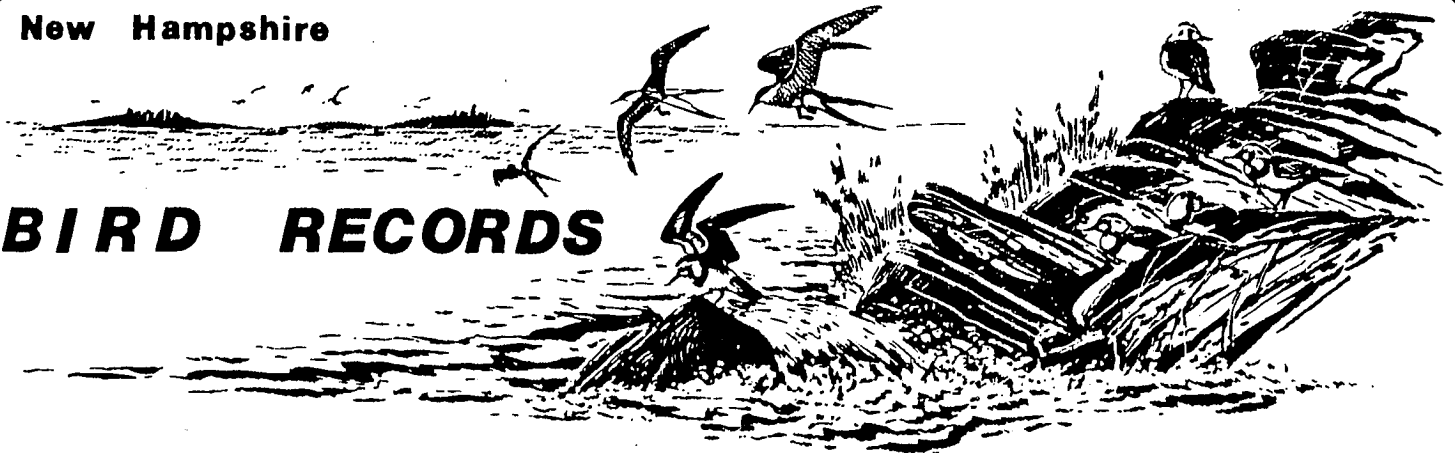


# BIRD RECORDS



Because many of you are new readers of N.H. Bird Records, we are repeating here the introductory editorial from Vol.1, No.1, on the hows, whys, and wherefores of bird records in New Hampshire. PLEASE NOTE the change in fall season editor at the end of the winter season report. - Ed.

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The bird records are an important part of the Audubon Society's work. The information contained in these reports becomes more valuable every year. The Endangered Species Program has used a lot of the information in the bird records in its classification and study of New Hampshire's threatened and endangered species.

But a record is useless without the right information to go along with it. What is that information? Well, to start with, sightings should be reported on the species slips that are available from Audubon House, and these slips should be filled out COMPLETELY, with proper species name, date, location, observers' names, and number seen (include sex or age here if appropriate); any substantiating information should go on the back.

### WHAT TO REPORT?

Kimball Elkins' checklist (for sale in our store for \$2 plus 75¢ postage) will give you a good idea of the seasonal occurrence of each species normally found in New Hampshire. During spring and fall we are most interested in migrants: dates of arrival, peak numbers, and departure dates (whether early, late or normal). Year-round residents (chickadees, grouse, etc.) do not need to be reported during these seasons unless seen in unusual numbers.

In summer we are mainly interested in nesting reports. At the present time the Breeding Bird Atlas, Breeding Bird Surveys and the Endangered Species Program plus a few town studies make up the bulk of the summer report. Comparisons of the same area from year to year are especially valuable during the nesting season.

In the winter season the Christmas Bird Counts usually provide most of the records. Wintering waterfowl, raptors, finches and other visitors or lingerers are also noteworthy. Rarities are always interesting. But any report of a rare bird or a bird that is "out of season" should include a good description (not just the fact that it was seen "well"), no matter who reports it. You should fill out your report slips so that someone 50 years from now will be convinced of what you saw (and where and when). Documentation is the key. And without good documentation you might as well not keep records.

When in doubt about a report, send it in. But try not to overburden your editors and do not expect every one of your records to be published. After all, one of the jobs of an editor is to edit!

## FALL MIGRATION

August 1 - November 30, 1983

Anyone who has made a practice of following the fall migration carefully knows that it is fully as interesting as the spring movement. Because of the summer season's production, there are actually many more birds in the fall, and their migration is spread over a longer period. We need more observers and reporters of the fall migration in New Hampshire if this publication is to live up to its purpose of summarizing and interpreting this fascinating event. The volume of reports received for fall 1983 is scarcely adequate. (*Likewise for the other seasons. Please send us your sightings, and on time! - Ed.*)

The season was mild, on the whole. In August temperature and precipitation both averaged slightly above normal. September was warm and rather dry; October was near normal in both temperature and rainfall; and November was mild but very wet, with above average snowfall in northern New Hampshire, but little snow in the south.

Mild weather is usually not a promoter of spectacular bird movements in the fall, so it is not surprising that the counts reported for most species were below those of some recent years. There were, however, some notable exceptions to this rule. The Audubon Society's efforts to monitor the hawk and nighthawk migrations had some outstanding successes, especially with Broad-winged Hawks. Unusual movements of Tree Swallows and Red-winged Blackbirds were also observed. On the other hand, warbler numbers were rather low, and sparrows even more so. There were good flights of Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins, but scarcely any reports of the other "northern finches."

At the coast and at sea there were a number of observations of bird species that are very seldom seen in New Hampshire, but from the rest of the state scarcely any reports of very rare birds were received.

In the paragraphs that follow, not all bird species reported as observed in fall 1983 are mentioned. For the few that are omitted, the information received was not considered significant enough to warrant its inclusion.

Kimball Elkins

\* \* \* \* \*

1983 Fall Migration



LOONS, GREBES

A Red-throated Loon seen off Seal Rocks at Rye on Aug. 11 (DJA) was very early. A few others were observed at the coast in Oct. & Nov. The only inland report was of 1 on Newfound Lake Oct. 14 (LRE). The migration of Common Loons appears to have been light. The highest count was 27 at the coast on Nov. 27 (DJA, SDA). Fourteen Pied-billed Grebes were reported, but only 10 Horned Grebes. There were two Red-necked Grebes on Squam Lake at Center Harbor on Oct. 30 (JF) and 3 on Newfound Lake Nov. 15 (KCE).

TUBENOSES THROUGH CORMORANTS

Sixty-five Greater Shearwaters, 100 Wilson's Storm Petrels, and 1 Leach's Storm Petrel were seen in the vicinity of New and Old Scantum by participants on the ASNH offshore trip on Sept. 17 (DJA,\*). On Sept. 24 a Manx Shearwater was observed about 2 miles east of the Isles of Shoals (DJA). \*six Sooty Shearwaters, 2 Greater Shearwaters, 2 Northern Fulmars, and a couple of Gannets were seen (SAG, ASNH). Four Great Cormorants were on Lunging Island Sept. 17 (DJA). Three or four immature birds of this species were reported in Manchester and Franklin in the period Sept. 14 to Oct. 16 (MTM, KCE), and an adult at New London Oct. 26-27 (KCE). There were many observations of Double-crested Cormorants at inland localities at dates ranging from Aug. 2 (Dummer and Errol, TR) to Nov. 8 (Franklin, KCE), with the largest numbers 7 at Littleton on Aug. 15 (RB) and 6 at Munsonville Sept. 14 (JHW,\*). At the coast 450 were seen at Seabrook on Aug. 28 and 600 Sept. 5 (DJA).

\* On the Oct. 8 boat trip, 5 Manx Shearwaters,

HERONS

There were 8 reports of American Bitterns, the last at West Sandwich Sept. 28 (BSR). Fifteen Great Blue Herons were counted in the Hampton Falls to Seabrook marshes Aug. 28 (DJA, ASNH). The latest of numerous other reports of these birds was of one at East Concord Nov. 20 (VH). Great Egrets were seen at Elm Brook Park in W. Hopkinton for a week or more beginning Aug. 19 (HWP, RAQ,\*), at Rye on Aug. 20 (KCE), and at Derry Oct. 6 (TW). The only inland Snowy Egret was seen flying over Manchester Aug. 11 (MR). Only 7 Green Herons were reported, the last at Keene Sept. 30 (RAS). The only Little Blue Heron was at Rye Aug. 11 (RCV,\*), and the only Black-crowned Night Heron at Seabrook Sept. 5 (SDA,\*).

WATERFOWL



A Mute Swan was on the Merrimack River in Manchester on Oct. 2 (MTM,\*). The only Snow Goose flocks reported were 15 at Penacook Oct. 8 (HPN) and 40+ at Deering Oct. 13 (DB), both fairly early dates for this species. A lone Brant was in Hampton Beach State Park Nov. 29 (SM,\*). Twenty-five Canada Geese at Errol on Aug. 7 (RAQ,\*) were very early, if they were indeed migrants. Over 500 in 10 flocks were seen overhead in the same town on Oct. 8 (TR), and about 1000 in 20 or so flocks there the next day (JF), but elsewhere flocks were rather few and mostly small.

Thirty-two Wood Ducks at Jefferson Aug. 13 (RB) were presumably summer residents. Only small groups were reported from other localities, none later than Oct. 24 (West Sandwich, BSR). A female Green-winged Teal at

Andover Oct. 16 (DLS,\*) was associating with a flock of Black Scoters in the middle of Bradley Lake. Other Green-wings were seen in Moultonboro, New Hampton, West Sandwich, and Wilmot--the last at Moultonboro Nov. 24 (VR\*). The number of American Black Ducks reported was quite low. The only Northern Pintails were 5 at New London Oct. 24 (KCE). There were 3 Blue-winged Teal at New Hampton Sept. 3 (VHH), 8-9 at New London Sept. 11-23 (RCV\*), 1 at Franconia Notch Oct. 4 and 14 (TR)--a poor showing. Two American Wigeon were at Bradford Sept. 13 (MB), 5 at Franklin Oct. 16 (DLS\*), and one in Concord Nov. 10 (TR).

The only Canvasbacks reported were 6 in Dummer on Oct. 28 (TR). These were the first the observer had ever seen in the North Country. There were 70+ Ring-necked Ducks at Jefferson Oct. 25 (TR), 40 at Sutton Oct. 20 (KCE), about 25 at Moultonboro Oct. 21-23 (BSR), and a few smaller flocks elsewhere. The only Scaup reported were 4 of undetermined species at Sutton Nov. 7 (KCE) and 1, also of doubtful species, at Concord Nov. 23 (TR). The ASNH Jeffreys Ledge trip Sept. 17 encountered 40 Common Eiders (DJA). Many others must have migrated past our coast, but they went unobserved, or at least unreported. A female King Eider was seen in Rye Nov. 27 (DJA, SDA). A male Oldsquaw on Lake Umbagog Nov. 15 (TR) was the only one reported. Flocks of Black Scoters on inland lakes were noted on two days: Oct. 9 when about 80 were on Lake Umbagog (fide TR), and 60+ on Squam Lake (TR); and Oct. 16 when smaller flocks and scattered individuals were seen in Andover, Bradford (on 3 lakes), Franklin, New London, and North Sutton (TR\*). The last reported were two males at Alstead Nov. 22 (AP). Thirteen Surf Scoters were on Squam Lake Oct. 9 (TR), 9 on Webster Lake in Franklin Oct. 16 (KCE, DLS), and 10+ on Meredith Bay Oct. 17 (K & G Collins, fide RAQ). White-winged Scoters were also noted on the lakes: a pair on Lake Sunapee Oct. 16 (TR), 7 on Meredith Bay Oct. 17 (K & G Collins, fide RAQ), about 15 on Lake Gloriette, Dixville, Oct. 29 (TR), and 15 in Stewartstown the same day (TR), but few were reported from the coast.

Small numbers of Common Goldeneyes arrived on several lakes in late Oct., as is normal. The first Buffleheads were noted on Squam Lake Oct. 20 (BSR\*) and their numbers were

also small. A female Hooded Merganser in the Hampton Falls marsh Aug. 27 (DJA\*) was early for that locality. Inland the largest flocks reported were 22 at Highland Lake in Andover Oct. 23 (KCE) and 21 in Sanbornton Oct. 10 (EM, JM). There were more reports of this than of any other species of ducks. About 100 Common Mergansers were on Lake Umbagog at Errol Nov. 15 (TR), and 65 on Newfound Lake the same day (KCE), but elsewhere numbers were low. The only Red-breasted Mergansers reported were 2 at Hampton Nov. 3 (DBK), but many others must have visited the coastal region.

#### VULTURES, HAWKS, FALCONS



Fifteen Turkey Vultures were seen at the Hookset dump Aug. 18 (MRE). The migration of vultures apparently peaked on Sept. 13, when 16 were seen by hawk watchers, 11 of them at Crotched Mtn. in Frankestown (MZ\*). The Hawkwatch total for the season was 63, and the last date Oct. 15. There was a good flight of Ospreys. Hawk watchers counted a total of 123, with the maximum 22 at Mt. Kearsarge Sept. 12 (CAR, MR\*). Late individuals were seen at Errol Nov. 4 (JF) and East Rochester Nov. 21 (SM\*). Bald Eagles were sighted at Sanbornton Aug. 28 (EM, JM), at Mt. Kearsarge Sept. 12 (CAR, MR), and at Antrim Sept. 14 (MZ\*). A Hawk Watch total of 40 Northern Harriers is considered encouraging (the count was 34 in 1982 but only 7 in 1981). Five were seen at Peterborough on Sept. 14 and on Sept. 25 (KEF). The last one reported was in East Concord Nov. 15 (VH). Sept. 14 appears to have been the peak day for Sharp-shinned Hawk migration: 62 were seen at Pack Monadnock Mtn. that day (KEF). In Hillsboro one was watched making passes at a Pileated Woodpecker, but without harmful results for the woodpecker (RAS). Hawk watchers reported a total of 20 Cooper's Hawks, all seen in the week of Sept. 14-20. Others were observed in Sanbornton Aug. 28 (EM, CM), and at Mt. Monadnock Oct. 10 (BAH). There was no flight of Northern Goshawks: the Hawk Watch total was only 16.

The migration of Red-shouldered Hawks seems never to be conspicuous in our state, but in fall 1983 it was almost non-existent: only 9 individuals were reported, 7 of which were seen by hawk watchers. The flight of Broad-winged Hawks, however, was



## SHOREBIRDS

spectacular. It was concentrated in three days, Sept. 12,13,14, with relatively few seen before or afterwards. The highest count was 4,309 made in Loudon on the 14th (DS), but there were several other totals in 4 figures: 1,244 in Farmington and 2,851 in Bedford on the 13th; 2,290 in Antrim (MZ\*) and 1,009 and 1,542 in two localities, respectively, in Hancock on the 14th (MC\*). We seldom get reports of hawk migration from the White Mtns., so a flight of 100 or so Broad-wings over Mt. Wildcat on Sept. 12 (TR) is of interest. The last straggler was seen in West Campton on Oct. 10. The Hawk Watch total of Broad-wings for the season was 18,531, which is more than three times last year's figure and double the number seen in 1981.

The bulk of the migration of Red-tailed Hawks comes late in the season, after most of the hawk watchers have stopped visiting their observation posts. They reported only 52 of these birds for the entire season. The only Rough-legged Hawk was seen in Rye on Nov. 27 (DJA,SDA).

The hawk watchers counted 73 American Kestrels, which is fewer than average. Other observers reported about 20. The first of about 15 Merlins was seen in Manchester Sept. 8 (MTM) and the second in Alton Sept. 9 (EGL\*). In Albany on Sept. 21, one was watched eating a bat! (CFS\*) The last reported was in Concord Nov. 7 (C.Hugny, fide RAQ). The only Peregrine Falcon was seen on Crotched Mtn. in Frances-town Sept. 13 (MZ\*). This compares very unfavorably with the 14 reported in 1982.

GROUSE THROUGH COOTS

The only acceptable reports of Spruce Grouse were of one seen Oct. 24 near the Androscoggin River in Dummer (CFS,HPN) and a male seen along the Twinway in the Pemigewasset Wilderness Aug. 7 (MRE). This species is very unlikely to occur south of the White Mtns, and reports from this area cannot be considered unless carefully documented. Two Virginia Rails with 5 very small young were seen in Moultonborough on Aug. 2 (AG). There were no reports of other species of rails. An American Coot was observed in Windham Nov. 27 (KEF), and there were 9 of these birds on Eel Pond in Rye on Nov. 19 and 27 (RB,DJA\*).

The best shorebird of a rather poor season was an AMERICAN AVOCET seen at Rye on Aug. 10 (EGL). There are very few records of this species for New Hampshire. (Details on file.) Black-bellied Plovers arrived at the coast in late July (RB), as usual. There were 600 in the coastal marshes by Aug.28 (DJA\*), and about 50 were still present at Hampton on Nov. 9 (DBK). There were 7 Semipalmated Plovers at Hampton as early as July 13 (RAQ) with 38 seen there July 29 (RB), and about 175 were seen at the coast Aug. 26 (KCE). The only report from an inland locality was of one at Wilmot Aug.21 and 24 (KCE\*). A late one was at Hampton Nov. 3 (DBK). Fifty-two Killdeer were seen at North Haverhill Aug. 14 (RB), and 43 or more at Milan Sept. 2 (TR). One at Center Sandwich Nov. 26-28 was very late (BSR,RB).

The ASNH coastal trip Aug. 28 recorded 100 Greater Yellowlegs (DJA). There were 10 at Hampton as late as Nov. 9 (DBK). Inland the species was reported from Ashland, Danbury, Errol, and New London in October-- one or two birds in each place. Lesser Yellowlegs were also numerous in the coastal marshes Aug. 28: 75 were seen on the ASNH trip (DJA). Twelve at Hampton Falls Nov.2 were quite late (DBK). The only reports from an inland locality were of one at New London Sept. 11 (RCV) and 19 (KCE)-- probably the same bird on both dates. Two Solitary Sandpipers arrived at New Hampton as early as July 11 (VHH). There were 12 in a Wilmot marsh Aug. 31 (KCE) and 8 in New London Sept. 11 (RCV). One at West Sandwich Oct. 24 (BSR) was the latest reported, and is the observer's latest record in the Squam Lakes region.

Whimbrels appear to have reached their peak at Seabrook the last week of July: RB counted 13 there July 26, 15 on the 27th, and 12 on the 30th. Lower numbers were seen there in August, and none were reported after that month. The only Godwit of the season was a juvenile Hudsonian at Seabrook Nov. 12 (DWF\*). There were 2 Ruddy Turnstones at Rye July 24 (RB), but few were reported later. Red Knots were missed at the coast, but a dozen were seen in flight at sea on the ASNH pelagic



trip Sept. 17 (DJA\*). By July 27 there were 82 Sanderling at Rye (RB); 180 were there Sept. 24 (DJA\*), and 11 remained until Nov. 20 (RB). Semipalmated Sandpipers are early migrants: over 700 were seen at the coast July 29 (RB). About 300 were seen there Sept. 24 (DJA\*). This was an exceptional year for Western Sandpipers at the coast. A group of 3 at Hampton Falls Aug. 28 had increased to 17 there Sept. 5 (DJA\*). And it was a good year for Least Sandpipers at North Haverhill, where 41 were seen Aug. 14 (RB). The last of only 4 White-rumped Sandpipers reported was at Seabrook Nov. 12 (DWF). Single Pectoral Sandpipers at Wilmot Aug. 15 and Sept. 12, and 2 at New London Oct. 12 and 16 (KCE), make up the total report for this species.

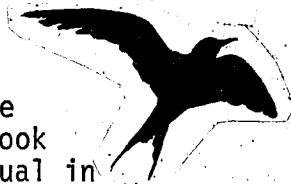
The earliest arriving Purple Sandpipers were apparently missed. There were already 48 at Rye by Nov. 20 (RB). The earliest Dunlin were also missed. The usual big flocks were present at the coast in the late fall, the largest reported=408 at Seabrook on Nov. 20 (RB). There were 52 Short-billed Dowitchers at Hampton July 29 (RB); later reports were of much smaller numbers. The only Long-billed Dowitcher of the season was at Hampton Falls Sept. 5 (DJA,SDA). A Common Snipe was at Hampton Falls Aug. 28 (DJA,\*). Of the few others reported, the last was at Salem Nov. 18 (KEF). Seven Northern Phalaropes were seen on the ASNH pelagic trip Sept. 17 (DJA). A Red Phalarope was seen from shore at North Hampton Oct. 27 (VHH\*).

#### SKUAS THROUGH ALCIDS

The best bird of the Sept. 17 pelagic trip was a Skua, seen in the vicinity of New Scantum, and identified as of the South Polar species (DJA\*). (Details on file.) The only Laughing Gull reported was at Seabrook Sept. 5 (SDA\*). The first individual of the small group of Little Gulls that visit Hampton/Seabrook harbor each fall arrived as early as Aug. 21 (DJA\*). Three were seen there Nov. 3 (DBK), and more in the early winter. An adult Common Black-headed Gull was in Portsmouth Nov. 15 (RS). Few Bonaparte's Gulls were reported. An immature SABINE'S GULL was seen in Hampton Sept. 22 (EWP). This gull is very rare in New Hampshire.



Ring-billed Gulls were locally common, as usual, but no large flocks were reported. There were almost 250 Herring Gulls way up in Berlin (at the dump) on Nov. 15 (TR). Seven Black-legged Kittiwakes were seen on the pelagic trip Sept. 17 (DJA\*). There were 2 adult and 2 immature Roseate Terns at Seabrook Aug. 24 (EWP). On Aug. 28 there were 150 Common Terns at this locality, a high percentage of which were juveniles (DJA). Three immature Forster's Terns were at Seabrook Aug. 21 and 27 (DJA\*). As usual in recent years a very small number of Least Terns were seen at the coast in late July and in August. The only Black Terns reported were 2 northeast of Duck Island (and therefore probably in Maine) on Sept. 24 (DJA). The first BLACK SKIMMERS seen in N.H. for some years were 2 at Seabrook Aug. 24 (EWP), one of which was still present, and photographed, Aug. 27 (DJA\*). This is said to be the first confirmed record for the state. The only "alcid" reported was a COMMON MURRE seen in flight and on the ocean at Rye on Oct. 10 (DJA) (details on file). This too is a rare species in New Hampshire.



#### DOVES THROUGH OWLS

The largest flocks of Mourning Doves reported were 22 at Hillsboro Aug. 27 (RAS) and 18 at Center Sandwich Sept. 26 (BSR). The only Black-billed Cuckoos were in Monroe and Franconia the first week of Aug. (PP, MF, LC). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was seen in Monroe Oct. 6 (PP, EE), and another at Rye the same day (EGL, ST). This suggests a small late flight, but confirmation from other observers is lacking. There were Snowy Owls at Seabrook on Nov. 11 (RAQ\*) and at Nashua on Nov. 26 (PA, fide RAQ). Barred Owls are always with us, but the only ones reported were in Stratham, where they are uncommon (DJA), and in New London (MDSchaffer) in Sept.



#### GOATSUCKERS THROUGH KINGFISHER

There was a good migration of Common Nighthawks. The peak dates were Aug. 25,



when 500 were seen in Keene (JHW) and Aug. 26, when 300 were observed in Frankestown (G. Peabody, fide MC) and 212 in Goffstown (CFS). The last one reported was in Lee on Oct. 3 (DNallon, fide MW).

A Whip-poor-will was calling in New Hampton Sept. 3 (RHuckins, fide VHH). One hundred Chimney Swifts were seen in Keene Aug. 25 (Mrs. JHWard). The last one reported was in Pittsfield Sept. 8 (AER\*). About 16 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were reported, none later than Sept. 16. Belted Kingfishers seem to have been present in normal numbers. One at West Sandwich Nov. 5 (BSR) was late for the locality, but 3 were seen at Manchester by the Merrimack River Nov. 15 (MTM).

#### WOODPECKERS AND FLYCATCHERS

There were reports of 6 Red-headed Woodpeckers, the same number as last year. The earliest was an adult in Concord at Audubon House Oct. 17 (BV\*). The others were all in November: Derry Nov. 3 (PD), Concord Nov. 7-14 (MH), E. Concord Nov. 15-21 (VH), Boscawen Nov. 13 (R.Holske fide NH), and Windham Nov. 26 (PA fide RAQ). The latest of the few Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers reported were 4 at Pittsfield Oct. 14 (AER). Three Black-backed Woodpeckers were seen on Mt. Wildcat Sept. 12 (TR, BDR). The migration of Common Flickers peaked about Sept. 21, when over 40 were seen in Hillsboro (RAS). None were reported after Oct. 21 (Pittsfield, AER\*), which is unusual. BSR observed 4 Pileated Woodpeckers on a hike in Sandwich Notch Sept. 16. Others were seen in Franconia (2), E. Rochester, Hillsboro (2), New London (2), Deerfield, Pittsfield, and Webster (2).

A dozen or more Olive-sided Flycatchers in Sandwich Notch Aug. 3 (BSR) were presumably summer resident pairs with their families. Elsewhere these birds were scarce: one in New Hampton Aug. 26 (VHH\*) and 2 in North Sandwich Aug. 28 (RR\*). Five Eastern Wood Peewees were seen in Manchester Sept. 14 (MTM). None were reported later than Sept. 16. Two Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were seen in Sandwich Notch Sept. 2 (BSR) and one in Manchester Sept. 14 (MTM). Four Alder Flycatchers were singing in Jefferson on Aug. 13 (RB), and one Least Flycatcher sang



in Sandwich Notch Sept. 8 (BSR). The last date reported for Eastern Phoebe was Oct. 18 at Milford (AEA). The only reports of Great Crested Flycatchers were from E. Wolfeboro, where one was seen Sept. 10 and another on the very late dates Oct. 21-25 (DLR, CHR). The only WESTERN KINGBIRD was in New Hampton Sept. 15-19 (RCH, VHH). Of the few Eastern Kingbirds reported, the latest was in Manchester on Sept. 10 (MTM).

#### LARKS THROUGH SWALLOWS

Three Horned Larks at Seabrook Aug. 11 (RCV\*) were probably local breeders. Other flocks reported were 5 and 8 at Hampton Nov. 3 and 9 (DBK\*) and 7 and 14 at Whiteface Intervale Nov. 6 and 27 (BSR\*). The last of a colony of about 50 Purple Martins at Alton left on Aug. 13 (H.Latham, fide EGL). No others were reported. A remarkable concentration of 1,200 Tree Swallows was in Keen the afternoon of Aug. 25 (JHW). Huge flocks of these swallows are sometimes seen in the coastal marshes in autumn, but are very unusual inland. A dozen Tree Swallows at Rye on Sept. 11 were the last reported (SDA\*). Four Bank Swallows were also at Rye on Sept. 11 (SDA\*). The only reports of Cliff Swallows were 55 at New Hampton on July 31, and 40 there Aug. 3 (VHH). Barn Swallows apparently left early: the last reported were 3 at Pittsfield Sept. 4 (AER\*).



#### JAYS THROUGH CREEPER

There was a "huge movement" of Blue Jays in the Squam Lake region in September, with many hundreds seen migrating Sept. 16 and lots of others to the end of the month (BSR). At New Hampton the Heberts counted 259 migrating on Sept. 14, and variable numbers thereafter through Sept. 30. At Bethlehem 27 Common Ravens were seen going to roost on Aug. 3 (RB). Farther south ravens were seen or heard in Hillsboro, Marlborough, New Hampton, New London, Roxbury, and Wilmot. Black-capped Chickadees were seen migrating (VHH) but no large numbers were reported. Boreal Chickadees appeared south of their normal range on Mt. Monadnock,

### 1983 Fall Migration

where 4 were seen Oct. 16 (BAH\*), also in Campton Oct. 18 (WWF\*), in Plymouth Oct. 28 (SAG), and in Dublin Nov. 1 (MC). The northernmost Tufted Titmouse reported was in Jackson Sept. 22-23 (GBW). Brown Creepers were more numerous in the New Hampton area in late Sept. and early Oct. than they have been for years (VHH).

#### WRENS THROUGH THRUSHES

The last of only 3 House Wrens reported was at Center Harbor Sept. 26 (BSR). As in the past two years, Winter Wrens were common in Squam Lakes region: 14 were observed on a hike in Sandwich Notch Sept. 28 (BSR). Elsewhere in the state there were reports of only 3. Probably many observers fail to look for this species, whose migration comes after most of the warblers have left for the south. There were very few Golden-crowned Kinglets, but Ruby-crowns were somewhat more numerous. The largest number was 6 at East Concord on Oct. 13 (VH), and the latest date Oct. 25 at Milford (AEA). Three Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were seen at Sanbornton Aug. 7 (EM\*), and one at West Sandwich Sept. 4 (BSR).

Fewer Eastern Bluebirds were reported than last year, and no flocks of more than 8 birds. The last 4 were at Bristol Oct. 21 (VHH). The last Veery (of very few reported) was at Manchester Sept. 14 (MTM). Gray-cheeked Thrushes were seen at Odiorne Point in Rye Sept. 11 (DJA,SDA) and in New London Oct. 8 (RCV). These birds seem surprisingly scarce on migration, considering the numbers that breed in the White Mtns. and northward, but they are shy and hard to identify: The first transient Swainson's Thrush was seen at Pittsfield Aug. 26 (GER, AER). There were a dozen or so at West Sandwich Sept. 7 (BSR) and 10 each at Hancock (MC) and Manchester (MTM) on the 14th. The last date for the species was Oct. 26 at Hillsboro (RAS) and New Hampton (VHH). Hermit Thrushes, the latest of the spotted thrushes to migrate, were numerous in October: 16+ were seen in Plymouth Oct. 22 (SAG\*). Two in Barrington Nov. 13 (DJA) were the last reported. There were reports of only 3 Wood Thrushes, the last at East Wolfboro Sept. 26 (DLR\*). An albino American Robin was seen in West Sandwich Oct. 20-22 (BSR\*). About 30 robins were still at Whiteface Intervale Nov. 27 (RR\*).



#### MIMIDS THROUGH VIREOS



Except for 10 at Manchester (MTM), no Northern Mockingbirds were reported. The last Brown Thrasher was seen in Pittsfield on Oct. 4 (AER,GCR). There were 25 Water Pipits at New Hampton Oct. 10 (LRE), but few others were reported. Except for 40+ at Hillsboro Aug. 27 (RAS), small flocks of Cedar Waxwings were the rule, the latest a group of 5 at Pittsfield Oct. 12 (AER\*). A Northern Shrike was seen at the Wangan Ground on the Kancamagus Highway (2800 ft.) on the early date of Oct. 14 (TR). There were others, or another, at Pittsfield on Nov. 2, 10 and 17 (AER\*) and one at West Sandwich Nov. 24 (VR\*). The only reports of Yellow-throated Vireos were from the Squam Lakes region (where the species is increasing). Three were singing at W. Sandwich Sept. 4, and the last was in Sandwich Notch Sept. 16 (BSR). Of a total of 5 Philadelphia Vireos reported, the earliest and latest were at West Sandwich Aug. 27 and Sept. 25, respectively (BSR). There were no significant reports of the other vireos.

#### WOOD WARBLERS

A Tennessee Warbler at West Sandwich on Oct. 7 (BSR) was the latest ever for the Squam Lakes region. The only Orange-crowned Warbler of the season was seen in Concord on Oct. 20 (HBM). Of the seven Nashville Warblers reported, four were seen in October: on the 4th two in Pittsfield (GCR\*) and one in Franconia Notch (TR); on the 7th one in West Sandwich (BSR). The very few reports of Northern Parulas were all in mid-September. Two Yellow Warblers were still singing at Center Harbor on Aug. 14 (BSR). One at Pittsfield Sept. 14 (GCR\*) was rather late, and one in Manchester Sept. 30 (MTM) very late. Two Chestnut-sided Warblers at Sandwich Notch Sept. 28 (BSR) were also unusually late. Counts of 14 Magnolia Warblers at Center Harbor Aug. 24 (BSR,RR) and 12+ at Sandwich Notch Sept. 8 (BSR)<sup>1</sup> mark high points in the migration of this species. None were reported in October.



There was a fairly good flight of Cape May Warblers. The first 2 reported were at West Sandwich Aug. 23 (BSR\*); the best counts were 18 at Moultonboro Aug. 28 (AG) and 10-20 on Mt. Wildcat Sept. 12 (TR); and the last 2 seen were at Pittsfield Sept. 18 (AER\*). On the top of Cannon Mountain on Sept. 15, "hundreds?" of Yellow-rumped Warblers were seen, "many flying up into the sky and down again" (TR). At New Hampton 65 were observed migrating the same day (VHH). Late individuals were seen at Moultonboro Nov. 6 (BSR) and Hancock Nov. 7 (MC), and six were noted at Hampton (where they might winter) on Nov. 9 (DBK). The fall flight of Black-throated Green Warblers was rather poor, with the last two seen Oct. 10 at Center Harbor (BSR). A Blackburnian Warbler at Pittsfield Sept. 18 (GCR\*) was fairly late for this species, which usually makes an early departure. Only three Pine Warblers were reported, the last at Hillsboro Sept. 12 (RAS). Palm Warblers put on a good flight at New Hampton, where the first was seen Sept. 28 (VHH\*) and the last Oct. 14 (LRE), with 8 on Oct. 8 the most on a single day (VHH). Elsewhere they were not numerous. The first Bay-breasted Warbler of the season was at Center Harbor Aug. 14, and 17 or more were seen there Aug. 24 (BSR). The best count elsewhere was 5 at Stratham Sept. 10 (DJA). The last one reported was in Sandwich Notch Sept. 25 (BSR).



About 6 Black and White Warblers were seen in Stratham Sept. 10 (DJA) and the same number in Hillsboro Sept. 12 (RAS). The species was unreported after Sept. 23 (Pittsfield, AER\*). At least 10 American Redstarts were seen in Hancock Aug. 26 (MC). There were few reported from other localities. Ovenbirds lingered late: there was one in Nelson Oct. 8 (MC\*), one in Marlborough Oct. 18 (JHW), and one in West Sandwich Oct. 23 (BSR). A Northern Waterthrush at North Sandwich Sept. 29 (BSR) was also rather late. The fourth week in Aug. is probably the best time to look for Mourning Warblers in the fall. A male was seen in Sandwich Notch Aug. 24 (AG) and another in Center Harbor the same day (BSR). Still another was in Sandwich Notch Sept. 1 (AG), and one was seen in Concord in mid-September (AS). Common Yellowthroats stay later than most of the warblers. The last two reported were in Pittsfield Oct. 16 (AER\*). Eight Wilson's Warblers at Center Harbor Aug. 24 (BSR) is a good count for this rather uncommon species. There were 9 Canada Warblers at Center Harbor

Aug. 24 (RR\*). The last one reported was in Chesham Sept. 14 (EHM).

#### TANAGER THROUGH TOWHEE

The most interesting of a number of reports of Scarlet Tanagers is of one seen above 4000 ft. on Mt. Wildcat Sept. 12 (TR, BDR). Very few were observed in New Hampton (VHH). The last one reported was in Pittsfield Sept. 22 (AER\*). Northern Cardinals were not reported north of West Sandwich and New Hampton. A very late Rose-breasted Grosbeak at a Plymouth feeder Nov. 12-23 (SAG, WWF) was considered a possible hybrid between that species and the Black-headed Grosbeak, due to the tawny wash on its underparts, but the observers lean towards pure Rose-breasted. A report of an immature Black-headed Grosbeak was also received, but the details supplied were insufficient to warrant its acceptance. An Indigo Bunting was seen in Pittsfield Oct. 4 (GCR\*). A female Rufous-sided Towhee in Pittsfield on Nov. 8 (AER) was unusually late, as was a male in East Wolfboro Nov. 3-5 (DLB, CHR).

#### SPARROWS



The first Tree Sparrows of the season--a group of 7--were in Pittsfield Oct. 26 (GCR\*). Not many others were reported. About 100 Chipping Sparrows were counted on a Dummer-Dixville trip Sept. 25 (VHH). The last reported were 15 at New Hampton Oct. 23 (VHH). Four Field Sparrows at Milford Nov. 28 were very late (AEA). A Vesper Sparrow in Pittsfield Oct. 14 (AER\*) was the only one reported. In Rye on Oct. 2 there were 26 Savannah Sparrows (SDA\*). Elsewhere the species was unreported, though certainly occurring in many localities. A few Sharp-tailed Sparrows were seen in the coastal marshes: 6 at Hampton Falls Aug. 28 and 4 at Seabrook Sept. 5 (DJA). This is normal, but a Seaside Sparrow at Seabrook Sept. 5 was rather unusual (DJA\*). The first Fox Sparrows of the autumn season appeared in New Hampton (VHH\*) and West Sandwich (BSR) on the early date of Oct. 9. There were 10 at Plymouth Oct. 27 (WWF, SAG), but elsewhere the numbers were low. The total report of Lincoln's Sparrows was just 6 birds, of which the first was at West Sandwich Sept. 1

(BSR) and the last ones there and at Pittsfield Sept. 28 (AER, GCR). The last week in September is normally the time for the peak of the migration of this species. There were fairly good numbers of White-throated Sparrows at New Hampton, where 66 were counted Sept. 30 (VHH), and at Hillsboro where RAS saw 52 on Oct. 1. The first White-crowned Sparrow was at East Wolfeboro Sept. 20 (DLR, CHR), and the species was widespread but not numerous. The last one reported was at Hillsboro Oct. 24 (RAS). Ten Dark-eyed Juncos at New Hampton Sept. 4 (VHH\*) may have been early migrants. There were 300 there Oct. 11-12 (RCH,VHH), but elsewhere no large flocks were reported.

LONGSPUR THROUGH EVENING GROSBEAK

The only Lapland Longspur of the season was seen at Whiteface Intervale on Nov. 27 (BAR, RR). It was the observer's first local record. In New Hampshire these birds are seldom observed away from the coast. The first Snow Bunting arrived in New Hampton Oct. 23 (Mrs. Evans, fide VHH). The largest flock reported inland was 30 at Errol Nov. 15 (TR). At the coast, where these birds are more abundant in the fall, 100 or so were seen at Hampton on Oct. 27 (RCH\*) and Nov. 9 (DBK).

At Littleton on Oct. 10 an estimated total of 5,500 Red-winged Blackbirds were seen "migrating in a long, long line" (RB). Such numbers are rarely seen in New Hampshire. About 150 were in Errol Oct. 29 (TR), and 38 at Whiteface Intervale Nov. 6 (BSR). Very few Rusty Blackbirds were reported. One with missing tail feathers stayed in a Manchester yard until they grew again, and left in early Nov. (MTM). A Common Grackle at Whiteface Intervale Nov. 27 was the observer's latest local record, by nearly a month (BSR). The only large flock of Brown-headed Cowbirds reported, about 80 birds, was seen in Manchester Sept. 19 (TH). About 15 Northern Orioles were observed in Manchester Sept. 10 (MTM). A very late one visited a feeder in Londonderry Nov. 1 to 20 (KC). Another in Manchester Nov. 5-10 was thought by the observer to be a female of the "Bullock's" race. (MTM-description on file).



The only Pine Grosbeaks reported for the entire season were 4 in Washington Nov. 30 (RAQ\*). Thirty Purple Finches were seen in Hancock Oct. 20 (MC). Elsewhere the numbers

were much lower. About two dozen House Finches spent the season in one locality in Manchester (MTM). The only crossbills were two Reds in Epsom Sept. 1 (BRR). The earliest Pine Siskins reported were in Nelson Oct. 6 (MC\*). Many small flocks were seen later, plus 50 at Peterborough Oct. 30 (KEF), 80 on Mt. Monadnock, Nov. 1 (BAH), 40+ at Hopkinton Nov. 11-12 (PV\*), and 100+ at Plymouth Nov. 30 (SAG\*). There were reports of only small flocks of American Goldfinches. Small groups of Evening Grosbeaks seen in New Hampton (VHH) and Plymouth (SAG) in August are likely to have been locally raised families. None were reported in September, but there was a good flight in October and November, beginning as early as Oct. 8 in Pittsfield (GCR) and Oct. 9 in East Concord (VH).

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CONTRIBUTORS AND OBSERVERS

- DJAbbott, SDAbbott, Parrigo, JBarrie, DBonnette, RBradley, MBrown, MCadot, KCampbell, LCole, PDionne, KCElkins, EEmery, LREmons, JFair, DWFinch, WWFogleman, KEFolsom, MFuller, SAGonzalez, AGRoTh, MHammond, NHarris, THarwood, VHayden, RCHebert, VHHebert, BAHedin, DBKirwan, EGLocke, EHM MacDonald, SMallett, MTMartin, HBMiller, EMorrier, JMorse, HPNevers, APecora, EWPhinney, PPowers, RAQuinn, CHRaddin, DLRaddin, MRestani, BDRichards, TRichards, BSRidgely, RRidgely, VRidgely, BRRing, AERobbins, GCRobbins, CARogers, MRogers, MDSchaffer, DLSkeels, CFSmith, RASprague, DSTavros, RStephenson, ASwenson, STThompson, RCVernon, BVerville, PVerville, TWalski, JHWard, MWatkins, GBWeir, MZettek, ASNH=Audubon Society of N.H.

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WHAT TO REPORT? CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The editors--listed on the back page of this double issue--appreciate having reports sent on a monthly basis to expedite the task of reviewing the slips and filing them by phylogenetic order. REPORTS SHOULD BE SENT TO THE APPROPRIATE EDITOR NO LATER THAN THE 5th DAY AFTER THE SEASON IS OVER.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions for N.H. Bird Records, please get in touch with me.

Bob Quinn, Editor

## **WINTER SEASON**

### The 1983-1984 Winter Season

Here in the Granite State in 1983-84 we experienced the wettest December in the past ten years. The first half of the month was warmer than usual, yet the much colder second half brought the average temperature for the month down to one degree cooler than normal. On December 21 all stations in the state recorded low temperatures at or below zero. For the continental U.S., Dec. 20-26 was one of the coldest weeks in the history of weather records.

In New Hampshire, the frigid weather continued into January, bringing with it blustery cold winds and heavy snow. This was followed by an exceptionally warm February during which rain and temperatures into the 60s melted snow cover and opened rivers. Red-winged Blackbirds and a few other species began moving back into the state then (only to find themselves frozen out when winter returned with sub-zero temperatures in early March).

Most significant was the incursion of Great Gray Owls during January. Other unusual species observed included a Peregrine Falcon, a Lesser Black-backed Gull, and a European Goldfinch. And of note were high numbers of wintering Snowy Owls, Northern Shrikes, and Pine Siskins, as well as exceptionally low numbers for Common Redpolls, Purple Finches, and crossbills.

Three Christmas Bird Counts had new record high species totals: Peterborough (42), Nashua (51), and Coastal (an incredible 104). And CBC participants were able to add a total of 16 (!) new species to five counts: Keene (2), Concord (3), Peterborough (3), Nashua (4), and Coastal (4). Of those 16 species, 5 were waterfowl and 4 were warblers. Well done!

We are sorry to say that we were unable to obtain the results for the Pittsburg CBC, the Errol-Umbagog CBC, and two-thirds of the Isles of Shoals CBC.

We are also sorry that we are unable to include all the individual reports we receive. Format and space limitations require us to utilize those reports which we feel are most significant. However, all the information we receive is recorded, consolidated, and referred to. It is your data that enables us to draw the conclusions we do. Thanks to all contributors.

Andrea and George Robbins

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1983 Winter Season

LOONS THROUGH HERONS



Fifty-four Common Loons were seen on the Coastal Christmas Bird Count (CBC) Dec. 17 (RS).

The Keene CBC, Dec. 18 (DH) had 2; and the Laconia CBC, Jan. 1 (WSL), had 1. RAQ and BS saw one on Lake Opeechee in Laconia Jan. 4; and GCR and AER had 5 in Rye Feb. 16. The Coastal CBC had the only Red-throated Loons reported (27).

The Coastal CBC also had the only report for Red-necked Grebes (121). Forty-one Horned Grebes were found on the Coastal CBC. And one bird picked up outside a neighbor's barn in Hillsboro Dec. 9 by RAS was "lively and apparently uninjured but exhausted." When placed in slack water in the Androscoggin R. it swam and dove normally. The observer believed it may have come down on icy pavement, mistaking it for water, and was then unable to get off the ground. One Pied-billed Grebe, a fourth count record, was seen on the Coastal CBC. The Coastal CBC had 43 Great Cormorants.

A decade high of 22 Great Blue Herons was tallied by Coastal CBC observers. One was seen during the Keene CBC count week; and one was found on the Lee-Durham CBC Dec. 23 (SM). Other single birds were reported from Salem Dec. 1-23 (KEF); Manchester Jan. 7 (MTM); Exeter Feb. 1 (SHP); and Lebanon Feb. 3 (MDS).

WATERFOWL



The Coastal CBC had a decade high of 3,020 Canada Geese; and the Concord CBC Dec. 18 had 1, for a fifth count record (RAQ). Eighty-nine were seen on the Nashua CBC Dec. 18 (RA); 19 on the Lee-Durham CBC; and 2, Feb. 23, at Crete's Farm, Concord (RAQ, TR).

The Nashua CBC had a new high of 434 Mallards, which were otherwise present in average numbers. The Nashua CBC also had a high of 206 American Black Ducks, while a decade high of 1,424 were counted on the Coastal CBC. A new species for the Nashua count was one Common Pintail, a rare duck during the winter months. A male Blue-winged Teal, found in Spofford Lake, was a new species for the Keene CBC.

The Coastal CBC had 700 Greater Scaup, while 3 Lesser Scaup, found by TR, BR, JT, were a new species for the Concord count. Four female scaup of undetermined species were seen on the Winnepesaukee R. in Tilton Jan. 4 by RAQ and BS.

Of note were these Common Goldeneyes sighted inland in early January: 108 on the Laconia CBC; 10 in the Pemigewasset R., W. Franklin, Jan. 4 (RAQ, BS); 20 in Silver Lake, Lochmere, Jan. 4 (RAQ, BS); and 20 in the Winnepesaukee R., Tilton, Jan. 4 (RAQ, BS). Two Christmas counts had a BARROW'S GOLDENEYE. A male Barrow's, seen on the Merrimack R. by GCR, was a new species

for the Concord CBC. The Coastal CBC had one female Barrow's, which was a ninth record for that count.

Observers counted 71 Buffleheads for the Coastal CBC and 13 for the Lee-Durham CBC. One Bufflehead added a new species to the Nashua count. The 77 Oldsquaw tallied by Coastal CBC participants was a typical number for this coastally wintering species. However, the 2 seen near the Androscoggin R. powerhouse between Berlin and Gorham in early December (MCE) were an unusual inland sighting. The Coastal CBC had 59 Common Eiders, and 7 were seen off Rye Feb. 16 (EGL). A single female KING EIDER was a sixth count record for the Coastal CBC, and the only sighting reported this winter. The Coastal CBC had 161 White-winged Scoters, and about 20 were in rough surf off Rye Feb. 16 (GCR, AER). Coastal CBC birders found the only Surf Scoters (2) and the only Black Scoters (23) reported.

Hooded Mergansers were present inland through January: a pair on L. Winnisquam, Laconia, Jan. 4 (RAQ, BS); 6 on Silver L., Lochmere, Jan. 4 (RAQ, BS); and 6 in Franklin Jan. 21 (KCE). Forty-four were seen Jan. 1 on the Laconia CBC. Common Mergansers were well reported inland as well as coastally throughout the winter season. Typically a coastal species, Red-breasted Mergansers were reported from the Coastal CBC (282); the Lee-Durham CBC (29); and from Newington, where 3 were seen in Great Bay Feb. 16 (GCR, AER).

#### HAWKS, FALCONS

Ten Northern Goshawks were sighted in the state this season. Could it have been that harsh winter conditions forced otherwise secretive Goshawks to hunt more openly, thus making them more obvious to observers? The following Christmas counts each tallied one bird: Peterborough, Dec. 17 (MC); Baker Valley, Dec. 17 (JK); Hanover-Norwich, Dec. 26 (WGE); Nashua; and Lee-Durham. The Coastal CBC had two for an eighth count record. Other Goshawks reported were single birds in Plymouth, Pittsfield, and Atkinson. Sharp-shinned Hawks were also well reported; 17 sightings were received. For an eight count record, the Coastal CBC had a Cooper's Hawk. A well described immature was seen in Salem

Dec. 26 (KEF). KEF also saw one in Salem Feb. 12, which may have been the same birds.

Of the 41 (!) Red-tailed Hawks reported from around the state this winter, 17 were seen on the Coastal CBC alone. On the other hand, only one Red-shouldered Hawk was reported--a single bird observed during the Nashua CBC count week. The Coastal CBC had 2 Rough-legged Hawks.

As many as THIRTY Bald Eagles wintered in New Hampshire this year. This included 22 adults and 8 immatures (CFS). One adult seen in Concord Jan. 12 by VH was most likely one of 3 which were observed on and off throughout the period along the Merrimack R. (CFS). Also included in the total were at least 1 bird along the Androscoggin R., one along the Connecticut R., and 5 near Great Bay in Newington (CFS).

The Coastal CBC had 1 Northern Harrier. They also had 1 Peregrine Falcon, found by EWP while counting feeder birds in Rye and very well described by her. This was a new species for the Coastal CBC. A Merlin, seen by other observers on the Coastal CBC, was a fourth count record. A decade high number (16) of our smallest falcon, the American Kestrel, were tallied on the Coastal CBC. Thirteen others were sighted, the northernmost being 1 female at the Laconia-Gilford Airport, Feb. 18 (CC).

#### GROUSE THROUGH ALCIDS

Forty-seven Ruffed Grouse were counted during eight Christmas Bird Counts. Of those, 19 was a high total for the Peterborough count. Also, 2 were observed throughout the winter months in Kensington (GWG). Helen Dane in Hudson had 2 Common Bobwhite, which she saw 2 or 3 times at her feeder and under a nearby apple tree, during the week of Dec. 30 (fide AER). Ring-necked Pheasants were found on 4 Christmas counts: Peterborough (2), Nashua (5), Keene (2), and Laconia (1). One hen was observed in Manchester during Feb. (MTM).

Open marsh areas yielded 2 Virginia Rails, an eighth count record, and 1 Sora, a third



count record, for the Coastal CBC. One American Coot was found by observers on the Laconia CBC Jan. 1. Another, sighted on Winnisquam L. in Laconia Jan. 4 (RAQ,BS), was most likely the same bird.

A late lingerer inland was one Killdeer which was last seen Dec. 9 at the Center Sandwich Fairgrounds (BSR) "standing on ice-covered grass looking forlorn, with an equally miserable Robin nearby." An early migrant was a single Killdeer, calling overhead, heading north Feb. 20 in Kensington (GWG). Seven Black-bellied Plovers were a new record high number for the Coastal count. Five Ruddy Turnstones were sighted on the Isles of Shoals CBC Dec. 31 (EWP). Another early migrant, which arrived during our exceptionally warm February, was one American Woodcock, seen flying around at dusk Feb. 23 in Kensington (GWG). Common Snipe were found on two of our N.H. Christmas counts. The Nashua count had one, and one was a ninth count record for the Coastal CBC. Isles of Shoals CBC birders counted 613 Purple Sandpipers, and Coastal CBC observers 112. Twelve Purples in two small flocks were in Rye Feb. 16 (AER, GCR). Other shorebirds seen on the Coastal count were 56 Dunlin and 8 Sanderlings.



The Isles of Shoals and the Concord CBCs each had one Glaucous Gull. One all white, second-year, bird was at the Andover landfill Jan. 27 (KCE) and at least two others wintered along the Merrimack R. in Concord (RAQ). Reports of single Iceland Gulls came from: the Coastal CBC; the Merrimack R., Concord, Dec.-Feb. (RAQ); Meredith Jan. 2 (SAG, WWF); Laconia Jan. 6 (CC); the Andover landfill, 1 adult Jan. 30 and 1 second-year bird Feb. 12 (KCE); and Manchester, a first-year bird, Feb. 6 (MTM). An undocumented third-year LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL seen by EWP in Rye Dec. 30 is only the second report ever of this species for New Hampshire. Eight of this year's 12 CBCs had Great Black-backed Gulls. Single birds seen on the Peterborough and Keene counts were a new species for each of those counts. A low number (367) were tallied by Coastal CBC observers using new counting methods. Present last year for the first time, the number of wintering Great Black-backs at the Andover landfill had this winter increased to 25 by Feb. 27 (KCE). The same eight CBCs also had Herring Gulls. Of

those, the Peterborough count had a record high total of 43, and the Coastal count had 3,121, a low due to new counting methods. Ring-billed Gulls were seen on 3 Christmas counts: Lee-Durham (3), Coastal (52), and Laconia (2). Eight Ring-bills were observed in Rye Feb. 16 (EGL), and 6 in Great Bay, Newington, Feb. 16 (AER, GCR). A new high total (154) of Bonaparte's Gulls was recorded by Coastal CBC participants. A rare but regular European straggler on the east coast is the COMMON BLACK-HEADED GULL. This year's Coastal CBC had one, which was only the second record for that species in the history of the count. The Coastal CBC also had Little Gulls, another European straggler; the 9 seen were a new record high total for the count. These 2 gulls are relatively common during the winter in Newburyport, Mass., and have been found nesting in Canada the past several years.

The only alcids reported this season were 10 Razorbills and 69 Black Guillemots on the Isles of Shoals CBC, and a single Black Guillemot (an eighth count record) on the Coastal CBC.

#### DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Our most northerly report for Mourning Dove comes from the town of Shelburne where 2 were seen Jan. 27 (CC). A new high total (218) was found on the Hanover-Norwich CBC.

Single Great Horned Owls were found on the Peterborough, Baker Valley, and Laconia CBCs, while the Coastal CBC had 5. Other Horned Owl reports: 1 in West Sandwich Dec. 4 (BSR); 1 in Dunbarton Dec. 5 (J. Wilcox Brown fide CFS); and 2 heard calling in Kensington Feb. 1, 15, and 29 (GWG). It was a terrific year for Snowy Owls in our capital city, where at least 3 and possibly as many as 5 were present for part of the winter. RAQ saw 3 distinctively different birds in Concord--Dec. 19, Dec. 29 (also CFS, Noreen Crean), and Jan. 15. One seen during the Concord CBC count week and one observed downtown, Dec. 16 by Pat Havumaki may have been different birds from the previous 3. A Snowy Owl was a new species for the Nashua CBC; and the single bird found on the Coastal CBC was their second in a decade and an eighth count

record. Also, 2 Snowys were seen on Star Island by Isles of Shoals CBC participants; and Nancy Ulen saw one in Alstead Center Jan. 31. Thirteen Barred Owls were reported. The one in Bow Feb. 15 (RAQ, CFS, JT) has an interesting but sad story. This bird was found in the Blue Seal Seed warehouse where it was eating House Sparrows (hooray!). Reportedly, "it never left the warehouse, weakened, was captured by ASNH, and died of 'old age' according to an 'ASNH' veterinarian."

The FOUR confirmed GREAT GRAY OWLS seen this winter have to be the most spectacular sightings of the season. Very rarely occurring in the East during the winter months, this largest (in height & wingspread) of our owl species is usually common only in the Far North. The Great Gray in Hillsboro Center Jan. 6 (Henry Baldwin) was seen sitting on top of a lawn flagpole. The Rochester bird, found Jan. 7 by Sandy Mallet et al. (fide RAQ), subsequently died and was sent to UNH for autopsy. According to Dr. Richard W. Fite of the Dept. of Animal Sciences (fide ACB), this light (under 1 kilogram) female died from acute enteritis. Another Great Gray, this one a male, was found dead in Campton Jan. 26 by a local high school student (SAG, WWF). It was taken to UNH, but Dr. Fite was unable to determine a cause of death (fide ACB). He found no disease, parasites, or trauma obvious, although this bird weighed only about 700 grams --just slightly heavier than a large female Barred Owl. The fourth Great Gray Owl was alive and well when seen in Monroe Jan. 29 (BB).

The Coastal CBC had 1 Short-eared Owl, a tenth count record. Single Northern Saw-whet Owls were reported from: the Coastal CBC (a fifth count record); Hanover Jan. 16 (Joanne Scobie fide Nancy Martin); Bristol Jan. 21 (VSW, RW); and Kensington Feb. 20, 22 (GWG).

Five CBCs had Belted Kingfishers: Coastal (8), Nashua (3), Lee-Durham (3), Hanover-Norwich (1), & Laconia (3). One bird was seen in the outlet of L. Horace, Weare, Jan. 17 (RAQ), and another near Turkey R., Concord, Feb. 1 (CFS).

One Common Flicker was seen on the Coastal CBC and another single bird was found on Star Island by



Isles of Shoals CBC birders. Seventeen Pileated Woodpeckers were observed throughout the state. A pair were actively courting Feb. 19 in West Sandwich (BSR et al.). Detailed documentation accompanied the report of an adult male RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER found in Walpole Dec. 31 on the Saxton's R., Vermont, CBC count day (Donald Clark). A Red-headed Woodpecker was observed Jan. 14 in Wolfeboro (Dr. W. Douglas Kipp fide AER, GCR). Hairy and Downy woodpeckers were present in average numbers, although the Peterborough CBC had a record high of 110 Downys.

#### HORNED LARK THROUGH STARLING



While the Hanover-Norwich CBC recorded only one Horned Lark, 115 were tallied by Coastal CBC participants. Two were in Andover Feb. 23 (KCE), and 4 were at Concord Airport Feb. 27 (CFS).

A single Gray Jay added a new species to the Peterborough CBC, and 1 was at a feeder in North Sandwich in early Feb. (Dorothy Bishop). Blue Jay numbers were back to normal after the previous year's low. Our several reports for Northern Ravens included: a new record high (14) for the Peterborough CBC; and 8 flying together over Center Sandwich Jan. 7 (BSR), entertaining the observer with their barrel rolling, croaking, and courtship performances. American Crows were present in average numbers.

Black-capped Chickadees were more numerous than in recent winters; the Peterborough CBC had a new record high of 1,684. A single Boreal Chickadee was a seventh count record for the Coastal CBC. No details were provided with a report of 6-12, on the ground under a feeder Feb. 4 & 5 in New London (AV); RAQ observed 2 at Pondicherry in Jefferson Feb. 29. Well reported for the southern half of the state was the Tufted Titmouse. A new high of 73 was recorded for the Coastal CBC. Typical numbers of White-breasted Nuthatches were seen. While the Coastal CBC had a new high total of 140 Red-breasted Nuthatches, single bird lows were recorded by the Hanover-Norwich and Keene CBCs. Brown Creepers were less evident than in recent winters. One was found during count week, but missed on the Hanover-Norwich count day for the first time since 1975.

Three individual Carolina Wrens were sighted. Well described, one appeared just before the first major snowstorm. It was seen for about five days in Concord and reported Dec. 5 by Alice Bean (fide CM). An unconfirmed bird remained for about a week near a suet feeder in Hampton Falls and was reported Jan. 5 (Chase family fide GWG). The third bird, present from early Jan. throughout the end of Feb. and into the spring season, survived at the feeders of Mr. & Mrs. Derrickson in Plymouth (fide SAG). Two Marsh Wrens (a seventh count record) were in coastal marshes on Coastal CBC count day.

Average numbers of Northern Mockingbirds wintered in southern New Hampshire. A Gray Catbird (sixth record) was found on the Coastal CBC. Two were seen in Kensington Dec. 1 (GWG); 1 of these survived until Christmas Day when, obviously uncomfortable in the severe cold, it acted as though its feet were frostbitten. A single Brown Thrasher proved to be a new species for the Peterborough CBC, and 1 had been in Concord 3 months when reported Jan. 1 by Lillian Nickerson (fide EJV).



A substantial number of American Robins were seen in New Hampshire during Dec. and Jan. Eight Christmas counts had a total of 37. Single birds were in Center Sandwich, East Wolfboro, Concord, and Pittsfield. Two wintered at the Plymouth State College (SAG, WWF); 2 were in New London Jan. 18 (AV); and 15 (eating crabapples and seemingly in good health) were in Dover Jan. 28 (PEK). An excellent description accompanied the report of a VARIED THRUSH, first seen Jan. 7 and studied for 3 days by Anne Scott in Rye. This is the seventh consecutive winter record for this northwestern species.

Fewer Golden-crowned Kinglets were reported than in recent winters. The Coastal CBC had 2 Ruby-crowned Kinglets. Two unconfirmed Ruby-crowns were near a feeder in Milford Jan. 3 (AEA), and 1 was in Westmoreland Feb. 11 and 12 (BH). For only the third time in Coastal CBC history, Water Pipits (2) were found.

This was a good year for wintering Bohemian Waxwings. Reports include: Laconia CBC (3); Sanbornton Jan. 2 (2) (SAG, WWF); Salisbury Jan. 14, 15 (25) (KCE); Hillsboro Center Jan. 28 (50) (Edwina Czajowski fide RAQ);

Hillsboro Feb. 19 (32) (RAS); and a flock of unreported size in Northwood in mid-Feb. The Coastal CBC had a decade high of 20 Cedar Waxwings. The Lee-Durham CBC had 1 and the Nashua CBC 6. In Hampstead, 1 Cedar Waxwing came to a feeder Jan. 24, with Evening Grosbeaks (Joanna Roesner fide CM).

A banner year for Northern Shrikes, 22 were sighted from the coast to the North Country. A decade high number of European Starlings (20,430) were recorded by the Coastal CBC.

#### WARBLERS AND ICTERIDS



Usually able to add one new species a year to their incredible total species list, Coastal CBC observers outdid themselves this winter by sighting four new species, three of which were warblers! EWP found the first ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER ever seen on count day. The other two warblers, observed and described in detail by Peter Vickory and Dennis Abbott, were a YELLOW WARBLER and a WILSON'S WARBLER. Twenty-four Yellow-rumped Warblers were tallied by Coastal CBC birders, while Isles of Shoals CBC participants found 15 on Star Island. A flock of 20 were braving the cold weather Jan. 14 in Seabrook (GWG), and 1 bird survived all winter at a feeder in Warner (JB). A warbler was a new species for the Concord count also; their first COMMON YELLOWTHROAT was found by John Tuxitt. Three Yellowthroats were a fifth count record for the Coastal CBC.

Four Eastern Meadowlarks were seen on the Coastal count. Red-winged Blackbird highlights include a new high total (19) for the Coastal CBC and 2 females in West Campton Jan. 28 to Feb. 12 (P. Tailby, P.A. Phipps fide SAG).

Spring migrants began arriving the third week in Feb. with the first "bunch" at White Farm, Concord, Feb. 22 (Chuck Hugny fide RAQ), and 6-8 birds along the Merrimack R. in Concord Feb. 23 (TR, RAQ). Single Northern Orioles were seen on the Coastal and Nashua CBCs. SAG and WWF reported the only Rusty Blackbirds, 2 in Plymouth Dec. 4. Common Grackles were relatively scarce, all reports follow: The Coastal CBC had only 2 (low), and single birds were seen on the Baker Valley CBC, in Plymouth Jan. 19 (SAG, WWF), and in Pittsfield Feb. 24 (AER).





The Coastal CBC also had a low of 3 Brown-headed Cowbirds, although other reports showed that they wintered in average numbers. A flock of 20+ in Errol Feb. 27 (SAG, WWF) is noteworthy.



### FRINGILLIDS

Northern Cardinals were well reported. The Peterborough CBC had a record high of 31. One seen on Black Mtn. in Jackson Dec. 6 (GBW) was our most northerly report, and 1 was singing in Laconia Feb. 17 (CC). A female ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEEK, which was a different bird than the tawny-breasted female seen by SAG in Nov., wintered at 2 feeders in Plymouth: Dec. 6/10 (Mr. & Mrs. R. Mitchell fide SAG) and Dec. 13 through Feb. (M. & O. Piette fide SAG).

Evening Grosbeaks were numerous. The Peterborough count had a new high of 1,315, and 405 was a high tally for the Keene count. Notoriously erratic, wintering Purple Finches were scarce this year compared to last winter's boom. No reports were received other than those for the following six CBCs: Peterborough (19), Baker Valley (6), Coastal (11), Keene (12), Concord (1) (a bottom-of-the-barrel low after last year's record high 86), and Laconia (4) (way down from last year's 91). House Finches continue to increase in numbers throughout the southern half of the state. New record highs were tallied on 4 Christmas counts: Peterborough (10); Baker Valley (11); Nashua (174); and Hanover-Norwich (127--up 31% over last year, but this pales in comparison to the previous year's 593% increase!).

The Baker Valley CBC had 76 Pine Grosbeaks, Hanover-Norwich CBC 10, and Laconia CBC 30. Small flocks of 20 or fewer were seen in Danbury (KCE), Andover (KCE), Holderness (BSR), Benton (CC), and Hillsboro (Baldwin fide RAS). One in Seabrook Jan. 14 (GWG) was our most southerly report. A few more Common Redpolls were sighted this winter than last, but only a very few. Two Christmas counts had them: Nashua (2) and Laconia (18). Single birds were seen in Plymouth Dec. 8 (SAG), East Wolfboro Jan. 2 (DLR), and Andover Feb. 24 (KCE). Three Redpolls were seen in Concord Feb. 24 (RAQ). Last winter only 23 Pine Siskins; this season the Peterborough CBC topped that with their record high of 120, while the Coastal CBC had a decade high of

90. And more than 700 others were sighted statewide. Average numbers of American Goldfinches spent the winter in our state. But, at a sunflower feeder in Wolfboro Jan. 11, a small flock contained an unexpected surprise--a European Goldfinch! (Dr. W. Douglas Kipp fide AER, GCR). Dr. Kipp saw the bird again Jan. 13 and for the last time Jan. 14 when it disappeared as did all his goldfinches. Crossbills were virtually nonexistent. Our only reports were 2 Red Crossbills, a new species for the Nashua CBC, and 2 White-winged Crossbills, which were seen on the Laconia CBC.

Single Rufous-sided Towhees were found on the Nashua CBC and during the Lee-Durham count week, while the Coastal CBC had two. The Coastal CBC had 4 Savannah Sparrows; no others were reported. An unconfirmed, yet probable, SHARP-TAILED SPARROW was well studied when it came to eat thistle seed under an evergreen in Don Lennox's backyard in Jefferson. The bird remained near his yard from the end of November--first appearing after the Thanksgiving snowstorm--until sometime in Jan. Because the bird had a droopy wing and was not able to fly well it may have become an easy victim for a Northern Shrike which arrived in the area about that time. This sighting was reported to us by MCE, who, alone with Phoebe Gogins, also observed the bird.



Northern Junco numbers were slightly lower than average, while American Tree Sparrows were plentiful. RAQ and AS found one Chipping Sparrow for the Concord CBC. No others were reported. An amazing number of Field Sparrows were located during 5 Dec. Christmas counts: Peterborough (1, a second record); Lee-Durham (1), Concord (2), Nashua (3), and Coastal (13, a new record high). The Nashua CBC gives us our only White-crowned Sparrow report; they had 1. Northernmost White-throated Sparrows reported were: Baker Valley CBC (1); Plymouth Dec.-Feb. (2) (SAG, WWF); and West Sandwich Jan. 4-8 (1,BSR). Few Fox Sparrows were seen. All of them (6, a new record high) were tallied by the Peterborough CBC. All reports for Swamp Sparrows include: Lee-Durham CBC (1), Hanover-Norwich CBC (1, a second record), and Coastal CBC (17). Six Song Sparrows on the Hanover-Norwich CBC and 1 which wintered in Plymouth (SAG,

WWF) were the most northerly reports for this species. The Haydens found one Snow Bunting for the Concord CBC. The Hanover-Norwich CBC had 17, and the Coastal CBC 68. About 40

40 were sighted in Gilford Jan. 28 by William Rennie. And the 90, in Derry for a week or two after Feb. 11 (RAQ), were originally seen perched in a tree!

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