

BIRD OBSERVER

OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS



JUNE 1986

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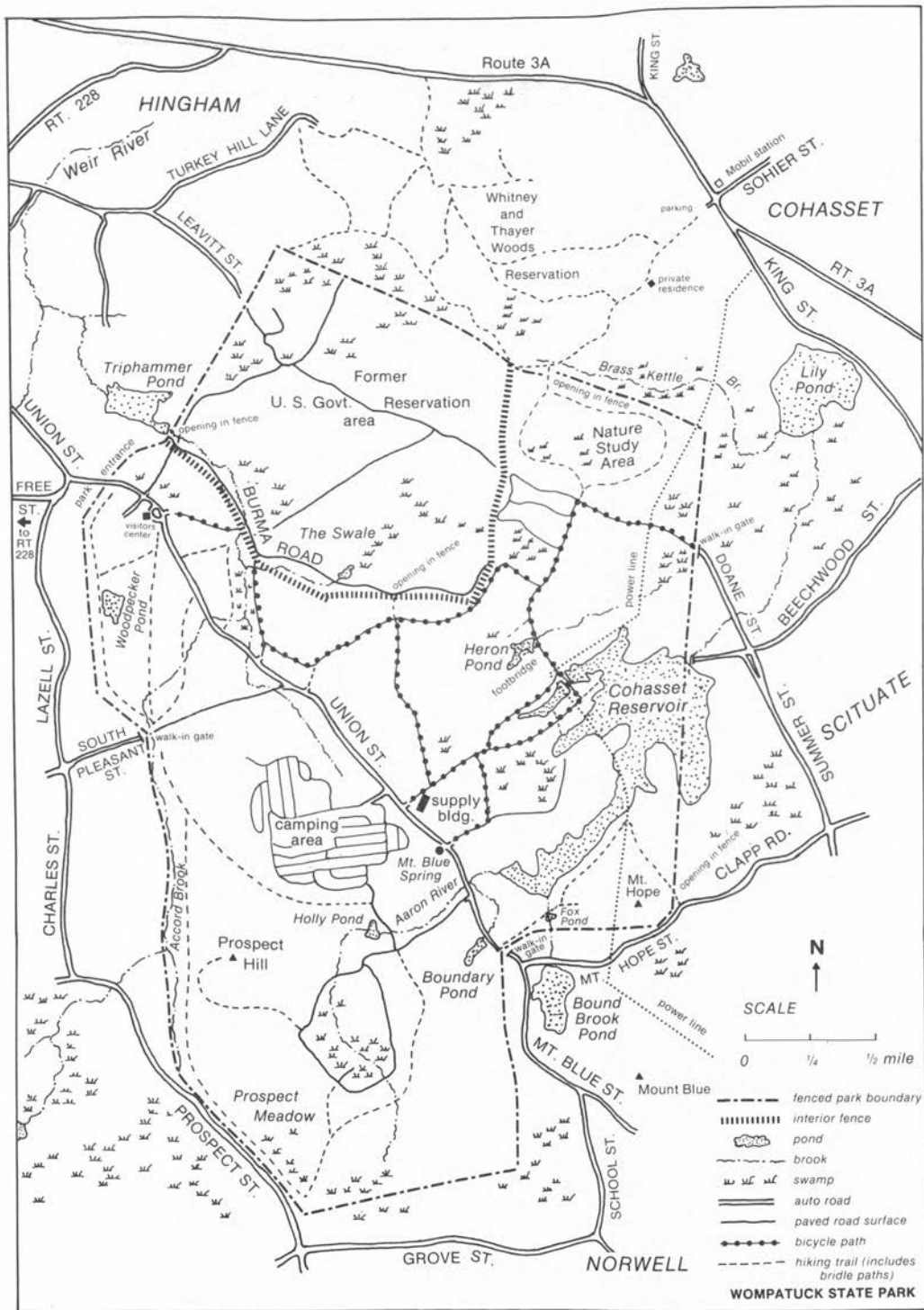
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TO PROTECT NESTING AREAS
OF LEAST TERN AND PIPING PLOVER,
HALF OF PLUM ISLAND BEACH AND ITS ACCESS AREA IS CLOSED
APRIL 1, 1986 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 1986.

In a determined effort to protect important nesting areas of the Piping Plover and Least Tern, the Parker River Refuge management announced this spring the closure of *THE ENTIRE AREA EAST OF THE REFUGE ROAD FROM PARKING LOT 1 TO CAMP SEA HAVEN*. Also, about half of Parking Lot 1 and both lots 2 and 3 have been closed. Parking spaces on the island now number 285. As many birders have discovered, this means that early arrival is mandatory, and the fewer the number of cars in the group, the better the chances of getting on the island.

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

Copies of most back issues of *Bird Observer* are still available. The few that are out of print are the following: *Volume 1 - nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4; Volume 2 - nos. 1 and 4; Volume 5 - nos. 1 and 4; and Volume 11 - no. 1*. Single issues are \$2.00 each for volumes 1 through 13, and special prices are available for volume sets. To place an order or for more information, please contact the treasurer. Supplies are limited. So order the back issues that you want - *now!*



Map based on USGS topographic Cohasset section map, Wompatuck state park maps, Trustees of Reservations Whitney and Thayer Woods map, information provided by J. Flaherty and H.C. Floyd and site visits. J. L. Heywood, June 1986.

BIRDING WOMPATUCK STATE PARK

by Jerry Flaherty, Scituate

Wompatuck State Park is an extensive tract of woods, fields, brooks, and ponds located in the southeastern corner of Hingham (over half the park) and adjacent areas of Cohasset, Scituate, and Norwell. Before becoming a state park, the 3500-plus acres of Wompatuck were part of a United States military reservation. The federal government took control of this land in 1941 for use by the U. S. Navy. Added to other thousands of acres in Weymouth and Hingham, this rugged land, designated "Cohasset Annex," was used to conceal hundreds of thousands of tons of high explosives offloaded from the Seventh Fleet prior to dry-docking operations at Quincy and the Boston Naval shipyards.

The federal government declared most of present-day Wompatuck "excess baggage" during the Vietnam War and "gave" it to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1968 for \$300,000 (about \$100 per acre). The commonwealth promptly turned the miles of ammunition railroad linkages into bicycle paths and in 1970 opened a 400-site campground. To this day, the park is underused. Other local campgrounds know they always have a spillover area in Hingham.

From the Greater Boston area, Wompatuck State Park is most easily reached by driving south on Route 3 to Route 228 (Exit 14) in Rockland. At the end of the exit ramp, turn left to Route 228 north. After about one mile, you will come to the intersection with Route 53. Continue straight through this intersection on Route 228 north. At 3.0 miles from this intersection, there will be a sign on the right for Wompatuck. Turn right here onto Free Street. At 0.8 miles from this turn, just after a sharp curve to the left, you will see on the right the large sign marking the main entrance to Wompatuck. Turn right here onto Union Street, and continue 0.2 mile to the gate.

Access to Wompatuck is limited. Although several roads lead to the park, gates block entry by car at all but the Union Street entrance in Hingham. The Union Street gate is open from 7:30 A.M. to dusk year round. During the camping season, it is open later to campers only. Entry on foot, by bike, or on cross-country skis is available at any time at any of the gates. Elsewhere, the perimeter of the park is guarded by an eight-foot-high chain-link fence, topped with barbed wire. The other gates are located at South Pleasant Street in Hingham, Mt. Blue Street in Norwell, and Doane Street in Cohasset. Parking is limited outside the gates. Be certain not to block them.

Driving access within the park is likewise limited to Union Street, which runs 2.5 miles through the heart of the park to the Mt. Blue Street gate in Norwell. (Actually, the road changes name within the park at the Hingham-Norwell line, just short of the Mt. Blue Street gate.) The only way to get to the outlying areas, aside

from attending the summer interpretive programs described at the end of this article, is by walking or bicycling. Wompatuck has almost twenty miles of paved bike paths and roads that are suitable for bicycles. Where these intersect Union Street, gates prevent entry by motor vehicles. Some off-road parking is available at most of these locations. Again, be careful not to block the gates.

The Mason D. Foley Memorial Visitors Center, on the right 0.2 mile from the park entrance, offers comfort stations, telephones, and useful information any time it is open. It is a worthwhile stop for any first-time visitor. In the lobby are some small displays, several of mounted native birds, and one of items of historical interest. On the walls are posters showing native birds, mammals, trees, and wildflowers and two detailed maps, one showing Wompatuck's trails and another its general vicinity. Copies of a map showing Wompatuck's major trails and topography should be available at the desk, but the current version is not up-to-date. Staff on duty are happy to answer questions about the park.

Current (1986) Visitors Center hours are 7:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., seven days a week. In camping season, currently April 15 to October 15, other toilets are available at any hour throughout the camping area (on the right 1.6 miles from the park entrance). A large covered pictorial map of Wompatuck can be viewed any time just outside the Visitors Center entrance. If dates and hours of access are a particular concern, an advance call to the Visitors Center at 617-749-7160 would be wise. Dates and hours may be affected by state funding from year to year.

Because of Wompatuck's large size and limited accessibility, birding the entire park in one visit would tax the energy and enthusiasm of even the most ardent birder. I have therefore described separate birding trips for five major sections of the park. One or more may be tackled in a day depending on one's time and energy.

Woodpecker Pond and Accord Brook.

This trip covers the section on the west side of Union Street from the main entrance to South Pleasant Street. It includes the Visitors Center, described above.

Park at the Visitors Center, and walk back toward the main entrance. As you approach the gate, turn left and follow the fence. You will be heading south. This road will lead you to Woodpecker Pond. This and all other bodies of water in and around the park are man-made. Green-backed and Great Blue herons, Black-crowned Night-Herons, Wood Ducks, and kingfishers are possible here.

After exploring the pond and the area beyond, return to the road you came on, and turn right where the road forks just northwest of the pond. This pleasant road through the woods will bring you back toward Union Street. Rufous-sided Towhee, Wood Thrush,

and Brown Thrasher are often found along this path. As the blacktop comes into view, you will intercept another path. A left here will return you to the Vistors Center via a nature trail. A right will take you to a meadow, wet well into the summer. Finches, sparrows, Common Yellowthroats, and House Wrens abound here. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks are often heard since they nest in the woodland beyond.

Continuing along this path will eventually bring you to Accord Brook and a drier field beyond. Blue-winged Warblers and/or "Brewster's" Warblers are frequently found here. "Pishing" at openings around the brook usually produces a good variety of songbirds. Occasionally, a screech-owl will answer a mimicking birder. This section is completed by walking to South Pleasant Street by way of some woodland trails and clearings, where one should regularly look skyward for soaring hawks.

The Camping Area, Holly Pond, Prospect Meadow, and Prospect Hill.

Even at the height of use in midsummer, a large portion of the southwestern end of the camping area is not used, and hemlock groves and planted Norway spruces provide some interesting habitat. Finches, creepers, and Red-breasted Nuthatches are customarily found here. The conifers should also provide extraordinary cover for roosting owls, although none have yet been seen here.

Access to this section is from South Pleasant Street, from the campgrounds in the off-season or if you camp, or from the first access road on the right (0.3 mile) after well-marked Mt. Blue Spring. (The spring is a magnet for local people. Bring a few



Illustration by William E. Davis, Jr.

jugs and get some water for yourself.) This last access road allows you to investigate Holly Pond and a prime area of spruces and hemlocks just to the northeast and connects as well to the road leading to Prospect Meadow and Prospect Hill. The meadow is a good place to find Indigo Bunting, and I have seen many hawks in the area over the years. Unfortunately, the summit of Prospect Hill is not cleared and does not reward the hiker with a vista.

Fox Pond Loop.

This area is best seen by making a loop that includes a part of Mt. Hope Street outside the park. Park at the Mt. Blue Street gate, which can be reached from either inside or outside the park. Again, do not block the gate. Follow the road that runs north-eastward, initially along the fence. After passing Fox Pond, named for the furrier who summered here, bear left, and follow the path through one of the most beautiful parts of Wompatuck. This climax beech, oak, and hemlock forest is impressive for Plymouth County, and the rocky cores exposed by the glacier are reminiscent of coastal Maine. It sometimes takes the voice of the Hermit Thrush to return your focus to birding in these pristine surroundings.

This wooded road eventually takes you to the southwestern tongue of the Cohasset Reservoir, a section that predates the present body of water and served once as a resource for a turn-of-the-century ice house. Herons, kingfishers, and hawks are regularly seen in this area.

When leaving the reservoir, instead of returning the way you came, continue back southeastward along a road that runs east of the power lines. Look for a grove of Sugar Maples and one of White Birches along this path. These species are oddities for southeastern Massachusetts. By following this path, you will eventually come to Mt. Hope Street, just north of the Norwell-Scituate line. By taking a right here you can return to where you parked your car. Be sure to take another right at the junction of Mt. Hope and Mt. Blue streets, just after Bound Brook Pond. Check the pond carefully for herons and waterfowl. A Red-shouldered Hawk can sometimes be seen or heard here.

Cohasset Reservoir, Heron Pond, and the Nature Study Area.

Inclusion of the nature study area, in the far northeastern corner of the park, makes this a long trek and should therefore be considered optional. To begin, park at the supply building lot, which is on the left 0.1 mile after the entrance to the camping area. After walking past the building, bear right, and continue walking until you come to the reservoir, which was completed in 1977 and is not shown on most maps. There are a number of lookouts along the way on the right. It is not unusual to rouse a slumbering Great Horned Owl or to find a photogenic Great Blue Heron at one of these.

Heron Pond and a northern tongue of the reservoir are reached by returning along the road you came on and turning at the first right. Ospreys can be seen at this part of the reservoir late into June and, in some years, later. An Osprey platform is being

installed on a small island here as this article is being written. A nesting Osprey would provide a precious ornament in the crown that is Wompatuck State Park. But watch here as well for Green-backed and Great Blue herons.

By following the road bearing right past the reservoir, you will come to Heron Pond. Take the time to cross the footbridge, sturdy despite its appearance. Wood Duck is almost a sure thing here, but just the wild beauty at the back end of the pond makes this visit compulsory.

A visit to the Nature Study Area can be included by continuing your walk northward after returning to the road from exploring Heron Pond. However, because of the distance involved, this might be done more easily through Whitney Woods. Entry to Whitney and Thayer Woods Reservation can be made opposite Sohier Street on Route 3A in Cohasset. An excellent map to this reservation can be obtained at the Mobil station at the corner. About 0.9 mile from the parking lot, a short trail branches from the main reservation path and leads into Wompatuck through an opening in the fence. A boulder with a commemorative-path plaque happens to lie at this branch point. Alternatively, the Nature Study Area can be visited by parking at the Doane Street walk-in gate and following the bike path. A trip to this area is well worthwhile; the nature study section is remarkable for the size of its hemlocks, pines, beeches, and black birches and apparently has been left uncut for several generations. The Black-throated Green Warbler nests here.

By returning on the road that brought you to Heron Pond and turning right at the reservoir, you will come into a more upland



Black-throated Green Warbler

*Photo by Allan D. Cruickshank
Courtesy of MAS*



part of this section. Another right will eventually return you to your car. The voice of the Hermit Thrush makes this part of the trip memorable. In spring listen as well for the occasional Winter Wren. Cardinal Flower blooms here in August, and Sweet Pepper Bush assails the senses throughout July.

Triphammer Pond and the Swale.

The wildness and quiet beauty of this area make the difficulties of getting into it a worthwhile challenge. This section has only recently been turned over to the state park system by the U. S. Army, who used it as a reserve training facility from 1941 to 1983. A fence still separates it from the rest of the park.

Triphammer Pond and the Swale are outstanding summer birding spots. Redtails and Great Horned Owls nest here, and Great Blue and Green-backed herons are commonly seen. In the three dozen times I have visited this area, I have had close contact with one or another of these species more than half the visits. It would be an ideal spot for a blind, and the park system may arrange something like this eventually.

Triphammer Pond lies outside the park, but the southeastern neck of the pond abuts the park fence. Discretion and stealth are absolutely necessary if one is to gain access through one of the several holes in the fence and spot the wildlife before they spot you. To enter this section, park at the Visitors Center. Walk back across the lawns toward the main gate and take a right at the first road crossing Union Street. (A left here leads to the park headquarters and garage complex.) Walk to the fence separating the old and new sections of the park, and pass through where the fence is conveniently rolled back. Triphammer Pond is almost immediately on the left. Some searching will locate another convenient hole in the fence separating you from the pond. A faintly worn footpath can be found once you are on the other side. This path goes around the entire pond and eventually loops back upon itself.

The Swale is reached via Burma Road, which is in the new section and roughly parallels the fence separating this section from the rest of the park. From the entry through this fence described

above, turn right immediately and follow Burma Road southeastward until the woods open up into a more open and wet area. This is the Swale. Red-tailed and Broad-winged hawks nest close by, as do Great Crested Flycatchers, whose nests can be readily approached and photographed in July.

If you continue along this road, you will eventually come to another hole in the fence, where you can return to Wompatuck proper. If you turn right once through the fence, you can return to Union Street at the supply building. However, since the supply building is 1.5 miles from where you parked, you may prefer to return from the Swale by reversing your path on Burma Road. Of course, the reverse of the route just described provides access to the Swale from the supply building.

As I indicated at the beginning, birding Wompatuck presents certain problems of accessibility, and therefore some parts may not appeal to everyone. Nevertheless, once the park is visited, these problems pale against the richness and surprising diversity it offers.

An alternative to birding Wompatuck on your own is to join the summer bird program, which is presented every Saturday through July and August. These meetings are designed to take both novice and experienced birders by car into parts of the park that are hard to reach. Maybe we will see you there in the summer. In the meantime, I hope you will find these directions helpful.

I would like to acknowledge the help I received in writing this article from several members of the birding community, especially Neil and Sharon Osborne and Bob Campbell.

JERRY FLAHERTY, a teacher in the Scituate Public Schools, is uniquely qualified to write about Wompatuck State Park. During summers since 1980 he has worked for the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management as Wompatuck's interpretive naturalist. His varied programs there, including birdwalks, bicycle tours, and astronomy outings, reflect his own broad interests in nature. Jerry has also worked as a naturalist at the South Shore Natural Science Center, and he is active with the South Shore Bird Club.

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SUMMER WORKSHOPS IN MAINE

The Institute for Field Ornithology of the University of Maine at Machias began its 1986 summer program with a June 15-20 workshop by Greg Budney, *BIRD SONG RECORDING*. Five weeklong workshops for serious birders offer classroom and field study in a variety of environments - forests, lakes and streams, bogs, shorelands, coastal bays and islands. The workshops begin with registration and a social gathering in the afternoon of the first date of the course. Classroom sessions and field work begin the next morning. Dormitory accommodations (individual rooms with shared bath) are available for \$30/week. July and August workshops and fees are given below.

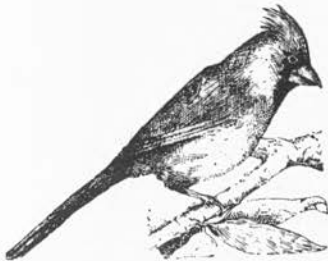
July 6-12: *ADVANCED FIELD IDENTIFICATION* - Susan Allen and Davis Finch; includes boat trip to Machias Seal Island; limited to 20; cost \$340.

July 13-19: *BIRD AND NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY* - Michael Hopiak; includes boat trip to Machias Seal Island; limited to 14; cost \$385 + \$30 lab fee.

July 27 - August 2: *SEABIRDS* - Charles Duncan and Peter Vickery; includes 3 boat trips; limited to 20; cost \$385.

August 3-8: *SHOREBIRDS* - Blair Nikula; optional boat trip to Machias Seal Island (August 9); limited to 20; cost \$305.

For information about enrollment, write or call -
Dr. Charles D. Duncan, Director, U. M. M., 9 O'Brien Avenue,
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STATUS OF THE PIPING PLOVER IN MASSACHUSETTS

by George W. Gove, Ashland

On January 10, 1986, the Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*) was added to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service list of endangered and threatened species of wildlife. The entire breeding population of this species in North America has been estimated at less than 2200 pairs. Piping Plovers breed in the Great Plains from southern Alberta eastward to Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Nebraska; at scattered locations around the Great Lakes; and on the Atlantic Coast from the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Maritimes to Virginia and the Carolinas. They winter along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts from South Carolina to Texas and northern Mexico. The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated the Great Lakes population, which is down to less than twenty pairs, as "endangered," a term applied when extinction is imminent, and the Great Plains and Atlantic Coast populations as "threatened" (describing the state that is precursor to "endangered"). The decline of the Atlantic Coast population has been attributed to increasing recreational use and development of ocean beaches.

In Massachusetts, the Piping Plover breeds coastally from Salisbury south and east to Cape Cod, the islands, and Westport. It is normally found in the state from mid-March through mid-September. This species makes a shallow nest, sometimes lined with fragments of shells, with pebbles, or wrack, along ocean beaches and filled-in areas near inlets and bays. The normal clutch of pale, sand-colored, speckled eggs is four. Incubation is underway by mid-May in Massachusetts. The normal incubation period is twenty-seven days, and the fledging time (defined as the time from hatching to flight in a precocial species such as this) is about thirty-four days.

The birds feed along beaches, at the margins of watercourses, and on flats. Their food consists of marine worms, fly larvae, beetles, crustaceans, mollusks, and other small marine animal life. Their feeding behavior, like that of other plovers, consists of running along and picking. The call of the piping plover is a melodious "peep-lo," for which the species gets both its common and its scientific name. It is more often heard than seen along the ocean beaches, since its coloration provides excellent camouflage in this habitat.

According to data reported by Dr. Scott Melvin of the Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program, Massachusetts has the largest Piping Plover population of any state or province on the Atlantic Coast. Based on observations by over thirty observers at sixty-three locations (see the table), there were a total of 131 breeding pairs in the state in 1985. This was eighteen more pairs than were reported in 1984. Increases were reported at nineteen sites and decreases at nine sites. The apparent increase in 1985 probably resulted from more intensive censusing at several sites than from a real population increase statewide.

Estimated Pairs of Breeding Piping Plovers at Censused Sites
in Massachusetts in 1984 and 1985*

LOCATION	NUMBER OF PAIRS: 1984	1985
Salisbury Beach, Salisbury	1	0
Parker River National Wildlife Refuge	3	3
Plum Island State Park, Ipswich	2	1
Crane's Beach, Ipswich	3	5
Snake Island, Winthrop	0	0
Boston Harbor Islands	0	0
Third Cliff, Scituate	3	2
Fourth Cliff, Scituate	1	1
Duxbury Beach, Duxbury	1	3
Plymouth Beach, Plymouth	3	4
Stoney Point Dike, Wareham	2	nd**
Long Beach Point, Wareham	1	nd
West Island Beach, Fairhaven	2	2
Demerest-Lloyd State Park, Dartmouth	nd	0
Allens Pond/Little Beach/Barney's Joy, Dartmouth	3	4
Gooseberry Neck, Westport	nd	1
Horseneck Beach, Westport	4	6
Acoaxet Beach, Westport	nd	2
Richmond Pond, Westport	2	3
Black Beach, Falmouth	1	nd
Washburn Island, Falmouth	1	nd
South Cape Beach, Mashpee	1	3
Town Beach, Sandwich	3	3
Springhill Beach, Sandwich	1	2
Scorton Creek, Sandwich	3	4
Sandy Neck, Barnstable	14	10
Dead Neck - Sampson's Island, Barnstable	3	2
Long Beach, Barnstable	2	2
Gray's Beach, Yarmouth	0	0
West Dennis Beach, Dennis	0	3
Chapin Beach, Dennis	nd	0
Forest Beach, Chatham	0	0
Cockle Cove, Chatham	0	0
Harding's Beach, Chatham	2	3
Morris Island Dike, Chatham	1	2
Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge, Chatham	3	5
North Beach, Chatham and Orleans	4	5
Nauset Heights, Orleans	2	2
New Island, Orleans and Eastham	1	1
First Encounter Beach - Nantasket Creek, Orleans and Eastham	0	nd
Coast Guard Beach, Eastham	5	12
Marconi Beach, Eastham	1	3
Indian Neck, Wellfleet	0	0
Jeremy Point, Wellfleet	nd	1
Pamet, Truro	2	0
Pilgrim Beach, Truro	1	nd
Beach Point, Truro	2	nd
French's (Exit 9), Provincetown	1	0
Race Point, Provincetown	1	0
Wood End Light, Provincetown	0	0
Naushon Island, Gosnold	0	nd
Weepecket Islands, Gosnold	0	nd
Great Island, Gosnold	nd	0
Pasque Island, Gosnold	3	4
Nashawena Island, Gosnold	1	1
Cuttyhunk Island, Gosnold	3	3
Penikese Island, Gosnold	0	nd
Martha's Vineyard	10	7
Noman's Land, Chilmark	0	0
Nantucket	10	10
Whale Island	0	2
Tuckernuck Island	nd	2
Muskeget Island	0	2
TOTAL PAIRS:	113	131

* Table supplied by Dr. Scott Melvin, Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program.

** nd = no data available.



Piping Plover

*Photo by John H. Gavin
Courtesy of MAS*

Predation by mammals markedly reduced breeding productivity at some sites, particularly Coast Guard Beach, Sandy Neck, and Crane's Beach. Limiting factors at other sites included flooding of nests during storms and high tides, human disturbance, off-road vehicles, and gull predation. Productivity at other locations was good; at Horseneck Beach, Harding's Beach, and Duxbury Beach, two-thirds or more of the breeding pairs successfully raised young to fledging.

Cooperative research on population dynamics, habitat use, and management needs of the Piping Plover was started in 1985 by the state Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and the National Park Service. This research has already yielded data that will help the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife to develop a formal conservation plan in accordance with the recommendations and guidelines of the Atlantic Coast Piping Plover Recovery Team. Volunteers interested in helping with plover observations at any of the Massachusetts breeding locations are encouraged to call Dr. Scott Melvin at 617-727-9194.

GEORGE W. GOVE, a technical writer for a computer firm in Framingham, has been a records compiler for *Bird Observer* since 1981. His chief interest in birding is shorebirds.

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FIELD TIPS: THE SINGLE FIELD MARK SYNDROME¹

by Kimball Garrett, UCLA

Over and over again Jon Dunn and I have pointed out in our bird identification articles the pitfalls of basing identifications on single field marks. So often a conspicuous feature of a bird becomes overridingly important as our minds try to attach a name to the creature we are studying; because of this we may ignore a suite of more subtle but, in sum, more important characters which militate against the identification that the conspicuous single feature calls for. A frequent example involves albinistic or highly leucistic large gulls. Trained by field guides to base identifications on major "field marks," we read the combination of large size and whiteness to indicate Glaucous Gull. Closer examination (bill color and shape, eye color, body size and proportions, wing length, etc.) usually reveals that these "white" gulls are variants of our more common species (Western, Glaucous-winged, Herring).

Another example of the "Single Field Mark Syndrome" involves our kingbirds. Tropical Kingbirds are regular fall visitors to coastal California; however, during September and early October the Western Kingbird is far more numerous along our coast. I know of at least two cases where fall Western Kingbirds were reported as Tropical Kingbirds (presumably Cassin's was eliminated because of the lack of a conspicuous white chin against a dark gray chest). In each case the identification was based on the lack of white in the outer tail feathers, a condition which obtains rather commonly in fall Western Kingbirds that are either extremely worn or have dropped, but not yet replaced, the outer tail feathers. A whole set of additional characters (bill size, tail color, breast color, back color, auricular color, etc.) would have indicated to the observer that these birds were indeed Western Kingbirds.

This month I'll illustrate the "Single Field Mark Syndrome" with a field problem which actually involves two completely unrelated passerines native to different hemispheres! This fowl-up [*sic*] (and I reiterate that all such fowl-ups have understandable origins and that none of us is immune) has occurred several times in widely separated parts of North America, most recently in a case reported to me from the Sepulveda Basin in the San Fernando Valley.

¹Reprinted with permission as originally published in *Western Tanager* 52(5): 1-2, January/February 1986. *Editor's Note:* Although this article was written for California birders, the principle formulated by the author is a valid caution to birders anywhere. Massachusetts, like California, has a "port-of-entry" position, and furthermore, the confusion that is possible between the Fork-tailed Flycatcher and Pin-tailed Whydah has also occurred in this state according to Richard Forster of Massachusetts Audubon Society.

Imagine a bird the size of a sparrow, with grayish to blackish upperparts, a black crown, whitish underparts, and an absurdly long pair of black tail feathers. This certainly doesn't match anything normally expected to occur in California. A look through the field guide, however, reveals one bird that fits this description: the Fork-tailed Flycatcher. A casual, but somewhat regular, stray to eastern North America (especially the coasts), this Middle and South American species would have to be considered a potential stray to California. [In fact, Monroe and Barron, in their summary of Fork-tailed Flycatcher records from North America (*American Birds* 34: 842-845, 1980), list an 1883 record from Santa Monica, though the purported specimen was destroyed and the record must remain suspicious.] Photographs of the Sepulveda Basin "Fork-tailed Flycatcher," however, quickly revealed it to be a male Pin-tailed Whydah (*Vidua macroura*, a species native to sub-Saharan Africa). Perhaps because of its abundant rank, weedy growth, and proximity to the



Fork-tailed Flycatcher (left) and Pin-tailed Whydah: The Single Field Mark Syndrome
Illustration by Kimball Garrett

thousands of pet shops and private aviaries in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area, the Sepulveda Basin attracts its fair share of exotic finches (up to three species of *Euplectes* bishops have been recorded here in a day!). Even so, birders could hardly be expected to be familiar with the names and field marks of every potential exotic in this area. So, again, the identification of this individual as a Fork-tailed Flycatcher, superficially the most similar bird in the North American field guides, becomes entirely understandable.

The accompanying sketch shows how the salient features, and in particular the long, black tail streamers, are similar in these two species. Of course, there are compelling differences in a number of other features (bill shape and color, back color, tail shape, wing pattern, and behavior), but the "Single Field Mark Syndrome" allows these to be overlooked.

One can imagine other scenarios in which an unfamiliar exotic is matched up with the most similar bird in the North American field guides (some of these have, in fact, been reported to me): Yellow-fronted Canary (*Serinus mozambicus*, from Africa) being identified as Dickcissel; female bishops (*Euplectes* spp., from Africa) being identified as Grasshopper Sparrows or fall Bobolinks; Oriental White-eye (*Zosterops palpebrosa*) as Connecticut Warbler; "monster" Mallards (of muddled genetic background) as American Black Ducks, and so forth.

Two points emerge from this discussion. The first, about the danger of basing identifications on single field marks, has been reiterated several times. The second point is especially applicable to areas like southern California, with large human populations, a nearly subtropical climate, and a port-of-entry position on the geographical edge of the United States. This is the problem of exotic birds. The active birder in southern California will likely encounter dozens of species from a potential pool of several hundred) that have escaped from captivity or otherwise occurred unnaturally in the region. One should keep this fact in mind before trying to "fit" an exotic to a species pictured in the local field guides.

KIMBALL L. GARRETT has written numerous articles on field identification for *The Western Tanager*. *Bird Observer* reprinted his article on the two color phases (still potentially separate species) of the Western Grebe in our December 1981 issue. Kimball is an ornithologist with the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History, has had extensive field experience throughout western North America, and has led birding tours in western U. S. and Mexico. "The Ecology, Distribution, and Evolution of the White-headed Woodpecker (*Picoides albolarvatus*)" is the title of his doctoral dissertation at the University of California at Los Angeles, where he teaches bird identification workshops for the extension program.

AMERICA'S BIRDING TEAM - OPUS 3

by John C. Kricher, Mansfield

Ted Turner owns a television network on which are broadcast the games of the self-proclaimed "America's team," the Atlanta Braves. If competing on Turner's network qualifies one for status as a national symbol, then the Manomet Swifts are soon to become America's Birding Team, for in the autumn of this year, "National Geographic Explorer," a regular Turner cable exclusive, will feature the Third Annual Cape May Bird-A-Thon competition, the World Series of birding. Last year, the exploits¹ of Wayne, Rick, Warren, John, and Betty found their way to Channel 7, courtesy of Robin Young. This bit of birding broadcasting won an Emmy Award for Robin. No kidding. It did. Now who can top that? Well, National Geographic is going to try. They sent a film crew with us this year in an effort to further document and dissect the odd psyche of birding and birders.

Ever hear the expression, "lights, camera, action"? Want to know what it means? It means midnight at the Great Swamp on a wet boardwalk listening for Barred Owls with two 250-watt floods in your eyes. It means scanning for shorebirds from the tower at Brigantine with a macro lens millimeters from your face, presumably recording footage of your nasal hairs. It means stopping to have your battery pack changed so your portable mike won't fail in the midst of an important utterance that all America should share. Example: "Got it?" No? Scan more to the right. Hurry, it's almost over the trees. Now do you have it?" "Yep." "Good. Let's go." It means being interviewed in front of a spotlighted clump of Phragmites at Dividing Creek near midnight after being up for nearly forty hours and being asked, "Why are you so intense about this? Why don't you look happy? Are you really having fun?" As Rhett said some years back, "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn."

In spite of taking the Cecil B. De Mille approach to birding, we did OK. We logged 175 species, equal to our first effort of two years ago, but not quite good enough to beat the National Geographic team in the out-of-state competition. They totaled 178 and thus won the Stearns Award for the second consecutive year. Of course, the Geos didn't have a film crew with them. You see, rumor has it that the Geographic birding team was less than enthusiastic about having the Geographic film crew along - something about slowing them down. We can't imagine what. Anyway, Geographic TV covered us, not their native sons. Nonetheless, we congratulate the Geos on their victory, as we do the two New Jersey teams, one led by Rich Kane, the other by Greg Hanicek, who tied for first with 199 species to share the grand prize in a total field of twenty-five teams.

Birding for twenty-four hours involves large measures of luck, skill, and stamina. We seemed to generate a fair amount of all

¹See "World Series of Birding 1985: A Tale of Five Swifts and a Robin" in *Bird Observer* 13: 184, August 1985.

three. Deciding on a traditional north-south route, we began at the Great Swamp with virtuoso bird-caller, Wayne Petersen, whistling in an Eastern Screech-Owl and hooting in a Barred Owl. A flashlight on the beams of the information center revealed a nesting phoebe, and the surprised tyrannid became the temporary center of attention for four birders and four film-makers. Night birds didn't fail us. Great Horned Owl, Virginia Rail, Sora, Swamp Sparrow, Black-billed Cuckoo, American Woodcock all made noise within our earshot. Overhead the chips of migrating warblers and the call notes of Swainson's Thrushes put us in an optimistic mood for daybreak at Waterloo.

Alas, the dawn brought fog. Great Crested Flycatchers called. The Louisiana Waterthrush was where it belonged and talking. A "fee-bee" from a Black-capped Chickadee was important. Had we missed it at Waterloo, we'd never reclaim it. South Jersey hosts only Carolinas. But the mist-laden trees were not buzzing with the songs of northern warblers. No Pileated Woodpeckers answered Warren Harrington's ringing imitation Pileated call. Waterloo was generally quiet, the dawn chorus more like a requiem. Not a creature was stirring, not even a grouse. The film crew clicked off footage of us standing around listening to the quiet. The level of excitement was somewhat less than that of a dull golf match. Bye Waterloo.

Our next stop resulted from the previous day's scouting efforts and was an unqualified strategic success. We returned to the Great Swamp and began racking up birds quickly: Bobolink, Eastern Bluebird, King Rail (flying across a meadow), Common Moorhen, Solitary Sandpiper. Our list had a healthy breakfast and was growing fast. On to our grassland sites, where scouting again paid dividends in the forms of Grasshopper Sparrow and Upland Sandpiper. Bull's Island, on the Delaware, produced several other birding teams (some smiled, some said hi, some didn't make eye contact - but at least nobody took a shot at us) plus the obligate Cliff Swallows, Cerulean Warblers, and Acadian Flycatcher. Gotta keep going; we're doing well. On to Institute Woods in Princeton. Gotta hurry.

We hustled through Princeton Woods, which was another Waterloo. The residents were there but few migrants and little sound. A gorgeous male Hooded Warbler perched out in the open for us but we couldn't take time to watch it. Had to keep moving. Do you suppose Thoreau would have understood the logic of a birdathon?

Into the van and through the pinelands we drove, stopping to nail Prairie and Pine warblers, Brown Thrasher, and Northern Bobwhite. It was a warm, sunny, spring day in New Jersey. Good early beach weather. Yawn.



Luck graced us at Brigantine. We blasted around the dikes recording such species as Whimbrel, American Oystercatcher, Pectoral and White-rumped sandpipers, Gull-billed Tern, Black Skimmer, Brant, Common Loon, Seaside Sparrow, and Least Bittern (which Warren calls a "bittin"). The sun was still high in the sky. We had some time.

South on the Garden State Parkway trying to keep to 55, at least in theory, as we drove on to Stone Harbor. Yellow-crowned Night-Heron right where it was supposed to be at the heronry. Sanderlings and Purple Sandpipers at the beach and jetty. List growing, sun descending. On to Cape May. Move with purpose.

Victorian Cape May: Common Scoters at the jetty, Piping Plovers on the back beach, Yellow-breasted Chat at Higbee. A lawn near Lake Lily where a male Blue Grosbeak was hopping about like a House Sparrow. A Belted Kingfisher on a wire over a farm pond. Good ole Cape May, we still have a chance! If we can only get to Bear Swamp before the sun gets to the horizon. Let's go; time's marching.

We arrived at Bear Swamp nearly twenty-two hours after we had begun at Great Swamp. Dusk. A Summer Tanager was singing taps. We met nearly every other team, each in search of the nesting Bald Eagles. The national birds were playing coy this year. We missed them, as did most of the others. Whip-poor-wills and Chuck-will's-widows began their night's work of monotonous vocalizing. The movie lights literally spotlighted the courtship of two amorous Whip-poor-wills, probably giving the avian component of our film an R rating.

Darkness had fully claimed daylight as we pulled up to the Dividing Creek marshes, near the quaint Delaware Bay town of Bivalve. Several carloads of teenage funseekers, innocent slaves to their raging hormones, were out for a night of rock music and body-rubbing in the salt marsh. They hadn't bargained for twenty-five consecutive carloads of birders and one film crew. The wind was still, the mosquitos awesome. But, in the still of this peaceful New Jersey night, the Black Rails were talking. "Kikki-doo" ended our day on a most pleasant note.

"Cut. Kill the lights. OK, people, it's a wrap. Let's go home."

JOHN C. KRICHER is a professor and chair of the Biology Department at Wheaton College, with a growing reputation as an author. He has two books in press: *Exploring the American Tropics* to be issued in the spring of 1987 by Prentice-Hall and *A Field Guide to Eastern Fields and Forests*, which will be published by Houghton Mifflin Co. John is president of the Northeastern Bird-Banding Association and lives in Mansfield with wife Linda and a menagerie of seven cats, four pygmy goats, and a female collared peccary.

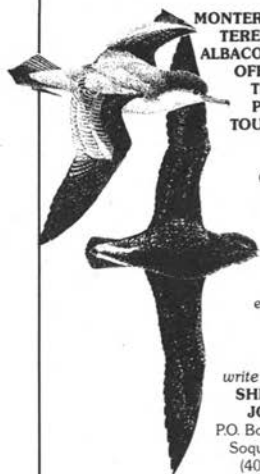
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THE 1985 SPRING MIGRATION WATCH

by John W. Andrews, Lexington

For the past six years, *Bird Observer* has sponsored an annual Spring Migration Watch (SMW), in which data on bird species abundance are collected by volunteer observers at various eastern Massachusetts sites during the spring migration. This article provides a brief summary of 1985 results and an analysis of the accumulated SMW database.

The data collection methodology for the SMW has been described in previous articles (*Bird Observer* 13:72, April 1985). Briefly, volunteer observers visit their chosen sites periodically during a period from mid-April to early June. They follow a fixed route on each visit, recording the numbers of all bird species that follow Rock Dove on the Massachusetts checklist. Daily totals are entered into a microcomputer computer database and analyzed using several software packages specially written for the SMW.

The data sets submitted for the 1985 SMW included 229 site visits, 308 hours in the field, and 30,402 individual birds (see Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of 1985 SMW Data.

SITE	OBSERVER	NUMBER VISITS	TOTAL HOURS	NUMBER SPECIES	TOTAL COUNT
Willard's Woods Lexington	J.Andrews	17	16.3	68	1123
Mt. Auburn Cemetery Cambridge	R.Stymeist	26	44.9	93	6260
Beech Forest Provincetown	B.Nikula	22	18.1	79	3112
Pond Meadow Park Braintree	R.Campbell	25	33.1	79	4441
Bridgewater - Lakeville	K.Holmes	22	42.5	87	2454
Met. State Hospital Waltham	L.Taylor	28	35.4	85	4546
Cutler Pond Needham	D.Case	22	37.1	57	1631
Bowen School Newton	O.Komar	15	17.3	68	1206
Bolton Flats Bolton	B.Parker	14	14.3	59	2398
Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary	C.Blasczak	10	9.7	76	763
Edmand's Park Newton	T.Estis	13	25.1	53	924
Mystic Reservoir Medford	C.Jackson	15	14.2	41	1544

1985 Results.

Analyzing the timing of the migration is complicated by the fact that the different sites vary greatly in the average abundance of migrants. Mount Auburn Cemetery averaged 43 migrants per hour, while the Lexington site averaged less than 7 migrants per hour. Thus, the combined number of migrants reported on a given day is not a reliable indicator of the strength of the migration, since this number is greatly affected by the mix of sites covered. In order to provide a better index to the actual strength of the migration, an analysis program was written that normalizes the count at each site by the average site count for the season. A normalized value of 1.00 corresponds to an average count; a normalized value of 1.50 would correspond to a count that was 50 percent above the site average. The normalized counts at each covered site are then averaged to produce an overall migration rating for the date. Figure 1 is a chart of this migration index for the 1985 SMW. In order to avoid confusion between migrant and breeding populations, only those species that do not normally breed in Massachusetts were used to produce this chart.

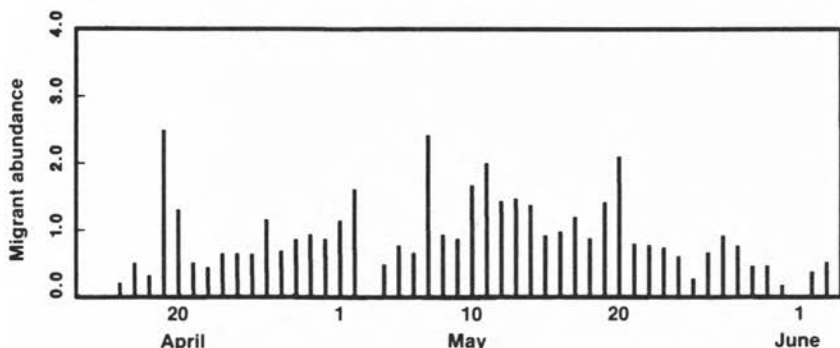


Figure 1. Daily variation in observed migrant abundance for 1985 SMW (1.0 = average count).

In terms of overall numbers of migrants, 1985 was below normal. Warblers averaged 23.9 birds per hour (BPH) compared with a six-year average of 27.9 BPH. The major movement of Yellow-rumped Warblers began on April 19 and continued through about May 12. Summer residents arrived in force on May 6 and had reached full strength by about May 12. The apparent peak of the general warbler migration was May 20. Other dates of strong migration were May 7, 10, 11, 17, and 20. A major movement of flycatchers was noted on June 2.

Yearly BPH Variations.

Table 2 provides BPH values for the month of May for each year of the count. 1985 produced high relative abundances for Tennessee Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, and Ovenbird. Low counts were noted for Magnolia Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Wilson's Warbler, and Canada Warbler.

Table 2. Warbler Abundances (BPH), May 1980-1985.

WARBLER SPECIES	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1980-85 COMBINED
Blue-winged*	0.074	0.671	0.082	0.085	0.058	0.096	0.1596
Golden-winged	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.005	0.0012
Orange-crowned	0.000	0.000	0.009	0.072	0.008	0.000	0.0151
Tennessee	1.131	0.514	0.663	0.804	0.422	0.840	0.7632
Nashville	0.315	0.235	0.481	0.418	0.232	0.344	0.3391
Northern Parula	1.428	0.697	1.916	1.948	2.243	1.574	1.6336
Yellow-throated	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.020	0.000	0.000	0.0035
Yellow*	3.368	0.557	4.005	2.314	2.127	2.206	2.4433
Chestnut-sided	0.321	0.166	0.309	0.405	0.472	0.213	0.3099
Magnolia	1.261	0.819	1.435	2.085	1.507	0.703	1.2770
Cape May	0.130	0.139	0.154	0.033	0.339	0.127	0.1456
Black-throated Blue	0.284	0.183	0.500	0.275	0.422	0.385	0.3391
Cerulean	0.000	0.000	0.009	0.007	0.008	0.000	0.0035
Yellow-rumped	3.999	5.183	10.136	9.059	12.674	6.058	7.5409
Black-throated Green	1.428	0.514	0.817	1.026	0.811	0.663	0.8925
Blackburnian	0.408	0.166	0.545	0.529	0.364	0.349	0.3950
Pine*	0.012	0.000	0.345	0.392	0.422	0.294	0.2435
Prairie*	0.056	0.035	0.218	0.157	0.132	0.091	0.1107
Palm	0.049	0.218	0.945	0.856	1.026	1.088	0.7073
Bay-breasted	0.494	0.070	0.300	0.458	0.290	0.369	0.3484
Blackpoll	1.199	0.610	1.371	0.954	1.175	0.789	1.0009
Black-and-white	1.601	1.333	2.525	2.268	3.046	1.705	2.0297
American Redstart	2.281	1.429	2.080	2.516	2.310	1.331	1.9680
Worm-eating	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.033	0.017	0.015	0.0117
Ovenbird	0.723	0.645	0.845	0.725	1.093	0.977	0.8389
Northern Waterthrush	0.346	0.166	0.209	0.314	0.281	0.127	0.2389
Louisiana Waterthrush	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.020	0.0047
Kentucky	0.000	0.000	0.009	0.007	0.000	0.010	0.0047
Mourning	0.006	0.009	0.045	0.065	0.066	0.035	0.0373
Common Yellowthroat*	3.492	1.786	4.033	3.556	2.550	2.910	3.0772
Hooded	0.000	0.000	0.009	0.052	0.017	0.000	0.0128
Wilson's	0.414	0.340	0.300	0.320	0.464	0.177	0.3251
Canada	0.698	0.636	0.845	0.758	0.621	0.349	0.6280
Yellow-breasted Chat	0.000	0.044	0.009	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.0070
Number of Individuals	4129	1970	3870	4974	4252	4713	23908
Time in hours	161.8	114.8	110.1	153.0	120.8	197.6	858.3
BPH	25.52	17.16	35.15	32.51	35.20	23.85	27.86

*Breeding populations may significantly affect count of these species.

Since detection of population trends is a major goal of the SMW, the extent to which species abundances vary from year to year is of fundamental interest. The more stable the abundances, the easier it is to detect population trends. Casual inspection of Table 2 reveals a significant amount of year-to-year variation in the reported BPH values. There are many factors contributing to this variation. In some years, noticeably 1981, the overall count is much lower than in others. This overall variation is probably due primarily to weather factors rather than differences in the actual population sizes. For breeding species, some of the variation in numbers is due to differences in the breeding populations present at the covered sites; e.g., the high count of Blue-winged Warbler in 1981 was due to the inclusion of a site that had several breeding pairs.

In order to characterize the magnitude of the variations, a special statistical analysis technique was applied to the data. This analysis began by selecting only those species for which the observed population in Massachusetts consists almost entirely of migrants. This eliminated species whose counts varied due to breeding populations at covered sites. Then, all species with combined abundances of less than 0.1 BPH were combined into an "other species" category. This eliminated much of the spurious variation due solely to the randomness of the counting process itself for rarer species. At this point, the statistics of the logarithm of each BPH were computed. A logarithmic analysis is justified by experience that shows that BPH differences from year to year tend to be multiplicative rather than additive. (It is more suitable to model the counts as varying from the norm by a given multiplicative factor than as varying from the norm by a given arithmetic difference.)

Figure 2 is a histogram of the extent to which the log BPH varies for the sixteen species subjected to analysis over the six years of the study. It can be seen that although BPH variations by factors up to 1.5 often occur, variations of more than a factor of 2 are quite unusual. The standard deviation of the log BPH value is 0.1769 (corresponding to a BPH factor of 1.50).

The observed variation can be further reduced by employing *relative abundances* rather than raw BPH values. This is equivalent to applying a correction for the overall yearly BPH value to each column of Table 2. The standard deviation of the log abundance then reduces somewhat to 0.1473 (corresponding to a factor of 1.40). Thus, relative abundance is somewhat more stable than the raw BPH, although it fails to radically reduce the observed variations.

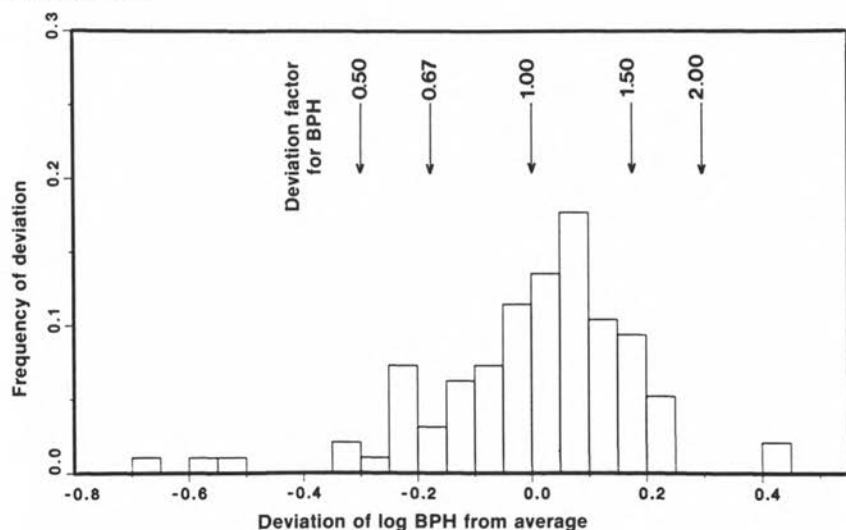


Figure 2. Histogram of deviations of the log BPH from the average log BPH for 16 warbler species over 6 years.

The SMW Database.

The SMW database now contains 51 data sets representing 22 different sites in eastern Massachusetts. These data are readily accessed for analysis using several data analysis programs developed specifically for the SMW. Yearly data entry remains a formidable task, and data analysis for nonwarbler species has been delayed by a backlog of unentered data. The Bird Observer Field Studies Committee continues to seek volunteers to aid with database maintenance. Please contact John Andrews, 22 Kendall Road, Lexington, MA 02173; telephone 862-6498.

JOHN ANDREWS is a research engineer at a Massachusetts Institute of Technology laboratory. He was the founding chairman of the Bird Observer Field Studies Committee and has regularly contributed articles to this publication. His ornithological interests include habitat utilization, population dynamics, and bird behavior. He is active in the Sierra Club and is an adviser to the Lexington Conservation Commission on land management issues.

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BOOK VIEWS

by Brian E. Cassie, Millis

BIRD BEHAVIOR by Robert Burton. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1985. 224 pages; color photographs. \$18.95.

One cannot help being struck immediately by the great array of color photographs displayed in this work - an alligator lunging at an immature egret, a Northern Shrike pulling apart an impaled mouse, even a notable series of shots of the ubiquitous starling. These and almost six hundred other quality photographs highlight many behavioral aspects of birds' lives and complement the text admirably. In ten chapters, Robert Burton surveys, in a generally clear and enjoyable style, the broad range of behaviors that constitute a bird's existence: flight, communication, mating, food gathering, migration, and others. Designed for a nonacademic audience, this book fulfills its stated purpose of bringing together ". . . information and ideas about bird behavior in an easily accessible form." Where it suffers, however, is in its failure to provide the reader with additional sources of reference. There is no bibliography, no reading list, and, most startling, no acknowledgment of "the many authors whose work provided the substance of this book," to cite the author's own words from the introduction. Certainly, a book intended for the general public need not have an overwhelming number of references to the scientific literature; yet to produce a work of this nature with no bibliography is inexcusable.

ORNITHOLOGY IN LABORATORY AND FIELD BY Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. Fifth edition. Academic Press, Orlando, 1985. xi + 403 pages; black-and-white illustrations. \$32.40.

First published in 1937, Pettingill's standard, classic introduction to ornithology has been thoroughly updated four times in the last half century. The latest edition features taxonomy and nomenclature based on the 1983 A.O.U. Checklist. In twenty-two chapters and four appendices, the author delivers the equivalent of a full year's college course on birds, complete with lectures on physiology, distribution, field identification, behavior, migration, song, nest-building, parental care, populations, and evolution, as well as practical tips on banding, photography, and even preparation of a paper. Pettingill is one author who knows the importance of supplying his readers (students) with additional references; by my count, there are over 155 references cited. I highly recommend *ORNITHOLOGY IN LABORATORY AND FIELD* to any serious bird enthusiast.

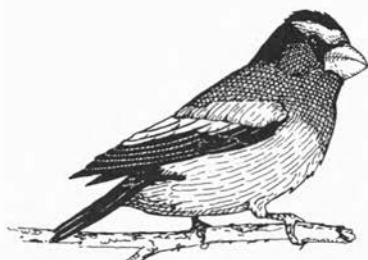
TUNNICLIFFE'S BIRDLIFE by Noel Cusa. Clive Holloway Books, London (distributed by Merrimack), 1985. 150 pages; folio; 120 paintings in color. \$34.95.

"The verdict of posterity in time to come is likely, I believe, to rate Charles Tunnicliffe the greatest wildlife artist of the

20th century." So wrote Sir Peter Scott in the foreword, and on the basis of sheer volume of outstanding work, Scott is certainly right. Tunnickliffe's brilliant paintings have illustrated eighty-seven books. His extraordinary likenesses resulted in large measure from his devoted study of birds, both in the hand and even more so in the field, where he sketched at every opportunity. Charles Tunnickliffe is probably best known on this side of the Atlantic for the various editions of his sketchbooks that have been published in the last several years. The present volume differs from previous works on the artist in reproducing his large oils and watercolors, many of which are privately owned and published here for the first time. The publisher has done a good job with the color reproduction, and very few will be disappointed with the artwork. On the other hand, with the exception of an insightful final chapter titled "Bird Painting," Cusa's commentary is unenlightening, and his lengthy captions to the color plates are merely tedious descriptions. For example, "A Buzzard is perched on a shattered and rotting tree stump. Grasses grow on the broken upper ends where leaf mold has accumulated. The fruiting bodies of honey fungus are growing lower down. It rains." And so on and so on. In sum, although the writing is ineffectual, the wonderful bird portraits are more than enough in themselves to make the book a worthwhile acquisition.

GARDEN BIRDS: How to Attract Birds to Your Garden by Noble S. Proctor. Rodale Press, Emmaus, 1986. 160 pages; color and black-and-white illustrations. \$17.95.

This book was originally produced in Great Britain; for my money (and yours), it should have remained there. Dr. Proctor is an exceptionally gifted field ornithologist and a fine writer, but I think his talents have been wasted on this mixed-up book. The first forty-two pages are devoted to bird gardening, and while the general information on garden planning, bird feeders, etc., is sound, the whole has a British slant, both in the plants mentioned and especially in the birds depicted (almost all are European). Since the book is directed at an American audience, this introductory material will probably confuse rather than help the backyard birdwatcher and wildlife gardener. The "Directory of 100 Garden Birds" comprises the remainder of the book. For each species, there is a "Facts and Features" block, which includes a range map and brief notes on plumage, habitat, food, and nest. Additionally, there are four or five short paragraphs on the bird and its habits, and a large color portrait. The information on birds is graphically well presented, and I support the author's choice of species in most cases (although Red-tailed Hawk and Orange-crowned Warbler seem a bit out-of-place). I must take exception to the specially commissioned bird illustrations, however. The artist, presumably British, undoubtedly has had little or no experience with American birds, and his portrayals, so highly touted in the book's advertisements, are uniformly poor. If you are keen on planting for the birds, there are a number of American publications that will serve you much better.



Field Records February 1986

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

February was cold, dry, and cloudy; the temperature averaged 28.9°, 1.8° less than normal, and was the lowest since February 1980 (27.9°). No temperature records were broken in Boston: the 47° came on the second; and the low of 13° on the seventh. Precipitation totaled 2.83 inches, a little less than normal, but 1.00 inch more than last year. Snowfall totaled 10.4 inches, 1.2 inches less than average. There was no big storm; all of this came on just 13 days. The seasonal snowfall stands at 15.5 inches, 17.2 inches less than normal and the seventh least in 96 years of record. An ice storm on February 18-19 brought treacherous conditions, and glaze built up on twigs and wires, causing much damage and many accidents in western suburbs.

LOONS THROUGH AMERICAN COOT

Unlike last year, during February there was no buildup of Red-necked Grebes noted. At Salisbury, an American Bittern was seen on 2 occasions, for the only heron highlight of the month.

A drake Wood Duck has been with feral Mallards in downtown Ipswich since mid-December. The bird has become so tame that it will practically eat out of your hand and is one of the more aggressive feeders in the flock. The Harlequin Ducks continued all month in North Scituate, and the King Eider at Scusset Beach was probably present all month as well.

A Turkey Vulture was reported from 3 locations on the upper Cape, probably the same individual; there were 5 reports last February. Along the Merrimac River at least 3 individual Bald Eagles were noted during the month. Other eagles reported were 2 adults in Pembroke and 2 adults in Lakeville. At Gate 43 in Quabbin 3 immature eagles were noted. An adult Red-shouldered Hawk was noted in Orleans, where an adult was present all of last February. In the Plum Island - Salisbury area, as many as 7 Red-tails, 8 Rough-legs and 4 Northern Harriers were noted most of the month. R.H.S.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>FEBRUARY 1986</u>
Red-throated Loon:				
8	Plum Island	4	W.Petersen#	
23	Provincetown, Falmouth	12+, 6	B.Nikula#, P.Trimble#	
Common Loon:				
1	Plum Island-Salisbury	15	BBC (F.Bouchard)	
2,8	Cape Ann	8, 8	BBC (A.Blaisdell, R.Vernon)	
Pied-billed Grebe:				
15,16	Wayland, Norwell	1, 1	R.Forster, B.+M.Litchfield	
Red-necked Grebe:				
2;8,9	N.Scituate,P.I.,Gloucester	4+; 1, 6	J.Cumming; W.Petersen	
20,23	Marion, Provincetown	1, 6	K.Holmes, B.Nikula#	
Great Comorant:				
1,2	Duxbury, Cape Ann	4, 40	D.Clapp, BBC (A.Blaisdell)	
3,16	Assonet, Nauset	3 imm., 200	R.Titus, B.Nikula	
23	Woods Hole	40	P.Trimble#	
Double-crested Cormorant:				
2,16	Manomet, Nantucket	1 ad., 2	R.Titus, B.Hallett#	
23	Falmouth	3	P.Trimble	
American Bittern:				
9,24	Salisbury	1, 1	N.+A.Clayton+v.o., J.McLean#	
Great Blue Heron:				
2	S.Scituate	1	J.Cumming	
Black-crowned Night-Heron:				
1;22	Nant., Eastham; E.Boston	4, 2; 1 ad.	M.Litchfield, W.Petersen; J.Cumming	

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	FEBRUARY 1986
Mute Swan: thr., 3	N.Scituate, Assonet	2, 12	v.o., R.Titus	
Greater White-fronted Goose: 2	Rochester	1 ad. (from Nov.)	W.Petersen#	
Snow Goose: 1	Plum Island	5	G.Gove#	
Brant: 6, 23	Cohasset, Nantucket	275, 76	R.Titus, M.Litchfield	
Canada Goose: 2	Sudbury River	800	G.Gove	
Wood Duck: thr., 10	Ipswich, Abington	1, 1	v.o., W.Petersen	
Northern Pintail: thr., 1, 16	Lexington, Nant., Wareham	3, 4, 2	L.Taylor, M.Litchfield, M.Lynch#	
Eurasian Wigeon: 2	Wollaston	1 m.	J.Cumming	
American Wigeon: 2	Lexington, Wareham	33, 25	L.Taylor, R.Titus	
17, 23	Wellesley, Falmouth	1, 15	C.Ewer, P.Trimble#	
Canvasback: 3, 16	Assonet, Eastham	772, 1	R.Titus, M.Lynch#	
23	Falmouth	40	P.Trimble#	
Ring-necked Duck: 16, 23	Eastham, Falmouth	68, 25	M.Lynch#, P.Trimble#	
Greater Scaup: 20, 23	Marion, Lakeville	50, 80	K.Holmes, W.Petersen	
Lesssr Scaup: 23	Falmouth	6	P.Trimble#	
Common Eider: 1, 2	Nantucket, Plymouth	300, 2350	M.Litchfield, R.Titus	
King Eider: 2	Sandwich (Scusset Beach)	1 imm. m.	R.Titus	
Harlequin Duck: thr., 16	N.Scituate, Nantucket	2, 3	v.o., B.Hallett#	
Oldsquaw: 1	Duxbury	30	D.Clapp	
Black Scoter: 2	N.Scituate (Third Cliff)	19	J.Cumming	
Surf Scoter: 1	Duxbury Beach	8	D.Clapp	
Common Goldeneye: 1	Newburyport, Nantucket	85, 60	BBC(F.Bouchard), M.Litchfield	
Barrow's Goldeneye: 1, 2+6	Newburyport, N.Scituate	2, 1 m.	BBC(F.Bouchard), J.Cumming+v.o.	
20	Marion	1	K.Holmes	
Bufflehead: 1; 16	Nant., Duxbury; Eastham	55, 60; 35	M.Litchfield, D.Clapp; M.Lynch#	
Hooded Merganser: 8, 11	Watertown, Hyannis	5, 16	J.Heywood, J.Aylward	
15, 16	Middleboro, Eastham	1, 4	K.Holmes, M.Lynch#	
16, 17	Nantucket, Wellesley	17, 5	B.Hallett#, C.Ewer	
23	Middleboro	8	W.Petersen	
Common Merganser: 16, 19	Eastham, Marshfield	25, 4	S.Carroll#, D.Clapp	
Red-breasted Merganser: 1	P'town (off Herring Cove)	1000's	W.Petersen#	
6, 8	Avon, Watertown	3, 16 (courting)	R.Titus, J.Heywood	
9, 17	Arlington, Wellesley	3, 2	L.Taylor, C.Ewer	
20, 27	Lakeville, Millis	2, 1	K.Holmes, B.Cassie	
Ruddy Duck: 9	Medford (Lower Mystic Lake)	1 f.	L.Taylor	
Turkey Vulture: 8	Barnstable	1	fide B.Nikula	
	Also reported from Mashpee and Falmouth			
Bald Eagle: thr.	Newburyport (Merrimac River)	max. 3 (2 imm., 1 ad.)	v.o.	
7, 9	Pembroke, Quabbin (Gate 43)	2 ad., 3 imm.	J.Metcalf, M.Lynch#	
16, 23	Lakeville, Wayland	2 ad., 1	K.Holmes, R.Forster	
Northern Harrier: 1, 2	Duxbury, Bridgewater	2, 4	D.Clapp, K.Anderson#	
6, 16	Marshfield, Eastham	3, 1	R.Titus, M.Lynch#	
16	Chatham, P.I.-Salisbury	1, 4	M.Lynch#, BBC (S.Bolton)	

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	FEBRUARY 1986
Sharp-shinned Hawk:				
1,9	Lexington, Sharon	1 imm., 1 ad.	L.Taylor#, R.Titus	
17	Brookline, Ipswich	1, 1	H.Wiggin, J.Berry	
24	Dartmouth	1	L.Taylor	
Cooper's Hawk:				
2,9	Concord, Quabbin (Gate 40)	1 imm., 1	J.Gordon#, J. Cumming	
Northern Goshawk:				
1,14	Plum Island, Rochester	1 imm., 1	L.Taylor#, K.Holmes	
Red-shouldered Hawk:				
8,24 on	Orleans, E. Middleboro	1 ad., 2	B.Nikula, K.Anderson	
Red-tailed Hawk:				
1	Salisbury, Plum Island	7, 3	G.Gove#	
6	Marshfield	3 at nest	D.Clapp	
8	Weston-Palmer (Mass. Pike)	10	L.Taylor#	
9	Belmont (A.D.Little)	2 imm. (on carrion)	L.Taylor	
20	Marion, Rochester, Lakeville	1, 1, 1	K.Holmes, D.Briggs	
Rough-legged Hawk:				
1	Salisbury-Plum Island	8	BBC (F.Bouchard)	
1	Halifax, E.Middleboro	1, 1	K.Anderson	
2,3	Bedford, Newburyport area	2, 4	N.Clayton, M.McClellan#	
6,10	Marshfield, Nantucket	6 (4 dark), 1 (dark)	R.Titus, E.Andrews#	
19,23	Marshfield, N.Truro	7, 1	D.Clapp, B.Nikula#	
23	Bridgewater	2	W.Petersen	
American Kestrel:				
thr.	Framingham (MCI)	1-2	G.Gove	
8,9	Lakeville, Mansfield	2, 4	K.Holmes, G.Gove	
Merlin:				
1,16;21	Nantucket; Plum Island	2, 1; 1	M.Litchfield, B.Hallett#; B.Hallett	
23,24	Falmouth, Salisbury	1, 1	P.Trimble#, J.McLean#	
Ruffed Grouse:				
14,15	Stoughton, Hardwick	4, 4	R.Titus, M.Lynch#	
American Coot:				
thr.	Medford	3	L. Taylor	

SHOREBIRDS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Reports of shorebirds, the number of species of shorebirds, and the numbers of shorebirds were very low this February. Of 10 species usually reported in February, only these 6 were reported: Black-bellied Plover, Purple Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, Dunlin, Sanderling, and Common Snipe. An adult *Mew* or *Common Gull* was found in the Hough's Neck area of Quincy and was seen by many observers. Another adult of this species was seen in Provincetown on the first of the month. It may be the same bird that has appeared in Provincetown for the past 3 winters. A *Thayer's Gull*, in first-winter plumage, spent most of the month scavenging at the fish pier in Chatham and was also seen by many observers.

A book to be published by the Massachusetts Audubon Society lists all of the known Massachusetts records of these 2 gull species through 1981. These records are supplemented by the Field Records appearing in *BOEM* since 1981. For the *Mew Gull* there are 23 records through 1981; 18 of these are spring (January 1 to May 9) records, and two specimens collected in the spring proved to be of the European race, *Larus canus canus*, the Common Gull. Of 5 fall (August 6 to October 10) records, 2 specimens collected in the fall proved to be of the western U.S. race, *Larus canus brachyrhynchus*, the *Mew Gull*. These races are said to be separable in first basic plumage. See the description of the Common Gull that appeared in the February 1984 *BOEM* (Vol. 12, No. 1, page 18).

Since 1981 and through February 1986, 11 reports of *Mew* or *Common Gull* and 6 reports of *Thayer's Gull* appear in *BOEM*. All of the *Thayer's Gull* reports were of subadult birds, and all but 1 was in first winter plumage. All of the reports of this species occurred between December 17 and April 22. All but 2 of the *Mew* or *Common Gull* reports were of adult birds, and all of the reports occurred between November 30 and April 12, which indicates that they may be *Larus canus canus*, the Common Gull of Europe.

On February 1, large alcids were noted moving past Race Point at a rate of more than 600 per hour. Large numbers of Razorbills have been seen at this time of winter in the past, probably feeding on the abundance of sand eels that have been offshore of Cape Cod. There were 8 species of owls reported, including a Great Horned Owl on a nest in Lexington and another on a nest in Bridgewater. Pileated Woodpeckers were reported from 6 locations, including a female that has been in Newton since November.

G.W.G.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>FEBRUARY 1986</u>
Black-bellied Plover:				
16	Chatham	4	M.Lynch#	
Ruddy Turnstone:				
6	N.Scituate	4	R.Titus	
Sanderling:				
8	Plum Island	6	W.Petersen	
Purple Sandpiper:				
6,26	N.Scituate	150, 200	R.Titus, K.Anderson	
8	Rockport, Salisbury	10, 13	R.Titus	
Dunlin:				
6,23	N.Scituate, S.Dartmouth	30, 82	R.Titus, G.Gove#	
Common Snipe:				
9	Woburn	1	C.Gaffney	
Common Black-headed Gull:				
thr.	Yarmouth	1 ad.	v.o.	
2,23	Gloucester, Newburyport	1, 1	BBC (A.Blaisdell), E.Nielson#	
Common Gull:				
thr.	Quincy (Hough's Neck)	1 ad. (details)	R.Abrams + v.o.	
1	Provincetown	1 ad. (details)	W.Petersen#	
Ring-billed Gull:				
6	Brockton	305	R.Titus	
Thayer's Gull:				
1-23	Chatham (Fish Pier)	1 (1W)	B.Nikula# + v.o.	
Iceland Gull:				
1,2	Newburyport, Gloucester	2 (1W), 5	G.Gove#, BBC (A.Blaisdell)	
1,8	Provincetown, Plum Island	3, 26	W.Petersen	
16;9,23	Nantucket; Provincetown	14; 8, 14+	B.Hallett#; B.Nikula#	
Glaucous Gull:				
1	Newburyport, Provincetown	1 ad. + 1 (1W), 1	L.Taylor#, W.Petersen#	
2,8	Gloucester, Plum Island	2, 1	BBC (A.Blaisdell), R.Titus#	
9	Provincetown	2	C.Floyd#	
Black-legged Kittiwake:				
22	Dennis	135	J.Aylward	
large alcid sp.:				
1,23	Provincetown	215 in 20 min., 75+	B.Nikula#	
Thick-billed Murre:				
2,8	Rockport, Cape Ann	1, 1	A.+N.Clayton, BBC (R.Vernon)	
Razorbill:				
8	Plum Island	1 (dead)	R.Titus	
Black Guillemot:				
1,9,23	Provincetown	1, 2, 1	B.Nikula#	
8,9,23	Cape Ann, Rockport	4, 29, 2	BBC(R.Vernon), J. Kenneally,	
Mourning Dove:				
2	Brookline	40 (at feeder)	R.Stymeist# H.Wiggin	
Common Barn-Owl:				
6,19	Nantucket	1 (from Jan.)	E.Andrews#	
Eastern Screech-Owl:				
8,23	Lakeville, Bridgewater	1, 1 (dead)	K.Holmes, W.Petersen	
Great Horned Owl:				
1	Halifax, Plympton	1, 1 (heard)	K.Anderson	
8-28,15	Lexington, Lakeville	1 (on nest), 1	S.Sanders + v.o., K.Holmes	
15-28,23	Stoneham, Bridgewater	1, 1 (nest)	M.Martinek, W.Petersen	
Snowy Owl:				
1	Duxbury	2	D.Clapp	
9,16,21,22,24	Plum Island	1, 1, 1, 1, 1	(very dark) v.o.	
22,28	E.Boston(Logan), N.Monomoy	1, 1	J.Cumming, R.Prescott#	
Barred Owl:				
1;15,17	Ipswich; Hamilton	1; 2, 1	A.+N.Clayton; J.Berry	
Long-eared Owl:				
1,16	Hamilton, Salisbury	1, 1	A.+N.Clayton, J.Cumming	
Short-eared Owl:				
1,8,23,24	Salisbury	1, 2, 4, 1	J.Nove, W.Petersen, R.Stymeist#, J.McLean#	
15,17	Chatham, Nantucket	2, 1	B.Nikula, B.Hallett#	
27	Lexington	1	R.Heil	
Northern Saw-Whet Owl:				
1,19	Plum Island, Nantucket	1, 1	L.Taylor#+v.o., E.Andrews	
Belted Kingfisher:				
20,23	Marion, Falmouth	1, 3	K.Holmes, P.Trimble	
Red-headed Woodpecker:				
thr.	Dover	1	v.o.	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>FEBRUARY 1986</u>
Red-bellied Woodpecker: 14;6,22	Stoughton; Norwell	1 m., 1 f.	R.Titus; M.+B.Litchfield	
Northern Flicker: 1,9 10-14	Plum Island, Belmont Stoughton	1, 1 3	L.Taylor R.Titus	
Hairy Woodpecker: 10-15	Stoughton	8	R.Titus	
Pileated Woodpecker: 1,9 2,6 18,24	Quabbin (G.37), Quabbin (G.43) Manchester, Newton Acton, Townsend	1, 2 1, 1 f. (since Nov.) 1, 2	M.Lynch#, S. Carroll# BBC(A.Blaisdell), M.Rugo C.Busse, L.Young	

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH EVENING GROSBEAK

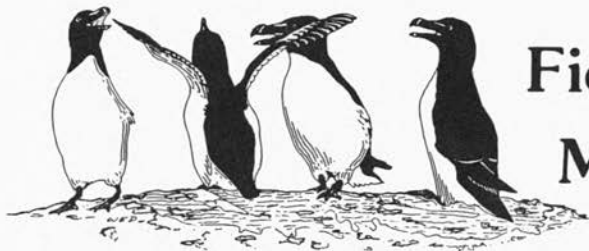
An Eastern Phoebe was seen in Wellesley on the seventeenth, constituting the only February report in the last 10 years. On Nantucket the Eurasian Jackdaw continued to be seen in the Slozak Farm area, its usual winter haunt. Reports of hundreds of American Crows were received from the Sudbury River Valley, but these were miniscule compared with the tens of thousands seen around the Framingham roost in January. Single Bohemian Waxwing individuals were seen at 3 widely dispersed locations, continuing the trend of a good flight this winter. Cedar Waxwings were reported in numbers during the earlier part of February, but began to disperse toward month's end. A Palm Warbler in South Attleboro on the twenty-third was only the third February report in the last decade. Another surprising warbler report was that of an Ovenbird on Nantucket on the ninth. This individual was well observed several times during the day, at one time in association with a Hermit Thrush. Last winter Lexington was the site of a February Ovenbird visit.

There was little evidence of any significant blackbird migration in February, although individuals of all the expected species were reported. Similarly with winter finches, most of the species were represented in the flight this February, but the overall magnitude was small. The only exception was redpolls, which occurred in modest numbers and were widely distributed.

L.E.T.

Eastern Phoebe: 17	Wellesley	1	C.Ewer	
Horned Lark: 1,17 22,26	Quabbin (G.37), Ipswich Plum Island, E.Boston	20, 102 4, 35	M.Lynch#, J.Berry S.Carroll#, J.Thomas	
Blue Jay: 8,10-15	Hardwick, Stoughton	20, 243	G.Gove#, R.Titus	
<u>Eurasian Jackdaw:</u> thr.	Nantucket	1	E.Andrews#	
American Crow: 2	Sudbury, Concord	500, 150	G.Gove#	
Fish Crow: 1-12,7	4 locations, Millis	1-5, 20	v.o., B.Cassie	
Common Raven: 1,16	Quabbin	3, 9	M.Lynch#, N.Osborne	
Red-breasted Nuthatch: 8,20	Plum Island, Lakeville	8, 2	R.Titus, K.Holmes	
Carolina Wren: thr. 3,10 22,23 24	Middleboro, Ipswich Berkley, Billerica Norwell, Falmouth Dartmouth, Westport	6, 1 3, 1 2, 12 6	D.Briggs#, J.Berry R.Titus, R.McLay M.+B.Litchfield, P.Trimble# G.Gove#	
Golden-crowned Kinglet: 2,9	Waltham, Quabbin (Gate 43)	2, 11	L.Taylor, S.Carroll#	
Eastern Bluebird: 23	S.Attleboro	4	B.Hallett#	
Hermit Thrush: 9,10 14 19,23	Nantucket, Marshfield Lincoln Concord, Norwell	1, 1 1 (dead) 1, 1	J.Van Vorst, D.Clapp R.Forster S.Hecker, M.+B.Litchfield	
American Robin: 15 17,22	Norwell Ipswich, Osterville	50+ 25, 75	M.+B.Litchfield Canzanelli, B.Barber	
Gray Catbird: 15,24	W.Newbury, Westport	1, 1	I.Giriunas, L.Taylor#	
Bohemian Waxwing: 4,6 14-17	Worcester, Marshfield E.Orleans	1, 1 1	M.Lynch, D.Clapp J.Russell#	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>FEBRUARY 1986</u>
Cedar Waxwing:				
6,9	Marshfield, Lexington	500+, 80	D.Clapp, L. Taylor	
9,17	Hingham, Ipswich	250+, 110	R.Stymeist#, BBC	
Northern Shrike:				
thr.	Plum Island-Salisbury, Eastham	2-3, 1	v.o.	
16,17	Nantucket, Ipswich	2, 1	B.Hallett#, J.Berry	
Yellow-rumped Warbler:				
1,24	Salisbury, Westport	1, 25	L.Taylor#	
Pine Warbler:				
thr.,10	Nantucket, Stoughton	4, 1	E.Andrews#, R.Titus	
19	Sudbury	1	J.Fellemon	
Palm Warbler:				
23	S.Attleboro	1	B.Hallett#	
Ovenbird:				
9	Nantucket	1	J.Van Vorst	
Rufous-sided Towhee:				
15	Whitman	1	W.Petersen	
Field Sparrow:				
thr., 3	Middleboro, Berkley	10 max., 24	D.Briggs, R.Titus	
12	Norwell	6	M.+B.Litchfield	
"Ipswich" Sparrow:				
16	Plum Island	1	J.Cumming	
Fox Sparrow:				
1,27	Mount Auburn, Easton	1, 2	M.Noland, S.Peak	
Swamp Sparrow:				
8,15	Saugus, Sudbury	1, 2	J.Cumming, J.Gordon#	
White-crowned Sparrow:				
17	Ipswich	1	J.Berry	
Lapland Longspur:				
24,26	Salisbury, E.Boston	2, 6+	J.McLean#, S.Thomas	
Snow Bunting:				
1,26	Quabbin (Gate 37), Sharon	30, 15	S.Carroll#, R.Titus	
Red-winged Blackbird:				
4-10,19	Marshfield, Cambridge	130 max. (2/10), 19	D.Clapp, L.Taylor	
Rusty Blackbird:				
12	Stoughton	1 m.	R.Titus	
Common Grackle:				
23	Truro	1	B.Nikula#	
Brown-headed Cowbird:				
9,10	Saugus, Marshfield	3, 24	J.Cumming, D.Clapp	
Pine Grosbeak:				
9,20	Hardwick, Waltham	5, 5	M.Lynch#, J.Horowitz	
24	Lincoln	6	R.Forster	
Purple Finch:				
2,9	Manchester, Lexington	12, 7	BBC, L.Taylor	
Red Crossbill:				
2,16	Lakeville, Plum Island	30, 15	D.Briggs#, BBC	
White-winged Crossbill:				
1,1-16	Mount Auburn, Plum Island	2, 6 max.	M.Noland, BBC	
23	Concord	1 f.	R.Walton	
Common Redpoll:				
thr.,1	Yarmouthport, Plum Island	20 max., 42	R.Scott, BBC	
15,5-27	Hardwick, 3 locations	80+, 6 total	M.Lynch#, v.o.	
11,23	Lexington, Wayland	25, 45	P.Roberts, R.Forster	
Hoary Redpoll (no details):				
15	Hardwick	1	M.Lynch#	
Pine Siskin:				
thr.	Nantucket, Middleboro	10-16, 20	E.Andrews#, D.Briggs	
15	Hardwick	1	S.Carroll#	
23,24	Falmouth, E.Middleboro	2, 5	P.Trimble, K.Anderson	
Evening Grosbeak:				
thr., 9	Middleboro, Hardwick	13, 12	D.Briggs, S.Carroll#	
24	Westport	13	L.Taylor#	



Field Records

March 1986

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

March was warm; the temperature averaged 40.7°, 2.3° above normal and the warmest since 1979. The high mark was 77° on March 30 (Easter Sunday). The lowest temperature was 7° on March 8. Precipitation totaled 3.42 inches, 0.71 inch less than normal. The total snowfall was 2.6 inches, 5.1 inches less than average. The seasonal total now stands at 18.1 inches, 22.2 inches less than average or the seventh least amount in 96 years of record. Good strong southwest winds on March 28, 29, and 30 brought many migrants into the area.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

Migrating Red-throated Loons were passing by Siasconset, Nantucket, at a rate of a hundred per minute on March 17; Common Loons were reported there in fewer numbers. Red-necked Grebes peaked at sixty-three at North Scituate on the twenty-second. A Western Grebe was discovered on March 27 in Winthrop, where it remained through the end of the month and was seen by many observers.

The first herons returned at the end of the month with single Great and Snowy egrets reported from many areas. An adult White Ibis was observed flying over Pilgrim Heights on March 27. Another or the same bird was found in Marshfield on March 31.

A Tundra Swan was present from March 1 through 18 at West Harwich. Snow Geese were migrating at the end of the month with large flocks noted in central Massachusetts. Migrating waterfowl returning at the end of the month included thirty-one Wood Duck in Wayland, and good numbers of Green-winged Teal included several of the Eurasian type among them. Blue-winged Teal were first noted on March 23 and had increased by the end of the month. Over 120 Redheads were still present on Nantucket, where as many as sixty Canvasbacks were also counted. Harlequin Ducks were still being seen in North Scituate, and others were noted up river in West Newbury; three of this species were present in Winthrop. The Oldsquaw flock at Madaket, Nantucket, was estimated at over thirty thousand. As many as seven Barrow's Goldeneye were found most of the month in Newburyport Harbor. The large flocks of Red-breasted Mergansers continued off Provincetown, and three were seen at Eddy Pond in Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge. R.H.S.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>MARCH 1986</u>
Red-throated Loon:				
4,8;5	Plum Island; Wellfleet	1, 2; 5	W.Ellison#; N.Martin#	
17	Nantucket	525	J.Barton#	
Common Loon:				
2	Gloucester, Newbypt area	12, 15	M.Lynch#, BBC (R.McHale)	
17	Nantucket	50	J.Barton#	
18,22	Chatham, Bass Rocks (Gloucester)	5, 14	W.Ellison#, J.Berry#	
28,29	N.Scituate, Salisbury area	6, 6	S.Carroll#, BBC (S.Bolton)	
Pied-billed Grebe:				
16,23	Newburyport, Falmouth	1, 2	M.Lynch#, P.Trimble	
27,29	S.Natick, Holliston	1, 1	R.Hildreth	
Horned Grebe:				
2,4	Gloucester, P.I. area	14, 15	S.Carroll#, W.Ellison#	
9,16	Lakeville, N.Scituate	1, 45	W.Petersen#	
18,22,28	Winthrop	5, 9, 10	J.Cumming	
22,23	Gloucester, N.Scituate	20+, 30	J.Berry#, G.d'Entremont#	
Red-necked Grebe:				
thr.	N.Scituate	max. 63 (3/22)	G.Gove# + v.o.	
2,22,25	Corporation Beach (Dennis)	12, 35, 25	J.Aylward + B. Nikula	
22	Gloucester, Winthrop	27, 1	J.Berry#, J.Cumming	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>MARCH 1986</u>
<u>Western Grebe:</u>				
27-31	Winthrop	1	M.+ C. Atkinson + v.o.	
<u>Northern Gannet:</u>				
18, 19	Winthrop, Orleans	3, 150	J. Cumming, W. Ellison#	
20, 22	Eastham, Rockport	45, 10+	N. Martin#, J. Berry#	
28	Rockport (Halibut Point)	30+	K. David	
<u>Great Cormorant:</u>				
2, 15	Newburyport area	40, 32	BBC (R. McHale), (I. Giriunas)	
2; 19	E. Boston; Chatham, Orleans	28; 30, 17	S. Thomas; W. Ellison#	
23, 29	N. Scituate, Bridgewater	85+, 10	G. d'Entremont#, K. Holmes	
<u>Double-crested Cormorant:</u>				
2	Newburyport, S. Boston	1 imm., 1 imm.	BBC (R. McHale), G. d'Entremont#	
20, 23, 28	Eastham, Woods Hole, Lakeville	1, 25, 2	W. Ellison#, P. Trimble, R. Titus	
29; 30	Clinton; P.I., Falmouth	1; 60+, 3	M. Lynch#; D. Briggs#, J. Aylward	
<u>American Bittern:</u>				
22	Bolton Flats	1	M. Lynch#	
<u>Great Blue Heron:</u>				
2, 16	Lakeville, Newburyport	1, 1	W. Petersen#, H. Wiggin	
15, 18	Nantucket, Eastham	1, 12	J. Cumming, W. Ellison#	
23, 30	Woods Hole, Yarmouth	3, 12	P. Trimble	
<u>Great Egret:</u>				
26, 27	Middleboro, Saugus	1, 1	L. Spaulding, J. Berry	
<u>Snowy Egret:</u>				
26, 30, 31	E. Boston (Belle Isle)	1, 4, 5	M.+ C. Atkinson	
26, 30	Cohasset, Plum Island	1, 1	D. Clapp#, D. Briggs#	
<u>Black-crowned Night-Heron:</u>				
18	Eastham	6	W. Ellison#	
<u>White Ibis:</u>				
27	Truro (Pilgrim Heights)	1 ad.	R. Everett	
31	Marshfield (DWWS)	1 ad.	D. Clapp + v.o.	
<u>Tundra Swan:</u>				
1-18	West Harwich	1	N. Reider + v.o.	
<u>Mute Swan:</u>				
thr.	S. Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	max. 37 (3/4)	LCES (R. Marshall)	
2, 12	Gloucester, Webster	4, 1	S. Carroll#, F. Markiewicz	
30	Ipswich (Clarks Pond)	pair on nest	J. Berry	
<u>Snow Goose:</u>				
14, 23-31	Concord (9-Acre), N. Monomoy	1, 1	R. Walton, B. Nikula#	
28, 29, 30	Newburyport-Plum Island	60+, 80+, 1	D. Briggs#, W. Petersen#, J. Berry	
29, 30	Petersham	175 migr., 1250 migr.	E. Nielsen	
29	Quabbin (Gate 43)	350 (2 flocks)	G. Gove#	
<u>"Blue" Goose:</u>				
29	Newbypt, Quabbin (G.43)	1, 2	W. Petersen#, G. Gove#	
<u>Brant:</u>				
18, 19, 21	Brewster, Orleans, P'town	280, 400, 175	W. Ellison#	
22, 28	E. Boston, Winthrop	300, 200	J. Cumming	
<u>Canada Goose:</u>				
15	GMNWR, Newburyport area	60, 300	E. Nielsen, BBC (I. Giriunas)	
25, 28	S. Dartmouth, W. Bridgewater	501, 250	LCES (R. Maker), W. Petersen	
28, 29	Wachusett Res., Bolton Flats	810, 800+	M. Lynch, S. Carroll	
<u>Wood Duck:</u>				
9	Middleboro	7	D. Briggs	
23, 25	Milford, Wayland	3, 31	R. Hildreth, G. Gove	
29	Oxbow NWR, Bolton Flats	7, 12	M. Lynch, S. Carroll	
Other reports of 1 or 2 individuals from various locations.				
<u>Green-winged Teal:</u>				
20, 28; 23	W. Bridgewater; Bridgewater	26, 80+; 30	W. Petersen	
22, 29	S. Monomoy, W. Harwich	75, 18	B. Nikula#, J. Aylward#	
26, 29	Newburyport area	35, 85	BBC (A. Blaisdell), (S. Bolton)	
29, 30	Petersham, P.I.	50, 170	E. Nielsen, J. Berry	
<u>"Eurasian" Green-winged Teal:</u>				
28-29, 29	W. Bridgewater, P.I.	1, 3	W. Petersen#, BBC (S. Bolton)	
<u>American Black Duck:</u>				
2	E. Boston	203+	S. Thomas	
4, 20, 25	S. Dartmouth (Allens Pond)	451, 236, 225	LCES (R. Marshall)	
14, 31	Halifax	30, 1000+	K. Anderson + v.o.	
29, 30	Petersham	80, 20	E. Nielsen#	
<u>Northern Pintail:</u>				
1-2, 1-19	Lexington, Yarmouthport	3, max. 40	L. Taylor, J. Aylward	
20, 28; 22	W. Bridgewater; S. Monomoy	8, 40; 20+	W. Petersen#; B. Nikula#	
22, 26	E. Boston (Belle Isle), Hull	3, 5	J. Cumming, D. Clapp	
29, 30; 30	Petersham; Plum Island	12, 4; 20	E. Nielsen; J. Berry	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>MARCH 1986</u>
Blue-winged Teal:				
23,27	Newbypt, Concord (9 Acre)	1 m., 2	H.Wiggin#, R.Forster	
28,29	P.I., Lakeville	3, 1	J.Berry, K.Holmes#	
Northern Shoveler:				
22,27	S.Monomoy, Concord(9 Acre)	8+, 5	B.Nikula#, R.Forster	
29	Plum Island	6	BBC (S.Bolton)	
Gadwall:				
4,9	Plum Island, Quincy	20, 6	W.Ellison#, W.Petersen#	
22,29	S.Monomoy, P.I.	20+, 3	B.Nikula#, BBC (S.Bolton)	
American Wigeon:				
2,15	Belmont, Stoneham	30, 1	N.Brine, J.Berry	
27,30	Wayland, Newburyport	14, 4	R.Forster, J.Berry	
Canvasback:				
2,19-20	Lakeville, Eastham (Great Pond)	12, 5	K.Holmes, W.Ellison#	
11,15-17	S.Dartmouth, Nantucket	11, 60	LCES (R.Marshall), J.Barton#	
23	Falmouth	35	P.Trimble	
Redhead:				
15-17	Nantucket	120	J.Barton#	
Ring-necked Duck:				
2,29	Lakeville	4, 2	K.Holmes#	
2,5	Newbypt area, W.Carver	12, 30±	BBC(R.McHale), K.Anderson	
19-20;23,29	Eastham; Milford	45; 15, 23	W.Ellison#; R.Hildreth	
28;29,30	Middleboro; Petersham	50; 30, 6	W.Petersen#; E.Nielsen#	
Greater Scaup:				
2,16	Hyannisport, Quincy	170, 150+	P.Trimble, L.Taylor#	
22,30	E.Boston, Newburyport	50; 50+	J.Cumming, J.Berry	
Lesser Scaup:				
1,4	Lakeville, S.Dartmouth	13, 5	K.Holmes, LCES (R.Marshall)	
8,19	Newburyport, Eastham	5, 5	W.Ellison#, N.Martin#	
22;23	Rockport; Falmouth, Newbypt	1; 10, 1	J.Berry; P.Trimble, H.Wiggin#	
Common Eider:				
2	Salisbury, Hyannisport	23, 130	D.Chickering, P.Trimble	
23	Woods Hole	650	P.Trimble	
Harlequin Duck:				
15,16	W.Newbury, N.Scituate	1 m., 2 m.	BBC (I.Giriunas), W.Petersen	
22-28	Winthrop	1 m., 2 f.	J.Cumming	
Oldsquaw:				
15-17	Nantucket	30,000	J.Barton#	
16,18	Newbypt, Chatham (Hardings Beach)	200+, 60	D.Chickering, W.Ellison#	
Black Scoter:				
15-17	Nantucket	200	J.Barton#	
4,29	Plum Island	20, 2	W.Ellison#, D.Chickering	
18	Orleans	11	N.Martin#	
Surf Scoter:				
15-17	Nantucket	400	J.Barton#	
20	Wellfleet, N.Scituate	15, 50	W.Ellison#, G.d'Entremont	
23	Woods Hole	60	P.Trimble	
White-winged Scoter:				
15-17	Nantucket	600	J.Barton#	
20	Wellfleet	164	W.Ellison#	
Common Goldeneye:				
1,2,16	Newburyport	200+	D.Chickering + v.o.	
1,4	Lakeville, S.Dartmouth	30, 19	K.Holmes, LCES (R.Marshall)	
22	Gloucester (Bass Rocks)	40+	J.Berry	
Barrow's Goldeneye:				
thr.	Newburyport Harbor	max. 7 (3/4,3/29)	J.Grugan + v.o.	
9,16	Quincy, N.Scituate	3, 1	W.Petersen#	
Bufflehead:				
15-17	Nantucket	200+	J.Barton#	
15,19	Newbypt area, Orleans-Chatham	200, 184	BBC (I.Giriunas), W.Ellison#	
Hooded Merganser:				
1,8,29	Lakeville (Long Pond)	4, 9, 5	K.Holmes	
3,14	Hyannis, Bridgewater	22, 9	J.Aylward, K.Anderson	
18,22	Sudbury, Bolton Flats	10, 5	B.Howell, M.Lynch#	
Common Merganser:				
1,2	Lakeville (2 loc.)	15, 10	K.Holmes	
8,20	Newburyport, Wellfleet	2, 10	W.Ellison#, N.Martin#	
28	Waltham (Cambr.Res.)	12	J.Cumming	
29	Wachusett Reservoir	15	M.Lynch#	
Red-breasted Merganser:				
14,15	Bridgewater, E.Bridgewater	3, 7	K.Anderson, W.Petersen	
23-31;21,20	Cambridge(Mt.A.); P'town	1-3; 455, 500	J.Heywood; W.Ellison#, B.Nikula	

RAPTORS THROUGH NORTHERN BOBWHITE

Turkey Vultures were reported from everywhere in our area with the largest numbers coming from inland locations. Ospreys were back in Lakeville on March 22 and in South Dartmouth by the last day of the month. An American Swallow-tailed Kite was photographed flying over Barnstable on March 15 for the first March record for this species. Bald Eagles were found in Provincetown and Lakeville as well as at Quabbin, and good numbers of Northern Harriers were noted. Red-shouldered Hawks were noted at six locations, and Northern Goshawks were reported from five places. The first Broad-winged Hawk of the season was noted on March 28. Rough-legged Hawks were seen in the usual numbers through the end of the month. An adult Golden Eagle was noted most of the month in east Quabbin, and others were reported from Newbury and Bridgewater. In addition to a pair of Peregrine Falcons in Boston, there was a total of eight single birds noted from as many locations.

R.H.S.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>MARCH 1986</u>
Turkey Vulture:				
2,5	Sturbridge, Foxborough	1, 2	N.Waldron, J.Johnston	
8,11	Newburyport, Stoughton	1, 1	W.Ellison#, R.Titus	
16,29,30	Petersham	2, 22, 8	E.Nielsen#	
17	Leominster, Sudbury	2, 1	I.Giriunas#, R.Forster	
17-25,23	Sharon, Pocasset	1+, 1	R.Titus, D.Casoni	
24,26	Plymouth, Lincoln	1, 1	D.Casoni, R.Forster	
28	Easton, Milford	1, 2	K.Ryan, R.Hildreth	
29	W.Newbury, E.Middleboro	2, 1	W.Petersen#, K.Anderson	
30	Hopkinton, Marshfield	1, 1	J.Gordon, D.Clapp	
30,31	Lakeville, Needham	1, 2	K.Holmes, D.Chickering	
Osprey:				
22 on	Lakeville	1-2	G.Gove# + v.o.	
31	S.Dartmouth	1	LCES (R.Maker)	
<u>American Swallow-tailed Kite:</u>				
15	Barnstable	1 ph.	G.Martin + R.Everett	
Bald Eagle:				
thr.	Lakeville	1 ad.	K.Holmes# + v.o.	
16,17	Salisbury, Quabbin(Gate 43)	1 imm., 6	D.Chickering, I.Giriunas#	
30	Provincetown	1 imm.	B.Nikula	
Northern Harrier:				
2,16,29	Salisbury	3, 2, 1	D.Chickering + v.o.	
2,13;8	E.Middleboro; P.I.	1; 1	K.Anderson; W.Ellison#	
18-21	Outer Cape Cod (4 loc.)	4 ind.	W.Ellison, N.Martin	
23,29	Falmouth, Halifax	1, 2	P.Trimble, K.Holmes#	
29,30	Petersham	2, 1	E.Nielsen	
Sharp-shinned Hawk:				
2,24;5	Easton; Canton	1, 1 imm.; 1	K.Ryan, R.Titus	
15,29;23	Lakeville; Falmouth	1, 1; 1	K.Holmes; P.Trimble	
Cooper's Hawk:				
1,15	Quabbin(Gate 43), Worcester	1 imm., 1 ad.	M.Lynch, S.Carroll	
16,29	Waltham, Quabbin (Gate 43)	1 ad., 1 imm.	L.Taylor#, J.Gordon#	
29	Wellesley, Topsfield	1, 1 imm. (dead)	R.Forster, J.Cumming	
Northern Goshawk:				
4,9	Brookline, Wenham	1, 1 imm.	H.Wiggin, B.Barnard#	
16,26	Newbury, Sudbury	1, 1	M.Argue#, R.Forster	
29	Petersham	1	E.Nielsen#	
Red-shouldered Hawk:				
thr.	E.Middleborough	1-3	K.Anderson + v.o.	
9,16;14	Lakeville; Rowley	2; 1 ad.	W.Petersen#; T.Dowd	
16,19;25	Petersham; Sharon	1; 1	E.Nielsen#; R.Titus	
28	Middleborough	1	W.Petersen#	
Red-tailed Hawk:				
1,2,16	Salisbury	2, 4, 3	D.Chickering	
2,14	Halifax	2, 3	K.Anderson	
2,16	Middleborough	3, 5	K.Holmes#	
26	Canton	8 (5 migr.)	R.Titus	
29	Lakeville	8 migr.	K.Holmes	
Rough-legged Hawk:				
1,2,16	Salisbury	3, 2, 2	D.Chickering + v.o.	
1	Middleborough, Westborough	3, 1	W.Petersen#, B.Blodget	
5,8	Canton, Newburyport	1, 4	R.Titus, W.Ellison#	
30,31	Nantucket, Middleborough	1, 1	E.Andrews, K.Holmes	
<u>Golden Eagle:</u>				
1	Quabbin (Gate 43)	1 ad.	M.Lynch + S.Carroll	
16	Bridgewater, Newbury	1 imm., 1	K.Holmes, H.Wiggin#	
16-17	Quabbin	1 ad.	J.Swedberg + v.o.	

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	MARCH 1986
American Kestrel:				
20	Wellfleet	5	W.Ellison#	
Merlin:				
1,5	N.Chatham, Stoughton	1, 1	J.Aylward, R.Titus	
12	Harwich	1	B.Nikula	
Peregrine Falcon:				
thr.	Boston	pr.	J.Grugan + v.o.	
1,3	Wareham, M.V.(Felix Neck)	1, 1 imm.	L.Robinson, G.Ben David	
19	Harwich, Milton	1 m., 1	W.Ellison#, E.Nielsen	
28	Middleborough, W.Bridgewater	1 ad., 1	R.Titus, W.Petersen	
28,29	N.Monomoy, Chatham	1, 1	B.Nikula, P.Trimble	
Wild Turkey:				
1	Quabbin (Gate 43)	6	M.Lynch + S.Carroll	
Northern Bobwhite:				
23	Marshfield	1	G.d'Entremont#	

RAILS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Piping Plovers arrived at the usual time and in the usual numbers. This species has been placed on the Federal Endangered Species list as noted elsewhere in this issue. The staff at Parker River NWR has distributed a four-page handout describing this bird and the threats to its survival and has closed the area east of the road from Parking Lot 1 to Camp Sea Haven to protect the nesting habitat of this species and the Least Tern.

A Least Sandpiper was reported from South Dartmouth on March 25. There is only one other March report of this species in *BOEM* records. A Long-billed Dowitcher was seen and heard in Marshfield.

Up to five Little Gulls were noted in Newburyport Harbor, and the Mew Gull continued from December at Raccoon Island in Quincy. A Common Murre in breeding plumage was reported from Provincetown.

Eight Eastern Screech-Owls and three Great Horned Owls were counted on an "owl prowl" in the Lakeville area. The reports of Snowy Owls were relatively scarce this winter and spring, but the remains of one were found in Wareham. A Northern Saw-whet Owl was found in a bird nesting-box in Holliston. G.W.G.

Virginia Rail:				
10	Chatham	1	B.Nikula	
American Coot:				
2,23	Medford, Falmouth	3 (from Dec.), 2	L.Taylor, P.Trimble	
Piping Plover:				
23,26	Scituate, Nantucket	2, 1	G.d'Entremont#, P.Dunwiddie#	
27,29	S.Dartmouth, Barnstable	2, 6	LCES (R.Marshall), P.Trimble	
Killdeer:				
4,7	S.Dartmouth, Sharon	1, 1	LCES (R.Marshall), R.Titus	
16,22	Salisbury, Marshfield	3, 5	D.Chickering, G.Gove#	
29,30	E.Boston, Bourne	5, 2	J.Cumming, P.Trimble	
American Oystercatcher:				
16,28	Nantucket, N.Monomoy	1, 7	M.Litchfield, B.Nikula + v.o.	
27	S.Monomoy, Morris Island	1, 1	R.Prescott, R.Humphrey	
Lesser Yellowlegs:				
17,18	Sharon, Salisbury	1, 1	R.Titus, M.+C.Atkinson	
28,29	W.Bridgewater, Rowley	1, 1	W.Petersen#	
Ruddy Turnstone:				
15	Nantucket	2	J.Cumming	
Sanderling:				
29,30	Barnstable, Salisbury	5, 45	P.Trimble, J.Berry	
Least Sandpiper:				
25	S.Dartmouth	1	LCES (R.Marshall)	
Pectoral Sandpiper:				
22,25	Halifax, S.Dartmouth	3, 2	R.Abrams, LCES (R.Marshall)	
26,27	W.Bridgewater, Concord	12, 3	W.Petersen, R.Forster	
Purple Sandpiper:				
22,27	Rockport, Winthrop	20, 6	J.Berry#, M.+C.Atkinson	
Dunlin:				
4,20,25	S.Dartmouth	158, 32, 89	LCES (R.Marshall)	
21	Wellfleet	29	W.Ellison#	
Long-billed Dowitcher:				
22	Marshfield	1	R.Abrams	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>MARCH 1986</u>
Common Snipe:				
18,22	Eastham, Marshfield	2, 8	W.Ellison#, G.Gove#	
29	Marshfield, Halifax	36, 30+	D.Clapp, SSBC (K.Holmes)	
American Woodcock:				
16,19	Middleboro, Hamilton	2, 5-6	W.Petersen#, J.Berry	
21,30	Malden, Ipswich	3, 2	D.Gibson, J.Berry	
Laughing Gull:				
17,24	Chatham	1, 2	M.+C.Atkinson, B.Nikula	
Little Gull:				
8;16,30	Newburyport 1 ad.; 1 ad., 4 ad. + 1 imm.		W.Ellison; J.Berry	
Common Black-headed Gull:				
1;28	Yarmouth; Quincy, Winthrop	1 ad.; 2, 1 imm.	J.Aylward; R.Titus, J.Cumming	
30	Newburyport	1 ad.	J.Berry	
Bonaparte's Gull:				
4-8,30	Newburyport	30+, 50	W.Ellison#, J.Berry	
Mew Gull:				
28 (from Dec.)	Quincy	1	R.Titus	
Iceland Gull:				
4,20	Provincetown, Wellfleet	4, 2	P.Trimble, W.Ellison#	
30	Salisbury	10-12 (2W)	J.Berry#	
Lesser Black-backed Gull:				
4,28	Provincetown, Quincy	1 ad., 1 (3S)	P.Trimble, R.Titus	
Ring-billed Gull:				
4,20	S.Dartmouth	166, 206	LCES (R.Marshall)	
Glaucous Gull:				
4,15	Provincetown, Nantucket	3, 1 (2W)	P.Trimble, J.Cumming	
17,28	Gloucester, N.Scituate	1, 1 (1W)	M.McClellan, W.Petersen	
Black-legged Kittiwake:				
18	Chatham	3	W.Ellison#	
Common Murre:				
4	Provincetown	1 br. pl.	P.Trimble	
Razorbill:				
4	Provincetown	10	P.Trimble	
Black Guillemot:				
4,16	Provincetown, N.Scituate	1 (br.pl.), 3	P.Trimble, W.Petersen	
2,23	Rockport, N.Scituate	4 (1 br.pl.), 8	J.Berry, G.d'Entremont#	
Eastern Screech-Owl:				
3,30;9,16	E.Middleboro; Middleboro	1 red-phase; 4	K.Anderson; W.Petersen#	
9	Lakeville-Bridgewater-Middleboro	8	BBC (K.Holmes)	
Great Horned Owl:				
thr. Norwell, Lexington	pr.nesting, pr.+ 2 yg.(3/29)		fide W.Petersen, D.Arvidson	
8,9	S.Dartmouth, Middleboro-Halifax	1, 3	LCES(R.Maker), BBC(K.Holmes)	
10,16	Ipswich, Lakeville	3 (2 m., 1 f.), 4	J.Berry, W.Petersen#	
Snowy Owl:				
2,1-18	Wareham, Plum Island	1 (dead), 1	L.Robinson, v.o.	
23	N.Monomoy	1	B.Nikula	
Barred Owl:				
2-16,22	Lakeville, Hamilton	max. 4, 1	W.Petersen#, J.Berry#	
29	Holliston	2	R.Hildreth#	
Long-eared Owl:				
9	Nantucket	1	E.Andrews#	
Short-eared Owl:				
1,2	E.Boston, Salisbury	1, 1	J.Cumming, D.Chickering	
3;9,23	S.Wellfleet; N.Monomoy	1; 1, 1	D.Reynolds; B.Nikula	
10,15	Chatham, E.Orleans	1, 2	P.Trull#	
Northern Saw-whet Owl:				
1,2;3-9	Plum Island; Nantucket	1; 1	D.Chickering; fide E.Andrews	
3,12	Holliston, Sudbury	1 (in bird box), 1	R.Hildreth, H.Lean	
17,26	Middleboro, Gardner	1, 1 (dead)	D.Briggs, K.David	
Belted Kingfisher:				
6,15	Watertown, GMNWR	2, 2	J.Heywood, E.Nielsen	
18,27	Brewster, W.Peabody	2, 1	W.Ellison#, G.d'Entremont	
Red-headed Woodpecker:				
22	Marshfield	1	C.Floyd#	
Northern Flicker:				
16	E.Middleboro	1 (first)	K.Anderson	
30	Ipswich-Newburyport, Petersham	3-4, 6	J.Berry, E.Nielsen	
Pileated Woodpecker:				
3-31,4,7	DFWS, Milton, Whitman	1-2, 1, 1	D.Schwenk, J.Touger, K.Holmes	
9,29	Westford, Petersham	1, 1	S.Bell, E.Nielsen	

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH NORTHERN SHRIKE

The very high total of twenty Eastern Phoebes was reported from the east Quabbin area on the last Saturday of the month. Common Ravens were reported in the same area for most of the month, reaching a maximum of four individuals. In Barnstable, an Eastern Kingbird seen on the twenty-sixth was a full month earlier than the usual first arrival date. Pioneer Carolina Wrens successfully wintered in Ipswich and Winchester, sites relatively far north for this species. The feeder-host in Ipswich was miffed when that bird departed in mid-March, possibly to push even farther northeast. A good winter for Bohemian Waxwing was capped by the occurrence of a flock of nineteen individuals seen and photographed at Truro on March 4. Northern Shrike reports, at six individuals for the month, were what would be expected in a non-flight year. L.E.T.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>MARCH 1986</u>
Eastern Phoebe:				
13,17	Eastham, Byfield	1, 1	P.Trimble, T.French	
28,29	ONWR, Petersham	3, 20	S.Carroll#, E.Nielsen	
Eastern Kingbird:				
26	Barnstable	1	C.Morano	
Horned Lark:				
1,1-22	Middleboro, E.Boston	150, 25 max.	W.Petersen, v.o.	
8,16	Salisbury, Bridgewater	25, 100+	M.Lynch#, G.d'Entremont	
25	S.Dartmouth	60	R.Marshall	
Tree Swallow:				
15,16	Harvard, Hardwick	6, 2	E.Nielsen, G.Gove	
22,23	Lakeville, W.Brookfield	200+, 40	K.Holmes, K.Ryan	
30	Nantucket, Plum Island	2, 15	E.Andrews, J.Berry	
Fish Crow:				
3-12,16	E.Middleboro, Scituate	4 max. (3/12), 1	K.Anderson, W.Petersen	
17,26	Byfield, Stoughton	1, 23	T.French, R.Titus	
Common Raven:				
1-17	Quabbin (Gate 43)	4 max.	v.o.	
16	Quabbin	21 (on carcass)	J.Swedberg	
<u>Eurasian Jackdaw:</u>				
thr.	Nantucket	1	E.Andrews#	
Red-breasted Nuthatch:				
5,18	Duxbury, Brewster	7, 6	D.Clapp, W.Ellison#	
16-30,30	Petersham, Plum Island	15 max.(3/30), 6	E.Nielsen, J.Berry	
Brown Creeper:				
20,23	Wellfleet, Wenham	7, 2 m.	W.Ellison#, J.Berry	
29	Bridgewater, Petersham	4, 12	SSBC, E.Nielsen	
Carolina Wren:				
thr.(from Aug.)	Winchester	1	M.McClellan#	
from Sept.-14	Ipswich	1	J.Berry	
thr., 5-18	Holliston, 5 loc.	2 max., 5 ind.	R.Hildreth, v.o.	
23	Falmouth	6	P.Trimble	
Marsh Wren:				
12	W.Harwich	1	B.Nikula	
Golden-crowned Kinglet:				
5,19	Duxbury, N.Chatham	2, 2	D.Clapp, W.Ellison#	
29	Bridgewater, Petersham	4, 10	SSBC, E.Nielsen	
Eastern Bluebird:				
16-29,16-30	Lakeville, Petersham	4 max.(3/29), 6 max.(3/30)	v.o.	
25-29,29	Marshfield, Rockport	4 max.(3/29), 10	D.Clapp, W.Pfefferkorn	
31	E.Middleboro, Lincoln	1 m., 2	K.Anderson, P.Swift	
Hermit Thrush:				
22,30	S.Dartmouth (LCES), Salisbury	1, 1	R.Maker, J.Berry	
American Robin:				
1,13	Holliston, E.Middleboro	5, 14	R.Hildreth, K.Anderson	
17,30	SRV, Petersham	9, 35	R.Forster, E.Nielsen	
Gray Catbird:				
1,23	Holliston, Falmouth	2, 2	R.Hildreth, P.Trimble	
Water Pipit:				
23,29	Rowley, Harvard	3, 1	J.Gugan, S.Carroll#	
<u>Bohemian Waxwing:</u>				
4,21-30	Truro, Quincy	19 ph., 1	P.Trimble, W.Cornwell#	
Cedar Waxwing:				
3,14	Easton, Hanover	40, 40	K.Ryan, W.Petersen	
16,21	Chatham, Lincoln	80+, 50	B.Nikula, M.Atkinson	
Northern Shrike:				
thr.	6 locations	6 ind.	v.o.	

WARBLERS THROUGH EVENING GROSBEEK

A Western Tanager was seen for the single day of March 22 at a feeder in Eastham. Another remarkable feeder bird was the Painted Bunting that lingered in Salem from February through the early part of March. The blackbird species staged a general arrival from March 12 on, with no evidence this year of the usual early March large flocks. Reflective of the fairly good finch winter, grosbeaks, crossbills, redpolls, and siskins were all seen in moderate numbers at a variety of locations. L.E.T.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>MARCH 1986</u>
Yellow-rumped Warbler:				
17-20,20	E.Boston, Eastham	1, 12	S.Thomas, W.Ellison#	
23	Falmouth	30	P.Trimble	
Pine Warbler:				
thr.,23	Nantucket, Falmouth	4 max.(3/1-18), 1	E.Andrews, P.Trimble	
28-31	6 locations	12 total	v.o.	
Palm Warbler:				
20,28	Newburyport, Bridgewater	1, 1	J.Grugan, R.Titus	
<u>Western Tanager:</u>				
22	Eastham	1 at feeder	M.O'Connor	
<u>Painted Bunting:</u>				
from Feb.-11	Salem	1 m. at feeder	C.Rhodes#	
Rufous-sided Towhee:				
from Jan.-9,30	Whitman, Wilmington	1, 2 m.	W.Petersen, M.Chalifour	
American Tree Sparrow:				
14,29	Halifax, Holliston	25, 2	K.Anderson, R.Hildreth	
Field Sparrow:				
thr.,9	Middleboro, Lakeville	10, 2	D.Briggs#, J.Cumming	
29,30	Randolph, Sandwich	4, 3	G.d'Entremont, P.Trimble	
Lark Sparrow:				
22	Quincy	1	S.Thomas	
"Ipswich" Sparrow:				
4-8,22	P.I., S.Monomoy	1, 1	W.Ellison#, P.Trull#	
23,29	N.Monomoy, Salisbury	1, 1	B.Nikula, J.Cumming	
Seaside Sparrow (details):				
20	Eastham	1	W.Ellison#	
Fox Sparrow:				
8,18	S.Dartmouth, Wayland	1, 1	LCES (R.Maker), B.Howell	
21-30,25	10 loc., Marshfield	16 total, 6	v.o., D.Clapp	
Song Sparrow:				
29,30	Holliston, Plum Island	24, 25	R.Hildreth, J.Berry	
Swamp Sparrow:				
9,18	Lakeville, Brewster	1, 2	J.Cumming, W.Ellison#	
Lapland Longspur:				
28-29	W.Bridgewater	1	W.Petersen	
Snow Bunting:				
2,8	E.Boston, Halifax	4, 75	S.Thomas, K.Holmes	
Red-winged Blackbird:				
15	Harvard, Hardwick	200, 300+	E.Nielsen, S.Carroll#	
16,29	Plum Island, Halifax	100, 300+	J.Berry, SSBC	
Eastern Meadowlark:				
29,30	E.Boston, Sandwich	1, 2	J.Cumming, P.Trimble	
Rusty Blackbird:				
16	Canton, Belmont	5, 9	R.Vernon, C.Floyd#	
18,29	Sudbury, Bridgewater	12, 20	B.Howell, SSBC	
Common Grackle:				
2,5	Holliston, Beverly	1, 1	R.Hildreth, J.Berry	
12,29	Hanover, Lancaster	100, 100+	W.Petersen, M.Lynch#	
Brown-headed Cowbird:				
14,16	Halifax, IRWS	10, 40	K.Anderson, M.Argue#	
29	Petersham, Middleboro	18, 30+	E.Nielsen, SSBC	
Northern Oriole:				
22	Winchester	1 f.	F.+M.McClellan	
Pine Grosbeak:				
from Feb.-12,17	Waltham, Hardwick	23, 6	J.Horowitz, I.Giriunas#	
21,30	Lincoln, Chatham	1, 2	R.Walton, B.Nikula#	
Purple Finch:				
23,25	Quabbin(Gate 40), Newbury	1, 1 m.	S.Carroll#, H.Wiggin#	
Red Crossbill:				
5,15	Canton, Quabbin(Gate 40)	3, 1	R.Titus, M.Lynch#	
16,29	Petersham	4, 1	E.Nielsen	
White-winged Crossbill:				
20,30	Wellfleet, Plum Island	5, 6	W.Ellison#, J.Berry	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>MARCH 1986</u>
Common Redpoll:				
2,2-16	Holliston, Belmont	19, 29 max.	R.Hildreth, L.Taylor	
4,18	Plum Island, Brewster	40, 70	W.Ellison#	
25,27	Worcester, Squantum	12, 15	M.Knufson, W.Cornwell	
Pine Siskin:				
thr.	Middleboro, Nantucket	10, 20 max.(3/1)	D.Briggs, E.Andrews#	
thr.,28	S.Dartmouth, Norwell	8, 2	LCES (R.Maker), W.Petersen	
Evening Grosbeak:				
thr.,16	Middleboro, Petersham	30, 25	D.Briggs, E.Nielsen	

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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

ADDENDA

DECEMBER 1985 Field Records:

Summer Tanager:

mid-Dec. Arlington 1 at feeder (ph.) R.Wheeler

Mew Gull:

15 on Quincy 1 D.Brown# (Quincy CBC)

NOVEMBER 1985 Field Records:

Painted Bunting:

14-18 Beverly 1 m. at feeder (ph.) L.+E.Talbot

SEPTEMBER 1985 Field Records:

Yellow-throated Vireo:

1 Great I. (Wellfleet) 1 fide Tom Prince

Lark Sparrow:

1 Great I. (Wellfleet) 1 fide Tom Prince

FEBRUARY 1986 Field Records (in this issue):

Virginia Rail:

10 Nantucket 1 M.Litchfield

A friend who was pleased to identify very easily the April bird photo said to me, "My first thought was Wedge-tailed Eagle (an Australian bird), but I was pretty certain that Blair Nikula (the photographer) has not been to Australia, so I decided this must be an American bird with a wedge-shaped tail, and that must be the raven. Right?" Yes, she is right. When "At A Glance" began, we agreed to use only photos of birds that had occurred in Massachusetts. So our readers who remembered this (and were not confused by a knowledge of Australian birds) probably had little difficulty in recognizing the silhouette in Blair's fine photo as a Common Raven. We felt it worthwhile to offer this picture, because it demonstrates precisely what the tail of the raven is like.

In the current issue (June), we offer a second photo-silhouette, a picture taken by Cape Cod photographer-birder, Roger Everett. This bird, too, has a wedge-shaped tail. This is not an effort to confuse our readers but rather to draw attention to the "single field mark syndrome" so well elucidated in Kimball Garrett's article on page 129.

Birders often complain of the need for a "longer" look, and that is the great thing about photographs - they do not fly away. They capture a fractional second of time and remain for everyone to view at leisure, to compare with past experience, with field guides and references, and, perhaps, to learn more about field identification.

So here is a modest challenge. Identify the second wedge-tailed bird, send the editor your I.D. and rationale, and *Bird Observer* will be happy to print the best response(s) we receive.

D.R.A.



Common Raven
May 2, 1983
Chatham, MA

Photo by Blair Nikula

At a Glance . . .

Photo by Roger Everett



Can you identify this bird? Identification will be discussed in next issue's *At a Glance*.



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JUNE 1986

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