

Bird Observer

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White-rumped Sandpiper Studies 1976

Lucy G. Anderson

HOT BIRDS



This **Summer Tanager** (left) was photographed at a feeding station in Chelmsford on May 6, 2007, by Eric Conrad.

This female **Hooded Warbler** (right) was photographed by Bob Mayer in Franklin Park in Boston on June 7, 2007. Bob found and photographed her nest on June 22.



Simon Perkins photographed this **Western Kingbird** (left), originally found by Steve Langer, on June 16, 2007, on Nantucket.

A flock of **Black-necked Stilts** (below)! On June 7, 2007, Mike O'Connor followed up on a report of Black-necked Stilts at Forest Beach in Chatham and discovered six. On June 18, Blair Nikula stopped by and got this photograph.



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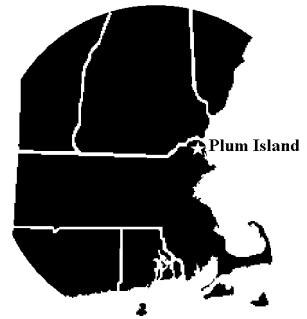
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A Birder's Guide to the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge and Sandy Point State Reservation on Plum Island

Thomas T. Wetmore IV



Introduction

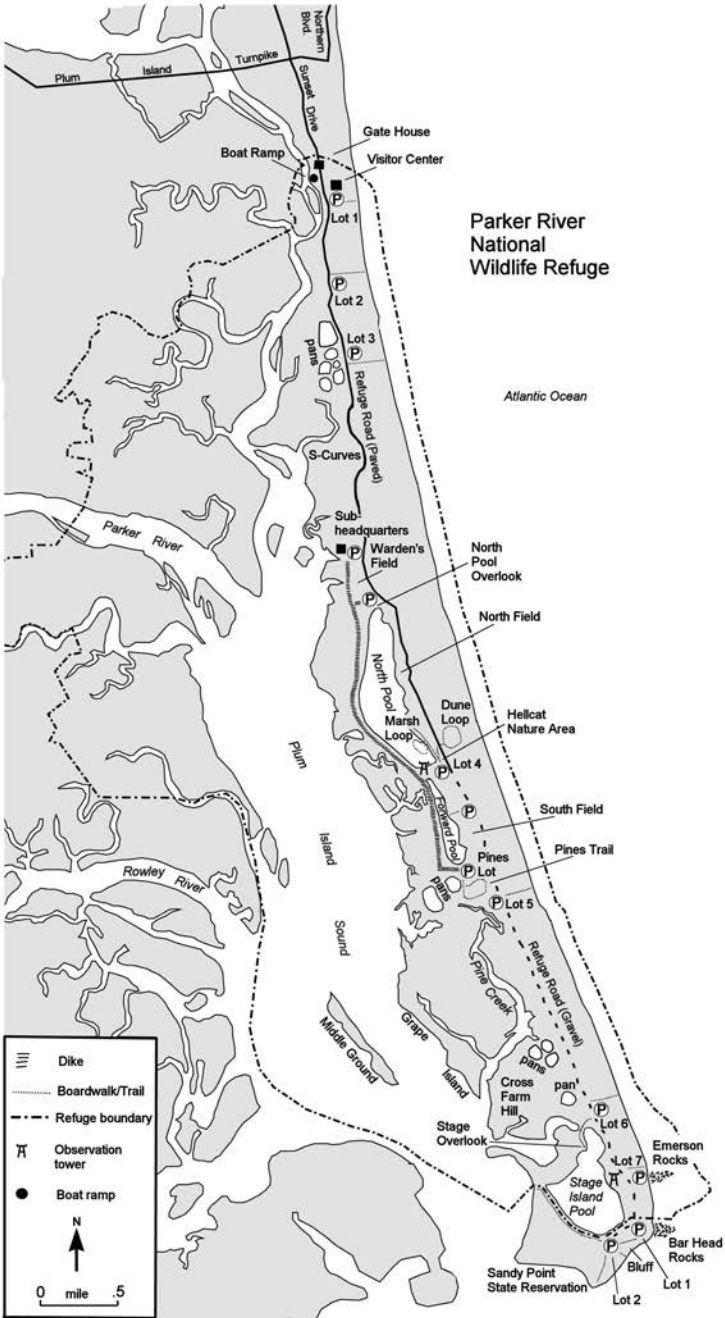
Plum Island is located in Essex County, Massachusetts, near the northeast corner of the state. The island is nine miles long, oriented north to south and divided fairly equally among the towns of Newburyport, Newbury, Rowley, and Ipswich. The northern three miles are residential, and the southern six miles are national wildlife refuge and state reservation land. The east side of the island is a barrier beach facing the ocean, and the west side borders an extensive salt marsh known as the Great Marsh. The island is wide enough to hold a variety of habitats that include sandy beach, dune, low scrub, maritime forest, grassy fields, salt marsh, fresh water swamps, and fresh water impoundments.

Plum Island is a popular birding destination. It is an excellent location for waterfowl, loons, grebes, bitterns, herons, raptors, rails, shorebirds, gulls, terns, owls, cuckoos, and passerines. Every season brings its own set of specialties, including neotropical migrants in spring; waterfowl, raptors, and shorebirds in fall; and an exciting array of specialties in winter. If you are interested in only one specific group of birds you may find a better spot in Massachusetts to see them, but for the widest variety of birds from the widest variety of groups on any day of the year, there is no better spot in the state than Plum Island.

The destination for most birders coming to the island is the southern portion. Most of this area is part of the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge (PRNWR); the southern tip of the island is the Sandy Point State Reservation (SPSR). The beaches on the PRNWR are closed during the beach nesting season (April through July or August), while the SPSR beaches are not. This guide covers the PRNWR and SPSR; it does not cover the northern portion of the island, nor does it cover the parts of PRNWR that are not on Plum Island.

Getting There

To reach the refuge, take the Plum Island Turnpike east from Newburyport. The turnpike passes a small airport and crosses the Wilkinson Bridge over the Plum Island River, a tidal estuary, to the island. Take the first right on the island, Sunset Drive, and drive a half mile south to the refuge entrance gatehouse. The PRNWR is a fee area. Most local birders buy an annual pass for the refuge, either the federal duck stamp for \$15.00 or the PRNWR entrance pass for \$20.00. The duck stamp covers a year from July 1st to the following June 30th and provides access to other national fee areas; the PRNWR pass is good for one year from the date of purchase and provides access only



MAP BY DOROTHY GRAASKAMP

to the PRNWR. The one-time drive-on fee is \$5.00. While at the gatehouse ask for a copy of the refuge bird list; it gives the status of each species by season and includes a map of the refuge. Bird lists are also available at the refuge headquarters on Rolfe's Lane, across the turnpike from Mass Audubon's Joppa Flats Education Center.

To avoid disappointment, plan to be on the refuge before the fair-weather beachgoers. This advice is especially important on summer days and on warm, sunny weekends in spring or fall. The refuge parking lots fill rapidly on these days. Sometimes, if you do not arrive by 11:00 a.m. or even earlier, you may find the refuge closed to autos or parking available only at lot one.

Though best known for its birds, Plum Island is ideal habitat for greenhead flies and salt-marsh mosquitoes, both quick-biting insects of the salt marsh and vicinity. Greenheads can make your visits to the island in July memorable. And like nearly all wild locations in New England, Plum Island has the deer ticks that carry Lyme disease.

This guide is written with the assumption that you will bird from the refuge entrance to Sandy Point, north to south, stopping along the way. This is a natural way to cover the island. Depending on time of day, location of the sun, or state of the tides or winds, you may want to modify your itinerary. Birding along the road can be easier from south to north because of lighting conditions. The problem for most birders, however, is that no matter how intent we are on getting to the south end, we will likely be waylaid for at least an hour or three along the way!

Lot One Area

After entering the refuge and passing the gatehouse, pull into parking lot one immediately on your left. There is a visitor center here with the only flush toilets and drinkable water on the refuge. The center is open only during the busy summer season, but there are rustic outhouses open year-round at three parking areas down the island.

An active Purple Martin colony at lot one is maintained by refuge volunteers. Lot one is also an excellent location to watch the spring raptor and songbird migrations. When weather fronts cooperate, there can be a steady flow of birds, sometimes directly overhead. This is a popular spring hawk-watching site, well known for the numbers of American Kestrels and Sharp-shinned Hawks that pass by.

From the lot, walk the boardwalk to the beach and ocean overlook. The beach is closed south of this point during the breeding season. Scan the beach for Piping Plovers and Least Terns, the two threatened species that nest on the barrier beaches. Check the ocean for seabirds and the beach for other shorebirds and gulls. The birds present vary during the year, and by tide and weather, but it is rare you will not find something interesting. Depending on the season, you will find scoters, loons, grebes, shorebirds, gulls, terns, larks, Savannah Sparrows (including the "Ipswich" race), Snow Buntings, and Lapland Longspurs. Especially sought-after birds include Wilson's Storm-Petrels, Northern Gannets, Black-legged Kittiwakes, and Razorbills.

As you return from the overlook, you have a good view of the salt marsh west of the island. This is a great spot to scan the marsh and sky. There are salt pans visible to the west that are otherwise hidden. These pans often hold numbers of waterfowl, herons, and shorebirds.

Return to the lot, cross the road, and walk the dirt track to the boat ramp on the Plum Island River. Check the marsh grasses on both sides of the estuary. Clapper Rails, Willets, Marsh Wrens, and Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed and Seaside sparrows all breed in this area. At low tide, mudflats are exposed along the sides and in the middle of the estuary. Check them for shorebirds, herons, bitterns, rails, or whatever else may be there.

Return to the main road and walk south a short distance. You pass two small dunes on the west side of the road, and the road makes a close approach to the Plum Island River. The small dunes and scrubby habitat on the east side of the road are passerine migrant traps. A little “pishing” might bring up almost anything: flycatchers, vireos, warblers, sparrows, and other songbirds. Check the estuary for the same birds often found at the boat ramp. This is a good spot to hear Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed and Seaside sparrows singing close by.

Lot Two, the Pans, and Lot Three

Driving south from lot one you soon reach parking lot two, a small lot on the east side of the road with a boardwalk that crosses scrub and dune habitat to the beach and ocean. The boardwalk and lot are closed during the nesting season. The first section of boardwalk climbs steeply to cross a vegetated dune. From the high point there is an expansive view back over the Great Marsh. You can see into distant pans and estuaries and can often find raptors perched on the many staddles and other high points on the marsh. In winter this is a good spot to look for Rough-legged Hawks, Snowy and Short-eared owls, and other raptors. During spring and fall this boardwalk is another good spot to watch the phenomenon of migration; during the right conditions a steady stream of passerines may pass almost within touching distance. The island is narrow at this spot, and you have an almost uninterrupted view of birds flying by.

Continue your drive south. The scrubby habitat on the east may hold a variety of passerines, and the marshes on the west may hold waterfowl, raptors, shorebirds, or others. Be prepared to pull over (advice that can be taken at any point along the refuge road). One species to be aware of here is Wilson’s Phalarope. Because the Great Marsh is the easternmost breeding outpost for this species, one or a few individuals are often seen in the puddles and pans in this area.

You soon reach the first and largest of the salt pans (the correct spelling is *pan*, not *panne*) that border the refuge road. There are almost always good reasons to stop and check the pans and surrounding marsh. The pans can hold large flocks of waterfowl, shorebirds, herons, gulls, and terns, and scanning the marshes around the pans may reveal raptors sitting on staddles or soaring in the air, or busy Sharp-tailed Sparrows flitting back and forth. The scrubby habitat opposite the pans is sometimes alive with migrant passerines.

South of the large pan is a series of smaller pans, one just opposite the lot three parking area. Park here to scan more of the pans and the salt marsh. There is a boardwalk at lot three that passes a kettle hole just to its north and then crosses rolling dunes to the beach. The beach provides another excellent vantage point to scan for seabirds. This lot and boardwalk are also closed during the nesting season.

S-curves, Sub-headquarters, and North Field

South of lot three you enter an area locally known as the S-curves, where the road winds back and forth through scrubby dunes, dense thickets, and maritime forest. This stretch of road is an excellent spot for migrant passerines; if you wander the road on foot, you may be rewarded. The S-curves can be filled with woodpeckers, flycatchers, vireos, kinglets, thrushes, mimids, warblers, and sparrows. Late-fall migrants such as Orange-crowned Warblers and Yellow-breasted Chats show up along the S-curves with some regularity.

At the south end of the S-curves is the sub-headquarters area, referred to by some birders as “the Warden’s.” (In pre-refuge times the wardens for Mass Audubon’s Annie H. Brown sanctuary lived in a cabin here.) Park in the sub-headquarters lot and check the thickets around the lot and the field and pond south of the buildings. The field hosts a number of birds over the course of a year, including Glossy Ibises, American Golden-Plovers, Whimbrels, Wilson’s Snipes, and Eastern Meadowlarks. The small pond and melt-water pools in the field often hold waterfowl and shorebirds. You can wander north through the S-curves from this spot.

Explore the sub-headquarters area itself by walking between the buildings to the grove of trees that borders the salt marsh. The bare ground around the buildings attracts open field birds such as larks, pipits, Savannah Sparrows, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings. The grove is known for the migrants that occur here. In fall the area is one of the better spots on the refuge to check for Vesper and Clay-colored sparrows. The body of water to the west is Plum Island Sound, and this is a good spot to scan it. In winter you will find Common Goldeneyes and Buffleheads in the sound in good numbers as well as other water birds, often including loons and noisy flocks of Long-tailed Ducks. At low tide extensive mudflats are exposed, which during shorebird migration can hold large numbers of shorebirds, including Black-bellied Plovers, yellowlegs, Dunlins, and peeps.

Starting at the sub-headquarters is a man-made dike that extends south for two miles, separating the salt marsh to the west from fields, forests, and fresh-water impoundments to the east. You encounter the dike a number of times as you travel down the island.

Continue south from the sub-headquarters, passing the small field on the west and more of the maritime forest on the east. After a short distance you pass a gated dirt road on the left. This leads to a bird-banding station run by Mass Audubon’s Joppa Flats Center. The area is closed to the public, but you can sign up for programs run by the center that visit the station while banding is in progress.

Shortly, you come to a small parking lot on the right. This is the North Pool overlook, and the lot is on part of the impoundment dike system. The body of water to the south is North Pool, the first of three fresh-water impoundments on the refuge. The overlook is the best spot to check the north end of the pool and the wide expanse of North Field to the south. The granite markers in the middle of North Field and on the dike mark the boundary between Newbury and Rowley, so you will hear this field referred to by locals as the boundary field or the town-marker field. Check the open water of North Pool and its edges for waterfowl, herons, rails, and shorebirds. Ring-necked Duck, Pied-billed Grebe, Least and American bitterns, Virginia Rail, Sora, Common Moorhen, American Coot, Whimbrel, Solitary and Pectoral sandpipers, Wilson's Snipe, and Eastern Meadowlark are among the more unusual and sought-after species that appear here often enough to make overlook visits anticipated events. North Field is a winter roosting site for Northern Harriers, and in recent years this field has been the only breeding location for harriers in Essex County. If North Field has one special bird, that bird is the Bobolink. During breeding season the field abounds with these busy, vocal birds.



NORTH POOL, OVERLOOK, AND FIELD — AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID LARSON

As you continue your trip down the island, you pass North Field on the west and forested areas to the east. North Field often has flooded and meadow-like areas during spring and early summer; these may contain nice surprises. Look for Wood Duck, Blue- and Green-winged teal, Northern Shoveler, Pied-billed Grebe, Glossy Ibis, and snipe, and listen for Sora and Virginia rail. Take careful looks at the “tree islands” scattered down the field. These are migrant traps and often used as perching areas for falcons, other raptors, and Northern Shrikes. Do not ignore the areas along the east side of the road. The habitat here has pine groves, thickets, and open areas. It can be productive to walk the road through this area; during migration you may encounter active pockets of warblers and other passerines.

Hellcat Nature Area

Continue south and turn into the large parking lot at the Hellcat Nature Area. This is one of the most heavily birded areas on the island and for good reason. Hellcat provides access to two of the island's fresh-water impoundments and to the dense maritime forest that grows here at the widest part of the island. Trails leading from the parking lot traverse a variety of habitats that can be alive with birds. There are many birding possibilities at Hellcat, so let's start down the list.

The parking lot itself and area around the outhouses is the first area to check. The birding can be excellent here; the Hellcat outhouses have been described as the most ornithologically active johns in Massachusetts. Sometimes you may return to the lot after exploring the rest of the area and wonder why you left!

Walk past the outhouses and up onto the dike that separates North Pool to the north and Bill Forward Pool to the south. Carefully scan the two pools. Forward Pool can be especially good for waterfowl, shorebirds, and herons. The common puddle ducks show up regularly on this pool, and many diving ducks (e.g., scaup, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, and Ruddy Duck) put in appearances. This pool is one of the better spots for finding a Tricolored Heron. The refuge staff lowers the water level of Forward Pool in late summer to provide foraging and roosting areas for migrating shorebirds. During high tides many hundreds of shorebirds can be found roosting at the pool as they await the low tides that expose the mudflats where they like to feed. The regular shorebird species include Black-bellied and Semipalmated plovers, Spotted Sandpiper, both yellowlegs, Willet, the commoner peeps (Least, White-rumped, and Semipalmated), Dunlin, Red Knot, Ruddy Turnstone, both dowitchers, Stilt Sandpiper, and the occasional American Golden-Plover, Baird's or Buff-breasted sandpiper, and Hudsonian Godwit. North Pool is a combination of open water and reed and cattail marsh that serves as a puddle-duck factory during the breeding season. When the water levels are left high during spring and summer, it also serves as a breeding area for elusive marsh birds. Significant numbers of Gadwalls and Mallards nest in North Pool, as do small numbers of Black Ducks, Wood Ducks, both species of teal, and Northern Shovelers are seen frequently enough in the pool during summer to raise suspicions that these species may breed there. In recent years North Pool has supported healthy populations of Soras and Virginia Rails, and one or more pairs of Pied-billed Grebes, Least and American bitterns, King Rails, Common Moorhens, and possibly American Coots. These marsh birds are notoriously hard to see, but they call on occasion, and patient scanning of the reed edges may reveal any of them. North Pool viewed from the Hellcat dikes is one of the best spots in Massachusetts to hear and sometimes glimpse these elusive birds.

There is an observation tower on the Hellcat dike; it provides a great view of both pools and the salt marsh and Plum Island Sound to the west.

A network of boardwalk trails begins at the Hellcat lot. The trails traverse maritime forest along with other habitats. The trails are renowned for neotropical migrants from late April through early June, peaking in the second half of May. During this period you are likely to encounter exciting pockets of migrants. You may



HELLCAT NATURE AREA SHOWING BILL FORWARD POOL (LEFT), NORTH POOL (RIGHT), DIKES, OBSERVATION PLATFORM (CENTER), AND PARKING LOT (LEFT) — AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID LARSON.

encounter mixed flocks of flycatchers (Least, Willow, Alder, Yellow-bellied, Great Crested, Olive-sided, phoebe, pewee), vireos (Blue-headed, Warbling, Red-eyed, Philadelphia), thrushes (Hermit, Veery, Swainson's, Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's, Wood), wood warblers (far too many to list), Scarlet Tanagers, orioles (Baltimore, Orchard), finches (Purple, gold, Rose-breasted Grosbeak), woodpeckers (Downy, flicker, sapsucker) and cuckoos (Black- and Yellow-billed). You may also stumble across American Woodcocks feeding beside the boardwalks, and you may hear Virginia Rails and Soras calling from North Pool. Fall migration, which lasts from August through October, is more drawn out and less frenetic.

The network is divided into the Marsh and Dune Loops. After you leave the Hellcat lot on the boardwalk, you soon come to an intersection with a boardwalk heading left down some steps. A sign identifies this as the Marsh Loop. Let us go that way first. The main Marsh Loop boardwalk follows fairly closely to the eastern edge of North Pool and ends at an open area with a wide view of the North Pool marshes (you may hear this spot called the "old blind," because there used to be an observation blind here). As you walk the main boardwalk, you pass two intersections to a separate loop that travels through a part of the marsh itself. We cover that below. The main part of the trail traverses heavily vegetated shrub swamp and is especially good for flycatchers and warblers. The open area at the end is an excellent spot to listen for the elusive marsh birds in the North Pool marshes. All these birds, including bitterns and rails, are heard and sometimes seen here. From this spot in fall you can watch incredible flocks of tree swallows, often numbering in the hundreds of thousands, that roost for the night within the relative safety of the North Pool reeds. Black-crowned Night-Herons roost in some of the trees near the open area.

As you return along the main marsh trail, turn onto the marsh boardwalk at the intersection near the bottom of some steps; the marsh boardwalk later rejoins the main

boardwalk. This is the loop part of the Marsh Loop, and it wanders well out into the North Pool marshes, passing through dense marsh vegetation. This boardwalk is the best place on the island to come face-to-face with Marsh Wrens, Swamp Sparrows, Red-winged Blackbirds, and, if you are lucky, a bittern or rail. Depending on the changing water levels, there can be spots along this boardwalk where you can sit quietly and sometimes have the exquisite pleasure of watching a Sora walk past your dangling feet, or seeing a Northern Waterthrush foraging around the bases of reed stalks. The common bird of this loop is the Marsh Wren; you may become enchanted by its constant gurgling and the activities it takes so seriously. When you come to the end of the loop, turn right and continue back toward the parking lot.

When you get back to the top of the steps where you first turned onto the Marsh Loop, turn left onto the Dune Loop trail. This boardwalk passes through thickets and a low, wet swale and then comes to the Ralph Goodno Woods just before it crosses the refuge road. This section of the trail can be excellent during spring migration for thrushes, warblers, and other migrants. During fall migration this is an excellent place to search for Connecticut Warblers. In spring, Goodno Woods often rings with the songs of Northern Waterthrushes and sometimes with the quieter songs of Mourning Warblers. The tall mature trees at Goodno Woods often hold a wide assortment of vireos and warblers. Look for Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, Cape May, and Tennessee warblers high in the canopy and up to twenty or so other warbler species lower down. Once you come to the road, and before you continue on the Dune Loop on the other side, it can be profitable to linger near the intersection or wander north a hundred yards or so. Flycatchers, vireos, many warblers, Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Scarlet Tanagers, finches, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks are often found along the road. Carolina Wrens have recently pioneered Plum Island in this area.

Across the refuge road the boardwalk forks into a loop, which you can follow in either direction. Whichever fork you take, the boardwalk first crosses a low swampy thicket and eventually ascends the coastal dunes until it reaches its highest elevation, where there is an expansive and panoramic view in all directions. This is a beautiful spot to linger at and let the birds come to you. When you get back to the road, return to Hellcat by road rather than trail. There can be another whole set of birds along the road. Be sure to check the very tops of the tall trees around the Goodno road crossing, since this is one of the best spots on the island to find Olive-sided and Great Crested flycatchers.

Forward Pool Blind, Pines Area, and Lot Five

From the Hellcat lot resume your drive south. From this point on the road is dirt and gravel. You soon come to a small parking area on the right with a short trail to an observation blind overlooking Bill Forward Pool. The trail passes through some of the best Field Sparrow habitat on the refuge, and the blind is located in a stand of mature pines that often holds interesting passerines. The blind is an excellent spot for scanning Forward Pool, especially in the morning with the sun behind you. It is one of the best spots on the island for watching shorebirds. The best times are high tides during August, September, and October.

Continue your drive down the island. You pass the entrance to the former Camp Seahaven on the east (no public access) and the scrubby field known as South Field on the west. As you pass by, you move from Rowley into Ipswich. A little farther south on the right is the access road to the Pines Trail. Turn in here and park in the Pines Trail lot. You are now at the south end of the dike that started two miles north at the sub-headquarters. Before walking the trail, scan the south end of Forward Pool and the southern, open portion of South Field, sometimes called the Pines Field. The south end of the pool is visited by many species of waterfowl during migration and is especially attractive to diving ducks. The field is a nesting area for Savannah Sparrows and Bobolinks. During migration this field is a great spot for grassland shorebirds. An Upland Sandpiper or two is seen on the field during spring migration most years. Other shorebirds that show up during fall are American Golden-Plovers, Whimbrels, and Baird's and Buff-breasted sandpipers.

The Pines Trail itself is a short loop that winds through salt-marsh edge habitat, a mature grove of pitch pines, and nice thickets. The pine grove is the most refreshing and best-smelling spot on the island. The loop has a platform that overlooks a few pans and the salt marshes and Plum Island Sound to the south and west. The pans are good spots to look for roosting shorebirds in fall; Black-bellied Plovers are often found in the pans and nearby marshes. There is an active Osprey nesting platform here. Depending on season, the pine grove and thickets along the loop host a wide assortment of birds. During migration they can be alive with flycatchers, vireos, thrushes, warblers, sparrows, and others. The trail is a favored birding spot for local birders. When the Hellcat trails are crowded with birders and noisy families, the Pines Trail can be devoid of other humans but filled with birds. The secret is out.

As you continue south from the Pines Trail the refuge road passes through the same pine grove the trail passed through. You quickly come to parking lot five on the right. This lot has been closed for the past few years, but if you find it open you can park here for a beautiful walk to the ocean. The boardwalk passes through more of the pine grove before opening out onto dune habitat.

South Marsh and Cross Farm Hill

Continue south. Beyond lot five you enter a long, straight stretch dominated by scrubby dune and thicket habitat to the east and salt marsh to the west. A scan of the salt marsh can turn up birds at any time of year. Check the staddles for raptors. Depending on season, you may find Northern Harriers, Rough-legged Hawks, Peregrine Falcons, and Snowy and Short-eared owls. Gyrfalcons have shown up a few times here in December. The thickets on the east are also worth attention. During breeding season Brown Thrashers can seem to be everywhere. The taller trees are used as perches by Merlins and Northern Shrikes. As you continue south, Pine Creek widens out to the west. At low tide this creek is a tidal mudflat; the small parking pull-offs are for local clambers. Pine Creek empties into Plum Island Sound. A scan of the creek and sound can turn up interesting ducks, herons, and raptors. During winter Pine Creek is a favored site for Black Ducks, Buffleheads, and gulls.

After the straight stretch along the salt marsh you come to a grassy hill on the west named Cross Farm Hill. Just north of the hill are pans that can hold large numbers of waterfowl, egrets, and shorebirds. These pans and those on the south side of the hill are good spots to look for Little Blue and Tricolored herons in fall. The hill has breeding Savannah Sparrows and Bobolinks and is a roosting and feeding area for Canada Geese. Late in fall some Snow Geese may mix in. The hill is a hunting area for raptors such as harriers, Rough-legged Hawks, and Short-eared Owls. With dense thickets to the east this is good habitat for Long-eared Owls, which are sometimes seen here. The trees far out on the hill are used by raptors as sunning sites in winter. Check the tripod platform west of the hill, used by breeding Ospreys in summer and often by Snowy Owls and other raptors in winter. Across the road on the dune side, the thickets are dense from here to the end of the island. These thickets may hold migrant songbirds and can support robins, mockingbirds, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Tree Sparrows in winter. These thickets are hunting habitat for wintering Northern Shrikes.

Stage Island Pool

After crossing Cross Farm Hill the road twists and turns a short distance till it reaches parking lot six on the east side. The lot provides beach access by a boardwalk and, across the road, access to Stage Island Pool, the third fresh-water impoundment on the refuge. When the beach is closed, most of the lot is closed, though a few spaces are kept open for pool visitors. The whole area is good for birding. To begin your exploration, cross the road and walk the dike that separates the impoundment from the salt marshes. Check in all directions as you go along. The dike is a fine location for Savannah Sparrows. In fall the Savannahs may be joined by a Vesper Sparrow or two and Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings. Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrows breed in the marshes to the north and west of the dike. American Bitterns and large numbers of egrets are often found in this marsh. If you did not do so from the road, check the pans between the dike and Cross Farm Hill. These pans are good locations for ducks, herons, and shorebirds in season. The dike also provides a view of Plum Island Sound, where you may find a number of waterfowl species including Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common Eider, and Long-tailed Duck.

Stage Island Pool is the main attraction here. As you walk the dike, be sure to scan the pool and its edges. The trail soon climbs a small rise where it ends at an open area that gives a view of the southern parts of the pool. (Be sure to stay left where the sign indicates.) Waterfowl use the pool throughout the year. Even when the pool is frozen, you may find a forlorn goose or Black Duck roosting on its surface. Puddle ducks can abound here, and Stage Island Pool is a good spot to check for diving ducks during migration. Wood Ducks are sometimes found along the edges of the pool half-hidden among the reeds.

Stage Island Pool is best known for shorebirds during the summer-fall migration from mid-July through October. The refuge lowers the water level in the pool to expose flats, which appear out in the pool and around its edges. During high tides

especially, the flats and shallows can fill with hundreds or thousands of many species of plovers and sandpipers. Black-bellied, American Golden, and Semipalmated plovers; both yellowlegs; five species of peep; Dunlin; both dowitchers; Stilt, Spotted, and Buff-breasted sandpipers; Red Knot; and Ruddy Turnstone are among the species that regularly occur here. And there is always a chance of something more unusual such as an American Avocet, American Oystercatcher, Little Gull, or Caspian Tern. The grassy and scraggly margin to the south and west of the pool, visible from the overlook, is closely watched by birders during August and September. This is where American Golden-Plovers, Baird's Sandpipers, and Buff-breasted Sandpipers, three of the refuge's most sought-after specialty birds, often put in first appearances. This margin often abounds with open country passerines such as larks, pipits, Snow Buntings, and Lapland Longspurs during late fall and early winter.

After you return to the road but before you continue down the island, you may want to walk the boardwalk to the beach (closed during the breeding season). The thickets along the boardwalk can be productive, and the beach and ocean are always worth a check. It is also a good idea to walk south along the road for a hundred yards or so to get more (and often close-up) views of the birds using Stage Island Pool. Least Bitterns have been seen in the line of cattails along the road.

Lot Seven Area

Continuing down the island, you soon reach parking lot seven, the last lot on the federal refuge. There is access here to an observation tower on the marsh side and a boardwalk on the dune side that ends at an ocean-overlook platform. Both are always worth a visit. Though the beach and platform are closed during plover season, the tower is always open, and the refuge reserves a couple of parking places for visitors. The tower ostensibly gives an overview of the southern part of Stage Island Pool, but it provides excellent views in all directions including out to sea. The tower is a great spot to watch and wait for birds to appear. The more time you spend here the more likely you will see or hear the specialty birds that make this area home. Willow Flycatchers and Marsh Wrens are among the common breeders, and Least Bitterns, Virginia Rails, and Soras use the reeds around the tower. These marsh species are difficult to see, but by lingering on the tower you increase your chances of hearing their calls or catching momentary glimpses as they move furtively from spot to spot. During spring migration the thickets at the base of the tower can be filled with cuckoos, flycatchers, warblers, and sparrows.

The beach overlook at lot seven is a favorite birding spot. Except at high tide, more or less of Emerson Rocks are exposed to the northeast, and more or less of the Bar Head rocks are exposed to the southeast. This stop can yield good birds at all times with ducks, loons, and grebes from fall to spring, migrant shorebirds and terns in the fall, and gulls year-round. When the rocks are exposed, a number of shorebird species roost and feed there, including Black-bellied Plover, Dunlin, Purple Sandpiper, Sanderling, Red Knot, and Ruddy Turnstone. The beach often hosts scurrying Piping and Semipalmated plovers and peeps. The waters around Emerson Rocks usually hold seabirds such as Brant, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, scoters,

loons, and grebes. Some of the most difficult birds to find on the island occasionally turn up here. Examples include Harlequin Duck, Barrow's Goldeneye, Red and Red-necked phalaropes, Little Gull, Roseate Tern, Arctic Tern, Black Guillemot, murre, Dovekie, and even Atlantic Puffin. These are hard birds to find on the island, but year after year the waters off lot seven yield more of these unusual birds than anyplace else. The more time you spend here, the more likely you are to have a new or unusual sighting. You might see a Peregrine Falcon making landfall after migrating offshore, a flock of scoters flying by with a Green-winged Teal tagging along, or a small flock of Brant flying by low to the water giving their gentle *gronking* calls. You may see Northern Gannets plunge-diving offshore or even catch sight of a Manx Shearwater or Parasitic Jaeger in the distance.

Sandy Point

Resume your drive south and you shortly reach the first parking lot on Sandy Point State Reservation. You have left the federal refuge. There is a path from this lot to the ocean near the southern tip of the island at the Bar Head rocks. If you have already scanned the ocean and beaches from lot seven you will not see much new from here. If the federal beaches are closed, however, this path provides the best access point to scan Emerson and Bar Head Rocks and the southernmost beaches exposed to the ocean. This is a great spot to begin a longer walk around Sandy Point, the southern tip of the island, and up the inner side.

Instead of stopping at the first SPSR lot, you can continue through the gated track that heads southwest from the first lot to the second SPSR lot, the last parking lot on the island. The gate to the second lot is sometimes closed, but you can carry on by foot; the distance between the two lots is short, and the walk can be quite birdy. The shrubs, thickets, trees, and beach grasses around the second lot often hold interesting




SANDY POINT STATE RESERVATION (LEFT), STAGE ISLAND POOL AREA (RIGHT), LOT SEVEN AND EMERSON ROCKS (CENTER AND BOTTOM LEFT) — AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID LARSON.

species during migration, including flycatchers, thrushes, warblers, and sparrows. Island oddities show up regularly enough here (e.g., Lark Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak, Dickcissel) to warrant a careful look. From this lot a trail goes part-way up Bar Head (the high bluffs at the south end of the island). Another trail goes north along the western edge of Stage Island Pool until it ends at a rocky beach bordering a closed section of the PRNWR. Though most birders eschew these two trails (to get to the beach as quickly as possible), the trail along Stage Island Pool can be rewarding at any time and ends at a beautiful spot. The shrubs and thickets are open and low, making birds easy to observe, and you get close-up looks at Stage Island Pool.

The destination for most birders coming to Sandy Point is the inner beach, and the birds of most interest are shorebirds and open field passerines. There are two trails to the beach from the second lot, and it matters little which you take. The best times to visit the beach are after storms in the spring, and almost anytime, especially around high tide, during fall. Because the beach is protected from the ocean, locals call it the Mothers' Beach. And because it is protected, it is a favorite roosting site for many of the shorebirds, gulls, and terns that visit the island. During high tides in fall, you may find hundreds and even thousands of shorebirds roosting on the beaches. Watching hundreds of Semipalmated Plovers, peeps, and other shorebirds arrive and assemble into large roosting flocks as the tide rises is one of the special Plum Island birding experiences.

Piping Plovers use the inner beach as a nesting area, and you can often get excellent looks at the birds in courtship. The state puts exclusion cages over the nests and ropes off areas around them, so it is easy to get looks at the incubating parents, and it is a fun challenge to find the off-duty parents. Later in the summer when the young have hatched, a visit to the beach may result in an intense cuteness attack as you watch tiny cottony fluff balls with legs dart around the beaches.

During and just after strong northeasterly storms and winds, birds usually found only far offshore may be pushed into the sound or may be struggling just outside. If the storm is in May, the birds will be in breeding plumage. Birding for storm-tossed seabirds and ocean migrants may be a somewhat advanced birding practice, but it can be lots of fun. Examples of wind-blown birds that have been seen recently at Sandy Point include Red and Red-necked phalaropes, Franklin's Gull, Arctic and Royal terns, Black Skimmer, and Pomarine Jaeger. 

Tom Wetmore is a software engineer living in Newburyport, Massachusetts. He is interested in birds, nature, and the far north. His passion for birding matured while living in Fairbanks, Alaska, and working for the University of Alaska's Geophysical Institute. Tom led many walks for the Fairbanks Bird Club and compiled the Fairbanks Christmas Bird Count. He did contract work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service monitoring spring migration in the Pacific Flyway from a location near the shoals where the oil tanker Exxon Valdez later ran aground. He was living in Alaska in 1975 when the Bird of the Century appeared in Newburyport harbor. Though he had not heard of Newburyport, he decided that if he returned to the Lower 48, he would make his home there. He did but still has not seen a Ross's Gull. Tom birds on Plum Island whenever he has the opportunity, and he maintains a website where he summarizes and tabulates bird sightings from the island.

Birders Secure Plum Island, Save Birds

Brooke Stevens

In 1928 Annie H. Brown, a long-time member of the Massachusetts Audubon Society, left \$25,000 to the Federation of the Bird Clubs of New England to establish and maintain a wildlife sanctuary in Massachusetts. The Federation chose Plum Island in Essex County. The core of the new sanctuary was a parcel of 300 acres of beach, dunes, and salt marsh near the southern end of the island. The Federation later merged with Mass Audubon, which increased the sanctuary holdings to 1115 acres. The Plum Island Beach Company had already secured title to most of the northern end of the island and eventually developed hundreds of small house lots. At the other end of the island, the Bar Island Realty Company had elaborate plans for creating roads and house lots on the 400 acres that are now Sandy Point State Reservation.

In 1942, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service purchased the Annie H. Brown Sanctuary as part of what was to be an extended federal wildlife refuge, initially including 12,000 acres of marsh as well as all of Plum Island. Strong opposition however, came from local sportsmen who saw marshland access slipping away and from land owners whose property was being acquired through eminent domain. In the end, political pressures prevailed but the core of the original refuge was saved, and some of the land that had initially been conceded was regained.

Today the total area of the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge (PRNWR) is 4662 acres, thanks to those birders who originally identified Plum Island and adjacent marshes as critical habitat for migrants using the Atlantic flyway, to a birder's bequest that started the conservation process, to Mass Audubon which built on the core land holding, and to waterfowl hunters who purchased Migratory Bird Hunting Stamps (since 1977 officially called the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp, and now commonly referred to as the "Duck Stamp"). Nearly all of the Refuge was purchased with federal Duck Stamp dollars.

The Duck Stamp and where the money goes

In 1934 Jay Norwood "Ding" Darling, Pulitzer-prize winning cartoonist, popular conservationist, and eventual founder of the National Wildlife Federation, created a revenue stamp purchased by hunters. The proceeds were used to buy disappearing habitat for waterfowl and other wildlife. His portrait of a pair of Mallards appeared on the first Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp. Those puddle ducks launched a simple yet powerful conservation tool, raising more than \$700 million that has been used to purchase more than 5.2 million acres over the years. But much more can be done to build on this success.

Ninety-eight percent of stamp proceeds go directly to secure wetland and grassland habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System. Everyone — birders, hunters, anglers, and other vacationers — who purchases a Duck Stamp contributes to saving wintering, migration, and breeding habitat used by a whole suite of water, marsh, and grassland birds.

As of September 30, 2006, the National Wildlife Refuge System encompassed 96,369,969.43 acres. This includes 547 national wildlife refuges, 37 Wetland Management Districts (which include Waterfowl Production Areas in 204 counties), and 50 Coordination Areas which are managed by the states.

Currently there is an acquisition list of high-priority properties for the refuge system that consists of 15.4 million acres with a price tag of a staggering \$4 billion. With only \$25 million annually coming into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund from the Stamp, there is a long waiting list.

The Atlantic Flyway, Northeast Region, and connecting the dots

Sixty years ago, Rachel Carson wrote:

A striking fact about the Atlantic flyway — a fact which dominates the conservation problem — is the extremely limited area of its winter range compared with the vast extent of its breeding grounds. The nesting area extends from Greenland across much of northern Canada; the wintering grounds are confined to a narrow strip of coastal marshes along the east coast of the United States. A map of the flyway looks like a huge, distorted funnel with a long slender stem. Imagine that for one-half of the year all the contents of the funnel have to be contained within the stem and you can understand the compression of birds within their winter range . . . Parker River is a link in the chain of refuges established at carefully chosen intervals on the Atlantic flyway . . . Of the coastal refuges of the flyway, the migrations of birds link Parker River toward the north with Moosehorn, near Calais, Maine, and toward the south with Brigantine on the ocean coast of New Jersey, and Bombay Hook, almost directly west on the shores of Delaware Bay. Then come Blackwater in Maryland; Chincoteague and Back Bay, Virginia; Pea Island and Mattamuskeet in North Carolina; Cape Romain in South Carolina; and Savannah on the border between South Carolina and Georgia.

Parker River National Wildlife Refuge is one of seventy-one refuges in the Northeast Region, which extends from Virginia to Maine and as far west as the Ohio River. Within the region there are landowners ready to sell when funds are available. Three times a year, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission decides how the Stamp dollars are spent. If you are interested in taking a look at the annual reports you can visit: <<http://www.fws.gov/realty/mbcc.html>>.

The Duck Stamp at work in New England

Historically, Duck Stamp dollars went into the acquisition of three National Wildlife Refuges in the state: Parker River, Monomoy, and Great Meadows, all of which are designated as Important Bird Areas. Since the Stamp was first issued, nearly 15,000 acres have been purchased for close to \$2.5 million. Walter Quist of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Hadley reports that although land acquisition prices are high, the Service is still able to maximize habitat protection with Duck Stamp dollars, focusing primarily on large undeveloped wetland parcels; the mouth of the

Examples of the percentage of refuge land in the Northeast Region acquired with Duck Stamp Funds

Iroquois, NY	99.4	Prime Hook, DE	81.8
Parker River, MA	99.3	Great Meadows, MA	75.6
Monomoy, MA	97.8	Blackwater, MD	75.8
Bombay Hook, DE	95.1	Chincoteague, VA	69.9
Missisquoi, VT	93.8	Moosehorn, ME	68.5
Erie, PA	90.5	Silvio Conte, CT/MA/VT/NH	56.3
Montezuma, NY	87.7	Rachel Carson, ME	53.9
Edwin B. Forsythe, NJ	85.0	Lake Umbagog, NH/ME	42.2
Supawna Meadows, NJ	83.8	Great Swamp, NJ	36.7

Oxbow in Northhampton is a recently approved land acquisition project. (pers comm.) In New England, recent national wildlife refuge purchases using Stamp dollars in Maine and New Hampshire have included Rachel Carson (35 acres), Lake Umbagog (250 acres), and Silvio O. Conte (499 acres).

What birders can do

It's simple: buy a stamp and display it in the field. The new Duck Stamp features a pair of Ring-necked Ducks by artist Richard Clifton, a Delaware native who is an active volunteer and member of the Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge friends group. It became available on July 1 and can be purchased at the Parker River Refuge, at your local post office, and online from birding groups that are currently offering the stamp along with a clear plastic key-ring type holder that can be attached to binoculars or pack.

As a conservation donation, it [the Stamp] is unparalleled . . . It's simply the most efficient application of your money to conservation. — David Sibley (*Birder's World*, August 2006)

“Exquisite waterfowl prints, painted by celebrated wildlife artists, priced at \$15, and the program safeguards critical habitat? Almost sounds too good to be true. I've been buying duck stamps for nearly forty years and recently I've gotten into the habit of buying two.” — Pete Dunne, Director of New Jersey Audubon Society's Cape May Bird Observatory

Birders can and must continue to be a tremendous resource for habitat protection. When I started birding my friends and I had different work schedules. They visited Plum Island mid-week most weeks of the year during the 1990s, finding Long-billed Curlew and Say's Phoebe among other great birds (calling me at work to share the excitement). Every year as they marked off more life birds they bought a Duck Stamp and pasted it into their field guides. It was an impressive collection that represented a remarkable decade of birding the PRNWR. As an added benefit, possession of a current \$15 Stamp allows holders free access to Parker River and other refuges that may charge for entry. The Stamp can be purchased at local post offices as well as

online at the Fish and Wildlife Service website. (*Ed. note: Mass Audubon's Joppa Flats Education Center in Newburyport now sells Federal Duck Stamps.*) In addition to the Federal Duck Stamp, there is also the Junior Duck Stamp, which generates funds for environmental education programs in schools.

Bird clubs and businesses may want to follow the example of Eagle Optics, which has recently introduced a stamp-holder and accompanying information on the stamp that is being distributed with all of its optics sales, or the Georgia and Wisconsin ornithological societies, which are selling Duck Stamps on their websites, along with a clear plastic key-ring type holder that can be attached to binoculars or pack. According to Steve Holzman, Georgia's Business Manager, Stamp and Stamp holder sales have been brisk since December (pers. comm.). Both societies are charging the original \$15 for the stamp plus a little more (up to \$2) for handling and/or for the holder. This is an encouraging volunteer effort to raise visibility not only for a regional and national conservation initiative but also for bird groups and businesses.

It's more than ducks

The refuge habitat secured through Duck Stamp sales saves far more than ducks. After all, it's officially called the Migratory Bird Hunting *and Conservation* Stamp. It works on behalf of shorebirds, raptors, herons, egrets, gulls, terns, and marsh-and-grassland-loving songbirds. It also works for the rest of us who enjoy birds. 🦆



Stamp sources

The Federal Duck Stamp Program <<http://www.fws.gov/duckstamps/stamps.htm>>

Georgia Ornithological Society <<http://www.gos.org/duckstamp/duckstamp.htm>>

Wisconsin Society for Ornithology

<<http://www.uwgb.edu/birds/wso/duckstamps.pdf>>

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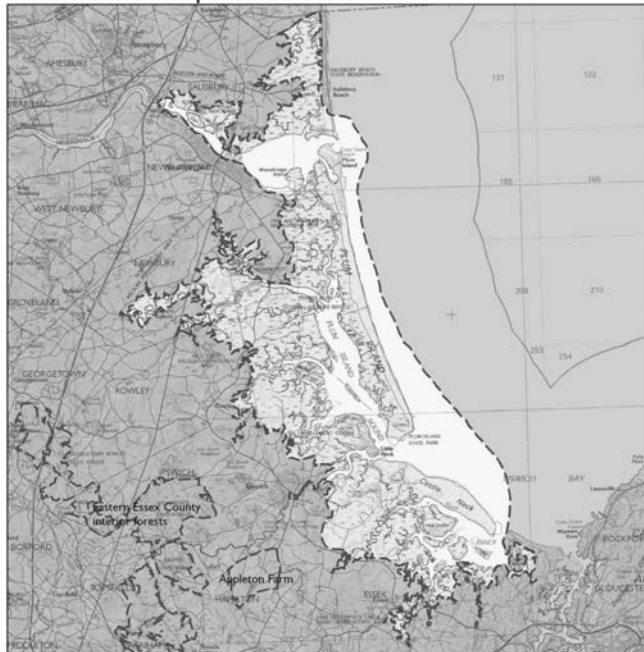
Brooke Stevens is a former editor of Bird Observer. She would like to acknowledge Paul Baicich's assistance in providing sources for the refuge data in this article, and editorial guidance from Jennifer Lapis of the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Great Marsh IBA — New on Mass Audubon's Website

Plum Island is a big chunk of the Great Marsh Important Bird Area (IBA), which encompasses the largest saltmarsh in New England. Visit the IBA program's greatly enhanced guide to Important Bird Areas on Mass Audubon's website.

http://www.massaudubon.org/Birds_&_Beyond/index.php

Massachusetts Important Bird Areas



Great Marsh

— IBA Boundaries

Notes: IBA boundaries from Mass Audubon's IBA Program.
Base map (USGS quads and shaded relief, or 2001 color orthophotos)
from MassGIS or USGS. Massachusetts State Plane, NAD83.
Map produced by Mass Audubon GIS Services, April 2007.



Massachusetts Important Bird Area: Great Marsh Map © April 2007 / Courtesy of Mass Audubon GIS Services.

Coffee Lessons for New England Birders

Paul J. Baicich

Seventy-five years ago, the godfather of modern birding, Ludlow Griscom, wrote “The distribution of bird-life in Guatemala” (*Bulletin American Museum of Natural History*, vol 64). In the lengthy paper, composed in his Cambridge home, Griscom described birds in coffee plantations multiple times and noted that when trees were left to furnish shade for the coffee plants, “the avifauna was little, if any, different from its original condition.”

Such observations were a curiosity in 1932, but not necessarily monumentally significant. After all, at the time there was much natural forest in southern Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and points southward. And this natural forest provided plenty of shelter for wintering neotropical migrants as well as permanent-resident middle-American birds.

That was then; this is now.

Today, the insight that songbirds in the neotropics — both migrating birds and residents — seem to inhabit traditional shade-grown coffee farms almost as much as they occupy existing natural tropical forests is highly significant, if only because the natural forests are under such stress. The fact that Black-and-White Warblers, Black-throated Green Warblers, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks do well on rustic coffee farms in Guatemala is important.

By the late 1980s, the implications of these observations began to be fully appreciated. In the last decade and a half there have been multiple scholarly papers in journals such as *The Auk* and *Conservation Biology* on this very subject.

Research, particularly in northern Latin America and the Caribbean, has shown that shade-coffee agriculture supports about as much avian biodiversity as natural forests. Other investigations, especially where shade-coffee farms were adjacent to undisturbed natural forest (serving as a *de facto* buffer), have produced similar encouraging results. See Figure 1 for some typical New England nesting birds which may winter in coffee country in Middle-America and the Caribbean.

The Concept and the Problems

Enter eco-agriculture with a twist of social awareness. The avoidance of pesticides and chemical fertilizer, the accumulation of leaf-litter, complex insect use, and, of course, maintenance of a mixture of large shade trees all combine to provide attractive, near-natural bird habitat today in these human-transformed coffee locations.

With coffee the leading source of foreign exchange in Latin America and the Caribbean, we could save those migrating orioles, warblers, and tanagers as well as the local motmots, todys, and euphonias. Drink up! Easy, isn't it?

Well, not really . . .

**From Southern Mexico through
Panama**

Ruby-Throated Hummingbird
Blue-headed Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Warbling Vireo
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Wood Thrush
Swainson's Thrush
Tennessee Warbler
Nashville Warbler
Black-and-white Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler

Black-throated Green Warbler
Yellow Warbler
Wilson's Warbler
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Baltimore Oriole

In the Central Caribbean

Cape May Warbler
Black-and-white Warbler
Black-throated Blue Warbler
Prairie Warbler
Ovenbird
American Redstart

Figure 1. Here is a list of sample Neotropical migrant birds — specifically, New England nesting birds — regularly found in quality shade-coffee farms.

Yes, the evidence is incontrovertible, but there are at least four major complications:

First, there is Robusta coffee. Robusta coffee plants grow taller, are more resistant to pests and disease, and produce more fruits than standard shade-loving Arabica coffee. Robusta is grown mainly in Africa, parts of Asia, and widely in Brazil. With caffeine content about twice that of the Arabica, Robusta is often used for instant coffee and as the main ingredient in canned supermarket-grade blends. Robusta coffee does not need to be grown in the shade, and Robusta plantations are clearly *not* havens for biodiversity.

Second, there is sun coffee. The arrival in South America of a fungus, coffee leaf rust (*la roya*), in the 1970s, promoted the expansion of newer coffee hybrids, bred for sun-tolerance, compact growth and additional yield per tree. The flip-side is that more chemical inputs — fertilizer, herbicides, and pesticides — are required for sun coffee than in traditional cultivation, and, of course, the land is denuded of trees.

“Like the Green Revolution that was supposed to provide a miracle cure through new strains of rice, wheat, and corn, the sun coffee revolution has failed to fulfill its promise,” wrote Mark Pendergrast, author of the thorough coffee history *Uncommon Grounds*. “Instead, it has contributed to the ecological degradation and loss of important habitat.” More than 40 percent of the coffee-growing land in Colombia, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean has been converted to sun coffee. Throughout the Latin American wintering grounds of migratory birds, the natural landscape has witnessed massive changes at phenomenal rates. Not surprisingly, studies have shown that in full-sun farms the number of bird species is cut by half, and the number of individual birds is cut by as much as two-thirds.

Third, there is the problem of the prolonged coffee glut. Prices coffee farmers received for their beans hit historic lows in the past decade, especially from the late

1990s to the middle of 2004. Bumper crops in Brazil and the entry of Vietnam as a significant coffee producer have at times flooded the market with cheap, low-quality Robusta coffee beans, causing prices to sink. Even the “specialty market,” which relies on higher-quality Arabica beans, has not been immune to dropping prices.

Even with a rise in coffee market prices over the past few years, the overall impact has had long-term devastating consequences, including the dislocation and impoverishment of thousands of coffee farmers and their families in Latin America. Many in the coffee sector in Latin America who are unable to make the transition to marketing organic and shade-grown Arabica coffees are now abandoning coffee — and the land — sometimes selling out to speculators and thus accelerating development of cattle ranches. Flight to urban areas, and to other countries, comes into play here. These circumstances are bad for people as well as birds. Moreover, any ongoing coffee glut just exacerbates the sun-vs.-shade issue.

Fourth, there is the issue of the label itself. There are unremitting controversies about exactly what constitutes real shade coffee. In the 1980s, a group of Mexican coffee researchers and technicians devised a “management spectrum for coffee,” with a five-category range of shade and cover (Nolasco 1985, Moguel and Toledo 1995, see Figure 2). This breakthrough, however, only clarified some debate limits. Controversy over what is legitimate shade-coffee, and if and how to certify it, abound. There is also the ongoing issue of truth-in-labeling. “Not all shade is equal,” summarizes April Pojman at the Thanksgiving Coffee Company.

The Answers

Consumer-birders, therefore, must develop into discerning eco-shoppers. We need to become better educated about the issues surrounding coffee. And we surely need to become better educators. The resulting message must be loud and clear: shade-coffee is great for birds and good for people. Responses are also available for the four problem areas:

First, the Robusta vs. Arabica issue turns on consumers’ awareness of coffee quality. Robusta, with a higher caffeine content and stronger flavor that tends toward the bitter, is less aromatic than Arabica. It is commonly used in instant coffee and as a price stabilizer in canned blends. Robusta is separated by quality as well as by place of origin. Arabica coffee of Latin America and the Caribbean is generally more expensive, due to higher growing and processing costs, and is perceived as better-tasting by discerning drinkers. There is no substitute for consumer awareness.

Second, absent a shade-label, organic Arabica coffee is about as beneficial to birds. This is because it is very hard to produce coffee outside of a shade environment without the use of some chemicals. Currently, “organic” is a stricter term than “shade-grown.” Another sustainable element, “fair-trade coffee,” also enters the mix. This coffee brings a fair return to those who pick and process the beans. An estimated 80 percent of fair-trade coffee is also de-facto shade-grown.

Third, despite the coffee glut, there is at least hope for quality-coffee operations. While nearly all gourmet/specialty coffees are Arabica, only about 10 percent of

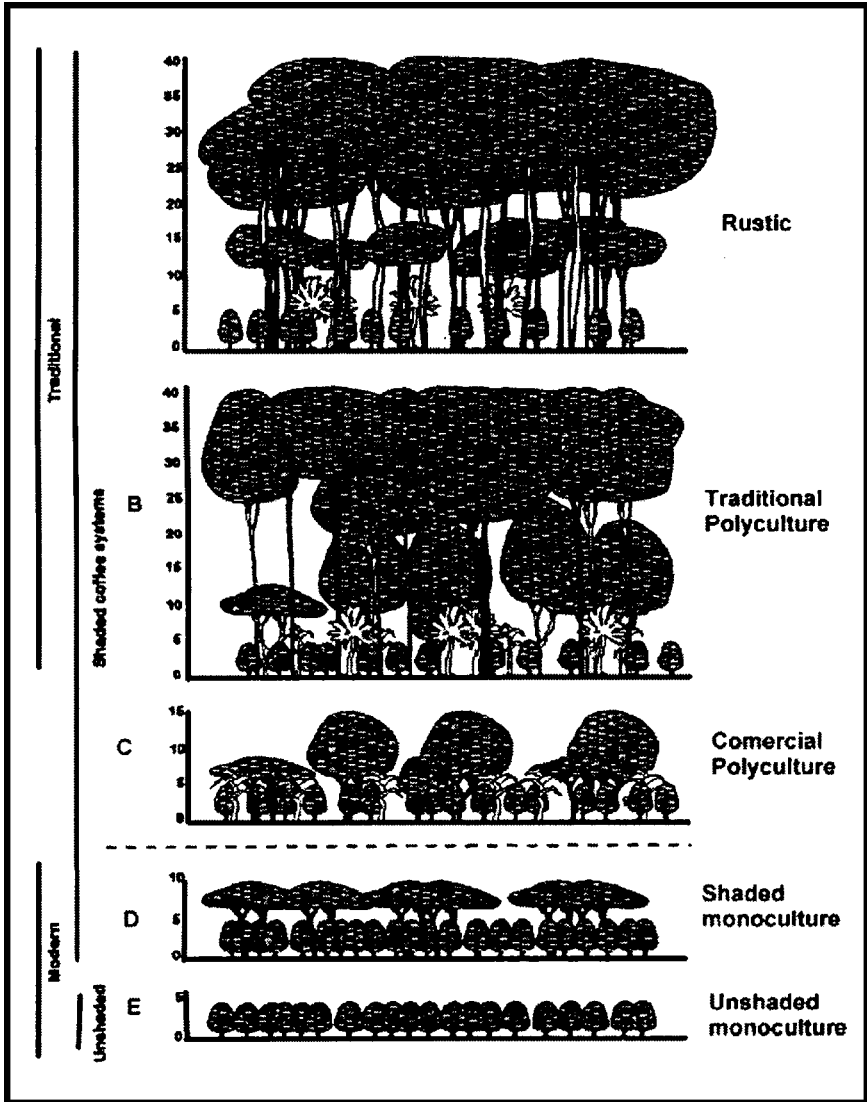


Figure 2: This diagram illustrates five different coffee-growing systems developed by M. Nolasco (*Café y sociedad en Mexico*, Centro de Ecodesarrollo, 1985), P. Moguel and V.M. Toledo, (“El Cafe de Mexico: Sustentabilidad y Resistencia Campesina e Indigena,” *La Jornada del Campo*, Sept. 26, 1995) and colleagues. This is a summary of their “management spectrum for coffee,” describing a progressive shade-gradient. Note, especially the vegetational complexity, height of arboreal strata, and variety of components.

Arabicas are gourmet quality. Maximizing that factor in Latin America and the Caribbean is the goal of visionary coffee operatives. For example, Paul Katzeff, head of the Thanksgiving Coffee Company and a past president of the Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA), has called for higher growing criteria (appreciating shade-levels), cooperative production and marketing, high-quality processing yardsticks, and on-going cupping standards to retain value in periods of low prices.

Fourth, while debates over coffee label-legitimacy are common, the more consumer demands are articulated, the more the industry, large and small, has to adjust its practices. Clearly, more transparency is necessary.

Some observers have viewed the larger market dilemma as a chicken-and-egg situation. Major coffee producers (giants such as Procter & Gamble, Kraft, Sara Lee Corp., and Nestlé) have said that not enough of specific shade-grown brands would be produced and certified to assure them of a reliable long-term supply. On the other end of the production process, growers are unlikely to pursue a certified shade-grown route unless they are guaranteed some secure return. Clearly, this cycle, particularly among the “big four,” must be fractured. (Recent moves at Procter & Gamble indicate that there may be some breakthroughs.)

Still, there are growing opportunities to find bird-compatible shade-grown coffee today, usually among the “specialty” coffees. Fortunately, it is far easier to buy shade-grown coffee now than it was five or ten years ago. There are even increasing opportunities to buy “triple-labeled” coffee — sustainable coffee that is shade-grown, organic, *and* fair-traded.


Making an informed decision when it comes to your daily — or more-than-daily — cup of coffee can actually save birds. The additional good news is that your decision can help create further consumer demand and can help to sustain struggling coffee communities, too.

Bird-conscious Consumers

The rise of the bird-preservation movement at the end of the 19th century was in response to the slaughter of birds to adorn women’s hats and clothing. The call to stop the feather industry was a call to thoughtful consumers. That effort gave rise to the early Audubon societies, including Mass Audubon (1896), Maine Audubon (1902), and New Hampshire Audubon (1914). It also gave birth to protective federal legislation (e.g., Lacey Act of 1900), an innovative refuge system, and a culture of bird appreciation. And it all began with concerned women and men calling for a change in behavior, in consumption.

What’s missing?

With a broad-based coffee-industry that has started to respond, we may conclude that cutting-edge marketing, and not necessarily further research and science, is what is really required today. We could go beyond label-obsession and concentrate on pressuring all the companies — from importers, to roasters, to coffee-shops — to respond to growing eco-consumer demand. We should also get beyond a persistent

feeling of powerlessness that often pervades the birder community. Then, perhaps, we could give new relevance to Griscom's observation in the early 1930s as well as match the wisdom, vision, and resolve of our bird-protection foremothers a century ago. 

Paul J. Baicich is a long-time birder who lives in Maryland. He has spent time in coffee-country in Nicaragua and elsewhere, combining interest in birds and sustainable human-oriented agriculture. This article is an updated version of a presentation he made at the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative a couple of years ago.

MASSWILDLIFE NEWS

State Fish and Wildlife Habitat Protection Tops 4000 Acres

Over 4000 acres of fish and wildlife habitat were protected for wildlife and the public by MassWildlife in the past fiscal year (July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007). Key wildlife habitat was protected through the efforts of MassWildlife and the Department of Fish and Game in 35 towns. Properties ranged from 0.1 acre in Wareham to 400 acres in Leyden. These lands will be added to the list of over 160,000 acres currently under the care and control of MassWildlife, most of which are Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). Most properties were purchased outright (in fee) but, on some properties, the agency purchased conservation easements (development rights), leaving the land held by the original landowner. A listing of the newly acquired FY 2007 properties by town can be found on the MassWildlife website at: http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/habitat/land/land_acquisitions.htm. All lands are open to fishing, hunting, trapping, wildlife observation, boating, hiking, and other passive wildlife related recreation.

MassWildlife's land acquisition program's primary mission is to protect the ecological integrity of the Commonwealth. The agency seeks to assure biological diversity by acquiring the most important fish and wildlife habitat and natural communities and to provide public access to the lands and waters of the Commonwealth. State WMAs include river corridors, wetlands, various type of forested upland, habitat for state listed endangered and threatened species and species of special concern, and high quality examples of other important habitat types. MassWildlife's holdings stretch from the Berkshires to the Cape and Islands. Maps for many WMAs are posted on the agency website at: http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/habitat/habitat_home.htm.

Support for the land acquisition program comes from several sources. The primary funding mechanism is the Commonwealth's open space bond authorization. Fishing, hunting and trapping license buyers contribute a \$5 fee to the Wildlands Fund for wildlife habitat acquisition as an additional revenue source. Some individuals and organizations make direct donations to the Wildlands Fund. A significant amount of funding is also leveraged or received through non-profit conservation organizations. "Gifts or acreage acquired at no cost to MassWildlife were a major part of this year's habitat protection efforts," said Bill Minior, MassWildlife's Realty Chief. "With the assistance of the environmental community, over 1149 acres of habitat were protected, amounting to nearly one third of the year's total habitat protection effort."

Osprey Legacy and the Loss of a Superhero: A Tribute to Gilbert Fernandez

Wayne R. Petersen

Gilbert Fernandez was truly a gentleman and a scholar — a man whose passion for conservation and the preservation of the natural world was exceeded only by his modest and understated demeanor. To quote Gil,

“I sincerely believe that man should leave this earth a little better, and at least as beautiful, for the privilege of having lived on it. It’s a natural way of giving thanks; and it’s the ultimate satisfaction we can all achieve, be we rich or poor, skilled or untrained, humble or heroic. We don’t own the earth we walk on; as the Native Americans admonish us, we are merely tenants. Our ‘osprey orchard,’ like our trees, will be thriving long after we’re gone. It is our only connection with eternity.” (*Sanctuary*, October 1984)

In 1963 Gil was a high school English teacher who, in the summer of that year sold his family’s business, the Gulf Hill Dairy. That same year he also found an Osprey nest on the Westport River not far from his home. Knowing that Ospreys were rare in Massachusetts at that time, he at once notified Allen Morgan and James Baird at Mass Audubon. Immediately Allen Morgan, who was then president of Mass Audubon, set up a blind in order to photograph the nest, and he encouraged Gil and his wife, Josephine, to begin monitoring what few nests still existed along the Westport River.

By 1967 Gil and Jo had located 11 Osprey nests, which collectively held 28 eggs. Only five of these eggs ever hatched, a paltry total considering that healthy Ospreys typically produce three young per pair. The Fernandezes eventually determined that most of the Westport River Ospreys were infertile, and that because they were nesting in shoreline trees, they were sustaining heavy predation from Raccoons, Opossums, and Great Horned Owls. The following winter Gil and Jo erected their first artificial Osprey nest platform, and by March a locally bred female returned to the Westport River, mated, and nested on the platform.

In 1968 Gilbert retired from teaching to pursue his Osprey work with undiminished enthusiasm. Not only was Gil a superb photographer and a world traveler, he was also an eloquent spokesman for Ospreys and their precipitous decline attributable to DDT contamination. After retirement, Gil and Jo began to increasingly give illustrated lectures and write articles in local newspapers and magazines, not only about their work with Ospreys, but about their world travels. They also generously donated hours of their time and their extensive banding expertise to the newly established Manomet Bird Observatory (now Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences). It was during this period in the late 1960s that Gil and Jo were also credited with discovering the first nesting Hooded Warblers ever found in Massachusetts.

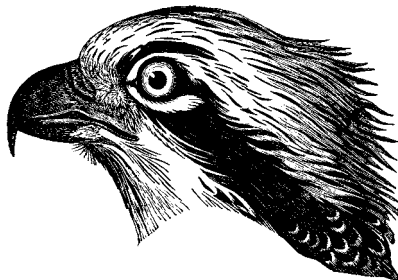
When Gil learned that the Coast Guard was routinely destroying Osprey nests located on navigation buoys in Chesapeake Bay, in 1970 he began rescuing eggs targeted for destruction in the Chesapeake area and brought the fertile eggs to Massachusetts to locate under sterile birds on the Westport River. Although not a totally successful effort, Gil's energies did not go unnoticed by the Coast Guard, who increasingly began to assume stewardship for Ospreys and their problems in Chesapeake Bay.

With the ban of DDT in 1972, along with the increasing number of nest platforms that the Fernandezes had erected on the Westport River, the Osprey population began to increase at the rate of 11-15 percent a year. In 1983, 30 nesting Osprey pairs laid 96 eggs in Westport River nests, 71 of which hatched, and 60 chicks survived to be banded by Gil and Jo Fernandez that year. By the mid-1980s Gil and his wife had banded over 500 Ospreys and erected 60 nest platforms. Incredibly, for a number of years the only financial remuneration that Gilbert received for his efforts on behalf of the beleaguered Ospreys was a \$300 gift from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in England!

Today approximately 75 nesting pairs comprise the Westport River Osprey population, and more than 100 young are typically fledged each year. Without the personal efforts of Gilbert Fernandez, the restoration of a robust Osprey population on the Westport River might never have come about.

The Fernandezes will always be remembered for their outstanding Osprey recovery work, an achievement for which they were recognized by being the first recipients of Mass Audubon's prestigious Allen H. Morgan Award in 1993. Perhaps Gilbert's most outstanding legacy, however, will be his willingness to work with Mass Audubon's Land Protection Department to secure in perpetuity the spectacular farm overlooking the Allens Pond Wildlife Sanctuary that was so near and dear to his heart for so many years. His farm represents a keystone to land protection efforts in the Allens Pond area of South Dartmouth.

Gil will be missed, not only by those who knew, respected, and admired him for so many years, but also by the more recent generations of birders and conservationists who had the opportunity to get to know him and interact with him through his indefatigable energy on behalf of the Paskamansett Bird Club. The passing of Gilbert Fernandez represents the loss of a superhero. 🦅



FIELD NOTES

Something New on the Menu at Logan Airport

Norman Smith

On Sunday, March 4, while I was on the airfield at Logan Airport, I watched an adult Red-tailed Hawk that had been hunting from a flag pole at Castle Island fly across the water and capture an American Black Duck that was taking a snooze in a puddle on the airfield. It quickly killed the duck, and with jets landing nearby it carried the duck to the roof of the Boston Design Center, flying very low over the deck of the JFK aircraft carrier that had thousands of people on board. It was the first time I had seen a red-tail capture a duck and fly off with it. I wondered if anyone on the JFK had noticed. I had just recently bought a digital camera but by the time I drove to the location and had the camera ready, the bird was long gone.

Later in the afternoon I was watching a pair of Peregrine Falcons that nest on the control tower. They were performing some incredible courtship flight maneuvers, when a second-year peregrine flew in from the direction of Spectacle Island and landed on a glide slope tower next to runway 4R, adjacent to the Fire Training Area where I was parked. Immediately, both adult peregrines began stooping relentlessly on the younger bird, and then on a Snowy Owl that was sitting on the roof of the adjacent fire training building. The roosting owl became very active and agitated after being struck by the adult male falcon. It puffed up to twice its size, opened its wings, and gave a loud drawn out call very similar to the food begging cry of a young Great Horned Owl. Immediately the adult peregrines ceased their harassment; the male circled up until it was almost out of sight, and the female went back to perch on the control tower. A short time later, the second-year peregrine, after scanning the airfield, took off from the glide slope tower, making a beeline toward a starling it had spotted on the ground. The adult male peregrine immediately dropped from the sky like a missile — I could hear the wind coming off his wings — and raked the younger peregrine before landing on the glide slope tower. Simultaneously, the Snowy Owl left its perch on the roof and also made a beeline toward the starling. The young peregrine hit the starling on the ground, and immediately the Snowy Owl — right behind it — grabbed the peregrine on the wing and landed with it fifty feet away. I drove up close to the spot and got a few photos, before the owl flew off a short distance with its kill. I cautiously approached the spot where the owl had landed with the peregrine and took a few more photos with both my film and digital cameras. The Logan Bird Patrol vehicle was on the perimeter road close by and noticed the bird activity and drove toward my vehicle. I tried to wave them off but they thought I was telling them to approach. As they approached my vehicle the owl opened its wings and screamed at us just as it had at the adult peregrines, and then flew off across the airfield with the young falcon in its talons and landed on the edge of an active runway. Due to the runway being active and knowing the safety limits set by FAA we took out a spotting scope and watched the owl eat the peregrine.



Snowy Owl with Peregrine Falcon prey at the Fire Training Area at Logan Airport (top) and mantling (bottom). Photographs by Norman Smith.

There were three other Snowy's at the airport that day that I tried to capture and band, but with no success. As it was getting dark I watched one owl capture a Killdeer after several attempts and another one nabbed a woodcock.

I went back to the airport early the next morning and the runway was closed, so I contacted the Massport Bird Patrol and was permitted to recover the remains of the peregrine, an unbanded male. The head was still attached, which is unusual for an owl kill, but the chest was completely gone.

On a number of occasions, my research assistants and I have seen Snowy Owls invert themselves with incredible speed and agility and nearly grab peregrines that were harassing them. Once we even watched a Snowy grab the wing of a gyrfalcon that came too close, but we can now officially add Peregrine Falcon to the long list of Snowy Owl prey items. 🦉

(Editor's note: Norman Smith is the director of Mass. Audubon's Blue Hills Trailside Museum in Milton. He has been studying Snowy Owls as well as other raptors at Logan Airport for over 25 years; the airport locations described are not accessible to the public. Snowy Owls at Logan Airport can best be observed from the fishing pier at Castle Island in South Boston.)

A Western Wilson's Warbler Subspecies (*chryseola/pileolata*) in Nahant, from January 2 through February 14, 2007

Linda Pivacek

On January 2, 2007, Tom Martin reported a Wilson's Warbler in the area of the Nahant Thicket. This was an extremely late date for this species and I relocated the bird on January 10. I had excellent views of the bird in good light and was immediately impressed with the plumage. My initial reaction was that I had never seen this brilliant plumage on a Wilson's Warbler in the northeast before and suspected it was one of the western subspecies. It was beautiful, very bright, with yellow-infused green upperparts and rich golden-yellow underparts. The nominate eastern Wilson's (*pusilla*) has a duller olive-green back and paler lemon-yellow upperparts. Very distinctive were the orange tones on the forehead, chin, and upper breast. I heard the bird call several times and the call note was different than I had heard in the northeast before; it was more nasal.

After a bit of research I determined that the plumage, especially the orange tone on the forehead, chin, and breast was consistent with that of the subspecies *chryseola*, of the Pacific coast. It appeared to be a male due to the brightness of its plumage, and the extent and blackness of the cap. The distal third of the cap was sparsely infused with green feathers, characteristic of a first-year male.



THE NAHANT WESTERN WILSON'S WARBLER © BRUCE DEGRAAF

I called Rick Heil and he saw the bird that afternoon and agreed that it was a western subspecies both from plumage and the call note. Rob Kipp and I took photos the following day and Rob's were posted on Massbird. I also contacted Don Crockett and we recorded the call notes.

Both Rick and I forwarded the photos to experts and Rick received a reply from Peter Pyle. Pyle stated that, in his opinion, this Wilson's Warbler was not the eastern subspecies, *pusilla*. He determined that it was a first-year male of the subspecies *chryseola* or *pileolata*. Although the plumage was characteristic of *chryseola*, there are areas in the eastern Sierra Nevada where *pileolata* and *chryseola* intermingle and the plumages are similar. In any case, this warbler was likely from California or extreme western Nevada — and had traveled a very long way.

I observed this bird many times up until February 14, the stormy day with periods of snow, rain and then in the early evening a flash freeze. Unfortunately, this was his "perfect storm." He was last seen very wet in a pouring rain at 4:30 p.m. Then the sudden drop in temperature produced a flash-freeze within an hour.

This western Wilson's Warbler was very tame and inquisitive. I have read about this characteristic in western birds. It brought both birders and non-birders together in Nahant. If one stood or sat quietly it would land on your shoe, hat, or even a camera lens or outstretched hand. For some it was a magical experience. Some locals had never even heard of a warbler before and got the chance to see this lovely creature in

an otherwise drab winter landscape — no binoculars needed. They learned about the existence of such wonderful creatures and wondered what they ate, how they kept warm, and where they slept. For me this was special, a shared experience that gave many an increased awareness and appreciation of birds. 🐦

Mallard Mobile Home

William E. Davis, Jr. and Sanford Legere

On June 10, 2007, in the early afternoon, Sanford (Sandy) Legere took his boat from its mooring, and with a neighbor headed up East Falmouth's Eel River, over to Waquoit Bay, and then out onto the ocean before returning to his mooring, a round trip of approximately six miles. Upon their return, the neighbor noticed that there was a duck, a female Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), on board, tucked back under a bulkhead that covered the gas tank, a tarpaulin, and the bilge pump well. Sandy made daily visits to the boat through June 16. The duck was absent on one occasion, and where it had been he discovered a sparse nest containing seven eggs. The nest consisted of Styrofoam fragments from the underside of the bulkhead. The female showed great nest tenacity, not budging during that initial one-hour boat trip (which included a bumpy stretch of open ocean) and subsequent daily visits from Sandy. On June 16 the female was seen flying from the boat around noon, and when we later examined the boat the eggs were gone and the female Mallard was nowhere in evidence. We suspected that nest had been predated by gulls, crows, or humans.

The following day Sandy returned to his boat and found that the eggs and remnants of the foam nest had rolled into the sump well where they were immersed in water, the foam fragments having clogged the bilge pump and caused it to burn out. The wind had been high the previous day and the water choppy, and the rocking of the boat may have caused the eggs to roll into well to their destruction. The eggs had rested on the plywood of the deck and there had been virtually no structure to the nest. Sandy had thoroughly checked his boat about a week before discovering the nesting duck, so the nest could not have been more than a week old at the time.

The *Birds of North America* account of Mallards (Drilling et al. 2002) reports Mallards in urban habitats nesting on human structures, including docks and boats, and on dry land (in people's yards) (Figley and VanDruff 1982). They also readily nest in nest boxes and baskets (Doty and Lee 1974, Titman and Lowther 1975). Mallards tend to tenaciously remain on nest during incubation, and when disturbed sometimes give broken-wing distraction displays (Titman and Lowther 1975), but not leaving the nest during a one-hour boat ride with two adult humans seems extreme. 🐦

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MALLARDS BY DAVID LARSON

Common Birds in Decline

Last month the National Audubon Society released *Common Birds in Decline*, a report which combines results of the 40 years of the Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) and the USGS-backed Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) to provide a snapshot of the state of some of North America's common birds. The report was a collaborative effort, with input from state NAS offices and a select group of Important Bird Areas (IBA) coordinators.

Common Birds in Decline presents a distressing picture of what is happening to some of our most familiar birds. The review and its associated outreach activities are intended to build public awareness over the fate of such common species as Northern Pintail, Greater Scaup, Northern Bobwhite, Common Tern, Eastern Meadowlark, and Evening Grosbeak — all species which were found to have experienced nationwide population declines of greater than 70 percent over four decades.

The report does not suggest that these birds should become the focus of any new or special conservation efforts, but simply that their condition highlights important conservation concerns affecting a wider environment.

As such, the mantra of “keeping common species common” resonates clearly in this report.

Details of *Common Birds in Decline* along with information on the methodology used can be found online at:
<http://stateofthebirds.audubon.org/cbid/>.

(Excerpted from THE BIRDING COMMUNITY E-BULLETIN July 2007. The Birding Community E-bulletin is distributed through the generous support of Steiner Binoculars. You can access an archive of past E-bulletins on the website of the National Wildlife Refuge Association [NWRA]:
<http://www.refugenet.org/birding/birding5.html> and on the birding pages for Steiner Binoculars <http://www.steiner-birding.com/bulletin.html>.)

ABOUT BOOKS

A Compilation, a Concoction, and a Continuation

Mark Lynch

Why Don't Woodpeckers Get Headaches: And Other Bird Questions You Know You Want to Ask by Mike O'Connor. 2007. Beacon Press. Boston, Massachusetts.

Good Birders Don't Wear White: 50 Tips from North America's Top Birders. Edited by Lisa White. 2007. Houghton Mifflin Company. Boston, Massachusetts.

Soaring With Fidel: An Osprey Odyssey from Cape Cod to Cuba and Beyond by David Gessner. Beacon Press. Boston, Massachusetts.

"Who often, but without success, have prayed for apt Alliteration's artful aid?" Charles Churchill

"Read, read, read." William Faulkner

Your Breeding Bird Atlasing is done for the year, summer is sliding rapidly into fall, and you want to take a break from looking at the throngs of molting shorebirds and waves of scruffy fall warblers. Ideally, you would like to get out of the sun and sit down in a cool, comfortable spot and get lost in the experience of reading something interesting and enjoyable about the avocation you so enjoy. But let's face it, reading most birding books, like the new *Gulls of the Americas* by Howell and Dunn, is like perusing an advanced level biology textbook. Sure, there's important information in them, but enjoyable? Below are three new books that you can curl up with for an hour or so before venturing back into the field with bins and scope.

If you have ever spent any time in the Bird Watcher's General Store in Orleans and gotten into a conversation with owner Mike O'Connor, you already have a good idea what to expect from *Why Don't Woodpeckers Get Headaches?* Mike's friendly, garrulous, and slightly wise-ass demeanor is part of the reason the store has enjoyed the success it has. His laid-back egalitarian attitude towards people who enjoy birds also makes him just as interested in the jays at someone's feeder as in the latest rare shorebird seen on South Beach. It's all about birds, so it's all good. Mike is the perfect antidote to dour obsessive-compulsive listers or geeky shorebird and gull mavens.



In the spring of 2000, Mike began to write about birding for the local paper, *The Cape Codder*. Other regional papers soon picked up this popular column. The format is simple: people write in questions about birds, and Mike answers them with his singular blend of humor and intelligence. *Why Don't Woodpeckers Get Headaches* is a compilation of selections from the column. The range of questions Mike has fielded is

in itself hilarious and indicative of the often wild and confused ideas the public has about birds and the natural world. There are the predictable inquiries about squirrels at feeders, buying binoculars, where the jays have gone, and what robins do in winter. But there are also truly odd queries about the identification of the AFLAC insurance waterfowl (it's a duck, not a goose), whether woodpeckers get headaches, and that ole' devil finch in the backyard:

Don't make fun of me, but I think I have a new kind of finch in my yard. This odd bird looks and acts very much like a female House Finch, but it has those horns on top of it's head. I swear I'm not making this up. I can't find it in my bird book. Is there such a bird as a Horned House Finch? (p. 128)

Of course Mike's answers are what makes *Woodpeckers* such an enjoyable read. Sometimes his comeback is so stand-up comedic you can almost hear the rim shot in the background.

Dear Bird Folks:

I want to get a new birdbath for my wife. Do you have any suggestions?

—Mel, Dayton, OH

A Question for you Mel,

How big is your wife? She might be more comfortable in a hot tub, though that's up to you. But seriously . . . (p. 95)

Mike does (eventually) get down to basics, and though his writing is often irreverent, he is also earnest in his desire to be genuinely helpful. Each question — serious or oddball — is treated as equally worthy of a well-researched answer. You never catch that whiff of snotty condescension you sometimes detect when a backyard bird feeder asks a question of a “serious” birder. Mike takes it as a given that while most people cannot tell a Short-billed from a Long-billed dowitcher, they are still very curious about birds and how they live their lives.

It has always surprised me that so many people can take a joyful hobby like feeding birds and turn it into a source of stress. (p. xv)

Why Don't Woodpeckers Get Headaches? is an excellent choice for novice birders and people content with simply looking out their windows at their feeders. But avid birders will also enjoy its humorous and easy-going style and Mike's good-natured patience in dealing with the public's sometimes very odd notions about birds.

Unlike *Woodpeckers*, *Good Birders Don't Wear White* is a book of many voices and attitudes. Lisa White is an editor at Houghton Mifflin Company. After attending a birding festival, she remembered Sheri Williams' sidebar in *Pete Dunne On Birdwatching* that was titled “Good Birder's Don't Wear White.” Thinking this would be a great title for a book, she came up with a short list of potential contributors and a list of categories covering the entire learning curve of birding. She invited fifty authors to choose a topic and to keep their essay under 1000 words; *Good Birders* is the concocted result.

GOOD BIRDERS
DON'T WEAR WHITE

50 TIPS—NORTH AMERICA'S TOP BIRDERS



FEATURING David Sibley, Tom Gohmert,
Kevin Kaufman, Dan & Lillian Stiles, Bill Thompson II,
Scott Weisburger, John Ziswiler, and more!
FOREWORD BY Pete Dunne
EDITED BY Lisa White

Not surprisingly, *Good Birders* is a mixed bag of conventional observations, interesting tips, and some rather unusual advice. Some essays like Peter Alden's "Play Fair When Sharing a Scope" or Bill Thompson III's "Clean Your Optics: The Unbearable Brightness of Seeing" deal with very specific situations that occur while in the field. Other essays attempt to define the spirit and nature of birding or to expand the reader's horizons. In this latter category are pieces like Wayne Petersen's "*Heed Birding's Traditions and Taboos*" and Scott Weidensaul's "*Make a Difference for Birds*."

Some essays just made me scratch my head and wonder. These would include Paul Kerlinger's "*Try the Canadian Great Plains in Winter*" (I like seeing Snowy Owls, but not *that* much!) or Steve Howell's "*Don't Be Afraid of Two-Thirds of the Planet: Pelagic Birding*" in which he blithely recommends "don't use drugs" and "don't hang on." (I've taken many students on their first pelagic trip, and not taking drugs just isn't an option for some people. When you get seasick, you can't just shrug your shoulders and ask for a "do-over." You're also stuck in the midst of what is causing you dire misery for many long hours.)

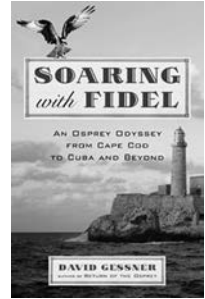
The short essay format used in *Good Birders Don't Wear White* works for the majority of these one-note efforts, but I found myself wishing a few were longer. In Richard K. Walton's "*Recognize True Greatness*" he discusses what makes a great birder, and why he himself will only ever be just a "successful" birder. He recommends ways to achieve greatness by approaching birding from the perspectives of "art, literature, history, science and philosophy" (p. 259). Walton's piece is one of the few truly pleasant surprises in *Good Birders Don't Wear White* because it refers to the greater intellectual world outside of birding and underscores how claustrophobic writing about the birding community can get.

Like many other concept collections, *Good Birders Don't Wear White* is an uneven effort with several real highs. It's a good book to dip into during the breaks in your day. Most of the pieces offer well-written, sincere advice from experts from around the birding community about the importance of journals, keeping better field notes, the fun of nocturnal birding, or how to behave in the field. But part of the fun of any collection like this is recognizing the author and wondering to yourself, "so *this* is what they chose to write about?" and then re-evaluating your opinion of them. At least that's what I did.

In a surprisingly short amount of time, David Gessner has evolved into one of our most accomplished and singular writers about nature. While many authors treat their experiences in nature with a hushed earnestness and a suspect neatness, Gessner writes about the messy humanness of being outside. That means there may be some drinking, some fighting, some idiocy, and some humor along the way. This in no way diminishes his reverence for the great outdoors, but he writes with a *verité* not often encountered in books concerned with subjects like — in this case — Ospreys.

Soaring With Fidel is a companion piece to *Return of the Osprey*, but it is much more than just a sequel. Whereas *Return of the Osprey* was a very personal and interior meditation on family and nature on Cape Cod, *Soaring With Fidel* is an

expansive book of many voices, tracking Gessner's spontaneous odyssey from Cape Cod, down the east coast, over to Cuba, and eventually to Columbia. The story begins as Gessner decides to track radio-tagged migrating Ospreys as they wend their way down the eastern seaboard. Before he can say "fish eagle" he finds himself in a silly competition with the venerable BBC (the British Broadcast Corporation, *not* the Brookline Bird Club), who are attempting to film a documentary of the very same migration and who are always just one step ahead of him.



It is the accounts of the people Gessner spends time with along the way that make *Soaring With Fidel* such an interesting and complex book. He meets briefly with Gil Fernandez, the man who single-handedly brought Ospreys back to Westport, Massachusetts, and finds him now a shrunken but still feisty 93-year-old defender of everything "Osprey." Fernandez smartly chides Gessner just because he described an Osprey nest as "messy." (*Editor's note: see page 230 of this issue.*) On Long Island, Gessner hooks up with a group of Osprey geeks who are tracking the tagged birds using satellite technology. There are insightful chapters on what it is like to go birding with the "young guns and old pros" at Cape May, New Jersey and the seasoned observers at Hawk Mountain. A revealing caffeine-fueled meeting with Paul Kerlinger finds the migration maven in a foul mood as he rails against "the f***ing environmentalists" who have portrayed him as a shill for the wind farm industry, and he sourly grouses about their alleged purity and lack of practical ideas.

But it's Gessner's own "Zugunruhe" (migratory restlessness) that keeps him moving towards his ultimate goal of getting to Cuba by hook or by crook. Gessner has learned that Cuban native Freddy Santana has had an Osprey epiphany and Gessner wants a taste of that same experience too:

Then one glorious day in August of 2003, as he stood on La Gran Piedra, Freddy Santana confirmed all he suspected. While he watched, over six hundred Ospreys streamed and soared along the beautiful mountain ridge toward the peak where he stood. The huge birds seemed to materialize out of the clouds above the city of Santiago and fly at him in flocks of up to fifty birds — *flocks!* No one had ever heard of osprey flocks before! — while he clicked away on the mechanical counter in his hand. (p. 15)

This last third of the book, set in Cuba and Columbia, is as much about the people of those two countries as about Gessner's borderline irrational avian obsession. Everything else Gessner has experienced on this journey up until this point has been a prologue to his experiences here. The reader is treated to a vibrant portrait of a Cuba of stark contrasts. Gessner writes movingly both about the sadly decaying infrastructure of an isolated nation and the wild Saturday music and dance night celebrations of "Noche Santiago." The grim and humorless military bureaucrats are unfavorably compared to the proud, enthusiastic, and warm people of Santiago. In this country, typically misunderstood and even still hated by many Americans, Gessner records the intimate details and desires of the everyday people he meets and how they

view their natural world. The reader is left wondering why we continue our destructive isolationist policies on this neighboring island nation.

In short order he pointed out a bee hummingbird (the world's smallest) and a striped tanager with an orange-yellow collar and a flashing black and white tail, and then, best of all, a Cuban trogon, with orange encircling its eyes like eyeliner and a blue-green back and long tail. As if on cue, it puffed out its bright orange belly. "It's the national bird," Freddy explained. "It is said to symbolize Cuban freedom. People say it will die if you catch it and put it in a cage. Its also the national bird because it has all the colors of the flag. (p. 174)

Because this is David Gessner and not David Attenborough, sober reality always creeps into his tropical idylls. David is traveling on a very tight budget, has borrowed too much money, and has left his wife and child at home wondering how he is getting on. What's more, his *bête noire*, the BBC, is always one step ahead waving fists full of cash as if to taunt him. But all that pales in comparison when, inevitably, the American State Department gets on his case.

David Gessner will never be an author who writes solely about nature; his interests are far too varied for him to be pigeonholed. As in most of Gessner's writing, the people are as important in his literary landscape as are the birds, and that makes *Soaring With Fidel* a very unusual and very entertaining "book about birds" indeed. 🐦

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MARSH WREN BY SANDY SELESKY

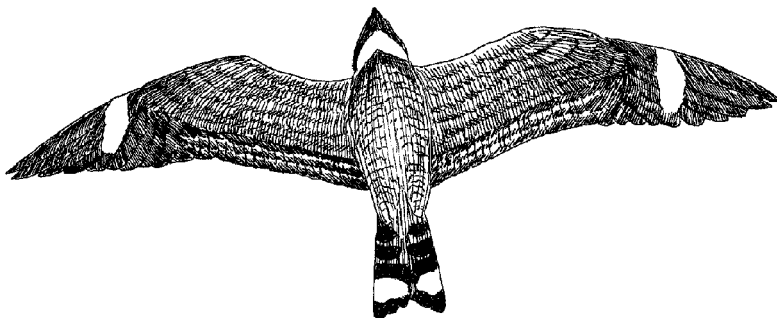
MASSWILDLIFE NEWS: Chicks are Banded

The Bay State's resident Bald eagles and Peregrine falcons were the focus of a banding effort by MassWildlife biologists during the months of May and June. Dr. Tom French, Assistant Director of MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program, reported a total of 25 peregrine falcon chicks at 11 nests.

"Peregrine nests are popping up everywhere with a total of 14 nesting pairs of falcons in the Bay State," said French. "For the first time since the 1950s, a historic nesting site on Mt. Tom in Holyoke was occupied by a pair of falcons and produced one chick. Another new nest was discovered in a Saugus quarry." Other nest locations include Boston, hosting four peregrine nesting sites, while Worcester, Fall River, Lawrence, Lowell, Deerfield, Amherst, and Springfield each host one nest.

Ralph Taylor, supervisor of MassWildlife's Connecticut Valley District office in Belchertown, spearheaded efforts to band chicks at known eagle nests in the state. Taylor and crew, with assistance from their colleagues in the Southeast, Central, Northeast, and Western Districts, visited known or suspected nesting territories from Middleborough to Sandisfield, to the Merrimack River as well as the "core" population on Quabbin Reservoir and the Connecticut River. Of 34 eagle nesting territories, 30 were successful, producing a total of 32 eaglets, 27 of which were banded. One nest tree was not safe to climb. Eagle nesting highlights included the discovery of new nests in Pittsfield, Quabbin, and Northfield. Several other nests in the state failed to produce chicks due to a variety of factors.

The banning of DDT in 1972 and subsequent restoration efforts brought the peregrine and bald eagle back from the brink of extinction in Massachusetts and across the country. Banding of the young has proven to be an important scientific tool in measuring the success of restoration programs and learning about raptor survival rates, dispersal distances, habitat preferences and causes of death. The peregrine falcon was removed from the federal Endangered Species list in 1999. Federally downlisted from Endangered to Threatened status in 1995, the American Bald Eagle was delisted at the end of July by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a tribute to the restoration efforts from states like Massachusetts.



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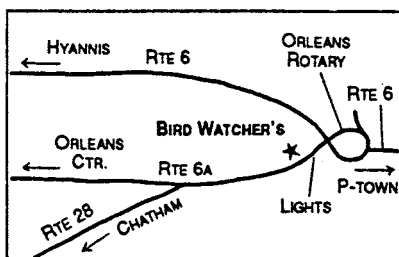
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BIRD SIGHTINGS

March/April 2007

Seth Kellogg, Marjorie W. Rines, Robert H. Stymeist and Jeremiah R. Trimble

The proverbial March Lion came in roaring on the second day of the month. Flooding rains saturated Greater Boston with nearly two inches of rain, and in western Massachusetts heavy snow was noted. Rainfall totaled 4.31 inches in Boston, just 0.5 inch over normal but 3.75 inches over last year's very dry March. The month on the whole was quite sunny, and the temperature averaged 37.5° in Boston, 1.4° below average. The high in Boston was 68° on March 14 and the low was a very cold 5° on March 9. Snowfall totaled 10.2 inches in Boston, 1.9 inches above average. The biggest snow of the season occurred on St. Patrick's Day; this storm ended as heavy rain, saturating the snow pack, making it hard to handle, and causing numerous flooding problems.

April in Boston was very cold, wet, and cloudy, not the weather birders look for in the first big month of migration. Cold temperatures dominated the first twenty days, then some warm southwesterly wind came on April 21 and 22, and the temperature soared to 86° on April 23, 18° warmer than average for that date. Birders recorded high numbers of Hermit Thrushes at Plum Island, Marblehead Neck, and Mount Auburn Cemetery on that day. Winds returned to the northwest, and, after that, we had only one other day with a southerly wind. Rainfall fell on fifteen days and totaled 6.71 inches, 3.11 inches above average for April. A nor'easter on April 15-16 brought heavy rain and storm-driven birds. At Andrew's Point in Rockport Northern Fulmars, Leach's Storm-Petrels, and high numbers of kittiwakes and razorbills were noted.

R. Stymeist

WATERFOWL THROUGH ALCIDS

Greater White-fronted Geese were well reported during the latter half of March, with as many as nine individuals including a flock of four in Northfield on March 23. The increasing regularity of this species in the state is impressive. Prior to 1999 there were only three records for western Massachusetts! The species has been reported every year since then, often in multiples. Two reports of **Barnacle Geese** (unaccompanied by details) in Deerfield and Hadley were probably of the same individual. The Hadley bird was seen in a flock with two Cackling Geese. Other **Cackling Geese** reports from around the state included one from Fairhaven, one from Sunderland, and another in Townsend, all within a ten-day period in late March. A **Tundra Swan** was reported during the last few days of March in East Bridgewater.

A hybrid Eurasian X American Wigeon was discovered at Nine Acre Corner in Concord on March 26 and rediscovered at Great Meadows NWR the following day. While this hybrid combination is not uncommon, it has been rarely reported in Massachusetts. As many as six Eurasian Wigeon were found elsewhere in the state. Eurasian Teal were nearly as well reported, with a total of five discovered at five widely scattered sites.

Pacific Loons were seen at three different locations during the reporting period. These included an individual in Provincetown, which stayed for most of April. A mixed flock of White-winged and Black Scoters at Granville was unusual for western Massachusetts. The **Eared Grebe** at Gloucester was last reported on April 21. A nor'easter in mid-April brought a good number of pelagics. Andrew's Point produced the lion's share, with forty-nine Northern

Fulmars, four Sooty Shearwaters, and sixty-six Leach's Storm-Petrels. The latter two species were noteworthy for the early date. Smaller numbers of these species were recorded on Cape Cod during the same storm.

The return of herons to the state is an indicator of spring, and there is no better place to witness this arrival than Kettle Island in Manchester-by-the-Sea, home of a large heron colony. The first Little Blue Heron was found there on March 30. Early dates for other species included Great Egrets at Plum Island on March 24 and a Snowy Egret at Newburyport on March 27. Glossy Ibis was first noted on March 23 at Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary. Most impressive was the discovery of multiple White-faced Ibises in the Newbury/Rowley area. On April 26 a single bird was discovered in a flock of Glossy Ibis. Just a few days later, an observer discovered two different White-faced Ibises in the same flock!

The spread of Black Vultures across the state continues with records coming in from as many as eighteen locations! A **Swallow-tailed Kite** report was received from Martha's Vineyard, unfortunately not accompanied by details. A second pair of Bald Eagles nesting in Lakeville was exciting as this species continues to spread across the state. Perhaps in the coming years Bald Eagles will re-establish themselves on Cape Cod, where they last nested over 100 years ago. Other noteworthy raptor sightings included two Golden Eagles on March 25 in Amherst. Coastal Massachusetts is known for producing some of the highest concentrations of migrating American Kestrels, and this season's high count of 107, as is usually the case, came from Plum Island.

A single King Rail was reported at the end of April from Plum Island. Every sighting of this extremely rare denizen of freshwater marshes is worthy of note. As the second Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas gets underway, it is exciting to confirm a new breeding species! A pair of Sandhill Cranes was confirmed breeding in the town of New Marlboro this year. On July 5 the pair was seen with a single chick. Hopefully, this is the start of a trend, and the species will continue to increase in the state.

American Golden-Plovers are unusual in spring in Massachusetts. This year single birds were reported from four sites during April, with the earliest noted on Plum Island on April 10. Piping Plovers returned to the state on March 13 at Oak Bluffs. The following day the first American Oystercatcher arrived at Fairhaven. Unfortunately, St. Patrick's Day brought significant snowfall that surely surprised these early arrivals. An Upland Sandpiper was discovered in New Braintree on March 25, one of the earliest records for the state. Similarly, Marbled Godwits at Menemsha (March 7-10) and North Monomoy (April 11) were exceptional and represent the first records for both March and April for the state except for an individual that over-wintered in Chatham during 1973-4. Although regular during spring in Massachusetts, a Ruff sighting is still an exciting event. This season a single individual was spotted at Newburyport Harbor on April 8. Although first suspected by many to be a female, during its nearly month-long stay it significantly molted to reveal itself as a young male!

Some storms during this period produced a number of Red Phalaropes, particularly in Cape Cod Bay. Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers were also associated with these storms in the same areas. This year's first tern was a large one, a Caspian Tern at Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary. Several others were noted around the state later in the month. Roseate Terns appeared in Marion on April 25 followed by seventy Common Terns in the same area the following day. Spring alcid sightings were highlighted by the first April record of Atlantic Puffin at Rockport. Large numbers of alcids were noted in both Rockport and Provincetown in the first few days of March. These included nearly 4000 Razorbills and over 1000 large alcid species (probably mostly Razorbills) at Rockport on March 2 and 100 Razorbills and 7000 large alcid species (probably mostly Razorbills) at Provincetown on March 3. *J. Trimble*

Greater White-fronted Goose

3/1-21 Fairhaven 1 v.o.
 3/14-4/1 W. Concord 1 v.o.
 3/23 Northfield 4 M. Taylor
 3/24 Hadley 1 A. Richards
 3/25 Amherst 1 S. Surner
 4/12 Sharon 1 J. Baur

Snow Goose

3/12 Newbury 6 D. Larson
 3/22-4/20 P.I. 14 max v.o.
 3/24 Pittsfield 75 T. Collins
 3/26 Northampton 1000 T. Gagnon
 4/4 Northfield 100 M. Taylor
 4/4 Amherst 100 H. Allen
 4/16 Sutton 4 D. Berard

Brant

thr Duxbury B. 160 max v.o.
 thr P.I. 190 max v.o.
 3/3 Swansea 721 M. Lynch#
 3/24 Plymouth 1320 M. Lynch#
 3/25 Ipswich 125 R. Heil
 3/31 Swampscott 210 P + F. Vale
 4/1 Squantum 175 G. d'Entremont
 4/29 S. Boston 200 R. Stymeist#

Barnacle Goose (no details) *

3/24 Deerfield 1 B. Kane
 3/25 Hadley 1 ad B. Zajda

Cackling Goose

3/18 Fairhaven 1 M. Lynch#
 3/25 Sunderland 1 S. Surner
 3/25 Hadley 2 ad B. Zajda
 3/27-29 Townsend 1 T. Pirro

Tundra Swan

3/27-30 E. Bridgewater 1 ph J. Weidenfeller + v.o.

Wood Duck

thr Wayland 34 max B. Harris
 thr Bolton Flats 71 max S. Sutton
 3/18 Hadley 452 C. Gentes
 3/23 Longmeadow 211 J. Cavanaugh
 3/25 Northfield 100 H. Galbraith
 4/1 Duxbury 24 R. Bowes
 4/7 Greenfield 65 T. Wansleben

Gadwall

thr P.I. 36 max v.o.
 3/5 Swansea 12+ B. Volkle#
 3/18 Salisbury 32 BBC (J. Center)
 3/21 Gloucester 12 MAS (B. Gette)
 3/23 Barnstable 32 M. Keleher
 3/28 Hatfield 3 F. Bowrys
 4/1 Duxbury 90+ R. Bowes

Eurasian Wigeon

3/1-10 Swansea 1-2 v.o.
 3/5-14 Falmouth 1 m v.o.
 3/25 Nantucket 1 MAS (J. Galluzzo)
 3/31 Halifax 1 ad m J. Center
 4/8-14 Hatfield 1 m C. Gentes

American Wigeon

3/3 Swansea 438 M. Lynch#
 3/5 Falmouth 30 P. Gilmore
 3/15 Longmeadow 16 S. Kellogg
 3/23 Barnstable 24 M. Keleher
 3/25, 4/17 Newbury 13, 10 R. Heil
 4/7 Hatfield 21 S. Surner
 4/8 GMNWR 14 P + F. Vale

Eurasian Wigeon X American Wigeon

3/26-27 Concord (NAC) 1 m ph S. Perkins
 3/27-28 GMNWR 1 v.o.

American Black Duck

3/9 Millbury 112 D. Berard
 3/10 Acoaxet 486 M. Lynch#
 3/17 Cumb. Farms 400 K. Anderson
 3/23 P.I. 260 R. Heil
 3/24 Plymouth 550+ M. Lynch#

Blue-winged Teal

3/4 Ipswich pr I. Davies#
 3/15-4/28 Hadley 2-4 v.o.
 3/25 Springfield 6 R. Titus
 4/thr P.I. 2-4 v.o.

Gloucester (E.P.) 6 S. Hedman
 Newbury 6 R. Heil
 Plymouth 5 I. Davies
 Concord (NAC) 6 S. Perkins
 N. Monomoy 1 B. Harris
 Bolton Flats 6 S. Sutton
 W. Bridgewater 6 SSBC (G. d'E)

Northern Shoveler

3/24-4/14 Hatfield 1-3 C. Gentes
 3/27 GMNWR 7 B. Harris
 3/31 Springfield 3 S. Ricker
 4/1 P.I. 3 R. Heil
 4/3 Longmeadow 7 J. LaPointe
 4/5 Hadley 5 S. Surner
 4/27 Rowley 2 I. Davies

Northern Pintail

thr P.I. 64 max v.o.
 3/thr Cumb. Farms 150 max v.o.
 3/3 Ipswich 36 P + F. Vale
 3/10 Acoaxet 28 M. Lynch#
 3/11-24 Hadley 30 max v.o.
 3/15-4/8 Longmeadow 45 max v.o.
 3/22-4/11 W. Bridgewater 20 max v.o.
 3/24 Newbury 40+ P + F. Vale

Green-winged Teal

3/11-4/28 Hadley 120 max 3/24 v.o.
 3/12-4/30 Bolton Flats 480 max 4/9 S. Sutton
 3/14-4/24 Concord (NAC) 225 max v.o.
 3/15-4/17 Newbury 195 max R. Heil
 3/15-4/26 P.I. 215 max v.o.
 3/16, 31 Longmeadow 150, 200 S. Kellogg
 3/22-4/25 W. Bridgewater 250 max G. d'Entremont
 3/28 Cumb. Farms 300 A. Brissette
 4/11 Hatfield 100 H. Allen

Eurasian Teal

3/15 Newbury 1 m R. Heil
 3/24-30 W. Harwich 1 m M. Tuttle
 3/27 W. Bridgewater 1 K. Ryan
 4/4-16 Concord (NAC) 1 S. Perkins
 4/10 P.I. 1 m R. Heil#

Canvasback

3/5 Falmouth 8 P. Gilmore
 3/16-25 Springfield 1 J. Cavanaugh
 3/31 Hingham 1 m C. Dalton#
 4/5 Turners Falls 1 A. Richards
 4/6 Westport 55 K. Ryan
 4/7-8 Southwick 3 S. Ricker

Redhead

3/3-25 Groveland 2-3 v.o.
 3/3-4/11 Gloucester (E.P.) 1 m ad v.o.
 3/11-24 N. Truro 11-22 v.o.
 3/28 Cumb. Farms 1 m A. Brissette

Ring-necked Duck

3/3-4/5 Turners Falls 178 max v.o.
 3/3 Medford 66 A. Ankers
 3/10 S. Groveland 95 J. Berry
 3/20 Concord (NAC) 110 B. Harris
 3/27 W. Bridgewater 70 K. Ryan
 3/27 Quabbin 145 L. Therrien
 3/31 GMNWR 206 P + F. Vale
 4/7 Southwick 65 S. Ricker

Greater Scaup

3/3 Swansea 834 M. Lynch#
 3/3 N. Truro 175 B. Nikula
 3/10 Westport 160 M. Lynch#
 4/10 Newbyp H. 70 R. Heil#
 4/11 Turners Falls 6 H. Allen
 4/29 Falmouth 60+ S. Moore#

Lesser Scaup

3/3 N. Truro 80 B. Nikula
 3/5 Falmouth 100 B. Volkle#
 3/10 Swansea 61 G. d'Entremont
 3/31 Westport 152 M. Lynch#
 4/1 Westboro 4 J. Liller#
 4/8 Hatfield 2 L. Therrien
 4/14 W. Newbury 6 D. Chickering
 4/22 Pembroke 16 G. d'Entremont#

King Eider				3/27	Westport	1 m	T. Casavant#
3/1-4/11	Gloucester (B.R.)	1 m	v.o.	4/21	Wellfleet	2	MAS (Larson)
4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	1 m	R. Heil				
Common Eider				3/1-4/7	Wakefield	41 max	P. + F. Vale
thr	P.I.	280 max	v.o.	3/7	Essex	30	R. Heil
3/10	Acoaxet	318	M. Lynch#	3/9	Taunton	44	E. Richards
3/18	Sandwich	320	P. + F. Vale	3/9	Millbury	31	D. Berard
3/24	Plymouth	2840	M. Lynch#	3/14	Woburn (HP)	44	M. Rines#
3/25	Newbyp H.	175	R. Heil	3/19	Ipswich	44	R. Heil
4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	138	R. Heil	3/25	Wakefield	41	P. + F. Vale
4/30	Salem	47	D. Ely	4/22	HRWMA	11	T. Pirro
Harlequin Duck				4/25	Leicester	3	M. Lynch#
thr	Rockport	65 max	v.o.				
3/10	Acoaxet	32	M. Lynch#	3/thr	Melrose	52 max	D. + I. Jewell
3/18	Nantucket	2	E. Ray#	3/3	Brewster	45	B. Nikula
4/13	Scituate	10	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	3/14	Pepperell	50+	E. Stromsted#
4/18	Barnstable	4	M. LaBossiere#	3/23	P.I.	56	R. Heil
4/22	N. Scituate	9	G. d'Entremont#	3/31, 4/14	W. Newbury	35, 99	D. Chickering
Surf Scoter				4/1	Southwick	45	S. Kellogg
thr	P.I.	100 max	4/30	4/7	Pittsfield (Onota)	45	N. Mole
3/10	Westport	52	M. Lynch#	4/29	Ware	3	M. Martin
3/31	Marblehead	53	P. + F. Vale	4/30	Wayland	4	B. Harris
4/15	N. Truro	400	B. Nikula	Red-breasted Merganser			
4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	65	R. Heil	3/11, 4/1	Squantum	240, 675	G. d'Entremont
4/18	Dennis (Corp. B.)	300	B. Nikula	3/24	Plymouth	243+	M. Lynch#
4/18	Barnstable (S.N.)	57	M. Malin	3/25, 4/28	P'town	800, 1300	B. Nikula
4/19	Manomet	250+	I. Davies	3/31	Westport	348	M. Lynch#
4/29	Boston (Deer I.)	65	R. Stymeist#	4/20	Gloucester	122	T. Bronson#
White-winged Scoter				4/27	Orange	2	B. Laffley
thr	P.I.	475 max	v.o.	4/27	Gardner	2	T. Pirro
3/19	Ipswich	1300+	R. Heil	Ruddy Duck			
3/24	Plymouth	60+	M. Lynch#	thr	Melrose	22 max	D. + I. Jewell
4/18	Barnstable (S.N.)	33	M. Malin	4/6	Yarmouthport	40	M. Tuttle#
4/21	Granville	5	J. Wwvks	4/22	Pembroke	80	G. d'Entremont#
4/22	N. Scituate	50	G. d'Entremont#	Ring-necked Pheasant			
Black Scoter				3/25	Newbyp	2 m	G. d'Entremont
thr	P.I.	800 max	v.o.	4/16	Ipswich	2 m	J. Berry
4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	26	R. Heil	4/29	Boston (BNC)	4 m	R. Stymeist#
4/18	Dennis	10	P. Flood#	Ruffed Grouse			
4/18	Barnstable (S.N.)	60	M. Malin	3/11	Hardwick	2	C. Buelow
4/19	Manomet	50+	I. Davies	3/14	Pepperell	3	P. Terrasi
4/21	Granville	30	H. Allen	4/21	Rutland	9	M. Lynch#
Long-tailed Duck				4/22	ONWR	2	A. Birch
thr	P.I.	1200 max	v.o.	4/28	Brookfield	5	M. Lynch#
3/25	Newbyp H.	325	R. Heil	4/29	Oxford	3	P. Meleski#
3/25	Quabbin Pk.	1	M. Lynch#	Wild Turkey			
4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	343	R. Heil	3/11	Woburn	25	J. Brown
4/16	Barnstable (S.N.)	135	D. Manchester	3/12	Pepperell	36	E. Stromsted
4/20	Williamstown	1	J. Wilder	3/13	Plymouth	19	K. Doyon
4/27	Turners Falls	3	F. Bowrys	3/17	Cumb. Farms	23	S. Anderson
4/29	Boston (Deer I.)	225	R. Stymeist#	3/23	S. Quabbin	35	L. Therrien
Bufflehead				Northern Bobwhite			
thr	Newbyp	425 max	R. Heil	3/17	Falmouth	2	CCBC (M. Keleher)
3/3	Swansea	493	M. Lynch#	4/1	Truro	10	J. Young
3/7	Osterville	200	M. Keleher	4/27	Chatham (MI)	1	B. Harris
3/24	Plymouth	270+	M. Lynch#	Red-throated Loon			
3/25	Quabbin Pk.	14	M. Lynch#	thr	P.I.	16 max	v.o.
3/31	Westport	375	M. Lynch#	3/3	P'town	320	B. Nikula
4/22	Pembroke	50	G. d'Entremont#	4/7	N. Truro	500	D. Manchester
4/29	Boston	40	R. Stymeist#	4/15	Rockport (A.P.)	28	R. Heil
Common Goldeneye				4/18, 19	Dennis (Corp. B.)	62, 72	B. Nikula
thr	Newbyp	480 max	R. Heil	4/20-30	Arlington Res.	1	M. Rines
3/3	Swansea	541	M. Lynch#	Pacific Loon (no details) *			
3/7	Holyoke	46	L. Therrien	3/4	Rockport	1	MAS (Larson)
3/10	Turners Falls	64	T. Pirro	4/1-28	P'town	1	B. Nikula#
3/23	Barnstable	200	M. Keleher	4/14	Orleans	1	J. Bair
3/27	Quabbin	44	L. Therrien	Common Loon			
3/31	Westport	141	M. Lynch#	thr	P.I.	45 max	v.o.
4/26	Gardner	9	T. Pirro	4/1	Duxbury	45	R. Bowes
Barrow's Goldeneye				4/1	Marblehead	35	G. d'Entremont
3/1-28	Gloucester	1	v.o.	4/15	N. Truro	80	B. Nikula
3/3	Swansea	2 m	M. Lynch#	4/18	Cape Ann	45	R. Heil
3/5	Cotuit	1 m	P. Gilmore	4/19	Manomet	69	I. Davies
3/7-4/10	Newbyp	3 max	v.o.	Pied-billed Grebe			
3/10	N. Truro	1 imm m	B. Nikula	3/13-4/7	Hadley	2-3	v.o.
3/10	Turners Falls	1	T. Pirro	3/25	Nantucket	5	MAS (J. Galluzzo)
3/14	Barnstable	1 m	M. Keleher	4/thr	GMNWR	2-3	v.o.
3/18	Fairhaven	1 m	M. Lynch#	4/7, 22	Wayland	6, 3	B. Harris

Pied-billed Grebe (continued)				4/8	Manchester	17		P. Brown
4/7	Cheshire	3	N. Mole	4/10-30	P.I.	15 max		v.o.
4/7	Hatfield	3	S. Surner	4/13	Scituate	4	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	
4/8	Southwick	3	S. Kellogg	4/13	Duxbury	4		R. Bowes
Horned Grebe				4/22	Hull	2		J. Galluzzo
thr	P.I.	40 max	v.o.	Little Blue Heron				
3/3	Swansea	69	M. Lynch#	3/30, 4/7	Manchester	1, 3		Heil, Grinley
3/23	Mashpee	26	M. Malin	4/11	Duxbury B.	1 ad		R. Bowes
4/1	Marblehead	242	G. d'Entremont	4/14	Essex	1		J. Hoye#
4/11	Duxbury B.	30	R. Bowes	4/19	Gloucester	1		A. + D. Morgan
4/22	N. Scituate	25	G. d'Entremont#	4/21	Groton	1		G. Gove#
4/28	Turners Falls	2	C. Gentes	4/22	Burrage Pd. WMA	1 ad		G. d'Entremont#
Red-necked Grebe				Tricolored Heron				
thr	P.I.	25 max	T. Wetmore	4/25	Westport	1		M. Labossiere
3/31	Winthrop	191	R. Stymeist#	Green Heron				
4/1	Duxbury	51	R. Bowes	4/25	P.I.	1		MAS (B. Gette)
4/7	Marblehead	150+	L. Pivacek	4/25	Oxford	1		D. Berard
4/18	Rockport	35	R. Heil	4/26	Marion	1		M. Maurer
4/22	N. Scituate	15	G. d'Entremont#	4/28	Belchertown	1		L. Therrien
4/27	Turners Falls	5	F. Bowrys	4/29	Wellfleet	1		B. Nikula#
Eared Grebe *				Black-crowned Night-Heron				
3/1-4/21	Gloucester	1	v.o.	3/28	Salisbury	1		S. McGrath
Northern Fulmar				4/6	Harwich	10		M. Tuttle#
3/2, 4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	80, 49	R. Heil	4/14	N. Monomoy	5		B. Harris
4/18, 19	Dennis (Corp. B.)	9, 2	B. Nikula	4/19	Plymouth	10		K. Langevin#
Sooty Shearwater				4/20	P.I.	8		T. Wetmore
4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	4	R. Heil	4/22	Medford	7		R. LaFontaine#
4/21	P'town	1	B. Nikula#	4/25	W. Harwich	6		A. Curtis
Leach's Storm-Petrel				4/27	Newbury	6		D. Chickering
4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	66	R. Heil	Glossy Ibis				
4/17, 18	Dennis	3, 4	P. Flood	3/23-4/19	DWWS	9 max		v.o.
4/18	Barnstable (S.N.)	12	M. LaBossiere#	4/7	Ipswich	5		S. Grinley#
4/18	Sandwich	8	M. Keleher	4/13	Scituate	1		MAS (J. Galluzzo)
Northern Gannet				4/13-30	P.I.	23 max		T. Wetmore
3/2, 4/15	Rockport (A.P.)	438, 331	R. Heil	4/14-30	Newbury	85 max		v.o.
3/3, 4/1	P'town	80, 900	B. Nikula	4/14	Westport	4		BBC (Stymeist)
3/30, 4/20	N. Truro	308, 600	D. Manchester#	4/16	Bolton Flats	1		S. Sutton
4/16	Barnstable (S.N.)	475	D. Manchester	4/18	W. Bridgewater	8		SSBC (Gd'E)
4/17, 18	Dennis (Corp. B.)	195, 115	B. Nikula	4/23	N. Truro	9		D. Manchester#
Double-crested Cormorant				4/26	Quincy	4		K. Ryan
4/21	Berkley	225	G. d'Entremont	4/27-8	Amherst	1		D. McKenna
4/21	N. Truro	200	D. Manchester#	4/29	Northampton	1		T. Gagnon
4/22	P.I.	1050	R. Heil	White-faced Ibis (no details) *				
4/28	P'town	350	B. Nikula#	4/26-28	Newbury/Rowley	1 ph		M. Daley + v.o.
Great Cormorant				4/29-30	Newbury/Rowley	2		R. Heil + v.o.
3/21	Amesbury	28	T. Bronson#	Black Vulture				
3/30	N. Truro	77	D. Manchester#	thr	Reports of indiv. from 11 locations			
3/31	Westport	48	M. Lynch#	3/13	Sheffield	2		B. Faggioni
4/14	N. Scituate	36	G. d'Entremont	3/27	Pittsfield (Pont.)	2		N. Mole
4/14	Duxbury B.	40	R. Bowes	3/31	Cheshire	3		N. Mole
4/18	Dennis	2	P. Flood#	4/9	Deerfield	2		F. Bowrys
4/29	Duxbury B.	3	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	4/21	Mt. Tom	2		D. Russell
American Bittern				4/21	Granville	2		S. Kellogg
3/15	Eastham	1	M. Taylor#	4/26	Amherst	2		H. Allen
4/7	Granby	1	L. Rogers	Turkey Vulture				
4/7, 21	N. Truro	1, 1	D. Manchester#	thr	N. Truro	258		Hawkcount (DM)
4/10-30	P.I.	1-3	T. Wetmore	3/3	Millbury	36+		D. Berard
4/12	Northampton	1	C. Gentes	3/5	Gr. Barrington	26		B. Faggioni
4/22	HRWMA	2	T. Pirro	4/7	Cheshire	145		H. Allen
4/23	Melrose	1	D. + I. Jewell	4/9	Hardwick	18		C. Buelow
4/28	Brookfield	2	M. Lynch#	4/14	Westport	28		BBC (Stymeist)
Great Blue Heron				4/22	New Braintree	18		M. Lynch#
3/13	N. Andover	14	M. Allan	4/26	S. Monomoy	34		B. Harris
3/24	Boxford	12	n N. Landry	Osprey				
3/26	Stoneham	3 nests	D. + I. Jewell	3/28-4/30	Barre	205		Hawkcount (BK)
4/1	Peabody	6 pr n	D. Williams	3/30	Mashpee	27		M. Keleher
4/14	Sturbridge	11 n	B. deGraaf	3/31	Westport	57		M. Lynch#
4/21	Rutland	7 nests	M. Lynch#	4/14	Westport	62		BBC (Stymeist)
4/29	Northampton	20	T. Gagnon	4/14-30	N. Truro	19		Hawkcount (DM)
Great Egret				4/30	P.I.	14		Hawkcount (CJ)
3/24-4/30	P.I.	7 max	v.o.	Swallow-tailed Kite (no details) *				
3/25, 4/6	Ipswich	1, 5	R. Heil	4/16	Gay Head	1		N. Weaver, D. Dandridge
4/7	Manchester	50	S. Grinley#	Bald Eagle				
4/13	Scituate	8	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	3/thr	Lakeville Ponds	2 pr n		R. Turner#
4/17-18	Amherst	1	H. Allen	3/3	Amesbury	6 imm		S. Ricker#
4/22	Hingham	10	G. d'Entremont#	3/4	P.I.	6		R. Heil
Snowy Egret				3/10	Newbypt	20		P. Roberts
3/27	Newbypt	1	S. Grinley	3/24-4/30	Barre	46		Hawkcount (BK)

Bald Eagle (continued)				4/5	Worcester	pr	M. Lynch#
3/25	Turners Falls	3	B. Zajda	4/20	N. Monomoy	2	B. Harris
3/25	Quabbin Pk.	5	M. Lynch#	King Rail			
Northern Harrier				4/26	P.I.	1	S. + B. Ross
thr	P.I.	17 max	v.o.	Virginia Rail			
thr	DWWS	4 max	v.o.	3/17	Westport	1	E. Richards
3/1-4/11	Cumb. Farms	9 max	v.o.	4/14	Quabog IBA	3	M. Lynch#
3/6, 26	W. Bridgewater	3, 5	K. Ryan	4/16	Sutton	2	D. Berard
3/7, 19	Essex	5, 4	R. Heil	4/21	W. Roxbury	3	F. Bouchard#
3/11	Hadley	4	S. Surner	4/25	Amherst	2	L. Therrien
3/12-4/26	N. Truro	16	Hawkcount (DM)	4/28	Brookfield	7	M. Lynch#
3/17	Duxbury B.	4	R. Bowes	4/29	Newbury	4	R. Heil#
3/27-4/29	Barre	23	Hawkcount (BK)	Sora			
4/10	Hatfield	4	J. Cavanaugh	4/26-30	P.I.	1-3	T. Wetmore
4/13	W. Bridgewater	4	K. Ryan	4/28	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
Sharp-shinned Hawk				4/28	Brookfield	2	M. Lynch#
3/24-4/30	Barre	188	Hawkcount (BK)	American Coot			
4/thr	N. Truro	80	Hawkcount (DM)	3/3	Medford	3	R. LaFontaine
4/10-30	Ipswich	pr n	J. Berry	3/3	Swansea	3	M. Lynch#
4/22	Russell	25	Hawkcount (TS)	3/31-4/30	GMNWR	2-3	P. + F. Vale
4/23	P.I.	32	Hawkcount (KC)	4/8	Woburn (HP)	3	P. Devaney
Cooper's Hawk				4/22	Pembroke	6	G. d'Entremont#
3/3	Cumb. Farms	2	D. Furbish	4/25	W. Bridgewater	3	SSBC (Gd'E)
3/14-4/30	N. Truro	39	Hawkcount (DM)	Sandhill Crane			
3/24-4/29	Barre	20	Hawkcount (BK)	3/25-26	Leicester	1	J. + E. Stencil#
4/14	Westport	2	BBC (Stymeist)	3/30	Townsend	4	T. Pirro
4/22	Worc. (BMB)	2	J. Liller#	3/31	Hadley	1	C. Gentes
4/24	P.I.	3	R. Heil#	4/1	Hatfield	1	C. Gentes
4/28	Brookfield	2	M. Lynch#	4/13	New Marlboro	pr n	S. Mullen
Northern Goshawk				4/21-22	Bolton Flats	1	S. Sutton
3/19	Boxford (C.P.)	2	S. Grinley	4/22	New Braintree	1	M. Lynch#
3/29	E. Middleboro	pr n	Robert Clem	4/29	Oxford	2	P. Meleski#
4/4	Groveland	pr n	J. Berry#	Black-bellied Plover			
4/9	Williamsburg	2	G. LeBaron	3/11	WBWS	12	M. Taylor#
4/21	Hubbardston	pr	M. Lynch#	4/thr	P.I.	1-3	v.o.
Red-shouldered Hawk				4/3	Duxbury B.	1	R. Bowes
3/thr	E. Middleboro	pr n	K. Anderson	4/7	Winthrop	1	D. Chickering
3/24-31	Barre	14	Hawkcount (BK)	4/11	Duxbury B.	15+	R. Bowes
3/31	Fall River	6	E. Richards#	American Golden-Plover			
4/14	Westport	3 ad	BBC (Stymeist)	4/10	P.I.	1	R. Heil#
Broad-winged Hawk				4/14	Newbury	1	E. Nielsen
3/31	Wayland	1	A. McCarthy	4/22	Orleans	1	J. Hoye#
4/1	New Braintree	1	C. Buelow	4/24	N. Monomoy	1	B. Harris
4/11	Southwick	3	S. Kellogg	Semipalmated Plover			
4/14-30	Barre	1110	Hawkcount (BK)	4/26	Wellfleet	2	CCBC (C. Franklin)
4/22	W. Springfield	62	J. Zepko	4/26	Minimoy	1	B. Harris
4/23	Mt. Tom	669	T. Gagnon	4/30	Duxbury B.	1	R. Bowes
4/23	Mt. Holyoke	493	M. Wilson	Piping Plover			
4/30	Lenox	40	T. Collins	3/13	Oak Bluffs	1	J. Nelson
Red-tailed Hawk				3/25	Plymouth	3	K. Doyon
thr	N. Truro	82	Hawkcount (DM)	3/27-4/30	P.I.	17 max	v.o.
3/27-4/22	Barre	141	Hawkcount (BK)	3/31	Truro	5	J. Young
Rough-legged Hawk				4/11	Duxbury B.	11	R. Bowes
3/thr	P.I.	6 max	v.o.	4/29	P'town (R.P.)	8	D. Scott
3/thr	Cumb. Farms	8 max	v.o.	Killdeer			
3/4	Boston (Logan)	2	N. Smith	3/1	W. Roxbury	2	M. Kaufman
3/5	DWWS	3	J. Offermann	3/3	Northfield	3	M. Taylor
3/7	Essex	5	R. Heil	3/3-4/30	Cumb. Farms	36 max	v.o.
3/10	Hadley	7	S. Surner	3/3-4/30	Concord (NAC)	22 max	v.o.
3/11	Southwick	4	S. Kellogg	3/3-4/30	Newbury	86 max	v.o.
Golden Eagle				4/2	Bolton Flats	20	S. Sutton
3/25	Amherst	2	C. Gentes	4/7	Greenfield	55	T. Wansleben
American Kestrel				American Oystercatcher			
3/27-4/30	Barre	60	Hawkcount (BK)	3/14	Fairhaven	2	C. Longworth
3/28-4/30	N. Truro	83	Hawkcount (DM)	3/16-18	Nantucket	11	E. Ray#
4/3	Southwick	13	S. Kellogg	3/31	Winthrop	6	J. Trimble#
4/8	Newbury	6	R. Heil	4/11	N. Monomoy	12	B. Harris
4/21	Granville	10	H. Allen	4/22	P.I.	1	R. Heil
4/22, 24	P.I.	23, 107	R. Heil	4/22	Gloucester	2	D. Sandee
4/22	Russell	14	Hawkcount (TS)	4/26	Boston (Thompson I.)	pr	K. Ryan
Merlin				4/30	Marblehead	2	D. Ely
thr	Reports of indiv. from 30 locations			4/30	Mattapoisett	6	R. Podolsky
3/30	Barre	3	Hawkcount (BK)	Spotted Sandpiper			
4/thr	N. Truro	23	Hawkcount (DM)	4/22	Petersham	1	M. Lynch#
4/10	Newbury	2	S. Hedman#	4/23	Concord (NAC)	1	S. Perkins
4/24	P.I.	5	R. Heil#	4/27	Woburn	1	J. Young
Peregrine Falcon				4/29	Arlington Res.	3	M. Rines
3/9	Deerfield	2	H. Allen				

Solitary Sandpiper				Ruff				
4/20	Concord (NAC)	1	T. + D. Brownrigg	4/8-30	Newbypt	1 m	ph	v.o.
4/24	Amherst	1	H. Allen	Short-billed Dowitcher				
4/29	Waltham	1	J. Forbes	4/21	N. Monomoy	4		B. Harris
Greater Yellowlegs				4/30	Essex	1		P. Brown
3/10	Swansea	1	G. d'Entremont	Wilson's Snipe				
3/15-4/30	P.I.	37 max	v.o.	3/3-4/4	Cumb. Farms	80 max		v.o.
3/24-4/30	Newbypt H.	63 max	v.o.	3/21-4/17	Newbury	185 max		R. Heil
3/30	W. Harwich	10	B. Nikula	3/24-4/20	Harwich	17 max		v.o.
4/22	Chatham	24	B. Nikula	3/26-4/24	Bolton Flats	43 max		S. Sutton
4/26	Quincy	17	K. Ryan	4/7	Hadley	42		S. Sumner
4/30	Duxbury B.	16	R. Bowes	4/7	Lexington	25		M. Rines#
4/30	Bolton Flats	31	S. Sutton	4/14	Westport	35		BBC (Stymeist)
Willet				4/16	Acton	50		E. Nielsen#
3/23	Eastham	2	D. Clapp#	4/16-24	Concord (NAC)	85 max		S. Perkins#
4/23	Wellfleet	2	K. Ryan	4/25	W. Bridgewater	125		SSBC (Gd'E)
4/25	Chatham	6	B. Nikula	American Woodcock				
4/28	N. Monomoy	9	B. Harris	3/17	Falmouth	8 CCBC (M. Keleher)		
4/29	Cotuit	2	S. Moore#	3/24	P.I.	18		T. Wetmore
4/30	P.I.	3	I. Davies#	3/24	DWWS	9		BBC (L. de la Flor)
Lesser Yellowlegs				3/26	Longmeadow	11		J. Wojtanowski
3/24-4/30	P.I.	5 max	v.o.	3/27	Belmont	8		R. Stymeist#
3/24	Cumb. Farms	2	M. Lynch#	3/28	Cumb. Farms	10		A. Brissette
4/7	Newbypt H.	11	P. Roberts#	3/30	Boston (BNC)	20+		J. Miller
4/17	Newbury	3	R. Heil	4/1	Westboro	10+		J. Liller#
4/26	Hadley	2	C. Gentes	4/9	Quincy	8		L. Tyrala#
4/30	Bolton Flats	5	S. Sutton	4/29	New Braintree	8		C. Buelow
Upland Sandpiper				4/30	Leicester	10		M. Lynch#
3/25-4/20	New Braintree	1	C. Buelow	Red Phalarope				
4/14	DWWS	2	SSBC (T. O'Neil)	3/17	Salisbury	1		M. Goetschkes#
4/22	Petersham	1	M. Lynch#	4/18	Sandwich	1		M. Keleher
4/24	P.I.	1	R. Heil#	4/18	Barnstable (S.N.)	3		M. LaBossiere#
4/24	Northampton	2	C. Gentes	4/18	Rockport	3		R. Heil
Marbled Godwit				4/18, 19	Dennis (Corp. B.)	1, 1		P. Flood#
3/7-10	Menemsha	1	R. Culbert	Pomarine Jaeger				
4/11	N. Monomoy	1	B. Harris	4/18	Barnstable (S.N.)	1 lt		M. Malin
Ruddy Turnstone				4/18	Dennis (Corp. B.)	2 ad		B. Nikula
3/3	P'town H.	2	B. Nikula	Parasitic Jaeger				
3/23	Barnstable	9	M. Keleher	4/7	Newbypt H.	1 dk		P. Roberts#
4/21	N. Monomoy	1	B. Harris	4/18	Dennis (Corp. B.)	1 ad		P. Flood#
4/29	Boston (Deer I.)	2	R. Stymeist#	4/18	Barnstable (S.N.)	2		M. LaBossiere#
Red Knot				Laughing Gull				
4/13, 24	S. Monomoy	1, 3	B. Harris	3/24	Harwich	1		M. Tuttle
Sanderling				3/27	Mashpee	1		M. Malin
3/3	P'town	1150	B. Nikula	4/14	Orleans	11		J. Bair
3/17	Westport	300+	E. Richards	4/15	Rockport (A.P.)	1 ad		R. Heil
3/24	Plymouth	150+	M. Lynch#	4/16	Acton	1 br pl		S. Perkins#
4/18	Barnstable (S.N.)	18	M. Malin	4/17	Plymouth	15		I. Davies#
4/28	Salisbury	13	D. Chickering	4/18	Dennis	10		P. Flood#
4/29	P'town (R.P.)	50	D. Scott	4/18	Cape Ann	11 ad		R. Heil
Least Sandpiper				4/19	P.I.	2		T. Wetmore
4/23	Hadley	1	C. Gentes	Little Gull				
4/24	Bolton Flats	1	S. Sutton	4/17	Rockport (A.P.)	1 ad		R. Heil
4/24	N. Monomoy	5	B. Harris	4/18	Gloucester (B.R.)	1 2S		R. Heil
4/24	Newbypt H.	3	P. Cozza	Black-headed Gull				
4/24	P.I.	2	R. Heil#	3/1-4/10	Gloucester	2-3BBC (Drummond)		
Pectoral Sandpiper				3/7	Osterville	1		M. Keleher
4/7	Bolton Flats	1	J. Nelson	3/10	Plymouth	1		K. Doyon
4/24	N. Monomoy	1	B. Harris	3/23	Barnstable	4 ph		M. Keleher
4/24-27	Hadley	1	C. Gentes	Bonaparte's Gull				
4/25	Amherst	1	L. Therrien	4/15	Southwick	2		S. Kellogg
Purple Sandpiper				4/16, 27	Turners Falls	3, 4		Taylor, Bowrys
thr	P.I.	72 max	v.o.	4/16	GMNWR	3		E. Nielsen#
3/1-4/16	Rockport	50 max	v.o.	4/17	Rockport (A.P.)	43		R. Heil
3/1-4/20	Gloucester	40 max	v.o.	4/17	Plymouth	427		I. Davies#
3/3	P'town H.	12	B. Nikula	4/17	P.I.	140		R. Heil
3/12	Sandwich	11	K. Doyon	4/18	Cape Ann	620+		R. Heil
3/16	Nantucket	30	E. Ray#	4/27-28	Hadley	1		A. Magee
4/13	Scituate	150	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	Iceland Gull				
4/25	Marblehead	40	T. Bronson	3/3-4/15	P'town	2-8		B. Nikula
4/29	Boston (Deer I.)	6	R. Stymeist#	3/3-19	Turners Falls	2-3		v.o.
Dunlin				3/4-4/18	Gloucester	4-6		v.o.
3/3	P'town	650	B. Nikula	3/15	W. Concord	1 1S		S. Perkins#
3/17	Westport	300+	E. Richards	3/17	Salisbury	3		S. Grinley#
3/19	Essex	240	R. Heil	3/24	Deerfield	1		B. Kane
4/4	Duxbury B.	440+	R. Bowes	4/15	Rockport (A.P.)	2 1W		R. Heil
4/13	S. Monomoy	1100	B. Harris	4/20	N. Truro	3		D. Manchester#
4/30	Newbypt H.	21	P. Brown					

Lesser Black-backed Gull				4/26	Minimoy	3	B. Harris
3/1-10	Turners Falls	1-2	v.o.	4/27	N. Falmouth	1	I. Nisbet
3/21-24	Boston	1 1W	R. Kelley#	Common Murre			
3/31	Winthrop	1 ad	J. Trimble#	3/2-4/17	Rockport (A.P.)	29 max 3/2	R. Heil
4/13	S. Monomoy	11	B. Harris	3/3	P.I.	2	P. Gilmore#
4/16	W. Concord	1 ad bp	S. Perkins#	3/3	P'town	3	B. Nikula
4/17, 22	P.I.	2 ad, 1 ad	R. Heil	Thick-billed Murre			
4/18	Gloucester (B.R.)	2 ad	R. Heil	3/2-4/17	Rockport (A.P.)	27 max 4/17	R. Heil
4/18	Dennis (Corp. B.)	1 (1W)	B. Nikula	4/17-23	Gloucester	7 max	v.o.
4/22, 29	Bolton Flats	1 2W	M. Lynch#	4/18	Essex	5	S. Hunt#
Glaucous Gull				4/18	Barnstable (S.N.)	3	M. Malin
3/1-28	Turners Falls	1-2	v.o.	4/19	Nahant	5	L. Pivacek
3/3	Salisbury	1 1W	MAS (Larson)	4/19	Dennis (Corp. B.)	4	B. Nikula#
3/21	Gloucester	2	MAS (B. Gette)	4/21	Humarock	2	J. Galluzzo
3/25	Hadley	1 (1W)	B. Zajda	4/30	Salem	1 ad	D. Ely
4/21	Plymouth	1 2S	I. Davies	Razorbill			
Nelson's Gull				3/2, 4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	3760, 390	R. Heil
3/10	Turners Falls	1	T. Pirro	3/3	P'town	100	B. Nikula
3/14	P.I.	1 1W	R. Heil	3/4	N. Truro	1200	B. Nikula
3/25	Gloucester	1	W. Petersen#	3/24	Wellfleet	48 BBC (L. de la Flor)	
3/27	Hadley	1	S. Kellogg	4/18, 19	Barnstable (S.N.)	2, 14	M. LaBossiere#
Black-legged Kittiwake				4/18	Dennis (Corp. B.)	14	B. Nikula
3/2, 4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	2170, 352	R. Heil	Black Guillemot			
3/3	P'town	15	B. Nikula	3/1-4/24	Gloucester	10 max	v.o.
4/17, 18	Dennis (Corp. B.)	43, 372	B. Nikula	3/2, 4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	4, 31	R. Heil
4/18	Barnstable (S.N.)	16	M. Malin	3/24	Wellfleet	4 BBC (L. de la Flor)	
Caspian Tern				4/14	Marshfield	7	G. d'Entremont
4/20	DWWS	1	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	4/18	Salisbury	1	MAS (B. Gette)
4/21	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore	4/19	Dennis (Corp. B.)	1	P. Flood#
4/22	Plymouth	1	I. Davies	4/22	N. Scituate	1	G. d'Entremont#
4/24	Winchester	1	M. Rines#	Atlantic Puffin			
4/29	P.I.	2	T. Wetmore	4/12	Rockport (A.P.)	2	R. Heil
Roseate Tern				Large alcid species			
4/25	Marion	3	R. Podolsky	3/2, 4/16	Rockport (A.P.)	1090, 290	R. Heil
4/30	Mattapoisett	1	R. Podolsky	3/3, 4/21	P'town	7000, 59	B. Nikula
Common Tern				3/4, 18	N. Truro	2600, 1100	B. Nikula
4/26	Marion	70	C. Mostello	4/19	Dennis (Corp. B.)	805	B. Nikula#

OWLS THROUGH GROSBEAKS

A Barn Owl was noted at Felix Neck in Edgartown, and there were many reports of Great Horned Owls, several of which were nesting birds with young. At Logan Airport the last Snowy Owl was reported on April 26. Norm Smith of the Trailside Museum banded a total of eleven Snowies this winter at Logan, four of them in March. On March 4 Norm witnessed a Snowy Owl capture and eat a Peregrine Falcon! During this period as many as four Short-eared Owls were noted at Logan. The first Whip-poor-wills were heard calling on the last day of April, and Chimney Swifts started appearing by the third week in April. A few Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were noted after April 18; most hummingbirds move through the state in May. Red-headed Woodpeckers, never common in the spring, were present throughout the period in Sutton and at the famous Great Blue Heron rookery along Route 2 in Littleton.

Rusty Blackbird, a species that has shown a population decline, is one to watch. The largest group noted this year was forty birds in North Andover. Rusties, unlike our other blackbirds, depend on boreal wetlands for breeding and wooded wetlands for wintering. They are more insectivorous than other blackbirds and typically prefer to feed as a single species. *Bird Observer* encourages all reports of this species. A single **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was found in Granby, the sixth record for this species in western Mass during this period.

The general arrivals of Eastern Phoebe and Tree Swallow occurred at mid March. The majority of other swallow species did not arrive until well into April. Purple Martins have declined in our area, and only eight individuals were noted during the period, including a single male on Plum Island. The Parker River NWR colony has had its ups and downs and currently seems to be on a downturn. Large flocks of robins arrived in early April despite temperatures that were colder than normal.

The coastal storm that began on April 15 brought several early arrivals of species that typically arrive later in May. A Summer and two Scarlet tanagers, four Blue Grosbeaks, and a glowing Indigo Bunting were reported from Nantucket. On Cape Ann, three Scarlet Tanagers, three Blue Grosbeaks, and an Indigo Bunting were noted after the storm.

The weather broke on April 22 and strong southwesterly winds sent the temperature to over 90° in suburban areas, and the floodgates were open for many April migrants. On Plum Island, a fallout of early migrants included forty-three Northern Flickers, twenty-four Blue-headed Vireos, twenty-nine Ruby-crowned and sixty-seven Golden-crowned kinglets, forty-five Hermit Thrushes, 260 Yellow-rumped and 139 Palm warblers, and forty-one Savannah and nearly 750 White-throated sparrows. Marblehead Neck and Mount Auburn Cemetery reported similar fallouts. Unusual early migrants included a White-eyed Vireo at Mount Auburn, a Yellow-throated Warbler at Fresh Pond in Cambridge, an American Redstart in Westminster, a Worm-eating Warbler in Brewster, and Grasshopper Sparrows in Gloucester and Hadley.

Also unusual were the number of birds that successfully over-wintered in the area. Most notable was the **Townsend's Warbler** that first appeared in a heavily developed section of Cambridge on January 22 and was last seen on April 10. The bird was gearing up for moving on, consuming over sixty mealworms a day, and had started to sing the first week of April. Other feeder holdovers included an **Audubon's Warbler** in Eastham, a Black-throated Blue Warbler in Boxboro, a **Harris's Sparrow** in Georgetown, and a Dickcissel in Gloucester. A **European Goldfinch** was photographed at a feeder in Pepperell where it spent eight days before moving on.

R. Stymeist

Barn Owl				Chimney Swift			
3/10	M.V.	1	D. Berard#	4/21	N. Truro	1	D. Manchester#
Eastern Screech-Owl				4/23	Williamstown	5	L. Reed-Evans
3/3	Waltham	2	J. Forbes#	4/28	Stoughton	4	G. d'Entremont
3/10	Wayland	2	B. Harris	4/29	Bolton Flats	3	M. Lynch#
3/19	Sutton	2	D. Berard	4/29	Melrose	4	D. + I. Jewell
3/19	Millbury	5	D. Berard	Ruby-throated Hummingbird			
3/27	Belmont	2 red	R. Stymeist#	4/18	Nantucket	1	S. Daniels
4/20	Hadley	2	C. Gentes	4/19	Auburn	1	D. Berard
Great Horned Owl				4/25-30	Reports of indiv. from 8 locations		
thr	Littleton	pr n	M. Rines	Belted Kingfisher			
3/12-31	Ipswich	pr n	J. Berry	3/23	Barnstable	3	M. Keleher
3/24	Boxford	1 ad, 2 juv	N. Landry	3/31	Mashpee	3	M. Keleher
3/30	Hingham (WE)	1 n	SSBC (H. Cross)	4/1	New Braintree	3	C. Buelow#
3/30	Peabody	1 n	D. + I. Jewell	4/7	Wachusett Res.	3	M. Lynch#
Snowy Owl				4/21	Lancaster	3	S. Sutton
3/1-25	P.I.	3 max	T. Wetmore	4/22	New Braintree	3	M. Lynch#
3/4, 4/26	Boston (Logan)	4, 1	N. Smith	4/28	Brookfield	4	M. Lynch#
3/10	Fairhaven	1	C. Longworth	Red-headed Woodpecker			
3/24	Newybpt	1	S. Grinley#	thr	Sutton	1	M. Bowden#
Barred Owl				4/thr	Littleton	1	v.o.
3/12	Brimfield	2	I. Lynch	Red-bellied Woodpecker			
4/15	IRWS	1 n	BBC (Vale)	thr	Medford	8 max	M. Rines
Long-eared Owl				3/14	Sutton	7	D. Berard
3/1-3	Hadley	2	C. Gentes	4/7	Boxboro	6	J. Nelson
3/1-9	Northampton	1	B. Zajda	4/20	Mt.A.	5	BBC (P. + F. Vale)
3/3-24	DWWS	1-2	v.o.	4/28	Brookfield	6	M. Lynch#
Short-eared Owl				Yellow-bellied Sapsucker			
3/1-4/9	P.I.	6 max	v.o.	thr	Reports of indiv. from 21 locations		
3/4, 4/11	Boston (Logan)	4, 1	N. Smith	3/19	Sutton	2	D. Berard
3/19	Cumb. Farms	1	D. Furbish	4/8	New Salem	2	J. Hoye#
3/24	DWWS	2	BBC (L. de la Flor)	Hairy Woodpecker			
3/27	Duxbury B.	1	D. Furbish	3/11	Worcester	3	M. Lynch#
4/14	N. Monomoy	3	B. Harris	3/31	Mashpee	4	M. Keleher
4/15	Newybpt	1	G. d'Entremont	4/7	Wachusett Res.	4	M. Lynch#
Northern Saw-whet Owl				4/21	Rutland	3	M. Lynch#
3/11	New Salem	1	B. Lafley	Northern Flicker			
3/19	Sutton	1	D. Berard	3/14	Cumb. Farms	18	D. Furbish
3/31	Truro	1	J. Young	4/21	Wakefield	16	P. + F. Vale
Whip-poor-will				4/23	N. Truro	11	D. Manchester#
4/30	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	4/24	P.I.	43	R. Heil#
4/30	Plymouth	1	S. Sanders				

Pileated Woodpecker			4/21, 23	N. Truro	1, 4	D. Manchester#
3/10 Bolton Flats	2	S. Sutton	4/22	N. Scituate	1 m	G. d'Entremont
3/25 Quabbin Pk.	3	M. Lynch#	4/22	P.I.	1 m	R. Heil
4/13 Littleton	2 m	I. Davies#		Tree Swallow		
4/26 Douglas	2	D. Berard	3/5	Cotuit	1	B. Volkle#
4/29 Hardwick	3	C. Buelow	3/11	Duxbury B.	1	D. Furbish
4/29 Wompatuck SP	2	BBC (E. Giles)	3/14	Sudbury	2	B. Harris
Eastern Phoebe			3/14-4/30	P.I.	270 max	4/24 R. Heil
3/3 W. Newbury	1	S. Grinley#	3/15-4/30	GMNWR	300 max	4/16 v.o.
3/9 Melrose	2	D. + I. Jewell	3/29	Turners Falls	140	L. Therrien
3/14 Wales	2	J. Ohep	4/10	Hatfield	150	H. Allen
3/16 General arrival			4/23	W. Warren	200	B. Zajda
Great Crested Flycatcher				Northern Rough-winged Swallow		
4/28 Mt.A.	1	S. Williams	3/31	Longmeadow	1	S. Surner
4/29 Winchester	1	F. Vale	4/1	Westboro	4	J. Liller#
4/29 W. Roxbury	1	R. Stymeist#	4/20	Waltham	3	C. Jeffery
Eastern Kingbird			4/22	P.I.	11	R. Heil
4/25 Hadley	1	C. Gentes	4/29	Mashpee	6	M. Keleher#
4/29 Jamaica Plain	1	K. Hartel#	4/29	Brighton	22	K. Hartel#
4/29 Oxford	1	P. Meleski#	4/30	Arlington	8	R. Stymeist
4/29 Belchertown	1	S. Surner		Bank Swallow		
4/29 Sheffield	1	C. Blagdon	4/22	P.I.	2	R. Heil
4/30 Arlington	2	R. Stymeist	4/24	Sterling	9	K. Bourinot
Northern Shrike			4/27	Pepperell	8	E. Stromsted
3/thr Reports of indiv. at 16 locations			4/29	GMNWR	15	S. Perkins
3/1-27 Wayland	1 ad	B. Harris	4/30	Bolton Flats	2	S. Sutton
3/1-24 P.I.	1	T. Wetmore		Cliff Swallow		
4/10 Gardner	1 ad	T. Pirro	4/22	N. Truro	1	D. Manchester#
White-eyed Vireo			4/24	P.I.	3	R. Heil#
4/24-30 Mt.A.	1	v.o.	4/27	Westminster	1	T. Pirro
Blue-headed Vireo			4/29	Wayland	1	J. Hoye#
4/21 Granville	1	S. Kellogg	4/30	Lenox	5	T. Collins
4/21 Hubbardston	1	M. Lynch#		Barn Swallow		
4/23 Hardwick	5	C. Buelow	3/23	Eastham	1	D. Clapp#
4/23 Newbury	6	L. Leka	3/27	Nantucket	1	E. Ray
4/26 Douglas	5	D. Berard	4/7	Wayland	1	B. Harris
4/29 P.I.	24	B. Harris	4/17-30	P.I.	67 max	4/22 v.o.
4/30 Wakefield	5	F. Vale	4/23	N. Truro	47	D. Manchester#
Warbling Vireo			4/27	Westminster	15	T. Pirro
4/26 W. Roxbury	1	M. Iliff	4/29	GMNWR	90	S. Perkins
4/26 Arlington Res.	1	M. Rines#	4/30	Arlington	26	R. Stymeist
4/28 Southwick	1	S. Kellogg		Red-breasted Nuthatch		
4/29 Oxford	1	P. Meleski#	3/19	Holyoke	4	J. Zepko
4/30 Medford	1	M. Rines#	3/31	Mashpee	6	M. Keleher
Fish Crow			4/1	Quabbin (G10)	3	B. Harris
3/4 Stoughton	6	G. d'Entremont	4/22	Petersham	7	M. Lynch#
3/16 Marshfield	10	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	4/28	Gardner	5	T. Pirro
3/21 Cumb. Farms	6	D. Furbish	4/28	Brookfield	7	M. Lynch#
3/27 Hadley	9	S. Kellogg		Brown Creeper		
3/30 Quincy	30+	H. Robinson	3/19	Holyoke	4	J. Zepko
3/31 Newbypt	6	D. Chickering	3/23	Taunton	3	T. Casavant
3/31 Wellfleet	35	J. Young	4/13	Littleton	3	I. Davies#
4/8 Northampton	6	F. Bowrys	4/21	P.I.	5	N. Landry
4/22 Plymouth	10+	I. Davies	4/21	Lancaster	5	S. Sutton
Common Raven			4/24	Hardwick	3	C. Buelow
thr Reports of 1-2 indiv. from 29 locations			4/28	Sturbridge	5	D. Berard#
3/4 Carlisle	2	T. + D. Brownrigg		Carolina Wren		
3/9 W. Newbury	2	R. Heil	3/3	Swansea	9	M. Lynch#
3/11 Rockport	2	J. Frontiero	3/4	Stoughton	6	G. d'Entremont
3/13 Erving	pr n	C. Buelow	4/14	Westport	21	BBC (Stymeist)
3/15 Windsor	12	A. + L. Richardson	4/22	Plymouth	5	I. Davies
4/8 S. Quabbin	51	L. Therrien	4/28	Brookfield	5	M. Lynch#
4/22 New Braintree	3	M. Lynch#		House Wren		
4/25 Plympton	2	A. Brissette	4/24	P.I.	2	R. Heil#
Horned Lark			4/28	Newton	2	P. Gilmore#
3/1-4/18 P.I.	60 max	v.o.	4/28	Medford	5	M. Rines#
3/1 Hadley	121	L. Therrien	4/29	Bolton Flats	2	M. Lynch#
3/8 Duxbury B.	14	D. Furbish	4/29	Hardwick	2	C. Buelow
3/19 Ipswich	140	R. Heil		Winter Wren		
3/19 Northampton	100	H. Allen	3/1-4/25	Medford	1-2	M. Rines
3/24 Cumb. Farms	150	G. d'Entremont	3/10	Quabbin	2	C. Buelow
3/29 Townsend	60	T. Pirro	3/24	Boxford (C.P.)	2	S. Grinley#
4/3 Amherst	100	S. Beaudrealult	4/1-24	P.I.	2-3	v.o.
4/4 Hatfield	200	F. Bowrys	4/8	Petersham	3	J. Hoye#
4/11 Pepperell	47	E. Stromsted	4/11	MNWS	2	K. Haley#
4/26 Wellfleet	2	CCBC (C. Franklin)	4/21	Lancaster	2	S. Sutton
Purple Martin			4/23	Wompatuck SP	3	C. Nims
4/19 Gloucester (E.P.)	1	S. Walker	4/24	Nahant	2	D. Bates#

Marsh Wren				3/14	Woburn (HP)	20	M. Rines#
4/24-30	P.I.	7 max	v.o.	4/29	Saugus	45+	P. + F. Vale
4/28	Brookfield	2	M. Lynch#	Orange-crowned Warbler			
4/29	Mashpee	2	M. Keleher#	3/1-4/10	Brewster	1	S. Finnegan
Golden-crowned Kinglet				3/18	Nantucket	1	E. Ray#
3/1-4/25	Woburn	10 max	4/7 M. Rines	3/31	Wellfleet	1	J. Young
3/1-4/21	Medford	12 max	4/21 M. Rines	4/1-26	Gloucester	1	J. Standley
3/23-4/29	P.I.	67 max	4/21 T. Wetmore	4/30	Lexington	2	B. Stevens
4/1	Quabbin (G10)	13	B. Harris	Nashville Warbler			
4/7	Petersham (G40)	16	B. Zajda	4/25	Oxford	1	D. Berard
4/7	Hadley	10	C. Gentes	Northern Parula			
4/7	Wachusett Res.	19	M. Lynch#	4/21	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	S. Hedman#
4/21	Malden	10	P. + F. Vale	4/24	Mt.A.	1	D. Bates#
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				4/25	Oxford	2	D. Berard
3/4, 4/25	Woburn	1, 24	M. Rines#	4/26	Newton	3	A. Gurka
4/1	Marshfield	3	J. Hoye#	4/28	Sudbury	1	D. Diggins#
4/20-30	Medford	14 max	4/25 v.o.	4/29	Milford	1	J. Liller
4/21-30	P.I.	29 max	4/24 v.o.	4/30	Arlington	1	R. Stymeist
4/25	Brookline	30	H. Miller	Yellow Warbler			
4/25	Mt.A.	50+	BBC (P. + F. Vale)	4/25	Sheffield	1	T. Collins
4/26	Wakefield	18	F. Vale	4/25	W. Bridgewater	1	SSBC (Gd'E)
4/26	Douglas	28	D. Berard	4/25	Longmeadow	1	N. Eaton
4/26	S. Quabbin	18	L. Therrien	4/26	W. Roxbury	1	M. Iliff
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher				4/29	Oxford	2	P. Meleski#
4/22	W. Newbury	2	S. Hedman#	4/29	Acushnet	3	S. Maguire
4/24	Hardwick	6	C. Buelow	4/30	Wayland	3	B. Harris
4/25	Oxford	3	D. Berard	Black-throated Blue Warbler			
4/29	Bolton Flats	7	M. Lynch#	3/1-17	Boxboro	1 m	fide S. Santino
4/29	ONWR	9	M. Lynch#	Yellow-rumped Warbler			
4/30	Medford	3	R. LaFontaine	3/thr	Reports of 1-2 indiv. from 8 locations		
Eastern Bluebird				4/thr	P.I.	260 max	4/24 R. Heil
3/8	N. Andover	6	I. Davies	4/19-30	Medford	41 max	M. Rines
3/9	Millbury	7	D. Berard	4/23-30	Arlington Res.	134 max	M. Rines
3/10	Hadley	19	C. Gentes	4/23, 30	Wayland	38, 146	B. Harris
3/14	Pepperell	9	E. Stromsted#	4/25	Amherst	107	L. Therrien
3/30	Hingham (WE)	6	SSBC (H. Cross)	4/25	Oxford	62	D. Berard
4/22	Worc. (BMB)	6	J. Liller#	4/25	Woburn (HP)	86	M. Rines
Hermit Thrush				4/28	Longmeadow	75	S. Ricker
3/1-4/21	Reports of 1-2 indiv. from many locations			Audubon's Warbler			
4/23	Mt.A.	14	J. Trimble	3/1-27	Eastham	1 ph	J. Hanson
4/23	P.I.	45	T. Wetmore	Black-throated Green Warbler			
4/24	MNWS	75+	J. Offermann	4/23	Holyoke	1	T. Gagnon
4/24	Boston (P.G.)	14	M. Garvey	4/24	P.I.	1 m	R. Heil#
4/26	Wakefield	34	F. Vale	4/26	Mattapoisett	1	M. LaBossiere
Wood Thrush				4/28	Berlin	1	S. Sutton
4/22	P'town	1	S. + C. Thompson	4/29	Wompatuck SP	3	BBC (E. Giles)
4/24	Hull	1	J. Galluzzo	4/29	Medford	1	M. Rines
4/28	Sudbury	1	D. Diggins#	4/29	Oxford	2	P. Meleski#
4/29	Ware	1	M. Martin	Townsend's Warbler (details submitted) *			
4/30	Worcester	1	M. Lynch#	3/1-4/10	Cambr.	1 ph	J. Orr, L. Cohen
4/30	Acushnet	1	K. Langevin	Blackburnian Warbler			
American Robin				4/26	Douglas	1	D. Berard
4/5	New Braintree	400	C. Buelow	Yellow-throated Warbler			
4/6	W. Newbury	240+	P. + F. Vale	4/29	Cambr. (F.P.)	1	N. Guppy
4/7	New Braintree	200	C. Buelow	Pine Warbler			
4/24	P.I.	160	R. Heil#	3/14	Millbury	1	D. Berard
Gray Catbird				3/28	General arrival		
3/3	Marblehead	1	K. Haley	4/22	Holyoke	12	S. Kellogg
3/10	P.I.	2	R. Heil	4/24	S. Quabbin	24	L. Therrien
3/21	Gloucester	1	MAS (B. Gette)	4/24	Hardwick	15	C. Buelow
3/21	Winchester	1	R. LaFontaine	4/25	Stoughton	17	G. d'Entremont
4/30	Northampton	1	B. Hart	4/29	Wompatuck SP	14	BBC (E. Giles)
Brown Thrasher				4/29	Mashpee	21	M. Keleher#
4/24	Sterling	3	K. Bourinot	Prairie Warbler			
4/25	Woburn (HP)	3	M. Rines	4/20	N. Truro	1	D. Manchester#
4/28	P.I.	9	P. + F. Vale	4/22	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	D. Brown#
4/29	Southwick	6	S. Kellogg	4/23-30	P.I.	1	v.o.
4/29	Oxford	3	P. Meleski#	4/28	Newton	1	P. Gilmore#
American Pipit				4/29	Milton	1	L. Tyrala#
3/3	Cumb. Farms	1	D. Furbish	4/30	Andover	1	M. Baird
3/14	Newbypt	12	R. Heil	Palm Warbler			
3/25	New Braintree	35	C. Buelow	4/7	Melrose	1	F. Vale
4/7	Hatfield	42	S. Sumner	4/12-30	P.I.	139 max	4/24 v.o.
4/8	Newbury	51	R. Heil	4/13, 25	Amherst	1, 33	Wilson, Therrien
4/16	Hadley	4	L. Therrien	4/19, 24	Medford	2, 38	M. Rines
4/28	Longmeadow	5	S. Ricker	4/23	Mt.A.	33	J. Trimble
Cedar Waxwing				4/25	Woburn (HP)	48	M. Rines
3/3	Turners Falls	300	H. Allen	4/26	Arlington Res.	34	M. Rines#

Palm Warbler (continued)				Vesper Sparrow			
4/30 Wayland	48	B. Harris		3/9 Cumb. Farms	1	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	
Black-and-white Warbler				4/18 Hadley	1	C. Gentes	
4/23 Newbury	6	L. Leka		4/23 Northfield	1	T. Wansleben	
4/23 Northampton	2	F. Bowrys		4/29 Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	
4/26 Douglas	3	D. Berard		Savannah Sparrow			
4/28 Brookfield	4	M. Lynch#		3/4 Hadley	12	H. Allen	
4/29 ONWR	5	M. Lynch#		3/24 Cumb. Farms	44	G. d'Entremont	
4/30 Arlington	4	R. Stymeist		4/23 Wayland	35	B. Harris	
American Redstart				4/24 P.I.	41	R. Heil#	
4/27 Westminster	1	T. Pirro		4/24 Medford	22	M. Rines#	
Worm-eating Warbler				4/26 W. Roxbury	25	M. Iliff	
4/24 Brewster	1	J. Nixon		4/29 E. Boston	20	R. Stymeist#	
Ovenbird				4/30 Bolton Flats	27	S. Sutton	
4/28 Sturbridge	1	D. Berard#		Ipswich Sparrow			
4/29 Byfield	1	J. Sutherland		3/8 Duxbury B.	3	D. Furbish	
4/29 P'town	1	B. Nikula#		3/14 Plymouth B.	1	K. Doyon	
Northern Waterthrush				3/24 Nantucket	1	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	
4/22 DWWS	1	J. Galluzzo		Grasshopper Sparrow			
4/23 MNWS	2	K. Haley		4/23 Gloucester (E.P.)	1 ph	P. Cozza	
4/26 Douglas	2	D. Berard		4/28 Hadley	1	L. Therrien	
4/29 Wompatuck SP	2	BBC (E. Giles)		Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow			
4/29 Oxford	2	P. Meleski#		4/10 N. Monomoy	1	B. Harris	
4/29 Northampton	2	T. Gagnon		4/28 P.I.	1	F. Vale	
Louisiana Waterthrush				Seaside Sparrow			
4/12 Northampton	1	F. Bowrys		3/15 Eastham	1	M. Taylor#	
4/21 Lancaster	2	S. Sutton		4/30 P.I.	1	T. Wetmore	
4/23 Brookline	1	M. Kaufman		Fox Sparrow			
4/23 MNWS	1	K. Haley		3/3 Quabbin	2	L. Therrien	
4/23 Holyoke	2	T. Gagnon		3/12 Brimfield	2	I. Lynch	
4/25 Oxford	2	D. Berard		3/14 ONWR	7	P. Cozza	
4/26 Berlin	2	BBC (S. Sutton)		3/17 Easthampton	8	F. Bowrys	
4/28 Brookfield	2	M. Lynch#		3/17 Belchertown	15	S. Sumner	
4/29 Wompatuck SP	1	BBC (E. Giles)		3/18 Longmeadow	10	A. Mueller	
4/29 Concord	1 m	J. Keyes		3/19 S. Quabbin	19	L. Therrien	
Common Yellowthroat				4/6 Granby	8	L. Rogers	
4/30 Chestnut Hill	1	M. Kaufman		4/14 Hadley	6	C. Gentes	
Hooded Warbler				Song Sparrow			
4/24 MNWS	1 m	R. + K. Barnes#		3/3 Swansea	77	M. Lynch#	
4/28 Nahant	1 f	D. Wilkinson		3/24 Cumb. Farms	66	G. d'Entremont	
Summer Tanager				3/26 P.I.	274	I. Davies#	
4/18 Nantucket	1	v.o.		3/31 Westport	96	M. Lynch#	
Scarlet Tanager				4/1 Quabog IBA	66	M. Lynch#	
4/17-18 Nantucket	2	v.o.		Swamp Sparrow			
4/21 Gloucester (E.P.)	3	S. Hedman#		3/10 Amherst	2	H. Allen	
4/23 Mt.A.	1	J. Trimble		3/13 Wayland	4	B. Harris	
4/24 P.I.	1	R. Heil#		3/15-4/30 P.I.	16 max	R. Heil	
4/28 Millbury	1	D. Berard#		4/21 Wakefield	12	P. + F. Vale	
Western Tanager (no details) *				4/23 New Braintree	6	I. Lynch	
3/26 M.V.	1	S. Anderson#		4/28 Brookfield	34	M. Lynch#	
Eastern Towhee				White-throated Sparrow			
3/10 S. Dartmouth	3	S. Grinley		3/22 Mt.A.	56	R. Stymeist	
3/16 Belchertown	1	N. Eaton		4/24 P.I.	740+	R. Heil#	
4/20 E. Quabbin	1	L. Therrien		4/24 MNWS	300	J. Offermann	
4/22-30 P.I.	25 max	v.o.		4/24 Boston (P.G.)	75	M. Garvey	
4/25-30 Medford	10 max	M. Rines		4/26 Worcester	50+	M. Lynch#	
4/28 Marshfield	10	MAS (J. Galluzzo)		4/26 Wakefield	40+	F. Vale	
American Tree Sparrow				4/26 Scituate	54	S. Maguire	
3/1-21 P.I.	27 max	v.o.		Harris's Sparrow (details submitted) *			
3/10 Bolton Flats	275+	S. Sutton		thr Georgetown	1 m	A. O'Hare	
3/18 Halifax	200	SSBC (W. Petersen)		White-crowned Sparrow			
3/25 Groton	100+	M. Resch		3/3-28 Salisbury	1 ad	v.o.	
Chipping Sparrow				3/9 Cumb. Farms	3	MAS (J. Galluzzo)	
3/1-4/21 Reports of 1-4 indiv. from many locations				3/10 Westport	7	M. Lynch#	
3/11 Melrose	6	D. + I. Jewell		3/17-4/19 Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	
4/24 Worcester	73	M. Lynch#		3/18 Salisbury	2 ad	L. Ferraresio#	
4/28 Brookfield	52	M. Lynch#		4/20 Lexington	1	MBC (R. Stymeist)	
4/29 Wompatuck SP	30	BBC (E. Giles)		4/22 Williamstown	1	L. Reed-Evans	
4/29 Bolton Flats	29	M. Lynch#		Dark-eyed Junco			
Field Sparrow				thr P.I.	65 max	v.o.	
3/13 Plymouth	6	K. Doyon		3/16 Easton	50	K. Ryan	
3/19 Sutton	2	D. Berard		3/20 Hardwick	100	C. Buelow	
3/30 Hanson	2	MAS (J. Galluzzo)		3/23 Melrose	45+	P. + F. Vale	
3/31 Westport	2	M. Lynch#		4/1 New Braintree	120+	M. Lynch#	
4/thr P.I.	8 max	R. Heil		4/8 Rutland	96	M. Lynch#	
4/thr Woburn (HP)	2	M. Rines#		4/29 P'town	1	D. Scott	
4/23 Mt.A.	2	J. Trimble		Lapland Longspur			
				3/3 Salisbury	2	P. + F. Vale	

Lapland Longspur (continued)				3/25	Hadley	5	B. Zajda
3/11	WBWS	3	M. Taylor#	3/25	Essex	9	C. Corley
3/14, 22	P.I.	1, 1	R. Heil	3/30	S. Dartmouth	12	K. Ryan
3/19	Sutton	1	D. Berard	4/14	Westport	9	BBC (Stymeist)
3/20	Northampton	4	S. Kellogg	4/25	Leicester	8	M. Lynch#
3/23	Hyannis	3	K. Blackshaw	Yellow-headed Blackbird			
3/24	Cumb. Farms	1	M. Lynch#	4/8	Granby	1	L. Rogers
4/11	N. Monomoy	12	B. Harris	Rusty Blackbird			
Snow Bunting				3/8	Chicopee	2	A. + L. Richardson
3/1-26	P.I.	56 max	v.o.	3/16	Littleton	4	G. Marley
3/3	Westfield	80	S. Kellogg	3/25	Hadley	10	B. Zajda
3/4	Hadley	30	H. Allen	3/26	W. Bridgewater	20	K. Ryan
3/4	N. Truro	22	D. Manchester#	4/6	Lenox	15	N. Mole
3/5	Shelburne	12	T. Gagnon	4/11	Northfield	14	H. Allen
3/7	Northampton	250	L. Therrien	4/13	N. Andover	40+	J. Berry
3/8	Duxbury B.	22	D. Furbish	4/14	Amherst	16	S. Surner
3/10	Templeton	27	T. Pirro	4/28	Byfield	5	J. Sutherland
3/14, 25	Plymouth B.	11, 2	K. Doyon	4/29	Wompatuck SP	3	BBC (E. Giles)
Rose-breasted Grosbeak				Common Grackle			
4/14	Nantucket	1	L. Zimmerman	3/3	Harwich	100+	B. Nikula
4/19	Chatham	2 m	D. Scott	3/7	Newbypt	400	R. Heil
4/21	Newbury	1 f	H. Leka	3/12	Bolton Flats	1275	S. Sutton
4/23	Littleton	1	G. Marley	3/24	Framingham	600	E. Taylor
4/25	E. Longmeadow	1	G. Kingston	4/24	P.I.	1350	R. Heil#
4/30	Wayland	1	B. Harris	Brown-headed Cowbird			
Blue Grosbeak				3/18	Fairhaven	120+	M. Lynch#
4/18, 26	Rockport	1, 1	M. Flor#	4/1	P'town	400	J. Young
4/18-20	Nantucket	4	v.o.	4/7	Concord (NAC)	125	SSBC (G. Long)
4/19-26	Gloucester (E.P.)	1 m	v.o.	4/24	P.I.	280+	R. Heil#
4/21	P'town	3	G. Martin#	Orchard Oriole			
Indigo Bunting				4/26	Newton	1	A. Gurka
4/16	Acushnet	1 m	C. Longworth	4/30	Arlington	1 m	M. Rines
4/16	Nantucket	1 m	D. Nicholson	Baltimore Oriole			
4/16	Gloucester	1	J. Standley	4/16	Nantucket	1	D. Miller
4/17-20	Nantucket	8	v.o.	4/26	W. Gloucester	1	J. Nelson
4/22	P'town	1	B. Nikula#	4/27	General arrival		
4/29	S. Orleans	1	C. + S. Thompson	Purple Finch			
Dickcissel				3/28	Hinsdale	12	M. Wiley
3/1-11	Gloucester	1	v.o.	3/29-4/30	P.I.	22 max	v.o.
Red-winged Blackbird				4/1	Quabbin (G10)	4	B. Harris
3/7	Newbypt	2500+	R. Heil	4/7	Wayland	4	B. Harris
3/11	DWWS	420+ MAS	(J. Galluzzo)	4/26	Gardner	3	T. Pirro
3/24	Bolton Flats	350+	S. Sutton	4/28	Brookfield	9	M. Lynch#
4/1	Quabog IBA	728	M. Lynch#	4/29	Wompatuck SP	3	BBC (E. Giles)
4/1	P.I.	620+	R. Heil	European Goldfinch			
4/25	W. Bridgewater	500	SSBC (Gd'E)	3/28-4/4	Pepperell	1 ph	Jeanne Nevard
Eastern Meadowlark				Evening Grosbeak			
3/3	Cumb. Farms	24	D. Furbish	4/8	New Salem	pr	J. Hoye#
3/5	DWWS	19	J. Offermann	4/20	Princeton	1	G. Gove#
3/15	Sunderland	5	A. Richards				

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO BIRD OBSERVER

Sightings for any given month must be reported in writing by the eighth of the following month, and may be submitted by postal mail or e-mail. Send written reports to Bird Sightings, Robert H. Stymeist, 36 Lewis Avenue, Arlington, MA 02474-3206. Include name and phone number of observer, common name of species, date of sighting, location, number of birds, other observer(s), and information on age, sex, and morph (where relevant). For instructions on e-mail submission, visit: <<http://massbird.org/birdobserver/sightings/>>.

Species on the Review List of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (indicated by an asterisk [*] in the Bird Reports), as well as species unusual as to place, time, or known nesting status in Massachusetts, should be reported promptly to the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, c/o Marjorie Rines, Massachusetts Audubon Society, South Great Road, Lincoln, MA 01773, or by e-mail to <marj@mrines.com>.



SWALLOWS BY DAVID LARSON

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

Taxonomic order is based on AOU checklist, Seventh edition, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, and 47th Supplements, as published in *The Auk* 117: 847-58 (2000); 119:897-906 (2002); 120:923-32 (2003); 121:985-95 (2004); 122:1026-31 (2005); 123:926-936 (2006) (see <<http://www.aou.org/checklist/index.php3>>).

ABC	Allen Bird Club	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	P.I.	Plum Island
A.Pd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth	Pd	Pond
B.	Beach	P'town	Provincetown
Barre FD	Barre Falls Dam,	Pont.	Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro
	Barre, Rutland	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	Res.	Reservoir
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	S. Dart.	South Dartmouth
BBC	Brookline Bird Club	S.B.	South Beach, Chatham
MBM	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
C.B.	Crane Beach, Ipswich	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
CGB	Coast Guard Beach, Eastham	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford	TASL	Take A Second Look
Cambr.	Cambridge		Boston Harbor Census
CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay WS
Cumb. Farms	Cumberland Farms,	WMWS	Wachusett Meadow WS
	Middleboro	Wompatuck SP	Hingham, Cohasset,
DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary		Scituate, and Norwell
DWMA	Delaney WMA	Worc.	Worcester
	Stow, Bolton, Harvard		
DWWS	Daniel Webster WS	Other Abbreviations	
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	ad	adult
EMHW	Eastern Mass. Hawk Watch	alt	alternate
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	b	banded
F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge	br	breeding
F.Pk	Franklin Park, Boston	dk	dark (morph)
G40	Gate 40, Quabbin Res.	f	female
GMNWR	Great Meadows NWR	fl	fledgling
H.	Harbor	imm	immature
H.P.	Halibut Point, Rockport	juv	juvenile
HRWMA	High Ridge WMA, Gardner	lt	light (morph)
I.	Island	m	male
IRWS	Ipswich River WS	max	maximum
L.	Ledge	migr	migrating
M.V.	Martha's Vineyard	n	nesting
MAS	Mass. Audubon Society	ph	photographed
MBWMA	Martin Burns WMA, Newbury	pl	plumage
MNWS	Marblehead Neck WS	pr	pair
MSSF	Myles Standish State	S	summer (1S = 1st summer)
	Forest, Plymouth	v.o.	various observers
Mt.A.	Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambr.	W	winter (2W = second winter)
NAC	Nine Acre Corner, Concord	yg	young
Newbypt	Newburyport	#	additional observers



TRICOLORED HERON ON SOUTH BEACH BY DAVID LARSON

ABOUT THE COVER

White-rumped Sandpiper

This plump little sandpiper is the quintessential long-distance migrant, with trips each year from its high Arctic breeding grounds to wintering areas as far south as Tierra del Fuego. In fall, adult White-rumped Sandpipers (*Calidris fuscicollis*) are grayer, longer-winged, and larger than Semipalmated Sandpipers and the other “peeps” with which they associate. In flight, the white rump that gives the species its common name is distinctive. Adults in spring are browner, with breast and flank streaks. Juveniles are browner and brightly patterned. In all plumages the folded wings extend beyond the tail. Baird’s Sandpipers are similar in size and shape but lack the white rump and are more boldly patterned. The White-rumped Sandpiper is monotypic (no subspecies) and is considered closely related to Baird’s Sandpiper because of similarities in morphology and courtship displays.

White-rumped Sandpipers breed from northern Alaska across northern coastal Canada and its islands to southern Baffin Island. They winter from southern Brazil to Tierra del Fuego and the Falkland Islands in the east and west to the Andes.

They arrive in Massachusetts in mid-April to early June and are found in a broad spectrum of habitats, including beaches, mud flats, salt pannes, and grassy fields. They are considered an uncommon migrant, but numbers fluctuate, and they are common in some years. In the fall they are present from late July to October. More than 200 have been reported from Monomoy, and one storm event resulted in a count of 2000 in Newburyport.

White-rumped Sandpipers are usually polygynous. A male mates with more than one female and has more than one female nesting in his territory. The breeding habitat is typically wet tundra near ponds or streams. Males are aggressively territorial, flying at intruders, and on the ground they will chase intruders with wings spread and tail cocked. They may also defend a feeding territory in winter. Courtship displays include an aerial performance with exaggerated deep wing beats or hovering with fluttering wings, giving rattling calls with neck and throat extended. Displays are followed with a glide to the ground, where, upon landing, the male often raises a single wing. On the ground he runs with tail cocked, wings straight out with tips down, displaying his white rump and undertail coverts. The flight song has been described variously as a rattling *buzz*, squeak, or twitter, with interspersed *quo-ick* notes.

The nest is constructed by the female alone, shaping the cup with her body in moss or other tundra vegetation and lining the cup with fine moss, lichen, or willow leaves. The usual clutch is four buff or greenish eggs blotched with red-brown. The female develops a brood patch and incubates the eggs alone for about three weeks until hatching. The female will give a distraction display when approached or hover in the face of an intruder. The precocial young leave the nest in a matter of hours. The female alone broods and stays with the chicks for sixteen to seventeen days until flight and independence.

White-rumped Sandpipers typically forage by probing several times in one spot and then walking or running to another to repeat the process. They will also glean prey from the surface. On the breeding grounds they forage in wet vegetation but mostly on mud flats on the wintering grounds. Their diet is largely invertebrates, including worms, snails, crustaceans, and insects, but they will take plant seeds.

White-rumped Sandpipers are dependent on stop-over areas or staging zones during their long migrations and are vulnerable to habitat loss in these areas. On the breeding grounds they are subject to the usual Arctic nest predators, including jaegers, Peregrine Falcons, and Arctic foxes. Very little information is available on population trends, but currently there is no evidence of decline. The remoteness of their breeding habitat offers some protection against human habitat alteration and pesticides, but alteration of their wintering habitat and stop-over areas is a real concern. 🐦

William E. Davis, Jr.



HUDSONIAN GODWITS BY DAVID LARSON

About the Cover Artist: Barry Van Dusen

As always, *Bird Observer* is delighted to publish a cover by Barry Van Dusen, the wildlife artist whose work has become almost a regular feature in our journal. Barry's drawings and watercolors are well known not only to our readers but throughout the birding world. He has illustrated several nature books and pocket guides, and his articles and paintings have been featured in *Birder's World*, *Birding*, and *Bird Watcher's Digest*. Barry frequently exhibits in New England and at prestigious national shows such as Birds in Art in Wausau, Wisconsin, as well as Art of the Animal Kingdom in Bennington, Vermont. His work has been shown also in Ireland, Scotland, France, and Holland. Barry became drawn to nature subjects through an association with the Massachusetts Audubon Society, which began in 1982. He has been influenced by the work of European wildlife artists and uses their methodology of direct field sketching. His skill as a field artist has enabled Barry to participate in projects abroad sponsored by the Netherlands-based Artists for Nature Foundation. With this organization he has traveled to India, Peru, Ireland, and Spain, working with other artists to raise funds for conservation of threatened habitats. In 1994 he was elected a full member of London's Society of Wildlife Artists and is a frequent contributor to its exhibitions. Barry resides in the central Massachusetts town of Princeton. His website is <<http://www.barryvandusen.com>>. 🐦

AT A GLANCE

June 2007



DAVID LARSON

You glance out the window on a winter morning and there, not far from your bird feeders, sits a hawk. Sure, you've spent lots of time watching hawks pass your favorite interior ridge-top hawkwatch location, or perhaps you've gotten a sunburned face perched atop a sand dune in April while monitoring raptors winging their way northward across the salt marshes or sneaking through the dune hollows at Plum Island. But all the hawks counted during those glorious migration days were in flight, not perched outside your kitchen window, and that makes a BIG difference when trying to distinguish one hawk species from another.


As beginning birders we were taught early on the basic shape differences between buteos, accipiters, and falcons in flight. We learned that some species typically soar in great lazy circles in the sky, while others flap-and-glide, flap-and-glide during sustained flight. We were told that some species soar or glide with their wings cast up in a dihedral configuration, while others are streamlined, speedy, and direct in their flight. Indeed, these are useful features and often constitute the bread-and-butter field marks for seasoned hawk watchers during migration. But the mystery hawk is perched!

All those nifty field identification clues you learned through your hours of hawk watching during spring and fall migration are no longer of value, because the mystery

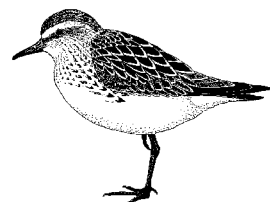
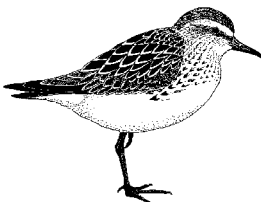
hawk before you is perched and lifeless on the page. What to do? Don't despair, because you already have clues — the bird is eyeing your bird feeder, and it's doing so in winter.

In Massachusetts only a few hawk species are routinely encountered under these circumstances. Most common are the Sharp-shinned Hawk and the Cooper's Hawk. Much less frequent are the Northern Goshawk and the Red-shouldered Hawk. We can at once remove the Northern Goshawk as a candidate since goshawks in any plumage always display a bold white stripe over the eye and under all circumstances appear significantly larger and more robust overall than the pictured hawk. The Red-shouldered Hawk can also be dismissed since an adult Red-shouldered would have a black tail, crossed by a series of contrasting thin white bands. If the bird were a juvenile Red-shouldered Hawk, its tail would be shorter and finely banded throughout; a young Red-shouldered would also be longitudinally striped with dusky coloring on the breast.

Consequently, we are left to choose between a Sharp-shinned Hawk and a Cooper's Hawk. Even though the bird is perched, its overall structure, small-headed and long-tailed, should at once tell experienced hawk watchers that it is in the genus *Accipiter*. More important, however, the tail is relatively short compared to the folded wingtips and is only slightly rounded at the tip. Nearly as important, there is no strong terminal band of white at the tips of the tail feathers. Additionally, the mystery hawk seems to have relatively small eyes and a small bill, a short neck, and no indication of a contrasting dark cap on the top of the head. All of these features point to the bird being an adult Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*). The wavy, horizontal markings just visible beside the folded wing, not streaks on the underparts, indicates that the bird is in adult plumage. An adult Cooper's Hawk would appear larger overall; would show a proportionately longer, more rounded tail with a more prominent white terminal band; and would definitely have a longer, thicker neck and a contrasting blackish cap on top of the head.

Sharp-shinned Hawks are very uncommon and reclusive nesters in Massachusetts, although they are common to very common migrants during both spring and fall. Even though their numbers in winter seem to vary from year to year, they are always present, especially in the milder eastern portions of Massachusetts, where they regularly prey on small birds attracted to backyard bird feeders. David Larson photographed the Sharp-shinned Hawk in the picture near his own backyard bird feeder. 

Wayne R. Petersen



SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPERS BY GEORGE C. WEST

AT A GLANCE



DAVID LARSON

Can you identify this bird?

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

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