

## THE BIRD OBSERVER SUMMARY FOR JANUARY

January provided an abrupt change from the abnormally cloudy weather of the two previous months, and birders were out in force to begin a new year of listing. The temperature averaged on the mild side, with periods of very cold and very mild weather. The mean was  $31.5^{\circ}$ ,  $1.6^{\circ}$  above normal and the warmest January since 1967. The highest temperature was  $61^{\circ}$  on the 1st and 18th. The low was  $1^{\circ}$  on the 8th, with no minimum records broken.

Snowfall was on the light side, with only 3.6", 8.6" under the past average, the least in January since 1969. Inland suburbs had much more snow, with a major storm on the 29th bringing 5-10" to many areas. Sunshine was abundant with 62%. The sun failed to shine on only four days. The wind averaged 14.7 m.p.h., a bit above January levels.

168 species were recorded. Some of the highlights were the Western Grebe at Magnolia, and an Fared Grebe off the jetties at Plum Island; a Manx Shearwater was reported off the Barnstable Shore (a first winter record?); the Common Egret remained at E. Orleans, being present since the Christmas Count, and a Snowy Egret remained from late December through January 5th in a swamp in Hyannis.

33 species of Anseriformes were seen and included such "goodies" as Blue Goose at Chilton, M.V., the European Widgeon at Little Harbor, Cohasset, 10 Shovelers at Monomoy, Barrow's Golden-eye at nine places, and as many as 12 Harlequin Ducks at Magnolia. Large numbers of Common Eider continued, and King Eiders were observed throughout the month.

Raptors included four individual reports of Goshawk, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's. A Golden Eagle was observed at the Little River Bridge in South Dartmouth, and a gray phase Cyrfalcon was noted at Monomoy on the 1st and 2nd. Only seven records of Sparrow Hawk - perhaps people should keep a closer watch on this species.

Clapper and Virginia Rails were reported, and a Sora was found in Ipswich. Eight species of shorebirds were reported. Numbers of Iceland Gulls increased, but only two Glaucous Gulls were recorded. Alcid numbers lacked distinction with: 1-5 Razorbills at five localities; Thick-billed Murres were recorded from 10 places; only one Dovekie was seen at Magnolia; and as many as nine Black Guillemot were at Eastern Point, Gloucester.

The highlight of the month was the Great Gray Owl at Gill, which delighted or disappointed nearly all the birders of the Northeast and beyond. Hawk Owls continued at Brewer, Me. and Gilford, N.H. Barn Owls were observed at Nantucket and in Boston Harbor.

The Gray Jay continued at feeders in Pelham, and two other reports came from the Connecticut Valley. Boreal Chickadees were still at Ashley Ponds, Holyoke. A Varied Thrush was seen for one day in Orleans. Bohemian Waxwings were recorded from three places, and Northern Shrikes were widespread with 18 reports.

An Orange-crowned Warbler spent the month at a feeder at Orleans, and a Yellow-breasted Chat fed on cornmeal mush in Plymouth. The Western Tanager continued at feeders in Annisquam throughout the month, and one was picked up dead in Orleans. The female Painted Bunting continued in Plymouth. Grasshopper Sparrows were reported from Falmouth and Wellfleet. Tree Sparrows were seen in small numbers. An Oregon Junco visited a feeder at Mt. Auburn. Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings were found along the outer beaches.

The summaries for both January and February are ways with which we can present the records. We would like to hear your comments on this subject and how you would prefer the records.

Abbreviations

ad	adult	PBC	Paskamansett Bird Club
imm	immature	NVBC	Nashoba Valley Bird Club
m.	male	FCBC	Felix Cutler Bird Club
f.	female	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
thr.	throughout	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
#	additional observers	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
v.o.	various observers	F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham
max.	maximum	FM	Fowl Meadow, Milton
WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary	AA	Arnold Aboretum
GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge	Mt.A	Mt. Auburn Cemetery
CWA	Crane Wildlife Area	P.I.	Plum Island
BBC	Brookline Bird Club	A.P.	Andrews Point
		E.P.	Eastern Point

Red-necked Grebe:

12	Manomet	12	Harrington
13-14	Cape Ann	7	Gordon (v.o.)
22	Magnolia	10	Weissberg

Western Grebe:

21-25	Magnolia	1	Goodrich # (v.o.)
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Eared Grebe:

27	P.I. (north end)	1	Post
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Horned Grebe:

13,18	P.I.	45,30	(BBC)Soucy, (BBC)Van Cor
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Pied-billed Grebe:

1	Wollaston	1	(BBC)Northway
7	Onset	1	Anderson
27	Plymouth	1	(BBC) Harrington

Manx Shearwater:

28	Barnstable(Sandy Neck)	1	Pease
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Gannet:

1,2	Monomoy	20	Winthrop Harrington
29	Eastham	8	Nikula

Great Cormorant:

thr.	Wollaston	max. 20	Jan. 1	(BBC)Northway
thr.	Cape Ann	max. 20	Jan. 6	(BBC)Jodrey
thr.	Newburyport	max. 18	Jan. 13	(BBC)Soucy
thr.	Westport-So.Dartmouth	max. 15	Jan. 14	(BBC)Grinley

Great Blue Heron:

7	Newton	9	(fide)Howard
14	Westport-So.Dartmouth	9	(BBC)Grinley
21	Eastham	12	Baines

Common Egret:

thr.	Eastham	1	Bailey #
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Black-crowned Night Heron:

2	Hingham	6	Harrington
21	N.Eastham	9	Baines

American Bittern:

13,18	Eastham	1,2	Nikula
24	So.Dartmouth	1	Regan

Mute Swan:

14	Westport	211	(BBC)Grinley
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Brant:

10	Squantum	63	O'Maley
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Snow Goose:

14	E.Falmouth	1	Moore
15-17	Cohasset	1	Hunt
28-31	Wollaston	1	Stymeist (v.o.)

Blue Goose:

28	Chilmark (M.V.)	1	Hancock
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Gadwall:

15	Falmouth	1	Pease
24	Chatham	1	Nikula

Pintail:			
thr.	Cohasset	1	(v.o.)
thr.	So.Dartmouth	1	(v.o.)
28	Essex	4	Clark
Green-winged Teal:			
1	Belmont	1	Stymeist
13-15	Eastham	1	Nikula, Pease
21	Plymouth	2	Higginbotham
27	Woburn (Horn Pond)	1	Tomfohrde
European Widgeon:			
thr.	Cohasset (Little Harbor)	1 m.	(v.o.)
American Widgeon:			
thr.	Belmont	50	Stymeist
27	Plymouth	25	Harrington
Shoveler:			
2	Monomoy	10	Forster
29	West Yarmouth	2	Mathewson
Wood Duck:			
thr.	Falmouth (Sider's)	1	(v.o.)
12,20	Plymouth	1	Higginbotham, Carmichaels
Redhead:			
thr.	Falmouth (Sider's)	26	(v.o.)
2	Monomoy	5	Forster
12,21	Plymouth	1	Higginbotham, Carmichaels
14	Acoaxet	4	Grinley
Ring-necked Duck:			
10	Falmouth	20	Argnes
Canvasback:			
1	Assonet	140	Hill
1	Westport	160-180	Hill
1	Falmouth	400-500	J.Baird
1	Taunton River	500	Hill
Greater Scaup:			
18	Hingham	2000	Moore
Barrow's Golden-eye:			
1	Rockport	4	(v.o.)
6-31	Newburyport	4	Forster (v.o.)
8-31	Plymouth	3	Carmichaels
Bufflehead:			
14	E.Falmouth	500	Moore
Harlequin Duck:			
1,28	Magnolia	5,12	Garret, Brown
29	Manomet	1	Shepherd
Common Eider:			
thr.	Buzzard's Bay	3500	Anderson
thr.	Rockport	600	King
thr.	Salisbury	1500	Wilson
thr.	So.Shore,Plymouth-Quincy	4000	(BBC)Harrington
King Eider:			
1,11	P.I.	1,2	Soucy, Quinlan #
1	Provincetown	1	Stone
6-20	Cohasset	1	(v.o.)
21	Rockport	2 imm. m.	Petersen
Ruddy Duck:			
thr.	Falmouth (Sider's)	10	(v.o.)
Hooded Merganser:			
7	Wareham	29	Anderson
Common Merganser:			
1	Lakeville	60	Perry
Cooper's Hawk:			
13	WBWS, Wellfleet	1	Bailey
29	Middleboro	1	Briggs
Red-shouldered Hawk:			
1	Wareham	1	Briggs
13	Newburyport	1	Soucy
Golden Eagle:			
5,6	So.Dartmouth	1	Hamlin

Marsh Hawk:				
14,26	Bridgewater	3,6		Briggs, Anderson
Gyr Falcon (Gray):				
1,2	Monomoy	1		Bailey, Clem, Forster, Winthrop Harrington, Miliotis, Pease
Ruffed Grouse:				
13	Bourne	1		Moore
16	Manomet (MBO)	3		Nichols
Clapper Rail:				
21	Eastham	2		Baines, Sorrie
Virginia Rail:				
21	Eastham	2		Baines
Sora Rail:				
7	Ipswich	1		Martin, Moore
American Coot:				
2	Monomoy	30		Forster
10	Falmouth	25		Emery, Argnes
Kildeer:				
10-20	Gloucester	1		(v.o.)
21	Eastham	1		Baines
29	Bourne	1		Briggs
Black-bellied Plover:				
14	Dennis	1		Nikula
Ruddy Turnstone:				
20	N.Scituate	3		Higginbotham
Common Snipe:				
7	Bourne	9		(SSBC) Anderson
13-14	Ipswich	1		Gordon
21	Plymouth	5,6		(v.o.)
Greater Yellowlegs:				
18	Eastham (F.H.)	1		Nikula
28	Cohasset	1		Litchfields
Purple Sandpiper:				
thr.	Rockport	max. 100		Gordon
21	N.Scituate	250		Argnes
Dunlin:				
27	Duxbury	200		Harrington
27	Cohasset	200		Harrington
Sanderling:				
27	Plymouth	100		Cornwell
Glaucous Gull:				
5	Nahant	1		Argnes
13-20	Gloucester	1		(v.o.)
16 on	P.I.	1-2		Gardler (v.o.)
Iceland Gull:				
1	Wareham	1		Briggs
13-27	Gloucester	1-3		Cornwell (v.o.)
12 on	P.I.	max. 15		Gardler
27	Salisbury	4		Wilson
31	Provincetown	1		Nikula
Black-headed Gull				
thr.	Squantum	max. 9		Brown # (v.o.)
28	Newburyport	max. 5		Gardler
Little Gull:				
16,27	Newburyport	1 imm 1 ad		Gardler, Post
Black-legged Kittiwake:				
13-14	Rockport	1		Gordon
29	N.Eastham	400		Nikula
Razorbill:				
1	Monomoy	3		Forster #
20	Rockport (AP)	1		(BBC) Hales
27	Magnolia	5		Cornwell #
29,31	Eastham, Wellfleet	1,1		Nikula, Bailey #

Thick-billed Murre:			
4,12-13	Truro, Provincetown	1,1	Banks, Nikula
12-25	Rockport	1	J. Baird # (v.o.)
13	Salisbury	1	(BBC) Soucy
21-27	Magnolia	1	Petersen # (v.o.)
27	Plymouth	4	(BBC) Harrington
Dovekie:			
22-27	Magnolia	1	Weissberg
Black Guillemot:			
1-25	Rockport (AP)	max. 4	McClellan # (v.o.)
22-27	Magnolia	1-3	Weissberg (v.o.)
25,27	Gloucester (EP)	5,9	D'Entremont, Post
Monk Parakeet:			
thr.	Braintree	1	Wilson (v.o.)
1-14	Brookline	1	Coolidge
9-15	Byfield	1	Joyce
Mourning Dove:			
12	Wellesley	45	Forster
29	Mansfield	51	Richardson
Barn Owl:			
3	Nantucket	1	Veit
20 on	Squantum	1	T. Parker
Screech Owl:			
thr.	Lanesville	1	(v.o.)
thr.	Milton	1	(v.o.)
19	Dartmouth-Westport	4	PBC
Great Horned Owl:			
thr.	Belmont	1	(v.o.)
4-20	Danvers	1	(v.o.)
27	Norwell	2	Litchfields
Snowy Owl:			
thr.	P. I.	1	(v.o.)
thr.	Salisbury	1	(v.o.)
18	Winchester	1	Ropes
26	Littleton	1	Sprong
30	Middleboro, Squantum	1,1	Anderson, Cornwell
Barred Owl:			
thr.	Belmont	1	Clarke (v.o.)
16-18	Winchester	1 (picked up dead on 18th)	Ropes
Great Gray Owl:			
22 on	Gill	1	Dwellely (v.o.)
Long-eared Owl:			
3	Nantucket	1	Veit
Short-eared Owl:			
thr.	Salisbury	1-3	(v.o.)
21-31	Squantum	1-2	(v.o.)
21-29	Bridgewater	2	Anderson
27	Wareham	1	Briggs
Saw-whet Owl:			
17	Dartmouth-Westport	2	PBC
19	Cambridge (Mt.A)	1	Horn
Eastern Phoebe:			
thr.	Middleboro	2-3	Lavallie, (fide) Briggs
Horned Lark:			
11	P. I.	75	Quinlin
Gray Jay:			
thr.	Pelham	1-2?	(v.o.)
6	Longmeadow	1	Simcovitz
13	So. New Salem	1	Gagnon
Fish Crow:			
20	W. Roxbury, Newton	2,1	Wiggin, Martin
Boreal Chickadee:			
thr.	Holyoke (Ashley Ponds)	max. 4	Yenlin (v.o.)
Red-breasted Nuthatch:			
thr.	Cambridge (Mt.A)	5	Stymeist
House Wren:			
1	Falmouth	1	Lanx, Goodrich

Winter Wren:			
25	Plymouth	1	Wilson
Long-billed Marsh Wren:			
6	Barnstable	2	Pease
Mockingbird:			
21	Chatham	16	(BBC) Baines
Catbird:			
thr.	Lincoln	1	Miller
10	Plymouth	1	Carmichaels
14	Falmouth	2	Moore
17	Concord	1	Peabody
Brown Thrasher:			
1-15	Falmouth	1	J. Baird (v.o.)
4	E. Lexington	1	(fide) Howard
Varied Thrush:			
8	Orleans	1	Erickson, Rich
Hermit Thrush:			
9,14	P. I.	1	Powell, Moore
11	Cohasset	1	Wilson
15-21	Vineyard Haven (MV)	1	Hancock
Ruby-crowned Kinglet:			
1	Falmouth	1	J. Baird #
10,21	Plymouth	1,1	Carmichaels, Emery #
Bohemian Waxwing:			
13	Princeton	2	Blodget
20	Dennis	1	Nikula
28	Scituate	2	Spring
Cedar Waxwing:			
1-9	Cambridge (Mt.A)	20-25	Robinson, Nore, Stymeist
10	Falmouth, Manomet	24,14	Arnes, Nichols
21	Dennis	35	Nikula
Northern Shrike:			
thr.	P. I., Salisbury	1-3	(v.o.)
6	Rowley, W. Newbury, Manomet, Harvard	1,1,1,2	Bouldry, Argnes, Nichols, Reed
11	Wellesley	1	Quinlin
12	Wellfleet	1	Pease
13	Provincetown	1	Nikula
17,21	Gloucester, Rockport	1,1	Nichols, Petersen
Starling:			
27	Quincy	10,000	Harrington
Orange-crowned Warbler:			
thr.	Eastham	1	Whitlocks (v.o.)
12	WMWS, Princeton	1	Blodget
Myrtle Warbler:			
10	Falmouth	135	Emery #
Palm Warbler:			
6	Gloucester	1	Jodrey
15	Woods Hole	1	(F.C.B.C.)
Yellowthroat:			
1	Falmouth	1	Baird
4	Middleboro	1	Briggs
5-31	Concord (GMNWR)	2	Heckt
Yellow-breasted Chat:			
12	Plymouth	1	Carmichaels
Meadowlark:			
14	N. Falmouth, S. Dartmouth	5,12	Moore, Grinley
21	Eastham (FH)	46	Sorrie
27	Plymouth	8	Harrington
Red-winged Blackbird:			
18	W. Roxbury	10	Agush
20	Hingham	2	Higginbotham
30	Quincy	3	Cornwell
Baltimore Oriole:			
1	Cambridge	1	Horn
7	Vineyard Haven (M.V.)	1	Hancock
Rusty Blackbird:			
2	W. Barnstable	3	Pease

Cowbird:			
14	Dartmouth-Westport	60	(BBC)Grinley
Western Tanager:			
6 on	Annisquam	1 m.	Copeland, Emery (v.o.)
31	Orleans	1 dead	Bailey
Painted Bunting:			
thr.	Plymouth	1 f.	Carmichaels (v.o.)
Dickcissel:			
thr.	S.Dartmouth	1	Regan
2-12	WBWS, Wellfleet	1	Bailey
6	Plymouth	1	Carmichaels
20	Hingham	1	Higginbotham
Evening Grosbeak:			
thr.	Byfield	100-200	Joyce
thr.	Manomet	15 banded	MBO
Purple Finch:			
thr.	Manomet	15 banded	MBO
House Finch:			
thr.	Vineyard Haven (M.V.)	22	Hancock
8	Rockport	20	Jodrey
10	Falmouth	50+	Emery
Pine Grosbeaks:			
6	Milton (FM)	10	O'Regan
13	Boxford, Provincetown	35,4	Palmer, Nikula
27	Plymouth	8	Harrington
Common Redpoll:			
14	Littleton	1	R.Baird
Pine Siskin:			
20	Jamaica Plain (AA)	3	Deveau
30	Marshfield	3	Wilson
Red Crossbill:			
1	Falmouth	5	Nikula
White-winged Crossbill:			
6	Ashland	1	Robertson
20	Jamaica Plain (AA)	3	Deveau
Rufous-sided Towhee:			
14	Falmouth	8	Moore
Ipswich Sparrow:			
13-14,28	P.I.	2,1	Gordon, Van Cor
21	Scituate (Humarock)	2	Emery #
27	Duxbury	1	Harrington
Savannah Sparrow:			
21	Scituate (Humarock)	1	Emery #
Grasshopper Sparrow:			
14	N.Falmouth (CWA)	1	Moore
31	WBWS, Wellfleet	1	Bailey
Sharp-tailed Sparrow:			
18,21	Eastham (FH)	12,5	Nikula, Sorrie
21	Scituate	7	Moore
Seaside Sparrow:			
18,21	Eastham (FH)	2,5	Nikula, Sorrie
Oregon Junco:			
thr.	Cambridge (Mt.A)	1 ad	Agush,Brown,Stymeist,Veit
27	Belmont	1	Bretts
Field Sparrow:			
7	Wellesley	2	Rome
13	Boxford	4	Palmer
21	Plymouth	25	Higginbotham
White-crowned Sparrow:			
21	Plymouth	1	Higginbotham
Fox Sparrow:			
13	Belmont (HF)	5	Butler
20	Jamaica Plain (AA)	6	Wiggin
Swamp Sparrow:			
21	Eastham	2	(BBC) Baines
31	Plymouth	1	D'Entremont

Lapland Longspur:				
thr.	P.I.	max.	25	(v.o.)
thr.	Salisbury	max.	15	(v.o.)
Snow Bunting:				
7	W. Newbury		13	Moore
13	Gloucester		30	King
21	Scituate (Humarock)		22	Emery #

#### WINTER GULL POSTSCRIPT

Though Philip Martin did a good job of summarizing "Winter Gulls in Massachusetts" (BIRD OBSERVER, Vol. 1, No. 1), I would like to make these additional comments.

Ring-billed gull: Second year birds often have completely black primaries since the all dark primaries of the juvenile plumage are not lost until the bird acquires its second winter plumage. This characteristic means that essentially gray-and-white gulls of medium size are often identified as kittiwakes on the basis of all black primaries with no white spotting at the wing tips.

Glaucous gull: The note on the folded wing and tail relationship of sitting Iceland and glaucous gulls is not reliable under many circumstances. The relationship is often dependent on just how the individual bird folds its wings! Not mentioned is the often helpful character of bill pattern on immature glaucous gulls. Generally, the very long, flesh or horn-colored bill of the glaucous gull is noticeably ringed with black at the distal end. There is quite an unmarked area between this ring and the basal end of the bill. In the sub-adult Iceland gull, the dusky tip usually blends gradually into the basal area, thus not leaving as much pale area between the ring and the base of the bill.

Bonaparte's gull: The Bonaparte's gull does not always have an all black bill. Often, the immatures, and even some adults, will have some pale or flesh-color at the basal portion of the bill, especially on the lower mandible. Therefore, not every small gull with a bicolored bill is necessarily an immature black-headed gull, unless other field marks are present.

Wayne R. Petersen  
Abington, Mass.

#### HAWK WATCHING ANYONE?

Birders who have experienced the spectacular flights of migrating hawks at Mt. Tom in western Massachusetts or Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania have probably wondered where the birds came from and where they would go. Also, an observer concentrating on one side of his lookout often just glimpses a kettle sneaking by on the other, thus raising the question, "How many hawks have I missed?"

Two years ago, Donald Hopkins and Gerald Merserau initiated a "hawk watch" to provide some answers. On designated weekends they encourage birders throughout southwestern New England to report sightings of migrating raptors. Although this project has not been blessed with especially favorable weather conditions, it has indicated that observers at traditionally "good" sites, such as Mt. Tom's Goat Peak, may see only about a third of the total hawk flight.

This years hawk watches are scheduled for April 21-22, September 15-16, and October 27-28. If you would like to witness one of the great migration spectacles, while making a contribution to field ornithology, write to Donald Hopkins, 27 London Rd., Windsor, Conn. 06095.

To brush up on hawk identification and techniques of observation, you might want to read A Guide to Northeastern Hawk Watching, by Donald S. Heintzelman, available from the author, 35 Church St., Lambertville, N.J. 08530. 64 pages, price about \$1.50.

P.M.