

# Bird Observer

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VOLUME 31, NUMBER 4

AUGUST 2003



# HOT BIRDS

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Perhaps the most exciting Hot Bird of the summer (so far) was a **White-winged Tern** that was discovered on a beach in Wells, ME. This handsome bird, in alternate plumage, was captured photographically by Steve Mirick on June 15, 2003.

At the same location, at the same time, a **Royal Tern** was the icing on the cake for those who managed to make it to Wells on that day.

Chad Dorsey took the photographs below of both terns on June 15.



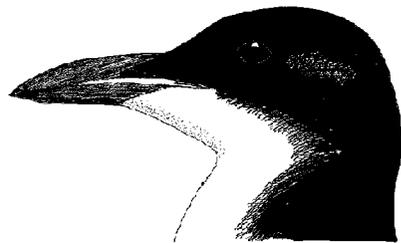
This **Red-necked Stint** was photographed by Blair Nikula on South Beach, Chatham, on July 8, 2003. These birds are becoming annual on South Beach. Take a look at the higher magnification view of this bird's right foot (below). It sure isn't a Semipalm!



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COMMON (LEFT) AND THICK-BILLED MURRES BY GEORGE C. WEST



# Bird Observer

A bimonthly journal — to enhance understanding, observation, and enjoyment of birds  
**VOL. 31, NO. 4 AUGUST 2003**

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# The Phalarope Conspiracy

As a new member of the Nuttall Ornithological Club, I was given Ted Davis's history of the Club from 1873-1986. I had attended monthly meetings as a guest of the Bird Observer staff and enjoyed the mix of members – men and women, young and old – and general atmosphere of congeniality. So I was surprised to read in Ted's engaging history about the controversy around a motion to change the bylaws in the early 1970s (substituting "persons" for "men" interested in ornithology) to allow women to join the club. The motion was tabled, postponing the decision on admitting women into the second century of the Club's history and allowing its centennial "to proceed peacefully, since several members had threatened to resign if women were admitted."

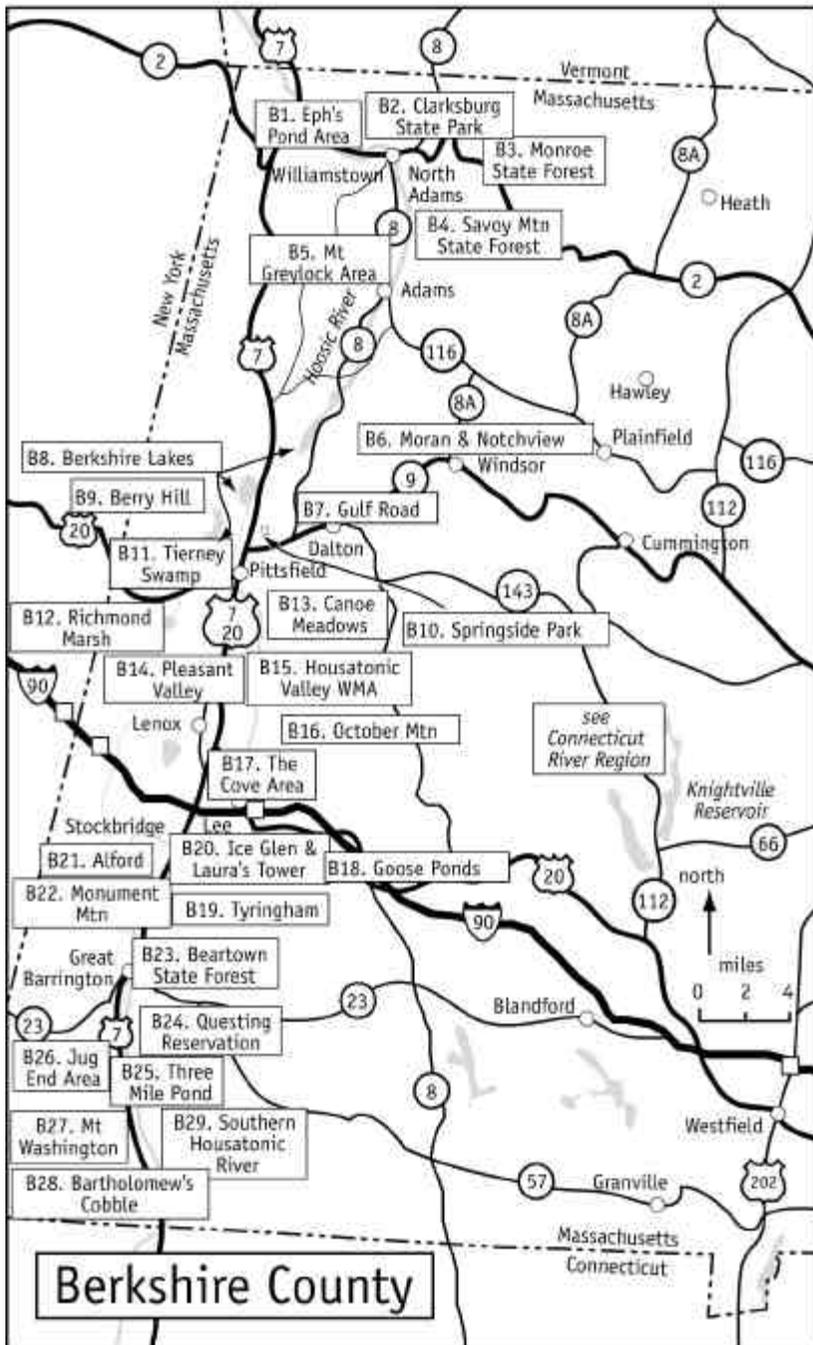
Ted Davis writes that it seemed "odd that the admission of women to the Club would cause such a furor, considering that the Club was well into the latter half of the twentieth century." This "Phalarope conspiracy" he notes, was well underway however, and Kathleen Anderson, then Director of the Manomet Bird Observatory, was the first woman to present a program, and the first official woman guest at a regular meeting. Betty Anderson became the thin edge of the wedge, followed by Deborah Howard, Margaret Argue, Ruth Emery, and others – "the flood gates were open and a tide of women guests was pouring through." In November 1973 Deborah Howard was proposed for membership, and several male members never again attended a meeting, thirty-six years after Margaret Morse Nice became president of the Wilson Ornithological Society (*Bird Observer*, February 2003 p. 18).

I asked Betty Anderson and Deb Howard to write about their experience as birders, not necessarily as "phalaropes." There were rumors of legal action against Harvard University for supporting a sexist organization, and an anonymous phone call to the *Christian Science Monitor* suggesting that there might be militant actions around the centennial. "These allegations," Ted notes, "remain obscure since none of them appear in the Club records, and it is remarkable how many people have somehow forgotten, or never knew." Or, as Betty Anderson wrote in her note to me, times change.

Brooke Stevens



WILSON'S PHALAROPE (FEMALE) BY GEORGE C. WEST



# Bird Finding in Northern Berkshire County

**Editor's Note.** *In this issue, Bird Observer reprints several brief site guides from the recently published Bird Finding Guide to Western Massachusetts (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Extension, 2003). This 334-page guide provides a long-desired companion to the 1994 Birder's Guide to Eastern Massachusetts. The new guide was edited by Jan Ortiz, David A. Spector, Pete Westover, and Mary Alice Wilson; illustrations are by Andrew Finch Magee. The entire guide will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of Bird Observer. Meanwhile, with the publisher's permission, we are reprinting the first five chapters of the guide, covering the five most northern sites described for Berkshire County. The first, on the Eph's Pond area, is by Leslie Reed-Evans, while the other four, covering Clarksburg State Park, Monroe State Forest, Savoy Mountain State Forest, and the Mount Greylock area, were written by Ronald Rancatti.*

*Unlike the expanded versions of two other sites (High Ridge Wildlife Management Area and Northfield; see Bird Observer 29:6, December 2001, and 30:1, February 2002, respectively) published in advance of the book, these five site guides are reprinted verbatim, and offer a tempting look at that part of Massachusetts most resembling northern New England in its flora and fauna.*

The book may be ordered online at <<http://www.umassextension.org>>, or by calling 413-545-2717 (877-UMASSXT in Massachusetts).

## B1. Eph's Pond Area, Williamstown

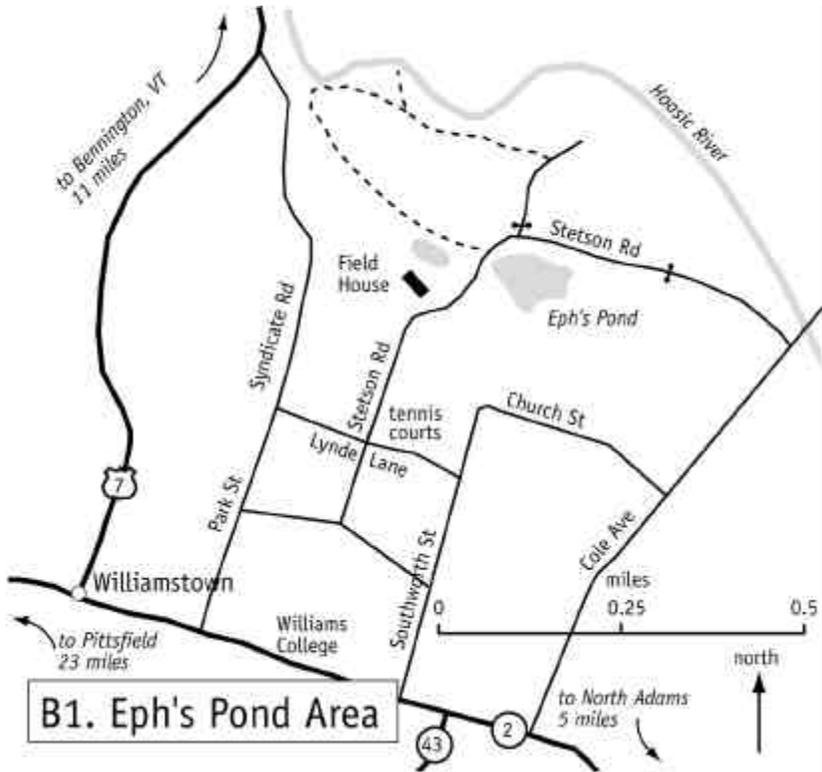
### Eph's Pond

It is amazing that amidst the comings and goings of hundreds of students it is possible to see a migrant Osprey fishing for goldfish. Backed by an extensive swamp and ringed with snags, Eph's Pond has a surprisingly diverse population in all seasons. The best times for birding are early morning and late afternoon.

From the intersection of Routes 2 and 7 in Williamstown head 0.3 mile east on Route 2 and turn left on Park Street. Head north 0.2 mile to Lynde Lane, turn right, and go one block. At the four-way stop turn left and continue straight past the Williams College field house on the left and downhill to the playing fields. The pond is immediately on the right. Parking is available along the edge of the field.

Bird by walking along the edge of the pond on the drive. There are several places with good views of the pond. Check the shrubby edges as well. Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Black Duck, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, and Common Merganser are seen in early spring. Occasionally American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, and Hooded Merganser also stop here.

Activity around the pond starts in early spring with the return of Swamp Sparrows and other early arrivals. Great Blue Heron and Belted Kingfisher, found along the Hoosic throughout the winter in some years, also visit in early spring.



The Osprey, a spectacular migrant, fishes the ponds and the river, perching in large cottonwoods. Other raptors here include Sharp-shinned, Broad-winged, and Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Eastern Screech-Owl, and Great Horned and Barred Owls. It is not unusual to find piles of feathers dotting the playing fields on early morning walks, evidence of these winged predators.

The pond and pond edge are very active in April. Shorebirds such as Semipalmated Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, and Solitary Sandpiper are spring visitors. American Bittern, Wilson's Snipe, and American Woodcock are sighted occasionally. Virginia Rail has been reported. Green Heron is a warm-weather resident, often flying between the pond and the river. Look for Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Yellow-rumped, and Palm Warblers around the pond.

May is of course the jackpot for species. Watch for Wood Duck on the pond and Tree, Northern Rough-winged, Bank, and Barn Swallows over the pond. Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, and Baltimore Oriole nest in the shrubby perimeter. Killdeer, Eastern Bluebird, and American Robin stalk the field. Hermit and Wood Thrushes, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Indigo Bunting are in the woods. Willow and Least Flycatchers, Carolina and House Wrens, Cedar Waxwing, Black-and-white Warbler, and American Redstart add their songs to the cacophony.

A few shorebirds filter through in August. Three or four Great Blue Herons consider the pond their August home and expend significant energy chasing away the immature Little Blue Herons, Great and Snowy Egrets, and Black-crowned Night-Herons that disperse to fish here. Killdeer, Solitary and Spotted Sandpipers gather on muddy banks if the water is low. Chimney Swifts gather over the pond in great numbers at dusk.

In fall watch for American Black Duck and noisy blackbird flocks. Vireos, thrushes, warblers, and sparrows, including White-throated and White-crowned, and other fruit-eating migrants gorge on fruits of the silky, red-panicked, and red-osier dogwoods, Japanese honeysuckle, and buckthorn. Walk slowly around the pond listening for the rustle of the underbrush as these birds prepare for migration.

Late fall and winter are the times to see the last waterfowl and returning winter residents. Cedar Waxwing flocks inhabit thickets around the pond; check for Bohemian Waxwing among them. Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, and Northern Cardinal are also common here. On the river, Common Mergansers congregate in the swifter areas through winter.

### **Hoosic River**

From Eph's Pond, walk north along the drive to the large gate at the curve. Follow a paved road between the lower football field and the higher playing field until just past the large spruces. Turn left into the woods and follow the track west along the Hoosic River. In spring, look for both nuthatches, Carolina Wren, Black-and-white Warbler, and American Redstart in tangled understory along the path. Approach the lookouts above the river quietly and scan for Wood Duck, American Black Duck, Common Merganser, and, in migration, Osprey. The tall cottonwoods and other floodplain species attract Red-eyed Vireo, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Baltimore Oriole, and a variety of woodpeckers. The trail branches several times; follow the trail to the right to a sand and gravel bar along a curve of the river or continue through the floodplain forest to the bottom of the curve, the best place to look for Red-bellied and Pileated Woodpeckers. A left-hand turn at that point leads across a bridge and through the woods to a cleared sewer easement. The brushy edge here hosts many warblers in migration. Turn left and follow this cleared path back to the playing field and parking area, passing a smaller pond and its associated swamp on your right.

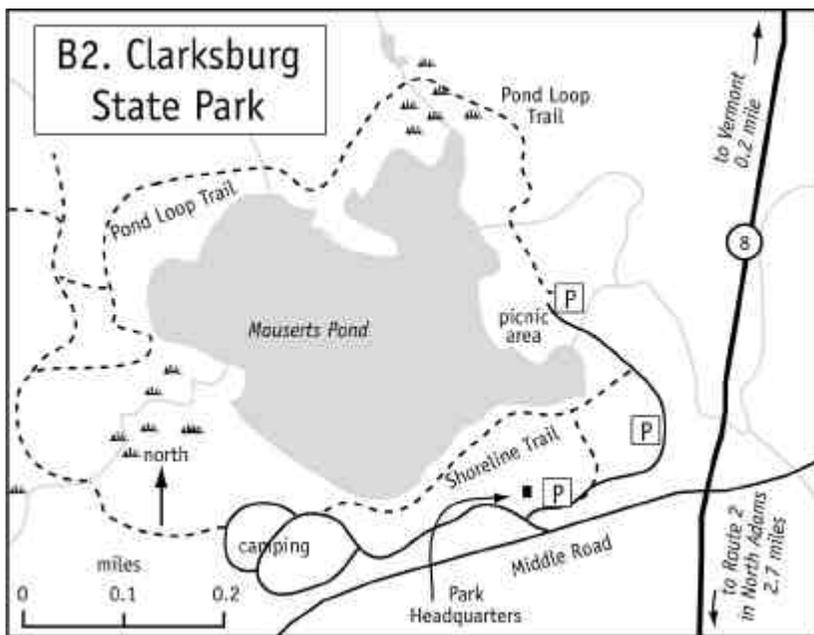
*Leslie Reed-Evans*

## **B2. Clarksburg State Park, Clarksburg**

In North Adams at the intersection of Routes 2 and 8, go north on Route 8. After 3 miles turn left on Middle Road in Clarksburg. The park entrance is 0.2 mile on your right. Park near the headquarters and pick up a trail map.

Birding Clarksburg State Park is best April through October. The walk on the paved park road heading east to the pond through a grove of towering white pines is usually productive. Great Horned Owls breed, and Yellow-rumped and Blackburnian

Warblers are numerous. At the pond scan for waterfowl and Spotted Sandpipers. In spring you may have the whole park and migrating waterfowl, Osprey, and songbirds to yourself. A trail encircles the pond, beginning at the far end of the picnic area. Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Canada Warblers and Northern Waterthrush breed here. Red-shouldered Hawks frequent the marshy inlets, and Pileated Woodpecker is often encountered. This blue-blazed trail can be wet, especially during rainy periods and in spring. Bridges and boardwalks make it more accessible. You can also explore Shoreline Trail linking the camping area and parking lots and trails to the west of the pond loop. Watch in the park for Great Blue Heron, Hooded Merganser, Blue-headed Vireo, Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Purple Finch, and Evening Grosbeak.



### B3. Monroe State Forest, Monroe

In North Adams at the intersection of Routes 2 and 8, go east on Route 2 crossing the top of the Hoosac Range at the Florida town line. After nearly 5 miles from the intersection turn left (north) on Tilda Hill Road at a green sign for Monroe and the Fire Department buildings. Drive roughly 4.2 miles on this road to a Monroe State Forest sign on your right shortly after a small bridge spanning Dunbar Brook. Ample parking is just beyond this sign. North Road is across the road. South Road and the Dunbar Loop are on the same side as the parking lot. Watch in appropriate habitat in this forest for Hooded Merganser, Pileated Woodpecker, and Evening Grosbeak.

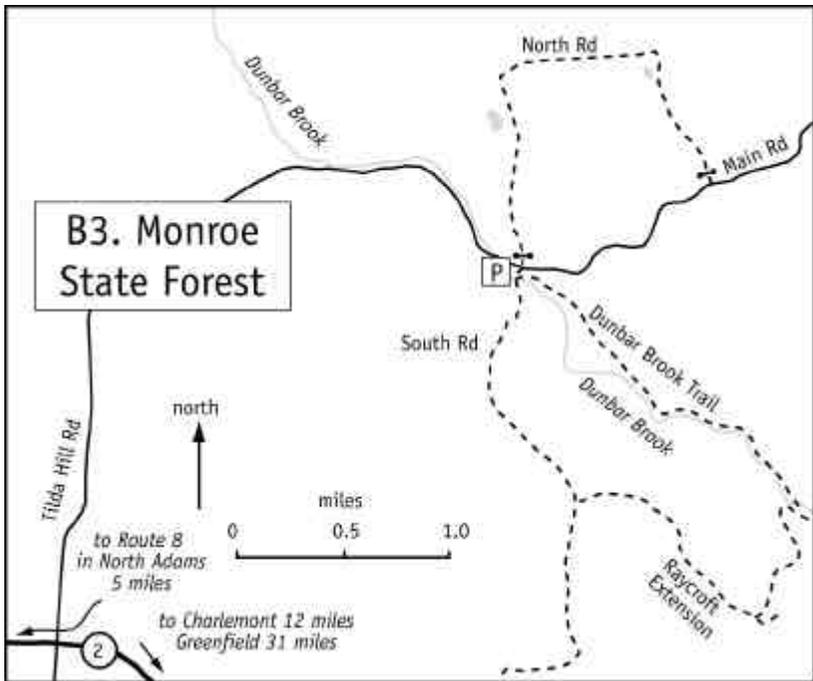
## North Road

The best time to bird this area is May through July. North Road (closed to traffic) passes a metal gate and climbs steadily a short while before becoming an easy level walk. Swainson's Thrush, Hermit Thrush, and upland forest warblers can usually be heard singing from thick hemlock-covered slopes to your left on the lower portion of this road. Winter Wren is also regular here. These species continue as the road becomes more level. To the left a small beaver pond, obscured by vegetation except in the spring, offers excellent opportunities for Red-shouldered Hawk.

The road ascends gradually to a small clearing, an old farm site. Turn sharply right; you will immediately pass another beaver pond on your left with a white pine plantation on your right. Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Goshawk, and Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawks nest between this point and the next metal gate at the other end of this road. Barred and Northern Saw-whet Owls are present here in breeding season. Swainson's Thrushes are expected. Rusty Blackbirds have been observed near the beaver ponds in breeding season, but nesting is not confirmed. The area is remote and the road closed, allowing a quiet birding opportunity.

## Dunbar Loop

This hike, nearly 4 miles long, has some steep ascents and descents. Numerous Swainson's Thrushes are expected, especially in the first half of July, when counts have reached 20 individuals. Start early to enjoy their beautiful song, Swainson's



Thrush regularly sings until late morning in early July. From the moment you leave your vehicle be alert for their song. Walk down South Road toward the bridge over Dunbar Brook around the first bend. The rushing stream almost drowns out all bird song, but the road soon swings right and climbs away from the noisy stream.

Continue on South Road to Raycroft Extension Road, your first left. Swainson's Thrushes and numerous Blackburnian Warblers are found along this road. Follow the road about one mile to a footpath on your left, the third leg of this trip. It descends gradually at first but becomes increasingly steep. A three-sided shelter along this trail is a good spot to rest. From here to the bottom of the ravine the going is steep. Winter Wren is often found here, especially around toppled trees on the slope. Swainson's Thrush, also fond of hemlock ravines, is again found here. Cross Dunbar Brook over a footbridge and turn left.

You are now on the hike's fourth and final portion; Dunbar Brook keeps you company for awhile. Golden-crowned Kinglets can be present but are sometimes difficult to hear next to the stream. The trail ascends gradually, following the stream, but near the end it veers away and climbs the side of the ravine, where you usually encounter more Swainson's Thrushes. After the steep climb the trail levels out, and you are soon back on South Road near the bridge you crossed at the beginning. Turn right; your vehicle is only yards away.

## B4. Savoy Mountain State Forest, Florida, North Adams, and Savoy

### **Spruce Hill**

From Monroe State Forest (see previous account), return to Route 2, turn right (west), go 1 mile and turn left (south) on Central Shaft Road.

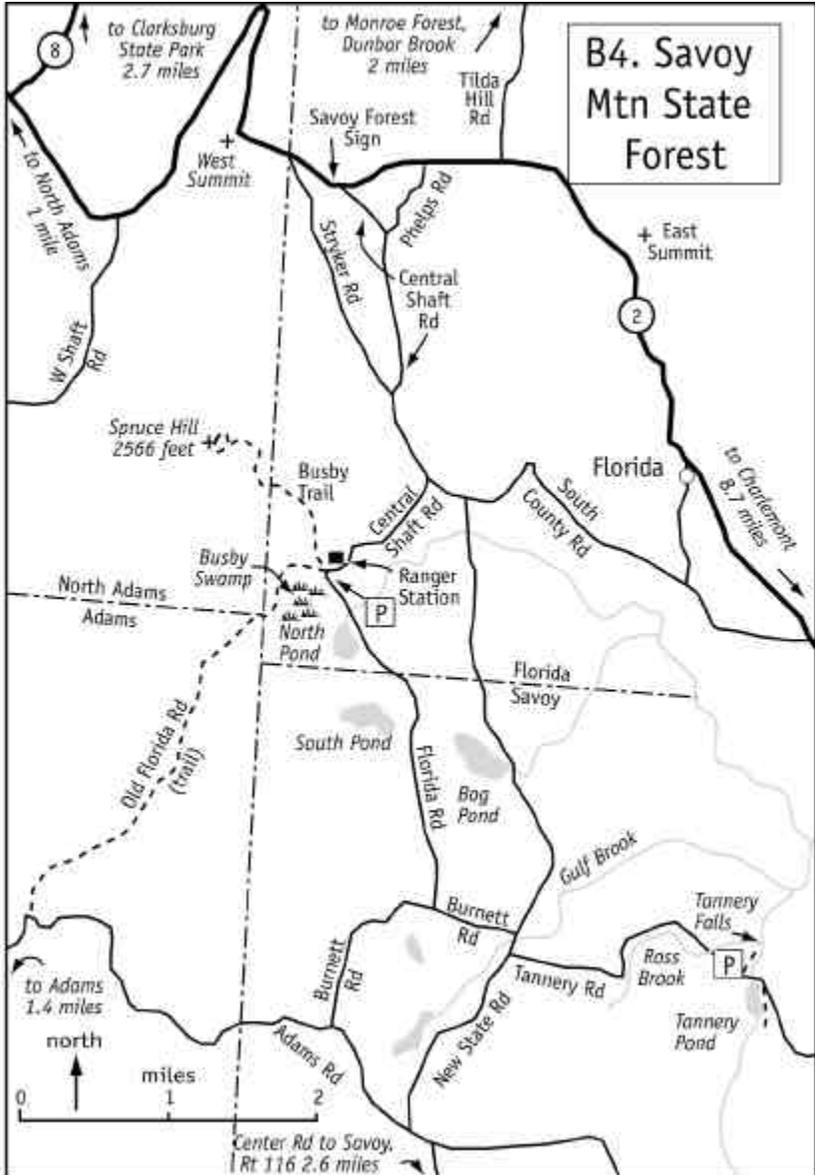
Alternatively, from the intersection of Route 8 north and Route 2 in North Adams, head east on Route 2, up through the hairpin turn, over the Hoosac Range into the town of Florida. After 4.2 miles past Route 8, just after a Savoy Mountain State Forest sign, turn right on Central Shaft Road.

Once on Central Shaft Road go 0.3 mile, bear right and go an additional 1.0 mile. Turn sharply right to stay on Central Shaft Road and continue another 1.5 miles. Park on the wide shoulder just after the Savoy Mountain State Forest Ranger Station on the right.

Before hiking to the summit, walk ahead a hundred feet from your vehicle to view Busby Swamp, where you may see moose. Listen for Alder Flycatcher and Swamp Sparrow in spring and summer. Wetlands such as these are favored areas for Barred and Northern Saw-whet Owls.

Return to your vehicle, walk to the woods road, and quickly take the first road to the right. There are signs for the blue-blazed Busby Trail to the Spruce Hill hawk lookout. It is 1.2 miles to the summit.

You almost immediately cross a power line, where Chestnut-sided Warbler is found. A second power line is good for Chestnut-sided Warbler and Eastern Towhee. The trail gradually ascends through several Norway spruce plantations. Watch for nesting Sharp-shinned Hawk. These spruce plantations are dependable for Blue-headed Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, and Blackburnian Warblers.



Hardwood forest takes over for the remainder of the journey. After the cellar hole of an old farm house the trail swings left and climbs steeply toward the summit. Stop and rest where an old stone wall straddles the trail. Hermit Thrush and Black-throated Blue and Canada Warblers are found here.

After this wonderful resting stop you climb steadily again. A loop hike is recommended from a fork in the trail where a steep ledge looms before you. Turn left; the trail soon scrambles up the ledge face. Beyond the top of the ledge the trail continues steadily uphill. After climbing the last small piece of ledge just below the summit you are treated to a view that makes your hard work worth it. Mount Greylock commands the Hoosic Valley yawning before you. But the birds are the main reason for being here so watch for Turkey Vultures and Common Ravens floating by. In fall, visit the full-time hawkwatch site on the north side of the summit, reached by following the blue-blazed trail a few hundred feet through stunted hardwoods to a large clearing.

In early September expect to see migrating Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, American Kestrel, and a few early Broad-winged Hawks. Usually by September 10 the number of migrating Broad-winged Hawks swells dramatically, and peak numbers occur anytime between this date and September 24. High counts of Osprey also occur at this time. Close up views of passing hawks are common. By late September, usually after the Broad-winged Hawks depart, adult Sharp-shinned Hawks take over as the most common raptor. This is also an excellent time for Peregrine Falcon and good numbers of Osprey and American Kestrels. A few Northern Harriers, Cooper's Hawks, and Merlins add to the excitement. By mid-October the deciduous foliage disappears, and Red-tailed Hawk is the most common migrating raptor. From mid-October into November, sighting a magnificent Golden Eagle is possible. If you have never seen a Golden Eagle, you'll never forget your first. Other late-season migrants include Osprey, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, and American Kestrel.

Other migrants seen in good numbers include Snow Geese (October), flocks of Blue Jays and American Robins, and numerous Yellow-rumped Warblers. October brings occasional Northern Shrikes, Snow Buntings, Evening Grosbeaks, and other winter finches.

To return to the main trail, head north through the hawkwatch site clearing and follow the blue-blazed trail. Descend a stone staircase just before the terminus of the summit loop. The trail back to your vehicle is on the left.

### **Tannery Pond and Tannery Falls, Savoy**

This is a heavily forested area with the possibility of raptors and Pileated Woodpecker along the roads and trails. Species found here include Wood Duck, American Woodcock, Barred and Northern Saw-whet Owls, Alder Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, Common Raven, Brown Creeper, Black-throated Blue and Canada Warblers, Northern Waterthrush, and Purple Finch. The recommended time to visit is May through July. Tannery Road is not open in winter.

Continue south on Central Shaft Road (which becomes Florida Road), go left on Burnett Road, and turn sharply right over a small bridge on New State Road (about 2.5 miles from the ranger station). After about 0.2 mile turn left on Tannery Road and drive 2 miles to the parking lot at the trailhead to Tannery Falls.

The trail to the bottom of Tannery Falls and its ravine travels through heavy hemlock growth with Winter Wren, Swainson's Thrush, Black-throated Green and Blackburnian Warblers, and Louisiana Waterthrush. Return to the parking lot and walk along Tannery Road just beyond. Turn left; Tannery Pond is soon on your right. Examine the pond for waterfowl and an occasional Great Blue Heron. To reach the marshy end of Tannery Pond walk beyond the pond. Turn right on an old woods road amidst a white pine grove, and walk past thick hemlocks on your right. Listen for Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Blackburnian Warbler, and Evening Grosbeak.

The forest thins after a few minutes of walking, and you gain an excellent view of the marshy end of the pond. Be alert for rare nesters such as Olive-sided Flycatcher, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Rusty Blackbird. These upland marshy areas are the favorite habitat of these three species.

Return to Tannery Road, walk past the parking lot, and cross the Ross Brook bridge. Continue walking on Tannery Road a short distance to a Norway spruce plantation on your left and hemlocks on your right, a dependable location to hear Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's Thrush, and Magnolia and Blackburnian Warblers. Norway spruce plantations near openings such as Tannery Road are excellent nesting locations for Sharp-shinned Hawk. Noisy fledglings are usually found from mid-July into early August.

## B5. Mount Greylock Area, Adams, Cheshire, New Ashford, North Adams, and Williamstown

Mount Greylock is the highest spot in Massachusetts. The mountain and surrounding highlands host many northern species, and many of the boreal areas, including the summit, are readily accessible by car when the road is open (late spring through late fall). There are many options for hikes of various levels of difficulty. If you are planning to hike, carry one of the many excellent trail maps and guides available at the Visitors Center, park kiosks, and area bookstores.

From the north (Notch Road): From downtown North Adams head west on Route 2 over the overpass; after 1.2 miles turn left on Notch Road. Proceed on Notch Road to its junction with Pattison Road. Turn left and continue on Notch Road until small fields appear on both sides. Bear sharply right just beyond. You will pass a large Mount Greylock State Reservation sign on your right and go through a gate (closed in winter). Continue on Notch Road as it climbs the northern slope of Mount Williams. The Appalachian Trail (AT) crosses at roughly 6 miles. Continue to the junction of

Notch Road and Rockwell Road at nearly 10 miles from North Adams. The Gould Trail starts at the parking lot directly across from the stop sign.

From the south (Rockwell Road): Driving north from Pittsfield on Route 7, watch in Lanesborough for the brown Mount Greylock State Reservation sign. Turn northeast on North Main Street. Drive nearly 0.7 mile and bear sharply right on Greylock/Quarry Road. Pass the Mount Greylock State Reservation maintenance building on your left. The road becomes Rockwell Road at this point and climbs past open fields to the Mount Greylock Visitors Center on your right. The road is steep past the metal gate (closed in winter) but soon levels off. From the Visitors Center it is 7.4 miles to the junction with Notch Road.

### **Notch Road, Adams**

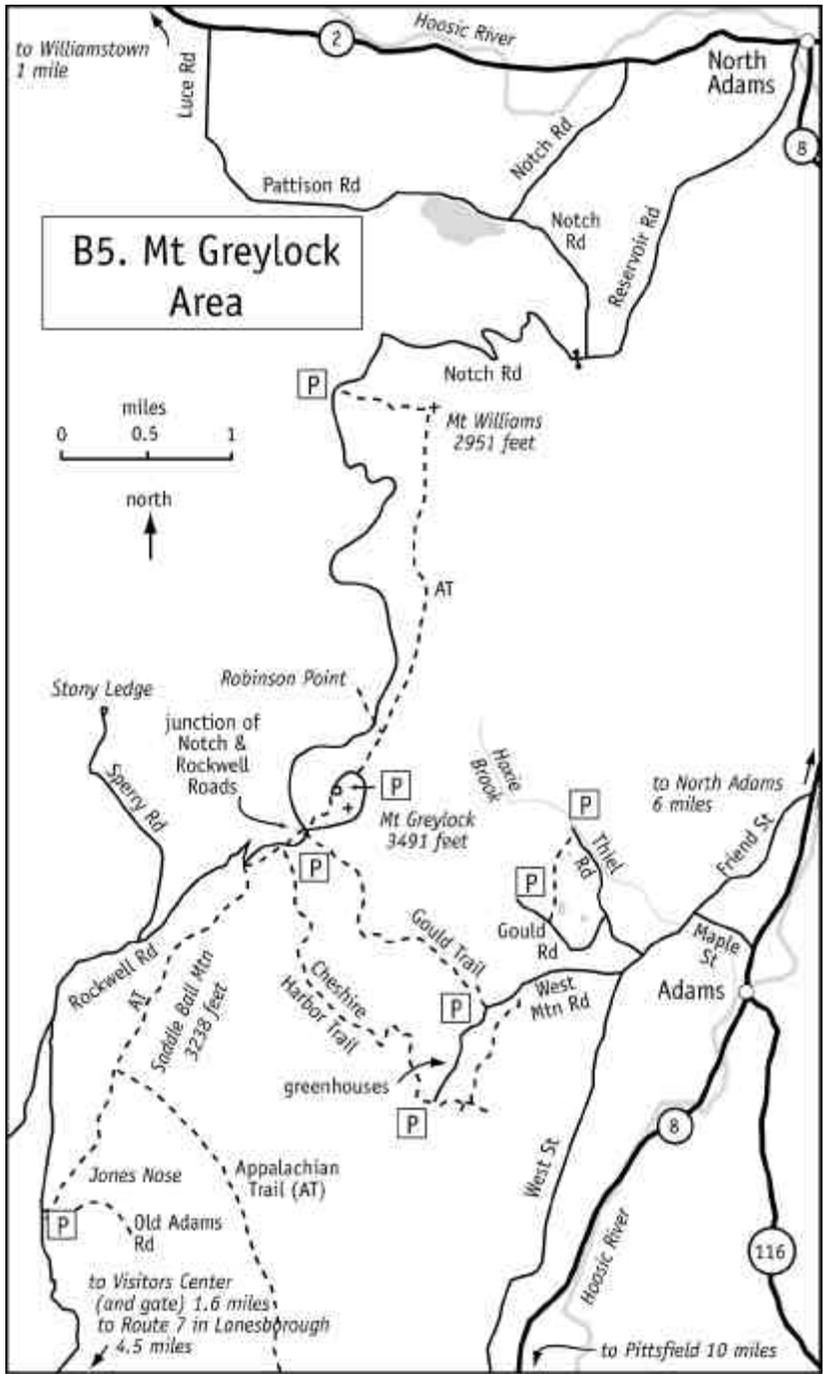
Because this trip, which begins at the parking lot at the junction of Notch and Rockwell Roads, includes walking on Notch Road, it is best to begin at dawn when traffic is not a problem and bird song is at greatest intensity. Listen for Swainson's Thrush and Yellow-rumped and Blackpoll Warblers as soon as you leave your car. You may be surprised at the number of American Robins. Walk across Rockwell Road and head north on Notch Road. Thick spruce and balsam fir are on both sides of the road. After one mile the Robinson's Point trailhead on your left has been a dependable spot for Blackpoll Warbler. Continue a little farther to the sign marking the boundary of the War Memorial Park.

You can return to your vehicle or continue on a loop hike. For the loop hike take a spur trail on the opposite (east) side of the road a short distance south of the Robinson's Point trailhead. This spur leads quickly to the Appalachian Trail (AT). Turn right on the AT and ascend steadily through an excellent area for Winter Wren, Canada Warbler, Eastern Towhee, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, and Indigo Bunting. The trail continues to Rockwell Road where the trail on the left heads downhill toward your vehicle less than half a mile away. Along the way you have a commanding view of the Hoosic Valley. Watch for Chimney Swifts and swallows, especially in late summer.

You may also encounter Barred and Northern Saw-whet Owls, Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes, Magnolia Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, Purple Finch, Evening Grosbeak, and, in some years, Red Crossbill and Pine Siskin.

### **Mount Greylock Summit, Adams**

From the junction of Notch and Rockwell Roads, continue on the paved road about 0.8 mile to the parking area at the top. The summit, with its spruce-fir woods and large grassy openings, has a rich history of attracting rare nesters, migrants, and species unexpected at high altitude. Watch for Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's Thrush, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped and Blackpoll Warblers, White-throated Sparrow, and Purple Finch. Red Crossbills and Pine Siskins can occur at any time or not at all. Keep an eye to the sky for



migrating raptors from late August through October. October is a good time to find Snow Buntings. Unusual sightings have included an Eastern Screech-Owl in June 1948, a Black-backed Woodpecker back in February 1928, a Northern Wheatear in October 1994, and 20 Lapland Longspurs in October 1985.

Bicknell's Thrush nested near the Mount Greylock summit up to about 30 years ago. It still nests on southern Vermont's higher peaks, so keep this species in mind at the summit, especially late May through mid-July.

### **Saddle Ball Mountain on the Appalachian Trail (AT), New Ashford**

From the junction of Notch and Rockwell Roads, follow Rockwell Road downhill (south) 0.5 mile to the large AT sign. A short dirt road to the left of this sign leads to the parking lot. Walk back to the paved road, pass the sign, and enter the forest on the AT to the right of the sign. If you have two vehicles, leaving the second at the Jones Nose parking lot (2.8 miles farther south on Rockwell Road) eliminates the need to retrace your steps; the return hike, however, is often productive.

Mid-May through mid-August is the best time to visit Saddle Ball Mountain, its birds, and its forest of spruce-fir and northern hardwoods. After you enter the forest the trail ascends, crosses a small knoll, and then descends to a boardwalk across a sphagnum bog. Listen for Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Common Raven, Winter Wren, Swainson's Thrush, and Nashville and Canada Warblers. Barred and Northern Saw-whet Owls occur here and at other locations on this ridge. The trail then ascends a series of small summits and passes other sphagnum bogs. Sharp-shinned Hawks have nested at one of these bogs. A few Blackpoll Warblers are usually found along this trail near bogs and small summits. A good day along Saddle Ball could yield four to six Blackpoll Warblers. One or two Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, closely associated with spruce bogs, are usually found each year. Mourning Warblers are found in recently disturbed, scrubby areas. One such place is on Old Adams Road which leads east from the parking lot below Jones Nose.

Nomadic Red Crossbills and Pine Siskins add excitement those years they occur. Common Raven, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Swainson's Thrush can be heard almost anywhere along the ridge top. Swainson's Thrush occurs here in small numbers, so if you encounter one, take time to savor his beautiful song. Listen throughout this area for Red-breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush, Magnolia and Yellow-rumped Warblers, White-throated Sparrow, Purple Finch, and Evening Grosbeak.

### **Greylock Glen (Gould/Thiel Roads Property), Adams**

From the intersection of Routes 8 and 116 in the center of Adams, go north about 0.2 mile on Route 8, and turn left (west) on Maple Street (note large statue of President McKinley at the intersection). After about 0.2 mile turn left (south) on West Street where Maple ends. After 0.4 mile turn right (west) on Gould Road; apple orchards will be on both sides of the road. After 0.3 mile go left on Gould Road. Parking is available a few hundred feet farther on the right.

This area's many habitats, including mixed forest, spruce lots, weedy fields, and small wetlands, provide good birding year-round. This area is popular with town residents; you probably will not find yourself alone, although this 1000+ acre State Department of Environmental Management tract has plenty of elbow room. An ideal way to bird the center portion of this area is to use the paved roads that nearly circle it. You can also enter the center of this open area by various trails. Pick up a free map at the Greylock Glen regulations sign. It is hard to get lost if you use Mount Greylock's imposing mass to the west as a reference point.

From October to April, look for Red-tailed and the scarcer Rough-legged Hawks, American Kestrel, Northern Shrike, and Snow Bunting. Common Ravens often soar overhead or over Greylock's slopes. Cedar Waxwings frequent this area; their flocks should be checked carefully for Bohemian Waxwing. Some hardy Eastern Bluebirds and American Robins are seen here in mild winters. Quietly inspect the spruce lots for whitewash or pellets, evidence of recent owl roosting. With luck you may find the owl itself. Stay alert for American Crows mobbing Great Horned or Barred Owls and for Black-capped Chickadees mobbing Eastern Screech-Owls or Northern Saw-whet Owls.

In fall and spring, this site yields Northern Harrier and other migrating hawks looking for a meal. Northern songbirds such as Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Palm Warbler, and, less commonly, Wilson's Warbler and Fox Sparrow, frequent this area in migration. A 1995 breeding bird survey of this tract located 78 species. A Mourning Warbler was a rare find. Louisiana Waterthrushes are found along Hoxie Brook. Other species include American Woodcock, Sharp-shinned, Broad-winged and Red-tailed Hawks, and American Kestrel. Black-billed Cuckoo, Alder and Willow Flycatchers occur around the ponds.

Watch in appropriate habitat for Cooper's Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Blue-winged, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, and Canada Warblers, Eastern Towhee, Savannah Sparrow, and Indigo Bunting.

### **Greylock Glen (West Mountain Road Property), Adams**

This is a less traveled portion of the Glen. Follow directions above to Greylock Glen, but continue south on West Street an additional 0.1 mile. Turn right on West Mountain Road immediately after the small Peck's Brook bridge. Proceed on West Mountain Road until you reach fields on both sides. At a sharp left corner (0.7 mile) there is parking on your right for the Gould Trail.

From here scan for Red-tailed Hawk and American Kestrel, and, from October to April, for Rough-legged Hawk and Northern Shrike. Then drive farther on West Mountain Road, passing Mount Greylock Greenhouses on your right. The road soon ends at parking for the Cheshire Harbor Trail. This is the trail of choice to hike to Mount Greylock's summit; be sure you have the necessary trail maps.

A different trail, and an excellent way to bird the varied habitat of highland meadows and forest, is to take a 2-mile loop which begins at the Cheshire Harbor

Trail parking lot. Follow the footpath (old road) on the east side of the parking area through a brushy pasture. At a fork in the trail, continue straight through a row of trees and stone wall that separates this pasture from a smaller one, bear left on another footpath. Eastern Towhee and Indigo Bunting are common here. This footpath enters secondary growth and then descends to a field. Expect Alder Flycatcher here, and listen for the buzzy Blue-winged Warbler song in May and June. Veery, Hermit and Wood Thrushes, Nashville Warbler, and White-throated Sparrow occur in this upland area.

Just beyond the field and a small brook, bear sharply right, and follow a badly rutted trail along the edge of a field with a mature mixed-hardwood forest on your right. Views of Mount Greylock are impressive from this entire area of the Glen. Where the trail intersects another footpath near the end of the field, go right and enter the forest. Turn left at the next intersection. Turn left again back to West Mountain Road. At the road either retrace your route or take West Mountain Road past the Gould Trail parking lot and the greenhouses back to your vehicle.

Watch in appropriate habitat in this section for Northern Harrier (spring and fall), Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, and Broad-winged Hawks, American Woodcock, Black-billed Cuckoo, Great Horned and Barred Owls, Pileated Woodpecker, Willow Flycatcher, Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blackburnian, Palm (spring and fall), and Canada Warblers, and Savannah Sparrow. 

*Ronald Rancatti*



ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK BY GEORGE C. WEST

# Health Tips for Birders

*Petti Staub, MD*

We are all familiar with the old adage “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” This statement aptly applies to the prevention of skin cancer. The majority of all skin cancers are caused by exposure to the sun’s ultraviolet (UV) rays, the effect of which is lifelong and cumulative. Each unprotected exposure increases your lifetime risk of developing skin cancer. Birders who spend a great deal of time in the sun, particularly at coastal and mountaintop watches between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. have a significant UV exposure and cumulative risk for skin cancer if preventive measures are not taken. The purpose of this brief article is to discuss how to recognize solar-related precancerous and cancerous skin lesions, and simple preventive measures that most of us are quite familiar with but do not always put into practice – perhaps now we will.

An Actinic keratosis (AK) is a precancerous skin lesion that is commonly found on the scalp, ears, forehead, nose, lips, and sun-exposed areas of forearms and hands of individuals who have a history of frequent sunburns or unprotected UV exposure to these areas. AK’s are small (2-4 mm) dry, scaly, sometimes crusty or horny red patches that persist and may itch or burn. These are easily treated with cryotherapy using liquid nitrogen.

There are three types of skin cancer: melanoma, basal cell carcinoma, and squamous cell carcinoma. Melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer and can be fatal if the lesion is not recognized and treated at an early stage. This is the one you don’t want to pass over. If the lesion is superficial (noninvasive to deeper levels of the dermis) it is curative with wide excision. Melanoma that is invasive into deeper levels of the dermis can spread to other organs through the lymphatic system and blood. This is much more serious and involves more aggressive treatment, including chemotherapy and radiation therapy. The ABCD signs of melanoma are: *Asymmetry* (a line through the middle would not create matching halves), *Border Irregularity* (scalloped or notched edges – common moles have smooth borders), *Color Variability* (varied shades of brown, tan, or black within the lesion – common moles are usually a single shade of brown; at later stages additional color changes of red, white, and blue may be seen), and *Diameter* (melanomas grow larger than common moles – larger than the size of a pencil eraser). The American Cancer Society reports more than 51,000 new cases of melanoma each year, and this trend continues to rise.

Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) and squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) are the more common types of skin cancers seen as a result of cumulative UV damage. BCC affects 800,000 Americans each year, and SCC more than 200,000. Characteristics common to both of these cancers include a persistent nonhealing sore or reddish patch (three or more weeks) that may bleed, ooze, or crust. BCC’s can be shiny, translucent pink, tan or brown nodules (bumps) with elevated rolled borders and crusted indented centers. Tiny blood vessels (capillaries) may be seen on the surface of the lesion.

BCC's can mimic scars and appear as whitish, yellowish, waxy patches with poorly defined borders. SCC's can be thick, rough, and warty in appearance. SCC's can also have raised borders with a crusted surface over an elevated pebbly base. The pinna (rim of the ear) and lower lip are especially susceptible to SCC. Both of these common skin cancers are easily treated with surgical excision or radiation if the tumor is too difficult to manage surgically. In general, SCC's are potentially more serious than BCC's and have a greater chance of spreading if left untreated.

We are all familiar with the standard recommendations of wearing protective clothing and using sunscreens if we are going to be outdoors and in the sun. UV radiation can be a health risk to your eyes as well as your skin, increasing the risk of cataracts and macular degeneration (a common cause of blindness in the elderly). So what do you say, let's all wear our long pants and long-sleeved shirts, broad-brimmed hats, and UV-protective sunglasses and apply sunscreens rated SPF 15 or higher as standard protocol for all our future birding adventures. Additional information and photos of the skin lesions discussed above can be found at the website for the Skin Cancer Foundation <<http://www.skincancer.org>>. Be well. 

*Perpetua Staub (Petti) is an Internist in Leominster, MA, where she has been part of a group practice for the past ten years. She started birding in the spring of 1983, thanks to the influence of a college science professor, a birder who spent the first five minutes of every lecture describing what he observed in nature that morning. She became interested in hawks by watching Northern Harriers hunt over the fields near her home in Pennsylvania, and learned basic hawk identification through visits to the North Lookout at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary. In 1990 she began residency training in Internal Medicine at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester. When interviewed for that position, the director of the residency program asked why she was interested in the New England area. "Birds" she answered. He laughed and shared that he too was a birder. Petti has been active with Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch (EMHW) and has participated in fall hawkwatches on Mount Wachusett (1993-1995) and on Mount Watatic (1996-2002). She is currently the EMHW site coordinator for Mount Watatic.*



GEORGE C. WEST

# The Phalarope Conspiracy

## One of Nuttall's Phalaropes

I was fortunate to grow up in a rural town with parents who were very tuned into everything happening in the natural world. Conversation at dinner was most often a recounting of who had seen what; first robins or dandelions, my father's discovery of a fox den with pups playing outside, and his promise that he would take us all to watch it from a distance.

I can't remember when I was first drawn to birds. Five or six perhaps? About that time an aunt gave me an old dog-eared copy of Chester Reed's little guide to common birds, with black and white illustrations that I promptly colored in as best I could based on the brief descriptions provided. My first journal began on January first when I was nine. My fifth grade teacher had given me at Christmas a bound book with blank pages. After much thought about what was the most important thing I could do with this treasure, I decided I would make my very own bird book, a conglomeration of field notes such as "I saw a Chipping Sparrow on April ten," together with bird pictures from magazines and Thornton Burgess stories cut from the *Boston Post* after Daddy had read it to us the night before . . . if the story was about birds.

The addiction to birds never left me. I brought home the Forbush volumes from the town library, reread them almost to the point of memorization, renewing over and over until the librarian asked my father to bring them back. I would wait a month or two until I thought she had forgotten, then take them out again. On my thirteenth birthday I was given a heavy package which turned out to be a brand new copy of *Birds of America*, edited by T. Gilbert Pearson. I still remember my amazed delight when I found that the mysterious package was my first grownup bird book. In retrospect I wonder whether the town librarian ordered it for my parents to save wear and tear on the library's set of Forbush. About the same time my father permitted me to use an old 4x pair of field glasses his uncle had carried in the Civil War. With these two acquisitions, birding went to a new level. But *Birds of America* was not a pocket guide. I soon discovered I could not trust my memory. I found I needed a notebook and pencil to describe what I saw, then race back to the house to look at pictures and text, only to find I hadn't noted presence or absence of wing bars. I still carry notebooks.

I never had the opportunity for a truly academic education in ornithology, but mentors like Edward Howe Forbush (unbeknownst to him), Jim Baird, Archie Hagar, and Bill Drury added immeasurably to my appreciation and understanding of bird biology. I read everything I could get my hands on, buying books once I had my own income. The Avian Encephalitis outbreak in 1956 led quite accidentally to eleven years as staff ornithologist at the Encephalitis Field Station established by the U.S. Public Health Service in 1957, which in turn led to cajoling as many birding friends as possible into volunteering their help on Duxbury Beach for two seasons while I netted, banded, and blood-sampled fall migrants. This in turn led to the founding of the Manomet Bird Observatory in 1969. But that's another story.

In 1970 I spoke at the March meeting of the Nuttall Ornithological Club describing the establishment of the first bird observatory on the Atlantic Coast, the first woman ever to speak to this bastion of “the old guard” of New England ornithology and at the same time the first official female guest of the club. I was told that there were regular attendees who chose not to attend that evening, but I would have no idea who they were. And incidentally, there have been rather few women speakers since. I was elected a member in 1974 and in 1984 became the first woman to serve as president of NOC. 🐦

*Kathleen S. Anderson*

## The Phalaropes

My Dad grew up in Brooklyn but had spent some time in the country as a kid and knew the names of all the common birds. We lived in a new subdivision in White Plains, New York, in the 1930s, and I quickly became very interested in the local bird life. Dad and our neighbor across the street were my sources of information whenever I wanted to know the identity of a bird.

I continued to be interested in natural history, especially birds, as I grew older and eventually majored in zoology at college. But we never went outside to look at actual living animals – ours were dead and reeking of formaldehyde.

I watched birds in a desultory way during my teens and twenties, but in my early thirties I discovered Mass Audubon, and Jim Baird took me under his wing as a volunteer and then as an employee. I became involved with birds in earnest, answering bird queries from the local populace, making study skins, generating nesting records, and writing simple pamphlets to answer common questions about birds and other animals. Jim helped me obtain a small grant from the American Museum of Natural History, and I spent close to five years every spring studying the American Robins in the twenty acres around my suburban house to find out how well they were succeeding in maintaining their population (not well, it turned out).

I got to know Archie Hagar when I went to see him about terns in Massachusetts, as I was about to take on a Tern Protection Program for the nesting birds in Massachusetts – mostly on Cape Cod. He was extremely helpful, as usual, and I took over from him as Secretary of the Northeast Bird Banding Association (known as NEBBA). I didn't know he was going to propose me for membership in the Nuttall Ornithological Club, but I do remember that the AOU annual meeting was being held in Boston, and there was some angst in the bird world about the fact that NOC did not admit women members. I think this may have been the impetus for a review of the club's policies and the subsequent decision to admit women.

I was delighted and a little awed to be a member of such a group, and it saddens me to think that some members felt that they could no longer remain. 🐦

*Deborah Howard*

# Anatomical and Physiological Changes in Birds

*Christopher Neill*

Imagine the possibilities. You are practicing for an important music recital and the part of your brain responsible for listening and expressing musical notes grows larger.

Or you are about to travel to a foreign country where vegetables, rice, and beans, rather than hamburgers and French fries are the standard diet, and your digestive system lengthens to accommodate the greater percentage of roughage you will be eating. Or, in the weeks leading up to the marathon run you are training for, your stomach, liver, and kidneys shrink, reducing your weight and allowing you to put more of your energy into leg muscles.

Sounds far fetched for us, but such dramatic, short-term anatomical and physiological changes are routine in the bird world.

Scientists who study bird songs have found that birds have specific areas of their brains devoted to learning and producing songs. These locations, or song nuclei, have more neurons and larger neurons, in species that sing complex songs, like Song Sparrows and many species of wrens.

Every spring, longer days trigger the release of testosterone in songbirds' blood. This hormone increases the size of the song nuclei – birds are in effect growing new parts of their brains each spring. “Seasonal changes in neural attributes of brain nuclei that control song are among the most pronounced examples of natural plasticity in the adult brain of any vertebrate,” writes G. Troy Smith, a bird song researcher at the University of Washington in Seattle.

How much these regions of the brain grow seems to be set for each species, and influenced only slightly by learning. To test this idea, Eliot Brenowitz of the University of Washington and Donald Kroodsma of the University of Massachusetts tested two groups of Marsh Wrens, one that was exposed at a young age to a variety of adult Marsh Wren song “dialects,” and one group that heard only the simplest songs. They found no difference in the size of their song nuclei.

Large changes in the size of other bird organs also follow from the “need” for them at different times of year.

The length of intestines changes in response to the quality of a bird's diet. Geese are a case in point. Geese make their living by eating a large volume of relatively poor quality food, primarily grass and other plant material. Geese that eat lower quality grasses need longer intestines, and this particular piece of the goose's anatomy can change by as much as fifty-seven percent, depending on diet.

If geese are not eating, as in arctic-nesting female Snow Geese tied to incubating a clutch of eggs, their guts shrink. This was discovered by comparing incubating females with females whose nests were lost to predators.

What drives these changes? C. Davison Ankney, who studied the snow geese, argues “there must be selection for geese whose digestive organs atrophy quickly because small organs make smaller demands on a bird’s metabolism.”

This phenomenon may be widespread. European Starlings, the blackbirds that are common nearly worldwide, have smaller guts during the breeding season, when they are eating more insects, a much higher quality food than the plant seeds that make up most of their diet the rest of the year. Other birds, such as Eastern Kingbirds, that switch from insect to fruit diets and back each year, will likely show the same pattern.

Another key reason that these kinds of physiological changes have evolved is the reduction of weight – a very important consideration for birds.

It has been known for a long time that birds put on large amounts of fat before they migrate. But recently, Theunis Piersma of the Netherlands Institute for Sea Research and Robert Gill, Jr. of the U.S. Geological Survey in Anchorage, found that Bar-tailed Godwits, large shorebirds that migrate 11,000 kilometers directly over the Pacific Ocean from the Aleutians to New Zealand, undergo physiological changes other than storage of fat.

They examined birds that died in collisions with a radar station just after they left land for their over-water migration. They had stomachs, livers, and kidneys that were much smaller than birds that were resident on the wintering grounds.

It appears this phenomenon is not limited to Alaskan godwits. The Red Knots that pass through Delaware Bay and Cape Cod’s Monomoy Island from South America on their way north in spring, can increase the size of their stomachs thirty percent in as little as three weeks, indicating that their internal organs were also reduced for intercontinental flight.

“It is consistent with the suggestion that it is unprofitable and energetically too expensive to carry a digestive machinery over thousands of kilometers of open ocean,” Piersma and Gill wrote. “It seems better to get rid of such tissue even before takeoff and to rebuild the strategically reduced body parts upon arrival at the destination.”

These adaptations are foreign to humans, with our evolutionary legacy of heavy, lumbering bodies, relatively stable diets, and a tendency to stick close to home.

But for birds, they are a fact of life. In Piersma’s words, “Many species of avian migrants may only be able to reach the corners of the earth by virtue of their remarkable body flexibility.” 

*Christopher Neill is an ecologist at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole. This article, reprinted with the author’s permission, originally appeared in the Falmouth Enterprise.*

# Black Rail in Greenland, New Hampshire

*Matt Tarr*

On the morning of May 19, I met with a landowner in the town of Greenland, New Hampshire to discuss wildlife habitat projects he was considering for his property. At eighty acres the property is one of the largest undeveloped areas in the town of Greenland. The combination of pine forest, wetlands, and nearly thirty-five acres of old-field habitat make it a diverse area for wildlife. The landowner's main reason for purchasing the property was to have a place where he and his brothers could hunt deer. Although hunting is still a priority, he has been getting more involved in maintaining the diversity of birds, mammals, and plant species that occur on the property.

We walked the property for about an hour, and around 9:00 a.m. we started looking at the last section of field which was adjacent to a 150-foot-wide wet swale of reed canary grass, cattails, and alders. As we walked through the field I could hear an odd bird call coming from the wet swale. The call was very quiet under the sounds of our talking and walking, but I knew that this was not a call I had ever heard before in the field. Naturally, my interest was piqued. Our path was taking us closer to where the bird was calling from and I was suddenly able to hear the entire call, which was being given about every five seconds: "*keekedr!.... keekedr!*" The words "Black Rail" immediately popped into my head; I had heard this diagnostic call many times on taped recordings. However, almost as quickly as I identified the call, I discounted my identification; this is not a bird that should be anywhere near New Hampshire!

I said nothing to the landowner, and over the next fifteen minutes we walked and talked within hearing distance of the bird, my mind racing the entire time to figure out what bird other than a Black Rail would make such a call. I was preoccupied with the call almost to the point of rudeness, so I finally pointed it out to the landowner and said "you'll have to excuse me, I need to go see what bird is making that call!" At that, I nearly ran to the edge of the wetland and then snuck through the cattails and ankle deep water to within ten feet of the calling bird. Although the bird remained hidden, it was calling loudly, and there was now little doubt in my mind that this was in fact a Black Rail.

I explained to the landowner the rarity of the bird and asked if he would mind if I had a few other birders join me that evening to confirm what I thought I was hearing. He was excited by the idea of a rare bird on his property so he agreed happily. As we left the site, I made a beeline for my truck and nearly tore it apart trying to find a cassette tape with a Black Rail on it. I listened to the call on the tape (which sounded just like the one coming out of the wetland!) and then ran back to try to get a glimpse of the bird. Unfortunately, the air temperature was now around ninety degrees, the bird had stopped calling, and I didn't have a portable tape player.

As soon as I got back to my office I contacted Becky Suomala and Steve Mirick of New Hampshire Audubon. I was able to speak with Steve and he assembled a

small group of experienced birders. We met at the property that evening with tape player and recording equipment in hand. The group ? which included me and Steve, along with Davis Finch, David and Terri Donsker, Mike Resch, and Denny Abbott ? made its way to the edge of the wetland and began broadcasting Black Rail calls. The bird responded within thirty seconds of our first calls, and quickly made its way to us through the marsh. That evening Davis Finch was able to get some great recordings of the bird, and everyone present was able to view the bird at least briefly as it walked through the cattails around us. We were hearing and seeing the first New Hampshire record of Black Rail!

I contacted the landowner that evening and told him that there was in fact a Black Rail on his property. I then explained to him that there would be a lot of birders who would really like to see and hear this bird. His idea of “a lot” was around twenty people. I then carefully explained he could expect many more birders than that! He was hesitant to open the property up to allow people to come and go at their pleasure, but was gracious in allowing organized groups of birders to join me on the property to view the bird.

Between May 19 and May 26 I led five groups of birders to observe the rail. Groups ranged in size from five to as many as seventy birders. Some of the smaller groups were lucky enough to get glimpses of the bird, but it would have been too invasive and disruptive to try to get seventy birders into the wetland; the larger group was at least able to hear the bird calling.

Work commitments did not allow me to check on the presence of the rail the week following May 26. The next day I was able to return was June 2. I broadcast rail calls through all of the wetland areas but couldn't locate the rail. I returned to the property the following week to conduct a bird survey and the rail was absent then as well.

The landowner was happy with the interest that this bird generated for his property. Although he is not quite ready to open the property up to the public, he is considering allowing birding by the public in the future. His long-term plans are to build two houses close together in the opposite corner of the property from where the rail was observed. The remainder of the property will likely be conserved and managed primarily for wildlife habitat and for hunting. The landowner's habitat management goals include maintaining most of the property in an old field/shrub habitat, working with Public Service of New Hampshire to retain shrub cover within the power line easement, maintaining a three-acre alder thicket along the edge of the wetland to encourage woodcock nesting and brooding, and amending an approximately five-acre area of the field to encourage tall grass habitat for bobolinks. All of the mowing on the property will be conducted in late summer and early fall to avoid damage to nests, fledglings, and deer fawns.

Thanks to all who joined us to observe the rail! Your responsible birding will likely result in this wonderful property being open to birders in the near future. 

*Matt Tarr is an Extension Educator, Forest Resources, with the UNH Cooperative Extension.*

**Editor's note.** And thanks to Matt for his thoughtful handling of the original discovery, its communication to the birding community, and his leadership, which respected both the privacy needs of the landowner and the excitement of many eager birders. I was among the "group of seventy" lined out quietly along the edge of the wetland listening intently. Black Rail remains a "heard bird" on my life list, and although I was almost willing the grasses to move, I was thrilled to share this first state record with so many others who stayed put. As another member of that evening's group remarked on Massbird "It was an experience, in many ways, including the participants. Birders are pretty neat folks. Lots of anticipation and sensory flooding: dynamic skies, greenest of greens, the air full of fresh scents and 'kee kee doo.' not too bad!"



The multitudes assembled in the parking lot of McDonalds in Greenland, NH, under threatening skies, to get the ground rules and directions from Matt.



In single file the excited participants slogged off through the wet grassland.



Listening in rapt concentration to a lost bird in a very unlikely location.



You mean it's hanging around in that tiny patch of wet meadow?

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES GROOM

# FIELD NOTES

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## A Memorable Experience: Ferry Hill Thicket, Marshfield, MA

*Dan Furbish*

On May 27, 2003, after four days of horrible weather, rain, and temperatures in the high 40's we caught a break on the south shore; about 4 p.m. on the fifth day the SUN came out!

After work I jumped into my car and drove to one of my favorite warbler spots, Ferry Hill thicket on Ferry hill road in Marshfield. It was still only about 54 degrees and a bit cloudy with breaks in the clouds letting in some sunshine. Only catbirds and grackles were stirring. Then at 5:45 p.m. the clouds parted, and the thicket came alive with birds.

I watched two of my favorite warblers – a beautiful male Canada and a gorgeous male Bay-breasted – side by side in the same Norway maple in full sunlight (although for *all* birds I see, I have adopted the Stephen Stills lyric: “love the one you’re with”).

I enjoyed the ascending song of a Swainson’s Thrush and the many musical Veerys singing. A female Rose-breasted Grosbeak was gleaning insects from under the leaves of the maple tree, hanging upside down to eat them.

A White-throated Sparrow’s head stripes were gleaming in the sunlight, while it skulked on the floor of the underbrush. Carolina Wrens, Great-crested Flycatchers, Northern Parula, Common Yellowthroat, Blackpoll, Canada, Black-throated Blue, and Redstart warblers were singing incessantly. A Red-bellied Woodpecker was calling from its nest hole in an old maple tree. A gray fox that slowly crossed the road and walked into the thicket rounded out the experience! 

## Massbird at Its Best—Mystery Accipiter Caper

*Carolyn B. Marsh*

It was April 4, 2003 – late afternoon – downtown Wellesley. I glanced out the kitchen window and was startled to see what seemed to be a large accipiter perched on our backyard fence, roughly twenty-five feet away. After watching it for a few minutes, I ran for a camera and snapped several pictures through the kitchen window.

I assumed it was a Cooper’s Hawk. We’ve had several as yard birds over the years, and this candidate really seemed big. But as I studied it for the half hour it sat there, I became less and less confident of my assumption. The tail clearly was square; the crown had no visible peak. And was there a light nape band, or not? Did those lighter feathers at the back of the head amount to anything?

Inspiration struck. I would post the pictures to massbird, a Massachusetts birding listserv, and ask for identification help. And that's where I found massbird at its best. Here's what happened.



CAROLYN MARSH

On April 4 at 6:58 p.m. my post appears on massbird with pointer to photos on our web page. At 7:42 p.m. responder number one suggests that I measure the fence from the cross rail to the tip of the fence post and thus calibrate the size of the bird. (*Moment of truth; red face. I'd never thought of doing that.*) Result: the bird is 11.5 inches long. Quandary ended. It had to be a Sharp-shinned Hawk. It is 7:58 p.m.

This proved to be just the beginning of the information inflow! Over the next two days I received fifteen more messages, some focusing on points I had considered, others mentioning factors I hadn't – but all of them enjoying the exercise of sharing expertise (or guesses). Additional comments included the following:

- 1) This is a chubby accipiter with a clearly square tail; almost no white terminus to the tail band and the red eye of an adult bird. Conclusion: adult male Sharp-shinned Hawk.
- 2) Mama sharpie; nifty bird!
- 3) Low contrast in crown vs. nape makes me think female. Also sharpies have more orange extending around neck than Cooper's; this seems to have a lot.
- 4) Central eye = sharpie.
- 5) Primaries extend almost to second tail band. Cooper's primaries only reach third band (see Sibley's illustrations.)
- 6) Question: was it being harassed by Blue Jays? If so, is it a sharpie. Have never seen a Blue Jay risk closeness to a Cooper's.

All in all, I heard from sixteen people in communications ranging from one liners to two-page manuscripts. The verdict was sharpie fourteen to two (primarily focusing on the small head and straight tail), although male versus female was a matter of disagreement. The collegial sharing of information was a real treat as well as an education, and I was most appreciative of the time and effort made by so many and the kind spirit in which suggestions were offered. Such a range of input would not have been available to me any other way in such a short period of time. This was massbird at its best! I regret only that the replies all came to me rather than to the list at large, as I think subscribers would have enjoyed the fallout.

One final thought. This was a caper that proved to be yet another humbling lesson about judging relative size – one I've heard preached many times, but didn't apply when the evidence was right at hand! 

## Original Massbird Post

### **Subject: Help with accipiter identification**

The accipiter in the photos at [www.jocama.com/birds](http://www.jocama.com/birds) was perched on a fence in our yard for half an hour this afternoon. I can't say I didn't have great looks at the backside! The bird never turned around, but did swivel its head from side to side. It was fairly large, and I first assumed it was a Cooper's hawk, but the longer I looked at it I wasn't totally comfortable with that ID. For one thing, the tail isn't rounded, and if it ever had a white band, it's well worn off. Secondly, there is not much (if any) contrast of between a dark crown and lighter back, and there are only a few scattered lighter feathers at the back of the head. (No obviously lighter nape.)

I did not detect any peak in the crown on this bird. I then tried to decide if the eye was in the middle of the head or more toward the front. I'd say maybe the latter, but that wasn't totally clear to me. Complicating my thinking is David Sibley's comment in *Guide to Birds* that sharpies almost always perch in trees, while it's not uncommon for Cooper's hawks to be on fences or poles. (There are plenty of tree branches right there; this bird chose the fence.) I could not see the legs, and only now and then got a glimpse of some rust and white and white feathers ruffling in the breeze.

So I'm wondering what I had. Did I miss (or misinterpret) a clinching clue? Any input welcome!

Carolyn Marsh [cmarsh@jocama.com](mailto:cmarsh@jocama.com) Wellesley MA

# A Birding Idol

*Robert H. Stymeist*

One of the very first bird books I ever owned was William Brewster's *Birds of the Cambridge Region*, an account of Brewster's travels and birding adventures in the "wilds" of Cambridge. It was a very special edition, beautifully bound in black and red leather, totally different from the original binding that was available. It must have belonged to someone who really enjoyed birds.

In my youth, like many of my classmates at Cambridge High and Latin, I hung out in Harvard Square. Not in front of the Harvard Coop but in the basement of the Starr Book Shop in the bird book section. I became friendly with Eva Thurman, the wonderful woman who ran the shop for Milton Starr. Everyone knew Eva, and she knew everything about books. She let me stay often and read the bird books in the cool basement of the Harvard Lampoon building where the bookshop was until just a few years ago. In fact Eva bought me my first pair of binoculars, knowing that it would improve my bird list. I had my eye on this particular copy of *Birds of the Cambridge Region*, and told Eva not to sell it until I had saved enough allowance to pay for it. I searched some of the areas Brewster mentions that remained wild a century later in the 1960s, like the Glacialis, where the Alewife T station is today. Most of the area near Little Pond and Alewife Reservation is still quite wild today. (However, the red maple swamp that Brewster refers to below encompassed the entire area now occupied by the two strip malls on either side of Fresh Pond Parkway/Route 2.)

I've always kept a Cambridge list; it was a thing to do for a city boy interested in birds. The birds of Cambridge according to Brewster in his introduction "have been studied longer and more continuously, as well as perhaps more carefully, than those of any other locality of similar extant in all America. As far back as 1832 they were intimately known to Thomas Nuttall." So, even today, over 170 years later, hundreds of birders continue to come to the Cambridge region to see the migration at Sweet Auburn, Brewster's name for the present day Mount Auburn Cemetery.

William Brewster was born in 1851, he went to Cambridge Latin, and because of poor health and impaired eyesight he chose not to enter college and was not enthusiastic about a business career like his father's, who was a very successful banker. He wanted to devote the rest of his life to the study of ornithology, an interest he developed early. Brewster was a member of the "shotgun" school of ornithology. He collected nests and eggs, shot birds, and prepared specimens. His skills in taxidermy led to one of the finest collections of North American birds, once kept in his own private museum and now at the Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ) at Harvard.

That brings me to present time. I am currently spending my retirement days doing something new and for me especially gratifying. I'm helping out at the MCZ transcribing the bird collection into a database. No easy task: there are at least

343,000 specimens in the Bird Department. Brewster's notes on his collection are especially detailed, and in many instances each day in the field unfolds in a captivating account of the day's event. Gleanings from the *Journal of William Brewster* is a new series inspired by my work at the MCZ. This month, the Connecticut Warbler, a bird much more common in Brewster's day, is featured. Not much has changed! Birders today search out this elusive warbler in the exact type of habitat where Brewster found it, right up to the beds of touch-me-not, or jewelweed, that is abundant at places like Dunback Meadow

## Gleanings from the Journal of William Brewster

September 16, 1881 Middlesex County, Massachusetts: Cambridge

A cool hazy day with faint sunlight and chill east wind. Yesterday evening Spelman [Henry M. Spelman] came in to report the arrival of the Connecticut Warblers in their old haunt the "Maple Swamp" He had seen eight there in the course of a few hours and had killed two, both females. His account fired my enthusiasm and I at once determined to visit the Swamp to-day and renew old associations as well as get four fresh specimens. The weather proving favorable this was carried into effect, Spelman accompanying me. . . . Now a word to record the mornings impressions and the present status of these warblers in the Cambridge swamps.

In 1870-71 when Henshaw [Henry W. Henshaw] and I killed so many then, the "Maple Swamp" as we used to call it, comprised three wooded islands separated from each other by narrow strips of open meadow and marked by broader stretchers of the same, interspersed with shallow pools and ditches.

The islands themselves were covered with five groves of red maple which cast a dense shade and kept the soil beneath damp and cool in the driest summer weather. Everywhere beneath there was a dense undergrowth of . . . [herbaceous plants]. Around the pools were the tangled stems of the Button Bush. There was also a few wild apple trees, an occasional Swamp White Oak and one cluster of Gray Birches . . . The whole place was intersected by a conglomerate of paths made – by heaven knows what – but possibly by hunters and collectors like ourselves. The ground in September bore a luxurious . . . growth of annuals which were the "Touch-me-not" (*Impatiens fulva*), the deadly nightshade and some others not known to me. This was the character of the place in 1870-71 and this was where we obtained most of our specimens by quietly following the paths and shooting them as they perched for a moment in the bushes after flying up at our approach.

To-day I found the haunt sadly changed: one island – the north east one – has been entirely cleared and only the undergrowth is growing up again: In another – the one nearest the railroad – the maples have been thinned and the bushes beneath are nearly all dead or gone. The third – the western one – remains precisely as of yore and I noticed only an increased area of Touch-me-not beds and some scattering of Cardinal flower which I did not remember in the old times.

We startled five *Oporornis* and I killed four of them [Specimens # 205552, 205553, 205554 & 205555]. They were all in the western Swamp and several were found in spots that I remember we used to consider choice places. They were very tame and all save one flew up into the bushes from the Night Shade or *Impatiens* whence we flushed them. The exception acted in a singular manner. It rose under my feet from a tangle of *impatiens* and after being shot at a wing dropped like a Rail into the rank bed. I again flushed it when again it dropped and although this time was shot at could not be again flushed. All the individuals seen today were silent. In the bushes they were awkward and slow of motion, sitting shyly like thrushes or slowly raising their tails like *Oporornis formosus* (Kentucky Warbler) which they greatly resemble in manners. Spelman tells me he heard many calling yesterday. They apparently spend nearly all this time on the ground among the matted tangle of Touch-me-not or nightshade. It is scarcely to be wondered at how few we see them or know of his fleeting presence in the September days when the harvests are ripening in the fields and Goldenrod and asters [are] blooming by the wayside.

We saw very few other birds of any interest: only an occasional Swamp or Song Sparrow and a little company of Cedar Birds.

*Journal of William Brewster* pages 272-273, Volume 2, MCZ Catalog Brewster collection. Reprinted with permission from the Museum Comparative Zoology, Harvard University.

## ABOUT BOOKS

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### Who Needs Aesthetics and Ornithology?

Mark Lynch

*Birds and Light.* Lars Jonsson. 2002. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 224 pages, 20 color illus. 11 13/16 x 11



“If aestheticism is for the artist what ornithology is for the birds, then I don’t give a damn for aesthetics, for birds do not give a damn for ornithology ? I paint, they fly.” (Written at the bottom right corner of *Autodidakt*, a self-portrait done by Lars Jonsson in 1982.)

I have a confession to make. When I was first exposed to the artwork of Lars Jonsson, I didn’t know what to make of it. Sheila Carroll had gone to Britain on business in the early 1980s and brought back four volumes of Lars Jonsson’s habitat-based guides to European birds. These had been originally published in Sweden as *Faglar i Naturen* a few years before and were completely unknown in the United States at the time. I looked at the illustrations in these slim volumes and was frankly confused. They were all so painterly, so loose looking. Instead of being shown simply from the side, many birds were shown in different positions in relation to the viewer. Waterfowl were depicted in water that actually showed the reflections of the light and the birds. Some pages would illustrate only one species. What a profligate waste of space I thought. Even though I had been teaching at an art museum for some time, these bird illustrations made no sense to me. After all, I had been using the Peterson and National Geographic guides, both of which illustrate birds like road maps to field mark identification, not living creatures.

My next run in with Lars Jonsson was brief but more instructive. I was just about to leave for my first birding trip to Australia and therefore in a state of total confusion and stress, when the phone rang. It was some damned person with a Swedish accent asking me if I could arrange a private viewing for him of the Worcester Art Museum’s justly famous watercolors by Winslow Homer and John Singer Sargent. It was the absolute last thing I needed. Trying to be polite, yet also trying to brush this person off, I briskly asked him his name again. Of course it was Lars Jonsson, and my heart sank. I had to leave very soon and there was no way to arrange his visit to the museum, something I have regretted to this day. By then I had realized that Jonsson’s birds have more in common with the paintings of artists like Homer, Sargent, and Anders Zorn than with the field guide illustrations by Peterson. Jonsson was as passionate about the observable natural world as he was about numerous effects of light on his subjects.

Lars Jonsson is now a familiar name to most New England birders. The article he coauthored with Richard Veit on Calidris sandpipers in a 1987 issue of *American Birds* was an instant classic that many serious birders still refer to. This piece featured a good number of full-page color plates by Jonsson of all the North Atlantic peeps and stints. These still remain the best field illustrations of the Calidrids. For some time, Lars was also trundled hither and yon across Massachusetts doing numerous paintings for Mass Audubon's wonderful centennial volume *The Nature Of Massachusetts* (1996). One week he would be in the Berkshires painting a spring Salamander in a stream; the next week he was on South Monomoy painting shorebirds and seascapes. Many birders got a chance to meet him at this time and marvel at his ease at painting plein air watercolors of birds and denizens of the natural world. Finally, numerous birders visiting Europe have also used Jonsson's *Birds of Europe*. This book was an extension and consolidation of his five-volume *Faglar I Naturen*.

The sumptuous volume *Birds and Light* clearly delineates Jonsson's important contributions to both fine art and natural history. The book starts with a cogent essay by Staffen Soderblum, which considers the formal aspects of Jonsson's paintings and places Jonsson's career in the cultural and historical context of other Swedish artists who have found themselves straddling the fields of so-called scientific and artistic painting. When considering a watercolor study of Hooded Crows in flight that Jonsson painted, Soderblum notes:

"Even lousy ornithologists like myself know what a crow looks like. We seldom mistake it in the field, and we do not need pictures of it in field guides. But crows are also in the guides, and they have to be of course: the principle of the field guide is not exclusion, but completeness. So, how does one paint a picture that nobody really 'needs'? This is the question that Lars Jonsson appeared to have asked himself with his crow, and his answer seems to have been to paint a picture of the bird's character, or its attitude. Or quite simply, what it says to us" (p.11).

This gets to the crux of the success of Jonsson's work. At their best, his paintings show us not every minute detail of a bird's plumage as if a skin was studied under a lens in a laboratory. Instead, a living, active bird is revealed as it looks to us in the field with all the changeable vagaries of light. Jonsson's paintings are about the human experience of birds, akin to a contemporary Impressionism of ornithology.

The bulk of the middle of *Birds and Light* consists of a profusely illustrated biography of Lars Jonsson taken from a series of interviews between Jonsson and Bjorn Linnell. This proves to be a successful format because instead of just a dry recitation of the facts, Jonsson's life is revealed in a series of lively conversations. We learn that Jonsson was born in Stockholm in 1952 and began drawing birds when only four-and-a-half years old. Some of these early works are lovingly reproduced here in full color. Jonsson developed an intense passion for birding as well as for color and light at this young age and from that point on never stopped his visual exploration. Trips to Gotland with his family, and later to Africa with birding friends expanded both his ornithological and artistic repertoires.

Reproduced in *Birds and Light* are passages from Jonsson's extensive field diaries that he has kept since an early age. These journals are an interesting combination of scientific exposition and poetic reverie. Writing about Atlantic Puffins on the Faroe Islands in 1969, Jonsson notes:

"Not many Puffins are seen to be about when the skies are grey. Puffin country is then empty and deserted, and only their burrows bear witness to their existence. But when the sun appears, hundreds and hundreds of these small auks crowd the ground and the skies. The sheer masses are really surprising when one knows how empty the place can appear to be. Like mushrooms growing out of the ground, they come out of their burrows. Like small gnomes from nowhere, suddenly, they are just there. The heavens are full of fluttering birds. They fly around in circles in enormous flocks, wings whizzing as they pass overhead. At longer distances these flocks look like mosquitoes, comparable in size to the locust swarms of Africa" (p. 56).

Like his paintings, Jonsson's writing is always focused simultaneously on accurate field observation as well as the human experience of nature.

Lars Jonsson was "discovered" in 1967 when a curator noticed him sketching in the galleries of the Natural History Museum. The director of the museum soon met Lars and gave him his first show, which introduced him to the community of other Swedish wildlife artists. By the early 1970s, Jonsson was regularly writing bird papers and illustrating articles. With the publication of *Faglar i Naturen* Jonsson became established as a natural history artist of international importance.

Most of the birds in that series of books were painted in the field and thus represent Jonsson's personal experience with that species. While continually striving to not copy the work of others, Jonsson has also resolved to stay as close to his subject as possible, always watching and sketching even common birds out his window for some nuance, some new attitude. He relates his considerable struggles to get a drab Willow Warbler just right. Never satisfied with merely a technical approximation, Jonsson wants to literally paint the essence of the experience of the bird on that particular day.

"I am striving for a balance between details and the bird's essentially reclusive nature ? the fortuitous nature of its presence before us. It is just the moment, the experience of the encounter with an individual bird in the wild, that I wish to convey equally as much as factual content" (p. 74).

After the biographical notes, *Birds and Light* continues with a stunning sixty-seven-page section titled "Paintings 1983-2002," which features finely printed full-page reproductions of paintings and field sketches. Personally, I am most fond of the more painterly pieces like "Great Black-backed Gulls" (1993) and "Raven" (1993), which showcase Jonsson's rather spontaneous command of watercolors and light. He is fond of painting birds in situations and times of the day that create unusual lighting effects. In "Common Gull and rocks" (1987) there is a slight shimmer to the air and the gull's reflection can be seen in the shallow water. In "Sidor av Ijus" (Aspects of

light: 1987) three European Avocets are shown preening and sleeping in late afternoon or early morning light. In “Desire” (1998-1999) a flock of Common Eiders is shown in a slight haze. Jonsson’s pencil drawings are also a revelation because they allow us to glimpse the artist at work, ceaselessly sketching, looking for that one certain pose of the bird that will capture the moment.

A section of small reproductions of Jonsson’s limited edition lithographs is also included in *Birds and Light*, many of which will be unfamiliar to American readers. Even in these prints, Jonsson’s obsession with light is evident.

It is in Jonsson’s seascapes that you can begin to see his relationship to great past landscape painters like Winslow Homer. Reversing the process, if you look at some of John Singer Sargent’s Florida watercolors like “Muddy Alligators” (1917, collection of the Worcester Art Museum), you can understand that Jonsson is never merely illustrating birds, but continuing a fine art tradition of Impressionist natural history painting that has included some of the great artists of Europe and America. *Birds and Light* shows the reader who may be familiar only with Jonsson’s field guide work, the real depth of his work. Although he is always focused on the actual and real, Lars Jonsson is also trying to pin down that ephemeral abstract aspect of any experience. The quote I used at the beginning of this review concerning aesthetics and ornithology was inspired by a quote by Barnett Newman (1905-1970). Newman was a pioneering American abstract painter associated with Abstract Expressionism and nonrelational painting and, interestingly, also a birder. As Jonsson states in *Birds and Light*: “The question is whether Newman painted his images for the same reason as the birds fly, which probably was his aim” (p. 106). The brilliance of Jonsson’s work emanates from his understanding the visual language and passions of the likes of Newman and Anders Zorn as well as Roger Tory Peterson and John James Audubon. He is unafraid to reach for that ineffable experience that happens every time we are awed by the natural world.

“Man likes to seek explanations for his actions, looks in the register of interpretive models and established values. But explanations rarely satisfy the sense of feeling, they just dress it in words, but the emotive influence, the abstract element that drives one onwards, never has a name” (p. 140). 🐦

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*Mark Lynch is a teacher, ecological monitor, and trip leader at Massachusetts Audubon Society's sanctuary at Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester. He is one of the regional editors for the new Finding Birds in Western Massachusetts. Mark has been a teacher and docent at the Worcester Art Museum for almost thirty years and leads a Birder's Tour of the collection every year. He also hosts INQUIRY on WICN (90.5 FM), an interview show of the arts and sciences.*



## Brookline Bird Club Ninetieth Anniversary Celebration

The Brookline Bird Club (BBC) was founded in 1913 to study, observe, and protect native songbirds and to encourage their propagation. Bird walks have continued to be the main reason for the club's existence. In ninety years the BBC has scheduled more than 13,000 field trips, in the course of which a total of 396 species have been recorded on the Massachusetts life list of the club, including one species now extinct, the Heath Hen, which was added to the club's list on a trip to Martha's Vineyard on April 19, 1931.

A gala evening celebration is planned for Saturday, November 8, 2003, at the Peabody Marriott Hotel. The keynote speaker is Shawneen Finnegan, a world-class birder, birding guide, illustrator, and photographer, who will speak about "Confessions of a Female Birding Addict."

Because of space considerations, the total number of attendees is limited. For further information see <<http://www.massbird.org/bbc/>> or call Joe Paluzzi at 978-922-5035.



# NUTTALL ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

## 2003 Request for Proposals

### Charles Blake Fund Grants

The Nuttall Ornithological Club is soliciting proposals for bird-related projects to be conducted in 2003-2004 under the direction of organizations meeting certain qualifications (see below). Selected projects will be supported by grants from the Club's Charles Blake Fund.

Grants will support ornithological research, conservation, and education, with particular emphasis on the birds of New England and the Northeast. The Fund will support grants for research, publication, education, and other worthy ornithology-related efforts.

The postmark-date deadline for applications is September 15, 2003. Awards will be announced by October 15, 2003. All funds will be distributed by November 31, 2003.

### **Application Guidelines:**

1. Applying organizations must be tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and must not be private foundations under section 509(a). Applications from individuals will not be considered.
2. Three typed copies of a brief proposal must be submitted in the following format:
  - a) Title page: project title and brief abstract; name, address and phone number; proposed starting and completion dates; total amount requested from the Charles Blake Fund;
  - b) Narrative of up to 5 pages including a) objectives, b) brief review of what is already known or has already been done, c) methods, d) value of the project to ornithology, e) project timetable, including a submission date for the final report, f) detailed budget, including funds applied for or expected from other sources;
  - c) Brief statement of investigator qualifications and a resume; and
  - d) Documentary evidence of section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status must be provided with each proposal.
3. Grants will be awarded on an annual basis from total available funds. The available money varies annually, but rarely is below \$15,000 per year. Proposals may request

up to that entire amount. Applications for projects expected to last more than one year will be considered, but no commitment beyond the funds available in the present year will be made.

#### **Nuttall Ornithological Club 2003-2004 Blake Fund Criteria**

4. Proposals will be reviewed by the Blake Fund Committee and will be selected for awards based on the following merits:

- a) Contribution to the goals of the Nuttall Ornithological Club,
- b) Conservation, management, or educational applications,
- c) Scientific merit,
- d) Feasibility, and
- e) Qualifications of investigator(s).

5. Typically the Blake Funds along with other Club funds (when available) are distributed in grants ranging from \$1000 to \$5000. Grants requested for more than one year will be noted, but funding will be on an annual basis only. No commitments to future funding are inherent in any grant.

6. Grant payments will be made directly to the 501(c)(3) organizations, and the Nuttall Ornithological Club will retain no authority over use of paid grant funds. However, the Nuttall Ornithological Club requires that recipients prepare a report on their work and use of grant money within twelve months of receiving the grant.

Proposals should be addressed to:

David S. Deifik, MD  
Nuttall Ornithological Club  
Chair, Blake Fund Committee  
C/O Dartmouth-Hitchcock Nashua  
21 E. Hollis St.  
Nashua, NH 03060  
Email: David.S.Deifik@Hitchcock.Org



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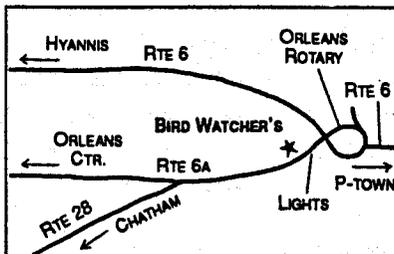
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# BIRD SIGHTINGS

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March/April 2003

*Seth Kellogg, Marjorie Rines, and Bob Stymeist*

After a harsh January and February we could have used a little spring weather, but March and April were dominated by cold temperatures. We began to wonder if winter was going to last forever. March temperature averaged 35.7° in Boston, 1.2° below normal. The first twenty days averaged over 5° below normal, with March 10 seeing a high temperature of only 26°, 16° below the average for that date. Rainfall totaled 4 inches in Boston with measurable amounts occurring on thirteen days and the total snowfall was 8.1 inches. Most of the state had snow on the ground much of the month.

April was cold and cloudy with frequent precipitation. The temperature averaged 44.5°, 3.8° below the Boston average, making April the seventh month in a row with below average readings and the coldest April since 1965. A short taste of summer raised the mercury to 84° on April 16, but dropped 32 degrees in two hours and by the next morning the temperature was just 30°, a 54° drop in less than 24 hours! A total of 4 inches of rain fell with measurable amounts noted on fourteen days. The shovels are supposed to be retired by April but 2.3 inches of snow fell in Boston, bringing the season total to 70.9 inches, nearly 30 inches above average.

A big fallout of migrants occurred on Tax Day following a strong southwesterly wind on April 14. The only other day with southwest winds was April 28 which brought in the first Whip-poor-wills and many other migrants for the year. *R. Stymeist*

## LOONS THROUGH ALCIDS

Inland sightings of Red-throated Loons are uncommon in spring, usually found (if at all) in mid-April when they are migrating. A total of five Red-throated Loons in Medford on March 17 was therefore somewhat strange. Even stranger were the two loons that stayed on Lower Mystic Lake in Arlington from March 13-23, when one expired, and the remaining loon stayed through the end of April. The only other report of an inland Red-throated Loon was at Turners Falls for a single day. Two **Pacific Loons** were reported at Race Point in Provincetown throughout the period, with one-day singles in Plymouth and Rockport. Four Pacific Loons in a two-month period would have been unheard-of only a decade ago, but now there are more birders, better optics, and ever-improving information on identification, but are there also more loons?

Common Loons, Red-necked Grebes, and Horned Grebes made an unusually good showing inland. The perennial **Eared Grebe** at Niles Pond in Gloucester barely merits a bold face as it completed its ninth – or is it tenth? – season. A Great Cormorant at Turners Falls was only the fourth for the period in western Massachusetts, the third being just last year.

A Great Egret in Amherst on March 27 and a Little Blue Heron in Hardwick on April 21 were exceptional for western Massachusetts with only a handful of previous spring records for both. On the coast, herons arrived on schedule, with excellent numbers by the end of April at the Kettle Island rookery in Magnolia. While North Shore birders were enjoying Tricolored and Little Blue herons, the South Shore Bird Club was at Allen's Pond in South Dartmouth where they were astonished and delighted to discover a **White Ibis**. The ibis lingered for a week, but the pleasure later birders might have derived from this sighting was marred by the more conspicuous sighting of boats offshore setting oil booms.

It was on April 27 that a barge ruptured and spilled 100,000 gallons of no.6 fuel oil into Buzzards Bay. Hundreds of volunteers, including many birders, assisted in the cleanup, but much of the oil had mixed with ocean water, meaning continued contamination for the unknown future.

Piping Plovers (federally and state Threatened) were preparing to nest on many of the affected beaches. Although their nests are high on the beaches, they feed below the wrack line, and on the west side of the bay 79 percent of the plovers ended up oiled to some degree (A. Jones, pers. comm.). At this point, no mortality can be linked to the spill, but since the organisms they feed on could be toxic, long-term evaluation is needed.

Bird Island and Ram Island in Buzzards Bay are breeding grounds to over 40 percent of the Endangered Roseate Terns in the northeastern United States. Bird Island was only lightly oiled, and it was possible to complete enough cleaning to allow the terns to land when they arrived around May 7. Ram Island, however, was badly oiled, and cleanup lasted through the end of May. Until then, hazing cannons and strobe lights were used to prevent their landing. Once the Roseates had settled in there was a new colony on Penikese Island, an increase in breeders at Bird, and a decrease at Ram (C. Mostello, pers. comm.). There are too many variables to draw concrete conclusions on this population shift until band data can be analyzed.

A number of unusual geese both in Massachusetts and around the northeast seemed to mirror early 2002, when there was a small invasion of rarities. Four **Greater White-fronted Geese of the Greenland race**, originally discovered in January, continued in Fairhaven through March 23. On March 24, a single bird was discovered at Bolton Flats, and on the March 27 two were observed in Turners Falls. Given the dates, it is somewhat tempting to associate these observations, but the Fairhaven birds were apparently acting as a group, and it is unlikely they are the same birds. In the winter of 2001-2002 there were as many as three **Barnacle Geese** reported, part of a small wave of sightings in the northeast. During this period there were three reports, including western Massachusetts' first in Turners Falls and Whately. Although these two reports were three weeks apart, it is possible there is only a single bird.

Four **Tundra Swans** may have been slightly off course, but were heading north as they obligingly flew only fifty feet above the heads of an Allen Bird Club trip. A total of four "Eurasian" Green-winged Teal were reported, but none was described. Wood ducks were reported in good numbers, particularly in western Massachusetts. Canvasbacks were reported from traditional areas in the southeastern part of the state but were unusually scarce elsewhere. A female **Tufted Duck** has been reported in February or March since 1998, with the exception of 2002. Ruddy Ducks, usually found inland in moderate numbers in the spring, made a poor showing with the largest number reported in the ocean off Nahant.

Good numbers of migrating raptors were reported, partially due to good coverage of hawkwatch sites, but possibly also because of improving electronic communication. A website "Hawkcount" allows anyone access to data from all over North America, including several sites in Massachusetts. In the past, hawkwatch data have often not been available to *Bird Observer*. The Blueberry Hill hawkwatch would normally have walked away with "best bird" honors for *three* Golden Eagles, the first spring record for this many individuals. On March 29, however, the Pilgrim Heights watch in Truro tallied a white **Gyrfalcon**, to the envy of almost everyone who read about it.

Wild Turkeys seem to be spreading in the eastern part of the state at an amazing pace, and are being reported sporadically in urban areas. The only Bobwhites of the season were in Concord, and of dubious origin. Two Clapper Rails were reported. The Plum Island rail has

become a routine visitor, returning to the same spot after seven or eight years. American Coots were few and far between, undoubtedly as a result of the severe winter.

Two Greater Yellowlegs in Pittsfield were unusually early, ten days earlier than the previous record in western Massachusetts. Whimbrels are uncommon spring migrants, and the few that are sighted are generally in May, so sightings at South Dartmouth and Plum Island at the end of April were noteworthy, as was a White-rumped Sandpiper on the April 29.

Laughing Gulls arrive early on their breeding grounds on the Cape and in Plymouth county, but it is uncommon to see them north of Boston before fall migration. A **Mew Gull** in Newburyport Harbor March 8-10 was well documented in writing and with photographs and submitted to the MARC. Two Caspian Terns on Plum Island were an excellent find. Two Forster's Tern were seen April 25-29 in Newburyport, an exceptionally early date for this uncommon spring migrant. Common Murres outnumbered Thick-billed Murres, which are usually the more common species. An Atlantic Puffin is a good bird at any time. *M. Rines*

<b>Red-throated Loon</b>				<b>Eared Grebe *</b>			
3/2	Boston H.	14	TASL (M. Hall)	3/1-4/8	Gloucester	1	v.o.
3/8	P'town (R.P.)	90	J. Hoye#		<b>Northern Gannet</b>		
3/13-4/30	Arlington	1-2	M. Rines	3/9	P.I.	20	P. McFarland
3/17	Medford	5	M. Rines	4/1, 25	N. Truro	500, 600	D. Manchester#
3/18	Turners Falls	1	S. Smolen-Morton	4/5	Nantucket	158	fide E. Ray
3/27	P'town (R.P.)	40	S. Highley#	4/13	P'town	250	B. Nikula
3/29	Orleans	26	G. Gove#	4/14	Magnolia	160 ad	R. Heil
4/2	P.I.	22	J. Offermann	4/25	W. Dennis	200+	P. Flood
4/6	Nantucket	172	fide E. Ray	4/26	Rockport (A.P.)	242 ad	R. Heil
4/13	P'town	35	B. Nikula		<b>Great Cormorant</b>		
<b>Pacific Loon *</b>				3/1	Cape Ann	72	M. Lynch
thr	P'town (R.P.)	1-2	B. Nikula + v.o.	3/11	Amesbury	70	J. Berry#
3/9	Plymouth H.	1	D. Furbish	3/15	Newbypt	50	T. Pirro
3/15	Rockport (A.P.)	1	J. Paluzzi#	4/6	Nahant	50	BBC (L. Pivacek)
<b>Common Loon</b>				4/13	N. Scituate	58	G. d'Entremont
3/1	Ipswich	54	D. Chickering	4/13	Turners Falls	1	M. Fairbrother
3/1	Gloucester	18	M. Lynch	4/14	Magnolia	10	R. Heil
3/2	Boston H.	49	TASL (M. Hall)	4/26	Rockport (A.P.)	3	R. Heil
3/8	P'town (R.P.)	20	J. Hoye#		<b>Double-crested Cormorant</b>		
3/15	Westport	16	E. Nielsen	3/25	Edgartown	10 nests	V. Laux
3/15	Newbypt	35	T. Pirro	4/8	Arlington	49	M. Rines
4/5-7	Reports of 1-3 indiv. from 5 inland loc.			4/9	Northampton	40	H. Allen
4/13	Winthrop	19	D. Saffarewich	4/14	Magnolia	170	R. Heil
4/15	N. Truro	19	D. Manchester#	4/15	Newbypt/P.I.	140	R. Heil
4/26-29	Reports of 2-8 indiv. from 5 inland loc.			4/24	Ipswich (C.B.)	1000	E. Johnson
<b>Pied-billed Grebe</b>				4/25	W. Dennis	250+	P. Flood
4/6	Lynn	3	BBC (L. Pivacek)	4/25	W. Harwich	752+	B. Nikula
thr	Reports of indiv. from 17 locations			4/28	Granville	65	J. Wojtanowski
<b>Horned Grebe</b>				4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	380	R. Heil
3/1	Barnstable	6	G. d'Entremont#		<b>American Bittern</b>		
3/1	Gloucester	52	M. Lynch	3/29	Brimfield	1	I. Lynch
3/2	Boston H.	142	TASL (M. Hall)	3/29-4/20	P.I.	1-2	v.o.
3/7, 4/2	Hadley	1, 1	Yeskie, Minnear	3/29	Longmeadow	1	Allen Club
3/16	P.I.	30	T. Wetmore	4/21	Newbury	1	O. Spalding#
3/16, 4/20	Turners Falls	1, 1	Surner, S-Morton	4/29	Brookline	1	F. Bouchard#
3/29	Squantum	8	G. d'Entremont#	4/30	HRWMA	1	T. Pirro
4/3, 26	Gill	2, 1	v.o.	4/30	Amherst	1	C. Gentes
4/12	Rockport	35	S. Hedman		<b>Great Blue Heron</b>		
4/13	N. Scituate	9	G. d'Entremont	3/15	Littleton	16	S. Moore#
4/18	Blandford	1	K. + M. Conway	4/7	New Braintree	10	C. Buelow
<b>Red-necked Grebe</b>				4/12	Peabody	32	P. + F. Vale
3/1	Turners Falls	1	S. Smolen-Morton	4/24	P.I.	20	T. Wetmore
3/1	P'town (R.P.)	25+	B. Nikula#	4/26	Northampton	20	T. Gagnon
3/2	Boston H.	19	TASL (M. Hall)	4/29	DWMA	27 nests	S. Sutton
3/5, 19	Holyoke	1, 2	Lafley, Kellogg		<b>Great Egret</b>		
3/8	Rockport	10	BBC (W. Drummond)	3/23	Quincy	3	E. Taylor
3/9	Nahant	8	L. Pivacek#	3/23	Marshfield	1	J. Paluzzi
3/12	Chicopee	2	H. Allen	3/23	Nauset B.	2	C. + S. Thompson
3/15	Northfield	2	S. Rayer	3/23	Westport	3	M. Lynch
3/16	Wellfleet H.	5	B. Nikula#	3/26, 4/14	Magnolia	41, 47	R. Heil
3/31-4/13	Reports of 1-2 indiv. from 5 inland loc.			3/27	Amherst	1	H. Allen
4/10	Pittsfield	5	N. Purdy	4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	22	R. Heil
4/13	N. Scituate	16	G. d'Entremont		<b>Snowy Egret</b>		
				3/23	Nauset B.	1	C. + S. Thompson

<b>Snowy Egret (continued)</b>				<b>Barnacle Goose *</b>			
3/23	Quincy	1	S. Maguire	3/22	W. Bridgewater	1	J. Sweeney
3/23	Winthrop	1	J. Hoye#	3/25	Turners Falls	1	D. Peake-Jones
3/24	Bourne	1	J. Kricher	4/13-14	Whatley	1	Martel + Van Heerden
3/24	Salem	2	K. Haley	<b>Mute Swan</b>			
3/26, 4/15	Magnolia	26, 126	Heil, Hedman	3/1	Falmouth	27	G. d'Entremont#
4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	45	R. Heil	3/23	Westport	34	M. Lynch
<b>Little Blue Heron</b>				4/13	N. Scituate	20	G. d'Entremont
3/26, 4/21	Magnolia	1 ad, 21	Heil, Vale	thr	Turners Falls	20	v.o.
4/8	Hingham	1 ad	R. Carroll#	<b>Tundra Swan</b>			
4/13	Scituate	1 ad	G. d'Entremont	4/19	Southwick	4	Allen Club
4/21	Hardwick	1	C. Buelow	<b>Wood Duck</b>			
4/26	Gloucester	1	J. Barber	3/12	Haverhill	19	R. Heil
4/26	Newbypt	1	P. + F. Vale	3/16	Lakeville	10	J. Sweeney#
4/27	Essex	2	D. Brown	3/24	Groton	10	T. Pirro
<b>Tricolored Heron</b>				3/25	Medfield	23	E. Morrier
4/25-30	P.I.	1	D. Chickering	3/26	Northfield	300	M. Taylor
<b>Cattle Egret</b>				3/29	Longmeadow	80	Allen Club
4/20, 27	Beverly	1, 2	Hedman, Vale	3/30	Bolton Flats	100	T. Pirro
4/30	Danvers	1	L. Pivacek	4/23	Ipswich	18	J. Berry#
<b>Green Heron</b>				<b>Gadwall</b>			
4/6	MNWS	1	R. Kipp	3/1	Barnstable	27	G. d'Entremont#
4/24	Northampton	1	C. Gentes	3/1	Gloucester	17	J. Berry
4/29	Boston (A.A.)	1	A. Joslin	3/16	Peabody	21	R. Heil
4/29	Medford	1	M. Rines	3/18	Woburn	12	M. Rines
4/30	Mt.A.	1	R. Stymeist	3/18-4/13	Turners Falls	2	v.o.
<b>Black-crowned Night-Heron</b>				3/22	P.I.	24	BBC (L. dela Flor)
3/1	Boston	1	J. Young#	3/26	Northfield	2	M. Taylor
3/11	Newbypt	1 imm	S. McGrath	4/12	Pittsfield (Onota)	2	N. Purdy
3/15-20	Falmouth	2	G. Gove#	4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	40	R. Heil
3/29	Harwich	21	G. Gove#	<b>Eurasian Wigeon</b>			
4/24	W. Harwich	22	MAS (P. Flood)	3/15-4/6	Newbypt	1	v.o.
4/30	Medford	24	M. Rines	4/10	Salisbury	2 m	J. Berry#
<b>White Ibis</b>				<b>American Wigeon</b>			
4/27-30	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	R. Fox + v.o.	3/1	Barnstable	25	G. d'Entremont#
<b>Glossy Ibis</b>				3/8, 4/10	Salisbury	5, 11	J. Berry#
3/23, 4/25	P.I.	9, 15	Haydock, Chickering	3/15, 4/5	Newbypt	7, 15	Wetmore, Vale
3/25	Essex	3	J. MacDougall#	3/15	Westport	4	E. Nielsen
3/26, 4/14	Magnolia	17, 21	R. Heil	3/21	Arlington Res.	4	A. Golden
<b>Black Vulture</b>				3/25	Northampton	3	A. Magee
3/12	Sheffield	1	D. Jennings	4/8	Northboro	5	E. Morrier
4/1	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	4/13	Gill	6	S. Kellogg
4/25	Granville	1	J. Wojtanowski	4/20	Bolton Flats	9	M. Lynch
4/30	N. Truro	1	D. Manchester	<b>Blue-winged Teal</b>			
<b>Turkey Vulture</b>				3/26, 4/20	Bolton Flats	2 m	Sutton, Lynch
3/12-29	N. Truro	53	Hawkwatch	3/29	Newbury	6	S. Moore#
3/15	Westport	16	E. Nielsen	3/30	P.I.	4	P. + F. Vale
3/16-28	Barre Falls	80	Hawkwatch	4/9	Northfield	4	M. Taylor
3/16, 26	Barre Falls	18, 18	Hawkwatch	4/10-13	Hatfield	5	A. Richards
3/17-28	Granville	95	Hawkwatch	4/18	DWWS	4	S. Carey#
3/24	W. Townsend	14	T. Pirro	4/19	MBWMA	4	BBC (S. Grinley)
3/24, 25	Granville	31, 27	Hawkwatch	4/28	Arlington Res.	1	M. Rines
3/26	Gloucester	13	R. Heil	<b>Northern Shoveler</b>			
3/28	Randolph	13	G. d'Entremont	3/22	Lakeville	2 m	G. d'Entremont
4/thr	Granville	42	Hawkwatch	3/26, 4/28	Arlington Res.	1, 1	M. Rines
4/thr	Barre Falls	31	Hawkwatch	3/28	P.I.	2	D. Chickering
4/thr	N. Truro	166	Hawkwatch	4/3-5	Gill	2	A. Richards
4/10	Granville	19	Hawkwatch	4/4-6	Northampton	3	C. Gentes
4/15, 21, 25	N. Truro	22, 20, 30	Hawkwatch	4/6	Ipswich	pr	S. Hedman
<b>Greenland Greater White-fronted Goose</b>				4/12	Bolton Flats	1 m	M. Lynch
3/1-23	Fairhaven	4	v.o.	4/16	Stowe	2 m	E. Salmela
3/24	Bolton Flats	1	S. Sutton	4/21	E. Boston (B.I.)	1 m	L. Ferraresso
3/27	Turners Falls	1 ad + 1 imm	M. Fairbrother	4/25	Winchester	pr	R. LaFontaine
<b>Snow Goose</b>				<b>Northern Pintail</b>			
3/29	Longmeadow	29	Allen Club	3/6	Amherst	2	H. Allen
4/5	Hatfield	800	Allen Club	3/15	P.I.	3 m	T. Wetmore
4/6	P.I.	30	BBC (S. Grinley)	3/19	Wayland	8	A. McCarthy#
4/9	Gill	250	M. Taylor	3/22, 4/13	W. Bridgewater	4, 1	J. Sweeney
4/13	W. Stockbridge	200	R. Wheeler	3/22	Cumb. Farms	4	G. d'Entremont
4/17	Ipswich (C.B.)	8	E. Johnson	3/23	Acoaxet	6	M. Lynch
4/30	Granville	19	J. Wojtanowski	3/24, 4/12	Longmeadow	6, 2	Lafley, Kellogg
<b>Brant</b>				3/25	Hadley	4	H. Allen
3/2	Boston H.	574	TASL (M. Hall)	4/5	GMNWR	4	S. Perkins
3/16	Orleans	200	B. Nikula#	4/6	Concord (NAC)	10	T. + D. Brownrigg
3/26	Sandwich	300+	D. Manchester	4/8	Newbury	6	R. Heil
4/6	Duxbury	225	D. Furbish	4/10	Hatfield	2	A. Richards
4/21	Squantum	339	P. O'Neill	4/26	Rockport (A.P.)	2	R. Heil
4/28	Newbury	191	P. + F. Vale				

Green-winged Teal			4/14	Magnolia	290	R. Heil
3/9 Longmeadow	3	R. Packard	4/26	Rockport (A.P.)	42	R. Heil
3/22, 4/13 W. Bridgewater	4, 65	J. Sweeney		Harlequin Duck		
3/23, 4/25 W. Harwich	32, 55	B. Nikula	3/1	Rockport	86	M. Lynch
3/27, 4/28 Arlington Res.	43, 16	M. Rines	3/29	Orleans	5	G. Gove#
3/30 Newbury	114	R. Heil	4/8, 26	Rockport (A.P.)	18, 8	R. Heil
3/30 Concord (NAC)	60	T. Pirro	4/13	N. Scituate	9	G. d'Entremont
4/10 Hatfield	55	A. Richards	4/30	Chilmark	30	A. Keith
4/12 Northampton	90	T. Gagnon		Surf Scoter		
4/14 Bolton Flats	330	T. Pirro	3/2	Boston H.	163	TASL (M. Hall)
4/26 P.I.	34	P. + F. Vale	3/15	Westport	1200	E. Nielsen
Eurasian Teal			3/16	P.I.	20	S. Sturup
4/1-7 Groton	1 m	T. Pirro	3/23	Fairhaven	29	M. Lynch
4/5-10 Newbury	1 m	v.o.	4/14	Manchester	650	J. Berry
4/9 Sunderland	1	A. Richards	4/16	Nahant	40	J. Berry#
4/13 W. Bridgewater	1	J. Sweeney#	4/26	Rockport (A.P.)	70	R. Heil
Canvasback				White-winged Scoter		
3/1 Barnstable	55	G. d'Entremont#	3/1	Cape Ann	222	M. Lynch
3/1 Dighton	16	J. Paluzzi#	3/2	Boston H.	787	TASL (M. Hall)
3/2 Lakeville	12	K. Anderson#	3/9	Agawam	1	R. Packard
3/7 Falmouth	25	G. Gove#	3/15	P.I.	70	T. Wetmore
3/8 Nantucket	51	E. Ray	3/23	Fairhaven	28	M. Lynch
3/15 Westport	25	J. Hoye#	3/31	Nahant	280	L. Pivacek
3/16 Somerset	19	J. Sweeney#	4/26	Rockport (A.P.)	26	R. Heil
3/28 GMNWR	2	B. Miller	4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	18	R. Heil
3/28 Randolph	4	G. d'Entremont		Black Scoter		
Redhead			3/1	Cape Ann	102	M. Lynch
3/9 Nantucket	1	E. Ray	3/2	Boston H.	19	TASL (M. Hall)
Ring-necked Duck			3/15-31	M.V.	5000+	fide A. Keith
3/15-21 Falmouth	224	G. Gove	4/13	N. Scituate	200	G. d'Entremont
3/16 Lakeville	54	J. Sweeney#	4/14	Magnolia	150 migr	R. Heil
3/16 Agawam	100	G. Kingston	4/19, 30	Chilmark	2500, 3	A. Keith
3/23 Sudbury	75	B. Volkle#		Long-tailed Duck		
3/29 S. Groveland	120	D. Larson	3/2	Newbypt	50	T. Wetmore
3/30 Concord (NAC)	240	T. Pirro	4/10	Pittsfield	2	N. Purdy
3/30 W. Bridgewater	100	G. d'Entremont	4/15, 29	Newbypt/P.I.	150, 525	R. Heil
4/2, 19 Bolton Flats	54, 24	S. Sutton	4/17	Ipswich (C.B.)	50	E. Johnson
4/5 Gill	200	Allen Club	4/26	Rockport (A.P.)	1293	R. Heil
4/9 Hadley	200	H. Allen		Bufflehead		
4/13 Westboro	111	M. Lynch	3/1	Gloucester	207	M. Lynch
4/21 Stow	38	S. Sutton	3/2	Boston H.	1705	TASL (M. Hall)
Tufted Duck *			3/8	Newbypt	150	J. Berry#
3/15 Westport	1 f	E. Nielsen	3/8	Nantucket	600	E. Ray
Greater Scaup			3/9	Chatham (S.B.)	300+	P. Flood
3/thr Nahant	70 max	L. Pivacek#	3/15	Westport	430	E. Nielsen
3/1 Fairhaven	150	G. d'Entremont#	3/22	Mashpee	100+	M. Keleher
3/1 Cape Ann	42	M. Lynch	3/29	Turners Falls	18	T. Gagnon
3/2 Boston H.	1767	TASL (M. Hall)	3/31	Nahant	212	L. Pivacek
3/4, 4/5 Turners Falls	2, 4	A. Moeckel	4/10	Ludlow	10	H. Allen
3/9 Nantucket	178	E. Ray		Common Goldeneye		
3/22 Falmouth	260+	S. Sutton	3/2	Boston H.	1408	TASL (M. Hall)
3/22 Lakeville	215	G. d'Entremont	3/7, 4/14	Newbypt/P.I.	435, 50	R. Heil
3/29 Squantum	500	G. d'Entremont#	3/7	Montague	65	H. Allen
4/5 Hadley	2	H. Allen	3/9	Chatham (S.B.)	85	P. Flood
4/7 Pittsfield (Onota)	2	S. Poulin	3/12	Haverhill	184	R. Heil
4/27 Randolph	18	G. d'Entremont	3/15	Westport	390	E. Nielsen
Lesser Scaup			3/19	Holyoke	60	S. Kellogg
3/thr Nahant	83 max	L. Pivacek#	3/22	Turners Falls	70	T. Gagnon
3/7, 4/5 Turners Falls	2, 4	Allen	3/22	Mashpee	80	M. Keleher
3/15 Westport	37	E. Nielsen	3/25	Medford	12	R. LaFontaine
3/16 Dighton	10	J. Sweeney#	4/13	Northboro	6	M. Lynch
3/22 Lakeville	10	G. d'Entremont	4/28	Toppsfield	1	J. Berry
3/30 Wakefield	5	P. + F. Vale		Barrow's Goldeneye		
4/6 Holyoke	2	T. Gagnon	3/1	Gloucester	1	J. Nelson
4/9, 30 Chilmark	200, 4	A. Keith	3/2	Boston H.	1	TASL (M. Hall)
4/13 Northboro	8	M. Lynch	3/7-22	Newbypt	2-3	v.o.
4/18 W. Newbury	4	D. Chickering	3/7, 25	Falmouth	3, 4	G. Gove#
King Eider			3/8	Nantucket	2 pr	E. Ray
3/24 Barnstable	1 m ad	J. Trimble#	3/9, 22	Turners Falls	1, 2	Fairbrother, Allen
4/14 Magnolia	1 ad m	R. Heil	3/12	Berkley	1	J. Sweeney
Common Eider			3/12	Haverhill	4	R. Heil
3/thr M.V.	10,000+	fide A. Keith	3/15	P.I.	2	B. Krisler
3/1 Fairhaven	450	G. d'Entremont#	3/22	Gloucester (E.P.)	2 m	S. Leonard
3/1 Cape Ann	433	M. Lynch		Hooded Merganser		
3/2 Boston H.	6897	TASL (M. Hall)	3/12	Haverhill	74	R. Heil
3/9 Chatham (S.B.)	250+	P. Flood	3/14	Wareham	15	C. Buelow
3/15 Westport	800	E. Nielsen	3/16	Lakeville	16	J. Sweeney#
3/16 Newbypt	400	T. Wetmore	3/18	Concord	11	B. McHugh

Hooded Merganser (continued)

3/22	Hyannis	10	C. Buelow
3/23	Wakefield	42	P. + F. Vale
3/23	Melrose	12	D. + I. Jewell
3/26	Gill	75	M. Taylor
3/30	HRWMA	12	T. Pirro
4/3	W. Carver	1 f on nest	R. Turner
4/7	Middleboro	1 f on nest	R. Turner
4/13	Hopkinton	5	E. Taylor
4/20	New Braintree	15	C. Buelow
4/30	Newbury	pr	J. Berry#
Red-breasted Merganser			
3/1	Gloucester	299	M. Lynch
3/2	Boston H.	749	TASL (M. Hall)
3/9	Chatham (S.B.)	220	P. Flood
3/15	Westport	260	E. Nielsen
3/26-4/5	Turners Falls	2-5	v.o.
3/27	P'town (R.P.)	350+	S. Highley#
3/29	Squantum	350	G. d'Entremont#
3/31	Southwick	3	S. Kellogg
4/5	Gill	3	Allen Club
4/14	Manchester	90	J. Berry
4/26	Rockport (A.P.)	25	R. Heil
4/29	Westport	30+	M. Lynch
Common Merganser			
3/12	Haverhill	90	R. Heil
3/12	W. Newbury	52	R. Heil
3/23	Quincy	40	S. Maguire
3/23	Lenox	150	N. Purdy
3/27	Arlington	289	M. Rines
3/29	Montague	70	J. Hoye#
4/1	Westboro	225	E. Morrier
4/7	Brookfield	83	I. Lynch
4/13	Attleboro	45	J. Sweeney#
4/21	Hardwick	9	C. Buelow
4/27	Randolph	8	G. d'Entremont
Ruddy Duck			
3/1-4/6	Nahant	53 max	L.Pivacek#
3/17	Medford	6	M. Rines#
3/29	Boston	18	G. d'Entremont#
4/9	Chilmark	6	A. Keith
4/9	Winchester	12	M. Rines
4/15	Arlington Res.	14	S. Baker
Osprey			
3/15, 16	Oak Bluffs	1, 8	N. Weaver
3/23	Acoaxet	11	M. Lynch
4/6-30	N. Truro	27	Hawkwatch
4/10	Mashpee	14	M. Keleher
4/10-30	Granville	87	Hawkwatch
4/12-29	Barre Falls	170	Hawkwatch
4/15, 25	Granville	13, 19	Hawkwatch
4/15, 16	Barre Falls	22, 21	Hawkwatch
4/23, 25	Barre Falls	17, 18	Hawkwatch
4/29	Westport	20 nests	M. Lynch
Bald Eagle			
3/7	Newbypt/P.I.	7	R. Heil
3/12	Haverhill	2 ad, 2 imm	R. Heil
3/12	Lawrence	10	R. Heil
3/15	Melrose	1	D. + I. Jewell
3/16	N. Truro	2	Hawkwatch
3/16-28	Granville	9	Hawkwatch
3/25	Maynard	1 ad, 2 imm	L. Nachtrab
3/30	Brookfield	pr building n	M. Lynch
4/thr	Granville	5	Hawkwatch
4/1-24	Barre Falls	10	Hawkwatch
4/25-29	N. Truro	6	Hawkwatch
4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	3	R. Heil
Northern Harrier			
3/7	Newbypt/P.I.	5	R. Heil
3/12-23	N. Truro	8	Hawkwatch
3/19	Cumb. Farms	3	K. Anderson#
3/22	W. Bridgewater	3	J. Sweeney
4/thr	Granville	14	Hawkwatch
4/thr	Barre Falls	18	Hawkwatch
4/13-30	N. Truro	21	Hawkwatch
4/15	Eastham	3	C. Buelow
4/15	P.I.	24	T. Carrolan
4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	9	R. Heil

Sharp-shinned Hawk

3/17-26	Granville	11	Hawkwatch
3/17-28	Barre Falls	14	Hawkwatch
3/20-29	N. Truro	7	Hawkwatch
3/25	Granville	5	Hawkwatch
4/thr	N. Truro	122	Hawkwatch
4/thr	Granville	135	Hawkwatch
4/thr	Barre Falls	155	Hawkwatch
4/15	P.I.	32	T. Carrolan
4/15, 16	Barre Falls	26, 29	Hawkwatch
4/16, 25	Granville	15, 20	Hawkwatch
4/16	P.I.	44	T. Carrolan
4/21	Mt. Watatic	4	R. Stymeist
4/25, 28, 29	N. Truro	30, 31, 28	Hawkwatch
4/28	P'town (R.P.)	5	A. Strauss
4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	38	R. Heil
Cooper's Hawk			
3/16	Peabody	4	R. Heil
3/16, 29	N. Truro	1, 2	Hawkwatch
3/17-25	Barre Falls	10	Hawkwatch
3/26	Lakeville	pr	A. Brissette
4/thr	N. Truro	36	Hawkwatch
4/10-30	Granville	9	Hawkwatch
Northern Goshawk			
3/3	Brookline	2	H. Wiggin
3/12	Stoneham	1	D. + I. Jewell
3/16	Barre Falls	2	Hawkwatch
3/16	Quabbin (G 43)	1	J. Hoye#
3/20	E. Middleboro	pr	R. Clem
3/22	Northampton	1	T. Gagnon
3/24	Northfield	1	I. Lynch
4/12	ONWR	1	S. Sutton
4/14	Lenox	1	C. Blagdon
4/16	Maynard	1	L. Nachtrab
4/18	Rowley	1	P. + F. Vale
4/19	Mt Washington	1	T. Gagnon
4/20	Holyoke	1	Allen Club
4/24	W. Falmouth	1	M. Kelleher
4/29	Granville	1	Hawkwatch
Red-shouldered Hawk			
3/16	Barre Falls	4	Hawkwatch
3/16-17	Granville	3	Hawkwatch
3/16-28	Barre Falls	26	Hawkwatch
3/17	Maynard	3	L. Nachtrab
3/17	Barre Falls	9	Hawkwatch
4/1	N. Truro	2	Hawkwatch
4/13	Middleboro	3	R. Clem
4/16-4/20	Granville	5	Hawkwatch
4/16-4/21	Barre Falls	30	Hawkwatch
Broad-winged Hawk			
3/23	Gr Barrington	1	J. Johnson
3/25	Northampton	1	A. Magee
4/15-30	Barre Falls	883	Hawkwatch
4/15-30	Granville	687	Hawkwatch
4/16, 23	Barre Falls	52, 116	Hawkwatch
4/19, 25	Maynard	2, 10	L. Nachtrab
4/20, 25	Granville	65, 251	Hawkwatch
4/21	Mt. Watatic	10	R. Stymeist
4/25, 28	Barre Falls	391, 114	Hawkwatch
4/25-29	N. Truro	24	Hawkwatch
4/25	Groton	26	T. Pirro
4/27, 28	Granville	122, 103	Hawkwatch
Red-tailed Hawk			
3/1	Gloucester	5	M. Lynch
3/12-29	N. Truro	18	Hawkwatch
3/15-4/28	Barre Falls	125	Hawkwatch
3/16-28	Granville	52	Hawkwatch
3/16-28	Barre Falls	86	Hawkwatch
3/17, 25	Granville	20, 14	Hawkwatch
3/24, 25	Barre Falls	16, 15	Hawkwatch
4/1-20	Barre Falls	39	Hawkwatch
4/10-20	Granville	38	Hawkwatch
4/20	Harvard	16	M. Lynch
Rough-legged Hawk			
3/7	Newbypt/P.I.	2 lt	R. Heil
3/22, 4/27	Cumb. Farms	6 lt, 1 lt	J. Sweeney
3/29	N. Truro	1	Hawkwatch
4/1	DWWS	1 dk	M. Tuttle#

Rough-legged Hawk (continued)				4/20	Bolton Flats	1	M. Lynch
4/6	Concord (NAC)	1 lt	D. Diggins	4/25	Ipswich	1	J. Berry
4/13	Newbypt	1 dk	T. Wetmore	4/26	W. Newbury	1	S. Sutton
4/14	Deerfield	1	R. Packard	4/27	Longmeadow	1	Allen Club
4/18	P.I.	1 lt	T. Wetmore	4/30	Amherst	1	C. Gentes
4/19	Nantucket	1	S. Langer		Sora		
4/21	Granville	1	Hawkwatch	4/21	DWWS	1	P. O'Neill
4/25	N. Truro	2	Hawkwatch	4/21	Malden	1	D. Gibson
Golden Eagle				4/27	Barre FD	1	M. Lynch
3/25	Granville	1	Hawkwatch	4/30	Amherst	1	C. Gentes
4/10, 25	Granville	1, 1	Hawkwatch		American Coot		
4/15	Barre Falls	1	Hawkwatch	3/1	Boston	2	J. Young#
American Kestrel				3/9, 4/12	Woburn	4, 6	M. Rines
3/2	Boston H.	4	TASL (M. Hall)	3/9	Medford	4	P. Roberts
3/24-28	Granville	8	Hawkwatch	3/16-30	Brookline	3	E. Taylor
3/30	DWWS	4	D. Furbish	3/19	Brockton	3	M. Faherty
4/3	Scituate	7	D. Furbish		Black-bellied Plover		
4/6-30	N. Truro	84	Hawkwatch	3/15	P'town (R.P.)	5	G. d'Entremont#
4/6-30	Granville	53	Hawkwatch	4/6	Duxbury	5	D. Furbish
4/12-29	Barre Falls	45	Hawkwatch	4/21	Winthrop	23	L. Ferraresso
4/15, 6	P.I.	191, 167	T. Carrolan		Piping Plover		
4/20	Barre Falls	11	Hawkwatch	3/18	Tisbury	1	D. Swanson
4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	108	R. Heil	3/21, 4/17	Ipswich (C.B.)	1, 17 pr	E. Johnson
4/29	N. Truro	32	Hawkwatch	3/24	P.I.	6	O. Spalding#
Merlin				3/25	Gloucester	4	J. Soucy#
3/16-4/28	Barre Falls	6	Hawkwatch	4/5	Nantucket	7	fide E. Ray
3/26-4/16	Granville	3	Hawkwatch	4/6	P'town	16	B. Nikula#
4/15	Newbypt/P.I.	8	R. Heil	4/20	W. Dennis B.	5	P. Flood
4/15	P.I.	11	T. Carrolan	4/21	M.V.	first eggs	D. Swanson
4/15-30	N. Truro	22	Hawkwatch		Killdeer		
4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	7	R. Heil	3/9-12	Reports of indiv. from 12 locations		
4/29	N. Truro	7	Hawkwatch	3/29	P.I.	15	T. Wetmore
Peregrine Falcon				4/6	Tyringham	40	K. + M. Conway
3/9	W. Tisbury	1	L. McDowell	4/6	Barre Falls	15	B. Kamp#
3/9	Agawam	2	R. Packard	4/7	Bolton Flats	48	S. Sutton
3/11, 25	Mt.A.	1, 1	R. Stymeist#	4/8	Newbury	22	R. Heil
3/22	Deerfield	1	H. Allen	4/8	Westboro	14	E. Morrier
4/5	W. Tisbury	1	V. Laux	4/10	Easthampton	43	C. Gentes
4/5	Northfield	1	M. Taylor	4/15	Newbypt/P.I.	15	R. Heil
4/6	Newbury	1	S. Leonard		American Oystercatcher		
4/6	Byfield	2	S. McGrath	3/13, 15	Tisbury	2, 6+	L. Raleigh + v.o.
4/13	Amherst	2	D. Norton	3/23	Fairhaven	6	M. Lynch
4/20	P'town (R.P.)	1	C. Jackson	3/29-31	Boston (Thomp. I.)	4	D. Brown#
4/23	Boston	2	G. Tepke	4/thr	Squantum	4	G. d'Entremont
4/24	Granville	1	Hawkwatch	4/6	W. Dennis B.	1	P. Flood
4/29	N. Truro	1	Hawkwatch	4/7	Bourne	1	J. Kricher
Gyr Falcon				4/18	Winthrop	4	D. Chickering
3/2	Boston H.	1	TASL (M. Hall)	4/19	Newypt	1	K. Stemp
3/29	N. Truro	1 white	Hawkwatch	4/28	S. Dartmouth	3	K. Anderson#
Ring-necked Pheasant					Greater Yellowlegs		
3/25	Nahant	5	L. Pivacek	3/16	Pittsfield	2	N. Purdy
3/29	Woburn	3	M. Rines	3/22	Falmouth	2	S. Sutton
4/19	Belmont	4	R. Stymeist	3/26	Newbypt	6	L. Wetmore
Ruffed Grouse				3/29, 4/19	Squantum	2, 14	G. d'Entremont#
3/22	E. Brookfield	1	R. Stymeist	4/3	Scituate	3	D. Furbish
3/22	Hyannis	1	C. Buelow	4/14	Bourne	2	J. Kricher
4/6	Wachusett Res.	1	S. Sutton	4/15, 29	Newbypt/P.I.	52, 230	R. Heil
4/27	Barre FD	4 drumming	M. Lynch	4/15	DWWS	15	D. Furbish#
Wild Turkey				4/30	Chilmark	16	A. Keith
3/thr	E. Middleboro	9-12	K. Anderson#		Lesser Yellowlegs		
3/7	DWWS	27	D. Furbish	4/6	Newbypt	2	BBC (S. Grinley)
3/15	Concord	19	M. Rines	4/15	Bolton Flats	1	S. Sutton
3/16	Melrose	7	D. Wilkinson	4/26	Arlington Res.	1	M. Rines
3/28	GMNWR	6	B. Miller	4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	6	R. Heil
3/29	Bradford	7	D. Larson	4/30	Rowley	2	P. + F. Vale
3/30	Topsfield	17	P. + F. Vale		Solitary Sandpiper		
4/10	Grafton	21	J. Scott	4/28	Chilmark	1	A. Keith
4/19	MBWMA	7	BBC (S. Grinley)	4/29	P.I.	3 migr	R. Heil
4/28	Sherborn	18	E. Taylor		Willet		
Northern Bobwhite				4/14	P.I.	2	N. Schwarzel
4/3, 30	Concord	1	M. Schwope	4/23	Scituate	1	D. Furbish
Clapper Rail				4/25	W. Dennis	3	P. Flood
3/18	W. Harwich	1	M. Dettrey	4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	5	R. Heil
4/29	P.I.	1	R. Heil	4/30	Westport	23	J. Scott
Virginia Rail					Spotted Sandpiper		
4/19	Belmont	1	R. Stymeist	4/29	P.I.	1	L. Cooper
4/19	Winchester	1	M. Rines	4/29	Becket	2	R. Laubach
4/20	New Braintree	1	C. Buelow	4/30	Arlington Res.	1	C. Floyd

Spotted Sandpiper (continued)			4/27	Orleans	11	M. Keleher
4/30 Woburn	1	M. Rines	4/29	Lynn B.	2	B. Faherty
Upland Sandpiper			Little Gull			
4/15 DWWS	1	D. Furbish#	4/7	Nahant	1	O. Spalding#
4/27-30 Newbury	1	D. + S. Larson	4/30	Nahant	3 ad, 1 1W	N. Bonomo
4/28 Chicopee	20	Allen Club	Black-headed Gull			
4/29 P.I.	1	R. Heil	3/7	P.I.	1 1W	R. Heil
Whimbrel			3/16	Winthrop B.	1	MAS (D. Larson)
4/27-30 S. Dartmouth	1 ad	W. Harrington#	4/1	Nahant	2	L. Pivacek
4/30 P.I.	1	MAS (N. Soulette)	4/6	Newbypt	1	J. Hoye#
Ruddy Turnstone			Bonaparte's Gull			
3/1 Fairhaven	25	G. d'Entremont#	3/30	Brookfield	1 ad	M. Lynch
3/2 Boston H.	16	TASL (M. Hall)	4/7	Nahant	250	O. Spalding#
4/12 Winthrop	23	P. + F. Vale	4/10	Pittsfield	1	N. Purdy
Sanderling			4/15	Newbypt/P.I.	18	R. Heil
3/1, 250 P'town (R.P.)	75	Nikula, d'Entremont	4/26	Gill	2	S. Surner
3/1 Rockport	90	J. Hoye#	4/30	Nahant	1500	N. Bonomo
4/29 Lynn B.	320	B. Faherty	Mew Gull (details submitted) *			
Least Sandpiper			3/8-10	Newbypt	1 ad	J. Berry# + v.o.
4/29 Newbypt/P.I.	13	R. Heil	Iceland Gull			
4/29 Westport	1	M. Lynch	3/1, 27	P'town (R.P.)	15	Nikula, Highley
4/30 P.I.	1	T. Wetmore	3/1	Gloucester	4 1W	M. Lynch
White-rumped Sandpiper			3/9	Agawam	1	R. Packard
4/29 P.I.	1	R. Heil	3/12	Lawrence	2	R. Heil
Pectoral Sandpiper			3/15, 4/8	Newbypt	3 ad, 2 ad	Pirro, Heil
3/29 Newbury	30	S. Moore#	3/27	P'town (R.P.)	6	S. Highley#
4/3 Bolton Flats	11	S. Sutton	3/29	Turners Falls	1	T. Gagnon
4/15 P.I.	3	R. Heil	4/1-23	Oak Bluffs	2	V. Laux + v.o.
4/15 DWWS	3	D. Furbish#	4/6	Northampton	1	C. Gentes
Purple Sandpiper			4/14	Bolton Flats	1 2W	T. Pirro
3/1 Fairhaven	7	G. d'Entremont#	4/24	Lynn	1 1S	J. Quigley
3/2 Boston H.	91	TASL (M. Hall)	Lesser Black-backed Gull			
3/2, 4/14 Magnolia	60+	Ferraresso, Heil	3/thr	Plymouth	1 ad	v. o.
3/8 Gloucester (E.P.)	180	J. + M. Nelson	3/8	Salisbury	1 ad	P. Baicich#
4/13 N. Scituate	150	G. d'Entremont	3/15	Edgartown	1 ad	A. Keith
4/26 Rockport (A.P.)	7	R. Heil	3/16, 4/12	Brewster	2 ad, 1 ad	Flood, Nikula
4/27 Salisbury	35	D. Chickering	4/7-10	Barre	1 ad	C. Buelow
4/29 Lynn B.	8	B. Faherty	4/12	Harwich	1 ad	B. Nikula
Dunlin			4/1-23	Oak Bluffs	1	V. Laux + v.o.
3/1 Fairhaven	75	G. d'Entremont#	4/20	Northampton	1	T. Gagnon
3/9 Chatham (S.B.)	260	P. Flood	4/23	Plymouth B.	1 2S	P. O'Neill
3/15 P'town (R.P.)	135	G. d'Entremont#	Glaucous Gull			
3/16 Dennis	160	B. Nikula#	3/8	Gloucester	1	BBC (W. Drummond)
4/6 Duxbury	420	D. Furbish	3/14	Agawam	1	N. Eaton
4/29 Newbypt H.	200	R. Heil	3/16-23	Marshfield	1 2W	W. + E. Lackey
Wilson's Snipe			4/1	Beverly	1 2W	J. Paluzzi
3/22, 4/15 DWWS	1, 30	D. Furbish	4/5	Newbypt	1 1W	P. + F. Vale
3/24, 4/6 Hadley	4, 41	Lafley, Gemtes	4/14	Magnolia	1 1W	R. Heil
3/29 Squantum	11	G. d'Entremont#	4/19-23	Oak Bluffs	1	A. Keith + v.o.
3/30, 4/8 Newbury	136, 154	R. Heil	Black-legged Kittiwake			
4/3 Lexington	56	M. Rines	3/8	Eastham (F.H.)	2	CCBC (M. Dettrey)
4/5 Topsfield	65	E. Stokes	3/16	P'town (R.P.)	2	S. Hedman#
4/6 W. Bridgewater	63	J. Sweeney#	4/12	Rockport	1	S. Hedman
4/6 Tyringham	37	K. + M. Conway	Caspian Tern			
4/7, 19 Bolton Flats	133, 57	S. Sutton	4/24	P.I.	2	MAS (B. Gette)
4/12 Lincoln	144	M. Rines	Common Tern			
4/25 Hardwick	2	C. Buelow	4/15	Hyannis	2	S. Clifton
4/27 Northampton	1	M. Faherty	4/21	Newbypt	2	O. Spalding#
American Woodcock			4/25	M.V.	1	V. Laux
3/16 Taunton	6	J. Sweeney#	4/29	Westport	18	M. Lynch
3/18 Lexington	6	P. Savage	Forster's Tern			
3/21 Cummaquid	6	D. Silverstein#	4/25-29	Newbypt	2 ad	J. Soucy#
3/23 Cambridge	8	D. Cowell	Common Murre			
3/23 N. Reading	6	D. Williams	3/1, 8	P'town (R.P.)	4, 11	Nikula, Hoye
3/25 Worcester	14	M. Lynch	4/8, 26	Rockport (A.P.)	2, 1	R. Heil
3/26 Salem	8	M. Burns	4/10, 18	Gay Head	2, 1	Keith, McDowell
4/20 Hardwick	9	C. Buelow	Thick-billed Murre			
Laughing Gull			3/1	P'town (R.P.)	2	B. Nikula#
3/18 Orleans	1	C. Thompson	Razorbill			
3/20 Plymouth H.	1	K. Anderson#	3/1, 4/8	Rockport	8	Lynch, Heil
3/23 Chatham	2	C. + S. Thompson	3/1, 4/13	P'town (R.P.)	30, 4	Nikula, Hoye
3/25 Plymouth	1 ad	D. Furbish	3/15-4/10	Chilmark	15-25	fide A. Keith
3/27 P'town (R.P.)	2	S. Highley#	4/14	Magnolia	2	R. Heil
4/6 W. Dennis B.	2	P. Flood	4/27	Nantucket Sound	6	C. Jackson
4/19 Lynn	1	J. Hoye#	Black Guillemot			
4/25 Manomet	1	P. O'Neill	3/1	Gloucester	12	M. Lynch
4/26 Rockport (A.P.)	3 ad	R. Heil	3/27	Nahant	2	D. Saffarewich
4/26 Gloucester	2	J. Barber	4/8, 26	Rockport (A.P.)	1 1W, 2	R. Heil

Black Guillemot (continued)				Large alcid species			
4/10	Gay Head	1	A. Keith	5/1	P'town (R.P.)	100+	B. Nikula#
4/13	N. Scituate	1	G. d'Entremont	4/6, 13	P'town	450, 70	B. Nikula#
Atlantic Puffin							
4/26	Rockport (A.P.)	1	R. Heil				

## PARAKEETS THROUGH FINCHES

The severe winter weather had a dramatic effect on many birds. The Barn Owl population on Martha's Vineyard took a big crash, and at least twenty-three owls are known to have died on the Vineyard between February and March. On Nantucket observers had seen no evidence of a similar die-off, although the conditions were also severe with heavy snow and prolonged cold temperatures. Barn Owls do not tolerate extreme cold, and a heavy snow cover makes it difficult to find the small rodents that comprise their diet. A careful watch of known nesting pairs will be made this spring. The other southern species which is mentioned often in severe winter weather is the Carolina Wren, and there is speculation that populations will be reduced dramatically. This has happened in years past when we have had a cold and particularly snowy winter. It is unlikely that we will get a true picture of population trends until the Christmas Bird Counts.

It turns out that much-maligned and numerous microwave or cell towers do have some value for birds. Common Ravens have discovered that they make ideal nesting platforms, and raven pairs were noted constructing nests on towers in Blackstone, Paxton, and in Foxboro. On Martha's Vineyard a Great Horned Owl hatched two chicks around March 17 for the first documented nesting on the Vineyard.

Despite a mostly cold spring, migration really did begin. There was a general arrival of redwings and grackles in early March, Eastern Phoebes started to arrive in mid- March, and Tree Swallows were much in evidence by the end of March.

In early April, birders are really looking forward to more but the weather sure didn't feel like spring. The first 14 days of April were cold, and in Boston 2.3 inches of snow fell. On the night of April 14 a strong southwest wind pumped the temperature from a high of 57° on the 14th to a record-breaking 81° on the 15th. All those migrants backed up to our south were just waiting to move and move they did! Observers on Plum Island and at Marblehead Neck reported a fallout of Northern Flickers with birds scattering at every corner. From all over the state there were reports of kinglets, Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped, Pine and Palm warblers, and Chipping and Savannah sparrows. A Black-throated Blue Warbler made a predawn visit to a yard in Mattapoisett for one of the earliest arrivals on record. The heat was just a tease in the weather; the mercury fell 54° from a high of 84° on April 16 to a low of 30° on April 17!

A major fallout (the mother of all April fallouts in Rick Heil's opinion) occurred on the night of April 28 when a southwest wind, the first in almost two weeks, brought favorable conditions for migration. Yellow-rumped Warblers were everywhere in good numbers with an exceptional fallout on Plum Island. In Rick Heil's own words: "During the first 3-4 hours of daylight there was a steady and heavy stream of warblers departing the island thickets and flying up and out to the northwest. For several hours I positioned myself along the refuge road and counted, by twos or by tens, as many hundreds of warblers flew past, some at eye level, some a hundred or hundreds of feet up, all heading out over the marsh and back to the mainland. Such a departure after a fallout is typical behavior of many warblers and other passerines which is why birding is certainly better here (Plum Island) in the very early morning."

The fallout at the end of April also had some noteworthy additions, Two Yellow-billed Cuckoos, unusual in April were noted from Martha's Vineyard. A total of over five

hummingbirds were recorded as compared with just one last April. A Magnolia Warbler in Becket on April 29 was the second earliest arrival date for western Massachusetts (4/28/69). The vanguard of many other warbler species also arrived on April 29.

The severe winter weather extended well into the southern states and may have had an effect on many birds that winter there; for example Seth Kellogg reports very few sightings of Winter Wrens as compared to recent years, the fewest numbers of Eastern Bluebirds since 1982 in western Massachusetts. Red-breasted Nuthatch numbers were very low statewide and interestingly, there seems to be a similar reduction in the number of Hairy Woodpeckers at least as found in some CBC circles in Worcester County. Red-bellied Woodpeckers on the other hand did well during the winter and their numbers continue to increase all over the state.

Rare and unusual reports included hangovers from the winter, a **Red-headed Woodpecker** from Turner's Falls and a **Clay colored Sparrow** at the Bird Watcher's Supply and Gift in Newburyport. A **Lark Sparrow** in breeding plumage paid a very brief visit to a feeder in Springfield and a **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was found in Northampton.

There were no reports of crossbills, redpolls or siskins, and for the fourth year in a row Evening Grosbeaks were scarce.

*R. Stymeist*

Monk Parakeet			4/30	Gloucester	1	D. Peloquin
thr Somerset	1-3	v.o.	Chimney Swift			
Yellow-billed Cuckoo			4/15	N. Truro	2	D. Manchester#
4/30 Oak Bluffs	1	M. Pelikan	4/27	W. Bridgewater	2	D. Cabral
4/30 W. Tisbury	1	A. Keith	4/28	Maynard	4	L. Nachtrab
Eastern Screech-Owl			4/28	Barre Falls	1	B. Kamp#
thr Reports of indiv. from 10 locations			4/28	Mt.A.	2	R. Stymeist
3/24 Winchester	3	M. Rines	4/29	Granville	1	J. Wojtanowski
3/thr DWWS	4	D. Furbish	4/29	Newbypt/P.I.	18 migr	R. Heil
4/8 Cummaquid	pr	E. Miller#	4/29	S. Lancaster	5	S. Sutton
4/19 MBWMA	3	BBC (S. Grinley)	Ruby-throated Hummingbird			
Great Horned Owl			4/20	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore
thr Reports of indiv. from 12 locations			4/29	Middleboro	1	K. Anderson
3/17 M.V.	pr + 2yg	T. Benoit	4/30	Reading	1 m	D. Schromm
3/20 Stoughton	3	G. d'Entremont	Belted Kingfisher			
3/25 Worcester	2	M. Lynch	4/15	Newbypt/P.I.	3	R. Heil
3/thr DWWS	4	D. Furbish#	4/20	New Braintree	3	C. Buelow
Snowy Owl			4/20	Bolton Flats	5	M. Lynch
3/1, 4,2 P.I.	3	Tepke, Offerman	<b>Red-headed Woodpecker</b>			
3/7 Newbypt/P.I.	4	R. Heil	3/20-4/20	Turners Falls	1	v.o.
3/11 Boston	1	P. O'Neill#	Red-bellied Woodpecker			
3/16 Duxbury B.	1	MAS (D. Furbish)	3/15-4/31	Mt.A.	pr n	R. Stymeist
Barred Owl			3/22	Westport	4	G. d'Entremont
thr Reports of indiv. from 8 locations			3/22	Sutton	5	M. Lynch
3/6 Brimfield	2	I. Lynch	4/19-30	Topsfield	pr n	J. Berry
3/16 Stoughton	pr	G. d'Entremont	4/21	Milton	3	P. O'Neill
3/23 Hardwick	3	C. Buelow	4/23	Ipswich	pr n	J. Berry
4/thr Sherborn	2	E. Taylor	4/30	Newbury	pr n	J. Berry#
Long-eared Owl			Yellow-bellied Sapsucker			
3/thr DWWS	1	D. Furbish + v.o.	3/16	Mt.A.	1	R. Stymeist
3/15-26 Woburn	2	M. Rines#	3/28	Pittsfield	1	K. Reed
3/17 P.I.	1	M. Faherty#	4/12	Newbypt	1 m	S. Hedman
4/20 Falmouth	1	M. Kasprzyck	4/15	Newton	1 m	R. Merrill
Short-eared Owl			4/16	Boston	4	G. Tepke
3/thr DWWS	2	D. Furbish + v.o.	4/28	Gardner	1 f	T. Pirro
3/1-22 P.I.	4 max	v.o.	Hairy Woodpecker			
3/5 Rowley	1	S. McGrath	3/16	Bolton Flats	4+	S. Sutton
3/16 Truro	3	D. Manchester#	3/23	Lincoln	3	M. Rines#
3/18 Eastham (F.H.)	1	C. Thompson	3/29	Brimfield	3	I. Lynch
3/23 Lincoln	1	K. Clayton	4/16	Woburn	3	M. Rines
4/8 Magnolia	1	R. Heil	4/29	Gardner	4	T. Pirro
4/9 Medfield	1	E. Morrier	Northern Flicker			
Northern Saw-whet Owl			3/22	DWWS	14	D. Furbish
3/1-8 Lexington	1	M. Rines	4/15	MNWS	75+	K. Haley
3/5 Ashfield	1	S. Sauter	4/15	Newbypt/P.I.	85	R. Heil
3/15 New Salem	1	W. Lafley	4/16	Medford	13	P. + F. Vale
4/4-8 Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	4/18	Mt.A.	16	P. + F. Vale
Whip-poor-will			4/20	Bolton Flats	18	M. Lynch
4/29 Belchertown	1	M. Taylor	4/21	N. Truro	13	D. Manchester#



Brown Creeper (continued)			Wood Thrush			
4/15	Salisbury	7	D. Chickering	4/28-29	MNWS 1	J. Smith#
4/23-30	Ipswich	pr n	J. Berry#	4/30	Longmeadow 2	Allen Club
4/27	Boxford (C.P.)	9	L. de la Flor#	American Robin		
4/27	Barre FD	18	M. Lynch	3/1	Barnstable 250	G. d'Entremont#
Carolina Wren				3/15	Westport 450	E. Nielsen
3/22	Westport	21	G. d'Entremont	3/30	New Braintree 580+	M. Lynch
3/22	Leicester	3	R. Stymeist	4/8	Newbury 350	R. Heil
3/28	Pittsfield	3	G. Shanpang	Gray Catbird		
3/29	Brimfield	3	I. Lynch	thr	Reports of indiv. from 11 locations	
4/6	Nahant	3	BBC (L. Pivacek)	4/30	Medford 3	J. Stein#
4/15	Belchertown	2	M. Faherty	Brown Thrasher		
4/30	Woburn	6	M. Rines	4/16	Boston 1	G. Tepke
House Wren				4/20	Northampton 1	T. Gagnon
4/17	Worcester	1	M. Lynch	4/21, 30	Medford 1, 4	J. Stein
4/26	Arlington Res.	1	M. Rines	4/27	Oxford 2	P. Meleski
4/29	Medford	2	M. Rines	4/27	Melrose 3	D. + I. Jewell
4/29	Pittsfield	1	T. Collins	4/27	Uxbridge 4	MAS (J. Liller)
4/29	Hadley	1	H. McQueen	4/30	Woburn 9	M. Rines
4/30	Woburn	4	M. Rines	American Pipit		
Winter Wren				3/8	P.I. 1	D. Furbish#
3/12	Stoneham	2	D. + I. Jewell	3/23	Templeton 13	T. Pirro
3/22	Malden	2	P. + F. Vale	4/2	Cumb. Farms 100+	K. Anderson#
4/13	Wompatuck SP	3	G. d'Entremont	4/6	Northampton 40	T. Gagnon
4/25	Boxford (C.P.)	2	J. Paluzzi	4/8	Rowley 2	R. Heil
4/27	Barre FD	2	M. Lynch	4/15	DWWS 1	D. Furbish#
Marsh Wren				4/29	P.I. 3	R. Heil
4/18	Gill	2	M. Taylor	Cedar Waxwing		
4/29	P.I.	1	R. Heil	3/1	Goshen 75	T. Gagnon
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher				3/5	Cambridge 75	B. Krisler
4/15	Longmeadow	1	J. Hutchison	3/9	Lexington 51	M. Rines
4/18	Wayland	1	J. Hoye#	4/11	Greenfield 50	R. Packard
4/18	Woburn (H.P.)	1	R. LaFontaine	4/12	Arlington 65	R. LaFontaine
4/28	Groveland	pr	J. Berry	Blue-winged Warbler		
4/28	Bolton Flats	4	S. Sutton	4/29	MNWS 1	K. Haley#
4/29	P.I.	7	R. Heil	4/29	Amherst 1	C. Gentes
4/30	Woburn	5	M. Rines	Orange-crowned Warbler		
Golden-crowned Kinglet				4/29	Boston 1	M. Garvey
3/9	Agawam	2	R. Packard	Nashville Warbler		
3/29, 4/16	P.I.	2, 5	T. Wetmore	4/29	Worcester 1	M. Lynch
4/6	Nantucket	6	K. Blackshaw	4/29	Pittsfield 1	T. Collins
4/15	Newby/P.I.	5	R. Heil	4/29	MNWS 1	K. Haley
4/15	Mt.A.	14	R. Stymeist	4/30	Mt.A. 1	R. Stymeist
4/15	MNWS	5	K. Haley	4/30	Berlin 2	S. Sutton
4/16	Woburn	4	M. Rines	Northern Parula		
4/19	Belmont	4	R. Stymeist	4/29	Amherst 1	H. McQueen
4/27	Barre FD	11	M. Lynch	4/30	Melrose 1	BBC (Jewell)
4/28	Gardner	pr n	T. Pirro	4/30	Lincoln 1	N. Soulette
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				Yellow Warbler		
3/1-10	Wayland	1	A. McCarthy#	4/28	Worcester 1	M. Lynch
4/3	Winchester	1	M. Rines	4/29	Southwick 1	S. Kellogg
4/15, 28	MNWS	35, 10	K. Haley	4/29	Westboro 1	E. Morrier
4/15	Saugus	7	D. + I. Jewell	4/29	Westport 6	M. Lynch
4/15	Longmeadow	4	J. Hutchison	4/29	Boston (A.A.) 4	A. Joslin
4/15-30	Mt.A.	15+ max 4/30	R. Stymeist	4/30	Falmouth 3	M. Keleher
4/19	Woburn	10	M. Rines#	4/30	Woburn 7	M. Rines
4/20	IRWS	35	BBC (Vale)	Magnolia Warbler		
4/29	P.I.	22	R. Heil	4/29	Becket 1	R. Laubach
4/30	Newby/W. Newby	12	J. Berry#	Black-throated Blue Warbler		
Eastern Bluebird				4/15	Mattapoisett 1	M. Sylvia
3/8	Lexington	5	M. Rines#	4/28	Northampton 1	A. Lombard
3/20	Barre Falls	12	B. Kamp#	4/29	P.I. 1 m	R. Heil
3/21	Natick	20	D. Gibson	4/29	Amherst 1	H. McQueen
3/23	Millbury	6	S. Hennin#	4/29	Westboro 1	E. Morrier
3/23	Lincoln	14	M. Rines#	4/29	MNWS 1 m	K. Haley
4/11	Falmouth	5	M. Keleher	Yellow-rumped Warbler		
Hermit Thrush				3/1	W. Gloucester 2	J. Nelson
3/3-4/12	Reports of indiv. from 8 locations			3/12	Truro 35	D. Manchester
4/15	Newby/P.I.	12	R. Heil	3/22	Mashpee 16	M. Keleher
4/15	Salisbury	27	D. Chickering	3/26, 4/16	Lexington 1, 12	J. Sutherland
4/15-30	Mt.A.	10+ max 4/30	R. Stymeist	4/15-30	Mt.A. 50 max 4/29	R. Stymeist
4/16	MNWS	9	J. Berry#	4/16	Woburn 1, 28	M. Rines
4/16	Boston	30	G. Tepke	4/18, 28	Arlington Res. 2, 42	M. Rines
4/17	Wakefield	12	F. Vale	4/21	Northampton 54	R. Packard
4/19	Belmont	6	R. Stymeist	4/28	Boston 30	G. Tepke
4/27	Barre FD	8	M. Lynch	4/29	P.I. 1350	R. Heil
4/29	P.I.	28	R. Heil	4/29	P'town 60	B. Nikula
4/30	Woburn	6	M. Rines	4/29	Medford 187	M. Rines

Yellow-rumped Warbler (continued)

4/30	Berlin	70+	S. Sutton
<b>Black-throated Green Warbler</b>			
4/27	Barre FD	2	M. Lynch
4/27	Williamstown	2	G. Soucie
4/27	Oxford	1 m	P. Meleski
4/29	Medford	4	P. + F. Vale
4/29	Hardwick	2	C. Buelow
4/29	Westboro	1	E. Morrier
4/29	Berlin	2	S. Sutton
<b>Pine Warbler</b>			
3/3	Raynham	6	P. Brady
3/27, 4/20	IRWS	1, 7	F. Vale#
3/30	Brimfield	1	I. Lynch
3/31	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
4/13	Wompatuck SP	4	G. d'Entremont
4/15	MNWS	5	K. Haley
4/15-30	Mt.A.	4 max	R. Stymeist
4/19	Hingham	10+	C. Nims
4/19	Uxbridge	8	M. Lynch
4/19	Oxford	12	S. Moore#
4/19	Woburn	8	M. Rines
4/21	Lunenburg	12	R. Stymeist
4/27	Barre FD	26	M. Lynch
4/27	P'town	12	M. Keleher
<b>Prairie Warbler</b>			
4/30	N. Truro	1	D. Manchester#
4/30	Oak Bluffs	1	M. Pelikan#
<b>Palm Warbler</b>			
4/6	Canton	1	J. Soma
4/15, 19	Arlington Res.	5, 20	M. Rines
4/15	Newbypt/P.I.	37	R. Heil
4/15	Newbury	12	D. Davis
4/15-30	Mt.A.	5+ max	R. Stymeist
4/16, 19	Woburn	4, 20	M. Rines
4/20	Ipswich	12	S. Hedman
4/20	IRWS	35	BBC (Vale)
4/20	W. Newbury	15	S. Grinley
4/21	Hardwick	14	C. Buelow
4/28	Medford	27	P. + F. Vale
4/29	P'town	18	B. Nikula
4/29	P.I.	125	R. Heil
<b>Black-and-white Warbler</b>			
4/20	Boxford	1	S. Mirick#
4/27	Hatfield	1	H. McQueen
4/27	Barre FD	3	M. Lynch
4/29	Medford	3	M. Rines
4/29	Manchester	3	D. Peloquin
4/29	MNWS	3	K. Haley
4/30	Woburn	4	M. Rines
4/30	HRWMA	2	T. Pirro
4/30	Mt.A.	5	R. Stymeist
<b>Worm-eating Warbler</b>			
4/29-30	MNWS	1	K. Haley
<b>Ovenbird</b>			
4/29	Worc. (BMB)	1	J. Liller
4/29	P.I.	1	R. Heil
4/29	Middleboro	1	K. Anderson
4/29	Dartmouth	1	J. Scott
<b>Northern Waterthrush</b>			
4/22	Pittsfield	1	K. Reed
4/23, 29	Middleboro	1, 5	K. Anderson
4/29	Gardner	1	T. Pirro
4/29	Westboro	2	E. Morrier
4/29	MNWS	3	K. Haley
4/29	P.I.	1	R. Heil
4/29	Medford	1	P. + F. Vale
4/29	Boston	1	K. Emrich#
<b>Louisiana Waterthrush</b>			
4/14	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
4/17	Montague	1	M. Fairbrother
4/23	Stonham	1	D. + I. Jewell
4/25-30	Berlin	1 m	S. Sutton
4/26	Carlisle	1	BBC (Brownrigg)
4/26-30	Wompatuck SP	2	G. d'Entremont
4/29	Hardwick	1	C. Buelow
<b>Common Yellowthroat</b>			
4/29	Westboro	1	E. Morrier

Eastern Towhee

3/14	Lakeville	2	CCBC (F. Caruso)
3/22	Falmouth	3	S. Sutton
4/6	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
4/16, 30	Woburn	3, 9	M. Rines
4/16	MNWS	7	J. Berry#
4/27	Barre FD	4	M. Lynch
4/27	Oxford	8	P. Meleski
4/28	Scituate	4	S. Maguire
4/29	P.I.	14	R. Heil
<b>American Tree Sparrow</b>			
3/12	Hardwick	16	C. Buelow
3/15	P'town (R.P.)	20	G. d'Entremont#
3/17	Athol	20	D. Small
4/1	Lexington	15	M. Rines
4/13	Westboro	4	J. Scott
4/21	Concord	3	S. Perkins
<b>Chipping Sparrow</b>			
3/thr	E. Middleboro	1	K. Anderson#
3/thr	Falmouth	6-12	G. Gove#
3/26	Deerfield	1	R. Ranney
4/5	Winchester	3	M. Rines
4/15	Newbypt/P.I.	3	R. Heil
4/15-30	Mt.A.	18 max	R. Stymeist
4/27	Barre FD	32	M. Lynch
4/28	Worcester	18	M. Lynch
4/29	Westport	25+	M. Lynch
<b>Clay-colored Sparrow</b>			
31-4/20	Newbypt	1	S. Grinley + v.o.
<b>Field Sparrow</b>			
4/3	Scituate	4	D. Furbish
4/14	Falmouth	6	C. Buelow
4/15	Newbypt/P.I.	6	R. Heil
4/16	P.I.	3	T. Wetmore
4/20	Millbury	8	J. Scott
4/27	Oxford	4	P. Meleski
4/30	Woburn	3	M. Rines
<b>Vesper Sparrow</b>			
3/30	New Braintree	1	M. Lynch
4/14	Northampton	1	C. Gentes
4/15	Salisbury	1	S. Walch
4/18-19	Granville	1	J. Wojtanowski
4/28	Hatfield	3	C. Gentes
<b>Lark Sparrow</b>			
4/14	Springfield	1	E. Rutman
<b>Savannah Sparrow</b>			
3/5	W. Roxbury	5	A. Joslin
4/15	Newbypt/P.I.	55	R. Heil
4/17	Concord (NAC)	60	S. Perkins
4/19	Lexington	15	M. Rines
4/28	Taunton	18	J. Sweeney
4/29	P.I.	65	R. Heil
4/30	Woburn	16	M. Rines
<b>Ipswich Sparrow</b>			
3/7	P.I.	3	R. Heil
3/22	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	S. Leonard
3/22	Mashpee	1	M. Keleher
4/21	Ipswich (C.B.)	6	E. Johnson
<b>Sharp-tailed Sparrow</b>			
4/29	P.I.	1	D. Larson#
<b>Seaside Sparrow</b>			
4/29	P.I.	4	R. Heil
<b>Fox Sparrow</b>			
3/1	Fairhaven	1	G. d'Entremont#
3/4	Hatchville	4	B. Good
3/18-31	Mt.A.	6 max	R. Stymeist#
3/23	Boston	4	M. Verdoes
3/23	Boxford (C.P.)	5	D. + S. Larson
3/23, 4/12	Lincoln	4, 21	M. Rines#
3/25	Lexington	4	M. Rines
4/5	Turners Falls	7	Allen Club
4/7	Southwick	9	S. Kellogg
4/8	Williamsburg	8	R. Packard
4/9	Pittsfield	7	K. Ryan
4/10	Concord	4	M. Rines
4/17	Ipswich (C.B.)	3	E. Johnson
<b>Swamp Sparrow</b>			
3/29	Brimfield	3	I. Lynch

Swamp Sparrow (continued)				<b>Yellow-headed Blackbird</b>			
3/29 Longmeadow	2	Allen Club		3/3 Northampton	1	A. Magee	
4/16 Boston	15	G. Tepke		Rusty Blackbird			
4/20 P.I.	15	T. Wetmore		3/5 DWWS	8	D. Furbish	
4/20 Bolton Flats	14	M. Lynch		3/24 Sudbury	27	L. Nachtrab	
4/27 Barre FD	13	M. Lynch		3/30 Spencer	11	M. Lynch	
4/28 Georgetown	11	J. Berry		4/1 Wayland	30	G. Long	
White-throated Sparrow				4/2 New Braintree	75	C. Buelow	
4/29 P.I.	410	R. Heil		4/6 Northfield	20	M. Taylor	
4/30 Mt.A.	80+	R. Stymeist		4/14 Lenox	20	C. Blagdon	
4/30 Newby/W. Newby	50	J. Berry#		4/16-20 Wakefield	42	P. + F. Vale	
White-crowned Sparrow				4/27 Essex/Hamilton	10	J. Berry	
4/thr Mt.A.	1	R. Stymeist + v.o.		4/27 Oxford	6	P. Meleski	
4/6 Nantucket	4	E. Andrews		4/29 Westboro	3	E. Morrier	
4/30 Chilmark	1	A. Keith		Common Grackle			
Dark-eyed Junco				3/5 DWWS	60	D. Furbish	
3/22 P.I.	100+	T. Wetmore		3/9 Longmeadow	12	R. Packard	
3/22 Sutton	78	M. Lynch		3/12 Somerset	22	J. Sweeney	
3/25 Wakefield	75+	F. Vale		3/17 Burlington	200	J. Mullen	
4/26 P.I.	1	P. + F. Vale		3/19 Methuen	100,000+	J. Hogan	
4/28 Boston	1	G. Tepke		4/2 New Braintree	300+	C. Buelow	
Lapland Longspur				4/7 Bolton Flats	1900	S. Sutton	
3/7 Newbypt	4	R. Heil		4/15 Newbypt/P.I.	2100	R. Heil	
3/10 P.I.	1	I. Lynch#		Brown-headed Cowbird			
3/27 Northampton	2	A. Magee		3/5, 31 DWWS	32, 60	D. Furbish	
Snow Bunting				4/15 Newbypt/P.I.	35	R. Heil	
3/2 Boston H.	21	TASL (M. Hall)		4/27 Barre FD	24	M. Lynch	
3/7 Ipswich (C.B.)	9	E. Johnson		Orchard Oriole			
3/9 Chatham (S.B.)	18	P. Flood		4/21 Chappaquiddick	1 m	N. Bettencourt	
3/15 P.I.	15	T. Wetmore		4/30 Newbury	1 m	S. Stichter	
3/16 Hadley	2	K. + M. Conway		4/30 Chilmark	1 m	A. Keith	
4/20 Nantucket	1	N. Slavitz		4/30 Woburn	1	M. Rines	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak				4/30 Falmouth	2 m	M. Keleher	
4/29 Lincoln	1	N. Soulette		Baltimore Oriole			
4/29 Deerfield	1	R. Ranney		4/25 M.V.	1	V. Laux	
4/29 Southwick	1	S. Kellogg		4/30 Mt.A.	2	R. Stymeist	
4/29 Devens	1	S. Price		4/30 Dennisport	1	D. Silverstein	
4/30 Mt.A.	1	R. Stymeist		4/30 Falmouth	1 m ad	M. Keleher	
4/30 Essex	1 m	P. Brown		4/30 Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	
4/30 Westboro	1 m	S. Sutton		4/30 Woburn	1	M. Rines	
Indigo Bunting				4/30 Medford	1	J. Stein#	
4/19 Nantucket	1	K. Layman		Purple Finch			
4/27 M.V.	3	fide A. Keith		3/18 Scituate	2	S. Maguire#	
Red-winged Blackbird				4/7 Ipswich (CB)	5 m	J. Berry	
3/thr DWWS	400	D. Furbish + v.o.		4/9 Ashfield	34	S. Sauter	
3/12 Newbypt	400+	R. Heil		4/13 Wompatuck SP	2	G. d'Entremont	
3/19 Methuen	5000+	J. Hogan		4/14 Falmouth	2 m	C. Buelow	
3/22 Cumb. Farms	250	J. Sweeney		4/15 Newbypt/P.I.	12	R. Heil	
3/29 W. Bridgewater	1000+	B. Faherty		4/16 Middleboro	pr n	K. Anderson	
4/2 New Braintree	500+	C. Buelow		4/23 Topsfield	pr	J. Berry#	
4/12 Bolton Flats	2990+	M. Lynch		4/27 Barre FD	8	M. Lynch	
Eastern Meadowlark				4/29 P.I.	18	R. Heil	
3/1 Fairhaven	3	G. d'Entremont#		Evening Grosbeak			
3/17 Athol	1	D. Small		3/1 Peru	14	T. Gagnon	
3/22, 4/15 DWWS	6, 4	D. Furbish		3/2 Westwood	3	B. Wicks	
3/23 Fairhaven	8	M. Lynch		3/23 Northfield	2	M. Taylor	
3/24, 4/28 Newbury	1, 3	McGrath, Vale		3/27 Pepperell	1	M. Resch	
4/4 Groton	2	T. Pirro		4/20 Gr Barrington	1	R. Forman	
4/7 New Braintree	2	C. Buelow		4/29 Belchertown	1	M. Taylor	
4/9 Medfield	2	E. Morrier					

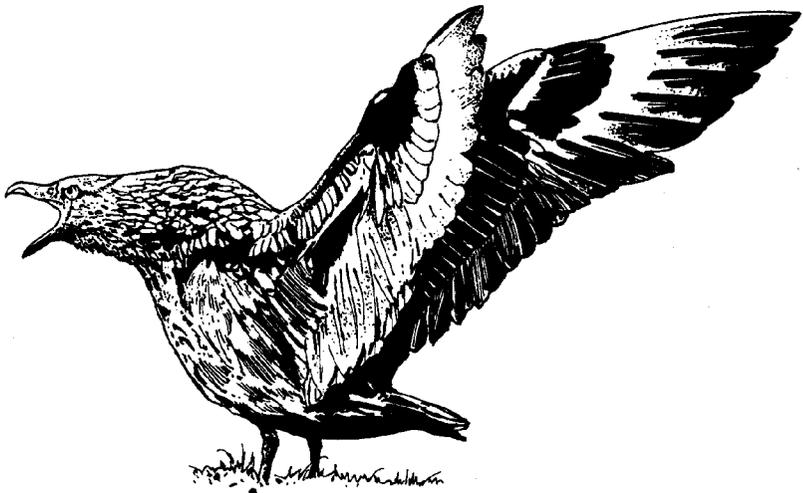
#### HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO BIRD OBSERVER

Sightings for any given month must be reported in writing by the eighth of the following month, and may be submitted by postal mail or e-mail. Send written reports to Bird Sightings, Robert H. Stymeist, 94 Grove Street, Watertown, MA 02172. Include name and phone number of observer, common name of species, date of sighting, location, number of birds, other observer(s), and information on age, sex, and morph (where relevant). For instructions on e-mail submission, visit: <<http://massbird.org/birdobserver/sightings/>>.

Species on the Review List of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (indicated by an asterisk [\*] in the Bird Reports), as well as species unusual as to place, time, or known nesting status in Massachusetts, should be reported promptly to the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, c/o Marjorie Rines, Massachusetts Audubon Society, South Great Road, Lincoln, MA 01773, or by e-mail to <[marj@rines.com](mailto:marj@rines.com)>.

## ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

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



SKUA BY ANON.

# Thirty Years Ago (From Bird Observer Vol. 1, No. 4, 1973)

## HOW DO PEOPLE BECOME BIRD WATCHERS?

Eliot Taylor, Sherborn

When I was in the 6th grade, my teacher was interested in birds, and every other week we had someone from the Massachusetts Audubon Society lecture and show slides on conservation and the various balances of nature. After the leaves were off of the trees, I littered the classroom with about 60 birds' nests that I collected as a nature project. Although I found the nests fascinating, I was really more interested in climbing trees. So I lived through the next few years not knowing a wood thrush from a yellow warbler, and caring less.

Then one spring day it happened. I was walking through the woods when I heard a clear two-note, two-pitched "fee-bee" from the top of a big pine tree. I knew that there was a bird called a phoebe, and I figured that I was hearing one. As the bird continued, I started wondering what would happen if I tried to imitate it. Every sporting goods store sold duck and crow calls, and I had heard of people luring birds by whistling. I looked all around and made absolutely sure that I was alone -- even at 14 I knew that people shouldn't be seen whistling at birds.

I tried my imitation. As I watched the top of the tree, I saw the bird drop down about 10 feet, look my way and continue to give his call. After three minutes, two birds flew down and landed on a dead branch within five feet of me. Now I could see that they were chickadees, that is unless phoebes looked like chickadees and occasionally say "chickadee." The next day I visited the library and found out that phoebes do not look like chickadees and that chickadees say "fee-bee" and that phoebes do not say "chickadee."

A few days later I was in the woods whistling "chickadee" when I heard "towhee" and "drink your tea" calls. Again, I tried imitations and in a few minutes had a male and a female towhee within 15 feet. I now had two species on my "Attracted-by-Imitating" list. After one more trip to the library to look up towhees, I went to a store and bought my first bird book.

My third species was the whip-poor-will. One night after a Boy Scout meeting, we heard one calling from the cliff in the woods behind a cemetery. We formed a circle around the cliff and closed in, and two of the boys caught a glimpse of the bird as it flew away.

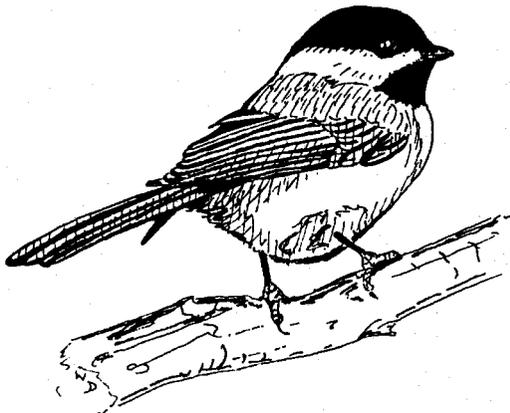
I knew that I could attract black-capped chickadees and rufous-sided towhees, so I started whistling whip-poor-will calls. In a few moments this bird returned and landed in a nearby bush where we could all see it. After I called a few more times, it disappeared. As we walked the half-mile back to my house we kept laughing and

giving calls. It was a big joke to us but not for the bird -- during the next four nights I was awakened at two a.m. by a whip-poor-will in the forsythia bushes under my bedroom window!

A year or two later I was sitting on the same cliff behind the cemetery at twilight whistling at hermit thrushes. when the first whip-poor-will of the evening called. I returned the favor and the bird flew down the path and landed on the cliff about 20 feet away. It was still fairly light, and we looked at each other. I called again and the whip-poor-will flew over and landed on my left thigh. I sat motionless and watched as it jumped down between my feet and then up onto my right thigh. Then another whip-poor-will flew over the cliff, giving some "chuck" calls, and my bird flew into the trees behind me. When I called again it flew back and landed on my left shoulder for about 15 seconds before leaving for good.

Whenever I hear a new bird I try my best to imitate it. If I can get either the pitch or the rhythm, the bird may come. Of course, if I can get both the pitch and rhythm my odds are greatly increased. The next time that you are in the woods, all alone, try whistling the chickadee's "fee-bee" call or something else. You too may be pleasantly surprised.

Here is a list of 55 birds that I have lured by imitating their calls: screech, great-horned, barred and saw-whet owls; whip-poor-will; great-crested and Traill's flycatcher; wood pewee; blue jay; black-capped chickadee; tufted titmouse; Carolina wren; mockingbird; catbird; brown thrasher; wood and hermit thrush; veery; bluebird; golden-crowned and ruby-crowned kinglets; yellow-throated, solitary, red-eyed and warbling vireo; black-and-white, blue-winged, Parula, yellow, black-throated-blue, myrtle, black-throated green, chestnut-sided, Canada, and prairie warblers; yellowthroat; redstart; eastern meadowlark; Baltimore oriole; rusty blackbird; scarlet and summer tanagers; cardinal; rose-breasted and pine grosbeaks; indigo bunting; purple finch; goldfinch; rufous-sided towhee; vesper, field, white-throated, fox, Lincoln's and song sparrows.



BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE BY WILLIAM E. DAVIS, JR.

# ABOUT THE COVER

---

## Semipalmated Plover

The Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*), whose name derives from the partial webbing between its toes, has a vast breeding and wintering range and can be abundant on Massachusetts shores during migration. It is a small, large-headed plover, brown above and white below with a prominent black breast band highlighted by a white collar and breast. It has orange-yellow legs and a short, stubby orange and black bill. In flight it shows a narrow stripe of white running the length of its wings. In breeding (Alternate) plumage it has a black mask highlighted by a white forehead patch. Although this vivid pattern is striking and conspicuous when we view the bird on a beach or mud flat, it is surprisingly cryptic when the bird is sitting on its nest surrounded by pebbles (Figure 1). The Piping Plover is much paler, lacks the black mask, and usually has a broken breast band. In coloration the Semipalmated Plover more closely resembles the Snowy Plover, but in the latter the breast band is reduced to black side patches. The Wilson's Plover is noticeably larger and has a huge bill.



**Figure 1**

WILLIAM E. DAVIS, JR.

The Semipalmated Plover is monotypic and with the Common Ringed Plover forms a superspecies. Its breeding range encompasses all of Alaska and east across sub-Arctic and Arctic Canada to Newfoundland. It winters primarily along the coast, in the east from Virginia south through the Caribbean, Central America, and in South America as far south as Argentina, and in the west from California to Chile. It is a medium to long-distance migrant that migrates usually in single-species flocks either during the day or night. In Massachusetts the northern migration reaches peak numbers in mid-May and is considered a common to abundant spring migrant. Its

southern migration peaks in early August; it is considered a very abundant migrant in fall. In spring males migrate earlier than females, the reverse is true in fall, and juveniles migrate south later than adults. Sizable concentrations occasionally occur, with as many as 5,000 reported from Monomoy and 4,000 from Quincy.

Semipalmated Plovers are monogamous with pairs often remaining together for years. They breed first at age 2-3, and produce a single brood per year. They are often site-faithful, returning to the same area or territory each year. They are very versatile in breeding habitat choice, nesting in tundra, areas of well-drained gravel or shale, rocky beaches, dry sections of bogs, open sites near sub-Arctic lakes, ponds, rivers, and marshes, and have been known to nest on rooftops. The male courtship display song is described variously as *kee-weepr-r-r-r-r* or *chu-weet* and is given during the aerial display over the male's territory involving slow, deep, wingbeats sometimes described as "butterfly" flight. Other descriptions of calls and song include *tyoo-eeep*, *kerwee*, *kweet*, *chuWEE*, and *too-ee*. Agonistic displays include charging a territorial intruder head down, wings partly open, or standing with tail erect.

Males defend a nesting territory and make scrapes that females try out and presumably make the final decision about nest location. The nest is usually a shallow scrape in a sandy or gravelly area, lined with any available material—anything from moss, leaves, and grass, to glass fragments and charcoal. The usual clutch is four drab-colored eggs blotched with darker tones. These can be quite cryptic if the nest is surrounded by gravel (Figure 2). Both parents incubate, sharing the task about equally, and both have a pair of large brood patches. Incubation lasts about twenty-four days, and the chicks hatch synchronously and are precocial, leaving the nest during the first day and foraging on their own. The chicks are initially tended by both parents,



Figure 2

WILLIAM E. DAVIS, JR.

including brooding for the first five days, but the female deserts the family after about two weeks. If approached by a predator, parent birds often give a distraction display with tail fanned, wings partly open, attempting to lead the intruder away from the chicks or nest (Figure 3). Males will defend feeding territories, attacking birds as large as Hudsonian Godwits. Chicks can fly in about 3-4 weeks.



**Figure 3**

WILLIAM E. DAVIS, JR.

Semipalmated Plovers are largely visual foragers, running and pecking prey from substrate. They are mostly diurnal foragers but sometimes forage at night, especially when the moon is full. In migration and on wintering grounds they forage mudflats, salt marshes, ploughed agricultural fields, beaches, sloughs, and the edges of ponds, lakes, rivers, and lagoons. They have been reported to foot-stir the water, presumably to scare up prey. They eat a wide variety of invertebrates including crustaceans such as amphipods and copepods, polychaete worms, small gastropods and bivalves, insect larvae and beach flies.

Semipalmated Plovers are subject to nest predation by ravens, raptors, arctic foxes, and other mammals, but their high-latitude tundra breeding grounds give them some protection against human intruders. Their northern nesting makes, them, however, vulnerable to cold weather. At present they are not threatened in any part of their breeding or wintering range, and currently some protection is extended at major migration stopover sites by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, and plans to extend this network to other sites should lead to increased protection. No decrease in numbers of individuals at stopover sites has been noted, which suggests that population numbers are relatively stable. Because of the vast extent of their breeding and wintering areas, accurate population numbers are unknown, and estimates range from about 20,000 to 240, 000 individuals, relatively small numbers

compared with some shorebird species, a pattern shared with the other small North American plover species. There is great deal about the biology of these elegant little plovers that is not known, including the factors that control population dynamics. 🐦

William E. Davis, Jr.

## About The Cover Artist

The work of noted wildlife artist Paul Donahue has appeared many times on the cover of *Bird Observer*. Some of our readers may also have enjoyed the experience of visiting the rain forest canopy walkway at the Amazon Center for Environmental Education and Research off the Rio Napo in the Department of Loreto in northeastern Peru. This canopy walkway, the world's longest, is the creation of Paul Donahue and Teresa Wood. Paul can be reached at PO Box 554, Machias, Maine. 🐦

### Bulletin of the Essex County Ornithological Club, 1919

#### THE INCREASE OF STARLINGS

A bird which promises to become as prominent in the bird life of the cities of Essex County as the English sparrow is the Starling, first introduced into this country from Europe about thirty years ago.

The increase and spread of this species in our county during the past five years has been phenomenal, and the fall of the present year (1919) finds huge flocks gathered in many localities with the evident intent of wintering with us.

Last summer for the first time I noticed several pairs nesting in the Elm trees of Salem Common, and since early spring I have constantly heard their notes around my home on Washington Square.

In late September on the grounds of the Salem Golf Club in North Salem, I saw a flock of these birds which must have contained many thousand individuals, for I counted over one hundred on a very small area, and the ground for hundreds of feet beyond was literally black with them.

In Topsfield, on November 16th, I saw two separate flocks each of which I conservatively estimated at one thousand birds, and I have heard many reports of similarly large gatherings.

It will be most interesting to watch the progress of this species and to try to gauge its value. Let us hope it will prove to be a desirable alien.

R.L.

[Ralph Lawson, Secretary of the ECOC]

[Reprinted with the permission of the Essex County Ornithological Club of Massachusetts, Salem, MA.]

# AT A GLANCE

---

June 2003



PETER YESKIE

What have we this month? A quick look would suggest a bird that is somewhere between a “finchy kind of thing” and a “little brown job.” Obviously, this isn’t terribly helpful, but at least it provides a useful first impression. And, remember, where bird identification is concerned, first impressions can be very important. Over analysis of a bird identification problem can sometimes stymie even the most experienced birders. There’s a lot of truth in the old saying, “If it looks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it probably is a duck.” With this sage advice in mind, let’s see where our first impression leads us.

Immediate attention should be focused on the mystery bird’s beak. Because the bill structure of a bird is often a key characteristic when trying to place a bird in the appropriate family, this should always be an important first step in field identification. In this case, the bill is thick at the base and conical in shape – a classic profile of finches and sparrows. The combination of what appears to be a rather heavily streaked breast and back, should reinforce our thinking that the bird might be some sort of sparrow or finch. But perhaps even more outstanding is the presence of extensive white on the greater wing coverts. This feature alone is practically sufficient to correctly identify this otherwise nondescript bird.

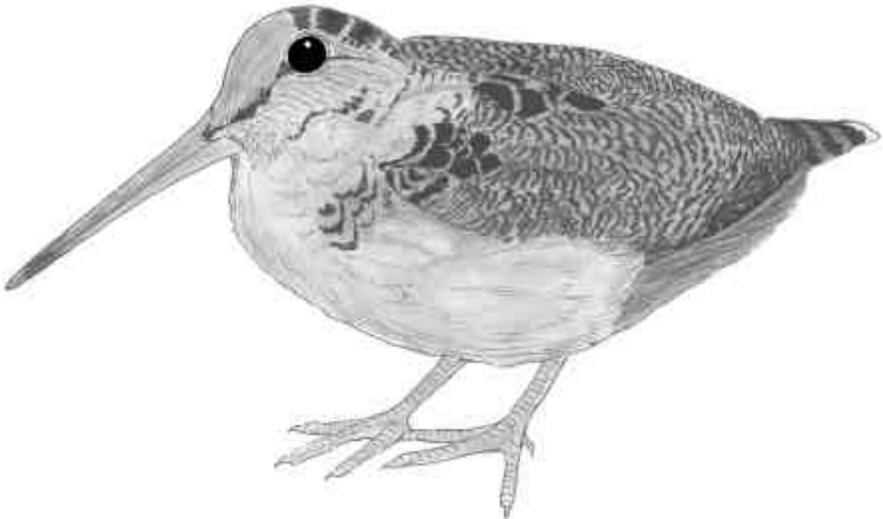
If we believe that the bird is a sparrow or finch, then a closer look at the head is warranted. Such an examination reveals a pale and rather broad supercilium (i.e., eyebrow stripe) running back from the eye (not unlike a female Purple Finch), in addition to a dusky cheek patch with a small pale spot behind it. Additionally the bird

appears to have a distinct, dark, malar (i.e., throat) stripe, along with the previously noted heavy streaking on the underparts. Despite the fact that the wing on the pictured bird is folded in such a way that the primaries are partially hidden, it would seem that the primaries are relatively short (i.e., not suggesting much primary extension) and brownish in color, not black, or in distinct contrast with the rest of the wing feathers.

Taken as a whole, foremost beginning with the fact that the mystery bird has a heavy, sparrow-like bill and a prominent white patch in the wing, the species depicted can only be a Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*). The apparent absence of contrasting black primaries or blackish around the face, along with the extent and degree of whiteness of the wing patch, suggest that the bird in the photo is a female, rather than an immature male or an adult male in winter plumage.

Lark Buntings are rare or casual visitors to Massachusetts, with most records occurring along the immediate coast in early fall; however, there are several spring records and a few reports from inland areas, as well. Peter Yeskie photographed the pictured Lark Bunting in his yard in Hadley, MA, on November 21, 2000. 

Wayne R. Petersen



AMERICAN WOODCOCK BY GEORGE C. WEST

# AT A GLANCE

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MARJORIE RINES

Can you identify this bird?

Identification will be discussed in next issue's AT A GLANCE.

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