

Bird Observer

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 6

DECEMBER 2006



HOT BIRDS



Eduardo del Solar was in the right place at the right time to get this spectacular photograph of a **Brown Pelican** (left) fishing off Castle Island in Boston on October 10, 2006.



Dan Sutherland was on Tuckernuck Island with Dick Veit and Simon Perkins on October 9, 2006, when he took this great shot of a **Magnificent Frigatebird** (above).



On the same day, Phil Brown took this photo while he and many others got wet finding this **Yellow Rail** (left) at high tide in the salt marsh in Newbury. The bird was discovered earlier in the day by Ron Lockwood.



On October 30, 2006, Marshall Iliff discovered and photographed a **Eurasian Collared-Dove** (above left) on Morris Island in Chatham. Clearly on a roll, on the same day Marshall photographed a **Black Brant** (above right) in Plymouth. Dan Furbish had found the Brant the day before.

Check the inside back cover for **MORE HOT BIRDS!**

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Bird Observer

A bimonthly journal — to enhance understanding, observation, and enjoyment of birds
VOL. 34, NO. 6 DECEMBER 2006

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CHANGES OF ADDRESS and subscription inquiries should be sent to: Bird Observer Subscriptions, P.O. Box 236, Arlington, MA 02476-0003, or e-mail to John Marsh at <jarsh@jocama.com>.

ADVERTISING: full page, \$100; half page, \$55; quarter page, \$35. Send camera-ready copy to Bird Observer Advertising, P.O. Box 236, Arlington, MA 02476-0003.

MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION: BIRD OBSERVER welcomes submissions of original articles, photographs, art work, field notes, and field studies. Scientific articles will be peer-reviewed. Please send submissions to the Editor by e-mail: Paul Fitzgerald <paulf-1@comcast.net>. Please **DO NOT** embed graphics in word processing documents. Include author's or artist's name, address, and telephone number and information from which a brief biography can be prepared.

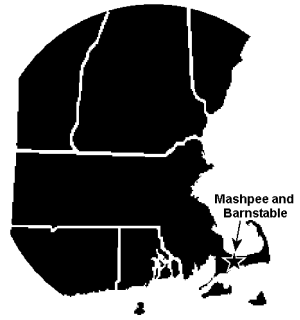
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BIRD OBSERVER, P.O. Box 236, Arlington, MA 02476-0003. **PERIODICALS CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT BOSTON, MA.**

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Winter Birding Hot Spots in Mashpee and Barnstable, Cape Cod

Mary Keleher

For a day of winter birding in Mashpee and Barnstable, I go to some of my favorite winter birding spots. I begin in Mashpee at the west side of the Mashpee River Woodlands. I use the back entrance at the end of River Road. Here one can do a quick loop around to the river and back down the main trail to return to River Road.

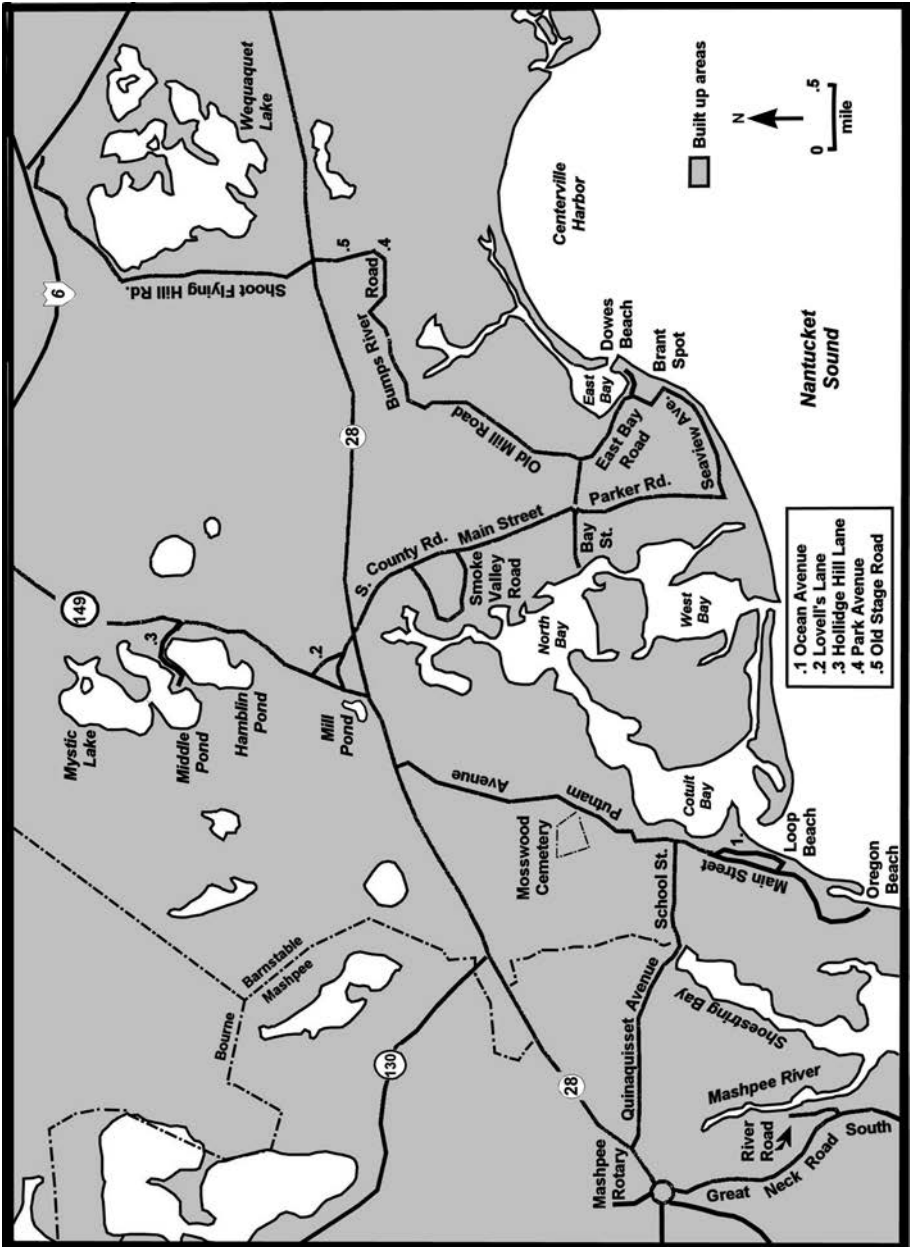


From the Mashpee rotary, take the Great Neck Road South exit out of the rotary heading toward New Seabury. Just over two miles on the left is River Road. Follow River Road to the end, and park in the small cul-de-sac. There is a “Mashpee River Woodlands” sign indicating the trail entrance. Enter the trail and take the first path to the right just after the sign with the painted map. While walking this loop, listen and look for small flocks of songbirds including Red-bellied, Downy, and Hairy woodpeckers, Northern Flicker, Red-breasted and White-breasted nuthatches, Brown Creeper, Tufted Titmouse, Black-capped Chickadee, Carolina Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, American Robin, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Pine Warbler, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, and American Goldfinch.

As the path winds to the left, there will be two smaller paths to the right leading to overlook areas that will allow for scenic views of the river. Farther down, as the path winds to the left and right is another area with three elevated overlooks offering different views of the river. Look for Great Blue Heron, American Black Duck, American Wigeon, Canvasback, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Hooded, Common, and Red-breasted mergansers. Watch for shorebirds such as Sanderling and Dunlin flying along the river. I have yet to see gulls other than Ring-billed, Herring, and Great Black-backed, but I keep looking. Other possibilities include Sharp-shinned, Cooper’s, Red-shouldered, and Red-tailed hawks, Belted Kingfisher, Gray Catbird, and Eastern Towhee.

Once the smaller path ends, you will come to a larger trail. Going left leads back to the main trail. Before heading to the main trail, walk about fifty feet to the right, and you will be level with the river. About one hundred feet diagonally across to the right is another area worth checking. Here there’s a bench with a view of a marsh area. Sometimes I sit here for a while admiring the view and appreciating the silence. Up against the grass on the opposite side of the marsh, I find flocks of ducks early in the morning.

From this area continue along the trail heading back to the main trail. Once you’ve reached the main trail, turn left to get back to the cul-de-sac at the end of River Road. Going right on the main trail leads to the main parking area on



DOROTHY GRAASKAMP

Quinaquisset Avenue. It's a three-mile walk from River Road to Quinaquisset Avenue and back. During the winter months this shorter loop is sufficient, but I have come across Hermit Thrushes and Pine Siskins by walking a short distance to the right. I highly recommend exploring more of this area if you have the time.

From the cul-de-sac at the end of River Road, head back to Great Neck Road South. Take a right onto Great Neck Road South heading back toward the Mashpee Rotary. Take the first exit out of the rotary onto Route 28 heading east toward Hyannis. Take the first right onto Quinaquisset Avenue. Follow this past the Willowbend Golf Course. On the right you will see Shoestring Bay. Continue over the small bridge where you enter the Cotuit section of Barnstable and Quinaquisset Avenue becomes School Street. Park in the parking area on the left after the bridge. Walk back to the water, and scan for a variety of bay ducks.

Continue on School Street to the end. Take a right onto Main Street. Take a left onto Ocean View Avenue, and follow it down to Loop Beach on the left. The water here is very calm, making it easy to search through the Common Goldeneyes for a Barrow's Goldeneye, which has been reported here for the past few winters and usually isn't far from shore. Scan the water for Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Common Eider, Bufflehead, and Red-breasted Merganser. Keep an eye out for unusual sightings, since there was a Black Guillemot that spent a week here in December 2003. This species is not normally found on the Nantucket Sound side of the Cape, and I believe this bird was a victim of a December snowstorm that had windblown Dovekies popping up in all sorts of odd places throughout the Cape. Be sure to check the sand spit across the water for an occasional Northern Harrier, shorebirds, and gulls. A Black-headed Gull was reported here in January 2004. Check the thicket across the street from the beach for Carolina Wren, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and Song Sparrow.

Continue on Ocean View Avenue as it loops around back to Main Street. Take a left onto Main Street, and follow it down to the end at Oregon Beach. I usually take a quick scan here for ducks and shorebirds, then turn around and head back up Main Street. Park on the right-hand side in front of the "Town of Barnstable Land Trust" sign near Lowell Road, which is on the left, just before Rushy Marsh Pond. You may find Downy and Hairy woodpeckers, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Pine Warbler, and Chipping and Song sparrows. Rushy Marsh Pond may be worth checking for ducks if it's not iced over.

Continue back on Main Street to Cotuit Center. Just past the Cotuit Grocery Store, which is on the left, take a right onto Putnam Avenue. As you round the corner, watch the small open field to the left for Eastern Bluebirds. Once around the corner you will approach Mosswood Cemetery. Take a left into the west side of Mosswood Cemetery. Here the birdhouses scattered throughout the cemetery can be just as interesting as the birds. There are several handmade birdhouses of different designs. Some of my favorites include a church, an old school house, a haunted house, and a general store. Again watch for Eastern Bluebirds as you make your way toward the back left corner of the cemetery. Here you will find piles of stumps, brush, and dirt. This is a great sparrow spot. Look for Field, Chipping, White-throated, Song, and Swamp sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos. Also look for Red-breasted Nuthatch as well as Red-tailed Hawk.

Exit left out of the cemetery, and continue on Putnam Avenue. Go a short distance, and carefully park on the right in front of the “Mary Barton Land Trust” sign. I stay in the car and scan the area for Eastern Bluebirds, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, and Chipping Sparrow. Continue on Putnam Avenue to Route 28. This is a good spot for a coffee break. There’s a Dunkin’ Donuts on the corner of Putnam Avenue and Route 28. Take a right at the light onto Route 28 and then the first right into the small shopping area.

Take a right out of the parking area onto Route 28 heading east and then a left onto Route 149, where the well-known Mill Pond is located in the Marstons Mills section of Barnstable. Parking is available on the right side of the road. In early December Pied-billed Grebe, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, and Common Merganser are all possibilities here. The number of species will decrease come January with only the hardiest winter ducks remaining. Listen for Belted Kingfisher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Red-bellied Woodpecker in the area.

Continue straight on Route 149 to the four-way intersection, and bear right onto Main Street. Follow Main Street back around to Route 28, and cross over 28 onto South County Road. Follow South County Road, and look for a boulder on the right that is engraved with the street name “Smoke Valley Road.” There’s a “Private: Residents Only” sign here, but from past experiences I’ve found the residents to be birder-friendly. On the right side of the road there’s an overlook to the water. This is usually where the Eurasian Wigeon can be found when it is not at Mill Pond. American Wigeon, Gadwall, and American Black Duck are among the other common sightings here, with a possible Great Blue Heron or Belted Kingfisher. Mute Swans congregate here when smaller freshwater locations are frozen. I’ve recorded as many as sixty of them. Check the thicket below and the trees along the street for songbirds.


Continue on Smoke Valley Road; it circles back around to South County Road. Take a right onto South County Road, which turns into Main Street heading toward the village of Osterville. When approaching Osterville Center, go right onto Parker Road. Go straight through the four-way stop, and follow the road to the end. This is the section of Barnstable known as Wianno. Take a left onto Seaview Avenue. On the left across from house number 347 between two telephone poles is a thicket that can be very productive. It’s where I saw my first Yellow-breasted Chat! The best time to check it is on a sunny day between late morning, when the sun hits it, and early afternoon. In addition to more common species here, I have also seen Carolina Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Fox Sparrow, and White-throated Sparrow.

Continue along Seaview Avenue, which will curve sharply to the left and become Wianno Avenue. Before going left, park on the right, and check the water. I call this my Brant spot. They are usually seen in close, feeding along the rock jetties. Scan out to Nantucket Sound for sea ducks with the possibility of Long-tailed Duck. Also look for shorebirds here.

Continue on Wianno Avenue, and take the first right onto East Bay Road. (There's a tree in front of the street sign making it difficult to see.) Take the first right off East Bay Road, and follow it down to Dowse's Beach. Here is another good view of Nantucket Sound. I drive to the end of the parking lot and look out over the channel for Horned Grebe, Common and Red-throated loons, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common Eider, and Surf, Black, and White-winged scoters. Be sure to look for shorebirds, especially Ruddy Turnstones on the jetty across the water. Also check the gulls, since I've seen a Lesser Black-backed and a Black-headed here.

Return to East Bay Road, and go right. Follow East Bay Road to the end, and go straight across Main Street to Old Mill Road. Follow Old Mill Road (staying to the left) to the end, and take a right onto Bumps River Road. There are two areas on the left side of Bumps River Road that seem to have open water even on the coldest winter days. Check them both for Gadwall, American Black Duck, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, and Hooded Merganser. Immediately upon turning right onto Bumps River Road, you will see the first area of water on the left. Park on the right side in front of the 25 mph speed-limit sign. Even though the speed limit is twenty-five here, I've seen cars speed by doing forty-five, so be careful when crossing. To the right is a river that may be worth checking for ducks and songbirds. Continue on Bumps River Road as it curves to the right. Around the next corner is the second area of water. Park on the right side beyond the guardrail in front of the "Barnstable Land Trust" sign. Again, be sure to use caution when crossing here since cars tend to speed through this area.

Continue on Bumps River Road, which curves to the right and then to the left around a cranberry bog, to the end. Take a left onto Park Avenue and another left onto Old Stage Road. Follow Old Stage Road to the intersection at Route 28. Continue straight across Route 28, and take the second right onto Shootflying Hill Road. Go through the four-way stop, and follow Shootflying Hill Road to Wequaquet Lake on the right. Park in the parking area, and look for Pied-billed Grebe, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, and Hooded and Common mergansers. Great Cormorant and American Coot are also possible. Carefully scan any flocks of Canada Geese. There was a Blue (or dark-morph) Snow Goose resting with them in January 2004.

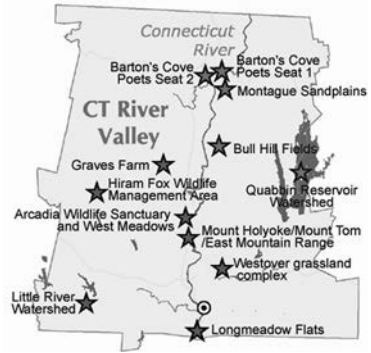
Continue on Shootflying Hill Road, which ends at Route 132. Taking a left onto Route 132 will take you back to Route 6 and the conclusion of our trip. 

Mary Keleher grew up in Rockland, Massachusetts. She has always been fascinated with nature and animals. After marrying, she moved to San Diego, where her interest in birds began when she bought her first field guides. After living in San Diego for four years, she and her husband moved back to Massachusetts to start a family. She settled in Mashpee, where she works part-time as an Administrative Clerk and full-time raising her two-year-old daughter.

Massachusetts Important Bird Areas (IBAs) — The Connecticut River Valley Region

Wayne R. Petersen and Brooke Stevens

This issue of *Bird Observer* profiles three distinctly different IBAs located in Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden counties. As its name implies, the core of the Connecticut River Valley is predominantly a flat lowland region comprised largely of extensive agricultural fields and floodplain forest. In addition to the prominent north to south-running Connecticut River corridor, there are a number of forested upland sites of considerable importance to birds. Among the IBAs described in this issue is a unique inland pine barren that supports a rich variety of scrubland birds as well as a modest population of breeding grassland sparrows and an extensive unfragmented secondary forest hosting a wide variety of interior forest nesting species. Breeding birds in this forest area have been monitored continuously for twenty years. This IBA also contains a scenic mountain range, which is important as a leading line for migrating raptors and as a breeding habitat for Worm-eating and Cerulean warblers as well as diverse other woodland nesting birds.



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Montague Sandplains and Turners Falls Airport IBA

Located in Franklin County slightly east of the Connecticut River in the town of Montague, the Montague Plains Wildlife Management Area, owned by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MDFW), and the adjacent Turners Falls Airport comprise 1750 acres, a rare and unique habitat remnant. This was once part of a large sand delta created more than 10,000 years ago when a huge lake (Lake Hitchcock) covered much of the Connecticut River Valley. Today this IBA is the largest, least fragmented, and most undeveloped glacial sand plain in the Connecticut River Watershed. Here the unusual inland pitch pine/scrub oak plant community supports a mixture of early-successional breeding species such as Whip-poor-will, Brown Thrasher, and Prairie Warbler, all of which are declining throughout much of the Northeast. In addition, the state-listed Grasshopper and Vesper sparrows nest at the adjacent Turners Falls Airport.

Early evening bird surveys at this IBA are especially impressive when the songs of numerous Prairie Warblers, Eastern Towhees, and Field Sparrows mix with the haunting vespers of Hermit Thrushes. In early spring after sunset the buzzing calls of displaying American Woodcocks are readily heard in appropriate open areas, and the robust Whip-poor-will population vocally reveals itself as thirty to fifty individuals may call on a single evening.

Shrubland habitats have a tendency to give way gradually to natural succession. Because of increased fire suppression through the years, many bird species characteristic of pine barren and shrubland communities are being forced out by increasing forest canopy closure. Once extensive forest openings, relatively low vegetation, and an abundance of sunlight are lost, attendant nesting species start to drop out. An obvious concern at this IBA is one of ever increasing forest succession. The challenge is to manage the site in ways that will not exacerbate this change.



BROWN THRASHER BY DAVID LARSON

The small Turners Falls Airport, which is part of this IBA, annually hosts ten to twelve Grasshopper Sparrows and several pairs of Vesper Sparrows, both of which are state listed in Massachusetts. In compliance with FAA requirements, the airport fields are currently managed in a way that allows the nesting of these declining grassland species. In addition to the sparrows, several pairs of Killdeers and Horned Larks breed at the airport.

Although not seen at the Montague Plains, the federally endangered Karner blue butterfly existed until very recently in a small pine barren area near Concord, New Hampshire, just north of the Massachusetts border. Similarly, the endangered northeastern bulrush grows at a wetland within the sand plain region. Although not birds, the presence of these species speaks to the uniqueness of this habitat.

Conservation: There are 700 additional acres of pitch pine/scrub oak habitat contiguous with the MDFW area that should be seriously considered for addition to this IBA. Because the grassland portions of this site are maintained to facilitate the operation of the Turners Falls Airport, the frequency and type of maintenance potentially affects rare and state-listed grassland birds negatively or positively. Continued oversight of the grassland maintenance activities is extremely desirable. Although this IBA is reasonably well protected, in addition to natural succession, recreational overuse and cowbird parasitism also pose threats to the site.

Starting in 2000, small prescribed burns have been conducted on a portion of the Montague Plains WMA for ecological management and training purposes. Two main areas of management and research have been ongoing at the Plains since 2000: 1) pitch pine crown fuels characterization and crown fire behavior prediction, and 2) scrub oak fuels and biodiversity management. Such active management on the part of the MDFW is an optimistic indication for the future sustainability of this important IBA.

Hiram Fox Wildlife Management Area IBA

The Hiram Fox Wildlife Management Area, located in the Westfield River Watershed, is an extensively wooded region owned and managed by the MDFW. Out of an overall total of more than 2600 acres, approximately 1000 acres make up the currently designated IBA. Located in the towns of Chester, Worthington, and Huntington, the site straddles the border between Hampden and Hampshire counties. Two connected land parcels include forested hills reaching 1200 feet in elevation, ledge outcrops, wetlands, and the Little River, which runs through one section of the property. The area is generally cloaked with northern hardwood forest, along with a



CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER BY GLEN TEPKE

a mix of northern red oak, white pine, and hemlock. Cutting and controlled burning have created forest openings ranging from one to five and a half acres in size.

The relatively unfragmented and remote nature of this large wooded parcel attracts a rich assortment of interior forest breeding species, some in robust abundance. Among the more numerous nesting species are Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-eyed Vireo, Veery, and Wood Thrush. Warbler species include Black-throated Blue,

Black-throated Green, and Blackburnian warblers, American Redstart, and Ovenbird. Particularly notable is a significant increase in nesting Chestnut-sided Warblers and the presence of nesting Mourning Warblers since deliberate clear-cutting and prescribed burning were initiated in the early 1990s. The appearance of Mourning Warblers is especially interesting since historically this state-listed species usually bred only at elevations greater than 1500 feet.

Besides the diversity and abundance of a number of interior forest-nesting species, this IBA has also enjoyed a twenty-year history of continuous breeding bird monitoring by the MDFW. Using standard point count survey methods, one hundred point count circles have been periodically surveyed since 1987. This monitoring program has increased the value of this IBA. Only by long-term and consistent monitoring is it possible to reliably register changes in Massachusetts bird populations.

Along with its forest bird nesting populations, the Hiram Fox IBA is home to a number of mammal species, including black bear and snowshoe hare.

Conservation: Eastern hemlock stands on the property are increasingly vulnerable to attack by the hemlock woolly adelgid, something that could have a material impact on species dependent upon hemlock for nesting (e.g., Black-throated Green Warbler). While Brown-headed Cowbirds have traditionally been lacking in the unbroken forested areas of the IBA, the effort to create forest openings by limited clear-cutting and burning, along

with similar effects created by beavers, fire, and storms could create points of entry for cowbirds in areas where impact on nesting success has traditionally been minimal. Housing development pressures on bordering private lands, as well as the gradual encroachment of property boundaries, pose the greatest overall threat to the continuity of the area. Continued land acquisition and conservation ownership of adjacent lands would definitely help limit or minimize the pernicious affects of development encroachment.

Mount Holyoke/Mount Tom/East Mountain Range IBA

This 8000-acre IBA is both scenically attractive and ornithologically significant. Situated on the border of Hampshire and Hampden County, it includes portions of the towns of Holyoke, Easthampton, Hadley, South Hadley, Amherst, Granby, Belchertown, West Springfield, and Westfield. Rising roughly 1000 feet in elevation, the Holyoke Range is comprised of a seven-mile ridge that runs from Hadley to Belchertown. Although the ridge is a patchwork of state, town, and private lands, primary stewardship lies in the hands of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Parcels acquired by the state since the 1970s have enlarged the Holyoke Range State Park alone to over 3000 acres.

The Mount Holyoke Range was formed some 200 million years ago when lava flowed from the valley floor, cooled, and was upended. More recently, glaciers have left their signature by smoothing the ridge's jagged edges in some places, exposing bedrock in others, or depositing till, sand, clay, or muck. Today the Holyoke Range is mostly wooded, with the ridge's steep slopes and east-west orientation combining to create a variety of forest types, including birch/beech/hemlock on the north side and oak/hickory on the south. Thickets, streams, ponds, and wetlands add to the overall diversity of this spectacular IBA.




BROAD-WINGED HAWK BY DAVID LARSON

Long known as a primary leading line for migratory raptors passing through Massachusetts, particularly in fall, Mount Tom is especially famous as a premiere hawk-watching location. In mid-September hundreds to thousands of Broad-winged Hawks drift past Goat Peak fire tower, typically accompanied by lesser numbers of Ospreys, Sharp-shinned Hawks, and American Kestrels. A diligent vigil later in the fall is likely to be rewarded by modest numbers of Red-tailed and Red-shouldered hawks, and sometimes by dazzling flights of Snow Geese. Once a longtime nesting site of Peregrine Falcons, the ancestral Mount Tom eyrie may once again be occupied by this regal falcon, now in steady recovery throughout New England.

While raptors and numerous passerines use the airspace and forested slopes of the Holyoke Range during migration, the IBA's extensive woodlands also support some

rare breeding species. Most notable among these breeders are Cerulean and Worm-eating warblers, the latter species having been a local specialty for many years. Up to ten pairs of these interior forest nesters have been estimated to nest on Mount Tom's dry, rocky slopes. A selection of additional species identified by Partners in Flight as priority species for southern New England that commonly nest within this IBA are Blackburnian Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Scarlet Tanager, Wood Thrush, and Veery.

Other notable fauna occurring within this IBA are marbled and Jefferson's salamanders, a relict population of northern copperheads and timber rattlesnakes, and a variety of interesting botanical species, including New England blazing star and black cohosh.

Conservation: The Mount Holyoke/Mount Tom/East Mountain Range IBA is both a natural highway for avian migrants and an important connecting wildlife corridor for various large mammal species. Since the surrounding region has become increasingly fragmented with urban development, curbing this encroachment is a major conservation priority for the lower slopes. Direct forest threats currently include hemlock woolly adelgid, a recent invader, and butternut cankerworms, which are threatening to destroy a stand of large trees on the northeast side of Mount Tom. Despite the protection the Holyoke Reservoir watershed affords to portions of this IBA, radio towers and wind turbines already exist on the summit of Mount Tom. Since the impact of such structures has been found to be pernicious in other localities, their efficacy should be carefully investigated before further development is considered. Also, since the Whiting Street Reservoir has been taken off line as a public drinking water supply, development pressure in its vicinity has mounted. With the purchase of the former Mount Tom ski area by the DCR, an effort should be made to consider managing some of the old ski slopes for shrubland bird habitat. 



WORM-EATING WARBLER AT MOUNT TOM BY JAMES SMITH

Western Reef-Heron

Don Stokes, Lillian Stokes, and Nikolas Haass

On August 18, 2006, we and numerous other birders received exciting news on the birding listserves, that Lysle Brinker had found a dark morph Western Reef-Heron in Kittery Point, Maine. This was a rare bird sighting of mega-magnitude, since this species had been recorded in North America only three times before.

(A Western Reef-Heron was reported in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, earlier this summer, and some people think, based on photo comparisons, that it was the same bird discovered in Maine. In 2005 a Western Reef-Heron was discovered in Stephenville Crossing, Newfoundland, and stayed from about June 17 until September of that year. A Little Egret was there at the same time, participating in stick passing and other courtship activities with the Western Reef-Heron. The first North American appearance of a Western Reef-Heron was on Nantucket Island, from April 26, 1983, until September 13, 1983.)

Hundreds of birders from across the country rushed to Maine to see the bird. We saw it for the first time on August 20 from the bridge by the Wentworth Hotel in New Castle, New Hampshire, where it had moved from Kittery that morning. A few birders in the assembled crowd had field guides with them that covered Western Reef-Heron. As we and a few others looked at the guides, the first doubts as to the identity of this bird crept into our minds.

The illustration in the field guides that most closely matched this bird was in the *Birds of East Africa*, by Stevenson and Fanshawe (2002). The trouble was, it was an illustration of a dark morph Little Egret.

Another birder had the just-published *National Geographic Complete Birds of North America*, edited by J. Alderfer, which shows an illustration of a Western Reef-Heron with a massive yellow bill and yellow lores. This didn't match up with the Kittery bird, which had a long grayish bill and gray lores.

We returned home and consulted many more field guides, comparing descriptions from each and other sources and found confusion and lack of agreement on what exactly constitutes a dark morph Western Reef-Heron. As the February 2004 *Birding* magazine article, "Little Egret, with Notes on Western Reef-Heron," put it, "the taxonomy of Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*), Little Egret (*E. garzetta*), Western Reef-Heron (*E. gularis*), and Dimorphic Heron (*E. dimorpha*) is, to put it mildly, a mess."

Serendipitously, on August 24, 2006, a message was posted on the NH Birds listserv (previously posted on New Jersey Birding listserv) that intrigued us. It was a note from Nikolas Haass, about new information on the taxonomy of the Western Reef-Heron suggesting that the "Western" Western Reef-Heron is really a subspecies of Little Egret.

(For clarification, there are two recognized subspecies of Western Reef-Heron. The "Western" form (*Egretta gularis gularis*) breeds along the West African coast,



Western Reef-Heron photographed in New Hampshire in August 2006 by Lillian Stokes



Comparison of Western Reef-Heron and Snowy Egret by Lillian Stokes



Western Reef-Heron by Lillian Stokes



Western Reef-Heron feeding acrobatics by Lillian Stokes

while the “Eastern” Western Reef-Heron (*Egretta gularis schistacea*) breeds in coastal areas from the Red Sea to India.)

We spoke with Nikolas, who provided us with this translation (from German) of the paragraph on Western Reef-Heron taxonomy from a chapter he’d contributed to the book *Die Vögel Baden-Württenbergs 2.1* (in press) by J.Hölzinger (see references).

...*gularis* (Bosc, 1792), breeds at the West African coast, *schistacea* (Hemprich and Ehrenberg 1828) breeds at the Indian Ocean coast, and

dimorpha (Hartert 1914) breeds on islands in the Indian Ocean (Cramp and Simmons 1977; Hancock and Kushlan 1984; Del Hoyo et al. 1992).

Bauer and Glutz Von Blotzheim (1966), Payne and Risley (1976), Cramp and Simmons (1977), Payne (1979), Sibley and Monroe (1990), and Svensson et al. (2000) treat Western Reef Heron as a separate species.

Hancock and Kushlan (1984) and Del Hoyo et al. (1992), however, treat all forms of Western Reef Heron as subspecies of Little Egret: *Egretta garzetta gularis*, *Egretta garzetta schistacea*, and *Egretta garzetta dimorpha*.

Voisin (1991) treats Dimorphic Heron, *Egretta gularis dimorpha*, as a subspecies of Western Reef Heron.

Bauer and Glutz Von Blotzheim (1966) and Cramp and Simmons (1977) treat Dimorphic Egret as subspecies of Little Egret, *Egretta garzetta dimorpha*, (although they treat Western Reef Heron as a separate species: *E. gularis gularis* and *E. gularis schistacea*).

Payne and Risley (1976), Payne (1979), and Sibley and Monroe (1990) treat Dimorphic Egret as a separate species: *Egretta dimorpha* (“Mascarene Reef-Egret” in Sibley and Monroe [1990]).

Wolters (1976) treats the Eastern form of Western Reef-Heron as a separate species: *Egretta schistacea*.

Using the superspecies concept (*Genus [superspecies] species subspecies*) the late Andreas Helbig (he is the one who split European *Larus argentatus* and American Herring Gull *L.smithsonianus*) summarized his work in Bauer et al. (2005) (cf. also Barthel in Svensson et al. 2000): The Western (Atlantic) form of Western Reef Heron *Egretta [garzetta] garzetta gularis* seems to be a southern subspecies of Little Egret *Egretta [garzetta] garzetta*. Similar to Snow Goose and “Blue Goose,” which originally were geographically separate populations of the same species, the southern subspecies of Little Egret (*gularis*) occurs predominantly in the dark morph.

In contrast, the Eastern (Indian Ocean) form of the Western Reef Heron, *Egretta schistacea*, (formerly *Egretta gularis schistacea*) seems neither closely related to Little Egret nor to “Western” Western Reef Heron (better “Southern” Little Egret, this name is my personal input), but seems to be a different species and not even a member of the superspecies *Egretta [garzetta]!*

On the other hand the Madagascar form *Egretta [garzetta] dimorpha* might be a separate species within the superspecies *Egretta [garzetta]!*

Of course, Eastern Reef Heron *Egretta sacra* remains a different species.

Note: A German summary of all that will be found in Haass (in press) and a summarizing German identification paper to all the confusing egrets has been published in *Limicola* (Haass 1997).

Where does this leave us? Most agree that the “Eastern” Western Reef-Heron looks different from Little Egret. The confusion is between the “Western” Western Reef-Heron and Little Egret.


We have yet to see a definitive description of the structural differences in “Western” Western Reef-Heron and Little Egret. Nikolas Haass told us that “according to Andreas Helbig there is no scientific study on bill length and bill structure difference of both forms.” Nikolas is continuing to research whether there are any new morphological and DNA studies on these birds.

Meanwhile, the famous bird that thrilled us all this summer is gone. It was last reported on the NH Birds listserve on September 20, 2006, near Route 1B in New Castle, New Hampshire. We, and others, wonder where it has gone.

Western Reef-Herons have been seen a number of times in Barbados, often staying from winter to spring. There are also records of Western Reef-Herons from St. Lucia, Trinidad, and Tobago. Interestingly, there are breeding colonies of Little Egrets on Barbados.

We spoke with Edward Massiah, who monitors the Little Egret breeding colonies in Barbados, and he said “no dark egrets have ever bred in Barbados.” He saw our photos of the Maine-New Hampshire bird and said a couple of years ago in November they had a Western Reef-Heron in breeding plumage that looked similar to our bird. So maybe our famous visitor is headed for Barbados. Who knows?

The many birders who added Western Reef-Heron to their lists can breathe easy for now, or at least until the AOU might lump it with Little Egret. The evolving sense of discovery about this bird is what intrigues us most. As Ian McLaren put it, “to me finding out all the details will be much more fun than clinging to a widely accepted tick.”

This undoubtedly will not be the last time we see a Western Reef-Heron in this part of North America. Perhaps by the time it returns, we will have figured out who it is. 

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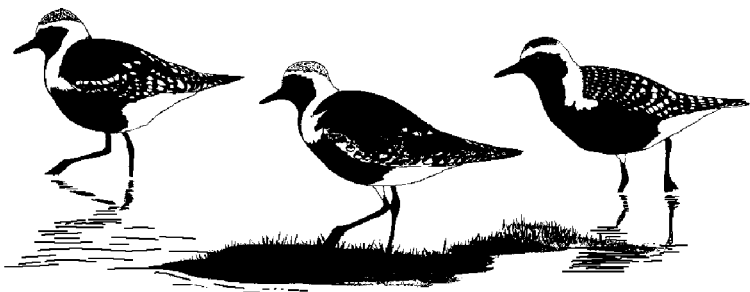
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Don and Lillian Stokes are authors of over thirty books on birds and nature, including Stokes Field Guide to Birds, producers of PBS birding television series, and members of the Nuttall Ornithological Club. Nikolas Haass is a fellow of the Delaware Valley Ornithological club and a member of the New Jersey Bird Records Committee.



BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS BY GEORGE C. WEST

Seabirds as Indicators of Environmental Health: Citizen Scientists Monitor Seabird Mortality throughout the Northeast USA

Julie C. Ellis, PhD; Mark Pokras, DVM; and Florina Tseng, DVM

Background

Seabird Ecological Assessment Network (SEANET) is a collaborative effort that was initiated by the Tufts Wildlife Clinic/Center for Conservation Medicine and the Lloyd Center for Environmental Studies in the fall of 2002. Seabirds are among the most conspicuous organisms of marine ecosystems and are frequently used as indicators of marine oil pollution and other threats. At the Wildlife Clinic we frequently receive calls about large numbers of dead and dying birds on our coast, but prior to the development of SEANET, there was no organized reporting of these events as there is for marine mammals and sea turtles. Numerous threats contribute to these mortality events such as diseases, fisheries operations, persistent organic pollutants and metals, and oil pollution. Without regular monitoring of beaches in this region, it is nearly impossible to detect bird mortality levels from oil and other threats.

Following model projects in Canada and on the Pacific coast, we have established a long-term effort to monitor seabird mortality in the northeastern U.S. One of our main goals is to involve as many citizen scientists as possible in collecting reliable data. Monthly beached bird surveys were initiated in Massachusetts by the Lloyd Center in the fall of 2002. Since then, SEANET has become part of a larger regional monitoring effort by Wildlife Trust (NJ), the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, the regional U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, national and state Audubon societies, and numerous others. Beached bird surveys are currently being conducted throughout the Northeast (Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut) and more recently in the Southeast (Florida and Georgia).

Results from monitoring efforts in coastal Massachusetts (2003–2004)

In 2003–2004 a total of forty-one beaches from Buzzards Bay to Cape Cod were monitored for dead birds. Beached birds were encountered at an average rate of 0.22 ± 0.04 birds/km (mean \pm S.E.), ranging from 0–10 birds/km per survey. A total of 262 carcasses of thirty-two species were found (240, or ninety-two percent, of all carcasses were identified to species, with the Great Black-backed Gull as the most frequently observed species, comprising forty-six of the 240 [19.2 percent]). Volunteers recorded an overall oiling rate of 2.5 percent (five of 199). Between 2003 and 2004, a great degree of seasonal and inter-annual variation was revealed, with the highest beached bird encounter rates in the spring of 2003 and fall of 2004 (**Fig. 1**). Species-specific mortality events, including Red-throated Loons (2003) and Common Terns (2004) influenced these patterns.

If we compare carcass encounter rates within the northwest Atlantic, the mean rate from this study during the past four years is slightly higher than that of Cape Breton, Canada (0.12 birds/km, range 0.04-0.27, Campbell 2005) but lower than the encounter rates calculated for other areas of the world, including Newfoundland (2.25 birds/km during 1984–1999, Wiese and Ryan 2003).

Although in this region it is fairly common for immature Common Eiders to die during late winter, in 2003 the levels of mortality for all ducks, loons, and mergansers were striking. Even disregarding the effects of the April 2003 Bouchard oil spill in Buzzards Bay, there was a very high level of “background” deposition of unoiled beached birds (not seen in loons and mergansers in 2004). Inter-annual monitoring points to the importance of multi-year surveys, especially in oil spill damage assessment. The data from beached bird surveys conducted in Massachusetts in 2003–2004 will be published in the peer-reviewed journal, *Marine Ornithology*, in the spring of 2007 (Harris et al.).

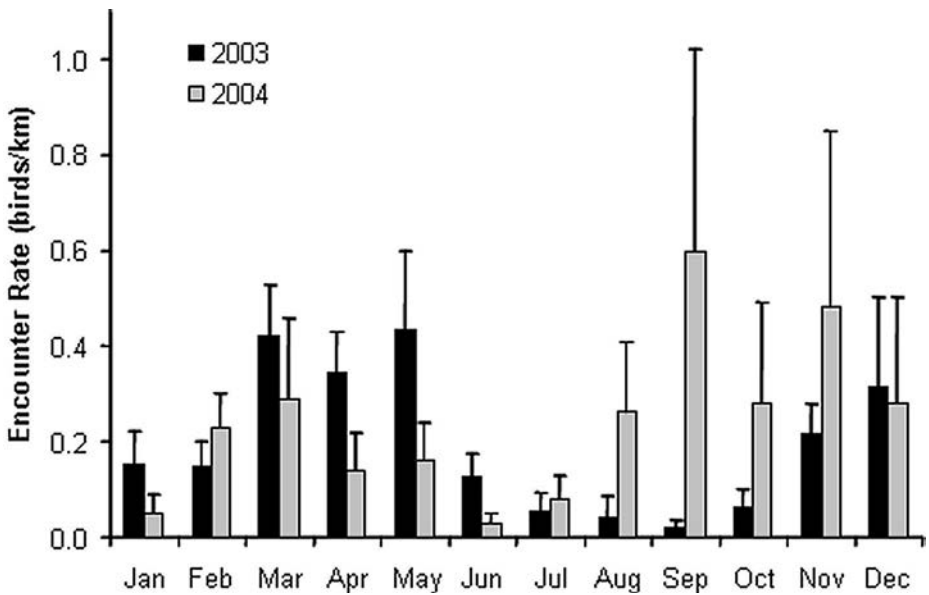


Figure 1. Mean encounter rates (birds/km) of dead seabirds on beaches from Buzzards Bay to Cape Cod, MA in 2003–2004. Particularly high rates of fledgling Common Tern mortality on Cape Cod due to salmonellosis were responsible for the high encounter rates. (See Harris et al. for details.)

Management applications of SEANET

Decades of beached bird surveys off the Newfoundland coast revealed up to seventy-five percent oiling rates for beached carcasses. This figure translates into an estimated 300,000 birds killed by oil each year off the coast of Newfoundland (equivalent to the mortality in the higher profile Exxon Valdez spill). The U.S. has

had a stricter system of fines than Canada, and SEANET data, which so far indicate chronic oiling levels of less than 2.5 percent, were used by groups in Canada to advocate passage of federal legislation, Bill C-15. This law, which went into effect on June 28, 2005, increased fines for the deliberate dumping of oily bilge waste at sea and increased funding for surveillance and enforcement. It represents a major step toward solving the internationally important issue of chronic oiling in the marine environment. Continued monitoring by both SEANET and our Canadian collaborators will help to verify the success or failure of this legislation.

On April 27, 2003, Bouchard Barge B120 spilled an estimated 98,000 gallons of no. 6 fuel oil in Buzzards Bay (http://www.acjv.org/documents/Buzzards_Bay.pdf). This spill killed a reported 461 birds. A drop of oil the size of a coin condemns the bird to a slow, painful death from hypothermia and starvation, by compromising the insulating capacity of its feathers. Oil ingested during preening often results in delayed death.

Because the spill occurred at the time of year when they were staging on the coast for inland migration, loons accounted for more than 130 of the birds killed in this spill. Endangered Piping Plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) were also arriving on beaches at this time. Weeks after the spill, at least eighty percent of the Piping Plovers prospecting in the Dartmouth area were moderately oiled. The timing was bad also for endangered Roseate (*Sterna dougallii*) and threatened Common terns (*Sterna hirundo*) returning from South America. The largest nesting colony of Roseate Terns in North America is in Buzzards Bay, with over 2000 adults (up to thirty percent of the entire North American population) nesting usually on Bird and Ram Islands. Less than a week after the spill, extensive areas of Ram Island's beach were covered with oil, and within two weeks of the spill, Bird Island's beaches were lightly oiled.

SEANET volunteers were mobilized to participate in clean-up and bird recovery efforts. In cooperation with the U.S. EPA, we necropsied over seventy loons and a handful of other species that died during the spill. In November 2004, the oil transportation company was fined several million dollars, which is being used for conservation of important wetland areas in coastal Massachusetts. Data from SEANET volunteer beach monitoring were used to assess the species most affected by the spill, and along with other data sets, helped determine wetland areas to target for conservation.

SEANET resources

Beached Birds: A COASST Field Guide to the North Atlantic

Many of our volunteers are inexperienced in bird identification; in addition, dead birds may be more difficult to identify than live ones depending on the degree of decay. Thus an identification key for seabirds in the region is valuable, particularly for those features that can be identified in a decayed carcass. In collaboration with Bird Studies Canada, we have produced a field guide to dead beached birds for the Atlantic region, since none existed before. The guide, based on one in use in the western United States (Hass and Parrish 2000), will benefit SEANET beached bird surveys

significantly, since it will allow more volunteers to become involved and insure more accurate data. This guide should be available for purchase from Tufts by the New Year.

Webpage and searchable online database

In 2002, a SEANET webpage was set up. It contains detailed information for volunteers, reports on seabird mortality events, links to collaborators, and a variety of additional information about the project (<http://www.tufts.edu/vet/seanet/>). In addition, a web-based reporting system for seabird strandings is housed at the Wildlife Disease Information Node of the National Biological Information Infrastructure at the USGS, located at: <<http://wildlifedisease.nbi.gov/seanet>>. This system allows volunteers to enter data directly on the web, allowing for quick compilation of results. We are currently working on making the database easily accessible and freely available to interested citizens, scientists, and other parties. Thanks to Megan Hines at the National Biological Information Infrastructure (USGS), based at the National Wildlife Health Center, Madison, WI, SEANET's online data entry system is serving as a model for other wildlife mortality reporting, including reporting for Avian Influenza for the United States.

Long-term goals of SEANET

Our main goal is to maintain a long-term, consistent effort to record changes in seabird mortality patterns. Only long-term monitoring can establish baseline data with which "unusual" mortality events can be compared. The involvement of large numbers of citizen scientists and students is crucial to such an effort. One of the most important parts of the project is the educational component; people invested in monitoring the health of their environment are far more likely to be dedicated to conservation in every aspect of their lives.

In addition to maintaining the educational components of this project, we plan to continue a rigorous research program and to publish the results in peer-reviewed technical journals. Thus far we have published data from beached bird monitoring in Massachusetts (Harris et al. in press) and from necropsies of gannets and shearwaters found on beaches in Massachusetts (Pierce et al. 2004). Currently, we are preparing reports of interesting findings from necropsied birds (e.g., heavy metal contamination and parasitism) and new results from additional beached bird monitoring efforts. In addition, we have started a new collaborative research project with Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute (WHOI) on diseases and pathogens in marine birds and mammals in the Gulf of Maine. The research findings produced by SEANET will aid in our understanding of how the health of humans and wildlife are linked. 🐾

Julie Ellis is coordinator of SEANET at Tufts Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine in the Center for Conservation Medicine, where she works with SEANET volunteers and does research on seabird ecology and health. She received a Master's degree in Systematics and Ecology from the University of Kansas and a PhD from the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Brown University. Her dissertation focused on how seabirds affect marine and terrestrial communities in the Isles of Shoals. In the fall of 2004 Ellis began a postdoctoral fellowship at the Shoals Marine Lab via Cornell University. During this time, she worked on a variety of projects, including gull banding and population studies as well as

investigations of the role of marine birds and mammals as indicators of pathogens in marine environments. **Mark Pokras** is Director of the Wildlife Clinic at Tufts University's Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine and a long-time bander, birder, and wildlife rehabilitator.

Florina Tseng is a professor at Tufts University's Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine specializing in wildlife medicine and issues related to seabird and marine ecosystem health.

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NWRA REFUGE PHOTO CONTEST

The National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) has launched its second annual Refuge Photo Contest — a digital photo contest designed to showcase America's national wildlife refuges.

Images may be of birds, mammals, insects, fish, other animals, plants, people, or simply refuge scenery; in short, almost any aspect of a National Wildlife Refuge can be submitted for this contest. The contest submissions must be made by January 15, 2007.

Two rounds of judging will select the winning entries. The first round will select up to 200 images to be included in the NWRA Refuge Image Library. The second round will result in the selection of the top prizewinners.

Prizes will include items from Steiner Binoculars, TrekTechnologies, Swarovski Optik, Wild Bird Centers, and Houghton Mifflin. Also, each photographer submitting an entry will receive a complimentary one-year membership to the NWRA.

For more information on the contest, including procedures, rules, and other details, see <<http://www.refugenet.org/contest/2007ContestHome.html>>.

[This information came from the Birding Community E-Bulletin. You can access an archive of past E-bulletins on the National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) website: <<http://www.refugenet.org/birding/birding5.html>> or on the Steiner Binocular website <<http://www.steiner-birding.com/bulletin.html>>.]

Everything But The Beak

John Kricher

It was a clear, bright winter day, the air temperature a nippy ten degrees Fahrenheit. Winds were light at South Beach, at Orleans, Massachusetts, as I walked toward the dunes in search of the Snow Bunting flock I had been observing over many visits. The scattered patches of newly fallen light snow revealed an abundance of bird tracks, each with a long hind toe. My flock of about ninety buntings had already been there this morning. As I parked, I could see the distant cloud of “snowflakes,” a popular old name for the species, as it whirled about like a miniature storm over the distant dunes.

Snow Bunting flocks are typically restless, often touching down repeatedly only to become immediately airborne again. This flock was doing a lot of that on this frigid morning. These birds were obviously consuming a great deal of energy trying to figure out if they wanted to land or not. I thought, perhaps, they just enjoy flying around together, but somehow I doubted that (the obvious question aside as to whether or not birds actually “enjoy” flying). After all, the body temperature of a Snow Bunting is about ninety-four degrees higher than the air temperature that cold January day. Having studied the creatures at close range, I fully appreciate how dense their feathers are, how snug they must be in their pale downy parkas. Still, without food, and lots of it, birds soon lose the ongoing battle with the elements. Snow Buntings, *Plectrophenax nivalis* (the scientific name *nivalis* refers to snow), are among the hardiest of birds, the passerine that nests farther north than all others. But they still have to eat, and eat a lot. So why weren't they landing and feeding?

Maybe it was me. I was ever so obvious as I made my way across a two-dimensional landscape of sand flats and marsh; they couldn't miss seeing me. Perhaps my very presence might have been causing them to be so restless, but I doubted that. I have watched Snow Buntings for many hours and have on occasion approached to within about twenty feet of them without causing discernable alarm, and in fact this flock was coming to me! As they approached, I heard them calling back and forth, a constant melodious pipping interspersed by a flat buzzy note somewhat like the sound of a bug getting zapped in a bug light. The flock flew directly toward me, only a few feet above the ground. I stood utterly still, and they passed me so close that their wing beats were easily audible. And then they were gone. Up they flew into the dazzling blue of a clear winter sky, out over the farthest dunes, gone. But I knew these birds, and I just waited.

I did not have long to wait. Within twenty minutes I heard the distinct *pip-pip* notes of an incoming Snow Bunting flock. After more trial landings and more circling, the flock finally settled about sixty yards from me on open sand. From there they scurried to the edge of a dune, and some flew up to perch on stalks of beach grass, feeding on the seed heads. Others jumped up from the ground to snatch seeds off the stalks. I did a quick count, and again, as had been the case in recent days,

about ninety birds were in the flock. Of course, I had no way of knowing whether these were actually the same individual birds I had been watching over previous days, although I knew one was. One of the adult males lacked tail feathers. He was pretty obvious among the others, and he had been present each day that I watched the flock.

There always seems to be a frantic quality about Snow Bunting feeding. They all seem to be in such a hurry. Often the flock moves as it feeds, wave-like, some birds flying over others to land in front, only to have the rear birds now do the same. A big Snow Bunting flock resembles an avian amoeba, moving in irregular undulations across the landscape in quest for seeds. This flock seemed just a bit more skittish than most I have watched . . . and I wondered how that male got separated from his tail feathers.

A nearby Horned Lark called, just once; that was enough. The Snow Buntings were immediately attentive to the lark's call. All feeding ceased; little white and tan heads became alert. Whatever that lark had said, the buntings didn't like, and they were immediately airborne again amid a cacophony of pips and buzzes, and soon they were gone again. I waited.

When the buntings returned, the flock landed away from the beach grass, on flat open sand. I cautiously approached, noticing how compact the flock was, the individual birds almost shoulder to shoulder. I relocated the tailless male. The scurrying birds began to feed, presumably picking up scattered seeds from the sand. I began to make notes on plumage variation when my peripheral vision alerted me.

INCOMING! The Merlin was barely a foot above the sand for the final twenty yards of the attack. She came in low and fast, and the buntings did not see her soon enough. I watched as the buntings scattered in all directions, a flurry of sound and feathers, as the Merlin tumbled across the sand, a Snow Bunting in her talons. As the raptor was righting itself and mantling its victim, the flock circled, regrouped, and flew with purpose away from the scene of the attack, until I could no longer see them, even through my scope. This time they were really gone, not soon to return.

The Merlin glared at me, and I remained still. The victim appeared lifeless, likely killed on impact. Was it, by any chance, the tailless male? I didn't think so; it looked too brown, likely a female or first winter male. Then I saw that it had a tail. The tailless male, perhaps almost a victim itself once, had escaped.

Apparently satisfied that I was not a threat, the female Merlin began to feed. She ate the head first, then turned the bird on its back, positioning it like a Thanksgiving turkey, and began plucking the breast feathers, which were quickly scattered by the wind. Big chunks of warm flesh soon filled her crop, and after finishing with the body, she worked on the wings, pulling out primary and secondary feathers and then eating the flesh and bone. The falcon fed for thirty-five minutes. A female Merlin weighs as much as 190 grams. A Snow Bunting tops out at about forty-two grams. This Merlin had eaten the equivalent of just over twenty percent of her own body weight. That's like a 150 pound person eating a thirty pound steak for dinner! The

bird's crop was obviously well extended when she laboriously took flight and, like the buntings, disappeared over a distant sand dune.

I walked to where she had been feeding. Wind had blown the feathers hither and yon, but what I did see lying on the sand was a little orange beak. I could not find any other substantive part of what was, minutes ago, a Snow Bunting.

There is no right or wrong in nature. The world of Merlins and Snow Buntings is not immoral; it is amoral. I felt fortunate, privileged really, to have seen what I saw. I have seen quite a few Merlin attacks, and most have failed. Indeed most of the Snow Buntings would make it through this cold winter, but a few would not. Because of them, maybe this Merlin would survive. That is nature.

I know many birders who thrive on chasing rarities and making lists. I do that too, but I also spend a great deal of birding time watching Snow Buntings in winter. It may not be for all birders, but I take great satisfaction in simply watching a species that has captivated me. I have put in a lot of time on cold windy days hanging out with Snow Buntings. I think they're worth it. 🐦

John Kricher is a professor of biology at Wheaton College (Massachusetts). He is past president of the Wilson Ornithological Society and Association of Field Ornithologists and serves on the board of the American Birding Association. He has authored three ecology field guides in the Peterson series and is author of A Neotropical Companion and Galapagos. Despite his tropical focus, he is really into Snow Buntings.



SNOW BUNTING FLOCK BY DAVID LARSON

Ten Tips for Alienating Your Birding Companions

John Nelson

In a previous article, “Ten Tips for Maintaining Your Birding Partner” [*Bird Observer* Vol. 33, No. 6, page 375], I provided some modest advice about how to keep your birding partner happy: willing and ready to bird with you. I now propose to guide you toward the accomplishment of a far more difficult feat. I offer helpful hints on how to annoy and, ultimately, alienate all your birding companions.

What makes this feat so challenging? The world is overrun with annoying inhabitants, some of them birders. How much skill or effort does it take to become such a person? That depends on how high you set your standard. To maintain your birding partner, you need only focus your attention on one person. To alienate your birding companions, whether on a brief local outing or on a long tour of Arizona or Australia, you may have to incur the wrath of fifteen or twenty people, perhaps for weeks at a time. If you're a fainthearted soul content to be middling, you'll strive for mere consensus. If you have any grit, you'll insist on unanimous hostility. Some birders are easy enough to infuriate: talk too much on the trails and they're yours. Others are more intransigent, either hopelessly good-natured or so blissed out by birds that almost nothing bothers them. To set people like this against you requires persistence, strategic planning, and a will to conquer, as well as whatever native ability you bring to the cause. The following tips suggest some ways to proceed.

(1) Whine. Whine about the leader's decision-making: why this trail, not that one? Whine about your fellow birders' regrettable lapses in field etiquette. Whine about the condition of your eyes or optics. If you're on a longer trip, whine about the itinerary, heat, altitude, and pace of the tour. It's too intense, it's too leisurely. You're not seeing all the birds you were promised. You're seeing too many birds to assimilate. There weren't any birds at the Taj Mahal: why did we stop there? It doesn't matter what you whine about as long as you keep up a constant litany of complaints. In fact, whining often has more lasting impact if your gripes are not even remotely birding-related. Whine about the incompetent laundry service, your too tight shoes, the slovenly appearance of the natives. Whine about the wine.

You might be tempted to use dogs or children as your models, since both are notoriously fervent, implacable whiners. Don't, they're dilettantes; it takes an adult to exploit the full potential of the whining strategy. Take, for instance, the middle-aged master whiner who accompanied my wife and me and twelve other birders on a Thailand tour. He whined incessantly and creatively for the whole three weeks. The birds were hiding, too small, too distant. The bus driver was going to kill us. The smoke outside the van was suffocating us. The Thai people were too Thai. If all else failed, he whined about his companions' whining. He also cleverly enlisted his spouse, not as a fellow whiner but as a co-conspirator who enabled his whining by giving credence to all his complaints, attempting to placate him, and apologizing for the birds he'd failed to get on. When he grouched about others in the group, he

employed the fiendishly effective tactic of directing all complaints to her, ostensibly in private conversations, yet loud enough to insure that every group member could overhear. Thus he succeeded in gaining the hatred of all while shielding himself from any accusation that he was insulting people face-to-face. Alienation need not be a solitary project; a team approach often works best.

(2) Gab. Gabbing, like whining, takes persistence, but depends less on a grating tone and more on pure endurance, volume, rapidity of speech, and obliviousness to any injunctions about keeping quiet in the field. Again, subject matter is secondary: the point is to keep talking. Gab about birding: the bird you just got on, the bird you're not getting on now, the birds you saw five years ago in Gabon. Gab about anything *but* birding: your sister-in-law's hip replacement, the leader's beard, George Bush's smirk. Gab while the leader is gabbing or, better yet, when the forest is still and the leader is merely listening. Encourage others to gab with you. In addition to nurturing ire, gabbing will drown out the monotony of the endless squeaks and whistles around you. Birdsong, wrote the biologist J. S. Haldane, tends to be "repetitious to the point of inanity." The human voice, by contrast, especially one's own voice, creates a music infinitely varied in tone, rhythm, and nuance.

(3) Gossip. Gossip is focused gabbing with a clear aim: to bring about embarrassment, friction, and an atmosphere of general ill will within a group. The object here is to pit people against one another and transform a harmonious unit of birders into backbiting factions. You can't be too subtle or devious. If you want to generate personal animosity rather than free-floating hostility or mistrust, your fellows must be able to locate the source of any dissension. The problem is that to gossip well, you need material — confessions of pet peeves, whispered revelations that Birder X can't abide Birder Y — and your companions may be reluctant to confide in a whiner and gabber. Fortunately, birders are forced to spend their days huddled in close proximity, on trails and at meals, and it's easy to eavesdrop. If that doesn't work, you might resort to the inferior tactic of sheer invention. More on this under tip #9.

(4) Linger. This is a both a surefire route to alienation and an easy strategy to put into practice. Linger in bed a few more minutes so you're late for breakfast. Linger over your third cup of coffee and your use of toiletries so you arrive at the van ten minutes after the designated meeting time. Linger at the scope long enough for the bird to flush before the woman behind you can check it off her life list. Linger back on the trail, pretending to be on something, until everyone has had their fill of some remarkably cooperative little skulker, say a tapaculo, then wait for the tapaculo to hide before notifying the leader that you missed it. If you're in the front of the van (see tip #6), linger long enough to check your backpack, water supply, and field guide before you exit the vehicle, but not so long that you're trampled to death by twelve crazed birders desperate to glimpse a rare raptor before it's gone.

(5) Malinger. The malingerer takes control of time; the malingerer refuses to be cowed by responsibility. It's not your job to find birds for the group: that's why the leader gets paid the big bucks. Once a bird's been found, it's not your job to

determine its exact location. A competent leader should be able to give precise directions, repeat them as often as necessary, and start over if the bird has moved on to another perch. Why should you be forced to memorize all those confusing names — vireos, antivireos — or keep track of every bird you've ever seen? You're not an index to a field guide, and you didn't put down good money to have your memory tested every three seconds. Even if you didn't put down good money, even if the leader is making no bucks at all, you have the right to ask a few hundred simple questions without everybody getting all snippy about it.

(6) Hog. Hog the front when the group walks Indian file down a narrow trail. Hog the front of the van. Hog the leader's attention. Hog the scope — make sure you're always positioned to hog it. Hog the best vantage point from which to view any unconfiding bird. Hog the snacks in the field. Later, hog any dishes at dinner that might be in short supply. Hog the conversation at meals. With a little determination you can whine, gab, gossip, and hog at the same time.

(7) Brag. Brag about the number of species you saw in Columbia before it became too dangerous to bird there. Brag about the vagrants you've found in your neighborhood, or birds you've never seen at all (see #9), especially if all your companions live at least 500 miles away from you. Brag about your life list; surprisingly few birders do. Brag about being the kind of person who doesn't keep lists because you grasp the true spirit of birding. Your boasts needn't have any connection to birds. Brag about your knowledge of German lieder, your offspring's precocious intelligence, and the steps you've personally taken to reverse global warming.

(8) Condescend. Bragging demonstrates your superiority to your companions; condescension shows that you know they're inferior. You might patiently explain how to distinguish murrelets, while implying through your patronizing tone that any birder with a brain can easily detect the differences in the field. You might provide elaborate directions to indicate where a bird is perched, while frequently reminding your companion that the bird is absolutely in plain sight and is, in fact, rotating on the perch to display each of its field marks. Or, more generally, use tone and gesture to suggest that you're doing the companion a favor merely by speaking to someone who lacks your expertise and dedication to the art of birding.

(9) Lie. Some birders might resist this strategy on ethical grounds. The Ten Commandments and the laws of other great religions do not prohibit whining, boasting, or lingering, but they do forbid the bearing of false witness. But why is it better to whine than fib? Deceit can be a fine way to arouse envy — alienation's first cousin — while proving your awareness of prime target birds and their habitats. Let's say that your group in Panama heads out at dawn to find the stunning yet wary Ocellated Antbird. Take a break, sleep in, linger over your coffee. When the group returns, bedraggled, sweating, and demoralized, casually mention that you were lucky to enough to get a great view of the bird, along with various other elusive and previously unseen species, when an ant swarm paraded down a trail just a hundred yards from your room. Remember, your canard must be plausible — you can't find an

antbird in scrub or a rare rail in a treetop — and you can use this trick only once or twice per tour. Even better, involve others in your dissimulations. You might, for example, show up twenty minutes late for the checklist (see #4) and inquire if Birder Z remembered to report the rare manakin the two of you spotted after the rest of the group had gone ahead. If Birder Z denies any recollection of any manakin, refresh his memory and remind him of his promise to catch up to the group and inform them of the bird's whereabouts. At the least Birder Z will be won over to your cause, and the suspicion you've stirred up could contribute to the general ill will discussed under tip #3.

(10) Stink. You may feel you lack the social skills, the gumption, or verbal finesse to rely on any of the measures above. If so, you can compensate for your deficiencies through one simple strategy, admittedly crude and extreme, yet undeniably effective: neglect of personal hygiene. This strategy works best on extended tours, particularly in the tropics. Pack lightly: nobody's fashion-conscious on birding trips, and your companions will be able to identify you more readily if you're always wearing the same outfit. Whenever possible, pursue birds by stomping through puddles and wading through soggy marshes. Apply repellent, lavishly, continuously, to ward off vermin. Drink plenty of fluids to stave off dehydration and keep the sweat flowing. Abjure detergents, deodorants, and other so-called "cleansing products" that degrade the environment. Sidle up to your companions for a more intimate birding experience.

It's a rare person who masters all ten strategies, but I've known birders quite accomplished at combining six or seven of them, as well as virtuosos so adept at one strategy that they didn't have to bother with the others. But why would any birder wish to alienate all his companions? The answer is simple: to be remembered. No one wants to be ordinary, yet the sad truth is that most of us are pedestrian birders, destined to be forgotten in the crowd or vaguely recalled as "a nice person" or "a decent birder." Ask me for the names of my companions in Thailand, and I'll come up blank on many of them, but I'll never forget the name, the forever aggrieved face, and the petulant drone of the Master Whiner. Follow these helpful hints, and I promise that your companions will remember you, long after they've forgotten that Spot-breasted Laughingthrush they were thrilled to see in Thailand, that bush-shrike they gushed over in Gambia, long after they've forgotten the names, faces, and personalities of birders they once considered friends. Become an alienation expert and you'll achieve a kind of immortality. Your companions will tell vivid stories about you after you're gone. You'll become a birding legend. 🦋

*John Nelson has recently retired after more than three decades as an English professor at North Shore Community College. He now dedicates himself to writing fiction and going birding, not necessarily in that order. He has published a book on teaching, *Cultivating Judgment: Teaching Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum*, and volunteers as a property monitor for Essex County Greenbelt. He makes his home in Gloucester.*

FIELD NOTE

With Gulls Like This, Who Needs Falcons?

Doug Chickering

Shortly after Lois Cooper and I arrived at Plum Island today (October 21) it became obvious that the duck-hunting season had begun. Far across the marshes, from the other side of the Plum Island River, we could see various-sized flocks of ducks streaking upwards into the clear morning air. The thud of distant gunfire rolled in over the marsh grass, and we could see the occasional small, camouflaged figure of a hunter way out on the flats.

We arrived at the Salt Pannes — filled with dabbling ducks — to see if we could find the adult male Eurasian Wigeon that Lois and I had seen there the day before, and also to count the American Wigeon. This year's crop of migrating wigeon was the largest I could ever recall seeing. Halfway through my count, the ducks broke into a sudden flurry of activity. I looked up, and sure enough, a large dark Peregrine glided in from the south, over the ducks who were frantically splashing into crowded flocks or breaking into a low collective flight just a few feet above the water. The Peregrine looked more deliberate than menacing and almost seemed to be testing the ducks more than hunting them. Perhaps he was trying to get one to try to make a break for it or to find one that looked injured or ill. Whatever the case, the Peregrine never made a serious move at any of the ducks but instead would just glide over them, bank into a wide slow turn, and then come back for another desultory pass.

The wigeons were frantic, gathered in tight flocks that broke into a splashing fury whenever the Peregrine passed over them. The falcon did this once or twice, then gained a little altitude, and then quickly stooped into dive towards the edge or the flock; not at a wigeon, but towards a Great black-backed Gull, who had been standing at the periphery of all the tumult, seemingly unconcerned and certainly unaffected by all the panic around him. I suddenly noticed a lot of splashing around the gull and then could not find the falcon; for an instant I thought it had hit the gull. I focused my scope on the gull and saw he was clearly latched onto something; something that was flailing desperately in its grip. Had the big gull actually caught a diving Peregrine? Preposterous! After a few more tense moments I realized that he didn't have the falcon but instead was firmly attached to the back of a wigeon. I had noticed early that during the activity caused by the Peregrine's arrival, one of the wigeons had separated from its flock and sought shelter next to the gull: a fatal mistake in judgment.

With a mixture of fascination and horror, I watched the terrible scene unfold before me. The duck splashed and struggled and tried desperately to break free of the gull. Holding the duck firmly by the back, the Black-backed Gull pressed it into the water, adjusted its grip, and held on as the wigeon cried out piteously and flapped and splashed.

I knew that I was witnessing an act of nature without moral implications, but my compassion was aroused and I couldn't help but assign evil to the gull and innocence to the duck. In human society such judgments are often necessary, but in nature, moral delineations do not apply. Still, I was horrified.

The duck eventually stopped struggling and went limp. The gull then proceeded to tear into it, and the Peregrine came to roost on the bank nearby to see if somehow he could manipulate things to his advantage. When I left, the gull had pulled the wigeon carcass farther out into the water, the Peregrine continued to watch from the bank, and the other ducks had resumed dabbling in the pans, seemingly unaffected, as if someone had just blown the "all clear" signal. 🦅

REFUGE BIRDING ACTIVITIES

The Refuge Improvement Act of 1997 recognizes that "compatible wildlife-dependent recreation is a legitimate and appropriate general public use of the [National Wildlife Refuge] System." As such, a group of birders, bird-industry practitioners, and avi-tourist experts has been asked by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide some feedback on birding on Refuges. The birders team's chairman is Jon Andrew, Chief of Refuges from Region 4 (Southeast).

Members of this new team first met in late September to discuss the Refuge System's conservation of migratory bird habitat strategy. An effort was also made to explore the group's experience with strengthening a bird-conservation and bird-appreciation constituency, and encouraging awareness of birds' needs through quality wildlife dependent recreational opportunities.

The Refuge System is increasingly interested in educating Americans about the importance and value of conserving our nation's birds. Key refuge staff want to know how their current bird recreation and conservation efforts are faring on NWRs, as well as how they are contributing beyond their boundaries. For example, how does the Refuge System contribute to regional birding trails, local nature festivals, and neighboring communities?

If you have particular insights or concerns in this area, you are welcome to pass your thoughts along to either of the E-bulletin editors (Wayne R. Petersen, wpetersen@massaudubon.org, or Paul J. Baicich, paul.baicich@verizon.net). They will make sure your concerns reach the Refuge Birders Team.

You can access an archive of past E-bulletins on the National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) website <<http://www.refugenet.org/birding/birding5.html>> or on the Steiner Binocular website <<http://www.steiner-birding.com/bulletin.html>>.

[This information came from the *Birding Community E-Bulletin*. You can access an archive of past E-bulletins on the National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) website: <<http://www.refugenet.org/birding/birding5.html>> or on the Steiner Binocular website <<http://www.steiner-birding.com/bulletin.html>>.]

ABOUT BOOKS

Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho-Cooks-For-You!

Mark Lynch

What's That Bird? By Joseph Choiniere and Claire Mowbray Golding. 2005. Storey Publishing. North Adams, Massachusetts.

Letters From Eden: A Year At Home, In the Woods by Julie Zickefoose. 2006. Houghton Mifflin Company. New York, New York.

Birds of Cape Cod and the Islands by Roger S. Everett. 2006. Schiffer Publishing Ltd. Atglen, Pennsylvania.

Handbook of Avian Hybrids of the World by Eugene M. McCarthy. 2006. Oxford University Press. Oxford, Great Britain.

Naturalised Birds of the World by Christopher Lever. T & A D Poyser. 2005. London, Great Britain.

“Gifts, believe me, captivate both men and Gods. Jupiter himself was won over and appeased by gifts.”

Ovid, Roman poet and notorious regifter, BC 43-AD 18

The climax of the year is a traditional time for gift giving. It doesn't matter whether you are religious, agnostic, atheist, or Zoroastrian, as the year winds down, with so many gaily wrapped parcels flying about, it's a good time to have something wrapped and ready to give, if only to yourself. Below are some suggestions for gifts of books that are about birds, because, being birders, birds are what we think about most, and like the Borg in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, we are always looking to assimilate another perfectly happy human into our “collective.” “Resistance is futile.”

For that very “small person” in your life whom you hope will put down that creepy American Girl doll, turn off Nickelodeon, and finally go outside:

One of the real joys of birding is that periodically you get that childlike kick at the wonder and beauty of nature. It is little wonder that birders are always looking for ways to pass our interest in the natural world off to our children or grandchildren (I have four of the latter, and I am certainly trying). Obviously, you need to take them outside often and teach them how to look at and behave in nature. Just as important is to supply them with age-appropriate books that they can use to learn more about birds on their own. A number of these come to mind: like *Flute's Journey* by Lynne Cherry or the *Bird* volume of the Eyewitness Books series. I am happy to report that one of the better young person's books on birds has recently been written and published locally.

What's That Bird? is by Joseph Choiniere, Director of the Massachusetts Audubon Society's Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary and Claire Mowbray Golding, an editor with twenty years' experience in creating educational materials for children. They make a perfect team: a seasoned natural historian and an editor who knows how best to get the information across to a young audience. This book is geared for children in the 6–13 year old age range, although novice adults would get a lot out of reading *What's That Bird?* too.



What's That Bird? is nothing less than a primary school course in ornithology. All the basics are thoroughly covered: migration, the dynamics of flight, nesting and feeding behavior, extinction, morphology, and the basics of bird field identification. Details on building a birdhouse and creating a bird-attractive arbor are also given. The book also includes an annotated reference list that includes books, CDs, DVDs, and web sites. *What's That Bird?* is heavy on content, but always fun to read.

What is most impressive about *What's That Bird?* is the layout and writing. The layout is colorful and clear, always engaging without being childish. There are numerous color photographs by Tom Vezo and a number of fine drawings and paintings by James Robins. The writing is authoritative yet at a child's interest level. The description of the Blue Jay begins:

“If birds were kids, the Blue Jay would be the kid who's always in trouble with the teacher. Jays are ‘take charge’ birds: noisy and pushy, with bold blue colors, large crests, and loud voices.”

The author continues, mentioning that jays store acorns like squirrels, details their nesting behavior, their “squeaky wheel” calls, and describes their mimicry of Red-shouldered Hawks. I wish most field guides were this much fun to read.

For that significant other who doesn't understand the real appeal of predawn outings to wet and buggy places, when you could stay warm and toasty in bed with them:

Julie Zickefoose's artwork will likely be familiar to long-time readers of *Bird Observer* and her writing has often graced the pages of *Bird Watcher's Digest*. The material in *Letters From Eden* was gathered over eight years of observation from her home turf in the northern Appalachians of Ohio. As she recounts in her preface:

Lately, I've been reading stories of nature study in far-flung and dangerous places, stories written by women of courage. To comb through my own writings, ruminations of the natural world just outside my door, has been a humbling counterpoint to their adventures. Granted, it's a pretty nice yard: eighty acres of Appalachian woodland surrounded by a patchwork of forest and agricultural land. I watch my neighbors: coyotes, copperheads, gnatcatchers, and bluebirds. I walk through their woods, and I'm lucky enough to come to know some of them.

The chapters are organized around the seasons, which gives this collection of essays a more unified sense of progress and meaning. The subject matter is as diverse as the wildlife just outside her door. Zickefoose writes about her ambiguous attitudes to the notorious, invasive multiflora rose, or the simple magic of watching phoebes, Tree Swallows, and Carolina Wrens nest. Her experience of being bitten by a copperhead many miles from any doctor is by turns frightening and humorous. A piece on local box turtle populations is a wonderful account of her efforts to rehabilitate formerly captive turtles that also includes a useful synopsis of some of the



current research on these stressed reptiles. Some pieces are poetic, some highly emotional, others funny and even a bit bizarre, like when she discovers that the bullfrog she innocently has introduced to her tiny lily pond is voraciously gulping down birds. Through all of Zickefoose's writing she reveals a deep sense of wonder at the complexity of nature that comes with careful and long-time observation of her local patch.

What sets these essays apart from a lot of other "nature" writing is in the sense they give us of Zickefoose as someone with a fairly typical family life. She is not some Thoreau-esque semi-hermit; she has a husband, friends who come over for dinner, deadlines to meet, and a house to keep up. Her two children were born during the period covered in these essays. This made me realize how rarely we read good natural history writing that has children as part of the action, not only toddling around in the background but sometimes front and center. Her essay "Birding With Bambinos" should be required reading for every Scrooge-like birder who has grimaced and muttered under their breath upon seeing kids while out in the field.

Letters From Eden also features numerous examples of Zickefoose's wonderful artwork: loose, spontaneous field sketches, as well as her accomplished watercolor painting. Two surprising paintings speak to that connection of children to the nature world so important in this book. In one, a potentially deadly copperhead slithers across a sidewalk that is covered with children's chalk drawings. In another, a Savannah Sparrow is depicted incongruously perched on a rack of children's birthday candles in a store.

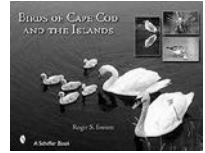
This is one of the very few books published this year that is as fascinating to read as it is to look at.

For that rich uncle/aunt with the expensive place in Truro that you would love to inhabit for several weeks next summer:

"You know what would make a great coffee-table book? A coffee-table book about coffee tables." Kramer on *Seinfeld* (Season 5, Episode 6)

I confess I don't really "get" coffee-table books. For one thing they're always ungainly huge and therefore not comfortable to read. They are also usually ridiculously expensive. On a profligate impulse you buy one, and after one leaf-through, the book just sits there forlornly on the coffee table gathering dust and coffee-cup rings.

Cape Cod photographer Roger S. Everett's *Birds of Cape Cod and the Islands* manages to transcend the coffee-table genre, though, with a collection of photographs and text that aspires to a field guide's thoroughness. Everett's photos show almost every species seen on Cape Cod over the past two decades. Indeed, there are few species that have appeared on the Cape that Roger hasn't photographed.



Eschewing the taxonomic approach, Everett organizes his photographic catalog according to where the photographs were taken, not where the birds are typically found. His categories include "In and Around the Yard," "Marshes and Pond," "Seashore," "Forests," and "Fields (Managed Lands)." I find this approach arbitrary and ultimately unsatisfying since birds are often found in more than one habitat. Everett places his Common Yellowthroat, for example, in the "Forests" section (because that's where this particular photograph was taken), when that species could just as easily have ended up in "Fields" or even "Marshes and Pond." A Peregrine Falcon is placed in "Fields," although I have more often seen Peregrines on the Cape along the "Seashore." Shearwaters, petrels, gannets, and alcids are all listed under "Seashore," when another category like "Off Shore" may have been more appropriate. All that said, one real advantage to organizing the photographs in this way is that it does allow more freedom in the layout of the book, and the result is very aesthetically pleasing.

The book ends with an amazing series of photographs of "Rare Sightings" that includes his pictures of such "Hotline" species as Sprague's Pipit, Rock Wren, Black-tailed and Bar-tailed godwits, Mississippi Kite, Magnificent Frigatebird, and even the Western Reef-Heron that was found on Nantucket in 1983.

Captions are, for the most part, minimal: a sentence or two about where the photograph was taken and perhaps a note on the habits of the bird or where or when it appears on the Cape. For some of the rarer species, however, the captions tend to be more involved. For instance, his photograph of a Yellow-throated Warbler is accompanied by:

One of the Cape's premier birders called me on New Year's Day in 1986 to tell me about this warbler at his front yard feeders. So, I packed my gear and my rather crude blind and set up in his front yard and was rewarded by this photo of a rare Cape visitor. His neighbors still talk about the strange New Year's Day sight of me on a cold morning in a blind in Harwich.

It is at moments like this when *Birds of Cape Cod and the Islands* is at its most engaging. Every photograph has a story behind it, and I am just as interested in Roger's tales of how he got the picture as I am in ogling the photos. I wish there had been more lengthy descriptions of his experiences in the field.

In an effort to be complete, Everett includes a few photographs that do not measure up to the high standards set by the rest of the book. Luckily, these are rare exceptions to an otherwise stunning collection. The full-page spread of the breeding

plumaged Black Tern taken on North Monomoy is simply sublime. A Baltimore Oriole's orange breast against an orange (fruit) half at a feeder is a wonderful juxtaposition of brilliant color. Among a flock of goldfinches at a tube feeder, a single male stares right at the viewer, revealing an intimate moment between the artist and his subject. The catalogue of visual pleasures of this book is nearly endless.

Birds of Cape Cod and the Islands is a fine book even if it is of the enigmatic coffee table variety. If you have spent any time birding the Cape's dunes and barrier beaches, flipping through these pages you can almost hear the crash of waves, the rustle of the dune grass, and the screams of the terns.

For that lister you want to torment:

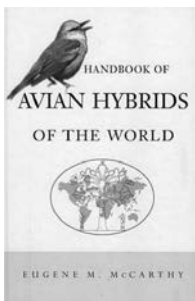
Hardcore Listers: what do you get them for a present when all they ever really want is another "tick?" Hardcore listers are classic obsessive-compulsives combined with a Rainman-like encyclopedic knowledge of the minutiae of birds and their occurrences. They're like Trekkies with optics.

Naturalised Birds of the World and the *Handbook of Avian Hybrids of the World* are two books custom made for that twitcher in your life. Both are long, technical, annotated lists of birds, but — and here is where the torment comes in — they are lists of birds you might not be able to count with a clear conscience (cut to a sardonic grin coming across my face).

The *Handbook* is an exhaustive listing of every single hybrid that has been scientifically identified, with brief annotations and complete references. Under Mallard, they begin:

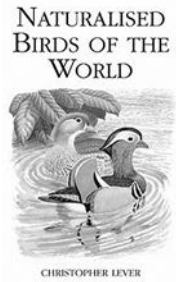
Of the Mallard, Sibley (1938, p. 332) says it "has hybridized with so many other species that any list of Mallard hybrids cannot pretend to be by any means complete. In fact, in a mixed collection of waterfowl the Mallard is an unmitigated nuisance because of the amorousness of the males." (p. 80)

What follows is a detailed list of thirty-seven species with which Mallards have been known to produce hybrids, including such surprising species as Canada Goose, Canvasback, Rosybill, Ruddy Shelduck, and Steller's Eider. (That's one randy waterfowl!) A report of a Mallard X Domestic Fowl (*Gallus gallus*), or chicken, is listed under "Dubious Reports" along with a purported Eurasian Woodcock X Lapwing, and others. Let your imaginations run wild on what those would have looked like.



The *Handbook* makes the bird world look like one big DNA-exchange free-for-all, but in reality, speciation and evolution are dynamic, ever-changing processes, and hybridization is just one very tiny footnote of that never-ending story. For the birder, the *Handbook* offers a perfect excuse the next time you clearly see a bird you can't identify. Like in Aesop's story of the Fox and the Grapes, you can comfort yourself by dismissively mumbling: "It was probably a hybrid."

Naturalised Birds of The World is geared more to a general readership, beginning with a brief introduction on the motives and consequences of taking a bird from one place and releasing it in a completely different place. What follows is a taxonomic listing of all naturalized species, accompanied by a number of wonderful black-and-white illustrations by Robert Gillmore. This includes a country-by-country list of where the birds have been naturalized, details of the history of how and why that species was brought there, and a discussion of the impact of that introduction.



We are all too familiar with those troublesome species that have been brought here from abroad, like European Starling, Rock Pigeon, English Sparrow, Mute Swan, and Monk Parakeet. But how many of you knew that Wild Turkeys have been introduced to Tasmania, or that the Northern Mockingbird was brought to the Hawaiian Islands where they are accused of helping spread the equally invasive and far more insidious banana poka vine (*Passiflora mollissima*)? Even a brief perusal of *Naturalised Birds of the World* makes one realize that humankind has been treating the birds of this world like some global poker deck, shuffling the species and then dealing them out hither and yon.

The question raised here for the birder is this: are naturalized birds “countable?” I know what the ABA rules say about ten years and increasing populations, but consider the Monk Parakeet in Massachusetts. Were we too quick to put this on our state list? How about the legitimacy of now counting Ring-necked Pheasants on our lists?

Well, I’ll let you listers argue about this. I have friends to visit, presents to open and birds to enjoy, so “to all, a good night!” 🐦

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A Fabulous Northern Wheatear Flight, Outside of Massachusetts

The fall of 2006 was a great season for finding Northern Wheatears along the east coast of North America. Some 41 birds were reported between August 8 and October 23, 2006, including twelve in Nova Scotia, seven in Quebec, three in Connecticut, and two in New Hampshire. Apparently none of these birds found Massachusetts to be a hospitable stopover, or at least Massachusetts birders didn’t find any. Maybe next year it will be our turn.

For a listing of the sightings and a map, visit Michael Smith’s website at <<http://www.augustabirds.org/references.html>>.

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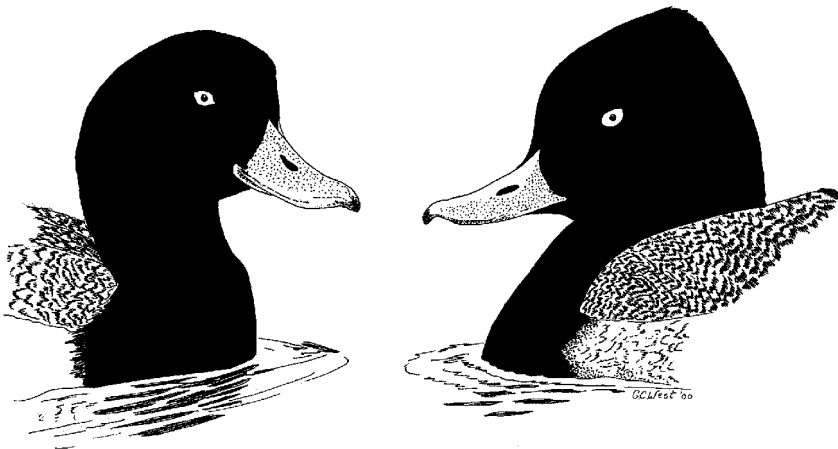
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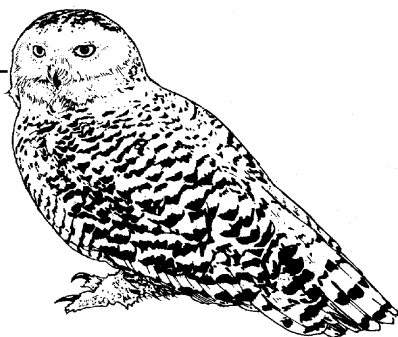
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GREATER AND LESSER SCAUP BY GEORGE C. WEST

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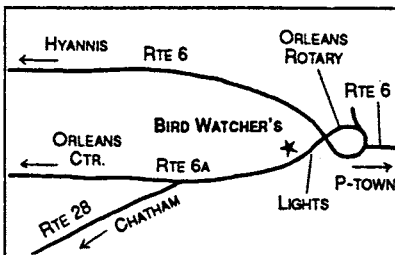
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BIRD SIGHTINGS

July/August 2006

Seth Kellogg, Marjorie W. Rines, Robert H. Stymeist, and Jeremiah R. Trimble

The month of July was hot. The average temperature in Boston was 76°, 2.1° above average. Records dating back to 1872 show that this was the sixth warmest July in recorded history — that's 134 years! There were six days during the month when the mercury rose to 90° or higher. The highest was 96° in Boston on July 18, the hottest July temperature since 97° in 2002. It reached 92° on July 14, 17, and 28 and 90° on the 29th. Humidity was also oppressive, reaching an almost unbearable 70 percent on July 22 and 28. Measurable rain fell on ten days for a total of 3.58 inches in Boston, about an inch more than normal. Of the five weekends, only the 22–23rd had any measurable rain. Tropical storm Beryl tracked near Nantucket on July 21 but with little effect on the mainland.

August was sunny and a bit cool, with near normal amounts of precipitation. The temperature averaged 71.4° in Boston, 0.9° below the average. Three days saw temperatures reach 90° or better. The high was 98° on August 2, the hottest August temperature in Boston since 101° in 2002. The lowest temperature was 55° on the 31st. August 25–31 was rather cold, with the longest streak of temperatures below 60° since 1992. Rainfall totaled 3.20 inches in Boston during August, just 0.17 inch below average. *R. Stymeist*

WATERFOWL THROUGH ALCIDS

Although not unprecedented, Brant found summering in the state are worth noting. A single bird spent the entire period at South Beach in Chatham, and as many as four were seen on Plum Island. Some interesting ducks were noted throughout the summer. These included as many as 110 Gadwall on Plum Island, one of the highest summer counts for the state. Diving ducks provided more interesting records. These included Ring-necked Ducks (one in West Newbury on August 1 and two in Cambridge on August 21, and a Greater Scaup on July 11 on Plum Island. In the last ten years there are fewer than five records for either of these species during this period. The single Harlequin Ducks in Orleans and Chilmark were rare summer visitors. Coincidentally, Harlequins were also reported at Chilmark in the summers of 2003 and 2004. Although one of the most common wintering ducks in coastal Massachusetts, Bufflehead are rarely observed here during the summer months. The single bird seen on the BBC boat trip out of Hyannis Harbor is therefore quite exceptional.

A Red-throated Loon at South Beach in Chatham was an unusual summer visitor. Individual Horned Grebes in Falmouth and Mashpee were also noteworthy. The Red-necked Grebe seen at Southwick on August 25 was an impressive find for the date and locality, the earliest record ever for western Massachusetts.

There was considerable activity in both nearshore and offshore waters. A Northern Fulmar was noted east of Chatham in early July. In Massachusetts this species is fairly common in June but rare in July. Stellwagen Bank was particularly attractive to seabirds this season. Consequently, many birders visited the area and got good counts as well as unusual species. A pelagic trip from Hyannis Harbor to Hydrographer Canyon on August 26 turned up some very interesting records. These included six **Audubon's Shearwaters** and a most impressive count of three **White-faced Storm-Petrels!** This latter species, though seen by relatively few birders

in North America, is probably somewhat regular off the east coast of the United States. The most interesting and unexpected bird found on that trip was surely the probable Scopoli's Shearwater. This is the nominate subspecies of Cory's Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea diomedea*), differing from the regularly occurring subspecies of Cory's Shearwater (*C. d. borealis*) by its somewhat smaller size; darker brown plumage particularly around the head; smaller, duskier bill; and distinctive underwing pattern. Scopoli's Shearwater breeds in the Mediterranean but may be at least somewhat regular off the coast of eastern North America. It has been collected on several occasions off Long Island and has been reported off North Carolina on several occasions. Although somewhat regular during the summer in Massachusetts, Northern Gannets seem to have been reported more frequently during this period. Two Great Cormorants were discovered at Wachusett Reservoir on August 27. Late August is probably as early as this common wintering species is found in the state.

Plum Island continues to lead the way in Massachusetts for rare freshwater wetland species, most notably Least Bittern. This year as many as four adults and two juveniles were seen there. High counts of many other herons in the state were recorded at Plum Island and Kettle Island in Manchester-by-the-Sea. The most noteworthy heron of the season was the hybrid **Little Egret x Snowy Egret** that was photographed on Nantucket and seen mainly during the first half of August. A similar hybrid was reported on Nantucket in 2005. Cattle Egrets were seen in Ipswich and Manchester-by-the-Sea.

Black Vultures were reported in more or less typical numbers throughout western Massachusetts, although an individual observed in Manchester-by-the-Sea was noteworthy because of its northeastern coastal location. In mid-July a **Swallow-tailed Kite** was reported from Martha's Vineyard in mid-July, unfortunately without details. Although this species is more typically observed in the state during May and June, there are at least two previous July records. It is interesting that both the previous July records come from Tuckernuck and Nantucket Islands. For now at least, Martha's Vineyard should not feel left out of the club. Because American Kestrels appear to be declining as breeders, it was exciting to hear of a nesting pair with two young in Dorchester. Merlins begin to return to Massachusetts by August but are very rarely noted during July. The one or two individuals seen on Plum Island during the second half of July were part of only a handful of July records for the state since 1990.

Similar in nocturnal habits and habitat preference, King Rails and Least Bitterns have repeatedly shown a preference over the last few years for the remaining freshwater marshes on Plum Island. As mentioned before, this locale is exceedingly important for the survival of these two species in the state. An immature **Purple Gallinule** was an exciting and fortuitous find in East Orleans in mid-August. American Coot has proved to be a rare breeder in Massachusetts over the last fifty years. Most recently, in 1999, an adult and two young were observed at Tuckernuck Island. Given the rarity of this bird during breeding season, it is worth noting that an individual spent much of July at Great Meadows NWR, a site where the species has historically bred.

This year's shorebird migration was highlighted by several rare species. During July and early August at least one American Avocet was reported on the coast of Massachusetts from Martha's Vineyard to Plum Island. Since this is a rather distinctive species, it is possible that one individual was tracked by birders as it moved up the coast. The shorebird highlight of the season was the **Black-tailed Godwit** discovered on Plum Island on July 17. This species has been recorded in the state on only three other occasions: in 1967 in South Dartmouth, in Chatham in 1993, and in Wellfleet in 1994. We received two reports of **Red-necked Stint** this season. Although this species has been sighted regularly in the state over the last few years, it remains very difficult to identify. Rounding off the report of rare shorebirds was the adult

Curlew Sandpiper photographed at South Beach in Chatham during the last half of August. Western Massachusetts has begun to produce interesting shorebird records for the last few years. Two Stilt Sandpipers were found in Northfield and Hadley at the end of August. Although Buff-breasted Sandpipers were recorded only twelve times in the western half of our state between 1966 and 1996, there have been fifteen records in the last three years, including four this year!

A **Skua species** (*Catharacta* species) was reported with no details from Stellwagen Bank on July 22. Stellwagen Bank appears to have hosted more jaegers than normal this season. Nearly every boat trip to the area has recorded at least one jaeger. A pelagic trip to Hydrographer Canyon yielded six juvenile **Long-tailed Jaegers**. Other Laridae highlights included a number of Little Gulls (e.g., four at Plum Island) and several Black-headed Gulls throughout coastal Massachusetts. An adult **Sabine's Gull** was seen at Stellwagen Bank during boat trips to the area in late July and again at the end of August. **Gull-billed** and **Sandwich terns** are among the least common of the large "southern" terns in Massachusetts. This July, however, they were encountered at a number of sites in eastern Massachusetts. Black Tern, a freshwater nesting species, is rarely recorded in western Massachusetts. There have been fewer than twenty records there in the last seventy-five years. Amazingly, a group of five Black Terns was encountered on August 20 in Hatfield. Black Skimmers were widely reported this season, including two on Plum Island in mid-August. This species tends to be rare in the state north of Boston, except during and following tropical storms. The only breeding site in the state, "Minimoy," off Chatham, did not do well this year but did produce at least five young. A few interesting alcids were found during July, including a breeding plumaged Common Murre at Tisbury and a Razorbill at Chilmark.

J. Trimble

Brant				8/11	N. Monomoy	35	B. Nikula
thr	Chatham (S.B.)	1	v.o.	Harlequin Duck			
7/11-8/25	P.I.	1-4	v.o.	7/thr	Orleans (Nauset)	1	v.o.
7/23	Newbypt	1	S. McGrath	7/1-16	Chilmark	1 m	L. Smiley
Wood Duck				Surf Scoter			
7/22	GMNWR	94	M. Lynch#	7/14	Chatham (S.B.)	7	D. Berard#
7/22	Sudbury	25+	J. Chasan#	8/30	Gloucester	5	S. Hedman
7/29	W. Newbury	30	R. Heil	8/31	N. Monomoy	3	D. Berard#
8/5	Bolton Flats	18	S. Sutton	White-winged Scoter			
8/12	Wakefield	48	P. + F. Vale	7/1-19	Falmouth	3	R. Farrell
8/20	Longmeadow	73	J. Wojtanowski	8/16	Rockport (A.P.)	3	R. Heil
Gadwall				8/21	Chatham (S.B.)	3	CCBC (E. Banks)
thr	P.I.	110 max	8/15 R. Heil	8/23	Winthrop	3	C. Thrope
Blue-winged Teal				8/31	N. Monomoy	12	D. Berard#
thr	P.I.	19 max	T. Wetmore	Black Scoter			
8/5-31	GMNWR	6	v.o.	7/19	Chatham (S.B.)	2	P. Flood
8/14	Scituate	3 f	D. Furbish	8/15	P'town (R.P.)	1 f	D. Berard#
8/25	Marstons Mills	5	M. Keleher	Bufflehead			
8/25	Northampton	2	R. Packard	7/8	Hyannis H.	1 m	BBC (Heil)
Northern Shoveler				Hooded Merganser			
8/15	P.I.	4	R. Heil	7/3	GMNWR	1 f	J. Forbes
Northern Pintail				7/5	Egremont	2	R. Packard
7/29-8/31	P.I.	2-8	v.o.	7/8	Quabbin Pk	2 yg	M. Lynch#
8/26	Longmeadow	3	S. Kellogg	7/14	P.I.	1 juv	T. Wetmore
8/31	Chatham (S.B.)	2	V. Laux#	7/15	Plainfield	2	S. Kellogg
Green-winged Teal				8/18	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	S. Hedman
thr	P.I.	137 max	8/29 v.o.	Common Merganser			
7/1	Rowley	1	S. Grinley#	7/1	Tyringham	5	R. Laubach
8/14	GMNWR	15	S. Perkins	8/2	Florida	16	T. Gagnon
8/25	Deerfield	2	C. Gentes	8/8	Huntington	6	R. Laubach
Ring-necked Duck				8/30	Barre Falls	10	B. Kamp
8/1	W. Newbury	1	S. McGrath	Red-breasted Merganser			
8/21	Cambr. (F.P.)	2	E. Wylde	7/3	Essex	2 f	D. Brown#
Greater Scaup				7/15	Duxbury B.	4 f	R. Bowes
7/11	P.I.	1	R. Heil	7/19	P.I.	1 f	T. Wetmore
Common Eider				7/22	Chatham	1 f	BBC (G. d'E.)
7/5	Duxbury B.	30+	R. Bowes	Ruffed Grouse			
7/8	Nant. Sound	28	BBC (Heil)	7/1	Ashburnham	1 ad, 4 yg	T. Pirro
7/25	Gloucester H.	115	R. Heil	7/1	Quabbin (G10)	1	SSBC (G. d'E.)
7/26	Stellwagen	65	J. Berry#	7/30	Falmouth	1	M. Keleher#

Black-crowned Night-Heron (continued)				Cooper's Hawk			
8/1	P'town	6	D. Berard#	7/10	Attleboro	pr	K. Ryan
8/11	P.I.	21	T. Wetmore	7/27	Wakefield	2 ad, 2 juv	F. Vale
8/12	Sudbury	15	G. Long	8/11	Pembroke	2	D. Furbish
8/26	Longmeadow	3	S. Kellogg	8/12	Sudbury	2	G. Long
8/26	Eastham	38	D. Clapp#	8/13	Groveland	2	D. Chickering#
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron				8/15	P.I.	3	R. Heil
7/5, 8/19	MNWS	1 ad	D. Noble	Northern Goshawk			
7/13	Gloucester H.	1 imm	J. Frontiero#	7/1	Monterey	1	J. Hoye#
7/29	N. Monomoy	1 imm	B. Nikula	7/15	Hawley	1 ad	M. Lynch#
8/5-28	Rockport	1 ad	M. Flor + v.o.	8/5	Lenox	1	R. Laubach
8/23	Manomet	1 imm	I. Davies	8/13	Woburn (H.P.)	1	P. Ippolito#
Glossy Ibis				8/20	Bolton Flats	1 imm	M. Lynch#
thr	P.I.	140 max	7/29 R. Heil	8/21	Granville	1	J. Weeks
7/3	Manchester (KI)	240	J. Hoye#	Red-shouldered Hawk			
7/7	Hyannis	1	D. + A. Morgan	7/10	Halifax/Hanson	1	J. Sweeney#
7/14	Brockton	7	K. Ryan	7/thr	E. Middleboro	1-3	K. Anderson
8/1-16	GMNWR	1	G. Gove	8/5	Wompatuck SP	1	G. d'Entremont
8/17	E. Boston (B.I.)	10	P. Peterson	8/11	Pembroke	1 ad	D. Furbish
Black Vulture				8/19	Ware R. IBA	1	M. Lynch#
7/1	Sheffield	5	J. Hoye#	8/23	Granville	3	S. Kellogg
7/8	Cheshire	1	M. Lynch#	Broad-winged Hawk			
7/13	Greenfield	1	S. Perkins#	7/1-2	Medfield	pr	J. O'Connell
8/10	Lincoln	1	M. Montgomery	7/3	Royalston	3	L. de la Flor#
8/20	Fitchburg	1	S. Sutton#	7/17	Washington	2	R. Packard
8/30	Barre Falls	1	Hawkcount (Kamp)	8/13	HRWMA	5	T. Pirro
Turkey Vulture				8/17	Belchertown	2	L. Therrien
7/1	Sheffield	28	J. Hoye#	8/22	Granville	2	J. Weeks
7/1	Barre	16	M. Lynch#	8/26	Barre Falls	2	D. Schilling
7/5	Chicopee	70	B. Platenik	8/30	Barre Falls	7	B. Kamp
7/8	Cheshire	14	M. Lynch#	American Kestrel			
7/9	Manchester	1	J. Trimble#	7/1	Southwick	2	S. Ricker
7/23, 8/15	P.I.	16, 14	R. Heil	7/3	Dorchester	2 ad, 2 yg	P. Peterson
7/25	Attleboro	10	K. Ryan	7/7	Halifax/Hanson	3	J. Sweeney#
8/30	Barre Falls	23	B. Kamp	7/24	Cumb. Farms	5	D. Furbish
Osprey				8/22	Leicester	2	M. Lynch#
thr	P.I.	17 max	R. Heil	8/30	Barre Falls	2	Hawkcount (Kamp)
7/24	Mashpee	9	M. Keleher	Merlin			
8/5	Sandwich	7	CCBC (Keleher)	7/18-8/30	P.I.	1-2	v.o.
8/30	Barre Falls	9	Hawkcount (Kamp)	8/5	Saugus	1	P. + F. Vale
Swallow-tailed Kite (no details)*				8/20	Northfield	1	C. Gentes
7/15	W. Tisbury	1	S. Anderson, J. Allen	8/26	Hadley	1	C. Gentes
Bald Eagle				8/28	Mashpee	1	M. Keleher
7/2, 8/12	P.I.	1 imm	Walsh, Vale	8/30	HRWMA	1	T. Pirro
7/3	Waltham	1 imm	J. Hoye#	8/31	Holyoke	1	R. Packard
7/3-16	Magnolia	1 imm	v.o.	Peregrine Falcon			
7/8	Sheffield	1 ad	R. Stymeist	7/2	Deerfield	3	T. Pirro
7/9	Plymouth	1 imm	I. Davies	7/29	Boston	3	P. Morlock
7/17-8/13	P'town/Truro	1 imm	v.o.	8/12	Longmeadow	2	J. Hutchison
7/22	Chatham	1 IS	BBC (G. d'E.)	8/13, 19	P.I.	3, 3	T. Wetmore
7/23	Quabbin Pk	1 ad	M. Lynch#	8/20	Essex	2	D. Brown#
7/24-8/6	Monomoy	1 imm	v.o.	8/21	Holyoke	2	R. Packard
7/29	Stow	1	D. Stewart#	Clapper Rail			
8/20	Wachusett Res.	1 ad	S. Sutton#	7/2	P.I.	1	M. Lynch#
8/26, 30	Barre Falls	1, 1	Hawkcount	8/30	N. Monomoy	1	B. Harris
Northern Harrier				King Rail			
thr	P.I.	1-5	.o.	7/1	P.I.	1	S. Grinley#
7/19	Cumb. Farms	1 f juv	D. Furbish	Virginia Rail			
7/19	Chatham (S.B.)	1 f	P. Flood	7/1	Pittsfield	6	R. Packard
8/4	Revere	1	P. Peterson	7/4	Richmond	13	R. Packard
8/6	Marshfield	1 imm	D. Furbish	7/5	Egremont	7	R. Packard
8/12	E. Boston (B.I.)	2	J. Dibbell	7/9	Brookfield	3 ad + 4 yg	M. Lynch#
8/14	GMNWR	1 juv	S. Perkins	7/14	P.I.	11	T. Wetmore
8/19	Duxbury B.	2	R. Bowes	7/23	Quabbin Pk	3	M. Lynch#
8/21	Essex	1	J. Nelson#	8/19	Ware R. IBA	3	M. Lynch#
8/31	N. Monomoy	2 f	D. Berard#	Sora			
8/31	Amherst	1	H. Allen	7/4	IRWS	1-2	J. Berry
8/31	Gloucester	1	J. Nelson	7/5	P.I.	2	J. Berry
Sharp-shinned Hawk				7/7	Halifax/Hanson	1	J. Sweeney#
7/1	Belchertown	1	S. Surner	7/9	Brookfield	1	M. Lynch#
7/8	Whately	1	C. Gentes	8/13	Mashpee	1	M. Keleher
7/24	Cumb. Farms	1	D. Furbish	8/27	GMNWR	3	M. Lynch#
8/18, 26	Leicester	1, 2	M. Lynch#	8/28	E. Boston	1	P. Peterson
8/19	Centerville	1	G. Hirth	Purple Gallinule			
8/22	P.I.	1	J. McNeal	8/16	E. Orleans	1 imm ph	B. Nikula#
8/26	Sudbury	1	T. Spahr	American Coot			
8/28	Gloucester	1	M. Flor	7/3-22	GMNWR	1	J. Forbes
8/30	Barre Falls	3	Hawkcount (Kamp)				

Black-bellied Plover

thr	P.I.	200 m ax	v.o.
7/1, 8/13	Chatham (S.B.)	350, 2200	B. Nikula
7/23, 8/27	Duxbury B.	10, 280	R. Bowes
8/6	Marshfield	100	D. Furbish
8/15	Newbypt H.	260	R. Heil
8/20	Essex	127	D. Brown#
8/20	Northfield	5	C. Gentes
8/26	Southwick	5	S. Kellogg

American Golden-Plover

7/20	Eastham	1	MAS (Weintraub)
7/23	WBWS	1	L. Tanino
8/19	Duxbury B.	1	R. Bowes
8/21	Plymouth B.	1	S. Hecker
8/22	P.I.	1	R. Heil
8/25	Whately	1	C. Gentes
8/25	Edgartown	2+	V. Laux
8/25	Chatham (S.B.)	1	J. Hoye#
8/26	Southwick	2	S. Kellogg
8/31	Minimoy	1	B. Harris

Semipalmated Plover

thr	P.I.	1600 max 8/15	R. Heil
7/1, 8/13	Chatham (S.B.)	20, 2900	B. Nikula
7/15, 8/16	Duxbury B.	21, 1500	R. Bowes
8/4	Lynn B.	5000+	K. Hartel#
8/5	Sandwich	175	CCBC (Keleher)
8/6	Marshfield	250	D. Furbish
8/14	GMNWR	28	S. Perkins
8/15	Newbypt H.	1700	R. Heil
8/20	Essex	490	D. Brown#

Piping Plover

thr	P.I.	15 max	R. Heil
7/2	Sandwich	8	M. Keleher
7/8	Duxbury B.	8 ad, 5 imm	R. Bowes
7/12	Plymouth B.	4 ad, 2 yg	I. Davies
7/29	P'town	20	B. Nikula
7/30, 8/15	Chatham (S.B.)	30, 30	B. Nikula

Killdeer

7/24	Cumb. Farms	32+	D. Furbish
7/29	Topsfield	31+	P. + F. Vale
8/1	GMNWR	40	G. Gove
8/25	Southwick	60	S. Kellogg
8/27	Northfield	76	H. Galbraith
8/27	Grafton	45	J. Liller#
8/28	Whately	97	C. Gentes

American Oystercatcher

7/8	Marion	2 fl	I. Nisbet
7/9	Marblehead	pr	S. Grinley#
7/16	Winthrop	14	S. Zende#
7/30, 8/13	Chatham (S.B.)	60, 125	B. Nikula
8/thr	W. Falmouth	3	R. Farrell
8/31	N. Monomoy	10	D. Berard#

American Avocet

7/18	Falmouth	1 ph	G. Hirth
7/22-29	Edgartown	1 f	N. Hugger + v.o.
7/31	Plymouth	1	E. Cody
8/4	P.I.	1	D. Weaver#

Greater Yellowlegs

thr	P.I.	110 max	v.o.
7/2, 8/6	E. Boston (B.I.)	8, 42	Zende#
7/12	Plymouth B.	21+	I. Davies
7/15, 8/12	Duxbury B.	15, 69	R. Bowes
7/30, 8/13	Chatham (S.B.)	100, 300	B. Nikula
8/4	Revere	35	P. Peterson
8/5	Sandwich	50	CCBC (Keleher)
8/14	GMNWR	14	S. Perkins
8/15	Newbypt H.	140	R. Heil
8/16	Nauset Marsh	80	B. Nikula#
8/30	N. Monomoy	70	B. Harris

Lesser Yellowlegs

thr	P.I.	250 max 7/23	R. Heil
7/18, 8/15	Newbypt H.	620, 3230	R. Heil
7/22-8/31	GMNWR	60 max 8/14	v.o.
7/29, 8/19	N. Monomoy	40, 28	B. Nikula
7/29	E. Boston (B.I.)	32	I. Davies
8/15	Newbypt H.	320	R. Heil
8/26	Hadley	22	C. Gentes

Solitary Sandpiper

7/14	Natick	4	D. Gibson
7/17	Bolton Flats	20	S. Sutton
8/14	GMNWR	54	S. Perkins
8/19	Nantucket	5	M. Greenburg
8/25	Deerfield	5	C. Gentes
8/26	Hadley	5	C. Gentes

Willet

thr	Chatham (S.B.)	225 max 7/30	B. Nikula
thr	P.I.	208 max 7/11	R. Heil
7/8, 8/12	Duxbury B.	26, 18	R. Bowes
7/16	Winthrop	28	S. Zende#
7/18	Newbypt H.	176	R. Heil

Western Willet

thr	Chatham (S.B.)	20 max	B. Nikula
8/15	P.I.	1	R. Heil

Spotted Sandpiper

7/17	Bolton Flats	6	S. Sutton
8/5	Duxbury B.	6	R. Bowes
8/6	GMNWR	5	P. + F. Vale
8/8	P.I.	5	H. Galbraith
8/23	Holyoke	6	R. Zackard
8/26	Hadley	8	C. Gentes

Upland Sandpiper

7/15	Cumb. Farms	1	J. Sweeney
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Whimbrel

thr	P.I.	1-5	v.o.
7/9	Manchester	20	J. Hoye#
7/9	Nantucket	3	E. Ray#
7/23, 8/30	Duxbury B.	1, 3	R. Bowes
7/29	N. Monomoy	38	B. Nikula
8/1	P'town	3	D. Berard#
8/8	Wellfleet	162	C. Gentes
8/12	Newbypt H.	3+	P. + F. Vale#
8/24	S. Dartmouth	7	K. Ryan
8/31	Chatham (S.B.)	40+	B. Nikula#

Black-tailed Godwit *

7/17-29	P.I.	1 ph	P. Brown + v.o.
Hudsonian Godwit			
7/9-8/31	P.I.	1-3	v.o.
7/11-8/31	Chatham (S.B.)	75 max 7/30	B. Nikula
7/29	Stellwagen	4	J. Frontier#
7/30, 8/28	Newbypt H.	1, 2	Vale, Young
8/6	S. Monomoy	27	B. Harris
8/25	Squantum	1	K. Ryan

Marbled Godwit

7/15-30	Chatham (S.B.)	1	B. Nikula
7/19-29	N. Monomoy	1	B. Nikula
8/thr	Chatham (S.B.)	2+	B. Nikula#
8/14, 19	P.I.	1, 2	Brown, Hoye

Ruddy Turnstone

7/23, 8/12	Duxbury B.	25, 101	R. Bowes
7/24, 8/31	N. Monomoy	30, 30	D. Berard#
7/29	Fairhaven	11	J. Sweeney
7/30, 8/13	Chatham (S.B.)	300, 325	B. Nikula
8/5	Sandwich	15	CCBC (Keleher)
8/12	P.I.	48	P. + F. Vale
8/17	Revere	26	P. Peterson

Red Knot

7/1, 8/13	Chatham (S.B.)	175, 850	B. Nikula
7/15	Orleans	4	L. Ferraresso#
7/18-8/30	P.I.	8 max	v.o.
7/23	Duxbury B.	3	R. Bowes
8/4	Eastham	175+	R. Buckner

Sanderling

thr	P.I.	300 max 8/15	R. Heil
7/29, 8/23	Revere B.	184, 70	P. + F. Vale
7/30, 8/27	Duxbury B.	846, 280	R. Bowes
7/30, 8/13	Chatham (S.B.)	2800, 2400	B. Nikula
8/4	Lynn B.	600+	K. Hartel#
8/20	Essex	182	D. Brown#

Semipalmated Sandpiper

thr	P.I.	3000 max 8/15	R. Heil
7/12	Plymouth B.	611+	I. Davies
7/15-8/30	Duxbury B.	5500 max 7/30	R. Bowes
7/18, 8/15	Newbypt H.	2650, 6000	R. Heil
7/22-8/30	GMNWR	70 max 8/1	v.o.
7/29	E. Boston (B.I.)	730+	I. Davies

Semipalmated Sandpiper (continued)				7/22-8/27	GMNWR	30 max	8/15	v.o.
7/29	N. Monomoy	4000	B. Nikula	8/20	Nantucket	20		E. Ray
7/30, 8/13	Chatham (S.B.)	5500, 2200	B. Nikula	Long-billed Dowitcher				
8/6	Marshfield	1600	D. Furbish	7/15	Duxbury B.	2		R. Bowes
Western Sandpiper				7/16-8/31	P.I.	15 max		v.o.
7/9-8/31	Chatham (S.B.)	20 max	8/31 B. Nikula	8/15	Newbypt H.	21 ad		R. Heil
7/22-8/31	P.I.	1-5	v.o.	8/31	Chatham (S.B.)	1 ad		B. Nikula#
7/24	N. Monomoy	1	MAS (Berard)	Wilson's Snipe				
8/19	Duxbury B.	2	R. Bowes	7/17	P.I.	1		R. Heil
8/22	Manomet	1 juv	I. Davies	8/14	GMNWR	19		S. Perkins
Red-necked Stint (no details) *				8/17	Agawam	1		S. Kellogg
7/24	Edgartown	1	A. Keith	8/25	Northfield	1		C. Gentes
Red-necked Stint (details submitted) *				American Woodcock				
7/30	Dorchester	1 br pl	R. Donovan#	7/2	P.I.	4		J. Hoye#
Least Sandpiper				7/8	Duxbury B.	3		R. Bowes
thr	Chatham (S.B.)	600 max	7/15 B. Nikula	8/11	Pembroke	2		D. Furbish
thr	P.I.	320 max	7/11 R. Heil	8/27	Belmont	2		R. Stymeist#
thr	GMNWR	250 max	8/6 v.o.	Wilson's Phalarope				
7/14	N. Monomoy	1000	B. Nikula	7/1	Newbury	1		S. McGrath
8/12, 27	Longmeadow	24, 25	T. Gagnon	7/1-8/9	P.I.	1-2		v.o.
8/15	Deerfield	23	C. Gentes	Red-necked Phalarope				
8/27	Agawam	35	C. Gentes	7/19	Newbypt	1		S. McGrath
White-rumped Sandpiper				8/11-31	Stellwagen	28 max		v.o.
7/1, 8/13	Chatham (S.B.)	6, 120	B. Nikula	8/12	Chatham (S.B.)	1 juv		B. Nikula#
thr	P.I.	65 max	8/15 v.o.	8/26	Hydrographer	550		BBC (Heil)
8/1	GMNWR	1	G. Gove	Red Phalarope				
8/6	S. Monomoy	85	B. Harris	8/26	Hydrographer	20		BBC (Heil)
8/15	Newbypt H.	35 ad	R. Heil	Skua species (no details) *				
8/20	Northfield	1	C. Gentes	7/22	Stellwagen	2		G. Williams#
8/20	Essex	81	D. Brown#	Pomarine Jaeger				
8/25	Hadley	1	R. Packard	thr	Stellwagen	5 max		v.o.
Baird's Sandpiper				7/8	E of Chatham	1 imm		BBC (Heil)
7/29	Chilmark	2	A. Keith	8/26	Hydrographer	1 subad		BBC (Heil)
8/20-31	P.I.	1	v.o.	Parasitic Jaeger				
8/25	Northfield	3	C. Gentes	thr	Stellwagen	5 max		v.o.
8/28	Southwick	2	S. Kellogg	7/7, 8/30	P'town	2, 6		B. Nikula
8/30	S. Monomoy	2	R. Prescott#	8/3	P.I.	1 3S		R. Heil
8/30	Whately	3	C. Gentes	8/26	Hydrographer	2 subad		BBC (Heil)
8/31	Scituate	1	D. Furbish	8/29	Rockport (A.P.)	1		R. Heil
Pectoral Sandpiper				8/30	N. Monomoy	2 imm.		B. Harris
7/5	Duxbury B.	3	R. Bowes	Long-tailed Jaeger				
7/17-8/31	P.I.	1-2	v.o.	8/22, 27	Stellwagen	1 sub-ad		B. Nikula#
7/22-8/31	GMNWR	21 max	v.o.	8/26	Hydrographer	6 juv		BBC (Heil)
8/20	Northfield	15	C. Gentes	Laughing Gull				
8/20	Hadley	11	C. Gentes	7/thr	P.I.	20 max		v.o.
8/20	Nantucket	2	M. Aquier	7/1	P'town	250+		B. Nikula#
8/30	Whately	4	C. Gentes	8/16	Duxbury B.	250		R. Bowes
Dunlin				8/17	E. Gloucester	70+		R. Heil
7/12	Plymouth B.	1	I. Davies	8/23	Revere B.	32		BBC (P. + F. Vale)
7/thr	Chatham (S.B.)	6 max	7/1 B. Nikula	8/29	W. Chatham	700+		B. Nikula
8/13	Chatham (S.B.)	6	B. Nikula	Little Gull				
8/20	Nantucket	6	E. Ray	7/5-8/12	P.I.	4 max		v.o.
8/30	Chatham (S.B.)	4 ad	M. Iliiff	7/30-8/25	Newbypt	2		D. Chickering
8/30	P.I.	1	H. Galbraith#	8/21	Rockport (A.P.)	1 1S/2W		R. Heil
Curlew Sandpiper *				8/30	Gloucester (E.P.)	1		S. Hedman
8/19-31	Chatham (S.B.)	1 ad ph	R. Clem + v.o.	Black-headed Gull				
Stilt Sandpiper				7/14, 29	N. Monomoy	1 (1s)		B. Nikula
7/3	Chatham (S.B.)	1	B. Nikula	7/18	P.I.	1 1S		R. Heil
7/7	Hyannis	2	D. + A. Morgan	7/23	Newbypt	1		S. McGrath
7/9-8/30	P.I.	10 max	v.o.	7/25	Gloucester H.	1 1S		R. Heil
7/23	E. Boston (B.I.)	2	S. Zende	Bonaparte's Gull				
7/29	N. Monomoy	2	B. Nikula	7/2, 23	P.I.	26, 37		R. Heil
8/20	Essex	2	D. Brown#	7/25	Gloucester H.	20 1S		R. Heil
8/20	Northfield	1	C. Gentes	8/4	Nahant	275		R. Stymeist#
8/27	Hadley	1	C. Gentes	8/11	Revere B.	243+ BBC		(P. + F. Vale)
Buff-breasted Sandpiper				8/15	Newbypt H.	423		R. Heil
8/19-24	Chatham (S.B.)	1	V. Laux#	Lesser Black-backed Gull				
8/24-31	P.I.	5 max	v.o.	7/1	P'town	1 1S		B. Nikula#
8/25	Hadley	1	R. Packard	7/8	E of Chatham	3		BBC (Heil)
8/25	Northfield	2	C. Gentes	7/9-8/31	Chatham (S.B.)	6 max		B. Nikula#
8/26	Whately	1	C. Gentes	7/26	off Gloucester	1 sub ad		J. Berry#
8/30	S. Monomoy	3+	R. Prescott#	8/15	P.I.	1 2W		R. Heil
Short-billed Dowitcher				Sabine's Gull				
thr	P.I.	858 max	7/23 R. Heil	7/23, 8/27-29	Stellwagen	1 ad		J. Frontiero
7/1-8/15	Chatham (S.B.)	3200 max	7/30 B. Nikula	Black-legged Kittiwake				
7/2-8/6	E. Boston (B.I.)	187 max	7/27 v.o.	8/4	P'town	1 imm		B. Nikula
7/8-8/12	Duxbury B.	252 max	7/15 R. Bowes	8/16, 29	Rockport (A.P.)	2 ad, 1 juv		R. Heil
7/14	N. Monomoy	3000	B. Nikula	8/17	Chatham (S.B.)	1 ad		R. Veit#

Black-legged Kittiwake (continued)	8/17	N of Stellwagen	2	J. Frontierro#	8/15-31	Chatham (S.B.)	4-6	v.o.
Gull-billed Tern *	7/10	Chatham (S.B.)	1 ph	Salett, Weintraub	8/15	Plymouth B.	2	K. Doyon
	7/11	P.I.	2 ad	R. Heil	8/19	Centerville	6	G. Hirth
Caspian Tern	7/22	Brewster	1	D. Clapp	8/21	E. Gloucester	4 juv	R. Heil
	8/15, 24	P.I.	1, 1	Heil, Daley	8/22	W. Chatham	35	B. Nikula
	8/27	P.I.	2	J. Young	8/30	Duxbury B.	2 ad	R. Bowes
Royal Tern	7/1	P'town	1	D. Berard#	8/31	Ipswich	2	J. Nelson
	7/15	Stellwagen	2	B. Nikula	Least Tern			
	7/18	Falmouth	1 ad	G. Hirth	thr	P.I.	95 max	v.o.
	8/16	Chatham (S.B.)	1	D. Berard	7/2	Lovell's I.	20 pr	R. Kelley
Sandwich Tern *	7/1, 22	P'town	1	Nikula#, G. d'E.#	7/2, 8/5	Sandwich	30, 40	M. Keleher
	7/3	Minimoy	1 ph	B. Harris	7/2	S. Carver	1	K. Anderson
Roseate Tern	thr	Chatham (S.B.)	300 max	v.o.	7/12	Plymouth B.	51+	I. Davies
	thr	P.I.	9 max	7/23 R. Heil	8/6	E. Boston (B.I.)	18	K. Hartel
	7/22	P'town	300	BBC (G. d'E.)	8/13	Scituate	59	S. Maguire
	8/15	W. Falmouth	300	I. Nisbet#	8/30	Duxbury B.	150	R. Bowes
	8/17	E. Gloucester	30+	R. Heil	Black Tern			
	8/21	Nantucket	425	E. Ray	7/1, 26	P'town	4, 2	B. Nikula#
Common Tern	thr	P.I.	275 max	v.o.	7/18-8/20	P.I.	35 max	8/15 R. Heil
	7/19	Chatham (S.B.)	20,000	P. Flood	7/30, 8/20	Nantucket	2, 20	E. Ray#
	7/22	P'town	2700	BBC (G. d'E.)	8/12, 8/31	Minimoy	7, 5	B. Harris
	8/13	Scituate	328	S. Maguire	8/12-31	Chatham (S.B.)	120 max	8/31 B. Nikula
	8/15	W. Falmouth	1000	I. Nisbet#	8/17	W. Falmouth	15	I. Nisbet
	8/17	E. Gloucester	700+	R. Heil	8/20	Hatfield	5	C. Gentes
	8/20	Nantucket	184	E. Ray	8/26	Vineyard Sound	12	W. Lee
	8/31	N. Monomoy	300	D. Berard#	Black Skimmer			
Arctic Tern	7/1	P'town	6+	B. Nikula#	thr	Chatham	2 ad	B. Nikula
	7/28-8/31	Chatham (S.B.)	1-2	v/p/	7/9-10	Edgartown	1	P. Rogers#
	7/29	Newbypt	1	S. McGrath	7/24	Lynn B.	1	J. Quigley + v.o.
	8/5	P.I.	1 ad	M. Resch#	7/29	N. Monomoy	2 ad	B. Nikula
Forster's Tern	7/22	P'town	1 2S	BBC (G. d'E.)	8/10-12	P.I.	2	K. Ryan
	8/thr	P.I.	1-3	v.o.	8/31	Minimoy	8 ad. 5 juv	B. Harris
	8/5, 8/21	N. Monomoy	1, 5	B. Harris	Common Murre			
	8/15	W. Falmouth	3	I. Nisbet#	7/10	Tisbury	1 br pl ph	D. Stanwood
					Razorbill			
					7/1-6	Chilmark	1	fide A. Keith
					Black Guillemot			
					7/4	Gloucester	1	J. Frontierro#
					8/6	Rockport	1	P. Trotter
					Atlantic Puffin			
					7/23	P.I.	2	R. Heil
					8/10	Truro	1 imm injured	fide S. Ellis

CUCKOOS THROUGH FINCHES

Although the shorebird migration is well under way at this time, the passerine movement is also in progress. Birders, however, may not pay attention to the passerine migration until September. It is true that the fall migration proceeds more slowly. Some birds will begin migration in mid to late summer while others of the same species may remain in this region into October. What we can count on, however, is the annual passage of Common Nighthawks and a buildup of swallows at coastal locations.

This was a good year for Common Nighthawks, with better numbers than those of the last several years. Tom Gagnon, who has been monitoring nighthawks in Northampton since the 1960s, had a single day total of 2194 on August 30, the most in any one day since 1996. Bart Kamp, who has been watching from the Worcester Airport in Leicester, had several "big" days, with a high of 1029 on August 23. At Mount Auburn Cemetery a total of 265 were counted on August 22, the second highest single day number in over twenty years.

The most exciting report for the period was the second state record of a **Black-chinned Hummingbird**, caught and banded on the incredible date of August 6 in Brewster. Sue Finnegan, who runs the Wing Island Banding Station at the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History, was at home and set up to do hummingbird banding. She caught just one bird and was shocked to see it was a Black-chinned! The first record of that species was a bird that appeared in a Cohasset greenhouse in November 1979.

Two uncommon flycatchers, the Olive-sided and Yellow-bellied, were again well reported, continuing a trend noted last fall. Acadian Flycatchers were reported from Gate 8 at Quabbin Reservoir and at Granville State Park, both traditional breeding locations; there were no reports from the Gate 15 area of Quabbin where several pairs had been noted in previous years.

Not to be missed is the annual buildup of migrating swallows on Plum Island at the Parker River Refuge. The vast majority are Tree Swallows, with numbers estimated at over 50,000 by mid-July and over 200,000 by mid-August. The birds roost in the *phragmites* in the North Pool area of this refuge. It should also be noted that on July 19 over 2500 Bank Swallows were seen coming to roost; this roosting occurs annually but is often overlooked because of the huge Tree Swallow flocks.

The first migrant vireos were noted by the end of August, with reports of Yellow-throated from Lexington and another banded in Brewster. Philadelphia Vireos were found in two locations at the end of August. Twenty-nine species of warblers were noted during the period, although Golden-winged was missing from the list. This is a species that continues to be of major concern here in New England. The Hooded Warbler first noted this spring was still singing in early August at Wompatuck State Park in Hingham. Cerulean Warblers were noted in early July from Mount Holyoke but none was reported from the traditional spot near the Quabbin Headquarters.

An intriguing report was a singing Bicknell's Thrush from the Saddle Ball trail at Mount Greylock on July 30. The bird was heard several times but was not seen; the observer was familiar with the song and immediately recognized it but also checked recordings for additional confirmation. The last Bicknell's Thrush reported nesting on Mount Greylock was in 1972. This species still can be found in southern Vermont and in New York.

Another interesting report during this period was the discovery of an immature Lark Sparrow on Plum Island on July 30. Most reports of this species occur after the middle of August. A **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was noted at South Beach in Chatham on August 17, and Evening Grosbeaks were observed in three Berkshire county towns. R. Stymeist

Black-billed Cuckoo				7/20	Hinsdale	2	R. Packard
7/2	E. Bridgewater	2	G. d'Entremont	8/21	Pepperell	2	E. Stromsted
7/2	Lenox	1	R. Laubach	Northern Saw-whet Owl			
7/3	Manchester	2	J. Berry	7/3	Petersham	1	M. Lynch#
7/7	Dover	2	J. O'Connell	Common Nighthawk			
7/8	Moran WMA	4	M. Lynch#	8/17, 30	Northampton	129, 2194	T. Gagnon
7/14	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore	8/18, 22	ONWR	109, 385	S. Sutton
7/15	Acton	1	M. Rines	8/19, 22	Leicester	111, 974	M. Lynch#
Yellow-billed Cuckoo				8/22, 30	HRWMA	132, 735	T. Pirro
7/1	Ipswich	1	J. Berry#	8/22	Mt.A.	265	R. Stymeist#
7/4	Berlin	1	S. Sutton	8/23, 26	Leicester	1029, 563	B. Kamp#
7/4	Stoughton	1	G. d'Entremont	8/24, 26	Grafton	221, 60	J. Liller#
7/13, 8/4	P.I.	1, 1	S. McGrath	8/24	Pittsfield	345	S. Robinson
7/15	Plymouth	1	I. Davies	8/28	Groton	350	T. Pirro
7/29	Mt. Greylock	1	S. Grinley	8/30	Jamaica Plain	108	A. Joslin
7/30	Falmouth	2	M. Keleher#	Whip-poor-will			
8/19	Ware R. IBA	2	M. Lynch#	7/16	Wellfleet	1	F. Bouchard
Eastern Screech-Owl				7/17, 8/5	Bolton Flats	1, 2	S. Sutton
8/9	Jamaica Plain	2	A. Joslin	7/19, 8/17	P.I.	2, 1	Heil, Daley
8/22, 23	Mt.A.	2	R. Stymeist#	7/26	Dover	1	E. Taylor
8/24	Pembroke	2 ad + 3 yg	D. Furbish	Chimney Swift			
Great Horned Owl				8/12	Melrose	50+	P. + F. Vale
7/30	P.I.	juv	T. Wetmore	8/14	GMNWR	125	S. Perkins
8/5	Bolton Flats	2	S. Sutton	8/22	Mt.A.	55+	R. Stymeist#
8/10	Newton	1 imm	P. Gilmore	8/26	Grafton	116	J. Liller#
8/15	P.I.	2	R. Heil	8/27	GMNWR	70 +	M. Lynch#
Barred Owl				8/30	Fitchburg	40+	S. Sutton
7/3	Princeton	1	J. Dekker	Ruby-throated Hummingbird			
7/11	Sheffield	1	R. Laubach	7/8	Whately	5	C. Gentes
7/16	Mt. Wachusett	1	S. Sutton	8/5	Bolton Flats	5	S. Sutton
7/20	Peru	3	R. Packard	8/12	Natick	5	G. Long

Ruby-throated Hummingbird (continued)			8/20	Bolton Flats	11	M. Lynch#
8/19 Medford	4	M. Rines#	8/22	Lexington	12	M. Rines
8/20-31 Wayland	4 max	A. McCarthy#	8/26	Northfield	10	M. Lynch#
8/26 Sudbury	5	T. Spahr	Great Crested Flycatcher			
8/27 Lexington	5	M. Rines	7/4	Berlin	8	S. Sutton
8/28 Mashpee	4	M. Keleher	7/15	Worc. (BMB)	3	J. Liller#
Black-chinned Hummingbird (details submitted) *			8/5	Wompatuck SP	4	G. d'Entremont
8/6 Brewster	1 m b ph	S. Finnegan	8/13	Mashpee	2	M. Keleher
Red-bellied Woodpecker			8/31	Medford	2	M. Rines#
7/thr Ipswich	pr n	J. Berry	Eastern Kingbird			
8/19 Medford	3	M. Rines#	7/4	Wakefield	20	P. + F. Vale
8/23 Ipswich	3	J. Berry	7/9	Brookfield	11	M. Lynch#
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker			7/22	Bolton Flats	10	S. Sutton
7/1 Monterey	3	J. Hoyer#	thr	P.I.	47 max 8/1	R. Heil
7/1 Mt. Greylock	5	M. Lynch#	8/19	Ware R. IBA	29	M. Lynch#
7/1 Quabbin (G10)	9	SSBC (G. d'E.)	8/21	Falmouth	12	G. Hirth
7/2 Savoy	3	R. Packard	White-eyed Vireo			
7/3 Petersham	3	M. Lynch#	7/7	Brewster	1 b	S. Finnegan
7/7 Sandisfield	7	R. Packard	Yellow-throated Vireo			
7/15 Hawley	4	M. Lynch#	7/1	Monterey	2	J. Hoyer#
Hairy Woodpecker			7/1	Quabbin (G10)	3	SSBC (G. d'E.)
7/1 Ashburnham	4	T. Pirro	7/3	Royalston	1	L. de la Flor#
7/1 Mt. Greylock	4	M. Lynch#	7/9	Brookfield	5	M. Lynch#
8/13 Mashpee	4	M. Keleher	7/17	Bolton Flats	4	S. Sutton
8/19 Ware R. IBA	11	M. Lynch#	7/23	Quabbin Pk	2	M. Lynch#
Pileated Woodpecker			8/19	IRWS	1	S. Hedman#
7/1 Quabbin (G10)	2	SSBC (G. d'E.)	8/30	Lexington	1	M. Rines#
7/1 Monterey	2	J. Hoyer#	8/31	Brewster	1 b	S. Finnegan
7/4 IRWS	pr	J. Berry	Blue-headed Vireo			
7/11 Andover	3	P. Guidetti	7/1	Mt. Greylock	6	M. Lynch#
8/26 Sudbury	pr	T. Spahr	7/1	Ashburnham	6	T. Pirro
Olive-sided Flycatcher			7/3	Petersham	13	M. Lynch#
7/23 Quabbin Pk	1	M. Lynch#	7/4	Ipswich	pr n	J. Berry
8/12 Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	7/15	Hawley	22	M. Lynch#
8/13 HRWMA	1	T. Pirro	7/16	Northfield	7	M. Lynch#
8/14 Amherst	2	D. Minear	8/13	HRWMA	4	T. Pirro
8/21 Falmouth	1 juv	G. Hirth	Warbling Vireo			
8/22 Granville	1	J. Weeks	7/4	Wakefield	18	P. + F. Vale
8/22 ONWR	1	S. Sutton#	7/22	Bolton Flats	9	S. Sutton
8/26 Northfield	4	M. Lynch#	8/7	Scituate	8	D. Furbish
8/27 Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	8/31	Medford	5	M. Rines#
Eastern Wood-Pewee			Philadelphia Vireo			
7/1 Quabbin (G10)	12	SSBC (G. d'E.)	8/27	Lexington	1	M. Rines
7/3 Petersham	8	M. Lynch#	8/31	P.I.	1	T. Wetmore
7/7, 8/17 Ipswich	6 m, 15	J. Berry	Red-eyed Vireo			
8/13 HRWMA	7	T. Pirro	7/1	Mt. Greylock	61	M. Lynch#
8/19 Ware R. IBA	26	M. Lynch#	7/1	Monterey	12	J. Hoyer#
8/26 Medford	7	M. Rines#	7/1	Quabbin (G10)	54	SSBC (G. d'E.)
8/26 Northfield	6	M. Lynch#	7/3	Petersham	29	M. Lynch#
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			7/3	Royalston	11	L. de la Flor#
7/29 Mt. Greylock	1	S. Grinley	7/9	Brookfield	37	M. Lynch#
8/13 P.I.	2	J. Hoyer#	7/15	Hawley	88	M. Lynch#
8/19 Ware R. IBA	1	M. Lynch#	7/23	Quabbin Pk	34	M. Lynch#
8/19 Nahant	1	J. Hoyer#	8/5	Wompatuck SP	13	G. d'Entremont
8/22 N. Andover	1	B. Drummond	8/19	Ware R. IBA	82	M. Lynch#
8/22 Melrose	1	D. + I. Jewell	8/26	Medford	7	M. Rines#
8/27, 29 Belchertown	1, 1	L. Therrien	8/30	Lexington	5	M. Rines#
Acadian Flycatcher			Fish Crow			
7/1 Quabbin (G8)	1	SSBC (G. d'E.)	7/4	Pittsfield	1	R. Packard
7/20 Granville	2	J. Hutchison	7/8	Lenox	1	R. Stymeist
Alder Flycatcher			7/9	Plymouth	5+	I. Davies
7/3 Petersham	2	M. Lynch#	7/12	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
7/3 Royalston	1	L. de la Flor#	7/29	Marshfield	14	D. Furbish
7/4 P.I.	1-2	R. Heil	7/30	Bourne	4	R. Farrell
7/6 Windsor	10	R. Packard	8/7	Scituate	6	D. Furbish
7/8 Moran WMA	5	M. Lynch#	Common Raven			
7/15 Hawley	3	M. Lynch#	7/1	Ashburnham	1	T. Pirro
7/22 Bolton Flats	1	S. Sutton	7/29	Mt. Greylock	17	S. Grinley
Willow Flycatcher			8/19	Ware R. IBA	5	M. Lynch#
7/4 Richmond	6	R. Packard	8/20	Leicester	2	M. Lynch#
7/15 Cumb. Farms	4	J. Sweeney	8/30	Barre Falls	5	B. Kamp
7/22 Bolton Flats	11	S. Sutton	Horned Lark			
8/1 P.I.	16	R. Heil	7/18	Templeton	3 ad	T. Pirro
Least Flycatcher			7/22	Sandwich	2 ad, 5 juv	CCBC (Keleher)
7/1 Quabbin (G10)	4	SSBC (G. d'E.)	8/25	Chatham (S.B.)	6	L. Ferrareso#
8/30 Lexington	2	M. Rines#	8/31	N. Monomoy	2	D. Berard#
Eastern Phoebe			Purple Martin			
8/13 HRWMA	11	T. Pirro	thr	P.I.	20 max	v.o.

Tree Swallow				7/29	Mt. Greylock	5	S. Grinley
7/14	N. Monomoy	150	B. Nikula	8/19	Ware R. IBA	6	M. Lynch#
7/19, 8/15	P.I.	50,000, 200,000	R. Heil	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher			
8/5	GMNWR	150	M. Rines#	7/8	Longmeadow	6	R. Packard
8/17	Ipswich	200+	J. Berry	7/9	Brookfield	5	M. Lynch#
8/25	Longmeadow	500	S. Kellogg	7/16	Groveland	3	D. Chickering
8/29	W. Chatham	300+	B. Nikula	8/5	Bolton Flats	7	S. Sutton
8/29	Gloucester	200	S. Hedman	8/19	IRWS	4	S. Hedman#
Northern Rough-winged Swallow				8/19	Medford	3	M. Rines#
7/13	W. Gloucester	10	S. Hedman	8/21	Amherst	3	H. Allen
7/16	Millers Falls	10+	M. Lynch#	Eastern Bluebird			
8/11	Wakefield	20+	P. + F. Vale	7/9	Ipswich (A.F.)	5	J. Berry#
8/21	S. Quabbin	2	L. Therrien	8/14	Topsfield	10	J. Nelson
8/28	Holyoke	1	R. Packard	8/21	Pepperell	8	E. Stromsted
Bank Swallow				8/23	Wenham	8	J. Nelson
7/12	Plymouth B.	15+	I. Davies	8/19	Sherborn	5	E. Taylor
7/17, 8/5	Bolton Flats	128, 50	S. Sutton	Veery			
7/19, 8/1	P.I.	2500, 200	R. Heil	7/1	Monterey	4	J. Hoye#
7/23	Millers Falls	60+	M. Lynch#	7/1	Mt. Greylock	19	M. Lynch#
8/14	GMNWR	110	S. Perkins	7/1	Ashburnham	4	T. Pirro
8/26	Longmeadow	500	S. Kellogg	7/1	Quabbin (G10)	29	SSBC (G. d'E.)
Cliff Swallow				7/3	Manchester	7	J. Berry
7/2	Williamsburg	15	T. Pirro	7/3	Petersham	5	M. Lynch#
7/8	Cheshire	227 nests	M. Lynch#	7/4	Berlin	6	S. Sutton
7/8	Whately	2	C. Gentes	7/7	Dover	3	J. O'Connell
8/5	GMNWR	5	M. Rines#	7/8	Moran WMA	23	M. Lynch#
8/5	Newbury	5+	P. + F. Vale	7/8	Cheshire	5	M. Lynch#
8/30	Northampton	1	T. Gagnon	7/9	Brookfield	39	M. Lynch#
Barn Swallow				7/12	Millis	4	J. O'Connell
7/8	Cheshire	40+	M. Lynch#	7/15	Hawley	29	M. Lynch#
7/23	Quabbin Pk	53	M. Lynch#	7/16	Millers Falls	3	M. Lynch#
8/15	P.I.	300+	R. Heil	7/16	Groveland	16	D. Chickering
8/20	Bolton Flats	35 +	M. Lynch#	7/22	Bolton Flats	6	S. Sutton
8/26	Leicester	79	M. Lynch#	8/5	Bolton Flats	3	S. Sutton
8/27	GMNWR	300 +	M. Lynch#	8/5	Wompatuck SP	3	G. d'Entremont
Red-breasted Nuthatch				8/19	Ware R. IBA	8	M. Lynch#
7/8	Moran WMA	7	M. Lynch#	Bicknell's Thrush			
8/5	Wompatuck SP	2	G. d'Entremont	7/29	Mt. Greylock	1	S. Grinley
8/13	Mashpee	17	M. Keleher	Swainson's Thrush			
8/19	Ware R. IBA	18	M. Lynch#	7/15	Hawley	3	M. Lynch#
8/21	S. Quabbin	7	L. Therrien	7/29	Mt. Greylock	3	S. Grinley
Brown Creeper				Hermit Thrush			
7/15	Hawley	2	M. Lynch#	7/19	Sherborn	5	E. Taylor
8/11	Pembroke	1	D. Furbish	7/1	Ashburnham	5	T. Pirro
8/26	Sudbury	1	T. Spahr	7/3	Petersham	10	M. Lynch#
Carolina Wren				7/4	Berlin	7	S. Sutton
8/4	MNWS	12+	R. Stymeist#	7/7-11	Ipswich	6 m	J. Berry
8/26	Medford	4	M. Rines#	7/15	Hawley	13	M. Lynch#
8/30	Lexington	7	M. Rines#	7/30	Falmouth	3	M. Keleher#
8/19	W. Falmouth	4	R. Farrell	8/19	Ware R. IBA	16	M. Lynch#
House Wren				Wood Thrush			
8/11	Pembroke	4	D. Furbish	7/1	Mt. Greylock	9	M. Lynch#
8/19	Medford	11	M. Rines#	7/1	Ipswich	6 m	J. Berry#
8/22	Lexington	23	M. Rines	7/3	Petersham	4	M. Lynch#
Winter Wren				7/9	Brookfield	13	M. Lynch#
7/1	Ipswich	2 m	J. Berry#	7/15	Hawley	4	M. Lynch#
7/1	Ashburnham	2	T. Pirro	8/11	Pembroke	4	D. Furbish
7/3	Manchester	2 m	J. Berry	8/30	Lexington	3	M. Rines#
7/3	Petersham	7	M. Lynch#	American Robin			
7/6	Windsor	3	R. Packard	7/17	Bolton Flats	610	S. Sutton
7/13	Savoy	2	S. Perkins#	7/31	Mt.A.	116	R. Stymeist
7/15	Plainfield	3	S. Kellogg	8/1	P.I.	235	R. Heil
7/15	Hawley	4	M. Lynch#	8/5	Bolton Flats	4370	S. Sutton
8/18	Conway	3	R. Packard	8/22	Leicester	300 +	M. Lynch#
Marsh Wren				Gray Catbird			
7/4	Wakefield	6	P. + F. Vale	7/4	Wakefield	41	P. + F. Vale
7/4	Richmond	14	R. Packard	7/9	Brookfield	47	M. Lynch#
7/5	Stockbridge	3	R. Packard	8/1	P.I.	180	R. Heil
7/9	Brookfield	6	M. Lynch#	8/11	Pembroke	30	D. Furbish
7/9	IRWS	pr n + 3	J. Berry	8/13	Mashpee	34	M. Keleher
7/17-8/5	Bolton Flats	max.4	S. Sutton	8/19	Ware R. IBA	41	M. Lynch#
7/22, 8/27	GMNWR	11, 6	M. Lynch#	8/30	Lexington	84	M. Rines#
8/1	P.I.	40	R. Heil	Brown Thrasher			
8/13	Mashpee	9	M. Keleher	7/25	Melrose	5	D. + I. Jewell
Golden-crowned Kinglet				8/1	P.I.	17	R. Heil
7/6	Windsor	6	R. Packard	8/7	Scituate	2	D. Furbish
7/8	Moran WMA	6	M. Lynch#	Cedar Waxwing			
7/15	Hawley	2	M. Lynch#	8/1	P.I.	125 ad, 2 juv	R. Heil

Cedar Waxwing (continued)				7/3	Petersham	15	M. Lynch#
8/5	Bolton Flats	36	S. Sutton	7/15	Hawley	11	M. Lynch#
8/12	Sudbury	100's	G. Long	7/16	Warwick	8	M. Lynch#
8/13	HRWMA	32	T. Pirro	7/16	Northfield	6	M. Lynch#
8/17	Amherst	200	H. Allen		Blackburnian Warbler		
8/20	Pepperell	80	E. Stromsted#	7/1	Mt. Greylock	31	M. Lynch#
8/22	Lexington	40	M. Rines	7/1	Quabbin (G10)	5	SSBC (G. d'E.)
Blue-winged Warbler				7/3	Petersham	3	M. Lynch#
7/22	Bolton Flats	2	S. Sutton	7/8	Moran WMA	6	M. Lynch#
8/22, 30	Lexington	5, 2	M. Rines	7/15	Hawley	15	M. Lynch#
8/31	Medford	1	M. Rines#	8/31	Medford	1	M. Rines#
Brewster's Warbler					Pine Warbler		
8/30	Medford	1 m	I. Davies	7/1	Quabbin (G10)	8	SSBC (G. d'E.)
Nashville Warbler				7/9	Brookfield	14	M. Lynch#
7/1	Ashburnham	2	T. Pirro	8/19	Ware R. IBA	15	M. Lynch#
7/29	Mt. Greylock	2	S. Grinley		Prairie Warbler		
8/11	Pepperell	4 ad, 1 imm	E. Stromsted	7/1	MBWMA	2	D. Chickering
8/13	Mt. Wachusett	1	J. Dekker	8/19	P.I.	2	B. Harris
8/21	S. Quabbin	1	L. Therrien	8/20	Bolton Flats	1 imm	M. Lynch#
8/26	Sudbury	1	T. Spahr	8/27	Brewster	1 b	S. Finnegan#
8/31	Medford	1	M. Rines#		Palm Warbler		
Northern Parula				8/17	Amherst	2	H. Allen
8/19, 31	Medford	3, 1	M. Rines#		Blackpoll Warbler		
8/31	Gloucester	2	S. Hedman	7/6-11	P.I.	1	S. McGrath
Yellow Warbler				7/24	Mt. Greylock	4	R. Laubach
7/2	Lovell's I.	20+	R. Kelley	8/31	Brewster	1 b	S. Finnegan
7/4	Richmond	21	R. Packard		Cerulean Warbler		
7/4	Wakefield	26	P. + F. Vale	7/2	Mt. Holyoke	1	T. Pirro
8/1	P.I.	72	R. Heil	7/3	Princeton	1 m	J. Dekker
8/12	Melrose	4	P. + F. Vale		Black-and-white Warbler		
8/30	Lexington	1	M. Rines#	7/3	Manchester	5	J. Berry
8/30	Groveland	1	D. Chickering#	7/15	Hawley	5	M. Lynch#
8/31	Medford	1	M. Rines#	7/22	Bolton Flats	3	S. Sutton
Chestnut-sided Warbler				8/1	P.I.	3	R. Heil
7/1	Monterey	6	J. Hoye#	8/17	Gloucester (E.P.)	3	S. Hedman
7/1	Quabbin (G10)	14	SSBC (G. d'E.)	8/22, 30	Lexington	3, 7	M. Rines
7/1	Mt. Greylock	39	M. Lynch#	8/30	Medford	6+	I. Davies
7/8	Moran WMA	30	M. Lynch#	8/31	Melrose	3	D. + I. Jewell
7/9	Brookfield	6	M. Lynch#		American Redstart		
7/15	Hawley	12+	M. Lynch#	7/1	Quabbin (G10)	7	SSBC (G. d'E.)
8/13	HRWMA	3	T. Pirro	7/1	Mt. Greylock	23	M. Lynch#
8/19	Ware R. IBA	4	M. Lynch#	7/11, 8/13	P.I.	6, 12	R. Heil
8/19	IRWS	3	S. Hedman#	7/15	Hawley	6	M. Lynch#
8/22	Lexington	3	M. Rines	8/19, 31	Medford	20, 29	M. Rines#
Magnolia Warbler				8/22, 8/30	Lexington	7, 25	M. Rines
7/1	Mt. Greylock	13	M. Lynch#	8/26	Sudbury	7	T. Spahr
7/15	Hawley	12	M. Lynch#		Prothonotary Warbler		
7/29	Mt. Greylock	15	S. Grinley	8/1	P.I.	1 m	R. Heil
8/1	P.I.	1	R. Heil	8/24	Chilmark	1	A. + G. Hartman
8/22	Lexington	2	M. Rines	8/31	Medford	1	M. Rines#
8/23	Chatham (MI)	1	B. Harris		Worm-eating Warbler		
8/24, 31	Medford	1, 3	M. Rines	7/2	Mt. Holyoke	2	T. Pirro
8/31	Gloucester	2	S. Hedman	7/7	Dover	1	J. O'Connell
Cape May Warbler					Ovenbird		
8/27	Lexington	1	M. Rines	7/1	Ashburnham	10	T. Pirro
Black-throated Blue Warbler				7/1	Quabbin (G10)	32	SSBC (G. d'E.)
7/1	Quabbin (G10)	21	SSBC (G. d'E.)	7/1	Mt. Greylock	18	M. Lynch#
7/1	Ashburnham	8	T. Pirro	7/1	Ipswich	11 m	J. Berry#
7/1	Mt. Greylock	19	M. Lynch#	7/3	Manchester	14	J. Berry
7/15	Hawley	6	M. Lynch#	7/3	Petersham	15	M. Lynch#
7/16	Warwick	4	M. Lynch#	7/4	Berlin	9	S. Sutton
8/23	Manomet	1 m imm b	I. Davies	7/4	Stoughton	7	G. d'Entremont
8/26	P.I.	1	S. McGrath	7/9	Brookfield	11	M. Lynch#
8/26	Sudbury	1	T. Spahr	8/13	Mashpee	7	M. Keleher
Yellow-rumped Warbler					Northern Waterthrush		
7/1	Ashburnham	2	T. Pirro	7/10	Halifax/Hanson	2	J. Sweeney#
7/1	Mt. Greylock	12	M. Lynch#	8/4	MNWS	4	R. Stymeist#
7/3	Royalston	3	L. de la Flor#	8/23	Manomet	3 b	I. Davies
7/3	Petersham	8	M. Lynch#	8/30	Lexington	4	M. Rines#
7/8	Moran WMA	12	M. Lynch#		Louisiana Waterthrush		
7/15	Hawley	13	M. Lynch#	7/4	Berlin	3	S. Sutton
8/13	HRWMA	2	T. Pirro	7/15	Hawley	1	M. Lynch#
8/19	Ware R. IBA	5 imm	M. Lynch#	7/22	Bolton Flats	1	S. Sutton
8/31	P.I.	2	T. Wetmore	7/29	E. Gloucester	1	R. Heil
Black-throated Green Warbler				8/13	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg
7/1	Ashburnham	6	T. Pirro		Mourning Warbler		
7/1	Mt. Greylock	17	M. Lynch#	7/1	Mt. Greylock	2	M. Lynch#
7/1	Quabbin (G10)	12	SSBC (G. d'E.)	8/18, 22	Manomet	1 b, 1 b	I. Davies

Mourning Warbler (continued)				8/17	Chatham (S.B.)	15+	B. Nikula#
8/19	MNWS	1	J. Hoye#	8/31	N. Monomoy	4	D. Berard#
8/23	Brewster	1 b	S. Finnegan#	Seaside Sparrow			
Common Yellowthroat				7/2-8/12	P.I.	1-2	v.o.
7/1	Quabbin (G10)	32	SSBC (G. d'E.)	Swamp Sparrow			
7/4	Wakefield	36	P. + F. Vale	7/3	Royalston	9	L. de la Flor#
7/8	Moran WMA	52	M. Lynch#	7/4	Wakefield	23	P. + F. Vale
7/9	Brookfield	63	M. Lynch#	7/4	Richmond	48	R. Packard
7/15	Hawley	39	M. Lynch#	7/6	Windsor	36	R. Packard
8/1	P.I.	41	R. Heil	7/9	Brookfield	23	M. Lynch#
8/13	Mashpee	36	M. Keleher	White-throated Sparrow			
8/13	HRWMA	21	T. Pirro	7/1	Mt. Greylock	7	M. Lynch#
8/19	Ware R. IBA	45	M. Lynch#	7/1	Ashburnham	7	T. Pirro
Hooded Warbler				7/8	Moran WMA	23	M. Lynch#
8/1-5	Wompatuck SP	1 m	G. d'Entremont#	7/13	Savoy	5	S. Perkins#
Wilson's Warbler				7/15	Hawley	7	M. Lynch#
8/13	Southwick	2	S. Kellogg	Dark-eyed Junco			
8/24	Lexington	1	M. Rines	7/1	Mt. Greylock	11	M. Lynch#
8/27	Southwick	1	S. Kellogg	7/8	Moran WMA	1	M. Lynch#
8/31	Belchertown	1	L. Therrien	7/13	Savoy	4	S. Perkins#
8/31	Medford	2	M. Rines#	7/15	Hawley	1	M. Lynch#
8/31	Gloucester	4	S. Hedman	7/16	Mt. Wachusett	5	S. Sutton
Canada Warbler				Rose-breasted Grosbeak			
7/1	Ashburnham	3	T. Pirro	7/1	Quabbin (G10)	5	SSBC (G. d'E.)
8/14, 24	Medford	1, 2	R. LaFontaine	7/3	MBWMA	5	S. Grinley#
8/19	Ware R. IBA	3	M. Lynch#	7/8	Moran WMA	9	M. Lynch#
8/21	S. Quabbin	2	L. Therrien	7/15	Worc. (BMB)	5	J. Liller#
8/22	Melrose	2	D. + I. Jewell	8/29	Lexington	16	K. Hartel
Yellow-breasted Chat				Indigo Bunting			
8/21	Brewster	1 b	S. Finnegan#	7/1	Mt. Greylock	9	M. Lynch#
8/22	Manomet	1 b	I. Davies	7/3	MBWMA	7	S. Grinley#
8/23	Chatham (MI)	1	B. Harris	7/8	Moran WMA	12	M. Lynch#
8/24, 31	Brewster	1 b, 1 b	S. Finnegan#	7/15	Hawley	11	M. Lynch#
8/29	Edgartown	1	S. + T. Baird	8/5	Bolton Flats	11	S. Sutton
Scarlet Tanager				8/22	Lexington	5	M. Rines
7/1	Quabbin (G10)	6	SSBC (G. d'E.)	8/26	Northampton	7	M. Lynch#
7/3	MBWMA	5	S. Grinley#	Dickcissel			
7/4	Berlin	9	S. Sutton	8/21	WBWS	1 ph	D. Berard
7/9	Brookfield	7	M. Lynch#	8/24	Gloucester (E.P.)	1	S. Hedman
7/15	Hawley	12	M. Lynch#	Bobolink			
8/19	Ware R. IBA	8	M. Lynch#	thr	P.I.	50 max	v.o.
Eastern Towhee				7/6	Windsor	26	R. Packard
7/1	Quabbin (G10)	36	SSBC (G. d'E.)	7/9	Ipswich (A.F.)	30+	J. Berry#
7/30	Falmouth	30	M. Keleher#	8/16	Concord	30	S. Perkins
8/1	P.I.	32	R. Heil	8/18	Leicester	143	M. Lynch#
8/5	Wompatuck SP	25	G. d'Entremont#	8/20	Bolton Flats	68	M. Lynch#
8/11	Pembroke	31	D. Furbish	8/22	ONWR	189	S. Sutton
8/19	Ware R. IBA	27	M. Lynch#	8/27	GMNWR	103	M. Lynch#
Chipping Sparrow				Red-winged Blackbird			
7/9	Brookfield	39	M. Lynch#	7/9	Brookfield	117	M. Lynch#
7/15	Hawley	36	M. Lynch#	7/22	Bolton Flats	127	S. Sutton
7/30	Falmouth	35	M. Keleher#	7/22	GMNWR	110+	M. Lynch#
8/11	Medford	60+	I. Davies	8/1	P.I.	160	R. Heil
8/22	Lexington	30+	J. Forbes	8/22	Lexington	230	M. Rines
Field Sparrow				Eastern Meadowlark			
7/3	MBWMA	4	S. Grinley#	7/2	Ipswich	2	M. Lynch#
7/30	Falmouth	20	M. Keleher#	7/3	Essex	1	G. d'Entremont
8/11	Pepperell	9	E. Stromsted	7/8	Whately	2	C. Gentes
Vesper Sparrow				7/10	Halifax/Hanson	2	J. Sweeney#
7/15	Plymouth	3	L. Ferrarresso#	7/12	Medfield	1	J. O'Connell
Lark Sparrow				7/13	W. Roxbury	4	A. Birch
7/30	P.I.	1 imm	S. Spangenberg#	7/14	P'town	1	B. Nikula
Savannah Sparrow				8/17	S. Lancaster	1	S. Sutton
7/2	P.I.	9	P. + F. Vale	Yellow-headed Blackbird			
7/8	Cheshire	10+	M. Lynch#	8/17	Chatham (S.B.)	1 imm m	B. Nikula#
7/8	Leicester	15+	M. Lynch#	Common Grackle			
8/6	Chatham (S. B.)	6	G. d'Entremont#	7/4	Wakefield	165+	P. + F. Vale
8/26	Northampton	13	M. Lynch#	7/11	P.I.	220	R. Heil
Grasshopper Sparrow				8/5	Bolton Flats	100	S. Sutton
7/15	Millers Falls	3	M. Lynch#	8/13	Mashpee	500	M. Keleher
7/15	Plymouth	5	L. Ferrarresso#	8/26	Leicester	427	M. Lynch#
7/19	Cumb. Farms	3	D. Furbish	Brown-headed Cowbird			
7/30	Falmouth	6	M. Keleher#	7/19	Cumb. Farms	300	D. Furbish
Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow				Orchard Oriole			
7/4, 8/1	P.I.	55, 20	R. Heil	7/4	Wakefield	3	P. + F. Vale
8/5	Sandwich	10	CCBC (Keleher)	7/9	W. Newbury	3	E. Nielsen#
8/6	E. Boston (B.I.)	12+	K. Hartel	7/30	Falmouth	6	M. Keleher#
				8/13	P.I.	2	T. Wetmore

Orchard Oriole (continued)			Purple Finch				
8/21	Essex	2	J. Nelson#	thr	PI.	16 max	R. Heil
8/21	Longmeadow	1	J. Wojtanowski	7/1	Quabbin (G10)	4	SSBC (G. d'E.)
Baltimore Oriole				7/1	Monterey	2	J. Hoye#
7/3	MBWMA	22	S. Grinley#	7/1	Groveland	2	D. Chickering
7/30	Falmouth	16	M. Keleher#	7/8	Moran WMA	15	M. Lynch#
8/1	P.I.	26	R. Heil	7/15	Plainfield	10	S. Kellogg
8/19	Ware R. IBA	17	M. Lynch#	7/15	Hawley	7	M. Lynch#
8/26	Sudbury	15	T. Spahr	8/13	HRWMA	3	T. Pirro
8/28	Pepperell	7	E. Stromsted	Evening Grosbeak			
8/30	Lexington	9	M. Rines#	7/2	Savoy	2	R. Packard
				7/15	Hawley	4+	M. Lynch#
				7/15	Plainfield	3	S. Kellogg

ABBREVIATIONS FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS

Taxonomic order is based on AOU checklist, Seventh edition, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, and 46th Supplements, as published in *The Auk* 117: 847-58 (2000); 119:897-906 (2002); 120:923-32 (2003); 121:985-95 (2004); 122:1026-31 (2005).

ABC	Allen Bird Club	ONWR	Oxbow National Wildlife Refuge
A.P.	Andrews Point, Rockport	P.I.	Plum Island
A.Pd	Allens Pond, S. Dartmouth	Pd	Pond
B.	Beach	P'town	Provincetown
Barre FD	Barre Falls Dam,	Pont.	Pontoosuc Lake, Lanesboro
	Barre, Rutland	R.P.	Race Point, Provincetown
B.I.	Belle Isle, E. Boston	Res.	Reservoir
B.R.	Bass Rocks, Gloucester	S. Dart.	South Dartmouth
BBC	Brookline Bird Club	S.B.	South Beach, Chatham
BMB	Broad Meadow Brook, Worcester	S.N.	Sandy Neck, Barnstable
C.B.	Crane Beach, Ipswich	SRV	Sudbury River Valley
CGB	Coast Guard Beach, Eastham	SSBC	South Shore Bird Club
C.P.	Crooked Pond, Boxford	TASL	Take A Second Look
Cambr.	Cambridge		Boston Harbor Census
CCBC	Cape Cod Bird Club	WBWS	Wellfleet Bay WS
Cumb. Farms	Cumberland Farms,	WMWS	Wachusett Meadow WS
	Middleboro	Wompatuck SP	Hingham, Cohasset,
DFWS	Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary		Scituate, and Norwell
DWMA	Delaney WMA	Worc.	Worcester
	Stow, Bolton, Harvard		
DWWS	Daniel Webster WS	Other Abbreviations	
E.P.	Eastern Point, Gloucester	ad	adult
EMHW	Eastern Mass. Hawk Watch	alt	alternate
F.E.	First Encounter Beach, Eastham	b	banded
F.P.	Fresh Pond, Cambridge	br	breeding
F.pk	Franklin Park, Boston	dk	dark (morph)
G40	Gate 40, Quabbin Res.	f	female
GMNWR	Great Meadows NWR	fl	fledgling
H.	Harbor	imm	immature
H.P.	Halibut Point, Rockport	juv	juvenile
HRWMA	High Ridge WMA, Gardner	lt	light (morph)
I.	Island	m	male
IRWS	Ipswich River WS	max	maximum
L.	Ledge	migr	migrating
M.V.	Martha's Vineyard	n	nesting
MAS	Mass. Audubon Society	ph	photographed
MBWMA	Martin Burns WMA, Newbury	pl	plumage
MNWS	Marblehead Neck WS	pr	pair
MSSF	Myles Standish State	S	summer (1S = 1st summer)
	Forest, Plymouth	v.o.	various observers
Mt.A.	Mt. Auburn Cemetery, Cambr.	W	winter (2W = second winter)
NAC	Nine Acre Corner, Concord	yg	young
Newbypt	Newburyport	#	additional observers

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE BIRD SIGHTINGS TO BIRD OBSERVER

Sightings for any given month must be reported in writing by the eighth of the following month, and may be submitted by postal mail or e-mail. Send written reports to Bird Sightings, Robert H. Stymeist, 36 Lewis Avenue, Arlington, MA 02474-3206. Include name and phone number of observer, common name of species, date of sighting, location, number of birds, other observer(s), and information on age, sex, and morph (where relevant). For instructions on e-mail submission, visit: <<http://massbird.org/birdobserver/sightings/>>.

Species on the Review List of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee (indicated by an asterisk [*] in the Bird Reports), as well as species unusual as to place, time, or known nesting status in Massachusetts, should be reported promptly to the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, c/o Marjorie Rines, Massachusetts Audubon Society, South Great Road, Lincoln, MA 01773, or by e-mail to <marj@mrines.com>.

ABOUT THE COVER

Snow Bunting

For many, winter birding is highlighted by flashes of black and white as a flock of Snow Buntings (*Plectrophenax nivalis*) swirls over a sand dune, alights, and then takes flight in unison. In breeding plumage males are entirely black and white with white heads, underbody, rump, and broad wing bands, which contrast sharply with the black wings, back, and white-edged tail. Females have rufous-streaked gray backs and some rufous on the head and flanks. Winter birds, including juveniles, resemble female breeding plumage but have a nearly complete rufous breast band and more rufous on the head, back, and flanks. In flight the wings appear white with black tips. This species breeds in the high arctic around the world, with four subspecies recognized. Our North American subspecies, *P. n. nivalis*, is the most widespread of the four. The Snow Bunting is closely related to the McKay's Bunting, a much whiter bird that breeds only in the Pribilof Islands in the Bering Sea.


All but the Aleutian Island populations and a few local populations along the Alaskan coast are migratory. They winter from the Alaskan coast across Canada to Newfoundland, and south to Washington State and Colorado in the west and to Virginia in the east. They are gregarious in winter, and it is not unusual to encounter flocks of up to 100 birds. In Massachusetts the Snow Bunting is considered a common to locally abundant winter resident and migrant. These birds arrive in peak numbers in early November, when as many as 1000 have been recorded in a single day. Their numbers gradually decrease from November onward. They are most common on beaches and barren fields.

Snow Buntings are largely monogamous and produce a single brood. They are the earliest of the migrants to arrive at their high Arctic breeding grounds, the males in April when weather conditions are still harsh and food is mostly covered with snow. The females arrive a month to six weeks after the males. Snow Buntings are unusual in that they nest in rock fissures, cracks, or other rock cavities, adaptive behavior presumably to avoid nest predation. The early arrival of males is thought to be driven by intense competition for territories with good nest sites. Both males and females defend the breeding territory with chases and fights, where birds use both feet and bills. The male's song is a warble, usually given from a rock perch, and serves both to attract mates and as a territorial advertisement. The song has been described as *tee-sip-purrr-tee-tee-sip-purr-twee* or *purrr-tsa-tsu-tsee* and *hudidi feet feet feew hudidi feet feet feew hudidi*. The repertoire of calls is considerable, e.g., *pee-ee*, *peee*, *cheee*, *twee*, *churr*, *shirr*, *chree*, *sis-sis-sis*, *weep*, *wee*, *seep*, *tew* and *tiu*. In courtship displays, the male walks around the female with his wings raised. In flight displays he flies from his perch up to thirty to fifty feet with rapid wingbeats, then sings and glides downward to his rock perch with wings held in the shape of a V. This latter behavior is also used as an aggressive display along territorial boundaries.

Both parents choose the nest site in a rock cavity, but only the female builds the nest. The nest is a thick-walled cup of moss and grass, lined with rootlets, fur, or


feathers. The clutch size is variable but averages five bluish or creamy, brown-spotted eggs. Only the female incubates for the ten to fifteen days until hatching. Males usually feed the female during incubation; she solicits food with begging calls and quivering wings. The young fledge in ten to seventeen days and are fed for more than a week after leaving the nest. Both parents feed the young, but they divide the brood, the male taking care of the first chicks to fledge. The young are fed almost entirely insects and spiders. After becoming independent, they join flocks of up to 100 other young birds.

Snow Buntings forage almost exclusively on the ground, where they walk along and peck at seeds. In summer they sometimes hawk insects, or they may leap to get seeds from taller plants. They sometimes jump at stems to loosen seeds. In winter they eat mostly grass and weed seeds and in summer seeds, buds, and invertebrates.

Snow Bunting avian predators include Gyrfalcons, Peregrine Falcons, Snowy Owls, and Long-tailed Jaegers. Weasels and foxes are nest predators that may be mobbed when approaching nests. The greatest threat is severe weather, which can cause mortality by exposure or starvation. The species is secure, however, because of the remoteness of the breeding grounds and the vast areas of suitable fields and other foraging areas across Canada and the United States. 

William E. Davis, Jr.

About the Cover Artist: Barry Van Dusen

Barry Van Dusen's drawings are well known to *Bird Observer* readers. His work has appeared on its cover more often than that of any artist. Barry has also provided illustrations for several nature books and pocket guides, including publications by the American Birding Association, HarperCollins, and Princeton University Press. His articles and paintings have been featured in *Birder's World* and *Bird Watcher's Digest*. Barry was trained as an artist but became drawn to nature subjects through the Massachusetts Audubon Society, an association which began in 1982. Shortly thereafter, he discovered the work of European wildlife artists and adopted their methodology of direct field sketching. His skill as a field artist has enabled Barry to participate abroad in projects sponsored by the Netherlands-based Artists for Nature Foundation. Working with other ANF artists to raise money for conservation of threatened habitats, he has traveled to India, Peru, Ireland, and Spain. Barry was elected a full member of London's Society of Wildlife Artists and is a frequent contributor to its exhibitions. His work has also been shown in Ireland, Scotland, France, and Holland. In the U.S. Barry frequently exhibits in New England, and at prestigious national shows such as *Birds in Art* in Wausau, Wisconsin, and *Art of the Animal Kingdom* in Bennington, Vermont. Barry resides in the central Massachusetts town of Princeton. His website is <<http://www.barryvandusen.com>>. 

AT A GLANCE

October 2006



DAVID LARSON

Just as our August issue typically features a shorebird as the mystery species, the October issue challenged readers to identify one of fall's "sneaky, streaky brown jobs." So, you ask, "What's a sneaky, streaky brown job?" Although definitions vary, such birds generally tend to be small, somewhat nondescript species that may be hard to observe and challenging to identify. Among the quintessential "sneaky, streaky brown jobs," sparrows quickly rise to the top of the list. Yes, this month's quiz bird is a sparrow. Before delving into the wonderful world of sparrows, however, are there other identification possibilities that should be considered?

A look at the mystery bird's short, conical bill and strongly patterned back at once suggests *Emberizidae* — the sparrow family. If it were something other than a sparrow, such as a female Indigo Bunting or Blue Grosbeak, it would not be spotted on the back and would not display a conspicuous pale eye ring. A female House or Purple finch would have a much larger and thicker bill and would appear more streaked on the back than the mystery bird. Overall, our bird gives the impression of being small and delicate, not big headed and chunky as is typical of these finches.

Knowing that the bird in the photograph is a sparrow narrows the field considerably. Previous "At A Glance" descriptions have emphasized the importance of the head pattern for identification. With this in mind, it should be noted that in addition to its distinct eye ring, the October mystery species has what appears to be a pale median stripe on the crown, a relatively unmarked pale face, and a dusky spot behind the auriculars (cheek feathers). When combined with distinct dark spots on the back and the absence of strong streaks on the flanks, these indications suggest that the bird in the photograph is a Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*).

To be certain, however, we must eliminate several other sparrow species. Both Nelson's and Saltmarsh sharp-tailed sparrows possess a broad triangle pattern on their face surrounding a dark cheek. They lack eye rings and have generally pale stripes of varying intensities on their backs. A LeConte's Sparrow would show a broad, ochre-colored stripe over the eye; a less prominent eye ring; tertials with distinct white or pale edges; thin, dark malar stripes at the sides of the throat; and distinct dark stripes on the sides and flanks. Field Sparrow, another species with a prominent eye ring, would display white wing bars, a pale gray neck collar, and a less spotted back.

Grasshopper Sparrows are uncommon and very local grassland breeders in Massachusetts. Listed as threatened in our state, most nest in only a few widely scattered localities. They are generally scarce migrants in the Bay State and are very rare in winter. David Larson obtained this digital image of a migrant Grasshopper Sparrow at the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. 🐦

Wayne R. Petersen



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AT A GLANCE



DAVID LARSON

Can you identify this bird?

Identification will be discussed in next issue's AT A GLANCE.

MORE HOT BIRDS



A Halloween surprise at the Joppa Flats Bird Banding Station on the Parker River NWR was this **Green-tailed Towhee** (left), banded on October 31, 2006, and photographed by David Larson. The bird was relocated on the refuge by birders several times well into November.

James Smith sighted a flyover Cackling Goose mixed in with Canadas on November 3, 2006, and on November 4 he discovered two **Richardson's Cackling Geese** (one of which is the bottom bird at right) at UMass Amherst.



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VOL. 34, NO. 6, DECEMBER 2006

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