

Equally important, the Grasshopper Sparrow has recently been listed as an Endangered Species in the Bay State. Other significant sparrow discoveries included the presence of a singing Fox Sparrow at Pittsburg, NH June 6–8 (EN) and the confirmed nesting of Lincoln's Sparrows at Windsor, *Berkshire*, MA June 8–July 28 (*fide* SK). Regionally, Fox Sparrow has been confirmed as a casual breeder only in n. Maine, and Lincoln's Sparrow has been found nesting in Massachusetts fewer than 10 times since first being confirmed in 1981. A report of an out-of-season Lapland Longspur at N. Monomoy I., July 10 (E. Pierce, *fide* B.O.) is awaiting a decision by the M.A.R.C.

A flurry of Cape Cod, MA, Yellow-headed Blackbird reports included singles (same bird/birds?) at Provincetown June 16 (J. Alciadi, *fide* B.O.), Chatham June 19 (E. Gelsey, *fide* B.O.), and Otis A.F.B., Mashpee, June 20 (A. McCloud, *fide* B.O.). The always unpredictable Red Crossbill this year made an unusual appearance when two showed up at a feeder at Chappaquiddick I., M.V., July 16 (F&R Clay, *fide* B.O.). Slightly less surprising were two Evening Grosbeaks at a feeder at Essex, MA in late July (M. Hoar, *fide* B.O.).

Subregional editors (boldface), contributors (italics), and observers: Dennis Abbott, Steve Arena, *Bird Observer*, Lysle Brinker, Barbara Coullon, *Alan & Barbara Delorey*, **David Emerson**, Davis Finch, Barbara Gearhart, **Greg Hanisek**, Scott Hecker, Rick Heil, Seward Highley, *David Holmes*, Peter Hunt, *Andrea Jones*, **Seth Kellogg**, Vernon Laux, *Ron Lockwood*, Stauffer & Eleanor Miller, Eric Nielsen, *Blair Nikula*, **Simon Perkins**, **Judy Peterson**, David Provencher, John Quigley, Robert Quinn, **Marj Rines**, Robert Stymeist, Mark Szantyr, Peter Vickery.

—*Wayne R. Petersen, Center for Biological Conservation, Massachusetts Audubon Society, Lincoln, MA 01773.*

Hudson-Delaware Region

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

This season featured hurricane *Bertha*, cool wet weather, and such red-letter rarities as Williamson's Sapsucker and Northern Lapwing.

Spring was already abnormally cool and wet; the Mother's Day storm of May 12 buried one Adirondack Bald Eagle nest under 9 inches of snow (PN). June and July continued cool and wet. In Philadelphia, it was the ninth wettest and the eleventh coldest July on record. Increased mortality was noted among monitored box-nesters, such as Tree Swallows and Eastern Bluebirds (RPY, VP, SK). "Buckets" of rain "really hammered" Ospreys, Peregrines, and Bald Eagles in the Adirondacks (JMCP, REL, PN). Beach-nesting terns, skimmers, and Piping Plovers were affected by rain at hatching time, and by hurricane *Bertha's* surge tides. Beach-nesters also suffered increasing predation by gulls, crows, and foxes, all flourishing in human vicinity. Marsh-nesters met a new scourge: jet-skis.

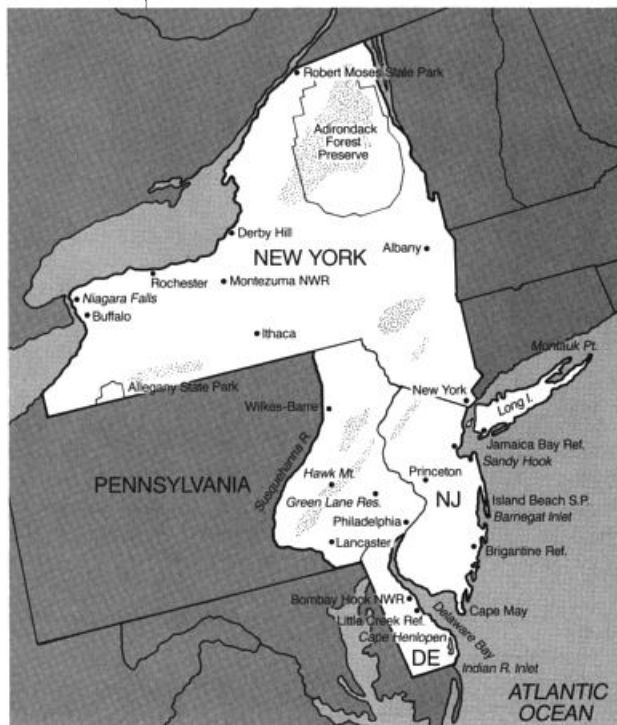
The cool spring extended migration later than normal. The Manitou, *Monroe*, NY banding station captured the migration's maximum of Swainson's Thrushes (16) and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers (13) June 1 (G. Jones), and a Bicknell's Thrush June 6 (R. McKinney).

Far more shorebirds than usual were still moving in early June, and more than usual apparently never went north. An exceptional flock of more than 6000—mostly Ruddy Turnstones with some Red Knots and Sanderlings—was over Green Lane Reservoir, *Montgomery*, Pennsylvania, around 8 p.m., June 2 (ph. J. Horne).

Seven Arctic-breeding species of shorebirds—including White-rumped, Stilt, and Western sandpipers, Red Knots, about 150 Short-billed Dowitchers, and six-plus Long-billeds—were at the Logan Tract June 19–23 (CDC, T. McGrath, JFS). Were the 100 Red Knots at Slaughter Beach, *Sussex*, DE June 22–23 (Philadelphia Birdline) unable to find enough horseshoe crab eggs to fuel their trip north? On the Lake Champlain shore between the two Chazy River mouths, *Clinton*, New York, five species of shorebirds, including an unusual Western Sandpiper, plus 25 Bonaparte's Gulls, were found between June 12–20 (B. Krueger, C. Mitchell).

Results from surveys of colonial waterbirds on Long Island and in coastal New Jersey in 1995 enable us to comment on medium-term trends in certain herons, gulls, and terns.

Abbreviations: Avalon (*barrier beach at Townsend's Inlet, Cape May, NJ*); Bombay Hook (*Bombay Hook N.W.R., near Smyrna, DE*); Braddock Bay (*Braddock Bay S. P. and vicinity, Monroe, NY*); Brig (*Brigantine Unit, Edward P. Forsythe N.W.R., Atlantic, NJ*); Derby Hill (*hawk watch at s.e. corner of L. Ontario, Oswego, NY*); Jamaica Bay (*Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York City*); Little Creek (*Little Creek Wildlife Area, near Dover, Kent, DE*); Logan Tract (*unit of Ted Harvey Conservation Area s. of Kitt's Hummock, DE*); N.Y.D.E.C. (*New York Department of Environmental Conservation*); Port Mahon (*marshes and bay shore east of Little Creek, Kent, DE*).



Hurricane *Bertha*

Bertha came earlier and at higher latitudes than most hurricanes, skirting n. of the West Indies before veering up the United States coast. She cut inland in North Carolina and crossed the lower Chesapeake and Delaware Bays before turning northeastward back out to sea. Although she was weakening as she passed Cape May before dawn July 13, she brought "the best fallout of hurricane-related seabirds in New Jersey ever" (PL). Few birds were apparent before or soon after the storm center's passage at 10 a.m. But between 1 and 5 p.m., W winds gusting to 50 knots pushed seabirds flying S down Delaware Bay toward the sea, up against the w. shore of the Cape May peninsula (Sunset Beach). Among the masses of local terns and gulls were some species characteristic of the summer Gulf Stream: Black-capped Petrel (eight), Band-rumped Storm-Petrel (≤ 11), Sooty Tern (four), and Bridled Tern (two). Others characteristic of colder Atlantic waters included: Leach's Storm-Petrel (one-two), Greater Shearwater (one-two), Arctic Tern (one) (PL). On the Atlantic side, only one Greater Shearwater was out of place. Farther north the only extralimitals found were a few Sooty Terns: one picked up dead at Barnegat Inlet (JB), one at Avon, *Monmouth*, NJ (B. Henschel), three at Shinnecock, LI (AJL), and one picked up and released at Caumsett S.P. on Long Island's n. shore.

Pelicans to Cormorants

An Am. White Pelican, now annual in the Region, was on the Niagara R. at Tonawanda June 1-2 (WW). Brown Pelicans had only a minor flight N, reaching only c. New Jersey. The largest number reported was about 30 off Barnegat (JB).

Double-crested Cormorants continue their sometimes unwelcome explosion. The mega-colony at Little Galloo I., in e. L. Ontario off Henderson Harbor, *Jefferson*, NY, grew about 10% to a record 8410 nests (BMi, REL). Around Buffalo the colony continues at Reef Lighthouse, fledging 14 young (WW), but the Niagara Falls colony remains unproductive (WD'A). Four Brothers I. in L. Champlain swelled again from 804 to 1184 nests (JMCP). Pennsylvania had its first breeding record: Wade I., in the Susquehanna R., near Harrisburg. Nesting continues in Delaware Bay on a buoy s. of Port Mahon, where the state's first nests were built in 1991. Anhinga reports continued, with one at Hidden Valley, Cape May, NJ June 27 (RC *et al.*).

Hérons to Waterfowl

Least Bitterns were widely reported. The Cape May area held about 6 pairs; 2 sites

were noted in Delaware (APE); and one was at Jamaica Bay June 2, where they are less than annual. One was unexpected at Piermont Pier on the Hudson, *Rockland*, NY June 2 (C. Weis).

The venerable heronry at Stone Harbor, *Cape May*, NJ, whose records go back to the 1880s, is defunct; but a new one has appeared at Avalon on the n. end of the same barrier beach. The Stone Harbor authorities, once reluctant hosts to the heronry, are now asking experts how to restore it (KP).

The fate of herons is more and more tied to fewer, larger colonies. One of the greatest of these, Pea Patch I., isolated from human intrusion in the shipping lanes of Delaware Bay off Delaware City, has been surveyed by Manomet Observatory for the last 4 years (KP). The survey's first year (1993) turned out to be a historic peak, with about 12,000 pairs; numbers dropped in half by 1995, and returned this summer to about 7500. A disturbing longer-term trend, however, is that Snowy Egret and Little Blue Heron have continued to decline there. In the case of Pea Patch's Snowy Egrets, negative factors include a nematode parasite and a long distance to appropriate feeding habitat in saline marshes. Some Snowies appear to have shifted to the newer colony in Rehoboth Bay, now up to 500 pairs. Elsewhere, New Jersey's colonial waterbird survey shows a 50% decline in Snowy Egrets since the last survey in 1989 (DJ), while the 1995 Long Island survey shows a slight but steady 5-year slippage in Snowy Egrets and a larger 10-year shrinkage of Little Blue Herons to only 27 pairs (MA). Cattle Egrets have undergone a massive adjustment downward since they burst into the northeast in the 1950s. More than 300 pairs bred on Long Island in 1985; in 1995, only 42; they dropped by more than half to a mere 29 in coastal New Jersey between 1989 and 1995. Since the great Rookery I. colony in the Susquehanna in *Lancaster* vanished in 1988, they may not breed in Pennsylvania at all. Their Regional stronghold is now Pea Patch, where they increased slightly this year to 2299 pairs, still below the 4642 of 1993 (KP).

Great Egrets bred for the 3rd year in the Motor I. colony in the Niagara R., their new outpost at the w. end of L. Ontario (WW); the trend is slightly up in coastal New Jersey (486 adults at nests in 1995) and well up on Long Island (514 pairs in 1995). Glossy Ibis, which had been slipping Regionally over the last decade, are slightly up in both coastal New Jersey and Long Island, and they account for much

of the recovery at Pea Patch, where they are back to their 1993 peak of 2000 pairs. A White-faced Ibis, now annual in the Region, was at Bombay Hook from May into early summer (FR, APE), and two were found there July 7 (MO'B, DS, RC).

Supplementing the spring's nesting Trumpeter Swans in *Jefferson*, NY, another pair nested in *Wayne* (*vide* BMi), and four summered after July 18 at Montezuma N.W.R., *Seneca*, NY (K. Fox). All of these birds are presumed to originate with the Ontario reintroduction program.

Following the Tufted Duck observed in spring at Braddock Bay, another (or the same?) turned up in July at Batavia Sewage Lagoon, near Buffalo, in July (WW, WD'A), where it was considered an escape. An exceptional 23 Com. Eiders were at Montauk during *Bertha* July 13 (NY RBA). A female observed intermittently through the season at Cape Henlopen (CDC) furnished Delaware's 3rd summer record. King Eiders are more regular there in summer; two were present July 20 (MG, BP).

A Com. Goldeneye nest at Picton I., in the Saint Lawrence R. near Clayton, *Jefferson*, was the first found outside the Adirondacks (A. Heineman).

Raptors

Following the spring's St. Lawrence R. Black Vulture, one June 2 at Derby Hill provided the 7th spring record there and the latest by 6 weeks (WP). Another season passed without finding the nest that surely exists in s.e. New York.

Osprey restoration continues. In New York, the Adirondack population raised only 30 young (45 last year) because of weather. The 21 nests on the Saint-Lawrence R. (same as last year) produced more young (34, last year 27). New Jersey took no aerial Osprey survey this year. While New Jersey's Ospreys breed mostly on the Atlantic and lower Delaware Bay, the major development is establishment of an inland population. The *Hunterdon* pair, established in 1992, continues to produce. Ospreys have become a "common sight" in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley, untrue 5 years ago (AK).

Following a good spring for Mississippi Kites, they continued as usual around Cape May until June 21, the biggest count being four June 15, including one full adult (K&J Lukens). Still another immature reached Braddock Bay June 1 & 3 (R. O'Hara, M. Lanzone), and another was relatively far north over Flat Rock Brook, Englewood, *Bergen*, NJ in late June, catching the abundant 17-year cicadas (*Philadelphina* Birdline). The latest

reported was a first-summer bird at Mil-ville, *Sussex*, DE, July 12 (K. Graff, *fide* Philadelphia Birdline).

Bald Eagles set a new record in New York, with 29 occupied territories (25 last year), 26 of which produced eggs. Nineteen nests were successful, producing 37 young, better than last year's 30, though weather led to the failure of 6-7 pairs in the Adirondacks. The increase occurred mainly downstate. Along the Hudson, where many now winter, 2 new pairs have recently established territories (1992, 1995), but they have not been productive, possibly because of contamination (PN). In New Jersey, 13 active pairs (2 more than last year) produced 14 young, slightly down, probably because of weather (KC). The Pennsylvania population e. of the Susquehanna was about stable, with 2 nests in *Pike* and 6 nests in the lower Susquehanna Valley (DB). Delaware was up to 15 active pairs, of which 10 successfully fledged 17 young (12 last year, LG-I).

Since Merlins were first discovered breeding in n. New York in 1992, the population has exploded. Bob Hagar estimates that the Adirondack breeding population could be counted in dozens, centered upon Owl's Head (*Franklin*), Lake Placid (*Essex*), and Saranac Lake (mostly the *Essex* side) (*fide* JMCP). A nest in a Norway spruce in the village of Potsdam, *St. Lawrence*, was the first found outside the Adirondacks (K. Crowell).

Peregrine Falcons gained major new ground in New York, which now has 32 territorial pairs (25 last year). Of those, 26 bred and 24 were successful, fledging 49 young (46 last year). The most dramatic gain was the first upstate urban nestings: A Rochester pair, the result of a hacking program sponsored by Rochester Gas and Electric, produced one young; a Buffalo pair, one of which came from Canada, fledged three young; Syracuse and Albany also had pairs. Long Island's first nesting attempt occurred on the Nassau County Medical Center, possibly by the pair that wintered at Jones Beach water tower. Other highlights this season were two more bridge nesters up the Hudson (Kingston-Rhinecliff and Mid-Hudson bridges), and 2 new pairs and one new nest in a natural cliff site at L. George (BL). New Jersey's Peregrine population increased by one to 11 nests on towers and buildings, and 5 on bridges (KC). In Pennsylvania, reintroductions are underway in Allentown and Williamsport (DB). The bridge nests are proving hazardous; chicks had to be fished from the water at 2 of the Delaware R. bridge nesters monitored by Pennsylvania (DB).

Rails to Shorebirds

A Black Rail reported at Perch River W. M. A., *Jefferson*, NY June 19-25 (N. Leone, B. Walker, B. Johnson) seems to be a first record for the St. Lawrence area.

A Northern Lapwing was an outstanding rarity at Bombay Hook July 6-7 (J&B Cupp, B. Stott, m.ob.). There is only one previous Delaware record (March 1953), but nine have occurred in North America since 1988, the farthest from the Atlantic being one in Ohio in December 1994 (*fide* AH). All North American records are presumed to cross the N. Atlantic assisted by cyclonic westerlies.

Piping Plovers gained slightly to 256 pairs on Long Island (MA), but slipped in New Jersey to 127 nesting pairs (132 last year, DJ). Productivity was slightly up there (1.01 per nest), but the onslaught by humans and predators favored by human activity (gulls, crows) increases steadily. Foxes have learned to dig under the wire cages that helped for a time. Delaware held on with 6 pairs, including 4 nests in Cape Henlopen S. P.; only one succeeded, fledging three young (LG-I, CB).

Away from Bombay Hook, where they still breed, Black-necked Stilts were reported only at Jamaica Bay June 6 (two, L. Shore). Only a few Am. Avocets wandered N of their usual post-breeding assemblage on the Delaware coast: two on the Susquehanna R. at the Conejohela Flats, Washington Boro, *Lancaster*, PA June 2 (Philadelphia Birdline), and, less exceptionally, one at N. Line Island, in Great South Bay, *Suffolk*, Long Island July 6 (AJL).

The two Willets resting at the fly-ash pond at the PP&L complex above Martin's Creek, *Northampton*, PA July 23 (RWi) were likely of the western race. The only double-digit count of vanishing Upland Sandpipers reported was 16 at New Castle County, DE, airport July 14 (B&NM).

The last northbound Hudsonian Godwits were late at Fire I. Inlet, LI June 1-2 (AJL). Southbound birds arrived in good numbers the end of July: ten at the Line Is., Great South Bay, *Suffolk*, LI July 27-28 (NYRBA), and 11 at the Port Mahon impoundment July 30 (APE, D. Bridger). Marbled Godwits were scarce; only a handful appeared, from Brig s. to Delaware. A distant peep at Bombay Hook July 7 was believed by experienced observers to be a Little Stint (MO'B, DS, RC); no details were provided.

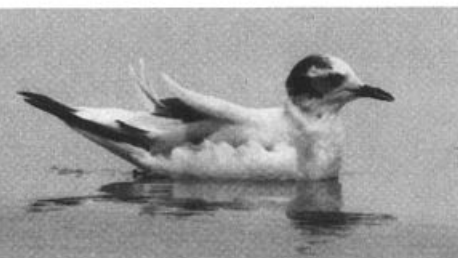
Only two Curlew Sandpipers were found: Cupsogue County Park, near Moriches, *Suffolk*, LI July 10 (A. Baldelli) and a bird in alternate plumage for about a week after July 7 at Bombay Hook (MO'B, DS, RC, m.ob.). Delaware was once again

the best place for Ruffs. Three different males were at Bombay Hook in July, and singles were at the Logan Tract on the early date of June 29 (CDC, E. Short) and Assawoman Wildlife Area July 6 (CDC, Delaware Ornithological Society), one of the few *Sussex* records (APE). Cape May came close behind, with one at South Cape May Meadows July 9 (T. Parsons) and one-two at the Canal Bridge impoundments at the end of July (A. Robinson *et al.*). The only other was a Reeve at Cow Meadow, Freeport, *Nassau*, LI July 27-31 (M. Levine, SS *et al.*). The only Red-necked Phalarope was at Shinnecock, LI July 27 (AJL). A Red Phalarope was reported the same day at Little Creek (J. Wilson).

Gulls to Skimmer

The Laughing Gull colony awkwardly placed at the edge of JFK airport holds its own with about 5000 pairs, despite the efforts of The New York-New Jersey Port Authority to keep them off the runway. About 2200 birds were shot this summer, down from 5000 last year. Airport authorities are experimenting with a falconer who deploys a Harris' Hawk and a "Pere-Gyr" to interdict the runways to gulls, with some success (DR). It is puzzling that no new Laughing Gull colonies develop on the vast salt marshes of the s. shore of Long Island. The trend is down in coastal New Jersey, from about 55,000 pairs in 1989 to 39,085 in 1995. Some colonies in Barnegat Bay have suffered increased flooding as dredging enhances tidal action (DJ), but some remaining colonies (e.g. Stone Harbor) are among the largest gull colonies in the world. Laughing Gulls reached L. Ontario in even higher numbers than usual this summer: One or more spring prospectors were around Rochester June 1-3 (BMA, m.ob.), and another passed Derby Hill June 1 (WP). Post-breeding wanderers passed Derby Hill July 19-20 (D&D Traver), and peaked at 35 in the Delaware R. at Philadelphia July 16 (EF).

Franklin's Gulls were reported only from Delaware: Slaughter Beach July 14 (CDC) and Port Mahon at the end of July (L. Lesco, J. White). Little Gulls were



Little Gull at Port Mahon, Delaware, July 23, 1996. Photograph/Greg W. Lasley.

scarce, with first-summer birds at Jones Beach, LI, July 4 (AJL) and at Port Mahon July 19–30 (ph. G. Lasley), with maybe a 2nd-summer bird there, too. Black-headed Gull went unreported. Left-over single Iceland Gulls were at Charlotte, *Monroe*, NY June 1 (BMA) and, more unusually, at Slaughter Beach, *Sussex*, DE June 2 (M. Barnhill), Lesser Black-backed Gulls are no longer unthinkable in summer; several ranging in age from first to 3rd-summer were around Cape May and one at Fire I. Inlet, LI, July 7 (NY RBA).

- The medium-term Herring Gull trend is slowly down, to >6800 pairs in coastal New Jersey and >11,000 pairs on Long Island in 1995, partly because of the covering of garbage dumps. Their impact on other birds remains high, however, for the number of nesting sites has increased. Great Black-backed Gulls may be supplanting them, having more than doubled since 1989 in New Jersey to 781 pairs and remaining stable on Long Island with >6000 pairs.

- Caspian Terns almost certainly nested again at Barnegat, NJ, where one was observed carrying food (JB). A Sandwich Tern strayed to Cape Henlopen June 24 (CB) and two were in Fire I. Inlet, LI, the same day (J&G Fritz), but only singles were at Avalon and Cape Henlopen after *Bertha*. The nearest breeding site is in Maryland.

- The monster Com./Roseate tern colony on Great Gull I., between the tip of Long Island and Connecticut, grew again to >9000 nests, a constant 1500 being Roseate nests (HH). The Cedar Beach, LI, colony, once nearly as big, was already reduced last summer, apparently by crow predation, to about 500 pairs. It failed totally this year when a family of foxes established itself on the site (JB). This leaves the new colony at Breezy Pt., in the Gateway National Seashore (>2500 pairs) as the next-largest Com. Tern colony on Long Island. The 10-year Com. Tern trend on Long Island has been downward (from about 26,000 pairs in 1985 to approximately 17,000 pairs in 1995; MA), and strongly so in New Jersey, where the total fell by half between 1989–1995 (4048 pairs, DJ). As for Roseates, while Great Gull I. remains by far the greatest Roseate Tern colony on earth, the lack of secondary back-up colonies exposes them to risk. The destruction at Cedar Beach leaves Shinnecock Bay, with several small colonies in Shinnecock Bay (Lane's I., 36 nests; Warner's I., 31 nests) as the Region's 2nd-largest Roseate Tern sites. Warner's I., unfortunately, is eroding away (MA, M. England). Other previous sites held no Roseates this summer, or only a handful (HH, L. Penny). Once again, several hung

around Cape May and \leq six at Cape Henlopen, DE (CB), but the hoped-for discovery of breeding Roseate Terns in New Jersey and Delaware still eludes us.

While we have no totals for New Jersey or Delaware, the tern nesting season in Barnegat Bay was a "disaster" (JB). Production was the poorest in 20 years except for 1978, another rainy summer. Damage was done by a mixture of human disturbance, exceptionally high tides (hurricane *Bertha*), rain, and predation.

- Burger witnessed the geometrical progression of disturbance by jet-skis, the latest recreational craze on Long Island and coastal New Jersey. These machines can be rented by the hour, and are not subject to licensing or other control. They circle and land on marsh islands, increasingly important to terns, skimmers, and oystercatchers pushed off the beach. At high tide jet-skis penetrate deep into the salt marshes. Burger is submitting a questionnaire to fishermen, which reveals that they, too, rate jet-ski interference high among their problems.

- The new Forster's Tern colony established at Jamaica Bay in 1992 continues, with about 50 pairs (DR), and several chicks were banded in Hempstead, LI, the species' n. limit on the Atlantic coast (JZ). They have doubled in New Jersey since 1989 to 3947 pairs (DJ). The now annual L. Ontario passage of Forster's Terns that presumably breed farther west was above average, with several late spring birds around the Rochester area in early June (KG, C. Cass, m.ob.) and an early-arriving adult at Sandy Pond, *Oswego*, July 20 (WP).

- Least Terns suffered severe tidal damage at hatching time (hurricane *Bertha*), plus heavy rains, compounding the pressures of human activity and predation by gulls, crows, foxes. At Breezy Pt., LI, they have been crowded out by Com. Terns. The New Jersey Commission of Fish, Game and Wildlife estimates 803 adults in New Jersey. That probably means a decline, but since the NJCFGW has changed its censusing method to one that it considers more accurate, precise comparison with previous years is impossible (DJ). Least Terns are famously adaptable, however, and a new colony at the Logan Tract, farther up Delaware Bay from the coast than previously known, shows that they can still find new nesting sites.

Black Skimmers are not breeding in Delaware, perhaps for lack of suitable habitat, but many have loafed in the state for the last half-dozen summers (DAC); this summer 150–200 hung around the Logan Tract. The trend on Long Island has been slightly up since 1985 to 599 pairs in 1995.

Doves to Shrikes

A White-winged Dove, now nearly annual, flew across the Cape May canal July 8 (MO'B, RC). A Com. Nighthawk nest on a roof at the Philadelphia Navy Yard (ph. EF) was encouraging in a city where they have been absent for several summers. Chuck-will's-widow was reported in 3 places in c. New Jersey, where there had been only 4 previous reports (BV). They still breed at Oak Beach, *Suffolk*, LI, despite the gradual death of the Japanese Black Pine groves. This may still be its northernmost regular nesting site.

Anything seemed possible when a ♀ Williamson's Sapsucker was banded at the Fire I. Lighthouse Research Station, *Suffolk*, LI, June 22 (ph. S. Mitra), the first e. North American record. This is, however, a migratory species whose range extends n. to s. British Columbia, with a history of wandering E, having turned up in Minnesota (3 times, AB 42:439), Illinois (AB 39:308), and Louisiana (AB 37:191). It was captured in a classic e. coast fall migrant trap, the site of many striking records, a pine grove at the tip of Fire Island that drains 30 mi. of barrier island stretching northeastward.

Willow Flycatchers seem to be doing well at both ends of their range. Southwards they are still increasing in coastal scrub on Long Island (ES) and they were present at several Delaware piedmont locations for the first time in 20 years (APE, B&NM, D. Miller). In the Adirondacks, normally too high for them, one was in *Clinton*, NY (*fide* JMCP).

Cape May had a W. Kingbird June 26 (FM) and a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher June 21 (G. Dwyer, B. Glaser, FM). Cliff Swallows inch ahead in the northeast, where a small colony on Iona I., in the Hudson R.,



Sedge Wren at Jacobsburg, Pennsylvania, in June 1996. A small colony there established the first recent nesting record for eastern Pennsylvania. Photograph/Rick Wiltraut.

provided the first *Rockland*, NY, breeding record since 1974 (E. Treacy, J. Focht), but the colony recently established in Delaware failed this year (APE).

Carolina Wrens are still below normal around Rochester, NY (RGS), and in s.e. Pennsylvania (NP). A small colony of Sedge Wrens at Jacobsburg, *Northampton*, PA represented the first recent breeding record e. of the Susquehanna R. in Pennsylvania (ph. RWi), though it was regular in the 1950s–1960s (WR). Loggerhead Shrike went unreported.

Warblers to Finches

Warbler migration is always in evidence by late July at closely watched Cape May. It was detected equally early this summer in n.e. Pennsylvania by Reid, who found 8 species, including Wilson's, in a half hour July 28, and 12 species in 45 minutes, including Wilson's and Bay-breasted, July 30. Lawrence's Warblers were discovered at Letchworth Park, *Monroe*, NY June 30 (K. Fox) and at the Tonawanda Indian Reservation, *Genesee*, through June (P. Yoerg).

Tennessee Warblers were on the move late June 11 at Brighton, near Rochester (T. Lathrop) and early July 27 at Palmyra, *Burlington*, NJ (TB). Northern Parula was expanding its breeding range e. in c. New Jersey (BV), and was present at unusual sites in Delaware, such as Brandywine Creek S.P. (APE, B. Vassallo). A Yellow-rumped Warbler at Bombay Hook June 21 (MG, BP) was way out of place. Pine Warblers, whose New York distribution is spotty, were unexpected in *Broome* (B. Howe) and at Kikiat Park, a possible first *Rockland* breeding record (F. Bonanno). Palm Warblers, first found nesting in the Adirondacks in 1984, are now being found widely when large boreal bogs are searched. Three out of seven singing males were banded and more were suspected present in 2 bogs in the Boreal Heritage Preserve, *Franklin* (W. Lanyon); another was in Sabbatis Bog, *Hamilton* (WP). Cerulean Warblers expanded their breeding range along the Delaware R. in c. New Jersey (B&B Jones), increased to 6 pairs at White Clay Creek S.P., n. of Newark, DE (Philadelphia Birdline), and approached their n. limit at Quiver Pond, *Herkimer*, NY (WP). Blackpoll Warblers are still breeding at Dutch Mt., *Wyoming*, where n.e. Pennsylvania's first successful nest was found last summer. A Prothonotary Warbler present at Balston L., *Saratoga*, NY until June 19 (G. Hanson *et. al.*) was the first since 1989 in that area, n. of previously known breeding sites. A Canada Warbler with young in Maple Swamp provided the 2nd e. Long Island nesting

record since the 1970s (ES). Ednie was aware of only two Yellow-breasted Chat sites in Delaware.

It was another banner year for Dickcissels, possibly because of midwestern drought. Singing males were found at Ft. Drum, *Jefferson*, NY through June 19 (N. Leone, ph. B. Johnson); near Rochester June–July 9 (K. Fox), where they are found about one summer in 5 (RGS); at 2 places near Hillsborough, *Somerset*, NJ (M. Caspar, R. Bakelaar, L. Larson); around Cape May; and in c. Delaware between Milford and Slaughter Beach and at the entrance to Bombay Hook (APE, J. Skolniki, NP, BP). Clay-colored Sparrows must be breeding ever more regularly in n.c. New York. We have June reports, without confirmed breeding evidence, from *Monroe* (G. Chapin, D. Sherony), *Ontario* (*vide* SK), *Onondaga*, and *Oneida* (WP). Henslow's Sparrows, already reduced to the n. edge of this Region, are "hanging by a thread" in the Buffalo area (WD'A), where they are known only in the towns of Clarence and Alfred. In n.e. Pennsylvania, 2 sites were located near Tunkhannock, *Wyoming* (WR), and one in s. *Luzerne* (R. Koval). In n. New York, they are still common at Ft. Drum (closed to the public) and seen most easily at Saratoga National Historical Park (JG). The observation of a striped juv. White-throated Sparrow at a Centerville, *New Castle*, feeder July 2 (E. Speck), plus a singing male at Brandywine Creek S.P. June 29 (APE, D. Vassallo) raises the possibility of breeding in the Delaware piedmont, far from the nearest regular areas in n.e. Pennsylvania.

Several hundred Com. Grackles invaded the forest at Hawk Mt. to feast on 17-year cicadas (LG). Orchard Orioles expanded into new locations away from the L. Ontario shore in *Livingston*, NY, and had a good year around Philadelphia (EF, Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education).

Red Crossbills were present outside the Adirondacks in the towns of Birdsall and Ware, *Allegany*, NY, in late June (EBr), and a striped juvenile was near Atsion, *Burlington*, NJ, in the Wharton S.F., July 7 (J. Gutsmut, P. Rush). Dasey heard singing there 2 weeks later.

Observers (subregional compilers in bold-face): Michelle Alfieri (N.Y.D.E.C.), **Robert Andrie** (Niagara Frontier Area), **Tom Bailey** (TBa) (coastal NJ: 87 Wyndham Pl., Robbinsville, NJ 08691); **Chris Bennett** (*Sussex*, DE: Cape Henlopen State Park, 42 Cape Henlopen Drive, Lewes, DE 19958), **Irving Black** (n.e. NJ: Eagle Rock Village, Bldg. 26, Apt. 8B, Budd Lake, NJ 07828), Dan Brauning (PA Game Commission), Elizabeth Brooks,

P.A. Buckley, Joanna Burger, **T. W. Burke** (NY Rare Bird Alert), C.D. Campbell, Kathleen Clark (NJ Dept. of Fish, Game, and Wildlife), Richard Crossley, Dorothy Crumb, **Willie D'Anna** (Niagara Frontier, NY: 2257 Cayuga Dr. Ext., Niagara Falls, NY 14304); J. D. Danzenbaker, **Ward Dasey** (s.w.NJ: 29 Ark Road, Medford, NJ 08055), Pete Dunne (PDn), S. H. Dyke, **A. P. Ednie** (*New Castle and Kent*, DE: 59 Lawson Ave., Claymont, DE 19703), Ed Fingerhood, Shawneen Finnegan, Lisa Gelvin-Innvaer (DE Div'n. of Fish and Wildlife), Laurie Goodrich (Hawk Mt. Sanctuary), Mike Gochfeld, **Jane Graves** (Hudson-Mohawk, NY: Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866), **K. C. Griffith** (Genesee, NY: 61 Grandview Lane, Rochester, NY 14612), Mary Gustafson, **David Harrison** (n.w. NJ: 126 Westchester Terrace, Annandale, NJ 08801), Helen Hays (Great Gull I.), G. K. Hess, **Armas Hill** (Philadelphia Birdline), Dave Jenkins (NJ Dept. of Fish, Game, and Wildlife), **Steve Kelling** (Finger Lakes Region, NY: 732 Old 76 Rd., Berkshire, NY 13736), **Arlene Koch** (Lehigh Valley, PA: 1375 Raubsville Rd., Easton, PA 18042), A. J. Lauro, Paul Lehman, **R. E. Long** (St. Lawrence, NY: 2807 Citation Dr., Pompey, NY 13138), Barbara Loucks (N.Y.D.E.C.), Bob Marcotte (BMA), Fred Mears, Bob Miller (BMi) (N.Y.D.E.C.), Bill and Naomi Murphy, Pete Nye (N.Y.D.E.C.), Michael O'Brien, Kathy Parsons (Manomet Observatory), Bruce Peterjohn, J. M. C. Peterson (Adirondack-Champlain Region, NY: Discovery Farm, RD 1, Elizabethtown, NY 12932), Nick Pulcinella, Vivian Pitzrick, **William Purcell** (Oneida Lake Basin, NY: 281 Baum Rd., Hastings, NY 13076); **William Reid** (n.e. PA: 73 W. Ross St., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702), Don Riepe (Jamaica Bay Wildlife Ref.), Frank Rohrbacher, Eric Salzman, **Sy Schiff** (Long Island: 603 Mead Terrace, S. Hempstead, NY 11550), Dave Sibley, **R. G. Spahn** (Genesee Ornithological Society), **Pat Sutton** (Cape May Bird Observatory), J. F. Swertinski, **Michael Usai** (Lower Hudson Valley, NY: 70 Vignria R., Apt. 18A, N. White Plains, NY 10603), **Brian Vernachio** (n.c. NJ: Rancocas Nature Center, 794 Rancocas Rd., Mt. Holly, NJ 08060), William Watson, Rick Wiltraut (RW), **Al Wollin** (Long Island: 4 Meadow Lane, Rockville Center, NY 11570), R. P. Yunick, John Zarudski.

—Robert O. Paxton, 460 Riverside Drive, Apt. 72, New York, NY 10027, William J. Boyle, Jr., 14 Crown Drive, Warren, NJ 07059, and David A. Cutler, 1110 Rock Creek Dr., Wyncote, PA 19095.

Mid-Atlantic Region

MARSHALL ILIFF

This summer was the fifth coldest for the Middle Atlantic Region since regular record keeping at Baltimore-Washington International airport began in 1950. The mercury never climbed above 92° F. in June and July, almost unheard of to those of us who sweated through the previous summer. Rainfall was slightly above average in June, and almost four inches above average in July.

The eye of hurricane *Bertha*, which had already been downgraded to tropical storm status, entered the Region in the early morning July 13, passing straight through central *Suffolk* and northward roughly along the Western Shore. The historically productive east edge of the storm passed right over the mouth of the Bay before dawn and hit Ocean City at about 7 a.m.

Several parties of birders dispersed to widely scattered parts of the Region in search of storm-blown birds. Ned Brinkley, Robert Anderson, Michael Stinson, David Hughes, Joyce Livermore, Tom Gwynn, and George Harris had the best results by far, hitting the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel shortly after dawn, and maintaining constant vigil there until dusk, with Brinkley and Anderson return-

ing the next day to be joined by Day, Williams, and Taber. The eight species of tubenose (including two Herald Petrels), two tropical terns, and Com. Ground-Dove (as well as exceptional counts of numbers more common species) were the product of exceptional effort at a prime location.

Other parties put forth similar efforts at other locations with disappointing results. Storm-blown birds probably did not penetrate far into the Bay, and the majority of birds must have remained close to the Bay's mouth. Craig and Cribb checked Point Lookout July 13, with only a Gull-billed Tern to show for their effort. Bazuin arrived in *Mathews* at dawn but found no storm-driven birds, despite a solid weekend of birding. Griffith, Scarpulla, and Blom birded the northern Bay to no avail, and Jett spent the day afield in *Charles* but found nothing unusual. Iliff and Stasz began at North Beach at dawn, and surveyed Sandy Point and the flooded fields, sewage ponds, and rivers of the Eastern Shore before arriving at Ocean City at 11 a.m., when the wind was already westerly. Ocean City produced nothing more unusual than four *Oceanodroma* in Assawoman Bay, and the lower Nanticoke held nothing unusual at dusk.

Why did the storm create such a fallout at the Bay's mouth and produce so little elsewhere? Did Sooty Terns depart early in the morning before most observers made it afield? Did the tubenoses really avoid the upper Bay, even though it is still more than 10 miles wide at the Maryland line? Or were the birds just too far out over the Bay to be seen? Compared to previous



In the wake of hurricane *Bertha*, this Greater Shearwater was far up Chesapeake Bay in Accomack County, Virginia, July 16, 1996. Photograph/Bill Portlock.

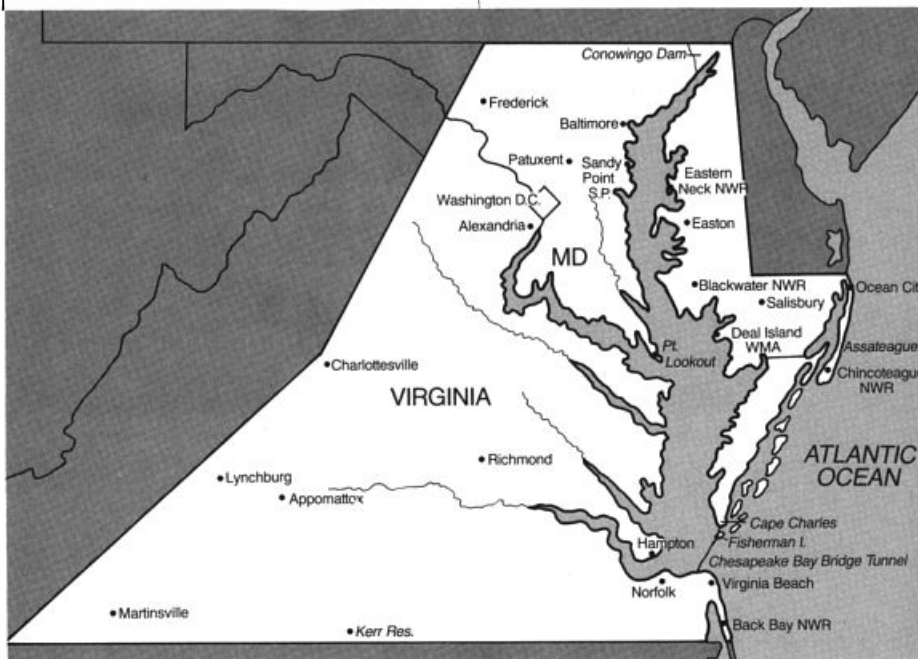
storms to hit the Region, *Bertha's* track and strength were similar in some respects to *David* (September 1979). *David*, however, was not birded as well as *Bertha*, and yet still produced numerous records of tropical birds (especially Sooty Terns) across the Region. Was it a product of *David's* later passage? Perhaps analysis of the very birdy hurricane *Fran* next season will shed some more light on the subject.

Again, nearly all reports were from Maryland, so all locations can be assumed to be in Maryland, except that each Virginia location is annotated the *first time* it is mentioned.

Abbreviations: Bay (*Chesapeake Bay*); Black. (*Blackwater N.W.R.*); C.B.B.T. (*Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel*); Craney (*Craney I. Disposal Area*); D.C. (*District of Columbia*); Deal (*Deal Island W.M.A.*); D.N.R. (*Department of Natural Resources*); Hart (*Hart-Miller I. Dredge Spoil Impoundment*); p.a. (*pending acceptance by respective rarities committee*); Vaughn (*E. A. Vaughn Wildlife Management Area*).

Loons to Waterfowl

Seven reports of Com. Loons represented a not surprising number of summer lingerers (v.o.). A Pied-billed Grebe pair at the new fresh marsh at Vaughn fledged four young in early June (SHD, SJ), was seen incubating July 4 (SHD), and had five downy young July 28 (SHD), for a rare *Worcester* nesting. Another adult with three chicks near Harrington July 3 (FF) provided a first *Kent* nesting and an adult at an undisclosed n. *Anne Arundel* site may have nested as well. Finding only one Pied-billed Grebe at Deal, *Somerset*, June 29 (HTA) was disappointing considering its once rich freshwater marshes.



SA Hurricane *Bertha* pushed every tubenose that one could reasonably expect off the Region in July into the mouth of the Bay, and a hit team of active Virginia birders camped out at the C.B.B.T. Island #1 to watch seabirds flow by. Their July 13 survey included nine Black-capped Petrels, two (one light- and one dark-morph) *Trinidade* (Herald) Petrels (p.a.), one unidentified *Pterodroma*, five Greater Shearwaters, three Cory's Shearwaters, seven Band-rumped Storm-Petrels (p.a.), 11 Leach's Storm-Petrels, four unidentified *Oceanodroma*, and 71 Wilson's Storm-Petrels (†NB *et al.*). The next day, 26 Black-capped Petrels were found (including a string of eight birds), along with 14 Leach's Storm-Petrels, more than 20 Wilson's Storm-Petrels, and single Greater, Cory's, and Audubon's shearwaters (NB *et al.*). The day before the storm produced one Band-rumped Storm-Petrel winging N in the early morning at Virginia Beach, VA (p.a. NB). Brinkley compiled a voluminous report on his observations in Tidewater Virginia, distributed over e-mail, which not only included careful records of the birds seen, but also extensive notes on their behavior and speculation as to how the storm affected all species (not just the rarities). Most birds were seen moving out of the Bay July 13, but the Black-capped Petrels were returning to the Bay on the 14th, interestingly enough. Other Tidewater observers had some luck as well. Willis found a dead Greater Shearwater on the Goodwin Bridge over the Nansemond R., Suffolk, VA, before dawn July 13, Williams and Taber saw eight Wilson's Storm-Petrels from the Jamestown Ferry on the James R., VA July 13, and Pearce saw a Black-capped Petrel and another gadfly petrel, probably a Black-capped, from Ft. Story, VA, that evening. The only tubenoses in Maryland were the two Leach's Storm-Petrels and two unidentified *Oceanodroma* in Assawoman Bay, Worcester, on the afternoon of July 13 (†ph. MJI, ph. JLS). Among *Bertha*'s numerous potential amendments to Virginia's avifaunal list are the state's 2nd and 3rd reports for *Trinidade* (Herald) Petrel, record-high Black-capped Petrel counts (among 11 previous records), 4th and 5th reports for Band-rumped Storm-Petrels—including a new high, a new Bay high for Wilson's Storm-Petrels and all the shearwaters except Audubon's (all except Cory's had previously been seen from the C.B.B.T.).

Certainly related to Hurricane *Bertha* was the Greater Shearwater well described from Bay waters just s. of the Maryland line, *Accomack*, July 16 (p.a. ph. †BPO). Another (the same?) Greater Shearwater was reported from the c. Bay just n. of the Maryland line in *Somerset* the next day (p.a. †MC, TB, JK), but was not convincingly described. While probably correctly identified, the observers did not consider Black-capped Petrel and are not familiar with either species. Only thrice have any Procellariidae appeared so far north in the Bay, and none have been identified to species. Lone Am. White Pelicans were found at Hog I., *Surry*, July 13 (BT), S. Metomkin I., *Accomack*, July 25 (JSW), and at the Fisherman's I. Brown Pelican colony June 16 (BW *et al.*), where a pair attended an empty nest last year. No Brown Pelicans nested in Maryland for the first time since 1987 (MD D.N.R., *fide* GDT), but 1370 were at Fisherman's I., June 16 (BW *et al.*) and some intruded into the n. Bay again, with numbers reported from *Saint Mary's* (PC *et al.*) and *Dorchester* (HTA *et al.*). Two Great Cormorants at the C.B.B.T., July 14 (NB *et al.*) were unusual, though the species has been found increasingly in summer months in the Region, and all along the East Coast. A single Anhinga was at Stumpy L., June 13 (NB) & 25 (KC).

Remarkable records of potentially nesting Am. Bitterns included singles at Vaughn June 5 & 16 (SJ), and July 28 (SHD), and one near Harrington, *Kent*, June 11, while one adult at Huntley Meadows, *Fairfax*, VA, was accompanied by a downy chick July 8 (JA, *fide* AH) for the first nesting there since 1992. Least Bitterns locations were Vaughn (SJ, SHD), where a juvenile was seen July 4 (SHD), two adults and four young at an undisclosed location in n. *Anne Arundel* July 12 (SR), and in a newly created marsh at Back Bay N.W.R. (v.o.). Inland, Tricolored Herons at Lilypons, *Frederick* (JG), and Owings Mills, *Baltimore* (EBo), were rare and unseasonal June 19 & 23, respectively; most dispersing herons occur at least a month later. The fast-eroding Holland I., *Dorchester*, held 123 nests of all species of colonial-nesting herons for the 4th straight year June 7 (HTA). A survey of a small heronry at Little Bodkin I. in June found small numbers of Cattle and Snowy egrets and Tricolored Herons, which furnished the first *Queen Anne's* nest records in several decades (LB, JWT, *fide* HTA). Eleven White Ibis at Fisherman's I. provided a good count June 16 (BW *et al.*). The 5 reports of dispersing imm. White Ibis began with a *Charles* first at

Waldorf July 13 (ph. GMJ) followed by another not far away at Popes Cr., July 28–30 (ph. GMJ, m.ob.). Of landmark occurrence were two *Roseate Spoonbill* reports, the only previous Regional report being in 1978 at Smith I., MD. One at Back Bay N.W.R., Virginia Beach, VA, was photographed by refuge personnel June 23 (p.a. DH, TG *et al.*) but did not stay long. Possibly the same bird was reported from Martin N.W.R., Smith I (again!), *Somerset*, July 11 (p.a. †MH, DJ), it was well-described by observers, and relocated and photographed in August.

Resident Canada Geese are thriving throughout the Region, especially in *Dorchester*. A count of 780 was made at Black., June 16 (HTA, JWT). A N. Shoveler at the Chestertown Sewage Ponds, *Kent*, July 1 & 7 (J&TG) was an unusual lingerer, though the four Tundra Swans, five Lesser Scaup, one Ring-necked Duck, four Canvasbacks, and four Ruddy Duck reports were much more regular in the annual show of summering waterfowl. Other unusual lingerers included an Am. Wigeon at L. Accotink, *Fairfax*, VA July 24 (DL), a Surf Scoter at Cambridge, *Dorchester*, June 16–17 (ES), and a Com. Merganser in Crab Cr., *Anne Arundel*, July 23 (MJI).

Raptors to Shorebirds

Mississippi Kites returned to Woodbridge, *Prince William*, VA, where a pair was seen through the summer (v.o.) and three were seen July 28 (J&CM), and ≤three were in *Greensville*, VA June 26–July 6. Another at Point Lookout S.P. July 14 (p.a. MJI, JLS) was from the lower Western Shore, where summer kite sightings appear to be most common; perhaps some evidence of nesting will crop up from that area. The Breeding Bird Foray June 4–9 in Virginia's Piedmont produced several unusual raptor records. An Osprey stooping on a Bald Eagle over the Rapidan R. was surprising, since neither species is known to nest nearby. Up to five Bald Eagles were seen on other dates during the 6-day Foray. The record 201 Bald Eagle nests in Maryland fledged approximately 265 young, another record since the beginning of the aerial surveys by Maryland D.N.R. (*fide* GDT). A N. Harrier over hayfields June 7 (JBB), and other sightings nearby that same week, suggested the possibility of Virginia's first Piedmont breeding. Single N. Harriers were seen at 5 locations in *Carroll* during June (RFR), also suggesting breeding, which has yet to be confirmed in the county. Broad-winged Hawks are extremely local on the Eastern Shore, but this year Dyke found singles at Nassawango and Snow Hill, *Worcester*, June 8 and