

New England Region

BLAIR NIKULA

The winter of 1994–1995, or what little there was of it in this Region, was both brief and benign, confined largely to a two-to-three week period in February. Both December (+5°F) and January (+6°F) were much warmer than normal (as measured in Boston), while February averaged somewhat colder (-2°F). Although rainfall for the period was slightly above average, snowfall was less than half of normal. Bare ground predominated throughout the Region well into January, and southern portions experienced almost no snow cover at all.

Not surprisingly, the season's avian reports were highlighted by a good variety of lingering species, many of which survived the beneficent season. Also particularly numerous, for reasons not obviously weather-related, were Harlequin Duck, Ruddy Duck, American Coot, Short-eared Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, American Robin, and Eastern Bluebird. Northern irruptives were scarce virtually across the board, the primary exception being Northern Shrike. A coastal storm December 23–25 blew a modest number of pelagics inshore.

A nice array of vagrants was highlighted by an incursion of Mountain Bluebirds. Additional rarities, many holdovers from the fall, included an American White Pelican, Wood Stork, Bridled Tern, three *Selasphorus* hummingbirds, Say's Phoebe, Townsend's Solitaire, Black-throated Gray Warbler, two Painted Buntings, and two Harris' Sparrows.

Abbreviations: C.C.L.&P.W.S. (*Cape Cod Lake & Pond Waterfowl Survey*); M.V. (*Martha's Vineyard*).

Loons to Wood Stork

Pacific-type loons were reported from Georgetown, ME Dec. 4 (†P. Vickery); Sandwich, MA Dec. 18 (S. Carroll *et al.*); and Middletown, RI throughout the period (M. Murray *et al.*). Common Loons, like a variety of waterfowl, lingered inland at many sites through mid-January. Pied-billed Grebes seemed somewhat more numerous than recently; 95 on the C.C.L.&P.W.S., Dec. 3–4 was the 2nd highest total in that 11-year survey (C.C.B.C.). Eleven Horned Grebes were on Lake Champlain at Ferrisburg, VT, on the exceptionally late date of Jan. 30 (JP), and as many as 22 were at Quabbin, MA Dec. 17–Jan. 16 (*vide* SK). Modest numbers along the coast included a peak of 100 at Sherwood Island S.P., CT Feb. 18 (RS). Two Eared Grebes were found this season, both in s.e. Massachusetts: Marion Dec. 17 (WP *et al.*), and E. Orleans Jan. 14–Feb. 12 (SA *et al.*). One of the most remarkable vagrant attendance records in avian history apparently has ended: Georgetown,

ME's venerable W. Grebe failed to appear after 17 consecutive winters—a moment of silence please!

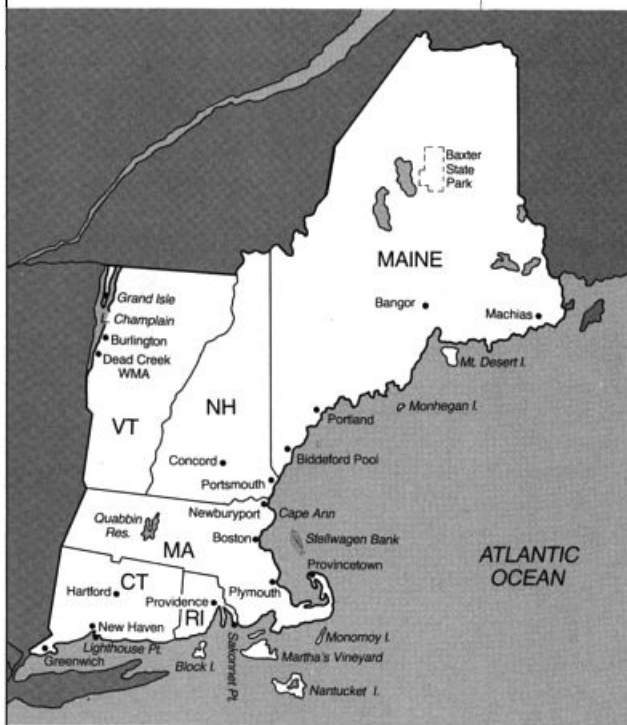
The NE storm in late December blew at least 40 N. Fulmars inshore to Cape Cod, 37 of which were seen from Provincetown Dec. 25 (BN); an incapacitated bird was picked up in Eastham Dec. 27 (*vide* JS). An unidentified large shearwater was seen from Provincetown, MA Dec. 6 (JS), and four were blown past Barnstable, MA Dec. 24 (T. Cameron). Gannets were more widely reported than normal throughout the period, but >5500 seen from Nantucket Jan. 2 (RH) far exceeded, by an order of magnitude, all other counts. Several gannets appeared once again in Long

Island Sound off Connecticut in mid-winter (DP, CB). An American White Pelican was in N. Kingstown, RI Dec. 3–6 (D. Haven), and what was perhaps the same bird was in Orleans, MA Dec. 9–10 (A. Dorman *et al.*). —Most notable among several inland occurrences of Great Cormorants was nine in Manchester, NH Feb. 13 (G. Mitchell). A lingering Double-crested Cormorant was inland at Grand Isle, VT Dec. 18 (D. Hoag), while 35 in Boston Harbor Jan. 15 (TASL) was a rather typical mid-winter total by recent standards. American Bitterns were reported frequently in s. portions of the Region during December and at least a few apparently survived the season; five in W. Barnstable, MA Dec. 3 (S. Clifton *et al.*) was the largest count at this season in many years. Among the very few lingering herons was a Cattle Egret in N. Kingstown, RI Dec. 16 (R. Graefe) and three Great Egrets at Harkness S.P., CT Dec. 4 (RN *et al.*); one Great Egret was in the same town Jan. 3 (DP) and another was down the coast at Sherwood Island S.P., Jan. 13 (RS). A Black-crowned Night-Heron in Seabrook, NH Jan. 22 (D&T Donsker) was a good mid-winter find at that latitude, and up to 33 on M.V. throughout the period (ABr) was the largest wintering group in New England in over a decade. November's unflappable imm. Wood Stork remained in Coruit, MA through Dec. 25; then, after an apparent absence of a month, reappeared briefly Jan. 27 (B. Meador) only to disappear again. An unsubstantiated report in March suggests that somehow the bird may have survived the winter, for the most part unseen or at least unreported!

Waterfowl

Tundra Swans numbered at least 19 Region-wide, the most at this season in 9 years, with peaks of nine on M.V., Dec. 6 (AF) and five at Naples, ME Dec. 4–Feb. 28 (*vide* JD). Apparently two different Whooper Swans continued to be seen in Ipswich, MA, one of which was banded (JB), and three appeared on M.V. in late January (ABr). I have been told that a number of captive Whoopers escaped from a Long Island, NY, breeder during the March 1993 blizzard.

At least two Greater White-fronted Geese were in the vicinity of Newbury, MA Dec. 21–Feb. 28 (L. Nachtrab *et al.*), and singles were in Newport, RI Feb. 9–28 (BG *et al.*); Westport, CT Dec. 2–10 (CB *et al.*); and Storrs, CT Jan. 1 & 5 (M. O'Leary *et al.*). Ever increasing numbers of Snow Geese are wintering in New England. Late migrants numbered 1000 in Addison, VT Dec. 6 (JP), while January reports numbered at least 2 dozen birds Regionwide. A Barnacle Goose, of typically uncertain provenance, was in Dartmouth, MA Feb. 25 (SA).



Wood Ducks were plentiful in s. New England; >20 in Newtown, CT throughout the period (L. Fischer) was an extraordinary winter gathering. Green-winged Teal totaled a well above-average >104 in Massachusetts during January; one—two of the Eurasian subspecies was in Richmond, RI Dec. 4–Jan. 31 (S. Carr, v.o.) for at least the 4th consecutive winter. A ♂ Blue-winged Teal was at what is becoming a traditional wintering site in W. Barnstable, MA Feb. 18 (M. Tuttle). Last fall's Cinnamon Teal at Milford Pt., CT, made the mistake of lingering into early January when it was bagged by a hunter, its origins forever unknown. A N. Shoveler was a good find in Shelburne, VT Jan. 14 (TM), and at least nine were found in Massachusetts during January. Indicative of the still-burgeoning Gadwall population were 268 in Seekonk, MA Jan. 16 (MB), an 11-year high of 183 on the C.C.L.&P.W.S., Dec. 3–4 (C.C.B.C.), and 115 at Milford, CT Jan. 30 (NC). Eurasian Wigeon numbered a record high >20 Regionwide: two in Connecticut, four in Rhode Island, >11 in Massachusetts, at least two in New Hampshire, and one in Maine.

~ A mere 115 Canvasbacks on the C.C.L.&P.W.S., Dec. 3–4 was an 11-year low (C.C.-B.C.), but in contrast were sizable flocks of >800 in Waterford, CT Feb. 7 (DP) and 750 at Gaspee Pt., RI Feb. 15 (DE). A few Red-heads were scattered across s. New England,

while three were at Shelburne Bay, VT Jan. 8–9 (TM) and a single at Durham, NH Jan. 29 (SM). A mini-invasion of Tufted Ducks in Rhode Island raised suspicions as to their origins. The first, a female at Trustom Pd., Jan. 13–28 (DK *et al.*), was followed by as many as four (two male, two female) at Little Compton Feb. 18–28 (JO *et al.*). Other Tufteds, both males and both not far from Rhode Island, were in Clinton, MA Jan. 27–Feb. 15 (F. McMenemy *et al.*) and Taunton, MA Feb. 12–28 (SA *et al.*). A mass of Greater Scaup, estimated at 25,000 birds, in Warwick, RI Feb. 15 (*fide* DE) was the largest Regional aggregation in decades.

~ Although Com. Eider numbers seemed generally low, flocks of 8000 at Sachuest Pt., Jan. 14 and 7000 in Little Compton Feb. 18 were unusual Rhode Island concentrations (*fide* DE), the 2nd straight year of such elevated populations in that state. King Eiders were again very scarce, with about eight total in Maine, only two in Massachusetts, one in Rhode Island, and two in Connecticut. However, an imm. ♂ King Eider on L. Champlain at Addison, VT Dec. 23 (†S. Morrill *et al.*) was notable. After plateauing for the past 3–4 years, Harlequin Duck numbers surged once again in s. New England. A boat survey of the waters around Isle au Haut, ME tallied >400 Harlequins Feb. 8 (*fide* AB), not an unprecedented number

there; but as many as 56 farther south at Ogunquit, ME Feb. 11 (JB) was a record for that locale. In Massachusetts at least 132 birds included ≤25 in Rockport (v.o.), and a new state high of 80 on M.V., Dec. 11 (AF). Rhode Island Harlequins also established a new record with ≤95 birds at Sachuest Pt. and an additional 16 at Sakonnet Pt., Feb. 18 (*fide* DE).

~ Lingering sea ducks inland in w. Massachusetts and on L. Champlain included at least six Oldsquaw, the latest Jan. 21; two Black Scoters, the latest Feb. 1; eight Surf Scoters, the latest Dec. 22; and three White-winged Scoters, the latest Jan. 29. Barrow's Goldeneye reports were sparse, the only concentration at the traditional Belfast, ME site, where a peak of >34 (*fide* AB) was well below recent norms. An apparent ♂ Com. x Barrow's Goldeneye hybrid was studied in Newburyport, MA Jan. 15 (†JB), and a ♂ Com. Goldeneye x Hooded Merganser hybrid was found on M.V., Dec. 3–4 (AK *et al.*). Good numbers of Hooded Mergansers included 718 on the C.C.L.&P.W.S., Dec. 3–4, the 2nd highest total on that 11-year survey. Following their incursion last fall, Ruddy Ducks remained in numbers not seen in a decade or more. Over 800 birds in Massachusetts during December included a peak of 239 in W. Newbury Dec. 10 (RH), while 300 were in Middletown, RI Feb. 21 (DE).



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V I R G I N I A

Vultures to Alcids

The new annual winter reports of Black Vultures included one at the Nashua, NH landfill Dec. 31 (†R. Andrews *et al.*), one at a roost in Randolph, MA Jan. 30 (NS), and two in New Milford, CT Jan. 27 (C. Wood). Small numbers of Turkey Vultures overwintered again in s. New England; roost counts were of 20 birds in Exeter, RI Jan. 29 (CR), and 13 in Randolph, MA Jan. 30 (NS). Tarrying Ospreys were seen on M.V., Dec. 1–2 (A. Keenan, v.o.) and in Manchester, NH Dec. 4 (†M. Martin). The Cumberland Farms fields in Middleboro, MA held the Regions' best raptor concentration this season, including ≤ 26 N. Harriers (NS). Wintering Cooper's Hawks have become too common to enumerate, but a total of >11 in Maine (*vide* JD) was representative. Rough-legged Hawks were very scarce initially, but there seemed to be a small influx during the latter half of the season. Only two Golden Eagles were reported, but one made headlines by appearing inexplicably in an E. Sebago, ME, *kitchen* (J. Libby)! The bird, an imm. female, was captured and treated for porcupine quill wounds in its feet. The only Gyrfalcons were in Vermont: singles at Addison Dec. 31 (TM) and Franklin Jan. 22 (B. Donlin).

Despite the clement weather, a Clapper Rail at Plum I., Dec. 4 (SP) was the only one reported. Following their explosion into the Region last fall, the Am. Coot population continued at an elevated level. In Compton, RI, 1010 were tallied Jan. 21 (DE), and 525 were in Westport, MA Dec. 11 (L.C.E.S.). At least 6 other sites hosted >100 birds, and there were dozens of smaller flocks noted. After more than a decade of decline, this sudden, dramatic surge is puzzling, but welcome.

Good numbers of Black-bellied Plovers wintered, as demonstrated by 50 on M.V., Jan. 21 (ABr *et al.*) and a total of 41 at 2 sites in Connecticut in late January (*vide* BK). Tardy Semipalmated Plovers were at 3 Massachusetts sites: one—two in Eastham Dec. 4–18 (E. Weinheimer, v.o.), one in Saugus, Dec. 12 (WP *et al.*), and one in Revere Jan. 15 (RS *et al.*). Also late: an Am. Oystercatcher at Westbrook, CT Jan. 1 (GH); a Lesser Yellowlegs at Bridgeport, CT Jan. 1 (CB); a W. Sandpiper at Westport, MA Jan. 14 (M. Sylvia); and three Long-billed Dowitchers at Plum I., Dec. 4 (SP *et al.*). Of the more than 2 dozen Greater Yellowlegs in s. New England in December, apparently only one endured into February. The scant wintering Ruddy Turnstones included "a few" at Biddeford, ME Jan. 15 (*vide* JD), 15 on Nantucket Jan. 2 (Gd'E), and 23 at Hammonasset Beach S.P., CT Jan. 20 (J. Gaskell).

The Christmas Eve northeaster produced two Pomarine Jaegers, four jaeger sp., and one skua sp. in Eastham, MA Dec. 25 (BN). Other late jaegers included one Pomarine and one

Parasitic (no details) 6 mi off Pemaquid Pt., ME Dec. 1 (*vide* AB), and a jaeger sp. in Provincetown, MA Dec. 6 (JS). At least four Little Gulls were found in Massachusetts during the period and an adult was at Pemaquid Pt., ME Dec. 27 (M. Libby). Common Black-headed Gulls totaled four in Maine, two—three in New Hampshire, >17 in Massachusetts (including one—two inland at Quabbin and Springfield, and a peak of 12 at the traditional Winthrop site), three—six in Rhode Island, and one in Connecticut. Indicative of the mild weather were >1000 Bonaparte's Gulls still present on Nantucket Feb. 13–15 (B. Weinig). For the 3rd consecutive year, an ad. Mew Gull, apparently of the nominate race, was present in Winthrop, MA Jan. 13–Feb. 28 (Gd'E, v.o.). Lesser Black-backed Gulls totaled five in Connecticut, >14 in Massachusetts, and one in New Hampshire. Herring \times Great Black-backed gull hybrids were reported from Lynn, MA Jan. 16 (J. Quigley), and Cutler, ME Jan. 17 (*vide* AB). Black-legged Kittiwakes were very scarce, but an immature was inland in Lebanon, NH Dec. 14 (†PH).

Lingering Forster's Terns at Milford Pt., CT Dec. 3 (T. Kilroy *et al.*) and on M.V., Dec. 4 (ABr) were not too surprising, but one reported without details from Sachuest Pt., RI, Jan. 7 (D. Speicher, *vide* DE), if correct, would apparently represent only the 2nd January occurrence in the Region. The most out-of-place bird this season was a moribund imm. Bridled Tern picked up on a golf course in Hyannis Port, MA Jan. 16 (N. Handy); the bird died before reaching a rehabilitator (*MCZ). Although the weather preceding the bird's appearance was unusually warm, there were no storms or strong winds to explain its deposition so far out of range. Small numbers of Dovekies were widely reported along the coast, mostly in Massachusetts, during December and early January, and eight were on Stellwagen Bank Jan. 31 (SH). Two Com. Murres at Pt. Judith Jan. 22 (DF) constituted a rare Rhode Island occurrence, but only two others were reported, both in Massachusetts (R. Lockwood). Thick-billed Murres numbered about a dozen, most in January and all in Massachusetts and Maine. Razorbills were rather few, the highest count >450 in Eastham, MA Dec. 20 (JS); highest counts outside of Massachusetts were 150 at Pt. Judith, RI Jan. 7 (BG *et al.*), and 100 at Pemaquid Pt., ME Dec. 25 (*vide* AB). Rare in Rhode Island were two Black Guillemots at Pt. Judith Jan. 22 (DF) and one in Newport Feb. 20 (R. Ferren), while 50 at Cape Ann, MA Dec. 9 (RF) was apparently the largest count ever from that locale. The only Atlantic Puffins included one picked up on a street 2 mi from the coast in Yarmouth Port, MA in late December (*vide* JS), and three on Stellwagen Bank Jan. 31 (SH).

Owls to Shrikes

Barn Owls, away from the s. islands, numbered only two in Massachusetts and one in Rhode Island. Snowy Owls were sprinkled across the Region, numbering roughly a dozen in Maine, three in New Hampshire, only two in Vermont, 15–20 in Massachusetts, two—four in Rhode Island, and one in Connecticut. As many as seven Long-eared Owls were in Fairfield, CT Jan. 23–Feb. 27 (CB *et al.*), and there was one other in Connecticut, two in Rhode Island, four in Massachusetts, and two in Maine. One of the few raptors in above-average numbers this winter was Short-eared Owl, particularly in Massachusetts where a statewide total of >28 included as many as 14 at the Cumberland Farm fields in Middleboro throughout the period (NS, v.o.) Elsewhere, there were six at Panton, VT Dec. 21 (TM), one in Maine, four or so in Rhode Island, and four in Connecticut.

Selasphorus sp. hummingbirds lingered from the fall through Dec. 10 in East Hartford, CT (*vide* BK), and through Jan. 25 in Fairhaven, MA (L&N Mach, v.o.), while yet another in Needham, MA through at least the end of December had apparently been present, but unreported, since October (K. Eriks, v.o.). Red-headed Woodpeckers had their best showing in years: five in Connecticut included four (two adult & two immature) in East Haddam, Jan. 1 through at least mid-February (S. Kotchko, v.o.); two were in Rhode Island, five in Massachusetts, two in Vermont, and two in Maine. Red-bellied Woodpeckers continued to increase in s. New England, but only four were reported from the n. 3 states (*vs.* at least nine last winter). Hardest of several Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were individuals in Addison, ME Jan. 25 (D. Reid, *vide* WT), and Watertown, MA Feb. 17 (N. Dane). A "Red-shafted" N. Flicker was in Bedford, NH, Dec. 17 (K. Metz).

Five E. Phoebes lingered into the new year, the latest Feb. 2 in Redding, CT (D. Rosgen), while the Say's Phoebe in Brandon, VT, first noted last fall, apparently survived the winter (*vide* JP). At least 40 Tree Swallows on M.V., Dec. 11 (AF) were late, although a few are somewhat regular at that locale in December. However, 20 in Falmouth, MA Jan. 20 (C. Leahy) and 16 still there Jan. 29 (RHS) were exceptionally dilatory. The only Gray Jay even slightly out-of-range was one in S. Londonderry, VT Dec. 16 (W. Norse). Fish Crows have abandoned their former roost site in Framingham, MA, where hundreds were often tallied a few years ago, but >35 in Westport Feb. 13 (GH) was a good Connecticut count. Following last winter's massive invasion inland, Red-breasted Nuthatches drew little comment this season, except in Rhode Island where they were "very scarce" (DE)

Carolina Wren populations were noticeably depressed from recent highs, but presumably benefited from this placid winter. Three House Wrens tarried into January in Massachusetts, as did a Marsh Wren in Newington, NH (M. Suomala *et al.*). A Sedge Wren in Eastham, MA Jan. 8 (SA) was presumably the same bird seen there in November.

A plentitude of Ruby-crowned Kinglets in January included three in Maine, one each in New Hampshire and Vermont, and >20 in Massachusetts; at least three of these survived into February. A late Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was in S. Orleans, MA, Dec. 4 (K. McGinley). The long recovery of E. Bluebird populations seems nearly complete; they were numerous everywhere this season.

SA The bird of the winter was Mountain Bluebird. Previously this stunning species had graced the Region but thrice, all in the spring. This winter five appeared! The first two provided Connecticut's first records for the species: a female in Guilford Dec. 4 through at least Feb. 4 (T. Koronkiewicz, m.ob.), and an imm. male at Sandy Hook Dec. 17–Feb. 5 (NC, m.ob.). More amazing, however, was a group of three (two male, one female) found Jan. 27 in S. Wellfleet, MA, which delighted hundreds of observers through the end of the period (E. Hoopes, m.ob.). Although E. Bluebirds were present in the same area, the 2 species rarely commingled. Previous Regional records were of a male that landed on a boat 70 mi s.s.e. of Nantucket Apr. 28, 1980, a male in Grand Isle, VT Apr. 2–8, 1989, and a male in Rutland, MA May 29, 1994.

A Townsend's Solitaire was in Newmarket, NH Dec. 17–Feb. 20 (D. Baleviev, m.ob.). American Robins were numerous throughout the Region, especially so in Rhode Island where Emerson opined that they were "as abundant as I can ever remember." Incontrovertible support of his impression was provided by a massive roost in the Great Swamp in S. Kingstown, estimated to host 15,000 birds in late December (S. Mitra *et al.*)! Paling only in comparison were >2000 robins in Southbury, CT Dec. 1–25 (RN). The season's token Varied Thrush was in East Peacham, VT Feb. 26–28 (C. Browne *et al.*).

Unprecedented numbers of wintering Am. Pipits were present in s.e. Massachusetts, highlighted by 44 in S. Dartmouth Jan. 16 (TA), and 54 in Middleboro Jan. 29 (RHS *et al.*). Northernmost was a pipit in S. Lubec, ME Jan. 15 (*fide* AB). Following their record-breaking invasion a year ago, Bohemian Waxwings were virtually absent this winter,

with only three reported from Maine, none from New Hampshire, and very few from Vermont. Curiously, there were several Bohemians in e. Massachusetts, particularly outer Cape Cod where perhaps three–four were present. Cedar Waxwings were well distributed across the Region, several flocks numbering >100 birds each. Northern Shrikes were one of the only n. irruptives to be well represented this year; at least several dozen appeared from Maine to Massachusetts, but apparently only one made it as far south as Connecticut.

Vireos to Finches

A very late White-eyed Vireo was on M.V., Dec. 26 (AK *et al.*). Orange-crowned Warblers persevered into the new year in Newport, RI Jan. 5 (JO), Boston Jan. 2 (TA), and Harwich Port, MA Feb. 3 (BN). Tardy warblers included two Nashvilles in Greenwich, CT in early December, at least one of which survived through Jan. 3 (BO *et al.*); Black-throated Blues in Deerfield, MA Jan. 2 (H. Allen) and Ossipee, NH Jan. 6 (†R. Dunbar); a N. Waterthrush in Marstons Mills, MA Dec. 3–Jan. 14 (TA, v.o.); and Wilson's in Roslindale, MA Dec. 4 (TA), Amherst, MA Dec. 18 (*fide* SK), and Hadley, MA Dec. 1–18 (*fide* SK). The Black-throated Gray Warbler first noted in November in Greenwich, CT remained through Dec. 15 (BO, v.o.). Northernmost Pine Warblers included four on Monhegan I., Feb. 7 & 15 (*fide* JD), one in Laconia, NH Jan. 2–Feb. 27 (C. Wilder, v.o.), and one in Rutland, VT Jan. 1 (K. Ward); at least a dozen were present in e. Massachusetts. Palm Warblers typically linger in s. New England until the first substantial snowfall, thus six in Fairhaven, MA Jan. 27 (TA) and several others in Massachusetts and Connecticut in late January exemplified the abnormally warm, snow-free conditions. Yellow-breasted Chats survived into February at 2 sites in Rhode Island and one in Massachusetts.

A W. Tanager in Belmont, MA Dec. 22–31 (J. Campbell) was apparently unique this season. Three N. Cardinals in extreme n. New Hampshire (*fide* DD) suggested a continuing, albeit slow, range expansion. A ♂ Painted Bunting returned to the same Brewster, MA, feeder for the 3rd consecutive year (A. Furman); where does this bird spend the summer? A ♀ Painted Bunting was reported from M.V., Dec. 3 (G. Daniels). Surprisingly, following an exceptional fall flight, only five Dickcissels remained into the winter, two in Maine and three in Massachusetts. A Rufous-sided (Spotted) Towhee spent the season in Acushnet, MA (M. LaBossiere, v.o.).

American Tree Sparrows are one of those widespread wintering species that rarely draw much comment, but 350 in Middleboro, MA Jan. 24 (TA) was an exceptional aggregation.

Chipping Sparrows continued to winter in ever-increasing numbers in s. New England; at least 48 were found in Massachusetts during January and February. Vesper Sparrows, likewise once rare as winterers, numbered 12 in Massachusetts, and one each in Vermont and Connecticut. Among the rarer sparrows were four–five Clay-colored in Massachusetts through late January; a Lark Sparrow in Southbury, CT Dec. 1–Jan. 19 (*fide* BK); and single Harris' Sparrows in Hopkinton, MA Dec. 11–Feb. 28 (G. Gove *et al.*), and on Nantucket Jan. 1–2 (RH, v.o.). Counts of >20 Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrows on N. Monomoy Dec. 3 (BN) and 16 in Eastham, MA Dec. 16 (WP *et al.*) provided among the highest numbers ever recorded in the Region. Although a few Sharp-tailed Sparrows usually winter in s.e. coastal areas, eight in Scituate, MA Feb. 3 (TA) were at an unexpected location, as was a Seaside Sparrow in Greenland, NH Dec. 3 (PH *et al.*). A late Lincoln's Sparrow was in Middleboro, MA Jan. 14–Feb. 19 (TA, v.o.). Among the 3 dozen or so wintering White-crowned Sparrows Regionwide were 15 at Sachuest Pt., RI throughout the period (*fide* DE). An Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco was in Sargentville, ME Dec. 5 (*fide* AB) and others were noted, on unspecified dates, in Longmeadow and Quabbin, MA (*fide* SK).

IRIAN JAYA BIRDS

(Western New Guinea)

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A very tardy Bobolink was discovered in Greenland, NH Dec. 31 (†PH, SM *et al.*). Blackbirds were unusually numerous in s. New England throughout the period, flocks of ≤210 Red-winged Blackbirds and ≤350 Brown-headed Cowbirds being widely reported, while 2000 Com. Grackles were in S. Dartmouth, MA Jan. 1 (MB) and 1000 in Hampden, MA Dec. 27 (*vide* SK). A ♂ Yellow-headed Blackbird was in Westport, MA Dec. 17 (R. Bowen), and a female in Wallingford, CT Dec. 18–21 (GH).

It was very definitely not a boreal finch year. Pine Grosbeaks were very few and only in extreme n. New England, except for a couple of unconfirmed reports in w. Massachusetts. Purple Finches were fairly numerous in n. New England, but scarce to absent elsewhere. White-winged Crossbills were abundant across n. New England, with breeding noted in Vermont by mid-season. However, the only reports from s. New England were of three–eight birds from 3 sites in w. Massachusetts during the latter half of the period. Red Crossbills were similarly distributed, though in lesser numbers, and no breeding was noted. Common Redpolls were nearly absent, with only a handful in Maine and New Hampshire, two singles reported from w. Massachusetts, and an anomalous individual in Richmond, RI Jan. 29 (CR). Pine Siskins were common across n. New England, but very few were found farther south. The finch of the season was Am. Goldfinch, which was abundant almost everywhere; 225 migrants were in Salisbury, MA Dec. 3 (RF). Evening Grosbeaks followed the general finch trend; they were fairly numerous across extreme n. New England, but scarce to absent elsewhere.

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Hudson-Delaware Region

ROBERT O. PAXTON, WILLIAM J. BOYLE, JR., AND DAVID A. CUTLER

Winter 1994–1995 contrasted sharply with the previous one. Mild weather and abundant fruit made the Adirondacks “half-hardy heaven,” according to Mike Peterson, and the term applied all over. Witness the 5000–10,000 Robins that lingered at Mendon Ponds Park, near Rochester (C. Cass, A. Claridge), diminishing to 4000 in mid-February; or the Forster's Terns that remained through the season at the Indian River Inlet, Delaware. Loons and ducks remained to the limit of open water on Lake Ontario, but Osprey, herons, shorebirds, and Belted Kingfisher set few northern records. Unable to risk a freeze, they leave when days shorten, regardless of temperature. Irruptive raptors were only fair, and winter finches remained localized in the Adirondacks.

The winter's one major general snowfall February 4 ushered in two frigid weeks, setting off cold-weather migration (see scap, below) and killing many half-hardy birds.

The seawatch at Avalon, Cape May, New Jersey, tallied 80,781 birds for the season, with a grand total from August through February of 648,291 (DWA, CS, F. Mears). Loons, Horned Grebes, alcids, and Snow Geese continued to move through January and after February's cold snap. Frostbite pelagic birding was richly rewarded this winter with tubenoses, skuas, and, above all, alcids. Three groups went to sea Dec. 3: from Captree, Long Island to Hudson Canyon (JAsk, TWB, PAB, AJL, RJK); 80 miles off Brielle (S. Kerr, LLa); and a “mini” from Cape May out to Five Fathom Bank (DG, CS). The “Miss Chris” (Capt. Ascoli) went southeast from Cape May Feb. 19 about 40

miles into Delaware waters (P. Guris, P. Lehman, DSI). In addition, Kerr rode party fishing boats out of Brielle 80 miles January 14 and 90 miles February 18.

Northern Lapwing was the stellar rarity of the season. Other highlights included Franklin's Gull, two reports of Ross' Gull, Rufous Hummingbird, Fork-tailed Flycatcher, possible Townsend's Solitaire, Varied Thrush, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Green-tailed Towhee, and Harris' Sparrows.

Abbreviations: Bombay Hook (*Bombay Hook N.W.R., near Smyrna, DE*); Brig (*Brigantine Unit, Edward P. Forsythe N.W.R., Atlantic, NJ*); Green Lane (*Green Lane Res., Montgomery, PA*); Cape Henlopen (*Cape Henlopen S. P., Sussex, DE*); Indian R. (*Indian River Inlet, Sussex, DE*); Jamaica Bay (*Jamaica Bay Wildlife Ref., New York City*); LI (*Long Island, NY*); Manasquan Inlet (*Manasquan Inlet, Monmouth-Ocean, NJ*); Montauk (*Montauk Pt. S.P., e. tip of Long Island*); N.Y.S.A.R.C. (*New York State Avian Rarities Committee*); Sandy Hook (*Sandy Hook Unit, Gateway Nat'l Recreation Area, Monmouth, NJ*).

Loons to Cormorants

Three Red-throated Loons inland were slightly above the norm on L. Cayuga, Tompkins, NY (an unusually long sojourn, Dec. 20–Jan 16); Octoraro L., Lancaster, PA Dec. 18; and L. Nockamixon, Lehigh, PA Dec. 7 & 16 (SFA, GAF). Last year's Red-necked Grebe invasion was not repeated. That made one on the Susquehanna R., Dec. 18, the 2nd ever recorded on a S. Lan-

