

# LETTERS

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Dear Mr. Berry,

I greatly enjoyed your article "A Survey of Published Bird Records in New England" in the current issue of *Bird Observer*. In the thirty-plus years I have been birding (primarily in New York and New England) there has been a tremendous growth in birding, but unfortunately many of the newer birders are often unaware of the long history of birding in their own regions. Your wonderful article will, I am sure, enlighten many.

There are a few publications that I am aware of that you did not mention in your article. I thought you might like to know about them if you haven't run into them. For Rhode Island there is a "Checklist of Rhode Island Birds: 1900-1973," compiled by the Rhode Island Ornithological Club and published by the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. This is really a four-page field card, but it does indicate average arrival and departure dates for species, and on the last page has a list of casual and hypothetical species with the years in which they occurred and indicates whether there is specimen evidence or a color photo to substantiate the record. This checklist was apparently updated in 1983 (I have not seen that version) and then again in 1990, when it was published as an eight-page booklet with blue covers under the title "Comprehensive List of the Birds of Rhode Island: 1900-1989" by Adam Fry.

For Connecticut, Sage, et al.'s "Birds of Connecticut" was preceded by "A Review of the Birds of Connecticut" by C. Hart Merriam. This 166-page book was published in 1877. My copy says: "Tuttle, Morehouse & Taylor, Printers" and indicates it is "From the Transactions of the Connecticut Academy, Vol. IV, 1877."

Joe DiCostanzo

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January 17, 2003

Dear Jim Berry

Enjoyed your article on "Published Bird Records of New England."

Commenting on your section on Ludlow Griscom, I would say he had no "disciples," no "entourages," or "proteges." He encouraged bird observers. In a letter from Guy Emerson, in my possession, Emerson (former President of National Audubon Society 1944) confirms my statement. He writes to L.G. that his friend, Griscom, is the source of the national bird observer movement and that "it is no small thing!" (Emerson 1956)

In the field, L.G. was available to many young people. I knew most of them.

I do not agree that he was “judgemental in his methods.” He distinguished *sharply* between bird observers and trained scientists. It was a matter of principle.

Aside from the Audubon trips, he was in the field, mostly, with Sam Eliot, George William Cottrell and Annette [Cottrell], and Richard Eaton. In his fifties, he went afield with “The Old Clucks’ Bird Club” (his term for the Old Colony Bird Club), which included Ruth P. Emery.

My father was a Victorian. His brusque manner hid a tender heart. He was not involved in social causes per se. His passion was to go abroad early in the morning, and see what he could see.

He saw a lot: and he taught others where to go looking.

Sincerely,

Edith R. Griscom



AMERICAN ROBIN ON BERRIES BY MARJORIE RINES