

CONTENTS

ATHOL'S WINTER SPECIALTIES Dave Small and Bill Fregeau	5
TEN YEARS AND A YEAR: THE FALL WATERFOWL CENSUS AT FRESH POND, CAMBRIDGE, 1984-1993, 1994 James H. Barton	11
WHERE DO THE LOONS GO? A FIELD GUIDE TO DNA CLASSIFICATION OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS John C. Kricher	25
RED-BREASTED NUTHATCHES AND THE WINTER OF 1993-1994 William E. Davis, Jr., and Wayne R. Petersen	38
BOOK REVIEW: <i>The Beak of the Finch</i> by Jonathan Weiner John C. Kricher	43
BIRD SIGHTINGS: SEPTEMBER 1994 SUMMARY	46
BIRD SIGHTINGS: OCTOBER 1994 SUMMARY	56
ABOUT THE COVER: Gyrfalcon	W. E. Davis, Jr. 68
ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST: Paul Donahue	M. Steele 69
AT A GLANCE	Wayne R. Petersen 70
Cover Illustration: Gyrfalcon by Paul Donahue	

SPRING HAWK WATCH

Prime spring hawk migration time is from mid-March to mid-May, with the largest numbers of hawks seen from mid-April through early May. The Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch (EMHW) seeks hawk reports from anyone seeing numbers of hawks at any time, or who has hawkwatched for an hour or more, even if they don't see any hawks. To obtain complete information on the Spring Hawk Watch, including information on several free hawk watching field trips led by experienced hawk watchers in April, call Paul Roberts at 617-483-4263 or write him at 254 Arlington Street, Medford, MA 02155.

BREEDING BIRDS OF WESTON

Volunteers are needed for a study of the breeding birds of Weston, MA, with a focus on Ovenbirds. Volunteers are needed to census breeding birds and study Ovenbird nesting success and territory use patterns. Dates of assistance are from late April to mid-July 1995, but the length of service for any one volunteer is flexible. Some positions may become paid research positions pending funding. Please contact David Morimoto, Department of Biology, Regis College, 235 Wellesley Street, Weston, MA 02193. Tel. 617-893-1820, ext. 2341, or 617-734-4756. Email: dcmoto@aol.com.

Spring Workshops

Spring Warblers - A Workshop Revisited

Over thirty species of wood-warblers regularly occur in Massachusetts in spring. Bound for breeding areas in New England and eastern Canada, the warbler migration can be among the most exciting events of the avian year. Because of their great diversity, warblers offer a wonderful opportunity to examine topics in speciation, migration, foraging ecology, and bird song. Many of these topics also provide useful tools when trying to identify unfamiliar warbler species. A field trip to Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge and selected spots in Essex County will help to enrich impressions gained during the indoor session. Leader: Wayne R. Petersen.

Seminar: Friday, May 5, 1995 (7:30-9:30 P.M.).

Field Trip: Saturday, May 13, 1995.

Cost: \$35

The Barrens and their Beasts - A Workshop on Pine Barren Ecology

Southeastern Massachusetts lies close to the northern edge of a unique association of plants and animals called the pine barrens. To the uninitiated, pine barrens appear desolate and relatively devoid of life, yet several of the state's rarest plant and invertebrate species occur there. Breeding birds in the pine barrens include species with a southern affinity, such as Whip-poor-will and Fish Crow, and more northern species, like Hermit Thrush and Nashville Warbler. Participants will be introduced to the interesting and often understated ecology of the pine barrens. The indoor session will present an overview of the environment and its bird life, and the field trip to the Myles Standish State Forest in Plymouth will offer the opportunity to observe firsthand some of the representative birds and plants. Leader: Wayne R. Petersen.

Seminar: Friday, June 2, 1995 (7:30-9:30 P.M.).

Field Trip: Sunday, June 4, 1995.

Cost: \$35.

Massachusetts Breeding Birds - What are They and How do They do it

Approximately 200 bird species breed in Massachusetts. These species occur in a multitude of habitats between the Cape and the Berkshires. Some are rare and local; others breed throughout the state in a wide variety of habitats. In addition to this variety in habitats, there is an equally great variety of breeding strategies, nest types, and interesting behaviors that are associated with nesting. This workshop will focus on the state's breeding birds and will specifically examine some of the important biological phenomena associated with the breeding season. A field trip to the Quabbin area will explore the rich breeding populations there and will provide an opportunity to see breeding bird activity near the height of the nesting season. Leader: Wayne R. Petersen

Seminar: Friday, June 23, 1995 (7:30-9:30 P.M.).

Field Trip: Sunday, June 25, 1995.

Cost: \$35.

These workshops are cosponsored by *Bird Observer* and the Needham Bird Club. Seminar sessions will be held in Needham, MA, from 7:30-9:30 P.M. Directions to the seminars will be sent to registrants. Details about the field trips will be announced at the seminars preceding them. If you have questions, please call 617-666-8934 (evenings). Workshops limited to 20 participants. Preregistration is required.

To register, send your name, address, and phone numbers with your check (payable to *Bird Observer*) to Bird Observer Workshops, c/o H. D'Entremont, 45 Montrose Street, Somerville, MA 02143.