + v.o.	5/8	Topsfield	26	D. Chickering#
Virginia Rail				5/9	Bolton Flats	28	N. Paulson
5/7	Burlington	4	M. Rines	5/19	Longmeadow	3	T. Gagnon
5/12	GMNWR	8	S. Perkins#	5/26	Lee	2	S. Kellogg
5/13, 6/19	W. Bridgewater	17, 29	S. Arena#	Greater Yellowlegs			
5/20	W. Barnstable	6	J. Trimble	thr	P.I.	131 max	v.o.
5/22	Bolton Flats	5	R. Stymeist#	5/5	Eastham (F.E.)	110	B. Nikula
5/22	Ware R. IBA	6	M. Lynch#	5/7	Bolton Flats	18	T. Pirro
Sora				5/14	Longmeadow	11	M. & K. Conway
5/2, 24	P.I.	3, 3	T. Wetmore	5/27	P.I.	19	K. Elwell
5/4	GMNWR	2	R. Schain#	6/30	Chatham	3	B. Nikula
5/13	W. Bridgewater	3	S. Arena#	Willet			
5/14	Ipswich	3	J. Berry	thr	P.I.	40 max	v.o.
5/16	E. Boston (B.I.)	3	M. Iliff#	5/7, 6/11	Duxbury B.	23, 33	R. Bowes
6/15	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	5/8	Chatham	40	B. Nikula
6/30	Hamilton	2	J. Berry	5/14	Edgartown	20	J.M. Nelson
Common Moorhen				6/11	Chatham (S.B.)	25	B. Nikula
5/8-6/30	Lenox	1	G. Hurley	6/13	Rowley	27	J. Berry
5/21-6/3	Bolton Flats	1	N. Paulson + v.o.	Lesser Yellowlegs			
5/23-6/17	Groveland	1-2	S. Haydock	thr	P.I.	15 max	v.o.
6/thr	GMNWR	1-2	v.o.	5/8	W. Harwich	2	B. Nikula
6/19	W. Bridgewater	1	S. Arena	5/9	Rowley	15	J. Center
American Coot				5/9	Bolton Flats	18	N. Paulson
6/4	Fairhaven	1	C. Longworth	5/14	Longmeadow	7	M. & K. Conway
6/10	GMNWR	1	S. Arena	Upland Sandpiper			
Sandhill Crane				5/thr	Plymouth airport	4 max	v. o.
5/7	C. Quabbin	1	L. Therrien#	5/22	Hanscom	1	D. Bates#
Black-bellied Plover				6/23	Westover	4	S. Surner
5/7, 6/15	Duxbury B.	72, 2	R. Bowes	6/25	Saugus (Bear C.)	1	J. Berry#
5/8	Orleans	225	P. Trull	6/25	Falmouth	1	M. Keleher#
5/14-6/30	P.I.	46 max	v.o.	Marbled Godwit			
5/16	Bolton Flats	7	T. Pirro	6/11	Chatham (S.B.)	1	B. Nikula
5/18	E. Boston (B.I.)	54	R. Stymeist#	Ruddy Turnstone			
5/19	GMNWR	2	S. Perkins	5/1-6/19	Duxbury B.	225 max	R. Bowes
5/19	Northampton	39	B. Bieda	5/15-6/10	P.I.	8 max	v.o.

Ruddy Turnstone (continued)				Wilson's Phalarope			
5/22, 6/5	Chatham (S.B.)	500, 130	B. Nikula	5/4-30	Rowley/P.I.	6 max	v.o.
5/29	Plymouth B.	30	SSBC (GdE)	6/30	Chatham	2	B. Bushnell
Red Knot				Red-necked Phalarope			
5/22	Chatham	150	C. Goodrich	5/10	Brewster	1	D. Clapp
5/22, 6/11	Chatham (S.B.)	45, 22	B. Nikula	5/14	Orleans	20	C. Goodrich
5/28-6/15	Duxbury B.	1	R. Bowes	5/15	Tuckernuck	400	R. Veit
5/29	Plymouth B.	1	SSBC (GdE)	5/21	Jeffries L.	150	J. Frontierro
6/22	P.I.	3	MAS(B. Gette)	5/28	Bolton Flats	1 ph	B. Kamp#
Sanderling				Red Phalarope			
5/11	P.I.	72	MAS (D. Weaver)	5/17	E. Boston (B.I.)	1 br pl	M. Garvey#
5/19	Ipswich (C.B.)	61	J. Berry	5/18	Longmeadow	1	B. Hodgkins
5/22, 6/5	Chatham (S.B.)	2000, 28	B. Nikula	5/20-21	Quabbin Pk	1 ph	D. Small#
5/29	Plymouth B.	300	SSBC (GdE)	5/21	Jeffries L.	4	J. Frontierro
Semipalmated Sandpiper				Black-legged Kittiwake			
5/14, 5/29	Plymouth B.	3, 300	Davies, GdE	5/16	P'town	1	B. Nikula
5/15	Groton	10	B. Hill	5/17	Rockport (A.P.)	1 1S	R. Heil
5/20, 6/26	P.I.	200, 2	Gras, McClure	Bonaparte's Gull			
5/22, 6/11	Chatham (S.B.)	2000, 8	B. Nikula	5/17-6/30	P.I.	500 max	v.o.
5/29	Nahant	143	P. + F. Vale	5/17	Rockport (A.P.)	130	R. Heil
Least Sandpiper				Black-headed Gull			
5/7-6/7	P.I.	60 max	v.o.	5/18	Manomet	55	I. Davies
5/8	W. Harwich	145	B. Nikula	5/19	Ipswich (C.B.)	300	J. Berry
5/10	Topsfield	65	R. Heil	5/29, 6/18	Nahant	250, 60	L. Pivacek
5/16	Longmeadow	41	T. Alicea	Little Gull			
5/22	Turners Falls	15	M. Fairbrother	5/20-21	P.I.	1	C. Gras + v.o.
White-rumped Sandpiper				Laughing Gull			
5/8	Topsfield	1	I. Giriunas	5/18-24	P.I.	1 1S	B. Harris + v.o.
5/8-6/11	P.I.	20 max	v.o.	5/27	Revere B.	2	Stymeist, Hartel
5/19	Longmeadow	2	T. Gagnon	5/29-6/24	Lynn /Nahant	2-3	L. Pivacek + v.o.
5/21	Duxbury B.	1	R. Bowes	6/30	P.I.	1 ad	T. Wetmore
5/22	Chatham (S.B.)	15	B. Nikula	Iceland Gull			
Pectoral Sandpiper				Lesser Black-backed Gull			
5/2	HRWMA	5	T. Pirro	5/14	Orleans	200	P. Trull
5/6	Bolton Flats	3	P. Sowizral	5/14	Plymouth B.	600	I. Davies#
5/7	Longmeadow	2	T. Alicea	5/17	Rockport (A.P.)	10 ad	R. Heil
5/11	Topsfield	2	O. Spaulding#	5/22	N. Truro	200	B. Nikula
5/18	Longmeadow	1	J. Hutchison	6/5	P'town	200	B. Nikula
5/21	S. Dart. (A. Pd.)	1	G. d'Entremont#	Wilson's Snipe			
Purple Sandpiper				American Woodcock			
5/1	Plymouth B.	20	S. Hecker	5/13	P.I.	f on nest/4 eggs	J. Berry#
5/14	N. Scituate	30	SSBC (GdE)	5/13	Wareham	7	M. Lynch#
5/15	Gloucester (B.R.)	30	S. + J. Mirick	5/14	Springfld Area	18	Allen Club
5/19	Salisbury	125	P. + F. Vale	5/15	S. Peabody	5 ad	R. Heil
Dunlin				Wilson's Snipe			
5/2	HRWMA	4	T. Pirro	5/7	Bolton Flats	8	T. Pirro
5/5	Bolton Flats	4	P. Meleski	6/12	Tyringham	4	M. & K. Conway
5/7, 6/15	Duxbury B.	449, 1	R. Bowes	6/19	October Mt.	1	SSBC (GdE)
5/8	Orleans	350	P. Trull	Caspian Tern			
5/22, 6/11	Chatham (S.B.)	2500, 2	B. Nikula	5/1-18	P.I.	1-3	v.o.
5/22	Turners Falls	5	M. Fairbrother	5/11	Plymouth B.	17 ph	L. McDowell
5/30	Wachusett Res.	3	B. Kamp	5/15-19	Truro	1	J. Young#
Stilt Sandpiper				Black Tern			
5/7-11	Rowley	1	v.o.	6/23	Nantucket	1 ad	B. Harris#
5/20-21	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	P. Champlin	Least Tern			
Short-billed Dowitcher				Caspian Tern			
5/8, 22	Chatham	2, 15	B. Nikula	5/1-18	P.I.	1-3	v.o.
5/22	Turners Falls	325	M. Fairbrother	5/11	Plymouth B.	17 ph	L. McDowell
5/24-6/13	P.I.	24 max	v.o.	5/15-19	Truro	1	J. Young#
5/25-6/11	Duxbury B.	24 max	R. Bowes	6/23	Nantucket	1 ad	B. Harris#
5/30	Wachusett Res.	5	B. Kamp	Black Tern			
6/11	Chatham (S.B.)	7	B. Nikula	5/18	Dennis	2	E. Hoopes
Wilson's Snipe				Black Tern			
5/7	Bolton Flats	8	T. Pirro	5/18	GMNWR	1	S. Perkins#
6/12	Tyringham	4	M. & K. Conway	5/18-27	P.I.	1-3	v.o.
6/19	October Mt.	1	SSBC (GdE)	5/19	Ipswich (C.B.)	1	J. Berry
American Woodcock				Least Tern			
5/13	P.I.	f on nest/4 eggs	J. Berry#	5/20, 30	Petersham	1, 1	M. Lynch#
5/13	Wareham	7	M. Lynch#	5/26	Wachusett Res.	1	K. Bourinot
5/14	Springfld Area	18	Allen Club				
5/15	S. Peabody	5 ad	R. Heil				
6/8	Greylock	4	T. Gagnon				

Black Tern (continued)				Black Skimmer			
5/29	Plymouth B.	1 ad	SSBC (GdE)	5/22	Chatham	2	B. Nikula
6/11	Chatham (S.B.)	1	B. Nikula	6/13	Harwich	1	M. Faherty
6/27	Nantucket	1 ad	B. Harris	South Polar Skua			
Roseate Tern				6/12	Stellwagen	1 ph	SSBC (Petersen)
5/14	Plymouth B.	4	I. Davies#	6/21	Nantucket	1	V. Laux#
5/15	Tuckernuck	250	R. Veit	Skua species			
5/19	Ipswich (C.B.)	11	J. Berry	6/25	Nant. Shoals	1	BBC (N. Yusuff)
5/21	P.I.	16	S. Sullivan#	Pomarine Jaeger			
5/22	Falmouth	35	G. Hirth	5/15	Tuckernuck	2 lt	R. Veit
5/29	Plymouth B.	6	SSBC (GdE)	5/20	Duxbury B.	1 ph	R. Bowes
6/4	Marion	30+	M. Lynch#	5/30	P'town	1	P. Trull
6/27	Newbypt H.	3	MAS (D. Larson)	6/25	Nant. Shoals	1	BBC (N. Yusuff)
Common Tern				Parasitic Jaeger			
thr	Plymouth B.	1400 max	v.o.	5/15	Tuckernuck	10	R. Veit
5/6-6/30	P.I.	300 max	v.o.	5/15, 18	P'town	6, 8	B. Nikula
5/15	Tuckernuck	3000	R. Veit	5/17	Rockport (A.P.)	7	R. Heil
5/19	GMNWR	1 ad	S. Perkins	5/31, 6/15	P'town	4, 2	B. Nikula
5/20	Petersham	1 ad	M. Lynch#	6/12	Stellwagen	4	SSBC (Petersen)
5/22	P'town	1200	B. Nikula	Common Murre			
5/22	N. Truro	500	B. Nikula	6/14	Rockport (A.P.)	7	R. Heil
6/1	E. Boston	80	R. Cressman	6/15	P'town	1	B. Nikula
Arctic Tern				6/25	Nant. Shoals	1	BBC (N. Yusuff)
5/16	Truro	3	G. d'Entremont#	Thick-billed Murre			
5/17, 6/14	Rockport (A.P.)	15, 1	R. Heil	5/3	N. Stellwagen	3	J. Frontiero
5/18	P.I.	2	B. Harris	Razorbill			
5/18	Plymouth B.	1	S. Hecker	5/3	N. Stellwagen	1	J. Frontiero
6/5	P'town	2 (1S)	B. Nikula	5/16	P'town	3	B. Nikula
Forster's Tern				5/17	Rockport (A.P.)	1 br pl	R. Heil
5/14, 6/29	P.I.	1, 1	Daley, Larson	Black Guillemot			
				6/30	Rockport	5	J. Frontiero

Doves through Finches

Eurasian Collared Doves were noted from two locations during May. Prior to these reports there were just two other records approved by the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, the first in Ipswich on May 28, 2005, and another on Morris Island in Chatham on October 30, 2006. **White-winged Doves** were observed from three locations. Although still uncommon in the state, there have now been at least 30 reports since 1961. The three Monk Parakeets continued in East Boston, adding additional material to their expanding nest. The nesting season begins for most birds in earnest during this period. Owlets for some owls are finally getting ready to branch after at least 45 days in the nest. Several reports of young Eastern Screech, Barred, and Horned owls were received, but probably the most watched and photographed Great Horned Owl family in Massachusetts was the pair that built their nest among the thorns of a Honey Locust tree at Mount Auburn Cemetery.

By mid-May, Common Nighthawks were being noted with a high count of 50 from Granby. Two **Chuck-will's-widows** were heard at Pochet Island in Orleans where they have been reported for several years, and another Chuck was heard in Westport. Whip-poor-wills were noted from many locations including Plum Island, where at least 20 calling birds were noted on May 13. Manomet banded 25 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds during the month of May, and at least 16 individuals were reported from Plum Island during the height of the honeysuckle bloom, a favorite food source.

The first southwest wind of the month on May 23–24 brought the month's high temperature and a fallout of birds. Plum Island birders recorded 139 species. The fallout was also noted on Cape Cod where the sun came out after weeks of clouds and northeast winds, and warblers were seen in excellent numbers at the Beech Forest in Provincetown. The day of the Mass Audubon Bird-a-thon on May 14 birders worked hard and came up with a high count of 155 species on Plum Island alone. There were 22 species of warblers noted on the Refuge that day including Cape May and **Yellow-throated** warblers. Another late wave on May 27 on Plum

Island produced an explosion of empids: 16 Willow, eight Alder, one Yellow-bellied, and two Least flycatchers, as well as six Mourning Warblers.

The Allen Bird Club's annual census of Hampden County on May 13-14 produced excellent numbers of both migrants and breeding birds. New record high numbers were established for Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Pileated Woodpecker. There were excellent counts for Warbling Vireo (180), Veery (104), Wood Thrush (192), Yellow Warbler (239), Ovenbird (138), and Baltimore Oriole (340). Several species have been declining in recent years, notably Least Flycatcher, House Wren, Field Sparrow, and Bobolink.

Thirty-five species of warblers plus hybrid Brewster's and Lawrence's, and a Western Palm Warbler were tallied during the period, one better than last year. **Golden-winged Warblers** continue to be very scarce with just two reports, from Windsor and Plum Island. The Plum Island bird was held in place during the northeast winds of May 15-19, affording many birders the chance to see this declining bird. Orange-crowned Warblers are uncommon in the spring, but four reports were received. One, banded at Manomet, was the first spring Orange-crowned there in 38 years! Nine **Prothonotary Warblers** were reported in this period compared with just one during the same period last year. White-eyed Vireos were well represented throughout the state, and two Philadelphia Vireos, uncommon in spring, were noted.

The bird of the period was a **Cassin's Sparrow** in Truro, a first state record pending acceptance by the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee. The normal range of this sparrow is in the western United States grasslands. The bird arrived during the period of northeast winds and remained in the area for five days allowing many birders an opportunity to see and study this exciting vagrant. Other sparrow highlights included nine reported Clay-colored and a late Fox Sparrow in Concord. A Dickcissel, an uncommon spring migrant and a first spring record for Mt Auburn Cemetery, delighted many birders as it sang for two days. *R.H. Stymeist*

Eurasian Collared-Dove				5/13	Wareham	3	M. Lynch#
5/12-20	Chatham	1	B. Fletcher	5/thr	Mt.A.	ad + 2 yg	v.o.
5/14-15	Nantucket	1 ph	S. Langer#	Barred Owl			
White-winged Dove				5/1-08	Westboro	pr	S. Arena
5/5	Newbypt	1	S. Grinley#	5/7	Wompatuck SP	3	BBC (GdE)
5/9-6/22	Nantucket	1	E. Ray	5/29	Winchester	pr + 3 yg	S. Gaynor#
6/4-6	Tuckernuck	1	R. Veit	6/18	Fitchburg-7	2	C. Caron
Monk Parakeet					Northern Saw-whet Owl		
thr	E. Boston	3	v.o.	5/14	Wompatuck SP	1	SSBC (GdE)
Yellow-billed Cuckoo				5/21	Montague	1	H. Allen
5/12	Upton	1	N. Paulson	Common Nighthawk			
5/12	Jamaica Plain	1	M. Barber	5/13	Ludlow	1	H. Allen
5/13	Waltham	1	J. Forbes	5/18	GMNWR	5	S. Perkins#
5/14	Agawam	2	S. Perreault	5/21	C. Quabbin	17	L. Therrien
5/27	Wompatuck SP	3	C. Dalton	5/24	P.I.	5	P. + F. Vale
6/4	Medford	2	P. + F. Vale	5/24	Essex	12	P. Brown
6/15	Wellfleet	2	S. Broker	5/25	Granby	50	C. Allen
Black-billed Cuckoo					Chuck-will's-widow		
5/1	Mt.A.	1	J. Offermann	5/13	Westport	1	J. Tripp
5/7	Nahant	1	J. Malone	5/14-6/30	Orleans	2	v.o.
5/26	Newbury	2	J. Berry#	Eastern Whip-poor-will			
5/27	P.I.	3	T. Wetmore	5/2, 13	P.I.	1, 20	v.o.
6/4	Waltham	2	J. Forbes	5/12	Florence	3	T. Gagnon
6/4	Woburn	pr	P. Ippolito	5/14	Montague	5	S. Sumner
6/5	Wellfleet	2	S. Broker	6/3	Southwick	4	S. Kellogg
6/18	Mt. Greylock	3	SSBC (GdE)	6/4	Lancaster	4	J. Hoye#
Eastern Screech-Owl				6/8	Plymouth (MSSF)	8	BBC (GdE)
5/13	Marion	5	M. Lynch#	6/8	Nantucket	4	K. Blackshaw
5/14	Wompatuck SP	2	SSBC (GdE)	6/16	C. Quabbin	6	L. Therrien
5/17	Reading	ad + 2 yg	I. Giriunas	Chimney Swift			
Great Horned Owl				5/8	Boston (PG)	40+	R. Schain
5/1	Methuen	nest/1 yg	J. Berry#	5/15	S. Peabody	225+	R. Heil
5/4	Groveland	1 ad, 2 juv	Vale	5/22	GMNWR	1000	S. Perkins#
5/7	Wompatuck SP	2	BBC (GdE)				

Ruby-throated Hummingbird				Least Flycatcher			
5/thr Manomet	25 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	5/3	Mattapan (BNC)	1	P. Peterson	
5/7 S. Quabbin	5	M. Lynch#	5/3	Mt. A.	1	J. Hoye#	
5/15 Wompatuck SP	3	G. d'Entremont#	5/21	P.I.	4	S. Sullivan#	
5/21 Topsfield	3	J. Berry#	5/28	Great Barrington	31	M. Lynch#	
5/22 P.I.	16	P. + F. Vale	6/4	Little R. IBA	10	Allen Club	
Red-bellied Woodpecker			6/18	Mt. Greylock	4	SSBC (GdE)	
5/7 Medford	8	M. Rines#	6/21	Fitchburg-3	4	C. Caron	
5/14 Springfield Area	138	Allen Club	6/30	C. Quabbin	26	L. Therrien	
5/21 Topsfield	10	J. Berry#	Great Crested Flycatcher				
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker			5/7	Medford	6	M. Rines#	
5/1 C. Quabbin	28	L. Therrien	5/7	ONWR	8	BBC (J. Center)	
5/2 Westminster	13	C. Caron	5/7	Wompatuck SP	9	BBC (GdE)	
5/7 S. Quabbin	8	M. Lynch#	5/21	Topsfield	16	J. Berry#	
6/4 Little R. IBA	23	Allen Club	5/25	Westport	13	BBC (R. Stymeist)	
6/19 October Mt.	8	SSBC (GdE)	6/4	Little R. IBA	15	Allen Club	
Pileated Woodpecker			6/26	Yarmouth	10	M. Keleher#	
5/7 S. Quabbin	4	M. Lynch#	Eastern Kingbird				
5/9 Upton	3	N. Paulson	5/5	Fitchburg-3	7	C. Caron	
5/14 Springfield Area	21	Allen Club	5/7	N. Truro	8	B. Nikula	
5/16 Wayland	2	B. Harris	5/14	Springfld Area	35	Allen Club	
5/21 Topsfield	4	J. Berry#	5/21	Topsfield	30	J. Berry#	
5/22 Fitchburg-11	3	C. Caron	5/29	Berkley	13	M. Lynch#	
5/29 Nantucket	6	K. Blackshaw#	6/4	Little R. IBA	13	Allen Club	
6/26 Fitchburg-8	3	C. Caron	6/7	P.I.	22	D. Chickering	
Olive-sided Flycatcher			White-eyed Vireo				
5/17-20 MNWS	1-2	D. Noble	5/1-21	P.I.	1	v.o.	
5/20, 27 P.I.	1, 2	Wetmore, Miller	5/2	Boston (F.Pk)	1	P. Peterson	
5/23 Wayland	1	B. Harris	5/6	Manomet	1 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	
5/24 Amherst	1	N. Barber	5/6	Falmouth	1	M. Keleher	
6/3 Granville	1	J. Zepko	5/7-09	Nahant	1	P. O'Neill# + v.o.	
6/5 Wachusett Res.	1	N. Backstrom	5/8, 6/12	Lenox	1, 2	Hurley, Conway	
6/19 October Mt.	1	BBC (GdE)	5/21	Fairhaven	4	G. d'Entremont#	
6/19 Washington	1	G. de'Entremont	5/21	Topsfield	1 m	J. Berry#	
Eastern Wood-Pewee			6/26	Chatham	1	M. Iloff	
5/12, 21 Medford	1, 7	M. Rines	Yellow-throated Vireo				
5/27 P.I.	12	T. Spahr	5/7	S. Quabbin	14	M. Lynch#	
6/2 Hamilton	11 m	J. Berry	5/12	Upton	10	N. Paulson	
6/4 Little R. IBA	49	Allen Club	5/21	Topsfield	15 m	J. Berry#	
6/11 Westboro	11	C. Caron	5/22	ONWR	7	R. Stymeist#	
6/18 Monson	14	M. Lynch#	6/7	Middleton	4 m	J. Berry	
6/19 Sterling-10	10	C. Caron	6/11	Westboro	3	C. Caron	
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			6/18	Hancock	6 m	J. Young	
5/21-6/2 P.I.	4 max	v.o.	Blue-headed Vireo				
5/24 Nahant	1	L. Pivacek	5/2	Westminster	5	C. Caron	
5/25 Manomet	1 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	5/5	Wompatuck SP	5	SSBC (C. Nims)	
5/25 Mt.A.	1	C. Cook#	5/6	Monson	8	M. Lynch#	
6/1 Quabbin Pk	1	P. + F. Vale	5/14	P.I.	11	S. Sullivan#	
6/2 Hamilton	1 m	J. Berry	5/26	Royalston	5	C. Caron	
Acadian Flycatcher			6/7	Athol	5	C. Caron	
5/14, 28 Wompatuck SP	1, 2	Arena, Dalton	Warbling Vireo				
5/25 Medford	1	M. Rines#	5/3	Mattapan (BNC)	13	P. Peterson	
5/26 Manomet	1 b	T. Lloyd-Evans#	5/14	Springfld Area	180	Allen Club	
6/2 Sharon	1	G. d'Entremont#	5/15	S. Peabody	29+	R. Heil	
6/3 MNWS	1	D. Noble	5/21	Topsfield	47	J. Berry#	
6/4 Granville	1	S. Kellogg	5/21	Newton	15	P. Gilmore	
6/5 Fall River	2	L. Abbey#	5/27	Middleton	10	J. Berry	
6/22 Nantucket	1 m	B. Harris#	6/12	Springfield	17	M. Lynch#	
Alder Flycatcher			Philadelphia Vireo				
5/13 Gill	1	J. Smith	5/7	Nahant	1	L. Pivacek	
5/14 W. Bridgewater	1	S. Arena#	5/14-27	P.I.	1	v.o.	
5/24 P.I.	9	R. Heil	Red-eyed Vireo				
5/25 Medford	3	M. Rines	5/25	P'town	10	B. Nikula	
5/26 Royalston	8	C. Caron	5/26	Royalston	55	C. Caron	
6/4 Washington	12	R. Shain	5/28	Great Barrington	96	M. Lynch#	
6/10 Ashburnham-2	10	C. Caron	6/4	C. Quabbin	104	L. Therrien	
Willow Flycatcher			6/4	Little R. IBA	334	Allen Club	
5/14-6/30 Bolton Flats	5 max	v.o.	6/4	New Salem	72	R. Stymeist#	
5/14-6/30 P.I.	22 max	v.o.	6/18	Mt. Greylock	94	SSBC (GdE)	
5/25 Westport	9	BBC (R. Stymeist)	Fish Crow				
6/4 Cumb. Farms	22	S. Arena	5/6	Milton	2	S. Jaffe	
6/12 Tyringham	8	M. & K. Conway	5/14	Holyoke	2	D. McLain	
6/13 Rowley	8	J. Berry	5/14	Longmeadow	2	S. Sumner	

Fish Crow (continued)				5/22	Ware R. IBA	2	M. Lynch#
5/14	Manomet	3	I. Davies#	5/26	Royalston	2	C. Caron
5/31	Plymouth	9	M. Lynch#	6/18	Mt. Greylock	4	SSBC (GdE)
6/8	MSSF	2	SSBC (GdE)	6/19	October Mt.	3	SSBC (GdE)
Common Raven	Reports of 1-5 indiv. from 19 locations			Marsh Wren			
thr				thr	P.I.	20 max	v.o.
Horned Lark				thr	GMNWR	29 max	v.o.
5/18	Northampton	1	T. Gagnon	5/14	Ludlow	3	H. Allen
5/22	Fitchburg-11	1	C. Caron	6/13	Harwich	16	M. Faherty
5/29	Plymouth B.	3	SSBC (GdE)	6/18	Lenox	3	SSBC (GdE)
6/24	Nantucket	5 m	S. Perkins#	6/19	W. Bridgewater	20	S. Arena
Purple Martin				Golden-crowned Kinglet			
thr	P.I.	12 max	v.o.	5/8	Petersham	3	M. Lynch#
5/13	Aquinnah	3	J.M. Nelson	5/28	Great Barrington	3	M. Lynch#
5/19	Ellisville	4	G. d'Entremont#	6/15	Newbury	2	L. Leka
6/11	Rochester	30	M. Lynch#	6/18	Mt. Greylock	4	SSBC (GdE)
6/30	Mashpee	30 ad, 24 yg	M. Keleher	Ruby-crowned Kinglet			
Tree Swallow				5/8	Petersham	4	M. Lynch#
5/5	Wayland	120	J. Malone	5/21	P.I.	2	J. Nelson
5/15	P.I.	1000+	J. Berry#	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher			
5/21	Topsfield	200	J. Berry#	5/1, 6/20	ONWR	12, 5	v.o.
Northern Rough-winged Swallow				5/4, 6/15	GMNWR	12, 7	v.o.
5/11	GMNWR	10	A. Bragg#	5/6	Amherst	16	L. Therrien
5/14	Springfld Area	54	Allen Club	5/6	Monson	16	M. Lynch#
5/14	Chicopee	12	T. Swochak	5/14	Springfld Area	37	Allen Club
5/18	Manomet	15	I. Davies	5/21	Topsfield	20	J. Berry#
6/18	Monson	12	M. Lynch#	5/28	Wompatuck SP	6	C. Dalton
Bank Swallow				Veery			
5/12	GMNWR	200	S. Perkins#	5/14	Wompatuck SP	20	SBBC (GdE)
5/18	Manomet	150	I. Davies	5/20	Essex	21	J. Berry
5/23	Bolton Flats	50	T. Pirro	5/26	Royalston	21	C. Caron
5/29	Nantucket	12	K. Blackshaw#	6/4	Little R. IBA	104	Allen Club
6/28	Lunenburg	8	J. Center	6/19	Lenox	17	SSBC (GdE)
Cliff Swallow				6/25	Monterey	21	M. Lynch#
5/7	N. Truro	2	B. Nikula #	Gray-cheeked Thrush			
5/12, 22	GMNWR	15, 5	S. Perkins#	5/21	ONWR	1 m	N. Paulson
5/13	Lincoln	5	M. Rines	Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush			
5/24	Newbury	10	P. Brown	5/15	Worcester	1	M. Lynch#
6/1	Haverhill	pr n	N. Landry	5/20	Marshfield	1	MAS (J. Galluzzo)
6/4	Groveland	2 pr n	J. Berry	6/3	Milton	1	P. O'Neill#
6/12	Sheffield	4	J. Drucker	Swainson's Thrush			
6/19	Lenox	4	SSBC (GdE)	5/4-24	Mt.A.	6 max 5/15	v.o.
Barn Swallow				5/14	Springfield	5	A. + L. Richardson
5/15	GMNWR	250	S. Perkins#	5/17	Boston (F.Pk)	2	P. Peterson
5/15	P.I.	300	E. Nielsen	5/23	Mt Washington	2	R. Laubach
5/18	Manomet	80	I. Davies	5/24	P.I.	4	T. Wetmore
Red-breasted Nuthatch				6/18	Mt. Greylock	3	M. & K. Conway
5/1	Nantucket	4	K. Blackshaw#	Hermit Thrush			
5/2	Ipswich (C.B.)	3	J. Berry	5/5	Boston	4	F. Bouchard
5/6	Monson	8	M. Lynch#	5/14	Wompatuck SP	6	SSBC (GdE)
5/7	P.I.	5	S. Sullivan#	5/22	Ware R. IBA	13	M. Lynch#
5/8	Petersham	16	M. Lynch#	6/8	Plymouth (MSSF)	6	BBC (GdE)
5/16	P'town	3	G. d'Entremont#	6/12	Quabbin (G12)	13	M. Lynch#
6/8	Winchendon	6	C. Caron	6/18	Mt. Greylock	5	SSBC (GdE)
Brown Creeper				6/18	Fitchburg-7	7	C. Caron
5/1	ONWR	2	J. Rose	Wood Thrush			
5/6	Monson	13	M. Lynch#	5/3	Leicester	5	C. Caron
5/12	W. Gloucester	2	J. Nelson	5/7	Medford	15	M. Rines#
5/30	GMNWR	2	A. Bragg#	5/14	Springfld Area	192	Allen Club
6/8	Winchendon	3	C. Caron	5/14	Rochester	14	M. Lynch#
6/18	Mt. Greylock	2	SSBC (GdE)	6/4	Fitchburg-8	12	C. Caron
6/19	Sterling-10	3	C. Caron	6/18	Monson	12	M. Lynch#
House Wren				Brown Thrasher			
5/2	Westminster	9	C. Caron	5/14	Springfld Area	16	Allen Club
5/3	Leicester	8	C. Caron	5/21	Medford	6	M. Rines
5/12	W. Gloucester	6	J. Nelson	5/22	Lancaster	5	R. Stymeist#
5/29	Berkley	24	M. Lynch#	6/11	Sheffield	6	J. Drucker
6/11	MSSF	7	G. d'Entremont	6/29	P.I.	10	MAS (D. Larson)
6/11	Rochester	9	M. Lynch#	American Pipit			
5/2	Westminster	2	C. Caron	5/14	P'town	1	M. Iliff
5/5	P.I.	3	S. Santino	Cedar Waxwing			
5/7	Wompatuck SP	2	BBC (GdE)	5/25	P'town Airport	110	B. Nikula
				5/28	P.I.	100	S. Motyl

Blue-winged Warbler				Black-throated Blue Warbler			
5/6 Milton	7		S. Jaffe	5/1-24 Medford	18 max	5/12	M. Rines
5/8 Westboro	13		S. Arena	5/1 C. Quabbin	13		L. Therrien
5/14 Springfield Area	50		Allen Club	5/9 Douglas	13		N. Paulson
5/25 Westport	8	BBC	(R. Stymeist)	5/15 P.I.	22		J. Berry#
5/29 Berkley	7		M. Lynch#	5/18 Marblehead	18		P. + F. Vale
6/12 S. Dart. (A.Pd)	7		J. Offermann	6/4 Little R. IBA	50		Allen Club
Golden-winged Warbler				6/6 Mt Washington	12		R. Laubach
5/15-19 P.I.	1 m		Guidetti + v.o.	6/18 Mt. Greylock	11		SSBC (GdE)
Brewster's Warbler				Yellow-rumped Warbler			
5/12 Montague	1		B. Kane	5/1-23 Medford	122 max		M. Rines#
6/2 Amherst	1		L. Therrien	5/1 Winchendon	71		C. Caron
6/20 Quabbin (G35)	1		B. Zajda	5/6 Monson	119		M. Lynch#
Lawrence's Warbler				5/7 Amherst	140		I. Davies
6/18 Monson	1		M. Lynch#	6/18 Mt. Greylock	11		SSBC (GdE)
Tennessee Warbler				6/25 Monterey	2		M. Lynch#
5/6, 24 Mt. A.	2, 1		Freedberg, Cook	Black-throated Green Warbler			
5/8, 31 Medford	2, 1		M. Rines#	5/1-24 Medford	21 max	5/12	M. Rines
5/14 W Springfield	2		S. Svec	5/1-6/19 P.I.	28 max	5/14	v.o.
5/17 Marblehead	2 m		K. Haley	5/9 Douglas	11		N. Paulson
5/20 P.I.	2		M. Megrath	5/23 Mt Washington	14		R. Laubach
Orange-crowned Warbler				5/25 P'town	18		B. Nikula
5/2 P.I.	1 m b		B. Flemer#	6/4 Little R. IBA	55		Allen Club
5/3 Manomet	1 m b	T. Lloyd-Evans#		6/18 Mt. Greylock	12		SSBC (GdE)
5/6 N. Truro	1		B. Nikula	Blackburnian Warbler			
5/20 Mt. A.	1		S. + S. Denison#	5/1-24 Medford	5 max		M. Rines
Nashville Warbler				5/1-6/2 P.I.	10 max		v.o.
5/1-21 Medford	24 max	5/12	M. Rines	5/25 P'town	13		B. Nikula
5/1 C. Quabbin	10		L. Therrien	5/28 Great Barrington	33		M. Lynch#
5/7 Amherst	8		I. Davies	5/29 Washington	36		S. Surner
5/1-29 P.I.	9 m ax		v.o.	6/4 Little R. IBA	42		Allen Club
5/11 Mt. A.	10		P. + F. Vale	6/18 C. Quabbin	12		L. Therrien
Northern Parula				6/18 Mt. Greylock	23		SSBC (GdE)
5/1-24 Medford	24 max	5/21	M. Rines	Yellow-throated Warbler			
5/5 Amherst	31		I. Davies	5/4 Jamaica Plain	1		J. Miller
5/15 P.I.	43		E. Nielsen	5/13-20 P.I.	2		Buxton, Murphy
5/15 Gloucester	25		S. Hedman	5/21 S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1		M. Bornstein
5/23 Manomet	24 b		T. Lloyd-Evans#	Pine Warbler			
6/20 P.I.	1		E. Glynn	5/1 C. Quabbin	27		L. Therrien
6/25 Monterey	1 m		M. Lynch#	5/7 Wompatuck SP	12		BBC (GdE)
6/29 Nantucket	2		B. Harris	5/22 Ware R. IBA	23		M. Lynch#
Yellow Warbler				6/11 MSSF	34		G. d'Entremont
5/7 P.I.	179	BBC	(L. de la Flor)	6/22 Ipswich	13 m		J. Berry
5/14 Springfield Area	239		Allen Club	Prairie Warbler			
5/15 S. Peabody	56		R. Heil	5/14 Springfield Area	16		Allen Club
5/21 Topsfield	46		J. Berry#	5/21 Bolton Flats	20		N. Paulson
5/25 Westport	48	BBC	(R. Stymeist)	5/22 Falmouth	11		M. Keleher
Chestnut-sided Warbler				6/4 Fitchburg-8	16		C. Caron
5/1 C. Quabbin	17		L. Therrien	6/8 Southwick	15		S. Kellogg
5/8 Petersham	43		M. Lynch#	6/11 MSSF	14		G. d'Entremont
5/22 Ware R. IBA	51		M. Lynch#	6/24 Nantucket	4 m		B. Harris#
6/4 Little R. IBA	88		Allen Club	Palm Warbler			
Magnolia Warbler				5/2 Medford	5		M. Rines
5/1-24 Medford	39 max	5/21	M. Rines	5/6 P.I.	3		N. Backstrom
5/24 P.I.	52		R. Heil	5/8 Boston (PG)	3		R. Schain
5/24 MNWS	12		P. + F. Vale	5/22 Devens	1		C. Johnson#
5/25 P'town	22		B. Nikula	5/28 P.I.	1		W. Freedberg
6/18 C. Quabbin	10		L. Therrien	Western Palm Warbler			
Cape May Warbler				5/7 P.I.	1 ph		T. Wetmore#
5/4 Northampton	1		N. Barber	Bay-breasted Warbler			
5/4, 12 Medford	1 m, 1 m		M. Rines#	5/3, 20 Mt. A.	1, 2		Walter, Cook
5/8 Petersham	2		M. Lynch#	5/4, 25 P.I.	1, 4		Flemer, Megrath
5/8 Mt. A.	1 m		P. + F. Vale#	5/14 Wayland	2		B. Harris
5/9 Winchester	1 m		R. LaFontaine	5/15 Gloucester (E.P.)	3		S. Hedman
5/13 Boston (PG)	1		T. Factor	5/19 Washington	5		E. Neumuth
5/14 Holyoke	1		D. McLain	5/25 P'town	4		B. Nikula
5/14 P.I.	3		S. Sullivan#	Blackpoll Warbler			
5/17 Quabbin Pk	1		E. Dalton	5/4 Mt. A.	1		A. Morgan
5/17 Orleans	1		C. Goodrich	5/7-22 P.I.	48 max	5/28	v.o.
5/18 Marblehead	1		F. Vale	5/21 Medford	21		M. Rines#
5/21 Pembroke	1		J. Hays	5/22 Boston (Fens)	12		R. Schain
5/25 P'town	1		B. Nikula	5/24 Amherst	12		N. Barber
5/30 Granville	1		S. Kellogg	5/25 P'town	23		B. Nikula

Grasshopper Sparrow (continued)				5/22	Ware R. IBA	38	M. Lynch#
5/14	Montague	1	S. Surner	6/15	Lincoln	7	P. Peterson
5/22	S. Quabbin	1	L. Therrien	Blue Grosbeak			
5/29	Plymouth	2	SSBC (GdE)	5/13	W. Tisbury	1	L. MacDowell
6/16	Southwick	3	S. Kellogg	5/19-6/30	Falmouth	1 m	v. o.
6/19	Sutton	1	M. Lynch#	5/22	Sandwich	1	D. Wiehe
Saltmarsh Sparrow				Indigo Bunting			
5/6-6/30	P.I.	20 max	v.o.	thr	Waltham	8 max	J. Forbes
5/12-6/30	E. Boston (B.I.)	4 max	P. Peterson	5/26	Newbury	7	J. Berry#
5/25	Westport	5	BBC (R. Stymeist)	6/4	Little R. IBA	21	Allen Club
6/11	Chatham (S.B.)	20	B. Nikula	6/4	Fitchburg-8	9	C. Caron
6/25	Nantucket	18	S. Perkins#	6/16	Southwick	14	S. Kellogg
5/21	S. Dart. (A. Pd)	25	G. d'Entremont#	6/18	Fitchburg-7	8	C. Caron
6/13	Harwich	8	M. Faherty	Dickcissel			
6/24	Ipswich	13	J. Berry	5/16-17	Mt.A.	1	v.o.
Seaside Sparrow				Bobolink			
thr	P.I.	5 max	v.o.	thr	Saugus (Bear C.)	26 max	S. Zende#
5/15-6/10	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	N. Paulson#	thr	P.I.	38 max	v.o.
Fox Sparrow				5/8	Winchendon	70	C. Caron
5/5	Concord	1	W. Hutcheson	thr	Cumb. Farms	45 max	v.o.
Lincoln's Sparrow				6/11	Sheffield	50	J. Drucker
5/4	Boston (PG)	1	P. Peterson	Eastern Meadowlark			
5/9	Amherst	2	L. Therrien	5/1	Saugus (Bear C.)	4	S. Zende#
5/21	Medford	1	M. Rines	5/3	Amherst	3	H. Allen
5/25	P'town Airport	1	B. Nikula	5/21	P'town	2	B. Nikula
5/27	Nahant	1	L. Pivacek	5/29	Beverly	3	J. Berry#
Swamp Sparrow				6/10	Amesbury	3	J. Berry
5/14	Springfld Area	21	Allen Club	6/12	Sheffield	2	J. Drucker
5/20	Winchendon-8	26	C. Caron	6/25	Falmouth	8	M. Keleher#
5/22	Ware R. IBA	23	M. Lynch#	Rusty Blackbird			
6/19	W. Bridgewater	12	S. Arena	5/2	Longmeadow	2	J. LaPointe
White-throated Sparrow				5/2	Sudbury	4	J. Malone
5/11	Boston (RKG)	18	R. Stymeist	5/5	Hadley	1	P. Yeskie
6/8	Winchendon	7	C. Caron	5/8	Milton	7	M. Trimitsis
6/17	Nantucket	1	K. Blackshaw	5/8	Lenox	1	G. Hurley
6/19	P.I.	1	T. Knittel	Orchard Oriole			
6/19	October Mt.	7	SSBC (GdE)	5/4	Mattapan (BNC)	4	T. Leverich
6/27	Winchendon-10	1	C. Caron	5/6	Falmouth	8	M. Keleher
White-crowned Sparrow				5/9	Woburn (HP)	4	M. Rines
5/3	Boston (Fens)	2 ad	R. Schain	5/15	S. Peabody	6	R. Heil
5/5	Pittsfield	5	T. Collins	5/31	Plymouth	5	M. Lynch#
5/7	Williamstown	4	C. Jones	Baltimore Oriole			
5/10	Carlisle	2 ad	T. Brownrigg	5/12	W. Gloucester	48	J. Nelson
5/12	Westfield	3	S. Kellogg	5/14	Springfld Area	340	Allen Club
6/10	P.I.	1	P. Sowizral	Purple Finch			
Dark-eyed Junco				5/6	Monson	8	M. Lynch#
5/25	P.I.	1	D. Chickering#	5/12	Wompatuck SP	5	SSBC (C. Nims)
6/4	Little R. IBA	21	Allen Club	5/13	P'town	8	B. Nikula
6/14	Boston (PG)	1 m	T. Factor	6/11	Sheffield	8	J. Drucker
6/18	Mt. Greylock	18	SSBC (GdE)	6/18	Mt. Greylock	7	SSBC (GdE)
Summer Tanager				6/22	P.I.	2 ad, 4 juv	B. Gette#
5/6	Duxbury B.	1 m imm	ph R. Bowes	Red Crossbill			
5/6	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	J. Nelson	6/10	Westfield	10	S. Surner
5/8	Jamaica Plain	1 m ad	J. Miller	White-winged Crossbill			
5/9	Mt.A.	1 m imm	K. Hartel#	5/1-6/12	Gloucester	8 max	J. Standley
5/13-31	Brewster	1	J. Talin#	5/2	Upton	1	N. Paulson
5/15-21	P.I.	1	C. Gras	5/7	Acushnet	1	C. Longworth
5/16	Granby	1	H. Allen	Common Redpoll			
5/19	Brookline	1	B. Cassie	5/6	Dalton	2	C. Blagdon
5/21	Westport	1 f	G. d'Entremont#	5/15	Nantucket	1	P. Sawyer
Scarlet Tanager				Pine Siskin			
5/7	Medford	15	M. Rines#	5/1-23	Easton	3	K. Ryan
5/14	Springfld Area	96	Allen Club	5/8	Merrimac	2	B. + B. Buxton
5/14	Wompatuck SP	16	SSBC (GdE)	5/11	Athol	8	D. Small
5/22	Ware R. IBA	23	M. Lynch#	6/15	Hadley	3	P. Yeskie
5/28	Great Barrington	22	M. Lynch#	6/19	Dalton	1	C. Blagdon
6/19	Ipswich	10	J. Berry#	Evening Grosbeak			
Rose-breasted Grosbeak				5/1	C. Quabbin	5	L. Therrien
5/5	Medford	15	M. Rines#	5/6	Middlefield	2	P. Purdy
5/8	Oxbow NWR	10	J. Forbes	5/15	Nantucket	1	S. Kirk
5/14	Springfld Area	118	Allen Club	5/19	Boxford	pr	T. Martin
5/21	Topshfield	13	J. Berry#				

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

Taxonomic order is based on AOU checklist, Seventh edition, up to the 52nd Supplement, as published in *Auk* 128 (3): 600-13 (2011) (see <<http://www.aou.org/checklist/north>>).

Location-#	MAS Breeding Bird Atlas Block	NAC Newbypt	Nine Acre Corner, Concord
ABC	Allen Bird Club	ONWR	Newburyport
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	P.I.	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
A.Pd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth	Pd	Plum Island Pond
B.	Beach	P'town	Provincetown
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	Pont.	Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
BBC	Brookline Bird Club	Res.	Reservoir
BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester	S.B.	South Beach, Chatham
C.B.	Crane Beach, Ipswich	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
CGB	Coast Guard Beach, Eastham	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
Cambr.	Cambridge	TASL	Take A Second Look
CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club		Boston Harbor Census
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay WS
Cumb. Farms	Cumberland Farms, Middleboro	WMWS	Wachusett Meadow WS
DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary	Wompatuck SP	Hingham, Cohasset, Scituate, and Norwell
DWMA	Delaney WMA	Worc.	Worcester
DWWS	Stow, Bolton, Harvard	Other Abbreviations	
E.P.	Daniel Webster WS	ad	adult
F.E.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	b	banded
F.P.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	br	breeding
F.Pk	Fresh Pond, Cambridge	dk	dark (morph)
G40	Gate 40, Quabbin Res.	f	female
GMNWR	Great Meadows NWR	fl	fledgling
H.	Harbor	imm	immature
H.P.	Halibut Point, Rockport	juv	juvenile
HRWMA	High Ridge WMA, Gardner	lt	light (morph)
I.	Island	m	male
IRWS	Ipswich River WS	max	maximum
L.	Ledge	migr	migrating
MAS	Mass Audubon	n	nesting
M.P.	Millennium Park, W. Roxbury	ph	photographed
M.V.	Martha's Vineyard	pl	plumage
MAS	Mass. Audubon Society	pr	pair
MBWMA	Martin Burns WMA, Newbury	S	summer (1S = 1st summer)
MNWS	Marblehead Neck WS	v.o.	various observers
MSSF	Myles Standish State Forest, Plymouth	W	winter (2W = second winter)
Mt.A.	Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambr.	yg	young
		#	additional observer

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO *BIRD OBSERVER*

Sightings for any given month must be reported in writing by the eighth of the following month, and may be submitted by postal mail or e-mail. Send written reports to Bird Sightings, Robert H. Stymeist, 36 Lewis Avenue, Arlington, MA 02474-3206. Include name and phone number of observer, common name of species, date of sighting, location, number of birds, other observer(s), and information on age, sex, and morph (where relevant). For instructions on e-mail submission, visit: <<http://massbird.org/birdobserver/sightings/>>.

Species on the Review List of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (indicated by an asterisk [*] in the Bird Reports), as well as species unusual as to place, time, or known nesting status in Massachusetts, should be reported promptly to the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, c/o Matt Garvey, 137 Beaconsfield Rd. #5, Brookline, MA 02445, or by e-mail to <mattgarvey@gmail.com>.

ABOUT THE COVER

Northern Pintail

The Northern Pintail (*Anas acuta*) is an elegant dabbling duck with beautiful lines and a subtle but stunning feather pattern in the male. Its esthetically-pleasing features make it a favorite among decorative decoy carvers. The pintail is a medium-sized duck with males larger than females. The slim profile, long neck, and long pointed tail distinguish it from all other dabbling ducks. The male's chocolate-brown head and contrasting white neck stripe and breast are stunning, and both sexes can be identified in flight by their long narrow wings, long neck and tail, and sleek appearance. The female is buffy in color with a gray bill. Juvenile birds resemble females.

The Northern Pintail is monotypic, with no described subspecies, and exhibits no geographic variation. It is closely related to the White-cheeked Pintail (*A. bahamensis*), which ranges from the Bahamas to South America, and the Yellow-billed Pintail (*A. georgica*) of South America. Northern Pintails hybridize with most other dabbling ducks, including Mallards, American Black Ducks, American Wigeons, Redheads, and teal. Northern Pintails are circumpolar in distribution. In North America their breeding range extends from Alaska across most of Canada to Newfoundland, south in the United States to the Great Plains, especially the Prairie Pothole Regions of Canada and the United States. In Massachusetts, pintails are rare breeders but common migrants. They winter irregularly in small numbers on Cape Cod. Except in parts of the western United States, they are migratory, wintering along the West Coast from southern Canada south throughout much of the southern half of the United States as well as Cuba and from Mexico to Costa Rica. Early migrants, pintails pass through Massachusetts from late February through March. In June and July males generally move south from their breeding grounds to molt, leaving the females to incubate eggs and raise the chicks alone. Eventually the males are joined by the females and young. In Massachusetts, peak numbers appear in October and November.

Northern Pintails are primarily monogamous. They pair on the wintering grounds, and in spring the males follow the females to the breeding grounds. Females tend to be breeding-site faithful. The pair bond, already in place when the pair returns to the breeding ground, is reinforced by various calls and displays. On the wintering grounds, courtship begins with groups of males giving a variety of displays, descriptively called Head-up-tail-up, Chin-lift, Grunt-whistle, Turning-the-back-of-the-head, Preening-behind-the-wing (displaying the speculum), and Burp (uttering *ee hee* or *geege* plus a trilled whistle). Pursuit flights may involve many males chasing one female. On the breeding ground a female may be aggressive, attacking chicks from other nests or giving a threat display by folding her head back, opening her bill, and uttering a *gaeck* sound. Generally, Northern Pintails are gregarious and unaggressive, but on the breeding grounds males will defend their females from other males.

The pair, led by the female, chooses a nest site, where she builds a bowl-shaped

scrape in brush, grass, or agricultural stubble, to which grass and down are added. The clutch is 3–12 pale-olive to buff eggs, averaging 7–8 in number. The female has a single brood patch, and she alone does the incubation for about three weeks until hatching, at which time the male is long gone. The chicks are precocial, leaving the nest and feeding themselves within a day of hatching. The female leads the chicks to water, sometimes for a considerable distance, and tends them for four to six weeks until the young birds can fly. If a predator approaches the female, she may give a distraction display.

Pintails forage by walking in dry fields, dabbling in water for surface food by filter feeding with their bills, and tipping up to forage in deeper water. In winter they eat mainly grain, corn, wheat, barley, rice, and aquatic plants. During the breeding season, adults and chicks eat mostly invertebrates, including insects, clams, and snails.

Pintails, like many duck species, face a litany of predators and other problems. Red foxes kill thousands of females on their nests, and the ducks are plagued by many other common mammalian and avian nest predators, including coyotes, skunks, raccoons, Great Horned Owls, and other raptors. Because pintails nest early, they are at the mercy of late snowfalls and other spring storms. They are also plagued by brood parasites including Redheads, Mallards, teal, and even Ring-necked Pheasants. Outbreaks of avian botulism and avian cholera can occasionally cause massive die-offs. Agricultural pesticides sometimes poison pintails, and birds nesting in agricultural stubble risk having their nests ploughed under. Lead poisoning is a constant threat, although the problem has been mitigated by the conversion to non-toxic shot in many areas. Habitat degradation and destruction, such as draining wetlands and changing agricultural practices are also a continuing problem facing pintails. Until 1985, when tighter bag limits were applied, more than a million Northern Pintails were shot each year in North America. Native Americans in Canada still harvest birds and eggs in spring and summer. The pintail population has significantly decreased over the past half century, but new government regulations and conservation initiatives by both the public and private sector have helped them rebound, and it appears that Northern Pintails, with their high fecundity and broad geographic range, have a relatively bright future. 🐦

William E. Davis, Jr.

About the Cover Artist: Barry Van Dusen

Our readers are certainly familiar with the work of Barry Van Dusen, who has created many covers for *Bird Observer* over the years. Barry is well known in the birding world, especially in Massachusetts, where he lives in the central Massachusetts town of Princeton. In late July 2011 Barry was an artist-in-residence at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens in Boothbay, Maine.

Barry has illustrated several nature books and pocket guides, and his articles and paintings have been featured in *Birder's World*, *Birding*, and *Bird Watcher's Digest* as well as *Bird Observer*. He has recently completed the illustrations for *Birds of Trinidad and Tobago*, which is awaiting publication. For more information about Barry's many achievements and activities, see <<http://www.barryvandusen.com>>. 🐦

AT A GLANCE

August 2011



WAYNE R. PETERSEN

Given its rather sinister, broad-shouldered, and glowering countenance, the August mystery species looks as much like an enforcer for the Mob as it does a bird identification challenge! There's something about a bird looking directly at the camera that often gives a species an altogether unique impression.

Impressions aside, the mystery bird is clearly a shorebird. There is no other bird group in Massachusetts that exhibits the combination of long, straight, slender bill and legs shown by the bird in the picture. Although herons, egrets, and rails share these features in one way or another, each is sufficiently different in so many obvious ways that confusion should not be a problem. If we assume that the mystery bird is a shorebird, an initial problem is to determine whether the bird is a plover or a sandpiper. Again, this is easy.

Plovers are distinctive in possessing either prominent breast rings (e.g., Killdeer, Semipalmated and Piping plover), or short, blunt-tipped bills and seemingly large eyes. Because the pictured shorebird is obviously clear-breasted and its bill is relatively long and slender, not short and blunt-tipped, the bird is a sandpiper (Family *Scolopacidae*). But which one? There are more than 30 species of regularly-occurring sandpipers in Massachusetts.

Secure in the knowledge that the pictured shorebird is a sandpiper, we can see from the photograph that its legs are black, not a lighter shade such as yellowish or light gray, all colors or shades that would be obvious even in a black-and-white image. Furthermore, despite any contrary impression created by the bird's left foot, a really close look at the pictured sandpiper's toes on its right foot indicate that they are not semipalmated (i.e., having partial webs between the toes), a feature removing Semipalmated and Western sandpiper as identification candidates. The mystery

sandpiper's *straight*, blunt, and relatively short bill also eliminates a great many other sandpipers (e.g., yellowlegs, godwits, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, all peep species, Dunlin, dowitchers, etc.). Combined with the features already listed, the pictured bird's strikingly-white, unmarked, underparts identify it as a Sanderling (*Calidris alba*). Also, while difficult to ascertain with certainty in the picture, Sanderlings lack the small hind toe (i.e., hallux) of other small sandpipers—a feature not present in the pictured shorebird.

The coarse black-and-white checkered appearance of the mystery sandpiper's mid-back is also unique to a juvenile Sanderling. Other small sandpipers in juvenal plumage exhibit a decidedly scaly dorsal pattern, not the coarse checkered back of a Sanderling. Lastly, most other sandpipers typically show more obvious streaking somewhere on the breast than do Sanderlings.

Sanderlings are common to locally abundant spring and fall migrants and reasonably common winter visitors on many sandy beaches along the coast of Massachusetts. They are decidedly uncommon away from the outer coast. The author photographed the pictured juvenile Sanderling at Nahant Beach on September 1, 2007. 

Wayne R. Petersen

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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.

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