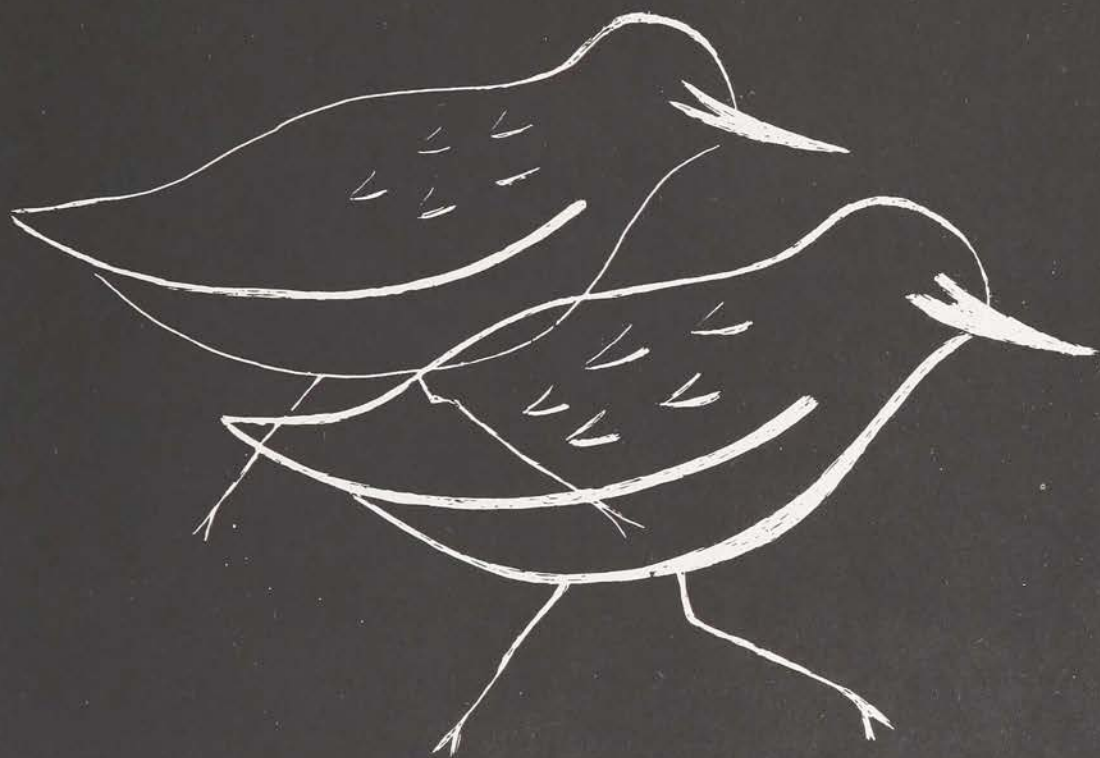


# BIRD OBSERVER

OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS



VOL. I NO. 2  
MAR.- APR. 1973

MUD HEN



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WHY BIRD OBSERVER?

BIRD OBSERVER is a regional publication designed to supply information on birding areas, maps, topical articles and field notes.

Subscriptions will run on a calendar year from January to December at \$5.00 per year. Back issues will be supplied, when available.

Articles are welcomed, but prompt editorial consideration not guaranteed.

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#### EDITOR'S PAGE

We were saddened to learn of the passing of George Drew, in Tucson. Although health prevented this Belmont resident from active field work, his keen hearing often yielded many excellent birds, such as last years western meadowlark at his brother's orchard in Westford. Mr. Drew encouraged and instructed many young birders and advocated the publication of BIRD OBSERVER.

The staff of BIRD OBSERVER expresses its thanks to the Board of Directors of the Brookline Bird Club for permission to use its membership list. The response has been very encouraging.

For those who could not locate the Arctic loon mentioned in the November records, it can now be found on page 43 of this issue.

A word concerning the mailing dates of BIRD OBSERVER. In order to include species seen during the month immediately preceding publication, it is necessary for the compilers to wait for these records to become available. For example, to list February birds in the March-April issue, the compilers must wait until at least March 8th. Final editorial preparation, printing, and distribution of BIRD OBSERVER then requires roughly another two weeks.

In reporting sightings to the compilers (addresses on the opposite page), it is essential that certain information be included: date (and time for rare birds), location, and numbers seen. For unusual sightings, details about field marks and names of confirmatory observers should also be given.

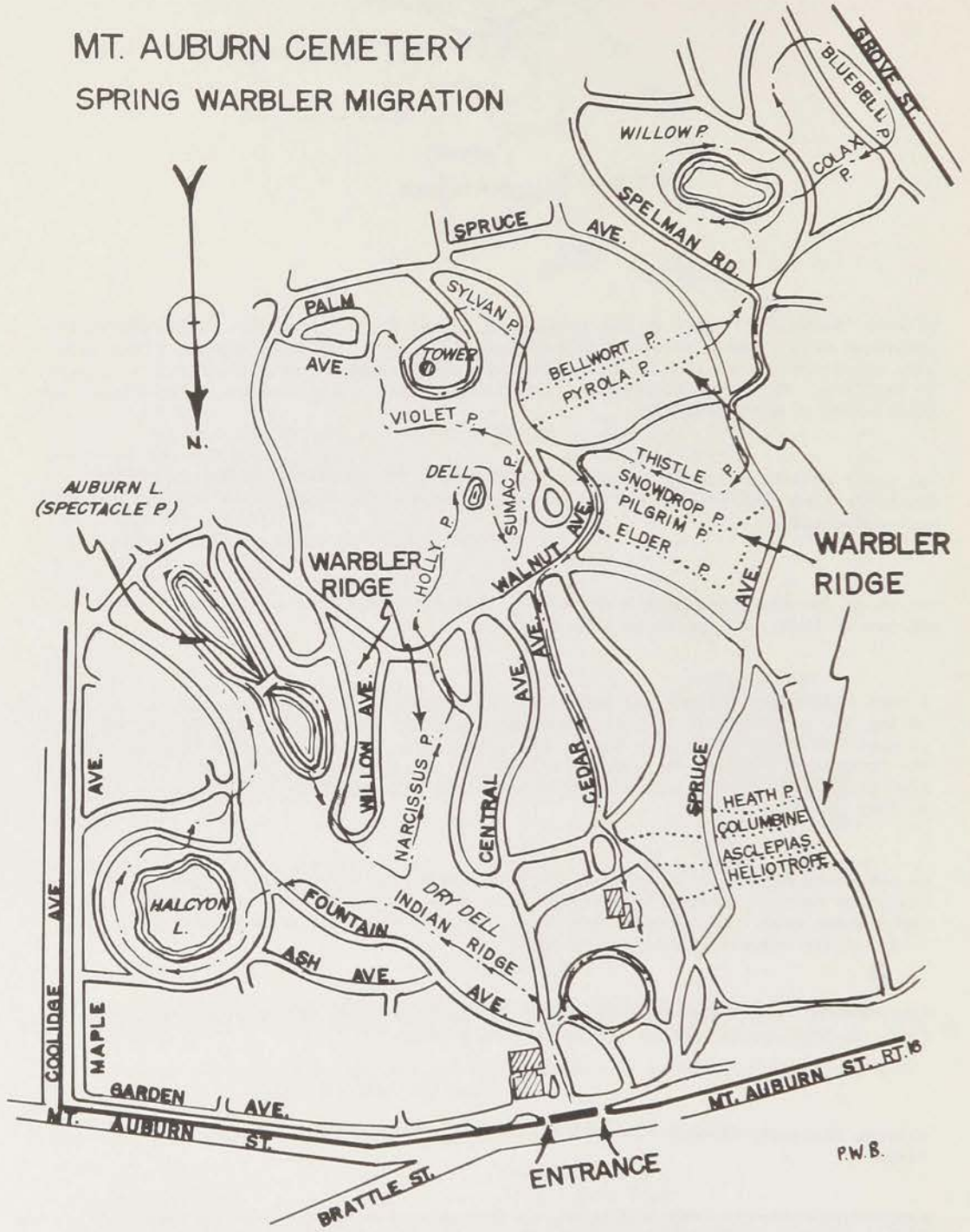
Many readers have asked that the artist of the gull plate in the first issue be identified. Philip Martin, author and artist, take a bow!

Welcome Worcester County! We look forward to your active participation, and to your birds.

April 29th is "Johnny Horizon Clean-up Day" at Plum Island. The Johnny Horizon program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of the Interior, is a national program designed to promote environmental awareness and action. Plum Island is a favorite birding location, and if we want it to continue to be a place of natural beauty as well as a great spot for birds, a few hours devoted to this annual clean-up would be well worth the time invested. For further information please contact Mr. Herman D'Entremont, 28 Ballard Street, Newton Center 02159 (tel. 969-8146).



MT. AUBURN CEMETERY  
 SPRING WARBLER MIGRATION



SPRING WARBLER MIGRATION  
MOUNT AUBURN CEMETERY

Robert H. J. Stymeist, Cambridge

The warblers of North America, or wood warblers as they are formally called to distinguish them from the dull-colored Old World warblers, are small insectivorous birds with generally slender pointed bills.

Warblers are not to be confused with vireos or kinglets. They differ from the vireos in wing formula and are also readily distinguishable by their greater activity. The vireos' movements are deliberate, they peer. But warblers pirouette or flutter, turning this way and that, darting here and there, and embodying perpetual motion. Kinglets are smaller than the tiniest warbler. The golden-crowned kinglet's black-and-yellow crest is always diagnostic, as are the ruby-crowned kinglet's call and nervous habit of twitching its wings.

There are 53 species of warblers listed in Birds of North America by Robbins, Bruun, and Zim, but only about 30 can be seen regularly in Massachusetts. 15 genera are represented, each indicating similarities in habit and in plumage. The genus Wilsonia (Wilson's and Canada warblers) catch insects on the wing. Oporornis (mourning) are sluggish and stay close to the ground in thickets or brush and are usually the last group to arrive in Massachusetts. Seiurus (ovenbird, waterthrush) walk on the ground in search of insects and bob up and down like miniature spotted sandpipers. Dendroica (yellow, magnolia) are tree loving warblers with wing bars and tail spots. Vermivora (Tennessee, Nashville) generally lack wing bars, except for blue-winged warblers and their hybrids.

Seldom do warblers winter in Massachusetts, except myrtles that feed on bayberries along the coast (Cape Cod and Plum Island), or an occasional hardy yellowthroat, a few pine and palm warblers on the Cape, or a slim scattering of chats and orange-crowned warblers at feeding stations.

Most of our summer residents winter in Central and South America. Warblers are mainly night migrants but also make extensive journeys by day. The longest non-stop flight is across the Gulf of Mexico -- 500 miles from the Yucatan Peninsula to the Louisiana coast, or 150 miles to Cuba and another 150 to Florida. Then the northward migration continues with daytime stops for feeding.

Black-and-white warblers, which are early migrants, average about 13 miles per day and require a whole month to travel from North Carolina to Massachusetts. The farther north a warbler goes, the faster it migrates. One of the greatest travelers is the blackpoll. The least distance between its North American breeding grounds and its Brazilian winter home is 3,500 miles; the blackpolls that breed in Alaska have to cross 7,000 miles.

Migration is not an instantaneous event. The northward or southward flow is actually a series of "waves" that are influenced by weather. In spring, listen to the forecast: southwest winds bring birds in, while during autumn it is the northwest winds that aid their flight.

Though not acclaimed songsters like the thrushes, the warblers can hold their own. All the promise of spring seems to be stored in the Parula's sizzling gurgle. There is cheer in the simple song of the yellow warbler, and a serenity in the zeeing of the black-throated green as he sings from his perch in the hemlock woods. And then there is the potpourri of the yellow-breasted chat -- enough said!

Acquaintance with warbler songs will be of great assistance in making identifications. There are many fine recordings available at stores and also in your library's record department. By playing and replaying records the day before a birding trip, you might become familiar with a species that otherwise would slip by in the confusion of a big wave.

Now, where does one go for migrating warblers? The success of a birder depends far less on his location than one would suppose. The experienced eye will often glean a rich harvest from the apparently most unpromising fields. However, an increasing



familiarity with a certain place frees the mind and gives quicker discernment of all the hidden treasures. Let me offer to you Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge.

Here is America's oldest garden cemetery, founded in 1831 by the Massachusetts Horticultural society. It has long been a favorite haunt for even the great birders. These acres have been under ever increasing surveillance, mostly in spring, and I think hardly a bird of interest now passes through without being seen. There are over 300 species of trees and shrubs in Mount Auburn, all of which are labeled. The spaced planting makes it easy to follow warblers, unlike the difficulty encountered in wood lots and the like, where birds get lost in the foliage.

I will not linger on identification, for field guides such as the Robbins' or Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds illustrate what you are looking at. I will attempt to reveal the best places within the cemetery to search, based on 10 years experience. at "Sweet Auburn." The map shows trails where warblers and other spring migrants can be easily seen. But feel free to wander -- remember, birds have wings!

The dates given for each species do not represent the earliest arrival nor the latest departure, but the interval when the likelihood of a sighting is greatest. The species are listed in order of arrival date and not by American Ornithological Union checklist convention. What to expect and when, varies every year due to weather and prevailing winds. Nevertheless, there are usually distinct waves around April 26th, May 2nd, 10th, 17th, and 24th.

PINE WARBLER: Dendroica pinus (April 10 - May 5)

Most often seen in the black pines at Washington Tower. These warblers are also frequently observed along the east side of the cemetery bordering Coolidge Hill Road. The song is an unbroken trill, clear and sweet.

PALM WARBLER: Dendroica palmarum (April 18 - May 8)

This tail-wagging ground feeder is most often seen near Halcyon Lake and Willow Pond.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER: Mniotilta varia (April 26 - May 30)

Throughout the cemetery.

MYRTLE WARBLER: Dendroica coronata (April 26 - May 20)

Throughout the cemetery. The myrtle has a very distinctive "tchip" note that immediately identifies it.

PARULA WARBLER: Parula americana (May 1 - May 28)

Throughout the cemetery. This and the two preceding species are the most common migrants.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER: Dendroica virens (May 1 - May 25)

Throughout the cemetery, though the best place is the Tower-Dell area. Formerly nested here.

YELLOW WARBLER: Dendroica petechia (May 1 - May 30)

This bit of feathered sunshine inhabits all the cemetery. It is especially fond of the areas around water, and occasionally breeds near Willow Pond.

AMERICAN REDSTART: Setophaga ruticilla (May 3 - June 5)

Recent breeder, 1970. Found throughout the cemetery. By far the most active warbler, constantly flitting about.

OVENBIRD: Seiurus aurocapillus (May 3 - May 20)

Common transient ground feeder, most often seen in the Tower-Dell area. Its loud and often repeated song is probably the best known of all warblers, "teacher, teacher, teacher."

NASHVILLE WARBLER: Vermivora ruficapilla (May 5 - May 25)

Throughout the cemetery. Easily recognized by its song, a series of six, eight or more lively rapid notes that suddenly congeal into a pleasant rolling twitter, lower in pitch than the first part and about half as long.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER: Dendroica magnolia (May 5 - May 25)

Throughout the cemetery. The favored location is the hemlock row at the base of the Tower at the Dell. The magnolia's song is easily remembered, "wee-to wee-to, wee tee-eet." The first four notes are deliberate, even, and low in tone, while the last three are hurried and of higher pitch. Can be confused with Nashville and chestnut-sided warblers.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH: Seiurus noveboracensis (May 5 - May 25)

Common transient, most often found feeding under yews and rhododendrons around Halcyon Lake, Auburn Lake (known to birders as Spectacle Pond), Willow and Dell Ponds.

YELLOWTHROAT: Geothlypis trichas (May 5 - May 30)

Throughout the cemetery and most often seen near the ground in shrubs and thick foliage. This curious warbler responds amazingly to man-made "spishing" sounds.

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER: Dendroica pensylvanica (May 6 - May 25)

Throughout the cemetery.

BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER: Dendroica caerulescens (May 8 - May 25)

Throughout the cemetery, though the best spot is the Tower-Dell area. The male is easily recognized, but the female is as obscure as the male is conspicuous, the only distinguishing mark being a white spot at the base of the primary wing feathers. The song of this warbler is perhaps the most versatile of the eastern migrants; its most common variation is an insect-like buzzing repeated three or four times, with a rising inflection.

PRAIRIE WARBLER: Dendroica discolor (May 8 - May 20)

Uncommon anywhere in the cemetery. The song is very familiar and easily identified, a series of buzzy notes ascending in a chromatic scale, sometimes fast, sometimes slow.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER: Vermivora chrysoptera (May 10 - May 20)

Uncommon transient visitor, most often seen during the bigger waves. The golden-winged can be easily located by its unique call, usually four or five notes of a buzzy quality, "shree-ee, zwee, zwee," the first prolonged and about two notes higher than the blue-winged.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER: Vermivora pinus (May 10 - May 20)

Uncommon migrant, seen more often than the golden-winged. It is also located by its buzzing song, mostly of a two-note quality that resembles inhaling and exhaling, "zwe-ee-e-e, z-eeee," the latter usually just a sputter.

CAPE MAY WARBLER: Dendroica tigrina (May 10 - May 25)

Uncommon in certain years, though regular in others. This bird can be found throughout the cemetery, but it seems to have a preference for flowering crabapples. The Cape May's song is very similar to that of the black-and-white or the blackpoll, though the notes are shorter, a little louder, less thin, and more run together.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER: Dendroica fusca (May 10 - May 25)

Throughout the cemetery and usually very common during big waves. Very fond of oak trees during migration.

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER: Dendroica castanea (May 10 - May 25)

Uncommon transient throughout the cemetery. The best sites are near the tower and the warbler ridges in the oaks during the bigger waves.

WILSON'S WARBLER: Wilsonia pusilla (May 10 - May 30)

Throughout the cemetery and common especially in low shrubbery.

TENNESSEE WARBLER: Vermivora peregrina (May 12 - May 20)

Uncommon, but not as irregular as most people believe. This nondescript warbler easily escapes detection in the taller trees. If you learn the song, a very loud series of chips increasing rapidly and then suddenly changing into a mere twitter, you should have no problem finding this bird.

BLACKPOLL: Dendroica striata (May 12 - June 5)

Throughout the cemetery in large numbers. Around the third week of May, every other warbler you look at is a blackpoll.



CANADA WARBLER: Wilsonia canadensis (May 12 - May 30)

Common throughout the cemetery and preferring low shrubbery, such as surrounds the Tower-Dell area, Halcyon and Auburn Lakes, and Willow Pond.

By the first week of May nearly all of these warblers make an appearance, but not in any large numbers, excluding the black-and-white, Parula and black-throated green. During the second week the numbers increase, but the largest and best waves occur in the third week. They come through touching the tops of the trees and very quickly move on. The best places to observe this migration are the oak ridges between the Tower and Willow Pond, the crematory west, and between Auburn Lake and the dry Dell (see map). You should locate the wave, sit down, and let the birds come to you.

The following warblers might occur each year, though their appearance is not sufficiently regular to merit specific dates. They could occur at any time and should be looked for especially during waves.

WORM-EATING WARBLER: Helmitheros vermivorus

Occurs every year; sometimes as many as five can be seen. When a worm-eating is located, usually along the slope between the Tower and the Dell (Violet Path), a birder has an excellent chance of seeing it, for the word spreads fast around Mount Auburn. Another fair spot for this ground-feeding warbler is near Auburn Lake, where there are many mountain laurels and rhododendrons to hide this bird.

MOURNING WARBLER: Oporornis philadelphia

Uncommon, but occurs every year, usually between May 22 - June 5, when the show seems to be over until next spring, and when most of the birders quit, the mourning slips in. The best spots are along Indian Ridge Path and the east side of the Tower in the forsythia (Rose Path to Palm Avenue).

HOODED WARBLER: Wilsonia citrina

Uncommon transient visitor, most often seen in the Dell area. If one is found in the morning, it is likely to stay around all day. A singularity of this bird is its constantly spreading tail, not a wagging like the palm warbler. This action is the more noticeable because of the large white spots on the hooded's tail.

CERULEAN WARBLER: Dendroica cerulea

Rare, but somebody always sees one each year in the "biggie" wave. The song of the cerulean must be carefully listened for as it resembles that of the Parula, rolling up the scale quietly and evenly, less delicately, yet not more wiry.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER: Vermivora celata

Another rarity that occurs each year somewhere in the cemetery. Most records are for the third week of May

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: Icteria virens

Rare and not recorded every year. To be looked for in the thick shrubs along Indian Ridge, the Dell and the Tower area. Nesting record: June 6, 1884 (3 eggs), W. Brewster.

KENTUCKY WARBLER: Oporornis formosus

Very rare. The Kentucky's loud and musical "teakettle" song resembles that of the cardinal or Carolina wren, and readily betrays this bird's whereabouts.

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH: Seiurus motacilla

Rare transient visitor to be looked for around the edges of Dell and Willow Ponds, as well as Halcyon and Auburn Lakes between April 22 and May 1. Plain throat, unlike the streaked northern waterthrush.

#### ACCIDENTALS

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER: Dendroica dominica

Rare: April 24-25, 1936, Tousey; collected by L. Griscom; also May 16, 1937, Sands.

LAWRENCE'S WARBLER: Vermivora lawrencei

Hybrid: May 14, 1964, various observers.



AUDUBON'S WARBLER: Dendroica auduboni

Rare straggler from the west. One record on November 15, 1876, Abbot M. Frazar; collected by W. Brewster. Is this species' close similarity to the ubiquitous myrtle a cause for its being overlooked?

HERMIT WARBLER: Dendroica occidentalis

One record: May 16-17, 1963, Osborn Earle and others

TO BE LOOKED FOR

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER: Protonotaria citrea

CONNECTICUT WARBLER: Oporornis agilis

Visitors are always welcome at Mount Auburn during open hours, 8 a.m. to sunset during the wintertime and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. during spring and summer, except Memorial Day week when the gates stay open an hour later.

The Brookline Bird Club has daily trips through the cemetery during the month of May, starting at 6:30 a.m., at the main gate on Mount Auburn Street. The cemetery is easily reached by public transportation from Harvard Square, by taking the trackless trolleys to either Watertown or Waverly squares or the Huron Ave. Line.

Visitors, especially birders, should keep in mind that the cemetery is consecrated ground. The cemetery is not public property, is not a park, and is not a bird sanctuary.

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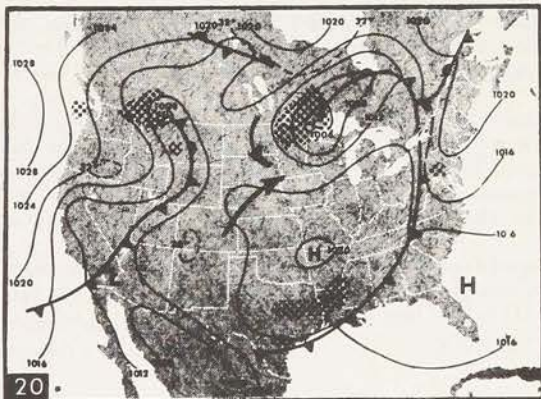
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This was the weather situation that produced an excellent warbler wave (20 species) at Mount Auburn on May 20, 1971. The arrows indicate the direction of air flow, counterclockwise around a low (L) and clockwise around a high (H).

Favorable migratory conditions occur when there is a high-pressure area to the south. Circumstances may be improved by a low to the west, as in this case, which adds its winds to those of the high and stimulates migration. A low to the north can also be beneficial, acting as a barrier to prevent further northward bird movement.

Check your daily newspaper in order to anticipate favorable winds.

This map has been adapted from Weather-wise, Vol. 24, No. 4, published for the American Meteorological Society, Boston, Massachusetts.



## STATE-WIDE BIRDERS' MEET 1973

Gina Sprong, Littleton

Over 100 birders from all over Massachusetts gathered at Wachusett Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary on March 3rd, by invitation of the Nashoba Valley Bird Club. Dianne Gould, club president, led the activities, which included an excellent program by members of the attending clubs and of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, sponsor of the event.

Deborah Howard of MAS presented results of the Cardinal-Titmouse census, and James Baird told of the society's new Birder's Kit, which is an excellent source of information about field problems, directions for self-guided trips, and directions for feeders of birds. Mr. Baird later presented a bird quiz, allowing even briefer glimpses of his slides than we often get of real birds in the field.

House finches (a species that is increasing in Massachusetts) was the topic of Betty Smyth, Manomet Bird Observatory. Most of us learned that we "miss the boat" because we fail to check birds for bands. They might carry the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aluminum band or colored ones that code special facts or projects.

The Allen Bird Club of Springfield presented an excellent film on Kirtland's Warbler (for more information, see the current issue of Man and Nature), a bird that precariously survives through careful management of its only known breeding site, the jack pine forest of Michigan.

The Ashby Bird Observatory was represented by Timmie Terrio, who showed slides of the banding operations there. Located away from the coast, this observatory provides information on birds that migrate through the central part of the state.

There was a reward for those who deserted the warm hall for the ice coated fields to go on a demonstration bird walk with Bradford Blodget. Brad's first lesson was how to adjust the binoculars. His instruction also included how to divert the attention of birders while the leader tried to make an identification. Some tips were, looking in the wrong tree, the wrong branch, a speck in the eye, and if all else fails, a hanky well shaken might flush the confusing species.

When the indoor program resumed, Michael Stolper and Timmie Terrio, students at Newton High School, described their chickadee research project, which has been exhibited at the Boston Museum of Science. They are studying how chickadee feeding habits are affected by the weather.

Gerald Mersereau and Donald Hopkins from Connecticut told about their studies of the New England hawk migration (see page 42 of this issue). This project now involves many individuals, clubs, radar surveillance, and may include aircraft in the future.

And then there was Eliot Taylor's bird calls that changed an anxious moment into merriment, after Gina Sprong had reversed the direction of her slide tray too hurriedly, popping some of the slides onto the floor. These were pictures of "goodies" photographed in the Nashoba Valley by herself and Gordon Seavey, another N.V.B.C. member. In the confusion, the slides were reinserted in the tray upside down. More bird calls!

Would-be bird photographers had a good lesson on how to take quality pictures with economical equipment. James Nye of Littleton supported his facts with some excellent slides illustrating how high-quality results require both proper equipment and correct exposure.

### BIRD WORDS

Austringer (ô's 'trîn-jër): One who keeps goshawks. This obsolete word is a corruption of the Middle English "ostreger." Old French: ostour = hawk. Webster III, 1961. Who would like to add to this trivia?



## THE BIRD OBSERVER SUMMARY FOR JANUARY

January provided an abrupt change from the abnormally cloudy weather of the two previous months, and birders were out in force to begin a new year of listing. The temperature averaged on the mild side, with periods of very cold and very mild weather. The mean was  $31.5^{\circ}$ ,  $1.6^{\circ}$  above normal and the warmest January since 1967. The highest temperature was  $61^{\circ}$  on the 1st and 18th. The low was  $1^{\circ}$  on the 8th, with no minimum records broken.

Snowfall was on the light side, with only 3.6", 8.6" under the past average, the least in January since 1969. Inland suburbs had much more snow, with a major storm on the 29th bringing 5-10" to many areas. Sunshine was abundant with 62%. The sun failed to shine on only four days. The wind averaged 14.7 m.p.h., a bit above January levels.

168 species were recorded. Some of the highlights were the Western Grebe at Magnolia, and an Fared Grebe off the jetties at Plum Island; a Manx Shearwater was reported off the Barnstable Shore (a first winter record?); the Common Egret remained at E. Orleans, being present since the Christmas Count, and a Snowy Egret remained from late December through January 5th in a swamp in Hyannis.

33 species of Anseriformes were seen and included such "goodies" as Blue Goose at Chilton, M.V., the European Widgeon at Little Harbor, Cohasset, 10 Shovelers at Monomoy, Barrow's Golden-eye at nine places, and as many as 12 Harlequin Ducks at Magnolia. Large numbers of Common Eider continued, and King Eiders were observed throughout the month.

Raptors included four individual reports of Goshawk, Sharp-shinned and Cooper's. A Golden Eagle was observed at the Little River Bridge in South Dartmouth, and a gray phase Cyrfalcon was noted at Monomoy on the 1st and 2nd. Only seven records of Sparrow Hawk - perhaps people should keep a closer watch on this species.

Clapper and Virginia Rails were reported, and a Sora was found in Ipswich. Eight species of shorebirds were reported. Numbers of Iceland Gulls increased, but only two Glaucous Gulls were recorded. Alcid numbers lacked distinction with: 1-5 Razorbills at five localities; Thick-billed Murres were recorded from 10 places; only one Dovekie was seen at Magnolia; and as many as nine Black Guillemot were at Eastern Point, Gloucester.

The highlight of the month was the Great Gray Owl at Gill, which delighted or disappointed nearly all the birders of the Northeast and beyond. Hawk Owls continued at Brewer, Me. and Gilford, N.H. Barn Owls were observed at Nantucket and in Boston Harbor.

The Gray Jay continued at feeders in Pelham, and two other reports came from the Connecticut Valley. Boreal Chickadees were still at Ashley Ponds, Holyoke. A Varied Thrush was seen for one day in Orleans. Bohemian Waxwings were recorded from three places, and Northern Shrikes were widespread with 18 reports.

An Orange-crowned Warbler spent the month at a feeder at Orleans, and a Yellow-breasted Chat fed on cornmeal mush in Plymouth. The Western Tanager continued at feeders in Annisquam throughout the month, and one was picked up dead in Orleans. The female Painted Bunting continued in Plymouth. Grasshopper Sparrows were reported from Falmouth and Wellfleet. Tree Sparrows were seen in small numbers. An Oregon Junco visited a feeder at Mt. Auburn. Lapland Longspurs and Snow Buntings were found along the outer beaches.

The summaries for both January and February are ways with which we can present the records. We would like to hear your comments on this subject and how you would prefer the records.

Abbreviations

ad	adult	PBC	Paskamansett Bird Club
imm	immature	NVBC	Nashoba Valley Bird Club
m.	male	FCBC	Felix Cutler Bird Club
f.	female	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
thr.	throughout	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
#	additional observers	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
v.o.	various observers	F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham
max.	maximum	FM	Fowl Meadow, Milton
WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary	AA	Arnold Arboretum
GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge	Mt.A	Mt. Auburn Cemetery
CWA	Crane Wildlife Area	P.I.	Plum Island
BBC	Brookline Bird Club	A.P.	Andrews Point
		E.P.	Eastern Point

Red-necked Grebe:

12	Manomet	12	Harrington
13-14	Cape Ann	7	Gordon (v.o.)
22	Magnolia	10	Weissberg

Western Grebe:

21-25	Magnolia	1	Goodrich # (v.o.)
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Eared Grebe:

27	P.I. (north end)	1	Post
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Horned Grebe:

13,18	P.I.	45,30	(BBC)Soucy, (BBC)Van Cor
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Pied-billed Grebe:

1	Wollaston	1	(BBC)Northway
7	Onset	1	Anderson
27	Plymouth	1	(BBC) Harrington

Manx Shearwater:

28	Barnstable(Sandy Neck)	1	Pease
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Gannet:

1,2	Monomoy	20	Winthrop Harrington
29	Eastham	8	Nikula

Great Cormorant:

thr.	Wollaston	max. 20	Jan. 1	(BBC)Northway
thr.	Cape Ann	max. 20	Jan. 6	(BBC)Jodrey
thr.	Newburyport	max. 18	Jan. 13	(BBC)Soucy
thr.	Westport-So.Dartmouth	max. 15	Jan. 14	(BBC)Grinley

Great Blue Heron:

7	Newton	9	(fide)Howard
14	Westport-So.Dartmouth	9	(BBC)Grinley
21	Eastham	12	Baines

Common Egret:

thr.	Eastham	1	Bailey #
------	---------	---	----------

Black-crowned Night Heron:

2	Hingham	6	Harrington
21	N.Eastham	9	Baines

American Bittern:

13,18	Eastham	1,2	Nikula
24	So.Dartmouth	1	Regan

Mute Swan:

14	Westport	211	(BBC)Grinley
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Brant:

10	Squantum	63	O'Maley
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Snow Goose:

14	E.Falmouth	1	Moore
15-17	Cohasset	1	Hunt
28-31	Wollaston	1	Stymeist (v.o.)

Blue Goose:

28	Chilmark (M.V.)	1	Hancock
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Gadwall:

15	Falmouth	1	Pease
24	Chatham	1	Nikula



Pintail:			
thr.	Cohasset	1	(v.o.)
thr.	So.Dartmouth	1	(v.o.)
28	Essex	4	Clark
Green-winged Teal:			
1	Belmont	1	Stymeist
13-15	Eastham	1	Nikula, Pease
21	Plymouth	2	Higginbotham
27	Woburn (Horn Pond)	1	Tomfohrde
European Widgeon:			
thr.	Cohasset (Little Harbor)	1 m.	(v.o.)
American Widgeon:			
thr.	Belmont	50	Stymeist
27	Plymouth	25	Harrington
Shoveler:			
2	Monomoy	10	Forster
29	West Yarmouth	2	Mathewson
Wood Duck:			
thr.	Falmouth (Sider's)	1	(v.o.)
12,20	Plymouth	1	Higginbotham, Carmichaels
Redhead:			
thr.	Falmouth (Sider's)	26	(v.o.)
2	Monomoy	5	Forster
12,21	Plymouth	1	Higginbotham, Carmichaels
14	Acoaxet	4	Grinley
Ring-necked Duck:			
10	Falmouth	20	Argnes
Canvasback:			
1	Assonet	140	Hill
1	Westport	160-180	Hill
1	Falmouth	400-500	J.Baird
1	Taunton River	500	Hill
Greater Scaup:			
18	Hingham	2000	Moore
Barrow's Golden-eye:			
1	Rockport	4	(v.o.)
6-31	Newburyport	4	Forster (v.o.)
8-31	Plymouth	3	Carmichaels
Bufflehead:			
14	E.Falmouth	500	Moore
Harlequin Duck:			
1,28	Magnolia	5,12	Garret, Brown
29	Manomet	1	Shepherd
Common Eider:			
thr.	Buzzard's Bay	3500	Anderson
thr.	Rockport	600	King
thr.	Salisbury	1500	Wilson
thr.	So.Shore,Plymouth-Quincy	4000	(BBC)Harrington
King Eider:			
1,11	P.I.	1,2	Soucy, Quinlan #
1	Provincetown	1	Stone
6-20	Cohasset	1	(v.o.)
21	Rockport	2 imm. m.	Petersen
Ruddy Duck:			
thr.	Falmouth (Sider's)	10	(v.o.)
Hooded Merganser:			
7	Wareham	29	Anderson
Common Merganser:			
1	Lakeville	60	Perry
Cooper's Hawk:			
13	WBWS, Wellfleet	1	Bailey
29	Middleboro	1	Briggs
Red-shouldered Hawk:			
1	Wareham	1	Briggs
13	Newburyport	1	Soucy
Golden Eagle:			
5,6	So.Dartmouth	1	Hamlin

Marsh Hawk:				
14,26	Bridgewater	3,6		Briggs, Anderson
Gyr Falcon (Gray):				
1,2	Monomoy	1		Bailey, Clem, Forster, Winthrop Harrington, Miliotis, Pease
Ruffed Grouse:				
13	Bourne	1		Moore
16	Manomet (MBO)	3		Nichols
Clapper Rail:				
21	Eastham	2		Baines, Sorrie
Virginia Rail:				
21	Eastham	2		Baines
Sora Rail:				
7	Ipswich	1		Martin, Moore
American Coot:				
2	Monomoy	30		Forster
10	Falmouth	25		Emery, Argnes
Kildeer:				
10-20	Gloucester	1		(v.o.)
21	Eastham	1		Baines
29	Bourne	1		Briggs
Black-bellied Plover:				
14	Dennis	1		Nikula
Ruddy Turnstone:				
20	N.Scituate	3		Higginbotham
Common Snipe:				
7	Bourne	9		(SSBC) Anderson
13-14	Ipswich	1		Gordon
21	Plymouth	5,6		(v.o.)
Greater Yellowlegs:				
18	Eastham (F.H.)	1		Nikula
28	Cohasset	1		Litchfields
Purple Sandpiper:				
thr.	Rockport	max. 100		Gordon
21	N.Scituate	250		Argnes
Dunlin:				
27	Duxbury	200		Harrington
27	Cohasset	200		Harrington
Sanderling:				
27	Plymouth	100		Cornwell
Glaucous Gull:				
5	Nahant	1		Argnes
13-20	Gloucester	1		(v.o.)
16 on	P.I.	1-2		Gardler (v.o.)
Iceland Gull:				
1	Wareham	1		Briggs
13-27	Gloucester	1-3		Cornwell (v.o.)
12 on	P.I.	max. 15		Gardler
27	Salisbury	4		Wilson
31	Provincetown	1		Nikula
Black-headed Gull				
thr.	Squantum	max. 9		Brown # (v.o.)
28	Newburyport	max. 5		Gardler
Little Gull:				
16,27	Newburyport	1 imm 1 ad		Gardler, Post
Black-legged Kittiwake:				
13-14	Rockport	1		Gordon
29	N.Eastham	400		Nikula
Razorbill:				
1	Monomoy	3		Forster #
20	Rockport (AP)	1		(BBC) Hales
27	Magnolia	5		Cornwell #
29,31	Eastham, Wellfleet	1,1		Nikula, Bailey #



Thick-billed Murre:			
4,12-13	Truro, Provincetown	1,1	Banks, Nikula
12-25	Rockport	1	J. Baird # (v.o.)
13	Salisbury	1	(BBC) Soucy
21-27	Magnolia	1	Petersen # (v.o.)
27	Plymouth	4	(BBC) Harrington
Dovekie:			
22-27	Magnolia	1	Weissberg
Black Guillemot:			
1-25	Rockport (AP)	max. 4	McClellan # (v.o.)
22-27	Magnolia	1-3	Weissberg (v.o.)
25,27	Gloucester (EP)	5,9	D'Entremont, Post
Monk Parakeet:			
thr.	Braintree	1	Wilson (v.o.)
1-14	Brookline	1	Coolidge
9-15	Byfield	1	Joyce
Mourning Dove:			
12	Wellesley	45	Forster
29	Mansfield	51	Richardson
Barn Owl:			
3	Nantucket	1	Veit
20 on	Squantum	1	T. Parker
Screech Owl:			
thr.	Lanesville	1	(v.o.)
thr.	Milton	1	(v.o.)
19	Dartmouth-Westport	4	PBC
Great Horned Owl:			
thr.	Belmont	1	(v.o.)
4-20	Danvers	1	(v.o.)
27	Norwell	2	Litchfields
Snowy Owl:			
thr.	P.I.	1	(v.o.)
thr.	Salisbury	1	(v.o.)
18	Winchester	1	Ropes
26	Littleton	1	Sprong
30	Middleboro, Squantum	1,1	Anderson, Cornwell
Barred Owl:			
thr.	Belmont	1	Clarke (v.o.)
16-18	Winchester	1 (picked up dead on 18th)	Ropes
Great Gray Owl:			
22 on	Gill	1	Dwellely (v.o.)
Long-eared Owl:			
3	Nantucket	1	Veit
Short-eared Owl:			
thr.	Salisbury	1-3	(v.o.)
21-31	Squantum	1-2	(v.o.)
21-29	Bridgewater	2	Anderson
27	Wareham	1	Briggs
Saw-whet Owl:			
17	Dartmouth-Westport	2	PBC
19	Cambridge (Mt.A)	1	Horn
Eastern Phoebe:			
thr.	Middleboro	2-3	Lavallie, (fide) Briggs
Horned Lark:			
11	P.I.	75	Quinlin
Gray Jay:			
thr.	Pelham	1-2?	(v.o.)
6	Longmeadow	1	Simcovitz
13	So. New Salem	1	Gagnon
Fish Crow:			
20	W. Roxbury, Newton	2,1	Wiggin, Martin
Boreal Chickadee:			
thr.	Holyoke (Ashley Ponds)	max. 4	Yenlin (v.o.)
Red-breasted Nuthatch:			
thr.	Cambridge (Mt.A)	5	Stymeist
House Wren:			
1	Falmouth	1	Lanx, Goodrich

Winter Wren:			
25	Plymouth	1	Wilson
Long-billed Marsh Wren:			
6	Barnstable	2	Pease
Mockingbird:			
21	Chatham	16	(BBC) Baines
Catbird:			
thr.	Lincoln	1	Miller
10	Plymouth	1	Carmichaels
14	Falmouth	2	Moore
17	Concord	1	Peabody
Brown Thrasher:			
1-15	Falmouth	1	J. Baird (v.o.)
4	E. Lexington	1	(fide) Howard
Varied Thrush:			
8	Orleans	1	Erickson, Rich
Hermit Thrush:			
9,14	P. I.	1	Powell, Moore
11	Cohasset	1	Wilson
15-21	Vineyard Haven (MV)	1	Hancock
Ruby-crowned Kinglet:			
1	Falmouth	1	J. Baird #
10,21	Plymouth	1,1	Carmichaels, Emery #
Bohemian Waxwing:			
13	Princeton	2	Blodget
20	Dennis	1	Nikula
28	Scituate	2	Spring
Cedar Waxwing:			
1-9	Cambridge (Mt.A)	20-25	Robinson, Nore, Stymeist
10	Falmouth, Manomet	24,14	Arnes, Nichols
21	Dennis	35	Nikula
Northern Shrike:			
thr.	P. I., Salisbury	1-3	(v.o.)
6	Rowley, W. Newbury, Manomet, Harvard	1,1,1,2	Bouldry, Argnes, Nichols, Reed
11	Wellesley	1	Quinlin
12	Wellfleet	1	Pease
13	Provincetown	1	Nikula
17,21	Gloucester, Rockport	1,1	Nichols, Petersen
Starling:			
27	Quincy	10,000	Harrington
Orange-crowned Warbler:			
thr.	Eastham	1	Whitlocks (v.o.)
12	WMWS, Princeton	1	Blodget
Myrtle Warbler:			
10	Falmouth	135	Emery #
Palm Warbler:			
6	Gloucester	1	Jodrey
15	Woods Hole	1	(F.C.B.C.)
Yellowthroat:			
1	Falmouth	1	Baird
4	Middleboro	1	Briggs
5-31	Concord (GMNWR)	2	Heckt
Yellow-breasted Chat:			
12	Plymouth	1	Carmichaels
Meadowlark:			
14	N. Falmouth, S. Dartmouth	5,12	Moore, Grinley
21	Eastham (FH)	46	Sorrie
27	Plymouth	8	Harrington
Red-winged Blackbird:			
18	W. Roxbury	10	Agush
20	Hingham	2	Higginbotham
30	Quincy	3	Cornwell
Baltimore Oriole:			
1	Cambridge	1	Horn
7	Vineyard Haven (M.V.)	1	Hancock
Rusty Blackbird:			
2	W. Barnstable	3	Pease



Cowbird:			
14	Dartmouth-Westport	60	(BBC)Grinley
Western Tanager:			
6 on	Annisquam	1 m.	Copeland, Emery (v.o.)
31	Orleans	1 dead	Bailey
Painted Bunting:			
thr.	Plymouth	1 f.	Carmichaels (v.o.)
Dickcissel:			
thr.	S.Dartmouth	1	Regan
2-12	WBWS, Wellfleet	1	Bailey
6	Plymouth	1	Carmichaels
20	Hingham	1	Higginbotham
Evening Grosbeak:			
thr.	Byfield	100-200	Joyce
thr.	Manomet	15 banded	MBO
Purple Finch:			
thr.	Manomet	15 banded	MBO
House Finch:			
thr.	Vineyard Haven (M.V.)	22	Hancock
8	Rockport	20	Jodrey
10	Falmouth	50+	Emery
Pine Grosbeaks:			
6	Milton (FM)	10	O'Regan
13	Boxford, Provincetown	35,4	Palmer, Nikula
27	Plymouth	8	Harrington
Common Redpoll:			
14	Littleton	1	R.Baird
Pine Siskin:			
20	Jamaica Plain (AA)	3	Deveau
30	Marshfield	3	Wilson
Red Crossbill:			
1	Falmouth	5	Nikula
White-winged Crossbill:			
6	Ashland	1	Robertson
20	Jamaica Plain (AA)	3	Deveau
Rufous-sided Towhee:			
14	Falmouth	8	Moore
Ipswich Sparrow:			
13-14,28	P.I.	2,1	Gordon, Van Cor
21	Scituate (Humarock)	2	Emery #
27	Duxbury	1	Harrington
Savannah Sparrow:			
21	Scituate (Humarock)	1	Emery #
Grasshopper Sparrow:			
14	N.Falmouth (CWA)	1	Moore
31	WBWS, Wellfleet	1	Bailey
Sharp-tailed Sparrow:			
18,21	Eastham (FH)	12,5	Nikula, Sorrie
21	Scituate	7	Moore
Seaside Sparrow:			
18,21	Eastham (FH)	2,5	Nikula, Sorrie
Oregon Junco:			
thr.	Cambridge (Mt.A)	1 ad	Agush,Brown,Stymeist,Veit
27	Belmont	1	Bretts
Field Sparrow:			
7	Wellesley	2	Rome
13	Boxford	4	Palmer
21	Plymouth	25	Higginbotham
White-crowned Sparrow:			
21	Plymouth	1	Higginbotham
Fox Sparrow:			
13	Belmont (HF)	5	Butler
20	Jamaica Plain (AA)	6	Wiggin
Swamp Sparrow:			
21	Eastham	2	(BBC) Baines
31	Plymouth	1	D'Entremont

Lapland Longspur:				
thr.	P.I.	max.	25	(v.o.)
thr.	Salisbury	max.	15	(v.o.)
Snow Bunting:				
7	W.Newbury		13	Moore
13	Gloucester		30	King
21	Scituate (Humarock)		22	Emery #

#### WINTER GULL POSTSCRIPT

Though Philip Martin did a good job of summarizing "Winter Gulls in Massachusetts" (BIRD OBSERVER, Vol. 1, No. 1), I would like to make these additional comments.

Ring-billed gull: Second year birds often have completely black primaries since the all dark primaries of the juvenile plumage are not lost until the bird acquires its second winter plumage. This characteristic means that essentially gray-and-white gulls of medium size are often identified as kittiwakes on the basis of all black primaries with no white spotting at the wing tips.

Glaucous gull: The note on the folded wing and tail relationship of sitting Iceland and glaucous gulls is not reliable under many circumstances. The relationship is often dependent on just how the individual bird folds its wings! Not mentioned is the often helpful character of bill pattern on immature glaucous gulls. Generally, the very long, flesh or horn-colored bill of the glaucous gull is noticeably ringed with black at the distal end. There is quite an unmarked area between this ring and the basal end of the bill. In the sub-adult Iceland gull, the dusky tip usually blends gradually into the basal area, thus not leaving as much pale area between the ring and the base of the bill.

Bonaparte's gull: The Bonaparte's gull does not always have an all black bill. Often, the immatures, and even some adults, will have some pale or flesh-color at the basal portion of the bill, especially on the lower mandible. Therefore, not every small gull with a bicolored bill is necessarily an immature black-headed gull, unless other field marks are present.

Wayne R. Petersen  
Abington, Mass.

#### HAWK WATCHING ANYONE?

Birders who have experienced the spectacular flights of migrating hawks at Mt. Tom in western Massachusetts or Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania have probably wondered where the birds came from and where they would go. Also, an observer concentrating on one side of his lookout often just glimpses a kettle sneaking by on the other, thus raising the question, "How many hawks have I missed?"

Two years ago, Donald Hopkins and Gerald Merserau initiated a "hawk watch" to provide some answers. On designated weekends they encourage birders throughout southwestern New England to report sightings of migrating raptors. Although this project has not been blessed with especially favorable weather conditions, it has indicated that observers at traditionally "good" sites, such as Mt. Tom's Goat Peak, may see only about a third of the total hawk flight.

This years hawk watches are scheduled for April 21-22, September 15-16, and October 27-28. If you would like to witness one of the great migration spectacles, while making a contribution to field ornithology, write to Donald Hopkins, 27 London Rd., Windsor, Conn. 06095.

To brush up on hawk identification and techniques of observation, you might want to read A Guide to Northeastern Hawk Watching, by Donald S. Heintzelman, available from the author, 35 Church St., Lambertville, N.J. 08530. 64 pages, price about \$1.50.

P.M.



THE BIRD OBSERVER SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY

February's birding activity came to a slower pace and fewer birds were reported. A total of 162 species was recorded during the month, about the same as in January. Counts of individuals decreased markedly from the preceding month for almost all species. This result could hardly be blamed on the weather. February continued January's fluctuating temperatures with alternate periods of quite mild and quite cold weather. However, the average temperature was near normal throughout the month. The mean was 30.1; the highest reading was 54 degrees on the 2nd and 3rd; the lowest was 3 degrees on the first. The snowfall was a scant 2.5 inches, 9.7 inches below normal, bringing this winter's total snowfall to only 10 inches, only one inch more than the record least seasonal amount recorded in the winter of 1936-37. If no more snow falls this season, the total will tie that of 1875-76 as the second least snowy in over 100 years of records.

By late month there had been little indication of the vanguard of early spring migrants which cheers "listers" during the February doldrums.

Loons, Grebes, Cormorant: The high count of Common Loon was only 17 at Manomet point on the 13th (BS), reports of Red-throated Loons were down, with 2 seen at P.I. on the 24th and 1 at Plymouth Beach on the 25th (BS). A record for Arctic Loon by three very qualified observers, Richard Bowen, Richard Kleber and Henry Parker, may be considered as "good" as such a record can be. They studied the bird for 15-20 minutes at the breakwater at the north end of P.I. on the 10th. The Bird Observer feels that all winter reports of Arctic Loon should be taken with a grain of salt, and that only well documented, breeding plumage birds be considered. The Western Grebe was reported on the 1st at P.I. (DA); one appeared at No. Scituate on the 5th & 6th (MM); and one was seen again at Magnolia on the 24th & 25th (RPE, M&AA, HD) - the same bird? Red-necked Grebes were down with a high of 8 at Manomet point on the 13th. The best count of Horned Grebes was 40 at P.I. on the 25th (JK). Eleven Pied-billed Grebes were recorded from Wareham on the 13th (RF). From 80-115 Great Cormorants spent the month at Hingham (MM).

Hérons: Great Blue Herons were widespread with the majority of reports from Cape Cod, 27 at Strong I., Chatham (MG). There were 20 Black-crowned Night Herons wintering at Fort Hill, Eastham (WP, RP). The Common Egret continued at E. Orleans, being present since the Christmas count (WB). An American Bittern was observed at Cackle Cove, Chatham on the 20th & 25th (BN, MG).

Waterfowl: The variety of waterfowl remained high, but counts dropped for almost all species. Two Whistling Swans were reported during the month, one on the 5th at Wareham (RM) and one on the 24th at Westport (VL). Brant were low with reports from only 8 localities, the highest at Squantum 58 on the 4th (NO). Snow Geese were reported throughout the month at Orleans (1) and Squantum (v.o.). Black Ducks reached a maximum on the 4th at Plymouth Beach 2000 (BS); Gadwalls were found at Chatham on the 5th (BN) and 2 at Hatchville on the 25th (RP). A total of 12 Pintails was reported from Chatham on the 14th (BN). A Common Teal made a brief appearance at the Mystic Lakes in Winchester on the 12th (HP, MMc). Green-winged Teals were reported from 6 places, and a wintering (?) Blue-winged Teal was well observed in Sandwich on the 21st (RP). The drake European Widgeon continued throughout the month at Little Harbor, Cohasset. There were few reports of American Widgeon, the highest at Belmont (25) on the 17th (RHS, PM). A Shoveler was seen in Worcester on the 10th (BB). Four Wood Ducks were reported, from Chatham (2) and Sandwich (2) (LM, RF). Redheads were reported from Plymouth (1-BS), 16 at Falmouth on the 3rd (M&AA), and 3 at Wareham on the 10th (HD). Eighty was the high count of Ring-necked Ducks at Chatham on the 10th (VL). Canvasbacks totaled 100 on the 25th at Falmouth (RP). On the 24th, 10 Lesser Scaup were well studied and photographed at Newburyport (BS). The Harlequin Ducks continued at Magnolia, with a maximum of 8 (PHP). Common Eiders totaled 3400 at Plymouth (BS), 3000 at P.I. (JK), 1000 at Marshfield (MM), and a thousand at Nantucket (ES). A King Eider continued at Provincetown (v.o.). Other King Eiders were seen at P.I. on the 7-17th (DA), Boston Harbor on the 3rd (BS), Plymouth from the 3rd-5th (RF) and in Cohasset on the 4th (NO). Ruddy Ducks at Falmouth continued with the max. of 12 on the 2nd (v.o.). Hooded Mergansers were reported from only two places, with 8 at Cohasset (v.o.). The high count of Common Mergansers was 40 in Marion on the 19th (HD).



Raptors: Single Goshawks were reported from 7 scattered localities; 3 reports of Sharp-shinned were all from the Cape; a Cooper's Hawk was seen at Brewster on the 10th (WRP), and another Cooper's was killed flying against a window in Ipswich on the 17th (ML). There were only three reported Red-shouldered Hawks during the month, on the 10th & 25th at Newburyport (Chase Shawmut) (v.o.), on the 22nd & 28th from S. Dartmouth (PR), and one from E. Middleboro on the 24th (JN); Rough-legged Hawks were way down this winter with only 8 individuals reported. The highlight of the month was an adult Golden Eagle at Westport on the 3rd and seen until the 19th (PR) (v.o.). Five Marsh Hawks on the Cape were the only ones reported, 3 at Barnstable on the 3rd (RF) and 2 at Chatham on the 5th (LM). A Pigeon Hawk was seen off and on again at Sandwich from the 4th-10th (RP). Ruffed Grouse were way down with only 2 reported from Marshfield throughout (EE).

Rails, Shorebirds: Wintering Virginia Rails were single birds at Wellfleet on the 1st (BN), on the 11th at Medford (HP), and at Hatchville on the 25th (RP). Nine species of shorebirds were reported during the month: a Killdeer at Gloucester on the 17th (EP\* BBC); 21 Black-bellied Plovers at Chatham on the 24th (BN); the high count of Ruddy Turnstones was 38 at Cohasset on the 17th (RHS & PM); a Woodcock at Falmouth on the 3rd (M&AA); two Common Snipe at Plymouth (v.o.), 1 at Woburn on the 18th (DW), and 1 at Wellfleet on the 25th (RP); two Knots at Cohasset on the 17th (PM, RHS). Purple Sandpipers were reported from many places with the high count of 300-400 throughout the month at N. Scituate (MM). Only 15 Dunlin were at Cohasset on the 21st (RPE), and the high count of Sanderlings was 150 at Plymouth Beach on the 4th (BS).

Gulls, Alcids: Numbers of Glaucous Gulls were down with only four individuals reported, all on the north shore. Iceland Gulls numbered 30 at the north end of P.I. (PMi), and 2 were at Provincetown on the 13th (RF). Black-headed Gulls were observed at 6 localities, the highest count of 24 at Squantum on the 18th (MG). Kittiwakes were observed at Salisbury on the 3rd, 1 (PMi) and 1 on the 10th (HPk); another was seen at Woods Hole on the 18th (D&HB). Alcids were few with 1 Razorbill at P.I. from the 8-12th (v.o.). A Common Murre was picked up oiled at Brewster by William Sheldon on the 24th, and joined the Common Puffin at WBWS to recuperate before they are released. Single Thick-billed Murres were reported from 5 localities, including a bird found in a residential section of Quincy on the 9th and released in Wollaston Bay (RL); only 1 Dovekie was reported from Gloucester on the 3rd (PHP-BBC); 2 Black Guillemots continued at Andrews Pt., Rockport.

Owls: The Barn Owl continued at Long I. in Boston Harbor throughout the month (v.o.). Two cooperative Screech Owls remained at Lanesville and at Milton, and Great Horned Owls were reported from Belmont throughout, on the 25th from Chatham (MG), and on the 24th from MtA (AA); Snowy Owls were seen throughout the month at Salisbury, P.I., and 2, including a very white bird, at Squantum (v.o.). The Great Gray Owl continued to make news at Gill and the New York Times. The Hawk Owls at Gilford, N.H. and Brewer, Me. delighted bird photographers. Barred Owls were reported from 5 places: Belmont throughout (v.o.), Lincoln, Danvers (C&TB), 2 at Middleboro (DB) and 1 at Newton on the 23rd (DWood); Long-eared Owls were observed at Middleboro on the 9th (GS) and on the 11th at Long I. (JJC); Short-eared Owls were seen throughout the month at Squantum with a max. of 3 on the 12th (WC), also at Bridgewater, Salisbury and at Chatham; 2 Saw-whet Owls were at Nantucket on the 17th (RV).

Phoebe, Jay and Crows: A Phoebe showed up on the 15th at Middleboro and remained through the end of the month (DB). The Gray Jay continued at Pelham. 600 Common Crows were at Bridgewater (DB), but only a max. of 40 could be found at W. Roxbury and Jamaica Plain (FA); another was found at Braintree on the 5th (RF). A max. of 4 Boreal Chickadees continued at Ashley Ponds in Holyoke (v.o.).

Mimids, Thrushes, Kinglet: Only 2 reports of Catbirds were received, 1 throughout at Worcester (BB) and 1 at Squantum on the 17th (PM); a Brown Thrasher visited a feeder throughout in Ipswich (fide ML) and 1 at Manomet on the 13th (BS); 30 Robins were at Cohasset on the 5th (MM); Hermit Thrushes were reported on the 5th at Cohasset (MM), the 7th at Vineyard Haven (MH), and on the 10th at N. Chatham (LM); a max. of 15 Bluebirds were at Chatham on the 17th (RP), and 3 were at Harwich on the 20th (BN). There were 2 reports of Ruby-crowned Kinglets, with 1 at Brewster on the 10th (WRP) and 1 at Hatchville on the 25th (RP).



Pipit, Waxwings, Shrikes: A Water Pipit was found at Corn Hill, Truro, on the 10th and is still present (RF); 2 Bohemian Waxwings were found at Plymouth on the 3rd and were seen off and on up to the 18th, another was at Sandwich on the 4th (RP), and over 100 Cedar Waxwings were at Plymouth on the 10th (RF). Northern Shrikes were reported from many localities, a total of 16 in all. A Loggerhead Shrike was reported from P.I. on the 24th (RPE, M&AA)

Warblers: Four species of warblers were observed during the month; the Orange-crowned continued at a feeder in Eastham (v.o.); an amazing count of 500+ Myrtle Warblers was made at Nantucket on the 16th (ES), 2 Pine Warblers were seen at Nantucket (RV), and 1 was seen throughout the month at Chatham (v.o.); Palm Warblers were at Gloucester on the 3rd-1 (PP-BBC) and 1 at Middleboro on the 28th (RM).

Blackbirds, Tanager, Fringillids: An unreported wintering flock of 50 Redwings was at West Roxbury on the 17th (PM, RHS); a Baltimore Oriole visited a feeder in Norwell on the 6th (BL); and a Rusty Blackbird was at GWNWR on the 17th (AA); the Western Tanager continued at Annisquam (v.o.), but was reported less frequently than in Jan. The Plymouth Painted Bunting was observed up to the 11th but not since (v.o.); a Dickcissel visited the feeder at WBWS in Wellfleet on the 10th (RF); Evening Grosbeaks totaled 100 at Plymouth on the 3rd (RF); 17 Purple Finches were banded at Manomet; and 50 House Finches were at Falmouth on the 10th (AAC). Reports of Pine Grosbeaks were way down, but continued in good numbers at various places, with 100 at Boxford (AP). Only 1 Pine Siskin was reported from our area, at Lincoln on the 5th (WH), while there were many reports from the Conn. Valley and the Berkshires. Twelve Red Crossbills were at Brookline on the 18th (AA), 1 at Belmont on the 24th (HTW), and 2-3 at Brewster on the 25th (MG). A Towhee continued throughout the month at Hardwick (BB), and 2 were seen at Falmouth on the 3rd (M&AA); 2 Ipswich Sparrows were in Scituate at Humarock on the 3rd (M&AA), and 2 were photographed at Duxbury (BS); Savannah Sparrows totaled 10 at Fort Hill on the 10th (RF). A wintering Grasshopper Sparrow was at WBWS on the 5th (WB); 7 Sharp-tailed Sparrows and 1 Seaside Sparrow were reported on the 5th from the Scituate Sewage Plant (GLS), and 3 Chipping Sparrows were observed at Middleboro on the 15th (DB). A Clay-colored Sparrow was reported from Westport on the 24th (VL); 2 White-crowned Sparrows visited a feeder throughout the month in Ipswich (fide ML); Fox Sparrow reports were way down with only 3 reports; and Lapland Longspurs continued at Salisbury Beach with high counts of 50+ on the 24th and 13 Snow Buntings there on the 10th.

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#### PREVIEWS

April is a time when we welcome signs of spring and the gradual return of our summer birds. Our yards once again are full of songsters such as chipping sparrows, song sparrows and house wrens; towhees and catbirds stake out their claims before the onrush of May's warblers, thrushes and vireos. Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge is a good place to visit in April to see a wide variety of woodland sparrows in great numbers. A trip to Westport along the river and beach will yield nesting ospreys, singing Carolina wrens, migrating broad-winged hawks, early snowy egrets, laughing gulls and herons.

## THE GREAT GRAY OWL

On the afternoon of February 3rd, Bob Stymeist, Dick Veit and I were bound for Gill, Massachusetts. Many birders had flocked there in recent weeks to seek the great gray owl that had been playing hide and seek, appearing and disappearing every few days. Though a few people were successful, most came away without a glimpse of the huge owl. Now it was our turn to try our luck.

We arrived in mid-afternoon and drove along the back roads, scanning the fields and woods. We found very few birds but many birders. By dusk, there were at least 30, including some of the most talented enthusiasts in the northeast, assembled at the farm on West Gill Road where the bird had been last seen. But all was to no avail, for night fell with no sign of the owl.

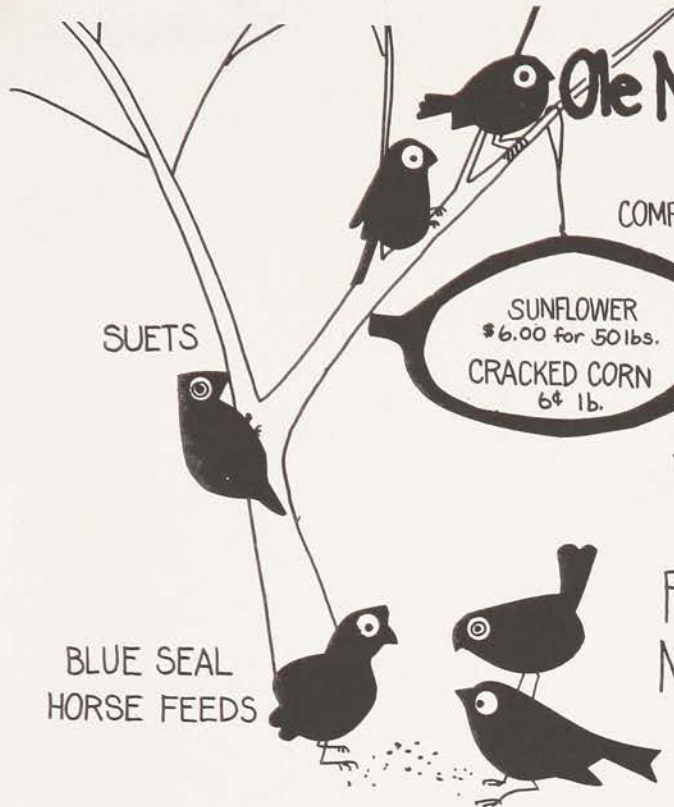
We couldn't give up and decided to stay overnight at a motel. Rising before the sun, we went directly to West Gill Road. Davis Finch (Northeastern Maritime Regional editor for American Birds) and Bob Smart were already there and informed us, much to our chagrin and dismay, that they had seen the owl just five minutes before (how often have I heard that story), but that it had flown into the woods. Mr. Smart pointed to the group of pines into which he thought the bird had flown.

Several hours of waiting followed before we obtained permission from the owner to walk on his property. By then at least a score of birders were eagerly waiting on the road. At last we started in, tramping through the snow, jumping a couple of streams, and heading directly for the pine grove. Suddenly, there was the owl, not 25 feet away, looming close to the trunk of a pine. It swiveled its head to stare at us with its small yellow eyes. All I could think of was, "It's so big!" After several minutes, the bird apparently became tired of all the ecstatic people. It ruffled its feathers and launched off on huge but noiseless wings. The great gray owl dipped low, then flopped off and disappeared among the trees.

P.M.







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