

# New Hampshire BIRD RECORDS





**NEW HAMPSHIRE BIRD RECORDS**  
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**IN APPRECIATION**

This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by Diana Stephens in loving appreciation of her mother and father, Dolores and Mallory Stephens, and her brother and sister-in-law, Mal and Claudia LaBrie Stephens. From learning to love nature to hiking and cross country skiing to learning to appreciate the wildlife that surrounds us, I would like to honor my family with this issue.



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obviously not evident in this photo.

UC and UR are both Common Tern, showing an orange-red bill with black tip, orange-red legs and the darkest upperparts of the group. MR is a Roseate Tern, showing a solid black bill, orange-red legs, the palest upperparts of the group and a tail that extends well beyond the wings when at rest. Beware, however, that Roseate Terns don't always have an all-black bill. During the breeding season Roseate Terns develop red at the base of the bill that eventually makes up 1/3 to 1/2 of the bill by the time chicks fledge before going back to all-black in August to September. Since not all Roseate Terns breed at the same time (later breeders tend to be 3-4 year olds), the amount of red at the base can range from none to 1/2 of the bill during the breeding season. BL is an Arctic Tern, showing a shorter blood-red bill, shorter and darker red legs, upperparts in between the other two species, and narrower white lores when compared with the Common Tern in the upper right.

All three species currently nest on White and Seavey Islands at the Isles of Shoals, approximately six miles off the coast of New Hampshire. This tern colony was reestablished through a partnership between NH Audubon and NH Fish and Game in 1997. Common Terns make up the large majority of the colony with roughly 2,500 pairs, followed by 40+ pairs of Roseate Terns and only a few pairs of Arctic Terns. Given the huge disparity in relative numbers, finding all three species on the same rock made it an especially good day for all who were able to observe these lovely terns.

*Quiz photo taken by Leo McKillop on June 2, 2019 at Pulpit Rocks, Rye, NH.*

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## Birding Page Pond Community Forest, Meredith

*by Rob Woodward*



*Page Pond by Rob Woodward.*

Now that I am a summer resident in the Lakes Region, I am searching for new birding sites to explore within the area. To my delight, I have located several good sites nearby, including state parks and sanctuaries of New Hampshire Audubon, Nature Conservancy, and Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. Still more preserves are town conservation commission properties. One of my favorites is Page Pond Community Forest in Meredith. Over 800 acres of woodlands, wetlands, fields, streams and ponds are protected in this special sanctuary at the upper end of Meredith Neck. Surprisingly, it gets little attention from birders with only a handful of reports in eBird.

The creation of this preserve began in 2009 when the Trust for Public Lands bought the property and transferred ownership to the town. Important financial assistance came from New Hampshire's Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), the town of Meredith and individual contributors. The Sherman conservation easement adds another 53 acres and in 2017, almost 200 additional acres were acquired. The property is conserved by the Meredith Conservation Commission.

The rich natural and human history of this site is evident throughout. The most conspicuous human feature is the large mill dam built in the 1830s. There is also an old family graveyard, some cellar holes and a quarry where a unique rock was mined, but first, let's take a tour of the property trail by trail, starting from the Quarry Road kiosk.

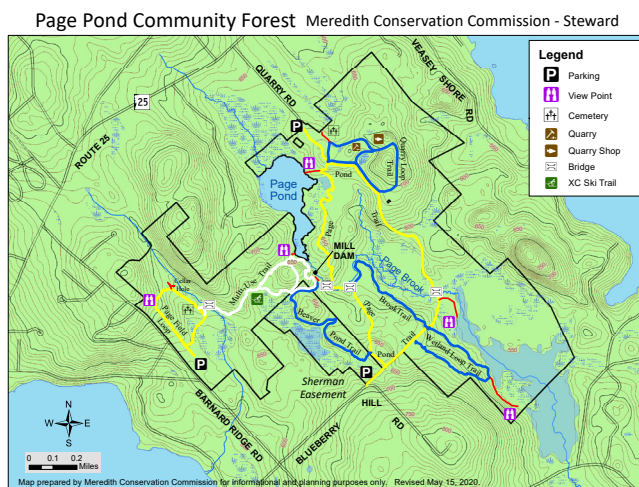
To reach the kiosk for Page Pond, turn east on Route 25 in central Meredith. Drive two miles to Moulton Farm and turn right on Quarry Road. Go 0.4 miles until the road turns to dirt and bear right into the parking lot where you will find the kiosk.

Pick up a trail map here and continue straight ahead for about a hundred yards and bear right on the Page Pond Loop Trail. After a short distance, you will see a spur trail for a

view of Page Pond, sometimes known as Little Pond. This is a must stop as it gives you the best view of this 19 acre undeveloped pond. The shallow north end is a good place to look for waterfowl.

On July 12, 2018, I found five Green-winged Teal, a rare bird anywhere in the state in summer, particularly inland. In August of 2020, at the time of this writing, a major irruption of two species of birds was occurring state-wide. There were many Red-breasted Nuthatches and some Red Crossbills present on some recent visits here. But don't come here to find rare birds. Instead, enjoy the deep forest, the tall trees, the ferns, toadstools and quiet beauty.

Continue on the Page Pond Trail until you come to a stream. Turn right and follow the sign to the mill dam. In 1806, as Lewis and Clark were returning from their famous expedition, Dudley Leavitt and his family settled in Meredith and in 1830, his son Sewall bought the land here and soon after built this huge dam and mill complex. The stone walls are 18 feet high and 16 feet wide, representing untold hours of hard labor in its construction.



Follow the white blazes of the Multi-Use Trail toward Page Field. Notice the nice wide bridges over the streams for accommodating cross-country skiers. Prior to reaching Page Field, you will come to a section of young secondary growth that will result in a change in the bird species composition from the deep woodlands you have just passed through. I recently found a Black-billed Cuckoo here. Up a steep section of trail is Page Field Loop, a trail that circumnavigates Page Field, the only open grassy area on the property. The top of the hill on this trail affords views of the nearby Belknap Mountains.

Retrace your steps on the Multi-Use Trail, bear right, and follow the Beaver Pond Trail. This wetland is good for Hooded Merganser and Belted Kingfisher. Unlike Page Pond, there are some small boat docks on the shore. This trail then connects with the Page Pond Trail marked with yellow blazes. Turn right on the Wetlands Loop Trail that takes you out to the largest wetlands complex on the preserve. At 281 acres, it is also the

largest wetland in Meredith. There is, or was, a Great Blue Heron rookery in here. Now is your chance to find herons and waterfowl. Sooner or later, you will hear the haunting cries of Common Loon from nearby Lake Winnepesaukee.

The Wetlands Loop reconnects with the Page Pond Trail or you can go straight on the Brook Trail, where in season you may find Louisiana Waterthrush. If you continue on the Page Pond Loop, you will come to a spur leading to a lookout of the wetlands along the Wetlands Loop. Return to Page Pond Trail. The trail passes a beaver dam where in 2018 I found a Mulberry Wing butterfly, still the only one I have ever seen. Farther down, turn right on the Quarry Loop Trail marked with blue markers.

On the right side of the trail are the ruins of the quarry shop and on the left side are the remains of the quarry. Here they mined "traprock", a special dark form of granite. If you have ever walked down a railroad track, you will have seen this dark igneous rock. Farther down the trail near a dead end, you will come to the Leavitt cemetery, a small, 19th century family graveyard, apparently limited to members of this pioneering family, including some young children. Go back to the loop trail and return to the Page Pond Trail and back to the Quarry Road parking lot.

The ten miles of trails that crisscross the preserve are very well maintained and marked. In fact, on a recent visit, there was a trail maintenance crew mowing and cutting the overgrowth on the trails. One of them told me he was on a guided bird walk last spring when they recorded 75 species of birds, about as many as can be seen anywhere in New Hampshire on a morning in May. I have only recorded about 60 species to date, but a morning walk in May and a waterfowl search in spring and fall will increase this list substantially.

If you are looking for a cool, quiet wood to walk in with a wide diversity of habitat and the potential for a large list of birds, I can highly recommend Page Pond Community Forest. Even if there are other cars in the parking lot, you probably won't see another person on the trails, but you will find evidence of human habitation and industry from long ago. Additional information on the history of this site and a trail map can be found on the Meredith Conservation Commission website.

After your morning bird walk, your day in the Lakes Region isn't over yet. Is there a lovelier town than the lakeside town of Meredith? After birding, return to Meredith to stop in for lunch, an ice cream cone, some shopping, and take a ride on the Winnepesaukee Scenic Railroad or a cruise on the lake on the M/S Mount Washington.

*After living in New Hampshire for 35 years, Rob Woodward retired and now lives in Fort Myers, Florida. He spends refreshing summers in the Lakes Region, continuing to search for new birding hotspots*

# New Hampshire Bird Records Endowment Fund

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## Abbreviations Used

AMC	Appalachian Mountain Club
BBC	Brookline Bird Club
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey
CA	Conservation Area
CC	Country Club
CFT	NH Audubon Chapter Field Trip
FT	Field Trip
IBA	Important Bird Area
L.	Lake
LPC	Loon Preservation Committee
NA	Natural Area
NHA	New Hampshire Audubon
NHBR	New Hampshire Bird Records
NHRBC	NH Rare Birds Committee
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
PO	Post Office
R.	River
Rd.	Road
RO	Raptor Observatory
Rt.	Route
SF	State Forest
SP	State Park
SPNHF	Society for the Protection of NH Forests, Concord
T&M	Thompson & Meserves (Purchase)
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
WMNF	White Mountain National Forest
WS	NHA Wildlife Sanctuary
~	approximately
WTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

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# Fall 2019 Rarities



*A first state record Cassin's Sparrow by Eric Masterson, 9-21-19, Star Island, Isles of Shoals, NH.*



*A second state record Lazuli Bunting by Sheri Oosterveen, 10-22-19, Bow, NH.*



*A Le Conte's Sparrow (fifth state record) found by Chris MacPherson. Photo by Leo McKillop, 9-25-19, Woodmont Orchard, Hollis, NH.*



*A third state record Gull-billed Tern by Sophia Wong, 9-28-19, Odiorne Point SP, Rye, NH.*