

feeder in Grande-Cascapédia, Gaspé, 14 Jan–13 Feb (Mr. & Mrs. A. Campbell, m.ob., ph.). While not as abundant as last winter in e. Québec, Bohemian Waxwings made a good showing in the south, while on the other hand, the Cedar Waxwing was much less common than last winter. Northern Shrikes were well in evidence.

A Yellow-rumped Warbler spent Jan–10 Feb in the Montréal Botanical Gardens (m.ob.). A **Black-throated Gray Warbler** (m.ob.). A **Black-throated Gray Warbler** in Neuville 28 Dec (MD, M. Courteau) was the second for the Region and also the latest, while a Yellow-throated Warbler appeared briefly in Montmagny 18–19 Dec (JL, M. Dion, N. Tanguay, C. Deschênes). Late Palm Warblers included singles in Noyan 2 Dec (LS) and Saint-Sulpice 6–10 Dec (J. Beauchamp), the latter a new Regional record-late date.

A late male Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Sainte-Sabine, *Richelieu*, lingered at a feeder from late Dec through at least 14 Jan (Mrs. Raymond, m. ob.). A female or imm. male **Painted Bunting** brightened a feeder at Sainte-Hélène-de-Bagot 11–26 Dec, furnishing the 7th record for the Region (E. Lapointe, m.ob.). An imm. male Dickcissel made frequent visits to a feeder in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 18 Dec–10 Feb (L. L'Écuyer, m.ob.), the latter a new Regional record-late date. A Field Sparrow overwintered successfully at a feeder in LaSarre, *Abitibi*, (L. Saulnier, *vide* S. Châteauevert, photo), while a White-crowned Sparrow attempted to winter in Chicoutimi-Nord Dec–20 Feb (M. Brochu, L. Dufour). An E. Meadowlark was present in Dundee 28–29 Jan (P. Éthier, JMB, DD), while a bird presumably of this species overwintered in Rivière-au-Tonnerre, *Lower North Shore* (L. Smith, m.ob.). An ad. **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch**, photographed in Saint-François-du-Lac 4 Dec, provided only the second record for the Region (D. Jauvin). Red Crossbills were present in above-average numbers all over the southern part of the province, while White-winged Crossbills, Purple Finches, Am. Goldfinches, and Pine Siskins were either present in low numbers or generally absent from the Region. Many Hoary Redpolls were spotted among the numerous flocks of Com. Redpolls throughout the Region.

#### EXOTICS

Two Ringed Teals appeared in Saint-Hyacinthe 5 Dec (N. Roy), while a flock of 10 Mandarin Ducks spent Jan along the Richelieu R., near Chambly (L. Laperle et al.). A Eurasian Goldfinch spent Dec in the Montréal Botanical Gardens (m.ob.).

#### Corrigendum

In reference to the Cacouna's Cinnamon Teals in June 1999 (*N. Am. Birds* 53:361), it should be noted that both male and female were seen as early as 10 Jun (J. Bouchard, L. Dallaire). The report of the breeding of a pair of Eur. Goldfinches in the Montréal Botanical Gardens in summer 1999 should be omitted, as definitive evidences was lacking (*N. Am. Birds* 53:362).

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# new england

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**T**o repeat what seems to be becoming a mantra of sorts, the past winter was warmer than usual. December 1999 was the eleventh consecutive winter month with temperatures above the 30-year mean, although it was not as warm as December 1998. Temperatures averaged four degrees above average, with Maine beating the mean by almost six degrees. The warmth continued into early January, when the mercury reached into the 70s in southern New England, resulting in temperatures eight-to-ten degrees above normal. The picture shifted dramatically in mid-month, however, when in a matter of days the winter returned with a vengeance. Thermometers plunged to eight-to-ten degrees below normal, and the first measurable snowfall fell in the central portions of the region. The cold snap and precipitation persisted into mid-February, at which point things warmed and dried in what has become a fairly reliable late winter thaw over most of New England. On the whole, the winter was in the top fifth in terms of temperature, and roughly average in precipitation. There were few significant coastal storms, and the only other noteworthy weather event of the season was a very strong cold front on 22–23 January. As expected, birds responded positively to the unseasonable climate, especially in the first half of the winter. Lingering warblers were not as common as in 1998–1999, but waterfowl continued to remain north and inland at a time of year when such sightings were almost unheard of only a decade ago.



As might be expected after last year's absence, irruptive species made a good showing throughout the region. Dominating the flight were Northern Shrikes, Bohemian Waxwings, Pine Grosbeaks, and redpolls, including several Hoarics. The usual smattering of western passerine vagrants included Western Tanager, Bullock's Oriole, and Audubon's Warbler. More unexpected were Yellow Rails on Nantucket, possible Northern Lapwing in Maine and New Hampshire, Brambling in Connecticut, and perhaps most bizarre of all, an immature Brown Pelican that wandered up the Connecticut River as far as Westfield, Massachusetts, in early January.

**Abbreviations:** D.W.W.S. (*Daniel Webster Wildlife Sanctuary, Marshfield, Plymouth, MA*), M.A.R.C. (*Massachusetts Avian Records Committee*), M.V. (*Martha's Vineyard, MA*), Nantucket (*Nantucket I., MA*), Ogunquit (*Ogunquit, York, ME*), Provincetown (*Provincetown, Barnstable, MA*), Rockport (*Rockport, Essex, MA*).

## LOONS THROUGH VULTURES

Once again, an **Arctic Loon** was reported from southern coastal Maine, this time from Kennebunk, *York*, 31 Dec and 9 Jan. Although reasonably well-described, the consensus of several experts was that the observers could not completely eliminate other loon species (*vide* JD). This species remains unconfirmed from the east coast of North America. In contrast, **Pacific Loons** are becoming much more reliable, with this season's sightings at Mt. Desert Is., *Hancock*, ME, 5 Dec (*vide* WT), Ogunquit 6–24 Jan, and Barnstable, *Barnstable*, MA, 28 Dec (V. Laux, J. Trimble). January 12 was an unusually late date for a Com. Loon inland at Quabbin Res., MA (*vide* SK). The late freeze allowed a relatively high number of Horned Grebes to winter on L. Champlain, with a high count of 29 at Charlotte, *Addison*, VT, 2 Jan (TM). The Eared Grebe returned to East Gloucester, *Essex*, MA, for the fifth consecutive winter (1998–1999 report incorrectly said third winter). The only W. Grebes were unconfirmed reports from Maine: one in Southport, *Sagadahoc*, in mid-Dec and two in Ogunquit 12 Jan.

Following some spectacular November nearshore flights, three lingering Greater Shearwaters were seen in December in Massachusetts: two on Cape Cod 12 Dec (BN) and one at Rockport 15 Dec (RH). Numbers of N. Gannets were also somewhat higher than usual in Dec, with maxima of 42 in Seabrook, *Rockingham*, NH, 24 Dec (AD) and 1700 at Provincetown 18 Dec (RH). Perhaps the bird of the season in New England was an imm. **Brown Pelican** that, for whatever reasons, wandered up the Connecticut River. First sighted at Windsor Locks, *Hartford*, CT, 31 Dec (*vide* M. O'Leary), it continued n. to Westfield, *Hampden*, MA, where it was captured 4 Jan, nursed back to health, and eventually returned to its normal haunts in Florida (*vide* SK). There were no unusual heron and egret reports from the region this winter. Black Vultures have now become unremarkable in w. Connecticut, but this core population continues to send prospecting individuals eastward along the coast. This season there were four elsewhere in Connecticut, two or three in Rhode Island, and three in s.e. Massachusetts. Turkey Vultures reached what appears to be a new winter maxima in Massachusetts, where up to 39 frequented a roost in S. Dartmouth, *Bristol*, throughout the season.

## WATERFOWL

Greater White-fronted Geese are possibly increasing as winterers in s. New England. This season there were six in Connecticut, at least one in Rhode Island, and three in e. Massachusetts. More unusual were inland birds in Great Barrington, *Berkshire*, MA (J. Johnson, v.o.) 23 Dec; and two in Proctor, *Rutland*, VT, 3 Jan (†S. Wetmore). An increase less likely to be appreciated by local birders is that of the Mute Swan. Up to 13 of these aggressive exotics frequented the Connecticut Valley of Massachusetts, where they were found as far n. as Hadley, *Hampshire*. Another was in Charlotte, VT, from late Jan–Feb (TM). An unprecedented flock of 60 Tundra Swans spent the night of 29 Feb on the N. Farm Res., Wallingford, *New Haven*, CT (*vide* GH). The only other reports of this species were three at the traditional site of Naples, *Cumberland*, ME, 28 Dec–5 Jan, and four in Coventry, RI, 21 Jan (*vide* RI Rare Bird Alert).

As a result of the mild winter, several species of waterfowl were either more common or lingered later than usual in w. Massachusetts (*vide* SK). Included in this list were Am. Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, and Bufflehead, although it should also be noted that Greater Scaup were less common. Surely an unusual identification challenge was a hybrid Gadwall × Am. Wigeon found in Portland, *Cumberland*, ME, 3 Dec (L. Brinker). Numbers of Eur. Wigeon were roughly normal, with four in CT, 10 in MA, and two in NH. Scattered Blue-winged Teal took advantage of open water and were found into Feb in e. Massachusetts (*vide* MR) and N. Shovelers seemed even more responsive to the mostly mild winter. Eastern Massachusetts hosted 11 in Dec and 13 in Jan, and four even made it to 28 Feb in Eastham, *Barnstable* (BN, W. Petersen). New Hampshire hosted two, at Plaistow 7 Jan and Newmarket 29 Jan (both *Rockingham*). Eurasian Green-winged Teal were in coastal Connecticut (*vide* GH) and Eastham, MA (G. Martin, v.o.).

The male Tufted Duck that has spent all or part of the last four winters on L. Wachusett, *Worcester*, MA, returned for a fifth and was last seen 8 Jan. Others were in Plymouth, *Plymouth*, MA, 1–15 Jan and Bridgeport, *Fairfield*, CT, 19 Feb (C. Barnard). There was possibly a second individual at the latter location 20 Feb, but it was not confirmed (*vide* GH). Harlequin Ducks seemed more common than usual, with the following high counts from traditional concentrations in Maine and

Massachusetts: 54 at Ogunquit, *York*; 33 in *York*, ME; 81 at Rockport; 23 at Nantucket; and 21 at Orleans, *Barnstable*, MA. There was no report for the regional hotspot of Sachuest Pt., RI. Another hybrid was a male Com. × Barrow's Goldeneye that was well-described from Swansea, *Bristol*, MA, 26 Jan (†PL). Ruddy Ducks remained in impressive numbers after last fall's near-record showing. In Massachusetts, for which detailed data are available, there were totals of at least 1000 in Dec, 300 in Jan, and 130 in Feb. The high count of 444 came from the Cape Cod Bird Count 4–5 Dec. Numbers in Maine started at 100 early in Dec and dwindled to nothing by the end of the month. In New Hampshire, an unprecedented total of 630 was found on L. Massabesic, *Rockingham*, 18 Dec (I. McLeod) and one lingered at Exeter, *Rockingham*, to 10 May (SM).

## RAPTORS THROUGH RAILS

Four Osprey were reported between Connecticut and Massachusetts in Dec, with the latest from Wayland, *Middlesex*, MA, 21 Dec (K. Hamilton). Connecticut also hosted an exceptional congregation of Bald Eagles in Feb, when at least 50 frequented the lower Connecticut River Valley. One of the raptor hotspots of the season was D.W.W.S. in se. Massachusetts, which hosted up to 12 N. Harriers, nine Red-tailed Hawks, and 12 Rough-legged Hawks, as well as a good variety of owls (see below). The late Jan cold front triggered a southerly movement of Rough-legged Hawks into Connecticut, where at least 30 birds made for one of the state's largest flights in recent memory (*vide* GH). It is thus puzzling that only a single individual was found in w. Massachusetts the entire winter. Farther n., Maine hosted normal numbers and the maximum daily count for Vermont was 15 in *Addison* 18 Jan (TM). Three Golden Eagles was a slightly above-normal total for Connecticut, but as with Rough-legged Hawks, this was offset by their complete absence from w. Massachusetts. Two were reported from Vermont: one seen by multiple observers in Shaftsbury, *Bennington*, 16–21 Feb and another unconfirmed bird from Whiting, *Addison*, 15 Feb (*vide* W. Scott). The highlight of the winter for local raptor lovers was undoubtedly the white-morph Gyrfalcon that spent a few days in early Feb at Stratford Great Meadows, *Fairfield*, CT (J. Zipp, v.o.).

Birders searching for a Sedge Wren on Nantucket were not prepared to find three **Yellow Rails** 17 Jan, providing the Bay State with its 6th winter record. One was still pre-

sent 19 Jan (F. Gallo, v.o.). Four Virginia Rails lingered into Jan in e. Massachusetts and one in Springfield, *Hampden*, MA, 18 Dec was only the third Dec record for w. Massachusetts (*fide* SK). Other late rails included a Sora on M.V. 8 Dec, and, continuing from the fall, a Com. Moorhen in Exeter, NH, 9 Dec (SM). A single Sandhill Crane was in Mattapoisett, *Bristol*, MA, 29 Dec and  $\leq 3$  frequented nearby Fairhaven through Jan and Feb (m.ob.)

#### SHOREBIRDS THROUGH ALCIDS

The shorebird of the season must unfortunately remain hypothetical at best, at least as far as New England is concerned. A N. Lapwing was observed at close range, but in poor conditions and by an inexperienced observer, in Stratton, *Franklin*, ME, 10 Dec (*fide* JD). Roughly a week later, a possible lapwing was seen in Stratham, *Rockingham*, NH, 18 Dec (SM). What makes these reports interesting is that a lapwing was seen in Newfoundland in Nov and one was in Delaware later in Dec. Could all four sightings pertain to the same individual, miraculously detected multiple times on its southward journey, or was there something of an invasion of this Eurasian plover into the Northeast last fall? Likely we'll never know, but speculating on the possibilities is half the fun anyway.

Once again shorebirds lingered beyond their normal departure dates in Massachusetts. American Oystercatchers were reported from Nantucket 4 Dec and M.V. 27 Feb, the latter location hosting two birds. An amazing assemblage of out-of-season *Scolopacids* in Chatham, *Barnstable*, 19 Dec included a Semipalmated Plover, a Semipalmated Sandpiper, and **four** W. Sandpipers (V. Laux, P. Trimble). Also on Cape Cod were four Long-billed Dowitchers in Hyannis 28 Dec, and a Whimbrel, quite likely the same bird as the last two winters, in Yarmouth 28 Dec–8 Jan. Away from the Bay State, the only shorebird report of note was an unidentified individual, possibly a Dunlin, on Grande Isle, *Grande Isle*, VT, 12 Dec (DH). An Am. Woodcock was at this same locality 15 Dec (DH).

Respectable numbers of jaegers passed First Encounter Beach, *Eastham*, MA, at the very beginning of Dec. Totals included 18 Pomarine Jaegers 1 Dec and 35 unidentified jaegers 2 Dec (BN). A Laughing Gull at Eastham 12 Dec was late leaving the Bay State (BN), and Little Gulls included one in Massachusetts and two in Connecticut. The landfill in Manchester, *Hartford*, CT, remained open until 1 Jan—before it finally closed it managed to attract a few gulls.

High counts from December included three Iceland, two Lesser Black-backed, and four Glaucous, as well as a few hybrids, out of Connecticut totals of roughly eight Icelands and seven Lesser Black-backs (*fide* GH). With Manchester out of the picture and no reports from Rochester, *Strafford*, NH, isolated Nantucket remains the region's only magnet for the rarer winter gulls. High counts from the island this winter were 85 Icelands and 10 Lesser Black-backs. The season's only Thayer's Gull was in Maine, where a second-winter bird frequented the Orrington, *Penobscot*, area from early Dec–early Feb (m.ob., *fide* JD). Two Mew Gulls returned to the Boston area, one of them for probably the tenth year, while an individual in Bangor, *Penobscot*, ME, 11–13 Jan remains hypothetical (*fide* JD). Rounding out the gull list was Vermont's first documented **Ivory Gull** at Grande Isle 4 Jan (ph., DH, TM, T. Hall). The bird did not appear to be in the best of health and could not be relocated despite extensive searching on subsequent days. The season's only tern was a Forster's at Dennis, *Barnstable*, MA, 13 Dec.

The alcid show in coastal New England paled in comparison to that of the previous winter. Dovekies were quite scarce, with one report from Maine and 4–5 from Massachusetts. Common Murre reports included one in Maine and five in Massachusetts, although some of the latter did not include details that would help eliminate Thick-billed Murre. The latter

species was significantly less common than in 1998–1999, with no more than four at any of the traditional localities. Razorbills, on the other hand, were sometimes abundant, especially on Cape Cod. Counts from Provincetown peaked at 500 on 13 Feb (BN). Even more remarkable was a flight of 2850 large alcids from this location, probably mostly Razorbills, in an hour-and-a-half on 21 Feb (BN). Away from Cape Cod the species was rarely reported, and usually in low numbers, the exception being 2950 at Rockport 15 Dec (RH). Single Atlantic Puffins were at Rockport in Dec and Jan.

#### PARROTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

The Monk Parakeet may be well on its way to moving into Massachusetts. Seven were reported from S. Dartmouth 21 Feb and, as if to welcome them, MARC has officially added the species to the state list. Barn Owl reports came from the expected location of Nantucket, but single birds also showed up in Boston and S. Dartmouth, MA, in Jan. Another reported from Owl's Head, ME, 20 Jan was exceptionally far north but was unaccompanied by supporting details (*fide* JD). Snowy Owls did better than last winter, with 11 in MA, one in NH, two in VT, and four in ME. Maine hosted two Great Gray Owls, the first in Cherryfield, Washington, 23 Jan (M. Hunter). The second, in Porter, *Oxford*, during the week ending 22 Feb (*fide* JD), moved a little to the w. and was last seen in Freedom, *Carroll*, NH, 27 Feb. While harriers and buteos ruled the day at D.W.W.S., they were



Any Ivory Gull in the contiguous United States is noteworthy. It was no different for this first-winter bird at Grand Isle, Lake Champlain, 4 Jan 2000, the first documented in Vermont. Photograph by David Hoag.

replaced at dusk by both Long-eared and Short-eared Owls. Winter maxima at this location were 12 and four respectively, and both species were reported in modest numbers elsewhere in Massachusetts. Banding efforts directed toward N. Saw-whet Owls yielded 120 birds during December at three se Massachusetts locations, including D W W S. (*fide* MR).

Only three Red-headed Woodpeckers wintered in New England, one in Maine and two in Massachusetts. Eleven Red-bellied Woodpeckers in New Hampshire suggest that the Granite State's population of this species may be stabilizing somewhat, while the ten birds in Maine represents the second-highest total in nine years (*fide* JD). Four Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in w. Massachusetts was the highest winter total since 1985 (*fide* SK).

#### FLYCATCHERS THROUGH WAXWINGS

Eastern Phoebe lingered late, as would be expected given the mild December. Less expected, however, was one in Wayland, MA, 29 Jan. As indicated in the fall report, N Shrikes staged a respectable invasion, with good numbers throughout the Region. Connecticut hosted at least 35, Massachusetts had over 60, and New Hampshire and Maine reported 24 and 55, respectively. Common Ravens continue to increase in w. Massachusetts, as exemplified by 53 in Becket, *Berkshire*, 15 Dec (*fide* SK). Tree Swallows presumably wintered in small numbers in Rhode Island as usual, so the only noteworthy report of this species was the early arrival of two at Chester, *Middlesex*, CT, 26 Feb (D. Sosensky). The only holdover from the fall's modest Boreal Chickadee flight was a single bird that remained in W. Newbury, *Essex*, MA, through 9 Jan. Much farther n. and e., where Boreal Chickadees are more expected, the parid of the season was a Tufted Titmouse in Machiasport, *Washington*, ME, 29 Jan (*fide* JD). Wrens making news included two Jan House Wrens in Massachusetts and two **Sedge Wrens**, apparently the state's third winter record, on Nantucket 7–19 Jan (R. Veit, v.o.). Carolina Wrens had one of their best winters in years, with above-average, if not near-maximum, numbers for peripheral areas such as w. Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine. Only time will tell if they can consolidate these gains in this era of increasingly warmer winters. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher lingered to 24 Dec in Watertown, *Middlesex*, MA, providing a new late date for the state.

Intriguing, but without supporting details, was a N. Wheatear in Northampton, *Hampshire*, MA, 29–30 Dec (*fide* MR). Better documented was a **Townsend's Solitaire** in Colchester, *New London*, CT, 19 Dec (D. Titus). As has been the trend for the last several winters, E. Bluebirds were seemingly everywhere, especially in the milder parts of the Region. Away from the s. coastal areas, the increase has been going on for roughly ten years in w. Massachusetts and four years in Maine. American Robins followed suit, with flocks of over 100 reported throughout the Region. The high count came from Massachusetts, where 5000 were reported in Boston 26 Dec (K. Hudson). Two other half-hardies that regularly winter in s. New England, Hermit Thrush and Gray Catbird, numbered 40 and 30, respectively, during Jan–Feb in Massachusetts. Even more noteworthy were two February Hermit Thrushes in w. Massachusetts and a catbird in Bridgton, *Cumberland*, ME, 12 Jan.

One of the stars of the winter irruptive season was Bohemian Waxwing, which showed up in small numbers in Dec but peaked from north to south Jan–mid-Feb. Numbers were highest in Maine, with flocks of roughly 1000 along the cen. coast in mid-late Jan. Vermont's high count of 1100 came from S. Burlington, *Chittendon*, 18 Feb (TM). Flocks of over 100 were common in cen. and n. New Hampshire, with highs of 300 birds in two locations (*fide* AD). Farther s. in Massachusetts, numbers were in single digits through Dec, with birds mainly in the west and extreme east. They began to increase in Jan and reached highs of 218 in the w. at Royalston, *Worcester*, 24 Feb, and 80 in the e. at Wellfleet, *Barnstable*, 20 Feb. Apparently none made it all the way to Connecticut and Rhode Island. Cedar Waxwings, in contrast, were relatively uncommon in the n. three states, but easily outnumbered Bohemians in Massachusetts throughout the season.

#### WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

In contrast to last winter and despite the mild weather, only 10 species of warblers were found in New England this past season. Among the usual hardy species, Orange-crowneds seemed a little less common than usual and Yellow-rumped numbers were down in s. coastal Maine (*fide* JD). Nashville Warblers seemed to be everywhere in e. Massachusetts, with three reports in Dec and two in Jan, one of which stayed through at least 25 Jan on M.V. Scattered Bay State *Dendroica* included a Cape May in W. Andover, *Essex*, 18–29 Dec;

a Prairie in Arlington, *Middlesex*, 19 Dec; and a Blackpoll in Eastham 19 Dec. An **Audubon's Warbler** was in a flock of its eastern relatives in Orleans, MA, 13 Feb (†RH). In Connecticut, a Yellow-throated Warbler visited a feeder in Hamden, *New Haven*, 1 Dec–7 Jan (W. Storz). The **MacGillivray's** and Wilson's Warblers that appeared in Boston in Nov were last reported 20 Dec and 1 Jan, respectively (*fide* MR). Farther north, an Ovenbird spent the early winter at a feeder in Falmouth, *Cumberland*, ME, and a Common Yellowthroat was along the Connecticut R. in Hinsdale, *Cheshire*, NH, 8 Jan (S. Schmidt).

In addition to the two warbler species above, there were several other passerines of western origin in New England this winter. A male **Western Tanager**, quite possibly the same bird as last year, was in Orleans, MA, 1–13 Feb (m.ob.). Also returning, for its third winter, was Goshen, *Litchfield*, CT's **Bullock's Oriole**. A **Spotted Towhee**, the first for w. Massachusetts, appeared at a feeder in Hadley, *Hampshire*, 19 Dec–Feb (S. Sumner, m.ob.). Among the sparrows, western forms made the spotlight with a Gambell's White-crowned Sparrow at D.W.W.S. 19 Jan+ and an Oregon Junco in Easthampton, *Hampshire*, MA, for the entire winter. Other wintering sparrows of note were a Clay-colored, also at D.W.W.S.; a Grasshopper on M.V. 1–23 Jan and a Henslow's at Great Meadows N.W.R., *Middlesex*, MA, 31 Dec (†G. Gorton). There were two Yellow-headed Blackbirds in Connecticut and one in Massachusetts.

And then there were finches. Although northern irruptives dominated the scene in 1999–2000, observers in Connecticut also had a visitor from the east: a first-year **Brambling** that spent Jan–Feb visiting a feeder, albeit sporadically, in Weston, *Fairfield* (ph., E. LaMore). The dominant winter finches of the season were Pine Grosbeaks and redpolls. The grosbeaks were limited to n. New England and w. Massachusetts, and started off relatively uncommon in Dec. By late Jan they appeared to have peaked, with flocks of 50 or more in Maine and New Hampshire and a high count of eight for w. Massachusetts. By mid-Feb they were mostly gone. The exceptions to this species' distribution pattern were two birds on Cape Cod 1 Jan, the first for that locality in over ten years (BN).

Common Redpolls had already made their presence known in New England in Nov and used the winter months to simply consolidate their gains. Flocks of over 400

were reported in Vermont and Maine, while 200 was more typical in Massachusetts. In the North, flock size was highest in Dec; by Feb the birds had become very local, with large flocks only at certain feeders and less likely away from them. In Massachusetts, flock size peaked in Jan, with most flocks numbering less than 50 in Dec and Feb. A few Com. Redpolls made it to Connecticut and Rhode Island, primarily in Dec. Along with the Commons came the Hoary Redpolls, and even if some of these sightings are unsubstantiated, it would appear that this was one of the better Hoary Redpoll showings in some time. Total available reports

indicate two in Vermont, four in New Hampshire,  $\pm 10$  in Maine, and three in Massachusetts.

Other finches were relatively scarce. Both species of crossbills were again along the coasts of s. New England, with the highest numbers (25–45) in Dec on Cape Cod, M.V., and Nantucket. Numbers reported in n. New England, these species' traditional stronghold, were generally lower. Pine Siskins made it all the way to Connecticut and Rhode Island in Dec, but then disappeared from most of the Region. Purple Finches and Evening Grosbeaks were generally scarce once again, although the latter species was relatively common, even occasionally abun-

dant, in the far-flung localities of w. Massachusetts and e. Maine.

#### **CORRIGENDA**

The calling Pied-billed Grebe and inland-nesting Osprey, both reported in Coventry, CT, in the Summer 1999 report, were actually in Canterbury, CT.

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**D**ecember and early January were unusually warm, but bitter cold weather arrived in mid-January and persisted into

early February, when somewhat warmer than normal weather returned. Precipitation was below normal in December and February, and near to above-normal in January. There was little snowfall over much of the region until 25 January. The warm early winter brought with it even some non-hardies such as Northern Rough-winged Swallow and Summer Tanager, while no fewer than seventeen species of warblers were recorded.

The highlights of the season were Delaware's first Tufted Duck and third Northern Lapwing, Black Guillemot inland in Pennsylvania, New York's first MacGillivray's Warbler, the return of last year's Mew Gull, and what will become New Jersey's first California Gull if accepted by the New Jersey Bird Records Committee. Also notable were a major die-off of American Woodcocks in the late January freeze, and unusually large numbers of Bald Eagles, Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Shrikes, Common Redpolls, and in northern New York, Bohemian Waxwings. In addition, there were Ivory Gull and Indigo Bunting in New York; Brown Pelicans and Rufous Hummingbirds, which survived well into February, in both New Jersey and Delaware; two Varied Thrushes and Cave Swallows in New Jersey; Painted Buntings in Pennsylvania and Delaware; and a Le Conte's Sparrow in Delaware.

**Abbreviations:** Barnegat Light (*Barnegat Light State Park, Ocean, NJ*); Bombay Hook (*Bombay Hook N.W.R., Kent, DE*); Hamlin Beach (*Lake Watch at Hamlin Beach S.P., Monroe, NY*); I.R.I. (*Indian River Inlet, Sussex, DE*); Jones Beach (*Jones Beach S.P., Nassau, NY*); Montauk (*Montauk Point, Suffolk, NY*); Montezuma (*Montezuma N.W.R., Wayne, NY*); Prime Hook (*Prime Hook N.W.R., Sussex, DE*); Sandy Hook (*Sandy Hook Unit, Gateway National Recreation Area, Monmouth, NJ*); Tinicum (*John Heinz N.W.R. at Tinicum, Philadelphia, PA*).

#### **LOONS THROUGH IBISES**

The region's only Pac. Loon was reported 31 Dec from Hamlin Beach (DT). In spite of the mild December, there was a larger southward migration of Red-necked Grebes this season than in the past two, with a peak of 23 at Hamlin Beach 15 Dec (BE, SSo, WS); the top CBC count was eight from Montauk 18 Dec (RJK). Seven Eared Grebes were present in New York, and four in New Jersey, all in late Dec or Jan. Pelagic trips to about 65 mi offshore, one on 4 Dec out of Manasquan Inlet, NJ, led by Guris with many observers, and another on 4–5 Dec out of Montauk by Guthrie and Wilson, produced a number of tubenoses. Recorded were five N. Fulmars (PG et al.); two Greater Shearwaters off Manasquan (PG et al.) and four off Montauk (AG, AWi); and two Manx Shearwaters off Manasquan (PG et al.) and one off Montauk (AG, Awi). Brown Pelicans were unexpected 26 Dec at Port Mahon, Kent, DE (MG, BGP), where they are rare at any season, and 13 Feb in the Manasquan R., Ocean, NJ (LM, SB). These provided the first Kent, DE, and 4th New Jersey winter records. American Bitterns were well represented in coastal areas with three in the marsh at I.R.I. 1 Jan (MG); one at Tinicum 19 Jan