

Bird Observer

VOLUME 43, NUMBER 5

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HOT BIRDS



This handsome male **Rufous Hummingbird** visited the Canton feeder of Julia and Michael McAdams from July 22 to July 26. Vagrant hummingbirds are most often discovered in the fall, usually females or hatch year birds, so a brilliant male in July was particularly exciting. Julia McAdams took the photograph above.



The August 22-23 Brookline Bird Club Extreme Pelagic was spectacularly successful. This **White-tailed Tropicbird** was one of four (!) spotted during the trip. Jeremiah Trimble took the photograph above.

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Bird Observer

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Bird Finding at Harkness Memorial State Park, Waterford, Connecticut

Robert Dewire

Harkness Memorial State Park is located in Waterford, along the Connecticut coast. To reach the park from Interstate 95 (I-95), take exit 81. If traveling south on I-95, turn left at the end of the ramp. At the second traffic light turn left onto Cross Road. If traveling north on I-95, go to the first traffic light and turn right onto Cross Road. Proceed just under one mile to US Route 1 and turn left at the traffic light. Go to the second traffic light and turn right on Avery Lane. Stay on this road, which changes name to Great Neck Road or Connecticut Route 213, and travel just over three miles. The park entrance will be on your right.

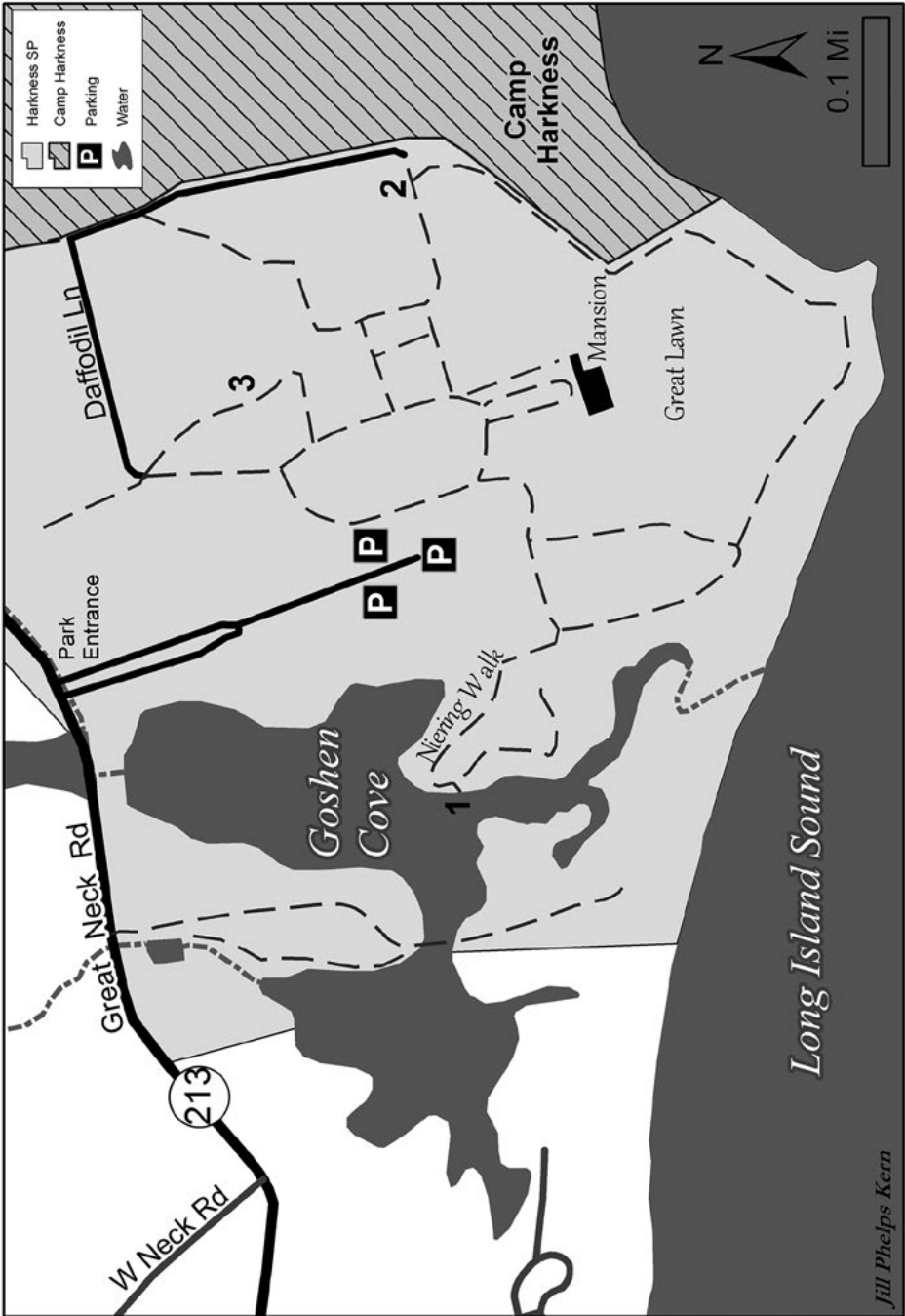


The park is open from 8:00 am to sunset all year. A parking fee is charged weekends from the third weekend in April through the weekend before Memorial Day. After Memorial Day the fee is charged daily until Labor Day weekend, after which charges are assessed on weekends only to mid-September. From then until the third weekend in April, no fee is charged.

The property was left to the state by owners Edward and Mary Harkness in 1950 and became a state park in 1952. The park is 230 acres and is dominated by the Harkness mansion, called Eolia, and its Great Lawn stretching from the mansion to Long Island Sound. Large meadows of grasses and wildflowers, thickets, fresh- and saltwater marshes, a tidal cove, sandy and rocky beachfront on Long Island Sound, and specimen trees dotting the Great Lawn make up the park habitats. The mansion is surrounded with formal gardens along with large cutting gardens nearby. Flowering is at its best in late summer and fall. There is no swimming allowed at the beach.

The western side of the park is bounded by a tidal cove called Goshen Cove. Besides the open water, the cove contains a salt marsh and exposed mud flats when the tide is low. Niering Walk, the trail down to the cove from the parking lot, borders some fine thickets. There is a viewing blind or hide, marked 1 on the map, which looks over the mud flat area. This habitat mix is the best area in the park for birding. Across the cove is a designated natural area, also part of the park, but not accessible to the public. Much of the water of the cove is visible as you walk the trail (NOTE: if it has been a wet spring, parts of the trail may be flooded).

From mid-October to mid-April a nice selection of waterfowl makes use of the cove. Common species such as Mallard, Black Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Bufflehead, and Hooded and Red-breasted mergansers can be found. Less common are Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, and Northern Shoveler. In late March and April, Blue-winged Teal often appear and Eurasian Wigeon has been found in with the American Wigeon. Prolonged cold spells can result in the cove completely freezing over, forcing the birds to depart.



Jill Phelps Kern



Marsh and mud flat in Goshen cove. (All photographs by the author.)

The mud flats attract shorebirds, terns, and gulls. Common and Least terns often use the flats in summer for loafing. In late summer and early fall they may be joined by Forster's and Black terns and on occasion a Black Skimmer. Royal and Caspian terns may also show up but are quite rare. Herring, Ring-billed, and Great Black-backed are the expected gull species. Laughing Gulls join them from August through October.

Fall shorebird migration begins in mid-July and goes into October. The common species on the mud flats include Semipalmated and Black-bellied plovers, Killdeer, Greater and Lesser yellowlegs, Short-billed Dowitchers and Spotted, Least and Semipalmated sandpipers. American Oystercatchers, Red Knots, Willets, Sanderlings, and White-rumped and Western sandpipers are less common but still may be found here. Rare finds have included Whimbrel, Marbled Godwit, Stilt Sandpiper, and the rarest find the park has ever had, a Black-tailed Godwit in breeding plumage that was discovered on April 29, 2001, and stayed the whole day, giving many birders an opportunity to see and photograph this beautiful bird.

The salt marsh attracts Great Blue and Green herons and Great and Snowy egrets from spring through fall. Little Blue Herons and Glossy Ibis are found mostly in April and May. Tricolored Heron is quite rare. Black-crowned Night-Herons roost in trees in summer and autumn in the natural area across the cove and can occasionally be seen flying about, even in mid-day. Saltmarsh Sparrows nest in the marsh and in October, Nelson's Sparrow is regularly found. An Osprey pole in the marsh has a nesting pair annually.

As you walk the trail, there are excellent thickets that are most productive in the fall (mid-September through November). A few taller trees in the thickets attract



Brant at rocky beach.

migrant warblers including Black-and-White, Northern Parula, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Magnolia, Cape May, Blackpoll, and Redstart. Thicket-loving warblers are harder to see, but include Blue-winged, Prairie, Northern Waterthrush and Wilson's. Although rare, Connecticut Warbler has been recorded here in October. The two breeding warblers here are Yellow and Common Yellowthroat. In late October through November, Yellow-rumped Warblers are by far the most common. They should be checked carefully for Palm and Orange-crowned Warblers. Also in fall, Yellow-breasted Chat may show up in thickets any time right up to the end of the year. You just have to be lucky.

Following the thicket edge will bring you to the beach where the cove empties into Long Island Sound. A viewing platform provides a good vista of the section of beach across the cove. It is here that Piping Plover and Least Tern nest. Plovers are here from late March to mid-September and the terns are present from early May to early September. Long Island Sound is pretty quiet in the summer; the best bird worth watching for in summer is Roseate Tern. Some of these birds feed along the Harkness beach, often with Common Terns. They nest on Great Gull Island in the Sound near Long Island, NY.

The best time period for scanning Long Island Sound from Harkness is from mid-October to late March. Common and Red-throated loons are readily found, along with Horned Grebes. Red-necked Grebes are found annually but can take a lot of searching. Among ducks, Common Goldeneyes arrive in November and are easily found along

with Buffleheads and Red-breasted Mergansers. Offshore, flocks of scoters pass by heading west into Long Island Sound. Some flocks will be close enough to identify without a scope. Our most common scoter is Surf, followed by Black, and then White-winged. Common Eiders are regularly found around the park, especially in the rocky area, usually single birds or a small flock of ten or so. Once in a while a large flock will appear offshore numbering a hundred or more birds, often with scoters mixed in as well. Always scan the eider flocks carefully since King Eider has been recorded here on more than one occasion. Good numbers of Brant can be expected along the Harkness shoreline from November through April. Sometimes they feed up on the Great Lawn.

At the eastern end of the beach, the sand gives way to large rocks offshore and a rocky beachfront as well. At low tide the seaweed-covered rocks attract Purple Sandpipers, Dunlin, and Ruddy Turnstones. At high tide all three will roost up on the larger rocks and often be joined by Sanderlings. American Pipits pick through the washed-up seaweed in this area and Bonaparte's Gulls fly just offshore. On strong easterly windblown days during November and December, watch offshore for Northern Gannets. Alcids are scarce in Long Island Sound, but in recent years Razorbills have become more regular in winter. The bottom line is that it is always worth scanning Long Island Sound.

Follow the water along the rocks until you come to a fenced-off beach area on the eastern side of the park. This is Camp Harkness, a summer camp for children with intellectual and development learning disabilities. The beach area is off-limits to the general public. Follow the fence and large shrubs around the beach. You will have the mansion and Great Lawn on your left. Continue along the shrub edge until you come to a bar across a dirt road on your right and beyond the bar, a paved road, marked 2 on the map. Go out to the paved road and turn left. The road is for transporting the children back and forth from the beach to the camp area. It is rarely used and the edges are a nice mix of thickets and trees. It is the one part of the park that is closest to a woodland habitat. In the fall, look for migrants such as Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Carolina Wren, both kinglets, Hermit Thrush, Brown Thrasher, Cedar Waxwing, Eastern Towhee, Scarlet Tanager, and Baltimore Oriole.

In irruptive years, the row of white pines can yield Red-breasted Nuthatch, Purple Finch, and Pine Siskin. When you get to the end of the pines, turn left on a paved road, Daffodil Lane. It will take you between two fields. The field on the left is wet in the spring and is a great spot to find Wilson's Snipe in late March and April. When you get to the bend in the road you will see a small apple orchard on the right. This is a good area for Eastern Bluebirds. Also at the bend, you will see a dirt road going off to the left to an open area marked 3 on the map, where park staff leave large piles of brush, cuttings, and other plant materials. This is the best area for finches and sparrows in the park; best time frame is from the end of September through mid-November. Sparrows are represented by good numbers of Savannah, Field, Chipping, White-throated, Swamp, and Song. You can also expect White-crowned in smaller numbers. Harder to find but recorded annually are Clay-colored, Lincoln's, and Vesper. In late November, Tree and Fox will be here. Indigo Buntings are regular, but the bright blue of the

males will have changed to their brown winter plumage. Watch for what looks like an oversized Indigo Bunting, because Blue Grosbeaks are also found here annually.

Continue toward the mansion and visit the gardens. Up to the end of September, you should find Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, and lots of butterflies as well. If you find a hummingbird in late October or beyond, check carefully because it may well be one of the western hummers like Rufous or Calliope. American Goldfinches and House Finches feed on flower heads. Pine Siskins may be present by early November. The large trees around the mansion have nesting Fish Crows and a couple usually overwinter. From the gardens it is a short walk back to the parking lot.

A few more special things to look for:

If it is a good winter for Snowy Owls, the dunes across the cove along the beach are a good area to see them.

In good years for Short-eared Owls, they will often be found flying over the cove, marsh, and adjacent fields at sunset.

The coastal hawk migration in late September and October is pretty good here. Hawks are best watched for from the crest of the hill next to the parking lot, looking down on the cove. Expect Sharp-shinned, Cooper's, Red-shouldered, and Red-tailed hawks, Osprey, Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, and Merlin. Less common are Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons.

In late October and November, areas of the Great Lawn by the water's edge may attract Horned Larks and Snow Buntings. Sometimes a Lapland Longspur or two may be with them.

Many of the fields are mowed in the fall. They can be attractive to Eastern Meadowlarks at this time.

For the most part, Harkness Park is at its birding best from late August to mid-April. In summer the park can be crowded, especially on weekends. Parking lots fill before noon, in which case the park entrance will be closed. Bathrooms are located by the parking lot. There are many benches where you can bring a picnic lunch or supper. There are no food vendors at the park.

Harkness is a great place to spend at least half a day. I wish you good birding when you are there. 🐦

Robert Dewire has lived in southeastern Connecticut for most of his life. He went on his first bird walk at age 14 with a group from a local nature center. The location of the walk was Harkness Park. On that day, he began his life list. He has been compiler of the New London, Connecticut, Christmas Bird Count since 1963 and is an active birdbander. He currently lives in Stonington.

Birdwatching, Observation-based Field Ornithology, and the Conservation Movement

The Influence of Ludlow Griscom and Roger Tory Peterson

William E. Davis, Jr.

Three areas of interest in birds—avocational birdwatching (birding), field-based scientific ornithology, and conservation—have evolved substantially since the 19th century. Each developed in parallel to the others, each was influenced by the development of the others, and there was considerable overlap among the three. To begin this historical discussion, I assess the blurred distinction between “amateur” and “professional” ornithologists, and how these two classes of people who are interested in birds have interacted as birding, observation-based field ornithology, and the conservation movement of the 20th century in North America evolved. To narrow the focus I have chosen to emphasize the roles of two individuals in this drama: Ludlow Griscom and Roger Tory Peterson. Both were New England residents for substantial parts of their careers, and both played significant roles in the development of all three areas, locally and nationally.



Fig. 1. Ludlow Griscom with his binoculars, symbolizing leadership in the sight-identification of birds. Photograph from *Ludlow Griscom, Virtuoso of Field Identification* by Edwin Way Teal, 1945, *Audubon Magazine* 47:349-358.

The Amateur and the Professional, an Historical Perspective

In no other science, with the possible exception of astronomy, is the concept of “amateur” and “professional” more blurred than it is in ornithology. In the latter half of the 19th century, few people earned their living from studying birds. Although there were a few museum ornithologists, most of the influential ornithologists of the day, such as William Brewster and Eliot Coues, were men of independent means, were physicians, or were connected to the army. There was little difference between the museum professional and, for example, the group of young men who founded the Nuttall Ornithological Club—all were serious students of bird life, and all published their scientific studies. The museum professionals developed extensive networks among the amateur ornithologists, many of whom supplied

the museums with their growing collections of bird skins, which was the currency of ornithological study of the time.

In the 20th century and into the 21st, the influx of ornithologists into the academic sphere, conservation organizations, and state and local government agencies has increased the number of ornithologists who earn their living working with birds. Many of these professional ornithologists started out as birdwatchers and many remain active birdwatchers throughout their lives. Also, professionals often recruit and train amateurs to help with their bird research, which further improves the amateur's skill level. These are a couple of examples why the distinction between the professional and the serious amateur remains blurred.

From Shotgun to Field Glasses

The latter half of the 19th century produced an explosive development of interest in natural history in general and birds in particular. By 1850, the U.S. National Museum, under the leadership of Spencer Fullerton Baird, began to stir interest in natural history, and a widespread movement began in earnest after the Civil War. The roots of this cultural trend can be traced to upper-class emulation of a similar earlier trend in Europe, and in a middle class with leisure time. Museums proliferated: the Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ) at Harvard University was established in the late 1850s under the leadership of Louis Agassiz, followed by the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in 1869, Chicago's Field Museum in 1893, and the Carnegie Museum of Pittsburgh in 1895. The hobby of collecting bird skins, nests, and eggs became widespread. Bird clubs and journals that dealt with birds and other natural history subjects proliferated remarkably (for an excellent discussion of these trends, see Barrow 1998).

The first organization that dealt solely with birds was the Nuttall Ornithological Club (NOC), established in 1873 by William Brewster and seven of his friends. From 1876 to 1883, the NOC published the *Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club*, the first journal in North America dedicated exclusively to birds. The *Bulletin* became *The Auk* in 1884 when it was transferred, editor and all, to the fledgling American Ornithologists' Union (AOU). The NOC is still alive and well, its members influential in a wide spectrum of local and national organizations (Davis 1987). The NOC is of particular interest because both Ludlow Griscom and Roger Tory Peterson were influential in this organization.

Another organization that had a profound effect on the development of ornithology and recreational birding was the Linnaean Society of New York, founded in 1878 by C. Hart Merriam, John Burrows, Eugene P. Bicknell (of Bicknell's Thrush fame), and seven other prominent naturalists. The Linnaean Society was a progressive organization that admitted women as members as early as 1890, including Florence Merriam, Olive Thorne Miller, and Mabel Osgood Wright, all of whom became influential writers and popularizers of birds.

The "shotgun school" of ornithology prevailed through the early 20th century, when birds were shot rather than studied alive in the field. But by 1900, several things

occurred that substantially changed this approach. One was the development of the protectionist movement, and another was the availability of high-quality German prism binoculars. These optics facilitated the development of modern birding, complete with its year lists, life lists, and “Big Day” competitions, and helped transform ornithology from a hobby to, in some aspects, a competitive sport.

The conservation movement began as a protectionist trend. After a false start in the mid-1880s with the formation of an Audubon Society for the Protection of Birds by George Bird Grinnell, it began in earnest in 1896 with the founding of the Massachusetts Audubon Society with William Brewster as the organization’s first president (Walton and Davis 2010). By 1901, there were three dozen local or state Audubon organizations, and by 1905 William Dutcher organized the National Association of Audubon Societies for the Protection of Birds and Mammals, which later became the National Audubon Society. This flurry of activity resulted from alarm and consternation over the slaughter of egrets, gulls, terns, and other species for the millinery trade and the slaughter of ducks, shorebirds, and doves for commercial markets. The protectionist movement, which gradually morphed into the conservation movement, slowly promoted a national interest in birds that influenced the development of birding, the demise of the shotgun school of ornithology, and the development of observation-based field ornithology.

Enter Ludlow Griscom and Roger Tory Peterson

Two of the most influential people in the development of birding, sight-based field ornithology, and the conservation movement were Ludlow Griscom and Roger Tory Peterson. Ludlow Griscom, whom Roger Tory Peterson described as “A genius at field identification” (Peterson 1980), was born in 1890. He recorded his first bird—an American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*)—at age four in Flushing, Long Island, New York, where he was raised (Davis 1994). At the age of 17 (1907), he formally became part of the birding community when he joined the Linnaean Society of New York. Here he became an ornithological force and a sight records guru (Figure 1).

In 1914, Ludlow Griscom entered Cornell University to obtain a Master’s degree under Arthur Allen, the first professor of ornithology in North America. His master’s thesis (1915) was titled *The Identification of the Commoner Anatidae of the Eastern United States in the Field*—demonstrating his commitment to and skill in rapid identification of live birds in the field (Figure 2). The following year he joined the

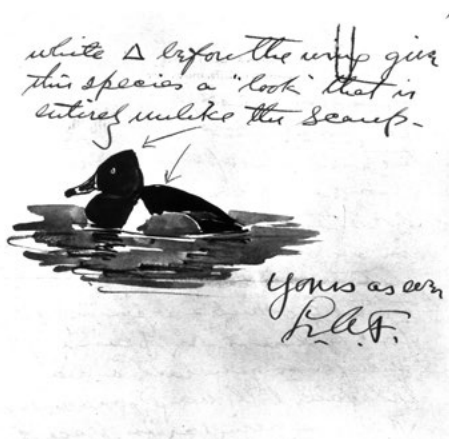


Fig. 2. Excerpt from a letter to Griscom by Louis Agassiz Fuertes, showing the finer points of Ring-necked Duck (*Aythya collaris*) identification in the field. Cornell University Olin Library Archives, Ludlow Griscom papers.

staff of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City, a position he held until 1927, when he took up a curatorship in the Museum of Comparative Zoology in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The Linnaean Society of New York met twice monthly at the AMNH and Griscom was a major influence on, among others, a group of young men who called themselves the Bronx County Bird Club, many of whom went on to professional careers in ornithology. The group included Roger Tory Peterson, for whom Griscom was an inspiration and a mentor, and who wrote on numerous occasions about Griscom's influence:

Ludlow Griscom was the first ornithologist I ever met, when, as a lad of 17 I came to New York in 1925 to attend my first meeting of the A.O.U.... I was to see him in action the following Saturday when he led the field trip to Long Beach on Long Island. On that day 13 new birds went down on my life list... Returning to New York a year later to take up my art education, I often saw Ludlow Griscom at the bimonthly meetings of the Linnaean Society which he dominated.... Griscom was our God and his "Birds of the New York City Region" [1923] our Bible. Every one of us could quote chapter and verse. We used his terminology and even his inflection when we pronounced something as "unprecedented" or "a common summer resident." The leader of our little group, Jack Kuerzi, even parted his hair in the middle in the approved Griscom style. (Peterson 1960)

Clearly Griscom was a charismatic leader who exerted substantial influence over these young men. There is a frequently told story of Griscom facing down one of the old shotgun boys by identifying difficult birds, for example, a female Cape May Warbler high in a canopy. The old boy shot the bird and sure enough, it was a female Cape May. The story goes that Griscom repeated this procedure until he established credibility. Scott Weidensaul summed up the importance of this story:

True? The story was told by one of Griscom's own students, so it might well be, but the factuality of it almost doesn't matter; the story has been told so often because it boiled down the emergence of modern birding, with its reliance on the binocular instead of the gun, into a simple parable—the dawn of a new age in a single morning in Central Park.... (Weidensaul 2007: 184).

Griscom encouraged the keeping of careful records of the birds seen on every outing. He developed the habit of recording each species and the number of individuals seen, thus encouraging a quantitative aspect to record keeping, and a more scientific dimension to birding. By example, he encouraged his disciples to do the same.

Griscom also exerted influence on his professional colleagues. As a member of the ornithological staff at the prestigious AMNH for a decade, a fellow of the AOU, and a prolific publisher, he was respected throughout the professional ornithological community. His book *Birds of the New York City Region* drew good reviews and demonstrated his leadership in field ornithology. One review, by Witmer Stone, for decades the editor of *The Auk*, particularly demonstrated this:

As is well known Mr. Griscom has for some years been studying the possibilities of sight identification with the idea of eliminating so far as

possible errors in field identification. He is not alone in this work as its importance is at once recognized by all students of living birds, but he has taken a leading part in it, and the results are beginning to show in the mention in our books of field marks by which a bird at some distance may be recognized....In cutting away from many of the traditional requirements of the last generation and considering the needs of the host of present day field students it sets a standard and example for what, as we have said elsewhere, might be termed the "new ornithology." (Stone 1924)

Hence Griscom provided a strong influence on both the professional and amateur ornithological communities. He was a professional who espoused sight-recognition-based ornithology and an avid participant in birding-for-pleasure adventures, keeping year and life lists of species seen, and leading Big Day bird tours and pelagic trips. Dealing with both the professional and amateur communities was not an easy task; he faced resistance from more traditional shotgun ornithologists and he chided the birdwatchers for their burgeoning sight records that were often of dubious value. In a sense, with the birders, he thought he had created a monster that he felt obligated to corral. It is also true that Griscom might have been "riding the wave"—the development of ecology as a science and the rise of ornithologists in academia. But maybe Griscom, like a famous physicist who was accused of riding the wave, could respond: "Well, I made the wave didn't I?"

Soon after Griscom arrived in Cambridge, he was welcomed into the Nuttall Ornithological Club, at the time a "Victorian men's club" dominated by old-school ornithologists. Ironically it was Charles Foster Batchelder, one of the club's founders in 1873, and decidedly of the old school, who nominated Griscom for resident membership. I wrote in the *History of the Nuttall Ornithological Club 1873-1986*:

Griscom was destined to have an enormous effect on the Club over the next 30 years. He was one of the prominent promoters of sight identification in the field and of the "sport of birding," neither of which were particularly appealing to many of the older members, who were of the shotgun school. He would promote the active participation of amateurs in the Club, and, as we shall see, in many ways directed the Club along lines which, depending with whom you discuss the matter, either threatened the demise of the Nuttall Ornithological Club or led to its entering a new, modern, and productive era. (Davis 1987: 35)

Membership in the NOC was restrictive; women were not allowed to be members, speakers, or guests. Even Roger Tory Peterson, when he came to Boston in 1933, was not elected to membership the first time his name was proposed. This led the progressive Griscom, who had several female protégés, to float the idea of electing women as members. The backlash was significant, as the bylaws were swiftly changed in 1936 from "Resident members shall be persons interested in ornithology...." to "Resident Members shall be men interested in ornithology...." Sadly, it was not until 1974 that women were admitted to the NOC. Of the five women admitted that year, three were Griscom protégés.



Fig. 3. Roger Tory Peterson (left) and Ludlow Griscom. Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7150, AOU Collection 1883–1977.

Griscom did more than anyone else to cause the shift from shotgun to observation-based ornithology in the NOC. He influenced a cadre of new, younger members by giving dozens of evening presentations on the state of the local seasonal bird migration and on sight identification of gulls, alcids, and other groups of birds. He shifted the focus of the meetings to include increased use of field notes based primarily on sight identifications instead of bird skins. During the 1930s and 1940s, as older members of the Club passed away, the tension over sight records diminished.

The evolution of the field guide

In 1934, Roger Tory Peterson was ready to find a publisher for his new concept of a field guide for bird identification (Figure 3). There had been a number of previous attempts to produce a book or a system to facilitate the identification of birds in the field, but none had been entirely successful (Dunlop 2011). Most were better for identifying birds in the hand, were too large to be carried into the field, were poorly illustrated, or dealt with too limited a compliment of species. Some were a tad sentimental, and most importantly none was *really* satisfactory—perhaps the time for a comprehensive field guide simply had not arrived.

For example, Alexander Wilson’s nine volumes of *Birds of America* (1808-1813) had hand-colored plates that were designed to facilitate the identification of birds in the field or in the hand (Burt and Davis 2013). But nine large volumes was hardly a “field guide.” Thomas Nuttall’s *Handbook* (1832, 1834; 1905) came closer, but was mostly restricted to northeastern birds. Elliott Coues’s *Key* (1872) was an improvement

but was difficult to use. Chapman's *Handbook* (1895) and particularly his *Color Key* (1903), which was a true visual guide and in many ways bridged the gap between shotgun and binocular bird identification, were steps in the right direction but still used keys. Florence Merriam Bailey's *Birds of Village and Field* (1898) and *Birds Through an Opera-Glass* (Merriam 1896) dealt with sight identification but were not comprehensive in terms of species. Perhaps the best of the lot was Ralph Hoffmann's *A Guide to the Birds of New England and Eastern New York* (1904). But it, too, was restricted in the species covered and was also a bit daunting to use.

Chester Reed produced a series of small oblong books that were aimed for beginning birders (e.g., 1906a,b). The guides were small enough for any pocket, had a color illustration of each species, and were inexpensive. They became the most successful of the early guides for the novice. Ernest Thompson Seton hit upon the idea of making comparative plates of ducks (Seton-Thompson 1903) and flying raptors as viewed from below at considerable distance (Thompson 1897), an idea that strongly influenced Roger Tory Peterson when he gathered together his first field guide. Hence by the early 1930s, many of the ideas that Peterson brought together in his 1934 field guide had been touched upon by previous authors except, perhaps, the drawing of lines (headless arrows) to show significant field marks. The stage was set.

Peterson consulted Griscom about his field guide plans, and Griscom read the manuscript but, because it was difficult to do much in the publication world during the Great Depression, Peterson's manuscript was initially turned down. Peterson explains how the manuscript was finally accepted:

Through Ludlow and his young disciples, I learned the tricks of field recognition and, being trained as an artist, was able to pull things together and give them form. In 1934 my first field guide was published. William Vogt had taken it in unfinished form to four publishers who had turned it down.... However, Francis Allen, the top editor at Houghton Mifflin, was himself a member of the Nuttall Club. He saw the validity of my unorthodox approach—patternistic drawings with arrows pointing to the key field marks. He brought in Ludlow Griscom, then at the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard, and seated him at the far end of the long table in the Houghton Mifflin board room in Boston. He then held up one plate after another. Without hesitation, Ludlow identified every bird. Having passed the test, Houghton Mifflin decided to gamble (Peterson 1994).

The rest, as they say, is history. Peterson revised his guide periodically and it became the jewel in the crown of the burgeoning Peterson Field Guide series that eventually included more than 50 titles on a broad spectrum of natural history subjects. It also spawned competition from Richard Pough and the National Audubon Society-sponsored series of three bird guides (e.g., 1946), the *Golden Guide* (Robbins et al. 1966), the National Geographic Society (1983) guide and more recently the Sibley guides (e.g., Sibley 2000). Scott Weidensaul described the impact of the Peterson guides on the development of birding:

It is hard to overestimate the impact that Peterson's guides have had on the world—not just on birding, but the way we as a culture think and feel about nature itself. Millions of people whose eyes were opened to the natural world in the pages of a Peterson guide provided the impetus for the modern environmental movement.... “In this century,” ecologist Paul Ehrlich said in the 1980s, “no one has done more to promote an interest in living creatures than Roger Tory Peterson.” (Weidensaul 2007: 181-182).

The National Audubon Society

Both Griscom and Peterson played significant roles in the National Audubon Society (Audubon), promoting birding and conservation. Frank Chapman, who ran the bird department at the American Museum of Natural History, founded what became the most popular bird magazine in America, *Bird-Lore*, in 1899. He remained its owner and editor until the mid-1930s when he sold it to the National Audubon Society; it morphed into *Audubon Magazine* in 1941 (Gibbons and Strom 1988). Peterson, who was employed by the society beginning in 1934, became the art editor of *Bird-Lore*, and education director of the society. He made the education section of the magazine prominent, revamped its cover, and graced the magazine with his bird art. Further, he wrote Junior Audubon leaflets, wrote articles for *Bird-Lore*, conducted radio shows, and gave lectures around the country, all with a strong conservation message. In his first four years at Audubon, he gave 100 lectures, 75 radio broadcasts, wrote 62 leaflets (3,800,000 printed), nine guides for teachers (87,500 printed), wrote 33 articles, and produced 480 paintings and illustrations for *Bird-Lore*—a prodigious effort (Carlson 2007). After he left Audubon, Peterson continued to influence birding and the conservation movement through his writings and through his long-term participation in the Audubon Screen Tours series (Rosenthal 2008).

Griscom became the “Seasons” editor for the Boston area for *Audubon Magazine* and by 1941 was the national editor. Griscom was great friends with Guy Emerson, president of the National Audubon Society, who leaned heavily on Griscom for advice, and in 1941, Griscom became a member of the board of directors. In 1944, when Emerson stepped down, Griscom refused the presidency and arranged a shake-up whereby John Baker, the executive director, would become president and Griscom chairman of the board. As chairman of the board, Griscom was in charge of Audubon policy and guided the society's conservation initiatives for two decades. He also had access to high-ranking government officials. When Monomoy on Cape Cod and the Parker River and Plum Island areas north of Boston were under consideration as National Wildlife Refuges, Griscom threw his support behind the federal initiatives. When a storm of local opposition and lobbying arose, Griscom contacted Ira Gabrielson, Chief of the Biological Survey (now US Fish and Wildlife service), and Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior. With Griscom's considerable influence, both places became National Wildlife Refuges. When he retired from the board in 1956 he received the society's Conservation Medal.



Fig. 4. Photograph of the members of the Old Colony Bird Club, originally called the Outer Circle Bird Club. Ludlow Griscom seated on left; Margaret (second from left) and Arthur (fourth from left) Argue, leaders on Massachusetts Audubon Society birding bus tours; Ruth Emery (back row left), was the first “Voice of Audubon,” perhaps the first birding hotline in the United States; C. Russell Mason (back row, second from left) executive director of Massachusetts Audubon Society and founder of an early ecotourism company: Russ Mason’s Flying Carpet Tours. Ruth Emery and Margaret Argue were two of the five women admitted to membership in the Nuttall Ornithological Club in 1974, the first women so honored. Photograph courtesy of Ruth Emery.

Griscom, the Boston scene, and the Massachusetts Audubon Society

Perhaps Griscom’s greatest influence in promoting birding was in the greater Boston area through the Massachusetts Audubon Society (Mass Audubon). As I reported (Davis 1994: 160-161):

In the decade after his arrival [1927], Ludlow Griscom had a growing influence on the development of the Massachusetts Society. His championing of sight recognition in birds and the burgeoning sport of birdwatching and listing affected all levels at the society, from the backyard birdwatching member to the president. Many of the most active members and staff were, in effect, Griscom protégés. He reached them through personal contact in the field, either by inviting people to join his entourage for a day of birding or through accidental contact as the Griscom party crossed paths with other groups. (Figure 4).

Griscom also aided the rise of birding in New England through his dozens of articles in the *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society* and the annual publication of his year list, which served as the bar to which local birders aspired. By the mid-1930s Griscom began publishing his sight records in the *Bulletin* rather than in *The Auk*. C. Russell Mason, executive director of Mass Audubon from 1939

through the mid-1950s, frequently recruited Griscom to give major talks at annual meetings, which were typically grandiose affairs held in Boston. Griscom was the guiding light for *Records of New England Birds*, a publication initially produced by the Boston Society of Natural History beginning in 1936, and later by Mass Audubon—the records therein were all sight records. Griscom served on three major Mass Audubon committees and was chairman of the Publications Committee. Griscom also pushed hard for conservation within Mass Audubon, as recalled by Henry Parker after Griscom’s death:

With the death of Ludlow Griscom...the Society lost a staunch supporter and friend.... Many of us may not have fully realized his grave concern and tireless drive, for a wider knowledge and acceptance of sound conservation methods throughout the country. This he saw as the backbone and “raison d’etre” of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. (Parker quoted in Davis 1994:164).

Perhaps in Mass Audubon, more than in other organizations where he served, his personality was a critical factor. He was the consummate showman who led the charge for increased public awareness and appreciation of birds and the natural world—and a love and thrill of birding.

The Legacy of Griscom and Peterson

Both Griscom and Peterson were influential in three areas: the development of birding, the scientific study of the living bird, and conservation. In addition, their efforts produced legions of birdwatchers. Since World War II, the contributions of birders to the science of ornithology has increased considerably, especially since the beginning of the age of the computer in the 1980s. Computers have made possible the collection, storage, compilation, and analysis of vast data sets that are a goldmine of information for professional ornithologists.

Perhaps the oldest data collection project is the Christmas Bird Count (CBC), established in 1900 by Frank Chapman of the AMNH. From a modest beginning, the number of birders participating in the CBC each year has burgeoned to the tens of thousands. Similarly, the various bird observatories scattered around the United States and Canada often rely on birders to aid with bird banding projects. Project FeederWatch of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada has enlisted the participation of thousands of birders, as has the eBird project at the Lab. The compiling of data for breeding bird atlases, some now in their second or third generation of data collection, have relied heavily on the participation of birders. Today there are shorebird monitoring projects, hawk migration counts, and the list goes on and on. These citizen science projects are providing crucial data for scientific study and also are the backbone of science-based conservation initiatives. The legacy of Ludlow Griscom and Roger Tory Peterson is, indeed, profound. 🐦

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Barred Owl Adventures in Hampstead

Alfred Maley



Barred Owllets (All photographs by the author.)

Field of Dreams

Twenty-five years ago I put up a Barred Owl nest box on our one-acre lot in Hampstead, New Hampshire, because I had heard owls in the forest behind the house and I am an optimist. Alas, Hampstead proved to be a desirable location for people. The forest was subdivided, followed by high-grade lumber harvest, lot clearing, road building, and 22 new houses on 2–10 acre lots. Towhees began to nest.

Plan B

Undeterred, I looked to the conservation lands—which I was steadily accumulating when I was chairman of the conservation commission—especially along nearby Darby Brook. The original nest box design was structurally weak and very heavy, but I improved it and added a ceiling mirror so the contents would be visible from the ground. Soon I had three boxes erected and occupied, closer together than I thought was possible, and I placed additional boxes, also close together, on the Main Street conservation lands. By the spring of 2013, there were five occupied nest boxes, each kicking out two owlets year after year. No box, once occupied, ever became unoccupied. That was probably due to proper design and construction and a raccoon guard.

Back home my original owl nest box had long been a favorite of Wood Ducks, so I had concentrated on duck nest boxes instead. By the spring of 2014, there were 11 nests in the yard (eight Wood Duck, three Hooded Merganser). For good measure I had also put up another owl nest box of the new design with a mirror so that I could monitor the contents from the ground, even if it was only ducks.

Return of the Forest and the Owls

Fast forward to 2014 and the forest behind me had grown. The canopy had closed over again, the towhees were gone, and the trees were getting big again. The road and the houses were still there, but they began to blend in with the trees more and more.

In the fall, I placed my usual frozen Thanksgiving turkey out near the nest boxes and noticed one or more Barred Owls visiting the turkey early in the morning, 4:00–5:00 am. I took that as a good sign as we headed off for the winter in Spain.

Not So Many Ducks

When we returned in late April 2015, there were fewer duck nests in the yard—six—which I ascribed to the gray squirrels which had taken advantage of the absence of any skilled marksmen. But NO, there were owls in the 'hood! The mirror revealed an amorphous gray blob in the bottom of the new owl box, which over the course of May resolved itself into three gray blobs. The adults were around, but reticent to show themselves.

Crafty Ducks

When the ducklings started to fledge in May, the females were keenly aware of the owls. Normally only the female owl would be present, close to and guarding her nest box. The ducks went to great lengths to circumnavigate the nest box and remain out of sight of the owl. Just one duck nest, which was 15 yards from the owl nest box and facing right at the female owl, suffered losses, but only two ducklings.

Bad Weather Strikes

May 2015 was dry, good for hunting owls that listen for mice, voles, and shrews scurrying though the leaves on the forest floor. But early June turned rainy and stress soon became evident. Only the adult male hunts, and he had to feed four mouths plus himself. After three days of rain, it became very difficult.

The Sora-like Call of the Female Barred Owl

About this time we began to hear the female owl give a nearly constant contact call, sounding like a listless Sora with the same upward inflection. She would give the call every 20 seconds or so for hours on end during daylight. I interpreted the call as “We’re here, bring food soon!” It was then that I began to notice that the male would announce his arrival with a food item and a downward *whoah*. The female would go to him, receive the food, and take it to the young who were still in the box.

The Irresistible Urge to Intervene

It was at this time, with the female complaining incessantly, the male having trouble hunting, and the third owlet about to become lunch for its siblings that I started a rodent trapline in the yard. I put the catch on a platform in the woods below the nest box and the female quickly figured it out. On the best day my handouts included six chipmunks, two mice, and a shrew. The complaining nearly stopped.

The Young Fledge, But Don't Go Far

At the nest boxes on the conservation lands, once the young fledged they were impossible to find as they secreted themselves high in the canopy. So I thought that perhaps they moved away in a matter of days. But at the box in the yard the young stayed around for over two weeks after fledging, perhaps because it took a while for the third owlet to get fully-grown and flying. As it was, he or she fledged nearly a week after the others. By the end of June, they were all ready to go.

The Sora Call Revisited

Once the young had fledged, the female, after receiving a food item, would turn around and issue the same Sora-like call but with some subtle difference to the ending that provoked the young to hiss, much like young Barn Owls do while still in their nest. I interpreted this call as "I've got food. Who wants it?" How the female interprets the responses of the young is unclear to me, but it may guide her as to which one to feed.

The Sora Call Yet Again

In late July, after the young had been wandering around the neighborhood for a month, they returned to the yard one night and I heard them giving a new call. Instead of just a hiss, they were giving a scratchy version of the Sora-like call with a hiss on the end, as if they were practicing for later in life. They wanted food and they wanted it now.

The Danger Call Around the Nest

The owls in the yard were habituated to us and never seemed to give an alarm call of any sort, at least when we were around the yard or at the nest tree. However, when I'd visit the owls in the conservation lands, they would frequently give a series of two to four loud rising *hoop* calls and fly about if there were young nearby that were fledged or nearly fledged.

What Goes Into *Who Cooks For You*

One afternoon in June, the male brought in a food item while the female was perched in the yard, clearly visible to us on the deck. The male, invisible in the foliage, gave the *who cooks for you* call. In response the female spread and lowered her wings and while pumping her tail down expelled each of the four syllables of the call. It's an effort like one of the prairie grouse go through and tells me why they don't do it for long. It must be exhausting. After one call the female took the prey item up to one

of the fledglings in a nearby tree. I now suspect that when I hear this call on a late afternoon in June or July, it is related to a food drop, rather than territorial conversation.



Slide bar and chain method of attachment for Barred Owl box

Suburbia As Barred Owl Habitat

Is it good for Barred Owls to nest in suburbia? No, if there is a high-speed highway close by. No, if the neighbors use leaf blowers all spring long—a deaf owl is a dead owl. No, if your neighbors use rodenticides in their gardens “to control those pesky voles.” Otherwise, sure. The food supply is probably better in the winter because of the rodents at bird feeders, worse in spring and summer when the owls have to hunt all day long and human activity is at its peak. There has to be some good area close by to hunt in, with few human-inspired dangers.

How Many Owls Are Feasible?

This year, 2015, I had seven occupied Barred Owl nest boxes in Hampstead, and I may have another one or two next year. The number of Barred Owls *seems* to have increased locally, at least I hear them almost every night. Boxes that

were initially unoccupied for several years all have become occupied. It seems clear to me that a shortage of suitable natural nest sites in second growth forest is more of a limiting factor than food supply, judging by the number of chipmunks I see.

Design Changes

Since the original article on nest box design (Maley 2010) I have made small changes. The entrance hole is one inch wider so you can get photos of two nestlings in it; the front, back, roof, and floor are all one inch wider so the box is square inside and larger; and the back has slide bars (see photo) so the box can ride up the tree as it grows circumferentially. The slide bars move the roof edge of the box out of contact with the tree and greatly reduce friction with the tree, while tending to stabilize the box against the curvature of the tree.

The box support, made of pressure-treated decking, is strong, easy to put up, and durable. It is especially easy to attach the box to the support, like putting a car wheel on the bolts of a hub. The boards are separated from each other by washers so they won't rot, and the board ends are cut so as to shed water—they will last for a very long time. All of my original boxes used this system as seen in the photos in the previous nest box article. However, since trees grow outward (circumferentially), you have to be

able to climb the tree every ten years or so and back out the lag bolts to accommodate the tree's increase in diameter. Though perhaps not clear from the article photo, there are four long lag screws that hold the board off the tree. There are also four galvanized bolts that go through the board in the opposite direction and into the box, which is secured with washers and nuts from inside via the entrance hole. Make sure to put a nut between the board and the box so the bolts don't move when attaching the box.

The new chain method (see photo) simply loops a chain attached to the box around the tree trunk and over a branch or a long lag bolt on the opposite side. The box hangs against the trunk by gravity and, as the tree widens in diameter, the box rises. This scheme might last for 15-20 years, and is especially useful where access is inconvenient.

The chain is partially encased in one inch black polypropylene water pipe, of the kind commonly used for wells. As it is somewhat rigid, I cut kerfs in the pipe so that it bends easily around the tree trunk. A 7/8-inch birch dowel inside the pipe keeps it straight while the kerfs are made using a table saw.

The two vertical pieces of pipe bolted to the back of the box serve not only to facilitate the box riding up the tree but also to conform the back of the box to the curvature of the trunk. Separate the pieces such that they just contact the trunk of a tree similar in diameter to the tree that will hold the box.

Placement Advice

The owls need to be able to approach the nest box head-on. There should be a clear flight path in front of the box, but not so clear that the young can't find a branch to fly to when they fledge. I place all my boxes in hardwood trees near hemlocks or thick white pines. Hardwoods have few low branches and admit sunlight into the nest box so that the mirror works during the spring months when the trees are leafless.

To place the box at a reasonable height without great effort, try to find an elevation within the forest such as a small hillock with a suitable tree. Alternatively, put the box in a stream valley, facing the stream but up one valley side. My boxes are 15-25 feet above the ground, but there is no magic number. If you place a box in suburbia, try to get it as far away from leaf blowers and fireworks as possible.

Drop me a line at AlfredMaley@gmail.com with questions or comments on your successes. 🦉

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Alfred Maley is a retired software engineer whose interest in nest boxes began at age 10, when he cobbled together a successful bluebird house with wood from an orange crate. Later came Barn Owl nest boxes and Long-eared Owl nest baskets. When they are not watching raptor migration in Spain or traveling with Danger Tours to Latin America, he and his wife Linda reside in Hampstead, New Hampshire.

Nineteenth Report of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee

Matthew P. Garvey, Jeremiah R. Trimble, and Marshall J. Iliff



Fea's Petrel photographed by Clifford Otto, June 24, 2014, Stellwagen.

The nineteenth report of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (hereafter MARC or the committee) covers the evaluation of 95 records involving 52 species or subspecies. Eighty-seven records were accepted, an acceptance rate of 92%, all unanimous on the first round of voting unless noted otherwise. The 69 records noted with an “eB” were accepted via eBird in accordance with our bylaws for expedited review (Garvey and Iliff 2013). eBird has helped the committee keep up with the plethora of well-documented modern records, improve our website, and focus on tricky and historic records. With this in mind, we have a queasy uneasiness that some of the only photos, video, or firsthand accounts of certain significant records are gathering dust and are at risk of destruction in attics, basements, and closets. If you the reader are aware of any such documentation, please contact us!

Three first state records occurred in 2014. Two were pelagic records—dynamic, enigmatic *Pterodroma* petrels, each of which has been occurring in nearby areas, so they were considered almost overdue. Massachusetts's first record of Trindade Petrel (*Pterodroma arminjoniana*) was a light morph photographed by Michael Force on a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) research boat in late July over Georges Bank; Michael followed that with another light morph Trindade

over the bank two days later. Much closer to shore was a Fea's Petrel (*Pterodroma feae*), captured in diagnostic photos by Clifford Otto from a whale watch boat over Stellwagen Bank. As with the Trindade, Massachusetts already has a second Fea's record, a yet unreviewed record hot off the presses from July 2015 just offshore of Truro. Lest landlubbers fear they can't contribute first state records, Adam Burnett found a Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*) along Wasque Point on Chappaquiddick Island in late April 2014; later that year, Marcus Rhodes found possibly the same bird at Cumberland Farms, Halifax, in early July. Zone-tailed Hawks were also recorded at Brier Island, Nova Scotia, on June 1 and at the Cape May Hawkwatch in New Jersey on September 27. All these sightings may have pertained to a single bird wandering up and down the East Coast, as previously there had been only two records east of the Mississippi River, one from Florida in 2000 and one from Nova Scotia in 1977.

A Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*) at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge on January 1, 2015, would have been the first state record but was rejected on grounds of provenance when a stellar suite of photographs revealed falconer's gear attached to one of the bird's legs. The committee reduced the state list by one when it re-reviewed and rejected Massachusetts's lone accepted record of Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*). A submission of another putative Yellow-legged Gull also failed to gain acceptance, as the committee feels identification of these birds in North America is, in most cases, currently too fraught with questions because it is difficult to eliminate the possibility of hybrids between Herring and Lesser Black-backed gulls (*Larus argentatus x fuscus*).

With three additions and one subtraction, the Massachusetts state list now sits at 501. It could soon fall to an even 500, however, as Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*), currently supported solely by sight-only written descriptions, stands perilously close to a delisting. The committee re-reviewed and rejected three accepted records and will review the two remaining accepted records soon. The rejection of these sight-only Anhingas reflects uneasiness with records of this species that lack physical evidence that can be reviewed objectively. In part, this reflects the growing research on the problems with eyewitness reports, e.g., how expectations, past experiences, issues with the way human brains create and store memories, and myriad other factors create some inherent unreliability (Garvey and Iliff 2013, Kozinski 2015). But the committee hasn't returned to the era of the shotgun as the only means of securing a bird record, nor does it consider the camera the only suitable alternative to the gun. Indeed, the MARC re-reviewed and confirmed acceptance of two previously accepted first state records that were supported solely by written submissions based on memory: a Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) found by Vernon Laux on Martha's Vineyard in 2002, and a Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*) found by Chris Leahy at Salisbury in 1968. Interestingly, while the first Smith's Longspur record was under additional committee review, Alan Trautmann found Massachusetts's second Smith's Longspur at Nahant's East Point—a well-photographed bird that came to light via eBird.

Also notable in this report are two records of Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*): one a fall migrant and one a potential breeding record from Otis Air National Guard Base in Mashpee. Once a rare and local breeder and a scarce but



Crested Caracara, April 15, 2015, Chatham.
(Photograph by P. Zuckerman)

regular migrant in the Commonwealth, Loggerheads are now extremely rare anywhere in the Northeast. These modern records are intriguing and underscore the MARC's primary function as a single source and archive for evidence of distribution trends over time of the Commonwealth's rarest avian visitors.

Another significant record in this report is Massachusetts's third record of Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*), a well-photographed bird from Chatham,

which was followed by two subsequent reports from Wellfleet and Westport that are currently under review. Some past records were initially questioned based on provenance, but this is no longer such a major concern as a strong pattern of occurrence has developed in the Northeast.

The committee also reviewed and did not accept a report of a first-cycle Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*), which would have been the first record of the species in that plumage. However, debate was intense, advances in identification criteria are being made, and several experts have recently opined on the identification as correct. The MARC voted to recirculate this record for another full committee review and also changed its bylaws to ensure more records make it to a third-round in-person vote. The new bylaws require a third-round vote so long as a record has at least two supporters in the second round; previously, a second-round majority of support was required.

The 2014–15 roster of MARC voting members included Ian Davies, Trevor Lloyd-Evans, Mark Faherty, Blair Nikula, Wayne R. Petersen, Tim Spahr, Ryan Schain, Scott Sumner, and Jeremiah R. Trimble (chair). Petersen has completed his six-year term. An icon and inspiration to many in the Commonwealth and beyond, he has been absolutely critical to the MARC, especially as co-author of the seminal *Birds of Massachusetts* and as a MARC founder and initial chair and secretary. He has served multiple stints as an active committee member and has been a valuable champion of MARC better serving the greater Massachusetts birding community. The committee thanks Petersen for his dedicated, unique, and valuable service. The committee elected Jessica Johnson to fill the committee slot. Matt Garvey continues as secretary and Ryan Doherty continues as webmaster. We thank committee members Nikula, Petersen, and Spahr for editorial assistance on this article.

In this truncated report, for each record of each species or taxon covered, we present basic statistics: the record number, count of individuals, where and when the bird was seen, and who submitted evidence. We also indicate if the evidence provided was photographic (ph.), video (v.), audio (au.), or a written submission (†). As always, the committee strongly encourages written submissions even when there are photographs. When known, we try to credit the discoverer with an asterisk (*), especially if he or she has supplied evidence. The statistics in brackets for each species

or taxon show the number of individual birds accepted through records in this report, followed by the total number of MARC-accepted individual records for that species, followed by our estimate of total known records, often supplemented with a plus sign (+) when we know there are additional records but are not sure how many. We do not count or use a plus sign for 2013–2015 records that are currently in review. For a subspecies, the statistics refer to the species unless noted otherwise. Species not on the Review List do not receive a count.

Species taxonomy and nomenclature follow the seventh edition of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU) *Check-list of North American Birds* (AOU 1998) and supplements (Chesser et al. 2009, Chesser et al. 2010, Chesser et al. 2011, Chesser et al. 2012, Chesser et al. 2013, Chesser et al. 2014, Chesser et al. 2015). Subspecies group nomenclature follows taxonomy of *The eBird/Clements Checklist of Birds of the World* (Version 6.9), available at <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/clementschecklist> (Clements et al. 2015).

The list of species reviewed by the MARC (the Review List) is available at www.maavianrecords.com. Please check out the full Review List and send us any evidence of new or old records you may have—even in this Information Age we can never get enough when it comes to the rarity records that keep our hearts thumping.

ACCEPTED RECORDS

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) [1,6,6]

2015-011: 1 adult at Allen Harbor, Harwich, *Barnstable*, 5/23/2015 [ph. A. Curtis]. eB. First *Barnstable* record. As with all Massachusetts records, this was the northern subspecies *D. a. fulgens*.

Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) [1,8,8]

2014-004: 1 adult at Pilgrim Road, Hatfield, and West Road, Longmeadow, *Hampshire*, and River Road, Whately, *Franklin*, 3/23/2014 to 3/30/2014 [ph. S. Motyl, L. Therrien*]. eB. First *Hampshire* record.

Ross's Goose (*Chen rossii*) [5,14,14]

2012-088: 1 adult at various fields (including Ward's) and Lake Massapoag, Sharon, *Norfolk*, 10/26/2012 to 12/23/2012 [T. Harmon*; ph. J. Offermann; V. Zollo]. eB. First *Norfolk* record.

2013-051: 1 adult at Argilla Road, Ipswich, *Essex*, 12/25/2013 to 1/1/2014 [ph. M. Brengle, P. Brown*]. eB.

2014-048: 1 adult at Madaket, Nantucket, *Nantucket*, 4/4/2014 [ph. T. Pastuszak]. eB.

2014-047: 1 adult at Barton Cove, Gill, and Turners Falls, Montague, *Franklin*, 12/20/2014 to 12/26/2014 [ph. C. Hyytinen, B. Zajda*]. eB.

2015-012: 1 adult at UMass Amherst Campus Pond and area, Amherst, *Hampshire*, 4/1/2015 to 4/2/2015 [ph. J. Drucker]. eB.

Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*) [2,15,15+]

2014-049: 2 adults at Maple Farm Sanctuary, Mendon, *Worcester*; later Nine Acre Corner, Concord, *Middlesex*, 3/1/2014 to 3/31/2014 [ph. I. Davies, Cheri Ezell*]. eB.

2015-004: 2 adults at West Road Sandbar, Longmeadow, *Hampshire*, and River Road, Agawam, *Hampden*, 1/2/2015 to 1/16/2015 [ph. S. Motyl]. eB.

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*) [5,17,17+; males on Review List only since 2010]

2013-054: 1 female/immature at Little Nahant, *Essex*, 1/26/2013 [L. Pivacek*, ph. J. Trimble]. eB.

2013-053: 1 female/immature at Falmouth Harbor and later at Siders Pond, Falmouth, *Barnstable*, 3/11/2013 to 3/30/2013 [ph. G. Hirth*]. eB.

2013-052: 1 adult male and 1 female at Johnsons Pond, Groveland, *Essex*, 3/29/2013 to 4/19/2013 [ph. T. Spahr, T. Walker*]. eB.

2014-050: 1 adult male at UMass Lowell boat house, Merrimack River, Lowell, *Essex*, 3/26/2014 to 3/29/2014 [ph. R. Stymeist, S. Sullivan*]. eB.

2014-051: 1 adult male at Salt Pond and Siders Pond, Falmouth, *Barnstable*, 12/13/2014 to 2/7/2015 [S. Kellogg*, ph. J. Trimble]. eB.

Pacific Loon (*Gavia pacifica*) [1,21,21+]

2015-006: 1 adult at Race Point, Provincetown, *Barnstable*, 3/15/2015 [ph. P. Flood]. eB.

Eared Grebe (*Podiceps nigricollis*) [2,10,35+]

2014-053: 1 at Quaboag Pond, Worcester, *Worcester*, 11/15/2014 to 11/21/2014 [ph. E. Nielsen, J. Young*]. eB.

2014-052: 1 at Attaquin Park, Mashpee, *Barnstable*, 11/20/2014 to 1/23/2015 [ph. P. Crosson, M. Keleher*]. eB.

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) [1,10,10+]

2012-098: up to 4 at Parker River NWR, Newbury, Newbury, *Essex*, 11/23/2012 to 2/22/2013 [M. Goetschkes*, S. Grinley*, ph. J. Offermann, L. Southworth*]. eB. An unprecedented count of birds together in the Northeast, where previously no more than two have been found in one location at once.

Yellow-nosed Albatross (*Thalassarche chlororhynchos*) [1,7,7+]

2014-004: 1 adult at Tillies Bank, at 42.600°, -70.281° (about 17 miles east of Gloucester), *Essex*, 6/1/2014 [ph. J. Frontierro, ph. K. Gierson, ph. S. Selesky]. The subspecies was *T. c. chlororhynchos*, identifiable by the gray hood; all North American records have represented this form, split as a species by some authorities.



Trindade Petrel, July 26, 2014,
GeorgesBank. (Photograph by J. Aschettino)

Trindade Petrel (*Pterodroma arminjoniana*) [2,2,2]

2014-017: 1 light morph at 39.952°, -67.602°, Georges Bank, *Nantucket*, 7/26/2014 [ph. J. Aschettino, † M. Force].

2014-037: 1 light morph at 40.06°, -67.873°, Georges Bank, *Nantucket*, 7/28/2014 [† M. Force].

Fea's Petrel (*Pterodroma feae*) [1,1,1]

2014-016: 1 at Stellwagen Bank, *Barnstable*, 42.18°, -70.34°, 6/24/2014

[† ph. C. Otto*]. Remarkable photos from a whalewatch boat captured enough of the underwing pattern and bill size and shape to eliminate the similar Zino's Petrel (*Pterodroma madeira*), which so far is known in the western Atlantic from just one North Carolina record.

White-tailed Tropicbird (*Phaethon lepturus*) [1,6,9]

2014-028: 1 immature at Dogbody Canyon, *Nantucket*, 9/4/2014 [ph. † E. Savetsky*]. eB.

American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) [6,17,26+]

2012-117: 2 at Parker River NWR, Ipswich, *Essex*, 10/11/2012 to 10/13/2012 [ph. S. Sullivan]. eB

2012-140: 1 at Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, South Wellfleet, *Barnstable*, 11/3/2012 to 11/11/2012 [ph. K. Yakola]. eB.

2012-130: 1 at Nauset Marsh, Eastham, *Barnstable*, 11/17/2012 to 11/24/2012 [ph. E. Nielsen]. eB.

2012-086: 1 at Black River, Duxbury, *Plymouth*, 12/22/2012 [ph. S. Davenport]. eB.

2014-023: 1 at Coast Guard Beach, Eastham, *Barnstable*, 10/25/2014 [ph. J. Evans]. eB.

2014-022: 1 at Parker River NWR, Ipswich, *Essex*, 10/26/2014 [† M. Salett]. eB.

Reddish Egret (*Egretta rufescens*) [1,2,4]

1991-011: 1 adult dark morph at Wellfleet Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, South Wellfleet, *Barnstable*, 5/12/1991 [ph. R. Prescott].

White Ibis (*Eudocimus albus*) [1,5,20+]

2011-097: 1 juvenile at Parker River NWR, Ipswich, *Essex*, 9/4/2011 [† ph. N. Landry, ph. J. Trimble]. eB.

Swallow-tailed Kite (*Elanoides forficatus*) [1,11,11+]

2014-036: 1 at River Court, Amesbury, *Essex*, 3/22/2014 [† K. Elwell*] (2nd round, 8–1). First *Essex* record.

Mississippi Kite (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) [3,28,55+]

2014-033: 1 subadult at Pumpkin Farm Pond, Nantucket, *Nantucket*, 5/27/2014 [ph. M. Malin]. eB.

2014-034: 1 subadult at South Monomoy Island, Chatham, *Barnstable*, 6/15/2014 [ph. M. Malin]. eB.

2015-015: 1 subadult at Morse Street, Westboro, *Worcester*, 5/23/2015 [† ph. S. Arena*]. eB.

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*) [1,7,11+]

2014-035: 1 dark morph at Parker River NWR, Newbury, *Essex*, 5/5/2014 [ph. J. Trimble*]. eB. First record for well-birded Plum Island.

Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo albonotatus*) [2,2,2]

2014-030: 1 adult at Wasque Point, Chappaquiddick Island, *Dukes*, 4/25/2014 [ph. † A. Burnett*].

2014-031: 1 adult at Wood Street, Cumberland Farms, Halifax, *Plymouth*, 7/8/2014 [ph. M. Rhodes*].

A majority of committee members thought these likely pertain to the same bird.

Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*) [4,7,7]

2012-144: up to 3 at Hummock Pond and Bartlett's Farm, Nantucket, *Nantucket*, 10/30/2012 to 4/1/2013 [ph. V. Laux, T. Pastuszek*, J. Shuster*]. eB.

2012-146: 1 at Fuller Street Fields, Cumberland Farms, Halifax, *Plymouth*, 11/11/2012 to 11/13/2012 [J. Carlisle*, ph. I. Davies]. eB.

2012-145: 1 at Bridgewater State Farm, Bridgewater, *Plymouth*, 11/12/2012 to 1/1/2013 [ph. M. Iliff, K. Ryan*]. eB.

2013-058: 1 at Bolton Flats, Bolton, *Worcester*, 4/27/2013 to 4/29/2013 [† S. Arena*, ph. J. Johnson]. eB.

As discussed in our 18th Report, a remarkable flight of Northern Lapwings arrived along the East Coast in the fall of 2012 (Garvey et al. 2014). The April 2013



Zone-tailed Hawk, July 8, 2014,
Cumberland Farms, (Photograph by M.
Rhodes)

record, as with similar records from Maine and New Hampshire that spring, likely represents a bird from the previous fall that arrived from Europe, wintered to the south of Massachusetts, and was discovered during its spring migration as it traveled north within North America.

Wilson's Plover (*Charadrius wilsonia*) [3,13,38+]

2014-054: 1 at South Beach, Chatham, *Barnstable*, 5/14/2014 [ph. K. Yakola]. eB.

2014-055: 1 at Crane Beach, Ipswich, *Essex*, 5/17/2014 [ph. I. Pepper]. eB.

2014-056: 1 at Sandy Point, Plum Island, Ipswich, *Essex*, 5/22/2014 [ph. A. Spears]. eB.

Franklin's Gull (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*) [1,13,29+]

2014-066: 1 adult at Plymouth Beach, Plymouth, *Plymouth* 6/10/2014 [ph. C. Gras*]. eB.

Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*) [1,6,6+]

2014-035: 1 1st-cycle at Niles Pond, Gloucester, *Essex*, 12/27/2014 [ph. † N. Bonomo, † G. Hanisek, ph. † J. Hough*] (3rd round, 7–1). The lone dissenter commented this was within the enormous range of variation in Kumlien's Iceland Gull (*Larus glaucooides kumlieni*) immature plumage.

Bridled Tern (*Onychoprion anaethetus*) [1,8,21]

2012-101: 1 first-summer on the BBC Pelagic at 40.152°, -68.379°, 8/25/2012 [ph. M. Iliff]. eB.

Gull-billed Tern (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) [3,10,55+]

2014-057: up to 2 at Sandy Point and elsewhere on Plum Island, Ipswich/Rowley/Newburyport, *Essex*, 7/13/2014 to 8/30/2014 [ph. S. Sullivan, Brian Tucker*]. eB.

2014-058: 1 adult in alternate plumage at South Cape Beach area, Mashpee, *Barnstable*, 7/16/2014 [ph. M. Keleher]. eB.

2014-059: up to 2 at South and North Beaches, Chatham, *Barnstable*, 8/12/2014 to 8/14/2014 [ph. B. Lagasse, K. Yakola*]. eB.

Sandwich Tern (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) [1,10,10+]

2014-061: 1 adult or subadult at Parker River NWR Lot 1, Plum Island, Newbury, *Essex*, 7/10/2014 to 7/14/2014 [ph. N. Dubrow, R. Heil*]. eB.

White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) [2,15,33+]

2014-062: 1 at Plum Island Turnpike (across from airport), Newburyport, *Essex*, 7/13/2014 [ph. Liam Waters*]. eB.

2014-029: 1 at Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, Plymouth, *Plymouth*, 8/27/2014 [ph. I. Davies*, B. Lagasse*]. eB.

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) [3,28,28+]

2014-015: 1 adult male at Dudley Road, Townsend, *Middlesex*, 7/23/2014 to 7/24/2014 [ph. M. Goetschkes]. eB.

2014-045: 1 hatch-year male at Cohasset Street, Roslindale, *Suffolk*, 11/7/2014 to 11/16/2014 [ph. † S. Finnegan, v. M. Garvey, C. Wenc*]. eB. First Suffolk record.

2014-018: 1 after-hatch-year female at Newport Street, Arlington, *Middlesex*, 11/15/2014 to 11/18/2014 [ph. † S. Finnegan, ph. J. Forbes]. eB.

Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus/sasin*)

2014-046: 1 at Rural Avenue, Medford, *Middlesex*, 10/17/2014 [ph. M. Rines].

Black-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*) [1,4,100+]

2015-009: 1 male at Forest Hills Cemetery and Franklin Park, Jamaica Plain, *Suffolk*, 1/6/2015 to 4/19/2015 [ph. R. Jelik, ph. B. Peters, † P. Peterson*, ph. S. Whitebread]. eB.

First Suffolk County record. Previously known for periodic irruptions of dozens of birds; the last occurred in 1974–75.

Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*) [1,3,3]

2015-007: 1 at Cotchpicicut Landing, Chatham, *Barnstable*, 4/5/2015 [ph. P. Zuckerman*]. First *Barnstable* record.

Fork-tailed Flycatcher (*Tyrannus savana*) [1,7,18+]

2014-064: 1 worn adult female at Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, *Middlesex*, 5/13/2014 to 5/14/2014 [ph. R. Merrill, ph. A. Trautmann*]. eB. First record for this well-birded hot spot.

Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) [2,3,3+]

2008-047: 1 at Otis Air National Guard Base, Mashpee, *Barnstable*, 5/27/2008 to 6/30/2008 [ph. M. Iliff, ph. J. Trimble, ph. P. Trimble]. eB.

2012-068: 1 at Morris Island Causeway, Chatham, *Barnstable*, 9/6/2012 [ph. M. Faherty, ph. D. Manchester*]. eB. Once a regular albeit uncommon migrant in Massachusetts, fall records like this have been almost unheard of since the mid-1970s (Veit and Petersen 1993).

Northern Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*) [1,10,10+]

2014-065: 1 at Skaket Beach, Orleans, *Barnstable*, 10/11/2014 to 10/17/2014 [B. Prescott*, ph. R. Schain]. eB.

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*) [1,9,9]

2012-106: 1 at Good Harbor Beach, Gloucester, *Essex*, 11/11/2012 to 11/14/2012 [J. Berry*, M. Brengle*, ph. J. Offermann, ph. T. Spahr]. eB.

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) [2,19,19+]

2014-014: 1 at Halibut Point State Park, Rockport, *Essex*, 11/4/2014 [v. R. Diebboll, † H. Galbraith*, ph. S. Sullivan]. eB.

2014-042: 1 at Evergreen Cemetery, Marion, *Plymouth*, 11/29/2014 to 1/14/2015 [ph. V. Zollo*]. eB.

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) [3,14,14+]

2012-142: 1 at Old King's Highway and Pasture Road, Sandwich, *Barnstable*, 3/13/2012 [ph. J. Trimble, ph. P. Trimble]. eB.

2012-143: 1 at Bayview Drive, Cuttyhunk Island, *Dukes*, 11/23/2012 [ph. I. Davies*]. eB.

2013-055: 1 at Massasoit Road, Eastham, *Barnstable*, 12/25/2013 [ph. N. Rabke]. eB.

Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*) [1,3,3]

1967-001: 1 at Parker River NWR, Plum Island, Newbury, *Essex*, 10/26/1965 [ph. W. French*].

Chestnut-collared Longspur (*Calcarius ornatus*) [1,2,6]

1991-012: 1 at Duxbury Beach, Duxbury, *Plymouth*, 10/23/1991 to 10/27/1991 [ph. R. Abrams].



Smith's Longspur, November 9, 2014, East Point, Nahant. (Photograph by A. Trautmann)

Smith's Longspur (*Calcarius pictus*)

[2,2,2]

1968-001: 1 at Salisbury Beach, Salisbury, *Essex*, 10/12/1968 [† C. Leahy*] (3rd round, 8-0). Re-review of a previously accepted record (Petersen 1995).

2014-020: 1 at Lodge Park, East Point, Nahant, *Essex*, 11/9/2014 [ph. A. Trautmann].

MacGillivray's Warbler (*Geothlypis tolmiei*) [2,9,18]

2012-125: 1 at Fenway Victory Gardens, Boston, *Suffolk*, 12/13/2012 to 12/23/2012 [T. Factor*, ph. J. Trimble]. eB. This was the third record for this urban hot spot.

2013-046: 1 at Crooked Lane Fields, Lakeville, *Plymouth*, 12/29/2013 to 12/31/2013 [ph. M. Faherty*]. eB.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (Audubon's) (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*) [1,7,7+]

2014-025: 1 at Stodders Neck, Hingham, *Plymouth*, 11/21/2014 to 1/11/2015 [† ph. S. Williams] (2nd round, 9–0). There was discussion about an intergrade with Myrtle Warbler (*Setophaga coronata coronata*), but all committee members agreed the bird fell within the parameters of a “pure” Audubon’s.

Black-throated Gray Warbler (*Setophaga nigrescens*) [1,6,10+]

2013-047: 1 female/immature at Jackson Point, Nantucket, *Nantucket*, 10/14/2013 [N. Ernst*, ph. B. Harris*, ph. V. Laux]. eB.

Townsend’s Warbler (*Setophaga townsendi*) [2,17,19]

2013-056: 1 adult male at Wauwinet, east end of Nantucket, *Nantucket*, 5/5/2013 [ph. Diane Kottmyer]. eB.

2014-006: 1 female/immature at Marblehead Neck Wildlife Sanctuary, Marblehead, *Essex*, 12/7/2014 to 1/7/2015 [ph. Andy Sanford]. eB.

Le Conte’s Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*) [2,14,27]

2014-063: 1 apparent adult at Danehy Park, Cambridge, *Middlesex*, 10/28/2014 [ph. T. Spahr*]. eB.

2014-021: 1 apparent adult at T-Time Driving Range (4790 State Highway), Eastham, *Barnstable*, 12/14/2014 to 12/15/2014 [N. Block*, J. Sweeney*, ph. V. Zollo*]. eB.

Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*) [1,4,7]

2015-001: 1 female/immature at Lake Road, Chilmark, Martha’s Vineyard, *Dukes*, 1/3/2015 [ph. † T. Spahr*].

Painted Bunting (*Passerina ciris*) [3,14,14+]

2014-044: 1 female/immature at Evergreen Cemetery, Brighton, *Suffolk*, 10/28/2014 to 11/3/2014 [† v. ph. P. DeGennaro*, ph. J. Trimble]. eB.

2014-069: 1 immature male at Madaket, Nantucket, *Nantucket*, 12/14/2014 [ph. K. Blackshaw, S. Langer*]. eB.

2015-014: 1 at Old County Road, Wellfleet, *Barnstable*, 1/31/2015 to 2/1/2015 [ph. J. Drucker, ph. K. Yakola]. eB.

Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) [1,1,1]

2002-32: 1 adult male at Herring Creek Farm, Edgartown, Martha’s Vineyard, *Dukes*, 10/14/2002 [† E. V. Laux*] (3rd round, 8–0). Re-review of a previously accepted record (Rines 2003).

RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

Anhinga (*Anhinga anhinga*)

1997-34: 1 at Great Brook Farm State Park, Carlisle, *Middlesex*, 9/16/1997 (2nd round, 1–8). Re-review of a previously accepted record (Rines 2003).

2001-24: 1 at Spring Street, Essex, *Essex*, 6/17/2001 (2nd round, 3–6). Re-review of a previously accepted record (Rines 2004).

2001-006: 1 at Stockwell Drive and Route 24, Avon, *Norfolk*, 6/19/2001 (2nd round, 3–6). Re-review of a previously accepted record (Rines 2003).

Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus michahellis*)

2002-045: 1 adult at Coast Guard Beach, Eastham, *Barnstable*, 10/6/2002 (3rd round, 2–6). Re-review of an accepted record (Rines 2005). The committee, after a good candidate ended up as a hybrid Lesser Black-backed x Herring Gull based on voice and, eventually, head streaking, thought this species' identification is too fraught with questions to accept a record based on photos of a sitting bird taken on a single day in fall. (Garvey and Iliff 2012).

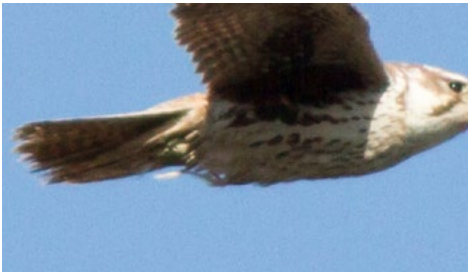
2014-039: 1 first-cycle at UMass Lowell Boathouse, Lowell, *Essex*, 4/8/2014 (2nd round, 3–6). The committee thought photos of a first-cycle bird couldn't rule out a hybrid Lesser Black-backed x Herring Gull.

Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*)

2015-002: 1 first-cycle at UMass Lowell, Lowell, *Essex*, 1/15/2015 (3rd round, 0–8). After much discussion on the sad state of Thayer's identification, the committee thought photos of this record didn't rule out Kumlien's Iceland Gull. Can someone please tag and photograph these guys on their breeding grounds to help elucidate the differences in these putative species?

Slaty-backed Gull (*Larus schistisagus*)

2013-050: 1 first-cycle at Silver Lake, Wilmington, *Middlesex*, 3/16/2013 (2nd round, 4–5). Will be recirculated for further review.



Prairie Falcon with falconer's gear.
(Photograph by J. Forbes)

Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus*)

2015-003: 1 juvenile at Parker River NWR, Ipswich, *Essex*, 1/1/2015 [ph. J. Forbes, ph. T. Kavanaugh, † T. Wetmore] (first round, 0–9). Photos revealed falconer's gear on the bird, leading the committee to reject it based on dubious provenance. 🦅

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PHOTO ESSAY

Highlights from MARC



Loggerhead Shrike, photographed by J. Trimble in 2008 at Otis Air National Guard Base, Mashpee.



Pacific Loon, photographed by P. Flood in 2015 at Race Point, Provincetown.



Black-backed Woodpecker, photographed in 2015 by B. Peters at Forest Hills Cemetery, Jamaica Plain.



Yellow-nosed Albatross, photographed by Sandy Selesky in 2014 at Tillies Bank (about 17 miles east of Gloucester).

FIELD NOTES

The Adopted Piping Plover of Winthrop Beach

Sean Riley



The Rossetti chick. (All photographs by the author).

If you're a Piping Plover, Winthrop Beach can be a scary place. At any given moment a disgruntled human could lob a beer can at you or a Peregrine Falcon might attempt to eat you. Luckily this is not that type of story, for this is a tale of redemption.

The 2015 Piping Plover season started out rough this year. Stretches of inclement weather in May washed out a number of nests, and killed many of the first broods of chicks. The Rossetti's Piping Plover pair, named for their consistent nesting location in front of Café Rossetti's on Winthrop Beach, have been successful parents for years. Like clockwork, the Rossetti male is the first to arrive in March and claim his traditional spot. By April 21 of the pair was already on eggs, and by April 28 they had a full clutch, right on track. On May 25 the entire nestful of eggs hatched overnight, and when I arrived the next morning for my plover-watching shift, I saw three small chicks running around under the watchful eye of the best plover parents around.

The days following the hatch brought heavy rains, ultimately killing two of the three Rossetti chicks. While such loss is always sad to see, the pair seemed content with their remaining chick. Meanwhile another brood of chicks had hatched to a second Piping Plover pair the day after the rains cleared, so in addition to the lone Rossetti chick, four other small chicks were now exploring the beach. A few days later we



The adopted Piping Plover family feeding by the waterline.

noticed the Rossetti adults were watching their chick with slightly less attention than usual, letting it range outside of their typical close proximity. Over the next few days they watched it less and less, with the chick mainly being off on its own all day, a very odd behavior given the perfect parent model we had observed in previous seasons and the very young age of the chick. Right around the one week mark, the Rossetti pair started scraping again, displaying courtship behavior, and were no longer watching their chick at all.



The fully-fledged Rossetti juvenile prior to departure

The next day the other monitors and I could not locate the chick and assumed the worst had occurred. Later that morning we located the other plover family, but instead of finding four chicks, we saw the adults walking around with a brood of five. The slightly larger Rossetti chick seemed right at home following the other chicks around, foraging and roosting. While the adoptive adults would not brood the foster chick, they rarely chased it and seemed far more tolerant than one would expect. As the weeks went on the Rossetti adults never again acknowledged their

surviving chick, and focused their attention on their new nest. As for the adopted chick, it continued to follow its new family around, and eventually fledged and departed Winthrop at the same time as its adoptive siblings.

In two seasons of working with Piping Plovers on Revere Beach and Winthrop Beach, I have never seen anything but aggression from Piping Plovers toward other adults and other pairs' chicks. The Rossetti saga played out in a fashion that the other monitors and I could never have imagined, beginning with a sad and perplexing case of abandonment and ending with a successfully fledged bird beginning its next journey south. 🐦

Rose-breasted Grosbeak Bilateral Gynandromorph

Peter Brown



Bilateral gynandromorph Rose-breasted Grosbeak at author's feeder. (All photographs by the author)

On the morning of June 15, 2015, I was looking out at my bird feeder from my kitchen when I spotted what I thought was a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*). The heavily wooded area in which I live in Newbury, Massachusetts is less than a couple of miles from the Merrimack River and Plum Island, and has an abundance of wood warblers and passerines. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks have been frequent visitors to my feeder during the five years I've lived in this house, so this sighting did not immediately produce much of a stir. My feeders sit about 15–18 feet from my kitchen windows, so I have a front-row seat as I drink my

coffee and watch for visitors each morning.

When I looked up a couple minutes later I thought a male had joined the female as I saw the distinctive red spot on the white chest and the deep black head. Yet, there was something wrong with this bird's plumage development. My first reaction was that the bird was an underdeveloped fledgling or juvenile because the male coloration didn't run completely across the bird's chest. In fact, it looked as if the male plumage came to an abrupt stop right in the middle of the bird.

I always keep a camera handy in case something interesting shows up at the feeder, so I quickly reached for it and began firing away hoping I was getting focused shots in case the bird flew away. The bird cooperated and I was able to take about 5–10 pictures before it left the feeder. I hadn't looked at the bird through binoculars so my photos were the first close-up views I had. While I waited to see if it would return, I quickly viewed what photos I had captured and was stunned to see that the bird was showing



Bilateral gynandromorph Rose-breasted Grosbeak at author's feeder.

both male and female plumage. In one photo shot head on, the right side of the bird had the female characteristics of yellow underwing color, brownish overall color, and white eye-stripe, whereas the left side of the bird had the solid black head, white chest feathers, and rose red spot of a male. These two plumages seemingly ran right down the two halves of the bird, from the tip of the beak to the end of the tail. Depending on which side was facing out this bird was half male, half female by plumage.



Bilateral gynandromorph Rose-breasted Grosbeak at author's feeder.

I waited and was rewarded with a couple more feeder visits and got some photos from slightly different angles. The bird was not unusual in any aspect other than plumage. It's feeding habits, size, and general behavior were not different from what you'd expect. It just looked weird.

As I was to learn later that morning, what I was looking at was a bilateral gynandromorph. I shared my photos with Wayne Petersen at Massachusetts Audubon and with Bill Gette at Joppa Flats, who confirmed the rare nature of my sighting. Bill came over to my house the next

morning and was able to see the bird in person and capture a couple of photos. As it turned out, Bill was the last person to see the bird.

What makes a bird a bilateral gynandromorph? The sex chromosomes of birds are called Z and W, and females are ZW but males are ZZ (note how birds differ from mammals in which females are XX and males are XY). Bilateral gynandromorphic birds, such as the grosbeak I observed, have mostly female ZW cells on one side of the body and mostly male ZZ cells on the other (Zhao et al. 2010). These rare birds are thought to arise from an abnormal egg cell that has two nuclei—one with a W chromosome and one with a Z chromosome. If each of these nuclei is fertilized with a sperm carrying a Z chromosome, then, after the egg divides, the embryo will consist of one female ZW cell and one male ZZ cell. As these first two cells and their descendants continue to multiply, the newly produced female ZW and male ZZ cells may stay on opposite sides of the embryo with little mixing, resulting in the full-grown gynandromorphic bird—one side male and the other side female by plumage.

Getting back to the bird, so what happened next?

As I said, I have had one or two resident pairs of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks each spring that are also regular visitors to the feeder. One pair showed up about an hour after the gynandromorph and began to take control of the feeder perches, thus letting the solitary Rose-breasted Grosbeak know that it was trespassing. Working in tandem for most of the morning, this pair discouraged the gynandromorph from returning to feed. I watched for another hour but the bird did not return that day.

The bird may have visited for only a day or two, but his/her reputation lived on past departure. As part of their weekly bird events update, the people at the Joppa Flats Massachusetts Audubon center shared my photos with the *Newburyport Daily News*. I got a call and gave a short interview on my observations. A photo of the bird and a short story made it to the front page of the newspaper. About two weeks later, I got a phone call from an editor in the newsroom at WBZ-TV who also thought the photos and story were newsworthy. I sent them photos and hope the rarity was viewed by more people. It will be interesting to see if the bird returns next spring. 🐦

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Peter Brown is a birder from Newbury, Massachusetts.

Baltimore Oriole Feeds Baby Tufted Titmice

Mike O'Connor

Editor's Note: *Mike O'Connor is owner of Bird Watcher's General Store in Orleans, Massachusetts, and a columnist for The Cape Codder newspaper. This Field Note is adapted from his "Ask the Bird Folks" column of June 19, 2015.*


In June 2015, a woman from Chatham, Massachusetts, phoned Bird Watcher's General Store with an unusual story and question:

A pair of Tufted Titmice has built a nest in our fourteen-year-old birdhouse. We were watching the adult titmice deliver larvae to their babies today, when suddenly another bird joined in. It was a male Baltimore Oriole. The oriole landed on the entrance hole of the birdhouse, stuck its head inside and fed the baby titmice. Is this normal?

When I first received Nora's call I was skeptical, but decided that her story needed to be documented. I yelled to my son Casey to grab his camera and we headed out to her Chatham home. As soon as we arrived I understood why Nora had so many birds. Her yard was beautiful, with a minimal amount of landscaping and lots of natural habitat. She pointed out the charming 14-year-old moss-covered birdhouse, which looked like something hobbits might live in. Casey and I sat down and waited for this alleged titmouse-feeding oriole to arrive. We didn't have to wait long.

Thirty seconds into our vigil a streak of orange came screaming across the sky. The male oriole arrived chattering and singing, with his mouth completely stuffed with worms. The oriole then flew straight to the box, stuck his head in the hole, and fed the baby titmice, just like Nora told me he did. I stood there amazed by what I was seeing. My son Casey began to photograph the action.

The show continued when the real parents arrived with food. The oriole wasn't about to let some other birds get near *his* babies and quickly dove at the titmouse couple. They were forced to sit back and wait for the oriole to be distracted before they could finally feed their own chicks. Don't get me wrong; the oriole did not appear to be a hindrance to the nestlings. He seemed to be an excellent stepfather. Casey even took a photo of him carrying away one of the chick's fecal sacs.

The next thing Nora wanted to know is: why is this oriole feeding some other bird's babies? I wasn't sure myself, so I sent the photographic evidence off to some birding experts, and also posted it on the definitive source of all information... Facebook. Amazingly, over 24,000 people saw my post of Nora's oriole. One reader, Janice, offered a link to a paper written by Marilyn Muszalski Shy (1982) on interspecific feeding. While interspecific feeding is rare, it is not unheard of. In her paper, Shy noted 140 documented cases, which isn't a lot considering that each year birds produce billions of normal nests. I suspect the oriole has likely lost his own babies to predators and as a result is focusing his attention on the little titmice. Or perhaps while he is waiting for his own eggs to hatch, he prematurely jumped into feeding mode, heard the begging titmice and thought, why not try something new and different? Whatever the reason, it sure made for a serendipitous birding adventure. Plus, it was a good excuse for me to get out of work for a few hours. 

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MUSINGS FROM THE BLIND BIRDER

Personal Encounters with Memorable Birds

Martha Steele

Birding can be many things to many people, but ultimately the common denominator is the bird. We all must have some fundamental connection to the birds themselves to search for them from our backyards to halfway around the globe.

But sometimes the connection to the bird turns very, very personal and transcends any objectivity that we may have about them in general. We all have stories about such personal encounters that never leave our memories and indeed fuel our passion even more. These are stories of not just a memorable bird but a bird that provoked an entirely different level of emotion, awe, disbelief, or admiration. Here are a few examples of such individuals for me.

It was a blazing hot midday near Beaumont, Texas, and Bob and I were driving in an open expanse of grassland and barbed wire fences. Bob noticed what he initially thought was a bird perched on a barbed wire along the side of the road. When we drove closer to the bird, we realized that it was hanging from the wire, apparently lifeless and hopelessly entangled in the barbed wire. We stopped the car, got out, and walked toward the bird. As we got closer, we were startled by its sudden movement, still alive and struggling to free itself. It was a Sora. We had no idea how long it had endured its predicament, but we set forth to try to free the bird. Bob first attempted to unravel its feathers from the barbs, gently holding the bird in the palm of his hand. I placed myself between the sun and the bird to try to give it some relief from the heat of the midday sun. After a few minutes, Bob and I switched positions and I continued to work on freeing the bird, trying hard not to damage any part of its body or wings. After several minutes, we were able to free the bird, now firmly in the palm of my hand. I bent over and released it on the ground. Unbelievably, it ran away quickly and disappeared into the grasses.

This bird did not say thank you, nor did it exhibit any sort of acknowledgement to us, of course. But still, our efforts to free a struggling bird hanging in the hot sun for an unknown amount of time elicited a profound sense of connection to this specific bird as we tried to help. We have no idea if the bird ultimately survived its injuries and our clumsy handling while freeing it, but we knew that at least we gave it a chance at life when otherwise, it had no chance. I will never forget that bird.

At the other extreme of weather, I take myself back to late January 2004, when Bob and I arrived at my mother's house in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. It was late afternoon, and Bob, walking straight to the window to look at the bird feeders, exclaimed, "There's a Barred Owl!" Indeed, sitting in a bare tamarack tree near the feeders in plain sight was a beautiful Barred Owl, quiet and serene. In the nearly two decades of feeding winter birds at the house, no one had ever seen a Barred Owl perched just yards away from our window. We stared at the owl with excitement and

wonder, and the owl appeared to stare back, seemingly with no fear. As night fell, the owl was still perched in the same spot.

The next morning, we quickly checked to see if the owl was still there. It was. It remained throughout the day, occasionally disappearing from its perch on the tamarack tree but always returning. We called our neighbors to come see the owl. What made this particular bird a bit surreal was that it made its appearance exactly one year to the day of the death of my stepfather, Erland. Coincidence, of course, but our being at the house that particular weekend was precisely because we wanted to be with our mother on this potentially difficult anniversary. Instead, this individual owl brought us joy and gave us a reason to celebrate, indeed, even to fantasize that it was Erland returning to say hello. The last day of that weekend, the owl disappeared, never to return to its perch. Since then, every time I hear a Barred Owl in the woods of our property—and we hear them often—I think of the Erland owl.

Seeing a living bird can engender plenty of emotion but so too can an encounter with a deceased bird. Bob and I were walking along the road adjacent to the Moose Bog Trail in Essex County, Vermont, when he spotted a roadkill along the side of the road. We picked it up, and it was a male Nashville Warbler, still warm and supple in our hands. It seemed in perfect condition, no obvious sign of any injury. I felt the warm bird in my hand, stared at its beauty, and just started crying. I cried for the fact that we humans had inadvertently killed this bird that was simply trying to fly here or there in its territory and unaware of vehicle danger. I cried for the fact that it survived such a long migratory journey only to meet its demise through human machinery. I cried simply for the loss of such a beautiful bird that met an untimely death. I fully realize that not every bird is going to make it and death from predation, humans, disease, or other causes is just the way it is. Still, the death of this particular bird seemed so senseless to me and was difficult to accept at that particular moment.

These are but a few individual birds that are etched into my memory. They do not include the individuals who seem to appear in the exact same spot every year on our Vermont property, such as the Wood Thrush, the Winter Wren, and the Common Yellowthroat, all taking up residence year after year. I sometimes walk into the dense woods where “our” resident Winter Wren resides, find a soft place to sit, and close my eyes to listen to the magnificent song of this little bird reverberating around me and penetrating into my soul. I find myself wanting so badly that the little guy will find his mate, have a successful breeding season, navigate the rigors and challenges of his southward migration, and find his way back to this very same spot so I can enjoy his company the following spring. Birding is after all about the birds themselves and our very personal connections to them. 🐦

Martha Steele, a former editor of Bird Observer, has been progressively losing vision due to retinitis pigmentosa and is legally blind. Thanks to a cochlear implant, she is now learning to identify birds from their songs and calls. Martha lives with her husband, Bob Stymeist, in Arlington.

GLEANINGS

Don't say it's "Just a Rump"

David M. Larson

Yellow-rumped Warblers (*Setophaga coronata*) are widespread breeders in North America. While we are most familiar with the Myrtle Warbler here in New England, Yellow-rumps constitute a species complex consisting of four taxa (subspecies, according to the American Ornithologists Union): Myrtle (*S. c. coronata*) breeds in the boreal forests of North America and winters in eastern North America, Central America, and the Caribbean; Audubon's (*S. c. auduboni*) breeds west of the Rockies and winters in the southwestern United States, Mexico, and Central America; Black-fronted (*S. c. nigrifrons*) is resident in Mexico; and Goldman's (*S. c. goldmani*) is resident in Guatemala. The fact that some of these subspecies migrate—Myrtle and most Audubon's—while others do not—some Audubon's and all Black-fronted and Goldman's—provides an interesting experimental model for studies on the development of migration and on what happens in hybridization zones. Toews et al. (2013) have investigated the genetics, biochemistry, and physiology of Myrtle, Audubon's, and Black-fronted warblers, concentrating on the areas of geographic overlap and particularly on birds from the hybridization zone in the southwestern United States.

Most animal cells contain two types of DNA. Nuclear DNA (nDNA) is the genetic material in the nucleus and is derived from both parents of the organism (half from the sperm, half from the egg). This is what we usually consider as the main genetic coding. However, cells contain mitochondria and these small organelles have their own DNA. All of the mitochondria and hence all of the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) in an animal is maternally inherited from the egg. So nDNA and mtDNA can provide different windows into the evolution of a species.

Looking only at nDNA, there are three distinct groups of Yellow-rumps: Myrtle, Goldman's, and a separate cluster containing Audubon's and Black-fronted. The Audubon's/Black-fronted group shows gradual changes in nDNA sequence and in phenotype (morphology) over the geographic overlap range from 40° to 30° N latitude. However, mtDNA sorts differently. North of the Utah-Arizona border (37° N), Audubon's warblers have mtDNA similar to that of Myrtles. Near that border, there is a dramatic transition to an mtDNA type characteristic of Black-fronted Warbler. That means that some of the Audubon's Warblers in Arizona and New Mexico have the Black-fronted Warbler mtDNA and some have Myrtle mtDNA. Could the differences in mtDNA type be functionally related to the different migratory behaviors of Audubon's Warblers?

The authors tested the linkage between the geographic transition from the Black-fronted to Myrtle mtDNA and the cellular metabolic needs of migration. Mitochondria are the power plants in cells. They use nutrients to produce adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the small molecule that provides energy for biochemical processes throughout each cell. If there is a functional link between mitochondrial genes and migration, then the prediction would be that the migratory behavior should sort with the mtDNA type—migratory individuals should have the Myrtle-type mitochondria and nonmigratory

individuals should have Black-fronted mitochondria. They tested this prediction by genetic analysis of birds captured along transects through the transition zone and by estimating the individual's migratory movements through analysis of stable hydrogen isotopes in feathers. A second prediction was that changes in the mtDNA type should result in changes in mitochondrial function. They tested this prediction by genetic analysis of mtDNA from individual birds and testing the biochemical capabilities of mitochondria from the muscle tissue of the same birds.

Migration and mtDNA type

Over the range of 32-40°N latitude, the more southerly Audubon's Warblers were not significantly migratory based on feather isotope analysis while the more northerly birds tended to be migratory with an estimated migration distance of 4-10°. The change in migration behavior paralleled the change in mtDNA phenotype as predicted.

mtDNA sequencing and mitochondrial function

DNA sequencing showed a 4.1% divergence between Myrtle and Audubon's/ Black-fronted mtDNA and substantial differences in the composition of some of the enzymes important in mitochondrial energy production. While most of the functional tests showed no difference between the individuals, the authors found significant mtDNA-correlated differences in the efficiency of coupling within one crucial part of the ATP production pathway. The differences in coupling suggest that the Myrtle-type mitochondria from the northern, more migratory birds are more efficient than those from the southern, nonmigratory individuals.

Summary

Yellow-rumped Warblers underwent complex speciation events during the last glacial period, resulting in four recognizable subspecies. In the United States, the Myrtle and Audubon's types diverged in nDNA and in appearance. Despite the differences in nDNA, most Audubon's Warblers contain Myrtle mtDNA. However, the southernmost populations of Audubon's Warblers—in the transition zone to Black-fronted Warbler—have Black-fronted mtDNA. The mtDNA types track with the migratory behavior of the populations. Myrtle and Audubon's are migratory; southern Audubon's and Black-fronted are not. Furthermore, Toews et al. (2013) have suggested that mitochondrial efficiency may be higher in Myrtle-type mitochondria, potentially an advantage in migratory populations. Although largely correlative, these results suggest that further examination of this Yellow-rumped Warbler complex could shed light on speciation and on hybridization at the nDNA, mtDNA, and functional and behavioral levels. 🐦

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ABOUT BOOKS

Mark Lynch

FADE IN:

INT. A DARK AND MESSY ROOM LIT ONLY BY A GOOSENECK LAMP.

A disheveled unshaven man is furiously typing at his PC. The camera zooms in over his shoulder to read the title on the screen:

True Tales of Treating Traumatized Trochilidae in Tinseltown

CUE REVIEW:

Fastest Things On Wings: Rescuing Hummingbirds In Hollywood. Terry Masear. 2015. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Hooray for Hollywood
Where you're terrific, if you're even good
Where anyone at all from TV's Lassic
To Monroe's chassis is equally understood
Go out and try your luck, you might be Donald Duck
Hooray for Hollywood
(Doris Day's interpretation of Johnny Mercer's classic song "Hooray for Hollywood")

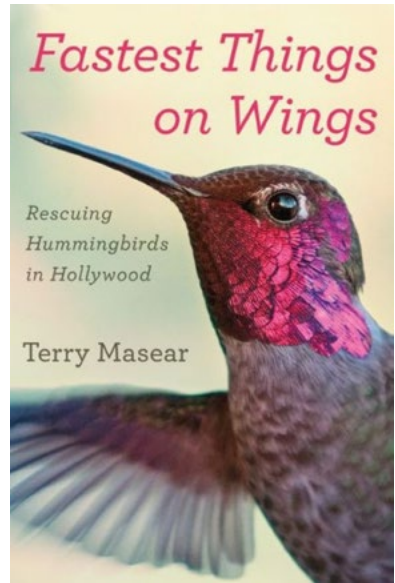
A few decades ago I was leading a Mass Audubon birding class trip to Westport, Massachusetts. We were in Acoaxet when we came across an injured young Black-backed Gull. As birders, we frequently encounter injured birds. We may pause for a few heartbeats and bemoan the bird's fate, but we quickly move on to the next stop, likely rationalizing something about "letting nature take its course." But this time was different. One of my students worked at the Tufts University Wildlife Clinic in Grafton. Here they treat all manner of wildlife, often for free, doing their best to heal and then release the animal back into the wild. The woman from the clinic captured the gull with some difficulty, found a box to house it in the back of her car, and immediately left to bring it to the clinic. I hate to admit this, but my first reaction then was, "Well, it's just a gull." But the rehabber thought very differently. Her first reaction was to see if something could be done for the bird and if not, to humanely euthanize it. The bird had to go to the clinic right now. Everything else, such as the trip and her birding, was secondary. Weeks later, on a class trip, we released the gull, now healed. That incident changed me in a very fundamental way. I have since interrupted several trips to rescue birds and bring them to Tufts, and I never think to myself, "It's only a gull" or "It's

only a sparrow” or even “It’s only a starling.” It’s a life and I can do something helpful here.

People who rehabilitate wildlife live very different lives from the rest of us. It is nothing short of a calling for them, and their dedication can at times appear insane. While reading *Fastest Things On Wings*, there were times when I wasn’t sure whether Terry Masear deserved a medal or meds, or both. The book starts innocently enough:

If destiny arrives at times by chance and at other times by choice, for me it came through some of each. In my case, the future appeared in the form of a pinfeathered hummingbird washed out of his nest in the ficus tree just outside our house during a punishing rainstorm. (p. xi)

When Terry was successful in getting that hummingbird to adulthood and flight, she thought that this might be something she would enjoy doing. She had no idea what she was in for, and soon she found herself deep into the crazy life of a rehabber. Just a few pages into *Fastest Things On Wings*, readers will likely remind themselves to be careful what they wish for. To date she has rescued more than 5000 hummingbirds in the greater Hollywood area and has fielded over 40,000 calls day and night from a variety of humanity. This includes the classic Hollywood types, super rich and spoiled people “in the business” who suffer a surfeit of what Terry calls “unenlightened self-interest.” But she has also dealt with the other, seedier side of Hollywood: “I’ve taken in birds from drug dealers, gangbangers, the morally bankrupt, the criminally insane, and other degenerates lingering on the periphery that nobody has bothered to report.” (p. 72)



It seems that everyone, no matter where they reside on society’s ladder, loves hummingbirds, and when they find one in trouble, there is an impulse to do something to help the tiny waif. Often, however, that impulse is horribly executed. For instance, Terry has taken in nestling hummingbirds that people have previously fed “...prune juice, Gatorade, protein powder, soda pop, wheat bread, boiled eggs, Fig Newtons, and in one bizarre instance, breast milk.” (p. 114) None of these is good for young hummingbirds and may kill them. But Terry takes in these birds and does her best to heal them and send them on their way.

As you can imagine, rehabilitating hummingbirds is a tremendous amount of intensive work. “Most wildlife centers won’t even let them through the front door. Every rehabber will tell you that immature hummingbirds are the most demanding, high maintenance, and stress inducing birds under the sun.” (p. 51)

There are never-ending feedings. Just getting the over-ripe bananas used to grow and feed the fruit flies that hummingbirds need is a chore that most of us would bail on after a few weeks. There are special procedures like “crop siphoning” that have to be done if the original hummingbird finder stuffed a bunch of ants (or worse) down the hummingbird’s throat. Running through the book are long and complicated stories of the difficult recuperation of two hummingbirds named Gabriel and Pepper.

Each hummingbird has an individual personality. As it graduates to a larger cage in which it can relearn to fly, there can be frightening fights that lead to more damage and setbacks. Terry’s charges need almost *constant* monitoring. Some of her hummers have complicated problems like neural damage or injured wings or have been traumatized by their injury or a run-in with a predator. Such cases have to be dealt with uniquely and even more intensively than usual. There are several times in *Fastest Things On Wings* when the reader gets empathetically exhausted for Terry. Amazingly, injured or distressed hummingbirds just keep coming, and Terry just keeps going. It seems positively Sisyphean. Compassion fatigue is a constant problem for rehabbers. This happens because there are times when the hummingbird dies despite Herculean efforts. It’s always heartbreaking, and the emotional toll of those losses can be devastating. This is yet another sacrifice rehabbers make when they take on the awesome responsibility of healing wild creatures; when those creatures die, the rehabber takes the pain. In the worst of times Terry uses her martial arts training and interest in the Tao Te Ching to center herself. Such times seem to occur every other week.

You don’t have much of a social life during the many months when hummingbirds are breeding. You don’t get much sleep, and you eat poorly, when you eat at all. At one point in *Fastest Things On Wings* Terry comes down with a horrible flu and collapses but manages to get back in the game after too short a time because she has to. There are other hummingbird rehabbers in the area, most notably Jean Roper, but they are also stressed from taking in as many birds as Terry. Jean Roper is the seasoned veteran rehabber that Terry often turns to when something new or challenging comes up, but Jean is often even busier with more hummingbirds than Terry.

The variety of species Terry Masear has rehabilitated is impressive. Allen’s, Anna’s, Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, and Rufous all now nest in the greater Los Angeles area, though the last two species are relatively recent nesters there. All of them have gone through Terry’s clinic. Occasionally a Calliope or a Costa’s shows up. It is no exaggeration to call Los Angeles and Hollywood the hummingbird rehab capital of North America. Why are there so many hummingbirds in such an urban area? Because all those wealthy Hollywood homes have numerous flowers and other plantings for hummingbirds to feed on and nest in, and numerous pools and fountains provide sources of water. Conspicuous wealth can be great for certain species. But it can be a double-edged sword, as a number of the nestling hummingbirds brought to Terry were found after gardeners have trimmed foliage and bushes in upscale yards and inadvertently chopped down a nest. Other birds have flown into limos or are covered with mites. Every call or knock at the door is a different tale of hummingbird woe. And they just keep coming. Some people are in tears and are looking for assurance that the hummingbird will be all right. Others just want the responsibility gone as quickly as

possible and for Terry to assuage their conscience by taking the bird off their hands. Other people try to dump non-hummingbirds off at her clinic, everything from a flock of ducklings to a young bobcat. The thought is simply that because she rehabs one thing, she can and has the time to rehab anything.

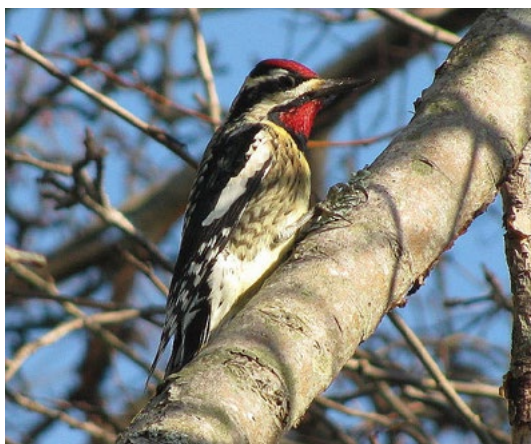
Throughout *Fastest Things On Wings*, Terry Masear shares her considerable hard-earned knowledge about the lives of hummingbirds. For instance, did you know that experienced hummingbird rehabbers can often identify the species of hummer just by looking at the *color* of the nest? Or that hummingbirds often exhibit a death-like torpor in response to extreme physical stress? They may look dead, but there may still be hope. *Fastest Things on Wings* offers a wealth of information on the behavior and anatomy of western species of hummingbirds that will be new to most birders.

Fastest Things On Wings is a classic, a must-read book for anyone who enjoys hummingbirds. Ultimately, this is a book about the natural world and how humans interact with it and think about it. It is a book about the responsibility all of us have, trying to live with the natural world instead of just ignoring it. It is also a reality check for anyone who has thought that being a wildlife rehabilitator would be a fun and easy job. The job certainly has its rewarding moments, but you more than earn those moments. I had the pleasure of interviewing and talking with Terry Masear not long ago. She was a down to earth, very centered person with a great sense of humor. We laughed a lot about who would play her should this amazing story ever get the full Hollywood treatment. But in the end I still don't know *how* she does what she does. After reading *Fastest Things On Wings*, I certainly know *why* she does it.

The author stops typing, tiredly looks at screen and, shrugging, hits "Save" and shuts off his PC. He gets up and leaves the room to get a beer.

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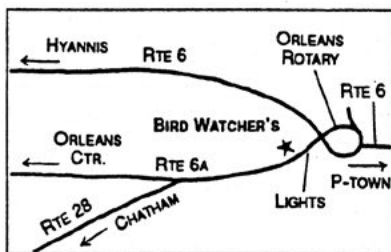
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BIRD SIGHTINGS

May-June 2015

Seth Kellogg, Marjorie W. Rines, and Robert H. Stymeist

May started cold with a high of only 49° on May 1 and 50° on May 2. The mercury rose quickly to 84° on May 4, prompting a fallout of migrants throughout our area. The high in Boston reached 89° on May 10, and many inland areas topped 90°. Rainfall for May was just 1.22 inches, nearly three and a half inches below average. Good southwesterly winds were noted on May 9, 17, and 19.

When a winterlike nor'easter occurred on June 28, the high for that day in Boston was only 59°, the coldest June record since 1995. Tornado warnings were forecast for Essex County, where a wind gust of 68 mph was recorded on Plum Island. The high temperature for June was 88° in Boston; rainfall totaled 5.01 inches, 3.68 inches above average.

R. Stymeist

WATERFOWL THROUGH ALCIDS

Although **Pacific Loon** has become almost annual in May, there was an unusual number reported this year, with at least two in Provincetown and one at Manomet. The individual reported from Truro may have been one of the Provincetown birds. A whale watch boat out of Gloucester spotted a **Brown Booby** on two consecutive days; on May 16 it was seen 23 miles east-southeast of Gloucester, and on May 17 it was photographed sitting on a weather buoy six miles southeast of Gloucester. Although the distance between the sightings was far, a booby can cover great distances, and it is inconceivable that there were two individuals. On June 30 a Brown Booby was photographed off Provincetown, presumably the same bird.

The now-annual **White-faced Ibis** of Essex County was seen in Rowley and also on its possible nest site on Kettle Island in Magnolia. **Mississippi Kites** are now regular in spring on Outer Cape Cod; sightings in Falmouth and Westboro were lucky finds. On May 8 there was a report on eBird of two **Crested Caracaras** at Wellfleet Bay. Unfortunately there was no supporting information for this sighting, but on May 10 an experienced reporter sighted a single caracara in nearby Eastham. We have therefore accepted a single caracara on May 8, not two. On April 5 a Crested Caracara was photographed in Chatham, almost surely the same bird. On April 12 a caracara was discovered in Montgomery, New York; given the extreme rarity of this species in the Northeast it is possible this is also the same bird.

An adult **Sabine's Gull** was seen off Provincetown on May 5 and 9, and an immature was seen on May 15. Although Sabine's Gull is somewhat regular offshore, it is always a treat to see one from land. Other interesting gull sightings included **Black-headed Gulls** in Provincetown and Manomet and several **Little Gulls** and a nice count of 34 Iceland Gulls in mid-May in Provincetown. Lesser Black-backed Gulls were reported in exceptional numbers on Cape Cod: 87 in Provincetown on May 16, and 105 at two locations in Chatham on June 20. A single **Gull-billed Tern** in a reporting period is exciting, but there were two, one at Chilmark on May 23 and a second on Plum Island on June 13.

M. W. Rines

Brant				5/9	P.I.	5	T. Wetmore
5/19	Wachusett Res.	30	J. Johnson	5/12	Rochester	5	G. Gove#
5/20	Newbypt. H.	30	P. + F. Vale	5/30	Turners Falls	1	J. Rose
5/21	Gloucester (E.P.)	16	J. Nelson	6/6	Cambr. (F.Pd)	1	R. Jilek
5/24	Plymouth B.	28	SSBC (GdE)	Common Goldeneye			
6/11	P.I.	13	D. Adrien	5/3	Pembroke	2	G. d'Entremont
Wood Duck				5/20	Wachusett Res.	2	M. Lynch#
5/15	Quabog IBA	17	M. Lynch#	5/21	Nahant	1	L. Pivacek
5/30	GMNWR 32 ad, 27 yg		S. Arena	Hooded Merganser			
Gadwall				5/15	Orange	8	G. d'Entremont#
5/25	P.I.	21	J. Berry	5/16	Ware R. IBA	6	M. Lynch#
5/30	Westport	1	M. Lynch#	5/27	DWMA	3	C. Cook
6/7	S. Dart. (A.Pd.)	1	SSBC (GdE)	5/30	GMNWR 23 ad, 9 yg		S. Arena
American Wigeon				Common Merganser			
6/14	P.I.	1	J. Keeley#	5/1	P.I.	15	T. Wetmore
Blue-winged Teal				5/3	N. Truro	2	B. Nikula
5/5	P.I.	4	S. Pierce	6/14	Sandisfield 5 ad + 8 yg		M. Lynch#
Northern Shoveler				Red-breasted Merganser			
5/28	P.I.	8	T. Wetmore	5/3	Quabbin (G35)	1	T. Pirro
Northern Pintail				5/9	Turners Falls	2	E. Huston
5/24	N. Monomoy	1	I. Davies#	6/3	P'town	10	B. Nikula
Green-winged Teal				Ruddy Duck			
5/2	Ipswich	4	J. Berry	5/23	W. Newbury	1	D. Bates#
6/6	Ludlow	1	S. Motyl	Northern Bobwhite			
6/6	Washington	2	S. Arena	5/25	Westwood	1	E. Nielsen
6/16	P.I.	9	D. Williams	Ring-necked Pheasant			
Ring-necked Duck				5/3	Brookline	1	D. Williams
5/1	New Salem	21	D. Small	5/5	Newbypt	1	R. Heil
5/16	Royalston	1	C. Kamp	5/11	W. Tisbury	2	N. Papian
5/21	Quabbin Pk	1 f	L. Therrien	Ruffed Grouse			
5/21	Hadley	1	L. Therrien	5/5	Marstons Mills	2	P. Crosson
6/29	Cambr. (F.Pd)	1	R. Jilek	5/16	Rockport (H.P.)	1	D. Savitch#
Lesser Scaup				5/25	Hawley	2	M. Lynch#
5/1	Randolph	2	G. d'Entremont	5/26	Quabbin (G40)	3	J. Hoye#
5/2	Nantucket	2	G. Andrews	6/3	Mashpee	2	M. Malin
King Eider				Red-throated Loon			
5/9	Gloucester H.	17	Seas Whale Watch	5/5	P.I.	29	R. Heil
Common Eider				5/16	P'town	13	J. Trimble#
5/15	Boston H.	169	R. Stymeist#	5/31, 6/12	N. Truro	8, 1	B. Nikula
5/22	Manchester (K1)	48	S. Perkins#	6/3	Chestnut Hill	1	J. Bourget
5/29	Boston H.	90	R. Stymeist#	Pacific Loon			
5/30	Acoaxet	3	M. Lynch#	5/2, 4	P'town	1 br pl	B. Nikula
5/30	Westport	5	M. Lynch#	5/9	P'town	2 br pl	L. Waters#
6/5	Revere B.	10 f, 12 yg	R. Stymeist	5/16	N. Truro	1 ph	L. Waters#
Harlequin Duck				5/24	Manomet	1	I. Davies
5/3	N. Scituate	2	G. d'Entremont	Common Loon			
5/12	Boston H.	1	R. Stymeist#	5/14	P'town	65 migr	B. Nikula
5/15	Aquinnah	1	S. Wheelock#	5/16	Wompatuck SP	4	G. d'Entremont#
5/29	Boston H.	1	R. Stymeist#	6/3	P.I.	24	T. Wetmore
Surf Scoter				6/9	Wachusett Res.	6	M. Lynch#
5/27	Westport	1	G. Gove#	6/12	N. Truro	11	B. Nikula
6/17	Chatham	1	B. Nikula	Pied-billed Grebe			
White-winged Scoter				5/14	Truro	1	E. LeBlanc#
5/1	P.I.	50	T. Wetmore	5/22	Bolton Flats	1	S. Arena
5/5	S. Quabbin	3	L. Therrien	5/30	GMNWR	2	S. Arena
5/18	Pittsfield (Pont.)	30	J. Pierce	6/3	Fairhaven	1	C. Longworth
5/18	Gardner	3	T. Pirro	6/3	Westport	2	A. Renaud
6/4	P.I.	100	D. Chickering	6/14	Bolton Flats	1	S. Arena
6/17	Chatham	3	B. Nikula	Horned Grebe			
Black Scoter				5/2	Duxbury B.	1	R. Bowes
5/16	N. Scituate	750	G. d'Entremont#	5/2	Amherst	1	S. Surner
5/21	P.I.	90	T. Wetmore	Red-necked Grebe			
5/27	Westport	39	G. Gove#	5/9	N. Scituate	1 br pl	BBC (G.dE)
6/17	Chatham	3	B. Nikula	Northern Fulmar			
Long-tailed Duck				5/20	Stellwagen	2	L. Waters#
5/5	P.I.	822	R. Heil	6/14	Off Truro	1	D. Clapp#
5/5	Wachusett Res.	1	B. Kamp	6/14	Nantucket	1	K. Wedel
5/18	Woburn (HP)	1	B. Marra	Cory's Shearwater			
6/17	Chatham	4	B. Nikula	6/2, 28	Rockport (A.P.)1, 417		R. Heil
6/20	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	L. Waters	6/10	Nantucket	4	K. Blackshaw
Bufflehead				6/10, 29	P'town	1, 1700	B. Nikula
5/1	Randolph	8	G. d'Entremont	6/14, 29	Truro	5, 700	B. Nikula#

Cory's Shearwater (continued)				5/22	Manchester (KI)	31	S. Perkins#
6/14	Stellwagen	30	B. Nikula#	6/9	Medford	52	M. Rines
Great Shearwater				6/29	P.I.	19	L. Waters
5/20	Stellwagen	1	L. Waters#	Yellow-crowned Night-Heron			
Sooty Shearwater				5/1, 6/25	P.I.	1, 1	v.o.
6/1, 28	Rockport (A.P.)	1, 89	R. Heil	5/1	Duxbury	1	R. Bowes
6/3, 29	P'town	2, 1100	B. Nikula	6/1-10	W. Chatham	2 ad	J. Junda
6/14	Stellwagen	7	B. Nikula#	6/5	Orleans	1 ad	M. Darcy
6/14, 29	Truro	4, 500	B. Nikula#	6/19	Ipswich	1 ad	J. Berry#
Manx Shearwater				Glossy Ibis			
thr	Revere B.	18 max	v.o.	5/2	W. Harwich	9	B. Nikula
6/2, 28	Rockport (A.P.)	4, 16	R. Heil	5/5	Bolton Flats	31	B. Kamp
6/3, 27	P'town	2, 9	B. Nikula	5/6	Sheffield	5	R. Wendell
6/12	N. Truro	5	B. Nikula	5/10	W. Brookfield	1	J. Higgins
6/14	Stellwagen	3	B. Nikula#	5/22	Manchester (KI)	222	S. Perkins#
Wilson's Storm-Petrel				White-faced Ibis			
6/14, 29	Truro	300, 200	B. Nikula#	5/16	Rowley	1	L. Ferrarasso
6/14	Stellwagen	55	B. Nikula#	5/22	Magnolia (KI)	1	S. Perkins#
6/28	Rockport (A.P.)	8	R. Heil	Black Vulture			
Leach's Storm-Petrel				5/3	Warren	1	J. Gordon
6/28	Rockport (A.P.)	3	R. Heil	5/7	N. Truro	1	Hawkcount (DM)
6/28	Dennis	9	P. Flood	5/9	Sterling	7	M. Paine
6/29	P'town (R.P.)	2	M. Hipp#	5/13	Lexington	1	H. Yelle
Brown Booby				5/16	Quabbin Pk	2	L. Therrien
5/16-17	Stellwagen	1 ad ph	M. Woods#	5/21	Hadley	1	J. Hoye#
6/30	P'town	1 ad ph	S. Landry	5/30	Westport	6	M. Lynch#
Northern Gannet				6/30	Groton	1	D. Kovacs
5/18, 6/29	P'town	200, 43	B. Nikula	Turkey Vulture			
6/2, 28	Rockport (A.P.)	246, 16	R. Heil	5/3	Milton	7	P. O'Neill
Double-crested Cormorant				5/7	N. Truro	50	Hawkcount (DM)
5/6	Medford	124	M. Rines#	5/30	P.I.	12	N. Landry
5/27	Orange	3 on nest	M. Lynch#	6/17	Plymouth	18	M. Lynch#
5/29	Boston H.	140	R. Stymeist#	Osprey			
Great Cormorant				5/1	P.I.	7	T. Wetmore
5/16	Lexington	3	J. Andrews	5/30	Acoaxet	21	M. Lynch#
6/26	Manomet	4	G. Gove#	Mississippi Kite			
American Bittern				5/16, 22	N. Truro	1, 1	D. Manchester
5/1	Stockbridge	2	R. Wendell	5/23	Westboro	1 ph	S. Arena
5/9	Ware R. IBA	2	M. Lynch#	5/29	Eastham/N. Truro	3	D. Manchester
5/14	Tyringham	4	T. Swochak#	5/30	Harwich	2	D. Manchester
6/6	Washington	2	S. Arena	5/30, 6/11	N. Truro	1, 2	D. Manchester
6/14	Bolton Flats	4	S. Arena	6/22	Falmouth	1	M. Malin
Least Bittern				Bald Eagle			
thr	P.I.	1	v.o.	5/2	Waltham	2	J. Forbes
5/16	P'town	1	P. Trull#	5/9	W. Warren	2 ad, 1 juv	B. Zajda
6/5	Brimfield	1	S. Motyl	5/20	Wachusett Res.	2	M. Lynch#
6/12	GMNWR	5	USFWS (S. Arena)	5/27	Lynnfield	pr n, 2 fl b	D. Williams
6/14	Bolton Flats	2	S. Arena	5/30	N. Truro	4	Hawkcount (DM)
Great Egret				6/7	P.I.	2	T. Wetmore
5/22	Manchester (KI)	145	J. Berry#	Northern Harrier			
Snowy Egret				5/5	P.I.	4	R. Heil
5/16	Savoy	3	P. Meleski	5/6	Newbury	1	MAS (D. Larson)
5/22	Manchester (KI)	127	J. Berry#	5/14	Blandford	1	L. Richardson
5/30	Easthampton	1	S. Surner	Sharp-shinned Hawk			
6/6	Lenox	1	G. Ward	5/3-10	P.I.	8	Hawkcount (PR)
6/17	P.I.	30	T. Wetmore	5/4	Barre Falls	7	Hawkcount (DG)
Little Blue Heron				5/7	N. Truro	18	Hawkcount (DM)
5/1	Topsfield	1	M. Baird	Cooper's Hawk			
5/22	Manchester (KI)	10	J. Berry#	5/2	Boston (A.A.)	2	BBC (R. Mayer)
6/1	Plymouth	1 ad	J. Gordon#	5/7	N. Truro	5	Hawkcount (DM)
Tricolored Heron				Northern Goshawk			
5/3	Falmouth	1	N. Clark	6/13	Amherst	1	L. Therrien
5/9-27	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore	Red-shouldered Hawk			
5/29	Rowley	2	I. Pepper	5/7	N. Truro	6	Hawkcount (DM)
6/2	Beverly	1	E. Hill-Gest	5/8	Sturbridge	2	M. Lynch#
Green Heron				5/29	Canton	2	G. d'Entremont
5/11	Woburn (HP)	3	M. Rines	6/7	MBWMA	2	BBC (Ferrarasso)
5/22	Manchester (KI)	2	S. Perkins#	6/20	Rehoboth	2	K. Bartels
5/28	GMNWR	3	MAS (P. Sowizral)	Broad-winged Hawk			
6/14	W. Newbury	2	P. + F. Vale	5/3	Wompatuck SP	5	BBC (E. Giles)
Black-crowned Night-Heron				5/3	Assabet NWR	3	J. Forbes
5/15	W. Harwich	13	N. Block#	5/4, 6	Barre Falls	8, 6	Hawkcount

Broad-winged Hawk (continued)				5/16	N. Scituate	6	G. d'Entremont#
5/7, 30	N. Truro	40, 67	Hawkcount	5/17	Saugus	4	S. Zende#
5/11	Gt Barrington	4	M. Lynch#	6/9	Wachusett Res.	6	M. Lynch#
6/20	HRWMA	3	T. Pirro	Solitary Sandpiper			
Crested Caracara				5/5	Lancaster	2	B. Kamp
5/8	WBWS	1	J. Keyes	5/5	P.I.	9	R. Heil
5/10	Eastham	1	R. Prescott	5/6	Ware R. IBA	9	M. Lynch#
Clapper Rail				5/9	Topsfield	40	R. Buchsbaum#
5/15	W. Harwich	4	N. Block#	5/13	Lexington	2	M. Rines
5/29	Barnstable (S.N.)	6	P. Trimble#	5/23	Rowley	1	J. Nelson
6/11	Dennis	2	B. Nikula	Greater Yellowlegs			
6/21	Mashpee	2	K. Fiske#	5/1	S. Quabbin	3	L. Therrien
6/26	Wellfleet	5	S. Broker	5/5	P.I.	23	R. Heil
King Rail				5/5	Newbypt H.	300	S. Grinley
5/22	Bolton Flats	1	S. Arena	5/7	Northampton	3	D. McLain
5/24	GMNWR	1	S. Martin	6/6	Pittsfield	3	R. Wendell
Virginia Rail				Willet			
5/3	Konkapot IBA	4	M. Lynch#	5/5	Newbypt H.	60	S. Grinley
5/22	Bolton Flats	34	S. Arena	5/26	Boston H.	6	R. Stymeist#
5/23	Lenox	6	J. Hoyer#	5/30	Westport	12	M. Lynch#
6/12	GMNWR	21	USFWS (S. Arena)	6/6	Duxbury B.	55	R. Bowes
6/20	Lenox	2	SSBC (GdE)	6/26	Essex	12 ad, 6 juv	D. Brown
6/20	Cheshire	3	M. Lynch#	Lesser Yellowlegs			
Sora				5/5	Newbypt H.	30	S. Grinley
5/3	Konkapot IBA	1	M. Lynch#	5/7	Northampton	17	D. McLain
5/4	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore	5/10	W. Harwich	7	B. Nikula
5/27	Amherst	1	L. Therrien	6/30	P.I.	40	R. Heil
5/30	GMNWR	4	S. Arena	Upland Sandpiper			
6/6	Blandford	3	A. & L. Richardson	5/4	P.I.	1	D. Adrien
6/14	Bolton Flats	3	S. Arena	5/7	Sandwich	7	E. Grash#
Common Gallinule				5/15	Bedford	1	P. + F. Vale
5/2	Nantucket	1	G. Andrews	6/6	Westover	8 ad, 3 juv	BBC
5/9-6/14	Lenox	2	v.o.	Whimbrel			
5/22	Bolton Flats	3	S. Arena	5/5	Dennis	1	P. Flood
5/23	W. Newbury	1	D. Bates#	5/14	Orleans	3	P. Trull
5/29	GMNWR	1	S. Arena	6/27	Nantucket	2	T. Pastuszak#
6/5-25	Belchertown	2	L. Therrien#	6/30	P.I.	1	R. Templeton
American Coot				Ruddy Turnstone			
5/22	Cambridge	1	P. Ippolito	5/12	Marion	33	G. Gove#
Sandhill Crane				5/26	Boston H.	6	R. Stymeist#
5/8	Yarmouth	1	P. Crosson	5/30	Westport	4	M. Lynch#
5/13-22	Chilmark	1	M. Williams+ v.o.	6/2	P.I.	18	S. Sullivan
5/23	Brewster	1	D. Clapp	6/6	Duxbury B.	4	R. Bowes
5/24	Petersham	2	D. Small	Red Knot			
Black-bellied Plover				5/15	Chatham	54	N. Block#
5/16	Essex	70	J. Nelson	5/25	Duxbury B.	2	R. Bowes
5/17	Chatham	350	B. Nikula	6/3	P.I.	9	MAS (B. Gette)
5/26	Boston H.	160	R. Stymeist#	6/7	S. Monomoy	17	Z. Casteel#
5/28	Northampton	1	L. Therrien	Sanderling			
6/1	Plymouth	37	G. Gove#	5/5	P.I.	75	R. Heil
Semipalmated Plover				5/6	Revere	50	S. Riley
5/17	Gloucester (E.P.)	20	S. Hedman	5/6	Winthrop	4	S. Riley
5/17	Chatham	70	B. Nikula	5/15	Revere B.	6	R. Stymeist
5/19	Longmeadow	15	P. Desjardins	6/1	Ipswich (C.B.)	40	J. Berry
5/25	P.I.	100	J. Berry	Semipalmated Sandpiper			
Piping Plover				5/15	Revere B.	56	R. Stymeist
5/24	Plymouth B.	16	SSBC (GdE)	5/20	Chatham	800	M. Faherty#
5/29	Duxbury B.	29	R. Bowes	5/25	P.I.	300	J. Berry
6/1	Ipswich (C.B.)	16	J. Berry	6/1	Ipswich (C.B.)	120	J. Berry
6/4	Chatham (S.B.)	68	MAS	Least Sandpiper			
6/5	Revere B.	15 ad, 13 yg	R. Stymeist	5/1	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	21	N. Sylvia
6/22	P.I.	13 ad, 5 juv	J. Keeley	5/5	P.I.	65	R. Heil
American Oystercatcher				5/5	Bolton Flats	24	B. Kamp
5/22	Manchester (K1)	4	S. Perkins#	5/13	N. Monomoy	150	M. Faherty#
5/26	Boston H.	11	R. Stymeist#	5/17	W. Harwich	355	P. Flood
6/19	Eastham	18	K. Schopp	5/19	Longmeadow	69	P. Desjardins
6/20	Chatham	11	J. Trimble#	White-rumped Sandpiper			
6/25	P.I.	1	D. Prima	5/15-6/30	P.I.	6 max	v.o.
6/27	Squantum	3	P. Peterson	5/16	E. Boston (B.I.)	1	C. Dalton
Spotted Sandpiper				5/16	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	E. Lipton
5/5	W. Newbury	3	P. + F. Vale	5/20	Chatham	12	M. Faherty#
5/16	P.I.	3	T. Wetmore				

Pectoral Sandpiper				Lesser Black-backed Gull			
5/6	W. Harwich	1	M. Keleher	5/6-6/17	P'town	87 max	5/16 B. Nikula
5/7	Bolton Flats	1	MAS (P. Sowizral)	6/20	N. Truro	8	B. Nikula
5/9	Northampton	1	L. Therrien	6/20	Chatham	105	J. Trimble#
5/13	Hadley	1	J. Rose	Glaucous Gull			
5/16	Rowley	2	MAS (D. Weaver)	5/31	P'town	1	B. Nikula
Purple Sandpiper				Least Tern			
5/1	Westport	9	G. Gove#	5/6	Winthrop	4	S. Riley
5/5	P.I.	12	R. Heil	5/13	Westport	113	L. Waters
5/15	Boston H.	5	R. Stymeist#	6/1	Ipswich (C.B.)	100	J. Berry
5/16	N. Scituate	20	G. d'Entremont#	6/8	Nantucket	300	MAS
Dunlin				6/12	Mashpee	152	MAS
5/5	Newbypt H.	162	S. Grinley	6/13	Edgartown	500	D. Seibel
5/17	Chatham	625	B. Nikula	Gull-billed Tern			
5/19	Longmeadow	3	A. Robblee	5/23	Chilmark	1 ph	P. Gilmore#
5/25	Wachusett Res.	1	J. Johnson	6/16	P.I.	1 ph	D. Williams#
Stilt Sandpiper				Caspian Tern			
5/13	W. Harwich	1 ph	R. Debenham	5/2	Medford	1	J. Restivo
6/17	P.I.	2	MAS (D. Weaver)	5/2	Burrage WMA	5	P. Jacobson
Short-billed Dowitcher				5/3, 18, 27	P.I.	1, 1, 1	v.o.
5/2, 23	P.I.	1, 170	v.o.	5/18	Scituate	1	P. Edmundson
5/17	Chatham	20	B. Nikula	6/13	P'town (R.P.)	1	G. d'Entremont
5/19	Pittsfield	1	J. Pierce	Black Tern			
5/24	Turners Falls	17	A. Richards	5/9-6/17	P'town	1-3	B. Nikula#
6/1	Sheffield	1	R. Wendell	6/3	Ipswich (C.B.)	1	J. Berry#
6/30	Pittsfield	1	J. Pierce	6/17	N. Truro	1	B. Nikula
Wilson's Snipe				Roseate Tern			
5/3	Konkapot IBA	2	M. Lynch#	thr	P.I.	2	v.o.
6/6	Washington	1	S. Arena	5/13, 6/7	P'town	20, 15	B. Nikula
American Woodcock				6/27	Plymouth B.	1	D. Scott
5/15	Quabog IBA	9	M. Lynch#	Common Tern			
5/16	P.I.	6	N. Landry	5/8	P.I.	200	D. Adrien
Wilson's Phalarope				5/13, 6/7	P'town	8000, 950	B. Nikula
thr	Rowley/P.I.	4 max	v.o.	5/19	Pittsfield	1	J. Pierce
5/20	Squantum	1	SSBC (Whitebread)	5/24	Plymouth B.	1500	SSBC (GdE)
Red-necked Phalarope				6/10	S. Monomoy	9000	S. Finnegan#
5/25	P.I.	1 ph	R. Doherty	Arctic Tern			
6/14	Off Truro	1	B. Nikula#	5/31, 6/7	P'town	1, 5	B. Nikula
Red Phalarope				6/1	Ipswich (C.B.)	1	J. Berry
6/29-30	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore#	6/2	Rockport (A.P.)	8	R. Heil
Black-legged Kittiwake				Forster's Tern			
thr	P'town	180 max	6/6 B. Nikula	6/17	P'town	1	B. Nikula
5/24	Plymouth B.	1	SSBC (GdE)	6/28	Dennis	6	P. Flood
6/2, 28	Rockport (A.P.)	5, 2	R. Heil	6/29	Nantucket	5	B. Foehring
6/20	N. Truro	26	B. Nikula	Royal Tern			
Sabine's Gull				6/8	P'town (R.P.)	1	C. Gras#
5/5, 9	P'town	1 ad	B. Nikula	6/20	Chatham	2	R. Schain
5/14	P'town (R.P.)	1 IS	G. d'Entremont	6/26	P.I.	1	K. Hartel
Bonaparte's Gull				6/29	Nantucket	2	B. Foehring
thr	P'town2000	max	5/3 B. Nikula	Black Skimmer			
5/5	Wachusett Res.	2	B. Kamp	5/15, 6/18	Edgartown	6	W. Manter#
5/9	S. Quabbin	1	S. Surner	5/30	Revere B.	1	L. Melvin
5/10	Ipswich (C.B.)	150	M. Bregle	6/11	Duxbury B.	3	R. Bowes
5/19	Pittsfield	4	J. Pierce	6/14	S. Monomoy	2	Z. Casteel#
Black-headed Gull				6/27	Plymouth B.	3	D. Scott
5/31, 6/10	P'town	1 imm	B. Nikula	Pomarine Jaeger			
6/21	Manomet	1 IS	J. Trimble	5/23	P.I.	1	D. Bates#
Little Gull				6/27	P'town	1 ad	B. Nikula
5/9-6/27	P'town	1-4	B. Nikula	Parasitic Jaeger			
5/16	Lynn	1 ad	J. McCoy	thr	P'town	20 max	B. Nikula
5/16	Chatham	2	N. Block#	6/2	Rockport (A.P.)	1 ad	R. Heil
6/10	N. Truro	2 IS	B. Nikula	6/12	N. Truro	4	B. Nikula
Laughing Gull				Long-tailed Jaeger			
5/12	Boston H.	1	R. Stymeist#	6/2	Rockport (A.P.)	5 ad	R. Heil
5/24	Plymouth B.	300	SSBC (GdE)	6/6, 7	P'town	1, 3 imm	B. Nikula
6/thr	P'town	600 max	B. Nikula	Common Murre			
6/1	Ipswich (C.B.)	4	J. Berry	5/16	P'town (R.P.)	6	P. Flood#
6/24	P.I.	4	MAS (D. Larson)	6/2	Rockport (A.P.)	7	R. Heil
Iceland Gull				6/4	Ipswich (C.B.)	1 dead	BBC (J. Berry)
5/1	Wachusett Res.	1	B. Kamp	Razorbill			
5/16, 6/10	P'town	34, 1	Trimble, Nikula	5/16	N. Truro	1	L. Waters#
5/24	Chatham	4	P. Trimble#	5/20	Stellwagen	1	L. Waters#

Black Guillemot				Atlantic Puffin			
5/12 Boston H.	2	R. Stymeist#	6/2	Rockport (A.P.)	1	R. Heil	
6/28 Rockport (A.P.)	1	R. Heil	6/20	P'town (R.P.)	1 imm	D. Clapp	

CUCKOOS THROUGH FINCHES

There were two reports of Snowy Owl during May, possibly the same individual noted from Salem on May 14 and on May 31 at Point of Pines in Revere. The latest report of a Snowy Owl in Massachusetts occurred just last year with a bird at Sandy Neck in Barnstable on June 15. The spring migration of Common Nighthawks often passes with few individuals compared with fall migration; an exceptional count of 75 were tallied over Westboro on May 17, and 30 over Belchertown on May 25. The **Chuck-will's-widow** returned for the third straight year near the Crane Wildlife Management Area in Falmouth, and another was heard for several days in Plymouth. Eastern Whip-poor-wills were well reported with 26 counted on a survey route in Sandwich and 11 on Plum Island.

There were six reports of **Red-headed Woodpeckers** during the period including four adults compared with just two individuals in 2013 and only one last year. Manomet banders captured and banded 21 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds in May. The pair of Monk Parakeets, first discovered last year, continued in the Allston section of Boston.

The southwesterly winds on April 28 brought a wave of migrants to satisfy birders through the first few days of May. The night of May 4 brought strong southerly winds, which produced a major fallout of migrants. On May 5 Manomet banders had the busiest day of the season, banding 141 individuals, including 77 Gray Catbirds. Birders on Plum Island that day also had a great day with highlights that included ten Blue-headed Vireos, seven Northern Waterthrushes, 46 Common Yellowthroats, 147 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 19 Black-throated Greens, and a **Prothonotary Warbler**. Sparrows included Lincoln's, six White-crowns, 32 Savannah and four Swamp Sparrows. May 9, 17, and 19 were other big days. On May 17 Sue Finnegan banded 74 birds of 13 species at the banding station on Wing Island in Brewster; this was her best spring migration capture in 15 years. The S curves of Parker River NWR were loaded with warblers on May 17. Birds were everywhere you stopped. Warbler counts included over 112 Yellow, 88 Magnolia, 50 Chestnut-sided, 40 Redstarts, 25 Parula, 25 Black-throated Blue, six Cape May and a Cerulean.

Other noteworthy spring migrants included good numbers of Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied flycatchers, six records of Philadelphia Vireo, a **Golden-winged Warbler** photographed at Martin Burns in Newbury, Kentucky Warblers in Freetown and Bridgewater, two reports of **Yellow-throated Warbler**, and Blue Grosbeaks in East Bridgewater, Falmouth, and Edgartown. A Fox Sparrow on May 2 was unusually late for this species, and a Red Crossbill was noted from Montague.

The breeding season saw increased nesting success with Purple Martins in Rehoboth and Mashpee and at Daniel Webster Sanctuary in Marshfield. The colonies in Rehoboth added 34 new pairs this year bringing the total to 92 nesting pairs in just two colonies. Acadian Flycatchers were suspected breeders in many areas in western Massachusetts, and Cerulean Warblers again nested at Skinner State Park in Hadley.

R. Stymeist

Yellow-billed Cuckoo			Black-billed Cuckoo		
5/9 Ludlow	1	J. Coleman	5/5 Longmeadow	1	M. Moore
5/16 W. Bridgewater	2	J. Carlisle	5/17 P.I.	3	S. Arena#
5/28 Medford	2	M. Rines#	5/18 Pepperell	4	S. Miller#
6/5 Foxboro	2	B. Cassie	6/3 Brewster	4	S. Finnegan
6/7 Fall River	2	G. d'Entremont#	6/3 Quabbin (G17)	5	S. Arena
6/24 Plymouth	3	M. Faherty#	6/9 Milton	3	P. Peterson

Snowy Owl				6/6	Topsfield	3	J. Berry#
5/14	Salem	1	B. Crawford#	6/19	GMNWR	2	J. Forbes
5/31	Revere (POP)	1 ph	S. Riley	Olive-sided Flycatcher			
Barred Owl				5/9	Nantucket	1	R. Ouren#
5/9	Wompatuck SP	3	G. d'Entremont	5/11	Gt Barrington	1	M. Lynch#
6/17	Lincoln	3	P. Peterson	5/16-30 Reports of indiv. from 8 locations			
Northern Saw-whet Owl				Eastern Wood-Pewee			
6/29	Lenox	1	R. Wheeler	5/9	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore
Common Nighthawk				5/22	Wendell	12	M. Lynch#
5/7	Belchertown	1	L. Therrien	5/29	W. Newbury	6	P. + F. Vale
5/9	Quabbin Pk	4	L. Therrien	6/6	Skinner SP	8	BBC (E. Giles)
5/14	IRWS	12	D. Nieman	6/7	Boxford (C.P.)	6	J. Berry#
5/15	GMNWR	19	G. d'Entremont#	6/7	Waltham	6	J. Forbes
5/17	Westboro	75	S. Arena#	6/27	Warwick	11	M. Lynch#
5/25	Belchertown	30	L. Therrien	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			
Chuck-will's-widow				5/11-6/5 Reports of indiv. from 20 locations			
5/7-6/30	Falmouth	1	M. Schanbacher#	Acadian Flycatcher			
5/16-6/30	Plymouth	1	J. Barrett	5/16	Ipswich	1	M. Brengle
Eastern Whip-poor-will				5/18, 29	P.I.	1 b, 1 b	B. Flemer#
5/3	Mashpee	3	M. Keleher	5/19	Fall River	2	G. d'Entremont#
5/15	Quabog IBA	11	M. Lynch#	6/3	Sheffield	1	G. Hurlley
5/28	S. Quabbin	13	L. Therrien	6/6	Skinner SP	2	BBC (E. Giles)
5/28	Sandwich	26	J. McCumber#	6/10	Quabbin (G22)	1	E. Huston
6/29	P.I.	11	L. Waters	6/11	Granville	2	S. Kellogg
Chimney Swift				Alder Flycatcher			
5/14	GMNWR	30	A. Bragg#	5/11	Gt Barrington	1	M. Lynch#
5/29	Ipswich	12	J. Berry#	5/23	Lenox	3	J. Hoye#
6/29	Warren	12	M. Lynch#	5/25	Hawley	13	M. Lynch#
Ruby-throated Hummingbird				5/30	P.I.	8	T. Wetmore
5/2	Canton	2	M. Ross	6/12	Wayland	3	B. Harris
5/6-27	Manomet	21 b	T. Lloyd-Evans	6/18	Brewster	2	S. Finnegan
5/19	P.I.	12	P. + F. Vale	Willow Flycatcher			
6/20	Rehoboth	12	K. Bartels	5/10	Ipswich (C.B.)	1	M. Brengle
American Kestrel				5/30	GMNWR	22	S. Arena
5/3-13	P.I.	14	Hawkcount (PR)	6/3	Bolton Flats	8	J. Nelson
5/6	N. Truro	10	Hawkcount (DM)	6/4	P.I.	16	T. Wetmore
6/23	Ipswich	pr + 5 yg in nest	J. Berry#	6/12	Middleton	4	J. Nelson
6/27	Woburn (HP)	2 pr n	M. Rines	Least Flycatcher			
Merlin				5/5	P.I.	3	T. Wetmore
5/3	N. Truro	4	Hawkcount (DM)	5/10	E. Brimfield	5	B. Zajda#
5/19	P.I.	1	P. + F. Vale	5/17	P.I.	18	S. Arena#
5/28	Northampton	1	L. Therrien	5/21	Gloucester (E.P.)	8	J. Nelson
5/31	Pittsfield (Onota)	1	K. Hanson	6/27	Warwick	14	M. Lynch#
6/13	Sandwich	1	J. McCumber#	Great Crested Flycatcher			
6/24	Nantucket	2	T. Pastuszak#	5/3	Medford	3	M. Rines#
6/27	Quabbin	1	L. Therrien	5/10	E. Brimfield	7	B. Zajda#
Peregrine Falcon				5/16	Ware R. IBA	11	M. Lynch#
6/5	Watertown	1 f, 3yg	R. Stymeist	5/31	Ipswich	9	J. Berry#
6/9	Lawrence	3 juv b	C. Gibson	Eastern Kingbird			
Monk Parakeet				5/10	E. Brimfield	14	B. Zajda#
5/16-6/30	Allston	2	v.o.	5/16	Ware R. IBA	14	M. Lynch#
Red-headed Woodpecker				5/17	P.I.	29	J. Trimble
thr	Ipswich	1 ad	J. Berry#	6/29	Warren	11	M. Lynch#
5/6-9	Sterling	1 ad	M. Paine	White-eyed Vireo			
5/8-18	Williamstown	1	R. Wendell	5/3	Longmeadow	1	S. Motyl
6/4	Greenfield	1	N. Baker	5/9	Amherst	1	E. Rubinstein
6/13	Sturbridge	1 ad	M. Lynch#	5/14	P.I.	2	P. + F. Vale
6/20-30	Lexington	1 ad	J. Williams	5/30	Acoaxet	3	M. Lynch#
Red-bellied Woodpecker				5/30	Belchertown	1	L. Therrien
5/1	Monson	5	M. Lynch#	6/7	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	2	SSBC (GdE)
5/9	Wompatuck SP	5	BBC (G.dE)	6/5-30	Belchertown	1	L. Therrien
6/6	Topsfield	5	J. Berry#	Yellow-throated Vireo			
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				5/4	ONWR	3	M. Lynch#
5/11	Gt Barrington	16	M. Lynch#	5/7	Newbury	4	J. Berry
5/23	Quabbin Pk	4	J. Hoye#	5/15	Hadley	5	G. d'Entremont#
5/25	Hawley	12	M. Lynch#	5/17	Spencer	4	S. LaBree
6/20	Mt. Greylock	5	SSBC (GdE)	5/22	Bolton Flats	3	S. Arena
6/27	Warwick	14	M. Lynch#	6/29	Warren	2	M. Lynch#
Pileated Woodpecker				Blue-headed Vireo			
5/8	Shirley	2	T. Aversa	5/1	Medford	3	R. LaFontaine
5/9	Carlisle	2	R. Stymeist#	5/3	Quabbin (G22)	8	J. Hoye#
5/11	Gt Barrington	6	M. Lynch#	5/5	P.I.	10	R. Heil

Blue-headed Vireo (continued)									
5/6	Ware R. IBA	7	M. Lynch#	Barn Swallow	5/2	W. Newbury	50	G. d'Entremont#	
6/25	Boxford (C.P.)	7	J. Berry#	5/5	P.I.		83	R. Heil	
Warbling Vireo				5/15	Quabog IBA		31	M. Lynch#	
5/3	Milton	6	P. O'Neill	6/29	Warren		44	M. Lynch#	
5/5	Boston (BNC)	6	BBC (M. Kaufman)	Red-breasted Nuthatch					
5/7	GMNWR	8	A. Bragg#	5/1	P.I.		2	T. Wetmore	
5/8	Spencer	12	M. Lynch#	5/30	Townsend		2	J. Forbes	
5/9	W. Warren	8	B. Zajda	6/10	Plymouth (MSSF)		2	SSBC (GdE)	
6/6	Cambr. (F.P.)	17	R. Stymeist	6/14	Gloucester		5	J. Nelson	
6/29	Warren	7	M. Lynch#	6/27	Warwick		7	M. Lynch#	
Philadelphia Vireo				Brown Creeper					
5/15	Pepperell	1	S. Miller	5/3	Wompatuck SP		4	G. d'Entremont	
5/17	P.I.	1	A. Dewart#	5/3	DFWS		4	P. Sowizral	
5/17	Nahant	1	D. Scott	5/10	E. Brimfield		4	B. Zajda#	
5/18	Lenox	1	J. Pierce	5/16	Ware R. IBA		16	M. Lynch#	
5/21	MNWS	1	L. Pivacek	5/27	DWMA		5	C. Cook	
6/5	Fall River	1	P. Champlin	6/17	Lincoln		3	P. Peterson	
Red-eyed Vireo				House Wren					
5/5	Medford	3	M. Rines#	5/3	Ipswich		4	J. Berry#	
5/28	Quabbin Pk	39	P. + F. Vale	5/8	Spencer		8	M. Lynch#	
6/6	Skinner SP	26	BBC (E. Giles)	5/26	W. Newbury		12	P. + F. Vale	
6/20	Mt. Greylock	82	SSBC (GdE)	Winter Wren					
6/27	Warwick	129	M. Lynch#	5/9	Wompatuck SP		3	BBC (G.dE)	
Fish Crow				5/17	Wompatuck SP		4	C. Dalton	
5/15	P.I.	18	E. Labato	6/7	Boxford (C.P.)		2	J. Berry#	
5/16	Wompatuck SP	8	G. d'Entremont#	6/20	Mt. Greylock		9	SSBC (GdE)	
6/17	Plymouth	7	M. Lynch#	6/22	Cohasset		2	V. Zollo	
Common Raven				6/27	Warwick		3	M. Lynch#	
5/7	Mt.A.	2	P. + F. Vale	Marsh Wren					
5/10	P'town	2	B. Nikula	5/16	Burlington		5	M. Rines#	
5/16	Ware R. IBA	3	M. Lynch#	5/21	P.I.		20	J. Keeley	
5/16	Rochester	pr n	L. Gerrior	5/22	Bolton Flats		5	S. Arena	
5/20	Woburn	pr + 5 yg	M. Rines	5/25	P.I.		13	J. Berry	
6/20	Cheshire	6	M. Lynch#	6/11	GMNWR		39	A. Bragg#	
Horned Lark				6/20	Lenox		3	SSBC (GdE)	
5/6	Winthrop	1	S. Riley	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher					
5/9	Plymouth	2 w/ yg	BBC (G.dE)	5/3	Medford		9	M. Rines#	
5/23	P.I.	1	D. Bates#	5/3	Milton		16	P. O'Neill	
Purple Martin				5/5	Groveland		8	P. + F. Vale	
5/3	P.I.	1	S. McGrath	5/9	Topsfield		13	R. Buchsbaum#	
5/3	Rehoboth	75	R. Marr#	5/10	E. Brimfield		8	B. Zajda#	
5/9	DWWS	10	BBC (G.dE)	6/4	GMNWR		12	A. Bragg#	
5/12	Rochester	8	G. Gove#	6/6	Topsfield		8	J. Berry#	
6/24	Norfolk	7 ad, 11 juv	W. Sweet	6/27	Milton		12	P. Peterson	
Tree Swallow				Golden-crowned Kinglet					
5/1	IRWS	75	M. Baird	5/4	P.I.		1	S. Pierce	
5/5	P.I.	225	R. Heil	5/16	Ware R. IBA		4	M. Lynch#	
5/15	Quabog IBA	81	M. Lynch#	6/20	Mt. Greylock		4	SSBC (GdE)	
6/29	P.I.	3000	L. Waters	6/27	Warwick		2	M. Lynch#	
Northern Rough-winged Swallow				Ruby-crowned Kinglet					
5/9	Hanson	3	J. Carlisle	5/1	Ipswich		2	J. Berry	
5/15	Quabog IBA	4	M. Lynch#	5/1	Arlington Res.		2	M. Rines	
5/15	GMNWR	3	P. + F. Vale	5/4	ONWR		6	M. Lynch#	
6/22	Montague	3	M. Lynch#	5/9	P.I.		15	S. Cerchio	
Bank Swallow				5/9	Medford		2	M. Rines	
5/1	Wayland	1	BBC (G. Long)	5/24	P.I.		1	J. Keeley#	
5/2	Ipswich	10	J. Berry	Veery					
5/5	P.I.	16	R. Heil	5/3	P.I.		1	T. Wetmore	
5/14	Russell	50	T. Swochak#	5/9	Wompatuck SP		19	BBC (G.dE)	
5/15	Quabog IBA	12	M. Lynch#	5/16	Ware R. IBA		64	M. Lynch#	
5/24	Plymouth B.	15	SSBC (GdE)	5/28	Quabbin (G8)		15	P. + F. Vale	
6/26	Manomet	22	G. Gove#	6/3	Quabbin (G17)		44	S. Arena	
Cliff Swallow				6/27	Warwick		37	M. Lynch#	
5/5	P.I.	3	R. Heil	Gray-cheeked Thrush					
5/9	Williamsburg	6	F. Bowrys	5/18	Marlboro		1	T. Spahr	
5/16	Concord (NAC)	4	P. Ippolito#	Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush					
5/20	W. Newbury	6	S. McGrath	5/18	Springfield		1	A. & L. Richardson	
5/23	Stockbridge	14 n	J. Hoye#	5/21	Belchertown		1	L. Therrien	
5/24	Tyringham	5	T. Swochak#	5/24	Boston (Fens)		1	C. Riehl	
6/20	Cheshire	40	M. Lynch#	5/25	Hadley		1	D. Griffiths	
6/20	Newbury	5	J. Berry						

Swainson's Thrush			5/25	Hawley	7	M. Lynch#
5/6	Mt.A.	1		Golden-winged Warbler		
5/8	P.I.	3		5/15	MBWMA	1 ph M. Viens#
5/8-31	P.I.	17 b			Blue-winged Warbler	
5/17	Boston	2		5/5	Pepperell	5 A. Bostick
5/21	Gloucester (E.P.)	2		5/5	P.I.	5 S. Sullivan
5/24	P.I.	5		5/6	Concord	14 D. Swain
6/20	Mt. Greylock	1		5/9	W. Warren	11 B. Zajda
Hermit Thrush				5/10	Pepperell	9 A. Bostick#
5/3-15	P.I.	22 b		5/26	W. Newbury	5 P. + F. Vale
5/4	Nahant	5		6/9	Milton	5 P. Peterson
5/5	P.I.	7			Brewster's Warbler	
5/16	Ware R. IBA	33		5/6	Pittsfield	1 J. Pierce
6/10	Plymouth (MSSF)	4		6/6	Westboro	1 ph S. Arena
Wood Thrush					Lawrence's Warbler	
5/7	Medford	9		5/12-30	W. Newbury	1 S. Grinley
5/9	W. Warren	15		6/11-16	Williamstown	1 v.o.
5/16	Wompatuck SP	8			Black-and-white Warbler	
5/31	Ipswich	7		5/8	P.I.	30 F. Bouchard
6/9	Milton	7		5/9	Mt.A.	20 P. + F. Vale
Gray Catbird				5/12	Medford	29 M. Rines#
5/3-29	P.I.	114 b		5/16	Ware R. IBA	41 M. Lynch#
5/5	Manomet	77 b		6/14	Sandisfield	14 M. Lynch#
5/8	Spencer	33		6/27	Warwick	7 M. Lynch#
5/9	W. Warren	66			Prothonotary Warbler	
5/16	Nantucket	120		5/3	Brookline	1 C. Dalton#
5/21	Gloucester (E.P.)	104		5/5	P.I.	1 D. Adrien
Brown Thrasher				5/5-6	Boston (PG)	1 L. Ferraresso
5/1	W. Roxbury (MP)	2		5/9	Longmeadow	1 S. Motyl
5/5	P.I.	12		5/14	N. Dighton	1 A. Eckerson#
5/12	Medford	2		5/23	Concord	1 J. King
5/23	Lancaster	2		5/24	Boston (PG)	1 M. Hunt
American Pipit					Tennessee Warbler	
5/6	Bolton Flats	3		5/9	Mt.A.	4 P. + F. Vale
5/13	Westport	1		5/9	Northampton	3 L. Therrien
5/16	E. Boston (B.I.)	2		5/12	Medford	4 M. Rines#
5/17	P'town	1		5/14	Cheshire	5 J. Pierce
6/12	N. Truro	1		5/17	N. Marshfield	3 G. d'Entremont
Cedar Waxwing				5/19	Pepperell	3 S. Miller#
5/24	P.I.	80			Orange-crowned Warbler	
5/27	S. Hamilton	25		5/2	Sandwich	1 M. Keleher
6/4	GMNWR	85		5/3-6	Boston	1 P. Peterson
6/4	Waltham	19			Nashville Warbler	
6/20	Cheshire	19		5/4	Woburn (HP)	3 M. Rines
Ovenbird				5/6	Concord	3 D. Swain
5/5-21	P.I.	58 b		5/8	P.I.	4 M. Baird
5/16	Wompatuck SP	75		5/9	Medford	9 M. Rines
5/16	Ware R. IBA	254		6/12	Wenham	1 J. Nelson
6/3	Quabbin (G17)	42			Mourning Warbler	
6/11	W. Barnstable	57		5/15	Hadley	1 L. Therrien
6/20	Mt. Greylock	32		5/16-6/6	Reports of indiv. from 18 locations	
6/27	Warwick	65		6/11	Manomet	1 b T. Lloyd-Evans
Worm-eating Warbler				6/20	Mt. Greylock	1 SSBC (GdE)
thr	reports of indiv. from	17 locations			Kentucky Warbler	
5/15	Skinner SP	5		5/19	Freetown	1 G. d'Entremont#
5/17	Wompatuck SP	7		5/30-6/7	Bridgewater	1 N. Block
5/20	Mashpee	3			Common Yellowthroat	
6/7	Mt. Holyoke	4		5/5	P.I.	46 R. Heil
Louisiana Waterthrush				5/9	Topsfield	20 R. Buchsbaum#
5/1	Monson	6		5/10	E. Brimfield	34 B. Zajda#
5/3	Wompatuck SP	2		5/12	Wakefield	21 P. + F. Vale
5/9	Townsend	3		6/27	Warwick	53 M. Lynch#
5/18	Shirley	2			Hooded Warbler	
6/14	Sandisfield	7		5/thr	Reports of indiv. from 15 locations	
6/20	Groton	4		5/19	Freetown	3 G. d'Entremont#
Northern Waterthrush					American Redstart	
5/5	P.I.	7		5/4, 17	P.I.	1, 40 v.o.
5/6	Ipswich	4		5/5, 15	Medford	1, 27 M. Rines#
5/10	E. Brimfield	5		5/20	P'town	14 B. Nikula
5/16	Medford	4		6/20	Mt. Greylock	17 SSBC (GdE)
5/17	Wompatuck SP	8		6/29	Warren	17 M. Lynch#
5/19	Freetown	4				

Cape May Warbler				5/9	Wompatuck SP	17	BBC (G.dE)
5/6	Mt.A.	5	A. Gurka#	5/16	Ware R. IBA	46	M. Lynch#
5/7-24	Reports of indiv. from 13 locations			6/10	Plymouth (MSSF)	22	SSBC (GdE)
5/10	Chestnut Hill	3	P. DeGennaro#	Yellow-rumped Warbler			
5/17	P.I.	6	J. Trimble	5/1	Wayland	35	BBC (G. Long)
Cerulean Warbler				5/1	Arlington Res.	89	M. Rines
5/5	Manomet	1 b	M. VandenBoom#	5/5	P.I.	147	R. Heil
5/16	Ware R. IBA	1	M. Lynch#	5/5	Medford	88	M. Rines#
5/17	P.I.	1	J. Trimble	5/6	Mt.A.	42	M. Sabourin
5/28	Quabbin (G8)	1	P. + F. Vale	6/20	Mt. Greylock	8	SSBC (GdE)
5/31	Westfield	1	T. Gagnon	6/27	Warwick	17	M. Lynch#
6/5	Northfield	1	E. Huston	Yellow-throated Warbler			
6/7	Skinner SP	3	L. Therrien	5/4	Woburn (HP)	1	M. Rines
Northern Parula				5/16	P'town	1	S. Carey#
5/6	Medford	39	M. Rines#	Prairie Warbler			
5/9	Mt.A.	20	P. + F. Vale	5/11	W. Tisbury	12	N. Papian
5/17	P.I.	25	S. Arena#	5/16	Ware R. IBA	13	M. Lynch#
5/20	P'town	12	B. Nikula	5/21	Blue Hills	10	J. Carlisle
6/27	Warwick	pr	M. Lynch#	6/10	Plymouth (MSSF)	6	SSBC (GdE)
Magnolia Warbler				6/17	Woburn (HP)	2	D. Fruguglietti#
5/4-31	P.I.	111 b	B. Flemer#	6/24	Plymouth	2	M. Faherty#
5/5, 15	Medford	3, 31	M. Rines#	Black-throated Green Warbler			
5/17	P.I.	88	J. Trimble	5/1	Monson	3	M. Lynch#
5/21	Gloucester (E.P.)	23	J. Nelson	5/3	Ipswich	3	J. Berry#
5/26	Manomet	30 b	T. Lloyd-Evans	5/5	P.I.	19	R. Heil
6/20	Savoy	5	M. Lynch#	5/8	Gardner	19	D. Knowlton
Bay-breasted Warbler				5/9	Wompatuck SP	10	BBC (G.dE)
5/4, 15, 23	P.I.	1, 6, 3	v.o.	5/20	P'town	9	B. Nikula
5/12	Pepperell	3	A. Bostick	5/28	Quabbin (G8)	13	P. + F. Vale
5/14	Williamstown	3	H. Powell	6/27	Warwick	24	M. Lynch#
5/15	Medford	4	M. Rines#	Canada Warbler			
Blackburnian Warbler				5/15	Medford	3	M. Rines#
5/8, 23	P.I.	3, 5	v.o.	5/17	P.I.	7	J. Trimble
5/11	Gt Barrington	21	M. Lynch#	5/18	Rockport (H.P.)	5	S. Hedman
6/3	Quabbin (G17)	3	S. Arena	5/21	Gloucester (E.P.)	4	J. Nelson
6/20	Mt. Greylock	11	SSBC (GdE)	5/23	MNWS	5	G. d'Entremont
Yellow Warbler				5/27	Petersham	4	M. Lynch#
5/3	Milton	22	P. O'Neill	6/20	Concord	3	C. Winstanley
5/8	W. Newbury	25	P. + F. Vale	Wilson's Warbler			
5/10	E. Brimfield	39	B. Zajda#	5/5	Longmeadow	2	M. Moore
5/17	P.I.	112	J. Trimble	5/9	W. Warren	3	B. Zajda
5/30	Acoaxet	28	M. Lynch#	5/9	Woburn (HP)	3	M. Rines#
Chestnut-sided Warbler				5/14	Medford	3	M. Rines#
5/3, 17	P.I.	3, 50	v.o.	5/25	P.I.	3	T. Wetmore
5/9	Medford	7	M. Rines	Yellow-breasted Chat			
5/10	E. Brimfield	8	B. Zajda#	5/10-16	W. Bridgewater	1	J. Carlisle + v.o.
5/16	Ware R. IBA	84	M. Lynch#	5/13-15	Mt.A.	1	J. Trimble
5/23	MBWMA	9	J. Nelson	5/20	Manomet	1 b	T. Lloyd-Evans
6/14	Sandisfield	26	M. Lynch#	6/14	Sudbury	1	D. Henkels#
6/20	Mt. Greylock	18	SSBC (GdE)	Eastern Towhee			
Blackpoll Warbler				5/1	MBWMA	20	S. Riley
5/5	Jamaica Plain	1	P. Peterson	5/2	P.I.	40	BBC (L. de la Flor)
5/6, 12	Medford	1, 10	M. Rines#	5/7	Newbury	31	J. Berry
5/7, 30	P.I.	1, 10	T. Wetmore	5/7	Medford	21	M. Rines
5/19	Concord	10	D. Swain	6/7	MBWMA	16	R. Stymeist#
5/22	MNWS	7	P. + F. Vale	6/10	Plymouth (MSSF)	39	SSBC (GdE)
6/20	Mt. Greylock	1	SSBC (GdE)	Clay-colored Sparrow			
Black-throated Blue Warbler				5/1	Belchertown	1	A. Griffiths
5/3	Ipswich	1	J. Berry#	5/2	P'town	1	B. Nikula#
5/9	Mt.A.	12	P. + F. Vale	5/12	Mt.A.	1	J. Trimble
5/16	Ware R. IBA	28	M. Lynch#	5/16	Plymouth	1	M. Faherty
5/17	P.I.	25	S. Arena#	5/18	Mt. Greylock	1	K. Hanson
5/22	Wendell	58	M. Lynch#	5/18	Boston (F.Pk)	1	J. Young#
6/20	Mt. Greylock	13	SSBC (GdE)	5/24	Plymouth	1	I. Davies
Palm Warbler				5/25	Sandwich	5	E. Grash#
5/1	IRWS	14	M. Baird	5/25	Hadley	1	D. Griffiths#
5/1	Arlington Res.	11	M. Rines	Field Sparrow			
5/5	P.I.	8	S. Grinley	5/1	Monson	6	M. Lynch#
5/13	Medford	1	P. + F. Vale	5/14	P.I.	3	K. Elwell
Pine Warbler				5/19	Pepperell	5	S. Miller#
5/1	Ipswich	20	J. Berry	5/25	MBWMA	3	D. Williams
5/9	P'town	12	B. Nikula				

Vesper Sparrow				6/27	Milton	8	P. Peterson
5/7	Northampton	1	D. McLain	Blue Grosbeak			
5/7	Lancaster	1	MAS (P. Sowizral)	5/3	E. Bridgewater	1	J. Carlisle#
5/9	Plymouth	2	BBC (G.dE)	5/11	Edgartown	1	K. Magnuson
5/15	Hadley	4	G. d'Entremont#	5/30	Falmouth	2	M. Malin
6/14	Sudbury	2	R. Crissman#	Indigo Bunting			
Savannah Sparrow				5/5	Pepperell	3	A. Bostick
5/3	DFWS	8	P. Sowizral	5/15	Hadley	6	G. d'Entremont#
5/5	P.I.	32	R. Heil	5/18	Pepperell	8	S. Miller#
5/25	Hawley	8	M. Lynch#	5/26	Waltham	5	J. Forbes
Grasshopper Sparrow				5/28	Quabbin Pk	6	P. + F. Vale
5/6	Westfield	2	T. Swochak#	5/30	Newbury	6	J. Berry
5/16	Millbury	2	A. Marble	6/7	MBWMA	5	R. Stymeist#
5/17	Westover	8	J. Bourget	Bobolink			
5/25	Sandwich	30	E. Grasch#	5/5	Ipswich	1	J. Berry#
5/25	Falmouth	19	A. Burdo	5/15	Bedford	12	P. + F. Vale
Nelson's Sparrow				5/30	Bridgewater	30	N. Block
5/25	Duxbury B.	2	R. Bowes	6/11	Lincoln	20	J. Forbes
Saltmarsh Sparrow				6/16	P.I.	24	D. Williams
5/13	S. Dart. (A.Pd)	1	L. Waters	6/20	HRWMA	46	T. Pirro
5/13, 6/17	P.I.	1, 18	T. Wetmore	Eastern Meadowlark			
5/30	Westport	8	M. Lynch#	5/1	Amesbury	2	S. McGrath
6/20	Newbury	6	J. Berry	5/16	Millbury	2	A. Marble
6/26	Essex	2	D. Brown	5/17	Woburn	2	M. Rines
Seaside Sparrow				5/23	Lancaster	2	M. Lynch#
thr	P.I.	1-2	v.o.	5/30	Weymouth	3	P. O'Neill
Fox Sparrow				6/6	Westover AFB	15	BBC (Ferrareso)
5/2	Newbury	1	G. d'Entremont#	Rusty Blackbird			
Lincoln's Sparrow				5/4	Wayland	1	J. Forbes
5/1-26	Reports of indiv. from 18 locations			5/6	P.I.	1	J. Hoye#
5/5-18	P.I.	6 b	B. Flemer#	Orchard Oriole			
5/21	Manomet	2 b	T. Lloyd-Evans	5/5	Hadley	3	T. Carter
Swamp Sparrow				5/5	P.I.	5	T. Wetmore
5/5	P.I.	34	R. Heil	5/7	Mt.A.	3	P. + F. Vale
5/22	Bolton Flats	20	S. Arena	5/10	Ipswich (C.B.)	5	M. Brengle
5/30	GMNWR	19	S. Arena	5/17	Woburn	5	M. Rines
6/27	Warwick	25	M. Lynch#	6/7	Ipswich	4	J. Berry#
White-throated Sparrow				Baltimore Oriole			
5/5	P.I.	430	R. Heil	5/10	E. Brimfield	23	B. Zajda#
6/thr	Nantucket	1	T. Pastuszak	5/10	Assabet NWR	39	M. Lynch#
6/20	Mt. Greylock	4	SSBC (GdE)	5/14	MBWMA	21	J. Hoye#
6/20	Savoy	2	M. Lynch#	5/23	Wompatuck SP	10	P. + F. Vale
White-crowned Sparrow				Purple Finch			
5/5	P.I.	6	S. Grinley	5/1	Monson	5	M. Lynch#
5/5	Bolton Flats	2	B. Kamp	5/5	P.I.	28	R. Heil
5/9	DWWS	3	BBC (G.dE)	5/5	Medford	4	M. Rines#
5/10	Northampton	6	T. Gagnon	6/10	Royalston	10	M. Lynch#
Dark-eyed Junco				6/20	Mt. Greylock	6	SSBC (GdE)
5/11	Gt Barrington	11	M. Lynch#	Red Crossbill			
6/6	Skinner SP	8	BBC (Ferrareso)	5/10	Montague	3	J. Rose
6/20	Mt. Greylock	17	SSBC (GdE)	Common Redpoll			
Summer Tanager				5/18	Pepperell	1	S. Miller#
5/5-09	Mt.A.	1 m	imm ph	v.o.	Pine Siskin		
5/8	W. Warren	1	B. Zajda	5/2	Boston (A.A.)	6	BBC (R. Mayer)
5/11-15	P.I.	1 f	v.o.	5/3	Konkapot IBA	7	M. Lynch#
Scarlet Tanager				5/4	Norwell	12	C. Patterson
5/12	Medford	11	M. Rines#	5/4	ONWR	5	M. Lynch#
5/15	P.I.	8	T. Wetmore	5/19	Concord	4	D. Swain
5/16	Ware R. IBA	42	M. Lynch#	5/27	Colrain	3	J. Hoye#
5/28	Quabbin (G8)	7	P. + F. Vale	6/11	New Salem	3	B. Lafley
5/31	Ipswich	6	J. Berry#	Evening Grosbeak			
Rose-breasted Grosbeak				5/5	Adams	2	J. Jones
5/7	Medford	9	M. Rines	5/9	Williamsburg	1	F. Bowrys
5/7	Newbury	11	J. Berry	5/9	P'town	1	C. Harris
5/14	MBWMA	8	J. Hoye#	5/15	Warwick	2	G. d'Entremont#
5/16	Ware R. IBA	30	M. Lynch#	5/19	Barre	1	K. Bourinot
5/17	Woburn	8	M. Rines	5/27	Colrain	3	J. Hoye#

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

Taxonomic order is based on AOU checklist, Seventh edition, up to the 53rd Supplement, as published in *Auk* 129 (3): 573-88 (2012) (see <<http://checklist.aou.org/>>).

Locations		Newbypt	Newburyport
Location-#	MAS Breeding Bird Atlas Block	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
A.A.	Arnold Arboretum, Boston	PG	Public Garden, Boston
ABC	Allen Bird Club	P.I.	Plum Island
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	Pd	Pond
A.Pd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth	POP	Point of Pines, Revere
B.	Beach	PR	Pinnacle Rock, Malden
Barre F.D.	Barre Falls Dam	P'town	Provincetown
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	Pont.	Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
BBC	Brookline Bird Club	Res.	Reservoir
BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester	RKG	Rose Kennedy Greenway, Boston
BNC	Boston Nature Center, Mattapan	S.B.	South Beach, Chatham
C.B.	Crane Beach, Ipswich	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
CGB	Coast Guard Beach, Eastham	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
Cambr.	Cambridge	TASL	Take A Second Look, Boston Harbor Census
CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay WS
Corp. B.	Corporation Beach, Dennis	WE	World's End, Hingham
Cumb. Farms	Cumberland Farms, Middleboro	WMWS	Wachusett Meadow WS
DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary	Wompatuck SP	Hingham, Cohasset, Scituate, Norwell
DWMA	Delaney WMA, Stow, Bolton, Harvard	Worc.	Worcester
DWWS	Daniel Webster WS		
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	Other Abbreviations	
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	ad	adult
F.H.	Fort Hill, 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	fide	on the authority of
H.	Harbor	fl	fledgling
H.P.	Halibut Point, Rockport	imm	immature
HP	Horn Pond, Woburn	juv	juvenile
HRWMA	High Ridge WMA, Gardner	lt	light (morph)
I.	Island	m	male
IRWS	Ipswich River WS	max	maximum
L.	Ledge	migr	migrating
MAS	Mass Audubon	n	nesting
MP	Millennium Park, W. Roxbury	ph	photographed
M.V.	Martha's Vineyard	pl	plumage
MBWMA	Martin Burns WMA, Newbury	pr	pair
MI	Morris Island	S	summer (1S = 1st summer)
MNWS	Marblehead Neck WS	v.o.	various observers
MSSF	Myles Standish State Forest, Plymouth	W	winter (2W = second winter)
Mt.A.	Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambr.	yg	young
NAC	Nine Acre Corner, Concord	#	additional observers

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Species on the Review List of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, 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 Matt Garvey, 137 Beaconsfield Rd. #5, Brookline MA 02445, or by email to <mattgarvey@gmail.com>.

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AMERICAN GOLDFINCH BY SANDY SELESKY

ABOUT THE COVER

Le Conte's Sparrow

The Le Conte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*) is a small cryptic denizen of wet grasslands, sedges, and marshes. In winter Le Conte's Sparrows are found in old fields and prairies, where they stay low and are difficult to see. If flushed, they fly low over the grass for a short distance before dropping out of sight. They also often walk through dense vegetation, avoiding observers. Because of their cryptic behavior, the basic biology and natural history of Le Conte's Sparrows is poorly known. Although the species was first described in 1790, its nest was not discovered until nearly a century later.

Adult Le Conte's Sparrows have a distinctive head and face pattern, a narrow white stripe splitting the black crown, and a bright buffy eye stripe and malar stripe separated by a brownish cheek. The upper breast, nape, back, and flanks are buff marked with fine to heavy dark brown to black streaks. The lower breast and belly are light gray. Le Conte's Sparrows can be confused with Grasshopper, Baird's, Henslow's, Nelson's, and Saltmarsh sparrows; however, the head and face pattern of Le Conte's Sparrows is distinctive. Juveniles are somewhat muted versions of adults. The Le Conte's Sparrow is monotypic with no subspecies recognized, and no geographic variation in their measurements, plumage, or song. They are closely related to other species in the genus *Ammodramus*.

The breeding range of the Le Conte's Sparrow consists of a swath across west and Central Canada and into the United States from North Dakota east to the Great Lakes. They have a patchy distribution across eastern Canada occurring only where suitable wet habitat is available. This species is migratory and winters along the Gulf Coast from the Florida Panhandle to south Texas, where the greatest densities are reported, and also inland to Illinois. The specific distribution of this hard-to-see species is poorly known. In Massachusetts Le Conte's Sparrow is considered a vagrant but since the 1980s the number of fall migrants observed appears to be increasing and there are currently at least 20 state records. Most occurrences have been recorded in October.

Le Conte's Sparrows are apparently monogamous, but like many other facets of their life, their breeding biology is poorly known. The male's song is a grasshopper-like buzzing, rarely given from an exposed perch. The call note is a shrill *tsip* and in nonbreeding season they communicate with a high, thin *ssisst*. During courtship the male gives chips and slurred notes as he ascends to 15-20 feet in the air, followed by the typical buzz notes as he descends on fluttering wings. Song probably functions as both territorial advertisement and mate attraction. Although apparently territorial, there is little known about the species' agonistic behavior.

The preferred habitat of Le Conte's Sparrow is marshy meadows and bogs. Nothing is known about pair formation, nest-site selection, or nest building. The nest is a cup composed of grass and rushes and is lined with fine grass or hair. The clutch is four to five greenish or grayish eggs, spotted with darker colors. There is no

information on development of brood patches or incubation other than one observation at one nest that the female alone incubated for the first few days. The incubation period for one egg was 13 days. The young are altricial—sparsely covered with down, their eyes closed, and helpless. The fledging period is unknown, as is the post-fledging behavior of the parents. However, both parents apparently feed the young.

Le Conte's Sparrows forage on the ground and in low, dense vegetation. Little is known of their foraging behavior. Their food is primarily grass seeds and insects.

In some areas Le Conte's Sparrows are frequent victims of cowbird nest parasitism. Because of their preference for wet habitat, their nests are subject to occasional flooding. Historically, changes in land use practices, including the draining of swamps and bogs doubtless reduced available breeding habitat. So little is known about the natural history of the Le Conte's Sparrow that it is difficult to assess its status, but the somewhat sparse Breeding Bird Census data suggest that most populations are stable or increasing, so this little-known sparrow may have a secure future. 🐦

William E. Davis, Jr.

About the Cover Artist: Barry Van Dusen

Once again, *Bird Observer* offers a painting by the artist who has created many of our covers, Barry Van Dusen. Barry, who lives in Princeton, Massachusetts, is well known in the birding world. Barry has illustrated several nature books and pocket guides, and his articles and paintings have been featured in *Birding*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, and *Yankee Magazine* as well as *Bird Observer*. Barry's interest in nature subjects began in 1982 with an association with the Massachusetts Audubon Society. He has been influenced by the work of European wildlife artists and has adopted their methodology of direct field sketching. Barry teaches workshops at various locations in Massachusetts. For more information, visit Barry's website at <www.barryvandusen.com>. 🐦

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AT A GLANCE

August 2015



WAYNE PETERSEN

At one level this month's mystery photograph is straightforward: the bird is a shorebird. To be precise it is a sandpiper, not a plover. Plovers have short, relatively stout bills, somewhat steep and angular foreheads, large eyes, and in some species prominently ringed or banded breasts. This bird has none of these features so we can conclude it belongs in the family *Scolopacidae* (sandpipers and allies) and not *Charadriidae* (plovers). Knowing that the species is a scolopacid eliminates the five regularly-occurring species of Massachusetts plovers.

The combination of a finely streaked breast, distinct whitish supercilium (eye stripe), dark legs, and a relatively short, straight bill eliminates approximately twenty species of sandpipers and sandpiper relatives (e.g., yellowlegs, Whimbrel, godwits, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Stilt Sandpiper, dowitchers, phalaropes) as identification possibilities. Indeed, the *jizz* (i.e., overall impression) of the mystery sandpiper strongly suggests that it is one of the small, similar-looking sandpipers collectively called peep (i.e., Baird's, White-rumped, Western, Semipalmated, and Least sandpiper), or possibly the somewhat similar Sanderling, Pectoral Sandpiper, or Dunlin.

Having narrowed down the identification possibilities it is helpful to also determine the plumage or age of the bird. The absence of a rich, rusty-colored head and chest or a distinct black belly patch remove Sanderling or Dunlin in breeding

(alternate) plumage as options. Additionally, the crisp and scaly appearance of the back, scapulars, and wing coverts created by the pale fringes to those feathers and the fine necklace of streaking on the upper breast all identify the mystery bird as a juvenile.

A juvenile Sanderling would never exhibit the crisp necklace of streaks shown by the bird in the photograph, a Dunlin would have a much longer and droopy-tipped bill, and a Pectoral Sandpiper would have noticeably pale (yellowish) legs and a more extensively streaked breast.

Having reduced the possibilities to Baird's, White-rumped, Western, Semipalmated, or Least sandpiper, shape becomes a helpful feature. The mystery sandpiper is long and attenuated at the rear. This distinctive shape is created by the sandpiper's long wings which, when folded, extend beyond the tail. The Baird's and the White-rumped sandpiper share this feature. Not surprisingly these species are long-distance migrants that travel deep into southern South America for the winter. Although the Baird's and the White-rumped have a somewhat similar shape, the Baird's Sandpiper lacks the prominent supercilium of the mystery sandpiper and would have a less crisply streaked breast pattern and an even scallier overall dorsal pattern than the mystery bird. In a color photograph a Baird's Sandpiper would also have a warmer, more buff-colored face and head than the mystery shorebird. This bird is a juvenile White-rumped Sandpiper (*Calidris fuscicollis*) in fresh juvenal plumage, the way many individuals appear in October when they pass through Massachusetts.

White-rumped Sandpipers are relatively uncommon late spring migrants and common to very common mid to late fall migrants in Massachusetts at favored localities along the immediate coast, especially on Cape Cod. A few individuals linger into mid-November before finally departing for their Patagonian wintering grounds. The author photographed this White-rumped Sandpiper on North Beach in Orleans on November 15, 2009. 🐦

Wayne R. Petersen



NORTHERN GANNET BY SANDY SELESKY

AT A GLANCE



WAYNE PETERSEN

Can you identify the bird in this photograph?

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

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