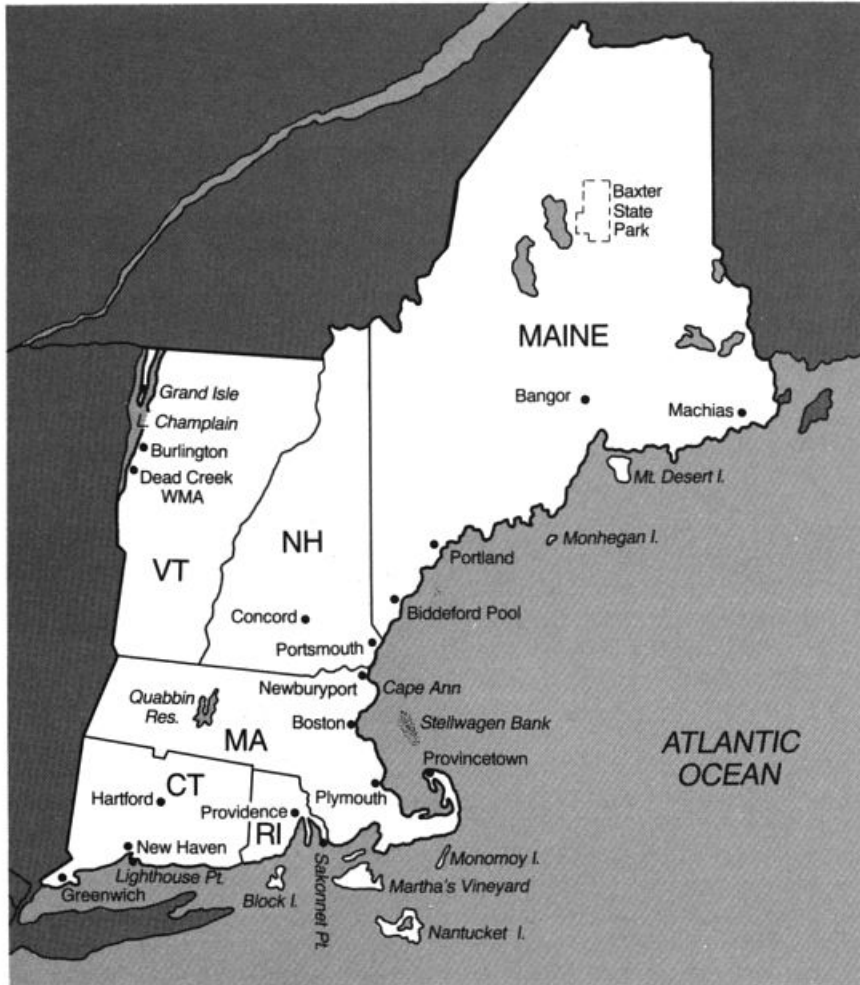


new england region



WAYNE R. PETERSEN

Weather during June and July was very dry and mostly sunny. Rainfall for the two months combined in the Boston area was only 2.04 inches, the second least amount in 127 years of records. Although cool temperatures prevailed in early June, more seasonably warm weather persisted for the rest of the period. There was little in the overall weather pattern to visibly influence avian activity in New England this season; even the passage of tropical storm *Danny* July 25 produced only marginal effects on seabirds forced into Cape Cod Bay.

The season was not studded with extreme rarities or exceptional breeding events, but the following species were noteworthy: probable offshore occurrences of Black-capped Petrel and White-faced

Storm-Petrel, Mississippi Kite in extreme eastern Maine, Black-necked Stilt in Connecticut, summering Bar-tailed Godwit on Cape Cod, Sandwich Tern in Maine, and a belated Painted Bunting report in Vermont.

In the breeding column, first confirmed nestings for Merlin in Vermont, Red-bellied Woodpecker in Maine, and Fox Sparrow in New Hampshire made the hit parade.

Abbreviations: Appledore I. (*Isles of Shoals, NH*); Block I. (*Block Island, RI*); First Encounter Beach (*Eastham, Barnstable Co., MA*); Manomet (*Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, Manomet, Plymouth Co., MA*); M.V. (*Martha's Vineyard, MA*); M.A.R.C. (*Massachusetts Avian Records Committee*); M.A.S. (*Massachusetts Audubon Society*); M.D.F.W. (*Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife*); M.S.S.F. (*Myles Standish State Forest, Plymouth*

Co., MA); N. and S. Monomoy I. (*Monomoy N.W.R., Chatham, Barnstable Co., MA*); Plum I. (*Parker River N.W.R., Newburyport, Essex Co., MA*); South Beach (*South Beach, Chatham, Barnstable Co., MA*); U.S.F.W.S. (*U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service*).

LOONS TO PELICANS

As usual, there was a scattering of Red-throated Loon reports throughout the Region, the most notable being singles at Little Compton, RI, June 26 (DE) and Milford Pt., CT, July 1 (*vide GH*). Of greater note was a small loon in breeding plumage at Plum I. June 2 (B. Gette) that was carefully identified as a Pacific Loon. Although still not officially accepted by the M.A.R.C. on the Massachusetts state list, the continued appearance of small loons in full breeding plumage in late spring increasingly begs the question of what such birds are, if not *pacifica*? Sixty-seven Com. Loons counted in less than 3 hours at Pt. Judith, RI, June 4 (RF) were obviously still migrating; however, 67 at Wareham, MA, June 26 (M. Sylvia, *vide B.O.*) were more likely non-breeders, since Buzzards Bay traditionally hosts modest numbers of this species in summer. Massachusetts breeding Com. Loons did particularly well this season, with 8 successful nesting pairs raising 11 chicks, two above the previous record (*vide BB*). In Vermont, 20 pairs nested successfully and produced 24 surviving chicks (*vide CR*). More exciting was the successful fledging of seven young Pied-billed Grebes this summer at Southampton, MA (CF), the first documented Bay State nesting in several years. Breeding Pied-billed Grebes were also confirmed at W. Rutland, VT, June 9 (SW et al.) and Exeter, NH, June 1 (D. Donsker, R. Balerviez, *vide RQ*). Errant could only describe a Red-necked Grebe at Branford, CT, June 15 (R. English, *vide GH*).

Although three moribund N. Fulmars came ashore at Nantucket I. in late June (*vide S. Holt*), there were plenty of healthy tubenoses inshore later in the summer. For the 2nd consecutive year, an abundance of sand lance (*Ammodytes* sp.) on Stellwagen Bank resulted in lots of summering whales and good numbers of attendant seabirds. In addition, a large Gulf Stream eddy "covered the entire area from just east of

Hydrographer Canyon eastward to well past Lydonia Canyon" for much of the summer (*vide* MG). Quite possibly this unusually warm water so near the edge of New England's continental shelf was responsible for the intriguing report of four well-described *Pterodroma* sp., reported as Black-capped Petrels, s. of Fishing Rip and w. of the Great South Channel July 13 (F. Blount, *vide* DE). These are among a mere handful of such reports in New England waters, and are especially notable by not being associated with a tropical storm. Eight Cory's Shearwaters appeared on Stellwagen Bank July 5 (N. Sampson, *vide* B.O.), and eight were recorded there July 30 (RD). Usually scarce in the cool waters n. of Cape Cod, a tally of 200 Cory's at Cox's Ledge was typical of the warmer waters s. of Block Island. In the Gulf of Maine, 2500 Greater Shearwaters were tallied 25 miles s.e. of Bar Harbor July 25 (B. Connery, *vide* JD), and 450 were noted at Stellwagen Bank July 30 (RD). Manx Shearwater numbers were slightly higher than usual, exemplary counts being 25 off Bar Harbor July 23 (*vide* KG) and 15 at Stellwagen Bank July 30 (RD). More notable was a well-documented sighting of an Audubon's Shearwater at Stellwagen Bank July 12 (RL), and an intriguing report of at least 23 unidentified small shearwaters—thought to be Audubon's—in Cape Cod Bay off First Encounter Beach during a storm July 26 (BN). Ten Audubon's Shearwaters in warm water near Lydonia Canyon July 8 (MG) were considerably more expected.

Among typical summer numbers of Wilson's and Leach's storm-petrels was a report by an experienced charter boat captain of a storm-petrel observed 5 mi s. of Block I. July 27 that was said to be "similar in size to a Wilson's Storm-Petrel, but with white underparts and white sides to the face." (F. Blount, *vide* DE). The observer said the bird matched perfectly the picture of a White-faced Petrel in Harrison's *Seabirds* guide! Reports such as this, much like the aforementioned Black-capped Petrels, are sufficiently compelling to warrant reporting even when not fully substantiated.

A storm-driven count of 420 N. Gannets at First Encounter Beach July 26 (BN) was unusually high for the Region in mid-summer. An Am. White Pelican, recognizably the same individual because of an injured eye, appeared at Scituate July 18 (v.o., *vide* B.O.) and Plum I. July 21 (D. Chickering, m.ob.); a pelican seen at Kingston, MA, July 13 (TL-E) and Hull July 14 (HC) was probably the same individual

HERONS TO WATERFOWL

Available pair and nest count totals for waders included 76 Great Egrets, 200 Snowy Egrets, 15 Little Blue Herons, and 78 Glossy Ibises at Kettle I., MA (SP); 22 Great Egrets, 55 Snowy Egrets, two Little Blue Herons, and 97 Black-crowned Night-Herons at Rose I., RI (RF); and 116 Great Egrets and 91 Black-crowned Night-Herons at Little Gould I., RI (RF). While no trend data were specifically reported, it appears unambiguous that breeding Great Egrets are showing at least a modest increase in s. New England at the moment. Somewhat unusual for *Berkshire*, MA, was a Little Blue Heron at Sheffield July 19 (*vide* SK). Slightly more notable was the apparent nesting of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons at Osterville, MA, throughout June (*vide* SH). Though no doubt annual breeders in the Bay State, nesting confirmations in recent years have been few indeed. Glossy Ibis reports included a bird inland at Hatfield, *Hampshire*, MA, June 12 (*vide* SK), and a tally of 65 at Plum I. July 27 (WP).

Four ad. Whooper Swans again summered at Plum I. (v.o.); however, the provenance of a single lingering Snow Goose at the same locality June 21 (SP) was certainly more legitimate. Northern Shovelers at Jefferson, NH, July 10 (RQ) and E. Boston July 26 (RS) were inexplicable, but 12 shovelers and 40 Am. Wigeon at Christina Res., Ft. Fairfield, ME, in early July (B. Sheehan, *vide* JD) were undoubtedly breeding at this now traditional Aroostook site. Inexplicable was a Eur. Wigeon at Lyme, CT, July 5 (*vide* GH). A Ring-necked Duck at Cheshire, *Berkshire*, MA, July 22 (*vide* SK) apparently showed no indication of nesting, but six Greater Scaup at Little Compton, RI, July 24 (DE) were certainly summering individuals. Common Eiders summering along the Rhode Island shore were considered more widespread than usual (DE), and two at Milford Pt., CT, June 14 (PD) may also be reflective of this phenomenon. More surprising was a male King Eider at Little Compton July 21–31 (DE, R. Larson, R. Bowen) and a female at Nantucket I. July 29–31 (ER). The most noteworthy lingering duck species was a Bufflehead at Hingham, MA, June 15 (K. Godfrey, *vide* B.O.).

RAPTORS

The nearly annual summer appearance of Black Vultures in s. New England featured two at Sheffield, *Berkshire*, MA, July 22 (*vide* SK) and a single bird at Wayland, MA, June 5 (SA), the latter a first record for the historically well worked Sudbury R Valley

The continued spread of breeding Ospreys in c. New England was suggested by first-ever nests in New Hampshire's Merrimack R. Valley at Hill and Bedford (RQ). A Swallow-tailed Kite at Nantucket I. June 13 and July 21 (*vide* ER) probably referred to the same bird. Mississippi Kites are now sufficiently frequent in the Region that they hardly need highlighting, although an immature at W. Quoddy Head S.P., *Washington*, ME, June 23 (K&J Fox, *vide* JD) was pushing the limit even for this expanding southern raptor. The only other Mississippi Kite report was an ad. bird at Orleans, MA, June 1–4 (M. Prue, v.o.) that was found dead on the latter date (* at M.A.S.).

Significant Bald Eagle mortality was documented in Massachusetts, where 8 of 9 nesting pairs produced eggs, with 4 nests successfully fledging eight young (*vide* B. Davis, M.D.F.W.). The remaining nests failed as a result of a late spring blizzard April 1. At L. Umbagog, New Hampshire's only breeding Bald Eagles were also unsuccessful (*vide* RQ). In Connecticut, where there is no record of recent nesting, a pair of N. Harriers exchanging food at Stratford during June (P. Comins, *vide* GH) was intriguing, while at Whitefield, a pair with four young furnished the only confirmed breeding in New Hampshire this year (RQ). Always elusive as a breeder in s. New England, reports of probable nesting Sharp-shinned Hawks came from 8 w. Massachusetts localities (*vide* SK); a bird banded at Manomet June 5 (TL-E) was unexpected. One of the most interesting reports of the season was an ad. **Swainson's Hawk** among 21 late migrating imm. Broad-winged Hawks at Provincetown, MA, June 25 (KJ). Possibly only the 2nd summer report for the Region, this bird remained at Provincetown throughout the summer.

As an example of the increasing concern over the decline of Am. Kestrels breeding in New England, only one pair raised two young out of 56 nest boxes monitored in e. Massachusetts. The same boxes held in excess of 20 pairs as recently as 12 years ago (NS). Further indication of the Regional increase in breeding Merlins was a pair that raised three young at Johnson, VT (J. Wrazen, M. Pitt, *vide* JN), for a first state nesting record, and another pair that nested at Errol, NH, in July (C. Martin, *vide* PQ). Peregrine Falcon reports show that nine nests in Vermont fledged 21 young (*vide* CR); New Hampshire nests fledged 16 young for a new state record (*vide* RQ); and Massachusetts Peregrines fledged eight young (*vide* B. Davis, M D F W)

RAILS TO SHOREBIRDS

A **Black Rail** heard calling at Woodbury, CT, June 8–10 (EM et al.) unfortunately gave no indication of nesting, but a pair of Clapper Rails that first appeared at Nantucket I. June 24 (D. Sutherland, *vide* B.O.) appeared later in the summer with a brood of young. A King Rail heard and observed at Plum I. June 3–14 (m.ob., *vide* B.O.) was thought to be paired with a Clapper Rail, although evidence of nesting was never obtained. A wacky Purple Gallinule at Nantucket June 11–July 4 (P. Burchell et al., *vide* B.O.) actually visited a bird feeder! The only reported breeding Com. Moorhen in the Region was an adult with one young at Stratton I., Saco, ME, July 26 (P. Moynahan, *vide* JD). A Sandhill Crane at Garland, ME, June 21 (C. Dorchester, m.ob., *vide* *The Guillemot*) provided the season's only sighting.

A breeding summary for Piping Plovers indicated: that 475 pairs (up approximately 25 pairs from 1996) nested in Massachusetts (*vide* BB); that 5 beleaguered nesting attempts in New Hampshire at Seabrook and Hampton eventually fledged three young for the first successful breeding in the Granite State since the early 1970s (*vide* RQ); and that Rhode Island plovers enjoyed "an excellent breeding season with many more birds than last year" (DE). Errant best describes a Wilson's Plover at New I., Orleans, MA, June 28 (KJ). American Oystercatchers nested at Stratton I., ME, for the 4th consecutive year, and reports of other individuals elsewhere on the Maine coast (*vide* JD) suggest that northward re-colonization may not yet be complete for this historic (?) breeder. A Black-necked Stilt at Greenwich Pt., CT, June 23 (M&A Malphaner, *vide* GH) was unique in the Region. At the Region's epicenter of breeding abundance in s. New England, a maximum count of 118 ad. Upland Sandpipers was made at Westover A.F.B., Chicopee, MA, June 10–16 (SM), and other notable concentrations in June included 15 pairs in New Hampshire at the Pease International Tradeport (RQ), and 12 birds at Hanscom Airport, Bedford, MA (RL).

Among the numerous migratory shorebirds reported throughout the Region, the following reports are considered most noteworthy. Notably early migrants included Am. Golden-Plover at Little Compton, RI, July 14 (BG); Solitary Sandpiper at Marshfield, MA, June 12 (D. Furbish, *vide* B.O.); Whimbrel at the Isles of Shoals, NH, June 22 (R. Suomala et al., *vide* RQ); Hudsonian Godwit at N. Monomoy I. June 24 (BN); and Buff-breasted Sandpiper at

Hammonasset Beach S.P., CT, July 22 (J. Gaskell, *vide* GH). Shorebirds thought to be particularly late migrants or possible summering individuals were 30 Red Knots at S. Beach June 27 (SP); W. Sandpiper at N. Monomoy I. June 15 (BN); four White-rumped Sandpipers at Napatree Pt., RI, June 16 (CRa); single Purple Sandpipers at Briggs Marsh, RI, June 1 (RF) and Isles of Shoals, NH, June 6 (M. Shulze, *vide* RQ); and five Dunlins at S. Beach June 27 (SP).

Recorded maximum counts of selected species included 920 Lesser Yellowlegs at Newburyport, MA, July 20 (RH); 150 Willets at N. Monomoy I. July 8 (BN); 548 Whimbrels at N. Monomoy I. July 26 (W. Harrington); 110 Hudsonian Godwits and 2400 Red Knots at S. Beach July 23 (RH); at least 5000 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Newburyport July 27 (WP); 48 Stilt Sandpipers at Plum I. July 30 (RH), the best count in several years; and 2700 Short-billed Dowitchers at S. Beach July 23 (RH). Reports of uncommon to rare species featured a summering Bar-tailed Godwit (race *lapponica*) at S. Beach July 7–31 (VL, m.ob.); the first Curlew Sandpiper in Connecticut in 10 years at Milford Pt. July 20–31 (D. Sosensky, m.ob., *vide* GH); and a Wilson's Phalarope at Dead Creek W.M.A., VT, July 27–29 (*vide* JP).

JAEGERS TO SKIMMERS

Despite the apparent availability of inshore bait fish, jaeger numbers were undistinguished during the reporting period. However, reports were received of a Great Skua seen by a whale-watching trip from Bar Harbor, ME, July 23 (*vide* KG), and South Polar Skuas at Cox's Ledge s. of Block I. July 8 (DF) and on n.w. Georges Bank ESE of Chatham, MA, July 7 (ph. MG). As previously noted in this column, because of the identification problems and taxonomic uncertainties associated with these birds, photographic documentation is desirable whenever possible.

The Massachusetts Laughing Gull breeding pair total reached 781, an increase from last year's dip to 685 pairs (*vide* BB). Reports of uncommon Regional gull species included an imm. Little Gull at Wells Harbor, ME, June 24 (*vide* KG) and an adult at Nahant, MA, July 5–20 (LP); a Black-headed Gull at Plum I. July 19–31 (L. de la Flor, m.ob., *vide* B.O.); an Iceland Gull at Nantucket I. June 1–28 (*vide* ER); Lesser Black-backed Gulls at N. Monomoy I. July 8 (BN) and Plum I. July 22 (RH); a Black-legged Kittiwake at Pt. Judith, RI, June 4 (RF); and an amazing ad. **Sabine's Gull** at

Milford Pt., CT, July 23 (D. Provencher, *vide* GH) for only the 2nd state record, if accepted by the state records committee.

A Caspian Tern in Boston Harbor June 22 (RS) and a scattering of Royal Terns along the Massachusetts coast were upstaged by the 9th Maine record of **Sandwich Tern** at Biddeford June 8 (ph. LB, J. Landry, P. Moynahan, *vide* JD) and another well-described individual at Eastham, MA, July 8 (E. Pierce, *vide* B.O.). Data on Roseate Terns was highlighted by 48 breeding pairs at Stratton I., ME (T. Duddy, *vide* JD), the highest total at that site since 1988; 1454 pairs in Massachusetts, where Great Horned Owl predation was a major disruption at a colony on Ram I. (*vide* BB); and a post-breeding count of 3200 (including many juveniles) at South Beach July 31 (RH). The significant long term decline of Arctic Terns at their s. breeding terminus in Massachusetts was exemplified by this year's state nesting total of only 5 pairs (*vide* BB). A single pair of Forster's Terns nested at Plum I. for the 7th consecutive year (*vide* BB), and 5 pairs of breeding Black Skimmers on S. Monomoy I. matched the state high for breeding pairs in recent decades (*vide* BB). Significantly (?), the nesting skimmers, as well as approximately 1400 pairs of Com. Terns, were located in an area devoid of nesting gulls, removed by an aggressive and controversial gull control program conducted by the U.S.F.W.S. during the past 2 years (*vide* J. Megyesi). News from Gulf of Maine Atlantic Puffin restoration efforts indicates that this season saw new breeding highs of 22 pairs of puffins at E. Egg Rock and 58 pairs at Seal I. (P. Salmanson, *vide* JD).

PIGEONS TO SHRIKES

A White-winged Dove, a species nearly annual in the Region in recent years, was recorded at N. Truro, MA, June 10 (R. Beatty, *vide* B.O.). In e. Massachusetts, reports of both Black-billed and Yellow-billed cuckoos suggested a higher-than-average early summer presence of these itinerant caterpillar followers (*vide* B.O.). In Aroostook, ME, a pair of Short-eared Owls was observed exchanging food at Easton in late June (J. Glicka, *vide* JD), and the species was thought to be "probably nesting" at Christina Res. (BS, *vide* JD). These sites should be carefully monitored for breeding evidence in the future, since the nesting of this species anywhere in the Region outside of coastal Massachusetts has been largely a matter for conjecture in recent years. At one of few definite New England breeding localities, 2 pairs of Short-eared Owls

produced three young at Tuckernuck I., MA (RV), and another pair was presumed to nest at Katama, M.V. (*fide* AJ).

A Chuck-will's-widow was heard calling at Southbury, CT, in June (A. Dimmitt, *fide* GH), and others appeared at 4 Bay State localities, including an estimated 10 birds at Edgartown, M.V., throughout July (VL, v.o.). Ironically, this species has yet to be confirmed as a breeder in New England, despite an annual summer presence since the 1970s. Notable in light of the species' apparent Regional decline were Massachusetts reports of 51 Whip-poor-wills at Lancaster (Ft. Devens) June 17 (RL), and 29 at Plymouth (M.S.S.F.) in late June (Gd'E). The only reported nesting of Red-headed Woodpeckers in the Region involved a pair at Malden, *Middlesex*, MA (CJ). As Red-bellied Woodpeckers continue their northward expansion, a first (?) breeding confirmation for Maine at Jefferson, *Lincoln* (B. Vetter, *fide* JD), hardly comes as a surprise. Almost as unusual was an unverified report of a Three-toed Woodpecker at Allagash Township, *Aroostook*, in early July (G. Flagg, *fide* KG). Surely this has to be the rarest permanent resident in the Region!

A respectable total of 13 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers was banded at Appledore I. June 1 (DH), and a nest from last season thought to belong to this species, along with three calling birds, was found at Mt. Greylock, *Berkshire*, MA, during June (RR). If the nest was indeed that of a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, it would be the first ever located in the state. Equally interesting, a "Traill's" Flycatcher netted at Appledore I. June 6 (DH) had been previously banded at Ottawa, Ontario, August 31, 1996. Found during grassland bird survey work at Westover A.F.B., Chicopee, MA, the tally of 95 ad. Horned Larks June 10–16 (SM) might represent a Regional high breeding concentration. Nesting Com. Ravens at Southington (B. Franczak, *fide* GH) extended the breeding range of the species in s.e. Connecticut.

The only Sedge Wrens reported were two at Addison, VT, June 8–10 (*fide* JP). A Bicknell's Thrush originally banded in Vermont at Mt. Mansfield, then captured the following winter in the Dominican Republic, was back on territory in Vermont for at least the 3rd consecutive summer (CR). A total of 39 Swainson's Thrushes at Pittsburg, NH, June 12–15 (A&BD) was the best total there in 4 years. Inexplicable describes a Loggerhead Shrike at Newington, NH, July 18 (SM).

VIREOS TO WARBLERS

A White-eyed Vireo at Tuftonboro, NH, July 27 (R. Fox, D. Duxbury) was notable by location, and a tally of nine the same day at Westport, MA (ML), was most respectable for Massachusetts. An intensive "wing warbler" survey in the vicinity of Brandon and Leicester, *Rutland*, VT, in early June produced a minimum of 12 Golden-winged Warblers, plus one "Brewster's" and one "Lawrence's" hybrid (SW). Though certainly positive, the fact that none was reported from w. Massachusetts (*fide* SK) is still troubling. Besides four reported "Brewster's" Warblers in e. Massachusetts (*fide* B.O.), one was banded at Appledore I. June 2 (DH) for the first spring record in 14 years of banding. Currently rare as a breeding bird in s. New England, reports of single N. Parulas at 4 scattered Massachusetts localities away from known breeding sites (*fide* B.O.) were interesting, as was a count of four at Rhode Island's Great Swamp June 14 (CRa). Notable as being either very late or very early was a Cape May Warbler at Manchester, MA, June 15 (C. Parsons, *fide* B.O.); a Palm Warbler (race *hypochrysea*) banded at Appledore I. (DH); a Bay-breasted Warbler at Lincoln, MA, July 18 (K. Calmer); a Black-poll Warbler at Rockport, MA, July 1–3 (M. Flor, *fide* B.O.); a Mourning Warbler at Gloucester, RI, June 28 (BG, J. Murphy, *fide* DE) for a first summer record for the state; and a Hooded Warbler at Ryegate, VT, June 14 (M. Guy). Harder to characterize were four singing Tennessee Warblers July 6–10 at Jefferson, NH (RQ), where the species is not known to breed. Also noteworthy was the breeding confirmation of Palm Warblers at Jefferson, NH (RQ), for one of very few confirmed nesting records in the Granite State, and the discovery (?) of a small colony of Bay-breasted Warblers at Pondicherry Wildlife Sanctuary, Jefferson, NH (RQ), apparently only the 2nd breeding site in New Hampshire. In spite of specific searching, no breeding Cerulean Warblers were found at traditional sites in Rhode Island (CRa), although a male was once again noted at Pawtucketaway S.P., NH (R. Frechette et al., *fide* RQ).

GROSBEAKS TO FINCHES

Wandering Blue Grosbeaks were present in New Hampshire at Wilmot June 1 (W&K Morrey, R. Vernon, *fide* RQ) and Milford June 20–21 (B&R Becker, *fide* RQ). More remarkable was a female Painted Bunting banded at Manomet, MA, June 4 (TL-E); a belated spring report pertains to a male Painted Bunting at Shelburne, VT, May 5–9

(ph. S. Klein, *fide* JN). Following last year's first breeding record for the Region in Maine, no fewer than six Clay-colored Sparrows were noted in Massachusetts during June (*fide* B.O., SK). Other Regional reports included singles at Quoddy Head S P, *Washington*, ME, June 1 (N. Famous, *fide* JD); Pittsburg, NH, June 14 (A&BD); and Grand Isle, VT, July 23–31 (ph. DH). Grasshopper Sparrow monitoring efforts in Massachusetts during June and July resulted in a minimum of 315 birds at approximately a dozen sites, most notable being 152 adults at Westover A.F.B. (SM), 40–50 at Ft. Devens, Lancaster (RL), and 34 adults at Nashawena I. (AJ). Andrea Jones color-banded 140 Grasshopper Sparrows this season as part of a continuing long-range study of the species in s. New England, so stay on the lookout!

At the Scarborough, ME, zone of allopatry for the Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow and the Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, species numbers were thought to be about equal during a visit June 29 (LB). A Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow banded at Manomet June 10 (TL-E) was a little surprising by its date and location. A Seaside Sparrow at Scarborough, ME, June 18 (LB) was in the same locality where the species attempted to nest 2 years ago. More noteworthy was the confirmed breeding of **Fox Sparrow** at Pittsburg, NH, June 9 (E. Nielsen), a first nesting for New Hampshire. A single Lincoln's Sparrow at last year's breeding station at Windsor, *Berkshire*, MA, July 26 (*fide* SK) gave no indication of breeding this year.

A Yellow-headed Blackbird at Nantucket I. July 1 (*fide* ER) was unique for the period. Boat-tailed Grackles nested at Stratford, CT (P. Comins, m.ob., *fide* GH), following an initial breeding there in 1995; other birds were reported at Milford Pt. and Hammonasset Beach S.P. (*fide* GH). The always enigmatic Red Crossbill made summer appearances in Massachusetts, with 14 at Mt. Greylock, *Berkshire*, July 16 (*fide* SK), two adults and three juveniles at Rockport July 19 (M. Flor, *fide* B.O.); and four at W Newbury July 26 (RH). Slightly more routine in recent years was the appearance of Evening Grosbeaks in 21 w. Massachusetts towns (*fide* SK), and two e. Bay State communities (*fide* B.O.).

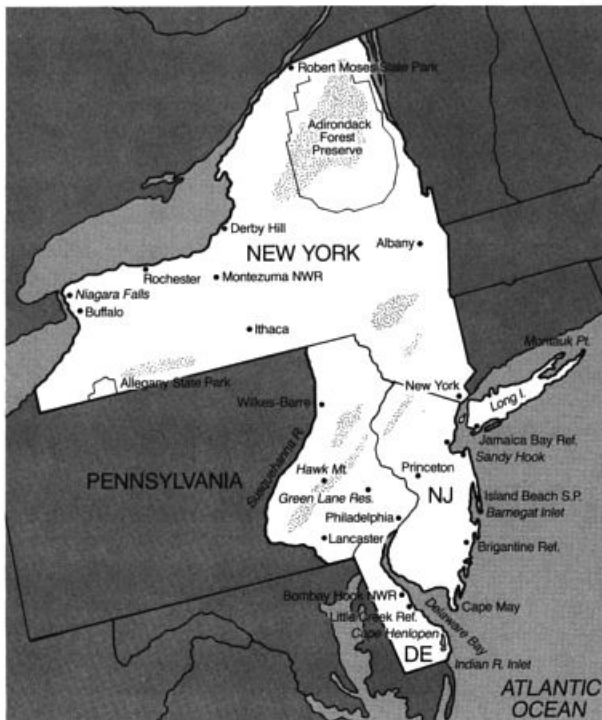
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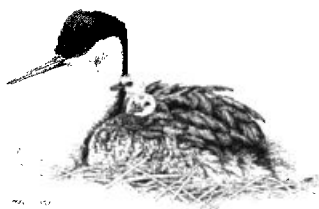


hudson-delaware region



1998 Directory of Birding Festivals

All across the continent, communities are organizing birding festivals that highlight ornithological wonders and promote bird and habitat conservation through economic activities. The 1998 Directory will be available by the end of 1997. For your copy call **Sharon DeCray (800/850-2473)** at ABA or check out our Web Site: www.americanbirding.org



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

A cold, wet spring delayed the last migrants well into June, and the nesting season ran late. Some nests of Ospreys, Peregrines, and Bald Eagles failed in the cold spring. When it finally arrived, a calm, mostly dry summer favored those land birds that are closely monitored (Tree Swallows, Eastern Bluebirds).

Overgrazing by deer was blamed for declines of Ovenbirds near Philadelphia (B&NM) and of juncos in upstate New York (RPY). The Avalon sea watch continued (DWa), giving us new precision about how much coastal movement continues through the summer. The New York Department of Environmental Conservation surveyed Double-crested Cormorants, gulls, and *Sterna* terns in the Great Lakes/Saint Lawrence area, but we go to press too early to have colonial waterbird totals for the rest of this Region. We received results from only one June Bird Count: *Putnam*,

New York (H. Turner), helpfully showing long-term trends. We would like to have many more.

Rarities included Band-rumped Storm-Petrel, Garganey (a Regional first), White-winged Tern, Rufous Hummingbird, Lewis's Woodpecker, and Western Meadowlark.

Abbreviations: Avalon (barrier beach at Townsend's Inlet, Cape May Co., NJ); Bombay Hook (Bombay Hook N.W.R., near Smyrna, DE); Brig (Brigantine Unit, Edward P. Forsythe N.W.R., Atlantic Co., NJ); Jamaica Bay (Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York City); Lakehurst (Lakehurst Naval Air Station, Ocean Co., NJ); Little Creek (Little Creek Wildlife Area, near Dover, Kent Co., DE); Logan Tract (unit of Ted Harvey Conservation Area s. of Kitt's Hummock, DE); Montezuma (Montezuma N.W.R., n. end of L. Cayuga, Seneca Co., NY); NY DEC (New York Department of Environmental Conservation); Little Galloo (Little Galloo I., e. Lake Ontario, off Henderson Harbor, Jefferson, NY); Port Mahon (marshes and bayshore east of Little Creek, DE).