

Bird Observer

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HOT BIRDS



On November 20 the Hampshire Bird Club was waiting at Quabbin headquarters for the rest of the group to arrive when Larry Therrien spotted a flock of 19 swans in the distance—**Tundra Swans!** Ian Davies took this photograph (left).

Since 2003 **Cave Swallows** have been a specialty of November, showing up in coastal locations in increasing numbers over the years. This year there was a flurry of reports along the New England coast. On Thanksgiving Day, Margo Goetschkes took this photograph (right) of one of the birds at Salisbury.



On November 30, Vern Laux got a call from a contractor reporting a “funny bird” at the Nantucket dump. Vern hustled over and was rewarded with great views of this **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** (left).

Imagine: you’re photographing a Rough-legged Hawk in flight, and all of a sudden it is being mobbed—by a **Northern Lapwing** (right)! That’s what happened to Jim Hully on December 2 on Plum Island. This is only the second state record for this species, the first being in Chilmark in December of 1996.



On April 9, Keelin Miller found an interesting gull at Kalmus Beach in Hyannis. As photographs were circulated, opinions shifted toward a **Yellow-legged Gull** (left). Check out Jeremiah Trimble’s photo from April 13.

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PINE SISKIN BY DAVID LARSON

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Bird Observer

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Birding the Lakeville Ponds of Plymouth County, Massachusetts

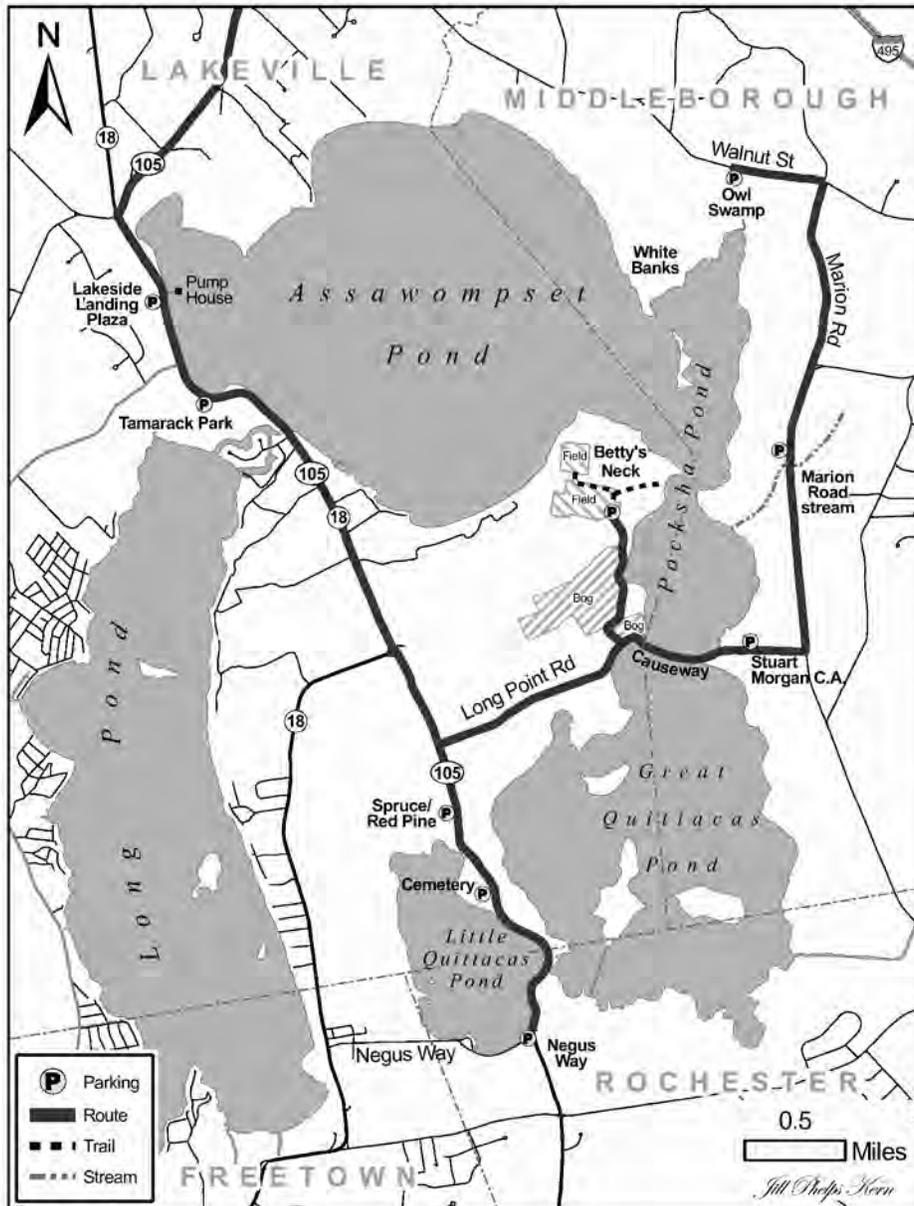
Jim Sweeney

Situated in the central portion of southeastern Massachusetts, the Lakeville ponds and environs constitute a veritable wilderness in a region of the state that is otherwise sprawling with development. The area is one of only a few locations in this section of the state where one can still walk along pristine stretches of shoreline and observe more deer tracks than human, an expanse of undisturbed emergent vegetation, and our nation's avian emblem soaring high overhead. This article is an all-season guide to some of the most productive birding areas in the Lakeville ponds region and focuses primarily on the species most likely to be observed in the vicinity of the following ponds: Assawompset, Great Quittacas, Little Quittacas, and Pocksha. Long Pond is not covered in this article, since its shoreline is mostly developed, and there is limited access to the water. Though most of the areas described in this article are in the town of Lakeville, please note that several sites mentioned are in the bordering towns of Middleborough and Rochester. All three towns are in Plymouth County.



Assawompset Pond, the crown jewel of the Assawompset Ponds Complex Important Bird Area, is the largest natural body of water in the Commonwealth and serves as a drinking water supply for the cities of Taunton and New Bedford. The Lakeville ponds, along with the Nemasket River flowing out of Assawompset Pond, fall within the southeastern portion of the Taunton River watershed. The entire area is characterized by oak-conifer forest and contains substantial tracts with American holly, eastern hemlock, yellow birch, American beech, witch hazel, and pitch pine. In addition, there are many wooded swamps containing red maple and Atlantic white cedar surrounding the ponds. The area suffered heavy damage from the hurricane of 1938, and in many places red pine and Norway spruce have been planted in an attempt to restore sections of the forest that were leveled by wind-throw. Several of these sites containing stands of introduced conifers have produced breeding records for species with a more northern and western distribution in Massachusetts. Some of these species are Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Yellow-rumped Warblers.

The name "Assawompset" translates to "the place of the white rock" from the N-dialect of the Algonquin language. Assawompset Pond is one of a few sites in the state containing a Paleo-Indian Native American habitation that produced artifacts from the earliest cultural epoch in the Northeast (circa 9000 years ago). Several Paleo-Indian projectile points were recovered at this location by members of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society and detailed in an archaeological report titled *Wapanucket* (Robbins 1980). The entire Lakeville ponds area was an important site for Native Americans from the earliest cultural periods through the mid-1800s. The



legacy of the native people who lived here for so many years is evident in the many native place names that describe the region today.

In 1675 Assawompset Pond was the site of a pivotal event regarded by many historians as one of the most significant precipitants of King Philip's War (1675-1676). In January 1675 John Sassamon, a Christian Native American who resided at

Assawompset Pond, was allegedly killed by three Wampanoags who believed he had leaked information to Plymouth Colony relative to the plans of King Philip, the Wampanoag chief, in response to mounting tensions with the colonists (Leach 1958). According to a number of historical accounts, Sassamon was allegedly forced under the ice of the pond by members of the Wampanoag tribe and drowned. This event, in turn, resulted in the public hanging of the three native people alleged to have committed the murder of Sassamon (*ibid.*). Subsequently, relations between King Philip and Plymouth Colony deteriorated rapidly and led to the bloody conflict that spread to many other locations in New England.

In the 1850s Henry David Thoreau made a series of trips to the Lakeville ponds, which are beautifully described in his journals. Those journal entries offer a glimpse into the flora and fauna of the region in the mid-nineteenth century. His vivid descriptions demonstrate how much has changed (and, in some cases, how little has changed) since he stayed at Sampson's Tavern on the western shore of Assawompset Pond. Although many of the common and scientific names of the species he describes have changed, his incredibly detailed accounts leave no doubt about the species he records. One entry that is particularly interesting concerns a species that Thoreau calls the "tweezer-bird." His journal entry from June 30, 1856 describes his encounter with our modern-day Northern Parula in the Lakeville ponds area:

On the right hand in the old orchard near the Quitticus Ponds, heard and at last saw my tweezer-bird, which is extremely restless, flitting from bough to bough and apple tree to apple tree. Its note like ah, zre zre zre, zritter zritter, zrit. *Sylvia Americana*, parti-colored warbler, with golden-green reflections on the back, two white bars on wings, all beneath white, large orange mark on breast, bordered broadly with lemon yellow, and yellow throat. These were making the woods ring in Concord when I left and are very common hereabouts. (Torrey and Allen 1962)

Because Northern Parulas prefer to construct their nests from old man's beard lichen (*Usnea* sp.), there has been an attendant decline in the breeding of this species in Massachusetts since the disappearance of the *Usnea* in many woodlands throughout the Northeast (Veit and Petersen 1993). However, as recently as 1978 Northern Parulas were detected as probable breeders in the Lakeville ponds area (Petersen and Meservey 2003). In recent years, males have occasionally been heard singing well into the breeding season along Marion Road on the east side of Assawompset Pond (Wayne Petersen, pers. comm.). Although currently the only two confirmed breeding records in the state are from Cape Cod (preliminary results from Breeding Bird Atlas 2, unpublished), the Lakeville ponds and vicinity may still contain a few suitable nesting sites.

Today the Lakeville ponds are probably best known for the breeding Bald Eagles that have been resident in the area since 1993. Currently, there are one to two known nest sites in the area. Bald Eagles have been observed at every one of the ponds described in this article, and a full day of birding in the fall and winter is almost certain to produce a sighting of this species. Notable non-avian species found in the



Plymouth gentian. All photographs by the author.

area include Plymouth gentian, northern red-bellied cooters, eastern pondmussels, and also the locally uncommon saffron-winged meadowhawk.

Because the Lakeville ponds and environs comprise such a large area (10,000 acres in the IBA alone), it is recommended that visitors prepare to spend at least a half a day exploring the sites described in this article. Spring and fall are the two most productive seasons for birding the Lakeville ponds, but summer and winter can

be rewarding if enough time is spent investigating all of the interesting habitats the area has to offer.

How to Get to the Lakeville Ponds

Take Interstate 495 (I-495) in either direction, and get off at Exit 4-Middleboro Ctr Lakeville to take Route 105 south. From the junction of I-495 and Route 105 travel southwest for 3.0 miles to where Route 105 and Route 18 merge (in Lakeville) and become the same road for several miles (Bedford St.). Travel south on Route 105-18 for 0.4 mile to the Lakeside Landing plaza on the right. This is the first stop, and Assawompset Pond will be visible on the left.

Assawompset Pond

Parking in the spots closest to the road will provide a commanding view of Assawompset Pond. Be sure to check the point that is directly in line with the pump house (on the left) since this is a reliable site for Bald Eagles in fall and winter. The pump house usually has a few Double-crested Cormorants lined up on the roof in the fall, but be sure to look for Great Cormorants too, since the Lakeville ponds are a reliable inland location for this species from late fall through winter as long as there is some open water. On a clear day the section of the pond known as White Banks is visible on the opposite shore. This prominent feature is actually a large 30-foot dune that was created after glacial Lake Assawompset dried and its sediments were exposed and blown by powerful southwesterly winds (Robbins 1980).

The view from the plaza parking lot is likely to produce sightings of Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, Common Mergansers, Greater Scaup, and American Coots in fall. After a powerful fall nor'easter, it is worth checking the pond from this vantage, since Horned Grebes, Common Loons, and White-winged and Surf scoters are sometimes blown in by the bad weather. Look for Bald Eagles on the ice during the coldest months of winter. In early spring, Canvasbacks are occasionally observed here as well as small numbers of Lesser Scaup.

Tamarack Park

Continue south on Route 105-18 for 0.5 mile, and take a right into the parking area of Tamarack Park. This location is one of the most productive stops in the

Lakeville ponds area and invariably produces species of interest in fall, winter, and spring. The section of Assawompset Pond that is visible from the main parking area usually remains open even during the coldest periods of winter. Check the large numbers of gulls that occasionally congregate here, since in recent years there have been Iceland, Glaucous, and Lesser Black-backed gulls mixed in with the common species. The open area is also a great spot to check for lingering Pied-billed Grebes and Ruddy Ducks in early winter. Other species to look for in midwinter are Common Mergansers, Hooded Mergansers, Buffleheads, and Common Goldeneyes.



Lesser Black-backed Gull

In the fall, the thickets surrounding the parking lot may hold a variety of interesting migrants. Look for Rusty Blackbirds in the black tupelos, Fox Sparrows scratching in the leaf litter, and semi-hardy lingerers like Hermit Thrushes, Eastern Towhees, and Gray Catbirds that frequently persist into early winter. Take the short walk to the small boat launch area at the west edge of the park. The water near the boat launch usually stays open even during extended periods of bitterly cold weather. Occasionally, Wood Ducks and Ring-necked Ducks can be found within a few feet of the launch area. Looking at the water from the boat launch, scan the line of trees off to the left where Bald Eagles can sometimes be observed. Additional species to look for in fall include American Tree Sparrows, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned kinglets, and White-throated Sparrows. This is also a worthy stop during spring migration when migrant warblers, vireos, flycatchers, and orioles may abound after a night with gentle southwesterly winds. Resident breeders to look for in summer include Carolina Wrens, Eastern Kingbirds, and Warbling Vireos. Lastly, minks and fishers have been observed in the park vicinity.

Betty's Neck

From Tamarack Park, take a right onto Route 105-18, and continue south for 2.2 miles (be sure to keep going straight on Route 105 where Route 18 splits to the right) to the junction of Long Point Road on the left. Turn left on Long Point Road, continue for 1.1 miles, and take another left into the entrance of the Island Terrace Nursing Home (57 Long Point Road). This is the access road that leads to Betty's Neck, a 480-acre conservation area managed by the town of Lakeville. Named for the daughter of Tispaquin, the "black sachem of Assawompset," the tract of land known as Betty's Neck was deeded in 1673 and was inhabited by the Nemasket tribe and their descendants until as recently as Thoreau's visits to the area in the 1850s. Continue on the road to the nursing home, which is situated on a prominent knoll. Just before entering the nursing home property, take a left and follow the signs for Betty's Neck. There are several cranberry bogs in the immediate area, and the main access road traverses the bogs as it heads towards Betty's Neck. Look for Eastern Bluebirds on the telephone wires in spring. In late summer and fall, migrant swallows can be found

perched on the same wires. A variety of ducks may be found in the flooded sections of the bogs throughout the fall season. With a little luck, something more interesting like a Northern Pintail or a Green-winged Teal will turn up among the common Mallards and American Black Ducks. While watching ducks in the area, check for Northern Harriers flying low over the bogs.

Shortly after passing the bogs, the road enters the forest and eventually leads to a small parking area. A path leads from the parking lot to a large field with a trail around the perimeter. Take a right and walk towards the building several hundred feet away. A trail leads to the water at the northeastern edge of this first field. The habitat here is mostly oak-conifer, and the view of Pocksha Pond at the end of the trail is worth the walk. The main trail around the first field leads to a second field that is contiguous with the first field. Explore any of the trails surrounding and emanating from these fields in spring and summer to see breeding birds, including Bobolinks, Great Crested Flycatchers, Eastern Kingbirds, Pine Warblers, Warbling Vireos, Scarlet Tanagers, Ovenbirds, and Wood Thrushes. The fields are also great for dragonfly and butterfly enthusiasts and regularly produce interesting sightings in mid-summer. Although spring and summer are unequivocally the most productive times to bird Betty's Neck, a hike through the area in winter may reveal the presence of Brown Creepers, Hairy Woodpeckers, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Dark-eyed Juncos, and Bald Eagles.

Great Quittacas and Pocksha Ponds

Returning to Long Point Road from the access road to Betty's Neck, take a left onto the causeway that runs between Great Quittacas and Pocksha ponds. During spring and fall the edges of the ponds here can be a great place to find migrant shorebirds like Spotted Sandpipers and Greater Yellowlegs (especially in late summer and fall when the water levels are low). In summer this is one of the most reliable areas to find breeding Bald Eagles. Scan the pines at the edge of the ponds carefully for this species, since eagles can be surprisingly inconspicuous when not observed in flight. While this area is otherwise not the most productive during the summer months, it does occasionally yield something notable like Laughing Gulls or Common and Forster's terns. Rarely, Least Terns are observed foraging on Pocksha Pond.



Great Quittacas Pond

The causeway is a good place to observe migrant swallows and raptors passing through in late summer and fall. Parking is limited to a few spots at the west end of the Great Quittacas side of the causeway. Bonaparte's Gulls are sometimes observed here, especially in November. Red-shouldered Hawks are occasionally sighted and probably breed nearby. Snow Buntings are regular along the edge of the causeway and on the dikes of the nearby cranberry bogs

from late October through mid-November. Migrant ducks to watch for include Common Mergansers, Hooded Mergansers, Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, Ruddy Ducks, Greater Scaup, and Ring-necked Ducks. Several of these migrant ducks may also be seen here in winter. Look for Great Cormorants on the rocks at the southeastern end of Pocksha Pond when sections remain ice-free.

Stuart Morgan Conservation Area

Continuing east across the causeway for 0.6 mile will lead to the small parking area for the Stuart Morgan Conservation Area on the left. At the east end of the parking lot, there is a trail that forks just a short walk from its start. Taking the left fork will take you up a small hill and eventually lead to the shore of Pocksha Pond (a five-minute hike in most seasons). The view from the shore at this location is quite scenic, and Bald Eagles have often been observed here. After taking in the sights from the edge of Pocksha Pond, backtrack a few feet and follow the path that continues east. During the coldest months the wet thickets on the left sometimes hold Winter Wrens. Listen for this species' telltale double-noted *dit dit* calls as it skulks low in the tangles. Other species that may be present in winter include Brown Creepers, Hairy and Downy woodpeckers, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Golden-crowned Kinglets. A nocturnal foray in the immediate area will likely reveal the presence of Great Horned Owls (early winter) and Eastern Screech-Owls (early spring). Continue on the path and listen for interior forest species like Scarlet Tanagers, Wood Thrushes, Red-eyed Vireos, Eastern Wood-Pewees, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and Great Crested Flycatchers during the breeding season. On a good morning in early May, the canopy at this location can yield an impressive array of migrant species. Farther up the path there is another fork; take the right fork to return to the parking area.

Norway Spruce and Red Pine Area

From the parking lot of the Stuart Morgan Conservation Area, retrace your route on Long Point Road and over the causeway for 1.7 miles to the junction of Route 105. Take a left on Route 105, and travel 0.4 mile to the fire road gate on the right. Park here, but be sure to park well away from the gate. There is ample room to accommodate several cars without blocking the entrance gate to the fire road. Because the fire roads are not open to the public, birding from the main road is recommended. However, there is one caveat. Route 105 can be very busy, and not everyone traveling on it observes the speed limit, so exercise caution. Directly across the road is a stand of red pine. Brown Creepers are reliable at this location. This area hosted breeding Yellow-rumped Warblers as recently as the late 1970s. Just north of the parking area there is a stand of enormous Norway spruces, mostly on the east side of the road. This stretch of Route 105 evokes images of a boreal forest, especially in late May when the songs of Golden-crowned Kinglets and the persistent nasal calls of Red-breasted Nuthatches resonate from the dense forest at the edge of the road. Both species have been confirmed breeding here in the past and likely will continue to do so in the immediate area. Other species regular here include Hermit Thrushes, Pine Warblers (some are present in winter), and Cooper's Hawks.

Negus Way and Little Quittacas Pond

From the parking area at the gate to the fire road, continue south on Route 105. After another 0.5 mile, look for the Royal Wampanoag Cemetery on the right. A small parking area on the right side of the road can accommodate one vehicle safely. This spot is a Native American cemetery containing the grave markers of several notable persons in the early history of the Lakeville ponds region. While not noteworthy for its birding, this stop certainly warrants a visit for its historical importance.

Continue south on Route 105 and pass between Great Quittacas Pond (on the left) and Little Quittacas Pond (on the right). In mid-July the shoreline of Little Quittacas Pond visible from the road is usually blanketed in blooming Plymouth gentian (*Sabatia kennedyana*), a rare and beautiful state-listed flower of the coastal plain. Eight-tenths of a mile from the cemetery (1.3 miles from the parking area at the fire road) look for the sign for Negus Way on the right. Take a right and park on the side of the road, but be careful not to block the gate. There is enough parking at this location to accommodate several vehicles. Walk along the road at the edge of Little Quittacas Pond, and scan the water for migrant ducks in the fall.

Numbers of migrant ducks at the Lakeville ponds have dropped precipitously over the past twenty to thirty years, but species diversity is still impressive throughout most of the area. The reasons for these changes are not entirely clear, but the dramatic decrease is thought to be largely due to changes in local food availability at the ponds (Wayne Petersen, pers. comm.). Little Quittacas is currently one of the best spots in the Assawompset Ponds Complex IBA to find migrant Ring-necked Ducks in the fall. From the late 1970s through the 1980s, maximum counts of this species occasionally exceeded 1000 individuals in a day, but in recent years high counts have rarely exceeded several hundred. Ring-necked Ducks reach their greatest abundance at Little Quittacas Pond in early November, but historically there was considerable variation in the peak of the fall migration, with the bulk of the numbers sometimes arriving as late as the third week of the month (Mendall 1958).

According to Ludlow Griscom (1939), the Ring-necked Duck became a regular spring transient in Massachusetts around 1930. He implied that the majority of Ring-necked Ducks occurring in New England at that time were the product of recently discovered populations breeding in northern New England and New Brunswick. He also explained that in the late 1930s most Ring-necked Ducks utilized lakes and reservoirs in northern New Jersey, southern New York, and western Massachusetts during the spring migration. The fall migration, on the other hand, was more coastal, and the greatest concentration of Ring-necked Ducks in the Commonwealth in this season was found at Little Quittacas (ibid.). In the late 1940s Elkins described Little Quittacas as “the best pond in Massachusetts” for clasping-leaved pondweed (*Potamogeton perfoliatus*), a principal duck food of the Chesapeake region, particularly around the Potomac River below Washington, D.C. (Elkins 1949). Elkins also stated that Little Quittacas was rich in several other aquatic plants favored as food by diving ducks. One example is a small, submerged arrowhead (probably *Sagittaria graminea* or *S. teres*) that, according to Elkins, was likely the main food

source for Ring-necked Ducks frequenting the pond. Lastly, a pipewort (*Eriocaulon septangulare*) was not only eaten by Ring-necked Ducks at Little Quittacas, but was also found to be part of this species' diet in certain ponds in northern Maine (*ibid.*).

Numbers of Greater Scaup and Ruddy Ducks have also decreased at the ponds through the years. It would be interesting and informative to conduct a botanical survey of the Lakeville ponds to determine if there have been any significant changes in the aquatic flora and the possible connection to the significant decrease in migrant duck numbers throughout the ponds region and at Little Quittacas specifically.

Little Quittacas Pond is also a good spot for late-lingering Ospreys. Some years this species can be found at the Lakeville ponds area well into late November. Pied-billed Grebes are another reliable species at this location in fall. During the winter months, scope the edge of the pond for Bald Eagles and other raptors like Cooper's, Sharp-shinned, Red-tailed, and, occasionally, Red-shouldered hawks. Winter birds that may also be present at this location include Great Cormorants (check the railing of the stone structure in the water at the southwest end of the pond) and a nice variety of ducks like Common and Hooded mergansers, Buffleheads, and Common Goldeneyes.

Additional Areas

The following areas are not included in the suggested route described above since they are brief stops that are generally productive only during the breeding season. It is best to observe birds from the road at these locations since there are no public trails that access the habitat and species described.

Marion Road

From the junction of Marion Road and Long Point Road in Middleboro, travel 1.0 mile north on Marion Road to the fire road gate on the left. Park here and walk south on Marion Road to the stream that flows under the road. This area is likely to support singing American Redstarts, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, House Wrens, Eastern Phoebes, and Wood Thrushes. In recent years, Northern Parulas have been heard singing during the breeding season in the vicinity of the stream, and in 1977 this was the site of the first twentieth century Acadian Flycatcher nest found in Massachusetts. This area is also a great place to stop in May, when an impressive diversity of Neotropical migrants may be present.

Owl Swamp

At the northern tip of the cove at the north end of Pocksha Pond lies Owl Swamp, a wetland characterized by the presence of red maple, sweet pepperbush, skunk cabbage, sensitive fern, and in late spring through summer, a thriving population of mosquitoes. A visit to this swamp in mid-May, however, makes for a relatively bug-free birding experience and is likely to produce singing Northern Waterthrushes, Veeries, Black-and-white Warblers, and possibly a Barred Owl. The edges of the swamp have been reliable in recent years for calling Eastern Screech-Owls. The best way to access the swamp is from Walnut Street in Middleborough along the section of the road that is roughly halfway between Marion Road and White Banks Road. To

reach this area from the aforementioned stop on Marion Road, travel north 1.4 miles to the intersection with Walnut Street, and turn left onto Walnut. Drive down the hill and through the swamp for 0.5 mile, park in the small parking area on the left side of the road, and listen from there.

Purple Martin Colonies

While driving the roads mentioned in this article and exploring other roads in the Lakeville ponds vicinity, look for the occasional small colony of breeding Purple Martins in yards containing nest houses and gourds. Some of these sites have had breeding martins for several years but then may remain uninhabited for several seasons. However, over the past fifteen years or so, there have been several active colonies visible from the road, so it is worth taking the time to check any of the nesting houses that are encountered.

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Jim Sweeney, of East Bridgewater, Massachusetts, has been an avid birder since 1980 and has birded extensively in New England, the mid-Atlantic states, the American desert Southwest, and Iceland. He is a past vice president of the South Shore Bird Club and currently serves as a council member for the Nuttall Ornithological Club. Jim has also been the compiler for the Taunton/Middleboro Christmas Bird Count since 2007. In addition to birds, he has a passion for dragonflies and damselflies and can frequently be found at water's edge with net in hand. He wishes to thank Wayne R. Petersen and Kathleen S. Anderson for reviewing early drafts of this article and for their many helpful comments.

[Editor's Note: The Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA) 2 is a five-year project conducted by Mass Audubon, beginning in 2007 and ending in 2011. BBA 1 was conducted from 1974-1979. Breeding bird atlases follow a standard field technique and protocol. Simply described, an atlas divides the county, state, or province into equally sized blocks or squares. Each square is surveyed for the presence of breeding birds. The breeding status of the species is determined by evaluating the behavior of the birds and comparing what is observed to a set of predetermined breeding criteria. This creates a data set of the distribution of all breeding species in the area—a detailed and repeatable snapshot of the distribution of the breeding birds.]

The Final Year of the Breeding Bird Atlas: Going Over the Top

John Galluzzo

And then there was one.

When birders around Massachusetts began field work, in year one of the Breeding Bird Atlas 2 project, they knew the end would come before they were ready for it. What they did not know was how addicting the atlasing process could be. A few seasoned veteran atlasers who participated in the pioneering first BBA in the 1970s knew it, but they represent just a fraction of the population taking to the field for the second atlas.

Atlasing hones the skills of birders, and one could argue that the Massachusetts birding community at large has undergone a five-year educational process that has raised competency levels and expanded the basic knowledge of birds across the state. Atlasing advances birders beyond basic identification to observation and understanding of behavior: like the significance of a Great-crested Flycatcher peeking into a hole in a tree, a Tree Swallow carrying nesting material in its bill, or a Common Grackle dropping a fecal sac in the same place it had dropped them for days.

The call is out for the fifth and final year of the Breeding Bird Atlas 2 project. With gaps to fill, now is the time for all good atlasers to come to the aid of their state, their country, and their birds. The digital snapshot of Atlas 2 needs a little more color management in Photoshop before it can be compared to the Polaroid taken of Atlas 1 in the seventies.

The gaps are known and easily filled, thanks to a dedicated corps of volunteer regional coordinators overseeing big portions of the atlas under project director Joan Walsh of Mass Audubon. Joan, of course, is examining the biggest portion of all, the state, and one bigger than that, a potential online Northeast regional breeding bird atlas. But before any such project can take place, the Massachusetts atlas must be completed.

Predictably, sparsely populated areas of the state, like Bristol, Berkshire, and the southern half of Plymouth counties, are in the direst need of help as the final field

season approaches. Fewer people in a region equals fewer birders; fewer birders, fewer atlasers; fewer atlasers, more work to be done in this, the last year for the rest of us.

Consider Bristol County. The United States Geological Survey breaks that county into 80 “blocks,” several of which contain very little viable habitat for nesting birds (such as blocks of mostly open water off the south coast or slivers of blocks that are mostly in Rhode Island). That said, by the end of last season, only thirty-five of the eighty blocks in Bristol County have met the minimum requirements for completion, i.e. twenty hours of effort, sixty species sighted, and 70 percent of those species confirmed as nesting in the block. Many of the Bristol blocks come close to fulfilling these requirements, but some may never fill the minimum criteria. Development has swallowed much of the old farmland that once covered Bristol County, leading to a decline or loss of various grassland nesters (a problem much larger than just Bristol County, obviously).

Bristol County needs atlasers to first hit the blocks that have had absolutely no coverage. New Bedford North 04, for example, has had no effort put into it whatsoever save for one incidental sighting, a confirmed Pine Warbler nest. In the 1970s, atlasers found forty-one species in this block, including confirmed nesting Song and Chipping sparrows, catbirds, mockingbirds, Barn Swallows, flickers, and even Black-billed Cuckoos.

Many blocks just need a final push over the top. They either need a little more effort to reach the twenty-hours-of-surveying mark—showing future generations we gave it the old college try—or a closer search for species recorded in the first atlas but not yet in this one. In some cases though, this latter task may be impossible. Short-eared Owls, Ring-necked Pheasants, Northern Bobwhites, and Golden-winged Warblers, for example, are no longer found in many blocks. Even after twenty hours of effort in Attleboro 06, for instance, nineteen fewer species have been found in the Atlas 2 period than in Atlas 1.

Overall, thirty Bristol County species from Atlas 1 have not been confirmed in Atlas 2. Conversely, twelve new breeding species have already been added in Atlas 2, including Wild Turkey, Cooper’s Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, and Common Raven. It’s disappointing but not surprising that Eastern Meadowlark, Whip-poor-will, Brown Thrasher, Purple Finch, and Ruffed Grouse are missing from the Bristol blocks in the second atlas, but where are the Savannah Sparrows, Killdeers, and Red-tailed Hawks (not to mention the pigeons)? Atlasers unable to take on full blocks and twenty-hour commitments in year five are asked to grab a list of target species per block and find those missing birds. The lists are available from regional coordinators or at the atlas website <<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bba/>>.

Finally, recon teams are needed to survey the entire viable habitat for specific species. Saltmarsh Sparrows, for example, were probably underrepresented going into the final year of the first atlas, as they appear to be this time around, because the blocks with the likeliest habitat haven’t been sufficiently covered by atlasers.

White-eyed Vireos are also conspicuously scarce in this BBA. It remains to be seen if these birds will be added to conversations about the loss of Bobwhites, American Kestrels, and Upland Sandpipers, or if our efforts in the final year of the atlas prove that they're still here. Some atlasers might consider becoming single-species champions, surveying suitable habitat for Saltmarsh Sparrows or the historic haunts of White-eyed Vireos or other species. The coast is also calling with the sounds of gulls and terns that need confirmation.

No atlaser needs to go it alone, though. Regional coordinators have already arranged "blockbusting" dates for areas needing coverage. They've worked up target lists and done everything but order the pizza for the wrap-up parties. Keep in mind that four atlasers birding for five hours in a single block in a single morning equals twenty hours and one more step toward completion of the Breeding Bird Atlas 2 project. A team of four atlasers committing three or four weekend mornings to the project this summer can conquer three or four blocks.

When all is written and the two atlases are compared, there may be more questions than answers. For example, since there were no safe dates (the plausible nesting period) used in the Atlas 1 project, we can't know if some of the White-throated Sparrows listed as breeders in that atlas were just late lingerers. There may have been sufficient confusion distinguishing Purple Finches from (then) newly arriving House Finches to skew numbers one way or another.

The atlas as a tool is effective for defining the variety and distribution of bird species in a given region during breeding season. Atlas 1 set the groundwork for Atlas 2, which will be just a snapshot compared to Atlas 3 twenty years from now. By filling the gaps in year five of the current atlas, we're not only producing valuable data on the current state of breeding birds in Massachusetts—essential for their conservation—we're setting up future generations for success.

To volunteer for the final year of the Breeding Bird Atlas 2 project, email Joan Walsh at jwalsh@massaudubon.org or register online at <http://www.massaudubon.org/birdatlas>>. 

John Galluzzo is the author of thirty books, mostly on the local history of the towns south of Boston, Massachusetts, and is a regular contributor to South Shore Living, Northeast Boating, Ships Monthly, and other magazines. John is the public program coordinator for Mass Audubon's South Shore Sanctuaries in Marshfield, and the Bristol and Plymouth counties coordinator for the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas 2.



BLUE JAY ON NEST BY DAVID LARSON

37 Years of Nighthawking

Tom Gagnon

My first memories of Common Nighthawks (*Chordeiles minor*) are watching from the roof of our den in late summer evenings as migrating flocks passed over our yard in Florence, Massachusetts. Florence is part of Northampton in the heart of the Connecticut River Valley here in western Massachusetts. My father would either be painting the back of the house or checking on the roof. As a small boy, I was allowed to climb the ladder and sit quietly on the roof. I can still see in my mind the low-flying flocks of nighthawks and how I marveled at their white wing patches. The seed was planted.

My first written record of a Common Nighthawk was during my senior year at Northampton High School, when I saw one flying over the school on May 18, 1962. Unbeknownst to me at the time, the notes and lists that I started in January 1962 were just the beginning of many lists and years of record keeping. The summer of 1962 brought my second record of nighthawks. I was on the roof of our shed when I saw twenty-five flying over, just like when I was a young lad on the den roof. Here are a few records from the roof of my shed:

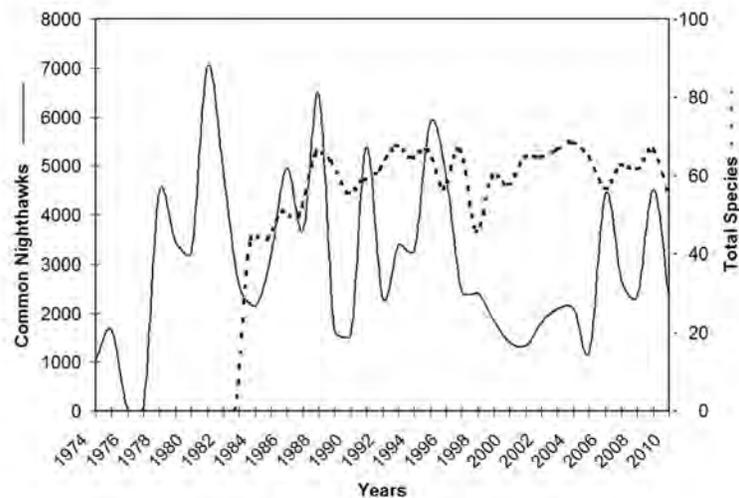
1969	August 28–September 1	2515
1970	August 28	1094
1971	August 29	1424

Since 2007, when Mass Audubon started the second Breeding Bird Atlas, no Common Nighthawk nests have been confirmed in Massachusetts. However, that was not always the case. In their 1937 classic, *Birds of the Connecticut Valley of Massachusetts*, Aaron Clark Bagg and Samuel Atkins Eliot, Jr. noted: “Common summer resident in cities, but rare elsewhere; sometimes abundant transient, especially in late summer” (p. 316).

In 1977, the late Richard Forster of the Massachusetts Audubon Society started a “Nighthawk Watch Survey,” with the hope of getting an overall picture of the migration in Massachusetts. Richard chose August 20 to September 7 to record the nighthawks. I believe this survey continued for ten years. By then, I had been counting nighthawks from the roof of our shed for a number of years. However, our neighbor had planted about 200 eastern white pines in his back yard that had started to block my view, so I decided I needed to find a new area to continue counting.

In 1974, I discovered an open hilltop about two miles from my house. The only problem was that it was an active cow pasture with a large herd of Holsteins that included a very large bull. So, for the first year or two, I had to stay near the edge of the pasture, where I was able to make a quick retreat under the fence when the herd came too close. The dairy farm ceased operation about three years later. For many years afterwards, a few horses and young dairy cattle were pastured in the field, but they presented no problems. The hilltop presented a 360-degree open view.

Lonely is the vigil of the nighthawker. Any of you who have spent an evening looking for nighthawks know that it can get very boring if the birds are not moving. So, in 1984, I decided to do a checklist of birds that I saw from my post for the season: August 20 to September 7. I feel that it helped to keep me more alert. I also made a rule for myself that I had to be within 7.5 feet of the old post that I sat on, giving me 15 feet to roam. A few times I would have to wander a little further to ID a bird but would quickly race back to the post so I would be able to see the bird from my little fifteen-foot diameter plot of counting space.



Nighthawks and total species counts for 1974-2010

The first year my list totaled forty-four species. Since then, my best year was in 2004, when I recorded sixty-nine species. Over the years even this listing has changed quite a bit. During the last four years Tree Swallows have dropped by at least ninety-eight percent. (Did they all move to Plum Island early?) In 1994, flocks of Wood Ducks passed over the pasture late each evening. Some evenings brought over 100 birds, plus an occasional Blue-winged or Green-winged teal. They were always fun and great for the list, but since 1995 hardly a Wood Duck is to be seen. Nineteen species have been tallied every year since 1984; the most surprising of those to me is Osprey. Some evenings I have had them migrating after 7 p.m.; on the evening of August 23, 2010, I counted nine.

Shorebirds always surprise me. Upland Sandpipers were seen or heard three times, Solitary Sandpipers eight times, and American Golden Plovers three times. Among the all-time highlights of the time spent on the hill is seeing Purple Martins (in 1986 and 1992) or Olive-sided Flycatchers teed-up on a dead snag in viewing range (five times). Several times I have heard Great Horned Owls call from the nearby pine grove, only to hear a young one start his or her begging call.

I have seen fourteen species only once. They are: Green-winged Teal, Red-shouldered Hawk, Northern Bobwhite, Black-bellied Plover, Lesser Yellowlegs, Least Sandpiper, Common Tern (a hurricane had passed over the valley that day), Fish Crow, Veery, Black-and-white Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Western Palm Warbler, Dickcissel, Vesper Sparrow, Monk Parakeet, and an escaped parakeet. So far, my total is 120 species.

The last four years the Bobolinks have been fun to count, with their totals being:

2007	9814
2008	13,676
2009	5920
2010	2945

Sometimes it is difficult to focus on counting nighthawks when flocks of Bobolinks are coming in to roost in the field below the hill. Bobolinks are in trouble as well and must be counted. More than nighthawks travel our evening sky.

Top 25 Evenings

Year & Date	# of Nighthawks	Wind and Comments
1978 8-30	103	WSW
1979 8-28	849	no wind, very hazy
1979 9-3	894	started raining at 7:20
1981 8-22	1354	ESE, 4-8 mph, cloudy
1981 8-27	2320	N, 0-8 mph, start 100% cloud, 6-6:30 light rain, then clearing
1982 8-26	1567	SW, 0-8 mph, clear
1982 8-31	1537	no wind, warm and hazy
1986 8-20	2063	NNW
1986 9-1	1312	S, 0-5 mph
1987 8-30	1691	S, 0-6 mph, very hazy, rained August 27-28-29
1987 9-6	1415	S
1988 8-26	1377	WSW, 5-10 mph to start, 6 o'clock no wind and clear
1988 9-2	1258	no wind, clear, 1000 milling around from 5:30 to 7:00
1988 9-3	2289	no wind, very hazy with 100% cloud cover
1991 8-22	3673	too busy counting to notice wind or anything else
1993 8-23	1924	no wind
1994 8-26	1385	no wind, very hazy
1994 8-27	1214	S, 0-3 mph
1995 8-29	1291	no wind, hazy, bug hatch
1995 9-1	2350	S, clear, 0-4 mph, bug hatch
1996 8-31	2331	SW, 0-4 mph, huge bug hatch

1997 8-26	790	S, 2-5 mph, light rain at 6:10 for 20 min., then no birds
1998 9-3	994	no wind
2003 9-4	730	
2006 8-30	2194	N, 0-5 mph, mostly clear
2009 9-2	889	no wind, clear

I usually arrive on the hill about 5 p.m. and stay until it is dark, unless it starts to rain. But if I have noticed a hatch of flying ants in my back yard, then I arrive as early as 4 p.m. I have found nighthawks milling around in good numbers, sometimes as many as 300–500 birds, in a frenzy of feeding on the flying ants. Sometimes these groups will stay in the same general area for one to two hours, feeding. These birds are essentially non-migratory for several hours while they feed. Then, as if an alarm goes off, the whole milling group will head in one direction, migrating maybe 200 to 300 feet above the treetops. I have witnessed high flights, with the birds just below cloud level, on a few rare occasions. When I have seen this happen, all of the birds were moving in the same direction, with what appeared to be a real sense of purpose.

Warm—Calm—Flying Ant Hatch = Big Evening of Migration

Movements after a day/evening of rain generally should produce a good count, since the conditions create a warm evening with little or no wind and flying ants mating in the air. On several occasions, I have had small flights just ahead of a thunderstorm moving through the valley. If there is a strong wind, you can plan on a very long evening of seeing almost no nighthawks. Judging from the top twenty-five evenings that I have had over thirty-seven years, one can conclude that an evening with no winds, or a gentle, warm southerly to southwest breeze with a good ant hatch *should* add up to a great evening. But I have had a few days when the winds were gentle from the north or west-south-west that produced a good flight. On August 27, 1981, for example, a wind from the north at 0-8 mph produced a bird count of 2320!

Try to find a location that will give you a 360-degree view. An exposed hilltop is best, but a large open field such as a soccer/football field might be good enough as long as it is not surrounded by tall trees. Hope for a good hatch of flying ants. Some evenings I have had ants coming out of the ground around my feet! Usually if there is a hatch, it subsides by about 6:30, and the evening sky then clears and the nighthawks are on their way. Here in the valley, not all flights are headed toward the south/southwest. Many evenings the entire flight might be headed north or northwest, when I feel they are following some of the smaller river valleys and working their way into Berkshire County and then south.

During my first four years on the hill, I was working a night shift, so I was not able to count on many evenings, and my figures are correspondingly quite low. The next twenty-eight years I was on the hill from August 20 to September 7. In 1984 and 1985, Scott Sumner of Belchertown helped me on several evenings, counting while I was working. Other than Scott's help on these occasions, all the count figures are my own.

From 1978 to 1996, I averaged 3909 birds a year, with only five years below 3000. Excluding the five lowest years, the average was 4572 birds for the remaining fourteen years. Then 1997 started a low trend in numbers. Over the next nine years I averaged only 1848 birds, with an all-time low of 1221 birds in 2005.

I started to question why my numbers were so low. Were the birds moving earlier? Were they moving later in the season? So I decided to start my count five days earlier, on August 15, and extend my count by three days to September 10. Historically, my counts after September 4 produced low numbers, many evenings falling to single digits, but I felt I had to try something and, in fact, from 2006–2010 my numbers climbed a little and I averaged 3177 birds per season. But was this because of the increase in the number of evenings spent watching? Breaking the figures down to look at just those eight extra evenings is interesting. Here are the results:

Year	August 15-19	September 8-10
2006	317	282
2007	66	352
2008	107	10
2009	160	29
2010	426	0

(Went to Yellowstone National Park instead)

So, by adding eight more evenings of nighthawking in each of the last five years, I have averaged 350 more birds per year.

As noted, no nesting of Common Nighthawks has been confirmed in Massachusetts during the ongoing Breeding Bird Atlas (2007 to present). The only explanation that I might suggest for their decline in the Bay State is the American Crow. I don't ever remember seeing crows in my yard when I started birding fifty years ago. At that time, they were a bird of the deep woods, and with an open season, shot on sight by many farmers. There is still a legal hunting season for crows today, but I rarely see them hunted, at least in the Northampton area.

American Crows are very intelligent birds. They have moved into the cities and neighborhoods across our state, and I believe they are here to stay. I have seen them on my suet feeders, and they use my birdbaths every day. Neighbors throw out stale bread, and the crows pick it up and fly directly to the bird baths to soften it. At my former place of employment before retirement caught up to me, I would walk from the warehouse to the manufacturing plant several times a day. From the 1960s into the early 1980s, Common Nighthawks nested on these roofs. What changed? Nothing. Still, by the early 1990s almost every time I took this walk between buildings, there would instead be two or three crows sitting on the corners of the roofs.

Whenever I go into Northampton (small city—population 30,000) I see crows everywhere. Plus, we now have Fish Crows in many of the cities. I suspect crows, being opportunistic, might have wiped out the nests (eggs and young) of our Common Nighthawks.

I have to say that it does not feel like I have been counting Common Nighthawks for thirty-seven years from the same spot. The time—like so many nighthawks—certainly seems to have flown by. I can only encourage everyone to get out and start your own tradition of keeping track of a certain species, whether it be shorebirds on your favorite beach on a certain weekend in August/September, or hawk watching for a certain time frame in September, or just a big day in January or May on Plum Island. Hopefully, my records will be of some use to someone studying the movements and conservation of Common Nighthawks in North America. 🦅

Tom Gagnon has always been interested in nature and started keeping records of birds in 1961. He has lived in Florence his whole life, except for three summers when he worked for the National Park Service in Moose, Wyoming. A graduate of Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Tom is a member of the Hampshire Bird Club but is also interested in mammals, wildflowers, butterflies, and antiques, especially stoneware. He is a past president of the Massachusetts Butterfly Club and has helped teach classes in butterfly identification at the Hitchcock Center in Amherst for several years. Tom also raises many different types of house plants, including many orchids, in a greenhouse attached to his home.

[Editor's note: Common Nighthawks have historically nested readily on flat gravel roofs, even in densely urban and industrial areas of the northeast. Armstrong (1965) studied nighthawks nesting on rooftops in an urban area and found "a significant correlation between home-range size and the number of available flat roofs." Consequently, there is much reasonable speculation that the wholesale transition from gravel to rubber and PVC sheathing on these roofs in recent decades has played a significant role in the decline of this species—at least in urbanized areas—because nighthawks do not nest on the new rubber surfaces. Vincent Marzilli—who studied nighthawks at the University of Maine in Orono—wrote in 1989 that eggs on rubber roofs can roll into drains or low spots filled with water, and that on a sunny July day, a black rubber roof registered an average of eighteen degrees hotter than one surfaced with gravel. Although another 1989 study (Brigham) asserts that "published accounts implicating a high frequency of nests on rooftops may in part reflect biased observation rather than actual preference," it is undeniable that in recent years nighthawks have disappeared as breeders from many industrial and mill complexes along the Connecticut and Merrimack rivers, in downtown Boston, and elsewhere in Massachusetts. The rubberizing of roofs is almost certainly a major factor in these instances.

However, the precipitous decline of the Common Nighthawk throughout its range undoubtedly points to a much broader, complex, and poorly understood combination of ecological factors (Hill, 2008). A recent five-year study involving 1.2 million individual bird records from Hudson Bay to Pelee Island in Lake Erie, (Cadman et al, 2008) revealed a thirty to fifty percent decline in most species of birds that rely on

flying insects for food, including swallows, Whip-poor-wills, and Chimney Swifts, and a nearly sixty percent decline in Common Nighthawks. The study implicates a diminishing flying insect food supply stemming from causes as varied as the decline in bees as pollinators, increased pesticide use in the control of West Nile Virus, and water pollution affecting insects with aquatic developmental stages. Climate change may also play a key role by altering the peak hatch schedule of flying insects, since the breeding cycle of nighthawks and other species has evolved to exploit these insect hatches.

New Hampshire Audubon recently launched a conservation program called Project Nighthawk, it involves placing gravel patches on rubber roofs in urban areas, an idea pioneered by Marzilli in the 1980s. Project documents offer construction and placement recommendations, information on nighthawk biology and behavior, and tips on working with building owners and roofing companies. To participate, please search "Project Nighthawk" on the New Hampshire Audubon website at <<http://www.nhaidubon.org/>> or download documents directly from <<http://nhbirdrecords.org/bird-conservation/library/Nighthawk-handbook.pdf>>.

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COMMON NIGHTHAWKS BY GEORGE C. WEST

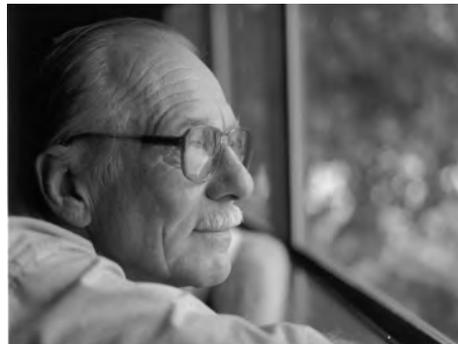
Leif J Robinson: May 21, 1939 – February 28, 2011

Soheil Zendeh

Leif knew stuff. He knew a lot of stuff, but he was damned if he'd flaunt his knowledge.

Craig Jackson and I recruited Leif and a few other birders for a Greater Boston Big Day—we were going to stay inside the Christmas Count circle. We had started this in 1979, and by the early 1980s we were pushing 120 species for a maximum. But when May 18, 1983, dawned raw and rainy, we assumed the worst. At 6:30 a.m., with rain dripping on us from the big trees in Middlesex Fells, nearly the entire party was ready to call it a day.

Leif was quiet, but at the end of the deliberations, when it was clear that the consensus was to cancel the Big Day, he said to let him just walk in the woods. He asked if we could pick him up at the end of the day! Now I knew very well that Leif had a terrible sense of direction. He could never find his way anywhere without getting lost—an amazing trait for an astronomer. I wasn't going to leave him in those woods by himself; we would never find him again. Remember, there were no cell phones in 1983.



Leif Robinson—photograph courtesy of Dennis DeCicco at *Sky and Telescope*

We reluctantly agreed to stick it out with him, at least for another hour. Sure enough, things began to look up (birdwise, not rainwise), and by the time we got to Mt. Auburn we realized a genuine, weather-based migrant grounding had taken place. At 10:30 in the morning the song in Mt. Auburn was ear-splitting! We never bettered that day's total of 129 species.

Leif knew all along what many of us have learned about rainy days and grounded migrants, but he wasn't willing to argue it or make a fuss about it. He just quietly wanted to go birding, so we followed.

As editor-in-chief of the premier amateur astronomy magazine in the world, *Sky and Telescope* (and Leif had a lot to do with making S&T a world-class magazine), cofounder of *Bird Observer* magazine, main idea man behind Take A Second Look (TASL—he coined the project title), coeditor of the first where-to-go-birding guide for Massachusetts and cofounder of Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch, Leif had his finger in many pies, and he was driven by an analytical approach to data which reflected his training as an astronomer. His approach was both expansive (he chased hawks all over the east coast; he chased eclipses all over the world) and intensive. He spent the decade of the 1980s birding almost exclusively in Weston, with an

occasional foray into a Greater Boston Big Day or a TASL count or, particularly, a hawk watch. His Weston focus was based on Charlotte E. Smith's *An Annotated List of the Birds of Weston, Massachusetts*, published in 1952. Leif decided that he would reproduce the older survey and document the habitat and breeding bird changes of the past 100 years in Eastern Massachusetts by focusing on one town. As a result of this focus, he turned up all sorts of rare breeders, which of course he wouldn't reveal to the birding community. For example, there was the Worm-eating Warbler—but that's a story for another time.

Leif's friendship was critical to me at the time that I was learning about the birding world. He was my mentor and chief encourager in bird study, environmental activism, even my business. But he was a funny cuss, too. It was he who coined the phrase, "There are only two types of birds: hawks and hawk-fodder." Now there's a friend worth having. 🐦

Soheil Zende, born in Tehran, grew up in Tehran and Tangier, Morocco, arrived in Cambridge in 1961 as a college freshman, and later started an auto repair shop in Cambridge, later Watertown. He began birding in 1973, never got a good look at the Newburyport Ross's Gull, got sick of driving to the north shore for birds, and began checking out local Boston spots in 1975, whereupon Bob Stymeist guided him to the "old puddle in East Boston." This turned out to be Rosie's Pond at Belle Isle Marsh. He founded the Friends of Belle Isle Marsh with Craig Jackson in 1978, then co-founded TASL with Craig Jackson, Dave Lange, Wayne Petersen, Leif Robinson, Bob Stymeist, and many others in 1979. He has edited and published Belle Isle News, TASL News, and TASL OnLine. From 2000 to 2005 he assisted Dick Veit and Ian Nisbet with Muskeget Island tern restoration. Since 2009 he has been guiding bird tours at Bear Creek Sanctuary in Saugus. Soheil lives in Lexington with his wife Christine.



WORM-EATING WARBLER BY DAVID LARSON

FIELD NOTES

Double-crested Cormorant Has Trouble Eating a Walking Catfish

William E. Davis, Jr.

On the morning of January 22, 2011, I was bird watching on the Anhinga Trail in the Everglades National Park, South Florida. In the ditch beside the path a Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) surfaced with a nine-to-ten-inch walking catfish (*Clarias batrachus*) in its beak. It was immediately chased by another cormorant in an attempted act of kleptoparasitism. After approximately a minute of evasive action, the cormorant with the fish swam to shore and waddled up the bank, across the path, and onto a grassy area where it began mandibulating the fish (the equivalent of chewing in animals with teeth), concentrating on the head end (Figure 1). The cormorant could not swallow the catfish initially because of its protruding lateral spines, part of the pectoral fins. In several instances the bird shook the catfish while holding it by one of these spines (Figures 2 and 3). After about three minutes a Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*) wandered up to the cormorant in another attempted kleptoparasitism. The cormorant protected its fish by turning away from the vulture and intensifying its mandibulation of the head end of the fish. After the lateral spines had been neutralized and no longer stuck out laterally, the cormorant swallowed the fish head first. The processing of the fish had taken four minutes and twelve seconds from the time it reached the grass.

Large walking catfish, an invasive species from Southeast Asia with potent pectoral fin spines, are apparently an



Figure 1. Cormorant processes anterior end of catfish. Photographs by the author.



Figure 2. Cormorant holds catfish by lateral spine in an attempt to break the spine.



Figure 3. Cormorant concentrates on breaking lateral spines.

energetically expensive meal. Cormorants swallow small fish underwater, and large or difficult to handle fish at the surface (Hatch and Weseloh 1999). Usually, cormorants swallow a fish within seconds of capture. This cormorant exited the water and carried the catfish approximately 15 feet (5 meters), took an unusually long time to prepare the fish for swallowing, and was subjected to two attempted acts of kleptoparasitism that required an expenditure of energy to avoid. It should be noted that other piscivorous bird species also have apparent difficulty eating walking catfish (Davis 2006). 

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Ruddy Turnstones and a Sanderling Drink Fresh Water

William E. Davis, Jr.



Figure 1. Seven Ruddy Turnstones and a Sanderling at an ephemeral puddle. Several of the turnstones are drinking. The shower head that was the source of the water is at the upper right. Photographs by the author.

On February 1, 2011, about mid-afternoon, my wife and I drove to Veteran's Memorial Park (Beach) at mile post 40, south of Marathon in the Florida Keys. When I came in from fishing the flats, I noticed seven Ruddy Turnstones (*Arenaria interpres*) and a Sanderling (*Calidris alba*) drinking water from a shallow fresh-water pool at the intersection of the parking lot and the walkway that led to the rest rooms and showers. The water that had created the pool was cascading down from an outdoor shower that was stuck partly on. I watched the birds drink in bouts of approximately one second, their bills opening and closing in a fluttering manner. This was a very ephemeral pool, and when I checked, there were no insects visible in the water. So this was not foraging, but drinking. The bill

flutters were characteristic of drinking bouts, not the rapid pecks that typify foraging for arthropods.

A car passed by, and the birds scurried across the parking lot and back onto the beach wrack, where they began to forage. I waited in the car for about a half hour and finally the birds ran back past my car and to the now drying pool (my wife had turned the shower off). I had my camera ready and snapped several photos of individuals in



Figure 2. Two Ruddy Turnstones drinking.

the group drinking (Figures 1 and 2). Human disturbance again sent them running across the parking lot to the beach. An hour later the pool was virtually gone.

Birds of North America accounts describe drinking by turnstones as “observed rarely, edge marshy freshwater streams and ponds” (Nettleship 2000, p. 8), and for Sanderlings no information is available (MacWhirter et al. 2002). Considering the opportunistic and repeated drinking of fresh water by the turnstones and Sanderling that I observed, I suspect that drinking of fresh water by these two species is more common than has been reported. 

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From Mass Wildlife: Leave Young Wildlife Alone!

The arrival of spring means the arrival of newborn and just-hatched wildlife. These youngsters soon venture into the world on shaky legs or fragile wings and are discovered by people living and working nearby. Every year, the lives of many young wild creatures are disturbed by people who take young wildlife from the wild in a well-intentioned attempt to “save” them. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (DFW) offices are already receiving calls about young wildlife picked up by people.

These well-meant acts of kindness tend to have the opposite result. Instead of being left to learn their place in the world, young wildlife removed from the wild are denied important natural learning experiences which help them survive on their own. Most people quickly find that they can't really care for young wildlife, and many of the animals soon die in the hands of well-meaning people. Young wildlife that do survive human “assistance” miss experiences that teach them to fend for themselves. If these animals are released back into the wild, their chances of survival are reduced. Often, the care given to young wildlife results in some attachment to humans, and the animals may return to places where people live, only to be attacked by domestic animals or hit by cars. Some animals become nuisances, and people have even been injured by once-tamed wildlife.

Avoid these problems by following one simple rule when coming upon young wildlife: If You Care, Leave Them There! It may be difficult to do, but this is a real act of compassion. The young are quite safe when left alone because their color patterns and lack of scent help them remain undetected. Generally the parent will visit their young only a few times a day to avoid leaving traces that attract predators. Wildlife parents are not disturbed by human scent. Baby birds found on the ground may be safely picked up and placed in a nearby bush or tree. Avoid nest and den areas of young wildlife and restrain all pets.

Leave fawns (young deer) where they are found. Fawns are safest when left alone because their camouflaging color helps them remain undetected until the doe returns. Unlike deer, newborn moose calves remain in close proximity to their mothers who, in contrast to a white-tailed doe, will actively defend calves against danger. An adult cow moose weighing over 600 pounds will chase, kick, and stomp a potential predator, people included.

Only when young wildlife are found injured or with their dead mother may the young be assisted, but must then be delivered immediately to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator. Due to the difficulty in properly caring for them there are no rehabilitators licensed to care for fawns. It is illegal to possess most wildlife in Massachusetts. Information on young wildlife has been posted online at <http://www.mass.gov/masswildlife> and a list of wildlife rehabilitators posted at: http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/wildlife/rehab/wildlife_rehab_index.htm.

ABOUT BOOKS

Small Wonders

Mark Lynch

AAAAW to ZZZZZD: The Words Of Birds. John Bevis. 2010. Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press.

A Spicing Of Birds: Poems By Emily Dickinson. Selected and introduced by Jo Miles Schuman and Joanna Bailey Hodgman. 2010. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.

So many books about birds being published today are large and oversized. Whether it's the newest coffee-table book of artsy bird photography, the latest field guide to everything you need to know to identify all the birds of North America (including Nunavut but excluding Hawaii), or the most up-to-date breeding bird atlas of teeny San Marino, books about birds today tend to be tomes. If you are an ardent ornithobibliophile, you know how quickly bookshelf space gets eaten up by wave after wave of bird books large enough to stun a Cassowary. Soon it becomes necessary to either deaccession or move to a larger house with more shelf space. But a large format and hundreds of pages do not always mean high quality or interesting writing. Below, we will look at two books that are deceptively small in size but big in the quality of their content. Both of these books are very personal undertakings, published as much as artistic projects as bird books.

Reading through a field guide, have you ever come across a word like “rrrrpheeleeoo” to describe a call of a bird (in this case an Upland Sandpiper) and wondered how in Bartramian’s good name do you possibly pronounce this insane jumble of letters? It really doesn’t help that it’s qualified as a *vibrant* “rrrrpheeleeoo.” Everything depends on where to put the emphasis and the tonal quality. And does the bird actually say this exact phrase? You find yourself sitting in a chair sounding like you have glossolalia as you attempt over and over to pronounce this birdcall and hope like hell no one else is home to hear you. I have found these transcriptions of bird sounds next to useless until I hear the birdcall in the field and then backtrack and realize, “Oh, THAT’S how that’s pronounced.”

John Bevis is a British writer, poet, artist, and birder. As he started down his personal birding path, Bevis became fascinated by the words used in field guides to describe the songs and calls of birds. He wondered, Where did these words come from? Were there standard editions? Was it always *screeeeeeee* when describing the calls of a Barn Owl, or did some authors take the liberty of adding or subtracting some *e*'s? Over twenty years ago, he began to collect all these “words of birds” on note cards. His current book *Aaaaw to Zzzzzd: The Words of Birds* is a second and much expanded version of an earlier book he published on



the subject. But *Aaaaw to Zzzzzd* is not just a lexicon of avian onomatopoeia, but a collection of short essays by Bevis on all aspects of birdsong, much of which is not found in most bird books.

These bird words come from the first era of popular birding, the early nineteenth century. This was the time of the rise of the popular bird book, before sound recordings. Some authors originally tried to use musical notation to transcribe the songs of some birds, but this failed miserably since even fewer people could read music. So these early birding authors made up words that would somewhat convey the song or call. For the most part, there were no grammatical conventions, and the system was completely arbitrary. One author would use four z's, another six. There are a few exceptions. For some reason that Bevis cannot understand, the call of the Gray Heron is given by quite a number of authors as precisely "frank." To me, this looks like a sound used by comic artist Don Martin in early editions of *Mad Magazine*.

More successful in helping you to actually learn a bird song are the mnemonic phrases that don't try to duplicate the sound of a bird but instead bring to mind the rhythm, pitch, pace, and cadence of the song. One of the most commonly used mnemonic phrases in Britain, known even to many non-birders, is "A little bit of bread and no cheese," the song of the Yellowhammer. Here in North America we have "Whip three bears" or, alternatively, "Quick three beers" (Olive-sided Flycatcher) depending, I guess, on whether you are thirsty or want to emulate a circus trainer. These phrases are easier to remember even if some seem to bear only a glancing resemblance to the actual birdsong. Most of us can certainly get "Sweet, sweet, sweet, I'm so sweet" being a representation of the song of the Yellow Warbler, but it does seem a real stretch to describe the call of the Brown Thrasher as "Plow now—plow now—plant it—drop it—cover it up—cover it up—good boy—three cheers!" Maybe it's because we are no longer an agrarian society.

Aaaaw to Zzzzzd is crammed with the fascinating digressions of Bevis's meditations on the nature of bird songs and is, therefore, a very idiosyncratic and personal book. He writes about why listening to birdsong is like listening to Schubert's treatment of German poems. There are essays on considering birdsong as music, the history of bird whistles and other birdsong imitators, a concise history of the recording of bird songs, and even a section on bird automata and cuckoo clocks.

Throughout *Aaaaw to Zzzzzd* are full-page black-and-white photographs of what appear to be odd bits of habitat: an overgrown field, a country lane, a swampy pond. These photos are captioned with stray lines of scientific knowledge of birdsong, such as, "Birds may rehearse phrases they later discard from their repertoire" (p. 81). When, in a recent interview, I asked Bevis about these strange photos, he said he was inspired by the title of an old book he had read called *British Moths and Their Haunts*. The idea of "bird haunts" stuck with him, and these photographs represent places where one could imagine standing and hearing different bird songs. These are, therefore, photographs of Bevis's visions of bird haunts.

Aaaaw to Zzzzzd is a unique book, part droll collection of what passes for the calls of birds in field guides and part unique history of bird songs and the humans who listened to them, became entranced, and tried valiantly to duplicate them.

To quote from page 80:

zrurrr Forster's tern
zttttttttt eastern meadowlark
zur zur zur zree back-throated blue warbler
zweet zweet zweet prothonotary warbler
zzip northern waterthrush
zzzzzd lazuli bunting

Jo Miles Schuman is an author, artist, and avid birder. Joanna Bailey Hodgman is a teacher and a poet. They are also cousins. *A Spicing of Birds* is a loving work of publishing art that was more than two and a half years in the making. Schuman took an intensive course on Emily Dickinson, read all her poems, and together with Hodgman decided on a project that would print some of their favorite Dickinson bird poems with some of the finest examples of bird art of the nineteenth century. They chose work that was published during the life of Dickinson and that depicted species found in the Dickinson poems or in the Amherst area. The one exception was work by Mark Catesby from the previous century. Getting permissions to publish these artworks was a tedious process that included correspondence with the Royal Library of Britain. Yes, the authors have a letter that actually states that the Queen has granted them permission to publish Catesby's work. The result is a small but beautiful book, thoughtfully put together and simply a joy to read.



Though I have long been familiar with the poems of Emily Dickinson, I have to admit that it is only with maturity that I have been able to appreciate deeply their seemingly effortless complexity and beauty. Perhaps it is because death is often lurking around the edges of so much of her work. Emily Dickinson is often thought of as a recluse, not wandering far from her father's house in Amherst. But she was, in fact, very well connected to the outside world through visits to friends and correspondence. She was very much an artistic rebel. Her poetry can be seen today as very modernist, decades ahead of its time in its ideas and execution.

Dickinson wrote over 222 poems that mentioned birds, and Schuman and Hodgman have selected their favorites as well as some of Dickinson's best-loved and most evocative bird poems. Why did she write so many poems about birds? Schuman and Hodgman write that Dickinson loved music, and she considered birdsong a form of music that deeply affected her with both joy and sadness. She also lived among a wide variety of birds. Because her father owned a farm, species of the garden, fields, and woods were very familiar to her. The title of the book *A Spicing of Birds* comes from her description of her homestead in a letter to a friend. Dickinson had very few good books to help her identify birds. Most bird books at the time were stuffy

scientific volumes. The exceptions were the popular titles written by pioneer birder Florence Augusta Merriam Bailey. Dickinson's considerable knowledge of birdsong and bird behavior was earned over long years spent looking and listening to the natural world around her.

A Spicing of Birds is a small treasure. Beautifully published, the reproduction of the artwork is first rate. Among the bird prints included are photographs by one of the early woman photographers, Cordelia Stanwood, who specialized in shots of nests and baby birds. Stanwood's work was often included in important works of ornithology, including books by Edward Howe Forbush. The inclusion of her photographs in this volume with works by the better-known Audubon, Nuttall, and Ridgeway, is another indication of the thoughtful and personal nature of this project.

Included in *A Spicing of Birds* is a biography of Emily Dickinson, as well as short biographies of all the artists in the book. *A Spicing of Birds* is a book you will sit down with, dip into often over years, and deeply enjoy.

One joy of so much anguish
Sweet nature has for me
I shun it as I do Despair
Or dear iniquity—
Why Birds, a Summer morning
Before the Quick of Day
Should stab my ravished spirit
With Dirks of Melody
Is part of an inquiry
That will receive reply
When Flesh and Spirit sunder
In Death's Immediately

(p. 33) 

Other Literature Cited:

Newman, Leonard Hugh. 1952. *British Moths and Their Haunts*. London: Country Book Club.



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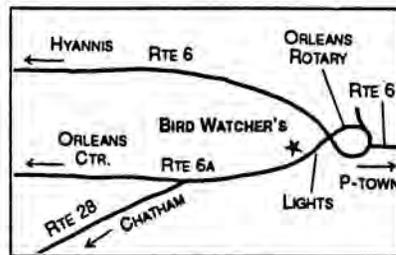
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BIRD SIGHTINGS

November/December 2010

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

The average Boston temperature for November was 44.8°, with nearly half the days of the month above normal and half below normal. The high was 64° on November 17; the low was 28° on November 28. Boston had its first 32° day on November 3, and the temperature did not reach freezing again until November 21. A killing frost occurred on November 28. Rainfall totaled 2.96 inches, an inch below average for November, and snowfall was absent throughout the state. Boston averages two inches of snow in November, and the suburbs average an inch or more.

December was cold and snowy; the average temperature in Boston of 32.7° was 2.1° below normal. The high was 57° on December 13 and the low of 14°, just three days earlier on December 10, was 15° lower than average for the date. Rainfall totaled 3.61 inches, with measurable amounts occurring on nine days. The big story was the snow, with a total of 22 inches recorded in Boston, 13 inches above normal for December. There was just one significant storm, the day after Christmas, when a violent nor'easter tore through our state. Severe coastal damage was recorded in many areas, particularly along the south shore of Scituate. December ranked ninth in the amount of snow in 120 years of records. Several Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) had to be rescheduled due to the storm. *R. H. Stymeist*

WATERFOWL TO ALCIDS

Every species of goose ever seen in Massachusetts was reported during the period, a feat never before achieved in the state. The most spectacular was a **Pink-footed Goose** discovered in Sudbury on November 17, only the third record for the species in Massachusetts. The goose was seen and enjoyed by many and lingered through the snowfall on December 26. **Greater White-fronted Geese** were reported in unusually high numbers, with as many as 11 individuals reported. A **Ross's Goose** on Nantucket was exciting. Prior to 2009, there had been only three records of this species, but March 2009 yielded a fallout, with groups of up to eight geese in five locations. **Cackling Geese** were, as usual, reported only from the western part of the state.

On November 20 there were reports of two flocks of **Tundra Swans**, 29 in Brimfield and 19 at Quabbin Reservoir. Large flocks are rare but not unprecedented; in mid-November 1998 there were reports of 28 swans in Westport and 16 in Brookfield. Inland waterfowl were seen in typical numbers through the end of December, when unusually cold weather froze out most of them. The Brookline Bird Club (BBC) "Extreme Pelagic" on November 13 reported impressive numbers of sea ducks off South Monomoy. Sea ducks such as Long-tailed Ducks and scoters were seen at inland locations as is typical during the period, but reports of Barrow's Goldeneye at several inland locations were unusual.

Pacific Loons were reported from Provincetown and adjacent North Truro; the species has been seen almost annually since 1997 from this part of outer Cape Cod. An **American White Pelican** flying over Eastham on November 27 was reported to the Wellfleet Bay sanctuary, and although it was not photographed, the description was persuasive. A Snowy Egret on November 27 was exceptionally late, as were two Little Blue Herons in Manchester and Chilmark. Cattle Egrets are never common in the state, least of all in the last two months of the year, but as many as eleven individuals were reported. A Green Heron that lingered at Mount Auburn

Cemetery until December 9 was exceptionally late; there have been only a handful of previous December records.

On Plum Island, a **Gyrfalcon** was seen at eye level 50 yards away. After hovering for a few moments, it flew off northwest and was not seen again despite a four-hour search. An adult **Purple Gallinule** was discovered in distress in Hull on December 27 and taken to the New England Wildlife Center, where it recuperated for several weeks. Sandhill Cranes were reported from three locations.

The shorebird of the season was a **Northern Lapwing**, photographed on Plum Island on December 2. Jim Hully described watching a Rough-legged Hawk and seeing the Lapwing fly in from the east and mob the hawk for a few seconds before heading south. Unfortunately no one was able to relocate the bird, but Jim's photos were undisputable. A Lapwing had been reported in Storrs, Connecticut, on November 28, possibly the same bird. A Spotted Sandpiper in Falmouth on November 24–25 was unusually late.

As usual, Nantucket was the gull capital of the state. An astonishing 327 Lesser Black-backed Gulls set a new state record on November 26, the previous high being 181 on Nantucket on November 16, 2008. Since November 2004, there have been several reports of the species in the triple digits. Other noteworthy gulls on November 26 included a Little Gull, a Black-headed Gull, and 47 Iceland Gulls.

Great Skuas were reported from three locations; two were well offshore, but the third sighting was at Andrew's Point in Rockport. Alcids were well reported during the period. Dovekies in the triple digits were counted from a research boat traveling from Cox's Ledge to Veatch Canyon, which may be normal for this location; we don't have enough data to know for sure. On the other hand, the tally of 296 Dovekies from First Encounter Beach in Eastham on December 2 was unusual. A northwest gale on November 24 was perfect for bringing birds to First Encounter Beach, and 8000 Razorbills were tallied there. *M. Rines*

Pink-footed Goose				Cackling Goose			
11/17-12/26	Sudbury	1 ad ph	Gove, Gordon + v.o.	11/13-12/4	Amherst	1-3	I. Davies + v.o.
Greater White-fronted Goose				11/18-12/28	Turners Falls	1-3	J. Smith + v.o.
thr	SRV	1	v.o.	Mute Swan			
11/21-29	Sharon	1	J. Baur + v.o.	12/4-5	Cape Cod	206	CCBC
11/25	Sutton	1	A. Marble	Tundra Swan			
11/27	Millbury	1	M. Lynch#	11/20	Brimfield	29	I. Lynch
12/7-17	W. Bridgewater	2 juv	K. Ryan + v.o.	11/20	Quabbin (G5)	19	L. Therrien + v.o.
12/11-15	Boston (F.Pk)	1 ad	R. Mayer + v.o.	12/4-5	Pittsfield (Onota)	2	M. Iliff
12/13	Dorchester	1	R. Schain#	Wood Duck			
12/18	W. Springfield	1	CBC (Conway)	11/18	Concord	30	G. d'Entremont#
12/25-26	Sharon	2	J. Baur	12/11	Waltham	20	J. Forbes
Snow Goose				12/14	Lunenburg	12	T. Pirro
11/21	P.I.	12	S. Haydock	12/29	W. Rox. (MP)	115	T. Aversa
11/27-30	Shrewsbury	4	G. Gove#	12/30	Arlington	13	R. LaFontaine
12/5	Pittsfield	21	T. Collins	Gadwall			
12/18	Springfield	10	CBC (Richardson)	11/1-12/26	P.I.	600 max	v.o.
12/26	Middleton	2	S. Sullivan#	11/7	Pittsfield (Pont.)	4	T. Gagnon
12/26	Halifax	2 imm	J. Sweeney	11/25	Plymouth	130	I. Davies
Ross's Goose				11/30	Ipswich	40	J. Berry
12/11-31	Nantucket	1 ph	J. Trimble + v.o.	12/4-5	Cape Cod	102	CCBC
Brant				12/15	Gloucester (E.P.)	35	MAS (B. Gette)
11/1	Mt. Watatic	70	T. Pirro	12/17	Plymouth	205	I. Davies#
11/6	WBWS	140	M. Faherty	12/31	Nantucket	4	G. d'Entremont#
11/7, 12/7	Nahant	70, 57	L. Pivacek	Eurasian Wigeon			
11/21	Boston H.	297	TASL (M. Hall)	11/1-7	Marstons Mills	1	v.o.
11/25	Plymouth	280	I. Davies	11/21-24	P.I.	1 m	Chickering + v.o.
11/28	P.I.	35	N. Backstrom	12/4-5	Cape Cod	1	CCBC
12/4	Bourne	84	M. Lynch#	12/11	Nahant	1	L. Pivacek
Barnacle Goose				12/14	Oak Bluffs	1 m ph	L. McDowell
11/1-12/18	Concord/Acton	1	v.o.	12/19	P.I.	1	S. Sullivan#

American Wigeon				11/28	Sudbury	130	G. Dysart
11/1-12/4	P.I.	166 max	v.o.	12/4-5	Cape Cod	512	CCBC
11/5	Lincoln	36	M. Rines	12/18	Eastham	140	M. Faherty
11/14	Nantucket	35	K. Blackshaw#	Greater Scaup			
11/14	Lincoln	30	M. Rines	11/8	Rockport (A.P.)	27	R. Heil
11/21	Westport	32	E. Nielsen	11/16	Lynnfield	10	P. + F. Vale
11/25	Acoaxet	79	M. Lynch#	11/21	Westport	170	E. Nielsen
11/25	Plymouth	54	I. Davies	11/21	Boston H.	376	TASL (M. Hall)
12/4-5	Cape Cod	123	CCBC	11/28	Mattapoisett	436	M. Lynch#
12/17	Plymouth	60	I. Davies#	12/4-5	Cape Cod	326	CCBC
12/19	E. Boston (B.I.)	7	P. Peterson	12/11	Acoaxet	300	E. Nielsen
12/28	Turners Falls	5	J. Smith	12/24	Nahant	94	L. Pivacek
12/30	E. Boston (B.I.)	4	P. Peterson	Lesser Scaup			
American Black Duck				11/7	Peabody	42	BBC (D. Williams)
thr	P.I.	3200 max	v.o.	11/10	Canton	16	V. Zollo
11/21	Boston H.	250	TASL (M. Hall)	11/21	Westport	22	E. Nielsen
11/25	Plymouth	946	I. Davies	11/28	Lynnfield	39	D. Williams
12/4-5	Cape Cod	1774	CCBC	12/4-5	Cape Cod	293	CCBC
Blue-winged Teal				12/24	Nahant	83	L. Pivacek
11/6-18	Plymouth	1 MAS	(S. Wheelock)	12/30	Arlington	2	R. LaFontaine
11/19-12/29	Marstons Mills	1-3	v.o.	King Eider			
Northern Shoveler				11/27	Gloucester	1	T. Burke
11/1-12/14	P.I.	28 max	v.o.	12/16-19	Winthrop B.	1 m ad	P. Peterson#
11/6	Arlington Res.	5	J. Forbes#	12/19	Rockport (A.P.)	1 imm m.	B. Harris#
11/11	Fall River	6	L. Abbey	Common Eider			
12/8	Salisbury	14	S. McGrath	11/6	Rockport	439	R. Schain#
12/11	GMNWR	3	P. Peterson	11/7	Salisbury	350	J. Berry#
12/14	Winthrop	4	M. Iliff	11/13	off S. Monomoy	350000	BBC pelagic
12/16-26	Jamaica Plain	5	M. Barber + v.o.	11/21	Boston H.	4037	TASL (M. Hall)
12/17	Salisbury	15	S. McGrath	11/27	Chatham	2000+	B. Zajda
12/21	Arlington	2	M. Rines	12/6	Bourne	1300	M. Keleher
Northern Pintail				12/17	Plymouth	569	I. Davies#
11/1-12/26	P.I.	225 max	v.o.	Harlequin Duck			
11/18	GMNWR	16	USFWS (S. Ryan)	thr	Rockport	150 max	v.o.
11/25	Acoaxet	51	M. Lynch#	11/7	Sandwich	2	P. Crosson#
12/5	Sudbury	17	B. Harris	11/8	Manomet	3	E. Dalton
12/16	Barnstable	11	J. Young	11/13	Chilmark	6	S. Whiting#
12/28	Marlboro	7	J. Hines	12/5-31	P'town H.	3	B. Nikula
12/29	Wellfleet	5	M. Faherty	12/5	S. Boston	1 f	C. Lawler
Green-winged Teal				12/11	Acoaxet	11	E. Nielsen
11/1-12/17	P.I.	800 max	v.o.	12/29	Scituate	11	B. Larson
11/7	W. Roxbury	32	M. McCarthy	Surf Scoter			
11/10	Canton	40	V. Zollo	11/1	P.I.	110	T. Wetmore
11/18	Braintree	55	K. Ryan	11/6	Pittsfield (Onata)	2	M. Lynch#
11/20	N. Chatham	22	B. Nikula	11/7	Nahant	800	L. Pivacek
11/29	GMNWR	57	A. Bragg#	11/8	Rockport (A.P.)	230	R. Heil
12/4-5	Cape Cod	14	CCBC	11/13	off S. Monomoy	3200	BBC pelagic
12/17	Salisbury	40	S. McGrath	11/21	Boston H.	1085	TASL (M. Hall)
12/18	Pittsfield	6	CBC (N. Mole)	12/31	Nantucket Sd	6000	G. d'Entremont#
12/21	Brookline	1	P. Peterson	White-winged Scoter			
Canvasback				11/6	Stoneham	2	D. + I. Jewell
11/1-12/20	Cambr. (F.P.)	19 max	v.o.	11/6	Quabbin Pk	3	J. Rose
11/7	Randolph	1 m	G. d'Entremont	11/7	Nahant	130	L. Pivacek
11/27	Acoaxet	1 f	I. Davies	11/13	off S. Monomoy	16750	BBC pelagic
12/4-5	Cape Cod	6	CCBC	11/21	Boston H.	1597	TASL (M. Hall)
Redhead				11/23	E. Gloucester	85	J. Berry
11/7-12/2	Randolph	2-5	GdE + v.o.	12/4	P.I.	120	E. Nielsen
11/7-12/5	Peabody	2	D. Williams + v.o.	Black Scoter			
11/9	Ipswich	4	J. Berry	11/1	P.I.	80	T. Wetmore
11/10	Canton	4	V. Zollo	11/6-7	Reports of 1-120 indiv.	from 14 inland loc.	
11/27	Acoaxet	2 m, 3 f	I. Davies	11/8	Rockport (A.P.)	545	R. Heil
11/29	P.I.	5	T. Wetmore	11/19	Lincoln	20	C. Cook
12/9	Marstons Mills	1	P. Kyle	11/20	Quabbin	10	T. Gagnon#
12/11	Eastham	1	E. Winslow	11/21	W. Brookfield	19	M. Lynch#
12/14	Oak Bluffs	1 ph	L. McDowell	11/28	P.I.	800	E. Nielsen
Ring-necked Duck				12/31	Nantucket Sd	250	G. d'Entremont#
11/1-20	Cambr. (F.P.)	164 max	v.o.	Long-tailed Duck			
11/1	W. Newbury	150	P. Brown	thr	P.I.	60 max	v.o.
11/5	Lincoln	110	M. Rines	11/1	Nantucket	1063	E. Ray
11/7	Randolph	150	G. d'Entremont	11/6	S. Quabbin	12	L. Therrien
11/13	Lynnfield	160	P. + F. Vale	11/6	Pittsfield	27	M. Lynch#
11/14	W. Boxford	400+	T. + N. Walker	11/8	Rockport (A.P.)	555	R. Heil
11/21	Westport	490	E. Nielsen	11/21	Boston H.	151	TASL (M. Hall)

Leach's Storm-Petrel (continued)				11/7	Fairhaven	3	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/13	P'town	1	B. Nikula	11/13	P.I.	3	T. Spahr
Northern Gannet				11/21	Westport	5	E. Nielsen
11/4, 8	Rockport (A.P.)	1520, 670	R. Heil	12/6	Bourne	10	M. Keleher
11/6	Salisbury	100+	B. Zajda#	12/11	Acoaxet	3	E. Nielsen
11/7	Nantucket	35	K. Blackshaw#	Osprey			
11/7	P'town	4750	B. Nikula	11/3	Sterling	1	T. Pirro
11/10, 12/2	Eastham (F.E.)	925, 575	B. Nikula	11/6	Stoneham	1	D. + I. Jewell
12/1	Wellfleet	350	M. Faherty	11/7	Wakefield	2	BBC (D. Williams)
12/5	Duxbury B.	25	R. Bowes	11/7	Wayland	1	B. Harris
American White Pelican				11/14	W. Boxford	1	T. + N. Walker
11/27	Eastham	1	M. Nettles	11/15	Falmouth	1	M. Keleher
Double-crested Cormorant				11/20	Lincoln	2	P. Peterson
11/1	P.I.	450	T. Wetmore	11/29	Brewster	1	S. Finnegan
11/1	Salisbury	170	J. Berry#	12/9	Nahant	1	L. Pivacek
11/3	P'town	425	B. Nikula	Bald Eagle			
11/21	Boston H.	62	TASL (M. Hall)	thr	Reports of 1-2 indiv. from 34 locations		
11/25	Westport	67	M. Lynch#	11/2	Mt. Watatic	4	Hawkcount (TP)
12/19	Winthrop B.	35	P. Peterson	11/3-12/31	Medford	1-3	v.o.
Great Cormorant				11/5-12/31	P.I.	1-3	v.o.
11/21	Westport	26	E. Nielsen	11/13	S. Quabbin	6 ad	M. Lynch#
11/21	Boston H.	82	TASL (M. Hall)	12/19	Mashpee	3	M. Keleher#
11/27	Fairhaven	14	SSBC (GdE)	Northern Harrier			
12/1	P'town	80	B. Nikula	thr	P.I.	8 max	v.o.
12/11	Acoaxet	15	E. Nielsen	11/2-13	Barre Falls	4	Hawkcount (BK)
12/17	Manomet	22	I. Davies#	11/7	Burrage Pd WMA	2	L. Ferraresso#
12/17	Cape Ann	36	BBC (B. Volkle)	11/10	Gardner	2	T. Pirro
12/24	Medford	9	R. LaFontaine	11/25	DWWS	3	I. Davies
12/29	Scituate	57	B. Larson	11/25, 12/17	Cumb. Farms	4, 4	I. Davies
American Bittern				12/11	Acoaxet	2	E. Nielsen
11/5-12/17	P.I.	1-2	v.o.	12/23	Salisbury	2	P. + F. Vale
11/6	Salisbury	1	R. Schain#	Sharp-shinned Hawk			
11/6	WBWS	1	M. Faherty	thr	Reports of indiv. from 17 locations		
11/7	Sandwich	1	P. Crosson#	11/1, 2	Barre Falls	9, 7	Hawkcount (BK)
12/15	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	P. Champlin#	11/1, 2	Mt. Watatic	5, 6	Hawkcount (TP)
Great Blue Heron				11/7	Malden (P.R.)	3	Hawkcount (CJ)
11/1	P.I.	7	C. Gras	11/10	Newbury	2	P. + F. Vale
11/7	Fairhaven	8	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/27	Fairhaven	2	SSBC (GdE)
11/12	Saugus	10	P. Peterson	12/11	P.I.	2	S. Grinley#
12/4	Mashpee	7	M. Keleher	12/18	Lexington	2	J. Forbes
12/20	GMNWR	3	A. Bragg#	Cooper's Hawk			
Great Egret				thr	Reports of indiv. from 30 locations		
11/1-21	P.I.	7 max	v.o.	11/1	Falmouth	2	B. Zajda
11/14	Squantum	1	G. d'Entremont	11/2	Burlington	2	M. Rines
11/16-19	Duxbury B.	1	R. Bowes	11/2	Barre Falls	4	Hawkcount (BK)
11/24	S. Boston	1	I. Davies	11/6	Newbypt	2	MAS (P. Roberts)
11/25	Acoaxet	2	M. Lynch#	11/25	Boston (Fens)	2	R. Stymeist
Snowy Egret				11/27	Fairhaven	2	BBC (GdE)
11/27	Falmouth	1	B. Porter	Northern Goshawk			
Little Blue Heron				11/1, 6	Granville	1, 1	J. Weeks
11/2-15	Manchester	1 imm	K. + D. Young	11/1, 3	Barre Falls	1, 1	Hawkcount (BK)
11/21	Chilmark	1 imm	S. Whiting	11/1	Hinsdale	1	J. Morris-siegel
Cattle Egret				11/2	Amherst	1	I. Davies
11/1-9	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore + v.o.	11/2	Mt. Watatic	3	Hawkcount (TP)
11/1-21	Falmouth	2	v.o.	11/10	Gardner	1 ad	T. Pirro
11/2-15	Ipswich/Essex	1	P. Brown + v.o.	11/13	Dracut	1 imm	A. Gaudet#
11/6	P'town	1	B. Nikula	11/28	Turners Falls	1	S. Surner
11/6	Cumb. Farms	2	MAS (S. Wheelock)	11/29	IRWS	1	J. Berry
11/27-30	Nantucket	3	T. Pastuszek + v.o.	12/5	Windsor	1	R. Laubach
12/7	Newbypt	1	S. Grinley	12/5	Cummington	1	T. Gagnon
Green Heron				12/11	Newbypt	1 imm	B. Harris
11/20-12/9	Mt.A.	1	S. Selesky + v.o.	12/29	Royalston	1 ph	M. Goetschkes
Black-crowned Night-Heron				Red-shouldered Hawk			
12/5	P.I.	1	C. Winstanley	11/1, 2	Mt. Watatic	7, 11	Hawkcount (TP)
12/15	Tisbury	8	M. Pelikan	11/1, 2	Barre Falls	13, 3	Hawkcount (BK)
Black Vulture				11/10	Gardner	7	T. Pirro
11/2	Barre Falls	1	Hawkcount (BK)	12/24	Groton	2	T. Murray
11/2, 12/13	Westport	5, 1	S. Moss	Red-tailed Hawk			
11/27	Gr Barrington	4	J. Drucker	11/1, 2	Granville	73, 24	J. Weeks
12/3	Hamilton	1	J. Frontiero	11/1, 2	Mt. Watatic	49, 26	Hawkcount (TP)
12/28	Sheffield	6	J. Drucker	11/1, 2	Barre Falls	43, 14	Hawkcount (BK)
Turkey Vulture				11/10	Gardner	23	T. Pirro
11/7	Nantucket	4	K. Blackshaw#	11/11	Mt. Watatic	23	Hawkcount (TP)

Rough-legged Hawk				11/10, 12/11	Duxbury B.	30, 2	R. Bowes
11/2	Mt. Watatic	1 lt	Hawkcount (TP)	11/13	Rowley	39	B. Harris#
11/3, 7	Granville	1, 1	J. Weeks	12/10	Plymouth	3	R. Bowes
11/7-12/31	P.I.	1-4	v.o.	12/19	Ipswich	2	J. Berry#
12/17	Windsor	1	G. Hurley		American Golden-Plover		
12/29	Barnstable (S.N.)	1	J. Trimble#	11/6	Cumb. Farms	1 MAS (S. Wheelock)	
12/29	Rowley	1 lt	J. Berry	11/14-15	P.I.	1	E. Nielsen + v.o.
12/31	Hatfield	1	S. Kellogg		Semipalmated Plover		
Golden Eagle				11/1-21	P.I.	16 max	v.o.
11/1	Mt. Watatic	1	Hawkcount (TP)	11/1	Duxbury B.	3	R. Bowes
11/3	Barre Falls	1	Hawkcount (BK)	11/6	Salisbury	2	R. Schain#
11/3	Granville	1	J. Weeks	11/18	Plymouth	4	E. Dalton
11/10	Gardner	1 juv	T. Pirro	12/4	Arlington Res.	1	P. Peterson
12/3	Williamstown	1	G. Soucie	12/11	Acoaxet	1	E. Nielsen
12/28	Sheffield	1	K. Chop	12/13	S. Dartmouth	6	T. Raymond
American Kestrel					Killdeer		
thr	Cumb. Farms	3 max	v.o.	11/6	Sharon	13	P. Peterson
thr	P.I.	1-2	v.o.	11/9	Ipswich	13	J. Berry
11/1	Newbury	2	P. Brown	12/5	Concord	3	S. Perkins
11/14	Saugus (Bear C.)	3	S. Zende#	12/18	Longmeadow	2	CBC (S. + R Svec)
11/25	Westport	2	M. Lynch#		American Oystercatcher		
12/22	S. Weymouth	3	S. McGrath	11/7	Fairhaven	3	BBC (R. Stymeist)
Merlin					Spotted Sandpiper		
thr	Reports of indiv. from 22 locations			11/24-25	Falmouth	1	I. Nisbet
11/13	P.I.	3	T. Wetmore		Greater Yellowlegs		
11/28	Chatham	2	C. Goodrich	11/1-28	P.I.	30 max	v.o.
Gyrfalcon				11/6	E. Harwich	81	B. Nikula
11/20	P.I.	1	P. Roberts	11/11, 12/9	Duxbury	7, 2	R. Bowes
Peregrine Falcon				11/20	E. Harwich	9	B. Nikula
thr	P.I.	1-3	v.o.	11/27	Eastham (F.E.)	9	B. Zajda
11/8	Gloucester	2	P. Brown		Lesser Yellowlegs		
11/10	Amherst	2	I. Davies	11/8	P.I.	4	S. McGrath
11/14	Saugus (Bear C.)	2	S. Zende#		Ruddy Turnstone		
11/21	Boston	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/14	Nantucket	3	K. Blackshaw#
11/27	Cumb. Farms	2	B. Loughlin	11/21	Boston H.	21	TASL (M. Hall)
12/19	Worcester	2	M. Lynch#	12/3	Gloucester	3	MAS (D. Larson)
Clapper Rail				12/5	Osterville	22	P. Trull
12/19	Harwich	1	E. Banks	12/11	P'town	3	J. Young
Virginia Rail				12/29	Osterville	33	B. Nikula#
11/6	WBWS	1	M. Faherty		Red Knot		
11/7	Wayland	1	B. Harris	11/1	P.I.	3	C. Gras
11/19	Sandwich	1	M. Keleher	11/10	Duxbury B.	25	R. Bowes
11/27	GMNWR	1	A. Ellis	11/18	Plymouth	7	K. Doyon
12/30	Longmeadow	1	J. Wojtanowski	12/29	Osterville	1	J. Trimble#
Sora					Sanderling		
12/17	GMNWR	1 dead	C. Corey#	thr	P.I.	600 max	v.o.
Purple Gallinule				11/10	Duxbury B.	50	R. Bowes
12/27	Hull	1 injured	A. Cartoceti	11/14	Nantucket	100	K. Blackshaw#
Common Moorhen				11/21	P'town	120	J. Young
11/29	Nantucket	1	E. Ray	12/31	Wollaston B.	18	J. Baur#
American Coot					Least Sandpiper		
thr	Jamaica Plain	30 max	P. Peterson	11/8	P.I.	2	S. Pierce
thr	Woburn (HP)	34 max	M. Rines	11/28	E. Gloucester	1	B. Harris#
11/5	Lincoln	95	M. Rines		White-rumped Sandpiper		
11/10	Canton	175	V. Zollo	11/1	Duxbury B.	1	R. Bowes
11/11-12/16	GMNWR	77 max	v.o.	11/1, 23	P.I.	6, 1	T. Wetmore
11/13	Merrimac	140	S. McGrath#	12/19	Ipswich	1	J. Berry#
11/14	W. Boxford	170	T. + N. Walker		Purple Sandpiper		
11/15	Groveland	86	P. Brown	11/6	Salisbury	2	B. Zajda#
11/18	Plymouth	114	E. Dalton	11/7	Fairhaven	11	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/21	Westport	410	E. Nielsen	11/21	Boston H.	30	TASL (M. Hall)
12/4-5	Cape Cod	252	CCBC	11/23	E. Gloucester	50	J. Berry
12/25	Brewster	23	P. Trull	12/3	Rockport (A.P.)	100	MAS (D. Larson)
Sandhill Crane				12/24	N. Scituate	75	G. d'Entremont
11/1	Rowley	1	S. McGrath	12/31	Nantucket	50	G. d'Entremont#
11/2	Littleton	1	J. Fenton		Dunlin		
11/15, 12/23	S. Dartmouth	1, 1	Champlin, Purtell	thr	P.I.	650 max	v.o.
Northern Lapwing				11/6	Newbypt. H.	350	SSBC (Emmons)
12/2	P.I.	1 ph	J. Hully#	11/24	Eastham	300	B. Nikula
Black-bellied Plover				12/1	Duxbury B.	1600+	R. Bowes
11/1	E. Boston (B.I.)	13	P. Peterson	12/19	Ipswich	61	J. Berry#
11/1-12/14	P.I.	120 max	v.o.		Long-billed Dowitcher		
11/6	Cumb. Farms	20 MAS (S. Wheelock)		11/20, 26	E. Harwich	2	B. Nikula

Wilson's Snipe				Common Tern			
11/5	Salisbury	2	S. McGrath	11/6, 13	P'town	250, 15	B. Nikula
11/6	Lexington	2	K. Marshall	11/11	Katama	2	S. Whiting#
11/7	Stockbridge	2	T. Gagnon	Forster's Tern			
11/16	Milton	1	S. Jaffe	11/3, 6	P'town	12, 6	B. Nikula
12/5	Cumb. Farms	1	SSBC (V. Zollo)	11/6	Plymouth	1	MAS (S. Wheelock)
12/7	P.I.	1	P. Roberts	Great Skua			
American Woodcock				11/8	Rockport (A.P.)	1	R. Heil
11/2	Rockport	1	R. Heil	11/13	Pollack Rip	1	BBC Pelagic
11/7	Wayland	1	B. Harris	11/13	Cox to Veatch	4	M. Sylvia
11/29	Medford	1	R. LaFontaine	Pomarine Jaeger			
12/31	Plymouth	1	D. Eddy	11/8	Rockport (A.P.)	10	R. Heil
Red-necked Phalarope				11/13	P'town	1	B. Nikula
11/13	Cox to Veatch	1	M. Sylvia	11/18, 12/2	Eastham (F.E.)	1, 2	B. Nikula
Red Phalarope				12/22, 27	Eastham (F.E.)	1, 9	B. Nikula
11/13	Cox to Veatch	2	M. Sylvia	12/27	Orleans	15	B. Nikula
Phalarope sp.				Parasitic Jaeger			
11/13	P'town	1	B. Nikula	11/6, 13, 15	P'town	1, 1, 1	B. Nikula
Black-legged Kittiwake				Jaeger sp.			
11/4	Rockport (A.P.)	1063	R. Heil	11/8	Rockport (A.P.)	2	R. Heil
11/6	N. Truro	630	B. Nikula	11/9, 14	P'town	3, 3	B. Nikula
11/7, 14	P'town	77, 290	B. Nikula	11/9, 24	Eastham	3, 4	B. Nikula
11/18, 12/2	Eastham (F.E.)	150, 160	B. Nikula	Dovekie			
12/22, 27	Eastham (F.E.)	22, 94	B. Nikula	11/1	Nantucket	3	E. Ray
12/31	Nantucket	5	G. d'Entremont#	11/7, 13	P'town	10, 17	B. Nikula
Bonaparte's Gull				11/13	Cox to Veatch	205	M. Sylvia
11/3	P.I.	80	T. Wetmore	11/14, 15	P'town	11, 15	B. Nikula
11/13	S. Quabbin	3	L. Therrien	11/14	N. Truro	745	B. Nikula
11/14	P'town	165	B. Nikula	12/2, 27	Eastham (F.E.)	296, 86	B. Nikula
11/25	Plymouth	122	I. Davies	12/11	P.I.	3	P. Roberts
12/6	E. Gloucester	190	J. Berry#	12/16	Cape Ann	3	H. Galbraith
12/12	Rockport (A.P.)	121	P. + F. Vale	12/27	Orleans	25	B. Nikula
12/24	Nahant	380	L. Pivacek	Common Murre			
12/31	Nantucket	3000	G. d'Entremont#	11/4, 27	Rockport (A.P.)	2, 15	Heil, Vale
Black-headed Gull				11/12	Eastham (F.E.)	3	B. Zajda
11/7	Nantucket	1	K. Blackshaw#	11/13	Cox to Veatch	1	M. Sylvia
11/28	Osterville	2	B. Nikula	11/14	Nantucket	1	P. Lohmann#
Little Gull				11/27	Wellfleet	5	B. Zajda
11/13	off S. Monomoy	1	BBC Pelagic	Thick-billed Murre			
11/26	Nantucket	1	E. Ray	11/8, 27	Rockport (A.P.)	1, 3	Heil, Vale
Laughing Gull				11/27	Wellfleet	1	B. Zajda
11/6	Falmouth	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)	12/31	P.I.	1	D. Chickering
11/27	Westport	1	I. Davies	Murre sp.			
Iceland Gull				11/27	Rockport (A.P.)	38	P. + F. Vale
thr	Reports of indiv. from 12 locations			Razorbill			
11/8	Rockport (A.P.)	2	1W R. Heil	11/2, 12/56	N. Truro	1200, 5850	B. Nikula
11/26	Nantucket	47	E. Ray	11/4	Rockport (A.P.)	177	R. Heil
12/1	Gloucester	2	J. Quigley	11/6, 21	P'town	15, 125	B. Nikula
12/2, 13	Turners Falls	5, 5	J. Smith	11/20	Dennis (Corp. B.)	80	B. Nikula
Lesser Black-backed Gull				11/24	Eastham	8000	B. Nikula
11/8	Gloucester	1	ad ph P. Brown	11/25	Sandwich	410	J. Trimble#
11/18, 12/2	Turners Falls	1, 2	J. Smith	11/26	Marshfield	100+	MAS (J. Galluzzo)
11/20	Chatham	1	R. Chain	12/4	Wellfleet	2100	M. Faherty
11/21	Boston	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)	12/11	P.I.	80	S. Grinley#
11/21	Dartmouth	1	A. + D. Morgan	Black Guillemot			
11/26	Nantucket	327	E. Ray	11/12	Orleans	1	B. Nikula
11/29	Cambr. (F.P.)	1	ad ph J. Trimble	11/14	N. Truro	2	B. Nikula
12/5	Deerfield	1	Z. Jakub	11/21	Boston H.	9	TASL (M. Hall)
12/11	Acoaxet	1	3W E. Nielsen	11/23	E. Gloucester	30	J. Berry
12/24	Waltham	1	C. Cook	12/7	Nahant	1	L. Pivacek
Glaucous Gull				12/17	Marshfield	38	I. Davies#
11/27	Rockport (A.P.)	1	BBC (B. Volkle)	12/17	Cape Ann	17	BBC (B. Volkle)
12/6	E. Gloucester	2	1W J. Berry#	Atlantic Puffin			
12/13	Turners Falls	1	J. Smith	11/7, 11	P'town	1, 2	B. Nikula
12/17	Manomet	1	1W I. Davies#	11/10	Eastham (F.E.)	2	B. Nikula
12/17	Marshfield	1	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	11/13	Cox to Veatch	4	ad M. Sylvia
12/28	Quincy	1	J. Poggi				

DOVES THROUGH FINCHES

A **White-winged Dove** appeared at a Watertown feeder in early December and remained to be recorded on the Greater Boston CBC, constituting the third Massachusetts CBC record. The first two occurred last year on the Sturbridge and Plymouth Christmas Bird Counts. The three Monk Parakeets continued in East Boston, although they ventured farther away to feed during the day. A **Barn Owl** in Gloucester was one of very few recent reports from the mainland rather than from Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. It was not a big year for Snowy Owls, with one report from Plum Island and one from Westport. Logan Airport hosted three that were banded and released on Duxbury Beach. It was another banner period for Northern Saw-whet Owls, and a total of 209 were banded at various sites in eastern Massachusetts. A Common Nighthawk was seen in Medford on November 9, the latest reported date for the species; there is one other November record, a report from Ipswich on November 1, 2005. It was a good period for hummingbirds, with three carefully identified Ruby-throats in November. A **Rufous Hummingbird** was banded in Worcester and was last noted on December 18. Another *Selasphorus* hummingbird lingered in Amherst until December 18. A **Black-chinned Hummingbird** visited a feeder on Nantucket, where it was identified with excellent photos.

Still under consideration by the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (MARC) was the *Tyrannus* kingbird that was found in October and remained through November 2 in Falmouth. From excellent photographs the identification can be narrowed down to either a **Tropical** or a **Couch's**. Both species have been documented in the state, but separating the two visually is a real challenge. Birders heard and described the call, and their reports will be helpful in the ultimate decision of the Committee. Far easier to identify was an adult **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** photographed on a one-day visit to Nantucket on the last day of November.

Persistent northwest winds in early November brought a flurry of **Cave Swallow** reports to our area, unlike 2009 when there were no fall reports of the species. Birders reported the largest number of Cave Swallows to date during the period. From November 23–26, northwest winds accompanied by rain and fog dumped as many as 40 individuals in Chatham. On a dismal note, more than 20 dead Cave Swallows were picked up in Chatham the next day when the temperature dipped below freezing.

A **Boreal Chickadee** showed up in a most unlikely location, Squantum Point Park in Quincy, where it lingered for six days, affording many an opportunity to enjoy it. Another Boreal Chickadee was present in a more likely location, the Moran Wildlife Management Area in Windsor, where the species has appeared most often in the state. The discovery of one unusual bird, such as the Boreal Chickadee in Quincy, often leads to the discovery of another, a phenomenon known as the "Patagonia Picnic Table Effect." The origin of this expression goes back several decades when nesting Rose-throated Becards were found at a roadside picnic area in Arizona. The area attracted birders who discovered yet another rare bird, a discovery that brought more birders and more discoveries. In Squantum Point Park, notably, a **LeConte's Sparrow** was found as well as late House Wrens, a Wilson's Warbler, and a Yellow-breasted Chat!

Some of the more unusual December holdout songbirds included a Tennessee, a Black-and-white, and three Orange-crowned warblers that were found in the Fenway Victory Gardens; an American Redstart in Brighton; a Wilson's Warbler at the Arnold Arboretum; a Hooded Warbler in Salisbury; an Ovenbird in Carlisle; and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Arlington. Alas, only the Wilson's Warbler stayed to be part of the Greater Boston CBC. The Ovenbird arrived as a nice Christmas Day surprise at a feeder in Carlisle and was present for the Concord CBC on January 2.

The winter finch flight was a big improvement over last year's. Many flocks of Common Redpolls were seen as early as mid-November and became increasingly evident around Christmas. Pine Siskins were noted at the same time. There was a scattering of single White-winged Crossbills over a wide area, with the only flocks noted from Cape Cod. Only three Pine Grosbeaks were reported, and Evening Grosbeaks were noted in small flocks in central and western Massachusetts, with an isolated or lost group of 25 in Nantucket. A single **Hoary Redpoll** was picked out of a flock of Commons in Gill. Finally there was a nice assortment of rarities, including **Sedge Wrens** from Weymouth and Nantucket, a **Townsend's Solitaire** in Gardner, a **Yellow-throated Warbler** in Chatham, three reports of **Harris's Sparrow**, and a **Black-headed Grosbeak** photographed in Easthampton.

R.H. Stymeist

White-winged Dove	12/4-31	Watertown	1 ph	J. Beckwith	12/11	Gill	3	J. Smith
Monk Parakeet	11/11	E. Boston	3	C. Floyd	11/9	Medford	1	R. LaFontaine
Barn Owl	11/23	Gloucester	1	B. Harris	11/3	Wareham	1 b	S. Finnegan
Eastern Screech-Owl	11/23	Gloucester	1	B. Harris	11/6	Lincoln	1 ph	M. Rines#
thr		Reports of indiv. from 15 locations			11/13	Chilmark	1	Fischer
11/2	Cape Ann	4		R. Heil	11/3-18	Nantucket	1 ph	S. Daniel + v.o.
11/15	Stoneham	2		D. + I. Jewell	Black-chinned Hummingbird			
11/29	Westwood	6		B. Cassie	Rufous Hummingbird			
12/5	Cumb. Farms	4		SSBC (V. Zollo)	11/1-12/18	Worcester	1 ph b	B. Humphrey#
12/26	Marshfield	5		G. d'Entremont#	Selasphorus species			
12/thr	Blue Hills	4 calling		N. Smith	11/1-12/19	Amherst	1	H. Allen
Great Horned Owl					Belted Kingfisher			
11/14	Wayland	4		B. Harris	11/5	Salisbury	2	S. McGrath
11/27	Falmouth	2		M. Keleher	12/30	Wayland	2	D. Vanderburgh
12/thr	Blue Hills	2 calling		N. Smith	11/3	Medford	6	M. Rines#
12/4	Woburn (HP)	4		M. Rines#	11/6	Falmouth	5	BBC (R. Stymeist)
12/5	Cumb. Farms	2		SSBC (V. Zollo)	12/29	W. Roxbury (MP)	3	T. Aversa
12/18	Lincoln	2		B. Harris	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker			
12/25	P.I.	2		T. Wetmore	11/2	Gloucester	1	R. Heil
12/25-31	W. Bridgewater	2		D. Cabral	11/2-11	Boston (Fens)	1-2	R. Schain
12/26	Marshfield	5		G. d'Entremont#	11/21	Sudbury	1	L. Joyal
Snowy Owl					11/21	Windsor (Moran)	1	B. Zajda
thr		Reports of indiv. from 14 locations			12/4	Eastham	1	M. Faherty
12/11	P.I.	1		S. Sullivan	12/10	Ipswich	1 imm	J. Berry#
12/31	Westport	1		G. Dennis	12/18	Holyoke	1	CBC (T. Gagnon)
Barred Owl					12/26	Marshfield	1	G. d'Entremont#
thr		Reports of indiv. from 14 locations			12/26	Newbypt	1	CBC (D. Larson)
11/thr	Blue Hills	2 b		N. Smith	Pileated Woodpecker			
12/thr	Bridge.-Milton	9 dead		N. Smith	11/3	Newbypt	1	S. McGrath
12/thr	Blue Hills	3 b		N. Smith	11/11	DFWS	1	P. Sowizral
12/thr	Boston (Logan)	3		N. Smith	11/13	Quabbin Pk	1	J. Rose
Long-eared Owl					11/21	Turners Falls	1	B. Zajda
11/21	Windsor (Moran)	1		B. Zajda	11/28	Concord	1	J. Forbes
11/thr	DWWS	3 b		fide N. Smith	12/26	Littleton	1 m	R. Stevens
12/18	Buzzards B. CBC	4		J. Trimble	Eastern Phoebe			
12/19	Essex (Hog I.)	1		D. Peterson	11/1	Malden	1	P. + F. Vale
12/19	Northamp. CBC	1		CBC	11/6	Falmouth	1	G. d'Entremont
Short-eared Owl					11/6	S. Quabbin	1	L. Therrien
11/2	Oak Bluffs	1		Baird	11/11	Westfield	1	E. Goodkin
11/7-12/11	P.I.	1		v.o.	11/13	Plymouth	1	K. Doyon
11/11	DWWS	1		N. Smith	12/19	Northampton	1	CBC (T. Gagnon)
11/12-13	Yarmouth	1		G. Gove	Tropical/Couch's Kingbird			
11/28	Cumb. Farms	1		K. Anderson	11/1-2	Falmouth	1	J. Offermann + v.o.
12/5	Duxbury B.	1		R. Bowes	Fork-tailed Flycatcher			
12/8	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1		P. Champlin	11/30	Nantucket	1 ad ph	V. Laux
12/21	Boston (Logan)	1		N. Smith	Northern Shrike			
Northern Saw-whet Owl					11/2-3	Granville	1	J. Weeks
11/thr	Sharon	31 b		fide N. Smith	11/6	Burrage Pd WMA	1	C. Nims#
11/thr	DWWS	99 b		fide N. Smith	11/12-12/11	P.I.	1	v.o.
11/1	Lincoln	13		MAS	11/13	Chilmark	1	L. McDowell
11/3	Lincoln	52		MAS	11/14	New Ashford	1	M. Kelly
12/thr	Blue Hills	2 b		N. Smith	11/16	Milton	1 imm	S. Jaffe
12/thr	DWWS	11 b		fide N. Smith	11/28	Windsor	1	T. Gagnon
12/thr	Middleboro	1 b		fide N. Smith	12/4	Gill	1	J. Smith

Northern Shrike (continued)				Red-breasted Nuthatch			
12/5	Cumb. Farms	1	SSBC (V. Zollo)	11/6	Sharon	4	P. Peterson
12/5	Carlisle	1 imm	A. Ankers#	11/6	WBWS	6	M. Faherty
12/12	S. Truro	1 imm	J. Young#	11/7-14	Nantucket	10	K. Blackshaw#
12/18	Pittsfield	1	CBC (K. Hanson)	11/13	S. Quabbin	8	M. Lynch#
12/19	Amherst	1	CBC (C. Read)	11/14	PI.	22	E. Nielsen
12/26	Worcester	1 ad	M. Lynch#	11/14	Mashpee	15	M. Keleher
White-eyed Vireo				11/19	Wellfleet	7	G. d'Entremont#
11/2	Rockport	1 ph	R. Heil	12/31	Ipswich	5	J. Berry
11/6	Concord	1 ph	E. Nielsen	Brown Creeper			
Blue-headed Vireo				11/13	PI.	2	T. Spahr
11/2	Gloucester	1	R. Heil	11/14	Mashpee	5	M. Keleher
11/15	Woburn (HP)	1	M. Rines	11/22	GMNWR	2	A. Bragg#
Red-eyed Vireo				11/28	Cotuit	3	SSBC (Keleher)
11/2	Rockport (H.P.)	1	R. Heil	12/24	N. Wayland	3	G. Long
11/2	Arlington Res.	1	J. Trimble	Carolina Wren			
11/3	Brewster	1	E. Hoopes	11/2	Cape Ann	36	R. Heil
11/10	PI.	1	D. + I. Jewell	11/7	Fairhaven	27	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/10	Squantum	1	J. Trimble	11/15	Falmouth	26	M. Keleher
11/11	Melrose	1	D. + I. Jewell	12/11	Acoaxet	18	E. Nielsen
American Crow				12/18	Buzz. B. CBC	189	J. Trimble
11/2	Mt. Watatic	727	T. Pirro	House Wren			
11/10	Gardner	230	T. Pirro	11/6	Squantum	1	R. Donovan
12/29	Mattapan (BNC)	300	T. Aversa	11/28	Falmouth	1	B. Porter
Fish Crow				Winter Wren			
11/3	Newbypt	1	S. McGrath	11/6	Falmouth	3	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/6	Sharon	50	P. Peterson	11/7	Fairhaven	8	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/6	Lawrence	1	G. Jones	11/18	Medford	4	R. LaFontaine
11/7	Fairhaven	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)	12/5	Belchertown	2	L. Therrien
11/17	Marlboro	1	B. deGraaf	12/14	Wayland	2	B. Harris
12/12	Dorchester	38	R. Stymeist#	12/24	Winchendon	2	M. Lynch#
12/24	Waltham	2	J. Forbes#	12/30	Boston (A.A.)	2	A. Joslin
12/29	Mattapan (BNC)	50	T. Aversa	Sedge Wren			
Common Raven				11/13-14	Weymouth	1	J. Restivo + v.o.
11/1	Mt. Watatic	12	T. Pirro	12/11	Nantucket	1	J. Trimble#
11/14	Monroe	5	M. Lynch#	Marsh Wren			
11/19	Stoneham	3	D. + I. Jewell	11/5	Salisbury	1	S. McGrath
11/21	Monsen	4	G. d'Entremont#	11/14, 12/4	Wayland	5, 1	B. Harris
11/23	Carlisle	2	J. Center	11/21	Westport	5	E. Nielsen
12/31	S. Quabbin	4	M. Lynch#	11/23	Harwich Port	2	B. Nikula
Horned Lark				11/28	Fairhaven	3	M. Lynch#
thr	PI.	55 max	v.o.	12/4	Mashpee	1	M. Keleher
11/6	Salisbury	21	R. Schain#	12/11	GMNWR	1	P. Peterson
11/14	Saugus (Bear C.)	40	S. Zende#	Golden-crowned Kinglet			
11/18	Acton	35	S. Perkins	11/1	PI.	6	T. Wetmore
12/6	Cumb. Farms	120	M. Iliiff#	11/6	Groveland	8	K. Elwell
12/19	Ipswich	42	J. Berry#	11/6	Falmouth	8	G. d'Entremont
12/26	Sharon	25	J. Baur#	11/14	Mashpee	23	M. Keleher
Tree Swallow				11/16	Randolph	10	P. Peterson
11/18	Plymouth	1 imm	E. Dalton	12/5	Brimfield	6	M. Lynch#
11/28	Nantucket	3	E. Ray#	12/23	C. Berkshire	23	L. Therrien
12/4	PI.	5	G. Griffin	Ruby-crowned Kinglet			
12/17, 29	Wellfleet	8, 1	M. Faherty	11/2	Cape Ann	11	R. Heil
Cave Swallow				11/3	Boston (Fens)	3	R. Schain
11/1	Salisbury	1	J. Nelson	11/6	Falmouth	3	G. d'Entremont
11/13	Chatham (MI)	6	D. Manchester	11/7	Fairhaven	5	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/24	S. Boston	17	S. Williams	12/4	Falmouth	2	G. d'Entremont
11/24	Marblehead	2	D. Noble	12/11	Southwick	1	E. Goodkin
11/24	Falmouth	4	G. Hirth	12/18	Medford	1	L. Thompson#
11/24	Lynn	5	L. Pivacek	12/19	Leverett	1	CBC (H. Lappen)
11/25	Westport	1	S. Carroll#	12/27	Lexington	1 m	C. Floyd
11/25	Cotuit	2	J. Trimble#	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher			
11/25	Chatham	40	B. Nikula	11/7	Rockport	2	S. Hedman#
11/25	Salisbury	1 ph	S. Grinley#	11/15	Squantum	1	P. Dolan
11/26	Chatham	8 +21 dead	J. Trimble#	Eastern Bluebird			
Barn Swallow				11/20	DFWS	14	P. Peterson
11/23, 28	Gloucester (E.P.)	2, 1	Harris, Brown	12/5	ONWR	10	K. Bartels
11/28	Nantucket	1	E. Ray#	12/5	DFWS	18	P. Sowizral
Swallow sp.				12/15	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	12	P. Champlin#
11/27	Burlington	1	P. Ippolito#	12/19	Concord	14	S. Perkins
Boreal Chickadee				12/26	Ipswich	19	J. Berry#
11/6-11	Squantum	1 ph	R. Donovan + v.o.	12/30	W. Boylston	12	R. Schain
11/21-12/4	Windsor (Moran)	1	B. Zajda + v.o.				

Townsend's Solitaire				11/5	Salisbury	13	S. McGrath
12/23-24	Gardner	1 ph	T. Pirro + v.o.	11/7	Fairhaven	18	BBC (R. Stymeist)
Hermit Thrush				11/22	Squantum	4	P. Peterson
11/2	Cape Ann	37	R. Heil	12/4	Falmouth	21	G. d'Entremont
11/2	Boston (Fens)	8	R. Schain	12/11	P.I.	2	J. Offermann
11/3	N. Truro	12	B. Nikula	12/18	Pittsfield	2	CBC (C. Blagdon)
11/3	Medford	9	M. Rines#		Black-throated Green Warbler		
11/6	Falmouth	7	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/3	Medford	1	R. LaFontaine
12/11	Melrose	1	D. + I. Jewell	11/15	Falmouth	1	M. Keleher
12/11	Lexington	1	K. Hartel	11/28	Nantucket	1	E. Ray
12/19	Waltham	1	J. Forbes#		Yellow-throated Warbler		
American Robin				11/26-28	Chatham	1 ph	J. Trimble#
11/3	N. Truro	2000	B. Nikula		Pine Warbler		
11/6	Falmouth	275	G. d'Entremont	12/6	Cumb. Farms	7	M. Iliff#
11/7	Worcester	400+	M. Lynch#	12/19	Lakeville	5	D. Eddy
11/7	Fairhaven	380	BBC (R. Stymeist)	12/26	Burrage Pd WMA	1	J. Sweeney
Gray Catbird					Prairie Warbler		
11/7	Fairhaven	10	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/2	WBWS	1	M. Faherty
11/15	Falmouth	8	M. Keleher	11/7	Fairhaven	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/21	Westport	14	E. Nielsen		Palm Warbler		
11/27	Gloucester	2	P. Vale	11/2	Gloucester	2	J. Berry
12/11	Acoaxet	11	E. Nielsen	11/2	Cape Ann	13	R. Heil
12/19	Essex (Hog I.)	2	D. Peterson	11/12	Boston (Fens)	1	R. Schain
12/31	P.I.	1	D. Chickering	11/12	P.I.	1	E. Labato
Brown Thrasher				11/21	Harwich	3	A. Curtis
11/7	Fairhaven	4	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/28	Fairhaven	1	M. Lynch#
11/13-30	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore		Blackpoll Warbler		
11/27	Chatham (MI)	1	B. Zajda	11/2	Cape Ann	3	R. Heil
12/4	GMNWR	1	L. Thompson#	11/3	Cumb. Farms	2	C. Nims#
12/19	Amherst	1	CBC (D. Williams)	11/3, 23	Boston (Fens)	4, 1	R. Schain + v.o.
12/30	W. Boylston	1	R. Schain	11/6	Wayland	2	B. Harris#
American Pipit				11/15	Falmouth	1	M. Keleher
11/1	Worthington	52	J. Morris-siegel	11/16	Manomet	1	T. Lloyd-Evans
11/2	Northampton	50	Z. Jakub		Black-and-white Warbler		
11/6	Sharon	90	P. Peterson	11/25-12/3	Boston (Fens)	1	R. Stymeist + v.o.
11/8	Acton	30	D. Sibley		American Redstart		
11/14	Lincoln	45	M. Rines	11/28-12/7	Chestnut Hill	1 ph	M. Garvey
11/25	Northampton	21	T. Gagnon		Ovenbird		
12/11	Sheffield	30	C. Jones	11/13-12/3	Bradford	1	D. + S. Larson
12/30	Medford	1	R. LaFontaine	11/21	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	P. Champlin#
12/30	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore	12/1-12	Hamilton	1	J. Frontiero
12/30	E. Boston (B.I.)	2	P. Peterson	12/3	Sudbury	1	L. Joyal
12/31	Newbypt H.	10	M. Goetschkes	12/25-31	Carlisle	1	A. Wilmot
Bohemian Waxwing					Northern Waterthrush		
11/6	Eastham	1	A. Curtis	11/14	Lincoln	1	M. Rines
11/18	Windsor	1	J. Morris-siegel		Common Yellowthroat		
12/11	Nantucket	1 ph	J. Trimble#	11/6	Falmouth	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)
12/11	Truro	5	B. Nikula	11/13	GMNWR	1	J. Forbes#
Cedar Waxwing				11/23	Rockport	1 imm m.	B. Harris
11/6	Falmouth	38	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/25	Boston (Fens)	1	R. Stymeist
11/18	Windsor	300	J. Morris-siegel		Hooded Warbler		
11/27	Lexington	30	J. Forbes	11/27-12/8	Salisbury	1 f ph	S. + J. Mirick
11/28	DFWS	33	P. Sowizral		Wilson's Warbler		
12/3	Beverly	120	J. Berry#	11/2	Burlington	1	M. Rines
12/11	Concord	30	P. Peterson	11/2	Boston (Fens)	1	R. Schain
12/31	P.I.	70	T. Wetmore	11/6	Squantum	1	R. Donovan
Tennessee Warbler				11/15	Falmouth	1	M. Keleher
11/19-12/2	Boston (Fens)	1 ph	R. Schain#	12/8-24	Boston (A.A.)	1 f ph	P. Peterson#
Orange-crowned Warbler					Yellow-breasted Chat		
11/2	Cape Ann	2	R. Heil	11/2	Rockport	3	R. Heil
11/3-12/3	Boston (Fens)	3 max	R. Schain#	11/6	Squantum	1	R. Donovan
11/13	Squantum	2	J. Taylor	11/12-14	Boston (Fens)	1 ph	R. Schain + v.o.
12/11	Falmouth	2	M. Iliff	11/28	Osterville	1	SSBC (Keleher)
Nashville Warbler				12/11	Acoaxet	1	E. Nielsen
11/1	Malden	1	P. + F. Vale	12/11	Harwich	1	A. Curtis
11/2	Arlington Res.	1	J. Trimble	12/26	Wakefield	1 ph	E. Casey#
11/11	Medford	1	R. LaFontaine		Eastern Towhee		
Black-throated Blue Warbler				11/7	Fairhaven	3	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/2	Amherst	1	I. Davies	11/13	Burlington	2	P. Ippolito#
11/13	Medford	1 f	R. LaFontaine	11/21	Westport	2	E. Nielsen
11/27-28	Sudbury	1 f ad ph	L. Joyal	11/21	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	2	P. Champlin#
Yellow-rumped Warbler				11/26	Chatham	2	J. Trimble#
11/2	Cape Ann	14	R. Heil	12/4	Falmouth	5	G. d'Entremont

American Tree Sparrow				White-throated Sparrow			
11/1	W. Newbury	1	P. Brown	11/2	Cape Ann	128	R. Heil
11/2	W. Roxbury (MP)	1	M. Kaufman	11/3	N. Truro	150	B. Nikula
11/14	Lincoln	45	M. Rines	11/27	Fairhaven	84	SSBC (GdE)
11/25	P.I.	36	P. + F. Vale	Harris's Sparrow			
12/5	Ipswich	35+	J. Berry	11/6	Burrage Pd WMA	1 ph	J. Sweeney#
12/17	Cumb. Farms	40	I. Davies#	11/21-12/31	Duxbury B.	1 ph	R. Bowes + v.o.
12/29	W. Roxbury (MP)	65	T. Aversa	11/25-26	Wellfleet	1	A. Hight
12/30	Salisbury	40	P. + F. Vale	White-crowned Sparrow			
Chipping Sparrow				thr	Cumb. Farms	12 max	v.o.
11/2	Arlington Res.	5	J. Trimble	11/3-5	Boston (Fens)	2	R. Schain + v.o.
11/5-11	P.I.	2	N. Landry + v.o.	11/6	Wayland	4	B. Harris#
11/6	Wayland	2	T. Spahr#	11/6	Falmouth	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/6	Falmouth	4	G. d'Entremont	11/7	Fairhaven	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)
11/6	Arlington Res.	1	J. Forbes	12/17	Concord	3	G. Long
Clay-colored Sparrow				Dark-eyed Junco			
11/2	Cumb. Farms	1	M. Bornstein	11/2	Cape Ann	140	R. Heil
11/6	Wayland	1	B. Harris#	11/2	Malden	350+	P. + F. Vale
11/6	Falmouth	1 ad	G. d'Entremont#	11/6	Sharon	120	P. Peterson
11/21	Truro	1	J. Young	11/11	P.I.	200	T. Wetmore
11/25	Amherst	1	N. Barber	12/19	Medford	120	P. Roberts
12/18	Wellfleet	1	M. Faherty	12/26	Ipswich	250	J. Berry#
Field Sparrow				Lapland Longspur			
11/7	Burrage Pd WMA	3	L. Ferrareso#	11/1	Granville	1	J. Weeks
11/7	Fairhaven	8	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/15	P.I.	9	T. Wetmore
12/4	Bourne	10	G. d'Entremont	11/19	Duxbury B.	7	R. Bowes
12/8	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	10	P. Champlin	11/25	Northampton	2	T. Gagnon
12/30	W. Boylston	8	R. Schain	12/6	Cumb. Farms	1	M. Iliff#
Vesper Sparrow				12/18	Pittsfield	1	CBC (T. Collins)
11/6	Salisbury	1 ph	S. Grinley + v.o.	12/19	Hadley	1	CBC (C. Page)
11/25	Cumb. Farms	1	I. Davies	12/23	Salisbury	3	P. + F. Vale
Savannah Sparrow				12/30	Ipswich (C.B.)	3	J. MacDougall
11/3	Cumb. Farms	25	C. Nims#	Snow Bunting			
11/5	P.I.	4	N. Landry	thr	P.I.	225 max	v.o.
12/26	Sharon	2	J. Baur#	11/7	S. Quabbin	35	J. Orcutt
12/30	Concord	3	J. Hines	11/7	Salisbury	200	J. Berry#
12/31	Nantucket	5	G. d'Entremont#	11/7	Nahant	53	L. Pivacek
Ipswich Sparrow				11/10	Duxbury B.	70	R. Bowes
11/2, 12/31	P.I.	1, 2	T. Wetmore	11/24	Westport	30	P. Champlin
12/13	S. Boston	1	R. Schain	12/15	Winthrop	100+	P. Peterson
12/18	Duxbury B.	2	R. Bowes	12/18	Williamstown	100	CBC (C. Jones)
12/19	Ipswich	2	J. Berry#	12/31	Boston	150	S. + C. Zende
12/29	Salisbury	4	MAS (B. Gette)	Scarlet Tanager			
Grasshopper Sparrow				11/7	Salisbury	1 ph	S. Grinley#
11/14	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	E. Nielsen	Rose-breasted Grosbeak			
Henslow's Sparrow				11/25-12/5	Arlington	1 ph	K. Hartel
11/12	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	P. Champlin	11/30	Littleton	1	G. Marley
Le Conte's Sparrow				12/1	Malden	1 m	fide K. Marshall
11/11	Squantum	1 ph	C. Floyd + v.o.	Black-headed Grosbeak			
Seaside Sparrow				11/17-12/3	Easthampton	1 ph	N. Steepe
12/28	Hyannis (CBC)	1	B. Nikula	Indigo Bunting			
Fox Sparrow				11/7	Salisbury	1 ph	S. Sullivan
11/6	Sheffield	8	J. Drucker	Dickcissel			
11/6	Wayland	12	T. Spahr#	11/5	Boston (Fens)	1	T. Factor#
11/7	Lexington	6	R. LaFontaine#	11/6	WBWS	1	M. Faherty
11/9	GMNWR	9	G. Gove#	11/7-10	Salisbury	1 ph	S. Grinley + v.o.
12/11	Malden	2	D. + I. Jewell	11/12-13	Amherst	1	I. Davies
12/24	Lexington	2	J. Forbes	12/12-14	Nantucket	1	T. Pastuszak
Lincoln's Sparrow				Red-winged Blackbird			
11/6	Salisbury	2	P. + F. Vale	11/1	Falmouth	120	B. Zajda
11/9-11	Squantum	1	R. Schain + v.o.	11/7	Westboro	300++	M. Lynch#
11/11	Wayland	1	B. Harris	12/18	Concord	26	S. Perkins#
11/13	Rehoboth	1	K. Bartels	12/26	Ipswich	41	J. Berry#
11/26	Chelsea	1	R. Stymeist	12/31	Cumb. Farms	15	R. Sawyer
12/8-11	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	P. Champlin	Eastern Meadowlark			
Swamp Sparrow				11/27	Fairhaven	6	SSBC (GdE)
11/2	Cape Ann	31	R. Heil	11/27	Cumb. Farms	11	J. Young
11/7	Fairhaven	11	BBC (R. Stymeist)	12/4	Ipswich	13	P. Brown
11/13	Burlington	10	M. Rines	12/6	Essex	10	D. Wilkinson#
11/14	Mashpee	23	M. Keleher	12/22	S. Weymouth	5	S. McGrath
11/27	Fairhaven	6	SSBC (GdE)	Rusty Blackbird			
11/30	Medford	5	P. Peterson	11/2	Deerfield	5	Z. Jakub
12/31	P.I.	2	D. Chickering	11/4	Southwick	7	S. Kellogg

Rusty Blackbird (continued)				11/3-12/19	Truro	30 max	v.o.
11/7	Worcester	2	M. Lynch#	11/11	Wayland	1 m.	B. Harris
12/5	Wakefield	20	P. + F. Vale	11/11	E. Quabbin	2	L. Therrien
12/13	W. Roxbury (MP)	2	M. Iliff	11/13	WBWS	1 f	M. Faherty
12/18	Lincoln	1	B. Harris	11/16-23	P.I.	2-3	S. Pierce
12/29	Needham	1	P. Gilmore	11/23	Egremont	2	R. Reed
Common Grackle				12/4	Lexington	1 imm	C. Floyd
11/6	Wayland	100	T. Spahr#	12/24	Wilmington	1 f ph	S. Sullivan
11/7	Millbury	250+	M. Lynch#	12/30	Royalston	1	J. Morris-Siegel
11/11	Boston (Fens)	45	R. Schain	Common Redpoll			
Brown-headed Cowbird				11/13-12/31	P.I.	98 max	v.o.
11/1-9	Mashpee	30	M. Keleher	12/11-30	Reports of 1-15 indiv. from 18 locations		
12/6	Cumb. Farms	200+	M. Iliff#	12/18	Lenox	64	CBC (D. Lynch)
12/15	Concord	35	S. Perkins#	12/22	S. Weymouth	34	S. McGrath
12/24	Brewster	63	P. Trull	12/23	N. Adams	32	L. Therrien
Baltimore Oriole				12/23	C. Berkshire	39	L. Therrien
11/12	Nahant	2	J. Malone	12/25	Wakefield	20	P. + F. Vale
11/13	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore	12/26	Burrage Pd WMA	24	J. Sweeney
11/14	Cheshire	1	J. Pierce	12/27	Pittsfield	50	T. Collins
11/15	Boston	1	J. Forbes	12/30	Ipswich (C.B.)	29	J. MacDougall
11/23	Rockport	1 imm	B. Harris	Hoary Redpoll			
11/27	Scituate	2	S. Maguire	12/30	Gill	1	J. Smith
Pine Grosbeak				Pine Siskin			
11/14	Windsor	1	B. Wood	thr	Reports of 1-45 indiv. from 43 locations		
12/18	Huntington	1	S. Hamlin	12/20	Easton	60	K. Ryan
12/19	Williamsburg	1	CBC (G. Lebaron)	12/26	Athol	100	D. Small
Purple Finch				12/28	Gill	100	J. Smith
thr	Reports of 1-4 indiv. from 27 locations			Evening Grosbeak			
11/3	Boston (Fens)	6	R. Schain	11/3	Littleton	5	G. Marley
11/6	Falmouth	6	BBC (R. Stymeist)	11/5	N. Orange	6	fide D. Small
11/7	Worcester	10+	M. Lynch#	11/7	Groton	7	L. Wiggs
11/12	Newton	6	C. King	11/10	Gardner	4	T. Pirro
Red Crossbill				11/11	Nantucket	25	K. Blackshaw
11/7	Belchertown	1	L. Therrien	11/14	N. Truro	2	B. Nikula
11/13-27	S. Quabbin	14 max	L. Therrien	11/15	W. Warren	11	B. Zajda
White-winged Crossbill				12/30	Royalston	14	J. Morris-Siegel
11/1, 11	Mt. Watatic	1, 1	T. Pirro				
11/3	Salisbury	2 f	MAS (B. Gette)				



WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL IN THE SNOW BY SANDY SELESKY

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

Taxonomic order is based on AOU checklist, Seventh edition, up to the 51st Supplement, as published in *The Auk* 127 (3): 726-44 (2010) (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
B.	Beach	P'town	Pond
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	Pont.	Provincetown
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	R.P.	Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro
BBC	Brookline Bird Club	Res.	Race Point, Provincetown
BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester	S.B.	Reservoir
C.B.	Crane Beach, Ipswich	S.N.	South Beach, Chatham
CGB	Coast Guard Beach, Eastham	SRV	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford	SSBC	Sudbury River Valley
Cambr.	Cambridge	TASL	South Shore Bird Club
CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club		Take A Second Look
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis	WBWS	Boston Harbor Census
Cumb. Farms	Cumberland Farms, Middleboro	WMWS	Wellfleet Bay WS
DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary	Wompatuck SP	Wachusett Meadow WS
DWMA	Delaney WMA	Worc.	Hingham, Cohasset, Scituate, and Norwell
	Stow, Bolton, Harvard		Worcester
DWWS	Daniel Webster WS	Other Abbreviations	
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	ad	adult
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	b	banded
F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge	br	breeding
F.Pk	Franklin Park, Boston	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

Black-and-white Warbler

The Black-and-white Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*) is distinctive because of its nuthatch-like foraging behavior on large branches and tree trunks (it has even been called “pied creeper” and “creeping warbler”). *Mniotilta* is a monotypic genus, and this delightful bird is the only North American wood-warbler that primarily forages on bark. The Black-and-white Warbler is distinctive with its black and white streaking. Males have black cheeks and are heavily striped below, while the slightly smaller female is gray striped below with gray cheeks. Young birds resemble females, and both may have a hint of tan on their flanks. The Black-and-white Warbler can be safely identified by its foraging behavior, probing bark surfaces with its long, slightly decurved bill. In this widespread species no subspecies are recognized.

Black-and-white Warblers breed in a broad swath across Canada from the Northwest Territories to Newfoundland and in the United States from the Great Lakes south to Georgia and west to Texas. They winter along the southeast coast, especially in Florida; in the West Indies; and from Mexico to northern South America.

In Massachusetts the Black-and-white Warbler is an uncommon to fairly common migrant and breeder. It is an early migrant, with most individuals arriving at the end of April and early May. The species breeds throughout the state except in urban areas and on the highest mountaintops. In fall this species passes through Massachusetts from mid-August through September.

Black-and-white Warblers breed in a broad spectrum of habitats, including mature and second-growth deciduous, swampy, and mixed deciduous and coniferous forest. On the wintering grounds, they forage in diverse habitats ranging from early-successional disturbed areas to mature woodlands and forests, both wet and dry. They also forage in mangroves. Black-and-white Warblers are monogamous and annually produce a single brood. Their song consists of a series of high-pitched notes variously described as *weesa weesa . . . weete, weese, weese, weese* or *squeaky, squeaky, squeaky*. Territorial males sing from before dawn to late morning, often from elevated tree perches. Males on territory are aggressive and frequently chase conspecifics and other wood-warblers, with these chases occasionally resulting in fights. In winter, they may join mixed species foraging flocks, probably for increased protection against predators, and may sometimes be aggressive. Courtship involves males chasing females and perching near them with fluttering wings. A male and female may fly low over the ground as the female searches for an appropriate nest site. The nest is a well-hidden structure typically on the ground, usually at the base of a log, shrub, tree, or rock, often in a swampy area. It is constructed of leaves, rootlets, grasses, or pine needles, and lined with fine grass or horsehair. The female incubates the four to five brown-spotted cream-colored eggs for ten to twelve days until hatching. The male may feed the incubating female. The young fledge in eight to twelve days. They do not fly well and scurry across the ground, staying close to the nest until they develop

flying skills. Both parents feed the young. When the nest is approached, females may perform the “rodent run” distraction display, mimicking a running mouse.

Although Black-and-white Warblers are primarily bark foragers, they also frequently foliage-glean from ground to canopy. This warbler is thus a foraging generalist, a characteristic that may partially explain why the species is so common and widespread. It forages in a similar manner on the wintering grounds and thus reduces interspecific competition from foliage-gleaning birds, especially in mixed-species foraging flocks. Black-and-white Warblers are insectivorous, taking a wide range of invertebrates, including caterpillars, ants, flies, beetles, weevils, spiders, eggs, and pupae—almost anything that is small and invertebrate.

Nesting Black-and-white Warblers are subject to Brown-headed Cowbird nest parasitism, and there is evidence that they have suffered from pesticide use. Like most species that nest in areas inhabited by humans, they are affected by forest fragmentation and degradation. There is no evidence, however, that the general population has declined. The species’ broad foraging and nesting niches appear to have served it well. 

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 the spring of 2009 Barry had an exhibition at Massachusetts Audubon’s Joppa Flats Education Center in Newburyport, MA. During the 2010 season he was the artist-in-residence at Fruitlands Museum in Harvard, MA. While there, Barry produced thirty finished paintings of birds and other nature subjects, which can be seen on the Fruitlands website, <http://www.fruitlands.org/image/tid/4>. Barry speaks of his personal history with Fruitlands: “During my college years at UMass Dartmouth, I worked here in the summers. My duties were primarily of the grounds-keeping and janitorial variety, but I took every opportunity to... savor the calls of meadowlarks and bobolinks drifting across the fields.” Barry will continue his association with Fruitlands during the 2011 season, when he will conduct several workshops and display his work in the gift shop.

In late July 2011 Barry will be an artist-in-residence once again, this time 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

February 2011



DAVID LARSON

The 2011 “At a Glance” series begins with a view of the tail-end of a diving waterbird. This is what birders often see just as a diver evacuates the surface prior to a feeding foray, or as it tries to avoid a predator or other surface threat. Important clues about the identity of the bird are at once visible. First, and one of the most important, is the position of the diving bird’s wings, at least partially open as the bird disappears beneath the surface. This is a critical clue, since many diving birds hold their wings tight against their body when diving or swimming underwater. For instance, certain diving ducks, cormorants, loons, and grebes use the feet as the primary mode of propulsion under water; hence their wings are kept closed when diving. Diving ducks such as most sea ducks, alcids, and “diving” shearwaters (e.g., Greater Shearwater, Sooty Shearwater, etc.), however, use their wings, sometimes exclusively, for underwater swimming.

Having narrowed the identification choices down to a duck, tubenose, or alcid of some type, we can focus on other characteristics. The mystery diver appears to have a whitish or possibly barred area at the base of its short, black tail. The bird also has partially whitish underparts, as seen on the feathering behind its partially opened wings and the suggestion of white on the visible portion of the right wing. The fact that this diver’s secondary feathers are black indicates that the white area on the wing is not a panel that extends to the trailing edge of the wing as on the wings of a White-winged Scoter, goldeneye, Bufflehead, or Common or Red-breasted merganser. None of the Atlantic shearwaters have white on their wings.

The trace of white on the middle portion of the mystery bird's wings, combined with its partially open-winged diving posture and grayish-white feathering at the base of an otherwise black back all point to a Black Guillemot (*Cepphus grille*) in non-breeding plumage. No East Coast alcid shows white in the middle of the wing or exhibits such extensive grayish-white at the base of the tail and lower back as a Black Guillemot. Black Guillemots like the pictured bird have a distinct non-breeding plumage in winter that is white below and mottled black, gray, and white above. In breeding plumage they are completely black with a conspicuous white wing-patch that is present in all plumages.

Black Guillemots are locally common winter visitors to inshore waters adjacent to rocky headlands, most notably at Cape Ann and a few spots along the South Shore. Occurrences at other seasons and localities are generally very uncommon. David Larson captured this image of a diving Black Guillemot in non-breeding plumage in Rye Harbor, New Hampshire, on Christmas Eve 2010. 🐦

Wayne R. Petersen



BLACK GUILLEMOT BY DAVID LARSON

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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