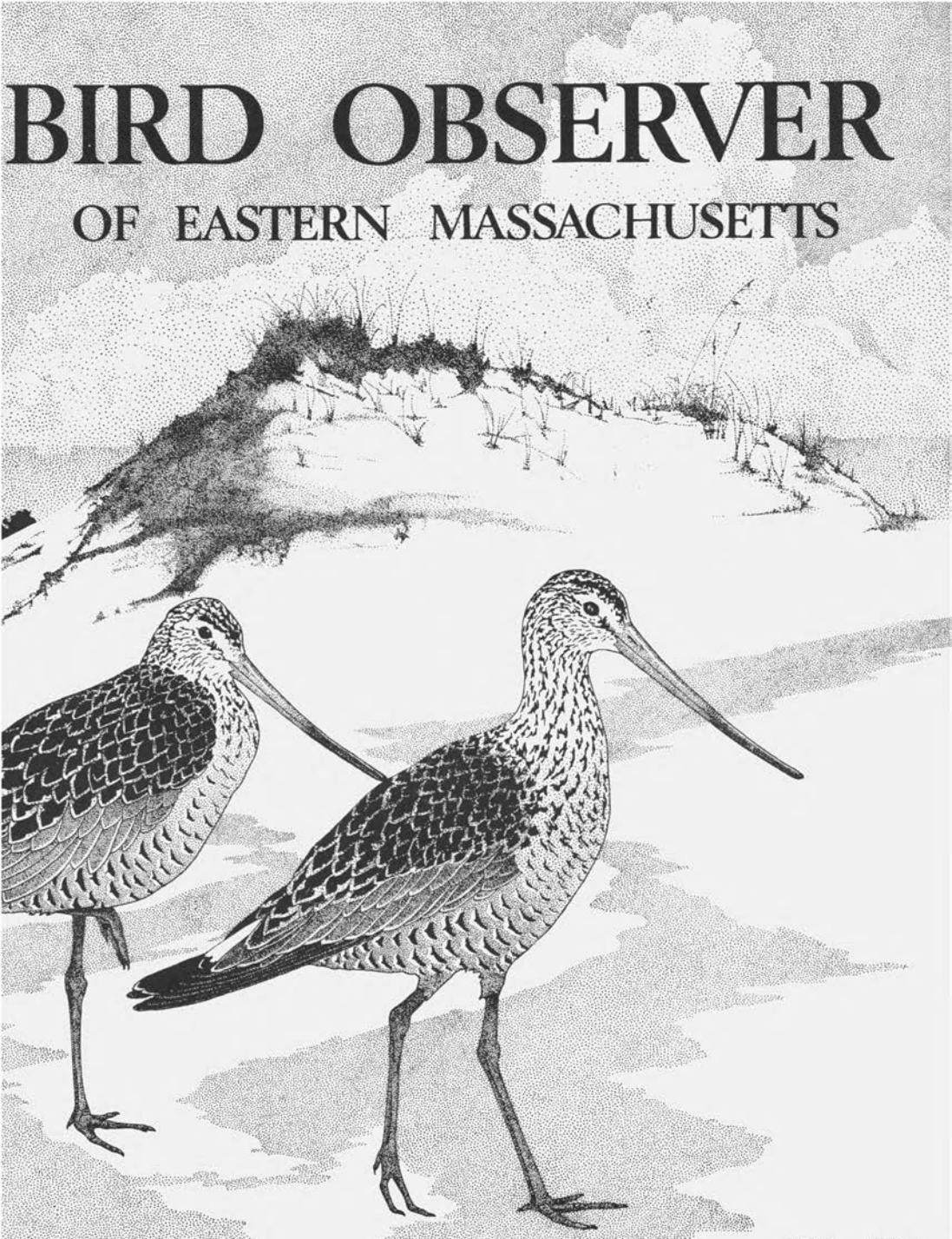
BIRD OBSERVER

OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS



OCTOBER 1986
VOL. 14 NO. 5

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BIRD OBSERVER, 462 Trapelo Road, Belmont, MA 02178. Second class postage paid at Boston, MA.

SUBSCRIPTIONS, CHANGES OF ADDRESS, AND REQUESTS for single issues ($2), for volume sets (inquire as to price and availability), or for the Index to Volumes 1-11 ($3) should be sent to the treasurer:
David E. Lange, 846 Massachusetts Avenue, #6E, Arlington, MA 02174.

MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION: The editorial staff will be glad to consider for publication appropriate contributions of articles, photographs, art work, field notes, and results of field studies. Please send these to the editor:
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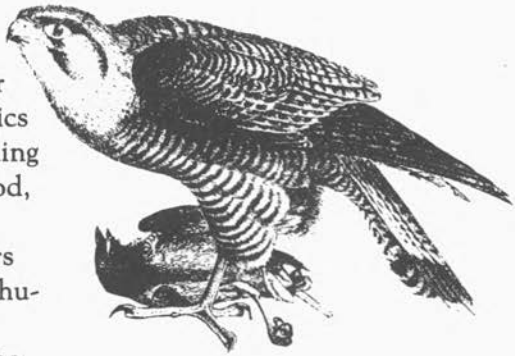
Bird Observer Winter Workshops

QUABBIN AND ITS WINTER WILDLIFE

Scheduled for January, this winter ecology workshop will include a two-hour lecture and a one-day weekend field trip. Cost: $25.

WINTER RAPTORS AND THE ROLE OF PREDATION



Scheduled for February, the indoor discussion will examine the dynamics of predation and will cover the feeding habits of wintering hawks, their food, and the movements of raptors in winter. The identification of raptors likely to be encountered in Massachusetts in winter will be emphasized during the discussion and during the weekend field trip to a high-density raptor area. Cost: $25.

GULLS-a workshop

Tentatively scheduled for March.

Wayne R. Petersen will conduct these workshops.

For more information, call Wayne R. Petersen, 617-447-0332.

Exact dates and times will be announced.

FINDING OWLS IN THE GRASS RIDES

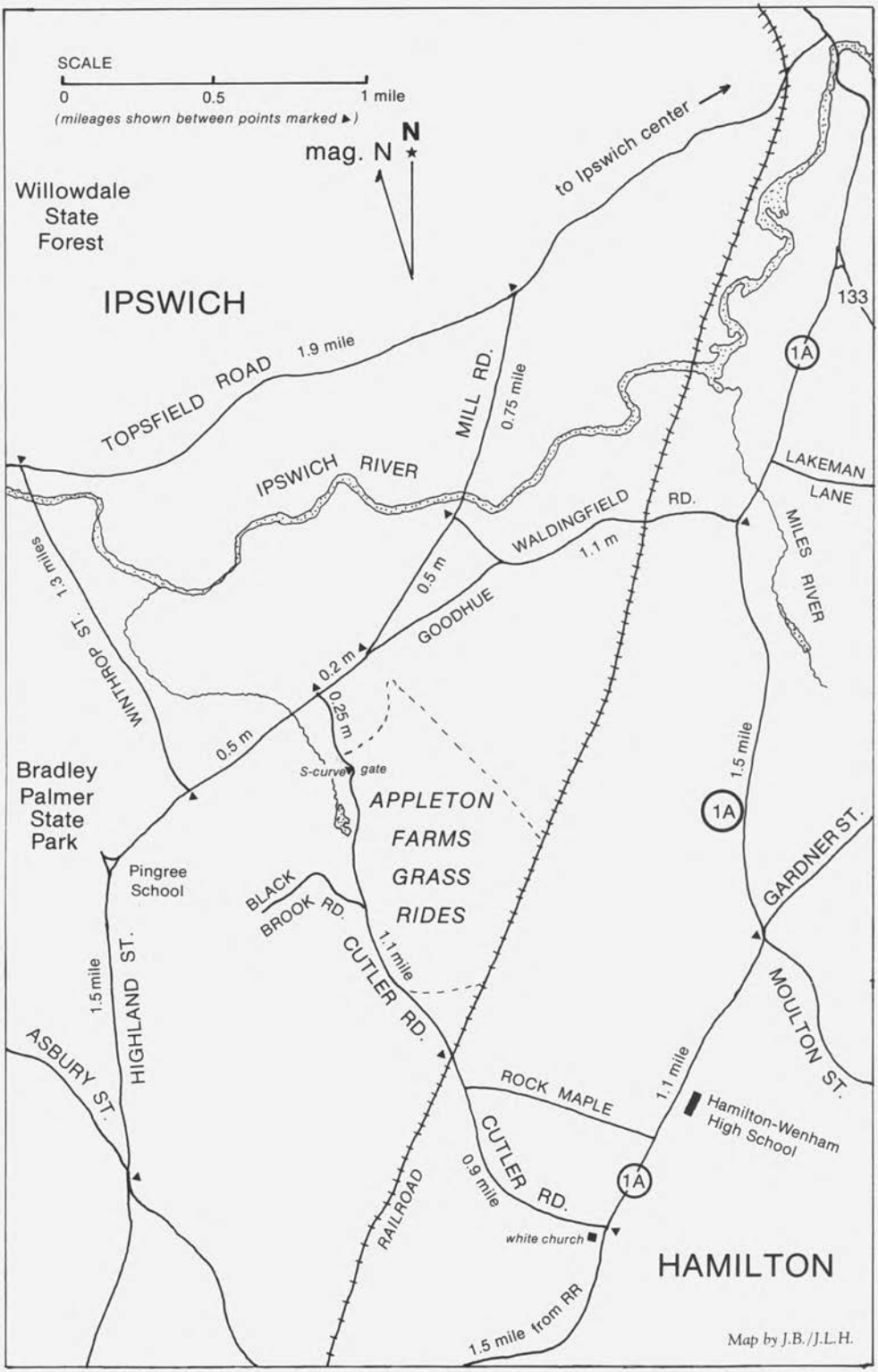
by Jim Berry, Ipswich

If the title of this article is mysterious, don't worry. I just found out myself what "Grass Rides" means. In old England, a "ride" was any grassy path or lane through the woods suitable for riding or walking, and that is the sense in which the Appleton family named the Appleton Farms Grass Rides in Hamilton. This 164-acre tract of mixed woodland was laid out with five miles of bridle trails around the turn of the century after the fashion in Europe and has since been maintained as a recreational area separate from the adjacent working dairy farm in Ipswich. (See "The Ipswich Cattle Egrets," *Bird Observer* 13: 258, October 1985.)

In 1970 Colonel and Mrs. Francis R. Appleton, Jr. donated the Grass Rides to The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR), and Mrs. Appleton has since donated additional land. TTOR is a privately administered charitable corporation maintaining about sixty-five properties throughout Massachusetts totaling more than 14,500 acres. Several of these properties are known to many birdwatchers: Crane Beach in Ipswich, Halibut Point Reservation in Rockport, Old Town Hill in Newbury, and World's End Reservation in Hingham.

The wide trails in the Grass Rides are mowed annually and thus facilitate bird-finding at any season, though in summer the mosquitoes are as pestilent as anywhere in New England. Horses as well as off-road vehicles are now precluded from the Grass Rides, which means serenity for the naturalist or hiker. In fact, the only activity that brings any number of people to the reservation is cross-country skiing. This suggests a potential conflict between skiers and birders, since winter is also the best time to look for owls. But there is no reason to fear. The skiers and the owls occupy different niches of the habitat, and I can guarantee that you will never find the two in the same place.

The Grass Rides are on Cutler Road, a back road 2.25 miles long that runs roughly northwest to southeast between Highland Street and Route 1A in Hamilton (see Map 1). If you approach from the south, take 1A north from Hamilton center to Cutler Road, which is 1.3 miles past Asbury Street or 1.5 miles north of the railroad crossing. Turn left on Cutler Road, which begins inconspicuously by a white church across the road from the Hamilton Cemetery. You will cross the railroad tracks about a mile up the road, and after another mile you will be at the S curve indicated on the map. If there is little or no snow on the ground, it is safe to park by the gate at the S curve, since the road is wide enough there, but if there is much snow, you must park another quarter-mile up the road at Nancy's Corner, where the road ends at Highland Street. Cross-country skiers flock to the Grass Rides



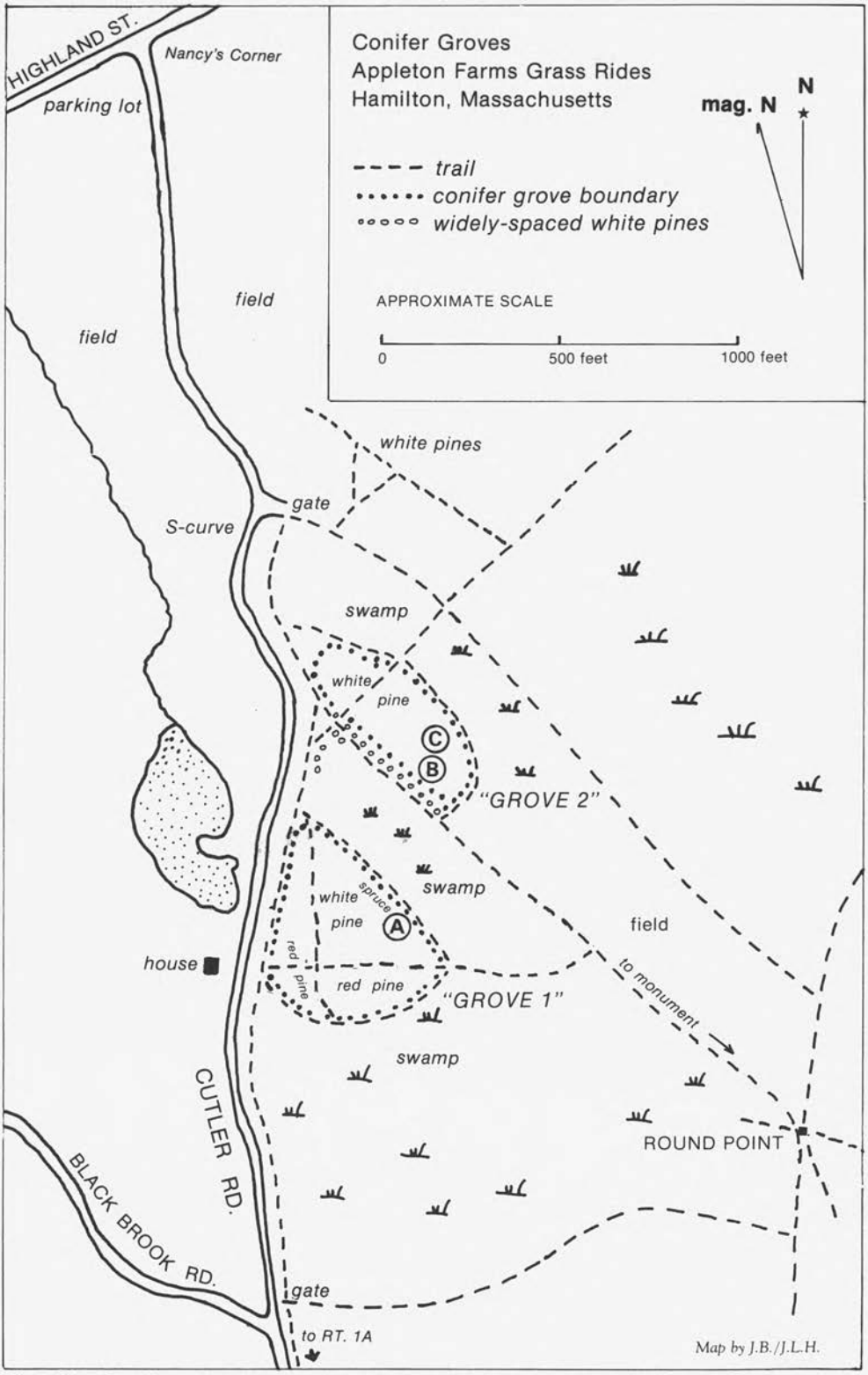
Map 1. Appleton Farms Grass Rides

when conditions are favorable, and the police will ticket cars parked along the road when the skiers are out and about.

If you are coming from Ipswich center, take Topsfield Road west from the railroad crossing for 1.2 miles to Mill Road. Turn left and follow Mill Road - it becomes Highland Street when it crosses the Ipswich River into Hamilton - 1.5 miles to Nancy's Corner, and park as described above. If you are coming from the west, take Ipswich Road off U. S. 1 in Topsfield. (This road becomes Topsfield Road in Ipswich: sometimes these changes in road names are actually made for sound reasons.) Take a shortcut to Cutler Road by turning right on Winthrop Street, which begins across the road from an animal clinic. Follow it to the end (1.3 miles), and turn left on Highland Street. Nancy's Corner is then a half-mile up the road.

Having parked, you are now ready to look for some owls. Although Great Horned Owls and Eastern Screech-Owls can be found just about anywhere in the neighborhood, the specialties of the house are Barred and Long-eared owls, and occasionally Saw-whet Owls. These species, but especially Barred Owls, can sometimes be found in either of two planted conifer groves close by the road. These groves, called "Grove 1" and "Grove 2" by members of the Brookline Bird Club (see Map 2), were planted by the Appletons in roughly circular fashion in the 1930s or 1940s to provide windbreaks for birds and other animals, to renew part of the forest, and for aesthetic reasons. They consist of evenly spaced rows of conifers in varying combinations of species. Grove 1 consists of mainly white pine in the center with red pine along much of the southern and western sides and thick spruces along the northeast side. Grove 2 is mostly white pine, with much eastern hemlock on the west side and red pines scattered throughout. There is virtually no undergrowth in either grove except for the red pine sections of Grove 1; so the groves are easy to canvass. Both groves are intersected by trails: Grove 1 is divided into four unequal parts by perpendicular trails and Grove 2 into two parts by one trail. Another feature of Grove 2 is that the southern edge consists of three rows of white pines much more widely spaced than the trees in the rest of the grove. These majestic trees suggest a boulevard, and if you look down the trail next to these trees to the east (away from the road), you can see in the distance a monument, taken from a former Harvard University library when it was demolished in World War I days and placed by the Appletons in the middle of the woods where several trails intersect. This is truly an unusual forest to walk in.

For the last several winters, one or more Barred Owls have been present in either grove. During the winter of 1985-86 there was a pair in attendance, and though I haven't been able to prove it, I think it is very likely that they are nesting in the vicinity. Though they can be seen almost anywhere in the groves, they seem to have a strong preference for red pines, perhaps because the thinner foliage allows them a clearer view. The



Map 2. Section of Appleton Farms Grass Rides

circle labeled C in Grove 2 (see Map 2) is where I saw one or both several times - there are several red pines together in that part of the grove. But I saw them in red pines elsewhere in Grove 2 and also in the red pine sections of Grove 1 just as frequently. Simply look for the lighter bark of these trees - they stand out like a sore thumb - and check the base of each for pellets. The presence of pellets won't guarantee an owl, but it will prove where one has roosted. However, the absence of pellets doesn't mean the absence of owls; several times I spotted a Barred Owl in a red pine and could not find a pellet beneath it. My inference from all this is that Barred Owls move around a lot and are not loyal to specific perches.

Long-eared Owls, on the other hand, seem to return to the same trees with greater regularity. John Andrews' comprehensive article on this species ("A Winter Roost of Long-eared Owls," *Bird Observer* 10: 12, February 1982) stated that individual owls tend to return to the same tree and even the same perch day after day. This was true of a Long-eared Owl I found in Grove 2 on January 18, 19, and 20, 1986, and again on February 2. The perch was about thirty feet up in a red pine on the southern edge of the grove (circle B on Map 2). Although the owl was not there every time I looked, it was there on enough occasions, including additional dates when it was seen by other people, to demonstrate loyalty to the perch. The large number of pellets at the base of the tree also indicated this. As with the Lexington owls described by Andrews, this bird favored a red pine with a southerly exposure. Interestingly, though, the perch was on a branch on the *north* side of the tree, which seems atypical in view of the findings cited in Andrews' article.

Another Long-eared Owl was found in Grove 1 by Bill Drummond on December 2, 1984 (circle A on Map 2). This bird was in the thick spruces along the northeast edge of that grove. Several people saw the bird and the tree was marked to make repeat searches possible, but I was not able to find the owl again, and I'm not aware of anyone else finding it either. However, it would not be safe to conclude that it left the area, because the trees there are so thick that the shift of a few yards in perch site could have meant peace for the owl as people gradually gave up looking. On the other hand, the disturbance could have caused the owl to relocate. My suspicion is that the bird probably stayed in the area if the food supply was adequate and if it did not become part of the food supply for one of the larger owls. The 1986 owl remained for several weeks at least, despite hordes of noisy observers and, on several occasions, the racing around of my dog, whom the owl barely deigned to notice. (The Barred Owls were similarly undisturbed by the dog's presence. Except for Great Horned Owls our local owls are remarkably tolerant birds.)

The only record of Saw-whet Owls I am aware of is that of Glenn d'Entremont who found not just one but a pair in the Grove 1 spruces on December 1, 1984. (It was while we were looking for

those owls the next day that Drummond found the aforesaid Long-eared Owl a few trees away!) The Saw-whets were not seen again, but in the winter of 1986 I found several small pellets under red pines in the western section of Grove 2 that may have come from this species. The habitat is certainly suitable, and, in fact, a Saw-whet spent the same winter in a similar red pine grove in another part of Hamilton, along Asbury Street.

There are, of course, many places to find owls, but the Grass Rides provide one of the best in view of the variety of species found there over the years. I hope this article will benefit those owl-seekers who have heard about the place but who find the labyrinth of trails confusing - that is, if they can find their way there in the first place. Visitors should keep in mind that as a mixed-forest swamp, the Grass Rides are also home for a number of other sought-after birds, such as Ruffed Grouse, Pileated Woodpeckers, and occasional Red-shouldered Hawks. In the spring of 1986, on May 31, I found an Acadian Flycatcher there and, on another occasion, a Carolina Wren. The combination of wildness and ease of access makes the Grass Rides one of the more appealing locations for nature study in Essex County.

Footnote. At dusk on October 11, 1986, just before this article went to press, I heard two Great Horned Owls and a Barred Owl calling in and around Grove 1. A few minutes later I heard a screech-owl at the S curve a few hundred yards away. You certainly don't have to wait for winter to listen for owls.

JIM BERRY has written several articles for *Bird Observer* dating back to 1976. His family's recent acquisition of a golden retriever has changed his birdwatching habits. Since the dog likes nothing better than long romps through whatever habitat is available and many natural areas are off-limit to dogs, Jim spends a lot of time in woodlands such as the Grass Rides and Willowdale State Forest. One side benefit of having a dog along is a marked increase in the number of Ruffed Grouse flushed. Jim's dream is to follow the dog through enough September salt marshes to flush a Yellow Rail.

OWLS IN MASSACHUSETTS

by Wayne R. Petersen, Whitman

Of all the groups of birds occurring in Massachusetts, few are as generally unfamiliar as the owls. Although owls are among the best known birds in folklore and literature and equally popular in art and sculpture, they remain something of a mystery to all but the most ardent ornithologists. Many birders encounter certain species of owls only once or twice every several years, and then often only at well-publicized roosting spots or by fortuitous happenstance. The principal reasons for this situation are these:

1. Most owls are mainly, if not completely, nocturnal.
2. Many owls roost by day either in tree cavities or in dense tree cover, which tends to render them inconspicuous.
3. Owls, being predators, have extremely keen hearing and vision. This fact, coupled with a generally shy nature, makes many species difficult to approach closely.
4. Many owls prefer extensive woodland habitat, terrain that is seldom visited by the casual birder.
5. Many owls are silent much of the year; others produce a variety of vocalizations, some of which are not readily distinguishable.

In one way or another, some combination of these factors can apply to the problems involved in trying to study any species of owl in the field. To better appreciate these problems, a few guidelines can be outlined before specifically treating in detail the seven breeding species of Massachusetts owls.

Activity Periods of Owls.

Most owls tend to do their hunting, feeding, calling, lovemaking, etc., under a cloak of darkness. Some species are often vocal just after sundown and then again just before sunrise. However, during courtship and the early breeding season, they often can be heard throughout the night.

Much of owls' hunting no doubt begins shortly after dark and continues through much of the night. Long-eared Owls *(Asio otus)* and Short-eared Owls *(Asio flammeus)* are well-known for their habit of coursing low over meadows in search of rodents at sundown. Occasionally at dusk, Great Horned Owls *(Bubo virginianus)* and Barred Owls *(Strix varia)* can be seen sitting silhouetted against the sky in dead trees along the roadside, similar to *Buteo* hawks during the daytime.

During the day, most owls are likely to sleep or doze in the security of a thick evergreen tree or within a tree cavity or large birdhouse. Northern Saw-whet Owls *(Aegolius acadicus)* and Long-eared Owls are classic conifer roosters whereas the Eastern Screech-Owl *(Otus asio)* can often be observed peering sleepily out of a hollow oak stub.

Locating and Approaching Owls.

As with many birds, individual temperament of an owl often determines how good a look one can get at a particular bird. In general, the big owls tend to be wary and shy, and the smaller Saw-whet and the screech-owls can sometimes actually be touched when they are roosting.

Moving quietly while in potential owl habitat is often the only way one can get even a fleeting glimpse of a Great Horned Owl or a Barred Owl during the daytime. At night, owls seem to be more curious, and they will often approach to investigate any peculiar sound, such as a mouselike squeak. Barred, Saw-whet, and screech-owls will regularly respond to a tape recording or human imitation of their own call by flying into a nearby tree and sitting quietly without calling in return. For this reason, a good spotlight can often be useful when looking for owls at night. As with many nocturnal animls, if the observer is quiet, owls will be undisturbed by a light trained in their direction.

Whenever one is in dense pine groves, especially Red Pine *(Pinus resinosa)* plantations, it can be worthwhile to search for both owl pellets on the ground and "whitewash" on tree branches and on the ground beneath the trees. These are often excellent clues that owls are using the grove as a roosting area. Once such evidence is obtained, then begins the neck-twisting task of systematically checking each tree under which the signs were found in an effort to locate the roosting owl. With patience, excellent studies can often be obtained of such conifer roosters as Long-eared and Saw-whet owls. Long-ears roosting in such situations generally sit high and near the trunk of the tree, whereas Saw-whets usually roost lower and farther away from the trunk.

Scolding songbirds or raucous Blue Jays *(Cyanocitta cristata)*, or Common Crows *(Corvus brachyrhynchos)* will sometimes lead one to a roosting owl. If a quiet approach is made, good views of the mobbed owl may be obtained.

To observe such diurnal or crepuscular forms as the Short-eared Owl, an automobile can afford an excellent blind, as long as sound and movement within are minimal.

Generalized Habitat Requirements for Owls.

As with most hawks, breeding owls generally require rather extensive woodlands relatively free of human disturbance. The specific plant composition of such woodlands varies considerably for each species of owl. Water is apparently an important requirement for many breeding owls since nests are often located near ponds, brooks, or in swampy woods. A few species, like the Short-eared Owl, actually require open fields and moorland habitat for nesting. Proximity to such habitat may be essential for the Common Barn-Owl *(Tyto alba)* and the Long-eared Owl as well.

Northern Saw-whet Owl *Illustration by William E. Davis, Jr.*

The Calling of Owls.

The calling of the various resident owls affords one of the best ways of detecting the presence of owls in an area and of determining general breeding territories. The conditions which seem to stimulate owls to call are apparently the result of a combination of factors, with no set formula always seeming to produce the same effect. Most important seems to be the time of year, the density of an owl population, the amount of illumination, the temperature, cloud cover, and overall weather conditions. Still nights are far better than windy nights, and warm evenings seem to produce better results than cold nights.

In areas where there are known to be several pairs of owls of the same species, calling seems to be more frequent. In Massachusetts this phenomenon can be appreciated among Great Horned Owl populations in the pine barrens of the southeastern coastal plain or among Barred Owl populations in the interior hill country. In addition, owls are like rails in that the calling of one will often stimulate others to vocalize.

A number of species seem to be vocal just before sunrise, so that a late winter or early spring owling survey can often record fairly good results by beginning at 4:00 A.M. and going until shortly after sunrise. Other owls are easily heard at dusk or an hour or two after sunset. The Great Horned and saw-whet owls belong in this category. A few species will even call at midday, especially in response to their own calls. Screech-Owls and Barred Owls notably exhibit this behavior.

The Breeding Owls of Massachusetts.

Common Barn-Owl. The Common Barn-Owl is a permanent resident on Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard and is a regular breeder throughout the rest of the northern and eastern portions of the state in very small and irregular numbers. Its nocturnal habits and local distribution make it a fancy find for Massachusetts birders. Most often it is found roosting in a conifer grove along the coast during the colder months of the year.

Its breeding season extends from early spring into late summer, and nests can occur anywhere that old buildings, deserted barns, church steeples, or large tree cavities exist. Many nest sites are in proximity to open country and are almost never found in heavily wooded areas. Recently, a modest barn-owl population has taken up residence on certain of the Boston Harbor islands.

At roosts, Common Barn-Owls tend to be messy, always leaving conspicuous golfball-sized, blackish pellets beneath their favorite roosting trees. In Massachusetts, their blood-chilling, rasping calls are seldom heard except near their nests. This species is sensitive to severe cold and occasionally freezes to death during extreme cold waves.

Eastern Screech-Owl. The screech-owl is a fairly common permanent resident throughout most of Massachusetts, except in the high hill-country areas of western Massachusetts. It seems to be partially migratory, or at least prone to wandering, since it frequently appears in late fall and winter in areas where it is unlikely to breed. The Eastern Screech-Owl and the Great Horned are the commonest owls in the state.

Screech-owls can often be lured to an imitation of their call at any time of the year, but they are most vocal from April to September. They are mainly woodland hunters and are especially partial to areas with small brooks and running water. Prime breeding habitat seems to be secondary woodlots and their edges, orchards, and well-planted city parks. They will regularly accept a large birdhouse in place of their normal tree cavity nest site.

Great Horned Owl. The Great Horned Owl is our largest and our second most common owl. Its deep, mellow, hooting calls are typical sounds of winter nights in much of rural Massachusetts. Although it is found practically throughout the state, it is particularly numerous in southern Plymouth County and in the pine barrens of Cape Cod, where as many as fifteen to twenty have been recorded in a single evening's survey. It is generally a rather sedentary permanent resident.

The Great Horned Owl nests very early, usually by late February, and shows a strong affinity for white pines *(Pinus strobus)* and standing water within its territory. Its nest is generally a modified crow or Red-tailed Hawk nest.

This species is a powerful predator, filling the nocturnal niche of the Red-tailed Hawk *(Buteo jamaicensis)* in the same habitats.

Great Horned Owls are not usually found in close proximity to man, except where a plentiful supply of food exists or where there is heavy timber nearby. They are perhaps best discovered in the daytime when a roosting individual is being mobbed by crows.

Barred Owl. The Barred Owl is an uncommon permanent resident in moist, interior hill country and is a local breeding bird in much of eastern Massachusetts, except along the southeastern coastal plain and on Cape Cod, where it is absent.

Its resonant "who cooks for you" call is most frequently heard from April until late summer, but so responsive is it to a good imitation that it will often call at other times of the year and in the daytime as well.

Its nesting territory usually includes hemlock *(Tsuga canadensis)* trees, and its nest site is generally in a large tree cavity or in an old crow or hawk nest. Barred Owls show a strong attachment for a breeding location and will often use the same nest for several years in succession. This owl, with its preference for moist woods and swamps, is the nocturnal counterpart of the uncommon and local Red-shouldered Hawk *(Buteo lineatus)*.

Long-eared Owl. The Long-ear is perhaps the least known owl species regularly breeding or occurring in the state. It is almost completely nocturnal and also is much less vocal than many other owl species. Most observers know it best by its occasional gatherings at communal winter roosts in Red Pine groves or in Eastern Red Cedar *(Juniperus virginiana)* thickets.

From June through September, the Long-eared Owl is especially difficult to locate in spite of the fact that it probably breeds, or has bred, in nearly every county in Massachusetts. Documented nestings suggest that this species likes open country with scattered thickets, groves, or woodlots for breeding. Nests are generally in pines and are usually modified crow nests.

The vocalizations of this species are varied; however, almost all seem to be used chiefly at or near the nest. Two of the more common sounds include a slurred, high-pitched "Eeeh-h-h," given with rising inflection, and a soft "Wuk-wuk-wuk" or Whoof-whoof-whoof." It is likely that certain of the less common calls of other owl species are often erroneously attributed to this species.

Short-eared Owl. The Short-ear is best known as a migrant and winter species. It is partial to broad, coastal salt marshes or fields near the seashore. It is partly diurnal or crepuscular and can often be seen coursing low over open country like a Northern Harrier *(Circus cyaneus)*. As a breeder, it is found on most of the large outer islands such as Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, and Monomoy, but it is rare as a nesting bird on the mainland. It nests on the ground in open or semiopen moorland habitat. It is usually silent.

Northern Saw-whet Owl. Although the little saw-whet is best known as a late fall migrant or as a winter visitor, it is also an occasional breeder throughout much of Massachusetts. Its hole-nesting habits and a preference for cedar swamps, bogs, and wet woodlands make it highly inconspicuous. Often the best indication of its presence in an area is its mellow "Too-too-too-too" call at dusk on warm early spring evenings. It is probably a permanent resident on Cape Cod, but it has been found nesting in a variety of locations throughout Massachusetts. Preferred nest sites are often in dead trees with lots of old woodpecker holes, and even bird boxes are occasionally used.

WAYNE R. PETERSEN is a teacher, lecturer, and bird tour leader who joined the staff of *Bird Observer* in 1974. The article above was originally distributed as a *Public Service Information* publication by the Massachusetts Audubon Society and appears here with the permission of the author and the Society.

Burrowing Owl

Photo by Ralph E. Cowan
Third Audubon International Exhibition of Nature Photography
Courtesy of MAS

TO TALK OF MANY THINGS: Athene cunicularia, REGAL FRITILLARIES, THE TROPICBIRD, AND OTHER RARITIES

by Dorothy R. Arvidson, Arlington

On July 17, 1986, at 8:30 A.M., the first call of the day on 259-9500 reached Cindy McElwain of the Natural History Services at Massachusetts Audubon. The caller was Peter Vickery. There was a Burrowing Owl *(Athene cunicularia)* at the Edgartown-Katama Airfield on Martha's Vineyard! Shortly thereafter, the machinery for informing the public of another rare bird in the state began to move. Calls to the Vineyard ascertained the position of the owl, how accessible to viewing, the possibilities of parking, ferry schedules, etc. - all the information needed for a Voice of Audubon alert. Richard Forster got busy with a Public Service Information sheet.

Disquieting news came midmorning in a call from a reporter preparing an article for *The Vineyard Gazette*. Was the Society aware that the owl had selected for its island stay a stretch of grassland habitat, the plants of which were being carefully monitored this summer by Nature Conservancy ecologists and that the airfield, where the owl perched, was situated within this ecologically valuable tract? The Conservancy was called and this was confirmed. The area was being studied. Furthermore, it was an important stronghold of the Regal Fritillary *(Speyeria idalia* Drury*)*, a butterfly that is becoming very rare and restricted due its vanishing grassland habitat. An additional, fairly major problem now surfaced: how to safeguard people and aircraft if birders, unfamiliar with the hazards of the area, should stray onto the airfield in an effort to get a better look at this rare bird.

A dilemma emerged - one that is becoming increasingly familiar to conservation organizations: how to accommodate the public to permit maximum enjoyment and appreciation of wildlife and still avoid accidents, intrusion on private property, or any lasting damage to fragile environments and threatened species. This is a very sticky problem when the public comprises enthusiastic birdwatchers who often are among the staunchest supporters of the organizations watching over the environment and wildlife.

A decision was reached. The presence of the owl would not be announced on the Voice, even though *The Vineyard Gazette* would publish the following week the news of the bird's arrival. The bird experts felt confident that the owl was here for a prolonged stay, that birders would discover it soon enough, but that the flood of people usually brought into the field by a Voice announcement could be avoided. Thus, the Burrowing Owl (seventh state record) settled in comfortably at the Edgartown airfield, undisturbed and unharassed, and (as Dick Forster has suggested) may have feasted occasionally upon the Regal Fritillaries in the grasslands that the Nature Conservancy was committed to protecting.

Is it truly possible that birders walking carefully through a field to look at an owl can endanger the existence of butterflies dancing about in the air above the grasses? Let us consider the life history of *S. idalia*. From June to September, the orange-brown, white-spotted adults with velvety, blue-black hindwings feed on the nectar of thistle and milkweed flowers and before the end of their summertime existence lay their eggs on grassland plants, usually near a clump of violets. The young hatch and feed actively at night on various species of violets, hiding away by day somewhere in the grasses away from the food plant. The larvae then hibernate over winter in the same area, completing development into flying adults throughout the summer months of the following year. The prospect of tens, possibly hundreds, of eager birders searching randomly through the grass for a ground-dwelling bird posed a very real threat to the Regal Fritillary as well as to the Conservancy's grassland studies.

Then, on September 15, a Red-billed Tropicbird appeared at Gay Head on the Vineyard - a first state record! Inevitably, the visiting birders discovered that a Burrowing Owl was also present but were persuaded (apparently successfully) by the locals to use caution in approaching the bird and to avoid harassing it. The upshot was that the owl was still present on October 3, perched at its customary spot, evidently undisturbed by three weeks and two weekends of heavy birding activity.

This little ten-inch owl with the very long legs is a Western Hemisphere bird who inhabits deserts, prairies, open treeless country, and airfields. *A. cunicularia* lives in burrows (which it excavates itself) that may be ten feet long and as much as three feet below the surface - a prodigious job of digging for a tiny bird. At times, the owl usurps the holes of prairie dogs or ground squirrels, shaping these habitations to fit its needs - the only North American owl to live underground (excepting Barn Owls who occasionally live in holes in cliffs). These owls may be gregarious, a dozen pairs occupying the same two or three acres. They may hunt by day but are usually seen perched upon a low elevation such as a rock, fence post, wires, or the roof of a low building. Our bird often perched on or hid under a dismantled aircraft wing near an airport taxiway. They fly about at dusk and hunt through the night, feeding on insects, rodents, snakes, and amphibia.

The western subspecies, *A. c. hypugea* (the Massachusetts vagrants that have been identified all belong to this group), is found from the West Coast and coastal islands eastward to south-central Manitoba and south through the Midwest into South America but is migratory only in the northern part of its range. A second subspecies, *A. c. floridana*, is a nonmigratory resident of Florida, the Bahamas, the Keys, and Cuba but has been recorded in Long Island, North Carolina, and Connecticut as a vagrant. Massachusetts records include a specimen taken in May 1875 at Newburyport, a report from Amesbury in February 1942, three reports in 1980 - Plymouth in May, Monomoy in June, and Katama on Martha's Vineyard

from July 12 to October 1, and in May 1982 at Northampton. The 1986 owl may be the same bird that appeared at Katama in 1980, a not improbable thought since several vagrants have been known to return to the same area year after year, and this species is on record as surviving for as long as eleven years.

In addition to the Burrowing Owl, three northern owls of circumpolar distribution occur as infrequent vagrants in the state: the Northern Hawk-Owl *(Surnia ulula)*, the Great Gray Owl *(Strix nebulosa)*, and the Boreal Owl *(Aegolius funereus)*. The Snowy Owl *(Nyctea scandiaca)* is not a rarity in Massachusetts but a winter resident. In the last century, all of these appeared in the state in greater numbers than is true today.

The Northern Hawk-Owl is a diurnal hunter who frequents half-open woods, parklands, and spruce-tamarack bogs, often perches in open treetops, and is therefore easy to see. This species has appeared in the state only five times in the present century: at Ipswich and Wakefield in November 1927 (different birds), at Greenfield in February 1946, at Concord in November 1958 to January 1959, and at Hinsdale in January to March 1965.

The Great Gray Owl is a forest denizen who hunts rodents, rabbits, squirrels, shrews, moles, and small birds either diurnally or at night in its normal range in the timbered regions of the North or of the higher elevations in the West. In recent times, this species has appeared in Massachusetts at Gill in January to March 1973, at Andover in January 1977, in January to March of 1979 (when there was a major incursion with seventeen records in this state and seventy-nine elsewhere in New England), at Oakham in February 1980, and at Hadley in February to March 1984.

Boreal Owls have occurred in heavy irruptions in the first quarter of this century (in 1922-23, a total of eighty-six were "taken" in New England, thirty of them in Massachusetts), but there have been only four records since then: Belmont in February 1942, Salisbury in December 1978, Back Bay in Boston in November 1983, and Chatham in January 1984. Truly nocturnal, this small forest-dwelling owl hunts mice, insects, and small birds only at night and hides during the day in thick foliage or, in the cold of winter, in abandoned igloos (!) or in barns. Therefore, it is seldom seen by birders, and there may be more of them about than can be projected from the records.

Compared with our resident species, these vagrant northern owls are fairly approachable; therefore, birders should show restraint. For satisfactory owl sightings, familiarize yourself with owl voices and keep in mind several things: (1) the habitat of the species; (2) what is its prey; (3) when is it hunting; and (4) most important for the continued health of the owl, when is it resting. It is true that as enlightened birdwatchers, we no longer hunt owls or even "take" specimen vagrants, but we do press them in order to get a closer look or picture. The life of a predator is "terrible hard," say the experts, and it behooves us to keep our distance from these wonderful hunters, neither disturbing the bird or its prey nor disrupting its habitat.

Great Gray Owl
Hadley, MA February 1984

Photo by Margaret Ciccarelli

A SUMMARY OF SHORT-EARED OWL BREEDING STATUS IN MASSACHUSETTS

by Denver Holt, Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program

The Short-eared Owl *(Asio flammeus)* is officially listed as "endangered" in Massachusetts because of its small and declining population and restricted distribution. It has also been listed on the National Audubon Society's "Blue List" since 1976 because of population declines in all or major parts of its range in the United States. This note compares the 1985 Massachusetts breeding population with the Northeast regional population and briefly discusses why our state population is endangered and what its future needs will be.

Abundance and distribution of breeding Short-eared Owls were determined through field surveys by the author and cooperators (Holt and Melvin 1986). In addition, I have compiled current estimates of abundance and distribution of breeding Short-eared Owls in the Northeast (thirteen states from Maine south to Virginia and West Virginia).

In Massachusetts breeding Short-eared Owls are now restricted to three counties - Barnstable, Dukes, and Nantucket. Within these counties the owls are limited to a few areas because of specific habitat needs: large expanses of coastal heathland, grassland, or beach grass communities.

Intensive surveys in 1985 confirmed only one breeding occurrence on the Massachusetts mainland. The remainder of the breeding population occurred on the islands of Nantucket, Tuckernuck, North and South Monomoy, Muskeget, and Martha's Vineyard. The maps presented here compare past summer distributional records of Short-eared Owls in Massachusetts (Forbush 1927) with present distribution (Holt and Melvin 1986). Obvious changes have occurred, but it is difficult to determine whether these were gradual or abrupt. Note that the Forbush map refers to sightings in

Table 1. Numbers and locations of breeding pairs of Short-eared Owls in Massachusetts, 1985

LOCATION	NUMBER OF PAIRS
Nantucket	8 - 11[a]
Monomoy N. W. R.	5 - 6[a]
Tuckernuck Island	4
Muskeget Island	1 - 2[a]
Martha's Vineyard	1
Pochet Marsh, Orleans	1
TOTAL	20 - 25[a]

[a]Smaller number represents known nesting pairs; larger number includes estimate of pairs whose breeding status is uncertain.

Figure 1. Summer distribution of Short-eared Owls based on Forbush, 1927.

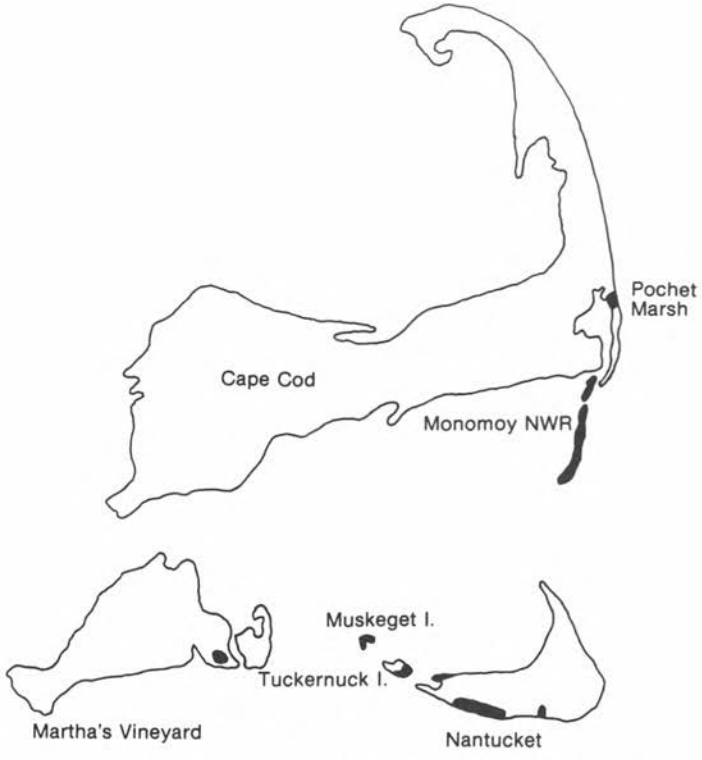


Figure 2. Locations (shaded) where breeding Short-eared Owls occurred in Massachusetts, March-August 1985.

summer, not necessarily breeding reports, and dates back to the era when most of Massachusetts' forests were cleared and the landscape was much more suitable for this species than it is today.

The estimated breeding population of Short-eared Owls in Massachusetts in 1985 was 20-25 pairs (Holt and Melvin 1986). This currently is the highest estimated breeding population in the Northeast and by far the highest in New England. The Northeast breeding population estimate in 1985 was 45-55 pairs. There is no indication that Short-eared Owls are increasing in any northeastern state; however, small populations may be stable at present.

Habitat loss and fragmentation are the most important factors limiting Short-eared Owls in Massachusetts. The maps clearly illustrate that these owls are now restricted to the eastern fringes of the state. The reduced size and distribution of the Massachusetts population increases its vulnerability to habitat loss, as well as natural limiting factors such as fluctuating food resources, predation, disease, and catastrophic events, e.g., fires or hurricanes.

In the future, vegetational succession may further limit the population as remaining habitats convert from grasslands to shrub and forest habitats in Massachusetts. Preserving small tracts of suitable habitat will not necessarily ensure the survival of the species in Massachusetts. Ultimately, large tracts of land will have to be managed to maintain viable populations of Short-eared Owls in this state. Ongoing research seeks to determine the amount and type of habitat needed to support breeding Short-eared Owls in Massachusetts (Holt and Melvin 1986).

It is possible that potential nesting areas have been overlooked or breeding pairs missed. More information is needed for the Cape Cod Natural Seashore and interior portions of the state. Persons with information on occurrences of Short-eared Owls in Massachusetts should contact Dr. Scott Melvin, Natural Heritage Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, 100 Cambridge Street, Boston, MA 02202, or Randy Tate, Biology Department, University of Massachusetts, Boston, MA 02125 to facilitate ongoing research.

Acknowledgments. My 1985 research on Short-eared Owls was conducted in collaboration with Dr. Scott Melvin of the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program. I am grateful to the following organizations and individuals for providing financial assistance for our research: Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program, Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, Nantucket Conservation Foundation, The Trustees of Reservations, Nancy Claflin, John Hay, and Donald Childs. Special thanks go to Dr. Wes Tiffney for making available the facilities of the Nantucket Field Station and to James Lentowski for permission to work on Nantucket Conservation Foundation property. I thank Dorothy Arvidson, Richard Forster, and Scott Melvin for comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

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DENVER HOLT has been associated with two major bird records in Massachusetts: the first North American appearance of the Brown-chested Martin on June 12, 1983, and the first U. S. breeding record for the Common Black-headed Gull, both events reported in the summer 1986 issue of *American Birds* [40(2): 192 and 204]. Denver is continuing his studies at the University of Montana and reports that he has begun a project on the Boreal Owl and hopes to spend time in Alaska studying northern raptors. He will soon have a paper published on the Pygmy Owl and also plans to continue his research on the Short-eared Owl.

HOW ABOUT THAT TAIL?

by Julius Rosenwald II, Menemsha,
Martha's Vineyard

Monday, September 15, 1986, was another beautiful day on Martha's Vineyard. The air was balmy, even at 7:00 A.M. Most of the people who had made up our summer birding group had either already left the island or were in the process of departure. This is the time of year when we usually see hawks. Living high up overlooking the Atlantic, one can easily see quite a number of raptors - Sharp-shinned, Merlin, American Kestrel, and Marsh Hawks (Northern Harriers) - flying low in a westerly direction. All are sure to pass by Gay Head Cliffs. So I drove to the cliffs, parked the car, and walked through a fine patch of poison ivy to a lookout directly at the edge of the cliff. Merlin were coming by this spot in quite some numbers. I was sorry my friends were not along. They'd have enjoyed the hour, the color of the sky, and, of course, the bird activity.

One cannot be in such a place without occasionally looking down over the cliff edge. The sea was quite calm. The sun was beginning to spread its light over the cliff face. It was about 8:20 A.M. when I first took a really good look at the waves as they washed ashore ninety feet below me. There, next to a small rock, not fifteen feet from shore, was a largish white bird sitting in the water with what appeared to be string tied to its tail. Binocs were adjusted to the scene below, and the first look showed a lipstick-red bill! The bird quickly eased itself into the air with long, thin wings tipped with black. A pale lattice-pattern showed along the back of the bird, an eyestripe behind the eye. But that bill!

Red-billed Tropicbird *Photo by Jonathan Alderfer*
Martha's Vineyard, MA September 15, 1986

At first I couldn't *believe* that I was seeing a tropicbird. Though I've birded quite a bit over the years, I have never seen one on the Vineyard. I had seen, as I recall, tropicbird in Tobago, in the south Caribbean Sea. Then, the horrible thought that no one was around to see this bird, too, hit me - really shook me.

I felt in my pockets for change. I had only a quarter. Running back through the same poison ivy to the Aquinnah Shop, where there was a pay phone, I called my wife, asking her to phone my birding companion, eagle-eyed Vernon Laux, and tell him *that there was a Red-billed Tropicbird at the Gay Head Cliffs.*

Having made the call, I returned to the little lookout spot as the bird was ducking behind one of the faces of the colored cliffs - flying to the right. All I could think about was that no one would ever believe me if I told them what I had seen. Suppose Judy had not been able to reach Vern? Then what? Well, he did arrive. He was there in about twelve minutes with Whit Manter and Jonathan Alderfer, both excellent birders. (The usual time to Gay Head from his house would be about twenty-five minutes.)

By this time, I had moved to yet another lookout, the location of a gun emplacement during World War II. From this vantage point I felt that I would spot the bird again if it hadn't taken off toward the Elizabeth Islands. (These are a small chain of islands that lie between the mainland and the Vineyard.)

I heard Vern yell as he and the others came up. "Where is it?" "Which way did it go?" "How long ago did you see it?" "Did you get a real good look at it?" It could not have been five minutes from the time the trio arrived that Jonathan said, "There it is," and we all zeroed in on it. When the bird veered and showed the bill, a shriek went up! "It's a Red-billed Tropicbird! I'll be a s-- of a b----!" Etc., etc.

The flight took the bird and its wonderful wavy tail out toward the point of Gay Head, which is marked by a Coast Guard lighthouse. It flew back and forth quite close to shore, often harassed by immature Herring Gulls. Its evasive techniques were agile and sharp. Then it disappeared around the point.

The four of us scrambled down the cliffs to the beach area below and soon picked it up again. Jonathan had a camera with a 500 mm lens, and he was busy getting every flight pattern, every movement of this tropical pelagic bird, so far off course.

Vern returned to make some calls and to notify some others. Jonathan and I remained on the beach for some time over an hour and a half, during which time he took two rolls of film, some as close as thirty-five feet. The bird filled the view finder!

That day, the bird was seen by about ten people; one of them saw it from a boat. During the night of September 15 and into the early hours of Tuesday the sixteenth, there was a horrible storm - windy, torrents of rain, thunder - the works. I could only think that our bird was on its way to either Greenland or Java. But I returned to the cliff again on Tuesday morning. One could not hold binocs - it was so windy. No sighting was possible. On Tuesday evening, Eloise Vanderhoop Page, a native of Gay Head, phoned me after she had read the front-page article in *The Vineyard Gazette*. (The Tuesday, September 16, 1986, edition of the island newspaper had a front page story on the tropicbird.) She said that she had seen that bird for two weeks and wondered about it. She thought it might have had string caught in its tail.

No sighting again until Thursday when a birding group spotted it from the same place. Ah, more excitement! Friday, I saw the tropicbird again and pointed it out to Gus Daniels - the 313th bird he had seen on the Vineyard. Saturday, September 20, brought people from Massachusetts Audubon as well as Peter Alden, Brad Blodget (state ornithologist), and Bill Drummond of the Brookline Bird Club. Folks alerted by a private rare-bird hotline came early on the first ferry, from Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire - about forty-five of them. The bird did show up at 11:00 A.M. and again at 1:00 P.M. I missed both sightings but was more than pleased that so many had seen it. The whole event was amazing to me - a first record for Massachusetts, and . . . *that tail was unbelievable!*

JULIUS "Dooley" ROSENWALD II of Menemsha, Martha's Vineyard, and Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, states that he keeps no bird lists but is "willing to look at any bird that wants to get in front of me." A lifelong interest in birds began when his mother enrolled him in Mrs. Colten's bird class. This lady had a suitcase full of stuffed birds. The children were shown a specimen bird, taught its song, and then sent forth to find it. His cousin hated the class, but Dooley loved it and has been a birdwatcher ever since. He has traveled worldwide, as far as Outer Mongolia and twice to Nepal, and his binoculars are always with him. He also enjoys photographing birds, especially in flight. Today, this active, sharp-eyed birder is father of three and grandfather of five and describes himself as semi-retired from business. However, he works with an educational, nonprofit corporation of twenty-seven colleges, universities, and medical schools - the Science Center in Philadelphia - an organization "engaged in the application of scientific and technical knowledge to improve the quality of life." When the Red-billed Tropicbird lingered on through October, Julius Rosenwald estimated that "somewhere between 750 to 900 caring people have seen the bird."

ANOTHER MASSACHUSETTS FIRST: RED-BILLED TROPICBIRD

by Dorothy R. Arvidson, Arlington

The sighting of a Red-billed Tropicbird off Gay Head in Martha's Vineyard on Monday, September 15, 1986, is the first record for this species *(Phaethon aethereus)* in the state, the third record for the Northeastern Maritime Region, and except for birds seen well out at sea off the coast of Georgia and North Carolina, the only time a healthy, flying adult of this species has been seen this close to the eastern seaboard of the U. S. The bird was first identified by Julius Rosenwald II, whose account of this adventure appears elsewhere in this issue.

When not nesting, the Red-billed Tropicbird is a lone pelagic wanderer, ranging widely at sea throughout its nesting range, i.e., the Caribbean (which supports a total population of 1600 pairs), the eastern Pacific off Mexico and northern South America from Colombia to Peru, including the Galapagos Islands, the South Atlantic off Brazil, and in another hemisphere, the eastern Atlantic off Africa, the northern Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf.

As an extralimital wanderer, this species occurs *regularly** off the Pacific coast from southern California south to Peru; *irregularly,* north to the state of Washington, west to Hawaii (where all three species of tropicbird were seen together in April 1983), and south as far as Chile; and is *casually accidental* in southern Arizona, in Madeira, and in southern Africa. Off the western Atlantic coast, it is infrequently seen from the Greater Antilles and south to Brazil and is only a *casual* visitor to the Atlantic coast of North America from Florida to Rhode Island (and now, Massachusetts). An old report from the Newfoundland Banks is unsubstantiated, and the Martha's Vineyard bird is the most northerly record to date. Most Red-billed Tropicbirds found along the eastern seaboard of the U. S. have been immatures - dead or dying or oiled. Of these, the most recent was the carcass of an immature Red-billed picked up on Moonstone Beach in Rhode Island on July 19, 1975 by a well-known Massachusetts birder - Nancy Clayton. The skin of Nancy's bird resides at the M.C.Z. at Harvard University.

The most remarkable features of this handsome ternlike bird in adult life are its large, slightly decurved, bright red bill and two threadlike central tailfeathers that extend beyond the 20-inch body to double the bird's overall length to 35-42 inches, producing an extraordinary and graceful conformation that prompted Linnaeus to formulate the Latin name, *Phaethon aethereus* - ethereal offspring of the sun god. Other distinctive markings of the silky white adult are a broad black stripe through the

*The terms *regularly, irregularly, casual,* and *accidental* are italicized to indicate that the technical meaning is intended as defined by the A.O.U. and *American Birds*.

black eye (sometimes extending around the nape), fine black barring on the upperparts, which often appear gray at a distance, black marks on the wing tips, gray legs, and black feet. The tail feathers are white with black shafts, and the long all-white streamers are carried in a graceful flowing arc. The long, narrow, pointed wings are broadly attached to the body, and the flight is strong with rapid, pigeonlike wing beats. The sexes are similar. Immatures of the Red-billed and the White-tailed species may be confused. The Red-billed juvenile can be distinguished by its larger size (18-20 inches compared with 15-16 inches) and by the finer barring on the back that appears gray or dusky at a distance rather than showing as distinct barring.

Happily, the Martha's Vineyard bird was an adult and so could not be confused with the White-tailed Tropicbird. Two of the latter species appeared during Hurrricane Gloria in September of 1985: an adult sighted off Chatham and an immature that collapsed on the playing field of Governor Dummer Academy in South Byfield. [See *Bird Observer* 13: 332-335, December 1985.]

The Red-billed is the largest member of the tropicbird family, Phaethontidae, which has only the single genus *Phaethon* and only three members throughout the world - Red-billed, White-tailed, and Red-tailed - hence an easy family to "wipe out" (the expression among world listers for having ticked off all the birds within a given group or family.) These are members of a large primitive group of birds known as Pelicaniformes, which include such morphologically diverse creatures as pelicans, boobys, cormorants, anhingas, and frigatebirds.

This species is marine and chiefly oceanic when not nesting, coming to land mostly on cliffs where take-off is easier. Although it is strong, elegant, and graceful in flight, the tropicbird cannot walk erect on land but must shuffle along with the body in contact with the ground. When feeding, the Red-billed Tropicbird hovers and then plunges from a height to catch fish and squid underwater in its beak. The prey is caught sideways in the bill, not stabbed, and is swallowed underwater or just at the surface. These birds do catch flying fish on the wing but are seldom seen in flight with prey in the beak.

The breeding season in the Caribbean (the probable home of our visitor) is an extended period in the first half of the year with most eggs laid from late January into March. The birds nest on island cliffs, and each pair lays but a single egg on the bare ground within a nesting cranny or under a sheltering overhang. Incubation requires 43 days, and the partly altricial offspring are nidiculous, learning to fly only after 70-100 days and following the adults around for a long time after fledging. Tropicbirds become gregarious when nesting, their nests spaced as little as one meter apart, depending on the room available. Both adults participate in the incubation and care of the young. A long-lasting monogamous pair-bond may be formed in successful breeders, who then are faithful to the nesting site season after season (if the mate is the same), and these nest sites are vigorously defended.

Although introduced rats can be a problem and may actually prevent tropicbirds from occupying islands where these rodents are abundant, man is the only serious predator of the tropicbird. Its egg and the bird itself are taken for food in some parts of the world, and formerly, the skins and feathers were widely used for adornment. A major factor limiting population is the competition for nest sites (vacant or abandoned sites are always quickly occupied). Almost all the eggs and chicks that are destroyed on the nesting ground are lost as a result of fighting among adults of the same species.

What brought the Gay Head tropicbird to these waters? The exact date of its arrival is unknown. When the story appeared in *The Vineyard Gazette* on Tuesday, September 16, a report came from an island resident suggesting that this bird had been around for two weeks or more, mistaken for a large tern with string caught in its tail. Assuming an arrival date around the first of September, the only weather system chronologically and geographically close enough was Hurricane Charlie. But this is only speculation, and certainly this bird gave no indication of being a "tempest tossed" refugee.

This beautiful, healthy, adult Red-billed Tropicbird actively disporting off the cliffs of Gay head with tail jauntily cocked and streamers aloft - to the immense satisfaction of visitors from as far away as Florida - constitutes a remarkable vagrant bird record for the eastern seaboard but remains something of a mystery. As October ended, the bird was still around, but no one was willing to predict the total length of its stay.

BOOK REVIEW

Shorebirds, An Identification Guide by Peter Hayman, John Marchant, and Tony Prater. 1986. Houghton Mifflin, 412 pages, 88 color plates, 215 maps, $35.

The British have done it again! This long-awaited volume, nearly identical in format to the popular and widely acclaimed *Seabirds, An Identification Guide* by Peter Harrison, is another landmark in avian identification literature. The title understates the book's scope, however, for this is much more than an identification guide; it is, in fact, a condensed handbook with a wealth of information on all of the world's shorebirds. *Shorebirds* covers 214 species generally classified as shorebirds, including several poorly known and, in some cases, extinct species that have never previously been adequately illustrated.

Following a foreword by Roger Tory Peterson - the ornithological equivalent of the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval - are several introductory sections, foremost among which is "How to identify waders," a particularly enlightening primer and must reading for any serious shorebirder. Another section, "Conservation of wader habitats and species," also warrants widespread exposure among all concerned with this fascinating group of birds.

The showcase of the book are the 88 color plates by Peter Hayman, each depicting from one to four species, with a facing page containing brief descriptions of identification features for each plumage and small four-color distributional maps. Following the plates are 176 pages of species accounts, nine tables synopsizing some of the more difficult identification problems, a short appendix, seven pages of bibliography, and an index. Each species has been assigned a number which is used throughout the book in cross-referencing the plates, plate captions, and the species accounts. In addition, letter suffixes following the numbers indicate the plumage (or race) illustrated in the plates.

Peter Hayman's artwork is superb, combining a sensitive artistry with technical precision, and far surpasses any shorebird illustrations in previous field guides. The artist went to great pains to insure accuracy in the shapes and proportions of the birds (as he describes in one of the introductory sections), and the results are virtually flawless. The colors are also generally very accurate, though perhaps a bit exaggerated in some cases and a few are noticeably off. The Piping Plovers in plate 39 have a sickly, ashen look rather than the bright, sandy coloration evident in life. The Wilson's Plovers at the top of the plate suffer from the same affliction. Nowhere among the various Least Sandpiper plumages on plate 78 do I find the dark, chocolate brown birds ("Hershey-pipers") characteristic of the worn adults that pass through New England in large numbers during July and early August. The breeding-plumaged Willet (146a in plate 59) described as the nominate eastern form appears much more similar in coloration and pattern to the paler, gray western

race *(inornatus)* than to the dark brown, heavily barred birds breeding on the Atlantic coast; the two distinctive races of Willet have yet to be adequately illustrated in an identification guide. The nonbreeding adult Ruddy Turnstone (154c in plate 62), correctly described in the caption as "lacking all chestnut on upperparts," shows a great deal of chestnut in the illustration and looks more like an adult in worn breeding plumage. The reader should also be aware that many of the juveniles depicted throughout the plates are birds in very fresh plumage and, particularly among arctic nesters, most of the juveniles encountered south of the breeding grounds during fall migration have undergone some wear and are not as brightly marked or distinctive as some of the plates might suggest.

In a few of the plates, e.g., 43, 50, and 77, some of the smaller figures and illustrations of heads are not numbered, and in other plates, e.g., 32, 33, 42, 63, 75, 76, 78, and 82, some numbers have no letter suffix, leaving the reader to guess as to the species and/or plumage being depicted. For example, the head at the top left of plate 39, apparently a female Wilson's Plover, is not numbered. The tail pattern labeled 194 on plate 60 should read "149" (Spotted Sandpiper).

The most serious flaw in the plates is the manner in which some have been laid out. The artist, apparently in an attempt to depict as many plumages and postures as possible, has crammed a bewildering number of figures, in varying scales, into some of the plates. (Note especially plate 63 which has *forty* figures.) While the intent is laudable, the result is cluttered and confusing. Compounding the problem is that illustrations of some species, rather than being located directly opposite the corresponding captions on the facing page as would be expected, are scattered throughout the plate. Apparently the intent was to facilitate comparisons between species, but the reader is forced into a frustrating search through the plate to locate all of the plumages described and illustrated. *Strict* attention must be paid to the number/letter designations, although, as previously stated, these are lacking or incomplete in some instances. Many of the smaller figures, while attractive, add little but confusion and could have been omitted without compromising the quality or completeness of the plates.

Somewhat less than half of the book is devoted to species accounts, each divided into nine sections: Identification, Voice, Habits, Movements, Description, Age/Sex, Races, Measurements, and References. Each account, written in a succinct, telegraphic style, contains a remarkable amount of information, and, aside from a couple of typos, I can find nothing to fault in them.

It is not surprising to find that the authors have used a distinctly European terminology. Although titled *Shorebirds* (perhaps a concession to the American publisher), the European term "waders" is used throughout the text. A commendable attempt has been made to use the most sensible common names for species,

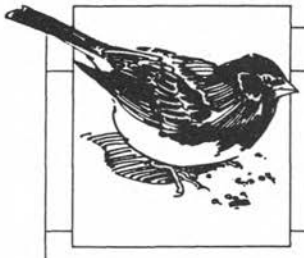
yet some parochial American readers may be temporarily confused by names such as Grey Plover (Black-bellied) and Lesser Sandplover (Mongolian Plover). The authors have chosen "breeding" and "non-breeding" to identify the two adult plumages often termed "alternate" and "basic," respectively, in American literature. The classification of the world's shorebirds is not without its nebulous areas; the number of species comprising the oystercatcher (Haematopodidae) and stilt (Recurvirostridae) families, for example, remains much debated. The authors' treatment ranges from liberal - recognizing eleven species of oystercatchers compared with as few as five species acknowledged by others - to conservative in recognizing only three species of stilts whereas some have proposed as many as nine species worldwide.

Most welcome, and all too often ignored in identification guides, is a fairly extensive bibliography, listing by my count 484 citations, although only about ten percent of these pertain specifically to identification with the remainder devoted primarily to various aspects of shorebird biology. The book is attractively designed and appears to be well-produced, though the binding on my copy cracked after less than two weeks use.

The novice birder will probably find the myriad species and plumages presented in *Shorebirds* overwhelming; the standard field guides remain a more suitable introduction. Anyone interested in birds, however, will find the beautiful illustrations and broad scope of the book appealing. In addition to being a valuable reference, it offers many hours of delightful browsing. There are some truly bizarre shorebirds in this world!

Shorebirds is the best of its genre yet to appear. Ultimately, however, its legacy may prove to be not so much its significant contribution to our rapidly expanding knowledge of avian identification but rather in the role it is likely to play in fostering a general awareness and appreciation of this remarkable group of birds and eventually, it is hoped, in their conservation throughout the world. The authors and artist should feel a profound sense of pride and satisfaction in this exceptional effort.

BLAIR NIKULA is a regional editor for *American Birds*, a regular contributor to *Bird Observer*, and has been responsible for a number of rare bird sightings in Massachusetts, among them Long-billed Curlew, Little Stint, Swainson's Warbler, Brown-chested Martin, White-tailed Tropicbird, and Mississippi Kite.



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BOOK VIEWS

by Brian E. Cassie, Millis

A GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF COLOMBIA. Steven L. Hilty and William L. Brown. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1986. 976 pages; 69 plates, 56 in color; 100 line drawings; 1475 range maps. $95.00 clothbound; $42.50 paperbound.

and

BIRDS OF NEW GUINEA. Bruce M. Beehler, Thane K. Pratt, and Dale A. Zimmerman. Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1986. 404 pages; 55 plates, 47 in color; 19 line drawings. $65.00 clothbound, $37.50 paperbound.

Here are the latest (long-awaited and long-overdue) bird field guides in the excellent series undertaken by Princeton University Press. Princeton has the process of producing first-class field guides down to a science (previous guides have been done for Australia, Venezuela, Panama, and the U.S.S.R.), and, if anything, the content of the books is getting better. Birdwatchers and biologists have been scrambling for years to pick up any ornithological literature they could find for New Guinea and Colombia; until now, this has been a time-consuming and frustrating experience. With the publication of these guides, the void has been filled most admirably.

Both books are a reasonable nine-by-six inches, convenient for field use. The plates, mostly in color and in all cases very well painted, are lumped together in the middle of the books. Those of you who own *Birds of Venezuela* or *Birds of the Republic of Panama* will immediately notice that a great number of the illustrations in the Colombia book were used originally in one of these guides. I have already heard grumbling from my customers, most of whom expected all new plates. I must say I find no fault with the publisher reproducing plates used in previous publications: the plates are good, and that is the important thing. For the record, there are sixteen entirely new plates in the Colombia guide.

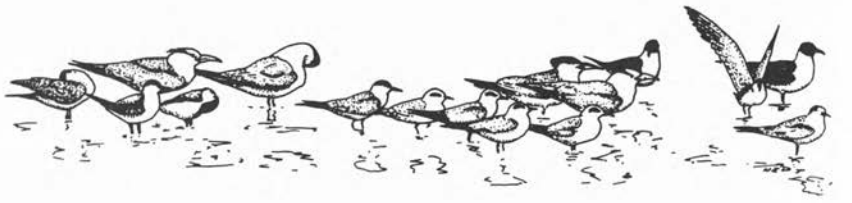
The text of both books follows a set formula. Families are introduced by a short to fairly lengthy paragraph, and each individual species within the family has an account comprising identification, similar species, voice, behavior, status, habitat, and range. The Colombia book has an additional segment on breeding biology, and, in general, the species accounts are fuller in this guide (due, no doubt, in large part to the tremendous amount of field work undertaken in the American tropics in the last few decades). The introductory chapters and appendices add significantly to these publications. *BIRDS OF NEW GUINEA* has a twenty-five-page chapter on Papuan natural history, another on field techniques, and a useful gazetteer. Included in *BIRDS OF COLOMBIA* are notes on topography, climate, vegetation, and habitats, all illustrated with photographs (an excellent, though

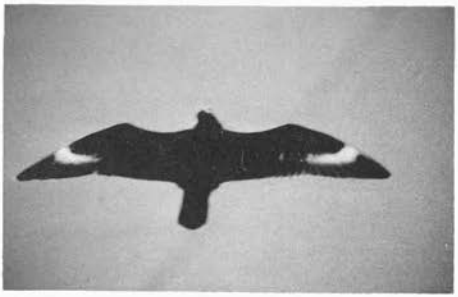
under-utilized, idea in guidebooks). In addition, there is an introduction to Colombian migrants, sections on conservation and national parks, a history of Colombian ornithology, and an eleven-page birdfinding guide. The range maps are well done (too bad there are none in the New Guinea book), and the bibliography runs to several hundred titles.

Although I commend Princeton on two more excellent guides, I am upset, but not surprised, with the prices asked for them. Although the paperbound editions are *relatively* inexpensive, they are not sewn, and if the *BIRDS OF VENEZUELA* paperback is indicative of the production throughout the series, these will not stand up very well to field use. The clothbound editions are perfectly sound, but also perfectly expensive. How can the publisher justify charging an *extra $27.50* (New Guinea) and *$52.50* (Colombia) for cloth bindings? I suggest that their marketing survey has told Princeton that they have us right where they want us - that the traveling birdwatcher will pay almost any price for a decent field guide. If they ever publish a guide to *all* of South America, I shall have to get a second mortgage to afford it.

CORRIGENDUM to the review of *ORNITHOLOGY IN LABORATORY AND FIELD*, which appeared in this column in the June 1986 issue. I commended the author, Olin Pettingill, Jr., on the great number of additional references cited, but was undermined by a typo. Pettingill lists not a mere 155, but *over 1550* references in all.

BRIAN E. CASSIE, who is currently at work on the Massachusetts Butterfly Atlas project, leads bird tours, manages his own business, *Ibis Books*, and lives in the suburbs with his wife, Sarah Jane and their three children, George, Jane, and Alexander.





South Polar Skua
Great South Channel
40°46′ N; 68°54′ W
June 26, 1986
Photo by William Strahle

Field Records
June 1986

by George W. Gove, Robert H. Stymeist, Lee E. Taylor

The first month of summer was wet and on the cool side, with much less sunshine than normal. The temperature averaged 66.1°, 1.9° below normal, yet this June was still 1.2° warmer than June 1985. The high mark was 89° on June 1; the lowest temperature of the month was 45° on June 3. Rain totaled 7.74 inches, 4.82 inches more than normal and the most in any month since 8.77 inches in May 1984. This was the sixth wettest June in 116 years of official record. Thunder was heard on six days, two more than average. R.H.S.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS

As many as 45 Common Loons were seen in Cape Cod Bay on June 29, a high total for the summer months. Three to four thousand Wilson's Storm-Petrels in Cape Cod Bay were well above normal for the location and may have been related to an unknown food source. An injured Northern Fulmar was picked up along the beach on Nantucket, and a late or lost Red-necked Grebe was observed in Nantucket Sound. Three Great Cormorants were present again in North Scituate.

Herons were not noted in any unusual concentrations; and of the rarer species, only one Little Blue, one Tricolored and a few Cattle Egrets were reported. At least four adult Yellow-crowned Night-Herons were observed. The most unusual report was of a White Ibis that was found in West Harwich and remained there for three days. R.H.S.

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JUNE 1986
Red-throated Loon:				
15	E.Boston (Belle Isle)	1	S.Zendeh	
Common Loon:				
11,29	Plymouth, Cape Cod Bay	2, 45 (2 groups)	R.Forster, H.Ferguson	
Red-necked Grebe:				
2	Nantucket Sound	1	M.Kasprzyk	
Northern Fulmar:				
6	Nantucket (Tom Nevers)	1 injured	fide E.Andrews	
Sooty Shearwater:				
2	Nantucket Sound	20	M.Kasprzyk	
Wilson's Storm-Petrel:				
25	Hingham Bay	4-5	J.Plotkin	
29	Cape Cod Bay	3-4000	H.Ferguson	
Northern Gannet:				
2,13	Nantucket Sound, P'town	2, 5 imm.	M.Kasprzyk, B.Nikula	
Great Cormorant:				
1	N.Scituate	3	W.Petersen	
Double-crested Cormorant:				
thr.	Saugus-Boston	max. 110 (6/9)	J.Berry	
4,23,29	P.I.	35, 30, 50	BBC (A.Blaisdell, D.Oliver, S.Moore)	
American Bittern:				
20	Mansfield	1	K.Holmes	
Least Bittern:				
4,8	P.I.	1, 1	BBC (A.Blaisdell, W.Drummond)	
18;19,21	Marshfield; W.Harwich	1; 1, 2	D.Clapp; M.Lynch, S.Carroll	
Great Blue Heron:				
thr.,5	P.I., GMNWR	max. 10 (6/29), 3	BBC (S.Moore)+v.o., A.Williams	
21,27	W.Harwich, N.Monomoy	6, 2	M.Lynch#, R.Humphrey	
Great Egret:				
thr.;3,19	P.I.; Mashpee	1; 1	v.o.; D.Morimoto	
3	S.Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	5	LCES (R.Marshall)	
15,22	E.Boston, Scituate	2, 1	S.Zendeh, W.Petersen	

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Great Egret (cont.):			
21	S.Dartmouth (LCES)	max. 61 (6/21)	LCES (R.Maker)
Snowy Egret:			
thr.	P.I., Saugus-Revere	max. 50 (6/29), max. 25 (6/23)	v.o., J.Berry
1,8,15,29	E.Boston (Belle Isle)	25, 3, 31, 57	S.Zendeh
19,21	N.Monomoy, W.Harwich	12, 8	M.Lynch, S.Carroll
22	Gloucester	13	J.Berry
Little Blue Heron:			
16	P.I.	1	BBC (W.Drummond)
Tricolored Heron:			
8,22	N.Monomoy, S.Monomoy	1, 1	v.o., B.Nikula
Cattle Egret:			
thr.	Ipswich	max. 3	J.Berry + v.o.
2,15	Essex, Marion (Bird Is.)	2, 1	R.Forster, I.Nisbet
Green-backed Heron:			
thr.	P.I.	max. 12 (6/29)	BBC (S.Moore) + v.o.
12,15	Lakeville, Waltham	1, 2	K.Holmes, L.Taylor
Black-crowned Night-Heron:			
thr.	P.I., Saugus-Boston	max. 7 (6/16), max. 6	BBC(W.Drummond) + v.o., J.Berry
1,15,29	E.Boston (Belle Isle)	8, 1, 7	S.Zendeh
9,10;14	Ipswich; Lynnfield	10, 5; 5	J.Berry
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:			
12;16,30	Needham; P.I.	1 ad.; 2, 2	S.Mick; BBC (W.Drummond,J.Murray)
21	Ipswich, Orleans (Nauset)	1 ad., 1 ad.	J.Berry, M.Lynch#
White Ibis:			
15-17	W.Harwich	1	R.Comeau + v.o.
Glossy Ibis:			
thr.	Revere, P.I.	max. 4, max. 12 (6/1)	J.Berry, D.Chickering+v.o.
1,29	E.Boston (Belle Isle)	4, 2	S.Zendeh
22,30	S.Monomoy, N.Monomoy	5, 3	B.Nikula, R.Humphrey

WATERFOWL

As many as four Brant lingered all month at North Monomoy. At Nahant along Short Beach an immature male King Eider and a first year male Harlequin Duck could be found through June 8; these birds were first noted in May. R.H.S.

Mute Swan:			
8,30	P.I.	1	BBC (W.Drummond, J.Murray)
Brant:			
thr.	N.Monomoy	max. 4	v.o.
Canada Goose:			
1,21,28	P.I.	50+, 20+, 20+	D.Chickering
Wood Duck:			
1,22;21	Uxbridge; Milford	8, 4; 7	R.Hildreth
29	Bolton Flats	4 ad., 6 yg.	M.Lynch, S.Carroll
Green-winged Teal:			
22;23,30	S.Monomoy; P.I.	5; 4, 6	B.Nikula; BBC(D.Oliver, J.Murray)
American Black Duck:			
tnr.	S.Monomoy	max. 200	R.Humphrey
1,8,15,29	E.Boston (Belle Isle)	17, 3, 8, 15	S.Zendeh
Mallard:			
1,8,15	E.Boston (Belle Isle)	4, 7, 15	S.Zendeh
22	S.Monomoy	25	B.Nikula
Northern Pintail:			
21,22	W.Harwich, S.Monomoy	1, 5	G.d'Entremont#, B.Nikula
30	P.I.	1	BBC (J.Murray)
Blue-winged Teal:			
22,30	S.Monomoy, P.I.	7, 14	B.Nikula, W.Petersen
Northern Shoveler:			
29	P.I.	2	BBC (S.Moore)
Gadwall:			
thr.,22	P.I., S.Monomoy	max. 12 (6/16). 15	BBC (W.Drummond), B.Nikula
American Wigeon:			
22	S.Monomoy	3	B.Nikula
Common Eider:			
10,29	Annisquam, S.Monomoy	1 imm. m., 12	H.Wiggin, R.Humphrey
King Eider:			
1-8	Nahant	1 imm. m.	L.Pivacek
Harlequin Duck:			
1-8	Nahant	1 1st yr. m.	L.Pivacek + v.o.

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JUNE 1986
Oldsquaw:				
7,12-14	E.Orleans, Hyannisport	4, 1	A.Williams#, S.Clifton + v.o.	
Black Scoter:				
1,7	Nahant, E.Orleans	1, 7	R.Forster, A.Williams#	
Surf Scoter:				
7	E.Orleans	1 m.	A.Williams#	
White-winged Scoter:				
29	S.Monomoy	8	R.Humphrey	
Hooded Merganser:				
14,29	Centerville, Bolton Flats	1, 2 flg. yg.	B.Nikula#, M.Lynch#	
Red-breasted Merganser:				
4	Orleans	15	R.Forster	
8,16;23	P.I.	1, 2; 1	BBC (W.Drummond; D.Oliver)	
Ruddy Duck:				
22	S.Monomoy	3	B.Nikula	

RAPTORS THROUGH RAILS

Throughout most of the month as many as four Bald Eagles could be found on the Outer Cape, most often seen at the Wellfleet dump. Other Bald Eagles were reported from West Bridgewater, and two were seen on Spectacle Island in Boston Harbor. Northern Goshawks and Red-shouldered Hawks successfully nested in East Middleboro. A pair of Peregrines were seen off and on all month in downtown Boston.

The most exciting report was of an adult Purple Gallinule found at Lynnfield Marsh on June 8, where it remained until the end of the month, though it became difficult to see amid the growing vegetation. R.H.S.

Turkey Vulture:			
4,15	Milton (Great Blue Hill), Sudbury	2, 1	D.Morimoto, R.Walton
15,19	Quabbin (Gate 40), Dover	2, 2	M.Lynch#, E.Taylor
22	Hardwick, Barre	2, 2	L.Taylor, G.Gove
23,24	Lincoln, Concord	1, 1	D.Rice, Lavinia
Osprey:			
thr.	S.Dartmouth (LCES)	pr. nesting, 3rd ad.	LCES (R.Maker)
1;8,29,30	Scituate; P.I.	1; 1+	W.Petersen; v.o.
8	GMNWR	2	J.Gordon#
9,12	Ipswich, Mashpee	2, 1	BBC (J.Berry), W.Petersen
14,21	Marshfield (DWWS),Lakeville	2, 2	SSBC (D.Clapp)
21	W.Harwich	2	M.Lynch#
Bald Eagle:			
thr.	Outer Cape Cod	max. 4 (Wellfleet dump)	v.o.
4,15	W.Bridgewater, Boston Harbor	1 ad., 2	S. + J.Peck, J.Andrews
Northern Harrier:			
21	W.Harwich	3 (2 ad. m.)	M.Lynch#
Sharp-shinned Hawk:			
4	Milton (Great Blue Hill)	1	D.Morimoto
Cooper's Hawk:			
13	Kingston	1	W.Petersen
Northern Goshawk:			
1,10	E.Middleboro	3 yg. in nest, fledged	K.Anderson
15	Quabbin (Gate 40)	1	M.Lynch#
Red-shouldered Hawk:			
thr.	E.Middleboro	pr. at nest seen daily	K.Anderson
4,22	Milton (Blue Hill), Holliston (Waseeka)	2, 1	D.Morimoto, R.Forster
Broad-winged Hawk:			
1,21	E.Middleboro, Salisbury	1, 2	K.Anderson, J.Berry
Red-tailed Hawk:			
19	Dover (Fire Tower)	3	E.Taylor
American Kestrel:			
14	Marshfield (DWWS)	5	SSBC (D.Clapp)
Peregrine Falcon:			
thr.	Boston (Downtown)	1-2	J.Berry + v.o.
Northern Bobwhite:			
1,8,14	Belmont	1, 1, 3	L.Taylor
1,5	Northbridge, Plymouth	3, 2+	R.Hildreth,G.d'Entremont#
14	Marshfield (DWWS)	3+	SSBC (D.Clapp)
Virginia Rail:			
28,29	P.I., Bolton Flats	1, 1	D.Chickering, M.Lynch#
Sora:			
4,29	P.I., Bolton Flats	1, 1	BBC (A.Blaisdell), S.Carroll#

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Purple Gallinule:			
8-30	Lynnfield	1 ad.	L.Jodrey, G.Soucy + v.o.
Common Moorhen:			
14	Lynnfield, Marshfield	2 ad. 5 yg., 2	R.Forster, SSBC (D.Clapp)

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH SKIMMER

Piping Plovers were noted at five locations, and twenty pairs of American Oystercatchers and at least thirty pairs of Willets were nesting on North Monomoy. A Black-necked Stilt spent nine days on Nantucket. This species has been noted only twelve times in this century in Massachusetts; seven of these reports have appeared in Bird Observer since 1973. Seven Upland Sandpipers were present at Hanscom Air Force Base; there were no other reports of this species. Two Hudsonian Godwits were seen at North Monomoy late in the month. Hudsonian Godwits are not a usual June bird, and these two may have been nonbreeding birds returning early from the breeding territory. The highest June count of White-rumped Sandpipers was made at North Monomoy with eighty birds present on June 14. A Stilt Sandpiper was noted on June 30; there are only three other June reports of this species in Bird Observer records. A Reeve was seen at Scituate.

An adult Franklin's Gull was reportedly well seen at Plymouth Beach, and an adult Gull-billed Tern was reported at Plum Island. One to two Common Black-headed Gulls were present at North Monomoy but there was no evidence of their breeding this year (the first breeding attempt in North America occurred two years ago at North Monomoy). Two Laughing Gulls and 230 Ring-billed Gulls were noted in a plowed field in Newbury. Throughout the month about a hundred immature (Portlandica) Arctic Terns were present at North Monomoy, where three nesting pairs of Black Skimmers were counted. Another pair of skimmers nested at New Island, Orleans, and one to two were observed at Plymouth on June 11.

G.W.G.

Black-bellied Plover:			
thr.	N.Monomoy	max. 250 (6/21)	B.Nikula
4,29	P.I.	12, 1	BBC (A.Blaisdell, S.Moore)
17,22	S.Dartmouth, Scituate	15, 3	R.Forster, W.Petersen
Semipalmated Plover:			
2,14	Newbury, N.Monomoy	6, 2	R.Forster, B.Nikula
22,30	Scituate, P.I.	2, 1	W.Petersen#
Piping Plover:			
3,17,24	S.Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	4, 4, 8	LCES (R.Marshall)
8,18,23,30	P.I.	1, 4, 2, 2	BBC + v.o.
9	Ipswich (Crane's Beach)	4	BBC (J.Berry)
15,19	Scituate, N.Monomoy	2 prs., 2	W.Petersen#, M.Lynch#
Killdeer:			
1,21,28	P.I.	2, 8, 11	D.Chickering
American Oystercatcher:			
thr.	Monomoy	20 nesting prs.	R.Humphrey
1,21	Plymouth, Fairhaven (West I.)	1, 4	G.Gove#, R.Maker
Black-necked Stilt:			
21-29	Nantucket (Great Pt.)	1	G.Frost, G.Kinney + v.o.
Greater Yellowlegs:			
1,8,15	E.Boston (Belle Isle)	5, 13, 1	S.Zendeh
15;29,30	Essex; P.I.	1; 6	R.Forster; BBC(S.Moore)+v.o.
Lesser Yellowlegs:			
21,28,29,30	P.I.	4, 13, 20, 15	v.o.
25,29	N.Monomoy, Newburyport	12+, 17	B.Nikula, R.Forster#
Willet:			
thr.	N.Monomoy	30+ prs.	R.Humphrey, B.Nikula
thr.	P.I.-Newburyport	max. 7 (6/29)	R.Forster + v.o.
3,17,24	S.Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	4, 5, 8	LCES (R.Marshall)
Spotted Sandpiper:			
1,8,15	E.Boston (Belle Isle)	1, 2, 1	S.Zendeh
1,8	Northbridge, Belmont	3, 1	R.Hildreth, L.Taylor
Upland Sandpiper:			
thr.	Hanscom AFB	max. 7 (6/22)	J.Carter + v.o.
Whimbrel:			
7-21	N.Monomoy	1	B.Nikula# + v.o.
Hudsonian Godwit:			
25	N.Monomoy	2	R.Humphrey
Ruddy Turnstone:			
thr.	N.Monomoy	max. 50 (6/7)	B.Nikula
1	Plymouth	41	G.Gove

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JUNE 1986
Red Knot:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max. 200 (6/7)	B.Nikula	
4	P.I., Orleans (New I.)	4, 6	BBC (A.Blaisdell),R.Forster#	
Sanderling:				
thr.,15	N.Monomoy, Scituate	max. 600 (6/2), 1	B.Nikula, W.Petersen	
Semipalmated Sandpiper:				
thr.,1	N.Monomoy, Nahant	max. 600 (6/2), 250	B.Nikula, R.Forster	
15,22;30	Scituate; P.I.	2, 5; 3	W.Petersen#	
Least Sandpiper:				
1	Uxbridge	4	R.Hildreth	
White-rumped Sandpiper:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max. 80+ (6/14)	B.Nikula	
1,2	Nahant, P.I.	4, 10	R.Forster	
15,22	Scituate, P.I.	6, 2	W.Petersen, G.d'Entremont	
Pectoral Sandpiper:				
21-22,30	N.Monomoy, P.I.	2, 1	B.Nikula, W.Petersen	
Dunlin:				
1,2	Nahant, Newburyport	2, 4	R.Forster	
14,21	N.Monomoy	2, 1	B.Nikula	
22,24	Scituate,S.Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	2, 1	W.Petersen,LCES (R.Marshall)	
Stilt Sandpiper:				
30(early)	P.I..	1	W.Petersen + v.o.	
Reeve:				
27	Scituate (Third Cliff)	1	D.Clapp	
Short-billed Dowitcher:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max. 20 (6/7)	B.Nikula	
2,4	Newburyport, Orleans	1, 2	R.Forster#	
17,28-30	S.Dartmouth (Allens Pond), P.I.	3, max. 16	R.Forster,D.Chickering + v.o.	
American Woodcock:				
8,9	Milton (FM),Ipswich (Crane Beach)	2, 2	G.d'Entremont#, BBC (J.Berry)	
14,29	Marshfield (DWWS), P.I.	3, 1	SSBC (D.Clapp), BBC (S.Moore)	
Wilson's Phalarope:				
thr.,1	P.I.,E.Boston (Belle Isle)	max. 3 (6/29), 2	v.o., S.Zendeh	
Red-necked Phalarope:				
9	N.Monomoy	3	B.Nikula	
Red Phalarope:				
1-7	N.Monomoy	1-2 (6/7)	R.Prescott + v.o.	
Parasitic Jaeger:				
8,13	E.Orleans, Provincetown	1 ad., 2	A.Williams#, B.Nikula	
jaeger sp.				
4,30	N.Monomoy	1, 1	R.Humphrey	
South Polar Skua:				
26	Great South Channel	1 ph.	W.Strahle	
Laughing Gull:				
2	Newbury	2 in plowed field	R.Forster	
19	N.Monomoy	150+	M.Lynch, S.Carroll	
Franklin's Gull:				
2	Plymouth Beach	1 ad. well seen	I.Nisbet, P.Trull	
Little Gull:				
2;4,29	Newburyport; P.I. 2 (1 S);	1	R.Forster; BBC(A.Blaisdell,S.Moore)	
14	N.Monomoy	1 (1 S)	B.Nikula	
Common Black-headed Gull:				
1-15	N.Monomoy	1-2 ad.	B.Nikula + v.o.	
Bonaparte's Gull:				
2,22	Newburyport, Scituate	85, 1	R.Forster, W.Petersen	
Ring-billed Gull:				
2	Newbury	230 in plowed field	R.Forster	
Black-legged Kittiwake:				
4	Orleans (New I.)	1 (1 S) + 1 dead ad.	R.Forster	
Gull-billed Tern:				
16	P.I.	1 ad.	W.Drummond	
Royal Tern:				
19,27	N.Monomoy	2, 1	M.Lynch#, R.Humphrey	
Roseate Tern:				
15	Scituate	6	W.Petersen	
Common Tern:				
thr.	P.I.	max. 20 (6/23)(6/29)	BBC + v.o.	
1,8,15,29	E.Boston (Belle Isle)	4, 3, 3, 3	S.Zendeh	
9,19	Ipswich (Crane Beach),N.Monomoy	100+, 250+	BBC (J.Berry), M.Lynch#	
Arctic Tern:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max. 100 (all imm.)	B.Nikula	

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JUNE 1986
Least Tern:				
thr.,9	P.I., Ipswich (Crane Beach)	max. 20 (6/30), 85+	v.o., BBC(J.Berry)	
19,29	N.Monomoy, E.Boston	15, 3	M.Lynch#, S.Zendeh	
Black Tern:				
7,27	N.Monomoy	3, 3	R.Humphrey + v.o.	
28	Nantucket (Great Pt.)	1	J. Von Vorst	
Black Skimmer:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max. 7, 3 nesting pr.	R.Humphrey + v.o.	
thr.	Orleans (New I.)	1 nesting pr.	P.Trull + v.o.	
11,17	Plymouth	2, 1	R.Forster#, K.Holmes	

CUCKOO THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Black-billed Cuckoos were reported from six locations, but Yellow-billed Cuckoos seem to be rather rare this summer. Up to six Short-eared Owls were present at South Monomoy, and one was on North Monomoy. A pair of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds was noted all month in East Middleboro, and there were four reports of others. G.W.G.

Black-billed Cuckoo:			
3-8;4,8	E.Orleans; P.I.	1; 1, 1	D.Williams#; BBC (A.Blaisdell, W.Drummond)
7,8	Holliston, Lincoln	1, 1	R.Hildreth, L.Taylor
14;24,26	Milton (FM); Annisquam	1; 1, 2	D.Morimoto; H.Wiggin
Yellow-billed Cuckoo:			
8	P.I.	1	BBC (W.Drummond)
Great Horned Owl:			
3,9	Ipswich	1, 1	J.Berry
Barred Owl:			
15	Ipswich	1	J.Berry
Short-eared Owl:			
thr.	N.Monomoy, S.Monomoy	1, 6	v.o., R.Humphrey
Common Nighthawk:			
5,9	Plymouth, Ipswich	1, 1	G.d'Entremont#, J.Berry
Whip-poor-will:			
5,19	Plymouth, Bournedale	20, 6+	G.d'Entremont#, R.Turner
16,23	Newbury	2, 3	BBC (W.Drummond), BBC (D.Oliver)
Ruby-throated Hummingbird:			
thr.,1	E.Middleboro, S.Carver	1 m. + 1 f., 1	K.Anderson
4,11	P.I., W.Gloucester	2, 1	H.Wiggin, BBC (A.Blaisdell)
23	Millis	1	R.Forster
Red-headed Woodpecker:			
1	M.V.	1	D.Briggs#
Red-bellied Woodpecker:			
1	M.V.	1	D.Briggs#
Pileated Woodpecker:			
14	Topsfield	1 juv.	J.Berry

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH EVENING GROSBEAK

Passerine migration was evident until the middle of the month, with reports of migrant Acadian Flycatcher and Mourning Warbler on June 14. The many excellent counts on June 8 in the West Bridgewater/Raynham area were the result of a careful census in the Hockomock Swamp by five observers.

Eight Acadian Flycatchers for the month was an above average count compared to the last ten years' data. All were identified based on call, and a notable single site count of four was logged at Plum Island on June 2. A Western Kingbird was reportedly carefully studied at Chatham on June 30, and constitutes the only June record for this species in even remotely recent years. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher reports, possibly of the same individual, were received from two southeastern Massachusetts locations. Indeed, this may have been the same individual reported on May 10 in Harwich. The jackdaw continued to be seen on Nantucket throughout June. Philadelphia Vireo, a rare spring migrant, is seldom recorded in June.

Warbler species totalled twenty-six for June, a good diversity compared to the last ten years. Highlights included a "Lawrence's" Warbler at West Newbury, and from among the "southern" warblers, potential breeding Worm-eating and Kentucky warblers from sites south of Boston. Mourning Warbler migration, with nineteen total individuals for the month and with a maximum single site count of six (Plum Island on June 2) was about average. The individual on North Monomoy Island on June 8 was at an unusual location for the species.

The count of sixty Savannah Sparrows in Lincoln on June 22 was the result of 1.5 hours

scouring the grass along the runways at Hanscom Field for this species, Upland Sandpiper, and Eastern Meadowlark. A male Lapland Longspur in breeding plumage was carefully observed at ranges as close as thirty feet on the beach at Scituate on June 22. This constitutes the latest report on record for this species in Massachusetts. Following a good winter flight and continuing the trend from the spring, both crossbill species were reported this June. The Red Crossbill individual was found recently dead, and was sexed by dissection. White-winged Crossbill, occurring in June for the first time in ten years, had also been seen in the Middleboro-Bridgewater area in larger numbers during May. L.E.T.

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
JUNE 1986			
Eastern Wood-Pewee:			
2,10	P.I., Annisquam	11, 1	R.Forster, H.Wiggin
15	Quabbin (Gate 40)	6	S.Carroll#
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:			
1,8	N.Scituate, P.I.	1, 1	W.Petersen, BBC(W.Drummond)
8	Annisquam	1	H.Wiggin
Acadian Flycatcher:			
1	M.V., Nahant	1, 1	D.Briggs#, R.Forster
2,10	P.I., Mashpee	4, 1	R.Forster, W.Petersen
14	Annisquam	1	H.Wiggin
Alder Flycatcher:			
2,5	P.I., Lincoln	1, 1	R.Forster, A.Williams
8-15,22	W.Bridgewater, Paxton	max. 3 (6/8), 1	W.Petersen#, L.Taylor#
Willow Flycatcher:			
thr.,14	P.I., DWWS	max. 4 (6/8), 12	v.o., SSBC (D.Clapp)
14,29	Lynnfield, Lancaster	4 m., 4	J.Berry, M.Lynch#
Least Flycatcher:			
15, 21	Quabbin (Gate 40),Tyngsboro	5, 4	S.Carroll#, BBC (R.Gerrish)
21,29	Milford, ONWR	1, 1	R.Hildreth, M.Lynch#
Great Crested Flycatcher:			
2,19	P.I., Dover	2, 2	R.Forster, E.Taylor
Western Kingbird:			
30	Chatham	1	P.Trull, W.Bailey
Eastern Kingbird:			
thr.,7	P.I., N.Monomoy	max. 25 (6/23), 1	v.o., R.Humphrey
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:			
14,18	Truro, Plymouth	1, 1	B.Blodget, R.Turner#
Horned Lark:			
19,30	N.Monomoy, P.I.	3, 2	S.Carroll#, BBC (R.Murray)
Purple Martin:			
thr.	P.I.	max. 126 (6/16)	v.o.
Tree Swallow:			
thr.	P.I.	max. 180 (6/16)	v.o.
Bank Swallow:			
9,14	Ipswich, Lancaster	20+, 20	BBC (J.Berry), S.Carroll#
21,29	Tyngsboro, P.I.	40, 20	BBC (R.Gerrish), BBC (S.Moore)
Cliff Swallow:			
14;15,29	DWWS; Essex	10; 2, 5 active nests	SSBC (D.Clapp); R.Forster
thr.	Rowley	est. 20-25 prs.	R.Forster
Barn Swallow:			
thr.	P.I.	max. 10 (6/30)	v.o.
Eurasian Jackdaw:			
thr.	Nantucket	1	E.Andrews#
Fish Crow:			
1	Lynn, Scituate	2, 3	G.d'Entremont#, W.Petersen
Red-breasted Nuthatch:			
10	Annisquam, E.Middleboro	1 f., 5+	H.Wiggin, K.Anderson
15	Plymouth	2	SSBC (R.Timberlake)
Brown Creeper:			
8	W.Bridgewater, Raynham	1, 1	W.Petersen#
Carolina Wren:			
14,18-30	DWWS, Whitman	1, 1-2	SSBC (D.Clapp), W.Petersen
21,30	Holliston, S.Dartmouth	1, 4	R.Hildreth, LCES (R.Maker)
Marsh Wren:			
thr.,21	P.I., W.Harwich	max. 10 (6/29), 10	v.o., M.Lynch#
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:			
1;3,10	M.V.; S.Dartmouth	1; 1, 1	D.Briggs#; LCES (R.Maker)
5,15	P'town, Quabbin(Gate 40)	1, 8+	B.Nikula, S.Carroll#
20;22	Topsfield;Wayland,Lincoln	2; 2, 3	G.d'Entremont#; BBC (B.Howell)
Eastern Bluebird:			
thr.,5-15	Eastham, Plymouth	1 pr., max. 3	fide M.O'Connor, v.o.
8-13, 10	Lincoln, E.Middleboro	1, 1 m.	W.Harrington, K.Anderson

Eastern Bluebird (cont.):			
12,15	Holliston, Quabbin (Gate 40)	1, 10	R.Wolanin, S.Carroll#
21	Milford, Tyngsboro	3, 3	R.Hildreth, BBC (R.Gerrish)
Veery:			
4,8	Nantucket, W.Bridgewater	1, 34	E.Andrews, W.Petersen#
15	Ipswich, Quabbin (Gate 40)	10, 10	J.Berry, M.Lynch#
Hermit Thrush:			
5,15	Plymouth, Quabbin (Gate 40)	3, 8	G.d'Entremont#, S.Carroll#
19,28	Dover, Hardwick	2, 1	E.Taylor, G.Gove#
Gray Catbird:			
thr., 14	P.I., DWWS	max. 40 (6/29), 15	v.o., SSBC (D.Clapp)
White-eyed Vireo:			
1,8	M.V., W.Bridgewater	1, 1	D.Briggs#, W.Petersen#
14,21	DWWS, S.Dartmouth	2, 1	SSBC (D.Clapp), LCES (R.Maker)
Solitary Vireo:			
1,28	M.V., Hardwick	1, 1	D.Briggs#, G.Gove#
Yellow-throated Vireo:			
14	ONWR	1	S.Carroll#
Warbling Vireo:			
3-10,14	Cambridge (Fresh Pond),Topsfield	max. 7, 2	J.Barton, J.Berry
14,21	Lynnfield, Milford	6, 4	J.Berry, R.Hildreth
Philadelphia Vireo:			
2	P.I.	1	R.Forster#
Red-eyed Vireo:			
1,2	M.V., P.I.	9, 5	D.Briggs#, R.Forster
Blue-winged Warbler:			
1,8	M.V., W.Bridgewater	2, 2	D.Briggs#, W.Petersen#
Golden-winged Warbler:			
2,15	Topsfield, Ipswich	1 f. on nest, 1 m.	D.Lange#, J.Berry
24	W.Newbury	1	W.Petersen#
"Brewster's" Warbler:			
15	Ipswich, New Bedford	1 m., 1 m.	J.Berry, M.Mello#
"Lawrence's" Warbler:			
1-14	W.Newbury	1	v.o.
Nashville Warbler:			
1,8	M.V., Raynham	1, 1	D.Briggs#, W.Petersen#
24	Truro	1	B.Nikula
Northern Parula:			
1,7,21	M.V., Osterville, Harwich	2, 1, 1	D.Briggs#, B.Barber#, M.Lynch#
Yellow Warbler:			
thr.	P.I., Cambridge (Fresh Pond)	max. 35 (6/29), max. 17 (6/10)	v.o., J.Barton
8,14	W.Bridgewater, DWWS	56, 20	W.Petersen#, SSBC (D.Clapp)
Chestnut-sided Warbler:			
2,14	P.I., DWWS	8, 2	BBC (W.Drummond), SSBC (D.Clapp)
Magnolia Warbler:			
1,2	Nahant, P.I.	2, 20	R.Forster
Black-throated Blue Warbler:			
1	P.I.	1	D.Chickering
Yellow-rumped Warbler:			
16,22	Plymouth, Holliston	1 m., 1	D.Morimoto, R.Forster
22	Hardwick, Petersham	1, 1	L.Taylor#
Black-throated Green Warbler:			
1,15	M.V., Quabbin (Gate 40)	3, 6	D.Briggs#, M.Lynch#
Blackburnian Warbler:			
1,2	Nahant, P.I.	1, 4	R.Forster
7,15;15	Ipswich; Quabbin (Gate 40)	2 m., 1 m.; 8	J.Berry; S.Carroll#
Pine Warbler:			
7,15	Ipswich, Quabbin (Gate 40)	3-4, 5	J.Berry, M.Lynch#
19	Truro, Framingham	6, 1	S.Carroll#, R.Forster
Prairie Warbler:			
14,15	Milton, Plymouth	10 pr., 8	D.Morimoto, SSBC (R.Timberlake)
Blackpoll Warbler:			
2	P.I.	8	R.Forster
Black-and-white Warbler:			
1,8	M.V., Lincoln	2, 3	D.Briggs#, L.Taylor#
American Redstart:			
2,8	P.I., Waltham	50, 1	R.Forster, L.Taylor
8,22	Lincoln, Worcester Co.	5+, 25+	J.Carter, L.Taylor
Worm-eating Warbler:			
10,21;29	S.Dartmouth; Milton	1, 2; 1	LCES (R.Maker); G.d'Entremont#
Ovenbird:			
5,15	Lincoln, Ipswich	1 migr., 13	R.Forster, J.Berry

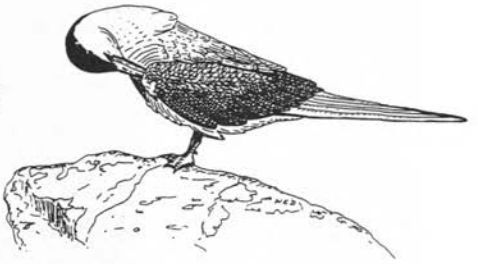
SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JUNE 1986
Northern Waterthrush:				
1	M.V., Nahant	1, 1	D.Briggs#, R.Forster	
2,8	P.I., W.Bridgewater	1, 5	R.Forster, W.Petersen#	
Kentucky Warbler:				
8	Milton (F.M.)	1 m.	G.d'Entremont#	
Mourning Warbler:				
1-10,2	7 locations, P.I.	9 total, 6	v.o., R.Forster	
8,13	N.Monomoy, Mashpee	1, 1	P.Trull#, W.Petersen	
14	Belmont, Waltham	1, 1	L.Taylor	
Common Yellowthroat:				
thr.,8	P.I., W.Bridgewater	max. 34 (6/29), 62	v.o., W.Petersen#	
Wilson's Warbler:				
2	P.I.	2	R.Forster	
Canada Warbler:				
2,8	P.I., Raynham	4, 1	R.Forster, W.Petersen#	
Summer Tanager:				
1	Nantucket	1	M.Kasprzyk	
Field Sparrow:				
14,21	Annisquam, Milford	1, 11	H.Wiggin, R.Hildreth	
Vesper Sparrow:				
15	Plymouth	6	SSBC (R.Timberlake)	
Savannah Sparrow:				
19,22	N.Monomoy, Lincoln	10+, 60+	M.Lynch#, L.Taylor#	
Grasshopper Sparrow:				
3,17;7	S.Dartmouth; N.Falmouth	3, 8; 3	LCES (R.Marshall); BBC (W.Drummond)	
Sharp-tailed Sparrow:				
thr.	P.I., S.Dartmouth	max. 12, max. 19	v.o., LCES (R.Marshall)	
1-15,19	E.Boston (Belle Isle), N.Monomoy	max. 5, 12+	S.Zendeh, S.Carroll#	
Seaside Sparrow:				
1,thr.	E.Boston(Belle Isle),S.Dartmouth	1, max. 7 (6/24)	S.Zendeh,LCES(R.Marshall)	
29	P.I.	4	R.Stymeist	
Song Sparrow:				
14,29	DWWS, P.I.	20, 26	SSBC (D.Clapp), R.Stymeist	
Swamp Sparrow:				
8	W.Bridgewater, Raynham	29	W.Petersen#	
White-throated Sparrow:				
15	Quabbin (Gate 40)	2	M.Lynch#	
Dark-eyed Junco:				
15	Quabbin (Gate 40)	1	M.Lynch#	
Lapland Longspur:				
22	Scituate	1 m. breeding plumage	W.Petersen	
Bobolink:				
14	ONWR, DWWS	15, 60	S.Carroll#, SSBC (D.Clapp)	
Eastern Meadowlark:				
22	Lincoln	36	G.Gove#	
Orchard Oriole:				
2,4	W.Newbury, E.Orleans	2 m., 1 m.	R.Forster, I.Nisbet#	
15,21	Essex, Byfield	1 m., pr. + 1 yg.	R.Forster, T.French	
24,29	W.Peabody, Essex	1 m., pr. + nest w/yg.	M.Martinek#, R.Forster	
Northern Oriole:				
3,21	Cambridge, Milford	8, 5	J.Barton, R.Hildreth	
Purple Finch:				
10	S.Dartmouth	2	LCES (R.Maker)	
Red Crossbill:				
13	Nantucket	1 imm. m.	E.Andrews	
White-winged Crossbill:				
8	W.Bridgewater	3+	W.Petersen#	
Pine Siskin:				
10-12,15	Needham, Halifax	1, 4	K.McClellan, B.Henderson	
Evening Grosbeak:				
1,3;15	Nantucket; GMNWR	1 m., 1 m.; 2	E.Andrews; J.Harbison	

CORRIGENDA - MAY 1986 Field Records

The adult Misssissippi Kite reported at Truro on May 6 by B. Nikula and R. Humphrey was not photographed.

Lark Sparrow:			
9	Chatham	1 m.	P.Trull
should read			
9	Chatham	1	P.Trull

Field Records
July 1986



by George W. Gove, Robert H. Stymeist, Lee E. Taylor

July 1986 was cool, wet, and unusually cloudy. The temperature averaged 71.0°, 2.5° below normal, making this the coolest July since 1969. The high was 95° on the eighth, and the low was 54° on the Fourth of July. Rain totaled 3.96 inches, 1.28 inches more than normal. Sunshine was just fifty percent of that possible, and this year tied with 1969, both having the fourth least amount of sunshine in July in ninety-four years of record. Heavy fog was recorded on four days, double the average number. R.H.S.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS

At Wachusett Reservoir in Sterling a pair of Common Loons successfully nested this year and raised two young, a second breeding record. Loons first nested here in 1984. There has been a small loon population breeding in the state since 1975, mostly in the Quabbin Reservoir. (This year at Quabbin there were five or six pairs of territorial loons, and three pair successfully hatched one young each. Unfortunately, two of the Quabbin chicks died.)

Pelagic birding was poor; only four Greater and one Manx shearwaters were noted, and Wilson's Storm-Petrels were reported in far fewer numbers on Stellwagen Bank.

Least Bitterns were reported from Plum Island and from Whitman, though the birds at Plum were harder to find than in previous years. A total of thirty-nine Great Egrets were tallied at Allens Pond in South Dartmouth, where two Little Blue Herons were also found. Other Little Blues were located in Duxbury, Plum Island, Scituate, Rowley, East Boston and on Monomoy. Other interesting reports included three Tricolored Herons and as many as four Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, three of them on Plum Island. R.H.S.

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1986
Common Loon:				
26	Sterling (Wachusett Res.)	2 ad. + 2 yg.	M.Lynch + S.Carroll	
Greater Shearwater:				
27	Stellwagen	4	BBC (H.D'Entremont)	
Manx Shearwater:				
27	Stellwagen	1	BBC (H.D'Entremont)	
Wilson's Storm-Petrel:				
3,21	Duxbury Beach, S.Monomoy	50+, 500+	W.Petersen#, R.Humphrey#	
22,27	Scituate, Stellwagen	15, 100+	W.Petersen, BBC(H.D'Entremont)	
31	S.Wellfleet (Atlantic)	700+	P.Trimble	
Northern Gannet:				
11,14	Wellfleet, Stellwagen	1 ad., 1	R.Humphrey#, P.Trimble	
Double-crested Cormorant:				
thr.	Saugus-Boston (train)	max.150+(7/30)	J.Berry	
3,13	Duxbury Bay, Newbypt	250+, 200	W.Petersen#, BBC(I.Giriunas)	
Least Bittern:				
4,26	Plum Island	1, 1	BBC(G.d'Entremont), D.Chickering	
4,27	Whitman	3, 1	W.Petersen	
Great Blue Heron:				
thr.	S.Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	max.4	LCES(R.Marshall)	
4,12,19	P.I.	2, 2, 1	D.Chickering	
11;12,19	Eastham; GMNWR	5; 6, 6	R.Humphrey#; M.Lynch#	
Great Egret:				
thr.	S.Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	max.39(7/30)	LCES(R.Marshall)	
3,6	Duxbury, Lakeville	2, 1	W.Petersen#, K.Holmes	
19;22,26	Rowley; Scituate	2; 1, 3	R.Stymeist#; W.Petersen	
23;26	Nantucket; P.I., Ipswich	2; 2, 6	N.Jenks-Jay; BBC, M.Lynch#	
30	Wayland	2	R.Walton	

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Snowy Egret:			
thr.	Saugus-Boston (train)	max.30+	J.Berry
thr.	S.Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	max.17(7/30)	LCES(R.Maker)
7,28	P.I.	45, 65	BBC(M.Barnett, D.+D.Oliver)
20,27	E.Boston (Belle Isle)	10, 20	J.Cumming, S.Zendeh
Little Blue Heron:			
3,5	Duxbury, P.I.	2 ad., 2 ad.	W.Petersen#, BBC(D.Deifik)
15,22,30	S.Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	2, 2, 2	LCES(R.Marshall)
15,19	Scituate, P.I.	1 imm., 1 imm.	B.Sorrie, T.Martin#
19,19-20	Rowley, E.Boston	5 ad., 1 ad.	R.Stymeist#, J.Cumming+v.o.
31	N.Monomoy	2	B.Nikula
Tricolored Heron:			
4	Monomoy	1	R.Stymeist#
21,27	P.I., Duxbury	1, 1	BBC(S.Thomas), R.Walton
Cattle Egret:			
12,25,29	Ipswich	6, 8-9, 15+	J.Berry
26,30	Essex	12, 15	J.Berry, T.Martin
Green-backed Heron:			
26	P.I.	12	M.Lynch#
Black-crowned Night-Heron:			
4,26	P.I.	4, 8	M.Lynch, S.Carroll
12,19	GMNWR	9, 14	S.Carroll, M.Lynch
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:			
8	Annisquam	1	H.Wiggin
12,14,19	P.I.	1, 2, 3	D.Chickering, N.King, D.Chickering
Glossy Ibis:			
4,7,26	P.I.	1, 25, 1	M.Lynch#, M.Barnett#, S.Carroll#
5-31	N.Monomoy	max.15	R.Humphrey#
15	S.Monomoy, S.Dartmouth	14, 9	R.Humphrey#, LCES(R.Marshall)
19,30	Rowley, Revere	7, 3	R.Stymeist#, J.Berry

WATERFOWL THROUGH RAILS

Four Brant, all apparently sick, spent the month on North Monomoy, and two Brant were found early in the month at Scituate. Wood Ducks were much in evidence at Great Meadows with counts of over a hundred individuals on two occasions. A female Common Eider with six chicks was found in South Dartmouth, and a flock of sixty was noted off Duxbury. An immature male King Eider was found at Monomoy, and presumably the same bird was found later on Nantucket.

A Black Vulture was reported about midmonth in Rockport near Halibut Point. Ospreys successfully raised young at Lakeville and Nantucket. A nest of Cooper's Hawks was noted at Broadmoor Sanctuary in South Natick. R.H.S.

Canada Goose:			
19,26	GMNWR, P.I.	94, 86	M.Lynch#, S.Carroll#
Brant:			
thr.,3	N.Monomoy, Scituate	max.4, 2	v.o., W.Petersen
Wood Duck:			
12,19	GMNWR	100+, 100+	S.Carroll#, BBC(M.Lynch)
26	P.I., Scituate	2, 3	M.Lynch#, W.Petersen
Blue-winged Teal:			
4,26	P.I.	10, 7	M.Lynch, S.Carroll
Gadwall:			
4,12,19	P.I.	7, 6, 6	D.Chickering
Common Eider:			
3,6	Duxbury, S.Dartmouth	60, f.w/6 yg.	W.Petersen#, T.Raymond
12,28	E.Orleans, Elizabeth I.	14, 11	A.Williams, P.Trimble
King Eider:			
16,20;26	N.Monomoy; Nantucket	1 imm.m.; 1 imm.m.	B.Nikula; S.Perkins
Black Scoter:			
3,21	Duxbury Bay, P.I.	2 f., 1 f.	W.Petersen#, BBC(S.Thomas)
Surf Scoter:			
3,14-31	Duxbury Bay, Chatham	1, 1	W.Petersen#, B.Nikula#
27	Westport (Gooseberry Neck)	1	K.Hansen
White-winged Scoter:			
3,14-31	Duxbury Bay, Chatham	1, 2	W.Petersen#, B.Nikula#
Red-breasted Merganser:			
3	Duxbury Bay	2	W.Petersen#
Black Vulture:			
about 7/15	Rockport (Halibut Pt.)	1	R.Hooper

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Turkey Vulture:			
4,28	Dover, S.Easton	4, 1	E.Taylor, K.Holmes
Osprey:			
thr.	S.Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	max.4(7/30)	LCES(R.Marshall)
6	Lakeville	2 ad. + 3 yg.	K.Holmes
23	Nant. (Great Pt.)	2 ad. + 3 yg.	N.Jenks-Jay
Bald Eagle:			
thr.	outer Cape Cod	3+	v.o.
Northern Harrier:			
20,30	P.I., S.Dartmouth	2, 2	K.Griffis#, LCES(R.Marshall)
Sharp-shinned Hawk:			
12	Plymouth	1	SSBC(A.Leggett)
Cooper's Hawk:			
4	S.Natick (Broadmoor)	2 at nest	BBC(E.Taylor)
Northern Goshawk:			
3	Halifax	1 ad.	W.Petersen
Red-tailed Hawk:			
4	Milford (3 sites)	6	R.Hildreth
20,27	Annisquam	1 ad.	H.Wiggin
American Kestrel:			
thr.	Beverly-Boston (train)	4-5	J.Berry
13	Newburyport	6	BBC(I.Giriunas)
Northern Bobwhite:			
6,12	Wayland, Plymouth	1, 13	R.Forster, SSBC(A.Leggett)
22,26	Sherborn	1	R.Forster
Virginia Rail:			
4	Whitman, P.I.	3, 1	W.Petersen, D.Chickering
12,19	GMNWR	8, 11	S.Carroll#, BBC(M.Lynch)
Sora:			
6	Wayland	1	R.Forster
12,19	GMNWR	4, 4	S.Carroll#, BBC(M.Lynch)
Common Moorhen:			
19,26	GMNWR, P.I.	1, 2 ad.+8 yg.	M.Lynch#, D.Chickering

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH SKIMMERS

A total of 55 Piping Plovers, including at least three young, were reported this month. More than 50 Killdeer and up to 16 Solitary Sandpipers were seen in a field in Halifax where 25 Solitary Sandpipers were noted last July. Twenty American Oystercatchers were counted at North Monomoy; this is less than the numbers reported in the last few Julys and less than the 20 pairs reported from there last month. A maximum of 120 Willets was also noted. Forty-one Willets were seen feeding behind the church at Plum Island on July 13. A maximum of 290 Whimbrel was seen going to roost at North Monomoy; the maximum number noted in the past few years there was 352 last year. The Hudsonian Godwit flock at North Monomoy built to 100 birds, and a Marbled Godwit was present there from July 10 through July 27. This is the first July record of Marbled Godwit since 1980.

An adult Gull-billed Tern was seen at North Monomoy on July 10 and 12, and a Sandwich Tern was seen there on July 1 and 23. Royal Terns were noted, one each at five locations. Up to 150 Arctic Terns, mostly immature, were present at North Monomoy throughout the month. A total of four nesting pairs of Black Skimmers were present at North Monomoy and Orleans, but none successfully nested. G.W.G.

Black-bellied Plover:			
thr.,3	N.Monomoy, Duxbury	max.225(7/1), 28	B.Nikula, W.Petersen
Semipalmated Plover:			
thr.,22	N.Monomoy, Scituate	max.150(7/31), 70	B.Nikula, W.Petersen
15-30	S.Dartmouth	max.24(7/30)	LCES(R.Marshall)
Piping Plover:			
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.19(7/16)	R.Humphrey+v.o.
thr.	S.Dartmouth	max.12(7/15)	LCES(R.Marshall)
3,24	Duxbury, Scituate	10 ad.+2 yg., 5+1 yg.	W.Petersen#
23	Nantucket	6	Nan Jenks-Jay
Killdeer:			
6,21	Halifax	30, 50+	W.Petersen
19	Newburyport	16	R.Stymeist
American Oystercatcher:			
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.20	B.Nikula+v.o.
23	Nantucket	6 ad.+6 yg.	N.Jenks-Jay

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1986
Greater Yellowlegs:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.100(7/20)	B.Nikula+v.o.	
13,26	P.I.	100+, 200	BBC(I.Giriunas, G.d'Entremont)	
Lesser Yellowlegs:				
thr.;20,27	N.Monomoy; E.Boston	max.150(7/31); 33, 40	B.Nikula+v.o.; S.Zendeh	
13,26	Plum Island	50, 100	BBC(I.Giriunas, G.d'Entremont)	
Solitary Sandpiper:				
3-27,20	Halifax, E.Boston	max.16(7/27), 1	W.Petersen, J.Cumming	
Willet:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.120(7/10)	J.Barton+v.o.	
thr.	S.Dartmouth	max.9(7/15)	LCES(R.Marshall)	
13	P.I.	41	BBC(I.Giriunas)	
"Western" Willet:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.15	B.Nikula+v.o.	
Spotted Sandpiper:				
thr.	S.Dartmouth	max.9(7/8)	LCES(R.Marshall)	
20,27	Winthrop, E.Boston	3, 3	J.Cumming, S.Zendeh	
Upland Sandpiper:				
6	Halifax	1 m.(displaying)	W.Petersen	
Whimbrel:				
8-30	S.Dartmouth	max.9(7/30)	LCES(R.Marshall)	
20	Winthrop(Snake I.)	1	J.Cumming	
23,31	Nant., N.Monomoy	30, 290+	N.Jenks-Jay, B.Nikula	
Hudsonian Godwit:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.100(7/31)	B.Nikula+v.o.	
26,27	P.I., E.Boston	30,13	BBC(G.d'Entremont), J.Cumming	
Marbled Godwit:				
10-27	N.Monomoy	1	J.Barton+v.o.	
Ruddy Turnstone:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.50(7/31)	B.Nikula+v.o.	
3,30	Duxbury, S.Dartmouth	3,5	W.Petersen#, LCES(R.Marshall)	
Red Knot:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.400(7/31)	B.Nikula+v.o.	
22	Scituate	50	W.Petersen	
Sanderling:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.1200(7/31)	B.Nikula+v.o.	
21	Ipswich	110	J.Berry	
Semipalmated Sandpiper:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.2000(7/31)	B.Nikula+v.o.	
26,27	P.I., Orleans	500, 500	BBC(G.d'Entremont), L.MacIvor	
Western Sandpiper:				
28	N.Monomoy	1 ad.	B.Nikula	
Least Sandpiper:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.1500	B.Nikula+v.o.	
thr.	Scituate	max.200+(7/24)	W.Petersen	
White-rumped Sandpiper:				
1,6,20	N.Monomoy	1, 2, 1	B.Nikula	
19,27	P.I., E.Boston	3, 1	R.Stymeist#, S.Zendeh	
Pectoral Sandpiper:				
4,21	P.I.	1, 2	R.Forster, BBC(S.Thomas)	
16-31	N.Monomoy	max.3(7/31)	B.Nikula+v.o.	
21	Halifax	6	W.Petersen	
Dunlin:				
thr;1,6	Scituate; N.Monomoy	1; 2, 3	W.Petersen; B.Nikula	
Stilt Sandpiper:				
12,19-26	N.Monomoy, P.I.	6, max.22(7/19)	B.Nikula, R.Stymeist+v.o.	
Ruff (details):				
20	E.Boston	1 f.	S.Zendeh	
Short-billed Dowitcher:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.2000(7/20)	B.Nikula+v.o.	
13-26	P.I.	max.400(7/26)	v.o.	
8-30	S.Dartmouth	max.20(7/15)	LCES(R.Marshall)	
Long-billed Dowitcher:				
19	P.I.	3	C.Floyd#	
Common Snipe:				
21	Halifax	5	W.Petersen	
Wilson's Phalarope:				
4,21	P.I.	1, 2	M.Lynch#, BBC(S.Thomas)	
12,20	N.Monomoy	1, 1	B.Nikula	
Red-necked Phalarope:				
27	Stellwagen	2	BBC(H.D'Entremont)	

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JULY 1986
Parasitic Jaeger:				
22,23	Marion	1, 2	P.Hallowell	
Laughing Gull:				
27	Lynn	9	BBC(H.D'Entremont)	
Little Gull:				
21	Ipswich, P.I.	1 imm.; 1 imm.	J.Berry, BBC(S.Thomas)	
Gull-billed Tern:				
10,12	N.Monomoy	1 ad.	J.Barton, A.Bennett	
Royal Tern:				
4-23,14	N.Monomoy, Chatham	1, 1	R.Humphrey#	
15,26	Nant., P.I	1, 1	N.Jenks-Jay, BBC(G.d'Entremont)	
27	Chatham	1	S.Kellogg	
Sandwich Tern:				
1,23	N.Monomoy	1, 1 ad.	B.Nikula, J.Barton	
Common Tern:				
thr.	E.Boston	max.3(7/13)	J.Cumming+v.o.	
thr.	S.Dartmouth	max.8	LCES(R.Marshall)	
23	Nantucket	30	N.Jenks-Jay	
Arctic Tern:				
thr.	N.Monomoy	max.150 imm.	B.Nikula+v.o.	
16	Nantucket	1 ad.	N.Jenks-Jay	
Forster's Tern:				
15,16	N.Monomoy	1, 1 br.pl.	B.Nikula	
Least Tern:				
thr.	S.Dartmouth	max.13(7/30)	LCES(R.Marshall)	
3,20	Scituate, P.I.	150, 62	W.Petersen, K.Griffis#	
20	Winthrop	7 ad.+3 yg.	J.Cumming	
Black Tern:				
thr.,15,21	N.Monomoy, Nant., S.Mon.	max.9(7/10), 1, 2	v.o., N.Jenks-Jay, R.Humphrey#	
Black Skimmer:				
thr.	N.Monomoy, Orleans	3 nesting pr., pr.nesting	v.o., P.Trull	
19,20	P.I.	1, 1	E.Nielsen#, K.Griffis#	

CUCKOOS THROUGH FINCHES

Cuckoo numbers continued low this summer. A Burrowing Owl was seen in Edgartown on the Vineyard on July 16 (see "To Speak of Many Things. . ." elsewhere in this issue for details), and a pair of Red-headed Woodpeckers nested in the SUASCO area of Westboro. The Fish Crows at both Wareham and Scituate were observed behaving in a manner suggesting possible breeding. Bluebirds continued at the Miles Standish State Forest and in Milford in numbers about the same as June. Sparrow reports of note included Vesper at Miles Standish State Forest, and Grasshopper and good numbers of both Sharp-tailed and Seaside at Allens Pond in South Dartmouth. A very few migrants were noted towards the end of the month and included pewee at Annisquam on July 25 and a Worm-eating Warbler seen briefly in Hopkinton on July 31. L.E.T.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo:			
5	Annisquam	1	H.Wiggin
Eastern Screech-Owl:			
18,31	Holliston, Ipswich	1, 1	R.Hildreth, J.Berry
Burrowing Owl (Details elsewhere in this issue):			
16-thr.	M.V.	1	P.Vickery
Whip-poor-will:			
7	Newburyport vicinity	3	BBC(M.Barnett)
Red-headed Woodpecker:			
21	Westboro(SUASCO)	pr. nesting	B.Blodget
Eastern Wood-Pewee:			
12,25	Plymouth, Annisquam	4, 2	SSBC(A.Leggett), H.Wiggin
Willow Flycatcher:			
4,6-19	Lancaster, GMNWR	2, max.5	S.Carroll#, v.o.
Eastern Kingbird:			
thr.,4	P.I., Milford	max.20(7/26), 9	v.o., R.Hildreth
Tree Swallow:			
15-31	S.Dartmouth	max.101(7/15)	LCES(R.Marshall)
Bank Swallow:			
4,12	Lancaster, GMNWR	8, 10	M.Lynch#
Cliff Swallow:			
19	Newbury, Rowley	2,7	R.Stymeist#
Purple Martin:			
7	P.I.	24	BBC(M.Barnett)
Eurasian Jackdaw:			
thr.	Nantucket	1	E.Andrews#

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
JULY 1986			
Fish Crow:			
9,15	Wareham, Scituate	2, 2+	B.Sorrie
21,26	Wilmington, S.Dartmouth	2, 1	B.Sorrie, LCES(R.Maker)
Red-breasted Nuthatch:			
15	Millis	1	R.Forster
Carolina Wren:			
thr., 10	Whitman, S.Dartmouth	1-2, 3	W.Petersen, LCES(R.Maker)
21,26	Annisquam, Holliston	1, 1	H.Wiggin, R.Hildreth
House Wren:			
thr.,12	Annisquam, Ipswich	3, 5	H.Wiggin, J.Berry
Marsh Wren:			
4,19	P.I., GMNWR	10+, 20	M.Lynch#, BBC(M.Lynch)
Eastern Bluebird:			
4,12	Milford, Plymouth	1 ad.+ 2 imm., 2	R.Hildreth, SSBC(A.Leggett)
Veery:			
4	S.Natick	5	BBC(E.Taylor)
Hermit Thrush:			
4,12	Dover, Plymouth	3, 10	E.Taylor, SSBC(A.Leggett)
31	Rowley	1	J.Berry
Gray Catbird:			
thr.,12	P.I., Plymouth	max.31, 22	v.o., SSBC(A.Leggett)
Northern Mockingbird:			
12,13	Plymouth, S.Dartmouth	11, 14	SSBC(A.Leggett), LCES(R.Maker)
Brown Thrasher:			
12,19	Plymouth, P.I.	8, 11	SSBC(A.Leggett), R.Stymeist#
Yellow-throated Vireo:			
4	Lancaster	1	S.Carroll#
Yellow-rumped Warbler:			
23	Wenham	1	W.Petersen
Black-throated Green Warbler:			
12	Ipswich	3 m.	J.Berry
Pine Warbler:			
12	GMNWR, Plymouth	3, 7	M.Lynch#, SSBC(A.Leggett)
Prairie Warbler:			
4,12	Milford, Plymouth	3, 16	R.Hildreth, SSBC(A.Leggett)
Black-and-white Warbler:			
12	Ipswich	2	J.Berry
Worm-eating Warbler:			
31	Hopkinton	1	G.Gove
Ovenbird:			
12	Ipswich	2	J.Berry
Northern Waterthrush:			
4	Holliston	5	R.Hildreth
Common Yellowthroat:			
12,19	Plymouth, P.I.	21, 12	SSBC(A.Leggett), R.Stymeist#
Rufous-sided Towhee:			
12,19	Plymouth, P.I.	70, 24	SSBC(A.Leggett), R.Stymeist#
Chipping Sparrow:			
12	Plymouth, Ipswich	26, 9	SSBC(A.Leggett), J.Berry
Vesper Sparrow:			
12	Plymouth	7	SSBC(A.Leggett)
Field Sparrow:			
4,12	Milford, Plymouth	6, 8	R.Hildreth,SSBC(A.Leggett)
Grasshopper Sparrow:			
thr.	S.Dartmouth	max.4(7/30)	LCES(R.Marshall)
Sharp-tailed Sparrow:			
thr.	S.Dartmouth, P.I.	max.27(7/8), max.14(7/26)	LCES(R.Marshall), v.o.
3,20	Duxbury Beach, E.Boston	3, 1	W.Petersen#, S.Zendeh
Seaside Sparrow:			
thr.,4	S.Dartmouth, P.I.	max.7(7/8), 1	LCES(R.Marshall), M.Lynch#
Song Sparrow:			
12,19	Plymouth, P.I.	40, 38	SSBC(A.Leggett), J.Heywood#
Eastern Meadowlark:			
4	Newbury	7	M.Lynch#
Bobolink:			
19,26	Wayland, Newbypt	12, 5	R.Forster, S.Carroll#
Orchard Oriole:			
1,6-21	Chatham, Woburn	1, pr.+yg.	B.Nikula, C.Floyd
Purple Finch:			
5,26	Annisquam, P.I.	2, 6	H.Wiggin, M.Lynch#
House Finch:			
19	Framingham	165	R.Forster

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ad.	adult
b.	banded
br.	breeding
dk.	dark (phase)
f.	female
imm.	immature
ind.	individuals
loc.	location
lt.	light (phase)
m.	male
max.	maximum
migr.	migrating
ph.	photographed
pl.	plumage
pr.	pair
S	summer (1S = first summer)
thr.	throughout
v.o.	various observers
W	winter (2W = second winter)
w/	with
yg.	young
#	additional observers
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester
Buzz.	Buzzards (Bay)
C.	Cape as in Cape Cod
Cambr. Res.	Cambridge Reservoir
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham
F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham
F.M.	Fowl Meadow, Milton
H.P.	Halibut Point, Rockport
I.	Island
M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
Mt.A.	Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
Nant.	Nantucket
Newbypt	Newburyport
P.I.	Plum Island
P'town	Provincetown
R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
Stellw.	Stellwagen (Bank)
BBC	Brookline Bird Club
BOEM	Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts
CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club
DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
DWWS	Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary
FCBC	Felix Cutler Bird Club
GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
LCES	Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies
MAS	Massachusetts Audubon Society
MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
NEHW	New England Hawk Watch
ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
PRNWR	Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
SRV	Sudbury River Valley
SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

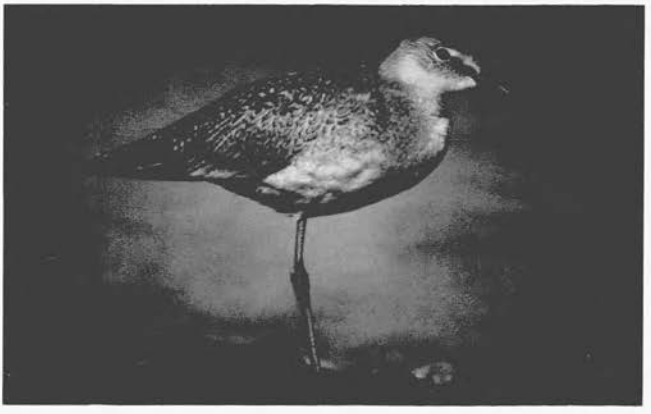
At a Glance . . .

August 1986

The shorebird pictured in the August issue should not pose a serious identification problem for the thoughtful observer. The *very long legs*, especially the tibia (the bone above the "knee"), and the *long, stout bill* immediately remove as possibilities all of the "peep" sandpipers and virtually everything smaller than the Pectoral Sandpiper. The *pale eye-ring and short, whitish supercilium (eye-stripe)* in front of the eye give the bird a spectacled appearance. This combination of features suggests that the bird is either a *Tringa* (yellowlegs or Solitary Sandpiper) or a Willet. The heavy body, combined with what appears to be a relatively short neck, argues against Lesser Yellowlegs and Solitary Sandpiper, both of which are delicate and streamlined species and which are finely spotted with white on the back.

Thus, the choice becomes one between Greater Yellowlegs and Willet. The absence of heavy, dark chevrons and bars on the sides and flanks, along with a lack of heavy stripes on the upper breast, serve to discount a Greater Yellowlegs in alternate (breeding) plumage. Likewise, a juvenile Greater Yellowlegs would display white dorsal spotting and a distinct breast-band of fine dusky stripes. Ultimately, however, it is the combination of the *straight, stout bill* and the unique *marbled pattern of the upperparts*, created by the *buff feather fringes and dusky submarginal lines on each feather*, that set the mystery bird apart as a Willet *(Catoptrophorus semipalmatus)* in juvenal plumage.

For those who might question why the bird could not be a juvenile Red Knot, the leg length alone should be the key, along with the lack of a strongly scaled appearance on the back and wing coverts. The juvenile Willet in the picture was photographed in early August at Lubec, Maine.



Willet *Photo by Wayne R. Petersen*

At a Glance . . .

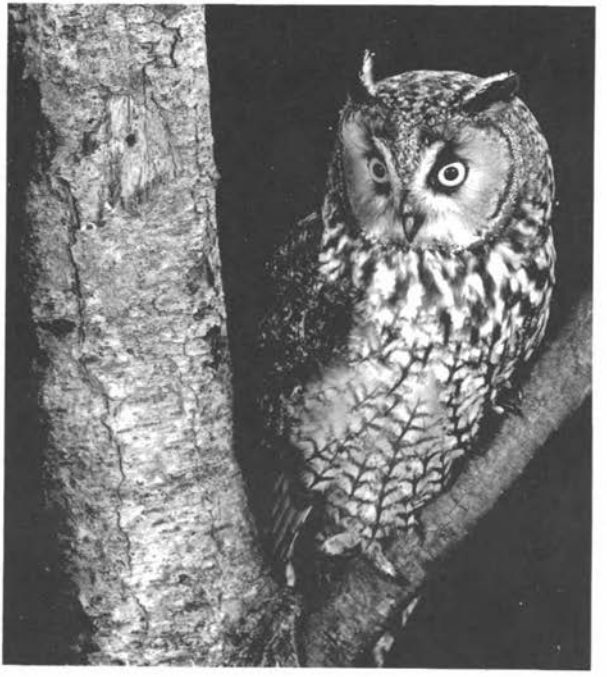
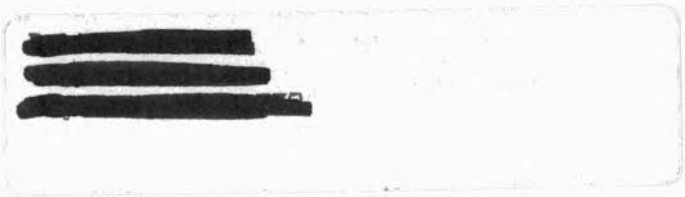


Photo by Leslie A. Campbell *Courtesy of MAS*

Can you identify this bird? Identification will be discussed in next issue's *At a Glance*.

BIRD OBSERVER (USPS 369-850)
462 TRAPELO ROAD
BELMONT, MA 02178

SECOND CLASS
POSTAGE PAID
AT
BOSTON, MA



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