



One of five Western Kingbirds detected in the Hudson—Delaware Region this winter, this cooperative bird was photographed at Cedar Swamp Wildlife Management Area, Delaware (very near the Dusky Flycatcher!) on New Year's Day 2002. *Photograph by Matt Hoberg.*

This fine Dusky Flycatcher was found on New Year's Eve Day at Cedar Swamp Wildlife Management Area, New Castle, Delaware, where it remained through 22 January 2002. Except for a hypothetical record in Pennsylvania, this represents potentially the Region's first and one of few anywhere in the East. It was photographed here on 1 January 2002. *Photograph by Ray Wilson.*



A second-basic Ivory Gull in Delta, British Columbia spent 4-23 December around the shipyard at the Deltaport Jetty, where strong nighttime illumination allowed birders to study this beauty well into the night! This bird represented Vancouver's first and the province's sixth record, photographed here 20 December 2001. *Photograph by Ruth Sullivan.*

Wisconsin's first Ross's Gull was enjoyed 6-8 December 2001 near Ashland. This photograph was taken on the first day of its visit. *Photograph by Travis Mahan.*



This immature gray-morph Gyrfalcon was the first for Texas. It was found on 21 January 2002 and faithfully roosted on a water tower through the end of the period. Interestingly, this Arctic falcon had never even been reported in the state previously. *Photograph by Jimmy McHaney.*

This White-winged Crossbill at Lawrenceville, New Jersey was one of up to 20 in the area, present from mid-December into January (here 8 January 2002). The species was one of several winter finches that staged substantial irruptions this fall and winter. *Photograph by Rick Wiltraut.*

PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS



This Mew Gull at Cherry Island Landfill near Wilmington, Delaware, was found 15 February 2002 by the photographer (and our own Photo Editor). Extensive examination by gull experts suggest that this bird was one of the Old World races (*canus*, *kamtschatschensis*, or *heine*), but field separation of these subspecies has not yet been resolved. Among other characters, the large size, longish legs, rather dark upperwings, and pale eye would appear to point to one of the Asian subspecies (*kamtschatschensis* or *heine*). Inasmuch as other Siberian species—Slaty-backed Gull and Long-billed Murrelet—were documented in the Hudson-Delaware Region this season, a third ambassador from that area is not unthinkable. Delaware has just one previous record of the species. Photograph by George L. Armistead.



This adult Slaty-backed Gull was photographed at Seneca Meadows Landfill, Seneca Falls, New York on 23 February 2002. It is conceivable that this bird is the same individual that was seen 4, 8, and 20 February at two locations in Sullivan County, New York, about 160 km away, but it's more likely that two birds were involved. Photograph by Steve Kelling.



It was a good gull winter over much of the East, and the Common Gull (as the nominate form of Mew Gull is known in most of the world) was a highlight in several regions. This adult, found among 20,000 gulls of 10 species on the Chesapeake Bay C.B.C. 26 December 2001, stood out among the Ring-billed Gulls by virtue of its dark eye, more delicate bill with faint zigzag band, short greenish-yellow legs, and distinctive primary pattern in flight. Photograph by Robert L. Ake.



This Mew Gull of the North American *brachyrhynchus* race (formerly called Short-billed Gull) was an outstanding find at Wheatley Harbour, Point Pelee, Ontario 26 February 2002 (the fourth for Pelee). This taxon strayed to many points east and south of typical range, including states of the interior Far West, as well as to Texas, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, and South Dakota. Singles of both *brachyrhynchus* and the nominate *canus* were again found in neighboring Ontario; observers should labor to distinguish whenever possible among the various subspecies. This image was taken 1 March 2002. Photograph by Alan Wormington.



Virginia Rails are hardy enough to overwinter in the northern tier of U. S. states when conditions permit. Even when winter sets in, innovative foraging methods allow the toughest birds to survive until milder weather arrives. This ice-fishing bird at Hampton, New Hampshire 21 January 2002 was another testimony among many to the mildness of winter 2001-2002. *Photograph by Dennis Abbott.*



Perhaps increasing as a vagrant east of its western range, Bullock's Oriole put in appearances at Québec, Florida, New Hampshire, and later Virginia. This one at Dover, Strafford County, New Hampshire 13 January 2002 was the first for that state in a quarter century. *Photograph by Dennis Abbott.*



Observers who began visiting landfills in the Middle Atlantic region about 20 years ago saw birds resembling Thayer's Gulls in small numbers. After almost two decades of documentation, it is accepted that such birds occur annually on the East Coast, especially between southern New England and northern North Carolina, but birds that appear intermediate between (supposedly typical) Thayer's Gull and "Kumlien's" Iceland Gull continue to cause consternation—and this is especially true of the variable first-winter birds. This typical first-winter Thayer's Gull (upper right) showed a relatively heavy build, dark-centered tertials, a dark secondary bar, and dark outer webs to the primaries; it was photographed at the Salisbury, Maryland landfill 15 January 2002. *Photograph by George L. Armistead.*



This Cattle Egret was caught in the act of making a transoceanic flight across the Atlantic: it was photographed moving east—northeast at $20^{\circ} 17' N$, $39^{\circ} 03' W$, some 1472 km from the nearest land (the Cape Verde Islands). While not in this journal's area of coverage, this bird is one of a handful of birds photographically documented over the Atlantic in the process of "vagrations," which in the case of this species led to colonization of the New World some 50 years ago. Cattle Egret is now a species in decline in some parts of its North American range; causes for this decline are unknown. *Photograph by C. J. Lippincott.*



Are Southern Lapwings on a slow march northward? Twentieth-century records suggest that an expansion or increasing northward and westward dispersal of the *cayennensis* subspecies, which is nonmigratory, has been underway for some time. The species was considered "casual" through the 1970s in Panama but lately is known to be resident there, and Costa Rican records are now beginning to accrue, though the species is still quite rare there. Six or more records from Costa Rica this past winter season included this bird, noted by Regional Editor Héctor Gómez de Silva and party about five km southeast of Jaco 19 February 2002. *Photograph by John Taylor.*

A new difficulty for larophiles at landfills arose this winter in the East and Midwest, in Ohio and Virginia. Birds that bore strong resemblance in plumage to Glaucous-winged Gulls were found, a first-winter bird in Ohio and this adult in Virginia at Prince William County Landfill (31 December 2001). Both birds, however, seemed a bit too delicate of bill and head, and perhaps too small, to be "classic" Glaucous-winged Gulls, and it has been suggested that hybrid origin is the most likely explanation for this aberration. However, nothing about the plumage of either bird suggested an admixture of genes from a smaller species, such as Herring Gull. *Photograph by Stephen C. Rottenborn.*



PICTORIAL HIGHLIGHTS



A Townsend's Warbler at Sandy Hook, New Jersey on 3 December 2001 provided the Garden State's eighth record of this hardy western species, which appears to be increasing as a vagrant to the East. *Photograph by Rick Wiltraut.*



This Pine Grosbeak was one of many well south of usual haunts in the Northeast; it was photographed at Georgetown, New York, 28 February 2002. *Photograph by Sean Sime/Housewren.*



An Ipswich Sparrow—the *princeps* race of Savannah Sparrow that nests almost entirely on Sable Island, Nova Scotia—frequented Cape Charles Beach, Northampton County, Virginia, for several days in January (here 2 January 2002), feeding on Cape Beach Grass seeds (*Ammophila breviligulata*). Although the Chesapeake Bay and its 6400 km of shoreline would seem to offer good winter quarters for Ipswich Sparrow, which favors outer dunes and barrier beaches, the loss of this habitat on the Bay's shores has been substantial in recent decades, and there are fewer than 20 Bay records of the taxon in Maryland and Virginia. *Photograph by Edward S. Brinkley.*



North Carolina's first documented Green-tailed Towhee entertained birders at a feeder in Southport from 5 January 2002 through the spring. The species is a very seldom visitor to the states of the East Coast. *Photograph by Van Atkins.*



The odd combination of Common Redpoll and Painted Bunting—both species on the move across the continent this winter—at a feeder near Rogers City, Michigan, was photographed here 2 February 2002. *Photograph by William Grigg.*



A Broad-winged Hawk on Christmas Eve 2001 at Tantra Park, Boulder, Colorado would seem outlandish, were it not for the similar records of the species now being made all through the East in early winter (see the Changing Seasons essay). This bird was a first in winter for the state. *Photograph by Bill Schmoker.*



This male Blue Seedeater was one of five mist-netted at scattered locations in Parque Nacional El Imposible, El Salvador between 9 January and 18 February 2002. These birds likely represent a small but previously overlooked population. The Blue Seedeater has been reported in El Salvador on only two previous occasions. *Photograph by Oliver Komar.*



Bohemian Waxwings invaded northern Colorado this winter season. These birds at Gross Reservoir, Boulder County, Colorado 2 February 2002 were part of a flock of 300 birds. *Photograph by Bill Schmoker.*



This subadult Masked Booby was photographed in La Jolla, California on 7 January 2002; it is likely the same bird that was later present 80 km north of La Jolla at Dana Point in Orange County. Distinctions from Nazca Booby are subtle and include bill color (greenish yellow in Masked, orangy in Nazca.) *Photograph by Larry Sansone.*



An unexpected bonus during nocturnal trapping of pheasants, this Yellow Rail was one of at least two caught and photographed in a closed area of Grizzly Island, Solano County, California on 12 February 2002. The species is rare enough on the West Coast that observers should take care to distinguish it from the similarly migratory Swinhoe's Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops exquisitus*) of eastern Asia. *Photograph by Anthony Battiste.*



Extremely rare at any season in the Pacific Northwest, Washington's first Yellow-throated Warbler (of the *albilora* subspecies) was the Oregon-Washington Region's fourth. It remained at Twisp from 8 December 2001 through 23 January 2002, (when a Sharp-shinned Hawk apparently removed it). *Photograph by Ruth Sullivan.*