

A GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF  
THE SQUAM LAKES REGION, NEW HAMPSHIRE<sup>1</sup>

by Beverly S. Ridgely

INTRODUCTION by Tudor Richards

History. There have been such extraordinary changes over the years in the bird life of the Squam Lakes Region (as in the rest of central New Hampshire) that some of these should be touched upon. Two centuries ago the region was still largely wilderness, with birds of deep forests predominant. In the following decades, however, the creation of much open land at the expense of the virgin forest caused a great decrease in the number of forest birds and an increase in those liking fields and pastures.

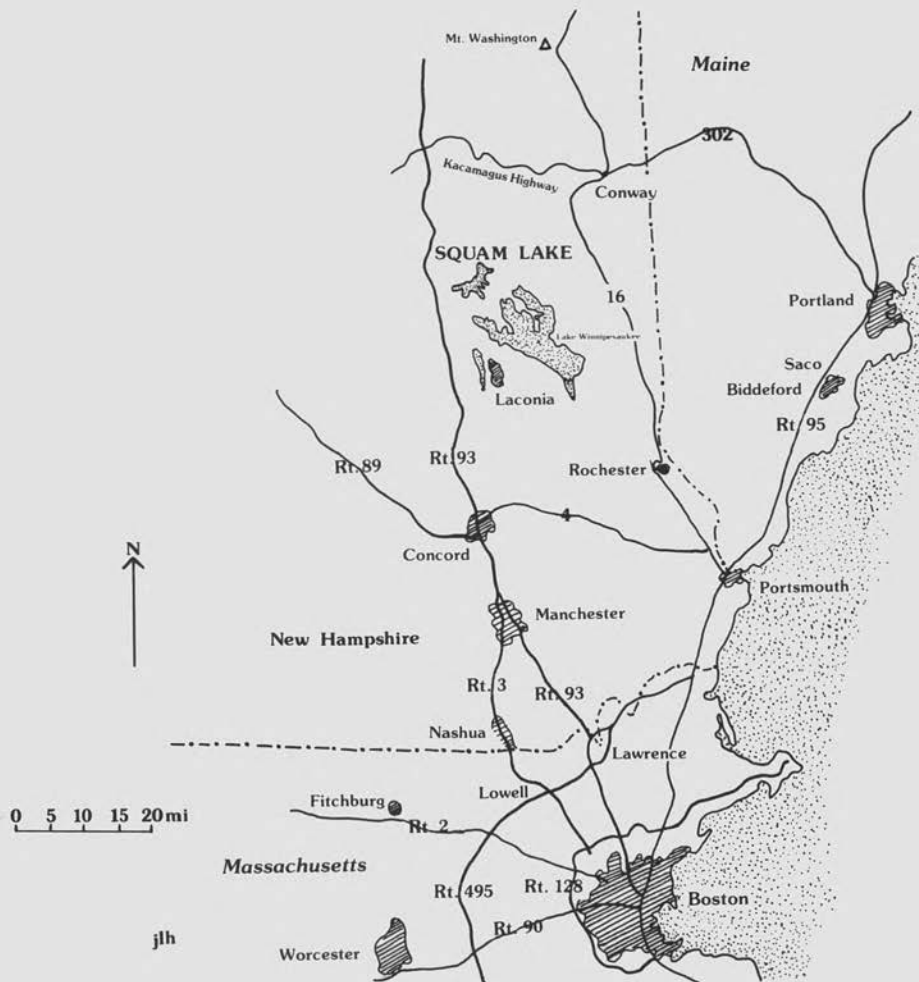
This trend has now been largely reversed with the decline of agriculture starting over a century ago. On the other hand, rather than reverting to well-developed forests, much of the abandoned farmland has come up to brushy areas, thin woodlands or unnaturally pure and extensive stands of white pine, many of which have been timbered on becoming merchantable, with certain birds benefiting from each of these mostly temporary types of habitat and others not.

Then there have been wholly disastrous developments such as market and feather hunting and the introduction of the House Sparrow and European Starling during the last century, and, more recently, the extensive use of pesticides. Furthermore, the proliferation of garbage everywhere has been a bonanza for gulls and "blackbirds," and the latter have also benefited from the availability of vast amounts of grain in certain sections of the country. As a result, species of birds preyed upon by gulls or parasitized by the Brown-headed Cowbirds have suffered greatly.

Nevertheless, there have also been favorable factors such as the much better protection of birds in general in recent decades, the creation of wildlife refuges, and the feeding of birds in winter, though the latter almost certainly is partially responsible for the increase of the Blue Jay, a natural nest robber that is now, unfortunately, present in unnatural numbers.

No doubt the greatest change that has occurred in the bird life of the Squam Lakes Region within historical times is the extermination of the Passenger Pigeon. Once the continent's

<sup>1</sup>Bird Observer wishes to thank the Squam Lakes Association of Plymouth, New Hampshire for permission to use this material, including the map, which is reprinted from the book by Professor Ridgely, A Guide to the Birds of the Squam Lakes Region, New Hampshire (228 pages), published by the Squam Lakes Association in 1977.



jlh

and probably the world's most abundant bird, it almost certainly was also our region's most abundant species up to perhaps the middle of the last century, some individuals possibly occurring as recently as the 1880s or 1890s. We are fortunate in having a number of references that together give us a good idea of the bird life of the Squam region 70-90 years ago or so, and none of which, incidentally, mentions the Passenger Pigeon. Though very probably somewhat down in numbers by the turn of the present century, the Common Loon and the Great Blue Heron seem to have survived the slaughter of the nineteenth century remarkably well. Waterfowl, not surprisingly, fared less well, the only species known to nest in the region during the above period being the Black and Wood ducks, and these sparingly. The Bald Eagle appears to have been more common then than it is now, but hawks in general seem to have been very scarce, including even the Broad-winged Hawk and the American Kestrel. Despite having been a major target of market hunters in the last century, the Upland Sandpiper apparently still nested in numbers in or near our region until at

least the 1890s, whereas the Killdeer was then almost unknown. Most remarkable of all, gulls were practically never seen except during or immediately after easterly storms, and then only occasionally.

All evidence indicates that the Mourning Dove, Eastern Meadowlark, Common Grackle, and Brown-headed Cowbird were, at best, rare in the Squam region in the period 1883-1903, and that the Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Tufted Titmouse, Wood Thrush, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, European Starling, Louisiana Waterthrush, Cardinal, and Evening Grosbeak were, except for an incursion of the latter in 1890, unknown. On the other hand, Walter Faxon, a highly respected amateur ornithologist, in his account of June visits to Holderness in 1885 and 1886, describes the Common Nighthawk, Purple Martin, Cliff Swallow, and Eastern Bluebird as "common," the Vesper Sparrow as "very common," the Whip-poor-will as "abundant," and the Indigo Bunting as "very abundant." All of these are much less common now as summer residents, and some seem to be absent except as migrants.

In more recent decades the Common and Hooded mergansers appear to have become summer residents in the Squam region for the first time in history, although in the last few years the former has returned to its earlier status as only or primarily a migrant. Unfortunately the non-native Mallard has been artificially introduced in recent years, become largely dependent on "handouts," and started to interbreed with the Black Duck. More welcome is the Ring-necked Duck, which was unknown around the turn of the century but is now fairly common in migration and possibly a locally nesting species.

Hawks seem to have staged something of a comeback in recent decades only to suffer serious setbacks more recently because of pesticide poisoning, though there are now signs of recovery from this catastrophe. Meanwhile the Upland Sandpiper has almost entirely disappeared from open agricultural land and has seemingly been replaced by the Killdeer.

By far the most dramatic change of all in recent years has been the extraordinary increase in the number of gulls. Starting with the Herring Gull, this explosion soon included the larger Great Black-backed Gull and the smaller Ring-billed Gull, all of which are now common on Squam Lake. As a group, gulls are, in fact, by far the most common waterbirds in summer on the lake. This unprecedented development is clearly the result of better protection followed by the proliferation of garbage, open dumps being where many gulls now get much of their food, some of it even in winter, though sanitary land-fill practices may soon begin to turn the tables on them.

Among the small landbirds, probably the most noticeable changes of recent decades have been the arrivals in the region of the Wood Thrush, which soon became a common summer resident, the great increase in the numbers of the Blue Jay, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, and White-throated Sparrow, and

the decrease of the Whip-poor-will, Common Nighthawk, Purple Martin, Cliff Swallow, Eastern Bluebird, Indigo Bunting, and Vesper Sparrow.

Mention should also be made of the fairly recent arrival as nesting species or possible nesting species of such "southern" birds as the Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Tufted Titmouse, Mockingbird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Cardinal, and also of two "northern" birds, the Common Raven and Ruby-crowned Kinglet; the very recent and remarkable increase of the Mourning Dove; and the noticeable decrease as summer residents of such small birds as the Black-throated Green and Blackburnian warblers, almost certainly at least partly the result of increased stealing of eggs and nestlings by Blue Jays and grackles and of nest parasitizing by cowbirds.

The bird life of the Squam Lakes Region today, despite the major changes that have occurred, remains much as it was nearly a century ago in that the vast majority of species occurring then occur now and vice versa, even if not, in many cases, in the same numbers.

Nesting Season. Even when the spring migration is over, a tremendous variety of birds stay to nest in the Squam Lakes Region, including a modest number of water birds. Our prize species is, of course, the Common Loon, that wonderful symbol of wildness which at Squam Lake is at the extreme southwestern limit of its principal nesting range, since the few lakes and ponds farther south where loons nest have all had only one or two pairs producing young in recent years.

Other water birds well represented as summer residents in suitable habitat in the region are the Great Blue Heron, American Bittern, Black and Wood ducks, Hooded Merganser, Killdeer, American Woodcock, Spotted Sandpiper, and the apparently non-nesting or not successfully nesting Great Black-backed, Herring, and Ring-billed gulls. Scarcer species that are probably regular at least somewhere in our area include the Pied-billed Grebe, Green-backed Heron, Common Merganser, Virginia and Sora rails Common Snipe, and perhaps one or two others.

Land birds summering in the Squam region range from "southern" species just reaching it, like the still very rare Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, to species near their southern limit here that range to the Arctic, like the Gray-cheeked Thrush. Our area has, in fact, a wonderful mixture of "southern" and "northern" birds. This is well illustrated by the thrushes, with the Veery and Wood Thrush largely confined to lower elevations, and the Swainson's Thrush to the top of Sandwich Dome, where it joins the even hardier Gray-cheeked Thrush.

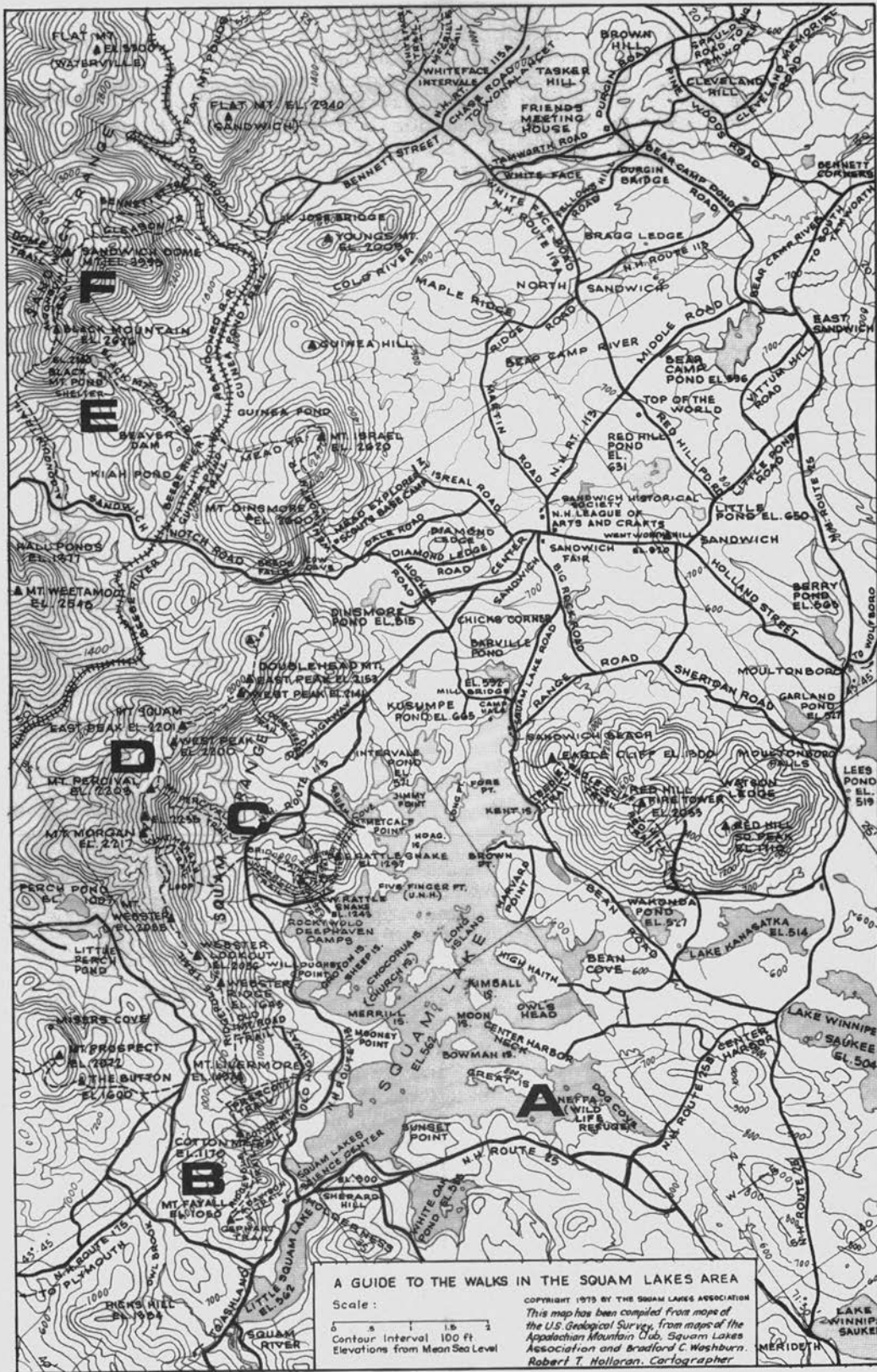
The wood warblers, because of their great variety and the rather particular niche that each species occupies during the

nesting season, from lakeshore pines in the case of the Pine Warbler to stunted spruce and fir in that of the Blackpoll Warbler, are, if anything, an even more interesting family during the early summer than during spring migration. About all they seem to lack are melodious songs, the term "warbler" being inappropriate, although the songs of most are not uninteresting and those of a few fairly musical.

Mention should also be made of a few more of our summer or permanent residents that are outstanding for one reason or another. Birds of prey are fairly well represented by the more common hawks, the Red-tailed and Broad-winged hawks and the American Kestrel, which are uncommon summer residents (Red-tail may sometimes occur in winter), and by the Great Horned, Barred, and Northern Saw-whet owls, which are uncommon permanent residents. Several other birds of unusual interest are the Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Common Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, and the "friendly" Eastern Phoebe which so often nests under the eaves of camps and boathouses.

While swallows are still well represented in the Squam region by the Tree and Barn swallows, the other species are not common and the Purple Martin seems no longer to nest here. Our best singers, aside from the thrushes and in particular the Wood and Hermit thrushes, are, in the opinion of this observer the tiny Winter Wren and Ruby-crowned Kinglet (both of which are more common in summer in the mountains than around the Lakes), and the Brown Thrasher, Solitary Vireo, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, Northern Oriole, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Purple Finch, and White-throated Sparrow, the oriole and grosbeak also being strikingly beautiful to look at. Other Squam birds with unusually bright colors besides these two species, the Eastern Bluebird, and many of the wood warblers, are the Red-winged Blackbird, Scarlet Tanager, Indigo Bunting, and American Goldfinch.

The Squam Lakes Region is fortunate to include high as well as low elevations (from about 560 feet above sea level at the lakes to 3993 feet on top of Sandwich Dome), and it should be emphasized that a good percentage of the birds of most interest to serious birders are mountain species not commonly if at all found in summer near the low country around the lakes. These include such permanent residents as the Spruce Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gray Jay, and Common Raven, which all probably occur uncommonly to rarely somewhere on the Sandwich Range and perhaps on Sandwich Dome, and the Boreal Chickadee, which is more widely distributed in the mountains; such summer residents, mostly local if not uncommon, as the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Philadelphia Vireo, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, and Mourning warblers, and Rusty Blackbird; and the Red and White-winged crossbills and Pine Siskin, which occur irregularly in both summer and winter.



FLAT MT. EL. 2900  
(WATERVILLE)

FLAT MT. EL. 2940  
(SANDWICH)

WHITEFACE INTERVALS  
 CHASE ROAD  
 TOP OF WASHA

BROWN HILL EL. 885

ARLUND  
 CLEVELAND HILL  
 CLEVELAND HILL

TASKER HILL  
 FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

**F**

**E**

**D**

**C**

**B**

**A**

SANDWICH MOUNTAIN EL. 2936

YOUNG MT. EL. 1000

GUINEA HILL

GUINEA POND

SHAYNE DAM  
 MIAH POND

MT. DINGMORE EL. 2600

MT. ISRAEL EL. 2620

MT. WESTAMOND EL. 2545

DINGMORE POND EL. 515

DOUBLEHEAD MT.  
 WEST PEAK EL. 2153  
 EAST PEAK EL. 2141

MT. SQUAM  
 EAST PEAK EL. 2201.5

WEST PEAK EL. 2100

MT. PERCIVAL EL. 2303

MT. MORGAN EL. 2217

PERCH POND  
 LITTLE PERCH POND

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

MT. PROSPECT EL. 2022

MT. SHERMERE EL. 1811

MT. FAYALL EL. 1700

SQUAM LAKES SERVICE CENTER

BENNETT STREET

JOSEPH BRIDGE

COLD RIVER

MAPLE RIDGE

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

DIAMOND RIDGE

CHICKS CORNER

BERVILLE POND

KUSUMPE POND EL. 665

INTERVALS

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

ROCKY WOLF DEEPHAVEN CAMPS

TASKER HILL

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

WHITEFACE INTERVALS

CHASE ROAD

TOP OF WASHA

BROWN HILL EL. 885

ARLUND

CLEVELAND HILL

CLEVELAND HILL

TASKER HILL

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

WHITEFACE INTERVALS

CHASE ROAD

TOP OF WASHA

BROWN HILL EL. 885

ARLUND

CLEVELAND HILL

CLEVELAND HILL

TASKER HILL

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE

WHITEFACE INTERVALS

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

BEAR CAMP RIVER

## BIRDS AND HIKES IN THE SQUAM LAKES REGION

The following pages seek to answer briefly a question asked by many residents of and visitors to the Squam region during the period between, say, mid-May and mid-October: what birds am I likely to find while taking a favorite hike or visiting a favorite area? Only the more unusual or choice species actually recorded by the author in recent years in the locality in question are included, and you of course cannot expect to see all of these special birds on one or even several hikes or trips. Remember too that most of the species mentioned are easier to hear and usually to see before mid-July. For directions on reaching the places involved and descriptions of trails, except the New England Forestry Foundation Association (NEFFA) tract, see the current edition of the Squam Lakes Association Trails Guide. All of the areas are indicated on the map of the region published therein. [The map referred to is about 11 x 18 inches and has been much reduced in order to reprint it in Bird Observer. This map can be purchased in the Squam Lakes area and is included in copies of Beverly Ridgely's book available at local bookstores.]

A. NEFFA Forest Management and Wildlife Sanctuary. After Guinea Pond and Black Mountain Pond areas described later, the NEFFA property, located on the western side of Dog Cove, Squam Lake, probably offers the greatest variety of birds in the Squam region. The author has regularly recorded 45-55 species on a morning's visit in early-to-mid-June, 35-50 in mid-to-late August, and 18-20 in late October. The entrance to this splendid tract is located on College Road, between Routes 3 and 25B, Holderness. NEFFA includes a remarkable variety of habitats in a relatively small space, including meadows, mixed woods, stands of mature conifers, several lake coves, and a large swamp. An extensive system of well-marked trails covers the property, including even the swamp, a fascinating and usually inaccessible wildlife community to which a catwalk gives easy access.

In June and July, such large birds as Common Loon, Great Blue Heron, Black Duck, Broad-winged Hawk, and Ruffed Grouse are all highly likely to be recorded. You will probably hear the call or drumroll of the great Pileated Woodpecker rather than glimpse this shy bird, but NEFFA is one of the few Squam localities where you have a good chance of seeing Alder Flycatcher at close range (from the catwalk through the swamp). A few pairs of both Brown Creeper and Winter Wren presumably nest in the tract, as do at least 16 species of warblers, including Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green, Black-burnian, Canada, and probably, Northern Parula and Magnolia. Swamp Sparrows, heard on all sides from the catwalk, can be spished or squeaked into the open and to very close range.

From mid-August to mid-September, NEFFA fairly swarms with birds, especially when waves of warblers pass through, pushed by the first northwest frontal systems that are harbingers of

things to come. The Red-breasted Nuthatch is then usually more numerous and conspicuous than during the nesting season, and you should find Tennessee, Cape May, Bay-breasted, Black-poll, and Wilson's warblers in greater numbers than generally occur in spring in our region. The Olive-sided Flycatcher is a good possibility at this season, especially in and around the swamp, and so is the unobtrusive Yellow-bellied Flycatcher; although the latter is usually identifiable by sight, you will find it very hard to separate the many Least and Alder Flycatchers unless one, by chance, sings once or twice.

In October, watch for both Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Palm Warblers, and White-crowned and Fox sparrows, and listen for Evening Grosbeaks and perhaps crossbills flying over. If you are lucky, you may find a Boreal Chickadee or two, probably with Black-capped Chickadees and other small arboreal birds.

B. Squam Lakes Science Center, Including Mount Fayall via the Gephart and Davison Trails. Although the grounds of the SLSC in Holderness do not include as great a variety of habitats and therefore of nesting or migrant birds as the NEFFA tract, they do boast several breeding species that may be seen here more regularly and easily than anywhere in our region. Among these are a pair or two of House Wrens and Eastern Bluebirds, which annually use birdhouses erected for them around the buildings and along the lower trails, several pairs of Warbling Vireos, which can be heard and with patience seen in tall shade trees on the Center's property and also along Route 3 in the town, and small colonies of Bobolinks which nest in the lush grassy meadows. Brown Thrashers, Yellow Warblers, Northern Orioles, and Chipping Sparrows also nest in the lower part of the grounds, while near and around the summit of Mount Fayall you will almost surely find Red-breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Dark-eyed Junco. Less certain but good possibilities are Pileated Woodpecker (as usual, less likely to be seen than heard drumming or calling), Bank Swallow (undoubtedly birds from the colony that nests annually in the large sandpit a few miles north along Route 113), and Scarlet Tanager (in predominantly deciduous woods along the lower part of the Gephart and Davison Trails on Mount Fayall).

C. West and East Rattlesnake Mountains, including Morgan and Col Ponds. For a representative and varied sampling of Squam bird life at lower elevations, here is a hike especially recommended for a clear calm morning from late spring through midsummer. Leave your car in the parking lot for Mounts Morgan and West Rattlesnake (located off Route 113, 5.2 miles northeast of Holderness and 6.4 miles southwest of Center Sandwich). Start by birding Morgan Pond, the beaver pond just north of the lot and bordering 113. Then climb West Rattlesnake via the Old Bridle Path Trail, and continue along the Ridge Trail toward East Rattlesnake. Where the Col Trail meets the Ridge Trail from the north, descend the Col Trail



and investigate Col Pond and its environs. From here you can either follow the dirt road north to Route 113 and return to your car or, if you have time, retrace the Col Trail to the Ridge Trail and continue east to East Rattlesnake. From its summit, descend the Butterworth Trail to Metcalf Road and either walk back to your car via Metcalf Road and Route 113 or use a companion's car, previously parked at the causeway on Metcalf Road near the head of the Butterworth Trail, to return to the Mount Morgan parking lot.

Since it provides access to two active beaver ponds and two low mountains as well as the wooded ridge connecting them, this un strenuous route offers a good cross section of summer bird life in our region up to about 1300 feet. In recent years, the author has taken this hike a number of times between mid-May and early September, and has recorded a total of 74 species; 40-45 would be a good count for any one morning. Morgan and Col Ponds are excellent places for seeing any or all of our three relatively common breeding ducks (Black and Wood ducks and Hooded Merganser), and both have had migrant Blue-winged Teal several times in August. These ponds are also good for migrant Solitary Sandpipers and for such uncommon breeders as Red-shouldered Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, and Yellow-throated Vireo. The Rattlesnake Mountains are the summer home of one of our largest populations of Hermit Thrushes, as well as of good numbers of several warblers, including Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green (especially in the stands of hemlock along the Butterworth Trail, East Rattlesnake), Blackburnian, Pine (most likely in the large grove of red pines near the summit of East Rattlesnake), and Canada. Moreover, such infrequently recorded birds as Northern Goshawk, American Woodcock, and Pileated Woodpecker have been observed on this hike more than once and at close range. From late August to early October, the area around Col Pond is one of our best for Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Philadelphia Vireo, Palm and Mourning warblers, White-crowned and Fox sparrows, and other uncommon migrants.

D. Red Hill and Squam Range: Mounts Morgan and Percival and Crawford-Ridgepole Trail. Undoubtedly Red Hill and Mounts Morgan and Percival are climbed by more people between June and October than any mountains in the Squam region except West Rattlesnake. While enjoying these popular climbs and the magnificent vistas they afford, birders can also record many species that nest more commonly from 1200 to 2200 feet than from the elevation of the Squam Lakes to 1200 feet. On such higher climbs, in addition to most birds found on Mount Fayall, the Rattlesnakes, and other comparably low mountains, you will see and, in season, hear more individuals of such species as Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Solitary Vireo, Nashville and Yellow-rumped warblers, and Scarlet Tanager. Moreover, you will record birds that are usually or always absent as breeders below 1200 feet, like Swainson's Thrush, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Magnolia and Blackpoll warblers. And there is always the chance, even

on such heavily frequented trails, of finding Red-tailed and Broad-winged hawks, Ruffed Grouse, and Pileated Woodpecker. A day along the Crawford-Ridgepole Trail, starting at the Sandwich Notch Road and ending at Mount Percival or Morgan and thence down to Route 113, is suggested, because it is relatively untraveled by hikers and gives you the opportunity to bird in greater peace and quiet than are possible on Red Hill or Mount Morgan.

E. Guinea Pond and Black Mountain Pond Trails, Sandwich Notch. For the largest variety of Squam birds in a day, at any season when the Sandwich Notch Road is open, this area is highly recommended. You can leave your car in the early morning at the trail head on the Notch Road (about 5.5 miles west of Center Sandwich), hike to Guinea Pond, retrace your steps a short distance and ascend to Black Mountain Pond, descend and return to your car, all in the course of a leisurely and rewarding day. Or, if you prefer, you can plan to spend the night at Black Mountain Pond, in your tent or the SLA shelter, and the next day climb to Black Mountain and perhaps Sandwich Dome via the upper part of the Algonquin Trail. Either way, the different habitats through which you will pass, particularly the extensive swamps along the Guinea Pond Trail, the shores and environs of beautiful Guinea and Black Mountain ponds, and the new ponds being created by beaver colonies along the Black Mountain Pond Trail, will assure your recording many kinds of birds, and most of them in quantity. Over the past six years, the author has totaled 96 species in this area on daylong visits between late May and mid-October. On an average trip, especially in early June - mid-July and late August - mid-September, you should easily tally 45-50 species.

Because of its relative isolation, Guinea Pond has so far not been too disturbed by fishermen and campers in the spring and summer (although its peace is now more and more shattered by ORVS or all-terrain vehicles). There you will find nesting Black and Wood ducks and Hooded Merganser as well as such relatively uncommon and interesting birds as Belted Kingfisher, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Rusty Blackbird. Migrants that stop at the pond to rest and feed include Pied-billed Grebe and American Bittern (both most likely late August - late September) and Solitary Sandpiper (mid-August - mid-September). The old swamps bordering much of the middle third or so of the Guinea Pond Trail are excellent for birds at all seasons. Along this stretch, for example, Alder and Olive-sided flycatchers nest in the swampy areas to the west of the trail, and Great Crested and Least flycatchers and Eastern Wood-Pewee in the mixed woods bordering it to the east. From late August to mid-September, warblers literally stream along the trail, both through the swamps and in the wooded sections (15-18 species should be recorded on a good flight day and often in astonishing numbers), and Sharp-shinned, Red-tailed, and Broad-winged hawks and Northern Harriers have been seen following the same NE-SW route. This is also one of the best places in the Squam region to find such uncommon and elusive birds as Black-billed Cuckoo, Philadelphia Vireo, and

Lincoln's Sparrow on fall migration. As you climb the trail to Black Mountain Pond, you will rise from about 1500 feet at Guinea Pond to 2260 feet and will have a good opportunity to note the changes in the breeding ranges of four of our brown-backed, spotted-breasted thrushes. Veery, Wood Thrush, and some Hermit Thrushes nest along the Guinea Pond Trail. You will then find the Veery dropping out, fewer Woods and more Hermits, and increasing numbers of Swainson's Thrushes which are the most common thrushes at Black Mountain Pond and in its vicinity. If you continue up Black Mountain, you will come upon our highest ranging thrush, the Gray-cheeked, which nests fairly commonly in the stunted growth on the open ledges here. You will thus have seen and heard in one day all our thrushes in their preferred breeding situations. Black Mountain Pond and the predominantly coniferous woods around it are also the summer home of Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned kinglets, Blackpoll Warblers, and Rusty Blackbirds, and the author has found Boreal Chickadee in July.

F. Sandwich Dome via the Algonquin Trail. Sandwich Dome, whose summit (3993 feet) is the highest point in the Squam region, can be climbed by trails from Waterville Valley and from Jose's Bridge, Whiteface. The SLA Algonquin Trail is, however, recommended for the superb views of the White Mountains and Lakes Region afforded by the open ledges on Black Mountain, and also for the variety of bird life it offers the interested climber. Along the first stretch of the trail, after it leaves the Sandwich Notch Road (about 7.5 miles west of Center Sandwich), there are streams, pools, and small swampy areas which add variety to predominantly mixed woods and higher up, coniferous habitats. You will not see as many different kinds of birds in a day on the Algonquin Trail as in the Guinea and Black Mountain Ponds area described earlier, but the additional 1700+ feet you must ascend to reach the top of Sandwich Dome provide access to greater numbers of our high-country species. Your chances will be good for Boreal Chickadee and excellent for Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray-cheeked Thrush (in the stunted conifers on the open ledges of Black Mountain), and both species of kinglets. You will also have the only real possibility in the Squam region today of happening upon a Spruce Grouse, although none seems to have been reported from Sandwich Dome or Black Mountain for a number of years. It is, however, very likely that you will hear and see a Common Raven or two, and watch a Red-tailed or Broad-winged Hawk soaring on the updrafts along the ridges. And if you make the climb from, say, the second to the fourth week of August, you may well have the at first surprising experience of watching Chimney Swifts, Barn Swallows, and perhaps other swallows flying over and around the summit of the Dome on their way southward. It should be noted, however, that the Algonquin Trail is in places the steepest, and in general, the ruggedest way to climb Sandwich Dome and that it should not be attempted in poor weather or if you are not in good physical condition.

BEVERLY S. RIDGELY, Professor of French Studies at Brown University for thirty years, has published widely both in his professional and his avocational fields of birdwatching and the collection of bird stamps and postal stationery, his latest book being published in the latter field. A birder from boyhood, he has travelled worldwide to observe birds and wildlife. He founded the Loon Preservation Committee and produced the bird guide to the Squam Lakes area for the Conservation Commission of the Squam Lakes Association. He is active in the Squam Lakes Science Center and has worked on the breeding bird atlas of New Hampshire. Proud father of Robert S. Ridgely, a well-published professional ornithologist (A Guide to the Birds of Panama, Princeton University Press, 1976), Professor Ridgely would like readers to know that profits from the sale of the book from which this article was reprinted are given to the Squam Lakes Association, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the area.

TUDOR RICHARDS, widely known and respected ornithologist, is former executive director of the Audubon Society of New Hampshire.

---

## Join the Flock!

**GET YOUR RABBIT, DASHER, VOLVO,  
DATSUN, TOYOTA, HONDA OR RENAULT  
REPAIRED AT:**

**CO-OP GARAGE**  
106 Pleasant Street  
Watertown  
923-0941  
(Convenient to MBTA)



---

### NEW ENGLAND GULL PROJECT

In an effort to determine behavioral patterns and movements of an inland-feeding population of gulls and to estimate the numbers using an area, U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologists have color-marked and released gulls in the Manchester/Concord, New Hampshire area in May and June. The gulls have been dyed red and tagged with a numbered yellow leg marker.

IF MARKED BIRDS ARE SIGHTED, PLEASE REPORT DATE AND LOCATION to: Rene Bollengier, Project Coordinator  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Box 1518, Federal Building, Concord, NH 03301  
Telephone: (603) 225-9621.