

# new england region



## WAYNE R. PETERSEN

In characteristic New England fashion, June's weather was completely opposite that of last year. This season was sunny, dry, and the hottest in over a century of record-keeping at Blue Hill Observatory, Milton, Massachusetts. Boston temperatures averaged 71°F, which was 3.3°F above normal, and on 7 Jun the mercury soared to 97°F. A total of only 0.29 inches of rain made the month the driest on record. July continued to be hot, with temperatures averaging 75.6°F in Boston—2.1°F above normal. Unlike that of June, however, July's Bean Town rainfall of 3.5 inches was close to normal. A violent and damaging Boston thunderstorm on 24 Jul was accompanied by wind gusts of over 70 mph. Despite the extreme heat and drought, there were no clear indications of how these conditions may have affected New England bird life.

Regional tern populations had outstanding nesting success, a trend mirrored by ever-burgeoning Piping Plover numbers. In Massachusetts, more than a decade of intense political effort, public education, and improved barrier beach management is paying major dividends for the various private, state, and federal agencies that have worked together, in some cases with coastal community governments, to achieve much of the success. Similarly, grassland bird conservation, much of it spearheaded by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, continues to provide new insights into the status, management, and future of several grassland bird species.

The presence of a brood of Common

Eider ducklings in Rhode Island all but confirmed the breeding of this species in the Ocean State and extended southward the edge of its breeding range on the Atlantic Coast. Although there were no other new state breeding records, the period was hardly lackluster. The bird of the season and the only species positively new to the Region was a Mongolian Plover in Rhode Island; but Yellow-nosed Albatross in Maine, Wood Stork in Connecticut, and Red-necked Stint in Massachusetts were not too shabby, either! Among aberrant records of note, see especially the comments under Red-tailed Hawk, Great Black-backed Gull, and Grasshopper Sparrow.

**Abbreviations:** Appledore I. (*Isles of Shoals, ME*); M.A.S. (*Massachusetts Audubon Society*); M.D.F.W. (*Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife*); Monomoy I. (*Monomoy N.W.R., Chatham, Barnstable Co., MA*); Plum I. (*Parker River N.W.R., Newburyport/Newbury, Essex Co., MA*); Seavey I. (*Isles of Shoals, NH*); Stratton I. (*Cumberland Co., ME*).

## LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

As usual there was a scattering of Red-throated Loon reports, the latest being one at Eastport, ME, 24 Jul (BS). In Vermont, 25 of 32 Com. Loon nests successfully fledged 39 of 41 hatchlings for a record high count (*vide JP*). Results in Massachusetts were less favorable, where despite a new high of 20 territorial pairs, five of ten nesting pairs raised only seven chicks. In dramatic contrast to last year's losses of loons to high water conditions in New England, drought and low water conditions were apparently responsible for this year's low productivity in the Bay State—an explanation reinforced by the fact that three of the successful pairs nested on rafts. Since Pied-billed Grebes continue to be scarce in s. New England, noteworthy were calling birds in Connecticut at Lyme 8 Jun (PC) and Coventry 14 Jul (MS) and a single bird at Wayland, MA (K. Hamilton), an historic nesting locality. A Horned Grebe at Stamford, CT, 1 Jun–5 Jul (PD) and a Red-necked Grebe at Schoodic Pt., *Hancock, ME*, 8 Jul (WT) were especially tardy lingerers.

The expected tubenose species appeared on schedule over inshore waters—as indicated by Stellwagen Bank counts of 1000 Greater Shearwaters and 500–600 Sooty

**SA** Only “stunning!” can describe an ad. **Yellow-nosed Albatross** present off Matinicus Rock, *Knox, ME*, 6 Jul (ph. A. Hill, L. Benedict, A. Lightcap, C. Maranto, S. Schubel). The bird was carefully observed for over 2 hours, both flying and resting on the ocean, and was frequently accompanied in flight by several Great Black-backed Gulls. Anthony Hill's photos (see the Pictorial Highlights) clearly reveal the light gray head characteristic of the nominate race *chlororhynchos* from the South Atlantic. Among the remarkable number of appearances of this species during spring and summer in the n.w. Atlantic are reports from e. Canadian waters, the Gulf of Maine, Cox's Ledge, the waters off Long I., NY, and the Mid-Atlantic Coast Region. This record represents at least the 3rd occurrence for Maine.

Shearwaters 10 Jul (*vide Newburyport Whale Watch*) and 20 Manx Shearwaters and 350 Wilson's Storm-Petrels 17 Jul (Gd'E). More notable was a shore tally of 29 Manx Shearwaters and 223 N. Gannets at Rockport, MA, 9 Jun (RH). Although a count of 50+ Leach's Storm-Petrels 100 mi s. of Martha's Vineyard 23–24 Jun (VL) is not especially unusual, summer totals of this magnitude are infrequently reported from s. New England waters.

In Connecticut, where the species is a rare breeder, Am. Bitterns were suspected of nesting at Simsbury, Litchfield, and Sharon—all in the c. and w. parts of the state (*vide GH*). The elusive Least Bittern was reported from a handful of traditional nesting localities in Maine, Massachusetts, and Connecticut, along with early June reports of singles at Moonstone Beach and Narragansett, RI (*vide M. Tucker*)—the only known Ocean State breeding localities. Kettle I., Manchester, MA (SP, J. Bleiler) had a record-high nesting count of 90 pairs of Great Egrets, along with 185 Snowy Egret, 17 Little Blue Heron, and 93 Glossy Ibis pairs. Other interesting heron reports were as many as nine Snowy Egrets at Longmeadow, *Hampden, MA*, 21 Jul (HA) and one at Shelburne Bay, *Chittenden, VT*, 11 Jun (TM); a maximum of five Tricolored Herons at Stratton I., ME, 5 Jul (LB); a Cattle Egret at Moosehorn N.W.R., Edmunds, *Washington, ME*, 20 Jun (*vide WT*); and

Yellow-crowned Night-Herons at Scarborough, ME, 5 Jul (LB) and inland at Worcester, MA, 26–27 Jun (JL). A wandering **Wood Stork** at Cornwall, *Litchfield*, CT, 21–22 Jul (ph. M. Root) represented only the 4th or 5th record for the state and the first since 1955 (*vide* GH). Previous Regional occurrences were in Maine and Massachusetts, most recently in 1994 at Cotuit, *Barnstable*, MA. Following last year's first Regional breeding confirmation of Black Vulture in e. Massachusetts, the species went unconfirmed this year. Despite regular sightings of up to three birds at Beacon Falls, *Fairfield*, CT, and in the Housatonic Valley to the west (GH, v.o.), this species has yet to be definitively confirmed as a breeder in Connecticut. In neighboring Massachusetts, as many as four were seen at Sheffield, *Berkshire*, 17 Jul (ML), but no further evidence of nesting was indicated.

#### WATERFOWL THROUGH RAPTORS

Lingering Snow Geese included one at Biddeford, ME, 8 Jun (*vide* KG) and another at E. Providence, RI, in late June (*vide* RF). More unusual was a late Brant inland at Pondicherry W.M.A., Jefferson, *Coos*, NH, 26 Jun (A&BD). Noteworthy breeding waterfowl records included a Gadwall with six young at Marshfield, MA, 26 Jul (DF) for possibly the first nesting for *Plymouth*; a brood of Green-winged Teal at Stratford, CT, 29 Jul (DV) confirming for the 2nd consecutive year the nesting of this rare Connecticut breeder; and two female Com. Eiders with 10 young at Sakonnet Pt., *Newport*, RI, 17–30 Jun (F. Norton, DE) apparently representing the most solid nesting evidence on record for the Ocean State. Seemingly displaced waterfowl spending all or part of the season in New England were Gadwall at L. Umbagog, NH, 1 Jun (RQ); Am. Wigeon at Stamford, CT (PD); N. Shoveler at Plum I. 29 Jun (RH) and W. Hartford, CT (DR); Greater Scaup at Marshfield, MA, 28 Jun–31 Jul (DF); King Eider at S. Dartmouth, *Bristol*, MA, 4 Jul (ph. C. Russell); Bufflehead at Stamford, CT (PD), Newburyport, MA, 6 Jun–13 Jul (DF), and Acoaxet, *Bristol*, MA, 31 Jul (ML); Com. Goldeneye at Turners Falls, *Franklin*, MA, 19–31 Jul (*vide* SK) and Acoaxet, MA, 31 Jul (ML); and Ruddy Duck at Exeter, NH, (a pair) 4 Jun (SM), New Haven, CT, 22 Jun (DV), and Nantucket I., 20 Jul (SP).

In Rhode Island 63 Osprey nests produced 109 young (*vide* L. Suprock)—the best nesting success since pre-DDT days in the 1960s. Three new nesting pairs in Vermont—bringing the state total to 28

(*vide* JP)—and the discovery of the first inland Connecticut nesting pair at Coventry, *Tolland*, 14 Jul (MS) added to the encouraging trend. The now annual “Cape Cod Kite Show” starred two sub-ad. Mississippi Kites at N. Truro, MA, 5 Jun (TC) followed by a Swallow-tailed Kite the next day (TC). Another (or the same?) Swallow-tailed Kite was seen at Marshfield, MA, 4 Jun (D. Ludlow et al.). The seasonal box scores for nesting New England Bald Eagles included 8 active nests in Massachusetts that produced 15 young (TF), 2 nests in Connecticut that produced one young (*vide* GH), and apparently 4–5 nests constructed in New Hampshire—possibly the highest number in recorded history—with the overall success unknown at the time of writing (*vide* RQ). In a state where it has been confirmed nesting only twice this decade, N. Harrier made news for the 2nd consecutive year in Connecticut when a pair fledged two young at Stratford (CB, DV) and when a juvenile seen at Barn I., Stonington, in late July was suspected of being fledged locally (GH). A nesting pair of Sharp-shinned Hawks in w. Rhode Island was the first in that state for many years (*vide* R. Ferren). At Nantucket I., Cooper's Hawks raised two young for a first island breeding record (ER). An almost totally white, malnourished Red-tailed Hawk that had been present in the vicinity of Burlington, *Middlesex*, MA, for nearly 2 years was received by a wildlife rehabilitator and later photographed 18 Jun (WP). Merlins, slowly increasing as breeders in the Region, successfully nested for the 2nd year at Errol, *Coos*, NH (*vide* RQ), and at Northeast Harbor, *Hancock*, ME (C. Crofoot, *vide* WT). In Massachusetts four pairs of Peregrine Falcons fledged eight young, but five of these were killed during fledging and three were injured (TF)! In Vermont, 17 successful nesting pairs fledged 40 young (*vide* JP), and in Connecticut a single pair fledged two young from beneath a bridge in *Fairfield* (DV).

#### RAILS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

A copulating pair of Clapper Rails at Plum I. 12 Jul (JB) provided compelling breeding evidence for a species at the extreme n. terminus of its breeding range. Similar evidence of breeding came from a pair of King Rails at Stratford, CT, 25 Jun (PC, CB), and a territorial King pair present for the 3rd consecutive year at West Meadows W.M.A., *Plymouth*, MA (SA), provided the only other probable evidence of breeding. Most unusual was a Sora with five young at Nashawena I., *Dukes*, MA, 21 Jun (AJ); the

last county breeding record was in 1900 at Martha's Vineyard (cf. 1926, Bent's *Life Histories*). The increasingly scarce Com. Moorhen went unrecorded in Massachusetts, and the only solid evidence of breeding in the Region came from S. Kent, *Litchfield*, CT, 22 Jun (J. Johnson) and Bangor, ME (PL, v.o.). A Sandhill Crane that spent the summer on the Connecticut R. between Monroe, NH, and McIndoe Falls, VT (v.o.), was enjoyed by birders from both states; other reports included one at Ashland, *Aroostook*, ME, 8 Jun (BS) and Greenwich, CT, 17 Jul (F. Purnell).

Three-hundred summering Black-bellied Plovers at N. Monomoy I. 3 Jul (HF) were accompanied by a considerably more unusual Am. Golden-Plover 3–27 Jul (HF, BN). Near the n. terminus of their range in the United States, five Am. Oystercatchers at Phippsburg, *Sagadahoc*, ME, 25 Jun (J. Wells) were interesting; at the now-established Stratton I. nesting locality, this year's

**SA** Massachusetts Piping Plovers reached a new high total of 515 nesting pairs this year (a 4% increase from 1998), and productivity was calculated to be 1.5 chicks per pair (*vide* TF). At Seabrook, NH, these plovers fledged 17 young, compared to only three in 1998 (*vide* RQ). Counts of Upland Sandpipers from a handful of primary breeding sites highlight the very specific habitat and area requirements of this quintessential grassland species. In Vermont's Champlain Valley, 28 Uplands in 22 towns represents a dramatic decline from 130 in 1991 and 45 in 1998 (JP). Changes in local dairy farm practices, as well as possible disruptions on the Argentine wintering grounds, have been implicated. Today, many Vermont cows are kept in barns, and the traditional open pastures are instead planted in corn and hay, rendering them less suitable for Upland Sandpipers. At Westover A.F.B., *Hampden*, MA, the most important Upland Sandpiper locality in the Bay State, 154 adults were counted 14 Jun (AJ), and 8 pairs were tallied at 2 other Massachusetts localities (*vide* AJ). At Pease Int'l Tradeport in New Hampshire, 12 Upland Sandpipers were counted 9 Jul (PH, D. DeLuca). As grassland bird conservation efforts gain momentum in New England, hopefully species population trends also will improve.

**SA** Without question, the "Bird of the Season Award" goes to a brilliant male **Mongolian Plover** discovered at Rhode Island's Charlestown Breechway, *Washington*, 24–26 Jul (L. Ferrarreso, MJ Murray, m.ob.). Ogled, photographed (see the Pictorial Highlights), and enjoyed by hundreds of observers, this fancy visitor remained just long enough so that most who went to see it were rewarded. The plover provided a first Regional record and represents only the 2nd occurrence on the Atlantic Coast of North America, the first being a bird in New Jersey in 1990 (*Birds of New Jersey*, 1999). Not surprisingly, the Rhode Island bird appeared to be of the race *stegmanni* from n.e. Siberia.

young oystercatchers apparently suffered predation (KG). An Am. Avocet at Plum I. 9–11 Jul (W. Drew et al.) was not too unexpected, but one at L. Lamoille, Morrisville, *Lamoille*, 21–31 Jul (G. Damon, TM et al.) was most unusual in Vermont. Early migrant shorebird arrivals included 55 Lesser Yellowlegs, a Whimbrel, 95 Least Sandpipers, and 15 Short-billed Dowitchers at Plum I. 29 Jun (RH, JB) and a Marbled Godwit at N. Monomoy I. 4 Jul (BN). A Stilt Sandpiper at Scarborough, ME, 9 Jun (LB) may have better qualified as an unusual, late spring migrant. Of the shorebird maxima reported in July, the only standout figures were 250 Whimbrels at N. Monomoy I. 20 Jul (BN) and 10,500 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Newburyport, MA, 27 Jul (RH)—a number in line with counts of 25 years ago, but seldom recorded in Massachusetts today. A **Red-necked Stint** in alternate plumage at Plum I. 26 Jun–2 Jul (D. Sandee, v.o.) constituted the 4th record for Massachusetts, the last report occurring as recently as last summer. Other unusual shorebird reports were an early Baird's Sandpiper at Turner's Falls, *Franklin*, MA, 31 Jul (R. Packard, *fide* SK) and at least five Regional Ruff reports from Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut 29 Jun–10 Jul (v.o.).

#### GULLS THROUGH ALCIDS

Massachusetts Laughing Gull numbers increased 13% this year, climbing from 706 pairs in 1998 to 803 pairs this season. One to two Little Gulls were present in the Newburyport–Plum I. area during late June and July (v.o.), and another was at Eastport, ME, 24 Jul (BS). Four Black-headed Gulls

lingered at Nahant, MA, 27 Jun–24 Jul (L. Pivacek, v.o.), and at Newburyport, as many as three were recorded 15–27 Jul (RH). Two Bonaparte's Gulls at Longmeadow, *Hampden*, MA, 22 Jul (SK) represented unusual inland summer occurrences. The only Lesser Black-backed Gulls noted were singles at Manchester, CT, 3 Jul (PC) and Provincetown, MA, 8–9 Jul (P. Champlin). A Glaucous Gull at Provincetown 30 Jun (ph. A. Strauss) significantly pushed the seasonal envelope. A large, black-backed, yellow-legged larid bearing features resembling a Kelp Gull was carefully observed at the Charlestown Breechway, RI, 27–29 Jul (WP et al.); however, on 29 Jul birders heard it produce a call characteristic of a Great Black-backed Gull (P. Buckley). Let this example serve as a cautionary note to future Kelp Gull watchers, wherever you may be! An early Sabine's Gull was reported from Mt. Desert Rock in the Gulf of Maine 21 Jul (Z. Klyver, *fide* WT).

A Gull-billed Tern at Plum I. 31 Jul (C. Holzapfel, *fide* B.O.) was unique for the season, and a Caspian Tern at Pittsburg, *Cos*, NH, 7 Jun (T. Maloney, *fide* RQ) was interesting in its date and location. A count of 10 Royal Terns at Bird I., off Marion, *Plymouth*, MA, 30 Jun (L. Nisbet) was considerably higher than normal for such early summer wanderers. Despite Red Fox predation and consequent abandonment of a major tern colony at Plymouth in early June, Massachusetts terns had a very successful nesting season; fortunately the disruption occurred early enough that most of Plymouth's terns settled in other colonies. Scott Hecker (M.A.S) and Tom French (M.D.F.W.) provided data on Massachusetts terns. A state total of 13,973 pairs of Com. Terns was an increase of 6%, the largest colony being 5478 pairs located at S. Monomoy I.—the site of an aggressive gull removal program initiated by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in 1995. A total of 1819 Roseate Tern pairs, principally at Bird I. and Ram I. in Buzzards Bay, represented the highest total since 1984, and Least Terns set an all-time Regional record with 3409 pairs, the largest colony containing 1420 pairs nesting on dredge spoil at Kalmus Park, Hyannis. Among nine pairs of Arctic Terns nesting in Massachusetts, a banded individual at Penikese I. in Buzzards Bay was 18 years old. An Arctic Tern in first-summer (i.e., "portlandica") plumage inland at S. Hadley, *Hampden*, MA, 17 Jun–10 Jul (HA, D. Spector, ph. S. Sumner) was unprecedented in the Connecticut Valley of Massachusetts. In Vermont, 140 nesting Com. Terns at



**Although Arctic Terns nest in very small numbers along the coast in Massachusetts, this first-summer bird photographed at South Hadley on 26 June was unprecedented inland in the Connecticut River Valley. Photograph/Scott Sumner**

L. Champlain fledged 90 young (*fide* JP), and at Seavey I., NH, there were 145 pairs compared to only 45 in 1998 (*fide* RQ). For only the 3rd time ever in Connecticut, Black Skimmers fledged eight chicks at Sandy Pt., W. Haven (D. Sosensky, v.o.). Out-of-place alcids included 20+ Thick-billed Murres at Eastport, ME, 24 Jul (BS) and four Black Guillemots and two Atlantic Puffins at Rockport, MA, 9 Jun (RH).

#### DOVES THROUGH WRENS

A report of a Eur. Collared-Dove at Northboro, *Worcester*, MA, 29 Jun (AB, *fide* B. Blodgett), pending details, would be a first Bay State record if bona fide. A **White-winged Dove** at Block I. 6–12 Jun (ph. K. Gaffett) was a first record for Rhode Island; a 2nd individual appeared briefly at Marshfield, MA, 16 Jul (DF). Unusual in Connecticut these days, a pair of Barn Owls fledged two young at Stratford (v.o., *fide* GH). If correctly identified, a N. Hawk Owl at Ft. Kent, *Aroostook*, 1 Jul (G. Flagg, *fide* KG, JD) was most intriguing in n. Maine in summer. Two Short-eared Owls at Nantucket I. 24 Jun (ER) furnished the only reports received for this beleaguered coastal heathland nester. Mildly encouraging results of June Whip-poor-will surveys in Massachusetts included totals of 30 at M.S.S.F., Plymouth (Gd'E), 29 at Lancaster, *Worcester* (RL), and 23 at Easton, *Bristol* (SA). In late July, an ad. male Rufous Hummingbird was identified at a feeder at Scarborough, ME (KG, JW), and another bird apparently returned to feeders at Grand Isle, VT (*fide* JP), for the 6th consecutive year. An ad. Three-toed Woodpecker feeding a young bird at Blake Gore, *Somerset*, ME, 13 Jul (*fide* KG) was only 100 yards from the Canadian



After eluding capture for ten weeks, this "mystery sparrow" at Delaney W.M.A., Massachusetts, was finally mist-netted on 25 July, the date of the photo. Test your skills in identifying it before reading the accompanying SA! Photograph/Simon Perkins

**SA** At least as mystifying as some of the sparrows in the Maine salt marshes was an apparent hybrid sparrow at the Delaney W.M.A., Stow, Middlesex, MA. Initially discovered and photographed 15 May (B. Van Dusen et al.), the strange sparrow continued singing into July. The bird most closely resembled an oversized, long-tailed, large-billed Grasshopper Sparrow, showing distinct streaks on the mid-breast, a white median crown stripe, and yellow above the eye and on the bend of the wing. However its song, recorded 16 Jul, closely resembled that of a Song Sparrow (AJ, GS, WP)! Efforts to capture the bird were unsuccessful until 25 Jul; after being mist-netted, it was banded, and blood samples were taken (AJ, ph. SP et al.). Although results of the blood DNA analysis are pending, all indications suggest that the strange sparrow was probably a previously unrecorded Grasshopper × Song hybrid. Almost as remarkable is the fact that there appeared to be a second, similar-looking individual in the same meadow! Stay tuned.

border, and a 2nd individual of this species—arguably the rarest breeding bird in New England—was recorded at Mt. Blue, Avon, Franklin, ME, 16 Jul (E. Giles et al., *vide* JD).

A pewee giving the distinctive burry call of a W. Wood-Pewee at Upper S. Branch Pond, Baxter S.P., Piscataquis, ME, 26 Jun (P.Vickery) could unfortunately never be visually confirmed. Ten Yellow-bellied Flycatchers banded at Appledore I., ME, 2 Jun (DH) underscore the lateness of this species' spring passage. Acadian Flycatchers nested for the 2nd consecutive year at Pawtucketaway S.P., Nottingham, NH, 12 Jun–5 Jul (A&BD). The only Regional report of Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was one at Houlton, Aroostook, ME, 30 Jun (D. Dietrich). A

Philadelphia Vireo at Oxbow N.W.R., Harvard, Worcester, MA, 1–30 Jun (RL, v.o.) was both out-of-place and peculiar in singing a song reminiscent of a Warbling Vireo. At least one pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches nested at Block I., RI, this season (C. Raithel)—a most unlikely location; a healthy scattering of reports in Connecticut could presage an autumn irruption (GH). A July count of 150 ad. and young Cliff Swallows at Southbury, Fairfield (DR), was notable for this generally rare Connecticut breeder. The only Sedge Wrens reported were singles at S. Londonderry, VT, 19 Jul (W. Norse, *vide* JP) and Bangor, ME, 13 Jul (DA).

#### WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Golden-winged Warblers now seem to be present in Massachusetts in such low numbers that only hybrids are being reported! This season's records included a Brewster's Warbler at W. Brookfield, Worcester, 20 Jun (ML) and Lawrence's Warblers at Groton, Middlesex, 2 Jun (TP), Williamsburg, Hampshire, 8 Jun (JY), and Carlisle, Middlesex, 2 Jul (CF). Three Tennessee Warblers at Hingham, Plymouth, MA, 3 Jun (DP) were certainly late migrants, and three Kentucky Warblers in the same community 1 Jun (DP) represented a notable single-day count at any season in Massachusetts. Two Kentucky Warblers singing throughout the summer at Lyme (PC) were intriguing in light of the rare nesting status of this species in Connecticut. Unfortunately, no proof of nesting could be obtained for a singing Yellow-breasted Chat at Westboro, Worcester, MA, 5–24 Jun (AB, v.o.). A Clay-

colored Sparrow reported in May at Grand Isle, VT, was still present in June (D. Hoag, *vide* JP), and in Maine singles appeared at Kennebunk 2–3 Jun (R. Eakin, *vide* KG) and Bangor 14 Jul (D. Mairs, *vide* KG). Grassland sparrow surveys in s. New Hampshire revealed encouraging totals of 20 Vesper Sparrows and 13 Grasshopper Sparrows (PH). In Massachusetts, similar efforts by Jones revealed a minimum of 316 ad Grasshopper Sparrows at 7 top state sites At Scarborough, ME, sharp-tailed sparrows singing both Saltmarsh and Nelson's song types—and apparently paired in assorted combinations—continue to cloud the taxonomic status of these two salt marsh species in the area of sympatry (GS, v.o.).

A Fox Sparrow at Baxter S.P., Piscataquis, ME, 6–22 Jun (JW) was in a region where this species has previously been suspected of nesting. White-throated Sparrows apparently nested at Norwell, Plymouth, MA (DF), and others somewhat out-of-place were singles in Middlesex, MA, at Arlington 4 Jul (JS) and Watertown 10 Jul (RS) A count of 500–1000 Red-winged Blackbirds per hour passing Lighthouse Pt., New Haven, CT, 20 Jul (GH) demonstrated how early some of these icterids apparently undertake southward migration. A White-winged Crossbill at Ashburnham, Worcester, MA, 31 Jul (BN, RH) was slightly s. of where it belonged at this date, but a flush of s. New England reports of Evening Grosbeaks in late June and early July seemed consistent with the pattern of the last few summers

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