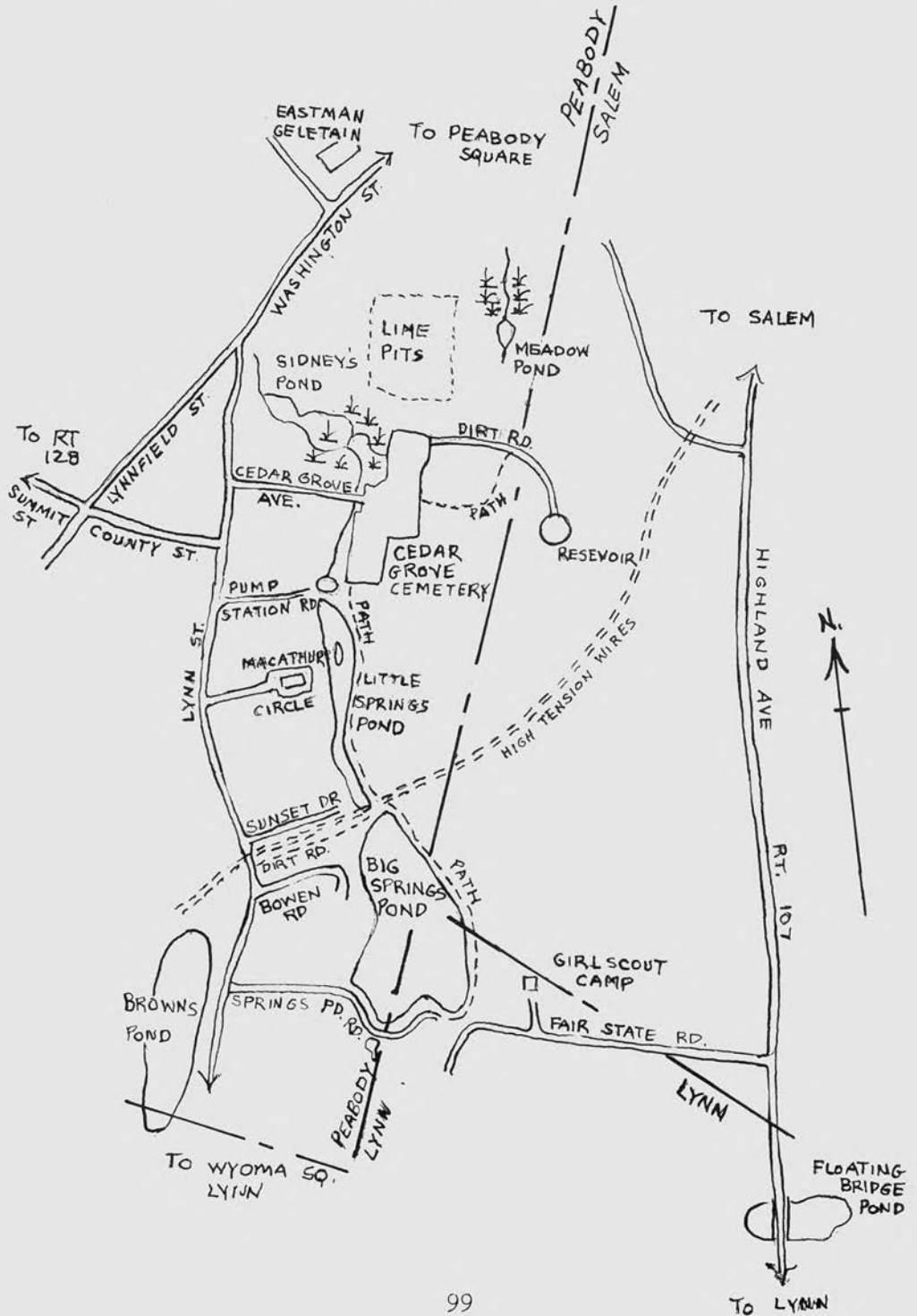


SPRINGS POND AREA



BIRDS OF SPRINGS POND AREA, PEABODY-SALEM

by Rick S. Heil, Peabody

The Springs Pond area is comprised of approximately 700 acres in three cities, mostly Peabody and Salem, but also a small section in Lynn. The area has a large variety of birdlife because of its many and varied habitats. Most of the area is deciduous woodland, primarily of oak, but there are several wooded swamps as well. Although White Pine is scarce, Pitch Pine can be found in several sections. There are many acres of rolling grassy hills and brushland around, and to the east of, the lime pits. These ponds, or "pits," are where the Eastman Gelatin Company dumps lime used in processing film. This area is completely enclosed by a chain link fence. There are four ponds: Big Springs Pond, Little Springs Pond, Sidney's Pond, and Meadow Pond. Sidney's Pond contains an eleven or twelve acre cattail marsh. Big Springs Pond is large and its rocky shores are evidence of its glacial origin.

Another reason for the large variety and numbers of birds in the area during migration is probably because the hills, which average 150-200 feet above sea level, run north to south--providing a natural ridge for migrants to follow. The Springs Pond area is 2.5 miles from Nahant Bay and 3 miles from Salem Harbor.

The best spots to observe the spring warbler migration are along the wooded shores of Big and Little Springs Pond. There are paths running along the shores of both of these ponds. The path along Little Springs Pond enters the woods at the south end of Cedar Grove Cemetery. This section of the path from the edge of the cemetery to where a stone wall runs up the side of the hill contains thick underbrush and is especially good in spring for warblers, such as Northern Parula, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, and Canada. On rarer occasions, a Mourning or a Hooded Warbler might be seen here. Pine Warblers can be seen in the Pitch Pines just north of the Girl Scout camp during the third week in April. Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and dozens of Palm Warblers can also be found here. To get to the area, take Fair State Road off Highland Avenue where there is a parking lot at the Girl Scout Camp. Pine Grosbeaks, Red Crossbills, an Orange-crowned Warbler and a Boreal Chickadee were found in these same Pitch Pines one day last October.

Take Cedar Grove Avenue off Lynn Street to enter Cedar Grove Cemetery. Proceed to the rear of the cemetery, where behind the garage there is a path which leads through some very dense deciduous woods. The following birds can frequently be seen here during migration: Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Olive-sided Flycatchers, Tennessee and Canada Warblers, and last May a Summer Tanager was found.

The cattail marsh at Sidney's Pond has resident Least and American Bitterns, Virginia Rails, Long-billed Marsh Wrens and Swamp Sparrows and an occasional Common Gallinule or Gadwall. Virginia Rails, Common Snipes, Swamp Sparrows, and as many as five American Bitterns also survive the winter here.

Nesting birds at Springs Pond area include: Broad-winged Hawks, Killdeers, Spotted Sandpipers, Black-billed Cuckoos, Warbling Vireos, Scarlet Tanagers, Indigo Buntings, Field and Swamp Sparrows.

The lime pits are the best spots in the fall. Here dozens of migrating Savannah, White-crowned and Song Sparrows feed on weed seeds, and a few Vesper and Lincoln's Sparrows come through each fall. The shallow chalky pools of the lime pits are good for shorebirds, considering it is an inland location. As many as one-hundred Greater and some Lesser Yellowlegs come in to rest each night. Other shorebirds seen here one or more times include: Golden and Black-bellied Plovers, Solitary, Pectoral, Least, and Semi-palmated Sandpipers and Dunlins. Other birds seen at the lime pits in fall are Marsh Hawks, Merlins, Sora Rails and Rusty Blackbirds. Last spring a male Clay-colored Sparrow set up a territory and sang constantly, until Field Sparrows drove him off.

During October, one or two Ospreys usually fish Big Springs Pond. This pond in winter occasionally harbours some Common and Hooded Mergansers, Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads and occasional Ruddy and Ring-necked Ducks.

Birding in the Springs Pond area is not always exciting, with mid-summer and mid-winter usually being most unproductive. Being such a large area, birds must often be searched out. Motorcycles very often become a nuisance, especially around Big Springs Pond and in the fields around the lime pits--even to the point of scaring off nesting Bobolinks.

The following list of 179 species and their seasonal abundance, including all the birds I

have previously mentioned, have all been recorded since March, 1974. Forty-three species have nested.

SEASONS

1. Feb., Mar.
2. Apr., May
3. Jun., Jul.
4. Aug., Sep.
5. Oct., Nov.
6. Dec., Jan.

ABUNDANCE

- A - Abundant
- C - Common
- U - Uncommon
- O - Occasional
- R - Rare
- 1 - Has only been recorded once.

* - Nesting has occurred.

	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
Common Loon			R			
Red-throated Loon					R	R
Pied-billed Grebe	O	O			U	O
Double-crested Cormorant		O	R		O	
Great Blue Heron	O	O	R	O	O	
Green Heron		O	O	U		
Cattle Egret		R				
Snowy Egret				R		
Little Blue Heron		R				
Black-crowned Night Heron		O	O	O		
Least Bittern			O	R		
American Bittern	O	O	O	O	O	O
Glossy Ibis			R			
Canada Goose		O	O	O	O	O
*Mallard	U	U	U	U	U	U
*Black Duck	U	U	U	U	U	U
Gadwall				R		
Pintail	R					R
Green-winged Teal		R			O	
Blue-winged Teal	R	O		O		
Wood Duck	R	R	R	R	O	
Ring-necked Duck	O					
Common Goldeneye	O					R
Bufflehead	U	O			U	O
Ruddy Duck					R	
Hooded Merganser	R	R				R
Common Merganser	R	O				O
Red-breasted Merganser		1				
Sharp-shinned Hawk		O			O	
Red-tailed Hawk	O	O	R	O	O	R
*Broad-winged Hawk		O	O	O		
Marsh Hawk		R			R	
Osprey		O			O	
Merlin					R	
*American Kestrel	O	C	R	O	C	R
Ruffed Grouse	R					
*Ring-necked Pheasant	U	U	U	U	U	U
*Virginia Rail	O	U	U	U	U	O
Sora Rail		O		O		
Common Gallinule			O	O	O	
American Coot	O	O	O	O	O	O
*Killdeer	O	O	O	O	O	R
Golden Plover				R		
Black-bellied Plover				R		
American Woodcock	O	R				
Common Snipe	O	O			O	O
*Spotted Sandpiper		U	U	O	U	
Solitary Sandpiper		R	R	O	O	
Greater Yellowlegs		R		U	U	
Lesser Yellowlegs		R	R	O	O	
Pectoral Sandpiper					R	
Least Sandpiper		O	R	R		

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Semipalmated Sandpiper				R		
Short-billed Dowitcher			R			
Dunlin					R	
Great-black Backed Gull	U	U	Ø	O	U	U
Herring Gull	C	C	C	C	C	C
Ring-billed Gull	R					R
Bonaparte's Gull					R	
Least Tern			1			
Rock Dove	U	U	U	U	U	U
*Mourning Dove	O	U	U	O	O	O
*Black-billed Cuckoo			O	O	O	
Screech Owl	U	U	U	U	U	U
Common Nighthawk			O	O	C	R
Chimney Swift			C	C	C	
Ruby-throated Hummingbird			R	R	R	
Belted Kingfisher	O	O	O	O	O	R
*Common Flicker	R	C	C	C	U	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker			O		R	
Hairy Woodpecker	O	O	R	R	O	R
*Downy Woodpecker	U	U	U	U	U	O
*Eastern Kingbird			C	C	U	
Great-crested Flycatcher			C	O	O	
Eastern Phoebe			C	O	O	O
Least Flycatcher			O	R	O	
Eastern Wood Peewee			O	O	O	
Olive-sided Flycatcher			R	R		
Tree Swallow			U	U	O	
Rough-winged Swallow			O	O	O	
Barn Swallow			U	O	U	
*Blue Jay	U	U	U	U	U	U
*Common Crow	U	U	U	U	U	U
Fish Crow			R			
*Black-capped Chickadee	U	U	U	U	U	U
Boreal Chickadee					R	
*Tufted Titmouse	U	U	U	U	O	O
White-breasted Nuthatch	O	O	O	O	O	O
Red-breasted Nuthatch			O	R	O	O
Brown Creeper	O	O			O	O
*House Wren		U	U	U	O	
Winter Wren	R	O			O	
*Long-billed Marsh Wren			O	O	O	
*Mockingbird	O	U	O	O	U	O
*Gray Catbird			C	C	C	O
*Brown Thrasher			C	C	U	O
*American Robin	O		C	C	C	R
Wood Thrush			O	R	O	
Hermit Thrush			C			O
Swainson's Thrush			U		O	O
Gray-cheeked Thrush				R		
Veery			O	R	O	
Eastern Bluebird			O		O	
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher			U			
Golden-crowned Kinglet	R	C			U	O
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			C		O	U
*Cedar Waxwing			U	U	U	O
Northern Shrike	R					
*Starling	C	C	C	C	C	C
Yellow-throated Vireo			R			
Solitary Vireo			U			
Red-eyed Vireo			U	R	O	
*Warbling Vireo			O	O		
Black and White Warbler			C		C	R
Golden-winged Warbler			R		R	
Blue-winged Warbler			O		R	
Tennessee Warbler			U			R
Orange-crowned Warbler						R

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Nashville Warbler		U	R	R		
Northern Parula		C		U		
*Yellow Warbler		C	U	U		
Magnolia Warbler		U	R	O		
Cape May Warbler		O		O	R	
Black-throated Blue Warbler		U		U	O	
Yellow-rumped Warbler		A		A	C	
Black-throated Green Warbler		U	R	U	O	
Blackburnian Warbler		O		O		
Chestnut-sided Warbler		O				
Bay-breasted Warbler		U		U		
Blackpoll Warbler		C	R		C	
Pine Warbler			O			
Prairie Warbler		O		R		
Palm Warbler		C		U	U	O
Ovenbird		U	R	U	R	
Northern Waterthrush		U		R		
Mourning Warbler			R		R	
*Common Yellowthroat		C	U	U	R	
Hooded Warbler		R				
Wilson's Warbler		O		O		
Canada Warbler		U	R	O		
American Redstart		C	O	C	O	
*House Sparrow	C	C	C	C	C	C
Bobolink		O	O			
Eastern Meadowlark	R	O	O	O	O	R
*Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C	C	C	O
*Northern Oriole		C	U	U	R	
Orchard Oriole		R				
Rusty Blackbird	U	O			O	R
*Common Grackle	U	C	C	C	U	R
*Brown-headed Cowbird	C	U	O	O	O	O
*Scarlet Tanager		U	U	O		
Summer Tanager		l				
Cardinal	O	O	O	O	O	O
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		O		O		
Indigo Bunting		U	U			
Dickcissel					l	
Evening Grosbeak	O	O			O	R
*House Finch	O	O	O	U	U	O
Purple Finch	R	O	O	O		
Pine Grosbeak					R	
Common Redpoll	R				R	
Pine Siskin					R	
*American Goldfinch	O	U	U	U	O	O
Red Crossbill	R	R			O	
*Rufous-sided Towhee		U	U	U	U	
Savannah Sparrow		U		O	C	O
Vesper Sparrow		R			R	
Dark-eyed Junco	U	U			C	U
Tree Sparrow	U	U			C	U
*Chipping Sparrow		O	O	O	O	
Clay-colored Sparrow		l				
*Field Sparrow	R	C	C	U	U	O
White-crowned Sparrow		R			U	
White-throated Sparrow	O	A		U	A	O
Fox Sparrow	U	O			O	
Lincoln's Sparrow		R			O	
*Swamp Sparrow	O	U	U	O	U	O
*Song Sparrow	C	C	C	C	C	U
Snow Bunting	R				O	