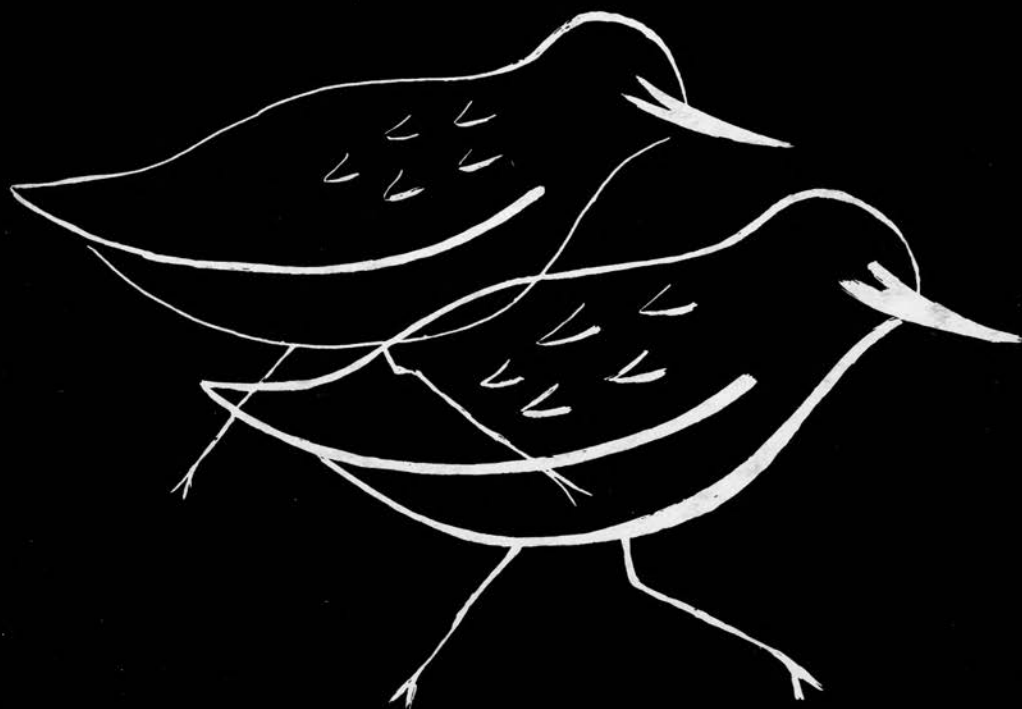


# BIRD OBSERVER

OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS



VOL. 4 NO. 2  
MAR-APR. 1976

MUDHEN



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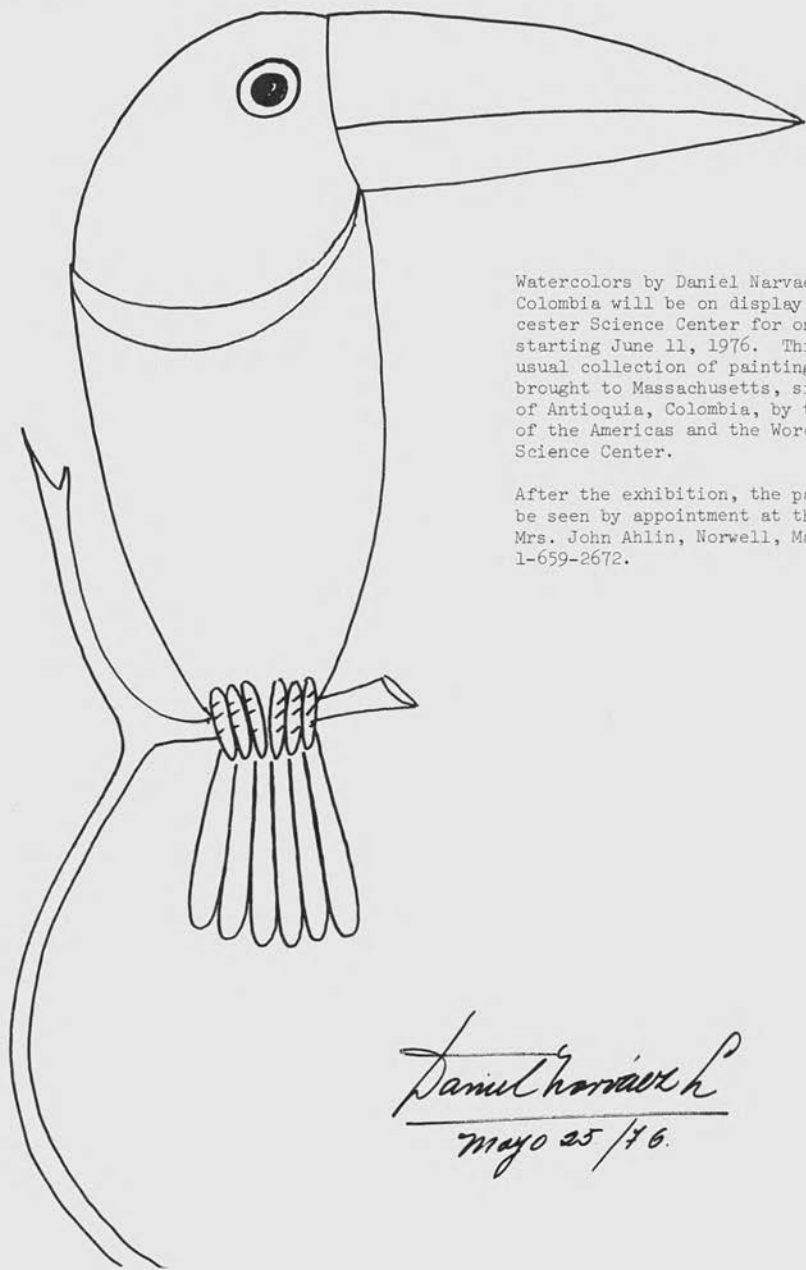
Send all bird reports to Mrs. Ruth P. Emery  
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Wollaston, MA 02170.

Reports should be received by the 10th of the month following the date of the sighting.

ART REVIEW

COLOMBIAN BIRDS, an exhibition of watercolors by Daniel Narvaez, is now to be seen at the Worcester Science Center. Mr. Narvaez, a native of Colombia, South America, began painting at the age of five. He studied at the School of Art in Cali and the National University of Colombia in Bogota, majoring in ornithology. His earlier works, when done as a painter for the Institute of Ornithology at the University, are now located in the archives there. He also illustrated The Herons of Colombia, written by Antonio Olivares.

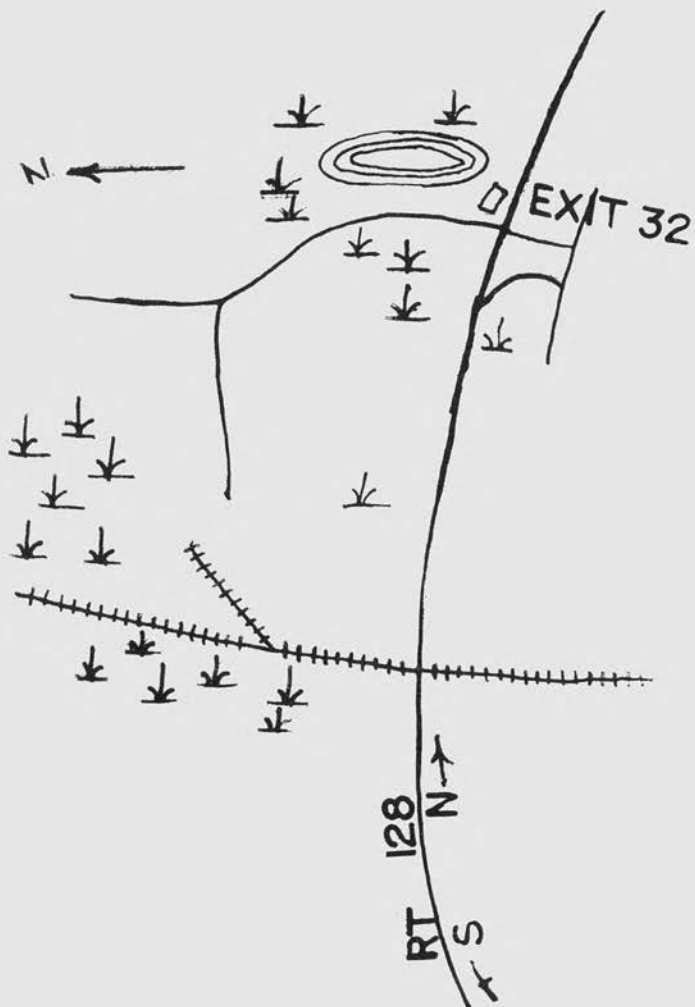
Mr. Narvaez's paintings are very Japanese in the use of negative space. His color is excellent and his portrayal of the birds' posture and habitat are most convincing. The artist's attention to plant forms are simple yet very studied. His work has been well received by both ornithologists and artists. He is the only painter in Colombia devoting his life to painting birds and he hopes to complete a field guide to Colombian birds in the near future. P.S.



Watercolors by Daniel Narvaez of Medellin Colombia will be on display at the Worcester Science Center for one week starting June 11, 1976. This most unusual collection of paintings has been brought to Massachusetts, sister state of Antioquia, Colombia, by the Partners of the Americas and the Worcester Science Center.

After the exhibition, the paintings may be seen by appointment at the home of Mrs. John Ahlin, Norwell, Massachusetts, 1-659-2672.

*Daniel Narvaez*  
Mayo 25 / 76.



## BIRDING THE LYNNFIELD MARSH

by Bennett Keenan, Lynnfield

Probably you saw a Least Bittern at Mt. Auburn. Did you find King Rails in the Nahant thicket? How about those other elusive, mysterious marsh birds--Gallinules, Marsh Wrens, Soras? Do you just hear them sometimes, or have you really watched them the way you watch a Robin on your lawn? If you've seen all these things, you don't need to visit the Lynnfield Marsh, although there's enough there to be exciting even so. On the other hand, if seeing these birds has some appeal, you owe yourself a trip.

The Lynnfield Marsh--Reedy Meadow, if you want to know its real name--is roughly triangular in shape, bounded southeasterly by Route 128, northeasterly by Walnut Street, and westerly by Main Street. In addition to its extraordinary wildlife, it has some other unique features: you can see it, you can find it, and you can get into it to find the birds. The most exciting time to visit is from mid-April to the end of May. It's almost that good in August and early September. Sora, Virginia and King Rails, Common Gallinules, Least and American Bitterns, Willow Flycatcher, and Long-billed Marsh Wrens not only breed here, but for some reason are fearless and often are seen at the birder's feet. The marsh seems also to be something of a magnet for rarities--I have seen Whistling Swan, Turkey Vulture, Black Tern, Red-headed Woodpecker, Prothonotary Warbler, Summer Tanager, and a long list of other unconventional visitors. How about eight Orchard Orioles in one tree? But then, I go there frequently; maybe you should.

The usual approach is to take Exit 32, Pleasure Island Road, off Route 128, at the colonial Statler Hilton Motel in Wakefield. The exit pattern is different from most, not the conventional sloverleaf, so you have to follow your nose and the signs, depending on whether you're headed North or South on Route 128. But how lost can you get on a highway exit ramp? Anyway, head north on Pleasure Island Road for approximately a quarter of a mile until it curves to the left. You will have marsh on both sides of the road. There is an opening through the trees bordering the road on your right that gives you a full view of some open water with the marsh grass beyond. Gallinules, grebes, geese and ducks swim in the open water. Sometimes rails walk on the marsh grass across the water--or at your feet. Don't overlook the small section of marsh on the other side of the road.

Then drive slowly and quietly along the road. Stay alert for landbird flocks in the woods to the end of the pavement. There are rumors that some birders go right into the paved parking lot of the factory that is there, but even though the lot is empty on weekends, it is private property. The proper thing is to bear a little to the right onto the indistinct dirt road, cross the railroad tracks and park in the obvious spot. Walk along the railroad spur until it meets the main line tracks, then walk the main line tracks to the right, under and beyond the power line. This is usually where the rails are. Sora and Virginia should be no problem. There should be a half dozen of each calling, and it is not unusual to see them, particularly Virginias, walking around on the lily pads. Don't be afraid to talk or make noise. Rails are naturally secretive, and therefore hard to see; they are, however, oblivious to people. Any normal or moderate noise you make won't cause them to hide--if anything it may make them move around a little. Plan to spend not less than a half hour in this railroad tracks-power line area.

Then walk back to your car, but instead of getting back into it, walk out the dirt road that begins at the tracks and goes under the power line, at a right angle to the tracks and the power line. It goes a few hundred yards through good warbler woods out to a small pond that shorebirds frequent. This little area is a finger-shaped peninsula sticking out into the marsh. Stay alert for marsh birds while you're walking it.

Next, drive out the way you drove in, but turn left into the parking area along the back of the motel. Cross the little bridge, continue up through the golf course past the restaurant and down the hill to Walnut Street. Turn left over the hill. After about a half mile, at the very bottom of the hill, where the brook goes under the street, there is a tiny area where you can park on the left side of the street. I have had the best luck finding herons and both kinds of bitterns looking out over the marsh from here.

If you haven't found all you want yet, there are two other shots. Continue along Walnut Street to the railroad crossing--about a mile. Walk along the tracks into the marsh. Good land birds, then plenty of marsh birds. Finally, continue along Walnut Street, bear left at the common onto Main Street, and turn right into Heritage Lane (almost exactly one mile from the tracks). Park on Heritage just off Main Street. On the opposite side of Main Street, and about a hundred feet before Heritage Lane, is a wooden highway fence

which marks the beginning of the Partridge Island Trail. There should be a sign marking it, because it is a joint project of the Conservation Commission and the High School, but the sign gets knocked down every once in a while. You can find the path, anyway. It goes through a quarter mile of wet woods out to Partridge Island (the trail has been bridged and cleared), which commands an excellent view of the marsh.

Let me close with a few observations about marsh birding. These may not be scientific, and some people whose opinions I respect don't agree, but they are based on frequent trips to this marsh over the last thirty-five years.

1) The earlier in the day, the better. You will hear five times as many rails, bitterns, marsh wrens, and others at 5:30 on a May morning as you will at 7:30. The birds stay active later--you will see them as frequently at 9:00 as at 5:30--but you don't actually see them often at any time.

2) Weather is important. I have my best luck on a still, damp, cloudy morning. Rain is not good, sunshine is bad, and wind is terrible.

3) The birds will change their location in the marsh to respond to differences in water table. Normally the best area for rails is in the railroad tracks-power line area, but in a dry spring or in late summer, look around the open water behind the motel or where the brook crosses Walnut Street.

4) It helps to be lucky!

WANTED: A used or new B and L Balscope Sr. spotting scope to replace stolen one. Contact Robert H. Stymeist, 54 Banks St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

#### FOR SALE

Island cottage--\$40,000. Only 40 minutes south of Boston, amid marshes, rivers and the ocean. Island has 22 acres, with 13 cottages on one half and with the other half wild. Auto access by causeway; deep water mooring included. Cottage needs work. Herons and hawks in summer, seals in winter. Also rental possibilities for other cottages. Call 729-0072 weekends or 8-10 p.m.

WANTED: Copy of Birds of the World by Singer. Write to Bird Observer or call Paula Butler, 484-2148.

#### AN AVIAN DOUBLE-CROSS

It's well known that Blue Jays can imitate the calls of several other species. When the Red-shouldered Hawk was a common summer resident, the jays would mimic its "kee-you" cry; now they have switched to the peewee-like whistle of the Broad-winged. So, whenever I hear a call that doesn't "fit," I first think of Blue Jay.

In April a bird gave repeatedly four of the short, harsh calls of the jay, but followed by a pair of two-note phrases that should have come from a Northern Oriole. A Blue Jay? No, an American Robin! Later, this bird sometimes followed the jay motif with a couple of normal robin phrases.

All of this recalled the celebrated Mt. Auburn robin of a few years ago, who could imitate Whip-poor-will to perfection. We should pay more attention to the songs of the thrushes; they may sometimes be as provocative as they are beautiful.

L. J. Robinson

## SYMBIOTIC STARLINGS

by Bruce A. Sorrie, Quincy

On April 24, 1975, I was with a small party of people including Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Petersen and Ms. Mary Cartung, sightseeing in Cades Cove, Tennessee. This is an area noted for its rich soil and early settlement by farmers, and the pastoral nature of the cove stands in marked contrast to the surrounding mountain terrain. Although now part of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Cades Cove still supports resident farmers, and small herds of cattle are a common sight.

At the western end of the loop road through the cove, we stopped to watch a Woodchuck (Marmota monax) feeding in the lush grass, when someone exclaimed "Look at that Starling!" Behind us lay some resting cows, one of which had a Starling (Sturnus vulgaris) perched upon its head. That was unusual enough, but the bird appeared to be picking about the animal's hide for food!

For the next two minutes or so we watched as the Starling moved in a deliberate manner about the ears, eyes, snout, and top of head, making obvious probing and picking movements with its bill in a manner which to us could only have been interpreted as feeding behavior. The bird concentrated its efforts at the bases of the ears and in the immediate vicinity of the eyes. What it obtained from the cow can only be surmised, for even with 7X binoculars we could not see the food items. Moving around the cow's great head proved to be no problem for the Starling; it never faltered or slipped, nor did the cow in any way attempt to dislodge the bird. Other Starlings in the pasture fed near cattle, but none alighted on the beasts.

Presently the Starling flew to another part of the pasture, but returned within a few minutes to the same cow, showing no hesitation to hop right back onto the animal's snout. This time it was soon joined by another bird, that fed atop the back of the cow's neck. We observed the birds for a few minutes more, took a few photographs for confirmation, then left.

Bizarre as this incident may seem, it is apparently not without precedent. Trevor Lloyd-Evans of the Manomet Bird Observatory assures me that he has seen references in European journals to symbiosis in starlings. Certainly, in the U.S. such behavior is rare enough to warrant mention here. Few birds indulge in true symbiotic behavior, but it is most interesting that the two species most specialized in this form of feeding are the oxpeckers of Africa, both members of the family Sturnidae, to which our Starling belongs.

## NEW ENGLAND HAWK WATCH

The New England Hawk Watch is looking for volunteer observers in eastern Massachusetts for the fall 1976, migrations. The purpose of the Hawk Watch, now six years old, is to trace old migration routes, locate new ones, and record the volume, variety and patterns of raptor migration. Thus many volunteers are needed to establish as many observation posts as possible throughout eastern Massachusetts. Observers will be asked to devote one day, or more if possible, to manning a hawk observation station where they would record all raptor movements. A coordinated New England-wide observation program will be conducted on the week-ends of September 18-19, September 25-26, October 2-3, and October 30-31, so volunteers are particularly needed for those dates. However, since relatively little is known of raptor movements in eastern Massachusetts, individuals who would be able to devote any other time to observation will be most appreciated.

If you have an interest in hawks and would like to participate, but do not feel confident in making identifications of migrating raptors, you may still make a significant contribution to the "watch." We can station beginners with more experienced observers who would benefit from the assistance of another pair of eyes scanning the sky and be able to offer tips on identification. Anyone wishing to participate is asked to contact Paul M. Roberts, 24 Pearson Road, Somerville, Mass. 02144; telephone (617) 776-8566.

Volunteers should note if they have a particular observation site which they would prefer to use or if they would be willing to staff a recommended station. Any information or advice individuals might have regarding good observation points, traditional migration routes, patterns or dates, or personal counts made in previous years will also be much appreciated.

## OWLS IN MASSACHUSETTS

by Robert H. Stymeist, Cambridge

Owls are one group of birds that have long fascinated and interested man. In North America there are 18 species of owls, of which 12 have occurred in Massachusetts. The owls most commonly found in the state are the Great Horned, Screech, Barred, Short-eared, Long-eared, Saw-whet, Snowy and Barn. There are only a handful of records for the Great Gray Owl, the most recent at Gill, from January to March 1973. The Hawk Owl has been seen on only 5 or 6 occasions, and the Boreal Owl only a few times since a pronounced flight in the winter of 1922-23. There is one record of a Burrowing Owl, collected at Newburyport on 15 May, 1875 by H. Joyce and J. K. Clifford. The specimen is preserved at the Museum of Science, Boston.

Detailed information on owl abundance is largely lacking. Most owls seem to be more common in winter, or at least they are reported more frequently from November through March than at any other time. Below is a chart listing all owls reported on a Christmas Count Census for the years 1967-1974. The number in parentheses following the year denotes the total number of counts held that year in Massachusetts.

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>1967(20)</u>	<u>1968(18)</u>	<u>1969(18)</u>	<u>1970(20)</u>	<u>1971(20)</u>	<u>1972(20)</u>	<u>1973(20)</u>	<u>1974(21)</u>	<u>Total</u>
Barn	0	1	2	1	0	0	2	6	12
Screech	19	11	21	46	42	17	27	56	239
Great									
Horned	16	21	19	39	56	17	41	68	277
Snowy	10	3	1	5	21	0	0	18	58
Barred	4	5	3	2	10	7	11	4	46
Long-eared	1	0	6	15	9	1	5	6	43
Short-eared	7	12	8	11	17	2	15	17	89
Saw-whet	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	8
	57	55	61	120	158	45	101	175	

As a family, owls display certain common but distinctive features and characteristics. Unlike most birds, the female is larger in size and weight than the male. For most birds, egg incubation begins after the last egg in the clutch is laid, but owls begin incubation after the female deposits the first egg. The hatching of young owls is thus staggered and not synchronized, and this of course, results in offspring of various sizes all in the same nest.

Owls seldom build their own nests. They often seek out the nests of hawks, crows or even squirrels in which to lay their eggs. To these structures they sometimes add a few new branches. Very rarely they build their own afresh. The usual clutch is 2 to 6 eggs--these invariably pure white. The male assists in feeding the young birds, and both parents are often aggressive and belligerent in the defense of the nest against intruders. The owlets are slow to develop and have a long period of dependence on parental care.

The eyes of owls are directed forward so that both look in the same direction. Thus, in order to look to the side, the birds are obliged to turn the head. Owls have superb eyesight: Barn Owls can capture prey where the illumination is only equivalent to that thrown by an ordinary candle burning 2500 feet away.

Not only do owls have such great eyesight, their hearing is equally superb. The ear openings are so large that they almost cover the wide sides of the head. The feathers of owls are constructed in such a way as to make their flight almost noiseless. A mouse has no chance to escape!

Owl longevity in the wild is largely a mystery, but a record exists of a Great Horned Owl that lived in captivity for 68 years.

Owls are difficult to observe because of their nocturnal nature. During the day they retire to dense forest vegetation. In the breeding season, owls become more vocal and are easily found by "owling." A good human imitation of the bird's call will often result in an answer, and hopefully the owl will come close enough to be seen with the aid of a powerful flashlight. Like most nocturnal animals, owls will not be disturbed by the light, provided that the observer is very quiet.

Finding an owl during the day is often a matter of luck. A good way to start is to pick a substantial stand of evergreen trees and then to look for pellets on the ground and



whitewash (bird droppings) on branches. Pellets are odd, compact, elliptical balls of undigested fur and bones. Most owls do not tear small prey apart, but instead swallow it whole with no injury to the bone structure of the animal eaten. Since the digestive juices in an owl's stomach are not acidic enough to dissolve the bones and fur after they have been swallowed, the owl must regurgitate them. This is done about six to eight hours after feeding. Another sure sign of the presence of an owl is a mob of scolding chickadees, nuthatches, crows and Blue Jays.

The Screech Owl is the most common owl in Massachusetts. It prefers woodlots and orchards and is often found within city limits. The only areas in which it is less populous are those of the higher elevations in western Massachusetts. Screech Owls breed from April to the second week of May. They are easily called in by a tape recording or a good imitation, and they will often respond during the day.

The Great Horned Owl is our largest common owl. It prefers heavily wooded areas and is particularly fond of the pine barrens of the Outer Cape and Plymouth County (especially Myles Standish State Forest). It nests very early in March, most often preferring a stand of White Pines (*Pinus Strobus*). Great Horned Owls are often seen at dusk, silhouetted against the sky. Less frequently, they can be seen in the daytime being chased by crows.

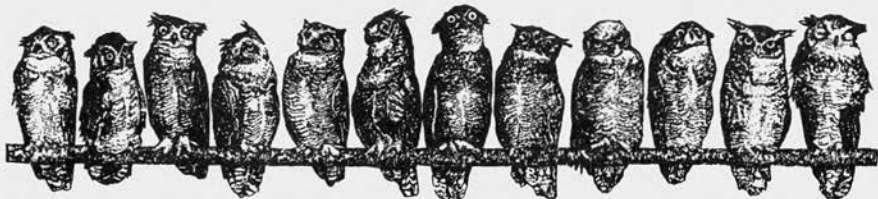
The Barred Owl is an uncommon breeding owl preferring densely wooded swamp regions. During the winter months, they often move from their breeding area to a region where food is more easily obtained. At this season they may even occasionally be found in thoroughly urban environments, such as downtown Boston. The Barred Owl is extremely rare along the southeastern coast and on Cape Cod. Crooked Pond, Boxford, is one of the easiest places in eastern Massachusetts at which to find this species. Mount Greylock in western Massachusetts is also most reliable, especially if you camp overnight. The Barred Owl's call is easily imitated, and results are often favorable--even during mid-day. Barred Owls call just at sunrise and up to one hour beyond that time.

The Long-eared Owl is the least known owl of those that regularly breed in the state. The species is almost totally nocturnal. It seems to call infrequently at the nest, but this is not a very vocal owl. The calls are quite weird: some resemble the yapping of an injured dog, others sound more like a human moan. Moreover, it is difficult to distinguish these calls from some of the less common vocalizations of other owl species. Certain calls of the Barred Owl are notably similar. The Long-eared Owl is easy to overlook during the day as well, for it is quite reluctant to flush. In spite of the rarity of this bird (which may be more apparent than real), winter roosts are occasionally found containing six or more individuals.

The Short-eared Owl is partially a diurnal owl. It is essentially a salt marsh and sand dune inhabitant, and is a permanent resident of Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket, Muskeget and Tuckernuck Islands. During the winter months, it can sometimes be found in such coastal marshes as those at Squantum, Salisbury, Parker River Refuge and even at Logan Airport. Fort Hill at Eastham is one of the more reliable Cape spots.

The Saw-whet Owl is a local breeding bird, preferring wet woodlands. It migrates in October and often shows up in the strangest places. Saw-whet Owls are very tame. They can be approached closely and sometimes even lifted off the perch. The species breeds on Cape Cod, probably in Nickerson State Park, and has been found nesting on Mount Greylock.

The Barn Owl is the least common owl in Massachusetts. It is a permanent resident of Martha's Vineyard and of Nantucket Island. During the winter months, it is found roosting in pine groves along the coast. Barn Owls probably also breed in Boston Harbor or in some of the abandoned buildings along the south shore waterfront, for they have been seen regularly on various islands in the Harbor.



## SHARP-TAILED SPARROWS IN MASSACHUSETTS

by Norman P. Hill, M.D., Assonet

Two obscure sparrows occur in the marshes of Massachusetts, little known because of their secretiveness and because of the difficulties of access to their habitat. These are the Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammospiza caudacuta*) and the Seaside Sparrow (*Ammospiza maritima*). The Seaside Sparrow is rare and local in this state, but the Sharp-tailed Sparrow occurs in almost all the marshes of our coastline and occasionally in inland fresh-water marshes during migration.

The Sharp-tailed Sparrow breeds from Virginia northeast along the coast to Nova Scotia and then west along the south shore of the St. Lawrence River, with isolated populations at James Bay and in the prairie provinces of Canada. Within this elongated and mostly very narrow range, the species is separated into five geographical races, four of which occur in Massachusetts.

The field identification of this species is not difficult if time and care are taken to obtain an adequate study. The essential field mark is the ochre-buff facial marking nearly surrounding the gray cheek patch; the crown and nape appear grayish and the back brownish. There are variable breast streakings, depending upon the race involved. With its short and sharply pointed tail feathers it could be confused only with the Seaside Sparrow, which appears appreciably larger, darker and grayer.

The typical habitat of Sharp-tailed Sparrows in Massachusetts is in the wide green marshes behind the dunes of the barrier beaches. Marshes filled with *Spartina patens* in which the Sharp-tails nest, and with the taller, coarser *Spartina alterniflora* along the creeks, along with various other grasses and rushes on the drier edges where the uplands begin to rise, are preferred. The Plum Island Marshes, the Barnstable Great Marsh and the Nauset Marshes are typical examples; however, the Sharp-tails tend to be colonial, even within these marshes, being found in small groups of three to fifteen pairs with half a mile or more between the groups. At Barnstable, the sum of many such colonies is about a thousand pairs.

Sharp-tailed Sparrows are late spring migrants. A few stragglers may arrive about mid-May but the bulk arrive at the end of the month. Nesting begins at once, with incubation lasting ten or eleven days and with young fledging in another ten or eleven days. By early July the marshes swarm with immatures in their rich buffy-brown plumage, very different in appearance from the adults. The nests are well hidden within tufts of grass and are cup-shaped and rest on the ground, protected from above by the arched grass stems.

In September the birds gradually withdraw southward down the coast, though stragglers remain until December or January. These stragglers seldom if ever survive the entire winter season. The main wintering grounds are in the marshes of the South Atlantic states, the Carolinas, Georgia and northern Florida, with a few birds also on the west coast of Florida. On these marshes, all five of the races occur in great abundance.

As mentioned above, four of the five races of the Sharp-tailed Sparrow occur in Massachusetts. Attempts to identify these races in the field are entertaining, and in some ways satisfactory, but in many ways not very convincing. For those who wish to try, the following will be helpful:

- 1) The Eastern Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*Ammospiza c. caudacuta*) is the race that breeds in Massachusetts and occurs exclusively in salt-water marshes. It is described above and may be considered the "mean of the species."

- 2) The Acadian Sharp-tailed Sparrow (*A. c. subvirgata*) is much paler and grayer, often appearing almost lavender on the back and with lemon-yellow facial markings and blurred breast streaking. This race breeds from Cape Elizabeth, Maine, northeastward through New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and west along the south shore of the St. Lawrence River to Kamouraska. Some colonies of this race occupy fresh water habitats when breeding. Birds of this race pass through Massachusetts very late in May and until mid-June and then again from mid-September through October. They occur mostly in the salt marshes of the coast, but a few individuals, presumably from the more western colonies along the St. Lawrence, are occasionally found in inland fresh-water marshes. The birds breeding in the marshes of southwestern Maine are intermediate in appearance between this race and the Eastern and are surprisingly similar to the James Bay race, so much so that field identification is impossible.

3) The James Bay Sharp-tailed Sparrow (A. c. altera) is gray on the back but not as pale as the Acadian and with richer orange facial markings. It breeds in the salt marshes at the southern end of James Bay and migrates south and southeast so that a few birds straggle through Massachusetts in the fall, where they have been collected both along the coast and in inland marshes. There are no spring records. Sight identification is impossible because of confusion with some Maine birds as well as with the next race.

4) The Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (A. c. nelsoni) is a slightly smaller bird with a relatively smaller bill; the breast is nearly devoid of streaking and the facial markings are very rich ochre. It breeds widely but sparsely through the prairie provinces of Canada and just across the border into North Dakota and Minnesota. As with the James Bay race, there are no spring records for Massachusetts; however, a few fall and early winter reports from both salt and fresh water marshes exist. In the field it is not separable from the James Bay race.

5) The Southern Sharp-tailed Sparrow (A. c. diversa) does not occur in Massachusetts as it breeds only as far north as central New Jersey. It is darker than the Eastern and has heavier breast streaking.

In conclusion, though the Sharp-tailed Sparrow is an easy bird to see each year, there is much that is still unknown about it. For instance, what confines the Sharp-tailed Sparrow to breeding in the Spartina patens and thus prevents their invasion into the niche of the Seaside in the wetter marsh areas or that of the Savannah in the drier grasses? Or why is the Sharp-tail colonial in Massachusetts whereas it is ubiquitous in apparently identical marshes further south? Or why, contrary to apparent geographical logic, does the Nelson's Sharp-tail occur more often in Massachusetts than does the James Bay race? The articles in "Life Histories of North American Birds" published by the U. S. National Museum in 1968 describe what is known in more detail than can this short communication and will better serve as a "take-off" point if you are interested in further study.

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THE BIRD OBSERVER SUMMARY FOR JANUARY, 1976

The weather during January was a continuation of the very cold and wet weather that began in the third week of December. The average temperature was 26.1°, 3.1° below normal. 5.29 inches of rain and 15.0 inches of snow fell during the course of the month; most of the snow (twelve inches) fell during a storm on the 12th-13th. The lowest temperatures were recorded during a period of Northwesterly winds on the 22nd-23rd, when the thermometer read -1° and -4° respectively. Thaws did not occur until the end of the month, when, from the 20th-29th, the temperatures averaged 12° above normal. Due to these low temperatures and heavy snow cover for the greater part of the month, very few lingering passerines remained beyond the end of December.

An Eared Grebe was present at Sandy Neck, Barnstable, on the 16th. Although three reports of Arctic Loon were received, the writers feel that this species, extremely rare within our area, is not distinguishable from small Common Loons in winter plumage. Contrary to a now popular belief, Common Loons can also be devoid of any white markings around the eye, in addition to being virtually identical in size and coloration to the Arctic on occasion.

Due to the freezing of most inland ponds during the month, most of the waterfowl moved out. However, 2 Snow Geese remained on the Cape and 5 separate Blue-winged Teal were reported. Single Tufted Ducks were seen at Salisbury and at Falmouth; it is up to the reader to speculate as to their origin.

Red-shouldered Hawks seem to be making a comeback after their drastic decline during the early 70's. Six individuals were reported this January as opposed to 2 and 5 reported during the same month of 1974 and 1975, respectively. Two immature Bald Eagles were found, and the Gyrfalcon was seen on the 10th at Orleans.

Lingering shorebirds included two American Woodcocks, a Spotted Sandpiper and a Red Phalarope off Cohasset. An adult Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen in Newburyport Harbor on the 6th, this being the first record for this species for the harbor, despite its increased occurrence at numerous other localities along the east coast. The Ivory Gull reduced itself to the role of a beggar by the end of the winter, accepting virtually any handout from numerous birders and passers-by.

Considering the severe weather which dominated the month, the following passerine records are of particular interest: Eastern Phoebe at Sandwich on the 6th, 7 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, Loggerhead Shrike at Salisbury remaining until the 25th, an Ovenbird in Framingham on the 3rd, and a Chipping Sparrow which spent the month at E. Wareham.

RRV

Common Loon:			
4	Cape Ann, P.I.	65, 22	CBC,CBC
Red-throated Loon:			
2	Orleans (North Beach)	20	W. Petersen
4	Cape Ann, P.I.	5, 4	CBC
25	Hull-Cohasset	3	B. Sorrie
Red-necked Grebe:			
3-11, 4	Orleans, Magnolia	7, 10-12	C. Goodrich, G. Gove
11,21	Rockport, N. Scituate	11, 8	D. Brown#, W. Cornwell#
31	Marshfield	6	W. Petersen
<u>Eared Grebe:</u>			
16	Barnstable (S.N.)	1	V. Laux
Horned Grebe:			
4,21	Cape Ann, Hull	71, 56+	CBC, B. Sorrie
Pied-billed Grebe:			
4,17	Bourne, Cape Ann	6, 18	SSBC(Anderson), BBC(D'Entremont)
Gannet:			
10	Cohasset	3	R. Emery & G. Wilson
Great Cormorant:			
4,24	Cape Ann, off Long I.	122, 150	CBC, D. Brown#
21,25	Weymouth, Hull	175+, 25+	B. Sorrie, W. Petersen
23	Nahant	30	V. & S. Zende
Great Blue Heron:			
20	Hingham	8	B. Sorrie
Snowy Egret:			
1-8	Eastham	1	v.o.

Black-crowned Night Heron:			
5,10	Wollaston, Eastham	3, 4	D. Brown, J. Bryant
11,12	N. Scituate, Dorchester	9, 2	S. Higginbotham, J. Murphy
American Bittern:			
2,4	S. Peabody, Newburyport	1, 1	R. Heil, CBC (P. Miliotis)
7-25,10	Falmouth, Eastham	1, 1	A. Clarke#, J. Bryant
Mute Swan:			
25	E. Falmouth	56	BBC (A. Clarke)
Canada Goose:			
1-31,4	Framingham, Newburyport	380+, 855	K. Hamilton, CBC
Brant:			
10,11	Orleans, Boston (L.I.)	400+, 101	A. Clarke, R. Stymeist
16	Duxbury	50	B. Sorrie
Snow Goose:			
thr.,11	Chatham, Falmouth	1, 1	v.o., R. Forster
Black Duck:			
4,12	Cape Ann, Dorchester	865, 375	CBC, J. Murphy
Gadwall:			
1,2	Cohasset, E. Orleans	2, 1	Litchfields, W. Petersen
13,17	Marion, Cohasset	1f., 2m.	G. Gove, W. Petersen
Pintail:			
3-20	9 localities	12 individuals	v.o.
Green-winged Teal:			
thr.,10	Woburn, Framingham	1m., 2	G. Gove, K. Hamilton
Blue-winged Teal:			
1,6	Marshfield, Sandwich	1, 3	B. Cassie, R. Pease
10	Hingham	1	R. Emery, G. Wilson
European Wigeon:			
thr.	Cohasset, Nantucket	1m., 4m.	v.o., E. Andrews#
American Wigeon:			
3	Wareham	42	SSBC (Anderson)
Northern Shoveler:			
1-11, 2-31	Yarmouth, Barnstable	4, 2prs.	V. Laux, R. Pease
Wood Duck:			
thr.	8 localities	13 individuals	v.o.
Redhead:			
4	Falmouth (Sider's Pond)	40	R. O'Hara
Ring-necked Duck:			
4,10	Eastham	25, 30+	CBC, A. Clarke
13	Sandwich	85	R. Pease
Canvasback:			
11	Falmouth	250	R. Forster
Greater Scaup:			
24,25	Boston, W. Harwich	800, 800+	W. Cornwell, A. Clarke
Lesser Scaup:			
6	Mattapoisett	220(details rec'd)	D. Brown#
31	Lakeville	1	W. Petersen
Tufted Duck:			
3,1-17	Falmouth, Salisbury	1, 1	T. Lawrence & T. Leverich, v.o.
Common Goldeneye:			
13,25	Marion, Newburyport	1000, 5000+	G. Gove, R. Veit
Barrow's Goldeneye:			
thr.	5 localities	singles	v.o.
thr.,6	Newburyport, Plymouth	2, 3	v.o., D. Brown#
25	Nahant/Lynn	2	S. Zende
Oldsquaw:			
4	Newburyport	162	CBC
Harlequin Duck:			
9on,2-11	Magnolia, E. Orleans	11, 2-3	K. Hamilton#, v.o.
Common Eider:			
10,11	Dennis, Scituate	2500+, 650	J. Bryant, R. Stymeist#
21,24	Weymouth, Boston	1000+, 2300	B. Sorrie, D. Brown & W. Cornwell
King Eider:			
2,3-10	E. Orleans, Rockport	1m., 1m.	W. Petersen, v.o.
11-20,14on	Magnolia, Cohasset	2, 1m.	M. Gardler#, D. Brown#
21	Weymouth	1m.	B. Sorrie
White-winged Scoter:			
4	Cape Ann	118	CBC
Surf Scoter:			
13	Marion	200	G. Gove

Black Scoter:				
27	Dennis	46		A. Clarke
Ruddy Duck:				
7,31	Falmouth, Orleans	40, 40		P. Garrey, T. Lloyd-Evans
Hooded Merganser:				
4,25	Bourne, E. Falmouth	16, 15		SSEC (Anderson), BBC (A. Clarke)
Common Merganser:				
4	W. Newbury	161		CBC
Red-breasted Merganser:				
4	Cape Ann	406		CBC
Goshawk:				
thr.	7 localities	singles		v.o.
Sharp-shinned Hawk:				
1	Lancaster	2-3		H. Merriman
Cooper's Hawk:				
2,15	Barnstable, Eastham	1, 1		R. Pease, B. Nikula
20	P.I.	1		fide M. Kasprzyk
Red-tailed Hawk:				
4	Newburyport	15		CBC
Red-shouldered Hawk:				
thr.	6 localities	singles		v.o.
7-31	Bridgewater	singles, 2 on 10 dates		L. Resmini
Rough-legged Hawk:				
17 31	Marshfield	7		W. Petersen
Bald Eagle:				
1-15,6	Orleans, Assawompset	limm., limm.		D. Brown, C. Goodrich
Marsh Hawk:				
4	Newburyport	7		CBC
<u>Gyr Falcon:</u>				
10	Orleans (North Beach)	1		C. Goodrich
Merlin:				
1	Sandwich	1		R. Pease
American Kestrel:				
4	Newburyport	15		CBC
Ruffed Grouse:				
4,19	Beverly, Lynn	2, 5		CBC, R. Heil
Ring-necked Pheasant:				
24	Squantum	20		W. Cornwell
Clapper Rail:				
1	Salisbury	1		D. Brown, W. Cornwell
Virginia Rail:				
7-16	Concord (GMNWR)	3-6		H. Payson
15,20	Ipswich	3, 2		G. Soucy, J. Berry
Sora:				
16+21	Concord	2		H. Payson
Common Gallinule:				
1	W. Harwich	1		B. Nikula, C. Goodrich
American Coot:				
4	Wareham	76		SSBC
Killdeer:				
4	Cape Ann, Bourne	6, 4		CBC, SSEC (Anderson)
Black-bellied Plover:				
11	Boston	9		R. Stymeist & T. Leverich
Ruddy Turnstone:				
3,11	Squantum, Cohasset	6, 7		E. Morrier, R. Stymeist#
17,25;21	N. Scituate; Hull	2, 20; 3		W. Petersen; B. Sorrie
American Woodcock:				
5,24	Plymouth, Brewster	1, 1		S. Parsons, J. Byrant
Common Snipe:				
4,31	Bourne, Buttermilk Bay	5, 6		SSEC (Anderson), J. Loughlin
9,22	Tewksbury	7, 4-12		M. Wilson, R. Gleason
<u>Spotted Sandpiper:</u>				
1-3	Chatham	1		C. Goodrich, V. Laux
Greater Yellowlegs:				
1-8,4-10	Eastham, Chatham	2, 1		v.o., CCBC (Baines)#
10	Dartmouth	1		W. Petersen
Red Knot:				
1,17	N. Scituate	75, 70		S. Higginbotham#, W. Petersen
2	Orleans (N. Beach)	25+		W. Petersen#

Purple Sandpiper:			
29	N. Scituate	500	G. Wilson
Dunlin:			
10	Westport, Cohasset	400, 200	J. Clancy, G. Wilson
Sanderling:			
1,31	Squantum, Manomet	30, 28	BBC (Donovan), W. Petersen
<u>Red Phalarope:</u>			
10	Cohasset	1	R. Emery & G. Wilson
Glaucous Gull:			
thr.	6 localities	7 individuals	v.o.
4,20	Cape Ann, P.I.	4, 4	CBC, M. Gardler
Iceland Gull:			
4,15	Cape Ann, P.I.	35, 40	CBC, W. Petersen
31	P.I.	75+	R. Veit#
		and many scattered individuals	
Great Black-backed Gull:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	1154, 340	CBC
<u>Lesser Black-backed Gull:</u>			
6	Newburyport Harbor	1ad.	F. Oatman
Herring Gull:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	6939, 3243	CBC
Black-headed Gull:			
thr.	5 localities	singles	v.o.
11	Wollaston	11	S. Higginbotham
Bonaparte's Gull:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	51, 370	CBC
<u>Mew Gull:</u>			
1-16	Newburyport	1ad.	J. Baird & v.o.
Little Gull:			
31	Newburyport	4ad.	R. Veit#
<u>Ivory Gull:</u>			
thr.	Salisbury	1imm.	v.o.
Black-legged Kittiwake:			
1,4	Salisbury, P.I.	60+, 103	W. Petersen#, CBC
12,10	Sandwich, Rockport	53, 60	R. Pease, M. Gardler
Razorbill:			
12	Sandwich	2	R. Pease
Thick-billed Murre:			
11	N. Scituate	1	S. Higginbotham
Black Guillemot:			
thr.	Rockport (A.P.)		D. Brown# & v.o.
11,25	N. Scituate	10, 3	D. Brown#, W. Petersen#
17-24	P.I.	1	J. Murphy# & v.o.
Common Puffin:			
31	Nauset Marsh	1imm.(dead)	J. Loughlin
Barn Owl:			
11	Boston (Long I.)	1	Y. & T. Martin#
Screech Owl:			
thr.	reports of single birds from 9 other localities		
3,12	Framingham, Peabody	8, 3	K. Hamilton, R. Heil
Great Horned Owl:			
thr.	8 localities	singles	v.o.
Snowy Owl:			
thr.	Salisbury-P.I., Squantum	2-3, 2	v.o.
23,26	Haverhill, Burlington	1, 1	W. Drummond, R. Robinson
30,31	Lancaster, Duxbury	1, 1	R. Christoph, W. Petersen
Barred Owl:			
3,14	Framingham, Belmont	2, 1	K. Hamilton, A. Head & v.o.
22on,28	Nahant, Dorchester	1, 1(photographed)	D. Bangs#, E. Sullivan
Long-eared Owl:			
1,3	Cambridge, Framingham	1, 1	H. Pratt# & v.o., K. Hamilton
10on	Bridgewater	1	W. Petersen# & v.o.
Short-eared Owl:			
thr.,2	Squantum, Chatham (North Beach)	4, 2-3	E. Morrier# & v.o., W. Petersen#
10	S. Dartmouth-Westport	3	B. Sorrie#
11,31	Bridgewater, W. Gloucester	1, 1	J. Flaherty, G. Wilson
Saw-whet Owl:			
1-4,26	P.I., Weston	1, 1(found dead)	G. Soucy# & v.o., L. Lazzari
Belted Kingfisher:			
thr.	16 localities	30 individuals	v.o.

Common Flicker:			
thr.	12 localities	31 individuals	v.o.
Pileated Woodpecker:			
thr.,2	Lancaster, Manchester	1, 1	H. Merriman, P. Parsons
21,30	Lincoln, Carlisle	2, 1	Namin, W. Davis
Red-bellied Woodpecker:			
thr.,8	Natick, Marston's Mills	1, 1 (dead)	H. Drury# & v.o., T. Preston
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:			
1, 7-8	Cambridge (Mt. A.)	lad., limm.	R. Stymeist# & S. Zende#
7on,	Cambridge	lad.	T. Lawrence
9+11	Vineyard Haven (M.V.)	1	M. Hancock
13,18,23	Sandwich, Braintree, Dennis	1, 1, 1	R. Pease, R. Alley, B. Nikula
Eastern Phoebe:			
6	Sandwich	1	R. Pease
Horned Lark:			
4,10	Newburyport, Concord	129, 75	CBC, R. Forster
Blue Jay:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	203, 577	CBC
Common Crow:			
thr.	Natick	400	E. Taylor
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	580, 224	CBC
4	Bridgewater	350+	L. Resmini
Fish Crow:			
thr.	Natick, W. Roxbury	50, 30	E. Taylor, G. Soucy# & v.o.
11,19	Weston, Middleboro	2, 1	L. Robinson, D. Briggs
Black-capped Chickadee:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	638, 439	CBC
19	Lynn (Lynn Woods)	225	R. Heil
Boreal Chickadee:			
thr.	Jamaica Plain (A.A.)	max. 7	L. Jodrey# & v.o.
1,2,4	P.I., Walpole, Hamilton	1, 1, 2	v.o., R. Barrett, CBC
11,18	Wellesley, Ipswich	1, 1	C. & L. Robinson, J. Berry
19,25	Lynn, Clinton	2, 1	R. Heil, H. Merriman
Tufted Titmouse:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	76, 40	CBC
White-breasted Nuthatch:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	40, 59	CBC
Red-breasted Nuthatch:			
thr.	7 localities	26 individuals	CBC
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	17, 9	CBC
27	Jamaica Plain (A.A.)	3	S. Zende#
Brown Creeper:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	12, 14	CBC
Winter Wren:			
1+16,1-2	Sandwich, Westport	1, 1	R. Pease, R. O'Hara
4	Boxford, Topsfield	1, 1	CBC, M. Kasprzyk
7,10	Falmouth, Lincoln	1,1	P. Garrey, R. Forster
16,25	Plymouth, Concord	1, 1	B. Sorrie, H. Payson
Carolina Wren:			
thr.,1	Sandwich, Lancaster	1, 1	R. Pease, H. Merriman
2,6	Walpole, Falmouth	1, 2	R. Bassett, M. Kasprzyk#
13	Marion	1	G. Gove
Mockingbird:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	26, 35	CBC
Gray Catbird:			
4,5	Rockport, Plymouth	1, 1	CBC, S. Parsons
6,10,13-28	Falmouth, Brewster, Bridgewater	2, 1, 1	M. Kasprzyk, J. Bryant, L. Resmini
Brown Thrasher:			
4,10	Topsfield, Westport	1, 2	CBC, J. Clancy
13	Peabody, Chatham	1, 1	M. Kasprzyk, B. Nikula
20,26	Stoneham, Weymouth	1, 1	R. Parks, W. Follansbee
American Robin:			
thr.	several flocks of 15-30 at various locations	v.o.	
1,1	Boston (Fenway), Framingham	45,41	R. Stymeist, K. Hamilton
Hermit Thrush:			
3;4	Westwood; Marion, Rockport	1; 1, 1	A. Beale; K. Anderson#, CBC
10,25	Rockland, Dartmouth	1, 1	J. Clancy#, P. Regan
Eastern Bluebird:			
10,13	Westport, Dennis	4, 5	J. Clancy#, P. Aiken
27	Barnstable, Stoughton	7, 1	R. Pease, B. Cline



Golden-crowned Kinglet:			
19	Lynn (Lynn Woods)	60	R. Heil
Ruby-crowned Kinglet:			
4	Bourne	2	SSBC (Anderson)
Cedar Waxwing:			
6,21	Norwell, Framingham	100+, 60	J. Flaherty, K. Hamilton
Northern Shrike:			
1	Lancaster, Bourne	1, 1	H. Merriman, J. Loughlin
5	Littleton, Athol	1, 1	J. Baird
8;11	Concord; Marshfield, Assonet	1; 1, 1	H. Payson; R. Stymeist, R. Forster#
22,24	Chelmsford, Boston (Long I.)	1, 1	R. Gleason, D. Brown#
<u>Loggerhead Shrike:</u>			
1-25	Salisbury	1	M. Moore & v.o.
Yellow-rumped Warbler:			
4,10	Cape Ann, Chatham	20, 120+	CBC, J. Bryant
24	Squantum, Brewster	30, 45	W. Cornwell, J. Bryant
<u>Ovenbird:</u>			
3	Framingham	1	C. Quinlan, R. Forster# & v.o.
Yellow-breasted Chat:			
10,10-12	Orleans, S. Wellfleet (WBWS)	1, 1	C. Goodrich, W. Bailey
13	Falmouth	1	A. Clarke
Eastern Meadowlark:			
2	Dartmouth	15	R. O'Hara
4	Ipswich, Bridgewater	16, 18	CBC, L. Resmini
Red-winged Blackbird:			
3,17	Harwich, Whitman	100, 20+	B. Nikula, W. Petersen#
Northern Oriole:			
1-20,3-12	Natick, Framingham	1, 5	R. Naticchioni, K. Hamilton
Rusty Blackbird:			
2	W. Roxbury, Wellfleet	1, 1	R. Stymeist#, B. Nikula#
3,4	Concord (GMNWR), Wenham	2, 1	H. Payson, CBC
13,27	Framingham, Barnstable	5, 9	K. Hamilton, R. Pease
<u>Brewer's Blackbird:</u>			
2-31	Katama (M.V.)	2m.	G. Daniels
Common Grackle:			
thr.,13	Lancaster, Framingham	2, 10	R. Kongorski, K. Hamilton#
Brown-headed Cowbird:			
4	Beverly, W. Newbury	20, 12	CBC
13	Framingham	200+	K. Hamilton
Cardinal:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	82, 40	CBC
Dickcissel:			
1-11,4	Byfield, Ipswich	1, 1	H. Wiggin# & v.o., CBC
Evening Grosbeak:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	159, 254	CBC
Purple Finch:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	66, 25	CBC
21	Framingham	30	K. Hamilton
House Finch:			
10,11	Westport, Annisquam	40, 125	J. Clancy#, D. Brown#
27	Jamaica Plain(A.A.)	50+	S. Zende#
Pine Grosbeak:			
1	Cambridge (Mt.A.), P.I.	8, 1	T. Marvin#, D. Brown#
8,17on	S. Wellfleet (WBWS), Lancaster	1, 4-17	W. Bailey, H. Merriman
23,26	Sherborn, Groton	25, 20	K. Hamilton, P. Miliotis
Common Redpoll:			
2	Westport, W. Roxbury	3, 10	R. O'Hara, H. Wiggin#
2	Chatham (N. Beach)	8	W. Petersen
4on	Cambridge (Hell's Half Acre)	80-100	S. Zende#, C. Jackson, R. Stymeist
Pine Siskin:			
4	Cape Ann	131	CBC
American Goldfinch:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	156, 125	CBC
30	Bridgewater	100	J. Flaherty
Red Crossbill:			
thr.	Cambridge (Mt.A.), P.I.	15-20, max.30	v.o.
2	Westport, Jamaica Plain (A.A.)	25, 10	R. O'Hara, H. Wiggin#
White-winged Crossbill:			
thr.	P.I., Cambridge (Mt.A.)	max.12, 10-20	v.o.

Rufous-sided Towhee:			
thr.	Dartmouth, Carver	1, 1	P. Regan, M. Mosher
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	4, 1	CBC
Savannah (Ipswich) Sparrow:			
2	Chatham (N. Beach)	2	W. Petersen#
Dark-eyed Junco:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	247, 182	CBC
Tree Sparrow:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	182, 382	CBC
<u>Chipping Sparrow:</u>			
thr.	E. Wareham	1	J. Ladd, R. Maxim
Field Sparrow:			
10,25	Plymouth, Bridgewater	6, 7	R. Emery#, J. Flaherty
<u>White-crowned Sparrow:</u>			
12,24on	Concord, Dartmouth	1, 1	H. Payson, G. Briggs
White-throated Sparrow:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	145, 114	CBC
Fox Sparrow:			
thr.,4	E. Wareham, Manchester	4, 4	J. Ladd#, CBC
Swamp Sparrow:			
4	Cape Ann, Newburyport	50, 29	CBC
7	Squantum	28	D. Brown#
Lapland Longspur:			
thr.	P.I.+Salisbury	max.40-45	v.o.
31	Marshfield	1	W. Petersen
Snow Bunting:			
thr.	P.I.+Salisbury	max.106	v.o.
2	Chatham, (N. Beach)	250+	W. Petersen#
4	Cape Ann	86	CBC

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Corrigenda for October 1975

American Robin:			
thr.	Weston, Lancaster	25-50+, <u>5000+</u> (roost)	H. Merriman, L. Robinson
			should read
American Robin:			
thr.	Weston, Lancaster	<u>5000+</u> (roost), 25-50+	L. Robinson, H. Merriman

THE BIRD OBSERVER SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY, 1976

February was remarkably mild and brought New Englanders much dry and sunny weather. The temperature averaged 37.3 degrees, 6.9 degrees above normal; this was second only to 38.0 degrees of February, 1925 in all of the 106 years of official weather record keeping. New daily records were set twice, with 59 degrees on the 22nd, topping the 58 degrees of 1943, and 63 degrees on the 28th, breaking the 62 degree mark of 1903. The lowest temperature was 12 degrees on February 2nd. Precipitation totalled only 2.45 inches, 1.09 inches under normal. Only 1.4 inches of snow fell, the least snowfall in February since 1.3 inches in 1941. No measurable snow fell after the 8th. The storm of February 2nd brought scattered wind damage, with most of the effects felt on Cape Cod and the Islands. Nantucket reported winds in excess of 100 m.p.h., while Boston winds gusted to a maximum of 62 m.p.h.

Unlike February, 1975, there were few special birds around (White Pelican, Sandhill Crane, Black Brant, Northern Three-toed Woodpecker, Varied Thrush and Western Tanager). The highlight, of course, still belonged to the Ivory Gull of Salisbury accepting handouts from birders who shared their lunches with the tame gull. The Smew continued in Newport, Rhode Island, with Massachusetts birders hoping it would fly to the "promised land." A few birders travelled to northern Maine for a look at a Hawk Owl.

Kerry Elkin, a field biologist from the Manomet Bird Observatory, compiled an impressive list of 56 Northern Fulmars, a Northern Skua, 200 Black-legged Kittiwakes and 4 Common Puffins, on board the research vessel, Albatross IV, out of Woods Hole. These are the highest counts during a two-week transect of George's Bank.

Red-necked Grebes totalled 23 in Dennis, and Brant peaked at 750+ at Squantum by months end. Three Blue-winged Teal spent the month in Sandwich and 24 Harlequin Ducks were reported.

Two Turkey Vultures highlighted the raptor reports, which also included 4 Goshawks, 4 Cooper's, 6 Red-shouldered, 2 Bald Eagles and 1 Merlin at Salisbury. Woodcocks returned at midmonth and were reported "displaying" in Lakeville on February 26th. Purple Sandpipers numbered 800+ in North Scituate. An adult Laughing Gull was found at Point of Pines, Revere. Over 500 Bonaparte's Gulls were on Nantucket, and as many as 5 adult Little Gulls were reported from Newburyport Harbor. A Common Murre in Provincetown Harbor appeared to be oiled, and 1 Dovekie was reported from Cape Ann.

There was a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker reported from Nahant, and Bluebirds were observed in four places. The week of February 14-21 brought a great change to woodland bird life. According to Leif Robinson, during the first half of the month, "The woods were as barren as I've ever seen them - both in species and in numbers, and even Blue Jays nearly disappeared. By the 21st the titmice, chickadees and nuthatches were in song and more abundant than anytime during the winter."

The blackbirds arrived nearly two weeks earlier than usual, with large flocks reported by months end. Two adult Brewer's Blackbirds were reported from the Herring Creek Farm at Katama, Martha's Vineyard. There was a surge in winter finch numbers, with the exception of Evening Grosbeaks which were almost lacking.

R.H.S.

Common Loon:			
15,19	Cape Ann, Cohasset-Hull	8,7	BBC(H.Weissberg), D.Brown
Horned Grebe:			
1	P.I.	25	R.Veit#
15,28	Cape Ann	22,38	BBC(H.Weissberg), BBC(P.Parsons)
Red-necked Grebe:			
8,25	Hull-Scituate, Dennis	22,23	W.Petersen#, B.Nikula
28	Gloucester Harbor	19	R.Forster
Pied-billed Grebe:			
8	Worcester	1	H.Merriman
Northern Fulmar: *			
20	George's Bank	56	K.Elkin
Gannet: *			
20,22	George's Bank, Gloucester	285,10	K.Elkin, R.Heil
24,28	Nauset, Rockport	75,10	B.Nikula, R.Forster

Great Cormorant:			
1,14	Rockport, Nantucket	60,100	R. Veit, C. Jackson
15	Cape Cod Canal	150+	A. Clarke
Great Blue Heron:			
1	Orleans, Acoaxet	5,8	BBC (H. Baines), W. Petersen
12,14-17	Canton, Nantucket	1,5	S. Zende, C. Jackson
Black-crowned Night Heron:			
5,9	Falmouth, Winthrop	5,2	G. Gove, P. Swanson
American Bittern:			
1	Eastham	4	BBC (H. Baines)
American Brant:			
5,19,28	Squantum	150+, 400+, 750	C. Clark#, E. Morrier, B. Sorrie
29	Plymouth	500	B. Adelson
Snow Goose:			
thr., 5,21	Chatham, Falmouth, P. I.	1,1,2	v.o., G. Gove, S. Garrett#
Gadwall:			
12,18 on	Cohasset	1,2 m.	R. Emery#, W. Petersen#
14,22	Ipswich	1,3	J. Berry
1-20,21	Barnstable, Eastham	2 m., 1 f.	R. Pease, W. Petersen#
Pintail:			
1-29	Barnstable	25	R. Pease
5,8	Plymouth, Hingham	3 m. & 1 f., 3	G. Wilson, W. Petersen
Green-winged Teal:			
21	E. Orleans	16	W. Petersen#
Blue-winged Teal:			
thr.	Sandwich	3	R. Pease
European Wigeon:			
14 on, 16	Cohasset, Nantucket	1 m., 2 m.	v.o., E. Andrews#
American Wigeon:			
16,20	Nantucket, E. Falmouth	100,76	C. Jackson, A. Clarke
21	E. Orleans	45	W. Petersen
Shoveler:			
thr.	Barnstable	2 prs.	R. Pease
Wood Duck:			
thr.	7 localities	14 individuals	v.o.
Redhead:			
8,16	Hull, Squantum	1 f. (on ocean), 2	B. Sorrie#, T. Atkinson
16,27	Nantucket, Falmouth	30,115	C. Jackson, B. Nikula
Ring-necked Duck:			
15,16	E. Falmouth, Nantucket	57,27	A. Clarke, C. Jackson
Canvasback:			
1	Falmouth, Acoaxet	175,300+	G. Soucy, W. Petersen#
1,8	Assonet, Newburyport	100,35	B. Sorrie#, BBC (Timberlake)
8,15-16	Worcester, Nantucket	2,40	H. Merriman, C. Jackson
15,20	W. Newbury, Weston	126,9	R. Stymeist#, J. Hines
Greater Scaup:			
1,16	Newburyport, Nantucket	4000+, 100	R. Veit, C. Jackson
Common Goldeneye:			
15,21	Nantucket, Newburyport	200,300	C. Jackson#, BBC (W. Ervin)
29	Boylston	7+	H. Merriman
Barrow's Goldeneye:			
8,15	N. Scituate, Revere	1,2	W. Petersen, S. Zende
15 on, 19-27	Newburyport, Plymouth	2-3, 1	v.o., J. Loughlin#
21,28	N. Chatham, Cape Ann	2,1	W. Petersen, BBC (P. Parsons)
Oldsquaw:			
1	Newburyport	500+	R. Veit
Harlequin Duck:			
14-15,15	Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket	6,14	G. Daniels, E. Andrews
21	E. Orleans	1 m. (from Jan.)	W. Petersen
21	Magnolia	1 m. & 2 f.	K. Hamilton
Common Eider:			
7	Duxbury	10,000	SSBC (S. Higginbotham)
King Eider:			
1	Nahant	1 m.	S. Garrett#
8	Salisbury, Beverly	1 m., 1 imm.	J. Barton#, T. Lawrence
8 on, 19	Hull, Sesuit	1 m., 1 m.	R. Veit & W. Petersen#, K. Hamilton
White-winged Scoter:			
17	Nantucket	5000	C. Jackson

Black Scoter:			
14-17,15	Nantucket,Cape Ann	100,20	C.Jackson,H.Merriman
Ruddy Duck:			
1,21,27	Orleans	64,85+,75	BBC(Baines),W.Petersen#,J.Clancy
Hooded Merganser:			
8-14,15	Newburyport,E.Falmouth	1 pr.,17	v.o.,A.Clarke
26	Lincoln	6	W.Harrington
Common Merganser:			
21	Belmont,Newburyport	31,30	BBC(J.Barton),BBC(
27	Lincoln,Plymouth	40,45	F.Hamlen,J.Loughlin
Red-breasted Merganser:			
1,14-17	Cape Ann,Nantucket	200,200	R.Veit,C.Jackson
Turkey Vulture:			
28	Sturbridge	2	J.O'Regan
Goshawk:			
4,5-22	E.Bridgewater,Wellfleet	1,1	J.Flaherty,W.Bailey
7,15	P.I.,Newburyport	1,1	C&T Baines,R.Stymeist#
Sharp-shinned Hawk:			
29	Lancaster	1	H.Merriman
Cooper's Hawk:			
1,5	Barnstable,Cambridge	1,1 ad.m.	R.Pease,R.Stymeist
12,14	Milton,Lancaster	1,1	J.O'Regan,H.Merriman
Red-tailed Hawk:			
15-29,26	Weston,S.Natick	3,1	L.Robinson,E.Taylor
Red-shouldered Hawk:			
4 on	Bridgewater	3 ad.,1 imm.	v.o.
23,29	Salisbury,Bolton	1,1	E.Taylor#,H.Merriman
Rough-legged Hawk:			
7,12	Marshfield,Bridgewater	8,5	SSBC(W.Harrington),R.Emery#
Bald Eagle:			
thr.	E.Orleans,Lakeville	1 imm.,1 imm.	v.o.,J.Ervin#
Marsh Hawk:			
thr.	1-2 birds reported from 5 places		v.o.
14-16	Nantucket	6	C.Jackson#
Merlin:			
23	Salisbury	1	E.Taylor
Ruffed Grouse:			
29	Plymouth	4	M&A Argue#
Virginia Rail:			
16	Chiltonville	1	D.Briggs#
Sora:			
16	Concord(GMNWR),Orleans	1,1 dead	BBC(Hinds),B.Nikula
American Coot:			
1,14	Eastham,Lynn	130,50-60	BBC(Baines),M.Gardler
Killdeer:			
7-29,18	6 localities,Marshfield	1-2,3	v.o.,W.Petersen#
18 on	Lancaster	3-32	H.Merriman
Black-bellied Plover:			
1	Acoaxet	1	B.Sorrie & W.Petersen
1,7	Eastham,Duxbury	3,1	BBC(Baines),H.Harrington
Ruddy Turnstone:			
8,28	N.Scituate,Squantum	60,12	R.Veit,B.Nolan
American Woodcock:			
16 on	9 localities	13 individuals	v.o.
26,29	Lakeville,Lancaster	3 displaying,5	R.Turner,H.Merriman
Common Snipe:			
1,21	Orleans	2,6	BBC(Baines),W.Petersen#
7,22	S.Duxbury,Ipswich	1,2	SSBC(H.Harrington),BBC(J.Berry)
Red Knot:			
8,28	N.Scituate	12+,8	W.Petersen & R.Emery,R.Veit
Purple Sandpiper:			
19	N.Scituate,Cohasset	800+,100	W.Petersen,D.Brown#
28	Rockport	97	BBC(P.Parsons)
Dunlin:			
1	Acoaxet,Eastham	200,125	B.Sorrie#,BBC(Baines)
Sanderling:			
1,8	Eastham,Manomet(MBO)	12,40	BBC(Baines),Staff
15	Nantucket	50	C.Jackson#

<u>Northern Skua</u> : *			
20	George's Bank	1	K. Elkin
<u>Glaucous Gull</u> :			
thr.	5 localities	8 individuals	v.o.
1,15	Gloucester	3,4-5	R. Veit, W. Petersen
8,20	Worcester, George's Bank	1,3	H. Merriman, K. Elkin
<u>Iceland Gull</u> :			
1,6	P. I.	75+,100	R. Veit, M. Gardler
15,21	Cape Ann	85+,70	BBC (H. Weissberg), R. Veit
<u>Ring-billed Gull</u> :			
1	Newburyport	125	R. Veit#
<u>Black-headed Gull</u> :			
1	Newburyport, Squantum	2 ad., 2	R. Veit, E. Morrier
19,24	Hull, Wollaston	22,11	R. Veit & S. Perkins, J. Murphy
26	Newburyport	3	R. Heil
<u>Laughing Gull</u> :			
8-14	Revere & Lynn	1 ad.	O&N Komer# & M. Gardler
<u>Bonaparte's Gull</u> :			
1,16	Newburyport, Nantucket	40,500	R. Veit, C. Jackson#
<u>Little Gull</u> :			
1	Salisbury	1 ad.	J. Berry
15,21	Newburyport	3 ad., 5 ad.	W. Petersen, R. Veit#
<u>Ivory Gull</u> :			
thr.	Salisbury	1 imm. (from December)	v.o.
<u>Black-legged Kittiwake</u> : *			
20	George's Bank	200	K. Elkin
<u>Razorbill</u> :			
28	Rockport	2	R. Forster
<u>Common Murre</u> :			
13	Provincetown	1 (oiled)	fide W. Bailey
<u>Thick-billed Murre</u> : *			
1;20	Gloucester; George's Bank	1;2	R. Veit, R. Emery, F. Hamlen; K. Elkin
<u>Dovekie</u> : *			
16,20	Gloucester, George's Bank	1,9	P. Parsons, K. Elkin
<u>Black Guillemot</u> :			
8,21	N. Scituate, Cape Ann	12,15	W. Petersen & B. Sorrie, K. Hamilton
<u>Common Puffin</u> : *			
20	George's Bank	4	K. Elkin
<u>Barn Owl</u> :			
16-24	Boston (Long Island)	1	B. Morrissey, J. Murphy
<u>Screech Owl</u> :			
5,15	Middlesex Fells, Lancaster	2,1	S. Zende# , H. Merriman
7	Weston, Abington-Pembroke	1,5	L. Robinson, W. Petersen
21	Gloucester, Brewster	1,4	E. Taylor# , B. Sorrie
<u>Great Horned Owl</u> :			
7	Bridgewater-Middleboro	7	J. Flaherty
<u>Snowy Owl</u> :			
1-6,21	Squantum, Salisbury-P. I.	3,3	E. Morrier, BBC (W. Ervin)
8	Hull, Duxbury	1,1	B. Sorrie# , J. Loring
<u>Barred Owl</u> :			
1-20,5	Nahant, Groton	1 (from Jan.), 1	v.o., N. Powell
9,21	Boston (South End), Boxford	1,1	T. Leverich, R. Veit & S. Perkins
29	Boston (Marlboro Street)	1	Mrs. Clarke
<u>Long-eared Owl</u> :			
14 on, 16	Bridgewater, Jamaica Plain	1,1	W. Petersen, Kousky
<u>Short-eared Owl</u> :			
9, 14 on, 21	Squantum, Bridgewater, Chatham	3,4,2	E. Morrier, W. Petersen# , J. Loughlin
<u>Saw-whet Owl</u> :			
2-5,16	Cambridge, Nantucket	1,1	J. Clancy, C. Jackson
19,21	Lincoln, Gloucester	1 dead, 1 dead	J. Baird, S. Perkins
<u>Belted Kingfisher</u> :			
21	Outer Cape	14	W. Petersen#
<u>Common Flicker</u> :			
14-16	Nantucket	30	C. Jackson
<u>Pileated Woodpecker</u> :			
thr.	Lancaster, Weston	1,1	H. Merriman, L. Robinson# & v.o.
9,26	Lincoln, S. Natick (Broadmoor)	1,1	M. Donnell, E. Taylor#

Red-bellied Woodpecker:			
11-18	Cohasset	1	H.Hooper
Red-headed Woodpecker:			
thr.,9	Gloucester(E.P.),Lincoln	1 mm.,1	S.Robbins & v.o.,fide R.Forster
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:			
1-20	Nahant	1	BBC(A.Murphy),H.Wiggin
Hairy Woodpecker:			
22	Weston	20	BBC(L.Robinson)
Downy Woodpecker:			
29	Hamilton	2(courting)	J.Berry
Eastern Phoebe:			
21	Dennis	1	C.Naegelin
Horned Lark:			
1,7	S.Dartmouth,Halifax	200+,60	W.Petersen#,B.Sorrie#
Swallow: (species)			
28	Eastham	1	C.Goodrich
Common Crow:			
3-4	Waltham	250+	J.Luck
Fish Crow:			
thr.	Weston,Natick(dump)	24,50	L.Robinson,E.Taylor
Black-capped Chickadee:			
21	Weston	51	L.Robinson
Boreal Chickadee:			
thr.,6	Jamaica Plain(A.A.),P.I.	2(from Dec.),1	v.o.,M.Gardler
10 on,15 on	Norwell,Beverly	2,1	J.Enright,T.Martin
Tufted Titmouse:			
15	Sherborn	178	fide E.Taylor
Red-breasted Nuthatch:			
thr.	Norwell(2 places)	5,3 b.	J.Enright,M&B Litchfield
1,6-28,26	N.Falmouth,P.I.,Dennis	5-6,2,2	A.Clarke,v.o.,F.Bouchard
Brown Creeper:			
thr.,8	Lancaster,Westwood	3+,2	H.Merriman,J.Clancy
26-28,29	S.Natick,Hamilton	3,2	E.Taylor,J.Berry
Winter Wren:			
1-8,3	Westport,Norwell	1,1	R.O'Hara,B.Litchfield
Carolina Wren:			
14;29	Middleboro,Woods Hole;Marion	2,1;2	E.Cushman,C.Jackson#;G.Gove
Mockingbird:			
15	Sherborn	21	fide E.Taylor
Gray Catbird:			
1,5-15	Acoaxet,Falmouth	1,1	W.Petersen#,v.o.
Brown Thrasher:			
23,27	Waltham,Eastham	1,1	P.Housley,J.Clancy
American Robin:			
5,6	Waltham,E.Sandwich	20,20	J.Gibbs,C.Harding
Hermit Thrush:			
1,3	S.Dartmouth,Cambridge(Mt.A.)	1,1	W.Petersen#,S.Zendeh
13	Jamaica Plain(A.A.)	2	J.Murphy
Eastern Bluebird:			
16,18	E.Dennis,Cummaquid	1,4	R.Sharron,W.Hodgkinson
28,29	Canton(F.M.),Lincoln	1,2	B.Nolan,P.Swift
Water Pipit:			
21	Chatham(North Beach)	1	J.Loughlin
Cedar Waxwing:			
5,8	Norwell,Mattapoissett	72,35	J.Flaherty,G.Mock
15,21	Woods Hole,Orleans	25,31	C.Jackson,W.Petersen
Northern Shrike:			
4,14-15	Middleboro,Squibnocket(M.V.)	1,1	R.Maxim,G.Daniels
11,15	Harvard,Fitchburg	1,1	C.Read,N.Powell
24,27	Chatham,Barnstable	1,1	B.Nikula,R.Pease
Loggerhead Shrike:			
1,14-15	Barnstable,Vineyard Haven(M.V.)	1,1	R.Pease,G.Daniels
Yellow-rumped Warbler:			
9	Squantum	10	E.Morrier
Pine Warbler:			
thr.	Chatham	2	V.Saunders# & v.o.
Yellow-breasted Chat:			
10	Plymouth	1	S.Parsons

Eastern Meadowlark:			
15	Ipswich	22	J. Berry
Red-winged Blackbird:			
wk. of 8	first arrivals in southeastern Massachusetts		v.o.
wk. of 15	general arrival in small flocks throughout Massachusetts		v.o.
wk. of 22	large flocks reported in many communities		v.o.
22, 28	Lancaster, Bridgewater	600+, 1800+	H. Merriman, W. Petersen#
29	Ipswich	750+	J. Berry
Northern Oriole:			
1-11, 10, 18	Framingham, Reading, Brockton	2, 1, 1	L. Campbell, V. Hall, R. LaBue
Northern (Bullock's) Oriole:			
1-22	Abington	1 imm. m. (from Nov.)	W. Petersen# & v.o.
	"Bird's plumage getting brighter, white wing patch beginning to fill in."		
Brewer's Blackbird:			
14 on	Katama (M.V.)	2 ad.	G. Daniels
Common Grackle:			
wk. of 15	first arrivals in small numbers		v.o.
wk. of 22	general arrival throughout, though no large flocks		v.o.
29	Lancaster	450+	H. Merriman
Brown-headed Cowbird:			
12, 15, 28	Abington, Falmouth, Middleboro	6, 1, 50+	G. Wilson#, A. Clarke, D. Briggs
Cardinal:			
15	Sherborn	68	fide E. Taylor
Evening Grosbeak:			
18	Pembroke	55+	W. Petersen#
	very few others reported, only small flocks		
Purple Finch:			
thr.	8 localities	23 individuals	v.o.
House Finch:			
13	Jamaica Plain (A.A.)	125	J. Murphy
21	Chatham-Orleans	150+	W. Petersen#
Pine Grosbeak:			
1-13, 5, 6	Lancaster, Lincoln, Maynard	22-1, 6, 8	H. Merriman, P. Alden, J. Baird
5, 9	Middlesex Fells, Acton	2, 7	S. Zende# , M. Herbert
22-29, 24	Weston, Harvard	2-9, 4+	L. Robinson# & v.o., N. Powell
Hoary Redpoll:			
29	Weston	2	W. Drummond, G. Soucy#
Common Redpoll:			
thr.	Weston, Lancaster	15-28, 5-100+ (Feb. 19)	L. Robinson# & v.o., H. Merriman
16, 20-26	Ipswich, Natick (dump)	35-40, 50+	J. Nove, E. Taylor
20, 22, 23	Carlisle, Hingham, N. Natick	50, 40, 50+	K. Harte, S. Osborne, E. Taylor
26, 29	Lincoln, Waltham	50-60, 40	W. Harrington, J. Luck
Pine Siskin:			
15, 16	Harvard, Weston	175, 38	N. Powell, L. Robinson
18, 22	Pembroke, Cohasset	35+, 20-30	W. Petersen#, S. Osborne#
American Goldfinch:			
24	E. Bridgewater	60+	J. Flaherty
Red Crossbill:			
thr., 19	P. I.	10-20, 90+	v.o., K. Hamilton
White-winged Crossbill:			
10, 18	Milton, Dedham	6, 6	J. Trumbull, A. Thatcher
Savannah Sparrow:			
12, 15	Edgartown (M.V.), Nantucket	1, 1	M. Hancock, C. Jackson#
Tree Sparrow:			
22, 29	Ipswich, Weston	15, 20+	BBC (J. Berry), L. Robinson
Field Sparrow:			
5, 22	Plymouth, Framingham	1, 1	R. Emery#, K. Hamilton
Fox Sparrow:			
5, 6	Plymouth, E. Sandwich	1, 1	R. Emery#, C. Harding
7	Manomet (MBO)	1	J. Loughlin
27, 29	Bedford, Harvard	1, 1	P. Wade, N. Powell
Swamp Sparrow:			
16	Concord (GMNWR)	1	BBC (J. Hines)
Lapland Longspur:			
8, 15	P. I.	30, 28	BBC (R. Timberlake), H. Butler#
Snow Bunting:			
14, 20	P. I., Bridgewater	400+, 1	K. Hamilton#, J. Flaherty



### Abbreviations

ad.	adult	GMNWR	Great Meadows Nat'l. Wildlife Refuge
b.	banded	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
f.	female	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
imm.	immature	A.A.	Arnold Arboretum, Jamaica Plain
m.	male	E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester
max.	maximum	F.M.	Fowl Meadow, Milton
thr.	throughout	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
v.o.	various observers	Mt.A.	Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
yg.	young	P.I.	Plum Island
#	additional observers	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
BBC	Brookline Bird Club		
SSBC	South Shore Bird Club		

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