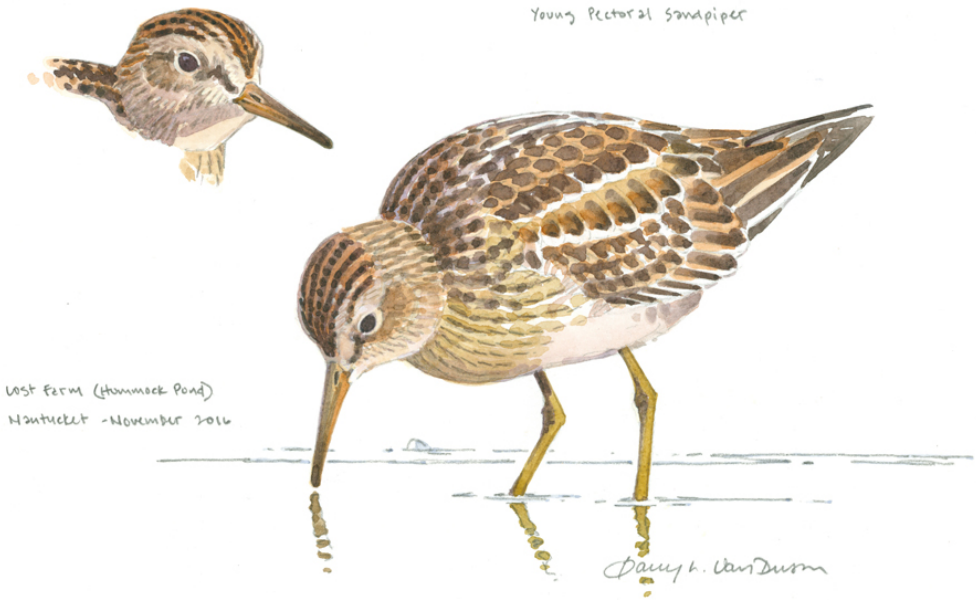
Bird Observer

VOLUME 50, NUMBER 4 AUGUST 2022



HOT BIRDS

James Kowalsky had perhaps the most improbable feeder bird of the spring when a male **Black-headed Grosbeak** appeared in his yard. After he posted it to eBird on May 19, several birders were able to enjoy it the following day. Lisa Schibley took the photo on the left.

After several years without any records, Massachusetts has documented **Loggerhead Shrike** for four years in a row. Jon Skinner (his photo on the right) found this year's Loggerhead at Fitchburg Airport on June 6. It stuck around for a couple of days, making many birders happy.

Captain Larry Backman (his photo on the left) spent Independence Day fishing south of Nantucket on his boat, the Skipjack. A **Red-billed Tropicbird** crossed his path and circled the boat for about 15 minutes, spicing up an otherwise quiet East Atlantis Canyon.

Single sightings of **Swallow-tailed Kites** in March and April were followed by no fewer than five reports in May, one of which included a pair soaring together. Mary (her photo on the right) and Ashley Keleher managed to see both species from their yard on the same afternoon, May 18.

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Bird Observer

A bimonthly journal— to support and promote the observation, understanding, and conservation of the wild birds of New England.

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Bird Observer supports the right of all people to enjoy birding and nature in a safe and welcoming environment free from discrimination and harrassment, be it sexual, racial, or barriers for people with disabilities.

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Birding Great Salt Bay Farm Wildlife Preserve in Lincoln County, Maine

Ethan Whitaker

If I were limited to birding just one location in the State of Maine, regardless of the time of year, without hesitation I would choose Great Salt Bay Farm Wildlife Preserve in Nobleboro. In winter, Bald Eagles, Belted Kingfishers, and Common Loons are regulars. With spring come the migrating warblers and returning Ospreys. In the summer, the meadows are alive with noisy Bobolinks, and the autumn brush is filled with a diverse array of sparrows. Great Salt Bay is Maine birding at its best.

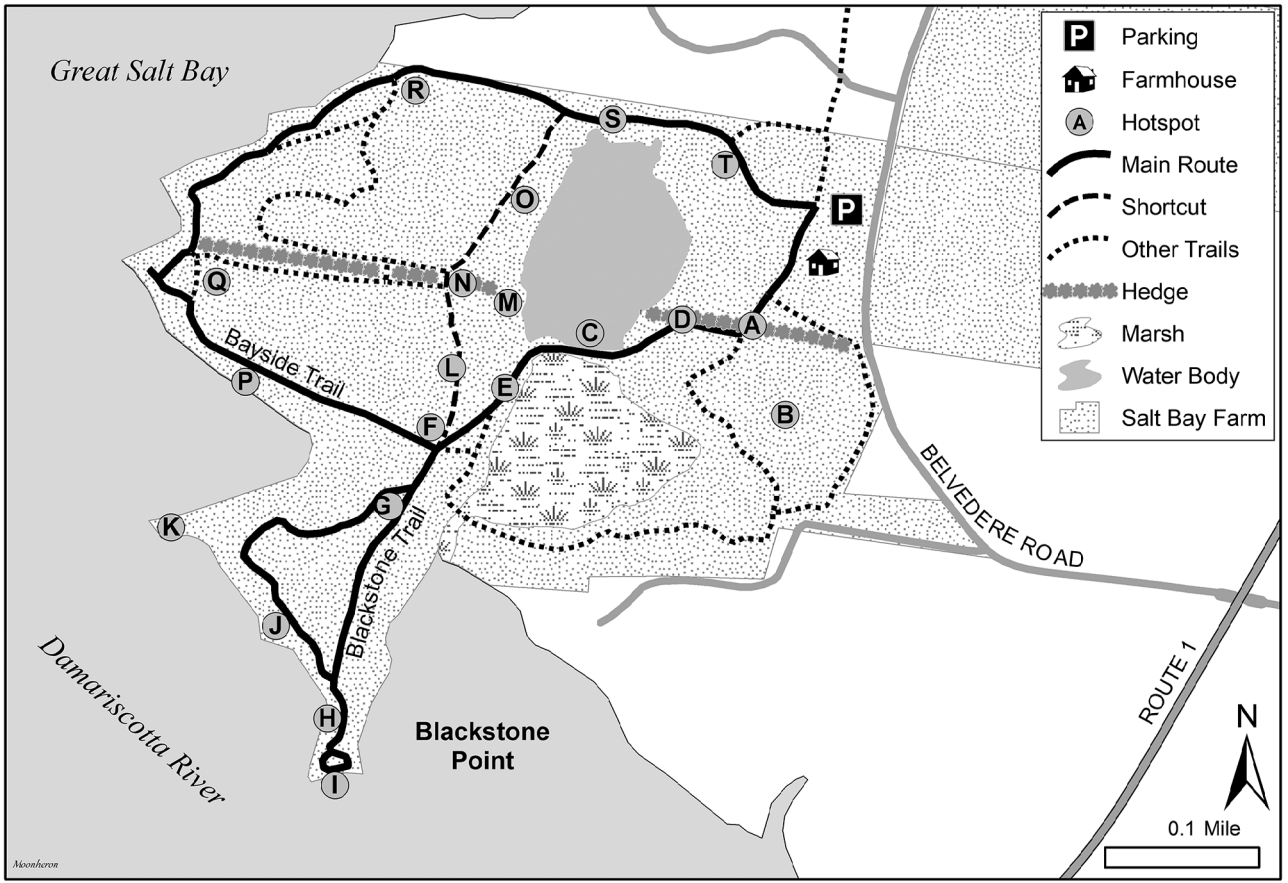
The Great Salt Bay Farm Wildlife Preserve (hereafter designated as Great Salt Bay) is a 115-acre wildlife preserve that was acquired in several pieces starting in 1994 by the late Mrs. Elizabeth Noyce, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Damariscotta River Association. The preserve is now managed by the Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust. Various websites and books designate Damariscotta—and even Newcastle—as the geographical home of Great Salt Bay, but do not be fooled. Great Salt Bay is located within the small, 23-square-miles town of Nobleboro. On its south side, Great Salt Bay abuts the Damariscotta River, which flows past East Boothbay and Christmas Cove into the Atlantic Ocean 12 miles away. A strong tidal flow pushes brackish water up the river into Salt Bay, which borders the preserve on the west and north.

Great Salt Bay is located about an hour north of Portland. To get there, travel north on Route 1 past the Damariscotta/Newcastle exits until you come to the flashing light at the intersection of Belvedere Road (44.048059, -69.506388). Turn left onto Belvedere and continue for 0.5 mile to the Great Salt Bay parking lot on the left (44.051529, -69.511409).

The parking lot is packed dirt, well maintained, plowed in winter, and has room for approximately 16 vehicles. During the warmer months, there usually is a porta-potty in the parking area. During winter, there are restrooms available at McDonald's and convenience stores a couple of miles away in Damariscotta.

There is a stately old farmhouse next to the parking lot, and I usually begin my birding visits by scanning the trees and birdfeeder near the colonial house. Eastern Bluebirds, Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, and White-breasted Nuthatches are almost always moving through the trees. During irruption years, Pine Siskins swarm the cedars in the front yard. Occasionally, you can hear House Wrens gurgling in the apple trees.

From the house, turn south on the mowed path that cuts through the hedgerow.



Great Salt Bay Farm Wildlife Preserve.

Great Salt Bay Farm Wildlife Preserve. All photographs by the author.

This path is part of the 2.8 miles of trails that snake around and crisscross the preserve. Since most of Great Salt Bay is hayfield or meadow, only the trail is kept closely mowed. The rest of the hay and grass is allowed to grow late into the summer to provide ideal nesting for Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlarks. Once I reach the hedgerow (Point **A** on the map: 44.050737, -69.512731) I pause and pish for a bit and invariably am greeted by a Song Sparrow, Gray Catbird, or Yellow Warbler. The hedgerows that run the width and breadth of the preserve are excellent warbler habitat during migration, with twenty species reported in 2021. American Redstarts, Northern Parulas, Common Yellowthroats, and Yellow Warblers nest at Great Salt Bay in great numbers. In the early spring, from the hedgerow cut-through, you can often see large amounts of standing water (**B**: 44.049877, -69.512415). This is a good spot to find Killdeer and Wilson's Snipes probing the soft soil for food.

After crossing through the hedgerow, turn right and follow the trail downhill until you reach the freshwater pond (**C**: 44.050502, -69.514527). On the pond, Buffleheads and Ring-necked Ducks are regulars in the cold weather, with Mallards and American Black Ducks present year-round. One or two Gadwalls visit each year. Common Gallinules and American Coots have been seen in the past. At least one pair of Canada Geese nest near the path to the south of the pond. It is important to be aware because the geese are defensive around their newly hatched goslings. I have seen people get attacked at this spot when they get too close to the young.

Tree and Barn swallows crisscross the air above the pond all summer chasing bugs. Northern Rough-winged, Bank, and Cliff swallows are seen on occasion. Then there is the noise. In the spring and early summer, dozens of male Red-winged Blackbirds

Female Belted Kingfisher. Listen for the rattle of Belted Kingfishers along the Blackstone Trail.

are singing on cattails. Here, during the summer, you will be guaranteed a Marsh Wren...or four...or more. While I have always found this species to be loud but reclusive, at Great Salt Bay they pop right up in the reeds to see who is visiting. When you add the Marsh Wrens gurgling, the Soras calling, and the Virginia Rails clucking, it can be deafening.

In the trees to the east of the pond, there is an elevated bird blind (**D**: 44.050963, -69.513779). I have never found the blind terribly helpful. It is set quite a bit back from the water, and the view of much of the pond is blocked by foliage. Instead, I have had remarkable luck just standing along the path by the pond. There I have had Soras stroll a few feet in front of me as they feed in the shallows and have had similar results with other rails and snipes.

Continuing on the path past the freshwater pond, you will curve around the salt marsh and find yellowlegs, peeps, and Solitary Sandpipers during migration. The Salt Marsh (**E**: 44.049969, -69.516198) is also a great place to get your Great Blue Heron checklist tick, because they feed in the deeper pools, which do not appear to be tide dependent. You can find birds of prey throughout Great Salt Bay, and the salt marsh seems to attract Northern Harriers and Red-tailed Hawks, the latter often perched in the oak trees along the south side.

Continue around the path and you will reach a four-way intersection (**F**: 44.049631, -69.516951). Take a left onto Blackstone Trail. This is a loop trail that takes you to a peninsula jutting out into the Damariscotta River. There is a lot of scrub on this 0.4-mile loop, which is good for Savannah Sparrows, Northern Cardinals, Eastern Bluebirds, Common Yellowthroats, and seasonal migrants. I have seen American Kestrels hunting here on more than one occasion.

You may also notice small Native American huts and shelters (**G**: 44.049059, -69.517550) made from grass and sticks along the trail. These are built by Wabanaki Indians who use them in education programs for local third-graders. Listen for the rattle of the Belted Kingfishers that regularly are visible from the Blackstone Trail. They tend to perch about 10 feet up on snags hanging over the river.

Near the end of the peninsula, the trail narrows with water a few feet away on both sides (**H**: 44.047082, -69.518249) before expanding to a round wooded hill at the end of the point. Here you get your first really good view of Salt Bay. Depending upon the time of the year, you will see Common Loons, all three mergansers, Buffleheads, Black Ducks, Canada Geese, and Mallards. For several years, a Canvasback returned to the bay each winter. During migration, you can see Least Sandpipers and other shorebirds browsing at the neck of Blackstone Trail and Snowy Egrets standing on rocks near shore.

Continuing to the point, follow Blackstone Trail as it loops around the hill at the tip of the peninsula (**I**: 44.046689, -69.518491). Look for nesting Northern Parulas. I have found them to be quite tame, curious, and vocal during the breeding season. If you look at the trail here on the hill, you will notice that it is partially white because you are on the Glidden Shell Midden**.** A shell midden is a prehistoric pile of oyster shells left by Native Americans several thousand years ago**.** At its deepest, the Glidden Midden is over thirty feet high. It is a reminder of the people who once gathered at this location to feast on the plentiful oysters that used to live in Salt Bay. After climbing down from the midden, follow the pine-lined return loop of Blackstone Trail**.** Soon you will hit Song Sparrow habitat (**J**: 44.048325, -69.519006). During nesting season, they will come out to scold you.


Male Bobolink.

The Blackstone Trail return loop is sometimes closed during the summer because Ospreys nest on the platform on the north end (**K**: 44.048929, -69.519628). Like many Ospreys, this pair can become agitated and aggressive when there are eggs or young in the nest, and they have been known to dive on visitors.

When you reach the four-way intersection again (**F**: 44.049631, -69.516951), head straight across and up the meadow hill. This is the Hilltop Shortcut Trail (44.050616, -69.516571), and as the name implies, it is a great way to shorten your visit if you have limited time. In the summer, it is also the best place to see Bobolinks in the entire state of Maine. You can hear and see hundreds of Bobolinks moving through the meadow. Males will be gurgling, bubbling, and whistling on every mound, bush, or grass stalk trying to get the attention of a potential mate. The brownish yellow females are not as apparent as the males, but with careful study you will see them hidden in the grass.

Following the Hilltop Shortcut Trail to the hill's summit will bring you to another hedgerow (**L**: 44.051313, -69.516655) and my favorite location in the entire preserve. From here you have a wonderful view of the pond and can sometimes see the shy, nesting Wood Ducks that you may have missed earlier. You can often see Virginia Rails popping up in the air with their humorous display flights, and American Bitterns may be hiding in the reeds on this side of the pond (**M**: 44.051060, -69.515541).

Back at the summit, Bobolinks tend to congregate on the hedgerow and migrant warblers and songbirds move through the thickets (**N**: 44.051313, -69.516655). A few years back, a Black-billed Cuckoo took up residence in the tunnel where the Shortcut Trail cuts through the hedgerow. The bird would get extremely upset when I entered the tunnel but make no effort to flee; obviously it was protecting a nest.

Follow the Hilltop Shortcut Trail down the back side of the hill, which takes you through more Bobolink habitat and a Canada Goose feeding area. Watch where you step. A number of small pines (**O**: 44.052049, -69.515162) in the high grass next to the

Sora.

pond are great areas to observe sparrows, particularly Savannah and Swamp sparrows, during the warmer months. During migration, Lincoln's and White-throated can be seen regularly. Historically, 17 types of sparrows have been reported at Great Salt Bay, including a LeConte's Sparrow in 2019.

Backtrack to the four-way intersection (**F**: 44.049631, -69.516951) to continue along the water's edge on Bayside Trail (**P**: 44.050467, -69.519308). This is another great spot to observe the birds of Salt Bay, and you are almost guaranteed Bald Eagle, if you watch long enough. Likewise, you can often see a handful of harbor seals sunning themselves on exposed rocks. The water table is quite high on Bayside Trail, and it can be soft and muddy after the snow melts or heavy rain. Waterproof boots or waders are recommended.

After 0.2 mile on Bayside Trail, you will hit the end of the Great Salt Bay hedgerow (**Q**: 44.051656, -69.519807) and come to a reliable American Redstart nesting area. Walk up the hedgerow in the late spring, and you will see and hear the warblers everywhere. A couple of years ago in the early spring, I was walking this path and heard a raspy whistling bird song that I didn't recognize. Soon I came upon a Northern Shrike, a bird seen in this part of Great Salt Bay most winters.

Continuing on Bayside trail (**R**: 44.053087, -69.517201), you will have second-growth forest on your left all the way back to the parking lot. Here you will find the usual array of woodpeckers—Hairy, Downy, Pileated, and Northern Flicker—a sizable population of Blue-headed and Red-eyed vireos, and the usual array of forest birds: Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, Blue Jays, and White-breasted and Red-

breasted nuthatches. American Robins tend to come and go with the seasons. Usually, you can find a Cooper's Hawk patrolling the woods.

Follow Bayside Trail for another 0.5 mile until you reach the north side of the freshwater pond (**S**: 44.052710, -69.514033). Here you will find a stand of white pines teeming with Golden-crowned Kinglets year-round. Depending on the season, it is a great place to find Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Yellow Warblers, and vocal Common Yellowthroats.

Climbing a final and deceptively steep hill (**T**: 44.052147, -69.512646), used for sledding in the winter, brings you back to the parking lot. Here I have seen Snow Buntings, Horned Larks, and even a Vesper Sparrow. Keep your eyes out for something unusual.

One final note about Great Salt Bay: the marshes and standing water are ideal breeding grounds for mosquitos and blackflies, especially in May and June. While I never have had to wear a head net, I carry a can of Deet with me and apply it liberally. Ticks can also be a problem, particularly in the long grass during Bobolink season. Long pants tucked into your socks is advisable, and check yourself for crawling creatures after your visit.

In addition to Great Salt Bay as a birding destination, there are other hotspots in the vicinity that are worth checking out:

Oyster Creek: Bald Eagles, waterfowl, and a Red-shouldered Hawk showed up in January 2022.

Damariscotta Fish Ladder: As many as a million alewives return from the sea and climb the restored fish ladder to reach Damariscotta Lake each spring. This attracts eagles, Ospreys, cormorants, and gulls in great numbers.

Residential feeders around Great Salt Bay: two female orioles—a Bullock's and a Baltimore—and a Lincoln's Sparrow overwintered in 2021–2022.

Damariscotta River Association (DRA) Community Garden: located across the street from Great Salt Bay, it is a great spot for sparrows.

As of May 2022, there have been 202 species reported at Great Salt Bay. Jeff Cherry, a renowned local birder, has a remarkable Great Salt Bay life list of 167 species.

Great Salt Bay Farm Wildlife Preserve provides an astonishing variety of species and habitats, all easily accessible and well maintained. Great Salt Bay is rarely crowded, dogs are kept on leash, and bikes are prohibited. It is a great place to bird in any season.

Ethan Whitaker *is a retired software developer who caught the birding bug in 2013. In 2021, he set a Maine Big Year record with 324 birds. He has authored and published a photo book about his adventure,* Every Bird in Maine*. Ethan resides in Wiscasset, Maine, with his wife Ingrid, also an avid birder. Follow their birding adventures on BigYearBirding.com.*

Notes from the Ground: Observations on Broad-winged Hawk Migration in Massachusetts and New England

Paul M. Roberts

Broad-winged Hawk. Photograph by Brian Rusnica.

Massachusetts birders are fortunate to live where they can view one of the greatest spectacles in the natural world: the daytime September migration of thousands of Broad-winged Hawks (*Buteo platypterus*) on their way from the eastern deciduous forest of North America to Central and South America. Nothing can adequately convey the awesome primal beauty of thousands of hawks spiraling ever higher in the heavens until they turn to glide to the southwest on silent wings. You need to see it live.

Here I discuss some of what I have learned over 48 years of marveling at and studying the migration of our most abundant diurnal raptor.

Broad-winged Hawks are complete migrants, meaning that they totally leave their breeding grounds. They exit Canada and most of the United States before the end of September. Many pass over Corpus Christi, Texas, in the last week of September (HawkCount 2022)—roughly 1,700 miles from Wachusett Mountain, a prime viewing site in Massachusetts. Almost the entire world Broadwing population then passes through a narrow corridor between the mountains and the ocean in Veracruz, Mexico, 400 miles farther south, primarily in the first half of October. Roughly 1.5 to 2 million Broadwings are counted there each year (HawkCount 2022). Because so many Broadwings migrate in such a compact time period, under ideal weather conditions it is possible to see hundreds or thousands of these raptors soaring together in the northeast, with a few flights exceeding 20,000 birds, as well as other hawks. In Texas

Broad-winged Hawk Kettle, Veracruz, Mexico. Photograph by Paul Roberts.

and Veracruz, flights of 30,000 to 100,000-plus Broadwings are possible during peak migration times.

September is peak migration time because that is when thermals—naturally occurring columns of hot air generated by sunlight heating the ground—are strongest and most abundant. Broadwings are not powerful fliers like Peregrine Falcons (*Falco peregrinus*), which might migrate long distances over the ocean nonstop. Broadwings do not like to fly over water because they find little lift there. These small buteos have evolved to use naturally occurring forces, such as thermals and orographic lift—created by winds deflected off landforms like ridges or mountains—to carry them hundreds, often thousands of feet high with little energy expenditure on their part, so they can glide effortlessly in the direction of the migration. That lift is usually best a day or two after a cold front passes a given location because the clear, cool, dry air over the warmer land enables the sun to generate powerful thermals.

When I began hawkwatching in the early 1970s, relatively little was known about migration of any hawk species. Many hawk populations had been in freefall for decades and were on the edge of extirpation (Bildstein 2008). Not much was known about Broadwings, which were thought to be less threatened than Bald Eagles, Peregrines, or Ospreys. Broadwing flights had been documented at the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Kempton, Pennsylvania, since 1934 (HawkCount 2022). Massachusetts state ornithologist Archie Hagar had seen a flight of 2,094 Broadwings at Mount Tom in Holyoke, Massachusetts, on September 18, 1937. I was told the best time to see Broadwings migrate was September 17–25.

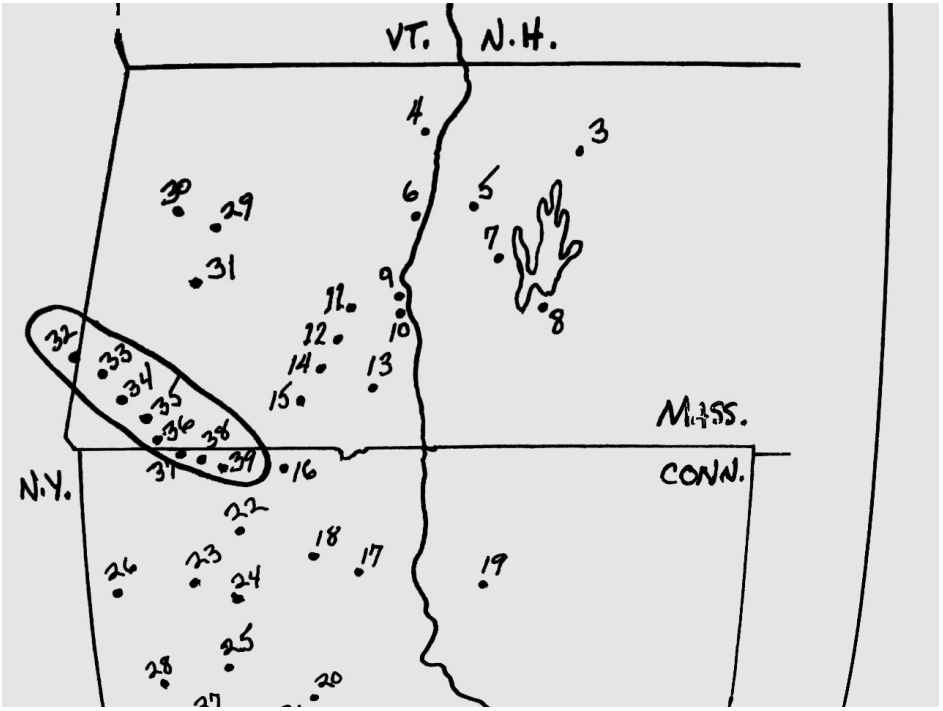


Figure 1. NEHW Interception Sites Map 1973. NEHW had three roughly vertical interception lines of sites in western Massachusetts in 1973 to help determine if Broadwings were moving on a broad front. A fourth, diagonal line had eight sites spaced roughly 2 miles apart to determine how far away observers might be able to see individual hawks and count kettles or streams.

In 1971, New England Hawk Watch (NEHW) was established in Connecticut and western Massachusetts to learn more about hawk migration and began to use citizen scientists to greatly expand our understanding of hawk migration. The NEHW recruited volunteers from local bird clubs to hawkwatch at dozens of locations in the area. Twenty years later, New England Hawk Watch became NorthEast Hawk Watch in 1991.

The founders of NEHW wondered where the birds at Mount Tom came from and where they went. They selected a mid-September weekend to look for Broadwings and a late October weekend for Red-tailed Hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*). Observers saw 3,390 Broadwings on September 19. On September 20, forty-two sites reported 22,218 hawks. NEHW had established three north-south interception lines, each with several sites five to ten miles apart to determine the breadth of any flights seen. If hawks were seen, were narrow rivulets of Broadwings going over one or two sites, or were multiple streams going over many sites on a relatively broad front? (Interception sites are determined largely by topography and public access. Usually sites are on hills or ridges where people can see most of the horizon above the canopy.) On September 20, NEHW concluded that the birds were moving on a broad front, a wave that was roughly 22 miles wide and up to 45 miles long in the afternoon (NEHW 1971; Hopkins 1975).

They estimated the hawks were moving at about 30 miles per hour, and that the watch sites were likely seeing only a portion of the birds.

In 1972, the NEHW discovered that large kettles of Broadwings could be tracked on weather radar (NEHW 1972; Hopkins 1975). The following year they established new interception lines, including a string of eight watch sites roughly two miles apart along a 14-mile diagonal front to see how far away observers might see individual and kettles of hawks. (See Figure 1.) NEHW also began to use a plane and in 1974 a motorized glider with a much lower stall speed to track hawks in flight. Observations revealed that Broadwings can see other hawks getting lift about six miles away, so they head toward the lift spot. This results in streams of hawks roughly 12 miles apart. These streams last no more than 90 minutes since the angle of the sun changes, which alters the locations of thermals.

Powered glider surveillance showed that Broadwings typically begin kettling around 1,000 feet above ground level (AGL) and may soar as high as 4,000, occasionally 5,000 feet AGL, though 2,500 feet is typical (Welch 1987). When birds reach the top of the thermal, or sooner, they glide out at a speed of around 40 miles per hour with a typical glide ratio of 16 to 1 (advancing 16 feet horizontally for every foot they lose in altitude). Thermals can take Broadwings up into cumulus clouds, which typically form at the top of thermals. Broadwings can soar into clouds without getting disoriented (Hopkins et al. 1979; Welch 1987). Under good conditions, Broadwings can glide more than four miles from one thermal (Hopkins et al. 1979; Welch 1987).

In 1976, I started the Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch (EMHW) to conduct hawkwatches east of western Massachusetts. Virtually nothing was known about migration in the rest of the state, so we gradually recruited volunteers to count at approximately 30 sites distributed across the state on one to four weekends each fall. The emphasis was on the northeast quarter of the state but extended to Boston and Cape Cod. All of our data were shared with the NEHW and the new Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA). We covered Wachusett three days in 1976; on one day, 632 Broadwings were reported—the largest hawk flight documented for eastern Massachusetts. We covered Wachusett for 19 days in 1977 when we had an incredible 3,302 Broadwings. We covered most sites on weekends and worked to establish a consecutive-day count at Wachusett during the Broadwing season.

The game changed on September 13, 1978, when four observers on Wachusett Mountain saw 10,086 Broadwings—by far the largest daily hawk flight reported in New England. That count total encountered considerable skepticism at first, but it opened many people's eyes to a phenomenon that probably had been going on over Massachusetts for millennia. The flight of September 13 was not limited to Wachusett Mountain. In Massachusetts, Mount Tom counted 3,822, Fisher Hill in Westhampton had 2,066, and Southwick counted 2,427. Warner Hill in New Hampshire reported 2,010 Broadwings. Watertown, Connecticut, tallied 4,186 (NEHW 1978; Roberts 1979).

On September 14, Wachusett had only 36 Broadwings, but Mount Tom added 1,521, Fisher Hill 2,066, Southwick 2,427, and 1,550 were seen in Pittsfield, which

had found only 128 the previous day. Hawk Mountain reported its all-time record Broadwing flight of 21,488 on September 14. Clearly, there had been a broad migratory movement that slid farther west. We determined that there had been a narrow ridge of high pressure between two larger low-pressure systems, with northeast winds in coastal New England and northwestern winds in the west, funneling hawks like an hourglass into south-central New England.

Interest in Broadwing migration continued to grow and then on September 13, 1983, Wachusett counted a record 19,912 Broadwings (NEHW 1983; Roberts 1984), including 16,216 from noon to 1:00 pm Eastern Standard Time. Southwick had 12,381 that day, but almost 8,000 Broadwings had passed before noon. Mount Tom had only 5,338 Broadwings, but 4,000 before noon.

Over several years, hawkwatchers reached the consensus that the large four- and five-digit flights were the result of warm fronts damming up the Broadwing flight; this is known as a weather block. The warm front—a low-pressure cell—provides a warmer, more stable air mass, often with lots of clouds, which means little thermal activity or strength—no lift, and often rain. Migrating Broadwings stack up at these warm fronts waiting for a new cold front. Broadwings still in the high-pressure cell continue to move until they hit the dam, which breaks only when the low-pressure system is driven out by the cold front.

Several hawkwatching trends developed over the next two decades. The number of sites covered on weekends gradually declined because people wanted to see the impressive numbers of Broadwings reported at major sites. Wachusett had 200 hawkwatchers crowding the old summit on weekends in September when the weather was nice. The Wachusett watch sought to extend volunteer counts to October 31 or November 15, but the emphasis was covering Wachusett every day during peak Broadwing season in September. Some sites began working toward consecutive-day coverage, hawkwatching every day from roughly mid-August or September 1 to mid- or late November except in persistent rain, strong winds, or storms, capturing a richer, more revealing data set for all raptors.

Lighthouse Point in New Haven, Connecticut, was the first site to move toward consecutive coverage in 1974. Quaker Ridge in Greenwich, Connecticut, followed in 1985; Mount Watatic in Ashburnham, Massachusetts, in 1988; Putney Mountain in Putney, Vermont, in 1997; Barre Falls, Massachusetts, in 2000; Pack Monadnock in Peterborough, New Hampshire, in 2005; Greenlaw Mountain in Saint Andrews, New Brunswick, in 2009; and Clarry Hill in Union, Maine, in 2011 (HawkCount 2022). Greenlaw and Clarry are now our northernmost Broadwing reporting sites, our distant early warning system.

Putney, a ridge north of Brattleboro, conveniently forms a loose horizontal interception line with Pack Monadnock roughly 29 miles to the east. Pack Monadnock is also the northern terminus of the north-south Wapack mountain range. Mount Watatic is the southern terminus in Ashburnham, 19 miles south of Peterborough. Wachusett, a monadnock in Princeton, Massachusetts, is 13 miles south of Watatic. The latter three sites form a north-south interception line 32 miles long. When Broadwings peel or

stream off the top of a thermal in inland New England, they are heading predominantly southwest toward the next thermal. Two sites on these lines might see portions of one broad migration wave of Broadwings, but not the same individual hawks.

I developed my own classification system for Broadwing flights at Wachusett. You might see a Broadwing any day from mid-August to mid-October, but we usually have several low, two-digit (10–99 birds) flights in August and early September. In September, there might be five to ten days with three-digit flights of 100–999 Broadwings. Maybe two or three days might be four digits, with 1,000–9,999 Broadwings, but most will be fewer than 4,000 birds. Any time you have 1,000–4,000 Broadwings, you have had a great day and perhaps some unforgettable sights.

Then there are the days, once every four or five years, when you might see a five-digit flight. Those are the days hawkwatchers live for. In Massachusetts, we have recorded 11 five-digit flights since 1976. Seven of those have been at Wachusett Mountain; one each at Bolton Flats, Barre Falls, Southwick, and Mount Tom. All occurred between September 13 and 18. Six occurred between September 12 and 15. Almost all of our largest flights occurred before what previously had been thought to be peak Broadwing migration time.

Since 1976, there have been 51 flights of more than 4,000 Broad-winged Hawks between September 11 and 25. Although 4,000 is selected arbitrarily, it represents a significant divide. Twenty-eight or 55% have occurred between September 11 and 15, with 10 occurring on September 15. Between September 16 and 25, there have been 23 flights of 4,000–9,999 hawks, and 21 have occurred between September 16 and 19. Over four decades, almost all flights of 4,000-plus Broadwings occurred between September 11 and 19.

When we look at the data gathered in Massachusetts (NEHW 1971–2020), the weather dam theory is not as simple as originally construed. The huge flights occur when a weather block is encountered early in the peak season because most Broadwings are moving through New England earlier than first thought. When Broadwings encounter a weather block, they have two choices: sit or fly low, slow, and alone. I think that when Broadwings encounter a weak warm front, they generally try to continue, going west or south short distances as conditions permit. If there is not great lift, there is no benefit to congregating in ever larger numbers. They can fly just above the canopy looking for meals en route, literally beneath the radar. There are significant exceptions to this pattern. Broadwings do sit down for persistent rain or strong winds, including hurricanes. Several of the biggest Broadwing flights recorded in North America happened the day after a hurricane, especially hurricane remnants passing inland. When the major weather block occurs early in the season, it affects the larger numbers of hawks already moving. If the block in the Northeast occurs in the second half of the season, it can affect far fewer birds. (Telemetry should eventually enable us to determine whether certain regional breeding populations tend to depart earlier than others.)

Normally there are tremendous variations from day to day and year to year at all sites, as shown at the Wachusett Fall Totals Table. (See Table 1.) In years when

Wachusett Mountain

Broadwings and Total Hawks Fall 1976-2021

YEAR	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
DAYS	3	19	27	22	35	27	30	47	23	29	34	27	25	26	26
HOURS	15.5	83	154.5	124.5	211.4	146.9	176.2	277.5	156.5	193.5	183.2	147.8	131.9	117.9	145.7
BROADWINGS	691	2,577	11,856	6,490	9,282	2,488	7,172	26,910	27,090	17,193	11,764	21,704	19,601	17,863	6,640
TOTAL HAWKS	733	3,302	13,146	8,025	10,776	3,928	9,176	28,920	28,485	19,432	13,510	23,079	20,891	18,865	7,740

YEAR	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
DAYS	24	21	13	23	27	11	21	16	22	22	20	10	23	8	9
HOURS	123.7	101.9	49	112.7	128.8	51.6	103.75	90	102.01	132.7	111.2	58.5	113	51.5	52
BROADWINGS	6,481	10,634	4,127	9,274	10,588	8,933	6,873	7,138	4,771	10,016	7,419	12,117	1,833	2,978	8,489
TOTAL HAWKS	7,344	11,413	4,483	9,929	11,489	9,149	7,681	7,684	5,293	10,837	7,984	12,562	2,487	3,433	8,806

YEAR	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
DAYS	23	17	23	26	15	13	24	44	48	49	42	57	46	65	65
HOURS	116.25	116	151	156	84	75	145.5	212	324	318.75	260.75	327.75	258.08	390.5	432.5
BROADWINGS	2,168	2,863	5,316	4,466	1,360	2,364	7,777	35,070	16,750	11,205	6,962	10,348	5,042	2,832	6,955
TOTAL HAWKS	2,637	3,477	5,865	5,293	1,838	2,564	8,503	36,229	18,475	12,464	8,465	11,789	6,327	4,484	9,451

YEAR	2021	TOTAL	AVE 77-86	AVE 77-21	AVE 12-21
DAYS	72	1,299	29	29	51
HOURS	434.75	7,452	171	165	310
BROADWINGS	4,458	426,928	12,282	9,472	10,740
TOTAL HAWKS	7,139	475,582	13,870	10,552	12,333

Table 1. Wachusett Mountain Fall Totals 1976–2021.

Wachusett might not see many Broadwings, it could simply be because the weather and thermals were better north and west of us. Or perhaps smaller numbers of Broadwings went through Worcester County in nickel-and-dime fashion, well below the summit. They never took the turnpike.

I have an easy-to-remember 80% rule: Broad-winged Hawks are roughly 80-plus percent of all inland hawk flights in Massachusetts. Over 80% of those birds pass through Massachusetts between September 12 and 19. Amazingly, 80% of the total Broad-winged Hawk flight can pass in three to four hours on a single day. Wachusett recorded over 16,000 in a single hour on September 13, 1983.

We know a lot more about hawk migration than we did 50 years ago, but many hawkwatchers now share a sense of unease regarding possible changes in migration patterns and the future of current hawkwatch sites, especially with respect to the potential consequences of climate change. Many hawkwatchers, including me, think that cold fronts are fewer, shorter, weaker, and warmer than in the past. I think the strong northwest winds of a cold front historically pushed birds a bit east in Maine and New Hampshire. However, often our best days were on dry northeast winds seen with a backdoor cold front dropping straight down from eastern Canada. In recent years, we have seen fewer days with northwest winds and more weak easterly winds, which can provide favorable lift but push birds west. The farther north the birds encounter easterly winds, the more likely they are to pass Pack and Putney, rather than Watatic and Wachusett.

What increases our concern about climate change is that two major Broadwing sites in the Northeast are suffering through dramatic crashes in migrant Broadwing numbers (HawkCount 2022; Miller et al. 2002). Quaker Ridge in Greenwich, Connecticut, was the site of the largest Broadwing flight in New England with 31,988 on September 19, 1995. It averaged 20,973 Broadwings from 1986 to 1995. From 2012 to 2021, it averaged only 7,623. Montclair, New Jersey, the second oldest continuous hawkwatch in North America, has experienced a worse decline. Montclair averaged 23,047 Broadwings from 1983 to 1992. It averaged only 3,663 from 2012 to 2021, 16% of their average from 1984 to 1993 (HawkCount 2022; Miller et al. 2002). Is changing weather—and perhaps climate—affecting regional breeding populations that once migrated through southwestern Connecticut and eastern New Jersey? Or is it that Broadwing populations are relatively stable but changing weather patterns, perhaps due to climate change, are altering their migration routes? We don't know the answers yet.

Whereas Quaker Ridge and Montclair are experiencing declines, Putney and Pack have enjoyed significant increases in Broadwings over the past decade. Putney Mountain averaged 3,656 Broadwings between 2002 and 2011. From 2012 to 2021, it has averaged 7,458, without a significant increase in coverage. Pack Monadnock averaged 7,135 Broadwings between 2005 and 2011, increasing 31% to 9,345 from 2012 to 2021. Clarry Hill, covered since only 2011, is averaging 9,404 Broadwings; its second-best year was 2021 (HawkCount 2022). Are the improved seasons in the west the result of climate change, or just natural variability in the weather?

Wachusett's average from 2012 to 2021 is 10,740 Broadwings, 13% above the total

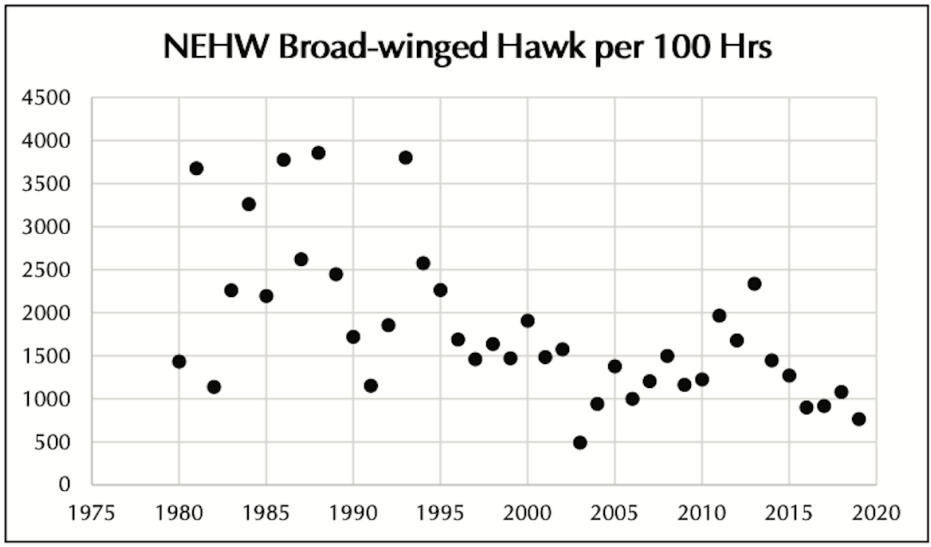


Figure 2. NEHW Broadwing Fall Migration Trends 1980–2019. Each dot represents the total number of Broadwings seen by NEHW sites per hundred hours of coverage (HPHH) that season, to compensate for annual variations in coverage.

average since weekday counting began in 1977. That increase was due entirely to an extraordinary flight in 2013, when it had six straight days of four-digit flights, including 14,471 Broadwings on September 15 and 12,272 on September 18—its only year with two five-digit flights in the same season. That year set a seasonal record of 35,070 Broadwings, but Wachusett's recent seasonal totals have been well below its long-term average, which is a cause for concern.

The recent *Raptor Population Index Report* (Oleyar et al. 2021) based on data collected through 2019, including Veracruz, indicates that the Broad-winged Hawk population is stable, but 11% of the 72 sites reported a decrease in Broadwings from 2010 to 2019. Those sites were all in the Eastern Region. Two other sources suggest something is happening with Broadwings in the Northeast. No Massachusetts or northern New England site has reported a five-digit flight since 1994, excluding the two at Wachusett in 2013. Nine of eleven five-digit flights were prior to 1994. The huge broad migration flights appear to be declining significantly, and none of the newer sites in northern New England has had one yet. Second, the NorthEast Hawk Watch Fall Migration Trends Report for Broadwings seen per hundred hours of coverage shows a clear downward trend between 1980 and 2018 (NEHW 2019). (See Figure 2.)

We need further research into possible changes in recent weather patterns in the Northeast and into the projected effects of climate change on Broadwings. We need to maintain existing consecutive-day sites, even if Broadwing counts there are plummeting, to document what is happening. We should expand coverage, including new distributed weekend sites and perhaps new interception lines to discover possible changes in migration routes. We are fortunate to have the relatively new sites in

northern New England. We need more sites throughout the region. We still have a lot to learn about Broad-winged Hawk migration.

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Paul M. Roberts *has been studying hawks since he saw his first large kettle of Broad-winged Hawks at Mount Tom in 1974. Paul founded the Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch in 1976 and later served as chair of the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA) in its formative years. He also served as president of the NorthEast Hawk Watch for twenty years. Paul has written extensively on hawks and taught hawk identification courses. He has visited Corpus Christi, Texas, and Cardel, Chichicaxtle, and Quiahuiztlan, Veracruz, multiple times to witness the largest raptor migration on earth, but some of the most spectacular flights he has seen have been at Wachusett Mountain.*

Fall Hawkwatching in Massachusetts

Brian Rusnica

In Massachusetts, September is considered the kickoff month for hawkwatching, which is the organized identification and counting of migrating raptors at designated watch sites. Hawkwatchers from all over New England set their eyes to the skies as raptors funnel out of our region and head toward wintering grounds to the south. Massachusetts hawkwatchers regularly see 12 diurnal raptor species every fall season, with several other species possible.

Eastern Mass Hawk Watch maintains ongoing hawkwatches at multiple sites. Wachusett Mountain is the premier hawkwatching spot in Massachusetts. From the observation deck on the summit, observers enjoy a full 360° view of the surrounding region. Wachusett will generally have an EMHW volunteer counter present between September 1 and mid-October, except during unfavorable or inclement weather conditions. Mount Watatic is another mountaintop hawkwatching site, offering a more rustic but serene experience for hawkwatchers able to hike the 1,832-foot mountain located at the southern end of the Wapack Ridge near the New Hampshire border. Mount Watatic will generally have an EMHW volunteer counter present during the peak of Broad-winged Hawk migration, between September 10th and 25th, except during unfavorable or inclement weather conditions. Pinnacle Rock in the Middlesex Fells Reservation, Malden, is an option closer to Boston. A coastal site at approximately 200 feet of elevation, Pinnacle Rock is typically most productive in October for accipiter migration. Our website, www.emhw.org has further details on each of these locations, including specifics on hiking trails and migration timing. You can also visit www.hawkcount.org to see migration counts from recent seasons.

Founded in 1976, EMHW is an all-volunteer, member-based conservation organization whose mission is to promote the study, conservation, and preservation of hawks locally and on a continental scale by monitoring migration in Massachusetts; to share data for research and conservation purposes; to promote education and awareness of the identification of hawks and the issues related to migrating hawks; and to instill an appreciation for hawks in general. Membership is $15 annually and offers access to our annual newsletter.

Hawkwatching might seem like an intimidating branch of birding due to difficulties with identification and frequently distant birds. However, hawkwatchers, especially those of us at EMHW, pride ourselves on being a welcoming community, and we are constantly looking to share our experience and teach hawkwatching to interested birders. The spectacle of a big raptor migration is undoubtedly one of our state's can't-miss birding experiences. A truly massive Broad-winged Hawk flight has to be seen to be believed. Binoculars are a must for any hawkwatcher, but little else is needed to get started: water, sun protection and a warm layer. Please join us at a hawkwatch site near you this fall.

Brian Rustica *is President of Eastern Mass Hawk Watch.*

Third Report of the Rhode Island Avian Records Committee: Summary of Historical Records of Rare Birds in Rhode Island and Review of Recent Reports Through 2018

Shaibal S. Mitra, Chair, Doug Wilson, Secretary, Robert Emerson, Rachel Farrell, Paul L'Etoile, Peter Paton, and Scott Tsagarakis

Snowy Plover. April 17, 2017. Goosewing Beach, Little Compton. Photograph by Geoff Dennis.

This report describes the Rhode Island Avian Records Committee's (RIARC) evaluation of 94 records, primarily from 2016–2018, but with nine from earlier years (1998–2015). These records are summarized below within a comprehensive list of all the species and distinctive subspecies on the Rhode Island Review List, as well as several species reported in Rhode Island for the first time. Following the name of each species or subspecies on the Review List, four numbers are presented in parentheses (a, b, c, d), defined as follows:

a the number of records cited by Howe and Sturtevant (1899).

b the number of records accepted from 1900–2002. This number is derived principally from the *Checklist of Rhode Island Birds* (Rhode Island Ornithological Club 2002), which represents a synthesis of information from Ferren (*in litt.*), Conway (1992), and records accepted by a pre-RIARC committee of reviewers for *Field Notes of Rhode Island Birds* through 2002 (Raithel 2001, 2002). A "++" represents relatively frequent historical occurrence of the species, which could be replaced with a number pending ongoing research.

c the number of accepted records from 2003–2015, including those published in RIARC's two previous reports (Mitra et al. 2010, 2021), plus additional records from this period published here.
d the number of accepted records from 2016–2018 published in the present report. Note: the sum of a, b, c, and d represents the total number of verified records in Rhode Island through December 2018.

To accommodate the full Review List, as well as three years' worth of records, discussion of individual records has been kept to a minimum in this report. The Committee intends to publish its fourth report in 2023 to cover records from 2019–2022, then annual reports thereafter, with fuller discussions of each year's individual records.

The current report features numerous highlights, including the first Rhode Island records of Graylag Goose, Snowy Plover, and Black-whiskered Vireo; second state records for Pink-footed Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Little Egret, and Townsend's Warbler; and third state records for Mountain Bluebird and Varied Thrush. Rates of occurrence continue to increase for some species, such as Ross's Goose, or to remain at higher than historical levels for others, such as Sandhill Crane. In contrast, other species have occurred less frequently in recent years than in the past, notably Eared Grebe, King Rail, Little Gull, and Gull-billed Tern.

For each record below, we list the RIARC Committee report number; the vote of the Committee (accept–not accept, or when three numbers then accept–not accept–accept identification but natural status uncertain); the number of individuals; the location of record; the date(s) of occurrence; and the observer(s), with the following codes: I = initial finder, R = provided a written report, and P = provided photo(s).

Fulvous Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) (0, 4, 0, 0)

Ross's Goose (*Anser rossii*) (0, 1, 2, 6)
2016–07 (7–0): One; Cottrell's Farm, West Kingston; November 25, 2016; Kathy Patric (I), Scott Tsagarakis (I, R).
2016–09 (7–0): One; Easton Pond, Middletown; December 1, 2016; Elizabeth Niemiec (I, R, P).
2018–01 (7–0): One; Dugway Bridge Road, West Kingston; January 2–3, 2018; Kevin Rogers (R, P), Alan Straus (R, P).
2018–02 A, B, C (7–0): (A) Two; Little Compton; January 3, 2018; Evan Lipton (I, R), Jonathan Eckerson (I, P); (B) Two; West Main Road, Little Compton; January 13, 2018; Michael Kiernan (R, P); (C) Two; Round Pond, Little Compton, January 21, 2018; Michael McBrien (R, P).
2018–04 (7–0): Four; Waite's Corner Road, West Kingston; January 16, 2018; Sue Talbot and Dan Finizia.
2018–07 (7–0): One; Card's Pond Road, South Kingstown; January 19, 2018; Wayne Munns (I, R), Barbara Sherman (R, P), Kevin Rogers (R, P).
2018–08 (7–0): One; Marsh Meadows, Jamestown; January 22–25, 2018; Matt Schenck (I, R, P), Jessica Kiamco (R, P).
2018–09 (7–0): Three; Sakonnet Point Road, Little Compton; February 14, 2018; Evan Lipton (R, P).

Ross's Goose continues to increase in Rhode Island, as in neighboring states. For 2018, records 1 and 4 and records 2 and 9 are united in the summary statistics.

Graylag Goose. February 5, 2017. Slater Park, Pawtucket. Photograph by David Blanchette.

Graylag Goose (*Anser anser*) (0, 0, 0, 1)
2016–11 (5–0–2): One; Watchemoket Cove, East Providence and Slater Park, Pawtucket; December 20, 2016, to January 25, 2017; Gabe Cohen-Glinick (I, R, P), multiple observers (P).

Given the ubiquity of domesticated Graylag Geese, the documentation for this well-studied bird was given intense scrutiny. Recognition of this species as a natural vagrant to eastern North America dates to spring 2005, when one was recorded on an oil rig 200 kilometers southeast of St. John's, Newfoundland (Maybank 2005). Since then, about a dozen plausibly wild birds have been observed in northeastern North America. These records follow major increases in the Icelandic breeding population from 1960 to 1990, and, more recently, breeding in Greenland (A. Fox, personal communication). Two Committee members were concerned that the present bird's context, far from the outer coast and in association with resident Canada Geese, contrasted with that expected for naturally occurring Palearctic Geese in Rhode Island, but other members cited Watchemoket Cove as a traditional site for rare waterfowl and other vagrant waterbirds. Under the bylaws of the RIARC, this record was accepted with five votes to accept, zero to not accept, and two accepting the identification but expressing uncertainty over natural status.

Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) (0, 0, 1, 4)
2016–05 (7–0): One; Slocum, North Kingstown; November 14–18, 2016; Steve Brenner (I, R, P), Carlos Pedro (P), Don Heitzmann (P).2017–16 (7–0): One; Westerly; December 20, 2017, to January 15, 2018; Chris Elphick (I, R, P), Anthony Vicciarelli (P), Andy Boyce (P).
2018–03 (6–1): One; Little Compton; January 3, 2018; Evan Lipton (I, R), Jonathan Eckerson (I, R, P).
2018–10 (7–0): One; Warren; February 21, 2018; Liam Waters (I, R, P).

Rhode Island's first state record, two birds in Newport in early 2007, was among the earliest documented records of this species in the Northeast. Since then, regional occurrence has increased, including these additional records in Rhode Island.

Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*) (0, 5, 2, 0)

Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*) (0, 0, 4, 1)
2017–01 (7–0): One; Green End Avenue, Middletown; January 5, 2017; Bob Weaver (I, R, P).

Bob Weaver's capable documentation of this nominate Cackling Goose adds to our understanding of the occurrence of this scarce and difficult to identify species, especially given the potential for other subspecies as very rare vagrants.

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) (0, 0, 1, 1)
2018–12 (7–0): One; Clay Head Swamp, Block Island; April 8–13, 2018; Heather Hatfield (I), Kim Gaffett (P), Nigel Grindley (P), Heather Spontak (P).

As breeding populations of Trumpeter Swans continue to expand in western New York State and the St. Lawrence and Lake Champlain valleys, additional Rhode Island records are to be expected. Although Tundra Swans occur regularly in the state, their numbers are so small, and the potential for confusion with Trumpeter Swan is so great, that all individuals of both species deserve careful documentation and review.

Tundra Swan (*Cygnus columbianus*) (1, ++, 0, 0)
"Eurasian" Green-winged Teal (*Anas crecca crecca*) (0, ++, 5, 0); first 1946.

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) (0, 10, 7, 4)
2017–02 (7–0): One; Seekonk River, Providence; February 1–14, 2017; Dan Finizia (I, R, P), Sue Talbot (I), Scott Hobson (P).
2018–05 (7–0): Two; Ninigret NWR, Charlestown; January 16–17, 2018; Dan Finizia and Sue Talbot (I, R, P).
2018–06 (7–0): One; Trustom Pond NWR, South Kingstown; January 21 to February 12, 2018; Jeff Linkinhoker (R, P), Bill Thompson (R, P).


White-winged Dove. December 16, 2017. Norman Bird Sanctuary, Middletown. Photograph by Barbara Sherman.

2018–11 (7–0): One; St. Mary's Pond, Portsmouth; March 2–4, 2018; Jan St. Jean (I), Tim Metcalf (R, P), Richard Garrigus (R, P).
2018–41 (7–0): One; Trustom Pond NWR, South Kingstown; November 24 to December 8, 2018; Michael McBrien (P).

This Eurasian species occurs regularly in Rhode Island, possibly due to long-lived individuals returning. The presence of two birds at Ninigret Pond in January 2018 is recorded above as a single occurrence, although these two individuals could have arrived independently. The drake at nearby Trustom Pond just days later was probably one of these birds.

Smew (*Mergellus albellus*) (0, 2, 0, 0)

Eared Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*) (0, 28, 2, 2)
2004–06 (7–0): One; Sachem Pond, Block Island; November 7, 2004; Mary Jo Murray (I), Bob Emerson (R), Shai Mitra (R, P).
2018–29 (7–0): One; Mohegan Bluffs, Block Island; December 20, 2018; Michael McBrien (I, R, P).
2018–31 (7–0): One; Weekapaug Breachway, Westerly; December 23–30, 2018; Shai Mitra (I, R, P).

When formal review of rare bird reports in Rhode Island began in the early 2000s, this species was perceived as occurring regularly and its inclusion on the review list was debated. The subsequent pattern of just four documented records from 2003–2018 illustrates the wisdom of preserving stability in the composition of review lists, as periods of increased occurrence often prove to be temporary.

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) (0, 8, 2, 0)
Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) (0, 0, 1, 0)

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) (0, 1, 1, 1)
2017–18 (7–0): One; Norman Bird Sanctuary, Middletown; December 13–21, 2017; Norman Bird Sanctuary Staff (I), multiple observers (P).

Chuck-will's-widow (*Antrostomus carolinensis*) (0, ++, 2, 3); first 1980.
2016–13 (7–0): One; Tillinghast Pond MA, West Greenwich; May 26 to June 26, 2016; Stephen Brenner (I), Barbara Sherman (recording).

Audubon's Shearwater. September 3, 2018. Block Canyon, pelagic. Photograph by Paul L'Etoile.

2017–11 (7–0): One; Tillinghast Pond MA, West Greenwich; April 29 to June 25, 2017; Carlos Pedro (I), Matt Schenck (Rec), Josh Seibel (recording).
2018–39 (7–0): One; Tillinghast Pond MA, West Greenwich; May 1 to July 5, 2018; Matt Schenck (recording), Bill Ostiguy (recording).

These records of a single territorial bird at the same site over three breeding seasons probably involve the same returning individual. Broader nocturnal surveys are needed to identify additional potential breeding sites in Rhode Island's extensive and varied pine-oak forests.

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) (0, 1, 5, 0)

Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus/sasin*) (0, 4, 11, 4)
1996–01 (7–0): One; Little Compton yard; November 8–11, 1996; Geoff Dennis (I, R, P).
1998–01 (7–0): One; Little Compton yard; November 26, 1998; Geoff Dennis (I, R, P).
2001–03 (7–0): One; Newport; December 10, 2001, to January 23, 2002; Rick Enser (P).
2002–05 (7–0): One; Little Compton; October 23–28, 2002; Geoff Dennis (I, R, P).
2016–10 (7–0): One; Portsmouth; November 11 to December 16, 2016; Geoff Dennis (R, P).
2017–07 (7–0): One; North Kingstown; November 5 to December 1, 2017; Geoff Dennis (R, P).
2017–08 (7–0): One; Wakefield (same yard as 2005 and 2009); November 11 to December 1, 2017; Geoff Dennis (R, P).
2017–09 (7–0): One; Boon Lake, Exeter; November 18 to December 20, 2017; Dylan Pedro (P).

The Committee reviewed two records of hummingbirds reported as Rufous Hummingbird and six more reported as Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird. On the basis of the available documentation, the Committee concluded that all records represented this species pair, but that none could be confidently identified to species at present. A thorough assessment of all such records is planned, using uniform criteria.

Calliope Hummingbird (*Selasphorus calliope*) (0, 0, 1, 0)

King Rail (*Rallus elegans*) (1, ++, 0, 1)
2016–02 (6–1): One; Great Swamp, South Kingstown; April 21–25, 2016; Stephen Brenner (P), James Restivo (R), Matt Schenck (R).

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*) (4, 14, 2, 0)
Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis*) (0, 3, 1, 0)

Corn Crake (*Crex crex*) (1, 0, 0, 0)

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinicus*) (7, 9, 0, 3)
2017–03 (7–0): One; Block Island; February 27, 2017; Kim Gaffett (R).
2017–13 (7–0): One; Cooneymus Road, Block Island; November 7, 2017; Kim Gaffett (R).
2018–15 (7–0): One; Narragansett; May 12, 2018; fide Linda Ferraresso (R, P).

Sandhill Crane (*Antigone canadensis*) (1, 14, 9, 4)

2016–14 (7–0): Two; Great Swamp MA, South Kingstown; April 28, 2016; Louis Mendes (I, R, P).
2016–15 (7–0): One; Trustom Pond NWR, South Kingstown; December 21, 2016; Josh Cummings (R, P, eBird).
2018–19 (7–0): One; Great Swamp MA, South Kingstown; June 7–8, 2018; Carlos Pedro (I, R, P).
2018–37 (7–0): Three; Great Swamp MA, South Kingstown; November 22, 2018; Bill Thompson (I, R, P).

The abrupt increase in records from about 2009 through 2015 appears to have leveled off at a rate of one or two records per year. The repeated occurrence at Great Swamp, including multiple individuals, suggests that future breeding is possible.

Gull-billed Tern. May 19, 2017. Charlestown Breachway, Charlestown. Photograph by Paul L'Etoile.

Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) (0, 8, 2, 0)
Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) (0, 2, 1, 0)
Lesser Sand-Plover (*Charadrius mongolus*) (0, 1, 0, 0)
Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) (0, 1, 0, 0)

Snowy Plover (*Charadrius nivosus*) (0, 0, 0, 1)
2017–14 (7–0): One; Goosewing Beach, Little Compton; April 17, 2017; Geoff Dennis (I, R, P).

This stunning Snowy Plover in breeding plumage is the first state record for Rhode Island and one of very few records in the Northeast. Discovered by Geoff Dennis, who saw it fly off, this bird was never seen again, despite much searching the next day. Records from nearby states include prior records in June from Massachusetts and Maine, a prior record in October from Connecticut, and a subsequent record in September from upstate New York.

Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*) (0, 10, 0, 1)
2018–25 (7–0): Two; Goosewing Beach, Little Compton; May 4–7, 2018; Carolyn Zaino (I), Geoff Dennis (R, P).

A very rare vagrant to the coastal Northeast, Wilson's Plovers have occurred almost a dozen times along Rhode Island's shoreline. The presence of two together is especially notable; this record is treated in our statistical summary as one occurrence, although it could be argued that their arrivals were possibly independent.

Eskimo Curlew (*Numenius borealis*) (++, ++, 0, 0); last 1913.
Long-billed Curlew (*Numenius americanus*) (++, 3, 0, 0)

Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*) (0, ++, 5, 2); first 1900.
2016–01 (7–0): One female; Weekapaug, Westerly; April 27 to May 2, 2016; Rey Larsen (I, R, P).
2017–21 (7–0): One male; Napatree Point, Westerly; July 23, 2017; Josh Seibel (I, R, P).

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) (0, 8, 2, 1)
2018–18 (7–0): One; Napatree Point, Westerly; June 1–3, 2018; Carlos Pedro (I, R, P).

Little Stint (*Calidris minuta* (0, 0, 1, 0)

Franklin's Gull. July 16, 2018. Sachuest Point NWR, Middletown. Photograph by Matt Schenck.

Long-billed Dowitcher (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) (1, ++, 5, 1)
2012–32 (7–0): One; Succotash Marsh, South Kingstown; August 11–12, 2012; Shai Mitra (I, R, P).
2016–08 (7–0): One; Quicksand Pond, Little Compton; November 24–26, 2016; Geoff Dennis (I), Doug Wilson (R, P).

Spotted Redshank (*Tringa erythropus*) (0, 1, 0, 0)
Wood Sandpiper (*Tringa glareola*) (0, 0, 1, 0)
Great Skua (*Stercorarius skua*) (0, 3, 0, 0)

South Polar Skua (*Stercorarius maccormicki*) (0, ++, 4, 1); first 1967.
2018–38 (7–0): One; south of Block Island; May 24, 2018; John Loch (I, R, P), Nick Metheney (I).

This species regularly occurs far offshore from late May through early August. However, Great Skua also occurs in Rhode Island waters and can be very difficult to distinguish from South Polar. Although Great Skua appears to be rarer than South Polar in Rhode Island and more likely in winter, its status is not understood well enough to rely on date as an indicator of identity, especially outside of the core period of occurrence of South Polar Skua in late spring. Furthermore, other skua taxa from the Southern Hemisphere might possibly occur. A bird photographed on August 10, 2017, southeast of Block Island near the East Grounds, was unquestionably a large skua (2017–17; Stephen Brenner (I, R, P)). In the single photo, the bird appears exceptionally bulky, short-tailed, and warm-toned, suggestive of Great Skua, and the record was accepted by the Committee as an unidentified large skua (*Catharacta*), a category for which we intend to derive summary statistics. A single observer sight report from land (2017–06) at Point Judith, Narragansett, on September 19, 2017, was not deemed sufficient to verify identification.

Long-tailed Jaeger (*Stercorarius longicaudus*) (0, ++, 2, 0); first 1952.

Thick-billed Murre (*Uria lomvia*) (4, ++, 6, 2)
2017–19 (7–0): One; Sakonnet Point, Little Compton; February 21, 2017; Evan Lipton (I, R, P).
2018–26 (7–0): One; Beavertail State Park, Jamestown; December 8, 2018; Zachary Millen (I, R, P), Brian Quindlen (I, R, P).

Long-billed Murrelet (*Brachyramphus perdix*) (0, 1, 0, 0)
Atlantic Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*) (0, 10, 5, 0)
Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*) (0, 1, 2, 0)
Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*) (0, 12, 2, 0)

Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) (0, ++, 4, 1); first 1946.
2016–16 (7–0): One; Sachuest Point NWR salt marsh, Middletown; May 24, 2016; Matt Schenck (I, R, P).

Franklin's Gull (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*) (0, 5, 4, 1)
2018–20 (7–0): One; Sachuest Point NWR, Middletown; July 16, 2018; Matt Schenck (I, R, P), Rey Larsen (P).

Black-tailed Gull (*Larus crassirostris*) (0, 1, 0, 0)

Black-whiskered Vireo. May 21, 2018. Sakonnet Point, Little Compton. Photograph by Evan Lipton.

"Thayer's" Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucoides thayeri*) (0, 7, 1, 0)
2014–16 (7–0): One; Cox's Ledge; December 20, 2014; Tom Auer (I, R), Dan Finizia (P), Keith Mueller (P), Ford Parker (P), Paul L'Etoile (P).

This report of a notoriously challenging taxon went through multiple rounds of review over several years, during which Thayer's Gull was lumped with Iceland Gull! Thayer's Gull has a documented history of occurrence in Rhode Island, and the Committee agreed to retain this subspecies on the Review List. RIARC agreed that the photographs classified this individual within the expected range of variation for *thayeri*.

Bridled Tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*) (0, 5, 3, 0)
Sooty Tern (*Onychoprion fuscatus*) (2, 10, 1, 0)

Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) (0, 29, 0, 1)
2017–05 (7–0): One; Charlestown Breachway, Charlestown; May 19, 2017; Paul L'Etoile (I, R, P)

Compared to the late 20th century, the occurrence in Rhode Island of Gull-billed Terns has diminished dramatically over the past two decades.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) (0, 13, 0, 1)
2018–40 (6–1): One; Point Judith, Narragansett; August 20, 2018; Shai Mitra (I, R).

Given the paucity of documented records of this species in Rhode Island, photographic documentation is much desired, but not possible for this record. However, a detailed description of plumage and structure was provided by the observer, who is intimately familiar with all plumages of this species and has found and photographed many dozens of them on Long Island, New York. The date is unusual for coastal southern New England away from breeding sites, as most records of Arctic occur from late May through mid-July (Mitra 2009).

Sandwich Tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) (0, 23, 7, 0)
2007–29 (7–0): One; Ninigret Mudflats, Charlestown; August 15, 2007; Carlos Pedro (P).

Mountain Bluebird. April 12, 2018. Big River Management Area, West Greenwich. Photograph by Carlos Pedro.

Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*) (0, 3, 0, 0)
White-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus*) (0, 2, 0, 0)
Red-billed Tropicbird (*Phaethon aethereus*) (0, 2, 1, 0)

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*) (0, ++, 12, 2); first 1941.
2017–12 (7–0): One; Central Beach, Charlestown; December 17, 2017; Sean Camillieri (I, R, P), Scott Tsagarakis (I), Carlos Pedro (P).
2018–33 (7–0): One; Block Island; December 20, 2018; Michael McBrien (I, R, P).

Yellow-nosed Albatross (*Thalassarche chlororhynchos*) (0, 3, 0, 0)

White-faced Storm-Petrel (*Pelagodroma marina*) (0, 4, 1, 1)
2018–28 (7–0): One; Block Canyon; September 3, 2018; Wayne Munns (I, R), Phil Rusch (I), Scott Tsagarakis (I), Carlos Pedro (I).

Leach's Storm-Petrel (*Hydrobates leucorhous*) (3, ++, 2, 0)

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (*Hydrobates castro*) (0, 0, 2, 0)
2018–27 (0–7): Three; Block Canyon; September 3, 2018.

The Committee debated these reports at length, with considerable support for the identification, based on the experience of the observers and multiple details in the written descriptions. However, the only photos were of Wilson's Storm-Petrels. Possibly the wrong individual(s) was photographed under the challenging and brief opportunity at sea, but overall, the documentation was not deemed sufficient to substantiate a record of a species that remains little known in Rhode Island waters.

Black-capped Petrel (*Pterodroma hasitata*) (0, 2, 2, 0)

Audubon's Shearwater (*Puffinus lherminieri*) (0, ++, 4, 1); first 1938.
2018–32 (7–0): Nine; Block Canyon; September 3, 2018; Wayne Munns (R), Carlos Pedro (P), Bill Thompson (P).

Cave Swallow. November 12, 2018. Scarborough Beach, Narragansett. Photograph by Sam Miller.

Records of Audubon's Shearwaters in Rhode Island waters remain few. This species often occurs in groups, and for this reason, and because not all the birds were photographed, this record was counted as a single occurrence in our summary statistics.

Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) (1, 0, 0, 0)

Magnificent Frigatebird (*Fregata magnificens*) (0, 10, 2, 1)
2018–30 (7–0): One; Point Judith, Narragansett; December 22, 2018; Phil Rusch (I, R), Glenn Williams (I, R), James Restivo (P).

Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*) (0, 3, 1, 0)
Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) (0, 3, 0, 0)
American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) (0, 8, 8, 0)

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) (0, 14, 7, 2)
2018–17 (6–0): One; A: Newport B: Warren River, Warren; May 26, 2018; A: Charles Avenengo and Francisca deLima (I, R, P); B: unknown fisherman (I, R, P), fide Rachel Farrell.
2018–21 (7–0): One; Sakonnet Point, Little Compton; July 16, 2018; Evan Lipton (I, R, P).

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) (0, 1, 0, 1)
2018–22 (7–0): One; Napatree Point and Weekapaug, Westerly; August 4 to September 5, 2018; Barbara Gearhart (I, R, P), multiple observers (P).

This individual bird was often difficult to find, but was seen and photographed by many during its month-long stay.

Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*) (0, 0, 1, 0)
White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) (0, 6, 4, 0)

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) (0, 2, 6, 2)
2017–04 (6–1): Two; Saint Mary's Pond, Portsmouth; April 25, 2017; Matt Schenck (I, R, P).
2018–36 (6–1): One; Sapowet WMA, Tiverton; June 24, 2018; Evan Lipton (I, R, P).

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) (0, 6, 4, 0)

Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) (5, ++, 5, 0)
2015–27 (7–0): One; Tiogue Lake, Coventry; November 16, 2015; Matt Schenck (I, R, P), Susan Schenck (I, R) eBird.

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) (0, 6, 6, 2)
2015–26 (6–1): One; West Kingston; May 31, 2015; Tom Auer (I, R, P).
2016–03 (7–0): One; Block Island; July 7, 2016; Catherine Joyce and Nigel Grindley (I, R, P).
2016–17 (7–0): One; Coventry; June 1, 2016; Matt Schenck (I, R, P), Susan Schenck (I, R, P).

Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*) (0, 0, 1, 0)
Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) (0, 4, 0, 0)
Northern Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula*) (1, 1, 0, 0)
Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) (0, 1, 0, 0)

Northern Wheatear. September 20, 2016. Colt State Park, Bristol. Photograph by Pete Rawlings.

Great Gray Owl (*Strix nebulosa*) (2, 3, 0, 0)
Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*) (5, 0, 0, 0)
Lewis's Woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*) (0, 1, 0, 0)
American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*) (0, 3, 0, 0)
Black-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*) (0, 6, 0, 0)
Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*) (5, ++, 0, 0); last 1995

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) (0, 6, 2, 3)
2016–06 (7–0): One; Carpenter's Beach, South Kingstown; November 12–13, 2016; Scott Tsagarakis (I).
2016–20 (6–1): One; Blackstone Bike Path, Cumberland; December 3, 2016; Joseph McGlinchey (I, R, P).
2017–20 (7–0): One; Little Compton; November 25 to December 10, 2017; James Osborne (I), Evan Lipton (R, P).

Western Kingbird (*Tyrannus verticalis*) (0, ++, 7, 0); first 1913.
2015–25 (6–1): One; Sachuest Point NWR, Middletown; September 12, 2015; Dan Berard and Danielle Crudden (I), Matt Schenck (P).

Although this is a rare but regular migrant in the coastal Northeast, the rate of occurrence in Rhode Island has been lower in recent decades than during the latter half of the 20th century. This record was supported by one photograph and by virtue of the experience of the observers, but several Committee members expressed a desire for a more detailed write-up.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus forficatus*) (0, 5, 2, 1)
2014–08 (6-1): One; Carter Preserve, Charlestown; June 3, 2014; Steve DelPozzo, Mary Jo Murray, Jeannie Dougherty, Nancy Clayton, and Jeff Hall (I, R), Dan Finizia (R, P), Sue Talbot (R, P).
2018–14 (7–0): One; Trustom Pond NWR, South Kingstown; May 2–3, 2018; Susan Carlson (I, R), Robert Weaver (P), Alan Strauss (P).

The Charlestown report involved an immature bird (probably second calendar year but resembling a juvenile in terms of its very limited and yellow-toned ventral coloring) with

broken and abraded rectrices. Several helpful photos were provided but as is often the case, these images did not show every important feature, e.g., underwing color, and were difficult to interpret for some features, e.g., mantle tone and wing covert pattern. Some Committee members felt that the bird was suggestive of a hybrid with Western Kingbird, and the record went through multiple rounds of review before being accepted.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*) (0, 3, 1, 0)
Hammond's Flycatcher (*Empidonax hammondii*) (0, 1, 0, 0)
Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) (0, 4, 1, 0)
Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) (0, 1, 0, 0)
Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) (2, ++, 0, 0)

Black-whiskered Vireo (*Vireo altiloquus*) (0, 0, 0, 1)
2018–16 (7–0): One; Sakonnet Point, Little Compton; May 21, 2018; Evan Lipton (I, R, P).

The discovery and documentation of this astonishing first state record is to the great credit of Evan Lipton's attentiveness and skills. It was seen only briefly, and, like the Snowy Plover described above, not re-found. As unexpected as this spring record might have seemed, it foreshadowed Massachusetts's first, just less than a year later, on April 21, 2019, on Martha's Vineyard.

Eurasian Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*) (0, 1, 0, 0)

Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*) (0, 2, 10, 3)
2008–17 (7–0): Two; Goosewing Beach, Little Compton; November 12, 2008; Geoff Dennis (I, R, P, eBird).
2012–31 (7–0): Two; Sakonnet Point, Little Compton; November 18, 2012; Geoff Dennis (I, R, P, eBird).
2016–18 (7–0): One; Moonstone Beach, South Kingstown; October 24, 2016; Shai Mitra (I, R).
2018–34 (7–0): One; Trustom Pond NWR, South Kingstown; November 10, 2018; Dave Mozzoni (I, R, P, eBird).
2018–35 (7–0): One; Scarborough Beach, Narragansett; November 12, 2018; Barbara Gearhart (I), Sam Miller (P).

Boreal Chickadee (*Poecile hudsonicus*) (1, ++, 0, 0); last 1982.
Sedge Wren (*Cistothorus stellaris*) (1, ++, 3, 0)
Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*) (0, 1, 0, 0)

Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) (0, 5, 6, 1)
2016–04 (7–0): One; Colt State Park, Bristol; September 20–24, 2016; Mike McBrien (I), multiple observers (P).

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*) (0, 1, 1, 1)
2018–13 (7–0): One; Big River MA, West Greenwich; April 10–13, 2018; Dylan Pedro (I, R, P, eBird), Carlos Pedro (P).

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) (0, 2, 1, 0)

Bicknell's Thrush (*Catharus bicknelli*) (unknown, 1)
2016–19 (7–0): One; Block Island Banding Station; September 24, 2016; Stephen Brenner (R, P, eBird).

Banded.

Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*) (0, 1, 0, 0)

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) (0, 2, 0, 1)

2018–24 (7–0): One; Block Island—The Maze; October 31, 2018; Clara Cooper-Mullin (I, R, P. eBird).
Banded.

Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*) (0, 2, 2, 0)
Phainopepla (*Phainopepla nitens*) (0, 1, 0, 0)
Pine Grosbeak (*Pinicola enucleator*) (++, ++, 2, 0)
Hoary Redpoll (*Acanthis hornemanni*) (0, 11, 2, 0)
Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*) (0, 1, 0, 0)
Harris's Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) (0, 2, 0, 0)

LeConte's Sparrow (*Ammospiza leconteii*) (0, 1, 4, 1)
2017–15 (6–1): One; Warren; December 12, 2017; Tom Seiter (I, R), Steve Davis (R). Given how difficult this species can be to observe in the field, the Committee commends the observers for providing detailed descriptions and a rigorous analysis. One member had some uncertainty, based on the absence of photos and the challenges of verifying identification.

Henslow's Sparrow (*Centronyx henslowii*) (1, ++, 0, 0); last 1968.
Green-tailed Towhee (*Pipilo chlorurus*) (0, 1, 1, 0)
Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) (0, ++, 8, 0); first 1919.
Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) (0, 2, 0, 0)
Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*) (0, 2, 0, 0)
Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) (0, 5, 0, 0)
Boat-tailed Grackle (*Quiscalus major*) (0, 2, 4, 0)
Swainson's Warbler (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*) (0, 0, 1, 0)
Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Setophaga nigrescens*) (0, 4, 0, 0)

Townsend's Warbler (*Setophaga townsendi*) (0, 1, 0, 1)
2017–10 (7–0): One; Trustom Pond NWR, South Kingstown; November 24–28, 2017; Robert Askins (I), multiple observers (P).

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) (0, 7, 3, 1)
2016–12 (7–0): One; Ninigret Park, Charlestown; December 26–28, 2016; Geoff LeBaron (I), Doug Wilson (I, R, P), Rick Murnane (I), Robert Weaver (P).

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) (0, 4, 1, 0)

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) (1, 8, 3, 1)
2018–23 (7–0): One; Jamestown; October 18, 2018; Chris Powell (I, R, P).

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The History of Bird Observer

Chapter 3: More Change, More Success

William E. Davis, Jr.

[Editor's Note: All of Bird Observer's content from 1973 to 2015 has been digitized to SORA, the Searchable Ornithological Research Archive at https://sora.unm.edu/. This archive is a resource that is open to the public. You can access all articles through SORA as well as through Bird Observer's archives.]

Bob Stymeist became president and Dorothy Arvidson became editor of *Bird Observer* in 1983. In other personnel changes, Janet Heywood became production manager and David Lange became subscription manager. The April 1983 issue introduced a new masthead that listed current *Bird Observer* staff to the inside front cover of the journal. Arvidson introduced other changes in the journal, including a section called Field Notes from Here and There that became an important feature of *Bird Observer* in the years ahead. Arvidson wrote an At a Glance column that also became a regular feature of Bird Observer. Chris Floyd, Janet Heywood, and David Lange compiled the "*Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts* Index, 1973–1983." The monthly reports of bird sightings, now titled Field Records, continued to be the dominant feature of *Bird Observer*.

Where to Go Birding articles in 1983 included "Birding Cape Ann" by Chris Leahy, "Breakheart Reservation: A Magical Urban Wilderness" by Craig Jackson, and "An Introduction to Winter Birding at Quabbin" by Mark Lynch. "Escapes Versus Vagrants: A Comment" by Richard Veit caused quite a stir in the amateur and professional birding communities, drawing comments, mostly favorable, from both. "The Great Barn Owl Caper" by David Clapp was a fascinating article detailing the rescue of Barn Owls trapped behind chicken wire in a church-steeple nest. Reports of rarities included Nicholas Komar's "A Winter Record of Henslow's Sparrow in Massachusetts," and reports of ongoing studies included "Results of the 1982 Spring Migration Watch" by John Andrews and Lee Taylor and "Behavior Watching Field Notes" by Don and Lillian Stokes.

In addition to publishing the journal, *Bird Observer* planned a pelagic bird and mammal trip for July 1983. In a joint venture with Manomet Bird Observatory and *Bird Observer*, Wayne Petersen led a three-part workshop called "Shorebirds: A Workshop and Observer Training Program."

Bird Observer had a good year in 1984. The At a Glance became a regular feature at the end of each issue, and a different member of the staff wrote up the identification of each pictured bird. Field Notes from Here and There appeared twice in 1984, with five field notes published in the April issue.

The first issue of 1984 started the year off well. A long letter from Roger Tory Peterson dealt with the vagrant versus escaped bird problem brought up by Richard Veit in 1983, giving examples from his own experience, and agreeing with Veit that sightings "should be put on record and we should not always assume that they are

escapes." Also of interest were the reports "A Decade of Wintering Brant in Boston Harbor" by Leif Robinson and "An Inventory of the Breeding Birds of Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge" by Denver Holt and John Lortie. Wayne Petersen wrote "Bird-finding in Southeastern Massachusetts—Bridgewater and Lakeville."

In the rest of the 1984 issues, articles included Timothy Anderson's "Know Your New England Naturalists: Kathleen Anderson," who was the first director of Manomet Bird Observatory—now Manomet—and a well-known member of the ornithological and birding community. John Kricher's "To New Jersey: For the Birds" was laced with humor and described the Massachusetts team John was on in the First Annual World Series of Birding, sponsored by the New Jersey Audubon Society and the Cape May Bird Observatory. John wrote, "Our team consisted of four birders…. Our heavy hitters were Wayne Petersen and Rick Heil. Wayne and Rick are to birding what Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid were to train robbing. They have finesse, style, and most of all skill. Take them anywhere, turn them loose, and watch the checklist fill." Another 1984 article of interest was Leif Robinson's "Birding at a Solar Eclipse." Reports of rare bird sightings included "Observation of a Long-billed Curlew in Massachusetts" by Blair Nikula and Henning Stabins and "White-faced Ibis Sighting in Essex, Massachusetts" by Dick Forster. Survey reports included "A Summer Bird Census in Millis" by Brian Cassie and "The Screech Owl Survey Project: Past and Present" by Oliver Komar. "Nature Watching in the Blue Hills Reservation" by Bob Abrams was a Where to Go Birding article.

Martha Vaughan became president of *Bird Observer* in 1985 and quickly became influential in the composition of the *Bird Observer* staff and in making major changes to the journal's appearance. Martha encouraged Ted Davis to get more involved with planning the covers of the journal and encouraged John Kricher to participate more in the organization.

In the April 1985 issue, signs of major change became evident in two back-to-back announcements on page one: "BIRD OBSERVER NEEDS TYPISTS TO PRODUCE CAMERA-READY COPY FOR THIS JOURNAL. (Such typing must be done on an IBM Correcting Selectric 12-pitch typewriter…)" and "WANTED: Computer equipment…BIRD OBSERVER would like to go to word processing and database management…." Changing to computers for producing the journal would lead to substantial conflict between those who wanted to take their time with the shift, including editor Arvidson, and those who wanted an immediate shift, if possible. With this April issue, Wayne Petersen took over the writing of the At a Glance column, which he has continued to do for the remainder of *Bird Observer*'s first 50 years. Wayne also wrote an insightful and deservingly glowing review of Richard K. Walton's book *Birds of the Sudbury River Valley–An Historical Perspective*.

Bird Observer offered four spring and summer courses, three by Wayne Petersen and the fourth by Edward Harper. In the October issue, *Bird Observer* advertised workshops for the upcoming season: "WINTER RAPTORS and the Role of Predation" and "OWLS–A Workshop on the Strigiformes," both offered by Wayne Petersen. In the December issue, there was an advertisement for "BIRD OBSERVER'S FIRST FUNDRAISER," which included a party with entertainment. The December issue also

included an index for 1985.

Bird Observer published a number of important articles, reports, and Where to Go Birding articles in 1985. Reports included "The 1984 Spring Migration Watch" by John Andrews and "Autumn Seabird Migration at Manomet Point" by Vincent Yurkunas. Rare bird sightings included "Adult Ross' Gull at Newburyport on December 3, 1984" by Stuart Tingley—a sighting that created quite a stir in the birding community, "Second Record of Little Stint (*Calidris minuta*) in Massachusetts" by Wayne Petersen, and "Sight Record of a White-tailed Tropicbird" by Blair Nikula. Where to Go Birding articles included "Birding Plymouth Beach" by Duncan Evered, and several far-flung ones, two on the Dry Tortugas: "Where we Went: Dry Tortugas, Florida" by Harriot Hoffman and "The Dry Tortugas" by Wayne Hoffman. There was also an interesting assortment of articles, including Bradford Blodget's "The Census Man Cometh—For Seagulls and Sundry Other Fowl of the Sea and the Shore" that dealt primarily with the history, censusing, and status of Massachusetts's colonial waterbird populations. P. William Smith's "My Stint with Scituate's Stints" examined in detail the problems with stint identification, and Richard Walton's "More Than a Name: Henslow's Sparrow" detailed the life of John Stevens Henslow and his history with John James Audubon, who named the sparrow species after him, and importantly, with Charles Darwin—quite a story. 1985 had been another important and creative year for *Bird Observer.*

By January 1986, the *Bird Observer* staff meetings were held at Bob Stymeist and Janet Heywood's house at Mount Auburn Cemetery, a rather classic location for a birders' meeting. At the first 1986 meeting, Brian Cassie became the book review editor. In January 1986, the official "Bylaws of Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts, Inc." became an official and stabilizing document that finalized the positions of officers in the organization and its board of directors. The January annual meeting was a bit of an extravaganza, with a program of slides presented by six individuals, following the official meeting.

The staff meeting of February was a busy one, with discussions about the cost of liability insurance for the *Bird Observer* sponsored boat trips, and the possibility of producing a second book about where to find birds. Martha Vaughan, in a move that was to introduce some controversy and change, introduced the new art and graphics coordinator:

> Martha welcomed William E. (Ted) Davis to the staff and gave him the floor for any remarks he wished to make. Ted briefly presented his ideas on a number of topics. He recommended improving the magazine's appearance by going to typeset or computer-facsimile print with incremental-proportional spacing, by varying the front cover from issue to issue, and keeping the quality of artwork more uniform from issue to issue. He also thought we should consider a change of name to just "Bird Observer," which would give us a less provincial image. …

At the March 1986 meeting, Martha Vaughan reported that the recent fundraiser collected $2,605. At the April meeting, an important step was made in finalizing the establishment of a computer system for *Bird Observer,* and Ted once again pushed the changes he wished to make in the cover of the journal:

> Ted D. passed around sample cover mockups based on his own line drawings and photos. He mentioned that artwork could be obtained from a promising young artist named Scott Hecker and showed some very impressive examples of Scott's drawings. Ted would like to change the cover art every issue. He feels he can get together an advance inventory of two years' worth of acceptable covers, something everyone agreed should be in hand before undertaking such a change. The Godwit could continue as our logo on the cover. Ted was charged with collecting the artwork (at least twelve covers' worth) to be used on covers beginning with the first issue of 1987.

At the May meeting, Janet Heywood proposed that the title be changed to *Bird Observer*, rather than *Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts,* and the motion was carried unanimously. At the July staff meeting, there was discussion about the kind of printer needed "to remove the typewritten appearance of the magazine." At the August meeting, Lee Taylor announced that the new computer had been bought and was installed and running. Ted Davis passed around a few examples of the proposed new cover artwork for *Bird Observer* and suggested that more cover art would likely come in after the first few covers had been published, and that this should be encouraged by printing a short blurb about the cover artist in each issue. Bruce Hallett suggested writing up an article on each cover bird.

On a different topic, Ted Davis reported that Jerome A. Jackson, editor of the *Journal of Field Ornithology*, had requested that Ted supply him with one-paragraph reviews of *Bird Observer* articles of national appeal. This would get *Bird Observer* some national and international exposure. In October, Martha Vaughan appointed a cover committee of Ted Davis, Bruce Hallett, and Dick Forster to oversee and implement the new cover program. In the cover discussions that followed, editor Dorothy Arvidson was heavily involved:

> Dorothy thinks we need more variety in birds and artists than we currently have in the available artwork. Dorothy is also concerned that having a submitting artist on the committee reviewing the artwork may hamper the objectivity of the committee. Ted disagrees, feels that he can be objective as a committee member. To alleviate this concern, Martha intends, at Dorothy's suggestion, to expand the committee membership.

At the November meeting, it was reported that *Bird Observer* had 660 paid subscribers, with a net profit for the organization for 1986. The computer committee report included a lengthy discussion of how to get the new computer-generated text ready in time for the February 1987 issue, when the new cover was to be in place:

> At this point Ted expressed his feeling that it is extremely important that the text for the February issue look improved to go along with the cover, and suggested that, if necessary, we hire someone to enter the articles into the computer using Word. Quite a bit of discussion ensued, the result of which was indication from Terry, George, and Martha that they could help enter articles into the computer.

Ted also reported that Gordon Morrison would be willing to contribute any of his substantial body of artwork. Ted also contacted Paul Donahue. There was discussion as

to whether to surprise the readership with the new covers; the vote was yes. The year 1987 was to be a year of great change for *Bird Observer*.

The first issue of 1987 had Scott Hecker's Great Horned Owl on the cover, accompanied by the stories "Meet Our Cover Artist" and "The Cover Illustration: Great Horned Owl" by Bruce Hallett. The second issue featured a cover drawing of a Ring-billed Gull by Ted Davis, the third a Song Sparrow by Julie Zickefoose, the fourth a Chimney Swift by John Sill, the fifth a study of Peregrine Falcons by Robert Shetterly, Jr., and the final 1987 issue hosted a Cox's Sandpiper by Barry Van Dusen—six covers by six different artists. After Bruce Hallett's first two stories about the cover birds, Dorothy Arvidson wrote the rest. Having a different bird on each cover was a pattern, with few exceptions, that has been followed for the rest of *Bird Observer*'s first 50 years. In addition, the articles no longer looked as if they were typed on a typewriter. *Bird Observer* had a thoroughly professional look for 1987.

In 1986 and 1987, *Bird Observer* continued to feature widespread Where to Go Birding articles, reports about ongoing bird projects, rare bird sightings, and articles of general interest. Getting far afield from Eastern Massachusetts were William Gette's "Birding on St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands" and Nicholas Komar's "Summer Birding Along Realty Road, Aroostook County, Maine." Nearer to home was Blair Nikula's "Birding in Provincetown." Reports included Denver Holt's "A Summary of Short-eared Owl Breeding Status in Massachusetts" and Blair Nikula's "The Cape Cod Lake and Pond Waterfowl Census." Rare bird reports included Dorothy Arvidson's "Another Massachusetts First: Red-billed Tropicbird" and Richard Forster's report of a "Sighting of an Anhinga in Massachusetts." Perhaps the most extraordinary—and certainly the most controversy-producing—sighting in many years was of a Cox's Sandpiper (actually a hybrid sandpiper, not a species). Richard Forster commented on the sighting in depth: "Why Was It a Cox's Sandpiper?" Articles of interest included Richard Walton's "Linnaeus and the Listers," which presented a fascinating history of Linnaeus, who "… instituted order where there was chaos" and made modern bird listing feasible. Another of Richard Walton's epic historical accounts was "Catesby's Colonial Field Guide," in which he traces the development of Catesby's eighteenth-century guide, which "constitutes the earliest comprehensive work on North American birds." Yet another of Richard Walton's forays into the history of American ornithology concentrated on the achievements of Alexander Wilson and his well-deserved title "father of America ornithology."

Between 1983 and 1987, *Bird Observer* had taken on a completely new, more professional look, was putting out Field Records on a monthly basis, and was publishing important papers—the winds of change were blowing strong.

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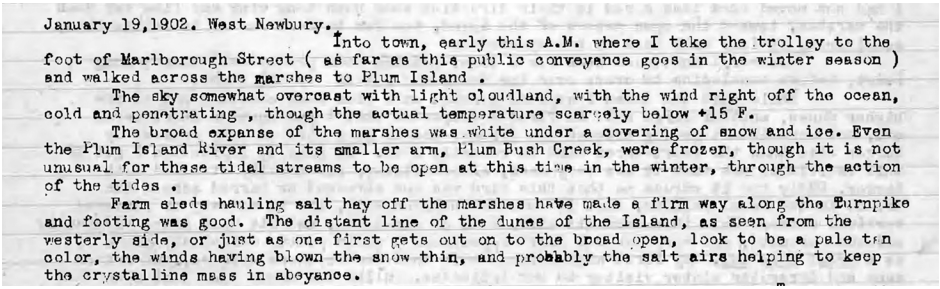
Nature Writing at its Best: The Journals of S. Waldo Bailey

Matt Kelly



January 19,1902. West Newbury.

Into town, early this A.M. where I take the trolley to the foot of Marlborough Street (as far as this public conveyance goes in the winter season) and walked across the marshes to Plum Island .

The sky somewhat overcast with light cloudland, with the wind right off the ocean, cold and penetrating , though the actual temperature scarcely below +15 F.

The broad expanse of the marshes was white under a covering of snow and ice. Even the Plum Island River and its smaller arm, Plum Bush Creek, were frozen, though it is not unusual for these tidal streams to be open at this time in the winter, through the action of the tides .

Farm sleds hauling salt hay off the marshes have made a firm way along the Turnpike and footing was good. The distant line of the dunes of the Island, as seen from the westerly side, or just as one first gets out on to the broad open, look to be a pale tan color, the winds having blown the snow thin, and probably the salt airs helping to keep the crystalline mass in abeyance.

Excerpt from S. Waldo Bailey journal. <www.hoffmannbirdclub.org>

I have been an avid nature enthusiast since I was "knee-high to a grasshopper." Growing up in Pittsfield, at a very early age I gravitated to the Junior Naturalist Club at the Berkshire Museum and later to the Hoffmann Bird Club (HBC). It was through the HBC that I met Priscilla Bailey, daughter of the late S. Waldo Bailey. Around 2013, in conversations with Priscilla, she mentioned to me more than once her desire that I should someday edit her father's journals into a book form. I really had no idea what she was asking of me since she never showed me any of her father's journals ("the Journals"). I told her I might consider the project but would need to see the journals before making any commitment. At that time, she was not willing to let them be seen. In 2015, Priscilla passed at the age of 95. At her funeral, Priscilla's neighbor informed me that Priscilla had recommended that her father's books and papers should be given to me. The administrator of Priscilla's estate was made aware that I should have the rights to this material. Almost two years elapsed before I was informed by a neighbor near Priscilla's house that the contents of the house were being cleared out and everything was going to the dumpster. As the house was being prepared for sale, I was informed that, "If you still have any interest in the books and papers, you better get down here right now!" I got there as quickly as I could. I was met by the administrator who said, "Oh, so you are still interested in all those old books and papers?" I had to move fast because everything was in the process of being cleared by a work crew.

I had never seen the second floor of the house, but when I went up the stairs, there they were—sixteen three-ringed binders of typed, single-spaced, meticulously organized journals. The years covered by the journals ran from 1902 to 1963, with a few volumes missing. (I was later able to recover one of the missing volumes, but one or two still remain at large.) I opened one volume at random, read it, and immediately became entranced. I opened another volume and the nature prose leaped from the pages. Bailey's writing style was tremendous, his details meticulous, his observations stunning, and all written in a wonderfully vivid style. I could open any journal for any year and not be able to stop reading.

Later, after more time with the journals, I realized the significance of this man's life's work. I believe the journals were on par with and comparable in importance to the journals of Henry David Thoreau or William Brewster. My plans for the journals were never in doubt: share them with the world. I worked out an agreement/release from the administrator to publish the journals, providing that any monetary gain would go directly to the Hoffman Bird Club, as Waldo Bailey was one of its founding members. The story of how over 4,050 searchable pages were scanned and put online in PDF format is described in the Introduction to the journals online. Many people helped along the way and are duly recognized in the Introduction.

Waldo Bailey was born in West Newbury, Massachusetts, in 1885 and moved to Pittsfield around 1918. He was an active and avid naturalist all his life, who not only made constant, detailed observations, but also painstakingly recorded them in his journals. He was also a teacher of natural history, and a pioneer in the development of color photography. Seemingly self-taught, he had a prodigious depth of knowledge of animals and minerals, but especially of birds and botany.

I offer here a few excerpts of the journals. Once you start reading, you, too ,will find it difficult to stop.

January 19, 1902, West Newbury:

Into town, this early this A.M. where I take the trolley to the foot of Marlborough Street (as far as this public conveyance goes in the winter season) and walked across the marshes to Plum Island.

....Most of my scanning of the prospect was toward the marshes and the scattered hay-stacks, and their white-capped tops, always on the alert to discover signs of bird life and possible individuals of "white owls". Somewhat farther down the way, after flushing the buntings, a large grey-brown bird took wing from the dune edges, and flew across my front at a distance of some 200-400 feet, and as luck would have it alighted on a stack top scarcely more than 400 feet away, affording a pretty comprehensive view of it. My first thought was that it was a great-grey owl, a more rare visitor from the north than the snowy owl. Closer scrutiny through the glasses gave me a better idea of its size than the impression given when in flight, 15 or 16 inches in length, as well as one could determine without known species for comparison; light brownish, streaked darker, back and breast. As it peered at me, I gained an impression of very slight ear-tufts, whence it dawned on me that this must be a short-eared owl. A few moments later as it took wing, diagonally back toward the dunes, its light under-wing plumage, helped to con-firm this determination. Could this be one of the "big grey owls" that have been reported from the marshes this winter by the visiting farmers?

A quarter of a mile farther on I spotted a "white" owl perched atop a snow-capped stack. No hesitation over the identity of this individual, size and color unmistakable. Casually swinging the glass on to one or two more hay-stacks in rather close proximity to the first what was my surprise pleasure to detect another "white" owl. This indeed was better luck than I had dreamed of! And in the case of these farmers have not been wrong in their general impressions of the birds they have seen.

February 21, 1906, West Newbury:

During the day saw a butcher bird dash down in true hawk fashion for what was probably a mouse in the dead grass. The sally was unsuccessful. The bird returned to its perch and awaited for the mouse to stir again. but apparently its patience was of short order for after a few moments of waiting and peering it flew on. A smooth, sleek looking bird, the shrike, in shape and carriage reminded me of the blue jay. Probably both birds possess traits of character that are akin. During the nesting season the jay is given to nest robbing, and goes about this in a sly and sneaking manner. The shrike plays the imposter on all the small birds, posing as a harmless fellow until within easy striking distance, often then too late for the smaller victim to escape. It would seem as if most of our small birds had not yet learned to appraise the shrike for the "hawk" that it really is. They are completely unsuspicious of it until it is too late to escape its fell attacks.

April 28, 1918, Pittsfield:

I was thrilled this morning at hearing the wild, wailing whistle of an upland plover! After a momentary search of the heavens from which the wild music came I discovered the bird, at a considerable height, and as I watched it came lower and after a bit of circling alighted on the plowed land beside the highway, within easy view. As nearly always, it gracefully folded its wings only after well alighted. For some fifteen or twenty minutes, it ran about on the bare soil, apparently finding some insects for fare. At length, unhurried it took wing in a northerly direction, and before it had passed out of sight, came its wild whistle again. In all the realm of varied bird voices I know of none quite like this "wail of the wild". It seems to take one back to an earlier, undiscovered wildness….

April 29, 1942, Lenox:

Desirable tenements in the bird world just now seem to be as much sought after as in the hectic defense, industrial, man's world. This morning I noted an old white birch stump, some twenty feet in height, where a pair of bluebirds were interestedly examining a knot-hole cavity. In a. few moments a pair of flickers came along, and appeared to have prior rights to the tenement, for the bluebirds retired a little way, and looked on with a disturbed air. perhaps giving over the contest because of the larger size of the woodpeckers. For after all, to a great degree, size and might make right in the realm of the wild. However, it was but a few minutes before the flickers were driven off by a male starling, which came into the scene and made energetic and noisy dashes at the pair, with an air of bluster and ownership which disconcerted the flickers, causing them to leave for other searching. The starling perched atop the stub and gurgled and chattered as if in glee over its easy conquest. But its manifest air of possession was of short duration, for scarce had it settled itself in self congratulary chatter when a pair of tree swallows seeking a nesting site visited the vicinity, and were greatly taken with the possibilities of the cavity as a nesting place. The dashes and scolding of the starling caused them to retreat a little way, but did not deter them in their persistency. Again and again, they would fly to the entrance, perch there a moment, merrily twittering as over a happy discovery, when the starling in its now angry attacks would drive them away. This performance was kept up for a space of ten or twelve minutes ere the swallows decided to seek quarters elsewhere, at long last leaving the foreigner his "nine points of law", those of possession. I question if this bird was really nesting there, or intending to do so. Its "dog in the manger" attitude was rather characteristic of the manner in which it lords it over some of the native and less aggressive species. For centuries the

ancestors of this foreigner have lived in densely populated, man settled lands where they must have acquired some of man's acquisitive and combative habits, traits which make the starlings of to-day so successful in competition with less sophisticated stocks.

January 1, 1949, Pittsfield:

With the beginning of another year, one contemplates the recording of his notes and observations on a few of the multitude of interesting incidents that come under his notice in the great out-of-doors, with a feeling that one is but a mere reporter of things and incidents noted. The eternal truths which doubtless many of these attest still elude one's seeking. Moreover, from year to year Nature repeats her program, and one includes, possibly as new material or thought many an item of similar character which has been again and possibly again reiterated. Further the thrill one experiences at some picturesque or happy phase of wild life cannot be adequately expressed or depicted in mere words. Yet the task of attempting to do so may be good discipline.

The online journals are arranged in chronological order, preceded by the Introduction. The journals are divided into chapters, one chapter for each year. Finally, the last segment of the journals is a compilation of all of the journals in one large file so that researchers may search the entire database at once.

The Bailey journals will prove to be an invaluable asset to anyone studying changes in our local ecosystems, especially as development further encroaches on them and global warming marches on. Most of the data recorded are from Massachusetts, primarily from Berkshire and Essex counties. To take a recent case in point, noted Massachusetts herpetologist Professor Thomas Tyning read in the journals about a rare salamander Bailey found and recorded in Clarksburg. Tyning went with a research team to the same location 82 years after Bailey's discovery, there to find a current living specimen. Journals like this are now increasingly recognized to be invaluable for the study of everything natural, from the arrival of spring birds to the first dates of wildflowers blooming and to provide a view into a past that is no more. If you too are a lover of nature, I know you will be instantly hooked by the journals, as I was and still am.

To view the journals of S. Waldo Bailey, go the Home Page of Hoffmann Bird Club at: <www.hoffmannbirdclub.org>

Author's note: Recently, two handwritten journals and a collection of lantern slides belonging to Bailey have come to light, so hope remains that the lost journals may be found.

Matt Kelly *is a past president and currently part of the Executive Committee of the Hoffmann Bird Club in Berkshire County where he serves as Programs Director. He is the general manager of the Donnybrook Country Club in Lanesborough. He was a former general manager of the Brodie Mountain Ski Resort in New Ashford and formerly served as a crew member with the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society. He currently resides in Grafton, New York, with his wife.*

Enter Bird Observer's Fiftieth Anniversary Photo, Video, and Writing Contest April 1 Through October 1, 2022

Contest Details & Rules: *Bird Observer* is celebrating our fiftieth anniversary in 2022 with the publication of Volume 50 of our journal. We invite our subscribers to join the celebration by entering the *Bird Observer* Fiftieth Anniversary Photo, Video, and Writing Contest. We welcome submissions from photographers, videographers, and writers of all skill levels, except for *Bird Observer* staff, board members, and their immediate family members.

The contest is open only to *Bird Observer*'s current subscribers. Subscribe now and be eligible to enter.

Contest Dates: The *Bird* Observer Fiftieth Anniversary contest runs from April 1, 2022, to October 1, 2022. Winners will be announced in our December 2022 issue.

Prizes for Entering: There will be one grand prize winner in each of three categories: photo, video, and writing. Each grand prize winner will receive a $100 gift card to Bird Watcher's General Store, Orleans, MA; a $100 gift card to Bird Watcher's Supply and Gift, Newburyport, MA; a $100 gift card to Birds and Beans Coffee; and a two-year extension of his or her subscription to *Bird Observer,* in addition to being featured in the December 2022 issue of *Bird Observer* in print and on our website, www.birdobserver.org.

At least 12 honorable mentions will win a one-year extension of his or her subscription to *Bird Observer*. Additional honorable mentions may be awarded at the discretion of the judges.

In addition to the winners, all contest entries have a chance to appear on our website.

What to Enter: You may submit original, previously unpublished digital photographs, digital videos, or nonfiction, fiction, or poetry that highlight the many facets of wild, native New England birds or birding in New England. Photographs and videos must be taken in New England. If you write about a birding experience, it must occur in New England. Submissions from your backyard or home patch bear equal weight with those from conservation lands, wildlife refuges, or wilderness areas.

We would like to see content that reflects our mission: *to support and promote the observation, understanding, and conservation of the wild birds of New England*. All submissions must align with the right of all people to enjoy birding and nature in a safe and welcoming environment free from discrimination and harrassment, be it sexual, racial, or barriers for people with disabilities. You must not infringe upon the rights of any other person to obtain any photo or video. Your photos or videos must not be obtained by capturing, moving, feeding, harassing, or disturbing wildlife, or by altering or damaging the environment in any way.

How To Enter: For the photo and video contests, you may submit a maximum of two entries. They can be entered at the same time or at any time during the contest. For the writing contest, you may enter one submission. You must submit all entries electronically, regardless of original format.

Specifics for Photo and Video Submissions: Your original photos or videos can be digital files, digital prints, slides, transparencies, color prints, black-and-white prints, or any other format that you are able to digitize for submission. You must submit your entries electronically via our online submission tool.

People in your photos or videos: You must obtain written permission (via print or email) from any recognizable people in your photos or videos to 1) submit these images to the contest, 2) publish the images in our print journal and electronically on our website, and 3) allow us to identify them by name. You must get permission from a parent or guardian for children under the age of 16. You must be able to show these consents to *Bird Observer* upon request.

File Types: Video entries must be in MP4 format. Photo entries must be in JPG (aka JPEG) format.

Screen Captures: Please submit original materials only. We will not accept any screen captures of images, including those from social media platforms.

Digital Alterations: You may freely alter or compose photographs or videos to suit your artistic vision. All birds present in an image or video must have been photographed somewhere in New England.

Photo Image Size: The winning image will be featured in *Bird Observer*'s print journal as well as online. Please use the highest setting on your camera. Entries should have a resolution of at least 2272 x 1704 pixels (i.e., 4 megapixels or greater).

Video Size: The winning video will be featured in *Bird Observer*'s online journal, and the print journal will provide a link to our website. The submission form limits file submissions to a maximum of 20MB. For video that is larger than 20MB, we will provide an alternate method for providing the file to us.

Specifics for Writing Submissions: You may submit one short work of nonfiction, fiction, or poetry of any type, so long as it is your original work. Entries may include—but are not limited to—observations, reflections, personal experiences, essays, natural history pieces, stories, and poems. Submissions must be in English and not contain material that is defamatory, obscene, offensive, infringing, indecent or otherwise unlawful or inappropriate as determined by the judges in their sole and absolute opinion.

Space is limited in *Bird Observer*; therefore, we require that your submission be between 500 and 1500 words, give or take a few, which equals about 1–3 type-written pages. Entries that run over the limit will automatically be disqualified. You must submit your entries electronically via our online submission tool.

File Types: Writing entries must be submitted in PDF format.

Judging: There will be one grand prize winner in each of three categories: photo, video, and writing. Winners will be selected by a panel of *Bird Observer* staff. Entries will be judged based on qualities such as originality, creativity, artistic/literary merit, and technical expertise/writing skill. Judges shall determine eligibility with sole and absolute discretion. All decisions of the judges are final.

ENTER THE CONTEST at <www.birdobserver.org>.

Rights: By entering the contest, you hereby grant to *Bird Observer* (i) a perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free, fully paid, nonexclusive, worldwide license to use your content in our print journal and electronically on our website, and (ii) the right to use your name, city, state, and country of residence in such publications. All content will be credited with the caption "© Person's Name."

Questions: If you have a question, contact contest@birdobserver.org.

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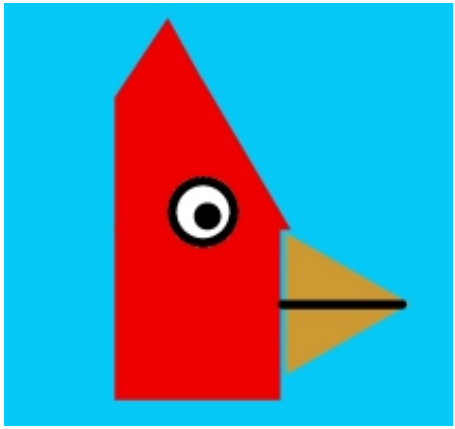
Ray Brown's Talkin' Birds

A Weekly Radio Show about Birds, Birding, and Conservation



Recent Guests -

Purbita Saha and Martha Harbison, Co-founders of The Galbatross Project and Female Bird Day

David Lindo, UK naturalist and host of the Urban Birder website

Danielle Kaschube, Bird Bander and MAPS Coordinator at the Institute for Bird Populations

Holly Merker, Co-author of the Mindful Birding book, Ornitherapy

With us Every Week -

Mike O'Connor, Birdwatcher's General Store: Advice on Backyard Birding

Live on Sunday mornings 9:30 - 10

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MUSINGS FROM THE BLIND BIRDER

Random Thoughts from the Raspberry Patch

Martha Steele

Random thoughts while preparing our Vermont raspberry patch for summer growing as Broad-winged Hawks call and circle overhead:

We are puzzled periodically by the details that birders provide for unusual bird sightings. A northeastern Vermont report of a Bohemian Waxwing in early April was unusual for its lateness in the region. This observation thus merited details about the sighting. Details were indeed provided but left us shaking our heads: "Sitting atop a tree." Okay, so any bird we see sitting atop a tree is a Bohemian Waxwing? Similarly, an unusual report of a Rough-legged Hawk was accompanied by "perched in a tree." Perhaps we need to periodically remind ourselves that regional reviewers require field marks, habitat descriptions, photos, recordings, or similar details or documented evidence to help them determine the validity of an unusual sighting.

The Merlin Bird ID app from the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology regularly came up in conversations this spring with the birders we have encountered in the field. Originally launched in 2014, the app appears to be used more and more frequently by birders in the field to help connect a song they just heard to its species, especially when it is challenging to see the bird in dense canopy or forest. But its use, or misuse, is also raising eyebrows and likely creating headaches and more work for reviewers of databases such as eBird, if not potentially threatening the integrity of some data. Merlin may appear an easy and accurate tool by which experienced and inexperienced birders alike can learn or verify bird songs. Indeed, by all accounts, Merlin is a helpful tool, but must be used with caution and only as a supplement to visual, auditory, seasonal, and habitat field observations. A recent post to the Vermont Birding Email List told an amusing story of a father out birding while pushing a stroller with his young daughter. His daughter coughed, and the Merlin app immediately suggested a Great Blue Heron. The father looked down at his daughter and muttered, "And to think, all along I thought you were a human." Tom Berriman, the guru of Moose Bog in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom, reported using the app while trying to identify a mysterious vireo that would not show itself. The app took turns identifying the bird as a Red-eyed, Blue-headed, Philadelphia, or Yellow-throated vireo. Tom concluded that he simply could not confidently identify the vireo singing without visual confirmation.

Quiz: Bob and I were recently astonished by a statistic from his lifetime eBird reports for Orleans County in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. He saw that two species appeared on 1,565 of the checklists that he has filed on eBird. That is, each species appeared on the exact same number of checklists, although not always concurrently, dating back to September 1998. Can you guess what two species these were? Quiz answer below.

Certain birds in certain habitats seem to stir deep emotions in me. Alvin and I

often walk the three-tenths of a mile to our mailbox to collect the mail at our Vermont home. For years now, at least one Veery has established residence in the woods near the mailbox. I eagerly anticipate our walk in May and June, hoping that the Veery will be in full song. When my wish is granted, Alvin and I stop dead in our tracks. We are alone in a peaceful and isolated slice of our planet with this beautiful and melodic song emanating from the forest edge, filling me with awe, wonder, and joy. I feel so grateful for the moment. Even Alvin seems to recognize that we are witnessing something special, sitting quietly by my side, not a muscle flinching, and staring into the woods.

I am thrilled to stand in the company of multiple birds singing simultaneously and identify all the species making up the cacophony of sound. This spring, while standing on the edge of a meadow dotted by thickets and small trees, I first reveled in the exhilarating explosion of nonstop sound, smiling broadly at my avian friends. Then I shifted my focus to identifying the individual components of the avian chorus: an Indigo Bunting, a Common Yellowthroat, an American Robin, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, a Chipping Sparrow, a Song Sparrow, a Savannah Sparrow, an American Redstart, and a Chestnut-sided Warbler. I felt deep contentment at how far my skills as a birder had come since I first heard bird songs after receiving my first cochlear implant in 2010. I thought back to a moment in early May 2010, or shortly after that first implant, when my husband Bob pulled into a small parking lot and asked me to tell him what I heard. I listened, trying to figure out all the songs reaching my ear. I told him, well, there are quite a few birds here, but I am not sure what they are. Perhaps a cardinal or robin? Bob laughed, pleased with my effort, as he pointed out that I was listening to only one bird, a Northern Mockingbird, mimicking various birds in his vicinity.

Quiz answer: American Crow and Black-capped Chickadee. Especially in winter, these two species are reliable on a nearly daily basis and on occasion may be the only birds we see or hear on a particularly bleak birding day.

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

Omission

The author's biographical sketch was inadvertently omitted from "Notes on the Birds of Hull, 1896" that appeared in the April 2022 issue of *Bird Observer*. Here it is:

John Galluzzo *is the author of more than 50 books on the history and nature of the Northeast. He writes the "Taking Flight" column on local bird sightings for the* Hull Times*, for which he has written since 1996. Born in Hull and now a resident of Hanover, Massachusetts, he is the Maritime Heritage Chair of the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, president of the Hanover Historical Society and vice president of the Hull Historical Society.*

FIELD NOTES

Osprey Captures Vole

Susan Browne

Osprey with a captured vole. Photograph by the author.

On April 1, 2022, at the Mass Audubon North River Wildlife Sanctuary in Marshfield, Massachusetts, I observed a female Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) sitting below the nest pole on a perch and calling. When the bird later flew off toward the North River, I followed its direction and subsequently observed it in the sky over the river, where I heard calling and saw a male Osprey circling the female repeatedly. I observed that the male was carrying prey and took several pictures of this courting behavior from the observation deck on the river. The silhouette of the prey was not that of a fish but rather appeared typical of a meadow vole (*Microtus pennsylvanicus*). Eventually the pair flew off, and I saw the female shortly afterward on the nest. I did not witness the male delivering the vole nor either Osprey ingesting it.

Although fish account for more than 99 percent of their diet, there have been rare reports of Osprey taking nonfish prey (Bierregaard et al. 2020). For example, Proctor (1977) and Campbell and Hillary (2009) reported instances of Osprey capturing meadow voles. In addition, Jung (2016) reported a swimming long-tailed vole (*Microtus longicaudus*) captured by an Osprey in British Columbia.

Both Jung (2016) and Campbell and Hillary (2009) noted that the voles were captured while they were in water. The observation that I made was during a high tide, making it possible that the meadow vole could have been captured in the river or marsh if not in the meadow where the nest pole is located.

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Bierregaard, R. O., A. F. Poole, M. S. Martell, P. Pyle, and M. A. Patten. 2020. Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), version 1.0. In *Birds of the World* (P. G. Rodewald, ed.) Ithaca, NY: Cornell Lab of Ornithology. https://doi.org/10.2173/bow.osprey.01. Accessed June 3, 2022.

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Jung, Thomas S. 2016. Swimming Long-tailed Vole (*Microtus longicaudus*) killed by an Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*). *Canadian Field-Naturalist* 130 (1):32–33.

Proctor, N. S. 1977. Osprey Catches Vole. *Wilson Bulletin*, 89 (4): 625.

Osprey Steals Fish from Great Black-backed Gull

Sarah Mayhew

1. I watched this Osprey flying over the beach rather than the ocean. All photographs by the author.

On May 6, 2022, at Quansoo Beach on Martha's Vineyard, I watched an Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) circle over the beach and wondered why it was flying over the sand and not over the ocean. Suddenly it went into a dive into the sand. I could not see that a Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) had a fish carcass just over the rise of the sand. The Osprey did not get the fish carcass the first time, but it circled around again, swooped in, and stole the fish from the gull. I had never seen this behavior before. Most times I see Great Black-backed Gulls mobbing Ospreys causing them to drop their fish, so I was happy to see this Osprey actually steal a fish from a gull.

2. Suddenly it dove into the sand. I could not see over the rise that a Great Black-backed Gull had a fish carcass on the beach.

3. The Osprey missed the fish the first time but it circled back, swooped in on the gull, and stole the fish. The gull stepped aside, but was not happy about it.

4. The Osprey grabbed the fish carcass from the gull and took off.

5. The Osprey successfully stole the fish and carried it off to a distant nest platform. The gull did not pursue it.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird Impaled on Allium

Frederick Thurber

On May 20, 2022, at approximately 10:00 am, I was working outside in my garden in South Dartmouth, Massachusetts, when my wife shouted to me to come quickly. I trotted over to my horrified wife as she pointed to an allium plant. I looked down and saw a dead male Ruby-throated Hummingbird that was stuck fast to the stalk of the allium. Its beak had been driven all the way into the stalk and its body hung limply from the plant. The bird was firmly attached, and we could not pull it out by tugging the body without damaging it. I finally freed it by firmly pushing the bill back out, but it was clearly too late. The membranes of the eyes were dry and sunken, the feet curled, and the neck limp. The allium was about 17 meters from a hummingbird feeder on the corner of our house. There is a small rhododendron hybrid known as 'Minas Grand Prix' less than one meter from the allium; this plant was blooming and had hanging, bell-shaped blooms of a deep pink, which may have attracted the hummingbird.

Impaled Ruby-throated Hummingbird from two angles. Photographs by the author.

ABOUT BOOKS

Small and Focused

Mark Lynch

The Real James Bond: A True Story of Identity Theft, Avian Intrigue, and Ian Fleming. Jim Wright. 2020. Atglen, Pennsylvania: Schiffer Publishing LTD.

A Pocket Guide to Pigeon Watching: Getting to Know the World's Most Misunderstood Bird. Written and illustrated by Rosemary Mosco. 2021. New York, New York: Workman Publishing Co., Inc.

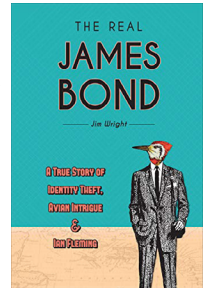
Birders always want more. A longer life list. More time in the field. More identification field marks. More information on where to see birds. And, of course, more birds and books about birds. It is no surprise that many books about birds tend to be large. The recent *Birds of Maine* by Peter D. Vickery clocks in at 642 large-format pages. Steve Hilty's *Birds of Colombia*, ostensibly a field guide, runs a close second at 604 pages. Both of these books are excellent and their size—and weight—testify to the amount of knowledge we now have about bird distribution, bird records, and bird life. Mention must be made of Lynx Edicions's mind-blowing 16 large-format volumes of *Handbook of the Birds of the World,* which illustrates every species of bird on this planet, contains thousands of state-of-the-art photographs, and has an encyclopedia's worth of text. The *Handbook of the Birds of the World* is the penultimate bird publishing venture. My one caveat about these mammoth tomes is that they are difficult to read, in the way an unabridged dictionary is physically awkward to read.

Below are two very small books about birds that are narrowly focused and fun to read.

> "This is the story of the most notorious case of identity theft in history" (p.7, *The Real James Bond*)

The history of birding is filled with odd tales. One of them concerns how popular author Ian Fleming came up with the name for his license-to-kill British spy James Bond. The story is simple enough to tell, but author Jim Wright has expanded the tale into a thin but entertaining monograph, *The Real James Bond*.

The original James Bond was a field ornithologist and expert on the birds of the Caribbean. Bond was born into a wealthy Philadelphia family on January 4, 1900. Though he had a child's usual interest in the natural world, reinforced by summers spent on Mount Desert Island, Maine, he seemed doomed for a life spent in banking. But through a series of family tragedies, and being cut out of his father's will, James Bond found himself accompanying wealthy friend Rodolphe Meyer de Schauensee on an expedition to the lower Amazon to collect specimens for the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.



> The expedition, via a 100-meter long, steam-powered cargo ship, turned out to be perilous. At one point, a legendarily lethal fer-de-lance popped up on the trail just inches away from Bond's feet, and he had to shoot the 5-foot-long snake before it could strike. Days later, while preparing to bathe in a jungle stream, Bond saw a giant boa constrictor gliding out of the understory. His reaction, as he recounted for the Philadelphia Daily News: "I turned and ran. Later I found out the boa was as scared as I was. It darted off in the opposite direction."
>
> The two budding explorers managed to return with many valuable specimens including a live, 23-foot long, dark-spotted anaconda and two live hyacinth macaws, but no hoatzin or bush dog. The anaconda turned out to be a new species that would be named in de Schauensee's honor, *Eunectes deschauenseei*. Bond and de Schaunensee sold the live specimens to zoos both public and private. (p. 33)

It was during this first trip that Bond became passionate about birds and adventure and began his long career as a field biologist. He was attracted to the bird life of the Caribbean and spent his life visiting the numerous islands, taking bird specimens, and writing papers on the distribution and identification of birds of the Caribbean. Bond's field work included many highlights. He obtained a specimen of an Eskimo Curlew in the Barbados. The Bahama Nuthatch, now possibly extinct, was first described by Bond in 1931. For a number of decades, he was recognized professionally as *the* expert on the birds of that area. Ultimately, this included a mind-blowing 24,000 records of birds of the Caribbean. He collected more than 290 of the 300 species of birds known to inhabit the Caribbean during his time (p. 10). He wrote more than 150 scientific papers and many other publications.

> Nate Rice, ornithology collection manager for the Academy of Natural Sciences, concurs: "Anybody who is studying Caribbean birds is going to quote Bond papers. That's his lasting legacy of scientific importance—how often his papers are cited."
>
> Bond's first paper, "Nesting of the Harpy Eagle," appeared in *The Auk* in 1927. His last, "Twenty-Seventh Supplement to the Check-List of birds of the West Indies (1956)" appeared sixty years later in 1987, two years before his death. (p. 109–10)

His publication that most birders are familiar with is *The Birds of the West Indies*, first printed in 1936.

Bond also developed a zoogeographic theory that the avifauna of the Caribbean was most closely related to the birds of North America, not South America as had been previously thought. A line, later known as "Bond's line" was drawn between the Lesser Antilles and Tobago to indicate this separation. He proposed another, smaller "Bond's Line" on the island of Hispaniola that separated the avifauna of Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

> In recognition of Bond's achievement, researchers have named a new family of Caribbean plants, several fish, a grasshopper, a stink bug, and a subspecies of Barn Owl and seven other birds in his honor. (p. 11)

His face has appeared on stamps (of Mali!), and even a mammal—a hutia—was named in his honor.

Despite all his ornithological accomplishments, Bond's life story would have likely sunk into academic obscurity, a geeky bespectacled ornithologist who tramped around the West Indies, whose once popular field guide is now out of date. His is a name known mostly to other ornithologists or older birders who had purchased his guide to the birds of the region. But then came Ian Fleming.

Fleming, a former British naval intelligence officer, decided to build a winter retreat on Jamaica.

> He named the place Goldeneye, not after the duck of the same name, but after a plan he'd developed for the defense of Gibraltar during the war, and after one of his favorite books, *Reflections in a Golden Eye,* the 1941 novel by Carson McCullers. (p. 13)

It was here, from mid-January to mid-March for 13 years, that he wrote the 007 novels. Looking for a name for his protagonist with the license to kill, he saw his copy of *The Birds of the West Indies* and used its author's name. James Bond, the fictional international suave spy and womanizer, could not be further from the real ornithologist in character or appearance. It bothered the real James Bond no end. I can imagine all the jokes and comments made by his colleagues, and probably strangers hearing his name. "In fact, Bond grew to hate the 007 connection, even as his wife did her best to promote it." (p. 8)

Once Ian Fleming and the real James Bond did meet. On February 5, 1966, James Bond and his wife dropped by unannounced at Goldeneye and met with Fleming. It was an awkward get together that was documented by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation who just happened to be there to interview Fleming. Bond stated rather flatly, "I don't read your books" and proceeded to identify the Cave Swallows flying around Goldeneye. Fleming for his part was gracious and apologetic for using Bond's name in his fiction.

The *Real James Bond* fleshes out all the events of Bond's life with details of some of his trips and his academic life. For example, Bond had an interesting trip to Cuba to see all three endemics of the Zapata Swamp. He also had a dangerous climb up the 8,000-foot Massif de la Selle in Haiti to obtain specimens of the endemic La Selle Thrush. Sadly, as revealed in *The Real James Bond*, Bond could also be a ruthless academic, and he cruelly sabotaged the career of his colleague Meb Carriker at the Academy of Natural Sciences.

Still, this is a slight story, so Jim Wright fleshes out his book with a number of digressions. There is a chapter on the different printings of the *Birds of the West Indies*. Another chapter explores the rumors that the real James Bond was an actual spy. "In

Bond's Footsteps" (p. 112), visits the various locations important to Bond's life that are still extant. I particularly was interested in the section on Bond's uncle, the artist Carroll Sargent Tyson, Jr. (1878–1950). A cousin of the painter John Singer Sargent, Tyson was also a painter who was fascinated by ornithology. He produced *The Birds of Mt. Desert Island, Acadia National Park*, which consisted of 20 chromolithographs of his 108 sketches and finished paintings. These were based on specimens that James Bond shot. There was a limited edition of this collection of prints of only 250 copies. After their printing, the plates were destroyed, so complete sets are a real rarity. Only his Snowy Owl is reproduced in *The Real James Bond*, but it reveals that Tyson could have been one of the great bird artists of his time. I would love to see the full set.

Also reproduced in *The Real James Bond* is "Goldfincher" by Avian Flemish.

> That same month, at the annual meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union, organizers distributed a parody of the group's newsletter, The Auk. The publication was the Auklet, billed as an "Irregular Journal of Irreverence," featured "On Her Majesty's Ornithological Service", by Avian Flemish. The parody, set in the West Indies, pits British ornithological agent James Blond against avian archvillain Goldfincher, who has a dastardly plot to collect as many endemic birds as he can, then drive up their value by blanketing the region with radioactive birdseed. (p. 73)

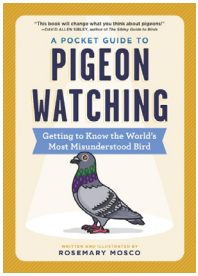
Fleming's novels led to many parodies and copycat books, television shows, and movies. Examples include television's "The Man from U.N.C.L.E." and "Get Smart." So, it should not be too surprising that the AOU would be tempted to satirize both the Bond novels as well as the real James Bond. I am certainly glad I got the opportunity to read "Goldfincher," but as you can imagine, nerdy ornithological spy parodies do not age well.

The Real James Bond is a fun book and worth a read. It is a perfect beach book. *The Real James Bond* is well illustrated, often with color photographs. Even without his 007 connection, and despite James Bond's darker aspects, his energetic life of obsessive ornithological field work and many discoveries deserves to be revealed again for modern audiences. As to Ian Fleming…well, my favorite cinematic Bond was Daniel Craig.

> Maybe you hate them. Tons of people do. Perhaps you loathe their dusty-looking feathers, or the way they swarm the sidewalks, or the fact that they're allowed to poop anywhere they want, but you always have to find a bathroom. (p.1, *Pigeon Watching*)

Many authors can write about science, but few can successfully communicate those ideas to a lay audience in a text. In addition, very, very few books about birds are genuinely funny. Rosemary Mosco is a science communicator, acclaimed cartoonist, and best-selling author. *A Pocket Guide to Pigeon Watching* highlights her considerable talents as a science communicator and is also the funniest book I have read about birds in some time. It is illustrated with Mosco's comic artwork that many of us have already enjoyed in her web comic "Bird and Moon." The combination of all

these elements makes *A Pocket Guide to Pigeon Watching* one of the most enjoyable natural history books of 2021.



Mosco is serious about her fascination with these birds that many people have dismissed as "flying rats." Rock Pigeons have an interesting history, exhibit complex behavior, and their long connections with human societies is always surprising. Right off the bat, Mosco lists 10 reasons why watching pigeons is a good idea. #1 on the list is that "It's free" (p. 6). This may seem like an offhand comment, but it is really about accessibility. Not everyone can afford to take trips to exotic bird-filled locations. Many people do not even have the time or means for traveling to birdy locations in their state. But anyone can become a pigeon observer. You can even watch pigeons from an apartment window. Pigeon watching is a democratic avocation. Her #10 reason is, "It's a hard world. Sometimes you just need to look at a soft bird" (p. 6). After all that has been going on these last few years, I could not agree more. I need a low key, calm alternative to racing around ticking the next rarity. Besides, in Mosco's eyes, pigeons are beautiful. Don't you dare disagree with her on this point.

> A pigeon is pretty (seriously, fight me), and its prettiest part is probably the iridescent purple and green neck. This iridescence plays an important role in a pigeon's courtship display and seems to reflect the health of a bird to its potential mates. (p. 67)

The amount of hard information contained in this small book is amazing. There are sections and chapters on the evolution of pigeons, the taxonomy of doves, and a complete and illustrated anatomy of pigeons. There are several sections on pigeons and people in which we learn about pigeons as food, the creation of dovecotes, and the many uses of pigeon excreta. Mosco, of course, thoroughly explains how pigeons poop and what makes up pigeon droppings. There are mini-biographies of famous pigeons, some decorated war heroes. There is an introduction into a few of the common breeds of domesticated pigeons. With breed names like Scandaroon, English Pouter, and American Giant Runt—each illustrated by Mosco—many of these breeds seem like they came from the lab of Dr. Moreau.

No matter how much you think you know about pigeons, Mosco manages to come up with something you likely never knew. Like the fact that pigeons have been trained to distinguish Impressionist paintings from Cubist paintings. Did someone get a grant to do that? Did you know that some pigeons have learned to ride the subway? To learn about the many patterns and colors of wild Rock Pigeons, Mosco begins with a thorough discussion of genetics and how it applies to a pigeon's appearance. Pigeons come in several colors and combinations of patterns. Wing patterns in particular are important in identifying individuals. Even their pigeon feet can be unique. Who knew about the variety of colors of a pigeon's toenails?

Pigeon breeding and nesting behavior involves many kinds of visual displays you could observe in a local park. Some behaviors are even auditory, like wing clapping and cooing. When it comes to mating, pigeons have no penises, but mate via their cloaca. This sounds difficult.

> If you flip over a pigeon and look for its genitalia…well, first off, why are you doing this? Second, you won't find anything but a hole. A pigeon's

> eggs, sperm, and poop all come out through an opening in a special chamber called the cloaca. To reproduce, a pigeon lines up its hole with its lover's hole (probably the worst phrase ever included in a field guide) and they rub them together until the male ejaculates sperm into the female. It's called the "cloacal kiss." You're welcome. (p. 71)

[Note: some birds do have a penis and Mosco, of course, lists those that do.]

Pigeon nests are basic, a simple collection of twigs and leaves. After the altricial young are born, they are fed with a thick cheesy "crop milk" that both males and females produce. Young pigeons peck at their parents' bills to signal them to regurgitate this food. Mosco has a bit of a dark fascination with crop milk.

> Scientists have figured out which genes are responsible for making crop milk, which means that they could theoretically produce it on a large scale someday. When civilization collapses, maybe the last survivors will subsist on glasses of chunky pigeon milk. (p. 180)

Pigeon Watching ends with a thoughtful essay on whether you should feed pigeons in the park.

A Pocket Guide to Pigeon Watching is a perfect book for teachers who are looking for a text to teach their classes about how to watch and enjoy wildlife. This is a sturdy book that would hold up to being taken into the field, and it actually does fit in your pocket. Mosco has crammed a lot of hard science into this small book. But she has couched all those technical details in humorous and conversational writing combined with her hard-edged cartoon artwork. She has added many interesting digressions to hold your attention. I found myself wishing this was the first volume of a long series. I expect to hear a lot more from Rosemary Mosco in future years. I will never dismiss a pigeon as unworthy of my attention again.

> "Pigeons were the original internet. They could update you on political news or give you the latest sports scores." (p. 45)

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Mark Lynch has interviewed both authors on his show Inquiry on WICN (90.5 FM): Here are the links to the podcast versions of those shows:

Jim Wright: <https://www.wicn.org/podcast/jim-wright/>

Rosemary Mosco: <https://www.wicn.org/podcast/rosemary-mosco/> NB: Mark Lynch did a second interview with Mosco about her art and comic work: <https://www.wicn.org/podcast/rosemary-mosco-2/

BIRD SIGHTINGS

March–April 2022

Neil Hayward and Robert H. Stymeist

Weather

The weather in March was generally uneventful. The average temperature in Boston for the month was 46 degrees and the high was 68 degrees on March 18. Areas west and north saw temperature readings into the low 70s. There was a pleasant stretch of mild weather between March 14–22 when the average temperature in Boston was a balmy 56 degrees. A blast of arctic air arrived at the end of the month; the high on March 28 was just 33 degrees in Boston, which tied the previous record set in 1893 for the lowest high temperature on that date. Rainfall for the month totaled 2.78 inches, 1.4 inches below the average with measurable precipitation falling on 18 days. Snowfall totaled 2.1 inches, 5.7 inches below the normal for March. Most of that snow came from a storm system that passed south of New England on March 9, dropping 1.4 inches of snow on Boston. Higher amounts were reported to the west, with Royalston receiving 5.5 inches and Newburyport 4.3 inches.

April began with ideal springlike weather but quickly lived up to its slogan, "April showers bring May flowers." A low-pressure system stalled over eastern New England early in the first week of the month resulting in unsettled weather right up to the Patriots' Day weekend. After perfect running conditions on the day of the Boston Marathon, a strong coastal storm arrived in the evening and brought heavy rain and strong winds along our coastline. Precipitation was recorded on 19 days in April, with Boston receiving a total of 2.33 inches, more than an inch below the historical average for the month. The high temperature for the month was 73 degrees on Saturday, April 16.

R. Stymeist

GEESE THROUGH HERONS

This has been an exciting winter for **Pink-footed Geese** in the Northeast. In December, a flock of four birds was found at Longmeadow, which represented a new high count for the United States. This flock spent much of the winter to the immediate south in Connecticut. Assuming these were the same birds, the group was spotted again returning north at Longmeadow on March 6–7, and then later in the Hadley area. This once exceptionally rare goose has now been recorded in the state in each of the past nine years. A flock of 362 Snow Geese that flew over Rowley on March 7 was the highest period count for 15 years.

An immature **Trumpeter Swan**—the first for Nantucket and the fourth record for the state—spent the winter on the island. It first appeared on December 22 and was last seen on March 27. Pairs of **Tundra Swans** were reported from Berkshire and Hampden counties in mid-March. An American Wigeon x Mallard hybrid was present in Fairhaven for the second half of April. Possibly the same bird was reported from Falmouth in March.

The bird of the period award goes to the one that got away. A **Willow Ptarmigan** was photographed and videotaped walking on the side of a road in Charlton on April 30. Despite extensive searches of the area, it was never relocated. To add to the feeling of birding loss, photos of presumably the same bird later appeared in a FaceBook post reporting a sighting in West Boylston two days before the Charlton sighting. The towns are roughly 18 miles apart as

Species	2022 Arrival date	Days early (-) or late (+) vs. average	2000–2021 Earliest arrival	2000–2021 Average arrival	2000–2021 Latest arrival
Piping Plover	Feb 2	-38	Feb 23	Mar 12	Mar 25
American Oystercatcher	Mar 12	+4	Feb 23	Mar 8	Mar 17
Pectoral Sandpiper	Mar 15	-9	Mar 7	Mar 24	Apr 15
Lesser Yellowlegs	Mar 17	-7	Mar 4	Mar 24	Apr 16
Short-billed Dowitcher	Apr 1	-20	Mar 4	Apr 21	May 14
American Golden-Plover	Apr 10	-8	Mar 20	Apr 18	May 16
Upland Sandpiper	Apr 12	-2	Apr 1	Apr 14	Apr 28
Solitary Sandpiper	Apr 12	-2	Apr 3	Apr 14	Apr 28
Spotted Sandpiper	Apr 14	-2	Apr 8	Apr 16	Apr 27
Willet	Apr 15	0	Mar 19	Apr 15	Apr 26
Least Sandpiper	Apr 17	0	Mar 31	Apr 17	Apr 29
Semipalmated Plover	Apr 23	-3	Apr 8	Apr 26	May 10
Whimbrel	May 29*	+29	Apr 10	Apr 30	May 29

* Record late date for the century

Table 1. Arrival dates of shorebirds in Massachusetts. Arrival dates in 2022 are compared to the earliest, average, and latest arrival dates for the period 2000–2021. Days early or late are relative to the average for the period. Data from eBird.org.

the ptarmigan flies. This bird is the most southerly record of the species ever recorded in North America. Incredibly, this was not the first record for the state, with the first and only other record coming 163 years ago on May 10, 1859. There does seem to be a pattern—albeit an exceptionally rare one—of vagrancy of this species into the Northeast in spring. Recent records include Point Peninsula, New York, April 24–May 18, 2014; Chebeague Island, Maine, May 16–June 2, 2000; St. Johnsbury, Vermont, May 8, 2014; and Colchester, Vermont, May 26, 2020.

An **Eared Grebe** continued at Marblehead through April 25. This bird first appeared on December 16 and is thought to be the same bird returning to the area from the previous winter.

A Yellow-billed Cuckoo found resting in a yard on Martha's Vineyard on April 9 is the third earliest record for the state and one of only a handful of April records. The two earlier records were of a dead bird discovered in Salisbury on March 28, 2010, and a bird in Ashfield on April 6, 2001.

A dusk survey at Burrage Pond WMA on April 25 produced eight Soras—a new high count for the period. Sandhill Cranes were reported from nine counties, which is now the new normal, reflecting the increasing status of this species in Massachusetts. Sandhill Cranes are now regular breeders in the state after first nesting in Worthington in 2007.

Shorebirds were generally early in their arrival this year (see Table 1). Only American Oystercatcher and Whimbrel arrived later than the average for this century. Three Piping Plovers seen at Sea Gull Beach, Yarmouth, on the very early date of March 2 were likely part of the

flock of up to five birds reported on the same beach on February 2–13. These birds may have successfully overwintered in the area. The first genuine spring migrant Piping Plover may be a record from Fairhaven on March 10, tying last year's first record of the year, which was then the earliest record for the state since 2004. A Western Willet may have successfully overwintered in West Dennis. The bird first appeared on December 26, 2021, and was last seen on March 14. A Western Willet overwintered in Barnstable Harbor in 2017, lingering until March 1.

Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution organized a joint cruise on April 5 to study right whales—specifically to understand the correlation between dimethyl sulfide and whale feeding. The chemical is a gas released by zooplankton on which the whales feed. The cruise produced birds, too, including 25 Common Murres. Seventeen of those were in Plymouth County waters and appear to represent the first April records for the county.

A Caspian Tern that flew past Race Point on March 26 is the new earliest record for the state, eclipsing the previous record set in 2020 by one day. These two are the only March records for the state. A Common Tern photographed in Nauset on March 31 is only the second March record for the state. The other is from Newburyport on March 27, 1999. Manx Shearwaters returned to their regular summer haunt of Revere Beach on March 20, ahead of schedule and two days shy of their earliest return of March 18 in 2017.

Herons made the news this period. The same dusk survey at Burrage Pond that produced a record count of Soras also revealed 10 American Bitterns—tying the state high count set at Fort Hill, Eastham in 1998. A Least Bittern was photographed at West Harwich on the very early date of April 14. The species typically arrives early- to mid-May, although this diminutive bittern has a pattern of turning up in odd places outside of its regular summer months; an unhappy looking bird was found perched in a bare winter tree in a parking lot near the Charles River in Newton on a chilly January 5, 2012. A Tricolored Heron found in Westport on March 27 beat the earliest record for the state by two days and is one of only three March records. **Cattle Egrets** were reported from three counties in April, including a first spring record for Franklin County and the first Hampshire County period record since 1995.

White Ibises were reported from a record four counties in April. One bird was responsible for ticking two of those counties—Middlesex and Suffolk—by crossing the Charles River and appearing in Mount Auburn Cemetery (a cemetery first) and the Christian Herter Community Garden in Boston (a Suffolk County first). This mini-invasion of White Ibises seems to have been restricted to Massachusetts; the only other record from the Northeast was an immature bird seen in Brooklyn, New York, on April 12.

N. Hayward

Snow Goose			
3/3	Dartmouth	5	S. Walas#
3/6	Quabbin (G29)	60	B. Lafley
3/6-3/23	Northampton area	150 max	H. Iselin# + v.o.
3/7	Rowley	362	R. Heil
3/7	Lancaster	135	B. Robo
3/7	W. Roxbury (MP)	6	D. Sullivan
3/17-3/21	Chatham	1	P. Kyle, v.o.
Greater White-fronted Goose			
3/7-3/16	Hadley area	2 max	A. Hulsey + v.o.
3/7,4/5-4/11	Ipswich	1,1 ph	v.o.
3/14-3/16	Rowley	1 ph	M. Goetschkes + v.o
3/15	Lancaster	1 ph	C. Yang + v.o.
3/17-3/19	Great Barrington	1 ph	R. Green + v.o.
Pink-footed Goose			
3/6-3/7	Longmeadow	4 ph	T. Gilliland + v.o.
3/6-3/17	Lancaster	1 ph	V. Burdette + v.o.
3/7-3/14	Hadley area	4 max ph	T. Gilliland + v.o.
Brant			
thr	PI	220 max	T.Wetmore+v.o.
3/1	Cohasset	22	M. Blaze
3/7	Fairhaven	300	C. Longworth
Cackling Goose			
3/7	Plymouth	1 ph	D. Furbish
3/7-3/16	Hadley area	1 ph	T. Gilliland + v.o.
3/9-3/20	Ipswich	1 ph	S. Grinley + v.o.
3/13	BFWMA	1 ph	J. Skinner + v.o.
3/14, 3/30	Turners Falls area	2,1 ph	D. Sibley, J. Yanko
Mute Swan			
3/18	Acoaxet	122	A. Rainville#
4/5	Westborough	24	M. Lynch#
Trumpeter Swan			
3/5-3/27	Nantucket	1 ph	G. Andrews
Tundra Swan			
3/16	Pittsfield (Onota)	2 ph	G. Hurley + v.o.
3/23	Palmer	2	J. Lafley

Wood Duck
3/12 Sunderland 170 max A. Richards
3/26 Petersham 32 M. Lynch#
Blue-winged Teal
3/22-4/25 Longmeadow 5 max J. Lafley + v.o.
4/4 Newbury 5 R. Heil
4/5-4/30 BFWMA 5 max V.Burdette+v.o.
4/17 Fairhaven 3 C. Molander#
4/24-4/30 Burrage Pd WMA 4 T. Lloyd-Evans
Northern Shoveler
3/7-4/9 Longmeadow 8 max M. Moore+v.o.
3/8-3/11 Gill/Turners Falls 8 max J. Coleman + v.o.
3/20 Rowley (RMWS) 5 R. Heil
4/13 Nantucket 13 S. Fea
4/25 Wellfleet 2 C. Hight
Gadwall
3/1-3/22 PI 28 max T.Wetmore+v.o.
3/6 Quincy 6 J. Bock
3/15 Seekonk 141 S. Reinert
Eurasian Wigeon
3/1-3/6 Sandwich 1 f ph G. Lynch + v.o.
3/3-3/13 Fairhaven 1 m ph C. Longworth+v.o.
3/3-4/3 Nantucket 2 max v.o.
3/19-4/8 Newbury 1 m ph C. Lapite + v.o.
American Wigeon
3/5 New Bedford 30 C. Floyd
3/8-4/15 BFWMA 10 max S. Wilson + v.o.
4/1-4/4 Newbury 48 max R. Heil + v.o.
American Wigeon x Mallard (hybrid)
3/5 Falmouth 1 N. Teague
4/14-4/26 Fairhaven 1 C. Longworth + v.o.
American Black Duck
3/1-3/22 PI 330 max v.o.
3/11 Quaboag IBA 34 M. Lynch#
3/20 Rowley (RMWS) 370 R. Heil
Northern Pintail
3/1-3/22 PI 23 max v.o.
3/5 Barnstable 19 H. Holbrook
3/8-4/2 BFWMA 8 max V.Burdette+v.o.
Green-winged Teal
4/2 BFWMA 250 G. d'Entremont
4/4, 4/12 Newbury 365,78 R. Heil
4/24 W. Harwich 60 J. Guion
Green-winged Teal (Eurasian)
3/13 Nantucket 1 m T. Pastuszak
3/20 Rowley 1 m ph R. Heil
4/3 Newbury 1 m ph R. Heil
Canvasback
4/12 Pittsfield (Pont.) 2 R. Wendell + v.o.
Redhead
3/6 Nantucket 32 G. Andrews
3/13-3/15 Melrose 1 J. McCoy + v.o.
Ring-necked Duck
3/8-4/18 New Salem 343 max T. Pirro + v.o.
3/14 Weston 140 J. Forbes
3/30 DWMA 185 R. Schlegel
Tufted Duck
3/2-3/26 Nantucket 1 m ph T. Pastuszak, v.o.
Greater Scaup
3/19 Clinton 25 V. Burdette
3/20 New Bedford 200 A. Rainville
Lesser Scaup
3/9 Acoaxet 68 J. Eckerson
3/21-4/12 Pittsfield (Pont.) 14 max J. Pierce + v.o.
4/2 Clinton 10 J. Skinner + v.o.
King Eider
3/30-4/4 Hull 1 ph K. Rowdon + v.o.
3/31-4/23 PI 1 f ph B. Murphy + v.o.
Common Eider
3/7 Westport (GN) 65 J. Eckerson
4/1 Orleans 7920 N. Tepper
4/2 Tuckernuck I. 10000 D. Veit
Common Eider (Northern *borealis*)
3/16 Ipswich 1 N. Dubrow#
Harlequin Duck
3/1-3/31 Rockport (HPt) 50 max v.o.
3/23 Aquinnah 9 B. Shriber
4/9 Westport (GN) 11 M. Eckerson
4/30 N. Scituate 9 BBC (G. d'Entremont)
Surf Scoter
3/23-3/25 Mystic River 1 J. Mott
4/9 Westport (GN) 410 M. Eckerson
White-winged Scoter
4/7 Quabbin (G35) 1 B. Lafley
4/9 Westport (GN) 218 M. Eckerson
4/19 Lee 2 J. Pierce# + v.o.
Black Scoter
4/9 Westport (GN) 1235 M. Eckerson
4/30 N. Scituate 300 BBC (G. d'Entremont)
Long-tailed Duck
3/7 Westport (GN) 155 J. Eckerson
4/2 Tuckernuck I. 1200 D. Veit
4/9 Richmond 6 max J. Felton + v.o.
Bufflehead
3/5 Acushnet 36 C. Longworth
3/14 Weston 24 J. Forbes
4/30 Pembroke 60 BBC (G. d'Entremont)
Common Goldeneye
3/7 Westport (GN) 65 J. Eckerson
3/16 Wachusett Res. 60 G. Dresser
4/24 GMNWR 2 v.o.
Barrow's Goldeneye
3/3 Cheshire 1 m D. Griswold+v.o.
3/13 New Bedford 1 A. Place
3/22 New Salem 1 m T. Pirro + v.o.
4/4 Cohasset 2 J. Kricher + v.o.
Hooded Merganser
3/2 Sharon 267 L. Waters
3/6 Westborough 76 M. Lynch#
Common Merganser
3/5 Webster 150 J. Savickas
3/5 Fall River 26 L. Miller-Donnelly
3/11 Quaboag IBA 98 M. Lynch#
Red-breasted Merganser
4/9 Westport (GN) 49 M. Eckerson
4/27 Wachusett Res. 2 1pr M. Lynch#
Ruddy Duck
3/18 Acoaxet 73 A. Rainville#
4/12 Pittsfield (Pont.) 5 max R.Wendell + v.o.
4/13 Randolph 8 G. d'Entremont
Wild Turkey
3/25 Upton 39 T. Dodd
4/1 Mashpee 68 M. Keleher
Ruffed Grouse
3/26 Princeton 3 W. Howes
4/3 Mashpee 4 N. Marchessault
Willow Ptarmigan
4/30 Charlton 1 ph M. Keefe#
Ring-necked Pheasant
4/9 Swansea 1 f L. Agosto
4/18 N. Dighton 1 J. Eckerson
Pied-billed Grebe
3/18 PI 1 T. Wetmore#
3/20 Sharon 1 L. Waters
3/20, 4/8 Quaboag IBA 1 M. Lynch#
3/29 Milton 1 v.o.
4/5 Westborough 2 M. Lynch#
Horned Grebe
3/27-4/22 Lee 21 max P. Banducci + v.o.
4/9 Westport (GN) 48 M. Eckerson
4/12 Gill/Turners Falls 6 P. Gagarin + v.o.
Red-necked Grebe
3/27-4/13 Pittsfield (Pont.) 1 S. Townsend + v.o.
4/4 WWMA 21 P. Vanderhoof + v.o.
Eared Grebe
4/3-4/25 Marblehead 1 ph J. Smith + v.o.
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
4/9 Edgartown 1 J. Bernier

Eastern Whip-poor-will
4/17 Quabbin (G8) 2 J. Yanko
4/22 Holden 1 M. Lynch#
Chimney Swift
4/15 Westfield 3 D. Holmes
4/19 Medfield 1 J. Bock
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
4/23 Dartmouth 2 M. Eckerson
4/23 Middleton 1 S. Kaplan
Clapper Rail
4/30 W. Harwich 2 P. Trull
Virginia Rail
3/1-3/11 GMNWR 2 max v.o.
4/12 PI 6 R. Heil
4/15 Warren 7 M. Lynch#
4/22 S. Easton 2 N. Block
Sora
4/7 Ipswich 1 M. Goetschkes + v.o
4/25 Burrage Pd WMA 8 max T. Lloyd-Evans
4/26 HRWMA 1 J. Skinner
American Coot
3/9 Acoaxet 15 J. Eckerson
4/1-4/25 Woburn (HP) 35 max v.o.
4/1-4/30 PI 3 max v.o.
Sandhill Crane
3/6 BFWMA 3 M. Lynch#
3/13-4/30 Burrage Pd WMA 3 G d'Entremont + v.o.
3/15-3/26 Worthington 2 T. Gessing + v.o.
3/16 Lancaster 3 M. Lynch#
3/20 GMNWR 1 L. Sorenson + v.o.
3/26-4/7 Plainfield 2 D. McLain, K. Jones
4/11 Medfield 3 J. Bock
4/12-4/13 Haverhill 2 max C. Norris + v.o.
4/14 W. Roxbury (MP) 1 I. Messbauer
4/29-4/30 W. Harwich 5 D. Lomba + v.o.
American Oystercatcher
4/2 Tuckernuck I. 20 D. Veit
4/8 Westport 9 A. Batchelor
4/21 Monomoy NWR 13 J. Murphy
American Golden-Plover
4/10-4/14 PI 1 H. Wales, E. Labato + v.o.
Killdeer
3/8 Lancaster 16 C. Daniliuk
3/14 Fairhaven 32 C. Molander
4/2 Newbury 55 J. Offerman
Semipalmated Plover
4/8 Beverly 1 Z. Peters
4/10 PI 2 D. Brewster
Piping Plover
3/2 Yarmouth 3 A. Warren
3/10 Fairhaven 1 J. Sweeney
3/17-3/23 PI 11 max D. Adrien + v.o.
3/27 Westport 8 M.+J. Eckerson
4/9-4/22 Quincy 4 V. Zollo + v.o.
Upland Sandpiper
4/12 PI 1 R. Heil
4/14-4/30 Westover AFB 4 max S. Surner
4/17 Newbury 1 A. Steenstrup
4/30 Plymouth Airport 3 BBC (G. d'Entremont)
Ruddy Turnstone
4/1 Westport (GN) 18 J. Eckerson
Sanderling
3/26 Westport (GN) 135 M. Sylvia
4/12 PI 225 R. Heil
Dunlin
4/12 PI 88 R. Heil
4/14-4/19 BFWMA 2 E. Kittredge + v.o.
4/22 S. Dart. (APd) 166 J. Eckerson
4/26-4/27 Amherst 1 J. Oliverio + v.o.
Purple Sandpiper
3/1-3/19 Gloucester (BR) 30 max v.o.
4/5 Rockport 80 D. Peterson
4/9 Acoaxet 12 L. Waters#
4/30 N. Scituate 200 BBC (G. d'Entremont)
4/30 PI 35 T. Wetmore#
Least Sandpiper
4/16-4/18 PI 1 L. Ferraresso# + v.o.
4/22 S. Dart. (APd) 4 J. Eckerson
Pectoral Sandpiper
4/1 Orleans 1 N. Tepper
4/2-4/17 Amherst 5 max L. Therrien + v.o.
4/4-4/30 PI 6 max J. Hannafee + v.o.
4/12-4/30 W. Harwich 3 max B. Nikula
Semipalmated Sandpiper
4/23 PI 1 K. Blake
Short-billed Dowitcher
4/1 Orleans 1 N. Tepper
4/1 Westport (GN) 1 M. Levine
4/5 PI 1 A. Sanford#
American Woodcock
3/8 Lancaster 18 E. Mueller
3/13 Saugus (Bear Ck) 18 G. Wilson#
3/15 Dighton 5 D. Stebbins
3/23 PI 36 T.+L. Wetmore
Wilson's Snipe
3/18-3/19 Sheffield 4 max So. Auer + v.o.
3/20 Fairhaven 23 D. Burton# + v.o.
3/27-4/3 Whately 11 max P. Gagarin
4/3 BFWMA 25 V. Burdette#
4/3 Newbury 13 R. Heil
Spotted Sandpiper
4/14 Holyoke 1 J. Vanek
Solitary Sandpiper
4/12 Newbury 1 R. Heil
4/15 BFWMA 1 V. Burdette + v.o.
4/15 Sheffield 1 J. Pierce
Lesser Yellowlegs
3/17-4/30 BFWMA 1 V. Burdette + v.o.
3/25-4/11 Fairhaven 4 max C.Molander+v.o.
Willet
4/13 PI 1 M. Miller
4/17-4/30 Fairhaven 6 max M. Molander# + v.o.
Willet (Western)
3/1-3/14 W. Dennis 1 v.o.
Greater Yellowlegs
3/25-3/27 Fairhaven 2 max C. Longworth + v.o.
4/22 W. Harwich 47 B. Nikula
4/23 Dartmouth 32 M. Eckerson
Common Murre
3/13, 4/30 P'town (RP) 15,5 J. Hillsley
4/5 Cape Cod Bay 25 L. Waters#
Thick-billed Murre
3/14-3/17 P'town (RP) 3 A. Place, T. Hibbets
4/5 Plymouth Co. (offshore) 1 L. Waters#
Razorbill
3/13, 3/26 P'town (RP) 1500, 110 J. Hillsley
3/24 Rockport (AP) 8 R. Heil
3/26 Westport (GN) 7 M.+J. Eckerson
Black Guillemot
3/1-4/6 Gloucester (EP) 3 max A. Sanford + v.o.
Atlantic Puffin
3/20 Gloucester H. 1 ph v.o.
Black-legged Kittiwake
3/13 P'town (RP) 30 J. Hillsley
Bonaparte's Gull
3/31 Pittsfield (Onota) 7 J. Pierce
4/8-4/9 Quaboag IBA 1 D. Lusignan
4/24 N. Quabbin 13 B. Lafley
Laughing Gull
4/10 Marblehead 1 J. Smith
Iceland Gull
3/1-3/20 Gill/Turners Falls 5 max D. Sibley + v.o.
3/11 P'town (RP) 30 B. Nikula
3/11-3/14 Quabbin Pk 3 max L. Therrien + v.o.
Lesser Black-backed Gull
3/1-3/18 Gill/Turners Falls 2 max D. Sibley + v.o.

Lesser Black-backed Gull (continued)
3/26-4/1 Westport (GN) 2 max M.+J. Eckerson
4/19 Clinton 2 V. Burdette
Glaucous Gull
3/4-3/14 Tewksbury 2 max J. Keeley
3/6-3/18 Gill/Turners Falls 2 max J. Coleman + v.o.
3/11 P'town (RP) 1 imm B. Nikula
4/2-4/22 Revere B. 1 S. Laks + v.o.
Least Tern
4/27 Westport (GN) 3 D. Merski
Caspian Tern
3/26 P'town (RP) 1 P. Flood#
4/9 Pittsfield (Pont.) 1 J. Pierce + v.o.
4/16-4/19 BFWMA 1 M.+L. Sorenson + v.o.
4/19 Wachusett Res. 1 V. Burdette
4/19-4/24 GMNWR 1 J. Finnell#
4/21 Westport 2 L. Miller-Donnelly
4/22 Boston (CHRes.) 1 R. Doherty
4/23, 4/27 Waltham 1,1 C. Hartshorn, M.Hanley
4/24 Assonet 2 M. Iliff
4/24 PI 1 A. Sanford# + v.o.
4/24 Quincy 1 V. Zollo
4/30 P'town (RP) 1 B. Nikula
Common Tern
3/31 Nauset 1 N. Tepper
4/12 Quabbin Pk 1 T. Gilliland
4/30 Fairhaven 62 C. Molander#
Red-throated Loon
3/5-3/8 Medford 1 v.o.
4/9 Westport (GN) 92 M. Eckerson
4/18 Wachusett Res. 1 R. Spedding
Pacific Loon
3/1-4/30 P'town (RP) 4 max ph B. Nikula
Common Loon
4/10 Wachusett Res. 6 V. Burdette
4/14 Westport (GN) 25 J. Eckerson
4/21 Quabbin (G8) 2 1pr M. Lynch#
Northern Fulmar
3/13 P'town (RP) 1 J. Hillsley
4/4 Hydrographer Canyon 4 E. Martin
Manx Shearwater
3/20-3/31 Revere 1 S. Jones#
4/9 P'town (RP) 1 P. Flood
Northern Gannet
4/14 Westport (GN) 1017 J. Eckerson
4/16 P'town (RP) 1600 L. Waters
Great Cormorant
3/1-3/5 Gloucester (BR) 19 max C. Ross + v.o.
3/1-3/17 Medford 1 J. Kovner + v.o.
3/1-3/20 PI 3 max v.o.
3/21 Fairhaven 33 C. Longworth#
Double-crested Cormorant
4/14 WWMA 43 E. Mueller
4/22 S. Dart. (APd) 185 J. Eckerson
American Bittern
3/1-3/5 Ipswich 1 T. Mcentee
3/13, 3/25 PI 1,1 G. Ellison, M. Baird#
3/15 Nantucket 1 T. Pastuszak
4/2 Dighton 2 au M. Eckerson
4/12 Arlington 2 P. Roberts
4/12 MtA 1 S. Johannet + v.o.
4/12-4/25 October Mountain 1 M. Watson
4/13 Dedham 1 nfc M. Iliff
4/13-4/27 Lenox 2 max J. Pierce + v.o.
4/24-4/29 N. Truro 1 A. Bedford
4/25 Burrage Pd WMA 10 max T. Lloyd-Evans
Least Bittern
4/14 W. Harwich 1 R. Debenham
4/22-4/23 PI 1 T. Wetmore# + v.o.
Great Blue Heron
3/23 HRWMA 14 J. Skinner#
4/8 Dighton 46 M.+J. Eckerson
Great Egret
4/1-4/10 PI 12 max v.o.
4/5 Dighton 6 J. Eckerson
4/13 W. Harwich 14 V. Burdette
4/30 Hingham 50 BBC (G. d'Entremont)
Snowy Egret
4/1 Ipswich 1 A. Sanford
4/13 W. Harwich 33 V. Burdette
4/27 Dartmouth 8 K. Wylie#
Little Blue Heron
4/9-4/20 Northfield 1 A. Baker + v.o.
4/24 Carver 1 B. Vacchino
4/29 W. Roxbury (MP) 1 T. Bradford
4/30 E. Boston (BI) 1 M. Kaufman
Tricolored Heron
3/27 Westport 1 V. Burdette#
4/3 S. Dart. (APd) 1 L. Miller-Donnelly#
4/5 Nantucket 1 T. Pastuszak
4/5-4/26 W. Harwich 1 M.J. Foti + v.o.
Cattle Egret
4/17 Quincy 1 ph E. Ross + v.o.
4/26 S. Deerfield 1 A. Richards + v.o.
4/28-4/30 Hadley 1 ph M. Locher + v.o.
Green Heron
4/12 New Salem 1 B. Lafley
4/13 Dedham 1 nfc M. Iliff
4/15-4/20 MtA 1 R. Stymeist# + v.o.
Black-crowned Night-Heron
4/11-4/12 W. Harwich 76 K. Burke#
4/12 Watertown 10 J. Forbes
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron
4/20 Duxbury 1 T. Carlson
White Ibis
4/11-4/18 WBWS 1 ad ph J. Jones + v.o.
4/17 Duxbury/Ellisville 1 ad ph T.Carlson, J.Burns+v.o.
4/20-4/24 Eastham (FH) 2 ad ph E. Creasey#
4/26-4/27 Boston/Cambridge 1 imm ph T. Bradford + v.o.
Glossy Ibis
4/8 Dighton 19 J. + M. Eckerson
4/17 Ipswich 55 J. Berry + v.o.
4/22 GMNWR 16 v.o.
4/29 W. Harwich 10 B. Tucker
4/30 Burrage Pd WMA 11 BBC (G. d'Entremont)
White-faced Ibis
4/17 Ipswich 1 ph S. Weatherall + v.o.
4/22-4/25 Rowley/Newbury 1 ph L. Morello# + v.o.

VULTURES THROUGH DICKCISSEL

A **Swainson's Hawk**, photographed in a kettle of vultures at Race Point, Provincetown, on April 13, is the fifth record from that location. Previous reports of this migratory hawk are September 9, 1994, August 23, 1996, June 25–October 15, 1997, and October 3, 1998. A **Swallow-tailed Kite** was photographed from North Truro on April 16. This species has been reported six times in recent years from Outer Cape Cod, as well as numerous areas elsewhere on the peninsula. Hawkwatchers stationed at Lot 1 on Plum Island estimated over 925 migrating American Kestrels. This was the second highest number since 2006. The best year was 2011

when 1,206 individuals were counted. Other totals from Plum Island included 83 Merlins, 125 Northern Harriers, and 106 Sharp-shinned Hawks. A Snowy Owl present most of the winter on Plum Island was last reported on April 17 and another bird was noted from Lowell on April 27.

March and April signal the start of migration, with the birding community ready to welcome the first returning Tree Swallows and Eastern Phoebes as well as any unexpected surprises. With a stretch of mild weather in mid-March, numbers of early migrants continued to build up and were joined by the first Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Pine and Palm warblers. Strong southwest winds at the end of March were probably responsible for sending two **Prothonotary Warblers** beyond their intended destinations. One was found in Mashpee, the other on Nantucket.

There was an intriguing report of an unusual martin noted on Tuckernuck Island on April 1. The observers noted that the entire underparts were dark brownish with dusky barring. The chunky body eliminated any likely species of swallow. Purple Martin was considered but ruled out after consulting various references and photographs, leaving Southern Martin as the closest match. Southern Martins have been reported farther north of their breeding area including a report from Key West, Florida. The observers felt it is worth noting the possibility that this species may occur in our area.

The first significant wave of new migrants arrived in mid-April. On the evening of April 11, southerly winds in advance of an approaching cold front set the stage for a fallout of birds. Rick Heil noted it was one of the best April fallouts that he has experienced on Plum Island; birds were everywhere with many moving north along the dunes and in the roadside thickets. Some of the high counts noted include over 250 Northern Flickers, 13 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, 26 Eastern Phoebes, 58 Hermit Thrushes, over 150 Golden-crowned Kinglets, 15 Fox Sparrows, over 150 Dark-eyed Juncos, and over 300 Song Sparrows. A similar experience on Plum Island was noted by Doug Chickering on the morning of April 15, when the weather was again unpleasant with fog, light rain, and cool temperatures. Just walking along the S-curves of the island, Doug counted 90 flickers, 20 Hermit Thrushes, over 100 robins, and a Vesper Sparrow among hundreds of Song Sparrows. After many days of raw east and north winds, a welcome southwest wind on April 26 brought another wave of migrants, especially the typical late April arrivals such as Blue-headed Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Chipping Sparrow, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. That day—April 26—produced exceptionally early reports of an Eastern Wood-Pewee and a Swainson's Thrush from Eastern Point in Gloucester. Other early reports included a Wood Thrush on Plum Island on April 12, a Blackpoll Warbler from Westport on April 22, a Great-crested Flycatcher from Norton on April 24, and a Grasshopper Sparrow in Lowell on April 24.

Holdovers from the winter included the **Red-headed Woodpecker** that was first noted on January 11 at the Lloyd Center in Westport and was last seen on April 20. The Wilson's Warbler first noted on December 4 from Mission Hill was last seen on April 12, and the European Goldfinch first noted on November 4 was last reported on March 16 after four months in the Arlington-Lexington area. A **Townsend's Solitaire** was photographed in Lexington on March 1 and may have been overlooked in nearby areas. Twenty-four species of warbler were reported during the period. The most noteworthy sightings were two reports of Worm-eating Warblers, three **Prothonotary Warblers**, a **Kentucky Warbler** in Dennis, a Hooded Warbler in Medford, and **Yellow-throated Warblers** from Franklin Park, Boston, and from Woods Hole. Other reports included a cooperative Blue Grosbeak that was present for two weeks at Millennium Park in West Roxbury and a **Summer Tanager** and a **Painted Bunting** from Marshfield.

R. Stymeist

Black Vulture
4/3 Centerville 6 H. Holbrook
4/13 Athol 11 E. Mueller
4/14 Lexington 8 R. Rotberg
4/23 Westport 20 D. Tobias
Turkey Vulture
3/12 Ware 40 M. Nolan
4/2-4/28 Saugus (Bear Ck) 29 Hawkcount (C. Jackson)
4/2-4/30 Truro 259 Hawkcount (D. Manchester)
Osprey
4/4-4/28 PI 58 Hawkcount
4/5 S. Dart. (APd) 28 E. Lipton
4/12 Mashpee 22 P. Crosson
Swallow-tailed Kite
4/16 N. Truro 1 ph L. Waters#
Golden Eagle
3/8 Orange 1 B. Lafley
3/15 Ipswich 1 G. Ellison
4/1 Williamstown 1 So. Auer
Northern Harrier
3/16-4/30 PI 125 Hawkcount
4/9 New Braintree 3 Anon.
4/16 P'town (RP) 5 L. Waters
4/16 W. Roxbury (MP) 1 J. Forbes
Sharp-shinned Hawk
4/5-4/30 PI 105 max Hawkcount
4/16 P'town (RP) 32 L. Waters
Cooper's Hawk
4/2-4/30 PI 36 Hawkcount
4/11 Athol 4 E. Mueller
Northern Goshawk
3/5 N. Andover 1 R. Heil
4/10 Washington 1 S. Welch
4/12 IRWS 1 S. Santino#
4/21 Petersham 1 D. Small
Bald Eagle
3/2 Norton 5 K. Ryan
3/8 Hardwick 5 W. Howes
4/11 Athol 5 E. Mueller
4/11-4/28 PI 15 Hawkcount
Red-shouldered Hawk
3/18 S. Easton 4 N. Block
4/13 Athol 13 E. Mueller
4/16 Mashpee 2 imm G. d'Entremont#
Broad-winged Hawk
4/4 Huntington 1 D. McLain, K. Jones
4/15 W. Roxbury (MP) 10 M. Iliff + v.o.
4/18 Barre 25 Hawkcount (J. Emerton)
4/23 Athol 46 E. Mueller
4/25 Mt Wachusett 43 E. Mueller
4/30 Boston (FPk) 5 S. Jones
Swainson's Hawk
4/13 P'town (RP) 1 ph J. Jones
Red-tailed Hawk
4/16 Somerset 12 M. Eckerson
Rough-legged Hawk
3/1-4/4 Indiv. rep. from 8 locations
Barn Owl
3/23-4/4 Barnstable 1 ph I. Ives
Great Horned Owl
3/21 Dartmouth 2 B. King#
4/3 Medfield 4 J. Bock
4/22 Holden 3 M. Lynch#
Snowy Owl
3/1-3/10 Pittsfield 1 L. Merry
3/1-4/17 PI 2 max T.Wetmore#+v.o.
3/6 Orleans 2 K. Burke
3/19 Gill 1 C. Witko
4/27 Lowell 1 Anon.
Barred Owl
4/22 Holden 4 M. Lynch#
4/26 Dighton 3 2ad+1yg J. Eckerson
4/30 Wompatuck SP 3 BBC (G. d'Entremont)
Short-eared Owl
3/5-3/20 Wellfleet 1 N. Marchessault + v.o.
3/15-3/31 PI 1 D. Adrien + v.o.
4/1 Orleans 1 N. Tepper
4/13 Northampton 1 J. Blue
Northern Saw-whet Owl
3/4 Winchendon 1 R. Galat
3/6-3/18 Hardwick 1 W. Howes
3/15 Barre 1 M. Perkins
3/18 Hardwick 2 C. Buelow
4/22 Holden 1 M. Lynch#
Belted Kingfisher
4/13 Hardwick 2 M. Lynch#
4/16 Harwich 3 G. d'Entremont#
Red-headed Woodpecker
3/1-4/20 Dartmouth 1 imm ph J. Bogart + v.o.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
4/1-4/12 PI 13 max R. Heil + v.o.
4/12 Boston (McW) 12 L. Grimes + v.o.
4/12 MtA 6 R. Stymeist#
4/13 Boston (FPk) 13 S. Jones
Northern Flicker
4/12 PI 268 R. Heil
4/16 P'town (RP) 28 min B. Nikula
4/23 W. Brookfield 11 M. Lynch#
Pileated Woodpecker
3/6 Dighton 3 A.+M. Eckerson
3/12 Shutesbury 5 K. Weir
4/24 Petersham 4 M. Lynch#
American Kestrel
3/20-4/30 PI 912 max Hawkcount
4/4-4/30 Truro 103 Hawkcount (D. Manchester)
4/16 P'town (RP) 15 L. Waters
Merlin
3/20-4/30 PI 83 Hawkcount
4/16 P'town (RP) 5 L. Waters
Peregrine Falcon
4/12 Lunenburg 2 T. Reif
4/18 Athol 2 E. Mueller
Great Crested Flycatcher
4/24 Norton 1 C. Darmstadt
Eastern Kingbird
4/20-4/29 Arlington Res. 1 J. Hueber#
4/27 Wayland 1 H. Stein
Eastern Wood-Pewee
4/26 Gloucester (EP) 1 R. Heil
Least Flycatcher
4/28 Athol 1 E. LeBlanc
Eastern Phoebe
4/12 MNWS 25 J. Smith
4/13 Hardwick 28 M. Lynch#
4/16 P'town 14 L. Waters#
Northern Shrike
3/1-4/9 Indiv. rep. from 9 locations
White-eyed Vireo
4/1 Nahant 1 B. Smith#
4/14 Westport (GN) 1 J. Eckerson
4/14-4/17 P'town 1 B. Nikula
4/25 MBO 1 ad b T. Lloyd-Evans#
Yellow-throated Vireo
4/23 P'town 1 S. Macalister
Blue-headed Vireo
4/17-4/30 MtA 5 max v.o.
4/24 Petersham 7 J. Skinner#
Warbling Vireo
4/25 Cambr. (FP) 1 W. Millett
4/28 Watertown 2 J. Forbes
Red-eyed Vireo
4/29 Ipswich 1 M. Chuffnel
4/30 Natick 1 C. Hughes
Fish Crow
3/2 Norton 14 K. Ryan
3/13 Dartmouth 262 L. Miller-Donnelly

Common Raven
3/5 Sandwich 6 G. d'Entremont
3/26 Athol 14 B. Mallett
Horned Lark
3/1-3/23 Egremont 250 max J. Pierce + v.o.
3/1-4/30 Northampton 250 max L. Therrien + v.o.
3/13 Saugus (Bear Ck) 120 G. Wilson#
Bank Swallow
4/27 BFWMA 1 T. Murray
4/27 Dartmouth 1 A. Morgan#
Tree Swallow
3/7 BFWMA 1 L. Markiewicz
3/20 IRWS 75 D. Bates#
3/23 DWMA 125 L. Markiewicz#
4/25 Burrage Pd WMA 145 max T. Lloyd-Evans
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
3/25-4/30 Longmeadow 20 max C. Lawlor
4/8 Uxbridge 10 L. Olsen
4/17 Westport 15 L. Miller-Donnelly
Purple Martin
3/27 Westport 1 M.+J. Eckerson
4/9-4/17 Rehoboth 30 max R. Marr
4/13-4/30 PI 30 max v.o.
Martin sp. (Purple / Southern Martin)
4/1 Tuckernuck I. 1 R. Veit#
Barn Swallow
3/18 Ipswich 1 I. Pepper
3/19 IRWS 1 A. Steenstrup
4/26 Fairhaven 12 C. Molander
Cliff Swallow
4/6 Mashpee 1 M. Keleher#
4/9 Cheshire 1 J. Felton
4/17 Arlington Res. 1 K. Hartel
4/23 Burrage Pd WMA 1 T. Lloyd-Evans
Red-breasted Nuthatch
4/17 Wompatuck SP 2 G. d'Entremont
4/23 Petersham 8 Anon.
Brown Creeper
4/12 PI 13 R. Heil
4/15 P'town 25 T. Green#
House Wren
3/21 Wilmington 1 S. Sullivan
3/22 Great Barrington 1 au G. Ward
4/23 Dartmouth 2 M. Eckerson
Winter Wren
3/4-3/16 Boston (FPk) 1 S. Jones
3/5 Medfield 2 J. Bock
3/6 Foxborough 3 J. Glover
4/17 Wompatuck SP 4 G. d'Entremont
Marsh Wren
3/1-3/23 GMNWR 1 v.o.
3/20 Lynnfield 1 J. Young
4/23-4/27 Lenox 2 max Z. Adams + v.o.
Carolina Wren
3/18 Dudley 15 M. Lynch#
4/23 Dartmouth 13 M. Eckerson
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
4/17 P'town 5 B. Nikula
4/20 MBO 3 b T. Lloyd-Evans#
4/26 Fall River 6 L. Abbey#
Golden-crowned Kinglet
4/12 PI 154 R. Heil
4/12 MNWS 32 J. Smith
4/16 P'town 223 L. Waters#
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
3/1-4/30 Hadley 23 max L. Therrien + v.o.
4/12 PI 37 R. Heil
4/14 Quincy 37 L. Waters
4/17 P'town 60 min B. Nikula
Eastern Bluebird
3/11 Quaboag IBA 23 M. Lynch#
3/11 Seekonk 20 R. McKetchnie
Townsend's Solitaire
3/1 Lexington (DM) 1 ph H. Yelle
Veery
4/22 Quincy 1 J. Bock
4/25 Hadley (Fort R.) 1 D. Oakley, H. Iselin
4/30 Sturbridge 1 D. Lusignan
4/30 Northborough 1 L. Lane
Swainson's Thrush
4/26 Gloucester (EP) 1 R. Heil
4/29 New Braintree 1 D. Mazzarese
Hermit Thrush
4/12 PI 58 R. Heil
4/12 MNWS 16 J. Smith
4/16 P'town 66 L. Waters#
4/20 MBO 7 b T. Lloyd-Evans#
Wood Thrush
4/12 PI 1 S. Babbitt#
4/18 Northampton 1 M. Locher
4/24 MNWS 1 H. Wales
Gray Catbird
4/23 Dartmouth 7 M. Eckerson
4/23 Eastham (FH) 5 G. d'Entremont
Brown Thrasher
3/1-3/24 Sterling 1 A. Laasanen
3/5 Oakham 1 W. Howes
3/16-4/10 Fairhaven 2 max S. Walas# + v.o.
Cedar Waxwing
4/13 Hardwick 30 M. Lynch#
4/21 Worc. 60 J. Erichsen
American Pipit
3/7 Fairhaven 25 C. Longworth
3/7-4/20 Northampton 13 max S. Surner + v.o.
4/9 Sheffield 25 G. Ward
Evening Grosbeak
3/19-4/11 Royalston 3 E. LeBlanc
3/27-4/12 Northfield 2 1pr A. Streaky + v.o.
4/4-4/23 Williamsburg 2 max M. McKitrick + v.o.
Purple Finch
3/1 Dighton 3 J. Eckerson
4/1 Orleans 6 N. Tepper
4/7 Athol 7 E. LeBlanc
4/12 PI 24 R. Heil
Red Crossbill
3/5-4/4 Williamsburg 2 max J. Young + v.o.
3/10-4/27 Montague 3 G. Watkevich + v.o.
3/16-3/18 Savoy 4 max G. Hurley + v.o.
3/20-4/18 Washington 24 max R. Nussbaumer + v.o.
3/25-4/17 Quabbin Pk 3 max L. Therrien + v.o.
4/1 Wellfleet 1 A. Hight#
European Goldfinch?
3/9 Lexington (DM) 1 N. Teague
3/16 Arlington 1 T. Dempsey
Pine Siskin
3/5 Royalston 16 C. Caron
4/1 Winchendon 16 B. Robo
Lapland Longspur
2/19 PI 1 D. Swain
3/5 Fitchburg 1 T. Pirro
3/5-3/23 Northampton 1 F. Bowrys + v.o.
3/10 Hadley 1 L. Therrien
3/13 Saugus (Bear Ck) 30 G. Wilson#
Snow Bunting
3/1-3/5 Northampton 40 max L. Therrien + v.o.
3/5 Whately 75 S. Surner
3/5 New Bedford 22 L. Agosto#
3/16 Wachusett Res. 10 max J. Skinner + v.o.
4/16 Gloucester 1 S. Hedman
Grasshopper Sparrow
4/24 Lowell 1 F. Lopez
Chipping Sparrow
3/9-4/12 Easthampton 7 max J. Yanko + v.o.
3/19 PI 1 J. Hoye#
4/27 W. Brookfield 17 M. Lynch#
Clay-colored Sparrow
3/1-3/5 Hadley (Honeypot) 1 M. McKitrick + v.o.
3/1-4/12 Easthampton 1 J. Lafley + v.o.

Field Sparrow
3/15 Freetown 7 L. Abbey#
4/18 Lancaster 18 D. Bates
Fox Sparrow
3/1-4/4 Hardwick 5 W. Howes
3/12 Lenox 3 R. Wheeler
3/16 Quincy 4 D. Burton
4/1 Orleans 4 N. Tepper
4/12 PI 15 R. Heil
4/30 MtA 1 N. Hayward
American Tree Sparrow
3/18 Paxton 12 R. Jenkins
3/26 BFWMA 26 J. Skinner#
4/20 Pittsfield 2 S. Townsend
Dark-eyed Junco
3/4 Quabbin Res. 40 M. Lynch#
4/12 PI 151 R. Heil
4/17 P'town 30 B. Nikula
White-crowned Sparrow
3/1-4/23 Sunderland 4 max S. Griesemer
3/2-4/30 W. Roxbury (MP) 6 M. Iliff + v.o.
4/3 Saugus (Bear Ck) 4 G. Wilson#
White-throated Sparrow
3/9 Easton 11 K. Ryan
4/23 W. Brookfield 56 M. Lynch#
4/25 MBO 12 b T. Lloyd-Evans#
Vesper Sparrow
4/1 Orleans 1 K. Burke
4/12 PI 2 R. Heil
4/13-4/21 W. Roxbury (MP) 5 J. Hanson + v.o.
4/13-4/24 Orange Airport 2 max P. Gagarin + v.o.
4/13-4/30 Lancaster 3 max J. Skinner + v.o.
Seaside Sparrow
4/22 S. Dart. (APd) 1 J. Eckerson
4/27 PI 2 T. Wetmore#
Nelson's Sparrow
4/1 Orleans 1 N. Tepper
Saltmarsh Sparrow
4/1 Orleans 3 N. Tepper
Savannah Sparrow
4/15 IRWS 27 J. MacDougall
4/17 Hardwick 20 W. Howes
4/23 Burrage Pd WMA 41 max T. Lloyd-Evans
Savannah Sparrow (Ipswich Sparrow)
4/1 Orleans 4 N. Tepper
Swamp Sparrow
4/13 WWMA 25 T. Spahr
4/15 Warren 11 M. Lynch#
4/23 Dartmouth 3 M. Eckerson
Eastern Towhee
4/22 MBO 3 b T. Lloyd-Evans#
4/23 Dartmouth 23 M. Eckerson
4/30 Grafton 10 C. Martone
Bobolink
4/30 Paxton 1 M. Landon
Eastern Meadowlark
3/1-4/30 Hadley (Fort R.) 6 max L. Therrien + v.o.
3/5 S. Dart. (APd) 17 K. Wylie#
3/18-4/30 Westover AFB 5 max D. Holmes + v.o.
Orchard Oriole
4/27 PI 1 T. Wetmore#
Baltimore Oriole
3/1-4/13 N. Attleboro 1 ad m Anon.
4/12 Waltham 1 J. MacConnell
4/20 Ipswich 1 L. Manzi
4/20 MtA 1 D. Fillingham
Rusty Blackbird
3/4 Medfield 6 K. Ryan
3/10, 3/15 Lynnfield 97,87 L. Ireland#
3/15 IRWS 6 A. Steenstrup
3/15 Wenham 6 R. Buchsbaum
3/9-4/14 Northborough 16 max v.o.
4/15 P'town 4 T. Green#
Ovenbird
4/23 Bedford 2 D. Swain#
4/26 Dighton 3 J. Eckerson
4/27 MtA 1 K. Dia
4/30 Wompatuck SP 4 BBC (G. d'Entremont)
Worm-eating Warbler
4/13-4/20 MNWS 1 J. Hoye# + v.o.
4/23-4/24 Boston (FPk) 1 S. Jones + v.o.
Louisiana Waterthrush
4/4-4/30 Williamsburg 4 max M.McKitrick+v.o.
4/5 Cohasset 1 S. Avery
4/24 Petersham 2 M. Lynch#
Northern Waterthrush
4/23 Fall River 6 H. Zimberlin#
4/15 Winchester (Fells) 1 R. Stymeist#
Blue-winged Warbler
4/26 WWMA 2 S. Beattie
Black-and-white Warbler
4/13 Bedford 1 J. Keyes
4/14 WWMA 1 B. Robo
Prothonotary Warbler
3/25 Mashpee 1 ph M. Tucker
3/28 Nantucket 1 ph Anon.
4/24-4/26 Sandwich 1 ph P. Grose
Orange-crowned Warbler
3/1-3/15 Gloucester (EP) 1 v.o.
3/1-4/5 Hudson 1 Anon.
3/5-3/19 Woods Hole 1 D. Remsen
Nashville Warbler
4/15 Pittsfield 1 So. Auer
4/26 Lenox 1 Z. Adams
Kentucky Warbler
4/21-4/22 Dennis 1 ph fide P. Trull
Common Yellowthroat
4/12 Freetown 1 L. Abbey#
4/17 Winchester (Fells) 1 F. Porter
4/17-4/25 Southampton 1 A. Hulsey + v.o.
Hooded Warbler
4/17-4/20 Medford 1 D. Noe + v.o.
American Redstart
4/25 Freetown 1 m C. Molander
4/25 Northampton 1 m B. Finney
Northern Parula
4/21 Boston (FPk) 1 S. Jones
4/23 Dartmouth 1 M. Eckerson
4/23 Wellfleet 1 B. Nikula
Yellow Warbler
4/15 Seekonk 1 D. Pacelli#
4/26 WWMA 8 T. Spahr
Blackpoll Warbler
4/22 Westport 1 L. Miller-Donnelly
Black-throated Blue Warbler
4/25 Deerfield 1 C. Drumgool
4/25 Williamstown 1 D. Schaller
4/29 Westminster 2 J. McEachern
Palm Warbler
4/13 Freetown 5 G. Chretien
4/15, 4/16 P'town 45,36 T. Green#, L. Waters#
4/18 DWMA 32 P. Sowizral
4/22 MBO 9 b T. Lloyd-Evans#
Pine Warbler
3/1-3/13 Gloucester 2 max C. Wood
4/16 Fall River 28 M. Eckerson
4/16 P'town 28 L. Waters#
Yellow-rumped Warbler
3/1-4/30 Northampton 30 max L. Therrien + v.o.
4/18 DWMA 82 P. Sowizral
4/22 Westport 30 L. Miller-Donnelly
Yellow-throated Warbler
4/6-4/8 Boston (FPk) 1 ph S. Jones + v.o.
4/15 Woods Hole 1 ph M. Tucker
Prairie Warbler
4/17 Southampton 1 A. Hulsey

Prairie Warbler (continued)			
4/22	PI	1	J. Nathan#
4/24	Bedford	1	V. Cook
Black-throated Green Warbler			
4/16	Fall River	1 m	L. Miller-Donnelly
4/23	Petersham	1	J. Huestis
Wilson's Warbler			
3/1-4/12	Boston (McW)	1 *pileota*	L. Grimes + v.o.
Summer Tanager			
4/18	Marshfield	1 ph	K. Randle
Scarlet Tanager			
4/26	Dartmouth	1	J. Eckerson
Rose-breasted Grosbeak			
4/13-4/22	N. Dartmouth	1 m	J. Sampieri#
4/21	Belchertown	1 f	E. Aasheim
4/22	Millbury	2	L. Laut
Blue Grosbeak			
4/10-4/23	W. Roxbury (MP)	1	T. Bradford + v.o.
4/21	Scituate	1	L. Norton
Indigo Bunting			
3/1-3/4	Harwich	1 f	M. Faherty
3/1-4/10	Nahant	1	M. Padulo + v.o.
4/9-4/19	WBWS	1 m	M. Moore + v.o.
4/16	Shelburne Falls	1	P. Conlin
4/20-4/27	Barnstable	1 m	C. Gelerman
Painted Bunting			
4/28	Marshfield	1 m ph	B. Morrissey
Dickcissel			
3/1-3/18	Nantucket	1	T. Pastuszak
4/1-4/10	Revere	1	P. Peterson + v.o.

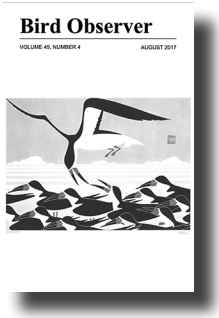
BYGONE BIRDS

Historical Highlights for March–April

Neil Hayward

5 YEARS AGO

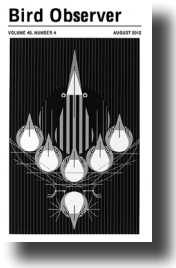
March–April 2017



A **Pink-footed Goose** continued in the Ipswich area until March 8. A **Ross's Goose** was found in Lexington on March 3 and stayed almost a week. Four **Tundra Swans** were present in Cheshire on March 24–25. A high count of four **White-faced Ibises** appeared in Ipswich on April 24. A **Black-necked Stilt** was found on April 12 in Edgartown. Two **Mew Gulls**—now split as **Common Gulls**—were found at Race Point on April 15. The pair of **White-winged Doves** continued in the Fenway, with the male heard singing on April 24. Continuing feeder birds included a **Boreal Chickadee** in Peru, a **Painted Bunting** in Orleans, and a **Harris's Sparrow** in Dalton.

Best sighting: a **Smith's Longspur** was present at Bear Creek Wildlife Sanctuary in Saugus from March 15–April 9. This was the fourth record for the state and quite possibly the same individual as the third record for the state, found the previous winter at the same location.

10 YEARS AGO



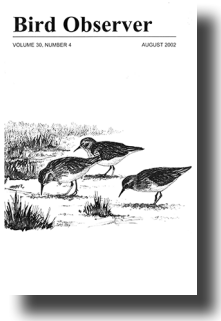
March–April 2012

This winter represented one of the largest Snowy Owl incursions on record. Mild weather produced some exceptionally early migrants including a Chimney Swift on April 8 and a Blackburnian Warbler on April 10. An **Allen's Hummingbird** appeared at a feeder in Dennis on March 24. Two days after being banded, the bird hit a window and died; the specimen is now housed in Harvard University's Museum of Comparative Zoology. The **Townsend's Warbler**, which had been visiting Jim

and Natalie Berry's feeder in Ipswich since December 24, was last seen on March 27. Jim estimated that as many as 500 birders visited during its three-month stay.

Best sighting: a **Black-throated Sparrow** was photographed at a feeder in Brewster. The homeowners were unwilling to make the sighting public. This is the first accepted record for the state after an unconfirmed sight report in Amherst in April 1963.

20 YEARS AGO

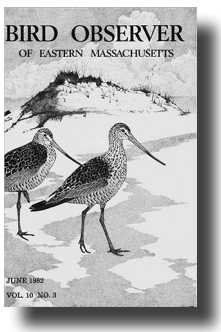


March–April 2002

A **Western Grebe** was present off the beach at Plum Island from March 16 into May. A **Dark-bellied Brant** (*Branta bernicla bernicla*) appeared at Newburyport on April 25–26. Monk Parakeets—which are not on the official state list—were noted in Somerset and Dartmouth. Rare songbirds included **Boreal Chickadees** in Granby and Windsor, a **Summer Tanager** in Belmont, a **Harris's Sparrow** in Westport, a **Painted Bunting** in Lexington, and **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** in Northampton and Weymouth.

Best sightings: a male **Eurasian Kestrel** was found in South Wellfleet on April 14 and—presumably the same individual—was later relocated in Chatham where it was present April 18–May 5. This is the second record for the state. The first was a female collected in Hull on September 29, 1887. A week after the kestrel was first spotted, an adult male **Pacific Golden-Plover** in breeding plumage was discovered at Plum Island on April 21. It was the first Massachusetts record and only the third for eastern North America.

40 YEARS AGO



March–April 1982

An **Arctic Loon** was reported at the north end of Plum Island on April 23. A **Western Grebe** was seen by many observers in Scituate from March 22–April 4. A **Tundra Swan** was present on Martha's Vineyard throughout March. Up to seven adult **Little Gulls** were present in Newburyport Harbor on April 29. A **Gull-billed Tern** was found on Nantucket on April 30 and an **Atlantic Puffin** was noted in Cape Cod Bay on April 19. A Red-bellied Woodpecker was found in Orleans in March and a **Red-headed Woodpecker** continued at Horn Pond, Woburn, through March. A **Boreal Chickadee** was spotted at Squaw Rock, Squantum, on April 16.

Best breeding location: Mount Auburn Cemetery hosted breeding pairs of Fish Crows and Pine Siskins.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

Taxonomic order is based on AOS checklist, Seventh edition, 62nd Supplement, as published online at <http://checklist.aou.org/taxa> (see also <http://checklist.americanornithology.org/>).

Locations

AA	Arnold Arboretum, Boston
ABC	Allen Bird Club
AFB	Air Force Base
AP	Andrews Point, Rockport
APd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth
AthBC	Athol Bird Club
B.	Beach
Barre FD	Barre Falls Dam
BBC	Brookline Bird Club
BFWMA	Bolton Flats WMA, Bolton & Lancaster
BHI	Boston Harbor Islands
BI	Belle Isle, E. Boston
BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester
BNC	Boston Nature Center, Mattapan
BR	Bass Rocks, Gloucester
BRI Co. seas	Bristol County, offshore
Cambr.	Cambridge
CB	Crane Beach, Ipswich
CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club
CGB	Coast Guard Beach, Eastham
Ck	Creek
Co.	County
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis
CP	Crooked Pond, Boxford
CPd	Chandler Pond, Boston
C. Res.	Cambridge Reservoir, Waltham
CSpk	Cold Spring Park, Newton
Cumb. Farms	Cumberland Farms, Middleboro
DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
DM	Dunback Meadow
DWMA	Delaney WMA, Stow, Bolton, Harvard
DWWS	Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary
EP	Eastern Point, Gloucester
FE	First Encounter Beach, Eastham
FH	Fort Hill, Eastham
FHC	Forest Hills Cemetery, Boston
FP	Fresh Pond, Cambridge
FPk	Franklin Park, Boston
G#	Gate #, Quabbin Res.
GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
GN	Gooseberry Neck, Westport
H.	Harbor
HCB	Herring Cove Beach, Provincetown
HP	Horn Pond, Woburn
HPt	Halibut Point, Rockport
HRWMA	High Ridge WMA, Gardner
I.	Island
IBA	Important Bird Area
IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
JPd	Jamaica Pond, Boston
L.	Ledge
MAS	Mass Audubon
MBO	Bird Observatory, Manomet
MBWMA	Martin Burns WMA, Newbury
McW	McLaughlin Woods
MI	Morris Island
MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
MP	Millennium Park, W. Roxbury
MSSF	Myles Standish State Forest, Plymouth
MtA	Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambr.
MV	Martha's Vineyard
NAC	Nine Acre Corner, Concord
Nbpt	Newburyport
ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
Pd	Pond
PG	Public Garden, Boston
PI	Plum Island
Pk	Park
PLY Co. seas	Plymouth County, offshore
Pont.	Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro
POP	Point of Pines, Revere
PR	Pinnacle Rock, Malden
P'town	Provincetown
R.	River
Res.	Reservoir
RKG	Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston
RP	Race Point, Provincetown
SB	South Beach, Chatham
SF	State Forest
SN	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
SP	State Park
SRV	Sudbury River Valley
SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
TASL	Take A Second Look, Boston Harbor Census
WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
WE	World's End, Hingham
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
WMWS	Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary
Wompatuck SP	Hingham, Cohasset, Scituate, Norwell
Worc.	Worcester
WS	Wildlife Sanctuary
WSF	Willowdale State Forest, Ipswich
WWMA	Westborough WMA, Westborough

Other Abbreviations

*	first state record (pending MARC review)
!	subject to MARC review
?	Questionable provenance / possible escape
ad	adult
alt	alternative plumage
au	audio recorded
b	banded
basic	basic plumage
br	breeding
cy	cycle (3cy = 3rd cycle)
d	dead
dk	dark (morph)
f	female
fl	fledgling
h	heard
imm	immature
inj	injured
juv	juvenile
lt	light (morph)
m	male
MARC	Massachusetts Avian Records Committee
max	maximum
migr	migrating
min	minimum
n	nesting
nfc	nocturnal flight call
ph	photographed
pr	pair
r	rescued
S	summer (1S = first summer)
subad	subadult
v.o.	various observers
W	winter (2W = second winter)
yg	young
#	additional observers

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO *BIRD OBSERVER*

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

Species on the Review List of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, as well as species unusual as to place, time, or known nesting status in Massachusetts, should be reported promptly to the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee at <https://maavianrecords.com/submit-sighting/>, or by email to Peter Crosson at capecodbirder@gmail.com.

ABOUT THE COVER

Pectoral Sandpiper

The Pectoral Sandpiper (*Calidris melanotos*) has one of the longest migration routes of any of the long-distance migratory shorebirds. Brown with a white belly, it is a somewhat long-necked, medium-sized sandpiper with a sharp line of demarcation between the dark streaked breast and white belly and undertail. The breast, back, head, and neck feathers are finely striped brown; the coverts and tertial feathers are dark brown with lighter brown edges. The legs are a greenish yellow. The head sports a whitish eye stripe and chin. The bill is slightly decurved, and either all dark or with a dull orange yellow base. Females are similar in plumage to males but are visibly smaller. Juveniles resemble adults but have a chestnut-colored cap and a more distinct white eye stripe. During the breeding season, the male's chest and throat often appear swollen. Despite its wide range, the Pectoral Sandpiper shows no geographic variation, and there are no recognized subspecies.

Pectoral Sandpipers nest on the arctic coast and plains of northwestern and northern Alaska and across arctic Canada to Hudson Bay, and on many of the northern islands, including Banks and Victoria. They also breed across Asia from the Bering Strait in the east to the Yamal Peninsula and the arctic lowlands of northwestern Siberia. Pectoral Sandpipers that breed in North America winter in South America from Peru and Brazil south to Tierra del Fuego in southernmost Argentina. In Massachusetts, the Pectoral Sandpiper is a locally uncommon to occasionally common spring migrant and a locally common to very common fall migrant. They pass through in April and early May, and in the fall they migrate from mid-July through late October.

The breeding system of Pectoral Sandpipers is not well known. It is probably polygynous or promiscuous, as suggested by the observations that a male will court any female that lands in his territory, females he has courted will nest outside of his territory, and no pair bond is established except during courtship and mating. A male may leave his territory to migrate before a female even lays eggs. Even if the male remains on territory, he takes no part in incubation or tending the chicks.

During breeding season, males develop pendulous throat sacs with heavy fat deposits that are inflatable and used in hostile interactions and courtship displays. For example, in both the territorial and courtship flight displays, the male's throat hangs pulsating during undulating flight, while the bird is giving hooting calls. When standing upright, his sagging chest is obvious. In courtship displays, the male follows the female, chest inflated, wings drooping, tail raised and fanned, giving hooting calls, and he sways side to side while walking. The male defends his territory for up to 10 hectares, running toward an intruder with his wings raised or with a threat posture—bill tilted forward, wings slightly up, and back feathers raised.

Breeding occurs on marshy tundra with grass and sedges and raised hummocks. Nests, constructed by the female, are usually shallow scrapes on small hummocks, lined with grass and other bits of vegetation. The female develops an incubation

(brood) patch and incubates the usual clutch of four dull white eggs splotched with brown or purple for approximately three weeks until hatching. The young are precocial, with eyes wide open soon after hatching and their bodies well coated with down. Although the young leave the nest within hours after hatching, the female broods them for several days in cold weather. The chicks feed themselves from the first day after hatching. The female attends the chicks for two to three weeks, and chicks are fully fledged in four to five weeks. They leave the breeding grounds after six weeks.

Pectoral Sandpipers take marine, freshwater, or terrestrial invertebrates depending on location and season and will occasionally ingest algae or seeds. They forage by jabbing or pecking for surface invertebrates, but probe substrate for larvae.

On the breeding grounds, jaegers, Arctic foxes, ravens, and gulls are egg predators of Pectoral Sandpipers; falcons, Snowy and other owls take adults as well as young birds. Little is known about population trends in Pectoral Sandpapers, but if migration stopover sites are protected and maintained, the vast and remote areas that are their breeding and wintering sites should ensure the survival of this interesting and elegant shorebird.

William E. Davis, Jr.

ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST

Barry Van Dusen

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

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AT A GLANCE

June 2022

JOHN KRICHER

Oh no! Another mystery butt shot, you say? I say, oh yes. Although it is not an everyday birding occurrence, there are times when the view a birder obtains of an unidentified species is not the definitive profile or ideal flight shot that would be most desirable. In such situations of less expected views, proper identification will require knowledge of less frequently needed field marks. This issue's puzzler falls in this category.

Clearly the mystery species is a large bird, as evidenced by its size compared to the ferns and other plants in the background. The bird's sturdy legs and the fact that it is standing in the water suggest that it has long legs and is likely some type of wading bird. Its extensively white plumage also suggests that it could be a heron or egret of some kind, although there are other extensively white waterbirds that could possibly be observed standing in water. Also notable are conspicuous black feathers showing at the rear of the bird. Although it is difficult to tell with certainty from the photograph, these black feathers are likely either primary or secondary wing feathers or possibly tail feathers. Possible species to consider include Snow Goose, American White Pelican, Whooping Crane, White Ibis, Northern Gannet, and Wood Stork as examples of white birds with black feathering in their wings.

The dark gray color of the upper legs—as seen in the online photograph—and the long leg length of the mystery bird can at once eliminate several of these species. White morph Snow Geese in adult plumage have pink legs, American White Pelicans have orange legs, and adult White Ibises have red legs. Although Northern Gannets have dark legs, the legs of the mystery bird are way too long to belong to a gannet, and you would also be unlikely to see a gannet wading in deep water. With these facts in mind,

the options are reduced to either a Whooping Crane or a Wood Stork. If the pictured species were a Whooping Crane, it would appear overall slimmer with longer legs than the mystery species and would possess long feathers on its back that would virtually cover the crane's black primaries and white tail with a white "bustle." By default, the pictured bird is an adult Wood Stork (*Mycteria americana*) clearly showing its black, not white, tail and the ends of its primaries—features typically covered by the bustle of a Whooping Crane.

Wood Storks are wandering vagrants from the south, with fewer than a dozen records for Massachusetts. John Kricher photographed this Wood Stork near Titusville, Brevard County, Florida, on January 24, 2020.

Wayne R. Petersen

OSPREY BY SARAH MAYHEW

Enter *Bird Observer's* Fiftieth Anniversary Photo, Video, and Writing Contest

April 1 Through October 1, 2022

See Details on Page 274

AT A GLANCE

WAYNE R. PETERSEN

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

MORE HOT BIRDS

Mississippi Kites have not been documented as nesting in Massachusetts, but at least a few turn up here every spring, perhaps more than usual this year. In mid-May, they were reported from 10 towns in a 10-day span: May 14 in Chatham and Provincetown, May 15 in North Dighton, May 18 in Mashpee and Easton, May 19 in Cambridge, May 20 in Marshfield, May 22 in Kingston and Truro, and May 23 in Ashland. A pair of June reports followed: Pilgrim Heights on June 6 and Sudbury on June 11. At least three of these reports featured multiple kites. Ben Shamgochian took the photo on the left.

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