

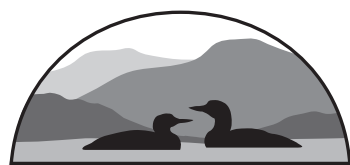
New Hampshire BIRD RECORDS



SUMMER 2019

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IN MEMORY OF
DENNIS J. ABBOTT, III



NH AUDUBON
Protecting our environment since 1914

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This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by the friends of Denny Abbott, in appreciation of all he gave to the birding community. For more on Denny see the article on page 3.



Denny Abbott on two of his many birding boat trips circa 1985 (left) and 2001 (right). Photos by Steve Mirick.

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In addition to the pair of breeding Common Loons, Hooded Mergansers utilize duck boxes installed on trees along the shoreline. Mallard and Wood Duck are also residents. “Occasional” species include Osprey, Spotted Sandpiper and Belted Kingfisher. Northern Waterthrush with its distinctive loud calls and chip notes breeds in the perimeter wetland habitat.

All five of the expected woodpeckers are found: Hairy, Downy, Pileated, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Northern Flicker. Throughout spring and early summer, one constantly hears Blue-headed and Red-eyed Vireos, Winter Wren, Ovenbird, and a nice variety of breeding wood warblers. On occasion, a few boreal species are found at Mountain Pond such as Pine Siskin, Red Crossbill and Purple Finch.

The best time of year to visit Mountain Pond is during spring and early summer. If you are lucky, you might find migrating Bay-breasted Warblers and hear native Barred Owls which also inhabit the forests. Lastly, there are Moose which routinely occupy the woods surrounding Mountain Pond as well as active American Beavers in the wetlands.

Tin Mountain Conservation Center

Although not thought of as a birding destination, the Tin Mountain Conservation Center in Albany is worth a visit, especially for families. Its Nature Learning Center is an attractive facility containing lots of nature resources and hosting many child-friendly as well as adult programs. Its major mission is environmental education both at its center and in outreach classes at local schools. Throughout the Valley, it has several large wood lots which are beyond the scope of this article although one of them has hosted nesting Common Nighthawks.

To do some birding here or just enjoy the woods and a nice pond, there are several trails leaving from the Nature Learning Center (maps available) into its 160 acre Albany property. The 66 species found here tend to be similar to those in the other areas described above. Notably, studies have shown that this property has a very high concentration of Black-throated Blue Warblers. The property also has a large concentration of Mountain Laurel, an absolute delight during its June blooming season.

The Tin Mountain Conservation Center is located at 1245 Bald Hill Rd. in Albany, NH. To reach it from North Conway, head south on Rt. 16. About 0.5 miles south of the Route 16 junction with the Kancamagus Highway, turn right onto Bald Hill Rd., and drive 1.1 miles. The facility and parking lot are signed.

If I may be of any help, please feel free to contact me at charlie.nims@gmail.com. All birding data has been sourced from eBird. Finally, I would like to again thank Rick Steber and Will Broussard for their contributions to this article.

Find Good Birding Spots and Keep Your own Lists in eBird

by Kathryn Frieden

How do you find out where to go birding in an area you don't know? Whether you are traveling to a new part of New Hampshire or another state, exploring Hotspots is a great way to figure out where to bird in an area you are interested in and what birds you can expect to find. In addition, some of the fun features offered by Hotspots can also be extended to your own Yard or Patch. You can track how many species you have seen in your yard or favorite birding place with eBird tools. Here's how.

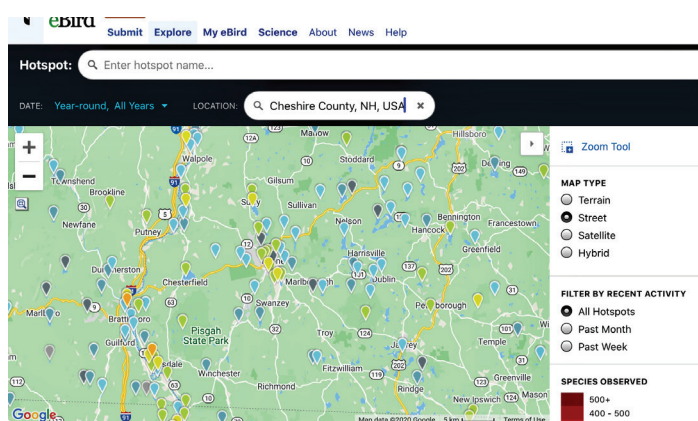


Figure 1. eBird Hotspots in Cheshire County.

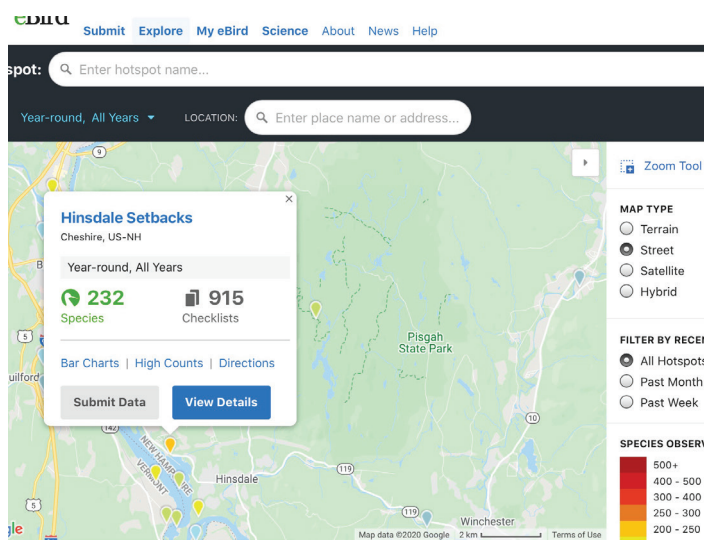


Figure 2. The information box for the Hinsdale Setbacks eBird Hotspot.

Hotspots

How can I find a good birding location?

In the previous issue, I described how to find a particular species by exploring Hotspots in eBird (“Find Birds with eBird”, Vol. 38 #1) and you can use the same technique to find a good birding location when you travel. Let’s say you

are going to be in southwestern New Hampshire. Go to the eBird website (NH portal: <https://ebird.org/NH>), select the Explore tab at the top, and click on the "Explore Hotspots" link. Enter Cheshire County for the location (or zoom in) and you will see the Hotspot location pins, which are color-coded by number of species reported (Figure 1). Look for the pins with the most species; these are usually the best birding spots. Click on the orange pin (200-250 species) near the Connecticut River and you will open an information box for the Hotspot "Hinsdale Setbacks" (Figure 2). Near the bottom of the box click on the blue "View Details" button and you will find all the details for the Hotspot. To get back to your chosen local map, click the "Hotspot" link at the top. Do not use the back button on your browser or it will take you all the way back to the starting place of the world map.



Figure 3. The warbler section of the bar charts for the Hinsdale Setbacks eBird Hotspot.

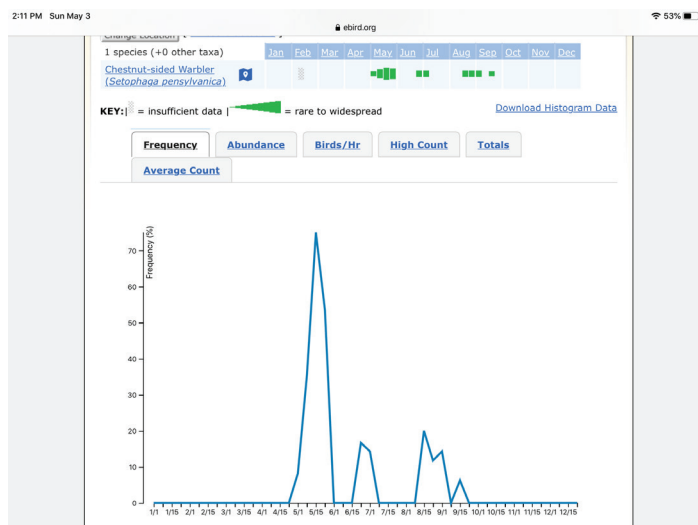


Figure 4. The frequency graph for Chestnut-sided Warbler at the Hinsdale Setbacks eBird Hotspot.

What species can I find there and when is a good time to visit?

Once you are into the "Hinsdale Setbacks" details page you can see the total number of species and checklists at this site in the "Overview" tab. From there, click on "Bar Charts" to see the species list in taxonomic order. The bar chart shows you the time of year each species is seen and the frequency of reporting. This view lets you see what a great place this is for finding warblers during May (Figure 3). Another useful feature allows you to track a specific species over time. Click on the small dark blue graph icon next to the species name. If you are interested in Chestnut-sided Warblers, for example, you can find specific dates, frequencies, and counts for all the reports for this location (Figure 4). You can get directions and print out a checklist for the location.



Species number 101 on the Frieden's yard list: a Nashville Warbler photographed by Roger Frieden, 5-5-20, Nottingham, NH.

Yards

How can I get a bird list for my own yard and bar charts like the Hotspots have?

It's fun to keep bird lists, especially a yard list! For a good review of yard-listing stories in New Hampshire, see the article in the *New Hampshire Bird Records* Spring 2017 issue by Phil Brown titled "Yard Listing: The Fascination, the Anecdotes, and, of course, the Numbers." Just the other day, we were excited to find a Nashville Warbler in our yard, partly because it is a beautiful warbler, but also because it was number 101 on our yard list!

How do I get an eBird "Yard List" and how do I use it?

eBird makes it easy to keep a yard list, as long as you enter all your yard sightings at one location (one pin). Go back to the Explore page and scroll down to find the section titled "Compare Your Totals." Click on the "Yard Totals" button and if you don't already have a designated Yard List in eBird, click on the green "Add a Yard" button, give your yard a name and choose the location from the list that is shown. Don't forget to click "Save Yard" at the bottom of

the page. You will now see a page titled “My Yard List.” I can click on Life “Total” to see our complete yard list. The default setting for the list is to be sorted by date, but this can be rearranged by clicking on the headings of each column, depending on what information you are seeking. Do we have many Black-throated Green Warbler sightings? When I click on “Taxonomic” (or “Alphabetic,” if you prefer) at the top of the species list, the list will rearrange so that the warbler is easily found. When I select “View All” on the far right, I can see all of our reports for this species. It turns out we have seen Black-throated Green Warblers in the yard five times, all during the month of May. Another great feature is the bar chart, which can show you all the same information for your yard that is available in Hotspots. Look for the link on the initial page titled “My Yard Lists.”



The Gile Road Marsh in Lee, NH that the Frieden’s have designated as one of their Patches. Photo by Kathryn Frieden.

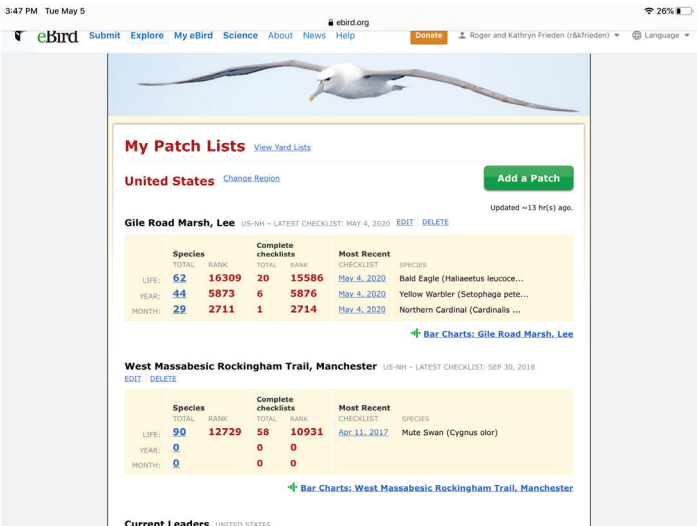


Figure 5. A view of the Frieden’s Patch List and the initial statistics on each location.

Patches

How do I see my bird list for my favorite birding spot?

eBird gives you the same tools for your favorite spot as it does for your yard by creating a “Patch.” A birding Patch is defined as an area where you can enjoy birding regularly, with enough varied habitat to make it interesting, and close enough to home so that you can get to it frequently without using too much energy. You can learn a lot from Patch birding. According to Derek Lovitch in his book *How to Be a Better Birder*, not only is it a thrill to add a new species to a Patch list, but “we can enhance our knowledge of local birds, their habitats, their occurrences, and so on.” Since moving to Nottingham a few years ago, we have enjoyed birding at Gile Road Marsh in Lee, which is within our “five-mile radius.” We have designated it as one of our Patches in eBird using the same process as adding a Yard by scrolling partway down the “Explore” page and clicking on Patch Totals. Once a location is designated as a Patch, you can see the same totals you see on your Yard Lists (Figure 5). While at the marsh a few days ago, we saw two Broad-winged Hawks soaring overhead. I couldn’t remember if we had seen any there before, but I was able to go to my Patch, click on “Life List,” go to “View All” for Broad-winged Hawk, and find that we had seen one there in 2018, almost on the same date. While checking this out, I discovered that we had just added our first Red-tailed Hawk to the list without even realizing it! Gile Road Marsh is also a Hotspot so I can check it to see what everyone else has seen there, but by making it a Patch on our list, we can see just our sightings.

Using the resources of Hotspots, Yards, and Patches in eBird can enhance your birding fun and knowledge. There are many other permutations and combinations of information that can be gleaned from these features that I have not described here. Don’t hesitate to explore the rest of the tabs and buttons to see what else there is to discover.

The Next Ten Species Predictions – How did we do?

by Iain MacLeod

In the Spring 2016 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* (Vol. 35, No. 1), I wrote an article posing the question: “What will be the next 10 new species of birds added to the New Hampshire Bird Checklist?” I asked members of the New Hampshire Bird Records Editorial Team to weigh in with their opinions on this topic and we narrowed down a list, which ended up being 13 because there were multiple tied votes. So . . . how did we do?

Summer 2019 Highlights



Tufted Duck by Leo McKillop, 7-27-19, Exeter WTP, NH.



Blue-winged Warbler by Wayne Scott, 6-18-19, Orford Rd., Lyme, NH.

Photo Quiz



Can You Identify These Birds?

Photo by Leo McKillop.
Answer in the next issue.