Bird Observer

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 4 AUGUST 2006

HOT BIRDS

Norman Levey found this **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** (left) hawking insects in Lincoln on June 4, 2006. Erik Neilsen took this photograph the same day.

On June 12, 2006, Brian Harris found and photographed this **Sandwich Tern** (right) on South Monomoy in Chatham. He found an apparently different individual on July 3 on Minimoy.

The bird of the summer (as of press time) was this very cooperative **Black-tailed Godwit** (above), found on July 17 on the Parker River NWR by Phil Brown and seen by many birders over the following days. Photographs: above left by Phil Brown (July 17); above right by Erik Nielsen (July 23). Acceptance by the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (MARC) will make this the fourth state record.

Sue Finnegan got a treat on August 6, 2006, when she captured and banded this **Black-chinned Hummingbird** (right) in Brewster. Acceptance by the MARC will make this only the second state record of this hummingbird species.

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***Looking Skyward: A Passion for Hawkwatching* took first prize in the Cape Cod Shorts Section of the Woods Hole Film Festival this summer.**

Looking Skyward is a 16-minute video that Shawn Carey, John Sutherland, Don Crockett, Fred Bouchard, and others created at Migration Productions. The video explores why people hawk watch and features interviews with Pete Dunne, Bill Clark, and Paul Roberts. It covers hawk watching at Hawk Mountain, Cape May, Mount Wachusett, and Mount Watatic. It features hawks in flight and footage of all the raptors likely to be seen in the northeast.

Shawn Carey and Jim Grady started Migration Productions <http://www.migrationproductions.com> in 1994, focusing on multi-image slide presentations. Since then, the company has presented slide and video programs to Mass Audubon, Eastern Mass Hawk Watch, many bird clubs, and national birding festivals and meetings.

Congratulations to Shawn Carey and all of the talented people at Migration Productions!

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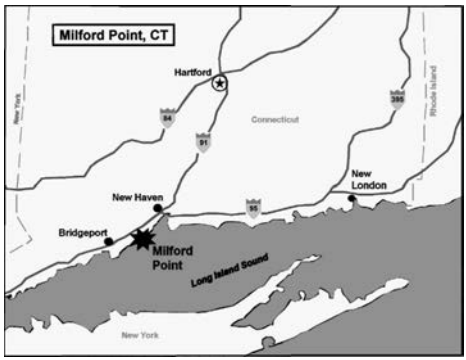
Birding Milford Point, Connecticut

Nick Bonomo

Introduction

The Connecticut coast is often overlooked by New England birders as a productive shorebird location. And who can blame them, with such sites as the Charlestown Breachway and South Beach to the east and Jamaica Bay NWR to the south? Even so, Milford Point, located at the mouth of the Housatonic River in Milford, certainly deserves attention. Well known to Connecticut birders, Milford Point is arguably the best location for shorebirds and terns in the state. The birding here goes beyond these two taxa, however, as waterfowl, long-legged waders, raptors, owls, and even a few passerines are featured during the appropriate seasons. In addition to the regular migrants and breeders, Milford Point has a history of drawing impressive rarities, including a few first state records. Be sure to bring a scope along: this makes identification of those small brownish shorebirds much easier!

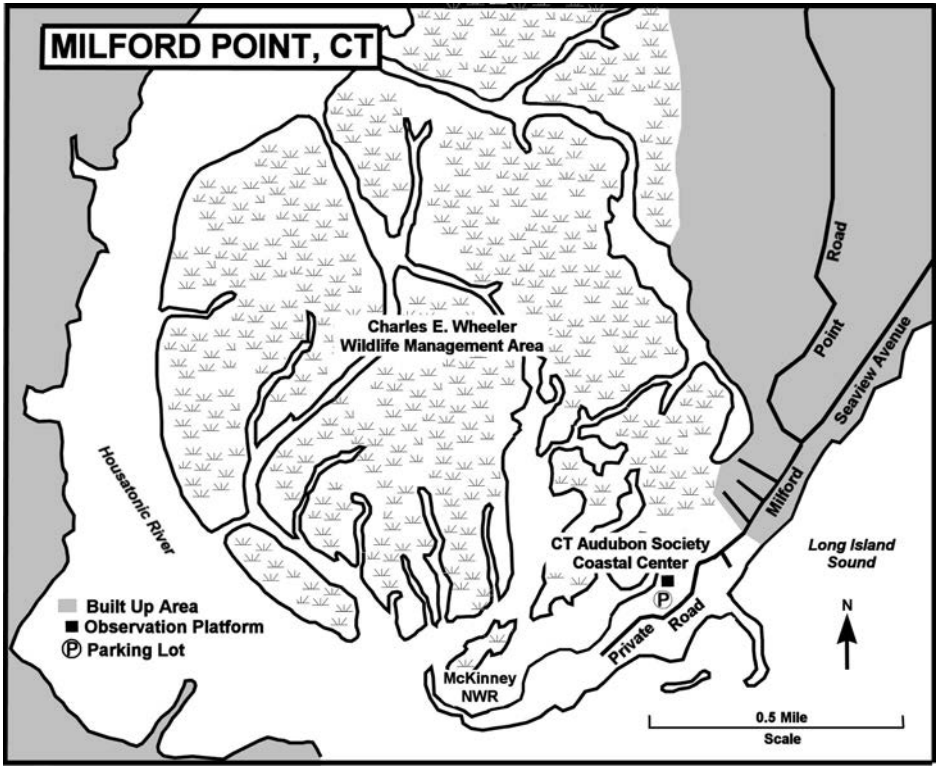


DOROTHY GRAASKAMP

Milford Point consists of 8.4 acres of Connecticut Audubon Society property adjacent to a 22-acre barrier beach that stretches northeast-to-southwest into the mouth of the Housatonic River. On the inland side of the beach lies an 840-acre salt marsh named the Charles E. Wheeler Wildlife Management Area. Wherever you are birding along this stretch, you'll have to deal with insects during the summer months, although a constant breeze will often keep the mosquitoes and gnats down. During July and August, be prepared for greenhead flies too. I recommend long pants if you can deal with the heat because they can really chew up your legs, especially in July.

Directions

Milford Point is easily reached via Interstate 95 in Connecticut. From either northbound or southbound directions, take Exit 34. At the end of the ramp, take a right onto Route 1 South. Proceed on Route 1 for 0.5 mile, and turn left at the traffic light onto Naugatuck Avenue for 0.6 mile, and then turn right at the traffic light onto Milford Point Road. Follow this for 1.2 miles, then remain on Milford Point Road by turning right at the stop sign. Note that the street signs are unclear, so it may appear that you are turning right onto Seaview Avenue. However, this is actually Milford Point Road. Follow the road for another 0.3 mile until it ends in a fork. Take the right fork, which is the entrance to the Milford Point parking lot. Do not take the left fork through the steel gateway, which is a private community.



DOROTHY GRAASKAMP

The Birds of Milford Point

As you enter the parking lot you will see a gray building straight ahead. This is the Connecticut Audubon Society Coastal Center at Milford Point. It is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. From inside the building, the birder has an elevated view of the marsh through large windows, which can be very inviting on cold and windy winter days. The parking lot itself is open daily from sunrise to sunset.

Our first stop will be the observation deck that overlooks the marsh from the northern corner of the parking lot. Morning is the best time of day to look at the marsh from here, when the sun is behind you. This is the first of three marsh overlooks that the birder should utilize. During shorebird migration (April to early June and July to October), the mudflats can be teeming with feeding shorebirds at low tide. Several species can be expected here, including Black-bellied and Semipalmated plovers, both yellowlegs, Willets, Whimbrels (rare in spring), Red Knots, Sanderlings, Dunlins, Short-billed Dowitchers, and Spotted, Semipalmated, Least, White-rumped, and Pectoral sandpipers. When the uncommon Hudsonian or Marbled godwits are present during autumn migration, they are often seen feeding in the marsh. In fact, Connecticut's first Black-tailed Godwit was found in this marsh in April of 2001.

Long-legged waders are well represented in the marsh, especially during the summer. High tide is the best time to see these birds, when they are forced out of the numerous marsh channels. Great Blue Herons occur year-round, while Great and Snowy egrets and Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned night-herons nest nearby and use the marsh to feed. It would be wise to brush up on your fly-by night-heron identification before making a visit, since you often see these birds flying from point to point over the marsh. The number of young night-herons in late summer, especially Yellow-crowned, can be surprising. Little Blue Herons are regular during migration and in some years remain throughout the breeding season. Tricolored Herons pass through during spring and fall, with most recent reports coming in May. American Bitterns occur during migration and occasionally through winter. Glossy Ibis may stop in the marsh to feed, but their stay is usually brief.

From October into May, the marsh holds an impressive assortment of waterfowl. The best time for observing these birds is high tide, as the rising water carries them above the marsh grass that conceals them during lower tides. Dabbling ducks peak in March/April and often consist of Green-winged Teal, American Black Ducks (breed), Mallards (breed), Northern Pintails, Blue-winged Teal (especially April into May), Northern Shovelers, Gadwalls (breeds), and American Wigeons. Check through those wigeon for the occasional Eurasian Wigeon. Other waterfowl to look for include Mute Swans (breed), Brant, Canvasbacks, Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, Red-breasted Mergansers, and sometimes Common Mergansers, especially when inland rivers and lakes freeze. A Snow Goose occasionally settles in with the Canada Goose flock. Pied-billed Grebes appear during migration.

Raptors are another major attraction of the marsh at Milford Point. The winter months offer your best chance at raptor variety. One or more Northern Harriers constantly course over the marsh in search of prey. During invasion years, look for Rough-legged Hawks hovering in the distance. One or two Short-eared Owls often winter at the point. This crepuscular species can be seen hunting over the marsh at dawn and dusk. Scan the marsh for Snowy Owls, a process that becomes exceedingly frustrating after a fresh snowfall! Peregrine Falcons are a possibility year-round, and Ospreys breed on manmade platforms during the warmer months. In migration, American Kestrels, Merlins, Sharp-shinned Hawks, and Cooper's Hawks are possible throughout the property.

Clapper Rails breed in the marsh and can be heard calling at dawn and dusk. The higher astronomical tides sometimes force them into the open at the edges of the marsh, allowing great views of this elusive species. Summer evenings are also marked by the bubbly song of the Marsh Wren, another breeder here. Keep an eye out for Common and Least Terns hunting for the small baitfish that inhabit the channels.

As you leave the overlook, walk towards the Coastal Center building. Follow the path to the left of the building, and head up the stairs to the entrance doors. You can enter the building and observe the marsh from indoors if you'd like, but I recommend walking around the porch to the three-story observation tower. This is the second of three marsh observation decks that we will visit. By climbing to the top of the tower

you allow yourself a better view down into the channels and bays of the marsh, where birds often hide behind the clumps of marsh grass. Keep an eye out for the same species noted above. A few bird feeders surround the tower and should be checked out. I have observed migrant sparrows such as Fox and White-crowned on several occasions as they feed below them.

The observation tower at the Coastal Center (photograph by the author)

Once you've scoured the marsh to your satisfaction, retrace your steps around the porch and down the steps. Take the path away from the building, which leads to the beach. Before you reach the beach you will cross the private road that runs to the houses down the point. While you are not permitted to walk down the road, you should check the trees and shrubs in this general area for passerines. Poor weather can ground migrants in spring and fall, which could lead to a few surprises in the form of warblers and sparrows. Possible migrants also include cuckoos, orioles, thrushes, vireos, Scarlet Tanagers, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and the occasional *Empidonax* flycatcher. Yellow-breasted Chats are regularly mist-netted by banders during fall migration. However, these migrants are often few and far between, so anything seen here should be considered a bonus. Look and listen for the boisterous Monk Parakeets that reside in the neighborhood. They are often seen rocketing overhead as they call. Brown Thrashers have recently nested nearby, and Fish Crows may be present at any time of year.

Continue on the path to the beach, which terminates in a slightly elevated platform. This platform provides a good starting point to your beach birding. During shorebird (April-early June and July-October) and tern (late July-September) migration, there is no place in Connecticut I would rather be than at this beach at high tide. As you examine the beach, you will notice two main features. The first is a sand spit that extends in front of you from the beach to your left. The second is a narrow sandbar off to your right and not very far from shore. For the best results, arrive at the beach about two hours before high tide. As the water rises, shorebirds are pushed out of the marsh and come to the beach and surrounding sandbars to roost.

The sand spit to your left holds a breeding pair or two of Piping Plovers, which arrive in mid-March and can be quickly located by the "exclosures" surrounding their nests. Least Terns (arrive in late April to early May) and American Oystercatchers (arrive in early March) also nest on this spit. You can walk access the beach from the platform and walk to your left for a closer look at the plovers and terns, but keep your distance during the nesting season so you do not disturb these declining species.

The sandbar to your right often holds the largest concentrations of shorebirds and terns at high tide. The shorebirds and terns on this bar can number in the thousands

during the peak of migration. The best time of day is the evening high tide as the light at this hour is just superb. Viewing during the early morning high tides will leave you fighting the glare on a sunny day. Combing through the flocks commonly yields Black-bellied, Semipalmated, and Piping plovers, American Oystercatchers, both yellowlegs, Willets, Ruddy Turnstones, Sanderlings, Dunlins, Short-billed Dowitchers, and Spotted, Semipalmated, and Least sandpipers. Less common species include American Golden-Plovers (starting in August), Whimbrels (rare in spring), Red Knots, and Western Sandpipers (rare in spring), White-rumped, Baird's (mid-August into October), and Pectoral sandpipers. If you're lucky, you can turn up the occasional Hudsonian or Marbled godwit, Stilt Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper (mid-August into October), Long-billed Dowitcher (starting in mid-August), or Wilson's Phalarope. Recent rarities have included American Avocet, Curlew Sandpiper, Ruff, and Red-necked Phalarope. Remember that we're talking about shorebirds here, so anything is possible. Connecticut's first Red-necked Stint, an adult in alternate plumage, was observed among these flocks in late July of 2000. Another alternate-plumaged Red-necked Stint delighted birders from up and down the east coast for eight cooperative days this past July, 2006.

The view of the salt marsh from the observation tower (photograph by the author)

While not as numerous as the shorebirds, terns like to roost on this sandbar as well. Common Terns stage here in moderate numbers that start to build in late July. A few Roseate and Forster's terns can often be found with the group, along with a Black Tern or two. Black Skimmers are possible throughout the summer. Keep an eye out for less common species like Caspian and Royal terns. A Sandwich Tern, the state's first, was seen in 1991 after the passage of a tropical storm. Much more recently, a Gull-billed Tern spent an hour feeding around the point in late June of 2006.

As one might expect, Peregrine Falcons and Merlins view these congregations as a godsend. If the shorebirds suddenly spook, look to the sky for a falcon or other raptor. It sometimes takes the birds a while to relax after this happens, so one often spends a couple of hours repeatedly searching through these flocks as the tightly packed birds shift around and rearrange themselves.

Other offshore sandbars can be seen, but they are so distant that only larger species can be identified. They should be scoped anyway because Least Terns and American Oystercatchers are currently using them to nest.

In the wintertime, waterfowl are the main attraction offshore. Check Long Island Sound from any point along the beach, especially from the platform where you gained access to the beach since it offers some elevation. Common and Red-throated loons,

Salt marsh view from the observation platform adjacent to the parking lot (photograph by the author)

Horned Grebes, Brant, American Black Ducks, Mallards, Long-tailed Ducks, scoters, Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, and Red-breasted Mergansers can all be expected. Check through those goldeneye flocks for the rare Barrow's Goldeneye. Large rafts of Greater Scaup are often seen well offshore. If they are close enough to land, it wouldn't hurt to scan them for Lesser Scaups and Redheads. Also during this season, inspect the beaches, sandbars, and breakwaters for a Snowy Owl, which is always a possibility from November to March.

Winter shorebird diversity is low, with Sanderlings and Dunlin being the only two regulars. Black-bellied Plovers, Ruddy Turnstones, and Purple Sandpipers are still possible, though unlikely. Herring, Ring-billed, and Great Black-backed gulls are in evidence year-round. Iceland Gulls sometimes occur during the winter, and Bonaparte's Gulls are possible year-round, even in mid-summer when one or two may associate with the tern flocks. Laughing Gulls, which do not breed in Connecticut, appear in late spring and increase in abundance until they peak in August-September; they linger through November.

Some other birds to look for here, depending on the season, include Northern Gannets in March-April and November. Easterly winds are your best bet for encountering this recently increasing species in Long Island Sound. Double-crested Cormorants occur from March to November but are largely replaced by Great Cormorants in the cooler months (October through April). The beach is suitable habitat for Horned Larks, Snow Buntings, and Lapland Longspurs. Look out for larks from October to April. Snow Buntings are most likely in November but can occur throughout the winter season. Check the lark and bunting flocks for one or two Lapland Longspurs, which rarely occur in numbers larger than this. Look and listen for American Pipits, which are uncommon from September into early May (least common in midwinter).

Barn Swallows nest in the area and are a staple of the summer birdlife. By the time late July rolls around Tree Swallows and a few Bank Swallows join the Barns in staging prior to their southward journey. Northern Rough-winged Swallows, Cliff Swallows, and Purple Martins may be seen as well. Since Cave Swallows have begun to show a pattern of vagrancy to New England over the past few years, Milford Point would be a suitable place to find this species after a November cold front.

Most birders conclude their visit after scouring the sandbar's birds, since this is often the most productive portion of Milford Point. There are other fruitful places to explore, however, for those willing to walk; an additional two or more hours are

required to adequately bird the remainder of the point. To continue birding, keep following the beach past the sandbar as it bends to the right and then back to the left. You will be in front of the last few houses on the point. Soon after you pass the final house you will see a large sign on your right for the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. From this point onward, the beach side of the point is CLOSED TO EVERYONE, but the marsh side of the point is open to birders and fishermen alike. (Important: Access to the point has changed over the years, and it is possible that the marsh side could also be closed in the future. Obey whatever signs are present and you should be fine.) Follow the short trail in front of the NWR sign, which crosses over to the marsh; located here is the last of the three observation platforms that overlook the marsh. It is worth rechecking the marsh here since it has probably been a while since you've seen it.

When you're finished on the platform, walk down to the edge of the marsh and follow it out to the point, which is about a 0.7-mile round-trip. Along the way, keep an eye out for birds that you may flush as they rest or feed on the edge of the marsh. The shrubs and dune grass to your left should also be checked for landbirds; a few surprises have been turned up here over the years. The "Ipswich" race of Savannah Sparrow winters in this habitat. The marsh grass itself can also hold a few passerines. Specifically, this is a great location to view both Saltmarsh and Nelson's Sharp-tailed sparrows during October. Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrows breed in the state, while Nelson's occur only as migrants. Marsh Wrens often show themselves here also. This stretch of marsh perimeter holds your best chance for Spotted and Least sandpipers. Flocks of dozens, if not hundreds, of the latter may roost here at high tide; they seem to prefer this habitat to the sandbars. Wilson's Phalaropes, while possible anywhere at Milford Point, are reported from this part most often. You may flush an American Bittern or Short-eared Owl during the appropriate seasons. Your effort on this walk is often rewarded with some fantastic looks at the birds you encounter.

The tip of the point eventually curves to the north. Shortly before you reach the tip, there will be a narrow path to your left that allows you to cross back over to the beach side. Cross over here, and you will see the town of Stratford across the mouth of the river. Directly in front of you lie mudflats that, when exposed at lower tides, hold many feeding shorebirds. To best time your walk to the point, plan to arrive about an hour after high tide. If you plant yourself here and wait patiently, the shorebirds will often fly in and feed right in front of you as the mudflats become exposed, almost oblivious to your presence! This is the perfect opportunity to examine these subtly beautiful birds feather by feather. Separating Western Sandpiper from Semipalmated Sandpiper may be difficult from a distance, but at this range you will have far less trouble. If photography is your goal, this place is also your best bet.

This concludes our tour of Milford Point, one of Connecticut's premier birding locations. Retrace your steps back to the parking lot while respecting the private homes by staying below the high tide line whenever possible. On your return trip you will notice that most of the birds that were roosting on the sandbar have departed to feed in the marsh or out at the point. Be sure to keep birding though…on several occasions I have had my best bird of the day on the walk back!

Resources

Connecticut Audubon Society. (n.d.). Geographic information on Milford Point retrieved May 25, 2006 from http://www.ctaudubon.org/visit/milford.htm

Devine, A. and D.G. Smith. 1997. *Connecticut Birding Guide*. Dexter, MI: Thomson-Shore, Inc.

Hanisek, G. 2005. Connecticut Birds by the Season. *The Connecticut Warbler* 25 (1): 3-34.

Nick Bonomo *recently graduated from Stonehill College in North Easton, Massachusetts, with a B.S. in Biology. He now lives with his family in Orange, Connecticut, and actively birds New Haven County on the weekends. He plans on attending graduate school in the next year, possibly in a physician assistant program. Nick has been an active member of the Connecticut birding community since the age of 15. He has developed a passion for shorebirds and will continue to pursue these interests regardless of his career choice.*

World Environment Day 2006 Fundacion Inalafquen Award Announcement: Betty Petersen, American Birding Association's Birders' Exchange Program

On June 4, 2006, the Fundacion Inalafquen announced that Betty Petersen and the ABA's Birders' Exchange Program would be honored with the award "Ideas that change the World" in recognition of her numerous and ongoing contributions to education, conservation, and research of birds, especially shorebirds, in the Americas.

This award is made only to non-Latin American citizens/institutions that have made exceptional achievements in helping and promoting the education, conservation, and knowledge of wildlife and their habitats in Latin America. By providing field equipment, bird guides, and support to amateurs and professionals in Latin America, the donations arranged by Betty beginning in 1995 and continuing until today have enriched the lives of many people in Latin America and brought them into the passionate world shared by the international fraternity of bird watchers. In many cases this has not only motivated Latin Americans to watch and help protect birds in more effective ways, but it has also had a transformative effect in directing young people into careers as ornithologists, educators, and ecotourism guides in their local communities.

Betty and American Birding Association's Birders' Exchange Program will be honored with a special "Ideas that change the World" certificate, and a recognition plaque honoring her will be displayed at the future Shorebird Interpretation Center at San Antonio Oeste, Río Negro, Argentina.

Congratulations to Betty for all of her hard work on this program and to all the contributors who have supported this program since its inception.

Some Additions to the Nesting Avifauna of Essex County, and Significant Nesting Events of Several Other Species

Jim Berry

The last three years, 2003 through 2005, were eventful in the ornithological history of Essex County, Massachusetts, in that the nests of four species were found there for the first time. Also found were the nests of several other species whose breeding ranges have recently expanded to include the area or which have recovered in recent years from previous population declines.

The county's four new "officially" nesting species are the Common Raven, Peregrine Falcon, Bald Eagle, and Common Eider. A pair of Common Ravens nested in Manchester in 2004, an event previously documented in this journal (Berry 2005b). (The birds did not re-nest, at least not in the same place, in 2005.) Peregrines nested in downtown Lawrence in 2003 and 2004, while successful nests of the eagle and the eider were observed for the first time in 2005.

Common Eider, *Somateria mollissima*

In three previous articles in *Bird Observer*, I have written about the nesting history of the Common Eider on the New England coast (Berry 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005a), recounting the birds' expansion in recent decades from their traditional southern limit in Maine to as far south as Boston Harbor and their deliberate introduction even farther south in Buzzards Bay in the 1970s. I also documented the frequent observation of eider ducklings near several of the Essex County islands in recent years, clearly establishing their nesting presence in the county, even without the discovery of actual nests.

Some of these ducklings had been seen in Gloucester Harbor by Chris Leahy, indicating nearby Ten Pound Island as a probable nest site. Eiders have summered on and around this island for decades, but I hadn't seen any ducklings and was not then aware that the males adopt eclipse plumage in summer. Thus I had mistakenly assumed that the summering birds were nonbreeding immatures. My friends Mary Capkanis and Dave Peterson saw more ducklings in the water off that island in July 2004 (Berry 2005a).

The three of us resolved to search Ten Pound Island the next year, since it has a public landing area. We landed on May 13, 2005. The vegetation is thick with invasive species—honeysuckle, multiflora rose, and Japanese knotweed—and we wondered how eiders could nest in such dense cover. But within minutes hens started exploding from under the shrubs by beating their molting wings along the ground until they got to the water. In an hour or so we found nineteen nests, most in thick cover but two or three in open grassy areas. Eggs numbered from three to six in each nest; no chicks had yet hatched. Many of the hens defecated on the eggs as they

Common Eider on nest and nest, Ten Pound Island, Gloucester Harbor, May 13, 2005 (photograph by Jim Berry)

flushed from the nests, an adaptation no doubt designed to make the eggs less appetizing to predators.

Indeed, egg-loving predators are the obvious reason the eiders hide the nests so well when cover is available. Large gulls, Great Black-backed and Herring (*Larus marinus* and *L. argentatus*), nest on most islands in the eiders' range, and Ten Pound is no exception. The gulls are relentless predators, taking eggs or chicks at every opportunity. So in such cover the eggs are well protected, though the newborns are of course vulnerable as soon as they are led to the water. Luckily, the ducklings can dive almost immediately, and some of them do survive, as they have done for millennia. (See Drury 1974 for notes on the complex relationship between nesting eiders and large gulls; he points out that Common Eiders are one of few species that have increased in recent decades while nesting within Herring Gull colonies, and that few eiders nest on islands that are not gull colonies.) We were thus gratified to see six small young with two hens on May 28 and a dozen young swimming and diving with several hens on June 3 when we passed the island on subsequent boat trips.

One predator that is not deterred by thick ground cover is the Norway rat, and when this animal gains access to an island, that island's nesting birds are in trouble. We found two eider hens dead from dorsal puncture wounds, almost certainly from rat bites, and ample evidence of rat burrows. One of those hens was still on the nest, where she had been attacked as she incubated. We wondered how any of the eiders (or gulls) could reproduce in such conditions, but apparently their sheer numbers enable some of them to succeed. One hopes that rats have not invaded all the county's vegetated islands.

Bald Eagle, *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Whether Bald Eagles ever nested in Essex County before the twenty-first century is an open question. Neither Townsend (1905, 1920a) nor Brewster (1906) mentions any historical nesting in northeastern Massachusetts. Forbush (1925) states, "Formerly breeding commonly in the primeval forest, the species has been greatly reduced in numbers, and in southern New England the breeding birds have been extirpated." This statement begs for explanation. If Forbush had added the words "along the coast" (especially the Maine coast) to the first clause, the improbable idea of Bald Eagles

nesting "in the primeval forest" would have had some context. As it is, he merely repeats earlier vague evidence of nesting in the three southern states, though one might reasonably suspect that the birds indeed nested along the entire New England coast before the arrival of the Europeans. C. J. Maynard, in his "Catalogue of the Birds of Eastern Massachusetts" (1870), lends some credence to this idea with his statement, "I do not think it breeds now, but it did twenty-five or thirty years ago" (emphasis in the original). But Maynard gives no specifics, and I was unable to find convincing evidence of historical nesting in Essex County.

Persecution and habitat destruction, the main causes of the Bald Eagle's steady decline, were aggravated in the twentieth century by the advent of pesticides. The birds suffered a further and precipitous nationwide decline due to the well-known effects of DDT and other pesticides on their reproductive cycle (Davis 1995). The situation changed for the better with the banning of such chemicals in the U.S. in 1972. The story of the eagles' successful reintroduction at Quabbin Reservoir by "hacking" young birds from 1982 through 1988 has been widely publicized, as has their subsequent commencement of unassisted (though in one case televised!) nesting at Quabbin, in the Connecticut River valley, in the lakes region of southeastern Massachusetts, and at a growing number of other sites. Similar successes have occurred in almost every state (ibid.). In the wake of such a dramatic comeback, it was only a matter of time until the birds would attempt nesting along the Merrimack River in Essex County, one of their longtime, historical wintering grounds.

The first attempt came in 2003, when a pair built a nest on the Haverhill side of the river. For unknown reasons the birds abandoned the attempt in June, and state wildlife officials subsequently recovered two unhatched eggs from the nest, one of which had been fertile (*MassWildlife* 2003). Sue McGrath, who was in contact with the Haverhill conservation officer who monitored the nest, reported that the pair built a new nest in 2004, also in Haverhill. This nest too was abandoned during the incubation period. The eagle pair then moved to a housing development, of all places, across the river in West Newbury, where that same summer of 2004 they began building a new nest in a large white pine. They worked sporadically and did not finish the nest until the winter, the typical nest building season for Bald Eagles in New England. (Editor's note: This nesting is further documented in Bob Pierce's "Eagles in the Back Yard" in this issue.)

Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus*

In the case of the Peregrine there is little doubt about its historical nesting status in Essex County: there is none; eastern Massachusetts has no tall cliffs, where the birds always nested before some of them discovered tall buildings. (The county doesn't have those either.) As with the Bald Eagle, the Peregrine population was decimated by pesticides in mid-century and was assisted in its comeback by a MassWildlife hacking program in various locations in the 1970s and 1980s. By 1987, Peregrines were already nesting on their own on skyscrapers in Boston and Springfield. They have since spread to several other Massachusetts nest sites, most on tall buildings or under bridges.

Tom French, director of the non-game program at MassWildlife, described the status of the Peregrine restoration program in Massachusetts (2004a) and later updated the story (French 2004b and pers. comm.). The latter article documented the first nestings of the birds in Essex County, on a renovated mill building in Lawrence only six stories tall. A territorial pair occupied the area in 2002 but did not nest until 2003, when three chicks were banded on June 4 by MassWildlife biologists. The birds repeated in 2004, and three young were banded on May 24. This was one of eleven Massachusetts Peregrine nests that year, nine of which collectively fledged twenty-seven young. No fewer than 150 young have fledged from Massachusetts nests since the restoration program began. The birds are doing so well that they are now selecting not-so-tall buildings in some of the smaller cities, thus enabling skyscraperless Essex County to claim another nesting species.

Wild Turkey, *Meleagris gallopavo*

In contrast to the previous two species, the Wild Turkey has a history in Massachusetts that is familiar to every American who has ever heard of Thanksgiving. It is also a nonmigratory species, so the fact that it was common in southern New England in colonial times of course meant that the birds nested here. J. A. Allen (1876) gives a brief account of the turkey's early abundance, quoting some of the seventeenth-century sources from which our sketchy knowledge of colonial birdlife comes. Glover Allen (1921) adds that its northern range was apparently limited to the southern parts of the three northern New England states, "thus correspond[ing] roughly to the transitional faunal area, and . . . more or less co-extensive with the area over which red and white oaks were sufficiently abundant to furnish food in reasonable quantity."

Large edible birds like turkeys were instantly known by all the settlers, and the consequence of their popularity, combined with the clearing of most of their forested habitat for farms, was that their numbers quickly and steadily diminished. From an estimated 40,000 turkeys in Massachusetts at the start of settlement, the birds were already "very rare" in the eastern part of the state by 1672. Extirpation was complete in eastern Massachusetts by the early nineteenth century and in the rest of the state by about 1850 (Cardoza 1977; G. M. Allen 1921).

Wild Turkey in display, West Newbury, May, 2001 (photograph by Jim Berry)

Ironically, this was just when farms started to be abandoned as the industrial revolution picked up steam. Turkey habitat began to reappear, but there were no turkeys to occupy it. Not surprisingly, efforts were made throughout the twentieth century to restock turkeys in Massachusetts, but most of the releases were game-farm birds, which weren't wild or hardy enough to survive, and the efforts failed. It wasn't until state wildlife officials trapped and released wild New

York birds in 1972 and 1973 in Berkshire County that Wild Turkeys began to reestablish their population in Massachusetts (Cardoza 1977, 1993). Reintroductions continued across the state from west to east, culminating with releases in Essex County in 1988 (Boxford State Forest) and 1991 (Bradley Palmer State Park). That was all that was needed. The turkey population exploded across the county, and they are now more or less common in every town except peninsular Nahant. They have even been sighted in the inner city of Boston.

Turkeys at feeders and hen turkeys with broods were common sights within a few years of the reintroduction. Many people have reported hens with broods in Essex County, and I have seen several myself. One Ipswich couple watched three different broods of different ages, totaling fifteen young, visiting their yard in 2004 (Bill Boice, pers. comm.). But finding turkey nests is another story. Like all gallinaceous birds, they nest on the ground, and for such huge birds they hide them very well, usually in thick cover. In the nineties I heard occasional reports of nests from friends, in one case on a pile of leaves in an Ipswich yard! But finding one myself proved much more difficult. On June 14, 2004, a nest with ten eggs was almost run over by a mower at the Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary in Topsfield, in a field very near the visitors' center. The driver saw the hen flush and spared that strip of vegetation. Fred Goodwin showed me the nest the next day, but it was empty. The lack of eggshells was evidence of predation—though one wonders why a predator wouldn't have left some trace, such as scattered shells—and the hen was not seen again.

Wild Turkey nest with eight eggs, Ipswich, June 3, 2005 (photograph by Jim Berry)

Success came on June 3, 2005, when I was visiting my friends Dave Peterson and Mary Capkanis at their home in Ipswich, just after the last boat ride mentioned above in the Common Eider account. Dave and Mary have a Jack Russell terrier, one of those dogs that will retrieve a ball and drop it at your feet for the rest of your life. The objective is to throw the ball as far as possible and hope the dog can't find it. My last throw was into a distant patch of weeds that had been a garden. The dog sailed over the low fence into the garden and out came a hen turkey, walking nervously to lure the dog away from what was certainly a nest. We found it within seconds. It contained eight eggs, a small number for Massachusetts, where clutches in recent years have averaged twelve (Petersen and Meservey 2003). The family checked the nest almost daily until July 1, when they left for a vacation; the eggs had not yet hatched. They returned July 23 to find eight cleanly broken shells in the nest, indicating a successful hatch. Incubation for this species takes about twenty-eight days, so hatching probably occurred around the time they left. Egg dates in Massachusetts are given as April 24 to May 31 in the *Breeding Bird Atlas* (ibid.), so this was a late hatching date, possibly as the result of an earlier nest failure.

Cooper's Hawk, *Accipiter cooperii*

The Cooper's Hawk is a bird with real ups and downs in its recent history in New England. C. J. Maynard (1870) called it "one of the most common Hawks" as a summer resident. It was still "common" in summer in Essex County a few decades later (Townsend 1905, 1920a). Forbush (1927) agreed when he reached back half a century to say that "In the bird-nesting days of my boyhood from 1868 to 1875, it was one of the most common hawks, and many nests were found . . . ." But, he added, "In the twentieth century the species has been decreasing and it is no longer the common breeder of my boyhood. It is so persecuted now that we may expect progressive decrease of the species in the future."

Forbush's prediction was accurate. Despite a growing movement to protect hawks, symbolized by the establishment of the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania in 1934, Griscom and Snyder (1955) called the Cooper's Hawk "formerly common, but now a decidedly uncommon and local summer resident." Raptor bander Jack Holt (pers. comm.) confirmed this, saying that in his early raptor-banding years of 1959–63 he never found a Cooper's nest in Essex County. In the 1960s, *Records of New England Birds* editors spoke of a crash in the species' population; in the 1970s, *Bird Observer* sightings compilers were still bemoaning the dearth of these hawks statewide. A look at the *Breeding Bird Atlas* (op. cit.) shows only three breeding confirmations in the entire state during the six years of atlas field work in the 1970s and only twelve other blocks in which the birds were even recorded in breeding habitat. As late as 1993, Veit and Petersen still called it a "rare and local breeder." I moved to Ipswich in 1972, and it wasn't until the nineties that I started seeing "coops" with any regularity, at any time of year.

It is curious that with the return of the forests in the twentieth century, this forest-dwelling hawk wouldn't have come back more quickly than it did. Perhaps it simply took a few decades for the population to recover from decades of persecution. Perhaps pesticides slowed the recovery. Until 1990, the only Essex County nest in the published record since the mid-fifties was one in 1984 in a conifer grove at the Newburyport Water Works (Veit and Petersen 1993; Rick Heil, pers. comm). Norman Smith, director of the Blue Hills Trailside Museum in Milton, found another in Boxford in 1980, in which he banded four chicks on June 13.

Whatever the causes of the Cooper's Hawk's slow recovery, things turned around dramatically in the 1990s, when sightings began to increase in all seasons. Jim MacDougall showed me a nest in Boxford State Forest in 1990 in which Norman Smith banded three young on July 3. Tom Aversa, who monitored that nest, found another in the same tree in 1992 that fledged three young, which he saw near the nest on July 22 (*Bird Observer*; Tom Aversa, pers. comm.). I was also shown nests in Topsfield in 1995 and Gloucester in 1997; two young fledged from the latter by the end of June.

In 2002 the pace picked up. I watched a pair building a nest on Castle Hill in Ipswich that spring, the apparent male carrying a dead pine bough to the nest as early as March 7, though from subsequent visits I concluded that that nest had been

abandoned or relocated. In 2003 Mollie Taylor showed me a very visible nest in a mature oak behind her house in Danvers from which three young fledged between July 12 and 15 and were fed at the nest by the adults for the rest of the month. This was the first Cooper's Hawk nest I had encountered in a built-out suburban neighborhood, perhaps a sign of adaptation to human development that bodes well for the species. (I mentioned the tolerant behavior of this pair in an earlier article [Berry 2003] when discussing the variable tolerance of humans by nesting Sharp-shinned Hawks, *Accipiter striatus*.)

Another suburban pair surfaced in North Andover on June 23, 2004, when Jack Holt got a call from nearby homeowners saying a young hawk was on the ground in their yard. Jack rescued a juvenile Cooper's Hawk that had fallen ninety-five feet (he measured it) from a nest in a white pine, the highest hawk nest I have heard of. He banded that bird and returned it to the nest but was unable to catch a second chick that branched at his approach. A third chick was found dead in the nest. That pair nested in the same yard in 2005 in a skinny white pine, only eighty feet up this time. Jack banded five young in that nest June 19, already three-plus weeks old. Fledging results are unknown for both nests.

Nestling Cooper's Hawk, Bradley Palmer State Park, Topsfield, June 26, 2005 (photograph by Phil Brown)

I had the good fortune of observing two additional nests in 2005. One was in another suburban area, this time in Ipswich, called to my attention by friends in whose yard it was being built. But neither they nor I ever observed incubation, feeding activity, or young birds, and it became apparent that the nesting attempt had been abandoned despite repeated sightings of the birds in the area. The other nest was much more satisfying. Phil Brown had told me of seeing Cooper's Hawks in and around a pine stand near the Topsfield entrance to Bradley Palmer State Park in early May. We met at the park on May 14 and soon found the nest, complete with sitting female, about sixty feet up in a white pine. Incubation continued through the awful weather of May, including a three-day nor'easter late in the month. Phil, who monitored this nest carefully, saw the adult tearing food June 4, indicating the presence of young. He saw the head of a downy young June 13 and a "softball-sized" young on the edge of the nest June 22. He photographed that chick, the only one, on June 26. On July 4, Phil saw the young bird branch at 2:55 p.m. and fly to another tree at 3:15. In the first ten days of August he saw the fledgling three more times near the nest, calling frequently. It is possible that the stormy weather of late May was responsible for the fact that only one egg hatched or that only one chick survived.

Of the twelve nests I have seen or been told of in the county since 1990, nine were in white pines, in many cases not particularly big trees. Two others were in oaks,

and one in an American beech. Heights ranged from forty to ninety-five feet, with an average of about sixty feet. Most of the nests were between fifty and sixty-five feet above the ground. The good news is that fully seven of these nests, representing four different pairs, were built very near human dwellings. Cooper's Hawks, in Essex County at least, are exhibiting a trend toward acceptance of humans as inevitable neighbors, a behavioral adaptation that has given Red-tailed Hawks (*Buteo jamaicensis*) a new lease on survival. This may be a factor in the Cooper's Hawk's demonstrable population increase in New England over the past decade and is a trend to be hoped for among raptors in the face of habitat destruction and various other environmental pressures.

Willet, *Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*

The Willet, one of the minority of shorebirds to nest in temperate latitudes, as opposed to the arctic tundra, is another species in the process of reclaiming its former breeding range, in this case expanding from south to north. I speak here only of the eastern subspecies, *C. s. semipalmatus*, the "Eastern" Willet, whose nesting range, according to the third (1910) edition of the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list, extended "from Virginia (formerly Nova Scotia) south to Florida and the Bahamas." Both Charles Townsend and Harrison Lewis, in identically titled notes in the *Auk* in October 1920, cited this passage and informed readers that the birds most assuredly still bred in extreme southwestern Nova Scotia, Townsend having seen over two dozen of the birds on territory in July of that year, and Lewis having flushed two sitting birds off nests the month before.

There is no doubt, however, that eastern Willets, like most other shorebirds, had been gunned almost to oblivion by the market hunters of a century ago. The resulting gap in the nesting range between Nova Scotia and Virginia was real and remained so until fairly recently. Their recovery has been slow, with most fall migrants in Massachusetts determined to be "Western" Willets at least through the 1950s. By 1955 breeding birds had returned only as far as southern New Jersey (Griscom and Snyder 1955), though these authors expected the species to breed again in Massachusetts "at any time."

Willet nest, Ipswich salt marsh, June 2004 (photograph by Jim Berry)

Curiously, the filling in of the breeding range gap seems to have occurred from both directions at once, presumably because the birds had maintained a toehold in Nova Scotia that enabled them to expand southward from there as well as northward from Virginia. Davis Finch (1972, 1975, 1976) reported the next watershed nesting events: at the southeastern tip of New Brunswick in 1964; on Long Island, New York in 1966; at new localities in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island in 1972; four

successful nests on the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge in southern Maine, also in 1972; and much farther north in Nova Scotia, on Cape Breton, in 1974. By the 1980s Willets were on the list of "breeding migrants" (as opposed to "breeding residents") in Newfoundland (Montevecchi and Tuck 1987).

The first modern breeding record in Massachusetts was established on Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge off Cape Cod in July 1976 when Dick Forster discovered an adult with chicks (*Bird Observer*; Veit and Petersen 1993). Spring birds were also exhibiting territorial behavior in the Plum Island marshes by the mid-1970s and were suspected of breeding there every year from 1977 on (Veit and Petersen 1993). Subsequent observations reported from the Plum Island-Newburyport area in *Bird Observer* included copulation in May 1982 (Bob Stymeist et al.); adults with two young on June 29, 1983 (Dorothy Arvidson et al.); an adult on a nest in May 1984 (unattributed); and adults with three young in July 1989 (Mark Lynch et al.).

My own first Willet nest experience came on May 30, 1992, when Tom Young and I flushed a bird off four eggs near the mouth of Plumbush Creek in Newbury, just west of the bridge to Plum Island. The nest was well concealed in salt meadow grass (*Spartina patens*) and silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*). I saw no others until I began joining Dave Rimmer in June 2003 on his surveys of nesting terns in the Ipswich and Rowley salt marshes in conjunction with MassWildlife's annual nesting-tern censuses. He and his party had flushed a Willet off a nest with four eggs in the middle of a Common Tern colony on June 10, 2002, and the same thing happened the next two years. On June 17, 2003, we flushed a Willet from four eggs in another tern colony; this time the cover was spike grass (*Distichlis spicata*). On June 14, 2004, I flushed a Willet off four eggs in another tern colony, this nest in *Spartina patens*. The propensity of at least some Willets to nest in tern colonies has the advantage of safety in numbers; the terns are aggressive toward potential predators.

I found two other Willet nests on June 24, 2003, when Rick Heil and I were looking for nests of various species in the Newbury salt marshes (see Berry 2003 for an account of our finding six nests of Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrows, *Ammodramus caudacutus*). These two nests were in *Spartina patens*, and each contained two cold, wet eggs. There had been a storm tide earlier in the month, which was the probable cause of desertion. Birds that nest in the salt marsh face many hazards! Nevertheless, the Willet's nesting population has grown steadily in Essex County in the last two decades, to the point where the birds have been reported in triple figures on and around the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge at the peak of the nesting season. When this local population explosion is considered in relation to the other documented breeding events up and down the northeastern coast, it appears that the species has been successful in recolonizing much of its historical nesting range.

(Note: I was informed just this summer [2006] by Franz Ingelfinger, regional ecologist for The Trustees of Reservations, that Willets are now nesting in the dunes at Ipswich [Crane] Beach, which is a new local habitat for them, very different from the salt marsh. I have not seen a nest there yet, but did see several territorial pairs on the perimeter of the dunes on June 26.)

Black-and-white Warbler, *Mniotilta varia*

Unlike the other species discussed in this article, the Black-and-white Warbler's status has not changed significantly over the last century, though it is probably somewhat less common than in Townsend's time, which is true of most neotropical migrants. It is included here because not many nests are found in Essex County. Though the species was confirmed nesting in no fewer than thirteen blocks in the county and 183 blocks statewide during the field work for the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas (Petersen and Meservey 2003), most of those confirmations must have come from observations of the carrying of nest material or food or of adults feeding fledged young, because John Kricher's atlas account mentions only four nests with eggs and none with nestlings in the entire state. Indeed, very few nests have ever been reported from Essex County, notwithstanding occasional sightings of adult birds feeding fledglings.

The nests are very well concealed on the ground, often on steep hillsides, and take patience to locate. I had found only one until last year, on such a hillside in Hawley, Franklin County, where a pair fed four young on June 13, 1993. That nest was in a bed of leaves situated in a gap between a fallen tree and a boulder. The young were arranged two by two, facing downhill, the direction from which the parent birds fed them. Locally, I watched a female black-and-white carrying dead leaves to a nest site in Ipswich on May 16, 1982, but did not want to approach it that day for fear of causing abandonment and could not find the nest when I later searched for it. It was to be over two decades before I finally found one in the county.

On June 28, 2005, I was walking a trail above a steep hillside in the Manchester Woods when I noticed a male Black-and-white Warbler carrying food and chipping nervously, a clear sign that he was taking it to either nestlings or fledglings. I sat down and remained still, hoping I wasn't too close to the nest and that he would soon go to it (or to a hidden fledgling). The female soon appeared with food, and I knew one of them would eventually make a delivery when they got used to my presence. After a few minutes the male relented, went to a spot on the ground about ten yards away from me, and emerged without the food. I waited until one of them went to the spot again, then moved carefully to look for the nest from below. I quickly found it, tucked into dead leaves and effectively covered over on top so that the entrance was on the side, facing downhill. Three young warblers with eyes barely open faced the opening. A dead branch more or less sheltered the nest, which was near the base of a hemlock sapling. I did not want to interrupt this family again and did not revisit the site. The worst of it was that I had not carried my camera on the walk, proving once again that leaving the camera behind virtually guarantees a great "photo op."

In a review of all published bird records covering Essex County over the last century, I found only two instances of Black-and-white Warbler nests being found and only one of young being fed out of the nest. That was on July 12, 1947, when Eleanor Barry reported a "pair and five fully-grown young" in Lynnfield (*Records of New England Birds* [*RNEB*]). (One hopes the young were not too fully grown to be distinguishable from the adults.) The feeding of fledglings has no doubt been

observed on at least a few other occasions but either not reported or not printed when it was. I once reported a male black-and-white feeding four fledglings in the Agassiz Rock reservation in Manchester on June 24, 2000, but my report was not included in the *Bird Observer* sightings for that month, since only a fraction of sightings can actually be published. These recent reports survive in the database, but much digging would be required to unearth any other unpublished reports from the days before computerized records.

As for nests, Clara deWindt saw an adult "carrying food to nest" in Ipswich on June 14, 1955 (*RNEB*), but the report did not say whether she found the nest or not. (The quoted words were used often in *RNEB*, but they did not necessarily mean that the nest was seen; in many cases the observer apparently assumed — logically — that the food was being taken to a nest, though of course it could have been taken to a fledgling as well.) In fact, no actual nests have ever been reported from Essex County in the *Bulletin of New England Bird Life* (1936–44), *Records of New England Birds* (1945–68), or *Bird Observer* (1973–present). The only nests definitively reported from the county until the one I describe above were two in the Lynn area in 1920 (Bates 1920):

> No. 1. May 19, building under log beside Spring Pond; May 30, nest contained three eggs; June 3-11, nest contained five eggs; June 26, nest empty.
>
> No. 2. May 27, building between large stone and a stump on Fay Estate. Nest nicely roofed over with dead leaves. June 3-11, four eggs in nest. June 26, nest empty.

Mr. Bates apparently did not visit the nests between June 11 and 26, during which time the young could have fledged, as they do this within eight to twelve days of hatching (Kricher 1995).

Even accounting for possible unpublished nesting records for this species, I was surprised to find so few in the primary sources. The Black-and-white Warbler is a fairly common nesting bird in Essex County, as demonstrated by many published counts of singing males in the breeding season, some running into the dozens. But ground-nesting birds like this species are amazingly secretive in their nesting habits, which discourages most birders from watching where the birds go with food in their mouths. This is good for the birds but bad for ornithological fact-finding. One thing birders can and should do is to routinely distinguish between adults and young when reporting birds during the nesting season. I believe that many bona fide nesting records have been masked by the reporting of total numbers seen (ducks, for example), without separating them by age, even when that is readily ascertained. And, of course, fledgling songbirds, aside from being fed by their parents, are almost always less than full-grown and have retained some downy feathers on their heads. I encourage the regular reporting of such observations, which are among the most gratifying in all of birddom.

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Jim Berry *studies nesting birds and is eagerly anticipating the second Massachusetts breeding bird atlas project, tentatively scheduled to commence in 2007. He is grateful to Rick Heil, Phil Brown, and Dave Peterson for reviewing all or parts of a draft of the article, and to Phil for generously contributing some of the photographs.*

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER BY DAVID LARSON

Eagles in the Back Yard

Bob Pierce

In 2004, Bob Pierce called Mass Audubon's Joppa Flats Education Center in Newburyport to report that eagles were building a nest behind his house in West Newbury. In the spring of 2005 he called again to report further nesting activity. The following is an edited transcript of Bob's e-mail diary of his adventures with the first pair of Bald Eagles known to have nested in the lower Merrimack River Valley. *David Larson*

March 31, 2005: Eagles continue to build the nest — lots of activity.

April 5: I believe that the eagles are sitting on egg(s) and may have been doing so for two to three days. I've noticed that only a single eagle has been roosting at night in one of the pine trees in our front yard. On prior evenings they have been roosting as a pair. This evening I saw both eagles on the nest. One remained and the other left. That eagle returned 15-20 minutes later and shortly afterwards an eagle left the nest. Perhaps they exchanged incubation duties.

West Newbury eagle on nest, March 21, 2005 (photograph by David Larson)

May 9: At 4:00 p.m. I observed an eagle on the right side of the nest. The eagle's attention was in the center of nest. For 15-20 minutes the eagle repeatedly dipped its head down into the center of the nest. Do we have chicks? I don't know, although I think something different is going on up there. I haven't yet seen any food brought to the nest, but I'm sure that I miss a lot more than I see.

May 18: At 5:30 p.m. I saw both eagles on the right side of the nest, the male sitting upright with the female behind and low in the nest. The female appeared to be feeding eaglet(s) toward center of the nest. During this time I could hear very faint and short high-pitched screams that sounded as if they were coming from the nest. The female had smudges of red on the side of her beak, presumably blood from whatever prey she was tearing up.

May 28: Eaglet seen! During feeding at 2:00 p.m., I saw an eaglet high in the nest reaching for food in the female eagle's beak. There is a possible second eaglet in the nest, since the female was tearing off chunks of meat and delivering them to a different and lower location within the nest.

June 1: I can hear the chick during feeding and I was able to see a chick again. It has grown noticeably larger since last week's sightings. The chick's coloration is darkening, its downy covering turning from white to smoky grey. Its wings are a charcoal color.

June 4: Confirmed — two eaglets in the nest! At 2:30 p.m. the adult male flew in with an eel. During feeding, I observed two eaglets.

June 6: One eaglet is noticeably larger than the other and I assume that that's the older of the two. The eaglets have black eyes and grayish beaks. It appears that their coverings are in the later transitional phase between downy white to smoky gray. Most of the eaglets' coverings are smoky gray, although there are numerous feathery white wisps on top of the gray.

June 8, 2005, Banding Day (see photographs): *On Banding Day, a crew from MassWildlife, lead by Bill Davis and Patricia Huckery, set up by the nest tree. Kurt Palmateer climbed up to the nest and captured the eaglets, sending them down to the ground in canvas bags on lines. The two female chicks were weighed (5 and 5 1/2 pounds) and banded. Feather samples were taken to test for contaminants. The eaglets were then returned to the nest.*

As of 8:30 p.m., the adult eagles have not returned to nest. Last sighting of an adult was at 4:30 p.m., when an eagle flew within 100 yards of nest. It should have been able to see the eaglets inside the nest.

(left) Climbing the white pine to the eagle nest; (right) banding one of the eagle chicks (photographs by David Larson)

Eaglets back in the nest after banding (photograph by Kurt Palmateer)

June 10: Adult eagle was sitting on the right side of nest at 7:30 a.m. At 9:40 a.m., the second eagle arrived at the nest with a fish. It took 4 circles around the nest before it landed, but the fish was delivered.

Shortly after delivering the fish, the adult male left the nest and circled around the nest and front yard. The eagle was very vocal. At first I thought it was agitated because of me, but it turned out that there was a Sharp-shinned Hawk in the area. The male returned to the nest only to leave shortly after to confront a pair of gulls that were headed toward the nest. The female left as well, and both eagles were involved in an aerial skirmish with the gulls. The gulls, which may have been after the fish in the nest, were rather persistent. It took a while for the eagles to drive them away.

June 20: Fish and eels continue to be delivered frequently to the nest by the adult male. In addition to food, nest materials (large clumps of long grass) have been brought to nest. The male seems to have settled down and is no longer skittish about returning to the nest.

The older eaglet is six weeks old today, and it has grown considerably. It appears to be covered totally in feathers, and aside from an absence of white, its color resembles the adults. With its head obscured, I have mistaken the older eaglet for one of the adults. It is spending more and more time on top of the nest and is clearly visible from the side yard. The younger eaglet, although active within the nest, is not seen as much. It is not fully feathered and still bears signs of its downy gray covering. Like its sibling, it has undergone substantial growth.

The eaglets can be heard throughout the day, and voices are especially strong when food is brought to the nest. Although I still see adults slicing up food for the eaglets, it looks as though they are now feeding themselves as well.

June 28: Food continues to be brought to the nest on a regular basis. Fish and eels are brought in by the adult male 2-3 times per day. Mid-week last week, the adult male brought in a large white bird. This was the first time I've seen a bird brought in for food.

June 30: The eaglet size differences are now unnoticeable. The older eaglet appears to more completely feathered, but not by a lot. The major difference between the two at this point is the coloration of their beaks. The older eaglet's beak has much more yellow in it.

July 5: I observed one eaglet this afternoon. By its head motions it was obviously following birds flying overhead. In the first case, a gull flying overhead had the close attention of the eaglet. This was followed by a crow, which the eaglet watched closely until it was out of sight. This is the first time I've seen the eaglets show interest in activities outside of the nest.

July 11: The older eaglet is 9 weeks old today; the younger will follow in a day or two. They appear to be at or near full growth. Aside from the coloration of the feathers and beak, they are copies of the adults. The adults are away from the nest more and more, leaving the eaglets alone for long periods of time.

July 25: Although I did not think that the eaglets were ready to leave the nest, one of the eaglets has in fact done so. Currently, one eaglet remains in the nest and the other eaglet is sitting on a branch on the nest tree about twenty feet from the ground. This eaglet was seen on two occasions by neighbors dipping low to ground and then flapping its wings furiously trying to gain altitude. I was told that the adults were making a lot of noise earlier today when the eaglet was attempting flight. Right now, the eaglet continues to roost on its twenty-foot-high perch, as it has for the last few hours.

July 26: At 5:15 a.m., the eaglet continues to roost on a branch near the base of tree. It has been doing so for over 40 hours. The eaglet in the nest was moving in branches above and aside of nest. At 3:30 p.m., the eaglet at base of tree was gone!

July 27: The second eaglet remains in the nest. An adult was in the nest in the early morning and probably brought food in.

The other eaglet was located in the early morning in a yard approximately 300 feet from the nest tree. It apparently walked through the woods to that yard. My daughter belatedly informed me that yesterday she saw an adult eagle drop a fish or eel onto the ground adjacent to where the eaglet was roosting. I assume that the eaglet was enticed to leave its perch and did so.

July 28: There have been no signs of activity at the nest since yesterday morning. I believe that the nest is now vacated. It took a hit last night during a thunderstorm and has openings in the nest wall, with sticks hanging downward.

I was informed by MassWildlife's Pat Huckery during my call to her this morning that the state had determined that the grounded eaglet was to be captured and sent to the Tufts Wildlife Clinic in Grafton. Tom French of MassWildlife felt that the eaglet was in a distressed condition due to a lack of food during its grounding over the last several days. Based upon no observations of adult eagle care and feeding of grounded eaglet, the weakened condition of the eaglet would only deteriorate.

Once Pat arrived, we developed a plan of capture. I was to approach the eaglet from another yard and drive it back towards the house, where Pat was hidden from view by a corner of the house and waiting with a large pole net.

The eaglet did not cooperate, as it allowed me to get within two feet of it as it continued to perch atop a rock. At this point I was trying to figure out what I would do if the eaglet flew at me instead of going the other way. After one last movement forward by me, the eaglet flew away from me and landed in some tree branches about 30 feet away and six feet off the ground. It slid to the ground and attempted to run away, but Pat trapped it against the ground with the net. I'm happy to report that the eaglet appears to be unhurt. The eaglet was quickly and carefully placed in a cage, and a tarp was placed over the cage. Once the tarp was in place, the eaglet became very calm. Again, the eaglet appeared to be uninjured and OK, although Pat thought it felt skinnier than it should have.

August 10: I had multiple sightings of the remaining eaglet flying to and from nest on Tuesday and today.

August 11: The eaglet returned from the Tufts Wildlife Clinic. It has been under Tufts' care for two weeks. It has been fed a diet of fish for much of its hospital stay, although its diet was recently switched to rats when it stopped eating fish. The eaglet was placed in a large cage that allowed it to exercise its wings and make short flights. It has regained its strength and shown a desire to fly to the point where both the staff at Tufts and MassWildlife felt it was time to release the eaglet at its Merrimack nesting site.

At 11:00 a.m. this morning, Pat Huckery of MassWildlife released the eaglet in my front yard. The eaglet had to be coaxed from its carrying case. Once in the open, it flew towards the front yard pine trees. Although the flight was short, the eaglet appeared strong. It is currently perched on a branch about 30-35 feet above the ground. A dead rat was placed on the ground below the tree. I was given three frozen rats to be used for future feedings if necessary.

I knew this would happen! I left the house for 1/2 hour. When I got back, the eaglet had left its perch, and there is no sign of it in the immediate area. I assume it's either flying or roosting over by the river.

Anyone want any frozen rats?

Bob reports that only one eaglet was seen in his neighborhood later in the summer. We did have a report from Plum Island of two juvenile Bald Eagles in flight a couple of weeks after this narrative ends, but it is unclear whether both young birds stayed in the area or even survived. Aside from the gripping highs and lows of Bob's relationship with his new neighbors, the ornithological significance of Bald Eagles nesting in the lower Merrimack River valley is heartening. It is a testament to improved water quality and a rebound of these top predators from the ravages of the DDT era. *David Larson*

***Bob Pierce**, recently retired, has become a devoted backyard birder with a special yard list.*

JUVENILE BALD EAGLE BY GEORGE C. WEST

Bald Eagles in Massachusetts

The return of nesting Bald Eagles after an 84-year absence has been one of Massachusetts' most remarkable avian success stories.

Over a six-year period, beginning in 1982, the state Division of Fisheries and Wildlife raised and released 41 young eagles from Michigan, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia at the Quabbin Reservoir in the hope they would return as adults to nest. The reservoir was chosen since it was already a popular wintering spot for eagles. Prior to the restoration, the last suspected wild nesting was in 1905 at Snake Pond in Sandwich.

The first three native Massachusetts chicks in the restoration hatched in 1989 in two Quabbin nests. Since then, more than 238 chicks have fledged. By last summer, Bald Eagles had established at least 22 nesting territories in Massachusetts and spread out to neighboring states. Despite a cold, wet spring, a dozen pairs successfully raised at least 23 chicks in 2005.

All but three nests are in western and central Massachusetts. At least seven are along the Connecticut River (including the state's most-watched pair in Gill, which has successfully produced 21 chicks since 1989). In a cooperative program involving state and federal wildlife agencies and Northeast Utilities, a stationary camera focused on the Gill nest has broadcast that eagle pair's activities on the Internet and the local cable access channel since 1997. Indoor enthusiasts can check on the parents and chicks by either clicking on <http://www.nu.com/eagles/default.asp> or by perching on a bar stool at one of the local watering holes that keeps a television set tuned to the eagle channel. The nest, high in a dead white pine, is now estimated to weigh more than 800 pounds.

Some Bald Eagles have sought the tall pines and seclusion of the protected wild lands around the Quabbin Reservoir, which is home to at least six pairs. Others have built their nests near busy boat yards, undaunted by human traffic. One urban pair is nesting behind a transmission shop in West Springfield. Their nest is clearly visible upstream from the Massachusetts Turnpike bridge across the Connecticut River.

Berkshire County has at least two nests, a well-established one just over the Connecticut border in Sandisfield and a new nest, discovered last summer, along the Housatonic River in Lenox.

Other new nests include one along the Connecticut River in Montague, discovered by a helicopter survey during this January's eagle census, one on Wachusett Reservoir in central Massachusetts, and another on Anuxanon Island in Great Quittacas Pond in Plymouth. The only other known nest in southeastern Massachusetts is on Assawompsett Pond in Plymouth, where a well-established pair has nested since 1993. However, Tom French, director of the state's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species program, says he expects there are more eagle nests to be found, especially in southeastern Massachusetts. *Trudy Tynan*

Adventures of the Rowley Dump Girls (and Boys)

Mary Cunningham

What does it take to make a Rowley Dump Girl?

First, it takes a Ruth Batchelder Alexander, who was blind in one eye for twenty years but could spot a hummingbird 500 yards away, and you had better dress properly, too. If you showed up wearing a bright red jacket, for instance, you clearly understood you should not wear it again. Ruth and her two sisters, Mildred and Lois, spent their summers at the Batchelder camp on Stackyard Road in Rowley and winters in Lynn or Nahant. Some local historians, now gone, related to me their memories of a somewhat tomboyish trio scampering across the expansive marsh to the railroad station, close to Batchelder's Landing at the end of Railroad Avenue where Ruth and Don Alexander later built their retirement home. That house was deeded to the Essex County Greenbelt Association before the Alexanders died and is now leased as part of a research station to the Marine Biological Laboratory out of Woods Hole. And if by chance you find yourself at the Rowley railroad station, note the haystacks in the panoramic photograph under the canopy. That young girl at the top of the stack is Ruth about 90 years ago, with Pa holding the ladder below.

Second, it takes the good fortune to be asked to tag along with a group of birdwatchers meeting at 8:00 a.m. at Batchelder's Landing from the first Monday in March through the last Monday in May.

Third, it takes a nom de plume unintentionally bestowed upon the group by a Wednesday birding group from the Lincoln-Concord area. To be truthful, the women of that group were the original Rowley Dump Girls. I'm told it started when Pat Garrey taught some birding classes at Drumlin Farm in Lincoln, shortly after the property was acquired by Mass Audubon in 1955. From what I have been able to learn, some of the women who took those classes really enjoyed each other's company and started to bird together every Wednesday. They often went to Essex County and frequented the Rowley dump area because of the birds there. Hence the name. *[See sidebar for more background on the original group — Ed.]* I can't prove any of this, but my guess is that the Middlesex County group began to peter out in the late sixties or early seventies and that Ruth Alexander, who I later found out was not an original Rowley Dump Girl, decided to recruit some local birders — even including a few men — to continue the tradition. She apparently felt no qualms about adopting the older group's name. And why should she? After all, she lived in Rowley, and what better name could a group have? What a wonderful tradition to uphold. And I now realize it's possible that two different birding groups calling themselves by the same name were operating at the same time in the early seventies, one on Mondays and one on Wednesdays!

A conservative guess would be that collectively there were probably over a thousand years of birding experience among the Rowley Dump Girls. And that was just our latter-day group — if we added in the originals, it must have been closer to

two thousand! There was usually one Cape Ann trip during the spring season as well as one in the winter and one all-day Ipswich trip, but mainly it was the Newburyport area we birded, and everything that surrounds it. And, of course, the Rowley dump on Red Gate Road across from Pikul's Farm.

My personal involvement began in 1971, so I never knew many of the founding members. By then, in addition to the Alexanders, there was Dorothea Bangs of Nahant. As she rushed into the Agawam Diner on Monday mornings, the waitress would yell out, "Coffee, an English muffin, and a side of bacon!" The rotund Annie Murphy, also of Nahant, was a sweet little retired teacher, perhaps an art teacher, for she was quite a talented painter and there wasn't room in the back of her car for one more canvas. Annie would stand silently by during a few heated discussions, but when her opinion was requested, it was never questioned. End of discussion.

Monday Bird Group in the Perley's yard in April, 1980 (Don Alexander, Juliette Kellogg, Annie Murphy, Dorothea Bangs), photograph courtesy of the author

Other members of the group included Louise Allan and Phil Hathaway of North Reading; Bonnie Gardt, Lucy Ingalls, Ida Mae Perkins, and the Copeland sisters, Betty and Deedee, from Lynnfield; Juliet Kellogg French of Andover and later Annisquam, who was a protégé of Ludlow Griscom; Ruth Moore and Rosemary and Larry Webster, Topsfield; Natalie Karl, Nahant; Esther Curtis Perley, Rowley; Betty Leavitt, Ipswich; and Noel Mann, Gloucester. Joining us from time to time, some perhaps regulars before I became involved: Margaret Cashman, Newburyport; Widge Arms, Boxford; June Ficker, a bander from Kennebunkport; and Kay Curtis from Wyoming and Arizona. In the years that I knew her, she would get off the plane at Logan, hop into a rental car and drive to Maine, attend the drag-car races, and make a return trip for the All-Day Rowley-Only Count. She was in her mid-nineties at that time. On occasion Ruth Emery would join us from her base in Quincy.

There was never a trip without a highlight. One time Jim MacDougall joined us with his jeep and rattled through Crooked Pond in Boxford carrying four elderly ladies, canes and all, to see a Pileated Woodpecker. Another time someone spotted an antique treasure on the Rowley dump, and Phil Hathaway refused to carry it in his Mercedes; she had to go back later and retrieve it herself. Shortly after, the front end of the Mercedes dropped into a hole at the wharf on Rings Island in Salisbury and had to be towed out by a wrecker. Once we had a tailgate party at Curtis Oaks in Boxford, probably still the smallest Greenbelt property, where we could always count on finding an Indigo Bunting. The oaks were saved from development but are now surrounded by million-dollar homes. Esther Curtis Perley recalled playing there as a child when it belonged to her paternal grandfather. She told me that at one time this property was owned by William Cullen Bryant, who wrote "To a Waterfowl."

Birding on Stackyard Road in Rowley in April, 1975 (Bonnie Hardt, Don Alexander), photograph courtesy of the author

When my husband, Murry, retired at age 58, he joined us. On one of his first outings, the walkers were approaching the six-foot fence at the blind on Plum Island — from the wrong side! He was wondering to himself, "How am I going to get past the fence?" when up ahead Juliet Kellogg, 80 years old, went right over the top! Another of his memorable moments was in Newburyport Harbor. There was an unidentifiable blob of feathers floating offshore. It was obvious there would be no calm until our leader's curiosity was satisfied; she felt quite certain it was a Snowy Owl. Out Murry waded in the frigid waters and retrieved the carcass of an immature Herring Gull. That kept our spirits up for the rest of the day.

When the Ross's Gull paid us a visit in Newburyport Harbor in 1975, so too did Roger Tory Peterson, dressed in a bright red windbreaker! The Alexanders had known Roger since he was a teenager, and I have seen pictures of them together during his younger years. The weather was bitter, and Roger and Davis Finch were invited back to Batchelder's Landing to thaw out and have lunch. During the cold months we usually went back there with our bag lunch. Now the hostess had to expand the menu for herself and Don to feed four instead of two. Well, eggs are always good, so egg salad sandwiches were made. But, the clam chowder! Ruth and Don were used to sharing a can of it, but now it had to serve four. What to do? She threw in a can of cream-style corn, and thus was RTP chowder created.

I guess it can be said, "Once a dump girl, always a dump girl." We found ourselves at the Ipswich landfill this time. Just as I stopped to put my VW Vanagan in reverse (seven of us inside), the front end began to sink . . . and sink . . . and sink. I hoofed it out onto Town Farm Road, hailed a pickup truck, told him my plight. He thought about it for a bit; knew my son; said he had a chain and would try to pull me out. It worked. Eternal thanks to Foote Brothers Canoes on Topsfield Road.

Trip to Crooked Pond in Boxford in May 1983 (Margaret Cashman, Ida Mae Perkins, Ruth Moore, Mary Cunningham), photograph courtesy of the author

A couple of times we were reported to the Rowley police. They hunted us down. Once when they finished interrogating me, Don Alexander, standing by in silence, said, "I don't blame you for stopping her. She's a suspicious-looking character." Thanks, Don. Could they have possibly thought that a van full of white-haired old codgers with binoculars were

casing the area with burglarizing in mind? However, if I happen to be going out alone on the Christmas count, I begin by paying a courtesy call to the Rowley police.

Time marches on, and we have shrunk from a caravan of five or six vehicles to one. My own vehicle has been downsized from a Chevy Choo-Choo conversion van to a Chevy Blazer (yes, with four-wheel drive), and the Rowley Dump Girls have shrunk to three. We like to say, "One can see; one can hear; and one can drive."

It has been a pleasure and an honor for a neophyte like me to have been accepted as a ROWLEY DUMP GIRL!

Mary Cunningham *is a life-long nature lover, having grown up on the banks of Kenduskeag Stream in Penobscot County, Maine, where she had freedom to explore the fields, woods, and swamps. She poled the stream in summer on a homemade raft and skated it in the winter. It was on a solo skating excursion at the age of twelve, she recalls, "that I came face-to-face with a Great Horned Owl. That probably ignited my bird curiosity." In later years Mary was a volunteer in the Natural History Department at the Peabody (now Peabody Essex) Museum in Salem, where she was also a ten-year volunteer docent. She is the senior participant on the Newburyport Christmas Bird Count.*

Background on the Original Rowley Dump Girls

What does it take to unearth the history of the Rowley Dump Girls?

First, it takes one of them to write it. When Carolyn Marsh first saw some reference to the Rowley Dump Girls, she was intrigued by the name and wanted to know if there was an article lurking out there somewhere. I knew little about the group but did know that Mary Cunningham was one of them, so I volunteered to take on the project and asked her to write up some of her adventures. She said she'd think about it; did so; said yes, it would be fun. Eternal thanks to Mary.

Second, it takes some digging, especially when Wayne Petersen tells you that the original Dump Girls were all from Middlesex County and were not the same people as the ones Mary was talking about, most of whom lived in Essex County. That meant finding out who the originals were and how they got started. Wayne could give me some of the names but recommended I talk with Jim Baird, at Mass Audubon back then, and with Phyllis Stearns, an original who could probably remember them all. But Phyllis lives in California, and it took some coordination to get a draft of the article to her and then arrange a time to discuss her recollections.

Third, it takes some editing to work enough of the history into Mary's article to smooth the transition from the older to the newer group, much of which Mary was not in a position to know. Here is a bit more of that background that doesn't fit in the article, with thanks to Wayne, Phyllis, Jim Baird, and Catherine Reid, the granddaughter of Ruth Dwelley, another original, who died at age 100 in 2005.

The group did indeed get together at the Drumlin Farm birding course in the mid-fifties, taught by Pat Garrey. The women birded together on Wednesdays for many years. A list of original members, by no means guaranteed to be complete or without

spelling errors, includes the following names: Ruth Butman, Margaret Cashman, Ruth Dwelley, Priscilla Elliott, Pat Garrey, Esther Hahn, Barbara Lampson, Jeanne McLean, Phyllis Stearns, and Nancy Wheelock. My apologies to any originals whom I have omitted, or to any of the newer group who may have also been originals. As it is, Margaret Cashman is the only person I'm aware of who seems to have bridged the gap. I would be happy to receive any corrections or additions to either list (or any corrections to the historical account), which *Bird Observer* could then publish in an addendum.

Oh yes, the name. The answer was given by Ruth Dwelley, in an interview with Mass Audubon's newsletter *Connections*, shortly before she died. (That interview includes a nice photo from 1965 of Ruth, Phyllis Stearns, and Pat Garrey.) "One day, somebody told us we could see a pectoral sandpiper at the Rowley dump, and that's when a member jokingly suggested that we label ourselves the 'Rowley Dump Girls.' And, you know, it stuck." It did indeed. Thank you, Ruth. And thank you, Mary, who adds that if there are birders out there who can either see, hear, or drive, the Rowley Dump Girls still have openings! *Jim Berry*

SIZE COMPARISON BY DAVID LARSON

Shorebirds of theWellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

Stephanie Ellis

An introduction to birding the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary requires an appreciation of the sanctuary's rich history. Between the years of 1929 and 1958, Dr. Oliver Austin owned what was then two hundred seventy-eight acres of land in South Wellfleet. He and his son Oliver L. Austin, Jr. established the Austin Ornithological Research Station, which became one of the most active bird banding operations of its kind in the states for thirty years, garnering international acclaim. Between the years of 1931 and 1933, birds banded at the sanctuary exceeded 43,000 individuals representing 162 species.

Dr. Austin made several changes to the property during the 1930s in order to attract a wide variety of species. Silver Spring and Goose Pond were created by excavating peat, and Dr. Austin rebuilt the existing salt marsh dikes. Because the landscape was dominated by open fields at that time, he planted three to four thousand conifer trees to encourage woodland development. Red maples were planted on the banks of Silver Spring, and several areas were installed with lawns and gardens of flowering shrubs and trees.

Dr. Austin had a particularly strong interest in studying local nesting tern populations; furthermore, his several hundred acres of salt meadow intertwined with creeks, salt panes, and barrier beach provided an ideal location for the capture and banding of shorebirds. Species of shorebirds commonly banded at the research station included Black-bellied, Semipalmated, and Piping plovers, Pectoral, White-rumped, Semipalmated, Spotted, and Least sandpipers, Ruddy Turnstones, and Dunlins. Shorebirds were caught using an automatic maze trap similar in operation to a fish weir. The Austin Ornithological Research Station remained in operation until Dr. Austin's death in 1957. The following year, the Massachusetts Audubon Society purchased the property for $132,000, establishing the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, which was managed by Wallace and Priscilla Bailey until 1982. Initially, the sanctuary included 366 acres. A large number of additional parcels have since been purchased or donated, increasing the size of the sanctuary to over a thousand acres. Approximately 430 acres consist of upland, 410 acres of salt marsh, and 160 acres of tidal flats.

The Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary represents approximately twenty different plant communities including salt marsh, pitch pine/scrub oak woodland, coastal heathland, sandplain grassland, coastal shrubland, barrier beach, and dune. The Goose Pond trail is a 1.4 mile self-guided nature walk through several of these plant communities. This trail provides several excellent birding opportunities. The salt pannes along the trail are active with shorebirds during the spring and fall. From August through October, common species found in the pannes include Greater and Lesser yellowlegs, Semipalmated and Least sandpiper, Semipalmated Plover, Whimbrel, and the occasional Pectoral and Spotted sandpiper. Also along this trail is

the man-made Goose Pond. The water level of this pond is regulated so that it receives salt as well as fresh water during certain months of the year. In late summer, the pond level is lowered to accommodate the feeding of southbound shorebirds. The walking bridge and duck blind at Goose Pond offer convenient places to set up a spotting scope. The two species found in greatest abundance on Goose Pond in the spring and fall are Greater and Lesser yellowlegs. Solitary and Spotted sandpipers can also be seen with some regularity during the months of September and October. Least Sandpipers, Semipalmated Sandpipers, Semipalmated Plovers, Short-Billed Dowitchers, and the occasional Western and White-Rumped sandpipers can be seen on the pond during the fall months. Stilt Sandpiper was an annual occurrence at Goose Pond for six to eight years until recently, but it is now a rare fall visitor.

The Goose Pond Trail brings you to a boardwalk leading to the sanctuary beach. During the summer months a walk out to the sanctuary beach will likely be interrupted by the noisy calls and songs of breeding Willets. Several pairs nest in the salt marsh around the sanctuary's barrier beach. The Willet is a species brought to near extinction by market hunting in the 1800s. The marsh grasses provide a safe and secluded nesting area for these birds. Shorebirds found on the beach tidal flats between August and September include Black-bellied, Piping, and Semipalmated plovers, Whimbrels, Ruddy Turnstones, Short-Billed Dowitchers, and occasionally Red Knots and American Oystercatchers. It is not uncommon to find Marbled and Hudsonian godwits feeding on the beach flats in September and October. During the fall and winter months, Sanderlings and Dunlins can be found in abundance on these flats.

The Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary property also includes over twenty-one acres of land in Eastham. This encompasses the distal tip of South Sunken Meadow Beach and is commonly referred to as the South Sunken Meadow Spit. This spit can be accessed from the South Sunken Road Boat Landing with an Eastham Beach permit. The spit can also be easily viewed from the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary Beach. South Sunken meadow habitat consists of tidal flats, dunes, salt marsh, and barrier beach. The salt marsh and tidal flats at the spit are perhaps one of the most reliable spots on the Cape to find Whimbrels, yet another species that was brought to the brink of extinction by market gunners in the 1800s. Thanks to increased wetland protection, Whimbrel are making a comeback in several managed areas. However, their overall population numbers continue to decline. The abundance of salt-marsh grass (*Spartina patens*) on the sanctuary provides refuge for thousands of fiddler crabs, a relished food source for the Whimbrel. During the fall months, it is not uncommon to see over twenty Whimbrels feeding along these tidal flats and marsh. In October of 2005, 122 Whimbrels were seen feeding on these tidal flats beneath a backlit sunset sky.

The endangered Piping Plover nests on the South Sunken Meadow Spit and their numbers are closely monitored by the Mass Audubon Society's Coastal Waterbird Program. This program was developed in 1987 to protect coastal birds and barrier beaches in New England. A primary focus of the Coastal Waterbird Program is to protect the coastal ecosystems in Massachusetts that provide nesting sites for Piping

Plovers and Least Terns. Though several pairs of Piping Plovers showed interest in nesting on South Sunken Meadow last summer, ultimately only one pair nested. This nest attempt was a success, with four young fledged. Initial nest attempts by several pairs of Piping Plover on the spit failed after two nor'easters hit Cape Cod in early May of 2005. Piping Plovers return to their summer breeding grounds on Cape Cod in mid-to-late March and can be seen all summer. During the fall months of August through September, Piping Plovers can be found using the spit as a migratory staging area. Least Terns also nest on the spit, and Willets nest in the marsh grasses.

One spectacular shorebird sighting at the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary was of a Spotted Redshank, a Eurasian vagrant, which frequented the sanctuary from July 31 through August 19, 1990. Before 1990, there had been only one other record of this species in Massachusetts, an adult bird seen at Plum Island in the Newburyport area on July 28, 1981.

The Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary is open to visitors year round. During the summer months, trails are open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. During the winter, trails are open from 8:00 a.m. until sunset. Admission is free for Massachusetts Audubon Members and $5.00 for nonmembers. A gift shop and trail maps are available at the office on site. The Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary is located at 291 State Highway (Route 6), South Wellfleet, MA 02663. Please call the office at 508-349-2615 or visit <http://www.massaudubon.org> to see a list of upcoming programs.

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Wellfleet Bay shorebirds (Black-bellied Plover, Marbled Godwit, Whimbrel)
Photograph courtesy of Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

ABOUT BOOKS

A Trip of Plovers, a Leash of Merlins, a Parcel of Oystercatchers, and Meatloaf on a Stick and a Gaggle of Guides

Mark Lynch

Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion. Pete Dunne. 2006. Houghton Mifflin Company. New York, New York.

Raptors of The World. James Ferguson-Lees and David A. Christie. 2005. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New Jersey.

Shorebirds of North America, Europe, And Asia: A Guide To Field Identification. Stephen Message and Don Taylor. 2005. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New Jersey.

The Shorebird Guide. Michael O'Brien, Richard Crossley, and Kevin Karlson. 2006. Houghton Mifflin Company. New York, New York.

I have an embarrassing confession to make. One of the reasons I had to move into my current house is that I had so many books that I was actually covering up dining room windows with bookcases. Bird books are a particular problem. They just keep coming. There is always some new "where to go" guide coming out, or a new book about the birds of some country I am unlikely to visit in this life. Worst of all are the field guides. What started out as a relatively narrow field of publishing has grown exponentially in the number of titles, multiplying like the brooms in Disney's Sorcerer's Apprentice. Do any of you remember when only the Peterson guide was available?

So before my house became positively cave-like, I moved to another with more shelf space; and still the bird books keep coming. To review them in a timely fashion for a bimonthly journal, sometimes by necessity I have to cover several books at one time...or fall far, far behind. This is too bad, because each of the four books below deserves a lengthy solo treatment, but then you wouldn't be finding out about them until years after they have been published. In the meantime, and I shudder to say this, the books are piling up dangerously close to the windows again.

Kicken' It Old Style

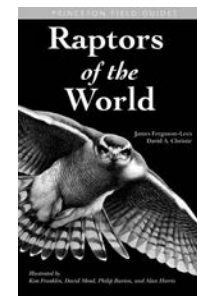
"I know a hawk from a handsaw." *Hamlet* 2.2 by William Shakespeare

On my radio show, I interview a wide variety of professionals in the fields of science, history, and art. After the interview is over I typically ask them, "What's next?" and it never ceases to amaze me how many of these professionals tell me they want to take a crack at writing a novel. It doesn't matter if they are theoretical

physicists working on Anti-de Sitter Space, Nobel laureates, or Post-Modernist feminist curators; everyone (well, almost everyone) still dreams of writing that great novel. I suspect that many of those in the bin and wellie set (i.e., birders) similarly dream of writing an identification guide to some particularly tough group of birds. What better way to demonstrate one's rarified level of birding mastery?

Identification guides have occupied the shelves of every serious birder since Peter Harrison wrote *Seabirds* in 1983. Each of these guides takes a particular group of birds, such as owls, shorebirds, or waterfowl, and illustrates every species of that group. Because the number of species covered in identification guides is large, only a few plumage variations of any one species are typically shown, and written details of the bird's lives and behavior are, by necessity, kept brief. These are books whose only aim is identification.

2001 saw the publication of one of the finer examples of this technical literary genre, *Raptors of the World* by James Ferguson-Lees and David A. Christie. Perhaps, because of the continuing publication of, and competition with, the outstanding series *Birds of the World* by Josep del Hoyo et al., in recent years identification guides have become much more detailed in their species accounts and the illustrations have improved dramatically. *Raptors of the World* is a tome "big enough to stun an ox," with a whopping 992 pages! In contrast to earlier identification guides, the text of *Raptors* was lengthy and detailed, and the accounts of many of the little-known raptors was authoritative. But this is not a book you would carry with you on that birding vacation to Sulawesi, or even a book you would keep in your car. It's just too damned big.



In 2005, however, a new version of *Raptors of the World* was published in paperback by Princeton University Press. Though the authors of this incarnation are still Ferguson-Lees and Christie, Alan Harris now augments the list of illustrators from the previous title. At a mere 320 pages, the new *Raptors* is considerably trimmer than the original. This version is more like a collection of plates from the previous book, with the range maps and very basic species details opposite each plate. All species are shown perched and in flight. Introductory chapters include discussions of raptor molt, taxonomy, and distribution. The authors intended this version to be easier to use in the field, and they succeeded.

The plates have been considerably changed, mostly for the better with a few now appearing less crowded. Maps have been corrected and updated. Alan Harris has added 65 extra images resulting in 118 plates, 6 more than the original. Though some species appear a bit stiff and stylized, overall the plates are of a high quality. Species are helpfully arranged so as to contrast regionally similar species. However, three plates I find almost useless are the introductory keys to large, medium, and small raptors. With twenty-six raptors in flight shown on each plate, the page is crowded to the point of visual anarchy. Are people actually going to use these? Why not ditch these plates and make the book even lighter?

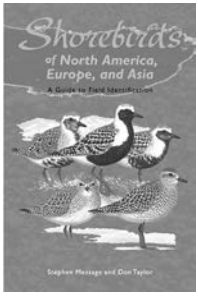
Do you need this book? Regional raptor guides to places like North American or Europe certainly have more complete plumage descriptions and more detailed information on migration and behavior. Books like Brian Wheeler's *Raptors of Eastern North America* and Dick Forsman's *The Raptors of Europe and The Middle East*, for example, would be more useful than *Raptors of the World* when birding in those specific areas. But if you are planning a trip to some far-flung country where the field guides are poor or nonexistent, or too heavy to carry with you, this new, relatively lightweight *Raptors of the World* is just the ticket. Of course, you could also keep a copy of *Raptors* in your car just in case lightning strikes twice and you come across some odd raptor with wanderlust, perhaps another Red-footed Falcon.

Two for the Road

"Double your pleasure, double your fun." Doublemint Gum advertisement

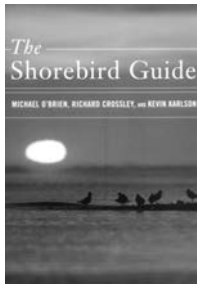
In the last few years, there have been no less than three new guides to shorebirds. I reviewed Paulson's *Shorebirds of North America* in a recent *Bird Observer*; now for the other two.

Shorebirds of North America, Europe, and Asia by Stephen Message and Don Taylor is really a British publication now released in North America in paperback by Princeton University Press. Taylor is a well-known and extensively published British birder and Taylor a professional bird artist whose work has appeared in several British publications. Their guide is surprisingly trim (224 pages) and relies on Message's clear and bold illustrations. Similar species are shown on the same page and illustrated in the same poses, typically an oblique view and a three-quarters view, to emphasize plumage differences. Most species are illustrated in breeding, nonbreeding, and juvenile plumages. A separate section shows all the species in flight. The text opposite the illustrations is concise, limited to key ID features, as well as to short descriptions of behavior and habitat. The bulk is reserved for plumage descriptions and "confusion species." Range maps are in the section that shows the shorebirds in flight.



My only minor complaint about the illustrations is that they are a bit too high-contrast, with plumages unnaturally detailed and colors a little too bright. Obviously, this is to emphasize the differences between similar species, but the look of the birds in the plates is sometimes just a tad unreal. A more serious criticism of the book is in its organization. In an effort to keep the plates uncrowded, birds in flight are shown in a completely separate section in the back of the book. This last section also contains the range maps as well as a separate written section on identification of each species in flight. These flight illustrations are considerably smaller than those of the stationary birds and relegated to the top third of the page, which is too bad. Overall, this latter section of the book is not as well organized as the first half, and this can be distracting when the birder has to flip back and forth. This detracts from the overall high quality of this guide. I would have preferred to have all the illustrations of a species in one part of the book, with perhaps the text and maps in another section.

The one real advantage *Shorebirds of North America, Europe, and Asia* has over Paulson's book and even the guide by O'Brien, Crossley, and Karlson (see below) is that it contains some of the better illustrations of the more sedentary Asiatic and Middle-eastern species. Birds that have never wandered to North America like Ibisbill, Crab Plover, Cream-colored Courser, and the stunning Pheasant-tailed Jacana are shown in some of the best illustrations I have seen of these species. This and the fact that this guide is so light in weight makes it a perfect choice to bring on trips to destinations like Japan, Thailand, or India, as well as to Europe.



The Shorebird Guide by Michael O'Brien, Richard Crossley, and Kevin Karlson is a nothing less than a stunner. This thick (478 pages) guide in many ways represents a real revolution in the look and content of identification guides. When I first picked up this photography-based guide, I was immediately struck by how sumptuous it appeared. "Is this a coffee table book or a field guide?" I thought, but the more I studied the guide, the more I realized just how fascinating and ultimately how useful this book is.

Each species account includes a large array of photographs: not just close-ups, but also comparison pictures of similar species in the same photo. For instance, on page 202, there is a wonderful color photograph of a nonbreeding Long-billed Dowitcher feeding right next to a Short-billed Dowitcher. There are several photographs of these two species together! On page 163, a nonbreeding White-rumped Sandpiper is shown feeding next to and in the same position as a molting adult Semipalmated Sandpiper. Birds are also shown in full frame and at a distance, in mixed species flocks, and in a variety of lighting conditions and attitudes. Almost all species are shown in flight. There are a number of in-your-face full-page close-up photographs, like the front half of a Black-bellied Plover, caught as it yanks a pink polycheate worm out of the sand, or a full frame, head-on shot of an American Woodcock.

I recently had the pleasure of interviewing Richard Crossley. As it says in the inside cover of this guide, Richard is "a master at identifying birds at a distance, based on their size and structure." I would also add "color" to that sentence. In other words, Crossley often uses "GISS" (General Impression of Size and Shape) to identify shorebirds, and *The Shorebird Guide* is a serious attempt to teach the birder this approach. The book is designed in many ways to encourage, almost force, the reader to look more closely and holistically at species, and not just as a collection of plumage details. Through the photographs and their useful captions, one begins to notice subtle things, like how Stilt Sandpipers tilt up higher than dowitchers when feeding (p. 189) or the often-prominent "Adam's apple" on a Greater Yellowlegs. The wealth of information shown in this guide on the color, posture, and behavior of shorebirds is nothing short of amazing.

Crossley also believes strongly in engaging the reader with questions. On page 299, there is a photograph of a flock of shorebirds that includes a nonbreeding Spoon-billed Sandpiper along with a number of Red-necked Stints, Broad-billed Sandpipers,

and Lesser Sand Plovers. Birds are asleep, feeding, and in a variety of postures, and the photograph is at a distance. The question reads: "Can you find the Spoon-billed Sandpiper?" Though its location is not definitely pointed out, the next two captions add: "nonbreeding birds are plain gray above with extensive white forehead and distinct split supercilium" and "breeding plumage usually acquired relatively late, so spring migrants may look gray while Rufous-necked Stints are beginning to show color." Armed with this information and the fact that the photograph was taken in Hong Kong in April, you'll suddenly see a Spoon-billed Sandpiper staring at you dead center in the picture. It's like a shorebird version of *Where's Waldo*. Similar field problems are scattered throughout the guide.

The Shorebird Guide is divided into three sections. "Domestic Species" includes all the regular occurring and breeding North American shorebirds. "Rarities and Regional Specialties" includes Eurasian species that on occasion appear in North America, including regular vagrants like Ruff and stints, as well as mega-ticks like Slender-billed Curlew. Finally, there is an extensive written "Species Accounts" section that includes full details on the timing and extent of molt, migration, plumage descriptions, and behavior. It should be noted that an abbreviated version of these accounts appears with the photography sections, along with the range maps. The layout of the photographs is particularly satisfying and aesthetically pleasing; care was taken to keep the arrangement of the photographs unusual and interesting.

The Shorebird Guide sets a new standard of what to expect from a field guide that uses photography, both in the author's excellent and varied choice of images and in how it inspires the reader to venture beyond mere plumage details. Although this is a guide that would be very useful to keep in the car, it's also a book I would recommend sitting with at home, leisurely poring over its visual riches...and that is not something I thought I would ever write about a field guide!

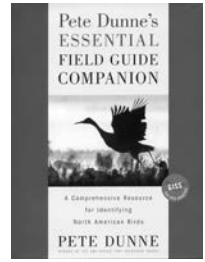
The Un-guide Guide

"It is not only fine feathers that make fine birds." Aesop *The Jay and The Peacock*

Another High Priest of the Church of GISS is Pete Dunne, Director of the Cape May Observatory and vice president of the New Jersey Audubon Society. Ever since his landmark *Hawks in Flight*, which proposed a holistic approach to identifying raptors in flight, Dunne has been one of the leading advocates in American birding for moving beyond plumage details as the only tool in field identification. On the cover of his latest book is a badge that proclaims: "GISS put into practice."

Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion is an anti-field guide in every sense. While there are lengthy species accounts, there are NO illustrations except for some small decorative black and white shots on the title pages. The book is huge, 710 pages, and sits on your shelf like a dictionary. The text has none of the clipped "just the facts" tone you find in typical field guides or in *Birds of North America On-Line*. Reading each species account, you are acutely aware of the author's subjective voice, his unbridled enthusiasm, and most of all, his rollicking sense of humor. Who but Pete

Dunne would describe an American Woodcock as "Meatloaf on a Stick" (p. 243).



All the breeding North American birds are covered in the *Essential Field Guide Companion*. Each account has at least one lengthy paragraph on subjects like "status," "description," "behavior," "flight," and something Dunne labels "pertinent particulars." This last section contains useful tips on separating similar species. In each account, Dunne is conveying a vivid subjective portrait of that species, the particular way it looks or behaves. Much of this information, which is so useful in the identification of birds, you will not find in most field guides. For field guides, brevity is next to godliness, which often means an over-reliance on the succinct plumage details to keep the guide as slim as possible. Dunne knows that in real-world situations, while knowledge of plumage is important, there are also many other cues that experienced birders rely on when making an ID. Birders often only pick up these kinds of insights on field trips with more seasoned birders or attending a lecture by an expert. In his *Essential Field Guide Companion*, Dunne is trying to convey the kind of intuitive sense of a bird that is normally acquired only after decades in the field.

Here is just a bit of how Dunne describes the Groove-billed Ani, under "Behavior":

> Anis like to stay close to the ground. Their movements are slow and clumsy: they clamber and hop in bushes, walk slowly on the ground, and run or hop when prey is sighted. They seem not so much to perch as to cling to branches or festoon themselves on bushes. When foraging in brush, they spend most of their time out of sight. Grackles stay in the open. Roosting anis commonly occupy the same perch with bodies touching. On cold and wet mornings, birds often array themselves, placidly and en masse, on the sunny side of hedges, looking disheveled and dejected. (p. 325)

Through Dunne's evocative and well-crafted descriptions of appearance, flight, feeding, and behavior, the reader is given a more complex and certainly useful understanding of how we see birds under field conditions. This is something that a typical field guide's tally of plumage details can never achieve. In other words, field guides typically deal with skins, while *Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion* is concerned with the living bird.

I have to mention one feature of this book I found extremely amusing. Under the name of the bird in each account heading is a single pithy phrase the Dunne uses to capture some aspect of the bird. Most make perfect sense to anyone who has birded awhile, but some, like the woodcock as a "meatloaf on a stick" are purposely over the top and reveal an author who is truly having fun birding. Other examples include: "the ugly American," "the Bronx petrel," "a Great Horned drawn by El Greco," and "the prairie hiccup." You'll have a great time reading these to fellow birders and letting them guess what species Dunne is referring to. (In order, these birds are Wood Stork, Rock Pigeon, Long-eared Owl, and Henslow's Sparrow.)

When I interviewed Dunne recently, he mentioned how sad it was how few birders remember Richard Pough's guides that were written in the 1940s. Pough's descriptions were written in a style that was personal and chatty but always focused on a living bird. Birding is a human avocation, and the way we look at birds can never be fully captured in a dry recitation of details of appearance. *Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion* is like birding with a close friend who also happens to be a much better birder than you. What you could learn in one day afield with that friend would never be found in any field guide. As legendary jazz saxophonist Stan Getz put it: "You can read all the textbooks and listen to all the records, but you have to play with musicians that are better than you."

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WORM-EATING WARBLER BY DAVID LARSON

BIRD SIGHTINGS

March/April 2006

Seth Kellogg, Marjorie W. Rines, Robert H. Stymeist, and Jeremiah R. Trimble

The proverbial March lion roared off and on during the month; temperatures were below average for eastern Massachusetts on nineteen days. The first nine days of the month continued the pattern that began on February 18 with below-normal readings for a total of twenty straight days. The month as a whole, however, was just 0.2° below normal in Boston thanks to a warm spell from March 10 to 14, when temperatures were as much as 15° above normal, and the closing days of the month, when March exited as it should — like a lamb. The coldest day was March 1 at 18°, and the warmest day in Boston was the last day, when the temperature reached 73°. Less than an inch of rain was recorded in March, 3.29 inches below average. In fact, this was the second driest March on record, the driest being March 1915. Snowfall was also below average, tied with six other Marches for the least amount of snow. The season total for Boston was 39.9 inches, 2.2 inches below average.

April in Boston was mild, dry, and quite sunny. The first twenty days recorded near-normal and above-normal temperatures; then cold weather arrived for the last ten days of the month. The high reached 77° on April 15; the low was just 33° on April 5. Measurable rain fell on 14 days but only amounted to 1.83 inches, nearly two inches less than normal. Only one weekend, April 22–23, had measurable rain on both Saturday and Sunday. There was a trace of snow on April 5, when observers noted white-out conditions. Huge flakes formed but melted when they touched paved surfaces. Wind was from the south on April 7 and 10 and from the southwest on April 12–14 and April 26–27. *R. Stymeist*

WATERFOWL THROUGH ALCIDS

The appearance of **Greater White-fronted Geese** is becoming more and more routine in Massachusetts. In March individuals were observed in Amherst and Concord, and two birds lingered in Ipswich during the second half of April. Also of note was the single **Cackling Goose** in Plymouth during March. A pair of **Tundra Swans** was tracked by birders as they moved south (!) through the Connecticut River Valley between March 11 and April 3. Several Eurasian Wigeon were observed during the period, including three in Falmouth in a flock of eighty-eight American Wigeon. A pair was observed in South Dartmouth in mid-March, and three singles were seen in other eastern Massachusetts localities. Continuing an almost-annual tradition was the sighting of a Eurasian Teal in West Harwich. According to the British Ornithologists' Union, this species occurs with some frequency in winter and spring in Massachusetts, particularly on Cape Cod. The numbers of Redheads, which are usually scarce, nearly rivaled those of Canvasbacks this season. Flocks of ten or more were reported from Concord, Falmouth, and Randolph.

Any birder interested in seeing a **Pacific Loon** in Massachusetts should take a trip to Provincetown next winter or spring. In recent years this spot has produced many sightings of this species with good reliability (at least on calm days!). This year Pacific Loons were sighted there on March 12 and April 23. Our old (quite old) friend, the Gloucester **Eared Grebe**, was last seen on March 25. We look forward to seeing you next year! Of great interest was the report of a single Manx Shearwater off Woods Hole near the Elizabeth Islands on April 23.

Amazingly, this species has bred in Massachusetts at Penikese Island in the Elizabeth Islands, where in 1973 an adult Manx Shearwater was found incubating an egg underneath a plank. A single chick, close to fledging, was seen later that summer in the same locale. At the time, this represented the first breeding record for North America. Could this species be attempting to breed again in the Bay State, or has it continuously bred at low levels over the last few decades? In 1977, a breeding colony was found in Newfoundland, and there have been a few historic reports of breeding from Bermuda.

A Green Heron furnished the earliest record for Massachusetts when it appeared at Pittsfield on April 3. As heron news goes, however, the real winner of the season was a **White Ibis**. This year two separate sightings, possibly of the same individual, were reported from Chappaquiddick on Martha's Vineyard (March 17) and Scituate (April 1). Although Black Vultures were observed at traditional areas in western Massachusetts, individuals were also seen in the northeastern part of the state at Plum Island, Ipswich, and Gloucester. Numerous pairs of breeding Bald Eagles were noted at various locales including Boylston, Lakeville, and Wachusett Reservoir. All three accipiter species were reported as breeding here this season. Because Sharp-shinned Hawk is a very rare breeder in the state, the discovery of a nest in Ipswich was exciting. In the last few decades there may have been fewer than ten breeding records in Massachusetts, although it apparently was a more common local breeder in the nineteenth century. Cooper's Hawk, also much more common as a breeder in the nineteenth century, declined during the twentieth century. In the last ten years, however, it has increased dramatically as a breeder in Massachusetts and currently could be considered a widespread, if still uncommon, breeding species.

The rarity of the season was most certainly the **White-tailed Hawk** that was observed in Hadley from April 22 to 24. This totally unprecedented occurrence raises questions about how this bird came to the Commonwealth. The species almost never occurs outside its normal range in coastal Texas and southward. Although rarely kept in captivity, the bird was found close to the New England Falconry headquarters, a coincidence that begs close scrutiny. Amazingly, on April 25 a White-tailed Hawk (most likely the same individual) was observed at Great Swamp NWR in New Jersey. More amazing was the discovery of a White-tailed Hawk (also probably the same individual) at Pilgrim Heights in Truro on April 27. I would like to commend the birders of the northeastern United States for their vigilance. That the same hawk was sighted at three such widely scattered locations is, well, amazing. One has to consider the possibility that more than one individual was involved (best of luck to the professionals at the Massachusetts and New Jersey Records Committees!). Other noteworthy raptor reports during the season included **Gyrfalcons** (or possibly a single individual) seen at both Plum Island and Nahant.

Two **Sandhill Cranes** were noted in New Marlboro on March 26 and were seen sporadically through the remainder of the period. This is the third spring in a row that this species has been reported from New Marlboro. In 2000 Sandhill Cranes were confirmed to be breeding in Maine, the first breeding record for New England, and it is undoubtedly only a matter of time before this species breeds in Massachusetts.

There were a few shorebird highlights this season. An American Golden-Plover spent nine days on North Monomoy in mid-April. This species is very rare in the state in April, with fewer than ten records during the last fifteen years. Semipalmated Plovers were reported much earlier than normal this year. These included a bird at Plum Island on April 8, probably the earliest spring arrival ever in the state. Noteworthy was the **Black-necked Stilt** found on April 1 in East Boston, where it lingered for a week to the enjoyment of many birders. Whimbrels are quite uncommon in Massachusetts as spring migrants. The single bird found at Morris Island on April 25 and the two seen the same day at Plum Island were therefore somewhat surprising. Although

typically one of the earliest spring shorebird migrants, the Pectoral Sandpiper that arrived at Plum Island on March 10 represented one of the earliest Massachusetts records to date.

Black-headed Gulls were well reported during March and April, including as many as four during March in Gloucester. Although the numbers of white-winged gulls were typical, the four Glaucous Gulls in Gloucester were somewhat noteworthy. Caspian Terns were reported from several locales in late April over a five-day period. The first Common Terns of the season, a group of four, were found in Marion on April 29. Black Skimmers are rarely seen in Massachusetts before mid-May. The individual identified at Chatham on April 29 is in fact one of fewer than five April records for the state. *J. Trimble*

Greater White-fronted Goose

3/10-23	Amherst	1	G. Martel
3/15-29	Concord	1	S. Perkins + v.o.
4/14-29	Ipswich	2	P. Brown + v.o.

Snow Goose

3/1-23	P.I.	3	R. Heil#
3/7	Marblehead	7	K. Haley
3/14	Hadley	25	D. Ziomek
3/23	Ipswich	3	J. Berry
4/1	N. Truro	1	S. Ellis

Brant

3/5	W. Dennis	130	D. Furbish
3/5	Quincy	1000	E. Taylor
3/7	Brewster	100+	M. Keleher
4/9, 23	Duxbury B.	156, 500	R. Bowes
4/10	Winthrop	282+	T. Bronson#
4/11	P.I.	187	R. Heil
4/30	Plymouth H.	380	SSBC (G. d'E)

Cackling Goose

3/1-21	Plymouth	1	T. Lloyd-Evans + v.o.

Mute Swan

3/4	Turners Falls	11	M. Lynch#
3/5	Squantum	39	G. d'Entremont
3/18	Falmouth	40	CCBC (G. Hirth)
4/22	Acoaxet	62	M. Lynch#

Tundra Swan

3/11	Turners Falls	2	G. Martel
3/18-20	Northampton	2	T. Gagnon
4/3	Holyoke	2	S. Svec

Wood Duck

thr	GMNWR	80 max	v.o.
3/10	Northfield	30	M. Taylor
3/11	Hadley	116	C. Gentes
3/11, 4/15	Bolton Flats	54, 25	S. Sutton
3/16	Belchertown	27	L. Therrien
3/19	W. Bridgewater	25	SSBC (WRP)

Gadwall

thr	P.I.	187 max 4/11	v.o.
3/3	Ipswich	10	R. Heil
3/5	E. Gloucester	20	R. Heil
3/14	GMNWR	3	S. Perkins#
3/23-4/15	Woburn	2-6	M. Rines
4/8	Pittsfield (Pont.)	6	E. Neumuth
4/24	Wachusett Res.	2	M. Lynch#

Eurasian Wigeon

3/5-18	Falmouth	3	S. Hedman#
3/11-17	S. Dart. (A. Pd)	1 m, 1 f	E. Nielsen
3/20	Westport	1	R. Hodson
3/31-4/2	P.I.	1 m	T. Wetmore
4/30	W. Harwich	1	M. Keleher

American Wigeon

3/1	Barnstable	20	M. Keleher
3/9	Falmouth	88	M. Keleher
3/10, 25	Easthampton	2, 15	C. Gentes
3/10-4/9	P.I.	74 max 3/26	v.o.
3/10	Waltham	15	J. Marino
3/14	Turners Falls	13	T. Collins
3/25	Hadley	10	S. Kellogg#

American Black Duck

thr	P.I.	890 max 3/10	R. Heil
3/3	Ipswich	410	R. Heil
3/5	Plymouth	325	G. d'Entremont
3/12	Westport	814	M. Lynch#
3/19	Cumb. Farms	900	SSBC (WRP)

Blue-winged Teal

3/16	Northampton	2	B. Hart
3/26	E. Boston (B.I.)	pr	D. + I. Jewell
3/31	Sudbury	4	G. Dysart
4/8-27	GMNWR	14 max 4/19	v.o.
4/9	Newbypt	4	S. Grinley#
4/25	N. Truro	4	D. Manchester
4/30	DWWS	1 f	E. Taylor

Northern Shoveler

3/12, 4/2	Longmeadow	5, 2	LaPointe, Carpist
3/14	Arlington Res.	3	M. Rines
3/25, 4/17	GMNWR	4, 2	Center, Rines
4/6	E. Boston (B.I.)	2 pr	D. + I. Jewell
4/8	Turners Falls	2	S. Surner
4/8	Pittsfield (Pont.)	3	E. Neumuth
4/8, 21	P.I.	3, 1	Moore, Wetmore

Northern Pintail

thr	P.I.	225 max 3/20	v.o.
3/1	Pittsfield (Onota)	1	N. Mole
3/10-4/23	GMNWR	18 max	v.o.
3/12	Acoaxet	76	M. Lynch#
3/12	Easthampton	10	C. Gentes
3/13	Orange (Rohunta)	11	T. Pirro
3/13	New Salem	11	T. Pirro
3/19	Burrage Pd WMA	75	SSBC (WRP)

Green-winged Teal

thr	W. Harwich	52 max	B. Nikula#
3/7-4/15	Bolton Flats	121 max 3/18	S. Sutton
3/8-4/30	GMNWR	130 max 4/8	H. Emmet
3/10-4/30	P.I.	204 max 3/14	R. Heil
3/14-4/17	E. Boston (B.I.)	32 max	v.o.
3/19	Burrage Pd WMA	60	SSBC (WRP)
3/28	Hadley	65	H. Allen
4/8	Pittsfield (Pont.)	63	E. Neumuth
4/16	IRWS	62	BBC (P.+ F. Vale)

Eurasian Teal

4/27-30	W. Harwich	1 m	M. Tuttle#

Canvasback

3/5-11	Falmouth	18 max	v.o.
3/7	Brewster	10	M. Keleher
3/11	Westport	43	E. Nielsen
3/11	Randolph	2 m	G. d'Entremont
3/12	Acoaxet	44	M. Lynch#
3/27	Braintree	4	P. Peterson

Redhead

3/1-7	Concord (NAC)	14	S. Perkins
3/5-18	Falmouth	12 max	v.o.
3/8	Rochester	7	M. Maurer
3/11	Randolph	10	G. d'Entremont
3/19	Pembroke	2 m	SSBC (WRP)
3/27	Braintree	2	P. Peterson
3/30	Edgartown	7	A. Keith

Ring-necked Duck

3/1-6	Concord (NAC)	55	S. Perkins
3/9-30	GMNWR	180 max 3/14	v.o.
3/12	Southwick	141	S. Kellogg
3/13, 4/9	Orange (Rohunta)	69, 100	Pirro, Durphey
3/17, 26	Holyoke	93, 190	Conway, Richardson
3/17	Lincoln	209	M. Rines
3/19	W. Bridgewater	300	SSBC (WRP)

Ring-necked Duck (continued)

3/19	Burrage Pd WMA	200	SSBC (WRP)
3/26	Sutton	137	A. Marble

Greater Scaup

3/5, 4/2	Falmouth	75, 786	Hedman, Lynch
3/7	Brewster	90	M. Keleher
3/12	Acoaxet	34	M. Lynch#
3/18	N. Truro	60	B. Nikula
3/19, 4/11	Newbypt	32, 20	Vale, Heil
3/25	Boston H.	25	S. Zendeh#
4/7	Cheshire	2	D. St. James
4/8	Pittsfield (Pont.)	2	E. Neumuth

Lesser Scaup

3/11	Randolph	4	G. d'Entremont
3/16	Northampton	3	C. Gentes
3/18	N. Truro	15	B. Nikula
3/19	Pembroke	10	SSBC (WRP)
3/21	Newbypt	3	R. Heil
3/22	Melrose	2	D. + I. Jewell
4/9	Orange (Rohunta)	2	J. Durphey

King Eider

3/5	Rockport	1 m ad	R. Heil
3/9	Vineyard Haven	1 sub ad m	A. Keith
3/10	P.I.	1 f	R. Heil
3/11	Newbypt	1	S. McGrath

Common Eider

thr	P.I.	900 max 3/28	v.o.
3/3	Ipswich	640	R. Heil
3/5	Mashpee	1500	M. Keleher
3/12, 4/22	Westport	1051, 103	M. Lynch#
3/25, 4/30	Gloucester	359, 75	Lynch, Hedman
3/25	Boston H.	210	S. Zendeh#
3/26	Sandwich	750+	D. Furbish
4/23	Newbypt H.	600	R. Heil

Harlequin Duck

3/5, 4/2	N. Scituate	13, 11	G. d'Entremont
3/5	Orleans	2	J. Young
3/12, 4/23	Rockport	63, 7	Berry, Heil
3/30	Chilmark	30+	A. Keith
4/10	Acoaxet	8	L. Thoerle#
4/20	Nahant	1	L. Pivacek

Surf Scoter

thr	P.I.	164 max 4/26	v.o.
3/25	Gloucester	149	M. Lynch#
3/30	N. Scituate	50	D. Furbish
4/2	Winthrop B.	25+	R. Heil#
4/15	Duxbury B.	1000+	R. Bowes
4/23	Truro	70	B. Nikula

White-winged Scoter

thr	P.I.	125 max 3/21	v.o.
3/12	Westport	97	M. Lynch#
3/19	Quabbin Pk	2 m	M. Lynch#
3/25	Gloucester	81	M. Lynch#
4/7	Pittsfield (Pont.)	1	D. St. James
4/23	Rockport (A.P.)	3	R. Heil

Black Scoter

thr	P.I.	42 max 3/28	v.o.
3/5, 4/15	Duxbury B.	23, 200	R. Bowes
3/19	Magnolia	40	C. Corley
4/30	Gloucester H.	11	S. Hedman

Long-tailed Duck

thr	Newbypt	3000 max 4/23	v.o.
thr	P.I.	910 max 4/11	v.o.
3/22	Tuckernuck/Nant.	2000	S. Perkins#
3/25	Boston H.	15	S. Zendeh#
4/2	Falmouth	46	M. Lynch#
4/8	Turners Falls	1	S. Surner
4/8	Pittsfield (Pont.)	7	E. Neumuth
4/23	Rockport (A.P.)	173	R. Heil

Bufflehead

3/1	Barnstable	85	M. Keleher
3/10-4/11	Newbypt H.	240 max 3/21	R. Heil
3/11	Randolph	30	G. d'Entremont
3/12, 4/22	Acoaxet	285, 7	M. Lynch#
3/19	Pembroke	70	SSBC (WRP)
3/25	Turners Falls	20	T. Schottland
4/8	Pittsfield (Pont.)	14	E. Neumuth

Common Goldeneye

3/1-4/11	Newbypt	350 max 3/21	R. Heil
3/1-4/26	P.I.	75 max 3/28	v.o.
3/3	Ipswich	65	R. Heil
3/5	Mashpee	45	M. Keleher
3/11	Turners Falls	50	G. Martel
3/11	Squantum	80	G. d'Entremont
3/12	Westport	127	M. Lynch#
3/19	W. Bridgewater	25	SSBC (WRP)
3/22	DWMA	20	S. Sutton
4/12	Winchester	2 m	P. Devaney

Barrow's Goldeneye

3/1	Barnstable	1	M. Keleher
3/1-25	E. Gloucester	1	v.o.
3/14, 22	Cotuit	1, 2	M. Keleher
3/16-28	Newbypt	4 max	R. Heil
4/2	P.I.	1	S. McGrath

Hooded Merganser

3/9	Falmouth	27	M. Keleher
3/10-4/20	P.I.	25 max 3/10	v.o.
3/10	Pepperell	70	T. Pirro
3/11	Bolton Flats	35	S. Sutton
3/13	Turners Falls	40	T. Schottland
3/19	Westwood	35	G. Canelli
3/22	Cambr. (F.P.)	23	S. Simpson
4/7	Pittsfield (Pont.)	35	D. St. James

Common Merganser

3/10	Pepperell	54	T. Pirro
3/12	Turners Falls	180	H. Allen
3/19	E. Brookfield	101	M. Lynch#
3/22-4/18	P.I.	76 max 4/2	v.o.
3/22	Southwick	100	S. Kellogg
3/25	Northampton	135	S. Kellogg#
3/26	W. Newbury	85	P. + F. Vale
4/8	Pittsfield (Pont.)	350	E. Neumuth

Red-breasted Merganser

thr	P.I.	85 max	R. Heil
3/25	Gloucester	122	M. Lynch#
4/1	Squantum	480	G. d'Entremont
4/2	Falmouth	259	M. Lynch#
4/15	Fairhaven	118	M. Lynch#
4/17	Westport	160	E. Nielsen
4/18	Turners Falls	2	W. Lafley
4/22	P'town	1700+	B. Nikula
4/25	N. Truro	500+	D. Manchester#

Ruddy Duck

3/14	Northampton	3	T. Collins
3/17-4/23	Melrose	12 max	D. + I. Jewell
3/19	Jamaica Plain	6	P. Peterson
3/26	W. Newbury	6	P. + F. Vale
4/7, 26	W. Newbury	3	Chickering, Weaver
4/8	Brookline	9	R. Merrill

Ring-necked Pheasant

3/5	Concord	3	L. + G. Long
3/25	Belmont	2	M. Rines#

Ruffed Grouse

3/11	Mashpee	2	M. Keleher
3/29	Quabbin	3	J. P. Smith
4/6	Belchertown	3	L. Therrien
4/14	Petersham	3	M. Lynch#
4/29	W. Newbury	2	J. Hoye#

Wild Turkey

3/12	WMWS	20	S. Grinley#
3/13	Amherst	36	H. Allen
3/19	Gloucester	12	S. Hedman
3/19	Boxford	25	S. Grinley#
3/30	Stow	20	J. Young
3/31	Westfield	20	S. Kellogg
4/5	Newbypt	12	MAS (B. Gette)

Northern Bobwhite

3/11	Mashpee	9	M. Keleher
4/26	N. Truro	2	D. Manchester

Red-throated Loon

thr	P.I.	41 max	v.o.
3/26, 4/23	Truro	30, 110	B. Nikula
3/26	P'town (R.P.)	25+	P. Flood
4/2	Winthrop B.	13	R. Heil#
4/21	Granville	1	S. Kellogg

Red-throated Loon (continued)

4/23	Hadley	1	D. Berard
4/24	Pittsfield	1	T. Collins

Pacific Loon *

3/12, 4/23	P'town	1, 1	Hoye, Nikula

Common Loon

thr	P.I.	49 max 3/28	v.o.
3/1	Barnstable	22	M. Keleher
3/3	Ipswich	36	R. Heil
4/2	Falmouth	31	M. Lynch#
4/21	Quabbin Pk	7	L. Therrien
4/23	Rockport (A.P.)	15	R. Heil
4/27	N. Truro	30	D. Manchester#
4/30	Gardner	2	T. Pirro

Pied-billed Grebe

3/13	Wareham	2	M. LaBossiere
3/15-4/27	GMNWR	2-3	v.o.
3/18	Falmouth	3	CCBC (G. Hirth)
3/21-4/26	P.I.	2	v.o.
4/8	Cheshire	3	E. Neumuth
4/11	Longmeadow	4	R. Kuerzel
4/22	Acoaxet	2	M. Lynch#
4/26	Oxford	2	D. Berard

Horned Grebe

thr	P.I.	43max 3/21	R. Heil
3/5	N. Scituate	7	G. d'Entremont
3/12	Westport	59	M. Lynch#
4/2	Winthrop B.	6	R. Heil#
4/2	Falmouth	12	M. Lynch#
4/8	Pittsfield (Pont.)	1	E. Neumuth
4/15	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg

Red-necked Grebe

3/2-4/9	P.I.	36 max 3/31	v.o.
3/25	Gloucester	7	M. Lynch#
3/30	N. Scituate	57+	D. Furbish
4/2	Winthrop B.	55	R. Heil#
4/15	Southwick	6	S. Kellogg
4/24	Deerfield	1	R. Packard

Eared Grebe *

3/1-25	Gloucester	1	v.o.

Manx Shearwater

4/23	Woods Hole	1	R. Jenkins

Northern Gannet

3/8, 21	N. Truro	318, 510	D. Manchester
3/26, 4/27	P'town (R.P.)	265, 2000	Flood, Nikula
4/5, 22	P.I.	30, 40	T. Wetmore
4/6, 25	N. Truro	600, 1100	D. Manchester
4/9, 23	Rockport	3, 289	R. Heil
4/23	Duxbury	250 ad	R. Bowes

Double-crested Cormorant

4/11, 25	P.I.	220, 620	R. Heil
4/16, 25	N. Truro	100, 600	D. Manchester
4/20	Revere Beach	250	P. Peterson
4/20	Nahant	600	L. Pivacek
4/25	Barre Falls	211	Hawkcount (BK)

Great Cormorant

3/27	N. Truro	22	D. Manchester
3/30	N. Scituate	40	D. Furbish
4/22	P'town	12	B. Nikula
4/23	Duxbury	11	R. Bowes
4/26	P.I.	3	J. McNeal
4/30	Scusset Beach	1	SSBC (G. d'E)

American Bittern

thr	P.I.	1	R. Heil
3/5	Edgartown	1	L. Walker
3/14	E. Boston (B.I.)	1	P. Peterson
3/17	S. Dart. (A. Pd)	1	M. Sylvia#
4/thr	Reports of indiv. from 15 locations		
4/27	Blandford	2	M + K. Conway
4/30	Amherst	2	L. Therrien

Great Blue Heron

3/8	Acton	4 n	B. Volkle
3/11	N. Andover	14 n	J. Fenton#
3/22	DWMA	14 on 11 nests	S. Sutton
3/28	DWMA	23 on 14 nests	S. Sutton
3/29	W. Boxford	40 nests	J. Berry
4/11	Middleton	21 nests	J. Berry
4/29	Ware R. IBA	21 on 14 nests	M. Lynch#

Great Egret

3/18	Scituate	1	D. Furbish
3/18, 4/15	Duxbury	1, 3	R. Bowes
3/29, 4/3	Manchester	2, 21	R. Heil
4/16	W. Warren	1	B. Zajda
4/22	Westport	10	M. Lynch#
4/25	Barre Falls	2	Hawkcount (BK)
4/25	P.I.	17	R. Heil

Snowy Egret

3/16	Edgartown	1	S. Miller
3/28	Boston (Logan)	1	N. Smith
3/31, 4/12	Manchester	1, 61	S. Hedman
4/15	Essex	12	P. + F. Vale
4/17	E. Boston (B.I.)	9	A. Birch
4/23	P.I.	24	T. Wetmore
4/29	Chatham	6	B. Nikula

Little Blue Heron

4/2	Essex	1	P. Brown#
4/3	Manchester	2 ad	R. Heil
4/15	Hingham	1 pied	SSBC (G. d'E)
4/26	Duxbury	1	R. Bowes
4/30	W. Gloucester	4	S. Hedman
4/30	E. Boston (B.I.)	1 ad	S. Zendeh

Cattle Egret

4/11	Essex	1	P. Brown
4/19	Newbypt	1	S. McGrath
4/22	Beverly	1	J. Hoye#

Green Heron

4/3, 25	Pittsfield	1, 2	T. Collins
4/29	Amherst	2	C. Gentes
4/30	Plymouth	2	I. Davies

Black-crowned Night-Heron

3/5	Bourne	1 imm	J. Young
3/20	E. Boston (B.I.)	1	P. Peterson
3/28	Dorchester	6	P. Peterson
4/8	W. Harwich	24	M. Dettrey
4/15	Hingham	3	BBC (G. d'E.)
4/27	Salem	3	J. Berry#
4/27	Cambridge	5	P. Griswold

White Ibis

3/17	Chappaquiddick	1 ad	D. Carter
4/1	Scituate	1 ad	C. Nims

Glossy Ibis

3/31, 4/11	P.I.	1, 15	Weaver, Heil
4/1	Scituate	16	S. Hecker
4/7	N. Truro	2	D. Manchester
4/8	E. Boston (B.I.)	39	J. Miller
4/8	Rowley	27	J. Miller
4/15	DWWS	2	D. Furbish

Black Vulture

3/5	Gr Barrington	6	T. Collins
3/9, 30	Milton (Blue Hills)	1, 1	N. Smith
3/10	P.I.	1	R. Heil
3/17	Westfield	2	R. Ranney
3/27	Westboro	1	O. Kennedy
4/6	Ipswich	1	J. Ciriello
4/9	Sheffield	7	M. Lynch#
4/12	Springfield	1	R. Titus
4/25	Gloucester	1	R. Heil

Turkey Vulture

3/1, 4/25	P.I.	19, 10	R. Heil
3/5	Ipswich	16	J. Berry
3/5-4/25	Barre Falls	76	Hawkcount (BK)
3/9, 28	Milton (Blue Hills)	17, 19	N. Smith
3/12-4/30	N. Truro	242	Hawkcount (DM)
4/1	Quabbin Pk	21	M. Lynch#
4/9	Sheffield	30	M. Lynch#
4/10	Amherst	23	S. Surner

Osprey

3/11, 4/22	Westport	1, 60	Nielsen, Lynch
3/14	Hadley	2	D. Ziomek
3/16	Tisbury	1	P. Uhlendorf
3/22	Mashpee	6	M. Keleher
4/thr	N. Truro	29	Hawkcount (DM)
4/2	Falmouth	21	M. Lynch#
4/2-26	Barre Falls	155	Hawkcount (BK)
4/11	P.I.	10	R. Heil

Bald Eagle
3/3 Newbypt 5 MAS (Weaver)
3/5 Boylston pr n M. Lynch#
3/6 Quabbin Pk 7 T. Gagnon
3/6 Newbypt 9 M. Beath
3/10 Lakeville 2 pr G. McAvoy
3/19 Quabbin Pk 5 ad M. Lynch#
4/2-26 Barre Falls 15 Hawkcount (BK)
Northern Harrier
thr N. Truro 24 Hawkcount (DM)
thr P.I. 15 max R. Heil
3/4 DWWS 9 C. Dalton
4/6-26 Barre Falls 17 Hawkcount (BK)
4/14 Harwich 2 MAS (S. Ellis)
4/14 Newbypt 2 P. + F. Vale
4/17 S. Dart. (A.Pd) 2 E. Nielsen
4/18 Newbury pr J. Berry
Sharp-shinned Hawk
3/11-4/27 Barre Falls 206 Hawkcount (BK)
3/22-4/30 Ipswich pr n J. Berry
3/26 Newbypt 2 P. + F. Vale
3/28-4/30 N. Truro 115 Hawkcount (DM)
4/1 DWWS 2 D. Furbish
4/2 Norton pr J. Shea
4/25 P.I. 48 R. Heil
Cooper's Hawk
3/11-4/25 Barre Falls 18 Hawkcount (BK)
3/21-4/27 N. Truro 20 Hawkcount (DM)
3/24 Scituate pr D. Furbish
3/28 P.I. 2 R. Heil
3/30 Wakefield pr n F. Vale
4/3 Brimfield 3 I. Lynch
4/15 DWWS 2 D. Furbish
4/22 Salem 2 BBC (L. dela Flor)
4/25 Scituate pr n D. Furbish
4/30 Wompatuck SP 2 BBC (E. Giles)
Northern Goshawk
3/11 Northampton 1 T. Gagnon
3/20 E. Middleboro pr n R. Clem
3/23 DWWS 1 ad D. Ludlow
3/24 Westfield 2 P. Langmore
3/24 Scituate 1 ad D. Furbish
4/3, 7 Barre Falls 1, 1 Hawkcount (BK)
4/4 Sutton 1 D. Berard
4/8 Harvard 1+MBC (R. Stymeist)
4/16 Arlington Res. 1 imm M. Rines#
Red-shouldered Hawk
3/4, 4/12 DWWS 2, 2 D. Furbish#
3/9 Easton pr K. Ryan
3/11-4/21 Barre Falls 21 Hawkcount (BK)
3/11 Templeton 2 ad T. Pirro
3/11 Randolph 5 G. d'Entremont
3/11-31 E. Middleboro pr K. Anderson
3/12-4/27 N. Truro 14 Hawkcount (DM)
3/13 Duxbury 3 R. Bowes
4/14 Cummington pr B. Spencer
4/26 Oxford 2 D. Berard
Broad-winged Hawk
4/thr N. Truro 26 Hawkcount (DM)
4/11-27 Barre Falls 1513 Hawkcount (BK)
4/16 N. Brookfield 11 M. Lynch#
4/20 Groton 26 T. Pirro
4/21 Quabbin Pk 177 L. Therrien
4/25 Hadley 222 J. P. Smith
4/25 Amherst 303 L. Therrien
4/29 Northfield 6 BBC (M. Taylor)
White-tailed Hawk *
4/22-24 Hadley 1 ph sub ad S. Surner + v.o.
4/27 N. Truro 1 Hawkcount (DM)
Red-tailed Hawk
3/3 Ipswich 12 R. Heil
3/6-4/26 Barre Falls 168 Hawkcount (BK)
3/8-31-4/30 N. Truro 48 Hawkcount (DM)
3/14 P.I. 7+ R. Heil
4/9 DWWS 6 D. Silverstein#
4/9 Cumb. Farms 8 SSBC (Sweeney)
4/16 N. Brookfield 7 M. Lynch#
4/21 Barre Falls 7 Hawkcount (BK)
Rough-legged Hawk
3/4-5 DWWS 1 L. Ferraresso
3/14 P.I. 1 lt R. Heil
American Kestrel
3/5-4/26 Barre Falls 46 Hawkcount (BK)
4/thr N. Truro 200 Hawkcount (DM)
4/2 P.I. 32 R. Heil#
4/2 Scituate 6 M. Emmons#
4/8 Bedford 14 M. Rines
4/9 Sheffield 6 M. Lynch#
4/9 Cumb. Farms 6 SSBC (Sweeney)
4/16 P.I. 9 T. Wetmore
4/16 DWWS 15+ P. Fitzgerald
Merlin
3/11 Edgartown 2 J. Nelson#
4/thr N. Truro 27 Hawkcount (DM)
4/11-25 Barre Falls 8 Hawkcount (BK)
4/24 Hadley 2 C. Gentes
4/25 P.I. 15 R. Heil
4/25 Hadley 3 J. P. Smith
Gyrfalcon *
3/10, 15 Nahant 1 L. Pivacek
3/14 P.I. 1 B. Secatore
Peregrine Falcon
thr P.I. 1-2 v.o.
3/15 Boston (Logan) 2 N. Smith
4/29 Worcester pr n M. Lynch#
Virginia Rail
3/1, 14 IRWS 1, 5 McGrath, Berry
4/3 Brimfield 2 I. Lynch
4/4 Sutton 2 D. Berard
4/9 Stockbridge 2 M. Lynch#
4/13 Concord 2 S. Perkins#
4/17 P.I. 3 T. Wetmore
4/29 Milton 2 P. O'Neill
Sora
4/8 Lenox 1 D. St. James
4/13-27 Concord 1 S. Perkins#
4/26 P.I. 1 T. Wetmore
4/27 Amherst 1 D. Minear
4/30 Stow 1 J. Hoye#
American Coot
3/1-4/15 Woburn (H.P.) 2-3 M. Rines
3/12 Acoaxet 19 M. Lynch#
3/13-4/29 GMNWR 14 max v.o.
3/17 Eastham 12+ MAS (S. Ellis)
3/18 Brighton 9 P. Peterson
3/18 Plymouth 12 R. Bowes
4/8 Brookline 7 R. Merrill
Sandhill Crane
3/26-4/30 New Marlboro 2 Conway, Mullen
Black-bellied Plover
3/21 Nantucket 12 S. Perkins#
4/1 N. Truro 2 S. Ellis
4/9, 23 P.I. 5 T. Wetmore
4/15, 23 Duxbury B. 9, 48 R. Bowes
4/20 S. Wellfleet 5 MAS (S. Ellis)
4/24 Plymouth 3 D. Noble
4/29 Chatham 9 R. Hodson
American Golden-Plover
4/11-4/20 N. Monomoy 1 B. Harris
Semipalmated Plover
4/8 P.I. 2 J. Egan
4/14 N. Monomoy 1 B. Harris
4/15 N. Truro 1 MAS (S. Ellis)
Piping Plover
3/15 Oak Bluffs 1 J. Nelson
3/17 S. Dart. (A. Pd) 2 M. Sylvia#
3/17, 4/30 P.I. 1, 6 McGrath, Liller
3/30, 4/19 Harwich 3, 3 pr S. Ellis#
4/1, 4/15 N. Truro 5, 6 pr S. Ellis
4/9 Ipswich (C.B.) 9 J. Berry
4/9 Duxbury B. 5 R. Bowes
4/19 Chatham 4 MAS (S. Ellis)
4/22 Acoaxet 5 M. Lynch#
Killdeer
3/4 Gloucester 1 BBC (Drummond)
3/8 Easthampton 2 H. Allen

Killdeer (continued)

3/10, 15	Concord (NAC)	2, 30	S. Perkins
3/10	P.I.	27	R. Heil
3/11, 18	Bolton Flats	7, 32	S. Sutton
3/18	Topsfield	16	BBC (L. dela Flor)
3/19	Amherst	17	M. Lynch#
3/26	Newbury	42	E. Nielsen

American Oystercatcher

3/11	Edgartown	1	A. Keith#
3/15-4/40	Boston (Logan)	3-4	N. Smith
4/thr	Thompson I.	2	v.o.
4/2	Winthrop	8	S. + J. Mirick
4/7	Squantum	2	L. Tyrala
4/15	Fairhaven	7	M. Lynch#
4/17	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	4	E. Nielsen
4/20	Eastham	64	MAS (S. Ellis)
4/22	Yarmouth	8	D. Furbish

Black-necked Stilt

4/1-8	E. Boston (B.I.)	1	L. Ferraresso + v.o.

Greater Yellowlegs

3/11-4/30	P.I.	152 max 4/25	v.o.
3/12-4/30	W. Harwich	40 max	B. Nikula
3/27	E. Boston (B.I.)	1	P. Peterson
3/30	Plymouth	1	K. Doyon
3/30	N. Falmouth	6	I. Nisbet
4/9	Newbypt H.	23	S. Grinley#
4/16	Chatham	38	B. Nikula
4/22	Newbypt	230+	P. + F. Vale
4/30	Grafton	5	M. Lynch#

Lesser Yellowlegs

3/10-4/30	P.I.	1-3	v.o.
4/4	E. Boston (B.I.)	1	P. Peterson
4/6	Topsfield.	1	S. McGrath
4/19	W. Bridgewater	1	SSBC (G. d'E)
4/20-30	W. Harwich	8	v.o.
4/22	Newbypt	3	J. Miller
4/24	Pittsfield (Onota)	1	N. Mole

Solitary Sandpiper

4/19	W. Bridgewater	1	SSBC (G. d'E)
4/22	P.I.	1	J. Miller
4/27	Newton	1	M. Kaufman
4/28	Plymouth	1	K. Doyon
4/30	Amherst	2	L. Therrien

Willet

4/20	Newbypt H.	1	S. McGrath
4/26	W. Dennis B.	2	M. Tuttle
4/29	Chatham	8	S. Ellis

Spotted Sandpiper

4/17	Wayland	1	B. Harris#
4/24	Northampton	1	C. Gentes
4/27	Newton	1	M. Kaufman
4/30	Grafton	2	M. Lynch#

Upland Sandpiper

4/10	N. Monomoy	1	B. Harris
4/14-22	Newbypt	2	P. + F. Vale

Whimbrel

4/25	Morris Island	1	B. Harris
4/25	P.I.	2	R. Heil

Marbled Godwit

3/8	Wareham	1	C. Longworth
4/16	N. Monomoy	1	B. Harris

Ruddy Turnstone

3/5	N. Scituate	1	G. d'Entremont
4/15	N. Truro	2	MAS (S. Ellis)
4/23	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore

Red Knot

4/25	N. Monomoy	2	B. Harris

Sanderling

thr	P.I.	75 max	v.o.
3/12, 4/22	Westport	15, 4	M. Lynch#
3/12	Brewster	300	B. Nikula
3/12	P'town (R.P.)	240	J. Hoye#
4/9	Ipswich (C.B.)	28	J. Berry
4/19	Eastham	64	MAS (S. Ellis)
4/20	S. Wellfleet	45	MAS (S. Ellis)

Least Sandpiper

4/26	P.I.	8	J. McNeal
4/28	Fairhaven	1	C. Longworth
4/30	Mashpee	3	M. Malin
4/30	W. Harwich	16	M. Keleher

Pectoral Sandpiper

3/10	P.I.	1	S. McGrath
3/17	S. Dart. (A. Pd)	1	M. Sylvia#
3/18	Bolton Flats	2	S. Sutton
4/4	Topsfield	4	R. Heil
4/12	W. Bridgewater	5	SSBC (G. d'E)
4/12-25	W. Harwich	5 max	E. Banks#
4/15	GMNWR	4	S. Perkins#
4/23	Orleans	1	B. Nikula

Purple Sandpiper

3/1-4/22	P.I.	35 max	T. Wetmore
3/12, 4/22	Westport	10, 15	M. Lynch#
3/12	Gloucester	133	J. Berry#
3/13, 4/15	Rockport	30, 23	Giriunas, Young
4/8	Revere	20	P. Peterson
4/22	Nahant	12	BBC (L. Pivacek)

Dunlin

3/12	P'town (R.P.)	120	J. Hoye#
3/12	Brewster	150	B. Nikula
4/15, 23	Duxbury B.	225, 919	R. Bowes
4/22	Newbypt	130+	P. + F. Vale
4/24	Plymouth	100	D. Noble
4/30	P.I.	73	P. + F. Vale

Wilson's Snipe

3/5	Boston (A.A.)	2	R. Stymeist#
3/8	Harwich	2	D. Silverstein#
3/14, 4/8	E. Boston (B.I.)	2, 40	Peterson, Miller
3/16	Bolton Flats	50	J. Hoye#
3/17-4/4	Newbury	51 max 4/4	v.o.
4/thr	W. Harwich	18 max	B. Nikula#
4/1	P.I.	10	J. Miller
4/8	Northfield	12	M. Taylor
4/9	Cumb. Farms	85	SSBC (Sweeney)
4/12	W. Bridgewater	150	SSBC (G. d'E)

American Woodcock

3/9	Pittsfield	10	T. Collins
3/10	Amherst	12	H. Allen
3/12	Westboro	20	J. Liller
3/12	DWWS	26	D. Furbish
3/19	Cummaquid	12	CCBC (Silverstein)
3/24	Uxbridge	12	B. Milke#
3/24	P.I.	70	T. Wetmore
4/6	Scituate	12+	D. Furbish

Laughing Gull

4/1	Truro	3	S. Ellis
4/6	Harwich	2	S. Ellis
4/15	Chatham	2	CCBC (Silverstein)
4/22	P'town	50	B. Nikula
4/23	Plymouth	6	J. Hoye#

Black-headed Gull

3/4, 25	Gloucester	1-4	v.o.
3/5	Boston	1	K. Hartel#
3/15-4/15	Newbypt	1	S. McGrath#
3/23	Osterville	1 ad	M. Keleher
4/11-16	P.I.	1 1W	R. Heil

Bonaparte's Gull

3/25	Gloucester	1	M. Lynch#
4/1	Newbypt	5	D. Chickering#
4/2	Falmouth	50+	M. Lynch#
4/12	Lynn	240	L. Pivacek
4/12	Quabbin Pk	1	L. Therrien

Iceland Gull

3/1-17	Turners Falls	1-2	J. P. Smith
3/5-4/2	W. Gloucester	6 max	v.o.
3/7-4/2	Newbypt H.	1-3	v.o.
3/7	Oak Bluffs	2	S. Whiting
3/8	S. Hadley	1	H. Allen
3/26-4/22	P'town	3-9	v.o.
4/23	P.I.	1 1W	R. Heil

Lesser Black-backed Gull

3/1-26	Turners Falls	1	J. P. Smith#
3/2-4/11	Newbypt	1	v.o.
3/5	W. Dennis	1	D. Furbish
4/2	P.I.	1	S. McGrath
4/15	Chatham (S.B.)	2 ad	B. Nikula

Glaucous Gull			
thr	Gloucester	4 max	v.o.
3/1-17	Turners Falls	2	J. P. Smith#
3/12	P'town (R.P.)	2 ad	J. Hoye#
3/16	Northampton	1	W. Lafley
3/16	ONWR	1	B. Lafley
Black-legged Kittiwake			
3/26	P'town (R.P.)	6	P. Flood
4/13	P.I.	1 ad	T. Wetmore
Caspian Tern			
4/22	P'town	2	B. Nikula
4/22-24	Plymouth	1	G. Harriman#
4/24	Wachusett Res.	1 ad	M. Lynch#
4/26	DWWS	1	D. Furbish#
Common Tern			
4/29	Marion	4	M. Maurer
Black Skimmer			
4/29	Chatham	1	R. Hodson
Common Murre			
3/12	P'town (R.P.)	2	J. Hoye#
4/22	P'town	1	B. Nikula
4/26	P.I.	1 br ad	B. Zajda
Razorbill			
3/11	off Gay Head	5	A. Keith
3/18	Falmouth	4	CCBC (G. Hirth)
3/26	P'town (R.P.)	8	P. Flood
Black Guillemot			
3/5	Marshfield	5	G. d'Entremont
3/5	N. Scituate	1	G. d'Entremont
3/11	Gloucester (E.P.)	3	ABC (McMahon)
4/9, 23	Rockport (A.P.)	1, 1	R. Heil

PARAKEETS THROUGH FINCHES

A lone Monk Parakeet was noted in Millennium Park in West Roxbury on the last day of April. This species was added to the official State List in March 2000. The Monk Parakeet is native to South America, but escaped cage birds have thrived even in the harsh winter conditions of northeast North America. They have been breeding for many years in nearby Rhode Island. Such birds seen in Massachusetts, especially in Bristol County, are undoubtedly from this population. There are very few reports outside of this area. A northeast storm on April 22–23 may have been largely responsible for the appearance of two Yellow-billed Cuckoos in late April; normally these birds do not show up until mid-May. A total of thirty-two Snowy Owls were banded at Boston's Logan Airport this season; four birds were still present at the end of April according to Norm Smith from the Trailside Museum. A Barn Owl was noted from Felix Neck in Edgartown, and there were many reports of Great Horned Owls, several of which were of nesting birds with young.

The first Whip-poor-wills were heard calling by mid-April, and Chimney Swifts started appearing by the last week in April. A few Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were noted after April 20 and a ***Selasphorus*** **hummingbird** was photographed at a North Orange feeder during April 22–27. Although *Selasphorus* hummingbirds are becoming almost routine in the fall, the only other spring report for a *Selasphorus* was that of a Rufous Hummingbird that had been released from a greenhouse in Northampton where it had spent several winters. A Red-headed Woodpecker, never common in the spring, was noted from Springfield; there were three birds reported during the same period in 2004 and 2005.

The much-anticipated spring migration begins with the first large flocks of blackbirds in March. In West Bridgewater a female **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was found among thousands of redwings, grackles, and cowbirds and continued to be seen well into April. Another adult Yellow-headed Blackbird was noted from Quabbin Park on April 1. The first Eastern Phoebes and Tree Swallows arrived by the second week of March, but their numbers did not peak until the end of the first week in April. Large flocks of American Robins arrived at the end of March. The first days of April saw temperatures running as much as 16° above normal but not much in the way of early arrivals. There was a heavy movement of grounded migrants working north low through the dunes on Plum Island on April 11 during a southeast wind. Rick Heil watched wave after wave of flickers, Eastern Phoebes, and especially Golden-crowned Kinglets (192!) pass at close range at or below eye level. April can be an exciting month for birders, and the southwest winds on April 26–27 brought in significant numbers of new arrivals, especially Blue-headed Vireos, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Yellow-rumped and Pine warblers, and Chipping, Savannah, and White-throated sparrows. A **Yellow-throated Warbler,** noted from Bourne, was brought by these same winds as was a **Summer Tanager** in Hingham and a **Golden-crowned Sparrow** in Sturbridge. A total of twenty species of warblers was noted during the period.

Among the more unusual arrival times was that of a Scarlet Tanager, found in Edgartown on the very early date of March 20, the earliest state record by over two weeks. A Lincoln's Sparrow was carefully studied on April 14 in Berlin; most reports of this species occur after the first weeks of May, although these birds have been known to overwinter occasionally. A male Indigo Bunting was found on Plum Island on March 28, the first Essex County record for the month of March. The most unusual birds during the period included four different **Boreal Chickadees** all coming to feeders, **Bohemian Waxwings** in Athol and Turner's Falls, and the continued presence of a **Varied Thrush** at a feeder in Edgartown, where it has been since February 7.

Also noted were a good flight of Purple Finches, two Red Crossbills in Plymouth, Common Redpolls in a few locations, and Pine Siskins in many areas although not in great numbers. Evening Grosbeaks, on the other hand, were noted in small flocks from various towns, mostly in Northern Worcester, Franklin and Berkshire counties. *R. Stymeist*

Monk Parakeet
4/30 Boston 1 A. Birch#
Yellow-billed Cuckoo
4/25 Nantucket 1 E. Ray
4/26 Millbury 1 D. Berard
Barn Owl
4/25 Edgartown 1 R. Jenkins
Eastern Screech-Owl
thr Reports of indiv. from 16 locations
Great Horned Owl
thr Reports of indiv. or families from 18 loc.
Snowy Owl
thr P.I. 3-7 v.o.
thr Boston (Logan) 4 max N. Smith
3/6 Duxbury 3 N. Smith
3/8, 4/9 Rockport 1 Gette, Heil
3/9 Bourne 1 D. Furbish
3/11, 4/11 Ipswich (C. B.) 1 McGrath, Diggins
3/15 Chappaquiddick 2 ph J. Robinson
3/27-4/17 E. Boston (B.I.) 1 v.o.
4/22-4/29 Minimoy 1 B. Harris
Barred Owl
thr Reports of indiv. or pairs from 17 loc.
Long-eared Owl
3/14 Brimfield 1 I. Lynch
Short-eared Owl
3/21 Concord 1 D. Wells#
4/2 P.I. 1 S. McGrath
Northern Saw-whet Owl
3/2 Woburn (H.P.) 1 R. LaFontaine#
3/29 Northampton 1 G. Cox
4/4, 10 Oxford 1, 2 D. Berard
Whip-poor-will
4/19-30 Medford 1 P. Devaney
4/23 Southwick 1 S. Kellogg
4/27 S. Peabody 1 R. Heil
Chimney Swift
4/25 P.I. 1 R. Heil
4/25 Hadley 2 J. P. Smith
4/26 Wachusett Res. 8 I. Lynch
4/27 Natick 10 G. Long
4/28 Ipswich 6 J. Berry
Ruby-throated Hummingbird
4/20 Littleton 1 m H. Bailey
4/25 S. Yarmouth 1 m A. Middleton
4/25 Canton 1 m M. Ross
4/25 P.I. 1 R. Heil
4/27 Pittsfield 1 T. Collins
4/29 S. Hadley 1 A. Hill
***Selasphorus* species** *
4/22-27 N. Orange 1 m ph fide R. Scherer
Belted Kingfisher
4/7 N. Truro 3 D. Manchester
4/9 Stockbridge 3 M. Lynch#
4/11 P.I. 5 R. Heil
4/30 Oxford 4 P. Meleski#
Red-headed Woodpecker
4/28 Springfield 1 E. Rutman
Red-bellied Woodpecker
3/5 Marshfield 13 G. d'Entremont
3/21 Boston 5 J. Miller
3/31 Boxford (C.P.) 4 J. Berry
4/7 Brookline 3 R. Merrill
4/22 Hingham 4 SSBC (S. Avery)
4/26 Sutton 8 D. Berard
4/28 Ipswich 4 J. Berry
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
4/2 WMWS 2 W. Howes
4/9 Mt. Washington 2 M. Lynch#
4/9 New Salem 2 J. Forbes#
4/9 Stockbridge 6 M. Lynch#
4/10 Princeton 2 J. Dekker
4/14 Quabbin Pk 5 M. Lynch#
4/14 Petersham 6 M. Lynch#
4/22 HRWMA 4 T. Pirro
Hairy Woodpecker
3/3 Ipswich 6 R. Heil
3/11 Pepperell 5 E. Stromsted
4/11 Boxford 6 J. Berry
4/16 Manchester 6 J. Berry
Northern Flicker
4/12 P.I. 60 T. Wetmore
4/14 Rockport (H.P.) 20+ J. Robinson
Pileated Woodpecker
3/7 Ipswich pr J. Berry
3/12 Andover pr J. Young
3/19 Manchester pr C. Corley
4/14 Petersham 3 M. Lynch#
4/29 Ware R. IBA 3 M. Lynch#
Least Flycatcher
4/27 Pittsfield 1 T. Collins
4/27 Belchertown 1 L. Therrien
4/28 Brimfield 1 I. Lynch
4/29 Ware R. IBA 3 M. Lynch#
4/29 Oxford 1 D. Berard
Eastern Phoebe
3/10, 4/11 P.I. 1, 37 McGrath, Heil
3/11 Wayland 1 G. Long
3/11 Gardner 1 T. Pirro
3/13, 4/9 Belchertown 1, 28 L. Therrien
4/1 Quabbin Pk 28 M. Lynch#
4/7 Amherst 26 L. Therrien
4/9 Hadley 27 C. Gentes
Great Crested Flycatcher
4/20 Norton 1 J. Shea
4/27 Southwick 1 S. Kellogg
4/27 Wakefield 1 F. Vale
Myiarchus species
4/2 Falmouth 1 M. Lynch#

Eastern Kingbird
4/16 N. Truro 1 B. Nikula#
4/25 Amherst 1 D. Minnear
4/26 Millbury 1 D. Berard
4/26 Boston 1 J. Miller
Northern Shrike
3/1-26 P.I. 2 v.o.
3/1-26 Reports of indiv. from 13 locations
4/18 Orange 1 J. Durphey
Blue-headed Vireo
4/14 Petersham 10 M. Lynch#
4/22 HRWMA 5 T. Pirro
4/26 Longmeadow 16 J. Hutchison
4/27 P.I. 7 T. Wetmore
4/29 Ware R. IBA 22 M. Lynch#
4/29 Northfield 6 BBC (M. Taylor)
Warbling Vireo
4/25 Mattapan 1 A. Birch
4/26 Boston (A.A.) 2 J. Miller
4/27 Oxford 3 D. Berard#
4/27 Medford 3 R. LaFontaine
4/29 Needham 6 H. Miller
4/30 Woburn (H.P.) 12 M. Rines#
Red-eyed Vireo
4/30 W. Quabbin 1 J. P. Smith
Fish Crow
3/4 Waltham 50 M. Rines#
3/11 WBWS 8 S. Elllis
4/9 Rockport 9 R. Heil
4/12 Scituate 8 D. Furbish
4/12 Pembroke 8 D. Furbish
4/12 Marshfield 28 D. Furbish
4/26 Seekonk 14 J. MacDougall
Common Raven
3/3 Manchester 1 C. Corley
3/4 Monroe 2 pr M. Lynch#
3/11 Barre Falls 8 T. Pirro
3/11 Templeton 16 T. Pirro
3/26, 4/24 Pepperell 1, 2 M. Resch
3/31, 11 Boxford 1, 1 J. Berry
4/1 Quabbin Pk pr n M. Lynch#
4/14 Chesterfield 15 R. Packard
4/15 Granville 16 S. Kellogg
4/16 Milton 1 E. Nielsen
Horned Lark
3/1-29 P.I. 62 max R. Heil#
3/3 Ipswich 90 R. Heil
3/9 W. Gloucester 12 J. Nelson
3/19 Amherst 12 M. Lynch#
3/26 Newbury 35 E. Nielsen
3/27 Northampton 95 J. P. Smith
4/9 Cumb. Farms 40 SSBC (Sweeney)
4/27 Northampton 110 J. P. Smith
Purple Martin
4/6 Scituate 1 m ad D. Furbish
4/8-30 P.I. 15 max 4/27 v.o.
4/25 N. Truro 4 D. Manchester
4/27 Rochester 2 m, 1 f M. Maurer
4/29 DWWS 6 D. Furbish
Tree Swallow
3/7 Oak Bluffs 1 L. Walker
3/10, 4/25 P.I. 1, 510 R. Heil
3/10 Concord (NAC) 5 S. Perkins#
4/1 Sterling 100 J. Dekker
4/3 Turners Falls 100 F. Bowrys
4/7 Lenox 1500 D. St. James
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
4/1 Milton 2 P. Peterson
4/5 Turners Falls 1 J. P. Smith
4/7 Lenox 8 D. St. James
4/16 Wayland 5 J. Hoye#
4/25 P.I. 5 R. Heil
4/28 W. Newbury 12 D. Chickering#
4/30 Oxford 10 P. Meleski#
Bank Swallow
4/15 Boston 1 J. Miller
4/15 Wayland 2 G. Long
4/16 W. Warren 2 B. Zajda
4/22 Falmouth 1 G. Hirth
4/22 Southwick 1 S. Kellogg
4/25 P.I. 1 R. Heil
Cliff Swallow
4/14 Sudbury 1 G. Long
4/16 W. Warren 4 B. Zajda
4/16 W. Newbury 1 R. Merrill#
4/24 Northampton 6 C. Gentes
4/26 P.I. 2 J. McNeal
4/28 Westfield 1 M + K. Conway
Barn Swallow
3/25 Falmouth 3 P. Morlock
3/31, 4/25 N. Truro 2, 22 D. Manchester
4/1, 25 P.I. 1, 286 Wetmore, Heil
4/9 Rochester 4 M. Maurer
4/16 W. Warren 7 B. Zajda
4/23 Westboro 33 M. Lynch#
Boreal Chickadee
3/1-4/10 N. Brookfield 1 M. Mills#
3/1-4 Plympton 1 I. Campbell + v.o.
3/1-26 Orange 1 A. Heinricher + v.o.
3/2-24 Rowley 1 S. Clements + v.o.
Red-breasted Nuthatch
3/3 Ipswich 20 R. Heil
3/5 Boston (A.A.) 8 R. Stymeist#
3/11. 4/6 Mashpee 11, 21 M. Keleher
3/26, 4/11 Boxford 3, 15 J. Berry
4/29 Ware R. IBA 11 M. Lynch#
Brown Creeper
3/26 Royalston 6 BBC (I. Giriunas)
4/1 Petersham 6 R. Packard
4/3 Brimfield 6 I. Lynch
4/11 P.I. 7 R. Heil
4/11 Boxford 5 J. Berry
4/13 Blandford 5 M + K. Conway
4/22 HRWMA 5 T. Pirro
4/26 Oxford 5 D. Berard
4/29 Ware R. IBA 8 M. Lynch#
Carolina Wren
3/5 Marshfield 10 G. d'Entremont
3/18 Falmouth 8 CCBC (G. Hirth)
4/9 Rockport 4 R. Heil
4/16 Stoughton 5 G. d'Entremont
4/22 Hadley 6 C. Gentes
4/22 Westport 14 M. Lynch#
4/26 Seekonk 4 J. MacDougall
House Wren
4/22 Yarmouth 1 D. Furbish
4/22 Hadley 1 C. Gentes
4/22 Winchester 1 M. Rines#
4/29 Medford 4 P. + F. Vale
4/30 Gloucester (E.P.) 3 S. Hedman
4/30 Sandwich 3 D. Furbish#
Winter Wren
3/6 Marblehead 3 K. Haley
4/11 Boxford 5 m J. Berry
4/14 Petersham 9 M. Lynch#
4/16 Manchester 3 m J. Berry
4/21 Granville 3 S. Kellogg
4/26 Wompatuck SP 3 C. Nims#
4/29 Ware R. IBA 9 M. Lynch#
4/30 W. Quabbin 3 J. P. Smith
Marsh Wren
3/29, 4/26 P.I. 5, 12 Wetmore, McNeal
4/9 Sudbury 1 G. Long
4/11 Wayland 1 J. Hoye#
4/30 Sandwich 3 D. Furbish#
4/30 Newbury 1 S. McGrath
Golden-crowned Kinglet
3/18 Boxford 32 BBC (L. dela Flor)
4/1 Holyoke 10 T. Gagnon
4/9 Rockport 12 R. Heil
4/11 P.I. 192 R. Heil
4/11 Wakefield 12 F. Vale
4/26 N. Truro 12 D. Manchester
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
3/27 Amherst 2 L. Therrien
4/11 P.I. 17 R. Heil

Ruby-crowned Kinglet (continued)

4/14	Rockport (H.P.)	20+	J. Robinson
4/15	Holyoke	20	T. Gagnon
4/25	Pittsfield	12	T. Collins
4/26	Longmeadow	26	J. Hutchison
4/28	Quabbin Pk	14	J. P. Smith
4/29	Ware R. IBA	13	M. Lynch#

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

4/10, 30	Wompatuck SP	1, 4	Nielsen, Giles
4/12, 15	P.I.	1, 4	T. Wetmore
4/15	Amherst	7	S. Surner
4/26	Oxford	6	D. Berard
4/27	Milton	10	P. O'Neill
4/29	Longmeadow	15	S. Kellogg#
4/30	Plymouth	4	I. Davies

Eastern Bluebird

3/3	Ipswich	20	R. Heil
3/6	Southwick	8	S. Kellogg
3/11	Pepperell	15	E. Stromsted
3/15	Scituate	8	D. Furbish
4/17	IRWS	10+	L. Ferraresso#
4/29	Ware R. IBA	8	M. Lynch#

Veery

4/26	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
4/29	Needham	1	H. Miller

Hermit Thrush

3/3	Ipswich	2	R. Heil
3/5	Marshfield	3	G. d'Entremont
4/8	Brookline	7	R. Merrill
4/10, 26	Wompatuck SP	2, 10	C. Nims
4/10	Melrose	9	D. + I. Jewell
4/11	P.I.	19	R. Heil
4/14	Petersham	14	M. Lynch#
4/29	Ware R. IBA	15	M. Lynch#
4/30	Gardner	7	T. Pirro

Wood Thrush

4/26	P.I.	1	B. Zajda
4/27	Mt.A.	1	R. Furrow
4/30	Cheshire	1	J. Zepko
4/30	Hadley	1	H. McQueen

American Robin

3/9	Scituate	300+	S. Maguire
3/30	Northampton	1500	J. P. Smith
3/31	Mt.A.	220+	R. Stymeist
4/2	Falmouth	177	M. Lynch#
4/4	Newbury	200+	R. Heil
4/9	Rockport	175	R. Heil
4/15	Fairhaven	192	M. Lynch#

Varied Thrush

3/1-4/14	Edgartown	1 f	P. Spencer + v.o.

Gray Catbird

3/5	Rockport	5	R. Heil
3/11	S. Dart. (A. Pd)	5	E. Nielsen
3/12	Acoaxet	4	M. Lynch#
4/11	P.I.	3	R. Heil
4/27	Medford	4	R. LaFontaine
4/27	Boston (A.A.)	6	J. Miller
4/30	Bourne	4	SSBC (G. d'E)

Brown Thrasher

3/9	DWWS	1	J. Offermann
3/23	Nahant	1	L. Pivacek
4/11, 25	P.I.	1, 6	McNeal, Heil
4/15, 28	Medford	1, 4	M. Rines#
4/30	Grafton	2	M. Lynch#
4/30	Boston	5	S. Williams
4/30	W. Roxbury	5	S. Williams
4/30	Woburn (H.P.)	5	M. Rines#

American Pipit

3/12	Westport	48	M. Lynch#
3/15	Hadley	3	H. Allen
3/27, 4/27	Northampton	6, 4	J. P. Smith
4/19	W. Bridgewater	3	SSBC (G. d'E)
4/26	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore
4/30	WMWS	1	E. Nielsen

Bohemian Waxwing

3/5	Athol	1	D. Small#
3/17	Turners Falls	1 ad	B. Zajda#

Cedar Waxwing

3/3	E. Longmeadow	30	R. Titus
3/15	Turners Falls	200	H. Allen
4/7	Amherst	64	R. Packard
4/10	N. Truro	55	D. Manchester#

Blue-winged Warbler

4/29	Lexington	1	MBC (R.Stymeist#)
4/29	Milton	2	P. O'Neill

Nashville Warbler

4/27	Belchertown	1	L. Therrien
4/27	Mt.A.	1	R. Stymeist
4/27	Oxford	2	D. Berard#
4/29	Ware R. IBA	2	M. Lynch#

Northern Parula

4/15	Royalston	1	P. Cozza
4/17	E. Harwich	1 f	A. Curtis
4/22	P.I.	1	J. Miller
4/23	Newton	2	L. Ferraresso
4/29	Oxford	6	D. Berard

Yellow Warbler

4/17	E. Harwich	1 f	A. Curtis
4/22	Weston	1	BBC (G. Long)
4/25	Southwick	2	S. Kellogg
4/29	Milton	7	P. O'Neill
4/29	Watertown	5	L. Ferraresso#
4/30	Plymouth	6	I. Davies
4/30	Westboro	5	J. Slovin

Chestnut-sided Warbler

4/28	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg

Black-throated Blue Warbler

4/29	Northfield	1	BBC (M. Taylor)
4/30	Mt.A.	1	D. Berard

Yellow-rumped Warbler

3/5	Ipswich (C.B.)	5	J. Berry
3/14	P.I.	23	R. Heil
4/2	Falmouth	39	M. Lynch#
4/9, 27	Arlington Res.	1, 20	M. Rines#
4/21	Quabbin Pk	34	L. Therrien
4/26	Longmeadow	150	J. Hutchison
4/27	Southwick	50	S. Kellogg
4/28	W. Newbury	30	S. Grinley
4/29	Ware R. IBA	54	M. Lynch#
4/29	Medford	40	M. Rines#

Black-throated Green Warbler

4/26	Wompatuck SP	2	C. Nims#
4/27	Boston (A.A.)	3	M. Edmonds
4/27	Belchertown	4	L. Therrien
4/29	Ware R. IBA	13	M. Lynch#
4/29	Northfield	3	BBC (M. Taylor)
4/30	Gardner	3	T. Pirro
4/30	Mt.A.	5	D. Berard

Blackburnian Warbler

4/28	Quabbin Pk	1 m	J. P. Smith

Yellow-throated Warbler

4/6-12	Chilmark	1 ph	S. Mercer# + v.o.
4/30	Bourne	1	SSBC (G. d'E)

Pine Warbler

3/31	Waltham	1	J. Forbes
3/31	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
3/31	Whately	1	B. Benner
4/1, 14	Quabbin Pk	8, 19	M. Lynch#
4/14	Petersham	15	M. Lynch#
4/14	M.V.	14	D. Clapp
4/15	Holyoke	21	T. Gagnon
4/15	Wompatuck SP	22	SSBC (G. d'E)
4/20	Newbypt	14	S. Grinley
4/22	Mashpee	31	M. Keleher#
4/29	Ware R. IBA	26	M. Lynch#

Prairie Warbler

4/27	Mt.A.	1	R. Furrow
4/27	Falmouth	1	M. Keleher

Palm Warbler

4/1, 15	Holyoke	1, 53	T. Gagnon
4/2, 28	Ipswich	1, 28	Heil, Berry
4/8, 27	P.I.	1, 125	Wetmore, Grinley
4/14	IRWS	27	J. Berry
4/15	Wompatuck SP	21	SSBC (G. d'E)
4/25	Pittsfield	20	T. Collins

Palm Warbler (continued)
4/26 Medford 30 R. LaFontaine
4/26 Longmeadow 28 J. Hutchison
Black-and-white Warbler
4/17 Mt.A. 1 I. Giriunas#
4/19 Amherst 1 D. Minnear
4/27 P.I. 5 S. Grinley
4/27 Wompatuck SP 3 SSBC (C. Nims)
4/28 Quabbin Pk 5 J. P. Smith
4/29 Ware R. IBA 12 M. Lynch#
4/30 ONWR 3 J. Hoye#
4/30 Westboro 6 J. Slovin
4/30 W. Newbury 4 P. + F. Vale
Worm-eating Warbler
4/28 Southwick 1 S. Kellogg
4/30 Mt. Tom 1 E. Rutman
Ovenbird
4/27 Wompatuck SP 3 SSBC (C. Nims)
4/27 Southwick 1 S. Kellogg
4/28 Ipswich 1 m J. Berry
4/29 Charlton 1 I. Lynch
4/29 Ware R. IBA 1 M. Lynch#
Northern Waterthrush
4/27 P.I. 2 D. Adrien#
4/28 Southwick 1 S. Kellogg
4/29 Ware R. IBA 3 M. Lynch#
4/29 Mattapoisett 1 M. LaBossiere
4/29 Milton 3 P. O'Neill
4/30 Belchertown 1 L. Therrien
4/30 Oxford 2 P. Meleski#
Louisiana Waterthrush
4/7 MNWS 1 D. Noble
4/8 Southwick 1 S. Kellogg
4/8-30 Boxford (C.P.) 1 v.o.
4/10 Newton 1 M. Kaufman
4/14 Cummington 1 B. Spencer
4/14 Berlin 1 S. Sutton
4/15 Wompatuck SP 2 SSBC (G. d'E)
4/20 Nahant 1 L. Pivacek
4/29 Northfield 1 BBC (M. Taylor)
Common Yellowthroat
4/25 P.I. 1 S. Pierce
Hooded Warbler
4/28 Quabbin (G36) 1 m B. deGraaf#
Summer Tanager
4/27 Wompatuck SP 1 m SSBC (C. Nims)
Scarlet Tanager
3/20 Edgartown 1 m S. Jordan
Eastern Towhee
3/6 Marblehead 2 K. Haley
3/11 S. Dart. (A. Pd) 7 E. Nielsen
4/14 M.V. 7 D. Clapp
4/16 Stoughton 5 G. d'Entremont
4/18 Worc. (BMB) 4 J. Liller
4/25 Wakefield 4 F. Vale
4/29 P.I. 22 S. Sutton
4/29 Ware R. IBA 11 M. Lynch#
4/30 Bourne 9 SSBC (G. d'E)
American Tree Sparrow
3/3 Ipswich 28 R. Heil
3/14, 4/11 P.I. 46, 4 R. Heil
3/18 Wayland 50+ G. Long#
3/26 Lexington 4 M. Rines
4/17 DWWS 1 D. Furbish
Chipping Sparrow
3/19 Easthampton 1 C. Gentes#
4/3 Bolton 1 J. Moosbruker
4/12 Arlington 3 K. Hartel
4/12 Medford 4 M. Rines
4/15 Wompatuck SP 19 SSBC (G. d'E)
4/22 Westport 49 M. Lynch#
4/25 Scituate 35 D. Furbish
4/27 Mt.A. 30 R. Stymeist
4/29 Ware R. IBA 41 M. Lynch#
4/30 Sutton 47 M. Lynch#
Field Sparrow
3/10 Easthampton 2 R. Packard
3/12 Westboro 2 T. Spahr
3/19 Pembroke 2 SSBC (WRP)
4/15 Quabbin Pk 3 S. Surner#
4/22 P.I. 14 J. Miller
4/25 Scituate 7 D. Furbish
4/27 Falmouth 13 M. Keleher
4/30 Woburn (H.P.) 6 M. Rines#
Vesper Sparrow
4/9 Hadley 1 C. Gentes
4/17 Pittsfield 1 T. Collins
4/20 Sunderland 1 L. Therrien
4/27 Northampton 2 J. P. Smith
4/29 Templeton 1 T. Pirro
Savannah Sparrow
thr P.I. 40 max 4/27 v.o.
3/3 Ipswich 8 R. Heil
4/8 Westfield 3 S. Kellogg
4/8 Bedford 8 M. Rines
4/23 Newbypt 17 D. Chickering#
4/25 Scituate 10 D. Furbish
4/27 Northampton 48 J. P. Smith
4/27 Lexington 40 M. Rines
4/27 Melrose 10 D. + I. Jewell
Ipswich Sparrow
3/12 Acoaxet 1 M. Lynch#
3/19, 4/0 Ipswich (C.B.) 1, 1 J. Berry
3/20 P.I. 1 D. Larson
4/30 Salisbury 1 S. McGrath
Seaside Sparrow
4/14, 25 P.I. 3, 4 Wetmore, Heil
Fox Sparrow
3/1 Barnstable 2 M. Keleher
3/4 Gloucester 2 S. Hedman
3/9 Belchertown 4 L. Therrien
3/16, 4/28 Lexington 10, 2 M. Rines
3/17 Lincoln 5 M. Rines
3/26, 4/30 Hadley 6, 1 Gentes, McQueen
3/30 Gardner 6 T. Pirro
4/4 P.I. 8 R. Heil
Lincoln's Sparrow
4/14 Berlin 1 S. Sutton
Swamp Sparrow
3/25 Bolton Flats 3 S. Sutton
4/9 Rockport 3 R. Heil
4/9 Stockbridge 7 M. Lynch#
4/11 P.I. 7 R. Heil
4/14 Petersham 8 M. Lynch#
4/15 Wakefield 13+ P. + F. Vale
4/26 IRWS 11 J. Berry
White-throated Sparrow
3/5 Marshfield 33 G. d'Entremont
3/5 Boston (Fens) 42 R. Stymeist#
4/17 S. Dart. (A.Pd) 45 E. Nielsen
4/26 Mt.A. 55+ BBC (P. + F. Vale)
4/29 HRWMA 72 T. Pirro
White-crowned Sparrow
3/19 Cumb. Farms 5 SSBC (WRP)
3/31 Granby 1 L. Rogers
4/14 Belchertown 1 L. Therrien
4/14 Petersham 1 ad M. Lynch#
4/17 P.I. 1 R. Hodson
4/28 W. Newbury 1 S. McGrath
Golden-crowned Sparrow (no details) *
4/26 Sturbridge 1 ad ph B. Courmier + v.o.
Dark-eyed Junco
3/3 Ipswich 49 R. Heil
4/9 Stockbridge 63 M. Lynch#
4/11 P.I. 47 R. Heil
4/13 Scituate 21+ S. Maguire
4/26 Boston (A.A.) 12 J. Miller
4/29 Ware R. IBA 7 M. Lynch#
4/30 Gardner 1 T. Pirro
Lapland Longspur
3/4 Gloucester 1 BBC (Drummond)
3/5-4/27 Northampton 1-5 v.o.
3/14 P.I. 4 R. Heil
3/26 Newbury 45 E. Nielsen
3/29 Dorchester 13 P. Peterson
4/10 N. Monomoy 15 B. Harris

Snow Bunting

3/5	Northampton	10	T. Gagnon
3/5-19	Ipswich (C.B.)	20 max	v.o.
3/10-26	P.I.	24 max	R. Heil
4/12	Quabbin Pk	1	M + K. Conway
4/12	Windsor	1	M + K. Conway

Rose-breasted Grosbeak

4/13	Truro	1 f	B. Perkel
4/15	Agawam	1	S. Perrreault
4/26	Boston (A.A.)	1 f	J. Miller
4/27	Newbury	1 f	L. Leka
4/27	Littleton	1 m	G. Marley
4/30	ONWR	1	J. Hoye#
4/30	Sudbury	1	T. Spahr
4/30	Woburn (H.P.)	1	M. Rines#

Blue Grosbeak

4/9	Edgartown	1 dead	E. Potter#

Indigo Bunting

3/28	P.I.	1 m	R. Heil
4/8	Westport H.	1 m	W. + M. Bender
4/15	Shutesbury	1	K. Weir

Dickcissel

3/5	Marshfield	1	G. d'Entremont

Red-winged Blackbird

3/12	W. Bridgewater	2000	G. d'Entremont
3/12	Westport	518	M. Lynch#
3/25	Bolton Flats	1600	S. Sutton
3/28	P.I.	780	R. Heil
4/9	Cumb. Farms	850	SSBC (Sweeney)

Eastern Meadowlark

3/8	DWWS	12	D. Furbish
3/12	Acoaxet	4	M. Lynch#
3/19	Templeton	3	T. Pirro
3/26	Amherst	4	J. P. Smith
3/30	Newbury	4	D. Noble
4/15	Bedford	12	S. Jaffe#
4/17	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	8	E. Nielsen

Yellow-headed Blackbird

3/12-4/19	W. Bridgewater	1 f	R. Finch + v.o.
4/1	Quabbin Pk	1 ad m	M. Lynch#

Rusty Blackbird

3/10	Mattapan	20	A. Birch
3/24	Lee	20	D. St. James
4/4	Sutton	10	D. Berard
4/8	Sudbury	75+	B. Volkle#
4/8	Wayland	30	J. Center
4/10	Amherst	8	S. Surner
4/16	Milton	30	E. Nielsen
4/17	Wayland	82	B. Harris#

Common Grackle

3/11	Bolton Flats	3300	S. Sutton
3/28	P.I.	710	R. Heil
4/4	Eastham	500+	S. Ellis
4/19	W. Bridgewater	1500	G. d'Entremont

Brown-headed Cowbird

3/7	DWWS	60	D. Furbish
3/12	W. Bridgewater	300	G. d'Entremont
4/1	N. Truro	250+	D. Manchester#
4/9	Rockport	320+	R. Heil
4/11	P.I.	190	R. Heil

Orchard Oriole

4/27	Hadley	1	J. Jorgensen
4/27	Newbury	1 m	S. Stichter
4/27	Boston (A.A.)	1	M. Edmonds

Baltimore Oriole

3/18-20	Medford	1 ph	G. Simmons
4/25	Groveland	1	S. Grinley
4/26	Oxford	1	D. Berard
4/27	Watertown	2	R. Evans
4/29	Longmeadow	3	S. Kellogg#

Purple Finch

3/3	Ipswich	7	R. Heil
4/7	Sudbury	10	G. Long
4/11	P.I.	11	R. Heil
4/15	HRWMA	12	BBC (Stymeist)
4/16	Oakham	25+	M. Lynch#
4/20	New Salem	16	B. Lafley
4/26	P.I.	14+	J. McNeal
4/29	Hadley	23	C. Gentes
4/29	Marlboro	40	T. Spahr
4/29	Ware R. IBA	12	M. Lynch#

Red Crossbill

4/15	Plymouth	1-2	J. Trimble

Common Redpoll

3/5-20	Blandford	55	M + K. Conway
3/12	WMWS	16	S. Grinley#
3/12	Westhampton	7	R. Stymeist#
3/17	Longmeadow	1	L. Tucker
3/21	Pelham	2	H. Allen
3/26	WMWS	30+	BBC (I. Giriunas)

Pine Siskin

3/5-31	WMWS	2-10	v.o.
3/22	IRWS	2	D. + I. Jewell
3/25	Whately	2	B. Benner
3/26, 4/16	P'town	1, 1	B. Nikula#
4/3	Williamstown	2	G. Soucie
4/12	Amherst	1	S. Surner
4/12	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
4/14	New Salem	1	B. Lafley
4/17	Blandford	1	M + K. Conway
4/23	Royalston	2	R. Stymeist
4/25	Rockport (H.P.)	2	J. Robinson

Evening Grosbeak

3/6	Northfield	30	M. Taylor
3/12	Ashfield	16	R. Stymeist#
4/1	Becket	1	R. Laubach
4/1	Petersham	2	R. Packard
4/2, 10	Blandford	2, 5	M + K. Conway
4/16	Oakham	2	M. Lynch#
4/23	New Salem	18	R. Stymeist#
4/23	Phillipston	12	J. Bartos
4/23	Royalston	12	R. Stymeist#

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO *BIRD OBSERVER*

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

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

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

Taxonomic order is based on AOU checklist, Seventh edition, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, and 46th Supplements , as published in *The Auk* 117: 847-58 (2000); 119:897-906 (2002); 120:923-32 (2003); 121:985-95 (2004); 122:1026-31 (2005).

ABC	Allen Bird Club
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport
A.Pd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth
B.	Beach
Barre FD	Barre Falls Dam, Barre, Rutland
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester
BBC	Brookline Bird Club
BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester
C.B.	Crane Beach, Ipswich
CGB	Coast Guard Beach, Eastham
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford
Cambr.	Cambridge
CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club
Cumb. Farms	Cumberland Farms, Middleboro
DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
DWMA	Delaney WMA Stow, Bolton, Harvard
DWWS	Daniel Webster WS
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester
EMHW	Eastern Mass. Hawk Watch
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham
F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge
F.Pk	Franklin Park, Boston
G40	Gate 40, Quabbin Res.
GMNWR	Great Meadows NWR
H.	Harbor
H.P.	Halibut Point, Rockport
HRWMA	High Ridge WMA, Gardner
I.	Island
IRWS	Ipswich River WS
L.	Ledge
M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
MAS	Mass. Audubon Society
MBWMA	Martin Burns WMA, Newbury
MNWS	Marblehead Neck WS
MSSF	Myles Standish State Forest, Plymouth
Mt.A.	Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambr.
NAC	Nine Acre Corner, Concord
Newbypt	Newburyport
ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
P.I.	Plum Island
Pd	Pond
P'town	Provincetown
Pont.	Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro
R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
Res.	Reservoir
S. Dart.	South Dartmouth
S.B.	South Beach, Chatham
S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
SRV	Sudbury River Valley
SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
TASL	Take A Second Look Boston Harbor Census
WBWS	Wellfleet Bay WS
WMWS	Wachusett Meadow WS
Wompatuck SP	Hingham, Cohassett, Scituate, and Norwell
Worc.	Worcester

Other Abbreviations

ad	adult
alt	alternate
b	banded
br	breeding
dk	dark (morph)
f	female
fl	fledgling
imm	immature
juv	juvenile
lt	light (morph)
m	male
max	maximum
migr	migrating
n	nesting
ph	photographed
pl	plumage
pr	pair
S	summer (1S = 1st summer)
v.o.	various observers
W	winter (2W = second winter)
yg	young
#	additional observers

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS BY GEORGE C. WEST

News From the USFWS

2006 Waterfowl Survey Shows Duck Population Gains

The preliminary 2006 Waterfowl Breeding Ground Population and Habitat Survey conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates a total duck population of more than 36 million, or a 14 percent increase from last year's estimate and 9 percent above the 1955-2005 average.

The Waterfowl Breeding Ground Population and Habitat Survey, the largest and most comprehensive survey of its kind in the world, samples 1.3 million square miles across the north-central United States, south-central and northern Canada, and Alaska. The survey estimates the number of ducks in the continent's most important nesting grounds.

Highlights from the survey include:

Mallard abundance was 7.3 million birds, which was similar to last year's estimate of 6.8 million birds and the long-term average.

Blue-winged Teal abundance was 5.9 million birds. This value was 28 percent greater than last year's estimate of 4.6 million birds and 30 percent above the long-term average.

The estimated abundance of Green-winged Teal at 2.6 million was 20 percent greater than last year and 39 percent above the long-term average.

The estimated number of 2.8 million Gadwall was 30 percent greater than last year and was 67 percent above the long-term average; whereas the estimated number of 916,000 Redheads increased 55 percent over 2005 and was 47 percent above the long-term average.

Canvasbacks numbered 691,000, 33 percent higher than last year and 23 percent over the long-term average.

Northern Shovelers at 3.7 million were 69 percent above their long-term average.

Although the numbers of most species increased over last year and were greater than their long-term averages, American Wigeon at 2.2 million and scaup (Lesser and Greater combined; 3.2 million) were 17 percent and 37 percent below their long-term averages, respectively. The estimate for scaup was a record low for the second consecutive year.

The abundance of Northern Pintails at 3.4 million was 18 percent below the 1955-2005 average, although this year's estimate was 32 percent greater than that of last year.

ABOUT THE COVER

Belted Kingfisher

The Belted Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*), with its loud, rattling call, is often heard before it is seen. It is unmistakable, with a disproportionally large bill, a short tail, and a head that is topped with a ragged, double-pointed crest. The blue-gray head and back contrast sharply with a white collar. Both sexes have a blue-gray band across the chest, but the female has rufous flanks that join to form a band across the belly. Kingfishers often fly with bursts of rapid wing beats followed by short glides. Although there is not universal agreement among taxonomists about the division, two subspecies are generally recognized: *C. a. alcyon* in eastern North America and *C. a. caurina* from Alaska to the Pacific Northwest. The Belted Kingfisher is most closely related to the Ringed Kingfisher of Central and South America.

The Belted Kingfisher breeds across North America from the Aleutian Islands to Newfoundland and south to the southern United States. Although most northern populations are migratory, since the freezing of ponds and rivers makes feeding in winter untenable, most United States populations are resident. Migratory birds winter as far south as northern South America. In Massachusetts the Belted Kingfisher is considered an uncommon but widespread breeding bird and a fairly common migrant. Although largely resident, these birds may be driven to the coast or farther south by the freezing of lakes and rivers in winter.

Belted Kingfishers live along streams, ponds, lakes, rivers, and estuaries — wherever they have access to visible prey. They are seasonally monogamous. On territory, the male catches a fish and is joined on a branch by the potential mate. They then move toward each other along a branch while making hopping 180 degree turns. Once side by side, the male feeds the female the fish. In other courtship displays the male will soar and dip over a water surface or engage in a spiral ascent followed by a stall and a tumbling descent ending in a glide. Both birds defend their territory vigorously, chasing away other kingfishers, while emitting their rattling call. Other pulsing calls have been described as screams and warbles. In aggressive situations kingfishers may scream and raise their wings and white eyespot feathers.

Belted Kingfishers nest in burrows in earthen banks, generally near their feeding territory. Suitable nest sites may be the limiting factor in population size and distribution. Typical sites include road cuts, ditches, and sand pits, but these birds have been found nesting in sand dunes and occasionally in tree hollows. Both sexes participate in burrow excavation, but the male does most of the work. The burrow may be three to six feet deep and ends in an unlined chamber. The burrow generally slopes upwards, presumably an adaptation to help prevent flooding of the chamber. If the excavating bird encounters an obstacle, it will change the direction of the tunnel or abandon the site and start a new tunnel. The pair may excavate several burrows but use only one during a season and may reuse a burrow in succeeding years.

The clutch size is variable and usually consists of six or seven eggs. The eggs are pure white, as is the case for many hollow-nesting birds. Both sexes incubate, but only the female has a brood patch, and there are conflicting reports on how much incubation the male does. Incubation lasts for twenty-two to twenty-four days until the chicks hatch. The chicks are helpless, with eyes closed and without down. Brooding is constant for the first three or four days, mostly by the female, but ceases after day six. The chicks are initially fed regurgitated boluses of partially digested fish but eat whole fish after day five. The chicks fledge after about a month. They remain with and are occasionally fed by their parents for about three weeks. Young birds usually start feeding themselves on more sedentary prey such as aquatic insects and crayfish and do not capture the more elusive live fish for a week or more after fledging.

Belted Kingfishes forage from perches such as bare branches or telephone wires, or by hovering over a water surface. They dive with wings tucked and grab their prey with their oversized mandibles. They then return to a perch and bash the fish against it before swallowing the fish head first. They feed mostly on fish but they also take insects, crustaceans, molluscs, amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals and birds.

Belted Kingfishers are not as affected by environmental pollutants as other piscivorous birds, perhaps because they eat smaller fish that tend to have lower concentrations of pesticides and other contaminants. But historically they have been persecuted by humans at fish hatcheries and trout streams. Their populations are widespread and generally stable, however, and their future appears to be secure.

William E. Davis, Jr.

About the Cover Artist: Barry Van Dusen

Barry Van Dusen's work has appeared on the cover of *Bird Observer* more often than that of any artist. Living in the central Massachusetts town of Princeton, he exhibits frequently in New England. Barry's work has also appeared at prestigious national shows such as *Birds in Art* in Wausau, Wisconsin, and *Art of the Animal Kingdom* in Bennington, Vermont. He has provided illustrations for several nature books and pocket guides, including publications by the American Birding Association, HarperCollins, and Princeton University Press. His articles and paintings have been featured in *Birder's World* and *Bird Watcher's Digest*. Barry was trained as an artist but became drawn to nature subjects through the Massachusetts Audubon Society, an association which began in 1982. Shortly thereafter, he discovered the work of European wildlife artists and adopted their methodology of direct field sketching. His skill as a field artist has enabled Barry to participate abroad in projects sponsored by the Netherlands-based Artists for Nature Foundation. Working with other ANF artists to raise money for conservation of threatened habitats, he has traveled to India, Peru, Ireland, and Spain. Barry was elected a full member of London's Society of Wildlife Artists and is a frequent contributor to its exhibitions. His work has been shown also in Ireland, Scotland, France, and Holland. His website is <http://www.barryvandusen.com>.

AT A GLANCE

June 2006

DAVID LARSON

Oh, boy! This month's puzzle bird looks like it might be a warbler-type thing, something nearly all birders know and love. Even better, we know the bird is in breeding plumage, since it is perched in a flowering crab apple or apple tree, a sure indication of spring. This one shouldn't be too hard, right?

In methodical fashion, let's focus on obvious or distinctive field marks. Does the bird appear to have wing-bars or streaks on its sides, flanks, or undertail coverts? The answer would appear to be no. Alternatively, does the head (i.e., crown or face) show any distinctive pattern or markings? The bird appears to be notably plain on the head and face as well as on the wings and underparts. In essence, we are left with a nondescript, unmarked bird that is seemingly without pattern! This plainness could be important in revealing the identity of this month's mystery bird.

If we assume that the pictured bird is a "warbler-type thing," we have taken a bold step toward identification. There are only a few warblers that are completely devoid of obvious field marks (i.e., wing-bars, streaks, prominent head markings). Most notably, these are Tennessee, Orange-crowned, and Nashville warblers, as well as the females of Yellow, Wilson's, and Common Yellowthroat. Most of these warblers can be eliminated, however, because the mystery bird lacks one or more

subtle features that the others possess. The absence of faint wing-bars and a big-eyed appearance eliminate Yellow Warbler. An Orange-crowned Warbler would be drab rather than white on the underparts, with a hint of dusky streaking. A female Wilson's Warbler would have a slimmer body and a longer tail as well as a less rounded head and a more pronounced eye stripe. A Nashville Warbler would show a pronounced white eye-ring, and a female Common Yellowthroat would have dusky coloration on the flanks and a longer, thinner bill. This leaves only the Tennessee Warbler as a candidate. Or does it? A Tennessee Warbler should show a *thin, pointed bill* and a more distinct white eye stripe and typically would not appear as round-headed as the mystery bird.

So what about the bill of this otherwise blank-looking "warbler?" Could it be that it's not a warbler? Close scrutiny of the mystery bird's bill suggests a tiny hook at the tip and a somewhat thickened appearance throughout its length. It does not have a thin, pointy bill like that of a Tennessee Warbler. It does, however resemble the bill of a vireo. Voila! The nondescript little bird in the picture is not a warbler after all. It's a vireo! What's more, its very plainness is a clue to its identity. It's a Warbling Vireo (*Vireo gilvus*), surely one of North America's most nondescript species. The otherwise similar Philadelphia Vireo can be eliminated by the clear absence of dark lores and by the feathering between the eyes and the base of the bill, which is pale in the Warbling Vireo and dark in a Philadelphia Vireo.

In Massachusetts Warbling Vireos are fairly common and widespread nesters, except on Cape Cod, where they are notably absent. They are partial to large trees near water. Even along urban stretches of the Charles River their rambling song is a familiar early summer sound. They are relatively common spring migrants, and their autumn departure is early and virtually complete by late September. David Larson obtained this digital image of the Warbling Vireo at Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in Concord.

Wayne R. Petersen

Avian Influenza Status

The highly pathogenic H5N1 strain of Avian Influenza has not been detected in Massachusetts. Information on the virus, avian impacts, and human health implications and status are available on the following websites:

US Centers for Disease Control
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/index.htm>,
World Healh Organization
<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/>,
Mass Audubon
<http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/wildlife/index.php>
(select "Birds: General Info"), and
Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences
<http://www.manomet.org/naturereport/#avian-flu>.

AT A GLANCE

DAVID LARSON

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

BIRD OBSERVER (USPS 369-850)
P.O. BOX 236
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