FIFTY YEARS OF BIRDING: AN INTERVIEW WITH MARGARET ARGUE

by Martha Steele

Margaret Argue was among the first group of women voted as members of the Nuttall Ornithological Club in 1974. She began birding in 1941 with her husband, the late Arthur Argue, and continues to bird at least every Saturday. She joined the staff of the Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS) on January 2, 1944, eventually serving on the lecture staff in 1947, and buyer of books, binoculars, scopes, birdhouses, and feeders from 1945 to 1959. She was also the Society's window decorator from 1944 to 1968. Since the MAS moved to Lincoln in February 1958 and closed its Boston store in February 1968, Mrs. Argue has been a volunteer at the Museum of Fine Arts slide library two days a week, where she continues today.

Mrs. Argue is a recognized authority on the birds of the Boston Public Garden. In 1986 she wrote an article for "A Victorian Promenade" program, sponsored by the Friends of the Boston Public Garden, the oldest public garden in the United States, and the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. The article was titled, "The Spring Migration: A Birdwatcher's Perspective" and recounted the bird species that can be found in the public garden during migration.

The following article is a combination of notes that Mrs. Argue wrote and two interview that took place with Mrs. Argue on Sunday, October 25, 1992, and Sunday, January 10, 1993, in her Boston home.

Steele: How did you start birding?

Argue: Arthur and I were walking in an old orchard in New Hampshire one day fifty-one years ago, when we saw a hole in a tree. We then saw a flicker on the tree and got an absolutely marvelous look at it. That bird was what got us going.

Steele: Tell us a bit about the evolution of equipment over the years.

Argue: Back in the early 1940s, many people started birding with French opera glasses, which were four-power glasses. Ludlow Griscom of Harvard University had a Zeiss single barrel telescope, with rotating oculars of twenty, thirty, and forty power. Arthur and I had a Zeiss binocular telescope with the same rotating oculars and power. The telescope, case, and wooden tripod weighed over twenty pounds. On Audubon bus trips, we used to line up to look at birds in the telescope. Then Bausch and Lomb developed the spotting scope sometime in the mid- to late 1950s.

Steele: What field guides did you use?

Argue: We used Roger Tory Peterson's field guide, first published in 1934. I began using the National Geographic guide as well when it was first published

(1983). In my mind, Peterson is number one in birding. Besides his illustration skills, we should also remember that he is a great photographer and writer, and one who has always worked extremely hard at his crafts.

Steele: You mentioned the Audubon bus trips. What were these?

Argue: Beginning in 1945, the Massachusetts Audubon Society organized eight birding bus trips a year. You have to remember that back in those days, very few people had cars. The trips started at the Audubon House at 155 Newbury Street in Boston, the site of Audubon headquarters at the time and now a parking lot. The bus trips always ran on Sundays, and Arthur, Ruth Emery, and I were the guides. We usually had about fifty people on the trips. In January we went to the South Shore as far as Plymouth. The February trip went to Cape Ann and Newburyport, Chain Bridge, and Plum Island. The March trip often went to South Dartmouth and Westport. The April bus trip started at Lynnfield Marsh, then Ipswich, West Newbury, and Plum Island. The May trip started at Lynnfield Marsh and wandered through West Newbury, Newburyport, and Plum Island. We did not have trips in June and July. In August we went to Newburyport, Plum Island, and Salisbury, where we stopped at a small pond that attracted terns and shorebirds. We would end the day at Clark's Pond in Ipswich, where Least Bittern and moorhen used to nest.

In October we went to Topsfield, Boxford, and a Georgetown feeding station looking for Evening Grosbeak. We did the rice marshes, the upper Merrimack River, Newburyport, and Plum Island, and ended the day at Clark's Pond in Ipswich. The November trip went to Manchester, Magnolia, Gloucester, and Rockport.

One memorable trip was on April 20, 1953, a cold and windy day. We changed our plans for birding in Essex County to be at our new Ipswich River Sanctuary at noon. Ludlow Griscom, Roger Tory Peterson, and the great English birder, James Fisher, spoke on WBZ radio. There were a couple of hundred Audubon members at the sanctuary to hear the three great birders of the day. This was the second stop on Peterson and Fisher's one-hundred-day and 30,000-mile birding tour of the United States, which ended in the Pribilofs. The notes made by both Peterson and Fisher became the famous book, *Wild America*, published in 1955.

Sometime in the 1950s, after more people got cars and relied less on public transportation, the bus trips were discontinued. Audubon eventually began organizing trips to more distant locations, such as Venezuela.

Steele: You have spoken of Ludlow Griscom. What do you recall about birding with him?

Argue: During World War II, from 1941-1945, Ludlow Griscom had a B ration card, which allowed him to go afield in his own vehicle about once a week. The cards were a means of rationing gas during the war. Most of the rest of us did not have such a card, and we would take a train from North Station in

Boston to Newburyport, walk from the train station in town to the Yacht Club, and bird there in all seasons. We would then work our way to Plum Island, checking the haystacks on all the straddles for Snowy Owls in the winter. They liked to perch on the haystacks because rodents often ran under the straddles, which kept the hay above the high tide mark.

In order to carry binoculars along the coast during the war, we had to have a Coast Guard pass with our picture on the pass. There seemed to be Coast Guardsmen on every fifth or sixth front porch. On the train back to North Station we always had to pull the shades because of the blackout, enforced along coastal areas to prevent lighted objects from being obvious targets.

I remember a memorable day of birding in September 1944 with Ludlow Griscom. Joining us were Edwin Way Teale, author of *North with the Spring*, Ruth Emery, Richard Curtis, and Russell Mason. Ludlow's lethal tour began at the Hayes Bickford restaurant, Harvard Square, at 5:00 A.M. for breakfast. Daybreak was most always, except in winter, at Lynnfield Marsh, and dusk was at Clark's Pond in Ipswich. Griscom's field birding was a competitive game to make or break a record or extend a known range. A day in the field with Griscom was always punctuated with his characteristic phrase: "let's stop here and flap our ears;" "now someone find a bird with some zip in it;" "first record for Massachusetts, well we didn't do so badly." Ludlow Griscom's last life bird was the Hawk Owl in Concord, Massachusetts, in 1958. He died in 1959.

Steele: Who are some other memorable personalities you birded with?

Argue: One person who was quite a character was Clara DeWindt of Painted Redstart fame. She lived in Newburyport, and to my knowledge she was the only birder to actually reside in Newburyport in my day. One day, she and

Margaret Argue in earlier times

Daisy Searle were birding on Marblehead Neck and saw this unusual bird. In the back seat of her car, Clara DeWindt carried the seven volumes of the octavo edition of Audubon's *The Birds of America*. Today's price of the octavo edition is about $25,000. Anyway, on a Saturday night, she called me at home about the bird. We had an Audubon bus trip scheduled the next morning, so I asked her to call me again early the next day to let me know whether the bird was still there. She called at 7:45 A.M. the next morning with the news that the redstart was still around, and so the bus headed to Marblehead Neck. We all saw the Painted Redstart very well and got good photographs.

Another well-known birder was Wallace Bailey, the first director of Audubon's Wellfleet Sanctuary. In 1945, at the war's end, Wallace thought he had to have a "duck," which was an amphibious vehicle that could travel on either land or water. He bought a surplus duck from the government. One day, he picked us up in Boston, drove to Ipswich Beach, and headed for Plum Island with the mere shift of a gear. We had to be careful rounding Emerson's Rocks. We rumbled the length of the island and into Newburyport to get gas. The vehicle caused quite a stir in Newburyport. Wallace kept the vehicle about two years. It was certainly not a good birding vehicle.

Steele: How were birdwatchers viewed back in the 1940s and 1950s?

Argue: We were definitely seen as an odd group, and there were far fewer birders back then than today, of course.

Steele: What about the number of women birding then compared with today?

Argue: There were always more women birding than men. Today it seems like it has evened out a bit, with about equal numbers of men and women.

Steele: What were the Cape Cod campouts?

Argue: The Massachusetts Audubon Society also organized these trips, run on the second weekend of September, except for the first one, which was over Labor Day weekend, September 4 through 7, 1942, at Chatham. We went from Boston by train to Hyannis and then took a bus to Chatham. Our list of birds that first year was 134 species. On the campouts, which were two days long except for the first Labor Day weekend campout, half the group would go on a pelagic trip while the other half would go on a land trip, usually down Monomoy, the first day, and then the groups would switch places the second day. The pelagic trips went to the south side of the Cape out into Nantucket Sound.

On that first campout in 1942, after the first group started out on the pelagic trip, a German submarine was spotted by the Coast Guard off Cape Cod. That put an end to pelagic trips for a long time. For those of us going on the land trip, we drove down in three station wagons to the south end of Monomoy, birding all the way down and back to Morris Island. That was our first trip with Ludlow Griscom, for he was the guide in our beach buggy, but it certainly was not the last trip. Audubon continued with the campouts for about twenty years.

Monomoy at that time was a long straight arm from the Cape that you could go right on down. In the late 1950s or early 1960s, a storm "broke" the island off from the mainland. A later storm eventually resulted in the island becoming two islands, and the islands continue to undergo change.

Audubon also organized a Berkshires campout trip every year. The first one was in 1945 and always took place the third weekend of June. We stayed at the top of Mount Greylock at Bascom Lodge. In the late evenings we listened for Bicknell's Thrush, and the next morning we walked a short distance down the road and listened to the Mourning Warbler sing. After doing the trails to the Conservation Corps camp, we listened for the Olive-sided Flycatcher and the Winter Wren in the tall spruces. We took in Pleasant Valley Sanctuary and then drove down to South Egremont for nesting Peregrine Falcon and Henslow's Sparrow and a chance to see a Turkey Vulture, at that time rare in the state.

Steele: You mentioned pelagic trips. What were these trips like?

Argue: Boat trips generally began in the 1950s, and usually went out of Gloucester to Stellwagen Bank. The most striking difference is the fact that we never expected to see a whale, very unlike today. Whales just were not seen back then. We would see jaegers and shearwaters, among others, but we never saw skuas on these trips.

Steele: Was the Brookline Bird Club (BBC) active at the time?

Argue: Oh yes, they were the largest birding group around. They ran a lot of trips, such as to the south end of Plum Island by boat from Ipswich. We would also walk from the Ipswich railroad station to Clark's Pond, which was the only place we could hope to see a Short-eared Owl. Another popular trip involved taking the Boston & Worcester bus to Saxonville, where we walked to the Heards Pond area and into Wayland Center to take the bus to Park Square. We rode the Boston and Worcester bus to Wayside Inn, Sudbury, did the Marlboro sewer beds, and walked back to Wayland by the Raymond Estate. Other trips went to the Fay estate in Lynn and to Hoar's Dam, now the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge. In the 1940s and early 1950s Hoar's Dam was owned by Samuel Hoar, and it was his private hunting preserve. The dam was overgrown with buttonbush and other vegetation and was almost impenetrable.

Early morning walks by the BBC included Mount Auburn Cemetery, Boston Public Garden, Boston Fenway, and the Arnold Arboretum. Evening walks often went to Lynnfield Marsh for rails, Mount Auburn, Woburn, and Horn Pond. From 1942 to 1962, Arthur and I birded the Boston Public Garden every morning in May from about 6:00 A.M. to 7:30 A.M. After 1962 we started going to Mount Auburn Cemetery because the birds were better and more numerous there.

Steele: What was Plum Island like compared with what it is now?

Argue: The southern part of Plum Island, which is now the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, was established in 1942. It was formerly owned by

the Massachusetts Audubon Society in the 1930s. They kept a warden there, whose house was located where the maintenance garages are now located. That is why older birders refer to that area as the warden's area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service spent three years building the two miles of dikes, which created 215 acres of freshwater marsh. There is fresh water in the three major pools. Before they drained the Stage Island pool, now refilled, Common Tern, Pied-billed Grebe, coot, moorhen, and Ruddy Duck nested there, and some years the King Rail also nested in this area. The salt pans were not there when the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service took over Plum Island. I guess the action of ice cakes in the winter formed the pans.

When the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service split the hunting season for ducks, it ruined Newburyport Harbor for ducks during the winter. There were always a thousand-plus Greater Scaup in the harbor each winter, as well as large flocks of goldeneye, Bufflehead, and Oldsquaw.

In late January and February we often stirred up flocks of Common Redpolls and sometimes a Hoary Redpoll. We also saw Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs, and Horned Larks. In the spring, summer, and fall, there were dozens of Black-crowned Night Herons in the marshes on either side of the road on the way to Plum Island. In shorebird season at high tide, we spent hours at what we called Plumbush. It was on the south side of the road, just before the Plum Island bridge: a place where for years they cut the salt hay first. All the shorebirds lined up in row after row, waiting for the tide to go out and uncover the mudflats, so they could forage for food at the next low tide. We always had a few Buff-breasted Sandpipers each year, and one August day we had seven at Plumbush. In the old days we always spent some time at the Coast Guard Station at 65th Street at the north end of Plum Island. We could observe the jetties, the estuary, and look out to sea. The Coast Guardsmen were very tolerant of our parking there. The station was washed away in a storm in 1947 and relocated in Newburyport. We also looked for shorebirds and terns in back of the Catholic Church on Plum Island.

In Newburyport we always birded at the Yacht Club. It was great for shorebirds. The birding there is not as good today because the way the tide goes in and out is very different than it was in the past. For instance, the tide used to go out quite slowly, and we could get wonderful views of shorebirds feeding on the flats as the tide receded. Today the tide seems to go out much faster, and most of the shorebirds are far out and more difficult to see.

From the Yacht Club we could also see Bald Eagles across the way. When DDT began causing problems with these and other birds, we no longer saw the eagles in Newburyport. It was then that we started going out to Quabbin Reservoir to see Bald Eagles, beginning sometime in the late 1950s or early 1960s. I heard that this year (1993), about fifty Bald Eagles were counted at Quabbin. That is just wonderful.

Steele: Tell us about the development of the Voice of Audubon.

Argue: In 1945 Bill and Annette Cottrell got the Massachusetts Audubon Society to continue the *Records of New England Birds*. [The Boston Society of Natural History published the *Bulletin of New England Bird Life* from 1936 to 1944. In 1945 the Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS) took over publishing the regional compilation of bird reports, renamed the *Records of New England Birds*. The MAS published *Records of New England Birds* until 1968, except for a two-year period, 1962 and 1963, when it was not published.] Then, in 1954 the Voice of Audubon was started with Ruth Emery doing the Voice until she retired in 1986. In late 1962 and early 1963 when Ruth was laid up with a broken hip, I did the Voice three times a week, and I started adding the numbers of each species being reported. You know, we never had any trouble reporting on bird sightings three times a week back then. We had plenty of sightings to report and plenty of people who were willing to call us with their reports.

Steele: What do you recall about the Ross' Gull in 1975?

Argue: This was of course the rarest bird of all and one of the great birding experiences we have ever seen. The Ross' Gull in Newburyport was the first ever recorded in North America south of Point Barrow, Alaska, and was identified on March 2, 1975, a very cold day. Walter Ellison of White River Junction, Vermont, saw the bird at Salisbury Beach and called the attention of other birders to it. The presence of a Ross' Gull in Newburyport was first suspected on January 12, 1975, by Phil Parsons and Herman Weissberg of Manchester, Massachusetts, who saw what was apparently the same individual and noted most of the field marks, except the tail. The Ross' Gull has a wedge-shaped tail, the only gull in the world with such a tail. At that time, it was just so difficult to believe that a Ross' Gull might be here in Massachusetts. Anyway, on March 3, 1975, Roger Tory Peterson arrived at Newburyport Harbor and was delighted to see the Ross' Gull, which was the 668th species that he had recorded on his life list for the United States. Birders from all over the country flocked to Newburyport to witness this remarkably rare gull. The Ross' Gull now nests at Churchill on Hudson Bay. It is regarded by some as the most beautiful of the world's gulls.

Steele: What were some other unusual birds or birding experiences you had?

Argue: There were certainly many, most of which I have listed separately for you (see Table 1). But let me talk about a few such experiences. The first Ivory Gull was sighted in 1946 in Gloucester. After the Ross' Gull in 1975, this is probably the most memorable experience for me. The bird was sighted during an Audubon bus trip that actually had two buses that day. The bird was sick and died the next day.

On October 31, 1944, my husband wrote the following about our experience seeing Brown Creepers in Newburyport: "Walking toward Pine

Table 1. Memorable Birds Seen By Margaret Argue

Arctic Loon[1]	1961, 1963, 1965, 1966, 1984
Eared Grebe	1947 to 1953 (Gloucester); 1990 (Gloucester Harbor)
Western Grebe	1947, 1948 (Rockport, a Griscom impossible at the time, now regular)
Little Egret	1989 (Plum Island)
White Ibis	May 1970 (Orleans), March 1989 (Middleboro)
White-faced Ibis	1984 (Essex)
Wood Stork	all summer 1955 (Henry's Pond in Rockport)
Fulvous Whistling-Duck	1974 (Stilt Pond in Rowley)
Trumpeter Swan	1969 (Wenham Lake)
Black Brant[2]	1975 (North Beach in Chatham)
Garganey	1985 (Plum Island)
Eurasian Green-winged Teal[3]	1973, 1988 (Plum Island)
Greater Flamingo	1964 (extreme southwest corner of Plum Island)
Eurasian Wigeon	1983, 1989 (Plum Island)
Steller's Eider	1977 (Scituate)
Gray Sea Eagle[4]	1944 (Yacht Club in Newburyport)
Gyrfalcon	1945 (Newburyport); 1979, 1983 (Plum Island)
Gyrfalcon, white-phase	1990 (Westport)
Wild Turkey	1977, 1991 (New Salem)
Purple Gallinule	1981, 1984 (Great Meadows in Concord)
Sandhill Crane	1979 (Danvers), 1988, 1989, 1990 (Ipswich, Plum Island, Belchertown)
Black-necked Stilt	1953, 1969, 1972, 1979 (Plum Island); 1983 (Ipswich)
Bar-tailed Godwit	1976, 1978 (Newburyport)
Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	1974 (Newburyport)
Long-tailed Jaeger	1942 (Monomoy)
Franklin's Gull	1942 (Monomoy); 1944, 1946, 1948, 1952, 1961 (Newburyport)
Mew Gull	1974, 1983, 1985 (Newburyport)
Thayer's Gull	1951, 1982 (Plum Island)
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1974-1980, 1981, 1985, now every year
Ross' Gull	1975 (Newburyport); summer 1981 (Newburyport)
Sabine's Gull	1973 (Eastham); 1980 (Nantucket); 1981, 1985 (at sea)
Ivory Gull	1946 (Gloucester); 1949, 1959 (Newburyport); 1975, 1976, 1977 (Salisbury)
Gull-billed Tern	1973, 1991 (Plum Island)
Atlantic Puffin	1953 (Rockport)
Barn Owl	1942, 1943, 1944 (nesting in a barn in Ipswich);1944 (nesting in a sycamore tree at Fresh Pond, Cambridge, another Griscom impossible)
Northern Hawk Owl	1958, 1959 (Concord)
Great Gray Owl	1973 (Gill); 1979 (Topsfield); 1984 (Hadley and Newburyport)
Boreal Owl	1978 (Salisbury)
Chuck-will's-widow	1969 (Mount Auburn Cemetery); 1990 (Marblehead Neck)
Lewis' Woodpecker	1969 (at a feeder in West Newbury)
Three-toed Woodpecker	1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962 (Newton); 1963, 1964 (Rowley); 1975 (Harvard)

Black-backed Woodpecker 1975 (Swampscott); 1990 (Upton)
Say's Phoebe 1957 (Plum Island)
Ash-throated Flycatcher 1991 (Wellfleet Bay Sanctuary)
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher 1959 (Wayland); 1974, 1981 (Marshfield)
Fork-tailed Flycatcher 1980 (Orleans); 1990 (Fresh Pond in Cambridge)
Gray Jay 1966 (Amherst); 1973 (Ipswich)
Black-billed Magpie 1944 (Mount Auburn Cemetery); 1981 (Belchertown)
Rock Wren 1965, 1966 (Rockport)
Sedge Wren 1942-1974 (nested in Lexington); 1985 (Prudential Center in Boston); 1986 (Harvard)
Northern Wheatear 1963 (Salisbury); 1970 (North Eastham)
Fieldfare 1986 (Concord, and the last life bird for Ruth Emery in the U.S.)
Varied Thrush 1963 (Magnolia); 1975 (Athol); 1979 (Chelmsford)
Bohemian Waxwing 1969 (Quabbin); 1977 (Plum Island); 1987 (Boxford)
Loggerhead Shrike 1947 (attempted nesting on Hale Street in Newburyport)
"Lawrence's" Warbler[5] 1955, 1957 (West Newbury); 1991 (Groveland)
Black-throated Gray Warbler 1962 (Concord)
Townsend's Warbler 1978 (Mount Auburn Cemetery)
Hermit Warbler 1964 (Mount Auburn Cemetery)
Yellow-throated Warbler 1968 (Plum Island); 1977 (Mount Auburn Cemetery); 1983 (Plum Island)
Painted Redstart 1947 (Marblehead Neck, see text)
Western Tanager 1954, 1957, 1959, 1973, 1974
Green-tailed Towhee 1953 (Magnolia); 1963 (at the Winthrop Estate in Ipswich)
Lark Bunting 1951, 1962 (Newburyport); 1965, 1969 (Salisbury); 1979, 1988, 1990 (Plum Island)
Henslow's Sparrow 1940 to mid-1950 (nested in back of Scotland Road, Newburyport, and in South Egremont); 1982, 1983 (Brookline)
Le Conte's Sparrow 1970 (Great Meadows in Concord); 1989 (Newburyport)
Harris' Sparrow 1946 (at a feeder in Ipswich); 1960, 1963, 1965, 1968
McCown's Longspur 1977 (Bridgewater)
House Finch 1965 (Marblehead Neck)
European Goldfinch 1969 (at a feeder in Marshfield)

Editor's Footnotes

1 Recently split into two species, Arctic Loon and Pacific Loon (Ehrlich, P.R., D.S. Dobkin, and D. Wheye. 1988. *The Birder's Handbook: A Field Guide to the Natural History of North American Birds*. New York: Simon and Schuster).

2 Black Brant is the western form of Brant. For years the Black Brant was considered a separate species, but the 1976 A.O.U. Check-List had it as a subspecies of Brant (Terres, J.K. 1980. *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.).

3 Old World subspecies of Green-winged Teal.

4 Gray Sea Eagle is another name for White-tailed Eagle (*Haliacetus albicilla*) (Terres, J.K. 1980. *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.).

5 First discovered in the 1870s, "Lawrence's" Warbler was thought to be a separate species. It was dropped from the 1910 edition of the A.O.U. Check-List. "Lawrence"'s Warbler is a hybrid of the Blue-winged Warbler and Golden-winged Warbler (Terres, J.K. 1980. *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.).

Island (a wooded area in the marsh), we observed twenty Brown Creepers. The birds were climbing up the sides of buildings, up telephone poles and fenceposts as well as trees. Proceeding to Pine Island, we found thirty more creepers. Here they were on trees and rocks and even on the ground. One alighted for a moment on my trouser leg" (in *Bent's Life Histories of North American Nuthatches, Wrens, Thrashers, and Their Allies*, Bulletin 195). Today I am happy if I see two Brown Creepers a year.

In May 1956 we saw over one hundred White-crowned Sparrows in the Boston Public Garden, an incredible thrill. In April 1957 we saw over one hundred Hermit Thrushes crossing the road as we drove down Plum Island. On another occasion, November 11, 1961, we saw eighteen Snowy Owls on Plum Island and two more at Salisbury.

An unusual story concerns Rosario Mazzeo, staff manager of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) and bass clarinet player who used to bird with us in the 1940s and 1950s. In June 1952 Rosario was in London with the BSO. He visited the Stockholm Bird Observatory in South Wales. He was asked to take a Manx Shearwater with him back to Boston that night, June 3, to be released at Logan Airport in Boston the following morning. He carried the bird in a box under his seat in the plane. He released the bird at 8:45 A.M. in Boston on June 4, 1952. The Manx Shearwater returned to its burrow, a distance of three thousand miles, twelve and one-half days later. What a record!

Another notable bird was the Gray Sea Eagle [White-tailed Eagle], a European bird, at the Yacht Club in Newburyport in the winter of 1944. Ludlow Griscom, who used to bird at the Yacht Club every Saturday, first saw it. We went up the next day and saw it. By the following weekend, the bird was gone.

Steele: What about some of the birds that are not as common today as when you were birding?

Argue: There are quite a few that are not around as much or at all now. Some examples that come most to mind include the fact that I used to see huge mixed flocks of blackbirds in the fall, and we used to get pretty high counts of blackbirds on the Christmas Bird Counts. I just do not see the really large flocks any more. We also used to get good flocks of Evening Grosbeaks on our Audubon bus trips, but where are they now? On the other hand, we never used to see the Bohemian Waxwing, and now they show up every now and then. And of course the House Finch. I guess some people brought this bird from the western part of the United States to New York City. We used to hear about the finches on Long Island for many years. Then one year, they irrupted into Massachusetts; the first report I can remember came from Marblehead. Now, of course, they are everywhere.

MARTHA STEELE, editor in chief of *Bird Observer*, is a public health specialist for a private environmental consulting firm in Waltham, Massachusetts.