



## Wayne R. Petersen

June continued the pattern of wet weather established in mid-May, actually setting a record as the third wettest June on record in the Boston area. The total rainfall of 25.6 cm was 313% above normal, even though temperatures for the month were normal. July saw a sudden departure from the wet weather of late spring/early summer and temperatures that averaged nearly 80° F, made it the sixth warmest July in Boston since 1872.

Although long-legged wading birds sustained some early-season nesting interruption due to the sustained wet weather in late May and early June, by census time most species seemed to fare pretty well. Similar to last year, high water or heavy rain adversely affected Common Loon and raptor nesting success in some areas, and aerial feeders such as Purple Martins and cavity nesters such as Eastern Bluebirds were all detectably hard hit by starvation and exposure during the protracted rainy weather.

Although few exceptional Regional nesting records were established, the season had a few first state occurrences: Eurasian Collared-Dove and Burrowing Owl in Maine, and Boat-tailed Grackle in Rhode Island. Other notable rarities were Yellow-nosed Albatrosses in Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts; Red-billed Tropicbird for the second year in a row in Maine; Bridled Terns in Maine and Massachusetts; Black-tailed Godwit and California Gull in Massachusetts; Red-necked Stints in Massachusetts and Connecticut; and a probable Brown-chested Martin in Connecticut.

**Abbreviations:** L. Josephine (Easton, *Aroostook*, ME), M.A.S. (Maine Audubon Society), M.D.F.W. (Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife), N. & S. Monomoy I.

(Monomoy N.W.R., Chatham, *Barnstable*, MA), M.V. (Martha's Vineyard, *Dukes*, MA), Plum I. (Parker River N.W.R., Newbury/Rowley, *Essex*, MA), South Beach (Chatham, *Barnstable*, MA), Stellwagen Bank (Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, MA), Stratton I. (Saco, *York*, ME), T.N.C. (The Nature Conservancy), U.S.F.W.S. (United States Fish & Wildlife Service).

## WATERFOWL THROUGH VULTURES

Although a few migrating Brant typically linger into early summer, true summering birds were at Plum I. 11-28 Jul (RH) and South Beach 11 Jul+ (m.ob.). As in recent past years, impounded freshwater marshes at Maine's L. Josephine once again supported an interesting assortment of breeding waterfowl that included Gadwall, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, and 7 summering Ruddy Ducks, a species first confirmed nesting in the Pine Tree State at this locality last year (BS). Late waterfowl included a Eurasian Wigeon at Dorchester (*Suffolk*, MA 3 Jun (RD); a Red-head at L. Josephine 25 Jun (BS); single King Eiders at Rockport, *Essex*, MA 5 Jun (JB) and Southwest Harbor, *Hancock*, ME 5 Jun–mid-Jul (R. MacDonald, m.ob.); single Harlequin Ducks at Biddeford, *York*, ME 11 Jun–27 Jul (EH et al.), Chilmark, M.V. throughout Jun (AK), and E. Orleans, *Barnstable* 1 Jul+ (B.O.); and 6 Long-tailed Ducks at the Norwalk Is., *Fairfield*, CT 16 Jun (A. Gingert) and one inland at Nepaug Res., Burlington, *Hartford*, CT 17 Jun (PC).

Once again, Vermont's Common Loon population raised the bar, with 58 nesting pairs, 44 of which successfully raised 65 chicks. Despite these numbers, 2006 witnessed the highest rate of nest failure in years, with five out of 14 nests ruined due to flooding; mortality due to encounters with fishing gear was also identified as a concern this season (*vide* E. Hanson). Pied-billed Grebes had notable breeding success at Brentwood, *Rockingham*, NH at a wetland mitigation area, where at least five broods were tallied in midsummer (T. Bronson, JB), and at Rochester, where two nests were located (D. Hubbard). A total of 4 summering Horned Grebes was recorded in New Hampshire (*vide* TV), Massachusetts (*vide* B.O.), and Connecticut (*vide* GH). Lingered Red-necked Grebes were present in Maine (*vide* JD) and Massachusetts (*vide* B.O.), and 4 were at Rye, *Rockingham*, NH 9 Jul (SM).

For the first season in several years, the Region supported some solid seabird concentrations, including several outstanding rarities. Reports of Yellow-nosed Albatross in New England are practically annual in recent years,

so the appearance of what was likely the same ad. albatross at Andrews Pt., Rockport, *Essex*, MA 6 Jun (RH) and Hampton Beach, *Rockingham*, NH 6 Jun (*vide* TV), along with a possible sighting at Yarmouth, *Cumberland*, ME 11 Jun (*vide* DL) and Maine's definite 4th state record at Stratton I. 16-19 Jul (ph. S. Sanborn, m.ob.) collectively suggest that something really interesting is going on, either with this species or an individual albatross. The albatross at Stratton I. actually landed on the beach and was observed sitting among gulls concentrated at the same location! Stellwagen Bank, with its intensive coverage by whale-watching boats and plenty of vigilant birders, supported the apparent return of robust concentrations of seabird food this year, especially during late Jun and early Jul. In addition to some of the largest inshore baleen whale concentrations in a number of years, tallies ranging from 1750-3000 Greater Shearwaters, 2000-3000 Sooty Shearwaters, 17-72 Manx Shearwaters, and 4700-10,000+ Wilson's Storm-Petrels (B.O.) suggested that both bait-fish and plankton were present in substantial abundance. In Long Island Sound, where tubenoses are generally scarce, a moribund Greater Shearwater beached at Stonington, *New London*, CT 28 Jun (ph. MS) was only the 3rd specimen ever for the Nutmeg State, and scattered reports of Wilson's Storm-Petrels along the Connecticut coast continued a recent trend in those waters (*vide* GH).

A Red-billed Tropicbird at Seal I., near Martinicus I. in the n. Gulf of Maine in late Jul was not photographed (*vide* JD), but such a report is not without precedent. Good numbers of Northern Gannets were still moving in late spring, as indicated by 800 at Wellfleet, *Barnstable*, MA 11 Jun (RH). Double-crested Cormorants continue to colonize Massachusetts and are now nesting inland in *Middlesex*, at Spot Pond, Stoneham (I. Jewell) and at Foss Res., Framingham (J. Hines), the latter location a site where they apparently first nested in 2003 (*vide* B.O.). An imm. Great Cormorant at Colebrook, *Litchfield*, CT 9 Jun (P. Carrier) was unusual by both date and inland location.

Five ad. Least Bitterns and several young at Plum I. in late Jun and early Jul (RH, SMc) offered proof that this historic breeding site continues to contain the emergent freshwater marsh habitat needed to support this scarce Regional breeder. Managers at Plum I. are being strongly encouraged to manage impounded freshwater areas on the refuge to benefit breeding marsh birds at this premiere Massachusetts Important Bird Area. Long-legged wading bird census data for Narragansett Bay colonies in Rhode Island revealed the pres-

ence of 127 nests and 29 pairs of Great Egret, 14 nests and 27 pairs of Snowy Egret, two pairs of Little Blue Heron, 116 nests and 67 pairs of Black-crowned Night-Heron, and 98 pairs of Glossy Ibis (RF, CR). In the Bay State, Kettle I., Manchester, Essex contained 102 nests of Great Egret (new 17-year high), 231 nests of Snowy Egret, 17+ pairs of Little Blue Heron, 35 nests of Black-crowned Night-Heron, and 117 nests of Glossy Ibis (the last representing a new high for that colony) (SP). Nearby Eagle I. supported 10 pairs of Snowy Egret, two pairs of Cattle Egret, 25 nests of Black-crowned Night-Heron, and four nests of Glossy Ibis (SP). At Sarah I., Hingham, Plymouth, MA, a survey produced totals of 76 Great Egrets, 49 Snowy Egrets, and 343 Black-crowned Night-Herons (*vide* K. Parsons). Particularly interesting was the discovery of two pairs of nesting Great Egrets amidst a Great Blue Heron colony inland at Framingham, Middlesex, MA (J. Hines). With the dramatic increase in the number of Great Blue colonies in s. New England, one wonders if this phenomenon could occur with increasing frequency in the future? Unusual by its location was a Cattle Egret in Stockholm, Aroostook, ME in mid-Jun (*vide* BS), and a count of 4 at S. Thomaston, Knox in early Jul was the highest tally in the Pine Tree State since 1999 (*vide* JD). A putative hybrid Little Egret × Snowy Egret that was reported from Nantucket I. in May reappeared 29 Jul+ (ph. E. Ray). The increasing Regional spread of Black Vultures was indicated by singles n. to Center Ossipee, Carroll, NH 29 Jun (*vide* TV) and the Kennebunk Plains, York, ME 27 Jun (RH).

## RAPTORS THROUGH CRANES

Ospreys enjoyed a banner year in New Hampshire, with 45 active nests fledging 62 young statewide, matching the record set last year (*vide* C. Martin). With a Granite State total of only 10 pairs in 1981, it is possible that Osprey could be the first species on the list of New Hampshire Threatened and Endangered Wildlife to be de-listed as a result of species recovery. In Massachusetts, the picture was less optimistic at the Westport R. colony, Bristol, where 73 nests fledged only 48 young, compared to 105 young in 2005 (*vide* D. Cole). The first Mississippi Kite report for the period was a juv. at Norwalk, Fairfield, CT 8 Jun (W. Haffey), followed by a subad. at East Granby, Hartford 16 Jun (JW) and an ad. at Simsbury, Hartford 19-23 Jun (P. Cianfaglione et al.). Other reports were one at N. Truro, Barnstable, MA 27 Jun (DM); an ad. at E. Matunuck, Washington, RI 4 Jul (ST); and one

at Kensington, Rockingham, NH 9 Jul (G. Gavutis, Jr.). Ten Bald Eagle nests in New Hampshire fledged 21 young, twice the previous high count (*vide* C. Martin). In Vermont, the species nested for the first time ever in a nest constructed on the Connecticut R. (*vide* Vermont eBird). In Massachusetts, 16 Bald Eagle nests fledged 33 young (*vide* TF), including a first-time nesting in Bristol (WP). A Sharp-shinned Hawk nest in Ipswich, Essex, MA successfully managed to fledge one



A remarkable record anywhere in New England outside the context of a tropical cyclone, but especially so in Maine, this adult Bridled Tern was nicely documented on Outer Green Island on 6 July 2006.

Photograph by Mike Fahay.

young, 3 siblings apparently having succumbed to exposure/rain (JB). While probably more common as a breeding bird in s. New England than records would suggest, very few Sharp-shinned Hawks are confirmed nesting from one year to the next in s. New England. The continued Regional decline of American Kestrels was reflected this season by an all-time record low occupancy of 18 out of 66 nest boxes in a long-term study in se. Massachusetts (JM, M. Maurer). Many kestrels simply failed to return this spring, and combined with rainy weather early in the season, the nest box trail resulted in only a 27% occupancy rate. Despite the overall low numbers, the 52 young that were banded is consistent with the per-box ratio of young produced in past years. A Merlin nest that fledged 3 or 4 young at Keene, Cheshire, NH 14 Jul (K. Burgman, *vide* TV) was well s. of previous New England nesting attempts. With their current rate of range expansion, these feisty little falcons could be nesting in s. New England before the end of this decade! Heavy rain and poor productivity punctuated the Peregrine Falcon nesting season in New Hampshire, where there were 17 occupied territories (a new post-DDT high count) but where only six nests were successful in fledging 14 young, the lowest total in the past decade (C. Martin). Of five New Hampshire sites specifically monitored under the

U.S.F.W.S. monitoring plan in place since de-listing of the Peregrine, 80% (four out of five) of the monitored nests failed. Vermont Peregrines fared better, with 27 pairs fledging 59 young (SF), while in Massachusetts, nine nesting pairs fledged 22 chicks (TF).

A Clapper Rail with 2 chicks at Chappaquiddick I., M.V. 21-24 Jun (*vide* B.O.) provided rare breeding confirmation in Massachusetts. At Plum I., a tally of 8-9 ad. Common Moorhens May-mid-Jun (B.O.) was one of the highest Bay State concentrations in recent years. At Stratton I., both this species and American Coot were suspected to have nested this season, though confirmation was not obtained (*vide* JD). Sandhill Cranes once again nested in Maine; one pair raised a chick at Belgrade, Kennebec, and another pair raised 2 at Smithfield, Somerset. In Leeds, Androscoggin, there were another two probable pairs, along with singles at Biddeford, York, Scarborough, Cumberland, and Palmyra, Somerset, though none of these were suspected of breeding (*vide* D Mairs). In Massachusetts, a pair of Sandhill Cranes continued from May through the period at New Marlboro, Berkshire (S Mullen), and one was seen at Avon, Hartford, CT 9 Jun (A. Lurie).

## SHOREBIRDS

Of the nesting shorebird species, Piping Plovers had an especially successful season this year. In Massachusetts, 480 pairs raised 557+ young (1.12-1.2 chicks/pair), compared to the dismal 1.02 fledged chicks/pair in 2005 (EJ, SM, MDFW). At Sampson's I., Barnstable, the density of plovers was 26 pairs along 2 km of beach, possibly the highest density in New England (EJ). Despite these robust numbers, coyote and fox predation continues to be a significant problem at several Bay State sites. In Maine, 40 pairs of plovers produced approximately 49 chicks (1.23/pair) (*vide* M.A.S.), and in Rhode Island, plovers generated 61 chicks (1.09/pair) (*vide* T.N.C., U.S.F.W.S.). Less rosy news was the total of 180 pairs of American Oystercatchers that only produced 80 chicks (.62/pair) in Massachusetts, a clear reminder that this species continues to struggle, particularly in the Bay State, where the breeding population is the largest in the Region (EJ, SM, M.D.F.W.). A total of 18 pairs of oystercatchers was documented in Rhode Island (RF, CR) and a tally of 15 American Oystercatchers at Milford Pt., New Haven 15 Jul (P. Comins) was considered notably high for Connecticut. The only mentionable Upland Sandpiper count was 15 at Westover A.F.B., Hampden, MA 10 Jun (R. Bieda).

The sole American Golden-Plover report

came from Eastham, *Barnstable*, MA 20-23 Jul (M. Salett, D. Weintraub). At South Beach, 700 Black-bellied Plovers and 1600 Semipalmated Plovers 30 Jul (BN) represented the Regional high totals for the period for these species. Single American Avocets were reported in Massachusetts at Falmouth, *Barnstable* 18 Jul (G. Hirth), Edgartown, M.V. 23-25 Jul (L. Baldwin), and Ellisville, *Plymouth* 31 Jul (E. Cody); in Maine, one was at Scarborough, *Cumberland* 26 Jul+ (L. Seitz, LB). A total of 208 Willets at Plum I. 11 Jul (RH) was slightly eclipsed by 225 at South Beach 30 Jul (BN), where a maximum of 20 *inornatus* was also present by Jul. The somewhat paltry maximum count of 38 Whimbrels at South Beach 29 Jul (BN) was undoubtedly more a result of the reduced accessibility of Monomoy N.W.R. than of any drop in migrant numbers. Undoubtedly the flashiest shorebird of the season was the ad. **Black-tailed Godwit** that visited Plum I. 17-29 Jul (ph. P. Brown et al.). Only the 4th record for Massachusetts and the 5th for the Region, this handsome and obliging shorebird pleased birders from far and wide who came to admire and photograph it. Despite the high quality of the photographs taken of this individual, controversy persists over whether the bird was of the nominate subspecies of w. Europe or *islandica*, the subspecies breeding in Iceland and Scotland. The high count of Hudsonian Godwits was 75 at South Beach 30 Jul (BN). A Marbled Godwit at Scarborough, *Cumberland* 19 Jul (DL) was an uncommon discovery on the Maine coast. Other notable shorebird sightings included Connecticut's 2nd **Red-necked Stint** at Milford Pt., *New Haven* 16-23 Jul (N. Bonomo et al., ph. J. Hough), and other ads. at Eastham, *Barnstable*, MA 20 Jul (C. Goodrich) and Dorchester, *Suffolk*, MA 30 Jul (RD); 2 Baird's Sandpipers at Stratford Great Meadows, *Fairfield*, CT 11 Jul (C. Barnard) and one at Sandy Pt., West Haven, *New Haven*, CT 18 Jul (J. Hough) were unusual for the Region in that they were ads.; and a Ruff at Plum I. 6 Jun (S. Haydock). An assortment of high shorebird tallies for the period includes 750 Red Knots, 2800 Sanderlings, and 5500 Semipalmated Sandpipers at South Beach 30 Jul (BN) and 1000 Least Sandpipers and 3000 Short-billed Dowitchers at the same location 14 Jul (BN).

## SKUAS THROUGH ALCIDS

A South Polar Skua that was well photographed on several whale-watching trips out of Bar Harbor, *Hancock*, ME 15-24 Jul (J. Busko) possibly represents the first photo-

graphic documentation for the Pine Tree State. Two unidentified skuas were reported at Stellwagen Bank 22 Jul (G. Williams, P. Rusch, *vide* B.O.). Along with the tubenoses previously noted, small numbers of Pomarine and Parasitic Jaegers were routinely recorded at Stellwagen Bank during Jul (*vide* B.O.). Considerably more unusual were 2 subad. Long-tailed Jaegers in the ocean off Truro, *Barnstable*, MA 11 Jun (WP et al.) and another at Great Cranberry I., Cranberry Isles, *Hancock*, ME 12 Jul (P. Polshek, *vide* JD). Stand-



A species often reported in the vicinity but rarely so well photographed, this South Polar Skua was found in the Gulf of Maine 24 July 2006. Photograph by Jonathan Busko.

outs among the season's gull reports were a tantalizing, but unconfirmed, report of a Black-tailed Gull at Machiasport, *Washington*, ME 26 Jun (R. Payne), an ad. California Gull at South Boston, *Suffolk*, MA 2 Jun (RD), and a slightly early ad. Sabine's Gull at Stellwagen Bank 29 Jul (ML). A total of 1492 breeding Laughing Gulls at Monomoy N.W.R. was up 14% from last season (*vide* EJ, SM, M.D.F.W.), and a single ad. at Salisbury, *Addison*, VT 18 Jun (C. Darmstadt, *vide* JN) was most unusual for the location and date. Approximately 10 Little Gulls were recorded from Maine to Massachusetts (*vide* JD, B.O., JV), and at least 4 Black-headed Gulls were tallied in New Hampshire and Massachusetts (*vide* JV, B.O.). Among a dozen reports of Lesser Black-backed Gull, there were 2 in Maine, where the species is still less frequent than it is in s. New England (*vide* JD), and 5 at Provincetown, *Barnstable*, MA 18 Jun (BN).

Gull-billed Tern, always an unusual species in the Region, made quite a splash this year. The first one to appear was at Popham Beach, Phippsburg, *Sagadahoc*, ME 22 Jun (ph. E. Hynes et al.) for a 10th state record. This report was followed by the discovery of the first record in Connecticut since 1996 at Milford Pt., *New Haven* 24 Jun (N. Bonomo). In Massachusetts, one was found at South Beach 10 Jul (M. Salett, ph. D. Weintraub), and 2 appeared at Plum I. 11 Jul (RH). Eight Caspian

Terns were recorded Regionwide, and a dozen Royal Tern sightings included 4 as far n. as s. Maine (*vide* JD). More unusual was a Sandwich Tern at Stratton I. 21 Jun (*vide* DL) for only the 10th state record. Sandwich Tern reports in Massachusetts included singles at N. Monomoy I. 12 Jun-3 Jul (B. Harris); Provincetown 18 Jun-23 Jul (BN, Gd'E); Edgartown, M.V. 24 Jun (V. Laux); and Nantucket I. 26 Jun (E. Ray). Tern nesting success was mixed. In Massachusetts, total pair counts of 1646 of Roseate Terns and 15,866

Common Terns showed increases of 10% and 3%, respectively, over 2005 (EJ, SM, MDFW). Two pairs of Arctic Terns, however, was down 67% and clearly reflects how this boreal species is barely holding on at its southernmost breeding station on the planet (EJ, SM, MDFW). The total of 2447 Least Terns (down 8%) provided evidence that these little guys continue to have breeding problems in the Bay State (EJ, SM, MDFW), despite the fact that Stratton I. had a record 57 pairs this season (*vide* DL). In the Bay State, 11 Arctic Terns at Rockport, Essex (RH) and 13 at Dennis, *Barnstable* 7 Jun (BN) were wind-drifted migrants. For the 2nd year in a row,

a **Bridled Tern** appeared briefly at Bird I., Marion, *Plymouth* 14 Jun (I. Nisbet), and another (or the same?) bird that showed up at Outer Green I. in Casco Bay off Portland, *Cumberland*, ME 6 Jul (ph. M. Fahay et al.) represented only the 2nd record for Maine (*vide* JD). Five pairs of Black Skimmers nested in Massachusetts (EJ, SM, MDFW), and 2 at Fort Popham, Phippsburg, *Sagadahoc* 13 Jun represented only the 2nd Jun/Jul occurrence in Maine since 1995 (*vide* JD). Alcids out of season included 2 Razorbills at Martha's Vineyard 4 Jul (T. & J. Nickerson) and 2 Atlantic Puffins at Plum I. 23 Jul (RH).

## DOVES THROUGH PIPITS

A Eurasian Collared-Dove at Kennebunk Beach, Kennebunk, *York* 4-5 Jun (J. Ficker, *vide* K. Gammons) will represent a first record for the Pine Tree State if accepted by the Maine records committee. Also in Maine, a White-winged Dove at Medomak, *Lincoln* 28 Jun (S. Weidensaul et al., *vide* JD) was the 10th state record. Another White-winged Dove appeared at Dover, *Strafford*, NH 2 Jul (ph. M. Suomala et al.).

A single Barn Owl at Middletown, *Middlesex*, CT 20 Jun (J. Maynard) was a bittersweet reminder that this was once the state's stronghold for this reclusive species. At Logan International Airport in Boston, the Region's winter epicenter for Snowy Owls, a lingering

bird 9 Jun (R. Chirello, N. Smith) was definitely outside the usual seasonal period for this species. Even more outstanding was Maine's first-ever Burrowing Owl that frequented a small blueberry barren at Columbia Falls, *Washington* 15 Jul+ (D. Cristol, m.ob., *fide* JD). The geographic origin of this bird is of interest, as both the Florida and the western subspecies have been recorded in the Northeast. Although a systematic Whip-poor-will monitoring effort initiated by New Hampshire Audubon this year began gathering some much-needed data for this declining species, results this season were insufficient to obtain a meaningful picture of the status of Regional populations (*fide* PH). An especially encouraging single tally, however, was 38 at Arcadia W.M.A., Exeter, *Washington*, RI 11 Jun (G. Williams).

Red-bellied Woodpeckers nested in at least two locations in Maine this season, a situation long suspected but apparently not previously confirmed (*fide* JD). Practically as notable was the discovery of an American Three-toed Woodpecker nest with 2 young at New Sweden, *Aroostook*, ME 5 Jun (B. Crowley, BS)—surely one of New England's rarest resident birds. A Willow Flycatcher at Ft. Fairfield, *Aroostook*, ME 7 Jul (BS) was considerably n. of more traditional s. New England locations, while a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Lincoln, *Middlesex*, MA 4 Jun (N. Levey, ph.) was noteworthy by its mere presence.

Fish Crows, though regular enough as breeding birds in Massachusetts, have not been confirmed since the 1980s in well-worked Essex until a nest with young was discovered at Newburyport 11 Jun (JB). There seems to be no limit to where Common Ravens can appear these days, as indicated by single individuals observed in mid-Jun in se. Massachusetts at Yarmouthport and Dennis, *Barnstable* (B.O.) and at Halifax, *Plymouth* 8 Jul (D. Furbish). Despite early nesting failures of Purple Martins in Massachusetts (resulting from cool and rainy spring weather), great success was apparently attained at Grand I., *Addison*, VT (DH), and nine pairs at a new colony in Barrington, *Bristol*, RI fledged 32 young (R. Marr, *fide* RF).

A tally of 2500+ Bank Swallows going to roost with an estimated 50,000+ Tree Swallows at Plum I. 19 Jul (RH) has to represent one of the highest such concentrations in New England in many years. Nearly as notable for the Bay State, 227 Cliff Swallow nests were counted at a single colony in Cheshire, *Berkshire* 8 Jul (ML). Nesting success for Eastern Bluebirds was hindered by inclement spring and early summer weather for the 2nd year in a row. In a long-standing bluebird trail

maintained in se. Massachusetts, a disappearing 14 pairs occupied 112 boxes, and only 58 young were banded this season (JM), nearly an all-time seasonal low; 12 out of 28 nesting attempts failed due to weather or predation. By contrast, in Rhode Island, 39 bluebird pairs using a trail in Smithfield, *Providence* fledged 221 young (R. Marr), a decided increase over the all-time low of 101 fledged in 2005. Very out of place geographically and seasonally was an American Pipit at Quicksand Pt., Little Compton, *Newport*, RI 3 Jul (R. Emerson, *fide* RF).

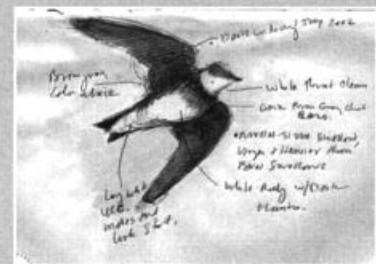
## WARBLERS THROUGH FINCHES

A Blue-winged Warbler carrying food at the Kennebunk Plains, *York*, ME 27 Jul (RH), slightly n. of traditional breeding areas, was

was on the late side for this scarce Essex nester. Four Mourning Warblers at October Mountain S.P., *Berkshire*, MA 18 Jun (Gd'E) made a notable count for this state-listed parulid at this location. An unmated male Hooded Warbler at Wompatuck S.P., *Hingham*, *Plymouth*, MA present since May lingered until at least 13 Jun (*fide* B.O.).

Clay-colored Sparrows continue to appear with increasing frequency during the nesting season at scattered locations throughout the Region, clearly suggesting that the species is continuing to consolidate its toehold breeding status in New England. Reports included 3 at the Kennebunk Plains, *York*, ME 6-8 Jun (DL) and singles at Moonstone Beach, *Matunuck*, *Washington*, RI 12 Jun (D. Cooper) and at Concord, *Hillsborough*, NH 14 Jun+

**SA** Unquestionably the most notable report of the season was a meticulously described **Brown-chested Martin** at Groton, *New London*, CT 1 Jul (MZ). The bird was well observed and carefully sketched in the field by a skilled observer who was aware at the time that the large brown martin with a broad brownish chest band that he was observing might well be this Neotropical hirundine. Although the bird was regrettably not seen by others, the summer date of the observation is not inconsistent with two of the three previous sightings of this species in North America (i.e., Massachusetts and New Mexico). However, unlike two previously confirmed records from the Northeast (Massachusetts and New Jersey), both of which represented the race *fusca* with a spotted mid-breast typical of the migratory population from s. South America, the Connecticut bird apparently lacked the spotted mid-breast and more closely resembled the unspotted-breasted and normally sedentary population *tapera* from n. South America. Brown-chested Martins ordinarily only migrate n. to Panama in varying numbers between Apr and Sep. If accepted by the Avian Records Committee of Connecticut, this represents a first record for the Nutmeg State.




A Brown-chested Martin was sketched from life 1 July 2006 at Bluff Point, Connecticut; previous reports of this South American species come from Massachusetts, New Jersey, Arizona, and Florida, though only the first two are verified. Sketch by Mark S. Szantyr.

eclipsed by one feeding a fledgling at St. Albans, *Franklin*, VT 6 Jul (TM). A meager four reports of probable breeding Golden-winged Warblers were submitted, all from Connecticut (*fide* GH), and a Brewster's Warbler at Conner Twp., *Aroostook*, ME 7 Jun (BS) was notable in this Canadian Zone corner of the Region. At Plum I., a Northern Parula 23-26 Jun (TW) and a Blackpoll Warbler 11 Jul (RH) were deemed nonbreeding wanderers. In a state where it is a rare breeder, Palm Warblers feeding young 30 Jun at Lewis, Northeast Kingdom, *Essex*, VT (two pairs) was noteworthy (TM, A. Strong). As proof of the rich breeding bird population at the giant 25,600-acre Little River Important Bird Area in *Hampton*, MA, counts of warblers during a one-day bird survey in early Jun included 98 Black-throated Blues, 70 Black-throated Greens, 58 Blackburnians, 135 American Redstarts, and 273 Ovenbirds (Allen Bird Club, *fide* B.O.). A migrant Louisiana Waterthrush at E. Gloucester, MA 29 Jul (RH)

(PH). Tardy or wandering Dark-eyed Juncos included singles at Lincoln, *Middlesex* 2 Jun (J. Kile) and S. Boston, *Suffolk*, MA 21 Jun (B. Zuzavich). Late-migrating Blue Grosbeaks appeared at Nahant, *Essex*, MA 6 Jun (L. Pivacek) and Monhegan I., ME 6 Jun (B. Boynton, *fide* JD). An enigmatic male Painted Bunting was especially notable at W. Tremont, *Hancock*, ME 19 Jul (*fide* B. Hancock). A count of 20 Eastern Meadowlarks at a capped and restored landfill at Saugus, *Essex*, MA 27 Jun (JB) is proof of the value of such sites to grassland birds. A male Yellow-headed Blackbird at Baltic, *New London*, CT 17 Jul (ph. D. Smith, *fide* GH) was enigmatic, while a female Boat-tailed Grackle at the Charlestown Breachway, *Washington* 2 Jun (RV, C. Mostello) represented a first record for Rhode Island. A pair of Red Crossbills bringing recently fledged young to a feeder at S. Plymouth, *Plymouth*, MA 7 Jun (S. Leslie, *fide* WP) represented an unusual breeding record for this sporadic Bay State nester.

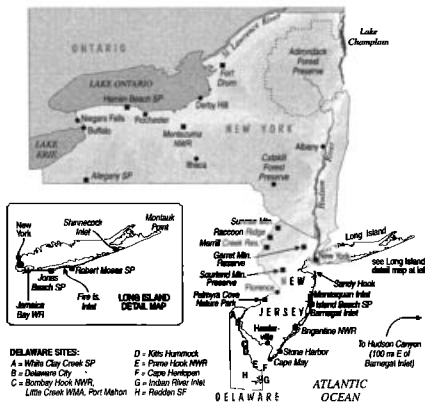
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## Hudson-Delaware



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Summer 2006 was one of the wettest on record. Nearly 37 cm of rain fell in New York City during the two months, 17.5 cm above normal. Albany received about 23 cm of rain in June, an all-time record, and the Oneida Lake Basin received over 25 cm in July. Torrential rains beginning 25 June caused damaging floods in the Delaware and Mohawk River Valleys. Only northwestern New York escaped the downpours. The rains were considered responsible for the death by hypothermia of 1800 Common Tern chicks on Great Gull Island (HH); the swamping of loon nests in northern Herkimer County, New York (WP); mortality in early bluebird broods in northern Saratoga County, New York (RPY); and fewer Ruffed Grouse broods in the Saint Lawrence River Valley (JBo).

A well-documented Broad-billed Hummingbird, the Region's first, was the principal rarity of the season. Fundamental seasonal rhythms seemed to be going awry. Several Snowy Owls lingered bizarrely into midsummer. Northbound migrants that seemed to have abandoned their journey (see shorebirds, raptors, warblers, American Pipit) nearly met exceptionally early returnees. Sandhill Crane, Northern Saw-whet Owl,

Merlin, Clay-colored Sparrow, and Dickcissel confirmed or extended their presence as breeders. An outbreak of type-B botulism in Lake Ontario killed numerous gulls, terns, and cormorants.

Abbreviations: Bombay Hook (Bombay Hook N.W.R., Kent, DE); Braddock Bay (hawkwatch on L. Ontario w. of Rochester, NY); Brig (Brigantine Unit, Forsythe N.W.R., Atlantic, NJ); Cuspogue (county park w. of Westhampton Beach, Suffolk, Long I., NY); D.N.R.E.C. (Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation); Fort Drum (Fort Drum Military Installation, Jefferson, NY); Great Gull I. (ternery off e. Long I., NY); Jamaica Bay (Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, New York City); Jones Beach (S.P., Nassau, Long I., NY); Little Galloo (island in e. Lake Ontario off Stony Pt., Jefferson, NY); Montezuma (Montezuma N.W.R. in Wayne/Seneca, NY); N.J.D.F.G.W. (New Jersey Division of Fish, Game, & Wildlife); N.Y.D.E.C. (New York Department of Environmental Conservation).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH FRIGATEBIRD

Introduced Trumpeter Swans were present again at last year's nest site in Wayne, NY and also bred nearby in Savannah Twp., e. of Montezuma. A few Surf and Black Scoters summered off coastal points, as usual, but White-winged Scoters, which winter farthest n., are rare here in summer. One was off Caven Pt., Jersey City, NJ 2 Jun (MBr) and another in the Leipsic R. at Bombay Hook 26 Jul (Z. Loman). A Long-tailed Duck off Island Beach S.P., NJ 4 Jul (Steve Weis) was another less-expected summering diving duck. A Common Goldeneye hen with 3 chicks at Willsboro Bay, in L. Champlain, Essex, NY 30 Jul (MMe) was s. of atlas breeding sites.

We now have final figures for the 5th Common Loon survey conducted last summer by the Adirondack Cooperative Loon Program.

On 16 Jul 2005, 452 volunteers surveyed 221 Adirondack lakes, the most ever, and found a total of 540 loons: 461 ads., 67 chicks, and 12 juvs. Although absolute numbers increased slightly, corresponding to fuller coverage, only 24% of the lakes surveyed had chicks or juvs., a slight drop, possibly because of heavy rains in early summer 2005. Only two Pied-billed Grebe nesting sites remain in Delaware, both along the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, *New Castle*. An Eared Grebe in breeding plumage discovered at Round Valley Res., *Hunterdon*, NJ 22 May (JDeM, ph. D. Beaton, FS, ph. A. Souto) lingered through 8 Jun, the first for nw. New Jersey. A Western Grebe



This Western Grebe was photographed off Battery Park, New Castle, Delaware 28 May through 2 (here 1) June 2006. Photograph by Maurice Barnhill.

found off New Castle, DE 28 May–3 Jun (Joe Francis, AH, m.ob.) was possibly the same as the one noted in the spring report at Reed's Beach, NJ on 13 May.

The commonest shearwaters visible from land, as usual, were Sooty Shearwaters, of which 30-40 were seen milling off Pike's Beach, Westhampton, Long I., NY 4 Jun (TWB, GB) and 5+ were off Cape May 6-7 Jun (CV); alongside the usual few Greater and Cory's Shearwaters, occasional Manx Shearwaters could also be found with diligent scop-