

New England



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Autumn 2001 was characterized by warmer-than-average temperatures and lower-than-average rainfall, contributing to the year's cumulative rainfall deficit and producing excellent shorebirding on northern Lake Champlain. An appreciable Broad-winged Hawk flight on 15 September followed passage of a cold front 13-14 September. Cold air pushed into the Region on 7 October, encouraging a large flight of 1300 warblers of 16 species at Bluff Pt., Connecticut. A weak frontal passage 22 October was apparently enough to put down numbers of Brant away from the coast, and a stronger front 26 October forced sea ducks down at inland locations 27-29 October. No hurricanes made landfall.

Influxes of a few northern species were seen this season, including a Snowy Owl flight equivalent to 1987 and 1991, and Bohemian Waxwings, Pine Grosbeaks, White-winged Crossbills, and Common Redpolls in moderate numbers. More significant rarities of the season were Yellow-nosed Albatross off Rhode Island, Red-necked Stint, Curlew Sandpiper and Couch's Kingbird in Massachusetts, an unprecedented five Ash-throated Flycatchers,

and last but certainly not least, Maine's first Sage Thrasher.

Abbreviations: Appledore (Appledore I., Kittery, York, ME); Charlotte (Charlotte, Chittenden, VT); Gay Head (Gay Head, Martha's Vineyard, Dukes, MA); Missisquoi (Missisquoi Bay, L. Champlain, Highgate and Swanton, Franklin, VT); Plum I. (Plum I., Newbury/Rowley, Essex, MA); Rockport (Andrew's and Halibut Pts., Rockport, Essex, MA); S. Beach (South Beach I., Chatham, Barnstable, MA).

LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

Massachusetts's Pacific Loon reports came from Plum I. 31 Oct (†RH), Gloucester, Essex 11 Nov (N. Soulette et al.), and Race Pt., Provincetown, Barnstable 24 Nov (SM et al.); a series of undocumented reports came from York, ME in Nov. Low water levels on L. Champlain and regular coverage by dedicated observers produced unprecedented numbers of several species on L. Champlain's Missisquoi Bay and the adjacent river delta. Pied-billed Grebe numbers gradually climbed through Sep, peaking at 99 on 12 Oct (RL). Massachusetts also had better-than-usual numbers in Nov. Farther s. on the lake, 200 Horned Grebes at Addison, Addison 17 Nov were noteworthy (AA, JN). The venerable Eared Grebe returned to Gloucester for its 7th

season 11 Oct (D. Sandee et al.), and 2 appeared at Trustom Pd. N.W.R., S. Kingstown, Washington, RI 8 Oct-4 Nov (S. Wheelock, S. Mitra et al.); one of these stayed to 17 Nov.

A report of a **Yellow-nosed Albatross** seen from shore at Green Hill Pt., S. Kingstown, RI 30 Oct awaits review by the state's records committee (†M. Tucker). Maine birders found only 2 Manx Shearwaters, but Massachusetts featured excellent counts of 170+ offshore at Stellwagen Bank 8 Aug (J. Trimble) and 45+ from shore at Provincetown 22 Sep (BN) "Inexplicable" best describes an observation of an apparent small black-and-white shearwater on n. L. Champlain 24 Aug (†DJH); recent stray Manx Shearwaters in unlikely locations and outside the context of hurricanes (in Michigan, Québec, Ontario) may provide some context. Three Audubon's Shearwaters were more expected at Hydrographer Canyon 27 Aug (B.B.C., N. Samson). Exceptional numbers of Wilson's Storm-Petrels frequented inshore waters in Aug; land-based high counts included 225 in Rockingham, NH 12 Aug (SM, J. Lawrence), 800+ at S. Beach 3 Aug, and 830 at Cape Ann, Essex, MA 5 Aug (RH). **White-faced Storm-Petrels** were very cooperative: 2 were photographed at Hydrographer Canyon 27 Aug (M. Sylvia et al.), one was captured on film at Atlantis Canyon 7-9 Sep (W. Zuzevitch et al), and another was captured and banded 92 km s of Block I., RI 30 Aug (ph. K. Gaffet). A Leach's Storm-Petrel surprised lake watchers at Charlotte when it passed by heading n. on 16 Sep (†TM), while others appeared inshore in e Massachusetts 30 Sep-1 Oct, and 2 were at Newmarket, Rockingham, NH 1 Oct (ph. SM). Another storm-petrel, believed to be a Leach's, was seen over S. Windsor, in the Connecticut R Valley n. of Hartford, also on 30 Sep (†D. Crockett).

An American White Pelican appeared in Stamford, Fairfield, CT 18 Oct (P. Dugan). An opportunistic Brown Pelican was seen in Groton, New London, CT, feeding in the wake of a fishing boat with gulls between there and Fisher's I., NY 19-20 Sep (M. Horn), while another was photographed at Ninigret Pd., Charlestown, Washington, RI 29 Sep (L. Landon). Double-crested Cormorants showed no signs of decline, with 2000 southbound migrants at Charlotte 22 Oct (TM, PR), over 20,000 passing Plum I. in Sep-Oct (RH), and 7640 at Napatree Pt., Washington, RI 23 Oct (CJR). Great Cormorants strayed inland to Concord, Merrimack, NH 24 Sep (SM, MS, RW) and Young I., Grand Isle, VT 29 Oct (†RL, †DJH).

Least Bitterns were well represented, with at least 10 individuals reported, including an ad

with 3 young continuing from summer in Rockport through Aug (RH) and a lingering bird there 7 Oct and in Chappaquiddick, *Dukes*, MA 4 Oct. Great Egrets found inland low water levels to their liking: 13 were at L. Umbagog, *Coos*, NH 4 Aug (CM, D. Demers et al.), and 19 were at Missisquoi 29 Sep (R&DL). The maximum count at the traditional Plum I. roost was 210 (RH). Snowy Egrets wandered n. to the Champlain valley 6 Sep (C. Powell) and L. Umbagog, NH 5 Aug (CM et al.). The season's only Little Blue Heron of note was at Frash Pond, Stratford, *Fairfield*, CT through the end of Nov (C. West). A Regional total of 5 Tricolored Herons was low, as was a total of 7 Yellow-crowned Night-Herons. The L. Champlain Cattle Egret post-nesting population remains stable at about 30 birds, seen frequenting Shelburne, *Chittenden*, VT in Aug. Black Vultures continue to increase, reaching Thomaston, *Knox* on the cen. Maine coast, as well as the more remote ne. parts of Connecticut. Turkey Vulture populations remained healthy, with counts of 70 in St. Albans, *Franklin*, VT and 80 in Westport, *Bristol*, MA.

WATERFOWL

This season's 5 Greater White-fronted Geese were once again confined to the s. part of the Region, with one each in Massachusetts and Rhode Island and the rest in Connecticut. The usual 12,000-15,000 Snow Geese gathered at Dead Creek W.M.A., *Addison*, VT in Oct and were accompanied by up to 3 Ross's Geese. A single Ross's Goose photographed in Chilmark 14-22 Oct was Massachusetts's 2nd documented record (T. Rivers et al.). Canada Goose peak numbers are now much lower than those for Snow Goose in the Region, so observers have taken to searching flocks for small pale birds of the Richardson's race (*hutchinsii*). One was found at Dead Creek W.M.A., and 3 were in Northampton, MA in Oct. Connecticut claimed the 4 Tundra Swans found this season. The total of 7 Eurasian Wigeon was lower than the number we have come to expect in recent autumns. However, large numbers of American Wigeon found Missisquoi a fortuitous migration stopover: the peak count of 730+ there 3 Oct (RL) contrasted with maxima near 200 in New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

The Sterling, *Worcester*, MA Tufted Duck returned for its 7th season 30 Sep (F. McMenemy et al.). Only 4 King Eiders—a low count—were picked out from their more common brethren, 2 in Maine, a drake in Massachusetts, and a hen in Connecticut. Harlequin Ducks gathered at traditional win-

tering areas in good numbers, with 45 at Cliff House, York, ME, 42 in Rockport, and 25+ at Nantucket. Surf Scoters reached an impressive 10,000 in Plymouth, MA 22 Oct (E. Neumuth). L. Champlain watchers continue to tally good numbers of the other scoters, with peaks of 551 White-winged 8 Oct at Charlotte (TM, AS) and 611 Blacks 27 Oct in Grand Isle (DJH). The period of 27-29 Oct produced numerous reports of sea ducks inland, especially White-winged and Black Scoters and Long-tailed Ducks. A near-record 274 Long-tailed Ducks passed Charlotte 9 Oct (TM et al.), probably on their way to join the flock of 22,616 counted at Nantucket 18 Nov (E. Andrews). Seventeen Barrow's Goldeneyes arrived in Nov in Vermont (2), New Hampshire (one), Maine (11), and Massachusetts (3). Vermont claimed the high count of Hooded Mergansers, with 265 at Carry Bay, N. Hero, *Grand Isle* 24 Nov (TM et al.). Sabbattus Pond, *Androscoggin*, ME remains popular with Ruddy Ducks, hosting 500+ in Nov; Massachusetts high counts came from W. Newbury, *Essex* (602) and Marlborough, *Middlesex* (459).

RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES

A Mississippi Kite passed over Mt. Wachusett, *Worcester*, MA 29 Sep (†J. Stein et al.). A family group of a male Northern Harrier with 4 imm. was a surprise in Vermont's Connecticut Valley in Windsor 4 Aug (†M. Quinn), while at coastal breeding localities six pairs nested at Tuckernuck, MA, and a female with 2 juvs. was

observed at Plum I. (RH). The Sharp-shinned Hawk migration peaked 7-8 Oct along the s coast, with two-day totals of 2179 at Lighthouse Pt., CT and 254 at Napatree Pt., RI. Napatree also had its one-day Cooper's Hawk high count (of 22) on 8 Oct, while 40+ were counted at Gay Head the next day (VL). The bulk of the Broad-winged Hawk migration was concentrated on 15 Sep in s. New England, with three Massachusetts watches topping 2000 and two Connecticut lookouts surpassing 5000 birds. A single juv. Swainson's Hawk was reported without details from Plum I. 16 Sep. Rough-legged Hawks apparently stayed to the n., with only 18 individuals found in their favored haunts in the Champlain Valley, one in New Hampshire, and 6 in Massachusetts. Golden Eagles continue to appear in moderate numbers in the Region; this season's total was 14. A dark-morph Gyrfalcon was at Plum I. 16-25 Oct, but no observers submitted details of their observations. The established population of Gray Partridge in far nw. Vermont reappears in these pages with a count of 12-15 in Alburg (F. Oatman, J. Wood). Only 8 Common Moorhens were located Regionwide, but one stayed into Dec on Nantucket. The Sandhill Crane that summered for the 3rd year in the n. Connecticut Valley was apparently joined by a 2nd bird, as the only report received from there was of 2 seen flying together 11 Aug (†J. Williams). Additional crane reports came from Massachusetts (2) and Connecticut (3).



Maine's first Sage Thrasher at Cape Neddick, York, York County, was found 17 November 2001 (photographed here 18 November) and became the cause for pilgrimages by birders from much of New England and beyond. *Photograph by Dennis Abbott.*

SA The lack of rain and subsequent low water levels on L. Champlain led to the emergence of extensive flats at Missisquoi Bay, at the n. end of the lake in Highgate and Swanton. Observers, led by Richard Lavallee, had to maneuver a small boat carefully, sometimes getting out to push it across the mud, but were rewarded with unprecedented counts of shorebirds. Maxima of particular interest included 82 Greater Yellowlegs 24 Oct, 30 Lesser Yellowlegs 21 Aug, 9 Hudsonian Godwits 24 Oct, 53 ad. White-rumped Sandpipers 23 Aug and 28 juvs. 26 Sep, 110 Pectoral Sandpipers 15 Oct, 1527 Dunlin 25 Oct, and 250 dowitchers overhead 27 Aug. Rarities for Vermont included a Willet 9 Oct, Western Sandpipers 19 & 24 Sep, a Buff-breasted Sandpiper 29 Sep, a Wilson's Phalarope 21 & 26 Aug and 2 on 14 Sep, and an ad. Red Phalarope 26 Sep (all †RL).

SHOREBIRDS

Moderate numbers of American Golden-Plovers touched down in New England, with a peak count of 23 from Grand Isle, VT 28 Aug (DJH); 6 on New Hampshire's L. Umbagog 4 Oct were at an unexpected location (RQ et al.). The count of 185 American Oystercatchers at S. Beach 23 Aug was marginally above counts of the past few autumns (BN et al.). American Avocets numbered 4: one at Tuckernuck I., MA 5 Aug (RV), 2 at Plum I. 10-11 Oct (RH), and one at Hammonasset Beach S.P., CT 28 Oct-11 Nov (m. ob.). All of the Region's 28 Upland Sandpipers were found in Massachusetts; none were reported from breeding habitat in the Champlain Valley. Details of a **Black-tailed Godwit** reported from Colchester, *Chittenden*, VT 19 Oct were scant, relying on only one critical field mark. Such a record would be almost unprecedented inland. The coastal high count of 107 Hudsonian Godwits came from S. Beach 13 Aug (BN). Most of the 19+ reports of Marbled Godwit came from various beaches in Chatham, MA (BN), with singles found in Maine, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. A count of 5000+ Semipalmated Sandpipers from Lynn/Nahant, *Essex*, MA 4 Aug (RH) was impressive for a location away from Newburyport and Cape Cod. A concentration of 15 Western Sandpipers was found at Plum I. 9 Sep (C. Buelow). Stray shorebirds from Eurasia reaching Massachusetts were a **Red-necked Stunt** at S. Beach 13 Aug (†BN) and a **Curlew Sandpiper** making an extended stay there 5-26 Aug (R. Lockwood et al.). Species staying

beyond expected departure dates included 5 Lesser Yellowlegs in Newburyport, *Essex*, MA to the end of the season, a Least Sandpiper at Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard 26-30 Nov (AK et al.), and a Stilt Sandpiper at Plum I. 4 Nov (RH). Two White-rumped Sandpipers at L. Umbagog, NH 13 Oct were unexpected at that location (RQ), while a maximum of 800 at S. Beach 26-27 Aug was notable (BN). The Regional totals of 45+ Baird's Sandpipers and about 10 Wilson's Phalaropes were about average, while 10 Buff-breasted Sandpipers was low. An apparently injured, or at least severely disoriented, Red Phalarope was found along a roadside in S. Hero, *Grand Isle*, VT 17 Oct (†T. Aversa).

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS

The Great Skua of the season was found 24-32 km s. of Great Wass I., *Washington*, ME 30 Sep (LB et al.). Lakewatchers at Charlotte continued to document jaeger migration on L. Champlain, with 14 for the season. About half were identified as Parasitics 1 Sep-2 Oct; 3 Long-taileds passed by in mid-Sep, and the balance was conservatively left unidentified (†TM et al.). Three other unidentified jaegers were viewed from Grand I. (DJH). On the Cape, a count of 25 Parasitics at Chatham 27 Sep was noteworthy (RH).

A Laughing Gull inland at Hadley, *Hampshire*, MA 8 Oct (PY) was unusual. Little Gull numbers were down, with only 14 reported from L. Champlain and lesser numbers in Maine and Massachusetts. A Black-headed Gull was at Grand Isle, VT 6 Nov (†DJH), while 12 others were at more expected locations along the Maine and Massachusetts coasts. White-winged gulls arrived late and in low numbers, but Lesser Black-backed Gulls put on a strong showing, with at least 43 individuals reported throughout the season. Two juv. Sabine's Gulls passed Charlotte 13 Sep (†TM, FP); a bird in first-alternate plumage at Scarborough, *Cumberland*, ME 31 Aug and 5 Sep was a surprise (L. Bevier et al.), but singles offshore at Stellwagen Bank and Atlantis Canyon were expected. A juv. Black-legged Kittiwake 29 Sep and a second-winter bird 17 Nov kept lakewatchers at Charlotte on their toes (†TM et al.).

Caspian Terns continued on n. L. Champlain, with 2-3 at Shelburne Bay, *Chittenden* 3 Aug (B. Pfeiffer) and up to 7 at Missisquoi in late Aug (RL). Eight were to the n. in Biddeford Pool, *York*, ME 20 Sep (LB). Common Terns seem to be faring well lately, as evidenced by 150-170 on n. L. Champlain and up to 10,000 in Chatham in late Sep. Forster's Terns also showed impressive numbers, especially in s. New England, with 130 at Duxbury,

Plymouth, MA 18 Sep (G. Levandoski) and **280** on the Seekonk R., Providence, RI (R. Farrell). A Least Tern was found at Eastham, *Barnstable*, MA on the very late date of 20 Oct (J. Hoye et al.). A noteworthy count of 71 Black Terns came from Missisquoi 16 Aug (RL). A report of 3 Black Guillemots w. of Grand I., VT 18 Oct was puzzling and awaits consideration by the Vermont Bird Records Committee (†DJH). Nine Atlantic Puffins put in an early appearance at Rockport 20 Aug (RH).

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

A **White-winged Dove** was reported 10 Sep from the same yard in Sterling, *Windham*, CT where the state's first documented record was videotaped in 1997. Snowy Owls invaded New England in force, with at least 65—just surpassing totals from 1987 and 1991. The earliest were in the three n. states 31 Oct-1 Nov, but they had reached the s. coast by the middle of Nov. The magnitude of the flight was dramatized by individuals appearing in such inland locations as N. Grantham, *Sullivan* and Twin Mt., *Coos*, NH, Orono, *Penobscot* and Houlton, *Aroostook*, ME, and Great Barrington, *Berkshire*, MA. Small numbers of these owls were later found dead. Barred Owls also seemed to be present in higher-than-usual numbers, suffering high road-kill mortality in the n. and appearing in uncharacteristic locations along the Massachusetts coast. The unprecedented nesting confirmation of **Boreal Owl** on Mt. Pierce, *Coos*, NH has been summarized in the previous Nesting Season report (R. Sawyer, ph. SM). Subsequent visits to the area by other observers indicated that at least 2 fledglings were present. Spruce and fir at higher elevations in n. New England produced an exceptional cone crop in 2000, which led to bumper populations of voles, mice, and Red Squirrels, apparently enticing Boreal Owls that came s. in autumn 2000-2001 to linger in suitable habitat. One wonders how many more bred in less-visited locations, and how far a hatch-year bird banded at Snake Mt., *Addison*, VT 30 Oct (ph. †RO) might have traveled. The owl banding station at Snake Mt. also handled over 90 Northern Saw-whet Owls for the season (RO), and the Freeport, *Cumberland*, ME station banded 187 (J. Walker). Vermont's peak Common Nighthawk count of 50 came from Burlington 20 Aug (E. Buford); the flight continued in Massachusetts, with 604 in Worcester 25 Aug (ML), 418 in Northampton 27 Aug (TG), and 934 in Worcester 28 Aug (B. Kamp), while New Hampshire saw 150 in Manchester, *Hillsborough* (J. O'Shaughnessy). A single Chuck-wills-widow remained on Martha's Vineyard 1 Aug (AK). *Selasphorus* humming-

birds were found in Granby, *Hampshire* and Worcester, MA in Nov, in a community garden in Storrs, *Tolland*, CT in Sep, and Southington, *Hartford*, CT in Oct. A female Rufous Hummingbird appearing in Old Orchard Beach, *York*, ME in mid-Nov subsequently wintered with a rehabilitator (*fide* JD), while it was unclear if another female in Agawam, *Hampden*, MA 16 Sep-30 Oct was the same bird that has wintered in a greenhouse there for the past four years (TG). A modest total of 16 Red-headed Woodpeckers was nonetheless well distributed across the Region. Red-bellied Woodpeckers continued to push northward, to Hanover, *Grafton*, NH and to Smithfield, *Somerset* and Machiasport, *Washington*, ME. A Black-backed Woodpecker in Grand L., VT 23 Aug was well out of range (DJH).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WRENS

An Eastern Wood-Pewee in Whitefield, *Coos*, NH 3 Oct (RQ et al.) was late for so far north. Banders at Appledore handled 45 Yellow-bellied Flycatchers for the season, their 2nd best total in 21 years of effort (DH). An impressive 5 **Ash-throated Flycatchers** invaded New England. New Hampshire's 2nd was in Concord 6-8 Oct (M. Suomala, D. Abbott, ph. S. Mirick). Massachusetts hosted singles in Belmont, *Middlesex* 30 Aug (†M. Rines), Gloucester 15-18 Nov (H. & J. Paluzzi, v. o.; subsequently relocated in Dec), and Cohasset, *Norfolk* 24-26 Nov (†N. Swirka, H. Cross), and Rhode Islanders found one in Middletown, *Newport* 26 Oct (H. Willoughby, P. Capabianco). A **Couch's Kingbird** on Plum I. 7 Sep was watched for several hours before a passing Peregrine Falcon elicited an identity-clinching call from it (†RH et al.); this species is virtually unknown as an East Coast vagrant n. of Florida. Thirteen Western Kingbirds were found, mostly in mid-season, with 2 in coastal Massachusetts in mid-Nov; one in W. Hartford, *Hartford*, CT was farther inland than usual. A modest 23+ Northern Shrikes first arrived 24 Oct and made it s. to Rhode Island.

Wandering White-eyed Vireos reached Appledore 24-27 Sep (the 2nd ever banded there, DH) and Durham, *Strafford*, NH 8 Oct (†SM). Late for such a count were 10 Blue-headed Vireos at Block I., RI 12 Nov (CJR); also late was a Red-eyed Vireo 17 Nov at Hammonasset Beach S.P., *New Haven*, CT (B. DeWire). Appledore banders netted a record-high 54 Philadelphia Vireos for the season, but numbers of other vireos were unremarkable (DH). Good numbers of Gray Jays were in evidence in New Hampshire's White Mts., with individuals wandering to the s. in Lee, *Strafford* (DA, *fide* SM), and in Massachusetts in

Windsor, *Berkshire* (continuing into winter; C. Quinlan, m. ob.), Barre, *Worcester* (F. McMenemy), and Gate 40, Quabbin Res. (2; J. Offerman). Fish Crows wandered inland to Concord, NH (RQ) and Northampton, *Hampshire*, MA (M. Williams) and showed that they are now well established on Cape Cod with a count of 40 in Truro (J. Young). Common Ravens continued their strong showing of recent years with 75+ in Manchester Center, *Bennington*, VT 11 Oct (B. Powers), 87 for the season at Mt. Watatic, MA, and an "almost regular" comment from Rhode Island (DE).

A count of 800 Horned Larks in Northampton, MA 2 Nov (G. LeBaron) was noteworthy, as was a migrant Purple Martin in Gilsum, *Cheshire*, NH 20 Aug (M. Wright). Very few martins were observed from their New England breeding stronghold in *Grand Isle*, VT. However, Northern Rough-winged Swallows there are doing very well, with a maximum count of 315 on 21 Aug (DJH). Along with the expected Nov Tree Swallow reports were one of a Northern Rough-winged in W. Dennis, *Barnstable*, MA 11 Nov (P. Flood) and Barn Swallows at Lighthouse Pt., *New Haven*, CT 17 Nov (B. Banks) and Chilmark, *Dukes*, MA 21 Nov (AK). Two *Petrochelidon* swallows, suspected of being Cave Swallows, in Provincetown, MA 27 Sep were conservatively left unidentified to species (RH).

Boreal Chickadees showed signs of a weak flight from the n. country, with individuals in Strafford, *Strafford*, NH and three s. Maine and five Massachusetts locations. Tufted Titmice at four locations on Martha's Vineyard indicate the species is becoming established on this offshore island (*fide* AK). Red-breasted Nuthatches moved in modest numbers, producing average counts of 15-20 and maxima of 36 and 45 along the Massachusetts coast. Brown Creepers joined the exodus, with a record 105 banded at Appledore, 25 of them on 29 Sep (DH). Carolina Wrens were found n. to *Grand Isle*, in Vermont's Champlain Valley, to Fairlee, *Orange*, VT and Lyme, *Grafton*, NH in the Connecticut Valley, and to 22 locations in Maine. Sedge Wrens showing late-season breeding site tenacity included a singing male in Durham, NH 3-12 Aug (SM et al.) and 3 vocalists in Old Lyme, *New London*, CT for most of Aug. A bird there was observed carrying food 21 Aug, but a later search found no nests (H. Golet et al.). As many as 6 other migrants were located in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

GNATCATCHER THROUGH WARBLERS

The last of several late, probably reverse-

migrant Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were at Rockport 17 Nov (RH) and Perryville, *Washington*, RI 22 Nov (S. Tsagarakis). The season's only Northern Wheatear was admired at Plum I. 7-10 Sep (RH, m. ob.). The night of 29 Sep was good for detecting migrant thrushes, with 40 Bicknell's/Gray-cheeked type and 200 Swainson's over Lincoln, *Middlesex*, MA (S. Perkins). The season total 237 Gray Catbirds banded at Appledore was 50 better than their previous record (DH). Certainly a contender for bird-of-the-season was Maine's first **Sage Thrasher**, first discovered 17 Nov at Cape Neddick, *York*. The bird was encouraged to stay into Dec by offerings of mealworms and raisins from appreciative birders from across the Region (L. Maley, †T. Wetmore, ph. DA, SM, m. ob.). Bohemian Waxwings appeared in moderate numbers across n. New England, with early arrivals in Northfield, *Merrimack*, NH, 14 Oct (PH) and Colchester, VT 23 Oct.

Only 3 Golden-winged Warblers were found this fall; these were supplemented by 2 Brewster's Warblers in Massachusetts. Observers turned up at least 49 Orange-crowned Warblers, more than twice as many as the formerly common Tennessee Warbler. The other traditional spruce budworm warblers, Cape May and Bay-breasted, were represented by equally low numbers. Over the past decade, Magnolia and Black-throated Green Warblers have become the most frequently encountered of mid-fall migrants. Of course, Yellow-rumped Warblers continue to far outnumber other species later in the season, especially along the coast, as attested by a count of 750+ from Noman's Land, *Dukes*, MA 9 Oct (AK et al.). An Audubon's Warbler found 22 Nov at Odiorne Pt. S.P., Rye, *Rockingham*, NH frequented the same area until at least late Jan (M. A. Patten, †D. & T. Donsker, m. ob.). Southern warblers, regular but rare, were all in Massachusetts. They included Yellow-throateds in Gloucester 28 Sep-2 Oct (RH, m. ob.) and Nantucket 28 Nov (M. Aqur), a Prothonotary at Plum I. 29 Sep (D. Chickering), a Kentucky at Marblehead Neck W.S., *Essex* 17 Aug (RH), and 4 Hoodeds between Plum I., Stoneham, *Middlesex*, Nahant, *Essex*, and Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, *Middlesex*. Lingering warblers were scattered across the Region, with a Yellow at Trustom Pd. N.W.R., RI 17 Nov (D. Finizia, C. Nunes), a Black-throated Blue in Concord, NH 14 Nov (RW), a Black-throated Green in Fairlee, VT 10 Nov (W. Scott), a Prairie in Rockport 26 Nov (JB), an American Redstart in Canton, *Hartford*, CT 28 Oct (J. Meyers), and an Ovenbird in Waltham, *Middlesex*, MA 26 Nov (L. Harvey). Also later than expected

was a Connecticut Warbler at Long I., Boston 25 Nov. About 32 other Connecticuts were distributed across the Region, while Yellow-breasted Chats were reported from Maine (14) and Massachusetts (23). Seven Connecticut Warblers banded at Appledore made that station's 2nd highest tally, while 8 Yellow-breasted Chats was average and 56 Wilson's Warblers a record (DH).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

A female Scarlet Tanager at Plum I. 16-22 Nov was considerably tardy (S. Haydock, m. ob.). A better-than-average 56 Clay-colored Sparrows were spread across the Region, with a high count of 6 on Monhegan I., ME in early Oct (P. Moynahan). Lark Sparrows also found Monhegan to their liking, with 4 at one feeder there 22-24 Sep (LB, T. Martin). Maine had 3 others, Massachusetts 7, and Connecticut one for the season. Grasshopper Sparrows stayed into Nov in Maine; one was in Portland, and another joined the Sage Thrasher at Cape Neddick 18-20 Nov (ph. DA, m. ob.). Fox Sparrows exhibited a strong flight in Maine, and an individual of one of the dark northwestern races was found in Bolton Flats, Worcester, MA 28 Oct (S. Sutton et al.). Peak flights for several of the regular migrant sparrows clustered around 13-15 Oct, but there were no exceptional high counts. Jumping the gun on their expected arrival dates were a White-crowned Sparrow in Northfield, NH 16 Sep (P. Hunt) and a lone Snow Bunting on Scusset Beach, Bourne, Barnstable, MA 2 Oct (R. Titus). The lone Harris's Sparrow was at Chilmark, MA 27-30 Nov (AK et al.).

Maine's only Blue Grosbeak was late and farther n. than usual in Winterport, Waldo 1 Nov (B. Bochan), while 2 of the Bay State's 16 were well inland at Hadley 25 Sep (PY) and Northampton 20-22 Oct (R. Rieda et al.); Rhode Island and Connecticut also had singles. Massachusetts once again dominated the Dickcissel tally, with 32 of 73 reported, but every other state contributed one to 7. After skipping out on New England in 2000, 7 Yellow-headed Blackbirds were found along the coast in Sep-Oct 2001. Good numbers of Rusty Blackbirds were encountered, with an especially good count of 300 in Simsbury, Hartford, CT 22 Oct (J. Kaplan). Common Grackle numbers built up to unprecedented levels near the coast, with 75,000 in Portsmouth, Rockingham, NH 29 Oct (SM) and up to one million in Methuen, Essex, MA 4 Nov (J. Hogan et al.). Up to 9 Boat-tailed Grackles were found near the species's breeding outpost in Stratford, Fairfield, CT (M. Resch), while Orchard Orioles at nesting sites in Grand I., VT and Kensington, Rockingham, NH just

made the fall season. Two additional Orchard Orioles were found at Plum I. 18 Aug (RH).

Autumn 2001 was good for finches. Pine Grosbeaks staged a moderate irruption—although they reached Connecticut, Nantucket, and Cape Cod, no flocks over 20 were reported. In contrast, Purple Finches exited the n. country, with Appledore banders handling their 3rd highest total and an observer on Martha's Vineyard counting 250+ at Gay Head 9 Oct (V. Laux). Red Crossbills were scattered in small numbers, mostly in pines along the s. coast. White-winged Crossbills were more numerous and widespread, with flocks up to 100 in Ellsworth, Hancock, ME and 150+ in Salisbury, Essex, MA. Small numbers of White-winged delighted feeder watchers in Connecticut and Rhode Island. Common Redpolls also invaded the northeast, arriving in early Nov. Most flocks were in the 20-40 range, but counts of 400+ at Dead Creek W.M.A., Addison, VT (AA, JN) and 600 in Sandwich, Carroll, NH (T. Vazzano et al.) were noteworthy. Pine Siskins joined Purple Finches in their exodus, especially along the Connecticut coast, where counts of over 300 per day were achieved at Lighthouse Pt., CT in late Oct. Evening Grosbeaks, although not

nearly as abundant as most observers can remember, were nonetheless more numerous than they have been in recent years.

EXOTICS

Up to 3 Whooper Swans were still present in Ipswich, MA, in Nov (JB). Two Monk Parakeets spent Sep-Oct in Concord, Middlesex, MA (S. Carlson et al.). An Orwell, Addison, VT feeder hosted a Ringed Turtle-Dove 3-5 Sep (†S. Wetmore).

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