

BIRD OBSERVER

OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS



APRIL 1986

VOL. 14 NO. 2



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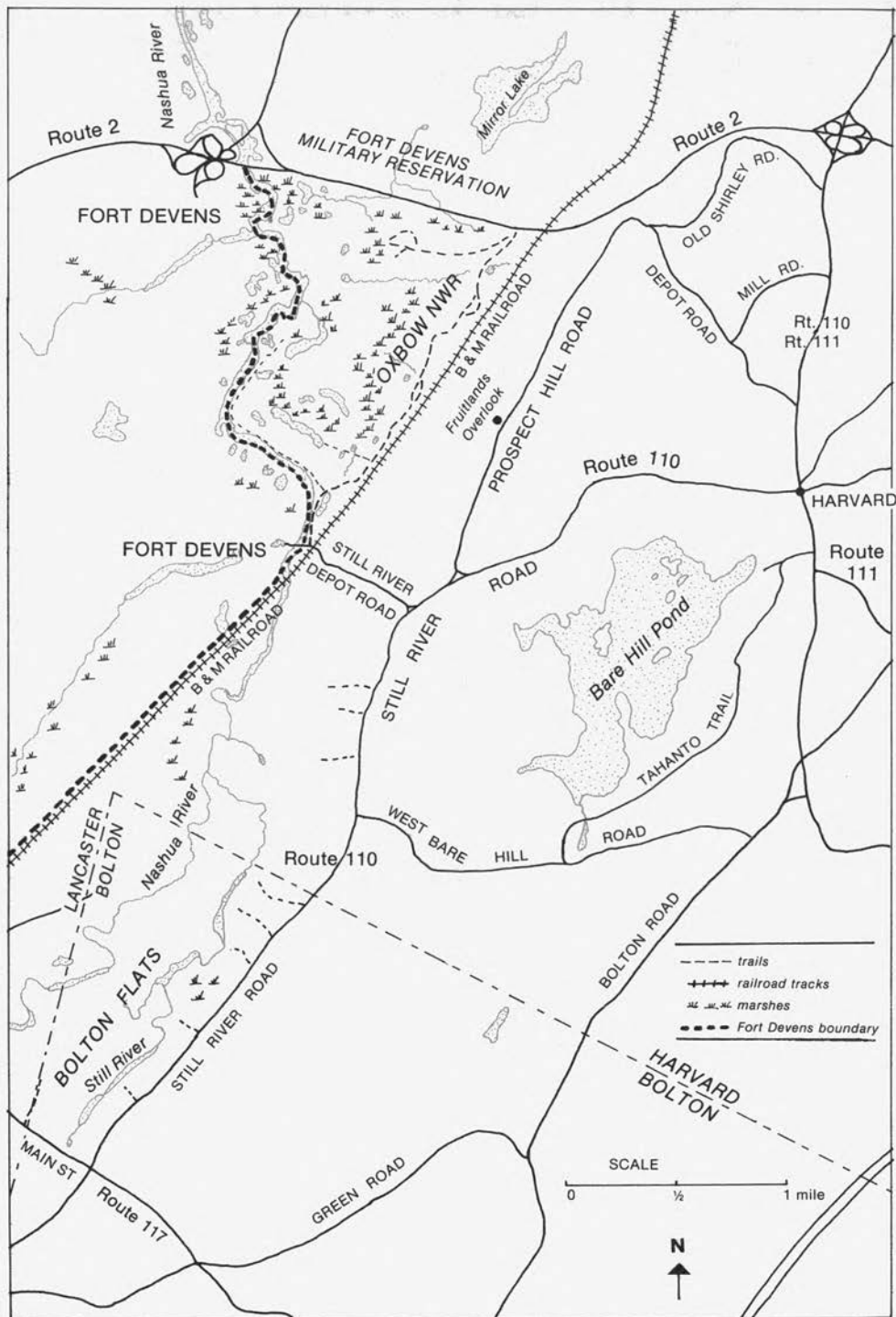
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WHERE TO FIND BIRDS AT OXBOW NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

by Mark Lynch, Worcester

Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge, located in the community of Harvard, Massachusetts, is a choice segment of riparian woodland that offers excellent birding opportunities in spring, summer, and fall. Located along the Nashua River, the Refuge consists primarily of wet deciduous woods and wooded swamps with a few conifer thickets. Breeding birds include Wood Duck, Ruffed Grouse, Yellow-billed and Black-billed cuckoos, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Scarlet Tanager, and Indigo Bunting. Among the breeding warblers in the area are Blue-winged, Pine, Black-throated Green, and Ovenbird. During migration, when a wide variety of hawks, warblers, and sparrows occurs, the refuge is an exciting place to bird. For the herpetologist, Blanding's Turtle and Blue-spotted Salamander, two species found only in isolated locations in the state, also occur.

Oxbow is located off Route 110 just north of the Bolton Flats Wildlife Management Area which should also be checked for ducks, marsh birds, and seasonal shorebirds. I often bird Bolton Flats early in the morning and bird at Oxbow later. Oxbow is located along one side of Fort Devens which is *STRICTLY OFF LIMITS* to the birder. The refuge is within earshot of various gunnery ranges on the fort so that startling sound effects may occur while you are birding. However, the birds do not seem to mind the occasional din as much as humans do.

To reach Oxbow from the junction of Routes 110 and 117, proceed three miles north on Route 110 and watch for the Still River Depot Road on your left (west) next to the Still River Post Office. If you are coming from the center of Harvard (the junction of Routes 110 and 111), proceed two miles south on Route 110 to Still River Depot Road.

Still River Depot Road.

This half-mile road, which descends from the post office and terminates at the refuge, offers excellent birding in the spring and fall, although it is often overlooked. After passing the houses, you will come to several rather unimpressive-looking cow pastures, hay fields, and weed fields bordered on both sides of the road by trees. These fields are private property, and the area must be birded from the road. Sparrows find the fields on both sides of the road attractive, especially in the fall (mid-September until the beginning of October). Most of the birds will be of the more common varieties - juncos, White-throated, Song, and Chipping sparrows - but White-crowned, Lincoln's, and Vesper sparrows occur regularly. It is best to work the road on foot because a passing car may flush the birds far out into the fields and out of sight.

Warblers, including Orange-crowned, occur in the few trees toward the bottom of the road (before the railroad tracks) during the spring and fall. If the fields are plowed, watch for pipits and flocks of blackbirds, including Rusty Blackbird. A breeding-plumaged Snow Bunting appeared here in April 1982.

The edges of the fields have many dead trees, used for perching by migrating hawks. Those hawks which I have seen in or over these fields have been Turkey Vulture (every year), Sharp-shinned Hawk (every year), Cooper's Hawk (twice), Northern Goshawk (several times), Merlin (several times, in both the spring and the fall), and the more common Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, and American Kestrel.

Breeding birds along this road include Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Northern Mockingbird. Even in midsummer, this road should be birded rigorously. In July 1985, I found three singing Sedge Wrens in the fields on the south side of the road. The birds remained about a week until the hay fields were mowed. One might hope that they will return!

The Refuge Proper.

Continuing down Still River Depot Road, you will cross over railroad tracks. You can either park your car in the dirt area beside the tracks or continue driving down to the left and park along the road or in the dirt beside the river. *DO NOT* drive over the bridge: it is the property of Fort Devens. You will see the entrance sign for the refuge at the beginning of a wide dirt road that runs parallel to the railroad tracks. Civilian cars are not permitted beyond this point.

This dirt road continues for over a mile and a half until it terminates at a locked gate (Fort Devens) under Route 2. Be forewarned that the army uses the road freely, and it is not unusual to meet rapidly traveling jeeps or even larger military vehicles along the way. If you hear a car coming, get off to the side of the road. Because of this traffic, ruts often develop and the road can get muddy, especially in the spring, so dress accordingly. Mosquitoes and deer flies can be downright deadly in the summer months, so insect repellent is a must. The usual route is to walk down the road a bit, cross over the railroad tracks, and double back along the tracks to the car.

When you get out of the car, bird in the immediate area of trees and bushes surrounding the parking area. The common breeding birds you should note here are Hairy and Downy woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Eastern Kingbird, House Wren, Red-eyed and Warbling vireo, and Northern Oriole. The common breeding warblers are all present in this area, including Chestnut-sided, Black-and-white, Yellow, and American Redstart. At dusk or in the very early morning, Eastern Screech-Owl can be heard and sometimes seen. During migration this parking area may attract Ruby-throated Hummingbird, various flycatchers,

Philadelphia Vireo, and many warblers, including Magnolia, Wilson's, and Canada.

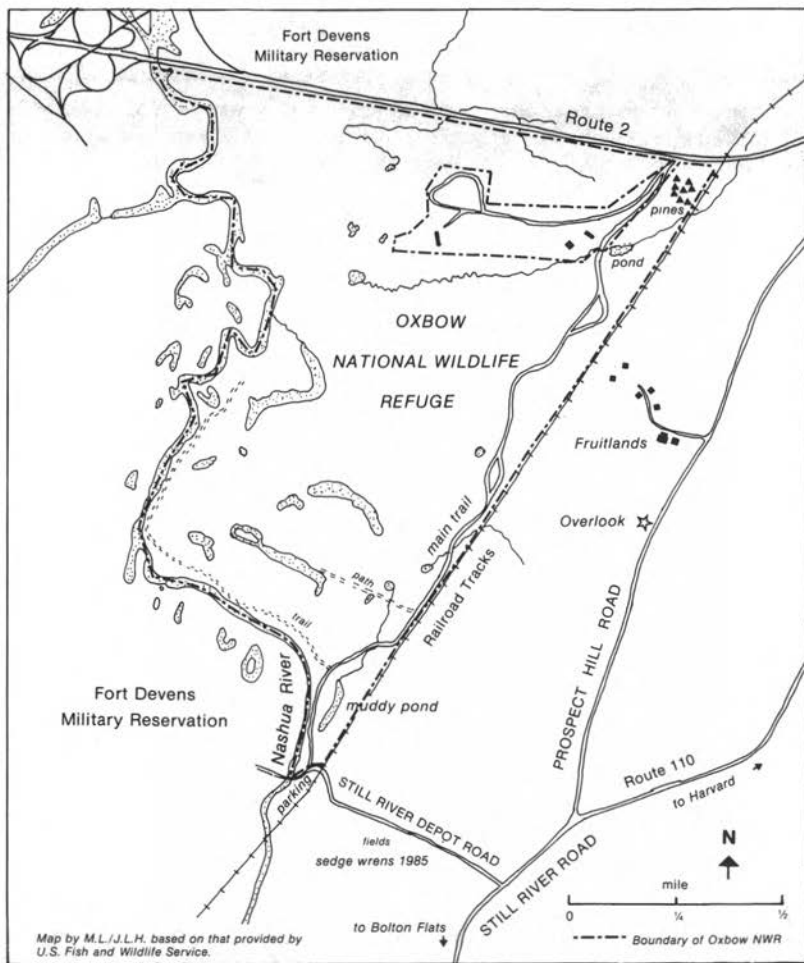
As you continue north along the road on foot, watch for a small brushy field immediately on your right. Field Sparrows are often present here during migration, and they sometimes linger. Blue-winged Warblers also find this area attractive. Beyond the field there is a stand of swampy woods. Listen for the calls of Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (which has nested here), Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and both cuckoos. This area has also been good for migrants, including Orchard Oriole. Common Yellowthroats and American Redstarts will be calling all around during the breeding season. In spring, the wet areas on the road and on the side of the road usually have a Spotted or a Solitary sandpiper.

After a short walk you will notice a path on the left that leads away from the main road and parallels the river closely. This continues for some distance along the river and becomes rather overgrown. Many of the species previously mentioned are found along this path, and along the river you can also find a Great Blue Heron or a Green-backed Heron. In migration, Osprey fly along the river, as do low-flying military helicopters!

Back on the main road, you will eventually come to a small, algae-covered, muddy pond on the right. It is difficult to get a clear look at it because it is screened from view by bushes. Despite its unpromising appearance, this area usually has Spotted and Solitary sandpipers in the spring, and occasionally other common shorebirds such as Least Sandpiper, American Black, Mallard, and Wood ducks are usually present, and Green-winged Teal may linger. The biggest surprise of all was in May of 1985 when I found twenty newly hatched Hooded Merganser ducklings with one or two ducks present! It remains to be seen whether or not the Hooded Mergansers will continue to nest in this area. Warblers find the pond attractive. The Northern Waterthrush is regular, as are flocks of Yellow-rumped and Palm warblers in the spring and fall. Check the area for Yellow-throated Vireo and Great Crested Flycatcher.

Shortly beyond the pond, where the phone lines emerge onto the road, the road swings close to the railroad tracks. If things are quiet and birds are not much in evidence, it is best to cut over to the tracks and return to the car.

If you continue along the main road, you will find that the road swings upward to a small area of sandy soil and tall pines. Usually there is a pair of Pine Warblers here. On the left, just past the area of pines, there is a narrow, overgrown path. This once connected to the path that runs along the river; and although it is now washed out in two places, it may be passable during extremely dry periods. This path may be taken to return to the main road. It is worth the trip, for it is an excellent



place for Wood Duck, Ruffed Grouse, both cuckoos, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Swamp Sparrow, as well as migrants. After you have walked this road, you should check yourself for ticks.

The main road continues for over a mile to its termination at Route 2. The vegetation here is wet woodlands and offers excellent opportunities for finding warblers, tanagers, and orioles. Migrants found along this road have included Worm-eating and Kentucky warblers in addition to the more typical Bay-breasted, Cape May, Black-throated Blue, Tennessee, and Magnolia warblers. Flycatchers include Least, Great Crested, and Eastern Wood-Pewee. Toward the road's end, it opens up to a bushy field where Field Sparrows and Blue-winged Warblers breed. I found Alder Flycatcher near here in 1985. You will pass a small pond on the right and an old building on the left. Just as you leave

the posted refuge area, you will see Route 2 in front of you. Usually there are Indigo Buntings and Field Sparrows in the area. Keep an eye skyward for Broad-winged Hawk and Northern Goshawk. On the right you will see an area of short pines with a path through them. If you follow this path, you will soon be back on the railroad tracks so that you can return to your car.

Along the Railroad Tracks.

The walk of 1.5 miles back along the tracks offers much the same type of birding as along Oxbow's main road. Migrants are somewhat easier to spot along the tracks, and one is more apt to note Brown Creeper, Yellow-throated Vireo, and Pine Warbler. Occasionally, Golden-winged Warblers have been found among the more common Blue-winged Warblers. Here, too, keep an eye skyward for hawks.

Perhaps the most consistently good birding area along the tracks is the area from Still River Depot Road north to the overlook of the muddy pond. For reasons that elude me, migrants are often concentrated in this area. The muddy pond is better viewed from the tracks - so watch for ducks and shorebirds. Also watch for the Solitary Sandpipers along the stream on the east side of the tracks opposite the pond. Indigo Buntings are usually present in this area. A small stand of pines holds Pine Warblers and, rarely, Red-breasted Nuthatch. From these pines to Still River Depot Road is a small area of bushes and trees bordering a cow pasture. This is a good area to check for migrant sparrows and warblers. Fox, Lincoln's, and White-crowned sparrows and even Yellow-bellied Sapsucker have all been found at this spot.

Proceed south along the tracks beyond Still River Depot Road until you reach a railroad bridge across the Nashua River. This short stretch can be productive if migrants are in evidence elsewhere. Do not cross the railroad bridge: this is Fort Devens property!

The Fruitlands Overlook.

Drive back up Still River Depot Road, turn left onto Route 110 north, and proceed a quarter-mile to the first left, Prospect Hill Road. After 0.6 mile, on the left you will see an obvious pull-off along a stone wall where there is a scenic overlook of Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge, Fort Devens, Mount Wachusett, and beyond. The field in front of you is the property of the Fruitlands Museum and is private. This is a good location for watching hawks in migration. Although the numbers are not impressive, I have noted Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Broad-winged Hawk, and Turkey Vulture. A pair of Red-tailed Hawks and American Kestrels are usually present. It is best to arrive at this spot between 9:00 and 11:00 A.M. I have seen Northern Goshawk here on several occasions - even in winter - so it may breed somewhere nearby. During April, May, and September you can easily bird Oxbow early in the morning for passerine migrants and still get to the Fruitlands overlook in time to see hawks.

Conclusion.

I have said little about birding Oxbow in winter because of the small number of species present. Flocks of American Tree Sparrows join flocks of hardy chickadees, titmice, and nuthatches. Great Horned Owls and Eastern Screech-Owls can be heard in the area. I have yet to find a Northern Shrike along Still River Depot Road - but I am still hopeful!

Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge offers a pleasant alternative to coastal birding. Its birding history is still in its infancy, and reports of new species are added each year; so who knows what you may find? For me, it has been one of the consistently better birding spots in central Massachusetts for migrants and a fine place to spend a few relaxing hours in summer.

[Author's note: Land in the vicinity of the refuge and surrounding towns is selling at premium prices, and much of this part of Massachusetts is being developed rapidly. Witness the homes being built adjacent to Bolton Flats. Although the refuge itself is still safe, surrounding areas such as Still River Depot Road will always be at risk. I hope that this area remains in the condition it was at the time of this writing.)

ABSTRACT

Place. Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge, 660 acres of marsh, swamps, and oxbows of the Nashua River, Harvard, Massachusetts. Located off Route 110, north of Bolton Flats and Route 117. Managed by U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Great Meadows N. W. R., Weir Hill Road, Sudbury, MA 01776 (617-443-4661). The Weir Hill headquarters would appreciate written reports of wildlife sightings at Oxbow.

Breeding Birds. Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, Ruffed Grouse, Black-billed and Yellow-billed cuckoo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Yellow-throated and Warbling vireo, Blue-winged, Pine, and Black-throated Green warbler, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark. Northern Goshawk may breed in the area, and Sedge Wren may have attempted to breed in 1985.

Migrants. A good selection of migrants both spring and fall. Many species of warblers (including records of Worm-eating and Kentucky), sparrows (including Lincoln's, White-crowned, and Vesper), and hawks occur.

Best time to bird. Spring (mid-April to late May) and fall (late August to early October). Summer is also good.

Cautions. The refuge is next to Fort Devens, which is strictly off limits. Roads may be muddy in spring. Deer flies and mosquitoes are a problem in summer.

MARK LYNCH is a teacher and tour guide at the Worcester Art Museum, teaches a birding class in Worcester Adult Education, and leads bird tours for the Worcester Science Center. He has birded in Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, England, and Scotland, in addition to the United States. Mark is currently researching a "Where to Find Birds" article on Gate 40 at Quabbin Reservoir.



Thank you, Thank you!

The first Bird Observer Fund-Raiser, held on February 22, 1986, at Mary Baird's Lexington home with special guests Susan Allen and Davis Finch, was a great success, beyond our expectations. A TOTAL OF \$2600 WAS CONTRIBUTED. This sum, along with funds from the boat trips, will be used toward the purchase of Bird Observer's first personal computer with word-processing software. This equipment will help our all-volunteer staff to produce more easily a journal of improved appearance.

All of the staff and our friends who contributed time, expertise, energy, labor, food, and hard cash can be proud of so bountiful a result. And what is more: "We all had a real good time." The people listed below, who helped Bird Observer, merit heartfelt thanks and recognition.

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OPEN YEAR ROUND

THE CAPE COD LAKE AND POND WATERFOWL CENSUS

by Blair Nikula, Chatham

In early November 1981, a group of volunteers under the auspices of the Bird Observer Field Studies Committee conducted a census of waterfowl in a number of lakes and ponds in eastern Massachusetts. The results of that effort were summarized by John Andrews (*BOEM* 10: 253, October 1982). The stated purpose of the census was "to determine the manner in which the various species of waterfowl were using lakes and ponds of different ecological character." The census was repeated in 1982 and 1983 but was then discontinued.

During the first weekend of November of 1983, the Cape Cod Bird Club, following the guidelines drawn up by the original census organizers, initiated a census of the lakes and ponds on Cape Cod. Participants were instructed to identify and count all the waterfowl (loons, grebes, geese, ducks, and coot) present on, but not flying over, each pond. If hunters or some other disturbance were present, the site was visited again the following day, Sunday. If a second visit was not possible, the disturbance was noted on the data sheets. The number of gulls present at a site was also recorded (but not included in waterfowl totals or in the following analyses).

An impressive list of 202 ponds was covered during the first Cape Cod census, and 3957 individuals of 22 species recorded. Buoyed by the success of that initial effort and the enthusiasm of the participants, we continued the project in 1984 but moved the dates by a month to the first weekend in December. Many ducks and geese do not arrive on Cape Cod until inland bodies of water begin to freeze, and we felt that the later dates would more closely coincide with peak waterfowl numbers locally. The results that year bore out our impressions: 213 ponds yielded 23 species and 8950 birds, more than double the previous year's total.

This past year, 1985, saw further increases in nearly every category: thirty-one observers censused 239 ponds recording 29 species and 10,521 individuals. The number of ponds censused, 239, may surprise many, but there are in fact over 300 bodies of water on Cape Cod classified as ponds. Many of these are very small, unproductive kettle holes or are temporary in nature - difficult to find on a map - and of little or no consequence to waterfowl. Therefore, the bird club's efforts have been very thorough and have included virtually all of the waterfowl present on the Cape's freshwater ponds during the count weekend. (It should be noted, however, that the highly productive ponds on south Monomoy Island are not included in the census, due to the difficulty of access at that season.)

The volume of data resulting from just one year's census is staggering and required several tedious hours with a calculator to accumulate just the basic results presented in Table 1. Clearly,

Table 1. Results of 1985 Cape Cod Waterfowl Survey by Township

	PROVINCETOWN	TURO	WELLFLEET	EASTHAM	ORLEANS	CHATHAM	BREWSTER	HARWICH	DENNIS	YARMOUTH	BARNSTABLE	SANDWICH	MASHPEE	PALMOUTH	BOURNE	TOTALS	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 1984
Red-throated Loon																	
Common Loon																	
Pied-billed Grebe																	
Mute Swan				2	4	14	1	7	11	4	2	8	14	4	2	57	-37
Snow Goose			2				3	3		4	10	8	5	30	2	75	+17
Canada Goose				35	25	54	50	34	120	130	217	204	24	603	7	1504	+18
Wood Duck			1														
Green-winged Teal																	
American Black Duck	33	3	22	96	155	18	349	33	13	133	85	32	14	56	2	1044	+58
Mallard	8	40	2	16	53	27	26	33	64	174	393	417	162	288	28	1731	-25
Northern Pintail					1					85	3	2				91	0
Blue-winged Teal										1					2	3	
Northern Shoveler											1					1	
Gadwall								9				2				11	
Eurasian Wigeon																1	
American Wigeon																1	
Canvasback	1				1	70	89	78	255	399	193	8	2	9	23	1169	+44
Redhead				1													
Ring-necked Duck				47	4	3											
scaup species	1			109		8	23	53	89	325	51	30	6	75	2	168	-16
Greater Scaup																2645	+53
Lesser Scaup										1	150					151	
Common Goldeneye	1	1	4	1			5	34			6					6	
Bufflehead	20			58	6	29	70	37	86	202	56	25	79	141	10	178	+23
Hooded Merganser				56	5	4	28	8		24	28					819	-12
Common Merganser	10						30	194			9	40	5	171	324	+324	
Red-breasted Merganser	1			1						5			7	67	82	291	+242
Ruddy Duck				1					1	5	3					151	+238
Common Moorhen								8								18	
American Coot				23	1	15		1		5	1	18	4	8	1	1	-57
Total number of birds	74	45	29	448	256	247	671	532	639	1499	1259	819	399	3553	51	10521	+18
Number of ponds	9	14	14	6	5	8	16	24	15	18	37	14	10	42	7	239	
Average birds per pond	8.2	3.2	2.0	74.7	51.2	30.9	41.9	22.2	42.6	83.3	34.0	58.5	39.9	84.6	7.3	44.1	
Total species	7	4	4	14	11	12	10	14	8	16	21	14	11	19	6	29	+21
Number of observers	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	4	2	6	3	1	8	1	31	

a computer is in order! In the following analysis, only the results from the 1985 census are used unless otherwise indicated.

Obviously, this type of annual census permits the detection of trends in local waterfowl populations over a period of time. Year-to-year fluctuations are to be expected and, even when sizable, may have little meaning over the long term. With just two years of data - the 1983 census was too early in the season to be comparable to subsequent years - we are still several years away from being able to detect any such trends. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that pronounced increases in 1985 versus 1984 were recorded for Canvasback (+44%), scaup (53%), Hooded Merganser (+324%), and Common Merganser (+238%). Species exhibiting notable declines were Pied-billed Grebe (-37%), black duck (-27%), and American Coot (-57%). It will be interesting to watch the results for these species over the next few years.

One species that certainly is at a low ebb on the cape now is Redhead. This species has a history of fluctuating numbers in this area and apparently hit a peak in the mid-to-late 1970s only to decline dramatically over the last three or four years. Only two were found on the 1985 census and none in 1984, and for the first time ever, none were recorded on the Buzzards Bay Christmas Bird Count compared with a peak of 144 in 1976.

The census also provides an indication of the distribution of waterfowl on Cape Cod ponds. The totals by town show that Falmouth can lay undisputed claim to the title, "Duck Capital of Cape Cod," with a total of 3553 birds, over one-third of the census total and more than double the 1499 in runner-up Yarmouth. Falmouth has many more ponds than Yarmouth however, 42 versus 18, and when the totals are converted to the average number of birds per pond, the difference between the two towns is negligible (84.6 versus 83.3; see Table 1). It should also be noted that 56% of Falmouth's total was comprised of scaup. The most variety of waterfowl, 21 species, was in Barnstable, followed by Falmouth with 19 species. Wellfleet was at the bottom of both lists with only 29 birds of 4 species and a paltry average of 2 birds per pond - truly an anatid wasteland!

A look at the distribution of individual species across the census area reveals some interesting, and often curious, patterns. For example, Mute Swans are concentrated on the inner cape with 93% of the total recorded from Dennis westward. This species is slowly making inroads on the outer cape, and we can expect future censuses to reflect this eastward expansion. Scaup also show a strong concentration westward, with 71% of the total in Falmouth alone. Canvasbacks, on the other hand, exhibit a pronounced clumping toward the center of the cape: 93% of this species was in the area from Barnstable to Chatham. Mallards and black ducks, two taxonomically similar species, had strikingly different distributions. Mallards were heavily concentrated on the inner cape with 88% of the total from Dennis westward, whereas only 32% of the black ducks were in this same area. Are these contrasting

Table 2. Frequency (in a Total of 239 Ponds) and Primary Sites of Occurrence for the Most Common Species Censused.

SPECIES	No. of PONDS (%)	PRIMARY PONDS (No. of BIRDS)
Scaup (both species)	25 (11%)	Coonamessett Pond, Falmouth (700) Morse Pond, Falmouth (500) Cedar Pond, Falmouth (400) Dillingham Avenue, Falmouth (380) Long Pond, Yarmouth (325)
Mallard	104 (44%)	Snake Pond, Sandwich (240) Ashumet Pond, Mashpee (130)
Canada Goose	46 (19%)	Sider's Pond, Falmouth (200) Basbane's Pond, Barnstable (163) Sanke Pond, Sandwich (155)
American Black Duck	68 (29%)	Cliff Pond, Brewster (339) Crystal Lake, Orleans (95)
Canvasback	22 (9%)	Swan Pond, Dennis (255) Swan Pond, Yarmouth (195) Follin's Pond, Yarmouth (150) Mystic Lake, Barnstable (150)
Bufflehead	64 (27%)	Follin's Pond, Yarmouth (120) Swan Pond, Dennis (80)
Hooded Merganser	27 (11%)	Jemimah's Pond, Eastham (56) Bourne Pond, Falmouth (52)
Common Merganser	14 (6%)	Hinckley's Pond, Harwich (130)
Common Goldeneye	28 (12%)	Hinckley's Pond, Harwich (25) Mashpee/Wakeby Pond, Mashpee (25)
Ring-necked Duck	14 (6%)	Coonamessett Pond, Falmouth (70) Great Pond, Eastham (30)
Northern Pintail	5 (2%)	Hallet's Mill Pond, Yarmouth (85)
Red-breasted Merg.	11 (5%)	Fresh Pond, Falmouth (39)
American Coot	13 (5%)	Great Pond, Eastham (23) Shawme Pond, Sandwich (16)
Mute Swan	26 (11%)	Swan Pond, Dennis (11)
Pied-billed Grebe	20 (8%)	Lover's Lake, Chatham (8) Mashpee/Wakeby Pond, Mashpee (6)
Green-winged Teal	2 (1%)	Pond at Route 6A and Maple Street, Barnstable (35)
American Wigeon	5 (2%)	Mill Pond, E. Falmouth (9) Maple Street, Barnstable (8)
Ruddy Duck	5 (2%)	Hinckley's Pond, Harwich (8)

distributions the result of competition between the two species, or are some other factors responsible?

Distribution patterns can be examined on a finer scale by studying the results on a pond-by-pond basis. Overall, the top ponds in total number were Coonamessett Pond (798 birds), Morse Pond (617), and an unnamed pond on Dillingham Avenue (605), all in Falmouth. All three ponds were dominated by scaup with those species comprising from 63% to 83% of the total birds at these three locations. The best variety, twelve species, was on Great Pond, Eastham, followed by Upper Shawme Pond, Sandwich (ten species).

One or more birds were recorded on 160 of the 239 ponds (71%) with the remaining 70 ponds having no birds. Brewster ponds scored a perfect 100% (16 of 16) while Truro trailed the pack with only 29% (3 of 14). Mallard (some of dubious ancestry) was by far the most widespread species, occurring at 104 (44%) sites, followed distantly by black duck (68 sites: 29%) and Bufflehead (64 sites: 27%). See Table 2. Endless hours could be spent studying the relationship of individual species to individual ponds. That can wait for the computer!

The tendency for many species to cluster in large flocks at just a few sites, as suggested by Andrews (op. cit.), was very evident in this census. For example, 50% of the Canada Geese were at five sites, 42% of the black ducks at only two sites, 93% of the pintail at one site, 64% of the Canvasbacks at four sites, 60% of the Ring-necked Ducks at two sites, 89% of the scaup at six sites, 65% of the Hooded Mergansers at six sites, and 65% of the Common Mergansers at just two sites. Most other species showed similar, though less pronounced, clustering.

In order to get some idea of the response of primarily freshwater species to ponds icing over, I compared the results of this census from the five towns from Eastham to Harwich with the results from the Cape Cod Christmas Bird Count, which covered the same five towns just two weeks later, on December 22. Very cold weather in the interim completely froze all of the freshwater ponds, though a few had reopened by the twenty-second. Species that showed notable declines were Pied-billed Grebe, which dropped from 28 to 4 birds, Canvasback (238 to 37), and Hooded Merganser (101 to 67). Smaller declines were evident in most other species, but two species increased dramatically: Ring-necked Duck from 54 to 202 and Common Merganser from 224 to 701. Presumably, these increases were the result of influxes from the mainland during the freeze.

I have presented a random sampling of some of the results, trends, and patterns that can be drawn from the 1985 data. Those with an eye for numbers will undoubtedly find more such tidbits in the accompanying tables. As is often true, the results generate more questions than answers: Why do ponds that appear identical (to us) differ so greatly in their attractiveness to waterfowl? Why do some species gather in large, often monospecific, flocks? Why have Redheads disappeared from the Falmouth ponds? Why does

the distribution of Mallards differ so strikingly from that of American Black Ducks? Why do Canvasbacks concentrate in the mid-cape area and scaup in the Falmouth area?

Answers to such questions are complex and not likely to be provided by a simple census such as this; they will require rigorous in-depth study by someone trained in pond ecology as well as ornithology. Pond ecology is an intricate subject involving a multiplicity of interrelated factors. Determinants such as pond size, pond depth, geography, floral and faunal characteristics, and chemical aspects, among others, must be taken into account when examining a pond's importance to waterfowl. The value of this type of census is that it shows the various distribution patterns and species associations and, over time, will document changes in these patterns as well as changes in local populations.

The Cape Cod Lake and Pond Waterfowl Census is an excellent example of one way in which birders, regardless of their expertise, can gather useful data and make a meaningful contribution to our knowledge of the Massachusetts avifauna. Waterfowl are relatively conspicuous, generally easy to identify (except for the notorious scaup species), and thus readily censused with only a modest effort. Members of the Cape Cod Bird Club look forward to continuing this beneficial and enjoyable project and invite other clubs to consider undertaking a similar effort in their own areas.

BLAIR NIKULA, who has been a regional editor for *American Birds* since 1982, has contributed many articles and reports of rare birds to *Bird Observer*. He is a recognized authority on the birds of Cape Cod and Monomoy.



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BOOK VIEWS

by Brian E. Cassie, Millis

I have no idea of the demographics of *Bird Observer* readership. However, I assume that all of you are birdwatchers, that a few are ornithologists, and that a handful are serious book collectors. Therefore, I shall tend to look at the more popular works, leave the technical literature for the professional journals, and occasionally throw in a collector's item. Once again, if there is a book you want me to describe, let me know.

THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BIRDS. Edited by Dr. Christopher M. Perrins and Dr. Alex L. A. Middleton. Facts on File, New York, 1985. xxxi+447 pages; 700 color photographs; color paintings. \$35.

There are a lot of things to like about *THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF BIRDS*. The book is a survey of the world's bird families and admirably succeeds such standards in the genre as Austin's *BIRDS OF THE WORLD* and Harrison's *BIRD FAMILIES OF THE WORLD*. Attractive in format and lavish in the use of color illustration, this collaboration by 90 authors and 10 artists provides up-to-date information on 180 families of living birds with handsome artwork depicting representative species and, to a lesser extent, their behavioral traits. The photographs are generally outstanding and include birds seldom seen in other photographic collections, e.g., White-winged Triller and Yellow-fronted Tinkerbird, as well as imaginative portraits of commoner species. Considering the quality of the production, the price is easily justified.

A DICTIONARY OF BIRDS. Edited by Bruce Campbell and Elizabeth Lack. Buteo Books, Vermilion, 1985. xxx+670 pages; over 200 black-and-white photographs and drawings; text figures; tables. \$75.

Ask ten ornithologists to name the outstanding bird publication for 1985, and I am sure most would unhesitatingly pronounce it to be *A DICTIONARY OF BIRDS*. The editors have done a superb job of compiling the work of some 282 authorities from around the world. The dust jacket blurb speaks true of the contents: "Major, authoritative articles cover the field of modern ornithology and related subjects, many of them running to several thousand words. In addition, there are articles on all the bird families [and] numerous short entries defining special terms, application of names, etc. The total gives a text of over 800,000 words." The range of subject matter covered is nearly as impressive as the writing itself. One expects articles on echolocation, ectoparasites, and energetics, but "Birds of the Bible" and "Birds in Poetry"? In my estimation, these add a great deal to the book - a bit of literature in a sea of science. The line drawings are first-rate, and the photographs are very well chosen, although not very well reproduced. For the serious bird student, amateur or professional, this is an invaluable

reference, and while the price may seem high, it is actually moderate compared with those of some academic publications.

Please note that of over 370 authorities contributing to the two volumes just discussed, fewer than five percent are women. Are there really so few women in the ornithological world? Perhaps that question can be answered by a new release - *BIRDWATCHING WITH AMERICAN WOMEN, A SELECTION OF NATURE WRITINGS* edited by Deborah Strom, Norton, New York, 1986; 286 pages; \$17.95. This work may possibly be reviewed in the future.

THE ESSENTIAL GILBERT WHITE OF SELBORNE. Edited by H.J. Massingham, selected and introduced by Mark Daniel. David R. Godine, Boston, 1985. xx+361 pages; woodcut illustrations; paperback. \$9.95

In December, 1788, the natural history letters of a retiring curate from a tiny English parish were published in London by his brother. Gilbert White and his *NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE* were an immediate success, and the book has remained more or less continuously in print ever since, the editions now numbering in excess of two hundred. (I have about thirty!) No library should be without a copy of White's writings, which James Fisher said "give an impression of simplicity but are the fruit of the endless pains of a genius." The present edition is noteworthy in that it includes not only the well-known letters to Daines Barrington and Thomas Pennant, but also excerpts from White's *NATURALIST'S JOURNAL* and *ANTIQUITIES OF SELBORNE* and several personal letters. Much of the content of White's letters concerns birds (he added three species to the British list), and birdwatcher and ornithologist alike have benefited from White's philosophy of careful observation and record keeping. The celebrated British naturalist Richard Jeffries put it this way nearly a century ago: "Part of his success was owing to his coming to the field with a mind unoccupied. He was not full of evolution when he walked out, or variation, or devolution, or degeneration. He did not look for microbes everywhere. His mind was free and his eye open. To many it would do much good to read this work if only with the object of getting rid of some of the spiders' webs that have been so industriously spun over the eyesight of those who would like to think for themselves."

Note on *A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BIRDS OF BRITAIN AND EUROPE*, which was reviewed in this column in the February 1986 issue: Mr. Harry Foster, field guide editor at Houghton Mifflin, has advised me that the version of the *GUIDE* sold by this company is the one with the reworked color plates. My thanks to Mr. Foster for correcting me on this point.

BRIAN E. CASSIE is a butterfly gardener living in Millis who has recently joined the staff of *Bird Observer* to write this column.



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BIRD SIGHTING

submitted by Ralph J. Richards, Shrewsbury

Species: Fieldfare.

Date and time: April 6, 1986, from 11:20 to 11:50 A.M.

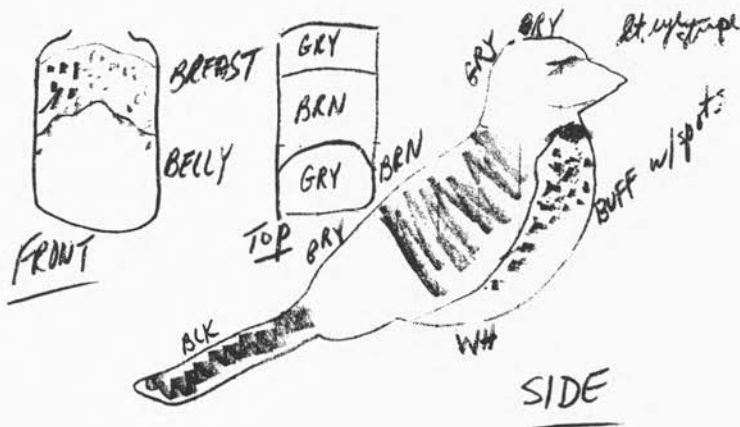
Location: Concord at Nine Acre Corner; south of Route 117, a quarter-mile from intersection on west side of Sudbury Road.

Weather conditions: cloudy with light rain and sleet; temperature in mid-30s, SE winds of 10 mph.

Equipment: Nikon 9 x 30 binoculars; Bushnell 25X telescope.

Viewing distance: approximately 200 feet.

Observer and reporter: Ralph Richards.



While standing by the road observing birds in a muddy cornfield, I noticed a different bird walking and feeding with a small flock of 25-30 robins. I observed this bird for approximately thirty minutes, writing notes of the field marks, and making a sketch of the bird to help with identification.

Description of the bird: size, shape, and behavior was like a robin; gray crown, nape, and rump; brown back; black tail; throat and breast buffy orange with black streaks; flanks heavily spotted with black; whitish belly.

When I returned home, I looked through several field guides and tentatively identified the "mystery bird" as a Fieldfare. I telephoned Mark Lynch at 2:30 P.M. and gave him the visual data I had written on the bird. He agreed that the information did indeed describe a Fieldfare but wanted to visit the site to see the bird. Mark Lynch and Sheila Carroll telephoned Alden and Nancy Clayton in Concord to meet us at the location. We arrived at the cornfield at 3:15 P.M. and looked for the bird. After half an hour, Alden Clayton found it. All observers agreed about the identification. The bird was a Fieldfare. From 4:00 to 5:00 P.M., the bird was observed by Alden and Nancy Clayton, Mark Lynch, Sheila Carroll, and other observers.

WHAT IS SO RARE?

As a Fieldfare in April? In Massachusetts, perhaps only a Western Reef Heron or a White-faced Ibis. April here is a month of avian surprises. The 1986 birdwatching spring was off to a happy start with the discovery by schoolteacher Ralph Richards, during a lonely vigil on the cold and rainy Sunday of April 6, of a Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) in a Concord cornfield near the Sudbury River. According to a bulletin promptly issued by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, this is a first state record, and there have been, since 1878, ten prior records in North America, the most recent being the occurrence of four Fieldfares in St. John's; Newfoundland, from December 1985 to mid-January 1986. "It seems not unlikely that the Massachusetts bird originated with the same midwinter flight that brought the Newfoundland birds to North America. . . ."

In winter, the Fieldfare ranges from southern Scandinavia, the British Isles, and central Europe south to the Mediterranean. Outside of the breeding season, the bird's habitat choice is open fields and pastures, where it occurs gregariously in large flocks, often accompanied by Redwings (*Turdus iliacus*). The Fieldfare nests in northern Scandinavia (it is Norway's most common thrush), in north and central continental Europe east to Siberia, and also in Iceland and southern Greenland. The story of the establishment of the disjunct Greenland population is well documented. In January 1937, a strong southeast gale swept a flock of Fieldfares across Europe and the Atlantic to the island of Jan Mayen and the Greenland coast. The survivors made their way across Greenland in the next week and discovered a birch woods (a preferred Fieldfare nesting habitat), settled down, nested that spring, and wandered no more - forming a resident, nonmigratory population that wintered near its nesting place. Another sudden expansion of this species, unrelated to weather, had occurred a century earlier when Fieldfares spread from East Prussia southwestward to eastern France, where they now nest.

This European species is irregular not only in its migratory habits but in its nesting style. Its nests are variously placed - in trees or bushes on the margins of woods (birch, especially); sometimes in town parks and gardens; occasionally on buildings or haystacks; or, when nesting occurs in the mountains above tree line, directly on the ground. Most Fieldfares nest early in the spring, before the trees leaf out. It is to their advantage to breed as early as possible, because earthworms, a main food resource, are more plentiful in the north at that time and less available later in the season. (That earthworms are a Fieldfare delicacy was amply demonstrated by the Concord gourmand, who consumed eleven worms within fifteen minutes, according to *The Boston Glöbe* of April 8.) The pairs that nest early in the spring often form colonies of nests, probably as a defense against predators, whereas later nesting birds, protected by the cover of leaves, may construct solitary nests. Studies have confirmed that, in early spring, synchronous breeding (in colonies) produces greater nesting success for the Fieldfare than does solitary nesting.

Another remarkable social adaptation was revealed by this same research (abstracted in the *Journal of Field Ornithology*, 56: 432, Autumn 1985). When a Little Owl (*Athene noctua*) was presented to colonial and solitary nesting Fieldfares, the birds engaged in mobbing and "simultaneous aimed defecation on" the unfortunate owl, regarded by them as a predator. The number (and efficacy) of the attacks by the colonial nesters was, of course, higher - they could deliver a devastating "guano" shower! This unseemly tactic may increase Fieldfare nesting success, but my sympathies are with the Little Owl, who measures only eight inches compared to the ten-inch thrush and who feeds mostly on insects and rodents.

Many observers of the Massachusetts Fieldfare remarked about its beautiful bright plumage; it was much less drab than depicted in the field guides. This species does vary in coloration (and size) but retains the same general pattern. The depth of color in this bird suggests that it was probably a male. Other comments mentioned its well-nourished appearance, how much less active it was than the accompanying robins, and how *hard it was to see the bird!* The Fieldfare's handsome coloration was striking when viewed against green grass, but when it appeared in the stubble of the field or against the soil or a tree trunk, the gray head and rump blended with the background and broke up the silhouette - a fine demonstration of how a bright pattern can be very protective. In contrast, the white flash of the underwings made its undulating flight easy to follow, as useful a signal to watching birders as it is an alarm in nature to other Fieldfares. Although the bird was heard to call - a sound similar to the familiar chucking of the robin, no one reported hearing it sing. No great loss. The song, a twittering, squeaking, or chattering, often given in flight, is not very musical.

The Fieldfare lingered at Nine Acre Corner in the cornfield or on the Nashawtuc golf course through the next Sunday, providing scores of birders (and golfers) a week and a weekend to enjoy the sight of this lovely bird, gorging eagerly on earthworms or resting contentedly in a nearby tree. The Fieldfare was not reported again after April 14, 1986.

RALPH RICHARDS of Shrewsbury, a Worcester public school English teacher for sixteen years, began birding as a young adult, is now an officer of the Forbush Bird Club, and belongs to Brookline Bird Club. His solo birding jaunt on April 6 began at 6:00 A.M. He planned to see the Western Grebe in Winthrop, birding along the way. However, all his stops at known birding spots proved fruitless. Frustrated and alone, but a dedicated birder, he stopped to scope the robins in the cornfield, grateful to find any birds on such a disappointing day, birding in the cold rain and sleet. He deserves commendation not only for his sharp-eyed discovery but for his exemplary persistence. There were no other birders about. Lacking an appropriate field guide, he went to the nearby Audubon Gift Shop - closed on Sunday until 1:00 P.M.! Thwarted, he returned home, called Mark Lynch (Ralph knew that Mark had birded in England), alerted all the birders he could reach, and came back to relocate the bird. He never did get to the Western Grebe.

Dorothy R. Arvidson

HETEROSPECIFIC VOCAL MIMICRY BY SIX OSCINES¹

by Douglas Branch McNair, Six Mile, South Carolina
and Richard A. Forster, Massachusetts Audubon Society

Heterospecific vocal mimicry in nature may occur in many avian species (Armstrong 1973). We present evidence of vocal mimicry in nature for several avian species, especially vireos, for which we believe such mimicry is under-recorded, overlooked, or rare. Terres' (1980) descriptions of primary song, calls, or other vocal sounds are used. Our combined field experience is about 40 years, and we believe our aural knowledge of bird sound is adequate to judge that the examples recorded are true mimicry and not normal variation of songs or single notes.

The Blue Jay, *Cyanocitta cristata*, may readily imitate other sounds, both avian and non-avian (Bent 1946). Blue Jays are renowned for mimicry of the call of the Red-shouldered Hawk, *Buteo lineatus*. The latter species has been extirpated from many former breeding sites in eastern Massachusetts during the last 15-20 years and mimicry of their 'kee-yoo, kee-yoo' call has often been replaced by mimicry of the Broad-winged Hawk, *B. platypterus*, call 'pweeee'; the latter breed at many sites in eastern Massachusetts. Jays still frequently imitate Red-shoulders at Boxford, Massachusetts, where the latter still nest. The same Blue Jay may imitate calls of both hawks; on 30 October 1976 in Wellesley, Massachusetts, a lone Blue Jay perched on top of a pine, scanned the sky for 10 sec, then uttered a high-pitched imitation of a Red-shoulder, followed 5 sec later by a high-pitched call of a Broad-wing. Blue Jays may also imitate the 'kree-e-e-e' call of the Red-tailed Hawk, *B. jamaicensis*, though they do so less frequently. Imitations of the Cooper's Hawk, *Accipiter cooperii*, call 'cuck-cuck-cuck' in the southeast United States have been heard about 20 times. Our observations are similar to those of Norris (1957). Mimicry of all four hawks has been heard at all seasons, whether or not the hawk imitated may have been present.

Most North American vireos seldom mimic other avian sounds, though White-eyed Vireo, *Vireo griseus*, mimicry may be more frequent than recorded. We have many records, from at least 30 individuals, of vocal mimicry for this species from April through August in southern New England and southern United States. Examples are the 'scrip' note of Red-cockaded Woodpecker, *Picoides borealis*, and the 'chuck' note of Gray Catbird, *Dumetella carolinensis*, and songs of Bobwhite, *Colinus virginianus*, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, *Coccyzus americanus*, and Carolina Wren, *Thryothorus ludovicianus*. Usually only parts of a song were mimicked, rarely the complete song. Most imitated sounds were

¹Reprinted with permission as originally published in *The Canadian Field-Naturalist* 97(3): 321-322, 1983.

interspersed with the primary song of the White-eyed Vireo, though some mimicked sounds were given alone. White-eyed Vireo vocal imitations in southwest Virginia were predominantly non-territorial sounds (Adkisson and Conner 1978).

A Yellow-throated Vireo, *V. flavifrons*, singing on territory for at least a week in deciduous canopy at Acoaxet, Massachusetts, had snatches of the primary song of the White-eyed Vireo interspersed in its primary song.

A Solitary vireo, *V. solitarius*, in spruce woods on 10 August 1977 in Windsor, Massachusetts mimicked the 'pse-ek' call of the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* for 15 min.

We have heard Red-eyed Vireos, *V. olivaceus*, mimicking the 'quebec' and 'hick-three-beers' calls of the Least, *E. minimus*, and Olive-sided, *Nuttallornis borealis*, flycatchers in New England and Canada. Red-eyed Vireos incorporate these songs into their own primary song and this mimicry is fairly frequent. A Red-eyed Vireo was also heard mimicking a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher call in a deciduous and evergreen grove 24 km north of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Finally, an adult Rose-breasted Grosbeak, *Pheucticus ludovicianus*, heard and seen singing for 15 min in deciduous-coniferous forest on 27 June 1977 at Savoy, Massachusetts, mimicked the songs of several species. Interspersed, at about 10 sec intervals in its primary song, were imitations of Red-eyed Vireo primary song and its 'tschay' alarm note. Gray Catbird 'mew' call and a scold note, two variations of Northern Cardinal, *Cardinalis cardinalis*, primary song, and Rufous-sided Towhee, *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*, 'teeeeeeee' song and 'che-wink' call. All imitated species were locally common to abundant.

We believe mimicry in nature by the Blue Jay, White-eyed Vireo, and possibly Red-eyed Vireo, has been often overlooked. Mimicry in nature for the other species is probably quite rare, though the proclivity for mimicry among vireos suggests it too may be overlooked. Mimicry has been reported before for all of these species (Bent 1950, 1968; Benton 1952; Borror 1961; James 1976). The majority of mimicking species mentioned in this note used elements of primary song or other avian vocalizations in their own primary song or advertising calls.

Acknowledgments. We thank M. Gochfeld and A. L. A. Middleton for helpful comments on the manuscript.

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EDITOR'S NOTE. A more recent paper by D. B. McNair on mimicry in Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, based on observations in Massachusetts, North Carolina, and South Carolina, appeared in the summer 1985 issue of *The Chat* 49: 78-80. The author states that he has recognized mimicry of about thirty species that are sympatric with the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in that bird's "mimic territorial song," given throughout the day but sung most frequently (and often as a whisper song) in a two-hour period around sunrise. He suggests that this mimicry, most intense during the courtship period when the male is patrolling territory, functions intra-specifically.

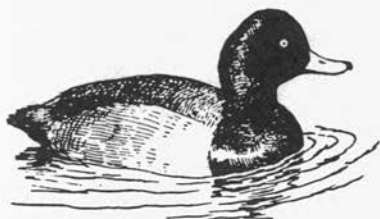
DOUGLAS BRANCH MCNAIR, author of "Birds of the Fobes Hill Area" (*BOEM* 8: 48, April 1980), has a master's degree in zoology from Clemson University, has published research on the reproductive biology of Lark Sparrows, and is currently working on a three-year project, sponsored by the Charleston Museum, on the nesting biology and breeding distribution of the birds of South Carolina. He is an officer of that state's Bird Records Committee, assessing rare bird records and compiling an official state checklist.

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Field Records December 1985

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

December 1985 was cold, dry, and with near normal sunshine. The temperature averaged 31.3°, 2.4° below normal and the coldest since 1980. The high temperature for the month was 60° on December 2, and the low was 7° on December 19. Rainfall totaled only 1.21 inches, 3.27 inches less than normal, making this the seventh driest December in 115 years of official record. Snow totaled 1.3 inches, 6.5 inches less than the past average. Wind-chill was especially noteworthy on December 3 when subfreezing temperatures and wind gusts of 45 mph were recorded.

The weather on the two Christmas Bird Count weekends was clear, and no snow or precipitation spoiled the eighty-sixth count. "The Christmas Bird Count is the single most popular, voluntary, early winter bird continental inventory in the world," according to Susan R. Drennan, editor of *American Birds*, the journal that publishes the results of over 1500 different counts throughout North America, Central America, and the Caribbean. In Massachusetts there are twenty-five different count circles, twenty of which are in eastern Massachusetts. Cape Cod traditionally leads the way in the number of species recorded, and this year logged in 126 species. We received reports from fourteen compliers, and the results can be found in the compilation that follows. R.H.S.

LOONS THROUGH HERONS

A new revision of the American Ornithologists' Union (A.O.U.) Checklist was just released in the July 1985 issue of its journal *The Auk* (102: 680-686). The Thirty-fifth Supplement to the Checklist has three changes that will affect North American birds. (1) The Clark's Grebe (*Aechmophorus clarkii*) is considered distinct from the Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) rather than a light morph of the Western Grebe; (2) the Red-naped Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus ruficalis*) is considered distinct from the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus varius*); and (3) the Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*) is considered distinct from the Arctic Loon (*Gavia arctica*). Our first post-split report of a Pacific Loon comes from Duxbury Beach. The reporter sent in details, but unfortunately, field identification of the two loon species is still in its infancy, and observers should be careful. This word of caution should also be extended to the Clark's-Western Grebe split as well. The best single field mark of the Clark's Grebe is the bright orange-yellow beak; the Western Grebe's bill is dull yellow-olive.

Also included in the tabulation below is a waterfowl census of Cape Cod beaches and ponds sponsored by the Cape Cod Bird Club; a report on this census appears elsewhere in this issue.

The Greater White-fronted Goose continued all month in Rochester (from November 3). A Tundra Swan was found in the Newburyport-Salisbury area on the weekend of December 7 and 8. Good numbers of Brant were reported from Boston south, and Snow Geese were found in five areas. Blue-winged Teal were found early in the month from two locations on Cape Cod, and Eurasian Wigeon were found in three places, five males alone on Nantucket. Redheads were not easy to come by, with only nine individuals reported outside of the large flock of 163 in Nantucket. The counts of Common Eider are interesting to look at; surely Massachusetts is the place to see this species especially from Boston south. At least fourteen individual King Eider were reported during the month as compared with eight last year. Nantucket traditionally is the place to see Oldsquaw, thousands upon thousands throughout the month were counted there this December. Other waterfowl species I would like to call your attention to in the tabulation are Common and Barrow's goldeneye, and the three species of mergansers. R.H.S.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>DECEMBER 1985</u>
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Red-throated Loon:

1	Duxbury, Lakeville	4, 2	D.Clapp#, W.Petersen#	
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<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>DECEMBER 1985</u>
Red-throated Loon (cont.):				
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	4, 3	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	3, 29	CBC	
28,29	Nant., Marshfield	17, 8	CBC	
<u>Pacific Loon:</u>				
1	Duxbury Beach	1 (details)	D.Clapp#	
Common Loon:				
7-8	Barnstable, Mashpee	3, 5	CCBC pond census	
21	Buzzards Bay, Quincy	38, 6	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	63, 18	CBC	
22,28	Westport, Nantucket	10, 71	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Newbypt	22, 63	CBC	
Pied-billed Grebe:				
7-8	Cape Cod	57 (total)	CCBC pond census	
11,12	Woburn, Wareham	2, 3	L.Taylor, L.Robinson	
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	27, 4	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Concord	8, 5	CBC	
Horned Grebe:				
1	Wachusett Res., Lakeville	6, 8	M.Lynch#, W.Petersen#	
8	Wareham, Winthrop	40, 38	L.Robinson, R.Stymeist#	
21	Buzzards Bay, Quincy	158, 56	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	46, 23	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	70, 36	CBC	
Red-necked Grebe:				
thr.	Dennis (Corp. Beach)	8+	v.o.	
8	Marshfield, Manomet	4, 2	W.Petersen	
8	Scusset, Winthrop	3, 2	W.Petersen, R.Stymeist	
21,22	Quincy, Cape Ann	8, 9	CBC	
22,28	Cape Cod, Nantucket	9, 53	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Newbypt	10, 3	CBC	
Northern Gannet:				
1	M.V., Duxbury Beach	1000's flying e., 25+	V.Laux, D.Clapp#	
22,28	Cape Cod, Nantucket	453, 517	CBC	
Great Cormorant:				
21,22	Quincy, Gr. Boston	412, 145	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	272, 101	CBC	
Double-crested Cormorant:				
1,7	Ipswich, Newbypt	1, 2	J.Berry, BBC (G.d'Entremont)	
21,22	Quincy, Gr. Boston	7, 6	CBC	
22,29	Cape Cod, Newburyport	5, 1	CBC	
American Bittern:				
28,29	Nantucket, Newbypt	1, 1	CBC	
Great Blue Heron:				
8,12	E.Boston (Logan), Saugus	8, 6	R.Stymeist#, J.Berry	
21	Buzzards Bay, Quincy	33, 44	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	5, 70	CBC	
22	Gr. Boston, Millis, Westport	21, 3, 36	CBC	
28;29	Nant.; Marshfield, Concord	32; 5, 21	CBC	
Black-crowned Night-Heron:				
22,28	Cape Cod, Nantucket	15, 5	CBC	
Single birds on Buzz. Bay, Quincy, Cape Ann, Gr. Boston, Newbypt CBC's				
Tundra Swan:				
7,8	Newbypt-Salisbury	1 ad.	v.o.	
Mute Swan:				
7-8	Cape Cod	75 (total)	CCBC pond census	
21	Buzzards Bay, Cohasset	113, 4	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod, Westport	11, 7, 99	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Newbypt	92, 2	CBC	
Greater White-fronted Goose:				
thr.	Rochester	1 ad.	v.o.	
Snow Goose:				
thr.	P.I.	max. 15 (12/1)	BBC (J.Nove) + v.o.	
7,8-11	Sandwich, Millis	1, 1	CCBC pond census, R.Forster	
29	Concord, Marshfield	1, 1	CBC	
"Blue" Goose:				
7	Clinton (Wachusett Res.)	1	M.Lynch#	
Brant:				
1,2	Duxbury Beach, E.Boston	210, 200+	D.Clapp#, S.Thomas	
7,8	Quincy (Nut I.), E.Boston (Logan)	400, 425	SSBC, R.Stymeist#	
12,21	Plymouth, Buzzards Bay	1200, 478	CBC	
22	Quincy, Gr. Boston, C.Cod	2773, 464, 1306	CBC	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>DECEMBER 1985</u>
Canada Goose:				
1	P.I., Worcester	950, 200+	BBC (J.Nove), M.Lynch#	
4,5	Ipswich (Ap. Farm), Rochester	1000+, 300	J.Berry, K.Ryan	
7-8	Cape Cod	1504	CCBC pond census	
7	Clinton (Wachusett Res.)	602	M.Lynch, S.Carroll	
21	Buzzards Bay, Quincy	1065, 539	CBC	
22	Millis, Gr. Boston	2833, 698	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	1686, 2199	CBC	
22,28	Westport, Nantucket	835, 491	CBC	
29	Concord, Marshfield	5351, 721	CBC	
29	Newbypt	3311	CBC	
Wood Duck:				
7	Barnstable, Arlington	1, 1	CCBC pond census, L.Taylor	
21	Buzzards Bay	3	CBC	
22	Gr. Boston, Millis	3, 1	CBC	
Green-winged Teal:				
1,7-8	P.I., Barnstable	210, 35	BBC (J.Nove), CCBC pond census	
21,22	Quincy, Cape Ann	4, 1	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	13, 20	CBC	
22,28	Westport, Nantucket	4, 9	CBC	
29	Concord	2	CBC	
American Black Duck:				
1,5,8	P.I., Rochester, Plymouth	106, 250, 800+	BBC, K.Ryan, W.Petersen	
7-8	Cape Cod	1044	CCBC pond census	
21	Buzzards Bay, Quincy	2107, 2401	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Ann	134, 1402	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	3334, 1626	CBC	
22,28	Westport, Nantucket	929, 540	CBC	
29	Concord, Marshfield	290, 806	CBC	
29	Newbypt	3994	CBC	
Mallard:				
7-8	Cape Cod	1731	CCBC pond census	
21	Buzzards Bay, Quincy	712, 238	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Ann	972, 794	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	367, 1833	CBC	
22,28	Westport, Nantucket	332, 349	CBC	
29	Concord, Marshfield	1096, 278	CBC	
29	Newbypt	704	CBC	
Northern Pintail:				
1,7-8	P.I., Cape Cod	135, 91 (total)	BBC (J.Nove), CCBC pond census	
7-20	Arlington (2 locations)	max. 8	L.Taylor	
21,22	Quincy, Gr. Boston	1, 2	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Cod	2, 3	CBC	
22	Westport	23	CBC	
Blue-winged Teal:				
7-8	Yarmouth, Falmouth	1, 2	CCBC pond census	
29	Concord	1 m.	CBC	
Northern Shoveler:				
7-8	Barnstable	1	CCBC pond census	
Gadwall:				
5,7-8	Rochester, Harwich	2, 9	K.Ryan, CCBC pond census	
8	Plymouth	28	W.Petersen	
22	Cape Ann, Millis	9, 1	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Marshfield	11, 1	CBC	
Eurasian Wigeon:				
thr.,8	Nantucket, Orleans	5 m., 1 m.	E.Andrews, B.Nikula	
~21	Quincy (Blacks Creek)	1 m.	CBC	
American Wigeon:				
1,7	Nantucket, Braintree	250+, 120	E.Andrews, SSBC (P.O'Neil)	
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	18, 20	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	11, 52	CBC	
Canvasback:				
4,19	Cambridge (Fr. Pond)	258, 55	J.Barton, L.Taylor	
7-8	Cape Cod	1169 (total)	CCBC pond census	
7	Braintree, Lakeville	38, 130	SSBC (P.O'Neil), W.Petersen	
21	Buzzards Bay, Quincy	138, 1	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	37, 6	CBC	
22,28	Westport, Newbypt	125, 31	CBC	
Redhead:				
7-8	Eastham, Falmouth	1, 1	CCBC pond census	
8	Plymouth	6	W.Petersen	
28,31	Nantucket, Worcester	163, 1	CBC, M.Lynch#	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>DECEMBER 1985</u>
Ring-necked Duck:				
7-8	Cape Cod	168 (total)	CCBC pond census	
21,22	Buzzards Bay	102, 202	CBC	
Greater Scaup:				
1,8	Lakeville, Barnstable	250+, 150	W.Petersen, CCBC pond census	
8	Winthrop-Revere	900	BBC (R.Stymeist)	
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	1093, 4964	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	27, 4238	CBC	
Lesser Scaup:				
7	Barnstable, Braintree	6, 30	CCBC pond census, SSBC (P.O'Neil)	
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	3, 9	CBC	
22,23	Gr. Boston, Lakeville	7, 2	CBC, K.Holmes	
Common Eider:				
1,8	Duxbury Beach, Monomoy	1500, 25,000+	D.Clapp#, W.Harrington#	
8,12	Revere-Winthrop,Plymouth	2200, 1400	BBC (R.Stymeist),L.Robinson	
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	4202, 853	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	548, 12,239	CBC	
22,28	Gr. Boston, Nantucket	918, 5954	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Newbypt	14,284, 31	CBC	
King Eider:				
1,8	Duxbury Beach, Winthrop	1 m., 1 m.	D.Clapp#, BBC (R.Stymeist)	
8,13 on	Scusset Beach, Rockport	1 f., max. 6	W.Petersen,P.William Smith+v.o.	
15	Dennis (Corp. Beach)	1 ad. m.	J.Aylward	
21,22	Quincy, Westport	1 f., 1	CBC	
28	Nantucket	2	CBC	
Harlequin Duck:				
6 on	N.Scituate	2	J.Hassett + v.o.	
28	Nantucket	3	CBC	
Oldsquaw:				
6,25;28	Nantucket	20,000, 50,000; 86,243	E.Andrews; CBC	
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	22, 153	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	181, 301	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Newbypt	39, 106	CBC	
Black Scoter:				
1	Duxbury Beach	40	D.Clapp#	
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	79, 309	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Westport	16, 39	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Marshfield	288, 25	CBC	
Surf Scoter:				
1,8	Lakeville, Winthrop	1, 120	W.Petersen#, BBC (R.Stymeist)	
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	6, 449	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	43, 78	CBC	
22	Westport, Gr. Boston	25, 66	CBC	
White-winged Scoter:				
8	Winthrop-Revere	800	BBC (R.Stymeist)	
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	800, 444	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	159, 629	CBC	
22,28	Gr. Boston, Nantucket	739, 704	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Newbypt	727, 94	CBC	
Common Goldeneye:				
8	Revere-Winthrop	400	BBC(R.Stymeist)	
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	747, 967	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	1030, 482	CBC	
22,28	Gr. Boston, Nantucket	620, 1174	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Newbypt	332, 753	CBC	
Barrow's Goldeneye:				
6,8	N.Scituate, Plymouth	1 m., 4 (3 m., 1 f.)	J.Hassett, W.Petersen	
8,12	Winthrop, Plymouth	1, 4	BBC (R.Stymeist), L.Robinson	
21,22	Quincy, Gr. Boston	1, 4	CBC	
22,28	Cape Cod, Nantucket	6, 7	CBC	
29	Newbypt	2	CBC	
Bufflehead:				
7-8	Cape Cod	819	CCBC pond census	
8	Winthrop-Revere	300	BBC (R.Stymeist)	
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	953, 2119	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	250, 1194	CBC	
22	Westport, Gr. Boston	170, 520	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Marshfield	215, 326	CBC	
Hooded Merganser:				
1,5	Lakeville,Waltham (Camb.Res.)	16, 12	W.Petersen#, R.Forster	
7-8	Cape Cod	324 (total)	CCBC pond census	
7,7-19	Braintree,Arlington (Spy Pond)	12, max. 34 (12/16)	SSBC(P.O'Neil), L.Taylor	

SPECIES/DATE LOCATION NUMBER OBSERVERS DECEMBER 1985

Hooded Merganser (cont.):

11,20 Winchester, Arlington (Mystic Lakes) 17, 31 L.Taylor
 21 Buzzards Bay, Quincy 344, 3 CBC
 22 Cape Cod, Gr. Boston 67, 17 CBC
 28,29 Nantucket, Concord 22, 15 CBC

Common Merganser:

5 Waltham (Camb. Res.) 100 R.Forster
 21 Quincy, Buzzards Bay 50, 222 CBC
 22 Cape Cod, Westport 701, 175 CBC
 29 Concord, Newbypt 12, 140 CBC

Red-breasted Merganser:

8 Revere-Winthrop 240 BBC (R.Stymeist)
 21 Quincy, Buzzards Bay 1054, 695 CBC
 22 Cape Ann, Cape Cod 262, 14,272 CBC
 22,28 Gr. Boston, Nantucket 571, 4218 CBC
 29 Marshfield, Newbypt 161, 192 CBC

Ruddy Duck:

5,7 Waltham, Braintree 66, 50 R.Forster, SSBC (P.O'Neil)
 8,13 Plymouth, Arlington 13, 3 W.Petersen, L.Taylor
 21 Quincy, Buzzards Bay 2, 1 CBC
 22 Cape Cod, Gr. Boston 7, 12 CBC
 29 Concord 1 CBC

BALD EAGLE THROUGH NORTHERN BOBWHITE

Eleven Bald Eagles were reported during December, four immatures in the Quabbin area and three birds in the Lakeville area. Looking at the tabulation below, you have to consider a significant overlap on the CBC totals especially for Northern Harrier and Red-tailed Hawk. Good numbers of Sharp-shinned Hawks were found, and six Cooper's Hawks were reported. Thirteen Northern Goshawks were noted this year compared with seven last December. A total of seven Red-shouldered Hawks were counted compared with just one last December. An immature Golden Eagle was found at the Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary in Marshfield, and another immature was located in East Quabbin.

Falcon totals included good numbers of kestrels and Merlins and four sightings of Peregrine Falcon.

Ring-necked Pheasant numbers seem surprisingly low outside of Greater Boston. Ruffed Grouse were reported from nine counts, and Northern Bobwhite from five counts, with eleven birds found in Belmont as the most unusual. R.H.S.

Bald Eagle:

3,8 Gloucester, Lakeville 1 imm., 1 imm. C.Leahy, R.Forster + v.o.
 15,29 Newbypt 1 ad. P.Roberts, CBC
 27 Wayland 2 imm. R.Forster#
 29,30 Lakeville, Quabbin (Gate 40) 1 ad., 1 sub ad., 4 imm. K.Holmes, M.Lynch#

Northern Harrier:

1 Marshfield, P.I. 4, 7 D.Clapp#, BBC (J.Nove)
 5 Rochester, Lakeville 2, 1 K.Ryan
 14,15 Marshfield, Newbypt area 3, 7 T.Carrolan, P.Roberts
 21 Quincy, Buzzards Bay 3, 7 CBC
 22 Cape Ann, Cape Cod 3, 18 CBC
 22 Westport, Gr. Boston 6, 2 CBC
 28,29 Nantucket, Marshfield 31, 16 CBC
 29 Newbypt 12 CBC

Sharp-shinned Hawk:

thr. Single individuals at eight locations excluding CBC counts.
 21,22 Buzzards Bay, Millis 5, 10 CBC
 22 Cape Cod, Gr. Boston 18, 5 CBC
 28,29 Nantucket, Marshfield 3, 6 CBC
 29 Concord, Newbypt 7, 6 CBC

Cooper's Hawk:

21,22 Buzzards Bay, Millis 1, 1 CBC
 22,29 Cape Cod, Concord 1, 2 CBC
 29 Newbypt 1 CBC

Northern Goshawk:

thr.,1 Brookline, Middleboro 1 imm., 1 ad. H.Wiggin, W.Petersen#
 22 Millis, Cape Ann 1, 1 CBC
 22,28 Cape Cod, Nantucket 2, 1 CBC
 29 Concord, Newbypt 3, 3 CBC

Red-shouldered Hawk:

5,13 Rochester 1 K.Ryan

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>DECEMBER 1985</u>
Red-shouldered Hawk (cont.):				
22	Millis, Cape Cod	2, 1	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Norwell	1, 1	CBC, M. + B.Litchfield	
29	Concord	1	CBC	
Red-tailed Hawk:				
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	13, 7	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Ann	68, 21	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Westport	11, 11	CBC	
22,28	Gr. Boston, Nantucket	53, 13	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	17, 110	CBC	
29	Newbypt	48	CBC	
Rough-legged Hawk:				
thr.	Newbypt area	max. 6 (12/16)	H. Parker + v.o.	
thr.	Marshfield (DWWS)	max. 5 (12/14)	T.Carrolan + v.o.	
22	Millis, Cape Ann	3, 2	CBC	
29	Concord, Newbypt	3, 16	CBC	
Golden Eagle:				
22-31	Marshfield (DWWS)	1 imm.	v.o.	
30	Quabbin (Gate 37)	1 imm.	M.Lynch, S.Carroll	
American Kestrel:				
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	6, 5	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Ann	14, 6	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Westport	20, 6	CBC	
22,28	Gr. Boston, Nantucket	20, 9	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	9, 11	CBC	
29	Newbypt	14	CBC	
Merlin:				
1,7	Duxbury Beach, N.Monomoy	1, 1	D.Clapp#, B.Nikula	
8,9	Marshfield, Halifax	1, 1	W.Petersen, K.Holmes	
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	1, 1	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	1, 3	CBC	
22,28	Westport, Nantucket	2, 4	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	1, 1	CBC	
29	Newbypt	1	CBC	
Peregrine Falcon:				
22	Cape Cod, Westport	2, 1	CBC	
22	E.Boston (Logan)	1	CBC	
Ring-necked Pheasant:				
21	Athol, Quincy, Buzz. Bay	9, 7, 7	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Ann, Gr. Boston	59, 10, 105	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Marshfield	68, 2	CBC	
29	Concord, Newbypt	41, 13	CBC	
Ruffed Grouse:				
21	Athol, Quincy, Buzz Bay	3, 3, 4	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Ann, Gr. Boston	32, 2, 1	CBC	
25,29	Lexington, Concord	1, 10	L.Taylor, CBC	
29	Marshfield, Newbypt	1, 6	CBC	
Northern Bobwhite:				
7	Belmont	11	L.Taylor	
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	40, 78	CBC	
22,28	Millis, Nantucket	11, 5	CBC	

RAILS THROUGH ALCIDS

December is the month of the Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) with intensive searches for birds, particularly unusual birds. This results in several things, including the following:

- * Most of the records are from the CBC's;
- * The numbers reported are usually higher than at other times;
- * Some unusual (either rare or extralimital) birds are recorded.

This December is no exception. However, the intensive search for some birds shows that they were not present in any numbers this December. Rails, gallinules, and coot were relatively scarce, as were Killdeer. The presence of American Oystercatchers constitutes only the second BOEM December record. The numbers reported were high, but it is difficult to know whether these were all different birds. Greater Yellowlegs were in low numbers compared with those of previous years. For example, the last four Cape Cod CBC's had these numbers of Greater Yellowlegs: 1985 (1), 1984 (12), 1983 (8), 1982 (6). A Lesser Yellowlegs found on the Newburyport CBC was also an unusual December bird (seen in only 7 of the last 14 Decembers) as was a Willet (4 of 14) on the Cape Cod CBC and a Western Sandpiper found at Martha's Vineyard (5 of 14). Common

Snipe and American Woodcock were represented in their usual numbers.

Two Laughing Gulls were noted in East Boston, and only one Little Gull was reported. On the Greater Boston CBC, six adult and one immature Common Black-headed Gulls were found in Winthrop. A total of 14 to 17 of this species were reported this month. Approximately 2200 Ring-billed Gulls were estimated in Middleboro, and 2656 of these gulls were counted on the Greater Boston CBC. This is the only time of year comprehensive estimates of Herring and Black-backed Gulls are reported, and the numbers indicate that these species are abundant. Iceland Gulls favor Cape Ann and Nantucket, judging by the numbers of them at these locations. Only two Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported; apparently none were found on the Nantucket CBC where they have been regular for years. A Glaucous Gull was found inland at Athol, and seven were noted on the Cape Ann CBC.

Only one Dovekie and one Thick-billed Murre were reported, both from Rockport. The outer Cape Cod CBC counted 2382 Razorbills; they probably congregate off the Cape for the same reason a lot of other birds and whales do -- the presence of large numbers of sand lance. G.W.G.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>DECEMBER 1985</u>
Virginia Rail:				
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	1, 8	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Marshfield	3, 5	CBC	
Sora:				
22,28	Cape Cod, Nantucket	1, 1	CBC	
Common Moorhen:				
7-8	Chatham	1	CCBC pond census	
American Coot:				
7-8,7-19	Cape Cod, Arlington	76, max. 21 (12/10)	CCBC pond census, L.Taylor	
8,7	Plymouth, Braintree	125+, 67	W.Petersen, SSBC (P.O'Neil)	
22	Cape Cod	25	CBC	
Black-bellied Plover:				
21	Buzzards Bay, Quincy	9, 32	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	6, 3	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Marshfield	7, 8	CBC	
Killdeer:				
1,9	Halifax, Concord	8, 2	W.Petersen, R.Forster	
22	Millis, Gr. Boston	1, 3	CBC	
29	Newbypt	2	CBC	
American Oystercatcher:				
1,15	Duxbury	4, 3	D.Clapp, E.Einhorn	
8,28;22	Chatham; Orleans	5, 1; 5	P.Trull; R.Forster#	
Greater Yellowlegs:				
1	P.I., Duxbury	1, 1	BBC (J.Nove), D.Clapp#	
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	1, 1	CBC	
Lesser Yellowlegs:				
28	Newbypt	1	R.Heil	
<u>Willet:</u>				
22	Chatham	1	CBC (V.Laux#)	
Ruddy Turnstone:				
1,14	Duxbury, Salem	1, 12	D.Clapp#, J.Nove	
22,28	Gr. Boston, Nantucket	2, 27	CBC	
Red Knot:				
1,21	Duxbury, Quincy	51, 22	D.Clapp#, CBC	
Sanderling:				
8,21	Revere, Quincy	70, 93	BBC (R.Stymeist), CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	94, 107	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Marshfield	450, 22	CBC	
<u>Western Sandpiper:</u>				
29-30	M.V.	1 (no details)	B.Nikula# + v.o.	
Purple Sandpiper:				
14,22	N.Scituate, Gr. Boston	200, 20	R.Charlton#, CBC	
22,28	Westport, Nantucket	34, 40	CBC	
Dunlin:				
1,12	Duxbury, Plymouth	1850, 135	D.Clapp#, L.Robinson	
22	Cape Cod, Westport	658, 255	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	91, 46	CBC	
Common Snipe:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Ann	10, 6	CBC	
22,29	Cape Cod, Newbypt	15, 9	CBC	
American Woodcock:				
20,21	E.Middleboro, Buzz. Bay	1, 2	K.Anderson, CBC	
22,29	Cape Cod, Newbypt	2, 1	CBC	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>DECEMBER 1985</u>
Laughing Gull:				
2	E. Boston	2	S. Thomas	
Little Gull:				
1	Chatham	1	W. Bailey	
Common Black-headed Gull:				
1, 8	Chatham, Winthrop	1, 6 ad. + 1 imm.	W. Bailey, BBC (R. Stymeist)	
13, 16	Gloucester, Newbypt	1, 2	W. Smith, H. Parker	
21, 22	Quincy, Cape Cod	3, 2	CBC	
29	Marshfield	1	CBC	
Bonaparte's Gull:				
8, 21	Revere, Quincy	350+, 369	BBC (R. Stymeist), CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Gr. Boston	389, 525	CBC	
28	Nantucket	544	CBC	
Ring-billed Gull:				
1, 8	Middleboro, Revere	2200, 1000+	W. Petersen#, BBC (R. Stymiest)	
21, 22	Quincy, Gr. Boston	1119, 2656	CBC	
Herring Gull:				
21, 22	Quincy, Cape Ann	6302, 14, 435	CBC	
22, 28	Cape Cod, Nantucket	10, 893, 9449	CBC	
Iceland Gull:				
22, 24	Cape Ann, Barre	25, 2	CBC, M. Lynch#	
28, 29	Nantucket, Newbypt	24, 4	CBC	
Lesser Black-backed Gull:				
14, 28	Gloucester, Centerville	1 ad., 1 ad.	C. Floyd, B. Nikula#	
Glaucous Gull:				
21, 22	Athol, Cape Ann	1 (no details), 7	CBC	
22, 31	Cape Cod, Worcester	3, 1 (3W)	CBC, M. Lynch#	
Great Black-backed Gull:				
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	4609, 2100	CBC	
28, 29	Nantucket, Marshfield	2975, 1665	CBC	
Black-legged Kittiwake:				
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	153, 1804	CBC	
28, 29	Nantucket, Newbypt	97, 143	CBC	
alcid sp.:				
22	Cape Cod	26	CBC	
Dovekie:				
13	Rockport	1	W. Smith	
Thick-billed Murre:				
15	Rockport	1	M. Lynch#	
Razorbill:				
8, 22	Scusset Beach, Cape Cod	50, 2382	W. Petersen, CBC	
28	Nantucket	16	CBC	
Black Guillemot:				
13, 22	Rockport, Cape Ann	10, 18	W. Smith, CBC	

DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Mourning Doves are to be found in the suburbs with 2118 on the Millis CBC and 1360 on the Concord CBC. The Millis area also had four species of owls. Two Common Barn-Owls were found dead on Georges Island, two others were noted on Lovell's Island, and one was found in a pine grove on the Nantucket CBC. Eastern Screech-Owls are relatively common in Eastern Massachusetts as probably are Great Horned Owls, in appropriate habitat. Six Snowy Owls were banded, and two others were seen at Logan Airport. Short-eared Owls were found on three CBC's and Northern Saw-whet Owls were present at four locations. Belted Kingfishers were very common on Cape Cod and the shores of Buzzards Bay. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen on the Cape. An interesting statistic to the writer is the ratio of Downy to Hairy Woodpecker. From the CBC data, this ratio is about four to one. A Black-backed Woodpecker was photographed in Provincetown, and one was found at Quabbin where it was seen by many through the end of the month. Nantucket and Cape Cod counted over 100 Northern Flickers, and eight Pileated Woodpeckers were found on the Concord CBC.

G.W.G.

Rock Dove:				
22	Millis, Gr. Boston	1175, 2958	CBC	
Mourning Dove:				
thr.	Brookline	max. 105 (12/22)	H. Wiggin#	
22, 29	Millis, Concord	2118, 1360	CBC	
Common Barn-Owl:				
20	Georges I., Lovell's I.	2 (dead), 2	N. Smith	
28	Nantucket	1	S. Zende#	
Eastern Screech-Owl:				
21; 22	Quincy; Gr. Boston, Millis	14; 30, 4	CBC	

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	DECEMBER 1985
Eastern Screech-Owl (cont.):				
29	Newbypt, Concord	33, 65	CBC	
Great Horned Owl:				
22	Millis, Westport	10, 12	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	15, 25	CBC	
Snowy Owl:				
21-31	Logan Airport	6 (b.) + 2	N.Smith	
29	Marshfield	1	CBC	
Barred Owl:				
14, 21	Halifax, Athol	1, 2	K.Holmes, CBC	
22, 27	Millis, Petersham-Hardwick	4, 4	CBC, M.Lynch#	
29	Newbypt, Concord	3, 5	CBC	
Long-eared Owl:				
22, 29	Millis, Concord	1, 1	CBC	
Short-eared Owl:				
1, 28	Nantucket	3, 4	E.Andrews#, CBC	
21, 22	Quincy, Cape Cod	3, 5	CBC	
Northern Saw-whet Owl:				
22, 28	Cape Ann, Wellfleet	3, 1	CBC, P.Trull	
28, 29	Nantucket, Newbypt	3, 2 (heard)	CBC	
Belted Kingfisher:				
21, 22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	21, 22	CBC	
22	Westport, Gr. Boston	7, 11	CBC	
29	Concord	9	CBC	
Red-headed Woodpecker:				
22	Millis	1	CBC	
29	Marshfield	1	CBC	
Red-bellied Woodpecker:				
29	Concord	2	CBC	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:				
28	W.Yarmouth	1	N. + S.Osborne#	
Downy Woodpecker:				
21, 22	Quincy, Millis	50, 503	CBC	
22, 29	Gr. Boston, Concord	168, 353	CBC	
Hairy Woodpecker:				
22	Millis, Gr. Boston	132, 39	CBC	
29	Concord	110	CBC	
Black-backed Woodpecker:				
6	P'town	1 (ph.)	R.LeBlond# + v.o.	
21-31	Quabbin (Gate 40)	1 m.	S.Carroll + M.Lynch + v.o.	
Northern Flicker:				
21, 22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	29, 21	CBC	
22, 28	Cape Cod, Nantucket	87, 105	CBC	
Pileated Woodpecker:				
thr.	Newton	1 f.	M.Rugo	
10, 22	Wayland, Millis	1, 1	C.Littman, CBC	
29, 30	Concord, Quabbin (Gate 37)	8, 2	CBC, S.Carroll#	

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WARBLERS

The Christmas Bird Count efforts found notable numbers of Blue Jays throughout the Eastern Massachusetts region. Their presence was likely a result of the year's good mast crop. Millis CBC tallies for many common wintering species including American Crow and Black-capped Chickadee in addition to Blue Jay were particularly high, exceeding even the traditionally high Concord CBC totals! These high Millis counts were mainly due to the large number of observers deployed at feeders. This year comparatively few semihardy species had individuals in any numbers lingering far into December, explainable by the severely cold weather during the week before the first CBC's. This dearth is well exemplified by Ruby-crowned Kinglet, for which the total of three individuals for the month is among the lowest in the past ten Decembers. Northern Shrike reports, at a total of fourteen individuals for the month, were very close to norms for nonflight years. One individual White-eyed Vireo was seen in Eastham at midmonth, just before the most severe cold weather arrived. A total of seven warbler species was reported, with only a couple of unexpected varieties. These included an amazing two Yellow-throated Warbler individuals observed at southeastern Massachusetts sites and a Wilson's Warbler seen in Eastham just before the CBC period. The CBC activities resulted in an excellent count of ten Pine Warblers on Cape Cod. Otherwise, warbler numbers were low, particularly notable with Palm Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat.

The Eurasian Jackdaw stayed put on Nantucket for yet another CBC season, its fourth. Other rarities for the month included a Varied Thrush at Ashburnham and two Bohemian

Waxwings together in Hardwick on December 21, diminishing to a single individual seen at least until December 28.

L.E.T.

SPECIES/DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	DECEMBER 1985
Eastern Phoebe:				
6-10,27;29	WBWS, Newbypt	1, 1; 1	D.Reynolds#; CBC	
Western Kingbird:				
1,7	Nantucket, Dennis	1, 1	E.Andrews, A.Tait#	
Horned Lark:				
thr.,21	Rochester, Athol	max. 250 {2/5}, 1	v.o., CBC	
	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	19, 112	CBC	
22	Gr. Boston, Westport	29, 23	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Marshfield	28, 56	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	438, 55	CBC	
Blue Jay:				
21	Athol, Quincy	1033, 326	CBC	
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	465, 3077	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	453, 420	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Marshfield	607, 399	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	942, 2659	CBC	
American Crow:				
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	383, 395	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Ann	4420, 661	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	420, 1498	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Marshfield	360, 725	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	853, 3229	CBC	
Fish Crow:				
22,29	Millis, Concord	2, 79	CBC	
Common Raven:				
21,30	Quabbin (Gate 40, Gate 37)	1, 1	M.Lynch#	
Eurasian Jackdaw:				
thr.	Nantucket	1	E.Andrews#	
Black-capped Chickadee:				
21	Athol, Buzzards Bay	1030, 885	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Cod	4066, 864	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	1116, 1169	CBC	
29	Concord	3083	CBC	
Tufted Titmouse:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	162, 1947	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Gr. Boston	139, 311	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	179, 970	CBC	
Red-breasted Nuthatch:				
21	Quabbin (Gate 40), Athol	7, 11	S.Carroll#, CBC	
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	5, 89	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	10, 28	CBC	
22,28	Gr. Boston, Nantucket	12, 23	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	16, 29	CBC	
White-breasted Nuthatch:				
21,22	Athol, Millis	84, 619	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Gr. Boston	89, 170	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	173, 450	CBC	
Brown Creeper:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	12, 52	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Gr. Boston	12, 23	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	25, 54	CBC	
Carolina Wren:				
thr.	Winchester, Ipswich	1, 1	M.McClellen#, J.Berry	
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	3, 58	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Westport	14, 22	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	7, 2	CBC	
Winter Wren:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	2, 1	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Marshfield	1, 1	CBC	
Marsh Wren:				
22,28	Gr. Boston, Nantucket	1, 3	CBC	
29	Newbypt	1	CBC	
Golden-crowned Kinglet:				
21	Athol, Buzzards Bay	47, 70	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Cod	25, 41	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	47, 47	CBC	
29	Concord	40	CBC	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet:				
3,21	M.V., Buzzards Bay	1, 1	fide V.Laux, CBC	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>DECEMBER 1985</u>
Ruby-crowned Kinglet (cont.):				
22	Cape Cod	1	CBC	
Eastern Bluebird:				
6,8	Marshfield, Hardwick	1, 4	J.Hassett, G.Gove#	
Hermit Thrush:				
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	4, 15	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	1, 2	CBC	
22	Gr. Boston, Westport	2, 6	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Newbypt	1, 3	CBC	
29	Concord	1	CBC	
American Robin:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	179, 109	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	156, 133	CBC	
Varied Thrush:				
4	Ashburnham	1	D.Fetig	
Gray Catbird:				
21	Buzzards Bay, Millis	6, 1	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	1, 12	CBC	
22	Gr. Boston, Westport	2, 3	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Newbypt	5, 1	CBC	
29	Concord	1	CBC	
Northern Mockingbird:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	86, 139	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Concord	152, 207	CBC	
Brown Thrasher:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	1, 1	CBC	
Bohemian Waxwing:				
21	Hardwick	2	M.Lynch#	
Cedar Waxwing:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	173, 312	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	180, 415	CBC	
29	Concord	654	CBC	
Northern Shrike:				
22	Millis, Cape Ann	1, 1	CBC	
15,25	Nantucket (2 sites)	1 imm., 1 imm.	E.Andrews#	
29	Newbypt, Concord	6, 4	CBC	
European Starling:				
21	Athol, Quincy	1106; 50000	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	184400; 11862	CBC	
White-eyed Vireo:				
15	Eastham	1	N.Waldron	
Yellow-rumped Warbler:				
21,22	Quincy, Cape Cod	99, 709	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Newbypt	1246, 48	CBC	
Yellow-throated Warbler:				
3,9-31	M.V., Harwich	1, 1 (ph.)	fide V.Laux, R.Comeau#	
Pine Warbler:				
thr.,21	Nantucket, Buzzards Bay	max. 4, 1	E.Andrews, CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Cod	1, 10	CBC	
Palm Warbler:				
8,21	Winthrop, Quincy	1, 1	R.Stymeist#, CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	1, 2	CBC	
Common Yellowthroat:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	1, 1	CBC	
22,28	Gr. Boston, Nantucket	1, 1	CBC	
Wilson's Warbler:				
18-19	Eastham	1	A.Thomas	
Yellow-breasted Chat:				
22	Cambridge	1	J.Gohres	

CARDINAL THROUGH HOUSE SPARROW

Low numbers of Rufous-sided Towhees on the CBCs further exemplified the lack of semi-hearty passerines in our region this December. There were reports of single individuals of some relatively uncommon sparrow species, including a Vesper at Concord and a Lark at Chatham. Dark-eyed Juncos were notable in their wide distribution and large numbers. An average count for December of twelve "Baltimore" Orioles was augmented by two individuals of the "Bullock's" variety seen December 3 on Martha's Vineyard. This year's winter finch flight started out fairly well, with December reports of at least some individuals of all the species that could reasonably be expected. Numbers of Pine Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls were both significant, and the reports were widely distributed throughout the region. L.E.T.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>DECEMBER 1985</u>
Northern Cardinal:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	302, 623	CBC	
22,29	Cape Cod, Newbypt	229, 119	CBC	
29	Concord	303	CBC	
Rufous-sided Towhee:				
8,21	Quabbin (Gate 35),Whitman	1, 2	BBC, B.Petersen	
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	2, 2	CBC	
22	Gr. Boston, Westport	1, 1	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	1, 2	CBC	
American Tree Sparrow:				
21,22	Athol, Millis	285, 668	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	36, 288	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Newbypt	1, 643	CBC	
29	Concord	1173	CBC	
Chipping Sparrow:				
22,28	Cape Cod, Nantucket	2, 1	CBC	
29	Marshfield	1	CBC	
Field Sparrow:				
5,21	Wareham, Buzzards Bay	20, 35	L.Robinson, CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Cod	14, 21	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Concord	13, 17	CBC	
Vesper Sparrow:				
29	Concord	1	CBC	
Lark Sparrow:				
22	Chatham	1	B.Nikula#	
Savannah Sparrow:				
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	12, 4	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Newbypt	14, 5	CBC	
"Ipswich" Sparrow:				
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	6, 1	CBC	
29	Marshfield	6	CBC	
Sharp-tailed Sparrow:				
22	Cape Cod	3	CBC	
Seaside Sparrow:				
22,29	Cape Cod, Newbypt	4, 1	CBC	
Fox Sparrow:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	2, 2	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	2, 1	CBC	
22	Gr. Boston, Westport	2, 1	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	1, 4	CBC	
Song Sparrow:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	201, 133	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	210, 312	CBC	
29	Concord	205	CBC	
Swamp Sparrow:				
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	4, 30	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Cod	9, 42	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	6, 28	CBC	
White-throated Sparrow:				
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	74, 232	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Ann	230, 81	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	152, 165	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	121, 226	CBC	
White-crowned Sparrow:				
21,22	Quincy, Cape Ann	2, 1	CBC	
22,28	Cape Cod, Nantucket	1, 3	CBC	
Dark-eyed Junco:				
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	243, 219	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Cod	2295, 207	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	1009, 405	CBC	
29	Concord	1244	CBC	
Lapland Longspur:				
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	1, 2	CBC	
29	Newbypt	30	CBC	
Snow Bunting:				
8,21	Winthrop, Athol	26, 10	BBC, CBC	
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Cape Cod	2, 6	CBC	
22	Westport	12	CBC	
29,30	Newbypt, Quabbin (Gate 37)	1, 13	CBC, S. Carroll#	
Red-winged Blackbird:				
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	40, 71	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	46, 13	CBC	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>DECEMBER 1985</u>
Eastern Meadowlark:				
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	2, 1	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	33, 6	CBC	
22,28	Westport, Newbypt	3, 20	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Newbypt	18, 1	CBC	
Rusty Blackbird:				
18,22	Peabody, Millis	25, 6	R.Forster, CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	3, 1	CBC	
Common Grackle:				
15,16	Waltham, Arlington	1, 1	R.Stymeist#, L.Taylor	
21	Buzzards Bay, Millis	1, 1	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	2, 1	CBC	
22,28	Gr. Boston, Nantucket	3, 3	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	7, 10	CBC	
Brown-headed Cowbird:				
21	Athol, Quincy	25, 19	CBC	
22	Millis, Gr. Boston	19, 20	CBC	
22,29	Westport, Concord	15, 9	CBC	
Northern Oriole:				
3	M.V., Lexington	2, 1	T.Rivers, R.Gubisch	
10,17	Grafton, Groveland	1, 1	S.White, B.Ayer	
19,21	Hopedale, Hingham	1, 1	C.Osterosky, R.Hornstra	
22	Arlington, Cape Ann	1, 2	W.McIntosh, CBC	
22,28	Cape Cod, Nantucket	1, 1	CBC	
"Bullock's" Oriole:				
3	M.V.	2	T.Rivers	
Pine Grosbeak:				
1,11	Worcester, Halifax	45, 9	M.Lynch#, K.Holmes	
21,22	Athol, Millis	37, 37	CBC	
22,24	Cape Ann, Lexington	20, 8	CBC, L.Taylor	
29	Newbypt, Concord	89, 102	CBC	
Purple Finch:				
21	Athol, Quincy	9, 4	CBC	
21,22	Buzzards Bay, Millis	12, 131	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	13, 20	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Marshfield	23, 3	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	22, 33	CBC	
House Finch:				
21	Athol, Buzzards Bay	94, 421	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Ann	863, 357	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	485, 473	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	538, 655	CBC	
Red Crossbill:				
13,21	Nantucket, Quabbin (Gate 40)	1 m., 1	E.Andrews, S.Carroll#	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	1, 6	CBC	
White-winged Crossbill:				
4,22	Littleton, Gr. Boston	10, 15	V.Sprong, CBC	
29	Newbypt	2	CBC	
Common Redpoll:				
4,21	Cambridge, Athol	1, 230	L.Robinson, CBC	
21,22	Quincy, Millis	84, 7	CBC	
22,29	Gr. Boston, Newbypt	85, 25	CBC	
29	Concord	13	CBC	
Pine Siskin:				
thr.,21	Middleboro, Buzzards Bay	max. 80 (12/28), 36	D.Briggs, CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Cod	5, 18	CBC	
28,29	Nantucket, Marshfield	30, 4	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	3, 17	CBC	
American Goldfinch:				
21	Quincy, Buzzards Bay	74, 96	CBC	
22	Millis, Cape Ann	624, 135	CBC	
22	Cape Cod, Gr. Boston	162, 347	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Concord	157, 402	CBC	
Evening Grosbeak:				
2	Nantucket, E.Middleboro	3, 20	E.Andrews#, K.Anderson	
3,21	Easton, Athol	12, 912	K.Ryan, CBC	
21,22	Quincy, Millis	10, 328	CBC	
22	Cape Ann, Cape Cod	21, 16	CBC	
29	Marshfield, Newbypt	48, 55	CBC	
29	Concord	72	CBC	
House Sparrow:				
22	Millis, Gr. Boston	1949, 1234	CBC	
29	Newbypt, Concord	883, 1442	CBC	



Field Records January 1986

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

January was mild and very sunny; the temperature averaged 31.3°, 1.7° above normal, and was the mildest since January 1977. The month's high was 58° on January 18, and the low was 1° on January 15. The month was marked by thaws and freezes. Precipitation totaled 3.42 inches, just 0.57 inch less than normal; snowfall was but 0.8 inch, 11.7 inches under normal - the least in January since 1980. This ties with 1934 for the fifth least of January records; the seasonal total now stands at 5.1 inches, 16.3 inches under the average, and second only to 2.6 inches in 1979-80 for the least in 92 years! Heavy fog was noted on four days, and sleet was noted on two days, causing very hazardous road conditions. R.H.S.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

Thirteen observers participated in the annual Boston Harbor census held on January 12 and tallied twenty-three species of waterbirds not including raptors, gulls, or shore-birds. The weather conditions were horrendous (normal for all TASL counts), with strong southwest winds most likely affecting the totals of some of the waterbirds, notably Great Cormorants and Common Eider. Also noteworthy on the census was a high count of twenty-five Double-crested Cormorants, all found within the inner harbor.

An American Bittern was flushed on Tuckernuck Island during the Christmas Bird Count (CBC). The only other herons reported were the usual Great Blues and four Black-crowned Night-Herons.

A Tundra Swan was found in Fairhaven, and presumably the same immature individual was later seen in Wareham. The Greater White-fronted Goose continued in Rochester at least through mid-month. At Wachusett Reservoir in Clinton, a "Blue" Goose kept company with a single Snow Goose. Good numbers of Brant were reported, especially in the Boston Harbor area. Specialty duck reports included five Eurasian Wigeon, nine King Eider, five Harlequin Duck, and eighteen Barrow's Goldeneye. Nantucket remains the best place to see Redheads in Massachusetts with a maximum of over 150 reported. R.H.S.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>JANUARY 1986</u>
Red-throated Loon:				
2	E.Sandwich, Tuckernuck	3, 6	K.Anderson, CBC	
11	Rockport	3	H.Wiggin#	
Common Loon:				
2,4	Tuckernuck, Cape Ann	21, 6	CBC, BBC (D.+D.Hale)	
11,25	Rockport, Salisbury-P.I.	6, 8	H.Coolidge#, M.Lynch#	
Pied-billed Grebe:				
11	Framingham, Nantucket	3, 7	K.Hamilton, R.Stymeist#	
18	Lakeville	2	K.Anderson#	
Horned Grebe:				
5,11	Cape Ann, N. Scituate	5, 3	J.Berry, M.Lynch#	
12,25	Boston Harbor, Salisbury-P.I.	12, 4	TASL(S.Zendeh), S.Carroll#	
Red-necked Grebe:				
thr.	Dennis (Corporation Beach)	max. 7+	B.Nikula# + v.o.	
2,4	Tuckernuck, Cape Ann	4, 7	CBC, BBC (D.+D.Hale)	
11,24	Rockport, Cape Ann	4, 2	H.Coolidge#, B.Cassie	
Northern Gannet:				
1,2	P'town, Tuckernuck	50+, 3	B.Nikula, CBC	
5,11	Rockport (A.P.), Nantucket	13, 4	J.Berry, R.Stymeist#	
Great Cormorant:				
2,4	Tuckernuck, Cape Ann	45, 76	CBC, BBC (D.+D.Hale)	
11,12	N. Scituate, Boston Harbor	25+, 147	M.Lynch#, TASL (S.Zendeh)	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>JANUARY 1986</u>
Double-crested Cormorant:				
11	Nantucket (Eel Pt.), Orleans	2, 1	R. Stymeist#, B. Nikula	
12	Boston Harbor (Boston)	25	TASL (S. ZendeH)	
American Bittern:				
2	Tuckernuck	1	CBC (M. Litchfield)	
Great Blue Heron:				
1	P.I.-Newburyport, Lexington	5, 1	BBC (A. Blaisdell), L. Taylor	
1, 11	E. Boston, Nantucket	5, 6	R. Stymeist#	
11, 12	Framingham, Milton	4, 3	K. Hamilton, L. Taylor	
Black-crowned Night-Heron:				
1, 11	E. Boston (Belle Isle)	1, 1	R. Stymeist#, C. Jackson	
2, 9	Eastham, Middleboro	1, 1	M. Lynch#, D. Briggs	
Tundra Swan:				
5, 9	Fairhaven, Wareham	1 imm., 1 imm.	K. Anderson, D. Briggs	
Mute Swan:				
4, 5	Cape Ann, Buzzards Bay	6, 27	BBC (D.+D. Hale), K. Anderson	
Greater White-fronted Goose:				
19	Rochester	1	M. Lynch, S. Carroll	
Snow Goose:				
1	Wareham, Ipswich	1, 1	K. Holmes, J. Berry	
3, 18	Clinton, W. Dennis	1, 1	M. Lynch#, P. Trull	
"Blue" Goose:				
3	Clinton (Wachusett Res.)	1	M. Lynch, S. Carroll	
Brant:				
1, 2	E. Boston (Logan), Sandwich	350, 75	R. Stymeist#, K. Anderson	
5, 12	Quincy, Boston Harbor	1400, 2121	J. Heywood#, TASL (S. ZendeH)	
Canada Goose:				
thr.	Beverly-Salem Harbor, Ipswich	max. 300+, max. 1000+	J. Berry	
1	Newburyport	1500+	BBC (A. Blaisdell)	
2, 4	Tuckernuck, Uxbridge	23, 190	CBC	
11, 19	Framingham, Rochester	1500, 700+	K. Hamilton#, M. Lynch#	
Wood Duck:				
11	Framingham	1	K. Hamilton	
Green-winged Teal:				
11, 28	Framingham, S. Acton	1, 2	K. Hamilton, S. Whaley	
American Black Duck:				
2, 4	Tuckernuck, Uxbridge	109, 81	CBC	
11, 25	Boston Harbor, Salisbury-P.I.	1415, 150+	TASL (S. ZendeH), M. Lynch#	
Mallard:				
4, 12	Uxbridge, Boston Harbor	141, 241	CBC, TASL (S. ZendeH)	
17	Brockton (Fields Park)	330	R. Titus	
Northern Pintail:				
1	Arlington, Lexington	3, 1	L. Taylor	
11, 12	Framingham, Ipswich	1, 2	K. Hamilton, J. Berry	
31	Yarmouthport	65	J. Aylward	
Gadwall:				
3, 5	Worcester, Nantucket	4, 10	S. Carroll#, E. Andrews#	
6, 11	Brockton, Framingham	3, 5	R. Titus, K. Hamilton	
11, 19	Nantucket, Marston Mills	5, 5	R. Stymeist#, M. Lynch#	
Eurasian Wigeon:				
thr.	Quincy, Nantucket	1, max. 3 m.	v.o., E. Andrews# + v.o.	
thr.	Orleans	1	A. Williams + v.o.	
American Wigeon:				
1, 4	Lexington, Belmont	12, 48	L. Taylor, R. Stymeist	
9	Wareham, Natick	5, 1	D. Briggs, C. Quinlan	
14, 19	Nantucket, Lexington	65, 23	E. Andrews#, L. Taylor	
Canvasback:				
6, 11	Dighton, Nantucket	89, 110	R. Titus, R. Stymeist#	
12, 18	Milton, Falmouth	6, 3	L. Taylor, H. Wiggin#	
Redhead:				
3, 11	Worcester, Nantucket	1 f., 150+	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
18, 19	Falmouth (2 locations)	1 m., 2	M. Argue#, M. Lynch#	
Ring-necked Duck:				
3, 11	Sterling, Nantucket	2, 10	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
19, 24	Falmouth, Lakeville	5, 4	S. Carroll#, K. Ryan	
Greater Scaup:				
12, 18	Boston Harbor, Newbypt	1994, 6	TASL (S. ZendeH), J. Berry#	
19	Falmouth	30+	M. Lynch, S. Carroll	
Lesser Scaup:				
18	Newburyport, Lakeville	1 imm. m., 2	J. Berry#, K. Anderson#	
19	Falmouth	6	M. Lynch, S. Carroll	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>JANUARY 1986</u>
Common Eider:				
2	Tuckernuck, Sandwich	480, 200	CBC, K.Anderson	
12,20	Boston Harbor, Scituate	2774, 400	TASL (S.Zendeh), D.Clapp	
King Eider:				
thr.	Rockport (A.P.+Halibut Pt.)	max. 8 (6 imm. m, 2 f.)	H.C.Floyd#+v.o.	
11	N.Scituate	1 f.	M.Lynch, S.Carroll	
Harlequin Duck:				
thr.	N. Scituate	2	v.o.	
1,12	Brant Rock, Winthrop	1 f., 1	W.Petersen, D.Wang	
20	Rockport (A.P.)	1 m.	F.Bouchard	
Oldsquaw:				
2	Tuckernuck	27,000	CBC (M.Litchfield)	
12	Nantucket Sound	5000	C.Floyd#	
Black Scoter:				
2,5	Tuckernuck, Rockport (A.P)	45, 8	CBC, J.Berry	
11,12	N.Scituate, Nantucket Sound	25+, 1000+	M.Lynch#, C.Floyd#	
Surf Scoter:				
5,12	Marion, Nantucket Sound	400, 3000+	K.Anderson#, C.Floyd#	
White-winged Scoter:				
12	Boston Harbor, Nantucket Sound	253, 3000+	TASL (S.Zendeh), C.Floyd#	
20,25	Scituate, Plum Island	60, 30	D.Clapp, M.Lynch#	
Common Goldeneye:				
2,4	Tuckernuck, Uxbridge	175, 8	CBC	
5,11	Newburyport area, N.Scituate	226, 50+	BBC (R.McHale), M.Lynch#	
11,18	Framingham, Newburyport	1, 350+	K.Hamilton, J.Berry#	
12	Boston Harbor	473	TASL (S.Zendeh)	
Barrow's Goldeneye:				
thr.	Nantucket	max. 12 (1/11)	G.Gove# + v.o.	
thr.	Newburyport, N. Scituate	max. 2, 1	v.o., v.o.	
12	Winthrop	3	TASL (C.Jackson)	
Bufflehead:				
2,12	E.Orleans, Boston Harbor	75+, 1084	M.Lynch#, TASL (S.Zendeh)	
Hooded Merganser:				
1,2-13	Falmouth (Salt Pond), Somerville	1 m., 4-6	H.Wiggin#, J.Berry	
11,16	Framingham, S. Boston	16, 2	K.Hamilton, A. Gillette	
19,20	Falmouth, Lakeville	11, 5	S.Carroll#, D.Briggs + v.o.	
23,26	Hyannis, Barnstable	10, 15	J.Aylward	
Common Merganser:				
2,4	Brewster, Uxbridge	250+, 28	M.Lynch#, CBC	
5,12	Wellesley, Milton	5, 97	Mrs.Gaw, L.Taylor	
18,24	Newburyport, Lakeville	75+, 15	J.Berry, K.Ryan	
Red-breasted Merganser:				
12	Boston Harbor	799	TASL (S.Zendeh)	

TURKEY VULTURES THROUGH NORTHERN BOBWHITE

There were four reports of Turkey Vultures, probably two individuals, noted during the month. The bird on the south shore was observed over a span of ten days. Reports of Bald Eagles continue to be encouraging; at least seventeen individuals were noted. Through careful observation of plumage differences, observers were able to identify seven individual birds in Lakeville.

Feeder watchers reported an assortment of accipiters visiting their stations and consuming more than sunflower seeds. Fifteen Sharp-shinned Hawks, six Cooper's Hawks, and seven Northern Goshawks were noted. Four Red-shouldered Hawks were seen, one less than last January. Golden Eagles were reported from three locations, with an adult or near adult found in East Quabbin. R.H.S.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>JANUARY 1986</u>
Turkey Vulture:				
16,17	Marshfield, Wayland	1, 1	K.Ryan#, D.White	
18,26	Hingham, Marshfield	1, 1	R.Fox, D.Clapp	
Bald Eagle:				
thr.	Lakeville	7 ind. (3 ad., 4 imm.)	K.Holmes# + v.o.	
thr.	Newburyport	max. 2 ad.	v.o.	
thr.	E.Quabbin	max. 7 (2 ad., 5 imm.)	M.Lynch,S.Carroll+v.o.	
6	Chatham	1 imm.	P.Trull	
Northern Harrier:				
2	Tuckernuck, Eastham	5, 2	CBC, M.Lynch#	
12,18	Bridgewater, Marshfield	3, 4	D.Briggs#, W.Petersen#	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>JANUARY 1986</u>
Northern Harrier (cont.):				
25	Salisbury, Plum Island	4	M.Lynch, S.Carroll	
Other reports of single birds from six locations				
Sharp-shinned Hawk:				
11	Framingham	4	K.Hamilton#	
12,16	Brookline 1 eating Hse. Sparrow, 1 eating Rock Dove		B.Rielly	
Other reports of single birds from ten locations				
Cooper's Hawk:				
1,3	Gilbertville, Swampscott	1, 1	M.Lynch#, L.Sager	
7,12	Halifax, Lakeville	1, 1	K.Anderson, K. Holmes	
18,20	E.Orleans, Annisquam	1, 1	R.Titus, F.Bouchard	
Northern Goshawk:				
1,12,18	Quabbin (Gate 37)	1 ad.	M.Lynch, S. Carroll	
1,5-11	Easton, Bedford	1, 1 (taking doves)	T.Kirshner, Mrs.W.Davis	
12;17,21	Lakeville; Brookline	1; 1 imm.	K.Holmes; H.Wiggin	
24,25	Canton, Newburyport	1 ad., 1	R.Titus, BBC (I.Giriunas)	
Red-shouldered Hawk:				
thr.11	Orleans, Gloucester	1 ad., 1 ad.	v.o., H.Wiggin#	
22,31	Norwell, Canton	1 imm., 1	D.Clapp, R.Titus	
Red-tailed Hawk:				
2,4	Tuckernuck, Uxbridge	2, 21	CBC	
13	Salisbury-P.I.-Newburyport	16	D.Arvidson	
Rough-legged Hawk:				
thr.	Bridgewater	max. 3 (1/18)	W.Petersen# + v.o.	
thr.	Salisbury-Plum Island	max. 6 (1/13)	D.Arvidson# + v.o.	
2,4;10	Tuckernuck,Uxbridge,Nant.	2, 1; 2	CBC; E.Andrews#	
12,21;31	Ipswich,Saugus; Halifax	2, 1; 4	J.Berry; K.Anderson	
<u>Golden Eagle:</u>				
1,10	Quabbin (Gates 37, 43)	1 ad.	M.Lynch#, R.Forster#	
1,21	Mansfield, Pembroke	1, 1	K.Holmes, L.Ashley	
American Kestrel:				
4	Uxbridge	4	CBC	
Merlin:				
1,5	Dennis, Nantucket	1, 1	J.Aylward, C.Andrews#	
10,12	Harwich, Nantucket	1, 1	P.Trull, E. Andrews#	
13	Orleans, Plum Island	1, 1	P.Trull, D.Arvidson#	
30,31	Milton, Monomoy	1, 1	R.Abrams, P.Trull#	
Peregrine Falcon:				
6,9	Chatham, Winthrop	1, 1	P.Trull, M.Simmons	
12	Nantucket	1	E.Andrews#	
Ring-necked Pheasant:				
27	Somerville	4	J.Berry	
Ruffed Grouse:				
1,10	Hardwick	5, 10	R.Stymeist#, R.Forster#	
1	E.Middleboro	2	K.Anderson	
4,18,31	Uxbridge,Petersham,Sharon	6, 5, 3	CBC, S.Carroll#, R.Titus	
Northern Bobwhite:				
8,28	Marion, Rochester	8, 12	K.Ryan, R.Forster	

RAILS THROUGH ALCID

Although rails were scarce last month, three Clapper Rails were spotted this month. One of the several American Oystercatchers seen in December apparently made it as far south as Nantucket, constituting the only January record for this species in fourteen years of BOEM records. The Lesser Yellowlegs found on the Newburyport CBC continued into January, making the second appearance in BOEM records; January 1985 was the first. No Greater Yellowlegs were reported this month, which is somewhat unusual. The usual hardy winter shorebirds were noted, but the numbers of Purple Sandpiper reported were low.

Although no Lesser Black-backed Gull was found on the Nantucket CBC, two were seen there this month. This species probably moves south in the winter, as there seem to be more reports of it from farther south this time of year. Glaucous Gulls were seen in Newburyport and in Gloucester. The large number of Razorbills off Cape Cod has evidently moved; only 120 large alcids were seen from Provincetown. G.W.G.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>JANUARY 1986</u>
Clapper Rail:				
11	E.Boston; Nantucket	1; 1	C.Jackson;R.Stymeist,M.Blazis	
26	Duxbury	1	D.Clapp	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>JANUARY 1986</u>
American Coot:				
thr.	Medford (Mystic Lake)	max. 4 (1/11)	L. Taylor	
9,11	Natick, Plymouth	4, 20+	C.Quinlan, M.Lynch#	
18	Lakeville, Falmouth	3, 6	K.Anderson#, M.Argue#	
Black-bellied Plover:				
5	Buzzards Bay	1	K.Anderson#	
Killdeer:				
4,12	Yarmouth, Ipswich	1, 1	J.Aylward#, BBC (J.Nove)	
American Oystercatcher:				
13	Nantucket	1	D.Beattie	
Lesser Yellowlegs:				
4	Newburyport	1	G.Soucy	
Ruddy Turnstone:				
11	Nantucket	22+	R.Stymeist#	
Sanderling:				
2,26	Tuckernuck, Duxbury	134, 2	CBC, D.Clapp	
Purple Sandpiper:				
1,11	Plum Island, N. Scituate	20, 75	BBC(A.Blaisdell), S.Carroll#	
5,18	Rockport	30, 120	J.Berry, C. Floyd	
Dunlin:				
26	Duxbury	20	D.Clapp	
Common Snipe:				
1	Ipswich, Newburyport	1, 1	J.Berry, BBC (A.Blaisdell)	
5,8	Buzzards Bay, Lakeville	4, 1	K.Anderson#, D.Briggs#	
Common Black-headed Gull:				
thr	Yarmouth (dump)	1 ad.	v.o.	
1,12	Newburyport, Winthrop	1, 1 ad.	H.Wiggan#, TASL (S.Zendeh)	
11	Winthrop, Quincy	4 ad., 1	J.Barton, M.Lynch	
Bonaparte's Gull:				
5,12	Cape Ann, Boston Harbor	10, 343	J.Berry, TASL (S.Zendeh)	
18-21	Salem	100	L.Sager	
Ring-billed Gull:				
30	Stoughton	115	R.Titus	
Iceland Gull:				
1	Quabbin (Gate 37)	1 (1W)	S.Carroll#	
5,18	Newburyport	2, 2 ad.	BBC (R.McHale), J.Berry	
5,24	Cape Ann	1 ad. + 1 (1W), 13+	J.Berry, B.Cassie	
11	Nantucket	6	G.Gove#	
Lesser Black-backed Gull:				
10,12	Nantucket	1 ad., 1 imm.	E.Andrews, C.Floyd	
Glaucous Gull:				
5,25	Newburyport	1, 1 (1W)	BBC(R.McHale), M.Lynch#	
24	Gloucester	1	B.Cassie#	
Black-legged Kittiwake:				
1,5	Newburyport	9, 29	BBC(A.Blaisdell),BBC(R.McHale)	
5	Rockport	250	J.Berry	
large alcid sp.:				
1,18	Provincetown	120+, 34	B.Nikula	
5;12,28	Rockport; Dennis	2; 2, 15	R.McHale; B.Nikula	
Dovekie:				
24	Rockport	1	B.Cassie#	
Thick-billed Murre:				
5,18	Rockport	1-3, 4	J.Berry, L.Taylor#	
Razorbill:				
24	Rockport	1	B.Cassie#	
Black Guillemot:				
5,20	Rockport	7, 2	J.Berry, F.Bouchard	
24	Gloucester	1	B.Cassie	

DOVE THROUGH WOODPECKER

Where there had been 104 Mourning Doves at a feeder, there were only 77, and speculation was that the rest had "(a) flown off to greener pastures, (b) died of an epidemic being so close together, or (c) been eaten by my Goshawk." The Common Barn-Owl at Nantucket continued to be seen through mid-month, and Great Horned Owls were seen throughout the month at Waltham and at Belmont (ADL). Although there were up to eight Snowy Owls at Logan Airport last month, only one or two were noted in that vicinity this month. Seven Short-eared Owls were found at six locations. A Long-eared and a Northern Saw-whet Owl were seen by many people in the last days of the month at Hamilton. A Northern Flicker with two red primaries was picked up dead at Nantucket, where another was seen with "watermelon-pink underwings."

C.W.G.

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>JANUARY 1986</u>
Mourning Dove:				
8	Brookline	77	H.Wiggin	
Common Barn-Owl:				
1-12	Nantucket	1	fide E.Andrews	
Eastern Screech-Owl:				
1	Scituate, Belmont	1, 2	W.Petersen, R.Stymeist	
1	Hopkinton	1	G.Gove#	
7	Worcester	1	S.Carroll#	
18	Lakeville-Middleboro	1, 8	SSBC (K.Holmes)	
Great Horned Owl:				
thr., 1-19	Waltham, Belmont	1-2, 1	L.Taylor	
1	Middleboro-Bridgewater	2	K.Holmes	
12	Ipswich	2	BBC (J.Nove)	
18, 20	Lakeville, P.I.	3, 1	K.Anderson#, F.Bouchard	
Snowy Owl:				
1	Duxbury, Boston	1, 2	W.Petersen, R.Stymeist#	
27	Saugus	1	J.Berry	
Barred Owl:				
1	Oakham, Bridgewater	1, 1	M.Lynch#, K.Holmes	
4, 19	S.Carver, Hamilton	1, 1	K.Anderson, BBC (W.Drummond)	
Long-eared Owl:				
1, 18-25	Bridgewater, Hamilton	1, 1	K.Holmes, J.Berry + v.o.	
Short-eared Owl:				
thr.	Chatham	max. 3	v.o.	
11	E.Boston, Squantum, Nantucket	1, 1, 2	C.Jackson, J.Barton, R.Stymeist	
13, 20	Plum Island	1, 1	D.Arvidson#, F.Bouchard	
25	Salisbury	1	S.Carroll#	
31	Middleboro	1	D.Briggs	
Northern Saw-whet Owl:				
thr.	Nantucket	1-3	fide E.Andrews	
1, 12	Oakham, Quabbin (Gate 37)	2, 1	M.Lynch + S. Carroll	
19-25	Hamilton	1	J.Berry + v.o.	
Belted Kingfisher:				
5, 11	Buzzards Bay, Framingham	2, 8	K.Anderson, K.Hamilton#	
4-19	reports of 6 individuals			
Red-bellied Woodpecker:				
6	Waban	1	R.Moore	
Black-backed Woodpecker:				
1-14	Quabbin (Gate 40)	1 (from Dec.)	v.o.	
Northern Flicker:				
5, 11	Fairhaven, Nantucket	5, 25+	K.Anderson#, R. Stymeist#	
12, 13	Nantucket	1 (dead)	G.Gove, F.Reed	
2-23	reports of 4 individuals			
Pileated Woodpecker:				
thr.	Newton	1 f. (from Dec.)	M.Rugo	
18	Quabbin (Gate 40)	5	BBC (M.Lynch)	

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH EVENING GROSEBEAK

Although a small number of flycatchers was observed on the Christmas Bird Counts toward the end of December, none were tallied in January. Eurasian Jackdaw reports from Nantucket continued into their fifth calendar year, an individual having first been observed there in November of 1982. An impressive corvid roost developed in Framingham this winter, in January including over 20,000 American Crows and 165 Fish Crows. Individuals of a few semi-hardy species were observed at some interior (i.e. comparatively cold) sites during the first week of the month. Included were Eastern Bluebirds on the Uxbridge CBC and a Brown Thrasher in Groton. Also robust must have been the Northern Oriole seen at a feeder in West Roxbury toward the end of the month. Northern Shrike reports, at four individuals, continued to trickle in at a rate suggestive of a non-flight winter. The warbler species totaled seven, the same as December, but this month the Orange-crowned replaced the December Wilson's. Pine Warblers, both at Millis and on Nantucket, were coming to feeders. The total of 102 Field Sparrows for the Uxbridge CBC is quite impressive, compared with a maximum of 35 from any of the December CBC's. Scattered reports of all the winter finch species continued, with no significant concentrations anywhere. For diversity, the Newburyport/Plum Island area was the place to be. L.E.T.

Horned Lark:			
20, 25	Rochester, Salisbury	400, 35+	D.Briggs, M.Lynch#
26, 31	Duxbury, E.Middleboro	30, 200	D.Clapp, K.Anderson
<u>Eurasian Jackdaw:</u>			
thr.	Nantucket	1	E.Andrews#

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>JANUARY 1986</u>
American Crow: thr.,9	Framingham, Easton	20,000 (roost), 50	B.Cassie#, K.Anderson	
Fish Crow: 11,18	Framingham, Watertown	165, 1	K.Hamilton#, R.Stymeist	
Common Raven: 1	Petersham	2	M.Lynch#	
12,13	Millis, Wayland	1, 1	B.Cassie, B.Miller	
Red-breasted Nuthatch: 5-7,12	Sherborn, Lakeville	2, 4	E.Cabot, K.Holmes	
18-25,26-31	Plum Island, Marshfield	4, 3	v.o., D.Clapp	
Brown Creeper: 11,25	Lakeville, Plum Island	5, 1	K.Holmes, S.Carroll#	
Carolina Wren: thr.	Easton, Ipswich	2, 1	K.Ryan, J.Berry	
thr.	Winchester, Lakeville	1, 2	M.McClellan, R.Turner	
thr.,5	Middleboro, Marion	5, 2	v.o., K.Anderson#	
Winter Wren: 8	WBWS	1	P.Trull	
Marsh Wren: 11	Nantucket	1	M.Blazis#	
Eastern Bluebird: 4	Uxbridge	3	CBC	
Hermit Thrush: 2,11	E. Orleans, Harwich	1, 1	M.Lynch#, J. Aylward#	
11,17	Plymouth, Nantucket	4, 2	S.Carroll#, J.VanVorst	
American Robin: 1,11	Lexington (2 sites)	26, 30+	L.Taylor	
18,28	Cambridge, Acushnet	23, 65	L.Taylor#, R.Forster	
Gray Catbird: 2	Chatham	1	S.Carroll#	
2,17	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	2, 1	CBC, J.C.Andrews#	
Northern Mockingbird: 11	Framingham	77	R.Forster#	
Brown Thrasher: 1-10	Groton	1	F.Smith	
Cedar Waxwing: 11,19	Framingham, Marshfield	195, 250	R.Forster#, D.Clapp	
23,29	Easton, Ipswich	100, 130	K.Ryan, R. Forster	
Northern Shrike: 11-25,13	Plum Island, Nantucket	2 max. (1/11), 2 imm.	v.o., J.White#	
Orange-crowned Warbler: 18	Marion	1	J.Gordon#	
Yellow-rumped Warbler: 11,12	Nantucket, Squantum	75+, 2	R.Stymeist#, L.Taylor	
18-25,19	Plum Island, Falmouth	4 max. (1/25), 10	v.o., M.Lynch#	
Yellow-throated Warbler: from Dec-2	Harwich	1	R.Comeau#	
Pine Warbler: thr.	Millis, Nantucket	3, 2-4	fide B.Cassie, E.Andrews#	
Palm Warbler: 2,10	Tuckernuck, Nantucket	2, 6	CBC, E.Andrews#	
Common Yellowthroat: 22	WBWS	1	P.Trull	
Yellow-breasted Chat: 6	Yarmouthport	1	J.Aylward	
Rufous-sided Towhee: 3,7	Concord, Sherborn	1, 1	M.Inman, E.Cabot	
9,19	Wellesley, Falmouth	1 m., 5	B.Thrasher, S.Carroll#	
American Tree Sparrow: 1,25	Hardwick, Newburyport	20+, 40	M.Lynch#, BBC	
Field Sparrow: thr., 4	Middleboro, Uxbridge	1-5, 102	D.Briggs, CBC	
Lark Sparrow: from Dec.-2	Chatham	1	M.Lynch#	
Fox Sparrow: 2	E.Orleans	1	S.Carroll#	
Swamp Sparrow: 4	Uxbridge	2	CBC	
White-throated Sparrow: thr.	Brookline, Ipswich	10, 10 max. (1/14)	B.Reilly, J.Berry	
19	Falmouth	29	S.Carroll#	

<u>SPECIES/DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>OBSERVERS</u>	<u>JANUARY 1986</u>
Snow Bunting:				
1	Petersham	60+	M.Lynch#	
11,18	P.i., Provincetown	45, 1	H.Coolidge#, B.Nikula	
31	E.Middleboro	10+	K.Anderson	
Red-winged Blackbird:				
5,18	Nantucket, Cambridge	23, 60 m.	E.Andrews, L.Taylor	
Eastern Meadowlark:				
12,29	Nantucket, Ipswich	4, 2	G.Gove#, R.Forster	
Rusty Blackbird:				
1,2	Wayland, W.Roxbury	1, 55	R.Forster, M.Murphy	
29	Peabody	20	R.Forster	
Common Grackle:				
2	Northbridge	1	S.Wheelock	
2,7	Tuckernuck, Chatham	1, 1	CBC, B.Nikula	
Brown-Headed Cowbird:				
31	Winthrop	18	J.Farmer	
Northern Oriole:				
30	W. Roxbury	1 m. at feeder	L.Arvey	
Pine Grosbeak:				
1,10	Ipswich, Petersham	13, 40	J.Berry, R.Forster	
11,18	Framingham, Newburyport	2, 6	E.Morrier, J. Berry	
Purple Finch:				
1,11	Quabbin (Gate 40), Lexington	1, 4	S.Carroll#, L.Taylor	
House Finch:				
11,25	Framingham, Ipswich	375, 32	R.Forster#, J.Berry	
Red Crossbill:				
1,12	Quabbin (Gate 40), P.I.	1, 12	M.Lynch#, J.Berry#	
White-winged Crossbill:				
4,18-25	Uxbridge, Plum Island	2, 5 max. (1/25)	CBC, v.o.	
Common Redpoll:				
1-4,11	Belmont, Framingham	21 max. (1/1), 69	L.Taylor, R. Forster#	
18,25	Plum Island, Ipswich	1 m., 1	J.Berry	
Pine Siskin:				
thr.	Middleboro, Nantucket	40-80, 24 max.	D.Briggs, E.Andrews#	
Evening Grosbeak:				
thr., 4	Middleboro, Hardwick	50, 12	D.Briggs, M.Lynch#	
11,26	Ipswich, Lakeville	8, 25	J.Berry, K.Holmes	

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ad.	adult	F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham
alt.	alternate (plumage)	F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham
b.	banded	F.M.	Fowl Meadow, Milton
br.	breeding	gr.	greater as in Gr. Boston area
dk.	dark (phase)	I.	Island
f.	female	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
fl.	fledge	Mt.A.	Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
imm.	immature	Nant.	Nantucket
ind.	individuals	Newbypt	Newburyport
loc.	locations	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)
N.S.E.W.	direction	BBC	Brookline Bird Club
ph.	photographed	BOEM	Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts
pl.	plumage	CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club
pr.	pair	DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
thr.	throughout	GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
v.o.	various observers	IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
W	winter (2W = second winter)	LCES	Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies
w/	with	MAS	Massachusetts Audubon Society
yg.	young	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
#	additional observers	MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum	NEHW	New England Hawk Watch
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
Buzz.	Buzzards (Bay)	PRNWR	Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
C.	Cape as in C.Cod or C.Ann	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
		WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary

FIELD NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

Chickadees Mob Saw-whet in White Pine.

On January 18, 1986, I made a census trip shortly after noon to a study lot on town conservation land in Foxboro, Massachusetts. In a one-acre stand of white pines surrounded by Oak-Maple forest (Davis, W. 1977, *American Birds* 32:50), I noticed two Black-capped Chickadees flying back and forth high in the crown of a White Pine. I was interested in seeing whether the chickadees were birds that I had banded in my back yard. (As part of a broader study, I band birds in the winter to determine whether the birds foraging in the woods are the same birds that frequent my feeders and traps.) When I located one of the chickadees in my binoculars, I found that it was perched less than a foot from an adult Northern Saw-whet Owl on a small branch among the needle sprays, approximately forty feet from the ground and six or seven feet from the trunk. The two chickadees continued mobbing the owl for several minutes, flying back and forth, often landing within a foot of it. I did not observe any feather pulling. The two chickadees were joined in the crown of the White Pine by three others, but these additional birds, although agitated, did not make close passes at the owl. The owl responded to my imitations of the saw-whet owl call by peering down at me.

This observation is interesting for two reasons: (1) the owl was mobbed by chickadees and was discovered because of the mobbing activity, and (2) the bird was forty feet high in a White Pine, which seemed an unusual place to find a Northern Saw-whet Owl. I asked a number of experienced bird observers whether they had ever seen a saw-whet owl at that height. Robert Stymeist told me that he had seen saw-whets perched high up in trees twice before, both in White Pines, and both some distance from the trunk. Two other observers said that saw-whets had been reported in White Pines at considerable heights. However, most of those consulted had never seen a saw-whet owl perched higher than ten feet above the ground, and most reported that the birds usually perched very close to the trunk.

There were no splash marks on the tree and no pellets on the ground, suggesting that the bird did not roost in the tree regularly. It was still present on the same perch four hours after the first observation, but was gone when next looked for two days later.

William E. Davis, Jr., Foxboro

Pontoppidan's Pursuer.

Eight of us on the Salisbury Beach access road had been admiring an adult Northern Harrier perched on a stump in the dunes to the east and then on the south had delighted in the interplay of yet another harrier with a Rough-legged Hawk. Suddenly the gulls and ducks resting on the marsh to the west were in the air! A large, dark bird was flying steadily northward over the estuary - an immature Bald Eagle! It was not the so-called "Osprey" eagle with the stripe through its eye, which has fascinated so many birders this winter on the Merrimack, but a younger bird with far less white in its plumage. High above and well behind, three raptors, apparently in pursuit, were soon outdistanced by the very strong, purposeful flight of the eagle, who appeared oblivious to the great commotion created by his passage. Now the three raptors turned upon themselves engaging in mutual harassment (play?), twisting, turning, swooping, diving at one another - two birds discernible in binoculars as dark-phase Rough-legs - the third smaller and lighter colored. Could it be a male light-phase Rough-leg? It had the dark carpal patches, but the overall shape was wrong, and it accelerated so much faster than the other two, climbing above them and diving down with wings curved back, the wingtips pointed, then hovering for a moment as it presented its talons. A falcon, perhaps? But the plumage was too light in color, the silhouette frontally too flat - yet a bird of comparable spirit, challenging his adversaries again and again. The Rough-legs took off northward. This territory was too well defended. Binoculars that had followed his combative course high in the sky now focused on the valiant fellow's descent. Down came a . . . Short-eared Owl!

Upon arriving home and delving into the literature (A. C. Bent, *Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey*, Part II 1938; Allan Eckert, *The Owls of North America* 1974; Heimo Mikkola, *Owls of Europe* 1983; R. Meinertzhagen, *Pirates and Predators* 1959), I found that Short-eared Owls are not always low-flying birds, gracefully quartering the marshes and meadows like "giant butterflies." All the references note this species' penchant for high flight and agility in performing astonishing aerial maneuvers. They also mention the harassment of large birds in flight (Great Blue Herons, American Black Ducks, egrets, gulls, cranes, and vultures), apparently without intent to kill or injure but for amusement. Mikkola further comments that the Short-eared Owl is strongly territorial, not only in the breeding season, but also over his winter hunting area, where he is vigorously responsive to trespass. The size of the territory defended varies according to the availability of food.

Nancy Clayton, Concord

Fairhaven Massacre.

On March 9, 1986, the day of this terribly exciting event, three inches of new snow lay on the ground at our Wenham home, which is situated in the middle of an old apple orchard in fairly open country. The usual bird species wintering in this area come regularly to our bird feeders. The large corn feeder on the ground in the backyard has been a steady attraction for twelve to fifteen Ring-necked Pheasants throughout the winter. Several times in the last few weeks I had noticed small collections of feathers on the snow. Usually they seemed to be Blue Jay or Mourning Dove feathers - many of these frequent the feeder. Once, my wife had noticed big wing prints in the snow with a few small flecks of blood in the center of them. We speculated that an owl or hawk had swooped down and taken a meal. I had kept a careful watch for marauding raptors, but nary a culprit was seen except for the usual Red-tailed Hawks that soar past almost daily. Where was the Sharp-shinned, the Cooper's, or perhaps the Great Horned Owl hiding?

On this eventful Sunday, my wife walked into the dining room with its large glass doors and beheld a sight that caused her to call us all to come quickly and to be quiet. Ten feet away from us in the brand new snow sat a huge immature female Northern Goshawk. She was perched on the still fluttering body of a hen pheasant. As we watched, breast meat and entrails disappeared into her gullet, which grew in size at an astounding rate as the carcass of the pheasant diminished. We tried to piece together what had happened. The snow was unmarked all around the goshawk and her prey. She had obviously killed the pheasant in flight, and it had dropped into the snow, where she alighted on it. Only fifteen feet away, the body of *another* hen pheasant had pitched into the snow and moved no more than two feet before it died and lay still. And . . . inches away from the glass of our window, in a large lilac bush, lay the still body of one of the lovely cock pheasants we had enjoyed watching. There did not seem to be a mark on it. A drop of blood dripped from the opened beak.

Later, a careful examination of the scene revealed that the cock had been hit in midair, and his body had thumped onto the roof of the house, then rolled over several times, and pitched into the bushes. The second hen pheasant must have been taken suddenly and cleanly in the air and fallen mortally wounded. We concluded that the goshawk had flushed the flock of pheasants while they were feeding or crossing the yard. There were no tracks in the fresh snow for at least thirty yards around. The goshawk must have then made three clean and almost instantaneous kills within a matter of seconds, dropping all three birds no more than twenty feet apart.

After fifteen minutes of eating, the goshawk flew away, leaving two birds untouched. At dark, we retrieved the cock pheasant, and I performed an autopsy, carefully removing every feather.

I could find only a few tiny puncture wounds in the bird's back, and the intestines showed slight signs of hemorrhage. We left the second hen undisturbed in the snow and hoped that the hawk would return the next morning. She did not, and that bird was also added to our larder. After aging in the refrigerator a few days, the birds were eaten at our dining room table only a few feet away from where one of nature's most magnificent predators dropped them.

Few hunters have had the thrill of a clean triple. I wonder how often a goshawk has performed such a feat. Evidently these birds are noted for their ability to kill game in excess of their needs at any particular time. We can certainly be witness to that. Our pheasant flock is now down to one cock and ten hens - and is much less in evidence. We hope that the goshawk will remain in the area. However, we hope she turns her attention to the pigeons, starlings, Blue Jays, and Mourning Doves, in the future.

Bryant Barnard, M.D., Wenham

Sailing with an Osprey.

The first weekend in October was chosen as the time we would bring our boat back from Ebenecock Harbor, Maine, to its home port in Marblehead, Massachusetts. On Saturday morning we left Portland, which we had reached the day before, and encountered fog, rain, a lot of wind, and very rough seas all day.

Late in the afternoon we were sailing about six miles offshore approaching York, still in rough seas and twenty-five to thirty knots of southeasterly wind. I was facing aft and was aware of two birds flying at a distance astern of us, but stalking us, and I assumed they were gulls. In a while one proceeded to follow us much more closely, and we instantly realized from its appearance that it was an osprey. He surveyed us from astern and from alongside at a distance of about ten feet. Then he became more adventurous and attempted to land on our back stay - not an easy accomplishment since the boat was moving around a lot in the rough conditions. After five or six tries, he finally managed to hook his talons around the stay and remained there for a minute or two, maintaining his balance with his wings outspread. When he left, his talon tore a corner out of the flag on our "tall buoy," the rescue pole thrown over to mark the location of a man overboard. He was gone for a few minutes and returned to land on the port spreader, which was wet and slippery. He slid on the spreader from the mast out to the shrouds and part way back as the boat rolled from side to side.

After another brief departure, he came back and hovered - again with outstretched wings - about one foot above and two or three feet behind the head of my husband who was at the helm. I was terrified that he was going to land on his head, come sit in my

lap, or, even worse, go down the companionway into the cabin and there feel trapped. His wingspread was close to five feet, and he studied us carefully with a menacing look. His hooked beak, black-encircled eyes, and sharp talons were not characteristic of what one would call a pretty bird - but rather a scary one.

Again, he flew off, only to return and land at the end of the boom. As before, he made several attempts before he accomplished it, since we had a following sea, encountered after we rounded York Ledge Buoy and headed in the last five or six miles toward Kittery. He was very persistent. He hooked one talon into the metal eye connecting the topping lift to the boom and was able to hold his position by spreading out his wings, still eyeing us carefully, about eight feet away. When he went to fly again, his talon was briefly caught in the metal eye and he lost his balance, bounced off the main sheet, and then ditched in the water astern of us. I could not believe he was seriously hurt, but he was in the water about a minute. We could not actually see him because of the big seas but knew where he was since six gulls appeared from nowhere the minute he fell in, and they circled above him. I suppose they were waiting for him to drown or die. Finally, we saw him fly very briefly and then fall back into the water. After another pause, he was airborne again and appeared to be fine. He returned once more and perched at the end of the boom, again with wings outspread. His earlier difficulty was obviously not a deterrent. He had no problem when he finally flew away and headed for the York Ledge Buoy where he settled. That was the last we saw of him, and we wondered what happened to him.

The whole episode lasted about fifteen to twenty minutes, and it was a unique and puzzling experience. We are curious as to why he followed us and why he kept landing on the boat. The buoy would have been a safer resting place if that's what he was seeking. Of course, he did hitch a few rides on the way to the buoy. He had not been blown out to sea because the wind was from the wrong direction. Was he hungry? What attraction did we have for him?

We don't know the answers but only know that it was an unforgettable portion of an otherwise miserable day.

Suzanne S. Connolly, Marblehead

THE WINNER

The winner of the 1985 AT A GLANCE CONTEST for correctly identifying three of the six photos - and notifying us of his identifications - is OLIVER KOMAR. The PRIZE is a \$25 certificate to be used with any of Bird Observer's advertisers.

CONGRATULATIONS, OLLIE!

The "At a Glance" photo quiz for February clearly is a seabird of some type. Gulls of all species can be eliminated by the combination of the black cap (not a hood), the dark borders to the white underwings, the absence of a clearly defined carpal bend (crook in the wings), and the faintly discernible hook and terminal swelling to the bill. This last feature, coupled with the stiff-winged appearance, points to the bird's being a procellariid (tubenosed bird) of some kind.

Knowing that the bird is a shearwater now makes identification relatively simple. The combination of the pronounced, *pale collar separating the dark cap from the back, the dusky smudge on the belly, and the heavily speckled inner wing linings* all indicate that the bird is a Greater Shearwater, *Puffinus gravis*. The similar Cory's Shearwater would be immaculately white below and on the underwings, would not exhibit a collared effect, and would display an evenly dusky face, head, and hindneck. Also, the bill would be longer, heavier, and lighter in color. The Black-capped Petrel, a tropical "gadfly petrel" that only rarely reaches New England waters, is similar in basic pattern to the Greater Shearwater; however, it is slightly smaller, has clear white underparts and wing linings, and a distinctive, dark, diagonal bar on the leading edge of the underwings. Also, its more rapid, towering flight and the rakish bow in its wings when soaring help distinguish it at a distance.

The Greater Shearwater pictured was photographed on Stellwagen Bank off Provincetown during the month of October.

W.R.P.



Greater Shearwater

Photo by Wayne R. Petersen

At a Glance . . .

Photo by Blair Nikula



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



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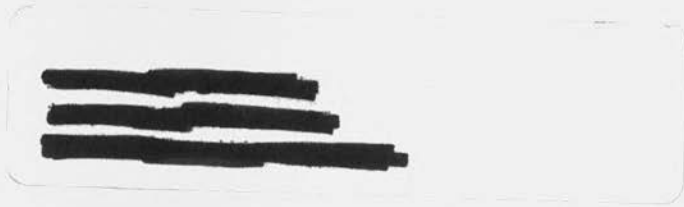
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