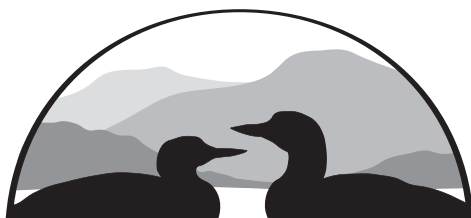


New Hampshire Bird Records



Fall 2009

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New Hampshire Bird Records

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<i>Managing Editor:</i>	Rebecca Suomala 603-224-9909 X309, bsuomala@nhaudubon.org
<i>Text Editor:</i>	Dan Hubbard
<i>Season Editors:</i>	Pamela Hunt, Spring; Tony Vazzano, Summer; Stephen Mirick, Fall; David Deifik, Winter
<i>Layout:</i>	Kathy McBride
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Cover Photo: Western Kingbird by Leonard Medlock, 11/17/09, at the Rochester wastewater treatment plant, NH.

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IN MEMORY OF

Tudor Richards

We continue to honor Tudor Richards with this third of the four 2009 *New Hampshire Bird Records* issues in his memory.

Tudor Richards on November 1, 2001 (age 86) at the foundation of a former camp on an island where one of his most memorable events occurred. In June of 1935, at age 20, Tudor made his first visit to Lake Umbagog. He and a companion paddled the entire length of the lake but their first night was spent in this camp's shelter because of heavy rain. After completing their long and arduous paddle... well, the rest of the story is best told in his words:

“We couldn’t find the car key and so had to spend another night out in a farmer’s field, with his permission. My thought of what had happened to the key had been right, for after renting an outboard and returning to Dutton Island the next day, I looked down from the edge of the porch where I had draped my wet pants to dry, and there in the grass was what we were looking for!”

Photo and account by Robert A. Quinn

In This Issue

Fall Season: August 1 through November 30, 2009	2
<i>by Stephen R. Mirick</i>	
Fall 2009 Raptor Migration Report	44
<i>by Iain MacLeod</i>	
Spotlight on Sabine’s Gull	47
<i>by Michael Harvey</i>	
Fall Migration on the Monadnock Region’s Lakes and Ponds	50
<i>by Phil Brown</i>	
Photo Gallery – Stranded on the Flats with a Godwit	56
<i>by Len Medlock</i>	
Fall Departure Dates for Solitary Sandpiper and Spotted Sandpiper	58
<i>by Robert A. Quinn</i>	
Volunteers and Research – Monitoring Nighthawk Migration in NH	62
<i>by Lance Tanino</i>	
Tudor Richards and the Fall of 2009	64
<i>by Robert A. Quinn</i>	

Photo Quiz will return in the next issue.

Fall 2009 New Hampshire Raptor Migration Report

by Iain MacLeod

The fall of 2009 marked the fortieth season of raptor migration monitoring at Little Round Top in Bristol. This incredible milestone is a testament to the dedication of site leader Susan Fogleman who has led the monitoring efforts for the majority of those forty seasons. Many others have helped with the all-volunteer efforts over the years, but Sue and her husband Wavell have been the inspirational leaders. Congratulations to Little Round Top.

Another milestone was reached at Interlakes Elementary School in Meredith. This season marked the thirtieth consecutive year that the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center has conducted a raptor migration class and hawkwatch with the fourth grade classes. Paul Lacourse also conducted hawkwatch classes once again with his class at Winnicunnet High School in Hampton.

Four sites conducted counts for greater than 20 hours: Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory in Peterborough, Carter Hill Observatory in Concord, Little Round Top Migration Observatory in Bristol, and Pitcher Mountain in Stoddard. Additionally, Brad Sylvester put in ten hours spread over three days in late August at Blue Job Mountain in Strafford and tallied 29 birds – mostly Turkey Vultures. It would be great to have a daily count at this spectacular site as well as multiple consecutive years of data.

Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory

2009 Official Counters: Julie Tilden, Lance Tanino, Iain MacLeod, Kate Yard, Peter Davenport and Al Grimstad.

Counts have been conducted here for decades by such hawkwatching pioneers as Ken Folsom. However, 2009 marked the fifth consecutive fall season of daily coordinated counts conducted under the leadership of New Hampshire Audubon and in a formal agreement with the New Hampshire Division of State Parks. With Lance Tanino as the part-time onsite biologist and a core of volunteers coordinated by Julie Tilden, a total of 420.75 hours were logged between September 1 and November 18 and 6,963 raptors were counted (5-year average = 8,503).

The Osprey count was down a little this year at 182 (5-year average = 241). The Bald Eagle total remained remarkably stable at 51 (5-year average = 52; range = 50-55). The number of Northern Harriers seen was 88, which is slightly above the 5-year average. Sharp-shinned Hawk counts remained very stable at 1,196 (5-year average = 1,089) while Cooper's Hawks dropped off slightly to 133 (5-year average = 148; high count in 2006 of 213) and Northern Goshawks were lower at 25 (5-year average = 36; high count in 2006 of 68). Red-shouldered Hawks hit an all-time high of 129, well above the 5-year



*Young Golden Eagle in flight,
by Leonard Medlock, near Lake Umbagog
National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters,
Wentworth's Location, NH.*

average of 75, while Broad-winged Hawks, which made up 62% of the total count, were noticeably down in numbers compared to the last three seasons with only 4,322 (5-year average = 6,101). The peak day this year was September 16, when we counted 2,042 Broad-winged Hawks (Table 1). Red-tailed Hawks had a fantastic year reaching an all-time high of 421, well above the 5-year average of 293. Those chilly late October and early November days can be great fun! Six Golden Eagles were seen this year, twice as many as last year and matching the 5-year average. American Kestrels had another poor showing and continue their decline in the East. Only 135 were counted all season (5-year average = 148), while Merlins were close to the average with 56 seen. How many years will it be before we see more Merlins than Kestrels? Peregrine Falcons bounced back after a down year last year; 30 were seen (5-year average = 26).

Table 1. Broad-winged Hawk fall migration totals and peak counts at Pack Monadnock, NH, and Little Round Top, NH, 2005-2009 from the Hawk Migration Association of North America’s (HMANA) HawkCount.org database.

Year	Pack Monadnock			Little Round Top		
	BWHA total	Highest one-day count	Date of highest count	BWHA total	Highest one-day count	Date of highest count
2005	3,978	1,687	09/18	389	154	09/11
2006	7,595	3,044	09/11	1,928	1,176	09/16
2007	7,776	2,676	09/16	743	227	09/18
2008	6,835	2,424	09/18	3,125	1,523	09/17
2009	4,322	2,042	09/16	2,376	1,106	09/16

Carter Hill Observatory

2009 Official Counter: Robert Vallieres

Carter Hill Observatory logged 249 hours between September 2 and October 27 and counted 1,921 raptors. This is the second year for this count, which is organized by New Hampshire Audubon.

Osprey counts in 2008 and 2009 were identical at 38. Bald Eagles were fewer (18 in 2009; 28 in 2008). The Northern Harrier count tripled this year and reached 18. Sharp-shinned Hawk numbers more than doubled and climbed to 251, while the Cooper’s Hawk count more than tripled at 175, and Northern Goshawk count hit 17 (there were only two in 2008). Red-shouldered Hawks were few (only 6) and the Broad-winged Hawk count dropped to 703 (1,904 in 2008). Red-tailed Hawks leapt to 83. In both years, a single Rough-legged Hawk was reported. The American Kestrel count of 88 was a major increase over 2008’s tally of 33. Merlins also took a major leap from 17 to 48 and Peregrine Falcons went from 13 to 17.

Little Round Top Migration Observatory

2009 Official Counter: Susan Fogleman

Little Round Top in Bristol logged 151 hours between August 30 and September 23 and counted 2,865 raptors. The Osprey count was good this year with a total of 75 (5-year average = 50) and the Bald Eagle count was very high with 56 (5-year average = 36). Northern Harriers reached eight this year, which is well above the 5-year average of five.

Watchers counted 114 Sharp-shinned Hawks (5-year average = 92) and Cooper’s Hawks made a good showing with 55 (nearly double the 5-year average of 29). Two Northern Goshawks and no Red-shouldered Hawks were seen (these species tend to migrate later in October). The Broad-winged Hawk count was good with 2,376, well above the 5-year average of 1,712 (Table 1), with a peak flight of 1,106 on September 16. Twenty-five Red-tail Hawks were tallied which is about average. American Kestrels had their best showing at this site for five years reaching 34 (5-year average = 24).

Pitcher Mountain

2009 Official Counter: Lance Tanino

The hardy crew at Pitcher Mountain in Stoddard logged 61.5 hours between November 1 and December 6 and counted 164 raptors. Lance also counted there in November and December 2008 and tallied 63 hawks in 18.75 hours of observation.

The major species this late in the year is Red-tailed Hawk. This year 116 were counted along with 2 Golden Eagles, 14 Bald Eagles, 4 Northern Harriers, 9 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 3 Northern Goshawks, 4 Red-shouldered Hawks, and 1 Merlin. Nice job Lance.

Table 2. Fall raptor migration monitoring data from the four NH sites with more than 20 hours of observations in 2009 from HMANA’s HawkCount.org database.hrs. – observer hours

PACK MONADNOCK

	hrs.	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	UR*	TOTAL
2009	420.75	80	182	51	88	1196	133	25	129	4322	421	0	6	135	56	30	109	6963
2008	432.75	47	256	50	87	1189	162	28	67	6835	254	0	3	183	59	17	37	9274
2007	410.25	121	291	53	121	1288	186	49	112	7776	263	0	5	143	90	44	82	10624
2006	379.25	99	257	55	77	1253	213	68	46	7595	407	0	11	201	48	29	76	10435
2005	326.00	29	219	52	24	520	47	11	23	3978	122	0	5	78	40	11	62	5221
5-year average	75	241	52	79	1089	148	36	75	6101	293	0	6	148	59	26	73	8503	

CARTER HILL

2009	249.00	233	38	18	18	251	175	17	6	703	83	1	0	57	48	17	256	1921
2008	202.50	310	38	28	6	125	56	2	3	1904	23	1	0	33	17	13	111	2670

LITTLE ROUND TOP

2009	151.00	23	75	56	8	114	55	2	0	2376	25	0	0	34	2	0	95	2865
2008	106.00	25	53	34	4	43	15	0	0	3125	15	0	1	14	1	0	51	3381
2007	123.50	21	46	39	4	118	41	1	0	743	19	0	0	31	4	3	71	1141
2006	100.00	9	39	25	2	123	22	1	0	1928	20	0	2	27	2	5	45	2250
2005	79.00	33	38	24	6	62	13	2	0	389	36	0	2	16	3	4	47	675
5-year average	22	50	36	5	92	29	1	0	0	1712	23	0	1	24	2	2	62	2062

PITCHER MOUNTAIN

2009	61.25	3	0	14	4	9	0	3	4	0	116	0	2	0	1	0	8	164
2008	17.75	0	0	1	2	12	2	3	6	0	35	0	1	0	0	0	1	63

Key to Species Abbreviations in Table 3.

TV	Turkey Vulture (<i>Cathartes aura</i>)	BW	Broad-winged Hawk (<i>Buteo platypterus</i>)
OS	Osprey (<i>Pandion haliaeetus</i>)	RT	Red-tailed Hawk (<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>)
BE	Bald Eagle (<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>)	GE	Golden Eagle (<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>)
NH	Northern Harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>)	AK	American Kestrel (<i>Falco sparverius</i>)
SS	Sharp-shinned Hawk (<i>Accipiter striatus</i>)	ML	Merlin (<i>Falco columbarius</i>)
CH	Cooper’s Hawk (<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>)	PG	Peregrine Falcon (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)
NG	Northern Goshawk (<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>)	UR*	Unidentified Raptor – “unidentified accipiters, buteos, falcons, and eagles”, combined with “unidentified raptors”
RS	Red-shouldered Hawk (<i>Buteo lineatus</i>)		

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- HawkCount.org. Online raptor migration database of the Hawk Migration Association of North America.

Iain MacLeod is Executive Director of the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center in Holderness, NH and former Chairman of the Board of the Hawk Migration Association of North America. Iain has birded in New Hampshire for more than 20 years and is a member of the New Hampshire Bird Records Editorial Team. He lives in Ashland.

Spotlight on Sabine's Gull (*Xema sabini*)

by Michael Harvey

Background

Sabine's Gull is a unique species generally placed in its own genus, although it is distantly related to the Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*). A striking and elegant bird, this species is easily recognized in all plumages by its sharply contrasting, black-gray-and-white wing pattern. It breeds on moist tundra, but spends the remainder of the year at sea, primarily along the continental shelf edge.



Sabine's Gull by Jason Lambert, 7/20/09, Hampton Harbor, Hampton, NH.

Distribution

Sabine's Gull breeds at scattered locations in the circumpolar high arctic between 55°N and 75°N. The primary wintering grounds are in the Humboldt Current off western South America and the Benguela Current off southwestern Africa, and most first-year birds are traditionally thought to remain in these areas year-round. Migration is primarily offshore, although occasional records at inland localities suggest that some overland movement occurs (Howell and Dunn 2007).

Occurrence in New Hampshire

Sabine's Gull has been reported in New Hampshire on ten occasions since 1936 (Figure 1). The first record in 1968 was followed by a number of observations during the 1970s and 1980s, but a two-decade hiatus followed before three recent records in 2007 and 2009. Eight of the ten records are of single individuals observed between August 23 and October 7. Two of these were juveniles and the remainder were either adults or presumed adults, with no obvious difference in the timing of records between the two age groups. More unusual were two adults observed together in

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	St. Pk.	State Park
FT	Field Trip	SPNHF	Society for the Protection of NH Forests, Concord
L.	Lake	T&M	Thompson & Meserves (Purchase)
LPC	Loon Preservation Committee	TNC	The Nature Conservancy
NA	Natural Area	WMA	Wildlife Management Area
NHA	New Hampshire Audubon	WMNF	White Mountain National Forest
NHBR	New Hampshire Bird Records	WS	NHA Wildlife Sanctuary
NHRBC	NH Rare Birds Committee	~	approximately
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge		
PO	Post Office		

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