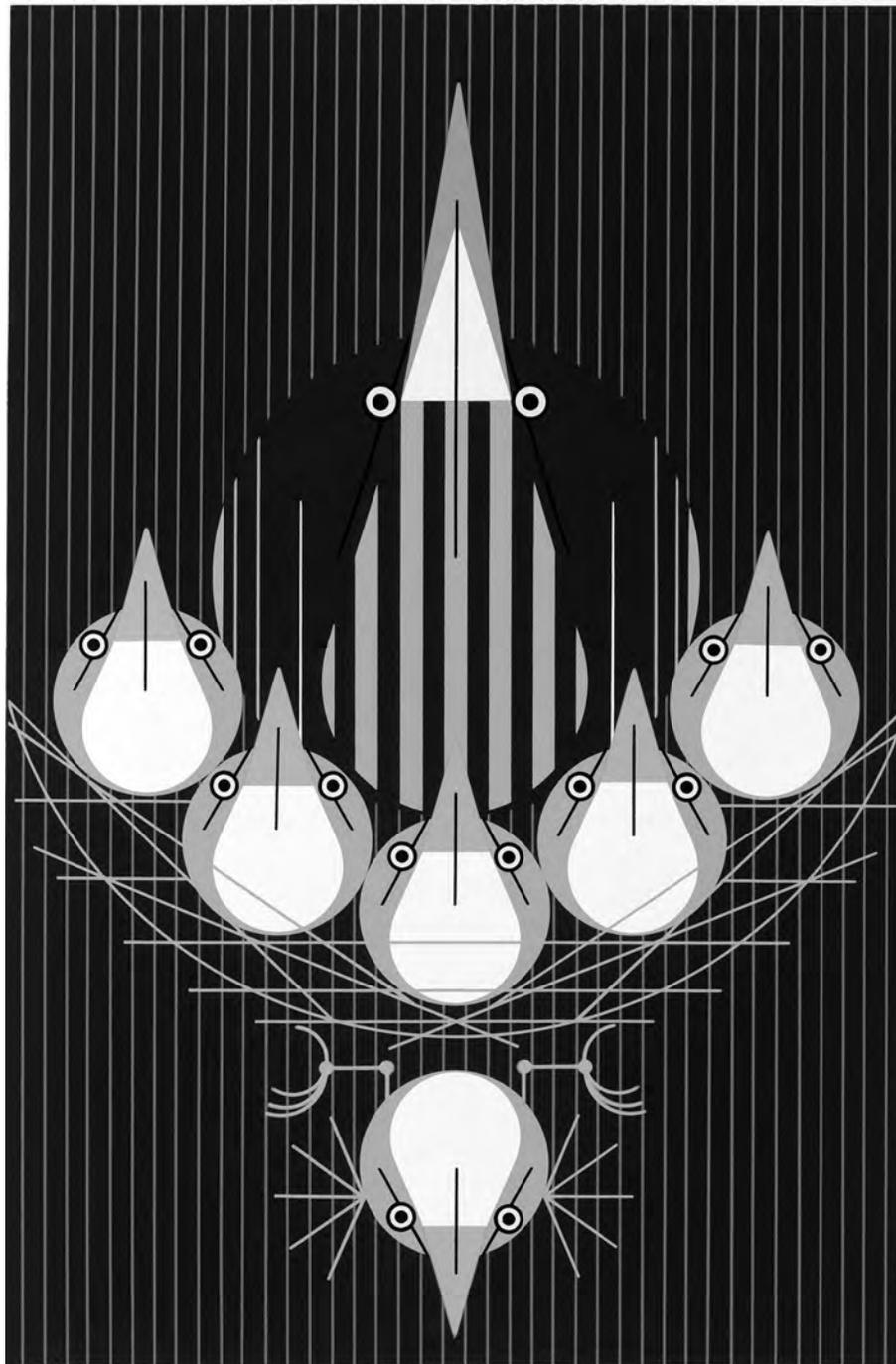


Bird Observer

VOLUME 40, NUMBER 4

AUGUST 2012



HOT BIRDS

On June 5 Jim Barber discovered a **Brown Pelican** (right) in Lobster Cove in Annisquam. So, is it the same one that many people saw near the Black Falcon Pier in Boston later in June?



On June 21 Blair Nikula discovered a **Bar-tailed Godwit** (left) South Beach in Chatham, possibly the same bird seen by Dick Veit earlier on Tuckernuck Island.

Ryan Doherty describes doing a triple-take when he spotted and photographed this **Black-bellied Whistling Duck** (right) resting by the dike at Great Meadows NWR in Concord. The bird was still being seen, on and off, in mid-August.



On July 21 Blair discovered a bright adult **Little Stint** (left) at South Beach in Chatham, and was able to photograph it.

Errata: We noticed two errors in the Hot Birds section of the June issue of *Bird Observer*. **Allen's Hummingbird:** In addition to the bird banded and photographed in Dennis and the first state record of a bird netted at Nantucket, there are at least three additional state records (all banded). **Black-throated Sparrow:** this sparrow was on Cape Cod, not Nantucket. *Bird Observer* regrets the errors.

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GREAT SHEARWATERS BY DAVID LARSON

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Bird Observer

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Birding at Mass Audubon's Drumlin Farm

Pam Sowizral

Introduction

Drumlin Farm is one of 53 Mass Audubon sanctuaries in Massachusetts. Located in Lincoln (Middlesex County), the property comprises 232 acres. The sanctuary offers experienced and developing birders alike a wide range of productive habitats to explore, and it is an excellent place to introduce friends to birding or to bring young families. The site includes ponds and thickets, farmland, open hillside, and pine forest. It is also notable for offering many opportunities for seasoned birders to participate in research and conservation activities or to take workshops and birding trips.

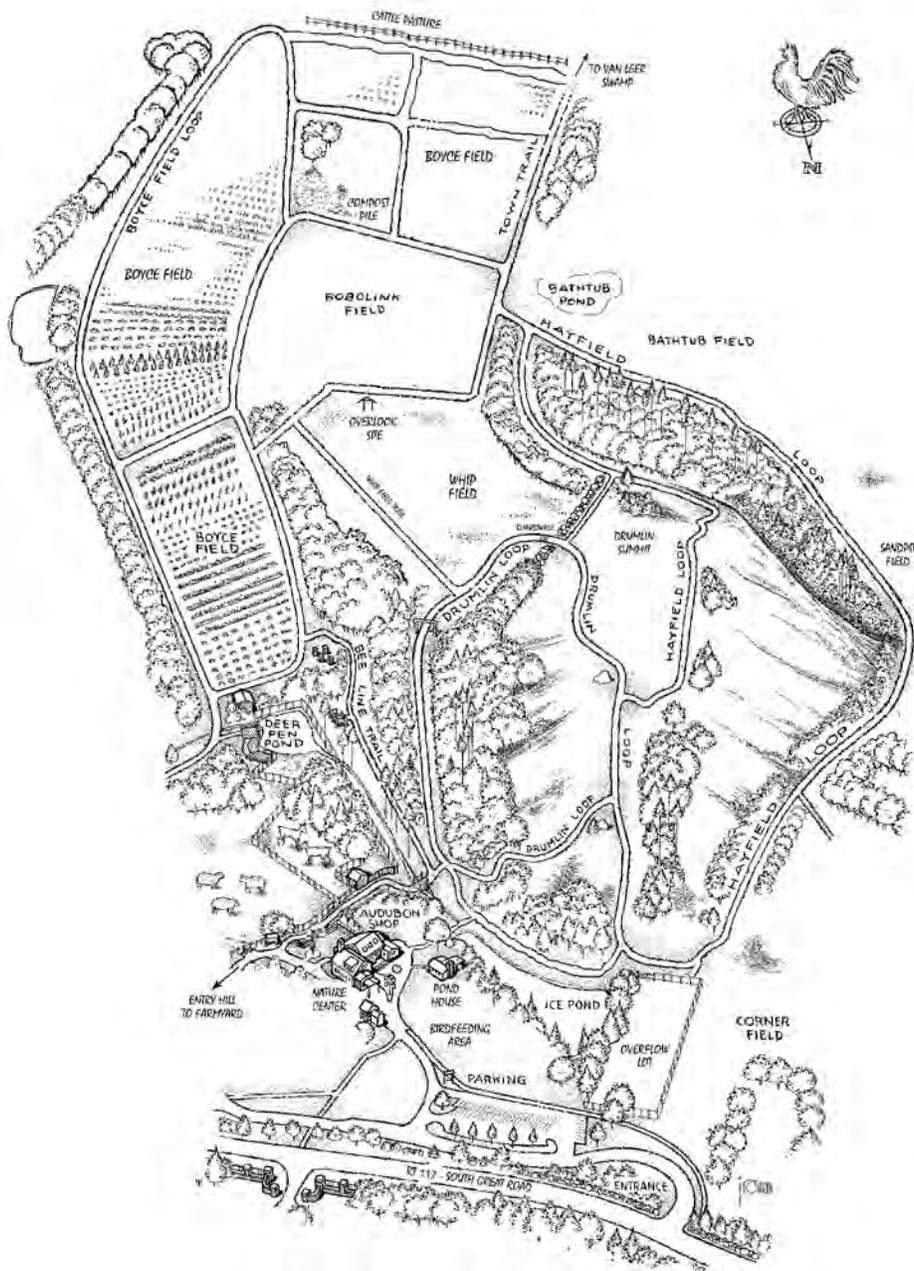
The sanctuary hosts a number of charismatic bird species, many of which can be found reliably in good numbers. Blue-winged Warblers and Indigo Buntings nest on the drumlin; Bobolinks inhabit the managed grasslands; shrubby edges and successional shrubland support warblers, thrushes, and sparrows; hawks catch thermals off the drumlin and hunt in the fields.

While Drumlin Farm cannot compete for rarities with some other Massachusetts hotspots, a careful birder can usually find some uncommon species. Birds that have been catalogued at the sanctuary include Bald Eagle, Osprey, Peregrine Falcon, American Kestrel, Common Snipe, American Woodcock, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Common Raven, Northern Shrike, Brown Thrasher, Eastern Meadowlark, both cuckoos, a large variety of migrating warblers (including Connecticut), and sparrows: Clay-colored, Field, White-crowned, Fox, Lincoln's, and Vesper.

Bird-related citizen-science programs are active at Drumlin Farm, notably the Cavity Nesting Project and fall owl banding. While Barred Owls and Eastern Screech-Owls are regularly observed at the sanctuary year-around, the migratory Northern Saw-whet Owl is



Barred Owl at Drumlin Farm in photograph by David Swain



the target species of the banding project. Saw-whet numbers are cyclical from year to year. In October and November 2007, 267 Saw-whets were banded, a Drumlin Farm record, compared to 90 the following autumn. Data from the banding effort at

Drumlin Farm is part of a national project to learn more about the migration patterns of these elusive birds.

The sanctuary's name is derived from its most dominant geological feature, the drumlin. Rising 285 feet above sea level, this tear-drop-shaped hill was formed by the movement of glaciers. Henry David Thoreau walked the property and wrote several journal entries noting the beautiful view from the top of the drumlin, from which Mount Wachusett is clearly visible.

The Drumlin Farm land was donated to Mass Audubon in 1955 by Louise Gordon Hatheway. From 1905 through 1927 Louise and her family purchased eleven local farms, which formed the greater part of the future sanctuary. Long before "know your food" became popular, Louise hosted school children from urban areas to show them how vegetables were grown. To address the disconnect existing in many people's minds between crops in the fields and food on the table, Louise asked that the property be maintained as a bird sanctuary and an educational center with an emphasis on both the natural world and agriculture. Today, in keeping with Louise's wishes, Drumlin Farm actively cultivates 17 acres, maintains livestock animals, offers nature programs for children and adults, and manages habitat for wildlife.

Drumlin Farm is located in Boston's western suburbs and is a short walk from the commuter rail, making it easily accessible to a large number of birders. The sanctuary can readily be covered in a morning or afternoon. Nine Acre Corner, Wayland Community Gardens, Water Row in Wayland, and Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge units in Concord and Sudbury are other local areas that may be combined with a Drumlin Farm visit for a full day of birding. In addition, one may visit the Van Leer Swamp conservation land. Located adjacent to Drumlin Farm's southern border, it sports a boardwalk providing access to moist deciduous woodland (see below).

Nature Center and Surrounds

Start your visit by scanning the trees around the parking lot, then head to the adjacent bird-feeding area. The usual feeder birds are present, but an occasional Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, or other species of interest can sometimes be found. Be sure to check the birders' kiosk for recent bird sightings. To your left, tall pines on the north side of the Nature Center seasonally attract Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Brown Creepers. In summer, Chimney Swifts are often seen flying over the building. Walk down the circular driveway toward the gift shop. The native plant gardens on the left attract hummingbirds in summer and sparrows in fall. On the right, a group of hollies provide winter food for turkeys, thrushes, and sparrows. The large maple tree immediately in front of the Pond House and the adjacent euonymus tree to its left are attractive to birds, especially in October when the euonymus tree bears fruit. Possible species seen here include Red-eyed Vireo, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Baltimore Oriole, and a variety of warblers. Even Green Herons have perched atop the maple tree.

Circle around the back of the gift shop to check the feeders and scan the trees on the right for warblers. A small stream runs behind these trees making the area especially

attractive to birds. Species sometimes seen in winter at the gift-shop feeders include Hermit Thrush, Eastern Towhee, and Pine Siskin. In spring the adjacent trees are worth checking for Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, warblers, and Indigo Buntings. Behind the gift shop, leading uphill along the wire fence on the left, is a short path surrounded by shrubs. Unfortunately, many House Sparrows reside here, but Swainson's and Hermit thrushes and House Wrens have been regularly spotted as well.

Ice Pond and Overflow Lot

The Ice Pond and the adjacent Beeline Trail (see map) attract orioles, grosbeaks, and migrating warblers. This area is conveniently located close to the parking lot for birders short on time.

By the blue Pond House take the path into the woods to the Ice Pond. The original farmers used this man-made pond as a source of ice blocks for summer refrigeration. Birds enjoy bathing in the shallow edges and perching in the surrounding vegetation. Great Blue Herons, Green Herons, and Belted Kingfishers are regularly seen along the far shore. In May 2011 a Yellow-billed Cuckoo was observed in the surrounding trees. Eastern Phoebes nest nearby and are frequently seen darting over the pond for insects. Mallards and, less frequently, Wood Ducks and Spotted Sandpipers can be found here.

Continue around the pond to the right to the gate at the overflow parking lot. The fence across the rear of this lot is often used as a perching site for birds and should be scanned carefully. Look at the hayfield on your left for nesting Bobolinks, and if you are here at dusk, American Woodcocks can sometimes be observed in this field doing their aerial courtship dances. Hawks regularly catch thermals off the drumlin making this a good spot to view raptors as well. On September 15, 2010, a Mass Audubon employee luncheon was held on this site, at which time staff were treated to the sight of a kettle of 200 migrating Broad-winged Hawks, quickly followed by a Bald Eagle, an American Kestrel, and Cooper's and Red-tailed hawks.

Hayfield Loop Trail

Follow the fence across the overflow lot to a second gate and proceed to the left along the Hayfield Loop Trail. Carefully check the surrounding shrubs and trees. Seasonally, water is found flowing in the gutters and across this dirt road attracting birds to the shallow pools. Sparrows and other passerines can be plentiful, and migratory fallouts of warblers have occurred here from time to time. Keep an eye out for less common passerines such as Black-billed Cuckoos, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Scarlet Tanagers, and White-crowned Sparrows. As you exit the wooded portion of the path, you will find the first hayfield on your right and to your left a view of an early successional shrubland.

You are now in Sandpit Field. Scan the tops of the nest boxes for Eastern Bluebirds and Tree Swallows. Wild Turkeys and their young roam through the tall grasses, and Red-tailed Hawks patrol overhead. The shrubs along the trail are also worth checking, especially for sparrows. Moving on, the road will again pass through

woods. This short corridor between the two hayfields is a good spot to look for Barred Owls, especially in the tall pines on your right. Kinglets and both nuthatches may also be found here.

Ahead is Bathtub Field, so named for the small, warm-water pond located at the southeast corner of the field. Birding here is not always exciting, but the scrubby edges and brush pile are worth checking for kinglets, thrushes, and sparrows. Beyond the nest boxes is a grassy path on the right leading to a break in the shrubs and to Bathtub Pond. Mallards and Wood Ducks maybe present. Ahead is another tree-lined corridor leading to Boyce Field. This area is a good place to check a small seasonal stream and its shallow pools. Brown Thrashers may be present here. As you exit this shady area, the habitat changes to grassland and agricultural fields.



Tree Swallow at Drumlin Farm in photograph by Becca Epstein

Boyce Field

Drumlin Farm grows more than fifty types of fruits and vegetables using organic principles and sustainable techniques. No chemical herbicides, insecticides, or fertilizers are used. Depending on the season, the 17 acres that comprise Boyce Field may be under cultivation. Soil health is a priority. Each year, portions of the fields are left fallow and planted in clover. In spring a top layer of composted manure is plowed into the fields. Agricultural diversity, lack of chemicals, scrubby field edges, small streams, and adjacent grassland combine to encourage a diversity of birds.

Depending on your schedule, you may now either bird Boyce Field by walking the perimeter and interior corridors of this large “L” shaped parcel, or take a shorter route to the Overlook Site (see map and details later in this article).

Staying on the trails, scan both the fields and shrubby edges. Plowed earth often attracts various species of shorebirds, and in 2010, a Buff-breasted Sandpiper spent several days here. Killdeer nest in the fields and gather here before the fall migration. Sections of the field left fallow and planted in clover are worth a good look in all seasons, and in late summer and fall the tomato plants have a special appeal for Palm Warblers and young swallows that can be seen perched on the tomato stakes. Be sure to check the centrally located compost piles, which can be bird magnets, especially in the winter when the heat from decomposing material prevents them from freezing. Eastern Bluebirds are often found foraging these piles, and other visitors have included American Woodcock, Wilson’s Snipe, and Lapland Longspur. The trees adjacent to the compost offer birds shelter from the open fields. The nest box located here fledged five kestrels in 2006. It has also been used by roosting Eastern Screech-Owls.

Adjacent to the southern border of the crop fields is a pasture used for grazing cattle. Canada Geese are usually found here in varying-sized flocks, some numbering over 150 birds. Although other species of geese have not been recorded at this site, Pink-footed, Snow, and Greater White-fronted geese have all been seen at nearby farms. In mid-summer, flocks of Eastern Bluebirds and Bobolinks gather in this pasture.

Migrating hawks are regularly seen, and American Kestrels particularly enjoy the fields in spring, when singles and pairs can often be spotted. Fifteen kestrels were seen here at one time in April 2008.

Overlook Site and WHIP Field

The Overlook Site provides a good vantage point looking downhill toward the Bobolink Field and uphill to the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) Field. Drumlin Farm is home to 38 nest boxes, many visible from this spot. The sanctuary's bluebird population has increased dramatically since the boxes were installed in 1991. Up to 30 bluebirds have been seen at the sanctuary at one time, and many overwinter, making Drumlin Farm an excellent year-around location to find this lovely species.

It should be no surprise that the Bobolink Field is home to nesting Bobolinks. The birds are most prevalent on the east side of this 3.5-acre field, and sometimes more than 20 may be seen on a single day. Multiple sightings of Eastern Meadowlarks, especially in late March and April, have occurred here, but there is no record of their nesting. In August 2009 a Virginia Rail was flushed from the southwest corner of the field.

The WHIP Field was previously a tangle of invasive plants including autumn olive, multiflora rose, and Amur honeysuckle. The government intentionally planted these non-native species in an effort to control erosion. What resulted was some excellent scrubby birding habitat. When the harmful impact of these plants became clear, however, a decision was made to rehabilitate the area, and in 2007 it was cleared. The WHIP Field is currently being converted to a field of mixed native grasses and forbs. Despite the transition, it still has some of the best birding on the sanctuary and would be the number one place to stop if you had limited time. Scan the few remaining trees in the open field for perching birds, especially the larger, dead tree near the top of the slope, which is often a favorite of Indigo Buntings. In June, on the path to the summit of the drumlin, the mulberry trees on your right can be a magnet for woodpeckers and thrushes. Seed heads in late summer and fall, along with patches of pokeweed, often attract sparrows including White-crowned, Swamp, Savannah, and Song. Keep an eye out for warblers as well; two Connecticut Warblers were banded here in 2005.

Drumlin Loop Trail

Continue along the path up the drumlin. For those short on time, take the wooded Drumlin Loop path to your right, which will lead you back to the Ice Pond and the gift shop. Along the way check the trees for woodpeckers, thrushes, and warblers. Before reaching the pond, scan the area around the red bridge, the shallow pools



Brown Thrasher at Drumlin Farm in photograph by David Swain

beneath it, and the surrounding rhododendrons. If you wish, bird the Bee Line Trail starting at the red bridge and head downhill along the stream to the Deer Pond. This can be a productive area, especially during spring migration. Look for Warbling Vireos, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and a variety of warblers. During the cooler months be on the lookout for Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and both species of kinglets.

Drumlin Top

Birders taking the longer walk from the WHIP Field should head left uphill and cross the boardwalk. Directly after passing the rock wall, take a left along the wooded path. Check for Barred Owl, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and Ovenbird. When the path reaches a tee intersection, go right and continue to the top of the drumlin. Near nest box 10, check the stand of sumacs for wintering thrushes. Seasonally, Olive-sided Flycatchers have been seen along the shrubby edges to your left. Hummingbirds and Indigo Buntings are regularly spotted. Farther ahead on the Hayfield Trail the successional shrub area near nest boxes 8 and 9 can be especially birdy. Look for bluebirds; Brown Thrashers; warblers, including Yellow, Nashville, and Blue-winged; and sparrows, including Fox Sparrow. In May 2011 a Clay-colored Sparrow visited this spot. This is also a good vantage point to scan for Chimney Swifts, hawks, and Ospreys. Looking west from this location you can see the tree tops along the Sudbury River. By using binoculars or a scope at dusk, from mid-August through early September, you may see flocks of migrating Common Nighthawks. On August 29, 2011, a total of 247 nighthawks was recorded here by Norman Levey as part of the official SuAsCo/Nashua Rivers and Beyond Nighthawk Survey. For information, see <http://www.borobirding.net/>.

Continuing your walk down the north side of the drumlin, scanning the birches and cedars along the path as you go, you will have completed a full circle and

returned to the overflow and visitors' parking lots. At this point birders have the option to bird another location or continue at Drumlin Farm. If you wish to explore the remainder of the sanctuary, check in at the admissions window (if you have not already done so), then head down the entrance hill to the Farmyard, which is less birdy and is not covered in this article.

Side Trip to Van Leer Swamp

In 2010, the Town of Lincoln purchased a portion of Van Leer Farm to serve as conservation land. While the remainder of the property is still privately owned, a conservation easement allows access to a new boardwalk and the Weston town trails beyond. The 900-foot boardwalk traverses a 55-acre red maple swamp, which is ringed by deciduous woods. Shallow water is present much of the year along with mossy hummocks, skunk cabbage, and a variety of water-loving shrubs and trees. Quicksand is present here, a feature that made this a difficult area to bird prior to the boardwalk installation. Previous observations along with recent surveys suggest that the swamp holds future promise for birders. As you bird the boardwalk, look for Hairy Woodpeckers, Great Crested Flycatchers, Brown Creepers, Veeries, Wood Thrushes, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed vireos, Northern Parulas, Ovenbirds, Northern Waterthrushes, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.

The Van Leer Swamp can be accessed from the southern side of Boyce Field. Take the Town Trail along the west side of the cattle pasture to Old Sudbury Road. Cross the street, turn left, walk to the three-foot wide, silver-colored gate and access the trail to the boardwalk. Those choosing to do so can continue past the end of the boardwalk onto the town of Weston's conservation trails. For information see <http://www.westonforesttrail.org/interactiveMap.html>. Insect repellent is recommended for this area.

Logistics

Drumlin Farm is located at 208 South Great Road (Route 117) in Lincoln. Because Mass Audubon Headquarters shares this mailing address with Drumlin Farm, a GPS may guide you to the headquarters property. You should look for the Drumlin Farm entrance sign on the south side of 117. The sanctuary is a 10-minute walk from the Lincoln commuter rail station.

The sanctuary is open year-round, Tuesday through Sunday, and federal holiday Mondays. Hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. from November through February, and until 5:00 p.m. from March through October. Drumlin Farm may be closed after or during large snowfalls or extreme weather.

Birders are welcome to walk the trails between dawn and dusk, but the farmyard proper is open to visitors only during the times noted above. Parking is available in the main visitors' lot. Admission is free for Mass Audubon members and residents of the town of Lincoln. For non-members, admission is \$7 for adults and \$5 for children. Please check in at the admissions window when you arrive. Free Drumlin Farm bird checklists and loaner binoculars are available at the admissions window. For additional information call Visitor Services at 781-259-2200.

Bathrooms are open during standard visiting hours and are located in the Nature Center, by the picnic area, and at the big red barn. Visitors are asked to stay on the trails. Parts of the sanctuary may be blocked off during summer camp season.

Optics, field guides, feeders, and a variety of other bird-related merchandise are available at the Audubon Shop.

If you wish to receive Drumlin Farm's e-newsletter letter, The Birder's Connection, sign up at <http://www.massaudubon.org/eneews/index.php>. It contains updates on birds seen at the sanctuary and on Drumlin Farm guided walks or trips along with other bird-related news. Your postings of Drumlin Farm bird sightings on Massbird and eBird are appreciated.

Bird-related activities at Drumlin Farm include Saw-whet Owl banding, the Cavity Nesting Program, seasonal Saturday and Thursday morning bird walks, instructional classes, local day trips, and guided week-long explorations. See Drumlin Farm's online program guide for details at <http://www.massaudubon.org/drumlinprograms>. 

Pam Sowizral coordinates volunteers and works on ecological management projects at Drumlin Farm. She wishes to thank Renata Pomponi, Karen Stein, Wayne Petersen, Kathy Seymour, and most especially David Swain for their help with this article.



AMERICAN KESTREL AFTER A SUCCESSFUL HUNT BY SANDY SELESKY

Sixteenth Report of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee

Matthew P. Garvey and Marshall J. Iliff

The sixteenth report of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (hereafter MARC or the committee) details the evaluation of 107 records involving 71 species or subspecies. Ninety-seven records were accepted, an acceptance rate of 90.7%. All accepted records in this report were accepted unanimously on the first round of voting unless noted otherwise.

The following contains full write-ups for some of the more significant records; the complete report with narratives for all species can be found online at <http://www.maavianrecords.com>.

With this report, four new species are added to the State List: Bermuda Petrel (*Pterodroma cahow*), Eurasian Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*), Yellow-green Vireo (*Vireo flavoviridis*) and Cassin's Sparrow (*Peucaea cassinii*). The petrel is one more reminder of how much we still need to learn about bird distribution in our pelagic waters, and how much value intrepid birders can provide by getting out there and documenting what you see. The hobby teaches the opposite but not necessarily conflicting lesson—don't neglect your patch! This one-day wonder was spotted and identified by Ian Davies from his house while he was enjoying a lunch break.

The vireo and sparrow reflect a major theme running through this report: the prevalence of southwestern birds in Massachusetts from spring through fall of 2011. It may well be that some of these birds wandered away from their typical range in reaction to the extreme drought that affected the Midwest, Southwest, and northern Mexico from November 2010 through May 2012 (North American Drought Monitor 2012). Although it is impossible to link specific records to those conditions, a clear diaspora is evident based on the unusually high number of records—especially in the Midwest and Northeast—of southwestern birds outside known areas of breeding (Iliff et al. 2011). Massachusetts was well represented in this diaspora, best attested to in this report by the 10 or more records of Ash-throated Flycatcher from fall of 2011, one of which is discussed below.

Another theme linking many of the birds in this report was Tropical Storm Irene, which deposited myriad Caribbean and southern Gulf Coast birds into the Bay State and produced a frenetic day of birding on August 28, 2011. Another suite of records are linked not by climactic event but by means of preservation; the MARC reviewed 46 skins of 19 species of review birds housed at the Harvard University Museum of Comparative Zoology, putting more of the state's rich ornithological history into the committee's centralized database but barely putting a dent in the committee's long backlog of unreviewed historic records.

As usual, some of the most instructive records are ones the committee did not accept. Two records in particular put the committee at the bleeding edge of bird

identification, even despite superb documentation. One of these was a scene-stealing putative Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*) that spent April 2011 in Hyannis. The committee ultimately rejected the record after review of a vocal recording from April and of photos of presumably the same bird at the same beach in fall that revealed plumage characteristics—especially a streaky neck and head—more consistent with a Herring x Lesser Black-backed hybrid (*Larus argentatus* x *Larus fuscus*). Similarly, a putative Tropical Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus*) was documented about as well as could be hoped for, with the glaring exception of voice recordings. Although some argued that structure was diagnostic for Tropical, the required majority of committee members ultimately could not get comfortable eliminating the similar Couch's Kingbird, so the record will go down as a Tropical/Couch's. In both cases, however, the bevy of evidence collected may prove instructive, not only now but to future generations of birders, highlighting the importance of gathering and archiving evidence even if it doesn't get a particular record into the accepted column.

The list of species reviewed by the MARC (the "Review List") is available at <http://www.maavianrecords.com>.

MARC depends on birders of all skill levels in the strong Massachusetts birding community to provide evidence needed to evaluate and, more importantly, to archive the state's rich ornithological record. We are extremely grateful to all who provided the evidence used in this report. Individuals who have provided evidence, whether photographic (ph.), video (v.), or audio (au.), are noted in parentheses in each account. The committee strongly encourages written submissions (indicated below with a "†"), even where photographs exist. The names of people who provide evidence are followed by the MARC record number. In addition, when known, we try to credit the discoverer either in the text or with an asterisk (*) if he or she has supplied evidence.

The species accounts below include specific geographic information for each record, including the location, town, and county (the county is shown in italics). Species taxonomy and nomenclature follow the seventh edition of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) *Check-List of North American Birds* (AOU 1998) and supplements (e.g., Chesser et al. 2009, Chesser et al. 2010, Chesser et al. 2011). Each species is listed with its scientific name the first time it is mentioned in the text, but not thereafter. Subspecies nomenclature follows taxonomy of *The Clements Checklist of Birds of the World* (version 6.6), available at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/clementschecklist>.

The 2011 roster of MARC voting members was Marshall J. Iliff (chair), Mark Faherty, Trevor Lloyd-Evans, Blair Nikula, Wayne R. Petersen, James P. Smith, Scott Sumner, Jeremiah R. Trimble, and Richard R. Veit. In spring 2012, Smith's term expired and he opted not to take on a second term. Ian Davies was elected to fill the vacancy. Jeremiah R. Trimble was also elected to serve his first term, after serving for the past year as a temporary replacement for Richard S. Heil, who retired before the completion of his term. Matt Garvey was appointed for another year as secretary, and Marshall J. Iliff was re-elected chair. We thank Smith for his service as a voting member. We also thank Erik Nielsen for considerable work on the MARC database

over the past two years. Naeem Yusuff has officially been designated MARC map-master, with many thanks for his help in strategizing how best to represent our records with powerful and accurate graphical tools. Perhaps most importantly, we wish to thank Ryan Doherty, who joined the team in 2011 as a volunteer webmaster and has significantly revamped and improved the design of the MARC website. Blair Nikula, Jeremiah Trimble, and Scott Turner provided valuable editorial assistance on this article.

The MARC website <<http://www.maavianrecords.com>> has much more information, including the MARC bylaws, past annual reports, the State List, and the Review List. We plan to add species accounts for all Review List species and hope that this will be of use to birders in Massachusetts and beyond to help understand the status and occurrence patterns of rarities in Massachusetts. Moreover, we hope to use the Internet to publicize the rich documentation in the MARC archives.

As introduced last year, we report statistics after the species name for each rare bird. The numbers in brackets show the number of MARC accepted records in this report, followed by the total number of MARC accepted records for that species, followed by our estimate of total known records, often supplemented with a plus sign (+) where we know there are additional records but are not sure how many. We do not count or use a plus sign for 2011 or 2012 records that are currently in review. Even where a subspecies is specified, the statistics given refer to the species unless noted otherwise. Species not on the Review List do not receive a count.

The committee could keep busy just tracking down and reviewing all the known records that have not yet been reviewed. Though that would be fun, we much prefer reviewing—and of course experiencing live—new records. So keep finding new birds and getting the word out—and please remember to send us your documentation!

Accepted Records

Western/Clark's Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis/clarkii*) [1,7,7; count for Western Grebe] A record submitted as Western Grebe consisted of a write-up and multiple distant photos (but about as good as could be hoped for given the setting) of an *Aechmophorus* grebe at Andrew's Point, Rockport, *Essex*, on February 6-7, 2011 (ph. M. Goetschkes; †L. Farrarresso*; ph. R. Stymeist; 2011-18). The record went three rounds and elicited much discussion on variation within Clark's Grebe (*Aechmophorus clarkii*) and the prevalence of hybridization between Western and Clark's. Bill color and face pattern (extent of darkness around the eye and on the lores) were especially tricky to assess given the bright lighting on the photographs. Ultimately, only three members felt the evidence supported a pure Western; most thought a hybrid with Clark's could not be eliminated, and two thought a pure Clark's was still in the mix as a possibility based on the photos submitted.

Bermuda Petrel (*Pterodroma cahow*) [1,1,1] While doing research for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Peter Duley photographed a Bermuda Petrel on June 28, 2009 (ph. †P. Duley* (ph); 2009-54) at 40 56.12' N, 66 14.32' W, about 313 km (194 miles, or 169 nautical miles) east-southeast of Nantucket. This record was published with two photos in *North American Birds* (Duley 2010), and the

photos leave no doubt about the identification. In fact, the photos seem clear enough to establish the freshness of the bird's plumage, indicating the bird was likely a juvenile, less than a year old.

The record was unusually thorny for the committee, however, since the bird was closer to Nova Scotia than to Massachusetts, and not within the MARC's jurisdiction according to its bylaws at the time. Instead, the bird fell in a sliver of ocean that, although closer to Nova Scotia than to any point in the U.S., is south of the Hague Line, and

therefore within the territorial waters of the United States. Massachusetts was the closest state to the bird, so the committee did its patriotic duty and amended its bylaws to make sure that this record would be reviewed. The bylaws were changed so that the "Adjacent Ocean" within MARC's purview now includes oceanic waters within U. S. territorial waters (i.e., south of the Hague line) and closer to Massachusetts than to any other state, within 200 nautical miles.

Although all prior U.S. and Canada records are from North Carolina, there is a possible sight record off Sable Island, Nova Scotia. Recent research with data loggers on Bermuda Petrels has produced data-logger tracks for the species that show adults dispersing regularly to waters off New England, Atlantic Canada, and even Ireland, apparently on feeding forays for their young (Duley 2010). Amazingly, it appears that Bermuda Petrel is regular in New England waters and additional records are to be anticipated. (The MARC might review some of the tracks currently published to establish additional Massachusetts records.) The finding that Bermuda Petrel occurs off New England makes even more intriguing the accepted Bermuda/Black-capped Petrel record from the southwest corner of Stellwagen Bank, *Barnstable*, from April 22, 1991 (1991-01); several committee members believed that the blurry photos that documented that record portrayed a Bermuda Petrel (Garvey and Iliff 2011).

Little (Barolo) Shearwater (*Puffinus (baroli) assimilis*) [1,2,2] Conducting seabird surveys for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, veteran seabirder Mike Force identified a Little "Barolo" Shearwater about 160 miles ESE of Nantucket on July 29, 2011 (†M. Force*; 2011-33). Although no photos were obtained, his detailed description—with careful attention to the face and upperwing pattern especially—was quite enough to identify this bird as *Puffinus assimilis baroli*. Many consider it a species in its own right; those who split *baroli* as a monotypic species (e.g., Clements 2011) use the common name Barolo Shearwater. Almost all authorities except the AOU (which MARC follows) agree that *baroli* is distinct from Little Shearwater *Puffinus assimilis*.



Bermuda Petrel image by Peter Duley

Just the sixth North American record of this taxonomically challenged taxon, it followed closely on the heels of the United States and Massachusetts first record in 2007 (Garvey and Iliff 2011). This record serves as yet another reminder that more time at sea is bound to bring payday for birders yearning to make significant contributions to our knowledge of bird distribution—or to get a lifer!

White-faced Storm-Petrel (*Pelagodroma marina*) [22,28,37] Exquisitely documented with photographs and a detailed submission matching photos to each specific sighting, a total of 22 White-faced Storm-Petrels delighted the fortunate participants on a late-August overnight Brookline Bird Club deepwater pelagic trip (ph. I. Davies*, ph. J. Forbes*, †M.J. Iliff*, ph. L. Seitz*, ph. S. Spangenberg*, ph. B. Van Doren*; 2010-41). All the birds were found along the edge of the continental shelf between Hydrographer and Dogbody canyons in the afternoon of August 28, 2009 (five) or the morning of August 29, 2009 (seventeen). Of the 22, six showed signs of heavy molt, indicating that they were older than hatch-year birds; four appeared in fresh plumage, likely indicating birds of the year or possibly adults that had completed molt; and the remaining twelve were not photographed well enough to determine molt status. This remarkable total exceeds the previous year's September 3-4, 2008, record of six White-faced on a single trip, which was itself a record for the western Atlantic. Dogbody Canyon, which had not been surveyed on prior trips, was particularly rich in White-faced, with some thirteen birds seen over a two-hour cruise there on August 29th.

Eurasian Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*) [1,1,1] Why do some people seem to turn up an exceptional number of megas? Luck surely plays a part, as does hanging out in the right places. But preparation, persistence, and keen senses are keys as well. On May 18, 2011, Ian Davies, just home from his first year in college, was having lunch at



Eurasian Hobby by Ian Davies

home when a bird perched a good distance away and piqued his interest. He immediately got on the bird, identified it as an adult Eurasian Hobby, captured a record shot, and got the word out. How many of us would have interrupted our lunch for a distant bird, much less considered Eurasian Hobby—at the time just the second record for the Lower 48 and the first for the East Coast? A lucky few birders were able to book it down to Bartlett Pond, Manomet, Plymouth, and Jeremiah Trimble even got some dazzling photos before the bird disappeared, never to be seen again (ph. †I. Davies*, ph. J.

Trimble; 2011-05). The only prior record from the Lower 48 hails from Seattle, WA, October 20, 2001. There is one record on mainland Newfoundland from Cape Spear May 21, 2004, and one May 9-15, 1989, on an offshore vessel about 320 miles east of Newfoundland, which show that the western Atlantic does have a tight pattern of records in the May 9-21 window.

Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) [1,2,2] Massachusetts' second record fortuitously flew into Jim Hully's view as he was trying to photograph a Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*) at the Pines Trail, Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, Essex, December 2, 2010, and he was able to capture stunning images of this one-day wonder (ph. †J. Hully*; 2010-61). Massachusetts's only prior record is from Chilmark, Martha's Vineyard, Dukes, December 26-30, 1996. The 2010 lapwing was part of a small invasion, as that season also produced records in Connecticut, Maine, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and a remarkable eight in Newfoundland, which also hosted Jack Snipe (*Lymnocyptes mimimus*), Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*), Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*) and several Redwings (*Turdus iliacus*) from the Old World, apparently related to a "Greenland Block" that produced severe cold weather in Ireland, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere in northern Europe, and relatively warm weather in northeastern North America (Brinkley 2011).

Mew Gull (Kamchatka/heinei) (*Larus canus kamschatkensis/heinei*) [1,3,25+] Four Mew Gull records along a seventeen-mile stretch of the North Shore between November 2009 and March 2011 made for four of the most complicated votes that the MARC has yet attempted. Although all four records had photos and the species identification was uncontroversial, the subspecies identification was challenging on all four records. Committee members were

asked to opine on which records might pertain to the same individual, which made the votes even more difficult. The four records all pertained to single adult birds in Essex: one each at East Gloucester Harbor and Brace Cove, November 26 to December 7, 2009 (ph. P. Brown, ph. R. Heil*; 2009-550); King's Beach, Lynn/Swampscott, December 8, 2009 (ph. †D. Bosler, ph. M. Goetschkes;



Mew Gull by Phil Brown

2009-56); Niles Pond, East Gloucester, January 20 to February 26, 2010 (ph. N. Bonomo*, ph. R. Heil, ph. J.P. Smith*; 2010-82); and King's Beach, Lynn/Swampscott, February 24 to March 5, 2011 (v. M. Garvey, ph. M. Iliff, ph. E. Nielsen, ph. S. Sullivan, †J. Quigley*; 2011-32). Although Veit preferred to consider all records as pertaining to different individuals, and although Trimble felt that 2010-82 and 2011-32 looked different from the December 2009 bird, the majority of the committee—seven—ultimately considered all four records to pertain to the same returning bird. The fact that this was an unusual subspecies, and that Mew Gulls are much rarer now than they were in the 1980s and 1990s, certainly factored strongly in that decision.

Mew Gull has four subspecies globally and it has been proposed that these should be split as two or three species. Identification criteria can be straightforward at times, but adults can be quite difficult to identify, as evidenced by these records. The subspecies vary by size, bill shape and pattern, back color, winter head-streaking pattern, and wing tip pattern. Key traits visible on some or all of the photos provided

for the records include: size close to Ring-billed Gull; substantial bill with a faint, zigzagging subterminal ring that was pale gray; dark amber eye; and a medium dark back that is darker than *L. c. canus*. The wing tip pattern showed a large mirror on p10 and p9, and, importantly, a “string of pearls” pattern formed by white tongues between the gray mantle and black primary tips and broad, pale tips to the inner secondaries. This combination of traits, especially the wing pattern, should occur only in *kamschatkensis* or *heinei*. The central Russian *L. c. heinei* is poorly known and may intergrade to the west with *L. c. canus* and to the east with *L. c. kamschatkensis*. Although *heinei* has never been confirmed from North America, the committee felt uncomfortable assigning this bird to *kamschatkensis*, especially given the unknowns in the variability of *L. c. heinei*. Further comment on subspecific identification of this bird would be welcomed. The committee previously accepted a record of *L. c. kamschatkensis* (without qualification with respect to *L. c. heinei*, despite traits similar to these recent records) from Gloucester Harbor, *Essex*, January 2-3, 2007. Some have suggested that the above records may also pertain to this individual, in which case the bird would have been unrecorded in the winters of 2007-2008 and 2008-2009.

Elegant Tern (*Thalasseus elegans*) [1,2,2] Eagle-eyed Ian Davies saw a photo posted to Massbird of a putative Royal Tern (*Thalasseus maxima*) taken at Sandy Pt., Plum Island July 23, 2011, and raised the idea that it was actually the much rarer



Elegant Tern by Suzanne Sullivan

Elegant Tern. The photos indeed left no doubt—the small size relative to neighboring Common Terns, thin drooping bill, and shaggy crest established this adult as only the second record for Massachusetts and a new record for *Essex* (ph. S. Sullivan; 2011-31). Lesser Crested Tern (*Thalasseus bengalensis*) is unrecorded from North America but worth considering, especially since the Mediterranean/west African subspecies *T. b. emigrate* has a back color close to Elegant Tern.

Eliminating Lesser Crested beyond any doubt may not be possible, especially since rump color was not seen, the thin bill with a gradual droop and apparent paler tip, shaggy and drooping crest, and narrow white loreal line seem more consistent with Elegant (Duivendijk 2010, Svensson, Mullarney and Zetterstrom 2009). This record and Massachusetts’ previous Elegant Tern—an adult at South Beach August 4-18, 2002—join records from Virginia (three), Florida, and the Texas coast as the only North American records in the Atlantic basin. Interestingly, there are a number of records from Europe as well, mostly involving summer birds appearing at colonies of Sandwich or Common terns. This species should be watched for in the future and all crested terns in Massachusetts should be identified with great care.

Tropical/Couch’s Kingbird (*Tyrannus melancholicus/couchii*) [1,3,3; one accepted as Tropical, one as Tropical/Couch’s, one as Couch’s] A yellow-bellied kingbird found by Bennet Porter at Peterson’s Farm, Falmouth, *Barnstable*, October 30 to

November 2, 2010, was exceptionally documented, well enough to age as a hatch-year bird, but ultimately not enough for the committee to get comfortable on a species-level identification (†G. Hirth, †M.J. Iliff, ph. M. Keleher, ph. J. Offerman, ph. †B. Porter*, ph. R. Schain; 2010-45). The two species are best separated by voice, and one of the lucky couple of people who heard it vocalize described a *brrrt* call, longer than a single note, that would be



Tropical Kingbird by Ryan Schain

consistent with Tropical. (Many attempted to hear and record its voice without success.) Most members did not feel that this description of a single call by a single person was enough to establish the species identification. Identifying the two species visually remains extremely difficult, with bill length and wing formula being perhaps the most promising options. Some members thought that the relatively even, narrow, long bill was on the long side for Tropical, and well beyond Couch's. The wing formula was also supportive, with the folded wing showing 8 exposed primaries, with p9 and p10 below the longer eighth primary; on Couch's, the outer three primaries are about the same length and should fall under the longest seventh primary (Pyle 1997), but the reliability of this as a field character is debatable. Arguably the most compelling evidence was Iliff's measurement of the wing chord and bill length from a photo and comparison of those ratios using a published table (Pyle 1997). The wing:bill ratio of the Falmouth bird was 0.1607, which is beyond the values for Couch's (0.128 to 0.147) and a good match with Tropical (0.143 to 0.183). A similar bill length:width ratio gave 2.125 for the Falmouth bird, which is below the value of 2.2 cited for Couch's and matches the "below 2.2" ratio cited for Tropical (Phillips 1994). The third and final voting round included a review of an impressive collection of Tropical and Couch's skins at the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology. Six voters felt the sum total of the evidence was just barely sufficient to support an identification of Tropical, but three members were uncomfortable given the difficulties of this identification. Specifically, they noted that the literature on wing and bill measurements used for the ratios calculated by Iliff was not clear whether it applied to adults only, or to hatch-year birds as well (Pyle 1997). The record was accepted as Tropical/Couch's, which is how Bennet Porter originally submitted it.

Yellow-green Vireo (*Vireo flavoviridis*) [1,1,1] Not on most folks' short list of the next new species for Massachusetts, an adult Yellow-green Vireo captured in the nets at the Joppa Flats Bird Banding Station on the Parker River NWR on Plum Island, Essex, was a shocker on September 4, 2011 (ph. B. Flemer; 2011-39). The bird was still molting its outer primaries, so it may have been molting on the island for some time before being captured in the nets. Regardless, it was not relocated and joins a Sep/Oct 1992 record from Bermuda [A. Dobson pers. comm.] as the most outlandish occurrence of this long-distance migrant. The species breeds rarely in southernmost Texas. It strays regularly to the central and southern California coast in fall,



Yellow-green Vireo by Ben Flemer

occasionally to southeast Arizona and New Mexico in summer, and to the Gulf Coast in spring and fall. It is accidental in south Florida, mostly in fall. Its occurrence in Massachusetts may have been related to the severe drought affecting the Midwest, Southwest, and northern Mexico from November 2010 through May 2012, but unlike with Cassin's Sparrow and Ash-throated Flycatcher, there was no clear diaspora of Yellow-green Vireo during this period (Ilf et al. 2011).

Cassin's Sparrow (*Peucaea cassinii*) [1,1,1] A male found by John Young made himself at home among the sand and pines at Corn Hill Road, Truro, *Barnstable*, May 15-19, 2011, and was even seen popping up on a beach chair. The bird allowed for stunning photos, and Jason Forbes was able to get diagnostic audio recordings of the



Cassin's Sparrow by Jeremiah Trimble

song (ph. A. Curtis, ph. au. J. Forbes, ph. B. Nikula, ph. J. Trimble, †J. Young*; 2011-04). It was Massachusetts' first record of this southwestern grassland specialist, which is typically a short-distance migrant. Spring and summer 2011 was quite the exception, as Cassin's Sparrow showed up in North Carolina (two; state first), Illinois, Louisiana, and Arkansas (state first). Significantly, they were also found in greatly elevated numbers at the eastern edge of the

species' range, indicative of a significant disturbance on their traditional breeding grounds. Indeed, the Southwest suffered a severe drought November 2010 through May 2012 (North American Drought Monitor 2012), which seemed responsible for the movement of Cassin's Sparrow and other species such as Ash-throated Flycatcher and Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*) (Ilf et al. 2011).

Records Not Accepted

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*) One of the more thought-provoking records in this report involved a soaring female/immature bird at Westboro, *Worcester*, September 11, 2011 (2011-07), submitted with a detailed description, multiple photographs, and analysis comparing the silhouette to a Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*). Although several committee members expressed that they likely would have voted to accept the record if it had been submitted as a write-up alone, the record was unanimously rejected (after an initial round with two votes to accept) based on the photos. All committee members agreed that the photos show a Double-crested

Cormorant, noting the orange yellow gular, proportion of body past the trailing edge of the wing (about half the tail length, much more than on an Anhinga) and the size and shape of the tail (relatively shorter and more even with the lower body).

This record highlights not only the challenge of identifying birds like cormorants that give different impressions in comparatively rare instances of soaring as compared to level flight, but more significantly the difficulty that records committees face when dealing with written submissions, especially of birds seen in flight only, no matter the general competence and integrity of the observer. It is a well-known trap for birders that the mind, once the observer thinks he or she knows what's being looked at, can fill in details even if those aren't directly observed (Sibley 2007). This is a basic issue of memory formation and affects many areas where detailed recollections are called for, such as eyewitness testimony in legal proceedings (Engelhardt 1999). Because sightings and memories are so impacted by expectations, observers can genuinely "see" details that never were there.

The committee is strongly in favor of people learning the craft of describing birds, and sharing with us their descriptions whether or not photos accompany them. Certainly photos have their own shortcomings as pieces of evidence, too; we are by no means promoting a move to pictures-only records. But this sobering submission has caused the committee to endeavor to apply extra care when dealing with records based on written evidence only. Moreover, the committee is considering re-reviewing all accepted Anhinga records, none of which were accompanied by photos, starting with one observed by a committee member—at the suggestion of the submitter himself.

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) An intriguing but ultimately frustrating record involves a poorly labeled juvenile male Prairie Falcon specimen housed at the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology (1898-01). The label misidentified the bird as a Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*), which was corrected once curator Jeremiah Trimble laid eyes on the bird. All committee members agreed the bird was a Prairie Falcon, of which Massachusetts has no records. But the label was just too sparse on details, reading only "Mass. coast (?) January 15, 1898." With no other evidence, the committee rejected the bird based on uncertainty that the bird was collected in Massachusetts and was not a captive bird at the time of collection. Particularly troubling was the possibility that specimens purchased in Massachusetts could have originated elsewhere, and the fact that the provider of the specimen, Reginald Heber Howe, Jr., did not mention the record—as a Gyrfalcon or a Prairie—in his 1901 publication *Birds of Massachusetts* with Glover Morrill Allen.

Supporting the record, the bird was collected in its first year, and vagrancy in immature falcons is perhaps more likely than in adults, plus captive birds (which should be long-lived) are probably less likely to be immatures. Further, there is some recent precedent for Prairie Falcon vagrancy to the East, with a recent bird returning to Pennsylvania for at least the past seven years. So if anyone has any more information on the Howe specimen, please let us know. This is another example of

why it is important for the MARC to preserve clean, organized, and fulsome archives now for the use of future generations.

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*) An adult gull at Kalmus Beach, Hyannis, *Barnstable*, delighted and intrigued rafts of far-traveling visitors from April 9 through 18, 2011 (2011-06). The Internet was immediately abuzz with news that this could be a “good” Yellow-legged Gull, supported by fantastic photos that seemed to match, including iris color and pattern of the spread wing. There were some doubts cast, pointing to the legs not being quite bright yellow enough for a bird in high breeding plumage, the head shape being a bit “off,” or simply the intractable issue of separating Yellow-legged from Herring x Lesser Black-backed hybrid in high condition. A couple of individuals documented the calls on video. The Kalmus bird’s “long” call did seem hard to distinguish from that of Herring Gull, but was much higher-pitched and shorter than any call of Yellow-legged the committee could get its hands on. It was inconsistent with the published literature on Yellow-legged long calls that notes the long call consists of 14-25 elements (Olsen and Larsson 2003), although there is some question whether variation amongst Yellow-leggeds is well enough known. Note to aspiring gull researchers: why not pick for your next project one of the few gulls you can study on its breeding grounds while getting a good tan and otherwise living like a tourist?

The real problem with this record was how to rule out a hybrid Herring x Lesser Black-backed Gull. Too little is known about what such hybrids look like, although they are known to occur, presumably with more and more frequency as Lesser Black-backed are almost certainly breeding in increasingly high numbers on our side of the this side of the Atlantic (Ellis et al. 2008). There weren’t any features of the April Kalmus gull that were inconsistent with a Herring x Lesser Black-backed hybrid, and it was especially telling that the bird’s long call seemed very similar to Herring. Most Yellow-legged Gull records on the west side of the Atlantic pertain to early winter birds, where they can (presumably) be safely identified by a lack of heavy neck and head streaking, something that both Herrings and Lesser Black-backed would show into February. The fact that the April gull in Kalmus lacked neck and head streaking, however, was meaningless given that all three species lack streaks that time of year.

On November 28 through December 4, 2011, a gull with heavy and splotchy neck and head streaks, but otherwise matching the April bird (with perhaps slightly duller yellow feet) even down to the pattern of each individual primary feather, was seen and photographed at Kalmus Beach. This was presumably the same bird. If so, the density and placement of streaks would eliminate Yellow-legged Gull, which would have, at most, neat streaks on the head creating a hooded appearance (in *L. m. atlantis*). With this final piece of evidence, the record fell 3-6 on the second ballot. In fact, given the uncertainties that have come to light regarding Yellow-legged Gull identification in recent years, the committee also unanimously agreed to reconsider Massachusetts’ only accepted record, an adult at Coast Guard Beach, Eastham, *Barnstable*, on October 4, 2002.

The leading treatise on gulls, *Gulls of the Americas* (Howell and Dunn 2007), says of separating Yellow-legged Gulls from Herring x Lesser Black-backed,

“identification criteria need elucidation.” Amen! The committee hopes the incredibly well-documented Kalmus bird can be instructive in helping to elucidate the identification criteria, or at least, to further elucidate just how badly elucidation is needed!

Accepted Records (full narratives at <<http://www.maavianrecords.com>>)

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) [1*,2,2] 5 at Temple Street pond, Duxbury, *Plymouth*, April 29, 2011 (†L. Maxey*; 2011-16); 5 at Great Meadows NWR, Concord, *Middlesex*, May 3-4, 2011 (au. M. Garvey, †M.J. Iliff*, ph. J. Offermann, au. J. Trimble*; 2011-17). Both observations accepted as same birds. Second state record.

Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) [2,4,4] Sudbury and Concord, *Middlesex*, November 17 through December 26, 2010 (ph. E. Nielsen, ph. J. P. Smith, ph. J. Trimble; 2010-42); Turner’s Falls, *Franklin*, October 26-28, 2011 (ph. C. & D. Fisher, ph. J.P. Smith*; 2011-45). Third and fourth state records.

Ross’s Goose (*Chen rossii*) [1,9,9] December 11, 2010, through February 13, 2011, Bartlett Farm, *Nantucket* (ph. J. Offermann, ph. J. Trimble*; 2010-44).

Cackling Goose (*Branta hutchinsii*) [3,13,18+] Marshfield Athletic Field, Marshfield, *Plymouth*, March 11, 1996 (ph. †Russ Titus; 1996-26); Turner’s Falls November 5, 2010 (ph. J. P. Smith*; 2010-60) and November 19-24, 2010 (ph. J. P. Smith*; 2010-59).

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*) [1,16,16+] Gloucester Harbor, June 7, 2011 (ph. R. Heil*; 2011-20).

Wilson’s Storm-Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*) Berkley, *Bristol*, August 16, 2007 (collected by M. Boewe [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 2007-59). Highly unusual inland record.

White-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus*) [2,5,8] Quabbin Park, *Hampshire*, August 28, 2011 (ph. †M. Iliff*, ph. L. Therrien*; 2011-21), during Hurricane Irene, first live bird observed inland in New England; Kingsbury Beach, Eastham, *Barnstable*, August 22, 1991 (collected by E. Cudihy, [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1991-09).

Brown Booby (*Sula leucogaster*) [1,2,4] Corporation Beach, Dennis, *Barnstable*, August 16-24, 2011 (ph. S. Arena, ph. R. Barstow, ph. A. Curtis, ph. M. Keleher; 2011-34) and August 29 to December 19, 2011, Herring Cove and MacMillan Wharf, Provincetown, *Barnstable*, (ph. D. Ely, ph. Thomas Dorazio, ph. M. Garvey, ph. M.J. Iliff, ph. B. Nikula*, ph. L. Seitz*, ph. B. Thompson, ph. J. Trimble*; 2011-35). Accepted as same bird.

American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) [2,11,15+] Fort Hill, *Barnstable*, November 27, 2010 (†M. Nettles; 2010-47); Cohasset, *Norfolk*, October 5, 1876 (ph. Jeremiah Trimble; 1876-01).

Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) [1,3,17] Nahant Beach, Nahant, *Essex*, November 11, 1988 (collected by C. Wasserman, [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1988-05); (Veit and Petersen 1993).

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*) [1,6,7] Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, *Essex*, July 9-10, 2011 (ph. W. Robel*, †F. & P. Vale*; 2011-14) and August 6, 2011 (ph. J. & A. Hoye*; 2011-15). Accepted as same bird.

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) [2,13,13+] Plum Island, *Essex*, April 22 - April 26, 2011 (v. M. Blust, ph. R. Schain; 2011-29); Argilla Road Horse Farm, Ipswich, *Essex*, May 8-16, 2011 (ph. M. Iliff*; 2011-30).

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops noveboracensis*) [37,42,57+] In addition to those in the following table, there are twelve specimens for which precise location and date are not currently known but are being investigated.

Sex	Location	County	Date	Collector	Record No.
M	Monomoy Island	Barnstable	9/14/1891	H. W. Marsden	1891-01
2 M	“Cape Cod”	Barnstable	10/14/1879	unknown	1879-01, -02
2 M	Weston	Middlesex	9/22/1911	unknown	1911-01, -02
F	Topsfield	Essex	11/3/1893	M.A. Frazar	1893-01
unk.	Allston	Suffolk	10/14/1868	A.L. Danielson	1868-01
M	Bedford	Middlesex	10/11/1906	G. A. Winn	1906-01
M	Lexington	Middlesex	9/13/1876	O. Bangs & E.A. Bangs	1876-02
M	Sudbury Meadows	Middlesex	9/25/1901	M. A. Frazar	1901-01
M	Sudbury	Middlesex	9/26/1907	unknown	1907-01
M	Wayland	Middlesex	9/13/1898	C. J. Payne Jr.	1898-01
M	Wayland	Middlesex	9/19/1911	unknown	1911-03
M, F	Wayland	Middlesex	10/5/1920	O. Bangs	1920-01, -02
M	Wayland	Middlesex	9/29/1908	unknown	1908-01
F	Dedham	Norfolk	9/3/1911	J. Healy	1911-04
F	Newton	Norfolk	4/4/1867	Charles J. Maynard	1867-01
F	Norwood	Norfolk	9/12/1908	F. B. McKechnie	1908-02
M, F	Marshfield	Plymouth	10/3/1936	J. L. Peters	1936-01, -02
F	Marshfield	Plymouth	9/30/1936	J. A. Hagar	1936-03
M	Plymouth	Plymouth	10/10/1893	unknown	1893-01
M	Scituate	Plymouth	9/18/1908	unknown	1908-03
M	Wareham	Plymouth	9/19/1899	O. Bangs	1899-01

Purple Gallinule (*Porphyrio martinica*) (4,5,51+) High Street and Baker Pond, Lanesville, Gloucester, *Essex*, May 15-24, 2010 (ph. R. Heil, ph. S. Mirick*, v. M. Keleher, ph. R. Stymeist; 2010-69); Great Pond, Eastham, *Barnstable*, May 25, 2010 (ph. S. Mumford; 2010-70); Samoset Avenue, Hull, *Norfolk*, December 27, 2010 (ph. A. Cartoceti; 2010-74); Cuttyhunk Island, *Dukes*, October 8, 2011 (ph. †R. Schain*; 2011-11).

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) [4,9,9+] Oyster River, West Chatham, *Barnstable*, May 29, 2011 (J. Kaar*; 2011-10); Brievogel Ponds, East Falmouth, *Barnstable*, May 29, 2011 (ph. R. Barstow, ph. I. Davies, ph. E. Nielsen, ph. †B. Porter*; 2011-08); Evergreen Cemetery and Morton Road bike trail, Chatham, *Barnstable*, July 11, 2011 (ph. †R. Schain*, †F. Bouchard*; 2011-09); Holbrook, *Norfolk*, April 9, 1974 (collected by S. Fordham [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1974-03).

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) (3,5,32+) North Easton, *Bristol*, September 8, 1982 (collected by M. H. McClellan [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1982-06); Pembroke, *Plymouth*, May 29, 1993 (found dead by R. Fannighetti [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1993-28), Great Hill Road, East Sandwich, *Barnstable*, May 2000 (exact date and collector unknown [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 2000-30).

Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*) [1,5,60+] Stow, *Middlesex*, in 1881 (collected by C. I. Goodale [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1881-01).

Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*) [1,9,34+] Truro, *Barnstable*, June 26, 1929 (collected by O. L. Austin Jr. [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1929-01).

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (*Calidris acuminata*) [1,3,5] Newburyport Harbor, Newburyport, *Essex*, November 3, 1973 (†W. Petersen; 1973-04).

“European” Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica lapponica*) [1,12,21] Cape Cod, *Barnstable*, September 16, 1907 (collected by C. R. Lamb [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1907-02).

Great Skua (*Stercorarius skua*) [1,2,35+] Nantucket Shoals, August 28, 2010 (ph. J. Forbes, ph. L. Seitz, ph. S. Spangenberg; 2010-65).

South Polar Skua (*Stercorarius maccormicki*) [1,3,21+] First Encounter Beach, Eastham, *Barnstable*, September 4, 2010 (†M.J. Iliff*, ph. R. Schain, ph. J. Trimble; 2010-80).

Mew Gull (European) (*Larus canus canus*) [1,3,25+] Chatham, *Barnstable*, February 8, 1908 (collected by N. A. Eldridge [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1908-04).

Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*) [2,4,4] Turner's Falls, *Franklin*, February 20-27, 2009 (ph. J. P. Smith*, ph. T. Pirro; 2009-53); Niles Pond, East Gloucester, *Essex*, January 25, 2010 (ph. M. Iliff*; 2010-67).

Sooty Tern (*Onychoprion fuscatus*) [4,6,34+] Quabbin Park, *Hampshire*, August 28, 2011 (ph. L. Therrien*, †M. Iliff*; 2011-43); Bass River, Dennis, *Barnstable*, August 28, 2011 (†S. Arena*; 2011-41); six seen from Drift Road, Westport, *Bristol*, August 28, 2011 (ph. P. Champlin*; 2011-42); Beachmont, Revere, *Suffolk*, August 28, 2011 (†M. Garvey*; 2011-40). All during Hurricane Irene.

Bridled Tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*) [3,7,20] Adamsville boat launch, Westport, *Bristol*, August 28, 2011 (ph. P. Champlain*; 2011-44); Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Bourne, *Barnstable*, August 28, 2011 (†S. Arena*; 2011-46); Twin Brooks Golf Course, Hyannisport, *Barnstable*, January 16, 1995 (collected by Ned Hardy [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1995-22).

Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) [3,4,44+] Bartlett Farm, *Nantucket*, June 10, 2010 (ph. V. Laux; 2010-79); South Beach, Chatham, *Barnstable*, August 27, 2010; (ph. Francois Grenon*; 2010-76); Sandy Point, Plum Island and Clark Pond, Ipswich, *Essex*, September 14-20, 2010 (ph. S. Sullivan*, ph. J. Fenton; 2010-75).

Sandwich Tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) [4,8,8+] Smith Point, *Nantucket*, July 8, 2008 (ph. V. Laux*; 2008-45); two at Nantucket's Great Point, September 6, 2010 (ph. V. Laux*; 2010-56); North Beach, Chatham, *Barnstable*, August 28, 2010 (ph. W. Petersen*; 2010-72); Cow Yard Road, Chatham, *Barnstable*, September 2, 2010 (†J. Trimble*; 2010-71).

Black Skimmer (*Rynchops niger*) Auburn, *Worcester*, March 14, 1993 (collected by Grocia [ph. J. Trimble; 1993-29]).

Black Guillemot (*Cepphus grylle*) Fitchburg, *Worcester*, August 2002 (collected by S. deSantos [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 2002-49).

Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*) [4,6,30+] Newton, *Middlesex*, February 26, 1879 (collected by E. A. and O. Bangs [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1879-03); Tyngsboro, *Middlesex*, March 11, 1885 (collected by W. H. Parham [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1885-03); New Salem, *Franklin*, January 1, 1903 (collected by P. Marshall [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1903-01); Hyde Park, *Suffolk*, November 26, 1905 (collected by Fred. Downey [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1905-01).

Great Gray Owl (*Strix nebulosa*) [5,6,52] Two in "eastern Massachusetts" during the winter of 1846-7 (collected by L. Agassiz [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1846-01, 1846-02); Townsend, *Middlesex*, on February 14, 1890 (collected by J. P. Melzer [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1890-01); Payson Park, Belmont, *Middlesex*, February 22, 1898 (collected by R. B. Malom and M. A. Frazar [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1898-02); Dover, *Norfolk*, February 18, 1904 (collected by unknown [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1904-01).

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) [2,18,18+] Airport Hill, *Worcester*, October 2 to December 18, 2010 (ph. S. Carroll, †M. Lynch, †A. Hill [bander], ph. B. Humphrey; 2010-46); New England Wildflower Center, Marshfield, *Plymouth*, November 17, 2003 (ph. J. Trimble; 2003-44).

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*) [1,4,5] Siasconset, *Nantucket*, October 31 to November 11, 2010 (ph. E. Ray; 2010-53).

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) [5,20,29] Old Harbor Road, Chatham, *Barnstable*, October 21, 2010 (ph. B. Fletcher; 2010-52); Desmond Avenue,

Watertown, *Middlesex*, Dec 4, 2010 to Jan 11, 2011 (ph. J. Beckwith*; 2010-63); Birdwatcher's General Store, Newburyport, *Essex*, May 5, 2011 (ph. S. Grinley*; 2011-28); Tuckernuck Island, *Nantucket*, June 4-6, 2011 (ph. R. Veit*; 2011-26); *Nantucket*, May 9-12, 2011 (ph. E. Ray; 2011-25).

Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) [3,5,5] Four at Old Harbor Rd. in Chatham, *Barnstable*, October 12, 2005 to January 12, 2006 (ph. B. Fletcher; 2005-60) and one on May 12-22, 2011 (approximately) (ph. B. Fletcher*; 2011-24); Point Road, *Nantucket*, May 14-15, 2011 (ph. S. Langer*, ph. E. Ray; 2011-23).

American Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides dorsalis*) [1,2,6] Harvard, *Middlesex*, January 15 to April 27, 1975 (ph. B. Sorrie; 1975-02).

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) [1,12,20+] Winthrop Greenway, Winthrop, *Suffolk*, October 11-12, 2011 (v. M. Garvey, †P. Peterson*, ph. R. Schain; 2011-27).

Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*) [1,6,17+] Nantucket Dump, *Nantucket*, November 30, 2010 (ph. V. Laux; 2010-68).

Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*) [3,17,17+] Hyannis Harbor, *Barnstable*, May 15, 2010 (†P. Trimble*; 2010-73); three at Salisbury State Reservation, *Essex*, October 30-31, 2010 (ph. P. Brown, ph. E. Nielsen, ph. S. Sullivan*; 2010-48); 17 at Pleasure Bay, South Boston, *Suffolk*, November 24, 2010 (ph. I. Davies, †S. Williams*; 2010-49); 40+ from Chatham Light to Morris Island, Chatham, *Barnstable*, November 25-27, 2010 (ph. B. Nikula*, ph. J. Trimble*; 2010-50).

Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) [1,8,8+] Hull, *Plymouth*, September 14-15, 2011 (ph. M. Curran*; 2011-12); Polpis Rd., *Nantucket*, September 19, 2011 (ph. T. Griswold, ph. V. Laux; 2011-13).

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*) [2,7,7] 70 miles south-southeast of Nantucket, April 28, 1980 (collected by J. Cherry [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1980-04); South Dartmouth, *Bristol*, December 18-19, 2010 (ph. M. Boucher; 2010-66).

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) [1,13,13+] Chapel Street/Carter Street intersection, Gardner, *Worcester*, December 23-24, 2010 (ph. †M. Lynch; 2010-43).

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) [4,9,9+] Highland Avenue, Russell, *Hampden*, December 16, 2010 (†P. Belanger*; 2010-64); Lake Wequaquet, Centerville, *Barnstable*, February 5-19, 2011 (ph. A. Curtis, ph. D. Graf*, ph. M. Iliff, ph. P. Trimble; 2011-37); West Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard, *Dukes*, November 17, 1992 (collected by Charles Crumm [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1992-12); Heathsbridge Road, Concord, *Middlesex*, December 31, 1987 (collected by unknown [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1987-05).

Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*) Nahant Thicket, *Essex*, May 14, 2011 (†P. Fitzgerald*, †M. McWade*; 2011-36).

Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) [1,7,22+] Good Harbor Beach, East Gloucester, *Essex*, October 8-10, 2011 (ph. E. Nielsen, ph. J. Offermann, ph. T. Spahr*; 2011-19).

Le Conte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*) [2,11,24] Squantum Point Park, Quincy, *Norfolk*, November 11, 2010 (ph. J. Trimble; 2010-51); Manomet Bird Observatory, *Plymouth*, September 4, 1971 (collected by unknown [ph. Jeremiah Trimble]; 1971-03).

Harris's Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) [3,5,15+] Burrage Pond, Halifax, *Plymouth*, November 6, 2010 (ph. J. Sweeney*; 2010-54); The Gurnet, Duxbury Beach, *Plymouth*, November 21, 2010 to March 22, 2011 (ph. R. Bowes*; 2010-55); Shallow Pond Lane, East Falmouth, *Barnstable*, February 1-9, 2011 (†H. Caswell*, ph. B. Porter; 2011-02).

Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon) (*Junco hyemalis [oreganus Group]*) S. Beacon Street, South Yarmouth, *Barnstable*, January 13-17, 2009 (ph. †A. Middleton*; 2009-22; start date approximate).

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) [1,3,22] Huckleberry Lane, Easthampton, *Hampshire*, November 17 to December 3, 2010 (ph. J. Saner; 2010-62).

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) [1,6,6+] Wellfleet, *Barnstable*, January 15, 2011 (J. Young*; 2011-03).

Bullock's Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*) [1,5,13+] Westland Terrace, Haverhill, *Essex*, November 8-10, 2010 (†S. Mirick, ph. P. Schiavone*; 2010-57).

Records Not Accepted (Full narratives at <<http://www.maavianrecords.com>>)

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*) Salisbury Beach, *Essex*, February 20, 2011 (2011-22); Andrew's Point, Rockport, *Essex*, October 6, 2010 (2010-83).

Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) Two at Colony Place Shopping Center, Kingston, *Plymouth*, May 28, 2011 (2011-38).

"Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*) Gay Head, Martha's Vineyard, *Dukes*, November 21, 1994 (1994-26).

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) North River Sanctuary, Marshfield, *Plymouth*, September 24, 2010 (2010-78).

Henslow's Sparrow (*Ammodramus henslowii*) Allen's Pond, South Dartmouth, *Bristol*, November 12, 2010 (2010-58).

Brewer's Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) Drift Road, Westport, *Bristol*, January 12, 2011 (2011-01). 🐦

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United We Count

Stephen Anderson

I've never been much of a joiner. Aside from AAA I currently belong to exactly one organization. I'll leave it to others to speculate on what that says about me, but I can state with some small measure of pride that the other organization to which I belong is Eastern Mass Hawk Watch (EMHW). To call us a club would be accurate but insufficient. For me, this diverse band of brother and sister hawk watchers is more like a close-knit family. We're not blood relatives but we all seem to share the common gene that predisposes a person to a condition I like to refer to as "raptorphilia." Those affected, or perhaps I should say afflicted, range from mere enthusiasts to full-blown fanatics about hawks. They love to observe, watch, count, talk about, and maybe even dream about raptors. In its more extreme form the condition approaches an obsessive-compulsive disorder. I myself am known to get to that stage every fall.

EMHW got its serendipitous start in the early 1970s when two people and a bird crossed paths at the proverbial right place and right time. A young couple, avid hikers but not yet avid birders, had just moved to the Boston area from Chicago. On one of their outings in the Middlesex Fells, they heard and then observed a very loud, medium-sized bird with a slightly downcurved bill, darkly streaked off white underparts, and a long tail. Its incessant, varied song and striking form totally captured their attention. The fascinated couple was Paul and Julie Roberts. After checking a field guide back at home, they determined that the bird was a Brown Thrasher, and so began a lifetime of love and dedicated study of all things avian. Over time, that gene I mentioned began to manifest itself and their interest began to turn increasingly and especially toward birds of prey.

The Roberts' raptorphilia really began to set in on a trip to Mount Tom in 1974, when they were among a group of hawk watchers who witnessed the sublime spectacle of 1700 migrating Broad-winged Hawks flying so low over the observation tower that the use of binoculars became a hindrance. Once the birds had passed, a few moments of stunned silence were followed by an outburst of spontaneous applause. In Paul's own words, "The hook was in and the event altered my life."

During the following few years the duo's budding interest in the amazing phenomenon of hawk migration began to blossom. They focused mainly on fall migratory flights, encountering others along the way who possessed more experience and knowledge and were eager to freely pass it on. Before long, Paul was not only watching the migrants but also counting them and compiling data, which he submitted to the newly-formed Hawk Migration Association of North America and to the Northeast Hawk Watch. He began recruiting others to participate, although their numbers were still small and activity was mostly limited to weekends.

Meanwhile, hiking remained an important part of Paul and Julie's life. They



Scanning the skies from the eastern lookout on Mount Watatic (all photographs by Shawn Carey)

regularly traveled the Wapack Trail which runs through parts of eastern Massachusetts and continues on up into southern New Hampshire. On one fall excursion, they met an organized group on South Pack Monadnock Mountain. These people had binoculars raised and spotting scopes trained in every direction, and they were kept busy as many birds came through. Paul had an epiphany of sorts and a pivotal question came to him, “If places as far apart as Mount Tom and this little mountain are within the wide flight path of migrating raptors, why not Mount Wachusett in Princeton as well?” On September 13, 1978, he and a few fortunate others who were present, including Nancy Clayton and Leif Robinson, got the emphatic answer. In a three-hour time span, a continuous stream of Broad-wings, stretching from horizon to horizon, passed over and in front of them. They tallied a stunning 10,076 birds, and a new hawk watch site was discovered.

Exhausted but exhilarated, Paul and friends came down from the mountain and proceeded directly to a birders’ meeting held that night at Mass Audubon’s Drumlin Farm Sanctuary. As they spread the news of the day’s events, there may have been a few skeptics, but most who heard the news became equally excited. They wanted in on the action. On September 13, 1983, and then again on September 17, 1984, they got more than they could have hoped for or even imagined. On each of those two remarkable and memorable days, in excess of twenty thousand birds were counted within a period of about three hours. Each of the tallies accounted for more than 90% of their respective year’s totals. Hawk migration is an extraordinary and unique aspect of animal behavior. As it has been more fully witnessed, studied, and understood

worldwide, any remnants of skepticism about the possibility of seeing birds of prey in numbers nearly too great to count have vanished. Interest, awareness, and research are now global.

Paul Roberts officially founded Eastern Mass Hawk Watch in 1978. The original logo, created by Julie Roberts two years earlier, is still in use today. Prior to the creation of the club, all funding for expenses related to watching, counting, compiling, and disseminating records, as well as to general promotion of the cause, came directly from their personal finances. When someone suggested the formation of a club with dues-paying members, the Robertses jumped at the idea. EMHW today boasts approximately two hundred dedicated members.



Close range Cooper's Hawk flyby

Over the decades since his brainchild came into being, Paul has become a well-known and respected authority on hawk identification and migration. Moreover, the database from Mount Wachusett is one of the most important of its kind in the eastern United States. Over a month's worth of continuous daily coverage and reporting during the peak of the fall flights has been carried out annually for more than thirty years. In addition, other key fall hawk watch sites have been

established and maintained at such places as Mount Watatic in Ashburnham and Barre Falls in Hubbardston. EMHW stalwarts Tom McCullough and Donna Schilling have spent thousands of hours searching the skies and feverishly clicking their counters at the former; more recently, Donna, Bart Kamp, and David Grant continue similar steadfast efforts at the latter. Spring doesn't produce flights of staggering proportions, but monitoring migration patterns and trends at that time of year is no less important than it is in the fall, and it can be just as rewarding. Many raptors, especially accipiters and falcons, seem to favor the coastal route on their trip north. For this reason, sites have been set up and manned (or womanned—a plug for Melissa Lowe, but with no slight whatever intended to Don Manchester) at places such as Pilgrim Heights, Truro, and Plum Island. Your best chance of seeing a Mississippi Kite in Massachusetts is to be stationed somewhere on Cape Cod in April or May.

The stated mission of our all-volunteer organization is to “promote the study, conservation and preservation of birds of prey by monitoring their presence in and migration through eastern Massachusetts.” A secondary purpose is to share our data with the larger regional and national bodies previously mentioned. Paul Roberts started this practice on his own even before EMHW came into existence. Sometimes the passing on of information has a certain element of urgency. Following Paul Revere's example, phone calls or electronic communications may go out to fellow hawk watchers in Connecticut, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania immediately after a big day here at home.

Educating the public about hawk identification and all issues related to raptor conservation is also one of our main goals. We hold watches, conduct classes, and publish seasonal and annual reports. Occasionally, one of our members publishes an article.



Red-tailed Hawk gliding low overhead

Although we are a small group with modest means, EMHW has always been willing to put its money where its mouth is. We allocate a portion of our limited funds to support several worthwhile individuals and organizations involved in raptor conservation. A cheerful and engaging woman from Middleboro, Joey Mason, is one beneficiary. She is the president of Keeping Company with Kestrels. Since 1989 her Kestrel Project has worked to reverse the population decline of our smallest falcon throughout southeastern Massachusetts. Until recently Joey owned a pair of these swift little birds and she took them to many different gatherings for up close and personal presentations. Sad to say, the two kestrels have died, but she plans to acquire a Peregrine Falcon to carry on her well-received programs. In addition, Joey has become a strong and much needed voice in the relatively new effort to have protective covers installed on top of external burners used to eliminate excess industrial gases. Many innocent and unsuspecting birds have been injured or killed by perching on or simply flying over these dangerous devices.

Tom Sayers, a jovial retired teacher from Connecticut, also receives our financial assistance. For more than five years he has been single-handedly building, installing, maintaining, and monitoring more than fifty kestrel boxes. Last season alone, his hard work resulted in nearly one hundred fledglings flying the coop. He also has started color banding the chicks for a possible future study of new nest location proximity to hatching location, and he tracks adult banded birds to learn more about nest site fidelity. In addition to supporting these two tireless individuals, we have contributed to the Raptor Population Index and the Wellfleet Bay Audubon Sanctuary, which applies some of the money toward the cost of paid hawk watchers and to various educational programs.

It would be a disservice to you the reader and an injustice to the loyal membership of EMHW if I neglected to say a few words about our annual meeting. Always free of charge and open to the public, it is typically held on the first Friday following Labor Day at the First Congregational Church of West Medford, MA. The date is timed to coincide with the approaching peak of the fall Broad-wing migration. The event is a combination get-together, pep rally, entertainment platform, and raptor information forum. The list of guest speakers reads like a who's who in American hawk watching circles. The roster has included, to name only a few, Pete Dunne, Bill Clark, Steve Hoffman, Mark and Marcia Wilson, Kate Davis, Rob Bierregaard, and local legend Norman Smith. (There have been several invitees from abroad as well,



During a lull in the action on Mount Watatic, site coordinator Tom Pirro logs the hourly count and records wind and weather conditions.

from countries as far apart as Costa Rica, Mexico and Israel.) This year's festivities will start at 7:00 p.m. on September 7th. The featured speaker will be Todd Katzner, a professor at West Virginia University. He is a world-renowned expert on Golden Eagles and Red-footed Falcons. He will gladly autograph copies of the recently published book *Eagle Watchers*, which he co-edited. Refreshments will be available during a social hour prior to the calling of the meeting proper. Lucky raffle winners will walk off with prizes ranging from a field guide cover to an authentic framed and signed raptor photo by Shawn Carey or Eric Smith, two of our members who really know which end of a telephoto lens to look through and where to point it. Our members and some of the vendors who attend have generously donated the raffle items.

You are welcome to join us as a guest or become a full-fledged member. Annual dues for an individual remain at an amazingly low \$10.00. So please come—we need all the help we can get. If you can't be there in person, visit us online at <http://www.massbird.org/EMHW>. Remember, you won't know what you're missing until you've tried hawk watching. See you on the mountain. 🦅

Stephen Anderson has been a member of Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch for nearly two decades. He joined the board of directors several years ago, and currently serves as recording secretary. Steve is a self-employed carpenter/woodworker from Northborough, MA. He has a great love of the natural world, and does his best to pass it on to his amazing nine-year-old grandson. His other interests include wilderness canoe camping and strumming his vintage Gibson guitar.

Recent Avian Studies at North Hill Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary, Duxbury

John Galluzzo

History of the Sanctuary

Malachi Brook, or West Brook, whichever you prefer, runs through a section of Duxbury east of Route 3 and west of Route 3A. In the late 1800s a man named Trask dammed the brook and created the pond known today as North Hill Marsh. To Duxbury's Joe Lund, it was the perfect place to fulfill a dream.

Lund, acting on the advice of Robert W. Blossom of Hull, first laid eyes on North Hill Marsh in 1929. He saw "that mythical duck and trout pond for which a diligent search has been going on," according to a diary kept by the men who would later form the Duxbury Duck Pond Associates and the North Hill Marsh Trust. Lund contacted his friend Stewart C. Woodworth of Boston, and together they knew they had what they had so long desired—a secluded, shallow, artificial pond within a few miles of a harbor that attracted migrating or wintering ducks. The pair envisioned the water teeming with American Black Ducks, Wood Ducks, and numerous other species, all within shooting distance of the blind they planned to build—after, of course, they purchased the needed land.

Acquiring the land took time. Some neighbors were willing to sell immediately, but others would hold out for years. Harry Priest, who owned 90 acres of land on one corner of the northeastern shore (hence the name Priest's Cove on maps today) had taught at M.I.T., but had unfortunately not done well with a mill he ran off the brook's water. He also kept up an ongoing border war with his neighbors, the Merrys, which led to several court dates between the two to settle boundary disputes. At times, Priest turned his venom on the hunters.

Some land sales came quickly and easily. The duck hunters group—friend Harold Tobey of Boston had joined by 1930—purchased a small lot from the Ford family on the northwestern shore and the Higgins family farm just south of nearby Waiting Hill, although that came with its own price. The men originally allowed a second-generation French family that was living in the Higgins home the right to remain, but the family refused to pay rent. After their eviction, the house mysteriously caught fire, to the delight of the new owners. The insurance money they received enabled the completion of the mortgage payments on the property and the naming of the land where the house once stood as Insurance Point.

As the land came together, the work began. A path was cut to the pond. Prime duck shooting positions —Insurance Point, East Point, and West Point—were staked out. Brushy vegetation was cleared, sometimes feet per day, other times in large swaths. Stumps were removed, trees cut, and eventually a blind was built on East Point, surrounded with newly planted hemlocks and arbor vitae. The Priests, in the heart of the Depression, found their selling price, but remained on the land as tenants.

In 1934, a solidified agreement among the growing number of group members—Wellington Wells Jr. of Cambridge and Edmund J. Kelley Jr. of Lowell had joined by then—stated that each member would have financial duties as well as a commitment to one hundred days of labor per year.

The hunting occurred each fall. Black Ducks ruled the waters, with Wood Ducks close behind. The group “corned” certain areas, laying down the grain as a food source for the wildfowl, while simultaneously releasing live decoys on the marsh, ducks with clipped wings. They shot woodcock, a Ruddy Duck (mistakenly, they bashfully noted, as it was illegal), a handful of Hooded Mergansers, and several large water snakes. On October 13, 1935, they introduced a bushel of duckweed from the Charles River and planted it in the pond. They tried unsuccessfully to stock the pond with trout on several occasions, but eventually lucked out with a thousand black bass put in by the Carolina Fish Company on July 20, 1938. The bass, like most of the wildlife in and around the pond, survived the great hurricane that struck just two months later. Their descendants still populate the pond today.

Other hunters poached on their land, stealing several rowboats and scows. Eventually, interest waned, and the diary noted that the self-scheduled work that needed doing was no longer being done in the spring and summer. The men settled into the good life of fishing and hunting each fall.

The partnership lasted into the 1970s when Kelley, Wells, and Lund donated their holdings to Mass Audubon for the establishment of a wildlife sanctuary. That land connects to several town-owned parcels to create one of the most fascinating and sprawling natural complexes on the South Shore today. It is anchored by the mythical duck and trout pond that Joe Lund and friends turned from dream to reality.

Waterfowl Monitoring

So what was the duck story at North Hill Marsh three quarters of a century after the creation of the marsh? In the spring of 2008, I began biweekly spring and fall migration waterfowl surveys, at the urging of Mass Audubon colleague Robert Buchsbaum with input from David Ludlow, the property manager at Mass Audubon’s South Shore Sanctuaries. The process was simple: two points, ten minutes each, every two weeks, from the time the ice thawed until it was obvious the migrants had passed in spring. The process was repeated from early September until freeze-up.

We selected our two sites. From historic Insurance Point, one can see most of the marsh. We chose another spot farther north that would give us access to a hideaway cove where we knew several species congregated and, I would come to find out, was also used by ospreys, Spotted Sandpipers, and more. Creatively, I called this magical place Point 2.

With each visit, I noted the atmospheric conditions and the number of birds of each species, and if they were traveling, feeding, resting, or courting. If there was anything else that caught my eye, I added it to the “Notes” column on my spreadsheet. I soon learned that spring and fall migrations at North Hill Marsh were very different.

Spring migrants passed through quickly during the next three years. From 2008 to 2010 I counted 547 ducks, geese, and swans in the spring. The earliest start date for the surveys was February 26, 2010, and the latest counts were conducted on May 16, 2009. Each year I conducted the counts until they became repetitive—Canada Goose, Mute Swan, Wood Duck. When only breeders were present for several weeks in a row, I considered migration over. In all, I—and volunteers Evan Dalton and Tim O’Neil—made 17 visits and totaled 34 point counts.

We found 12 waterfowl species using the marsh in some way. Canada Geese dominated the list, being the most frequently spotted and most abundant, with Wood Ducks and Ring-necked Ducks following not very closely behind.

Species	Number of Counts	Total Counted	% of total
Canada Goose	24	209	38%
Wood Duck	16	67	12%
Ring-necked Duck	15	176	32%
Mute Swan	11	18	3%
Common Merganser	8	29	5%
Hooded Merganser	5	23	4%
Mallard	5	6	1%
American Black Duck	3	7	1%
Bufflehead	2	7	1%
Common Loon	2	2	<1%
Green-winged Teal	1	2	<1%
Ruddy Duck	1	1	<1%

In studying these numbers, several points became obvious. First, any descendants of the Ruddy Ducks shot in the 1930s learned their lesson. In spring, the marsh is used in significant numbers primarily by three species: Canada Geese, Wood Ducks, and Ring-necked Ducks. I’m sure the members of the old association would be surprised to look upon the waters today and see all those geese. The Canada Geese also represented the largest single species count from any one point: 81 on March 15, 2008, from Insurance Point.

More details can be divined. Of the 547 individuals counted, I noted that 250, or 46 percent, were resting. Another 40 percent, or 219, were actively feeding. Only two, a pair of Wood Ducks, were caught in courtship. The remainder were travelers. Furthermore, of the three non-breeding species that were counted in significant numbers (20 or more individuals), none stayed beyond mid-April. The latest recorded date for Hooded Mergansers was April 6; for Common Mergansers, April 7; and April 14 for Ring-necked Ducks, as abundant as they were.

On the other hand, in fall there were 22 visits (44 point counts). The earliest survey was September 1, 2009, the latest December 7, 2009. I tallied 1605 birds, nearly three times the number seen in spring. Food was more of an obvious priority, since 1169 or 73 percent of the birds surveyed were tucking into the muck. About 21 percent, or half as many as in the spring, were seen resting. Ironically, I found more birds, four, in courtship rituals in the fall than I did in the spring.

I—and in this case it was only I, from beginning to end—found one fewer species in the fall, but some tremendous differences in frequency and abundance.

Species	Number of Counts	Total Counted	% of total
Wood Duck	30	249	16%
American Black Duck	26	263	16%
Mallard	24	164	10%
Canada Goose	23	249	16%
Ring-necked Duck	18	594	37%
Mute Swan	10	17	1%
Pied-billed Grebe	5	7	<1%
Green-winged Teal	4	25	2%
Gadwall	2	7	<1%
Hooded Merganser	2	20	1%
Blue-winged Teal	1	3	<1%

In the fall, larger groups of more species use the marsh for longer periods. Some spring species disappeared. Common Loons and Buffleheads apparently took wing for the saltwater, and the lone Ruddy Duck did not return during a survey, but a Massachusetts endangered species, the Pied-billed Grebe, made several appearances.

So what is the duck situation three quarters of a century after the creation of the marsh? Well, several species are telling us that it's an important stopping point on both migrations, and even without corning or live decoys, it is a necessary feeding station on the way south as the cold winds begin to blow.

Tree Swallows

What of the breeders?

A second dam, installed in 1940 by an abutter to control irrigation of his cranberry bogs, added to the water footprint of the marsh by flooding several acres, including a cedar forest in the southeastern corner of the property. Hundreds of dead cedars remain standing today, making it a perfect place for a Tree Swallow colony.

More than 100 nest boxes were placed on the trees in the early 1980s (joined by about two dozen Wood Duck boxes), and since the early 1990s they have been examined on an annual basis. Data collection typically takes place during the height of winter, when two teams walk out on the ice and open each box to tally contents: the presence or absence of a nest, unhatched eggs, dead birds, signs of parasites, and more. The ice often gives out loud cracks as the groups walk. In years without ice, the survey typically occurs by canoe. In an oft-repeated comical scene, the surveyors remove old nests and drop them in the water. If there are Tree Swallows in the area, they trail the boat, pick up the swan feathers that fall from the discarded nests, and carry them to nests under construction. On several occasions, there was no survey due to staff time commitments and weather factors.

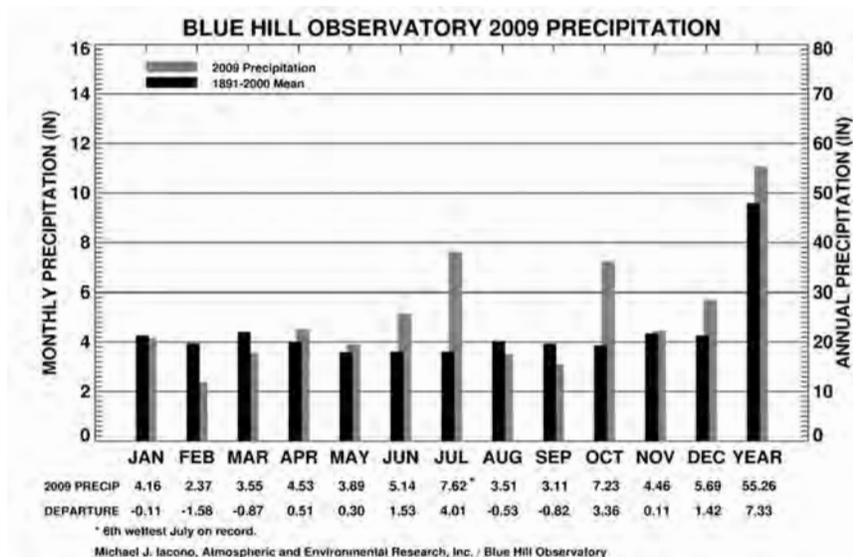
After extended rain in the early summer of 2009, during which the South Shore received rainfall on more than 20 consecutive days, I noticed Tree Swallows gathering at the beaches in large numbers. It seemed to me to be too early, but the connection was obvious—aerial insectivores would have trouble feeding themselves and their young during prolonged periods of rain. Parasitic blowflies, which suck the blood of young, also multiply during wet weather. The timing of the rain created an awful situation for Massachusetts' Tree Swallows, which typically fledge their young in late June and early July. I waited until the following February, when we would have the North Hill Marsh nest box data, to break down the numbers.

Using my own formula, I wanted to calculate the mortality rate from year to year in the boxes, based on the data we could collect after the breeding season. Using an average clutch size of five, I estimated losses.

Year	#Boxes	#Nests	Usage	Dead Young	Unhat Eggs	Dead Adults	Mort /Nest	Mort %
2009								
2008	109	80	73%	4	7	0	0.1	3%
2006	98	83	85%	17	10	0	0.3	6%
2004	128	88	69%	11	19	1	0.3	7%
2003	138	79	57%	12	15	4	0.3	7%
2002	173	89	50%	76	14	0	0.9	20%
2001	158	88	56%	10	24	2	0.4	5%
2000	115	79	69%	18	15	0	0.4	8%
1999	114	81	71%	16	10	0	0.3	8%
1998	114	83	73%	67	21	1	1.1	21%
1997	109	90	83%	16	25	0	0.5	9%
1996	112	91	81%	31	18	1	0.5	11%
1990	93	80	86%	69	39	1	1.4	27%

Before I plug in the 2009 numbers, let's examine what other years tell us. First, one of my big questions had been the percentage of boxes used. It turned out that question was moot. Whether there were 93 boxes or 173, ice ate away at the bases of the dead trees and knocked those trees into the marsh each year, taking boxes with them. In the meantime, individuals, from scouts to volunteers, hung new ones. The nest count in the colony has ranged between 79 and 90.

Three years stand out: 1990, 1998, and 2002. In each year we found on average one dead tree swallow or one unhatched egg per nest, a mortality rate (or failure rate, however we choose to term it), based on an average brood size of five, of more than 20 percent. What did those years have in common? June 1998 was the wettest June on record, according to the Blue Hill Meteorological Observatory's 120 years worth of data. May 2002 was the seventh wettest May on record, and June was wetter than average as well. The pattern became clear.



The Blue Hill 2009 data forewarned me that the results would not be good for the Tree Swallows of North Hill Marsh. They were, in fact, the worst numbers we had ever encountered.

Year	#Boxes	#Nests	Usage	Dead Young	Unhat Eggs	Dead Adults	Mort /Nest	Mort %
2009	109	80	78%	89	24	0	1.4	28%

So what is to be done? In the short-term, nest box availability will be the number one problem we can remedy. More cedars are falling each year, and Mass Audubon’s South Shore Sanctuaries may need to consider placing nest boxes on manmade posts in the marsh. We’ve seen that even after the worst years, the Tree Swallow colony rebounds, as nesting attempts in the 79 to 90 nest count range remain remarkably constant from year to year. But will any of these statistics matter in thirty years? Unless the climate change pattern reverses its current course, no.

With average temperatures on the rise in our region, and the average amount of precipitation increasing every year, Tree Swallows will face an increasing number of catastrophic nesting seasons at North Hill Marsh.

Volunteer John Zmud has taken on the North Hill Marsh Waterfowl Survey, and the South Shore Sanctuaries’ staff still marches out on the ice every winter (last year was a canoe year) to check on the Tree Swallows. The sanctuary has proven to be as wonderful as Lund and company had hoped—an important place for both the migrating and breeding birds of Massachusetts. 🐦

John Galluzzo is the adult education and citizen science coordinator for Mass Audubon’s South Shore Sanctuaries.

ABOUT BOOKS

Born Of Heartache, Grief, And Devotion

Mark Lynch

America's Other Audubon. Joy M. Kiser. 2012. New York, New York: Princeton Architectural Press.

“Grief can destroy you—or focus you.” Dean Koontz, *Odd Hours*.

The publishing of *America's Other Audubon* has taken people in the birding community by surprise. This large-format beautiful book contains state-of-the-art reproductions of hand-colored lithographs from another book, originally titled *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio*, that was drawn, painted, and written in late nineteenth-century Ohio.

That book and its authors and artists have remained almost totally forgotten until now. Many birders who are ardent bibliophiles have never heard of the book nor have they seen examples of the illustrations. A few specialists in the natural history rare book business have been familiar with this “should be” classic of American ornithology. Leslie K. Overstreet, the Curator of Natural History Rare Books at the Smithsonian Institution Library, certainly knew of its existence prior to this new release because the Smithsonian owns two copies of *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio*. Within the Smithsonian, the staff has consulted the book since its publication to help identify nests and eggs; it is known among the staff as “the nest and eggs” (p.9). But for most of us, dipping into *America's Other Audubon* and poring over the detailed color prints of *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* is akin to discovering some rare breeding bird in our own patch.

The story behind *America's Other Audubon* is actually two different tales of discovery and determination separated by over a century. One story is the touching history of the creation and publication of *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* and the other is the contemporary story of the rediscovery of that book. Joy M. Kiser is currently a writer and editor for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives—which sounds like a unique job. She moved to the Washington, D.C. area to work as a librarian at the National Endowment for the Arts, but before that, in May of 1995, Kiser was an assistant librarian in the Cleveland Museum of Natural History in Ohio. On her way to work she would pass a lucite display case containing an open book from the museum's collection. It was *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio*. She had never heard of the book before or seen the fabulous illustrations. The meager accompanying label stated that the book had been illustrated by Genevieve Jones but gave few other details. Kiser's



curiosity was piqued. Who was this woman from over a century ago who was responsible for this book and why was this book unknown beyond the Cleveland Museum? Kiser set off on a mission of years of research to uncover the history of the book, Genevieve Jones, and her family.

Kiser's first professional presentation was a paper on *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* given at a conference at the Natural History Museum in London in 1999. The book was new to most of the conference attendees and there was some incredulity expressed about the quality of the book and its dramatic back-story. During a break at the conference, it was discovered that the Natural History Museum had a copy of *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* and it was brought out so everyone could admire the book. Kiser's next hurdle was to find a publisher who would reprint the book and do justice to the detailed lithographs. After many disappointments, finally Princeton Architectural Press agreed to publish *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* under the title *America's Other Audubon*. The contemporary volume reproduces the hand-colored lithographs of the original book as well as the text. It includes an extensive introductory essay by Joy M. Kiser that details the history of the book and several photographs of the principals involved.

What Kiser found out about the creation of *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* was a compelling tale of passion, loss, and healing. Genevieve Jones, or Gennie as she was called by her family and friends, grew up in the small town of Circleville, Ohio during the late 1800s. Her father, Dr. Nelson E. Jones, was a passionate amateur ornithologist. He often took Gennie to look at birds or collect bird nests and eggs when she was growing up. Gennie's mother, Virginia, had no real interest in natural history, but tolerated the collection of live birds that Gennie and her brother Howard kept in the house. This menagerie included several large species such as a Cooper's Hawk and a Turkey Vulture. Gennie's father's extensive library contained many books on birds, but she was surprised that she could not find any book that illustrated bird nests. Gennie enjoyed painting and her father encouraged her to illustrate a book about bird nests, but initially nothing came of it.

Genevieve was a uniquely intelligent woman. As a student, she excelled at the sciences, mathematics and languages. She had a passion for art and ornithology. As she approached thirty years of age, she was still single, a state of affairs that must have alarmed her and her parents. Because of a skin condition, her face often had a "flushed" look and Kiser describes Gennie as "self conscious about her appearance" as well as "sensitive and anxious" (p.14). She began to have what is described as migraines.

When Gennie began dating a man who was described as "fine looking," her story looked like it would end the way it did for so many women of her day: married and confined to the home to look after her husband and the inevitable children. Gennie's potential lover had one fatal flaw: he drank alcohol. It is not revealed whether he simply had an occasional drink or was a serious drunkard, because it did not matter to Gennie's parents. Her father was against all alcohol use except as medicine and her mother was a member of the American Temperance Society. Any amount of liquor

was too much. They forbade Gennie to marry her suitor. Despite considerable research, Kiser has yet to uncover the identity of Gennie's suitor.

You can imagine Gennie's reaction to this decree from her parents. According to Kiser, she became silent and withdrawn. Her male acquaintance still sometimes visited, but they both knew it was an impossible situation and doomed.

To prevent his daughter from sinking further into depression and to direct her attention away from her failed love life, Nelson Jones once again encouraged Gennie to think about creating a book about bird nests and eggs. He would finance the project and her brother Howard would gather the nests and write the text. Gennie's closest female friend, Eliza Schulze, would help her measure and sketch the nests. Gennie threw herself into the project. Though initially Gennie wanted to illustrate and print, in actual size, all of the 320 species known at that time to breed in America, her father wisely encouraged her to narrow the focus of this family project to only the species that bred in Ohio, a mere 130 birds. Nobody in the family knew anything about lithography, but the company that offered to print the illustrations, the Adolph Krebs Company of Cincinnati, offered to instruct Gennie and Eliza how to create lithographs through mailed instructions. This point in Kiser's retelling of the creation of *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* blew my mind. These two young women learned the difficult and physically demanding art of lithography through correspondence. They learned how to draw on and work with the cumbersome 65-pound lithography stones at home. They even drew on both sides of the blocks and hand painted the prints themselves. Their small in-house studio became so crammed with tools, paints, prints, and stones, that Nelson had to put a two-room addition onto the house just to accommodate their studio.

Nelson's business plan for marketing the book followed along the lines of other classic, large-format books of the time. He planned to release *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* to subscribers in 23 sets, with three groups of illustrations of nests and eggs with the text per set. Each set would cost \$5.99 for the hand-painted version or \$2.00 for the uncolored version. There would be a limit of 100 copies printed.

By 1878 the first three lithographs were completed and samples were sent to various scientific bodies and ornithologists. The prints and text received favorable reviews from some of the most prominent ornithologists of the day, including Elliott Coues and William Brewster. The first set was sent to 39 subscribers in July 1879: things were definitely looking up for Gennie and her family.

Quite unexpectedly Gennie contracted typhoid fever. Within three weeks she died on August 17, 1879, just as the second set of prints was ready to go out to subscribers. The soul and raison d'être behind the entire family book project was gone. If this wasn't tragic enough, Gennie's unnamed suitor committed suicide upon hearing of her death. One can only imagine what was going through Nelson's mind at that point.

Something unexpected and extraordinary happened. The Jones family decided to complete Gennie's book. "Gennie's book became the Jones family's transitional

object, a physical entity with which they could distract themselves from their heartache and into which they could invest their passion and energy.” (p. 17)

Gennie’s mother Virginia learned to draw, a talent she previously lacked, and after a lot of practice copying Gennie’s style, Virginia produced lithographs of extraordinary quality. As the costs began to mount, Nelson put his entire retirement money up to complete the project. In the end, 90 volumes were completed, 53 of which were hand colored. After Nelson died in 1901 and Virginia died in 1906, Howard locked the doors of the studio; they were not reopened for 32 years, thus finalizing a family project born of love and grief. The blocks and materials passed through the hands of various family members up to the present day.

Does the work and writing in *America’s Other Audubon*, this contemporary reproduction of *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio*, live up to its dramatic and touching history? The short answer is a resounding “yes.” The prints are reproduced somewhat smaller than in the original book, but they are large, detailed, wonderfully colored, and have a three-dimensional quality. No birds are shown, only their nests and eggs. Yet there is something visually intriguing about these prints. Sometimes only the eggs are illustrated and described as in the case of the common hawks (p. 120-121). The eggs are mostly shown at a more reduced scale. These are illustrations that you need to spend time with and savor, noting how the different materials are woven together and how the nest is attached to its substrate. Howard’s collection of nests is idiosyncratic so we see unique details such as the pods of the wild cucumber vine shown woven into the kingbird’s nest (p.15) or the odd bit of newsprint found in the Traill’s Flycatcher nest on page 93. The written accounts are on the page opposite the prints and are definitely worth reading. Each account provides details of where the nest was found but also includes bits of local knowledge and personal recollections of the species.

“A particular catbird, which built for several seasons in the yard of a friend, so excelled as a vocalist and mimic that he attracted the attention and admiration of the whole neighborhood. At intervals throughout the day, from a favorite perch upon a pear tree, he would drop his tail and wings, loosen his feathers until they seemed to almost stand on end, and assuming a comical, semi quizzical look, pour forth volumes of as pure notes as ever came from a feathery throat.” (p.56)

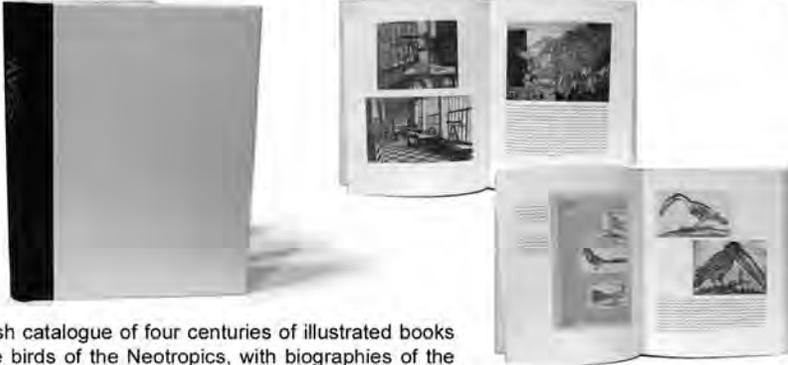
I do have some minor quibbles with *America’s Other Audubon*. Why not title the book *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio*? The bulk of the new volume is a reproduction of the original book, so why not make that fact clear? I also think the title sets an expectation that can never really be met. Audubon traveled around the country to obtain specimens for his work in what became one of the great natural history adventures of America. Gennie Jones, though obviously talented and intelligent, hardly ever left Circleville, Ohio, and did not live long enough to realize her full potential. You cannot compare this book to Audubon’s works based on the impact that their writings and artwork had on the science of ornithology. Audubon’s books were extensively marketed in Britain and America. *Illustrations of the Nests*

and *Eggs of Birds of Ohio* from the outset was intended to have only a limited publishing run and so never had the social or scientific impact of Audubon's works even in his day. The history, writing, and artwork of *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* are a family project begun and inspired by a fascinating young woman, Gennie Jones. That dramatic history makes *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* unique among American natural history books, and its rerelease should celebrate this fact.

Common bird names in use during the late nineteenth century are used throughout the book, some of which are no longer used in contemporary bird books. Joy M. Kiser has attempted to include the modern names for these species. In a few cases, she incorrectly attributes modern names or there are questions about the names of the species Kiser indicates. David Spector, biology professor at Central Connecticut State University and longtime avid birder of the Connecticut River Valley and beyond, has already composed an extensive annotated list of possible errors and has forwarded that list to Kiser.

These are all minor concerns. *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* is available at last to the birding and ornithological community. Joy M. Kiser has done a fine job researching the history of the Jones family and their amazing efforts to complete *Illustrations of the Nests and Eggs of Birds of Ohio* as a appropriate and touching memorial to a deeply-loved family member. Kiser's *America's Other Audubon* has brought a lost, unique masterpiece of American natural history literature to a wider audience. 

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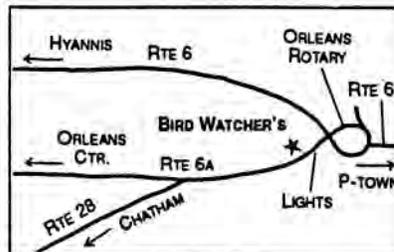
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BIRD SIGHTINGS

March/April 2012

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

The unusually warm and dry winter weather continued into this period. In fact, March was the second warmest March ever recorded in Massachusetts. We were not alone in dealing with this unusual warmth; NOAA reported that it was the warmest March on record nationally since records were first kept in 1895. The high in Boston was an unbelievable 83° on March 22, 30° above the normal for that date, breaking the previous high of 72° set in 1948. Only six days in March saw the temperature dip below normal. Rainfall was 1.21 inches in Boston, 3.11 inches below average. Snow for March totaled only 0.6 inch bringing the seasonal total to 9.3 inches, 32.6 inches below average for the winter season.

In April, the average temperature in Boston was 53.1°, the second warmest on record and the tenth month in a row with above normal temperatures. The high was 87° on April 16. There were only six days of measurable rain totaling 3.09 inches. The most on any one day was 1.48 inches on April 23. Southwest winds were recorded on three days during the month, and winds from the south occurred on an additional seven days. *R. H. Stymeist*

WATERFOWL THROUGH ALCIDS

For the past few years this early spring reporting period has typically included some waterfowl rarities, but this year was disappointing with the only “rarities” being those that are seen annually, such as **Greater White-fronted Goose**, **Eurasian Wigeon**, and **Barrow’s Goldeneye**.

Over the past two decades **Pacific Loon** has become almost annual in early spring, particularly in Provincetown and Truro, where single individuals were reported during this period. A Pacific Loon reported from Plum Island during March 5–17 had an odd, downturned bill, undoubtedly the same individual photographed off Hampton, New Hampshire, on January 15. A fourth Pacific Loon was seen in Marshfield.

For the fifth consecutive year Manx Shearwaters returned to Revere Beach in April. Up to a dozen have been seen there over the years, but, although a pair was observed copulating, the shearwaters have not been confirmed as breeding at Revere Beach. Manx Shearwaters construct underground burrows for their nests and go to and from the nests only at night. The most likely nesting spots are the Boston Harbor Islands; the number of islands plus difficulty of access makes confirmation a real challenge. This species has been confirmed as breeding only once in Massachusetts, in 1973 on Penikese Island.

Clapper Rails were reported from two Cape Cod locations, and a single King Rail was seen by a birder doing a census of marsh birds at Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in Concord. Sandhill Cranes were well reported during this period, but there were no reports from the only known breeding site in New Marlboro.

Whimbrels are unusual in spring, and this year they were reported from two locations. A Stilt Sandpiper in Rowley was a rare spring visitor. The Long-billed and Short-billed dowitchers that overwintered in West Harwich remained through the end of April. Short-billed Dowitchers are extremely rare in winter.

Black-headed Gulls were well reported in the January–February period, but only three in Hyannis lingered into March. An early Laughing Gull arrived at Provincetown on March 25. Alcids reports were typical of the March/April period. *M. Rines*

Greater White-fronted Goose	3/9	Cheshire	8	L. Therrien
3/7 Gill 1	J. Smith	3/17 Westport	25	R. Stymeist#
Snow Goose	Green-winged Teal			
3/11 Cummington 23	B. Spencer	thr P.I.	218 max	v.o.
3/18 Nantucket 2	K. Blackshaw#	3/1-4/23 GMNWR	45 max	v.o.
3/28 P.I. 75	MAS (B. Gette)	3/18 Ipswich	48	J. Berry
4/7-14 Nahant 2	L. Pivacek + v.o.	3/19 Topsfield	53	P. + F. Vale
Brant		3/27 Bolton Flats	450	N. Paulson
3/4 Quincy 1000	V. Zollo#	3/30 Hadley	33	L. Therrien
3/16 Scituate 316	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	4/8 W. Harwich	33	B. Nikula
3/23 Salisbury 250	F. Vale#	4/16 Northampton	21	L. Therrien#
4/1 P'town H. 150	B. Nikula	Canvasback		
4/6 Revere B. 460	W. Manter	3/2 Haverhill	3 m, 1 f	v.o.
4/29 Winthrop 140	P. Peterson	3/4 Nantucket	75	K. Blackshaw#
Wood Duck	Redhead			
thr GMNWR 48 max	v.o.	3/1-4/4 P.I.		v.o.
3/11 Hadley 28	L. Therrien	3/3 Cheshire	2	C. Johnson
3/25 Wayland 25	SSBC (G. Long)	3/4 Nantucket	4	K. Blackshaw#
3/29 IRWS 39	J. Berry	3/7 Sheffield	1	E. Neumuth
4/8 W. Bridgewater 22	S. Arena	3/19 Sandwich	2	P. Kyle
4/11 Wenham 31	J. Berry	Ring-necked Duck		
4/21 Longmeadow 30	J. Orcutt	3/1-4/25 GMNWR	220 max	S. Perkins
Gadwall		3/4 Sterling	90	R. Quimby
3/8 Arlington Res. 7	M. Rines	3/7 Sheffield	151	E. Neumuth
3/10 Turners Falls 6	J. Drucker	3/11 Gloucester (E.P.)	60	C. Haines
3/13 Ipswich 152	R. Heil	3/11 New Salem	140	B. Lafley
3/18, 4/15 P.I. 135, 14	Trimble, Berry	3/17 W. Bridgewater	300	SSBC (Peterson)
3/18, 4/7 Ipswich 40, 17	J. Berry	3/24 P.I.	45	N. Landry
3/18 Longmeadow 7	S. Surner	3/29 IRWS	38	J. Berry
Eurasian Wigeon		4/28 Ipswich	3	J. Berry
3/13-18 Nantucket 2 m	K. Blackshaw#	Greater Scaup		
American Wigeon		3/4 Squantum	325	G. d'Entremont
3/4 Braintree 5	V. Zollo#	3/4 Quincy	300	V. Zollo#
3/4 Nantucket 75	K. Blackshaw#	4/3 Jamaica Plain	1	R. Schain
3/8 Ipswich 6	J. Berry	Lesser Scaup		
3/16 E. Boston (B.I.) 6	P. Peterson	3/3 Cheshire	2	C. Johnson
3/16 Longmeadow 5	S. Kellogg	3/4 Braintree	27	G. d'Entremont
3/30 Rowley 9	B. Peters	3/4 Sandwich	125	M. Goetschkes
4/10 P.I. 8	R. Heil	3/17 Pittsfield	13	B. Zajda
Eurasian Wigeon X American Wigeon		4/1 Nantucket	65	K. Blackshaw#
3/13 Rowley 2 m	R. Heil	4/7 Wakefield	10	P. + F. Vale
3/19 Plymouth 1 ph	M. Faherty	Common Eider		
American Black Duck		3/24 P.I.	225	R. Doherty
3/17 Westport 194	R. Stymeist#	Harlequin Duck		
4/11 P.I. 171	D. Ely	3/13 N. Scituate	33	P. O'Neill
Blue-winged Teal		3/20 Plymouth	8	M. Faherty
3/1-25 Marstons Mills 2	v.o.	3/25 Nantucket	16	K. Blackshaw
4/5 Longmeadow 4	T. Alicea	4/1 P'town H.	5	B. Nikula
4/14 Taunton 6	J. Sweeney	4/16 Rockport (A.P.)	28	S. Perkins#
4/17 W. Roxbury (MP) pr	A. Morgan	4/22 Westport	6	P. Champlin
4/24 Bolton Flats 5	P. Morlock	Surf Scoter		
4/25 Topsfield 4	J. Berry	3/9 Ipswich (C.B.)	40	J. Berry
4/27 DWWS 2	C. Patterson	3/20 S. Monomoy	200	D. Clapp
Northern Shoveler		4/8 Revere	30	R. Stymeist#
3/1-4/21 P.I. 7 max	v.o.	4/23 Rockport (A.P.)	1030	D. Ely#
3/1-5 W. Barnstable 2	v.o.	White-winged Scoter		
3/10 Bolton Flats 4	D. Grant	3/5 Winthrop	275	R. Stymeist
3/22 E. Boston (B.I.) 3	P. Peterson	3/24 N. Truro	300	B. Nikula
3/23 S. Dart. (A.Pd) 3	MAS (P. Champlin)	3/31 Revere B.	78	R. Stymeist
4/6 GMNWR 4	J. Forbes#	4/26 P.I.	35	T. Wetmore
4/7 DWWS 2 m ad	J. Galluzzo	Black Scoter		
4/8 Longmeadow 2	N. Eaton	3/4 P.I.	60	K. Elwell
Northern Pintail		3/20 S. Monomoy	400	D. Clapp
3/1-4/15 P.I. 185 max	3/18 v.o.	4/16 Manchester	76	R. Schain
3/8 Amherst 12	I. Davies	4/23 Rockport (A.P.)	703	D. Ely#
3/8 Ipswich 9	J. Berry			

Long-tailed Duck			Red-throated Loon					
3/19	Falmouth	350	G. Hirth	3/1	Medford	1	M. Rines	
3/23	Marshfield	80	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	3/18	P.I.	16	R. Schain	
4/1	P.I.	700	J. Restivo	3/18	Nantucket	25	K. Blackshaw#	
4/22	Turners Falls	2	S. Sumner	3/25, 4/7	P'town	60, 240	B. Nikula	
4/22	Chestnut Hill	2	R. Schain	3/25, 4/14	N. Truro	340, 140	B. Nikula	
4/22	Pittsfield (Onota)	2	G. Hurley	4/4	Wellfleet	350	M. Faherty	
Bufflehead			Pacific Loon					
3/4	Squantum	300	G. d'Entremont	3/5-17	Salisbury	1 ph	E. Labato + v.o.	
3/13	Newbypt H.	250	R. Heil	3/17	P'town	1	L. Seitz#	
3/17	Westport	100	R. Stymeist#	3/25	N. Truro	1	B. Nikula	
4/1	Nantucket	75	K. Blackshaw#	4/14	Marshfield	1	E. Dalton	
4/14	Hingham (WE)	50	SSBC (H. Cross)	Common Loon				
4/27	Turners Falls	8	J. Smith	3/4	P.I.	56	J. Berry#	
Common Goldeneye			3/5			Winthrop	11	R. Stymeist
3/5	Winthrop	38	R. Stymeist	3/25, 4/14	N. Truro	30, 40	B. Nikula	
3/8	Gloucester (E.P.)	20	P. Peterson	4/4	Wellfleet	75	M. Faherty	
3/11	Turners Falls	8	S. Svec	4/22	Pittsfield (Onota)	11	G. Hurley	
3/13	Newbypt H.	350	R. Heil	4/22	Westport	200	P. Champlin	
3/14	GMNWR	42	S. Perkins#	Pied-billed Grebe				
4/24	Ipswich (C.B.)	2 m	J. Berry	3/13-4/30	GMNWR	8 max	v.o.	
Barrow's Goldeneye			3/24			W. Warren	3	B. Zajda
3/1-14	Falmouth	1	v.o.	4/2	Princeton	2	L. Pistrang	
3/4	W. Boylston	2	B. Abbott	4/15	Longmeadow	2	C. Surprenant	
3/8-14	Gloucester	2	v.o.	Horned Grebe				
3/16	GMNWR	1 m	S. Perkins#	3/4	S. Quabbin	2	L. Therrien	
3/17-18	Wayland	1	v.o.	3/18	Nantucket	50	K. Blackshaw#	
Hooded Merganser			3/23			Wellfleet	45	M. Faherty
3/6	Braintree	23	P. Peterson	4/1	Squantum	88	G. d'Entremont	
3/8	Ipswich	29	J. Berry	4/8	P.I.	30	K. Cronin	
3/8	Marshfield	34	J. Galluzzo	4/22	Waltham	4	J. Forbes#	
3/11	New Salem	7	B. Lafley	Red-necked Grebe				
3/18	Petersham	7	M. Lynch#	3/4	P.I.	40	T. Wetmore	
4/29	GMNWR	4	W. Hutcheson	3/11	Winthrop B.	131	K. Hartel#	
Common Merganser			3/13			N. Scituate	34	P. O'Neill
3/4	Westboro	144	S. Arena	3/31	Gr Barrington	2	G. Ward	
3/6	Ludlow	141	A. & L. Richardson	4/5	Winthrop	114	D. Ely	
3/8	Northampton	122	L. Therrien	Northern Fulmar				
3/10	Turners Falls	120	J. Drucker	3/2	Eastham (F.E.)	85	B. Nikula	
3/10	Southwick	132	S. Kellogg	4/17	SW of Tillies Bk	27	K. Mueller	
4/22	Waltham	2	J. Forbes	4/23	Rockport (A.P.)	2	T. Spahr	
Red-breasted Merganser			Manx Shearwater					
3/17	Westport	150	R. Stymeist#	4/5-30	Revere B.	11 max	v.o.	
3/17, 4/8	P'town	800, 2400	B. Nikula	Leach's Storm-Petrel				
4/15	P.I.	330	E. Nielsen	4/23	Rockport (A.P.)	2	D. Ely#	
Ruddy Duck			Northern Gannet					
thr	P.I.	30 max	v.o.	3/3, 4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	21, 110	R. Heil	
3/4	Nantucket	89	K. Blackshaw#	4/7	P.I.	400	E. Nielsen	
3/17	Pembroke	110	SSBC (Petersen)	4/8, 26	P'town	375, 1550	B. Nikula	
3/18	Braintree	32	P. Peterson	4/8	N. Truro	350	B. Nikula	
4/6	Chestnut Hill	40	M. Bakker	4/16	Stellwagen	900	P. Trull	
4/25	Charlton	2	R. Jenkins	Double-crested Cormorant				
Northern Bobwhite			4/21			Barre Falls	100	B. Kamp#
4/16	N. Truro	3	B. Nikula	4/23	GMNWR	46 migr	S. Perkins	
Ring-necked Pheasant			4/23			Turners Falls	26	S. Kellogg
3/13	Byfield	1 m	P. + F. Vale	4/28	P.I.	117	S. Sullivan#	
4/15	Saugus	4	S. Zende#	4/29	Edgartown	164	J. M. Nelson	
4/15	Cumb. Farms	2 m	P. + F. Vale#	Great Cormorant				
4/25	Gloucester	1	C. Haines	3/4	Medford	7	M. Rines	
Ruffed Grouse			3/13			N. Scituate	50	P. O'Neill
3/11	New Salem	1	B. Lafley	3/17	P'town	104	M. Iliff	
3/14	ONWR	2	F. Bouchard	4/14	N. Scituate	7	G. d'Entremont	
4/4	Falmouth	7	P. Trimble	American Bittern				
4/10	Quabbin (G35)	2	J. Hoye#	3/23	GMNWR	2	M. Iliff	
4/19	Groveland	1	P. + F. Vale	4/15	Nahant	2	L. Pivacek	
4/28	Hardwick	1	B. Zajda#	Great Blue Heron				
Wild Turkey			4/1			W. Boxford	42 n	B. deGraaf#
3/11	Wellfleet	20	T. Green	4/1	Concord	52 n	B. deGraaf#	
3/13	W. Gloucester	47	J. Nelson	4/1	Methuen	17 n	B. deGraaf#	
3/13	Concord (NAC)	28	S. Perkins	Great Egret				
3/17	Westport	31	R. Stymeist#	3/11	Wellfleet	1	J. Young	
4/8	Newbury	35	P. + F. Vale	3/13	Westport	3	G. Gove#	

Great Egret (continued)				4/8	Nantucket	4	K. Blackshaw#
4/5	Concord (NAC)	3	P. Sowizral	4/15	Cumb. Farms	3	P. + F. Vale#
4/16	Manchester	93	R. Schain	4/21	S. Dartmouth	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)
4/17	Hingham	30	E. Lipton	Sharp-shinned Hawk			
4/24	W. Newbury	12	P. + F. Vale	4/thr	P.I.	80	Hawkcount (PR)
Snowy Egret				4/thr	N. Truro	38	Hawkcount (DM)
3/27	Truro	1	E. Hoopes	4/5-28	Barre Falls	47	Hawkcount (BK)
4/7	Essex	27	R. Stymeist	4/10	P.I.	37	R. Heil
4/16	Manchester	59	R. Schain	Cooper's Hawk			
4/17	Hingham	7	E. Lipton	3/7	W. Newbury	2	R. Heil
4/29	E. Boston (B.I.)	4	P. Peterson	3/14	GMNWR	2	S. Perkins#
Little Blue Heron				3/31	Marshfield	pr	G. d'Entremont
4/6	P.I.	1	O. Spalding	4/thr	Medford	pr n	R. LaFontaine#
4/6	Gloucester	1	S. Hedman	4/5-20	Barre Falls	15	Hawkcount (BK)
4/15-17	Easthampton	1	M. Keane-Moore	4/30	P.I.	2	Hawkcount (TM)
4/16	Manchester	3 ad	R. Schain	Northern Goshawk			
4/23	Marshfield	1	S. Avery	3/7	Egremont	1	E. Neumuth
Cattle Egret				3/12	Townsend	1	C. Caron
4/17-21	DWWS	1	S. Schroeder# + v.o.	3/13	Mt Tom	1	T. Gagnon
4/21	Ipswich	1	J. Berry	3/15	Amherst	1	E. Dalton
Green Heron				3/18	Groveland	1	K. Elwell
4/19	Oxford	1	B. Mulhearn	3/23	Barre Falls	pr	B. Kamp#
4/21	Boston (Fens)	1	P. Peterson	3/31	Topsfield	1	S. Grinley#
4/21	Ipswich	1	J. Berry	Red-shouldered Hawk			
4/29	W. Newbury	2	D. Chickering#	3/11	New Salem	2	B. Lafley
Black-crowned Night-Heron				3/13	Hubbardston	2	W. Howes
3/8	Boston	1	T. Factor	3/15	Upton	3	N. Paulson
3/15	Plymouth	1	L. Fuller	3/16	DFWS	pr	P. Sowizral
3/27	W. Harwich	13	M. Keleher	3/25	Rehoboth	pr	K. Bartels
4/16	Manchester	19	R. Schain	4/thr	N. Truro	14	Hawkcount (DM)
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron				4/21	Wayland	pr	D. Peebles
4/25	Nantucket	1	E. Ray#	4/28	Mashpee	pr n	M. Keleher
Glossy Ibis				Broad-winged Hawk			
3/13	P.I.	2	v.o.	4/10-28	Barre Falls	257	Hawkcount (BK)
4/10	Pembroke	3	G. Everett	4/14	Wayland	3	B. Harris#
4/10-13	Cumb. Farms	3	v.o.	4/18	Barre Falls	76	Hawkcount (BK)
4/15	Winthrop	12	R. Cressman	4/20	Wompatuck SP	3	S. Hedman#
4/16	Manchester	98	R. Schain	Red-tailed Hawk			
4/19	Concord	5	S. Perkins	3/7	W. Newbury	13	R. Heil
4/21	Longmeadow	2	H. Schwartz	3/13	GMNWR	8	S. Perkins
Black Vulture				4/thr	N. Truro	43	Hawkcount (DM)
thr	Reports of indiv. from 9 locations			4/21	Wayland	10	S. Perkins#
3/28	Rehoboth	3	K. Bartels	Rough-legged Hawk			
4/14	Hadley	2	J. Drucker	3/1-18	P.I.	1-2	T. Wetmore
4/17	Williamstown	3	D. Jones	3/7	Newbyp H.	1 lt	R. Heil
4/21	Westport	2	BBC (R. Stymeist)	4/11	DWWS	1	W. Freedberg
Turkey Vulture				Golden Eagle			
3/thr	N. Truro	115	Hawkcount (DM)	3/11	Hadley	1	G. d'Entremont#
3/4	Westfield	19	S. Kellogg	4/1	Boston (Long I.)	1 ad	R. Donovan
3/11	Amherst	22	I. Davies	4/23	Amherst	1	A. Magee
3/30	Dorchester	31	P. Peterson	American Kestrel			
4/4	Georgetown	25	K. Elwell	4/thr	P.I.	636	Hawkcount (PR)
4/10	P.I.	26	R. Heil	4/thr	N. Truro	56	Hawkcount (DM)
4/thr	N. Truro	356	Hawkcount (DM)	4/5-20	Barre Falls	24	Hawkcount (BK)
4/21	Westport	13	BBC (R. Stymeist)	4/7	Newbury	6	C. Johnson#
Osprey				4/9	P.I.	188	Hawkcount (PR)
3/11	W. Harwich	1	A. Curtis	4/11	DWWS	14	W. Freedberg
4/1	Nantucket	4	K. Blackshaw#	4/14	Westfield	12	S. Kellogg
4/5-28	Barre Falls	38	Hawkcount (BK)	4/15	Cumb. Farms	10	P. + F. Vale#
4/9-30	P.I.	9	Hawkcount (PR)	Merlin			
4/21	Westport	19	BBC (R. Stymeist)	4/thr	P.I.	38	Hawkcount (PR)
4/29	Oak Bluffs	10	J. M. Nelson	4/thr	N. Truro	17	Hawkcount (DM)
Bald Eagle				4/9	P.I.	13	Hawkcount (PR)
thr	Reports of 1-2 indiv. from many loc.			Peregrine Falcon			
3/4	Amesbury	6	S. McGrath#	thr	Lawrence	pr n	L. Kaplan#
3/9	Medford	3	S. Zende#	3/thr	Sagamore	pr	v.o.
4/6	Barre Falls	4	Hawkcount (BK)	3/9	Cambr. (F.P.)	2	P. Roberts
Northern Harrier				3/10	Bolton Flats	2	D. Grant
3/1-4/18	P.I.	44 max	v.o.	3/19	Brockton	pr n	K. Ryan
3/7	GMNWR	2	K. Dia#	Clapper Rail			
3/23	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	4	MAS (P. Champlin)	3/3	Osterville	1	J. Trimble
4/1	N. Truro	6	Hawkcount (DM)	4/11, 19	Eastham	1	B. Nikula
4/1	Saugus	3	S. Zende#				

King Rail							
4/28	GMNWR	1	S. Arena	3/16, 4/28	W. Harwich	2, 15	B. Nikula
Clapper/King Rail				4/1	Bolton Flats	1	S. Sullivan#
4/26	Harwichport	1	B. Nikula	4/16	P.I.	4	K. Elwell
Virginia Rail				4/17	Northampton	2	E. Dalton
3/16	E. Boston (B.I.)	3	P. Peterson	4/23	GMNWR	2	S. Perkins
4/1	Mashpee	3	M. Keleher#	4/28	W. Harwich	15	B. Nikula
4/2	GMNWR	6	D. Swain	Upland Sandpiper			
4/11	Wenham	5	J. Berry	4/7	Westfield	2	T. Gagnon
4/22	Westboro	6	J. Lawson#	4/30	Westover	20	S. Surner
4/26	Burlington	5	M. Rines	Whimbrel			
4/29	W. Bridgewater	16	S. Arena	4/24	Duxbury B.	1 ph	R. Bowes
Sora				4/26	W. Dennis	1	E. Hoopes
4/16	P.I.	2	K. Elwell	Ruddy Turnstone			
4/21	Concord	7	S. Perkins#	3/4	Squantum	18	G. d'Entremont
4/21	Westboro	2	S. Arena	3/19	Revere B.	5	P. Peterson
4/29	W. Bridgewater	2	S. Arena	4/19	Plymouth B.	1	S. Hecker
Common Gallinule				Sanderling			
4/18	Lenox	1	G. Hurley	3/1-4/15	P.I.	200 max	v.o.
American Coot				3/4	Quincy	43	V. Zollo#
thr	Woburn (HP)	125	M. Rines#	3/17	Westport	18	R. Stymeist#
thr	GMNWR	50 max	v.o.	4/5	Plymouth B.	130	S. Perkins#
3/1	Waltham	50	J. Forbes	4/29	Duxbury B.	52	R. Bowes
3/8	Ipswich	22	J. Berry	Least Sandpiper			
3/26	Jamaica Plain	57	P. Peterson	4/24	Topsfield	1	D. Chickering
4/8	Nantucket	85	K. Blackshaw#	4/27	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	9	MAS (Champlin)
Sandhill Crane				4/28	W. Harwich	31	B. Nikula
3/8	P.I.	2 ph	R. Heil + v.o.	Pectoral Sandpiper			
3/13-4/2	Newbury	2 ph	R. Heil + v.o.	4/20	P.I.	4	S. Sullivan
4/7-09	GMNWR	1	S. Grinley# + v.o.	4/24	Topsfield	2	P. + F. Vale
4/9-15	Cumb. Farms	2	R. Stymeist#	Purple Sandpiper			
4/12	Wayland	1	G. Gove#	3/8	Rockport (A.P.)	80	J. Nelson
4/28	Rochester	1	J. Sweeney#	4/12	Lynn	30	P. Peterson
Black-bellied Plover				4/14	N. Scituate	50	G. d'Entremont
3/11	Nantucket	8	E. Ray	4/19	Plymouth B.	24	S. Hecker
3/13, 4/28	Duxbury B.	2, 23	R. Bowes#	4/29	Oak Bluffs	36	J. M. Nelson
4/21	P.I.	7	T. Wetmore	Dunlin			
4/22	Winthrop	6	BBC (R. Stymeist)	thr	P.I.	237 max	v.o.
Piping Plover				3/3	Brewster	150	B. Nikula
3/10	Falmouth	1	C. Gibson	3/13, 4/29	Duxbury B.	1080, 210	R. Bowes#
3/11	Ipswich (C.B.)	1	D. Williams	4/5	Plymouth B.	1400	S. Perkins#
3/15	P.I.	7	v.o.	4/26	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	29	P. Champlin
4/5	Plymouth B.	19	S. Perkins#	Stilt Sandpiper			
Killdeer				4/28-30	Rowley	1	P. + F. Vale#
3/4	W. Bridgewater	6	K. Ryan	Short-billed Dowitcher			
3/12	Westboro	22	S. Arena#	thr	W. Harwich	1	B. Nikula#
3/13	Ipswich	37	R. Heil	4/24	P.I.	8	P. + F. Vale
3/18	Topsfield	23	P. + F. Vale	4/26	Mashpee	1	M. Keleher
3/27	Bolton Flats	13	N. Paulson	4/26	W. Dennis	3	E. Hoopes
American Oystercatcher				4/26	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	3	P. Champlin
3/4, 14	Fairhaven	1, 6	C. Longworth	4/26	Duxbury	2	R. Bowes
3/30	Chatham	22	C. Thompson	Long-billed Dowitcher			
4/22	Winthrop	13	BBC (R. Stymeist)	thr	W. Harwich	1	B. Nikula#
4/29	Oak Bluffs	6	J. M. Nelson	Wilson's Snipe			
Spotted Sandpiper				3/10, 4/1	Bolton Flats	4, 60	Kamp, Sullivan
4/13	W. Boylston	1	K. Bourinot	3/12, 24	Topsfield	2, 55	Heil, Vale
4/19	W. Roxbury (MP)	1	P. Peterson	3/24	W. Harwich	15	B. Nikula
4/24	Topsfield	2	P. + F. Vale	3/25, 4/21	Longmeadow	12, 3	L. Therrien
4/25	Sterling	2	A. Marble	4/6	Burrage WMA	120	J. Galluzzo
Solitary Sandpiper				4/8	Wayland	27	B. Harris
4/21	Longmeadow	1	J. Orcutt	4/15	W. Harwich	12	B. Nikula
4/24	Topsfield	1	R. Heil#	4/16	Northampton	13	L. Therrien#
4/24	P'town	1	B. Nikula	American Woodcock			
4/28	GMNWR	1	S. Arena	3/11	P.I.	20	C. Turnbull
4/30	Manchester	1	BBC (S. Hedman)	3/14	Wayland	12	B. Black
Greater Yellowlegs				3/14	Amherst	16	I. Davies
3/3-31	W. Harwich	19 max	B. Nikula#	3/22	Heath	18	D. Potter
3/18-4/30	P.I.	24 max	v.o.	Wilson's Phalarope			
3/30	Rowley	7	B. Peters	4/30	P.I.	1	S. Wheelock
4/5	Essex	12	D. Chickering#	Black-legged Kittiwake			
4/16	Northampton	7	L. Therrien#	3/2	Eastham (F.E.)	1700	B. Nikula
4/25	Bolton Flats	8	B. Kamp	3/3	Rockport (A.P.)	20	R. Heil
4/26	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	30	P. Champlin	3/3	P'town	105	B. Nikula

Black-legged Kittiwake (continued)				3/12	Westminster	1	1W	T. Pirro
3/8	P.I.	20	W. Tatro	4/16	Stellwagen	1		P. Trull
Bonaparte's Gull				4/17	Gloucester	1	1W	K. Mueller
3/9	Lynn	1	J. Quigley	Caspian Tern				
4/9	Swampscott	31	L. Pivacek	4/17	P.I.	1		B. Parker
4/20	S. Quabbin	3	L. Therrien	4/26	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1		P. Champlin
4/22	Waltham	2	J. Forbes#	4/27	Scituate	1		MAS (J. Galluzzo)
4/22	GMNWR	1 ad	S. Perkins#	Common Tern				
4/22	Pittsfield (Onota)	2	G. Hurley	4/24	Vineyard Sound	1		B. Porter
4/23	Turners Falls	3	S. Kellogg	4/26	P'town	25		B. Nikula
4/24	Wachusett Res.	2	D. Berard	4/27	Turners Falls	1		J. Smith
Black-headed Gull				4/28	Swansea	2		J. Sweeney#
3/1-4	W. Hyannis	3	v.o.	Forster's Tern				
Laughing Gull				4/30	Plymouth B.	72		S. Hecker
3/25	P'town	1	B. Nikula	Common Murre				
3/31, 4/29	Wellfleet	8, 150	M. Faherty	3/17	P'town (R.P.)	14		J. Trimble
4/5	Plymouth B.	120	S. Perkins#	4/23	Rockport (A.P.)	1		T. Spahr
4/16	Stellwagen	45	P. Trull	Thick-billed Murre				
Iceland Gull				3/3	Rockport (A.P.)	1		R. Heil
3/1-4/17	P'town	30 max	B. Nikula	Razorbill				
3/2-6	Turners Falls	1	J. Smith	3/3, 4/23	Rockport (A.P.)	61, 1		Heil, Harris
3/5	Holyoke	1	I. Davies	3/7	P.I.	40		T. Wetmore
3/18	Gloucester	7	J. Quigley	3/17	P'town	250		B. Nikula#
3/25	P'town	9	B. Nikula	3/25	N. Truro	50		B. Nikula
4/16	Stellwagen	3	P. Trull	4/23	Rockport (A.P.)	1		B. Harris
Lesser Black-backed Gull				Black Guillemot				
3/3, 29	Brewster	1 ad	B. Nikula	3/13	Duxbury B.	1		R. Bowes#
3/28	P.I.	1 ad	A. Robinson	3/14	Gloucester (B.R.)	7		MAS (B. Gette)
3/31-4/20	P'town	1	B. Nikula	3/23	Marshfield	12		MAS (J. Galluzzo)
4/6	Plymouth	1	A. + D. Morgan	4/23	Rockport (A.P.)	1		D. Ely#
4/22	Boston	1 ad	R. Stymeist	Large alcid species				
Herring x Lesser Black-backed Gull				3/3	P'town	1900		B. Nikula
3/10	Hyannis	1	B. Nikula	3/18	N. Truro	1175		B. Nikula
Glaucous Gull								
3/10	Scituate	1	S. van der Veen					

OWLS THROUGH FINCHES

This winter was one of the largest Snowy Owl incursions on record, and reports continued into April from six locations. Long-eared Owls were found in Salisbury, and one continued from February in Amherst.

The mild weather was undoubtedly responsible for some exceptionally early migrants including a Chimney Swift on April 8 and a Blackburnian Warbler on April 10. A warm southerly flow on the nights of April 14-16 brought more early arrivals: a Warbling Vireo on April 16, an Ovenbird on the 14th, a Northern Parula on the 18th, and a Yellow Warbler and a Black-throated Green Warbler on the 16th. A Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush was photographed on Nantucket on April 28; this species is usually the last migrant thrush, arriving in mid-May.

The bird of the period was the appearance of a **Black-throated Sparrow**, which was photographed at a feeder in Brewster. The homeowners sent photos to Vernon Laux, who writes a bird column for the *Cape Cod Times*. The homeowners were unwilling to make the sighting public but did permit some local experts to confirm the sighting. This is only the second record for the state; the first was in Amherst in April 1973.

A *Selasphorus* hummingbird showed up at a feeder in Dennis on March 24; it was banded and identified as an **Allen's Hummingbird**. Unfortunately, the bird hit a window two days later and was killed; the specimen was taken to the Museum of Comparative Zoology. The **Townsend's Warbler** initially sighted at Jim and Natalie Berry's Ipswich feeder on December 24 was last seen on March 27. Jim estimated that as many as 500 birders visited during its three month stay.

Other highlights included a **Varied Thrush** in Sandwich, a **Yellow-headed Blackbird** at Cumberland Farms, three Prothonotary Warblers, an early Worm-eating Warbler on Plum Island, a Summer Tanager in Falmouth, a Blue Grosbeak on Nantucket, and Dickcissels in three locations.

R. H. Stymeist

Eastern Screech-Owl				4/8	New Salem	4	B. Lafley
3/14-31	Ipswich	1-2	J. & N. Berry	4/16	WMWS	6	K. Ryan
4/21	Medford	2 red	P. Devaney	4/18	Boston (PG)	3	P. Peterson
Great Horned Owl				4/29	Petersham	7	J. Hoye#
3/10	Northboro	2	S. Moore#		Northern Flicker		
3/18	Boxford	1 n	D. Chickering#	4/11	Wenham	13	J. Berry
3/21	Sudbury	pr n	J. Hoye#	4/14	P.I.	20	F. Vale
3/22	Ipswich	1 n	J. Berry	4/15	P'town	15	B. Nikula
3/24	Wareham	2	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	4/16	N. Truro	35	B. Nikula
4/4	Rochester	2	L. Gerrior	4/17	Boston (F.Pk)	11	P. Peterson
4/29	GMNWR	pr	W. Hutcheson	4/21	MSSF	14	G. d'Entremont#
Snowy Owl					Pileated Woodpecker		
thr	P.I.	6 max	v.o.	3/15	Upton	3	N. Paulson
3/4	S. Boston	1	V. Zollo#	3/25	Ipswich	3	J. Berry#
3/8	Duxbury B.	4	N. Smith	4/18	Lincoln	3	A. McCarthy#
3/14	Fairhaven	1 dk	C. Longworth		Eastern Phoebe		
3/29	Plymouth	1	S. Hecker	3/9-4/30	P.I.	12 max	v.o.
4/1	Saugus	1	S. Zende#	3/10, 21	Lexington	1, 6	M. Rines
Barred Owl				3/11	Amherst	1	I. Davies
3/17	W. Newbury	2	S. Grinley#	3/18	W. Newbury	5	P. + F. Vale
3/19	HRWMA	2	T. Pirro	3/18	Ware R. IBA	11	M. Lynch#
3/20	Wayland	2	G. Dysart	3/19	Lincoln	8	M. Rines
3/25	Ipswich	2	J. Berry#	4/2	Belchertown	18	L. Therrien
3/27	IRWS	2	J. McCoy#		Eastern Kingbird		
4/8	Wompatuck SP	4	G. d'Entremont	4/22	Winchester	1	R. LaFontaine#
4/22	W. Warren	4	B. Zajda	4/22	Chestnut Hill	1	R. Schain
Long-eared Owl				4/25	Wenham	1	L. Waters
3/8	Amherst	1	J. Hoye#	4/26	Georgetown	1	J. Berry#
3/11	Salisbury	1	E. Labato	4/28	Longmeadow	1	B. Jones
Short-eared Owl					Northern Shrike		
3/3-4/16	P.I.	1-2	v.o.	3/4, 21	P.I.	1 ad	Berry, Gras
4/7	Sandwich	1	P. Trimble	3/5	Uxbridge	1	A. Marble
4/10	W. Warren	1	B. Zajda	3/6	Braintree	1 imm	P. Peterson
4/15	Saugus	1	S. Zende#	3/8	Heath	2	D. Potter
Eastern Whip-poor-will				3/9	Wayland	1 imm.	B. Harris
4/20	Mashpee	2	M. Keleher	3/12	Windsor	1	K. & M. Conway
4/20	P.I.	2	S. McGrath#	3/14	Belchertown	1	E. Dalton
Chimney Swift				3/18	HRWMA	1 ad ph	K. Bourinot
4/8	Jamaica Plain	1	J. Miller	4/6	Burrage WMA	1 ad	J. Galluzzo
4/17	Boston (F.Pk)	1	P. Peterson		White-eyed Vireo		
4/18	Bolton Flats	5	T. Pirro	4/28-29	Fairhaven	2	v.o.
4/22	GMNWR	10	J. Trimble#	4/29	Wompatuck SP	1	C. Nims
4/29	W. Bridgewater	70	S. Arena		Yellow-throated Vireo		
Ruby-throated Hummingbird				4/21-22	Westboro	1	S. Arena
4/22	Rochester	1	C. Wade	4/30	S. Quabbin	1	T. Gagnon
4/24	Rehoboth	1	K. Bartels		Blue-headed Vireo		
4/25	Norwell	1 m	W. + A. Childs	4/15	Barre	1	B. Milke
4/27	DWWS	1	C. Patterson	4/15	WMWS	1	G. Billingham
4/28	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	4/15	S. Quabbin	1	L. Therrien
4/29	Georgetown	1 f	M. Watson	4/16	P.I.	9	P. + J. Trimble
4/30	Manomet	1 m	K. Doyan	4/18	Medford	2	M. Rines
4/30	Brewster	2	D. Clapp	4/28	Barre	2	B. Zajda#
Allen's Hummingbird					Warbling Vireo		
3/24-26	Dennis	1 b	S. McGibbon	4/17	Brookline	1	v.o.
Belted Kingfisher				4/19	Brookfield	1	R. Jenkins
3/18	ONWR	3	G. Billingham	4/21	Longmeadow	1	J. Orcutt
3/25	Wayland	3	SSBC (G. Long)	4/26	Worcester	3	B. Mulhearn
4/1	GMNWR	3	S. Perkins	4/29	Wayland	3	B. Harris#
4/21	Wayland	3	S. Perkins#	4/30	W. Roxbury (MP)	7	T. Bradford
Red-bellied Woodpecker					Fish Crow		
3/16	Brewster	7	D. Clapp	3/4	Mattapan	12	R. Stymeist
3/17	Quabog IBA	8	M. Lynch#	3/6	S. Weymouth	27	J. Galluzzo
4/11	Wenham	5	J. Berry	3/10	Hadley	6	B. Zajda
4/16	Medford	5	M. Rines	3/18	Braintree	20	P. Peterson
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				3/20	Salem	5	K. Elwell
3/31	Royalston	4	J. Hoye#	3/30	Needham	45	A. Joslin

Fish Crow (continued)				Carolina Wren			
4/21	MSSF	9	G. d'Entremont#	3/17	Westport	15	R. Stymeist#
Common Raven				4/21	Westport	18	BBC (R. Stymeist)
thr	GMNWR	2	v.o.	House Wren			
thr	Quincy	pr n, 3 yg	v.o.	4/11	Grafton	1	N. Paulson
3/18	Barre F.D.	pr n	M. Lynch#	4/16	Holden	1	M. Driscoll
4/8	New Salem	4	B. Lafley	4/16	Wakefield	1	F. Vale
4/15	Harvard	pr n	J. Center	4/16	Northampton	2	L. Therrien#
4/19	Fall River	3	L. Abbey	4/21	Ipswich	3	J. Berry#
Horned Lark				4/21	Medford	4	M. Rines#
3/1	Fitchburg	12	N. Beauregard	4/26	Belmont	7	R. Stymeist#
3/7	P.I.	20	MAS (D. Weaver)	4/27	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	5	P. Champlin
3/9	Ipswich	19	R. Heil	Winter Wren			
3/13	Duxbury B.	11	R. Bowes#	3/12	Medford	2	R. LaFontaine
3/24	Northampton	75	J. Rose	3/21	Lexington	2	M. Rines
4/9	Cumb. Farms	16	R. Stymeist#	3/30	Boxford	3	J. Berry
Purple Martin				4/12	Upton	2	N. Paulson
3/21	DWWS	1	T. O'Neil	4/15	WMWS	4	G. Billingham
4/9	Rehoboth	2	R. Marr Jr.	4/16	Carlisle	2	T. + D. Brownrigg
4/10	N. Truro	1	D. Manchester	4/20	Wompatuck SP	3	S. Hedman#
4/15	Rockport	1	B. Harris#	Marsh Wren			
4/15	P.I.	2	N. Landry	thr	GMNWR	10 max	v.o.
4/23	GMNWR	1 f	S. Perkins	thr	P.I.	16 max	v.o.
Tree Swallow				3/17	Longmeadow	1	N. Eaton
3/7-4/30	GMNWR	700 max	v.o.	3/30	Harwich	2	B. Nikula
3/8-4/30	P.I.	390 max	v.o.	4/8	E. Boston (B.I.)	3	R. Stymeist
3/25	Wayland	410	SSBC (G. Long)	4/23	Dorchester	3	P. Peterson
4/4	Holyoke	800	T. Gagnon	4/26	Ipswich	3 m	J. Berry
4/29	W. Bridgewater	125	S. Arena	4/29	W. Bridgewater	10	S. Arena
4/30	W. Warren	100	B. Zajda	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher			
Northern Rough-winged Swallow				4/10	DWWS	1	B. Gleavy
3/30-4/30	GMNWR	7 max	v.o.	4/13	Lincoln	1	M. Rines
3/30	Needham	6	A. Joslin	4/15	Longmeadow	2	C. Surprenant
4/12	Wayland	8	G. Gove#	4/21	Upton	4	N. Paulson
4/22	Wakefield	12	P. + F. Vale	4/21	Medford	4	M. Rines#
4/29	W. Bridgewater	6	S. Arena	4/21	Westport	5	BBC (R. Stymeist)
4/30	Manchester	6	S. Hedman	4/22	P'town	4	M. Keleher
Bank Swallow				4/22	Wompatuck SP	4	G. d'Entremont
4/22	GMNWR	1	S. Perkins#	4/23	W. Roxbury (MP)	6	D. Bernstein
4/22	Wayland	1	B. Harris	4/26	GMNWR	8	P. Peterson
4/29	W. Bridgewater	1	S. Arena	Golden-crowned Kinglet			
4/29	Arlington Res.	3	J. Forbes	3/1-4/11	P.I.	23 max	v.o.
4/30	W. Warren	2	B. Zajda	3/18	Braintree	5	P. Peterson
Cliff Swallow				3/18	Ware R. IBA	8	M. Lynch#
4/2-30	GMNWR	1-4	v.o.	3/29	Boston (A.A.)	6	P. Peterson
4/17	P.I.	1	S. Sullivan	4/1	Mashpee	11	M. Keleher#
4/26	Adams	1	D. St James	4/7	P'town	10	B. Nikula#
4/29	W. Bridgewater	2	S. Arena	4/8	Wompatuck SP	8	G. d'Entremont
4/30	Williamstown	2	T. Gagnon	4/10	Nahant	5	L. Pivacek
4/30	W. Warren	1	B. Zajda	Ruby-crowned Kinglet			
Barn Swallow				3/3	Plymouth	3	J. Trimble
4/2-30	GMNWR	90 max	v.o.	4/4	Holyoke	3	T. Gagnon
4/6	Easton	4	K. Ryan	4/7, 16	P'town	3, 13	B. Nikula#
4/7	Burrage Pd WMA	2	G. d'Entremont#	4/10-30	P.I.	61 max	4/16 v.o.
4/10	P.I.	13	R. Heil	4/16	Winchester	7	R. LaFontaine
4/21	Westport	10	BBC (R. Stymeist)	4/16	N. Truro	8	B. Nikula
4/29	W. Bridgewater	12	S. Arena	4/16	Medford	6	M. Rines
Red-breasted Nuthatch				4/16	Melrose	10	D. + I. Jewell
3/18	P.I.	2	S. Grinley#	Eastern Bluebird			
4/1	Mashpee	12	M. Keleher#	3/12	DFWS	12	P. Sowizral
4/8	Nantucket	5	K. Blackshaw#	3/18	ONWR	12	G. Billingham
4/15	WMWS	2	G. Billingham	4/15	WMWS	11	G. Billingham
4/17	Boxford	2	J. Berry	Veery			
4/21	MSSF	8	G. d'Entremont#	4/28	Hardwick	1	B. Zajda#
Brown Creeper				Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush			
3/17	MSSF	3	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	4/28	Nantucket	1 ph	V. Laux
3/18	Ware R. IBA	11	M. Lynch#	Hermit Thrush			
3/22	Heath	14	D. Potter	3/10	Lexington	2	M. Rines
3/24	Boxford	4 m	J. Berry	3/14-4/30	P.I.	69 max	v.o.
3/25	Ipswich	8	J. Berry#	4/6	Jamaica Plain	2	M. Kaufman
4/1	Mashpee	10	M. Keleher#	4/14	Nahant	7	BBC (L. Pivacek)
4/15	WMWS	6	G. Billingham	4/15	Boston	17	D. Scott
4/15	Rutland SP	12	M. Lynch#	4/15	Rutland SP	14	M. Lynch#

Hermit Thrush (continued)				4/17	Manomet	1	T. Lloyd-Evans
4/15	Squantum	19	G. d'Entremont	4/17	Nahant	1	v.o.
4/16	Melrose	12	D. + I. Jewell	4/19	Holyoke	1	D. Norton
4/16	Winchester	14	R. LaFontaine	4/19	Fall River	3	L. Abbey
4/18	Boston (PG)	10	P. Peterson	4/20	Wompatuck SP	3	S. Hedman#
Wood Thrush					Blue-winged Warbler		
4/21	Boxford (C.P.)	1	L. de la Flor#	4/20	W. Bridgewater	1	K. Ryan
4/23	Belchertown	1	L. Therrien	4/25	Northampton	1	S. Sauter
4/23	Groveland	1	K. Elwell	4/26	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	P. Champlin
4/25	Natick	1	P. Loranger	4/29	Fairhaven	1	P. Perry
4/30	Medford	1	D. Pettee	4/30	Mt.A.	1	F. Lehman
Varied Thrush				4/30	W. Newbury	1 m	K. Marshall
3/1-28	Sandwich	1 ph	<i>fide</i> J. Trimble		Black-and-white Warbler		
Gray Catbird				4/17	W. Bridgewater	1	R. Finch
3/12	N. Brookfield	1	J. Smith	4/18	Cambridge	1	D. Owen
3/17	Westport	3	R. Stymeist#	4/20	P'town	1	B. Nikula
3/18	P.I.	3	R. Schain	4/21	Westport	3	BBC (R. Stymeist)
4/21	Medford	2	M. Rines#	4/21	S. Amherst	6	B. Zajda
4/22	Nantucket	2	K. Blackshaw#	4/22	Quabbin	5	S. Motyl
Brown Thrasher				4/24	Millbury	5	J. Lawson
3/17	Westport	1	R. Stymeist#	4/28	Manchester	6	S. Hedman
4/16	Uxbridge	1	B. Milke	4/29	Medford	7	M. Rines#
4/16	P'town	1	B. Nikula	Prothonotary Warbler			
4/18	Medford	5	M. Rines	4/19	Groveland	1 m	P. + F. Vale#
4/20	Lancaster	3	P. Sowizral	4/21	P.I.	1	D. Chickering
4/22	P.I.	8	F. Vale	4/28-30	Cumb. Farms	1	A. O'Neill#
American Pipit					Orange-crowned Warbler		
3/13	Ipswich	1	R. Heil	3/1	Jamaica Plain	1	G. Denton
3/18	Barre Falls	1	B. Kamp#	3/15	Boston (Fens)	1	M. Kaufman#
3/29	Topsfield	5	J. Berry	4/7-14	Mattapan (BNC)	1	v.o.
4/11	Hadley	1	J. Drucker	4/22	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	P. Champlin
4/27	Westover	2	T. Gagnon		Nashville Warbler		
Bohemian Waxwing				4/18	Beverly	1	W. Tatro
3/5	Heath	78	A. & L. Richardson	4/25	Amherst	1	I. Davies
3/6	Windsor	90	G. Hurley		Common Yellowthroat		
3/7	New Salem	40	D. Ely	3/1-15	W. Roxbury (MP)	1	M. Iliff
3/9	Rowe	80	D. Potter	4/19	Stoneham	1	D. + I. Jewell
3/10	Charlemont	60	J. Hoye#	4/25	N. Brookfield	1	R. Jenkins
3/10	Williamstown	60	B. Bokamp	4/29	Carlisle	1	A. Ankers#
3/11	Royalston	30	D. Pettee	4/29	Worcester	1	S. Ricker
3/18	Dalton	2	J. Morris-Siegel		Hooded Warbler		
Cedar Waxwing				4/29	Medford	1	M. Rines#
3/4	Westboro	120	S. Arena		American Redstart		
3/9	Hadley	104	D. Potter	4/25	Fall River	1	L. Abbey
3/10	Williamstown	100	B. Bokamp	4/29	Holyoke	1	S. Svec
3/11	Amherst	134	L. Therrien		Northern Parula		
4/25	Mt.A.	48	R. Stymeist#	4/18	Ipswich	1 m	J. Berry
Lapland Longspur				4/19	Mashpee	1	P. Trimble
3/4	P.I.	5	K. Elwell	4/22	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	2	P. Champlin
Snow Bunting				4/22	P'town	1	M. Keleher
3/4	Heath	8	J. Fleming	4/22	P.I.	1	MAS (W. Tatro)
3/4	S. Quabbin	8	L. Therrien	4/28	Southwick	1	M. Conway
3/4	P.I.	27	T. Wetmore		Blackburnian Warbler		
3/7	Gill	15	J. Smith	4/10	Sheffield	1	K. Reed
3/17	Winthrop B.	8	R. Cressman	4/19	Amherst	1	I. Davies
4/5	Plymouth B.	12	S. Perkins#	4/20	S. Quabbin	1	L. Therrien
Ovenbird					Yellow Warbler		
4/14	S. Dartmouth	1	B. Cassie	4/16	Waltham	1	S. Martin
4/18	Medford	1	M. Rines	4/17	Milton	1 m	S. Jaffe
4/25	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	4/20	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
4/27	Mashpee	2	M. Keleher	4/22	Milton	3	R. Mussey
4/30	Wompatuck SP	4	P. Loranger	4/23	W. Roxbury (MP)	4	D. Bernstein
Worm-eating Warbler				4/27	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	4	MAS (P. Champlin)
4/25	P.I.	1	T. Graham#		Palm Warbler		
Louisiana Waterthrush				3/24	Belchertown	1	L. Therrien
4/5	Sheffield	1	S. McDonald	3/26-4/30	P.I.	61 max	v.o.
4/11	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	4/12	Upton	18	N. Paulson
4/20	Worcester	1	L. Hennin	4/14	Hingham (WE)	21	SSBC (H. Cross)
4/21	Upton	1	N. Paulson	4/15	N. Truro	15	B. Nikula
4/28	Barre	1	B. Zajda#	4/16	Winchester	50	R. LaFontaine
4/28	Dartmouth	1	R. Schain	4/18	Braintree	18	J. Sweeney
Northern Waterthrush				4/26	Mt.A.	15	P. + F. Vale
4/16	Carlisle	1	T. + D. Brownrigg				

Western Palm Warbler	4/26	Mt.A.	1	J. Trimble	Black-throated Sparrow	4/20-21	Brewster	1 ph	<i>fide</i> V. Laux
Pine Warbler	3/18	Quabbin (G35)	2	B. Zajda	Savannah Sparrow	3/18	Ipswich	10	J. Berry
	3/21	Stoughton	2	G. d'Entremont		4/15	Waltham	10	J. Forbes#
	3/25	Ipswich	10	J. Berry#		4/15	Saugus	22	S. Zende#
	4/14	Upton	26	N. Paulson		4/16	Northampton	50	L. Therrien#
	4/20	S. Quabbin	19	L. Therrien		4/18	Bolton Flats	20	T. Pirro
	4/21	MSSF	109	G. d'Entremont#		4/21	Taunton	33	J. Sweeney
	4/21	Fall River	18	BBC (R. Stymeist)	Ipswich Sparrow	3/9	Ipswich (C.B.)	1	J. Berry
Yellow-rumped Warbler	3/22	Essex	3	J. Berry		3/13	Duxbury B.	4	R. Bowes#
	3/31	Westboro	22	S. Arena		4/20	P.I.	1	J. Sender
	4/16	Winchester	100	R. LaFontaine	Grasshopper Sparrow	4/29	W. Stockbridge	1	D. St James
	4/16	P'town	60	B. Nikula	Seaside Sparrow	4/25	P.I.	2	T. Wetmore
	4/18	Braintree	22	J. Sweeney	Fox Sparrow	3/9	Boston (PG)	3	T. Factor
	4/18	Medford	57	M. Rines		3/10	Amherst	4	J. Drucker
	4/19	Mt.A.	54	D. Swain		3/10	Northboro	3	S. Moore#
	4/21	P.I.	50	R. Schain#		3/10	Hubbardston	3	W. Howes
Prairie Warbler	4/21	Mt. A	1	J. Forbes		3/13	Stoneham	3	D. + I. Jewell
Townsend's Warbler	3/1-27	Ipswich	1	J. & N. Berry		3/14	W. Warren	3	B. Zajda
Black-throated Green Warbler	4/16	WMWS	1	K. Ryan		3/18	P.I.	11	R. Schain
	4/17	Boxford	1 m	J. Berry	Song Sparrow	3/8	P.I.	247	R. Heil
	4/21	Fall River	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)		3/17	Quabog IBA	68	M. Lynch#
	4/22	Quabbin	3	A. Robblee	Swamp Sparrow	3/16	E. Boston (B.I.)	3	P. Peterson
Yellow-breasted Chat	3/15	Sandwich	1	P. Trimble		4/1	Wayland	11	B. Harris
Eastern Towhee	4/18	Medford	7	M. Rines		4/11	Wenham	19	J. Berry
	4/21	P.I.	23	R. Schain#		4/15	Rutland SP	21	M. Lynch#
	4/21	MSSF	79	G. d'Entremont#		4/15	Southwick	20	S. Kellogg
	4/21	Fall River	16	BBC (R. Stymeist)		4/21	Longmeadow	15	J. Orcutt
	4/27	Mashpee	14	M. Keleher	White-throated Sparrow	4/16	P.I.	100	D. Brewster
	4/29	Wompatuck SP	10	SSBC (E. Giles)		4/16	Medford	77	M. Rines
American Tree Sparrow	3/18	P.I.	20	K. Elwell	White-crowned Sparrow	3/7	Sheffield	1	E. Neumuth
	4/7	Burrage Pd WMA	2	G. d'Entremont#		3/13	Bolton Flats	1	P. Sowizral
	4/14	Wayland	1	B. Harris#		4/13	Cumb. Farms	1	E. Dalton
	4/14	DWWS	1	G. d'Entremont		4/29	Sterling	1	J. Lawson
Chipping Sparrow	3/24	Quabbin	1	L. Therrien	Dark-eyed Junco	3/14	P.I.	205	C. Gras
	3/25	Rehoboth	1	K. Bartels		3/18	Ware R. IBA	140	M. Lynch#
	4/4	Holyoke	3	T. Gagnon		3/29	Boston (A.A.)	70	P. Peterson
	4/5	Winchester	11	M. Rines		4/14	Boston (F.Pk)	30	P. Peterson
	4/15	Cumb. Farms	15	P. + F. Vale#		4/16	P.I.	38	P. + J. Trimble
	4/21	MSSF	136	G. d'Entremont#	Summer Tanager	4/27	Falmouth	1	D. Belcher
Clay-colored Sparrow	3/7	Hadley	1	D. Ely	Scarlet Tanager	4/29	Milton	1 m	E. Lipton
	3/13-4/14	Nantucket	1	T. Pastuszak	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	4/22	Brewster	1	P. Trull
	3/20	Plymouth	1	M. Faherty		4/23	Amherst	1	J. Rose
Field Sparrow	3/17	Westport	3	R. Stymeist#		4/25	Worc. (BMB)	1	S. LaBree
	3/19	Plymouth	4	M. Faherty		4/29	Winchester	1	K. Sweadner
	4/14	Woburn (HP)	3 m	M. Rines#	Blue Grosbeak	4/23	Nantucket	1	V. Laux
	4/14	Westfield	4	S. Kellogg		4/23	Mashpee	1	M. Keleher
	4/18	Lancaster	3	T. Pirro	Indigo Bunting	4/24	Winthrop	1 m	P. Peterson
	4/21	MSSF	9	G. d'Entremont#		3/11	Rockport	1	E. Nielsen
	4/22	P.I.	9	S. Sullivan#		4/7	Natick	1	D. Scott
	4/29	Milton	5	E. Lipton		4/9-21	Cambridge	1	A. Hrycyna
Vesper Sparrow	3/1-20	Northboro	1	S. Moore#	Dickcissel	4/29	DWWS	1 m	M. Salett
	4/9	P.I.	1	P. Ruvido#		3/4	W. Bridgewater	1300	K. Ryan
	4/11	Hadley	2	T. Gagnon		3/5	Concord	1000	S. Perkins
	4/13	Cumb. Farms	1	E. Dalton					
	4/14	Orange	1	B. Lafley					
	4/14-29	Wayland	1	B. Harris#					
	4/16	Northampton	3	L. Therrien#					
	4/18-28	Lancaster	3 m	T. Pirro#					
	4/29	Topsfield	1	J. Sweeney#					

Red-winged Blackbird (continued)				4/25	Quincy	1	G. Denton
3/17	Bolton Flats	2000	J. Hoye#	4/28	Revere	1 m	K. Marshall
4/1	Cumb. Farms	5000	G. d'Entremont	4/29	Boston (F.Pk)	2 m	B. Mayer
Eastern Meadowlark				4/29	Cambr. (F.P.)	1 m	C. Thrope
3/16	DWWS	3	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	Baltimore Oriole			
3/17	Westport	7	R. Stymeist#	4/21	W. Newbury	1	J. Cole
3/18	Newbury	6	J. Trimble	4/22	Chestnut Hill	1	R. Schain
4/14	Hadley	6	J. Drucker	4/25	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
4/20	DWWS	3	R. Stymeist	4/29	Medford	3	M. Rines#
4/29	Saugus (Bear C.)	4	R. Stymeist#	4/30	DFWS	4	P. Sowizral
4/30	Westover	8	S. Surner	Purple Finch			
Yellow-headed Blackbird				3/5	Cheshire	17	A. & L. Richardson
4/1-15	Cumb. Farms	1	G. d'E + v.o.	3/16	Heath	37	D. Potter
Rusty Blackbird				3/16	Hubbardston	17	W. Howes
thr	Wayland	187 max	B. Harris	4/13	Ipswich (C.B.)	10	J. Berry
3/16-4/30	GMNWR	98 max	v.o.	4/14	Wompatuck SP	3	G. d'Entremont
3/19	Cheshire	10	G. Hurley	4/16	PI.	20	K. Elwell
3/24	W. Bridgewater	35	G. d'Entremont	4/21	Harvard	4	BBC (P. White)
4/1	Hadley	40	L. Therrien	White-winged Crossbill			
4/11	Upton	40	N. Paulson	3/7	Heath	2	D. Potter
4/30	Lenox	12	G. Hurley	Pine Siskin			
Common Grackle				3/12	HRWMA	5	T. Pirro
3/3	GMNWR	1500	S. Perkins	3/18	Rowe	18	D. Potter
3/13	Rowley	3400	R. Heil	3/22	Heath	40	D. Potter
3/14	Bolton Flats	1700	F. Bouchard	4/1	Royalston	11	S. Sullivan#
4/1	Cumb. Farms	2500	G. d'Entremont	4/22	Wompatuck SP	2	G. d'Entremont
Brown-headed Cowbird				Evening Grosbeak			
3/4	W. Bridgewater	300	K. Ryan	3/8	Cummington	1	E. Lewis
3/9	Ipswich	65	R. Heil	3/14	Heath	12	D. Potter
3/14	ONWR	50	F. Bouchard	3/22	Rowe	22	D. Potter
3/17	S. Dartmouth	18	R. Stymeist#	4/1	Royalston	12	Z. Cornell
4/21	MSSF	56	G. d'Entremont#	4/22	Whately	2	B. Benner
Orchard Oriole							
4/21	Needham	1	P. Oehlkers				



PINE SISKIN (SAME BIRD AS ON PAGE 253) BY DAVID LARSON

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

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

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

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO BIRD OBSERVER

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

Species on the Review List of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, as well as species unusual as to place, time, or known nesting status in Massachusetts, should be reported promptly to the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, c/o Matt Garvey, 137 Beaconsfield Rd. #5, Brookline, MA 02445, or by email to <mattgarvey@gmail.com>.

ABOUT THE COVER

American Bittern

The American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) is a denizen of marshes with tall, emergent vegetation. The birds are solitary, cryptically colored, and most frequently observed in flight. This medium-sized heron is brownish and tan; its neck is boldly striped with reddish brown. It can be separated in flight from immature night-herons by its black flight feathers, which contrast with pale wing coverts. The American Bittern is monotypic with little variation throughout its range. It is closely related to the other *Botaurus* species of South America, Europe, and Australasia.

American Bitterns breed in patchy habitat throughout the northern half of the United States and the southern half of Canada. Most populations are migratory, wintering in East Coast wetlands from Virginia south to Florida and the Gulf Coast, Cuba, Mexico, and Central America to Panama. They also winter along the West Coast from extreme southwestern Canada through Baja California. A few are year-round residents from New Jersey to North Carolina and from Washington State south to central California. In Massachusetts, American Bitterns are considered an uncommon breeder and migrant. They arrive by mid-April and after breeding, disperse to coastal salt marshes where they may be present until November, with the occasional bird overwintering.

American Bitterns are largely restricted to breeding in extensive cattail marshes. They are generally monogamous but may occasionally be polygamous. The male's call is a low, resonant booming, variously described as *bloonk-adoonk*, *pumper-er-lunk*, or *dunk-a-do*, preceded by gurgling sounds. This amazing call, which functions both as territorial advertisement and mate attraction, has led to a plethora of local common names including devil's pump, bog-pumping hell-driver, mud pumper, pile driver, pump-thunder, and thunder-pumper. Territorial disputes involve elaborate displays, including crouched birds approaching each other, feathers fluffed and white shoulder plumes displayed. Aerial chases include bill stabbing. When disturbed, American Bitterns often assume a cryptic bittern stance, with neck extended, bill pointed up, and the neck swaying like a reed in the wind.

Because American Bitterns typically nest deep in a marsh with tall emergent vegetation, usually over shallow water, their breeding biology is not well known. The female may select the nest site and does most of the nest construction. The nest is a platform of vegetation with a shallow depression at the top lined with fine grasses. Only the female has a brood patch, and she alone incubates the clutch of three-to-five buffy brown eggs for the four weeks until hatching. The young are altricial (helpless), but like other herons they are thought to be born with their eyes open, and they are covered with down. The chicks are fed mostly by the female, who regurgitates partially digested insects, fish, frogs, mice, and other delicacies for the young. The chicks leave the nest between the first and second week after hatching but remain near the nest for several more weeks. They reach independence in about two months and undertake wide-ranging post-breeding dispersal.

American Bitterns are solitary foragers that hunt by stealth. They usually walk slowly or stand in place and await wandering prey. With a sudden darting motion of the bill they seize prey, shake it, and swallow it headfirst. They sometimes sway their necks, a motion that may function to reduce glare. Their brownish coloration and vertical striping provide camouflage in the emergent vegetation, and make it difficult for prey to detect them. Major food items are insects, amphibians, snakes, small fish, crustaceans, and small mammals such as voles. Indigestible material is regurgitated as pellets.

Breeding Bird Survey data indicate a significant decline in American Bittern numbers in the United States, but the Canadian population remains stable. In Massachusetts, and in much of the rest of the United States, the declines are due to loss or degradation of their preferred cattail marsh habitat. Over half of the original wetlands in the United States are now gone, and much of the remaining has been degraded. Other factors include the vulnerability of their prey to agricultural pesticides, and the alteration of their breeding habitat by invasive plants, such as purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*). They are Blue Listed (designated as a reduced or declining population) by the National Audubon Society. Clearly, conservation of freshwater wetland habitat is a high priority if this vulnerable species is to survive. ↗

William E. Davis, Jr

About the Cover Artist: Charley Harper

Charles (Charley) Harper (1922–2007) was a Cincinnati-based artist best known for highly stylized wildlife prints, posters, and book illustrations.

Born in Frenchtown, West Virginia, in 1922, Harper's upbringing on his family's farm influenced his work throughout his life. He studied at the Art Academy of Cincinnati, where he taught after graduation. He also worked for a commercial firm before going out on his own. Charley and his wife, Edie, also an artist, worked at home. Later, with their only child, Brett Harper, they formed Harper Studios.

Charles Harper illustrated numerous books, notably *The Golden Book of Biology*; magazines such as *Ford Times*, and many prints, posters, and other works. For his subjects, he drew on nature, frequently birds. Charley often created works for nature-based organizations, among them the National Park Service, the Cincinnati Zoo, the Cincinnati Nature Center, and Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania. He also designed interpretive displays for Everglades National Park.

In a style he called "minimal realism," Charley Harper captured the essence of his subjects with few visual elements. When asked to describe his unique style, Charley responded,

"When I look at a wildlife or nature subject, I don't see the feathers in the wings, I just count the wings. I see exciting shapes, color combinations, patterns, textures, fascinating behavior and endless possibilities for making interesting pictures. I regard the picture as an ecosystem in which all the elements are interrelated, interdependent, perfectly balanced, without

trimming or unutilized parts; and herein lies the lure of the painting; in a world of chaos, the picture is one small rectangle in which the artist can create an ordered universe.” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charley_Harper)

And what did Charley Harper say about our cover bird? The Harper family has asked *Bird Observer* to publish the following:

Bittern Suite

“It’s not the Waldorf, but it’s home and even with six quibbling siblings in the bed and five in the middle, there’s love along with the lumps and the life of a little bitty bittern is sweeter’n bitter. But mealtimes are a mess—breakfast in bed...and lunch...and dinner. And no maid service. Is that why they are holding their noses in the air? Any birdwatcher will tell you they’re making like the marshscape: bulrush bower, cattail choreography—nobody can hide better’n a bittern.”

For other examples of Charley’s work and that of his family go to <http://www.charleyharperartstudio.com>. 



HUDSONIAN GODWIT BY SANDY SELESKY

AT A GLANCE

June 2012



DAVID LARSON

Another headless wonder! Once again readers are challenged by an image of a bird seemingly lacking a head—a ghoulish phenomenon no doubt all too familiar to many regular readers of this column.

Despite the mystery bird's obscured head, several features in the picture are fairly obvious clues.

Most notably, the mystery bird appears conspicuously streaked above and below, and it has two prominent wing-bars and a distinctly notched tail. Additionally, it is perched in a tree with no leaves (probably a red maple judging by the opposite twig arrangement and the appearance of the buds), which suggests the image was captured in the winter. Compared to the size of the buds and twigs of the maple, the bird is quite small.

Because of these features, the list of identification possibilities is surprisingly short. In fact, the choices are limited to sparrows and finches. Though several warbler species have streaks on their back or flanks (e.g., Blackpoll Warbler and Northern Waterthrush), no warblers display all the features shown by the mystery bird,

including the prominently notched tail. Warblers are also unlikely to appear as chunky as the bird in the photograph.

In the sparrow department, primary consideration has to be given to species with clearly defined wing-bars (e.g., *Spizella* and *Zonotrichia*). Fortunately, all the species in the genus *Spizella* (e.g., American Tree Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, etc.) and *Zonotrichia* (e.g., White-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, etc.) can be eliminated because none have the obvious flank streaks shown by the bird in the photo. We are thus left only with finches as viable possibilities. Purple and House finches would typically appear darker in color on the back and would not have the bold wing bars shown by the mystery finch. American Goldfinches have no streaks at all. Only Pine Siskin and the two redpoll species remain as possibilities.

A close look at the photograph suggests that the crispness and uniformity of the streaks on the back and flanks, the thickness of the lower wing bar (i.e., tips of the greater secondary coverts), and the extensive pale coloration on the secondaries all point to Pine Siskin (*Carduelis pinus*). The pale coloration on the edges of the secondaries is actually yellow in Pine Siskins, but this is not detectable in a black-and-white photo. A redpoll would appear quite similar but would typically show less clearly defined back stripes and would ordinarily display thicker and darker flank stripes.

Pine Siskins are a classic irruptive species whose frequency in winter in our area is largely determined by the abundance of birch catkins in the boreal forests north of Massachusetts. In irruption years Pine Siskins are most common in forested areas where hemlock and birch trees are common or at bird feeders stocked with Niger thistle seed. In years following major winter irruptions, small numbers of Pine Siskins often remain to nest in Massachusetts. David Larson photographed the Pine Siskin in the picture in February in northern New Hampshire. 🐦

Wayne R. Petersen



ATLANTIC BRANT IN FLIGHT BY DAVID CLAPP

AT A GLANCE



WAYNE R. PETERSEN

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

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