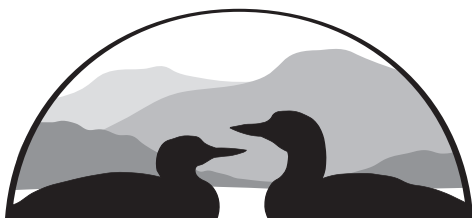


New Hampshire Bird Records



Summer 2010

Vol. 29, No. 2



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Cover Photos: American Oystercatchers by Leonard Medlock, Hampton Harbor, 6/12/10.

New Hampshire Bird Records is published quarterly by New Hampshire Audubon's Conservation Department. Bird sightings are submitted to NH eBird (www.ebird.org/nh) by many different observers. Records are selected for publication and not all species reported will appear in the issue. The published sightings typically represent the highlights of the season. All records are subject to review by the NH Rare Birds Committee and publication of reports here does not imply future acceptance by the Committee. Please contact the Managing Editor if you would like to report your sightings but are unable to use NH eBird.

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Published by New Hampshire Audubon's Conservation Department



Printed on Recycled Paper

IN HONOR OF Robert A. Quinn



Photos by Marc Brody



This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by the friends of Bob Quinn in honor of his contributions to understanding of New Hampshire birds and his well-deserved receipt of the 2010 Goodhue-Elkins Award.

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Peregrine Falcon 2010 Breeding Season

by Chris Martin, NH Audubon raptor biologist

The New Hampshire Peregrine Falcon recovery effort celebrated the 30th consecutive breeding season since the state's first post-DDT era falcon pair was found nesting in Franconia Notch. New Hampshire's state-listed threatened peregrines posted an impressive new benchmark for number of young fledged in 2010. This season's statewide total of 35 young fledged sets a new state record-high, surpassing the previous high of 29 young fledged by over 20% (Figure 1). And the state's most well-watched pair in Manchester fledged five young, the first time any New Hampshire Peregrine Falcon pair has accomplished that in the 30-year history of nest site monitoring in the Granite State.

Other breeding season highlights included the Portsmouth Harbor pair, which fledged three young while using for the first time a gravel-filled tray that was originally installed under the roadway of the I-95 Bridge in Spring 2007 by USFWS biologists. Also of note was the rehabilitation of Manchester female fledgling black/green C/E, who was successfully reunited with her parents and four brothers after spending a week in recovery care at Wings of Dawn Rehabilitation Center.



Peregrine Falcon chicks on the nesting tray under the I-95 Bridge, 6-7-10 by Chris Martin.

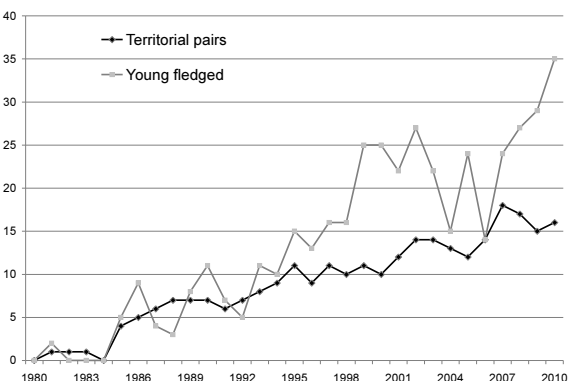


Figure 1. Peregrine Falcon breeding success in NH, 1980-2010.

A big thank you to all collaborating biologists, volunteer observers, rock climbers, land managers, web cam operators, raptor rehabbers, donors, and others who made the 2010 NH peregrine falcon breeding season a success. Peregrine Falcon management is supported by a federally-funded contract with the NH Fish & Game Department, however Peregrine Falcon monitoring (e.g., behavioral observation and searches for new sites) is funded by private donations to NH Audubon's Conservation Department.

Bald Eagle 2010 Breeding Season

by Chris Martin, NH Audubon raptor biologist

The 2010 New Hampshire Bald Eagle breeding season was exciting and groundbreaking in several respects. Working with support and cooperation from federal and state agencies, corporate partners, and local landowners, NH Audubon biologists and volunteer observers located more territorial bald eagle pairs in the state and confirmed identities of more individual eagles than ever before, and also used satellite technology for the first time to begin tracking a few of New Hampshire's fledgling eagles after they left their nests.

The 22 territorial pairs and 14 incubating pairs documented in the Granite State this year both are new post-DDT era record-highs. But despite more pairs and more nesting attempts, productivity lagged in 2010; one spring snowfall event in northern New Hampshire in late April was largely responsible. Happening right at hatch time, the heavy snow contributed to three simultaneous nest failures north of the White Mountains.

After a long wait, it appears that the Merrimack River corridor is finally attracting the attention of several prospecting eagle pairs. However, locating their nests (if they actually exist) has been a challenge. Over the spring and summer we documented three new breeding age pairs but no nests on Massabesic Lake, on the Merrimack in Boscawen, and above Franklin on the Pemigewasset River, which is a tributary to the Merrimack.



Juvenile Bald Eagle with satellite transmitter, 9/6/10, near Blueberry Island on Lake Winnepesaukee.
Photo by Lauren Goldsmith.

Thanks to a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), three juvenile eagles from two nests in Moultonboro and New Durham were also fitted with backpack-style satellite transmitters that should enable us to track their dispersal patterns regardless of where they roam. With luck, these transmitters will allow us to monitor the travels of these three youngsters for the next two or more years, a time during which immature eagles are often quite transient.

NH Audubon's Bald Eagle monitoring and management work is supported by a federally-funded contract with the NH Fish & Game Department, by grants from TransCanada Corporation and NFWF, and by NH Audubon donors and volunteers.

Rusty Blackbirds with Radio Transmitters

by Carol Foss and Laura Deming, NH Audubon



Rusty Blackbird by Leonard Medlock, 5/22/10, East Inlet, Pittsburg, NH.

The 2010 Rusty Blackbird field season was marked by diverse efforts and exciting discoveries. The season got off to a cold and muddy start with surveys of potential breeding habitat in the Androscoggin Watershed on the first two weekends in May. Field technician Rachel Rabinovitz soon arrived to monitor activity at 10 breeding territories north and west of Errol. Five parties drove, hiked, and canoed the roads and wetlands of Pittsburg and Clarksville on the third

weekend of May to survey for Rusties there. The following week University of Georgia Ph.D. student Patti Newell began capturing and banding adults and young, and attaching radio transmitters to selected individuals. Rachel, joined by Eian Prohl, Laura Deming, John Nelson and Hope Batcheller, turned her attention to radio-telemetry, and several intrepid citizen scientists assisted with nest site observations and radio tracking activities on the second weekend of June. Lighthawk pilot Janice Newman flew Rachel and Chris Martin over the Androscoggin Valley to determine the distance from which the transmitter signals could be detected from the air. Finally, in mid-July, a team measured nest site and habitat characteristics for 12 breeding pairs.

Surveys located 23 Rusty Blackbird pairs in the Androscoggin Watershed and seven in Pittsburg and Clarksville. Field staff monitored 14 nests, of which 11 successfully fledged young. Patti Newell banded 29 adults and 32 fledglings, and collected tissue samples for analyses of contaminants, blood parasites, stable isotopes, and genetics. She attached radio transmitters to 19 individuals, which the field team followed for the next six weeks (until the radio batteries died). This radio tracking data has provided the first available information on post-fledging activities of Rusty Blackbirds. Fledglings remained near their nest sites for the first few days, and then moved to nearby forested wetlands, where they hid in dense vegetation while their parents foraged and brought them food. Once they were able to fly well, the families traveled together among a number of wetlands, and eventually joined with other families in riparian areas, where they remained into mid-July. We look forward to continuing the telemetry study in 2011 with longer-lived radios, and learning even more about these elusive birds!

Abbreviations Used

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

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