

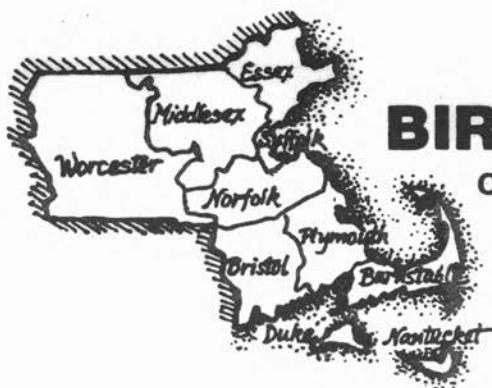
BIRD OBSERVER

OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS



APRIL 1984

VOL. 12 NO. 2



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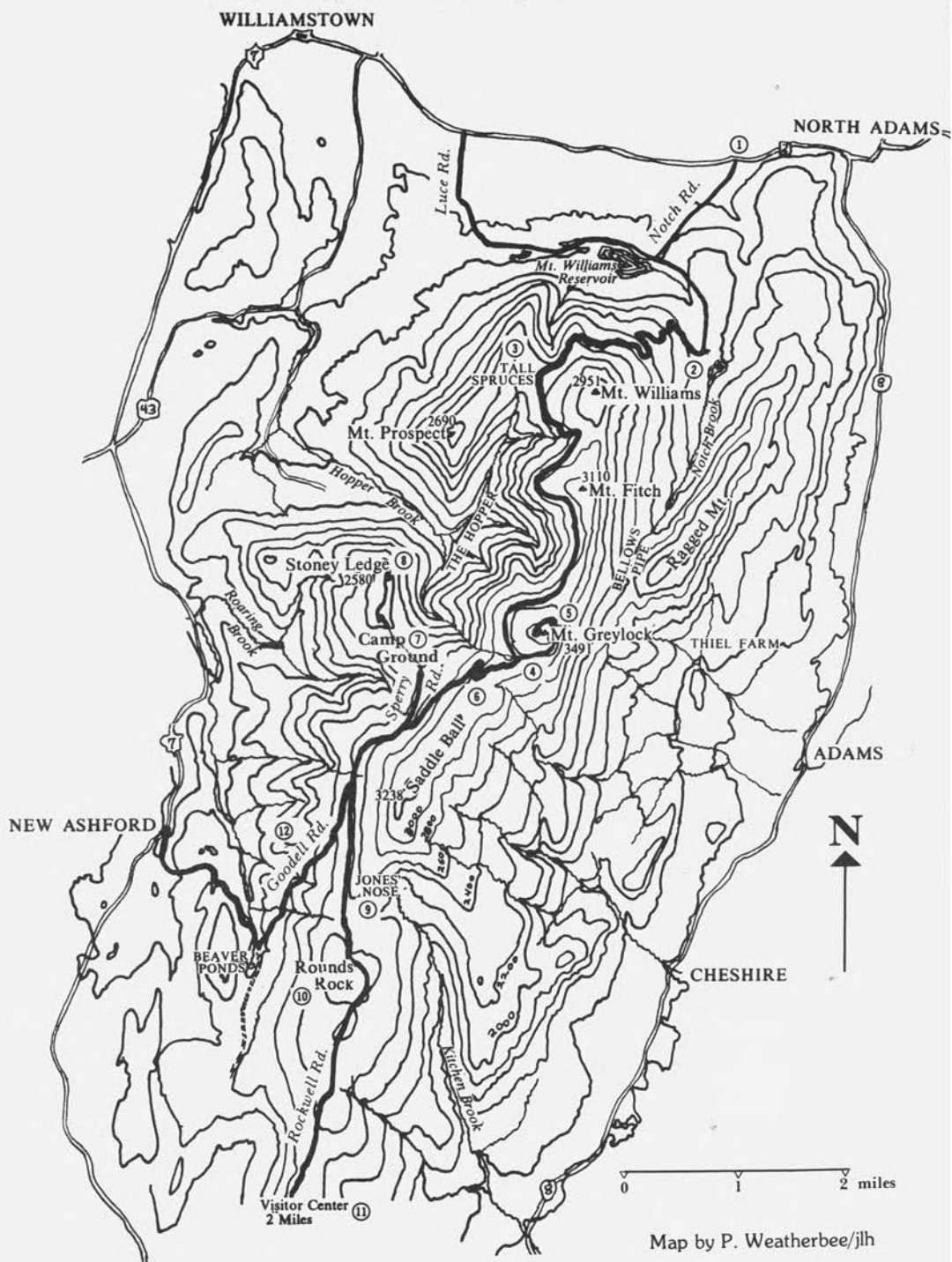
LAST CALL: BOEM JUNE WORKSHOP ON SPRING WARBLERS

Nearly thirty species of wood-warblers breed in central and northern New England, and many of them can be found in June in the Berkshire area. The topics covered in this workshop will include parulid evolution, migration, breeding and foraging ecology, and warbler song as a basis for field identification. This BOEM workshop will consist of an evening seminar at 7:30-9:30 P.M. on WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6, at the FIRST CHURCH IN BELMONT: UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST, 404 Concord Avenue, Belmont, and an ALL DAY FIELD TRIP on SATURDAY, JUNE 9.

Field trip participants will assemble in the parking lot at BASCOM LODGE atop MOUNT GREYLOCK at 6:30 A.M., already fortified with breakfast and equipped with appropriate clothing, lunch pack, and insect repellent.

Overnight accommodations include Bascom Lodge, camping out, and several motels in the Mount Greylock area for those who wish to make a weekend of it. Participants must make their own arrangements for staying overnight.

The workshop leader is WAYNE R. PETERSEN, and the cost of the entire workshop (seminar and field trip) is \$25. The group will be limited to twenty persons. For more information, call 244-0166 (Martha Vaughan, BOEM Program Coordinator). To register, send your check made out to Bird Observer to BOEM, 462 Trapelo Road, Belmont, MA 02178, include your address and telephone number, and mark the envelope, "Warbler Workshop."



MOUNT GREYLOCK

by Pam Weatherbee, Williamstown

The pervasive mood of Mt. Greylock is that of a world apart, removed from the everyday concerns of the valley. Whether you wish to sit on the rocks and dreamily take in the view that stretches across farmlands, orchards, mill towns and mountain ridges to Mt. Monadnock or to haunt some tangled ravine where the song of the Winter Wren mingles with the sound of a waterfall, what you will remember will be the feeling of remoteness. Physically isolated from the north-south trending ridges of the Green Mountains and the Taconics, Greylock is an "island," geologically and climatically different from its surroundings. William Brewster, eminent ornithologist of the nineteenth century, put it aptly when he termed the mountain "a Canadian island rising from an Alleghenian sea." The summit is a haven for boreal species of plants and birds usually found hundreds of miles to the north, and this is what intrigues me - Mt. Greylock's northern character and its many varied habitats, each adding to the many diverse ecosystems of Massachusetts. It is quite a jump from Nantucket's Prickly Pear Cactus to Greylock's wind-racked spruces and firs.

From its height of 3491 feet, the highest point in Massachusetts, the whole massif of Mt. Greylock dominates the skyline of northern Berkshire County and presents a striking sculptural shape from any approach, rising fortress-like from its central position between two mountain ranges. Seen from the west, the full length of the range stretches out from Mt. Williams and Mt. Fitch on the north to Saddle Ball on the south at an average of 3000 feet, and Mt. Greylock lords it over them from the center, framed by the symmetrical sides of the Hopper Valley that lies within two lesser spurs, Mt. Prospect and Stony Ledge. These spurs join the main ridge in flat saddle-like areas known as Tall Spruces (Wilbur's Clearing) and The Campground. Ragged Mountain, well named, joins the east side of the massif at the Notch. "Twin thrones, giants of the North," is how Oliver Wendell Holmes described the way Greylock and Saddle Ball seem to oppose each other as seen from the south creating a concave shape between them, thus explaining Greylock's original name of Saddle or Saddleback Mountain. Looking out at this view from his study window in Pittsfield, Herman Melville was inspired to dedicate his novel, Pierre, to Greylock's "Most Excellent Purple Majesty."

Geological History. The forces that created this sculptured range, now host to a rich variety of life, were common to the rest of New England and eastern North America. Six hundred million years ago, this particular area was at the edge of a proto-Atlantic sea: a Precambrian and Cambrian ocean lapped at sandy beaches during a long quiet time in geologic history, building layers of sand that would become quartzite under heat and pressure. In the deeper parts of the sea to the east,

muds accumulated and gradually became shales and then, finally, schists under miles of sediment. Life was burgeoning in the sea, but a walk along the beach would not have been accompanied by the cries of birds or relieved by a mantle of green. Later, about 500 million years ago (Ordovician Period), shelled animals began building coral reefs in the warm shallow seas, creating what was to become limestone. These three rock formations - Cheshire Quartzite, Schist, and Stockbridge Limestone were the main building blocks of the region. On the east side of the mountain, quarrying operations are exposing a huge vein of Stockbridge limestone that dips under the mountain.

This stable time was gradually shattered by the terrible pressures produced by the oncoming continent (now Europe). Once-level layers were buckled like a pushed-up rug. Some rocks were even uprooted from their places of origin and shoved twenty or thirty miles to the west. This is thought to be what happened to the rocks that now form Greylock. These schists plowed into and over the native quartzite and limestone, and, together, they were further twisted and folded. Pressures also raised the level of the land above the ocean so that no new rocks were laid down beyond the Ordovician. Time and erosion then became the great landscape makers, carving away the softer rocks like limestone, leaving the ridges capped with resistant schist. Now, the valleys are underlain by limestone, also found scattered in pockets in the foothills of Greylock, creating habitats for plants dear to the hearts of botanists. The finishing touches were added by the glacial ice sheet that ground down from the north, smoothing mountain tops, gouging out the U-shaped valleys, and leaving till and outwash along the valley sides. Before finally melting away, glacial ice blocked the drainage and formed a huge lake, Lake Bascom, that almost surrounded the massif at the 1100-foot



Common Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis montana*)

Illustration by Julie Roberts

contour level. As the glacier retreated 14,000 years ago, the climate warmed, and plants and animals migrated back from their southern refuge. Plants adapted to the cold and exposure remained only on the mountain tops.

The Human Intrusion. The region was too wild and rugged even for the Mahican Indians who never established villages here but who used the valleys for an east-west travel route and for hunting-grounds. After the Europeans began their incursions, there was a long confrontation with the Indians that lasted until the end of the French and Indian Wars in 1763. The Berkshire Barrier (a high plateau on the eastern border of the county) also served to discourage settlers who referred to the elevations as "hideous high mountains." One hundred and forty years after the Pilgrims landed, permanent villages began to spring up. Then the clearing of land for farms and lumbering proceeded rapidly, starting from the river bottoms and sweeping up to the mountain heights. One enterprising farmer, Jeremiah Wilbur, established a "fine farm" on the saddle between Mt. Prospect and Mt. Williams. He built the first road to the summit of Greylock in order to carry salt to his cattle which often strayed there. At an altitude of 2300 feet, these high open pastures must have been beautifully alpine in aspect. Although Wilbur's farm now has grown up to spruces, some of this same feeling can be experienced at Jones' Nose or Rounds Rock (9 and 10 on map) where now blueberry bushes and small trees are struggling to complete the inexorable push to reforest.

Almost as soon as settlement peaked, richer lands to the west lured away marginal farmers. However, lumbering on the mountain continued to feed the fires of charcoal makers, lime burners, iron horses, iron furnaces and stoves, and to provide lumber for houses and barns. Most of Greylock at one time or another was cut, with only trees in the most inaccessible ravines escaping the saw. Logging slash led to disastrous fires that ravaged the east side of the mountain, burning the soil and creating conditions ideal for erosion and landslides. In 1885, a commercial venture bought land at the summit and tried to attract tourists. Local citizens, appalled at the destruction of the forests, bought out this failed business and presented the land to the state in 1898 with the proviso that the state continue to buy up land on the whole range. Gradually, the Mount Greylock Reservation grew to more than ten thousand acres, thus protecting most of the mountainous area (Greylock and adjacent peaks). The area was the focus of a fierce and bitter conservation battle in the 1960s when plans to build the world's largest tramway and ski resort on the world's smallest mountain were foiled at the last minute by the Mount Greylock Protective Association, a citizen group aided by bird clubs, by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and the Massachusetts Forest and Park Association. Formerly managed by Berkshire County, Mt. Greylock became a part of the state park system in 1968.

Present Status. Mt. Greylock now provides these resources: (1) a watershed - its slopes supply water to four towns and two great river systems, the Hudson and Housatonic; (2) a recreation area for hikers, campers, and skiers - the visitor center on Rockwell Road furnishes information, Bascom Lodge at the summit provides food and lodging in the summer, and a good trail guide, available at local bookstores, is put out by Williams College Outing Club; (3) a scenic attraction; and (4) a mecca for naturalists.

Early Naturalists. It is necessary to return to the nineteenth century to describe the development of knowledge of the natural history of the mountain. At the same time that the early use and misuse of Greylock's resources were going on, a different group was exploring the mountain, cataloging its plants and assembling lists of birds. Williams College was a botanical center in the early 1800s. Chester Dewey discovered two new sedges (Carex novae-angliae and C. hitchcockiana) on the mountain, and Amos Eaton lectured on botany to enthusiastic students who printed in 1817 one of the first manuals of botany in America. Ebenezer Emmons, a geologist, made a list of birds in 1835 and was the first to indicate that Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Brown Creepers, Magnolia Warblers, White-throated Sparrows, and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers bred in this region. His observations were confirmed in 1883 when William Brewster published his list of birds breeding on Greylock. Henry David Thoreau, after having walked from Concord in 1843, hiked up the Bellowspipe, spent a cold night under some boards in the wooden tower at the summit, and awoke to find a landscape of clouds lapping at his feet. Thoreau may have heard of Greylock through his friend Nathaniel Hawthorne, one of the first to use the name "Graylock" in print, the usual name at the time being Saddleback. He called it a "respectable" mountain and explained that "it often has a gray cloud or lock of gray mist upon its head." The name might also have something to do with an Indian chief, Greylock, who fought the English, burned Connecticut Valley settlements, and died in 1725. No one really knows.

The Vegetation and Birdlife of Greylock.

In late May, when the valleys are in full leaf, the flush of green is just creeping up the slopes of the mountains. Wildflowers that you may have missed down below can be seen as you ascend. Drifts of white Canada Violets standing tall line the roadsides, along with both the purple and yellow species. Red Trillium and Painted Trillium decorate the woods. The delicate white flowers of Dutchman's Breeches and Squirrel Corn glow against their silvery foliage. Spring Beauty whitens the roadsides, and in hidden corners, Large-flowered Bellwort hangs its bells. In the woods, the Hobblebush splashes its white, flat flower-clusters.

The lower slopes of the mountain are covered with tall straight trees typical of the northern hardwood community. Sugar maple is the dominant tree among the Beech, Yellow and Black birches, and the White or Paper Birch. There are lesser numbers of Black Cherry, Basswood, White Ash and poplars. Hemlocks are most common along the north-facing slopes. A handsome tree in every respect is the small Striped Maple (Acer pensylvanicum) with its large, three-lobed leaves and bright striped bark which, along with Hobblebush, forms a large part of the understory. Dry slopes with a southern exposure host Northern Red Oak and Mountain Azalea. Notch Road (2 on map) quickly takes you into this forest on the north side of Mt. Greylock, but Rockwell Road winds through an area more recently returning to forest where Fire Cherry, Blueberry, Blackberry, and Fireweed abound.

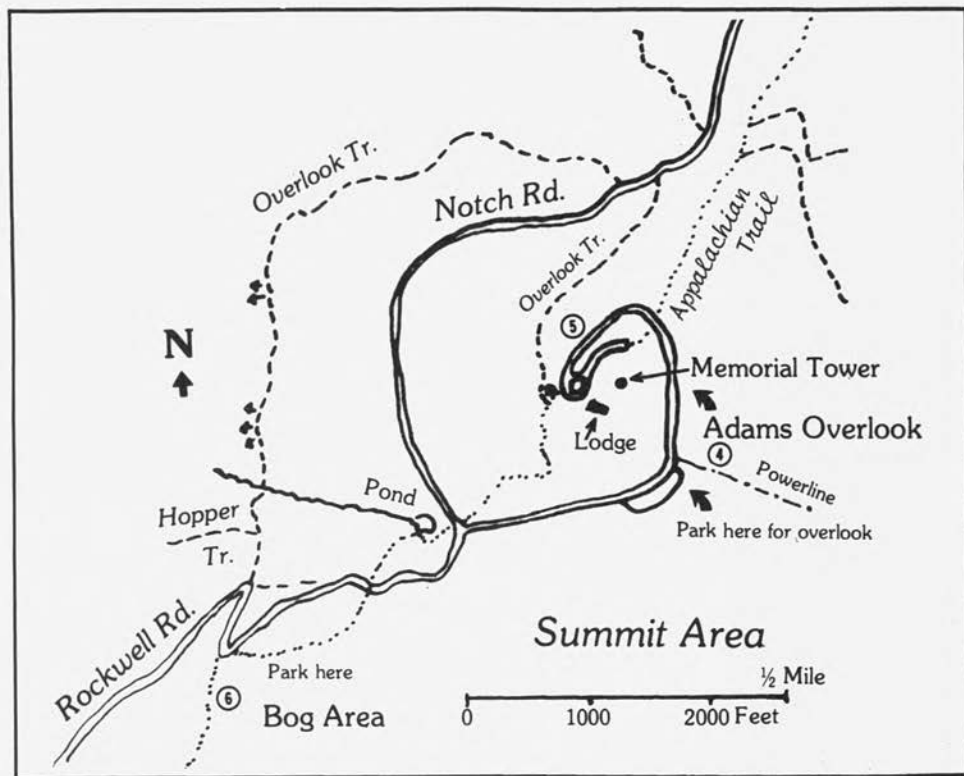
The birds on the lower slopes are those common to many other wooded areas in the state, but where else could you find such a beautiful backdrop? Driving up Notch Road (2) or hiking any of the trails, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and Black-and-white warblers, American Redstart, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak are species easily seen. Louisiana Waterthrushes nest along the lower rushing streams. Wild Turkey have taken hold well and are most likely to be seen in the Bellowspipe or along Notch Road. Pileated Woodpeckers range widely in the mature forest. In the late summer, many grouse families are seen, led by their squealing mothers, who will try to decoy an intruder away from the chicks. In the dusk of a late afternoon, a Barred Owl may be seen peering down from an overhanging branch.

Tall Spruces (3 on map). The first dense stand of Red Spruce appears at 2300 feet where the Appalachian Trail crosses Notch Road. Called Tall Spruces or Wilbur's Clearing, this is the former site of the "fine farm" of Jeremiah Wilbur. It is a good place to see the resident warblers such as evergreen-loving Blackburnian, Magnolia, and Yellow-rumped as well as the migrating Bay-breasted, Cape May, and others. The "pip-pip-pip" call of the Olive-sided Flycatcher is often heard, and the birdwatcher has a good chance of seeing it. A walk along any of the trails or the road is very productive, and careful listening may turn up a Winter Wren.

After Tall Spruces, the vegetation becomes noticeably shorter, with spruces, Yellow Birch, and Mountain Ash (Pyrus americana) beginning to predominate. The 2600-foot elevation, according to experts, is a definite boundary between deciduous hardwoods and the boreal forest. Here, clouds hang longer, thus cutting out the sun and providing more moisture, and hoar frost is more common, making the growing season shorter. Only plants adapted to cold and exposure survive. Above this line, the wind becomes a factor as well, because there are no barriers to mitigate the flow which is speeded up as it passes over the mountain. Severe winds drive ice crystals into the tree bark, killing

one side and producing dwarfed, twisted trees that grow away from the predominant wind direction. These are known as "flag trees." Balsam fir becomes more common closer to the summit and is the dominant tree there. It is highly resistant to cold, and its pliable limbs are able to rebound from the weight of ice and snow.

Summit Areas (4 and 5 on maps). Greylock's summit is far from its original state due to man's continued disturbance of the area. Eyesores such as memorial towers, radio towers, TV towers, microwave towers, parking lots, and buildings all mar the area. However, the views are still lovely, ranging from Mt. Monadnock and the Holyoke Range to the Catskills, Adirondacks, and the Green Mountains. The east face drops directly down to Adams, giving a hawk's-eye view of orchards, fields and old mills. The Hoosac Range bounds the east side of the valley. If the memorial tower looks more like a lighthouse to you, you are not far wrong; it was originally designed to be placed on a Boston Harbor island. Bascom Lodge, built of native stone by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s, seems to fit more comfortably into the landscape.





Mourning Warbler

Illustration by William E. Davis

The summit area was originally covered with stunted, laterally growing firs, as Timothy Dwight found in 1799. Such trees may still be found in clumps around the summit. Their leaders are dying but the lower, ground-hugging branches extend out in a lush circle. Yellow birch appears here as straggly bushes, but Mountain Ash flourishes covering the mountain top with white flower clusters in June. Growing along with the latter is Northern Mountain Ash, found here and on another nearby ridge, the southern limit of the species' range. Similarly distributed is Bartram's Shadbush which puts out its starlike blossoms in time for the first birdwatchers in early June. Other berry-producing bushes such as raspberry, blueberry, and chokeberry complete the bird menu, their fruits being enjoyed by towhees, Cedar Waxwings, robins, etc. Late summer finds the Large-leaved Goldenrod, another northerly plant at its most southerly station, blooming along the road and edges of clearings. The song of the White-throated Sparrow is background music to this northern scene. Blackpolls call an insistent "seet-seet-seet" from the tips of firs. Yellow-rumped Warblers nest here and in a broad zone above 3000 feet. Juncos are omnipresent. The much sought Mourning Warbler appears each summer in the low growth just below the Adams overlook between the Appalachian Trail and the powerline and is most easily seen here (4 on map) in the very early morning. This

bird seems to like the tangled mess of branches and raspberry bushes often resulting from logging slash. Several pairs are now nesting in just such a habitat on the Hopper's lower slopes along the Hopper Trail (see summit map). Bicknell's Thrush, a race of the Gray-cheeked, traditionally nests here, at its southern range limit, but has not been found in recent years.

It is worthwhile to compare what William Brewster saw a century ago with what exists today. In a delightfully written article published in 1884, he describes his visit of June 21-29, 1883. After exploring the valley areas for several days, he ascended Greylock from Adams on horseback one June morning. Reaching a level plateau that had been logged just below the summit and was now covered with vigorous second growth about fifteen feet high, he realized the goal of his hopes, the attainment of the Canadian Zone. The air "rang with bird music." He quickly identified Olive-backed (Swainson's) Thrush, Winter Wren, Mourning Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and Olive-sided Flycatcher, "at least three additions to the summer fauna of Massachusetts within less than as many minutes!" Mourning Warblers were described as abundant. After passing into a dark spruce and fir wood, he saw only Red-breasted Nuthatches, Blackburnian Warblers and Swainson's Thrushes. He noted juncos at the top.



Rose Twisted Stalk (*Streptopus roseus*)

Illustration by Julie Roberts



Dark-eyed Junco

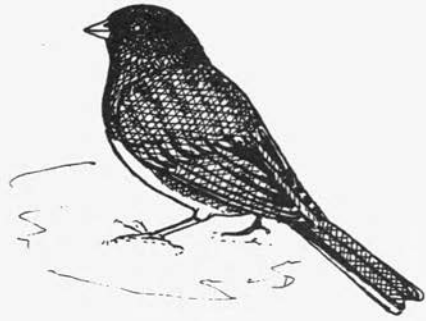


Illustration by William E. Davis

Hawks use the steep slopes for uplift and can be seen zooming by the Adams overlook. Greylock is not a good place for migrating hawks as it is not part of a long north-south ridge, but it may occasionally serve as a grandstand seat to observe kettles of broadwings following the Hoosac Valley south. More often now, the hoarse croaks and cries of the Common Raven are heard on the mountain, and groups of four or five may be seen. Perhaps someday, ravens will again nest in Berkshire County, and Raven Rocks on Ragged Mountain will live up to its name. In some summers, Evening Grosbeaks have been seen in many places on the upper slopes and ridges, and it is always a pleasant sight to see Indigo Bunting family groups near the summit.

Saddle Ball Ridge. Boreal forest in unspoiled condition extends along the ridge of Saddle Ball and is accessible by walking the Appalachian Trail south from a hairpin turn on Rockwell Road (6 on map). While ascending the trail over a small ridge, notice the rich assortment of spring wildflowers including Rosy Twisted-stalk and the yellow bells of Clintonia borealis. Canada Warblers inhabit the dense growth here. The trail descends to a small stream that leads to a sphagnum bog. Here you are likely to hear the bubbling song of Swainson's Thrush. This, and the other resident thrush, the Hermit Thrush seem much scarcer now than ten years ago. The Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, a late migrant but only a suspected breeder here, is usually seen in these boggy areas. All along the ridge, the boreal forest is typified by small firs and Yellow Birches not over twenty feet tall, and the boggy soil



Clintonia (*Clintonia borealis*)

Illustration by Julie Roberts

is richly green with geometrical forms of Wood Sorrel, Yellow Clintonia, Shining Club Moss (*Lycopodium lucidulum*), and Mountain Woodfern (*Dryopteris spinulosa austriaca*) arranged more artfully than in any Japanese garden. Compare this sparse number of species to the lush disorder of more southern climates.

The Campground, Stony Ledge, and the Hopper Valley. The campground (7 on map) and Stony Ledge (8 on map; both spellings are acceptable) are reached by Sperry Road off Rockwell Road. The first is situated in a transition zone between spruce-fir forest and northern hardwoods. Once a farm, and in the 30s a home for a Civilian Conservation Corps camp (foundations and fireplaces can still be seen), the primitive campground is a pleasant place to stay to enjoy some of the resident birds and to hear Barred Owls calling at night.

Solitary Vireos nest near the road, and Red-breasted Nuthatches, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Brown Creepers, and juncos populate the woods, the latter often choosing nest sites right by the road. Trails lead down to waterfalls where the Winter Wren holds forth, where huge hemlocks cling to steep slopes, and where Mountain Maples move gently in the spray.

A contrast is the road to Stony Ledge (8) which winds through sunny blueberry fields and opens out to a stunning view of the Hopper valley and the blue peaks of Vermont in the distance. Sitting on the rocks, one can hear the collective sounds of the valley floating up. The monotonous Red-eyed Vireo and the distant chimes of the Hermit Thrush mix with sounds of rushing brooks. The valley is an unusual shape, closed in on three sides by steep slopes through which tumble many small streams that connect to form Hopper Brook and then rush west out the narrow gateway. March Cataract forms a delicate white strand down the mountain during spring runoff, easily seen from the valley. Sometimes thought to be a glacial cirque, the Hopper definitely is carved by erosion as indicated by the sharp V-shaped valley bottom. In contrast to the upper slopes which tend to have acidic soils, a narrow band of limestone circles the lower slopes producing the rich soil needed by rarer species such as Large-Flowered Bellwort, Ginseng, and Massachusetts' only Holly Fern, Polystichum braunii, rediscovered by the author and Bruce Sorrie of the state's Natural Heritage Program. The trees in this sheltered valley are particularly tall and straight. Fortunately, sixteen hundred acres of the Hopper have been placed in the National Register of Natural Areas by the Society of American Foresters, and this precludes any cutting or vehicle use. In years to come, this area should be a shining example of undisturbed old-growth forest, a rarity preserved for future generations.

Mount Greylock should be regarded as a treasure by the state. Its northern vegetation and associated birdlife are rare in this small, heavily populated, northeastern state. Like the rest of the Berkshires, it is intimate, accessible, and not overwhelming in altitude, but still offers wild rugged country that is a challenge to anyone interested in getting off the beaten path. There are remote areas that reward the person willing to explore these scenes of wild beauty. After a day on Greylock, my feelings concur exactly with those of William Brewster: "Looking back at the rosy haze fast deepening into purple shadows under the brow of the mountain, it was hard to realize that the day's experience had not been a delightful dream." Greylock needs more people to share that experience and, once aware, will come to be its guardians. With care, the Blackpolls, Mourning Warblers, Whitethroats, and perhaps again, the Bicknell's Thrush, not to forget us humans, will always find our island of the north.

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Fox, William T., Professor of Geology, Williams College.
Sorrie, Bruce, Program Botanist for Natural Heritage Program.
Wobus, Reinhard A., Professor of Geology, Williams College.

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ITINERARY AND JUNE BIRDING GUIDE FOR MOUNT GREYLOCK

Access by car is from Route 2 on Notch Road from North Adams, Luce Road in Williamstown, and from Route 7 north of Lanesborough center where there are signs directing one to the Park and Visitor Center.

The numbers of the places listed below refer to the circled numbers on the maps (pages 64 and 70).

1. Notch Road begins 1.2 miles west of North Adams Center on Route 2.
2. Notch Road enters Mt. Greylock Reservation 2.4 miles from Route 2. Birds seen along the road are
Yellow bellied Sapsucker, Wood Thrush,
American Robin, Red-eyed and Solitary vireos,
Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, and
Black-and-white warblers, American Redstart,
Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak.
3. Tall Spruces (4.7 miles from Route 2). The Appalachian Trail crosses here. Park and take the trail north (right) to the clearing and the trails beyond. The trail south (left) and along the road are productive also. The birds are
Olive-sided Flycatcher, Winter Wren,
Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, and Blackburnian warblers,
Cape May and Bay-breasted warblers in migration.
4. Adams Overlook. Go left at the junction of Notch and Rockwell roads (8.5 miles) and park at first pull-off. Walk up the road to where the Appalachian Trail crosses.
Hawks, Blackpoll, Mourning, and Chestnut-sided warblers,
juncos, White-throated Sparrows.
5. Summit area (9.5 miles from Route 2) and Bascom Lodge. Park and walk east to Overlook and around edges of clearing.
Yellow-rumped and Blackpoll warblers,
White-throated Sparrows.
6. Saddle Ball along Appalachian Trail and bog area. Return to road junction and take Rockwell Road (left). Drive about 2000 feet down and park on left at sharp hairpin turn. Walk in here on the trail and explore boggy areas and boreal forest.
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Winter Wren,
Swainson's Thrush, Canada Warbler.
7. Campground. Turn right off Rockwell Road onto Sperry Road (2.2 miles from summit). Walk along road and explore trails. Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper,
Golden-crowned Kinglet, Solitary Vireo,
Mourning Warbler nesting along Hopper Trail.
Expect Barred Owls calling if you stay overnight.

8. **Stony Ledge.** Continue on Sperry Road for view of Hopper Valley. Birds here are

Dark-eyed Juncos, Hermit Thrush, towhees.

9. **Jones' Nose.** Return to Rockwell Road and continue down (4 miles from summit) to high open fields, blueberries, shad-bush.

10. **Rounds Rock.** (5 miles) Park on left ("4 miles" painted on road) and take trail west (right) not over a mile to a beautiful place with views to the south, blueberries, Mountain Holly (Nemopanthus), soaring hawks, and Hermit Thrushes.

11. **Visitor Center:** (8.5 miles to summit) exhibits and information. Continue down from here to Route 7.

12. **Alternate route to Route 7.** Take right 3 miles from summit at Ash Fort onto good gravel road. This is a less-traveled, quiet road with woodland birds, Barred Owl seen along the road, and a chance for Wild Turkey.

PAM WEATHERBEE spent most of her childhood in Williamstown, Massachusetts, roaming the woods and fields. This early interest led to a degree in biology and then to a wider interest in natural history with emphasis on birds and botany. She worked for three summers as a volunteer naturalist on Mt. Greylock and is now on the Mt. Greylock Advisory Committee.

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by Paul M. Roberts, Medford

GYR 1 - 2 - 3 is not a new software program developed for your personal computer. Rather, it is a question: "How many Gyrfalcons (Falco rusticolus) were present on Plum Island, Massachusetts during December 1983?" Many birders no doubt heard reports of two birds - a gray Gyr and a "dark" one. Based on oral and written reports, I believe that the two phases, or morphs, reported by other observers referred to the same individual. However, I also believe that two distinctly different Gyrfalcons, in two easily differentiated plumages, were present on the island on December 9. And I believe it possible that three individuals were present over a three-day period from December 9 to 11.

This highly improbable story began for me on the evening of December 3, 1983, when I received a phone call from Nancy Clayton informing me that a gray-phase Gyrfalcon had been seen by numerous observers on Plum Island. Nancy knows that some years ago I spent almost forty entire days roaming Plum Island and Salisbury in pursuit of an elusive white Gyrfalcon. Few things in life are more awesome, or more ephemeral, than a Gyr.

The weather was foul on Sunday, the fourth. Visibility was minimal, and no one reported a Gyr. Observers on Monday and Tuesday also apparently failed to find the bird. By this time, I heard reports that a dark-phase Gyr had been seen over the previous weekend, but I could not find anyone who had actually seen the "dark" bird. A Gyrfalcon may have been seen but not officially reported December 7, because numerous birders were on the Parker River Refuge the next day when a Gyrfalcon was found at Cross Farm Hill, plucking away for hours at a goose carcass on the north side of the hill. The reports I heard again described the bird as gray-phase, but talk of a dark-phase persisted. I thought it highly unlikely that two Gyrfalcons were present at the same time. It seemed much more reasonable to assume that only one Gyrfalcon was present and that it was sufficiently dark on the back and streaked on the breast and belly so that to one observer it would appear gray while another would see it as dark.

By now the Gyrfalcon had been present for almost a week and was known to frequent Cross Farm Hill. I was determined to look for myself.

On December 9, I drove to Newburyport in the predawn hour. With first light, I scoured the marsh near the airport and Pine Island and in the direction of Woodbridge Island. Red-tailed Hawk. Rough-legged Hawk (light-phase). Three kestrels and a Northern Harrier - but no Gyr. I worked my way down the island, scanning every inch of marsh and dune visible from the

refuge road, down to Hellcat Swamp. Failure. But then, I was prepared for it. The scars of wild Gyrfalcon chases still mar my psyche.

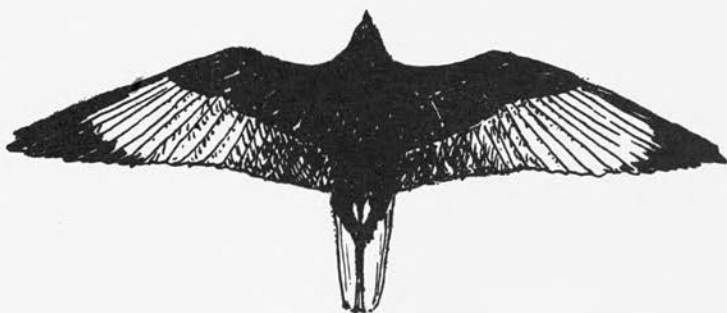
Watching from the top of the Hellcat tower, I picked up a large, very dark bird gliding south from the town marker field over the swamp. The bird's effortless speed in a shallow glide was impressive. The bird looked bulky, and its wings were held stiff on the horizontal, straight out from the body, as the creature melded into the woods. The jizz was not that of a harrier or a Rough-legged Hawk, the two most likely raptors to be seen here.

I RAN from the tower and started working my way up the road, hoping to see this bird again. No such luck! Disappointed, I headed back to the parking lot, debating whether to return to the tower or move on. Suddenly, I saw a large, but different, raptor moving quickly, effortlessly, up the dune side of the road. It was followed, but not harrassed, by several hard-working crows. The bird was using a slow, shallow, stiff beat from the "hand" to maintain its speed. The wings were long and thick, as was the tail, which looked plank-like.

I didn't have time to erect my scope, so I used my 8.5X binoculars, with the sun shining over my shoulder providing excellent light. The bird's mantle appeared consistently dark. The color was questionable - dark gray, brown, or blackish - but the crown, nape, back, upper-wing coverts and flight feathers appeared uniformly dark. I was impressed by the contrast between the underparts and the upperparts. The bird's cheek and throat appeared quite light, conceivably light gray, with a distinct, sharp malar bar or moustache. The breast and belly also appeared quite light. No heavy streaking was obvious. (Light crossbarring seems possible, but it was not seen.) The color of the underparts reminded me of an adult Northern Goshawk, but I was confident the bird was not a Goshawk. I had seen the shape of the extended wings, the tail, and the moustache too well. Underneath, the primaries were light gray, tipped dark. Due to the shallow wingbeat and the altitude of the bird, I did not see the wing linings well, nor did I see the middle and lower belly or the tail from below. The tail appeared uniformly dark from above. I did not perceive heavy banding, but fine banding was possible.

When the bird passed out of sight, I quickly ran to the Hellcat Tower to see if I could pick it up again. I could not. It was only 8:10 A.M., and I wasn't going home skunked. I had seen the Gyr! My only question was how could anyone ever mistake that bird for a dark-phase bird.

While I was still on the tower, all the ducks and geese in the south pool suddenly spun into the air in a flurry of activity. I quickly searched the horizon with my binoculars but could not find a raptor. Then I perceived a silhouette, backlit, on the dike. Using the scope (25X), I saw a large, extremely dark



Gyrfalcon

Illustration by Julie Roberts

falcon at the far south end of the dike, sitting on a kill. I ran to the car, drove quickly to the Old Pines, and slowly worked my way along the Old Pines trail until I had a clear view of the dike, but nothing was there.

Then I spied the hawk in the field. It had carried the kill down from the dike, out of the wind, and was plucking away at a large waterfowl, which appeared to be a Mallard. The falcon, less than a hundred yards away, plucked at the duck for ten to fifteen minutes. The hawk then rose in the air lazily and soared low, in front of and directly over me, no more than twenty yards away. The soar was low, effortless, and slow; the bulk of the bird was such that it appeared to be defying gravity. There was no heavy flapping. After circling over me twice, the bird passed low over the field and perched in a short tree. It remained there for more than half an hour. A crow landed in the tree, within a yard of the falcon, but made no sound or motion toward its impressive neighbor.

This hawk was LARGE and barrel-chested. It reminded me of the Squantum Gyr of the previous year in that it was so robust it conjured up images of a pheasant or ptarmigan in flight. The head and neck were substantial; the wings and tail long and thick. This bird was completely dark brown - fuscous - when seen from above, with a pale bloom at the base of the primaries on the upper wing. From below, the throat, breast, and belly were saturated fuscous - there was no streaking. The tail was all dark from above, not perceptibly banded. The cheeks were slightly paler than the crown, and the cere and feet were bright yellow. In flight, the wing linings appeared quite dark, contrasting with the white to gray, dark-tipped flight feathers. The underside of the tail was grayish-white and unbanded, but I think the rectrices were narrowly tipped with dark. The plumage, except that of the tail, seemed exactly like that of a dark-phase Rough-legged Hawk, but the bird was a falcon.

Now I knew why two different Gyrs had been reported! Two Gyrs within an hour and not another birder, another witness, in sight! Then, Herman Weissberg appeared. He heard my tale and went with me to the Hellcat dunes observation deck to look for the bird. There it was, back in the same tree! We drove down the road slowly, observing the perched bird from the parked car and then on foot. As we drew closer, the bird flushed, passed low over us, and paddled slowly up the Hellcat dike until it disappeared from view. Herman joked that the bird looked so similar to a dark-phase roughleg that he probably would have dismissed it as such, without looking closely, if it hadn't been for me. The thought occurred to him that perhaps he had already seen that bird earlier in the week and had indeed assumed it to be a buteo.

Herman drove on, and I returned to the Old Pines where I found the bird perched on a staddle in the south end of Hellcat Marsh. I observed it for another fifteen minutes before it flew up the dike and out of sight. Walking back to my car, I met several birders who reported a gray Gyrfalcon at Cross Farm Hill, perched on a swallow box. I drove to the hill, but the bird was not there, and I returned to the office for a half-day's work.

On December 10, numerous observers again saw a Gyrfalcon at Cross Farm Hill. I returned to Plum Island on the eleventh to learn that the bird had been seen well very early but had recently disappeared. Just north of Cross Farm Hill, a dozen cars marked the scene of the disappearance, and people were scanning the marsh randomly. A light-phase Rough-legged Hawk alighted in a tree on the hill but soon flew. Then, Don and Lillian Stokes and I saw a blur disappear low over the hill; we thought it had that distinctive Gyr jizz. After a short time, a bird teed up on a post deep in the marsh, so distant and so badly backlit that we could pick up very little. Eric Neilsen and I thought the bird looked slim, and the relatively small head appeared light, contrasting with a darker breast. We both thought it was probably a roughleg. Don Stokes thought Gyr. As we walked down the road for a better look, the bird, still quite far away, flew - proving Don correct.

I observed this bird for at least three hours over the course of the day. I saw it close, perched in a tree on Cross Farm Hill, standing nearby on the grassy slope, flying out over the marsh, and perched on a distant staddle for what seemed an eternity. I saw the falcon in excellent light, with the sun beaming over my shoulder, and in poor light, backlit or under heavy overcast.

The bird was dark brown on the back, with some pale feather edging, especially on the crown, nape, and cheeks. The breast and belly were the color of creamy eggnog, heavily streaked with brown. The streaks were so long and thick on the upper belly that from a distance they appeared to converge into a belly band. The crown, neck, cheeks, and throat were light

brown - tawny. A dark but not very distinctive moustache was obvious behind the eye and stretching down from the gape. The cere, beak, and feet were bluish. Seen close up, the bird appeared predominantly dark. The more distant the bird, the lighter the crown, cheeks, breast, and belly appeared. At a distance, the abdominal streaking "dissolved," giving the bird a two-toned appearance. I questioned whether this might be the same gray bird I had seen two days before. Its appearance seemed to change with each shift in posture and distance. Of any two observers, one would invariably describe the bird as gray and the other as dark. People who had seen a Gyr on the eighth questioned whether this could be the same bird! Those who had watched the Gyr on the hill that morning were asking if this could be the hawk that perched on the distant saddle. This was a "mirror" falcon: whoever looked at it saw something different.

Gyrfalcon reports emanated from Plum Island again on December 12 ("light brown"), on December 21 (dark phase, immature), and concluded with a report from the Christmas Bird Count on December 26. The variety of reports and the discrepancies between them prompted me to reexamine carefully the literature with regard to morph, age, and sex determination.

Today, most authorities consider the Gyrfalcon a monotypic species with a variety of morphs or color phases.

Colour and pattern are extremely variable, ranging from white with dark streaks, spots, and bars on individual feathers, to almost uniformly black with faint, lighter edgings and spots, but various grey intermediate plumages are most common. Adult plumages are similar, but males tend to be less heavily marked with streaks and bars on the ventral parts and head than females, some males being immaculate underneath.¹

Beebe and Weick describe three and four color phases respectively, also allowing for numerous intermediate plumages. The illustrations in Weick and the spectacular plates in Schiøler best portray the wide variety of plumages in adults and juveniles.

Aging of Gyrfalcons also poses some difficulties. Most authorities seem to agree that the cere and feet of adult birds are yellow, and the cere and feet of immatures are bluish to grayish. Weick, however, asserts that adults can have blue or bluish-gray legs and feet.² Brown and Amadon ascribe a yellow cere and feet to both adults and immatures!³ Most authorities do agree that adult birds have some transversal bars, or crescent- or arrow-shaped streaking or barring about the crown, sides of the head, or flanks. Adults also tend to have heavy tear-shaped streaking or barring. Immature birds tend to have narrow longitudinal streaking and no barring. Schiøler offers the best illustrations depicting barring versus streaking.

Attempting to identify the sex of the bird in the field is not an easy task either. Cade asserts that females are generally

darker than males, at least in the gray phase, but the difference may not be obvious unless both sexes are present!⁴ Fortunately, all authorities agree that females, on average, are significantly larger and heavier than males as this table of comparative weights illustrates:

Adult Males	805 - 1300 grams	Adult Females	1400 - 2100 g.
Juvenile Males	800 - 1219 g.	Juvenile Females	1000 - 2100 g. ⁵

Clearly, determining the morph, age, and sex of a Gyrfalcon in the field is not an easy task nor reliably done.

In retrospect, I could not classify Sighting 1 as to morph, age, or sex. The bird appeared gray-white underneath, and the seeming absence of streaking suggests an adult, but the evidence is far too scanty to draw any conclusions.

Sighting 2 was quite dark and significantly larger than either Sighting 1 or 3. With a bright yellow cere and feet, and such bulk, the bird was most likely an adult female. The closest pictorial depiction I have found is that rendered by D. M. Henry in Brown and Amadon.⁶

The Sighting 3 bird was apparently the only individual seen by most observers other than Herman Weissberg and me. Various people have classified the bird as gray- and dark-phase. Originally, I thought of it as gray-phase but now tend towards dark-phase as the most descriptive. The blue cere and feet, the heavy streaking, and the absence of barring suggest an immature bird. The relatively small size, at least in comparison with Sighting 2, suggest a male. This seems reasonable in that juvenile males appear more likely to fly farther south than do females.

The question remains. How many Gyrfalcons were there? Some skeptics might accept only the generally seen, heavily streaked bird, dismissing the totally dark bird with yellow feet and cere as a dark-phase Rough-legged Hawk. I can only respond that it was a falcon, not a buteo. For the past four years I have spent many hours observing roughlegs as part of a research project, and I feel quite familiar with the species.

At least two easily differentiated Gyrs were present on Plum Island between December 9 and 11. Were there three? If I had not made Sighting 1 and Sighting 3, I would be prone to dismiss the issue quickly, but I find it very difficult to reconcile the two sightings as one bird. Most particularly, in excellent light, the first bird had crisp gray-white underparts. The light breast of Sighting 3, when seen at a distance in poor light, was a soft, fuzzy eggnog color to my eyes, and I observed that bird under poor conditions for more than an hour just to make such a comparison! However, this is clearly inadequate evidence on which to posit the existence of a third bird. In fact, the description of the bird originally seen on December 3 by Dave Brown, Bob Campbell, and Glenn

d'Entremont suggests that their bird and my first sighting may have been the same individual. [The full description can be found in the December field records in this issue. Ed.]

The hawk was obviously a falcon with an obscure but observable malar mark. This mark was brown which blended with the light gray-brown markings on the face and head. The back was mottled gray-brown with the wings, rump, and tail mostly light brown. The undersurface was heavily striped brown-gray. The original close range viewing allowed the brown highlights to stand out. As the hawk moved away, the brown blended to gray. The tone and quality of the color can be compared with an adult Goshawk.

Perhaps I didn't see that first bird as well as I thought I did. Three Gyrfalcons? The limits of credulity are strained, if not rent asunder. And yet

I would like to extend special thanks to Nancy and Alden Clayton for their help in obtaining access to some publications. I would also like to thank the Massachusetts Audubon Society and Don and Lillian Stokes for their help in obtaining materials, and Dave Brown, Bob Campbell, and Glenn d'Entremont for their written report of the December 3 sighting.

Footnotes.

1. Cade (1982), pp. 74-76.
2. Weick, p. 140.
3. Brown and Amadon, p. 843.
4. Cade (1960), p. 157.
5. Cramp and Simmons, p. 360.
6. Brown and Amadon, p. 832. See Plate 161, No. 4.
"Candicans" form, unusually dark, Greenland."

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PAUL M. ROBERTS, a hiker and birder for fifteen years, has a special interest in hawks and hawk migration. He saw his first Gyrfalcon, a white-phase bird, from the new John Hancock building in Boston, and each Gyr since then has been a life bird. To date, he has seen five - or is it six? - Gyrs.



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RESULTS OF THE 1983 SPRING MIGRATION WATCH

by John Andrews, Lexington, and Lee Taylor, Arlington

For the past four years, BOEM has sponsored a cooperative data collection project designed to monitor landbird populations during the spring migration period (see J. Andrews and L. Taylor, BOEM 9: 67-75, 10: 79-83, and 11: 75-81). Originally, the project focused only upon warblers (Parulidae). By 1983, the scope of the study had grown to include all species on the Massachusetts checklist from doves through finches. This report presents a summary of the results for 1983.

Methods. The methods used in the study have been described in BOEM 10(April): 79-83 and are summarized only briefly here. Volunteer participants visited their selected sites at least once every four days during the study period. They followed fixed routes through the site each day and recorded the numbers of all species detected by visual sighting or by song. At the end of the study, they identified those species for which breeding residents contributed to the count. They also noted which species were seen in distinctly greater or lesser numbers than usual for the site.

Fifteen data sets were received from sites within the study area. These sets were inspected for completeness and consistency, and the records were forwarded to BOEM and Massachusetts Audubon compilers for use in preparation of monthly field reports. Thirteen data sets were then selected for detailed analysis. These data sets were analyzed using a Kaypro 4 microcomputer.

Results. The table provides a summary of the thirteen data sets. Of the 155 species that follow Rock Dove on the MAS checklist, our observers saw 128, plus 6 species not on the list. The additions were Chuck-will's-widow, Prothonotary Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Kentucky Warbler, and Summer Tanager. In 1982, 32 species of warblers were seen; this year 35 species were sighted. Of the 8 sites that were covered in 1982, 7 recorded a higher number of warbler species in 1983, and the birds-per-hour (BPH) value for warblers increased from 19.0 to 22.5. This increase was not observed in the major permanent resident species whose BPH value declined by 20 percent. These numbers are indicative of the general qualitative feeling of most observers that the 1983 spring migration was the strongest, in both numbers and diversity, since 1980.

Check-marks indicating that a species had been seen in distinctly greater or lesser numbers than normal were tabulated. It was considered significant if a species received two or more supporting marks. The strength of the migration was reflected in the fact that there was no species that received two votes for decreased numbers. Increases were noted mostly among the

warblers. Species thought to be up in numbers were Bank Swallow, Tennessee Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, and American Redstart. Unusually high counts were noted for some normally less common warbler species such as Orange-crowned, Worm-eating, and Hooded Warbler. It was somewhat surprising that no one reported Fox Sparrow. This species was also missing on the Greater Boston Christmas Bird Count for the first time since the count began in 1972. Any award for the most unexpected observation would probably go to the Pine Grosbeak at Marblehead Neck, although the Chuck-will's-widow at Mt. Auburn Cemetery was certainly noteworthy.

Inspection of the BPH abundances for the warblers reveals that, as noted in previous years, the rank order of abundance is remarkably stable. Drops in rank order were observed, however, for Blackpoll (from 7th to 11th place), Black-throated Blue (from 16th to 21st), and Cape May Warbler (23rd to 29th).

Summary of 1983 Spring Migration Watch.

SITE OBSERVER	VISITS	HRS. AFIELD	TOTAL FLYC. SPEC.	THRUSH SPEC.	VIREO SPEC.	WARB. SPEC.
Braintree (Pond Meadow)						
G. d'Entremont	17	19	77	4	5	31
Bridgewater						
K. Holmes	20	27	83	7	5	22
Cambridge (Mt. Auburn Cem.)						
F. Bouchard	19	37	105	5	6	33
Cambridge (Norton's Woods)						
P. Stevens	30	22	51	3	4	17
Marblehead (MNWS)						
C. Blaszczak	15	13	80	7	5	22
Medford (T. McDonald Pk.)						
C. Jackson	14	15	39	2	3	10
Nahant (Nahant Thicket)						
L. Pivacek	14	16	76	7	6	22
Newton (Bowen School)						
O. Komar	26	27	82	4	5	24
Newton (Novitiate Park)						
N. Komar	28	39	99	8	6	24
Provincetown (Beech Forest)						
B. Nikula	25	27	87	3	5	26
Roxbury (Gethsemane Cem.)						
M. Greenwald	12	21	66	3	3	16
Waltham (Met. State Hosp.)						
L. Taylor	15	18	71	4	5	20
W. Newbury (Pikes Br. Rd.)						
R. McHale	7	8	54	2	4	13
TOTALS (13 sites)	242	289	128	9	6	35



Magnolia Warbler

Illustration by John W. Andrews

Future of the Spring Migration Watch. Twice during the four years of its existence, the ground rules of this project have been altered. The time period covered was expanded in 1982, and the number of species included was expanded in 1982 and 1983. The project now appears to be fully mature, and it is hoped that it can continue indefinitely under the sponsorship of the BOEM Field Studies Committee with little change. As data accumulates, our ability to draw conclusions concerning population dynamics and site differences should grow accordingly. But in order to use this data base, it is important to take full advantage of the availability of personal computers that can store data collected over many years and retrieve it for analysis. We feel that the data processing capabilities of personal computers are growing so rapidly that we will never accumulate a data base too large for available technology.

It is critically important, however, to make sure that the form of the data is such that it is truly useful. One question that arises in this regard is the manner in which data from different days is combined in the data base. Until now, all compilation has resulted in the combining of data for all site visits during the study period. When the starting date of the study period was moved up into mid-April, the count totals for certain early migrants such as Palm Warbler increased because the extended period included more of their peak migration period. At the same time, the BPH abundances of migrants that did not migrate in April declined, because more count hours were added without any additional birds being seen. This is obviously undesirable, for it makes it difficult to compare the project results with any other data that does not employ iden-

tical starting and stopping dates. If we abandon all attempts at combining data and simply record all counts on a day-by-day basis, the amount of data that must be entered into the computer can be staggering. Some compromise seems necessary. In the future, data will probably be combined into time divisions equal to one quarter of a month. Such units are small enough to provide meaningful measures of abundance during each part of the migration season, yet they are large enough to greatly reduce the data input task.

Anyone wishing to have a printout of the BPH abundances for the species observed in 1983 may obtain one by sending a long, self-addressed, stamped envelope to John Andrews, 22 Kendall Road, Lexington, MA 02173.

JOHN ANDREWS is chairman of the BOEM Field Studies Committee. His special birding interests include avian population dynamics, habitat utilization, and behavior. He is active in local conservation groups and in the Sierra Club. John works as a research engineer at an M.I.T. laboratory.

LEE TAYLOR is a charter member of the BOEM Field Studies Committee and is a records compiler for BOEM. He works as a communications systems engineer and has served as a member of the Arlington Conservation Commission.



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an electronic bulletin board for birders

The Newburyport Birders Exchange and the Massachusetts Audubon Society are pilot-testing an electronic bulletin board for birders. Birders with a home computer and telephone modem are invited to participate. The bulletin board will provide information similar to that found on The Voice of Audubon. However, the information may be stored by the computer and printed out for later reference. Other services typical of existing public bulletin boards, such as exchanging messages with other callers, will also be provided. There is no charge for this service, other than your regular phone charges if you are calling long distance.

For further information, please write to:

Edward Mair
Newburyport Birders Exchange
31 Plummer Avenue
Newburyport, MA 01950.

A self-addressed, stamped envelope would be appreciated.

BOOK REVIEW

The Peacocks of Baboquivari. Erma J. Fisk. 1983. W.W.Norton & Company, 284 pages, \$15.

The title of this book would lead you to believe that the story takes place in an exotic foreign land. And it does occur in a locale exotic for eastern birders - high in a mountain range in southwestern Arizona. Erma (Jonnie) Fisk was sent there by the Nature Conservancy to record the wildlife of the area for one winter and spring. The peacocks had been imported by the original owner of the ranch and turned out to be a detriment to her work. "A flock of peacocks, for Pete's sake!"

The Nature Conservancy chose an unusual and well-qualified person to document the birdlife by banding and field observation. Widowed, restless and lonely, Jonnie Fisk was free to take on the task, and her background is enviable, though she puts herself down. "Damn, damn, they have sent a girl to do a man's job." But, she tells us, "I have parlayed my backyard fun into a serious avocation." She was in her forties when she began her birdwatching, got a banding license, and started a new career. (We don't need to be told that she comes from a family of workaholics.) Interspersed with telling us about her experience in Arizona, we get glimpses of her work in Florida, on the east coast to protect the nesting Least Terns (for ten years), at the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell, in Ecuador, Honduras, Belize, Trinidad and Tobago, for example. Elected to many boards, Mrs. Fisk says she falls asleep at meetings, that she is a field person, not a policy person, and has built her new life around field ornithology. Among her many accomplishments, she translated Maria Koepcke's Las Aves del Departamento de Lima, Peru. There is in this book the pleasure of reading about persons and places familiar to birders as well as a strong conservation message throughout.

The setting for her simple cabin at 4,500 feet was magnificent, with the rocky tower of Baboquivari dominating. The road, however, was a rough track, and it was the coldest winter on record, with constant rain, even snow and hail. She had to backpack in her supplies much of the time for two miles from her van, and three times was isolated by impassable fords. There were people who checked on her well-being, but she was mostly alone, in semiwilderness. "My presence is obviously a surprise to every visitor. On some days it is to me too."

The peacocks ran off the small birds, there was no shade for the nets, and even in spring she felt the ranch was too high for migrants. In her words, "There is not enough birding to make an honest woman of me," or "My birds are mostly juncos, damn it." At times, she ran eleven nets all day and was lucky to get four or five species, mostly repeats. She is frank with her problems of identifying sparrows and Empidonaxes. One evening, she has to cut an oriole out of the net, because

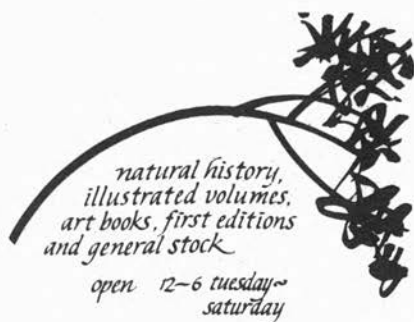
she can't see to untangle it, an act of of absolutely last resort for a bander of her experience. But perhaps the saddest time for her was when the rancher's wife hosed down the Say's Phoebe's nest with eggs, that she had been watching for weeks. "Where are those phoebes, grieving as I grieve tonight?" In contrast, is her description of the Hooded and Scott's orioles singing vespers in the fig tree. "As their duet continues it becomes for me a distillation of all the clarity and beauty of spring in this remote canyon."

Jonnie Fisk deals with her disappointments, her loneliness, her physical handicaps and age (she is in her seventies) in a down-to-earth, honest way, and always with humor. The picture she paints of the area and the details of her life there are absorbing, as are the vignettes of her family and friends. Her personal courage is remarkable.

In spite of not having caught any unusual birds, she admits she has enjoyed the winter even though, "I have abandoned hope of listing new birds for the area and sending down reports to excite my sponsors, of making some small reputation in ornithology for myself." Readers will know she already had such a reputation and has added to it with this very personal book. This is an adventure story from which there is much to learn. When it is time to leave, she writes that the Least Terns are flying north from South America, and she must return to Cape Cod. Jonnie Fisk has more work to do. The debt is ours.

Proceeds from this book go to the Nature Conservancy.

Patricia N. Fox, Lexington



*Saxifrage
books*

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BOOK NOTES

Two books available at large discounts from the Birding Book Society (BBS) deserve mention. The avid collector of field guides will not want to miss the first book, regardless of cost, and the second offering will appeal to the birder who is interested in the exciting frontiers of ornithological research.

A Field Guide to the Birds of the U.S.S.R. V. E. Flint et al. N. Bourso-Leland, tr., with J. Baird, adviser (both of Massachusetts Audubon Society). 1984. Princeton University Press, 420 pages, \$65 (BBS: \$42.50). The 728 species described are nearly all pictured in color and include birds from much of Europe, East and Central Asia, and India with 303 distributional maps. The Russian edition of 1968 is out of print; this is the first U.S.S.R. field guide in English.

Perspectives in Ornithology. A. H. Brush and G. A. Clark, eds. 1983. Cambridge University Press, 560 pages, \$30 (BBS: \$21). This is a collection of papers and commentaries presented at the A.O.U. centennial celebration in September 1983. The essays included not only review what is known but point out what is not yet understood. Topics covered include avian mating systems (D. W. Mock) and cooperative breeding strategies (S. T. Emlen and S. L. Vehrencamp); optimal foraging (J. R. Krebs, D. W. Stephens, and W. J. Sutherland), an analysis of the complexities of bird behavior in habitat selection; the genetics of speciation (G. F. Barrowclough); paleornithology (L. D. Martin), changing views of bird evolution and the uncertain position of Archeopteryx, not on the main line of evolution but a primitive lizard; song-learning (P.J.B. Slater), examining why some birds learn their songs and others do not; and bird navigation (C. Walcott, A. J. Lednor, and K. Able), the mystery of the nature of a bird's navigational "map." These are lively and speculative discussions by active, and for the most part, young, iconoclastic researchers, and the reader gains a glimpse of the expanding horizons of research in this field.

D.R.A.

WILDLIFE OBSERVATION PERMIT FOR NORTH MONOMOY ISLAND

Access to the North Island of Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge will be by PERMIT ONLY from April 15 to August. Anyone planning to visit this area during this period may obtain a permit from the Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, Morris Island, Chatham (telephone 945-0594).



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Field Records: December 1983



by George W. Gove and Robert H. Stymeist

December 1983 was quite wet and a bit on the cold side. The temperature averaged 32.1° , 1.6° below normal and 7.5° colder than the very mild December of 1982. A brief warming on the sixth brought the month's high temperature of 59° ; then a five-day warm stretch on December 12-16 averaged about fourteen degrees above normal; and during a final warming on December 28 the temperature rose to 57° . On the colder side, the month's low was just zero on Christmas Day, twenty-six degrees below normal for this holiday. Precipitation in the form of rain totaled 4.94 inches, 0.46 inch more than normal; measurable amounts fell on fourteen days. Snowfall totaled just 2.6 inches, 5.4 inches less than the average December record.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

On December 4, in a two-hour period with a strong northeast wind, eighty-three Red-throated Loons were counted flying past Sandy Neck in Barnstable, and over thirty Common Loons were reported off Cape Ann. A Western Grebe was observed off Siasconset, Nantucket, the same location where one was found during the same period in 1981. A total of twenty-nine Pied-billed Grebes was reported on the Cape Cod CBC, and another eighteen were observed on the Mid-Cape CBC, considerable increases over the previous year's total of seventeen and five respectively.

Double-crested Cormorants were reported in unusually high numbers this December, with all-time high counts recorded of twenty individuals in the Greater Boston CBC and ten on the Cape Cod CBC. Another fourteen were counted on the Quincy CBC.

Lingering herons included a Great Egret at Chatham, Little Blue Herons on Plum Island and in Orleans and Cattle Egrets at Marshfield and another on Nantucket. A total of 119 Great Blue Herons on the Cape Cod CBC was considerably more than the 62 reported on the same count the previous year.

Two Tundra Swans were seen at Plymouth, and two different individuals were noted at Ipswich and on Plum Island. In Arlington, a pair of Mute Swans made the local news, and a first record for the Greater Boston CBC. The Greater White-fronted Goose, first found in early November, continued in a Rochester cornfield until December 19.

On December 3, a Cinnamon Teal hybrid was found at Clarks Pond in Ipswich where it remained for three days and was seen by a multitude of birders. According to Richard Heil of Peabody "the bird appeared essentially like a typical adult male breeding-plumaged Cinnamon Teal with bright cinnamon sides and breast except that the head was duller with (in good light) a greenish patch back from the eye to the rear of the head. The bill was darkish and fairly long." James Berry of Ipswich adds, "Later I saw it fly; it had distinct large light blue patches on forewings like Cinnamon Teal (and other species). My impression was that it had a bill too small for a Cinnamon or a Blue-winged Teal, more like Green-wing size." Virtually any duck with green in the proper area might have been the other parent (Mallard, Northern Shoveler, American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal).

Other highlights of December include: 2 Eurasian Wigeon, 2 King Eider, over 20 Harlequin Ducks and 16 Barrow's Goldeneye. High counts of Common Eider were noted on the Greater Boston CBC and 19,289 Common Eider were tallied on the Cape Cod CBC. Equally

high counts of this species were noted on the Marshfield and Plymouth CBCs. Common Goldeneye numbers were high on the Quincy, Greater Boston, Marshfield and Plymouth CBCs. Over 2000 Red-breasted Mergansers were seen in Duxbury Bay early in the month, but only 386 were counted on the Plymouth CBC on December 28. R.H.S.

SPECIES/DECEMBER	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Red-throated Loon:			
4	Barnstable(S.N.), Brant Rock	83 in 2 hrs., 30	B.Nikula, W.Petersen
18	C.Cod	40	CBC
Common Loon:			
4,10,18	C. Ann	30 ⁺ , 45, 88	K.Durham#, BBC, CBC
18,28	C.Cod, Plymouth	94, 62	CBC
Pied-billed Grebe:			
18,26	C.Cod, Mid-Cape	29, 18	CBC
Horned Grebe:			
4,9	Lakeville, S.Middleboro	35, 40+	D.Emerson, L.Robinson
17;18	Buzz.Bay, Quincy; C. Ann	442, 71; 71	CBC
Red-necked Grebe:			
4	Rockport, Dennis	2, 10+	L.Taylor, B.Nikula
10,28	Gloucester, Plymouth	28, 15	BBC, CBC
Western Grebe:			
30-31	Nant.	1	W.Boyle#+v.o.
Northern Gannet:			
4,18	Brant Rock, C.Cod	300, 1275	W.Petersen#, CBC
Great Cormorant:			
17;18	Quincy; C.Cod, C. Ann	307; 108, 347	CBC
Double-crested Cormorant:			
17,18	Quincy, Gr. Boston	14, 20	CBC
18,23	C.Cod, Gloucester	10, 1 imm.	CBC, R.Heil
American Bittern:			
17,18	Westport, C.Cod	1, 1	CBC
Great Blue Heron:			
17,18	Westport, C.Cod	42, 119	CBC
Great Egret:			
18	Chatham	1	CBC(R.Scott)
Little Blue Heron:			
3,16	P.I.	2 imm., 1 imm.	R.Heil#, C.Floyd
13-19	Orleans	1 imm.	C.Smith#
Cattle Egret:			
3	Marshfield	1 ph.	W.Petersen#
1st wk. of Dec.	Nant.	1	E.Andrews
Black-crowned Night-Heron:			
5,17	Nant., Quincy	22, 4	E.Andrews, CBC
18	C. Ann, C.Cod	5, 36	CBC
Tundra Swan:			
1-19, 15-16	Ipswich, P.I. (different bird)	1, 1	E.Norman#+v.o., v.o.
28	Plymouth	2	CBC
Mute Swan:			
chr.	Arlington(Spy Pond)	2	M.Rosenfeld+v.o.
17,28	Westport, Plymouth	60, 57	CBC
Greater White-fronted Goose:			
1-19(from Oct.)	Rochester	1	D.Cosman#+v.o.
Snow Goose:			
11,20-23	P.I., Framingham	38, 1 imm.	J.Berry, K.Hamilton
"Blue Goose":			
6	P.I.	1 ad.	R.Forster
Brant:			
17,18	Quincy, Gr. Boston	726, 446	CBC
18,28	C.Cod, Plymouth	755, 432	CBC
		7	
Canada Goose:			
7,10	PRNWR, GMNWR	1800, 700+	staff, R.Walton
18	C.Cod	2125	CBC
Green-winged Teal:			
3	P.I.	100	BBC(G.d'Entremont)
"Common Eurasian Teal":			
9	Nant.	1 m.	C.+ E.Andrews
American Black Duck:			
7	PRNWR	3500	staff
17,18	Quincy, C.Cod	1130, 3400	CBC

<u>SPECIES/DECEMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Northern Pintail:			
7,11	PRNWR,Winthrop	10, 3(in ocean)	staff,R.Stymeist
26	Mid-Cape	36	CBC
Cinnamon Teal (Hybrid):			
3-5	Ipswich	1	R.Heil#+v.o.
Northern Shoveler:			
6,18	P.I.,Lexington	32, 2	R.Forster,L.Taylor#
Gadwall:			
3	Ipswich to P.I.	133	R.Heil
10,18	Gloucester,C. Ann	25, 32	BBC,CBC
24	Arlington,Chilmark	1, 21	L.Taylor,W.Manter
Eurasian Wigeon:			
3,18	Ipswich,C.Cod	1 f., 1	M.Argue#,CBC
American Wigeon:			
3	Ipswich	30+	BBC
Canvasback:			
3,18	Lakeville,C.Cod	65, 106	K.Anderson,CBC
19,26	Cambridge,Mid-Cape	131, 128	F.Bouchard,CBC
Redhead:			
4,18	Braintree,C.Cod	4, 2	SSBC,CBC
Ring-necked Duck:			
17,18	Quincy,C.Cod	26, 22	CBC
Greater Scaup:			
11,17	Winthrop;Quincy,Buzz.Bay	409; 936, 8246	R.Stymeist#,CBC
Lesser Scaup:			
3	Marshfield,Gloucester	2, 14	W.Petersen,W.Smith
4,11	Braintree,Lakeville	6, 10	SSBC,K.Holmes
Common Eider:			
17,18	Quincy,Gr.Boston	2985, 6664	CBC
18	C. Ann,C.Cod	491; 19289	CBC
26,28	Marshfield,Plymouth	17152; 13951	CBC
King Eider:			
5	S.Dartmouth	1 m.	R.Laubach
23,28	Rockport,Plymouth	1 1W m., 1	R.Heil,CBC
Harlequin Duck:			
thr.	Chilmark(M.V.)	17 max. (12/23)	W.Manter+v.o.
thr.	E.Orleans	2	fide B.Nikula
16,17	Rockport,Hull	1 m., 1	S.Reade,CBC
Oldsquaw:			
17,18	Quincy,C.Cod	166, 87	CBC
Black Scoter:			
18,28	C. Ann,Plymouth	18, 16	CBC
Surf Scoter:			
17	Westport	175	CBC
White-winged Scoter:			
17,18	Quincy,C. Ann	218, 210	CBC
18,28	C.Cod,Plymouth	366, 679	CBC
Common Goldeneye:			
17;18	Quincy;C.Cod,Boston	520; 526, 636	CBC
26,28	Marshfield,Plymouth	716, 470	CBC
Barrow's Goldeneye:			
18	Gr.Boston,C.Cod	1, 3	CBC
31	Nant. Harbor	11	R.Stymeist#
Bufflehead:			
5,11	Nant. (Quaise),E. Boston	375 ⁺ , 200	E.Andrews,R.Stymeist#
17	Westport, Quincy	292, 879	CBC
18	C.Cod,Gr.Boston	1518, 1118	CBC
Hooded Merganser:			
4,17	Braintree,Quincy	30, 82	CBC
17	Buzzards Bay	140	CBC
18	Gr.Boston,C.Cod	36, 12	CBC
Common Merganser:			
17	Quincy,Athol	38, 84	CBC
18	C.Cod,Gr.Boston	270, 141	CBC
Red-breasted Merganser:			
3	Duxbury Bay	2000+	W.Petersen#
17,18	Quincy,C.Cod	972, 297	CBC
18,26,28	Gr.Boston,Mid-Cape,Plymouth	1408, 2067, 386	CBC

<u>SPECIES/DECEMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Ruddy Duck:			
4,17	Braintree, Millis	40, 29	SSBC, CBC
17,18	Quincy, Gr. Boston	93, 47	CBC

HAWKS THROUGH BOBWHITE

Turkey Vultures were seen in Rochester and Falmouth, and an Osprey was noted at Great Meadows on the third. Bald Eagles were seen at five locations. A total of 22 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 3 Cooper's Hawks were counted on five CBCs. Four Red-shouldered Hawks were also counted on CBCs, and a total of 109 Red-tailed Hawks were seen on six CBCs. On the Cape Cod CBC, 6 Merlins and a Peregrine Falcon were noted.

A Gyr Falcon was present on Plum Island from December 3 through 26 and was seen by many observers. Reports of colors and markings varied considerably from brown or brownish through gray. The bird was seen feeding on goose and duck carcasses and chasing other raptors away from its preferred feeding area in the vicinity of Cross Farm Hill. (One of these forays generated a behavior note which appears in this issue. See "Field Notes from Here and There.") The following is excerpted from the account provided by the observers who saw the bird on December 3.

At about 10 A.M., a large hawk was observed at close range first sitting on the dike south of the Warden's and then flying north. It was during the flight that the following field marks were observed.

The hawk was obviously a falcon with an obscure but observable brown malar mark which blended with the light gray-brown markings on the face and head. The back was mottled gray-brown and the wings, rump, and tail were mostly light brown. The underside was heavily streaked brown-gray. The initial close range viewing caused the brown highlights to stand out. As the bird flew away, the brown blended to gray.

The wings were wide with a noticeable bend in the leading edge about three-fourths of the distance from the body toward the tip forming a pointed wing. The body was wide with a bulky chest and belly. The wide body gave the impression of relatively short wings but a considerable wing span. The tail was wide, square, and relatively long in proportion to the total length of the bird.

The flight of the bird was effortless with minimal wing movement. The flight appeared powerful and the bird moved very fast. Based on these observations, the writers believed the bird to be a gray phase, first year Gyr Falcon.

G.W.G.

Turkey Vulture:			
17	Falmouth	1	CBC
19	Rochester	1	D.Briggs#
Osprey:			
3	GMNWR	1	R.Walton
Bald Eagle:			
5,17	Chatham, Quabbin	1, 2	W+P. Bailey, CBC
26	Middleboro, Lakeville	1 imm., 1	CBC
29	Wayland (Heard Pond)	1 imm.	R. Forster
21-31	Newbypt.	1 ad.	R. Heil, J. Berry
Northern Harrier:			
thr.	P. I.	max. 10 (12/6)	v.o.
18	C. Cod, C. Ann, Middleboro	16, 4, 2	CBC, CBC, K. Holmes
17	Millis, Westport	2, 4	CBC
26, 28	Marshfield, Plymouth	7, 2	CBC
Sharp-shinned Hawk:			
17, 18	Quincy; Boston, C. Cod	3; 4, 11	CBC
21-26, 26	Brookline, Middleboro	1, 2	H. Wiggins, CBC
28	Plymouth	2	CBC
Cooper's Hawk:			
3, 17	Ipswich, Athol	1 imm., 1	R. Heil#, CBC
18	Cambridge, C. Ann	1, 1	CBC
23, 25	Sudbury, Brookline	1 ad. F., 1	R. Forster, J. Papatseanos
Northern Goshawk:			
8, 17	Nahant, Millis	1 imm., 1	R. Heil, CBC
18, 26	C. Cod, Middleboro	1, 4	CBC

SPECIES/DECEMBER	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Red-shouldered Hawk:			
3-31	Orleans	1 ad.	B.Nikula#
17,26	Millis,Middleboro	2, 1	CBC
Red-tailed Hawk:			
thr.	Bridgewater-Middleboro	max. 8	K.Anderson
17,18	Quincy,Marshfield	15, 8	CBC
18	C.Cod,C.Ann	11, 17	CBC
17,26	Millis,Middleboro	35, 23	CBC
Rough-legged Hawk:			
thr.	P.I.	max. 4	v.o.
3,17	Quincy,Millis	1, 1	S.Higginbotham,CBC
24,26	M.V.,Marshfield	2 (1 lt., 1 dk.),	3 W.Manter,CBC
American Kestrel:			
3	P.I.-Newbypt	4	BBC
17	Quincy,Westport,Millis	13, 7, 16	CBC
18,26	C.Cod,Middleboro	12, 7	CBC
Merlin:			
6,17	P.I.,Baldwinville	1, 1	R.Forster,CBC
18	C.Cod,Lakeville	6, 1	CBC,K.Holmes
28	Plymouth,Westport	1, 1	CBC,R.Caron
Peregrine Falcon:			
3,18	Chatham,C.Cod	1 ad., 1	B.Nikula,CBC
<u>Gyrfalcon:</u>			
3-26	P.I.	1(details)	D.Brown,R.Campbell,C.d'Entremont+v.o.
Ruffed Grouse:			
10,17	W.Newbury,Millis	2, <u>38</u>	C.Floyd,CBC
26	Middleboro	4	CBC
Northern Bobwhite:			
17,18	Quincy,Saugus	7, 6	K.Anderson,CBC
18,26	C.Cod,Middleboro	47, 40	CBC
26,28	Marshfield,Plymouth	17, 30	CBC

RAILS THROUGH ALCIDS

One Clapper Rail and fifteen Virginia Rails were counted on the Cape Cod CBC where a Sandhill Crane was also found although no details were provided. A Purple Gallinule was picked up on a lawn in Middleboro and taken to the Franklin Park Zoo where the reporter was told that the Zoo had another immature that was picked up about December 1.

The first December record for American Oystercatcher in eleven years of BOEM records occurred this year with a report of two spending the month on Nantucket mostly on the jetty at the harbor entrance. The fifth December record of Lesser Yellowlegs is also notable. Ruddy Turnstones were reported in lower than usual numbers for December, and American Woodcocks were reported from only one CBC this year. Three Long-billed Dowitchers were heard calling as they flew over Plum Island on the fourteenth.

Laughing Gulls were seen on two north shore CBCs, and the Mew (Common) Gull first reported in November was seen again in Provincetown. See details on this bird in the February 1984 BOEM. Three Lesser Black-backed Gulls, two adults and one third-winter bird were seen on Nantucket, and two Glaucous Gulls were reported from Plum Island. Counts of 9500 Black-legged Kittiwakes and 7608 Bonaparte's Gulls along the Falmouth shore on the Buzzards Bay CBC are remarkable. The kittiwake, in particular, is only rarely encountered in Nantucket Sound, and while Bonaparte's Gull is routinely present there, numbers are more normally in the hundreds. This congregation was attributed to the local abundance of sand-lance. A total of 29,360 Black-legged Kittiwakes was seen on the Cape Cod CBC, and a Common Tern was found on the Westport CBC.

Alcids put in quite an appearance on Cape Cod in December. In the period from December 3-5, the winds were at first strong from the north and west and then shifted to the northeast, gusting between 18 and 44 mph. During that period, 700 large, unidentified alcids and 200 Razorbills were seen at First Encounter Beach. In addition, 250 Razorbills were counted at Dennis on December 4. On the day before and the day of the Cape Cod CBC (December 17-18) winds were from the north and west gusting to 25 mph. Although there may have been no relation to the weather, the total count of kittiwakes was close to 30,000. Alcids included 100 large unidentified, 20 Dovekies, and 2920 Razorbills. G.W.G.

Clapper Rail:			
18	C.Cod	1	CBC

<u>SPECIES/DECEMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Virginia Rail:			
3,17	Marshfield, Westport	1, 2	W. Petersen, CBC
18,26	C. Cod, Marshfield	15, 4	CBC
Sora:			
17,26	Millis, Marshfield	1, 1	CBC
<u>Purple Gallinule:</u>			
29	Middleboro	1 imm.	fide K. Anderson
Common Moorhen:			
18	Chatham	2 imm.	CBC(B. Nikula#)
American Coot:			
3,15	S. Carver, P. I.	12, 5	K. Anderson, PRNWR staff
17,18	Quincy, C. Cod	67, 60	CBC
28	Plymouth	16	CBC
<u>Sandhill Crane:</u>			
18,20	Chatham	1 (no details)	CBC(V. Laux#), C. Goodrich
Black-bellied Plover:			
3,17	Duxbury, Quincy	70, 14	W. Petersen#, CBC
18,26	C. Cod, Marshfield	12, 6	CBC
Killdeer:			
3,10	Marshfield, E. Boston	1, 1	W. Petersen#, CBC
17	Quincy	2	CBC
<u>American Oystercatcher:</u>			
thr.	Nant.	2	G. Andrews
Greater Yellowlegs:			
3,16	Quincy, Nant.	1, 1	S. Higginbotham, E. Andrews
18,28	C. Cod, Plymouth	8, 1	CBC
Lesser Yellowlegs:			
18	E. Boston	1	CBC(R. Stymeist#)
Ruddy Turnstone:			
3	Duxbury	2	W. Petersen#
Red Knot:			
3,18	Duxbury, C. Cod	20, 4	W. Petersen#, CBC
Sanderling:			
1,17	Quincy, Cohasset	41, 150	G. Wilson, CBC
18,20	Revere, Wollaston	205, 30	CBC, G. Wilson
31	Westport	20	R. Caron
Purple Sandpiper:			
10,17	Rockport, Quincy	75, 86	BBC, CBC
17,26	Westport, Marshfield	80, 109	CBC
Dunlin:			
3,17	Duxbury, Westport	2300, 405	W. Petersen#, CBC
18	Revere, C. Ann	106, 154	CBC
18,28	C. Cod, Plymouth	172, 75	CBC
Long-billed Dowitcher:			
14	P. I.	3	R. Heil
Common Snipe:			
3	Bourne, Newbypt	1, 1	D. Briggs#, BBC
18	C. Cod, C. Ann	3, 2	CBC
26,28	Marshfield, Plymouth	7, 4	CBC
American Woodcock:			
28	Plymouth	2	CBC
Pomarine Jaeger:			
5	Eastham	6	C. Goodrich#
jaeger species:			
5	Eastham	5	B. Nikula
Laughing Gull:			
18	E. Boston, C. Cod	1 imm., 3	CBC
23	Gloucester	1 (1W)	R. Heil
Little Gull:			
10	P. I., Quincy	3(1 ad. + 2 imm.) 1 (1W)	W. Petersen#, CBC
Common Black-headed Gull:			
6,11	P. I., E. Boston	2, 1 ad. (b.)	R. Forster, R. Stymeist#
18	Boston, C. Cod	6, 1	CBC
23,31	Gloucester, Nant.	3 (1W), 2	R. Heil, G. d'Entremont#
Bonaparte's Gull:			
3,10	Newbypt, Gloucester	10, 50	BBC
17	Falmouth	7608	CBC
17,18	Quincy, Boston	809, 404	CBC
18	C. Ann, C. Cod	602, 429	CBC

<u>SPECIES/DECEMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
<u>Mew Gull:</u>			
11	P'town	1 ad (from Nov.)	B.Nikula#
<u>Ring-billed Gull:</u>			
17	Quincy, Westport	1354, 1175	CBC
18	Boston, C.Cod	1790, 1780	CBC
<u>Herring Gull:</u>			
18	C.Cod, C. Ann	<u>14800</u> , 11841	CBC
<u>Iceland Gull:</u>			
3, 10	Gloucester, P.I.	1, 1 imm.	BBC, W.Petersen#
10, 18	C. Ann, C. Cod	4, 3	BBC, CBC
28	Plymouth	2	CBC
<u>Lesser Black-backed Gull:</u>			
31	Nant.	2 ad. + 1 (3W)	G.Gove#
<u>Glaucous Gull:</u>			
4	P.I.	2 imm.	J.Grugan
<u>Great Black-backed Gull:</u>			
11, 18	P'town, C. Ann	3000, 2544	B.Nikula#, CBC
<u>Black-legged Kittiwake:</u>			
17	Falmouth	9500	CBC
18	C. Cod	<u>29360</u>	CBC
<u>Forster's Tern:</u>			
17	Falmouth	1	CBC
<u>Common Tern:</u>			
17	Westport	1	CBC
<u>Large alcid species:</u>			
3, 4, 5	Eastham	225, 200, 450+	B.Nikula#
4	Marshfield, Dennis	9, 100	W.Petersen#, B.Nikula#
18	C. Cod	100	CBC
<u>Dovekie:</u>			
5, 18	Eastham	2, 20	B.Nikula
<u>Thick-billed Murre:</u>			
4; 8, 10	Dennis; Rockport	2; 1, 1	F.Bouchard; M.Klein, BBC
11, 23	Wellfleet, Rockport	1, 1	B.Nikula, R.Heil
<u>Razorbill:</u>			
3, 5	Eastham	150+, 50+	B.Nikula#
4	Dennis, Marshfield	250+, 11	B.Nikula#, W.Petersen#
18	C. Cod	<u>2920</u>	CBC
<u>Black Guillemot:</u>			
4	Rockport	7	L.Taylor#
18	C. Cod, C. Ann	8, 4	CBC

MOURNING DOVE THROUGH OWLS

On the Millis CBC, there were 615 Mourning Doves and 29 Eastern Screech-Owls, and 10 Great Horned Owls were recorded there. The Greater Boston CBC recorded 28 Eastern Screech-Owls and 11 Great Horned Owls, and 31 Eastern Screech-Owls were noted on an "owl prow" in Newton for a total of 114 reports of Eastern Screech-Owls and 51 reports of Great Horned Owls for the month. Barred Owls were seen at five locations including 3 birds in Middleboro and one at Winthrop Square in downtown Boston. A very dark Snowy Owl was noted at Plum Island, perhaps a female or a first-year bird. Short-eared Owls were seen at the usual coastal locations, and a Northern Saw-whet Owl was seen in Lakeville. A Monk Parakeet was noted in Kingston. G.W.G.

<u>Mourning Dove:</u>			
thr.	Brookline	max. 71	B.Rielly#
17, 26	Millis, Marshfield	615, 194	CBC
<u>Monk Parakeet:</u>			
26	Kingston	1	CBC(D.Clapp)
<u>Common Barn-Owl:</u>			
17	M.V.	2	W.Manter
<u>Eastern Screech-Owl:</u>			
11, 12	Lakeville, Newton	8, <u>31</u>	K.Holmes, O.Komar
17, 18	Millis, Gr. Boston	<u>29</u> , 28	CBC
18, 26	C. Cod, Middleboro	4, 14	CBC
<u>Great Horned Owl:</u>			
17	Millis, Westport	10, 3	CBC
18	C. Ann, C. Cod	3, 3	CBC
18	Gr. Boston	11	CBC
26	Middleboro	4	CBC
	17 others from 10 locations		

<u>SPECIES/DECEMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Snowy Owl:			
10-28	P.I.	max. 2	v.o.
18,28	Boston (Logan Airport)	max. 2	CBC + T.McMakin
18,26	C. Ann, Marshfield	1, 1	CBC
Barred Owl:			
17,18	Quincy, Waltham	1, 1	CBC
18,22-26	C. Ann, Boston	1, 1	CBC, v.o.
26	Middleboro	3	CBC
Short-eared Owl:			
3,14	Duxbury, P.I.	1, 1	W. Petersen#, R. Heil
18,26	E. Boston, Marshfield	2, 2	CBC
	5 others from 5 locations		
Northern Saw-whet Owl:			
11,26	Lakeville	1, 1	K. Holmes, CBC

BELTED KINGFISHER THROUGH COMMON RAVEN

Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, though not totally unexpected during the winter months, nonetheless are not common, so to have three individuals in the Greater Boston area is somewhat noteworthy. The reports of Northern Flicker were better than average for previous December records.

Eastern Phoebe were noted in both Lakeville and Needham, and Western Kingbirds were found in Rockport and in Eastham. The Eastham bird was found December 18. Sometimes small numbers of Tree Swallows linger into early December, but a count of about one hundred individuals at one location is noteworthy. Also of note is the flock that remained throughout the month at Chilmark and actually peaked as late as December 26.

Three Common Ravens were found in Royalston, not far from the many recent sightings of this species near Ashburnham and Mount Watatic. A rare Gray Jay was found in Petersham during the Athol CBC.

Undoubtedly one of the more controversial highlights of the month was the reappearance of the Jackdaw on Nantucket on December 31. It was found virtually at the exact location of its original sighting on November 28, 1982. Previous to the last day of 1983, the Jackdaw had not been seen on Nantucket since April 4, 1983. Where did it spend the summer? "Not on Nantucket," say the masses of birders who canvassed the island during the "reef heron" summer. More information is now being sought on the Nantucket Jackdaw.

R.H.S.

Belted Kingfisher:			
17	Millis, Westport	6, 5	CBC
18,21	C. Cod, Mid-Cape	27, 12	CBC
28	Plymouth	7	CBC
Red-headed Woodpecker:			
10	Hingham	1	T. Sullivan
Red-bellied Woodpecker:			
10-31	Yarmouthport	1 m.	R. Scott#
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:			
18	Boston, Cambridge	1, 1	CBC (H.D'Entremont, J. Heywood#)
18-31	Belmont	1 m.	J. Wissman
Downy Woodpecker:			
17	Millis	150	CBC
Hairy Woodpecker:			
17	Millis	43	CBC
Northern Flicker:			
17	Westport, Millis, Buzz. B.	26, 8, 62	CBC
18,28	C. Cod, Plymouth	87, 31	CBC
Pileated Woodpecker:			
10	Royalston	1	K. Hamilton
Eastern Phoebe:			
25,26	Needham, Lakeville	1, 1	fide P. Hallowell, CBC
Western Kingbird:			
4,18	Rockport, Eastham	1, 1	L. Taylor#, CBC (W. Petersen#)
Horned Lark:			
3	Rochester	200	W. Petersen#
18,28	C. Cod, Plymouth	65, 36	CBC
Tree Swallow:			
thr.	Chilmark	max. 21 (12/26)	W. Manter#

<u>SPECIES/DECEMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
<u>Gray Jay:</u>			
17	Petersham	1	CBC(R.Coyle)
<u>Blue Jay:</u>			
17	Quincy,Westport	173, 112	CBC
17	Athol,Millis	391, 512	CBC
18	Gr.Boston,C.Cod	488, 265	CBC
<u>American Crow:</u>			
17,18	Millis,Gr.Boston	2100, 1124	CBC
<u>Fish Crow:</u>			
16,17	Brookline,Millis	2, 25	H.Wiggins,CBC
<u>Common Raven:</u>			
8	Royalston	3	K.Hamilton
<u>Jackdaw:</u>			
31	Nant.(from 11/28/82)	1	D.Brown#

CHICKADEES THROUGH HOUSE SPARROW

Red-breasted Nuthatches were reported in better numbers on this year's Christmas Bird Counts, as compared with last year's CBCs. However, no count had very high numbers, with the exception of Newburyport, where 129 were tallied. Boreal Chickadees were seen off and on all month along the Merrimack River in Newburyport.

An apparently healthy Wood Thrush was well studied on December 2 in Salem. In western Massachusetts, a Varied Thrush appeared and remained at a feeder through the winter. A total of fifteen Gray Catbirds on the Buzzards Bay CBC is noteworthy. Northern Shrikes were reported from ten locations during December; only four were noted last year.

December warbler reports other than the usual Yellow-rumped are always noteworthy; this December was especially so with 4 Orange-crowned, 3 Nashville, 3 Ovenbirds and 7 Yellow-breasted Chats. There has been only one previous December record for both the Ovenbird and the Nashville Warbler. The 1048 Yellow-rumps on the Cape Cod CBC is more satisfactory than the 1079 House Sparrows on the Greater Boston CBC.

Land birds of more than passing interest include a Western Tanager found on the Plymouth CBC, a Clay-colored Sparrow on the Cape Cod CBC, a Lark Sparrow on the Mid-Cape CBC and a Lincoln's Sparrow in Wellesley. All of these birds remained through the New Year to the delight of many birders.

A brightly-plumaged Sharp-tailed Sparrow believed to be the interior race nelsoni was found on the Newburyport CBC. The nelsoni race is characterized by the very bold pure white lines on the back, the very rich orange eyestripe and indistinctly streaked underparts. Remember the Ipswich Sparrow, formerly a separate species? A total of thirty-one of these was counted on the Cape Cod and Marshfield CBC. In addition to the Lincoln's Sparrow in Wellesley, another was well studied in East Falmouth on December 17.

A Bobolink spent a week at the Concord sewer beds near Great Meadows. This was the first December record for Massachusetts and probably one of the few for all of North America. Seven Northern Orioles, reported from outer Cape Cod, is a record high count for a Massachusetts CBC. Winter finches were scarce, especially crossbills and red-polls. R.H.S.

<u>Black-capped Chickadee:</u>			
17	Athol, Millis	931, 1415	CBC
18	C. Ann, Gr. Boston, C. Cod	669, 838, 954	CBC
<u>Boreal Chickadee:</u>			
thr.	Newbypt	1-3	v.o.
<u>Tufted Titmouse:</u>			
17	Millis, Quincy	297, 70	CBC
<u>Red-breasted Nuthatch:</u>			
17	Millis, Athol, Quincy	2, 9, 3	CBC
18	C. Ann, C. Cod	43, 17	CBC
18, 26	Gr. Boston, Mid-Cape	17, 2	CBC
26, 28	Newbypt, Plymouth	129, 17	CBC
<u>White-breasted Nuthatch:</u>			
17, 18	Millis, C. Cod	166, 26	CBC
<u>Brown Creeper:</u>			
17, 18	Millis, Gr. Boston	30, 30	CBC

<u>SPECIES/DECEMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Carolina Wren: 17;18	Buzz.Bay,Westport;C.Cod	29, 20; 11	CBC
House Wren: 17	Buzz.Bay	1	CBC
Winter Wren: 17	Marion,N.Falmouth,Buzz.Bay	2, 2, 6	K.Anderson,R.Stymeist,CBC
26	W.Newbury	1	R.Stymeist#
Marsh Wren: 3,26	Marshfield	1, 1	W.Petersen,CBC
3,26	P.I.,Newbypt	1, 2	R.Heil, CBC
17,18	Westport,C.Cod	1, 8	CBC
Golden-crowned Kinglet: 17,18	Millis,Gr.Boston	92, 26	CBC
18	C.Ann,C.Cod	21, 65	CBC
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 2,11	Cambridge,Newbypt	1, 1	L.Robinson,I.Giriunas#
17,18	Millis, C.Cod	2, 3	CBC
Hermit Thrush: 17	Buzz.Bay,Westport,Quincy	25, 3, 4	CBC
18	C.Ann,C.Cod	3, 5	CBC
Wood Thrush: 2	Salem	1 (good details)	R.Heil#
American Robin: 17	Millis,Quincy	87, 55	CBC
18	C.Cod,Gr.Boston	41, 82	CBC
Gray Catbird: 17	Westport,Buzz.Bay	7, 15	CBC
18	C.Cod,C.Ann	6, 2	CBC
Brown Thrasher: 18,26	C.Cod,Duxbury	1, 1	CBC
Cedar Waxwing: 23,28	Marshfield,Plymouth	240, 301	D.Clapp,CBC
Northern Shrike: 17	Concord;Athol,Quincy	1; 1, 1	R.Walton;CBC
17;18	Ipswich;Gr.Boston,C.Cod	1; 2, 2	J.Berry;CBC
18,28	C.Ann,Plymouth	1, 1	CBC
European Starling: 17,18	Quincy,Gr.Boston	100000, 161200	CBC
Orange-crowned Warbler: 17,18	Buzz.Bay,Gr.Boston	2, 2	CBC
Nashville Warbler: 1-14	Stoneham	1 from 11/17	R.Heil
early Dec.-18	Cambridge	1-2 (12/18)	L.Robinson,B.Hallett#
Yellow-rumped Warbler: 18	C.Ann,C.Cod	120, 1048	CBC
Pine Warbler: 11,18	Newbypt,C.Cod	1, 3	I.Giriunas,CBC
28,31	Plymouth,Nant.	3, 1	CBC,R.Stymeist#
Palm Warbler: 17;18	Buzz.Bay,Gr.Boston,C.Cod	17; 8, 9	CBC
Ovenbird: 17,18	Quincy,E.Orleans	1, 1	CBC
20	W.Chatham	1	C.Goodrich
Common Yellowthroat: 17,18	Westport,C.Cod	2, 7	CBC
21,30	Framingham,GMNWR	1, 1 f.	K.Hamilton,G.Gove
Yellow-breasted Chat: 17	Buzz.Bay,Westport	4, 1	CBC
18	C.Cod	2	CBC
Western Tanager: 28-31	Plymouth	1	D.Forster,R.Heil#+v.o.
Dickcissel: 10	Rockport	1 b.	R.Norris
Rufous-sided Towhee: 17,18	Buzz.Bay,C.Cod	29, 12	CBC
American Tree Sparrow: 3	Braintree	100	P.O'Neill#
17	Quincy,Millis	322, 323	CBC
18	Gr.Boston,C.Ann	564, 127	CBC
Chipping Sparrow: 17,18-31	Millis,Framingham	1, 1	CBC,K.Hamilton

<u>SPECIES/DECEMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
<u>Clay-colored Sparrow:</u>			
18-31	Orleans	1	D.Clapp# +v.o.
<u>Field Sparrow:</u>			
1,17	Halifax,Millis	20, 26	K.Anderson,CBC
17	Buzz.Bay,Quincy	97, 61	CBC
18	C.Cod,Gr.Boston	42, 21	CBC
<u>Vesper Sparrow:</u>			
10,17	Concord,Buzz.Bay	1, 1	R.Walton,CBC
<u>Lark Sparrow:</u>			
17-31	W.Dennis	1	N.Ryder#+v.o.
<u>Savannah Sparrow:</u>			
11,17	E.Boston,Westport	18, 10	R.Stymeist,CBC
18,26	C.Cod,Marshfield	31, 31	CBC
<u>"Ipswich" Sparrow:</u>			
3,11	P.I.,E.Boston	21, 3	R.Heil,R.Stymeist
18,26	C.Cod,Marshfield	16, 7	CBC
<u>Sharp-tailed Sparrow:</u>			
11,18	E.Boston,C.Cod	1, 1	R.Stymeist,CBC
26	Newbury	2	CBC(R.Heil)
<u>Seaside Sparrow:</u>			
17	Westport	1	CBC(D.Emerson)
<u>Fox Sparrow:</u>			
4,8	Brookline,Nahant	1, 4	B.Rielly#,R.Heil
10,20	Braintree,Framingham	1, 2	G.d'Entremont,R.Heil
<u>Song Sparrow:</u>			
17	Quincy,Millis	155, 96	CBC
18	C.Cod,Gr.Boston	263, 403	CBC
<u>Lincoln's Sparrow:</u>			
9-31	Wellesley	1	C.Ewer#+v.o.
17	E.Falmouth	1	R.Heil+B.Nikula
<u>Swamp Sparrow:</u>			
18,28	C.Cod,Plymouth	53, 50	CBC
<u>White-throated Sparrow:</u>			
18	C.Ann,Gr.Boston	31, 218	CBC
<u>White-crowned Sparrow:</u>			
thr.,18	Chilmark,S.Boston	1, 1	W.Manter,CBC
<u>Dark-eyed Junco:</u>			
17	Athol,Millis,Quincy	193, 539, 169	CBC
18	C.Ann,C.Cod,Gr.Boston	127, 57, 878	CBC
<u>"Oregon" Junco:</u>			
23,26	Framingham,Mid-Cape	1, 2	R.Forster,CBC
<u>Lapland Longspur:</u>			
26	Salisbury	2	CBC
<u>Snow Bunting:</u>			
19,28	Halifax,Plymouth	200+, 75	K.Anderson,CBC
<u>Bobolink:</u>			
11-17	Concord(Sewer Beds)	1	J.Hines+R.Walton
<u>Red-winged Blackbird:</u>			
thr.,5	Framingham,W.Roxbury	2-12, 80+	K.Hamilton,M.Murphy#
<u>Eastern Meadowlark:</u>			
17,18	Millis,C.Cod	1, 36	CBC
26	Marshfield,Middleboro	20, 21	CBC
<u>Rusty Blackbird:</u>			
17,28	Westport,Plymouth	2, 6	CBC
<u>Common Grackle:</u>			
thr.,10	Framingham,Braintree	1, 1	K.Hamilton,G.d'Entremont
<u>Brown-headed Cowbird:</u>			
thr.,17	Framingham,Westport	8-65, 140	K.Hamilton,CBC
<u>Northern Oriole:</u>			
18	C.Cod	7	CBC(B.Nikula)
<u>Pine Grosbeak:</u>			
9,18	Royalston,C.Cod	5, 2	K.Hamilton,CBC
<u>Purple Finch:</u>			
17	Millis,Westport	83, 10	CBC
<u>House Finch:</u>			
17,18	Millis,C.Cod	178, 319	CBC
18,28	C.Ann,Plymouth	253, 214	CBC
<u>Red Crossbill:</u>			
4	Royalston	1	K.Hamilton

<u>SPECIES/DECEMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Common Redpoll:			
13	P.I.	12	N.Nash
18,27	C.Ann,Dedham	2, 8	CBC,D.Brown
Pine Siskin:			
thr.	Middleboro	30-36 daily	D.Briggs
17	Millis,Athol,Westport	61, 11, 3	CBC
26,30	Marshfield,Concord	35, 27	CBC,R.Walton
American Goldfinch:			
17,18	Millis,C.Cod	368, 208	CBC
18,28	C.Cod,Plymouth	208, 123	CBC
Evening Grosbeak:			
4	Middleboro,Royalston	100+, 450	D.Briggs,K.Hamilton
17	Athol,Millis	1461, 183	CBC
26	Middleboro,Marshfield	286, 189	CBC
House Sparrow:			
18	Gr.Boston	1097	CBC
	ADDENDUM:	December 1983	
Northern Mockingbird:			
17	Buzz.Bay	142	CBC
	CORRIGENDUM:	November 1983	
Snow Bunting:			
3-27,6	P.I.,Newton	100 max., 65	v.o., O.Komar
	should read		
3-27,6	P.I.,Needham	100 max., 65	v.o., O.Komar

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

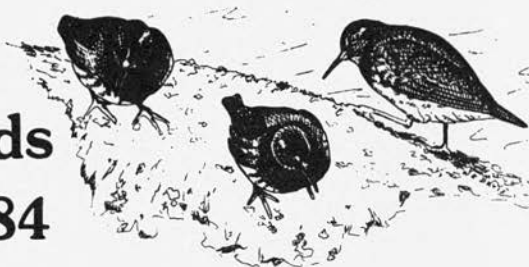
ad.	adult	F.M.	Fowl Meadow, Milton
alt.	alternate (plumage)	gr.	greater as in Gr.Boston area
b.	banded	I.	Island
br.	breeding	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
dk.	dark (phase)	Mt.A.	Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
f.	female	Nant.	Nantucket
fl.	fledge	Newbypt	Newburyport
imm.	immature	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
ind.	individuals	P.I.	Plum Island
loc.	locations	P'town	Provincetown
lt.	light (phase)	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
m.	male	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
max.	maximum	Stellw.	Stellwagen (Bank)
migr.	migrating	ABC	Allen Bird Club
ph.	photographed	BBC	Brookline Bird Club
pl.	plumage	BOEM	Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts
pr.	pair	CBC	Christmas Bird Count
thr.	throughout	DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
v.o.	various observers	FBC	Forbush Bird Club
W	winter (2W = second winter)	GBBCC	Greater Boston Breeding Bird Census
w/	with	GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
yg.	young	IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
#	additional observers	MAS	Massachusetts Audubon Society
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
Buzz.	Buzzards (Bay)	NBBC	Newburyport Breeding Bird Census
C.Cod	Cape Cod	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	TASL	Take a Second Look (BOEM project)
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham	WMWS	Wachusett Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary

COLOR-MARKED HAWKS

Information is sought on Red-tailed Hawks that have been marked with yellow patagial markers. If you see marked birds, please report the age class, marker number, and which wing is marked to Bird Banding Office, Laurel, MD 30708; and to David Jennings, University of Georgia, Institute of Ecology, Athens, GA 30602.

Field Records

January 1984



by George W. Gove, Robert H. Stymeist, and Lee E. Taylor

January 1984 was cold and cloudy with frequent light precipitation. The temperature averaged 26.7° , 2.9° below normal and 4.5° colder than January 1983. A siege of cold settled in on the tenth and the temperature did not go above the freezing mark again until the twenty-third, 310 hours later. It was the longest stretch since 388 hours of sub-freezing temperatures in January, 1970. There were two thaws, January 4-7 and the second from January 24-28. The month's high mark was 51° on the twenty-seventh, the low was 1° on the twenty-second.

Precipitation totaled 2.31 inches, 1.68 inches less than normal, measurable amounts fell frequently, a total of thirteen days, one more than average. Snowfall totaled 21.1 inches, 8.7 inches more than average. This was the most in January since 35.9 inches fell in 1978. The most in any storm was 9.7 inches on January 10-11. Glaze from freezing rain was reported on the tenth and twenty-fourth; these conditions caused more than the ordinary January troubles for drivers and pedestrians.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

Large numbers of both loon species were found off Nantucket on the Christmas Bird Count, mostly on the southeast side of the island from Quidnet to Cisco. A Western Grebe was also found within this same area, the exact location of a record two years ago on the CBC. Another Western Grebe was found off Provincetown at the end of the month. Both these birds were dark morphs (nicely illustrated in the new National Geographic field guide), and the reports were accompanied by extensive field notes.

Twenty-seven wintering Double-crested Cormorants in Boston Harbor are evidence that this species is clearly extending its winter range northward. Other 'summer' cormorants were found in Nantucket Harbor and in Brewster.

An American Bittern was found on the Nantucket CBC, where twenty-four Great Blue Herons and seventeen Black-crowned Night-Herons were also tallied.

A Tundra Swan (from December 1983) remained in Plymouth through January 8. A heavy freeze at the end of December completely closed most of the ponds on Nantucket, usually open at this time of winter; thus the numbers of bay and dabbling ducks were down considerably over past years. A Eurasian Wigeon was found at East Orleans at midmonth. Large concentrations of Common Eider were found in Plymouth and in Boston Harbor most of the month. Other highlights included twenty-five Harlequins at Chilmark, thirteen Barrow's Goldeneye in Nantucket Harbor and good numbers of Hooded Mergansers at various locations.

R.H.S.

<u>SPECIES/JANUARY</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Red-throated Loon: 1,16	Nant., S. Dartmouth	288, 6	CBC, R.Laubach
Common Loon: 1,7 8,14	Nant., Boston Harbor P.I., C. Ann	341, 11 16, 10	CBC, TASL BBC, T.Walsh
Pied-billed Grebe: 1,4	Nant., Lynn	4, 7	CBC, R.Heil
Other reports of single individuals from many locations.			
Horned Grebe: 7;8,28	Boston Harbor; P.I.	65; 21, 14	TASL; BBC
Red-necked Grebe: 1,4 7	Nant., N.Scituate C. Ann, Boston Harbor	39, 3 5,2	CBC, M.Kulstead BBC, TASL

SPECIES/JANUARY	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Red-necked Grebe, continued: 16,23	E.Orleans, C. Ann	4, 18	J.Aylward#, R.Heil
Western Grebe: 1-2,29-31	Nant., P'town	1, 1	CBC+v.o., H.Merriman#+v.o.
Details are on file for both these sightings.			
Northern Gannet: 1,29	Nant., P'town	8, 10-15	CBC, H.Merriman#
Great Cormorant: 7	C. Ann, Boston Harbor	52, 287	BBC, TASL
Double-crested Cormorant: 2,11 16	Nant., Boston Harbor Brewster	8 imm., 27 1	G.d'Entremont#, TASL J.Aylward
American Bittern: 1	Nant.	1	CBC
Great Blue Heron: 1,4 23,27	Nant., Plymouth Westport, Squantum	24, 7 3, 3	CBC, fide G.Wilson R.Laubach, C.+N.Hubbard
Black-crowned Night-Heron: 1,28	Nant., Eastham (F.H.)	17, 18	CBC, T.Raymond
Tundra Swan: 1-8	Plymouth	1	D.Brown# + v.o.
Mute Swan: 1,9	Nant., Arlington	62, 1	CBC, N.King
Snow Goose: 24-31	M.V. (Chilmark)	1	W.Manter, V.Laux
Brant: 1,7 8;8,15 21	Nant., Boston Harbor Plymouth; Buzz. Bay Boston Harbor	107, 5066 250; 275, 160 2800	CBC, TASL BBC; SSBC, BBC BBC
Canada Goose: thr.,2	P.I., Concord	1000+, 1798	staff, CBC
Wood Duck: 1,14	Nant., Wellesley	2, 1	CBC, K.Winkler
Green-winged Teal: 1	Nant.	105	CBC
Northern Pintail: 1,30	Nant., Westport	6, 10	CBC, R.Laubach
Northern Shoveler: 1	Nant.	3	CBC
Gadwall: 1,14	Nant., Belmont	5, 10	CBC, BBC (R.Clayton)
Eurasian Wigeon: 16	E.Orleans	1	J.Aylward#
Canvasback: 1,4 8,15	Nant., Wareham Lakeville	29, 125 58, 13	CBC, K.Ryan SSBC, BBC
Redhead: 1,22	Nant., Falmouth	37, 5	CBC, H.Wiggin#
Ring-necked Duck: 7,15 22	Plymouth, N.Middleboro Falmouth	10, 5 25	G.d'Entremont#, W.Petersea M.Argue#
Greater Scaup: 1,7	Nant., Boston Harbor	476, 2678	CBC, TASL
Lesser Scaup: 14	Plymouth	1	W.Petersen#
Common Eider: 1 7,8	Nant. Boston Harbor, Plymouth	10827 8977, 10000	CBC TASL, BBC
King Eider: 1-2,7 2,14-28	Nant., Hull Rockport	1-2+, 1 imm. m. 1, 2-1	CBC + v.o., W.Petersen# M.Lynch#, T.Walsh + v.o.
Harlequin Duck: thr. thr. 10-16,21-29 22-31	M.V. (Chilmark) Scituate Marshfield, Rockport P'town harbor	max. 25 1 m. 1 f., 5 1 imm. m.	V.Laux# + v.o. M.+B.Litchfield + v.o. S.Higginbotham+v.o., R.Heil+v.o. P.W.Smith# + v.o.
Oldsquaw: 1,2	Nant.	10712, 90000±	CBC, v.o.
Black Scoter: 8,16	S.Dartmouth (Gooseberry Neck)	15	R.Laubach

<u>SPECIES/JANUARY</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Surf Scoter:			
7,29	Boston Harbor, Magnolia	3, 4	TASL, J.Berry
White-winged Scoter:			
7	Boston Harbor, Nahant	365, 650+	TASL, R.Heil
Common Goldeneye:			
1	Nant., Newbypt. area	652, 100	CBC, BBC
7	Boston Harbor, C. Ann	2004, 150	TASL, BBC
28,29	Newbypt., Gloucester Harbor	450, 100+	J.Grugan, J.Berry
Barrow's Goldeneye:			
1	Nant. Harbor	13	CBC(R.Stymeist + G.Gove#)
2,4	Brant Rock, Plymouth	1, 5	M.+B.Litchfield, D.Brown#
7	Boston Harbor, C. Ann	4, 2	TASL, BBC
8	Chatham, Plymouth	2, 2	H.Stabins#, BBC
8,15	Buzz. Bay, Quincy	2, 3	SSBC, D.Brown#
28	Gloucester, Newbypt.	3, 3	C.Floyd#, F.Bouchard#
Bufflehead:			
1	Nant.,P.I.-Salisbury	916, 200	CBC, BBC
7	Boston Harbor	1389	TASL
Hooded Merganser:			
1,7	Nant., Plymouth	4, 4	CBC, R.Abrams
8	Falmouth-Plymouth,Lakeville-Buzz.Bay		22, 21 BBC, SSBC
8,9	Westport, Framingham	2, 3	R.Laubach, K.Hamilton
22	Falmouth	152	D.Clapp
24,28	Boston, Eastham	9, 8	J.Berry, T.Raymond
Common Merganser:			
1-5,7	Wollaston, Framingham	21, 15	R.Abrams, K.Hamilton
7,15	Boston Harbor,Lakeville area	58, 98	TASL, BBC
Red-breasted Merganser:			
1,7	Nant., Boston Harbor	2703, 1661	CBC, TASL
8,30	P'town	3000+, 800+	B.Nikula#, R.Heil#
28	P.I.	750	J.Grugan

RAPTORS THROUGH BOBWHITE

Throughout most of the month Bald Eagles were seen in the Lakeville area where as many as three birds were reported. A very unfortunate incident was the shooting there on January 7 of one immature eagle which was rescued by a birder and brought to a vet in Marion where it is recovering. At Newburyport, three Bald Eagles were seen throughout the month along the Merrimack River; other Bald Eagles were noted from Plymouth and Wayland.

A Red-shouldered Hawk was reported at a Concord feeder eating suet! Others of this species were found in Middleboro, Orleans, Sudbury, Bridgewater, and Littleton. R.H.S.

<u>Bald Eagle:</u>			
1-7	Lakeville	3(1 ad.,2 imm.)	K.Holmes,D.Briggs# + v.o.
7,20-29	Lakeville	1 imm. shot, 1 ad.	R.Turner#,K.Elkin# + v.o.
thr.	Newbypt.	1 ad., 2 subad.	v.o.
6,15	Plymouth, Wayland	1 imm., 1 imm.	D.Brown#, R.Walton#
Northern Harrier:			
thr.	P.I.	max 8(1/2)	J.Berry + v.o.
1,7	Nant., Boston Harbor	35, 8	CBC, TASL
Sharp-shinned Hawk:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	5, 7	CBC
7,8	Dennis, Salisbury	1, 1	G.d'Entremont# (both)
20	S.Peabody	1	R.Heil
Cooper's Hawk:			
12,27	S.Peabody, P.I.	1 imm., 1 imm.	R.Heil (both)
Northern Goshawk:			
1	Nant., E.Middleboro	1 ad., 1 pr.	CBC, K.Anderson
2,29	Concord, Hull	3, 1 imm.	CBC, W.Petersen
30	Milton (Blue Hills)	1	R.Abrams
Red-shouldered Hawk:			
3,8+14	E.Middleboro, Orleans	1,1 ad.	K.Anderson, v.o.
15	Sudbury, Bridgewater	1 imm., pr.	R.Forster, K.Anderson
24,26	Littleton, Concord(at suet feeder)	1 ad., 1 ad.	J.Baird,A.Umpfrey#
Red-tailed Hawk:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	21, 74	CBC
28	Sudbury S.R.V.(Winter Raptor Survey)	16	R.Walton#

Reports over wide area of 1-4 individuals.

SPECIES/JANUARY	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Rough-legged Hawk:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	4, 1	CBC
thr.	P.I.-Salisbury	max. 10 (1/27)	v.o.
Other reports of 1-2 individuals from various locations.			
American Kestrel:			
1,7	Nant., Boston Harbor	11, 10	CBC, TASL
26	Marlboro-Wareham (Rte 495)	4	V.Sprong
28	Sudbury S.R.V. (Winter Raptor Survey)	3 m.	R.Walton + v.o.
Merlin:			
1	Marion, Nant.	1, 1	D.Briggs#, CBC(E.Andrews)
8,15	E.Harwich, P'town	1, 1	B.Nikula#, P.Trull#
28	Newbypt.	1	P.Roberts
Ruffed Grouse:			
2	Concord	37	CBC
Northern Bobwhite:			
2	Concord	2	CBC

RAILS THROUGH ALCIDS

An adult Sora was seen foraging at the edge of a small section of cattails bordering open water on Flax Pond in Lynn. The bird, described in detail, did not appear to be healthy according to the observer. Also seen at Flax Pond were 150 or more Bonaparte's Gulls and 450 Ring-billed Gulls in addition to 16 American Coot that spent the month there.

The usual January shorebirds were reported with no surprises. On the Nantucket Christmas Bird Count (CBC), 528 Sanderling were counted, and a Pomarine Jaeger was added to the count. Little Gulls were seen at Martha's Vineyard, and 16 to 20 Common Black-headed Gulls were noted from eight locations. The Mew Gull, first reported in November from Provincetown, was seen again this month. See the November and December BOEM records for more details concerning this bird. The following gulls were seen on the Nantucket CBC: 3687 Bonaparte's, 11104 Herring, 81 Iceland, 3 Lesser Black-backed, 5 Glaucous, 1438 Great Black-backed, and 3880 Black-legged Kittiwake.

Dovekies were reported this month - not a usual occurrence - from three locations. A Common Murre was seen on the beach at Race Point and an oiled Common Murre was picked up at Wellfleet in early January. Razorbills were plentiful with 737 on the Nantucket CBC and 1500 noted there the next day. At the end of the month, a maximum of 4700 was seen off Provincetown where Black Guillemots were also seen feeding with the gulls on sand lance. The number of guillemots peaked at 270 which is the highest guillemot count for the state, more than double earlier counts. An adult Atlantic Puffin was also seen sitting in the water just offshore at Race Point. G.W.G

Virginia Rail:			
1,7-12	Nant., S.Peabody	3, 1	CBC, R.Heil
Sora:			
1,4	Nant., Lynn	1, 1 ad.	CBC, R.Heil
15	Bridgewater	1	K.Holmes
Common Moorhen:			
1	Nant.	1	CBC
American Coot:			
thr.	Lynn	16	R.Heil
1,5	Nant., Framingham	12, 1	CBC, K.Hamilton
22	Falmouth, Plymouth	3, 2	M.Argue#, H.Wiggin#
Black-bellied Plover:			
1,2	Nant., Revere	3, 1	CBC, D.Gibson
7,19-25	Boston Harbor, Quincy	3, 8	TASL, D.Brown
30	P'town	3	R.Heil
Killdeer:			
7,12	Boston Harbor, S.Peabody	2, 1	TASL, R.Heil
7,21	Gloucester	1, 1	BBC
22	Orleans	1	B.Nikula
Greater Yellowlegs:			
8	Eastham	3	B.Nikula#
Ruddy Turnstone:			
1,14	Nant., N.Scituate	8, 6	CBC, R.Abrams
21,29	Gloucester	2, 4	BBC
Red Knot:			
6,29	M.V., N.Scituate	4, 6	V.Laux#, W.Petersen#

<u>SPECIES/JANUARY</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Sanderling:			
1	Nant., P.I.	582, 7	CBC, BBC
7	Boston Harbor	97	TASL
Purple Sandpiper:			
1,3,4	Nant., Salisbury, N. Scituate	42,40,100	CBC, F. Bouchard, M. Kulstead
7,22	Boston Harbor, N. Scituate	64, 200	TASL, S. Higginbotham
29	Rockport	80	BBC
Dunlin:			
1,7	Nant., Boston	6, 22	CBC, TASL
21,29	Scituate	60, 65	S. Higginbotham, W. Petersen
Common Snipe:			
thr.	S. Peabody	3	R. Heil
1;8	Nant.; Plymouth, Lakeville	5; 3, 4	CBC; BBC, SSBC
2,15	Concord, Ipswich	2, 2	CBC, J. Berry
<u>Pomarine Jaeger:</u>			
1	Nant.	1	CBC (D. Brown, G. d'Entremont)
Little Gull:			
2-3,4-7	M.V.	1 imm., 1 ad.	V. Laux#, W. Manter#
Common Black-headed Gull:			
thr.	P'town, Lynn	1 (1W), max. 5 (2 ad.+3 1W)	B. Nikula#, R. Heil
thr.	Gloucester	4 (1 ad.+ 3 1W), max. 6	R. Heil, T. Walsh
Five others were reported from five locations.			
Bonaparte's Gull:			
1,7	Nant., Lynn	3687, 150+	CBC, R. Heil
<u>Mew Gull:</u>			
15	P'town (from Nov.)	1 ad.	B. Nikula#
Ring-billed Gull:			
4	Lynn	450+	R. Heil
Herring Gull:			
1	Nant.	11,104	CBC
Iceland Gull:			
thr.	Gloucester	max. 64 (1/23)	v.o.
1	Nant.	81	CBC
3-16	Newbypt.-P.I.	max. 34 (1/16)	v.o.
29	P'town	4	H. Merriman
Lesser Black-backed Gull:			
1	Nant.	3	CBC
Glaucous Gull:			
1,4	Nant., Wareham	5, 1	CBC, K. Ryan
16,30	Quincy, P'town	1, 1 ad.	S. Higginbotham, R. Heil
23-29	Gloucester	3	v.o.
Great Black-backed Gull:			
1	Nant.	1438	CBC
Black-legged Kittiwake:			
1	Nant.	3888	CBC
23,29	P'town	1000, 200	D. Brown#, H. Merriman
Dovekie:			
1,3	Nant., Scituate	1, 1	CBC, B. Litchfield
14	Marshfield	1	R. Abrams
Common Murre:			
23,29	P'town	1, 1	D. Brown#, B. Nikula
Thick-billed Murre:			
thr., 6-8	P'town, Yarmouthport	max. 3 (1/30), 1	v.o., J. Aylward#
21,22	Nahant	1, 1	BBC, J. Heywood#
23,29	Rockport	1, 1	R. Heil, BBC
Razorbill:			
1,2	Nant.	737, 1500	CBC, v.o.
22,29;30	P'town	4700+, 4000; 450+	B. Nikula#; R. Heil
Black Guillemot:			
1	Nant.	19	CBC
17,22	P'town	267, 75	D. Brown#, W. Smith
29,30	P'town	170, 205	H. Merriman#, R. Heil
<u>Atlantic Puffin:</u>			
23	P'town	1 ad.	D. Brown#

MOURNING DOVE THROUGH WOODPECKERS

The Concord CBC recorded 2091 Mourning Doves and 22 Eastern Screech Owls, 13 Great Horned Owls, and 2 Barred Owls. Also on the Concord CBC were 538 Downy Woodpeckers

and 213 Hairy Woodpeckers for a ratio of 2.5 to 1 for those species. The number of Hairys was a new high for the count. Five Pileated Woodpeckers were also recorded on that CBC.

A Boreal Owl was picked up along the side of the road in Chatham by the Animal Rescue League and taken to a veterinarian in Marion who determined that it had a broken clavicle and probably would not fly again. The bird is now in the Buttonwood Zoo in New Bedford. There are probably more of these owls around than we are aware of; two locally this winter seems amazing.

G.W.G.

SPECIES/JANUARY	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS
Mourning Dove:			
thr.	Brookline	77	B.Rielly#
1,2	Nant., Concord	55, 2091	CBC
Common Barn-Owl:			
2	M.V.	1	CBC
Eastern Screech-Owl:			
2	Concord	22	CBC
	2 individuals from 2 locations		
Great Horned Owl:			
1,2	Norwell, Concord	1 pr., 13	M.+B.Litchfield, CBC
2	Little Nahant	1	W.Crawford
	Four others were seen at four locations.		
Snowy Owl:			
thr.	P.I.	max. 3	v.o.
1	Tuckernuck, Newton	1, 1	S.Perkins, V.Sampson
7-21	Boston (Logan Airport)	max. 3	v.o.
9-31	M.V.	1	W.Manter
Barred Owl:			
2,22	Concord, Pocasset	2, 1	CBC, M.Argue#
Long-eared Owl:			
1,3	Nant., P.I.	2, 1	CBC, F.Bouchard
Short-eared Owl:			
2-15	Concord area	2	R.Walton#
14,31	E.Boston, Squantum	2, 1	S.Zendeh#, D.Brown#
<u>Boreal Owl:</u>			
16	Chatham	1 (injured)	fide R.Turner,K.Anderson
Northern Saw-whet Owl:			
1,2	Nant., M.V.	1, 1	CBC
25	Lincoln	1	P.Swift
Belted Kingfisher:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	6, 5	CBC
7,22	Framingham, Orleans	5, 2	K.Hamilton, W.Smith
	Six others from six locations.		
Red-headed Woodpecker:			
2	M.V.	4	CBC
Red-bellied Woodpecker:			
thr.	Yarmouthport	1 m.	R.Scott
Downy Woodpecker:			
2	Concord	538	CBC
Hairy Woodpecker:			
2	Concord	213	CBC
Northern Flicker:			
1,2	Nant., Middleboro	91, 3	CBC, K.Anderson
15	Squantum	5	R.Abrams
	Four others from four locations.		
Pileated Woodpecker:			
2	Concord	5	CBC

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH Tanager

An Eastern Phoebe, first discovered in Needham in December, was remarkable in remaining a ways into the postholiday cold spell. Other more regularly occurring semihardy species which lingered on Cape Cod and the islands included a few Tree Swallows and Eastern Bluebirds. Common Ravens have been wintering for several years and this past summer were reported breeding in the Quabbin area. The report of ravens wintering east of Quabbin in locales not far from Mts. Wachusett and Watatic is a new phenomenon and is most interesting, since individuals have been regularly seen there during the fall hawkwatching season. We might look for ravens soon as breeders in that part of Worcester County. The Nantucket Jackdaw, rediscovered the day before the Christmas Count, was seen only that one weekend, probably because of little expenditure of effort to relocate it later in the month.

A single Water Pipit at Rochester was in the area well beyond that species' time norms, though there was only one other recent (1982) winter record. So far, this has been an extraordinary year for Bohemian Waxwings; another group was recorded from Maynard in addition to the five birds seen earlier at Provincetown. This winter has also had a modest Northern Shrike flight. Notable for small winter counts this year are warblers. Yellow-rumped Warbler numbers on the CBCs and subsequently were quite low compared to other recent years, and both Palm Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat were unreported for January. The Western Tanager at Plymouth which stayed on from December was unusual but not unprecedented in light of the two recorded in the winter of 1979. L.E.T.

<u>SPECIES/JANUARY</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Eastern Phoebe: from Dec.-8	Needham	1	P.Hallowell
Horned Lark: 1,2 21	Nant., Concord Bridgewater	31, 55 300	CBC W.Petersen
Tree Swallow: 1-8	M.V.	4	W.Manter#
Blue Jay: 1,2	Nant., Concord	87, 1683	CBC
Fish Crow: 1,2 3,8	Natick, Concord Wellesley, Brookline	20, 19 1, 1	T.Walsh, CBC C.Ewer, H.Wiggin
Common Raven: thr.	Gardner-Templeton	2	v.o.
Jackdaw: From Dec.-2	Nant.	1	D.Brown + v.o.
Black-capped Chickadee: 1,2	Nant., Concord	170, 3441	CBC
Boreal Chickadee: 28	Newbypt.	1	H.Wiggin#
Tufted Titmouse: 2	Concord	636	CBC
Red-breasted Nuthatch: 1,2 8,22	Nant., Concord Amesbury, Scituate	21, 73 25, 1	CBC G.d'Entremont, S.Higginbotham
White-breasted Nuthatch: 2,11	Concord, E.Middleboro	515, 4	CBC, K.Anderson
Brown Creeper: 2	Concord	58	CBC
Carolina Wren: 6,7	Lakeville, Plymouth	1, 1	K.Anderson, R.Campbell#
Winter Wren: 2 6,9 12-20	Concord, M.V. MNWS, Framingham S.Peabody	1, 2 1, 1 1	CBC J.Smith, K.Hamilton R.Heil
Marsh Wren: 1,17	Nant., M.V.	2, 1	CBC, W.Manter
Golden-crowned Kinglet: 1,2	Nant., Concord	27, 50	CBC
Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 1,2 8,9	Nant., Concord Salisbury, Framingham	3, 1 1, 1	CBC D.Brown#, K.Hamilton
Eastern Bluebird: 2,21	M.V., Harwich	7, 4	CBC, fide R.Prescott
Hermit Thrush: 2,7,8 16-18,21	Concord, Plymouth, P.I. MNWS, Middleboro	1, 1, 1 1, 1	CBC, R.Campbell#, M.Lynch J.Smith, W.Petersen
American Robin: 1,2 22,24 29	Nant., Concord Scituate, Halifax Lexington	107, 123 50, 14 11	CBC SSBC, K.Anderson L.Taylor
Gray Catbird: 1,2 6,8 16,22	Nant., Concord Lakeville, Falmouth MNWS, Scituate	3, 1 1, 1 1, 1	CBC K.Anderson, BBC J.Smith, S.Higginbotham
Northern Mockingbird: 1,2	Nant., Concord	26, 247	CBC
Brown Thrasher: 2,18	Concord, Petersham	2, 1	CBC, fide S.Kellogg

<u>SPECIES/JANUARY</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
Water Pipit:			
6	Rochester	1	D.Brown#
<u>Bohemian Waxwing:</u>			
23	Maynard	3	P.Jopling
Cedar Waxwing:			
thr.,2	Middleboro,Concord	130 max. (1/18),	105 D.Briggs, CBC
6,7	Lakeville, Lunenburg	30, 100	K.Holmes#, R.Coburn
Northern Shrike:			
thr.,2	P.I., Concord	1-2, 3	v.o., CBC
Eight others were reported from eight locations.			
Orange-crowned Warbler:			
1	Nant.	1	CBC
Yellow-rumped Warbler:			
1,3-15	Nant., Squantum	1398, 50 max.	CBC, v.o.
Common Yellowthroat:			
2	Concord	3	CBC
<u>Western Tanager:</u>			
from Dec.-9	Plymouth	1	v.o.

CARDINAL THROUGH EVENING GROSBEAK

The five Chipping Sparrows seen during the Concord CBC constituted a very good count for so late, so far north, and inland. Several other individuals of unusual wintering sparrow species including Clay-colored and Lark stayed from December virtually throughout January on Cape Cod. A single Lincoln's Sparrow remained in Wellesley from December into the first week of the new year. An "Oregon" Junco of the pink-sided race was carefully observed in Milton. A flock of twenty Rusty Blackbirds seen in Marshfield towards the end of the month constituted a notably high count for the season, based on the observer's experience in that area. Surprisingly, no oriole reports of either of the species which might be expected were received. Similarly, besides Pine Siskin, winter finch reports continued quite sparse for this winter. L.E.T.

Northern Cardinal:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	49, 425	CBC
Dickcissel:			
1	Nant.	1	CBC
Rufous-sided Towhee:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	1, 4	CBC
8,15	Falmouth, Lakeville	2, 1	BBC
16,22	Marblehead, Pocasset	1, 1	J.Smith, M.Argue
American Tree Sparrow:			
1,2	Halifax, Concord	35, 1140	K.Anderson, CBC
Chipping Sparrow:			
2,10	Concord, Braintree	5, 1	CBC, S.Higginbotham
<u>Clay-colored Sparrow:</u>			
from Dec.-30	Orleans	1	v.o.
Field Sparrow:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	5, 29	CBC
10,17-30	Braintree, Orleans	12, 40 max.	S.Higginbotham, v.o.
Vesper Sparrow:			
1-15	Halifax	2	K.Anderson#
Lark Sparrow:			
from Dec.-22	W.Dennis	1	v.o.
Savannah Sparrow:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	13, 5	CBC
15	Bridgewater, Halifax	22, 18	W.Petersen#
"Ipswich" Sparrow:			
1,8	P.I., Salisbury	1, 2	BBC, H.Merriman#
Fox Sparrow:			
1,2	Rowley, Concord	1, 2	H.Wiggin#, CBC
7-14,12	3 locations,E.Middleboro	3, 2	v.o., K.Anderson
Song Sparrow:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	198, 266	CBC
15	Bridgewater	30	W.Petersen#
<u>Lincoln's Sparrow:</u>			
from Dec.-5	Wellesley	1	v.o.
Swamp Sparrow:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	3, 26	CBC
2,4	Halifax, Marblehead	6, 3	K.Anderson, J.Smith
22	Scituate, Plymouth	3, 2	S.Higginbotham, M.Argue#

<u>SPECIES/JANUARY</u>	<u>LÓCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>
White-throated Sparrow:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	28, 299	CBC
15	Bridgewater	30+	W.Petersen#
White-crowned Sparrow:			
1,thr.	Nant., M.V.	1, 1	CBC, W.Manter#
Dark-eyed Junco:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	19, 1698	CBC
"Oregon" Junco (well described):			
14	Milton	1	G.d'Entremont
Lapland Longspur:			
1,15	Nant., P.I.	3, 5	CBC, J.Grugan
21	Bridgewater, E.Boston	6, 1	W.Petersen, S.Zendeh
Snow Bunting:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	24, 17	CBC
7,15	Rockport, Bridgewater	30, 65	BBC, W.Petersen#
18,29	Athol, P'town	10, 50+	fide S.Kellogg, H.Stabins
Red-winged Blackbird:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	19, 25	CBC
7,28	S.Peabody, Belmont	25, 15	R.Heil, L.Taylor
Eastern Meadowlark:			
1,14	Nant., E.Middleboro	6, 11	CBC, K.Anderson#
Rusty Blackbird:			
29	Marshfield	<u>20</u>	W.Petersen#
Common Grackle:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	3, 21	CBC
Four others were reported from four locations.			
Brown-headed Cowbird:			
2,18	Concord, Cambridge	73, 1	CBC, L.Robinson
Pine Grosbeak:			
8,18	Hardwick, Athol	1, 10	W.Smith#, fide S.Kellogg
Purple Finch:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	3, 114	CBC
House Finch:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	226, 844	CBC
Common Redpoll:			
2,15	Concord, Squantum	1, 2	CBC, BBC
24	WBWS	1	D.Reynolds
Pine Siskin:			
2,8	Concord, Amesbury	141, 3	CBC, D.Brown#
thr.	Middleboro	36 max.	D.Briggs
American Goldfinch:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	56, 1156	CBC
Evening Grosbeak:			
1,2	Nant., Concord	17, 1672	CBC
1,14-31	Ipswich, Cohasset	60, 42 max.	H.Wiggin#, H.Mallers

NEW STATE CHECKLIST AVAILABLE. The 1983 Massachusetts Bird List (third edition), Fauna of Massachusetts Series No. 1, by Brad Blodget has just become available. This is a 24-page booklet listing the birds of Massachusetts, fully annotated with space to check your finds and appendices on Problematicals and Infrequent Vagrants. Bearing the Western Reef Heron on the cover, this up-to-date publication is available for one dollar (postage included) from the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Field Headquarters Westboro, MA 01581.

Send a \$1.00 check (not cash) made out to the above state division and mark the envelope: Attention Non-Game Division.



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FIELD NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

Arctic Encounter at Plum Island. On December 11, 1983, I joined a group of birders at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge to observe the Gyrfalcon that had been seen there for over a week. On this day, the bird was observed north of Cross Farm Hill flying over the salt marsh or perched on one of the many staddles. A little after three in the afternoon the Gyrfalcon flew from its perch and headed south disappearing behind Cross Farm Hill. I drove south searching for it and then proceeded north, finally spotting the bird flying at the far (west) end of the hill where it landed and began feeding on something down in the grass. We watched it for several minutes noting that while it was feeding, it made frequent scans overhead. After one of these scans, the falcon took off and quickly rose to a height of about seventy feet when it made a harrassing pass at a large all-white bird that was flying steadily to the southeast. At first glance, I thought a white-winged gull but soon noted that it had the large head of an owl. The Snowy Owl continued on a level flight as the Gyrfalcon made four or five passes at it. Despite this harrassment, the owl barely altered its wingbeat. The two birds crossed the road and descended out of sight behind the dunes. I hastened to parking lot 6, hoping to get a better view of the falcon in the dunes. Some of us proceeded towards the beach stopping at intervals to check things out. Almost immediately I spotted a Snowy Owl perched atop the nearest dune, and my companions found another one perched on the other side of the boardwalk. By now our group had grown to six, and though we searched the dunes and beach, we could not find the Gyrfalcon. With lessening light and the arctic chill increasing on that cold, windy Sunday, I headed back to my warm car, greatly excited by this wonderful encounter with a Gyrfalcon, a life bird for me only the day before. Heading north in the twilight, I was rewarded with a Short-eared Owl coursing batlike along the edges of the salt pans.

David Lange, Arlington

High Arctic Spectacle. Late fall in Churchill belongs to the Polar Bear. Moving slowly in our tundra buggy for another glimpse of Ursus maritimus, we were instead treated to a spectacle of the high Arctic we shall never forget, a fascinating interplay of Arctic bird life. A white-phase Gyrfalcon appeared on a boulder ahead of us, then joined two gray-phase Gyrs and disappeared behind the icy tundra. Excited, we moved on following them when a snow-white Willow Ptarmigan was spotted flying toward us. Just behind, in hot pursuit, came one of the gray-phase falcons. Then, with a spectacular burst of speed, the magnificent white Gyr streaked past, hit the Ptarmigan in a shower of white feathers, and carried it off. Thrilled with our good fortune, we started back toward Churchill when an immature goshawk landed a short distance away clutching another freshly killed ptarmigan. As we watched



Young Snowy Owl with rat



Illustration by William E. Davis

intently in the diminishing light, a pair of Snowy Owls silently flapped past us. The larger owl spotted the young goshawk, flew down toward him with legs outstretched, snatched the ptarmigan from the Gos - another poof of feathers, and the young goshawk watched helplessly as the huge white owl flew off with its prey.

Dorothy S. Long, Wayland

Starling Fracas. On as many days as possible in the fall, I try to cover the community garden plots at Rock Meadow in Belmont at about a half hour after sunrise for the BOEM sparrow migration project. On 17 October 1983, as I was about midway completed coursing through the area, I saw the first real concentration of birds and heard an unusual soft, buzzy call among them. Species in the flock, which was comprised of about fifteen individuals, included a Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrows, and some House Finches. My first thought was that I was hearing an unfamiliar feeding song from the latter. As I moved in on the source of the noise, the birds flushed in ones and twos, but the sound continued. Finally, when I was within a few feet of the site, no further birds flushed, and the noise stopped.

First I saw just a wing on the ground among weeds and right next to a small wire fence. Upon closer examination, I determined that the appendage belonged to a European Starling. The body was askew, and I thought that this might have been an unclean kill by the Merlin that I had observed terrorizing passerines in the area the day before. At this point I squatted down to further check out the situation and immediately noticed that something was hanging out of the bird's bill. A blink of its eye let me know that the creature was alive, though the lack of movement led me to believe not by much. Finally, I realized that what I was looking at was two starlings, locked in serious combat. The foot of one was apparently clutching the other's beak area, with one claw hooked just below the eyelid. The second bird had one of the other toes of the same foot clamped in its beak; this was what I had noticed initially.

The starlings seemed uninterested in doing anything, and I decided I might as well interfere a bit. The bill that I had first observed seemed like a good (though in retrospect, irreverent) handle. Picking up the whole vulgaris mass, which still showed no significant movement, gave me an opportunity to see how thoroughly the birds were intertwined. In addition to the first foot I had seen, a pair of feet, one from each individual, was locked together. The final foot of the two-bird complement of four was grasping body feathers in the opponent's breast area. Both individuals, for the record, were wearing the glossy adult plumage. Only after I set the clump back down did it finally break apart, revealing two apparently healthy birds that flew vigorously off, with a screech.

Lee E. Taylor, Arlington

Clever Jackdaw. While on Nantucket for this year's Christmas Bird Count, we found our old friend, the Jackdaw (Corvus monedula), in a group of American Crows on Low Beach. The bird had not been reported since the previous April. I was told that back then the Jackdaw was always seen near a small flock of crows, but when it approached too close, it was chased off and forced to remain on the outskirts of the flock. The bird's persistence in gaining acceptance by this group has obviously paid off. At Christmas, whether the group was feeding or flying about, the Jackdaw remained in the midst of these crows, staying close to one crow in particular. It probably roosted with the flock as well. The amazing corvid intellect and adaptability seem apparent in this situation. Here, a small cousin of the American Crow (thirteen inches compared to the crow's seventeen inches) had found a group of birds of its own family and, although initially treated with hostility, had worked its way into the group. It is possible that the habits and vocalizations of American Crows are enough like those of the Jackdaw for it to stand its ground and finally be allowed into the flock as a peer. Jackdaws range over most of Europe, northern Africa, and western Asia to Mongolia and the Himalayas, with a few reports coming from Iceland. Although a long way from home, the Nantucket bird has apparently earned acceptance and is now a regular member of the gang of crows residing on Low Beach.

Robert Abrams, Milton

Foolish Pelican. On December 9, a White Pelican plummeted into a Springfield, Massachusetts parking lot, apparently mistaking the reflecting pavement for a pond. The poor bird was taken to Laughing Brook Sanctuary where it was given a daily vitamin supplement and antibiotics to combat any infection resulting from the chest swelling and bruising as a consequence of the crash landing. After two weeks, the pelican was flown by Eastern Airlines to Florida to be released.

Robert H. Stymeist, Watertown

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR MASSACHUSETTS PIPING PLOVER CENSUS AND
RARE BIRD INVENTORY

Field volunteers are needed to help in two surveys sponsored by the Nongame and Endangered Species Program of the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife: a Piping Plover Census and a Natural Heritage Program Rare Bird Inventory.

Piping Plover Census. In order to determine the current distribution and status of the Piping Plover in Massachusetts, this state organization is coordinating a statewide census during the period of May 18 through 24. The Piping Plover is a fairly widespread, though vulnerable, breeding resident on open, sandy beaches throughout coastal Massachusetts. Recently, the species has become the object of considerable concern because population declines have been documented or suspected in most of its North American range. Current estimates place the total breeding population at a maximum of only sixteen hundred pairs. Here in Massachusetts, the current breeding population is estimated at approximately one hundred pairs. However, this figure, based primarily upon incidental data gathered by the various individuals and agencies working with terns in the state, gives only a partial picture.

A comprehensive statewide census in 1984 will provide some of the necessary baseline information against which future censuses can be compared and upon which management decisions affecting the Piping Plover's survival in Massachusetts can be formulated. Volunteers are needed to visit potential breeding locations in their areas to determine the presence or, just as importantly, the absence of Piping Plovers.

Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program: Rare Bird Inventory. As part of its ongoing inventory of rare plants and animals and unique natural communities, this state program is soliciting site-specific information on occurrences of a number of bird species that are considered endangered, rare, or declining. They are particularly interested in monitoring population trends and documenting and mapping specific breeding sites for the following species:

Common Loon	Willet
Pied-billed Grebe	Black Skimmer
Great Blue Heron	Common Barn-Owl
American Bittern	Short-eared Owl
Least Bittern	Long-eared Owl
Cooper's Hawk	Sedge Wren
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Gray-cheeked Thrush
Northern Harrier	Loggerhead Shrike
Common Moorhen	Northern Parula
King Rail	Golden-winged Warbler
Piping Plover	Henslow's Sparrow
American Oystercatcher	Grasshopper Sparrow
Upland Sandpiper	Vesper Sparrow

Inventory information is maintained in a mapped and computerized data base and is used in environmental reviews, site protection planning, and the wildlife management and research activities of the state's Nongame and Endangered Species Program.

Interested observers who wish to help or have field reports to make can receive additional information and standardized field and census forms by contacting

Dr. Scott Melvin, Program Zoologist
Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program
Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02202
Telephone: 617-727-3160



NOW AVAILABLE! NEW MAPS OF U. S. WETLANDS

Wetlands are probably the most biologically productive lands on earth. They shelter and nurture fish, shellfish, and migratory birds and also provide natural flood and erosion control and help to purify water. Of the 215 million acres of wetlands that originally existed in the United States, there are now only 99 million acres left, and an additional 458,000 acres (an area half the size of Rhode Island) are lost to development, drainage, and agriculture each year.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has prepared a series of maps to show the location of these remaining fragile wetland areas and to describe their geography, hydrology, and vegetation. These maps (10,000 in all) cover portions of 46 states - about thirty percent of the area of the Lower 48, six percent of Alaska, and the entire state of Hawaii. They include parts of the coastal zone, the floodplains of major rivers, and the Midwest's "prairie pothole" region. Prepared by using stereoscopic analysis of high-altitude aerial photographs and resembling large scale blueprints, the maps show wetlands ranging in size from thousands of acres to less than one acre at scales of 1:24,000 to 1:100,000 and are printed on U.S. Geological Survey base maps.

National Wetland Inventory Maps may be ordered from the National Cartographic Information Center, U.S. Geological Survey, 507 National Center, Reston, Virginia 22092 (phone: 703-860-6045). To place an order, consult the U.S. Geological Survey's map index for the map names. Information on prices, which vary, can be obtained at the above office.

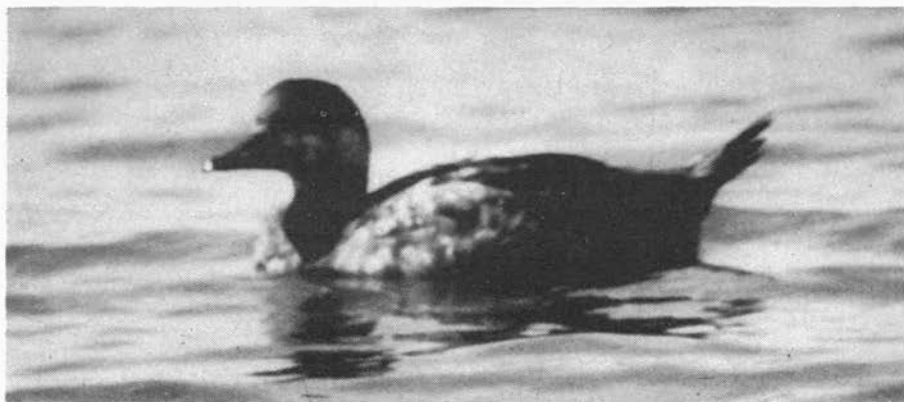
Fifty years ago, Roger Tory Peterson effectively demonstrated in his first Field Guide to the Birds that color pattern is actually more useful than color itself for identifying certain species of waterfowl. To that concept can be added the value of shape, posture, and proportion as factors influencing the proper field identification of ducks.

With these factors in mind, February's "At a Glance" duck offers several helpful identification clues. First, the rather solid, chunky body, thick neck, and long tail suggest that the bird is a diving duck rather than one of the more streamlined puddle ducks. The long, elevated tail further narrows the field to either Ruddy Duck, Harlequin Duck, or one of the scoters. A look at the dusky coloration on the sides and flanks, the pointed-tipped bill (not broad and flattened), and the elongated body shape all direct us away from Ruddy Duck, despite the suggestion of a pale face.

We are left with Harlequin Duck versus a scoter. Obviously the bird is not a drake, so we should expect two or three clearly defined white patches on the head, a tiny pointed bill, a steep forehead, a rounded head, and a bull neck for our bird to be a Harlequin female. Instead, we see a bird with a fairly long, slender bill; an obviously dark cap; and the suggestion of a pale cheek (darkened by the resolution in the printed picture); as well as a fairly slender neck and a somewhat angular head.

The combination of the dark cap and abrupt forehead tell us that the bird is a female Black Scoter, despite the seeming lack of an extensive pale cheek, a character which readily identifies the species in life.

Wayne R. Petersen, Whitman



Black Scoter (female)

Photo by Wayne R. Petersen

At a Glance . . .

Courtesy of Mass. Division of Fisheries and Wildlife



Can you identify this bird? Identification will be discussed in next issue's *At a Glance*. Bird Observer will again award a PRIZE to the reader who submits the most correct answers in 1984. Please send your entry on a postcard to Bird Observer, 462 Trapelo Road, Belmont, MA 02178 before the answer is published in the next issue.



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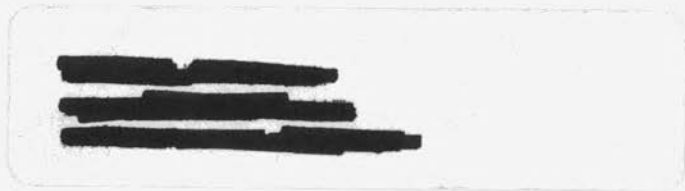
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