

BIRD OBSERVER



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VOL. 22 NO. 3
JUNE 1994



BIRD OBSERVER

• a bimonthly journal •

To enhance understanding, observation,
and enjoyment of birds.

VOL. 22, NO. 3 JUNE 1994

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POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *BIRD OBSERVER*, 462 Trapelo Road, Belmont, MA 02178. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT BOSTON, MA.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$16 for 6 issues, \$30 for two years in the U. S. Add \$2.50 per year for Canada and foreign. Single copies \$4.00. An Index to Volumes 1-11 is \$3. Back issues: inquire as to price and availability.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS and subscription inquiries should be sent to Bird Observer Subscriptions, P. O. Box 236, Arlington, MA 02174.

ADVERTISING: full page, \$80; half page, \$40; quarter page, \$25. Send camera-ready copy to Bird Observer Advertising, P. O. Box 236, Arlington, MA 02174.

BIRD SIGHTINGS: Send reports of any given month in writing by the eighth of the next month to

Bird Sightings, Robert H. Stymeist, 94 Grove Street, Watertown, MA 02172.

MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION: *BIRD OBSERVER* welcomes for publication contributions of original articles, photographs, art work, field notes, and field studies. Please send these or other suggestions to the editor in chief:

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ISSN: 0893-4630

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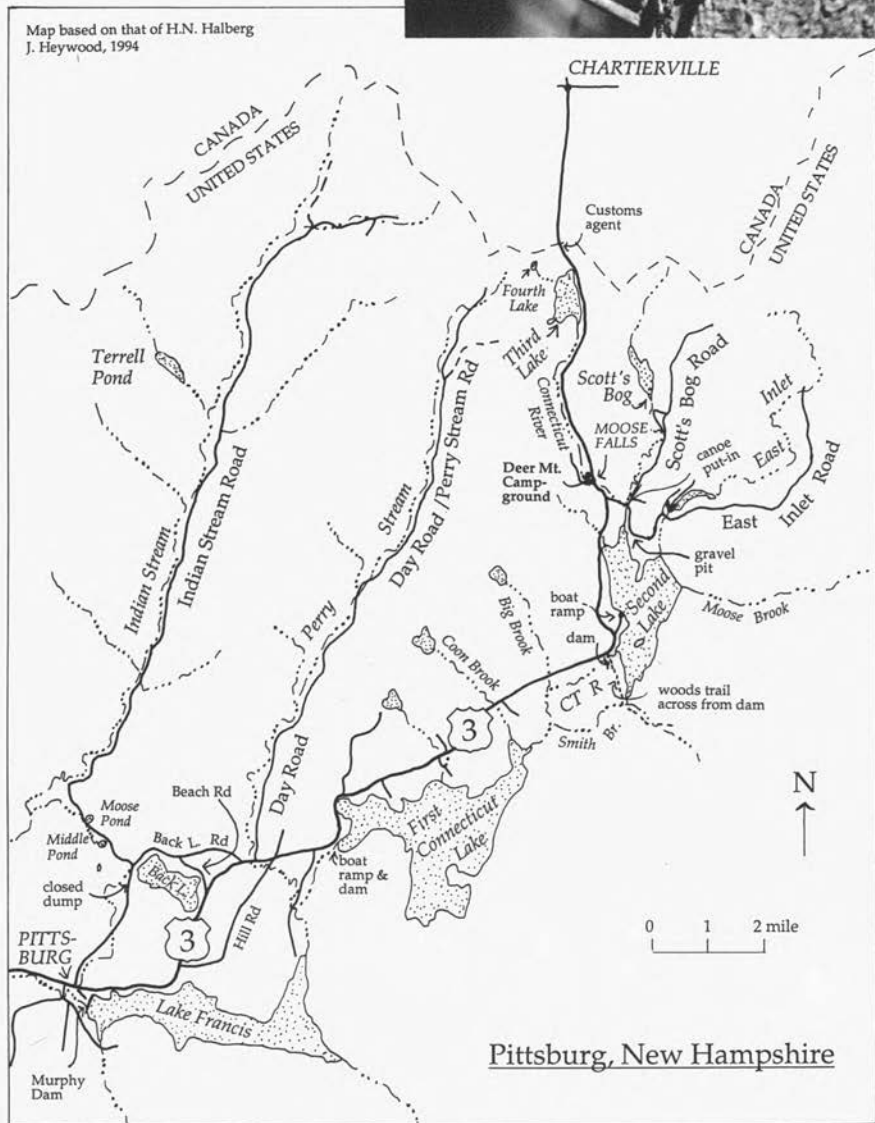
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Black-backed Woodpecker
 Pittsburg, NH
 Photo by Robert A. Quinn



FINDING BIRDS IN PITTSBURG, NEW HAMPSHIRE

by Robert A. Quinn

In the wild northern tip of New Hampshire is a land of low-level spruce and fir with some of the most sought-after birds in the northeast: Spruce Grouse, Gray Jay, Black-backed and Three-toed woodpeckers, and Boreal Chickadee. It is the untamed headwaters of the longest river in New England, and although not pristine wilderness, it is wild country that echoes to the call of loons, coyotes, and boreal birds. Join me for a brief look at some of the most fascinating birding this side of Canada.

Pittsburg, New Hampshire, at the tip of Coos County (pronounced Ko-oss), is an isolated land of truly independent Yankees. Pittsburg is about 135 miles north of and three hours driving time from Concord, New Hampshire. During the Indian Stream Rebellion of 1832 the locals left the Union and set up their own sovereign nation. It is a place of bogs, moose, an undisturbed remnant of the primeval boreal forest (the Norton Pool tract), Cape May Warblers, snipe, eagles, Ospreys, and an abundance of other interesting critters. It is a land of superlatives. Its 300 square miles dwarf any other township in the eastern United States. It is so far north that it is bordered by Canada, not Vermont, to the west. It has the best boreal birding in the state under the easiest conditions, and it has some of the finest scenery anywhere (at least when it is not raining).

The elevation is the reason for the good boreal habitat. Pittsburg village, which is in the southern part of the township, is at 1300 feet. The elevation rises steadily as you head north from the village on Route 3 to the Canadian border, where the elevation is 2360 feet. Several mountains in the area top 3500 feet; the highest mountain, Stub Hill, stands at 3607 feet.

I will focus on the nesting birds and how, when, and where to find them. I want to emphasize that boreal birding is usually hard work because the terrain and habitat can be daunting. Most boreal birding is done by ear, and the birds in Pittsburg do not always sound like the recordings you may have listened to. So, forewarned with that knowledge, bring your long johns, your rain gear, and your bug dope, and let us begin our exploration of this fascinating area.

The best time to visit for nesting birds is from mid-June until early July. During this time you will find the greatest variety of species. The spring migrants will have finally made it on territory, and the boreal residents should have young that are noticeable in one way or another. Over the past sixteen years I have run a Breeding Bird Survey route in Pittsburg each June that has averaged seventy species and has a cumulative total of about 110 species. You can expect to find about one hundred species in a weekend if the weather cooperates.

For this article I will focus on the best and most accessible places and leave the more obscure areas for you to explore on your own. The region from Second

Connecticut Lake northward is the best for boreal birds, and any suitable habitat is worth exploring.

Deer Mountain Campground and Points North

I recommend that you stay at the Deer Mountain campground, which will be the central locus for this article. (However, there are many alternatives; see the accommodations section later in this article.) It is a picturesque, although primitive, camping area nestled in dense stands of spruce and fir with the juvenal Connecticut River flowing through it. In past years both Black-backed and Three-toed woodpeckers have nested in the campground. Almost any North Country specialty can be found: Bay-breasted, Cape May (rare), and Blackpoll warblers; Rusty Blackbird; Gray Jay; and Black-backed Woodpecker. Proceed approximately sixteen miles north of Pittsburg village on Route 3, past the Second Connecticut Lake, to the well-marked (but isolated) campground on your left. Please note an unmarked dirt road on the right about one-half mile south of Deer Mountain for future reference.

The main, or upper, camping area is just off the highway. Just behind that is a lower camping area of about six campsites where a wide but unmarked trail at the far edge of the clearing leads in about a quarter of a mile to what I call the Moose Falls Flowage, a small impoundment of the Connecticut River. The woods along this trail are good for most boreal species, and the pond is a good place for Rusty Blackbird. It would be easy to spend a full morning just in the vicinity of the campground.

Scott's Bog and East Inlet

Considered by many the best all-around area in Pittsburg, Scott's Bog and East Inlet have a good variety of boreal land birds and waterbirds. A series of well-maintained logging roads lead to, and pass by, several man-made impoundments and good spruce-and-fir habitat. Head south on Route 3 from Deer Mountain campground about one-half mile to the above-mentioned unmarked dirt road, now on the left. It is the only road in the area. Drive about a quarter-mile off Route 3, and cross a bridge over a small river (the mighty Connecticut!). Once across the bridge the Scott's Bog Road goes left, and the East Inlet Road goes right. Go left, and walk or drive slowly down the Scott's Bog Road, checking the various habitats as you go. Blackpoll, Magnolia, Parula, and Yellow-rumped warblers are common (the Blackpolls are often singing a trilled version of their song); Swainson's Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, American Redstart, and White-throated Sparrow are other common species here. Boreal Chickadee, Gray Jay, and Black-backed Woodpecker are all fairly regular along this road but cannot be expected. Ravens are usually overhead, and Osprey, Northern Harrier, and other hawk species are sometimes seen here.



Scott's Bog, Pittsburg, NH

Photo by Robert A. Quinn

The more open and wetter areas commonly have Alder, Yellow-bellied, and Olive-sided flycatchers, Nashville Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow, Rusty Blackbird, and Common Grackle. If you are there at dawn or dusk, Common Snipe and Common Loon (from the nearby Second Connecticut Lake) are usually heard. Some of the rarer possibilities include Tennessee and Wilson's warblers in swampy alder thickets, Mourning Warbler in two- or three-year-old cutover areas with abundant raspberry bushes, Bay-breasted and Cape May warblers in the tops of tall spruces, and Philadelphia Vireo in the alders along the streams.

Many more common species, such as American Robin and Cedar Waxwing, will be seen as you progress down Scott's Bog Road. After approximately 3.5 miles a rough gravel road to the left (passable for jeeps) leads down to the dam at Scott's Bog. Scott's Bog is more of a pond than a bog, but it does have marshy edges that might have Rusty Blackbird or rails. The most common ducks are Wood Duck, Black Duck, Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, and Hooded Merganser. The more unusual waterfowl that nest in Pittsburg include Blue-winged and Green-winged teal and Common Goldeneye, and these ducks should be looked for on any of the smaller ponds.

It usually takes two to three hours of birding to get to Scott's Bog. Next, head back on Scott's Bog Road the way you came, watching for species you may have missed on the way up, until you reach East Inlet Road. It is usually better to drive rather than walk the East Inlet Road because it has more traffic and is much longer than the Scott's Bog Road. The best technique is to stop when you

see some likely looking spot or some good bird activity. One interesting area is about one-half mile down the East Inlet Road, where there is a small gravel pit on the right as the road makes a ninety-degree turn to the left. Walk through this gravel pit and through the woods a short distance to the edge of the river as it enters Second Connecticut Lake. This is a good place for a variety of warblers and waterbirds, and a great place for moose at dawn.

An excellent spot for boreal residents is farther down East Inlet Road. In about a mile from the gravel pit, you will pass on the left the dam forming the pond at East Inlet (worth a check for moose—again, early morning is best). Then go approximately two miles, watch for a very wide clearing on the left, and park there. Follow this wide clearing, which looks like a power line right-of-way without power lines, for about a half-mile, bearing right at a fork. Be alert for anything because this area is where I finally found my first New Hampshire Spruce Grouse, a female with chicks. Boreal Chickadee is reasonably common (but hard to see) in the spruces. After about a half-mile from the road, you should notice the land sloping down to the right with denser spruce and fir habitat. You can plunge into the tangle of trees, and head for the swampy lowlands, or stay along the logged area. If you go into the woods, make sure you have landmarks to follow for your return because it is easy to get lost. When you are finished in this area, head back the way you walked in. You can drive farther on the East Inlet Road, which goes on for many more miles, or head back toward Route 3. Whatever you choose to do, stay alert for more interesting species, moose, and logging trucks.

Fourth Connecticut Lake

Route 3 north of Deer Mountain campground takes you past several wetlands (west of the road and somewhat distant) and Third Connecticut Lake (always worth checking for waterbirds) until you reach the height of land at the Canadian border. Here is the starting point for one of the most interesting walks in the region—to the origin of the Connecticut River at Fourth Connecticut Lake. The lake is actually a small bog pond surrounded by starkly pointed spruce and fir. To get there, you have to sign in and out with the United States Customs agents. They will direct you to the beginning of the trail, which is up the hill behind the customs house. A short but steep trail along the international border leads to the jewel-like Fourth Connecticut Lake, which is protected by The Nature Conservancy. The lake is surrounded almost entirely by tall, dark conifers, thereby providing a truly wilderness setting and habitat for many boreal birds. Rusty Blackbird is regular here, and it is fun to gently explore the boggy rim of this small glacial tarn. As with so many of the trails in the Pittsburg area, return the way you came, and please be careful on the few steep and slippery sections.

To appreciate the geography of Pittsburg, take a very short drive into the

nearby Canadian town of Chartierville, and then look back. You will see the dramatic rise in elevation along the length of the Pittsburg township to the international border.

Areas South of Deer Mountain Campground

Second Connecticut Lake Boat Ramp. About four miles south of Deer Mountain campground on Route 3, watch for a sign on the east side for the road to the New England Power Company's public boat ramp, which is about one-quarter mile down a gravel road (go right at the only fork). The boat ramp provides a nice view of Second Connecticut Lake, where you should see Common Loon and Common Merganser. Other waterbirds are possible, and Ring-billed Gull is likely (and probably nests around the lake but there is no proof yet). Head back out to Route 3, and a little farther south, you will come to the Second Connecticut Lake dam and another place to scan for waterbirds. You can cross the dam where there is a trail that goes for miles on the other side that I have never explored but might be worthwhile. Please let me know if you check it out.

First Connecticut Lake Dam and Boat Ramp. About six miles south of the Second Connecticut Lake dam on Route 3 is the First Connecticut Lake dam and another spot to look for waterbirds.

Perry Stream/Day Road. About 1.5 miles south of the First Connecticut Lake dam, the Perry Stream crosses Route 3 just north of the Back Lake Road. This location is a good spot for Common Snipe and Savannah Sparrow. Turn right immediately before the stream onto Day Road, a well-maintained gravel road on which you can drive for miles. It has a variety of habitats and has been a reliable place for Boreal Chickadee the past few years. Some good boreal habitat lies along the first few miles of Day Road, but I personally have never gone much farther than that, although it is probably worthwhile to explore.

Back Lake Road. A hundred yards south of Day Road, Back Lake Road forks to the right off Route 3. For the first mile or two Back Lake Road traverses an area heavily logged but still good for birding, especially for Mourning Warbler. When you get to Back Lake itself, there are limited views of the water, but there may be Osprey or Common Goldeneye.

Indian Stream Road/Middle and Moose Ponds. Continue on Back Lake Road about one-half mile past the junction of Beach Road, which comes in on the left just before you first see the lake, and watch for an unmarked dirt road on the right (if you reach the recently closed dump, you have gone too far on Back Lake Road). This unmarked gravel road is somewhat rough but goes by two interesting small ponds (Middle and Moose ponds) that may have Common Goldeneye; once a Palm Warbler was discovered in this area during the breeding season. Continue on through to Indian Stream Road, only a half-mile or so past Moose Pond, stopping wherever it looks interesting. Turn right onto

Pittsburg, New Hampshire, Breeding Bird List

Common Loon	Eastern Phoebe	Ovenbird
Pied-billed Grebe	Great Crested Flycatcher*	Northern Waterthrush
American Bittern	Eastern Kingbird	Mourning Warbler
Great Blue Heron	Tree Swallow	Common Yellowthroat
Green Heron*	Rough-winged Swallow*	Wilson's Warbler (R)
Wood Duck	Bank Swallow	Canada Warbler
Green-winged Teal* (R)	Cliff Swallow	Scarlet Tanager (R)
Black Duck	Barn Swallow	Northern Cardinal*
Mallard	Gray Jay	Rose-br'ted Grosbeak (V)
Blue-winged Teal (U)	Blue Jay	Indigo Bunting (V)
Ring-necked Duck	American Crow	Chipping Sparrow
Common Goldeneye (U)	Common Raven	Vesper Sparrow (R)
Hooded Merganser	Black-capped Chickadee	Savannah Sparrow
Common Merganser	Boreal Chickadee	Fox Sparrow*
Osprey (R)	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Song Sparrow
Bald Eagle*	White-breasted Nuthatch	Lincoln's Sparrow
Northern Harrier*	Brown Creeper*	Swamp Sparrow
Sharp-shinned Hawk*	House Wren*	White-throated Sparrow
Cooper's Hawk*	Winter Wren	Dark-eyed Junco
Northern Goshawk*	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Bobolink
Broad-winged Hawk	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Red-winged Blackbird
Red-tailed Hawk	Eastern Bluebird	Eastern Meadowlark
American Kestrel	Veery	Rusty Blackbird
Spruce Grouse	Gray-cheeked Thrush*	Common Grackle
Ruffed Grouse	Swainson's Thrush	Brown-headed Cowbird
Virginia Rail*	Hermit Thrush	Northern Oriole* (R)
Sora*	Wood Thrush (R)	Pine Grosbeak*
Killdeer	American Robin	Purple Finch
Spotted Sandpiper	Gray Catbird	Red Crossbill*
Common Snipe	Brown Thrasher*	White-winged Crossbill*
American Woodcock	Cedar Waxwing	Pine Siskin*
Ring-billed Gull*	Starling	American Goldfinch
Mourning Dove	Solitary Vireo	Evening Grosbeak
Black-billed Cuckoo*	Philadelphia Vireo (R)	House Sparrow
Great Horned Owl	Red-eyed Vireo	
Barred Owl	Tennessee Warbler	* Likely but not confirmed breeders
Whip-poor-will*	Nashville Warbler	R = rare
Chimney Swift	Northern Parula	U = uncommon
Ruby-th'ed Hummingbird	Yellow Warbler	V = variable
Belted Kingfisher	Chestnut-sided Warbler	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Magnolia Warbler	List compiled by the
Downy Woodpecker	Cape May Warbler (R)	author from sightings
Hairy Woodpecker	Black-th'ed Blue Warbler	reported in the Audubon
Three-toed Woodpecker	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Society of New
Black-backed Woodpecker	Black-th'ed Green Warbler	Hampshire quarterly
Northern Flicker	Blackburnian Warbler	publications over the past
Pileated Woodpecker	Palm Warbler*	forty years and from
Olive-sided Flycatcher	Bay-breasted Warbler	sightings reported by
Eastern Wood Pewee	Blackpoll Warbler	Fred Scott, Vera Hebert,
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Black-and-white Warbler	Tudor Richards, Dennis
Alder Flycatcher	American Redstart	Abbott, the author, and
Least Flycatcher		others.

Indian Stream Road, taking careful note of the landmarks so you can find the intersection of this unmarked road and Indian Stream Road on your return. Indian Stream Road is another long gravel road with mixed habitats, but overall it has more southern birdlife, such as Great Crested Flycatcher and Yellow Warbler, than the previously mentioned spots. In about eight miles it leads to Terrell Pond, another pond formed by a small dam. Spruce and fir trees surround the pond, and it is probably a good birding spot in the early morning, but I have not been there at that time. If you are going to go this far, either have a detailed map or follow the tire tracks of all the fishermen.

Pittsburg Village, Lake Francis, Murphy Dam, and Points South. Carefully retrace your route until you reach Back Lake Road, which is paved, and take a right (past the closed dump). Back Lake Road takes you directly into Pittsburg village at the junction of Route 3. The village often has such scarce "southern" species as House Wren, Brown Thrasher, and maybe even a Northern Cardinal. Curiously, it can also be one of the better spots for Evening Grosbeaks because they frequent yards with feeders. The most interesting feature in downtown Pittsburg is the nesting Cliff Swallows on the school building almost in the center of town. Heading south from town on Route 3, you go through some farmlands that are fringed with spruce and fir and can yield such combinations as Gray Catbird, Bobolink, Northern Goshawk, and Cape May Warbler.

Canoe Trips

There are many possibilities for canoe outings, but my two favorite outings are East Inlet (the pond) and the young Connecticut River where it flows into the Second Connecticut Lake. (In both cases, paddling is easy with no strong currents.) Dawn is the best time to avoid other boaters (mainly fishermen). To put in at East Inlet, drive out the East Inlet Road about two miles off Route 3 to where the dam and boat ramp are on the left. Once you put in and get around the first point of land, you will be approaching the "Moose Pasture" on your left. The Moose Pasture is a large boggy area that is interesting botanically (orchids, pitcher plants, and the squishy, bouncy, bog mat) and has birds such as Lincoln's and Savannah sparrows and maybe Gray Jay, Boreal Chickadee, Spruce Grouse, and Black-backed Woodpecker. The Moose Pasture is posted around its edges by The Nature Conservancy boundary markers.

Waterbird possibilities include Pied-billed Grebe, either teal species, Osprey, American Bittern, Common Loon, Virginia Rail, Sora, Ring-necked Duck, and possibly Common Goldeneye. Moose and deer are common.

The Connecticut River from the first bridge on the East Inlet Road (just off Route 3) down to the Second Connecticut Lake is a favorite paddle of mine at dusk. The easiest put-in site is just upstream from the bridge. The species variety is small, but the wailing of loons, the winnowing of snipe, and the

howling of coyotes (sometimes) as the inky darkness settles over the lake are, to me, the true voices of the North Country.

Other Areas

Space does not permit a discussion of many other interesting areas such as Magalloway Mountain (a likely Gray-cheeked "Bicknell's" Thrush site), the Norton Pool (contact The Nature Conservancy, 2 1/2 Beacon Street, Concord, NH 03301, for more details), South Bay Bog, Cedar Stream, Boundary Pond, Hall's Stream, and others. Do not hesitate to explore these areas on your own.

There are some excellent outlying areas of interest if you have a few extra days, such as Dixville Notch, the East Colebrook farmlands, and Lake Umbagog.

Specialty Species

Spruce Grouse. Spruce Grouse is present throughout the area in the proper habitat but range from hard to almost impossible to find. Writing in 1959, the Halbergs, after eight years of June visits, said, "We must quote the reports of others . . ." when talking about this species. In 1993 I saw my first Spruce Grouse in Pittsburg in sixteen years of June visits. Do not go there expecting to see this species! However, they may be easier to locate earlier in the spring while they are courting and are sometimes seen along roadsides (although the snow can be quite deep into May and sometimes even early June).

Three-toed Woodpecker. This species may be harder to find than Spruce Grouse, but some observers have had some luck along the wide power-line-type clearing two miles north of East Inlet dam in recent years (see East Inlet section). I have never found this species in Pittsburg. It apparently requires old-growth thick spruce, so another possibility would be to thoroughly explore the Norton Pool area (see "Other Areas"), which is an extreme physical challenge because there are no trails, and the number of fallen trees makes walking or hiking extremely difficult.

Black-backed Woodpecker. At last, a species that you are likely to see if you spend several days in the area. They are often found in last year's logged areas or burned-over sites. In June their nestlings are noisy, so nests can often be found. The nests are usually low to the ground and can provide an excellent opportunity to observe this relatively tame species. I have seen this woodpecker dozens of times, frequently more than one individual at a time, and on at least four occasions there was a nest that I could observe from the comfort of my car. The nest hole is fairly distinctive with its beveled lower edge, and the birds normally chip all the bark off the trunk for about a foot above and below the hole. Hairy Woodpeckers have very noisy nestlings too, so you may have to watch several nest holes before finding your quarry.

Gray Jay. The Gray Jay is believed to be declining but is still usually

found during visits of more than a day or two. They are usually seen perched in the tops of spruce or fir, although they can be seen almost anywhere. In my experience they do not come in begging for food as their camp-robber reputation would make you think, but they are rather tame. Most of my sightings have been in the East Inlet and Scott's Bog area. The fledged young of Gray Jays are black and can confuse you the first time you see them. These dark juveniles can usually be seen by mid-June.

Boreal Chickadee. This rather common bird can be missed quite easily and is difficult to see most of the time. Usually located by its short, nasal call, the Boreal Chickadee is outnumbered by Black-capped Chickadee almost everywhere except in the thickest spruce or fir habitats. Like the Spruce Grouse, the Boreal Chickadee may be easier to locate before June, when it becomes less vocal. Any stand of spruce trees is potential habitat, and I have recorded it every year.

Finches. Notoriously erratic, even up here, the numbers of Purple Finch, American Goldfinch, Evening Grosbeak, Pine Siskin, and Red and White-winged crossbills vary considerably from season to season and year to year. Look for them most often during an excellent cone season and listen for them all the time.

The "Why Not" Species. Some traditionally more northern species have been recorded in Pittsburg in June or July on rare occasions and might be more regular than we realize. These species include Pine Grosbeak (at least two sightings), Fox Sparrow (one), Palm Warbler (one), and Black Tern (several).

Then there is the "Wouldn't it be really exciting and maybe even possible" list of species that might be lurking out there, such as Solitary Sandpiper, Bohemian Waxwing, Yellow Rail, Boreal Owl, and Great Gray Owl. There is always a chance, so keep looking.

Additional Notes

To enjoy yourself in Pittsburg it is best to follow the Boy Scout motto—"Be Prepared."

Weather. Coos County is much colder and wetter than southern New England, with fierce thunderstorms common in June and July. Morning temperatures are often in the forties and sometimes in the thirties. Lightweight gloves and winter clothes are recommended for those who do not like the cold. Rain gear is essential, and you should expect to use it. If you use a tent, make sure it does not leak.

Bugs. The nightly chill is not enough to eliminate black flies, no-see-ums, and mosquitos, which usually are at their peak when the breeding birds are at theirs (mid-June). The bugs are at their worst when the nights are warm (thankfully not very often).

Private Lands. The most important note is that almost all of this country is

privately owned, and we are guests of the timber companies who are very generous hosts. PLEASE OBEY ALL SIGNS, RESPECT ALL GATES, AND REMEMBER THAT LOGGING TRUCKS HAVE THE RIGHT OF WAY ON THE LOGGING ROADS. The trucks will not slow down or get out of your way. That is your job, and it really is in your best interest.

Moose. A very serious subject. Read and believe the signs. Whenever you see a moose while driving, slow down. They are highly unpredictable, as are the tourists that go to Pittsburg just to see them. Be careful, and be especially watchful at night. Driving at normal speeds at night can be an invitation to disaster.

Maps and Compass. Maps are essential even if you do not leave sight of your car; a compass is also essential if you go more than a short distance off any road. The best maps are 1) Roads and Trails, Connecticut Lakes Region, compiled by Ross Hunter, 2) the *New Hampshire Atlas and Gazetteer* by Delorme, and 3) the various USGS topographic maps of the area. The Ross Hunter map should be purchased as soon as you arrive in Pittsburg because it is large, colorful, and the best local map.

Accommodations. In addition to Deer Mountain campground, there is another state-run campground at Lake Francis State Park, and there are many private campgrounds, lodges, and cabins. For further information write to North Country Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 1, Colebrook, NH 03576, or to Connecticut Lakes Tourist Association, P.O. Box 38, Pittsburg, NH 03592.

In closing, I hope that you take the opportunity to visit this enchanting land of the pointy trees, and if you do I would be thrilled to hear what you saw or for any helpful comments about this article.

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ROBERT A. QUINN is a native of New Hampshire. He has birded through forty-eight states in the last twenty years. He worked for the Audubon Society of New Hampshire (ASNH) for nine years, becoming their first staff ornithologist. He continues as a volunteer for ASNH, serving as president of the Council of Chapters and as a trustee of the board. He has led dozens of field trips including trips to Georgia, Florida, Texas, and Trinidad. He is editor of the summer season for *New Hampshire Bird Records* and has a keen interest in the nesting status of birds in the state. He has recently formed his own natural history services business, Merlin Enterprises, and lives with his wife and two children in Canterbury, New Hampshire.

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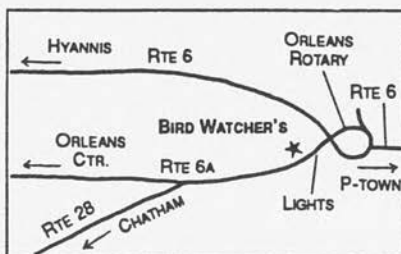
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THE GREAT BOHEMIAN WAXWING FLIGHT OF 1994

by Richard A. Forster

Each year one or two avian events eclipse all other happenings by such orders of magnitude that their significance is overwhelming. More often than not, the event is a sighting of an extraordinarily rare bird whose presence serves as a benchmark for future sightings. Less often the event involves an influx of a species that by its sheer magnitude makes all previous sightings pale in comparison. An example of such an invasion was the well-chronicled flight of Great Gray Owls (*Strix nebulosa*) in the winter of 1979. The influx of Bohemian Waxwings (*Bombycilla garrula*) into New England this past winter rivaled that of the Great Grays in its surprising magnitude and, at least in Massachusetts, far surpassed any previous flight.

The Bohemian Waxwing breeds predominantly in the vast coniferous and mixed forests of western Canada and Alaska. When not breeding, the Bohemian Waxwing is extremely gregarious and forms sizable flocks that wander from location to location in search of a reliable food source that in winter consists of a wide variety of persistent fruits and berries. In this regard the species is similar to the Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*), which is familiar to most New Englanders. The winter movements of both species are extremely erratic and unpredictable, but these wanderings are more obvious with the Bohemian Waxwing due to its more restricted range and its appearance in areas far removed from its normal range where these birds constitute a species highly sought after by birdwatchers.

The historical occurrence of Bohemian Waxwing in Massachusetts is somewhat a matter of conjecture. Since the only prior pronounced flight into Massachusetts in 1969, the Bohemian Waxwing has appeared almost annually in winter, but at no time has the total aggregate of birds exceeded a hundred



Bohemian Waxwings

Photo by Blair Nikula

individuals. Although Forbush (1929) stated that Bohemian Waxwings were possibly annual in occurrence in New England at that time, many of his contemporaries were skeptical. Even Griscom and Snyder (1955) debunked Forbush's statement largely because of their very conservative reliance on specimens and verifiable sight records. In retrospect, their approach seems conservative in the extreme, especially given the often ephemeral nature of the sightings (as some observers in this winter of waxwing abundance can sadly attest).

There was little indication or advance notice that the 1993-1994 winter would be an unusual winter for Bohemian Waxwings. Apparently, they moved into northern New England on a broad front beginning in early November. This movement was not particularly noteworthy because Bohemian Waxwings are more routinely found in northern New England, particularly at the University of Maine campus in Orono, where they occur annually and often in appreciable numbers. In eastern Massachusetts a single Bohemian Waxwing in Hingham and a group of four in Wellfleet were present in late November. These sightings were not unusual nor were they necessarily precursors to a subsequent invasion. December brought only a single elusive Bohemian Waxwing to Amherst, where it was present for the better part of the month. The lack of sightings was real because an army of binocular-toting observers scoured the state on the annual Christmas Bird Counts during the last two weeks of the month without detecting a single Bohemian Waxwing. As we entered the new year, prospects of seeing so much as a lone Bohemian Waxwing seemed remote.

Meanwhile, to our north in New Hampshire and Vermont, flocks numbering into the hundreds were being found during December, and in Maine a flock at the traditional Orono site was estimated at over a thousand birds. In southern Maine at Lewiston twelve hundred were counted on December 30. The night of January 4-5 brought extremely strong winds out of the north with the strongest gust of wind recorded at 65 mph. Just after noon on January 5, an observer visiting High Head in North Truro near the tip of Cape Cod found a group of approximately sixty waxwings, twenty-four of which were definitely Bohemians, and the remainder were thought to be Bohemians. These birds were still present the following day. A different observer searched for the Bohemian Waxwings on Saturday, January 9. En route to Truro he stopped at the Bound Brook area of Wellfleet to check for Bohemian Waxwings because some Bohemians had been found there the previous November. To his amazement he encountered a flock of 140 Bohemian Waxwings that he watched and photographed the remainder of the day. Remarkably, a group of eighty Bohemian Waxwings was observed in Rockport that same day. The presence of these flocks at outlying coastal points is strongly suggestive of an over-the-ocean flight of Bohemian Waxwings originating from southern Maine across the Gulf of Maine, following a strong front with north winds. The apparent lack of



Bohemian Waxwings

Photo by Blair Nikula

reports from other areas supports this hypothesis. However, a report of three hundred Bohemian Waxwings in Montague in western Massachusetts indicates that a movement from some other region, either Vermont or New Hampshire, occurred at about the same time.

For the next two weeks interest in Bohemian Waxwings focused on outer Cape Cod with a few small groups found in widely scattered locations. Then a second major influx occurred from January 21-24. This movement centered around northern Worcester County and the Merrimack River valley. A glaring exception was the presence of three hundred birds in Wakefield on January 22. This report was unusual because it was one of the largest flocks reported during the duration of the flight and one of only a handful from the Greater Boston area. The Merrimack Valley group was centered around West Newbury, where over 320 birds were seen on January 23. A group of three hundred birds seen the same day in Amesbury may actually have been the same flock because only the Merrimack River separated the two sightings. Reports of birds in this area lasted little more than a week.

After the onslaught, groups of Bohemian Waxwings both small and large were widely scattered, but concentrations continued to be reported from Charlemont/Heath, Amherst, northern Worcester County (primarily in the Hardwick/Athol area), Halifax, outer Cape Cod, and Nantucket. The Nantucket birds may have been present as a result of the presumed over-water flight that reached Cape Cod. They were very scarce in southern portions of the state and completely absent on Martha's Vineyard despite active searching. Rhode Island

had none, and they were present in Connecticut apparently only in the northwestern corner of the state. Reports during March came predominantly from Berkshire County. The predominance of reports in the western portion of the state at this time suggests a general departure toward their home range. However, a group in Halifax proved reliable into April.

The Bohemian Waxwings showed a strong preference for ornamental crab apples, multiflora rose hips, and winterberry, a wild native holly found commonly on Cape Cod. Bittersweet and mountain ash were also taken when available. In areas where they were especially sought, it appeared that small flocks would amalgamate into one large flock before splitting up again into smaller flocks of varying sizes. The birds were highly mobile, often present for only a short period of time in any given area. The waxwings had a voracious appetite and would soon deplete a small food resource and then abandon the area. Locating them often seemed a very frustrating experience even though they had been present in a given area half an hour earlier.

The largest previous flight of Bohemian Waxwings into Massachusetts occurred in late winter 1969, when approximately 335 birds were seen, two-thirds of which were present at Worcester airport. It is virtually impossible to put a precise figure on the number present from January to March 1994, but certainly several thousand appears to be a realistic estimate.

Bohemian Waxwings are superficially similar to Cedar Waxwings in many respects. However, closer inspection reveals that they are larger and gray in overall coloration with a pinkish blush about the face. The wings sport obvious white patches, and some show prominent yellow patches as well. The long undertail coverts are chestnut. The sleek crest often appears longer and bushier than in a Cedar Waxwing and more prone to blowing in the wind. In sum, they have an understated yet elegant beauty that must be seen to be appreciated, as those who successfully sought these scarce Westerners can attest. For those who were unsuccessful in their searches, we can only hope, for their sakes and ours, that the Bohemian Waxwing flight of 1994 will be repeated soon.

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RICHARD A. FORSTER is a frequent contributor to *Bird Observer*, particularly to the summaries for the bird sightings reports. The focus of much of Dick's work has been the Sudbury River Valley and Essex County in Massachusetts. Dick wishes to thank Blair Nikula and Seth Kellogg for providing details of sightings beyond the reporting area of this journal.

BOOK REVIEW: *In Trouble Again: A Journey
Between the Orinoco and the Amazon*

by Alden Clayton

In Trouble Again: A Journey Between the Orinoco and the Amazon by Redmond O'Hanlon. 1992, Random House, New York. \$11.00 (paperback).

"Escape civilization, but not the comforts of civilization" is the headline in a current nature tour brochure. *In Trouble Again* is a book about escaping from civilization *and* leaving behind—totally and absolutely—all of the comforts of civilization. If you have nurtured a secret desire to see the wildlife of the Amazon basin the "native way," let's say three months along the river systems between the Orinoco and the Amazon in a dugout canoe with native guides, read this book. It will change your mind and put an end to such dreams forever. If you have already made plans, and it is too late to cancel, do not read this book. It will only double your suffering before and during the trip.

This is not a trip for people who worry about diseases, particularly exotic and dangerous infections.

There is Chagas' disease, for instance, produced by a protozoan, *Tripanozoma cruzii*, and carried by various species of Assassin bugs which bite you on the face or neck and then, gorged, defecate next to the puncture. When you scratch the resulting itch you rub the droppings and their cargo of protozoa into your bloodstream; between one and twenty years later you begin to die from incurable damage to the heart and brain.

Nor is this a trip for people whose tolerance for insects is low and who wish to be aware of them only on the outside of a well-screened back porch.

We tied the dugouts on long ropes to a tree, climbed the sloping ramp of granite which led to the little cliff, and made a shelter in the forest behind it. Huge flies with zebra-striped rear ends zigzagged everywhere and landed on everything; and tiny, yellow-brown flies settled all over our hands and faces, crawled into our eyes and nostrils, and clustered at the edges of our mouths. "Sweat bees," said Juan.

People who only enjoy rain through a window pane should not do this trip.

The rain drummed on the canvas as if each drop were trying to get at us, personally. It rebounded off the leaves and the trunks and sliced into the shelter at a thousand different angles. Fragmented droplets snapped across the ground sheet . . . Dawn merely lightened the lines of falling water from grey-black to grey, and through the gap at the end of my hammock I could see out for no more than ten or

twelve yards. I unwrapped myself from the SAS groundsheet, a defence against the big biting flies, whose proboscides, I had discovered, lance through cotton shirts and hammocks and trousers without a pause, but buckle against canvas: I sat up and drew a deep breath of wet, rancid air. Already covered in microscopic algae and fungus, the hammock and mosquito net and I and everyone else were beginning to smell of rotten butter.

Finally, this is not a trip for people who enjoy observing wildlife but who do not necessarily enjoy eating what they have just seen—caiman, river turtle, anaconda, armadillo, agouti, curassow, peccary, tapir (tapir steak is a rare treat), and (somewhat reluctantly) monkey flesh. These are the native bill-of-fare.

The title of *In Trouble Again* traces to Redmond O'Hanlon's previous book, *Into the Heart of Borneo*, a publication that established his reputation as a travel writer with sensitivity to nature and a sense of humor. O'Hanlon is a product of Oxford, a fellow of the Royal Geographic Society, and natural history editor of *The Times Literary Supplement*.

When we first pick up on O'Hanlon, he is planning another adventure. In the tradition of the great British explorers of the nineteenth century it will be a journey of discovery and hardship. O'Hanlon's goal lies in the Amazon basin. His knowledge of natural history and his special fascination with birds are ideal attributes for such an undertaking.

The size of the Amazon and the amount of water contained in its huge drainage area are difficult to fully comprehend. The statistics are staggering. The Amazon's drainage area of 2,280,000 square miles is almost two-thirds the size of Canada, and it contains two-thirds of all the river water of the world. Transportation within this vast basin is almost exclusively and not surprisingly on the surface of the water. There are 14,000 miles of navigable waters (boats and large ships of various kinds) and several million miles through swamps and forests that are seasonally usable for travel by native dugouts and canoes.

The Amazon is the world's largest river. At flood its mouth may be 300 miles wide, and up to 500 billion cubic feet of water per day are emptied into the Atlantic with a current so strong that the river water flows 125 miles into the ocean before it begins to mix with salt water. Another way to think about the meaning of these numbers is to relate 500 billion cubic feet of water to human water consumption. One day of this flow would sustain New York City's freshwater use for nine years. The Amazon system contains 1100 tributaries, of which seventeen are over 1000 miles long—longer than the Rhine (820 miles) and the St. Lawrence (800 miles) and almost as long as the Columbia (1243 miles). The largest of these tributaries is the Rio Negro. Its black waters are poured into the Amazon at a rate up to four times the volume of Mississippi River water emptied into the Gulf of Mexico.

Perhaps the most amazing fact about the Amazon is its shallow

gradient—only two inches per mile from Iquitos to the Atlantic, a distance of 2300 miles. Thus, unlike other rivers whose waters are pulled downstream by gravity, the Amazon is more pushed than pulled by the huge volume of water cascading down the Andes and accumulating at flood in the enormous reservoir of streams and swamps within the Amazon basin.

The Amazon is an ancient river. Hundreds of millions of years ago, before the super-continent of Gondwanaland was pulled apart by tectonic drift, the Amazon flowed from east to west. Geologists believe its source was located in the area of the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. As South America drifted westward it collided with the Pacific Ocean plate. The consequence was an upthrust that created the Andes, blocked the flow of the Amazon, and formed a giant freshwater lake. About 50 million years ago the entire continent of South America tilted to the east, thus creating the Amazon drainage system as it exists today.

It is the northern edge of this vast wilderness of water and rain forest that O'Hanlon sets as a point of entry. Strong bodies and river experience are needed. The crew will be organized in Caracas. The priority while still in England is to interest a compatible traveling companion from among O'Hanlon's friends and acquaintances. It is not easy. The poet James Fenton, who accompanied him to Borneo, turns him down flat. "I want you to know that I would not come with you to High Wycombe." O'Hanlon is dismayed. Several other prospects fail to understand his enthusiasm. Finally he talks to Simon Stockton, a friend from his twenties. Simon is deep into the casino lifestyle of London. He knows nothing about the lifestyle of the Amazon, but he agrees to go. "I need to change my life."

In Caracas O'Hanlon goes to the top to organize the expedition. Charles Brewer-Carias is the great explorer and photographer of Venezuela. He is also a popular hero because of his aggressive support of Venezuela's territorial claims against Guyana. Charlie sets the objective. O'Hanlon explains it to Simon.

We're going to try to be the first people to reach Neblina, the highest mountain in South America outside the Andes, via the vast Baria swamp. Then we'll be going down a river that nobody's been down since the seventeenth century, to try and find a fierce people called the Yonomami. Apparently they hit each other over the head in duels with ten-foot-long clubs and they hunt each other with six-foot-long arrows.

For the first time, Simon begins to comprehend what he has gotten into. "Oh thanks," said Simon, concentrating at last . . . "Out of sight. Thanks a bundle for telling me in London. I've always wanted to be slammed in the arse with an arrow and then whacked on the nut with a pole."

Charlie selects the crew: Chimo, who claims to know this route; Glavis, radio operator and cook; Valentine, an old prow-man; and Pablo, very strong

and good with an axe. Charlie pronounces the crew as the best in Venezuela. He also instructs O'Hanlon to hire two dugouts with outboard motors. "Two dugouts?" Redmond asked. "Redmond, you are going to one of the most isolated places on earth. If you break a boat, running it over tree trunks, you could never walk out of that swamp."

A charter plane flies south with O'Hanlon and Simon to the frontier town of San Carlos, where the party assembles and organizes for departure. From here the adventure begins. O'Hanlon's chronicle includes the challenges, the difficulties, the dangers and escapes, the bugs, the rain, the heat—all of the physical hardships and mental stress endured—the day-to-day routine of living off the land, but also the feelings of accomplishment and wondrous nature. The complex relationships of water, the forest, and its inhabitants are observed. Spectacular bird sightings, of which there are many, are noted. O'Hanlon describes an unforgettable meeting with a Harpy Eagle.

Juan woke me with a yell. I opened my eyes and focused them straight into the green-brown pupils of the mightiest eagle in the world. The black and white rounded wings, a good six feet across, seemed to hang above the boat forever; the grey hood and enormous hooked black bill were turned down toward us; the wrist-thick legs and the massive talons, a startling bright yellow, were held straight back towards the long barred tail.

"Jesus," I said.

A bird that lives by ripping monkeys and sloths out of trees, it plainly intended to amuse itself by plucking Juan and me out of the dugout, one in each foot. But then, thinking better of it, with one leisurely beat of the great wings, it rose over the canopy and out of sight.

The party is lost in the Baria swamp. O'Hanlon is intrepid, sometimes discouraged but never deterred, always pushing on. The comfort-loving, totally urbanized Simon despairs about going on. A remote army outpost offers escape. He quits.

"Don't do it," I said. "You'll feel bad about it later. About deserting me . . . you'll never forgive yourself."

"Oh yes I damn well will. I have already, Redmond—I've cried four times in my adult life. Once when my father died; once when my wife left me; once when Pinky my cat was run over in front of me; and every night when we were lost up in that stinking pitsville of a swamp."

The native crew is terrified as Yonamami territory is approached. They threaten to turn back. O'Hanlon doubles their wages and orders them on. With

great trepidation they visit a Yonamami village. They are received with suspicion and barely controlled hostility. They share the village yoppo pipe and experience a wild psychedelic night. With the help of a friendly Yonamami, they slip away through the forest and escape in their canoes.

With aplomb, earthy British humor, and an easy narrative style, O'Hanlon spins out his tale of adventure. In the process he provides a vicarious, "tell it like it is" education about life in the Amazon rain forest. The Amazon is one of the world's great wonders. Everyone who resonates with nature should have an Amazon experience. Start by reading this book.

ALDEN CLAYTON's Amazon experience was closer to "the comforts of civilization" than "the native way." He recalls the particular pleasure of drifting downstream in a canoe, on a day like New England summertime with blue sky and white fleecy clouds overhead, while watching wonderful birds fly across the river from giant tree to giant tree. Alden has contributed to *Bird Observer* from time to time in the past. He is currently department head for book reviews.

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A BIRDER'S GUIDE TO EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

I am pleased to announce that the book, *A Birder's Guide to Eastern Massachusetts*, a joint publishing venture of Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts, Inc., and the American Birding Association (ABA), will be available in late summer 1994.

The book contains twenty-three chapters arranged in six clusters: North Shore, South Shore and Southeastern Massachusetts, West of Boston, Quabbin Reservation, Boston Area, and Cape Cod and the Islands. Early versions of most chapters have appeared in *Bird Observer* over the course of two decades, and all of these chapters have been updated for the book. Several new where-to-go-birding chapters are also contained in the book. Other chapters written especially for the book include an introductory chapter, an appendix on specialty birds of Massachusetts, and a section of bar graphs, all written by Richard Forster; an appendix on pelagic birding by Wayne Petersen; and an appendix on hawkwatching by Paul Roberts. Janet Heywood produced most of the maps for the book. Those of you who are familiar with other books in ABA's *Birder's Guide* series can expect the usual high quality editorial and production standards. We at *Bird Observer* are delighted that this book will soon be available for our readers and other interested birders.

The origins of the book lie in our recognition that Bird Observer's previous book, *Where to Find Birds in Eastern Massachusetts*, published in 1978, was both long out of print and long out of date. The joint venture with ABA resulted from a number of factors, both philosophical and practical. Both organizations share common goals—both are interested in promoting and enhancing recreational birding, the study of birds, and the enjoyment of birds. It seems fitting that a book about finding birds in an area with such a rich tradition in birding, fostered by the influence of such notable individuals as Ludlow Griscom and Roger Tory Peterson, should receive more than regional attention and should be published by an organization that already had a bird-finding guide series well established. This joint publication venture is, therefore, a symbiosis in which both organizations and their respective but overlapping constituencies can benefit. It combines local expertise with high quality publication standards for the benefit of the largest possible audience.

Both organizations realize that public awareness and education are major factors in the conservation efforts necessary to ensure the continued existence of the birds upon which we and our memberships ultimately rely. We hope that this book will help with these efforts by making the birds of our region more accessible, and their understanding and appreciation more enjoyable.

William E. Davis, Jr., President

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FIRST REPORT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS AVIAN RECORDS COMMITTEE (MARC)

by Wayne R. Petersen, MARC Chairman

In the June 1992 issue of *Bird Observer*, the establishment of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (MARC) was announced, and a brief history of the need and rationale for such a Committee was presented. The article indicated that since its inception in 1989, the primary objectives of the MARC were to: (1) establish a protocol for processing unusual bird reports; (2) finalize a set of bylaws that would direct the activities of the Committee; and (3) produce the MARC's state list of Massachusetts birds.

Since the 1992 article appeared, the MARC has been actively working on examining and, in some cases, reevaluating old Massachusetts bird records, along with processing more recent records that have not previously been subjected to rigorous scrutiny. During this time-consuming and often frustrating process, inevitable inconsistencies and discrepancies appeared in the bylaws. Consequently, the bylaws have been refined and improved during the workings of the Committee. Also, after great deliberation, the MARC has produced a state bird list that should prove useful to anyone with an interest in Massachusetts birdlife. Obviously, a state list is never complete; however, the enclosed copy reflects the activities of the MARC as of May 1994. Although the MARC State List is enclosed as a removable tear-out from the current issue of *Bird Observer*, the MARC and the Massachusetts Audubon Society will eventually publish a more compact version of the list, which can be used as a replacement for or a supplement to the existing Massachusetts Audubon Daily Field Card.

While the procedure used in the record review process and the mechanics of the MARC might be of interest to some readers, space does not permit a full detailing of the Committee's bylaws. However, a set of the printed bylaws will be distributed to all Massachusetts bird clubs and local bird record-keepers; individuals who want to obtain a copy may send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the Secretary (Marjorie Rines, 48 Robinhood Road, Arlington, MA 02174).

The MARC List: The enclosed list represents the product of a careful and thoughtful analysis of a number of bird records, some old and some more recent. Not every species on the list has been evaluated by the MARC. Most of those species for which there is no state specimen or recognizable photograph, or those records where existing evidence has never been formally evaluated, were processed by the MARC. For records of birds new to the state, the MARC requires either a unanimous vote or a vote of 8:1 for the record to be accepted.

In addition to species new to Massachusetts, the MARC has also taken action on a number of reports that are defined in the bylaws as: (a) any species

recorded in Massachusetts fewer than ten times overall or fewer than five times in the last twenty years; (b) any rare or difficult to identify species as designated by the Committee; or (c) any record of a species that is judged by the MARC to be geographically or temporally rare. The results of these MARC activities are presented in the tabulation that follows.

Birds marked by an "*" (e.g., Pacific/Arctic Loon) represent pairs of species where, based on evidence before the MARC, one or the other species of the pair unquestionably has occurred in the state, but it was impossible to positively determine which of the species in each pair was present. In each case, the species listed first is the one judged by the MARC to be more likely.

Birds on the supplemental list (e.g., Barnacle Goose) are species of questionable origin. The MARC feels that wild origin of these species is probable, but enough doubt exists that a supplemental designation is the most appropriate way of listing the species.

Actions taken by the MARC since 1989: As indicated above, the MARC has processed a variety of records, each for slightly differing reasons. For records that were accepted by the MARC, information in the tabulation that follows includes the: (a) MARC file number; (b) species (or species pair) name; (c) first date of the appearance of the species; (d) specific locality where the species was recorded; and (e) name of the observer credited with the species' discovery. Species are listed in taxonomic order.

For records not accepted by the MARC, the format is similar to that used for accepted records, with the following exceptions: (1) observer names are omitted; (2) reasons for the record's rejection are listed as [a] identification questionable, [b] natural occurrence questionable, or [c] establishment of introduced population questionable. A First Annual Report of the MARC, to be published in the future, will include more details on the rationale for not accepting certain records.

Three species, Common Ringed Plover, Thayer's Gull, and Black-billed Magpie, which would affect the state list, are currently under consideration.

The **Massachusetts Avian Records Committee** comprises nine voting members and a nonvoting secretary. Voting members include Kathleen Anderson, Bradford Blodget, Richard Forster, Seth Kellogg, Mark Lynch, Blair Nikula, Simon Perkins, Wayne Petersen (Chairman), and Robert Stymeist. The secretary is Marjorie Rines.

The MARC accepted the following records:

84-4	Pacific/Arctic Loon	4/27/84	Manomet	J. Loughlin
84-5	Pacific/Arctic Loon	10/29/84	Plymouth	D. Evered
87-3	Pacific/Arctic Loon	12/12/87	Rockport	S. Perkins
88-2	Pacific/Arctic Loon	7/24/88	Plum Island	M. Lynch
93-7	Eared Grebe	9/18/93	Duxbury	R. Fox
73-1	Black-browed Albatross	9/16/73	Nantucket Sound	R. Veit
76-1	Black-browed Albatross	7/11/76	Jeffreys Ledge	R. Heil
71-1	Yellow-nosed Albatross	5/7/71	Buzzard's Bay	I. Nisbet
76-2	Diomedea species	7/24/76	Newburyport	R. Heil
91-1	Black-capped Petrel	4/22/91	Stellwagen Bank	S. Highley
91-2	Black-capped Petrel	8/19/91	N. Eastham	R. Heil
93-16	White-faced Storm-Petrel	8/24/93	Nantucket Sound	S. Highley
84-1	Band-rumped Storm-Petrel	8/20/84	Hydrographer Canyon	R. Veit
87-1	Anhinga	5/25/87	Nahant	R. Forster
91-3	Anhinga	4/18/91	Lincoln	I. Nisbet
89-1	Little Egret	8/12/89	Plum Island	R. Forster
84-2	White-faced Ibis	4/24/84	Essex	R. Forster
90-2	White-faced Ibis	6/24/90	Topsfield	S. Perkins
90-3	White-faced Ibis	7/25/90	Holden	B. Blodget
23-1	Grtr. White-fronted Goose	11/1/23	N. Truro	J. Peters
54-3	Tufted Duck	1/24/54	Newburyport	S. Eliot
92-8	Tufted Duck	4/19/92	Plymouth	S. Arena
1889-1	Masked Duck	8/27/1889	Malden	C. Corey
10-1	White-tailed Kite	5/30/10	Martha's Vineyard	S. P. Fay
90-1	Terek Sandpiper	6/23/90	Plum Island	D. Stemple
93-5	Black-tailed Godwit	6/23/93	Monomoy Island	B. Nikula
91-5	Bar-tailed Godwit	5/19/91	Monomoy Island	B. Nikula
91-7	Bar-tailed Godwit	8/11/91	Monomoy Island	B. Nikula
92-9	Bar-tailed Godwit	6/3/92	Monomoy Island	B. Nikula
92-10	Bar-tailed Godwit	7/8/92	Monomoy Island	B. Nikula
80-1	Rufous-necked Stint	6/24/80	Monomoy Island	R. Veit
80-2	Rufous-necked Stint	7/17/80	Scituate	W. Petersen
85-1	Little Stint	7/25/85	Scituate	W. Petersen
91-4	Baird's Sandpiper	11/17/91	Newburyport	T. Leukering
91-6	Franklin's Gull	8/5/91	Barnstable	B. Nikula
88-1	California Gull	4/24/88	Newburyport	R. Forster
54-1	White-winged Tern	5/25/54	N. Scituate	J. May
92-5	Ancient Murrelet	11/8/92	Rockport	L. Brinker
73-2	Common Ground-Dove	10/7/73	Monomoy Island	T. Howell
92-4	Rufous Hummingbird	10/18/92	Holyoke	L. Uphatham

78-1	Selasphorous species	4/15/78	Newton	A. McGowan
82-4	Jackdaw	11/28/82	Nantucket	S. Perkins
75-1	Bewick's Wren	9/27/75	Cuttyhunk Island	W. Petersen
93-9	Townsend's Solitaire	11/13/93	Hingham	D. Cooper
77-1	Phainopepla	10/7/77	Tuckernuck	M. Lafarge
79-1	Lucy's Warbler	12/1/79	Ipswich	R. Heil
64-1	Hermit Warbler	5/16/64	Cambridge	O. Earle
93-17	Ash-throated Flycatcher	11/7/93	Arlington	L. Taylor
83-2	Sulphur-bellied/ Streaked Flycatcher	11/12/83	Martha's Vineyard	W. Manter
93-1	Le Conte's Sparrow	3/20/93	Middleboro	M. Sylvia
93-14	Le Conte's Sparrow	10/30/93	Marshfield	D. Brown
68-1	Smith's Longspur	10/12/68	Salisbury	C. Leahy
86-2	Boat-tailed/ Great-tailed Grackle	4/24/86	Newbury	R. Forster

For the following records, the MARC believes that wild individuals of these species may have occurred in the state. However, a captive origin cannot be discounted.

1885-1	Barnacle Goose	11/1/1885	N. Eastham	N. Vickary
68-2	Garganey	5/4/68	Plum Island	P. Wade
78-2	Cinnamon Teal	5/11/78	Monomoy Island	S. Mott
77-2	Steller's Eider	3/29/77	Scituate	R. Vernon
61-1	Common Chaffinch	4/1/61	Chatham	Reynolds
79-2	Brambling	2/79	Mansfield	R. Everett
93-12	Brambling	11/8/93	Groveland	L. Cooper
83-3	Eurasian Siskin	5/5/83	Rockport	O. Norris

The MARC did not accept the following records based on "identification questionable." In some cases identification may have been correct, but the documentation provided was not sufficient to allow acceptance.

83-1	Arctic Loon	1/21/83	Rockport	
82-3	Yellow-billed Loon	11/14/82	Salisbury	
85-2	Yellow-billed Loon	3/16/85	Nantucket Sound	
87-2	Yellow-billed Loon	4/14/87	Tuckernuck	
93-2	Brown Pelican	3/21/93	Erving	
81-1	Anhinga	6/13/81	N. of Boston	
93-14	Magnificent Frigatebird	5/21/93	W. Newbury	
93-13	Mississippi Kite	9/12/93	Ipswich	
92-7	Swainson's Hawk	11/29/92	Wareham	

86-1	Northern Hobby	9/28/86	Monomoy Island
86-3	Greater Golden-Plover	11/23/86	Monomoy Island
93-8	Bar-tailed Godwit	9/2/93	Monomoy Island
92-11	Franklin's Gull	9/7/92	Wellesley
93-3	Ivory Gull	3/14/93	Nantucket
54-2	Vermilion Flycatcher	10/22/54	Plum Island
92-6	Hermit Warbler	10/20/92	Martha's Vineyard
92-1	Black-headed Grosbeak	5/20/92	Rockland
92-3	Black-headed Grosbeak	5/14/92	Leverett
59-1	Black-throated Sparrow	11/4/59	Deerfield
63-1	Black-throated Sparrow	4/12/63	N. Amherst
93-10	Henslow's Sparrow	10/16/93	Salem
93-4	Harris' Sparrow	4/18/93	Newton
93-11	Scott's Oriole	5/22/93	Cambridge
90-4	Cassin's Finch	1/29/90	Athol

The MARC did not accept any records of the following species based on "questionable origin."

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European Goldfinch

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AMERICAN ROBINS NESTING IN PHRAGMITES

by Kenneth Hudson

The American Robin has long been known to breed in a variety of habitats and to use a diverse array of substrates to support its nest. Still, one might assume that by now all possible kinds of nesting locations would have been observed and reported. But during the spring of 1993, in Boston's Fenway neighborhood, I found ten robin nests that had been built in phragmites reeds bordering a shallow freshwater stream.

When I notified the North American Nest-Record Card Program at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology about this discovery, they informed me that no other reports of robins nesting in phragmites could be found in their files. At last count Cornell's file of American Robin nest cards totaled more than 16,000 (Lowe 1993, pers. comm.). What I had noticed by mere happenstance at the Fens turned out to be something new (or at least something newly reported).

To say that I was surprised to find robins nesting in phragmites would be an understatement. In earlier seasons I had observed Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles nesting in phragmites at the Fens and at the nearby Riverway. I had also observed that many birds use these giant reeds for shelter and as a place in which to seek food. But I had not imagined that robins might breed in such apparently unsuitable habitat.

I found the first nest on April 29. It was about three feet above the ground in a dense reedbed. At that season fresh green reed growth had barely begun to sprout among the tall dead stalks left over from the previous year. The nest was supported entirely by old dry reedstalks. Identification was absurdly easy: an adult robin was clearly visible in the nest. At first I felt that this find might be an anomaly without much significance. Still, I kept my eyes open and paid a bit more attention than usual to the local reedbeds.

The very next day, April 30, I found two more robin nests in reeds at the Fens. Two additional nests were added to the list on May 2. On May 3 I tallied four more. The tenth and last nest of the year was found on June 7. In view of these dates all of the nests, except possibly the last, were likely of the season's first brood nesting attempts. Every one of these nests was supported solely by dead reedstalks. With one exception, all were found at or near the landward side of reedbeds—that is, on the side opposite the stream. Each nest was between approximately three and six feet above the ground. In every instance identification was confirmed by observing, and in some cases photographing, an adult robin at or in the nest.

Unfortunately, I was not able to see whether any of the nests contained eggs or nestling birds. Therefore, information such as clutch sizes and fledging success rates are not available. (I would dearly like to know the latter statistic in

particular, and to compare it with the corresponding figures for nests in more orthodox sites.) On a couple of occasions later in the season I saw recently fledged robins in the reeds not far from known nest sites. Of course, these birds might have hatched in some nearby tree or bush.

Most of the known robin nests in the Fens reedbeds were relatively easy to see once initially spotted. Dull overcast days turned out to be the most favorable conditions for seeing the nests, because bright sunshine produced confusing patterns of light and shadow among which nests were hard to pick out. A couple of nests were so visible from nearby paths or sidewalks that I wondered why no other birders had noticed and reported them. But one nest proved to be an exception. The nest was embedded in an extremely close-packed clump of reedstalks that leaned at an angle of about forty-five degrees. The reeds concealed the nest so effectively that I was unable to see more than a tiny part of it no matter how I shifted my viewpoint. Even from a distance of only four or five paces it was almost invisible. I am still amazed that the adult birds were able somehow to squeeze through that compact vegetation and construct a nest in it. The site truly appeared more appropriate for an arboreal snake than for a robust songbird.

In all, I found ten robin nests in phragmites and forty-four in other plants, primarily deciduous small trees and bushes (e.g., rose, lilac, ash, birch, red-black oak), during the 1993 season. Thus, approximately eighteen percent of the known robin nests (determined by clearly seeing an adult bird at or in the nest) were located in phragmites.

If a few careful observers will visit the Fens in future seasons and do some painstaking fieldwork, a lot more light can be shed on this intriguing matter of robins nesting in phragmites. Exactly how many of them are doing so and what proportion of the local robin population they comprise are questions that remain to be answered. Also remaining to be answered is the extent to which robins in other locations might be nesting in phragmites. I encourage readers to visit the nearest reedbed and watch for such behavior.

The chief lesson to be learned from these observations is that time spent studying bird behavior is never wasted. Even when the species is abundant, widespread, well known, and easily identified, there is always a real possibility of learning something entirely new about it. If you cannot travel to the tropical rain forests to discover a new species, stay close to home, and discover a common species doing something that no one has reported before.

References

- Lowe, J. 1993. Personal Communication (letter to K. Hudson, June 7, 1993, regarding inquiry on American Robins nesting in phragmites), Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Ithaca, New York.

KENNETH HUDSON has been a naturalist and birder for many years.

After moving to Boston over twenty years ago, he became seriously interested in the urban habitat. He has written several reports and articles on Boston's birds, including "Birding Boston: The Common to the Fens" (*Bird Observer* 20(6):296-306).

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THE BATTLE FOR THE FISH

On January 22, 1994, I was leading a birding class in the Newburyport area. We were visiting Deer Island, where we had just seen several immature Bald Eagles at a distance. After the eagles took wing, we looked at a small pool of open water in the otherwise frozen river. Several Common Mergansers and a Great Cormorant were fishing in this pool, which was bathed in spectacular midwinter afternoon light.

The Great Cormorant suddenly bobbed up to the surface with a large catfish in its mouth. The fish seemed almost too large for the cormorant to swallow, and the large bird labored to toss the fish around until it was turned head first, suitable for swallowing, into the predator's bill. The still-living fish flailed to and fro while the cormorant dove into the water, attempting to get a better grip on it. The cormorant then crawled out onto the ice, trying to do the same. Minutes passed, and it appeared that the fish might be just too big for the cormorant to swallow.

Suddenly, a Great Black-backed Gull dropped onto the ice and moved toward the cormorant, which quickly returned into the water with the fish. The gull strode over to the edge of the ice and grabbed the tail of the fish, the head of which was still in the bill of the cormorant. The gull then pulled hard at the fish, physically yanking the Great Cormorant entirely out of the water and dragging it onto the ice.

I was about to tell the class that there was no doubt as to who was going to win this contest, when I was preemptively proved wrong. Suddenly, the gull simply let go of the fish. The cormorant slid backward into the water, fish in tow. Only then did I see an adult Bald Eagle swooping down onto the ice, next to the gull. The class and I were mesmerized by the spectacular sight of this eagle coming head-on to us, wings flared back to brake itself as it landed on the ice.

Clearly, the eagle had been perched in a large pine tree across the river from the pool, waiting for just such an opportunity, and sufficiently camouflaged that none of us had seen the bird. The gull had clearly spied the eagle well before we had.

The gull played coy, while the eagle merely looked around. It then dawned on me that the cormorant and fish had disappeared from view. Suddenly, the bird bobbed up to the top of the water once again, with a severe thickening of its throat, and then took a brief drink, half rose out of the water, and shook itself, before it returned to swimming casually. The eagle took off, returning to its secretive perch, and the gull took off shortly thereafter.

The mini-drama had been captivating. Apart from the awesome view of the eagle, what struck me was how powerful the Great Black-backed Gull must be, that it could pull a Great Cormorant entirely out of the water. Only on writing this note did it dawn on me how tough that fish must have been, too.

Paul Roberts, Medford, Massachusetts

THE BIRDS AND THE BURRS

I was birding the Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary in Marshfield, Massachusetts, on February 11, 1994. It was about 9:30 A.M., there was little or no wind, and it was snowing. The ground was covered with about two feet of snow from the previous two-day storm. I was walking on the Piggery Loop trail. This area comprises a variety of vegetation; apple trees, honeysuckle bushes, stinging nettle, buckthorn, mulberry, and a crop of common burdock. It was here that I saw a Black-capped Chickadee and a Tufted Titmouse pulling the burr (fruit) off a common burdock stalk. The chickadee flew up to the honeysuckle bush nearby and proceeded to open the burr. At first I thought that the birds were eating the seeds from the burr, but I watched the chickadee as it pecked at the burr with vigor. Most of the burr fell onto the snow-covered ground. I pulled a burr from the burdock and opened it up. The inside appeared to be a woody-segmented rosette with fine hairs. After pulling the rosette apart, I found an insect larva that appeared to be overwintering in a hole bored laterally through the center of a few segments (seeds). I then opened more of the burrs, and in about seventy-five percent of them I found larvae. The chickadee and titmouse were probably feeding on these larvae.

With the help of Phil Perkins from the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology, Entomology Department, the larvae were identified as those of the bruchida beetle. These beetles lay their eggs on the developing fruit of a plant. The larvae bore into the seed and eat its contents, killing the seed. When they attack weeds, these beetles can be beneficial; however, agriculturally they can be a pest.

On March 13, 1994, I returned to Piggery Loop and found that the burdock patch had been stripped of almost all of its burrs. The burdock, considered to be a waste plant, provided the chickadee and titmouse a hearty food source this snowy winter.

Frances M. Garretson, Marshfield, Massachusetts

BIRD SIGHTINGS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1994

SUMMARY



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

Few of us will forget the winter of 1994: cold, snowy, and generally unpleasant. January's temperature averaged 22.2°, 6.4° below normal, ranking it as the 10th coldest January in 124 years of records. The low for the month was -4° on the 16th. The high was 54° on the 28th, up 54° from the zero reading the previous day. Snowfall totaled 33.7 inches, 21.7 inches higher than the average and the third highest January snowfall in 104 years. February was no improvement. Snowy and cold, the temperature averaged 26.9°, 3.4° below normal. The high was 62° on the 20th, and the low was 3° on the 10th. Snow totaled 36.2 inches, 24.9 inches over the past average. This was second only to 1969 for the snowiest February in 104 years, and the third snowiest of any month. Combined with January, the total of 69.9 inches set a new January-February record.

M. W. R.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

An excellent count of Red-throated Loons was made along the south coast of Martha's Vineyard in mid-January. The loons were undoubtedly forced south by the hard weather that began immediately after Christmas day and continued seemingly unabated. The loon count is the best-ever documented occurrence of such a hard weather movement. The Pacific Loon found in Truro was likely the same bird that has been present in the Provincetown/Truro area for at least the past two winters. Both Horned and, particularly, Red-necked grebes were poorly reported. An Eared Grebe was discovered at Andrew's Point, Rockport, one of the few recent reports of this species during winter. It remained through the reporting period to be enjoyed by a large contingent of observers. A Northern Fulmar found beached but alive in Gloucester was an unusual report.

The waterfowl situation became alarming in early January when the prolonged cold weather froze most fresh water and even some coastal bays and inlets. The widespread frozen water resulted in concentrations of birds at the few remaining areas of open water. At the Mystic River in Medford, for example, among a varied assortment of ducks, seven Redheads were present. Further testimony to the severe conditions was a large flock of scaup and Canvasbacks on the ocean off Woods Hole. Fortunately conditions ameliorated just enough at the end of February to forestall widespread mortality of waterfowl. Otherwise, waterfowl were reported in normal numbers. A drake Blue-winged Teal was a rare find at Marstons Mills, and a total of four Northern Shovelers from three locations was a good winter total. Harlequin Ducks were present in good numbers, while King Eiders were unusually scarce. Reports of Barrow's Goldeneyes, mostly singles, were widespread. Most impressive was the number of Common Goldeneyes on Nantucket.

R. A. F.

RAPTORS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Raptors in general were very well reported. Included in the Turkey Vulture reports were migrants returning after a brief warm spell in mid-February. Bald Eagles were particularly widespread in January, perhaps in response to more birds being displaced due to frozen waters further north. Rough-legged Hawks were a little below average except for a fine showing in Middleboro. The only Golden Eagles were noted at their Quabbin stronghold.

Rails were poorly reported, but the Clapper Rail in Fairhaven was a nice find at an unusual location. The usual wintering shorebirds were present in reduced numbers. Killdeers also responded to the brief warm spell in February and were reported from several locations. The American Oystercatcher at Fairhaven on January 1 represented one of the few mid-winter reports for the species. The Short-billed Dowitcher on Martha's Vineyard was clearly the shorebird of the season. The bird was carefully studied at very close range. More importantly it was heard to utter its distinctive call on numerous occasions. All previous records of winter dowitchers that were identified to species were the more expected Long-billed Dowitcher.

Few reports were received for Purple Sandpiper.

Like other waterbirds, gulls were reported in low numbers this season. The number of wintering Common Black-headed Gulls was well below recent standards. After a few reports on January 1, Bonaparte's Gulls were reported only once more in the period, in late February. A sprinkling of Iceland Gulls were observed inland. At Newburyport a high percentage of the Iceland Gulls were adults, and among the obvious "kumlieni" subspecies (with gray in the tips of its wings) were individuals apparently with clear white tips to the primaries. This leads to speculation that these may have been nominate "glaucoides" that breed in Greenland and winter in Iceland and Great Britain. Determining whether nominate "glaucoides" winters in North America, at least on occasion, is one of the more perplexing questions concerning gull distribution. Two Herring Gull x Great Black-backed Gull hybrids were reported, one of these a bird that returned to Lynn for at least the third consecutive winter. It was a fine winter for Glaucous Gull including birds both along the coast and inland. Amazingly two of these birds were color-banded, leading to the possibility that we can determine the breeding source of those few individuals that reach our area in winter. Reports of Black-legged Kittiwake were better than usual for mid-winter, but more significant was the total lack of reports from outer Cape Cod.

The scattering of Dovekie reports were unusual because they are normally very scarce in mid-winter. The typical few Thick-billed Murres were reported, and a Common Murre was observed at Provincetown where it has become fairly regular in recent winters. With the single exception of a significant report from Provincetown, Razorbill numbers were about average. Black Guillemots were present in good numbers at Cape Ann, and a handful of Atlantic Puffins graced the Outer Cape, including one that was unfortunately found dead.

A Barn Owl in West Newbury in January was a particularly hardy individual. A surprising number of Snowy Owls appeared at coastal locations south of Boston, somewhat more surprising in a presumably "nonflight" year. Long-eared and Short-eared owls were not well reported. Most Northern Saw-whet Owls were in Worcester County. A single Red-headed Woodpecker was reported, but Red-bellied Woodpeckers were widespread and appear to be well established. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were noted in widely scattered locations. A **Black-backed Woodpecker**, unaccompanied by details, was reported from Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, but could not be relocated despite an intensive search. R. A. F.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH GROSBEAKS

A maximum of over 80 Fish Crows could be found each early morning congregating near the Friendly's at the Watertown Mall, a step up from the McDonald's crow roost in Framingham. Red-breasted Nuthatches continued in exceptional numbers, especially in Worcester County (the Quabbin CBC on January 1 tallied 1886 individuals!). The Boreal Chickadee continued throughout the period along River Road in West Boylston, where White-winged Crossbills and Pine Siskins were also found.

Carolina Wrens and Eastern Bluebirds seem to be adjusting to the harsh New England weather. American Robins were also reported in exceptionally high numbers throughout the area. The **Townsend's Solitaire** first found in Hingham on November 13, 1993, was last seen on New Year's Day.

At least six **Varied Thrushes** turned up near feeders. Varied Thrush has a similar range to that of the **Bohemian Waxwing**, which also staged an unprecedented invasion. A full report of the Bohemian invasion appears elsewhere in this issue of *Bird Observer*.

An **Ovenbird** in Ipswich was among the warbler highlights. A male Painted Bunting frequented the same feeder in Brewster where it wintered last year. Good numbers of towhees were noted, many seen at feeders, where they were apparently driven by the harsh winter. It was a good winter for sparrows. A **Harris' Sparrow** and as many as 12 White-crowned Sparrows were found at a farm in South Dartmouth. Other noteworthy sparrows included a Clay-colored Sparrow on Nantucket, a Lark Sparrow in Bridgewater, and a Grasshopper Sparrow in Peabody.

A **Chestnut-collared Longspur**, originally reported on December 31, continued in Salisbury through the first week of January. The longspur was only the fifth state record. A **Yellow-headed Blackbird** made a brief appearance in South Dartmouth on New Year's Day.

Common Redpolls were everywhere, and by mid-January more and more were showing up at feeding stations. At least three **Hoary Redpolls** were reported among these, although details were not received. Pine Grosbeaks, both Red and White-winged crossbills, Pine Siskins, and Evening Grosbeaks were all reported, with the majority of reports from central Massachusetts. R. H. S.

Date	Location	Number	Observers	Date	Location	Number	Observers
Red-throated Loon				1/20	Newburyport	1	R. Forster#
1/2	P.I.	4	D. Chickering	Greater White-fronted Goose			
1/12	Chilmark	600+	V. Laux#	2/7	New Bedford	2	M. LaBossiere
2/6	Salisbury	8	M. Lynch#	Snow Goose			
Pacific Loon				1/1	W. Boxford	1	T. Walker#
2/18	Truro	1	G. Martin	1/15-31	Falmouth	1	P. Trimble#
Common Loon				1/27-2/28	Boston	1 imm	T. Aversa + v. o.
1/2	Ipswich	15	J. Berry	1/30	Nantucket	1	J. Papale
2/5	Westport	16	M. Lynch#	2/15	Plymouth	1	K. Hamilton
2/6	Salisbury	17	M. Lynch#	Brant			
Pied-billed Grebe				1/1	Bourne	12	K. Anderson
thr	Lakeville	1-2	v. o.	1/3	New Bedford	88	M. Boucher
1/8	Newton	1	J. Hepburn#	1/22	Provincetown	500	M. Lynch#
1/15	Wareham	8	M. Lynch#	1/22	Duxbury	25	H. Wiggin#
1/23	Edgartown	1	V. Laux	2/8	Nahant	30	I. Lynch
1/29	Marstons Mills	1	P. Trimble	2/21	Boston H.	630	TASL (M. Hall)
2/3	Plymouth	1	M. LaBossiere	Barnacle Goose			
Horned Grebe				2/6	S. Dartmouth	1	R. Stymeist#
1/2	P.I.	7	D. Chickering	Canada Goose			
1/2	Ipswich	14	J. Berry	1/2	Newburyport	500	J. Berry
1/29	Westport	7	BBC (R. Stymeist)	1/2	W. Boxford	385	S. Charette
1/31	Fairhaven	38	J. Botelho	1/29	Westport	1275	BBC (R. Stymeist)
2/13	Lawrence	1	J. Hogan	2/20	Rochester	1000	G. d'Entremont#
2/18	Cape Ann	14	N. Nash	Wood Duck			
2/20	Lakeville	1	K. Anderson	thr	Medford	2 m	v. o.
2/20	P.I.	6	M. Pelikan	1/8	Boston (F.Pk)	1 f	T. Aversa
Red-necked Grebe				1/31	Westport	1 m	M. Boucher
1/1-31	Dennis	15 max	1/2 B. Nikula	2/21	Waltham	3	C. Ralph
1/3	Gloucester	2	D. Chickering	2/27	Cumb. Farms	1 m	J. Hoye#
2/19	Provincetown	10	B. Nikula	2/27	Lakeville	3 m	J. Hoye#
2/19	Newbypt H.	1	N. Nash	Green-winged Teal			
Eared Grebe (details submitted)				1/1-31	Rosindale	1-3	T. Aversa
1/25-2/28	Rockport (A.P.)	1	D. Lane + v. o.	1/2	Cambridge	2 m	L. Taylor
Northern Fulmar				1/6	Salisbury	1 m	H. Wiggin#
1/16	Gloucester	1	J. Steigar	1/15	W. Barnstable	13	P. Trimble
Northern Gannet				1/25	Marstons Mills	3	T. Aversa
1/1	Rockport	12	BBC (J.J. Nove)	2/5	Newburyport	1 f	R. Heil
2/19	Rockport	1	H. D'Entremont#	2/26	W. Peabody	2 m	R. Heil
Great Cormorant				2/28	Cambridge	6	M. Rines
1/22	Eastham (F.E.)	100	J. Hoye#	American Black Duck			
2/5	Lakeville	3	K. Holmes	1/2	P.I.	1000	D. Chickering
2/18	Waltham	1 ad	R. Forster	1/15	Wareham	290	M. Lynch#
2/19	Newburyport	65+	R. Heil	1/15	Plymouth	520	M. Lynch#
2/19	Amesbury	70	J. Berry	2/5	Westport	1400	M. Lynch#
Double-crested Cormorant				2/19	Newburyport	875	R. Heil
1/1	Plymouth	1	R. Forster	Northern Pintail			
1/2	Nantucket	2	G. d'Entremont#	thr	Medford	2	v. o.
1/15	Wareham	1	M. Lynch#	1/2	Yarmouthport	20+	B. Nikula
1/15	Plymouth	1	M. Lynch#	1/22	Edgartown	20	V. Laux#
American Bittern				1/29	Westport	12	BBC (R. Stymeist)
2/8	Harwich	1	B. Nikula	2/5	Ipswich	2 m	J. Berry
2/19	Nantucket	1	P. Loring#	2/20	Cumb. Farms	3	K. Anderson
Great Blue Heron				thr	Reports of individuals from 5 locations		
1/2	Nantucket	20	G. d'Entremont#	Blue-winged Teal			
1/15	Falmouth	6	P. Trimble	1/30	Marstons Mills	1 m	P. Trimble
1/29	Westport	7	BBC (R. Stymeist)	Northern Shoveler			
2/19	Amesbury	2	J. Berry	1/1	S. Dartmouth	1	M. Boucher
thr	Reports of indiv. from 12 locations			1/15	W. Barnstable	1	P. Trimble
Black-crowned Night-Heron				2/17	Medford	2	L. Taylor
1/2	Nantucket	4	G. d'Entremont#	Gadwall			
1/20	M.V.	2	V. Laux	1/1	S. Dartmouth	1 m	M. Boucher
2/6	Boston	1 ad	T. Aversa	1/2	Belmont	3	L. Taylor
2/7	Charlestown	1	M. Hall	1/2	Marstons Mills	27	B. Nikula#
Mute Swan				1/5	Fairhaven	2	J. Botelho
thr	Medford	4-6	v. o.	1/11	Wareham	1	M. Sylvia
1/1	Wareham	75	K. Anderson	1/15	Plymouth	2	M. Lynch#
1/22	Falmouth	110	R. Turner	1/15	Medford	2	P. Roberts
1/29	Westport	143	BBC (R. Stymeist)	1/22	Chilmark	10	V. Laux
Black Swan (escape)				2/3	Plymouth	3	M. LaBossiere

Gadwall (cont.)								
2/12 Gloucester	4		T. Aversa#	2/20 Newburyport	100		M. Pelikan	
Eurasian Wigeon				Black Scoter				
1/1-15 Plymouth	1		v. o.	1/10 Plymouth B.	50		J.B. Nove	
1/1-31 E. Harwich	1 m		v. o.	1/29 Westport	50	BBC (R. Stymeist)		
1/2 Centerville	1 m		B. Nikula#	2/5 Rockport	24		T. Young	
American Wigeon				Surf Scoter				
thr Medford	1-5		v. o.	1/10 Plymouth B.	400+		J.B. Nove	
1/1 Wareham	5		K. Anderson	2/5 Rockport	3		T. Young	
1/2 Fairhaven	4		D. Zimmerlin	2/5 Westport	400+		M. Lynch#	
1/9 Plymouth	125		BBC (T. Prince)	White-winged Scoter				
1/11 Wareham	19		M. Sylvia	1/10 Plymouth B.	300+		J.B. Nove	
1/25 Barnstable	2		T. Aversa	2/5 Rockport	170		T. Young	
Canvasback				Common Goldeneye				
1/11 Wareham	51		M. Sylvia	thr Lawrence	22		S. Charette	
1/15 Falmouth	6		P. Trimble	1/12 Nantucket	3000		E. Andrews#	
1/22 Woods Hole	175		H. Wiggin#	1/15 Plymouth	72		M. Lynch#	
1/29 Westport	70	BBC (R. Stymeist)		1/31 Fairhaven	470		J. Botelho	
2/12 Gloucester	1 m		T. Aversa	2/19 Westport	200+		S. Arena	
2/20 Lakeville	16		K. Anderson	2/19 Newburyport	610		R. Heil	
Redhead				2/20 Lakeville	20		K. Anderson	
1/1 Cambridge (F.P.)	1		C. Cook	2/21 Boston H.	531	TASL (M. Hall)		
1/9-2/14 Medford	7		v. o.	Barrow's Goldeneye				
1/15 Plymouth	2		M. Lynch#	1/1-31 M.V.	5+		V. Laux#	
1/22 Woods Hole	1 m		H. Wiggin#	1/1-15 Osterville	1 m		P. Trimble	
1/22 Gay Head	1 m		V. Laux#	1/1-2/6 S. Dartmouth	1 m		M. Boucher	
1/29 Westport	4	BBC (R. Stymeist)		1/3 Wellfleet	1 m		G. Martin	
2/3 Plymouth	1		M. LaBossiere	1/9 Rockport	1 m		B. Parker	
Ring-necked Duck				1/22-2/19 Newbypt.	1-2		v. o.	
thr Medford	3-6		v. o.	1/24-2/28 Winthrop	1		v. o.	
1/9 Taunton	5		S. Arena	1/28-31 S. Yarmouth	2 m		v. o.	
1/15 Plymouth	38		M. Lynch#	2/6 Gloucester	1 m		J. Berry#	
1/22 Falmouth	30		H. Wiggin#	2/6 Lawrence	1 f		J. Hogan	
2/8 Framingham	9		M. Krier	2/20 Magnolia	1		L. High	
2/12 Wayland	4		B. Howell	Bufflehead				
2/20 Lakeville	27		M. Boucher	1/15 Wareham	270		M. Lynch#	
Greater Scaup				1/31 Fairhaven	80		J. Botelho	
1/30 Newburyport	9		J. Berry#	2/5 Westport	180+		M. Lynch#	
2/17 Winthrop	1500+		M. Hall	2/6 Salis./Newbypt.	290+		M. Lynch#	
2/19 S. Dartmouth	40		H. Wiggin#	2/21 Boston H.	758	TASL (M. Hall)		
2/20 Rowley	4 m		J. Berry	Hooded Merganser				
2/20 Lakeville	9		K. Anderson	thr Medford	12 max		M. Rines	
Lesser Scaup				1/1 Watertown	35		R. Stymeist	
1/6 Plymouth	2	BBC (T. Prince)		1/2 Nantucket	17	G. d'Entremont#		
1/15 Falmouth	6		P. Trimble	1/11 Wareham	41		M. Sylvia	
1/29 Westport	1 m	BBC (R. Stymeist)		1/15 Falmouth	40		P. Trimble	
2/5 Dartmouth	16		J. Hoye#	1/31 Worcester	6		R. Bradbury	
2/19 Newburyport	1 m		J. Berry#	2/16 Boston	7		T. Aversa	
2/20 Lakeville	40		K. Holmes	2/21 Raynham	8		S. Arena	
scaup species				thr Reports of 1-3 indiv. from 8 locations				
1/22 Woods Hole	600		H. Wiggin#	Common Merganser				
Common Eider				1/1-31 Lawrence	18 max		S. Charette	
1/10 Plymouth B.	2000+		J.B. Nove	1/8 Medford	14		M. Rines	
1/23 Truro/Ptown	1300	BBC (B. Volkle)		1/16 Bridgewater	15		K. Holmes	
1/29 Westport	355	BBC (R. Stymeist)		1/11 Wareham	88		M. Sylvia	
1/29 Rockport	900	BBC (W. Drummond)		1/30 Amesbury	50		J. Berry	
2/5 Nahant	550		J. Brown#	2/19 Newburyport	45		J. Berry	
2/19 Salisbury	550		R. Heil	2/20 Lakeville	27		K. Anderson	
2/17 Winthrop	6500+		M. Hall	Red-breasted Merganser				
King Eider				1/1 Bourne	15		K. Anderson	
1/8-25 Manomet	1 m		J.B. Nove	1/15 Wareham	75		M. Lynch#	
Harlequin Duck				1/15 Plymouth	100		M. Lynch#	
thr Rockport	17 max		v. o.	1/14 Salis./Newbypt	90		M. Lynch#	
1/1-31 Chilmark	37		V. Laux#	1/22 Provincetown	40		M. Lynch#	
1/1 Plymouth	1 m		R. Forster	Ruddy Duck				
1/2 Nantucket	8		G. d'Entremont#	1/3 Waltham	3		R. Forster	
2/1-2 Sandwich	2 m		v. o.	Turkey Vulture				
2/13 Osterville	1		P. Trimble	1/23 Chilmark	1		V. Laux#	
2/18 N. Scituate	4		T. Aversa	2/6 Westport	10		M. Boucher	
Oldsquaw				2/19 Randolph	3		G. d'Entremont	
2/5 Dennis	550		B. Nikula	2/19 Peabody	1		R. Forster#	
				2/20 Easton	1		S. Arena	

Turkey Vulture (cont.)			2/6-27	Lawrence	1 ad	J. Hogan
2/20	Wayland	1		2/13	Winthrop	1 P. + F. Vale
2/25	Medford	1			Ring-necked Pheasant	
2/27	S. Dartmouth	6	C. Ralph	1/2	Nantucket	5 G. d'Entremont#
2/27	Waltham	1	L. Beady	1/31	Roslindale	15 T. Aversa
			W. Petersen#		Ruffed Grouse	
			M. Murphy	1/1	Middleboro	1 K. Holmes
Bald Eagle				1/9	Westford	1 S. Selesky
thr	Newbpt area	13+	v. o.	2/3	Essex	2 T. Young
thr	Lakeville area	6+	v. o.	2/6	W. Newbury	1 M. Hale
1/9	Quabbin	37	fide W. Davis	2/18	Marshfield	1 T. Aversa
1/13	Dighton	3	B. LaPointe	2/19	Wayland	1 J. Hoye#
1/15	Plymouth	2	fide R. Turner		Wild Turkey	
1/25	Nantucket	2	D. Sutherland	1/1-31	W. Newbury	6 R. Heil
1/27	Lowell	3	fide W. Petersen	1/5	Danvers	10 T. Floyd
thr	Reports of indiv. from 16 locations			1/14	Barre	19 R. Bradbury
Northern Harrier				1/21	Middleboro	20 K. Holmes#
thr	Middleboro	2	v. o.	1/22	Harvard	12 K. Seltzer
1/1	S. Dartmouth	1	M. Boucher	1/23	Athol	32 J. Johnstone#
1/3	P.I.	1	J. Hepburn	1/25	Worcester	18 M. Lynch#
1/12	N. Truro	3	R. Forster	1/25	Sterling	2 K. Hamilton#
1/12	Salisbury	1	S. Charette	1/27	Lexington	2 M. King
1/22	DWWS	1	H. Wiggin#	2/19	Bridgewater	1 K. Anderson
1/22	Orleans	1	R. Stymeist#	2/20	Gay Head	14 T. Young
1/22	Wellfleet	1	M. Lynch#		Northern Bobwhite	
1/25	Cotuit	1	T. Aversa	1/5	E. Middleboro	5 K. Anderson
Sharp-shinned Hawk				1/21	W. Roxbury	10 T. Aversa
1/2	Lakeville	2	K. Anderson	1/22	Truro	6 T. Aversa
1/2	Nantucket	3	G. d'Entremont#	2/20	Halifax	20 D. Brown#
1/7	Sudbury	2	R. Forster#		Clapper Rail	
1/15	Newburyport	2	BBC (T. Young)	1/2	Fairhaven	1 D. Zimmerlin
2/6	Dartmouth	2	R. Stymeist#		Virginia Rail	
thr	Reports of indiv. from 25 locations			1/1	Fairhaven	1 D. Zimmerlin
Cooper's Hawk				1/2	Nantucket	1 G. d'Entremont#
thr	Reports of 1 or 2 indiv. from 28 loc.			1/12	Chilmark	1 V. Laux#
Northern Goshawk				1/19	Edgartown	1 V. Laux#
1/1	E. Middleboro	1	K. Holmes		American Coot	
1/1	Newburyport	1 ad	H. Wiggin#	1/6	Medford	22 M. Rines
1/2	Wayland	1	F. Richardson	1/15	Plymouth	160 M. Lynch#
1/6	Magnolia	1 ad	J.J. Nove	2/20	Brockton	10 S. Arena
1/16	Newbury	1	D. Chickering		Black-bellied Plover	
1/23	Holliston	1	M. Rines#	1/10	Plymouth B.	2 J.B. Nove
1/29	Salisbury	1 ad	H. Wiggin#	1/15	Eastham	3 W. Petersen
Red-shouldered Hawk				2/19	Edgartown	2 T. Young
thr	Reports of indiv. from 14 locations				Killdeer	
Red-tailed Hawk				1/1	Buzzards Bay	2 K. Anderson
1/1	Quabbin	8	M. Lynch#	2/20	Easton	2 K. Ryan
1/29	P.I./Salisbury	10	P. Roberts	2/20	Newbury	2 P. + F. Vale
1/30	Bridge./Middleb.	15	W. Petersen#	2/21	Newburyport	2 T. Maloney
2/5	Uxbridge/Worc.	9	M. Lynch#	thr	Reports of individuals from 8 locations	
Rough-legged Hawk					American Oystercatcher	
1/19	Edgartown	2	V. Laux#	1/1	Fairhaven	1 D. Zimmerlin
1/22	P'town/Truro	2	M. Lynch#		Greater Yellowlegs	
1/30	Middleboro	7	W. Petersen#	1/15	Falmouth	1 P. Trimble
2/1	Salisbury	2	H. Parker	1/29	Hyannis	4 P. Trimble#
thr	Reports of indiv. from 12 locations				Ruddy Turnstone	
Golden Eagle				1/2	Nantucket	16 G. d'Entremont#
1/1	Quabbin	1 imm, 1 ad	CBC (S. Surner)	1/23	N. Scituate	15 K. Anderson
American Kestrel				1/31	Fairhaven	5 D. Zimmerlin
1/29	P.I./Salisbury	3	R. Roberts	2/19	Westport	3 S. Arena
1/30	Halifax	2	W. Petersen		Sanderling	
thr	Reports of individuals from 10 loc.			1/12	Salisbury	32 S. Charette
Merlin				1/22	Provincetown	7 M. Lynch#
thr	Reports of 1 or 2 indiv. from 14 loc.			1/24	Nantucket	135 E. Andrews#
Peregrine Falcon				1/29	Westport	50 BBC (R. Stymeist)
1/5, 2/23	Saugus	1	J. Berry	2/19	Revere	210 T. Aversa
1/9	Salisbury	1	D. Chickering		Purple Sandpiper	
1/12	Eastham	1 ad	R. Forster	1/14	Salisbury	4 M. Lynch#
1/21	Edgartown	1	V. Laux#	1/22	Scituate	12 H. Wiggin#
1/22	Boston	1 ad	R. Stymeist#	1/30	Rockport (A.P.)	8 S. Charette
1/22	Provincetown	1	S. Arena	2/19	Westport	34 S. Arena
1/24	New Bedford	1	D. Zimmerlin			
1/28-2/4	Revere	1	L. Pivacek			

Purple Sandpiper (cont.)	2/19	Winthrop	5	M. Pelikan	2/17	Provincetown	2 dead	G. Martin
Dunlin	1/1	Westport	25	M. Pelikan	2/19	Provincetown	3	B. Nikula#
	1/15	Eastham	1200	W. Petersen	Razorbill			
	1/21	Fairhaven	9	D. Zimmerlin	1/12	Chilmark	12	V. Laux#
	1/29	Westport	50	BBC (R. Stymeist)	1/20	Edgartown	6	V. Laux#
	2/4	S. Dartmouth	70	T. Aversa	1/22	Truro	21	M. Rines#
	2/5	Revere	73	P. + F. Vale	1/29	Rockport	16	BBC (W. Drummond)
Short-billed Dowitcher					1/30	Provincetown	500	R. Abrams
1/18-2/28 M.V.	1			V. Laux#	2/19	Rockport (A.P.)	8	R. Forster#
Common Snipe					2/19	Provincetown	20	B. Nikula
1/6	Newburyport	1		R. Forster	large acid species			
1/8	N. Dartmouth	1		M. Boucher	1/29	Provincetown	27	B. Nikula
1/15	Sandwich	2		P. Trimble	Black Guillemot			
1/17	Ipswich	1		J. Berry	1/2	Nantucket	1	G. d'Entremont
2/18	Buzzards Bay	1		R. Turner	1/9	Rockport	13	J. Nove
American Woodcock					1/15	Manomet	1	M. Lynch#
1/1	Braintree	1		R. Forster	1/29	Cape Ann	28	R. Forster
1/20	M.V.	1		V. Laux	2/19	Rockport (A.P.)	11	R. Forster#
Common Black-headed Gull					2/19	Provincetown	5	B. Nikula
thr	Winthrop	8 max		v. o.	Atlantic Puffin			
thr	Newburyport	1 ad		v. o.	1/22	Truro	2	R. Stymeist#
1/10	N. Falmouth	1 ad		I. Nisbet	2/17	Provincetown	3	G. Martin
1/24	Nantucket	1		fide J. Papale	2/17	Provincetown	1 dead	G. Martin
Bonaparte's Gull					Monk Parakeet			
1/1	Rockport	6		J. Berry#	1/18	Lexington	1	A. Bevington
1/1	Lynn	20		J. Quigley	Barn Owl			
1/1	New Bedford	30		D. Zimmerlin	1/28	W. Newbury	1	J. Kelly
2/20	Newburyport	3		M. Pelikan	2/19	E. Orleans	1	D. Emerson
Iceland Gull					Eastern Screech-Owl			
1/2	Sudbury	1 W		R. Forster	thr	Mt.A.	2-4	R. Stymeist#
1/6	Amesbury	2 ad		R. Forster	2/5	E. Middleboro	3	K. Holmes
1/22	P'town (R.P.)	3		M. Lynch#	2/28	S. Dartmouth	2	M. Boucher
1/29	Brocton	1 W		S. Arena	thr	Reports of individuals from 7 locations		
1/31	Medford	1 W		M. Rines	Great Horned Owl			
2/16	Hull	5		N. Swirka	1/1	Ipswich	3	J. Berry
2/18	Waltham	1 W		R. Forster	1/1	Quabbin	7	M. Lynch#
2/19	Newbypt/Salis.	38		R. Heil	1/30	Easton	5	S. Arena
thr	Reports of 1 or 2 indiv. from 8 coastal loc.				thr	Reports of 1-2 indiv. from 6 locations		
Lesser Black-backed Gull					Snowy Owl			
1/1, 2/13	Lynn	1 ad		J. Quigley	1/1	Barnstable	1	G. Ferguson
1/2	Dennis	1 ad		B. Nikula#	1/5	Fairhaven	1	J. Botelho
Glaucous Gull					1/8	New Bedford	1	M. Boucher
thr	Provincetown	1-2		v. o.	1/17	Nahant	1	J.J. Nove
1/4	New Bedford	1		M. Boucher	1/21, 2/18	P.I.	1	D. Chickering
1/9	Taunton	3		S. Arena	1/29	WBWS	2	v. o.
1/12	5 mi. off Boston	1 b		D. Breen	1/30	S. Orleans	1	H. Dickson#
1/23	Gloucester	1		D. Lane	1/30	Harwichport	1	E. Banks#
1/23	Lynn	1 W		R. Forster	2/1, 2/19	Salisbury	1	v. o.
1/29	Salisbury	1 ad		H. Wiggins#	2/18	Boston (Logan)	5	N. Smith
2/5	Acton	1 b		v. o.	Barred Owl			
2/6	Gloucester	2		J. Berry#	1/1	Quabbin	7	M. Lynch#
2/19	Halifax	1 W		W. Petersen	2/28	S. Dartmouth	2	M. Boucher
Herring x Great Black-backed Gull					Long-eared Owl			
1/1	Lynn	1 ad		J. Quigley	1/2	Uxbridge	1	S. Wheelock#
1/31	New Bedford	1 ad		J. Botelho	1/2	Ipswich	1	P. + F. Vale
Black-legged Kittiwake					1/12	Salisbury	1	D. Chickering
1/1	Rockport	115		BBC (J.J. Nove)	1/22	Middleboro	1	M. Lynch#
2/5	P.I.	8		W. Petersen#	1/22	Amesbury	1	M. Sullivan
2/5	Rockport	25 ad		R. Heil	Short-eared Owl			
Dovekie					1/22	Ipswich	1	L. Pivacek#
1/4	Scituate	1		fide D. Ludlow	1/30	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	J. Botelho
1/12	Chilmark	1		V. Laux	2/1	Salisbury	1	H. Parker
2/7	Rockport (A.P.)	1		C. Paine	2/20	Cumb. Farms	3	S. Arena#
2/20	Rockport	1		J. Hoye#	Northern Saw-whet Owl			
Common Murre					1/1	Quabbin	6	M. Lynch#
2/19	Provincetown	1		B. Nikula	1/16	Salisbury	1	v. o.
Thick-billed Murre					1/18	Wayland	1	L. Giardino
1/29-2/20	Rockport	1		v. o.	1/30	Uxbridge	3	R. Bradbury#
2/5	Gloucester	1		T. Walker	1/30	Middleboro	1	W. Petersen#
					2/5	Newburyport	1	R. Heil
					2/6	Easton	1	S. Arena

Northern Saw-whet Owl (cont.)				1/23 Athol	4	J. Johnstone#
2/22 Essex	1	T. Young		1/23 Hardwick	5	R. Bradbury
Red-headed Woodpecker				1/23 Holden	1	M. Lynch#
1/2 Millville	1	CBC (B. Cassie)		Black-capped Chickadee		
Red-bellied Woodpecker				1/1 Quabbin	501	M. Lynch#
1/1-19 Weston	pr	A. Kiskadday		1/29 Westport	135	BBC (R. Stymeist)
1/1 Acoaxet	3	E. Salmela		Boreal Chickadee		
1/16 Marlboro	2	T. Gooley		thr W. Boylston	1-2	v. o.
1/23 W. Brookfield	2	R. Bradbury		1/1 Quabbin	1	M. Lynch#
thr Reports of indiv.	from 15 locations			Red-breasted Nuthatch		
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				1/1 Quabbin	552	M. Lynch#
1/1 Acoaxet	1	E. Salmela		1/7 Boston	6	T. Aversa
1/2 Millville	1	CBC (B. Cassie)		1/22 Topsfield	5	J. Brown#
1/13-15 Mt. A.	1 m	M. Rines + v. o.		1/23 Edgartown	12	V. Laux#
1/22-23 Ipswich	1	J. Berry		Brown Creeper		
1/24 Nantucket	1	fide J. Papale		1/1 Quabbin	15	M. Lynch#
Hairy Woodpecker				1/22 W. Boylston	3	G. d'Entremont
1/1-31 Sherborn	2	E. Taylor		1/23 Lakeville	2	M. Boucher
1/1-31 Natick	2	E. Taylor		2/1-21 Mattapoisett	2	F. Smith
1/1 Quabbin	9	M. Lynch#		2/5 Acton	4	M. Rines#
1/17 Lynnfield	2	P. + F. Vale		2/20 N. Middleboro	2	K. Holmes
1/27 Wayland	5	S. Arena		2/20 IRWS	pr	J. Berry
2/1-28 Hamilton/Wenham	3	N. Nash		Carolina Wren		
Northern Flicker				thr Sherborn	5-10	E. Taylor
2/1 Cumb. Farms	10	T. Aversa		1/15 Woods Hole	4	P. Trimble
2/4 S. Dartmouth	10	T. Aversa		1/29 Westport	34	BBC (R. Stymeist)
Black-backed Woodpecker (no details)				1/30 Marstons Mills	6	P. Trimble
1/13 Mt. A.	1 m	A. Bennett		2/6 Dartmouth	34	R. Stymeist#
Pileated Woodpecker				2/18 Marshfield	3	T. Aversa
thr Sherborn	pr	E. Taylor		thr Reports of indiv.	from 13 locations	
1/1 Quabbin	2	M. Lynch#		Winter Wren		
1/14 Millville	1	M. Chickering		1/1-31 Manomet	1-2	J.B. Nove
1/14 Wellesley	1	P. Ferro		1/22 Chilmark	4	V. Laux
1/16 Barre	1	M. Lynch#		thr Reports of indiv.	from 12 locations	
1/22 N. Andover	1	J. Dowd		Marsh Wren		
1/23 Pepperell	1	L. High		1/2 Nantucket	2+	G. d'Entremont#
1/23 Carlisle	1	S. Selesky		Golden-crowned Kinglet		
1/30 Hardwick	1	M. Lynch#		1/1 Quabbin	16	M. Lynch#
2/1-2/28 E. Boxford	2-3	J. Brown#		Ruby-crowned Kinglet		
2/2 Wachusett Mead.	1 m	C. Ralph		thr Reports of indiv.	from 9 locations	
Eastern Phoebe				Eastern Bluebird		
1/1 Barnstable	1	R. Forster		1/8 Stow	10	D. Glorioso
2/20 Middleboro	1	K. Holmes		1/15 Wellfleet	11	G. Martin
Horned Lark				1/20 M.V.	18	V. Laux
1/1 S. Dartmouth	100	M. Boucher		1/21 Lakeville	10	K. Holmes#
1/13 E. Middleboro	50	K. Anderson		1/23 Uxbridge	10	M. Rines
1/14 Salisbury	30	M. Lynch#		1/23 Sterling	10	M. Lynch#
1/29 Westport	120	BBC (R. Stymeist)		thr Reports of 1-8 indiv.	from 17 locations	
2/6 Salisbury	16	M. Hale		Townsend's Solitaire		
2/19 Dartmouth	24	S. Arena		1/1 Hingham	1	D. Clapp
2/20 Rowley	16	J. Berry#		Hermit Thrush		
2/20 P.I.	40	M. Pelikan		1/1-31 W. Newbury	2	R. Heil
2/27 Winthrop	22	P. + F. Vale		1/15 Osterville	3	P. Trimble
Tree Swallow				1/22 Truro	3	T. Aversa
2/9 Nantucket	3	S. Tiffney		1/22 Chilmark	6	V. Laux
American Crow				1/22 Wellfleet	6	R. Stymeist#
thr Framingham	4500 max	E. Taylor		2/6 Dartmouth	3	R. Stymeist#
1/27 Wakefield	1000+	P. + F. Vale		thr Reports of individuals	from 4 locations	
2/6 Lawrence	4256	J. Hogan		American Robin		
Fish Crow				1/1-31 Wellfleet	200+	B. Nikula#
thr Watertown	80 max	R. Stymeist		1/1 Mt. A.	90+	R. Stymeist#
thr Framingham	15-20	E. Taylor		1/19 W. Newbury	100	R. Heil
1/13 Lawrence	1	S. Charette		2/2 N. Andover	250	S. Charette
1/25 Brookline	1	H. Wiggin		2/8 Essex	150+	T. Young
1/30 Worcester	1	R. Bradbury		2/14 N. Dartmouth	500+	M. Boucher
2/1 Wayland	6	S. Arena		2/20 Roslindale	65	T. Aversa
2/21 Arlington	17	M. Pelikan		Varied Thrush		
2/27 Dedham	1	W. Petersen		1/1-21 Athol	1 f	M. Nappari
Common Raven				1/9-2/11 Holliston	1 m	J. Howe + v. o.
1/1 Quabbin	4	M. Lynch#		1/23-2/1 W. Boxford	1 m	L. Doherty + v. o.
1/16 Salisbury	1	G. Gove#		1/23 Athol	1 m	fide D. Small

Varied Thrush (cont.)								
1/31-2/28 Concord	1 m	A. Connolly + v. o.		1/1	Falmouth	1		R. Forster
2/25-28 Sudbury	1 f	J. Gobbi		Northern Cardinal				
Gray Catbird				thr	Sherborn	25		E. Taylor
1/1 Dartmouth	10	E. Salmela		thr	Ipswich	36 max		J. Berry
1/1 Fairhaven	3	D. Zimmerlin		2/4	S. Dartmouth	42		T. Aversa
1/1 Yarmouthport	1	R. Forster		Painted Bunting				
1/1 Falmouth	3	R. Forster		thr	Brewster	1 m		A. Furman
1/2 Nantucket	4	G. d'Entremont#		Rufous-sided Towhee				
1/7 Boston	1	T. Aversa		1/1	Acoaxet	6		E. Salmela
1/8 Roslindale	1	T. Aversa		1/1	Dartmouth	10		E. Salmela
1/15 Osterville	1	P. Trimble		1/1	Falmouth	2		R. Forster
1/24 New Bedford	1	D. Zimmerlin		1/9	Upton	2		E. Arnold
1/29 Westport	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)		1/14	Uxbridge	2		J. Huntington
2/4 S. Dartmouth	4	T. Aversa		1/29	Westport	3		BBC (R. Stymeist)
Brown Thrasher				1/31	S. Natick	2		B. Howell
1/1 Dartmouth	1	E. Salmela		thr	Reports of indiv.	from 13 locations		
1/6 P.I.	1	H. Coolidge#		American Tree Sparrow				
1/12 N. Falmouth	1	I. Nisbet		1/1-31	Sherborn	12		E. Taylor
1/17-2/1 Nantucket	1	J. Van Vorst		1/1	Quabbin	37		M. Lynch#
1/23 W. Boxford	1	L. Doherty		1/1	Quincy	30		J. Hepburn#
1/29 Westport	1	BBC (R. Stymeist)		1/3	Belmont	20		M. Rines
2/7-10 Danvers	1	J. Gordon		1/14	P.I.	15		M. Lynch#
American Pipit				1/15	Wareham	15		M. Lynch#
1/1 Acoaxet	1	E. Salmela		Chipping Sparrow				
2/20 E. Middleboro	6	K. Holmes		1/1-31	Yarmouthport	3 max		K. Hamilton
Bohemian Waxwing				Clay-colored Sparrow				
1/3-2/24 Wellfleet	204 max	B. Nikula + v. o.		1/19-2/28	Nantucket	1		F. Reed#
1/5-2/11 Truro	110 max	W. Bailey + v. o.		Field Sparrow				
1/9 Rockport	80	B. Parker		1/3	N. Dartmouth	2		M. Boucher
1/14-2/1 W. Newby	320 max	C. Leahy + v. o.		1/15	Falmouth	4		P. Trimble
1/16-2/2 Athol	150 max	D. Small		1/24	Westport	6		BBC (R. Stymeist)
1/17 Haverhill	80	W. Drummond#		1/24	Acushnet	4		D. Zimmerlin
1/22 Wakefield	300	J. Hepburn#		2/22	Truro	1		T. Aversa
1/23 Amesbury	300	B. Peacock		2/26	Ware	1		T. Aversa#
1/25 Wachusett	100	B. Steinberg		Lark Sparrow				
1/30 Heath	250	J. Gary		thr	Bridgewater	1		K. Weinheimer
1/30 Hardwick	415	M. Lynch#		Savannah Sparrow				
1/18-2/16 Nantucket	100+ max	v. o.		1/1-31	Yarmouthport	5 max		K. Hamilton
thr	Reports of 1-60 individuals	from 42 loc.		1/6	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1		LCES (J. Hill)
Cedar Waxwing				1/6	N. Dartmouth	2		M. Boucher
1/9 Wellfleet	60+	B. Nikula		1/22	WBWS	1		A. Hirschkop
1/16 Sterling	300	M. Lynch#		2/12-28	Nantucket	1		E. Andrews
1/22 W. Newbury	105	R. Heil		"Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow				
1/27 Wayland	200	S. Arena		1/1	Fairhaven	1		D. Zimmerlin
2/2 N. Andover	150	S. Charette		1/9	Salisbury	2		M. Rines
2/5 Ipswich	125	R. Heil		Grasshopper Sparrow				
2/27 Halifax	100	W. Petersen#		1/3	Peabody	1		R. Heil
Northern Shrike				Fox Sparrow				
1/1 Bolton	1 imm	R. Bradbury		1/11	Wrentham	1		R. Danca
1/3 Wayland	1	K. Hamilton		1/16	S. Dartmouth	2		M. Boucher
2/12-19 Wayland	1 ad	B. Howell + v. o.		1/22	Falmouth	1		H. Wiggins#
Yellow-rumped Warbler				1/23	Gay Head	1		V. Laux#
1/1 Quincy	7	J. Hepburn#		1/25	Walpole	1		A. Wilson
1/2 Ipswich	2	P. + F. Vale		2/1	Boxford	1		D. Chickering
1/6 Fairhaven	10	J. Botelho		2/1-28	Brewster	1		v. o.
1/29 Westport	15	BBC (R. Stymeist)		2/1-28	Easton	1		K. Ryan
2/6 Dartmouth	13	M. Rines#		Song Sparrow				
2/18 Marshfield	5	T. Aversa		1/13	N. Dartmouth	15		M. Boucher
2/20 Middleboro	4	K. Holmes		1/30	Marstons Mills	20		P. Trimble
Pine Warbler				2/1-28	Nantucket	21		E. Andrews
1/4 S. Truro	2	J. Talin#		Swamp Sparrow				
2/1-28 Harwich	4	M. Marion		thr	Nantucket	4 max		E. Andrews#
2/1-28 Brewster	1-5	v. o.		1/1	Fairhaven	3		D. Zimmerlin
thr	Reports of indiv.	from 9 locations		1/15	W. Barnstable	6		P. Trimble
Ovenbird				1/15	Plymouth	7		M. Lynch#
1/1-4 Ipswich	1	J. Berry		2/1	Cumb. Farms	3		T. Aversa
Common Yellowthroat				thr	Reports of indiv.	from 5 locations		
1/1 Acoaxet	1	E. Salmela		White-throated Sparrow				
2/19 Newburyport	1 m	R. Heil		thr	Ipswich	8-10		J. Berry
Yellow-breasted Chat				1/9	W. Barnstable	12		P. Trimble
				1/13	N. Dartmouth	20		M. Boucher

White-throated Sparrow (cont.)									
2/4 S. Dartmouth	65		T. Aversa	1/5 Petersham	30		J. Baird		
White-crowned Sparrow				1/9-2/12 Worc. (Airtpt.)	25 max		v. o.		
1/1 Malden	2		P. + F. Vale	1/16 Sterling	10		M. Lynch#		
2/4-15 S. Dart.	12 max		T. Aversa + v. o.	1/28 Belchertown	8		R. Abrams		
2/26 Petersham	1		W. Petersen#	1/30 Hardwick	1		M. Lynch#		
Harris' Sparrow				2/1 Worcester	9		R. Wolanin		
2/4-28 S. Dartmouth	1 imm		T. Aversa + v. o.	2/2 Athol	127		D. Small		
Dark-eyed Junco				Purple Finch					
1/1-31 Sherborn	50		E. Taylor	1/16 Hardwick	1		M. Lynch#		
1/1 Quabbin	187		M. Lynch#	1/30 Halifax	2		W. Petersen#		
Lapland Longspur				2/1 Wayland	1		S. Arena		
1/1 S. Dartmouth	1		M. Boucher	2/5 Sudbury	1		R. Forster		
1/3 Newburyport	3		E. Cutler	2/21 Halifax	5		D. Clapp#		
2/2 Salisbury	10		D. Chickering	2/22 S. Carver	1		J. Shaw		
Chestnut-collared Longspur				House Finch					
1/1-9 Salisbury	1		v. o.	1/1 Mt. A.	65		R. Stymeist		
Snow Bunting				1/8 Newbury	65		D. Chickering		
1/1 S. Dartmouth	75		M. Boucher	Red Crossbill					
1/23 Provincetown	12		J. Hoyer#	1/1 Quabbin	45		M. Lynch#		
2/7 P.I.	50		M. Pelikan	1/20 Belchertown	10-15		J. Smith		
2/15 Saugus	50		J. Berry	1/23 Hardwick	4		R. Bradbury		
2/19 Westport	7		S. Arena	1/29 Petersham	40		R. Bradbury		
2/19 Salisbury	70		R. Heil	1/30 Uxbridge	4		R. Bradbury		
2/20 Concord (N.A.C.)	8		J. Hoyer#	2/6 Quabbin	20		R. Donovan		
2/26 Nantucket	8		B. Vigneau#	2/17 Dana	25		D. Small		
2/26 W. Boxford	130		T. Walker#	White-winged Crossbill					
Red-winged Blackbird				1/1 W. Boylston	7		R. Bradbury		
1/3 Dedham	50		M. Orleans	1/1 Quabbin	8		M. Lynch#		
1/5 Lakeville	8		A. Standish	1/29 Belchertown	2		R. Abrams		
1/7 Centerville	16		P. Trimble	Common Redpoll					
1/9 W. Barnstable	95		P. Trimble	thr W. Newbury	125 max		R. Heil		
1/9-31 N. Dartmouth	125 max		M. Boucher	thr Arlington	60 max		M. Rines		
2/1-28 Nantucket	25-30		E. Andrews	1/1 Quabbin	62		M. Lynch#		
2/27 Wayland	20		L. Giardino	1/1 Watertown	100		C. Cook		
thr Reports of 1-5 indiv. from 17 locations				1/1 Cambridge	80		R. Stymeist		
Eastern Meadowlark				1/3-31 Maynard	30-60		L. Nachtrab		
1/6 S. Dart. (A.Pd)	8		LCES (J. Hill)	1/9 Quabbin	100		D. Small		
1/9 Cumb. Farms	13		K. Anderson	1/15 Salisbury	70		T. Young		
1/12 Eastham (F.H.)	8		R. Forster	1/27 Harwich	75		S. Buckler		
2/18 DWWS	2		T. Aversa	2/5 Westport	100		J. Hoyer#		
Yellow-headed Blackbird				2/5 Chatham	75		R. Clem		
1/1 S. Dartmouth	1		M. Boucher#	2/13 Boxford	120		T. Walker#		
Rusty Blackbird				2/26 Athol	125		W. Petersen#		
1/3 Sudbury	68		K. Hamilton	thr Reports of 1-25 indiv. in 41 locations					
1/9-31 W. Barnstable	4 max		P. Trimble	thr Reports of 26-50 indiv. in 22 locations					
1/17-2/28 Lynnfield	45 max		P. + F. Vale	Hoary Redpoll (no details)					
2/1-28 Wayland	34 max		S. Arena	1/13-22 W. Newbury	1 or 2		R. Heil#		
2/22 Brookline	15		P. Willis	2/1 Hull	1-2		H. Cross		
2/23 Acushnet	10		M. Boucher	2/5 Acoaxet	1		J. Hoyer#		
thr Reports of 1-3 indiv. from 5 locations				Pine Siskin					
Common Grackle				thr W. Boylston	38 max		v. o.		
1/9 W. Barnstable	6		P. Trimble	1/1-2/3 Sherborn	15		E. Taylor		
1/25 Woods Hole	13		T. Aversa	1/1-31 WBWS	3 max		J. Sones#		
1/30 Marstons Mills	1		P. Trimble	1/9 Athol	250		D. Small		
2/5 Revere	1		P. + F. Vale	1/23 Holden	30		G. Gove		
2/6 Boston	2		T. Aversa	2/27 Middleboro	17		W. Petersen#		
2/11 Boxford	1		T. Walker	thr Reports of 1-2 indiv. from 8 locations					
2/20 Wayland	30		R. Forster	Evening Grosbeak					
Brown-headed Cowbird				1/1 Quabbin	59		M. Lynch#		
1/1 Quabbin	63		M. Lynch#	1/19 Maynard	2		L. Nachtrab		
1/2 Barry	50		M. Lynch#	1/23 New Braintree	6		R. Bradbury		
1/9 E. Middleboro	1 m		K. Anderson	1/23 Athol	5		M. Lynch#		
1/22 DWWS	1 m		H. Wiggin#	1/23 Petersham	8		M. Lynch#		
1/24 N. Dartmouth	75		M. Boucher	1/23 Acushnet	24		M. Boucher		
1/29 Westport	4		BBC (R. Stymeist)	1/30 Hardwick	7		M. Lynch#		
2/15 S. Dartmouth	2 m		T. Aversa	1/30 Nantucket	2		J. Papale		
2/17 Dorchester	1 f		T. Aversa	2/5 W. Boylston	7		R. Quimby		
Pine Grosbeak				2/6 Barre	20		R. Forster		
thr Athol	5-80		v. o.	2/7 Littleton	25		M. Ransa		
1/1 Quabbin	3		M. Lynch#	2/19 W. Acton	2		A. Sgroi		
				2/20 Middleboro	2		K. Holmes		

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ad	adult	H.	Harbor
alt	alternate	I.	Island
b	banded	L.	Ledge
br	breeding	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
dk	dark (phase)	Mt.A.	Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
f	female	N.A.C.	Nine Acre Corner, Concord
fl	fledged	Nant.	Nantucket
imm	immature	Newbypt	Newburyport
ind	individuals	P.I.	Plum Island
juv	juvenile	Pd	Pond
loc	location	P'town	Provincetown
lt	light (phase)	Quab.	Quabbin
m	male	Res.	Reservoir
max	maximum	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
mi	mile	S.B.	South Beach, Chatham
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)	CBC	Christmas Bird Count
w/	with	CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club
yg	young	DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
#	additional observers	DWWS	Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum	EMHW	Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
A.Pd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth	HRWMA	High Ridge Wildlife Management Area, Gardner-Westminster
Arl.	Arlington	IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
B.	Beach	LCES	Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	MARC	Massachusetts Avian Records Committee
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	MAS	Massachusetts Audubon Society
Buzz.	Buzzards Bay	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
Cambr.	Cambridge	MBWMA	Martin Burns Wildlife Management Area, Rowley
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	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
F.M.	Fowl Meadow	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge	TASL	Take A Second Look Harbor Census
F.Pk	Franklin Park, Boston	USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
G40	Gate 40, Quabbin	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
G45	Gate 45, Quabbin	WMWS	Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary

ABOUT THE COVER: WORM-EATING WARBLER

The Worm-eating Warbler (*Helmitheros vermivorus*) is somewhat misnamed because it does not eat earthworms, although it does specialize in caterpillars during the breeding season. This cryptic warbler is more often heard than seen. It spends most of its time near or on the ground, where it walks, rather than hops, with its tail cocked. When foraging in deciduous trees, the Worm-eating Warbler will sometimes spiral around the trunk or a branch much like the Black-and-white Warbler. It is distinctive in appearance—an olive-and-buff warbler that lacks wing bars and has distinctive black head stripes. The sexes are similar.

The bird's breeding range in the United States lies east of the prairies and south of the Great Lakes, from northeast Texas to southern New England. In Massachusetts it breeds in southern Berkshire County, where the first nest was found in 1949. Up to a dozen territorial males have been recorded at Mount Tom (north of Springfield), and more recently nesting has been recorded in scattered locations farther east, for example, in Dover and Weston. They winter in the West Indies, Mexico, and Central Mexico.

Worm-eating Warblers arrive in the United States in early April. In Massachusetts, where they are an uncommon but regular spring migrant, they arrive in late April or early May. They are rare migrants in Massachusetts in the fall, with a maximum of five reported in a single season.

Males are territorial, advertising with their song, which is a single trill, usually of the same pitch. The song is similar to that of the Chipping Sparrow, but the warbler's song has a thinner and dryer quality—a more insect-like buzz. Males also have a courtship flight song, which is musical and varied. Their breeding habitat is generally deciduous, wooded hills—along slopes or in ravines—with an understory of saplings and shrubs. They are reported to be site-faithful, returning year after year to the same nesting locality. They probably produce a single brood each year.

Worm-eating Warblers nest on the ground, usually under low bushes on hillsides. The nest is hidden by fallen dead leaves and is lined with the fine stalks of the hair-moss (*Polytrichum*) or other fine materials. The female relies on cryptic behavior and appearance for protection—females have been caught with hats and can sometimes be touched before bolting from the nest. The clutch is usually four or five white eggs, spotted or blotched with brown. The female apparently does all the incubating, but the male may feed her. The incubation period is about two weeks, and the young are altricial (born blind, naked, and helpless). They are fed by both parents and fledge in about ten days. If disturbed at the nest, an adult bird may give a distraction display, fluttering on the ground, wings open, tail dragging, enticing the intruder away from the young.

Worm-eating Warblers are entirely insectivorous, with caterpillars their main staple, but their diet also includes a wide variety of arthropods including

beetles, grasshoppers, and spiders. They have different foraging behaviors on their breeding and wintering grounds. During the nesting season they specialize in gleaning caterpillars from live leaf surfaces and are largely arboreal, rarely using hanging maneuvers during their leaf gleaning. In the winter, however, they become "aerial leaf-litter specialists," with more than three-quarters of their foraging done on hanging dead curled leaves. They use a variety of hanging maneuvers, such as the maneuver illustrated in the cover picture. Their relatively large bills and short tarsi (legs) are considered adaptations for this highly specialized foraging mode. They also show a pronounced propensity for manipulating the hanging leaf substrate. It is suggested that the change in foraging behavior between seasons results from the differing behavior of arthropods on the temperate breeding grounds and tropical moist forest wintering areas. In northern summers caterpillars are diurnal foragers on exposed leaf surfaces where they are easily attacked by gleaning, while tropical arthropods are largely nocturnal foragers that hide during the day in places like dead curled leaves, where more complex foraging behaviors are necessary.

Worm-eating Warblers are forest-interior nesters, and declining and extirpated local populations have been blamed on forest fragmentation of their breeding grounds. When large forest patches are fragmented into many smaller ones, the relative proportion of edge habitat increases, exposing, particularly, ground-nesting species to increased predation by mammals (e.g., raccoons, cats, dogs) and birds (e.g., Blue Jays). Worm-eating Warblers are subject to cowbird nest parasitism, and increasing the proportion of forest edge increases this risk dramatically. Deforestation on the tropical wintering grounds is a further threat to this vulnerable species and may become a more serious problem because moist tropical forests are being cleared at an alarming rate. Hence conservation efforts both in the United States and in the tropics are essential for the continued presence of this interesting warbler species.

W. E. Davis, Jr.

MEET OUR COVER ARTIST

Julie Zickefoose is a freelance artist, writer, and naturalist who is devoted to the study, conservation, and appreciation of birds. She worked as a field biologist for The Nature Conservancy for six years before turning to art as a full-time career. Julie's drawings have been published in *The New Yorker*, and she has painted, drawn, and written for *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *American Birds*, *Bird Observer*, *Ladybug Magazine*, and numerous publications of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Exhibitions include one-woman shows at Harvard University's Museum of Comparative Zoology, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, the Memorial University of Newfoundland, and the XIX International Ornithological Congress in Ottawa. Awards include a Radcliffe Traveling Fellowship to paint birds of Amazonian Brazil, and International Council for Bird Preservation and Sigma Xi stipends.

M. Steele

This month's field problem is compounded by the fact that the photograph depicts three different-looking birds. Although it is fairly obvious that all of the birds are geese, their varying coloration and size make their identification potentially more complicated.

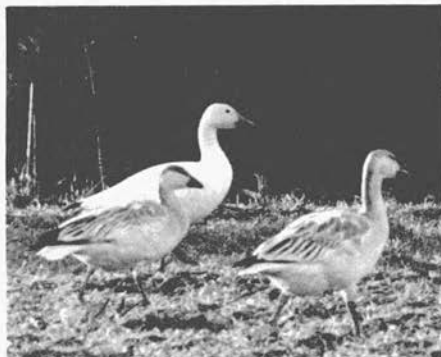
The pure white plumage and black wing tips on the bird in the rear of the photograph make that individual readily identifiable as either an adult Snow Goose or a Ross' Goose in the white morph. Both by association and by the presence of black wing tips and dusky feathering on the heads, necks, and backs, it is possible to identify the remaining two birds as immatures of either of the same two species. But how do we account for the dramatic difference in size between the two immature birds? Are two different species present in the picture?

At this point, it is important to focus on the white individual in the photograph. A look at its large size compared with the smaller immature, its rather long, graceful neck, and its flat-headed and large-billed appearance all immediately distinguish it from the Mallard-sized Ross' Goose—a western species unrecorded in Massachusetts, but one that is appearing in the East with increasing frequency. Less obvious in the photograph, but nonetheless visible, is the appearance of a "grin patch" on the side of the adult goose's bill. This feature is characteristic of the Snow Goose but is lacking in the stubby-billed Ross' Goose, which also has a more abrupt forehead and a more rounded configuration to the top of the head. So what about the little guy?

Snow Geese are polytypic; that is, they occur in two distinct and recognizable subspecies—the "lesser" Snow Goose and the "Greater" Snow Goose—each with a geographically distinct Arctic breeding range. These forms differ significantly in size (26-30 inches compared to 29-33 inches) and ordinarily have distinct wintering areas. The majority of the Snow Geese occurring in Massachusetts are "Greater" Snow Geese that mainly spend the winter on the mid-Atlantic coast; "Lesser" Snow Geese migrate principally through the interior and western United States and winter in the West and along the Gulf Coast. However, a few "Lesser" Snow Geese, including the dark morph form ("Blue Goose"), do use the Atlantic coastal flyway and regularly occur in

Massachusetts in association with the more numerous "Greater" Snow Geese. And that is what's going on in the picture.

The Snow Geese (*Chen caerulescens*) in the picture generated considerable excitement last fall when the smallest individual was thought initially to be a possible Ross' Goose. The birds were photographed in Rochester by Michael LaBossiere.



AT A GLANCE

Photo by Linda M. Gray



Can you identify this bird?

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

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