

# BIRD OBSERVER

OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS



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MUDHEN



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EDITOR'S PAGE

Letters to the Editor

Sir:

I was delighted to see in the July-August issue of Bird Observer the impressively long roster of individuals who maintained daily watches at specific locations to assess last spring's migration. That such data has "remarkable similarity" is especially encouraging. This result also nicely supports the correlation Bob Stymeist found in 1975 (BOEM, 3, 4, 129) for data taken at Mt. Auburn, Manomet Bird Observatory, and Weston. Clearly, day-to-day efforts by scattered individuals can yield a consistent picture of migration.

Yet, which method of counting birds is best? Will one technique serve for both migrants and for residents? Do inland techniques work along the coast--or at sea? Perhaps the jury ought to stay out for a year or so, permitting the compilers to assess various methods as they are tried by different observers. Perhaps the only guiding precept should be that the technique be capable of yielding quantitatively comparable results from year to year.

These questions of methodology are not trivial. Not only do they hint at good science, they may well offer important alternatives for birders in the near future. As gas becomes more expensive (or something worse), it is certain that more birders will chose to survey areas close to home or convenient on the way to work.

Yet, birders do not have to focus on numbers alone. For a variety of projects that can be conducted on a small plot or a particular species, I recommend Joseph Hickey's A Guide to Bird Watching, first published in 1943. Now generally forgotten, this classic treasure house of ideas is still amazingly relevant and important today.

Leif J. Robinson  
Wellesley

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The Greater Boston Christmas Bird Count will be held on Sunday, December 18, 1977. This annual event is sponsored by the National Audubon Society, as well as 20 other counts within Massachusetts. If you are interested in participating in the Greater Boston Count, please contact: Robert H. Stymeist, 46 Beaver Street, Waltham, Mass. 02154.

FOR SALE: L. L. Bean Rubber Moccasins, size 10D. Leather is full grain, elk-tanned cowhide. The featherweight rubber bottoms are light and unusually flexible. Waterproof and ozone resistant they have durable crepe soles and treads. Great for birding Monomoy or walking through wet grassy fields for Short-billed Marsh Wrens. Only used once. Current Bean Fall Catalog price is \$21.00, will sell for \$16.00. Contact Bob Stymeist, 46 Beaver Street, Waltham, Mass. 02154

## REFLECTIONS ON NORTON RESERVOIR--LATE SUMMER AND EALY AUTUMN, 1977

by John C. Kricher, Mansfield

The Norton Reservoir is a 189 hectare (467 acres) shallow water impoundment located on Rt. 140 between the towns of Mansfield and Norton in southeastern Massachusetts. The Rumford River flows into the reservoir on its northwestern side and exits at a dam on the eastern side. The extensive tract known as the Great Woods almost abuts the reservoir on its western side.

The reservoir is extremely shallow throughout and is undergoing nutrient enrichment from natural sources as well as from fertilizer runoff and water outflow from the Mansfield sewage treatment plant (the reservoir is not used for drinking water). The nutrient inputs coupled with the shallow depth combine to produce massive algal blooms during the summer months.

The best time to bird the Norton Reservoir is late summer and early autumn. The area never seems to attract diverse species of waterfowl, but during the time of low water in late summer, it does provide ample exposed mud flats which attract migrant shorebirds. This past August the water level was extremely low, more so than in previous years. Because of this phenomenon, which may or may not be repeated in succeeding years, the reservoir attracted unusually large numbers of shorebirds and herons. The species referred to in this article were those seen this past August and September, 1977.

The Norton Reservoir is easily accessible from the road. Two roads, Rt. 140 and Reservoir Avenue, allow one to make a complete five mile circle around the reservoir, stopping frequently to bird. From the intersection of routes 123 and 140 in Norton, drive north on 140 (North Main Street) toward Mansfield for 0.3 mile. At that point, Reservoir Avenue forks to the right and Rt. 140 continues straight. It makes no difference which way one decides to go since the route is circular but, for this essay, we will follow the Reservoir Avenue fork.

Driving 0.7 mile from the fork on Reservoir Avenue, you come to Lakeside Liquors. Across from this store is a lagoon which has exposed mud around its edge when the water is low. Semipalmated, Least, and Spotted Sandpipers were quite regular on these muddy areas. Semipalmated Plovers were also frequent and Killdeers were often present in large numbers. In addition, both yellowlegs species and Solitary Sandpipers sporadically appeared. One or more Great Blue Herons could usually be found along the edge of the lagoon.

Just 0.3 mile beyond the lagoon is a bridge where the Rumford River exits from the Norton Reservoir via a spillway and dam. The river is small and resembles a creek more than a river. Parking is easy and a few minutes of birding in the area of the spillway often produces Belted Kingfishers and Green Herons. Both of these species are always quite common throughout summer and can be found almost anywhere around the reservoir, but the spillway is perhaps the most dependable place. In addition, Gray Catbirds, Brown Thrashers, Rufous-sided Towhees, Common Yellowthroats, and Yellow Warblers are frequently seen. Spotted Sandpipers usually can be

found teetering on the rocks in the Rumford. In early spring, the spillway area is an excellent place to find Wood Ducks.

Continuing 1.3 miles along Reservoir Avenue, you will cross a small bridge where Back Bay Brook enters the reservoir to your left from a lagoon on your right. This brook represents the source of input from the Mansfield Sewage treatment plant. Limited parking is available just beyond the bridge. Cattails grow extensively around the reservoir adjacent to the road and wide mud flats occurred here this past summer. Consequently, this area was excellent for shorebirds. Flocks of up to 100 Semipalmated Sandpipers and up to 60 Least Sandpipers visited here quite regularly. In addition, both species of yellowlegs, Killdeers, Semipalmated Plovers, Spotted Sandpipers, and Solitary Sandpipers were commonly seen. On August 9th, two Baird's Sandpipers occurred on the higher flats in a grassy area. All of the shorebird species, including the Baird's, were very easy to approach closely and a spotting scope provided outstandingly close views for plumage comparisons. Other species commonly sighted at this area included Green and Great Blue Herons, Herring and Black-backed Gulls, Mallards, Black Ducks, Canada Geese, and flocks of Blue-winged Teals. During spring migration, the cattails occurring on both the reservoir and lagoon sides of the road are good places to search for rails and bitterns and the thickets provide good habitats for migrating warblers (including an occasional Prothonotary).

After visiting the Back Bay Brook area, proceed along Reservoir Avenue until it reintersects Rt. 140 (0.3 mile). Turn left onto Rt. 140 and stop immediately at a grassy area adjacent to Raschel's Transit Seeding, Inc. Behind this company is a marshy area which was outstanding for shorebirds during August and September. Before birding, it is wise to obtain permission from someone at Raschel's since they own the land. They have always granted permission graciously.

From the area behind Raschel's, it was possible to observe all the species of shorebirds previously mentioned, with the exception of the Baird's. In addition, Common Snipes, Pectoral Sandpipers, and Stilt Sandpipers were frequent. In addition to Green and Great Blue Herons, this area produced Great Egrets and an adult Black-crowned Night Heron. One to three juvenile Double-crested Cormorants were often perched along the reservoir edge or on one of the old stone walls whose top just projected above the low water. An immature Red-tailed Hawk, an adult Broad-winged Hawk, or an Osprey often flew overhead.

Just 0.2 mile south of Raschel's is Captain Jack's restaurant. From the parking lot you can walk down to the water's edge. This outlook often provides closer views (in better light) of many of the species just mentioned.

One mile south of Captain Jack's is a mobile home park and the Norton Real Estate office. Just 0.3 mile beyond is Jimmy's Restaurant. Both of these locations afford excellent outlooks of the reservoir. These two locations are best for Ospreys (often two) and hawks in general, as well as ducks, geese, Double-crested Cormorants, and Pied-billed Grebes. As many as five or six Great Blue Herons as well as the other heron species previously mentioned can be seen here. During early spring, Common Mergansers are always on these waters. Many Herring and Great Black-backed

Gulls also often congregate there.

Norton Reservoir has been underbirded. The area affords variety and accessibility and will probably yield many other species if it receives more attention.

#### ORNITHOLOGICAL DETENTE

A United States-Soviet Union treaty on the conservation of migratory birds and their environment, is the newest in a series of international agreements designed to protect wildlife.

The treaty extends the protection provided many species of birds and provides a means for U.S. and Soviet scientists and wildlife managers to cooperate in the conservation of these birds and the habitats upon which they depend.

The treaty applies to all areas under the jurisdiction of both countries and covers more than 200 species representing 36 families of birds of mutual interest to the United States and the Soviet Union.

Some of the major agreements of the new treaty:

--provides that both nations will protect and enhance the habitat of these birds; recognizes that special concern must be paid to species of birds that are threatened with extinction and provides for cooperation in protecting them; provides authority for the U.S. Government to conserve some species of migratory birds not covered by existing authorities; recognizes that indigenous inhabitants of Alaska and parts of the U.S.S.R., such as Eskimos, may take certain birds for their own nutritional and other essential needs under regulated circumstances; provides for each nation to notify the other in the event of calamities which may pose a threat to significant numbers of migratory birds or their environment, and provides for cooperation in eliminating such hazards; provides authority to control the introduction of wild exotic plants or animals which may be harmful to migratory birds or their environment; encourages both nations to establish refuges and other protected areas for the conservation of migratory birds and their environment and to manage such areas so as to preserve and restore the natural ecosystems.

Although the new treaty is between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., both nations recognize that the birds in question visit or are of interest to many other countries and have agreed to explore the possibility of expanding the treaty to allow other nations to sign.

## THE FIRST GREATER BOSTON BREEDING BIRD CENSUS

by Robert H. Stymeist, Waltham

On Saturday, June 18, 1977, the first Greater Boston Breeding Bird Census took place. The area covered was the same as during the Greater Boston Christmas Count, as were most of the participants who covered their wintertime areas. The idea of a "Christmas" count during the breeding season is not new; the Captree (Long Island, N.Y.) Christmas Bird Count initiated such a census in June, 1972.

We followed the rules and format of the official Christmas Bird Count and did not make any special effort to locate nests. However, if any unexpected species was observed, it was noted so that a follow-up could be made. What did we learn from this experience? What can be done in subsequent years to improve our results? Will this effort encourage more people to survey existing Christmas Bird Count circles during the breeding season?

The result of the count was 112 species, representing 15,729 individuals. This was quite unexpected; I anticipated 85-90 species at most. (The 1976 Greater Boston Christmas Bird Count recorded 110 species and 119,504 individuals.) The surprises were mostly lingerers or non-breeding species, that is, Brant, American Wigeon, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, White-winged Scoter, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Interesting species which deserve more attention include Ruffed Grouse, Bobwhite, Sora, Mourning Warbler and Dark-eyed Junco. Other surprising sightings were of four Black Terns, an adult Little Blue Heron, and a Magnolia Warbler.

### THE BEGINNINGS

The first problem was to motivate a good number of birders to participate in the traditionally dull month of June. I tried to muster support from the regulars of the December Count, but could come up with only 13 out of the 55 who participated in December, 1976. Thirteen "new" volunteers brought the total field coverage to 26. I tried to make the task appealing for the observer by emphasizing the counting of species as the goal - a roundup similar to that of the South Shore Bird Club.

Secondly, an effort was made by all observers to note any breeding behavior, such as a nest, nest building, young, parents carrying food or feeding young. The counting of individuals was the third priority, with no one visiting the Starling roost or logging gulls at any of the dumps.

Everyone was out to get a big list, and each area competed with the others. The Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas project, sponsored by the Massachusetts Audubon Society and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Game, had already helped some of the participants to

locate nests within their assigned areas. However, we also confirmed many new birds within several of the atlas blocks. Uncommon or declining nesters and those species which are at or near the edge of their ranges were especially searched for. This kept the excitement level high. Nobody spent a day looking for an Ovenbird's nest, and only one party tried to locate owls.

#### THE AREAS COVERED

There were ten sections within the count circle, each with a captain. Area 1 (South Boston-Squantum) was headed by Dave Brown and Josh Murphy. This area, which includes Spectacle Island in Boston Harbor where several herons breed (not covered on this date, however), provided the largest number of unexpected species. The big surprise was four Black Terns near Squaw Rock. Dave and Josh also found the only Common Loon, Brant, Little Blue Heron, Glossy Ibis, Blue-winged Teal, Greater Yellowlegs, and Carolina Wren.

Area 2 (Revere-Saugus) had Soheil Zende and Craig Jackson in command. They did the only owling, which yielded none. Their highlights included a Sora Rail at Breakheart (this most interesting find will hopefully be followed up), a late Mourning Warbler, and the only White-winged Scoter.

Area 3 (Cambridge) was covered for seven hours by Tom Marvin, assisted by the Stymeist party at the Arthur D. Little marsh. A Willow Flycatcher's nest was found, along with that of a Cedar Waxwing. Along Alewife Brook, 23 Black-crowned Night Herons were located.

Area 4 (Brookline) yielded to Andy Agush and Bill Evans the remarkable American Wigeon at Brookline Reservoir. Andy also found one female Bobolink at Alldendale Farm and the only White-throated Sparrows of the count.

Area 5 (Belmont) was covered by the author and party, which flushed an unexpected Wood Duck at Beaver Brook. (A Rose-breasted Grosbeak's nest was found with four young; only a few feet above the grosbeak was the nest of a Northern Oriole.)

Area 6 (Lexington-Woburn) was surveyed by Dick Veit and Marcia Littlefield. The highlights were three Orchard Orioles, a nesting Eastern Bluebird and a lone Red-breasted Nuthatch.

Area 7 (Waltham) was handled by the Stymeist party also. The most interesting find was a Red-shouldered Hawk's nest and a Red Fox.

Area 8 (Middlesex Fells). Paul and Julie Roberts had been covering the Fells for the Atlas project, so they knew exactly where everything was for the count day. The Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were expected - but not five nests of them! Other good birds were nesting Dark-eyed Junco, the only Ruffed Grouse and Black-throated Green Warbler (!), two Pine Warblers, three Red-breasted Nuthatches, and the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.



Area 9 (Melrose). John Andrews took command here and, like Paul, had been working the area for the Atlas project. He also found the most interesting bird of the count - the Magnolia Warbler. There is no explanation as to why it was still in Melrose.

Area 10 (Forest Hills-Newton) saw Herman D'Entremont and party at the Arboretum, where they found Fish Crows, four Gray Catbird nests and three young Mockingbirds. Mimi Murphy and Ruth Rabinow covered most of Newton, locating a Bobwhite. Sherm and Sue Dennison criss-crossed Hammond Pond Woods and also recorded two Willow Flycatchers.

### PROBLEMS

In December the day is short and the afternoon is not significantly less productive than the morning or evening. In June, however, the day is very long and tiring, and the afternoon can be almost nonproductive. For future breeding bird counts, I would recommend more observers working only a half-day, from before sunrise until afternoon when all the participants would meet for lunch and compile the list. If something was "missed," someone could be dispatched during the late afternoon or evening. A long half-day will not be too exhausting, though it would still span six to eight hours. I, for one, could hardly move at 4:00 p.m., with the temperature at 88°F. In conclusion, it is best to have as many good observers as possible active afield during the most productive early morning hours.

### THE RESULTS

Greater Boston, Mass., 42°24'N 71°06'W, all points within fifteen-mile diameter, center Healy School, Somerville. June 18, 1977, 4:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Clear-partly cloudy; temperature 75°-88°. Wind calm.

Common Loon, 1; Double-crested Cormorant, 138; Great Blue Heron, 3; Green Heron, 11; Little Blue Heron, 1; Snowy Egret, 33; Black-crowned Night Heron, 57; Glossy Ibis, 1; Canada Goose, 113; Brant, 1; Mallard, 296; Black Duck, 71; American Wigeon, 1; Wood Duck, 2; Greater Scaup, 3; Bufflehead, 3; Common Eider, 12; White-winged Scoter, 2; Red-tailed Hawk 2; Red-shouldered Hawk, 1; Broad-winged Hawk, 4; American Kestrel, 15; Ruffed Grouse, 1; Bobwhite, 2; Ring-necked Pheasant, 62; Virginia Rail, 3; Sora Rail, 1; Killdeer, 29; Black-bellied Plover, 11; American Woodcock, 1; Spotted Sandpiper, 6; Greater Yellowlegs, 1; Great Black-backed Gull, 56; Herring Gull, 1439; Ring-billed Gull, 16; Laughing Gull, 4; Bonaparte's Gull, 42; Common Tern, 167; Least Tern, 4; Black Tern, 4; Rock Dove, 288; Mourning Dove, 91; Common Nighthawk, 7; Chimney Swift, 100; Belted Kingfisher, 2; Common Flicker, 67; Hairy Woodpecker, 7; Downy Woodpecker, 45; Eastern Kingbird, 62; Great-crested Flycatcher, 33; Eastern Phoebe, 13; Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, 1; Willow Flycatcher, 4; Eastern Wood Pewee, 7; Tree Swallow, 30; Rough-winged Swallow, 7; Barn Swallow, 45; Blue Jay, 178; Common Crow, 270; Fish Crow, 3; Black-capped Chickadee, 209; Tufted Titmouse, 67; White-breasted Nuthatch, 31; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 4; Brown Creeper, 14; House Wren, 46; Carolina Wren, 1; Mockingbird, 72; Gray Catbird, 285;

Brown Thrasher, 60; American Robin, 356; Wood Thrush, 22; Veery, 4; Eastern Bluebird, 1; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, 5; Cedar Waxwing, 15; Starling, 7,642; Red-eyed Vireo, 49; Warbling Vireo, 19; Yellow Warbler, 96; Magnolia Warbler, 1; Black-throated Green Warbler, 1; Pine Warbler, 2; Prairie Warbler, 5; Ovenbird, 4; Mourning Warbler, 1; Common Yellowthroat, 108; American Redstart, 10; House Sparrow, 378; Bobolink, 2; Eastern Meadowlark, 7; Redwinged Blackbird, 773; Orchard Oriole, 3; Northern Oriole, 126; Common Grackle, 581; Brown-headed Cowbird, 60; Scarlet Tanager, 12; Cardinal, 62; Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 23; Indigo Bunting, 51; Purple Finch, 5; House Finch, 96; American Goldfinch, 89; Rufous-sided Towhee, 43; Savannah Sparrow, 5; Sharp-tailed Sparrow, 14; Dark-eyed Junco, 3; Chipping Sparrow, 40; Field Sparrow, 13; White-throated Sparrow, 2; Swamp Sparrow, 15; Song Sparrow, 317.

Twenty-four observers in ten parties. No party hours given. No mileage recorded. Andrew Agush, John Andrews, Fred Bouchard, David Brown, Sherm and Sue Dennison, Herman D'Entremont, Bill S. Evans, Rose Gould, Mary Hutchinson, Craig Jackson, Marcia Litchfield, Tom Marvin, Joshua Murphy, Mimi Murphy, Ruth Rabinow, Martha Reinstein, Alice Rios, Raymond Rios, Julie and Paul Roberts, Robert Stymeist (compiler), Mr. & Mrs. Ugaya, Richard Veit and Soheil Zende.

#### CHRISTMAS GIVING - SHOULD SOMETIMES BE TO ONESELF

FOR CHRISTMAS, WHY NOT GIVE A GIFT TO YOURSELF, OR TO A FRIEND THAT WILL GIVE LASTING PLEASURE - A NEW PAIR OF SWIFT AUDUBON 8.5 x 44 BINOCULARS, OR THE NEW SWIFT TELEMASTER JR., OR SENIOR ZOOM SCOPE.

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## RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER: FIRST CONFIRMED BREEDING IN MASSACHUSETTS

by Richard A. Forster, Framingham, and Leif J. Robinson, Wellesley

The first reported nesting of Red-bellied Woodpeckers (*Centurus carolinus*) in Massachusetts occurred on June 20, 1977, when Robert Edson of South Natick observed a pair of adults feeding suet to two juvenile birds in his backyard. Mr. Edson had been alerted to the rarity of this species and the possibility of its breeding locally through an information bulletin prepared by Leif J. Robinson and distributed in mid-May by Richard Lent. In the days that followed, the original sighting was confirmed (young photographed) by Eliot Taylor, Lent, and Robinson, all participants in the Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas Project.

Shortly after the discovery of the Natick birds, an active nest of Red-bellied Woodpeckers was found in Adamsdale, Bristol County. The parent birds had been feeding on suet at the home of Mrs. Grace Crawford since at least February. All attempts at finding the nest proved unsuccessful until the discovery on July 3rd by Richard Forster and David Clapp.

Thus, the northeasternmost known breeding limit of Red-bellied Woodpeckers was established. If we follow the logic of John Bull (Birds of New York State, 1974), these pairs reflect the continuing range expansion of this species toward the northeast from the South Atlantic states. A detailed assessment of this expansion, as observed in Massachusetts during the past century, has been prepared by Robinson (to be published).

### History of the South Natick Birds

From February, 1971, through June, a female Red-bellied Woodpecker was observed in South Natick by many birders. But not until January, 1974, was this species again reported from that town--only then was it learned that a Red-bellied Woodpecker had been regularly visiting the suet feeder of William Biggart. On February 2, 1974, Robinson discovered a pair of Red-bellied Woodpeckers near the Biggarts' property. In mid-December, 1974, Taylor was told by Mr. Biggart that possibly as many as three birds had been regularly visiting his feeder. A year later Mr. Biggart assured Taylor that there were three Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and plans were laid to establish confirmation of nesting.

The first contact from the information bulletin came about May 25, 1977, when Mr. Edson reported that Red-bellied Woodpeckers had come to his feeders for several years. (Mr. Edson lives about a quarter mile from the Biggarts and didn't know the birds were rare.) Less than a month later the confirmation was in hand.

Thus, in South Natick, it seems likely that Red-bellied Woodpeckers bred in 1975 and possibly as early as 1974. Yet, actual first nesting in Massachusetts may have occurred in 1972, when male and female birds occupied closely adjacent territory in the central part of the state. The male was seen in the Springfield-Longmeadow area from October, 1971, through April, 1972; the female in Agawam from January, 1972, through April, 1972 (records on file at Massachusetts Audubon Society).

## History of the Adamsdale Birds

Mrs. Crawford originally reported the Red-Bellied Woodpeckers as a postscript to her report during the February Cardinal-Tufted Titmouse-Mockingbird Census. During the following months both male and female were reported frequenting the suet feeder. In June the behavior of the adult birds, especially the female, seemed to indicate that the birds had young. The female would arrive at the suet, remain for several minutes feeding, and then would fly off carrying a chunk of suet. The male was an infrequent visitor to the feeder at this time, and the duration of his stay was short. Despite this fairly conclusive behavior, the actual location of the nest remained a mystery.

Discovery of the Nest: Upon the arrival of Forster and Clapp on July 3rd, the female was feeding. Shortly thereafter she left carrying suet, and an attempt was made to find the nest. Due to the mature hardwoods (oak, beech), it was impossible to ascertain the direction in which she flew. After searching the area for several minutes with no results, it was decided to watch a field behind the house, hoping to observe the direction from which she flew in. After about half an hour the female appeared from a wooded area across the field and disappeared near the houses. As the observers were walking across the field, she flew overhead into the wooded area.

The wooded section was entered and a meandering stream followed until an extensive area of large red maples with many dead trees was reached. Armed with the knowledge that Red-bellied Woodpeckers were partial to river bottomlands, Forster and Clapp were certain that they were in the vicinity of the nest. After about five minutes they heard a Red-bellied call, and immediately the male came cruising through the woods and landed on a dead tree. Its bill was crammed with insects (grubs, beetles?). It disappeared into a hole, reappeared, then disappeared again finally reappearing with his bill empty. This routing was repeated twice more before the observers left the nest site.

## Some Observations and Reflections

Careful observations of the young by Taylor on June 24th and Robinson on the 26th revealed both juvenile male and female. The former displayed dark crimson (Harvard style) on the forehead and a very vague pinkish spot on the nape; the latter exhibited a pink wash on the nape that was more widespread and stronger than the juvenile male's and a deep gray forehead without a trace of red. No down was evident on either of the young.

On June 24th Taylor noted that the juvenile male was feeding himself, though still being cared for by the adult male. By the 26th Robinson observed both young feeding alone, yet continuing to demand attention from the adult male. Aggressive behavior by the juvenile female was observed by Taylor as early as June 24th as she drove Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) away from the suet feeders. On the 26th Robinson and Lent noted similar behavior by the adult male and the young. This behavior is especially interesting in light of Harrison's remarks (*A Field Guide to Birds' Nests*, 1975): "Common Starlings are aggressive competitors of Red-bellied Woodpeckers, often forcing them to abandon excavations after

completion." Curiously, the adult female was not seen between June 20th and 29th.

The dates on which the South Natick fledglings were first observed deserves mention, for it precedes by three days the earliest of the 44 breeding records cited by Bull for New York State through 1971.

While Forster and Clapp observed the Red-bellied Woodpeckers feeding the young in the nest, only the male arrived, each time carrying large insects in great quantity. He would disappear almost entirely into the hole, indicating that the young were at a fairly early stage of development. (Well-developed young often stick their heads out of the nest hole to be fed by the adults.)

#### Admonishments

Since the Red-bellied Woodpecker is quite sedentary, it can be expected any time of year. Therefore, it is requested that birders avoid the nesting areas from April through June. Playing a tape recording of the bird's vocalization at any time is unwise and during the breeding season it is stupid.

As a general policy, nesting species which represent pioneering efforts in our state are not widely broadcast. It requires only a slight disturbance to cause abandonment, especially while the birds are incubating. If these pioneering species are left unmolested to establish breeding populations, then in a decade's time we may be able to enjoy a healthy breeding population.

#### Acknowledgements

For their assistance in confirming the South Natick birds, Robinson would like to thank Richard Lent and Eliot Taylor for, respectively, doing the leg-work and for describing the history of the South Natick birds. He also thanks the birders who will seek the Red-bellied Woodpeckers with as much respect for creatures as for checklists.

#### THISTLE SHORTAGE

Embargo on thistle from India because it is being used for its oil content which in turn is being consumed as protein for human consumption. Food, and in particular protein, is very short in India so the government took these steps.

Previously most thistle came from Ethiopia but has declined in the last two years.

#### DEFECTIVE COPIES OF BIRD OBSERVER

It has come to our attention that several copies of our last issue had three sets of blank pages. If your copy was among these please contact our subscription manager: Ted Atkinson, 462 Trapelo Road, Belmont, Massachusetts 02178. We will gladly replace your defective issue.

A BREEDING RECORD FOR THE ACADIAN FLYCATCHER IN MASSACHUSETTS

by Wayne R. Petersen, Whitman

The distributional history of the Acadian Flycatcher (Empidonax virescens) in the Northeast is one of withdrawal and then gradual recolonization. The American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American Birds (5th edition) describes the Acadian Flycatchers' northeastern breeding range as, "... southern New York, northeastern Pennsylvania, and southwestern Connecticut, casually from Vermont and Massachusetts, south ... ." To this should be pointed out the fact that the single Vermont record (Bennington, 1904) is rather tenuous (see Bagg and Eliot, 1937) and that the species has nested only once in Massachusetts. The single Massachusetts nesting occurred in June 1888, when Fred W. Hill collected one parent and a nest with three eggs in Hyde Park, Suffolk County. The specimen now rests as #245093 at Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology.

Bull (1974) gives the status of the Acadian Flycatcher in New York as, "Formerly a local breeder; since 1900 has greatly decreased; now a rare migrant only; no definite breeding for over 45 years." Bull further describes two widely separated geographical units in the New York region: southeastern--Long Island and lower Hudson Valley; and western--Finger Lakes region and Lake Ontario plain. The southeastern population, most especially that on Long Island, may be of significance in the context of events since 1968.

A close perusal of National Audubon Society's American Birds for the past decade reveals that in 1968 the Acadian Flycatcher nested in New England for the first time since the 1906 records cited by Forbush (1927) and Sage and Bishop (1913). The year 1968 marked the beginning of a more or less continuous breeding trend in the Northeast. After the first nesting at Devil's Hopyard State Park, East Haddam, Connecticut, that state had two or three breeding pairs by 1970. In June and July of 1976 and 1977, Acadian Flycatchers nested in Rhode Island in the Parker Woodland near Vernon, establishing first and second state breeding records. Further south, in the Long Island section of John Bull's "southeastern unit", the species made an abortive nesting attempt in 1972 near Nyack on eastern Long Island. By 1973, P. A. Buckley and T. H. Davis stated in American Birds that, "Acadian [Flycatchers] probably bred at 2-3 Long Island locations (a most recent occurrence) ... " (AB, 27:851). By 1976, Buckley and others maintained that the "Acadian Flycatcher continued to consolidate its newly reconquered range in the New York part of the Region ... " (AB, 30:937).

It thus appears that the Acadian Flycatcher is gradually expanding its range northeastward, or is at least reclaiming a previously marginal portion of its northeastern distribution. The probable origin of this northeastward expansion is very likely the coastal plain population existing south of New York and which has gradually colonized Long Island, Connecticut and Rhode Island. To these recent breeding areas should now be added southeastern Massachusetts.

A recent increase in Massachusetts' Acadian Flycatcher migration records were properly put into perspective when the Manomet Bird Observatory

began intensive banding studies in the early 1970's. As a result of continuous late spring mist netting, the species was found to be a regular migrant in small numbers, while field observers began to detect a corresponding increase in singing birds, some being present well into the month of June. With the increase of more reliable banding techniques and increasing sight records of singing birds, the statement by Griscom and Snyder (1955) that the Acadian Flycatcher was a "Casual summer resident . . . . All sight records and banding records of trapped birds are rejected since specimens collected were only Least Flycatchers," is now grossly outdated. Since 1970, the species has proven to be of annual occurrence in the eastern part of the Commonwealth, with records extending north to Essex County and west to the Connecticut Valley area.

This trend seemed to point to the inevitable re-nesting of the Acadian Flycatcher in Massachusetts. This breeding was realized in 1977. On June 26, 1977, the writer, accompanied by Kathleen Anderson, observed a singing Acadian Flycatcher in Middleboro, Plymouth County. The bird was not far from the Lakeville town line and was within a mile of Lake Assawompsett. The habitat was a wooded glen, watered with a small brook and overgrown with maples, ash, tupelo, American holly, locust and a variety of smaller shrubs. While being observed, the bird sang two songs typical of the species; however the characteristic "wee-seet" song was most frequent.

A return visit by the writer on the 29th confirmed the presence of a highly territorial pair of birds, with all indications of the area being a probable nesting site. Confident of establishing a nesting record, another visit on the 30th with Richard Forster and Elizabeth Phillips was successful in producing a partially constructed nest about 10' above the ground, braced on a horizontal fork 7' from the trunk of a large tupelo tree. Not wishing to disturb the birds further, a return visit was delayed until July 8th, at which time a parent bird was incubating eggs while the mate called nearby. A final visit on July 17th found the nest empty and only one adult on hand. Evidence suggested that the nest was robbed by a predator, as no remains of egg shells or other traces of fledging were present. The nest was collected and is now in the possession of the writer.

While such range expansions can prove temporary (for example, Hooded Warbler [Wilsonia citrina]), it is likely, if the present trend continues, that in years to come Massachusetts' ornithologists will find an increase in the breeding status of the Acadian Flycatcher in the Commonwealth.

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#### DRUMLIN FARM PEREGRINES

Of the three Peregrine Falcons raised at Drumlin Farm in Lincoln, as part of the Cornell University Peregrine Project, only one may be still surviving in the wild. One Peregrine was accidentally electrocuted this summer, and a second was shot by a person shooting pigeons in Cranbury, New Jersey. In an out-of-court settlement with the New Jersey Division of Fish and Game, Stanley Bystreck agreed to pay \$2,000.00 to the Peregrine Project. This sum is approximately the cost of rearing a replacement according to Thomas Cade, director of the Peregrine Project.

T. H. A.

#### NEW BREEDING SPECIES

The Breeding Bird Atlas Project has completed the fourth year of its five year study. So far 13 species have been confirmed that are new breeders to the state of Massachusetts or have not been known to breed here for decades. The most recent confirmations have been Rusty Blackbirds in Savoy State Forest, Red-bellied Woodpeckers in South Natick, and Acadian Flycatchers in Middleboro. Other nesting species are Glossy Ibis', Cattle Egrets, Louisiana Herons, Willets, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Northern Shovelers, Ruddy Ducks, American Wigeons, Fish Crows, and Common Loons. Both the Ruddy Ducks and Common Loons were nesters many years ago, and the only previous nesting of Acadian Flycatchers occurred at Hyde Park in 1888.

T. H. A.

#### 150 BALD EAGLES

The wintering population of Bald Eagles in the state of Maine may be about 150. This number was arrived at by ground and aerial observations by the Eagle Project at the University of Maine, Orono.

T. H. A.



## HIGH HOPES FOR THE WHOOPER

by Paul M. Roberts, Somerville

Several times during this century the total number of migratory Whooping Cranes has dropped to less than 20, and the species has seemed on the verge of extinction. While the whooper's future is by no means assured, there is now more hope for the species' survival than there has been in decades. Reports from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service indicate that 1977 will be a banner year for the crane.

The major whooper flock, which breeds and summers in Wood Buffalo National Park, Canada, had 69 birds return to the nesting grounds in 1977. This flock produced 34 eggs, two of which were eaten by predators. Of the remainder, 16 were removed and placed in the nests of Sandhill Cranes in Gray's Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Idaho. This marked the second year in which eggs were transferred from Canada to Idaho in an attempt to establish a second breeding ground, which would greatly improve the endangered species' survival potential. Of the eggs transferred in 1976, six birds fledged. That total was reduced to five in May when one of the yearlings was found dead in Wyoming, the victim of a mysterious three-inch gash on the under side of its left leg. Of the 16 eggs transferred this year, 12 have hatched and survived. Of the eggs left at Wood Buffalo Park 15 hatched, producing a total of 27 chicks.

Breeding success has also been reported from the U.S. Government's Patuxent Wildlife Research Center at Laurel, Maryland. After years of study and research, biologists have developed a successful breeding program for the center's 14 captive whoopers. Beginning in mid-February, the birds are exposed to an artificial prolongation of their daylight hours. The period of "sunshine" is increased about three percent weekly from 14 hours in February to almost 24 hours in June, in an attempt to simulate the photoperiod of the cranes' experience in their nesting grounds in Canada's Northwest Territories. The Patuxent birds have entered breeding condition, but as the Whooping Crane has not yet mated in captivity, the females have been artificially inseminated.

A whooper in the wild will normally lay two eggs, but usually only one chick will survive. Last year the four breeding pairs at Patuxent laid only five eggs. This year they produced 22! By regularly removing eggs from their nest, one pair of cranes was encouraged to lay a total of nine eggs! In May, eight of the Maryland eggs were flown to Gray's Lake, to be placed in the nests of the Sandhill Cranes. But a 17 1/2 inch snowstorm caused the foster parents to abandon their nests, including two whooper chicks and the six remaining eggs. Several weeks later six additional eggs were flown to Idaho, three of which hatched. Although one of these chicks died, a fourth egg was still being incubated by Sandhill Cranes in late June. At least three of the eggs kept at Patuxent also hatched.

The birds raised at Patuxent still confront a major problem. Long-legged birds raised in captivity are frequently afflicted with a serious leg problem which causes deformity and often death. Research

indicates that the problem might occur because the incubated chicks grow too quickly and do not receive sufficient exercise. In the future, eggs laid in Maryland too early to be transferred to Idaho will be incubated, hatched and reared in Maryland by captive Sandhill Cranes. The chicks will be fed a special diet designed to limit their calorie intake and they will be kept in large grassy enclosures which will enable them to get the exercise they need. Patuxent biologists are now considering a plan to keep the chicks with their foster parents for an entire year. The yearlings would then be transported to Gray's Lake where they would be stronger and better able to fend for themselves. This could considerably reduce the young whooper's mortality rate, often as high as 50 percent during the first year. Similar experiments with Sandhill Cranes have had encouraging results.

This year's captive breeding success has fostered even greater expectations for next year, since three additional pairs of whoopers at the research center are believed to be approaching sexual maturity. (There are five other Whooping Cranes in captivity: two breeding pairs at the San Antonio Zoo and one bird at the Audubon Park Zoo in New Orleans.)

The two wild flocks of whoopers are continuing to be carefully monitored. The chicks are quite vulnerable for several months following hatching, but this year the chicks at Gray's Lake are particularly susceptible to predation. The drought plaguing much of the nation has significantly lowered the marsh water levels, considerably reducing the amount of vegetation and saturated soil where the chicks can feed and find protection from coyotes. In an attempt to limit predation on the flock, refuge authorities have killed 12 coyotes so far this year.

There may now be as many as 126 Whooping Cranes in existence, but the final tally will not be taken until the Gray's Lake flock has migrated some 800 miles to New Mexico and the Canadian flock reaches the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas, some 2,450 miles south of its breeding grounds. If only half the birds hatched this spring reach the wintering grounds, it will be a spectacular year for the Whooping Crane.

\* \* \* \* \*

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service recently announced the release of a 50-minute film, "A Great White Bird," which traces the history of the movement to save the magnificent Whooping Crane from extinction. Produced by the National Film Board of Canada, in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Canadian Wildlife Service, the film was photographed on location in Canada's Northwest Territories and in Texas. "A Great White Bird" is available for a three-day rental at \$17.50, or for purchase at \$231.50. Inquiries should be addressed to the National Audiovisual Center, General Services Administration, Washington, D.C. 20409.

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## SUMMARY FOR JULY, 1977

July was very sunny, dry and warm. The temperature averaged 74.9°F, 1.6° above normal. This was the warmest July since 1975; it tied with 1910 and 1966 for the 8th warmest July in 107 years. This high average was due primarily to one prolonged heat wave from the 16th-21st, when the mercury reached 91° or higher each day, culminating with a reading of 102° on the 21st. This heat wave tied, with a 6 day run in 1963, as the third longest in July records; in 106 years of record the longest was 9 days in 1912. The maximum temperature of 102° this month is the highest for July since 1926, when the thermometer registered 103°. The temperature exceeded 90° on 9 separate days, nearly twice the overall average of 5 days per July. With the exception of the heat wave, much of the month was cool, many days (15) averaged below normal. The average daily maximum was 84°, the minimum 65.7°.

Rain totalled 2.21", .53" below normal. More than half of the total, 1.19", fell on the 25th.

### LOONS THROUGH TUBENOSES

The only summering Common Loons reported were singles at Marion July 9 (GM) and off Tuckernuck Is. July 14 (RAF), and a pair of Pied-billed Grebes with 5 young was noted at P.I. (v.o.). Typically, numbers of Northern Fulmars present on Georges Bank and surrounding waters had dwindled from the June totals to a count of 9 (4 dark, 5 light) made between Georges Bank and Cashes Ledge July 6-20 (RRV). Greater Shearwaters observed were estimated to number perhaps 10,000 on Georges July 6-20 (RRV), and scattered groups of 25 or less were observed coastally throughout the month. Fifteen Sooty Shearwaters were at Stellwagen Bank July 3 (RSH,MK), 12 were off Tuckernuck July 15 (RAF) and 100 were seen on Georges Bank July 6-20 (RRV). On Jeffries Ledge, a Manx Shearwater was seen July 20 (RSH,MK) and 3 were seen on the 27th (CWL). An Audubon's Shearwater was most carefully identified at point-blank range at the northern edge of the Gulf Stream, some 75 miles due south of Nantucket on the continental slope July 14 (RRV). At this locality, the species should prove to be of regular occurrence, considering its observed abundance just 100 miles to the south, in the Gulf Stream waters off Delaware. Leach's Storm-Petrels were common and widespread on Georges Bank and the southern Gulf of Maine July 6-20, with a pronounced concentration of 30+ in view at once on Cashes Ledge July 15 (RRV). A comparatively, though really not surprisingly, high concentration of 4000+ Wilson's Storm-Petrels was noted on Stellwagen Bank July 6 (RRV), perhaps indicative of a second year of high productivity for these waters. Single Gannets occurred July 3 at Stellwagen Bank (RSH) and July 27 at Jeffries Ledge (CWL).

### HERONS

Little Blue Herons numbered 14 in the state, with a count of 7 adults from Manchester near the nesting colony of House Island (PP) and 3 immatures at E. Boston (SZ) being the highest. Cattle Egrets frequented a farm in Marshfield throughout the month, the peak count being 16

July 9 (WRP). Elsewhere, 7 were observed at Topsfield July 11 (RSH) and singles occurred at Ipswich and Peabody. Eight Great Egrets were present at Manchester July 4 (PP) and 7 additional birds were reported from 5 localities. An immature Yellow-crowned Night Heron was at Annisquam July 16 (HTW) and an adult was at P.I. July 24-25 (GLS). Four Louisiana Herons were seen at Manchester (where a pair was first proven nesting in 1976) on the 4th (PP), and 3 were present at P.I. throughout the month. As of this year, the species nests as far north as Maine. Fifty Glossy Ibis were still present at P.I. on the 3rd (RT). An immature White Ibis was found July 11 at Weymouth, and was observed sporadically for the remainder of the month in Cohasset (S.Richman, F.Morano#, BAL#).

#### WATERFOWL THROUGH RAPTORS

Single laggard Brant were noted at Newburyport July 9 (RSH) and at Monomoy July 24 (MK#). Gadwall numbered 115 with 8 young at their stronghold on P.I. (RSH) and summering American Wigeon included two at GMNWR throughout the month (EWT) and one at P.I. July 16 (WRP#). A count of 150 Wood Ducks was made at GMNWR July 19 (RAF), further emphasizing that locality as the species' local center of abundance. Greater Scaup, all singles, were noted at Winthrop July 8 (SZ), at Newburyport July 16 (SH) and at Lakeville July 9 and 17 (WRP, SH). A female Red-breasted Merganser was noted at P.I. July 26 (MK). An immature Goshawk was reported from Sudbury July 21 (Mrs. Beaudette), and the only Red-shouldered Hawk reported was an adult at Newbury on the 3rd (JWB).

#### BOBWHITE THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

That Bobwhite still subsists in the Newburyport area is attested to by the observation of two there July 31 (RAF). A Sandhill Crane was found at Katama, M.V. July 25, where it remained until the 30th (GGD#). A King Rail was apparently heard calling at P.I. July 11 (RSH), where they have gone unreported for two breeding seasons. Four pairs of Common Gallinules were successful in raising young at GMNWR (RW). Totals of reported American Oystercatchers were 17 at Nantucket (NA#) and 12 at Monomoy (v.o.), though numbers of juvenals are not at hand. Note the accompanying tables summarizing the peak counts of the more abundant shorebird migrants from two prime staging areas, Newburyport-P.I. and Monomoy.

Newburyport-P.I.

	<u>7/2</u>	<u>7/5</u>	<u>7/9</u>	<u>7/11</u>	<u>7/14</u>	<u>7/16</u>	<u>7/23-24</u>	<u>7/26</u>	<u>7/31</u>
Semi. Plover					10			110	100
Blk.-bellied Plover					10				100
Gtr. Yellowlegs	2				32	40			
Lssr. Yellowlegs				1100		480	780		650
Least Sandpiper				100+			150+		100+
S.B. Dowitcher					950	600	780		775
Stilt Sandpiper	5	11	4	3				19	5
Semi. Sandpiper					1800		6600/8500		8400
Hudsonian Godwit							20		28

(RSH, MK, WRP, RRV#)

Monomoy

Scituate

	<u>7/24</u>	<u>7/27</u>	<u>7/29</u>
Semi. Plover	150+	200	350
Blk.-bellied Plover	80		
Ruddy Turnstone	25+		80
Greater Yellowlegs	35		
Lesser Yellowlegs	12		
Red Knot	67	1500	2000
Short-billed Dowitcher	600+		
Semi. Sandpiper	2500+		

(RRV, MJL, RSH#)

Twenty Piping Plovers were counted at Monomoy July 24 (MK#), a comparatively low total for recent years. Ten Whimbrels were at Monomoy July 24 (RRV, MK#) and 28 were seen at W. Dennis July 26 (P. Trull); no other flocks were observed. A pair of Upland Sandpipers successfully fledged 3 young in Marshfield (WRP) and at least one pair fledged two young at Newburyport; more may have nested at the latter locality as is suggested by a count of eight there July 12 (RSH). A Solitary Sandpiper July 2 at GMNWR was almost certainly a southbound migrant (JM), ten were observed there July 24 (RAF) and 12 were at S. Peabody July 27 (RSH). Of 12+ Willets at Monomoy July 24, one was said to be of the western inornatus race (RSH) and another "western" Willet was at Newburyport July 9 (RSH). In addition to the totals of Greater Yellowlegs listed above, counts of 70 at Cohasset July 24 (BAL) and 85 at E. Boston July 27 (RRV) were significant. Fifteen Lesser Yellowlegs occurred inland at GMNWR July 31 (EBC), and 80+ Red Knot were at E. Boston July 18 (SZ). The counts of Red Knot at Scituate were particularly high for recent years (cf. 300, 3000+, 600+, 900 totals since 1973).

Three Purple Sandpipers at Tuckernuck Is. July 31 (RRV, MJL) were surprising, although not unprecedented. Pectoral Sandpipers built up to totals of 9 July 27 at GMNWR (EWT) and 16 July 31 at P.I. (RSH#).

White-rumped Sandpipers were particularly scarce; the only reports being of singles July 17, 23, 25 at P.I. (v.o.). A Curlew Sandpiper in virtually complete alternate plumage was present at P.I.-Newburyport July 14-31 (MK, RSH#). Twelve Dunlin had arrived at Monomoy by July 24 (RRV#). Quite regular in mid-July, an adult Long-billed Dowitcher occurred at W. Newbury July 23rd (WRP#).

A Marbled Godwit, a species that is virtually never reported away from the coast, occurred at Hadley July 24-27 (TG#). A Marbled Godwit was seen at P.I. July 23rd (HD'E#) and two were at Monomoy July 29-31 (CAG#). In addition to the tabulated counts of Hudsonian Godwits, four were seen at E. Boston July 8 (SZ) and two were there July 27 (RRV). Sanderlings numbered 600-700 at Monomoy July 24 (MK, RSH). A particularly early Red Phalarope was reported in a flock with four Northern in the vicinity of the southern edge of Jeffries Ledge July 20 (EP, SG). Five Wilson's Phalaropes occurred in July; they included one at P.I. on the 3rd (BBC-Timberlake), one at Monomoy and one at WBWS on the 23rd (CAG, WWB), one at Nauset on the 24th (BN), and one at Concord on the 27th (RAF).

#### JAEGERS THROUGH SKIMMERS

Four "subadult" Pomarine Jaegers were observed in the waters southwest of Nantucket July 13-15 (RAF), while the only Parasitic Jaegers observed were 1 immature in Nantucket Sound July 4 (RRV, MJL) and 2 light-phase adults from shore at P.I. on the 31st (RSH#). In addition, RAF# noted 4 unidentified jaegers off Nantucket July 13-15. The group from MBO (AWN, JB, WRP, RAF#) noted 2-3 separate skuas (sp?) to the southwest of Nantucket, one within sight of land, July 13-15, all of which were described as being very dark in coloration. Five additional skuas (sp?) were observed between the eastern portion of Georges Bank and the southern Gulf of Maine July 6-20 (RRV), but again these blackish individuals could not safely be assigned to species. Summering, non-breeding Ring-billed Gulls numbered 110 non-adults at Newburyport July 9 (RSH), where 120 immature Bonaparte's Gulls were also counted July 12 (RSH), and 100-200 Bonaparte's Gulls were present throughout the month at Revere (SZ). One-three adult Black-headed Gulls were sporadically observed at Revere Beach throughout the month (SZ) and one was reported at Newburyport on the 30th (JG). Laughing Gulls were said to number 500 adults and young at their nesting colony on Monomoy July 12 (RAF). A Little Gull occurred at Provincetown in "early July" (fide WWB) and an adult was at Revere Beach July 21 (SZ). Summering sub-adult Black-legged Kittiwakes numbered 8 at Provincetown July 10 (JM#). Common and Roseate Terns numbered 6000 and 1000, respectively, at the nesting colony on Monomoy (RAF), 250+ Commons were observed throughout the month around P.I. (v.o.) and 60 Roseates were found at Scituate July 27 (WRP). Eight adult and two young Arctic Terns were reported from the Plymouth Beach colony July 16 (HD'E#). July Royal Terns included 2 at Plymouth Beach on the 4th (HD, DC), one "off P.I." July 20 (SG, EP) and one adult at P.I. July 26 (RSH, MK). A Caspian Tern in Newburyport Harbor July 11 was seasonally unusual and perhaps represented a vagrant of southern origin as opposed to a bird from the Gulf of St. Lawrence colonies. A Black Skimmer was particularly far north at Ipswich July 4 (JN) and 2 were seen in the Chatham-Monomoy area July 16-21 (WWH, RAF).

### CUCKOOS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Three Yellow-billed and 10 Black-billed Cuckoos were reported, all singles, from scattered localities throughout the month (v.o.). Four Screech Owls were found in Waltham July 21 (KB), and one returned to a traditional locality at Lanesville July 27 (HTW). Two young Horned Owls were quite late in Middleboro (DB), 2 Barred Owls were in Lakeville July 17 (WRP) and 1-2 Short-eared Owls were present at Monomoy, although no evidence of nesting was noted. Two pairs of Red-bellied Woodpeckers were confirmed nesting, by the location of fledged young in each case, at Adamsdale and Natick. The nest in Adamsdale was found July 3 (RAF,DC) while the adults in Natick were first seen with young July 4 (LJR,EWT#). These represent the first confirmed nestings for Massachusetts.

### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH THRUSHES

In Middleboro, the Acadian Flycatcher nest discovered in June was noted to hold 3 eggs July 8 (WRP), although the nest was later abandoned, perhaps due to predation. Willow Flycatchers were finally documented as breeding in Plymouth County as WRP discovered 2 active nests (4 eggs, 2 eggs) in Marshfield July 2-9. A count of 225 Bank Swallows at P.I. July 14 was quite high, and nesting Cliff Swallows were located in Haverhill (4 nests - PM#), Ipswich (5 nests - JWB) and W. Townsend (4 nests - RAF). The largest Purple Martin colonies in our area are in Middleboro, where 90-100 pairs with 75 young were counted (DB#) and P.I. where "100" were noted July 18 (GLS). A Tufted Titmouse at P.I. July 5 (RSH) was unusual in that the species is extremely sensitive to natural barriers such as open water or marshes and therefore is very slow in colonizing ecological as well as geographical islands. (Tufted Titmouse has yet to be recorded at Nantucket.) Two Hermit Thrushes were found in suitable nesting habitat at Ashby July 11 (RAF).

### KINGLET THROUGH WARBLERS

Another exciting discovery was that of a pair of nesting Golden-crowned Kinglets in Lakeville. The adults were found feeding young in the nest July 9 (WRP) after being noted as present in the area for most of the summer. Single "Brewster's" Warblers were noted in Golden-winged Warbler colonies in Framingham July 2 (RAF) and West Newbury July 23 (RSH). Other warblers noted on possible territories in suitable nesting habitat included a Nashville singing in Framingham July 2 (RAF), four Black-throated Blues singing at Ashby July 11 (RAF), 2 pairs of Golden-wingeds and 4 individual Blue-wingeds in Framingham and 4 Blue-wingeds in Sherborn July 5 (RAF). A Louisiana Waterthrush was carefully identified at Lakeville July 9 (SH,WRP).

### ORIOLES THROUGH SPARROWS

Orchard Oriole reports included an adult and an immature in Framingham July 4 (RAF), an adult in S. Peabody July 10 (RSH), and an immature at Marshfield July 16 (RSH). Both the presence of a Pine Siskin at Provincetown July 15 (PAB) and the presence of 2 Red Crossbills at Annisquam on the 26th (HTW) and one at Framingham the same day (RAF) are indicative of possible upcoming winter irruptions of these species

into our area. The presence of 6 Savannah Sparrows in Saugus July 8 strongly suggests their breeding there (SZ), and four Seaside Sparrows were noted at Newburyport on the 24th (SG). Any evidence of breeding for this species, at the extreme northern periphery of its known breeding range at Newburyport, would be of interest. Griscom (1955) lists breeding evidence from 1953, but no more recent date is at hand. Finally, 3 Vesper Sparrows were observed in Halifax July 24 (WRP), but no breeding evidence was noted.

RRV

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## SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 1977

August was hot and dry, the mercury averaged 73.4°, 2.1° above normal. This was the warmest August since 1973, and the 14th warmest in 107 years. The first 10 days were hot, averaging 5° above normal, while the rest of the month was mostly very moderate and comfortable. A short hot spell brought 95° highs on both the 28th and 29th. The average daily maximum was 82.3°, the low averaged 64.5°.

Rain totaled 2.91 inches, 0.55 under normal and only a bit over a third of last year's wet August. Measurable amounts fell on 12 days; the most in 24 hours was 0.71 inch on the 1-2nd. Many northern suburbs had much more, up to several inches in heavy showers.

Fog was a frequent visitor, noted on 17 days. There was dense fog on the 12th and 31st.

Northwest winds, those favorable for fall migration, occurred on the 20th and 25th.

### LOONS THROUGH HERONS

A record count of 225 Common Loons for the month of August was noted on a fishing party boat from Gloucester to Georges Bank on the 29th (RSH, MK), the previous high count for August was 49 off Monomoy in 1941.

Fifty Cory's Shearwaters were reported off Tuckernuck Island on the 2nd (RRV, MJL) and 38 were seen out of Woods Hole on the 6th (GRF). These counts are considerably higher than in previous years with only one reported in August 1976, 6 in 1975 and a total of 34 in August 1973. Thirty Greater Shearwaters were noted off Monomoy on the 10th (WRP). The Brookline Bird Club recorded over 500 at Stellwagen Bank on the 28th (BBC-WCD, HW#), and 920 were noted on a fishing party boat from Gloucester - Georges Bank, the majority being seen in the vicinity of Pollocks Rip (RSH, MK). Sooty Shearwaters were noted off Monomoy on the 10th, when 8 were counted (WRP), 25 were recorded at Stellwagen Bank on the 28th (BBC-WCD, HW#), and in the vicinity of Pollocks Rip on the 28th over 100 were observed (RSH, MK). Manx Shearwaters were recorded in usual numbers with 8 being noted at Stellwagen Bank (BBC-WCD, HW) and 11 recorded at or near Pollocks Rip on the 28th (RSH, MK). On the 31st a single Manx was noted at Sandy Neck, Barnstable (DTB#) and 2 were observed at Provincetown (BN#) on the same day.

Over 300 Wilson's Storm-Petrels were noted at Stellwagen Bank on the 28th (BBC-WCD, HW), and on the same day 760 were counted in the Pollock Rip - Georges Bank area (RSH, MK). Five Gannets were noted on Cape Cod Bay on the 11th (SZ) and one was seen at Sandy Neck, Barnstable, on the 31st (JM#).

At Great Meadows, Concord, as many as 10 Great Blue Herons were noted (v.o.) and a Great Egret was present there throughout the month (v.o.). Herons were coming to a roost at Plum Island each evening and the following counts were made: Great Egrets, 10; Little Blue Herons, 4 adults, 15 immature, 1 pied plumage; Snowy Egrets, 350; and Louisiana Herons, 4 (W. Byrne). Immature Little Blue Herons were noted in East

Boston on the 5th (SZ), in Weston on the 7th (LJR), the first Weston record since 1915 (R.B. May), and on Nantucket on the 28th (SZ); another pied plumaged bird was found in Duxbury on the 17th (R. Walton). At Ipswich as many as 45-50 Cattle Egrets were present (J. Nove#), and in Marshfield 10 were noted all month (v.o.). The Forbush Bird Club recorded 35 Great Egrets on a trip from Fall River - Westport (D.Crompton#). There were no less than 10 individual Yellow-crowned Night Herons during the month on Cape Cod, with 5 at a roost in Eastham (fide BN). Two immature Yellow-crowned Night Herons were also reported from the 25th on at P.I. (RSH#). Least Bitterns were present throughout the month at Plum Island with at least two birds reported.

A total of 46 Glossy Ibis' were counted at Rowley on the 6th (RHS#). The highlight of the month was an immature WHITE IBIS first noted at the North River, Scituate, on the 21st (Ellie Sabin and v.o.), and found again on the 28th at Third Cliff, Scituate (Neil and Sharon Osborne). The only recent records were that of an immature bird in the Dartmouth - Westport area 23 August '75 on; and presumably the same bird in Chatham on 19 August '75. Three were seen flying over Westhampton on 12 May '74.

#### WATERFOWL THROUGH SANDHILL CRANE

A single Brant was noted off Monomoy on the 10th (WRP), the only other recent August record was in 1974 when 8 were present throughout at Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary. Gadwalls continue to increase as breeding birds and a maximum of 50 were noted at Plum Island on the 1st (MK). American Wigeons were noted at GMNWR on the 21st (BBC-JFK) and 3 were seen at Plum Island on the 30th (F. Maher). Sixty-five Wood Ducks were counted at GMNWR on the 6th (BBC-A+NC) and one was observed on Monomoy on the 10th (WRP), this is exceptionally unusual for the island.

Single Greater Scaups were noted at Squantum on the 8th (WRP), and in Danvers on the 9th (RSH). A single Bufflehead was reported from Acoaxet on the 6th (FBC-DCC). White-winged Scoters were moving on the 31st when 175 were counted at Sandy Neck, where 22 Surf Scoters were also recorded (DTB, JM). A pair of Ruddy Ducks with eight young were observed at Plum Island on the 27th (HTW). Single Hooded Mergansers were noted at Tuckernuck on the 6th (RRV, MJL), in West Newbury on the 26th (WRP), and on Monomoy on the 26th (BN, CAG).

An immature Goshawk was observed in West Newbury on the 14th (RSH), and a Sharp-shinned Hawk was present throughout the month in Middleboro (DB). A wing-tagged immature Bald Eagle was noted from the 18th - 31st in the Orleans - Wellfleet area (v.o. fide BN). As many as 8 Marsh Hawks were noted on Nantucket during the last week of the month (SZ), and 3 were seen at P.I. (RMB#). A banded Peregrine Falcon was noted at P.I. on the 16th. James and Bonnie Baird were able to read the tag as the bird perched close by (2/8/M). An untagged Peregrine adult was noted at Monomoy on the 18th (J. Nelson#). One Merlin was noted at Sandy Neck, Barnstable, on the 31st (DTB, JM). (The Sandhill Crane was seen again on the 8th on Marthas Vineyard (fide SZ); and was noted on Penikese Island on the 26th (Leslie Chalmers).

JAEGERS, GULLS AND TERNS

The Brookline Bird Club trip to Stellwagen Bank on the 28th produced 5 Pomarine, 3 Parasitic and 12 unidentified jaegers (WCD, HW#). Single Pomarine Jaegers were also noted off Sandwich on the 24th (RFP), and another in the vicinity of Pollocks Rip on the 29th (RSH, MK). At the south end of Plum Island and in the Ipswich area between 3-4 Parasitic Jaegers were noted from the 9th on (R. Moore#, v.o.). On a trip from Gloucester to Georges Bank 7 Parasitics were noted on the 29th (RSH, MK), and on the 31st 4 were observed at Provincetown (BN, DW), and 3 at Sandy Neck, Barnstable (DTB, JM).

Black-headed Gulls were noted only at Revere where an adult was seen at Point of Pines on the 24th (SZ), and another was found at Monomoy on the 26th (BN, CAG). Laughing Gulls continue to increase with as many as 200 still at Monomoy throughout the month (v.o.) and a maximum of 8 at Plum Island on the 30th (F. Maher, v.o.). At Acoaxet, the Forbush Bird Club totalled 100 on the 6th (D.C.C.), and 75 were noted on the BBC boat trip from Lynn to Stellwagen (WCD, HW). An amazing 600 Bonaparte's Gulls were counted in Revere on the 13th (SZ), where there were never less than 300 present during the month. At Newburyport 1-2 adult Little Gulls were present throughout the month and another adult was found at Revere on the 18th (SZ). The highlight of the month was an adult Sabine's Gull found at sea on the 28th (BBC-WCD, HW + v.o.). The only other recent August record was an adult present on Monomoy from the 9th-24th in 1974. A single Black-legged Kittiwake was noted at Stellwagen Bank on the 28th (BBC-WCD, HW).

A Gull-billed Tern was reported from Plymouth Beach on the 13th, however no details were submitted (H + DC). A total of 8 Forster's Terns were noted with 7 south of Boston (v.o.). During the month reports of maximum Common Terns came from Monomoy where 1500+ were noted on the 20th (RHS#), Nantucket where 4000+ were recorded on the 24th (SZ), and a maximum of 500+ at Plum Island on the 25th (RSH#). Arctic Terns were carefully noted at Plum Island on the 7th when 1 adult was seen (RSH), and from Monomoy on the 10th when 1 adult and 2 immatures were observed (WRP). A maximum count of 170 Roseate Terns was made on the 25th at Plum Island (RSH + v.o.). At the beginning of the month 20 or more Least Terns were noted at Plum Island (BBC-MK) and by the 27th only one was seen (BBC-IG). Royal Terns were noted at Revere on the 3rd when 3 were observed at Point of Pines (SZ), and 2 were observed at Acoaxet on the 6th (FBC-DCC). Single Royal Terns were seen in South Yarmouth on the 12th (KH), at Ipswich on the 14th (JN) and at Plymouth on the 20th (H + DC#). Many Black Terns and especially Black Skimmers were noted during the month. Most of the skimmers were juveniles, indicating post breeding dispersal from their breeding grounds.

Black Terns:

thr,10	P.I., Monomoy	1-4,5	v.o.,WRP#
10,18	Yarmouth,Brewster	4,3	PT,JBryant
24-30,31	Nantucket, Barnstable	15,8	SZ,DTB#

Black Skimmers:

tr.	Monomoy, Nauset	max 8/20(16 imm, 2ad), max 8	v.o., ICTW#
12 on	Plymouth Beach	max 8(8/29)	H+DC#+v.o.
13-20, 15	Brewster, Sandwich	2imm, 2imm	JBryant, PT
31	Barnstable (SN)	7imm, 1ad	DTB, JM

SHOREBIRDS



Hudsonian Godwits in flight, photographed by Dick Veit on Monomoy, August 1977.

NEWBURYPORT - AUGUST, 1977

<u>Species</u>	4	7	10	11	14	16	18	20	21	26	27
Semipalmated Plovers					200+			100+	300		
Black-bellied Plovers					300	325		700	430	950	
Greater Yellowlegs	40	45	90		140	125			85		
Lesser Yellowlegs	600	500		340	150	175					
Short-billed Dowitchers	750				235		340			160	90
Long-billed Dowitchers				2		2			2	6	
Stilt Sandpipers	27	15		10	9		13			16	2
Semi-palmated Sandpipers	8500	8000		6600	2900	2500				800	
Hudsonian Godwits		33			45						11

MONOMOY - AUGUST 1977

	6	7	10	13	20
Semipalmated Plovers		600			125
Black-bellied Plovers	300		500+		650
Greater Yellowlegs	100+				150
Lesser Yellowlegs					125
Short-billed Dowitchers	600+				125
Stilt Sandpipers			10		
Hudsonian Godwits	146			100	55

The above tables depict the occurrence of shorebirds during the month of August at the two major staging areas in Massachusetts, Newburyport and Monomoy. Most apparent from these tables are the gradual diminishing of totals of Lesser Yellowlegs, Short-billed Dowitchers and Semipalmated Sandpipers during the course of the month. This decline in number correlates with the departure of adults on their southward flight. The later influx of juvenals (in the case of Semipalmated Sandpipers) is not apparent from these data, although the number of juvenals present at Newburyport increased markedly by the last week of August.

Also note the gradual departure of Hudsonian Godwits from a peak of 146 at Monomoy, and the comparatively low overall total for Stilt Sandpipers in the state (cf. 60, 126, 44, 71 totals since 1973).

The high count of Piping Plovers at Monomoy was a low 15 on August 20 (DJA, RRV), while a count of 85 Killdeers at Newburyport on August 16 was impressive (RRV). Golden Plovers totalled 57 for the month including one flock of 50 at Martha's Vineyard on August 30 (fide WWB). The higher counts of Ruddy Turnstones were 15 at Monomoy on August 13 (H.D'E#), 22 at Ipswich on August 15 (JN), and 60 at the south end of P.I. on August 21 (HM, RRV, MJL). Whimbrels numbered 140+ at Monomoy on August 9 (CAG, BN) and 35 at Nantucket on August 24 (SZ), and a count of 16 Upland Sandpipers at Marshfield on August 4 was unusually high for any locality (WRP). Solitary Sandpipers totalled 24 from 11 localities, including one at Monomoy on August 20 (BBC-RHS#), and one at Sandy Neck, Barnstable, August 31 (DTB). Six-eight Willets were reported from Monomoy throughout the month (v.o.) and four other singles were reported along the coast from the Cape to P.I., with 7 on P.I. on the 31st (RMB + v.o.). A pure albino Red Knot was found with a flock of 18 others at S.N. August 31 (JM#); while larger flocks of this species were 300+ at E. Boston August 5 (SZ), 75 at Chatham August 16 (HMF) and 100+ at Duxbury August 7 (RW). Two Purple Sandpipers, reportedly immatures, found at Plymouth Beach August 17 (NH) were certainly early migrants. Pectoral Sandpipers totalled about 60 in August, with no particular concentration reported. White-rumped Sandpipers totalled a very low 30, with 9-10 at P.I. August 18-26 (v.o.) (cf. 90+, 85, 8, 20± totals since 1973). Two Baird's Sandpipers at P.I. August 27-31 (RSH, RRV#, RMB) were unique. The Curlew Sandpiper discovered in July was still present at Newburyport August 4, and was noted to be in advanced molt (RSH). Two-five Dunlin were present on Monomoy throughout the month (WRP, RHS). Two Long-billed Dowitchers at Monomoy August 10 were comparatively early and unusual for that locality (WRP). Following a particularly weak showing in New England in the fall of 1976, Western Sandpipers were reported with some regularity this month. Reports included two at Monomoy and two at Nauset August 7 (WRP), 4 adults at Rowley August 16 (RRV), and two at Monomoy August 20 (RHS#). A Buff-breasted Sandpiper August 2 at Plymouth Beach was early (HC, DC); one was at Duxbury August 16 (RW), four were in the Newburyport region August 21 (RRV, MJL) and a single was at P.I. August 27-28 (RSH). Marbled Godwits were at Monomoy (1 - 6th WRP), (2 - 13th HD'E) and at Falmouth August 16 (1 G. Peabody), at P.I. August 16-25 (1 - RPE). A basic plumaged Ruff was at Newburyport on August 4 (RSH, MK) and a female (Reeve) at Hadley, in the Connecticut Valley, was most unusual for that inland locality (TG). A count of 3000 Sanderlings was made at Monomoy August 6 (WRP), and an American Avocet

was at North Beach, Chatham, August 16 (H<sub>u</sub>F). Wilson's Phalaropes numbered about 8, all from the P.I. area except for 2 at GMNWR August 21 and 1 there August 31 (RAF). Fifty-two unidentified phalaropes were seen in the vicinity of Pollocks Rip August 29 where 7 Northern's were identified (RSH, MK), and 10 Northern's were observed at Stellwagen Bank August 28 (WCD#).

#### CUCKOOS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

More cuckoos were reported this August than in the previous 4 years; here is the breakdown:

Yellow-billed Cuckoo:

6,14 on	Rowley, Middleboro	1,1	RHS#,DB
21,28,31	GMNWR,Nantucket,Nahant	1,1,1	RAF,SZ,MK

Black-billed Cuckoo:

thr,4,5	Middleboro,Salem,MNWS	2,1,1	DB+RB,CB,CB
6,7,14	Annisquam,P.I.,Marion	6,1,1	HTW,RSH,GM
24,31	Nantucket,Nahant	1,2	SZ,MK

A Great Horned Owl was hooting every 15 seconds for about 10 minutes on the 28th in Norfolk (RMB), where a Saw-whet Owl was found on the 10th (RMB). Five Short-eared Owls were seen together on the north end of Monomoy on the 20th (BBC-RHS). Two Barred Owls were noted on the 20th in Lancaster (HM). Common Nighthawks were migrating by month's end, but more would come in September. The Massachusetts Audubon Society is conducting a special Nighthawk watch; the full report will appear in our September records. Over 100 Chimney Swifts were seen in Salem on the 23rd (MK) and a Pileated Woodpecker was noted in Weston on the 11th (W. Conway).

#### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SHRIKES

As many as 25 Eastern Kingbirds were recorded from Plum Island during the month. A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was carefully noted at Marblehead Neck on the 28th (RSH). Olive-sided Flycatchers were reported from Winchester on the 18th (M. Martinek), and one each from Monomoy and Wellfleet on the 26th (CAG,BN). Two Least Flycatchers on the 28th in Weston was the first record in three years (LJR).

Tree Swallows were building up to over 6000 at Plum Island by month's end and over 300 were noted in Bolton on the 28th (HM). Two adult and 5 young Rough-winged Swallows were noted at GMNWR on the 3rd (fide RAF), and two were seen in Chatham on the 6th (WRP#). A single Cliff Swallow was noted at Lancaster on the 27th (HM). Over 100 Purple Martins were counted on Plum Island on the 6th (RHS#), and only 2 were seen there on the 25th (HTW).

A single Fish Crow was seen in Whitman on the 25th (WRP), none were reported elsewhere. Red-breasted Nuthatches were widely reported in good numbers, with fair numbers on Cape Cod. As many as 15 were noted in Lancaster (HM) and 12 were reported from Rockport on the 17th (RSH).

Only one Hermit Thrush was reported during the month, at Dennis on the 25th (J. Bryant). Four Swainson's Thrushes were recorded from Baldwinville on the 11th (JO'R), and one from Marblehead Neck on the 26th (MK). Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were noted in Rowley on the 16th (RRV#) and in Rockport on the 17th (RSH). A Loggerhead Shrike was noted at Pochet, Orleans, sometime around the 21st (D.Comeau,P.Nagorniuk).

#### VIREOS THROUGH WARBLERS

An immature White-eyed Vireo at Plum Island on the 31st was the only report for the month (RMB), a single Solitary Vireo was noted in Chatham on the 31st (BN#). Philadelphia Vireos were reported from Plum Island with as many as 3 birds observed (RSH+v.o.); Marblehead Neck reported a maximum of 3 from the 25th on (MK) and 3 were noted on Monomoy on the 26th (CAG,BN). A Warbling Vireo at Provincetown on the 27th was the only report during the month (BN).

One of the largest August waves of warblers in recent years occurred on the 26th, especially on the outer Cape. Warblers were present in every suitable patch of habitat from Chatham to Provincetown. According to Blair Nikula, even by the most conservative estimates the total warbler population on the outer Cape only during this period was 100,000 to 150,000 birds! (4-5 birds per acre X approximately 30,000 suitable acres - 1/2 the total acreage of the outer Cape). Bay-breasted and Cape May Warblers comprised at least 80% of this total.

A single Prothonotary Warbler was reported on the 30th from Martha's Vineyard (fide WWB). Mark Kasprzyk noted many warblers at Marblehead Neck especially from the 26th on. Highlights included 4 Black and white, 1-2 Blue-winged (from the 19th on), 7 Tennessee, 4+ Magnolia, 12 Yellow-rumped, 1 Black-throated Green, 4+ Blackburnian, 1 Chestnut-sided, 70 Bay-breasted (RSH), 1 Blackpoll, 1 Connecticut (from the 25-31st) 5+ Wilson's, and 5 American Redstart.

From Cape Cod the following were noted during the month: Golden-winged Warbler, 1 at Chatham on the 21st, and another at Provincetown on the 27th (BN), 1 Orange-crowned at Barnstable on the 31st (DTB#), 1 Nashville from Dennis on the 28th (J.Bryant), 400 Cape May at Chatham on the 26th (CAG,BN), a Yellow-throated Warbler at Brewster on the 25th (J.Bryant) was carefully studied, 400 Bay-breasted at Chatham on the 26th (CAG,BN), one Kentucky Warbler in Chatham Center on the 28th (RVC) and another at Morris Island on the 31st (DW#), a Connecticut at Chatham on the 30th (fide WWB), 3 Mourning Warblers at Chatham on the 26th and 1 at Wellfleet on the same day (CAG,BN), a Yellow-breasted Chat on Monomoy on the 26th (CAG), and finally two Hooded Warblers - one at Chatham on the 20-21(RRV,CAG), and another at Monomoy on the 31st (BN,CAG).

Other warblers were a Brewster's at West Newbury on the 7th (RSH), 90 Cape Mays at Annisquam on the 26th (HTW), 7 Cape Mays were recorded from Lancaster on the 27th (HM). A Yellow-throated Warbler was noted in Annisquam on the 26th (HTW), 41 Bay-breasted Warblers were banded at Manomet on the 26th (Staff), where a Yellow-breasted Chat was banded on the 29th. A Louisiana Waterthrush was reported from Tuckernuck Island on the 8th (RRV,MJL), where a Hooded Warbler was noted on the 6th (RRV#). Another Hooded was found at Eastern Point, Gloucester, on the 28th (RRV,

MJL), where 12 Canada, 25 Bay-breasted and 1 Mourning were also noted.

#### BLACKBIRDS THROUGH SPARROWS

Over 80 Bobolinks were counted in Marshfield on the 4th (WRP) and 3 were noted in Annisquam on the 26th (HTW). A Yellow-headed Blackbird was found on Tuckernuck on the 8th (RRV,MJL) (cf. 2, 3, 4, 0 for the last 4 years during August, all but one reported from Cape Cod and the Islands). An Orchard Oriole from Plum Island on the 6th is quite unusual (TPG), and so too were 3 females from Tuckernuck on the 13th (RRV,MJL). Scarlet Tanagers and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were moving on the 26th with many being reported. A Blue Grosbeak was reported from Martha's Vineyard on the 30th (fide WWB). A single Evening Grosbeak was found at Annisquam on the 26th (HTW). Two Grasshopper Sparrows were observed in Falmouth on the 20th (RHS#). On the 13th 20 or more Sharp-tailed Sparrows were located at Plum Island (LJR), and 2 Seaside Sparrows were seen carrying food there on the 27th (RAF#). White-throated Sparrows returned to P.I. on the 25th when 2 were noted (RSH), and a Lincoln's Sparrow was seen and heard singing in Baldwinsville on the 26th (JO'R).

RHS,RRV

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CORRELEGENDA

FOR MAY 1977:

The statement in the May Summary (in reference to the Cape) "Landbird waves occurred on the 1st, 7th, 13th, 17-18th, and on the 27th, the last date being exceptional on Cape Cod," is misleading. The date is not unusual but the fact was the wave was produced by gusty Northwest winds.

FOR JUNE 1977:

The species name skua should not be capitalized, only when referring to a specific species is the name put in capital letters.

On the 29th of June only one pair of Acadian Flycatchers in Middleboro were noted, not two pairs as stated.

On the 26th of June, two pairs of Short-billed Marsh Wrens in Hadley were seen feeding young and extracting egg shells from the nest, not building a nest as stated.

FOR AUGUST 1977:

Delete Hooded Merganser: 6            Tuckernuck            1            RRV, MJL

ADDENDA

FOR MAY 1977

Gannet:

10            Eastham (1st Encounter)            500            BN

Yellow-crowned Night Heron:

thr.            S. Wellfleet (WBWS)            1 imm.            BN

Golden Plover:

9            Barnstable (SN)            2            RFP

Wilson's Phalarope:

17            Monomoy            6            fide BN

Black-headed Gull:

8-9            Nauset            1 ad.            v.o.

Alcid (sp):

11            Eastham (1st Encounter)            3 lg. unid.            BN

FOR JUNE 1977

Royal Tern:

12,30	Provincetown, Nauset should read	1,1	BN, BN
12,30	Provincetown, Nauset	2,3	BN, BN

FOR AUGUST 1977

Goshawk:

23	Grafton	1	Jeanne L. Johnson
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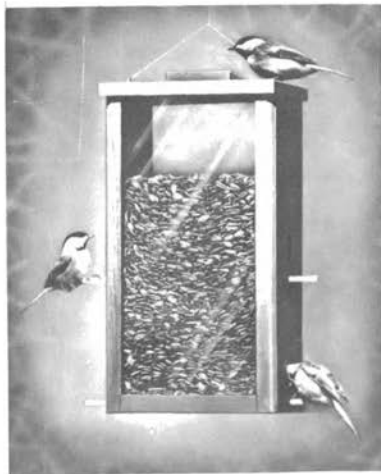
Tennessee Warbler:

27	Provincetown	40	BN
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From Manomet Bird Observatory the following banding records were received too late for inclusion in the summary: Gray Catbird 58 b 8/15; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 3 b 8/16, Yellow-throated Vireo 1 b 8/30; Philadelphia Vireo 1 b 8/26; Warbling Vireo 1 b 8/25; Golden-winged Warbler 1 b 8/26; Bay-breasted Warbler 42 b 8/25; Mourning Warbler 1 b 8/24; Yellow-breasted Chat 3 b thr; White-throated Sparrow 36 b 8/22 and Lincoln's Sparrow 1 b 8/16.

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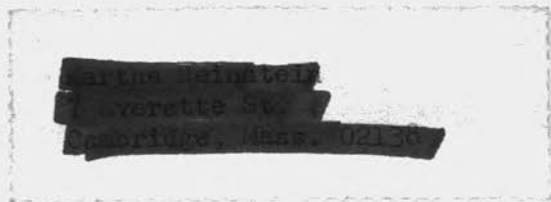


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