

The month of June continued the pattern of cool, wet, and cloudy weather that characterized much of New England during the spring. Temperatures in Boston averaged 2.7° F below normal, and rainfall exceeded the average by 3.73 cm. July finally broke the cool, wet pattern set during the previous several months, and actually proved slightly warmer, thus ending an unusual nine-month stretch of below-normal temperatures. Precipitation in Boston was nearly 2.5 cm below normal.

Not surprisingly, the immoderate weather conditions of the previous several months took its toll on Regional breeding birds. Various reliable sources indicated that nest failure among Ospreys, Bald Eagles, American Kestrels, Piping Plovers, Purple Martins, Tree Swallows, and Eastern Bluebirds was directly attributable to the cool, wet conditions that prevailed in May and June. Additionally, severe weather during the past winter was suggested as a significant source of mortality for Eastern Bluebirds in Massachusetts. More episodic, and possibly more pernicious, was the impact of a significant oil spill in Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts, late in April. In addition to the large numbers of loons and sea ducks affected, the estimated 98,000 barrels of oil spilled clearly impacted Piping Plovers; approximately 80% of the plover population in Bristol picked up at least some oil, and large numbers of terns, including many Endangered Roseate Terns, were similarly affected. Fortunately, efforts to discourage recently arrived nesting terns from landing on the oil-soaked shores of Ram I., an important Buzzards Bay tern colony, were reasonably successful, and it is felt that at least 250 pairs relocated on nearby Penikese I. which, fortunately, was unaffected by the oil.

While no new breeding records were established in New England this year, the season nonetheless had its share of highlights. First state records included a peripatetic Reddish Egret in Rhode Island, the continued presence from May of Black Rail in New Hampshire, and an all-too-brief visit of a White-winged Tern in Maine. Other outstanding occurrences included Yellow-nosed Albatross, Wilson's Plover, and Red-necked Stint in Massachusetts, and offshore appearances of White-faced Storm-Petrel, Red-billed Tropicbird, and Bridled Tern. No complaints!

**Abbreviations:** M.A.R.C. (Massachusetts Avian Records Committee), M.D.F.W. (Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife), N. & S. Monomoy I. (Monomoy N.W.R., Chatham, Barnsta-

# New England



ble, MA), Plum I. (Parker River N.W.R., Newbury/Rowley, Essex, MA), South Beach (Chatham, Barnstable, MA), S.S.B.C. (South Shore Bird Club), Trustum Pond N.W.R. (Washington, RI).

## LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

A Red-throated Loon at Napatree Pt., Washington, RI 19 Jun (*vide* RF) apparently provided one of the latest spring reports for the Ocean State. Common Loon data for Vermont indicated that 37 successful nests hatched 61 chicks, although 12 chicks were lost as of this writing (*vide* Eric Hanson). A tally of 46 Common Loons at Falmouth, Barnstable, MA 21 Jun (RF) is indicative of the number of subad. loons that regularly summer in Buzzards Bay, well away from interior breeding areas. A report of a pair of Pied-billed Grebes with 2 juvs. at Trustum Pond N.W.R. 24 Jun (AM) was the only report received of nesting in the

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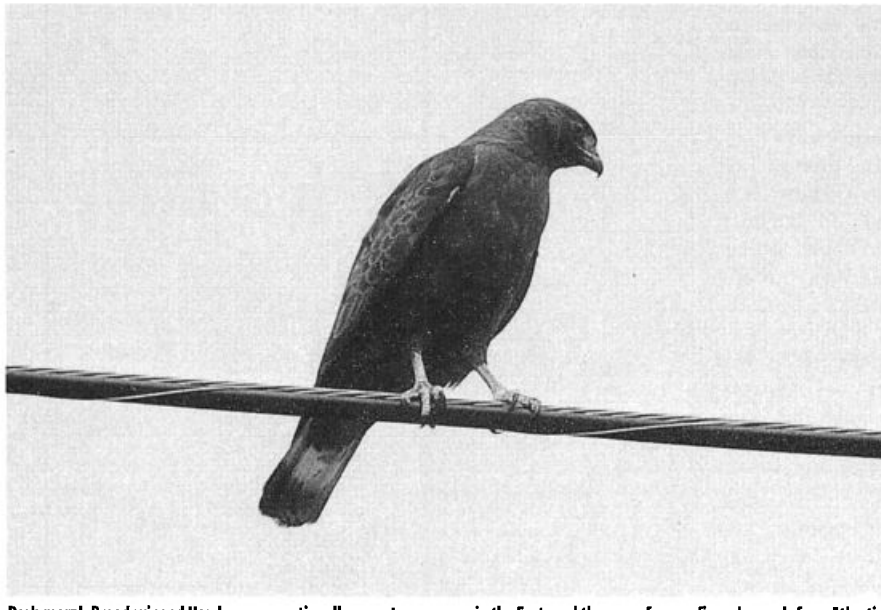
Region. In the seasonally tardy column belong single Horned Grebes at Wallis Sands State Beach, Rockingham, NH 12 Jun (CM) and at South Kingstown, Washington, RI 1 Jul (*vide* RF), along with a Red-necked Grebe at Winter Harbor, Rockingham, ME 4 Jul (*vide* BT).

A well-described Yellow-nosed Albatross in Cape Cod Bay at First Encounter Beach, Eastham, Barnstable, MA 2 Jun (BN, CG) represents yet another in a series of early-summer observations of this Southern Hemisphere tubenose in New England waters within the last sev-

eral years; the inevitable question arises as to whether a single or several individuals are involved. Regional shearwater numbers were unremarkable, with only a concentration of 2,000–5,000 Greater Shearwaters near Mt. Desert Rock in the Gulf of Maine 14 Jun (BT) and 520 Sooty Shearwaters at South Beach 1 Jul (RH) being at all noteworthy. Although not exceptional, an estimate of 1414 Wilson's Storm-Petrels at Stellwagen Bank 13 Jul (ME, S.S.B.C.) was the highest of the reporting period. A White-faced Storm-Petrel 15 Jul near Hydrographer Canyon, located at the edge of the continental shelf se. of Nantucket I. (CD, BP et al.), was in the vicinity of nearly all previous New England observations. At Noman's Land, Dukes, MA, a colony of Leach's Storm-Petrels discovered two years ago was found to contain at least 16 pairs, and this summer, 8 birds were banded there (TF). The same deepwater pelagic trip that recorded the White-faced Storm-Petrel also tallied a most unusual Red-billed Tropicbird in the vicinity of Hydrographer Canyon 15 Jul (CD, BP et al.). Although White-tailed Tropicbird might seem to be the more expected tropicbird in New England offshore waters, the fact is that Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island all have one to several records for this widespread tropical seabird. A soaring American White Pelican was noted over Truro, Barnstable, MA 28 Jun (JY), and another individual was alleged at Silver L., Barnard, Windsor, VT (*vide* JN).

Among the scattering of Least Bitterns reported Regionwide, nesting was apparently confirmed only at Stratford Great Meadows, Fairfield, CT (CB). An annual wading bird survey conducted by Simon Perkins at Kettle I., Essex, MA produced a nest count of 94 Great Egrets, 203 Snowy Egrets, 12 Little Blue Herons, 15 Black-crowned Night-Herons, and 52 Glossy Ibis. In Rhode Island, Richard Ferren conducted a similar effort in Narragansett Bay that yielded nest totals of

209 Great Egrets (+24 pairs), 36 Snowy Egrets (+40 pairs), five pairs of Little Blue Herons, a single pair of Cattle Egrets, 197 Black-crowned Night-Herons (+55 pairs), and 13 Glossy Ibis (+195



Dark-morph Broad-winged Hawks are exceptionally rare at any season in the East, and there are few confirmed records from Atlantic coast states. This bird, photographed at the southern tip of Moosehead Lake near Greenville Junction, Piscataquis County, Maine, appears to be an adult. It was present throughout July (date of photograph unknown). Photograph by Marylea Klauder.

pairs). Bay State numbers showed a modest increase from recent past tallies; however, in Rhode Island, Black-crowned Night-Heron numbers continue well below counts made in the 1980s and 1990s, and Glossy Ibis took a decided dip from recent past census figures. Of the scattering of Yellow-crowned Night-Heron reports, individuals at Phippsburg, Sagadahoc, ME 14 Jul (CC) and Hampton, Rockingham, NH 8 Jul (BG) were the most extralimital. Foremost among the wading bird highlights was an immature, dark-morph Reddish Egret that first appeared at the Charlestown Breachway, Washington, RI 5–17 Jul (ST, LF), and later moved to Westport, Bristol, MA 20 Jul (RB) and Little Compton, Washington, RI 20–27 Jul (RF et al.). This individual furnished a first state record for Rhode Island and only the 4th for Massachusetts. Also of interest was a White Ibis that appeared in Rhode Island at Newport 1 Jun (D. Cinotti) and Jamestown, Newport 2 Jun (m. ob.); possibly the same bird was at Hammonasset Beach S.P., Madison, Middlesex, CT 14 Jun (CR). More elusive was a White-faced Ibis at Rowley, Essex, MA 8–24 Jul (RH) that managed to avoid detection by most who endeavored to find it.

#### WATERFOWL THROUGH RAPTORS

Particularly noteworthy of the out-of-

season waterfowl reports were a crippled Snow Goose at Ferrisburg, Addison, VT 12 Jul (TM, SA); 2 Brant at Duxbury Beach, Plymouth, MA throughout Jul (DF) and a single at South Beach 13 Jul (RH); 2 Harlequin Ducks at Petit Manan I. in the Gulf of Maine 15 Jun (ZK), along with a single that spent the month of Jun at Chilmark, M.V. (AK); and single Buffleheads at Grand Isle, VT 22–23 Jun (DH), Eel Pond, Rockingham, NH 9 Jul (CM, DA), and Bar Harbor, Hancock, ME 11 Jul (BT).

Vermont Ospreys this year fledged a record-breaking 82 chicks from 48 successful nests (*vide* JN). In Massachusetts, the Osprey colony at Martha's Vineyard comprised 58 pairs (*vide* VL), and at the Westport

R. in Dartmouth/Westport, Bristol, there were 66 nests (*vide* DCo). Evidence of the continued growth of the New England Bald Eagle population was the first successful nesting of eagles in Rhode Island at Scituate Res., Providence (*vide* RF), and the appearance of a new Massachusetts nest at Haverhill, Essex (*vide* M.D.F.W.). Elsewhere in Massachusetts, nine nesting pairs fledged 13 young (*vide* M.D.F.W.). Most striking and very unusual in New England was a dark-morph Broad-winged Hawk present throughout Jul at Greenville Junction, Piscataquis, ME (ph. Marylea Klauder, *vide* Claire Burnett). This morph is thought to breed primarily in the Alberta region of w. Canada, and though it apparently migrates in very small numbers along the eastern edge of the Great Plains, it is generally exceedingly rare in the East, with only a few accepted sight reports away from Gulf Coast.

Nest monitoring of American Kestrels in cranberry bogs in se. Massachusetts continued to reflect the steady decline previously noted here. This was the 4th year in a row of declines, with 108 young produced in 31 of 65 boxes monitored, compared to 156 young produced in 45 boxes of 64 boxes monitored in 2000 (JM, MM). We'd best start really paying attention to these handsome little falcons in New England, because they are

quietly slipping away! By contrast Merlins are apparently continuing to increase as breeders in n. New England, where this year nesting confirmation came in Vermont at Addison, Addison 12 Jul (TM, SA) and S. Burlington, Chittenden the same day (AS). Further evidence was suggested by the presence of early migrants (?) in Massachusetts at Nahant, Essex 22 Jul (RH) and Plum I. 26 Jul (TW). Not unlike Bald Eagles and Ospreys, Peregrine Falcons continue their steady recovery from the dark days of DDT contamination. In Massachusetts this year, these regal falcons produced 16 young at 10 sites, including a newly-occupied historic eyrie at Mt. Sugarloaf in S. Deerfield, Franklin and a new urban site at Lawrence, Essex (TF). An interesting sidebar to this story is that kill remains in various Bay State nests included no fewer than 4 Budgerigars and one Cockatiel (TF)! Even if not as exotically nourished as the Bay State falcons, Vermont Peregrines fledged 39 chicks from 16 successful nests (*vide* SF).

### RAILS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

The continued presence from May of a calling Black Rail at a small, freshwater wetland at Greenland, Strafford, NH until 2 Jun (*vide* BT) was nothing short of extraordinary. At the extreme periphery of their range in s. New England, 2 Clapper Rails at Duxbury Beach, Plymouth, MA 24 Jul (DF) were of interest, as the species has been suspected of nesting at this locality within the past several years, an event that is always a rare occurrence in Massachusetts. In contrast, Bay State counts of 11 Virginia Rails at S. Hanson, Plymouth 15 Jun (WP, S.S.B.C.) and 10 at Barre, Worcester 17 Jun (CB) remind one of how ubiquitous this species is where proper habitat exists. One ad. and 2 juv. Common Moorhens at Otter Cr., Ferrisburgh, Addison, VT 5 Jul (TM) was the only confirmed nesting in New England. Near L. Messalonskee, Kennebec, ME, a pair of Sandhill Cranes raised one young this year, and at least one additional pair was present at Smithfield, Somerset (*vide* LB), along with 2 ads. at Leeds, Androscoggin 31 Jul (ph. R.

Crowley). With the confirmed breeding of Sandhill Cranes in Maine for the past three years, observers should no longer be as surprised by occasional sightings of birds beyond the borders of the Pine Tree State, including a group of 4–5 cranes in flight over Provincetown, Barnstable, MA 2 Jun (RP, GP) and singles at Barrington, Bristol, RI 25 Jul (SRe) and Monroe, Grafton, NH in Jun (*vide* BT).

Despite a serious late-Apr oil spill in Buzzards Bay that oiled approximately 80% of the Piping Plovers nesting in Bristol, MA, 523 pairs of plovers statewide still managed to fledge 1.1 young per pair, a figure only slightly below last year's numbers. Additionally a cool, wet spring and a high incidence of predation this season were thought to be contributing factors to this year's lowered productivity. In the vicinity of Allens Pond, South Dartmouth, Bristol, 28 nesting Piping Plovers picked up at least some oil; nonetheless, 14 pairs fledged 7 young (*vide* MAS). Given the fact that Massachusetts is steward to approximately a third of the Atlantic Coast population of this threatened species, every young fledged is significant! New Hampshire plovers had similar difficulties, and by late Jun, four out of seven nests failed; however, by late Jul, at least 5 chicks were close to fledging (*vide* BT). Continued monitoring of American Oystercatchers in Massachusetts this year confirmed 168 breeding pairs with a fledge

bird Conservation Plan (2001).

Either there was a mini-invasion of Black-necked Stilts in early Jun, or a few individual stilts covered a lot of coastline. Three stilts found in late May at the Charlestown Breachway, Washington, RI continued from late May until 9 Jun (*vide* RF), and one has to wonder if a trio at Scarborough, Cumberland, ME 14–15 Jun (*vide* Julie Suchecki, CM), followed by a single at Lubec, Washington 15 Jun (Nancy McReel, *vide* JD) may not have been part of the same group. There are five or six previous Maine records but none involving so many birds (*vide* JD). The most encouraging report of Upland Sandpipers was 16 at Hanscom Air Base, Concord, Middlesex, MA 12 Jun (MR), even though only one juv. was observed. Shorebirds observed during Jun and Jul typically offer a mix of late spring migrants, fall migrants, non-breeding summering individuals, and rarities. Sometimes plumage offers a clue as to which birds belong in which category, but sometimes not. In the late migrant/non-breeding category probably belong 75 Red Knots at South Beach 14 Jun (BN); 47 Semipalmated Sandpipers and 8 White-rumped Sandpipers at South Beach 17 Jun (BN); 2 Western Sandpipers (always rare in spring in New England) at Edgartown, M.V. 7 Jun (AK); and 42 Red-necked Phalaropes at Andrew's Pt., Rockport, Essex, MA 1 Jun (RH). High tallies for southbound migrants included 800 Semipalmated Plovers at Crane's Beach, Ipswich, Essex, MA 30 Jul (EJ); 550 Lesser Yellowlegs at Plum I. 19 Jul (P&FV); 220 Willets (race *semipalmatus*) at South Beach 20 Jul (BN); 15 Willets (race *inornatus*) at South Beach 9 Jul (BN); 30 Hudsonian Godwits, 400 Red Knots, 1500 Sanderlings, 2000 Semipalmated Sandpipers, and 1600 Short-billed Dowitchers at South Beach 20 Jul (BN); 5000 Semipalmated Sandpipers at Plum I. 25 Jul (RH); and 1300 Least Sandpipers at South Beach 13 Jul (RH). In the unusual category clearly belongs a well-described Wilson's Plover seen at Crane's Beach, Ipswich, Essex, MA 6 Jun (EJ), unfortunately never seen again. Also notable was a Marbled Godwit at Sherwood Island S.P., Westport, Fairfield, CT 16–19 Jun (PS); an infrequently-noted ad. Baird's Sandpiper at Charlestown Breachway, Washington, RI 16 Jul (DF); a Red-necked Stint at



Gracing Laudholm Farms, Maine on 14 June 2003 was this rare Royal Tern. Photograph by Chad Dorsey.

rate of 0.6 per pair (*vide* M.D.F.W.). Although the pair count is slightly higher than 2002, the low productivity is a point of concern, particularly since the American Oystercatcher is listed as a Species of High Concern in the *United States Shore-*

South Beach 8–9 Jul (ph. BN et al.); a Ruff at Essex, Essex, MA 10 Jul (RH); a scattering of Wilson's Phalaropes, including 2 at Scarborough, Cumberland, ME 27 Jul (LB), where last year the species nested; and 2 Red Phalaropes observed well inland at Pondicherry Wildlife Preserve, Jefferson, Coos, NH 13–15 Jul (*vide* BT).

### JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS

As is usually the case, the only South Polar Skuas recorded were 2 observed well offshore on Georges Bank 15–16 Jul (KD et al.). The Massachusetts Laughing Gull population (the largest in the Region) registered 1200 pairs, an 8% increase over last season (M.D.F.W.). A total of 5 Little Gulls appeared at various points in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, and up to 3 Black-headed Gulls occurred at Rye, Strafford, NH 3–7 Jul (SM, v.o.), one of which was said to be sporting an Icelandic bird band. Tardy Icelandic Gulls included singles at Galilee, Washington, RI 5 Jun (CN); Provincetown, Barnstable, MA 10 Jun (BN); and Concord Point, Rockingham, NH 12 Jun (CM). Apparent hybrid gulls observed were a Herring x Great Black-backed Gull at Nahant, Essex, MA 22 Jul (RH) and a Herring x Glaucous Gull, for the 3rd year in a row, at Plymouth, Plymouth, MA 22 Jun (AB).

Northernmost of the total of 6 Royal Terns Regionwide were singles in Maine at Wells, York 14 Jun (CM) and Phippsburg, Sagadahoc 17 Jul (CC). Single sightings of Sandwich Terns in Massachusetts could possibly have all pertained to the same bird, due to their geographical proximity and clustering of dates. The reports included single individuals at Nantucket I. and Muskeget I. 11 Jun (ER, RV) and Edgartown, M. V. 7 Jun (AK). Tern numbers at the tern restoration project at White I. and Seavey I., Isles of Shoals, NH this year featured approximately 8000 Common, 132 Roseate, and 12 Arctic Terns (*vide* BT). At L. Champlain in Vermont, 150–160 pairs of Common Terns raised

74 chicks, an increase over the past two seasons (*vide* Mark LaBarr). The Massachusetts total of 1715 pairs of Roseate Terns was a 17% increase over last season's tally, while a most impressive 16,087 pairs of Common Terns was an all-time modern high count (*vide* M.D.F.W.). The increase in Common Tern numbers was largely due to the continued success of a gull and predator-exclusion project at S. Monomoy I. A count of 55 Arctic Terns in first-summer plumage at South Beach 1 Jul (RH) is indicative of the way terns in *portlandica* plumage regularly haunt the fringes of large, active tern colonies in early summer. Six Forster's Terns at Eastham, Barnstable, MA 21 Jul (PF, BN) were a little early for such a number. The total of 2562 pairs of Least Terns in Massachusetts was down 8%, and marked the 2nd year in a row of decline (*vide* M.D.F.W.). A Bridled Tern at Hydrographer Canyon 15 Jul (CD, BP et al.) was substantially upstaged by a White-winged Tern

in breeding plumage at Wells, York, ME 13–14 Jun (SR, ph. SM, v. o.) for a first state record. A concentration of 16 Black Terns at Sandwich, Barnstable, MA 25 Jul (MT) was notably early for such a high number. Seven pairs of Black Skimmers were present at S. Monomoy I. (*vide* M.D.F.W.), and a single pair nested at Sandy Pt., W. Haven, New Haven, CT (*vide* GH).

Out of season were single Common Murres at Cox's Ledge, s. of Block I., RI 5 Jun (ST), at Andrew's Point, Rockport, Essex, MA 21 Jun (RH), and at White I. and Seavey I., Isles of Shoals, NH 22–27 Jun (RS). Equally unusual, although increasingly regular, were 5–6 Atlantic Puffin sightings along the coast in Jun, ranging from the Isles of Shoals to Andrew's Pt., Rockport, Essex, MA. Unprecedented, however, was a puffin in Narragansett Bay at N. Kingstown, Washington, RI 3 Jun (CR, RF).

### DOVES THROUGH THRUSHES

An alleged Eurasian Collared-Dove was marginally photographed at Oak Bluffs, M.V. 14 Jul (Roger Williams, *vide* AK).

As this would represent a first unequivocal record for both Massachusetts and the Region as a whole, absolute resolution must await action by the M.A.R.C. In Maine, a White-winged Dove at Bangor, Penobscott 25–29 Jul (JM, MP) represented the 11th state record. Cuckoos are sufficiently elusive that tracking their local abundance is frequently more of an anecdotal exercise than one based on science. Nonetheless, at least one seasoned Granite State observer noted that in New Hampshire, "this [was] one of the better cuckoo years in recent memory (PH, *vide* BT)." A solo Short-eared Owl report came from Chappquidick I., M.V. 10 Jun (VL), one of the few remaining localities where this beleaguered breeder is making a (final?) stand in the Region.

The presence of 2 Chuck-will's-widows at Bourne, Barnstable, MA throughout Jun (Jerry Ingersoll, *vide* B.O.) serves as a reminder that this species is still unconfirmed as a breeder in the Bay State. A count of 30 Whip-poor-wills at Myles Standish S.F., Plymouth, Plymouth, MA 24 Jun (Gd'E) was consistent with recent past tallies. The ever uncommon and local Red-headed Woodpecker this season made at least four Regional appearances, the most enigmatic being one at Nantucket I. 7 Jun (GF). Considerably more unusual were 2 American Three-toed Woodpeckers at Baxter S.P., Piscataquis, ME 5 Jul (GT, CCh), a species that is arguably the most difficult-to-locate breeding bird in New England.

An Olive-sided Flycatcher at Chesterfield, Hampshire, MA 27 Jul (RP), if it was a local breeder, was notable, as this species has all but vanished as a nester in Massachusetts in recent years. An Acadian Flycatcher was again present in early Jun at Pawtucketaway S.P., Nottingham, NH (CM, v. o.), a site where the species has nested in the recent past, virtually at the n. extreme of range in New England. A robust count of 35+ Willow Flycatchers at Plum I. 7 Jun (P&FV) undoubtedly included both migrant and resident individuals. Extralimital but increasingly frequent at this season in New England, Rhode Island's 6th state record of Scissor-tailed Flycatcher came at Richmond 18–22 Jun (SC et al.) and Charlestown, Washington 29–30 Jun (C. Thompson et al.). If nesting, the 3 Yellow-throated Vireos at Wompatuck S.P., Hingham, Plymouth, MA 15 Jun (P&FV) were quite unusual in this part of Massachusetts. Similarly notable, a Warbling Vireo at Vineyard Haven, M.V. 1 Jul (AK) was at a locality where the species



Little Gulls are scarce in New England after May and before the early fall, so this bird at Laudholm Farms in Maine 14 June 2003 (with the White-winged Tern) constituted a summer-season rarity. Photograph by Steve Mirick.

is virtually unknown as a breeder.

Motivated by concern over declining Bay State Purple Martin numbers, a concerted statewide census revealed no more than 159–180 pairs, along with confirmation that most colonies are located in se. Massachusetts (*fide* DCI). Most interesting was a tally of 160 Northern Rough-winged Swallows deemed to be migrating at Falmouth, Barnstable, MA 19 Jul (RF). Well known for its early southward departure after nesting, documented instances of such significant early movements of Northern Rough-winged Swallows are virtually unrecorded in New England.

The confirmed nesting of Carolina Wrens at Bangor, Penobscott, ME 22 Jun (JM) was significantly n. of the regular breeding range of this species in New England. Eastern Bluebirds, as well as Tree Swallows, apparently took a significant hit following a severe winter and a cool, rainy spring. Carefully monitored "Bluebird Trails" in se. Massachusetts revealed 17 pairs of bluebirds in 134 nest boxes (21 pairs in 2002) on one trail (JM) and an additional 12 pairs in another 134 boxes (24 in 2002) on another trail (MM). Needless to say, the total number of fledglings was similarly reduced. The Bicknell's Thrush population at Stratton Mt., VT, carefully monitored, suffered significant nest failure, with nine of 14 nests located fledging no young (*fide* JN). In the hill country of w. Massachusetts, Swainson's Thrush numbers have been relatively low in recent years, so a count of 7 at Monroe S.F., Franklin 25 Jun (EN) was encouraging.

### WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

Good single-day counts on 28 Jun of 70 Chestnut-sided Warblers and 73 Black-throated Green Warblers (ML) within the Ware R. watershed, Worcester (a Massachusetts Important Bird Area) reflects the fact that where appropriate breeding habitat exists, these breeding species occur in substantial numbers. Three Cerulean Warblers at Quabbin Res., Hampshire, MA 6 Jul (Gd'E) and 2 at Highgate, Franklin, VT 16 Jun (TM) were at regular New England breeding stations. Of 2 reported Kentucky Warblers, one at Matinicus Rock in the Gulf of Maine 9 Jun (V. Lane) was most notable. Equally interesting was a Yellow-breasted Chat at Prudence I. in Narragansett Bay, RI throughout Jun (RE). Although no evidence of nesting was obtained, it was certainly a possibility.

"Out of place" best describes a male Western Tanager at Winter Harbor, Hancock, ME 28 Jun (L&MS) just three

weeks before one turned up on Machias Seal I., NB. Clay-colored Sparrows apparently nested again at Grand Isle, VT (DH), and a singing male at S. Dartmouth, Bristol, MA 22 Jun (CDa) was intriguing, even though there was no evidence of breeding. An intensive saltmarsh survey in the Newbury/Plum I. area of Essex, MA 17 & 21 Jun (RH) registered an impressive total of 252 Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrows and 37 Seaside Sparrows, clearly indicating the significance of this Important Bird Area for these Regionally important species. Single Blue Grosbeaks at Woburn, Middlesex, MA 5–6 Jun (MR) and S. Quabbin, Hampshire, MA 25 Jun–6 Jul (RK, v. o.) were seasonally out of place, as were single Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Belgrade, Kennebec, ME 12 Jul (KG) and New Bedford, Bristol, MA 29 Jul (Carol Newport). At least one pair of Boat-tailed Grackles nested this year at Stratford Great Meadows, Fairfield, CT (CB, *fide* GH). A European Goldfinch at Rockport, Essex, MA 30 Jul (G. Soucy) was assumed an escapee.

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