

BIRD OBSERVER



Paul Donahue

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BIRD OBSERVER

• a bimonthly journal •

To enhance understanding, observation,
and enjoyment of birds.

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Manuscripts should be typed double-spaced on one side only of 8.5-by-11-inch paper. Manuscripts longer than 15 typed pages (about 4500 words) may be shortened when edited. Use the current A.O.U. Check-List for bird names and sequence. Type tables on separate pages. Black-and-white photographs and graphics are best. Include author's or artist's name, address, and telephone number and information from which a brief biography can be prepared. Indicate whether an IBM-compatible 5.25-inch diskette containing the article in ASCII or Microsoft Word can be supplied. Scientific and technical articles are peer reviewed. Views expressed in *BIRD OBSERVER* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect an official position of Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts, Inc.

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COUNTING CLIFF SWALLOWS

Do you know the location of any Massachusetts Cliff Swallow colonies? As part of a statewide survey, the Massachusetts Audubon Society is seeking information on the whereabouts of Cliff Swallow nesting sites in the state. This species appears to be seriously declining as a breeder in the Commonwealth. Competition from House Sparrows, deteriorating local habitat conditions, and a shortage of suitable nesting structures have all been proposed as possible explanations for the decline.

Readers able to provide information about the specific location of current nesting sites are encouraged to contact: Mara Silver, P.O. Box 60231, Florence, MA 01060.

Summer-Fall Workshops

Seabirds and Whales — a workshop for pelagic birders

Marine birds and mammals are some of the most remarkable creatures that occur in the ocean environment. Their adaptations and specialized life style make them particularly interesting to observe and to study.

This workshop will describe some of the factors that affect the distribution of marine birds and mammals, as well as providing useful hints on identifying and locating sea birds and whales while they are in Massachusetts waters. A field trip aboard a whalewatching boat will allow participants to observe some of these birds and mammals in their marine environment..

Seminar: Friday, July 24, 1992 (7:30-9:30 P.M.).

Field Trip: Sunday, July 26, 1992

Cost: \$35 (Plus the cost of a half-day whalewatch, about \$20, to be paid directly to the whalewatch).

Shorebirds — a workshop for birders

Every summer thousands of shorebirds move through Massachusetts as they travel to wintering quarters in South America. With approximately thirty-five species occurring annually in the state, shorebirds offer the birder a perplexing assortment of identification difficulties. Most species tend to be nondescript in coloration, and often they closely resemble one another in size and form. Fortunately, the behavior, habitat, and vocalizations of many shorebirds can be used in the identification process.

In this workshop, the emphasis will be on learning to identify various confusing species of shorebirds by using a combination of features. Some general background on the biology of shorebirds will supply useful information that can often be applied to problems in field identification.

Seminar: Friday, August 7, 1992 (7:30-9:30 P.M.).

Field Trip: Saturday, August 8, 1992 (Plum Island).

Cost: \$35.

Fall Warblers — a workshop for confused birders

Consistently, fall warblers puzzle, confound, and demoralize birders. Their indistinct and confusing plumages, animated behavior, and often irregular appearance make them among the most challenging of birds to study and identify.

In this workshop, field identification, behavior of fall warblers, and fall warbler migration will all be described in the context of a New England setting. An early fall field trip should offer the possibility of seeing a variety of fall migrants.

Seminar: Friday, September 11, 1992 (7:30-9:30 P.M.).

Field Trip: Sunday, September 13, 1992 (Essex County).

Cost: \$35.

These workshops are cosponsored by *Bird Observer* and the Needham Bird Club and will be presented by Wayne R. Petersen. Seminar sessions will be held in Needham, MA, from 7:30-9:30 P.M. Directions to the seminars will be sent to registrants. Details about the field trips will be announced at the seminars preceding them. If you have questions, please call 617-666-8934 (evenings). Preregistration is required.

To register, send your name, address, and phone numbers with your check (payable to *Bird Observer*) to Bird Observer Workshops, c/o H. D'Entremont, 45 Montrose Street, Somerville, MA 02143.

COASTAL BIRDING IN RHODE ISLAND

by Alan E. Strauss

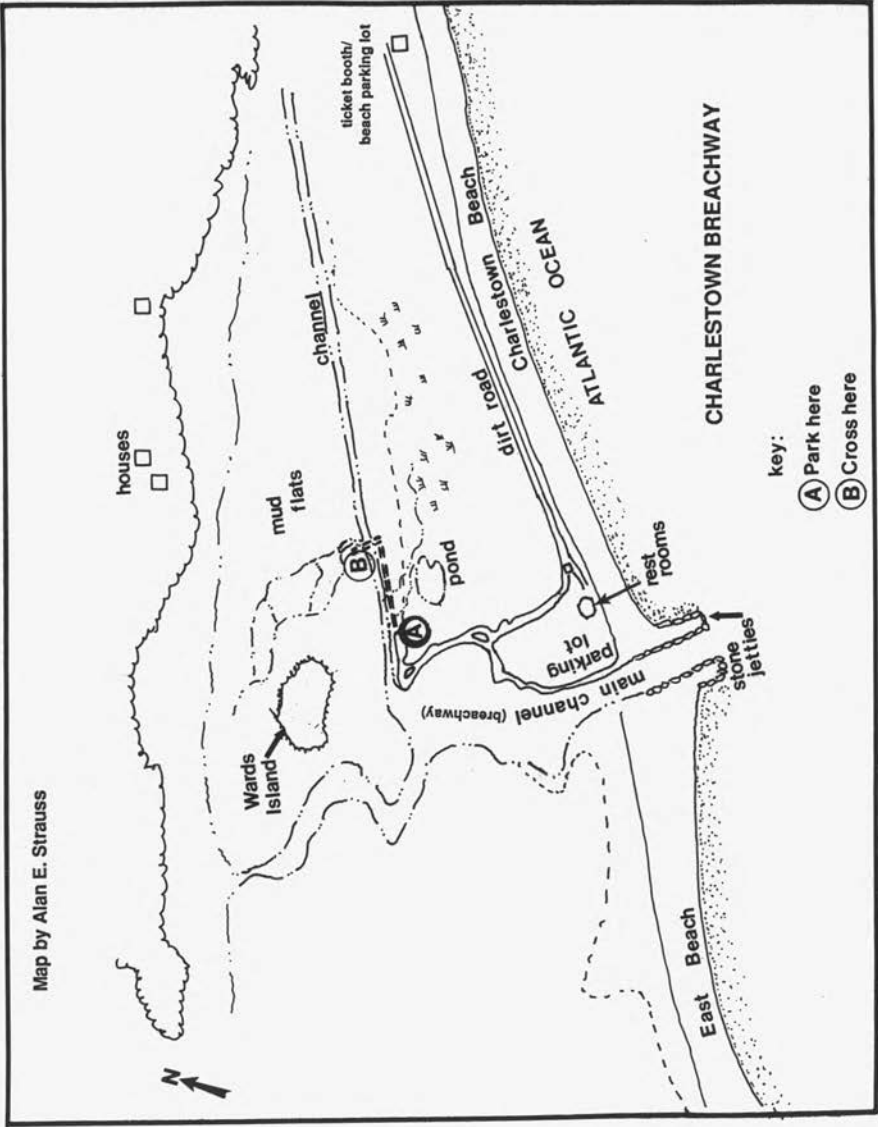
The coast of Rhode Island offers many birding locations. This article focuses primarily on the Charlestown Salt Pond Breachway, with shorter descriptions provided for other areas along Rhode Island's coast. To reach the breachway, take Route 95 south to Route 4 south (exit 9). Route 4 will merge with Route 1. Follow signs for Route 1 south. Watch for a sign, "Entering Charlestown." The next sign is for the Charlestown Breachway; exit from the left lane onto Route 1 north. From Route 1, exit at the Breachway sign. Proceed one hundred yards to a stop sign, and continue straight on Narrow Lane. At the next stop sign, go left on Schoolhouse Road, and follow signs to the breachway. Take the next right onto Charlestown Beach Road (a bakery and a deli are on the corner). In 1.3 miles, cross the Green Hill Pond bridge; Charlestown Pond is to the right, and Green Hill Pond is to the left. Bear left around the first beach parking lot, and follow the dirt road west along the barrier for about a quarter of a mile to the Charlestown Breachway ticket booth.

Charlestown Breachway

Charlestown Salt Pond, approximately 1,711 acres, is the largest salt pond in Rhode Island. The breachway is a channel that runs between the Atlantic Ocean and Charlestown Salt Pond. The surrounding environment includes a barrier beach about four miles long (Charlestown Beach), a low dune ridge, vegetated back barrier flats, and a lagoon and tidal mud flats. Only a few localities in Rhode Island offer mud flats to migrating shorebirds. Consequently, Charlestown Breachway, one of the most extensive mud-flat areas in the state, acts as a magnet to birds traveling along the coast. Over seventy-five species of birds have been recorded in the area including Least Bittern, Golden Eagle, Marbled Godwit, Long-billed Curlew, Baird's Sandpiper, Little Gull, and Caspian Tern. From August through September the numbers of shorebirds can be astounding, and the birder often finds at least one good species.

The breachway area is owned and operated by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management; much of the adjacent estuarine basin is part of the Ninigret National Wildlife Refuge. This marine environment serves as a multipurpose recreational facility for fishing, bathing, boating, camping, and birding. Beginning in June, many camper-trailers and recreational vehicles are found in the parking lot. Note that on hot summer days the parking lot can be filled by 9 A.M.

A ticket booth, open twenty-four hours a day, is located at the entrance to the park. Fees in 1991 varied from four dollars (resident, weekday) to ten dollars (nonresident, weekend).



Because one must cross a channel in order to reach the mud flats, it is important to know that the low tide times at the breachway are often one to two hours later than the advertised low tides for the Newport area. The channel can be crossed when the tide is ebbing, but unless you like wading in waist-deep water, it is best to wait for the tide to go out even farther. In all cases, however, one must be willing to get wet, because if you cross at low tide and stay on the flats any length of time, the return crossing will necessarily be at a slightly higher tide. Hence, you might want to wear a pair of sneakers, shorts or a bathing suit, and a lightweight shirt while birding the breachway. You are also likely to walk in soft sand or mud while negotiating the flats.

Once you have passed through the ticket booth at the breachway entrance, follow the dirt road to the right past the trailers to the end of the parking lot. If you do not mind a bumpy ride, drive down the road as far as possible. Those who do not want to drive the last little leg can park just before the access road leaves the parking lot. Walk or drive along the main channel, which will be on your left, as you proceed north from the parking area.

It can take between two and three hours to bird the entire area carefully, including inspection of all the side pools, the beachgrass areas for sparrows and bitterns, and the mud flats out to the edge of the deeper water. The birder not wanting to cross the channel can walk along the edge and set up a scope at various points, which will provide views of the mud flats but will not permit detailed examination of the peeps and smaller avian species.

Table 1 shows a bird list for the breachway. Most of the shorebirds can be found regularly in the summer and fall. Sea ducks, gulls, and owls are found in winter. Those birds that are rare or have been found only a few times are so indicated in Table 1.

Directly across from the end of the access road is Ward's Island. Look across to the wooded island for roosting Great Egrets, Snowy Egrets, and night-herons. Watch the skies for hovering kestrels, Merlins, Ospreys, Sharp-shinned Hawks, and harriers as they cruise over the wooded and grassy areas. To the right you will find low bushes that surround a small pond. You can occasionally find American and Least bitterns (uncommon) at this pond.

In order to reach the mud flats you must first cross two small inlets that will be in front of you as you leave the end of the access road. Look for the shallowest and sandiest sections, and wade across in the knee-deep water. Your goal is to walk along the channel for about five minutes until you reach the fording area. If you are birding during August or September, there will probably be sandpipers on the small mud flats where you cross the first small inlet. I recently photographed an immature Yellow-crowned Night-Heron about five feet from me at the first inlet crossing.

A narrow path skirts the channel. Make pishing noises when you come to the first clump of shrubs between the path and the channel. Here you should be

Birds of the Charlestown Breachway Area
Compiled by Daniel Finizia and Alan Strauss

Red-throated Loon	Least Sandpiper
Common Loon	White-rumped Sandpiper
Horned Grebe	Baird's Sandpiper
Red-necked Grebe	Pectoral Sandpiper
Northern Gannet	Dunlin
Great Cormorant	Stilt Sandpiper
Double-crested Cormorant	Short-billed Dowitcher
American Bittern	Long-billed Dowitcher
Least Bittern (rare)	Wilson's Phalarope
Great Blue Heron	Laughing Gull
Great Egret	Little Gull (rare)
Snowy Egret	Bonaparte's Gull
Green-backed Heron	Ring-billed Gull
Black-crowned Night-Heron	Herring Gull
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (rare)	Iceland Gull
Mute Swan	Great Black-backed Gull
Canada Goose	Caspian Tern
Green-winged Teal	Royal Tern
American Black Duck	Roseate Tern
Mallard	Common Tern
Common Eider	Forster's Tern
Black Scoter	Least Tern
Surf Scoter	Black Tern
White-winged Scoter	Sandwich Tern (rare)
Red-breasted Merganser	Black Skimmer
Osprey	Rock Dove
Northern Harrier	Mourning Dove
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Short-eared Owl
Red-tailed Hawk	Belted Kingfisher
Golden Eagle (1985)	Northern Flicker
American Kestrel	Willow Flycatcher
Merlin	Horned Lark
Peregrine Falcon	Tree Swallow
Black-bellied Plover	Bank Swallow
Piping Plover	Cliff Swallow (1991)
Killdeer	Barn Swallow
American Oystercatcher (rare)	American Crow
Greater Yellowlegs	Fish Crow
Lesser Yellowlegs	Marsh Wren
Solitary Sandpiper	European Starling
Willet	Tennessee Warbler
Whimbrel	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Hudsonian Godwit (rare)	Sharp-tailed Sparrow
Marbled Godwit	Seaside Sparrow
Long-billed Curlew (1991)	Savannah Sparrow
Ruddy Turnstone	Song Sparrow
Red Knot	Snow Bunting
Sanderling	Red-winged Blackbird
Semipalmated Sandpiper	Common Grackle
Western Sandpiper	House Sparrow

able to find resident Seaside and Sharp-tailed sparrows. In August 1991 I found seven Sharptails and four Seasides, some of which were immature. These sparrows can also be found in the grass to your right. There are small wet pools in the grass so your feet will get wet again if you venture into the marsh. Farther to the right you will see more inlets with adjacent mud flats and pools, where you will likely find shorebirds, egrets, and herons. Watch for soaring Barn, Bank, Tree, and occasionally Cliff swallows over the low bushes and on electric wires in the distance.

The channel soon forks: one branch continues straight, and the other goes left. There are large rocks in the water at this point. This is the fording point to reach the mud flats. To cross the channel, wade carefully across on the shallowest sandbars. The crossing point is only a few yards wide, but you should return while the tide is still low to avoid wading in chest-deep water. The fording area itself is quite interesting. Watch for blue crabs as they scurry along the bottom and schools of small fish, including flounder, as they swim through the channel. A total of forty species of juvenile and adult fish were collected by fisheries biologists in Charlestown Salt Pond (Stolgitis et al. 1976).

Across the channel there should be birds everywhere. Scan with your scope or binoculars to find the most promising and interesting species, and then head toward them for a closer look. Least and Common terns with young are numerous, as are Least and Semipalmated sandpipers and Semipalmated Plovers. Baird's Sandpipers and Wilson's Phalaropes often are found here. The mud flats are one of the best places in the state to find Black Skimmers and a variety of interesting terns. In September 1986 Caspian, Royal, Forster's, Least, and Common terns were seen. Black Terns can be found occasionally through August and September. Sandwich Terns are found on rare occasions after hurricanes.

Ever-changing braided shallow streams, usually filled with small fish, periwinkles, and hermit crabs, cross the mud flats. Look for razor clams, quahogs, soft-shelled clams, and scallops in addition to schools of small fish. Archaeological studies indicate that in the area at Foster's Neck, Native Americans harvested oysters and other shellfish some one thousand years ago.

The deeper water at the end of the pond usually has dowitchers, Stilt Sandpipers, and yellowlegs. Check the drier areas for Western Sandpipers. Unusual birds sometimes show up in the area. In February 1985 a Golden Eagle was found, and in August 1989 a Little Gull was seen. In 1991 a Long-billed Curlew flew over the mud flats. The mud flats allow very close views of birds that are often seen at a distance. I have photographed Baird's Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Black Skimmer, and Marbled Godwit within five to ten feet.

In the fall, scan the ocean for all three scoters, loons, grebes, mergansers, and cormorants. Yellow-rumped Warblers and Willow Flycatchers can be found

in the thickets during migration, and Short-eared Owls have been found in the winter. The colder months produce a greater variety of birds on the ocean side including Oldsquaw, eiders, gannets, Horned Grebes, Common Goldeneyes, and Common and Red-throated loons. Occasionally on easterly winds during a storm, a Razorbill or Dovekie might whiz by.

Other Coastal Birding Localities

Quonochontaug Breachway. Quonochontaug Breachway is located farther south from the Charlestown Breachway along Route 1. Because Route 1 is a divided highway, you must go north on Route 1 from the Charlestown Breachway and turn south at the next crossover. Watch for the signs for Quonochontaug (accent on first syllable and the "ch" pronounced like a "k").

Quonochontaug has an extensive wet marsh of low-growing marine grass. There are soft spots and numerous water-filled holes and gullies. Be careful if you choose to venture out into the marsh; it is easy to fall into a mud-filled hole. Birds can be seen from the end of the parking lot where people launch boats and dig for bivalves. Common shorebirds similar to those at the Charlestown Breachway are found here. American Bitterns might be more frequent here than at Charlestown, and Sharp-tailed and Seaside sparrows also occur. Rare birds have made an appearance at "Quonie" in recent years, including American Avocets and Boat-tailed Grackles. Birds sighted in the 1970s include White Ibis, Smew, Curlew Sandpiper, and Black-necked Stilt (Conway 1979).

Napatree Point. Another good birding spot is Napatree Point, a mile-long, narrow spit of sandy beach at the southwest tip of Rhode Island. To reach Napatree, continue along Route 1 south to Route 1A, where it goes left just inside the Westerly town limit, and follow signs to Watch Hill. You can park for two hours at meters along the street or pay five to ten dollars for all-day parking. Walk through a large parking lot reserved for beach club members adjacent to a seawall and small yacht club marina. At the far end of this parking lot, you will find a small sign for the Napatree Point Wildlife Sanctuary. One can walk either along the beach on the ocean side or along the shoreline on the bay side. Due to the popularity of this recreational area in the summer, you should arrive early in the morning. It is a twenty-five minute walk to the end of Napatree Point. Look for the Osprey nests about halfway down the beach. The Ospreys occur regularly in this area and can often be seen feeding young and fishing. Watch for shorebirds, especially along the bay side once you pass the moored boats.

In the summer Napatree has a variety of birds that can usually be viewed at close range. These include Roseate, Common, Least, and Black terns, Black Skimmer, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Marbled Godwit, Whimbrel, Curlew Sandpiper (rare), Piping Plover, and American Oystercatcher. Like shorebirds at the Charlestown Breachway, many of these can be studied at remarkably close range. This area is also the most reliable spot for oystercatcher in the state. You

can find them at low tide along the rocky shores at the outer edge of the end of Napatree Point. A host of other shorebirds such as dowitchers, Dunlins, plovers, Red Knots, Willets, yellowlegs, and most of the sandpipers can be found here as well. Remember to check the wrack line along the edge of the sand spit for peeps, as well as the Buff-breasted Sandpiper.

The area is also known for its raptor migration in the fall. In the winter look for Snowy and Short-eared owls. The grassy areas at the end of the point and in the surrounding areas often harbor Sharp-tailed and Savannah sparrows as well as occasional Ipswich Sparrows in winter. Warblers and migrating passerines can be found in the thickets on the higher ground that surrounds the marsh areas in season.

Washington County. A final birding area is Washington County (named South County by many locals), which provides a variety of interesting coastal birding localities where many uncommon species can be found with some regularity. Some productive areas are Weekapaug, Ninigret National Wildlife Refuge, Green Hill Beach, Trustom Pond National Wildlife Refuge, and Succotash Marsh in Jerusalem. You can also explore on your own at many other vantage points along Rhode Island's coast. With a little planning and some luck, you will not be disappointed.

References

- Conway, R.A. 1979. *Field Checklist of Rhode Island Birds*, Rhode Island Ornithological Club, Bulletin 1.
- Stolgitis, J., J. O'Brien, and M. Fogarty. 1976. *Rhode Island Salt Ponds Fisheries Inventory*, Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council, Department of Fish and Wildlife.

ALAN E. STRAUSS is currently studying nesting species. He would like to thank Daniel Finizia for his help on compiling a bird list for the Charlestown Breachway. Alan dedicates this article to his father, who encouraged him to observe wildlife from a young age.

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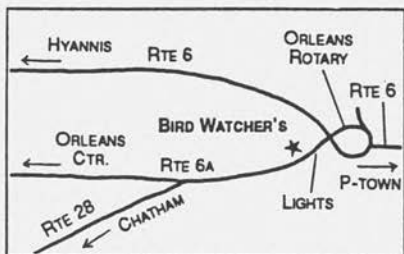
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PREDATION BY A PEREGRINE FALCON ON COMMON AND ROSEATE TERNS ON BIRD ISLAND

by Ian C. T. Nisbet

Since 1970 I have been studying the breeding colony of Common Terns and Roseate Terns at Bird Island, Marion, Massachusetts. In three previous years (1986, 1989, and 1990) a single Peregrine Falcon has visited the island in early May and killed one or two terns before continuing on spring migration. In 1991, however, a Peregrine took up residence on the island for nearly three weeks and severely disrupted the colony at the time of settlement in May.

I first visited Bird Island on April 27, 1991, with a party of volunteers for the spring cleanup. On that date I saw the remains of one Common Tern that had evidently been killed and dismembered by a Peregrine. On the same day two other visitors found pellets and droppings on the lighthouse, although I did not learn of this until later.

On my next visit, on May 5, I saw a Peregrine perched on the lighthouse balcony and found remains of at least nine Roseate Terns on the balcony and three Common Terns in various places on the island. The lighthouse is about twelve meters high and has been decommissioned since the 1930s. The lantern has been removed, and the glass windows were replaced by plastic during the 1970s; one of the eight plastic windows was missing in 1991. The Peregrine had apparently been perching on the rail of the balcony and had dismembered the Roseate Terns on the rail or the floor of the balcony. It had apparently been roosting inside the plastic enclosure, entering through the missing window and perching on the lantern platform, which was surrounded by droppings and about twenty pellets.

Jennifer Boyce and I visited the island for one to five hours on most days from May 6 to 14, and we monitored the lighthouse by telescope from the mainland at other times. The Peregrine was present daily, perching on the lighthouse rail in the early morning and afternoon, but usually absent from the time when we first flushed it until midafternoon. On each day we found one to four freshly killed terns. Although Common Terns outnumbered Roseates by five or ten to one among the terns present at the island during the day, Roseates comprised twenty-four of thirty-one birds found dead. I speculate that the Roseates were less wary than the Commons in approaching the island, either in the evening to roost or in the morning to explore the nesting area.

The Peregrine thoroughly consumed most of the birds that it killed. We found only one intact carcass, a Roseate Tern apparently dropped from the lighthouse rail. Pellets contained only remains of terns; the only other birds found killed were a Northern Flicker and a Blue Jay, both of which are rare visitors to the island. We did not find all the terns that were killed, because the

Peregrine plucked and ate many birds below the high-water mark. Assuming that it killed about two Roseates and one Common each day from April 26 to May 13, it would have killed about thirty-six Roseates and about eighteen Commons. This would account for about one percent of all the Roseates that nested on the island in 1991 (1738 pairs). Because the birds killed were among the earliest settling on the island, they would have included some of the oldest and highest-quality breeders in the colony. Four bands were found on dead birds or in pellets; three of these had been placed on early-breeding adult Roseates in 1989-1990, while the fourth had been placed on a chick in 1986.

By plumage, the Peregrine appeared to be a subadult bird from an arctic population. Because it was clearly not a local breeder and was causing severe damage to another endangered species, the state Division of Fisheries and Wildlife granted permission to trap it and translocate it. Norman Smith of the Massachusetts Audubon Society attempted unsuccessfully to trap it on May 9, but trapped it on May 14. It was carrying a Danish band and proved to have been banded as a nestling in West Greenland on July 30, 1990. Smith released it at Plum Island later on May 14, and it did not return to Bird Island.

A second Peregrine Falcon was seen perched on the lighthouse balcony on May 10 and 14. Although the two birds were never seen together, the second bird was smaller and darker and easily distinguishable from the first. It may have been a bird that took up residence on the power station at New Bedford, twenty kilometers away, during April 1991. We saw what appeared to be the same bird flying past the island on May 16 and 24, but it did not settle on the lighthouse again, and we found no new kills after May 14.

In ordinary years, Common and Roseate terns settle on the island during the first half of May and start to lay eggs about May 9 and May 17, respectively. By May 14 we would have expected about two hundred pairs of Common Terns to have laid eggs, one thousand or more Common Terns and several hundred Roseates to be present on the island during the day, and two to three thousand Commons and one to two thousand Roseates to be roosting there at night. In 1991 the largest numbers of terns seen at any one time were 120 Common Terns and twenty-five Roseates on May 12. On this and other days at this period, most of the terns that were seen were flying around over the bay or flying high over the island, touching down occasionally for periods of less than a minute and performing only early stages in courtship display. At sunset on May 14 (after the first Peregrine had been removed), the only terns seen were a flock of forty Commons flying low in tight formation toward the east. Simon Perkins and Scott Hecker have reported that at this period (the first half of May), unusually large numbers of both species of terns were present in Vineyard Sound and on the east shore of Martha's Vineyard. As late as May 18 and 19, Perkins saw about two thousand terns at the east end of Martha's Vineyard and one thousand at the west end of Nantucket; more than half of these terns were Roseates.

Evidently, the Peregrine had kept most of the terns that would have settled at Bird Island in this period well away from the area.

The terns settled very rapidly onto Bird Island after May 14. The first Common Terns laid on May 17, and the peak of nest initiation (i.e., laying of the first egg in the clutch) was on May 28. Roseate Terns first laid on May 25, and the peak of nest initiation was about June 3. Common Terns were about eight days later than usual, while Roseates were about seven days later than usual. Intensive trapping of Common Terns produced unexpectedly few old birds (over fifteen years old), and the total number of nests in 1991 was about six percent lower than that in 1990. Hence, it is possible that many of the oldest birds (which ordinarily would have laid before May 14) stayed away from the island altogether in 1991. There was no evidence of a similar shortfall in Roseates, despite the heavy predation on the earliest birds.

The Roseate Tern was listed as a federally endangered species in 1987 because its population in the northeast had become dangerously concentrated into a few colony sites. In 1991, as in other recent years, Bird Island supported about half the North American population. The entire population could be jeopardized by a single predator at this site, as in fact happened in May 1991. Management plans for this population call for contingency plans to deal with severe predation, but it is difficult to foresee and plan for every eventuality. If I had not maintained surveillance of the colony during early May 1991, it could have been severely disrupted before anyone knew that anything had happened.

IAN C. T. NISBET has been studying terns in Massachusetts since 1970. He was director of the scientific staff at the Massachusetts Audubon Society from 1976 to 1980, and is now a free-lance environmental consultant based in Lincoln, Massachusetts. He is a member of the Recovery Team for the northeastern population of the Roseate Tern. He wishes to thank Tom French for permission to trap the Peregrine, Norman Smith for his skill in trapping it, Jennifer Boyce for assistance in the field, and Scott Hecker and the Massachusetts Audubon Society for support.



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ANYTHING BUT BARREN, PART II: THE SEARCH FOR PATTERNS CONTINUES

by David C. Morimoto

In the April 1992 issue of *Bird Observer* (Morimoto 1992), I related preliminary results from a three-year study of the breeding bird community of the southeastern Massachusetts pine barrens. Thirty-one species were detected on eight sites that had been burned from fewer than five to more than thirty years prior to the onset of the study. Some species responded to the ecological differences among the sites, but many species exhibited few patterns. Although interspecific competition did not seem to be important, a complex picture of community structure was emerging, with species responding to habitat variation in different ways and to varying degrees.

Focusing the Search for Patterns. Following my initial work, I turned my attention to a more detailed study of Rufous-sided Towhees, Common Yellowthroats, and Prairie Warblers, each of which had exhibited intriguingly different patterns despite the fact that they were the most widespread and abundant species, comprising the bulk of the bird community (forty-nine to seventy percent of total density). Prairie Warblers exhibited strong habitat preferences, avoiding areas with higher tree coverage, whereas the superabundant towhees and yellowthroats exhibited only weak preferences. From these patterns I hypothesized that towhees and yellowthroats were responding to habitat characteristics in a way quite different from Prairie Warblers. Perhaps Prairie Warblers were far more sensitive to habitat characteristics than either the yellowthroat or the towhee.

Dispersion Patterns. To explore this hypothesis, I looked at the distribution of individuals of each of these species both within plots and among plots (Morimoto and Wasserman 1991a). By looking at different sized plots, I could determine differences among the species in what ecologists refer to as "scale." For example, at any given scale, individuals could exhibit one of three patterns of dispersion: random, even, or clumped (patchy). If the distribution patterns of the three species changed in different ways with changes in plot scale, and if these patterns were related to habitat variation, then there would be strong support for the hypothesis that each species responds to habitat in an individualistic, scale-specific manner. This analysis is analogous to looking at the dispersion patterns of people on a series of crowded coastal beaches on a hot summer day. At a fine scale of resolution corresponding to the size of individual people, one might detect a patchy dispersion as people would be clumped in family groups and other aggregates. At a coarser or larger scale (e.g., corresponding to the average group size) one might detect a pattern of even dispersion caused by the territorial nature of humans on beaches. At a still coarser scale (e.g., corresponding to an entire beach) one might again detect

patchy dispersion, as people would be grouped more densely on the higher quality beaches. Birdwatchers, on the other hand, would exhibit markedly different patterns of distribution (or, as ecologists like to call it, "dispersion"), being concentrated on relatively uninhabited beaches (unless a rarity happened to show up on a popular crowded beach).

All three bird species exhibited evenly spaced patterns within plots (analogous to a within-beach dispersion), clearly reflecting the territoriality resulting from intraspecific competition. This pattern held for Prairie Warblers even on plots where they were not very abundant, suggesting that they were selecting favorable patches of habitat within these plots.

When I looked at dispersion patterns across all plots at scales of resolution ranging from 0.25-0.50 hectares (roughly 0.6-1.25 acres and roughly equivalent to individual territory size) up to 7.0 hectares (roughly 17.75 acres and the size of entire plots), I found that all three species were evenly dispersed at smaller scales, consistent with the results of the within-plot analysis. However, Prairie Warblers became significantly clumped at scale sizes of 3.5 and 7.0 hectares, while Rufous-sided Towhees and Common Yellowthroats were randomly distributed at these coarser levels of resolution. This pattern held for each of the three years of the study. This result, combined with the results of the analysis of habitat associations, gave strong support to the hypothesis that the three species were responding at different scales to habitat variation. Prairie Warblers clearly responded to the structural differences in the various successional stages encompassed by my study, whereas Rufous-sided Towhees and Common Yellowthroats did not. The latter two species seemed to prefer equally well the entire array of pine barrens habitats included in this study.

These results are consistent with a belief that bird communities are composed of individuals having their own species-specific "ecological neighborhoods" (Addicott et al. 1987) or "patch hierarchies" (Kotliar and Wiens 1990) that characterize their response to environmental variation and influence their distribution and abundance patterns (Milne 1991). In their detailed study of the shrubsteppe bird community, Wiens and Rotenberry (see Wiens 1984) found very few patterns when they confined their analyses to shrubsteppe habitats alone. However, when they expanded the study to include several grassland habitats in addition to shrubsteppe, strong distributional patterns and habitat associations became evident. Similarly, if I were to expand the scale of my study to include other habitats, such as oak-pine, white pine, and red maple forests, I would expect Rufous-sided Towhees and Common Yellowthroats to begin to exhibit patchy dispersions and more well-defined habitat associations and to diverge from each other in these patterns as their full "ecological neighborhoods" were encompassed.

The results of my study suggest that the birds of the pine barrens were responding to factors such as habitat variation in an individualistic, scale-

dependent manner, pointing to the importance of looking at many scales in order to unravel the complex patterns of community structure (see also Rotenberry and Wiens 1991). Interspecific competition did not seem to be playing a role in influencing the distributional patterns and habitat associations detected. (In the beach analogy one would likely detect a strong negative correlation between birdwatchers and sunbathers, suggestive of competition.) One might expect Prairie Warblers and Common Yellowthroats to compete with one another simply because of their abundance and co-occurrence on all sites and their somewhat similar ecologies. However, because their territories heavily overlapped, it appeared that competition was not influencing their spatial distribution. But it might be influencing their foraging behavior.

Foraging Behavior. To gain a better idea of how Rufous-sided Towhees, Common Yellowthroats, and Prairie Warblers were using the habitat, I investigated foraging behavior, paying attention to intersexual as well as interspecific differences (Morimoto and Wasserman 1991b).

The analysis of 1624 foraging observations (900 Rufous-sided Towhee, 404 Common Yellowthroat, 320 Prairie Warbler) recorded in 1985 and 1986 revealed that differences in foraging height, plant species used as a substrate, position within a tree, and foraging maneuver were more pronounced between species than were male-female differences within species. This finding was not surprising for Rufous-sided Towhees, for which seventy-four to eighty percent of the foraging maneuvers recorded were on the ground. However, significant male-female differences did exist for Common Yellowthroats and Prairie Warblers. Furthermore the foraging behavior of female Prairie Warblers was more similar to that of Common Yellowthroats (especially males) than to that of male Prairie Warblers. What could explain such patterns?

The most straightforward explanation for these patterns is that the differences between male and female Prairie Warblers and Common Yellowthroats were due to sex-related constraints on their foraging behaviors (Holmes 1986), although the importance of male-female competition could not be entirely ruled out. Male Prairie Warblers often sang repeatedly from pitch pines, which served as scattered conspicuous song posts. Because of this behavior, these birds were likely to forage in these trees (forty percent of the observations were above three meters and in pitch pines compared with twenty-five percent for females). While male Common Yellowthroats were more opportunistic in their foraging height distribution, foraging at a variety of heights (depending on the availability of vegetation at those heights), they often sang from the tops of shrubs or from various heights in pitch pines, and thus their singing behavior may have been responsible for their foraging in these locations. The females of both species nest on or near the ground and thus, due to nest-related activities, forage closer to the ground. While male Rufous-sided Towhees often sang well above the ground, they were likely strongly influenced

by their need to scratch for food to forage primarily on the ground, resulting in no significant intersexual differences in this ground-nesting species. Once again, it was not necessary to invoke interspecific (or intersexual) competition to explain the patterns detected. Rather, sex-related and anatomical constraints were sufficient to explain the observed patterns. Finer-scale comparative studies of foraging behavior and reproductive success in overlapping and nonoverlapping territories, and in sites where only one species is abundant, are needed to address the question of interspecific competition more closely.

The results from these analyses adds more pieces to the complex puzzle of bird community structure. But many pieces remain. So far, I have looked at habitat associations, distributional patterns, and foraging behavior of individual species. Additional insight can be gained by investigating whole-community patterns (Maurer 1985). Such large-scale patterns raise questions about the effects of natural and human-caused disturbance on bird communities.

Whole-Community Patterns. The major community-level pattern emerging in this study was that plots burned most recently, with more open and patchy habitats, had the highest bird density and highest species richness (number). The message for conservation and management is clear: to preserve the most diverse and unique bird communities in the pine barrens (including the dense populations of Rufous-sided Towhees, Common Yellowthroats, and Prairie Warblers) open habitats must be maintained along with an array of more mature habitats, together comprising a rich patchwork mosaic. Prescribed burning seems to be the most appropriate way to maintain these open areas. Myles Standish State Forest is being considered for management under such a scheme with zones varying in the degree to which they restrict human activity. Other pine barrens sites, such as the pine barrens of Mashpee, would benefit from similar management schemes.

Today, a housing development sits on part of what used to be one of my favorite sites in Mashpee. While I might be saddened by this occurrence, it does provide an opportunity to evaluate the effects of habitat fragmentation on the pine barrens bird community (see Kerlinger and Doremus 1981). Fragmentation of open habitats may have different effects than fragmentation of forested habitats (Langen et al. 1991), about which much more is known (Saunders et al. 1991). Such information is needed if we are to be better equipped to approach the conservation and management of the pine barrens in a balanced way. From my own study it became clear that sites situated closer to housing developments and occurring on parcels of land that were more dissected by roads, had more birds which are traditionally associated with human habitations. We need to know what effects, if any, this has on the community in the long run. We also need to know how large a pine barrens site must be in order to maintain the bird community. Importantly, these questions must be addressed with a consideration of the landscape mosaic within which the pine barrens are embedded, with

attention to factors such as patch shape, number, and configuration, the presence or absence of vegetated corridors connecting patches, and the effects of the surrounding matrix (e.g., agricultural versus suburban). The conservation of the rich pine barrens ecosystem would allow the unique and interesting bird community to persist, and it would allow us to continue to explore and experience its wonderful complexity.

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BOOK REVIEW: *A PARROT WITHOUT A NAME*

by Dorothy R. Arvidson

A Parrot without a Name: The Search for the Last Unknown Birds on Earth by Don Stap, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1990; x + 239 pages, bibliography and index; \$19.95. (Also available in paperback, University of Texas Press, 1991; \$14.95.)

"What is it, then?" Pete asks. . . .

"It's nothing," O'Neill says. "It's something new."

No one says anything. Angelo leans closer to the bird O'Neill is holding. Paul and Mara exchange glances. It's as if a bomb has exploded in the distance. We see the explosion, but we have not yet felt the shock waves. O'Neill seems very sure of the startling announcement he has just made. He has spent thousands of hours looking at specimens of every bird known from South America, and now images of them have passed through his mind at high speed. A picture of this small parrot did not show up anywhere. It must be an undescribed species. . . .

Personally, I cannot believe my luck. . . . Here, less than eighteen hours before I must leave camp, O'Neill has a new species in his hand. I could not be more surprised and delighted if a jaguar came out of the forest and sat at my feet. O'Neill keeps the bird's legs pinched between two fingers, holding it out in front of him and turning it slowly about in the light the way one would show off a diamond ring. (pp. 217-218)

Thus, in the final pages of this enthralling book, the author dramatizes for us the discovery of the unnamed parrot of the book's title.

I read this book at one sitting, swept along in the adventure narrative and captivated by Don Stap's crystalline and evocative prose. It was no surprise, then, to learn from the dust jacket that writer Stap is also a published poet and the recipient of a fellowship in poetry from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Why was poet Stap, a self-described "occasional bird-watcher," invited to join this 1987 scientific foray? The reason is explained in a letter to Stap from the expeditions's leader, Louisiana State University (LSU) ornithologist Dr. John P. O'Neill who is currently Coordinator of Field Studies for LSU's Museum of Natural Science: "I am very worried that we are near the end of really pioneering, basic expeditions to discover what is actually in a wild part of this earth. There are few wild places left and the political situation around the world is such that we may not be able to do this sort of work too much longer. I

want to see such work well documented." John O'Neill should be very happy with Stap's book.

When O'Neill graduated from Oklahoma University in 1964, he had already published a description of a new species of Peruvian bird, the Orange-throated Tanager. Not surprisingly, he spent his first year out of college traveling about in Peru. On a flight southeast from Pucallpa, he saw from the plane window a "stunted mountain range known as the Cordillera Divisor sticking up out of the Amazon basin as if a piece had been torn from the Andes and set off by itself. What birds would be in mountains like that? he wondered." (p.18) Twenty-three years and twenty-one expeditions later, the 1987 endeavor, which he asked journalist Stap to chronicle, was to trek to that very mountain range to study its biota and to discover for O'Neill another new species—his twelfth.

O'Neill's group traveled from Pucallpa by dugout on the Rio Ucayali and Rio Abujao into the upper reaches of the Rio Shesha, a shallow stream, often impassable in the dry season, that meanders through the wilds of the Peruvian rainforest. The group of natural scientists set up a base camp where the Rio Shesha flows closest to the Cordillera Divisor, an isolated cluster of low mountains surrounded by unexplored lowland rainforest—300,000 square miles of it. In addition to scientific equipment, they had to carry enough food and supplies for fifteen people for ten weeks.

When they reached the site chosen for the base camp, a large satellite photo of the area and a map were examined to determine their exact location, the first basic datum that had to be established before work began. Stap writes on page 83:

I'm struck by how fantastic it is that we've just consulted a photograph taken from a satellite to tell us exactly where we are after three days in *peki-peki* on the Rio Shesha. I can scarcely imagine that the faint, squiggly, silver line in the photograph *is* the sunlit river forty feet to my right. The two perspectives do not jibe. It makes me feel far away, and small, as if I were a speck in this photograph that was taken from outer space. For me, this whole endeavor has the feel of something otherworldly about it, something incredible.

Twelve of the twenty-four chapters are devoted to a realistic, often humorous, and occasionally disturbing day-by-day journal of the uncertainties, obstacles, physical hazards, and discoveries of the 1987 expedition. This absorbing narrative is richly amplified by Stap's digressions in nearly every other chapter to relate lively anecdotes of Peruvian exploration or to provide perceptive sketches of John O'Neill, Ted Parker, and their natural scientist colleagues at work in the field. The author also succeeds in enlightening the general reader in an easy "by-the-way" style about a variety of technical natural

science topics, including, for example, a most lucid explanation of taxonomy, species, and speciation, important concerns for the expedition scientists.

John P. O'Neill has made twenty-one expeditions to Peru since 1961. He has discovered or described twelve new species there, more than any other living ornithologist: Orange-throated Tanager (1963), Selva Cacique (1965), Black-faced Cotinga (1966), Elusive Antpitta (1969), Pardusco (1976), Long-whiskered Owllet (1977), Cinnamon-breasted Tody-Tyrant (1979), Ochre-fronted Antpitta (1983), Inca Wren (1985), Cinnamon Screech-Owl (1986), Ash-throated Antwren (1986), and the parrot of Stap's book.

In addition to his firmly established ornithological reputation, O'Neill is also recognized worldwide as a fine natural-history painter. His work is found in many field guides, and his painting of a Pale-billed Antpitta is included in Roger Pasquier's recent *Masterpieces of Bird Art*, Abbeville Press, 1991. At LSU O'Neill manages to devote about half his time to his painting.

Stap devotes five chapters to Ted Parker, a younger colleague of O'Neill's, also associated with LSU. Stap had visited Parker in Baton Rouge and had spent some time with him in northeastern Peru, at Parker's camp on the Sucusari River. Parker had been expected to join the Cordillera Divisor expedition but never made it.

Theodore A. Parker III, which is how his name appears on over fifty scientific treatises, committed himself to an ornithological career at the age of sixteen, inspired by O'Neill's description of Peru and by his painting of the Elusive Antpitta that appeared in *The Auk* in 1969. Ted, who is a college graduate but not a university academic has, nonetheless, a reputation in ornithological circles that is equal to O'Neill's. He has published numerous papers in ornithological journals and, with first wife Susan Allen, *An Annotated Checklist of Peruvian Birds* (Buteo Books, 1982). As Stap says, Parker is regarded by many as "the leading authority on the birds of Peru, if not all of South America—John O'Neill and Bob Ridgely notwithstanding. . . . Roger Tory Peterson says simply, 'In the neotropics, Parker is supreme.'" (p. 113)

The basis for his reputation is his superb acoustic memory. Parker made six-to-seven thousand tape recordings between 1972 and 1985 in the rainforest and apparently never forgets a bird's song. Like O'Neill, he also recognizes on sight and knows the ranges of thousands of birds. Parker knew enough when in 1983 he first heard a *Tolmomyias* flycatcher making a sound he did not recognize that it was probably a new species. This makes Parker "the only ornithologist alive who has actually discovered a new bird in the wild rather than after the bird has been collected." (p. 122) Ted's flycatcher is a flatbill, which he has named the Orange-eyed Flycatcher, *Tolmomyias traylori*.

Ted has maintained himself primarily as a tour guide for VENT but is regularly sought out as the expert best able to identify South American bird species. The June 1991 issue of *Smithsonian* reports the work he is currently

doing in Bolivia and Ecuador as one of four biological experts for Conservation International's Rapid Assessment Program (RAP). RAP is described as an ecological SWAT team that moves rapidly through vast areas of the South American rainforest, one jump ahead of the bulldozers and loggers, to sample what species are out there. This is an effort to aid conservationists in wisely allocating their efforts and limited funds to areas with a rich biotic variety.

Working with Parker on RAP is Al Gentry, senior curator at the Missouri Botanical Garden and a world authority on tropical plants. The *Smithsonian* article reports that Gentry "will do anything to get to a plant. Bitten once by a venomous pit viper four hours by boat from the nearest village, his first reaction was annoyance that he would be losing field time. The snake died; Gentry didn't." This intrepid botanist was also a member of the Cordillera Divisor expedition, and his competence under adversity is well delineated by Don Stap in *Parrot Without a Name*.

All of the other courageous and dedicated people on O'Neill's trip deserve mention. In addition to botanists Al Gentry and Camilo Díaz and herpetologists Paul and Mara Freed, the other ornithologists were Angelo Capparella, Pete Marra, Tony Meyer (also an M.D.), Donna Schmitt (a skilled specimen preparer), and Peruvians Gabriel Ballón and Cecilia Fox (students of O'Neill). The Peruvian guide and staff were Manuel and Marta Sánchez and Magno Lazón.

Fifteen years ago, in June and July 1977, I had the good fortune to be on a month-long visit to Peru, guided by Peter Alden and Robert S. Kennedy (another LSU doctorate, to be known later for his work on the Harpy and Philippine eagles and his book, co-authored with Edward C. Dickman and Kenneth C. Parkes, *The Birds of the Philippines*, B.O.U. Check-list No. 12, British Ornithologists' Union, 1991). We spent some time at the newly opened Explorer's Inn in the Tambopata Wildlife Reserve, where Ted Parker and Susan Allen were resident naturalists. According to Stap, this reserve "may be, biologically speaking, the richest area on earth. Since 1976, 545 species of birds have been recorded in Tambopata, more than 1,100 species of butterflies, and 102 species of dragonflies, more than anywhere else in the world." (pp.145-146)

The 1977 sojourn at Explorer's Inn was memorable for me. In the wildest area I had ever visited, I listened to a young Ted Parker identifying for us every bird sound we heard—every note, call, song, rustle, or whisper. I shall never forget his mastery. A treasured memento of that visit is a tape I made of Ted naming the songs of twenty different species as the phrases were sung by an extraordinary mimicking thrush that was new to Ted but which he thought (and hoped) might be a new species. He called it the "uniform thrush" for its nondescript appearance. Ted was so familiar with South American bird song even then—he must have been about twenty-three—that he was able to comment with undeniable authority about one song in the mimicking thrush's

repertoire: "That's nothing; he's making that up." (The bird was later determined to be not a new species, but a Lawrence's Thrush.)

I found Stap's biographies of O'Neill and Parker and the contrast between the two men fascinating. I have never met John O'Neill. I first heard of him in 1968 as the graduate student artist at LSU who had agreed to do the colored plates for Peter Alden's first book, *Finding the Birds in Western Mexico*. During my 1977 sojourn at Explorer's Inn, John O'Neill's name popped up regularly in the conversation because Ted and Susan Parker and Bob Kennedy were LSU people. Later that same year a Texas birding friend sent me a news clipping about the discovery in Peru of a species believed extinct for a century, the White-winged Guan. Who had rediscovered it? John O'Neill, of course.

As you might expect, the parrot of this book is no longer nameless. It has been dubbed Amazonian Parrotlet. The April 1991 issue of *The Auk* formally announced its baptism in an article by John P. O'Neill, Charles A. Munn, and Irma Franke J.: "*Nannopsittaca dachilleae*, A New Species of Parrotlet from Eastern Peru" (108: 225-229). This is a copy of *The Auk* to treasure: accompanying the article is a colored print of John O'Neill's beautiful painting of two adult parrotlets pictured along the upper Rio Shesha. In the article, the authors announce that the species name *dachilleae* is a tribute to "our dear friend and colleague in conservation, Barbara D'Achille, who died tragically on 31 May 1989 while investigating reforestation projects in the mountainous Peruvian Department of Huancavelica [she and a companion were shot by Sendero guerillas]. . . . By the last three years of her life she had gained a worldwide reputation as Latin America's most committed, most effective, and most published environmental journalist. . . . Appropriately, Barbara wrote many of her finest articles while on expeditions to the rain forests of Pucallpa, Tambopata, and Manu, where she was among the first investigators to see the new species of parrotlet we name in her honor. We hope that naming this parrotlet after Barbara will keep her memory alive and inspire young journalists in Latin America and around the world to follow her example and fight for the survival of our planet's threatened biota."

Parrot Without a Name is a great book, informative and well written, about modern pioneering scientists of heroic proportions. It is also a worthy tribute to the Louisiana State University Museum of Natural Science, which has spawned so many fruitful ornithological studies in South America. This museum has the fourth largest university-related collection of bird specimens in the United States and, sadly, lacks both adequate space and funding—the Cordillera Divisor expedition was supported by the National Geographic Society. They deserve all the public recognition they can get. Don Stap has performed this service gracefully and honestly in the best and the most intelligent popular science book I have ever read. I look forward now to reading his book of poetry—*Letter at the End of Winter*. And I'll wager he's a d....d fine birder!

DOROTHY R. ARVIDSON, a former biology professor, is editor emeritus of *Bird Observer* and now works as a free-lance editor, writer, and consultant in biology. Birds have been a significant part of her life since the age of five when she became the chief rescuer of nestlings that fell from her grandmother's Purple Martin house. In college and in graduate school in the Middle West, she happily fell under the spell of biologist Carl Welty and ecologist Aldo Leopold and has been a student of birds and a conservation activist ever since.

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BOOK REVIEW: *ON WATCHING BIRDS*

by William E. Davis, Jr.

On Watching Birds by Lawrence Kilham, illustrated by Jean Waltermire, foreword by John K. Terres; Chelsea Green Publishing Company, Chelsea, Vermont, 1988; 187 pages; \$9.95 (paperback).

Over the past few decades scores of books have been published which have "bird watching" or "watching birds" in their titles: *Watching Birds: An Introduction to Ornithology* (Roger F. Pasquier), *A Guide to Bird Watching* (Joseph J. Hickey), and *Watching Sea Birds* (Richard Perry), to name but a few. Many bird watching books deal mainly with sport birding, listing, or bird identification, but some encourage the reader to extend their interest in birds into the realm of bird behavior and other aspects of bird biology. The three books mentioned above are in this tradition, and so is *On Watching Birds*, by Lawrence Kilham.

This autobiographical book is about behavior watching, principally bird behavior, but also the behavior of mammals and other animal groups. Kilham began watching birds when he was fourteen years old, but after partaking of the competitive sport of birding with its "Big Day" emphasis, decided that he was more interested in the solitude of a cabin in New Hampshire's White Mountains. There he could enjoy nature in a quiet way and, with careful watching, perhaps discover something new. The chapters of this book present a sampling from his lifetime of behavior watching, the anecdotes liberally salted with philosophy and quotes from past and present nature watchers. Kilham strongly believes that great satisfaction can be derived from sitting in one place and learning about bird behavior in depth. He always prefers to be unobtrusive in his watching and never, for example, has banded birds. He suggests that it is best to learn about a bird first hand and then read about it. Kilham finds little value in the "...chart-and table-studded articles on behavior in the leading journals of today." His taste is for good old-fashioned natural history.

An entire chapter is devoted to the old adage, "Chance favors the prepared mind," and Kilham suggests that discoveries do not have to be big to be exciting. He argues that behavior watching can be as exciting as chasing rarities and is motivated by the same impulse. Opportunism plays a major role in behavior watching, and Kilham favors watching whatever birds are local and easy to observe. The reader may find his linking bird watching to John Locke's searches after truth a bit quaint, but Kilham makes the point that watching birds should be something special, something that opens new horizons.

The book is divided into twelve chapters which follow, somewhat chronologically, Kilham's behavior watching exploits. The first chapter traces the development of his interests through his medical school days, and the second

chronicles his first serious behavior watching efforts. The latter included observations on the distraction displays of a Worm-eating Warbler, the attack on a Ring-necked Duck by a Pied-billed Grebe from underwater, and the nesting behavior of a pair of Black and White Casqued Hornbills in East Africa. Chapter Three deals with Kilham's woodpecker behavior watching (a topic on which he has published extensively), and Chapter Five focuses on watching birds in Central America (Chapter Four is an interlude in the bird watching sagas entitled, "Reading for Ideas and Inspiration"). Subsequent chapters include behavior watching of willets, oystercatchers, a Whimbrel, Snowy Egrets, Sandhill Cranes, kingfishers, and crows (about which he has also published extensively). Chapter Nine discusses behavior watching opportunities throughout the year in New Hampshire.

In the final chapter, "Instinct for Beauty and Love of Animals," Kilham expresses his philosophy of nature and concludes:

What I like best about behavior-watching . . . is that it not only strengthens my bonds with the beauty of nature, but also my empathy with living things . . . Merging with nature for the time that one is absorbed in watching some bird or animal is a way of hanging onto the fundamental self that, in many people, seems in danger of extinction.

Some may find this a bit sentimental, but I think it clearly suggests that behavior watching may provide new satisfactions and insights into the world around us which are both exciting and meaningful. If you can accept the numerous quotations from people such as Oliver Wendell Holmes, quotations that I found unnecessary and a little irritating, and a tone that belittles modern-day practices, the book is a delight to read. Kilham writes well and is obviously a very experienced and keen observer of nature. If you are a behavior watcher you will love this book. If you are not, you probably ought to read it anyway. It may stimulate some new interests and in the long run increase the pleasure you get from birds.

WILLIAM E. DAVIS, JR. is president of Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts, Inc. He is a frequent contributor to *Bird Observer*.

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UNUSUAL PREY ATTAINMENT
OF AN IMMATURE RED-TAILED HAWK

The fall passerine migration is typically quite good at Mothball Pines, Cisco, Nantucket. For four weeks during the month of September, Edith Andrews of Madaket, sponsored by the Maria Mitchell Association, conducts a banding program in the Pines. The object of the program is mainly to study fall passerine migratory patterns and relative bird population densities. Although 1991 did not have the great numbers experienced in previous years, it did have good species diversity and unusual sightings. Species highlights included Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Traill's Flycatcher (unknown species), Mourning Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Connecticut Warbler, Lincoln Sparrow, and Gray-checked Thrush. In addition, an unexpected visitor, a Red-tailed Hawk, "ran" the net lanes with the project volunteers.

This strikingly handsome hawk first appeared on Monday afternoon, September 2. It perched on a twelve-foot snag in close proximity to the net lane called "Edge 2." The bird was easily approachable, allowing members of the crew to photograph and study it at close range for several minutes. All the while, it seemed unconcerned with our presence. It was obvious that its well-warranted prejudice toward humans was not yet developed.

On Tuesday morning during the first check of the lanes for netted birds, a disturbance was noticed near the net lane called "Catbird 2." As another project volunteer (Max Leenhouts of Houston, Texas) and I came upon the scene, we saw the young hawk sitting near the bottom panel of the four-tiered mist net. The hawk was removing an entangled Gray Catbird from the net. Upon realizing we were present, the hawk flew off into the pines with its prey. Inspection of the net revealed that the hawk was able to remove the catbird without destroying the net meshing. This event caused much excitement at the banding table, prompting several volunteers to return to the encounter site to inspect the array of catbird feathers left behind by the retreating hawk. They returned to the banding table with what appeared to be a freshly disgorged pellet. The pellet was found directly at the site of the hawk's attack on the catbird. Evidently, the immature Red-tailed Hawk had spent some time examining the Gray Catbird in the net prior to dispatching it. It is likely that the hawk discarded the pellet during the period between when the net lanes were opened and the time of the first run. Over the next half hour I dissected the pellet to determine what our guest had been eating. To our surprise, I discovered the lower portion of a set of small passerine-sized legs!

The portions that I found included the heels, the tarsometatarsi, and the toes. Several distinct features indicated that these partial hindlimbs belonged to

none other than those of a Cape May Warbler. The diagnostic features and supporting evidence included booted tarsi where the topside of the toes was uniformly black and the underside was the bright yellow of a "yellow jacket" wasp. Also, on the previous days, several Cape May Warblers were banded, and one of the striking features we noticed was the uniqueness of the leg and foot colorations.

This leads to several possible theories as to how the hawk was able to capture what we presume was a Cape May Warbler. One theory is that the warbler was so exhausted by its night-time migration that it could not evade the hawk, thus allowing the raptor to capture and kill the warbler. A second possibility is that the Cape May had died, and the hawk was hungry enough to scavenge for carrion. A third theory is that the warbler was entangled in the mist net, and the hawk picked it out of the meshing.

Of the above three theories, I believe the third to be most plausible. It is possible that a different bird was consumed by the Red-tailed Hawk, but the supporting evidence suggests that it was a Cape May Warbler. Subsequent to the catbird event, the hawk was seen in the vicinity of another net lane called (coincidentally) "Cape May." Here it was attempting to dislodge and dispatch a Black-capped Chickadee. The hawk was scared away from the chickadee and from that point on, was discouraged by the volunteers from hunting near the net lanes. This discouragement served several purposes: it made the hawk "afraid" of humans, thus giving it a better chance of avoiding any aggressive human encounters; it saved (we are sure) the lives of some unsuspecting netted passerines; and it saved the bird from possibly destroying our nets and causing injury to itself. The hawk was last seen in the vicinity of the net lanes on September 14.

Steven Arena, North Easton, Massachusetts

CORMORANT AND CLAM

Some encounters of birds with clams or other pelecypods are apparently inconvenient, and may even lead to death. John Terres in his article on "Mollusks and Birds" in the *Encyclopedia of North American Birds* (1982, page 615) summarizes records for several shorebirds, a tern, rails, and kingfishers caught by the bill, and wading birds by the leg or foot. Here I report a clam firmly attached to a cormorant's bill.

On May 19, 1985, I watched from a boat near Middle Weepecket Island (in Buzzards Bay, near Woods Hole, Massachusetts) an adult Double-crested Cormorant with a hard-shelled clam around the tip of its lower mandible. The cormorant was standing on or near a nest among many other nesting cormorants. By comparing clam and bill-lengths on a photograph (kindly provided by

Whitney Robbins), I estimated the clam to be about fifty-five millimeters long. From the weights of a series of four clams with lengths fifty to seventy millimeters, I estimated the clam's weight as at least fifty-two grams. The cormorant's gaping bill and repeated lifting movements suggested that the clam was an inconveniently heavy load.

On the next day (May 20) I again approached the island by boat and later landed. I found no clam-bearing cormorant standing on the island, nor any dead bird or clam in the vicinity of the original sighting. Thus, I can say nothing about the final effect of the clam on the cormorant.

Cormorants usually feed only on fish, and this bird may have encountered the clam while seeking demersal prey, such as a rock eel (gunnel) or sand lance, which comprise a large part of the diet in this area.

Jeremy J. Hatch, Milton

WETLAND BIRD PROJECT

Observations are requested for the second year of a two-year study to research the habitat of wetland birds and to inventory the more secretive ones. Eleven species are being studied: Pied-billed Grebe, American Bittern, Least Bittern, Green-backed Heron, Virginia Rail, Sora, King Rail, Clapper Rail, Common Moorhen, American Coot, and Common Snipe. If you observe the presence or breeding activities of these birds, please contact Dr. Scott Melvin, Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) Rare Species Zoologist, at NHESP, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, Westboro, MA 01581 (508-792-7270).

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THE MASSACHUSETTS AVIAN RECORDS COMMITTEE

by Wayne R. Petersen

To lend credibility to the increasing volume of unusual bird reports which annually appear in journals such as *American Birds* and *Bird Observer*, the need for objective, rational, and qualified evaluation of such reports has become increasingly obvious. In order to be credible and accepted into the scientific record, bird sighting reports must be systematically subjected to responsible and unbiased analysis and evaluation. To that end, the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (MARC) has been formed to evaluate bird sighting reports in the state of Massachusetts.

A bird records committee for Massachusetts is long overdue. Beginning in 1978, Brad Blodget, state ornithologist for the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, started maintaining an "official" Massachusetts bird list. Using clearly defined criteria and rigorous standards of acceptance for sight records, Blodget produced an exemplary bird list. Blodget's list, however, relies on specimen or photographic evidence to substantiate the report, or requires that "three or more observers with extensive field experience in Massachusetts" substantiate a report of a species new to the state list. Blodget labeled bird reports failing to meet these rigorous criteria as "problematical." It is likely, however, that the majority of the problematic species were correctly identified in Massachusetts. The formation of MARC will provide an expanded, yet still rigorous, set of criteria and will involve more than one person to evaluate bird sighting reports.

MARC's first organizational meeting was in 1989. In the months since, the MARC has: (1) finalized a set of bylaws; (2) established a protocol for processing unusual bird reports; and (3) set about addressing the responsibilities put forth in the bylaws. To quote from the bylaws, "The purpose of the MARC shall be to evaluate and document reports of unusual occurrences of birds in Massachusetts for the purpose of providing a means by which such reports can gain acceptance as valuable scientific data and for maintaining an official Massachusetts bird list."

The most important priority for the MARC is to produce a state bird list that conforms as closely as possible to the model provided by Blodget, yet be as unencumbered by problematical categories and provisional records as possible. In addition future activities of the committee will adhere to a policy that will require documentation for bird reports in any of the following categories:

1. Any report of a species that would represent a first Massachusetts record

2. Any report of a rare or difficult to identify species as defined by the MARC
3. Any report of a species that would represent a first Massachusetts nesting record.

Furthermore certain bird reports will be evaluated at the discretion of the committee and shall include the following:

4. Any species reported four weeks earlier than the week of arrival or four weeks later than the week of departure as indicated on the Massachusetts Daily Field Card
5. Any species occurring in a totally unexpected geographical location (e.g., coastal species inland and inland species at the coast)
6. Any species that has nested fewer than five times in Massachusetts
7. Any extralimital nesting of a species within Massachusetts.

The obvious intent of these criteria is to establish guidelines that will objectively evaluate unusual Massachusetts bird reports but will also be flexible enough to eliminate processing bird reports that local bird record-keepers can readily arbitrate. In the future the MARC will publish a list of "rare or difficult-to-identify species" that will automatically require specific action by the committee. All Massachusetts bird clubs and bird record compilers will receive copies of the MARC's bylaws, which will be available upon request. The activities of the MARC and the results of the committee's actions will be regularly published in *Bird Observer* and *Bird News of Western Massachusetts*, and an archive for the MARC's activities will be maintained at the Massachusetts Audubon Society in Lincoln.

For birders interested in learning more about the important role bird records committees can play in their region, the December 1990 issue of *Birding* contained a fine summary article by Don Roberson on the role and status of bird records committees in North America. Roberson presented statistics about the organization and machinations of these different committees and discussed the rationale used by the various groups.

In conclusion, birders are encouraged to direct specific questions concerning the MARC to any of the committee's members. At the present time, the MARC comprises the following individuals: Kathleen Anderson, Bradford Blodget, Richard Forster, Seth Kellogg, Mark Lynch, Blair Nikula, Simon Perkins, Wayne Petersen (Chair), Robert Stymeist, and Richard Walton (nonvoting Secretary). We will continue to publish information about the MARC in the months ahead as the committee becomes fully operational.

WAYNE R. PETERSEN is a field ornithologist with the Massachusetts Audubon Society (MAS). He can be reached at MAS, South Great Road, Lincoln, MA 01773, telephone 617-259-9500.

Yellow-throated Warbler
Essex, MA
November 1991
Photo by Mark Jordan



BIRD SIGHTINGS JANUARY/ FEBRUARY 1992 SUMMARY

by Richard A. Forster and Marjorie W. Rines

January's weather was sunny and mild, and featured little precipitation. The first week and a half averaged 8 degrees above normal, while the latter part of the month was more seasonal. The month's average temperature was 31.0 degrees, 1.4 degrees above normal. Precipitation totaled only 3.11 inches, tying the second lowest total in 100 years. Only 0.4 inch of snow fell. The most disagreeable weather was on the 4th and 5th, producing a good flight of sea birds at Cape Ann.

February continued mild and dry, averaging 32.4 degrees, 1.7 degrees above normal. Precipitation totaled 2.28 inches, 1.42 below average, although precipitation was frequent. The first half of the month was cool while the latter half was warm, prompting an early migration of blackbirds. Overall the winter season was mild, dry, and sunny.

R. A. F.

LOONS THROUGH WATERFOWL

Several Pacific/Arctic Loons were reported with convincing details although two may have been the same individual. The storm in early January brought numerous Northern Gannets toward coastal locations. Double-crested Cormorants seem to be lingering in greater numbers and more locations with an early January count in Boston Harbor three times the Great Cormorant total. Unusual winter herons included a Great Egret at Nantucket and a Little Blue Heron in Plymouth. Great Blue Herons were well reported early in January.

A Greater White-fronted Goose was present throughout the period in New Bedford, where presumably the same individual has been present for several years. Waterfowl were present in normal or slightly above-normal numbers due to the mild season. Especially noteworthy were Northern Shoveler and a better than average number of Eurasian Wigeons. Both King Eider and Barrow's Goldeneye seemed to be reported in less-than-normal numbers, while Harlequin Ducks were in near-normal numbers in traditional locations. A drake Smew of questionable origin was present in Chatham, and a Tufted Duck was seen in Brewster where it was found in December. Good numbers of Hooded Mergansers were present at numerous locations.

R. A. F.

Red-throated Loon			
1/4, 1/12	Rockport (A.P.), P.I.	1, 2	H. Wiggin#, M. Lynch#
1/12, 2/2	E. Gloucester, Boston H.	2, 5	J. Berry, TASL (M. Hall)
2/15	Provincetown	7	M. Lynch#
Arctic/Pacific Loon (details submitted)			
1/3-2/29	Provincetown (R.P.)	1	P. Trimble + v. o.
1/5, 1/26	Manomet, Sagamore	1, 1	M. Sylvia, T. Hall
Common Loon			
1/4, 1/12	Clinton, P.I.	7, 5	R. Bradbury, M. Lynch#
1/25, 1/31	Salisbury, Sagamore	4, 21	I. Lynch, M. Rines
2/15, 2/16	Provincetown, N. Scituate	17, 5+	M. Lynch#
2/17, 2/22	Ipswich, Rockport	14, 4	BBC (J. Berry), BBC (J. + J. Nove)
Pied-billed Grebe			
1/4, 1/5	Clinton, Brewster	1, 11	R. Bradbury, G. Gove
1/12, 1/18	Nantucket, Wareham	1, 6	E. Andrews, I. Lynch#
2/4, 2/8	Nantucket, Falmouth	2, 1	E. Andrews#, P. Trimble
2/15, 2/29	Lakeville, Nantucket	2, 3	K. Holmes, R. Abrams#
Horned Grebe			
1/12, 1/21	P.I., Mashpee	15+, 18	M. Lynch#, P. Trimble
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	30, 22	TASL (M. Hall)
1/31, 2/2	Sagamore, Falmouth	27, 4	M. Rines, P. Trimble
2/8, 2/16	P'town (R.P.), Hull	10, 10+	J. Hoye#, M. Lynch#
2/16, 2/22	N. Scituate, Rockport	5+, 3	M. Lynch#, BBC (J. + J. Nove)
2/23, 2/27	Quabbin (G43), P.I.	1, 4	M. Lynch#, W. Drew#

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	Jan./Feb., 1992
Red-Necked Grebe				
1/4, 1/5	Rockport (A.P.), Nahant	23, 12	R. Heil, I. Lynch	
1/12, 2/2	P'town (R.P.), Boston H.	10, 2	K. Jones, TASL (M. Hall)	
2/9, 2/16	Plymouth, N. Scituate	5, 14	BBC (G. d'Entremont), M. Lynch#	
2/15, 2/22	P'town, Rockport	10+, 5	B. Nikula, BBC (J. + J. Nove)	
Northern Gannet				
1/3, 1/4	P'town (R.P.), Rockport (A.P.)	75, 74	P. Trimble, R. Heil	
2/2, 2/9	Salisbury, Scituate	1, 1	M. Lynch#, BBC (G. d'Entremont)	
2/10, 2/22	Provincetown	1, 25	M. Boucher, J. Hoye#	
Great Cormorant				
1/6, 1/20	P'town (R.P.), E. Gloucester	115, 27	K. Jones, I. Lynch	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	23, 20	TASL (M. Hall)	
1/29, 2/8	N. Scituate, New Bedford	45, 27	T. Aversa, M. Lynch#	
2/15, 2/22	Eastham, Newburyport	105, 14	M. Lynch#, P. + F. Vale	
2/22	Haverhill	35	J. Hogan	
Double-crested Cormorant				
1/1, 1/11	Falmouth, Chatham	4, 2	G. d'Entremont, B. Nikula	
1/12, 1/18	Gloucester, New Bedford	1, 2	J. Berry, M. Lynch#	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	65, 10	TASL (M. Hall)	
1/25	Nantucket	3	S. Perkins	
American Bittern				
1/5-1/19	Eastham	1	S. Arena + v. o.	
Great Blue Heron				
1/11, 1/20	Outer Cape, Falmouth	40, 6	SSBC (W. Petersen), P. Trimble	
1/25, 1/28	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Eastham	5, 13	LCES (J. Hill), R. Stymeist	
2/1, 2/1-19	Arlington, Everett	2, 1	H. Hoffman, J. Berry	
2/9, 2/15	Plymouth, Eastham	5, 7	BBC (G. d'Entremont), M. Lynch#	
Great Egret				
1/21	Nantucket	1	E. Eberhardt	
Little Blue Heron				
1/10	Plymouth	1	P. Trimble	
Black-crowned Night-Heron				
thr, 1/2	Boston, Nantucket	4 max, 8	K. Hudson + v. o., E. Andrews#	
1/10, 1/14	Plymouth, Everett	1, 1 imm	P. Trimble, J. Berry	
1/20, 2/4	Falmouth, S. Boston	2, 1	P. Trimble, K. Ryan	
Mute Swan				
1/5, 1/1-2/17	Lynn, Arlington	2, 1	I. Lynch#, L. Taylor + v. o.	
1/18	New Bedford, Plymouth	60, 46	M. Lynch#	
1/18	Wareham, Falmouth	33, 5	I. Lynch#	
1/20	E. Gloucester	4	I. Lynch	
Greater White-fronted Goose				
thr	New Bedford	1	v. o.	
Snow Goose				
1/3-2/12, 1/29-2/17	Essex, New Bedford	1, 1	T. Young, v. o..	
2/21	Lexington	1	C. Leaky	
Brant				
1/6, 1/26	New Bedford, Nantucket	14, 150	M. Boucher, S. Perkins	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	875, 1059	TASL (M. Hall)	
2/9, 2/16	Plymouth, Duxbury	21, 30	BBC (G. d'Entremont), H. Wiggin#	
2/15	Eastham	150+	M. Lynch#	
Canada Goose				
thr, 1/19	P.I., Clinton	780 max	W. Drew# + v. o., M. Lynch#	
1/20, 1/25	Arlington, S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	475, 685	L. Taylor, LCES (J. Hill)	
1/27	Rochester	1568	D. Peirson	
Wood Duck				
thr, 1/26-2/11	Arlington, Halifax	7 max	M. Rines#, K. Anderson	
1/11, 1/26	Lakeville, Lynn	1 f, 2 pr	K. Holmes, T. Aversa	
2/3, 2/15	Mattapoisset, Manchester	1 m, pr	M. Boucher, P. + F. Vale	
Green-winged Teal				
1/4, 1/10	Framingham, P.I.	2, 4	K. Hamilton, W. Drew#	
1/12, 1/28	Boston (B.I.), W. Roxbury	2, 31	M. Rines#, T. Aversa	
2/22, 2/23	P.I., Arlington Res.	18, pr	W. Drew#, L. Taylor	
American Black Duck				
thr, 1/18	P.I., Orleans	2320 max	W. Drew#, P. Trimble	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	1739, 1629	TASL (M. Hall)	
1/18, 2/20	New Bedford, Westport	230+, 2500	M. Lynch#, R. Abrams	
Northern Pintail				
1/8, 1/10	W. Barnstable, P.I.	16, 15	P. Trimble, W. Drew#	
1/11, 1/24-2/7	Yarmouth, Boston (F.Pk)	17, 4	T. Prince#, T. Aversa	
Northern Shoveler				
thr, 1/25-2/24	Boston, New Bedford	pr, 1 or 2	v. o.	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	Jan./Feb., 1992
Gadwall				
thr, 1/1-1/31	Boston, Framingham	1 or 2, 7	K. Hudson, K. Hamilton	
1/1, 1/1	Chatham, Worcester	1, 4	G. d'Entremont#, R. Bradbury	
1/2, 1/8	P.I., W. Barnstable	12, 12	W. Drew#, P. Trimble	
1/22	Gloucester	2	T. Young	
Eurasian Wigeon				
1/1, 1/3-28	S. Dartmouth, New Bedford	1 m, 1 or 2 m	M. Boucher, v. o.	
1/8, 1/11-2/29	W. Barnstable, Chatham	2 m, 1-3	P. Trimble, B. Nikula#	
1/19, 2/25	Harwich, Plymouth	3 m, 1 m	K. Jones, R. Abrams	
American Wigeon				
1/8, 1/11	W. Barnstable, Chatham	24, 15	P. Trimble, J. Hoye#	
1/12, 1/19	New Bedford, Harwich	30+, 42	S. Arena#, K. Jones	
2/1, 2/8	Belmont, Falmouth	34, 35	M. Rines, P. Trimble	
Canvasback				
1/1, 1/13	Falmouth, Lakeville	125, 91	G. d'Entremont#, M. Boucher	
1/25, 1/27	Wareham, Yarmouth	200-225, 265	M. Maurer, K. Hamilton	
2/1, 2/16	Lakeville, Quincy	12, 1	BBC (D. Davis), M. Lynch#	
2/19, 2/20	Nantucket, Westport	21, 220	E. Andrews#, R. Abrams	
2/22	Arlington	pr	L. Taylor	
Redhead				
thr, 1/1	New Bedford, Falmouth	2, 2	v. o., H. D'Entremont#	
1/5-2/9	Plymouth	2 m	G. d'Entremont + v. o.	
1/19-2/29	Nantucket	18 max	E. Andrews + v. o.	
Ring-necked Duck				
1/4, 1/18	Framingham, Arlington	15, 27	K. Hamilton#, L. Taylor	
1/19, 1/27	Sandwich, Natick	220, 55	P. Trimble, K. Hamilton	
1/29, 2/8	Nantucket, Falmouth	16, 90	E. Andrews, P. Trimble	
2/22, 2/23	Eastham, Wayland	13, 4	J. Hoye#, S. Perkins#	
Tufted Duck				
1/1	Brewster	1 m	H. D'Entremont	
Greater Scaup				
1/5, 1/18	Winthrop, New Bedford	30+, 360+	M. Lynch#	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	314, 528	TASL (M. Hall)	
2/9, 2/20	Plymouth, Westport	3, 25	BBC (G. d'Entremont), R. Abrams	
Lesser Scaup				
thr, 1/11	Boston, Chatham	1 imm m, 24+	T. Aversa, B. Nikula	
1/25, 1/26	New Bedford, Nantucket	38, 42	R. Stymeist, S. Perkins	
1/27, 2/8	Natick, Falmouth	1, 4	K. Hamilton, P. Trimble	
Common Eider				
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	3559, 4739	TASL (M. Hall)	
2/9	Plymouth, Quincy	600, 350+	BBC (G. d'Entremont), M. Lynch#	
King Eider				
1/1-3, 1/1-2/9	Orleans, Plymouth	1 m, 1 m	J. Talin#, v. o.	
1/4, 1/5	Winthrop, Revere	1 m, 1 m	H. Wiggins#, P. + F. Vale	
1/12, 2/8-16	E. Gloucester, Quincy	1 imm, 1 m	J. Berry, v. o.	
Harlequin Duck				
thr	Rockport, Nahant	9 max 1/3, 4 max	v. o., L. Pivacek + v. o.	
1/1	Plymouth, E. Orleans	1, 1 m	K. Holmes#, A. Williams	
2/16, 2/20	N. Scituate, Westport	4, 5	M. Lynch#, R. Abrams	
Black Scoter				
1/2, 1/5	P.I., Rockport	20, 3	W. Drew#, J. Brown#	
1/25, 2/15	Nantucket, Provincetown	150, 4	S. Perkins#, M. Lynch#	
2/16	Hull	2	M. Lynch#	
Surf Scoter				
1/4, 1/26	Rockport, Nantucket	8, 250	M. Lynch#, S. Perkins#	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	40, 7	TASL (M. Hall)	
1/31; 2/15	Sagamore; Provincetown, Hull	23; 4, 10+	M. Rines; M. Lynch#	
White-winged Scoter				
1/2, 1/4	P.I., Gloucester	105, 10+	W. Drew#, M. Lynch#	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	48, 163	TASL (M. Hall)	
1/26, 2/7	Nantucket, P.I.	800, 50	S. Perkins#, W. Drew#	
2/15, 2/22	Provincetown, Rockport	126, 200+	M. Lynch#, T. Young	
Common Goldeneye				
1/4	Cape Ann, Framingham	100+, 25	BBC (S. Bolton), K. Hamilton#	
1/4	Clinton	21	R. Bradbury	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	965, 1017	TASL (M. Hall)	
1/21, 2/2	Mashpee, Newburyport	140, 170	P. Trimble, BBC (J. Center)	
2/4, 2/8	Cotuit, New Bedford	420, 61	P. Trimble, M. Lynch#	
Barrow's Goldeneye				
1/3-2/9, 1/26	Gloucester, Nantucket	2, 5	M. Rines + v. o., S. Perkins#	
2/2, 2/9	Boston H. Marshfield	2, 1	TASL (M. Hall), BBC (G. d'Entremont)	
2/13-22	Newburyport	1-4	v. o.	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	Jan./Feb., 1992
Bufflehead				
1/18, 1/21	New Bedford, Mashpee	140+, 200	M. Lynch#, P. Trimble	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	1181, 1320	TASL (M. Hall)	
2/2, 2/23	Cotuit, Wayland	400, 2	P. Trimble, S. Perkins	
Smew (escape?)				
1/13	Chatham	1 ad m	M. Silke	
Hooded Merganser				
1/1, 1/4	Quabbin (G43), Framingham	27, 19	M. Lynch#, K. Hamilton#	
1/5, 1/8	Boston, W. Barnstable	17, 16	K. Hudson, P. Trimble	
1/19, 1/20	Nantucket, Falmouth	14, 28	E. Andrews#, P. Trimble	
2/22, 2/28	Eastham, Worcester	14, 14	J. Hoyer#, R. Bradbury	
Common Merganser				
thr, 1/1	Arlington, Harwich	48 max, 500	M. Rines + v. o., G. d'Entremont#	
1/10, 1/19	Lakeville, Newburyport	30, 50	K. Anderson, J. Berry	
1/24, 2/2	Nantucket, Westport	17, 15	E. Andrews, M. Boucher	
2/9, 2/17	Plymouth, Clinton	15, 25	BBC (G. d'Entremont), M. Lynch#	
Red-breasted Merganser				
1/1, 1/3	Newburyport, P'town (R.P.)	200, 145	J. Berry, P. Trimble	
1/12, 1/18	Cape Ann, Plymouth	100, 50+	J. Berry, M. Lynch#	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	684, 845	TASL (M. Hall)	
1/21	W. Roxbury, Mashpee	2, 240	T. Aversa, P. Trimble	
1/29, 2/8	Readville, New Bedford	1 m, 122	T. Aversa, M. Lynch#	
2/14-29, 2/15	Arlington, Eastham	14 max, 150	M. Rines, M. Lynch#	
Ruddy Duck				
1/1, 1/4	Arlington, Framingham	2, 2	R. Stymeist#, K. Hamilton	

RAPTORS THROUGH ALCIDS

Turkey Vultures continue their northern push with an established winter roost in the Randolph area, where a Black Vulture late in February was a surprising find. Equally unusual were two reports of Ospreys in January. Bald Eagles were well reported over a wide area. Prospects for this species are very optimistic. The increase in Cooper's Hawks is reflected in the almost equal number of reports as Sharpshins in January. Although Rough-legged Hawks were seen, it obviously was not a flight year. A Golden Eagle was once again found at Quabbin Reservoir. A Gyrfalcon present for two weeks at Plum Island highlighted reports for this rare visitor.

Increasingly scarce, a Clapper Rail was found in Eastham. Plymouth remains the stronghold for American Coot in recent years. Greater than normal numbers of Killdeers were present, as were two Greater Yellowlegs, an unidentified yellowlegs species, and a Long-billed Dowitcher. A well-described Great Skua was reported from Rockport during the January 4th storm. Common Black-headed Gulls were scarce away from their Winthrop stronghold. Bonaparte's Gulls were fairly well reported early in the period. Two interesting hybrid gulls were reported. Iceland and Glaucous gulls were reported in well below normal numbers. The usual scattering of Lesser Black-backed Gulls was present, including two inland.

Among the alcids, Black Guillemots and Razorbills were well represented. A few Common Murres were regularly present at Provincetown, where they have been seen in midwinter for several years. A scattering of Thick-billed Murres and Dovekies was reported.

R. A. F.

Black Vulture				
2/28, 2/29	Milton, Randolph	1	N. Smith	
Turkey Vulture				
1/3, 1/8-2/29	Lexington, Milton area	1, 16 max 2/28	M. Maloney, v. o.	
1/22, 2/21	S. Dartmouth, Westport	3, 4	T. Aversa, M. Boucher	
1/27, 2/29	Randolph (roost)	5, 9	N. Smith	
2/22	Framingham	1	G. Gove	
Osprey				
1/8, 1/23	Bourne, Brewster	1, 1	F. Bygate, L. Tilson	
Bald Eagle				
thr	Newbypt area, Lakeville	3 max (1 ad, 2 imm), 2 imm	v. o., K. Holmes#	
thr	Quabbin (G43)	21 max 2/23 (11 ad, 10 imm)	M. Lynch#	
1/2, 1/3	Clinton, Wayland	1 imm, 1 ad	R. Bradbury, K. Tramosposh	
1/8, 1/10-26	Mansfield, Harwich	1 imm, 2 imm	T. Aversa, R. Clem#	
1/12, 1/19	S. Peabody, Arlington	1 ad, 1 ad	R. Heil, H. Hoffman	
1/26, 2/1	Haverhill, Quabbin (G37)	1 ad, 4 ad	T. Aversa, J. Hoyer#	
2/8, 2/15	New Bedford, Eastham	1 imm, 1 imm	M. Lynch#, B. Nikula	
2/17	Orleans	1 imm	I. Lynch	
Northern Harrier				
thr	E. Middleboro, P.I.	2, 1-4	K. Anderson + v. o., v. o.	
1/5, 1/12	Eastham (F.H.), Bridgewater	2, 2	S. Arena, M. Maurer#	
2/3, 2/13	Easton, DWWS	2 f, 3	K. Ryan, J. Hoyer	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	Jan./Feb., 1992
Northern Harrier (continued)				
2/23	Rowley	4	J. Berry	
Sharp-shinned Hawk				
1/1-1/31	Reports of individuals from 17 locations.			
2/1-2/29	Reports of 15 individuals from 14 locations.			
Cooper's Hawk				
1/1-1/31	Reports of 14 individuals from 13 locations.			
2/1-2/29	Reports of individuals from 6 locations			
Northern Goshawk				
1/1, 1/2	Salisbury, E. Orleans	1 f, 1 ad	H. Wiggin#, A. Williams#	
1/11, 1/22	Quabbin (G43), Halifax	1 ad, 1	M. Lynch#, K. Anderson	
1/25, 1/26	W. Wareham, P'town (R.P.)	1 ad m b, 1	M. Maurer#, K. Jones	
1/31-2/12, 2/2	Middleboro, Rowley	1 or 2, 1 ad	K. Anderson, H. Wiggin#	
2/13, 2/23	Milton, Natick	1, 1	K. Anderson, BBC (D.F. Oliver)	
2/26	W. Newbury	1 ad	R. Heil	
Red-shouldered Hawk				
thr	Orleans, Wareham	1, 1 imm	v. o., M. Maurer#	
thr	Lincoln	1 or 2	v. o.	
1/29, 2/2	Marshfield, Rowley	1 ad, 1 ad	T. Aversa, H. Wiggin#	
2/2, 2/3	Easton, Rochester	1 ad, 1	K. Ryan, M. Boucher	
2/4-28, 2/22	E. Middleboro, Sherborn	1 or 2, 1	K. Anderson, E. Taylor	
Red-tailed Hawk				
1/11, 2/17	Mass Pike, Ipswich	15, 8	J. Brown#, BBC (J. Berry)	
2/23, 2/29	Sudbury R. Valley, Nantucket	19, 19	S. Perkins#, R. Abrams#	
Rough-legged Hawk				
thr	P.I., Salisbury	4 max (2 dk), 2 dk	v. o.	
thr, 1/1	Middleboro area, Brookline	4 max, 1	v. o., R. Stymeist#	
1/10, 2/17	Ipswich	1, 1 lt	J. Brown#, BBC (J. Berry)	
1/19, 2/5	Rowley, Boston (Logan)	1 dk, 1 dk	T. Young, N. Smith	
2/12	Nantucket	1 dk	E. Andrews#	
Golden Eagle				
2/23	Quabbin (G43)	1 sub ad	M. Lynch#	
American Kestrel				
thr, 1/2	P.I., Wareham	1-3, 1 ad m b	v. o., M. Maurer#	
1/18, 2/17	New Bedford, Salisbury	2, 2	M. Lynch#, P. + F. Vale	
Merlin				
1/7, 1/11	Middleboro, P'town	1, 1	R. Abrams, P. Iarrobino#	
1/24, 2/10	Nantucket (Boston)	1, 1 ph	E. Andrews#, K. Hudson	
Peregrine Falcon				
thr	Reports of individuals from 13 locations			
Gyr Falcon				
1/10; 2/5, 2/20	Middleboro; S. Boston	1,; 1 dk	K. Holmes; J. Clifford	
2/11-2/27	P.I.	1	T. Raymond + v. o.	
Ruffed Grouse				
1/8, 1/12	Mansfield, Quabbin (G40)	2, 2	T. Aversa, G. d'Entremont	
1/28, 2/4	Hanover, Holliston	2, 3	T. Aversa	
2/11, 2/14	Stoughton, W. Newbury	5, 2	T. Aversa, R. Heil	
Wild Turkey				
thr	Petersham, Boxford	38 max 2/29, 3	v. o.	
1/15, 1/18	Barre, Oakham	65, 20	R. Bradbury, G. Gove#	
1/23, 2/12	Sherborn	1, 6	E. Taylor	
2/2, 2/9	E. Petersham, Westport	60, 1	G. Gove, R. Tarani	
Northern Bobwhite				
1/1, 1/7	Orleans, E. Orleans	3, 8	H. D'Entremont, A. Williams	
1/8, 1/22	Lincoln, Sandwich	11, 4	D. Lang, P. Trimble	
2/6, 2/8-29	Sandwich, Hopkinton	3, 1 m	P. Trimble, J. Gordon#	
Clapper Rail				
1/26	S. Dartmouth	1	M. Boucher	
Virginia Rail				
1/28, 1/30	W. Roxbury, Newburyport	1, 2	T. Aversa, R. Heil	
2/22	Ipswich	1	BBC (J. Berry)	
American Coot				
thr, 1/5	Medford, Lynn	10 max 1/22, 3	M. Rines + v. o., I. Lynch#	
1/5, 1/19	Plymouth, Nantucket	185, 12	G. d'Entremont#, E. Andrews#	
1/27, 2/6	Natick, Nantucket	3, 9	K. Hamilton, E. Andrews#	
2/25	Plymouth	120	R. Abrams	
Black-bellied Plover				
2/8, 2/15	Eastham	2, 3	J. Hoye#, M. Lynch#	
Killdeer				
1/10, 1/12	Plymouth, Gloucester	1, 1	P. Trimble, J. Berry	
1/12, 1/18	P.I., Orleans	1, 4	M. Lynch#, P. Trimble	
2/15, 2/20	Manchester, Wayland	1, 1	P. + F. Vale, S. Arena	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	Jan./Feb., 1992
Killdeer (continued)				
2/23	Newburyport, Ipswich	1, 1	B. Nikula#, J. Berry	
2/23, 2/25	Quabbin (G43), Plymouth	1, 1	M. Lynch#, R. Abrams	
Greater Yellowlegs				
1/1-31, 2/15	Yarmouth, Eastham	1, 1	K. Hamilton, M. Lynch#	
Yellowlegs sp				
1/19	Boston Harbor	1	TASL (M. Hall)	
Red Knot				
1/12, 2/15	N. Scituate, Eastham	22, 1	R. Abrams#, M. Lynch#	
Ruddy Turnstone				
1/12, 2/8	N. Scituate, Nantucket	24, 38	R. Abrams#, E. Andrews#	
1/19	Boston Harbor	1	TASL (M. Hall)	
Sanderling				
1/1, 1/3	P.I., P'town (R.P.)	64, 32	H. Wiggin#, P. Trimble	
1/19, 2/2	Boston H.	17, 41	TASL (M. Hall)	
1/30, 2/5, 2/10	Nantucket	100+, 150+, 200+	C. Andrews#	
2/2, 2/15	Salisbury, Eastham	23, 8	M. Lynch#	
Purple Sandpiper				
1/1, 1/5	Winthrop, Rockport (A.P.)	23, 30	P. + F. Vale, R. Heil	
1/5, 1/12	Nahant, N. Scituate	115+, 750+	I. Lynch, R. Abrams	
2/9, 2/20	E. Gloucester, Westport	11, 75	M. Lynch#, R. Abrams	
Dunlin				
1/1	Revere	30	P. + F. Vale	
2/15, 2/17	Eastham, Ipswich	182, 60	M. Lynch#, BBC (J. Berry)	
Long-billed Dowitcher				
1/18	Eastham (F.H.)	1 ph	P. Trimble	
Common Snipe				
thr	Newburyport, Ipswich	2-4, 1	R. Heil + v. o., J. Berry	
1/4, 1/19	Framingham, E. Harwich	1, 4	K. Hamilton#, B. Nikula#	
1/19, 1/21	Sandwich, W. Roxbury	2, 1	P. Trimble, T. Aversa	
1/21, 2/11	Nantucket, Bridgewater	2, 1	E. Eberhardt, T. Aversa	
2/24	Westport	1	M. Boucher	
American Woodcock				
2/11, 2/27	Worcester, N. Dartmouth	1, 3	M. Lynch#, M. Boucher	
2/29	Cambridge	1	M. Rines	
Great Skua (details submitted)				
1/4	Rockport (A.P.)	1	R. Heil	
Laughing Gull				
1/25	Provincetown	1	J. Murray	
Common Black-headed Gull				
thr	Winthrop, Newburyport	15 max, 2	v. o.	
1/22, 1/26	Mansfield	1 ad	J. Berger, S. Arena#	
Bonaparte's Gull				
1/2, 1/5	Revere, Winthrop	400, 150+	J. Quigley, M. Lynch#	
1/26, 2/15	Nantucket, Newburyport	200+, 100+	S. Perkins#, J. Berry	
1/19, 2/2	Boston Harbor	251, 131	TASL (M. Hall)	
Ring-billed Gull				
1/6, 1/14	Revere, Bridgewater	1000, 75	J. Quigley, K. Anderson	
Herring x Glaucous Gull				
2/15	Provincetown	1 ad	B. Nikula	
Herring x Great Black-backed Gull				
1/31	Lynn	1	J. Quigley	
Iceland Gull				
thr	Gloucester, P'town (R.P.)	4 max, 5 max	v. o., K. Jones + v. o.	
thr	Newburyport area, Salisbury	7 max, 1	v. o.	
1/25, 1/26	Fairhaven, Norton	1, 2	R. Stymeist#, K. Ryan#	
1/26, 2/14-29	Nantucket, Arlington	20+, 1 1W	S. Perkins, M. Rines	
2/26, 2/29	Quincy, Nantucket	1 ad, 20	T. Aversa, R. Abrams	
Lesser Black-backed Gull				
1/4-2/9, 1/22	Gloucester, New Bedford	1 ad, 1 ad	H. Wiggin#, D. Zimmerlin	
1/26, 2/17	Nantucket, Wachusett Res.	2, 1 ad	S. Perkins#, M. Lynch#	
2/28	W. Boylston	1 ad	R. Bradbury	
Glaucous Gull				
thr	P'town, Newburyport area	3 max (2 ad, 1 1W), 1	v. o.	
1/5, 1/10	Rockport, Scituate	1 2W, 1	J. Brown#, R. Abrams	
1/26, 2/28	Nantucket, W. Boylston	1 ad, 1 ad	S. Perkins#, R. Bradbury	
Great Black-backed Gull				
1/4	Gloucester	1000	H. Wiggin#	
Black-legged Kittiwake				
1/3, 1/4	P'town (R.P.), Rockport	35, 742	P. Trimble, R. Heil	
1/4, 1/12	Dennis (Corp. B.), P.I.	70, 6	B. Nikula, M. Lynch#	
1/19, 2/22	Nahant, P'town (R.P.)	2, 3	M. Gooley, J. Hoye#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	Jan./Feb.. 1992
Dovekie				
1/4, 1/26	Rockport (A.P.), Provincetown	3, 2	M. Lynch#, K. Jones	
2/23	Provincetown (R.P.)	2	P. Trimble	
Common Murre				
1/3, 1/9, 2/15	P'town (R.P.)	2, 2, 2	P. Trimble, K. Jones, M. Lynch#	
Thick-billed Murre				
1/3, 1/4	P'town (R.P.), Rockport (A.P.)	4, 4	P. Trimble, R. Heil	
1/10, 1/12	Hull, E. Gloucester	2, 1 dead	R. Abrams, J. Berry	
2/15	Rockport	1	P. + F. Vale	
Razorbill				
1/1, 1/4, 2/22	Rockport	8, 820, 5	P. + F. Vale, R. Heil, T. Young	
1/3, 2/15, 2/23	P'town	140, 306, 40	P. Trimble, M. Lynch#, P. Trimble	
1/1, 1/11	Sandwich, Eastham	3, 20	G. d'Entremont#, SSBC (W. Petersen)	
1/30, 2/9	P.I., Nantucket	25+, 5	R. Heil, E. Andrews	
2/28	Nahant	4	L. Pivacek	
Black Guillemot				
1/4, 1/30, 2/9	Cape Ann	5, 17, 4	M. Lynch#, R. Forster#, M. Lynch#	
1/3, 1/6, 2/15	Provincetown	12, 6, 18	P. Trimble, K. Jones, M. Lynch#	
1/26, 2/2	Nantucket, Boston H.	5, 3	S. Perkins#, TASL (M. Hall)	
2/2	Boston Harbor	3	TASL (M. Hall)	
alcid species				
1/1, 1/3, 2/15	Provincetown	50+, 150, 125	B. Nikula, P. Trimble, B. Nikula	
2/2	Eastham (F.E.)	60	B. Nikula#	

DOVES THROUGH FINCHES

Snowy Owls were seen throughout both months, with the highest numbers reported from Logan Airport. Only a single Red-headed Woodpecker was reported, but Red-bellied Woodpeckers were widely reported. A single Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Eastern Phoebe were unseasonable but not unexpected. A small flock of Tree Swallows continued in Eastham from the previous months.

Red-breasted Nuthatches were virtually nonexistent in the eastern portion of the state. The Rock Wren, only the second record for the state, continued to be found in South Orleans, and Carolina Wrens continue to be prevalent throughout the region. The number of House Wrens represents perhaps the best winter total ever, reflective of the mild weather.

Eastern Bluebirds are no longer uncommon. American Robins were found in surprisingly high numbers in several locations. The annual Varied Thrush appeared in Oakham during January. Although not unprecedented during winter, American Pipit is usually not reported. Thus a group of 30 present in late January was exceptional. Cedar Waxwings were present in numerous large flocks, but only three Bohemian Waxwings were reported, possibly representing two individuals. Northern Shrike demonstrated a modest incursion this winter. The presence of a well-documented Loggerhead Shrike at Barnstable in January is one of the few records in recent years, a shockingly disturbing situation.

A Yellow-throated Warbler was seen at a feeder in Essex in January. In recent years Massachusetts has seen few western vagrants. Hence, a Western Tanager that stayed in Eastham for a month was notable.

Sparrows and finches have been in short supply in recent years, and this year was no exception. Large flocks of American Tree Sparrows were apparently lacking, but Chipping Sparrows were well represented. A Clay-colored Sparrow was seen in Sandwich and a surprising five Vesper Sparrows were seen in Middleboro. Two Lark Sparrows, rare in winter, were reported. Up to four Grasshopper Sparrows were seen in Sandwich. Both Sharp-tailed and Seaside sparrows were found in Eastham. "Oregon" Dark-eyed Juncos were found at several locations. This form has been poorly reported since it was lumped with our regularly occurring form.

Red-winged Blackbirds and meadowlarks were reported in numbers from widespread locations. Winter finches were extremely poorly reported, with the bulk of the reports from the central part of the state.

R. A. F.

Monk Parakeet				
2/22	Lakeville	4	M. Shaw fide K. Holmes	
Eastern Screech-Owl				
thr, 2/13-2/29	Mt. Auburn	1 red, 1 red + 1 grey	J. Heywood + v. o.	
1/1, 1/4	Belmont, Framingham	3, 15	R. Stymeist#, K. Hamilton	
Great Horned Owl				
1/1	Quabbin, Belmont	3, 3	M. Lynch#, R. Stymeist#	
1/1, 1/22	E. Middleboro	pr	K. Anderson	
1/4, 1/10	Framingham, Essex	4, 2	K. Hamilton, T. Young	
1/18	Brookline, Lexington	2, 2	R. Stymeist#	
2/5, 2/6	Eastham (F.H.), Sandwich	2, 2	T. Aversa, P. Trimble	
2/12-29, 2/23	Mt.A., Ipswich	pr on nest, 2	v. o., J. Berry	
Snowy Owl				
thr	Boston (Logan)	8 max 1/8, 9 max 2/5, 11 bN.	Smith	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	Jan./Feb.. 1992
Snowy Owl (continued)				
thr	P.I., Nantucket (4 locations)	6 max 1/2, 4	v. o.	
thr	Ipswich, Rowley	1 or 2, 3 max	J. Berry, v. o.	
thr	Salisbury, P'town	1, 1 or 2	J. Berry + v. o., P. Trimble + v. o.	
1/12, 1/13	Plymouth, Orleans	1, 1	M. Lynch#, K. Jones	
1/19, 1/26	Sandwich, Duxbury	1, 1	P. Trimble, W. Petersen	
Barred Owl				
1/1	Quabbin (G43)	1	M. Lynch#	
2/4, 2/6	Easton, Salisbury	1, 1	K. Ryan, J. Hoye	
2/14, 2/23	W. Newbury, Quabbin (G43)	1, 2	R. Heil, M. Lynch#	
Long-eared Owl				
1/5-7, 2/23	Ipswich	2, 2	J. Berry + v. o.	
1/18, 2/17	Hamilton	1, 2	R. Stymeist#, BBC (J. Berry)	
1/29, 2/8, 2/14	Essex	1, 2, 1	T. Young	
Short-eared Owl				
thr	Nantucket (2 locations)	2	D. + K. Beattie + v. o.	
1/19	Salisbury	1	BBC (P. Stevens)	
Northern Saw-whet Owl				
1/1, 1/7	Petersham, Hamilton	1, 1	M. Lynch#, T. Aversa	
1/10-26, 1/11-18	P.I., Weston	1, 1	M. Rines# + v. o., K. Griffis + v. o.	
1/29, 2/9-29	Marshfield, W. Roxbury	1, 1	T. Aversa, v. o.	
Belted Kingfisher				
1/4, 1/11	Framingham, Salem	5, 2	K. Hamilton#, I. Lynch	
1/18, 1/19	Plymouth, Newburyport	2, 2	M. Lynch#, J. Berry	
1/24, 1/25	Arlington, New Bedford	2, 2	M. Rines, R. Stymeist	
1/27	Yarmouth	3	K. Hamilton	
Red-headed Woodpecker				
1/5-6	Wellesley	1 imm	N. Starr	
Red-bellied Woodpecker				
thr	Newton, Westport	1, 1 m	R. Stymeist + v. o., M. Boucher + v. o.	
thr	Boston (F.Pk), Medford	1 m, 1 f	T. Aversa, M. Rines	
1/1-31, 1/1	Wellesley, P'town	2, 1 f	N. Starr, K. Jones	
1/1, 1/5	Hingham, Rockport	1 m, 1	K. Godfrey, J. Brown#	
1/10, 1/11	Marlboro, Hardwick	1, 1	L. Rochette, R. Bradbury	
1/21, 2/29	Uxbridge, Ipswich	1 f, 1	C. Bailey, I. Lynch#	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				
1/1	Westport	1	E. Salmela	
Northern Flicker				
1/26	Norton	20	K. Ryan#	
Pileated Woodpecker				
thr, 1/11	Quabbin (G43), Hardwick	5 max, 3	M. Lynch#, R. Bradbury	
1/29, 2/16	Middleboro, Hamilton	1, 1	D. Briggs, T. Young	
2/22, 2/25	Westford, Boxford	1, 1	S. Seleski, J. Brown#	
Eastern Phoebe				
1/1	S. Orleans	1	S. Thompson	
Horned Lark				
thr	Newburyport, P.I.	400+ max, 40 max	v. o.	
thr	Ipswich, Salisbury	22 max, 30 max	v. o.	
thr, 1/11	Middleboro, Scusset Beach	100 max, 11	v. o., G. d'Entremont	
1/19, 2/8	Bridgewater, Eastham	25+, 25	K. Holmes#, J. Hoye#	
Tree Swallow				
1/3, 1/11	Eastham	12, 5	R. Hall, SSBC (W. Petersen)	
American Crow				
1/1-18, 1/31	Framingham	2000+, 300	E. Taylor	
1/25, 2/2	Lawrence, Rowley	5272, 400+	J. Hogan, H. Wiggin#	
Fish Crow				
1/1-18, 1/26	Framingham, Haverhill	50+, 1	E. Taylor, T. Aversa	
2/14, 2/15	Brookline, Watertown	1, 5	H. Wiggin#, J. Heywood	
2/16, 2/17	Mt. A., Medford	2+, 1	J. Heywood, L. Taylor	
2/20	W. Newbury	3	R. Heil	
Common Raven				
thr, 1/16	Quabbin (G43), Fitchburg	7 max, 1	M. Lynch#, W. Petersen	
2/1	Quabbin (G37)	7	J. Hoye	
Red-breasted Nuthatch				
thr, 2/23	Ipswich, Quabbin (G43)	2 or 3, 12	J. Berry, M. Lynch#	
Brown Creeper				
1/1, 1/13	Quabbin (G43), Lakeville	3, 2	M. Lynch#, M. Boucher	
2/9, 2/23	Hamilton, Quabbin (G43)	2, 6	J. Berry, M. Lynch#	
Rock Wren				
thr	S. Orleans	1	v. o.	
Carolina Wren				
1/1-1/31, 1/1	Sherborn, Brookline	3, 4	E. Taylor, R. Stymeist#	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	Jan./Feb.. 1992
Carolina Wren (continued)				
1/4, 1/12	Framingham, S. Dartmouth	6, 18	K. Hamilton#, R. Stymeist	
1/18, 1/25	Petersham, Middleboro	7, 4	G. Gove#, R. Stymeist	
2/1-29, 2/8	W. Newbury, Falmouth	4, 24	R. Heil, P. Trimble	
2/20, 2/23	Westport, Worcester	30, 2	R. Abrams, R. Bradbury	
House Wren				
1/1, 1/1-11	Winthrop, Orleans	1, 1	R. Stymeist#, G. d'Entremont# + v. o.	
2/16	Osterville	1	P. Trimble	
Winter Wren				
thr, 1/12	Medford, S. Dartmouth	1, 3	M. Rines#, R. Stymeist	
1/13, 1/15	Lakeville, Essex	2, 2	M. Boucher, H. Wiggin#	
1/1-1/31	Reports of individuals from 9 locations			
2/1-2/29	Reports of individuals from 4 locations			
Marsh Wren				
1/1, 2/17	Newburyport, Ipswich	3, 1	R. Heil, T. Young	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				
1/12	S. Dartmouth	1	R. Stymeist	
Eastern Bluebird				
1/11, 1/18	Hardwick, Falmouth	6, 12	M. Lynch#, P. Trimble	
1/22, 1/27	Sandwich, Millis	6, 10,	P. Trimble, P. Iarrobino	
1/31, 2/3	E. Middleboro, Nantucket	2, 1	R. Soule, E. Andrews#	
2/5, 2/17	Sandwich, Holliston	13, 4	P. Trimble, J. Hoyer	
Hermit Thrush				
1/11, 1/12	Medford, Falmouth	1, 2	M. Rines#, L. Taylor#	
1/12, 1/25	S. Dartmouth, Middleboro	2, 1	R. Stymeist#	
1/29, 2/3	Essex, Nantucket	1, 2	T. Young, E. Ray	
2/8, 2/20	Essex, Westport	1, 1	T. Young, R. Abrams	
American Robin				
1/4, 1/12	Framingham, Hingham	292, 150+	R. Forster#, B. Nikula#	
1/29, 1/30	Essex, W. Newbury	95, 700+	T. Young, R. Heil	
2/5, 2/7	Sandwich, Newbury	50, 200+	P. Trimble, M. Rines	
2/15, 2/23	Westport, Lincoln	200, 50	G. Gove, W. Petersen	
Varied Thrush				
1/1-1/31	Oakham	1 m	R. Crombie	
Brown Thrasher				
1/1	Westport	2	E. Salmela	
Gray Catbird				
1/12, 1/20	S. Dartmouth, Falmouth	1, 1	R. Stymeist, P. Trimble	
1/22-30, 1/22-2/4	Nantucket, Worcester	1, 1	E. Andrews, C. Phillips	
2/2, 2/3	Ipswich, Acushnet	1, 1	I. Giriunas, M. Boucher	
2/9, 2/15	Marshfield, Westport	2, 1	BBC (G. d'Entremont), J. Gordon#	
2/20, 2/23	Westport, Natick	2, 1	R. Abrams, BBC (D.F. Oliver)	
American Pipit				
1/30, 2/2	Halifax, Newbury	30+, 3	K. Anderson, H. Wiggin#	
2/23	Easton	9	K. Ryan#	
Bohemian Waxwing				
2/3, 2/24	Newbury, W. Acton	1, 1	F. Morris, C. Paine	
2/28-29	W. Newbury	1	R. Heil + v. o.	
Cedar Waxwing				
1/4, 1/12	Framingham, Hingham	298, 100	R. Forster#, B. Nikula#	
1/26, 1/30-2/29	Newburyport, W. Newbury	150, 100+ max	I. Giriunas, R. Heil	
2/7, 2/11	Newbury, Millis	600+, 71	M. Rines, P. Iarrobino	
2/17, 2/20	Lexington, Wayland	55, 100	L. Taylor, S. Arena	
Northern Shrike				
thr	Reports of 19 individuals from 17 locations.			
Loggerhead Shrike (details submitted)				
1/5	Barnstable (S.N.)	1 ph	P. Trimble	
Yellow-rumped Warbler				
1/11, 1/26	Essex, Taunton	16, 30+	T. Young, S. Arena#	
1/28, 2/1-29	Hanover, W. Newbury	12, 15+	T. Aversa, R. Heil	
2/5, 2/6	Truro, Millis	20, 9	T. Aversa, P. Iarrobino	
2/17, 2/26	P'town, Squantum	18, 20	P. Trimble#, T. Aversa	
Yellow-throated Warbler				
1/1-31	Essex	1	K. Gentleman + v. o.	
Pine Warbler				
thr, 1/1-30	Peabody, Amesbury	1, 1	J. Murray, J. Renihou	
1/1-31, 1/12-13	Yarmouthport, Beverly	3 max, 1	K. Hamilton, C. Fletcher	
2/2	Rochester	4	K. Ryan	
Palm Warbler				
1/3, 1/12	Fairhaven, Falmouth	2, 4	D. Zimmerlin, L. Taylor#	
Common Yellowthroat				
2/25	Plymouth	1	R. Abrams	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	Jan./Feb., 1992
Yellow-breasted Chat				
1/1, 1/11-2/29	Westport, Gloucester	1, 1	E. Salmela, J. Mann + v. o.	
1/19	Duxbury	1	S. Hecker	
Western Tanager				
1/18-2/15	Eastham	1	W. Swift#	
Northern Cardinal				
1/1-29, 2/20	Brookline, Westport	17, 22	H. Wiggin#, R. Abrams	
Dickcissel				
1/1-5, 1/26	Gloucester, Brookline	1, 1	v. o., H. Wiggin#	
Rufous-sided Towhee				
1/12, 1/20	S. Dartmouth, Falmouth	3, 3	R. Stymeist, P. Trimble	
2/14, 2/20	Medford, Westport	1, 1	M. Rines, R. Abrams	
2/22	Rockport	1	BBC (J. + J. Nove)	
American Tree Sparrow				
1/12, 1/17	Hardwick, Sandwich	15, 55	G. d'Entremont, P. Trimble	
1/22, 2/18	Halifax, Wayland	35, 25	K. Anderson, S. Arena	
Chipping Sparrow				
thr, 1/1	Yarmouthport, N. Dartmouth	3, 1	K. Hamilton, M. Boucher	
1/11, 1/12	W. Wareham, Falmouth	2, 1	M. Maurer, L. Taylor#	
1/17, 2/8	Sandwich	1, 8	P. Trimble	
2/22	Lakeville	1	K. Holmes	
Clay-colored Sparrow				
2/12	Sandwich	1	P. Trimble	
Field Sparrow				
1/1, 1/12	Halifax, S. Dartmouth	5, 12	K. Anderson, R. Stymeist	
1/21, 1/26	W. Roxbury, Taunton	2, 3	T. Aversa, S. Arena#	
2/12	Sandwich	40+	P. Trimble	
Vesper Sparrow				
1/11, 1/17-2/12	Middleboro, Sandwich	5, 1 or 2	J. Cameron#, P. Trimble	
Lark Sparrow				
1/1-2/9, 2/4-29	Scituate, W. Roxbury	1 ad, 1 ad	v. o., T. Aversa + v. o.	
Savannah Sparrow				
1/1, 1/20	Newburyport, S. Dartmouth	9, 18	R. Heil, M. Boucher	
1/22, 2/4	Halifax, W. Roxbury	30, 10	T. Aversa	
2/5, 2/23	Sandwich, Easton	80+, 12	P. Trimble, K. Ryan	
"Ipswich" Savannah Sparrow				
1/1, 1/7	Newburyport, Eastham	1, 4	R. Heil, K. Jones	
1/10, 1/26	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Nantucket	1, 1	LCES (J. Hill), S. Jackson#	
Grasshopper Sparrow				
1/17-2/12	Sandwich	1-4	P. Trimble	
2/6, 2/18	S. Dart. (Allens Pd)	1	LCES (J. Hill)	
Sharp-tailed Sparrow				
1/1, 1/5	Newburyport, Eastham (F.H.)	1, 16	R. Heil, G. Gove#	
Seaside Sparrow				
1/1, 1/5	Newburyport, Eastham (F.H.)	4, 3	R. Heil, S. Arena	
Fox Sparrow				
thr	Framingham, W. Wareham	1, 1	K. Hamilton, M. Maurer	
1/7, 1/11	Stoneham, Eastham	1, 1	T. Aversa, SSBC (W. Petersen)	
1/17, 1/26-2/29	Uxbridge, Belmont	1, 1	R. Bradbury, M. Rines	
2/7-10, 2/20	Medfield, Westport	1, 1	P. Gaines, R. Abrams	
Swamp Sparrow				
thr, 1/18	Nantucket, Eastham	1 or 2, 2	E. Andrews, P. Trimble	
1/20, 1/22	S. Dartmouth, Lakeville	2, 3	M. Boucher, T. Aversa	
1/28, 1/29	W. Roxbury, Milton (F.M.)	5, 2	T. Aversa	
2/3, 2/4	Middleboro, W. Roxbury	2, 8	K. Ryan, T. Aversa	
2/9	DWWS	2	BBC (G. d'Entremont)	
White-throated Sparrow				
thr	Brookline, Ipswich	8, max 15	H. Wiggin#, J. Berry	
1/4, 1/19	Framingham, N. Dartmouth	45, 23	K. Hamilton#, M. Boucher	
2/1-2/29, 2/20	Marblehead, Westport	8 max, 63	I. Lynch#, R. Abrams	
"Oregon" Dark-eyed Junco (details submitted)				
1/1-31, 1/17-2/29	Wenham, Framingham	1, 1	N. Nash, R. Forster#	
1/20	Lincoln	1	S. Perkins	
Lapland Longspur				
1/5, 1/12	Newbury, Halifax	28, 2	BBC (R. McHale), K. Holmes	
2/15, 2/29	Middleboro, Newbury	4+, 10	S. Arena, H. Wiggin#	
Snow Bunting				
thr, 1/25	P.I., Salisbury	20 max 1/7, 15	v. o., S. Arena	
2/25, 2/29	S. Dart. (Allens Pd), Newbury	20, 25	LCES (J. Hill), H. Wiggin#	
Red-winged Blackbird				
1/7, 1/11	Nantucket, Westport	22, 900	E. Andrews, J. Gordon#	
1/20, 1/27	Fairhaven, Cambridge	13, 9	M. Boucher, L. Taylor	

DATE	LOCATION	NUMBER	OBSERVERS	Jan./Feb., 1992
Red-winged Blackbird (continued)				
1/28, 1/31	W. Roxbury, Halifax	23, 125 f or imm	T. Aversa, M. Rines	
2/1, 2/11	Sudbury, W. Roxbury	16, 32	J. Gordon#, T. Aversa	
2/20, 2/21	Westport, Harwich	120, 25	R. Abrams, B. Nikula	
2/23, 2/24	Ipswich, Millis	25, 52	E. Perkins#, P. Iarrobino	
2/24, 2/28	N. Dartmouth, W. Newbury	50, 25	M. Boucher, R. Heil	
2/29	Nantucket	50	R. Abrams#	
Eastern Meadowlark				
thr, 1/5	Eastham (F.H.), Ipswich	17 max, 10	v. o., J. Berry	
1/11, 1/12	S. Dartmouth, Bridgewater	14, 25+	G. Gove#, K. Holmes	
1/12, 1/29	Middleboro area, DWWS	40, 43	M. Maurer#, T. Aversa	
Rusty Blackbird				
1/21-2/29, 2/17	W. Roxbury, Halifax	7 max, 6	v. o., K. Anderson	
2/16, 2/23	Marshfield, Wakefield	20, 15	D. Ludlow, P. + F. Vale	
Common Grackle				
1/1-1/31	Nantucket, Boston (F.Pk)	3-8, 10+	E. Andrews, T. Aversa	
1/1, 1/11	Needham, Westport	1, 900	P. Iarrobino, G. Gove#	
2/22, 2/24	Bolton, N. Dartmouth	70+, 75	R. Bradbury, M. Boucher	
Brown-headed Cowbird				
1/11, 1/12	Westport, Petersham	200, 40	G. Gove#, G. d'Entremont#	
1/20, 2/7	Fairhaven, Newbury	15, 10	M. Boucher, M. Rines	
2/15, 2/16	Petersham, Millis	73, 36	M. Rines, P. Iarrobino	
Northern Oriole				
1/1-2/16	Middleboro	1 imm m	D. Briggs + v. o.	
1/1, 1/25	Eastham, Yarmouthport	1, 1 dead	G. d'Entremont, B. Goodale	
Purple Finch				
1/20, 1/29	Millis, Essex	2, 2	P. Iarrobino, T. Young	
2/15, 2/17	Petersham, Lexington	4, 2	M. Rines, L. Taylor	
2/22, 2/23	Waltham, Natick	2, 4	L. Taylor, BBC (D.F. Oliver)	
2/23, 2/25	Millis, Wayland	4, 19	P. Iarrobino, T. Hart	
2/28	Hanson, W. Newbury	10, 20	W. Petersen, R. Heil	
House Finch				
1/4	Framingham	149	K. Hamilton#	
Common Redpoll				
1/1, 2/14	Ware, Nantucket	3, 1	R. Bradbury, B. Vigneau	
2/20	W. Newbury	1	R. Heil	
Pine Siskin				
1/1, 1/16	Quabbin (G43), Millis	2, 1	M. Lynch#, P. Iarrobino	
1/18, 2/18-28	Petersham, W. Newbury	1, 13 max	J. Gordon#, R. Heil	
2/20-29, 2/29	Millis, Athol	2, 100	P. Iarrobino, BBC (W. Drummond)	
American Goldfinch				
2/20, 2/29	W. Newbury, Athol	110, 60	R. Heil, BBC (W. Drummond)	
Evening Grosbeak				
1/1, 1/8	Quabbin (G43), Sherborn	15, 10	M. Lynch#, E. Taylor	
2/15	Petersham, Middleboro	83, 5	M. Rines, S. Arena	
2/23	Hardwick	20+	M. Lynch#	

CORRIGENDA TO BIRD SIGHTINGS NOV/DEC. 1991 SUMMARY (VOL. 20, NO. 2)

Northern Shoveler (page 100)				
11/14	S. Monomoy	1 f	B. Nikula	
should read				
11/14	S. Monomoy	55	B. Nikula	
Purple Sandpiper (page 103)				
12/7	Eastham	225	K. Jones	
should read				
Dunlin				
12/7	Eastham	225	K. Jones	
skua species (page 103)				
11/11	Barnstable	1	K. Jones	
should read				
11/11	Eastham (F.E.)	1	K. Jones	

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ad	adult	I.	Island
alt	alternate	L.	Ledge
b	banded	M.V.	Martha's Vineyard
br	breeding	Mt.A.	Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge
dk	dark (phase)	N.A.C.	Nine Acre Corner, Concord
f	female	Nant.	Nantucket
fl	fledged	Newbypt	Newburyport
imm	immature	P.I.	Plum Island
ind	individuals	Pd	Pond
juv	juvenile	P'town	Provincetown
loc	location	Quab.	Quabbin
lt	light (phase)	Res.	Reservoir
m	male	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
max	maximum	S. Dart.	South Dartmouth
mi	mile	S.F.	State Forest
migr	migrating	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
n	nesting	S.P.	State Park
ph	photographed	Stellw.	Stellwagen Bank
pl	plumage	Worc.	Worcester
pr	pair	BBC	Brookline Bird Club
S	summer (1S = first summer)	BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester
thr	throughout	BOEM	Bird Observer of Eastern Massachusetts
v.o.	various observers	CBC	Christmas Bird Count
W	winter (2W = second winter)	CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club
w/	with	DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary
yg	young	DLSP	Demarest Lloyd State Park
#	additional observers	DWWS	Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum	EMHW	Eastern Massachusetts Hawk Watch
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	FCBC	Felix Cutler Bird Club
B.	Beach	GMNWR	Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	IRWS	Ipswich River Wildlife Sanctuary
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	LCES	Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies
Buzz.	Buzzards Bay	MARC	Massachusetts Avian Records Committee
C.	Canyon	MAS	Massachusetts Audubon Society
Cambr.	Cambridge	MBO	Manomet Bird Observatory
C.B.	Crane Beach, Ipswich	MDFW	MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis	MNWS	Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford	MSSF	Myles Standish State Forest
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	NBC	Needham Bird Club
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	NEHW	New England Hawk Watch
F.H.	Fort Hill, Eastham	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
F.M.	Fowl Meadow	PRNWR	Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
F.Pk	Franklin Park, Boston	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
F.S.F.	Federation State Forest	TASL	Take A Second Look Harbor Census
G40	Gate 40, Quabbin	USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
G45	Gate 45, Quabbin	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary
H.	Harbor	WMWS	Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary

ABOUT THE COVER: ATLANTIC PUFFIN

The Atlantic Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*), one of three puffin species, is a striking bird, decked out in tuxedo black and white and, during the nesting season, sporting bright orange-red legs and feet, and an outlandish yellow, orange, and grey bill. The bill of all three puffin species earned puffins the nickname "seaparrot." Standing on the rocks near its nest with a half dozen sand-eels neatly lined up in its beak, the puffin is an elegant yet comic sight. After the breeding season they lose much of their color, their legs and beak fading to yellow, their white faces turning dull grey. They shed some of the bright plates from their bills, and immature birds have much smaller, duller, and less triangular bills, but otherwise resemble adults in winter plumage. The sexes are alike in plumage.

Atlantic Puffins breed on rocky coastal cliffs or islands around the North Atlantic from France north to Great Britain, Scandinavia, Iceland, Greenland, and south to the Maritime Provinces of Canada and coastal Maine. They are pelagic during most of the year, wintering as far south as Massachusetts. They leave Massachusetts waters in March and arrive on their breeding grounds in late March to early May. They are highly gregarious and, in the waters of the breeding grounds, they congregate several weeks before egg laying commences. They swim in groups, where males display by rising out of the water, flapping their wings, and snapping or flicking their heads. In the colonies antagonistic behavior is common, with birds walking hunched forward in threat displays, or actually fighting, bill grappling and tumbling downslope. Open bills display their bright yellow mouth lining. Site ownership displays include the "Pelican walk" with bill tucked into breast feathers. Their vocalizations consist of various grunting and purring noises, and trisyllabic growls. Puffins are monogamous and often do not breed until their fifth or sixth year. They may live several decades.

All puffin species dig burrows up to a yard in length ending in an expanded nest chamber. Their toenails are well adapted for digging into grassy slopes atop cliffs or islands. If suitable habitat for burrowing is not available they often nest in crevices and crannies on cliffs or in boulder rubble. The nest is lined with grass with some leaves and feathers mixed in. They raise a single brood. Females lay a single white egg, and both birds incubate although the female does most of the work. They sometimes give moaning calls during nest relief (i.e., when one parent leaves the other at the nest). The incubation period and the time to fledging are each about six weeks.

Both adults feed the chick on a diet of fish, often capelin or sand-eels. The adults have a more varied diet which includes crustaceans and squid. They forage mostly at shallow depths up to fifty feet, and swim by "flying" through the water with wings beating, and feet trailing behind, a characteristic of all alcids.

Puffins tend to be tame and suffered population declines in the nineteenth century from eggng and overhunting. Although many of their colonies have stabilized, many puffins are killed each year in fishing nets, and overfishing can reduce the local food supply and disrupt reproduction. Atlantic Puffins have been reintroduced to several islands off the Maine coast where they had previously bred. This ambitious program, sponsored in part of the National Audubon Society, involves translocating and hand-rearing puffin chicks from established colonies to islands where puffins previously bred. Puffins tend to be faithful to their natal island, and hence some of the translocated chicks have returned to breed at their new home. The National Audubon Society sponsors boat trips to Eastern Egg Rock and Seal Island, Maine, where puffins have been successfully reintroduced. In addition, several commercial trips are available which allow viewing puffins at close range from blinds on Machias Seal Island, Maine. The photographic possibilities are virtually endless, and few ornithological treats can match a visit to a puffin colony. It can only be hoped that a global conservation strategy will ensure the continued survival of these marvelous birds.

W. E. Davis, Jr.

MEET OUR COVER ARTIST

Paul Donahue's artwork has been widely published in the bird literature. Paul spends about half of the year leading tours or working in the rainforest canopy of Manu Lodge in Manu National Park, Peru. The remainder of the year he resides in Machias, Maine, where he paints during the winter after a fall of hawkwatching. Paul can be reached at P.O. Box 554, Machias, Maine 04654.

The Atlantic Puffin drawing first appeared in a catalog of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, Inc. (VENT). This is the fourth time that Victor Emanuel has kindly given Bird Observer permission to use one of Paul's drawings that had previously appeared in his catalog. VENT conducts birding tours around the world. Their address is P.O. Box 33008, Austin, Texas 78764.

M. Steele

April's mystery species is obviously a gull. As with a number of previously described At A Glance waterbirds, initially establishing a bird's age and precise stage in its plumage sequence can go a long way toward making a correct identification. In this case, the gull is clearly an immature bird due to the narrow terminal band on the tail and the dark carpal bar running diagonally across the upper wing. These characteristics are typical of the majority of immature small gull species in North America.

A close look at the pictured bird's head shows a dark spot behind the eye. This spot suggests that the bird is one of the species that acquires a dark hood when in breeding plumage. The unhooded Black-legged Kittiwake also shows a dark ear spot; however, the kittiwake can be eliminated by the absence of solid black primaries and the presence of a dark bar across the nape. At this point, the options are limited to the immature plumages of the Common Black-headed, Bonaparte's, and Little gulls.

Immature Little Gulls in first winter plumage are tiny, and they characteristically possess a very broad black carpal bar, tend to show solid black primaries similar to those of an immature kittiwake, and have a dusky patch on the nape. The pictured gull shows a narrow carpal bar, has the suggestion of a wedge of white on the outer primaries and a dark trailing edge to the wing, and no dusky patch on the nape. These features reduce the choices to Bonaparte's Gull and Common Black-headed Gull. Common Black-headed Gulls in first winter plumage have a strongly bicolored yellowish bill with a dark tip, more extensive dusky markings on the upper wing surface than a Bonaparte's Gull, and grayish-black underprimaries which contrast with the white of the inner portion of the underwing. The absence of these characteristics, particularly the delicate black bill and pale underprimaries, indicates that the mystery photograph depicts an immature Bonaparte's Gull (*Larus philadelphia*) in first winter plumage.

The Bonaparte's Gull in the picture was photographed by the author in August near Eastport, Maine.



AT A GLANCE

Photo by Simon Perkins



Can you identify this bird?

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

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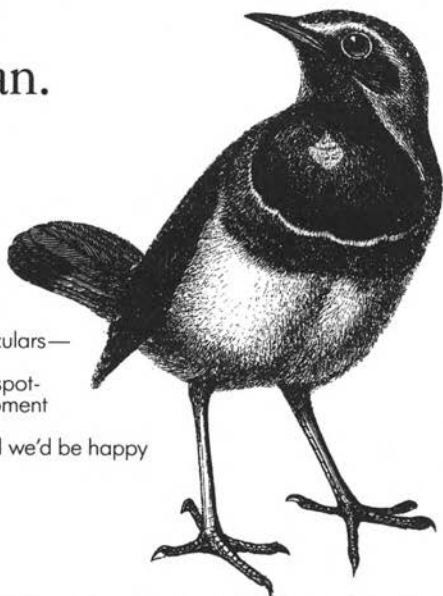
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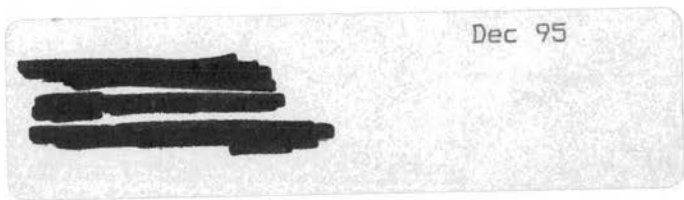
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