

# BIRD OBSERVER



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JUNE 1987



# BIRD OBSERVER

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Manuscripts should be typed double-spaced on one side only of 8.5 x 11 inch paper with 1.5 inch margins all around. There is no limit on the length of manuscripts, but most do not exceed 10 double-spaced typewritten pages (about 3000 words). Use the 1983 A.O.U. Check-List for bird names and sequence. Type tables on separate pages. Black-and-white photographs and graphics are best. Include author's or artist's name, address, and telephone number and information from which a brief biography can be prepared if needed.

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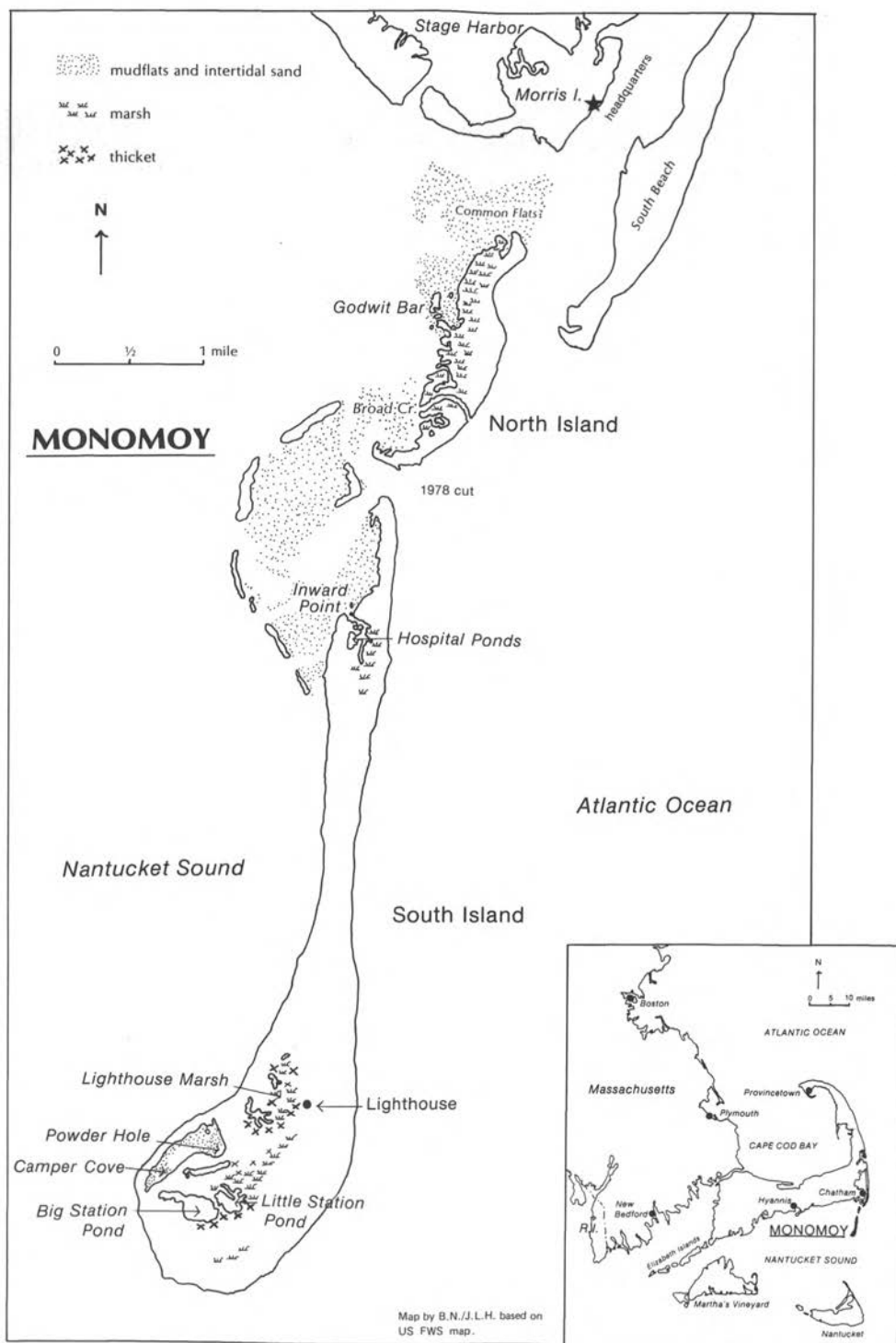
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## THANK YOU TO THE BIRDS

*Bird Observer* is bidding a fond farewell to Jim and Mary Bird who have, since 1981, shouldered the onerous and time-consuming task of typing our monthly field records. Jim Bird became interested in birds while doing research on whales with Roger Payne. Mary Dickinson Bird is a teacher and is completing work on her master's degree this spring. The Birds are moving to Maryland where Jim, whose field is library science, will assume the position of librarian at the University of Maryland, and Mary will pursue her teaching career. We shall miss them both and wish them well in their new positions.

map of monomoy goes on this page



## WHERE TO GO: MONOMOY

by Blair Nikula

Located within the township of Chatham at the elbow of Cape Cod, Monomoy is the most northeasterly of a series of islands that fringe New England's south shore. Unlike the other islands, which are glacial formations resulting from the Pleistocene ice sheet, Monomoy is entirely a creation of the sea, composed of sand washed southward from Cape Cod's eroding eastern shore. As such, it is a classic barrier beach comprising surf-battered dunes on its eastern shore that gradually flatten out to salt marsh and mud flats on its western shore. The ocean is continually reshaping Monomoy's approximately twenty-five hundred acres, and at various times in its history it has been a peninsula, an island, or a series of islands. For the first half of this century, Monomoy was a peninsula connected to the Chatham mainland at Morris Island and was accessible by beach buggy, a circumstance of which the great Ludlow Griscom and other birders of his time frequently took advantage. In 1958 an April storm "islandized" the peninsula by breaching the beach just below Morris Island and created the cut-through that still exists today. Local rumor has it that this April storm was aided and abetted by a few shovel-wielding local fishermen eager for a quicker route from Nantucket Sound to the ocean!

Twenty years later, in February 1978, a severe northeaster combined with extremely high tides "bi-islandized" Monomoy, creating a second cut-through just north of Inward Point, about one and a half miles south of the first cut. Consequently, Monomoy now consists of two islands: a shrinking, unstable north island approximately two miles long and a more stable and enlarging south island about six miles long.

For most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Monomoy was inhabited by the citizens of a small but active fishing village located along the perimeter of what is now called the Powder Hole -- then a rather sizable harbor. During the last part of the nineteenth century, the harbor began to sand in, and by the turn of the century few year-round inhabitants remained. In 1944 Monomoy became a National Wildlife Refuge and in 1970 was afforded even more extensive protection with its designation as a National Wilderness Area. Since it has gained control of the island, the government has slowly but steadily been dismantling the old buildings so that now only the dilapidated lighthouse and a couple of rundown shacks remain standing.

Monomoy's ornithological history began during the era of the "sportsmen-naturalists" in the late 1800s. The hordes of migrating waterfowl and shorebirds attracted many of these gentlemen gunners resulting in the formation of the

Monomoy Brant Club in 1862. Though most of these men were primarily interested in hunting, there were some fine naturalists among them, and their records provide us with considerable information on at least a portion of the birdlife at that time.

Much more complete information on the island's birdlife resulted from Ludlow Griscom's interest in the area. Griscom was the first to exploit Monomoy's potential as one of the most exciting birding locations on the East Coast and during his lifetime made over three hundred trips down the (then) peninsula. Monomoy became separated from the mainland just a few months before Griscom's death in 1959.

It was during the 1960s that the ornithological coverage of Monomoy reached its apex. In 1960 the Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS) under a cooperative agreement with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service began conducting beach-buggy tours of the island to explore the wildlife. Led by a series of young guides with an insatiable passion for birds, these tours quickly became very popular and at times were being run almost daily during the peak summer season. During the late 1960s a banding operation under the direction of James Baird was conducted on the south end, based in the old lighthouse which had been purchased by Massachusetts Audubon in 1964. Consequently, for a few years Monomoy received a level of coverage that is not likely to be matched again. The designation of Monomoy as a National Wilderness Area eliminated vehicle access and, combined with changes in the physical structure of the island and surrounding waters, made the tours increasingly difficult to operate, and they were terminated after the 1975 season. However, MAS has since resumed walking tours of the island and offers trips to both the north and south islands. See Access below. A more detailed history of Monomoy is available in *Monomoy Wilderness*, a delightful booklet published by the Massachusetts Audubon Society in 1972 and now, unfortunately, out of print.

Birding on Monomoy is considerably different on the two islands. The north island is best visited from May through September when large numbers of shorebirds and terns are present, whereas the south island is best from August through November when migrant landbirds, raptors, waterfowl, and some of the rarer shorebirds can be found.

### **The North Island of Monomoy**

The north island consists entirely of dunes, salt marsh, and mud flats and attracts hordes of migrating and nesting terns, gulls, and shorebirds. The largest concentrations of birds are generally found at high tide along the edge of the flats and marsh in a quarter-mile stretch extending from the extreme north end south to Godwit Bar (see map). However, during periods of extreme high tides,

this area is flooded, and the birds are often forced farther down the island or over the South Beach to the east.

Until recently one of the largest (over three thousand pairs) Common Tern colonies in the Northeast was located in the dunes on the extreme north end of the island. The birds have been plagued with a variety of problems, however, and the colony now consists of only a few hundred terns, dispersed in small groups on marsh hummocks throughout the island. The future of Common Terns as nesters on Monomoy is at best very tenuous. Roseate Terns no longer nest, but a few can usually be found roosting on the flats during the spring and early summer, and large numbers of postbreeders are present from late July through mid-September. One or two pairs of Arctic Terns still attempt to nest each year, and a few migrants can occasionally be found in May. In recent years large numbers (up to several hundred) of immature Arctic Terns have been present during June and July. Least Terns nest sporadically, sometimes in considerable numbers, but their presence is completely unpredictable from year to year and even week to week. An additional six species of terns occur more or less regularly, and Black Skimmers are often seen in the late summer and have nested on rare occasions, one pair in 1985 and three pairs in 1986.

A colony of several hundred pairs of Laughing Gulls (one of only two in the state) was located on the north end of the island, but it too has declined recently, and only two pairs nested in 1986. In 1984 a pair of Common Black-headed Gulls nested among the Laughing Gulls, establishing a first record for the U. S. Nesting Great Black-backed and Herring gulls have overrun the remainder of the north island as well as most of the south island: a 1984 census of both islands yielded approximately twenty thousand pairs. Although the tern and Laughing Gull nesting areas are strictly off-limits, the observer is free to explore the gull colony, and this can be an interesting diversion in the rare event that birding is slow.

Nesting shorebirds are represented by a few Piping Plovers and a burgeoning population of American Oystercatchers and Willets. After an absence of a century or more, the latter two species both reestablished themselves as nesters in the early 1970s and are currently thriving with approximately ten pairs of oystercatchers and over twenty pairs of Willets occupying the north island. Spotted Sandpipers, once common, apparently no longer nest on the refuge. Two unexpected nesting occurrences involved the finding of a dead Least Sandpiper chick in the summer of 1979 and the discovery of a Wilson's Phalarope nest with eggs in 1980. Although Wilson's Phalaropes have been expanding eastward in recent years and their nesting on Monomoy is not too surprising, the apparent nesting of Least Sandpiper is best considered an accident. However, the odd and unexpected are almost routine on Monomoy.



Certainly the most spectacular avian event in the area is the shorebird migration, which peaks in late May and again in late July to early August, during which time more than ten thousand birds may be present. Even more impressive than the numbers is the variety, which is greatest from late August to mid-September. An incredible **forty-six** species of shorebirds -- from every corner of the globe -- have been recorded on Monomoy, including such exotics as **Eurasian Curlew** (second North American record), **Little Stint** (sixth North American record), **Wandering Tattler** (first East Coast record), **Rufous-necked Sandpiper** (first state record), **Long-billed Curlew**, and **Bar-tailed Godwit** along with the more routine **American Avocet**, **Wilson's Plover**, **Curlew Sandpiper**, and **Ruff**. The very local **Hudsonian Godwit** is another shorebird feature, and in recent years high counts during the August peak have averaged a hundred to a hundred and fifty individuals. **Buff-breasted** and **Baird's** sandpipers can also be found on occasion, though they are more regular on the south island.

Hérons are commonly seen in the marsh, and although Snowy Egrets and Black-crowned Night-Herons predominate, all of the regularly occurring northeast herons are seen from time to time. The only appearance in Massachusetts of **Reddish Egret** was here in May 1958.

Although the waterbirds provide the main attraction on the north island, there are a few other species worth looking for. Sharp-tailed Sparrows are common nesters throughout the marsh, and in some years Seaside Sparrows can be found along the tidal creeks. Horned Larks and Savannah Sparrows are common nesters in the dunes where the observer might also flush a Short-eared Owl at any season. During migration one should constantly be on the lookout for passing falcons and accipiters, and occasionally a few landbird migrants can be flushed from the grass.

### **The South Island of Monomoy**

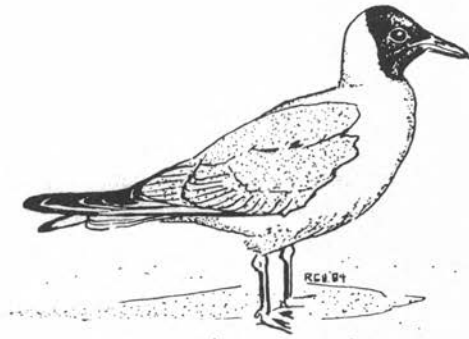
Most of the south island comprises scantily-vegetated dunes, and the birdlife, with the exception of nesting gulls, Horned Larks, and Savannah Sparrows, is sparse indeed. Toward South Monomoy's northern terminus there is a small area of salt marsh, now largely sanded over -- the so-called Hospital Ponds just inside Inward Point -- that has nesting Sharp-tailed Sparrows and possibly nesting Willets. At least two to three pairs of oystercatchers nest along the beach here. Formerly one of the finest landbird thickets on the island, Wildcat Swamp, was located on what is now the northeast corner of the south island, but this wet swale, which provided the only cover for a couple of miles in any direction, has been claimed by the sea, leaving only a few dead and dying shrubs and pines. A short distance to the south of Inward Point there is a small colony of Black-crowned Night-Herons and Snowy Egrets.



In contrast, the south end of South Monomoy has freshwater ponds and marshes and dense wet thickets of bayberry, Beach Plum, and Poison Ivy (everywhere!), providing the primary attraction for both birds and birders. During the fall migration and more rarely in the spring when conditions are right, this area offers some of the most exciting and challenging birding on the East Coast. The hub of avian activity here is the so-called Station Ponds that lie approximately a half mile south and southwest of the lighthouse -- Big Station Pond to the west and the smaller, more marshy Little Station Pond to the east. Numbers of ducks, herons, and shorebirds frequent these ponds, and the numerous dense thickets ringing their perimeters attract great numbers of migrant passerines on good days. Just to the west of the lighthouse is the Lighthouse Marsh, actually a group of very small shallow ponds interspersed among more dense thickets and a few scrub pines -- some of the very few trees on the island. These ponds are also good for ducks and herons and the thickets for migrant landbirds. To the north of the lighthouse are extensive hudsonia moors (plants similar to heather in the rockrose family) that are worth checking in the early fall for Buff-breasted and Baird's sandpipers, Lesser Golden-Plover, and Whimbrel. Southwest of the lighthouse lies the Powder Hole, which usually has a few shorebirds. Adjacent to the Powder Hole on the southwest corner of the island is Camper Cove, a good spot for terns and shorebirds. Until recently this cove was tidal, but sand washing around the point has now closed it off; the Station Ponds were formed by this same process. South and southwest of Big Station Pond are a series of thickets, many of which border small damp grassy "sedge-flats."

An attempt to list all of the species that can be expected on the south island on a good day would be tedious and serve little purpose. Most of the typical northeast fall migrants can be found, and on a good day a list of over a hundred species is quite possible. However, a few species that are regular or even common on nearby Morris Island are scarce or absent from Monomoy. This group consists primarily of those birds that are very reluctant to cross water or that are rather sedentary. Black-capped Chickadee, Blue Jay, Cardinal, House Finch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Hairy Woodpecker, House Sparrow, and the *buteos* are all very rare at best, and Tufted Titmouse has yet to be recorded.

It is, of course, the rare and unexpected -- the vagrants -- that excite most birders, and South Monomoy has a vagrant track record that is unsurpassed, despite very limited coverage. Among the more spectacular have been Whistling Swan, Purple Gallinule, Wandering Tattler, Sooty Tern, Bridled Tern, Burrowing Owl, Brown-chested Martin, Cassin's Kingbird, Say's Phoebe, Western Wood-Pewee, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Bewick's Wren, Painted Bunting, Le Conte's Sparrow, and Henslow's Sparrow. Some of the more typical fall vagrants such as Red-headed Woodpecker, Western



*Common Black-headed Gull*

*Illustration by Robert Humphrey*

**Kingbird, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Blue Grosbeak, Lark Sparrow, and Clay-colored Sparrow** are all more or less regular.

In any coastal migrant landbird trap, the weather is critical to an observer's success, and nowhere is this more evident than on the south island. When the weather is favorable (clear skies and light northwest winds), the birding can be unbeatable, but on a poor day it can be as dull as anywhere. Unlike many other coastal traps, there is a distinct lack of landbird habitats here, resulting in a quick exodus of most of the individuals that may be present immediately after the passage of a cold front. Fortunately, the waterbird habitats are more consistently productive, and some decent birding can often be salvaged on even the poorest of days.

If you are fortunate enough to get to the south end on a good day, you'll have no problem occupying an entire day. Check all of the thickets slowly -- those around the Station Ponds, to the east of Little Station Pond, around the Lighthouse Marsh, between the Powder Hole and Big Station Pond and especially those on the extreme southwest corner of the island. It seems that many southbound birds tend to build up in these last thickets before leaving the island in a southwest or westerly direction, and there is a constant turnover here. Always keep an eye on the sky as accipiters, falcons, and harriers pass through in some numbers during the fall, as do many other diurnal migrants. Short-eared owls nest in the dunes and might be flushed almost anywhere at any season. The west end of Big Station Pond and the south and east sides of Little Station Pond are the best spots for shorebirds, particularly during dry years. During wet years, the series of damp "sedge-flats" south of the Station Ponds are the best bet for shorebirds. **Buff-breasted and Baird's sandpipers** can often be found here in season (early fall) as well as Wilson's Phalarope, Stilt and Pectoral sandpipers, and Long-billed Dowitcher. Pelagics can sometimes be seen off the south point.

Although the birds are the primary attraction on Monomoy, the observer who visits and sees only birds has experienced only a portion of this unique and fascinating natural community. Several species of mammals are present on the islands, most as year-round residents. White-tailed Deer are common and rather

conspicuous on the south island and seem to thrive despite a severe shortage of winter food. From November to May, Harbor Seals are present in large numbers with counts of over a thousand in recent years, and they are often joined by several individuals of the much rarer Gray Seal. Muskrats are common around the ponds on the south island and are present also on North Monomoy where the only source of fresh water is below ground! Meadow Voles are abundant and can often be seen scurrying through the meadow grasses. The Spring 1987 issue of *The Cape Naturalist* features an article, "The Mammals of Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge" by D. W. Holt, R. C. Humphrey, and J. P. Lortie (15: 63-69). Butterflies are conspicuous in the late summer and early fall, and it is possible to see several species in a day. For the botanist, over a hundred and sixty species of plants have been identified, most around the freshwater habitats on the south island.

### Access to Monomoy

When planning a visit, contact the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge headquarters to obtain the current information about permission and restrictions and about boating and weather information. The address is Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters, Morris Island, Chatham, MA 02633 (telephone: 617-945-0594).

Monomoy can be reached only by boat and is not always an easy place to visit. For those not fortunate enough to have a friend with a boat, the easiest way to reach the islands is either on a guided tour or with one or more private ferry services operating from the Chatham mainland. Those visiting for the first time would do well to take one of the frequent guided tours conducted by Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS), organized by the Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. These tours, led by experienced naturalists, are offered both to North Monomoy and to South Monomoy regularly from April through November and infrequently during the winter. Call or write the MAS Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, South Wellfleet, MA 02633 (telephone: 617-349-2615) for a current schedule and rates.

For those preferring to explore the islands on their own, there are private ferry services available. John McGrath of Chatham (telephone: 617-945-9378) operates a ferry service (Art Gould's Boat Livery) to the north island and to South Beach. This service will drop you off and pick you up at the times you prefer. If his schedule permits, trips to the south island can be arranged also. Similar services are offered by Jeff Russell (telephone: 617-945-0681). Information can also be obtained through the Birdwatcher's General Store in Orleans. Jeff Russell's boat leaves from Morris Island -- the foot of the stairs below the Monomoy refuge headquarters.

For those with a boat of their own, the nearest public boat ramp is located on the north side of Stage Harbor on Bridge Street across from the Stage Harbor Marina. From the rotary in the center of Chatham, turn south on Stage Harbor Road for about one mile, then left on Bridge Street. Conditions change in the area continuously, and anyone boating to the island on their own should first check with the Monomoy Refuge headquarters for the latest information on weather, restrictions, and the best location for anchoring.

An increasingly popular means of reaching North Monomoy is by canoe or kayak from the beach below the Monomoy refuge parking lot on Morris Island. It's a short paddle to the island (though the current can be strong) and reasonably safe but should be attempted only by experienced canoeists and only when the weather is favorable, i.e., little or no wind and little possibility of fog. When beaching your canoe on the island, be certain it is well above the high-tide line. A floatable, waterproof container for your optics is also advisable.

Anyone attempting to take his own craft to Monomoy should be an experienced boatsman, familiar with the local waters and constantly alert for changes in weather conditions. The weather in the area is very unpredictable and can change suddenly and dramatically. Fog is especially prevalent during the warmer months and can develop literally in a matter of minutes. Do not attempt to take a small boat around the south point, as there are treacherous rips there under certain conditions.

Visits to the north island should be scheduled to coincide with high tide when the shorebirds and terns are concentrated. The tide has little effect on the birdlife of the south island. Whichever island you visit, you should keep in mind that there are no restroom facilities and on the north island practically no cover except low scrub or dunes. So attend to personal needs before embarking. Bring water or fruit to relieve thirst and a snack and some sort of protection from the sun, because there is no shade. There is use for a cover to protect your optical equipment and yourself from salt spray during the boat ride. A lightweight poncho works well and then can be used to sit on when resting or lurching on the island. Be prepared to wade to and from the boat, although this may not be necessary if you take one of the MAS guided tours. Old sneakers are generally the recommended footwear during the warmer months, but to insure safe footing on the very slippery mud flats you may want something with a sole that can grip securely. The temperature is generally several degrees cooler than the mainland, and there is no shelter from wind or blowing sand on either island, so dress accordingly. On the south island Poison Ivy is virtually everywhere, growing in loose prostrate carpets throughout the dunes and in five-to-six-foot-high bushes in the thickets. It is impossible to bird the area effectively without some contact with the sinister weed. It is well to bring along your favorite ointment if you are very allergic to Poison Ivy, and rubbing alcohol will diminish the effects if

applied to exposed skin shortly after contact with the plant. Old hands often swear by washing exposed portions of the skin with salt water prior to leaving the island, but each person should be fortified with a personal remedy. On occasion, ticks and mosquitoes can be a nuisance on the south island also. Beware especially of the tiny deer tick which is a carrier of Lyme disease. On the north island, the only insect problem occurs during July and August when man-eating greenhead flies are on the prowl. Insect repellents will help, and long pants are recommended for protection against all these forces -- wind, sun, insects, and Poison Ivy.

When visiting Monomoy, particularly the north island, during the breeding season (May to early August), keep in mind that there are birds nesting everywhere the length and breadth of the island. Some of the primary nesting areas are posted and off-limits, but no matter where you are, except portions of the outer beach, you are probably keeping birds off their nests. The best strategy to minimize disturbance is to keep moving and not linger too long in any one place. Certain portions of the refuge are closed during the nesting season and visitors should always contact the headquarters ahead of time for current regulations (telephone: 617-945-0594).

If you are fortunate enough to visit Monomoy some day, take a few moments to reflect upon this dynamic, unspoiled natural community. There is much more to be found here than just a few checks on your list. Every trip is a voyage of discovery, for not only the avifauna but the island itself changes continuously. This is a land of many changes and contrasts, whether it be the dramatic creation of a new break through the island or a subtle change in the soft contours of the summer berm, the sudden, energy-packed arrival of thousands of resident terns in the spring or their subdued, almost imperceptible departure in the fall. This is truly a place where "one can stand and put the world behind him" (Thoreau), a place where events still follow a natural and rational course. In our increasingly irrational and unpredictable world, it is no small comfort to know that a few -- precious few -- such pristine areas still exist.

**Acknowledgments.** My thanks to Robert Humphrey and Dorothy Arvidson for their useful comments and suggestions.

**BLAIR NIKULA**, who has kept track of the birds on Monomoy and Cape Cod for nearly twenty years, has been responsible for sighting or confirming many of the rare vagrants observed there. His other pursuits involve regional editorship for *American Birds*, leading birding tours at home and abroad, New Jersey birdathoning for Manomet Bird Observatory, officer of Cape Cod Bird Club, active membership in Nuttall Ornithological Club, and contributing to a manuscript on where to bird on Cape Cod.

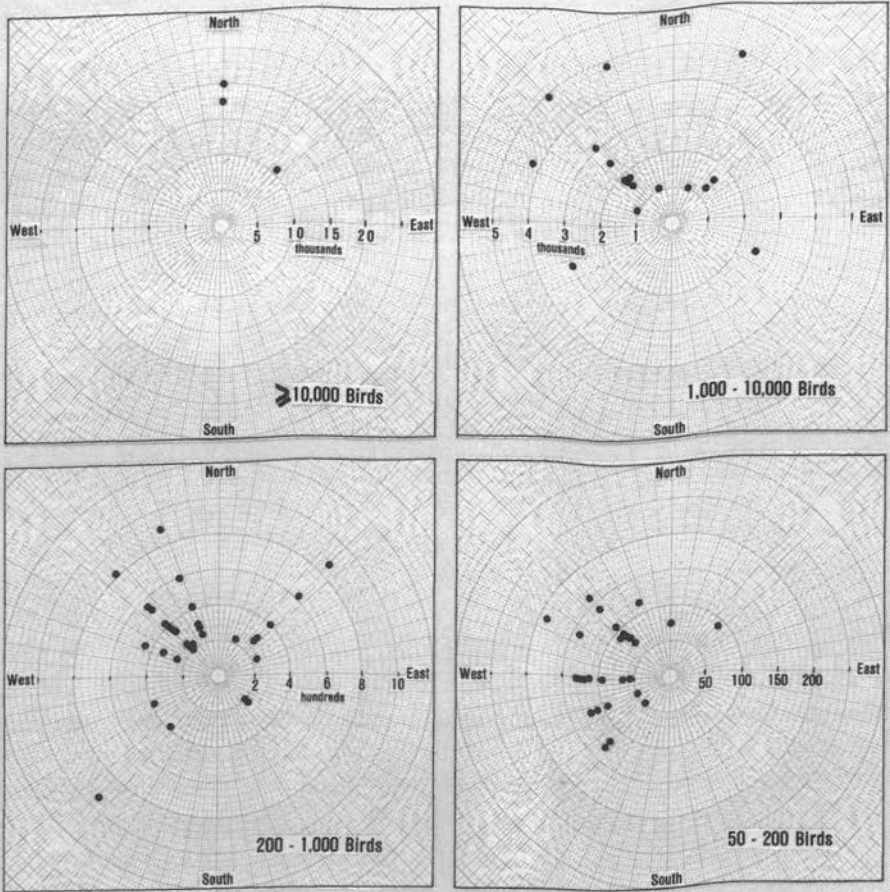


Figure 1. The distance of a dot from the center indicates the size of a day's Broad-wing flight, relative to the scale in each frame. The position of the dot circularly indicates the average direction of the wind on that day. Notice that the pattern of dots shifts westward (counterclockwise) as the flights become smaller.



**WACHUSETT MOUNTAIN:  
EIGHT YEARS AND 100,000+ BROAD-WINGS LATER**

by Leif J. Robinson

*Dedicated to Tom Lipsky, who someday may be fortunate enough to have a teacher's strike linger into mid-September.*

A flight of 10,000 Broad-winged Hawks over Wachusett Mountain in Princeton, Massachusetts, on September 13, 1978, was unprecedented for any New England site. The spectacle so stunned the four who witnessed it that they soul-searched for months to assure themselves that they really saw what they thought they saw. Since then, the 1978 flight has paled compared to one-day totals of 20,000 in 1983 and 17,000 in 1984.

Years of consecutive-day coverage have made it clear that Wachusett Mountain can be expected to yield from 7000 to more than 25,000 Broad-wings each September. It can also toss up huge one-day displays now and again. But when? I attempt to answer that question by analyzing the Wachusett Mountain records from 1978 through 1985, as prepared and distributed by Paul Roberts of the Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch.

**Wind direction.** Everyone knows that wind direction plays a major role in producing hawk flights. Each dot in Figure 1 represents one day's count of Broad-wings, plotted circularly in the direction of the prevailing wind and radially according to the number of birds seen. It is evident that flights of 10,000 or more Broad-wings have always arrived on northerly or northeasterly winds. Smaller flights, though still numbering in the thousands, have usually taken place on northwesterly winds. Nevertheless, some exceptions are notable: 2500 birds on a southeast wind and 3000 on a west-southwest wind. The smallest flights depicted, 50 to 200 birds, occurred when the wind was predominantly in the southwest-northwest quadrant, a pattern quite unlike those of the larger flights.

Thus, it seems evident that as the direction of the wind shifts counterclockwise from the northeast to the southwest, the size of the flight decreases. This trend is illustrated in Table 1, where for various levels of flight activity the percent of flights occurring within a narrow range of wind direction is given.

Table 1. Flight Sizes and Prevailing Wind Direction

FLIGHT SIZE	WIND DIRECTION	% OF FLIGHTS
>10,000	N -- NE	100
1000-10,000	NW -- NE	77
200-1000	NW -- NE	72
50-200	SW -- NW	89



**When the birds pass.** The question is how to assess these flights year after year, especially when the observers change and when substantial numbers of birds might have been missed due to lack of coverage. Cumulative percent seems like a good solution. Cumulative percent is derived as follows. First divide the number of birds seen on any given day by the total number of birds seen during the count period. This gives the percent for that day. Then, from the day on which birds are first seen, each successive day's percent is added to those of all preceding dates to get the cumulative percent. This accumulation is continued through the last on which birds were seen. At that point the percent equals 100, for all birds have been included. Figure 2 shows the average cumulative percent of Broad-wings that passed Wachusett Mountain during the period from 1978-1985. The steep rise in the curve between September 10 and 16 indicates that the vast bulk of the Broad-wings goes past Wachusett Mountain in less than a week. (To give cumulative percent in a more familiar context, on the right side of Figure 2 are the corresponding cumulative numbers of birds, based on an assumed annual flight of 13,500.)

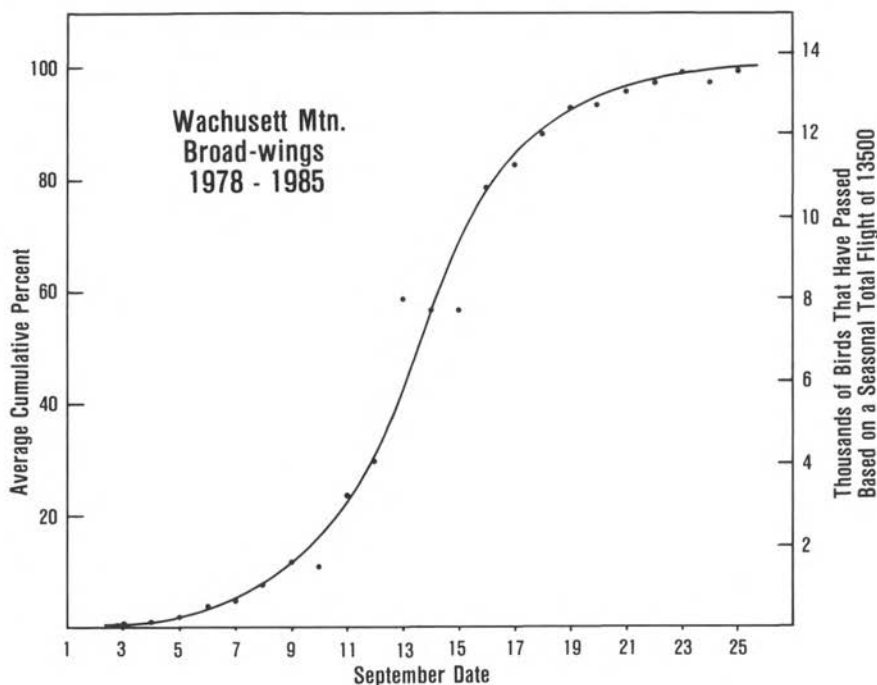


Figure 2. This curve shows the average rate at which Broad-wings pass Wachusett Mountain during autumn over the years studied. The steeper the curve, the more birds pass. The legend at the right is based on an assumed annual total of 13,500 birds.

Wachusett Mountain flights seem to divide into two kinds. Spectacular "explosive" flights, with essentially all the birds passing through in one day, occurred in 1978, 1983, and 1984. More usual are "protracted" flights, extending over one or two weeks. The following equations represent both kinds of flights. C% is the cumulative percent, expressed as an integer, reached on a particular September day (D).

Average for explosive migration:  $C\% = 27.1 \times (D \text{ minus } 11.5)$

(Use between September 12 and 15, non-leap-year dates)

Average for protracted migration:  $C\% = 6.66 \times (D \text{ minus } 6.86)$

(Use between September 7 and 21, non-leap-year dates)

These formulae can be used to predict when an explosive-type migration might occur. Typically, about 20,000 Broad-wings pass Wachusett Mountain in such a year and 10,000 in a protracted year. An explosive migration, therefore, is likely if the cumulative count of birds follows the pattern below.

September 9 less than 1400 Broad-wings  
September 10 less than 2100   "  
September 11 less than 2800   "  
September 12 less than 3400   "

**Birds per hour (BPH).** Averaged over the years 1978-85, the Wachusett Mountain Broad-wing peak occurs on September 13 -- averaging about 260 BPH. Also from averages over those eight years, Table 2 gives the range of dates during which particular BPH rates can be expected to be exceeded.

Table 2. BPH rates in September

BPH greater than 50	September 9	to 19
BPH greater than 100	"	11 to 17
BPH greater than 150	"	11 to 16
BPH greater than 200	"	11 to 15

### Conclusions.

1. In any year there should be two days between September 9 and 19 yielding 2000 or more Broad-winged Hawks.
2. For an explosive flight day of 10,000 or more birds, the wind should be from the north or northeast; a more westerly component can still produce flights of several thousand birds. Such flights take place between September 12 and 16 (non-leap-year dates). Circumstances are particularly attractive when 2800 or fewer Broad-wings have been logged through September 11.
3. Wachusett Mountain has proved itself to be a very predictable site for autumn Broad-wing watching. The data are so consistent that at least one superb flight day can be virtually guaranteed annually to anyone who sits atop that hill for a few days in mid-September.

4. Despite extensive observations over eight years, the Wachusett Mountain flights still pose many questions. One of the most intriguing concerns the interpretation of annual variations in the intensity of migration. Are explosive flight years really different from years with protracted activity, or are both thrusts merely parts of one process?

LEIF J. ROBINSON is a former editor of *Bird Observer* and currently editor of *Sky and Telescope*. He is a member of the Bushnell Birding Advisory Council. His book on selecting binoculars, spotting screens, tripods, and accessories is soon to be published by the Massachusetts Audubon Society. This year, Leif was awarded the Klumpke-Roberts prize for science popularization and joins the distinguished ranks of previous winners including Isaac Asimov, Timothy Ferris, and Carl Sagan. *Bird Observer* will publish in the next issue a short article by Leif on binoculars.

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## MORE ON SHRIKE IDENTIFICATION

I read with enjoyment the article on shrike identification in the February 1987 issue of *Bird Observer*. It was an interesting and well-done piece, but I must disagree in part with the comments about bill color.

The article says that the bill of the Northern Shrike is "blackish with a light base to the lower mandible." It says the bill of the Loggerhead Shrike is "all black." Both statements are partly true, part of the time. Variation in bill color leaves considerable room for confusion, however.

Northern Shrikes are pale at the base of the bill, but **only in the fall and winter**. The rest of the year the bill is all black. Northerns may acquire the all-black bill by March. If the pale area becomes progressively smaller throughout the winter, it may be quite small and hard to see by mid- or late winter. The amount of pale at the base of the bill is apparently quite variable. From one-quarter to one-third of the base of the bill can be pale, and it can involve both mandibles or just the lower.

Loggerhead Shrikes also have a **pale base to the lower mandible in the fall and early winter**. It is usually smaller, covering one-quarter or less of the lower mandible but can be readily visible through binoculars at up to forty or fifty yards.

Unfortunately, bill color is cited as one of the few absolutely diagnostic characters in shrike identification, and an observer, seeing pale at the base of the bill in fall or early winter or an all-black bill from mid-winter on, may ignore other characters. Bill color is at best a suggestive character and should be used with caution and with full knowledge of the variation in both species.

The information on bill color first came to my attention in the fine article by Dale Zimmerman in the September 1955 issue of the *Wilson Bulletin*.

Eirik A. T. Blom

**AUTHOR'S RESPONSE.** J. Baird writes in response that although E. A. T. Blom's exhaustive comments about bill coloration are edifying, it seems that he missed the point of the article, which was to minimize bill color (only one of seven characters discussed, if bill shape is included) and to encourage birders to look at the whole bird before making their identification.

**Eirik A. T. Blom** together with Jon L. Dunn has been Chief Consultant for both editions of the *National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. **James Baird**, now Vice President of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, was for 25 years head of the Natural History Services (later Conservation Department) of the Society.

## RALPH HOFFMANN: FATHER OF THE MODERN FIELD GUIDE

by Bruce A. Sorrie

In a recent issue of *Bird Observer* (14: 284, December 1986) I read with interest the article by Richard K. Walton on early field guides, especially Catesby's benchmark work. As one who has been interested in the development of the modern identification guide, I would like to point out a major omission. Ralph Hoffmann, not Roger Tory Peterson, should be regarded as the creator of the modern field guide.

Born and raised in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in Berkshire County, Ralph Hoffmann graduated from Harvard and taught Latin at Brown and Nichols School in Cambridge while refining his already prodigious birding skills and gathering information on bird identification and behavior. During this period he also was a member of the Nuttall Ornithological Club and was thus able to interact with the finest field ornithologists of his day. This, coupled with his keen hearing, observational abilities, attention to detail, and love for teaching, provided Hoffmann with all the requisites for being a first-rate author of natural history. He began work on *A Guide to the Birds of New England and Eastern New York* in the mid-1890s and completed it in 1904.

What sets *A Guide to the Birds* apart from earlier works are (1) Hoffmann's use of italics to call attention to critical identification points; (2) comparative statements regarding similar species; (3) generous use of black-and-white woodcuts showing diagnostic patterns of the upper body and tail; (4) accurate phonetic renditions of calls and songs; and (5) extended notes on behavior, nests, and other details. Not only does this demonstrate Hoffmann's deep knowledge of hundreds of species, but the emphasis on the "field-mark," on "the aspect of birds as seen out of doors," and on vocal clues means that Hoffmann fully realized that the days of shooting to confirm identification were coming to an end and that he was breaking new ground.

As an example of Hoffmann's abilities, consider the following from the Vesper Sparrow species account.

To distinguish between the Vesper Sparrow and the Song Sparrow, observe, if possible, the *white outer tail-feathers* of the former; these, however, are often not clearly visible, -- the bird must spread its tail fully to show them. One may also note the grayer shade of the Vesper Sparrow's brown, the *dusky cheek-patch*, and the absence at the sides of the throat of the reddish-brown marks, which on the Song Sparrow form a triangle with the dark breast-spot. The Vesper Sparrow is a less nervous bird than the Song Sparrow; it often runs or squats before one, either in the road . . . or in the grass; the Song Sparrow darts with a jerk of its tail into the nearest bushes.

Hoffmann expounds further on the song of the Vesper Sparrow, not only comparing it with other species but pointing out variations in the form of local dialects.

Certainly R. T. P. would approve! What Hoffmann has given us is the "Peterson method," but in a verbal form, lacking only the diagnostic arrows and full-color plates. True, Hoffmann required the observer to wade through lengthy keys to arrive at a species identification, but his keys, being arranged by color *and* by season as well as containing brief information on plumage, voice, and behavior, were designed to maximize efficiency and accuracy. In his superb *Birds of the Pacific States* (1927) -- yes, he had spanned the continent before Peterson's first eastern guide had appeared -- Hoffmann moved a step closer to the ideal guide by enlisting the help of Allan Brooks to portray in black and white each species in lifelike action poses, thus showing to advantage the various fieldmarks and characteristic postures. Although a few color plates are included, I find the line drawings to be superior to most field-guide plates of his era *and* of ours. Therefore, I believe that it was Ralph Hoffmann who brought us the first truly modern field guide.

Having devoted the above paragraphs to emphasizing the importance of Hoffmann's contribution to field ornithology in the hope that he won't slip back into relative obscurity, I wish to note another of Hoffmann's accomplishments in field science -- that is, in botany. In 1922 Hoffmann published his "Flora of Berkshire County, Massachusetts" (*Proceedings of the Boston Society of Natural History* 36 (5): 171-382). It was, and is, a fine example of sound herbarium research, perceptive field work, and erudite synthesis of data. Nearly sixteen hundred species and well-marked varieties were treated. Today, sixty-five years later, I find it an indispensable guide in my searches for the state's rare flora. And finally, while living in California, Hoffmann concentrated on the large and notoriously difficult genus *Eriogonum* (buckwheats -- you've seen one; you've seen them all). For Hoffmann, it must have been sheer pleasure. Imagine -- rather than a mere half dozen *Empidonax* to trifle with, he had over a hundred *Eriogonum* to romp through!

Readers wishing to know more about Ralph Hoffmann may read the article by Harold Swanton in the September 1981 issue of *Natural History* (90: 30).

**BRUCE A. SORRIE** has gained national attention for his accomplishments as Program Botanist for the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program (see "Finder of Lost Plants" by S. Gilbert in *Audubon* 87: 38, May 1985). In addition to romping through the Berkshires in search of endangered *Lonicera*, Bruce has worked as a field ornithologist at Point Reyes and Manomet Bird Observatories, as a naturalist in the Peruvian Andes and Amazon Basin, and as a natural history tour leader. He has been associated with *Bird Observer* since its incorporation.

*A BIRDER'S GUIDE TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO* by William L. Murphy. 1986. Peregrine Enterprises, College Park. v + 124 pages, photos, maps; paperback. \$12.95.

Murphy's book seems to have just about everything one could ask for in a bird-finding guide. There are details on specific bird trips, keys to abundance, and annotated list of Trinidad and Tobago specialties, a 196-reference bibliography, decent maps, an information on tours, guides, hotels, and airlines. Drawbacks are the print, which is a computer print-out that is heavy in many spots, and the shortage of birdwatching sites discussed, though all the major areas are well detailed. This should go in there right next to the toothpaste when you pack for your trip to Trinidad and Tobago.

*NEW ZEALAND BIRDS: An Artist's Field Studies* by Raymond Ching. 1986. Reed Methuen Publishers, Ltd., Auckland (distributed by Salem House Ltd., Merrimack). 231 pages, folio, 69 paintings in water color and oil, 78 pencil studies. \$50.

Ten years ago, with the publication of the *Reader's Digest Book of British Birds*, Raymond Ching burst onto the world of popular bird illustration. Ching is an artist of immense talent and in the last decade he has published several first-rate collections of bird portraits. The present work is his first devoted entirely to the birds of his homeland, and the avifauna of New Zealand has certainly not been painted as splendidly since Keulemans' treatment nearly a century ago. With names straight out of a crossword puzzle dictionary, the Weka, Tui, Kea, and Pukeko (not to mention the Takahe, Kaka, and Kokako) are superbly presented, and the artist-author's studies of the feeding Brown and Little Spotted kiwis are unique. The overall production and specifically the color separation on the plates are very fine. You may not find this volume in your local bookstore, but if you are a student of fine bird illustration or of New Zealand birds, it will be worth searching for.

#### Recommended Remainder Titles

*WADING BIRDS OF THE WORLD* by Eric and Richard Soothill. 1982. 334 pages, 96 color photographs, maps, line drawings. \$14.95 (published at \$29.95). Over three hundred species of "wading birds" are discussed, including shorebirds, herons, storks, flamingos, ibises, spoonbills, cranes, Limpkin, and Sun Bittern. Attractively illustrated, it is a good deal at this price.

*WOOD WARBLERS' WORLD* by Hal Harrison. 1984. 336 pages, 55 color and hundreds of black-and-white photographs, maps. \$8.95 (published at \$19.95).



The author has spent thirty years studying and photographing warblers and presents a readable, personal tour through the Parulinae.

*PARENT BIRDS AND THEIR YOUNG* by Alexander Skutch. 1976. 503 pages, 116 photographs, text figures. \$19.95 (published at \$45). From the blurb: "the most complete up-to-date worldwide survey of the family life and reproductive behavior of birds. . . ." There is a 21-page bibliography.

### Tribute to a Writer

I was leading a bird trip into Lost Maples State Park in Texas when I heard that Jim Lane had died. We had done what countless others before us had done, and what countless more will do -- followed Jim's advice and detailed directions and gone searching for the unusual. This time it was for Golden-cheeked Warblers and Black-capped Vireos, and both put on marvelous displays. That evening we saw millions of bats streaming forth from their cave, again led to the spot by Jim's unerring guidebook. I had the chance to co-lead a trip with Jim once, and I was looking forward to the privilege again. He was a tremendous human being, a beautiful guy. It's too bad he never made video tours, because only a small part of the real Jim came through in his books. Here is a list of his guides. May they keep his memory alive.

*A BIRDER'S GUIDE . . . TO FLORIDA, . . . TO SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA, . . . TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, . . . TO EASTERN COLORADO, . . . TO THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY OF TEXAS, . . . TO THE TEXAS COAST, . . . TO CHURCHILL.*

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## TRIBUTE TO A NATURALIST

by Peter Alden

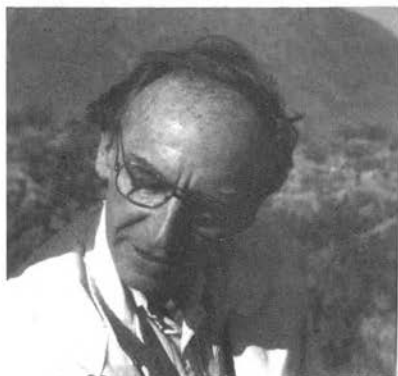
Jim Lane was a demigod to thousands of fledgling birders out west. His finding-bird books completed what O. S. Pettingill, Jr. started by pinpointing hundreds of bird-rich areas. A prolific writer and well-rounded naturalist, Jim could be counted on to know the reptiles and flowers as well.

Jim was the most welcomed "non-official" at most conventions of groups such as the National Audubon Society or American Birding Association. Everyone would ask for Jim, and he was always ready to go in the field. A quick smile and a long handshake greeted his thousands of admirers who knew he'd know where to take them or to direct them. Never aloof, Jim remembered all the good folk year after year and seemed to get his adrenalin flowing by seeing the joy in others as they saw each "new" bird.

Although his personal background was rarely discussed, and we often sensed he had influence in other disciplines, he was for birders the outgoing, omniscient naturalist so many of us wished we could be. As a tour leader for Massachusetts Audubon, he developed a unique style and a loyal following.

His many helpful books will be classics, a standard for others to revise. Those fortunate enough to have known this gentleman will long remember his charm and enthusiasm.

While leading a MAS tour with Jim Lane in the Chiricahuas, we were approached by a young "hotshot" birder who helped us find some rarity. When it was appropriate for introductions, he was introduced to me and knew of my Mexican work, but you should have seen his jaw drop when he learned he had just shown Jim Lane a bird. The reverence reminded me of reactions to finally meeting R.T.P.



Pat N. Fox who took this picture writes, "I have been on five trips with Jim Lane. The last one was in Big Bend. One evening, after everyone had collapsed from the rigors of the day, Jim found out that I had not seen a Poorwill. Despite his own weariness, he insisted that we get in the van and go find them, which we did. That was typical of Jim."

## DEFENSE OF THE HOUSE SPARROW

In response to Vince Yurkunas' observation of grackles killing House Sparrows (*Bird Observer*, 15: 78, April 1987), I have witnessed this behavior in my yard as early as May 9. Sometimes the victim is dropped in flight. The following is an account of this nesting-season activity as recorded in J. V. Dennis: *A Complete Guide to Bird Feeding*, 1980, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, page 246: "Numerous observers have told of grackles killing house sparrows at feeders and then dismembering the victims and eating portions of them. The brains seem to be a special delicacy. During a single spring, an observer in Rhode Island counted no fewer than thirteen house sparrows killed by a **single** grackle." No statistics were given for how many a **mated** grackle might kill!

While on the topic of House Sparrows, I'd like to know why so many birdwatchers put down these and other more common creatures, variously referred to by such derogatory terms as "junk birds" or "dickey birds." I refer to the title of Mr. Yurkunas' field note "Solution to House Sparrow Problem?" [actually, the editor of *Bird Observer* was responsible for this title], recent poisoning of starlings in Rhode Island as reported on page 59 of *The Boston Globe* for Sunday, April 26, 1987, or the article on Canada Geese in the February/March issue of *Sanctuary* as other recent examples of the C.B.D.S. (common bird disparagement syndrome).

First, some of these species didn't ask to be imported, and furthermore, they are all quite interesting to observe. (Three cheers for the Stokes' behavior series!) Although my pocketbook may frequently collapse to see them approach the feeders, their presence does attract other species and provides protection. Certainly their great numbers enhance the startle effect when they fly off at the least disturbance and decrease the likelihood of an individual being caught by a predator. The House Sparrow's lively chatter on cold winter days reminds me how varied is its communication. Maybe they're not as colorful as warblers, but not every birder is as handsome as Robert Redford or Bo Derek, either.

Starlings also attract attention by their mystifying flight patterns. Their beautiful iridescent coloration and masterful mimicry (Rich Little, move over!) are intriguing. (Read *Arnie, the Darling Starling* by Marguerite Sigl Corbu and Diane Marie Barras.)

By some accounts (J. V. Dennis, 1980, pages 9, 66, and 236), numbers of some common species, especially House Sparrows, may be declining. More locally, a comparison of the 1984 and 1986 Christmas Bird Counts for Eastern Massachusetts shows a drop of about ten percent (10,779 in 1984 to 9585 in 1986) in the House Sparrow population. Likewise, starlings dropped by over

43,000 individuals. Even at my feeders, there are half as many House Sparrows as a few years ago. Are they going the way of the most common bird in Audubon's time, the Passenger Pigeon? Perhaps someday, birders will record *Passer domesticus* as a write-in.

Some distinguished birders may travel the country in search of number 701 or rush around the world to "get" all the species they can, but do they notice the "Simple Gifts" in their backyards? (Perhaps, they're not home long enough.) At least those of us who stay put can -- on those days when no Fieldfares show up -- pay more attention to our more common backyard friends.

Dottie Case, Needham

### FURTHER COMMENT ON GRACKLES AND HOUSE SPARROWS

The latest [April 1987] issue of *Observer* is a delight. We've been reading the short articles aloud and crowing over them. Vince Yurkunas (Arlington) might be interested to know that when I was a child in Richmond, Virginia, I raised an orphaned baby House Sparrow to a healthy feathered fledgling. She was taking strong flights every day, with me looking on. I was sitting on the curb watching her at a neighbor's feeder, when a Common Grackle swooped down, grabbed her by the neck, and bore her screaming away. End of story. And now I help set traps for sparrows. But that early experience was a blow to my Disney-molded view of nature.

Julie Zickefoose, Hadlyme, Connecticut

### LOVE AFFAIR IN DOWNTOWN BOSTON: PEREGRINE COURTSHIP

On March 9 a fellow hawk enthusiast at work on the thirtieth floor at One Beacon Street, Boston, called me to the window to see the Peregrines. We had been watching one, and sometimes two, for more than a year. As I watched that day, however, I saw immediately that several things were unusual about their flight. What was most noticeable, and different from any other Peregrine flights that I had seen, was how "together" the birds were. Although they were separated by space (the male, the smaller bird, was above; the female, below), they turned and dove as one bird. Their synchronous flight was breathtaking. Another striking aspect of this flight was the interactions. The male would dive at the female, folding his wings and plunging toward her. Suddenly, one or both birds would seem to plummet, not flying, soaring, or diving, but falling. Then they would swoop up (as we all breathed again!) and resume their positions in

the sky. From time to time they would flutter their wings very fast. It did not seem to be a wing beat used for flying, as the beats were very short and quick.

Soon a group of us was watching at the window; the wonder of this flight was apparent to more people than the hawk watchers. The birds were coming very close to the window and staying in a contained area between our building and the Kennedy Building, but they were using a great extent of vertical space -- soaring way above us on the thirtieth floor and diving far below. We watched from 10:00 to 10:30 A.M. The birds continued their courtship for at least four more hours, because every time we would check the window, they were there. I learned that earlier in the day, one of the birds (probably the female) had been perched on the ledge of the Kennedy Building, and the male repeatedly dived at her.

I often think about the birds and their flight that day. The most memorable thing about it, the aspect that made it different from other Peregrine flights I have seen (and working in downtown Boston I have fortunately had many opportunities to watch Peregrines) was the synchronous flight. I felt over and over that the birds were not just flying. Their dives were breathtaking, and the unity of the flight seemed purposeful, as if it had been choreographed to the smallest wing flutter.

Many people "fell in love" that day -- it was hard not to. We set up a scope near a window and delightedly watched Peregrines perch and eat and cache prey on ledges of the Kennedy Building. "Have you see the birds today?" became the usual greeting. We later discovered a peregrine-watching network independent of our own and anxiously awaited news of their nesting site, which we all hoped would be on the Kennedy Building.

We greeted with elation the news learned through a Peregrine network memo sent through interoffice envelopes that a nest site was established and that first one and then two, three, and four! eggs were laid.

Chere Bemelmans, Bradford

## BACKGROUND FOR THE PEREGRINE FIELD NOTE

The following information is quoted from an article in the Spring 1987 issue of *Massachusetts Audubon: Boston* (1: 1), "The Peregrine Falcon: A Species on the Mend."

An endangered species, the Peregrine has not nested in the Commonwealth since 1955. The widespread use of DDT as a pesticide that began at this time interfered with the Peregrine's nervous and reproductive systems, most notably by reducing egg shell thickness. . . .Before they started disappearing, there were 350

wild pairs of Peregrines east of the Mississippi River. By 1966, in this same area no pair remained. . . . DDT was banned in 1972. . . . [Starting] with birds borrowed from falconers, program scientists hatch Peregrines and send five-week-old falcons to nesting sites. In the years 1984 and 1985, a dozen of these baby falcons came to Boston. . . . part of the Peregrine Restoration Program (PRP). . . . Under the direction of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife [MDFW], the falcons have been raised in a special, wooden, hacking tower on the roof of the McCormack Post Office Building in downtown Boston. Hacking is the process of allowing young birds to learn to hunt and fend for themselves in the wild while providing them with food. . . so that the falcons never see their human surrogate parents. . . . Of the 12 that were initially hacked in Boston, 6 have survived. . . . [The first courtship calls, "E-CHIP, E-CHIP," were heard by Tom French on February 10, 1987, outside his window at the MDFW office at 100 Cambridge Street in Boston.] The male falcon was Dublin, the bird who was released here in 1984 and visited in 1985. The female, identified by bird bands, was released in Toronto, Canada, in 1984 and is the only Canadian release known to have taken up residence in the United States. . . . In other areas east of the Mississippi River, there are [at present] 43 pairs of Peregrines. Last year, thirty of these pairs attempted to nest and 25 of them succeeded in raising 53 young.

The urban environment of Boston is an ideal setting for hacking the Peregrine Falcons. As state ornithologist Brad Blodgett notes, "The skyscrapers mimic the cliff nesting sites of these birds in the wild." . . . In the city, there is a vast food supply for the falcons, consisting mainly of seabirds, starlings, and to a lesser extent pigeons. However, the program is not a pigeon control effort. . . . Another advantage . . . is a lack of natural predators in Boston, namely the Great Horned Owl. . . . The Peregrine Restoration Program was the first program that resulted from the Nongame Wildlife Fund . . . made up of contributions from taxpayers who check off a section on their tax returns to contribute to this program. . . . The PRP [has] a volunteer network to keep track of the Peregrines in Boston [of which *Bird Observer's* Chere Bemelmans is a part]. . . . Other articles on the Peregrine Falcon can be found in *Boston Magazine* (November 1986) and *Massachusetts Wildlife* (Summer 1986).

D.R.A.

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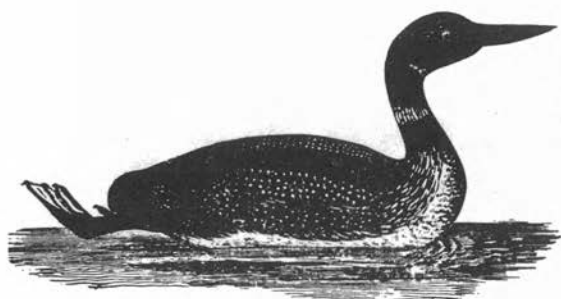
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## FIELD RECORDS

### JANUARY 1987

by George W. Gove and Robert H. Stymeist

January was wet, snowy, cloudy, and cold. Miserable. The temperature averaged 28.9 degrees, 0.7 degree below normal. The high was 50 degrees on the fifteenth and the low was 8 degrees on January 27. Precipitation totaled 7.28 inches, 3.29 inches over normal. January 1987 ranked fifth wettest in 117 years of record, and the most rain fell since the record of 10.55 inches in January 1979. Measurable amounts fell on fourteen days. Snowfall totaled 24.3 inches, 12.1 inches more than average. This was the most in January since 35.9 inches in 1978 and ranks ninth in 97 years of record. The Boston area missed a number of big storms with up to a foot of snow on January 2 in some northern and western suburbs, and then on January 26, Cape Cod was hit with 12- to 16-inch totals and huge drifts from high winds. The National Weather Service Station at Worcester airport reported a January total snowfall of 46.8 inches, three times the average. There were six days with an inch or more and this abnormal frequency caused much difficult travel and hazardous conditions. Sunshine was just 48 percent of possible. A new January low for barometric pressure (28.61) occurred on January 23. This was the fourth lowest reading in the entire 116 years of record.

R.H.S.

#### LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

A Pacific Loon was described in detail from the Sagamore Beach area, where it remained through the end of the month. The identification of the recently split species, Pacific Loon as opposed to Arctic Loon, was based on the lack of flank patches, size (smaller, less robust), and the probability of occurrence versus the Arctic Loon from Europe.

Double-crested Cormorants were reported from six locations with as many as 14 along the Charles River Basin, and 13 were tallied on the Nantucket CBC. A Great Egret continued to be seen in the Falmouth area until January 7; the bird had been present since mid-December.

The Greater White-fronted Goose was still present through January 3 at Wachusett Reservoir in Clinton, where large flocks of Canada Geese were still congregating. The count of Brant was over 1500 in the Squantum area on January 11. The open water on Nantucket was a key factor in the totals of 124 Canvasback and 157 Redheads. Eurasian Wigeons were seen in three locations, and the only Northern Shoveler of the month was found on Nantucket.

The flight of Oldsquaw off Nantucket and Tuckermuck is truly awesome. Birds fly past at a rate of 600 per minute and fly continually from mid-afternoon to dusk. This year the Tuckermuck CBC tallied 96,900, a new national high count, surpassing last year's record breaker of 86,243 seen from Nantucket. King Eiders were located in three spots, and Harlequin Ducks were found in four locations. On Nantucket an apparent Common x Barrow's Goldeneye hybrid was described. The bird was feeding with Barrow's and had a reddish-purple sheen to the head, an intermediate back and scapular pattern, intermediate head shape, and a teardrop-shaped cheek spot. As the editor of *American Birds* would say, "Stay tuned."

R.H.S.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JANUARY 1987
	Red-throated Loon			
3	Nantucket	37	CBC	
	Pacific Loon (details submitted)			
20-31	Sagamore	1 ad W	S. Dinsmore + v.o.	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JANUARY 1987
<b>Common Loon</b>				
1, 3	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	30, 62	CBC	
1, 4	Newburyport area	12, 14	BBC (A. Blaisdell, R. McHale)	
11	Newburyport area	11	BBC (I. Giriuanas)	
18	Gloucester	17	J. Berry	
<b>Pied-billed Grebe</b>				
3, 20	Nantucket, Lakeville	8, 1	CBC, W. Petersen#	
<b>Horned Grebe</b>				
1	Winthrop, Newburyport	18, 10	R. Stymeist#, BBC (A. Blaisdell)	
3, 18	Nantucket, Gloucester	5, 17	CBC, J. Berry	
<b>Red-necked Grebe</b>				
1	Nahant, Winthrop	2, 4	R. Stymeist#	
3, 18	Nantucket, Gloucester	39, 10	CBC, J. Berry	
18	Dennis, Provincetown	16, 5	B. Nikula, W. Petersen#	
<b>Northern Gannet</b>				
3, 18	Nantucket, P'town	106, 15	CBC, W. Petersen#	
<b>Great Cormorant</b>				
3, 10	Nantucket, Boston Harbor	141, 40	CBC, BBC (J. Barton)	
14-15, 18	Naushon I., Gloucester	290, 70	J. Hatch#, J. Berry	
<b>Double-crested Cormorant</b>				
thr.	Cambr. (Charles R. Basin)	14 max 1/2	R. Stymeist + v.o.	
1, 3	Clinton, Nantucket	1 imm, 13	M. Lynch#, CBC	
5, 6, 20	Somerville (Mystic R.)	1, 1, 2	J. Berry	
17, 18	Eastham, Provincetown	2, 1 imm	B. Nikula, W. Petersen#	
<b>Great Blue Heron</b>				
thr	Nantucket, Framingham	10 max, 3	v.o., K. Hamilton	
1	7 locations	21 ind	v.o.	
6	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	4	R. Marshall	
Other reports of single individuals throughout the month.				
<b>Great Egret</b>				
1-7	Falmouth	1	S. Wiedeman	
<b>Black-crowned Night-Heron</b>				
1	Tuckernuck, Eastham	10, 10	CBC, B. Nikula	
3	Nantucket	2	CBC	
30	Sudbury	1	J. Huntington	
<b>Mute Swan</b>				
3, 6	Nantucket, Gloucester	19, 7	CBC, J. Berry	
6	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	15	R. Marshall	
<b>Greater White-fronted Goose</b>				
1-3	Clinton (Wachusett Res.)	1	M. Lynch + v.o.	
<b>Brant</b>				
1, 3	E. Boston, Nantucket	70, 57	R. Stymeist#, CBC	
11	Squantum	1500	S. Higginbotham	
<b>Canada Goose</b>				
thr	Beverly-Salem Harbor	450+ max 1/27	J. Berry	
1, 4	Newburyport area	1200, 278	BBC (A. Blaisdell, R. McHale)	
1, 3	Clinton (Wachusett Res.)	700+, 600+	M. Lynch#	
3, 4	Nant., Orleans (Pochet)	263, 107	CBC, A. Williams	
<b>Wood Duck</b>				
thr, 5	Ipswich, Framingham	1 m, 1 f	J. Berry, K. Hamilton	
<b>Green-winged Teal</b>				
1-10	Framingham	1	K. Hamilton	
3	Salisbury, Nant.	1, 6	R. Forster, CBC	
7	Cummaquid	2	R. Barber	
17, 31	W. Roxbury, Lynn	10, 3	T. Aversa, J. Quigley	
<b>American Black Duck</b>				
3, 10	Nantucket, Plymouth	312, 170	CBC, M. Lynch#	
4, 25	Newburyport-Salisbury	600+, 850+	M. Lynch#	
6, 29	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	606, 519	R. Marshall	
<b>Mallard</b>				
1, 3	Essex, Nantucket	100+, 351	J. Berry, CBC	
10, 18	Plymouth, E. Gloucester	100+, 100+	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
<b>Northern Pintail</b>				
1, 3	P.I., Nantucket	2, 5	BBC (A. Blaisdell), CBC	
9, 10	Cohasset, Framingham	6, 2	S. Higginbotham, K. Hamilton	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JANUARY 1987
Northern Pintail (continued)				
11, 20	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1, 2	R. Marshall	
18, 25	Yarmouthport	45, 80	B. Nikula	
Northern Shoveler				
3	Nantucket	1	CBC	
Gadwall				
thr	Framingham	5	K. Hamilton	
1, 3	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	7, 2	CBC	
4	Worcester, Scituate	1, 1	M. Lynch#, S. Higginbotham#	
8-13, 9	Salem, Lakeville	8-10, 1	J. Berry, D. Briggs	
10, 17	Plymouth, Quincy	15+, 3	M. Lynch#, G. d'Entremont#	
18	E. Gloucester	14	J. Berry	
25	W. Yarmouth	4	B. Nikula	
30	Scituate	1	D. Clapp	
Eurasian Wigeon				
thr	Plymouth, Nantucket	1 m, 1 m	v.o.	
17-25	Chatham	1 m	A. Richards + v.o.	
American Wigeon				
3, 10	Nantucket, Belmont	14, 14	CBC, R. Stymeist	
6	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	8	R. Marshall	
10, 18	Plymouth, E. Gloucester	30, 1	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
Canvasback				
3	Nantucket, Clinton	124, 1	CBC, M. Lynch#	
6, 13, 20	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	16, 19, 24	R. Marshall	
9, 25	Lakeville, Newburyport	10, 1	D. Briggs, M. Lynch#	
Redhead				
4, 9	Nantucket, Falmouth	157, 20	R. Stymeist#, J. Aylward#	
10, 12-31	Plymouth, Natick	12, 1	M. Lynch#, K. Hamilton	
Ring-necked Duck				
thr, 1	Framingham, Lakeville	3-9, 6	K. Hamilton, D. Briggs#	
1, 19; 3	Winchester; Nantucket	9, 8; 9	L. Taylor; CBC	
10	Plymouth	120+	M. Lynch#	
Greater Scaup				
1	E. Boston-Winthrop	500	R. Stymeist#	
3, 9	Nantucket, Falmouth	399, 3200	CBC, J. Aylward + v.o.	
9, 11	Lakeville, Wollaston	4, 200	D. Briggs, S. Higginbotham	
29, 30	Dorchester, Scituate	390, 1	M. Hall, D. Clapp	
Lesser Scaup				
1, 3	Essex, Nantucket	1, 21	J. Berry+, CBC	
9, 25	Lakeville, Plymouth	10, 2	K. Anderson, S. Higginbotham	
Common Eider				
1, 3	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	445, 3673	CBC	
King Eider				
thr	Winthrop	1 m	A. Bennett + v.o.	
23 on	Sagamore	1	S. Dinsmore + v.o.	
28 on	N. Scituate	1	S. Higginbotham#	
Harlequin Duck				
thr	Winthrop, Nantucket	2, 9 max	v.o.	
17, 25	Wellfleet, N. Scituate	1, 1	B. Nikula + v.o., K. Anderson	
Oldsquaw				
1	Tuckernuck	96,900	CBC (M. Litchfield + v.o.)	
3	Nantucket	50,323	CBC	
4	Nantucket	600/minute	A. Wilson + v.o.	
Black Scoter				
3	Nantucket Sound	500+	R. Stymeist#	
29	Nant. (Siasconset)	150	M. Litchfield	
Surf Scoter				
3	Nantucket Sound	800+	R. Stymeist#	
White-winged Scoter				
3	Nantucket Sound	1000+	R. Stymeist#	
Common Goldeneye				
1, 3	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	319,582	CBC	
10, 25; 30	Framingham; Scituate	5, 7; 22	K. Hamilton; D. Clapp	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JANUARY 1987
Barrow's Goldeneye				
1	E. Boston, Newbypt	1, 2	J. Cumming, M. Argue#	
3	Chatham, Quincy	1, 1	J. Aylward, S. Higginbotham#	
4	Nant., W. Newbury	12, 2	G. Gove#, H. Weissberg#	
5, 6	Naushon I., Hull	1, 1	J. Hatch#, P. Thayer	
Bufflehead				
4	Newburyport area	124	BBC (R. McHale)	
12	Nantucket (Long Pd)	45	M. Litchfield	
Hooded Merganser				
1	Lakeville, Winchester	4, 8	D. Briggs, L. Taylor	
3, 6	Nantucket, Boston	15, 8	CBC, A. Tolland	
10	Plymouth	50+	M. Lynch#	
10, 17, 19	Arlington	1, 10, 21	L. Taylor	
10, 11	Framingham, Weymouth	4, 4	K. Hamilton, S. Smith	
23, 30	Watertown, Marshfield	15, 1 f	M. Hall, D. Clapp	
Common Merganser				
1	Brewster, Ipswich	155, 2	B. Nikula, J. Berry	
1, 19	Winchester (Mystic L.)	48, 61	L. Taylor	
1, 3; 3	Clinton; Nantucket	12, 9; 29	M. Lynch#; CBC	
9, 10	Lakeville, Plymouth	8, 100+	K. Anderson, M. Lynch#	
10, 19	Arlington (Spy Pd)	10, 55	L. Taylor	
12, 15	S. Carver, Naushon I.	12, 8	K. Anderson, J. Hatch#	
18, 25	Milton, Framingham	35, 9	L. Taylor, K. Hamilton	
Red-breasted Merganser				
3	Nantucket	8636	CBC	
4, 25	Newbypt, Salisbury	120+, 280	M. Lynch#	
Ruddy Duck				
1, 19	Winchester (Mystic L.)	12, 8	L. Taylor	
1-10, 3	Framingham, Nantucket	2, 9	K. Hamilton, CBC	
7	Eastham	4	R. Barber#	
19	Cambr. (Charles R.)	34	I. Giriunas	

#### RAPTORS

Bald Eagles were observed on a regular basis in the Lakeville area with an adult and an immature bird moving between the lakes of the area. Along the Merrimac River, at least three birds including two adults were seen throughout the month. Feeder-watchers reported many Sharp-shinned Hawks especially after stormy weather. The reports of Rough-legged Hawks were numerous with the bulk near the coast, and Red-tailed Hawks lined the highways. American Kestrels, on the other hand, were few and far between. Peregrine Falcons were found on Nantucket, Tuckernuck, and Kettle Islands. R.H.S.

Bald Eagle				
thr	Lakeville	1 ad + 1 imm	K. Holmes + v.o.	
thr	Newbypt (Merrimac R.)	2 ad + 1 imm	v.o.	
3	Wenham (Wenham Lake)	1 imm	R. Forster	
Northern Harrier				
1, 3	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	10, 18+	CBC	
1	P.I., E. Boston	3, 2	BBC (A. Blaisdell), R. Stymeist	
1	Ellisville	5	D. Briggs#	
4	Bridgewater	1	K. Holmes	
13	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	3	R. Marshall	
14, 18	Naushon I., P'town	2, 2	J. Hatch#, W. Petersen#	
20, 25	Halifax, Duxbury Beach	3, 3	W. Petersen#, K. Anderson	
Sharp-shinned Hawk				
1-15	13 locations	15 individuals	v.o.	
16-31	4 locations	5 individuals	v.o.	
Cooper's Hawk				
3, 9	Nantucket, Lakeville	1, 1	CBC, K. Holmes	
17	W. Roxbury	1	T. Aversa	
10-24	W. Newbury	1	T. Martin + v.o.	
24, 29	Chatham, E. Middleboro	1 ad, 1	B. Nikula, K. Anderson	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JANUARY 1987
Northern Goshawk				
thr	WBWS	1 imm	D. Reynolds + v.o.	
thr	P.I.	1 imm	R. Everett + v.o.	
8, 9	S. Carver, Lakeville	1 ad, 1	J. Shaw#, K. Anderson#	
26, 28; 31	Westwood; Needham	1; 1 imm	S. Allen; W. Petersen	
30	Plum Island	1 imm	T. Aversa	
Red-shouldered Hawk				
thr, 4	Orleans, Worcester	1 ad, 1 ad	B. Nikula + v.o., M. Lynch	
18, 20	Holliston, Lakeville	1 ad, 1 ad	R. Forster, W. Petersen#	
25	E. Middleboro	1	P. Anderson	
Red-tailed Hawk				
1, 3	Ipswich-Essex, Nant.	5, 24	J. Berry, CBC	
4	Bridgewater-Halifax	7	K. Holmes#	
Many other reports of 1 or 2 individuals from a wide area.				
Rough-legged Hawk				
thr	P.I.-Salisbury	6+ max	v.o.	
thr	Middleboro-Bridgewater	6 max	K. Holmes + v.o.	
thr	Nantucket	4+ max	v.o.	
1, 14	Sudbury, Naushon I.	1 dk, 1 dk	R. Forster, J. Hatch#	
17, 18	Mansfield, P'town	1, 1	G. Gove#, W. Petersen#	
22, 25	Westboro, Marshfield	1 dk, 2	B. Blodget, K. Anderson	
Golden Eagle (no details submitted)				
8	P.I. (Hellcat)	1 ad	J. Murray	
American Kestrel				
3, 4	Nantucket, Bridgewater	13, 2	CBC, K. Holmes#	
There are very few reports of this species submitted.				
Merlin				
3	Nantucket	4	CBC	
14	Nantucket	1 ad, 1 ad	P. English, M. Litchfield	
16, 28	Halifax, Nantucket	1, 1 subad	K. Holmes, M. Litchfield	
Peregrine Falcon				
1	Tuckernuck, E. Boston	1 ad, 1	CBC, R. Stymeist#	
3, 23	Nantucket	1, 1	CBC, M. Litchfield	
19	Manchester (Kettle I.)	1	C. Leahy	

#### PHEASANTS THROUGH SHRIKES

Several observers noted that the number of pheasants seems to be down recently; this probably can be attributed to the fact that the state has not been stocking them east of Route 495. The Long-billed Dowitcher at Hyannisport continued from December through January 4. About 1100 Bonaparte's Gulls were feeding in the rips off Low Beach at Nantucket where a Thayer's Gull was also noted as were Iceland and Glaucous gulls. A Lesser Black-backed Gull was noted on the Charles River Basin on New Year's Day. All of the usual alcids (Dovekie, Common and Thick-billed murre, Razorbill, and Black Guillemot) were reported this month.

Although the numbers in this month's records don't really reflect the fact, this is an invasion year for Snowy Owl; 3 to 5 were present at Nantucket, which is unusual since they are seen there only infrequently, and many have been banded at Logan Airport. Flycatchers are not the usual fare for January, but an Eastern Phoebe was found on the Tuckernuck CBC. A large crow roost exists in Framingham, and 2500 American and 600 Fish crows were estimated there. By the time you read this, the Fish Crows will have dispersed to breeding areas in southeastern Massachusetts and should be looked for north of Boston also.

Carolina Wrens were reported from many locations including 7 from Naushon Island; more than 450 were tallied on the Massachusetts CBCs this winter. Winter Wrens were also reported from three locations and Eastern Bluebirds were seen at two locations including 10 birds on Nantucket. A Varied Thrush spent a week at a feeder in Dedham. Another was present in Tewksbury January 5-28, and a Bohemian Waxwing was noted in Acton. A Brown Thrasher was found in Squantum.

G.W.G.

Ring-necked Pheasant				
12, 24	Everett, P.I.	3, 1 f	J. Berry, H. Wiggin	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JANUARY 1987
Wild Turkey				
17	Petersham	22	M. Lynch#	
Virginia Rail				
9, 20	Scituate, Nantucket	1, 1	S. Higginbotham, E. Andrews	
American Coot				
1-19	Arlington	21 max 1/1	L. Taylor	
3, 10	Nantucket, Plymouth	14, 25	CBC, M. Lynch#	
16-31	Natick	9	K. Hamilton	
Black-bellied Plover				
3, 23	Nantucket	7, 4	CBC, M. Litchfield	
Ruddy Turnstone				
27	Nantucket	15	M. Litchfield	
Sanderling				
1	Nahant	250	G. Gove#	
3-18	Nantucket	127 max 1/3	v.o.	
4	Newburyport	43	BBC (D. McHale)	
Purple Sandpiper				
1, 3	Lynn, Nantucket	60, 35	R. Stymeist#, CBC	
4	N. Scituate	350	S. Higginbotham	
18	Gloucester	60	J. Berry	
Dunlin				
1, 17	Nahant, Westport	80, 60	G. Gove#	
Long-billed Dowitcher				
4 from Dec.	Hyannisport	1	S. Clifton + v.o.	
Common Snipe				
1	W. Newbury, Essex	2, 3	J. Gordon#, J. Berry	
21	Bridgewater	1	K. Ryan	
American Woodcock				
6, 7; 23	Nantucket, Brewster	1; 1	E. Andrews; R. Everett	
Red Phalarope				
16	Winthrop	1	S. Dinsmore	
Little Gull				
24	Nantucket	1 ad	M. Litchfield	
Common Black-headed Gull				
1, 3	Winthrop, Yarmouth	4, 1 ad	R. Stymeist#, J. Aylward#	
1, 23	Lynn	1 (1W), 1 ad	J. Quigley	
16, 25	Winthrop, Nantucket	9, 1 imm	S. Dinsmore, E. Andrews	
Bonaparte's Gull				
3, 9	Salisbury, N. Scituate	45, 15	R. Forster, S. Higginbotham	
4, 18; 23	Nantucket; Lynn	1100, 300	M. Litchfield, J. Quigley	
Iceland Gull				
3	Nantucket, Salisbury	49, 20	CBC, R. Forster	
16-25	Gloucester	9 max 1/18	v.o.	
17	Lakeville	1 (2W)	G. Gove	
Thayer's Gull				
1-4	Nantucket	1 (1W)	M. Litchfield, B. Nikula	
Lesser Black-backed Gull				
1, 3	Cambridge, Yarmouth	1 (3W), 1 ad	R. Stymeist#, J. Aylward#	
22	Lynn (Flax Pd)	1 ad	J. Quigley	
Glaucous Gull				
3, 18	Nantucket	4, 1 ad	CBC, M. Litchfield	
3; 3, 18	Salisbury; Gloucester	2; 2, 1	R. Forster, BBC (W. Drummond)	
Black-legged Kittiwake				
1, 3	Tuckernuck I., Nant.	91, 122	CBC	
18	P'town	500	W. Petersen	
Dovekie				
31	Sagamore	2	M. Lynch#	
Common Murre				
3	Rockport	1	K. Griffis#	
Thick-billed Murre				
3, 10-25	Nantucket, Rockport	1, 1	CBC, v.o.	
25	Salisbury	1	M. Lynch#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JANUARY 1987
<b>Razorbill</b>				
1, 3	Tuckernuck I., Nant.	35, 15	CBC	
18	P'town	125	W. Petersen	
<b>Black Guillemot</b>				
3, 6	Nantucket, Scituate	9, 1	CBC, S. Higginbotham	
18	Rockport	7	BBC (W. Drummond)	
<b>Mourning Dove</b>				
21	Easton	50	K. Ryan	
<b>Eastern Screech-Owl</b>				
1	Hopkinton, W. Newbury	2, 1	G. Gove#, R. Stymeist#	
1, 3	Ipswich, Hamilton	1, 1 (red)	J. Berry	
29	Easton	1	K. Ryan	
<b>Great Horned Owl</b>				
thr	Ipswich	1 pr	J. Berry#	
1-17; 14	Belmont; E. Orleans	1; 1	L. Taylor; A. Williams	
1, 9	Lakeville, Brookline	2, 1	K. Holmes, H. Wiggin	
17, 18	Hardwick, E. Middleboro	7, 2	M. Lynch#, K. Anderson	
<b>Snowy Owl</b>				
1, 3	E. Boston, S. Dartmouth	4, 1	R. Stymeist#, T. Raymond	
1, 10	Newburyport, Wareham	6, 2	BBC (A. Blaisdell), D. Smyly	
17, 3-27	Nantucket	3, 3-5	E. Andrews, M. Litchfield	
<b>Barred Owl</b>				
1; 3, 18	Lakeville; Hamilton	1; 2, 1	K. Holmes#; BBC (W. Drummond)	
15	E. Middleboro	1	K. Anderson	
<b>Long-eared Owl</b>				
1, 4	Bridgewater, Nantucket	2, 2	K. Holmes#, R. Stymeist#	
4, 10	Hamilton, P.I.	1, 1	J. Berry#, BBC (W. Van Cor)	
<b>Short-eared Owl</b>				
1	Salisbury, Bridgewater	3, 1	v.o., K. Holmes#	
4, 20	Nantucket, Middleboro	7, 2	M. Litchfield, W. Petersen#	
<b>Northern Saw-whet Owl</b>				
1	Lakeville, Hamilton	2, 1	K. Holmes#, J. Berry#	
3-17	Nantucket	1	E. Andrews	
<b>Belted Kingfisher</b>				
1, 3	Ipswich, Nantucket	1, 1	J. Berry, CBC	
14	Naushon I.	2	J. Hatch#	
<b>Red-bellied Woodpecker</b>				
thr	Lakeville, Hamilton	1 m, 1 m	v.o.	
21; 18, 28	Lexington, Easton	1, 1 f	M. Baird#, K. Ryan	
31	Andover	1 m	R. Means	
<b>Northern Flicker</b>				
1, 3	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	12, 38	CBC	
6, 10	Wayland, Waltham	1, 1	R. Forster, L. Taylor	
<b>Pileated Woodpecker</b>				
1-4	IRWS	2-3	v.o.	
4	Hamilton, Shirley	1 f, 1	G. d'Entremont#, E. Peters	
<b>Eastern Phoebe</b>				
1	Tuckernuck	1	CBC (M. Litchfield)	
<b>Horned Lark</b>				
thr	Newburyport area	40 max 1/24	v.o.	
25	Halifax	100	K. Anderson	
30	Duxbury Beach	59	D. Clapp#	
<b>American Crow</b>				
6, 10	E. Middleboro, Framingham	300, 2500	K. Anderson, K. Hamilton	
<b>Fish Crow</b>				
10	Framingham	600	K. Hamilton	
<b>Common Raven</b>				
18	Quabbin	2	M. Lynch#	
<b>Red-breasted Nuthatch</b>				
thr	Ipswich	1	J. Berry#	
3, 4	Nantucket, Hamilton	25, 4	CBC, G. d'Entremont	
<b>Brown Creeper</b>				
1, 3	Hamilton, Belmont	2, 3	J. Berry#, BBC (R. Clayton)	
17, 31	N. Middleboro, Ipswich	3, 1-2	K. Holmes, J. Berry	



DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JANUARY 1987
<b>Carolina Wren</b>				
2, 10	Brookline, Salisbury	1, 1	H. Wiggin, D. Stemple	
14, 15; 17	Naushon I.; Westport	7, 2	J. Hatch#, G. Gove#	
25, 26	Ipswich, Winchester	1, 2	J. Berry, M. McClellan	
Reports of 11 individuals from 11 locations.				
<b>Winter Wren</b>				
1	Lakeville, Nahant	1, 2	D. Briggs, G. d'Entremont#	
16	E. Middleboro	1	K. Anderson	
<b>Marsh Wren</b>				
3	Nantucket	4	CBC	
<b>Golden-crowned Kinglet</b>				
thr	N. Middleboro	1	K. Holmes	
28, 31	Cohasset, Ipswich	4, 4-5	S. Higginbotham, J. Berry	
<b>Ruby-crowned Kinglet</b>				
1	Tuckermuck I., Nantucket	3, 1	CBC	
11, 14	Belmont, Naushon I.	1, 1	G. Gove# J. Hatch#	
<b>Eastern Bluebird</b>				
17, 18; 30	Lakeville; Nantucket	1 m + 1 f; 10	K. Holmes, E. Andrews#	
<b>American Robin</b>				
3, 10	Nantucket, Boxford	657, 15	CBC, M. Argue#	
11, 18	Cohasset, Yarmouthport	36, 50	fide R. Forster, B. Nikula	
18, 30	E. Dennis, Taunton	40, 50	B. Nikula, C. + N. Foss	
<b>Varied Thrush</b>				
5-28	Tewksbury	1	B. Robertson	
24-31	Dedham	1	E. Cutler	
<b>Gray Catbird</b>				
3, 28	Nantucket	4, 1	CBC, M. Litchfield	
<b>Brown Thrasher</b>				
18	Quincy	1	J. Gordon#	
<b>Cedar Waxwing</b>				
1, 10	Bourne, Boxford	12-15, 40	D. Briggs#, H. Wiggin#	
16, 25	Middleboro, Nantucket	100, 17	D. Briggs, M. Litchfield	
<b>Bohemian Waxwing</b>				
10	Boxford	1	H. Wiggin, M. Argue	
<b>Northern Shrike</b>				
1, 3	P.I., Nantucket	3, 2	BBC (A. Blaisdell), CBC	
10, 24	Framingham, Eastham	1, 1	K. Hamilton, K. Anderson	
Reports of 4 individuals from 4 locations.				

#### WARBLERS THROUGH GROSBEAKS

Orange-crowned Warblers survived in four locations with one bird in South Carver coming to a suet feeder. Yellow-breasted Chats were located in three areas with two of the birds later found dead. On Nantucket, a chat was found the day before the CBC, the day after the CBC, and hit the picture window on January 20. On Beacon Hill in downtown Boston, a chat was rescued alive from a snowbank at 11:30 A.M. but was dead by 1:30 P.M. A Chipping Sparrow visited a feeder in East Orleans, and the Harris' Sparrow continued throughout the month at a feeder on Nantucket.

Common Redpolls were on the move by January 18 and were reported at feeders throughout the area. Also of note was the number of Pine Siskins at feeders. Other winter finches were less obvious with just two reports of Red Crossbill, two individual White-winged Crossbills, and not a single record of Pine Grosbeak. R.H.S.

<b>Orange-crowned Warbler</b>				
1	Nahant, Belmont (ADL)	1, 1	A. Bennett + v.o., L. Taylor	
3	Nantucket	1	CBC (O. Komar)	
11-12	S. Carver (suet feeder)	1	J. Shaw + v.o.	
<b>Yellow-rumped Warbler</b>				
1, 3	Scusset, Nantucket	10-12, 367	D. Briggs#, CBC	
14-15, 18	Naushon I., Squantum	152+, 2	J. Hatch#, L. Taylor#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JANUARY 1987
<b>Pine Warbler</b>				
3, 11	Nantucket, Squantum	11, 1	CBC, S. Higginbotham	
24-26	Lexington (suet feeder)	1-2	N. Reiner	
31	Burlington	1	G. Mullen	
<b>Palm Warbler</b>				
1, 3	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	4, 4	CBC	
<b>Common Yellowthroat</b>				
1	Tuckernuck	1	CBC (M. Litchfield)	
<b>Yellow-breasted Chat</b>				
1-6	Nahant (from Dec.)	1	v.o.	
2-20	Nantucket (hit window 1/20)	1	B. Nickerson, L. Loring	
19	Boston (Beacon Hill)	1	B. Zaremba	
<b>Rufous-sided Towhee</b>				
thr, 1	Chatham, Lakeville	1, 1	B. Nikula, D. Davis#	
14-15, 31	Naushon I., Brewster	5, 1	J. Hatch#, B. Nikula	
<b>Chipping Sparrow (details submitted)</b>				
4-15	E. Orleans (at feeder)	1	A. + E. Williams	
<b>Field Sparrow</b>				
1, 9	Clinton, Halifax	6, 6	M. Lynch#, D. Briggs	
14-15, 26	Naushon I., Millis	18, 1	J. Hatch#, R. Forster	
27-29, 28	E. Middleboro, Cohasset	1, 2	K. Anderson, S. Higginbotham	
<b>Savannah Sparrow</b>				
3, 13	Nant., S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	13, 4	CBC, R. Marshall	
<b>"Ipswich" Sparrow</b>				
1, 4	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	3, 1	CBC, P. Trimble	
5	Salisbury	1	M. McClellan#	
13	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1	R. Marshall	
<b>Fox Sparrow</b>				
4, 9	Salisbury, S. Carver	1, 1	G. d'Entremont#, I. Shaw	
<b>Song Sparrow</b>				
1, 3	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	29, 78	CBC	
<b>Swamp Sparrow</b>				
4, 31	Nantucket	2, 1	R. Stymeist#, E. Andrews	
<b>White-throated Sparrow</b>				
thr, 1	Ipswich, Tuckernuck	5 max, 7	J. Berry, CBC	
<b>Harris' Sparrow</b>				
thr from Nov.	Nantucket	1 ad	Harnish + v.o.	
<b>Lapland Longspur</b>				
5, 11	Salisbury	2	M. McClellan	
30	Duxbury Beach	7	D. Clapp#	
<b>Snow Bunting</b>				
3, 4	Quincy, Nantucket	3, 24	S. Higginbotham#, R. Stymeist#	
11, 14	Salisbury, Uxbridge	1, 30	M. McClellan, A. Strauss	
20	Middleboro	250	W. Petersen#	
20, 24	Nantucket, Salisbury	40, 22	M. Litchfield, H. Wiggin	
30	Duxbury Beach	1	D. Clapp#	
<b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>				
5, 17	Marshfield, Belmont (ADL)	15, 2	S. + R. Higginbotham, L. Taylor	
17	W. Roxbury, Nant.	5, 25	T. Aversa, E. Andrews	
19	Millis	1	R. Forster	
28	Marshfield (DWWS)	114 (9 ad m)	D. Clapp	
<b>Eastern Meadowlark</b>				
1	Tuckernuck, E. Orleans	8, 1	CBC, A. Williams	
3; 9, 12	Nant.; Millis	14; 5, 4	CBC; M. Kasprzyk#	
6, 13	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1, 2	R. Marshall	
20	Halifax	9	K. Anderson#	
25, 30	Duxbury	14, 6	K. Anderson, D. Clapp	
<b>Rusty Blackbird</b>				
17	W. Roxbury	25	T. Aversa	
<b>Common Grackle</b>				
19, 25	Nantucket, Sudbury	14, 1	M. Litchfield, R. Forster	
30	Marshfield	3	D. Clapp	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	JANUARY 1987
Brown-headed thr	Cowbird Burlington	6	M. Hall	
Purple Finch 3	Ipswich, N. Middleboro	7, 1	R. Forster, K. Holmes	
House Finch 1	Essex	100+	J. Berry#	
Red Crossbill 11-12	Weston (at feeder)	1 f	C. Webb	
17	New Braintree	3	M. Lynch#	
White-winged Crossbill 16, 27	Watertown, Nantucket	1 m, 1 m	R. Stymeist#, N. Adams	
Common Redpoll 1	Cambr., Salisbury	15, 10	R. Stymeist, BBC (A. Blaisdell)	
3, 17	Nant., Arlington	17, 2	L. Taylor	
11, 20	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	20, 50	R. Marshall	
18	6 widespread locations	50 total	v.o.	
27-31	10 locations	74 total	v.o.	
29	Dorchester	25	M. Hall	
Pine Siskin thr	Nantucket	57 max 1/1	E. Andrews	
thr	Arlington	50 max 1/1	L. Taylor	
thr	Ipswich	5 max 1/25	J. Berry	
thr	Middleboro	2-3	D. Briggs	
thr, 3	Lakeville, Nantucket	2-3, 115	R. + H. LaPointe, CBC	
4, 7	Ipswich, Westford	7, 25	N. Holahan, S. Selesky	
12, 18	S. Carver, Petersham	20, 40	J. Shaw, M. Lynch#	
29	Stoughton	50	G. Ruben	
American Goldfinch thr	Ipswich, Watertown	12 max, 24 max	J. Berry, J. Heywood#	
1, 17	Essex, Hardwick	30+, 24	J. Cushing#, M. Lynch#	
Evening Grosbeak thr; 10	Middleboro, Boxford	100+, 15	D. Briggs, H. Wiggin	
10, 18	Framingham, Easton	34, 22	R. Forster, K. Ryan	
18; 17, 18	IRWS; Petersham (2 loc)	72; 120, 175	M. West; M. Lynch#	
30	Marshfield	16	D. Clapp#	

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*Red Crossbill*  
*Salisbury, MA*  
*February 1987*  
*Photo By Bonnie Manning*



# FIELD RECORDS

## FEBRUARY 1987

by George W. Gove and Robert H. Stymeist

The month of February had record sunshine, 75 percent of possible, breaking the former February mark of 74 percent set in 1895. This ended the record-long ten-month-old stretch of sunshine deficit. The temperature averaged 29.1 degrees, 1.6 degrees below normal. The high mark was 47 degrees on both February 7 and 28, and the low was one degree below zero on February 14 and 15. This was the first zero reading for Boston since Christmas Day 1983. No temperature records were broken. Precipitation totaled just 0.72 inch, 2.98 inches under normal and the third least in 117 years of February records. It was also the driest month since 0.60 inch precipitation in March 1981. Snowfall total was 3.7 inches, 7.8 inches under average. The most in any day was 3.6 inches on the ninth. Snow remained on the ground most of the month, however, due to the heavy snowfall in January.

### LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

Red-necked Grebes were noted in good numbers during the month, with a large concentration at North Scituate where a maximum of 126 birds was counted early in the month.

Waterfowl highlights were few and included many of the same birds found earlier this season, such as Eurasian Wigeon, King Eider, and Harlequin Duck. Very few Red-breasted Mergansers were noted as compared with record numbers last year.

R.H.S.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	FEBRUARY 1987
<b>Red-throated Loon</b>				
7, 14	C. Ann, A.P. (Rockport)	1, 3	SSBC (J. Kenneally), T. Aversa	
7, 22; 28	P.I. area; Winthrop	3, 6; 2	W. Ellison#, BBC; J. Cumming	
<b>Common Loon</b>				
7	Cape Ann	31	SSBC (J. Kenneally)	
1, 4	Cape Ann, Newbypt	20, 12	BBC (S. Bolton), W. Ellison#	
<b>Pied-billed Grebe</b>				
1-28	Framingham	1	K. Hamilton	
6, 16	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	5, 5	B. Hallett, L. Taylor#	
<b>Horned Grebe</b>				
1; 7, 21	Cape Ann	5; 6, 2	BBC (S. Bolton); J. Berry	
6, 8	N. Scituate	7, 4	B. Hallett, S. Higginbotham	
7	Plum Island	24	W. Ellison#	
7, 14	C. Ann, A.P. (Rockport)	46, 1	SSBC (J. Kenneally), T. Aversa	
<b>Red-necked Grebe</b>				
thr	N. Scituate	126 max 2/6	B. Cassie + v.o.	
1	Cape Ann	4	BBC (S. Bolton)	
7	Cape Ann	15	SSBC (J. Kenneally)	
7, 21	Cape Ann	4, 8	J. Berry	
<b>Western Grebe</b>				
14-16	Newbypt Harbor	1	G. d'Entremont + H. D'Entremont	
<b>Northern Gannet</b>				
24	N. Scituate	4	S. Higginbotham	
<b>Great Cormorant</b>				
thr	P.I.	60+ max 2/1	J. Berry + v.o.	
1	Cape Ann	22	BBC (S. Bolton)	
7	Cape Ann	15	SSBC (J. Kenneally)	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	FEBRUARY 1987
Great Cormorant (continued)				
15-28	Lakeville	1 imm	K. Anderson + v.o.	
17, 25; 24	Boston, N. Scituate	9; 30	J. Berry; S. Higginbotham	
Double-crested Cormorant				
14, 15	Nantucket, Newbypt	6, 5	B. Hallett, L. Taylor#	
Great Blue Heron				
thr	Nantucket	3 max 2/14	B. Hallett + v.o.	
8-15	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	2	S. Dinsmore	
9, 11	Milton, Eastham	2, 8	S. Higginbotham, D. Clapp	
18, 26	Lakeville, Watertown	1, 1	W. Petersen, M. Hall	
Black-crowned Night-Heron				
1, 15	Eastham, Nantucket	1, 1	D. Clapp, B. Hallett#	
Mute Swan				
21	Gloucester	13	J. Berry#	
28	Hingham Bay	8	P. Rodgers	
Brant				
22, 24	Revere, S. Dartmouth	400, 6	J. Cumming, R. Marshall	
Canada Goose				
thr	Beverly-Salem harbor	max 400+	J. Berry	
1	Newbypt	210	J. Berry	
28	Winchester-Woburn	100+	R. Clayton#	
Wood Duck				
thr	Hyannis	1 m	v.o.	
15	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	1 m	S. Dinsmore	
Green-winged Teal				
8	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	1 f	S. Dinsmore	
8	Centerville	24	S. Clifton	
American Black Duck				
1, 8	Cape Ann, P.I. area	100+, 100+	BBC (S. Bolton, J. Detweiler)	
16, 18	Ipswich, E. Middleboro	100+, 75	BBC (J. Berry), K. Anderson	
Mallard				
1, 16	Cape Ann, Ipswich	80, 250+	BBC (S. Bolton, J. Berry)	
28	Mystic Lakes-Horn Pd	100+	BBC (R. Clayton)	
Northern Pintail				
7, 8	Nant., Centerville	5, 2	M. Litchfield, S. Clifton	
Northern Shoveler				
thr	Nantucket (Quaise)	2 m	E. Andrews# + v.o.	
Gadwall				
thr	Framingham	5	K. Hamilton	
thr	Scituate Harbor	2	S. Higginbotham	
3-9, 4-7	Salem, Nantucket	6-8, 2	J. Berry, E. Andrews + v.o.	
8-15	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	18	S. Dinsmore	
21	Gloucester	5	J. Berry	
Eurasian Wigeon				
thr	Chatham, Plymouth	1, 1	v.o.	
8-15	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	1 m	S. Dinsmore	
8, 26	Orleans, Nantucket	1, 1	S. Clifton, M. Litchfield	
American Wigeon				
7	Nant.	10	M. Litchfield	
8-15	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	40	S. Dinsmore	
Canvasback				
thr	Nant.	88 max 2/7	M. Litchfield	
14-15	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	1 f	S. Dinsmore	
Redhead				
thr	Nantucket	110 max 2/7	M. Litchfield + v.o.	
thr	Plymouth, Natick	12 max, 1 f	v.o., K. Hamilton	
8-15	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	16	S. Dinsmore	
5, 27	Long Pond (Brewster)	8-10	S. Dinsmore	
Ring-necked Duck				
thr	Nantucket	19 max 2/26	M. Litchfield	
14-16	Nantucket	30	B. Hallett	
thr	Framingham	6 max 2/22	K. Hamilton	
8-15	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	115	S. Dinsmore	
15	Lakeville	6	K. Anderson	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	FEBRUARY 1987
Greater Scaup				
7, 28	Nantucket, Newbypt	125, 11	M. Litchfield, J. Berry	
Lesser Scaup				
8-15, 14	Billington Sea, Nant.	2 m + 3 f, 14	S. Dinsmore, B. Hallett	
Common Eider				
thr	Nant.	450 max 2/18	M. Litchfield	
7	Cape Ann	335	J. Kenneally	
King Eider				
thr	Nahant, Winthrop	1, 1	J. Quigley, J. Cumming	
2-26	Sagamore Beach	1 imm m	S. Dinsmore	
Harlequin Duck				
thr	Nantucket harbor	7 (4 m + 3 f)	M. Litchfield + v.o.	
16	N. Scituate	1 m	D. Clapp	
28	A.P. (Rockport)	2 m + 1 f	B. Howell	
Oldsquaw				
4, 28	Newburyport	82, 100+	W. Ellison#, J. Berry#	
Black Scoter				
22	P.I. area	5	BBC (D. + D. Oliver)	
Surf Scoter				
1	Cape Ann	10	BBC (S. Bolton)	
White-winged Scoter				
1; 7, 21	Winthrop; Cape Ann	60; 25, 26	J. Cumming; J. Berry	
Common Goldeneye				
1, 28	Newburyport	300+, 500+	J. Berry	
4	Newburyport	430	W. Ellison#	
1; 7, 21	Cape Ann	87; 20, 40	BBC (S. Bolton); J. Berry	
15, 23	Ipswich, Framingham	110, 7	J. Berry, K. Hamilton	
Barrow's Goldeneye				
thr	N. Scituate	1 m,	v.o.	
thr	Newburyport	7 max 2/21	G. Gove + v.o.	
2, 5, 22	Hull	1 m	P. Thayer	
Bufflehead				
1	Cape Ann, Newbypt	131, 50+	BBC (S. Bolton), J. Berry	
18	Hyannis harbor	175	M. Litchfield	
Hooded Merganser				
thr, 2	Somerville, Nant.	1 f, 5	J. Berry, M. Litchfield	
6, 8	Plymouth, Watertown	2 f, 6	B. Hallett, M. Hall	
8-15	Plymouth (Billington Sea)	3	S. Dinsmore	
9, 21	Milton, Lakeville	2, 2	S. Higginbotham, K. Holmes	
Common Merganser				
thr	Nantucket	100 max 2/14	B. Hallett + v.o.	
thr	Framingham	27 max 2/23	K. Hamilton	
1, 9	Newbypt, Milton	45, 24	J. Berry, S. Higginbotham	
13	Haverhill	10	T. Aversa	
Red-breasted Merganser				
28	Lakeville	1	W. Petersen	
Ruddy Duck				
14, 22	Nantucket, Plymouth	2, 1	B. Hallett#, W. Petersen	

#### VULTURES THROUGH SHRIKES

A Turkey Vulture was seen in Ipswich, and Bald Eagles were reported from five locations. There were twelve reports of Sharp-shinned Hawk and eight of Cooper's Hawk. A Gyrfalcon was reportedly seen at Magnolia although no details were provided.

A Common or Mew Gull was seen at Fresh Pond in Cambridge, and details were submitted. It was said to be a second winter bird with a very rounded head and a tiny grayish bill with a visible dark tip that contrasted with the bills of nearby Ring-billed gulls. The smaller size was said not to be conspicuous though it was clearly shorter than the Ring-billed Gulls. Most reports of this gull appear in the December to April period.

An oiled Dovekie was found alive at Nantucket where an oiled and dead Razorbill was also found. Mourning Doves were seen copulating and nest-building in Middleboro on February 26, and pairs of Great Horned Owls were reported from three locations with one pair being at a nest in Bridgewater.

Northern Saw-whet Owls were noted at six locations. The Red-bellied Woodpecker continued in Hamilton from December. A Boreal Chickadee was reported from Oakham, and a Varied Thrush was present throughout the month in Dedham. Carolina and Winter wrens were still present. Eight individual Carolina Wrens were reported. Four Eastern Bluebirds were noted in Hardwick. A Bohemian Waxwing was seen with Cedar Waxwings in Acton, and seven Bohemian Waxwings were photographed in Truro. This has been a Northern Shrike winter; birds were reported from twelve locations this month.

G.W.G.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	FEBRUARY 1987
Turkey Vulture				
28	Ipswich	1	H. Carr	
Bald Eagle				
thr, 1-22	Wellfleet, Newburyport	1 imm, 1-2	fide B. Nikula, v.o.	
1	Quabbin (G43)	3 ad + 3 imm	M. Hall	
15	Lakeville, Haverhill	1 ad, 1 ad	K. Holmes, T. Aversa	
28	Lakeville	1 ad + 1 imm	K. Anderson	
Northern Harrier				
10, 15	Scituate, P.I.	5, 1 m	S. Higginbotham, L. Taylor#	
24	S. Dartmouth	4	R. Marshall	
Sharp-shinned Hawk				
thr	Scusset Beach	1 or 2	S. Dinsmore	
7, 8, 22	Newburyport-P.I.	1, 1, 1	v.o.	
7; 8, 21	Nantucket; Easton	1; 1, 1	M. Litchfield; K. Ryan	
Reports of 6 individuals from 6 locations.				
Cooper's Hawk				
thr	Scusset Beach	1 imm	S. Dinsmore	
6, 10	E. Middleboro, Cohasset	1, 1 f	K. Anderson, S. Higginbotham	
10, 16	Littleton, W. Roxbury	1, 1	V. Sprong, T. Aversa	
21	Chatham, Weston	1, 1	B. Nikula, W. Petersen	
28	Cape Ann	1	BBC (R. Vernon)	
Northern Goshawk				
thr, 7	WBWS, Wellfleet	1 imm, 1 ad	D. Reynolds#, S. Clifton#	
6, 8	Chelmsford, Easton	1, 1 ad	C. Alexander, K. Ryan	
18	Middleboro	1	W. Petersen	
Red-shouldered Hawk				
7, 8	E. Harwich, Route 202	1 ad, 1	R. Comeau#, V. Sprong	
20	Hanson	1 ad	W. Petersen	
27, 28	E. Middleboro	1	K. Anderson	
Red-tailed Hawk				
2, 8	W. Bridgewater, Newbypt	3, 5	K. Anderson, BBC (J. Detweiler)	
15	Middleboro-Halifax	5	K. Anderson	
21	Lakeville	2	K. Holmes	
Rough-legged Hawk				
thr.	Newburyport-Salisbury	4 max 2/4	v.o.	
7-28	DWWS	7 max 2/12, 13	D. Clapp, D. Morimoto	
8, 28	Bridgewater, Middleboro	3 lt + 3 dk, 5	K. Holmes, W. Petersen	
American Kestrel				
7, 11-28	Newburyport, N. Beverly	4, 1 f	F. Bouchard, J. Berry	
10, 27	Attleboro, Lynn	2, 2	F. Bouchard, J. Berry	
Merlin				
thr	Nantucket	2	M. Litchfield	
13, 19	Boston, Chatham	1, 1	M. Skalla, B. Nikula	
Gyrfalcon (no details submitted)				
1	Magnolia	1	J. Aylward#	
Wild Turkey				
1	Middleboro	9	E. Cushman	
7-16	Petersham	24 max 2/16	M. Lynch#	
Virginia Rail				
16	Ipswich	1	BBC (J. Berry)	
American Coot				
1; 1, 28	Natick; Medford	9; 8, 5	K. Hamilton; L. Taylor	
2, 6	Nantucket, Plymouth	10, 100	M. Litchfield, B. Hallett	
Black-bellied Plover				
17	Quincy	2	S. Higginbotham	



DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	FEBRUARY 1987
Ruddy Turnstone				
thr	Nantucket	14 max 2/27	M. Litchfield	
7, 28; 18	Dennis; Quincy	1, 1; 3	S. Clifton#, K. Ryan	
Red Knot				
6	Scituate	1	B. Hallett	
Sanderling				
thr	Bourne	24	S. Dinsmore	
1, 22	Winthrop	38, 22	J. Cumming	
11, 28	Nantucket, P.I.	90, 12	M. Litchfield, J. Berry	
Purple Sandpiper				
thr	N. Scituate	200 max 2/16	v.o.	
7	Cape Ann	35	SSBC (J. Kenneally)	
Dunlin				
9	Hull	8	P. Thayer	
Common Snipe				
1	Newburyport	1	J. Berry	
American Woodcock				
2-16	Nantucket	1	M. Litchfield	
Common Black-headed Gull				
1, 15	E. Boston, Winthrop	1, 3	J. Cumming	
12	Gloucester	1 ad	J. Quigley	
Bonaparte's Gull				
thr	Nantucket	52 max 2/13	M. Litchfield	
1, 7	Winthrop, Newbypt	225, 14	S. Dinsmore, W. Ellison#	
Common Gull (details submitted)				
28	Cambridge (F.P.)	1	J. Barton, S. Zende	
Ring-billed Gull				
4, 8	Newbypt, Watertown	180, 240	W. Ellison#, M. Hall	
Herring Gull				
1, 8	Cape Ann, P.I.	1500, 7100	BBC (S. Bolton) BBC (J. Detweiler)	
Iceland Gull				
thr	Nantucket	15 max 2/15	M. Litchfield + v.o.	
1, 21	Cape Ann, Gloucester	17, 23	BBC (S. Bolton), J. Berry	
4	Newburyport-P.I.	37	W. Ellison#	
Lesser Black-backed Gull				
15	Nantucket	1 (3W)	B. Hallett#	
Glaucous Gull				
15, 21	Nant., Newburyport	2, 1 (2W)	B. Hallett#, G. Gove#	
19-27, 22	Gloucester, Wayland	1 (2W), 1	J. Quigley, R. Forster	
Great Black-backed Gull				
1	Cape Ann	1025	BBC (S. Bolton)	
Dovekie				
7	Nantucket	1 (oiled)	M. Litchfield	
Razorbill				
7	Nantucket	1 (oiled)	M. Litchfield	
Black Guillemot				
21, 28	Rockport, Cape Ann	2, 5	J. Berry, BBC (R. Vernon)	
Great Horned Owl				
thr	Belmont, Ipswich	1, pr	L. Taylor#, J. Berry	
14, 18-28	Wenham, Bridgewater	pr, 1 (nest)	J. Berry, W. Petersen	
22	E. Middleboro	1	K. Anderson	
28	Lexington	1	L. Taylor	
Snowy Owl				
thr	Nantucket	3	M. Litchfield	
8, 20	P.I., Saugus	2, 1	BBC (J. Detweiler), J. Berry	
22, 24	N. Monomoy, S. Dart.	1, 1	B. Nikula, R. Marshall	
25, 28	Nahant, N. Scituate	1, 1	J. Quigley, D. Morimoto	
Barred Owl				
thr	Hamilton	1-2	S. Whittum#, J. Berry	
2	Oakham	1	M. Lynch#	
Short-eared Owl				
thr	Saugus	1	J. Berry	
1	E. Boston, Eastham	3, 1	J. Cumming, D. Clapp	
14	Nantucket	2	B. Hallett#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	FEBRUARY 1987
<b>Northern Saw-whet Owl</b>				
8, 16	Nantucket, Hamilton	1, 1	E. Andrews#, BBC (J. Berry)	
22	WBWS, Topsfield	2, 1	R. Prescott, J. MacDougall	
18, 22; 28	Chatham; Lakeville	1; 1	B. Nikula; W. Petersen	
<b>Belted Kingfisher</b>				
1, 8	Newburyport	1, 2	J. Berry, BBC (J. Detweiler)	
<b>Red-bellied Woodpecker</b>				
16 (from Dec.)	Hamilton	1 f	BBC (J. Berry)	
<b>Northern Flicker</b>				
7	Waltham, Belmont	1, 1	L. Taylor	
14, 15	Wenham, Lakeville	3, 6	J. Berry, K. Holmes	
<b>Pileated Woodpecker</b>				
3, 6	Wellesley, Worcester	1, 1	G. LeTowt, W. Macera	
7, 8	Oakham, Petersham	1, 1	M. Lynch#	
6, 24	Wayland, N. Reading			
<b>Horned Lark</b>				
thr	E. Middleboro	200 max 2/18	K. Anderson	
18, 25	Salisbury, Plympton	35, 50	B. Hallett#, K. Anderson	
<b>Fish Crow</b>				
6, 14	Scituate, Wayland	1, 4-6	B. Hallett#, G. Gove#	
28	Lexington	1	L. Taylor	
<b>Boreal Chickadee</b>				
2, 7	Oakham	1, 1	M. Lynch#	
<b>Red-breasted Nuthatch</b>				
thr, 7-16	Ipswich, Hamilton	1, 1-3	J. Berry	
28	Quabbin (G40)	24	M. Lynch#	
<b>Carolina Wren</b>				
thr	Southboro, Littleton	1, 2	I. Tufts, C. Roth	
21, 23	N. Falmouth, Easton	1, 1	L. Taylor, K. Ryan	
14, 24	Hardwick, Winchester	1, 2	M. Lynch#, M. McClellan	
<b>Winter Wren</b>				
13, 21	Marshfield, Cambridge	1, 1	D. Clapp, H. Keith#	
<b>Golden-crowned Kinglet</b>				
8, 28	Hamilton, Lexington	5, 4	J. Berry, L. Taylor	
<b>Eastern Bluebird</b>				
14	Hardwick	4	M. Lynch#	
<b>American Robin</b>				
7, 10	Waltham, Cohasset	4, 15	L. Taylor, S. Higginbotham	
22	Plymouth, Nantucket	16, 300	W. Petersen, M. Litchfield	
<b>Gray Catbird</b>				
10, 14	Chatham, Nantucket	1, 7	B. Nikula, B. Hallett#	
16	Manomet	1	S. Dinsmore	
<b>Varied Thrush</b>				
thr	Dedham	1	E. Cutler	
<b>Bohemian Waxwing</b>				
7, 8	Acton	1	S. Bolton + v.o.	
28	Truro	7 ph	S. Clifton, R. Comeau + v.o.	
<b>Cedar Waxwing</b>				
8, 10	Acton, Cohasset	200, 10	v.o., S. Higginbotham	
14, 28	Hardwick, Middleboro	70, 7	M. Lynch#, K. Holmes	
<b>Northern Shrike</b>				
8, 21	Princeton, Newburyport	1 ad, 2	G. Gove#, J. Gordon#	
16, 26	DWWS, Nahant	1 ad, 1 imm	C. Floyd#, J. Quigley	

Reports of 8 individuals from eight locations.

#### WARBLERS THROUGH GROSBEAKS

An Orange-crowned Warbler continued to visit a feeder in South Carver through February 21. Another feeder bird, the Harris' Sparrow on Nantucket continued all month; that bird was first found in November 1986. Several "Ipswich" Sparrows were reported with 4 individuals found together along Duxbury Beach. A flock of over 175 Snow Buntings was counted in Middleboro, and another 65 were tallied along Low Beach, Nantucket. At Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary in Marshfield a flock of 120 Red-winged Blackbirds was counted on February 13, and over 60 were there on the sixteenth.

Most of them were females and immatures. Winter finch reports included a single Pine Grosbeak, 5 White-winged and over 20 Red Crossbills. It was a good month for redpolls. Common Redpolls were reported visiting feeders all over our area with some locations showing high concentrations. Over 200 birds were tallied in Hardwick, and flocks of over 40 were reported by four feeder-watchers. A Hoary Redpoll was present most of the month at a feeder in Watertown. Pine Siskin numbers were down from January and February, and Evening Grosbeak reports were concentrated west of Boston with fewer noted north of Boston or on Cape Cod.

R.H.S.

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	FEBRUARY 1987
Orange-crowned Warbler				
1-21	from Jan. 11 S. Carver	1	J. Shaw	
Yellow-rumped Warbler				
7	Cape Ann	1	SSBC (J. Kenneally)	
Pine Warbler				
1	Burlington	1	G. Mullen	
Rufous-sided Towhee				
thr	Chatham	1	B. Nikula	
13	DWWS (Marshfield)	1	D. Clapp	
Field Sparrow				
21	N. Falmouth	4	L. Taylor	
Savannah Sparrow				
thr	Scusset Beach	2	S. Dinsmore	
"Ipswich" Sparrow				
4, 7	Salisbury, P.I.	1, 3	W. Ellison#	
19, 28	Nantucket	1, 1	B. Hallett#, M. Litchfield	
16	Duxbury Beach	4	G. Gove#	
Song Sparrow				
10	Cohasset	8	S. Higginbotham	
12-28	Nant. (feeder)	15	E. Andrews	
Swamp Sparrow				
thr	Nantucket	1	E. Andrews	
White-throated Sparrow				
21	N. Falmouth	25+	L. Taylor	
<b>Harris's Sparrow</b>				
thr	Nantucket	1	R. Harnish + v.o.	
Dark-eyed Junco				
thr	Ipswich (feeder)	16-18	J. Berry	
Lapland Longspur				
thr	Salisbury	20+ max 2/15	L. Taylor + v.o.	
5	Race Point (P'town)	6	S. Dinsmore	
12, 18	Duxbury, Middleboro	33, 3	D. Clapp, W. Petersen	
21	P.I.	18	S. Dinsmore	
Snow Bunting				
9	Milton, Nantucket	3, 65	S. Higginbotham, M. Litchfield	
18	Middleboro, Salisbury	175+, 5	W. Petersen, B. Hallett	
27	R.P. (P'town)	55	S. Dinsmore	
Red-winged Blackbird				
1, 7, 28	Belmont (ADL)	2, 2, 5	L. Taylor#	
4	IRWS (Topsfield)	8	M. West	
13, 16	Marshfield (DWWS)	120, 60+	D. Clapp, G. Gove#	
Eastern Meadowlark				
1, 2; 18	Millis (feeder); Nant.	1; 7	C. Romano#; J. Andrews#	
18	E. Middleboro, Halifax	10, 15	K. Anderson, W. Petersen	
Common Grackle				
16, 28	Nantucket, Cambridge	1, 1	B. Hallett#, L. Taylor	
Brown-headed Cowbird				
thr	Burlington	6	M. Hall	
16	DWWS (Marshfield)	1 f	J. Gordon#	
Pine Grosbeak				
3	Nantucket	1 f	E. Andrews#	
Purple Finch				
28	Quabbin (G40)	1	M. Lynch#	
Red Crossbill				
13, 28	Chatham, Salisbury	1, 20+	B. Nikula, R. Heil + v.o.	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	FEBRUARY 1987
White-winged	Crossbill			
9	Littleton	1	V. Sprong	
14, 28	Hardwick, Quab. (G40)	1, 1	M. Lynch, S. Carroll	
28	Framingham	1 f	K. Hamilton	
28	Salisbury	2 f + 3 m	R. Heil + v.o.	
Common Redpoll				
thr	Watertown	79 max 2/25	R. Stymeist + v.o.	
thr	Framingham	63 max 2/12	K. Hamilton	
1, 19	Ipswich	1 f, 1 m	J. Berry	
3, 14	Arlington	1 f, 2	L. Taylor	
4	Westford	10	C. Colburn	
7-14	Petersham	40+ max 2/8	M. Lynch#	
7-8, 8	P.I., Hardwick	4, 200	M. Schoene, G. Gove#	
9	Littleton	30	V. Sprong	
10, 11	Chatham, Yarmouthport	2+, 35	B. Nikula, K. Hamilton	
11	Harwich, Nantucket	5, 25	K. Hamilton, M. Litchfield	
14, 15	Marshfield, Worcester	7, 2	D. Clapp, M. Lynch#	
23	Roslindale, Stoneham	20, 30	C. Machioles, M. Gattineri	
27, 28	Woburn, Hopkinton	3, 40	T. Collins, J. Gordon#	
Hoary Redpoll				
4-28	Watertown	1 ph	R. Stymeist + v.o.	
Pine Siskin				
thr	Framingham	2	K. Hamilton	
1, 7, 28	Arlington	4, 10, 15	L. Taylor	
1, 16, 21	Ipswich	1, 3, 2	J. Berry	
2, 7	Westford, Petersham	12+, 5	S. Selesky, M. Lynch#	
28	Middleboro, Hopkinton	3, 12	K. Holmes, J. Gordon#	
Evening Grosbeak				
thr	Petersham	112 max 2/7	M. Lynch + v.o.	
7, 8	Wellfleet, Hamilton	8, 1-2	S. Clifton#, J. Berry	
8	Rutland, Oakham	25+, 50+	L. Taylor#	
9, 22	Easton	55, 25	K. Ryan	
15	Billington Sea	2	S. Dinsmore	

CORRIGENDUM TO APRIL 1987 BIRD OBSERVER

In the last paragraph on page 91 of the April 1987 issue of *Bird Observer*, "The 1986 Christmas Bird Counts in Eastern Massachusetts" states, "Also, 10 Common Barn-Owls were tallied (6 on the Vineyard and 4 at Newburyport)."

The last part of the sentence should read "(6 on the Vineyard and 4 at Westport)."

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ad	adult	F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge
b	banded	G40	Gate 40, Quabbin
br	breeding	H.P.	Halibut Point, Rockport
dk	dark (phase)	I.	Island
f	female	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
imm	immature	Mt.A.	Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
ind	individuals	Nant.	Nantucket
juv	juvenile	Newbypt	Newburyport
loc	location	P.I.	Plum Island
lt	light (phase)	Pd	Pond
m	male	P'town	Provincetown
max	maximum	Quab.	Quabbin
migr	migrating	Res.	Reservation
n	nesting	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
ph	photographed	S. Dart.	South Dartmouth
pl	plumage	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
pr	pair	Stellw.	Stellwagen (Bank)
S	summer (1S = first summer)	BBC	Brookline Bird Club
thr	throughout	BOEM	Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts
v.o.	various observers	CBC	Christmas Bird Count
W	winter (2W = second winter)	CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club
w/	with	DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
yg	young	DWWS	Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary
#	additional observers	FCBC	Felix Cutler Bird Club
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum	GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	LCES	Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	MAS	Massachusetts Audubon Society
Buzz.	Buzzards Bay	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
C.	cape as in Cape Cod	MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
Cambr.	Cambridge	NEHW	New England Hawk Watch
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	PRNWR	Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
F.M.	Fowl Meadow	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

## MEET OUR COVER ARTIST

**JULIE ZICKEFOOSE** worked as a Nature Conservancy naturalist for six years and was in charge (1983-86) of the Connecticut Least Tern/Piping Plover Recovery Program. She lives at the Burnham Brook Preserve in East Haddam, Connecticut, where she is now a full-time professional artist but still happily carries on the bird census on that property (up to 140 species in 1986, the all-time high in 23 years of records). Her art has appeared on the covers of *Birdwatcher's Digest* and *Parrots' Wood* by E. J. Fisk, and in *American Birds* and has been exhibited at the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell, at the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard, and at the Peabody Museum in Salem. Julie is currently at work on illustrations for the book by Dr. William Montevecchi, *The Birds of Insular Newfoundland*, which will include the Roger Tory Peterson plates from the 1951 volume on Newfoundland birds by H. S. Peters and T. D. Burleigh. She is also illustrating Paul Spitzer's book on Ospreys to be published by Smithsonian Press. Inquiries about commission work, works available for purchase, and future exhibits should be sent to her at Box 84, Hadlyme CT 06439.

### THE COVER ILLUSTRATION Song Sparrow

*Melospiza melodia* by its Latin name is a finch that sings a pleasant song. According to one bird-song expert, "The vocal effort of the Song Sparrow is such a simple roundelay that one wonders why it received the name." Although few listeners may know by name the ubiquitous and unobtrusive bird that produces it, this familiar vocalization is a lovely part of the Massachusetts scene. The eminent ornithologist Margaret Morse Nice studied for an entire decade the Song Sparrows of Columbus, Ohio, "as they came, courted, mated, nested, raised their young, developed their songs, departed and returned -- following them through the generations, parent to child and even to great-grandchild until sometimes her writings begin to sound like the begetting portions of the Bible (J. Kastner, *A World of Watchers*, 1986, page 145)." She learned to distinguish her male birds through their songs and discovered that each male had at least six and some as many as twenty-four in his repertoire that were recognizable as uniquely that individual's.

Song Sparrows are present year-round in our state and nest in wet meadows or similar habitat. Some remain over winter, but most of the breeding residents depart in the fall for the southern United States, returning north in early March to establish by the end of April breeding territories (each about a third of an acre), one pair producing as many as three broods in a year, accounting in part for their abundance.

Dorothy R. Arvidson

April's *At a Glance* mystery photograph gives the reader a marvelously definitive view of a species that observant readers of this journal have seen regularly depicted for the past fourteen years. Yes, the shorebird in the picture is an alternate-plumaged Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*).

The bird's large size, as indicated by both its tarsal and bill length, and its generally dark ventral coloration limit the bird's identity to one of only several Holarctic shorebird species. Although the recurvature of the bill is partially obscured by the grass in the foreground of the photograph, the bird's **black tail** and **white rump** are obvious. Additionally, and most importantly, the **velvety-black underwing coverts** and **axillaries** contrast sharply with the white in the wing stripe. This combination of characters virtually eliminates confusion of the Hudsonian Godwit with any other shorebird in the northern hemisphere, with the possible exceptions being the palearctic Black-tailed Godwit (which has occurred as a vagrant in Massachusetts) and the Willet. The Black-tailed Godwit in a similar posture would display **strikingly white underwing coverts** and **axillaries**, a **more extensively white wing stripe**, and **more white on the rump**, thus giving the viewer the impression of nearly complete whiteness on the underwings and sides of the rump.

A Willet, by contrast, would not appear as dark beneath as the bird in the photo, and it would show a stouter and thicker bill. Also, the broad white wing stripe of a Willet would extend fully to the lead edge of the wing, and there would be a narrow band of white on the underside of the leading edge of the wing.

The Hudsonian Godwit in the picture was photographed during fall migration at Monomoy Island, Chatham, Massachusetts.

Wayne R. Petersen



*Hudsonian Godwit*

*Photo by Roger Everett*



## AT A GLANCE

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*Photo by Robert Marshall*



Can you identify this bird?

Identification will be discussed in next issue's AT A GLANCE.



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