

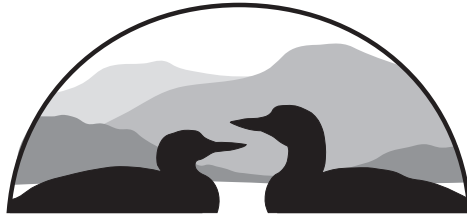
# **New Hampshire Bird Records**



**Winter 2003-04**

**Vol. 22, No. 4**

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# **New Hampshire Bird Records**

## **Volume 22, Number 4**

### **Winter 2003-04**

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**Cover Photo:** Hoary Redpoll by James Smith, 12-21-03, Keene, NH.

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## Announcement — Change in the Photo Quiz

You will notice that there is no new photo quiz in this issue. That does not mean the feature has disappeared – far from it. Beginning with the next issue, the answer to the photo quiz will appear in the **same** issue that the photo appears. You will no longer have to wait for the next issue to get the answer! The quiz photo will be in the beginning of the issue, so you can look at it first, puzzle over the identification, and then turn to the end of the issue for the answer. Separating the photo from the answer is a traditional learning tool to force readers to research the identification (as well as encourage readers to continue subscribing) but many of us get impatient waiting for the next issue to arrive and would like to get the answer right away. After much discussion, we decided to break with tradition and provide the answer in the same issue. We're sure our readers will still learn from the quiz and we trust you'll continue to subscribe. Let us know how you like it. —*Ed.*

by Rebecca Suomala

## Welcome Stephen Hale

In this issue we welcome Stephen Hale as a regular author for the feature, Research and Volunteer Opportunities. His first article appears on page 52. Steve works as a Research Scientist in the Complex Systems Research Center at the University of New Hampshire (UNH). He also teaches a variety of courses at UNH in the areas of ecology, anatomy, and environmental education. For the last five years he has taught the Bird Ecology and Migration course at the College for Lifelong Learning. After receiving his Master's Degree studying morphology and evolution of birds at Louisiana State University, he earned his doctorate at UNH in 2001, researching methods to map bird distribution and abundance using satellite imagery and geographic information systems (GIS). Steve has lived in the Seacoast area for 10 years and currently resides in Barrington. He will be sharing his *New Hampshire Bird Records* writing responsibilities with Susan Story Galt, the other regular author of this feature.

## Thank You, Peg Lopata

We are sorry to bid good-bye to Art Editor, Peg Lopata. Peg was the first person in this new volunteer position and did a wonderful job gathering art and photos for each issue and helping to improve the look of the publication. She also helped organize the art and photo resources in the computer and struggled through the trials that accompany a new position. We are very grateful for all her hard work and patience. Now that we've figured out the best way to structure the position, we're ready for a new volunteer to fill Peg's shoes. If you are interested, please contact me for the details of this position.

## We are looking for volunteers to fill these positions:



**Art Editor**  
**Photo Editor**  
**Promotion Manager**  
**Office Assistant**

Contact me if you're interested. It's a great way to be part of a terrific publication.

## December 1, 2003 through February 29, 2004

by David Deifik, Winter Editor

**W**inter birding often challenges the stamina of the bird observer and the winter of 2003-2004 was no exception, particularly after the New Year's holiday. December was slightly warmer than average, but almost twice as wet. We were blessed with heavy doses of rain and snow during the month. The rest of the season was extraordinarily dry, particularly in January. We might be able to blame the bitter cold of the month for that with January temperatures six degrees below normal. The temperatures bounced back a bit for February, actually being slightly above normal. From the vast improvement in the number of reports over last year, it appears that the birding community was able to put forth a good effort in the field this season. The regular season reports totaled about 130 species compared to 80 last year. This is again more in line with a typical winter.

A **Slaty-backed Gull** discovered in Rochester was the outstanding bird of the season. The record is currently under New Hampshire Rare Bird Committee review. If accepted it would not only be a first record of this western Pacific gull for New Hampshire, but it would be the first record for all of New England. It even had the good grace to stay long enough to be recorded on the Lee-Durham Christmas Bird Count. The **Sandhill Crane** in Monroe was an even rarer event than its summer appearance at that locale. A **Variied Thrush** spent most of the winter visiting a feeder in Newbury. This was our first visit from this western wanderer in three years. **Bohemian Waxwings** staged a mid-winter invasion of near biblical proportions.

The state's second **Spotted Towhee** was discovered during the Concord Christmas Bird Count and stayed through the rest of the season, to the delight of the many birders who sought it out. Two records for **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** were truly remarkable. An amazingly hardy **Baltimore Oriole** made an extended visit to Groveton, way up in the north

country. This was the first winter report anywhere in the state for the last seven years. Common Redpolls staged an invasion this winter, bringing with them a virtually unprecedented number of reports of the normally ultra-rare **Hoary Redpoll**.

The summaries and listings below do not include Christmas Bird Count (CBC) sightings, except for the New Hampshire portion of the Saxton's River CBC in Vermont. A summary of the CBC and table of sightings can be found beginning on page 26.



*Bohemian Waxwings by Tony Brown, 3-1-04, Hancock, NH.*

# Waterfowl

**W**inter season Snow Geese are generally scarce. Therefore several reports during December to early January from Rochester and a report of a single bird from Brookfield in the Lakes Region were notable. Brant are also usually quite scarce in the winter season. This season there was a single report from North Hampton. This marks the third year in a row Brant has been reported. Interestingly, there was only a single winter record in the 10 years prior to 2001–2002.

Two inland Wood Duck reports were notable. Three records for Northern Pintail just inland from the coast, were somewhat fewer than for recent seasons. Despite a relatively mild December, inland diving duck reports were scarce compared to some of the large flocks found in the winters of 2000 and 2001. There was only a solitary inland Barrow's Goldeneye, reported from both Tilton and Franklin. Very rare away from the coast, an immature male **King Eider** was photographed at the Rochester wastewater treatment plant in early December. Virtually all Ruddy Duck reports for the winter season occur in December. A late February record from the coast at Rye was the first for that time frame in at least 15 years.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Snow Goose</b>				
12-01	8	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
12-15	1	Brookfield	Wentworth Rd.	J. LaBelle
01-06	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	B. Griffith
<b>Brant</b>				
02-26	9	N. Hampton	shore n. of Fox Hill Point	L., P.& M. Sunderland



*Mute Swans by Michael Harvey, 1-31-04, Portsmouth, NH.*

## **Mute Swan**

01-07	31	Durham	Little Bay off Adams Pt.	P. Hendrickx, C. Fisher
01-31	30	Portsmouth	Pray St.	M. Harvey

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Wood Duck</b>				
12-14	1	Plainfield	River Rd.	S. Sturup
02-29	1	Nashua	Nashua River at millyard	R. Andrews
<b>American Wigeon</b>				
01-11	2	New Castle	shore	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
<b>American Black Duck</b>				
12-06	1		Newfound Lake	J. Williams
12-06	12	Ashland	Squam River	J. Williams
12-20	17		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
01-11	3	Tilton	Rt. 140 bridge	J. Williams
02-17	4	Laconia	Appleton Street docks	H. Anderson
<b>Northern Pintail</b>				
12-01	3	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
01-11	1	Rye	s. of Rye Harbor	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
02-08	2	Newmarket	town landing	M. Harvey
<b>Green-winged Teal</b>				
12-02	40	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
02-10	1	Newmarket	Lamprey River	S. Mirick
02-16	1	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
<b>Ring-necked Duck</b>				
12-09	4	Windham	Cobbetts Pond	M. Harvey
12-14	1		Newfound Lake	J. Williams
<b>Greater Scaup</b>				
12-01	2	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
12-06	1	Ashland	Squam River	J. Williams
01-26	1	Tilton	Silver Lake	J. Williams
02-01	1	Northfield	Winnepesaukee R. near downtown Tilton	P. Hunt
02-17	400	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
02-22	1	Laconia	Winnepesaukee River	H. Anderson
02-28	3	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	R. & M. Suomala
<b>Lesser Scaup</b>				
12-01	35	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
12-09	4	Windham	Cobbetts Pond	M. Harvey
02-14	1	Rye	Rye Harbor	M. Harvey
02-29	1	Manchester	Moores Crossing	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
<b>King Eider</b>				
12-02	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
<b>Surf Scoter</b>				
12-26	2	Hampton	Hampton Beach	A. & G. Prazar
01-06	12	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	B. Griffith
01-06	30	Rye	Rye Harbor St. Pk.	B. Griffith
02-14	3	Rye	Odiore Point	J. Williams, B. Taffe
<b>White-winged Scoter</b>				
12-22	4	Laconia	Lake Winnisquam, off Wildwood Beach	H. Anderson
12-26	1	Hampton	waterway under Hampton-Seabrook Bridge	A. & G. Prazar
01-06	3	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	B. Griffith
01-06	3	Rye	Concord Pt.	B. Griffith

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Black Scoter</b>				
12-26	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach	A.& G. Prazar
02-28	2	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	R.& M. Suomala
02-29	24	Hampton	coast	M. Harvey
<b>Long-tailed Duck</b>				
12-26	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach	A.& G. Prazar
01-03	2	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson
01-06	5	Rye	Rye Harbor St. Pk.	B. Griffith
02-14	3	Rye	Odiorne Point	J. Williams, B. Taffe
02-29	52		NH coast	M. Harvey
<b>Bufflehead</b>				
12-06	3	Ashland	Squam River	J. Williams
02-01	2	Tilton	Lochmere, above Silver Lake Dam	H. Anderson
<b>Common Goldeneye</b>				
12-06	12		Newfound Lake	J. Williams
12-06	10	Holderness	Squam Lake outlet	J. Williams
12-13	6	Windham	Canobie Lake	K. Folsom
12-14	10	Lebanon	Connecticut R., behind BJ's	S. Sturup
12-20	34		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-26	30		NH coast	A.& G. Prazar
12-28	46	Sanbornton	town beach on Lake Winnisquam	J. Williams
01-06	7	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	B. Griffith
01-06	6	Rye	Concord Pt.	B. Griffith
01-26	49	Tilton	Rt. 140 bridge	J. Williams
01-26	80	Laconia	Lakeport, Opechee Bay	J. Williams
02-01	62	Northfield	Winnepesaukee R. at Rt. 140	P. Hunt
02-01	25	Lebanon	Connecticut R.	S. Sturup
02-14	16	Rye	Odiorne Point	J. Williams, B. Taffe
02-17	200	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
<b>Barrow's Goldeneye</b>				
12-14	1	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
01-11	1	Franklin	Merrimack R., River St.	J. Williams
01-26	1	Tilton	Rt. 140 bridge	J. Williams
01-31	1	Rye	Ragged Neck	M. Harvey
02-01	1	Rye	Odiorne Pt. St. Pk.	E. Masterson
02-16	1	Hampton	North Beach	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
02-28	1	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	R.& M. Suomala
<b>Hooded Merganser</b>				
12-06	2	Holderness	Squam Lake outlet	J. Williams
12-06	2		Newfound Lake	J. Williams
12-20	11		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-31	2	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
01-11	2	Tilton	Rt. 140 bridge	J. Williams
01-31	14	Tilton	Silver Lake	J. Williams
02-01	54	Lebanon	Connecticut R.	S. Sturup
02-16	12	Tilton	lower Lake Winnisquam	P. Hunt
02-16	8	Laconia	Opechee Bay	P. Hunt
02-24	4	Newmarket	town landing	M. Harvey
02-29	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	M. Harvey



<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Common Merganser</b>				
12-06	1		Newfound Lake	J. Williams
12-06	2	Holderness	Squam Lake outlet	J. Williams
12-20	45		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
01-11	3	Tilton	Rt. 140 bridge	J. Williams
01-26	4	Tilton	Silver Lake	J. Williams
01-31	74	Laconia	Lakeport, Opechee Bay	J. Williams
02-01	30	Lebanon	Connecticut R.	S. Sturup
02-16	54	Laconia	Opechee Bay	P. Hunt
02-28	37	Laconia	below Lakeport Dam	H. Anderson
<b>Ruddy Duck</b>				
02-28	1	Rye	n. of Pulpit Rocks	R. Frechette, S. Spangenberg
<b>Ring-necked Pheasant</b>				
02-19	1	Stratham	s. of Rt. 108 & Swampscott Rd. jct.	G. Gavutis III
02-23	2	Walpole	County Rd.	R. Ritz
<b>Wild Turkey</b>				
12-02	23	Columbia	residence	D.& B. Killam
12-05	30	Newbury	Newbury traffic circle	P. Newbern
12-20	90		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-22	23	Epping	Rt. 128, w. side	P. Hendrickx
01-12	3	Brookline	residence	M. Anne
01-28	9	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow Rd.	M. Wright
02-01	11	Belmont	Jamestown Rd.	H. Anderson
02-01	40	Lancaster	North Rd.	M. Harvey
02-20	30	Newbury	Newbury traffic circle	P. Newbern
02-29	19	Alton	Halls Hill Rd.	K.& B. Palfy
<b>Red-throated Loon</b>				
02-29	3	Hampton	Odiorne Pt. St. Pk.	M. Harvey
<b>Common Loon</b>				
12-06	1		Newfound Lake	J. Williams
12-08	1	Windham	Cobbetts Pond	M. Harvey
12-14	2		Newfound Lake	J. Williams
12-26	12		NH coast	A.& G. Prazar
12-28	3	Sanbornton	Lake Winnisquam	J. Williams
02-14	5	Rye	Odiorne Point	J. Williams, B. Taffe
02-29	75		NH coast	M. Harvey
<b>Horned Grebe</b>				
12-06	1		Newfound Lake	J. Williams
12-26	2	Rye	Seal Rock	A. Prazar
12-28	1	Laconia	Lake Winnisquam from Sanbornton town beach	J. Williams
01-06	1	Rye	Concord Pt.	B. Griffith
02-29	20		NH coast	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
<b>Red-necked Grebe</b>				
12-26	1	N. Hampton	old Rt. 1A at Rt. 101 jct.	G. Prazar
01-06	2	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	B. Griffith
02-29	10		NH coast	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon

# Cormorants through Raptors

**M**ost Double-crested Cormorants leave the state by the beginning of the winter season. Typically there are a few winter records each year, mostly coastal in December. The January record from Portsmouth was a bit later than usual. There were several early returning Turkey Vultures reported, but also one possible wintering bird in East Kingston, with records in early December and Mid-February. This was a good winter for the normally scarce Rough-legged Hawk, with at least one bird spending most of the winter on the Seacoast. There was but a single **Golden Eagle** record for the season, likely a late migrant.

Audubon Society of New Hampshire (ASNH) coordinated this year's 24th annual mid-winter Bald Eagle survey on January 10. A record high total of 35 Bald Eagles was tallied. The Merrimack River Valley led with 13 eagles, followed by the Lakes Region with nine eagles. Six eagles were seen on the Connecticut River below the Wilder Dam (those seen north of the dam are credited to Vermont). There were five on Great Bay and two eagles seen on the Androscoggin River. In all, 43 eagles were seen during the two-week count period surrounding January 10. The count period record of 50 eagles was set in 2002.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Double-crested Cormorant</b>				
12-14	1	Portsmouth	Portsmouth Harbor	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
01-06	1	Portsmouth	Pierce Is.	B. Griffith
<b>Great Cormorant</b>				
02-08	1	Tilton	Lower Lake Winnisquam	P. Hunt, M.& L. Krenitsky
02-14	17	Rye	Odiorne Point	J. Williams, B. Taffe
02-16	11	Manchester	Merrimack R.	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
02-16	1	Laconia	Opechee Bay	P. Hunt
02-29	47		NH coast	M. Harvey
<b>Great Blue Heron</b>				
12-20	1		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-26	1	Exeter	Exeter R., Swasey Pkwy.	G. Prazar
02-29	1	Hampstead	along Rt. 111	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
<b>Turkey Vulture</b>				
12-03	1	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch
02-12	2	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch
02-20	13	Nashua	landfill	E. Masterson
02-24	2	Londonderry	by Exit 4, Rt. 93	P. Newbern
02-25	4	Hampton	over Rt. 95	J. Romano
02-29	1	Durham	Cedar Pt.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
02-29	1	Nashua	Nashua River at millyard	R. Andrews
<b>Bald Eagle</b>				
12-01	1	Lyman	Dodge Rd.	L. Kraft, M. Proctor
12-08	1	Monroe	town center	S.& M. Turner
12-08	1	Laconia	Lakeport Square	H. Anderson
12-14	1	Plainfield	River Rd.	S. Sturup

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
12-14	1	Lebanon	Wilder Dam	S. Sturup
12-20	2	Manchester	Lake Massabesic	I. MacLeod, B. Quinn
01-03	1	New Hampton	Pemigewasset R., Rt. 104 bridge	B. Barret
01-04	1	Hebron	Newfound Lake	B. Barret
01-15	1	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch
01-20	2	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	M. Harvey
01-28	1	Northfield	end of Granite St.	P. Hunt
01-31	1	Tilton	Silver Lake	J. Williams
02-08	1	Tilton	Winnepesaukee R. at Rt. 140	P. Hunt, M.& L. Krenitsky
02-08	1	Belmont	lower Lake Winnisquam	P. Hunt, M.& L. Krenitsky
02-12	1	Nashua	Rt. 111 bridge over Merrimack R.	M. Harvey
02-14	1	Rye	Rye Harbor	M. Harvey
02-23	1	Westmoreland	River Rd., Connecticut R.	C. Jacobs, R. Ritz
02-28	2	Lebanon	Wilder Dam	S. Sturup
02-29	1	Laconia	Dixon Point - Martel's Bait Shop	H. Anderson
02-29	2	Manchester	Moore's Crossing	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon

### **Northern Harrier**

01-20	1	Seabrook	Cross Beach Rd.	M. Harvey
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### **Northern Goshawk**

12-07	1	Lyman	Hurd Hill Rd.	S.& M. Turner
01-08	1	Tamworth	Tall Pines Rd. residence	C.& J. Tewksbury
02-29	1	Salem	Rt. 28 strip	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon

### **Red-shouldered Hawk**

01-12	1	Durham	Mill Road shopping plaza	S. Mirick
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*Rough-legged Hawk by Stephen R. Mirick, 2-1-04, Rye Harbor, NH.*

### **Rough-legged Hawk**

12-11	1	Rye	marshes near wooden bridge	S. Mirick
01-10	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	G. Dennis
01-24	1	Hampton	Meadow Pond	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, P. Lacourse, D. Abbott
01-31	1	Rye	Rye Harbor	M. Harvey
02-14	1	Seabrook	Rt. 286 over wastewater treatment plant	M. Harvey
02-22	1	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch

### **Golden Eagle**

12-09	1	Raymond	Blueberry Hill Rd. near Exeter R.	C. Moreno
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<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>American Kestrel</b>				
12-20	1		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
01-15	1	Brentwood	Rockingham County Complex, Cooperative Ext. Bldg.	M. Tarr
01-20	1	Dover	Bellamy WMA	G. Gavutis
<b>Merlin</b>				
12-20	1	Manchester	Derryfield Country Club	I. MacLeod, B. Quinn
01-27	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	I. MacLeod
02-29	1	Concord	White Park	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>				
12-05	1	Monroe	Rt. 135	P. Powers
12-20	1	Manchester	Hampshire Plaza	I. MacLeod, B. Quinn
02-07	1	Portsmouth	Memorial Bridge	S. Mirick, Newburyport Birders FT
02-28	1	Concord	State House	I. MacLeod

## Cranes through Alcids

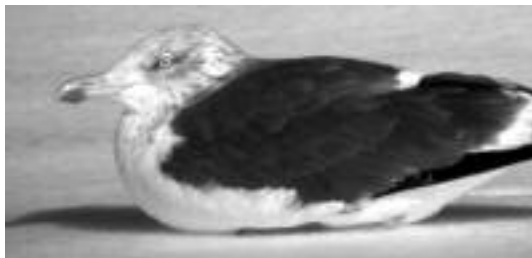
**Sandhill Crane** is normally very rare in the state but an individual has been seen every summer in Monroe since 1999. This individual was seen in early December, a virtually unprecedented sighting for the winter season. Killdeer are rare in the winter season, so an individual flushed by a passing Red-tailed Hawk from a marsh in Rye was quite a surprise. Bonaparte's Gull was unusually scarce with but one report from the Seacoast.

An impressive maximum of 13 Iceland Gulls was reported in early February from the Rochester area. Until about five years ago, Lesser Black-backed Gull was of very rare occurrence in New Hampshire. This season they were again reported from several seacoast towns with about five birds spending a good part of the winter. Although not a true species, the **Nelson's Gull** is an attractive hybrid of the Herring and Glaucous Gull. One of these forms was observed and photographed in Rochester this season. The record is presently under review by the New Hampshire Rare Bird Committee. There was a relative dearth of alcid reports from the coast with only a few each of the three most common species: Black Guillemot, Razorbill, and Thick-billed Murre.



*Thick-billed Murre, 2-14-04, N. Hampton, NH, by Glen Tepke, [www.pbase.com/gtepke](http://www.pbase.com/gtepke)*

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Sandhill Crane</b>				
12-06	1	Monroe	Plains Rd.	E. Emery, P. Powers
<b>Killdeer</b>				
01-11	1	Rye	marsh s. of Odiorne Pt.	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
<b>Sanderling</b>				
12-31	15	N. Hampton	N. Hampton State Beach	B. Griffith
02-14	25	Rye	Jenness Beach	M. Harvey
<b>Purple Sandpiper</b>				
01-31	30	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	M. Harvey
02-10	5	Rye	Pulpit Rocks area	J. Romano
02-14	1	Rye	Odiorne Point	J. Williams, B. Taffe
02-28	2	Rye	Rye Ledge	R. & M. Suomala
02-28	3	Rye	Seal Rocks	R. & M. Suomala
02-28	2	N. Hampton	just n. of Little Boars Head	R. & M. Suomala
02-29	10	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
<b>Dunlin</b>				
01-24	20	Hampton	Hampton Harbor jetty	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, P. Lacourse, D. Abbott
02-29	20	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
<b>Bonaparte's Gull</b>				
12-26	3		NH coast	A. & G. Prazar
<b>Iceland Gull</b>				
12-01	7	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
12-06	1	Rye	Rye Harbor	M. Harvey
12-28	1	Windham	Cobbetts Pond	M. Harvey
12-31	1	Seabrook	Seabrook Harbor	B. Griffith
02-01	1	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
02-03	13	Rochester	Rochester area	S. Mirick
02-14	2	Seabrook	Seabrook Harbor	M. Harvey
02-14	1	Rye	Rye Ledge	M. Harvey
02-16	1	Hampton	North Beach	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
02-16	1	Hampton	Hampton Harbor	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
02-16	1	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
02-22	4		NH coast	S. Mirick
02-28	1	Tilton	Winnepesaukee R.	D. Johnson
02-29	1	Seabrook	Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon



*Lesser Black-backed Gull*  
by Michael Harvey,  
2-8-04, Newmarket, NH.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Lesser Black-backed Gull</b>				
12-10	1	Dover	Willand Pond	S. Mirick
12-10	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
12-22	1	Newmarket	off Bay Road	S. Mirick
12-31	2	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
01-11	1	Portsmouth	Portsmouth Fish Pier	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
02-03	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
02-24	1	Newmarket	Lamprey River	S. Mirick
<b>Glaucous Gull</b>				
12-10	2	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
01-06	1	Seabrook	Seabrook Harbor	B. Griffith
01-20	3	Rochester	wastewater Treatment Plant	M. Harvey
02-03	2	Rochester	Rochester area	S. Mirick
<b>Black-legged Kittiwake</b>				
12-06	2	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	M. Harvey
12-14	2	Rye	Odiorne Point St. Pk.	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
01-03	2	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson
01-24	2	Rye	Ragged Neck	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse, J. Lawrence, D. Abbott
<b>Thick-billed Murre</b>				
02-11	1	N. Hampton	at Rye town line	S. Mirick
02-29	1	Rye	off Concord Pt.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
<b>Razorbill</b>				
01-06	1	Rye	Rye Harbor St. Pk.	B. Griffith
01-24	1	Rye	Odiorne Point	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse, J. Lawrence, D. Abbott
02-07	1	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, et al.
<b>Black Guillemot</b>				
02-07	4		NH coast	S. Mirick
02-29	2	Rye	Odiorne Pt. St. Pk.	M. Harvey
02-29	1	Rye	off Concord Pt.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon

## Owls through Horned Lark

We received three winter reports of the relatively scarce **Eastern Screech-Owl**. Unfortunately two of those birds were found deceased. Inland records of Snowy Owl, especially north of the Lakes Region, are rare; one photographed virtually in the shadows of Mt. Chocorua was therefore quite notable. Red-bellied Woodpeckers continue their presence in the state with no less than 14 records this winter. This is a phenomenon of only about the last 10 years. After a few years of sparse reports Northern Shrike records were seen in numbers again this winter. Only the winters of 1999 and 2000 had more within the last 10 years. Only the few hardy souls venturing to the higher elevations of the White Mountains were rewarded with Gray Jay this winter. A small group of Fish Crows spent most of late winter in the shopping district of Salem.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Eastern Screech-Owl</b>				
12-30	1	Northwood	Rt. 4 near Coe-Brown Academy	I. MacLeod
01-01	1	Hampstead		A. Maley
01-24	2	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis
<b>Great Horned Owl</b>				
02-07	1	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence	G. Gavutis Jr.
02-10	1	Newmarket	Bay Rd.	H. Chary
02-29	3	Durham	Adams Pt.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
<b>Snowy Owl</b>				
12-30	1	Madison	Boulder Hill, 5 mi. ese. of Mt. Chocorua	G. Clark
02-20	1	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick, B. Atherton
<b>Short-eared Owl</b>				
01-06	1	Rye	Rye Harbor St. Pk.	B. Griffith
02-22	1	Rye	Harbor Road	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
<b>Northern Saw-whet Owl</b>				
12-13	1	E. Kingston	Monahan Corner, Rts. 107 & 108	D. Finch
01-24	1	Exeter	off Drinkwater Road	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, P. Lacourse, D. Abbott
02-03	1	Plainfield	Hell Hollow Rd. residence	L. Zeltman
<b>Red-bellied Woodpecker</b>				
12-04	1	Plainfield	residence	R. Mogielnicki
12-07	1	Hudson	Old Derry Rd.	M. Wright
12-18	1	Milford	Federal Hill Rd.	R. & B. Becker
12-22	1	Windham	residence	J. Romano
01-01	1	Newmarket	Bay Rd.	H. Chary
01-01	1	Plymouth	Cummings St.	J. Williams
01-02	1	Exeter	residence	M. Prazar
01-14	1	Brookline	residence	M. Anne
01-24	1	Newmarket	New Road	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, P. Lacourse, D. Abbott
01-29	1	Salem	town forest	M. Harvey
02-05	1	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch
02-08	1	Stratham	s. of Rt. 108 & Swampscott Rd. jct.	G. Gavutis III
02-10	1	Nashua	Clovercrest Dr. residence	B. Harris
02-18	1	Portsmouth	Jones Ave. nursing home	A. Handren
<b>Yellow-bellied Sapsucker</b>				
01-21	1	Portsmouth	off South Street	S. Mirick
<b>Black-backed Woodpecker</b>				
02-29	2	Beans Grant	Crawford Path & Mizpah Cutoff jct.	D. Govatski, C. Bretton
<b>Northern Shrike</b>				
12-01	1	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis
12-02	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
12-04	1	Plainfield	Black Hill Rd.	R. Mogielnicki
12-05	1	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
12-06	1	Hancock	Antrim Rd.	E. Masterson
12-10	1	Kensington	s. of Winkley Brook	G. Gavutis
12-12	1	Auburn	Massabesic Audubon Center	I. MacLeod

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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### Northern Shrike—continued

12-14	1	Rye	Odiorne Pt. St. Pk.	M. Harvey
12-14	1	Rye	Rye Ledge	M. Harvey
12-18	1	Pittsburg	First Connecticut Lake, Rt. 3	S. Stoddard, D. Govatski
12-31	1	Rye	Rye Ledge	B. Griffith
01-09	1	Concord	Audubon House, Silk Farm WS	K. Palfy
01-11	1	Rye	Straw Point	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
01-17	1	Plymouth	Pine Gate Rd.	J. Williams
01-17	1	Hanover	Blueberry Hill residence	K. Kluge, T. Rosenmeier
02-07	2	Rye	coast	S. Mirick, et al.
02-14	1	Windham	Castle Hill Rd.	M. Harvey
02-19	1	Lebanon	Reservoir Rd.	S. Sturup
02-20	1	Hillsborough	Windsor Rd.	I. MacLeod

### Gray Jay

12-10	2	Beans Purchase	Mizpah Hut	D. Govatski
01-10	1	Sargents Purchase	Davis Path, Mt. Isolation	J. Stockwell
02-13	1	Livermore	n. slope of Mt. Tecumseh	D. Johnson, G. Cushing
02-21	6	Beans Grant	Mizpah Cutoff trail	D. Govatski
02-28	1	Bethlehem	AMC Zealand Hut	D. Govatski

### Fish Crow

02-20	10	Salem	Veterans Memorial Pkwy.	M. Harvey
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### Horned Lark

12-20	93		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-31	3	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	B. Griffith
01-20	22	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	M. Harvey
01-31	89	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	M. Harvey

## Chickadees through Waxwings

As with the Gray Jay, it required some dedicated winter hiking in the White Mountains to find any Boreal Chickadees this season. Carolina Wren records were somewhat off from their abundance of last winter, producing but half the records of 2002–2003. A lovely and cooperative **Varied Thrush** graced a bird feeder in Newbury throughout the winter. Through the kind hospitality of the homeowners many birders (more than 85 signed the visitor log) were able to view this stunning visitor from the west. This species normally nests no closer than northwestern Montana and winters to southern California and Arizona. One would therefore expect this to be a purely accidental sighting, but it is more of a rare but regular occurrence. Our last New Hampshire record was three years ago.

*Bohemian Waxwing by Tony Brown,  
3-2-04, Hancock, NH.*





Brown Thrashers become rare in the state after early October. Our one record is typical for this season. A similarly hardy American Pipit was seen on the coast during the January freeze.

One of the most outstanding events of the season was the invasion of **Bohemian Waxwings**. This is an irruptive species that will normally produce from zero to fewer than five winter records in a given season, though the winters of 1995, 1997, and 1999 moderately exceeded that. One has to go back to the winter of 1993–1994 to see a substantial incursion of Bohemians. Interestingly, this was also the last season to produce a large incursion of Common Redpolls. At that time there were 25 records involving approximately 4,000 individuals. This season, 50 records of over 6,000 individuals were documented. One flock seen in Hanover was estimated to contain 1,600 birds! The timing of this invasion was quite interesting. Usually Bohemians will start their incursions in the late fall producing good numbers of Christmas Bird Count records. This season, they were virtually absent during the CBC period with only three individuals noted in the whole state. They remained absent for most of January. On January 21 the situation started to change as the first of the many records was reported.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Boreal Chickadee</b>				
12-20	3	Franconia	Owls Head summit	J. Stockwell
12-28	2	Sargents Purchase	Boot Spur Trail, 4000'	J. Stockwell
01-01	3	Woodstock	Mt. Jim summit	J. Stockwell
01-10	3	Sargents Purchase	Isolation Trail near shelter	J. Stockwell
01-31	2	Beans Purchase	Wildcat ridge between A and D.	J. Stockwell
02-01	3	Waterville Valley	Tripyramid between N. & S. Peaks	J. Stockwell
02-22	2	Berlin	Mt. Weeks	J. Stockwell
02-27	3	Beans Purchase	South Carter	J. Stockwell
02-27	1	Beans Purchase	Middle Carter	J. Stockwell
02-28	1	Bethlehem	North Twin	J. Stockwell
<b>Carolina Wren</b>				
12-22	1	Windham	residence	J. Romano
12-27	2	Hopkinton	residence	T. & B. Richards
01-30	1	Salem	residence	K. Folsom
01-31	1	Nashua	Hills Ferry Rd. residence	J. Allard
01-31	1	Bristol	residence	W. Barret
02-06	2	Exeter	High St. residence	L. Ring
02-14	1	Nashua	Clovercrest Dr.	B. Harris
02-22	1	Northfield	Park St.	P. Hunt
02-29	1	Concord	Portsmouth St.	R. & M. Suomala
<b>Winter Wren</b>				
12-02	1	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis
01-03	1	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis
01-09	1	Chester	residence	B. Folsom
<b>Eastern Bluebird</b>				
12-10	5	Kensington	sw. of Muddy Pond	G. Gavutis
01-13	2	Rye	Clark Rd.	V. White
01-20	20	Dover	Bellamy WMA	G. Gavutis
01-24	3	Newmarket	Moody Point	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse, J. Lawrence, D. Abbott
01-26	3	Rye	West Rd.	B. & H. Blanchard

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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**Eastern Bluebird—continued**

02-05	5	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence	G. Gavutis Jr.
02-28	2	Auburn	Massabesic Audubon Center	I. MacLeod
02-28	1	Newmarket	Hamel Farm Dr.	P. Hendrickx

**Hermit Thrush**

12-10	3	Kensington	just s. of Muddy Pond	G. Gavutis
01-07	1	Auburn	Massabesic Audubon Center	J. Nelson, K. Acerno, et al.
01-08	1	Auburn	Massabesic Audubon Center	J. Doherty, D. Turcotte

**American Robin**

12-10	100	Kensington	s. of Muddy Pond & Winkley Brook	G. Gavutis
01-04	100	Merrimack	Pearson Rd.	D. Hergert
01-07	470	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
01-12	250	Kensington	Rt. 108 near E. Kingston line	G. Gavutis
01-20	60	Dover	Bellamy WMA	G. Gavutis
01-24	75	Manchester	Derryfield Court	C. Sherwood
01-24	40	Exeter	Saltonstall Medical Bldg., Buzell Ave.	G. Prazar
01-27	800	Dover	downtown Dover	S. Mirick
01-31	45	Nashua	Hills Ferry Rd. & Manchester St.	J. Allard
02-06	75	Laconia	Wildwood Rd.	H. Anderson
02-13	75	Belmont	Wildwood Rd.	H. Anderson
02-29	50	Concord	Old Loudon Rd.	R. & M. Suomala

**Varied Thrush**

12-04	1	Newbury	Richards Rd.	K. & J. Mock
12-13	1	Newbury	Richards Rd.	T. Keene
12-18	1	Newbury		I. MacLeod, et al.

**Brown Thrasher**

02-14	1	Loudon	Hemlock Hill Dr.	B. Sullivan
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*American Pipit by Stephen R. Mirick, 1-11-04, Great Boars Head, Hampton, NH.*

**American Pipit**

01-11	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
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**Bohemian Waxwing**

12-21	19	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
12-27	1	Durham	off Durham Point Road	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, et al.
01-21	50	Gilmanton	Old Jones Farm	J. Stockwell

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
01-21	2	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis
01-22	4	Epping	off Rt. 87	S. Mirick
01-23	40	Sandwich	Rt. 25	T. Vazzano
01-24	230	Plymouth	Beech Hill Rd. residence	J. Williams
01-25	65	Plymouth	Pine Gate Rd.	J. Williams
01-26	100	Conway	Shaw's Plaza Rd.	G. & M. McElroy
01-28	103	Laconia	Wildwood Shores Beach, Shore Dr.	H. Anderson
02-01	92	Plymouth	Plymouth State University	M. Harvey
02-01	175	Northfield	Bay Rd.	P. Hunt
02-01	19	Northfield	Park St.	P. Hunt
02-03	65	Franklin	River St.	D. Stavros, L. Bardusk
02-03	35	Holderness	US Forest Service lot	J. Williams
02-07	180	Peterborough	Old Street Rd.	D. Rowell
02-09	7	Londonderry	Mammoth Rd., high school	K. Murphy
02-10	32	Rochester	Pickering Road	S. Mirick
02-10	250	Laconia	Opechee Townhouse Condos, North Main St.	H. Anderson
02-10	400	Hanover	Dartmouth College campus	S. Sturup
02-11	240	Hillsborough	Windsor Rd.	I. MacLeod
02-11	200	Laconia	Veteran's Square, Laconia Savings Bank	H. Anderson
02-14	1600	Hanover	Rt. 10, just n. of Mink Brook	B. Shepard
02-14	85	Hanover	Smith Rd.	S. Sturup
02-15	50	Plymouth	Hatch Plaza	J. Williams
02-16	20	Colebrook	River of Life Church	D. Killam
02-17	1	Dover	Burger King parking lot	S. Mirick
02-18	140	Hampstead	town hall	D. Finch
02-18	30	Hanover	East Wheelock St.	S. Sturup
02-19	10	Hanover	Reservoir Rd.	S. Sturup
02-20	150	Moultonborough	Rt. 25, just e. of Center Harbor	P. Hunt
02-21	40	Holderness	downtown	J. Williams
02-22	200	Laconia	behind Baptist Church, Court St.	H. Anderson
02-23	33	Newbury	Fisherfield Rd.	P. Newbern
02-24	2	Dover	Prospect St.	S. Galt
02-27	30	Plymouth	Hatch Plaza	J. Williams
02-28	160	Concord	White Park	I. MacLeod
02-28	25	Dublin	w. side of Dublin Lake	T. Wright & K. VanWely
02-29	45	Concord	W. Portsmouth St.	R. & M. Suomala
02-29	80	Concord	Walmart, Loudon Rd.	M. Lee
02-29	30	Rumney	Quincy Rd.	B. Taffe
02-29	47	Chichester	Horse Corner Rd.	R. & M. Suomala

### **Cedar Waxwing**

12-03	36	Keene	behind Cheshire Medical Ct.	M. Wright
12-09	37	Laconia	Gilford Ave.	H. Anderson
12-10	15	Kensington	e. of Muddy Pond	G. Gavutis
12-14	59	Holderness	Rt. 175A	J. Williams
12-14	65	Sanbornton	Rt. 3, miniature golf course	J. Williams
12-20	923		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-31	120	Windham	Castle Hill Rd.	M. Harvey
01-01	60	Laconia	Folsom St.	H. Anderson
01-01	40	Plymouth	Cummings St.	J. Williams
01-21	60	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Cedar Waxwing—continued</b>				
01-25	25	Gilmanton	Currier Hill Rd.	J. Stockwell
01-26	15	Exeter	Saltanstill Medical Bldg.	G. Prazar
02-03	45	Belmont	Belknap Mall tree	D. Stavros, L. Bardusk
02-08	75	Northfield	end of Granite St.	P. Hunt
02-09	100	Tilton	School St.	P. Scheider
02-24	17	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch, M. Bott
02-29	30	Concord	Old Loudon Rd.	R. & M. Suomala
02-29	35	Concord	Portsmouth St.	R. & M. Suomala

## Warblers through Sparrows

**Parulids** (Wood Warblers) are never a prominent component of our winter bird life. This was particularly the case this season. There were no warbler reports of any species outside of a few Yellow-rumped Warblers during the CBCs. Although we have no Eastern Towhees to report this season, its western counterpart, the **Spotted Towhee**, was found on December 14 during the Concord CBC. It was extremely cooperative, spending the rest of the season hanging around the same residence. When found, it was apparently a first state record. Shortly after this sighting a second record came to light of a Spotted Towhee that had first been seen in November, making it the first state record! The taxonomic status of the Eastern and Spotted Towhees has been quite dynamic. They were considered subspecies of one species, the Rufous-sided Towhee, at the beginning of the twentieth century. They were later split, lumped, and finally split again as separate species in the mid-1990s.

A hardy Chipping Sparrow apparently wintered over in Northfield. They are rare during the season and can be a tricky identification given their superficial resemblance to the American Tree Sparrow, a much more abundant species at this time of year. Besides its distinctly smaller size, the Chipping Sparrow lacks the rufous cap in the winter. This is replaced by a streaked brown cap. It also lacks the central black breast spot of the Tree Sparrow. Fox Sparrow can be hardy enough to stay around during the winter. Our five records are about typical for the last 10 years. Although uncommonly seen as late as December, a **Swamp Sparrow** seen in late January must be considered truly rare. The last January record for this species was 10 years ago. **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** is a very rare winter season visitor indeed. One would have to go all the way back to the Baker Valley CBC of 1990 to find a single occurrence of this species (one of three in over 50 seasons of CBC data). The two photographically documented records found this season were unique.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Spotted Towhee</b>				
12-14	1	Concord	Garvins Falls Rd. residence	M. & R. Suomala
12-16	1	Concord	residence on Garvin Falls Rd.	S. Mirick, M. Suomala, D. Finch, D. Abbott
12-20	1	Grafton	Height of Land Rd. residence	B. Taffe, J. Williams, G. Renee

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
01-17	1	Grafton	Height of Land Rd. residence	G. Renee
02-29	1	Concord	Garvins Falls Rd.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon

### **American Tree Sparrow**

12-02	2	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis
12-05	3	Deerfield	Mountain Rd. Ext.	J.& C. Carr
12-06	2	Brookline	residence	M. Anne
12-13	2	Salem	residence	K. Folsom
12-14	11	Franklin	River St.	J. Williams
12-15	15	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow Rd.	M. Wright
12-20	169		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-21	26	Northfield	census route	P. Hunt
01-02	6	Gilmanton	Old Jones Farm	J. Stockwell
01-07	4	Rye	West Rd.	B.& H. Blanchard
01-07	9	Chichester	Smith Sanborn Rd.	R.& M. Suomala
01-10	1	Exeter	residence	G. Prazar
01-11	32	Laconia	Wildwood Rd.	H. Anderson
01-13	1	Milford	Federal Hill Rd.	B. Becker
01-22	21	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow Rd.	M. Wright
02-05	15	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence	G. Gavutis Jr.
02-12	13	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow Road	M. Wright
02-24	8	Laconia	Wildwood Rd.	H. Anderson

### **Chipping Sparrow**

12-20	1		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
01-24	1	Northfield	Sargent St.	P. Hunt

### **Field Sparrow**

01-01	1	Keene	bike path by Water St.	R.& M. Suomala
01-30	1	Salem	residence	K. Folsom

### **Savannah Sparrow**

01-24	1	Seabrook	Cross Beach Road	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, P. Lacourse, D. Abbott
01-24	3	Seabrook		I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon

### **Fox Sparrow**

12-02	1	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis
12-02	1	Newmarket	Hamel Farm Dr.	P. Hendrickx
12-12	2	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch, M. Bott
01-02	1	Peterborough	Union St.	M. Johnson
01-30	1	Jaffrey	Harling St.	B. Ellis

### **Song Sparrow**

12-14	1	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch, M. Bott
12-20	32		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-24	2	Newmarket	Hamel Farm Dr.	P. Hendrickx
01-08	1	Nashua	residence	J.& B. Ayer
02-28	1	Concord	Brochu Nursery	I. MacLeod

### **Swamp Sparrow**

01-22	1	New Castle	off Rt. 1A	S. Mirick
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<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>White-throated Sparrow</b>				
Winter	2	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch, M. Bott
Winter	4	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch, M. Bott
12-02	3	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis
12-03	2	Salem	residence	K. Folsom
12-18	1	Concord	Garvins Falls Rd.	R. & M. Suomala
12-20	12		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
01-03	1	Laconia	Wildwood Rd.	H. Anderson
01-27	2	Durham	University of NH campus	R. Suomala
01-28	2	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis
02-12	3	Nashua	Clovercrest Dr.	B. Harris
02-24	1	Laconia	Wildwood Rd.	H. Anderson
02-29	1	Concord	Portsmouth St.	R. & M. Suomala
<b>White-crowned Sparrow</b>				
12-20	1		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-22	1	Stratham	River Road	S. Mirick
<b>Dark-eyed Junco</b>				
12-02	5	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis
12-20	76		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-21	11	Northfield	census route	P. Hunt
01-01	8	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow Rd.	M. Wright
01-09	5	Exeter	residence	G. Prazar
02-05	7	Chichester	Smith Sanborn Rd.	R. & M. Suomala
02-29	11	Northfield	census route	P. Hunt
<b>Lapland Longspur</b>				
01-17	13	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
12-10	1	Jefferson	Rt. 115 llama farm	D. Govatski
02-08	2	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	M. Harvey
<b>Snow Bunting</b>				
12-05	20	Sandwich	fairgrounds	T. Vazzano
12-19	4	Holderness	Exit 25 cloverleaf	J. Williams
12-20	137		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-26	6	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	A. & G. Prazar
02-28	6	Laconia	Winnepesaukee Expo Center parking lot	H. Anderson
02-29	8	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	M. Harvey
<b>Rose-breasted Grosbeak</b>				
12-09	1	Newton	Tara Lane	P. McFarland
01-10	1	Derry	Miltimore Rd. residence	B. Horton
01-24	1	Derry	Miltimore Rd. residence	S. Mirick, D. Abbott, J. Lawrence, P. Lacourse

## Blackbirds through Finches

Though Red-winged Blackbirds start filtering into the state by late February, one bird in late January was possibly an over-wintering bird or an unusually early “spring” migrant. An adult male **Baltimore Oriole** spent about one month visiting a feeder up north in Groveton. The homeowner set up a heated feeding shelter where the oriole devoured a steady diet of mealworms, orange, cranberry, and suet. Presently this record is under Rare Bird Committee review.

The winter of 2003–2004 will be remembered as one of the great **Redpoll** invasion seasons. Common Redpoll usually occurs on a biannual irruptive cycle, but one has to go back to the winter of 1993–1994 to experience a similar invasion. This season there were almost double the number of Common Redpoll records compared to 1993 and five times the yearly average of the last 10 years. Truly exciting was the large number of reports of **Hoary Redpoll**. Though there are some controversies in the taxonomy of this species pair and difficulties with their field identification, the 15 records accepted by the Rare Birds Committee (RBC) this season exceeds prior records by a factor of three! The records were widely distributed across the state as well extending from the wilds of Errol in the far northeast to Keene in the southwest corner of the state. For more than three weeks the redpolls of Keene were most cooperative. A mixed Redpoll flock close to downtown Keene afforded many birders observations of at least four individual Hoary Redpolls, and there may have been as many as ten (additional details on the Keene Hoarys are awaiting review by the RBC).



*Hoary Redpoll by James Smith, 12-25-03, Keene, NH.*

Interestingly, abundance of other irruptive finches was not uniformly distributed across the group. Both Red and White-winged Crossbills were virtually absent. Pine Grosbeak was found in about average numbers. There were about three times as many records for Pine Siskin as one would usually expect, although they were not found in large numbers.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>				
12-29	1	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch
01-24	1	Portsmouth	Great Bog	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, P. Lacourse, D. Abbott
02-18	16	Salem	Brady Ave.	M. Harvey
02-20	1	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence	G. Gavutis Jr.
02-24	1	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch
02-29	13	Newmarket	Hamel Farm Dr.	P. Hendrickx
02-29	25	Seabrook	Walton Rd.	M. Harvey
02-29	1	Hampton	Rt. 101	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
02-29	1	Concord	East Side Dr.	D. & B. Soule
<b>Rusty Blackbird</b>				
12-12	3	Hillsborough	Windsor Rd.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson
01-17	1	Plainfield	River Rd. at McNamara's Farm	S. Sturup
<b>Common Grackle</b>				
12-31	1	Rye	Rt. 1A & Elyryn Rd.	B. Griffith
01-22	1	Portsmouth	Great Bog	S. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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**Common Grackle—continued**

02-16	1	Manchester	off Wellington Rd.	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson
02-17	2	Manchester		E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
02-18	5	Salem	Cortland Dr.	M. Harvey
02-29	48	Seabrook	Walton Rd.	M. Harvey
02-29	1	Northfield	Sargent St.	P. Hunt
02-29	1	Newmarket	Hamel Farm Dr.	P. Hendrickx
02-29	1	Salem	Rt. 28 strip	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
02-29	9	Nashua	Nashua millyard	R. Andrews
02-29	15	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch

**Brown-headed Cowbird**

12-03	4	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch, M. Bott
12-18	1	Hillsborough	Windsor Rd.	I. MacLeod
12-20	7		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
01-04	19	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch, M. Bott
01-24	3	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, P. Lacourse, D. Abbott
02-07	1	Gilmanton	Currier Hill Rd.	J. Stockwell
02-18	25	Salem	Brady Ave	M. Harvey
02-29	1	Newmarket	Hamel Farm Dr.	P. Hendrickx

**Pine Grosbeak**

12-28	1	Sargents Purchase	Boot Spur Trail, 3000'	J. Stockwell
12-29	7	Pittsburg	Back Lake Rd. wetlands	B. Griffith, M. Harvey
12-31	1	Jefferson	Airport Rd.	D. Govatski
12-31	13	Columbia	residence	D. Killam
02-26	20	Columbia	residence	D. Killam



**Purple Finch**

12-03	1	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch, M. Bott
01-05	1	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow Rd.	M. Wright
01-12	1	Hillsborough	Windsor Rd.	I. MacLeod



<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Red Crossbill</b>				
12-14	7	Bethlehem	Trudeau Road wetlands	T. Berriman, D. Govatski
<b>White-winged Crossbill</b>				
12-18	8	Pittsburg	Deer Mountain Campground	S. Stoddard, D. Govatski
12-29	3	Bethlehem	Trudeau Rd. Ranger Station	B. Griffith, M. Harvey
01-31	9	Beans Grant	Crawford Path	D. Govatski
<b>Common Redpoll</b>				
12-03	1	Hancock	Antrim Rd.	E. Masterson
12-06	1	Hudson	Old Derry Rd.	M. Wright
12-06	25	Bristol	Wulamet Rd.	J. Williams
12-06	15	Columbia	residence	D. Killam
12-09	15	Hanover	Balch St.	S. Sturup
12-10	10	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
12-12	30	Laconia	Wildwood Rd.	H. Anderson
12-12	55	Hillsborough	Windsor Rd.	I. MacLeod
12-14	40	Rye	NH coast	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence
12-14	35	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	M. Harvey
12-19	35	Whitefield	Whitefield Airport, Cinder Rd.	D. Govatski
12-20	58		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-20	50	Keene	bike path	B. Griffith
12-20	70	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow Rd.	M. Wright
12-20	25	Newbury	residence	B. Griffith
12-30	35	New London	Pingree Rd.	A.& R. Vernon
01-01	16	Plymouth	Cummings St.	J. Williams
01-02	150	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
01-02	10	Deerfield	Mountain Road Ext.	C.& J. Carr
01-02	35	Rumney	Quincy Rd.	B. Taffe
01-05	68	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
01-07	55	Gilmanton	Crystal Lake	W. Arms
01-11	14	Franklin	Ledgeview Overlook	J. Williams
01-17	35	Hanover	Blueberry Hill residence	K. Kluge, T. Rosenmeier
01-23	10	Derry	Ledgewood Dr.	M. Mensinger
01-24	25	Northfield	Spring St.	P. Hunt
01-25	30	Gilmanton	Currier Hill Rd.	J. Stockwell
01-31	40	Newbury	residence	P. Newbern
02-07	125	Barrington	Alwood Dr., Mendums Pond shore	T.& L. Chase
02-13	100	Walpole	Merriam Rd.	R. Ritz
02-18	20	Weare	Perkins Pond WMA	G. Gavutis Jr.
02-29	20	Auburn	Massabesic Audubon Center	I. MacLeod, E. Masterson, R. Woodward, D. Fallon
<b>Hoary Redpoll</b>				
12-08	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
12-20	2	Keene	bike path between Water & Main St.	B. Griffith
12-24	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
12-29	4	Keene	bike path between Water & Main St.	B. Griffith, M. Harvey, J. Smith, S. Spangenberg
12-30	3	Ossipee	Beech River Circle	M.& G. McElroy
12-31	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
01-01	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
01-01	4	Keene	bike path between Water & Main St.	B. Griffith
01-04	1	Belmont	south of Winnisquam	M. Suomala

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Hoary Redpoll—continued</b>				
01-06	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
01-09	1	Strafford	residence	P. Redmond
01-11	2	Keene	Water St. RR crossing	P. Hunt
01-11	2	Franklin	Ledgeview Overlook by Franklin Falls Dam	J. Williams
01-31	1	Newbury	residence	P. Newbern
02-03	1	Errol	Last Chance Hiway Motel, Rt. 27	M.& J. Halloran
02-06	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
02-06	1	Hanover	Birchview Terrace residence	K. Kluge, T. Rosenmeier
02-15	1	Hanover	Birchview Terrace residence	K. Kluge
02-23	3	Ossipee	Beech River Circle	M.& G. McElroy
02-25	1	Newbury	residence	P. Newbern
02-29	1	Chester	Hillside Haven	A. Delorey
<b>Pine Siskin</b>				
12-19	3	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow Rd.	M. Wright
12-31	11	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
12-31	8	Nottingham	Flutter St.	S. Mooney
01-01	40	Derry	Ledgewood Dr.	M. Mensinger
01-01	3	Hillsborough	Windsor Rd.	I. MacLeod
01-01	5	Plymouth	Cummings St.	J. Williams
01-24	2	Newmarket	Moody Point	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, P. Lacourse, D. Abbott
01-30	15	Hanover	Balch St.	S. Sturup
02-02	2	Windham	residence	J. Romano
02-04	6	Newmarket	Bay Rd.	H. Chary
02-07	60	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence	G. Gavutis Jr.
02-22	2	Northfield	Cross Mill Rd.	P. Hunt
02-28	2	Chichester	Smith Sanborn Rd.	R.& M. Suomala
02-28	2	Laconia	Wildwood Rd.	H. Anderson
02-28	4	Gilmanton	Whispering Pines Rd.	K. Palfy
<b>Evening Grosbeak</b>				
12-03	30	Lyman	Hurd Hill Rd.	S.& M. Turner
12-04	2	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch
12-20	27		Saxtons River CBC-NH sightings	
12-20	7	Grafton	residence	J. Williams, B. Taffe
01-05	10	Hillsborough	Windsor Rd.	I. MacLeod
01-13	31	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow Rd.	M. Wright
02-01	7	Newbury	residence	P. Newbern
02-22	11	Walpole	Merriam Rd.	R. Ritz

## Reporters for Winter 2003-04

Karen Acerno	Bill Harris	Judy Romano
Jayne Allard	Michael Harvey	Brenda Sens
Ralph Andrews	Phil Hendrickx	Bill Shepard
Marie Anne	Lindsay Herlihy	Christina Sherwood
Widge Arms	Barbara Horton	Dot Soule
Bill Ayer	Pam Hunt	Dawn Stavros
Jeannine Ayer	Margot Johnson	Stefan Sturup
Bertram Becker	Ted Keene	Barbara Sullivan
Helen Blanchard	David Killam	Larry Sunderland
Chris Carr	Karen Kluge	Mark Suomala
Julie Chapin	Iain MacLeod	Rebecca Suomala
Hank Chary	Eric Masterson	Bill Taffe
Tom Chase	Nancy May	Matt Tarr
Donald Clark	Megan McElroy	Jean Tewksbury
H. Cook Anderson	Paula McFarland	Sandra Turner
Alan Delorey	Michelle Mensinger	Tony Vazzano
Jane Doherty	Stephen Mirick	Bob Vernon
Brenda Ellis	Charlie Moreno	John Williams
Davis Finch	Peter Newbern	Mary Wright
Kenneth Folsom	Kathie Palfy	Scott Young
Rich Frechette	Greg Prazar	Lynn Zeltman
Susan Galt	J.R. Stockwell	
George Gavutis Jr.	Pat Redmond	Some sightings were
David Govatski	Tudor Richards	taken directly from the
Ben Griffith	Lib Ring	NH.Birds list serve.
Mark Halloran	Robert Ritz	

## Reports for the following species were received in Winter 2003-04 but not listed.

Herring Gull	Northern Flicker	Brown Creeper
Great Black-backed Gull	Pileated Woodpecker	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Rock Pigeon	Blue Jay	Northern Mockingbird
Mourning Dove	American Crow	European Starling
Barred Owl	Common Raven	Northern Cardinal
Belted Kingfisher	Black-capped Chickadee	House Finch
Downy Woodpecker	Tufted Titmouse	American Goldfinch
Hairy Woodpecker	Red-breasted Nuthatch	House Sparrow
Black-backed Woodpecker	White-breasted Nuthatch	

Sightings of the species listed above occurred in average numbers at expected locations, were discussed in the summaries, or are escaped exotics.

# Christmas Bird Count Summary 2003–2004

by David Deifik

## Statewide Highlights

This year's Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) were held between December 14, 2003, and January 5, 2004. The count period is now fixed between those dates. Twenty counts were taken within the state, though two of these were principally centered in Vermont. Sightings from the New Hampshire portion of the Saxton's River Count are found in seasonal summaries. Data from the Barnet, Vermont, count were unavailable for the New Hampshire section. The weather during the count period was much more cooperative than last season. Almost all of the counts were held under precipitation free conditions.

In terms of overall results the aggregate number of species counted was 133. This was a definite improvement over last year's 122. There were 10 species seen in their highest numbers ever compared to only two last year. Numbers of individual count highs were virtually doubled from last year as well.

The award for the outstanding bird found on a Christmas Count would have to go to the **Slaty-Backed Gull** recorded on the Lee-Durham count. The gull made its first confirmed New Hampshire appearance only a few days before the count and made its third and last appearance on count day. This was the first recorded occurrence of this gull in all of New England. This record is presently under review by the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee. The Grafton-Bristol and Concord counts share the honors for another new species for any count, each recording a Spotted Towhee. These birds were the first and second New Hampshire state records for this western counterpart of the Eastern Towhee.



*Spotted Towhee by Stephen R. Mirick, 12-17-04, Concord, NH.*

Inland waterfowl numbers were just average after a few seasons of some outstanding counts. In other highlights the Peterborough-Hancock count recorded the first Long-eared Owl in six years. Only one Peregrine Falcon was seen in the state, the first for the Nashua count. The first Atlantic Puffin on a count for 21 years was recorded on the Isles of Shoals count. Notable was the virtual absence of Winter Wren this year. The only record was a single bird seen on the Lake Sunapee

count. Compare this to the seven individuals seen last year and nine the year before. A **Varied Thrush**, an outstanding western vagrant, was recorded on the Lake Sunapee count for the first time. This is the first Christmas count record in the state in the last 23 years. Nashua, Lee-Durham, and Hanover recorded single Bohemian Waxwings. This would hardly predict the outstanding season for this species to come, starting in late January. A Lincoln's Sparrow on the Seacoast count was the first for any count in

six seasons. Finally, the four Hoary Redpolls seen on the Keene and Sandwich counts were the first of this species to be recorded *on these counts* in 26 years and a high number for the season—indeed, a tantalizing hint of the Hoary Redpoll invasion to come.

## Individual Count Highlights

### Nashua-Hollis

- New state count high: Carolina Wren
- First count record: Great Cormorant, Peregrine Falcon
- Count high: Ring-necked Duck, Wild Turkey, Bald Eagle, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Great Black-backed Gull

Besides being first for this count, the Peregrine Falcon was the sole individual reported in the state. Sharp-shinned Hawk tied the previous count high. Red-bellied Woodpecker tied the previous state high set in Nashua in 2000. Ring-necked Duck and Northern Saw-whet Owl were reported for only the second time on this count. Nashua's count was one of only three to record Bohemian Waxwing this year.

### Peterborough-Hancock

- First count record: Long-eared Owl
- Count high: Bald Eagle, Common Raven, Tufted Titmouse

The Long-eared Owl was the only individual reported on any count this year. It has not been reported on any count in six years. Red-bellied Woodpecker tied the previous count high. A single Carolina Wren provided only the third count record.

### Keene

- First count record: Hoary Redpoll
  - Count high: Wild Turkey, American Kestrel (second record), Hairy Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, American Tree Sparrow, Common Redpoll
- Hoary Redpoll tied the state record of two for an individual count.



*Hoary Redpoll by James Smith, 12-28-03, Keene, NH.*

## Seacoast

- New state count high: Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Rock Pigeon, Eastern Screech-Owl, Horned Lark, Northern Cardinal
- Count high: Mallard, Barred Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, American Goldfinch
- Second count record: Lincoln's Sparrow

The Seacoast count had an outstanding six new state highs. The Lincoln's Sparrow was the first on any count in six years. Other highlights among the 14 species exclusive to the Seacoast Count this year were Northern Pintail, a Double-crested Cormorant, Savannah Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, and Common Grackle.

## Isles-of-Shoals

- New state count high: Razorbill
- First count record: Fox Sparrow
- Second count record: Harlequin Duck (and count high), Black-capped Chickadee, Dark-eyed Junco

An Atlantic Puffin provided the first Christmas count record in 21 years. Black-legged Kittiwake was only seen on this count.

## Lee-Durham

- New state count record: **Slaty-backed Gull**
- Second count record: Snow Goose
- Count high: Wild Turkey, Cooper's Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, American Robin, European Starling, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Redpoll

Lee-Durham's count was one of only three to record a single Bohemian Waxwing and the only count to have Lesser Black-backed Gull.

## Concord

- New state count record: **Spotted Towhee** (honors shared with Grafton-Bristol)
- Count high: Wild Turkey, Rock Pigeon, White-breasted Nuthatch, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, European Starling

Two Great Horned Owls tied the previous count high. Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, as well as Northern Cardinal, were only a few shy of count highs.

## Laconia-New Hampton

- Second count record: Hoary Redpoll
- Count high: Common Raven

Great Cormorant was recorded for only the third time. Pileated Woodpecker and Cedar Waxwing were very close to previous count highs. The only Barrow's Goldeneye for any count this year was also found.

## Hanover-Norwich

- New state count high: Black-capped Chickadee, Cedar Waxwing
- Count high: Common Merganser, Bald Eagle

Four Northern Shrikes tied the previous count high. Hooded Merganser and Tufted Titmouse were almost equal to previous count highs. Common Redpoll had its second best count as well. Hanover's count was one of only three to record a single Bohemian Waxwing this year.

## Baker Valley

- Count high: Great Black-backed Gull, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, American Tree Sparrow, Common Redpoll
- Hoary Redpoll was recorded for the third time.

## Littleton

Though Littleton didn't set any new count highs, Common Raven and Red-breasted Nuthatch were seen in their second best numbers. A Cooper's Hawk was seen for only the fourth time on the count.

## Grafton-Bristol

- New state count record: **Spotted Towhee** (honors shared with Concord)
- First count record: Wild Turkey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Carolina Wren, Song Sparrow
- Count high: Mallard, Ruffed Grouse, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove

## Errol-Umbagog

Although no count highs were set, Errol tallied its second highest count of Mourning Dove. The only Gray Jay in the state this year was also found on this count.

## Pittsburg

- Count high: Common Raven
- Bald Eagle was recorded for only the third time for the count.

## North Conway

- First count record: Turkey Vulture, Bald Eagle
- Count high: Canada Goose, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Red-tailed Hawk, Hairy Woodpecker, Common Raven, Common Redpoll

Besides being a first count record, the Turkey Vulture was the only one found on any count this year.

## Lake Sunapee

- First count record: Northern Goshawk, **Varied Thrush**
- Second count record: Northern Flicker, Wood Duck
- Count high: Wild Turkey, Downy Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch.

Sunapee's Varied Thrush was the first recorded on any count in 23 years! Winter Wren was recorded for the third time. The only Winter Wren in the state this year was found on the Lake Sunapee count.

## Manchester

- First count record: Wild Turkey
- Second count record: Ring-necked Pheasant, Merlin, Barred Owl
- Count high: Cooper's Hawk, Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, American Robin, Northern Mockingbird, Cedar Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow, Snow Bunting, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow

## Sandwich

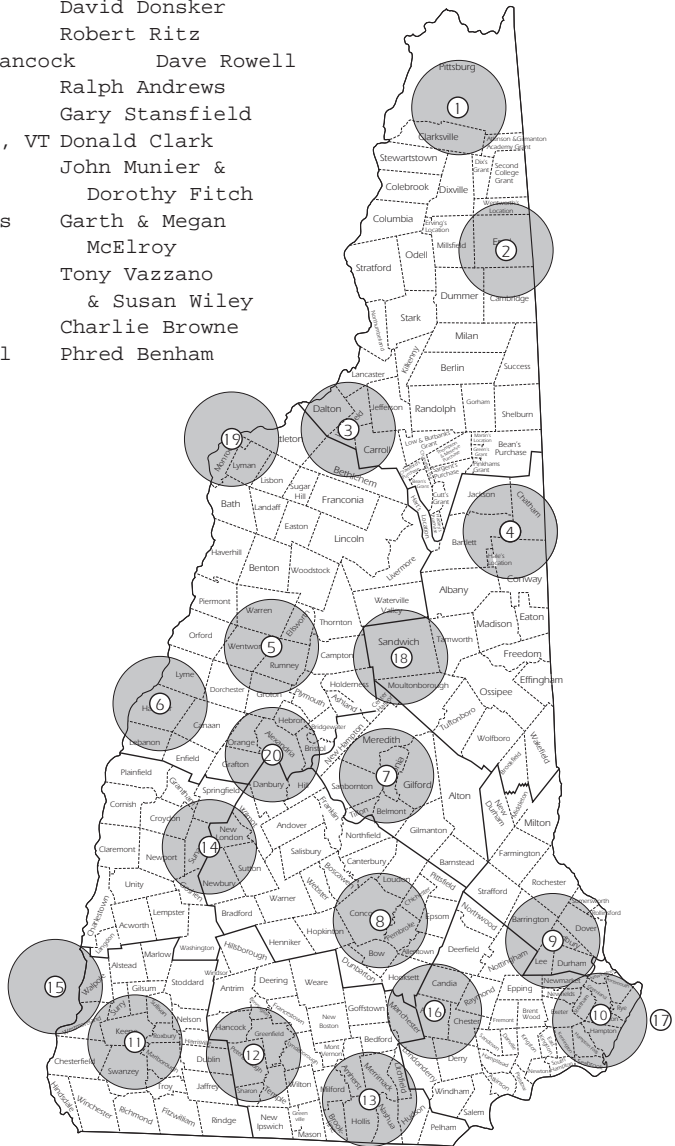
- Second count record: Hooded Merganser, Great Horned Owl
  - Count high: Common Raven, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Tree Sparrow, Common Redpoll, Hoary Redpoll (second count record)
- Red Crossbill was recorded for the third time.

**Vermont Counts:** We were unable to obtain results from the Barnet CBC, which extends into New Hampshire. Reports for the New Hampshire section of Saxton's River CBC are in the regular season listings.



# Christmas Bird Count Compilers

- |    |                      |                                |
|----|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1  | Pittsburg            | David Govatski                 |
| 2  | Errol-Umbagog        | Chris Martin                   |
| 3  | Littleton            | David Govatski                 |
| 4  | North Conway         | Tin Mtn. Conservation Ctr.     |
| 5  | Baker Valley         | Northam Parr                   |
| 6  | Hanover-Norwich      | Walter Ellison & Nancy Martin  |
| 7  | Laconia-New Hampton  | Pam Hunt                       |
| 8  | Concord              | Robert Quinn                   |
| 9  | Lee-Durham           | Stephen Mirick                 |
| 10 | Coastal              | David Donsker                  |
| 11 | Keene                | Robert Ritz                    |
| 12 | Peterborough-Hancock | Dave Rowell                    |
| 13 | Nashua-Hollis        | Ralph Andrews                  |
| 14 | Lake Sunapee         | Gary Stansfield                |
| 15 | Saxton s River, VT   | Donald Clark                   |
| 16 | Manchester           | John Munier &<br>Dorothy Fitch |
| 17 | Isles of Shoals      | Garth & Megan<br>McElroy       |
| 18 | Sandwich             | Tony Vazzano<br>& Susan Wiley  |
| 19 | Barnet, VT           | Charlie Browne                 |
| 20 | Grafton-Bristol      | Phred Benham                   |



# 104th Christmas Bird Count: Dec. 14, 2003 - Jan. 5, 2004

species	Nshua	Petrb	Keene	Coast	Isles	LeeDu	Cncrd
Snow Goose	-	-	-	2	-	1	-
Canada Goose	706	8	71	3454	1	697	110
Mute Swan	-	-	-	50	-	-	-
Wood Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
American Wigeon	-	-	-	14	-	-	-
American Black Duck	47	1	16	916	20	397	3
Mallard	617	3	46	<b>1439</b>	-	556	63
Northern Pintail	-	-	-	4	-	CW	-
Ring-necked Duck	<b>2</b>	-	-	-	-	-	1
Greater Scaup	-	-	-	232	-	-	-
Common Eider	-	-	-	52	500	-	-
Harlequin Duck	-	-	-	1	12	-	-
Surf Scoter	-	-	-	196	15	-	-
White-winged Scoter	-	-	-	248	9	-	-
Black Scoter	-	-	-	84	-	-	-
Long-tailed Duck	-	-	-	141	10	-	-
Bufflehead	-	-	-	71	-	260	-
Common Goldeneye	4	-	-	540	25	40	21
Barrow's Goldeneye	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-
Hooded Merganser	1	-	8	2	-	1	1
Common Merganser	50	-	47	32	-	11	41
Red-br. Merganser	-	-	-	164	21	13	-
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	1	2	-	-	-	-
Ruffed Grouse	3	10	7	1	-	9	2
Wild Turkey	<b>71</b>	109	<b>115</b>	35	-	<b>56</b>	<b>64</b>
Red-throated Loon	-	-	-	14	1	-	-
Common Loon	-	-	1	128	20	7	-
Horned Grebe	-	-	-	47	-	-	-
Red-necked Grebe	-	-	-	32	-	-	-
Northern Gannet	-	-	-	6	5	-	-
Double-cr. Cormorant	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Great Cormorant	*1	-	-	15	20	-	-
Great Blue Heron	5	-	-	12	-	-	2
Turkey Vulture	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bald Eagle	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	-	1	-	2	-
Northern Harrier	-	-	-	2	-	CW	-
Sharp-shinned Hawk	6	1	CW	9	-	4	2
Cooper's Hawk	<b>8</b>	1	-	<b>**13</b>	-	<b>6</b>	1
Northern Goshawk	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Accipiter sp.	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-shouldered Hawk	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-tailed Hawk	<b>46</b>	-	5	<b>**67</b>	-	32	12
Rough-legged Hawk	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
American Kestrel	2	-	<b>2</b>	2	-	1	-
Merlin	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Peregrine Falcon	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Killdeer	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Sanderling	-	-	-	5	-	-	-
Purple Sandpiper	-	-	-	90	368	-	-
Dunlin	-	-	-	80	-	-	-

Lcni	Hnovr	BkrVI	Ltltn	Grftn	Errol	Pttsb	NCnw	LSunp	Manch	Sandw	Total
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>11</b>	-	301	-	5359
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
36	19	-	2	-	-	2	-	17	19	11	1506
702	174	29	3	<b>5</b>	-	-	19	61	411	20	4148
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	232
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	552
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	211
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	257
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	84
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	151
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	331
475	7	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	25	-	1141
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
76	19	-	1	-	-	-	-	7	-	1	117
154	<b>95</b>	-	1	6	4	2	-	-	16	-	459
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	199
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	5
3	4	3	16	<b>2</b>	3	2	13	1	1	15	95
25	71	67	110	*5	-	-	<b>185</b>	<b>105</b>	*9	92	1119
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
6	-	-	-	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	165
-	-	-	-	<b>4</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	37
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	-	1
CW	<b>3</b>	-	-	-	1	1	*2	-	5	-	21
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
4	-	1	-	*1	-	-	-	1	1	-	30
1	2	-	1	*1	-	-	-	-	<b>3</b>	-	37
2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	6
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
-	2	1	2	1	-	-	<b>3</b>	-	11	-	182
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	458
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80

# 104th Christmas Bird Count (continued)

species	Nshua	Petrb	Keene	Coast	Isles	LeeDu	Cncrd
Slaty-backed Gull	-	-	-	-	-	**1	-
Bonaparte's Gull	-	-	-	23	25	-	-
Ring-billed Gull	332	-	-	479	1	367	21
Herring Gull	3033	-	1	3430	621	10000	33
Iceland Gull	2	-	-	3	3	8	-
Lesser Bla.-bac. Gul	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Glaucous Gull	1	-	-	1	1	3	-
Great Bla.-bac. Gull	<b>1092</b>	-	-	297	149	904	1
Gull sp.	-	23	-	-	-	-	-
Bla.-leg. Kittiwake	-	-	-	-	25	-	-
Common Murre	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Razorbill	-	-	-	6	**53	-	-
Black Guillemot	-	-	-	2	23	-	-
Atlantic Puffin	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Alcid sp.	-	-	-	-	22	-	-
Rock Pigeon	848	197	121	**1961	-	549	<b>888</b>
Mourning Dove	575	303	185	996	-	403	310
Eastern Screech-owl	-	-	-	**4	-	-	-
Great Horned Owl	CW	-	-	7	-	3	2
Barred Owl	1	2	-	<b>8</b>	-	3	1
Long-eared Owl	-	*1	-	-	-	-	-
N. Saw-whet Owl	1	-	-	<b>2</b>	-	-	-
Belted Kingfisher	3	-	1	6	-	1	3
Red-bel. Woodpecker	11	2	-	4	-	2	-
Downy Woodpecker	120	81	47	120	-	77	71
Hairy Woodpecker	52	65	<b>35</b>	30	-	25	45
Northern Flicker	6	-	-	22	1	5	-
Pileated Woodpecker	4	10	4	8	-	<b>9</b>	1
Northern Shrike	3	3	-	4	-	-	1
Gray Jay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Blue Jay	514	508	387	748	-	511	408
American Crow	837	156	148	836	-	516	344
Common Raven	CW	<b>17</b>	5	1	-	3	2
Horned Lark	-	-	25	**567	-	12	4
Black-cap. Chickadee	758	974	568	831	1	853	570
Boreal Chickadee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tufted Titmouse	231	<b>145</b>	<b>86</b>	186	-	170	114
Red-br. Nuthatch	53	34	22	7	-	38	66
White-br. Nuthatch	190	176	78	169	-	155	<b>97</b>
Brown Creeper	15	8	4	8	-	11	11
Carolina Wren	**8	1	2	5	-	3	-
Winter Wren	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Marsh Wren	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Golden-cr. Kinglet	15	17	2	33	-	36	8
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>3</b>
Eastern Bluebird	35	-	-	22	-	27	5
Hermit Thrush	-	-	-	3	-	-	-
American Robin	386	3	7	495	-	<b>191</b>	17
Varied Thrush	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
N. Mockingbird	61	-	-	113	-	43	16

Lcnia	Hnovr	BkrVI	Ltltn	Grftn	Errol	Pttsb	NCnw	LSunp	Manch	Sandw	Total
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48
210	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	1	1447
78	3	-	7	-	-	-	2	-	407	-	17615
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
50	44	<b>13</b>	7	-	-	-	1	-	159	-	2717
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	59
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
164	697	120	215	<b>76</b>	-	1	140	147	718	3	6845
258	195	104	85	<b>55</b>	25	30	131	111	<b>371</b>	114	4251
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	14
3	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	CW	1	5	28
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	17
-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-	-	1	21
90	91	21	27	25	3	2	44	<b>45</b>	<b>74</b>	62	1000
29	40	26	48	15	7	1	<b>47</b>	26	<b>42</b>	54	587
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	<b>2</b>	-	37
13	6	-	2	5	1	1	5	CW	<b>3</b>	4	76
-	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	18
-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
323	228	98	125	113	34	8	112	242	<b>491</b>	126	4976
254	1509	39	89	19	16	12	90	61	416	22	5364
<b>17</b>	24	10	78	12	6	<b>97</b>	<b>81</b>	7	4	<b>21</b>	385
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	613
1395**2788	<b>1147</b>	-	541	717	251	287	692	<b>1191</b>	<b>659</b>	1020	15243
-	-	-	2	-	-	3	-	-	-	16	21
139	122	<b>47</b>	-	18	-	-	11	<b>41</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>75</b>	1571
25	127	<b>59</b>	68	16	43	14	39	<b>78</b>	8	<b>73</b>	770
145	162	<b>74</b>	25	56	5	1	65	<b>65</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>178</b>	1751
9	16	1	5	3	4	2	2	3	4	10	116
1	-	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-	21
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
29	22	<b>24</b>	61	19	5	2	17	35	<b>24</b>	37	386
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	89
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
20	21	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	<b>80</b>	1	1222
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	1
7	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	<b>37</b>	-	281

# 104th Christmas Bird Count (continued)

species	Nshua	Petrb	Keene	Coast	Isles	LeeDu	Cncrd
European Starling	1295	370	136	2657	31	<b>7351</b>	<b>3156</b>
Bohemian Waxwing	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
Cedar Waxwing	359	29	454	39	-	171	57
Ylw.-rumped Warbler	-	-	-	5	-	<b>2</b>	-
Spotted Towhee	-	-	-	-	-	-	**1
Eastern Towhee	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-
Am. Tree Sparrow	290	68	<b>271</b>	774	-	213	163
Chipping Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Field Sparrow	2	-	-	1	-	-	-
Savannah Sparrow	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Fox Sparrow	-	1	-	-	*1	-	-
Song Sparrow	39	4	5	171	4	27	6
Lincoln's Sparrow	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Swamp Sparrow	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
White-thr. Sparrow	23	1	4	61	-	14	2
White-cr. Sparrow	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Dark-eyed Junco	511	71	155	498	1	107	113
Lapland Longspur	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Snow Bunting	20	-	6	75	7	7	1
Northern Cardinal	131	34	51	**224	2	104	59
Red-winged Blackbird	1	-	1	2	-	-	-
Eastern Meadowlark	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Rusty Blackbird	-	-	-	5	-	1	2
Common Grackle	-	-	-	10	-	-	-
Br.-headed Cowbird	-	-	CW	3	-	-	-
Pine Grosbeak	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Purple Finch	5	2	27	6	-	1	-
House Finch	168	1	109	619	-	153	179
Red Crossbill	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whi.-wing. Crossbill	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Redpoll	344	99	<b>183</b>	180	1	<b>309</b>	159
Hoary Redpoll	-	-	*2	-	-	-	-
Pine Siskin	10	8	3	9	-	5	3
American Goldfinch	495	243	209	<b>900</b>	-	452	362
Evening Grosbeak	-	6	4	-	-	CW	-
House Sparrow	791	112	58	2034	-	647	345
Number of Species	64	44	48	104	34	65	54
Number of Participants	42	35	19	36	25	27	13

Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 133

CW = Count Week

Nshua = Nashua-Hollis (12/27/2003)

Petrb = Peterborough-Hancock (12/20/2003)

Keene = Keene (12/14/2003)

Coast = Seacoast (12/20/2003)

Isles = Isles-of-Shoals (12/21/2003)

LeeDu = Lee-Durham (12/27/2003)

Cncrd = Concord (12/14/2003)

\*=New species to count

\*\*=New count high for the state

**New individual count high**

Lcni	Hnovr	BkrVI	Lltn	Grftn	Errol	Pttsb	NCnw	LSunp	Manch	Sandw	Total
560	877	29	78	71	-	9	196	182	1525	81	18604
-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
582**	959	21	-	-	-	-	20	76	<b>216</b>	26	3009
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
-	-	-	-	**1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
109	207	<b>59</b>	21	18	5	13	44	67	<b>170</b>	<b>51</b>	2543
-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
1	5	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-	8	1	272
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
9	5	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	2	-	125
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
44	132	9	12	6	1	4	12	27	235	8	1946
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	275	-	CW	-	1	-	-	5	<b>180</b>	-	577
50	65	10	4	-	-	-	5	18	<b>110</b>	5	872
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	33
-	-	-	CW	-	-	13	-	-	-	-	18
-	-	-	3	-	-	3	-	-	-	2	49
113	130	2	4	1	-	-	-	99	<b>70</b>	6	1654
-	-	-	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	39
-	1	-	-	CW	-	12	4	-	-	-	17
706	603	<b>370</b>	191	-	34	55	<b>332</b>	171	<b>105</b>	<b>552</b>	4394
1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>2</b>	6
13	46	4	4	-	-	-	6	-	<b>8</b>	11	130
238	319	31	30	49	-	-	10	81	<b>407</b>	93	3919
-	154	24	48	21	6	-	11	4	-	-	278
446	385	29	3	110	-	-	51	86	<b>849</b>	-	5946
49	49	32	38	35	22	26	36	37	49	40	
27	28	10	13	8	4	5	39	10	20	22	

Lcni = Laconia-New-Hampton (1/4/2004)

Hnovr = Hanover-Norwich (1/1/2004)

BkrVI = Baker-Valley (1/3/2004)

Lltn = Littleton (12/14/2003)

Grftn = Grafton-Bristol (12/21/2003)

Errol = Errol-Umbagog (12/17/2003)

Pttsb = Pittsburg (12/18/2003)

NCnw = North-Conway (12/30/2003)

LSunp = Lake-Sunapee (12/20/2003)

Manch = Manchester (12/20/2003)

Sandw = Sandwich (12/28/2003)

# Spotlight on Dickcissel (*Spiza americana*)

by Eric Masterson

## Background

Dickcissel, formerly known as Black-throated Bunting, is a member of the family *Emberizidae* and is most closely related to buntings, grosbeaks, cardinals, and tanagers. Dickcissel breeds only in the United States and winters in Central and South America, primarily in Venezuela. Its population decreased significantly from 1966–1978 to an estimated 6 million individuals, as measured at Venezuelan roost sites in 1993.



Dickcissel by Stephen R. Mirick, 9-26-03, Pease Golf Course, Portsmouth, NH.

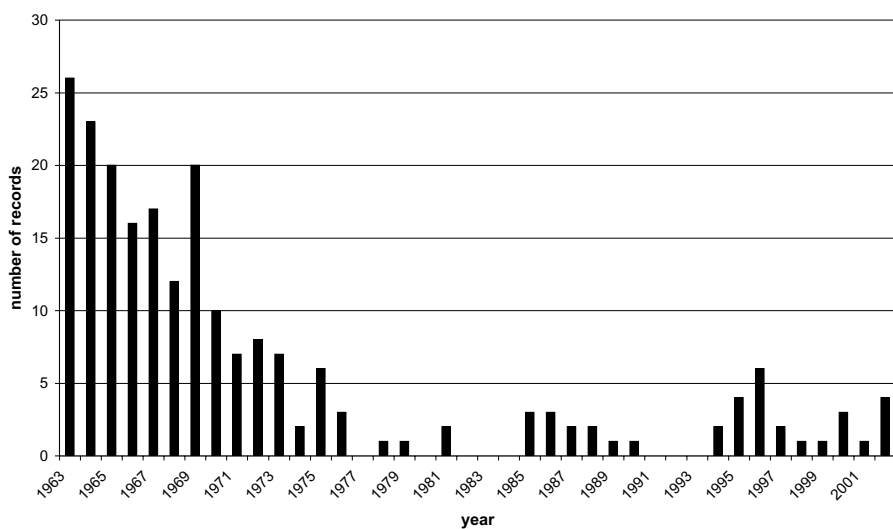
## Breeding Status

Breeding is primarily centered on the prairie grasslands of North America. The core breeding range extends from North Dakota and Minnesota south to Texas and from Colorado in the west to Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee in the east. There are no documented records of breeding in New Hampshire, although the species occurs sporadically during the breeding season as close as western New York and western New Jersey.

## Occurrence in New Hampshire

A comprehensive search of the records dating back to 1963 uncovered 217 reports of Dickcissel involving 265 individuals (Figure 1). It has occurred almost annually (averaging four out of five years during the last 40 years), with most records involving single birds.

**Figure 1.** Dickcissel Records by Year in New Hampshire, 1963–2002.





Dickcissel has been recorded primarily as a fall migrant in New Hampshire, with a strong peak occurrence during October (Figure 2), but with substantial numbers occurring from September through December, although many records from December through April may refer to lingering individuals. It is a very rare spring migrant with fewer than 10 records since 1963.

Records are well distributed across the southern half of the state, biased somewhat towards the seacoast (Figure 3).

Finding Dickcissel in New Hampshire is much more of a rare event than it used to be in the 1960s and early 1970s. It has dramatically declined since 1960 when the number of records would indicate the status of scarce fall migrant. It must now be considered a rare occurrence to see this bird in the state.

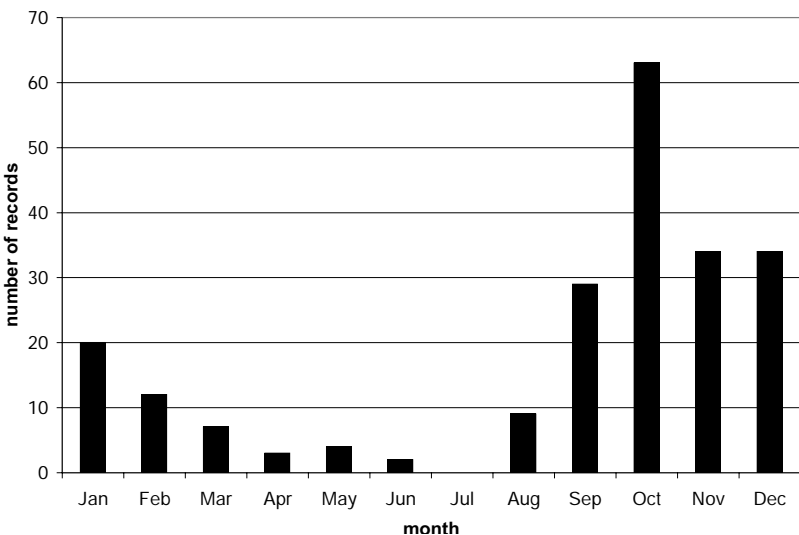
### Comments

The post-breeding nomadic tendencies of the species (Temple, 1995) may account in part for its regular occurrence in the state. Dickcissel may have bred in New Hampshire in the 19th and early 20th century when the percentage of grassland in the region was far higher than it is today, although there are no reports to substantiate this speculation. Breeding records from Massachusetts from 1835 to 1877 (*Birds of Massachusetts*) support this view.

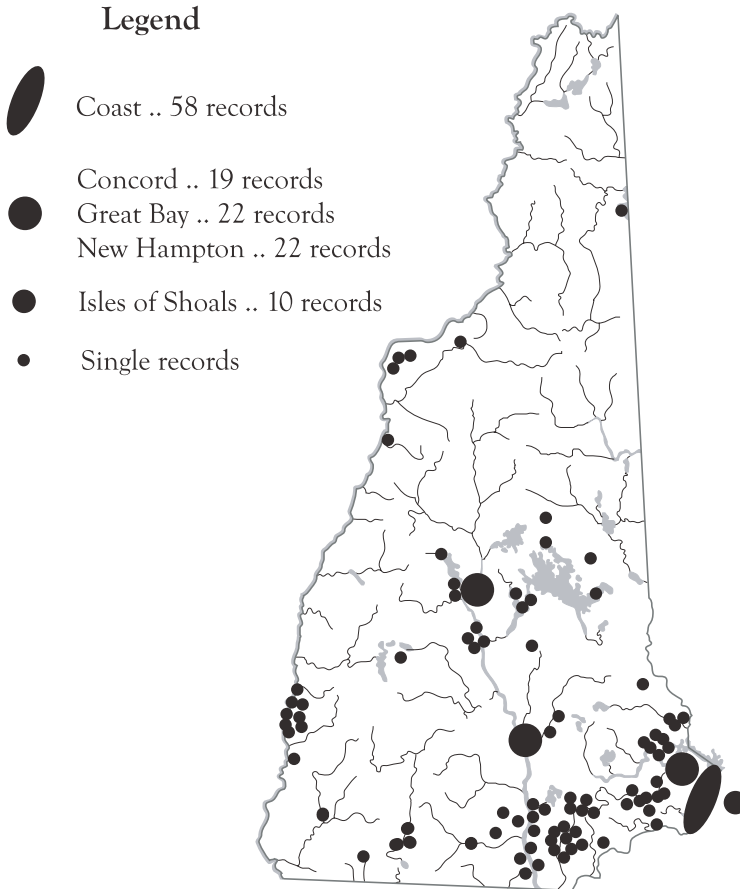
The dramatic decline in occurrence of Dickcissel in New Hampshire since 1960 is mirrored by a 30% decline of the world population since 1966, with the population stabilizing since 1979 at about two-thirds of the 1966 level.

While New Hampshire may never again be cleared to open pasture reminiscent of the early 1900s, one can still hope to hear the song of the Dickcissel, as Vera Hebert did in New Hampton on October 8, 1960. Indeed, this was one of 22 reports of Dickcissel in New Hampton between 1963 and 1986, no small coincidence given that Vera, who lived in New Hampton, was one of the most active contemporary birders. Such reports provide further proof, if it were necessary, that one needed only to step outside the front door to experience good birding at that time.

**Figure 2.** Dickcissel Records by Month in New Hampshire, 1963–2002.



**Figure 3.** Distribution of Records of Dickcissel in New Hampshire, 1963–2002.



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*The data for all figures represent the number of individuals seen (duplicate records of a sighting are not included).*

# Winter Birding in the Lakes Region

by John Williams

The Lakes Region of central New Hampshire has many excellent birding opportunities during the winter. For those hardy souls willing to venture out in any weather, there are areas of open water that tend to concentrate a nice range of waterfowl. Many of these sites are very close to the Route 3 corridor from Laconia to Franklin. I'll describe a half-day (or longer) trip along this route that often provides excellent winter birding in central New Hampshire.

Franklin and West Franklin have open water. The Pemigewasset River and the Winnepesaukee River merge here to form the Merrimack. From Central Street in Franklin (also called Routes 3 and 11), take River Street south about one-half mile to a brick building (the sewage pumping station) on a short dead-end road where parking is available (see #1 on map). People walk with their dogs here all winter because the volume of traffic is low; birders are welcome. Likely birds at this site are wintering Bald Eagles, Common Goldeneyes, occasional Barrow's Goldeneyes, Hooded and



Common Mergansers, Lesser Scaup, American Black Ducks, Mallards, and Buffleheads. The area along the shoreline has a variety of fruiting shrubs, which provide winter food to Mockingbirds, Northern Cardinals, Cedar Waxwings, and often lingering sparrows of various species. The dam in West Franklin also usually has a range of ducks, including all of the above (see #2).

**Tilton** Proceed east along Route 3 and just east of I-93 take the first right onto Route 140, which will lead to the Winnepesaukee River Bridge (#3). This area often has roosting gulls and the likelihood of finding the occasional Iceland Gull mixed in with the more common Great Black-backed Gulls, Ring-billed Gulls, and Herring Gulls. It is another good area to find some of the rarer duck species. In winter 2004 a female Barrow's Goldeneye fed in the river for several weeks along with Common Goldeneyes. The road has moderately wide shoulders on each side for parking, and depending on the snow depth, there are some turnouts.

Return back to Route 3 and continue east. Silver Lake, reached by a right hand turn about two miles east of I-93, is kept open by a power generation dam (#4), where there is parking. The northern end of the lake has a small island on which Bald Eagles roost. Normally, fish-eating ducks (rather than dabblers) populate the area, but sometimes both are here, and once in a while there are Horned and Red-necked Grebes. Belted Kingfishers are sometimes able to winter over. River Street follows the river above the dam for about one half mile. This stretch seldom freezes and often accumulates large numbers of goldeneyes (both types) and mergansers (both types). In the last five years, I've seen more Barrow's Goldeneyes in this stretch than anywhere else in the Lakes Region. River Road returns you to Route 3.

**Sanbornton** Continue to head northeast along Route 3 and make a left hand turn onto Bay Street, immediately before the Lake Winnisquam bridge. The first right turn off Bay Street is Lower Bay Road, which skirts some of the shore of Lake Winnisquam. This shallow section of the lake (#5) often attracts large rafts of diving and dabbling ducks in December and into early January. It is quite common to see several hundred feeding at one time. Both scaup, both goldeneyes, both mergansers, occasional Ring-necked Ducks, and (rarely) Canvasback are seen here. Common Loons are usually found and Horned Grebes make an occasional appearance. Unfortunately, parking opportunities are limited, especially when there are snow banks. Another west side view point onto Lake Winnisquam can be found at the Sanbornton town beach, located on Doctor True Road, another mile and a half out Lower Bay Road.

**Laconia** Return to Route 3 and cross over the Lake Winnisquam Bridge, continue roughly 2 miles toward Laconia. Pass by Lake Winnisquam, then turn left on either Bay Street or Fair Street. On the left is Dixon Point (#6), which has a well-known Bald Eagle perch tree at the location where the Winnepesaukee River enters Lake Winnisquam. It is also a spot of open water that often has the full range of aforementioned waterfowl. This is one of the sites where Great Cormorant has been seen in three of the last four years.

Continuing along Route 3 brings you to Opechee Bay, which usually has open water at its outlet and also at its inlet by the Lakeport dam (#7). The Lakeport dam site frequently is a gull roost where the occasional Glaucous Gull will visit. In late winter 2004, Pam Hunt found 17 species of waterfowl here, including Northern Shoveler and

Long-tailed Ducks. In the evening and on weekends it is easy to park in the area below the dam in Lakeport in the various business parking lots that are unused at those times.

Paugus Bay is reached by continuing along Route 3. The docks at Burger King often have large numbers of gulls roosting, including rarer gulls. At the inlet in Weirs Beach, diving ducks and Common Loons can be found.

**Gilford Lily Pond (#8)**, near the Laconia Airport, usually freezes fairly early. When ice-free, however, it is a favored stopover for many dabbling and diving ducks (including a pair of Redheads in 2002) and often Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Ducks, and both species of scaup.

*John Williams is a member of the ASNH Pemigewasset Chapter. He has worked as a forestry technician on the White Mountain National Forest for over 30 years. He has been an active birder for most of that time, and enjoys watching waterfowl on the lakes during the fall, winter and spring.*

## The Backyard Birder

**W**e were intrigued by the following piece we received from Tom Chase and it prompted us to look into the behavior he described. Lindsay Herlihy, one of New Hampshire Audubon's Volunteer Naturalists, reports back on the results of her research.—*Ed.*

### Unusual Behavior from a Red-breasted Nuthatch

*by Tom Chase*

**T**he Red-breasted Nuthatch is one of my favorite birds, so when both a male and female "Little Red," as I like to call them, reappeared at my feeders on October 23, 2003, after a long summer absence, I was most pleased. Like many birders, I take great delight in watching their antics—they seem perfectly comfortable hanging upside down, sometimes circling completely over and under a branch—and their squeaky "tin horn" calls are always a welcome sound.

Red-breasted Nuthatches are not shy of humans, and have alighted on the feeder while I was in the process of filling it. Once one landed on my hat, impatient for me to get on with it.

I happened to notice the following day that the male was making repeated swift trips to the feeder outside our dining room window. He'd grab a sunflower seed and fly off, always in the same direction, almost as if he were bringing food to young—but surely not in October. A minute later, he'd be back at the feeder. I went to another window to see if I could figure out what Little Red was up to.

Our house sits on the shore of Mendum's Pond in a hemlock and mixed deciduous forest. Because there is little topsoil, I had spread wood chips under the clothesline and other areas to provide better footing and prevent erosion. To my surprise, the little

Red-breasted was caching the seeds under the wood chips. He'd push aside a chip with his beak, set down the seed, cover it with the chip, and dash back to the feeder. He engaged in the same activity the next morning.

Since then I have checked in a number of bird books, but have found no mention of Red-breasted Nuthatches caching food, although jays and other species do it.

*Tom is a retired airline pilot, aspiring writer, and amateur birder. He has participated in a number of ASNH activities including Isles of Shoals trips, Christmas Bird Counts, and Peregrine Watch. He writes a bi-monthly column in the Rochester Times called "Bird Notes."*

## About Caching Behavior in Red-breasted Nuthatches

by Lindsay Herlihy



Red-breasted Nuthatch  
by Lindsay Herlihy

**A**s a young birder, I immediately fell in love with Red-breasted Nuthatches when they began visiting our backyard suet feeders about three years ago. Their engaging behavior and high-pitched chatter simply captured my heart. Since then, my knowledge of birds has grown exponentially (many thanks to the helpful staff members at New Hampshire Audubon). While I have never actually witnessed the caching behavior of the Red-breasted Nuthatch, I was able to find some references that discussed it.

According to *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior*, "In fall and winter, nuthatches store nuts and invertebrates in caches for future consumption. These storage sites, which are dispersed and often hold only one seed per cache, are located in bark crevices and under branches, and are often covered with bark lichens, moss, and snow." Caches can also be located in the small holes created by sapsuckers. Red-breasted Nuthatches in Yosemite National Park have also been seen caching seeds in cracks in granite walls hundreds of feet above the ground (Gaines 1988). Also, in *Life Histories of North American Nuthatches, Wrens, Thrashers, and Their Allies*, Francis Zirrer wrote, "They [the Red-breasted Nuthatches] are great hoarders, which...occasionally leads to amusing incidents. The woodpeckers, especially Hairy, watch the hoarding with great interest, and, as soon as the nuthatch leaves to get another piece, fly to the place and appropriate the morsel." This behavior was also noted in *The Birds of North America: Life Histories for the Twenty-first Century*. It adds that the "Red-breasted Nuthatch's habit of caching seeds may be an important dispersal mechanism for various conifer species, but also of plant parasites such as dwarf mistletoe." (Punter and Gilbert 1989).

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*Lindsay Herlihy is a fifteen-year-old New Hampshire native who was raised to love nature. She is currently a Volunteer Naturalist at the Silk Farm Audubon Center in Concord, and an assistat at the Appledore Island Migration Banding Station on Appledore Island, Maine, and the Massabesic Banding Station in Auburn, New Hampshire*

## Golden Eagles in New Hampshire – Are there more around?

by Iain MacLeod

In the fall of 2003, while conducting my annual hawkwatches in New Hampshire, I observed three Golden Eagles (*Aquila chysaetos*) from three different hawkwatch sites in south central and southwest New Hampshire. This is three times my usual fall tally, and although the sample size is, admittedly, extremely low, it does beg the question, “are more Golden Eagles migrating through New Hampshire, and if so, why?”

### Status in New Hampshire

The Golden Eagle is a rare bird in New Hampshire. Indeed throughout the northeast its breeding status borders on “absent.” *The Atlas of Breeding Birds in New Hampshire* (Foss, 1994) refers to active nests in the late 1800s, and one nest in the Lake Umbagog region supported a pair in the 1950s, perhaps as late as 1962, but there are no records of young being produced anywhere in the state since 1956. There are reports from the White Mountains in June and July of 1966 and the summer and fall of 1971, but during the Atlas survey years (1981–1986) no breeding activity was recorded in the state



Golden Eagle by Iain C. MacLeod

(Foss, 1994). Golden Eagles are recorded in small numbers in New Hampshire annually during both spring and fall migration.

### Status in Eastern Canada and Maine

The population of breeding Golden Eagles appears to be increasing in Eastern Canada and consistently larger numbers have been seen in recent years at eastern hawkwatch sites (Wheeler, 2003). A substantial number breed in the northern part of Labrador and summering birds are recorded in New Brunswick and Cape Breton Peninsula in Nova Scotia. Fewer than ten pairs breed in the northern part of Ontario. It is the northern portions of the province of Quebec that hold the largest breeding population in the east. Recent estimates concluded that 200 pairs and 400 juveniles and subadults inhabit Quebec in the summer (Wheeler, 2003).

In the northeastern United States, only Maine has held nesting pairs in recent decades. The last pair attempted and failed to breed in 1997 and had failed to produce young in each of the previous 13 years! Only three young have been produced in the

**Table 1.**  
An analysis of sightings in New Hampshire, 1991–2003, from the *New Hampshire Bird Records* database at the Audubon Society of New Hampshire.

Year	#	Date	Location
1991	1	07/29	Boscawen
1992	1	05/03	Deering
1992	1	09/24	Strafford
1993	1	09/16	Deering
1993	1	10/14	Hooksett
1994	1	05/10	Alton
1995	1	10/09	Deering
1995	1	11/05	Lebanon
1996	1	10/14	Peterborough
1997	1	10/02	North Hampton
1997	2	10/07	Rye
1997	1	10/26	Londonderry
1997	1	11/04	Millsfield
1998	1	07/06	Alton
1998	1	10/22	Moultonborough
1999	1	09/28	Moultonborough
1999	1	10/16	Deering
2000	1	05/11	Wilmot
2000	1	09/10	Deering
2001	1	09/15	Peterborough
2001	1	09/27	Sandwich
2001	1	10/17	Gilsum
2001	1	10/20	Exeter
2003	1	09/10	Deering
2003	1	09/21	Peterborough
2003	1	11/07	Hillsboro



state in the last 25 years (C. Todd and A. Weik in Wheeler, 2003). The main reasons for nesting failures are organophosphate pesticides contaminating major prey species, such as Great Blue Herons, and loss of open habitat (Wheeler, 2003).

### **Migration in the East**

Clearly the increase in records at eastern hawkwatch sites is connected to the increase in breeding eagles in Quebec and Labrador. These birds spend the winter months south of New England in mainly montane (upland slopes below timberline) regions of the central and southern Appalachian Mountains in North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia (Wheeler, 2003). Some winter in Michigan and Pennsylvania.

The Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA) has compiled hawk migration data for all of North America for the last thirty years. HMANA's database indicates a steady increase in numbers of Golden Eagles recorded at eastern hawkwatch sites, culminating in record breaking totals at several sites in 2003. Waggoner's Gap in Pennsylvania has consistently tallied good numbers of Golden Eagles each fall. Their data show a steady increase since 1990 when they recorded 122. In 1995 they recorded 146, in 1996 they saw 163, and in 1997 they recorded 176. In 2002 their fall total reached 207 and in 2003 they recorded 245. (Hawk Migration Studies, HMANA, and HawkCount on the HMANA Web site, [www.hmana.org](http://www.hmana.org))\*

The accumulation of Golden Eagle migration data for all eastern sites shows dramatic increases. HMANA groups sites to northern and southern regions with a boundary in central Pennsylvania. Northern site totals have grown from 170 in 1990 to 273 in 1995 to 320 in 2002 (complete 2003 data is not yet available). Southern site totals have grown from 489 in 1990 to 734 in 1995 to 961 in 2002. (Hawk Migration Studies, HMANA, and BirdHawk website, HMANA)\*

In 2003 dramatic single-day counts at several sites in the east included a record-breaking 31 on November 20 at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania (HMANA published data)\*. That month saw the bulk of records at Hawk Mountain (110 of their 160 for the season). November 20 also brought 29 Golden Eagles to Bake Oven Knob in Pennsylvania (another one-day record) and 17 Golden Eagles over Waggoner's Gap as well as 16 on November 21.

### **Migration in New Hampshire**

An analysis of data in the *New Hampshire Bird Records* database from 1991 to 2003 indicates that from one to five Golden Eagles are recorded annually in the state (note: some hawkwatch sites do not report their data to *New Hampshire Bird Records*, so this analysis may not represent all sightings for New Hampshire). Most sightings are from the months of September, October, and November (when many eyes are on the sky looking for other hawks), but there are three sightings in May and two in July. Based on my own observations, I tend to see mostly adults in September and immatures later in October and November, although the sample size is too small to be statistically significant.

\*The author takes responsibility for any inaccuracies based on his analysis of HMANA published data.

## Summary

Golden Eagles are a rare but annual migrant through New Hampshire. Their breeding population is increasing to our north and sightings of migrants in spring and fall is increasing in the east. Although Bald Eagles are much more likely to be seen migrating past watch sites in New Hampshire, take a second look and make sure that eagle isn't a "goldie."

For detailed information on hawk migration throughout North America, check out the Hawk Migration Association of North America website at [www.hmana.org](http://www.hmana.org). The HMANA member newsletter, *Hawk Migration Studies* is also an excellent resource. Check the NH Audubon Web site, [www.nhauudubon.org](http://www.nhauudubon.org), for information about fall hawkwatches and programs.

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## New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee Report

The following report from the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee (NHRBC) contains decisions for records voted on by the Committee since the last report in the Winter 2002–03 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*. The NHRBC is an independent technical advisory committee to *New Hampshire Bird Records*. It reviews unusual sightings in an effort to maintain accuracy and scientific integrity for both *New Hampshire Bird Records* and the historical database of bird sightings maintained by the Audubon Society of New Hampshire (ASNH). Sightings are evaluated based on the details submitted. A record must have a vote of 6–0 or 5–1 to be accepted by the Committee.

A rejection is not an indication that the identification was incorrect but that the information received was not enough to allow its inclusion in the state record. Adequate documentation is the key to whether a report is accepted or not. For information on the Committee and its decision-making process, please see the article in the Summer 1996 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*. The Fall 1996 issue has an article on how to document rare bird sightings. Contact the Managing Editor at ASNH for a copy of either of these articles.

The current voting members of the committee are Dennis Abbott, David Deifik, Alan Delorey, David Donsker, Davis Finch, and George Gavutis. Please contact any one of them if you have questions. Addresses and general information on the committee are available from the non-voting chair, Pam Hunt, at [biodiva@cyberportal.net](mailto:biodiva@cyberportal.net) or work phone at 224-9909 X328.

## Spring 2003

### Records accepted by the committee:

Black Rail in Greenland in late May. First state record; seen or heard by many, call recorded.  
Sandhill Crane in Lebanon on April 30.  
Sandhill Crane in Lancaster on May 5.  
Jaeger species offshore Rye on May 24.  
Acadian Flycatcher at Pawtuckaway on May 31  
Varied Thrush in Gilford from late February to late April.  
Yellow-throated Warbler at Pawtuckaway on May 3.  
Yellow-throated Warbler in Hanover on May 11.  
Pine Warbler in Lee on March 2.  
Hooded Warbler in Hampton on May 9–10.  
Hooded Warbler on the Isles of Shoals on May 19.  
Blue Grosbeak in Francestown on May 3.  
Blue Grosbeak in Charlestown on May 18.

### Records not accepted by the committee:

Common Murre on White Island on May 26. Description of head color and pattern was unclear or inconclusive enough that Thick-billed Murre could not be eliminated. The identification was accepted as Murre species.  
Barn Owl in Deerfield on May 3. Bird was heard only, and description of call does not eliminate immature Great Horned Owl.  
Bicknell's Thrush in Livermore on April 29. Bird was heard only, and despite detailed description of call, the difficulty of vocal identification of this species, combined with the exceptionally early date, resulted in the committee deciding to err on the side of caution.  
Summer Tanager in Lincoln on May 24. Although at least one of the three similar birds reported was described fairly well, the presence of such a high number and absence of additional descriptive details resulted in the committee not accepting the record.  
Pine Grosbeak in Thornton on April 22. Based on the photograph, the committee believed that the bird in question was actually a Red Crossbill.

## Summer 2003

### Records accepted by the committee:

Tricolored Heron in Rye on June 15. Photographed.  
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron in Hampton on June 1–8. Photographed.  
American Oystercatcher on White Island on June 28.  
Little Gull in North Hampton on June 1.  
Little Gull in Rye on June 18. Photographed; different plumage from previous bird.  
Black-headed Gull in Rye June 3–6. Photographed.  
Caspian Tern in Pittsburg on June 10.  
Common Murre at White Island on June 22–27.  
Murre species on White Island on June 15.  
Razorbill at Isles of Shoals on June 8.  
Atlantic Puffin at White Island on June 15–24.  
Red-headed Woodpecker in Nottingham on July 20.  
Acadian Flycatcher at Pawtuckaway on June 7–8.  
Acadian Flycatcher in South Hampton on June 28.  
Louisiana Waterthrush in Nashua on July 27.

### Records not accepted by the committee:

Royal Tern at White Island on June 26. Although generally well described, the description of a black crown is inconsistent with this species' plumage at this time of year.

Thick-billed Murre on White Island on June 14. Unclear description failed to fully eliminate either Common Murre or Razorbill, and the record is best left as “large alcid species.”  
Chuck-will’s-widow in Canaan on June 20. This date is unusually late for this species, which is a very rare spring vagrant to New Hampshire. This combined with some missing details about the observation resulted in the committee deciding to err on the side of caution. The possibility exists that the bird in question was an aberrant Whip-poor-will.

## Fall 2003

### Records accepted by the committee:

Common Eider in Littleton on October 22.  
Common Eider in Bartlett on October 22.  
Sandhill Crane in Concord on October 8.  
Little Stint in Rye on August 7–8. This bird was photographed, seen by numerous birders, and constitutes a First State Record.  
Lesser Black-backed Gull in Errol on September 30. Photographed.  
*Selasphorus* hummingbird species in Merrimack on August 17.  
Tropical/Couch’s Kingbird in Claremont on November 2. Although the bird in question was never heard, and thus cannot be identified to species, this represents a First State Record of this species pair.  
Cave Swallows in Rye on November 26. Photographs; qualifies as a First State Record.  
Northern Wheatear in Epsom on September 7. Well-described individual.  
Bell’s Vireo in Exeter on November 1 and beyond. Photographed and seen by many, this bird represents a Second State Record.  
Golden-winged Warbler in Rye on September 14.  
Western Tanager in Plymouth on November 30.  
Black-headed Grosbeak in Derry on November 3. Photographed and seen by many.  
Spotted Towhee in Grafton on November 17 (and through winter). Photographed; represents a First State Record.  
Yellow-headed Blackbird in Merrimack on August 2.

### Records not accepted by the committee:

Wood Stork in Dover on September 2. The details provided were not comprehensive enough for a rarity of this magnitude; the bird’s head was not described.  
Fulvous Whistling-Duck in Grantham on August 7. Bird was unusually tame, and the possibility of a variant domestic duck was not considered.  
Harlequin Duck in Jefferson on October 24. Sketchy description did not eliminate immature or female scoters.  
Golden Eagle in Northwood on August 22. Details were insufficient for a report of this species so early in the season.  
Sandhill Crane in Alexandria on October 1. The observer had no optics and was unfamiliar with this species. Some aspects of the bird’s behavior were inconsistent with Sandhill Crane.  
Long-billed Dowitcher in Lancaster on October 31. Poor description; observer did not conclusively eliminate Short-billed Dowitcher.  
Red-necked Phalarope in Portsmouth on September 26 was not sufficiently distinguished from Red Phalarope. Identification was accepted as Phalarope species.  
Lark Bunting in Franklin on October 2. Description of bill color inconsistent with female Lark Bunting; female Purple Finch not conclusively eliminated.  
Clay-colored Sparrow in Peterborough on October 31. Did not conclusively eliminate Chipping Sparrow.

## Winter 2003-2004

### Records accepted by the committee:

Golden Eagle in Raymond on December 9.

Varied Thrush in Bradford for most of the winter. Seen by numerous birders.

Brown Thrasher in Loudon on February 14.

Spotted Towhee in Concord for most of the winter. Photographed and seen by many. Represents a Second State Record.

The following Hoary Redpoll reports were accepted. Many of these were accompanied by photographs:

Sandwich on December 8, December 31, January 1, and February 6 (all different birds)

Keene on December 8 and onward (multiple birds)

Ossipee on December 30

Belmont on January 4

Stratford on January 9

Franklin on January 11

Newbury on January 31

Errol on February 3

Hanover on February 6

Chester on February 29

### Records not accepted by the committee:

Chipping Sparrow in Newmarket on February 4. Documentation did not conclusively eliminate other sparrows, including Clay-colored and Swamp.

The following Hoary Redpoll reports were not accepted. In all cases the observer failed to distinguish the bird from Common Redpoll:

Bedford on January 9

Thornton on January 13

Newmarket on February 29

New London in January

### Records awaiting additional discussion:

The committee has not had a chance to meet and discuss the documentation for the following records:

“Nelson’s” Gull in Rochester on December 29.

Slaty-backed Gull in Rochester on December 23–27.

Baltimore Oriole in Groveton on January 2.

Hoary Redpoll in Northfield on January 24.

Hoary Redpoll, 10 in Keene during the winter.

## Decisions of Late Submissions

Records that the Committee was unable to evaluate in time for publication with the other votes from that season.

### Records accepted by the committee:

Red-headed Woodpecker in Merrimack on July 10, 2002. Photographed.

Clay-colored Sparrow in Newington on June 24, 2001. Well-described; an unusual mid-summer record.

The following record from Fall 2002 was accepted by the Committee but inadvertently omitted from the 2002 summary in the Winter 2002–03 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*:

Redhead, 6 on Great Bay in Stratham, November 27, 2002.

### Records not accepted by the committee:

Hooded Warbler in Sugar Hill on May 10, 1992. Insufficient description.

# Research on Early Successional Habitats

by Stephen R. Hale

**A** long walk or bike ride through nearly any New Hampshire countryside often takes one through a variety of habitats including wetlands, fields, and forests. From year to year, these habitats do not change very much, and the plants and animals that live there can often be predicted with great reliability. Over longer time periods habitats change, and early successional habitats can change very rapidly.

Early successional habitats represent the early stages of both vegetation composition and structure following some kind of disturbance. For example, natural events such as wind storms, hurricanes, ice storms, fire, insect outbreaks, and landslides can reduce (or disturb) an old tall-standing forest to an open field. Over time, the open field transforms through different habitat stages as old trees rot away and grass, non-woody plants, and woody shrub pioneers invade the area. These pioneers actually improve the site conditions, so that other species can colonize and take over. Continual change in the plant species, termed succession, proceeds until 1) a stable community (climax) structure is reached, or 2) another disturbance resets the habitat conditions to an earlier stage and the process continues from there. Often, disturbances are so frequent that a climax community is never realized, but instead the habitat is in a constant state of change rather than balance. Various logging practices and mowing regimes have similar effects as natural disturbances. When trees and their associated leafy canopies are removed, habitat conditions can change dramatically through increased sunlight, temperature, wind penetration and decreased humidity and soil moisture. Not only do the vegetation characteristics change, but also the animal communities that are adapted to various vegetation types.

Richard and Carly Chandler, from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, are a husband and wife team investigating the use of early successional habitats by songbirds in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Richard is investigating the value of wildlife openings for songbirds. Intended to promote game species, wildlife openings are small patches (up to 40 acres) of early successional habitat maintained by mowing or prescribed burns (fire). Richard hypothesizes that wildlife openings are also of great benefit to populations of non-game species, including an early successional songbird, the Chestnut-sided Warbler (CSWA, *Dendroica pensylvanica*).

Over the coming summers, Richard will be monitoring nests, juvenile, second-year adult, and after second-year adult CSWA in over 60 wildlife openings of various sizes, disturbance types, and vegetation structures. Second-year and after second-year adult CSWAs can be identified by the length of their chestnut colored flank stripe. In second-year birds, the chestnut stripe does not extend as far onto the flanks, and not far enough to connect with the black facial stripe. Richard's primary research methods include distance point-counts and spot (territory) mapping. Distance point-counts attempt to estimate the abundance/density of birds within a sampled area, while spot mapping can provide more detailed information on their breeding biology (for example, territory size).

Meanwhile, Carly hypothesizes that early successional habitat is of great importance to a wider array of songbirds than previously thought. She wonders why many forest interior-breeding songbirds move into early successional habitats in late July, August, and September. In her work, she asks if forest songbirds, which do not necessarily nest and forage in early successional habitats while breeding, utilize these habitats after fledging/nesting. Two different ideas that could work together are: 1) birds are using the increased stem and branching patterns of shrub-like trees as protection from predators, and 2) birds are utilizing the abundance of fruit in these habitats. To answer this question, Carly aims to estimate the abundance and fitness characteristics of birds using various types of early successional habitats in late summer. Together with distance point-counts, Carly will be mist-netting and color banding birds. She hopes to resight the birds in order to determine if marked birds remain in the habitat, and for how long. Additionally, she will be estimating fat-levels (an estimate of fitness: the more fat, the fitter the bird), and making morphometric measurements (e.g., wing cord and tarsus length).

Carly will use her data to compare among sites with A) high stem and branch density with berries, B) low stem and branch density with no berries, and C) high stem and branch density with berries removed. These comparisons will enable her to determine if songbirds are using high stem and branching density habitats more than low stem and branching density habitats (compare B vs. C), and if they are selecting high fruit density habitats (compare A vs. C).

The highest-risk times in a migrant songbird's life are probably the period after fledging and periods of migration. Richard and Carly Chandlers' studies will help to determine if we should appreciate an expanded role for early successional habitats in the conservation of the forest songbirds. We look forward to periodic progress reports on their respective investigations.

## Answer to the Fall 2003 Photo Quiz

*by David Donsker*

**A**t first glance, the subject of our Photo Quiz appears to be a diminutive woodland bird perched in the bare twigs of a deciduous tree. This impression is the result of two of the distinctive features of this species: its small dark bill and fluffy plumage. The large, dark eye set in its white face adds to this effect, as does the round profile of its head. We also note that it has a proportionally long tail. Further, it has a fairly extensive black cap on the hind crown with a bit of the black of the crown extending down behind the eye. It has a prominent white hind collar. The remainder of the body is uniformly medium toned with some faint white tipping to the tail feathers.

This bird's body proportions and head pattern eliminate most possibilities. A bird that we might briefly consider is Tufted Titmouse, which shares the dark eye and white face of this bird as well as similar bill and tail proportions. But, amongst other things, the titmouse is crested and lacks the black cap. Another consideration would be one of our shrikes, which are also long-tailed birds with white throats and fairly

stubby bills. But their bills are not as proportionally small and are hooked at the tip. Besides, the two shrikes have black masks rather than a black cap.

At this point, it wouldn't be unreasonable to conclude that this is some form of aberrant chickadee. Both of our native chickadees, Boreal and Black-capped, share many of the features described above: small dark bill, fluffy plumage, black cap, and proportionally long tail. But, of course, our chickadees have black throats or "bibs" and their caps extend over their foreheads. In contrast, this bird has a white throat and forehead.

In the end, the only bird in our forests that has the plumage characteristics that match the above description is Gray Jay, which is the subject of this photograph. The superficial resemblance of Gray Jay to chickadees has been noted both by David Sibley and by Roger Tory Peterson, who has described it as looking like a "huge, overgrown chickadee." Of course, Gray Jay isn't nearly as diminutive as the photograph suggests. It is 11.5 inches long, which is quite a contrast to a five-inch chickadee. But out of context, it is very hard to judge the size of our bird, and its structural features make it seem smaller than it actually is. Also, the deciduous twigs in which it roosts add to the false illusion. This bird is much more likely to be found perched on the branch of an evergreen.

If one isn't familiar with Gray Jay, it might even be difficult to conclude that its closest relatives in our state are Blue Jays, ravens, and crows. Gray Jay shares the same gregarious habits of its cousins, but unlike its relatives, it is relatively quiet. Our other corvids (the family that includes crows and jays) also have proportionally longer and larger bills than this species and lack the fluffy plumage. Gray Jay is best understood in the context of the jays of the Palearctic (the temperate regions of the Old World), which include its nearest relatives, Siberian and Sichuan Jays. Unlike most other American corvids, the Palearctic jays are relatively small-billed, round-headed birds. Our Gray Jay is derived from this Palearctic stock and represents a separate colonization of the New World by this branch of the crow family.

Gray Jay is a characteristic and conspicuous resident of the coniferous boreal forest that extends across Canada and the very northern states in our country and southward along the major mountain ranges of the American West as far as northern California and Arizona. In New Hampshire, it is uncommon to fairly common permanent resident in the very northern part of the state and in the White Mountains at elevations between 3,000 and 4,000 feet. It is an extremely curious and bold species that is well known to visit backwoods camps and picnic grounds, usually in small groups, for scraps and other handouts. This behavior has given it such colloquial names as "Camp Robber" and "Grease Bird". The name "Whiskey Jack", commonly applied to this species, is a corruption of one of its Native American names ("wiss-ka-tjon" or "wis-ka-chon", turned into "Whiskey-John"). Its normal diet, as with most corvids, is extremely varied. It includes insects, berries, conifer seeds, fungi, animal carcasses, eggs, and nestlings. Much of their food is cached for later use, especially in late winter and early spring.

One final note: If you think that the resemblance of Gray Jay to chickadees is strange, an even stranger example of convergent evolution between these two families was recently discovered. Ever since its discovery in Tibet in the late 19th century until recently, a dull-colored, sparrow-sized bird with a long, down-curved bill,



*Pseudopodoces humilis*, was considered an odd member of the crow family, despite its diminutive size. This is because its superficial structure and terrestrial behavior were very similar to several much larger true *corvids*, the Ground-Jays, which also live in the same general region of Asia and share a similar habitat. It was given the common name of Hume's or Tibetan Ground-Jay. Astonishingly, an ornithologist on the staff of the Smithsonian Institution only last year discovered, based on molecular and skeletal studies, that this bird is actually a parid (a member of the chickadee and titmouse family), whose closest relative is Great Tit, a common Old World species that closely resembles our own chickadees. Appropriately, it was renamed Ground Tit. This discovery rocked the ornithological world!



*This Gray Jay was photographed by Denny Abbott in Errol, New Hampshire, in January 2002.*

### References:

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- Sibley, D., 2000. *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. Knopf. New York, New York.

## Where's the New Photo Quiz?

There will be a new one in the next issue, along with the answer! See the announcement on page 1 for the details.

# Corrections

The following corrections were found after the issue was published. Minor typos are not included. Please let us know of any inaccuracies you find in an issue, especially those which involve sighting records so that we may correct them in the computer data file to improve accuracy.

## Spring 2002

- p. 4 The Northern Fulmar photo was taken on 3-9 not 3-19.
- p.11 In The Osprey through Crane summary, third paragraph, second sentence about Sandhill Crane should read “another individual appeared in Newington not Newmarket.
- p.12 The Sora on 4-20 was seen in Durham not Newmarket.

## Summer 2002

- p. 7 In the Waterfowl summary, the last line should read “The two reports of Ruddy Duck are very unusual”, not three reports.
- p. 7 The following Mallard sightings mentioned in the Waterfowl summary were accidentally omitted:
- |          |            |                                     |                |
|----------|------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| 06-11 14 | Pittsburg  | First Connecticut Lake boat landing | E. Nielsen     |
| 06-26 5  | Kensington | Route 107 residence                 | G. Gavutis Jr. |
- p. 24 On 07-07, 6 Wood Thrush were seen in Northfield not 60.
- p. 25 Wood Warblers summary:  
Fourth sentence regarding Blackpoll Warblers should read “seen on June 4 in Newmarket”, not Durham.  
Next to last sentence, beginning “The pair reported from Durham”, was misplaced and refers to Blackburnian Warblers, not Canada Warblers. It should go after the third sentence that end with “good finds.”  
The last line should read “A Yellow-breasted Chat made its first summer appearances in New Hampshire Bird Records (which began as an independent publication with Spring 1982 reports).

## Fall 2002

- p. 5 The Red-necked Grebe on 11-28 was seen on Newfound Lake from Crescent Lane not on Crescent Lake.
- p. 11 The following Redhead sighting was accidentally omitted:  
11-27 6 Sandy Point Stratham Morgan & Marcia Tingley  
The following sightings at Canobie Lake in Windham were observed and reported by Michael Harvey, not John Williams:
- p. 4 Common Loon on 10-15.
- p. 5 Red-necked Grebe on 10-16.
- p. 10 Gadwall on 10-07; Blue-winged Teal on 10-10; Green-winged Teal on 10-11.
- p. 13 Red-breasted Merganser on 10-10.
- p. 17 Greater Yellowlegs on 10-10.
- p. 18 Spotted Sandpiper on 10-11.
- p. 19 Least Sandpiper on 10-15.
- p. 36 In the Sparrows, Blackbirds and Finches summary, in the third sentence there were five Dickcissels reported not four.

## Abbreviations Used

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

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