

New Hampshire Bird Records





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IN MEMORY OF

Arthur Mudge

This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by New Hampshire Audubon and friends in memory of Art Mudge. Art was an avid birder and long-time friend, supporter, and trustee of NH Audubon.

Art Mudge receiving NH Audubon's Tudor Richards Award in 2012.

Photo by Bob Quinn.



In This Issue

| | |
|---|----|
| From the Editor | 1 |
| Photo Quiz | 1 |
| Thank You to Donors | 2 |
| Winter Season: December 1, 2013 through February 28, 2014..... | 3 |
| <i>by Pam Hunt</i> | |
| Christmas Bird Count Summary 2013-14..... | 18 |
| <i>by David Deifik</i> | |
| 114th Christmas Bird Count Map | 21 |
| 114th Christmas Bird Count Table | 22 |
| Photo Gallery – Snowy Owl Extravaganza..... | 26 |
| Field Trip Report – Winter Offshore, Dovekies! | 28 |
| <i>by Rebecca Suomala</i> | |
| Backyard Birder – Barred Owls at Your Feeder | 29 |
| <i>by Brenda Sens</i> | |
| Field Notes | 30 |
| <i>compiled by Jane Wing</i> | |
| What's on the Snowy Owl Menu this Winter?..... | 30 |
| <i>by Brian Cassie</i> | |
| Gyr Falcon Kleptoparasitizes a Peregrine Falcon..... | 30 |
| <i>by Ben Griffith</i> | |
| Downed Red-necked Grebe | 30 |
| <i>by Jane Hills</i> | |
| Winter Birding in Urban Nashua – | |
| Beyond House Sparrow, Rock Pigeon and European Starling..... | 31 |
| <i>by Chris Sheridan</i> | |
| Superbowl of Birding Adventures with the “Twitchers in the Rye” | 33 |
| <i>by Pam Hunt</i> | |
| Volunteers and Research – <i>Counting on Birds</i> , the Christmas Bird Count | 34 |
| <i>by Rebecca Suomala</i> | |
| Answer to the Photo Quiz..... | 35 |
| <i>by David B. Donsker</i> | |

Cover Photos: Snowy Owl (top) by Terri Fratus, 2/28/14, Rye, NH. Townsend's Warbler (bottom left) by Deanne Fortnam, 12/12/13, Odiorne Pt. St. Rye, NH. Spotted Towhee (bottom right) by David Lipsy, 2/1/14, Rye, NH.

New Hampshire Bird Records is published quarterly by New Hampshire Audubon's Conservation Department. Thank you to the many observers who submit their sightings to NH eBird (www.ebird.org/nh), the source of data for this publication. 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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Field Trip Report

Winter Offshore – Dovekies!

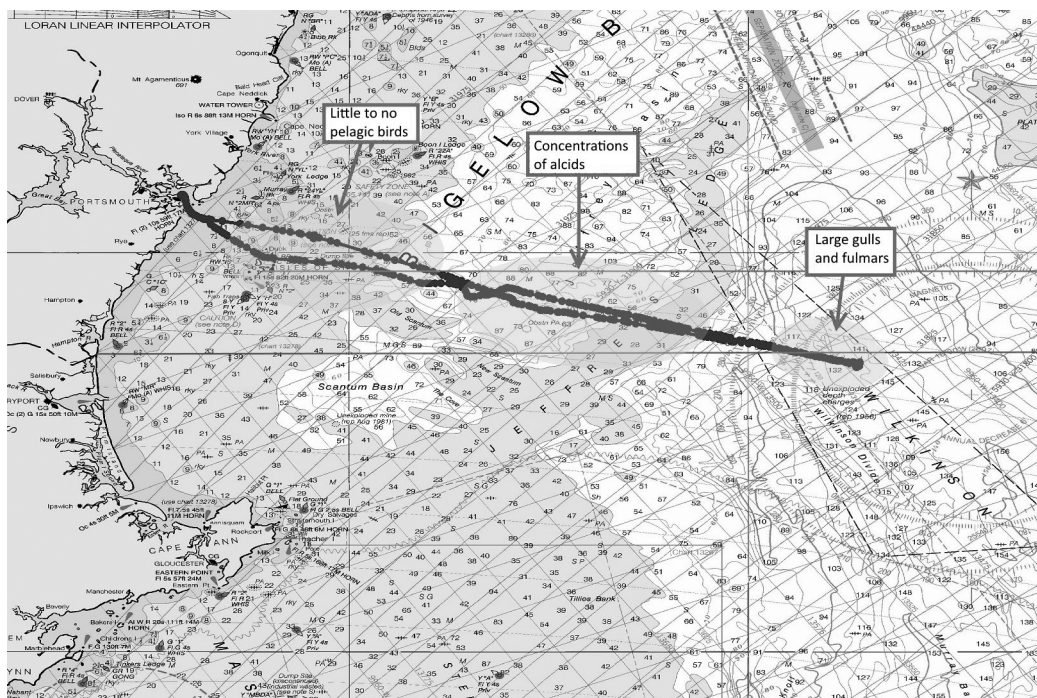
by Rebecca Suomala



A few of the many Dovekies on the boat trip to Jeffreys Ledge, 2/23/14. Photo by Eric Masterson.

On February 23, 2014, a group of us went on a regularly scheduled deep sea fishing trip by Eastman's out of Seabrook. The trip was partially prompted by a report from Steve Mirick of a trip he took on February 12 aboard the UNH research vessel "Gulf Challenger" during a water sampling trip to Wilkinson's Basin. On that trip, he had massive numbers of Dovekies (717) as well as 21 Common Murres, two Thick-billed Murres, 184 Razorbills, and 14 Atlantic Puffins. Almost all the alcids were in New

Figure 1. Map of the Gulf Challenger trip on 2/12/14 by Steve Mirick.



Hampshire waters along with 25 Northern Fulmar and 154 Black-legged Kittiwakes. Steve created a map of his route and the concentrations of birds (Figure 1).

The only company doing regular offshore trips this winter was Eastman's and Steve's spectacular report prompted Zeke Cornell to share the details and recruit birders to join an upcoming trip on February 23. Thus 11 birders (Chris Borg, Pam Hunt, Jon Woolf, Katie Towler, Jim Sparrell, Steve & Jane Mirick, Eric Masterson, Rob Woodward, Zeke Cornell and I) headed out on a fishing boat to Jeffrey's Ledge with a similar number of fisherman.



Birders bundled up for the February 23, 2014 boat trip with Eastman's to Jeffreys Ledge. Photo by Steve Mirick.

It was a full day trip and the conditions were about as good as you could hope for on a winter day. Seas were two to four feet and the boat was rolling a bit causing initial distress for some of us, but it improved over time. Temperatures were relatively mild (30-40s) with winds of 10-20 knots causing some chop but still allowing great sightings. We had a



Northern Fulmar by Jason Lambert, 2/12/14, Jeffreys Ledge.

sweep of the alcids (Black Guillemot, Dovekie, Razorbill, Common and Thick-billed Murre, and Atlantic Puffin) and lots of other great sightings, all in New Hampshire waters. The highlights included a huge number of Dovekies (466) with some terrific, close views, great looks at Northern Fulmars, Atlantic Puffins and Common Murres, and an unusually large flock of 250 Black-legged Kittiwakes. One of the most bizarre sightings was an American Pipit, seen and heard by a few people on the boat when we were at Jeffreys Ledge, more than 20 miles from shore. We had a total of 20 species on the offshore waters plus a few more at Hampton Harbor, including a Snowy Owl in the dunes when we came back to dock. It was great to have so many sets of birding eyes on the boat. The totals for the alcids and a few other offshore birds are below. All in all a spectacular winter trip offshore.



Black-legged Kittiwake by Jon Woolf, 2/23/14 boat trip with Eastman's to Jeffreys Ledge.

Note: Kyle Wilmarth and Amanda Altena went out on a similar boat trip on March 8, 2014 and found that the number of alcids had dropped dramatically from the numbers on the February 23 trip, although they still had good variety.

Highlights from a boat trip to Jeffreys Ledge, NH on 2/23/14.

Northern Fulmar 32, both dark and light morph
 Northern Gannet 4
 Dovekie 466, many groups in flight along the boat or just in front of the bow.
 Common Murre 16
 Thick-billed Murre 7
 Common/Thick-billed Murre 4
 Razorbill 60
 Large alcid sp. 86, too distant to identify
 Black Guillemot 8, near the Isles of Shoals
 Atlantic Puffin 17
 Black-legged Kittiwake 297
 Bonaparte's Gull 1
 Iceland Gull 2
 American Pipit 1



Immature Atlantic Puffin by Eric Masterson, 2/23/14 boat trip with Eastman's to Jeffreys Ledge.

Backyard Birder

Barred Owls at Your Feeder

by Brenda Sens



Barred Owl by Jennifer McKown, 2/9/14, Brookfield, NH.

During January and February of 2014, New Hampshire Audubon received numerous emails and telephone calls from people who reported seeing Barred Owls perched on or near their bird feeders during the day as well as at dawn and dusk. Although Barred Owls do occasionally hunt during the day, most people do not expect this behavior and find it very unusual. Although Barred Owls feed on a variety of mammals and do take the occasional bird, they are known mainly for their consumption of a great many mice. As we know all too well, the winter of 2013-14 was one of extreme cold and heavy snows, causing the smaller mammals to travel through tunnels beneath the surface. This, in turn, made it more difficult for the owls to find as much food as they needed and hunger brought them out at all hours in hopes of finding small creatures feeding on spilled seed. A number of people who contacted us hoped to be able to help the owls get through this ordeal. Unfortunately, Barred Owls are attracted by the movement of living mammals, and there is little that can be done to help the owls in this situation.

New Hampshire Bird Records Endowment Fund

Donations to this permanently restricted fund provide long-term support for the collection, organization, quality control, distribution, dissemination, publication, promotion, preservation and storage of New Hampshire bird sighting information. This fund supports all facets of the *New Hampshire Bird Records* publication. For more information, contact the Managing Editor (see inside front cover).

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Abbreviations Used

| | |
|-------|--|
| 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 |
| 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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