A Different Kind of Where-to-go-Birding: Ten Favorite Places of the *Bird Observer* Staff

For this thirtieth-anniversary issue, the editors, recent guest editors, department heads, and various other *Bird Observer* staff members collaborated on a project to describe their favorite places to watch birds, and why they like them so much. We began by trying to identify and summarize the ten *best* places to bird in Massachusetts (since that's where the staff all live), but that quickly proved an impossible task. How could the best places be determined? Who would ever agree with our choices? So we decided to eschew politically charged decisions and concentrate on our *favorite* places instead.

The following pieces are not intended to describe these places in detail, give directions, or provide comprehensive lists of birds seen there. They are short essays on why the particular staff member really likes to bird the place. Of course the authors include avian highlights, but the aim is to also offer insight into the more personal and aesthetic reasons that the selected location is a pleasure to bird. No two authors have gone about their task in the same way, and, indeed, there were few ground rules except to keep it short and personal. So sit back and enjoy the essays. You will quickly find that the staff have described what would generally be considered some of the *best* birding sites in Massachusetts, although most of them are in the eastern part of the state, an artifact of where the majority of the staff live. Many of these sites have also been selected as Important Bird Areas. And that's as it should be – why would the best and most important places not be some of our favorites? *Jim Berry*

Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary

Fay Vale

Situated on a thin spit of land jutting into the ocean between Boston and Salem, Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary is a tiny, sixteen-acre gem owned by the Massachusetts Audubon Society. The sanctuary consists of open deciduous woods, two small ponds (one of which can be viewed from above on a rocky hill), and lots of thickets. Its small size is part of what makes it so special – a slow walker can cover the whole thing several times in an hour. And several times is how to bird this place. In spring and fall migration on an active day, the warblers travel through the property in swirls of activity. (Coming up with accurate numbers of birds is impossible because of this.) When sunlight hits the front pond, the warbler movement can be astonishing and very visible.

Because of the sanctuary's position on the spit, it becomes an inviting migrant trap every year, especially in the spring. Large numbers of migrants flood the property, and because the trees tend to leaf out later than at Mount Auburn Cemetery, the birds stay visible longer into the season.

Memories that stand out for me include seeing five thrush species while I was sitting on a rock by the back path, counting five Mourning Warblers all in one place at the same time, finding a Kentucky Warbler three years in a row, knowing just where the Olive-sided Flycatcher will perch, following the chip of a flashy Hooded Warbler into the underbrush, gasping as a Prothonotary Warbler perches in front of my face, and losing a staring match with a Yellow-crowned Night-heron.

I tend to start my wanderings in a counterclockwise direction from the parking lot, each part of the route identified for me by memories of sightings over the years. Down the back path (carpets of Hermit Thrushes, Worm-eating Warbler); onto the boardwalk to the back pond (regularly 3-4 Northern Waterthrushes, Yellow-breasted Chat, lots of breeding Carolina Wrens); off the boardwalk again toward the back of the sanctuary (this past spring a flock of 6-8 Bay-breasted Warblers); into the back pine woods (Lincoln's Sparrow, Eastern Screech-owl, flocks of Northern Parulas, Black-throated Greens and Blues); up the hill to the rocky outcropping (Cape May and Blackburnian warblers, multiple hummingbirds, the aforementioned Olive-sided Flycatcher); down the slope to the front pond (every warbler, vireo, and flycatcher); and back out the front path (Golden-winged Warbler). I'm sure everyone who birds the site regularly has his or her own route and set of accompanying memories.

But rare species aside, what makes Marblehead Neck so special is the intimacy it grants to someone who can be patient. Sometimes I sit on the bench by the pond for an hour. At first nothing much is happening, and then warblers and flycatchers arrive and begin feeding, bathing, singing, chasing one another. Moments like these remind me of why I go birding – a place that can do that is special.

Mount Auburn Cemetery

Robert H. Stymeist

Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge and Watertown has long been the premier place to see hundreds of land birds in an absolutely beautiful landscape. During the spring migration, birders converge here mostly to see migrants, but also to see and be seen by other birdwatchers. Very few birds escape the gaze of the many birders during this annual migration show. Mount Auburn has hosted such rarities as the first state record of Hermit and Townsend's warblers and the only state record of a Brewer's Sparrow, which was collected near Willow Pond on December 15, 1873. (Willow Pond was not yet part of the cemetery at that time.) The unexpected species, such as American and Least bitterns, Glossy Ibis, migrating White-fronted and Snow geese, and "lost" Pileated Woodpeckers, add to the excitement of birding here.

Mount Auburn is a horticultural showpiece, being the first garden cemetery in the United States; it truly is a beautiful place to bird. (Don't get me wrong – I love birding in dumps, overgrown litter-filled urban oases, and sewer beds too.) Birdwatchers have been coming to "Sweet Auburn," as William Brewster liked to call the place, for over a hundred years; in fact, some of the birding pioneers are *still* at Mount Auburn. The cemetery is the final resting place of Thomas Barbour, Charles Batchelder, Thomas Mayo Brewer, William Brewster, Ludlow Griscom, Harriet Hemenway, and Charles Wendell Townsend, to name a few. More recently, some

more illustrious birders have chosen Mount Auburn to be their final home; Nancy Claflin and Dick Forster are two that many of you have undoubtedly heard of.

The waning days of migration, around Memorial Day through the first week of June, bring out the true Mount Auburn birder. Heck, the leaves are out in full force, but that is not the end of migration; now is the time for the rare flycatcher and the Mourning Warbler. Often an unusual bird such as a Kentucky Warbler or a Summer Tanager will appear. The diligent few folks who continue to visit also encounter the wayward bird –I've seen Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Dark-eyed Junco, and White-throated Sparrow in *full* song, obviously lost, in June.

Well, the rest of the year it is like a ghost town to the birding community. With the exception of myself and an occasional tourist who has missed the migration, Mount Auburn is neglected. What a pity! I have been doing a monthly survey now for over five years and of course have visited often during the fall and winter, and I have to tell you that each visit brings an unexpected surprise. Rarities such as Ash-throated Flycatcher and Black-throated Gray Warbler have been seen in the fall. But just as satisfying for me is picking out a Great Cormorant in a flock of migrating Double-cresteds, hearing the distinct call of Snow Geese high over the cemetery, counting the Common Nighthawks each night in late August, or coming upon a flock of both crossbills in the hemlocks on a bright January day. Again, the added benefit is the beauty of the place – there is *always* something in bloom, the seven sons flower tree in October and November and snowdrops in January and February. Come visit *year-round* – you won't be disappointed.

Wachusett Mountain State Reservation

Paul M. Roberts

Part of the thrill of birding at a favorite site is the sense of anticipation in going there, the air of expectancy and yet of uncertainty. It includes knowing that great times have been had there, and will be had again, but what about today? Wachusett Mountain State Reservation in Princeton is that for me, particularly in hawk migration season.

I had been birding for only seven years when on September 13, 1978, three rivers of more than 10,000 Broad-winged Hawks streamed over the summit of Wachusett in a three-hour period. I had never even *conceived* of something like that. It was one of the most incredible sights – and experiences – in my life. I was now a hawkwatcher.

One September day several years later, the winds were out of the northeast, which wasn't exactly ideal, or so we thought. From Lincoln I could see eastern Massachusetts weighted down with thick, low, leaden clouds. I thought seriously about turning around and going to work. "Don't waste your one hawkwatching vacation day of the year," but my car continued west. At the mountain it was apparent that almost every other prospective hawkwatcher had opted for work that morning. The broadwings flowing over us that day outnumbered the humans about 20,000 to 10.

But Wachusett is not just a place for big days, although there is nothing to compare to the aerial ballet of thousands of broadwings with eagles and ospreys playing supporting roles. Those come only once or twice a September if we're lucky, and the really big ones much less frequently than that. There are Sharp-shinned Hawks or kestrels skimming the canopy to pick up carry-out meals, and the sight of bronzy Red-tailed and Red-shouldered hawks gliding into the golden sunlight of a late October afternoon is incomparable.

There are many days when just a few hawks are enough. It was a blustery November day when, as I huddled in my parka with my fingers almost immobile with cold, a young Northern Goshawk landed on a tree branch only yards away and looked at me with an intensity I will never forget. She and I were the only ones there, except for six or seven Snow Buntings. Later that day a subadult Golden Eagle trimmed the treetops, gliding slowly up the ski slope toward the summit and me, followed shortly by a subadult Bald Eagle coming on low and slow. I was shaking, but not from the cold.

Wachusett is not just hawks. Butterflies and passerines migrate past the summit and through the woods below. I have this image of some leaf-peeper being impaled by a near-sighted hummingbullet, oops, -bird, as it explodes low across the summit in September. Skeins of Canada and Snow geese. Loons kettling! Flocks of Brant and golden plovers taking shortcuts across New England. Occasional Evening or Pine grosbeaks.

Fall is not the only season for birding Wachusett, although it is the most exciting. Some of the largest spring hawk flights recorded in the state have occurred there. There is also the opportunity for some great hiking on the mountain. In spring, the wildflowers are profuse, and you look for specialties like bloodroot and hepatica. Nesting Pileateds and Winter Wrens spice up the hike. In fall, the asters and goldenrod are spectacular. All this, and I've not even mentioned the 360^{o} views from the summit, especially in October.

Wachusett is one of my favorite places, period. The adjective "birding" is not required. When the high-pressure cell is reaching New England, the temperature drops, and the wind shifts, Wachusett is where I want to be.

Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge

Marjorie Rines

Going back as far as Henry David Thoreau and William Brewster, Great Meadows in Concord has been a popular destination for Massachusetts birders. Spring migration can be excellent here, and the summer breeding birds are unquestionably excellent. It is fall migration, however, that brings me to Great Meadows once a week.

I am a local lister, but my territory includes no coastal locations, so finding shorebirds is always a challenge. Great Meadows, with acres of exposed mudflats, is a magnet for shorebirds, but that's only the excuse for going there. With every visit there is something special to make the outing a joy. Harriers are common here in the

fall, and I love watching one as it tilts and banks only inches above the grass, often scattering small flocks of pipits or shorebirds. Young rails seem to shun the secretive nature of older birds and often can be seen in full view poking around the mud, a rare treat since spring rail "sightings" are really only "hearings."

Scanning through the shorebirds is a treasure hunt, looking for that "good" bird among the yellowlegs and peeps. American Golden-Plover, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, and Baird's Sandpiper are somewhat regular at inland locations, but there are some species that rarely travel inland. Coastal birders would think nothing of Sanderlings, Dunlin, Stilt Sandpipers, or dowitchers, but any one of them is a trophy inland. In October 1997 a Ruff spent a week there, and in September 1999 a Hudsonian Godwit made a brief visit following the passage of Hurricane Floyd.

More than just shorebirds, Great Meadows is a draw for herons, waterfowl, and raptors. Bitterns are elusive, but can occasionally be seen in the fall, and sometimes there is a visit from a more coastal wader such as a Little Blue Heron or Glossy Ibis. Just about every species of inland duck has been seen at Great Meadows, including rarities such as Redhead and Eurasian Wigeon. With a 360° view of the sky, it is a superb spot to look for raptors, and while almost any species can be seen here, I always treasure a day when I got to see a Peregrine cruising the meadow, sending up huge flocks of teal and shorebirds.

Management of the water at Great Meadows varies from year to year as the refuge staff work toward a goal of reducing or eliminating exotic vegetation, so the condition of the mudflats can vary from year to year. But there is always something of interest, and it is well worth the trip.

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge

Wayne R. Petersen

A favorite birding place obviously means different things to different people. Since justification seems inherent to the definition of a favorite birding place, I submit the following in support of my choice of Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge as my personal favorite.

My recollections of Monomoy date back to July 1958 when, as a youthful birder, I can vividly recall identifying my first Hudsonian Godwit and Black Skimmer, puzzling over the mysterious summer plumages of eider ducks, hearing the frenzied screams of nesting terns overhead, and gazing wide-eyed at vast mudflats literally teeming with shorebirds. A decade later, I was privileged to share the Monomoy experience with countless birders who toured the refuge with me during the course of three summers I spent as a naturalist working at Massachusetts Audubon Society's Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, at that time directed by one of my foremost birding mentors, Wallace Bailey.

Since those seminal Monomoy encounters nearly a half-century ago, I have visited the island(s), and the more recently formed peninsula know locally as South Beach, literally hundreds of times, and nearly always in the company of old and dear friends or birding colleagues of long standing. Through the years I have been stranded

on the island, humbled by its exquisite sunsets, exhilarated by its glorious sunrises, captivated by the site of a buck silhouetted atop a high dune, and moved by the sharp whistle of a golden-plover passing southward high overhead. I have slept in its venerable lighthouse, listened to its pounding surf, and walked alone through its silent *Hudsonia* moors. But these are intensely personal reasons for selecting Monomoy as my favorite place. There are plenty of others.

The 7600-acre Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge is a barrier island, currently comprising two islands, which extends southward from Chatham on the elbow of Cape Cod into Nantucket Sound for a distance of approximately 7.5 miles. The refuge's habitat mix of ocean beach, sand dunes, coastal thickets, freshwater ponds, and both salt- and freshwater marshes has lured over 350 different species of birds to the refuge, a statistic generated by legions of birders and naturalists who have visited Monomoy for over three centuries. Although this is not the place to enumerate all of the island's possibilities, a sample of some of the Monomoy birds that have personally thrilled me the most through the years includes Wandering Tattler, Eurasian Curlew, Long-billed Curlew, Black-tailed Godwit, Red-necked Stint, Little Stint, and Brown-chested Martin. Most recently, an Elegant Tern at nearby South Beach underscored the region's continuing potential for attracting the far-flung and the unusual.

In addition to hosting the exotic (Greater Flamingo and Chilean Flamingo), the unexpected (Common Ground-Dove and Burrowing Owl), and the rare (California Gull and Cassin's Kingbird), Monomoy and adjacent South Beach offer unparalleled birding opportunities found at few other Massachusetts localities. During the peak of autumn shorebird migration it is occasionally possible to record 25-30 species of shorebirds in a single day between Monomoy and South Beach, while a careful scan of the ocean can often produce fine views of shearwaters, storm-petrels, and jaegers, a treat for those disinclined to venture offshore in a boat! Similarly, under appropriate weather conditions from late August through October, spectacular passerine fallouts occasionally occur on Monomoy's South Island. At such times it is possible to record over 100 species of birds in a day at Monomoy alone. Later in the fall, great rafts of eiders and scoters offshore, flocks of diving ducks in the freshwater ponds, and the real possibility of encountering a Gyrfalcon, a Snowy Owl, or perhaps a rare longspur are what personally draw me to Monomoy in the so-called off season.

Regardless of the time of year, and of what birds are seen or not seen, a trip to Monomoy is always an experience underscored by anticipation, opportunity, and fulfillment. For this author, there is also a unique restorative component that comes from a day's trip to Monomoy, and for this reason alone, it shall forever remain my favorite birding locality.

Quabbin Reservoir

Mark Lynch

When I first birded Quabbin in the mid 1970s, it was an isolated and little-known place to most birders – except a handful of hardcore folks from the Connecticut Valley and certain Forbush Bird Club members from Worcester County. There was a tangible sense of exploration and solitude in a very big, preserved, but somewhat

unnatural forested habitat. Unnatural because of Quabbin's unique history. You rarely bumped into another person in those days, and the only sounds you would hear were from the many birds and mammals that thrived in this contrived wilderness. You pulled out a topo map, chose a gate, hiked in, and saw what was there.

Today, of course, Quabbin is quite a different experience. Birders, fishermen, bikers, and hikers flock here to get a sense of some kind of "almost wild" experience. Gate 40 and Quabbin Park become crowded during the peak of foliage season. The sound of the chainsaw is commonly heard in most parts of the Big Water, audible clues to the MDC forestry operations. It is now a rare event when you don't bump into somebody else when you hike any of the more popular gates. By writing several articles about where to go birding at Quabbin for this very journal, I contributed to this popularization of Quabbin, and to be honest, to this day I am not sure how I feel about that.

All that aside, Quabbin remains one of the great year-round birding destinations in the state. It is a unique habitat: the state's largest body of fresh water, surrounded by protected land. Early spring brings countless waterfowl to the huge, deep, amoeba-shaped lake. Pileated Woodpeckers can easily be seen (although more often heard) bounding across water or path before the leaves come out. Saw-whet Owls can be heard tooting in northern areas of the watershed. Brown Creepers can be heard singing their beautiful tinkling song at every turn. Late April and May migration features warblers, vireos, thrushes, and sparrows wherever you train your binoculars or cock an ear.

The breeding season is also full of surprises. There is a full contingent of wood warblers nesting, including Quabbin specialties like Cerulean (and not just in Quabbin Park). Other special Quabbin breeders include Common Loon and Bald Eagle. It was at Quabbin that the eagle became reestablished as a breeding bird in Massachusetts. Redstarts and gnatcatchers can seem to be everywhere in Quabbin Park. Depending on where you choose to hike in summer, besides the myriad mosquitoes and black flies, you may also find nesting Common or Hooded mergansers, Goshawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Wild Turkey, Common Raven, or Evening Grosbeak. Pick a gate, and try your luck.

Fall migration brings large flocks of Pine and Yellow-rumped warblers, phoebes, and small flocks of bluebirds around open areas. The tower at Quabbin Park is a dandy place to witness fall raptor migration. As the season progresses, winter finches can often be heard barreling overhead. After the boat-fishing season ends, the surface of Quabbin becomes inviting for migratory waterfowl of every kind as well as loons and grebes. By mid-November, Bald Eagles start to migrate through as well as a very few Golden Eagles. Quabbin remains the best place in the state to hope to see Golden Eagles.

But it is in the harshest season of winter that Quabbin's magic comes to life. To be sure, land birds can be few and far between. One can hope for a Black-backed Woodpecker or a Gray Jay, but realistically you will most likely have to settle for a raven. Not a bad compensation. Bald Eagles rule the skies over Quabbin in winter, and the sight of several fighting over a deer carcass on the ice is always a treasured

memory. Quabbin's mammals are also best seen or at least tracked in the winter months. The ardent explorer may find evidence or get an all too brief glimpse of a coyote, bobcat, fisher, or even a moose. Best of all, silence returns to Quabbin in the depths of winter, and if you are very lucky on some cold battleship-gray day while standing alone opposite Mount Zion, you may hear the gentle sweep and soft hiss of snow falling on ice and nothing else.

Plum Island and Newburyport

David Larson

While Plum Island was first discovered by Samuel de Champlain in 1606, the ornithological history of this barrier island and its surroundings begins in the mid-1800s with several first state records coming from market gunners in Newburyport. Ludlow Griscom's *Plum Island and its Bird Life* (1955, Massachusetts Audubon Society) contains a fine short history of the ornithological significance of the area, including some of the contributions of E.H. Forbush, William Brewster, James Peters, Charles Maynard, and, of course, Griscom.

The bird that put the area on the modern birding map was a Ross's Gull discovered in Newburyport harbor in 1975. This transcendent event changed birding in North America. Now the Newburyport/Plum Island area is a prime birding destination throughout the year (except, for some of us, in July – picture death by a billion greenheads). Not only can you find birders from throughout Massachusetts, but from everywhere in the world. Susan Carlson and I started birding the area over fifteen years ago, and we hit the island nearly every weekend for the first four to five years, even though we live on the South Shore.

In winter, the harbor holds ducks (including specialties such as Barrow's Goldeneye), gulls (Little, Black-headed, Glaucous, Iceland), and Bald Eagles. Snowy and Short-eared owls, Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Shrikes, Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs, crossbills, and ducks of every description are fall and winter specialties of the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, most of which is on Plum Island, and of nearby Salisbury Beach State Reservation. Sea ducks, loons, and grebes (with the odd alcid thrown in) are seen from the beach. Spring brings shorebirds to the flats and pools on the island, and passerines to the thickets and woodlands, sometimes in astonishing fallouts. Nearly every Big Day or Birdathon team will swing through the area in May. Breeding birds include the federally listed Piping Plover and Least Tern. Come late summer and fall, shorebirds are the big draw, in the flats of the harbor and the pools on the island, as well as passerines and raptors. Clouds of Tree Swallows gorge on insects and bayberries to fatten up for migration, and balls of starlings try to evade the hawks.

Despite the normal avian wonders of the area, the big draw for birders is rarities, which in their number and variety elevate the refuge/harbor ecosystem from a good birding area to a spectacular one. Whether it is a Lark Bunting, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, a Say's Phoebe, or a Gyrfalcon, Newburyport and Plum Island together are as good a place as any in the northeastern United States to find it. Within the last few years, birds documented from the refuge have included Western Grebe, American

White Pelican, Garganey, Pacific Golden-plover (first state record), Long-billed Curlew, Curlew Sandpiper, Red-necked Stint, Vermilion Flycatcher, Couch's Kingbird (first state record), Fork-tailed Flycatcher, Northern Wheatear, Harris's Sparrow, and many other pulse-pounding finds. I'm getting twitchy just writing this. Whew!

Granville and Blueberry Hill Hawk Watch

Seth Kellogg

State Route 57 begins at the Connecticut River in Springfield and runs west through the fast-growing suburbs of Agawam and Southwick. Then the first high ridge of the Berkshire Plateau appears, and behind it lies the secret kingdom of Granville. The road heads straight for a gorge that cuts the ridge in two and through this narrow passage is the gateway to Granville. Munn Brook winds along the bottom of the chasm, and from it the elven voices of waterthrush and Winter Wren are heard.

Granville produces three things for the outside world: cheese, apples, and drinking water. It is the third that makes it a paradise for forest birds, for about half of the town is watershed land. Route 57 (Main Road) soon comes to a sleepy valley that lies just beyond the first ridge. There most of the townspeople live, and they still listen to whip-poor-wills from their porches. Few live on the roads that take off to the north and south, since they go through the woods of the watersheds.

The first road to the north passes Parks Reservoir. One barely used side road, several abandoned roads, and many trails make this watershed a paradise for those seeking every species that breeds in the forests of Massachusetts, including Acadian Flycatcher and Worm-eating Warbler. As you continue west, turn down any road to the north and south to find warblers that buzz, flycatchers that sputter, thrushes that chime, vireos that carol, and woodpeckers that tap and drum. The last road to the south goes through Granville State Forest. Any road going north leads to two more reservoirs, Cobble Mountain and Borden Brook. West of these are three large beaver meadows where Bobolinks and Alder Flycatchers abound. Back on Main Road an open marsh called Shaughnessy Swamp comes within a few feet of the pavement. Pull over and look for otters and Hooded Mergansers. Everywhere are trails that go deep into the woods and give you a closer experience of the forest and its wonders. One road is called North Lane and offers something special, the Phelon Forest, more than a thousand acres of preserve owned by the New England Forestry Foundation. A few minutes walk from the parking lot is a rocky outcrop in the middle of wild blueberry fields and low brush, where hawkwatchers scan the sky.

Stand on this highest hill in the town, and enjoy the view of tree tops that stretch to Monadnock and Greylock. Every year thousands of Broad-winged Hawks glide and kettle overhead, hundreds of accipiters and falcons streak low and close, and scores of Bald Eagles and harriers sail slowly along. For good measure, bluebirds and Snow Buntings will feed at your feet while Red-shouldered Hawks, ravens, and Barred Owls serenade far and near. Trails wind through the forest, and the new-growth saplings along the ridge always hold a myriad of migrant songbirds in the fall. Even if you are not fortunate enough to live nearby, Granville will soon become a favorite place to bird.

Hingham

Glenn d'Entremont

I love bird diversity, and I love counting birds. The more of each the better. I love walking through woodlands and grasslands and everything in between. I dislike driving when I can bird. I grew up driving practically every weekend to bird some place in Essex County. I lived (and still do) in Norfolk County. Lots of hours not birding. South Shore birding is just like North Shore birding but involves less driving and more birding for those living south of Boston.

Hingham has year-round birding with arguably the best chunk of forested land between Boston and Plymouth in Wompatuck State Park. Another fine piece of property is The Trustees of Reservations' World's End. There is also Turkey Hill Conservation area, Triphammer Pond, and Whitney Woods; the latter two abut Wompatuck.

Wompatuck State Park has birds even in winter. The best birding is in spring and early summer for diversity, but a nice walk in the woods can be had at anytime. This park has numbers of birds that are uncommon or rare along coastal Massachusetts, such as Worm-eating Warbler and Louisiana Waterthrush. It has several different habitats including hemlock forest. There are scattered ponds and several small brooks. Bird counts are plentiful, and the occasional Goshawk can be seen. One of the ponds on the west side has had Glossy Ibis in July twice! Access is easy, with trails all over the place, so almost any part of it can be sampled. Called in the past "Crooked Pond South," Wompatuck now has a name of its own.

Nearby is World's End Reservation, a large peninsula protruding into the southern end of Boston Harbor and only a short distance from the coast. Protected from the ocean by the narrow town of Hull, it is three hills connected by one causeway. This proximity to the coast makes World's End a good place to watch or sample migration. Raptors can be seen from the hills, land birds in the thickets, and waterbirds from the edges. Orchard Orioles are common nesters. Sarah Island, just off the west side of the entrance, is currently an egret and night-heron rookery. Fall and winter birding are just as interesting, with records such as Tropical Kingbird, Red-headed Woodpecker, and Townsend's Solitaire. There is a small freshwater marsh near the entrance where in past years Virginia Rails have been recorded on the Quincy Christmas Count. World's End can be productive all year.

Hingham has other properties, such as More-Brewer Park, Bear Cove Park, Stoddard Neck, and Hingham Harbor, which also hold a variety of birds and their share of rarities such as Purple Gallinule. Birding these wonderful properties is very rewarding with little time out driving.

Cape Ann

Jim Berry

It may be ironic that my favorite place to bird is a place not especially known for its nesting birds, which are my primary interest. Cape Ann is where I most like to go

in fall and winter, when nesting is out of the question and one can concentrate on the sheer fun of watching migrating and wintering seabirds. I don't live close enough to Cape Cod to bird there very often, but I am close to Cape Ann and go there in the colder months as often as I can, always hoping to catch the next seabird bonanza. It doesn't have to be stormy, and in fact I prefer days without precipitation, but gray days are the best without the glare off the water. Whatever the weather, I love the place.

Gloucester and Rockport, which form the cape, have a terrific array of habitats, to be sure, and places like Ravenswood Park and Dogtown Common would no doubt prove to have a gratifying diversity of nesting birds if I explored them more often. Also present are two notable migrant traps, Eastern Point in East Gloucester and Halibut Point in Rockport. These underbirded hot spots, nominated as Important Bird Areas, rival Marblehead Neck and Nahant for the quality and quantity of migrant waves in the right weather conditions.

But the main reason I go to Cape Ann is for the seabirds. It is by far the best place to watch them north of Boston, and in my opinion is one of the best such places on the east coast. The famous Andrews and Halibut Points in Rockport are eight or ten miles east of the main coastline, and are situated where seabirds blown into Ipswich Bay during easterly gales make their exit as they seek to regain the open ocean. These parades of migrants, from loons to ducks to jaegers to alcids, happen frequently, primarily during storms, but also on any easterly winds and to some degree even on calm days. In the right conditions, the birds can occur in such densities as to be difficult to count. The early fall of 2002 offered the greatest shearwater show ever seen on the North Shore, and it lasted for weeks, thanks to an unusual inshore run of baitfish. Just after this spectacle ended, a storm with an east wind enabled over 800 Northern Fulmars to be counted from shore in one day!

Eastern Point, although more protected and not as prominent in terms of passing birds, can be equally exciting, especially for vagrant fall land birds and wintering species like alcids and King Eiders. Nothing is quite as satisfying as sitting with a scope on the rocks at the base of the lighthouse, or out at the end of Dog Bar breakwater on a calm winter day, looking for rare gulls and counting the guillemots and other sought-after pelagics. The same goes for Halibut Point, where sitting on the rocks on a gray fall day with calm seas, an easterly breeze, and no rain, watching the seabirds streaming by or the gannets slamming into the ocean, provides a degree of contentment that is hard to beat.

All the locations described above have previously been featured to one extent or another in *Bird Observer* where-to-to-birding articles, and most are also featured in *A Birder's Guide to Eastern Massachusetts*, copublished in 1994 by *Bird Observer* and the American Birding Association. Here are the references to those site guides, presented informally instead of in the usual bibliographic format. In each case the reference is simply to the title, the author, the month and year of the issue, and the volume and number of the issue, or the chapter from the *Birder's Guide*.

Marblehead Neck

Marblehead Neck Sanctuary
Dorothy E. Snyder — October 1978 V 6 (5)

Birding Marblehead: Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary and Beyond
Jan Smith — April 1995 V 23 (2)

Birder's Guide: Chapter 17, Boston Harbor North

Mount Auburn Cemetery

Spring Warbler Migration, Mount Auburn Cemetery
Robert H. Stymeist — Mar-Apr 1973 V 1 (2)

Mt. Auburn Cemetery
R. H. Stymeist and J. T. Leverich — Mar-Apr 1977 V 5 (2)

Birder's Guide: Chapter 15, Greater Boston Inland

Wachusett Mountain and Granville

Where to Watch Hawks in Massachusetts: An Introduction
Paul M. Roberts — July-Aug 1977 V 5 (4) (Includes both sites)

Fall Hawkwatching: When and Where. A Guide to the Best Times and Sites in our Region
Paul M. Roberts — Aug 2001 V 29 (4) (includes Mt Wachusett)

Great Meadows

Autumn Birding at Great Meadows
Peter Alden — Sept-Oct 1973 V 1 (5)

Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
Berlin Heck — Sept-Oct 1973 V 1 (5)

The Sudbury River Valley
Richard A. Forster — February 1989 V 17 (1) (includes GMNWR)

Birder's Guide: Chapter 9, The Sudbury River Valley

Monomoy/South Beach

The Birds of Monomoy
Richard Forster — July-Aug 1973 V 1 (4)

Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge
Berlin Heck — July-Aug 1973 V 1 (4)

Monomoy
Blair Nikula — June 1981 V 9 (3)

Where to go: Monomoy
Blair Nikula — June 1987 V 15 (3)

Birding Chatham, Cape Cod
Blair Nikula — June 1988 V 16 (3) (covers Morris Island)

Birder's Guide: Chapter 19, Chatham, and Chapter 20, Monomoy

Quabbin Reservoir

An Introduction to Winter Birding at Quabbin
Mark Lynch — December 1983 V 11 (6) Towns: Hardwick, New Salem, Shutesbury, Ware

Relict of Days Past: West Quabbin
Peter H. Yaukey — August 1986 V 14 (4) Towns:Belchertown, Pelham, Shutesbury

The Birds of Gate 40, Quabbin
Mark Lynch — October 1987 V 15 (5) Towns: Hardwick, Petersham

Birding Northeast Quabbin
Mark Lynch December 1989 V 17 (6) Towns:New Salem, Petersham
Birder's Guide: Chapter 12, Quabbin Gate 40; Chapter 13, Northeast Quabbin; Chapter 14, West Quabbin

Plum Island/Newburyport
Newburyport and Vicinity
William C. Drummond August 1978 V 6 (4)
The Four Seasons at Plum Island (Part I - Winter/Spring)
Herman H. D'Entremont and Soheil Zendeh December 1978 V 6 (6)
The Four Seasons at Plum Island (Part II - Summer/Fall)
Herman D'Entremont and Soheil Zendeh June 1979 V 7 (3)
Birding Newburyport Harbor and the Salisbury Beach State Reservation
Richard A. Forster February 1981 V 9 (1)
Birding Plum Island
Richard A. Forster June 1985 V 13 (3)
Hawk-watching Sites in the Newburyport Area
Edward M. Mair February 1986 V 14 (1)
Birder's Guide: Chapter 1, Plum Island, and Chapter 2, Newburyport Harbor and Salisbury Beach

Hingham
Birding in Hingham, World's End to Foundry Pond
Neil Osborne December 1981 V 9 (6)
World's End Reservation, Hingham
Kevin Godfrey April 1999 V 27 (2)
Birding Wompatuck State Park
Jerry Flaherty June 1986 V 14 (3)
Birding Wompatuck State Park
Dennis Peacock April 2001 V 29 (2)
Birder's Guide: Chapter 16, Boston Harbor South (includes World's End)

Cape Ann
A Good Day at Cape Ann
Herman D'Entremont Jan-Feb 1973 V 1 (1)
Birding Cape Ann (Gloucester, Rockport)
Christopher Leahy February 1983 V 11 (1)
Seabirds of Andrews Point, Rockport, Massachusetts
Richard S. Heil October 2001 V 29 (5)
Birder's Guide: Chapter 4, Cape Ann

AMERICAN ROBIN, ANON.