

Fabien, *Rimouski*, May 28, (N. David *et al.*). A N. Bobwhite that spent the winter near feeders at Cap Tourmente, *Charlevoix*, was still there Apr. 17 (J. Guerin). A Ringed Turtle-Dove was reported from Hull May 1–16 (L. Parenteau). Single Eur. Goldfinches were located in the Mont Royal Cemetery May 2 (E. Legault) and at La Baie May 23 (R. Côté). A Japanese Hill Robin (*Leiothrix lutea*) was trapped by a bird bander at Pierrefonds, *Montréal*, Apr. 20 (M. Bergeron).

Corrigendum

The first-year Franklin's Gull reported in *AB* 47:238 should be deleted.

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New England Region

SIMON PERKINS

Spring 1995 in New England, as measured by Boston data, was cool and very dry. Precipitation was 5.42 inches below average, which ranked it as the fifth driest spring in 125 years of meteorological records. The cooler temperatures were directly related to a nearly complete lack of southwesterly winds, a pattern that prevailed until about the third week of May. Consequently, Boston didn't reach 70 degrees until the record-late date of May 18, the previous late date being May 14, set in 1924. The average date is April 10.

Despite the weather being rather uncooperative, the birds arrived more or less on time, though at least until the third week of May the deficit of southwest winds tended to keep most of the volume in the interior portions of the Region. A damming effect nearer to the coast, particularly in eastern Massachusetts, broke immediately and dramatically over the weekend of May 20 and 21, when migrants were seen and heard everywhere.

Most among the many noteworthy birds this spring were holdovers from the winter season. (Tufted Duck, Mew Gull, Rufous Hummingbird, Say's Phoebe, Mountain Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire, Varied Thrush,

Western Tanager, Painted Bunting, Rufous-sided "Spotted" Towhee, Harris' Sparrow, *etc.*). Through April new rarities were running a bit on the thin side. But May came with a flourish and, comparatively speaking, the season finally stacked up very well. Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut all recorded new state birds, but the most intriguing bird of the year was an apparent hybrid egret in Connecticut.

Abbreviations: Martha's Vineyard (*Martha's Vineyard, Duke's Co., MA*), N. Monomoy (*Monomoy Island N.W.R., Chatham, MA*), Nantucket (*Nantucket Island, MA*), Plum Island (*Plum Island, Newburyport/Newbury/Rowley/Ipswich, Essex, MA*).

Loons to Ibises

Three Arctic/Pacific-type loons were reported. A bird present all winter at Middletown, RI (*vide DE*) remained at least through Mar. 27, another Rhode Island bird, in partial breeding plumage, was at Napatree Pt., Westerly, Apr. 24 (CR), and the 3rd was in Boston Harbor, MA Apr. 30 (RD).

An estimated 225 N. Fulmars in flocks of 10–20 were sitting on the water on a dead calm evening, several mi e. of Chatham, MA May 20 (Wi. Harrington), and another >50 were noted on Jefferey's Ledge a day later (M. Gooley).

SA Five years ago in this column, the question was posed whether it was too early to be checking Snowy Egret colonies for amorous Little Egrets. Apparently it wasn't. A probable Snowy x Little Egret visited Hammonasset S.P. in Madison, CT Apr. 26–May 23 (DP, *et mult al.*, ph.). The bird looked very much like a Snowy Egret: yellow loral skin, well-developed aigrettes on the lower back, and a bushy crest. The striking difference was the presence of 2 long, Little Egret-



This egret at Hammonasset S.P., Connecticut, May 7, 1995, was apparently a Snowy Egret x Little Egret hybrid—if so, it was the first known instance of this hybrid combination. Photograph/Frank W. Mantlik.



like plumes that extended from—and well beyond—the bird's bushy crest [see photos]. More amazingly, there may have been two such birds in Connecticut this spring. A similar bird was also seen and photographed in Norwalk May 7 (F. Gallo *et al.*, ph). If these birds really were hybrids, they were almost certainly the first known examples. The question remains, where were they born? If they had hatched somewhere far to our south (e.g., the Caribbean), it seems unlikely they would have migrated north to New England—being from, presumably, non-migratory parents. More likely, they would have come from a colony comprised of migrant Snowys, perhaps somewhere between New Jersey and Nova Scotia. What is the prognosis for Little Egret in North America? Could Little Egret follow in the footsteps of Cattle Egret? On the surface, the main difference is that Cattles filled an essentially unoccupied terrestrial niche. Little Egrets, on the other hand, would probably attempt to coexist with Snowys. Could they do so? Would hybrids be reproductively viable? Are the two “species” in fact conspecific, as some authors suggest? The answers to these and other questions may soon be at hand. Meanwhile, those of us with access to Snowy colonies in the northeast would do well to work them over. The first confirmed nesting of Little Egret in North America seems imminent. Wouldn't that, if you'll pardon the expression, be a feather in someone's hat! By the way, the Nantucket Little Egret, rediscovered May 2 (J. Soucy *et al.*), returned for a 4th consecutive year.

The northernmost Little Blue Heron was in Bar Harbor, ME Apr. 18 (*vide* WT), and inland birds included one in Agawam, MA Apr. 14 (SK), and another in Bolton, MA Apr. 30 (*vide* B. Van Dusen).

A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron discovered in Phippsberg, ME May 2 was later found to be nesting with a 2ndbird (B&P Vickery). The nest was located 40–50 ft high in a red oak in a pine-oak forest, 150 meters from the nearest marsh. This was the first confirmed nesting of Yellow-crowneds in the state. Yellow-crowneds seen inland, where they are rare, included singles in Wellesley, MA May 7–8 (RAF) and Middleboro, MA May 15 (KA).

A flock of >200 Glossy Ibises in Ipswich, MA Apr. 22 (SP) represented a particularly large aggregation, but the bigger *Plegadis*



Adult White-faced Ibis (center bird) at Stratham, New Hampshire, April 15, 1995. First state record. Photograph/Peter Hunt.

news came with the appearance of two single White-faced Ibises in Stratham, NH Apr. 15 (SM), and Hammonasset S.P. in Madison, CT May 16–19 (DP *et al.*, ph). Both represented first state records. The Regional total now stands at 5 or 6, the rest coming from Massachusetts.

Waterfowl to Terns

Tundra Swans were fairly well represented, with four birds in 3 Massachusetts locales, two in Vermont, two in Rhode Island, and eight together in Connecticut. One of the Massachusetts birds remained in Auburn until May 20 (SK). At least five Whooper Swans were still present in Essex, MA, where one individual attacked and killed a Mute Swan (*vide* JB). One–two Greater White-fronted Geese that spent the winter in Newburyport, MA lingered into April (*vide* B.O.), a single White-fronted was in Newport, RI Mar. 8–14 (B. Gearhart, *et al.*), and a Barnacle Goose of unknown origin was noted in S. Dartmouth, MA Mar. 5 (F. Carney). A *Hutchinsii* Canada Goose was reported from Newtown, CT Mar. 5 (J. Romar).

Three “Eur.” Green-winged Teal were seen in Massachusetts in April, and one was found in Old Orchard Beach, ME Apr. 13 (K. Gammons). This year's Regional total of ≥ 13 Eur. Wigeon was above average. The remarkable slew of Tufted Ducks that first surfaced in the Region last winter remained into spring. The last of seven in Rhode Island were reported at least through Apr. 7 (*vide* DE), and one of the two in Massachusetts was still at Wachusett Res., Worcester, Apr. 8 (*vide* B.O.). A count of nearly 200 Harlequin Ducks tallied at Isle au Haut, ME Mar. 11 (*vide* WT) was typical for that locale; 92 Harlequins were still at the usual wintering site at Sachuest Pt., Middletown, RI Mar. 13 (R. Ferren), and a pair paused at Lake Champlain, Charlotte, VT May 5–8 (DH). Surf Scoters are very unusual on in-

land lakes in spring, so four on Onota L. in Pittsfield, MA Apr. 22 (B. Goodrich) were noteworthy, as was a large flight totaling >750 off Martha's Vineyard Apr. 24 (VL), and an oddly tardy raft of 175 birds, comprised entirely of imm. birds, at N. Monomoy May 28 (SP). Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century duck hunters, whose records have given us invaluable insights into the timing of migration, status, and distribution of waterfowl, provided vivid accounts of sudden spring departures of throngs of wintering seaducks from New England coastal waters. Such an exodus, within a 2-hour period on the afternoon of May 20 (SP, CM), afforded a glimpse into the past; 14,000 White-winged Scoters abruptly departed the waters around Nantucket, heading first around the w. end of the island, then northward across Nantucket Sound, and finally out of sight. The scene was reminiscent of the magnificent flights of roughly 200,000 wintering Oldsquaw that return daily from their shellfishing grounds on Nantucket Shoals to roost on the Sound. Two Barrow's Goldeneyes at Grand Isle, VT on L. Champlain Mar. 16–17 (DH) were unique inland this year. Following an above-average winter for Ruddy Ducks in Rhode Island, a state record-high 646 was tallied in Little Compton Mar. 19 (DE).

Numbers of Black Vultures continue to rise, particularly in Connecticut, where their now annual, late spring presence continues to spur hopes of local breeding. Possibly as many as 13 in Connecticut alone included three in Milford Mar. 24–Apr. 10 (CW), \leq five in Kent Apr. 18–May 15 (GH *et al.*), and five together in Glastonbury May 14 (C. Leahey, *vide* FM). Four in Massachusetts included singles in Southwick Apr. 18 (SK)

and Harvard May 13 (ES), and two in Great Barrington Apr. 20 (D. Reid). A sub-ad. Mississippi Kite in Newbury, MA May 20 (P. Roberts) was the only kite to visit the Region. The winter raptor show in Middleboro, MA that included as many as 15–20 Short-eared Owls and 20–25 N. Harriers on some days began to break up by late March.

Two Clapper Rails in Newburyport, MA seen nearly continuously throughout May were observed copulating May 25 (*fide* B. Sides). Newburyport is the northernmost known limit of the species' breeding range.

Four Black-necked Stilts graced the Region. They were at Scarborough Marsh, Old Orchard Beach, ME May 22 (A&BD, ph.), Middleboro, MA May 4–27 (R. Finch *et al.*), Newburyport, MA May 22–31 (J. Wood *et al.*), and S. Kingston, RI May 12 (D. Wexler). The pair of Am. Oystercatchers that attempted to nest at a new northernmost outpost at Scarboro Marsh, Old Orchard Beach, ME last year returned and succeeded in hatching chicks (JD). White-rumped Sandpipers are not often seen inland in spring, so one in Longmeadow, MA May 29 (ML), another at Grande Isle, VT May 27 (DH), and a 3rd in Panton, VT May 19–20 (T. Murin) were noteworthy. A Stilt Sandpiper made a rare spring appearance in the Region at Old Orchard Beach, ME May 27 (SPo). All four Ruffs in the Region, spanning between Apr. 23–mid-May, were in Newburyport, MA (*fide* M.A.S.).

A Laughing Gull in Longmeadow, MA May 15 (SK) represented one of very few existing inland records for the Region, and a wintering Mew Gull in Winthrop, MA was last reported Mar. 31 (*fide* B.O.). A Gull-billed Tern was seen in Newburyport, MA May 27 (ML), and more than half the Regional total of 13 Caspian Terns were inland: three in Northampton, MA Apr. 28 (B. Bieda), one at Grande Isle, VT May 4 (DH, ph.), and three in Attleboro, MA May 14 (D. Nazio).

Pigeons to Waxwings

Massachusetts finally got its first unequivocal record of **Band-tailed Pigeon** when a bird visited a yard in Brookline May 29 into June (M. Vose, ph.). This species had been long anticipated in the state since it had already been recorded in New Hampshire (once), Connecticut (twice), and Maine (thrice).

The Monk Parakeets are coming! Following their first nesting attempt in Massachusetts in 1993, 2–3 nests were found in Taunton, MA May 31 (T. White *et al.*). Monk Parakeets have bred nearby in Warwick, RI for years; they continue to spread along the coast of Connecticut, with newly found nest trees in Stamford, Norwalk, and Westport

(*fide* FM); the species has recently been added to the Connecticut state list. Despite the fact that this species has yet to successfully raise young in Massachusetts, their eventual success may be inevitable. Their placement on the Connecticut list casts the status of Massachusetts and Rhode Island individuals in a new, interesting light.

Single Chuck-will's-widows were heard singing briefly in Norwalk, CT May 23 (FM), Montague, MA May 19 (M. Fairbrother), and Norfolk, MA May 25 (M. Hurden), and several individuals returned again to Martha's Vineyard, at what would be the n. limit of their breeding range if nesting were confirmed.

The 2nd confirmed state record for **Rufous Hummingbird** was secured with the capture and measurement of a female type that spent the winter in a greenhouse in East Hartford, CT. Presumably the bird was released this spring (*fide* FM).

A **Fork-tailed Flycatcher** was a rare (particularly in spring) find in Attleboro, MA May 21 (J. Lash), and the **Say's Phoebe** that was first found in Brandon, VT last October somehow managed to survive the winter, and was last reported Apr. 28 (*fide* JP).

The Com. Ravens discovered last year carrying sticks in Ledyard, CT returned again this year (R. Askins). Though no direct evidence of breeding has yet been observed, this would represent the southeasternmost Regional nesting outpost.

An unconfirmed report of a N. Wheatear came from Shelburne, VT May 23 (J. Marlow, *fide* JP). The three **Mountain Bluebirds** that spent the latter portion of the winter in Wellfleet, MA were last reported Mar. 14 (*fide* B.O.), and the **Townsend's Solitaire** present in New Hampshire during the winter remained into the spring, though the date it was last seen was not reported. The two **Varied Thrushes** in the Region this spring paled in comparison with last year's spate. One visited a feeder in East Peacham, VT for roughly 3 weeks, and was last reported Mar. 11 (D&M Magnus); another feeder bird in Norwalk, CT, also first reported in late February, stayed until Apr. 19 (B. Rabenold *et al.*). Single **Bohemian Waxwings** were in Middleboro, MA Mar. 12 (T. Raymond) and Eastham, MA Mar. 14 (K. Hamilton).

Warblers to Finches

Most reporters agreed that warbler migration was better than average this year, particularly inland. In Connecticut, Greg Hanisek described a "flood" of warblers between May 12–20. This coincided with the best day in w. Massachusetts, which came May 13. Many seasonal totals in w. Massachusetts were the highest in over 15 years, while the local totals



Male Varied Thrush at Norwalk, Connecticut, March 21, 1995. This bird was visiting a feeder from late February–late April. Photograph/Frank W. Mantlik.

of 328 Magnolias and 562 Black-throated Greens were the highest on record (*fide* SK). Predictably, Vermont's Champlain Valley had its best stretch later still, beginning May 18 (*fide* JP), and e. Massachusetts was inundated with migrant warblers beginning the weekend of May 20. Inexplicably, an unusually heavy flight of N. Parulas came through e. Massachusetts during and immediately following a prolonged stretch of E winds May 14, when roughly 70 parulas were counted on Martha's Vineyard (VL), and >50 were tallied in Marshfield, MA (W. Petersen). May 25 produced a huge flight of warblers at Provincetown, MA that included a rough estimate of 200 Blackpolls (RA). Among the usual smattering of over-shooting s. warblers, (including Yellow-throated, Prothonotary, and Kentucky), more noteworthy sightings included the northernmost Yellow-throated in Weare, NH Apr. 30–May 1 (B. Suomala), and a singing ♂ Yellow-throated in Kent, CT Apr. 22–May 31 (GH), which was presumably the same individual that occupied that site the previous 5 years, and which had furnished the first state breeding record. At a time when they should have long since been on territory, one–two Louisiana Waterthrushes were oddly out of place at Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, MA May 5–8 (*fide* RHS), as was another in



Out of place and late for a migrant was this Louisiana Waterthrush at Provincetown, Massachusetts, May 25, 1995. Photograph/Robert P. Abrams.

Provincetown, MA May 25 (RA, ph.). Conversely, a Louisiana in Harvard, MA Mar. 28 (ES) was a week early.

A wintering W. Tanager was last seen at a Belmont, MA feeder Mar. 18 (G. Speck). Since the fall of 1992, when Cape Cod was hit with a mini-invasion of Painted Buntings, several individuals of this previously irregular s. species have occurred annually in s.e. Massachusetts. An over-wintering male in Brewster remained at a feeder until Mar. 10 (A. Furman), another or the same male was reported from Truro May 31 (M. Minnerath), and a female visited a feeder in Westport, MA Apr. 4-9 at a residence owned, coincidentally, by another A. (Alicia) Furman, who is unrelated to the aforementioned A. Furman in Brewster!

A wintering Dickcissel in Dartmouth, MA was last seen Mar. 25 (E. Nielsen), another was in Newport, RI Mar. 12-17 (B&W Gearhart), and most interesting was a singing ♂ Dickcissel found in Bridport, VT May 20 that continued to defend a territory into June (K. Brock, S. Jackson *et al.*). A Green-tailed Towhee, providing roughly the 10th state record, was discovered in Marblehead, MA Apr. 1 (J. Smith). More birders would have seen it that day, but some waited for corroboration for fear of becoming part of an April Fools joke. Luckily, the bird remained at least through Apr. 28. A wintering "spotted" Rufous-sided Towhee departed Acushnet, MA on or around Apr. 15 (M. LaBossiere).

Among a minimum of six Clay-colored Sparrows in the Region, two singing males discovered in late May remained into June. One of these was in Bridport, VT (B. Gilbert), and the other was in Windsor, CT (P. Desjardins). In Massachusetts, two single Lark Sparrows that probably spent the win-

ter locally were at feeders in Peabody Mar. 14-25 (*vide* B.O.), and Amesbury Apr. 22-25 (R. Peacock). During spring migration in New England, numbers of migrant White-crowned Sparrows can vary widely between years. This year's flight was particularly heavy, as evidenced by the following totals: 11 in New Milford, CT (CW); > 50 throughout the spring in w. Massachusetts (*vide* SK); nearly 100 in e. Massachusetts, including maximum single locale/single day tallies, within roughly a 10-day period in mid-May, of 11 in Nantucket, 13 at Plum Island, 15 in Hingham, and 20 on Martha's Vineyard (*vide* M.A.S.). Two wintering Harris' Sparrows, one in Hopkinton, MA (J. Gordon, G. Gove), and the other at Nantucket, MA (E. Van Dyne *et al.*), remained until May 2 and May 15, respectively. Two "Oregon" Dark-eyed Juncos included a bird in Boston May 13-14 (L. Jefferson *et al.*), and one reported as a "pink-sided" in Chester, NH Mar. 14-22 (A&BD).

Single Yellow-headed Blackbirds were reported from Middleboro, MA Mar. 26 (J. Hepburn), and Niantic, CT Mar. 15-23 (J. Hajesy, *vide* FM). The provenance of a Eur. Goldfinch in Grand Isle, VT May 3 (J. Mapes), as with all those before it, will remain suspect.

Corrigendum

The Black-tailed Godwit reported as first appearing Apr. 19 last year, actually first appeared May 19.

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Hudson-Delaware Region

WILLIAM J. BOYLE, JR., ROBERT O. PAXTON, AND DAVID A. CUTLER

Spring 1995 continued the trend of the previous two seasons over most of the Region, as the weather was generally mild but dry. Upstate New York was somewhat cooler than usual, but the rest of our area enjoyed one of the finest springs in many years. Birding, too, was excellent, although somewhat spotty, as birders reported some of the best waves of warblers and other passerine migrants encountered in recent years. In contrast to recent years, when the migration has seemed to be creeping to earlier and earlier dates, the major flights occurred more or less on schedule. Indicative of the quality of the season was the staggering total of 225 species recorded in New Jersey in a single day by a Canadian team on the World Series of Birding May 13.

The unusually dry weather approached drought conditions in some areas, and contributed to a major forest fire in the New Jersey Pine Barrens. More than 20,000 acres burned in the state's largest fire in more than 30 years. Reservoirs and lakes were low as



In Bridport, Vermont, this male Dickcissel was singing on territory from May 20, 1995, into June. Photograph/Scott Jackson.

