

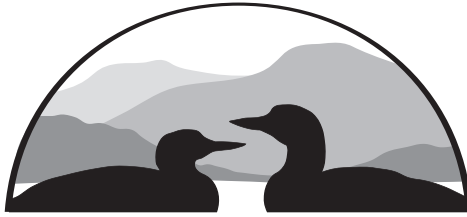
# New Hampshire Bird Records



**Winter 2008-09**

**Vol. 27, No. 4**





# New Hampshire Bird Records

## Volume 27, Number 4

### Winter 2008-09

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**Cover Photo:** Northern Hawk Owl with fresh-caught prey, by Jason Lambert, 1/12/09, along Coe Hill Rd., Center Harbor, NH.

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## IN MEMORY OF *Andy and Karen Woolf*



**T**his issue of New Hampshire Bird Records with its color cover is sponsored by the Woolf Family, in memory of Andy and Karen Woolf. Andy and Karen were life-long birders and conservationists, and strongly supportive of New Hampshire Audubon's mission to preserve wild lands and wildlife.



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## From the Editor

by Rebecca Suomala, Managing Editor

### Thank You

We are very grateful to the many generous donors who made contributions to *New Hampshire Bird Records*. These donations help New Hampshire Audubon bring you this publication and make the bird sighting data available for bird conservation throughout the state. All of us who work on *New Hampshire Bird Records* appreciate your support.

Becky Suomala  
Managing Editor

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## Photo Quiz



### Can You Identify These Birds?

Answer on page 61  
Photos by Jon Woolf

## Winter Season

**December 1, 2008 through February 28, 2009**



*David Deifik*

*by David Deifik, Winter Editor*

**N**ew Hampshire birders were treated to an outstanding season of avian delights despite the sometimes challenging conditions. *The* weather event of the season was a highly destructive ice storm on December 11-12. It caused widespread damage particularly in the southern part of the state. Almost half the residents of the state were without power, some for as long as two weeks. Three snowstorms in rapid succession in late December produced about double the average monthly snowfall. January was cold and snowy with average temperatures almost six degrees below normal and snowfall 14 inches above average. We finally had a slackening of those relatively brutal conditions with February having average temperature and precipitation. Through all of this, observers witnessed some great rarities, some outstanding boreal irruptives, and a good assortment of “half-hardies.” Surely leading the list of glamour birds was a **Northern Hawk Owl** first found in Meredith on December 5. It relocated to Center Harbor on January 12 when it received widespread publicity in both the birding community and the media. It was fairly reliable for the many birders who sought it out during the rest of the season. Many people combined the trip for the owl with a visit with Tony Vazzano in nearby Sandwich who graciously shared his outstanding redpoll show (see the article on page 57). Among his large flock of Common Redpolls there was at least one beautiful adult **Hoary Redpoll** to be found from late January through late February. Add to that frequent sightings of Pine Grosbeak and Bohemian Waxwing to make for a perfect day of New Hampshire winter birding!

A **Red Phalarope** reported on New Year’s Day from Hampton was one of the rarest finds for the season. There have been no reports for the winter season since 1966 when an individual was reported during count week on the Isles of Shoals Christmas Bird Count (CBC).

Seen by two birders at the Rochester wastewater treatment plant, a well-described and photographed



*Northern Hawk Owl by Leonard Medlock,  
1/17/09, Center Harbor, NH.*

gull consistent with **Glaucous-winged Gull** would be *the* rarity of the season if accepted by the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee. This west coast gull has never been verified in the Eastern United States, much less New Hampshire. The two **Thayer's Gulls**, also seen at the Rochester wastewater treatment plant, represent the second rarest gull species for the season. This fits the trend of increasing reports of Thayer's Gull in New England. This may be an effect of improving skill in identification of this difficult species as much as any real increase in occurrence.

Although there has been a trend of increasing numbers of American Robins wintering in the state in recent years, this winter they seemed to be especially numerous in the southern part of the state. All of our winter finches were present this season, but several species staged major irruptions. This was a truly outstanding winter for White-winged Crossbill. They were widespread and numerous throughout the state. Although one would not expect redpolls to stage invasions in consecutive years, they were quite conspicuous for a second consecutive winter season. There were a number of well-described and photographed Hoary Redpolls with the Common Redpolls. The biggest finch invasion of the season was produced by the Pine Siskin. Not since the winter of 1991-1992 have they been so numerous and widespread.


## Waterfowl

A **Cackling Goose** found in Belmont on December 14 is *the* outstanding waterfowl record, and was found on the Laconia CBC. Cackling Goose has been unrecorded, except on the CBCs (see page 33), since being split from the Canada Goose. Quite scarce, a **Tundra Swan** was seen in Hinsdale in mid-February. There were a number of waterfowl sightings that are unusual for the winter season: a Northern Shoveler in Exeter at the beginning of December, a Gadwall from Hampton on January 2, Ring-necked Ducks at the coast, Kingston, and the Connecticut River, and a Lesser Scaup that overwintered in Exeter. A King Eider and a Barrow's Goldeneye, notable for their reliably relative scarcity, made extended stays in Hampton. The Barrow's Goldeneye was particularly reliable. Hooded Merganser again put on an outstanding show in Hinsdale. A maximum number of 124 was just one bird shy of last year's outstanding single site count, which was the highest in at least eight years.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Snow Goose</b>				
12/30	23	Durham	Rt. 155A fields (Moore)	S. & J. Mirick
1/1	3	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	B. Griffith
1/1	18	Seabrook	Seabrook Harbor	B. Griffith
1/6	5	Rye	9th fairway, Wentworth-by-the-Sea GC, Rt. 1B	H. Anderson
1/11	4	New Castle	marsh off Route 1B	S. & J. Mirick
<b>Brant</b>				
2/15	1	Rye	Concord Point	B. Griffith, L. Kras
2/22	2	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S. & J. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Cackling Goose</b>				
12/14	1	Belmont	Silver Lake	P. Hunt, L. Buntten, D. Crook
<b>Canada Goose</b>				
12/6	54		NH coast	S. Mirick
12/7	100	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
12/14	219	Belmont	Silver Lake	P. Hunt, L. Buntten, D. Crook
12/29	850	Durham	Rt. 155A fields (Moore)	T. Bronson
1/23	225		Great Bay	T. Bronson
<b>Tundra Swan</b>				
2/14	2	Hinsdale	Connecticut River	S. Reagan
<b>Wood Duck</b>				
1/3	1	Concord	Merrimack R. above Sewalls Falls bridge	P. Hunt
1/3	1	Concord	River Road	P. Hunt
2/14	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	L. Tanino
2/22	1	Exeter	Downing Court	L. Medlock
2/27	5	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
<b>Gadwall</b>				
1/2	1	Hampton	Plaice Cove	S. & J. Mirick
<b>American Wigeon</b>				
1/21	1	Exeter	reservoir	S. Mirick
1/22	1	New Castle	near Wentworth Hotel	P. Brown
2/27	5	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
2/28	1	Exeter	Downing Court	L. Medlock
<b>American Black Duck</b>				
12/3	27	Greenland	Great Bay, Sunset Farm	L. Medlock
12/4	28	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/7	79	Hampton	Plaice Cove	S. & J. Mirick
12/27	90	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
1/1	15		Barnet, VT CBC-Monroe sightings	E. Emery, J. Cate
1/2	250		NH coast	T. Bronson
1/5	44	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	D. Hubbard
1/6	130	Hampton	Great Boars Head, Bicentennial Park	T. Bronson
1/23	150		Great Bay	T. Bronson
2/9	85	Hampton	Hampton Marsh	T. Bronson
<b>Mallard</b>				
12/8	80	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	L. Tanino
12/19	205	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	D. Hubbard
12/27	174	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
1/2	71		NH coast	T. Bronson
1/10	1300	Exeter	reservoir	S. & J. Mirick
1/13	280	Laconia	Landing St., off Water St.	H. Anderson
2/9	43	Hampton	Hampton Marsh	T. Bronson
2/9	65	Rye	Wallis Sands marsh	T. Bronson
2/21	201	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	L. Tanino, C. Seifer, Monadnock CFT
<b>Northern Shoveler</b>				
12/1	1	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	P. Chamberlin



<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Northern Pintail</b>				
12/8	1	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	T. Bronson
12/30	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	D. Hubbard
1/10	3	Exeter	reservoir	S.& J. Mirick
2/9	1	Rye	Wallis Sands marsh	T. Bronson
2/20	1	Tilton	Winnepesaukee River	J. Williams
<b>Green-winged Teal</b>				
12/2	6	Nashua	Salmon Brook	C. Sheridan
12/7	3	Hampton	Plaice Cove	S.& J. Mirick
<b>Ring-necked Duck</b>				
12/6	2	Kingston	Great Pond	T. Bronson
1/6	1	Hinsdale	Connecticut R. below Vernon Dam	L. Tanino, K. Yard, C. Seifer
1/21	1	Hampton	Liberty Lane	S. Mirick
2/27	2	Kingston	Powwow Pond	L. Medlock
2/27	4	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
<b>Greater Scaup</b>				
12/3	600	Greenland	Great Bay, Sunset Farm	L. Medlock
12/18	1	Rye	Eel Pond	C. Sheridan
12/28	3	Laconia	Winnisquam L., mouth of Winnepesaukee R.	R. Suomala
1/10	2	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	S.& J. Mirick
				
<i>Lesser Scaup and Mallard by Jon Woolf, 12/15/08, Eel Pond, Rye, NH.</i>				
<b>Lesser Scaup</b>				
12/1	10	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	P. Chamberlin
12/13	1	Rye	Eel Pond	S.& J. Mirick
2/15	1	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	L. Tanino, C. Seifer, P. Chamberlin
<b>King Eider</b>				
12/14	1	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	E. Masterson
1/21	1	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	L. Medlock
<b>Surf Scoter</b>				
2/15	72		NH coast	L. Tanino
<b>White-winged Scoter</b>				
12/14	1	Tilton	Winnisquam Lake	P. Hunt, L. Bunten, D. Crook
2/15	137		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
<b>Black Scoter</b>				
1/2	20	Rye	Jeness Beach	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
2/9	12	Hampton	Great Boars Head north	T. Bronson
2/9	5	Seabrook	Seabrook Beach at Haverhill St.	T. Bronson
2/15	2	Rye	Rye Harbor St. Pk.	L. Tanino

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Long-tailed Duck</b>				
12/3	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	L. Tanino
12/7	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
2/15	114		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
<b>Bufflehead</b>				
12/14	43	Portsmouth	Little Bay	E. Masterson
12/16	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	D. Hubbard
2/9	5	Manchester	Merrimack River	E. Masterson, S. Hunter, S. Tucker
<b>Common Goldeneye</b>				
12/6	2	Pittsfield	Jeness Pond	A.& G. Robbins
12/28	60	Laconia	Winnisquam Lake, mouth of Winnepesaukee R.	R. Suomala
2/1	250	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	L. Tanino, K. Yard
2/9	40	Manchester	Merrimack River	E. Masterson, S. Hunter, S. Tucker
2/15	126		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
2/17	200		Great Bay	T. Bronson, D. Hubbard
<b>Barrow's Goldeneye</b>				
12/7	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	S.& J. Mirick
1/2	1	Rye	Rt. 1A pulloff opposite Stone Angel	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
1/10	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson, L. Tanino, K. Klapper, P. Strelitz
1/23	2	Manchester	Merrimack River	E. Masterson
2/15	2		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
2/28	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	E. Masterson
<b>Hooded Merganser</b>				
12/4	51	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/6	7		NH coast	S. Mirick
12/6	7	Kingston	Great Pond	T. Bronson
12/6	9	Northwood	Northwood Lake	A.& G. Robbins
12/6	35	Pittsfield	Jeness Pond	A.& G. Robbins
12/28	12	Belmont	Silver Lake below Lochmere Dam	R. Suomala
12/30	1	Dover	Cocheco River	S.& J. Mirick
1/1	6		Barnet, VT CBC-Monroe sightings	E. Emery, J. Cate
1/2	1	N. Hampton	Little River WS	T. Bronson
1/2	3	Rye	Witchs Creek	S.& J. Mirick
1/15	13	Laconia	Paugus Bay	J.& J. Williams
2/4	124	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
2/9	1	Manchester	Merrimack River	E. Masterson, S. Hunter, S. Tucker
2/11	7	Plainfield	Connecticut River	L. Tanino, K. Yard
2/15	5	Nashua	Field's Grove	C. Sheridan
2/20	4	Tilton	Winnepesaukee River	J. Williams
2/25	2	Hampton	Hampton River at Rt. 1	T. Bronson, N. Nelson
2/27	2	Kingston	Powwow Pond	L. Medlock
<b>Common Merganser</b>				
12/2	4	Goffstown	Glen Lake	T. Bronson
12/2	45	Harrisville	Skatutakee Lake	T. Bronson

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
12/3	33	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	L. Tanino
12/14	276	Laconia	Weirs Beach	I. MacLeod
2/9	13	Manchester	Merrimack River	E. Masterson, S. Hunter, S. Tucker
2/11	25	Nashua	Field's Grove	C. Sheridan
2/20	16	Tilton	Winnepesaukee River	J. Williams
2/21	7	Errol	Androscoggin River	L. Medlock, Seacoast CFT
2/27	71	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson

**Ring-necked Pheasant**

12/14	1	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	L. Medlock
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**Wild Turkey**

1/1	100		Barnet, VT CBC-Monroe sightings	E. Emery, J. Cate
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## Loons through Raptors

There was only one inland report of Common Loon, coming from Spofford Lake in Chesterfield on December 20. Spofford Lake was also one of only two sites for Pied-billed Grebe this season with Great Pond, Kingston being the other. Both records were at the very beginning of December. Of great interest were the results from a mid-winter pelagic trip to Jeffrey's Ledge aboard the University of New Hampshire research vessel "Gulf Challenger." A very impressive total of 140 Northern Fulmars were tallied. This species was last reported during the winter season in 2002, also at Jeffrey's Ledge. At that time, 25 birds were seen.

Inland records of Double-crested Cormorant during the winter season are quite rare, particularly after mid-December. There were two such records this year, one of a bird in Exeter seen for almost two weeks into early January, and one in Manchester in early February. There were two inland reports of Great Cormorant, one from Laconia in January, and two birds in Manchester. This species is slightly more common inland during winter than the Double-crested. A Great Blue Heron seen on December 14 at the Pinkham Notch Visitor Center was an unusual find as there are very few reports from the North Country by this time of year. Turkey Vultures continue to increase their winter season presence. There were about double the number of reports as compared to last year. The majority of the records were in February suggesting very early spring arrivals.

The New Hampshire Audubon Mid-Winter Bald Eagle Survey was again a record setting event. The trend over the survey's 29 year history has been most heartening. In 1982, only two eagles were seen on count day. This year, a record 61 eagles were seen in the state on January 10 (January 8 in the Lakes Region). This



*Merlin fanning its wings and tail,  
by Chris Sheridan,  
12/28/08, Nashua, NH.*

consisted of 32 adults and 29 immature birds. During the count period, extending from December 31, 2008 through January 14, 2009, a record 74 eagles were tallied (42 adults, 32 immatures). The high count on survey day was from the Seacoast/Great Bay Region with 18 eagles. The other principal areas of abundance were the Merrimack River (17 on count day), Lakes Region (9), Connecticut River (8), and the Androscoggin River (4). Thanks to NH Audubon's Chris Martin and the 88 volunteers who made this important survey possible. Red-shouldered Hawk is quite scarce in winter, so the three records for the season are notable. Rough-legged Hawk was present this winter, but at somewhat lower abundance than last year's relatively strong showing. As for falcons, we now have a reversal of abundance for American Kestrel versus Merlin with the kestrel now being the much rarer species in winter.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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*Red-throated Loon by Steve Mirick,  
12/25/08, Rye Harbor, NH.*

#### **Red-throated Loon**

12/6	8		NH coast	S. Mirick
12/18	2	Rye	Rye Harbor	C. Sheridan

#### **Common Loon**

12/20	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake, Keene CBC	P. Brown, J. Tilden
2/15	35		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick

#### **Pied-billed Grebe**

12/4	4	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/6	1	Kingston	Great Pond	T. Bronson

#### **Horned Grebe**

2/15	17		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
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#### **Red-necked Grebe**

12/3	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	L. Tanino
12/14	3	Belmont	Winnisquam Lake	P. Hunt, L. Bunten, D. Crook
2/28	100		NH coast	E. Masterson

#### **Northern Fulmar**

2/6	140	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. & J. Mirick, B. Griffith
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#### **Northern Gannet**

12/12	14		NH coast	S. Mirick
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#### **Double-crested Cormorant**

12/7	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor	S. & J. Mirick
12/28	1	Exeter	Exeter River falls downtown	P. Chamberlin
1/10	1	Exeter	downtown on river	S. & J. Mirick
2/9	2	Manchester	Merrimack River	E. Masterson, S. Hunter, S. Tucker

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Great Cormorant</b>				
12/9	18	Rye	Concord Point	T. Bronson, D. Hubbard
12/28	1	Exeter	Exeter River falls downtown	P. Chamberlin
1/2	21		NH coast	T. Bronson
1/8	1	Laconia	Paugus Bay near Madeira on Elm St., Lakeport	B. Sens, N. Mitchell, C. Martin
1/23	2	Manchester	Merrimack River	E. Masterson
2/2	1	Manchester	Merrimack River	J. Williams
2/9	60		NH coast	T. Bronson
<b>Great Blue Heron</b>				
12/4	1	Holderness	Squam Channel	I. MacLeod
12/6	1	Brentwood	Rt. 101 at exit 8	T. Bronson
12/7	3		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
12/14	2	Laconia	Water St., Eagar Island	H. Anderson
12/15	1	Pinkhams Grant	Pinkham Notch Visitor Center	T. Bronson
1/2	1	Rye	marsh	L. Medlock
2/15	1	Durham	Durham Point Road	L. Medlock
2/25	1	Nashua	Field's Grove	C. Sheridan
<b>Turkey Vulture</b>				
12/29	2	Newmarket	Rt. 108 at New Road	T. Bronson
12/30	1	Epping	Wal-Mart	S. & J. Mirick
1/4	1	Exeter	Front St.	R. Aaronian
2/13	1	Hampton Falls	Woodlawn Avenue	T. Bronson
2/13	2	Newmarket	Route 108	K. Dorsey
2/13	1	Windham	Londonderry Road	J. Romano
2/14	1	Exeter	Route 101	L. Medlock
2/15	3	Newmarket	Bay Road	H. Chary
2/15	1	Rye	Jeness Beach	S. & J. Mirick
2/16	2	Auburn	Route 101	L. Medlock
2/18	1	Madbury	Bellamy Reservoir	C. Awalt
2/18	18	Nashua	Main Dunstable Rd.	C. Sheridan
2/20	1	Concord	Route 3 near prison	P. Hunt
2/20	1	Keene	Route 9	J. Tilden
2/21	1	N. Hampton	Little River saltmarsh	T. Bronson
2/21	1	Raymond	Route 101	H. Chary
2/26	3	Exeter	Washington St.	T. Bronson
2/28	9	Durham	transfer station	K. Dorsey
2/28	1	Keene	upper Court St.	D. Scribner
2/28	1	Stratham	Great Bay	E. Masterson
2/28	2	Walpole	Falls Mountain	P. Brown, J. Tilden
<b>Northern Harrier</b>				
12/2	1	Surry	Surry Mountain Lake	L. Tanino
1/2	3		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
1/6	1	Westmoreland	Chickering Farm	C. Seifer
<b>Northern Goshawk</b>				
12/19	1	Nottingham	Stevens Hill Rd.	D. Crowe
12/21	1	Goshen	Brook Rd.	P. Newbern
12/23	1	Rumney	Buffalo Road residence	J. Williams
1/21	1	Bradford	West Rd. & Old Mountain Rd.	C. Meise
1/23	1	Madison	Silver Lake, Bimba Island	G. Gavutis, Jr.
2/1	1	Bradford	West Rd.	C. Meise

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Red-shouldered Hawk</b>				
12/4	1	Windham	Easy Street	A. Vaughan
1/2	1	Lee	Rt. 125/Rt. 4 shopping plaza	A. Tappan
2/2	1	Nashua	Fairview Ave.	C. Sheridan
<b>Rough-legged Hawk</b>				
12/23	1	Exeter	Wentworth Street	T. Bronson
12/30	1	Dover	off 6th Street	S. & J. Mirick
1/2	1	Hampton	Hampton Marsh	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
1/12	1	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	J. Merrill, J. Lambert, et al.
2/21	1	Hampton Falls	Depot Road railroad causeway	T. Bronson
<b>American Kestrel</b>				
1/23	1	Concord	School Street	E. Masterson
2/22	1	Hampton	off Route 101	S. & J. Mirick
1/1			Barnet, VT CBC-CW-Monroe sightings	E. Emery, J. Cate
<b>Merlin</b>				
12/14	1	Concord	community gardens off Clinton St.	R. Woodward
12/20	1	Keene	Marlborough Street	L. Tanino, K. Yard
1/15	1	Nashua	Main St.	C. Sheridan
2/11	1	Newmarket	Smith Garrison Road	K. Dorsey
2/21	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	T. Bronson
2/28	1	Nashua	Lake, Main & Belmont Sts.	C. Sheridan
2/28	1	Surry	Village Road	L. Tanino
<b>Peregrine Falcon</b>				
12/3	1	Stratham	Rt. 101 at Rt. 108	T. Bronson
12/27	2	Hampton Falls	South Elder Lane	J. Hurrie
2/2	1	Newington	Rt. 16 General Sullivan Bridge	D. Hubbard, A. Kimball
2/9	2	Manchester	Merrimack River	E. Masterson, S. Hunter, S. Tucker
2/14	1	Concord	State House dome	R. Woodward
2/25	1	Hampton Falls	Depot Road	L. Medlock
2/28	1	Hampton	water tower	E. Masterson

## Sandpipers through Alcids

A single Killdeer report from Concord in early December was a very uncommon find. By any standard, the report of a **Red Phalarope** on New Year's Day in Hampton should qualify as a mega-rarity. There are no winter season or CBC reports for this species since 1966 when one bird was seen during count week of the Isles of Shoals CBC.

*Glaucous-winged Gull by Scott Young, 1/10/09, Rochester wastewater treatment plant, NH.*



The gull show from the Rochester wastewater treatment plant continues to surprise and delight the lariphiles among us. A **Glaucous-winged Gull** photographed on January 10 would constitute a first state record if accepted by the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee. Moreover, it would be a first for the whole Eastern United States! First year and adult **Thayer's Gull** records are also outstandingly rare and they represent only the second and third records for the state. The six records for Lesser Black-backed Gull continues a trend of an increasingly common presence for this previously super-rare gull.

The two **Dovekie** records seen from land were not reflective of the generally big season for this species in the region. Both Maine and Massachusetts had them in abundances not seen in many years. The previously mentioned pelagic trip to Jeffrey's Ledge yielded a bonanza of 78 Dovekies from New Hampshire waters only. As a comparison, 14 were seen on the last reported mid-winter Jeffrey's Ledge outing in early February of 2002.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>American Coot</b>				
12/5	2	Exeter	Powder House Pond	P. Chamberlin
12/7	2	Rye	Eel Pond	S. & J. Mirick
<b>Killdeer</b>				
12/9	1	Concord	Morrill's Farm	H. Nevers
<b>Sanderling</b>				
12/7	110	Hampton	Hampton Harbor inlet rocks	S. & J. Mirick
12/30	14	Rye	Rye Ledge	T. Bronson
<b>Purple Sandpiper</b>				
1/1	8	Hampton	rocks near Bicentennial Park	L. Medlock
1/2	33	Rye	Rye Ledge	T. Bronson
2/22	40		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick



*Dunlin in the surf by Jon Woolf, 12/2/08, Hampton Beach State Park, Hampton, NH.*

<b>Dunlin</b>				
12/7	110	Hampton	Hampton Harbor inlet rocks	S. & J. Mirick
<b>Red Phalarope</b>				
1/1	1	Hampton	North Side Park	B. Griffith
<b>Black-legged Kittiwake</b>				
12/10	1	Rye	Concord Point	T. Bronson, D. Govatski, et al.
12/12	6		NH coast	S. Mirick
2/6	5	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. & J. Mirick, B. Griffith

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Bonaparte's Gull</b>				
12/10	9	Rye	Jenness Beach	T. Bronson, D. Govatski, et al.
12/14	1	Rye	Rye Harbor St. Pk.	E. Masterson
1/11	1	New Castle	Great Island Common	S.& J. Mirick
1/24	1	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	S.& J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, D. Donsker
<b>Ring-billed Gull</b>				
12/4	135	Fremont	Martin Road	T. Bronson
2/20	20	Tilton	Winnepesaukee River	J. Williams
2/27	37	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
<b>Herring Gull</b>				
12/3	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	L. Tanino
1/9	1	Swanzy	Dillant-Hopkins Airport	L. Tanino
2/4	1050	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	L. Tanino, B. Griffith, D. Hubbard
2/16	20	Bethlehem	Trudeau Road	S.& J. Mirick
2/20	6	Tilton	Winnepesaukee River	J. Williams
2/21	8	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	L. Tanino, C. Seifer, Monadnock CFT
<b>Herring X Lesser Black-backed Gull hybrid</b>				
12/16	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	B. Griffith
<b>Thayer's Gull</b>				
12/16	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	B. Griffith
12/18	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	J. Lambert
1/12	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	B. Griffith, J. Lambert
<b>Iceland Gull</b>				
12/6	1	Rye	Eel Pond	E. Masterson, Monadnock CFT
12/14	4		NH coast	E. Masterson
12/29	1	Nashua	Nashua landfill	E. Masterson
1/10	1	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	S.& J. Mirick
1/11	1	New Castle	Great Island Common	S.& J. Mirick
1/13	16	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	E. Masterson
1/21	2	Exeter	downtown area	S. Mirick
2/4	2	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	L. Medlock
2/11	2	Nashua	Field's Grove	C. Sheridan
2/20	1	Tilton	Winnepesaukee River	J. Williams
2/22	1	Seabrook	Seabrook Harbor	T. Bronson
<b>Lesser Black-backed Gull</b>				
12/7	1	Durham	town landing	K. Dorsey
12/10	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	T. Bronson, D. Govatski, et al.
12/23	2	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	D. Hubbard
12/27	1	Newmarket	town landing	K. Dorsey
1/24	1	Rye	Frost Point at Odiome Point St. Pk.	S.& J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, D. Donsker
2/9	1	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	S. Young
<b>Glaucous-winged Gull</b>				
1/10	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	S. Young, D. Hubbard



<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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*Second-winter Glaucous Gull by Jon Woolf, 1/6/09, parking lot near Yankee Fishermen's Coop., Seabrook, NH.*

### **Glaucous Gull**

12/6	1	Rye	Rye Ledge	E. Masterson, Monadnock CFT
12/7	2		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
1/12	10	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	B. Griffith, J. Lambert
1/24	1	Hampton	Hampton Harbor	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod, P. Brown, D. Fallon
1/24	1	Seabrook	Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	S.& J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, D. Donsker
2/15	2		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick

### **Great Black-backed Gull**

12/2	1	Goffstown	Glen Lake	T. Bronson
2/6	50	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S.& J. Mirick, B. Griffith
2/16	20	Bethlehem	Trudeau Road	S.& J. Mirick
2/18	11	Laconia	L. Winnepesaukee off Water St.	H. Anderson

### **Dovekie**

12/24	1	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S.& J. Mirick
2/1	1	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	L. Medlock, S.& J. Mirick
2/6	78	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S.& J. Mirick, B. Griffith

### **Thick-billed Murre**

1/24	1	N. Hampton	North Side Park	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod, P. Brown, D. Fallon
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### **Razorbill**

12/6	4	Rye	Odiorne Point St. Pk.	E. Masterson, Monadnock CFT
12/14	7		NH coast	E. Masterson
1/2	3	Rye	Odiorne Point St. Pk.	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
2/6	8	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S.& J. Mirick, B. Griffith

### **Black Guillemot**

12/6	9		NH coast	S. Mirick
12/14	5	Hampton	Northside Park	L. Medlock, J. Lambert, J. O'Shaughnessy
12/14	4	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	E. Masterson
1/4	4	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	S.& J. Mirick
2/2	5	Hampton	Little Boars Head	L. Medlock, J. O'Shaughnessy

## Doves through Crows

This was a banner year for Snowy Owl throughout the region and New Hampshire enjoyed a major influx as well. There were at least seven birds seen during the winter season, including four from inland locations where the species is more rarely found. The Milford bird was particularly notable, because it spent eight weeks in the area (see page 66). Honors for the star bird of the season have got to go to the **Northern Hawk Owl** that spent the season in the



*Northern Hawk Owl launches into flight, by Fred Tyrrell, 1/12/09, Center Harbor, NH.*

Lakes Region. First photographed on December 4 in Meredith, the bird was re-located in Center Harbor on January 12 and promptly reported. From that time until the end of the season, the owl received widespread publicity in the media and numerous visitors from throughout the region. It remained in Center Harbor at least through the end of February. There was a definite up-tick in the number of Northern Saw-Whet Owls reported. Though not rare at this time of the year, they are hard to detect and hence only a couple of birds are usually reported.

Two separate records of the scarce Red-headed Woodpecker are quite notable. The last winter report of this species was a single bird in the winter of 2004-2005. Reports of Red-bellied Woodpecker have now become so numerous that for a second year they are not separately listed. The CBC results graphically illustrate the continuing population explosion for this species. The three reports for Yellow-bellied Sapsucker are about average for this half-hardy woodpecker. For the second year in a row, Northern Shrike was in evidence with only slightly fewer records than last year's very strong showing. An Eastern Phoebe found on December 7 was a noteworthy record as they are quite scarce at any time during the winter season. By late October, Blue-headed Vireo becomes quite rare, so a bird found on December 1 was quite outstanding. There have been no winter season records for this species since before 1990.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Eastern Screech-Owl</b>				
12/21	1	Exeter	Park Street	L. Medlock
1/24	1	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	S.& J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, D. Donsker
<b>Snowy Owl</b>				
12/1	1	Milford	end of Rt. 101 bypass in Market Basket area	S. Christensen
12/1	1	Rye	Foss Beach & Rye Harbor St. Pk.	C. Martin, V. Jones
12/8	2	Rye	Foss Beach, Ragged Neck	T. Bronson
1/5	1	Manchester	near Harley Street	C. York

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
1/19	1	Westmoreland	Woodward Rd.	E. Chamberlin
1/24	1	Milford	Lee-An Dr., Mayflower Hill	J. Welch
2/4	1	Rochester	landfill	L. Tanino, B. Griffith
2/11	1	Rye	Ragged Neck	S. Mirick
2/25	1	Rye	Star Island	A. DeSteiguer
1/1			Barnet, VT CBC-CW-Monroe sightings	E. Emery, J. Cate

### Northern Hawk Owl

12/5	1	Meredith	Follett Road	K. McClendon
1/12	1	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	J. Merrill, et al.
1/29	1	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	L. Tanino, K. Yard

### Short-eared Owl

12/24	1	N. Hampton	Philbrick Marsh	S. & J. Mirick
1/2	1	Rye	Odiorne Point St. Pk.	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
2/21	1	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	T. Bronson



*Saw-whet Owl peeking through branches,  
by Leonard Medlock*

### Northern Saw-whet Owl

1/24	1	Antrim	Route 9	P. Brown
1/27	1	Weare	River Rd.	J. Lamson
1/30	1	Gilford	Stark St.	D. Morgan, R. Sanders
2/1	1	Nelson	residence	P. Brown, J. Tilden
2/5	1	Keene	Woodside Ave.	D. Farmer
2/19	1	Rochester	Jiffy Lube, Charles St.	K. Smith, S. Boulard
2/23	1	Meredith	Old Center Harbor Rd.	F. Tyrrell, J. Merrill
2/28	1	S. Hampton	Burrows-Brookside WS	L. Medlock

### Belted Kingfisher

12/3	2	Durham	Adams Point WMA	T. Bronson, D. Hubbard
12/9	1	Hampton	Route 101 at marsh	T. Bronson
12/9	1	Portsmouth	Route 1 at Sagamore Creek	T. Bronson, D. Hubbard
12/9	1	Rye	Seavey Creek at Rt. 1A	T. Bronson, D. Hubbard
12/14	1	Laconia	Water St., Eagar Island	H. Anderson
12/23	1	Nashua	Hassel Brook at Hassel Brook Rd.	C. Sheridan
12/27	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
12/28	1	Laconia	Winnepesaukee R., Water St.	R. Suomala
12/29	1	Nashua	Hassel Brook	C. Sheridan
2/8	1	Concord	Morrill's Farm	P. Hunt
2/9	1	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	L. Medlock, J. Lambert
2/21	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	L. Tanino, C. Seifer, Monadnock CFT

### Red-headed Woodpecker

1/2	1	Conway	off West Side Rd.	P. Buswell
2/15	1	Auburn	Dollard Rd.	D. & A. Dollard

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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**Red-bellied Woodpecker**

1/10	1	Chatham	Robbins Ridge	B. Crowley
1/20	1	Conway	Goldfinch Lane	J. & C. Assunto
2/2	1	Bartlett	Rolling Ridge Rd.	S. Heuston



*Yellow-bellied Sapsucker by Chris Andon, 1/17/09, Berkeley St., Nashua, NH.*

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**

1/1	1	Concord	Shaker Rd. School	R. Suomala
1/17	1	Nashua	Berkeley St.	C. Andon
2/11	1	Manchester	residence near McIntyre Ski Area	J. Duval

**Black-backed Woodpecker**

12/28	2	Beans Grant	Crawford Path	D. Govatski
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**Eastern Phoebe**

12/7	1	N. Hampton	n. of Little Boars Head	S. & J. Mirick
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**Northern Shrike**

12/6	1	Concord	RR tracks n. of Horseshoe Pond	R. Woodward
12/11	1	Nelson	Old Concord Road	P. Brown
12/14	1	Westmoreland	Westmoreland Road	P. Brown, J. Tilden
12/15	1	Milan	Chickwolnepy Road	T. Bronson
12/17	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
12/20	1	Portsmouth	Bancroft Road	P. Hunt
12/23	1	Jefferson	Rt. 116 residence	D. & K. Govatski
12/24	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
1/2	1	Farmington	Farmington Country Club	S. Young
1/2	1	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
1/3	1	Colebrook	Rt. 3 at Stewartstown/Colebrook line	L. Medlock, J. Lambert, B. Griffith
1/9	1	Keene	Green Wagon Farm	L. Tanino
1/13	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
1/18	1	Nelson	residence	P. Brown, J. Tilden
1/19	1	Farmington	Farmington Country Club	S. Young
1/21	1	Hampton Falls	Elton Lane	T. Bronson
1/22	1	Newmarket	Lubberland Creek Preserve	P. Brown, C. Cabot
1/30	1	Colebrook	Indian Trail	B. Rappaport
2/3	1	Keene	Krif Road	L. Tanino
2/6	1	Keene	Green Wagon Farm	L. Tanino
2/14	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
2/19	1	Plymouth	Merrill & Emerson Sts.	B. & K. Wheeler
2/21	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	L. Tanino, C. Seifer, Monadnock CFT

**Blue-headed Vireo**

12/1	1	Raymond	Routes 27 & 107	T. Bronson
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<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Gray Jay</b>				
12/28	4	Beans Grant	Crawford Path	D. Govatski
1/25	3	Beans Grant	Mt. Jackson summit	J. Stockwell
2/7	1	Cambridge	Route 26	B. Griffith, L. Kras
2/14	2	Pittsburg	East Inlet Road	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
2/21	3	Errol	ranger station	L. Medlock, Seacoast CFT
<b>Fish Crow</b>				
2/12	1	Durham	post office	K. Dorsey

## Larks through Waxwings

**H**orned Lark was about as commonly reported as last year, but generally with much smaller flock sizes. A very strange looking chickadee photographed in Concord on December 21 generated a lively on-line discussion as to its identity. It was fairly obvious that one parent was a Black-capped Chickadee, but the origin of the other parent was murkier. After much discussion and expert consultation, the general consensus was that this was a Blue Tit X Black-capped Chickadee hybrid! Though the origin of the Blue Tit will remain unknown, the greatest likelihood is that it was an escaped captive bird. Several years ago a Great Tit found in Jamestown, Rhode Island was traced to an aviary escape, suggesting that there are more of these birds held privately than one would think. Boreal Chickadee in the North Country is an expected species in proper habitat, but is a real rarity in the southern half of the state. Hence, a bird found (originally on the Concord CBC) at a feeder in Bow generated quite a bit of interest. It spent almost the entire month of February at this locale affording observers and photographers a rare opportunity to drive right up to a bird that usually requires a trip north to the mountains with a bit of a hike as well. A second bird was seen in Concord at the end of December, but unfortunately was a “one-day-wonder.”

Carolina Wren continues to be quite evident and widely reported, although for the most part confined to the southern part of the state. Two new occurrences on CBCs in the North Country suggest it may be starting to penetrate up there as well. The smattering reports of the normally scarce Winter Wren are typical for the season.

*Varied Thrush found during  
the Coastal CBC,  
by Jason Lambert,  
12/23/08,  
between Fairway Road  
and Lawrence Lane,  
Rye, NH.*




Eastern Bluebird continues its winter presence in the south with even a few more records than last year's excellent showing. Hermit Thrush, the other half-hardy thrush, did even better in relative terms with more than double the records from last year. At least three **Varied Thrushes**, a rare visitor from the western United States, were reported this season, all from near the coast. One was found on the Coastal CBC and it lingered long enough to be observed by a number of birders and photographers. This level of occurrence was consistent with the banner year for the species in neighboring Maine. No fewer than eight separate birds were reported from Maine this winter, a truly phenomenal number. We have gotten used to seeing American Robins in good numbers in the last several winters, but this season was amazing for their large numbers and widespread distribution. This appeared to be part of a huge invasion of robins mainly found in the coastal plain from Maine to Rhode Island.

There was only one seasonal record for Gray Catbird. With the exception of the banner season of 2005-2006, there are usually no more than two or three occurrences during winter. The three records for American Pipit, all occurring in mid-December, are consistent with its rare status for this season. After the fabulous showing for Bohemian Waxwing last year, one wouldn't expect a repeat invasion this year. However, that is what occurred with Bohemians again being widely reported. The majority occurred from the Lakes Region north, but about 20% of the sightings were in the southern region, both coastal and inland.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Horned Lark</b>				
12/7	40	N. Hampton	Runnymede Farm	S.& J. Mirick
12/20	13	New Castle	Cambells Lane	P. Hunt, F. Benhan, B. Griffith
12/27	20	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
12/30	6	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	T. Bronson
1/2	25	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	T. Bronson
1/4	112		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
1/6	9	Walpole	Malnati Farm	L. Tanino, K. Yard, C. Seifer
1/6	28	Walpole	River Road	L. Tanino, K. Yard, C. Seifer
1/10	77	Walpole	Chickering Farm	E. Masterson, L. Tanino, Monadnock CFT
1/23	15	Stratham	Stuart Farm	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse
1/25	251	Walpole	River Road	L. Tanino
2/2	43	Kensington	Stumpfield Rd. at farm field	T. Bronson
<b>Boreal Chickadee</b>				
12/28	7	Beans Grant	Crawford Path	D. Govatski
12/30	1	Concord	Bog Road	P. Hunt
1/3	2	Pittsburg	Route 3	L. Medlock, J. Lambert, B. Griffith
1/10	4	Jackson	Wildcat E., south side at 3650'	J. Stockwell
1/30	1	Bow	River Rd. feeders	R. Craven
2/11	1	Low & Burbanks Grant	Valley Way trail to Mt. Madison	S. Crowley
2/14	1	Pittsburg	East Inlet Road	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
2/16	1	Albany	Kancamagus Highway	S.& J. Mirick
2/16	2	Livermore	Kancamagus Highway	S.& J. Mirick
2/24	1	Bow	River Road	T. Bronson

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Chickadee hybrid</b>				
12/21	1	Concord	SPNHF	J. Pietrzak
<b>Winter Wren</b>				
12/14	1	Westmoreland	Butterfield Hill Rd.	P. Brown, J. Tilden
12/27	1	Durham	Lamprey River Preserve	K. Dorsey
1/24	1	Durham	Fogg Drive	K. Dorsey
1/26	1	Marlborough	Page Hill	K. Yard
<b>Eastern Bluebird</b>				
12/3	6	Durham	Adams Point WMA	T. Bronson, D. Hubbard
12/17	2	Meredith	Old Center Harbor Rd.	F. Tyrrell
12/26	10	Bedford	Barrington Drive	T. Dainesi
12/30	4	Hillsborough	Bible Hill Rd.	M. Placer
1/3	3	Concord	Morrill's Farm	P. Hunt
1/5	4	Dover	Strafford County Farm	D. Hubbard
1/5	4	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
1/6	4	Hampton Falls	Drinkwater Rd. & King St.	T. Bronson
1/10	10	Chesterfield	Cross Road	E. Masterson, L. Tanino, K. Klapper, P. Strelitz
1/15	6	Westmoreland	Partridge Brook Rd.	R. Ritz
1/20	4	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	F. Tyrrell
1/20	10	Newmarket	Bay Road	H. Chary
1/23	6	N. Hampton	Lovering Road	T. Bronson
2/4	6	Dublin	East Harrisville Rd.	P. Mill
2/12	7	Salem	Shadow Lake Rd.	E. Nutter
mid-Feb.	4	Salem	Shore Drive, North Salem	M. Pomeroy
2/18	6	Madbury	Bellamy Reservoir	C. Awalt
2/22	11		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
<b>Hermit Thrush</b>				
12/7	1	N. Hampton	Woodland Road	S. & J. Mirick
12/10	1	Exeter	Phillips Exeter Academy campus	A. Bodington
12/19	1	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
12/27	1	Durham	Lamprey River Preserve	K. Dorsey
1/2	1	N. Hampton	Spruce Meadow	S. & J. Mirick
1/2	1	New Castle	off Route 1B	S. & J. Mirick
1/13	1	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow	M. Wright
1/21	2	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
2/19	1	Exeter	High St.	E. Ring
<b>American Robin</b>				
12/4	2000	Newfields	Chapmans Landing off Rt. 108	phone report
12/13	156	Keene	Pitcher Street	L. Tanino
12/14	120	Sanbornton	Hunkins Pond Road	P. Hunt, L. Bunten, D. Crook
1/3	350	Concord	Millstream Rd	P. Hunt
1/9	50	Swanzy	Dillant-Hopkins Airport	L. Tanino
2/4	75	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	L. Tanino, B. Griffith, D. Hubbard
<b>Varied Thrush</b>				
12/20	1	Rye	Lawrence St. & South Rd.	P. Lacourse, C. Scott
12/22	1	Rochester	Daffodil Hill Lane	P. Dausch

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Varied Thrush—continued</b>				
12/23	1	Rye	Fairway & Lawrence Lns., Abenaqui GC	L. Medlock, J. Lambert, T. Bronson, J. Hully
2/20	1	Rochester	Salmon Falls River residence	K. Rudnicki
				
<i>Gray Catbird by Carol Scheele, 1/12/09, Burbank Rd., Londonderry, NH.</i>				
<b>Gray Catbird</b>				
1/12	1	Londonderry	Burbank Road	C. Scheele
<b>American Pipit</b>				
12/14	1	Rye	Odiorne Point St. Pk.	E. Masterson
12/14	1	Rye	Rye Harbor St. Pk.	E. Masterson
12/20	4	Rye	Ragged Neck	P. Hunt, F. Benhan, B. Griffith
<b>Bohemian Waxwing</b>				
12/20	1	Keene		P. Brown, J. Tilden
12/23	30	Ashland	Sanborn Road	I. MacLeod
12/27	1	Newmarket	Dame Road	K. Dorsey
12/30	15	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow	M. Wright
1/2	2	Rye	Wallis Sands	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
1/5	41	Littleton	Owen Dr. between Kilburn & South Sts.	M. Boulanger
1/7	250	Plymouth	Plymouth State Univ. campus by traffic circle	J. Williams
1/10	8	Walpole	Route 12	E. Masterson, L. Tanino, K. Klapper, P. Strelitz
1/11	400	Conway	White Mountain Hwy (Rt. 16)	L. Medlock
1/14	50	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	J. Merrill, et al.
1/16	31	Wilmot	Penacle Rd.	W. & J. Walker
1/19	25	New London	Colonial Shopping Plaza	P. Newbern
1/19	1	Portsmouth	Woodbury Drive	K. Dorsey
1/19	50	Rochester	Rod Road	S. Young
1/20	16	Laconia	Kinsman Dr.	H. Anderson
1/21	27	Conway	Main St. at fire station	B. Crowley
1/21	50	Moultonborough	Route 25 & Route 109	T. Bronson
1/21	10	Newport	Bradford Rd.	A. Mitts
1/21	45	Surry	Village Road	L. Tanino
1/22	12	Newmarket	Kwaks WS	P. Brown, C. Cabot
1/23	65	Chichester	Smith Sanborn Rd.	R. Suomala
1/23	400	Hanover	Lebanon St. near Hopkins Center	A. Briere
1/23	270	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
2/3	20	Bradford	West Rd.	C. Meise
2/3	8	Surry	Village Road	L. Tanino
2/7	300	Holderness	post office	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Knapp
2/19	150	Webster	Water Street	R. Quinn
2/22	60	Conway	Settler's Green Shopping Ctr., Rt. 16	P. Brown, J. Tilden
2/26	60	Keene	Court Street	L. Tanino



<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Cedar Waxwing</b>				
12/1	150	Concord	Contoocook Island	P. Hunt
12/2	150	Walpole	Merriam Rd.	R. Ritz
12/4	400	Plymouth	Rt. 25 w. of Hatch Plaza	J. Williams
12/13	300	Concord	White Park	S. Brand
12/20	500	Keene	Marlborough Street	L. Tanino, K. Yard

## Warblers through Sparrows

There were about three times the average number of records for Yellow-rumped Warbler this winter, with all reports confined to or very near the coast. Among them was a record for the western **Audubon's Warbler** subspecies, rare for us. There were only two other warbler species reported during the season – a Palm Warbler in Rye and two Pine Warblers in early December from Pittsfield and Seabrook (there was also a CBC record).



*Pine Warbler on a feeder, by Andrea Robbins, 12/13/08, Pittsfield, NH.*


The numerous records of Eastern Towhee represent the first seasonal appearance for this species in three years. Field Sparrow becomes increasingly scarce through December, so a January 10 record from Newton was quite notable. Two unidentified sharp-tailed sparrows from December 12 in Hampton were a rare find. The odds probably favor Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows given that they are later migrants than the Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow. Swamp Sparrows are decidedly scarce during the season, particularly after December. The last few years have produced a few records after December as we saw again this year. Snow Buntings were quite in evidence this year with records from the coast, inland, and in the North Country as well.

A Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Bradford represents only the third time this species has been recorded in Winter since 1986. A Dickcissel, scarce at any time of the year, was photographed at a feeder in Frankestown. The last time this species was reported in this season was the Winter of 2006-07.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Yellow-rumped Warbler</b>				
12/6	10	Seabrook	dunes	S. Mirick
12/7	1	N. Hampton	n. of Little Boars Head	S. & J. Mirick
12/14	2	Rye	Odiome Point St. Pk.	E. Masterson
12/23	6		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
1/22	1	Newcastle	Great Island Common	S. Young
2/10	1	Newmarket	Bay Road	H. Chary

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Yellow-rumped Warbler - Audubon's subspecies</b>				
1/16	1	Newmarket	Cushing Road residence	D. Arnold, A. Crawford
1/24	1	Newmarket	Cushing Rd.	T. Bronson, S. Spangenberg, F. Doyle, J. McCoy
<b>Pine Warbler</b>				
12/6	1	Seabrook	wastewater treatment plant	S. Mirick
12/9	1	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Road	A. & G. Robbins
<b>Palm Warbler</b>				
12/14	1	Rye	Odiorne Point St. Pk.	E. Masterson
<b>Eastern Towhee</b>				
12/8	1	Wilton	Connor Lane	D., M., J. & M. Rupert
12/13	1	Conway	Remoat Trail, N. Conway	M. Oyler
12/17	1	Bristol	North Main St.	J. Smith
12/25	1	Jaffrey	Wheeler St.	P. St. Pierre
1/4	1	Hopkinton	Maple St., Contoocook	A. Plummer
1/13	1	Lyndeborough	Ridge Rd.	M. & J. Boette
1/21	1	Stratham	Stratham Heights Road	S. Mirick
1/24	1	Stratham	Willow Brook Ave.	S. & J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, D. Donsker
2/1	1	Nelson	Tolman Pond Road	B. & K. Tolman, P. Brown
2/6	1	Hampton	North Shore Road	D. Crowley
<b>American Tree Sparrow</b>				
12/1	10	Durham	Fogg Drive	K. Dorsey
12/1	22	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
12/7	24	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
1/1	21		Barnet, VT CBC-Monroe sightings	E. Emery, J. Cate
1/4	10	Surry	Dort Road	L. Tanino, K. Yard
1/29	33	Keene	Pitcher Street	L. Tanino
2/21	10	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow	M. Wright
<b>Chipping Sparrow</b>				
12/18	1	Hampton Falls	Woodlawn Avenue	T. Bronson
1/24	1	Stratham	River Road residence	L. Medlock, S. Mirick, & Superbowl of Birding Teams
<b>Field Sparrow</b>				
12/7	1	N. Hampton	Woodland Road	S. & J. Mirick
1/10	1	Newton	off Route 108	S. & J. Mirick
<b>Savannah Sparrow</b>				
12/14	1	Rye	Odiorne Point St. Pk.	E. Masterson
12/30	1	Concord	Fowler Street	P. Hunt
1/2	2	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	S. & J. Mirick
1/11	3		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
1/23	2	Stratham	Stuart Farm	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse
2/22	2	Seabrook	Cross Beach Road	S. & J. Mirick
<b>Savannah Sparrow - Ipswich subsp.</b>				
1/2	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
<b>Sharp-tailed Sparrow sp.</b>				
12/12	2	Hampton	Island Path	S. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Fox Sparrow</b>				
12/6	1	Kingston	Green Road	T. Bronson
12/7	1	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
12/26	1	Rye	along Route 1A at Odiorne Point	S.& J. Mirick
1/7	1	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
1/24	1	Stratham	River Road residence	L. Medlock, J. Lambert, J. Hully, S. Young, J. O'Shaughnessy, G. Tillman
2/1	1	N. Hampton	Beau Monde Estate	L. Medlock
2/22	1	Rye	Appledore Road	S.& J. Mirick
<b>Song Sparrow</b>				
12/6	3	Kingston	Green Road	T. Bronson
12/7	7	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
12/18	3	Rye	Rye Harbor St. Pk.	C. Sheridan
1/1	1	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
1/2	1	Seabrook	end of Farm Lane	T. Bronson
1/10	9	Westmoreland	Chickering Farm	E. Masterson, L. Tanino, Monadnock CFT
1/12	1	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	J. Merrill, et al.
1/20	2	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
1/22	1	Goffstown	New Boston Rd.	J. Doherty
1/22	2	Hampton Falls	Depot Road	T. Bronson
1/22	1	Keene	Green Wagon Farm	L. Tanino
1/23	3	Hampton Falls	Brown Road	T. Bronson
1/23	2	Kensington	Dow Lane	T. Bronson
1/25	2	Walpole	River Road	L. Tanino
2/5	1	Windham	residence	J. Romano
2/7	1	Concord	Horseshoe Pond	R. Woodward
2/21	1	Kensington	Kimball Road residence	T. Bronson
2/22	14		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
2/28	5	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
<b>Swamp Sparrow</b>				
12/7	2	N. Hampton	Route 111	S.& J. Mirick
12/20	1	Rye	Brackett Road	P. Hunt, F. Benhan, B. Griffith
1/2	1	N. Hampton	Woodland Road	S.& J. Mirick
1/23	1	N. Hampton	Woodland Road	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse
2/18	1	Rye	Brackett Road	S. Mirick
<b>White-throated Sparrow</b>				
12/21	15	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
1/10	10	Westmoreland	Chickering Farm	E. Masterson, L. Tanino, K. Klapper, P. Strelitz
1/18	4	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	J. Merrill
1/18	22	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
1/27	2	Newmarket	Bay Road	H. Chary
2/3	1	Keene	Krif Road	L. Tanino
2/4	11	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
2/7	5	Hinsdale	shooting range parking lot	L. Tanino
2/22	17		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
2/26	8	Hampton Falls	Drinkwater Rd. & King St.	T. Bronson

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>White-crowned Sparrow</b>				
12/6	1	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	S. Mirick
1/2	1	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	S. & J. Mirick
1/11	1	New Castle	off Route 1B	S. & J. Mirick
1/23	1	Portsmouth	Bluefish Blvd.	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse
<b>Dark-eyed Junco</b>				
12/6	30	Kingston	Winslow Park Drive	T. Bronson
12/13	84	Concord	Penacock survey route	P. Hunt
12/31	29	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
1/1	24		Barnet, VT CBC-Monroe sightings	E. Emery, J. Cate
1/7	45	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
1/10	36	Westmoreland	Chickering Farm	L. Tanino, E. Masterson, K. Klapper, P. Strelitz
2/28	50	Kensington	Route 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
<b>Lapland Longspur</b>				
1/2	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	T. Bronson
1/25	1	Walpole	River Road horse farm	L. Tanino
2/22	7	Hampton	Hampton Beach St. Pk.	S. & J. Mirick
				
<i>Snow Bunting by Leonard Medlock, 2/15/09, Exeter, NH.</i>				
<b>Snow Bunting</b>				
12/1	5	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	P. Chamberlin
12/9	42	Seabrook	Yankee Fishermen's Coop., Cross Beach Rd.	T. Bronson, D. Hubbard
12/10	13	New Boston	Route 13	
12/12	3	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
12/13	56		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
1/1			Barnet, VT CBC-CW-Monroe sightings	E. Emery, J. Cate
1/2	120	Durham	Rt. 155A fields (Moore)	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod
1/4	75	Stoddard	Pitcher Mountain	E. Masterson
1/5	100	Conway	Schartner Farm, West Side Rd., N.	Conway S. Heuston
1/25	80	Pittsburg	Halls Stream Rd.	D. Bourget
2/1	20	Concord	Clinton St. fields	R. Woodward
2/7	98	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	L. Tanino
2/9	50	Rochester	wastewater treatment plant	L. Medlock, J. Lambert
2/14	8	Colebrook	Route 3	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
2/15	62		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
2/15	30	Rye	Rye Harbor St. Pk.	E. Masterson
2/22	23	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	L. Medlock
<b>Rose-breasted Grosbeak</b>				
12/9	1	Bradford	West Road	M. Halsted
<b>Dickcissel</b>				
12/2	1	Francestown	Scobie Road	M. Loggans, T. Bronson

## Blackbirds through Finches

**A** flock of 13 Rusty Blackbirds from Hampton was quite notable for late January as they should be completely absent from the state at this time of the year. Common Grackle and Brown-headed Cowbird seem to be continuing a recent trend toward more frequent winter occurrences. There were two records for Baltimore Oriole this winter, in Portsmouth and Salem. Although nothing like the banner year of 2007-2008, Pine Grosbeaks were still quite in evidence this year, ranging as far south as Concord and



*Rusty Blackbird by Scott Young, 12/5/08,  
Rt. 155A (Moore) fields, Durham NH.*

Greenfield. White-winged Crossbill was another conspicuous irruptive invader this season. We had many times the number of records of the last invasion year of 2001. The majority of the records came from the Lakes Region south, likely due to a poor cone crop in the northern part of the state. Other back to back irruptives were the redpoll species. Along with the large numbers of Common Redpolls, there were almost as many records of **Hoary Redpoll** as last year. Another prominent feature of the season was a major invasion of Pine Siskins, not seen at this level in at least 17 years. Most records were from the southern tier, but there were records from central and northern parts of the state as well.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>				
12/9	8	Rye	South Road	T. Bronson, D. Hubbard
12/14	1	Windham	residence	J. Romano
12/20	2	Rye	Brackett Road	P. Hunt, F. Benhan, B. Griffith
1/3	1	Concord	over Route 93	K. Dorsey
1/3	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
1/4	11	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
1/10	3	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	S. & J. Mirick
1/21	1	Hampton	Drakeside Road	S. Mirick
2/11	8	Rye	Central Road	S. Mirick
2/18	26	Greenland	Great Bay Road	S. Mirick
2/18	1	Rochester	Fowler Farm, Salmon Falls Rd.	D. Hubbard
2/19	2	N. Hampton	Walnut Ave.	P. Bush
2/20	1	Swanzy	Dillant-Hopkins Airport	P. Brown, C. Wood
2/22	9		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
2/25	8	Goffstown	Route 13	C. Bousquet
2/26	8	Hampton Falls	Drinkwater Road	T. Bronson

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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**Red-winged Blackbird—continued**

2/27	17	Exeter	wastewater treatment plant	L. Medlock
2/27	20	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
2/27	1	Newmarket	Bay Road	H. Chary
2/28	11	Canterbury	Morrill Rd.	K. Lany
2/28	4	Nashua	Field's Grove	C. Sheridan

**Eastern Meadowlark**

12/14	3	Rye	marsh s. of Rye Harbor	E. Masterson
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**Rusty Blackbird**

12/6	1	Durham	Woodridge Park	K. Dorsey
12/7	2	Hampton Falls	Crestview Drive	T. Bronson
12/30	1	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
1/20	13	Hampton	Huckleberry Lane	S. Mirick
2/28	1	Kensington	Kimball Road	L. Medlock

**Common Grackle**

12/1	1	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow	M. Wright
1/23	1	Stratham	Willow Brook Ave.	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse
2/15	1	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
2/15	2	Hampton Falls	Woodlawn Avenue	T. Bronson
2/18	31	Greenland	Great Bay Road	S. Mirick
2/27	8	Nashua	Pine St.	C. Sheridan
2/28	1	Concord	Fowler Street	P. Hunt

**Brown-headed Cowbird**

12/12	1	Hampton Falls	Woodlawn Avenue	T. Bronson
1/7	1	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
1/10	50	East Kingston	South Road	S. & J. Mirick
2/18	6	Greenland	Great Bay Road	S. Mirick

**Baltimore Oriole**

1/24	1	Portsmouth	Union Street	S. & J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, D. Donsker
1/30	1	Salem	Williams St.	H. McNamara



*Pine Grosbeak, by Scott Young, 1/2/09,  
Farmington Country Club, Farmington, NH.*

**Pine Grosbeak**

12/4	2	Sandwich	Weymouth Hill, Rt. 109, Center Sandwich	G. Gavutis, Jr.
12/14	1	Tilton	River Road	P. Hunt, L. Bunten, D. Crook
12/20	2	Ashland	Route 3	I. MacLeod
12/22	2	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
12/24	6	Jefferson	Route 116 residence	D. & K. Govatski

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
12/30	3	Littleton	Owen Drive	M. Boulanger
12/31	50	Conway	Dewhurst Law Firm	S. Heuston
1/2	3	Farmington	Farmington CC	S. Young
1/3	60	Pittsburg	Route 3	L. Medlock, J. Lambert, B. Griffith
1/13	7	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
1/14	1	Greenfield	town	K. Camp
1/14	4	Laconia	Ledges Dr.	H. Anderson
1/15	15	Roxbury	Dillingham Rd.	I. Benson
1/17	10	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	J. Merrill, et al.
1/21	1	Benton	Tunnel Brook Trail 2,300'	J. Stockwell
1/27	17	Laconia	Greystone Place	H. Anderson
2/3	4	Conway	Lowes, North Conway	B. Crowley
2/7	7	Milan	Chickwolnepy Road	B. Griffith, L. Kras
2/10	13	Concord	Island Road	E. Masterson
2/11	2	Surry	Surry WMA	P. Brown, J. Tilden
2/14	30	Pittsburg	East Inlet Road	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
2/17	11	Laconia	Ledgecroft Place	H. Anderson
2/21	15	Jackson	Dundee Road	P. Brown, J. Tilden
2/21	18	Milan	Chickwolnepy Road residence	L. Medlock, Seacoast CFT
2/21	3	Pittsburg	West Dorman Rd.	P. Newbern
<b>Purple Finch</b>				
12/2	1	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
12/9	4	N. Hampton	Woodland Rd. at Rt. 111	T. Bronson, D. Hubbard
12/14	2	Exeter	Haven Lane	L. Medlock
12/20	4	Westmoreland	Westmoreland Rd.	P. Brown, J. Tilden
12/22	3	Walpole	River Road	L. Tanino, K. Yard
12/31	6	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
1/3	1	Concord	River Road Christmas tree farm	P. Hunt
1/6	6	Hampton Falls	Drinkwater Rd. & King St.	T. Bronson
1/13	6	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
1/23	2	Greenland	Tidewater Farm Drive	T. Bronson
1/23	6	Hampton Falls	Brown Road	T. Bronson
1/23	4	Newmarket	Packers Falls Road	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse
1/24	1	E. Kingston	South Road	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod, P. Brown, D. Fallon
1/24	1	Newmarket		E. Masterson, I. MacLeod, P. Brown, D. Fallon
1/24	1	Stratham	River Road	E. Masterson, I. MacLeod, P. Brown, D. Fallon
2/7	5	Durham	Fogg Drive	K. Dorsey
2/7	4	Newmarket	Bay Road	H. Chary
2/12	2	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
2/15	1	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
2/24	3	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow	M. Wright
<b>Red Crossbill</b>				
1/4	2	Farmington	Farmington CC	S. Young
1/6	1	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
1/8	1	Antrim	Willard Pond WS	J. Tilden
1/14	1	Hancock	Antrim Road	E. Masterson

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
<b>White-winged Crossbill</b>				
12/3	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	L. Tanino
12/11	150	Rochester	Rt. 202A & Meaderboro Rd.	D. Hubbard
12/12	100	Barrington	Al Wood Dr. residence	T. & L. Chase
12/14	150	Meredith	Wickwas Lake	I. MacLeod
12/14	51	Rye	Odiorne Point St. Pk.	E. Masterson
12/17	12	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
12/29	20	Webster	Call Road	R. Quinn
1/1	25	Concord	Centre Street	S. Brand
1/3	32	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
1/4	30	Hampton	Spruce Meadow Road	L. Medlock
1/9	25	Keene	Green Wagon Farm	L. Tanino
1/11	20	Kensington	Rt. 107 residence, South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
1/11	56	New Castle	flying n. over River	S. & J. Mirick
1/15	38	Northwood	Old Mountain Road	S. Young
1/23	15	Madison	Bimba Island, Silver Lake	G. Gavutis, Jr.
1/27	6	Marlborough	Page Hill	L. Tanino, K. Yard
2/14	2	Columbia	Route 3	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
2/16	4	Albany	Kancamagus Highway	S. & J. Mirick
<b>Common Redpoll</b>				
12/18	1	Westmoreland	River Rd.	R. Ritz
12/28	3	Dublin	Dublin Lake	E. Masterson
12/31	3	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
1/4	58	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
1/13	150	Rochester	Fowler Farm, Salmon Falls Rd.	D. Hubbard
1/15	22	Rumney	Sand Hill Road	J. & J. Williams
1/27	42	Merrimack	industrial park	L. Medlock
2/3	600	Keene	Krif Road	L. Tanino
2/7	120	Milan	Chickwolnepy Road	B. Griffith, L. Kras
2/10	185	Tilton	Rt. 93, exit 20 on river edge	D. Stavros, L. & W. Bardusk
2/14	600	Colebrook	Route 145	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
2/14	100	Pittsburg	Route 3	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
2/20	100	Lincoln	Hardwood Ridge Rd.	J. Fradette
2/21	200	Jackson	Route 16	L. Medlock, J. Lambert
2/22	240	Swanzy	Dillant-Hopkins Airport	L. Tanino
2/23	1	Milford	Federal Hill Road	B. Becker
2/24	450	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
2/26	45	Rumney	Route 25	J. Williams
2/28	30	Laconia	Ledgecroft Place	H. Anderson
<b>Hoary Redpoll</b>				
1/22	1	Farmington	Hornetown Road	J. Lambert
1/22	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
1/23	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
1/25	1	Keene	Ash Brook Court	K. Klapper
wk. of 2/2	1	Charlestown	Tehran Drive	E. Jakub
2/3	1	Keene	Krif Road	L. Tanino
2/5	2	Keene	Krif Road	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert



<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
2/7	2	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd. residence	Len Medlock, Tony Vazzano
2/14	1	Colebrook	Route 145	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
2/14	1	Pittsburg	Route 3	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
2/18	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
2/21	1	Berlin	residence	L. Medlock, K. Dube, J. Lambert
2/21	1	Milan	Chickwolnepy Road residence	L. Medlock, J. Lambert
2/22	1	Swanzy	Dillant-Hopkins Airport	L. Tanino

### **Pine Siskin**

12/4	1	Newbury	residence	P. Newbern
12/5	50	Webster	Call Road	R. Quinn
12/23	60	Ashland	Sanborn Road	I. MacLeod
12/27	50	Hancock	Antrim Road	E. Masterson
12/27	150	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
12/29	40	New Boston		E. Masterson
1/1	13		Barnet, VT CBC-Monroe sightings	E. Emery, J. Cate
1/4	30	Milford	Osgood Rd.	C. Popp
1/9	100	Littleton	Owen Drive	M. Boulanger
1/17	55	Plainfield	River Road	L. Tanino, K. Yard
1/22	170	Concord	Contoocook Island	P. Hunt
1/31	40	Gilmanton	Currier Hill Rd.	J. Stockwell
2/2	200	Lebanon	Buckingham Place	B. Wardrop
2/6	22	Keene	Court Street	L. Tanino
2/22	50	Walpole	Merriam Rd.	R. Ritz

### **Evening Grosbeak**

12/1	2	Rumney	Buffalo Road residence	J. Williams
12/3	2	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
12/9	4	Hancock	Harris Center	P. Brown
12/12	5	Walpole	Merriam Rd.	R. Ritz
12/17	42	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow Rd.	M. Wright
12/19	2	Milford	Osgood Rd.	C. Popp
12/20	10	Westmoreland	town center	P. Brown, J. Tilden
12/22	48	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow	M. Wright
12/24	16	Jefferson	Route 116 residence	D. & K. Govatski
12/28	3	Ashland	Sanborn Road	I. MacLeod
12/28	2	Dublin	Fair Hill Bible School	E. Masterson
1/3	6	Pittsburg	Route 3	L. Medlock, J. Lambert, B. Griffith
1/11	10	Gilsum	Hammond Hollow	M. Wright
1/25	1	Walpole	River Road	L. Tanino
2/21	10	Jackson	Dundee Road	P. Brown, J. Tilden
2/21	30	Milan	Chickwolnepy Road residence	L. Medlock, Seacoast CFT

## Reporters for Winter 2008-09

Rich Aaronian	Keith Gordon	John Payzant
Diane Albert	David Govatski	Andi Plummer
H. Cook Anderson	Ben Griffith	Maureen Pomeroy
Widge Arms	Sarah Hall	Greg Prazar
David Arnold	Michele Halsted	Robert Quinn
Chuck Awalt	Rick Hedrick	Blenda Rappaport
Jeannine Ayer	Sandie Heuston	Scot Reagan
Bert Becker	John Hohenadel	Elizabeth Ring
Mary Boulanger	Dan Hubbard	Robert Ritz
Robert Bradley	Pam Hunt	Andrea Robbins
Stijn Brand	Ezekiel Jakub	Judy Romano
Terry Bronson	Susan King	Dan Rota
Dorothy Brousseau	Kenneth Klapper	Karen Rudnicki
Phil Brown	Paul Lacourse	Douglas Rupert
P. Bush	Jason Lambert	Carol Scheele
Jim Buzard	Jim Lamson	Brenda Sens
Michael Caduto	Brent Lemire	Keene Sentinel
Larry & Melva Cate	N. Lucier	Christine Sheridan
Patience Chamberlin	Iain MacLeod	Dawn Stavros
Hank Chary	Chris Martin	J. R. Stockwell
Tom Chase	Eric Masterson	Larry Sunderland
Jean Cole	Gordon McCormack, Sr.	Rebecca Suomala
Michele Collins	Len Medlock	Lance Tanino
Terry Comstock	Carol Meise	Anne Tappan
David Crowe	Michelle Mensinger	Brenda Thomas
Bob Crowley	John Merrill	Karen Tolman
Deborah Crowley	Deborah Mesick	Fred Tyrrell
Susan Crowley	P. Mill	Tony Vazzano
Patricia Dausch	Steve Mirick	Ben Wardrop
David Deifik	Anne Mitts	J. Welch
Laura Deming	Chris Monroe	Kenton Wheeler
Carolyn DeSchuytne	Susan Mooney	John Williams
Jane Doherty	Mary Mortimer	Rob Woodward
Kurk Dorsey	Peter Newbern	Mary Wright
Jeannie Duval	Pat Niswander	Scott Young
Clyde & Betty Fitz	Mik Oyler	Some sightings were taken
Chris Gagnon	Kathie Palfy	directly from the NH.Birds
George Gavutis, Jr.	Richard Parker	list serve.

## Reports for the following species were received in Winter 2008-09 but not listed.

Mute Swan	Downy Woodpecker	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Common Eider	Hairy Woodpecker	Northern Mockingbird
Red-breasted Merganser	Northern Flicker	European Starling
Ruffed Grouse	Pileated Woodpecker	Northern Cardinal
Bald Eagle	Blue Jay	House Finch
Sharp-shinned Hawk	American Crow	American Goldfinch
Cooper's Hawk	Common Raven	House Sparrow
Red-tailed Hawk	Black-capped Chickadee	Sightings of the species listed
Herring X Glaucous Gull Hybrid	Tufted Titmouse	above occurred in average num-
Rock Pigeon	Red-breasted Nuthatch	bers at expected locations, were
Mourning Dove	White-breasted Nuthatch	discussed in the summaries, or are
Great Horned Owl	Brown Creeper	escaped exotics.
Barred Owl	Carolina Wren	

## Christmas Bird Count Summary 2008-2009

by David Deifik

This year's Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) were held during the usual period from December 14, 2008 to January 5, 2009. There are 21 counts in the state with two of those being Vermont based counts with a portion of the count circle in New Hampshire. Interesting sightings from the New Hampshire portion of the Barnet, Vermont Count are presented in the seasonal listings rather than in the CBC table. Data from the New Hampshire portion of the Saxton's River count was unavailable. For the third year in a row the Isles of Shoals CBC was not run due to adverse sea conditions.

There were 134 species found across all counts. This was a slight improvement from last year, but still about 10% fewer than the 2006-2007 season. For the second year in a row, there were no new species for the state's CBCs. The closest we came was a new subspecies for the state, Pink-sided Junco. This is a western form of the Dark-eyed Junco which is quite rare for New Hampshire. There were only five new high species counts for the state, which was half as many as last year. Interestingly, there was a dramatic improvement from the relatively low 62 individual count highs from last year to 82 this year. This compares favorably to the average of the few years prior to 2007-2008. There were 17 species new to an area's count which was also a major rise from last year and comparable to the year before.

Inland waterfowl numbers were generally improved from last year. Laconia had a new count high for Canada Goose. The relative abundance of Canadas probably set the stage for the first count appearance of the closely related Cackling Goose on that count. This was only the second record for any count with the sole other record being of two birds on the Seacoast count in 2000. American Black Duck set count highs in Concord and Sandwich. Hooded Merganser also did particularly well with new count highs in Nashua and Hancock. Also, Laconia almost equaled its 2006 count. On the other hand, waterfowl counts on the Seacoast were dramatically down. The problem there was that on count day there were nearly white-out conditions at the seashore. Rare for the winter season, Manchester tallied the only Ring-necked Duck in the state. The Seacoast CBC did manage to set a count high for the state of four Lesser Scaup, which is quite notable given the fact that only a single Lesser Scaup was found on any count in the previous two years.

For the second year, Wild Turkey was recorded on all New Hampshire counts. Though somewhat down from last year's record numbers, its count was still about double the count from as recently as two years ago.

As for raptors, the appearance of Golden Eagle for the second year in a row was remarkable. The Conway count set a state high with two well-described individuals. This marks only the third time that Golden Eagle was seen in New Hampshire CBC history. Bald Eagle again had a banner year. The 53 birds seen equals the record high set last year. This is consistent with the data from the New Hampshire Audubon mid-winter eagle count, which also set a record high. Red-tailed Hawk numbers were consistent with last year with the Lee-Durham count attaining an individual count high. Sadly, American Kestrel was completely missed this year. 2006 was the last time they

were seen on count day and only one was seen during count week in 2007. This would go along with the general consensus that this lovely raptor is in trouble in New England.

For gulls, the Lee-Durham count dominated with its sightings of Iceland, Lesser Black-backed and Glaucous Gulls. A Herring X Glaucous Gull hybrid, "Nelson's Gull", was also found on the Lee-Durham count.

Three Snowy Owls this year were notable with two of them seen on the inland counts of Nashua and Peterborough-Hancock.

Reflecting an ongoing range expansion, Red-bellied Woodpecker continues to increase its numbers on the CBC. Two counts, Nashua and Lee-Durham tied for new state highs. In **all** of the rest of the counts that Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen, new individual count highs were achieved. The total count overall was more than double that of each of the last two years.

In the thrush family, the very rarely tallied Varied Thrush was seen on the Seacoast count. Counts for the American Robin were truly impressive, reflecting the widespread and large numbers also reported during the winter season in general. Total numbers were triple that of last year. Only one count missed it and nine counts set new individual count highs for robins. Carolina Wren continues its expansion into the North Country with first time sightings for both the Littleton and Conway counts. Although not seen in huge numbers statewide, Bohemian Waxwings set new individual count highs on two of the northern counts – Errol and Conway. Keene broke the previous state record count for Cedar Waxwing that it already held, although the species was a little less abundant overall than last year.

As for finches, White-winged Crossbill and Pine Siskin generated the most excitement. White-winged Crossbill was seen on an impressive 15 counts. There were five count highs, all from the central and southern part of the state. The Pine Siskin invasion was no less impressive. From just a tiny handful two years ago, more than 600 siskins were seen last year. This year the count grew by more than a factor of five.

## **Individual Count Highlights:**

### **Nashua-Hollis**

- New state count high: Red-bellied Woodpecker (tied with Lee-Durham this year)
- Count high: Hooded Merganser, Bald Eagle, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch

Mute Swan and Great Blue Heron equaled previous count highs. Merlin was seen for the third time. Snowy Owl was seen for only the second time with the first record being in 1983.

### **Peterborough-Hancock**

- Count high: Northern Harrier, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Pine Siskin
- Second count record for Northern Harrier

### **Keene**

- New state count high: Cedar Waxwing
- New to count: Merlin, Short-eared Owl, Eastern Phoebe
- Count high: Wood Duck, Red-bellied Woodpecker, American Robin

Cooper's Hawk equaled its previous high count. Northern Cardinal had its second highest count, close to the record set in 1991. Bohemian Waxwing was seen for the third time and White-winged Crossbill for only the second time.

### Coastal New Hampshire

- Count high: Lesser Scaup, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Red-winged Blackbird (ties state high), White-winged Crossbill

Pink-sided Junco, a western form of the Dark-eyed Junco was seen for the first time on any state count. Lesser Black-backed Gull was seen for the third time. American Robin and Dark-eyed Junco had their second highest counts.



*Short-eared Owl by Polly Pattison, at UPS bldg. near Krif Road during the Keene CBC, 12/20/08.*

### Lee-Durham

- New state count high: Red-bellied Woodpecker (tied with Nashua this year), American Goldfinch
- Count high: Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Tufted Titmouse, Hermit Thrush, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, White-winged Crossbill

Nelson's Gull, a hybrid between Herring and Glaucous Gull was seen for the first time on the count. Bald Eagle and Downy Woodpecker both came close to count highs set last year. A Pine Warbler was seen for only the second time on the count.

### Concord

- New count high: American Black Duck, Wild Turkey, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin (second highest state count), Northern Cardinal, White-winged Crossbill, Pine Siskin

Merlin and Peregrine Falcon were seen for the second time. Boreal Chickadee was seen for the third time; the last record for the count was back in 1975. Also, Savannah Sparrow was seen for the third time.

### Laconia

- New to count: Cackling Goose
- Count high: Canada Goose, Red-necked Grebe, Red-bellied Woodpecker, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, White-winged Crossbill

Great Blue Heron equaled a count high. Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen for the third time. Northern Shrike and European Starling were just off previous count highs.



*In the aftermath of the December ice storm, this American Robin was able to find some exposed berries on the Laconia CBC. Photo by Pam Hunt, 12/14/08, Sanbornton.*

### **Hanover-Norwich**

- New to count: Lapland Longspur
- Count high: Hooded Merganser, Red-bellied Woodpecker, American Robin, Pine Siskin

The count high for Hooded Merganser almost doubles the previous high. Bald Eagle tied its previous high in 2005. Snowy Owl was seen for the second time. Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen for the third time.

### **Baker Valley**

- Count high: American Robin, White-winged Crossbill
- Eastern Bluebird was seen for the second time.

### **Littleton**

- New to count: Red-bellied Woodpecker, Carolina Wren
  - Count high: Northern Cardinal
- Black-backed Woodpecker equaled its previous high of two.

### **Grafton-Bristol**

- New count high: Wild Turkey, Ring-billed Gull, Common Raven, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch
- Carolina Wren and White-winged Crossbill were seen for the second time. Herring Gull was seen for the third time.

### **Errol-Umbagog**

- New count high: Bohemian Waxwing
- Bald Eagle matched the previous high count of five.

## **Pittsburg**

- New to count: Canada Goose

New count high: Ring-necked Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Snow Bunting

## **North Conway**

- New state count high: Golden Eagle
  - New to count: Snow Goose, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Eastern Towhee
  - New count high: Bald Eagle, Bohemian Waxwing, Cedar Waxwing, Pine Siskin
- Red-headed Woodpecker and Rose-breasted Grosbeak were seen during count week.

## **Lake Sunapee**

- New count high: American Robin
- Bohemian Waxwing was seen for the fourth time.

## **Manchester**

- New to count: Eastern Towhee
- New count high: Wild Turkey, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Song Sparrow, Pine Siskin

Pileated Woodpecker tied its previous high. White-throated Sparrow was only two birds shy of its previous high. Purple Finch was seen for the third time.

## **Sandwich**

- New to count: Northern Goshawk, Red-tailed Hawk
- New count high: American Black Duck, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Pine Siskin

Carolina Wren was seen for the third time. White-throated Sparrow was seen for the second time.

## **AMC-Crawford**

- New to count: Rock Pigeon, American Tree Sparrow, Snow Bunting
- New count high: Mourning Dove, Blue Jay, Evening Grosbeak

Gull species was seen for the first time. Boreal Chickadee was seen for the third time. Dark-eyed Junco was seen for the second time.

## 109th Christmas Bird Count: Dec. 14, 2008 - Jan. 5, 2009

species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak
Snow Goose	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-
Canada Goose	180	2	40	2975	886	1	<b>470</b>	-	-
Mute Swan	5	-	-	25	2	-	-	-	-
Cackling Goose	-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-
Wood Duck	2	-	<b>2</b>	-	-	2	1	-	-
American Wigeon	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
American Black Duck	34	-	3	506	149	<b>105</b>	63	6	-
Mallard	689	-	23	840	390	373	687	220	-
Northern Pintail	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Ring-necked Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Greater Scaup	-	-	-	670	-	-	-	-	-
Lesser Scaup	-	-	-	<b>4</b>	-	-	-	-	-
Scaup sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-
King Eider	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-
Common Eider	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	-	-
Surf Scoter	-	-	-	13	-	-	-	-	-
White-winged Scoter	-	-	-	63	-	-	1	-	-
Black Scoter	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-
Long-tailed Duck	-	-	-	22	-	-	-	-	-
Bufflehead	-	-	-	69	101	-	2	-	-
Common Goldeneye	12	-	-	133	24	22	298	3	-
Barrow's Goldeneye	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Hooded Merganser	<b>9</b>	-	25	1	CW	3	155	<b>61</b>	-
Common Merganser	21	-	8	34	19	28	570	63	-
Red-br. Merganser	-	-	-	58	14	-	-	-	-
Ring-necked Pheasant	3	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	6
Ruffed Grouse	4	6	-	-	-	8	-	1	2
Spruce Grouse	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wild Turkey	69	140	64	28	123	<b>117</b>	78	132	81
Red-throated Loon	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Common Loon	-	-	1	52	4	-	10	-	-
Horned Grebe	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Red-necked Grebe	-	-	-	2	-	-	3	-	-
Double-cr. Cormorant	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Great Cormorant	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Great Blue Heron	6	-	-	CW	1	1	2	-	-
Turkey Vulture	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-
Bald Eagle	<b>6</b>	2	-	7	12	3	5	4	1
Northern Harrier	-	<b>2</b>	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Sharp-shinned Hawk	6	-	3	5	3	<b>7</b>	1	2	-
Cooper's Hawk	8	-	3	9	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	1	2	1
Northern Goshawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-shouldered Hawk	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-
Red-tailed Hawk	36	3	4	22	<b>44</b>	13	4	9	CW
Rough-legged Hawk	-	-	-	2	CW	-	-	-	-
Golden Eagle	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Merlin	1	-	*1	1	-	1	-	-	-
Peregrine Falcon	-	-	-	CW	-	1	-	-	-
Sanderling	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Purple Sandpiper	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-



Lit	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
-	-	-	-	*5	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	*1	-	1	13	-	-	4569
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
5	12	-	-	10	12	2	15	-	922
-	31	-	5	137	141	286	14	-	3836
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	670
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	64
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	172
-	12	-	-	-	-	20	-	-	524
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
1	2	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	261
-	CW	6	2	-	-	1	-	-	752
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	72
-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	14
13	3	2	6	2	2	-	1	-	50
-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	0
69	83	8	9	65	50	23	91	1	1231
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	67
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2	1	5	-	3	-	2	-	-	53
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	CW	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	30
1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	45
-	-	1	1	-	-	-	*1	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
1	-	-	-	3	-	10	4	-	153
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	**2	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10

## 109th Christmas Bird Count (continued)

species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak
Bonaparte's Gull	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-
Ring-billed Gull	37	-	-	353	229	CW	101	-	-
Herring Gull	168	3	-	1014	9595	-	14	-	-
Iceland Gull	-	-	-	2	8	-	-	-	-
Nelson's Gull	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Lesser Bla.-bac. Gul	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-
Glaucous Gull	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-
Great Bla.-bac. Gull	38	-	-	129	548	-	7	-	-
Gull sp.	-	4	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
Razorbill	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Black Guillemot	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-
Rock Pigeon	636	58	169	383	326	356	64	233	20
Mourning Dove	463	109	174	367	689	179	109	177	72
Eastern Screech-owl	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Great Horned Owl	-	-	-	-	1	CW	-	-	-
Snowy Owl	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-
Barred Owl	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	CW	CW
Short-eared Owl	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-
N. Saw-whet Owl	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Belted Kingfisher	2	-	-	2	CW	1	3	CW	-
Red-hea. Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-bel. Woodpecker	**41	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>29</b>	**41	12	10	3	-
Ylw.-bel. Sapsucker	CW	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-
Downy Woodpecker	148	73	69	129	181	79	61	51	10
Hairy Woodpecker	68	45	32	31	68	36	56	46	12
Bla.-bac. Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Flicker	13	-	-	10	8	2	-	-	-
Pileated Woodpecker	3	5	2	6	<b>10</b>	9	9	7	CW
Eastern Phoebe	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Shrike	-	-	-	1	1	-	4	-	-
Gray Jay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Blue Jay	629	589	283	387	<b>879</b>	460	462	641	358
American Crow	346	168	190	330	765	593	700	1660	44
Common Raven	3	18	11	CW	CW	6	10	42	11
Horned Lark	-	-	-	61	CW	20	-	-	-
Black-cap. Chickadee	701	1153	751	627	1267	<b>827</b>	764	1819	419
Boreal Chickadee	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Tufted Titmouse	219	138	84	159	<b>337</b>	121	157	125	13
Red-br. Nuthatch	16	41	11	36	99	7	50	40	15
White-br. Nuthatch	165	130	58	80	232	117	87	89	16
Brown Creeper	4	11	3	4	14	4	14	14	2
Carolina Wren	9	2	3	9	7	3	1	6	-
Winter Wren	1	-	-	1	5	-	-	-	-
Golden-cr. Kinglet	10	16	7	10	19	14	2	1	2
Eastern Bluebird	<b>91</b>	1	-	62	47	23	4	-	1
Hermit Thrush	-	-	-	6	<b>4</b>	-	-	1	-
American Robin	<b>930</b>	151	<b>409</b>	2229	898	<b>3542</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>68</b>
Varied Thrush	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
N. Mockingbird	53	1	2	31	29	21	4	2	-
European Starling	1299	240	371	4696	2952	565	919	240	60

Lit	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
CW	<b>2</b>	-	-	-	CW	10	-	-	732
11	1	-	-	-	-	11	3	-	10820
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
2	-	-	-	1	-	13	4	-	742
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	18
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
144	111	-	-	32	66	434	18	*3	3053
62	63	6	20	181	85	48	107	<b>3</b>	2914
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	-	7
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	0
*1	-	-	-	-	-	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	-	162
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
18	39	5	11	35	30	47	41	5	1032
33	25	4	9	39	26	10	49	5	594
2	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	36
4	7	-	2	7	2	3	9	CW	85
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	1	2	-	-	-	1	-	10
1	-	3	4	-	-	-	-	7	15
234	407	84	74	537	208	239	411	<b>24</b>	6906
71	95	9	4	178	90	136	87	2	5468
33	<b>74</b>	26	90	50	5	3	17	5	404
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	81
448	894	258	360	735	579	384	935	98	13019
3	-	2	21	-	-	-	2	3	32
2	<b>48</b>	-	-	31	22	145	56	-	1657
36	39	9	16	40	11	6	93	1	566
24	79	2	-	59	17	77	89	-	1321
2	10	1	1	8	-	CW	23	CW	115
*1	1	-	-	*1	-	1	1	-	45
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
9	1	13	5	8	4	2	2	1	126
-	-	-	-	*8	-	18	16	-	271
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
5	<b>182</b>	3	1	7	<b>94</b>	583	<b>135</b>	-	9844
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	-	155
7	<b>348</b>	2	8	62	69	576	89	-	12503

## 109th Christmas Bird Count (continued)

species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak
American Pipit	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Bohemian Waxwing	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	5	-
Cedar Waxwing	183	45	**1807	53	83	360	958	266	CW
Ylw.-rumped Warbler	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-
Pine Warbler	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Eastern Towhee	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-
Am. Tree Sparrow	144	50	67	224	190	165	105	105	18
Chipping Sparrow	-	-	-	CW	-	1	-	-	-
Field Sparrow	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Savannah Sparrow	-	-	-	7	-	1	-	-	-
Fox Sparrow	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Song Sparrow	72	2	9	102	41	25	5	1	-
Swamp Sparrow	-	-	-	6	4	-	-	-	-
White-thr. Sparrow	51	1	17	187	98	51	4	18	-
White-cr. Sparrow	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Dark-eyed Junco	680	114	338	1158	<b>1544</b>	314	328	351	11
Pink-sided Junco	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Sparrow sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Lapland Longspur	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	-
Snow Bunting	-	-	25	27	153	2	-	98	-
Northern Cardinal	257	51	107	245	<b>247</b>	<b>136</b>	39	91	3
Rose-breasted Grosbe	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-winged Blackbird	-	-	-	<b>48</b>	1	1	-	-	-
Rusty Blackbird	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Common Grackle	-	-	-	47	-	-	-	-	-
Br.-headed Cowbird	-	-	-	163	-	1	-	-	-
Baltimore Oriole	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Pine Grosbeak	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	28	4
Purple Finch	3	4	6	12	25	1	12	4	-
House Finch	249	-	160	189	308	106	72	126	-
Red Crossbill	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whi.-wing. Crossbill	-	1	1	<b>42</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>274</b>	10	<b>21</b>
Common Redpoll	-	3	1	-	4	4	-	22	-
Pine Siskin	<b>81</b>	<b>624</b>	99	37	125	<b>569</b>	50	<b>750</b>	2
American Goldfinch	<b>1005</b>	391	305	565	**1320	746	475	601	113
Evening Grosbeak	-	13	70	-	CW	-	1	13	20
House Sparrow	675	108	84	775	562	363	268	233	25
Number of Species	57	40	49	95	68	60	58	50	30
Number of Participants	49	26	26	29	24	20	13	21	7

### Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 134

CW = Count Week

Nsh = Nashua-Hollis (12/27/2008)

Pet = Peterborough-Hancock (12/28/2008)

Kee = Keene (12/20/2008)

Cst = Seacoast (12/20/2008)

Lee = Lee-Durham (12/27/2008)

Con = Concord (1/3/2009)

Lac = Laconia-New-Hampton (12/14/2008)

Han = Hanover-Norwich (1/1/2009)

Bak = Baker-Valley (12/14/2008)

\* = New species to count

\*\* = New count high for the state

**New individual count high**

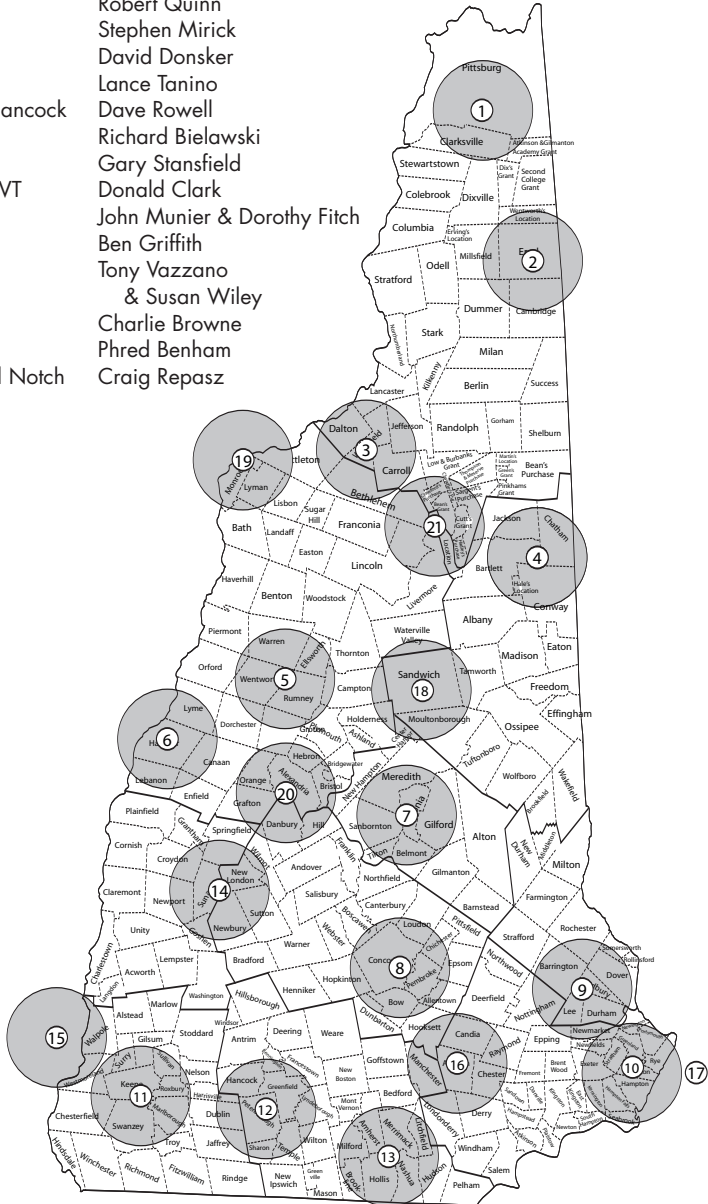
Lit	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	4	62	1	78	1	-	103	-	257
1	86	-	-	89	185	37	1	-	4154
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	*1	-	*1	-	-	5
6	30	5	1	18	14	36	13	*1	1192
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	3	-	-	-	4	18	-	-	282
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
3	2	-	-	1	12	14	10	-	469
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
27	64	-	-	19	43	244	96	4	5335
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	CW	-	92	109	-	33	CW	*10	549
15	30	-	-	18	31	41	8	-	1319
-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	47
-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	169
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
39	-	9	12	16	-	-	9	-	121
-	9	-	-	3	-	2	-	-	81
2	41	-	-	10	17	43	4	-	1327
-	-	-	-	3	-	-	CW	-	3
25	3	5	12	15	-	-	17	1	573
26	-	-	-	52	-	-	15	-	127
2	286	1	3	395	1	343	559	-	3927
154	276	-	1	233	97	265	292	-	6839
11	-	48	27	32	-	-	4	2	241
CW	54	-	-	CW	51	378	10	-	3586
42	39	28	31	47	32	48	45	19	
10	12	13	10	46	15	11	22	14	

Lit = Littleton (12/14/2008)  
 Grf = Grafton (12/28/2008)  
 Erl = Errol-Umbagog (12/17/2008)  
 Pit = Pittsburg (12/16/2008)  
 Cnw = North-Conway (1/4/2009)  
 Sun = Lake-Sunapee (12/20/2008)  
 Man = Manchester (1/3/2009)  
 San = Sandwich (12/28/2008)  
 Amc = AMC-Crawford (12/20/2008)

# Christmas Bird Count Compilers

- 1 Pittsburg
- 2 Errol-Umbagog
- 3 Littleton
- 4 North Conway
- 5 Baker Valley
- 6 Hanover-Norwich
- 7 Laconia-New Hampton
- 8 Concord
- 9 Lee-Durham
- 10 Coastal
- 11 Keene
- 12 Peterborough-Hancock
- 13 Nashua-Hollis
- 14 Lake Sunapee
- 15 Saxton's River, VT
- 16 Manchester
- 17 Isles of Shoals
- 18 Sandwich
  
- 19 Barnet, VT
- 20 Grafton-Bristol
- 21 AMC Crawford Notch

- David Govatski
- Chris Martin
- David Govatski
- Tin Mtn. Conservation Ctr.
- Steve Rounds
- Walter Ellison & Nancy Martin
- Pam Hunt
- Robert Quinn
- Stephen Mirick
- David Donsker
- Lance Tanino
- Dave Rowell
- Richard Bielawski
- Gary Stansfield
- Donald Clark
- John Munier & Dorothy Fitch
- Ben Griffith
- Tony Vazzano  
& Susan Wiley
- Charlie Browne
- Phred Benham
- Craig Repasz



## Big Year Fundraiser 2008

by Terry Bronson

I had been birding occasionally ever since I was a kid in northern Wisconsin, but I didn't become a serious birder until the 2004 Coastal New Hampshire Christmas Bird Count, a few months after I retired and moved to New Hampshire. I found my first rarity, a Snowy Owl, on that count. Shortly thereafter, I began volunteering for *New Hampshire Bird Records*, and it mushroomed from there.

Among the Christmas presents I gave myself in 2004 was a book called *The Big Year* by Mark Obmascik, an account of the 1998 competition between three birders to find the most species of birds in North America in a single year. The winner, Sandy Komito, found 745 species, a record that may never be broken. Intrigued by that story, I immersed myself in nearly full time birding and three years later, after garnering a wealth of experience and knowledge about New Hampshire birding, I decided to do my own Big Year, but just in the state. The time seemed fortuitous because Winter 2007-2008 was a winter when some species that are not seen every year were present.

In 2007, I had found 237 species. The New Hampshire Big Year record, as best I could determine, was 280 species by Mike Harvey in 2003. To challenge myself, I set a goal of 275 species for 2008 and converted my effort into a fundraiser for New Hampshire Audubon's Seacoast Chapter.

I quickly realized doing a Big Year is an all-consuming proposition. You must plan out the year in detail to maximize your time and resources to be in the right place at the right time. For example, several pelagic species are almost never seen from land so you have to go on whalewatches and dedicated pelagic trips to find them. A good number of species are northern New Hampshire specialties, so trips to Coos County and the White Mountains are necessary. Some are winter-only birds, such as some sea ducks, gulls, alcids, and winter finches. Many can be seen only during spring and/or fall migration as they pass through the state. The ideal plan, I thought, would be to see as many bird species as early in the year as possible to minimize the pressure later in the year when one is racing the clock to see them before the year ends or they depart for the winter.

I was able to participate in scheduled field trips on a few occasions, but a Big Year is necessarily a lonely quest since many decisions on where and when to go are made at the last minute based on telephone alerts and postings to the NH.Birds e-mail list. Also, because many birds are most active in the few hours just after dawn, many excursions need to begin well before dawn to allow enough travel time to get to remote locations by dawn. Some of those days require a full day's commitment of up to fourteen hours. Inviting someone to go along is not really an option.

In 2004, New Hampshire Audubon published its updated *A Checklist of the Birds of New Hampshire (Checklist)*. Listed with bar graphs are 306 regularly-occurring species showing abundance and when the birds are present. I used those graphs to target species by month based on their "findability", including all year-round species in January, and assigning other species based on the month they became common enough to be realistically findable.

**Table 1.** New Hampshire Bird Species by First Month of Realistic “Findability.”

Month	Number of New Species	Month	Number of New Species
January	99	July	5
February	4	August	11
March	25	September	10
April	47	October	4
May	95	November	0
June	6	December	0
		TOTAL	306

Thus, by June 1, the end of spring migration, 270 of the 306 species should be findable (Table 1). After that date, with so few species yet to arrive, a Big Year often becomes largely a tedious quest for species that were missed earlier.

My New Hampshire life list had risen to 270 at the end of 2007; it would increase to 286 in 2008. I only found three new life species – Ross’s Goose, Worm-eating Warbler, and Hoary Redpoll, although the last two were not accepted by the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee. There were, however, many memorable sightings:

Ross’s Goose—the first state record at Moore Fields in Durham.

Harlequin Duck—one drake at Bicentennial Park in Hampton.

American Bittern—a male displaying for a female at Whitefield airport.

Pied-billed Grebe—five very young birds riding on their mother’s back in Brentwood.

Mississippi Kite—two in Newmarket at the now-famous nest site.

Northern Goshawk—one in my yard in Fremont before I moved to Hampton Falls.

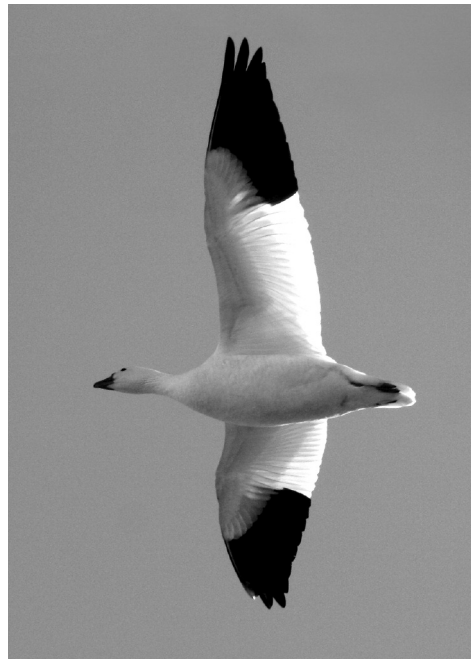
Common Moorhen—one at Pickering Ponds in Rochester.

Wilson’s Snipe—my first windowing bird at Scott Bog in Pittsburg.

Red Phalarope—one at the Exeter wastewater treatment plant, which I embarrassingly mis-identified as a Red-necked Phalarope, but was saved by Len Medlock’s photos.

Razorbill—twenty-five off Seabrook Beach.

Snowy Owl—two birds interacting at Rye Harbor.



*Ross's Goose in flight above Durham Town Landing by Scott Young, 3/30/08, Durham, NH.*



Whip-poor-will—two sets of eyes flying across a gravel pit at Fowler Farm in Rochester.

Red-headed Woodpecker—one, maybe two, in Bedford on Buttonwood Road.

Black-backed Woodpecker—two at Trudeau Road in Bethlehem found because a black bear on the trail forced me to try a different trail.

Olive-sided Flycatcher—one singing along Huntress Bridge Road in Effingham.

Tree Swallow—5,800 migrating birds in Seabrook.

Boreal Chickadee—two close birds along East Inlet Road in Pittsburg.

Bohemian Waxwing—several flocks totaling hundreds of birds in Barnstead, Northwood, Strafford, and Rochester.

Bay-breasted Warbler—two well-seen birds along East Inlet Road in Pittsburg.

Cerulean Warbler—two males at Pawtuckaway State Park in Nottingham, though they very disappointingly looked black instead of blue due to light conditions.

Worm-eating Warbler—a puzzlingly pale-looking bird at Odiorne Point State Park in Rye.

Connecticut Warbler—a female at Doe Farm in Durham.

Clay-colored Sparrow—one at Warren Farm in Barrington.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow—two at Chapman's Landing in Stratham.

Orchard Oriole—one stunning male in Hampton off Drakeside Road.

Hoary Redpoll—two in Sandwich at Tony Vazzano's home.

And now, here's how I did, tallied in two different ways (Table 2 and Table 3). It took until September to see an American Pipit, the final common to abundant species listed in the *Checklist*. The only uncommon to fairly common species missed were Sora, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Tennessee Warbler, and Red Crossbill. In the very uncommon category, I missed Canvasback, Ring-necked Pheasant (the one I saw had just been released for hunting), Spruce Grouse, Northern Fulmar, Thick-billed Murre, Short-eared Owl, and Gray-cheeked Thrush. As expected, the rare to very rare category was where I fell short.

**Table 2.** Species found during 2008 New Hampshire Big Year by month first found. The second number is for species so rare in the state that they are not on the Checklist—Eared Grebe, Ross's Goose, Mississippi Kite, Sandhill Crane, Rufous Hummingbird, Worm-eating Warbler, and Lark Bunting.

Month	Number of New Species Found	Month	Number of New Species Found
January	94 + 1	July	6
February	9	August	3
March	6 + 1	September	18
April	39	October	1 + 3
May	70	November	1 + 1
June	13 + 1	December	4
		TOTAL	271

**Table 3.** Species found during 2008 New Hampshire Big Year by abundance category. Abundance categories are the four categories used in the *Checklist*. Species are assigned to the most common abundance category attained during the year.

Abundance Category	Number of Species in Checklist	Number of Species Found
Common to abundant	143	143
Uncommon to fairly common	75	71
Very uncommon	36	29
Rare to very rare	52	21
Not on Checklist	0	7
TOTAL	306	271

Since I didn't have a cell phone and didn't use recordings, I'm sure that cost me a couple of species. Several birds just eluded me despite numerous tries to find them, including Canvasback, Redhead, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Seaside Sparrow. Two misses in particular stand out:

Black Vulture, seen in Durham five minutes after I departed a field trip.

Yellow-breasted Chat, only the yellow breast seen very briefly at the Great Bay Discovery Center—not enough to clinch the identification.

But the indisputable jinx bird was Yellow-billed Cuckoo—I made thirty-two attempts to find this species. In fact, I even coined a term—the Cuckoo Triangle—for the Madbury-Barrington-Strafford-Northwood area where several were seen by others, but then just disappeared when I came around. The moral of this story is that you don't find a cuckoo; the cuckoo finds you.

I take some consolation from the fact that most of the ones I missed were rarer birds that were one-day wonders seen by only one or two people in western or northern New Hampshire. I also kept a list of all species reported by all birders in the state during the year. That list totaled 323 species, 298 of which are on the Checklist. Some of those, however, were undocumented, heard-only, or not seen well enough to be accepted by the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee.

Although there wasn't an official contest to find the most species, my total ended up as only the third highest in 2008. Steve and Jane Mirick had 278 and 274 species respectively. Len Medlock with 265 and Ben Griffith with 261 weren't far behind.

To let you know what it takes to do a serious Big Year, here are a few statistics:

Number of days birded: 251

Hours birded: 1,550, including driving time.

Earliest departure time: 2:00 a.m. on June 6 for a trip to Pittsburg.

Longest day: 17 hours and 55 minutes on May 24 for the Birdathon.

Miles driven: 19,925

Gas used (at estimated 25 m.p.g.): 797 gallons

Gas cost (ouch!): \$2,512

Food cost (when I didn't pack a lunch): \$505

Tolls: \$59

Lodging (six nights): \$308

Other expenses (Birdathon, Superbowl of Birding, two Star Island trips, five whalewatch and pelagic trips, parking, admission fees, Christmas Bird Counts, etc.): \$347

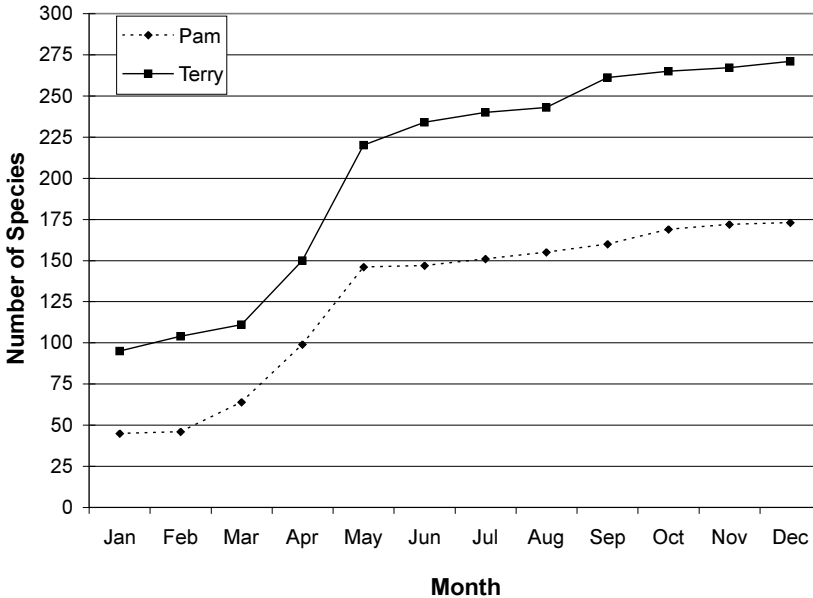
Total expenses: \$3,731 (maybe 80% of that money would have been spent anyway)

January and May, because of the numerous new species seen, were the most exciting. After July 1, frustrating weeks would sometimes pass between sightings. With every passing week, the chances of hitting my goal diminished—especially after September 1, when species started leaving the state for the year. But I persevered, and I'm happy to have come within only nine species of the state record.

I received twenty-one pledges totaling \$1,098 for my efforts—100% of which went to the Seacoast Chapter. I thank those people profusely, and I also thank those who gave me advice on where and when to find certain species, who gave me tips on newly arrived rarer birds, and who just helped me to keep on going during the frustrating times when not much was happening. Lastly, my wife, Nancy Nelson, deserves special thanks for putting up with my quest and the uncertain schedule that resulted from it.

*Terry Bronson was one of New Hampshire's most avid birders, a volunteer for New Hampshire Bird Records, an officer of NH Audubon's Seacoast Chapter, and Secretary of the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee until May 2009, when he and Nancy moved to West Virginia, where he expects to be equally active in that state's birding community.*

**Figure 1.** The cumulative number of species seen by Pam Hunt (see next page) and Terry Bronson during their big year efforts in 2008.



## Big Year Walkabout 2008

by Pam Hunt

On the morning of December 30, 2008, I awoke to a dusting of snow. The weather forecast was calling for 20 mph wind gusts, and I was not happy. This day was to be my final chance to break my personal record of 172 species of birds seen in a year – completely under my own power. Could it be done? Could it be done in the wind? There weren't many options left in late December, but I headed out on my 6.5 mile Penacook Census with that dim hope in the back of my mind. The winds weren't even that bad early on, but at this point in my story I'll leave you hanging and go back to a day 364 days earlier when it all began.

I stepped out of my front door at 7:45 AM on New Year's Day to take the 2.5 mile walk around the island where my Penacook condo is located. Two hours later, I was back inside with 22 species under my belt and another "Bigby" well under way. For the many readers unfamiliar with the term, "Bigby" is short for "Big Green Big Year," a reference to a growing movement toward more carbon-neutral birding. How many species can you find without burning any fossil fuels – essentially meaning you bird on foot or with a bicycle? My Bigby efforts involve the weekly Penacook Census (near the Contoocook River in Concord) and a monthly extended Great Penacook Walkabout version that goes to the Merrimack River. I'd been doing this for years under the term "human-powered birding," and had a goal in sight: beating my old record of 172 species set in 2007.

By the end of January, I'd found 45 species, and kept on this record-breaking pace through the first quarter of the year. Despite the beginning of spring migration, April ended at 99, two species short of the record set in 2006. During this period, there were a couple of surprises, including a Lesser Black-backed Gull flying up the Merrimack River in March and a pair of Gadwall at Morrill's Farm in mid-April. The reliable presence of Bohemian Waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks also helped the long, snowy winter pass more pleasantly.

A highlight of the year came on May 18, when my 17-mile "Walkabout" yielded an even 100 species. A few days earlier, a Cerulean Warbler 200 yards from my house turned out to be the first record of this species for Concord. By the end of May, I was still a little behind, with 146 species as compared to 147 in 2007. The summer passed rather uneventfully, although by the end of August, the year's total was back in record territory at 155. The challenge facing me was twofold. First, I'd never made it out of Penacook, meaning that a few species more easily found elsewhere in Concord were missing from my list, and second, I'd already found some "fall" species back in the spring.

But it turned out that the fall of 2008 was a wonderful time to be birding on foot in Concord. Sparrows and warblers were everywhere and it's worth taking a brief detour from amassing the year list to comment on the joys of finding even common birds in your local patch. Who'd have thought that Blackpoll Warblers would be almost dripping from the trees in September, or that Palm Warblers and Hermit Thrushes would be doing the same in October? Never knowing what's around the next corner is part of

why we bird. Fall had its share of surprises as well, including Connecticut Warbler in September, Western Kingbird and Dickcissel in October, and an unusually late American Redstart on November 1. Two weeks later a White-winged Crossbill along Bog Road brought me to 172 species, tying the record set in 2007.

Then came the long drought of November and December, when I hoped constantly for a Northern Shrike, Evening Grosbeak, or some other winter visitor that would put me over the top. Efforts to conduct my usual walking surveys were constantly thwarted by the weather, and even the Concord Christmas Bird Count got postponed until 2009, too late to help me find a shrike on my Walkabout route. After finding nothing of note on a walk around The Island on December 29, all hinged on the longer Penacook Census the next day. Thus we come full circuit to that windy morning of the 30th and the last minute decision to do the route counter-clockwise for a change. Just short of the morning's three-mile mark, and after walking roughly 527 miles during the year, a Boreal Chickadee called from the hemlocks along Bog Road. I'd found "Number 173," and a "good bird" at that (Boreal Chickadees are only irregular visitors south of the White Mountains). The final miles passed uneventfully, with the wind picking up on the home stretch as predicted.



*Boreal Chickadee by Thomas Murray.*

And of course, I could have done better. I didn't do a bicycle "Big Day" this year, and missed fairly easy species such as Virginia Rail and Grasshopper Sparrow that don't occur regularly within my usual walking radius. Peregrine Falcon, Great Black-backed Gull, and Evening Grosbeak failed to appear. But getting *everything* is really not the point, especially since it's practically impossible. Instead, it is better to consider what is possible: finding 173 species of birds, almost entirely within the city limits of Concord, entirely

under my own power. I'd walked about 530 miles (from Concord to North Carolina, as the crow flies) and biked another 60 miles. The only fossil fuels consumed were those that went into the treads on my shoes. And thus, in this era of economic uncertainty, global climate change, and dwindling energy reserves, I can say but one final thing: DO try this at home.

January 1, 2009: chickadees at my feeder at 8:57 AM— here we go again.

For readers interested in learning more about "green birding," visit its Web site at: <http://www.sparrowworks.ca/greenbirding/index.html>

## Spotlight on Irruptive Finches in the Winter of 2008-09

by Pam Hunt

One of the exciting things about winter in New England is the constantly shifting populations of what birders generally call “winter finches.” Some years we’re inundated with redpolls, other years it’s Purple Finches, and anyone who’s been here over 15 years recalls, with a certain amount of longing, the days when Evening Grosbeaks would clean out a feeder in a matter of hours. The comings and goings of these finches (and a few other irruptives like Northern Shrike and Bohemian Waxwing) are the bread



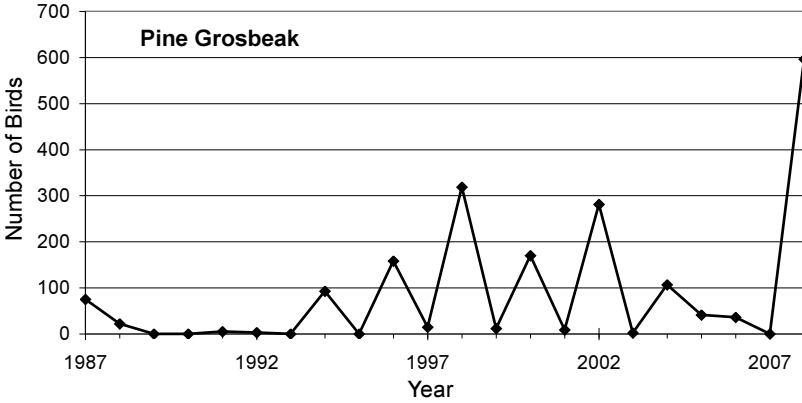
*Pine Siskin by Jon Woolf, 12/30/08, Massabesic Audubon Center, Auburn, NH.*

and butter of the *New Hampshire Bird Records* winter summary, since there’s always *something* interesting going on. The same is true for the winter of 2008-09, but the point of *this* article is to look back on 20 years of these finch movements, and hopefully provide some context for what people saw in 2008-09.

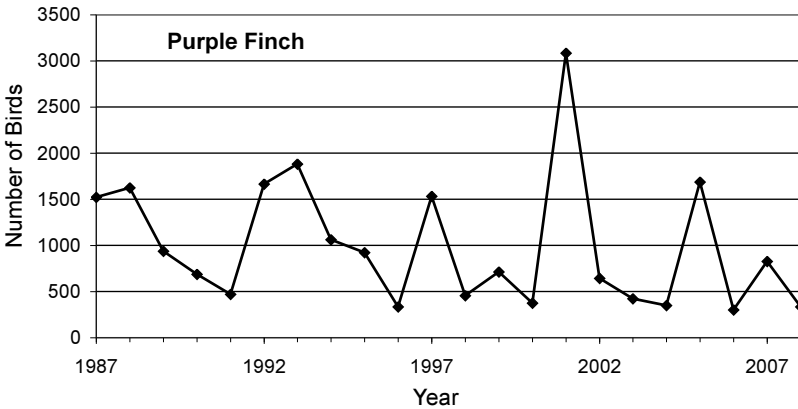
First let’s explain some terminology, just to ensure that we’re all on the same page. In the preceding paragraph I referred to this broad group of birds as “irruptives.” This does not mean they suddenly start spewing lava, but at times I suppose the analogy is apt when flocks descend on unsuspecting neighborhoods like volcanic ash. Technically speaking, irruptives are birds that have somewhat unpredictable mass migrations in response to fluctuating food supplies. Unlike “normal” migrants, irruptives can’t be counted on to head south from point A to point B in September and reverse their journey the following spring. Instead they are nomads, heading south some winters, west in others, and staying put sometimes as well. Sometimes they move in October, sometimes in January, and how far they go is anyone’s guess. They do this because their preferred winter food (usually seeds or fruit of some sort) tends to vary in abundance among years, and if there’s no food in one spot, the birds pick up *en masse* and head out in search of better foraging. Different species respond to different food sources, the details of which will be presented as we move forward. A final introductory note: all the data presented in this article are from New Hampshire Audubon’s *Backyard Winter Bird Survey* (BWBS); see <http://nhbirdrecords.org/bird-conservation/backyard-winter-survey.htm> for more information on this project.

Seven species of irruptive finches have been regularly recorded on the BWBS since 1987, and only one of them is a frugivore (fruit-eater). The Pine Grosbeak feeds primarily on mountain ash fruit during the non-breeding season, and when this crop is

**Figure 1.** Annual variation in Pine Grosbeak abundance on New Hampshire Audubon’s annual Backyard Winter Bird Survey, 1987-2008.



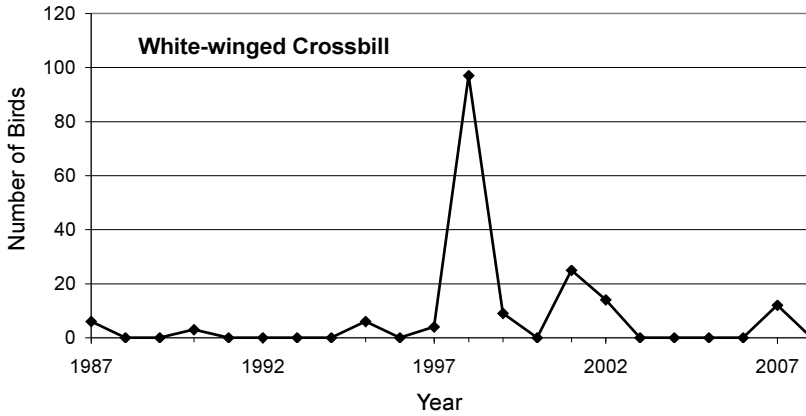
**Figure 2.** Annual variation in Purple Finch abundance on New Hampshire Audubon’s annual Backyard Winter Bird Survey, 1987-2008.



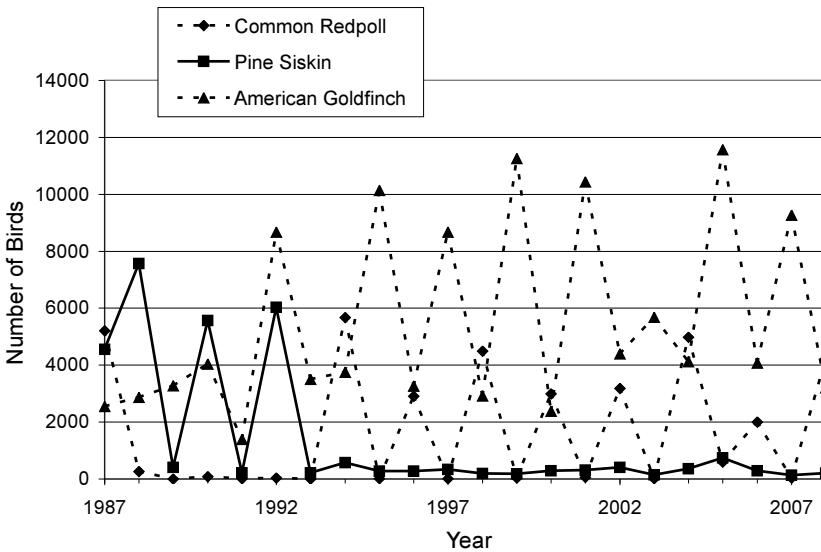
rare in Canada, these birds move south into the northern United States, at which time they frequent crab apples and other ornamentals. They tend to occur in higher numbers every two years (Figure 1), although some may be present in the northernmost parts of New England every winter. Also note that in some years when you might expect them, they hardly show up at all – a classic example of the unpredictable nature of this whole group of birds. Unlike many of the smaller finches, Pine Grosbeaks rarely wander south of Massachusetts.

The Purple Finch also shows a two-year cycle, although it is not as regular as that of the Pine Grosbeak (Figure 2). In some ways our state bird has more of a four-year cycle, sometimes with a little blip halfway through. Despite its being a locally common breeder, we don’t know much about what drives Purple Finch populations, and more often than not we see our largest numbers in the fall as they move south to grace feeders elsewhere. The fall of 2008 was no exception, and when winter arrived, it was

**Figure 3.** Annual variation in White-winged Crossbill abundance on New Hampshire Audubon’s annual Backyard Winter Bird Survey, 1987-2008.



**Figure 4.** Annual variation in abundance of small finches on New Hampshire Audubon’s annual Backyard Winter Bird Survey, 1987-2008.

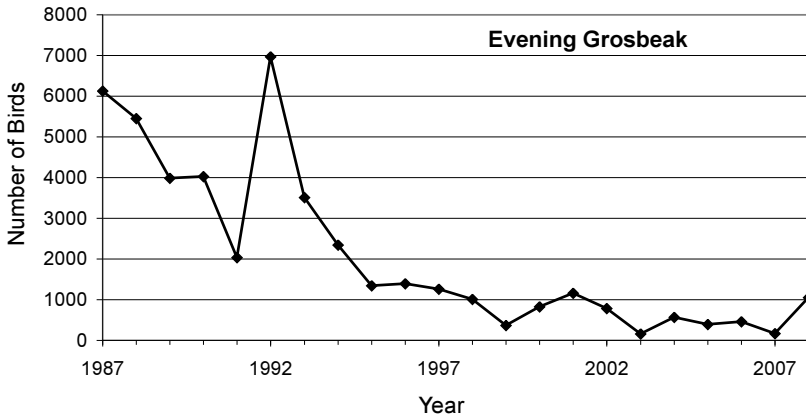


pretty clear that there were very few Purple Finches – for the second year in a row. Where they went is anyone’s guess, although we’ll find out in due time as data are collected across the continent. In 2007-08, they mostly ended up in the Midwest.

Crossbills are the true nomads in this group of birds. They are heavily reliant on cones, so much so that the Red Crossbill may have diverged into as many as eight species based simply on the dominant pines in different parts of North America. But that’s a completely different story, and in fact the Red Crossbill is too rare on the BWBS to discuss in this article. The White-winged Crossbill isn’t exactly abundant either, but there are enough data to show that – unlike all the other finches in this sum-



**Figure 5.** Annual variation in Evening Grosbeak abundance on New Hampshire Audubon's annual Backyard Winter Bird Survey, 1987-2008.



mary – there isn't really a pattern at all (Figure 3). To be fair, this lack of pattern is at least partially because this species is much less likely to visit feeders. White-winged Crossbills feed primarily on smaller cones, and track the abundance of spruce and larch crops across much of North America. When they do appear, it's usually because of an exceptional cone crop, and in such cases they will sometimes stay to breed – even in the middle of winter. They can do this because they feed their nestlings conifer seeds, which unlike insects can be available year round. As noted in the season summary, the winter of 2008-09 was a good one for White-winged Crossbills, which showed up in numbers across the state in the fall for the first time since 1997. It's anyone's guess when they'll be back!

There are three small finches in the genus *Carduelis* that can to some extent be summarized together. These are the Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin, and American Goldfinch, all of which eat primarily tiny seeds such as those of birch, alder, or thistle. Crops of birch and alder cycle like everything else, resulting in – you guessed it – biennial cycles in the birds' movements. In recent years, this pattern has been much more obvious for redpolls and goldfinches than for siskins, something we'll get back to in a moment. Also, note that redpoll numbers are usually high in low goldfinch number years and vice versa (Figure 4). While we tend to think of goldfinches as somehow different from other finches since they live in New Hampshire all year, this pattern is evidence that at least some of the goldfinches we see in the winter are *not* going to be nesting locally come summer.

So now back to the Pine Siskin. Along with the White-winged Crossbill, this small finch was the star of the 2008-09 season. It appeared in the fall in numbers not seen since the early 1990s, disappeared briefly in December, and then returned with a vengeance for the remainder of the winter. The numbers for the 2009 BWBS haven't been finalized yet, but it's certainly safe to say that the long flat tail on the present graph (Figure 4) will get a sudden increase at the end. It's no coincidence that siskins and crossbills irrupted together, since both responded to lower than normal spruce cone crops in much of eastern Canada. Along with the siskins, there were far more

redpolls than one would expect in an “off” year, apparently because birch seed was relatively scarce in the far north for a second year in a row.

Many people remember with a mix of longing and relief the 1970s and 1980s, when huge flocks of Evening Grosbeaks would descend on feeders across the Northeast and apparently consume sunflower seed by the ton. Longing because those flocks have become a thing of the past, relief because we save a bundle at the feed store. The flocks were largely absent by the mid-1990s, and since then these yellow and black gluttons have shown a weak two-year cycle (Figure 5). Evening Grosbeaks eat a wide variety of tree seeds in winter (especially ash and some conifers), but a big part of the story here is what they eat in summer. Grosbeaks were exceptionally abundant in the 1970s and 1980s because they were responding to spruce budworm outbreaks in eastern Canada. The species is something of a budworm specialist, and the high populations of this forest pest allowed for bumper crops of grosbeaks for decades. Since the caterpillars aren’t available in the winter, the grosbeaks moved south to clean out everyone’s sunflower supplies. Now that budworm populations are extremely low, there are far fewer Evening Grosbeaks in the Northeast to detect, and even in peak years their numbers don’t hold a candle to those of 30 years ago.

Hopefully the profiles above have given you an appreciation for the vagaries of winter finch movements. Even for species for which we think we have a consistent pattern (e.g., redpolls in every other year), along comes a winter like this one where redpolls are far more abundant than we expected. Add to this the largest siskin movement in over 15 years, White-winged Crossbills, and even a few Pine Grosbeaks, and you quickly realize that it’s nearly impossible to predict what a given winter will be like in any detail (although we can make pretty good guesses). That’s for the birds to know, since for them these movements are a matter of life or death, and we are simply spectators. So sit back, enjoy whatever is gracing your feeders at the moment, and get ready for whatever surprises come our way in the fall of 2009.

## Redpoll Irruption and Birder Invasion

by Tony Vazzano

**B**ased on the trends of the past 15 years, the winter of 2008-2009 should not have been a big flight year for redpolls in New Hampshire. They usually have big years here every two years and, since the previous year was a big one, I only expected a few this past winter. Our local Christmas Bird Count seemed to confirm that this was happening because only 15

were found. Then in January and February, the number of redpolls at our feeders increased from a few, to a few dozen, to a few hundred. In late February, the flock size peaked at about 450 for several days. They are difficult to count because they are seemingly in constant motion and it is not possible to get an accurate count. When redpoll numbers reach these proportions, it is not unusual to have a few Hoary Redpolls among the Common Redpolls. Both an adult male and an adult female Hoary Redpoll, as well as one or two immatures, were often in the flock.

The hillside we live on is loaded with birches and the seeds of these trees are a favorite redpoll food as is thistle seed, also called black nyjer. Redpolls have plenty of both in our neighborhood and large flocks are typical, often including a couple of Hoary Redpolls. Over the years, we have hosted a few dozen birders hoping to see a Hoary Redpoll including about six birders the previous winter. This winter things were different. In the middle of January, a rare and exciting Northern Hawk Owl was discovered in nearby Center Harbor, about 10 miles away. John Merrill, who discovered the owl near his house, was not a subscriber to the New Hampshire birding e-mail list (NH.Birds) and therefore I took on the task of letting birders know the status of the owl. So, the owl and the Hoary Redpoll sightings were posted on NH.Birds often and birders coming north to Center Harbor for the owl frequently made the extra trip to Sandwich for a Hoary Redpoll. At about the same time, two adult Ivory Gulls were found in Massachusetts. An adult Ivory Gull is extremely rare and incredibly beautiful, so birders from other parts of the country ventured to Massachusetts for a chance to see the gull. Subsequently, many of them came to New Hampshire for the Northern Hawk Owl and some of them came for the Hoary Redpolls. Also, there was a large flock of Bohemian Waxwings in an orchard across the street from us which provided a life bird for some of the visiting birders. One afternoon, while looking out our kitchen window, I counted 270 of these handsome birds perched on the trees across the street! During the first weekend that all these various birds were present, about a dozen bird-



*Hoary Redpoll by Leonard Medlock, 2/7/09, Sandwich, NH.*

ers came to our home to see redpolls. Many of them contacted me by e-mail ahead of time while some didn't because they didn't know about the redpolls until they heard about them while watching the nearby Northern Hawk Owl. The only good views of the birds, and the only reliable way to see one of the Hoary Redpolls, were from inside the house. Visitors had come from as far as North Carolina and Colorado that weekend.

The Northern Hawk Owl became quite famous and birders continued to converge on the area. The following weekend brought at least a couple of hundred visitors for the owl and nearly 40 of them, including 26 from a Massachusetts Audubon group, were in our house to see the redpolls. The flock of birds was approaching 200 at times and was consuming a couple of pounds of thistle seed every day. With the price of the thistle seed nearly twice what it was the previous winter, one visiting birder suggested we ask for a \$1 donation per person to help buy bird seed. Soon the birds were eating five pounds per day as the flock size continued to increase and, for the first time ever, feeding the birds became an expensive venture. On one of my posts to NH.Birds, I suggested to visiting birders that nothing says "thanks, we love your redpolls" more than a pound of thistle seed. By late February, about five weeks after the first visitor had arrived, the total number of birders who had visited our home was 175 and they had donated an astounding 150 pounds of thistle seed as well as enough money to buy another 150 pounds! A box of chocolates, a bottle of wine, and three beers were also donated to the cause. No, redpolls do not drink wine or beer or eat chocolate, but we certainly do.

The visiting birders ranged from beginners to experts. For many, a Hoary Redpoll was a life bird and, for many others, it was the best look they'd ever had at one. While Hoary Redpoll can present an identification problem (see the Photo Quiz article in the Winter 2007-2008 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*), adult birds are usually recognizable and often stand out from the crowds of Common Redpolls. The total number of e-mails from and to the visitors was 330 and I spent about 60 hours showing the birds. Because I work from home and usually have a break during the morning, I was able to accommodate the crowds of birders and managed to find at least one of the Hoarys for nearly all of them. We enjoyed meeting the birders who came; some were birding friends and acquaintances while the vast majority were strangers. There were a few indelible memories. A woman from Connecticut saw a Hoary Redpoll from the comfort of our living room for her 500th life bird and then popped open a bottle of champagne at 11:00 a.m. to celebrate with her friends and, of course, her host. One weekend morning, I was escorting some birders out the door and looked out only to see each of my five highest snow banks at the corners of the driveway with a birder and a scope perched atop them! Of course, I invited them in and they all got great looks at the birds. It surprised me to see that one was a birder from Connecticut whom I had already met twice in the past two years while chasing rare birds in Maine. While standing at the windows and looking out, one birder and I were treated to an adult Bald Eagle heading our way, just above treetop level, and then soaring directly over our heads. Another birder watched as a flock of about 300 redpolls swirled around the yard, coming and going just a short distance from the window, and commented that it was "the best show" he had seen all winter. For me, having 450 redpolls in the backyard and 175 grateful birders in the house to see them was also "a great show" and is now among the most memorable experiences in my nearly 30 years of birding.

## Volunteers and Research

### Winter Raptor Surveys in New Hampshire

by Lance Tanino and Terry Bronson



*Immature Bald Eagle, by Leonard Medlock, 2/9/09, Rochester wastewater treatment plant,*

**A**re there any hawk watchers in New Hampshire who would like to extend the fall hawk watching season through the winter months without freezing on a mountain? Are there any birding-by-car folks who enjoy driving (safely of course) and recording what they see? Are there birders in New Hampshire who enjoy exploring a new route?

If you answered yes, to any or all of these questions, we have experienced a fun winter birding activity that we'd like to share with you. This new endeavor is called a Winter Raptor Survey (WRS). This is a citizen science project coordinated by the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA). The purpose is to docu-

ment basic information on wintering raptors throughout the country. HMANA developed WRS procedures (check out [www.hmana.org](http://www.hmana.org)), an updated version from similar surveys conducted in past years at various locations such as the Great Basin, western Vermont, California, Pennsylvania and Illinois. The information observers (two people minimum) gather includes species, location, behavior, distance from vehicle, and weather. The routes range between 30 to 100 miles in length and are away from main roads as much as possible to allow observers to slow down and stop along the roadside. Volunteer teams are encouraged to conduct their selected route once a month with three weeks between surveys from late November to late February/early March. A survey in late January/early February is the most important if your team can only commit to a single winter survey.

Analyses of data gathered over many years will hopefully provide a better picture of wintering raptors. Information from the survey could one day relate winter raptor abundance to climate change, habitat loss and other factors that affect raptor populations.

This past winter (2008-09) two teams in New Hampshire conducted Winter Raptor Surveys. Terry Bronson and Dan Hubbard surveyed along the New Hampshire coast and the Rochester/Great Bay area. Kate Yard and Lance Tanino covered the Connecticut River in southwestern New Hampshire from West Chesterfield north to Plainfield.

The winter season is broken into two periods: wintering and migration. Wintering occurs roughly from the second week of December until the first week in February and is

broken into two sections. Section I runs from the second week in December until the end of the month while Section II goes from early January into the first week of February. Migration is categorized into Early and Late sections. The Early section occurs roughly during the last two weeks in November and the first week in December while the late section occurs roughly from the second week in February into the first week of March.

Eighty-five percent of the raptors encountered during the past two winter seasons in New Hampshire routes (Table 1) were Red-tailed Hawks (72%) and Bald Eagles (13%). The wintering period had high counts of 15 Red-tailed Hawks in December (New Hampshire Coast 2008 and Connecticut River 2009) and five Bald Eagles along the Connecticut River in late December 2009. Migration period had high counts of 14 Red-tailed Hawks (Connecticut River and Rochester/Great Bay) and five Bald Eagles (Connecticut River) in 2009. Although they are not part of the WRS, owls are birds of prey and a Snowy Owl was noted during the NH coast survey in February 2009.

A possible New Hampshire route that has yet to be conducted in the southern portion of the state would include following the Merrimack River. It would be an interesting survey because Bald Eagles are known to spend time in this area during the winter months. Of course, we're sure there are other possible interesting new routes. Go for it and give it a try.

**Table 1.** Results from Winter Raptor Surveys in New Hampshire. Only one survey was conducted during the Section II period.

	EARLY	EARLY	I	I	II	LATE	LATE	LATE
	11/22/09	12/3/08	12/9/08	12/22/08	1/17/09	2/11/09	2/17/09	2/21/09
	CT River	Rochester	NH Coast	CT River	CT River	CT River	Rochester	NH Coast
TUVU								1
BAEA	5			5	2	1	1	
SSHA	1		1				1	
COHA	2			1				1
RTHA	14	9	15	15	3	2	14	4
RLHA								2
MERL								1
UB							1	1
UA			1					1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>

Key  
 TUVU – Turkey Vulture  
 BAEA – Bald Eagle  
 SSHA – Sharp-shinned Hawk  
 COHA – Cooper’s Hawk

RTHA – Red-tailed Hawk  
 RLHA – Rough-legged Hawk  
 MERL – Merlin  
 UB – Unidentified Buteo  
 UA – Unidentified Accipiter

**References**

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*Terry Bronson is an avid birder, who volunteered for New Hampshire Bird Records, was an officer of NH Audubon’s Seacoast Chapter, and Secretary of the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee until May 2009, when he moved to West Virginia.*

*Lance Tanino resides in Keene, is an avid New Hampshire birder and volunteer for New Hampshire Bird Records, NH Audubon’s Monadnock Chapter, and Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory at Miller State Park.*

## Answer to the Photo Quiz

by David B. Donsker

**T**his issue's Photo Quiz is not only a challenge, but a chance to compare two very familiar and very similar species...Downy Woodpecker and its larger cousin, Hairy Woodpecker.

This fortuitous pair of photographs captures these two look-alikes at precisely identical distances and in nearly the same posture. Thus, we can allow ourselves to critically examine the differences between this species pair in a way that is frequently not available to us in the field.

But why would we want to go through this exercise? In fact, common as these birds are, and as separable as they may be, individual birds that are seen in isolation can and do make us sometimes question our identification. One of the leading causes of this problem is that it is often difficult to judge size in individual birds, particularly if the bird in question is foraging high in a tree or has nothing near it with which to compare. The other factor is that, size aside, shorter-billed female Hairy Woodpeckers can have proportions that approach those of male Downy Woodpecker. As such, we can sometimes be trapped into coming to the wrong conclusion when we try to make an identification of a solitary bird.

Downy and Hairy Woodpecker, our "pied" woodpeckers, have nearly identical plumages. Both are principally black and white woodpeckers. Both have virtually identically striped heads. The striping consists of a prominent white eyebrow and white line below the eye which contrast with their black crowns, thick black postocular stripe and black malar stripe or moustache. Both have nearly identical checkered wings. Both have pure white underparts and mostly black upperparts with pure white backs. The unmarked white back of both of these species immediately separates them from similar species. Both Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Three-toed Woodpecker have densely barred backs. Black-backed Woodpecker, as its name implies, has an all black back.

As the photos so elegantly show, these two species differ primarily in size. The diminutive Downy Woodpecker is half the weight of the medium sized Hairy Woodpecker. Downy Woodpecker is less than 7 inches from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail. In contrast, Hairy Woodpecker is over 12.5 inches, or approximately 35%, longer. The other excellent distinguishing feature is the size and length of the bill. Downy Woodpecker has a very short bill. The bill of Hairy Woodpecker, in contrast, is proportionally longer and stouter. Because in both species bill length tends to be longer in males as compared to females, female Hairy Woodpecker and male Downy Woodpecker are the most similar in their proportions. Also, juvenile Hairy Woodpeckers of both sexes have shorter bills than adults. In the late summer, these juvenile Hairy Woodpeckers could be confused with Downy Woodpecker.

Despite their close similarity, these two species do have a couple of unique plumage characteristics that, when seen well, can help to further distinguish them from each other. Downy Woodpecker has a very prominent nasal tuft, the patch of

feathers between the eye and the base of the upper bill. This tuft is particularly prominent since Downy Woodpecker is so small. This feature can be seen well in the accompanying photograph. In contrast, the larger Hairy Woodpecker has an inconspicuous nasal tuft. Another plumage feature that distinguishes these two species can be seen in the outer tail feathers. Those feathers in Hairy Woodpecker are pure white, without any black markings. This photograph of Hairy Woodpecker shows this feature well. Downy Woodpecker, on the other hand, usually has small dark bars on the outer tail feathers. These can be quite inconspicuous, as they are in the photograph, but when present they are an excellent confirmatory feature.

A more subtle difference involves the black malar stripe. In both species, this stripe broadens on the side of the neck and extends onto the mantle. In Hairy Woodpecker the stripe also branches to extend down to the upper lateral side of the breast. In Downy Woodpecker it often does not extend onto the upper breast or if it does, it is very small and inconspicuous. This feature can be seen easily in the photographs.

Although it is not covered in our readily available field guides, careful examination of the nape, or back of the head, of these two similar woodpeckers can also be helpful in separating the two species. At least in eastern North America, the red nape patch of the male Hairy Woodpecker is typically divided by a vertical black line, resulting in two separate red spots. This is not always the case, but when it is present it is characteristic of Hairy Woodpecker. The red nape patch of Downy Woodpecker is never divided. Although females of these two species lack the red nape patch, the pattern of the back of the head can also be useful in distinguishing the two species. In both species the white eyebrow line extends behind the head. In Hairy Woodpecker it is divided by a vertical black line. This line can be thick or thin, but it is always there. Female Downy Woodpeckers can show a similar pattern of variably thin, medium or thick dividing lines, but unlike Hairy Woodpecker, the vertical black line may be absent, creating a continuous white line behind the head. Interestingly, the variation of the nape pattern and nape spot of both of these species can be quite specific to a given bird. As such, examination of the nape can often help distinguish particular individuals. A good set of illustrations showing various nape patterns can be seen in Kilham 1983 referenced below (J. Berry, personal communication).

The contact calls of these two cousins are also similar, but can be distinguished from each other. Downy Woodpecker has a short, flat "pik" call. The similar call in Hairy Woodpecker is a louder, sharper and higher pitched "peek".

There are behavioral characteristics that can also help you to distinguish these species from each other. Downy Woodpecker is a rather tame species. It is easy to walk up upon a foraging bird to within a few feet. Hairy Woodpecker, on the other hand, is shyer and will often fly ahead of you as you approach. Downy Woodpecker is very tolerant of human habitation. Hairy Woodpecker prefers mature woods and forests and is less often seen in yards, gardens and at feeders. As might be expected by their size, the two similar species have different foraging tactics. Downy Woodpecker frequently forages on the small outer branches of trees or even on weeds, where it will often hang upside down, much like a chickadee. The larger Hairy Woodpecker prefers the larger branches of larger trees. It would not likely be seen working thin spindly stems.



Both Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers are year-round residents of our state. Both can be found in deciduous or mixed woodlands from the Massachusetts to the Canadian borders. As stated before, Downy Woodpecker is also often found in villages, parks and suburban yards while Hairy Woodpecker prefers less disturbed woods and forests.

These two familiar woodpeckers are often the first of their family to be learned by beginning birdwatchers, but even more advanced birders can learn something by taking a few moments to absorb their subtle differences.

This nice pair of photographs of adult male Downy and Hairy Woodpecker were taken by Jon Woolf at the Massabesic Audubon Center feeders in Auburn, NH.

*Special thanks to Jim Berry and Dan Hubbard who both offered insights into the significance of the nape patterns exhibited by these birds.*

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## Where to Bird

### Winter Birding in Berlin and Points North

by Kathy Dube

The Androscoggin River flows through the center of Berlin, New Hampshire. The river and the Mt. Carberry landfill attract eagles, gulls, ravens, and crows. A Lesser Black-backed Gull was found near the James Cleveland Bridge a few years ago. I have seen Great Black-backed, Herring, Ring-Billed, Glaucous, and Iceland Gulls. A great number of gulls roost on the remaining mill buildings near the VFW post on Upper Main Street and eagles have been seen taking gulls off the ice. Fruit trees around town attract Pine Grosbeaks and Bohemian Waxwings.

In Berlin, follow Main Street (Route 16) to the 12th Street Bridge, turn right and cross bridge, and then turn left heading north. Stop at the Berlin Industrial Park to check for Snow Buntings and Horned Larks. The White Mountain Chalet is just north of the park. Gray Jays were daily visitors here during the winters of 2007 and 2008. Proceed north to Success Loop Road on the right. There are many feeders visible from the road. Gray Jays have also been reported here. A Northern Goshawk was seen on a 2008 winter finch trip. Return to East Milan Road and make a right to go to the airport. Restrooms are in the terminal building and always open.



*White-winged Crossbill by Leonard Medlock, 1/26/09.*

Stay on East Milan Road to Chickwolnepy Road, which will be on your right. This road is a great place to find Dark-eyed Juncos, Evening Grosbeaks, Pine Grosbeaks, Purple Finches, nuthatches, redpolls, and White-winged Crossbills. The Caron family owns the log cabin near the top of the hill. They sent me a beautiful photo of a male Black-backed Woodpecker working a tree in their front yard. Their feeders often have a good variety of species. Birders are often seeking Red Crossbills, which I see most often in the spring. On the 2007 winter finch trip, we found Red Crossbills eating grit on Chickwolnepy Road.

Return to East Milan Road and continue north to Dummer. Go right on Hill Road in front of the Dummer church. At about 2.5 miles is the junction of Hill Road and Ferry Road. At this junction is the “meat pile.” Farmers, trappers, and hunters leave the remains of moose, deer, cows, and coyotes near the back center of the field close to the tree line. Bald Eagles, Common Ravens, American Crows, Red-tailed Hawks, and bobcat can be seen scavenging among the carcasses. Scan the trees for perched birds such as young eagles and hawks, which are well camouflaged. I counted 12 Bald Eagles, 75 Common Ravens, and 50 American Crows here on one mid-December day in 2007.

Take either Ferry Road or Hill Road back to East Milan Road and travel south to Milan. Cross the bridge to Route 16 and turn right to travel north for 3.5 miles to Pon-took Dam and Reservoir. Stop at the dam parking lot. Eagles are always looking for scraps from the ice fishermen. A Bald Eagle nest is located 1.4 miles north of the dam. It is on the east side of the river in a pine tree.

Continue traveling on Route 16 north to Errol, stopping frequently, especially at stands of conifers. Black-backed Woodpeckers nest along the highway and are sometimes seen in winter. Crossbills, Ruffed Grouse, Gray Jays, and Common Mergansers are frequently seen. I found a female Spruce Grouse foraging under some spruce trees about 5 miles south of Errol. In Errol, check the area around the bridge on Route 26 for Bald Eagles. Backtrack a few yards and travel north on Route 16. A large pool below the Errol Dam can sport as many as a hundred-plus Common Goldeneye congregating in late March, waiting for “ice-out” in the northern lakes.

Continue on Route 16 to Greenough Pond Road, 2-3 miles north on the left. This seems to be the best place to find Boreal Chickadees. I’ve had a 60% success rate finding this elusive species. Be careful on dirt logging roads, as trucks are hauling seven days a week. Walking these roads is preferable to driving, especially in winter. Return to Route 16 and continue north to the headquarters of the Lake Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge, the last stop on the journey. Two or three Gray Jays have flown in to greet participants on previous winter finch trips.

The Errol/Umbagog Christmas Bird Count, which is compiled by Chris Martin, has data available online that would be helpful for birding this area (<http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/index.html>). Visiting birders should consult the detailed maps in the New Hampshire Atlas & Gazetteer by DeLorme map to follow the route outlined above.

*A very experienced birder and resident of Berlin, Kathy Dube leads winter finch trips every year for the Seacoast Chapter of New Hampshire Audubon.*

## Photo Gallery

### A Snowy Owl Winter

by Steve Mirick

The winter of 2008-09 brought a large number of Snowy Owls southward into New England including several individuals in New Hampshire. The first New Hampshire bird was reported from along the coast on November 2, 2008, but several more were subsequently found including at least a couple from inland locations and a few others from the coast. One individual spent several weeks at Ragged Neck in Rye, where remains were found indicating that it had been feeding on sea birds including three grebes, a Black Scoter, and a Red-throated Loon! Norm Smith of Massachusetts Audubon has been conducting research on Snowy Owls at Logan airport in Boston, MA for over 25 years, where he has been banding and relocating owls. In recent years, he has been putting satellite transmitters on them in order to track their movements in New England, and migration to and from their breeding grounds in the Arctic. A recent post to the Massachusetts birding e-mail list included some interesting information which he has learned over the years. Some of his results are as follows:



2 Snowy Owls interacting, by Larry Masters, 12/8/08, Rye Harbor State Park, Rye, NH.

Winter Snowy Owl incursions into New England are the result of an abundance of food on its breeding grounds the summer before. This allows for more young Snowy Owls to be raised and most of the birds we see are typically nomadic young birds.

Thirty Snowy Owls had been captured, banded, and relocated from Logan Airport for the winter of 2008-2009 as of March 29. Of these, all but two were young birds, and all were relocated to either Plum Island or Duxbury Beach in Massachusetts. Incredibly, five birds were killed this winter as a result of strikes with aircraft at Logan!

Ten out of 14 Snowy Owls with satellite transmitters attached to them returned to the Arctic in the vicinity of Baffin Island in Canada. Remarkably, three of the 14 were shot in Massachusetts and the carcasses were found because of the transmitter.

One adult Snowy Owl returned to Logan Airport 16 years after being banded, and is the oldest Snowy Owl known to date.

The following photos show some of New Hampshire's Snowy Owls from the winter of 2008-09.



*Snowy Owl by Leonard Medlock, 1/5/09, in field behind Hayward Farms, Milford, NH.*



*Owl pellet and remnants of owl prey – a grebe foot, by Steve Mirick, 2/18/09, Rye Harbor State Park, Rye, NH.*



*Common Raven harassing a Snowy Owl, by Chris Sheridan, 12/30/08, behind Hayward Farms, Milford, NH.*

## 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 any issue so we can correct the computerized data file of sighting records.

### Spring 2006

- p. 15 There is only one Lesser Black-backed Gull in the photo and it is indicated by the lower arrow. The upper arrow points to a Great Black-backed Gull for comparison.
- p. 31 Three Pine Warblers not Cape May Warblers were seen on 5-18 in Nottingham.
- p. 34 A Common Yellowthroat listed on 4-14 lacked accompanying details for this extremely early sighting and should not have been listed.

### Summer 2006

- p. 15 In the Jaegers through Alcids summary, second paragraph, the sentence about Common Murres should read “they do breed on offshore islands in the Gulf of Maine” not “Downeast Maine” (although they do breed on Machias Seal Island in Maine).
- p. 16 The Black-legged Kittiwake photo was taken on 6/2/06 not 6/03/06.
- p. 44 Figure 2 is incorrect. It shows the same graph as above. See the Summer 2007 issue for the correct figure (Vol. 26, No. 2).

### Fall 2006

- p. 18 The American Coot in Laconia on 10-25 was seen by Tony Vazzano not Vaz-zabo.
- p. 25 In the summary, first paragraph, the second sentence should read “reported from an unusual location,” not “usual”.
- p. 25 In the summary, second paragraph, it should be “Alan Keitt not Keit”.
- p. 37 A Common Yellowthroat not Mourning Warbler was seen on 10-02 in Portsmouth.
- p. 53 In the second paragraph, end of second line, it should be “Pierson not Perison”.

## Abbreviations Used

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

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# An Invasion Year for White-winged Crossbill



*White-winged Crossbill male, by Leonard Medlock, 2/19/09, Rt. 1A and Central St., Rye, NH.*



*White-winged Crossbill, by Stephen R. Mirick, 2/15/09, Rt. 1A, Rye, NH.*



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