

THE WINTER SEASON 1978

January was on the cold and cloudy side, but was most remarkable for heavy precipitation and record snowfall. The temperature averaged 28.5°, 5.2° warmer than the bitter cold 1977 January. The highest temperature was 58° on the 9th, quickly followed by the month's low, 10°, on the 10th and 11th. Though there was no prolonged January thaw, there were two short-spanned but dramatic thaws. The first was a warming on the 8th to 53° by midnight and to 58° in the morning of the 9th, before the mercury took a steep dive in the afternoon, reaching 19° by midnight. The second thaw was on the 26th, with near 40° throughout the early hours, until a nearly instantaneous jump to 55° in the morning. The mercury quickly began an almost straight-line decline to 35° by midnight and on to 21° the next morning.

Precipitation totaled 8.12 inches, 4.43 above normal and second only to 9.54 inches in 1958 for the 108-year January record. The most in any 24 hours was 2.09 inches on the 20-21st. Snow totaled 35.9 inches, about 3 times the 12.2 average and a new January record in 107 official years. The old record was 35.7 inches in 1904. Much of this snow fell in a single day, when 21.0 inches broke the record for any previous 24 hours. The month's total snow was second only to 41.3 inches in February, 1969, for any month in 107 years. Prolonged periods of icing from freezing rain and drizzle plagued the area on the 13-15th, with heavy ice accumulation in some south suburban areas.

February's weather will not long be forgotten: the temperatures were on the cold side, and the month was extremely dry and sunny, except for the Great Blizzard. The highest temperature was 44° on the 16th and 17th; the low mark was 3° on the 4th. Every day dipped below 32°.

There was no rain throughout the month, a rare event even in winter; but the Great Blizzard was another story. The storm set several records. The 24-hour total of 23.6 inches topped that set less than 3 weeks earlier: 21.0 inches on January 20, 1978. The storm total of 27.2 inches topped the old mark of 26.3 in February, 1969. The new snow depth mark of 29 inches broke the 26 inches set just in January. The old February depth record had been 23 inches, set in 1899. The blizzard brought high winds with a peak gust of 79 mph from the NE on the 6th; this tied the Sept. 12, 1960, mark from Hurricane Donna for the highest since 100 mph in Hurricane Carol (August 31, 1954). In Chatham the peak gust was registered at 92 mph from the NE. Heavy damage occurred along our coasts with thousands of homes badly torn apart. The storm ripped apart Monomoy Island near Inward Point, and Coast Guard Beach lost the Outermost House. Much of the Boston area had nearly 30 inches of snow, but amounts ranged upwards from 40 inches in some areas south toward Rhode Island. In these areas, totals were probably the highest since the Great Snows of 1717.

LOONS THROUGH CORMORANTS

The maximum collections of wintering Common Loons reported were 20 at P.I. on January 20 (RS), 35 at Martha's Vineyard Feb. 17-20 (RSa#) and 30 at Nantucket Feb. 18 (CJ). An immature Arctic Loon, in winter plumage, was carefully studied at close range for over an hour at Race

Point, Provincetown Feb.18 (RRV, MJL), It could not be located on a subsequent day, and the species remains to be photographed or otherwise documented in Massachusetts. Forty-three Red-necked Grebes were counted at Cape Ann Jan.29 (MK), and 5 were in Sandwich Jan.17 (RFP) and 4 were at Eastham Feb.11 (WRP); but an influx of migrants in late February was nowhere apparent. A single Red-necked Grebe was picked up in an exhausted condition in a paddock in E.Middleboro Feb.8, following the severe blizzard (fide KSA). Roughly 250 Horned Grebes were reported from scattered coastal localities throughout the month, with the largest concentrations being 125 at Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa#) and 51 at P.I. Feb.20 (PMR). Wintering Pied-billed Grebes included 6 at Orleans Jan.29 (BBC-DB#) and 3 at Plymouth Feb.26 (SSBC-TLL-E#). On Jan.16, 2,500 Northern Fulmars were counted over deep water in the southern Gulf of Maine, in close proximity to two fishing trawlers (RRV); 95% of these were noted to be of the "double-light" phase. During that patrol, as well as one in February, Fulmars were found to be considerably less abundant on Georges Bank and many of the inshore fishing banks than in the deeper, colder waters of the Gulf of Maine. In February, Blair Nikula noted 600+ Northern Fulmars 60 miles NE of Provincetown on the 5th, but was present in Cape Cod Bay during the Great Blizzard and was surprised to see virtually no pelagic species at all. Four or five exhausted Fulmars were picked up along the beaches of Cape Cod following the storm, however. Whether or not these individuals were subspecifically identified is not known. A Sooty Shearwater was observed 75 miles south of Block Island Feb.2 (BN). The only concentration of Gannets noted during the winter was 2,000, 75 miles south of Martha's Vineyard Feb.4 (BN), although 75+ were seen from shore at Eastham Jan.28 (WRP). Two Great Cormorants were observed inland at Whitman Feb.8 (WRP), clearly an artifact of the storm; while 350 were counted off the northwestern shore of Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa), indicating that species' local center of abundance. Two Double-crested Cormorants (one ad. and one imm.) persisted until at least Jan.22 in Plymouth Harbor (WRP#), as did 3 in Provincetown Harbor until the same date (fide BN).

HERONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

Some 25 Great Blue Herons were reported during the winter, including one inland at GMNWR that remained until Jan.16; and 8 survived until Feb.26 at E.Orleans (RRV,MJL). Five Cattle Egrets were reported on the extraordinarily late date of Jan.28 in Westport (fide V.Laux). Fifteen Black-crowned Night Herons were found in Hingham Jan.12 (M.Purdy); 26 others were recorded from Cape Cod and the islands, which included 6 individuals seen after the severe weather (3 on Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa) and 3 at Eastham Feb.26 (RRV#)). Single American Bitterns were found in Fairhaven Jan.6-13 (DS) and Eastham Feb.4 (WRP#). Wintering Collections of Brant included 150 at Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa#), 500 at Squantum Feb.24 (GW), 250 at E.Boston Feb.26 (JJC) and 52 at Salem Feb.25 (CB). A single Snow Goose at Martha's Vineyard Feb.7 was almost undoubtedly a local winterer (RSa). Gadwalls were unusually numerous north to Essex County during January and early February; 6 were at Salisbury Jan.5, 12 were at Salem Jan.31 and 19 were at Gloucester Feb.1-4 (RSH#). In addition, 25 were counted on Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa#), and 16 were in Plymouth Feb.26 (WRP). Eighty Pintails were present throughout the month in Yarmouth (BN), and singles were recorded north to Newburyport Feb.5-11 (JWB) and Gloucester Feb.5

(JN). A Blue-winged Teal somehow survived until at least Jan.12 at GMNWR (RKW), and the almost traditional bird was again recorded at Sandwich Feb.18 (RFP). Two European Wigeons were present throughout the winter on Nantucket (EFA), and were unique in the state. Wintering American Wigeons included 78 at Hatchville Jan.12 (AAC) and 300 on Nantucket Feb.19 (CJ). Rather surprising for this winter was the persistence of two Northern Shovelers, one in Clinton and the other in Lancaster, throughout the month of February (HLM). Twenty-five Wood Ducks were counted on Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa#), and on the mainland, 10 were in Framingham Jan.15 (RSH), 4 were in Salem Jan.15 (RSH), and 6 were in Brookline Jan.8 (DTB#). Redheads continue to congregate on Nantucket to the virtual exclusion of other seemingly appropriate wintering ponds; 265 of the 269 individuals noted this winter were at Nantucket Feb.18 (CJ#); the others were 2 at Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa#), and 2 in Plymouth Feb.1 (WRP, KSA). Ring-necked Ducks were found north to Framingham (2 throughout Jan.), Brookline (3 throughout Jan.) and Winchester (1 on Feb.12 (BBC-RC)). Twenty-five were in Falmouth Jan. 15 (BBC-JBr), 20 were at Nantucket Feb.18 (CJ) and 16 were in Plymouth Feb.26 (SSBC-TLL-E). A count of 1,500 Canvasbacks on the Taunton River in Assonet Feb.7 (WRP, KSA, TLL-E) far eclipsed any other Massachusetts total, although between 400-600 were present in the Dennis area throughout Feb. (WRP, SH). A single Lesser Scaup remained in Framingham at least through Jan. (RAF,RSH), 3 were identified on Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa#), and 4 at Falmouth Feb.20 (FRH). The maximum estimate of the wintering Common Goldeneye population in Newburyport Harbor was 1,300 Jan.17 (RSH), and 1,000 were carefully estimated around Martha's Vineyard Feb.23 (WRP). Barrow's Goldeneyes numbered a rather high 23 for the winter, with a maximum count of 2 (8m.,1f.) in Plymouth Harbor Jan.22 (WRP#), Others included 3 in Scituate Jan.1-15 (MFL,BAL), 3 in Newburyport Jan.5-19 (v.o.) and 3 males in Ipswich Feb.12 (JWB,IG). Five hundred Buffleheads were counted in Newburyport Harbor (RSH) and 400 were at Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa#). At least 20,000 Oldsquaw were visible from Nantucket flying into the sound at night Feb.18 (CJ), and the wintering population at Newburyport was estimated at 700 (RSH). Harlequin Ducks were present at most traditional locales throughout the winter: 1 male was at Cohasset Jan.1-5 (MFL,BAL), 5 (3m.,2f.) were present throughout the season at E.Orleans (v.o.), as were 6 (4f., 1 imm.m., 1m.) at Magnolia (v.o.). The higher Common Eider concentrations were 6,500 at Plymouth Feb.4 (BB), 5,000 at Nantucket Feb.18 (CJ), and 10,000 at Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa#). King Eiders included an immature male at E.Orleans throughout the winter (BU#), an immature male in Plymouth Jan.15-28 (WRP & v.o.), 1 m. and 1 f. at Rockport Feb.5 (RRV, MK) and 1 m. at Salisbury Jan.29-Feb.5 (RRV & MJL, MK). Scoters present off Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 were comprised of 700 White-wingeds, 40 surfs and 200 Blacks (Rsa#). The largest flock of wintering Hooded Mergansers was 30 at Fairhaven, counted Jan.8 (SSBC-KSA). Of the 50+ other individuals reported, the 2 northernmost were at Framingham throughout Jan. (RAF, RSH). One hundred and fifty Common Mergansers were counted at Fairhaven Jan. 8 (SSBC-KSA); 200+ were at Newburyport Jan.21 (R.Stone), and 250 at Pochet in E.Orleans Feb.18 (RRV, MJL). The only notable concentration of Red-breasted Mergansers was 1,800+ around Martha's Vineyard Feb.23 (WRP#).

RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

Goshawks continue as a predominant raptor in eastern Massachusetts as is suggested by the occurrence of 13 individuals during the month of January alone (cf. a total of 14 Sharp-shinned recorded during the same period). Reports of Cooper's Hawks include 2 on the Concord CBC, an adult at Eastham (observed catching a Blue Jay) Jan.28 (WRP), 1 of unspecified age at Boxford Feb.4 (MA, AA), 2 at Bridgewater Feb.5 (BBC-DD) and 2 adults seen throughout the month of February in the Eastham area (v.o. fide BN). The Concord CBC recorded a high 56 Red-tailed Hawks, consistent with an apparent increase throughout New England this winter, while 33 other individuals were recorded from 16 other localities, with high counts of 8 and 6 coming from, typically, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket, respectively (RSa#, CJ). Red-shouldered Hawks include 2 throughout the winter in Bridgewater (LR & v.o.), 1 in Wrentham Jan. 23 (DD), 1 in Hyannis Jan.26 (fide BN), 1 (adult) in Gloucester Jan.29 and Feb.18 (MK#), 1 in Ipswich Feb.9 (JWB), and 1 in Barnstable Feb.18 (VL). Rough-legged Hawks totaled 31+ for the winter, indicating a slight increase from the earlier part of the winter, but still clearly not suggesting a flight year. An immature Bald Eagle was seen in Chatham Jan.17 (WRP), and what may well have been the same individual was seen in Eastham Feb.11 (WRP#). Of 22 Marsh Hawks recorded during the winter, all but 2 (at P.I.) were on the southeast coastal plain. The P.I. birds were noted early in the season, on Jan.1 (HTW). At least 13 Merlins were noted at coastal localities ranging from P.I. to Martha's Vineyard during the course of the winter. A Cyrfalcon, of the gray phase, was noted at Orleans between Feb.11-15 (WRP, DC, PN), and was suspected of possibly being the same individual that wintered at Monomoy for three consecutive winters, 1974-76. Data on American Kestrels is rather scant; 15 individuals were reported from 7 localities in February, a total seemingly much too low to give any meaningful indication of their true abundance.

Four or five Virginia Rails frequented GMNWR from Jan.1-14 (RKW#), and 4-5 were also present in S.Peabody Jan.8-23 (RSH). The latest recorded Virginias were 1 at Westwood Feb.10 (JJC) and 1 at Ipswich Feb.18 (BBC-JWB). Much more surprising was the persistence of 5 Soras at a sewer outlet at GMNWR until Jan.15 (RKW)! Another Sora was present in Ipswich Jan.15-22 (JWB, JN#). A Common Gallinule was seen in Woburn Jan.7 (GWG), while a count of 35 American Coots as far north as Lynn Feb.28 was likewise impressive (RSH). American Coots otherwise totaled 34 from milder areas on the southeastern coastal plain. Five Killdeers lingered at least into January, and 3 into February (2 at Bridgewater Feb. 5 (DD#) and 1 at Orleans Feb.15-20 (FRH#)). Eighty Black-bellied Plovers were present at Nauset Jan.1 (CAG), 1 stubborn individual lingered at Newburyport until at least Jan.29 (RRV, MJL), and 7 were noted at Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa#). The last remaining Ruddy Turnstones were 4 at Salem Feb.15 (RSH) and 25 at N.Scituate Feb.19 (SH, RH). Nineteen Common Snipes were present throughout the winter at scattered localities, while 2 American Woodcocks on Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa) may well have wintered; 2 in Middleboro Feb.28 (DB) were more likely early arrivals from proximate wintering quarters. Astounding and perplexing was the discovery of a Eurasian Curlew at Menemsha Pond on Martha's Vineyard Feb.18 (EMS, RMSa, AK, GGD, CL), where it remained into March. Given the

extreme rarity of the species involved, the unlikely date and the occurrence of a White-rumped Curlew on Long Island, N.Y., late in the fall of 1976, it seems likely that the Vineyard bird and the Monomoy bird (Sept.19-Oct.12, 1976) are one and the same. Wintering Red Knots included 20 at Scituate Feb.19 (SH, RH), 40 at Winthrop the same day (RHS) and 50 at Revere Feb.26 (CJ#). The Winthrop and Revere flocks likely contained many of the same birds. Two impressive counts of Dunlin were 1,000+ between Hull-Scituate Jan.15 (MFL, BAL) and 1,000 at Eastham Feb.11 (WRP#). Although not wholly unexpected, the appearance of Red Phalaropes late into the winter was noted for the first time this winter. One was observed off Provincetown Jan.15 (RRV), and 50 were seen flying by First Encounter Beach following a storm Jan.21 (BN, CAG). On Feb. 5, a single Red Phalarope was seen 60 miles NE off Provincetown(BN).

SKUAS THROUGH ALCIDS

Two skuas (sp?) were observed in the southern Gulf of Maine and on Georges Bank, Jan.17 and 18, respectively (RRV). The former bird was thought to be a Northern Skua (Catharacta skua skua) on the basis of plumage and structural characteristics, but positive identification was not made. In addition, 4-6 Skuas were noted 75 miles south of Martha's Vineyard Feb.4 (BN). Glaucous Gulls were present in small numbers during the winter with a maximum of only 3 in Newburyport (R.Stone# & v.o.), at Nauset Light 3+ were noted on Feb.12 (BN, CAG), 2 were found in Sandwich on Jan.29 (JJC), singles were found in several other coastal localities, with inland reports from Wachusett Reservoir Feb.20 (BB), and in Bridgewater on Jan.8 (J.Nichols#). Iceland Gulls continue in good numbers in the Salisbury-Plum Island area with a maximum of 80 individuals there during January. As many as 45 Iceland Gulls were noted during the winter along Cape Ann (v.o.). Seven Iceland Gulls were noted from Eastham on Feb.11 (WRP) where they occur less regularly than north of Boston. The high count for Ring-billed Gulls was 30 at Lynn on Feb.28 (RSH). Only one immature Black-headed Gull was reported during February at Eastham on the 25th (WRP#), during January 1-2 birds were noted at Newburyport (v.o.), and 1-5 birds were noted from the Squantum area (v.o.), another single was noted on Jan.29 (MJK). The maximum count of Bonaparte's Gulls was 150 on Jan.8 in Quincy (BBC-DTB); the reports for February seemed very low, making it difficult to quantify. Black-legged Kittiwakes were reported in good numbers during January when RRV noted 200+ off Martha's Vineyard on the 14th, 300+ off Provincetown on the 15th, and in the Gulf of Maine on the 16th, only 2 immatures were recorded in a flock of 500+. At Provincetown 400 were noted on Jan.22 (BN). On Feb.5, 1,000 were noted 60 miles northeast of Truro (BN). A Little Gull was noted in Newburyport on Jan.21 (R.Stone) and on Jan.28 (HHD'E#).

Richard Veit noted 65 Razorbills off Martha's Vineyard on Jan.14, on the 15th 250+ were noted off Provincetown (RRV). Two Razorbills were noted at Rockport on Jan.14 (MJL). Sixty miles ENE of Truro 5 Razorbills were observed on Feb.5, 15 were noted from Nantucket on Feb.18 (CJ); also on the 18th 2 were seen at Nauset (MJL#), and 2 were noted at Provincetown on Feb.18 (RRV#). A Common Murre was carefully studied at Provincetown on Jan.15 (RRV). Thick-billed Murres were noted at Brant Rock on the Marshfield CBC Jan.1, and 1 was observed in E.Orleans on Feb.25 (WRP).

Ten Dovekies were noted in the Gulf of Maine on Jan.16 (RRV), 50+ were observed 60 miles ENE of Truro on Feb.5 (BN), and 10 were found at Nantucket Shoals on Feb.21 (MBO staff). Throughout the winter 5-6 Black Guillemots were present at Rockport (v.o.), with 3+ seen off and on in Provincetown (RRV & v.o.). Common Puffins were noted Jan.15 off Provincetown when 1 adult was observed (RRV), 2 were seen in the Gulf of Maine on Jan.16 (RRV). In February 6 Puffins were noted in Eastham on the 4th (WRP#), 3 were seen 60 miles ENE of Truro on the 5th (BN), and 5 were seen in Eastham on the 11th (WRP#).

OWLS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Barn Owls were picked up dead on Jan.11 in Rockport (RTN) and in Harwich on the 28th (RRV#). At Squibnocket, Martha's Vineyard, 2-3 Barn Owls were present from Feb.17-26 (RSa# & v.o.). Twenty-five Screech Owls were recorded on the Concord CBC Jan.2; 10 were found in Framingham on Jan.10 (RAF). A Great Horned Owl spent the winter in Mt. Auburn Cemetery (MA & v.o.). In the Newburyport-Plum Island area 1-2 Snowy Owls were present from Jan.6-Feb.26 (RSH & v.o.); the only other Snowy Owl was found in Foxboro on Jan.22 (WS). Single Barred Owls were reported from 6 localities during Jan. and Feb. Two Long-eared Owls were reported throughout January in E.Lexington (WLD# & v.o.), with 3 noted on Jan. 1 in Bridgewater (WRP) and 1-2 during February on Martha's Vineyard. Single Long-eared Owls were noted from P.I. on Jan.8 (MJK), Hyannis on Jan.21 (VL), and Woburn on Jan.24 (T.Anderson). A maximum of 3 Short-eared Owls was present throughout the winter in the P.I.-Salisbury area, in Bridgewater a maximum of 2 was seen during Jan. and Feb. Three Short-eareds were recorded from Squantum on Jan.21 (B.Donovan), singles were noted from Scituate (MFL), Eastham (SH) and Orleans (RRV#). At Plum Island 1-2 Saw-whet Owls were present throughout Jan. and Feb. (JO), 1 was in Middleboro on Jan.22 (WRP), 2 were noted on Martha's Vineyard on Feb.17-20 (RSa#), and 2 were found in Brewster on Feb.25 (WRP#).

Thirteen Common Flickers were noted during January. Thirty were noted on the Vineyard on Feb.17-20 (RSa#), and 40 were counted in Orleans on Feb.26 (JG). Six Pileated Woodpeckers were noted during February from 4 localities, all west of Boston. Red-headed Woodpeckers were reported from Gloucester (v.o.), Hopkinton Feb.16 (WG), in Spencer on Feb.2 (C.Whitcomb), in Dover on Jan.10 and in Harwichport Jan.1 (S.Babb). One to two Red-bellied Woodpeckers were found throughout Jan. in South Natick (EWT & v.o.).

HORNED LARK THROUGH SNOW BUNTING

A maximum count of 200+ Horned Larks was noted on Jan.22 (WRP & v.o.) in Bridgewater, and a large flock was present there throughout the winter. In Concord on Jan.7, 84 Horned Larks were noted (RKW) and in Newburyport a high count of 82 was seen on Jan.15 (JN).

In the Greater Boston area three Common Crow roosts have been monitored; in West Roxbury a maximum of 1,414 crows were seen on Jan.3 (RMB); in Waltham, at Prospect Hill, between 5,000-6,000 were estimated on Feb.19 (LJR, RHS); and in Framingham 2,800+ were estimated during February (EWT). All three roosts have an assembly point and at sundown the birds

proceed to the roosting area. Hopefully, after another winter roost watch, an article on these roosts will be forthcoming. The only Fish Crows reported were from the Natick dump where 12+ were observed on Jan.8(RMB).

Ninety Blue Jays were found in the Salem-South Peabody area on Jan.11 (RSH). Single Boreal Chickadees were found in W.Boylston on Jan.2(BB), in Waltham and Clinton on Jan.8 (RHS & HLM), and in February, a bird was seen in Clinton on the 26th (HLM). Red-breasted Nuthatches continued in good numbers with 42 in Weston on Jan.2 (LJR) and 27 there on Feb.26 (LJR). A Winter Wren apparently crept into a building through a crevice in Manomet on Feb.11, where it was banded and released; another Winter Wren was found in Sandwich on Feb.18 (RFP, JJC). A total of 8 Carolina Wrens was found on Martha's Vineyard between Feb.17-20 (RSa#), while the only other reports were from Marion where 2 were seen on Jan.16 (GWG) and 2 were noted in Falmouth on Jan.29 (MFL, BAL). A Long-billed Marsh Wren was found in Harwich on Jan.28 (RRV, MJL).

Gray Catbirds were found in Falmouth on Jan.29 (RMB) and another was seen on Martha's Vineyard on Feb.23 (RSa#). Brown Thrashers fared much better with 13 individuals in January and 10 during February. Good numbers of American Robins were noted during January, and in February 47 were seen in Bridgewater on the 5th (DD), and 70 were noted on Nantucket on the 19th (CJ). A Varied Thrush continued in Melrose at Pine Banks Park (JA & v.o.); the bird was first discovered on the Greater Boston CBC Dec.18. Other Varied Thrush reports came from Wayland on Jan.8 (HP), and sporadically during the first half of February in N. Eastham (WWB & v.o.). Hermit Thrushes were reported from the Arnold Arboretum on Jan.8 (DTB#), 2 were noted from Plympton on Jan.28 (KSA#), and 1 was found in Squantum on Feb.19 (BDM). On Cape Cod, 12 Eastern Bluebirds were present throughout Jan. in Chatham (v.o. fide BN), and in Eastham 7 were present throughout February (v.o. fide BN).

In Bridgewater 3 Water Pipits were found on Jan.1 (RMB) and 1 bird was still there on the 22nd (GWG). A single Golden-crowned Kinglet was noted from Clinton on Feb.26 (HLM) and the only report of Ruby-crowned Kinglets was noted from Sandwich on Feb.18 (RFP, JJC). Flocks of Cedar Waxwings were observed in Framingham on Jan.7th -- 87 individuals (RAF), 25 in Needham on Jan.21 (R.Sommers), and 40 in Cohasset on Jan.27 (J. Bean).

The numbers of Northern Shrikes were fantastic, with 5 on the Concord CBC Jan.2 (PA# & v.o.). Throughout January 4-5 were seen on the outer Cape (v.o. fide BN); in the Newburyport-Salisbury-Plum Island area 4-6 birds were noted; along the South Shore 3-4 individuals were seen; and in the Greater Boston-Worcester area 6-8 were counted. In February 2 additional sightings were recorded. This was the best season since 1973 when 29 were recorded (cf. 13, 17, 15, 19 the last 4 years).

Warbler reports include 40 Yellow-rumped at Chatham on Jan.29 (BBC, D. Baines), 100+ on Martha's Vineyard Feb.17-20 (RSa#); 4-5 Palm Warblers continued all winter in Bridgewater (WRP# & v.o.); a Pine Warbler was noted from Feb.12 on in Bridgewater (GRF# & v.o.). A Yellow-breasted Chat was observed in Falmouth on Jan.28 (HTW#), and Jan.29 (RMB), and another was found at a feeder in Mattapoisett from Feb.8-20 (GBM).

As many as 22 Eastern Meadowlarks were present in Bridgewater through Jan.-Feb,5 (DD# & v.o.); the most northerly report was 3 on P.I. on Jan.15 (RMB#). Eight Red-winged Blackbirds were noted from Lakeville on Jan.7 (WRP#); the first migrants started to arrive around the 25-26th of February from scattered localities. Northern Orioles were noted from Plainville on Jan.19 (B.Armstrong), W.Chatham on Jan.26 (J.Harty), and in Waban from Jan.22-Feb.8 (N.Braash). In S.Peabody 2-8 Rusty Blackbirds were present through January and after the storm 45 were there on Feb.9 (RSH); 75 were noted on Martha's Vineyard Feb. 26 (PA# & v.o.), and other small flocks were recorded during the end of February from scattered localities. An adult male Brewer's Blackbird was noted with Starlings on a farm at Katama, Martha's Vineyard, from Feb.17-26 (RSa#, RHS#); two birds were present there in 1977. In January wintering flocks of Common Grackles totaled 60 in Hanover on Jan.3 (WRP), and 40 in Framingham on Jan.16 (RAF). Migrant Grackles started to arrive on Feb.25-26 when 400+ were counted on Martha's Vineyard (RSa#). A Western Tanager was picked up dead on Jan.2 in Belmont (N. Harris); the specimen was sent to MAS. An adult male Painted Bunting showed up at a feeder in Hyannis on Jan.20, where it remained through Feb.(Mr.Mycocck & v.o.); Mr. Mycocck also had the pleasure of having an adult male Dickcissel throughout Feb. at his feeder. Evening Grosbeaks were reported in exceptionally low numbers all winter, as were Purple Finches with only 8 reported in January and 13 in February. A total of 130 House Finches was counted in Westport on Jan.7 (JJC) and 53 were noted in the Arnold Arboretum,Boston, on Jan.8 (DTB#).

A most fantastic flight of Pine Grosbeaks occurred around January 15, as shown in the following chart:

Pine Grosbeaks:

January 15	Framingham-Concord	390	RAF, KSH
January 15	Concord-Sudbury	177	RKW
January 15	S.Peabody-Salem	70	RSH
January 13	Lincoln, Ayer	40,27	RAF, JI
January 21	Boxford	200+	R.Palmer

In addition, 150 other individuals were reported in smaller flocks from a wide area. During February the numbers were down quite a bit with 50 noted in Acton on the 10th (HWF) and 60 from Beverly on the 22nd (RSH).

Common Redpolls were noted in good numbers during the invasion of Pine Grosbeaks with 70 noted on Jan.15 in the Middlesex Fells (PMR#), and on the same day 30 were counted in Newburyport (RMB); other small flocks totaling 65 individuals were also noted during January. In February a mild invasion occurred at mid-month with many flocks of 20-40+ individuals reported from everywhere. Other large flocks are tabulated below:

Common Redpolls:

February 20	Salem	50+	C.Blaszczak
February 21	Framingham	110	ICTN
February 21	W.Newton	50+	M.Forsyth
February 27	Reading	90-100	C.Brown

A total of 1,258 Pine Siskins was counted on the Concord CBC on Jan.2 (PA# & v.o.). Flocks of 20-50+ individuals were noted in many localities throughout the winter. In Wayland 100 Siskins were at a feeder

on Feb.15 (D.Long) and in Lincoln 500 were present at a feeder on Feb.17 (WWH). A total of 10 Red Crossbills was found on the Concord CBC (PA# & v.o.), 5 were noted from Weston on Jan.2 (LJR), 6 in Scituate on the 15th (BAL#), 7 from Brookline on the 24th (HC), and 5 from Lincoln on Jan.26 (MJL). In February a maximum of 27 was counted in the New Pines, P.I., and 20 were noted on Feb.17-20 on Martha's Vineyard (RSa#). White-winged Crossbills were noted in good-sized flocks of 7-30 individuals throughout January with a maximum of 145 noted from P.I. on Jan.6 (HW# & v.o.) and 120 in the Lynn Woods on the same day (RSH). In February a maximum 218 White-winged Crossbills were reported from P.I. (HP# & v.o.).

In January, 9 Rufous-sided Towhees were reported, the northernmost report came from Newburyport; and 15 were noted Feb.17-20 on Martha's Vineyard (RSa#). Five Savannah Sparrows were found in Bridgewater on Jan.22 (WRP) and 13 were noted from Katama, M.V., on Feb.26 (RHS#). Sharp-tailed Sparrows were noted from Scituate on Jan.15 (WRP#), 5 were seen in Eastham on Jan.29 (GWG) and 1 was carefully identified in E.Orleans on Feb.25 (WRP#). A Lark Sparrow was visiting a feeder in Needham on Jan.21, where it returned after the blizzard and remained throughout February (Mrs. Hottle & v.o.). Over 90 Tree Sparrows were noted on Jan.1 in Bridgewater (RMB#). Throughout February 4-9 Field Sparrows were observed in Middleboro (DB), where an immature White-crowned Sparrow was noted on Jan.22 (WRP, GWG). Seven Swamp Sparrows were noted in Concord on Jan.16 (RAF). Lapland Longspurs were noted in Lancaster on Jan.1 (HLM) and in Concord on Jan.5 (RKW); in the traditional areas, a maximum of 40 was seen on P.I., and a maximum of 15 was counted in Bridgewater in February (WRP & v.o.). Two hundred, fifty-five Snow Buntings were noted from P.I. on Feb.20 (PMR# & v.o.), and inland reports include 3 in Clinton on Jan.1 (HLM) and 57 in Concord on Jan.5 (RKW).

RRV, RHS

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Corrigendum: September, 1977. Page 212. 225 Double-crested Cormorants, not Common Loons, were observed flying over Mt. Wachusett on Sept.18th.

CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE
SHOREBIRD COLOR-MARKING 1978:
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

In 1978, the Canadian Wildlife Service will be continuing an extensive program of banding and color-marking shorebirds in James Bay, with the objective of defining migration routes used by shorebirds on their journeys between the Arctic breeding grounds and wintering areas. During the past three years, over 30,000 shorebirds have been captured in southern James Bay, and have resulted in more than 1,200 "bird days" of sightings of dyed birds, in areas ranging from eastern Canada to South America. Much new information is being obtained on migration routes and strategies, and your assistance in looking out for and reporting color-marked birds would be very much appreciated and would contribute very substantially to the success of the program.

Feather dyes (yellow/orange) and colored leg bands (yellow or light blue) will be used to mark the birds according to age and date and place of capture. If you see a marked shorebird, please record details of: species, place, date, color-marks and, if possible, numbers of other shorebirds present. For color-dyed birds, please record the color and area of the bird that was dyed (e.g., entire breast, upper breast only, belly from legs to tail only, etc.). For color bands and standard metal leg bands please record which leg the bands were on, the colors involved, and the relative position of the bands if more than one was on a leg (e.g., right leg, blue over metal, etc.). A note should also be made whether the bands were below or above the "knee" of the bird.

Thank you very much for your assistance. All reports will be fully acknowledged and should be sent to:

Dr. R.I.G. Morrison
Canadian Wildlife Service
2721 Highway 31
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1G 3Z7