

BIRD OBSERVER



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BIRD OBSERVER

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and enjoyment of birds.

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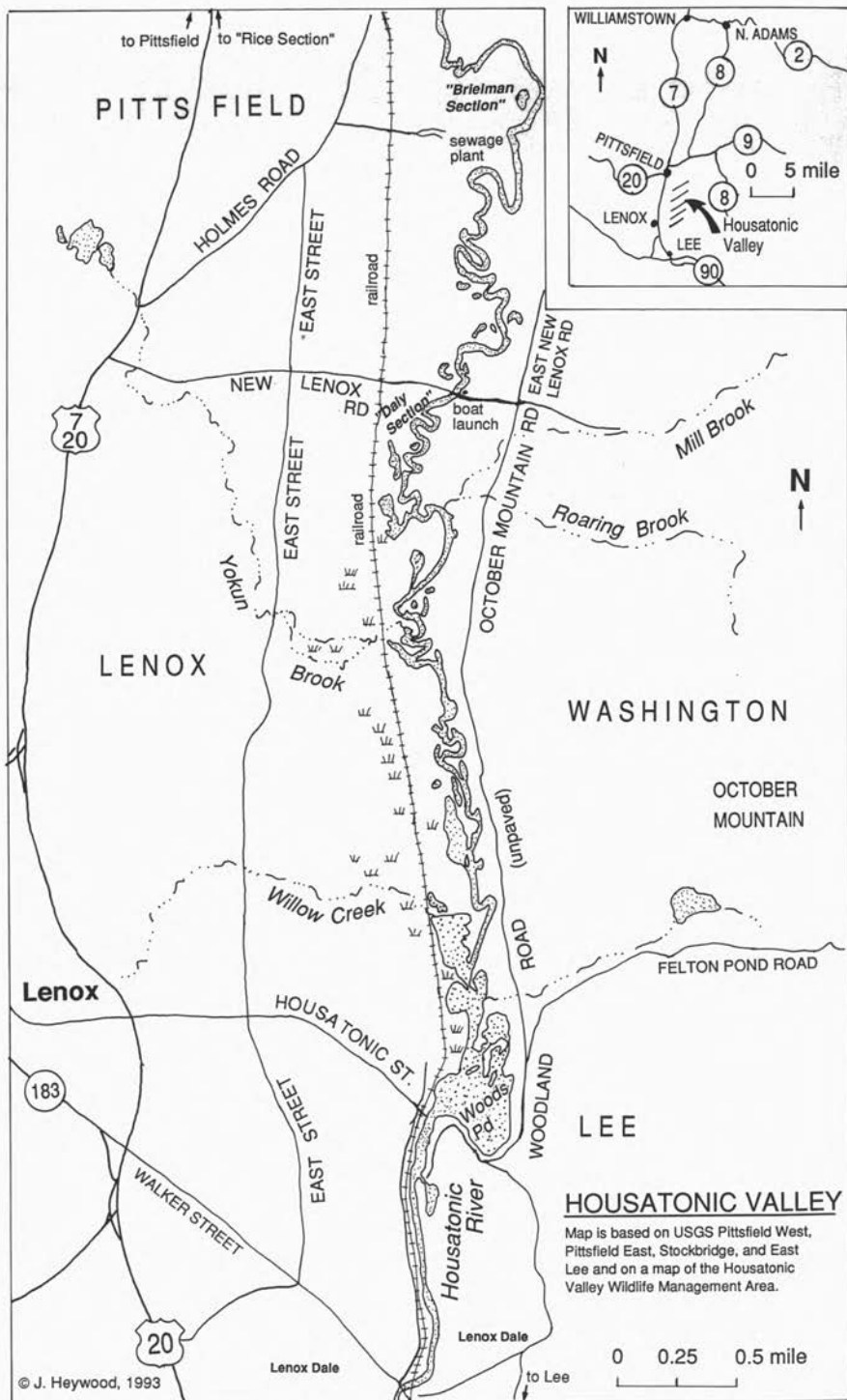
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BIRDING THE HOUSATONIC VALLEY WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

by David St. James

Established in 1968, the Housatonic Valley Wildlife Management Area contains over 850 acres in the western Massachusetts towns of Pittsfield, Lenox, and Lee. Owned and administered by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the area is one of many parcels of land that have been set aside for hunting, fishing, habitat preservation, protection of rare and endangered species, or access to major rivers and streams. It contains a varied habitat that includes floodplain, northern deciduous woods, agricultural lands, and the swamps and marshes associated with the Housatonic River, which flows through the entire area. The birding is as varied as the land, and several rare and protected plant and animal species reside within its boundaries. Since 1970 over 190 species of birds have been recorded within the area.

The river valley serves as a major flyway for migrating birds in both spring and fall, and the hidden backwaters and marshes along the river harbor suitable habitat for nesting bitterns, rails, and a myriad of waterfowl and songbirds. Perhaps as important as the birds are the scenic vistas of pastures, meadows, and wetlands, backdropped by October Mountain and the Hoosac Range to the east. This is the land that inspired Longfellow, Melville, Holmes, and a host of other poets, authors, and artists for the last two hundred years.

Immediately to the north of the management area, the Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS) owns and operates the 260-acre Canoe Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary. Pleasant Valley Sanctuary, another MAS sanctuary with 1150 acres of upland forest and meadow, lies a mere four miles to the west. To the east, the 16,000-acre October Mountain State Forest abuts the area, and directly to the south, 200 acres of Lenox Conservation Commission land complete a unique perspective of the Berkshires experience. These properties collectively constitute one of the largest arrays of wildlands available to Massachusetts today.

The management area is most easily accessible by exiting the Massachusetts Turnpike in Lee (Interchange 2) and traveling on U.S. 20 West for approximately 7.5 miles to New Lenox Road, which is a right-hand turn immediately adjacent to the Luau Hale Polynesian Restaurant. Proceed approximately 1.2 miles, through one intersection (East Street) and across a set of railroad tracks to the Decker Boat Launch site, which affords a central point of reference for locating the other portions of the area. The land can be divided into several discrete subunits that, despite their proximity to each other, offer a diverse assortment of habitats and their associated wildlife.

Daly Section

The Daly section is bordered by railroad tracks to the west, the Housatonic River to the east, Woods Pond to the south, and north to a property line abutting pasture and a large experimental station involved in the transmission of extremely high-voltage electricity. Parking lots along New Lenox Road allow easy access to both this section and the Decker Boat Launch site immediately to the east.

The most rewarding birding can usually be attained by parking near the railroad tracks and walking south along the tracks. A pleasant walk of approximately 1.5 miles to the confluence of Yokun Brook can yield a surprising number of species. In season, shorebirds and waterfowl can be abundant in Yokun Brook, which has been swollen into a broad marsh by beavers. On a May morning in 1982 eighty-four species of birds were recorded merely by walking this section of tracks and briefly birding the Brielman section (see description below). Nesting waterthrushes, Winter Wrens, and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers are easily observed. Large concentrations of American Woodcock perform their comical twilight courtship dances from the nearby alder thickets and wet meadows, while Rusty Blackbirds have languished into June, tempting the birder with the possibility of their breeding. Whip-poor-wills, an increasingly rare find in the Berkshires, have until recently bred in these fields. In winter it is not uncommon to find a Rough-legged Hawk perched nearby or a Northern Shrike surveying the fields for a careless mouse. This is the season when one can most easily hear owls calling up and down the valley. Up to seven Great Horned Owls have been heard at once in one of the most interesting choruses one could hope to experience. Saw-whet, Eastern Screech-, and Barred owls have all been recorded by merely standing along New Lenox Road by the tracks or by the nearby river bridge.

Canoe Trip from Decker Boat Launch to Woods Pond

The most pleasurable way of birding the area is by canoe. The Decker Boat Launch site on New Lenox Road is the best place to put in your canoe. (From September 15 to May 15, canoeists must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device.) Canoes cannot be rented in the management area, but they can be rented in nearby Hancock or Sheffield. In addition, MAS runs guided canoe trips from May to October. Call MAS at 413-637-0320.

While gasoline engines are prohibited by town ordinance, canoeing is leisurely and affords access to about six miles of flatwater river paddling with the opportunity to observe many birds and mammals normally too shy to be seen so closely. American Bitterns, Soras, and Virginia Rails have nested regularly at or near the launch site. Throughout the spring, Ospreys are commonly seen flying overhead grasping foot-long carp. Apparently, the high visibility of these fish makes them the preferred food for this species. The

goldfish were presumedly introduced into the system by people who tired of their pets and chose to dispose of them "humanely." They now constitute one of the largest components of the area's fishery.

Canoeing the river downstream (south) from the launch site sends the visitor through a series of habitats that gradually meld from one into another and with them their associated birdlife. The agricultural pastures of the first dozen or so meanders allow the canoeist close encounters with Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, Bank Swallows, and an occasional Spotted Sandpiper. Throughout the summer, swallows patrol these fields. A small colony of Cliff Swallows lives beneath the New Lenox Road bridge, and a short upstream paddle beneath this bridge allows for a view of their well-constructed nests. Early on a summer morning, just downstream of the launch site, one is very likely to see and hear an American Bittern that has nested here for several years. Virginia Rails nest alongside the launch site itself, and while it takes patience, luck, or a tape recording to draw out these shy creatures, the result is well worth the effort.

Gradually, the fields are left behind, and mature woodlands of silver maple, elm, basswood, and ash eventually become dominant. An occasional willow arches over the bank, and an understory of dogwood and willow makes an impenetrable barrier. Warbling and Yellow-throated vireos add to the cacophony of tanagers, orioles, thrushes, and warblers. Green-backed Herons commonly flush before the canoe; Blue-gray Gnatcatchers nest in the trees along the stream.

Just as gradually as the fields passed into woods, the woods now cede their dominance to broad marshes playing host to a multitude of backwaters that tempt and beg for a closer inspection. Common Moorhens have until recently nested in these areas. During the fall, these hidden areas are used as staging areas for migrating waterfowl. Large numbers of geese and Wood Ducks, and smaller concentrations of mergansers utilize these sloughs.

This river ride culminates at Woods Pond, which is actually a mere swelling of the river caused by a dam from one of the long-forgotten nineteenth century mills that used to hug the banks of most of our streams. Great Blue Herons commonly are found fishing its banks. Early spring gatherings of Common Goldeneyes, Hooded Mergansers, and Ring-necked Ducks are often found in surprisingly large numbers for such a small body of water. Since this is, in essence, the river, it remains free of ice over much of its portion through most winters when other lakes and ponds are completely locked in. It is then that this spot may play host to some late wintering waterfowl and raptors.

At the south end of Woods Pond along its western bank are the old remains of a bridge that used to span the river just above the dam. It is here, on the western abutment, that most take out their canoes. It is a welcome thought that one had the foresight to bring a second car to this point to return to the Decker

Boat Launch site without having to paddle back. While the canoeing is never strenuous, the river seems to grow perceptibly at the end of a long morning or afternoon of intense birding, if you have to paddle the entire length again. Taking one's time to bird or explore other natural wonders along the way, one should anticipate a three to four hour canoe trip from Decker to Woods Pond.

To reach the disembarking location on Woods Pond from the launch site, return west on New Lenox Road to the first intersection (East Street), and turn left. Proceed approximately 2.8 miles south on East Street to Housatonic Street. Turn left onto Housatonic Street. After about 0.8 mile, the road veers sharply to the right, and the pond is visible straight ahead with the above-mentioned bridge abutment. Park judiciously, being careful not to block the private drive on the left.

Woodland Road

Proceeding east along New Lenox Road from the launch site about 0.3 mile, one will arrive at the intersection of East New Lenox Road and New Lenox Road. Evening Grosbeaks have been noted every summer at this intersection from 1980 to 1992, with the exception of 1985. Proof of nesting is merely awaiting an ambitious investigator. Take a right (called October Mountain Road on the south side of New Lenox Road), and drive one mile through some sparsely located housing, after which the road turns to dirt and is only seasonally passable, and then only by high-bodied vehicles. This road roughly parallels the east bank of the Housatonic River. At the town line between Lenox and Lee, the road changes its name to Woodland Road. The road continues along the banks of the river and offers many access points to observe the wildlife of the marshes and the eastern shore of Woods Pond. The road continues to a junction (at 3.5 miles south of New Lenox Road). Turn left past the campground at October Mountain State Forest to head into the town of Lee.

Habitat type here is distinctly different. The steep slopes of October Mountain abut the road, and bring with them the associated plant and bird species of a more boreal climate. Winter Wrens, Hermit Thrushes, Blackburnian Warblers, and Scarlet Tanagers claim possession of the canopy and understory vegetation. Ruffed Grouse range the deciduous woods, and it is here that Wild Turkeys are commonly noted. Sightings of black bear are not uncommon, and while perhaps equally as common, bobcats usually are more successful hiding in the talus slopes. In early spring wildflowers abound, and the sides of this road feature magnificent patches of Dutchman's breeches, spring beauty, trillium, and hepatica.

Brielman Section

Historically the richest of the areas in birdlife, the Brielman section is merely a shadow of its former greatness, but for a surprising reason. It was long associated with Pittsfield's sewage treatment facility, and prior to the early

1970s held open beds that attracted a surprising assortment of waterfowl, shorebirds, and waders. Older records mention Ruddy Turnstones, dowitchers, and Buff-breasted and Western sandpipers, all unusual Berkshire visitors. Modernization has since stripped the area of this attractant, but a natural pond and the backwaters of the nearby Housatonic River still host many of the management area's more intriguing marsh birds.

To reach the Brielman section, drive west from the launch site along New Lenox Road to the first intersection (East Street). Take a right and proceed approximately 0.8 mile to the intersection of Holmes Road. Turn right, proceed one hundred yards to Utility Drive on the right just before the Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, and turn right. After passing through a railroad underpass, park along a graveled road on the left just before the buildings of the sewage treatment plant. Areas past this point are inaccessible to vehicles.

Despite its small size, the wetland on the left is the main attractant for most of the interesting bird species in this area. Until a recent shrinkage in overall Massachusetts range, Common Moorhens were commonly found nesting here. They were quite visible throughout the summer with their young squeezing through the cattails and hopping along sedge hummocks. Bitterns, Virginia Rails, Soras, Marsh Wrens, and Common Snipe actively breed in this wetland and are quite visible. The pumping call of the bittern and the aerial flight songs of the snipe are the signature sounds of the early morning. Historically, King Rails have bred here and should be watched for.

The gravel road forks almost immediately into a left branch and one that continues straight ahead. Walk along the left fork, which leads for approximately two miles along the western bank of the river. It does, at points, come into close proximity to private development, which can be distracting. By continuing straight ahead, one is led into a gravel band and the potential of viewing the marshes from the eastern side. Unfortunately, this particular section has been overridden by all-terrain-vehicles, and their presence on most weekends mars an otherwise enjoyable outing.

Rice Section

The most recently acquired parcel of the management area is a little-utilized portion in Pittsfield known as the Rice section. To get to this area, return west from the launch site along New Lenox Road to Route 20. Take a right onto Route 20 West, and continue for 2.7 miles. Adjacent to a gas station (still south of Pittsfield center) and on the right is Underhill Place, a deadend road about one hundred yards long. On the left side of Underhill Place is space for very limited parking. From here, a short grassy road continues, passing through a stand of very old and large-trunked white pine and oak. The trail leads into several fields that are periodically mown to maintain open space, and many unmarked trails veer off from the bordering woods allowing access to the river.

The mature nature of the surrounding woods sets this area apart from the rest of the management area. Species diversity in this section is somewhat low and bird-finding can often be very disappointing throughout most of the area. One notable exception, however, is a wetland immediately adjacent to the first field encountered. A short path to the north side of this field will lead one down a fairly steep slope to a cattail/phragmites association. This is a particularly productive area in the winter for lingering Song Sparrows, American Robins, and Cedar Waxwings. Another good, and perhaps more productive, area is a small section just off the management boundaries on the extreme east side. If you follow the main trail through the fields, a small trail to the southeast will lead to the railroad line. From this point, one can see Morewood Lake. Most of the lake is owned by the local country club, and their docks and swimming beaches are very evident on the far shore. On the northwestern side, however, is a little-studied marshland that has historically recorded species such as King Rail. Recent observations show this area to be a major staging point for migrating waterfowl.

Final Comments

In the autumn months the area is actively hunted for pheasants and waterfowl. Although it can be very disconcerting to have shotgun blasts nearby when one is attempting to enjoy a quiet afternoon in the country, it is nevertheless the sportsman's dollars that originally purchased this land.

A checklist of birds has been published for this area. It is currently out of print, although an updated version may be available in the near future. For more information, contact me at 413-637-2218.

DAVID ST. JAMES works in the Western District Office of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, which manages the Housatonic Valley Wildlife Management Area. He has birded the region for thirty years and has lived in the management area for the last twelve years. He participates in local Christmas Bird Counts and runs a Breeding Bird Census route for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A good all-around naturalist, David is well versed in edible plants and is currently vice-president of the Hoffman Bird Club.

NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT

The second annual North American Migration Count (NAMC) will be conducted on May 8, 1993. The main purpose of the count is to gather data on the shape of migration of songbirds. It is conducted on a single day, and each count area is an entire county in a particular state. For more information on the 1993 NAMC, contact Jim Stasz, NAMC Coordinator, P.O. Box 71, North Beach, MD 20714.

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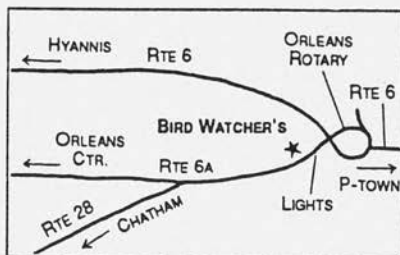
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BICKNELL'S THRUSH: A NORTHEASTERN SONGBIRD IN TROUBLE?

by Christopher C. Rimmer, Jonathan L. Atwood, and Laura R. Nagy

Few birders experience the spiraling song and plaintive calling of the "Bicknell's" Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Catharus minimus bicknelli*), the Northeast's only endemic songbird. Fewer still may encounter this seclusive denizen of New England's mountaintop spruce-fir forests in the future. Absent from its only former Massachusetts haunt, Mount Greylock, since 1972 and from several areas of historic abundance in the Canadian Maritimes, the Bicknell's Thrush may be declining throughout its restricted breeding range. Yet so little is known of its current distribution and population levels that its conservation status cannot be accurately assessed.

Even the taxonomy of Bicknell's Thrush is in doubt. First recognized in 1881, when E. P. Bicknell discovered a small population on Slide Mountain in the Catskills of New York, Bicknell's Thrush is now classified as a subspecies of the Gray-cheeked Thrush, whose nominate form (*C. m. minimus*) is more northern and widely distributed. However, recent studies by Canadian taxonomists indicate that Bicknell's Thrush may be a distinct species (Ouellet 1991; Seutin 1991). Several lines of evidence suggest this.

Morphologically, the two forms show marked differences in plumage characters and size, as first reported by Wallace (1939) in his classic study of Bicknell's Thrush. Bicknell's Thrush is considerably smaller than the Gray-cheeked Thrush, with almost no overlap (although the largest male *bicknelli* may approach the smallest female *minimus* in size). The mean wing length of *bicknelli* measures a full 10 mm shorter than that of *minimus*. Typically, Bicknell's Thrushes' upperparts are a richer brown color than Graycheeks, which are more distinctly olive-gray. However, Wallace (1939) also reported that each subspecies is characterized by both a grayish and a brownish color phase, leading to considerable overlap. While the tail of *bicknelli* is almost invariably a dull chestnut color and contrasts with the browner back, the tail of *minimus* is olive-brown to olivaceous and shows little contrast to the back. Additionally, the pale area at the base of the mandible is distinctly yellowish in *bicknelli*, dull fleshy-pink in *minimus*. Although these two subspecies may be separable in the hand, accurate field identification is dubious at best.

Additional differentiation is provided by the songs of both forms. The nasal, gyrating song of Bicknell's Thrush tends to be higher in frequency than that of the Graycheek and ends on an even or ascending pitch, while the Graycheek's song descends. Playback experiments by Ouellet (1991) have confirmed that *bicknelli* completely ignore *minimus* songs, although the reverse experiments have not yet been attempted. Finally, biochemical analyses (protein

electrophoresis, mitochondrial DNA) have revealed significant differences between the two taxa, further suggesting that they may be distinct species (Ouellet 1991; Seutin 1991).

Regardless of their taxonomic differences, Bicknell's and Gray-cheeked thrushes occupy clearly demarcated breeding ranges. Historically, Bicknell's Thrushes bred from the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Gaspé Peninsula, and Seal Island (off southwestern Nova Scotia), south through the Adirondacks, the mountains of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine, to southern limits on Mount Greylock and in the Catskills. The breeding distribution of Gray-cheeked Thrushes extends from Newfoundland, Labrador, and northern Quebec across the Canadian and Alaskan taiga to eastern Siberia. No zone of intergradation has been found.

In New England and New York, Bicknell's Thrush inhabits montane forests, primarily those areas dominated by balsam fir and red spruce at elevations greater than 3000 feet. This restricted habitat faces a number of threats, including the damaging effects of acid precipitation and airborne pollution (Vogelmann 1982; Schreiber and Newman 1988), habitat loss from ski area development and transmission tower construction, and overuse by hikers. Severe diebacks of red spruce stands, thought to have resulted largely from acid precipitation damage, have been documented in the high peaks of the Green, White, and Adirondack mountains since the mid-1960s (Vogelmann 1982). Possible global climate changes may also profoundly impact the long-term health and viability of subalpine spruce-fir forests.

To date, no link between changes in breeding habitat quality and thrush populations has been established because detailed survey data are lacking. However, Bicknell's Thrush population declines have been reported by observers in New York, Vermont, Nova Scotia, and Quebec. After occupying the Mount Greylock summit since at least 1888, with six to eleven pairs estimated to have bred there annually between 1934 and 1960, Bicknell's Thrush numbers fell off gradually between 1961 and 1972, and no individual was reported after 1972 (Veit and Petersen in press). Seal Island's once dense breeding population disappeared in the mid-1950s, and the birds appear to be gone from the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, including the Magdalen Islands (J. Marshall, pers. comm. 1992).

The conservation status of Bicknell's Thrush is clouded by uncertainty about its wintering distribution and ecology. The only confirmed winter specimens have been collected in Haiti and the Dominican Republic (Wallace 1939; J. Marshall, unpublished data), with additional mist-netted birds and documented sightings in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico (Petersen 1990; J. Marshall, unpublished data). Winter sightings of Graycheeks from other Caribbean islands (Jamaica, Mona Island) may represent *bicknelli* (Arendt 1992). Wintering *minimus*, on the other hand, are known only from the

mainlands of South and Central America, extending from northern Peru and northwestern Brazil through Colombia, Venezuela, Trinidad, and Guyana as far north as Costa Rica.

Preliminary data suggest that the winter habitat of Bicknell's Thrush may be restricted to primary tropical forest (Arendt 1992; J. Marshall, unpublished data). These forests have been heavily clear-cut, burned, and converted to other uses throughout the Caribbean as a result of burgeoning human population pressures. While we will never know the full historic winter range and habitat associations of Bicknell's Thrush, changes seem certain to have occurred.

Thus, at both ends of its migratory spectrum, Bicknell's Thrush may be facing significant habitat degradation. The ingredients for a population freefall appear to be present: a small, geographically restricted breeding population that is fragmented throughout most of its range on habitat "islands"; documented deterioration of the breeding habitat itself; presumed concentration during winter on a small and rapidly shrinking range; and virtually no background data on which to assess the magnitude of any population changes or make informed conservation decisions. Given the relative infrequency with which birders visit its breeding and wintering habitats, let alone carefully monitor its numbers, the Bicknell's Thrush could slip to dangerously low levels before any alarms are sounded. The precedents for such a scenario are disturbingly common throughout recent human history.

Recognizing a need for baseline scientific information, the Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) and the Manomet Bird Observatory (MBO) launched an investigation of the population status of Bicknell's Thrush in 1992. Still in its early stages, this project has two preliminary objectives: 1) to determine the current distribution of Bicknell's Thrush in New England and New York, and to compare this with historic information; and 2) to determine efficient censusing techniques and to generate density estimates for use in eventual estimation of population size and trends. Our overall goal is to assess the conservation status of the subspecies and ascertain whether formal protection under federal or state endangered species laws may be warranted.

Fieldwork in Bicknell's Thrush breeding habitat presents imposing logistic challenges. Most of the occupied peaks are geographically isolated and can be reached only on foot, often without the benefit of trails. High elevation spruce-fir forests typically consist of nearly impenetrable thickets on steep, rugged slopes. Wallace (1939) remarked that "only a freak ornithologist would think of leaving the trails [on Mount Mansfield] for more than a few feet [due to] the discouragingly dense tangles" of vegetation. The additional factors of unpredictably severe mountaintop weather, an abbreviated summer breeding season, and the reputation of Bicknell's Thrush for confining its vocal activity to dawn and dusk, have contributed to the long-standing paucity of knowledge on this bird. Clarifying the status of Bicknell's Thrush promises to be no simple

task.

To document current distribution, we coordinated a network of volunteer observers to cover the high peaks of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts (Maine, with its roadless expanses and extremely limited record of historic Bicknell's Thrush distribution, was beyond our scope for 1992). We identified 572 peaks at elevations greater than 915 meters (3000 feet) in those four states, and more than 200 additional peaks between 762 and 915 meters (2500 to 3000 feet). We especially targeted known historic sites, of which, from various published and unpublished sources, we have so far identified eighty-nine in the four states. Aided by volunteer coordinators in New York and New Hampshire, we assembled an impressive corps of 112 observers. Each was equipped with a set of standardized survey instructions, a tape recording of Bicknell's Thrush songs and calls, a USGS topographic map of his or her assigned site(s), and a data form. Observers were requested to visit each assigned site at least once between early June and mid-July, preferably at dawn or dusk, and to record the presence or absence of Bicknell's Thrushes. Follow-up visits were encouraged to sites where initial surveys failed to confirm the bird's presence. VINS and MBO staff covered many priority peaks for which no volunteers were available.

Survey results indicated Bicknell's Thrushes to be surprisingly widespread. Overall, Bicknell's Thrushes were confirmed present on 145 of 229 (63 percent) surveyed peaks. Of the 191 peaks greater than 915 meters in elevation, thrushes were located on 141 (74 percent). Of the additional 37 surveyed mountaintops between 723 and 907 meters in height, Bicknell's Thrushes were found on four, the lowest at an elevation of 838 meters (2749 feet) in the Green Mountains. Birds were located on 27 of 39 New York peaks, 69 of 122 peaks in Vermont, 49 of 66 in New Hampshire, and neither of two peaks in Massachusetts. Although most observers did not attempt complete censuses, estimated populations ranged from only one or two pairs on 70 peaks to as many as 250 pairs on Mount Mansfield in Vermont. Of the 58 surveyed peaks with known historical records of Bicknell's Thrush, birds were located on 47 (81 percent). Due to the late date of some surveys and the marked decrease in responsiveness of territorial birds to broadcasts of taped calls, Bicknell's Thrushes on some peaks were undoubtedly missed.

The second phase of our 1992 fieldwork investigated census techniques and vocal behavior of Bicknell's Thrushes on Mount Mansfield in Stowe, Vermont, the site of Wallace's classic (1939) life history study. On a study plot located at approximately 1150 meters (3775 feet), we compared intensive mapping of thrush territories with fixed-width line transects and fixed-radius point counts, both with and without tape playbacks, at different times of day. Bicknell's Thrushes appeared to occur at relatively high density on the study plot. Mapping of territorial males yielded density estimates of about forty to fifty-five pairs per

forty hectares (or 100 acres). Both line transects and point counts underestimated density as compared with the maximum value from territorial mapping. However, given the difficulties of conducting fieldwork in high elevation habitats, we believe that none of these methods will suffice for actual population censuses throughout the breeding range of Bicknell's Thrush. More likely, future population estimates will have to be based on calculations, using infrared satellite photography, of the area of suitable habitat, applying average density estimates obtained from representative breeding sites.

Our studies of vocal activity showed that, while Bicknell's Thrushes called and sang frequently throughout the day during early and mid-June, vocalizations became more sporadic by late June, continuing through July. In particular, late-season calls and songs were increasingly restricted to dawn and dusk periods. A surprising resurgence of calling was recorded in mid-September. These results strongly suggest that presence-absence surveys for Bicknell's Thrush should be conducted during the first three weeks of June, and that later surveys should only be attempted at dawn or dusk, especially when accompanied by playback recordings of calls and songs to elicit vocal response.

Plans for 1993 involve tackling Bicknell's Thrush distribution in Maine, surveying additional historic sites in New England and New York that were not covered during 1992, resurveying selected peaks where birds were not located in 1992, and refining estimates of thrush density on Mount Mansfield. We plan to uniquely color-band breeders on the Mansfield study plot in 1993 and to begin collecting data that should provide a foundation for long-term population and ecological studies at the site. While our preliminary survey results suggest that the distribution of Bicknell's Thrush in New England and New York has not undergone significant recent change, questions remain about the population size and stability of Bicknell's Thrush. Mount Greylock birds are gone, and populations in the Canadian Maritimes appear to have plummeted. Whether these are local extinctions of little overall consequence or symptoms of habitat degradation at either or both ends of its range, Bicknell's Thrush bears close monitoring in the years to come. Little is known, yet much may be at stake.

As in 1992, we encourage participation by volunteer birders in 1993 distributional surveys of Bicknell's Thrush. Anyone who enjoys rigorous hiking and is intrigued by the possibility of encountering this mountaintop dweller is welcome. Additionally, we are anxious to add to our list of peaks historically occupied by Bicknell's Thrush. We would like to receive reports from anyone with breeding season records of Gray-cheeked (Bicknell's) Thrush prior to 1990 from New York, New England, or the Canadian Maritime provinces. We especially need records from Maine and the Adirondack Mountains. For each record, please report the site (peak) name, town or topographic quadrangle, date of encounter, elevation, number of birds encountered, and any other pertinent information. Please relay all information or expressions of interest in

volunteering for 1993 field surveys to Chris Rimmer at VINS, Woodstock, VT 05091, or call 802-457-2779.

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BIRD OBSERVER WELCOMES MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION

Bird Observer would like to remind its readers that we welcome contributions for publication. These contributions can include field notes and observations, articles on where to find birds, reviews of bird-related literature or equipment, notes on conservation issues affecting bird populations or important habitats, bird identification difficulties, population surveys, photographs or drawings, and others. The masthead of each issue contains more specific information on article length and format.



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**BOOK REVIEW: *The Macmillan Field Guide
to Bird Identification***

by Robert Hilton

Note from Alden Clayton, *Bird Observer* Department Head, Book Reviews. The lead article in the February 1993 issue of *Birding* is "Building a Birder's Library," by Richard E. Webster. Citing 223 titles organized in twenty-two categories, Webster offers an extraordinarily comprehensive survey of books relevant to birds and birding. His final category is headlined as, "The Best Bird Book Buys." Two books are selected "that especially fit all my conceptions of 'quality' in combination with 'value'." One of these is *The Macmillan Field Guide to Bird Identification*. The other is W.E. Godfrey's *The Birds of Canada*. Webster has this to say about the Macmillan guide.

This is my nomination for the standard for future bird books. As a bibliophile who has recommended tomes for pages and pages of this article, I still think that there is something about good small books that make them the best. Although a British guide, it offers much to a North American birder and a great deal to any lover of bird books. What does this book have? Just artistically exquisite illustrations of complex plumages accompanied by a birder's text. This is the book against which I will measure all others when it comes to a "satisfaction index."

The Macmillan Field Guide to Bird Identification, by Alan Harris, Laurel Tucker, and Keith Vinicombe. 1989 (revised 1990). London, England: Macmillan Press. [iv+] 224 pages (94 contain color). \$29.95.

This little book is a British equivalent to Kenn Kaufman's *A Field Guide to Advanced Birding*, with each of the seventy-one chapters illustrated in color. It discusses regularly occurring British and Irish species that pose problems for the "average bird watcher"; only confusing plumages are illustrated and considered. Rarities are included when they are frequently confused with a common bird. The book is the same size as and put out by the British publisher of what we know as *The Facts on File Guide to North Atlantic Shorebirds*.

As with *A Field Guide to Advanced Birding*, the individual chapters, written by Keith Vinicombe, are arranged in a manner suitable for the species under discussion. The general format is that of an identification "mini-paper." Unlike the Kaufman guide, there is a profusion of color illustrations, provided by Alan Harris and the late Laurel Tucker. For a week after I obtained my own copy, I spent every evening at home merely admiring these paintings. Tucker's portraits are more impressionistic and more lively than Harris': one of her Wood

Sandpipers looks set to walk off the page. Charming vignettes pepper her plates; I particularly like the flock of grey geese stretching across the tops of two pages, containing individuals of each species feeding, walking, or standing. Harris' paintings have a preciseness to them, with most larger, patterned feathers individually delineated. Hand lettering on plates give name, plumage, and often key identification information.

About thirty-five chapters deal with two or more American species, making them useful in North America, with another sixteen containing at least one regular North American species. Any chapter discussing a North American species is valuable for the illustrations alone. The chapters with the most utility for North Americans discuss loons, grebes, dabbling ducks (including female and juvenile Garganey), large plovers, skuas and jaegers, gulls, terns, alcids, and Long-eared and Short-eared owls.

As an example, take a chapter of particular interest to me: the one that discusses three medium-sized terns, Common, Arctic, and Roseate terns. Common and Arctic terns are treated together with many features compared and contrasted between the two species: adult summer and winter, juvenile, and first summer plumages are covered, with subheadings highlighting parts of the body necessary to identify a specific plumage. The Roseate Tern, with somewhat less detailed treatment, is compared in adult and juvenile plumages. The illustrations show all three species in a variety of plumages, both in flight and sitting, and include paintings of three heads and two underwings to demonstrate important features. These species are also discussed and compared with Sandwich, Gull-billed, and the three marsh terns in other tern chapters.

Plates throughout the book, some containing more than thirteen individuals each, show a wide variety of plumages. Many times, two birds are drawn in the same plumage and pose to illustrate individual variation. Aberrant plumages of a few species are shown: for example, a first winter Little Gull with all dark wings. Several nice paintings portray molting shorebirds, among them an adult Spotted Redshank and molting juveniles of both Wilson's and Grey (our Red) phalaropes. Their proportions are more accurately portrayed than in *The National Geographic Society Field Guide to North American Birds*.

The introductory material contains a section on shortcuts in identification, in which Vinicombe discusses the importance of aging and sexing birds and elaborates well the basics of rare bird study: know the common birds, keep an open mind, learn calls, and write descriptions. Both inside covers contain useful (and identical) material depicting bird plumage terminology. There is a two-page bibliography of widely available books and articles (the latter mostly from *British Birds* magazine), which contain more detailed useful information.

Comparisons to *A Field Guide to Advanced Birding* are perhaps inevitable. The Macmillan guide contains many more illustrations, all of which are in color. Many of these portray the entire range of tricky plumages of two or more

species side by side, whereas Kaufman usually depicts one plumage or view per page or chapter. Species that are discussed in both books receive approximately the same amount of coverage, albeit from their different perspectives. Kaufman's book has a more thorough introductory discussion on how to identify a bird.

I find this book valuable because of the wealth of plumages it portrays for both American and European species (many of the latter potential vagrants to this country), including many not commonly represented in general field guides. For instance, females of each British species of dabbling duck (Cinnamon Teal included, as an escape) are illustrated; all species except Blue-winged Teal have either the juvenile or eclipse male plumage pictures as well, and for most species both plumages are shown. The gull plates show each species in winter plumage from first winter to maturity, as well as juvenile and first summer dress, for both flying and sitting or swimming birds. Sometimes more than one individual is portrayed in each plumage and pose combination; Scandinavian Herring and hybrid Herring x Glaucous gulls are also depicted, in addition to the normal British form.

I recommend this book for many reasons. If you plan on traveling to England, by all means buy a copy. Rare bird searchers will want to own it as well, because it is useful in researching the identification of accidental species. Less peripatetic birders who enjoy well-done books about other avifaunas may also want to obtain a copy: the artwork alone is an inducement for purchase.

ROBERT HILTON has been an avid birder for more than twenty years, and now takes this book with him on most outings. He lived for two years in Italy and has also birded in England, Belgium, and other European countries. He is planning on returning as soon as he can.

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Unusual Behavior of a Baird's Sandpiper

"Have you seen the Baird's Sandpiper?"

After the usual greetings and comments about the hawk flight, this was the first question directed to us upon our arrival on the hawk platform at Cape May Point.

"No, where is it?"

"On the beach, near the fort."

There it was. Right at the water line of the open beach where the surf rolls in from the Atlantic. It was pecking in the wet sand in the company of a Sanderling and a Laughing Gull. Next day, without the Sanderling or gull, it was in the exact same spot. For one full week (October 4-11, 1992) it remained in the same location, seemingly healthy and content, despite beach walkers, joggers, fishermen, even dogs, coming and going up and down the beach—to say nothing of migrating Merlins cruising overhead. As birders who look for it avidly each year well know, the Baird's is a rare autumn migrant along the Atlantic coast. For those individuals that do stop, Forbush poetically describes their haunts and habits.

On the south shore of Martha's Vineyard where in West Tisbury and Chilmark shallow pools are formed from the overflow of ponds and marshes just inside the beach ridge—there the Baird's Sandpiper loves to feed. In late August or early September when the grass has been cut, this bird comes in small parties of four to eight and hunts about the margins of partly dried out pools, threading its way among the stubble or poking about upon the bare mud . . . Occasionally it feeds on the beaches but seems rather to prefer inland ponds and even uplands (Forbush, E.H. 1927. *Birds of Massachusetts and Other New England States*, Norwood Press).

Granted that rare birds and rare behavior do sometimes coincide and that arctic-born juveniles of many species are known to be less people-shy than adults, the aplomb of this particular juvenile in its unusual situation was rather extraordinary.

It is interesting that a Baird's Sandpiper lingered in similar fashion in 1992 for two weeks (September 5-19) on a relatively small, shell-covered area of the upper beach at Lynn. One difference in the people-bird relationship at Lynn versus Cape May was that most viewers and photographers at Lynn were watching over a seawall, whereas the Cape May Baird's was often feeding, busily and unperturbedly, at a distance of no more than ten feet from a semi-circle of scopes, binoculars, and cameras intruding into its area of the beach.

Alden Clayton, Concord, Massachusetts

American Kestrel Caching Food

On May 1, 1992, I had joined David Ludlow at the Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary (DWWS) in Marshfield at lunch to go over the hectic May and June schedules. While we were sitting in the parking lot, an American Kestrel male flew in and landed on a wire near a cherry tree in the yard of the work area. The kestrel was carrying a meadow vole. The bird hopped over to the cherry tree, clambered upward a few branches, and then flew off without the vole. We had expected the bird to pin the vole to the wire with its feet and proceed to eat from the head on down. We had seen that activity many times. Sometimes the only remnant was a rather neatly skinned pelt, and on other occasions, an apparently less hungry kestrel would leave entrails and body parts behind.

We examined the tree and found a mildly weathered and inactive nest of an American Robin near where the kestrel had been. Further examination showed that the vole had been left in the nest. At 3:00 P.M. the vole was still in the nest. No further observations were made that day. One week later, at 6:30 P.M., I was relating the story to Fran Garretson when the bird flew in again, deposited a vole in the nest, and departed. This visit, like the previous one, lasted about one minute, including the time spent on the wire, in the tree, and at the nest.

Until the past few years, the American Kestrel had used the DWWS as a nesting spot and migratory feeding area for many years. We have had as many as three nesting pairs, although one or two were more likely. In the fall kestrels or Northern Harriers occasionally appear for a day or two, using the sanctuary as a rest stop during migration. For example, one day we had seventeen harriers in about thirty minutes, just before dusk. On another late summer day there were more than sixty kestrels on the sanctuary in midafternoon.

When the kestrels that were caching the food did come in, they roosted in the hay sheds near the cherry tree and were regularly seen in the area of the tree and the barns. They did not exhibit any territorial behavior in the area. The cherry tree and the cache nest seemed to be unguarded and ignored. On the day after Fran Garretson and I saw a kestrel deposit a vole in the nest, Bev and Myron Litchfield noticed a kestrel in the same area and watched it eat a small mammal. They mentioned this to David Ludlow who looked into the nest and found that the bird had left substantial remains of its meal in the nest.

There is little doubt that this bird was using the nest as a storage site for its evening meal. The larder was filled during the day at varying times. A morning of successful feeding and hunting might provide the extra item earlier than a day in which hunting was difficult or slow. The meal was left in the nest to be removed and eaten prior to the kestrel's roosting.

David E. Clapp, Marshfield, Massachusetts

Never Bite a Pitohui, It's Poisonous

The genus *Pitohui* (the word even sounds like something you might say as you spit out something that tastes horrible) includes several poisonous species of birds endemic to the New Guinea area. The fact that three *Pitohui* species are poisonous is quite remarkable, because they are the first poisonous birds known to science, and more remarkably this was not discovered until June 1990. The setting for the discovery was a small tent camp about a mile from the nearest road in a mountain forest in Varirata National Park, only a few miles from Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea. Bruce Beehler of the Smithsonian Institution was conducting research on a variety of bird-related projects, with the aid of a number of graduate students (including John P. Dumbacher) and other helpers. I was at the camp for six weeks and arrived soon after the discovery of the poisonous nature of the Hooded Pitohui, the common representative of this genus at Varirata. These birds are common, noisy, conspicuous, and colorful (bright orange and black), and were often caught in mist nets for banding.

Several entries in my journal mention the discovery: "Occasionally a Hooded Pitohui will thrash around. These birds have poison in their feathers. Michael or Rodney [two natives working for Bruce Beehler] inadvertently put his hand to his mouth after handling one in the nets, and his tongue got numb. It



is well known to the natives that they are poisonous. Jack [Dumbacher] licked some pitohui feathers, and his mouth got numb. There were a lot of 'lick a pitohui' comments around camp. It's sort of a sign of manhood!"

"We photographed them [birds removed from mist nets] and released all but the pitohui, which will be sacrificed for the poison bird study (the meat and feathers are poisonous)."

The results of the analysis of the Varirata pitohuis, and those collected later elsewhere, appeared in the October 30, 1992, issue of *Science* (Dumbacher, Beehler, Spande, Garraffo, and Daly, *Science*, 258:799-801), published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The issue had two species of pitohuis on the cover and vaulted the poisonous birds into international prominence. The article tells the story of chemical analysis and informed speculation on the evolution and functions of the poison.

The poison is the steroidal alkaloid, homobatrachotoxin, found only in the three species of *Pitohui* and the poison-dart frogs (so named because their poison is used by South American natives for their blowgun darts) of the genus *Phyllobates*. The presence of the same poison in two different classes of animals, with very different evolutionary histories in different parts of the world, suggests that the poison was evolved independently (polyphyletic origin). Presumably, the poison evolved as a defense mechanism against predators, most likely raptors and snakes, which should be sensitive to it. The poison-dart frogs are brightly colored (some bright orange or yellow), and it is considered probable by biologists that the bright colors "advertise" their poisonous nature—a "bite me and die" statement. It is interesting that the Hooded Pitohui is also brightly colored (orange) and is conspicuous and noisy in an environment where most birds are cryptic and mostly silent. Maybe the pitohui is advertising as well. The Variable Pitohui is much less toxic than the Hooded Pitohui, but some races closely resemble the Hooded Pitohui, which the authors of the *Science* article suggest may indicate mimicry—not unlike the viceroy mimicry of the monarch butterfly.

The article in *Science* details the various analyses of toxicity, the high concentrations of the toxins in pitohui feathers and skin, arguments for the adaptive significance of the poison, and all in all makes for some fascinating reading. I highly recommend it to anyone who is interested in poisons, defense mechanisms, evolution, mimicry, or just plain birds.

William E. Davis, Jr., Foxboro, Massachusetts

Phalaropes, Phalaropes Everywhere

Far overshadowing all other events of the fall of 1992 was the coastal storm on December 11-13, which rivaled the "Halloween storm" of October 1991. Below is a chronology of the storm and selected sightings reported during the storm.

By dawn on Friday, December 11, the storm was full upon the coast. Sustained winds were due east in excess of thirty miles per hour, with gusts up to sixty miles per hour for most of the day. Viewing conditions were satisfactory until midafternoon. One intrepid observer maintained a constant vigil at Andrew's Point in Rockport for seven and one-half hours beginning at 7:30 A.M., with the following results: 115 Northern Fulmars (all light morph), 550 Northern Gannets, 1320 Black-legged Kittiwakes, and 1565 Razorbills. Other noteworthy sightings included Common and Thick-billed murre, Dovekies, a single Pomarine Jaeger, and several Red Phalaropes.

By the morning of December 12, heavy snow enveloped Boston and points to the north, while driving rain prevailed in the milder southeastern coastal region. Winds were fairly steady out of the northeast at about twenty-five to thirty miles per hour, with gusts over forty miles per hour. Viewing conditions were best on Cape Cod. Through midday, observations along the bay shore of Cape Cod were very unproductive. At Sandy Neck in Barnstable, observers saw an early morning flurry of jaegers. Gannets and kittiwakes were present but not in numbers even suggesting anything interesting was happening. A handful of Razorbills and a flock of about seventy Red Phalaropes were about the only observations that served to instill any hope of continued searching with any chance of reward.

By midday most of the shore vantages were closed to the public, and observers were ordered to evacuate in anticipation of storm-surge high tides. A few observers converged on First Encounter Beach in Eastham in early afternoon. Due to the protection afforded from the strong northeast winds, conditions were almost benign. Rain was light, and the ocean was calm. Only a scattering of kittiwakes and gannets was present. Given the lack of activity, some observers went to East Sandwich in midafternoon. Small groups of Red Phalaropes were passing by and as time progressed seemed to be increasing in numbers as the rain slackened. During about one hour of observation, 2100 Red Phalaropes, a Dovekie, and an Iceland Gull were noted before darkness brought an end to the day's observations.

Sunday morning saw the wind shift farther to the north-northeast. Sustained winds had diminished to about twenty miles per hour, with peak gusts to about thirty miles per hour. Light rain persisted until about 9:45 A.M. By 9:00 A.M. some observers had gathered at Sandy Neck and marveled at the spectacle. The dominant theme was Red Phalaropes everywhere. The shoreline resembled a veritable windrow of birds. Small groups would alight on and then take off from

the beach. Many of the birds that landed on the beach were near exhaustion. Extensive patches of what appeared to be foam resolved itself into flocks of phalaropes. Meanwhile a steady flow of phalaropes moved by just offshore. Singles and small groups of Razorbills passed by with an occasional Dovekie. Close observations of several white-winged gulls were made as they drifted over the dune ridge. Anything that appeared to be a duck or duck-like was casually dismissed as uninteresting. Several jaegers lumbered by including an adult dark morph Pomarine Jaeger. The climax was a massive, dark form moving resolutely up the beach toward the observers. Exhausted Red Phalaropes resting on the beach took panicked flight at its approach. The menacing form of a Great Skua passed close enough to see the glint in its eye and the symmetrical molt in its primary feathers. Not to be outdone by the spectacle that was unfolding, it performed a dramatic semiflip, as if waving to the appreciative observers. Soon after, the number of birds began diminishing appreciably.

While unproductive in the morning, First Encounter Beach in early and midafternoon proved highly productive. Northern Fulmars, some close enough to distinguish their diagnostic field marks, flew offshore. Flocks of alcids were almost constantly in sight, many appearing as featureless forms in the distance but a considerable number close enough that bulk and bill shape were clearly noted. A small group of three Atlantic Puffins passed by alone, while others took up consort with passing Razorbills, thus affording comparison of size and shape that are less apparent when viewed alone or at a substantial distance.

Jaegers and skuas were frequent enough to satisfy even the most callous observers. A couple of Dovekies landed on the water not far offshore affording excellent views of their curious neckless appearance. A steady stream of Red Phalaropes continued throughout the afternoon.

By 3:45 P.M., nary a binocular was raised at the passage of a form offshore. A satisfying quietude surrounded the remaining diehard observers. All knew that they had witnessed something special.

The sightings reported on pages 101 through 112 represent conservative estimates. It is likely that the majority, if not all, of the unidentified species were of the dominant species present during the storm. However, due to the presence of some individuals of similar appearance or species that require extremely careful study at close range, those birds were lumped in the sightings under the convenient category of "species unknown." This designation should not detract from the value of the documentation of this memorable storm.

Richard A. Forster, Wellesley, Massachusetts

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BIRD SIGHTINGS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1992

SUMMARY



by Richard A. Forster, Marjorie W. Rines and Robert H. Stymeist

Both November and December were cloudy and wet. The temperature averaged 38.3 degrees over the two-month period, with November slightly below normal and December slightly above normal. The high was 64 degrees on November 13, and the low was 13 degrees on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Measurable rainfall amounts fell on 26 days. In December the highest rainfall amount in any 24-hour period was 5.14 inches on the 11th and 12th, a new record for December and the most in any month since 8.40 inches fell on August 18 and 19, 1955. Snowfall totaled 10.3 inches. The first trace of snow for the season fell on November 8, but most of the snow came during the December 11-13 storm, which was accompanied by high winds and characterized by very wet and sticky snow. This was the largest December snowstorm since 12.9 inches fell on December 4 and 5, 1981. The storm affected eastern Massachusetts areas differently. The South Shore and Cape Cod mostly had very heavy rain. Sustained winds battered coastal areas, with devastating results for homeowners. Inland locations north and west of Boston had significant snow accumulations. The Blue Hills Observatory in Milton recorded 19 inches of snow at the summit. Reports of about one foot of snow were common at lower elevations, with amounts increasing to about two feet in communities further to the southwest. The Worcester airport set a record with three feet of snow. R. H. S.

LOONS THROUGH DUCKS

The December 11-13 storm rivaled the notorious Halloween storm of October 1991 and had a significant effect on offshore seabirds. Like the Halloween storm, the December storm was unusual for its intensity and duration, lasting for several days. On page 98 is a more detailed account of the storm. The summary below includes highlights of sightings during the storm.

A November storm produced excellent numbers of loons. The number of Horned Grebes reported from Nantucket and Wareham were higher than usual. The December count of storm-driven Red-necked Grebes from Sandy Neck may represent the highest count ever seen flying by a coastal vantage point. During the December storm, Northern Fulmars were reported in unusual numbers from Rockport and Eastham. Heron reports were very scanty. The most interesting reports were late appearances by all three species of egrets.

The Cape Cod Bird Club (CCBC) conducted its tenth annual lake and pond waterfowl survey on the first weekend in December, and Take A Second Look (TASL) continued its periodic surveys of Boston Harbor. Both surveys provide useful baseline data to measure whether perceived increases or decreases are real. On Cape Cod, the total number of waterfowl tallied was the lowest ever. Of the 20 species recorded in ten years combined, 16 were found in below average numbers. Five species—Canada Goose, Mallard, Black Duck, Ring-necked Duck, and American Coot—were recorded in the lowest numbers ever. In particular coot continued a steady ten-year decline. Good numbers of scaup, Bufflehead, and Hooded Mergansers were recorded. Highlights included a **Tundra Swan** and a **Greater White-fronted Goose**, both of which put in cameo appearances on the stormy Saturday of count weekend.

Another **Greater White-fronted Goose** returned to an established wintering area on the Acushnet River. Freshwater duck totals were rather routine. Northern Pintail was numerous only at Plum Island, and Northern Shoveler appeared in appreciable numbers only at Monomoy. Winter specialties, such as King Eider, Harlequin Duck, and Barrow's Goldeneye, were poorly represented. Noteworthy was a flock of Harlequin Ducks at nontraditional Marblehead during the storm. An exceptional flight of scoters and eiders was observed at Gay Head, Martha's Vineyard, on November 6. R. A. F.

Red-throated Loon

11/1, 11/10	Norfolk, P.I.	1, 39	B. Cassie, K. Disney
11/16, 11/24	Winthrop, Barnstable (S.N.)	14, 410	R. Stymeist, R. Abrams
11/29, 12/4	Cambridge (F.P.), Nantucket	1, 55	P. Roberts, J. Papale
12/11, 12/13	Rockport, Eastham (F.E.)	41, 100	R. Heil, R. Forster#

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	NOV./DEC. 1992
Arctic/Pacific Loon				
12/27	P.I.	1	M. Lynch#	
Common Loon				
11/1, 11/2	Norfolk, Nantucket	3, 10	B. Cassie, J. Papale	
11/10, 11/14	P.I., Lincoln	22, 2	K. Disney, R. Forster#	
11/15, 11/24	Lakeville, Barnstable (S.N.)	2, 370	W. Petersen, R. Abrams	
12/13, 12/24	Barnstable, Wachusett Res.	300, 4	T. Cameron#, R. Bradbury	
loon species				
11/24	Barnstable (S.N.)	330	R. Abrams	
Pied-billed Grebe				
11/5	New Bedford, Wellesley	6, 8	M. Sylvia, C. Quinlan	
11/16, 11/21	Cambridge (F.P.), Medford	3, 6	R. Stymeist, BBC (J. Kennedy)	
12/1, 12/5-6	Nantucket, Cape Cod	3, 63	J. Papale, CCBC	
Reports of 1 or 2 individuals from 9 locations.				
Horned Grebe				
11/4, 11/14	Cambridge (F.P.), Nantucket	2, 100+	J. Barton, J. Papale#	
11/14, 11/15	Lakeville, Bourne	11, 67	BBC (D. Davis), R. Stymeist#	
11/16, 11/22	Wareham, Boston H.	124, 243	M. Sylvia, TASL (M. Hall)	
11/28, 12/13	Wachusett Res., Barnstable (S.N.)	16, 26	M. Lynch#, R. Forster#	
Red-necked Grebe				
11/11, 11/13	Provincetown, P.I.	3, 10	S. Perkins#, K. Disney	
11/22, 11/29	Boston H., Rockport	28, 11	TASL (M. Hall), M. Lynch#	
12/13	Barnstable (S.N.), Eastham (F.E.)	51, 3	R. Forster#	
Northern Fulmar				
12/11, 12/13	Rockport (A.P.), F.E.	115 lt, 50+	R. Heil, S. Perkins#	
Greater Shearwater				
11/11	Eastham, Provincetown	7, 8	S. Perkins#	
12/13	Eastham (F.E.)	1	B. Nikula#	
shearwater species				
12/13	Eastham (F.E.)	1	W. Petersen#	
Leach's Storm-Petrel				
11/1	Barnstable (S.N.), off P'town	1, 1	H. Ferguson, BBC (G. d'Entremont)	
Northern Gannet				
11/1	Mass. Bay-Cape Cod Bay	750	BBC (G. d'Entremont)	
11/24, 11/27	Barnstable, E. Orleans	630, 300	R. Abrams, W. Petersen	
11/28, 12/3	S. Monomoy, Wellfleet	400+, 400	B. Nikula#, A. Strauss	
12/4, 12/11	Nantucket, Rockport	2000, 550	J. Papale, R. Heil	
12/11, 12/13	Barnstable (S.N.), Eastham (F.E.)	451, 100	M. Sylvia, v. o.	
Great Cormorant				
11/22, 12/19	Boston H., Salisbury	71, 43	TASL (M. Hall), J. Berry	
Double-crested Cormorant				
11/14, 11/22	Southboro, Boston H.	1 imm, 57	R. Forster#, TASL (M. Hall)	
American Bittern				
11/8, 11/19	P.I., E. Boston (B.I.)	1, 1	BBC (S. Charette), L. Rogers	
11/22	Squantum	1	TASL (M. Hall)	
Great Blue Heron				
11/11, 11/22	Eastham, Boston H.	50, 28	S. Perkins#, TASL (M. Hall)	
11/27, 12/6	E. Orleans, Westport	50, 29	W. Petersen, M. Sylvia	
12/16	Boston (Logan)	16	N. Smith	
Great Egret				
11/14, 12/6	Westport, Chatham	2, 1	R. Stymeist#, D. Scott	
12/27	Centerville	1	R. Jenkins#	
Snowy Egret				
12/28	Hyannisport	1	P. Trimble#	
Cattle Egret				
11/2-4, 11/19-20	Franklin, Bridgewater	1, 1	P. Mastromatteo, J. Libby	
Black-crowned Night-Heron				
thr, 11/6	Boston (Fens), E. Boston	1-3, 1	K. Hudson, T. Aversa	
11/14, 12/6	Westport, Lynn	1, 2	M. Rines#, BBC (J. Quigley)	
Tundra Swan				
12/5	Provincetown	1	K. Jones	
Mute Swan				
11/1-30, 11/28	Arlington, S. Monomoy	8 max, 24	L. Taylor, B. Nikula#	
12/6, 12/5-6	Westport, Cape Cod	55, 226	M. Boucher, CCBC	
Greater White-fronted Goose (Greenland form)				
12/5, 12/15-31	WBWS, New Bedford	1 ad, 1 ad	S. Perkins#, D. Zimmerlan	
Snow Goose				
11/1-30	P.I., Essex	13 max, 1	W. Drew# + v. o., T. Young	
12/19	Falmouth	1	B. Nikula#	
Brant				
11/16, 11/22	Wareham, Boston H.	7, 1516	M. Sylvia, TASL (M. Hall)	
11/23, 11/30	Eastham, S. Dartmouth	93, 36	A. Strauss, M. Boucher	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	NOV./DEC. 1992
Brant (continued)				
12/1	Nantucket	37	J. Papale	
Canada Goose				
11/15, 11/28	Wakefield, GMNWR	325, 301	BBC (D. Williams), M. Lynch#	
12/23	Clinton	460	R. Bradbury	
Wood Duck				
11/7, 11/8	Brewster, Framingham	15, 6	K. Jones, K. Hamilton	
12/9-31, 12/18	Framingham, W. Newbury	1 m, 1 m	K. Hamilton, R. Heil	
Green-winged Teal				
11/1-30	P.I., Arlington Res.	300+ max, 15 max	v. o., L. Taylor	
11/1, 11/6	Peabody, E. Boston	19, 15	S. Perkins, T. Aversa	
11/28, 12/1	S. Monomoy, E. Boston	20, 5	B. Nikula#, T. Aversa	
American Black Duck				
11/1-30, 11/22	P.I., Boston H.	560 max, 1376	W. Drew#, TASL (M. Hall)	
11/28, 12/6	S. Monomoy, Westport	450, 734	B. Nikula#, M. Boucher	
Northern Pintail				
11/1-30, 11/7	P.I., Ipswich	63 max, 2 f	W. Drew#, BBC (J. Berry)	
12/7, 12/9	Boston (F.Pk)	2, 2	T. Aversa, K. Hamilton	
12/18, 12/31	W. Newbury, E. Orleans	2, 2	R. Heil, A. Williams	
Northern Shoveler				
11/6-12/1, 11/12	E. Boston, Harwich	1 m, 1 m	T. Aversa, K. Hamilton	
11/12, 11/18	Wellesley, Waltham	1, 1	C. Quinlan#, M. Murphy	
11/18-12/31, 11/28	Boston, S. Monomoy	1 m, 45	K. Hudson, B. Nikula#	
11/28	Orleans	1 f	K. Jones	
Gadwall				
11/6-19, 11/7	P.I., Ipswich	3 max, 25	W. Drew#, BBC (J. Berry)	
11/11, 11/14	Belmont, Westport	6, 3	L. Taylor, R. Stymeist#	
11/28, 12/1	S. Monomoy, S. Peabody	40, 12	B. Nikula#, T. Aversa	
12/5-23, 12/17	Boston, Plymouth	1-3, 14	K. Hudson, K. Hamilton#	
Eurasian Wigeon				
thr, 12/6-31	Chatham, New Bedford	1 m, 1 m	v. o., D. Zimberlan	
American Wigeon				
11/1-11/30, 11/1	Arlington, Wareham	75 max, 16	L. Taylor, M. Sylvia	
11/6-11/24, 11/17	P.I., Nantucket	17 max, 38	W. Drew#, J. Papale	
11/28, 12/3	S. Monomoy, Cambridge (F.P.)	40, 22	B. Nikula#, D. Flood	
Canvasback				
thr	Cambridge (F.P.), Lakeville	245 max, 221 max	J. Barton, v. o.	
11/17, 11/28	Nantucket, S. Monomoy	32, 60	J. Papale, B. Nikula#	
12/5-6, 12/22	Cape Cod, Wareham	213, 137	CCBC, M. Sylvia	
Redhead				
11/1-12/3, 11/8	Waltham, Sterling	1 m, 1 f	v. o., B. Kamp#	
11/21, 12/23	Southboro, Nantucket	2, 2 m	C. Quinlan, J. Papale	
12/1-31, 12/8	Yarmouth, Framingham	2, 1	C. Smith#, C. Quinlan	
Ring-necked Duck				
11/1	Wayland, Lakeville	37, 1300	K. Hamilton, W. Petersen	
11/1-30, 11/4	Southboro, Cambridge (F.P.)	500 max, 156	E. Taylor, J. Barton	
11/8, 11/17	Eastham, Nantucket	35, 31	W. Petersen#, J. Papale	
11/28, 12/24	S. Monomoy, Taunton	90, 10	B. Nikula#, G. d'Entremont#	
Greater Scaup				
11/15, 11/17	N. Falmouth, Nantucket	550, 70	R. Stymeist#, J. Papale	
11/22, 11/28	Boston H., Lakeville	448, 400+	TASL (M. Hall), K. Anderson	
12/24, 12/16	Falmouth, Hingham	1750, 50	M. Sylvia, G. d'Entremont#	
Lesser Scaup				
11/1-12/8, 11/1	Lakeville, Ipswich	300 max, 2	W. Petersen, S. Perkins	
11/19, 11/25	Nantucket, Lincoln	1 m, 1	J. Papale, W. Petersen	
11/21, 12/24	W. Newbury, Falmouth	1, 15	H. Wiggin#, M. Sylvia	
Common Eider				
11/6, 11/22	Gay Head, Boston H.	15,000, 5438	V. Laux, TASL (M. Hall)	
11/27, 12/4	E. Orleans, Nantucket	8000+, 3000	W. Petersen, J. Papale	
12/11, 12/26	Rockport, Hull	3100+, 400	R. Heil, E. Taylor	
King Eider				
11/26, 12/13-15	Rockport, Provincetown H.	1 m, 1 m	I. Giriunas, v. o.	
Harlequin Duck				
11/12-12/31, 11/8	Rockport, Wellfleet	6 max, 1 m	v. o., W. Petersen	
11/27, 12/13	Nantucket, Marblehead	2 pr, 12	M. Porny, J. Smith	
Oldsquaw				
11/6, 11/17	Wachusett Res., Nantucket	1, 80+	R. Bradbury, J. Papale	
11/24, 11/30	Barnstable, S. Dartmouth	157, 26	R. Abrams, M. Boucher	
12/11, 12/27	Rockport (A.P.), Nantucket	60, 6500	J. Brown#, J. Papale	
Black Scoter				
11/5, 11/6	Wachusett Res., Gay Head	3, 6000	R. Bradbury, V. Laux	
11/11	Eastham	50	S. Perkins#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	NOV./DEC. 1992
Surf Scoter				
11/6, 11/22	Gay Head, Boston H.	2000, 159	V. Laux, TASL (M. Hall)	
11/28, 12/6	Scusset, P.I.	150, 25	S. Perkins, BBC (S. Moore)	
White-winged Scoter				
11/6, 11/22	Gay Head, Boston H.	10,000, 440	V. Laux, TASL (M. Hall)	
Common Goldeneye				
11/8, 11/22	Petersham, Boston H.	8, 998	R. Bradbury, TASL (M. Hall)	
11/28, 12/10	Lakeville, Wareham	20, 61	K. Anderson, M. Sylvia	
12/16, 12/23	W. Boylston, Framingham	25, 42	R. Bradbury, K. Hamilton	
Barrow's Goldeneye				
11/28, 12/4	Magnolia, Nantucket	1 m, 2	H. Allen + v. o., J. Papale	
Bufflehead				
11/1-30, 11/22	P.I., Boston H.	60 max, 3164	W. Drew#, TASL (M. Hall)	
12/5-6, 12/6	Cape Cod, Westport	1736, 79	CCBC, M. Boucher	
Hooded Merganser				
11/1-30	Winchester, Lexington	48 max, 40 max	L. Taylor, R. Forster#	
11/1-30	Lakeville, Arlington	53 max, 35 max	W. Petersen, L. Taylor	
11/15	Wakefield, S. Monomoy	41, 50	BBC (D. Williams), H. Ferguson	
11/22, 12/5-6	Quabbin (G43) Cape Cod	64, 469	T. Gagnon, CCBC	
12/5, 12/19	Lynn, Boston	38, 13	BBC (J. Quigley), K. Hudson	
Common Merganser				
11/15, 11/20	Lakeville, Worcester	100+, 47	W. Petersen, R. Bradbury	
11/21, 11/25	Southboro, Wakefield	181, 125+	M. Lynch#, P. + F. Vale	
12/2, 12/8	Holden, Wayland	49, 44	R. Bradbury, K. Hamilton	
12/5-6, 12/15	Cape Cod, Medford	243, 35	CCBC, M. Rines	
Red-breasted Merganser				
11/10, 11/22	N. Monomoy, Boston H.	2000, 2981	B. Nikula, TASL (M. Hall)	
12/27	Cambridge (F.P.)	23	D. Flood	
Ruddy Duck				
11/1-30, 11/1	Arlington Res., Framingham	35 max, 65	L. Taylor, K. Hamilton	
11/7, 11/16	Southboro, Cambridge (F.P.)	46, 36	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist	
11/21, 11/25	W. Newbury, Waltham	94, 70	H. Wiggin#, W. Petersen	
11/25, 11/28	Lincoln, S. Monomoy	65, 15	W. Petersen, B. Nikula#	
12/9, 12/27	Framingham, Cambridge (F.P.)	80+, 1	K. Hamilton, D. Flood	

RAPTORS THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

The two December reports of **Black Vulture** are reflective of the species' continued range expansion to our south. Oddly, the distribution of the increasing number of reports for this species shows little regard for seasonality. As the Osprey population continues to increase, so do reports well past their anticipated departure date. Observers saw a good migration of Red-shouldered and Red-tailed hawks at Wachusett Mountain in early November, but Rough-legged Hawks were scarce. One observer singled out a lone American Kestrel in his report because it was the only one he saw, and a few other observers noted that kestrels were completely lacking. Readers are urged to report kestrel sightings to help determine whether this apparent scarcity represents a decline that is just now becoming apparent.

Although shorebirds were well reported, there were few unexpected occurrences. Most of the species are now expected during November toward the end of their migration. Significantly very few were noted in December. Although not unprecedented, two Spotted Sandpipers in December were unusual. Perhaps the highlight of the December 11-13 storm was the large number of Red Phalaropes, climaxing with over 10,000 at Sandy Neck on December 13.

R. A. F.

Black Vulture				
12/5, 12/20	M.V. (Felix Neck), Cohasset	1, 1	G. Ben David, T. Cameron#	
Turkey Vulture				
11/14	Westport	2	R. Stymeist#	
Osprey				
11/1-3, 11/6	Wayland, Newbury	1, 1	K. Hamilton, K. Disney	
11/28, 12/6	Medford, Milford	1, 1	P. Roberts, C. Quinlan	
Bald Eagle				
11/8; 11/11, 11/28	Wellfleet	1 imm	W. Petersen; K. Jones#	
11/15, 11/28	N. Monomoy, S. Monomoy	1 imm, 1 imm	H. Ferguson, B. Nikula	
12/18, 12/26	W. Newbury, E. Harwich	1 ad, 3	R. Heil, R. Comeau	
12/7	Lakeville	1	D. Zimmerlan	
Northern Harrier				
11/1, 11/15	Sandwich, Middleboro	2, 2	P. Trimble, W. Petersen	
11/20, 12/1	Wayland, Rowley	1, 1	S. Arena, J. Brown#	
12/8, 12/26	P.I., W. Roxbury	3, 2	W. Drew#, T. Aversa	
Sharp-shinned Hawk				
11/7	Wellesley, W. Roxbury	2 migr, 2	R. Forster, T. Aversa	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	NOV./DEC. 1992
Sharp-shinned Hawk (continued)				
11/8, 11/9	P.I., Gay Head	2, 6	J. Berry#, V. Laux	
11/10, 11/14	Sandwich, Westport	2, 2	P. Trimble, R. Stymeist#	
thr	Reports of individuals from 13 locations.			
Cooper's Hawk				
thr	Reports of individuals from 20 locations.			
Northern Goshawk				
11/1, 11/8	Wachusett Mt., Boxford	2 ad, 1	P. Roberts, J. Brown#	
11/10, 11/12	Sandwich, Wellesley	1, 1 ad	P. Trimble, C. Quinlan	
11/27	E. Middleboro, Halifax	1, 1	K. Anderson	
12/26, 12/30	Hardwick, Boxford	1 ad, 1	M. Lynch#, J. Brown#	
Red-shouldered Hawk				
11/1, 11/2, 11/7	Wachusett Mt.	13, 10, 6	EMHW, P. Roberts, EMHW	
11/27, 11/30	E. Middleboro, Natick	1, 1	K. Anderson, B. Boyd	
12/22, 12/23	Easton, W. Roxbury	1, 2	K. Ryan, T. Aversa	
12/26	New Braintree	1 imm	M. Lynch#	
Red-tailed Hawk				
11/1, 11/7	Wachusett Mt.	58, 26	EMHW	
11/1, 11/6	Waltham, Newbury	4, 4	L. Taylor, M. Rines	
11/27, 12/16	Boston, Marlboro	3, 3	K. Hudson, R. Graefe	
Rough-legged Hawk				
11/14, 11/15	Salisbury, Rowley	1 lt + 1 dk, 1	P. Roberts, J. Berry	
11/20, 11/24	Wayland, P.I.	1 dk, 1	S. Arena, W. Drew#	
11/24, 12/6	E. Middleboro, E. Boston	1, 1	K. Anderson, BBC (R. Stymeist)	
12/15, 12/22	Nantucket, N. Middleboro	1, 1	J. Papale, K. Holmes	
Golden Eagle (details submitted)				
11/8	Petersham	1 imm	R. Bradbury	
American Kestrel				
thr	Reports of individuals from 8 locations.			
Merlin				
thr	Reports of 11 individuals from 10 locations.			
Peregrine Falcon				
11/12, 11/14	Ipswich, Nantucket	1 ad, 1 ad	T. Aversa, J. Papale#	
11/20, 11/27	Boston, E. Orleans	2, 1	K. Hudson, W. Petersen	
11/28, 11/29	S. Monomoy, N. Monomoy	1 ad, 1 ad	B. Nikula#, S. Perkins#	
12/13, 12/18	Eastham (F.E.), Boston	1, 1	v. o., K. Hudson	
Ruffed Grouse				
11/15	Bourne, E. Middleboro	1, 1	R. Stymeist, K. Anderson	
11/15, 12/19	Holbrook, Easton	1, 2	G. d'Entremont, K. Ryan	
12/27, 12/31	Ipswich, Rowley	1, 2	J. Brown#, R. Stymeist#	
Wild Turkey				
11/8, 11/16	Barre, Worcester	44, 17	R. Bradbury, R. Bradbury	
11/24-12/31	Sherborn	3	E. Taylor + v. o.	
Northern Bobwhite				
11/1, 11/7	Sandwich, W. Roxbury	40, 8	P. Trimble, T. Aversa	
12/8, 12/26	Nantucket, W. Roxbury	5, 8	E. Andrews, T. Aversa	
Virginia Rail				
11/15, 12/1	W. Harwich, Nantucket	6, 1	B. Nikula, E. Andrews	
Sora				
11/15, 12/20	W. Harwich, Chatham	1, 1	B. Nikula, B. Loughran#	
American Coot				
11/1-30	Arlington, Southboro	31 max, 13 max	L. Taylor, M. Lynch#	
11/1-12/8, 11/7	P.I., W. Newbury	16 max, 6	W. Drew#, H. Wiggin#	
11/15, 11/28	Lakeville, S. Monomoy	12, 6	W. Petersen, B. Nikula#	
12/5-6, 12/9	Cape Cod, Nantucket	3, 13	CCBC, J. Papale	
Black-bellied Plover				
11/6, 11/19; 11/6	P.I.; Winthrop	42, 3; 40	W. Drew#; T. Aversa	
11/7, 11/15	Ipswich, Middleboro	30+, 18	BBC (J. Berry), W. Petersen	
11/15, 11/20	N. Monomoy, Nantucket	300, 13	H. Ferguson, J. Papale	
11/22, 12/5	Boston H., Eastham	13, 2	TASL (M. Hall), R. Forster#	
Lesser Golden-Plover				
11/6, 11/12	Newbury, Ipswich	2, 1	M. Rines, T. Aversa	
11/12, 11/13	Katama, P.I.	3, 1	V. Laux, J. Brown#	
11/15	Middleboro	4	W. Petersen	
Semipalmated Plover				
11/6, 11/12	Revere	5 juv, 3 juv	T. Aversa	
11/6, 11/22	P.I.	6, 1	W. Drew#, T. Young	
Killdeer				
11/14	Lexington, Essex	12, 14	R. Forster, J. Berry#	
11/14, 11/24	Westport, Cumb. Farms	5, 10	R. Stymeist#, K. Anderson	
American Oystercatcher				
11/10	N. Monomoy	7	B. Nikula	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	NOV./DEC. 1992
Greater Yellowlegs				
11/2, 11/6	S. Dartmouth, E. Boston	29, 42	M. Boucher, T. Aversa	
11/8, 11/14	Eastham (F.E.), E. Orleans	20, 17	W. Petersen#, B. Nikula#	
11/22, 11/26	Quabbin (G43), Wareham	1, 4	S. Sumner, M. Sylvia	
12/1, 12/5	Nantucket, Lynn	4, 3	J. Papale, BBC (J. Quigley)	
Lesser Yellowlegs				
11/1	Ipswich, Rowley	1, 4	S. Perkins#	
11/7	P.I.	1	M. Lynch#	
Spotted Sandpiper				
12/10, 12/18	Centerville, W. Newbury	1, 1	R. Pease, R. Heil	
Hudsonian Godwit				
11/15	N. Monomoy	1	H. Ferguson	
Ruddy Turnstone				
11/20, 11/22	Nantucket, Boston H.	7, 1	J. Papale, TASL (M. Hall)	
12/26, 12/31	N. Scituate, Nantucket	3, 2	R. Forster, G. d'Entremont#	
Red Knot				
11/8, 11/10	P.I., N. Monomoy	1-5, 160	J. Berry#, B. Nikula	
Sanderling				
11/10, 11/13	N. Monomoy, P.I.	1000, 120	B. Nikula, J. Brown#	
11/22	W. Yarmouth, Mashpee	85, 30	P. Trimble, J. Trimble	
11/29, 12/6	Nantucket, Revere	100+, 360	E. Ray, BBC (R. Stymeist)	
Semipalmated Sandpiper				
11/6, 11/11	Revere, Westport	1, 1	T. Aversa, R. Abrams	
11/17	P.I.	2	M. Lynch#	
White-rumped Sandpiper				
11/1, 11/10	Ipswich, N. Monomoy	2, 2	E. Nielsen, B. Nikula#	
11/12	Revere, P'town (R.P.)	14, 6	T. Aversa, K. Jones	
11/22, 11/28	P.I., S. Monomoy	5, 1	BBC (J. Nove), B. Nikula#	
Pectoral Sandpiper				
11/2, 11/7	Wayland, P.I.	15, 2	K. Hamilton, M. Lynch#	
11/14	Lexington	2	R. Forster#	
Purple Sandpiper				
11/2, 11/19	Westport, P.I.	2, 2	M. Boucher, W. Drew#	
11/22, 11/28	Boston H., Scusset	13, 2	TASL (M. Hall), J. Trimble	
11/26	Swampscott	100	TV news fide R. Forster	
Dunlin				
11/1-30, 11/10	P.I., N. Monomoy	450+ max, 850	v. o., B. Nikula	
11/22, 12/18	Boston H., Newbypt	272, 18	TASL (M. Hall), J. Brown#	
12/6, 12/19	Revere, S. Dartmouth	190, 127	BBC (R. Stymeist), M. Boucher	
Long-billed Dowitcher				
11/1-22	P.I.	35 max 11/6	W. Drew# + v. o.	
11/6, 11/16-12/20E	Boston (B.I.)	2, 1	T. Aversa, v. o.	
Common Snipe				
11/1	Ipswich, Waltham	19, 1	S. Perkins#, L. Taylor	
11/6, 11/21	E. Boston (B.I.), Medfield	1, 1	T. Aversa	
American Woodcock				
11/7, 11/10	Newbury, Sandwich	1, 1	T. Aversa, P. Trimble	
11/20, 11/27	Wellesley, Medfield	1, 1	R. Forster, T. Aversa	
12/3, 12/26	Stoneham, N. Falmouth	1, 1	M. Martinek, I. Nisbet	
Red Phalarope				
11/1, 12/11	Barnstable (S.N.), Rockport	1, 6	H. Ferguson, R. Heil	
12/12	E. Sandwich, S.N.	2400, 70	S. Perkins#	
12/13	S.N., Eastham (F.E.)	10,000+, 4500	R. Forster#, P. Bailey#	
12/14, 12/15	F.E., Sandwich	100, 500	B. Nikula, J. Sones	

JAEGERS THROUGH ALCIDS

A few Pomarine Jaegers were reported incidental to the December storm. Perhaps the most unusual, and undoubtedly related to the storm, was the one at Plum Island on December 19. The only report of a Little Gull was not from a usual location, and Common Black-headed Gulls were firmly ensconced at their wintering quarters in Winthrop. A Mew Gull returned to an area where it has been present in recent winters. Black-legged Kittiwakes were prominent during the December storm. One of the most surprising reports was a very late Royal Tern at Monomoy in late November and a very tardy Forster's Tern graced the Christmas Bird Count in the Westport area.

A scattering of Dovekies and Thick-billed Murres were found both during and unrelated to the December storm, but Common Murres were storm-related. Alcids seen during the December storm included hundreds of Razorbills at various locations, plus 10 Atlantic Puffins at First Encounter Beach. An excellent count of Black Guillemots was at Cape Ann in November and was unrelated to any major weather disturbance. Almost overlooked by the storm was an Ancient Murrelet at Halibut Point, Rockport, on November 29. The

individual was discovered by a group of out-of-state birders and was extensively documented. This west coast alcid has been a consistent fall vagrant across interior portions of the country for the past decade or more, including one in Pennsylvania about two weeks prior to the Cape Ann sighting. However, this is apparently the first observation of this species on salt water in the western North Atlantic. The report is pending evaluation by the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee. R. A. F.

Pomarine Jaeger

11/23, 11/24 Eastham (F.E.), Barnstable (S.N.) 6, 5 A. Strauss, R. Abrams
 11/29, 12/11 Rockport 1, 1 dk C. Leahy, R. Heil
 12/13 S.N., Eastham (F.E.) 3, 10 v. o., B. Nikula#
 12/19 P.I. 1 H. Wiggin#

jaeger species

11/23 Brewster, Eastham (F.E.) 5, 30 A. Strauss
 11/24, 12/3 Barnstable (S.N.), Wellfleet 4, 1 R. Abrams, A. Strauss
 12/6, 12/12 Eastham (F.E.), S.N. 25+, 31 B. Nikula#, R. Pease#
 12/13, 12/14 Eastham (F.E.) 20, 4 B. Nikula#

Great Skua

12/13 Barnstable (S.N.), Eastham (F.E.) 2, 3 R. Donovan#, S. Perkins#

skua species

12/13, 12/14 Eastham (F.E.) 5, 3 or 4 B. Nikula#

Laughing Gull

11/8, 11/24 Wellfleet, Barnstable (S.N.) 3, 2 ad W. Petersen#, R. Abrams
 11/28 Scusset 6 S. Perkins#

Little Gull

12/5 Squibnocket (M.V.) 1 ad G. Daniels

Common Black-headed Gull

thr, 12/10 Winthrop, Nantucket 21 max 12/20, 1 v. o., J. Papale
 12/18, 12/28 Newburyport, Lynn 1, 1 ad J. Brown#, J. Quigley

Bonaparte's Gull

11/8, 11/15 Salisbury, Rowley 80, 26 J. Berry#, J. Berry
 11/16, 11/22 Swampscott, W. Yarmouth 250, 75 R. Stymeist, P. Trimble
 11/27, 11/28 P'town, Wachusett Res. 40, 1 ad K. Jones, M. Lynch#
 12/1, 12/6 Nantucket, Revere 830, 1100 J. Papale, BBC (R. Stymeist)

Mew Gull (details submitted)

11/21, 12/20-31 Winthrop 1, 1 ad J. Barton, S. Perkins + v. o.

Ring-billed Gull

11/22, 12/9 Cumb. Farms, Wachusett Res. 1000, 1220 K. Anderson, B. Blodget

Iceland Gull

11/27, 12/4 P'town (R.P.), Nantucket 1, 6 ad K. Jones, J. Papale
 12/12, 12/13 E. Sandwich, S.N. 1 ad, 4 S. Perkins#, T. Cameron#
 12/14 Barnstable (S.N.) 1 R. Pease

Lesser Black-backed Gull

11/7, 11/24 Brewster, Winthrop 2 ad, 1 K. Jones, T. Hoogendoorn
 11/27, 12/26 N. Truro, Nantucket 1 ad, 1 ad K. Jones#, C. Jackson
 12/28 Lynn 1 ad J. Quigley

Glaucous Gull

11/11, 11/27 N. Monomoy, P'town (R.P.) 1, 1 ad B. Nikula#, K. Jones
 12/13 S.N., Eastham (F.E.) 3, 1 1W T. Cameron#, S. Perkins#

Herring x Great Black-backed Gull (details submitted)

12/24 Lynn 1 ad J. Quigley

Black-legged Kittiwake

11/12, 11/23 Rockport, Eastham 25, 92 J. Brown#, A. Strauss
 11/24 Barnstable (S.N.) 307 R. Abrams
 12/11 S.N., Rockport 250, 1320 M. Sylvia, R. Heil
 12/12 S.N., Dennis "thousands," 800 R. Pease, B. Nikula
 12/13 S.N., Eastham (F.E.) 200, 1500 T. Cameron#, B. Nikula#

Royal Tern

11/27 N. Monomoy 1 J. Sones#

Common Tern

11/1, 11/8 Plymouth, Wellfleet 75+, 1 BBC (G. d'Entremont), W. Petersen#
 11/27 Provincetown 1 B. Meador

Forster's Tern

11/1, 11/14 Plymouth, Westport 3, 2 BBC (G. d'Entremont), R. Stymeist#
 12/19 Westport 1 CBC (D. Emerson)

Dovekie

11/24, 11/28 Barnstable (S.N.), Rockport 7, 3 R. Abrams, R. Heil
 12/11, 12/12 Rockport, E. Sandwich 1, 1 R. Heil, v. o.
 12/13 Sandwich, Barnstable (S.N.) 3, 6 A. Strauss, R. Forster#
 12/13, 12/14 Eastham (F.E.), S.N. 15+, 2 B. Nikula#, A. Strauss
 12/19 Lynn 1 dead (ph) J. Quigley

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	NOV./DEC. 1992
Common Murre				
12/11, 12/22-29	Rockport (A.P.), P'town	5, 1 or 2	R. Heil, K. Jones	
Thick-billed Murre				
11/24, 11/29	Barnstable (S.N.), Rockport	3, 2	R. Abrams, M. Rines#	
12/11, 12/13	Rockport, Eastham (F.E.)	2, 1	R. Heil, B. Nikula#	
12/29	Provincetown	1	K. Jones	
Razorbill				
11/8, 11/23	Wellfleet, Brewster	9, 20	W. Petersen#, A. Strauss	
11/24, 11/27	Barnstable (S.N.), P'town (R.P.)	44, 7	R. Abrams, K. Jones	
11/29, 12/11	Rockport	12, 1565	M. Lynch#, R. Heil	
12/13	S.N., Eastham (F.E.)	21, 275	R. Forster#, B. Nikula#	
12/14	Eastham (F.E.)	50	B. Nikula#	
large alcid species				
11/24, 12/13	Barnstable (S.N.), F.E.	37, 800+	R. Abrams, B. Nikula#	
12/14	Eastham (F.E.)	350	B. Nikula#	
Black Guillemot				
11/20, 11/24	Nahant, Barnstable (S.N.)	1, 1	M. Rines#, R. Abrams	
11/28, 12/1	Cape Ann, Cohasset	42, 4	R. Heil, J. Hubbard	
12/11, 12/13	Rockport, Barnstable (S.N.)	24, 2	R. Heil, R. Donovan#	
Ancient Murrelet (details submitted)				
11/29	Rockport (Halibut Point)	1	T. Burke, L. Brinker, R. Kurtz, J. Askildson	
Atlantic Puffin				
11/1, 12/13	Cape Cod Bay, Eastham (F.E.)	1, 10	BBC (G. d'Entremont), W. Petersen#	

OWLS THROUGH FINCHES

At Logan Airport 13 Snowy Owls were banded during November and December, and others were found in a wide area, although mainly along the coast. Unlike last year Short-eared Owls were few and far between, and only one Northern Saw-whet Owl was noted. A Barred Owl was discovered in Arlington by a school teacher in a densely-populated neighborhood. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were widespread, especially on Cape Cod, where over 12 were found during December. Extremely late was an *empidonax* flycatcher at Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. The bird was captured, measurements taken, and identified as a "Traill's" Flycatcher. Also on the late side was a Great Crested Flycatcher at Wellfleet Bay on November 14. The normal late departure is at the end of September. At least ten Western Kingbirds were noted, similar to last year.

The crow roost in Framingham reached a maximum of about 4000 birds on the last day of the year, down about 2000 birds over the past year. Red-breasted Nuthatches were noticeably low in numbers from previous years, and Northern Shrike totaled just 2 individuals compared with about 28 individuals last year. On the other hand, Carolina Wrens exploded, and good numbers of Eastern Bluebirds, Hermit Thrushes, and American Robins were found in many areas. A Varied Thrush met an untimely death by hitting a window in West Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard.

Unusually late warblers included a Worm-eating Warbler and an Ovenbird at Nahant, both about a month and a half beyond their normal departure dates. Other late warblers included Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and Wilson's warblers, and Northern Waterthrush. An *Oporornis* warbler or warblers were found in South Boston in mid-November. The observer was confident he may have seen both a MacGillivray's Warbler and a Mourning Warbler. Orange-crowned Warblers were found in eleven locations, and three individuals were present in Nahant on November 22. Painted Buntings were found in four locations on Cape Cod and represent at least two male individuals. These birds were all reported from feeders, each of which contained millet seed. There was a modest flight of Fox Sparrows, primarily during the first weekend of November, and Clay-colored Sparrows were reported from four locations. Other sparrow highlights included several late Lincoln Sparrows, a Grasshopper Sparrow, and an "Oregon" Junco. A Yellow-headed Blackbird put in a brief appearance at a feeder in Lincoln. "Bullock's" Orioles were reported from Watertown and Plymouth. Winter finch reports were almost nonexistent.

R. H. S.

Eastern Screech-Owl

11/7, 11/9	Easton, Barnstable	1 red, 2	K. Ryan, P. Trimble
11/15, 11/29	Lexington, Mt. A.	1 grey, 1 red	M. Rines, J. Heywood
Great Horned Owl			
11/1	Ipswich, N. Middleboro	pr, pr	J. Berry, K. Holmes
11/17, 11/28-12/31	Lexington, Mt. Auburn	pr, pr	C. Floyd, M. Rines + v. o.
Snowy Owl			
11/1-30	Boston (Logan)	7 b, 5 max 11/22	N. Smith
12/1-31	Boston (Logan)	6 b, 8 max 12/20	N. Smith
11/1-12/31	Cape Cod/Islands	7	v. o.
11/7-12/31, 11/22P.I., Duxbury		1, 1	v. o., S. Hecker
11/20-24, 11/25	Haverhill, Plainville	1, 1	M. Doyle, P. Kaufman
11/24, 12/9	S. Dartmouth, Westport	1, 1	M. Eataugh, F. Sweeney

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	NOV./DEC. 1992
Barred Owl				
11/2, 11/22	Arlington, Barre	1, 1	v. o., M. Lynch#	
12/6	Salisbury	1	BBC (S. Moore)	
Long-eared Owl				
11/1-30	Ipswich	1	v. o.	
Short-eared Owl				
11/19, 11/22	E. Boston (B.I.), Boston (Logan)	1, 1	L. Rogers, N. Smith	
12/27	Nantucket	1	G. Andrews	
Northern Saw-whet Owl				
11/20	Petersham	1	R. Bradbury	
Red-headed Woodpecker				
12/19-31, 12/27	Hingham, S. Dartmouth	1 imm, 1	G. d'Entremont#, J. Allen	
12/31	W. Falmouth	1 ad	L. Richer	
Red-bellied Woodpecker				
11/1-30, 12/1-31	Outer Cape Cod, Cape Cod	5, 12+	v. o.	
12/6	Petersham	1	R. Bradbury	
thr	Reports of individuals in eastern	Massachusetts	from 12 locations.	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				
11/2, 12/6	Nantucket	1 imm, 1 imm	J. Papale, E. Andrews	
12/10, 12/19	Belmont, E. Orleans	1 imm, 1	N. Harris, K. Hamilton#	
Pileated Woodpecker				
11/22	Barre	1	M. Lynch#	
"Traill's" Flycatcher				
11/27-12/5	WBWS	1	J. Sones + v. o.	
Eastern Phoebe				
11/1	Sandwich, Lancaster	1, 1	W. Loughran, R. Bradbury	
11/1, 11/14	Waltham, Nantucket	1, 1	L. Taylor, J. Papale#	
11/14, 11/18	Middleboro, IRWS	1, 1	BBC (D. Davis), J. Murray	
11/29, 12/29	E. Middleboro, W. Barnstable	1, 1	K. Holmes, B. Meador	
Great Crested Flycatcher				
11/14	WBWS	1	K. Jones	
Western Kingbird				
11/2-15	DWWS	1	D. Clapp + v. o.	
11/6, 11/9, 11/15	Gay Head	2, 3, 4	V. Laux, V. Laux, S. Perkins#	
11/8, 11/12-15	Sudbury, Magnolia	1, 1	T. Gumbard#, K. Disney + v. o.	
11/20, 11/23-29	Nantucket, WBWS	2, 1	H. Foria, K. Jones + v. o.	
Horned Lark				
11/8, 11/10	Salisbury, P.I.	40, 13	J. Berry#, K. Disney#	
11/14, 11/22	Middleboro, Boston	71, 108	BBC (D. Davis), TASL (M. Hall)	
Tree Swallow				
11/29, 12/18	N. Monomoy, Brewster	1, 1	S. Perkins#, M. Rines#	
American Crow				
11/1	Sandwich	260	P. Trimble	
11/20, 12/31	Framingham	500, 4000	E. Taylor	
Fish Crow				
11/15, 11/22	Holbrook, Wellesley	1, 1	G. d'Entremont, R. Forster	
12/11, 12/18-31	Brookline, Framingham	1, 2	H. Wiggin, E. Taylor	
Common Raven				
11/1, 11/2	Wachusett Mt.	5, 5	P. Roberts	
11/22, 11/30	Quabbin (G43), Athol	2, 1	T. Gagnon, K. Hamilton	
Red-breasted Nuthatch				
11/4, 11/28	Harwich/Yarmouthport, Southboro	19, 10+	K. Hamilton, M. Lynch#	
12/26, 12/27	Quabbin (G41), Georgetown	7, 4	M. Lynch#, J. Brown#	
Brown Creeper				
11/2	Nantucket	8	J. Papale	
Carolina Wren				
11/4, 11/12	Belmont, Nahant	2, 2	S. Sanders, T. Aversa	
11/14; 11/15	Westport; Bourne, Falmouth	44; 14, 18	R. Stymeist#	
11/15, 11/23	Holbrook, Nantucket	4, 2	G. d'Entremont, N. Brooks	
11/28, 12/5	Gloucester, Brookline	8, 2	R. Stymeist#, H. Wiggin	
House Wren				
11/15; 12/21	Bourne, Falmouth; Newton	2, 1; 2	R. Stymeist#; N. Komar	
Winter Wren				
11/7, 11/12	Weston, Nahant	2, 4	R. Stymeist, T. Aversa	
11/14, 11/15	Westport, Falmouth	2, 5	M. Rines#, R. Stymeist#	
12/18	W. Newbury	4	R. Heil	
thr	Reports of individuals from 17 locations.			
Marsh Wren				
11/13, 11/15	Cumb. Farms, W. Harwich	3, 5	T. Aversa, B. Nikula	
11/22, 11/25	P.I., Nantucket	1, 2	BBC (J. Nove), J. Papale	
11/27, 11/28	Essex, GMNWR	1, 1	T. Young, M. Lynch#	
12/4	Falmouth, WBWS	1, 1	T. Aversa	

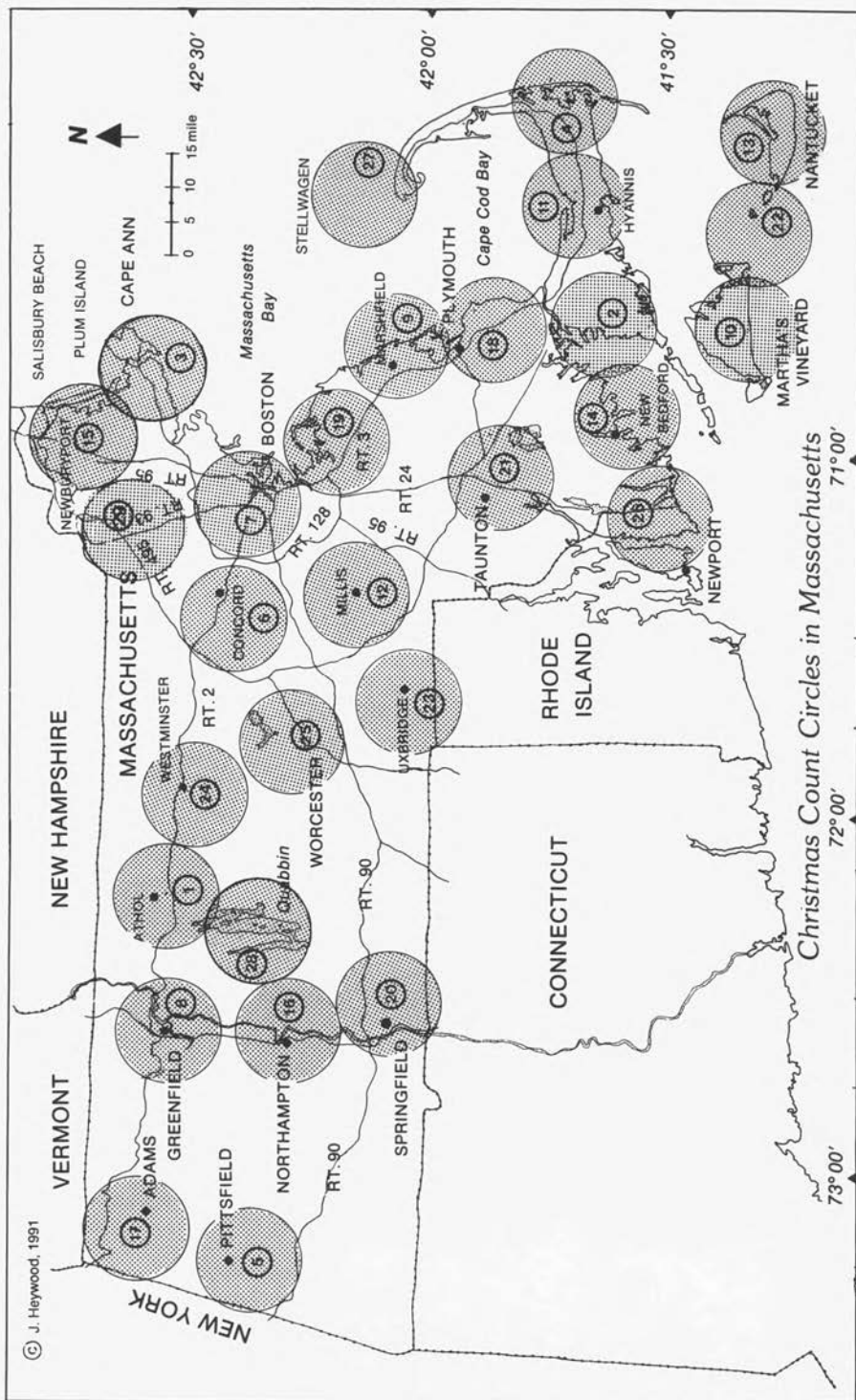
DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	NOV./DEC. 1992
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				
11/12, 11/13	Nahant, Falmouth	8, 8	T. Aversa	
11/14	Malden, Westport	2, 4	P. + F. Vale, R. Stymeist#	
11/22, 11/29	Boston, Petersham	2, 4	T. Aversa, R. Bradbury	
12/4, 12/6	Falmouth, Nantucket	2, 2	T. Aversa, J. Papale#	
11/20-12/31	Reports of individuals from 8 locations.			
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher				
11/1	Peabody	1 f	E. Nielsen	
Eastern Bluebird				
11/1	Medford, Lancaster	3, 8	P. Roberts, R. Bradbury	
11/3, 11/6	Sherborn, W. Newbury	8, 6	E. Taylor, R. Heil	
11/9, 11/14	Gay Head, Lakeville	22, 12	V. Laux, BBC (D. Davis)	
11/14, 11/28	Sudbury, Sandwich	6, 5	R. Forster#, S. Perkins#	
12/2, 12/8	Upton, Westboro	5, 2	P. Johnson, R. Bradbury	
12/24	Raynham, Taunton	5, 8	S. Arena#	
Hermit Thrush				
11/1, 11/7	Waltham, Cambridge	7, 2	L. Taylor	
11/11, 11/14	Chatham, Westport	2, 15	B. Nikula, R. Stymeist#	
11/15, 11/20	Falmouth, Nahant	4, 3	R. Stymeist#, R. Forster#	
11/21, 11/23	Boston, S. Sandwich	2, 4	K. Hudson, P. Trimble	
American Robin				
11/7, 11/9	Ipswich, Boston	50+, 60	BBC (J. Berry), K. Hudson	
11/9, 11/26	Gay Head, Essex	800, 110	V. Laux, T. Young	
Varied Thrush				
11/17	W. Tisbury	1 dead	C. Crumm	
Gray Catbird				
11/13, 11/14	Falmouth, Westport	10, 9	T. Aversa, R. Stymeist#	
11/15, 11/29	Bourne, Sandwich	5, 3	R. Stymeist#, P. Trimble	
12/4	Falmouth, Barnstable	4, 2	T. Aversa, M. Rines#	
12/9, 12/10	Boston, Nantucket	4, 4	T. Aversa, J. Papale#	
Brown Thrasher				
11/1-12/1, 12/4	Nahant, Falmouth	1, 1	T. Aversa	
American Pipit				
11/1, 11/12	Ipswich	120, 40	S. Perkins, T. Aversa	
11/4, 11/14	Sterling, E. Orleans	30, 5	R. Bradbury, B. Nikula#	
11/28, 12/19	Middleboro, S. Dartmouth	80, 11	W. Petersen, M. Boucher	
Cedar Waxwing				
11/8, 11/9	Wellesley, Gay Head	70+, 200	R. Forster, V. Laux	
11/14, 11/18	Westport, Worcester	90, 150+	R. Stymeist#, R. Bradbury	
12/5, 12/8	Westboro, Marlboro	160, 30	B. Blodget, R. Graefe	
12/22, 12/27	Nantucket, Boxford	70+, 150	N. Brooks, J. Brown#	
Northern Shrike				
11/22, 12/20	Quabbin (G43), WBWS	1, 1	T. Gagnon, D. Clapp#	
White-eyed Vireo				
12/1-4	Westport	1	F. Thurber	
Orange-crowned Warbler				
11/1	Waltham, Malden	1, 1	L. Taylor, P. + F. Vale	
11/5, 11/11	Wellesley, Belmont	1, 1	C. Quinlan, L. Taylor	
11/13, 11/22	Falmouth, Nahant	1, 3	T. Aversa, R. Stymeist#	
12/5, 12/20	WBWS, Chatham	1, 1	D. Reynolds#, P. Trimble#	
12/23, 12/27	W. Roxbury, Yarmouth	1, 1	T. Aversa, B. Scott#	
12/28	Mattapan	1	T. Aversa#	
Nashville Warbler				
11/22	Manchester, P.I.	1, 1	N. Creighton, W. Miller	
12/6	Nantucket	1	J. Papale#	
Black-throated Blue Warbler				
12/5	Taunton	1 m	J. Sweeney	
Yellow-rumped Warbler				
11/1, 11/7	Sandwich, Ipswich	20, 20+	P. Trimble, BBC (J. Berry)	
11/8, 11/15	Salisbury, Essex	7, 15	J. Berry#, T. Young	
12/24, 12/26	Taunton, Hingham	5, 10	G. d'Entremont#	
Black-throated Green Warbler				
11/14	Lakeville	1	BBC (D. Davis)	
Pine Warbler				
11/20, 11/22	Nahant, W. Barnstable	1 or 2, 1	T. Aversa, P. Trimble	
12/1-31, 12/5-31	Bolton, Northboro	3, 1	D. White, B. Volkle	
Palm Warbler				
11/1, 11/28; 11/15	Sandwich; Middleboro	30, 8; 3	P. Trimble; W. Petersen	
11/23, 11/27	Nantucket, E. Orleans	5, 2	J. Papale, W. Petersen	
12/1	E. Boston, S. Peabody	1, 3	T. Aversa	
12/14, 12/18	Nantucket, Newburyport	8, 1	N. Brooks, K. Disney	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	NOV./DEC. 1992
Blackpoll Warbler 11/2, 11/12	Boston (F.Pk), Nahant	1, 1	T. Aversa	
American Redstart 11/11-15, 11/19-20	Truro, S. Boston	1, 1	R. Forster + v. o., R. Donovan	
Worm-eating Warbler 11/12	Nahant	1	T. Aversa	
Ovenbird 11/13, 11/15 11/22, 12/8 12/9	Boston, Holbrook Nahant, Boston Mashpee	1, 1 1, 1 1	L. Kaplan, G. d'Entremont R. Stymeist#, B. Bochan F. LeBaron	
Northern Waterthrush 12/5, 12/20 12/27	WBWS, E. Orleans Hyannisport	1, 1 1	S. Perkins#, R. Forster# J. Sones#	
Oporornis species 11/13, 11/19-20	S. Boston	1	R. Donovan	
Common Yellowthroat 11/13, 11/28 11/28 12/3, 12/24 12/25	Falmouth, Cambridge Orleans, Nantucket Westboro, Raynham E. Orleans	2 m, 1 1, 1 m 1, 1 1	T. Aversa, L. Taylor K. Jones, B. Vigneau# C. Cuiquan, G. d'Entremont# J. Sones	
Wilson's Warbler 12/1	MNWS	1	T. Aversa	
Yellow-breasted Chat 11/13, 11/17-12/4 11/22, 11/28 12/4, 12/19-31	Falmouth, Franklin Belmont, Orleans Falmouth, Nantucket	2, 1 1, 1 1, 1	T. Aversa, M. Chickering L. Taylor, K. Jones T. Aversa, B. Vigneau#	
Blue Grosbeak 11/7	Dorchester	1	R. Donovan	
Painted Bunting 11/22-28, 11/29 11/25-12/31, 12/21-31	Sandwich, Barnstable Brewster, Hyannis	1 m, 1 m 1 m, 1 m	R. Smith, M. Fuller A. Furman, D. Stewart#	
Dickcissel 11/7, 11/8 11/18-12/1, 12/19 12/19-25	Brewster, Sandwich Nantucket, Beverly Nantucket	1, 1 2, 1 1	R. Everett, P. Trimble B. Vigneau#, H. Wiggin# E. Andrews	
Rufous-sided Towhee 11/6, 11/14 11/15, 12/2 12/4, 12/19	Essex, Westport Falmouth, Nantucket Falmouth, S. Dartmouth	1 m, 6 4, 1 1, 3	T. Young, R. Stymeist# R. Stymeist#, J. Papale T. Aversa, M. Boucher	
American Tree Sparrow 11/1, 11/15 11/28, 12/26	Bolton, Rowley Sandwich, Hardwick	60, 20 30, 12	R. Bradbury, J. Berry P. Trimble#, M. Lynch#	
Chipping Sparrow 11/22, 11/28 12/5, 12/19 12/28	Nantucket, Sandwich WBWS, N. Dartmouth Boston	13+, 5 4, 2 1	J. Papale, E. Nielsen# S. Perkins#, M. Boucher T. Aversa#	
Clay-colored Sparrow 11/1-12/19, 11/11 11/30-12/11, 12/19	Sandwich, Eastham N. Dartmouth, Falmouth	1-4, 1 1, 1	P. Trimble#, R. Forster# M. Boucher#, B. Nikula#	
Field Sparrow 11/14 11/15, 11/28 12/19, 12/24	Middleboro/Lakeville, Westport Weymouth/Holbrook, Sandwich N. Dartmouth, Raynham	7, 6 8, 25 25, 20	BBC (D. Davis), R. Stymeist# G. d'Entremont, P. Trimble# M. Boucher, G. d'Entremont#	
Vesper Sparrow 11/1-30, 12/18	Sandwich, Cumb. Farms	10 max, 2	P. Trimble, T. Aversa	
Savannah Sparrow 11/7, 11/14 11/14, 11/28 12/18, 12/19	W. Roxbury, Westport Lincoln, Sandwich Cumb. Farms, S. Dartmouth	16, 8 2, 250 9, 3	T. Aversa, R. Stymeist# R. Forster#, P. Trimble# T. Aversa, M. Boucher	
"Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow 11/10, 11/16 11/20, 11/29 12/19	P.I., Wareham Nahant, Salisbury S. Dartmouth	2, 2 3, 1 2	K. Disney, M. Sylvia R. Forster#, J. Center M. Boucher	
Grasshopper Sparrow 11/28	Sandwich	1	S. Perkins#	
Sharp-tailed Sparrow 11/11	Eastham (F.H.)	4	S. Perkins#	
Fox Sparrow 11/1, 11/5 11/7 11/7, 11/8 11/9, 11/14	Lancaster, Boston W. Roxbury, Wellesley Weston, Belmont Needham, Sudbury	3, 5 5, 2 5, 5 4, 2	R. Bradbury, T. Aversa T. Aversa, R. Forster R. Stymeist#, L. Taylor B. Brush, R. Forster#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	NOV./DEC. 1992
Fox Sparrow (continued)				
11/5-11/28	Reports of individuals from 6 locations.			
Song Sparrow 11/28	Sandwich	250	P. Trimble#	
Lincoln's Sparrow 11/1, 11/12 12/19	Sandwich, Nahant N. Dartmouth	1, 1 1	P. Trimble, T. Aversa M. Boucher	
Swamp Sparrow 11/1-30, 11/14 11/15 11/25, 11/26 12/4, 12/23	Sandwich, Westport Holbrook, Weymouth Nantucket, WBWS Falmouth, W. Roxbury	40 max, 9 12, 3 3, 10 18, 7	P. Trimble, R. Stymeist# G. d'Entremont J. Papale, K. Jones T. Aversa, T. Aversa	
White-throated Sparrow 11/14, 11/28	Westport, Sandwich	160, 20	R. Stymeist#, P. Trimble#	
White-crowned Sparrow 11/1-30, 11/1 11/2-30 11/2-11/28	Sandwich, Belmont Nantucket Reports of individuals from 5 locations.	20 max, 2 imm 4 max	P. Trimble, L. Taylor J. Papale	
Dark-eyed Junco 11/2, 11/7 11/14, 11/30	Wayland, Weston Lincoln, N. Dartmouth	35, 60 50, 25	S. Arena, R. Stymeist# R. Forster#, M. Boucher	
"Oregon" Dark-eyed Junco 12/5	WBWS	1	S. Perkins#	
Lapland Longspur 11/6, 11/8 11/11	P.I., Salisbury N. Monomoy, Eastham	5, 1 50, 10	S. Charette#, J. Berry# B. Nikula#, S. Perkins#	
Snow Bunting 11/1-22, 11/11 11/11, 11/14 11/22, 12/4 11/1-12/20	P.I., N. Monomoy Provincetown, Nantucket W. Yarmouth, Wareham Reports of 1-85 individuals from 16 locations.	200+ max, 400 500, 400 110, 147	v. o., B. Nikula# W. Petersen#, J. Papale# P. Trimble, M. Sylvia	
Bobolink 11/1, 11/5	Sandwich, W. Newbury	1, 4	P. Trimble, R. Heil	
Red-winged Blackbird thr, 11/1-30 11/6, 11/13 11/27, 12/20	Nantucket, Sandwich Methuen, Cumb. Farms W. Roxbury, Hamilton	59 max, 30 max 600+, 23 8, 2	E. Andrews#, P. Trimble J. Hogan, T. Aversa T. Aversa, J. Brown#	
Eastern Meadowlark 11/1, 12/15	Sandwich, Nantucket	18, 14	P. Trimble, N. Brooks	
Yellow-headed Blackbird 11/18	Lincoln	1 f	A. Ayson	
Rusty Blackbird 11/1, 11/6 11/7, 11/15	Westboro, Methuen W. Roxbury, Wakefield	35, 7 1, 2	C. Quinlan, J. Hogan T. Aversa, BBC (D. Williams)	
Common Grackle thr, 11/1-30 11/6, 11/20	Boston (F.Pk), Sandwich Methuen, Stoneham	12, 22 max 400,000, 8	T. Aversa, P. Trimble J. Hogan, T. Aversa	
Brown-headed Cowbird 11/1, 11/2 11/24, 12/26	Sandwich, S. Dartmouth E. Middleboro, Hardwick	40, 75 25, 8	P. Trimble, M. Boucher K. Anderson, M. Lynch#	
Northern Oriole 11/17, 11/18 11/28-30, 12/12-31 12/15, 12/30	Millis, Lincoln Sandwich, Mansfield Lincoln, Nantucket	1, 1 2, 1 1, 1	P. Iarrobino, M. Rines S. Sweet, G. Dupree P. Swift, J. Papale	
"Bullock's" Oriole (details submitted) 12/6-26, 12/29	Watertown, Plymouth	1, 1	J. Heywood#, J. Atwood	
Purple Finch 11/1, 11/20 11/20, 12/18 12/26, 12/28	Waltham, Natick Wellesley, W. Newbury Hingham, Quabbin (G40)	6, 2 2, 7 3, 31	L. Taylor, E. Taylor R. Forster, R. Heil G. d'Entremont#, R. Bradbury	
House Finch 11/10, 11/14	Wellesley, Lincoln	41, 60	R. Forster, R. Forster#	
Red Crossbill 11/27	Quabbin (G40)	2	J. Johnstone	
White-winged Crossbill 11/30	Athol	2 m	K. Hamilton	
Pine Siskin 11/8	Boxford	1	T. Martin	
American Goldfinch 11/28	Sandwich	175	S. Perkins#	
Evening Grosbeak 12/14, 12/25, 12/31	Holliston, Berlin, Hardwick	2, 10, 1	M. Martinek, P. Iarrobino, R. Bradbury	

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ad	adult	G45	Gate 45, Quabbin
alt	alternate	H.	Harbor
b	banded	I.	Island
br	breeding	L.	Ledge
dk	dark (phase)	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
f	female	Mt.A.	Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
fl	fledged	N.A.C.	Nine Acre Corner, Concord
imm	immature	Nant.	Nantucket
ind	individuals	Newbypt	Newburyport
juv	juvenile	P.I.	Plum Island
loc	location	Pd	Pond
lt	light (phase)	P'town	Provincetown
m	male	Quab.	Quabbin
max	maximum	Res.	Reservoir
mi	mile	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
migr	migrating	S. Dart.	South Dartmouth
n	nesting	S.F.	State Forest
ph	photographed	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
pl	plumage	S.P.	State Park
pr	pair	Stellw.	Stellwagen Bank
S	summer (1S = first summer)	Worc.	Worcester
thr	throughout	BBC	Brookline Bird Club
v.o.	various observers	BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester
W	winter (2W = second winter)	BOEM	Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts
w/	with	CBC	Christmas Bird Count
yg	young	CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club
#	additional observers	DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum	DLSP	Demarest Lloyd State Park
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	DWWS	Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary
A.Pd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth	EMHW	Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch
Arl.	Arlington	FCBC	Felix Cutler Bird Club
B.	Beach	GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	LCES	Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies
Buzz.	Buzzards Bay	MARC	Massachusetts Avian Records Committee
C.	Canyon	MAS	Massachusetts Audubon Society
Cambr.	Cambridge	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
C.B.	Crane Beach, Ipswich	MDFW	MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis	MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford	MSSF	Myles Standish State Forest
Cumb. Farms	Cumberland Farms, Middleboro-Halifax	NBC	Needham Bird Club
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	NEHW	New England Hawk Watch
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham	PRNWR	Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
F.M.	Fowl Meadow	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
F.Pk	Franklin Park, Boston	TASL	Take A Second Look Harbor Census
F.S.F.	Federation State Forest	USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
G40	Gate 40, Quabbin	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
		WMWS	Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary



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CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 12/17/92-1/3/93

Compiled by Robert H. Stymeist

The Ninety-third annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC), sponsored by the National Audubon Society, was held from December 17, 1992, to January 3, 1993. Eastern Massachusetts and a portion of Rhode Island contain twenty-four count areas (see map). Results from all but one count area, Millis, are summarized in the following pages. A total of 183 species plus three subspecies, "Ipswich" Sparrow, "Oregon" Junco, and "Bullock's" Oriole, was recorded. The Nantucket CBC led the area counts with 126 species, followed by the Cape Cod count with 120 species. One additional species was found during the CBC period but not recorded on any count day—a Snowy Egret on mid-Cape Cod.

Observers found an array of rarities: Arctic/Pacific Loon, Tundra Swan, Greater White-fronted Goose, Golden Eagle, Gyrfalcon, Mew Gull, Common Murre, and Painted Bunting. Lingering species included Great Egret, Turkey Vulture, Long-billed Dowitcher, Forster's Tern, Nashville Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Grasshopper, Lark, and Lincoln's sparrows.

Eleven years ago only sixty-four Carolina Wrens were tallied. This year they were found in all CBC count areas except for Athol, and the number of individuals totaled 1136! Seventeen counts recorded another southern invader, the Red-bellied Woodpecker. Observers counted a total of fifty-seven individuals, compared with just two eleven years ago.

Only fourteen species were reported in each of the twenty-three counts: American Black Duck; Ring-billed, Herring, and Great Black-backed gulls; Downy Woodpecker; Blue Jay; American Crow; Black-capped Chickadee; American Robin; Northern Mockingbird; European Starling; Northern Cardinal; and Song and White-throated sparrows.

In the following table, birds identified only by species type, such as "scaup species," are not shown. One exception is for the count on Martha's Vineyard, where no Greater or Lesser Scaup could be positively identified.

We wish to thank all of the compilers who contributed their time to prepare the results for this summary. They are as follows: Gene Ballard, Andover; Dave Small, Athol; Richard Harlow, Buzzards Bay; John Nove, Cape Ann; Blair Nikula, Cape Cod; Richard Walton, Concord; Robert Stymeist, Greater Boston; Warren Harrington, Marshfield; Whit Manter, Martha's Vineyard; Peter Trimble, Mid Cape Cod; Edith Andrews, Nantucket; Ken Machado, New Bedford; Jim Berry, Newburyport; Trevor Lloyd-Evans, Plymouth; Scott Surner, Quabbin; Robert Abrams, Quincy; Simon Perkins, Stellwagen; John Kricher, Taunton-Middleboro; Simon Perkins, Tuckermuck; Richard Hildreth, Uxbridge, MA/RI; John Williams, Westminster; Francis McMenemy, Worcester; David Emerson, Newport County, RI/Westport, MA.

Map on facing page: Each Christmas Count Circle was located by the latitude and longitude (in degrees and minutes) of its center. Athol (1), Buzzards Bay (2), Cape Ann (3), Cape Cod (4), Central Berkshire (5), Concord (6), Greater Boston (7), Greenfield (8), Marshfield (9), Martha's Vineyard (10), Mid-Cape Cod (11), Millis (12), Nantucket (13), New Bedford (14), Newburyport (15), Northampton (16), Northern Berkshire (17), Plymouth (18), Quincy (19), Springfield (20), Taunton-Middleboro (21), Tuckermuck Island (22), Uxbridge, MA/RI (23), Westminster (24), Worcester (25), Newport County, RI/Westport, MA (26), Stellwagen Bank (27), Quabbin (28), and Andover (29).

93rd CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 12/17/92-1/3/93

species	And.	Athol	B. B. C. Ann	C. Cod	Conc.	Gr. Bos.	Marsh.	M. V.	Mid-C.	Nant.	
Red-throated Loon	0	0	1	5	22	0	0	2	157	2	38
Arctic/Pacific Loon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Common Loon	0	1	49	89	71	0	4	9	298	25	120
Pied-billed Grebe	0	0	12	0	18	0	4	0	0	8	5
Horned Grebe	0	0	324	39	8	0	76	2	120	27	9
Red-necked Grebe	0	0	4	27	3	0	12	16	11	0	14
Northern Gannet	0	0	0	143	413	0	0	0	3	3	24
Great Cormorant	79	0	68	182	47	0	29	42	171	38	55
Double-cr. Cormorant	0	0	4	4	7	0	48	1	3	0	8
American Bittern	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Great Blue Heron	1	0	41	9	66	7	35	14	80	78	27
Great Egret	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Black-cr. Night-Heron	0	0	0	1	1	0	6	0	7	0	11
Tundra Swan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Mute Swan	0	0	58	10	31	0	8	12	66	61	46
Gr. Whi-fro. Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Snow Goose	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brant	0	0	701	0	1107	0	405	35	28	33	152
Canada Goose	736	0	626	1074	731	2703	2272	793	1199	735	245
Wood Duck	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	0	0	1	0
Green-winged Teal	0	0	0	0	6	1	1	0	11	26	6
American Black Duck	33	30	1022	464	1897	176	1619	2150	1291	982	622
Mallard	743	1	367	447	161	920	2044	344	605	933	652
Northern Pintail	0	0	1	1	2	2	0	1	8	25	4
Blue-winged Teal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Northern Shoveler	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	1
Gadwall	0	0	0	2	3	0	2	0	16	103	0
Eurasian Wigeon	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
American Wigeon	1	0	2	2	65	1	59	0	6	45	4
Canvasback	0	0	50	0	0	0	60	0	3	228	15
Redhead	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
Ring-necked Duck	4	0	30	0	2	24	18	0	0	58	5
Greater Scaup	0	0	2513	1	30	0	17	0	0	146	29
Lesser Scaup	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	28	97
scaup species	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38	0	0
Common Eider	0	0	5157	10429	10068	0	7436	6423	10573	3591	3964
Harlequin Duck	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	56	0	7
Oldsquaw	0	0	182	29	14	0	5	14	66	149	158924
Black Scoter	0	0	30	17	78	0	0	9	387	27	84
Surf Scoter	0	0	671	12	9	0	11	0	117	51	51
White-winged Scoter	0	0	1952	277	329	0	333	189	1105	206	457
Common Goldeneye	53	2	570	257	229	7	451	257	961	250	539
Barrow's Goldeneye	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	5
Bufflehead	0	0	1234	270	824	4	365	361	1717	1098	463
Hooded Merganser	0	2	173	4	43	10	145	5	89	85	32
Common Merganser	55	80	120	13	4	12	174	0	16	393	10
Red-br. Merganser	0	0	1218	250	955	0	608	241	1389	499	598
Ruddy Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	1	24	0	3
Turkey Vulture	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Bald Eagle	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Harrier	0	0	4	0	7	0	2	12	5	10	29

93rd CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 12/17/92-1/3/93

species	N. B.Newbpt.		Ply. Quab.	Quin.	Stell.Tau-Mb.	Tuck.	Uxbr.	Wstm.	Worc.	Nwp.RI*	
RTLO	1	5	0	0	2	1	0	5	0	0	11 / 2
APLO	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
COLO	8	79	96	0	12	11	1	18	0	0	67 / 14
PBGR	0	0	6	0	0	0	5	0	2	0	_9 / 0
HOGR	18	51	93	35	76	0	0	2	0	0	24 116 / 23
RNGR	1	2	60	0	79	4	0	4	0	0	29 / 0
NOGA	0	1	0	0	0	12	0	35	0	0	5 / 0
GRCO	2	28	140	1	95	33	4	18	0	0	1 440 / 88
DCCO	1	1	1	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	1 2 / 2
AMBI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
GBHE	11	5	10	0	12	1	5	2	6	1	5 14 / 23
GREG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 / 0
BCNH	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
TUSW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
MUSW	36	4	121	0	9	0	12	3	0	0	154 / 50
GWFG	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
SNGO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 / 0
BRAN	0	0	177	0	591	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
CAGO	1001	1754	603	0	1413	0	1814	40	654	1	533 4467 / 1097
WODU	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	7	0	0 0 / 0
GWTE	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	32 / 0
ABDU	521	3386	876	53	1116	180	368	101	228	93	140 685 / 388
MALL	295	563	591	88	346	14	760	0	208	228	770 143 / 88
NOPI	3	12	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0 36 / 0
BWTE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
NOSH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3 / 0
GADW	0	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 30 / 0
EUWI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
AMWI	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	24	0	0	0 43 / 0
CANV	0	0	0	0	10	0	51	0	0	0	0 359 / 0
REDH	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
RNDU	0	1	121	0	2	0	12	0	0	0	0 81 / 0
GRSC	63	0	8	0	630	0	0	71	0	0	0 1474 / 39
LESC	440	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0 207 / 0
sc. sp.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
COEI	680	95	2718	0	8653	287	0	1369	0	0	0 479 / 2114
HADU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0 35 / 0
OLDS	104	65	121	0	102	69	0	2606	0	0	0 3 / 8
BLSC	16	18	85	0	0	0	0	35	0	0	0 112 / 86
SUSC	141	6	378	0	16	0	0	9	0	0	0 48 / 9
WWSC	127	523	603	0	546	73	0	283	0	0	0 74 / 188
COGO	495	612	353	105	509	1	106	304	0	0	57 498 / 183
BAGO	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 2 / 0
BUFF	720	146	211	0	611	29	31	70	0	0	1 391 / 213
HOME	0	3	36	6	29	0	34	4	2	0	44 13 / 0
COME	0	91	95	498	42	0	86	0	7	0	39 108 / 8
RBME	239	481	544	0	722	114	1	151	0	0	0 325 / 243
RUDU	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0 376 / 0
TUVU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
BAEA	0	1	0	30	0	0	2	0	0	0	0 0 / 0
NOHA	1	18	0	0	1	1	4	7	0	0	0 10 / 4

* Figures shown in Newport County, RI/Westport, MA CBC column are broken down by state: RI / MA.

93rd CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 12/17/92-1/3/93

species	And.	Athol	B. B. C. Ann	C. Cod	Conc.	Gr. Bos.	Marsh.	M. V.	Mid-C.	Nant.	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	3	6	8	8	9	10	3	8	14	9
Cooper's Hawk	0	0	3	2	1	3	3	3	1	1	0
Northern Goshawk	1	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Red-tailed Hawk	45	5	7	24	13	78	60	25	45	10	30
Rough-legged Hawk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Golden Eagle	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Kestrel	1	0	1	8	2	7	8	3	0	1	2
Merlin	2	0	1	2	2	0	1	0	1	1	6
Peregrine Falcon	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Gyrfalcon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	2	2	2	6	0	20	33	0	5	0	8
Ruffed Grouse	0	2	3	4	0	8	0	0	0	0	0
Wild Turkey	1	118	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Bobwhite	1	0	14	0	37	0	0	6	12	12	0
Virginia Rail	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4	0	4	7
Sora		0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Coot	0	0	1	0	4	0	39	0	0	2	17
Black-bellied Plover	0	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	17	5	11
Killdeer	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Greater Yellowlegs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0
Ruddy Turnstone	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	15
Sanderling	0	0	16	0	111	0	300	7	446	264	344
Purple Sandpiper	0	0	0	62	0	0	22	0	0	0	0
Dunlin	0	0	14	0	576	0	166	24	13	26	18
Long-billed Dowitcher	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Common Snipe	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	5	6	2
American Woodcock	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Common Bla.-hea. Gull	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	0	0	0	0
Bonaparte's Gull	0	0	153	148	6	0	1448	3	22	0	230
Mew Gull	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Ring-billed Gull	426	1	399	235	105	59	3802	828	195	373	93
Herring Gull	1108	571	1432	6334	4660	553	9431	4502	2563	2559	6651
Iceland Gull	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	1	54
Lesser Bla.-bac. Gull	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Glaucous Gull	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	3
Great Bla.-bac. Gull	138	382	273	3744	1425	82	1019	657	297	404	1756
Black-legged Kittiwake	0	0	0	10	24	0	0	1	13	0	14
Forster's Tern	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dovekie	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Common Murre	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Razorbill	0	0	0	6	147	0	0	0	22	0	72
Black Guillemot	0	0	0	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Rock Dove	1446	508	183	503	77	709	3228	419	214	404	260
Mourning Dove	203	548	408	337	324	1169	278	239	606	197	324
Barn Owl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	6
Eastern Screech-Owl	0	0	4	3	1	15	22	14	4	11	0
Great Horned Owl	2	0	3	8	6	27	3	1	0	7	0
Snowy Owl	0	0	0	0	1	0	8	1	0	1	2
Barred Owl	0	1	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Long-eared Owl	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0

93rd CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 12/17/92-1/3/93

species	N. B.Newbpt.		Ply. Quab.		Quin.	Stell.Tau-Mb.		Tuck.	Uxbr.	Wstm.	Worc.	Nwp.RI*
SSHA	3	7	3	1	3	1	4	0	3	4	5	4/0
COHA	1	1	1	0	2	0	3	0	3	0	1	3/0
NOGO	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
RSHA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/1
RTHA	4	64	5	24	20	0	25	4	24	5	37	21/4
RLHA	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1/0
GOEA	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0/0
AMKE	2	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	12/3
MERL	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
PEFA	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0/1
GYRF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
RNPH	0	26	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	3	1	3/0
RUGR	0	6	0	30	0	0	3	0	5	9	1	0/0
WITU	0	12	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0/0
NOBO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
VIRA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
SORA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
AMCO	0	0	56	0	6	0	2	0	0	0	0	83/0
BBPL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
KILL	3	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	0	5/0
GRYE	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2/1
RUTU	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	16/0
SAND	0	108	26	0	1	17	0	39	0	0	0	91/28
PUSA	35	15	2	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	44/1
DUNL	232	17	261	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1/154
LBDO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
COSN	0	7	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	2/1
AMWO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0/0
CBHG	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1/0
BOGU	358	1	5	0	622	0	0	0	0	0	0	51/160
MEGU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
RBGU	1370	865	401	26	1377	11	253	5	68	2	994	609/469
HEGU	3277	3123	2081	194	8496	737	800	710	205	1120	1279	1994/153
ICGU	0	6	0	0	1	9	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
LBBG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
GLGU	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0/0
GBBG	802	405	425	28	1025	535	881	465	36	771	1208	193/49
BLKI	0	6	0	0	0	3	0	29	0	0	0	0/0
FOTE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/1
DOVE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
COMU	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
RAZO	0	0	1	0	0	9	0	110	0	0	0	1/2
BLGU	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
RODO	972	633	258	69	458	145	380	0	801	398	552	332/26
MODO	215	541	158	241	82	26	226	0	177	119	453	423/108
BROW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
EASO	0	15	1	0	9	0	5	0	16	0	6	3/4
GHOW	3	42	1	13	2	2	8	0	10	1	4	5/0
SNOW	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0/0
BAOW	0	4	0	10	0	0	2	0	2	0	3	0/0
LEOW	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0/0

* Figures shown in Newport County, RI/Westport, MA CBC column are broken down by state: RI / MA.

93rd CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 12/17/92-1/3/93

species	And.	Athol	B. B. C.	Ann	C. Cod	Conc.	Gr. Bos.	Marsh.	M. V.	Mid-C.	Nant.
Short-eared Owl	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Northern Saw-whet Owl	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Belted Kingfisher	2	1	20	5	16	10	8	12	20	23	1
Red-hea. Woodpecker	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red-bel. Woodpecker	2	0	5	3	4	4	2	2	15	1	2
Yellow-bel. Sapsucker	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Downy Woodpecker	57	70	61	52	40	437	169	53	79	91	8
Hairy Woodpecker	5	20	9	3	8	89	9	13	14	8	0
Northern Flicker	3	2	53	39	81	14	50	22	99	69	99
Pileated Woodpecker	0	3	0	2	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
Eastern Phoebe	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Horned Lark	26	15	4	68	71	85	6	9	0	30	7
Blue Jay	126	346	705	789	496	807	334	184	405	299	62
American Crow	3431	293	896	619	513	1323	1913	354	2257	458	702
Fish Crow	2	0	0	0	0	5	10	0	0	0	0
Common Raven	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Black-cap. Chickadee	370	1353	882	734	723	2856	865	404	684	783	179
Tufted Titmouse	73	162	163	146	54	858	257	114	1	131	0
Red-br. Nuthatch	5	34	4	15	14	25	8	4	24	4	10
White-br. Nuthatch	47	142	84	102	36	402	118	49	88	43	3
Brown Creeper	7	3	9	4	3	43	30	8	12	3	0
Carolina Wren	2	0	264	12	77	26	20	26	147	130	6
House Wren	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Winter Wren	2	0	7	4	4	4	6	0	6	8	2
Marsh Wren	0	0	0	1	11	0	3	0	0	1	4
Golden-cr. Kinglet	22	36	62	65	48	139	68	28	30	34	35
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	0	0	5	1	2	1	8	0	1	7	4
Eastern Bluebird	0	0	2	0	0	31	0	15	16	6	5
Hermit Thrush	0	0	19	1	23	1	3	2	17	37	2
American Robin	3	2	590	1333	467	498	1230	527	312	674	576
Gray Catbird	0	0	50	2	19	3	6	4	39	38	30
Northern Mockingbird	48	30	98	79	49	271	195	89	71	99	35
Brown Thrasher	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
American Pipit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cedar Waxwing	3	14	731	510	326	485	93	126	123	186	138
Northern Shrike	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
European Starling	1876	1296	1865	9255	1471	2456	156375	2117	1127	1114	1901
Orange-cro. Warbler	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	0
Nashville Warbler	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yellow-rumped Warbler	0	0	87	110	709	0	14	167	545	318	1779
Pine Warbler	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5
Palm Warbler	0	0	10	0	4	0	0	0	19	30	18
Ovenbird	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Northern Waterthrush	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Common Yellowthroat	0	0	2	1	4	0	3	0	1	1	0
Yellow-breasted Chat	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Northern Cardinal	53	69	329	155	225	482	275	76	163	267	95
Rose-br. Grosbeak	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Painted Bunting	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Dickcissel	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rufous-sided Towhee	0	0	53	3	1	1	3	0	37	8	7

93rd CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 12/17/92-1/3/93

species	N. B.Newbpt.		Ply. Quab.	Quin.	Stell.Tau-Mb.		Tuck.	Uxbr.	Wstm.	Worc.	Nwp.RI*	
SEOW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0 / 0
NSWO	0	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
BEKI	4	8	11	2	5	0	4	0	6	1	5	3 / 6
RHWO	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
RBWO	1	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	7 / 1
YBSA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2 / 0
DOWO	28	225	68	72	47	1	48	2	71	35	108	41 / 9
HAWO	0	33	10	15	4	1	4	0	10	13	24	0 / 0
NOFL	10	47	47	0	40	12	24	23	18	0	2	88 / 19
PIWO	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0 / 0
EAPH	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1 / 0
HOLA	0	483	0	0	7	42	110	0	0	0	0	65 / 45
BLJA	156	1198	972	201	170	86	206	5	130	94	408	199 / 63
AMCR	350	1325	202	182	561	26	410	35	529	285	481	492 / 47
FICR	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
CORA	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	0 / 0
BCCH	152	1487	514	1385	258	47	418	22	876	851	694	230 / 78
TUTI	91	404	152	282	52	5	181	0	274	98	199	34 / 18
RBNU	1	29	8	86	10	2	5	0	1	7	19	1 / 0
WBNU	37	217	38	140	28	0	58	0	123	71	124	31 / 4
BRCR	2	35	5	47	3	1	6	0	7	11	14	0 / 1
CAWR	21	5	107	2	17	2	60	1	22	1	13	138 / 37
HOWR	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
WIWR	0	0	7	3	1	3	1	0	2	1	3	4 / 1
MAWR	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2 / 0
GCKI	3	99	50	136	25	0	25	2	74	23	48	19 / 3
RCKI	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	10 / 2
EABL	2	7	0	8	0	0	36	0	20	4	0	4 / 0
HETH	0	1	15	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	5 / 10
AMRO	87	686	550	14	473	619	126	1	38	2	51	660 / 152
GRCA	2	4	18	0	0	6	3	0	1	0	0	49 / 8
NOMO	27	203	97	33	76	15	96	1	94	15	75	127 / 27
BRTH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0 / 0
AMPI	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12 / 0
CEWA	11	853	459	154	168	22	99	0	103	47	197	194 / 32
NOSH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	/ 00
STAR	1942	4633	1956	757	45421	78	2455	6	2325	1176	3461	18964 / 810
OCWA	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
NAWA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
YRWA	17	123	798	0	195	347	37	140	6	0	0	163 / 17
PIWA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
PAWA	2	1	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	28 / 0
OVEN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
NOWA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
COYE	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3 / 0
YBCH	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 / 0
NOCA	61	265	149	54	62	15	95	2	160	51	86	159 / 24
RBGR	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
PABU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
DICK	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
RSTO	6	0	9	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	12 / 3

* Figures shown in Newport County, RI/Westport, MA CBC column are broken down by state: RI / MA.

93rd CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 12/17/92-1/3/93

species	And.	Athol	B. B.	C. Ann	C. Cod	Conc.	Gr. Bos.	Marsh.	M. V.	Mid-C.	Nant.
Amer. Tree Sparrow	43	112	89	177	24	490	230	48	10	42	9
Chipping Sparrow	2	0	29	0	2	1	0	0	8	0	2
Clay-colored Sparrow	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Field Sparrow	6	0	95	0	23	12	7	14	30	38	4
Vesper Sparrow	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Lark Sparrow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Savannah Sparrow	0	0	174	4	18	1	8	1	73	50	32
"Ipswich" Sparrow	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	9	0	5	4
Grasshopper Sparrow	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sharp-tailed Sparrow	0	0	0	0	5	0	2	0	0	0	0
Seaside Sparrow	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fox Sparrow	0	0	4	0	2	4	0	0	0	3	2
Song Sparrow	29	8	560	126	316	290	409	123	367	426	328
Lincoln's Sparrow	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Swamp Sparrow	0	2	74	2	70	7	19	22	18	73	14
White-thr. Sparrow	32	16	559	183	258	284	378	128	437	291	104
White-cr. Sparrow	0	0	14	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Dark-eyed Junco	145	283	497	284	53	1256	626	251	255	237	49
"Oregon" Junco	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lapland Longspur	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Snow Bunting	0	0	152	166	4	0	60	10	407	29	558
Red-winged Blackbird	1	0	8	9	20	15	32	86	7	9	187
Eastern Meadowlark	0	0	4	0	52	0	8	20	74	43	5
Rusty Blackbird	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
Common Grackle	0	1	3	0	0	12	14	0	45	1	14
Brown-headed Cowbird	24	1	20	0	0	20	0	0	0	0	15
Northern Oriole	0	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
"Bullock's" Oriole	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Purple Finch	13	28	4	7	1	40	0	2	2	0	4
House Finch	284	1009	1132	827	810	1331	799	455	430	933	549
Pine Siskin	0	0	0	11	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
American Goldfinch	104	255	430	285	244	995	544	197	148	324	88
Evening Grosbeak	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
House Sparrow	627	555	549	1209	299	1620	1573	336	597	686	272
number of species	60	54	114	98	121	80	106	83	107	110	126
total birds	12563	8447	31607	42965	32518	24368	202978	23785	34392	22361	185280
	And.	Athol	B. B.	C. Ann	C. Cod	Conc.	Gr. Bos.	Marsh.	M. V.	Mid-C.	Millis

And. = Andover CBC
 Athol = Athol CBC
 B. B. = Buzzards Bay CBC
 C. Ann = Cape Ann CBC
 C. Cod = Cape Cod CBC
 Conc. = Concord CBC
 Gr. Bos. = Greater Boston CBC
 Marsh. = Marshfield CBC
 M. V. = Martha's Vineyard CBC
 Mid-C. = Mid-Cape Cod CBC
 Nant. = Nantucket CBC

December 26, 1992
 December 19, 1992
 December 19, 1992
 December 20, 1992
 December 20, 1992
 January 2, 1993
 December 20, 1992
 December 27, 1992
 January 3, 1993
 December 27, 1992
 January 2, 1993

93rd CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 12/17/92-1/3/93

species	N. B.Newbpt.		Ply. Quab.		Quin.	Stell.Tau-Mb.		Tuck.	Uxbr.	Wstm.	Worc.	Nwp.RI*
ATSP	51	480	159	175	107	9	45	0	103	77	104	87 / 5
CHSP	3	0	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
CCSP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 / 0
FISP	37	3	47	2	4	4	31	0	23	0	0	44 / 3
VESP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 / 0
LASP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
SASP	7	36	0	0	0	3	0	20	2	0	0	105 / 9
"IPS"SP	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0 / 0
GRSP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
STSP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
SESP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
FOSP	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0 / 2
SOSP	92	183	353	28	147	17	112	33	158	10	69	447 / 62
LISP	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
SWSP	3	16	55	1	10	1	14	1	14	1	3	184 / 7
WTSP	120	269	305	32	91	58	92	2	71	11	91	722 / 131
WCSP	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	26 / 0
DEJU	180	581	369	329	240	26	790	0	590	149	416	245 / 50
"ORE" JU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
LALO	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
SNBU	45	3	0	4	0	126	1	189	14	0	1	0 / 2
RWBL	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	214 / 0
EAME	0	0	4	0	0	1	9	19	0	0	0	47 / 4
RUBL	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	6	0	0	1 / 0
COGR	9	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1162 / 0
BHCO	6	0	0	19	19	0	26	0	3	0	32	191 / 40
NOOR	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0 / 0
"BU" OR	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 / 0
PUFI	13	16	1	169	0	0	2	0	5	24	41	1 / 1
HOFI	344	1225	698	429	356	13	239	0	481	459	1194	555 / 193
PISI	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	0 / 0
AMGO	106	550	110	180	204	10	217	0	338	103	356	118 / 55
EVGR	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0 / 0
HOSP	256	1181	492	557	356	203	587	0	710	470	884	185 / 26
# of species	83	98	94	59	88	60	78	56	68	44	66	119
total birds	16504	30807	20611	8169	76936	4129	12579	7054	9894	6850	15384	47192
	Nant.	N. B. Newbpt.	Quab.	Quin.	Stell.Tau-Mb.	Tuck.	Uxbr.	Wstm.	Worc.	Nwp.RI		

* Figures shown in Newport County, RI/Westport, MA CBC column are broken down by state: RI / MA.

- N. B. = New Bedford CBC December 19, 1992
- Newbpt. = Newburyport CBC December 27, 1992
- Ply. = Plymouth CBC December 29, 1992
- Quab. = Quabbin CBC January 2, 1993
- Quin. = Quincy CBC December 19, 1992
- Stell. = Stellwagen CBC December 27, 1992
- Tau-Mb. = Taunton-Middleboro CBC December 27, 1992
- Tuck. = Tuckernuck CBC January 1, 1993
- Uxbr. = Uxbridge, MA/RI CBC January 2, 1993
- Wstm. = Westminster CBC December 26, 1992
- Worc. = Worcester CBC December 19, 1992
- Nwp. RI = Newport County, RI/Westport, MA CBC December 19, 1992

ABOUT THE COVER: GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH

The Gray-cheeked Thrush (*Catharus minimus*) is the least observed of the thrushes routinely seen in Massachusetts. It is usually classed as a very uncommon and inconspicuous migrant, although until the early 1970s a few nested on Mount Greylock, and small populations nest at high altitudes on the mountains of the northern New England states and New York. In spring the thrushes begin arriving in the second week of May and are on their nesting grounds by the beginning of June; in fall they pass through Massachusetts in the last half of September and early October. They can be separated from all the other thrushes, except the Swainson's Thrush, by their uniformly olive-brown upper parts, and from the Swainson's by the gray cheeks and lack of a prominent buffy eye-ring. The sexes appear similar in all plumages.

The taxonomy of this species is in a state of flux. Currently the smaller, New England breeding population is considered a subspecies (*C. m. bicknelli*), although the recent evidence outlined in the article by Rimmer and coauthors in this issue of *Bird Observer* (see pages 84-89) suggests that this population is in all probability reproductively isolated from the more northern *C. m. minimus*, and thus should be considered a distinct species.

While *bicknelli* nests mostly on mountain slopes above three thousand feet in New England, New York, and the Maritime provinces of Canada, *minimus* has a broad breeding range from Siberia and Alaska across northern Canada to Newfoundland, often in dwarf trees and scattered shrubs of the arctic tundra. It is North America's most northern breeding thrush. The two subspecies appear to have different wintering grounds, with *bicknelli* predominantly in the Caribbean, and *minimus* across northern South America as far south as Peru.

The life history of these birds is poorly known, but courtship includes pursuit flights, often accompanied by vocalizations and crest erection and bill gaping. The song is similar to that of a Veery, but more nasal and with a different ending. The nest is usually low or on the ground, cup-shaped, and made of woven bark, grass, weeds, and twigs, with a soft grass lining; *bicknelli* nests often incorporate moss. The three to five eggs are typically pale blue and lightly spotted with brown. Incubation is about two weeks, and two weeks after hatching the young fledge. These thrushes are largely insectivorous in spring and summer, but become largely frugivorous in the fall, specializing in berries. Their insect food includes beetles, flies, ants, and caterpillars. They feed insects to their young.

It seems ironic that the only bird endemic to our area, *bicknelli*, has become extinct as a breeding bird in Massachusetts before it becomes recognized as a full species! We can only hope that the apparent population declines of this enigmatic bird do not continue, and that it will continue to challenge researchers on its rugged mountain breeding grounds into the future. W. E. Davis, Jr.

MEET OUR COVER ARTIST

Barry W. Van Dusen's exquisite artwork has often been seen on *Bird Observer's* cover, and he recently mesmerized the audience at a Nuttall Ornithological Club meeting at Harvard University with his field sketches, descriptions of how he goes about his craft, and breathtaking closeups of some of his paintings. *Bird Observer* is very grateful to Barry for his contributions of artwork. Barry's work will be in the Lyme Invitational Wildlife in Art Show at the Lyme Art Association Gallery in Old Lyme, CT, on June 5 and 6, 1993. For more information on upcoming exhibits or artwork available for sale, Barry can be reached at 13 Radford Road, Princeton, Massachusetts, 01541. M. Steele

AT A GLANCE February 1993 _____ Wayne R. Petersen



Photos: S. Perkins (upper r.), W. Ervin (lower r.), and W. Petersen (l). Courtesy of MAS.

The twentieth anniversary issue of *Bird Observer* offered three "At A Glance" mystery photographs. Rather than depicting regularly occurring Massachusetts birds, the species shown in the pictures were from the list of *Best Birds in Massachusetts: 1973-1992* (see page 22 of the February 1993 issue). The photographs illustrate several relevant points about identifying a possible vagrant species: 1) some vagrants may be easily identified with the assistance of any of the leading North American field guides; 2) some vagrants may not safely be identified from photographs or in the field, even with the best of field guides; and 3) some vagrants may not be shown in North American field guides.

To demonstrate point number one, the best example is the bird pictured in the lower right photograph. Clearly a gull species of some sort, the pictured bird's dusky face, long black-tipped primaries, black-speckled wing coverts, and pigeonlike profile instantly identify it as an Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*) in first-winter plumage. A quick perusal through the better field guides should make this identification fairly simple. In immature plumage, an Ivory Gull, like the one photographed at Salisbury in 1975, is practically unmistakable.

The handheld bird in the upper right photograph illustrates the point that some vagrants cannot safely be identified from a photograph or sometimes even in the field. From the photograph, the fine pointed bill, prominent eye crescents, and slim proportions indicate that the bird is a warbler. Furthermore, its lack of wing bars and ventral streaks, along with indistinct shading on the throat and upper breast, indicate that it is one of three similar species in the genus *Oporornis*. The Connecticut Warbler can be eliminated because that species displays a complete white eye ring and always has a distinct brownish breast band. This leaves the Mourning Warbler and its western counterpart, the MacGillivray's Warbler, as possibilities. The indistinctness of the breast band suggests that the pictured warbler is an immature, which leaves only the distinct eye crescents as obvious clues. These eye crescents are seldom as bold or wide in a Mourning Warbler. In addition, the color slide of the pictured warbler shows a pale grayish throat, not yellow as in the Mourning Warbler. While this combination of features suggests that the pictured bird may be a MacGillivray's Warbler (*Oporornis tolmiei*), it was not without first obtaining definitive wing and tail measurements during banding that this MacGillivray's Warbler in Lexington in 1977 was positively identified.

The remaining mystery photograph shows a bird not illustrated or described in any of the North American field guides. In this case, the first step in making a correct identification is to place the bird in its correct family, which in this case is the swallow family. The pictured bird's rather long neck, large bill, and long wings make it look large for a swallow, especially a Bank Swallow, which it otherwise resembles because of its broad breast band. Also unlike a Bank Swallow, it possesses a series of bold ventral spots extending down the mid-breast below the breast band. Indeed, European and Neotropical field guides show that only the Brown-chested Martin (*Phaeoprogne tapera*) of South America has these proportions and this pattern. In addition to the martin's brown dorsal color (not discernable in the photo), the extensive breast spots are notable because they indicate that the bird is of the migratory southern South American race, therefore making it the race most likely to show up as a vagrant in North America. Although this species' visit to Monomoy Island in 1983 provided an especially challenging identification problem, careful analysis of its characteristics can still make the identification possible. Birders simply need to remember that not all vagrant birds will appear in their standard field guides.

AT A GLANCE

Photo by Tom Martin



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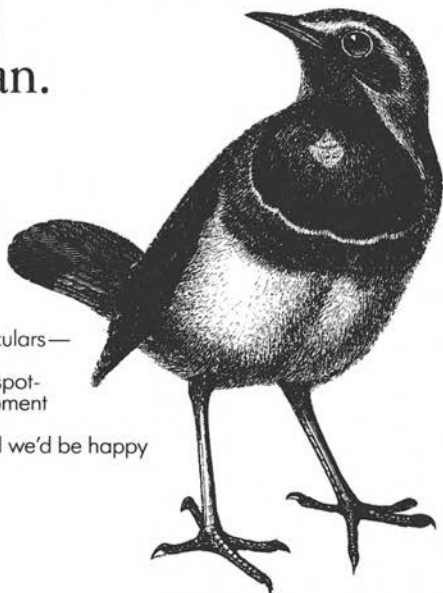
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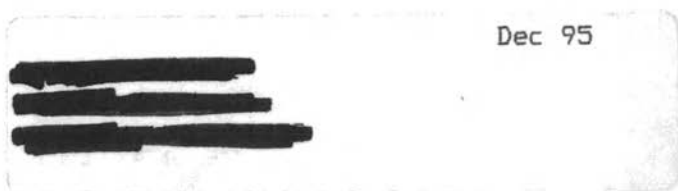
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