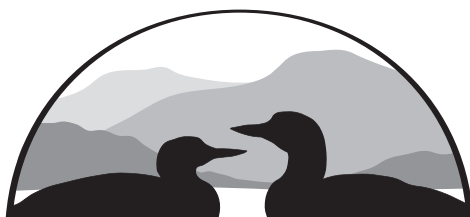


New Hampshire Bird Records



Winter 2010-11

Vol. 29, No. 4



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Volume 29, Number 4

Winter 2010-11

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**IN HONOR OF
Alice Cormier**

This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*, with its color cover, is dedicated to Alice Cormier. New Hampshire Audubon is grateful for her many contributions to the organization and for her legacy gift. This sponsorship also recognizes and remembers the birders we have recently lost who made many contributions to our knowledge of birds in the state and supported their conservation (see page 2).



Alice Cormier with her husband, Paul.

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Remembering

In the last year, we have lost a number of birders. We take a moment to recognize and remember them. We realize that short descriptions can never do justice to a person's contributions and we apologize for those we missed.

Bob Bradley (12/16/10) was the recipient of the 2009 Goodhue-Elkins Award for his contributions to our knowledge of birds in New Hampshire. An active birder in the North Country, he contributed many records of bird sightings from that area, especially in the 1960s and 1970s when there were few reporters from that area.

Alice Cormier (10/17/10) was a volunteer for Osprey Weekend, Winter Eagle Watches, and the Breeding Bird Atlas, as well as a Christmas Bird Count participant. She was an active Nashaway Chapter member, field trip leader and former Chapter President. Many will remember her welcoming manner, delightful laugh, and warm friendliness.

Charles Osgood (12/31/10), a resident of Kearsarge, New Hampshire, had a lifelong interest in birds and traveled worldwide in search of them. He was a strong supporter of conservation efforts and in several instances purchased land to ensure its protection.

Robert Rathbone (2/23/11) was an active birder and New Hampshire Audubon board member in the 1960s and 1970s. He was instrumental in New Hampshire Audubon's acquisition of Paradise Point on Newfound Lake.

Robert Ritz (11/22/10) was a long-time reporter to *New Hampshire Bird Records* submitting many sightings, as well as interesting bird descriptions, in his unique hand writing. He always noted when he heard the first song of arriving spring migrants. He was also the compiler of the Keene Christmas Bird Count for many years.

Jesse Ward (5/22/10) was a volunteer for the Breeding Bird Survey, conducting a route for 32 years; an amazingly long tenure for a survey that requires starting at 4:34 am! His daughter, continuing the tradition, took over his route several years ago.

From the Editor

Thank You David Deifik, Welcome (back), Pam Hunt

This issue marks a big change for the Winter Editor position. After many years as Winter Editor, David Deifik is transitioning to a different role. Although he will no longer be the season editor, David will still be summarizing the Christmas Bird Count and putting together the table of results from each count. This is an important part of the winter season and requires considerable work in its own right. We are delighted that he is continuing with this responsibility and think it will work out well for both the publication and the Winter Editor position to have someone dedicated to this task. We very much appreciate all that David has done as season editor and are very glad that he will be continuing on the *New Hampshire Bird Records* team.

We welcome Pam Hunt as the new Winter Editor. Pam, hardly recovered from doing her last issue as Spring Editor, is taking on her first winter issue. As New England Winter Editor for *North American Birds*, Pam is no stranger to the winter season. The change will allow her to better combine both responsibilities. We are very happy to have her “back” although I can’t really say that she ever left!

More Volunteer Changes

This is Len Medlock’s first issue as the new Photo Editor and we welcome him in this new position. As part of the change, Phil Brown will be taking over the coordination of the Where to Bird feature in *New Hampshire Bird Records*. If you have any ideas for this feature, or would like to write an article on birding an area that you know well, please contact him: pbrown@nhaudubon.org or (603) 224-9909 x334.

Thank You to Donors

We are very grateful to those who have donated to *New Hampshire Bird Records*, sponsored an issue, or sponsored the “Twitchers in the Rye” during the annual Superbowl of Birding (see the article on page 36). Subscription revenue does not cover the full costs of *New Hampshire Bird Records* and your contributions help make it possible for New Hampshire Audubon to bring you this publication and maintain the quality of the records. Support for data compilation and management was also received from New Hampshire Audubon’s Dr. Margery J. Milne and Dr. Lorus J. Milne Biological Science Research Fund.

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Friends of Margot Johnson who sponsored the Fall 2010 issue are in the list above.

Friends of Bob Quinn who sponsored the Summer 2010 issue were listed in that issue.

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Photo Quiz



Can You Identify This Bird?

Answer on page 58

Photos by Phil Brown (top) and Eric Masterson (bottom).

Winter Season

December 1, 2010 through February 28, 2011

by Pamela Hunt

The winter of 2010-2011 started innocuously enough, with temperature and precipitation both near normal during December. The month started with heavy rain and southeasterly flows that provided excellent conditions for observing migrating seabirds, conditions that were replicated on December 12-13. Both times, Steve Mirick was able to station himself at the coast to watch the show, which was particularly impressive on December 1. January saw a shift to below normal temperatures and more snow than recent norms. For example, a storm on January 12 dumped 18.3 inches on Concord, only 0.3 inches short of the Capitol City's one-day record set in 1901. January ended with roughly twice as much snow on the ground in most southern locations than we usually get during the entire month. The cold and snow continued into February, which has the dubious honor of being the first month since October 2009 that regional temperatures were below normal in New England as a whole. Two more nor'easters brought heavy snow on February 2 and 25, by which time towns were running out of places to put the stuff. In addition to impacting birds like Barred Owls that have trouble hunting in deep snow, the snowfall reduced parking options on the heavily-birded Route 1A along the New Hampshire coast. Who knows what interesting seabirds were missed because people had nowhere to pull over! In the middle of all the cold and snow, there were two brief respites in the second half of February, when southwesterly flows brought daytime temperatures above freezing on February 14 and 17-18, and ushered in the beginnings of a much-longed-for spring migration (at least if you count vultures as signs of spring).

Ornithologically speaking, it was something of a quiet season, with a few notable exceptions. We saw irruptions of redpolls and Bohemian Waxwings, although numbers were generally lower and flocks more dispersed than in the last few major invasions. There was also a nice "invasion" of western species, including two **Townsend's Solitaires**, a **Varied Thrush**, **Spotted Towhee**, and, for the second winter in a row, one of the western subspecies of Orange-crowned War-



Pam Hunt



*Spotted Towhee by Len Medlock,
02/06/11, Peterborough, NH.*

bler. Waterfowl watchers were kept busy, with everything from migration watches along the coast to roost counts on inland rivers. A few lingering dabblers were added to the mix to keep things interesting. Rounding out the list was a **Northern Fulmar** seen *inside* Hampton Harbor on January 22. The vast majority of New Hampshire records for this pelagic species are from well offshore, and, in this case, there wasn't even a weather event that might have explained its presence in the harbor (see the article on page 29).

Since this is my first winter season, a brief note on philosophy is in order. As the number of records submitted to NH eBird continues to increase (over 17,000 this season), it becomes more and more challenging to sort through them all, and as a result, I've opted to dramatically cut back on the number of records that are published. Included are a few high counts, the first and last dates for unusual birds, and most records of things like "boreal specialties" for which people always like to search (even in winter). For most of our expected winter species (e.g., feeder birds), there will be few if any records published here. These records are still important, since along with other data sources (like the Christmas Bird Count) they continue to provide information on changing populations and timing of migratory movements. In some cases, I will comment on apparent trends but opt not to include the data, since the stories I aim to tell are usually a little larger than the individual sightings that generate them. So, with no further ado, feel free to break out your down jackets and snowshoes and relive the winter that was 2010-2011.

Waterfowl

As mentioned in the introduction, coastal storms on December 1 and 13 brought waterfowl and other marine migrants close to shore. Rather than listing these records in the sightings section, I have compiled them in a single table so the two days can be compared (Table 1). Note the overall decline in numbers of ducks and geese (and other species) between the two dates, indicating that the bulk of migration had occurred by the early part of the month. After that, most counts of ducks on the coast were of winter residents in typical numbers, and these are not listed below. Noteworthy



Northern Shoveler (f) by Scott Young, 12/14/2010, South Mill Pond, Portsmouth, NH.

in the sea duck category was an adult male Harlequin Duck that appeared to wander back and forth between Great and Little Boars Heads, but was nowhere reliable. Although this species is common at sites to the north and south of New Hampshire, we don't get them very regularly on our small section of coastline and few make extended stays.

Gadwall and Northern Shoveler are also rare winter birds in New Hampshire, although the former is sometimes abundant as close as Plum Island, Massachusetts. Two Gadwalls graced the Granite State this season, with a female in Rochester surviving at least through mid-January.

Two of the five winter shovelers also made it through most of January. This species is clearly on the increase as a wintering bird, a pattern manifest across coastal New England. The dramatic increase in Mallard numbers at the Exeter Wastewater Treatment Plant was likely a result of other water bodies, including Great Bay, freezing up during the February cold snap. This is now the second year in a row that such large numbers have been recorded here.

For inland waterbird enthusiasts, Spofford Lake in Chesterfield is the place to be in early December. This season the lake hosted a Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, up to 3 Lesser Scaup, and a Bufflehead (plus a Red-necked Grebe, see below), all rare in winter away from more coastal areas. Also inland, David Lipsy discovered a nice roost of dabblers, Common Goldeneye, and Common Mergansers above the Amoskeag Dam in Manchester in early January. Later in the season, two Bufflehead were found in Manchester, and at least one of those birds appears to have started working its way north in February. Bufflehead are rare away from salt water at any point in the winter. Hinsdale continues to support an interesting mix of waterfowl well into the winter, including some relatively high counts for Hooded Merganser. We can't close this waterfowl summary without mentioning the exceptional concentration of Ruddy Ducks on Great Bay in early December, which had dwindled to a single bird on New Year's Day.

Table 1. Comparison of seawatch counts of waterfowl, loons, and other seabirds from Little Boars Head, North Hampton, NH. Most birds were reported to be flying south and presumed to be migrating. Observers are Steve and Jane Mirick (Data from eBird).

	Dec 1	Dec 13
	4.5 hrs	2.0 hrs
Canada Goose	284	0
American Black Duck	58	6
Green-winged Teal	1	0
Greater Scaup	44	0
Common Eider	27	54
Surf Scoter	18	10
White-winged Scoter	40	20
Black Scoter	43	83
Long-tailed Duck	24	3
Common Goldeneye	13	7
Red-breasted Merganser	28	53
Red-throated Loon	142	11
Common Loon	7	12
Northern Gannet	85	5
Black-legged Kittiwake	24	0
Bonaparte's Gull	20	2
Dovekie	2	0
Razorbill	11	19

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Snow Goose				
12/08	1	Rye	Awcomin Marsh	J. Lambert
12/17	2	Rochester	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
01/08	1	Dover	Gulf Rd.	S. Young, D. Hubbard
Canada Goose				
12/04	307		NH coast	S. Mirick
12/15	500	Conway	E. Conway Fields	B. Crowley
12/20	200	Conway	E. Conway Fields	B. Crowley
12/22	250	Nashua	Bishop Guertin High School	C. Sheridan
01/08	220	Dover	Gulf Rd.	S. Young, D. Hubbard
01/22	103		NH coast	J. Lambert
Wood Duck				
12/03	1	Hollis	Heron Pond residence	K. Klasman
02/17	1	Bow	Hess Gehris Solutions, Hall St.	D. Lipsy
Gadwall				
12/03	1	Derry	Derry WTP	S. Mirick
12/03	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick
01/20	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	J. Lambert
American Wigeon				
12/10	1	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
01/01	1	Portsmouth	North Mill Pond	L. Medlock, J. Woolf, J. O'Shaughnessy
01/20	4	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert
01/22	3	N. Hampton	cove at Rye town line	S. Mirick
01/23	1	N. Hampton	N. Hampton State Beach	M. Harvey
02/20	1	Portsmouth	Sagamore Bridge	B. Griffith, L. Kras
American Black Duck				
12/10	1000	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
12/20	30	Moultonborough	Blueberry Island	I. MacLeod
12/23	35	Rochester	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
12/30	78	Hampton	North Side Park	D. Bishop, R. Belding
12/31	35	Hinsdale	Hinsdale bluffs roost	J. Russo, D. Clark
01/10	10	Manchester	Merrimack R. above Amoskeag Dam	P. Brown, D. Lipsy, P. Hunt
01/28	160	Exeter	Exeter WTP	L. Medlock
02/23	180	Exeter	Exeter WTP	L. Medlock
Mallard				
01/10	200	Manchester	Merrimack R. above Amoskeag Dam	P. Brown, D. Lipsy, P. Hunt
01/11	210	Rochester	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
01/20	800	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert
01/28	1500	Exeter	Exeter WTP	L. Medlock
02/07	225	Rochester	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
02/13	2000	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert
Northern Shoveler				
12/05	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	P. Brown
12/12	1	Portsmouth	South Mill Pond	L. Kras, J. Lambert
12/16	3	Rochester	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick
01/20	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	J. Lambert
01/29	1	Portsmouth	South Mill Pond	S. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Northern Pintail				
12/01	1	Strafford	Bow Lake	S. Young
12/06	1	Northwood	Northwood Lake	S. Young
12/15	1	Portsmouth	South Mill Pond	B. Griffith, L. Kras
12/16	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick
12/30	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	L. Medlock
01/16	1	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
02/14	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick
02/18	1	Portsmouth	South Mill Pond	K. Elwell, S. Santino
02/27	1	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
Green-winged Teal				
12/04	2	Stratham	Stuart Farm	S. Mirick
12/05	1	Hampton Falls	Dodge Ponds	S. Mirick
01/20	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert, S. Young
02/13	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert
Redhead				
12/09	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
Ring-necked Duck				
12/02	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	T. Schottland, J. Russo, D. Clark
12/10	1	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S. Mirick
12/19	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake, Keene CBC	P. Brown
12/24	1	Tilton	s. Lake Winnisquam	I. MacLeod
02/22	1	Manchester	Intervale CC	L. Hansche
02/27	6	Hinsdale	above Vernon Dam	A. Johnson
Greater Scaup				
12/03	1	Derry	Derry WTP	S. Mirick
12/10	1350	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
01/02	1	Sanbornton	Winnisquam Lake, Laconia CBC	P. Hunt, D. Crook, L. Bunten
01/29	500		Great Bay	P. Brown, K. Klapper, C. Seifer
02/16	4	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	T. Pirro
Lesser Scaup				
12/02	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	T. Schottland, J. Russo, D. Clark
12/09	3	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/26	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	K. Klapper
02/05	1	Durham	Great Bay, Adam's Point	J. Lambert, L. Kras, B. Griffith
Harlequin Duck				
12/10	1	N. Hampton	N. Hampton State Beach	S. Mirick
12/23	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach, south	C. Muise
02/13	1	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	J. Lambert, L. Medlock, J. O'Shaughnessy
02/23	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	S. Mirick
Bufflehead				
12/03	1	Derry	Derry WTP	S. Mirick
12/03	2	Nelson	Tolman Pond	P. Brown
12/11	23	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	J. Kelly

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

12/16	28	Hampton	n. side of harbor s. to Cross Beach Rd.	J. O'Shaughnessy
12/17	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
01/08	40	Dover	Gulf Rd.	D. Hubbard, S. Young
01/31	2	Manchester	Merrimack River	B. Griffith
02/22	1	Manchester	Manchester millyard	L. Hansche
02/24	1	Hooksett	Amoskeag Rowing Club	R. Quinn

Common Goldeneye

12/31	42	Hinsdale	Hinsdale bluffs roost	J. Russo, D. Clark
01/08	80	Dover	Gulf Rd.	D. Hubbard, S. Young
01/10	250	Manchester	Merrimack R. above Amoskeag Dam	P. Brown, D. Lipsy, P. Hunt
01/20	66	Manchester	Old Mill Complex, dam to Granite St.	D. Lipsy
02/12	142		NH coast	S. Mirick
02/16	28	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	T. Pirro
02/19	64	Concord	Sewalls Falls	R. Quinn, et al.



Barrow's Goldeneye by Cliff Otto, 01/28/11, Merrimack River, Manchester, NH.

Barrow's Goldeneye

12/01	1	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S. Mirick
12/10	1	New Castle	Fort Stark	S. Mirick
12/17	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	J. O'Shaughnessy
12/31	1	Hinsdale	Hinsdale bluffs roost	J. Russo, D. Clark
01/06	1	Rye	Concord Point	S. Mirick
01/24	1	Manchester	Waumbec Mill	M. Thompson
01/30	2	Manchester	Commercial St.	Z. Cornell
02/21	1	Rye	Seal Rocks	J. Lambert, B. Griffith

Hooded Merganser

12/01	15	Strafford	Bow Lake	S. Young
12/02	12	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	T. Schottland, J. Russo, D. Clark
12/06	29		Silver Lake, Tilton/Belmont	I. MacLeod
12/11	38	Concord	Penacook Lake (Long Pond)	P. Hunt
12/19	82	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake, Keene CBC	P. Brown
12/26	12	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	K. Klapper
12/31	45	Hinsdale	Hinsdale bluffs roost	J. Russo, D. Clark
01/06	24		Silver Lake, Tilton/Belmont	I. MacLeod
01/10	6	Manchester	Merrimack R. above Amoskeag Dam	P. Brown, D. Lipsy, P. Hunt

Common Merganser

12/09	47	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/14	576	Center Harbor	Lake St., Lake Winnepesaukee	L. Medlock, J. Lambert
12/20	120	Moultonborough	Long Island Road Bridge	I. MacLeod
12/29	48	Meredith	Shep Browns Boat Basin	I. MacLeod
12/31	30	Hinsdale	Hinsdale bluffs roost	J. Russo, D. Clark
12/31	80	Laconia	Bartlett Beach	I. MacLeod

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
01/10	100	Manchester	Merrimack R. above Amoskeag Dam	P. Brown, D. Lipsy, P. Hunt
02/19	49	Concord		D. Lipsy
Red-breasted Merganser				
01/23	45		Hampton Harbor	M. Harvey
Ruddy Duck				
12/02	82	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
12/04	110	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
12/10	30	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
01/01	1	Greenland	Great Bay, Sunset Farm	L. Medlock, J. Woolf, J. O'Shaughnessy

Quail through Coot

If there were a prize for “escaped game bird of the season,” it would have to go to Mountain Quail. This species of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade mountains most certainly did not make it to Rye under its own power, but was nonetheless photographed at a feeder there in December. The count of **142** migrating Red-throated Loons off Little Boars Head on December 1 (see Table 1, previous section) was noteworthy for its lateness, since most high counts for this species are from late October through mid-November. Note also the large numbers of Northern Gannets seen during the same vigil. The other coastal highlight in this taxonomic grouping was the **Northern Fulmar** that somehow found itself inside Hampton Harbor on January 22. Sometimes fulmars are seen from shore (although not usually in New Hampshire) during nor’easters or other inclement weather, but in this case the winds were from the west, making the pelagic bird’s presence in the harbor even more mysterious (see page 29).



*Northern Fulmar by Jason Lambert,
01/22/11, Hampton Harbor,
Hampton, NH.*

Inland sightings of note included single Pied-billed and Red-necked Grebes on Spofford Lake in early December, followed by one each of the same species on the Connecticut Lake in Hinsdale at month’s end. Were they the same birds, simply moving to the next available open water as ice set in on the lake? Could the American Coot that spent much of the winter in Hinsdale also have been at Spofford previously, but not detected by all the birders looking for ducks and grebes? Along the Merrimack River, 1-2 Common Loons frequented the limited open water between Manchester and Concord. The same was true for Great Cormorant, numbers of which in Manchester peaked at a remarkable 16 in mid-February. A couple of individuals of this mainly coastal winterer remain on the Merrimack most winters, but this number is unprecedented, and may reflect the start of northward migration since it occurred near the February mini-thaws.

Vultures most certainly moved into New Hampshire in mid-February with “warm” southwesterly flows. This is clearly the case with the three **Black Vultures** in the southeastern part of the state on February 14 and 18. While a single Turkey Vulture had ventured north as early as January 20, the big influx occurred nearly a month later, at the same time as the Black Vultures. At the beginning of the season, an Osprey in Peterborough was one of only a handful of winter records for the state (although there is some indication early winter records are on the increase in southern New England). Participants in early January’s mid-winter Bald Eagle count tallied 54 eagles statewide, down a little from the record (61) set in 2010. When the count was repeated in late February, the total number of eagles was again 54, although they were distributed differently among the state’s major wintering areas. Birders in the Connecticut River Valley were treated to both light and dark morph Rough-legged Hawks. Last but not least, a “large falcon” at Pease International Tradeport on December 4 might have been a Gyrfalcon, but, after a too-brief initial sighting, the bird could not be relocated. Outside of Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs), there were totals of six Merlins and five American Kestrels. It was not so long ago that any winter Merlin in the state would be noteworthy, but as this species increases as a breeder in the Northeast, and kestrels decline, this switch in relative abundance was bound to happen sooner rather than later.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Common Loon				
01/03	1	Meredith	Meredith Bay	P. Brown
01/30	1	Hooksett	Lambert Park	Z. Cornell
01/31	2	Manchester	Merrimack River	B. Griffith
02/20	1	Bow	Merrimack River	P. Verville., B. Dyment
Pied-billed Grebe				
12/09	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/31	1	Hinsdale	Hinsdale bluffs roost	J. Russo, D. Clark
02/27	1	Hinsdale	above Vernon Dam	A. Johnson
Red-necked Grebe				
12/02	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	T. Schottland, J. Russo, D. Clark
12/17	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/31	1	Hinsdale	Hinsdale bluffs roost	J. Russo, D. Clark
Northern Fulmar				
01/22	1		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick, J. Lambert
Double-crested Cormorant				
12/15	2	Portsmouth	Peirce Island	B. Griffith, L. Kras
02/08	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	J. Kelly
Great Cormorant				
12/19	33	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	D. Hitchcox
01/16	1	Manchester	Merrimack River	B. Griffith, L. Kras
01/20	4	Manchester	Old Mill Complex, dam to Granite	St. D. Lipsy
01/30	2	Hooksett	Lambert Park	Z. Cornell
02/16	16	Manchester	Manchester millyard	L. Hansche
02/19	2	Concord		D. Lipsy

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
02/22	9	Manchester	Manchester millyard	L. Hansche
02/24	3	Hooksett	Amoskeag Rowing Club	R. Quinn



*Black Vulture by Len Medlock,
02/18/11, Newmarket, NH.*

Black Vulture

02/14	1	Hampton Falls	Hampton Falls	D. Terrence
02/14	1	Manchester	Rt. 93 n. before Rt. 101	T. Young
02/18	1	Newmarket	Nichols Ave.	L. Medlock, L. Kras, J. Lambert

Turkey Vulture

12/06	3	Newmarket	Rt. 152	J. O'Shaughnessy
12/11	1	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis Jr.
01/20	1	Manchester	Mall of NH	J. O'Shaughnessy
02/12	3	Nashua	Simon St.	C. Sheridan
02/18	12	Newmarket	Nichols Ave.	L. Medlock, L. Kras, J. Lambert
02/24	30	Nashua	Edmatteric Dr.	D. Fortnam

Osprey

12/04	1	Peterborough	Rt. 202, bus depot pond	P. Brown
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Northern Harrier

12/16	1		Hampton Harbor area	J. O'Shaughnessy
12/18	1	Antrim	Willard Pond WS	P. Brown, J. Tilden, M. Einermann
12/23	1	Durham	Little Bay	S. Mirick
01/08	1	Hampton		J. O'Shaughnessy
01/11	1	Rye	Straw Point	S. Mirick

Red-shouldered Hawk

12/05	1	Seabrook	Rt. 95	S. Mirick
12/09	1	Litchfield	residence	L. McKillop
01/08	1	Dover	Gulf Rd.	D. Hubbard, S. Young
01/21	1	Derry	Frost Road	B. Estabrook

Rough-legged Hawk

12/12	1	Westmoreland	Woodward Rd.	A. Burnett
12/16	2	Westmoreland	Woodward Rd.	A. Burnett
12/17	1	Tilton	over Rt. 93	A. Ports
12/26	1	Westmoreland	Woodward Rd.	A. Burnett
12/28	1	Candia	Abe Emerson Marsh	C. Sheridan
02/02	1	Portsmouth	Pease Int'l. Tradeport	L. Kras

Golden Eagle

12/02	1	Bow	Turee Pond boat ramp at high school	D. Lipsy
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<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Large falcon sp.				
12/04	1	Portsmouth	Pease Int'l. Tradeport	L. Medlock
American Coot				
12/03	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick
12/08	8	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
12/10	6	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
01/30	1	Hinsdale	above Vernon Dam	A. Johnson

Plovers through Alcids



Black-bellied Plover by Jason Lambert, 02/21/11, Hampton Harbor, Hampton, NH

Shorebirds don't generally make much news in winter and this season was typical in that regard, with the notable exception of a Black-bellied Plover that managed to overwinter in Hampton. Killdeer also deserve mention, with one well to the north in Conway in mid-December and another on the coast in January. Gulls were limited to the expected species, and even our usual winter visitors, Iceland, Lesser Black-backed, and Glaucous Gulls, were

reported in lower numbers than in many recent winters. Bonaparte's Gulls and Black-legged Kittiwakes were among the migrants noted along the coast on December 1 (see Waterfowl summary, above), but were gone or largely gone by December 13.

Then there were alcids. There were at least five Dovekies, including a very cooperative individual that spent the latter half of December unusually close to shore in Hampton, where it was enjoyed by birders from near and far. A remarkable concentration of Razorbills formed at the mouth of the Piscataqua River early in December, culminating in a tally of roughly 75 from Odiorne Point during the Coastal CBC on December 18 (normal CBC totals are less than 10, see the CBC Summary). This phenomenon may have been the result of currents temporarily forcing small fish into the area. In the absence of winter pelagic trips, there were no Common Murres reported at all, and only a single Thick-billed Murre. Finally, a cooperative Black Guillemot spent the winter inside Rye Harbor, and occasionally even ventured upstream, where it could be seen in the relatively confined habitat of a salt marsh channel – definitely an unusual location for this normally offshore species.



Black Guillemot by Jason Lambert, 01/22/11, Awcomin Marsh, Rye, NH.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Black-bellied Plover				
12/04	4	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	S. Mirick
02/21	1	Hampton	Hampton Harbor, Hampton River Marina flats	J. Lambert, B. Griffith
Killdeer				
12/04	2	N. Hampton	Rt. 111	S. Mirick
12/15	1	Conway	E. Conway Fields	B. Crowley
01/20	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach, south	J. O'Shaughnessy
Sanderling				
12/10	80	Rye	Rye Ledge	S. Mirick
01/05	12		NH coast	D. Lippy
01/23	25	Rye	Rye Ledge	P. Hunt, R. Suomala, P. Hunt
02/19	45	N. Hampton	N. Hampton State Beach	P. Corcoran, J. Mays, B. Cole
Purple Sandpiper				
12/19	40	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	S. Mirick
01/11	40	Hampton	Hampton Beach, south	J. Scott, B. Crowley
02/07	53	Rye	Rye Ledge	S. Mirick
Dunlin				
12/05	48	Hampton	Hampton Harbor Inlet	S. Mirick
12/19	108	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	D. Hitchcox, D. Suitor
01/29	100		Hampton Harbor	P. Brown, K. Klapper, C. Seifer
Black-legged Kittiwake				
12/12	5		NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
12/19	2	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	D. Hitchcox
12/27	2	Hampton	Great Boars Head	J. O'Shaughnessy
Bonaparte's Gull				
12/05	90	New Castle	Fort Stark	P. Brown, P. Davenport
12/17	40	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	P. Hunt
01/01	14		NH coast	J. O'Shaughnessy
02/13	2	Rye	Rye Harbor	J. O'Shaughnessy
Iceland Gull				
12/12	1	New Castle	Great Island Common	L. Kras, J. Lambert
12/20	1	Meredith	Meredith Bay	I. MacLeod
12/30	2	Rochester	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick, L. Medlock
02/08	4	Rochester	Rochester WTP	J. Lambert, B. Griffith
02/13	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert
02/25	1	Derry	Derry WTP	M. Thompson
Lesser Black-backed Gull				
12/03	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick
12/17	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	P. Hunt
01/03	1	Portsmouth	Peirce Island	S. Young
02/06	1	Manchester	Merrimack River	J. Lambert, L. Kras, B. Griffith

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Glaucous Gull				
01/19	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	M. Harvey
01/22	1	Seabrook		J. O'Shaughnessy, L. Medlock
01/22	1		Hampton Harbor	B. Griffith, L. Kras
01/22	1	Seabrook	south of bridge	S. Mirick, J. Lambert
02/23	1		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick



*Dovekie by Len Medlock, 12/22/10,
Great Boar's Head, Hampton, NH.*

Dovekie				
12/15	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	S. Mirick, et al.
12/18	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	P. Hunt
12/19	3	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	S. & J. Mirick, et al.
12/27	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	J. O'Shaughnessy

Thick-billed Murre				
02/17	1	Rye	Seal Rocks	J. Lambert
Razorbill				
12/05	11		Portsmouth Harbor	S. Mirick
12/10	13	New Castle	Coast Guard station	S. Mirick
01/11	7	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	J. Scott, B. Crowley

Owls through Corvids



*Barred Owl by Len Medlock, 01/05/11,
Water Street, Exeter, NH.*


There were no unusual owls confirmed this winter in New Hampshire, although two Northern Hawk Owls entertained birders nearby in northern Vermont. As in the winter of 2007-08, heavy snows may have forced Barred Owls into more open areas to feed. Many were reported from roadsides and feeders, especially in February, although there doesn't seem to have been as much mortality (e.g., road kills, birds brought to rehabilitators) as in 2008.


Perhaps one sign of warming associated with climate change is increased numbers of "half-hardies" showing up in winter in New Hampshire. These are species that typically winter in the southeastern United States, and

which, in milder seasons, linger in the north, at least into early- to mid-December. Two woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Northern Flicker, fall into this category. Not that many years ago, a sapsucker anywhere in New Hampshire in winter was a noteworthy find, but this year there were nine (eight listed below plus one on the Laconia CBC), some of which were found well into the winter. The same goes for flickers, which seem to be getting more regular away from the coast where there have been winter records for a longer period of time. There was a modest Northern Shrike incursion this winter. At least 17 were reported statewide, with those listed below chosen to represent the breadth of locations.

One of the more intriguing winter bird phenomena is that of the evening crow roost. Observers in the Merrimack Valley were treated to a "river of crows" that streamed toward Manchester most evenings throughout the season. Unfortunately, there were no full counts of this roost (and there may actually be two of them) submitted to eBird, although partial counts from Concord and Manchester give a hint of its size. How far afield are these crows coming from? How many such roosts are there in the state? Are they in the same places each winter? I know of a roost in the Upper Valley in Lebanon and there used to be one in Portsmouth, but we don't tend to get a lot of data on big movements of crows. Observers are encouraged to pay a little closer attention to crows next winter; there are likely interesting things to learn if we take the time to watch!

Fish Crows, like other half-hardies, may be increasing as winter visitors. They may even overwinter in extreme southern New Hampshire (e.g., Salem), but there are limited data on which to state this positively. This situation is certainly confounded by the difficulty in identifying Fish Crows in winter when they are less likely to give their distinctive calls. They most certainly do not winter up in Ossipee, at the species' northern range limit in the state, so the February birds there were the early wave of spring migrants. Like crows, Common Ravens also form communal roosts in the winter, as evidenced by the remarkable counts from Chatham.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>	
Eastern Screech-Owl					
12/18	4	Greenland	Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick	
01/05	1	Exeter	Water Street	L. Medlock	
01/29	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	S. Mirick, et al.	
01/29	1	Rye	Rye Recreation Area	P. Hunt, R. Suomala, L. Medlock, P. Myers	
02/18	1	Exeter	Swasey Pkwy., Squamscott River	J. O'Shaughnessy	<i>Eastern Screech-Owl by Len Medlock, 01/28/11, Exeter, NH.</i>
Northern Saw-whet Owl					
01/29	1	Rye	Love Lane	P. Hunt, S. Mirick, et al.	
01/29	1	Newmarket	Lubberland Creek Preserve	P. Brown, K. Klapper, C. Seifer	
02/13	1	Newbury		L. Leboeuf	
02/17	2	Barnstead	Pitman Rd.	J. Lambert	
02/23	1	Weare	jct. Mary Hadley Rd. & Barnard Hill Rd.	P. Myers	

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				
12/26	1	Milford	Soft Landings, Federal Hill Rd.	M. Nickerson
01/08	1	Walpole	Boggy Meadows Farm	P. Brown
01/10	1	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
01/30	1	E. Kingston	Willow Rd.	D. Skillman
02/06	1	Nashua	Berkeley St.	C. Andon
02/12	1	Durham	Crogham Ln.	M. Bogle
02/12	1	Bedford	Cobbler Ln.	E. LaPointe
02/12	1	Weare	Barnard Hill Rd.	S. Babka
Northern Flicker				
01/01	1	Concord	Morrill's Farm, Penacook	P. Hunt
01/01	2	Epping		G. Tillman
01/09	1	Hudson		T. Wehner
01/14	1	Bow	Sterling Place	J. Lambert
01/15	2	Conway	Depot Rd.	J. O'Shaughnessy
				
<p><i>Northern Shrike by Len Medlock, 12/04/10, Pease Intl. Tradeport, Portsmouth, NH.</i></p>				
Northern Shrike				
12/02	1	Portsmouth	Pease Golf Course	S. Mirick, L. Medlock
12/06	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge	T. Vazzano
12/16	1	Dover	Strafford County Farm	S. Mirick
01/03	1	Jefferson	Bailey Road	D. Govatski
01/06	1	Meredith	Quarry Rd.	L. Medlock, T. Vazzano
01/13	1	Swanzy	Keene Airport	K. Klapper
01/18	1	Peterborough	Nubanusit neighborhood and farm	N. White
01/29	1	Lincoln	Hancock Notch Trail, .25 mile in	K. Votta
02/02	1	New London		M. Vernon
02/09	1	Henniker	Rt. 202/9	P. Brown
Gray Jay				
01/05	1	Carroll	Mount Willard	M. Jette
01/17	3	Carroll	Crawford Depot	D. Bates
02/02	2	Pinkhams Grant	Pinkham Notch	W. O'Brien
02/13	2	Beans Grant	Crawford Path	P. Brown
02/19	2	Errol	Akers Pond Rd.	K. Dube, Seacoast Chapter FT
02/27	2	Pittsburg	Dorman Rd.	P. Newbern
American Crow				
12/07	400	Concord	Horseshoe Pond	D. Lipsy
02/10	350	Stratham	Stuart Farm	J. Lambert
02/22	2000	Manchester	Manchester millyard	L. Hansche
Fish Crow				
12/03	1	Salem	World End Pond	S. Mirick
12/14	1	Dover	Bellamy River WS	P. Brown
02/04	2	Durham	Durham	L. Kras
02/27	2	Ossipee	Rts. 25 & 16, W.Ossipee	T. Vazzano

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Common Raven				
12/05	25	Chatham	Robbin's Ridge, n. side	B. Crowley
12/17	50	Chatham	Robbin's Ridge, n. side	B. Crowley
12/28	96	Chatham	Robbin's Ridge, n. side, N. Conway CBC	B. Crowley
02/27	10	Chatham	Robbin's Ridge, n. side	B. Crowley

Larks through Waxwings

Despite sometimes heavy snow cover, there were large flocks of Horned Larks in parts of the Connecticut Valley, Saco Valley, and Seacoast. In contrast, the highest count from the central portion of the state was a group of seven in Gilmanton.

Without a doubt, two of the stars of the season were the **Townsend's Solitaires** in Bow and Strafford. The latter bird was first found in early December, but word didn't get out until February 11, after which point it was seen by hordes of birders from near and far. It helped that it rarely ventured far from the town library where it had taken up residence. By the time birders learned of the Strafford bird, the one in Bow, first found January 1, hadn't been reported for over two weeks. During its January run, however, it



*Townsend's Solitaire by Len Medlock,
01/02/11, Sterling Place, Bow, NH.*

too had its share of visitors, although it tended to be a little more unpredictable. After a February absence, the Bow solitaire was rediscovered by the landowner in early March, suggesting it had remained in the area. Two additional Townsend's Solitaires visited Maine and Massachusetts this winter, making it something of an invasion year for the species in New England.

Also invading from the west were **Varied Thrushes**, with six reported in New England for the season. The only one for New Hampshire first appeared in Antrim sometime in "late February/early March" and thus is included here based on the likelihood that it was indeed present in the state during the winter season. While observers have now gotten used to the fact that American Robins are no longer a sign of spring, this winter proved to be something of an exception to the "robins are increasing in winter" rule. In contrast to at least the last ten years, there were no extremely high counts (all counts over 50 listed below). What there was of a robin pulse came later in the season, starting in late January, but even then it never built to our expectations. It will be interesting to see what more standardized surveys like the CBC and New Hampshire Audubon's *Backyard Winter Bird Survey* tell us about robin numbers in 2010-11. Two American Pipits in Stratham were an unusual record for late January; this species rarely stays into the winter beyond late December.

This winter's Bohemian Waxwing flight was similar to that of 2009-10. At the regional scale, the first birds appeared in the late fall in northern Vermont and western

Maine, and gradually filled in the area between (i.e., New Hampshire) as December progressed. They first appeared in the Upper Valley, but by Christmas large flocks were being reported in central New Hampshire, including the traditional hot spot of Plymouth. January saw some expansion into southern parts of the state, and by February there were a few large flocks in areas of Strafford and northern Rockingham counties. Most Bohemians appeared to have left by late February, although there were certainly reports scattered in central New Hampshire well into March. In comparison, Cedar Waxwings occurred in somewhat higher numbers throughout the winter, and were generally more widely distributed than Bohemian Waxwings. The reports below are only locations where flocks of at least 50 were reported.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Horned Lark				
01/07	31	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	J. Carroll
01/08	100	Walpole	River Road	P. Brown
01/17	100	Conway	Sherman Farm	J. Scott, B. Crowley
01/23	40	Rye	Massacre Marsh	P. Hunt, R. Suomala, P. Hunt
01/25	120	Stratham	Stuart Farm	S. Mirick, L. Medlock
02/13	7	Gilmanton	Upper City Road	A. Robbins
Boreal Chickadee				
12/21	3	Pittsburg	Pittsburg CBC	P. Brown
12/22	2	Albany	Champney Falls	J. Kelly
01/05	2	Carroll	Twin View Drive	N. Mitiguy
01/15	3	Jackson	Doublehead Mountain	D. Bates
02/13	1	Beans Grant	Crawford Path	P. Brown
Winter Wren				
01/01	1	Walpole	Mill Pond Nature Sanctuary	K. Benton
01/09	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	P. Hunt
01/11	2	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				
01/08	1	Hampton Falls	Depot Rd.	J. O'Shaughnessy
Townsend's Solitaire				
01/01	1	Bow	Brown Hill	A. Winters, J. Pietrzak
01/24	1	Bow	Sterling Place residence	Z. Cornell
02/11	1	Strafford	Hill Public Library	S. & D. Kern, J. Lambert
02/20	1	Strafford	Hill Public Library	J. Lambert, P. Sagan
Hermit Thrush				
12/05	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	L. Medlock, J. Hully
01/14	1	Exeter	Haven Ln.	L. Medlock
01/23	1	Rye	Grove Rd.	P. Hunt, R. Suomala, P. Hunt
02/09	1	Unity	Hurd Rd.	T. Geiser
02/12	1	New London	Conifer Lane	R. & T. Fulton
02/12	1	Hopkinton	Main St., Contoocook	L. Denoncourt
American Robin				
12/18	101	Greenland	Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick
12/31	80	Loudon	Loudon Ridge Rd.	A. & G. Robbins
01/04	50	Bow	Sterling Place	D. Lipsy
01/10	50	Manchester	Merrimack R. above Amoskeag Dam	P. Brown, D. Lipsy, P. Hunt

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
01/29	80	Rye	Cable Rd. and Rt. 1A jct.	P. Hunt, R. Suomala, L. Medlock, P. Myers
02/10	120	Concord	South Spring St.	D. Poggi
02/12	100	Concord	Horseshoe Pond	P. Hunt
02/12	52		NH coast	S. Mirick
Varied Thrush				
late Feb.	1	Antrim	residence	M. Harris
Gray Catbird				
12/18	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	P. Hunt
Brown Thrasher				
01/18	1	Epsom	Mountain Rd.	C.& E. Preston
American Pipit				
12/29	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	S. Santino, A. Walsh
01/01	1	Rye	Rye Ledge	L. Medlock, J. Woolf
01/24	2	Stratham	Stuart Farm	L. Medlock, J. Lambert, J. O'Shaughnessy
02/08	1	Stratham	Stuart Farm	S. Mirick

American Pipit
by
Len Medlock,
01/24/11,
Stuart Farm,
Stratham, NH.



Bohemian Waxwing
by
Deanne Fortnam,
02/02/11,
Concord, NH.

Bohemian Waxwing

12/02	12	Lyme	Dorchester Rd.	P. Ackerson
12/02	23	Lyme	Whipple Hill	B. Allison
12/16	30	Hanover	Dartmouth College	P. Johnson
12/19	1	Concord	Shaker Road School, Concord CBC	R. Suomala, A. Robbins
12/21	24	Pittsburg	downtown	R. Quinn, et al.
12/23	180	Plymouth	Plymouth State University	T., A. & C. Muise
12/26	40	Center Harbor	Center Harbor Town Docks	I. MacLeod
12/26	1	Durham	Lee-Durham CBC	L. Medlock
12/26	160	Meredith	Meredith Bay	I. MacLeod
12/27	30	Lancaster	neighborhood	D. Haas
12/28	22	Conway	North Conway CBC	B. Crowley
12/31	125	Loudon	Upper City Road	A. Robbins
01/05	3	Keene	Main Street	K. Klapper, P. Dexter
01/06	190	Wolfeboro	Rt. 28 n.	A. Robbins
01/07	4	Hampton	Towle Farm Road	S. Young
01/08	7	Walpole	Boggy Meadows Farm	P. Brown
01/09	50	Gorham	Gorham Middle High School	N. Levesque
01/29	25	Northwood	Rt. 4	B. Griffith
02/08	56	Rochester	Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Church	J. Lambert, B. Griffith
02/09	20	Colebrook	Indian Trail	B. Rappaport
02/12	100	Northwood	Sherburne Hill Rd.	S. Mirick
02/15	89	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
02/27	32	Derry	Hope Hill Road yard	J. Vanasse
02/27	85	Hanover	Kendal at Hanover	J. Norton

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Cedar Waxwing				
12/16	100	Hanover	Dartmouth College	P. Johnson
12/19	115	Concord	Shaker Road School, Concord CBC	R. Suomala, A. Robbins
12/19	50	Loudon		A. Robbins
12/29	178	Keene	Main Street	K. Klapper
01/02	135	Tilton	RR tracks near Noyes Rd., Laconia CBC	P. Hunt, D. Crook, L. Bunten
01/08	80	Walpole	Boggy Meadows Farm	P. Brown
01/11	50	Lee	Market Basket	S. Young
01/28	70	Dover	Bellamy River WS	P. Brown
02/12	250	Concord	Horseshoe Pond	P. Hunt
02/13	78	Exeter	Exeter Hospital	L. Medlock
02/26	95	Nashua	Millyard Tech Park	C. Sheridan

Longspurs through Blackbirds



*Orange-crowned Warbler by Robert Ridgely,
12/27/10, Sandwich, NH.*

As with Horned Larks, fields in the seacoast and Connecticut and Saco River valleys hosted some large numbers of Snow Buntings, including a remarkable flock of roughly a thousand in Walpole. In most cases, careful observers were able to find single Lapland Longspurs amid the swirling multitudes of larks and buntings. Warblers were sparse as usual, but even Yellow-rumped, which winters in small numbers near the coast, went unreported except for the Coastal CBC (see also the Christmas Bird Count Summary


on page 43 for Ovenbird and other warblers on the Coastal and Lee-Durham counts). Among the CBC warblers was a Yellow-breasted Chat at Odiorne Point State Park, one of several reported in north-coastal New England in early winter. Two Orange-crowned Warblers at feeders were noteworthy, with the one in Sandwich being a brightly-colored bird typical of western populations. The warbler standout, however, was without doubt the **Hooded Warbler** at Seabrook. First found in late November, this bird bounced back and forth across the Massachusetts state line through December 7, and represents only the third winter record for all of New England (and the first such record for New Hampshire).


In the sparrow world, Eastern Towhees might be increasing as wintering birds, with three this season despite the often harsh conditions. Much more notable, however, was the state's third **Spotted Towhee** in Peterborough. First detected in early January, this western wanderer was not confirmed until February 3, and remained until at least the February 20, where thanks to the homeowners' generosity, many birders

were able to see it. Other sparrows were generally of the expected species, with only the half-hardies published in the listing below. Particularly noteworthy were two Lincoln's Sparrows, one in Walpole and the other in Stratham. This is usually the least likely sparrow to occur in winter, but like many other species, it may be getting more common as a wintering bird in New England. A **Dickcissel** in Exeter in early December rounds out this list of seed-eaters that are normally much farther south (South America in the case of Dickcissels!).

Given ongoing declines in Rusty Blackbirds, there is increasing interest in their wintering range. They typically winter in the southeastern United States, with occasional records as far north as New Hampshire. While the five reported from New Hampshire this season may seem like a lot, observers should be aware that a flock of 150 spent the winter at a feeder in coastal Connecticut. In the New England region, "Rustys" appear to be joining the ranks of sapsuckers and towhees as increasing winter residents. The first Common Grackles of spring appeared in southeastern New Hampshire by mid-February and the only other blackbird of note was a Baltimore Oriole at a feeder in Manchester.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Lapland Longspur				
12/29	1	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	S. & J. Hersey
01/22	4	Stratham	Stuart Farm	P. Brown, J. Tilden
02/10	1	Stratham	Stuart Farm	J. Lambert
02/13	1	Hampton	Island Path	J. Lambert
02/22	1	Walpole	River Road	J. Russo
Snow Bunting				
12/28	50	Conway	Rt. 113 field	M. Cline
12/30	250	Walpole	River Road	J. Russo
01/06	1000	Walpole	River Road	J. Russo, D. Clark
01/09	35	Newbury	Baker Hill Rd. golf club	F. Perrota
01/17	100	Conway	Sherman Farm	J. Scott, B. Crowley
01/23	25	Rye	Massacre Marsh	P. Hunt, R. Suomala, P. Hunt
01/28	60	Hampton	Island Path	J. O'Shaughnessy
01/28	100	Keene	Keene State WMA	J. Atwood
02/08	10	Litchfield	residence	L. McKillop
02/13	12	Gilmanton	Upper City Road	A. Robbins
02/15	27	Rochester	Rochester WTP	B. Crowley, J. Scott
02/18	136	Walpole	behind Agway	W. Cripps, C. Crawford
02/19	70	Milan	Rt. 16B just s. of Berlin Airport	K. Dube, Seacoast Chapter FT
Orange-crowned Warbler				
12/12	1	Sandwich	across from Thompson WS	R. Ridgely
01/24	1	Exeter	High St.	B. & A. Campbell, L. Medlock, R. Aaronian
Common Yellowthroat				
12/03	1	Swanzy	Keene Airport	P. Brown
12/18	1	Greenland	Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Hooded Warbler				
12/01	1	Seabrook	Seabrook WTP	S. Mirick, L. Medlock, L. Kras
12/07	1	Seabrook	Seabrook WTP	J. Kelly
Yellow-breasted Chat				
12/18	1	Rye	Odiome Point SP	N. Purmort
Spotted Towhee				
02/03	1	Peterborough	Old Town Farm Rd.	C. Grummon
02/20	1	Peterborough	Old Town Farm Rd.	S. Motyl
Eastern Towhee				
12/10	1	Exeter	McDonald's, Portsmouth Ave.	L. Medlock
01/11	1	Rye	Old Beach Rd.	S. Mirick
02/12	1	Raymond	Meadow Ct.	D. Bateman
Chipping Sparrow				
12/26	1	Lee	Lee Hook Rd. near Durham line	J. Lambert
12/29	1	Litchfield	residence	L. McKillop
01/12	1	Henniker	residence	A. Moser
01/18	1	Litchfield	residence	L. McKillop
02/28	1	Henniker	residence	A. Moser
Field Sparrow				
12/26	1	Lee	off Riverside Farm Rd.	J. Lambert
01/20	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert, S. Young
01/20	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Rd. residence	D. Hubbard
02/28	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Rd. residence	D. Hubbard
Savannah Sparrow				
01/02	6	Milford	N. River Rd. farm fields, Nashua CBC	R. Suomala, P. Myers, L. Herlihy
01/20	2	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert
01/24	9	Stratham	Stuart Farm	J. Lambert
Savannah Sparrow - Ipswich subsp.				
01/15	1	Hampton	Hampton Harbor State Marina	S. Mirick
01/15	1	Seabrook	Cross Beach Road	S. Mirick
Fox Sparrow				
12/01	1	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
12/02	1	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook River	A. Robbins
12/19	1	Concord	Abbott Rd. stump dump, Penacook	P. Hunt
				
<i>Lincoln's Sparrow by Len Medlock, 01/24/11, Stuart Farm, Stratham, NH.</i>				
Lincoln's Sparrow				
12/31	1	Walpole	Sawyer Farm, River Rd.	K. Klapper
01/22	1	Stratham	Stuart Farm	P. Brown, J. Tilden
01/29	1	Stratham	Stuart Farm	S. Mirick, et al.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Swamp Sparrow				
12/02	5	Durham	Durham Reservoir	L. Kras
01/29	1	E. Kingston	South Road	S. Mirick, et al.
01/29	1	Rye	Wallis Road	P. Hunt, R. Suomala, L. Medlock, P. Myers
01/29	1	E. Kingston	South Road	P. Brown, S. Mirick, et al.
02/26	1	Stratham	Stuart Farm	S. Mirick
White-crowned Sparrow				
01/04	1	Goffstown	Hooksett Rd.	L. Hansche
01/25	1	Stratham	River Road	S. Mirick, L. Medlock
02/06	1	Stratham	River Road	L. Medlock, G. Tillman
02/27	1	Goffstown	Hooksett Rd.	L. Hansche
				
<i>Dickcissel by Len Medlock, 12/10/10, Portsmouth Ave., Exeter.</i>				
Dickcissel				
12/10	1	Exeter	McDonald's, Portsmouth Ave.	L. Medlock
Red-winged Blackbird				
01/02	3	Milford	N. River Rd. farm fields, Nashua CBC	R. Suomala, P. Myers, L. Herlihy
01/11	11	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	J. Scott, B. Crowley
01/15	4	Hampton	Landing Road	S. Mirick
02/20	3	Stratham	Rt. 108	S. Mirick
Rusty Blackbird				
12/15	1	Conway	E. Conway Fields	B. Crowley
12/23	1	Surry	near Surry Library	K. Klapper, D. Steinberger
01/02	3	Milford	N. River Rd. farm fields, Nashua CBC	R. Suomala, P. Myers, L. Herlihy
Common Grackle				
12/05	60	Seabrook	Worthley Ave	S. Mirick
12/24	4	Seabrook	South Main St.	S. Mirick
01/29	1	Stratham	River Road	S. Mirick, et al.
02/06	1	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
02/11	20	Portsmouth	Pease Int'l. Tradeport	B. Griffith
02/20	50	Stratham	Rt. 108	S. Mirick
02/25	10	Milford	Soft Landings, Federal Hill Rd.	M. Nickerson
Brown-headed Cowbird				
12/09	3	Walpole	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd.	P. Brown
12/18	6	Stratham	River Rd., Coastal CBC	J. Kelly, et al.
01/29	40	E. Kingston	South Road	S. Mirick, et al.
01/29		E. Kingston	South Road	P. Brown, K. Klapper, C. Seifer
Baltimore Oriole				
12/26	1	Manchester	residence	E. Pilotte

Finches



*Pine Grosbeak by Lauren Kras,
02/19/11,
Chickwolnepy Rd., Milan, NH.*

Pine Grosbeaks were few and far between this winter. With the exception of a single female in Deerfield, all were north of the White Mountains and numbers were quite low. This parallels a pattern seen in the other northern New England states. There weren't that many Purple Finches either. I counted only 27 statewide reports to eBird, and the total number tallied on CBCs was 31. Although no Red Crossbills were reported at all, there was a small flight of White-winged Crossbills. They first appeared in mid-December, with scattered records from Star Island, Nashua, and the northern CBCs. In mid-January, they wandered south into central New Hampshire and the seacoast, where a small flock eventually took up residence (at a thistle feeder!) in Rye well into the spring.

Without question, the invading finch of 2010-11 was the Common Redpoll, but even then these little acrobats were unpredictable. They first started trickling in through the middle of December, but larger counts (e.g., over 25) weren't in evidence until near the end of the month. By January, they were widespread across the state, with several flocks numbering over 50. Numbers seemed to increase again in February, by which point, there were a handful of locations reporting over 200 birds on occasion. One interesting observation about this season's redpoll irruption is that birds seemed a little less dispersed than usual. The large flocks were concentrated at a few locations, while observers elsewhere often had long periods between sightings, even at feeders. It is possible that this pattern reflected an abundance of natural food such as birch seeds, resulting in birds spending a significant amount of time away from feeders. With the Common Redpolls were a handful of **Hoary Redpolls**. A conservative count places the number in the state at between five and ten, pending review of documentation by the NH Rare Birds Committee. This is a respectable number of Hoarys for New Hampshire, and is reflective of a larger-than-normal southward movement to our west (e.g., there were perhaps 25 in Vermont and more still in New York).

Pine Siskins were generally uncommon, save for a few flocks that, like the redpolls, showed a fondness for a handful of feeders scattered across the state. Away from these locations, the species was decidedly scarce. Unlike redpolls, siskins were almost exclusively reported south of the Lakes Region. American Goldfinches sometimes occurred in large flocks, but in general showed no obvious patterns. While there were a few Evening Grosbeaks around, they too seemed closely tied to a handful of feeders in the north and west.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Pine Grosbeak				
12/21	5	Pittsburg	Pittsburg CBC	P. Brown
01/03	2	Jefferson	Bailey Road	D. Govatski
02/12	1	Deerfield	Nottingham Rd.	S. Mirick
02/19	1	Milan	Chickwolnepy Rd.	L. Medlock, J. Lambert, et al.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
White-winged Crossbill				
12/19	5	Nashua	Tilton Street boat ramp	C. Sheridan
12/19	2	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	S. Mirick, et al.
01/11	1	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
01/12	1	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
01/14	1	Bow	Sterling Place	J. Lambert
01/15	1	Carroll	Bretton Woods	L. Bergum
01/17	4	Warner		M. Wiggin
01/19	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Rd. residence	D. Hubbard
01/20	4	Exeter		T. Talas
01/21	1	Loudon	residence	G. Baird
01/25	1	Rye	Fairhill Ave.	S. Mirick, L. Medlock
01/29	2	Carroll	Bretton Woods	L. Bergum
01/29	1	Deerfield	residence	E. Berglund Jr
01/29	10	Rye	Cable Rd and Rt. 1A jct.	P. Hunt, R. Suomala, L. Medlock, P. Myers
01/29	14	Rye	Fairhill Ave.	P. Hunt, R. Suomala, L. Medlock, P. Myers
02/04	4	Carroll	Bretton Woods	L. Bergum
02/07	3	Antrim	Willard Pond WS	J. Brown
02/18	27	Rye	Fairhill Ave.	L. Medlock
02/19	10	Errol	Bean Road	L. Kras, B. Griffith, et al.
02/26	11	Rye	Rt. 1A	S. Mirick
Common Redpoll				
12/05	1	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
12/11	1	Carroll	Bretton Woods	L. Bergum
12/14	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Rd. residence	D. Hubbard
12/19	8	Concord	Appleton St., Concord CBC	R. Suomala, A. Robbins
12/19	1	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	D. Hitchcox, D. Suitor
12/21	30	Pittsburg	Pittsburg CBC	P. Brown
12/25	30	Carroll	Bretton Woods	L. Bergum
12/25	40	Concord	Clinton St.	D. Howe
12/25	40	Webster	Call Road	R. Quinn
12/26	100	Dublin	Pumpelly Ln.	T. Warren
12/29	12	Lempster	Long Pond snowmobile trail	J. Swatt
01/01	45	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge	T. Vazzano
01/03	60	Jefferson	Bailey Road	D. Govatski
01/05	55	Hampton	Hampton Harbor, Hampton River	Marina flats J. Kelly
01/05	27	Keene	Cheshire Rail Trail	K. Benton
01/06	35	Meredith	Snell Road	L. Medlock, T. Vazzano
01/12	51	Lyme	Whipple Hill	B. Allison
01/15	52	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook River	A. Robbins
01/17	150	Conway	Sherman Farm	J. Scott, B. Crowley
01/23	23	Westmoreland	residence	A. Burnett
01/26	70	Lyme	Whipple Hill	B. Allison
01/29	90	Carroll	Bretton Woods	L. Bergum
01/31	40	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
02/05	30	Newbury	Ramblewood residence	P. Newbern
02/06	275	Dublin	Pumpelly Ln.	T. Warren
02/09	10	Pinkhams Grant	Pinkham Notch	W. O'Brien
02/12	100	Carroll	Bretton Woods	L. Bergum
02/12	230	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Common Redpoll—continued				
02/16	80	Chatham	Green Hill Road	B. Crowley
02/19	80	Errol	Akers Pond Rd.	K. Dube, Seacoast Chapter FT
02/19	50	Marlborough	Clapp Pond Rd.	K. Klapper
02/21	70	Rye	Seal Rocks	J. Lambert, B. Griffith
02/24	80	Rochester	Ten Rod Rd. residence	D. Hubbard
02/25	150	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook R.	A. Robbins
02/27	227	Claremont	Skyline Terrace	J. Roberts
02/27	40	Henniker		A. Moser
02/28	190	Lyme	Whipple Hill	B. Allison



Hoary Redpoll by Scott Young, 01/11/11, Strafford, NH.

Hoary Redpoll

01/01	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge	T. Vazzano
01/10	1	Dublin	Pumpelly Ln.	T. Warren
01/16	1	Sutton	Birch Hill Rd.	C. House
02/18	2	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
02/19	2	Errol	Akers Pond Rd.	K. Dube, Seacoast Chapter FT
02/27	1	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young

Pine Siskin

12/09	30	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis Jr.
12/11	36	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
12/17	25	Durham	Church Hill	S. Snyder
12/23	40	Surry	near Surry Library	K. Klapper, D. Steinberger
12/26	50	Dublin	Pumpelly Ln.	T. Warren
01/07	25	Winchester	residence	J. Atwood
01/11	80	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
01/27	16	Henniker		A. Moser
02/27	24	Claremont	Skyline Terrace	J. Roberts

American Goldfinch

12/03	40	Swanzy	Homestead Avenue	P. Brown
12/19	100	Dover	Strafford County Farm	D. Hubbard
01/08	65	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
01/09	200	Bow	Bow Bog Rd.	G. & J. Tasker
01/11	35	Manchester	residence	S. Papachristou
01/28	48	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook R.	A. Robbins
02/01	80	Rochester	Ten Rod Rd. residence	D. Hubbard
02/17	60	Greenfield	Ravenwood Farm	T. Shiel

Evening Grosbeak

12/05	21	Lyme	Whipple Hill	B. Allison
12/22	62	Errol	near Clear Stream, Errol CBC	R. Quinn, S. McCumber
12/22	14	Warner		M. Wiggan
01/03	53	Jefferson	Bailey Road	D. Govatski
02/16	25	Deering	Deering WS	P. Brown

Spotlight on Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*)

by Stephen R. Mirick

Background and Breeding

The Northern Fulmar is an oceanic bird closely related to the shearwaters and storm-petrels. Like these species, the Northern Fulmar has a tubed nostril sheath on the top of its bill, and navigates the oceans using its keen sense of smell to find food, which includes fish, squid, and crustaceans, as well as offal discarded from fishing boats.

Away from its breeding colonies on remote boreal and arctic sea cliffs, the Northern Fulmar is strictly a pelagic bird and is rarely seen from land. It feeds in the cold, northern waters of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, wintering as far south as North Carolina off the east coast of the United States and southern California off the west coast. The Northern Fulmar is a long-lived species, with a life span that can exceed 50 years; however, young birds may not start breeding until they are eight to ten years old, and only a single egg is laid each year.

Over the last 200 years, the Atlantic population of Northern Fulmar has increased significantly with an expansion of the breeding population over the last 60 years that has brought it westward and southward from Iceland. It now nests abundantly in colonies in Greenland and arctic Canada, first beginning to nest in Labrador in 1972 and in Newfoundland in 1973. The populations at these last two sites are relatively small and stable. Because of its well known habit of scavenging from humans, there is speculation that supplemental food resources generated by man, first through the whaling industry, and then by modern trawlers, has been the major factor for this increase, but this theory has been debated. The Pacific population has remained relatively stable during the same time period.

Historic Records for New Hampshire

With the spread of the Northern Fulmar into the western North Atlantic, the Northern Fulmar made its way into New Hampshire's records. Glover Allen (1902), in his book, *The Birds of New Hampshire*, makes no reference of any records in the state. In *The Birds of Massachusetts*, Petersen & Veit (1993) state that the Northern Fulmar was considered "a rare vagrant to Massachusetts" until the range expansion into New England in the 1960s and 1970s. The first report for New Hampshire came from the fall of 1971 when 10+ birds were seen on September 19 during a New Hampshire Audubon boat trip to Jeffrey's Ledge, a fishing area located approximately 30 miles off the New Hampshire coast. Subsequently, the species was regularly recorded in almost every year during the 1970s and early 1980s.

Interestingly, very few Northern Fulmar were reported from the mid 1980s through the 1990s (Figure 1), perhaps reflecting the smaller number of pelagic trip reports, but also likely reflecting a shift in pelagic bird distribution, as pelagic birds in general

were sparsely reported during this period. Likewise, the increase in reports in the last 10 years corresponds to a general increase in the number of pelagic birds as well as a greater number of bird trips, including several winter trips. This was especially true in 2009 when large numbers of pelagic birds were seen offshore during the summer and fall, and there were 14 separate reports of Northern Fulmar, accounting for nearly one-quarter of all of New Hampshire’s reports (Figure 1).

Northern Fulmar has been reported from every month of the year except April in New Hampshire. Although the species is probably most common off the coast from October through March, this is not reflected in the data due to the scarcity of offshore boats during these months. The scattered summer records presumably represent immature, non-breeding birds. Figure 2 shows all reports by month in New Hampshire since the first report in 1971.

Most reports of Northern Fulmar in New Hampshire are of less than 15 birds with only two reports in excess of 30 birds. They include a report of 50 from the Jeffrey’s Ledge area on November 9, 2010, and 189 from the Jeffrey’s Ledge area of Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts on February 6, 2009. The second report included an estimate of 140 birds in New Hampshire waters, and a single group of 120 birds on the water about eight miles east of Jeffrey’s Ledge. Large concentrations of fulmars in other regions are not uncommon as the species is known to concentrate around fishing

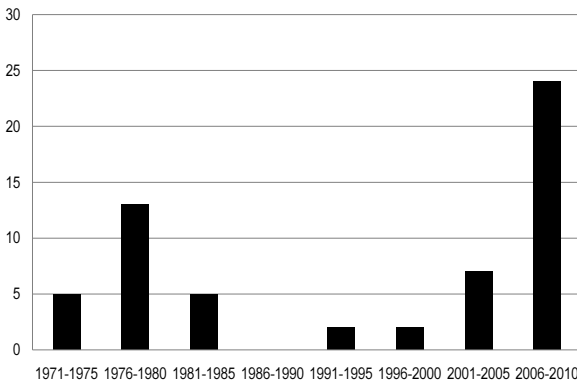


Figure 1. Number of Northern Fulmar reports for each five year time period in New Hampshire, 1971-2011. Data sources searched extend back to 1936, but there were no records prior to 1971.

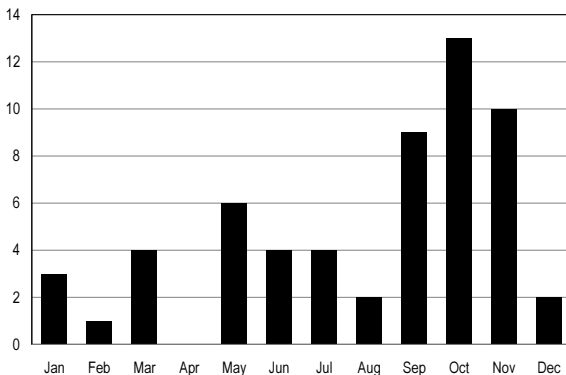


Figure 2. Northern Fulmar reports by month in New Hampshire, 1971-2011. Data sources searched extend back to 1936, but there were no records prior to 1971.

vessels. An exceptional report of 8,000 Northern Fulmars in 1978 on George's Bank off Massachusetts was attending a commercial fishing fleet.

As stated earlier, Northern Fulmars are strictly pelagic and are rarely seen from shore. Most of the 59 reports for New Hampshire are from Jeffrey's Ledge, approximately 30 miles offshore, with a small number of reports from near the Isles of Shoals. There are only three records from the New Hampshire coastline. Two of these were birds seen offshore during storms with strong easterly winds. However, the most interesting sighting was from January 22, 2011 when a bird was photographed (with trees in the background!) gliding through the moored boats at Hampton Harbor on a sunny day with westerly winds!

Data Sources

The following data sources were searched for records of this species. The data for all figures represent the number of records; duplicates are not included. Not all records presented here have been reviewed by the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee.

New Hampshire Bird Records and archives, circa 1963 through May 31, 2009. Audubon Society of New Hampshire, Concord, New Hampshire.

Bulletin of New England Bird-life, 1936–1944. New England Museum of Natural History, Boston, Massachusetts.

Records of New England Birds, in Massachusetts Audubon Society Bulletin, 1945–1955. Massachusetts Audubon Society, Concord, Massachusetts.

Records of New England Birds, 1956–1960 and 1964–1968. Massachusetts Audubon Society, Concord, Massachusetts.

NH.Birds e-mail list (December 1, 2010 through February 28, 2011)

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Veit, R. and W. Petersen. 1993. *Birds of Massachusetts*. Massachusetts Audubon Society, Lincoln, MA.

Hatch, S. and D. Nettleship. 1998. Northern Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*). In *The Birds of North America Online* (A. Poole, ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; retrieved from the Birds of North America Online: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/361>

Ever since his first Magnolia Warbler at the Foss Farm in Durham in May 1981, Steve Mirick has been addicted to birding in New Hampshire. He has been the fall editor for New Hampshire Bird Records for the last 22 years and is the author of Birding the New Hampshire Seacoast and Great Bay. He has a keen interest in pelagic birds, and has been on countless boat trips from New Hampshire and Massachusetts over the years. Although he currently lives in Massachusetts, his heart is in New Hampshire and its coastline, where he and his wife Jane bird at every opportunity.

Field Notes

compiled by R.A. Quinn

Arboreal Mallards

by Christine Sheridan

Our wintering Mallards are resourceful survivors. Some of their strategies for gleaning a winter meal have included: a drake battling a feisty crayfish on an ice shelf; a group diving completely underwater to pluck acorns from the muddy bottom; and, of course, adorable quacking,



Munching Mallard in Nashua by Chris Sheridan, 2/13/11.

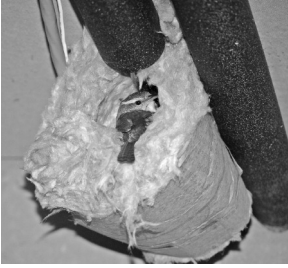
beady-eyed gangs beseeching passers-by at local parks, hotel ponds, and streamside neighborhoods for a charitable donation to their cause.

The winter of 2010-2011 was especially harsh. Here in Nashua, as one bitter, windy day followed another, I watched small flocks of Mallards abandon their local streams and ponds as the snow and ice cover expanded. Eventually, only tiny spots of open water remained in the Mallards' usual winter havens. Still, some birds stayed behind, crowding into small areas of water, especially in places where friendly humans could be hit up for a handout. I must admit on one particularly frigid, blustery Saturday, I succumbed to the pleading of a hungry flock. I bought them a bag of corn. Never could I have made so many so happy for a mere two dollars!

On that same icy weekend, I received an e-mail from a friend who'd seen a hawk eating an American Robin near the Crown Plaza Hotel, so I decided to go over and see if I could get some photos. The raptor was gone when I arrived, but I noticed some heavily laden crabapple trees nearby and decided to check them out. As I walked over to the trees, a flock of Mallards, half-waddling, half-flying, began to head in my direction. Instead of begging for food, however, the flock crowded around the fruit trees. Most gleaned fallen fruit from the snow; others leaped up with some assistance from their wings to pluck low-hanging crabapples from the snow-bent boughs.

Three females had a better idea. They launched themselves into the air, and somewhat gracelessly, crashed down onto the bent branches of the trees. Balancing on their oversized feet with the help of their stubby tails, they reached out to gobble as many crabapples as they could. They feasted in peace, six or seven feet up in the trees while their flock-mates jostled one another for the fruit they could reach from the ground.

Something about a Mallard's face, especially a happy and well-fed Mallard, seems to radiate contentment and joy. The clever hens looked particularly pleased with themselves.



A Carolina Wren snug as a ...wren in garage insulation by Deb Lievens, 02/04/11, Londonderry, NH.

Wren Visitors

by *Deb Lievens*

I've been taken with Carolina Wrens since the late 1990s, when I started hearing them on walks in my Londonderry neighborhood. I had learned their calls a number of years before during a New Hampshire Audubon "Birding by Ear" class with Art Borrer, but they were uncommon at that time. By 2006, they could be seen in my yard and now I see a pair regularly, chattering and scolding near my feeder or calling from the trees. This winter, they became a little friendlier. During an early February cold

snap, I arrived home, opened my garage door, started to enter, and out flew a wren. I assumed my husband had left the door open and the bird had flown in, but actually they were cozying up in some insulation. The "skittish wren" left and the "comfy wren" stayed. I had to take pictures, but only captured a single wren. I then shooed it out with some difficulty. That's that, I thought. But no, the next day they were both back. When they snuck in a third time, my husband took the small piece of insulation down. That solved the problem, but I was sad to force them out into the elements. They did look so comfy.



"Chipper" the Chipping Sparrow by Aiden Moser, 01/12/11, Henniker, NH.

"Don't Chipping Sparrows migrate south for the winter?"

by *Aiden Moser*

That is what I thought when I first saw "Chipper," our name for a Chipping Sparrow nervously eating in our window feeder on January 12, 2011. As soon as I had taken photos, I looked up "Chipper" and saw our Chipping Sparrow belonged all the way down in Texas for the winter. After learning this, I was excited

and sent out an email to the NH.Bird e-mail list. I quickly got confirmation that it was a Chipping Sparrow (thanks to all the great birders on the server) and that they rarely overwinter in New Hampshire. "Chipper" came to our feeder a couple times a day.

Birding and bird photography are my two favorite hobbies. I enjoy identifying an especially tricky bird. I like to watch birds do interesting things, such as two hummingbirds fighting one another in midair, or a waxwing swallowing a berry in one gulp. One of my favorite places to go birding is Plum Island, Massachusetts because of the great variety of birds. I went there for my tenth birthday and saw 23 bird species. I also enjoy watching the birds at home.

I became interested in birds through tracing out of an old bird book we got at a yard sale. I was soon tracing a couple of birds every day because I loved it so much. I began to enjoy identifying birds and reading bird books. Now I am very much into birding and think it will be a lifelong hobby.

Photo Gallery

Peregrine Falcons in Downtown Nashua

by Chris Martin

Photos by Deanne Fortnam

Birders Chris Sheridan and Jim Kegley found an unbanded immature female Peregrine Falcon, a hatch-year 2010 bird, on the Nashua Christmas Bird Count in early January 2011. She remained in downtown Nashua, perching on various church steeples and other tall buildings.



By the end of the January, Chris Sheridan discovered that the immature female (right) had been joined by an unbanded adult male (left).

Stunning photo of the light-backed, unbanded male Peregrine in action captured by local photographer and birder Deanne Fortnam in mid-February 2011.





The unbanded male peregrine stretches while perched atop a decorative copper ornament at the St. Mary's Coptic Church in Nashua.



By mid-March, Deanne Fortnam's series of falcon photos revealed that the unbanded male Peregrine had been "replaced" by a relatively dark-backed, color-banded male.



The new male (black/green band, 5 over 9) was a three-year old bird banded as a chick at a nest on the Library Tower at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst in June 2008 by Tom French. The female parent of this new male was raised at the Brady-Sullivan Tower in Manchester in 2002 and banded by New Hampshire Audubon raptor biologist Chris Martin. This second male and the immature female spent the entire spring season in Nashua together, but various observers saw no evidence to suggest that they actually attempted to incubate eggs or raise young in 2011. But breeding Peregrine Falcons may be part of Nashua's avian future for many seasons to come.

Where to Bird

A “Superbowl” Strategy for Winter Birding in Interior Rockingham County

by Phil Brown

It's 5:10 am on a Saturday morning in late January. You're probably sleeping, unless you're competing in the Superbowl of Birding. My team and I, “The Flocking Busters,” are standing in a suburban neighborhood somewhere between Newmarket and Greenland – New Hampshire that is. But it might as well be the country Greenland! We're whistling odd noises and barking strange howls into the crisp pre-dawn air. It's generally a comfortable 5-15 degrees but the wind chill makes it feel several degrees on either side of zero. I can't feel my fingers or toes. Somehow out of the lifeless air comes a response. Was it the bark of a dog or a distant Barred Owl? Or, worse, a competing team? If so, did they hear us and count our imitation as a real owl?! My teammates remind me that it's not that good an imitation. A few seconds later comes the full song “Who-cooks-for-you, who-cooks-for-YOU-ALL!” Redemption, and it's high fives all around. Actually, high threes, the point tally of a Barred Owl. Then it's on to the next secretive nocturnal species. And so begins Massachusetts Audubon's annual winter freeze-fest, the Superbowl of Birding.

For those of you who aren't familiar with the event, January 29, 2011 was the eighth annual Superbowl of Birding, a friendly competition (at least that's how I think it was designed) in Essex County, Massachusetts and Rockingham County, New Hampshire that gets birders to enjoy their favorite pastime during a season when many choose to hang up their binoculars. It's good for a New England birder's morale, the birding community, and even the economy!

The event lasts just as long as the typical warm-blooded mammal can survive jumping into and out of a car during late January – twelve hours to be exact, from 5:00 am to 5:00 pm sharp. Every species counts, but not equally; each species has a predetermined point value depending upon its abundance, from one for common species like such as American Crow and Bufflehead to five for less-than-annual rarities such as Orange-crowned Warbler and Long-eared Owl; plus, three points are awarded for any five-point species that your team calls in before a competitor does. Within New Hampshire, the “Rockingham County only” category has grown from just one or two teams the first couple of years to up to five during the past several. Now, let's get to the strategy.

In this article, I focus only on areas in eastern Rockingham County that are west of Route 95. Watch for a future article on “A Superbowl Strategy for Coastal New Hampshire” and see *Birding the New Hampshire Seacoast* by Stephen R. Mirick for information on coastal birding locations. The following locations are some personal favorites for the Superbowl of Birding. Keep in mind, however, these are only some of the locations that teams use on the Big Day; undoubtedly, there are other birding sites still to be discovered.

Choosing a Route

Rockingham County is large, stretching from the Isles of Shoals off the coast (east) to the Merrimack River in Londonderry (west), and from Northwood Lake in Northwood (north) to World End Pond in Salem (south). How can one possibly cover all that ground in just 12 hours? You can't. A decision about what areas to cover is necessary because the county is so large. One consideration is that the number of possible species decreases the farther north and west one travels. The competitive Superbowl birder must choose a route that encompasses many stops in many habitats (e.g., ocean, bay, farm, shrubland, urban) so that the greatest number of possible bird species may be found in the least amount of time. For example, at least twenty species (e.g., sandpipers, the "white-winged" gulls, scoters, loons, Red-necked Grebe, Great Cormorant) would not be expected away from the immediate coastline during winter. Thus, one can't expect to find the majority of species in Rockingham County without scanning a few beaches. Likewise, your chances of finding any of the lingering sparrows, blackbirds, and rare feeder birds diminish without birding farm edge habitat and suburban neighborhoods.

Scouting

While many towns in interior Rockingham County are well worth checking for birds in winter, attempting to include all of them into the Superbowl route reduces one's chances of spending enough time on the coast, and thus, finding the species needed to win. There's just not enough time in the day. Our team, unfortunately, has had to learn this the hard way several times.

That's where scouting comes in and can be an invaluable tool in helping refine your route. Scouting can be as simple as making a quick visit to a historic location for a particular species to confirm its presence, or checking an easy-to-access parcel of conservation land for the expected wintering Hermit Thrush. Another type of scouting that can prove to be extremely useful to your Superbowl strategy involves scouting bird feeders. Familiarizing yourself with the most productive bird feeders in the county can make the difference between an average day and a great one. Fortunately, several folks often open up their yards (and sometimes, houses) to birders, and these locations are sometimes shared through the NH.Birds e-mail list – usually the best bet for finding out about feeder rarities. Ask people you know also! They may be hosting a bird they can't identify and you may be able to help them contribute a rare sighting. An Exeter couple provided an Orange-crowned Warbler as a top treat on the 2011 Superbowl. My team's search for this species proved much more successful than the fruitless 45-minute wait for a Ruby-crowned Kinglet several years ago – an instance that our former captain still hasn't lived down!

A winning strategy should incorporate the chance occurrences with actual known locations of species. Of course, it's impossible to know for certain when and where birds might appear, but birders are increasingly connected to the current tools such as eBird and NH.Birds. Still, one lesson we learned from the Superbowl of Birding is that the more scouting you do, the more disappointed you will be on Superbowl day! Birds have a habit of not appearing when and where you want (or expect) them to. That's part of the intrigue in birding as a sport, in my opinion. Don't despair, though, as scouting is important in helping refine your route, and day-to-day observations help

paint the picture of bird behavior and distribution – so you’re always learning something.

Owling

From 5:00 to 6:30 am it’s time to look for the four species of commonly occurring owls of New Hampshire. Look for all of them, but don’t count on the roosting Eastern Screech-Owl in Exeter to show itself when you’re driving by, although that’s how bird-finding often works. Habitat diversity is one key for finding owls and the Great Bay area is both rich in habitats and logistically advantageous as a starting point for the Superbowl. (A tip: start by whistling for Northern Saw-whet Owl or Eastern Screech-Owl before attempting to imitate their predators, the Great Horned and Barred Owls. Saw-whets are worth more on the Big Day anyway.) Great Horned Owls and Eastern Screech-Owls prefer woodland edges adjacent to large fields and can even be found in fairly suburban areas. Barred Owls are typically heard calling in dense woodlands with nearby wetlands, of which there are plenty on conservation land in Newmarket and surrounding towns. Invasive shrub thickets and clusters of small conifers seem to attract Northern Saw-whet Owls in coastal New England, at least during winter, and they can turn up in a variety of seemingly unlikely places. The Great Bay Discovery Center at Sandy Point is a well-known location for both saw-whets and Eastern Screech-Owls, and the Lubberland Creek Preserve in Newmarket has been especially productive for owls for “The Flocking Bustards” over the years. When temperatures are especially brutal, disturbing owls can jeopardize their survival, so use good judgment and don’t let competition get the best of you.

Great Bay and Surrounding Towns

By 6:30 am, it’s almost sunup and time to shift gears to diurnal species, which will dominate the remainder of the day. The possibilities suddenly explode, and you can begin quickly adding many species. The question now becomes what is around and how many points is it worth. If Great Bay has open water and good concentrations of waterfowl, you might hedge your bets on finding a duck or two that might not be found on the coast. In some years, Redhead, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Ruddy Duck, Lesser Scaup, and others may mix with the usual concentration of wintering Greater Scaup and Canada Geese. Also, Mute Swan and Common and Hooded Mergansers are more expected here than on the coast. A problem for birders is that there are few publicly accessible locations for viewing waterfowl on Great Bay and many of these are typically near the developed southern end of the Bay. For site locations and maps of some Great Bay locations, see “Birding Great and Little Bays” by Mirick and Bronson in the Winter 2007 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* (Vol. 26, No. 4). Please remember to practice good birding etiquette when viewing birds in private and suburban areas!

One accessible location is Sandy Point at the Great Bay Discovery Center. More than once, our team has welcomed daylight here in search of a distant Redhead or Canvasback in early morning light. Just because your attention has turned to ducks, don’t forget to look and listen for songbirds, raptors, and more. Bald Eagle in Rockingham County is most expected at Great Bay, and many locations around the southern part of Great Bay have been productive for Pileated and Red-bellied (becoming

more common) Woodpeckers, Wild Turkey, and Brown Creeper. The Discovery Center usually has well-stocked bird feeders, and this can be a great place to begin your morning tally of songbirds.

Newmarket has a well-established reputation as a good birding town even in winter. The coveted wintering Turkey Vulture occasionally roosts in pines just west of the downtown area. Crabapple trees downtown have, in the past, attracted Bohemian Waxwings. Anywhere in town has proven good for the four-point Common Raven, which we often pick up flying over. The Nature Conservancy's Lubberland Creek Preserve and its varied habitats are worth a check for lingering migrants and uncommon over-wintering species; Hermit Thrush, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Swamp Sparrow, Great Blue Heron, Eastern Bluebird, and Belted Kingfisher have each treated our team to three points during past years. Other locations worth a check during scouting include the vicinity of Ash Swamp and Follett's Brook New Hampshire Audubon wildlife sanctuaries along Route 152 (see *New Hampshire Bird Records* Spring 2010 issue, Vol. 29, No. 1).

The Stuart Farm in Stratham has recently been a standout location for wintering songbirds. On the 2006 Superbowl, a male Yellow-headed Blackbird lit up the field within the flock of European Starlings and the few Brown-headed Cowbirds that are usually found here. In the 2011 Superbowl the farm played host to an American Pipit, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings which mixed with the large flock of Horned Larks. Also present were a Lincoln's Sparrow and up to nine Savannah Sparrows. There's almost always a hungry accipiter working the fields, too. This is a privately-owned working dairy farm, so please keep away from farm equipment and active paths, do not enter the buildings, and respect the privacy of the dwellings.

Chapman's Landing in Stratham along Route 108 is the best place for Common Merganser, usually an individual under the bridge. In addition, Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagle, and Belted Kingfisher can sometimes be found here if there is open water. Ring-necked Duck and Double-crested Cormorant have lingered in open water into January, but are rare.

Not far south along Route 108 in Stratham is River Road (to the west), which is known not only for lingering sparrows at feeders (Chipping, White-crowned, and Fox Sparrows have been present here in recent years), but also for a famed "dirt pile" that is full of weeds and can have many sparrows. The Lincoln's Sparrow which was present here in December of 2009 lingered until the day before the Superbowl, which made for a frustratingly cold search the next day!

Working counter-clockwise around Great Bay from Chapman's Landing leads you to Greenland and Newington which have abundant bay frontage. Much of it is inaccessible, however, and the southeastern portion of the bay is usually frozen with open water too distant even for a spotting scope. Despite this, the farms off Newington Road are usually worth a stop. The Great Bay Farm (roadside access only), particularly, has become one of the more reliable places for winter blackbirds; it's close to the Great Bog blackbird roost that hosts hundreds of thousands of blackbirds in fall. In addition, the brushy habitat around the farm and homestead is a good place to find lingering Savannah Sparrows. As an active dairy farm with lots of bird activity, it almost always produces a Cooper's or Sharp-shinned Hawk. The series of farms along this

stretch of road sometimes produce an American Kestrel or even a Rough-legged Hawk.

Another accessible part of Newington is the perimeter of Pease International Tradeport, which, aside from species that can be found elsewhere in Rockingham County, has been surprisingly unproductive for birds during past Superbowls of Birding. Potential exists, however, for such open field specialists as Rough-legged Hawk, American Kestrel, Northern Shrike, or perhaps even a Snowy Owl (blending in alongside the long runways), so this area is worth checking during scouting. Wild Turkey, Eastern Bluebird, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper, and Common Raven are other winter goodies that can be found in and around Pease with some luck.

One last location in Newington that is worth checking is the Great Bay Marina (Marina Road off Fox Point Road). Views of Fox Point and Little Bay abound from the parking lot, and the strong current of the Piscataqua River maintains open water. Only small concentrations of the usual bay and sea ducks can be located here, but include all three mergansers, Bufflehead, and Common Goldeneye. Keep an eye out for an American Wigeon or Gadwall amongst the flocks of dabbling Mallards and American Black Ducks that frequent the shoreline. Other fish-eaters like Great Blue Heron, Belted Kingfisher, and Bald Eagle can also be found here. Be sure to play by the rules: Strafford County begins halfway through the Little Bay and encompasses all the land across the bay, so birds over this invisible line don't count on the Superbowl.

Exeter may be one of the best towns for winter birding in New Hampshire away from the immediate coastline. This is in part due to open water at the publicly-accessible wastewater treatment plant, which often contains lingering waterfowl species such as Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Lesser Scaup, or Ruddy Duck amongst the ubiquitous Mallards and American Black Ducks. Odd land-birds, too, are drawn to the plant at many times of the year, so it's almost always worth a check. Other locations in Exeter that may be worth a look for an interesting bird or two include the Swasey Parkway, which sometimes has an interesting wintering gull.

The Superbowl of Birding is my competitive birding outlet and has become one of my favorite winter traditions. Each year, I hope to lead my team to victory but usually end up saying "We'll get 'em next year!" Try your hand in the Superbowl of Birding this coming January, if nothing else but to have fun! Or be an 'armchair participant' by sponsoring the "Twitchers in the Rye," a New Hampshire Audubon led team that raises funds for *New Hampshire Bird Records* each year (see page 41).

Many thanks to Steve Mirick for introducing many of us to this fun winter event, providing great suggestions and numerous tips, and occasionally sharing the top team honors!

Phil Brown has been participating in the Superbowl of Birding since its second year and has twice won the "Rockingham County Rocks" award, which is awarded to the team that gains the highest number of points in Rockingham County. Phil is Director of Land Management for New Hampshire Audubon and is the new "Where to Bird" editor for New Hampshire Bird Records.

Superbowl of Birding with the "Twitchers in the Rye"

by Pam Hunt and Rebecca Suomala



The Twitchers in the Rye, left to right: Len Medlock, Becky Suomala, Pat Myers, Pam Hunt.
Photo by Pam Hunt.

January 29, 2011, shortly after 5:00 a.m., a blue Prius is parked along Love Lane in Rye with four figures standing in the road next to it and whistling. A Northern Saw-whet Owl calls back from the nearby cedars, and after high-fives all around, the figures bundle back into the car and speed away. The four people engaging in this pre-dawn hit-and-run were none other than the "Twitchers in the Rye," competing in their third "Superbowl of Birding," organized by Massachusetts Audubon's Joppa Flats Education Center. As in the last two years, the team confined their birding entirely to the town of Rye.

Twelve hours later, the "Twitchers" were headed for the compilation with 57 species and 94 points under their belt. Our chances of winning anything were slim, since there's no category for single town, but the team stuck to a more local approach to birding and accepting pledges to support *New Hampshire Bird Records* and NH eBird, both projects of New Hampshire Audubon's Conservation Department.

This year the "Twitchers" were Pam Hunt (Team Captain), Becky Suomala, Pat "Hawkeye" Myers, and Len Medlock. The temperature was actually in the low 20s (vs. 4 degrees in 2010) and there was no wind, sparing us the -15 wind chills from our previous attempt.

From Love Lane, we made a beeline to the Rye Recreation Area, where we encountered Steve Mirick's Superbowl team, the "NH 4th and Longspurs." They'd found neither the saw-whet nor screech-owl that Paul Lacourse had here on the Christmas Bird Count in mid-December, and were on their way to Love Lane. We stayed a little longer and managed to lure in a gray morph Eastern Screech-Owl, which nicely sat over our heads giving great views. But our owl luck had runneth out – stops on the way to Odiorne Point State Park failed to turn up a Great Horned Owl. An American Tree Sparrow called around 6:30, and Snow Buntings were calling overhead. It was time to switch gears.

Our plan was to try for land birds at Odiorne (a Winter Wren had been around) and look for "Frosty" (the local Lesser Black-backed Gull that has been the "Twitchers"

nemesis on Superbowl day), and then blast south to the marshes near Concord Point where we'd had Hooded Mergansers on a high tide a few days previously. We needed to be there before the tide dropped too much; high tide was at 7:00 a.m. There was no Winter Wren, there was no Frosty, and a fly-by Red-throated Loon was only seen by two of us, thus not counting by Superbowl rules (we needed three; this rule would haunt us several times during the day). A female Black Scoter (rare in Rye) was a bonus, but we'd dallied too long, the tide had dropped and we missed our Hooded Mergansers at Concord Point. Our consolation prize was a Swamp Sparrow, and since it was worth three points to the merganser's two points, we really couldn't complain.

The marshes at Rye Harbor proved good for woodpeckers (!) thanks to the distant drumming of a Pileated Woodpecker heard by Len and the bizarre sight of a Northern Flicker hopping around on the snow in the salt marsh with a few Horned Larks (later in the day a Red-tailed Hawk was seen eating something in this same section of marsh, and one has to wonder if it was a slightly mal-adapted flicker).

A stop at Rye Ledge failed to turn up the flock of Sanderlings, Purple Sandpipers, and Dunlin that we'd found roosting here the previous Sunday (a common theme regarding our success at finding scouted birds), so we hightailed it back north to begin our "inland" birding. Along the way, we were distracted by a large flock of robins with a dozen Cedar Waxwings. While watching them Len and Becky saw a fly-by flock of 10 White-winged Crossbills, but Pat and Pam missed them. Another flock of crossbills was at Concord Point, but this time only Pat and Pam saw them, so we were sort of even, but we still couldn't officially count them.

Things improved a little later with sightings of both Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks, and a single Wild Turkey (a Twitcher first!) roosting in a pine tree. At a feeder near the Rye Elementary School, we were treated to a couple of Common Redpolls.

It was now around 12:30, and we, although not realizing it at the time, were in a slump. Our staked-out Hermit Thrush had apparently uprooted its stakes and feeders were quiet. Back at the coast, we finally all saw a flock of 14 White-winged Crossbills at Fairhill Avenue, but seabirds were scarce. At 3:00 p.m. we were back at Odiorne still needing Red-throated Loon. After 30 minutes of scoping, Len found a Razorbill. Then, Becky found it. And after a grueling 5-10 minutes, Pam found it to clinch it for the team. Poor Pat never even had a chance (we only had three scopes). As it approached 4:00 p.m. we officially gave up on Red-throated Loon.

A Brown Creeper at a feeder stop was to be our last new bird for the day. It turns out that between the redpolls around 11:30 and the Razorbill around 3:30, *we hadn't added a single species to our list*. Nonetheless, our species and point totals were right in the middle of our previous two attempts and we raised over \$600. Thanks to everyone who supported the Team!

You can see a species list and read the full summary (and past summaries) on the *New Hampshire Bird Records* home page: www.nhbirdrecords.org. Even though the competition is long over, you can still send a contribution, or sign up to support the team next year. For information contact Becky at bsuomala@nhadubon.org or 603-224-9909 x309.

Christmas Bird Count Summary 2010-2011

by David Deifik



Black-legged Kittiwake by Len Medlock, photographed on the Isles of Shoals CBC, 12/19/10.

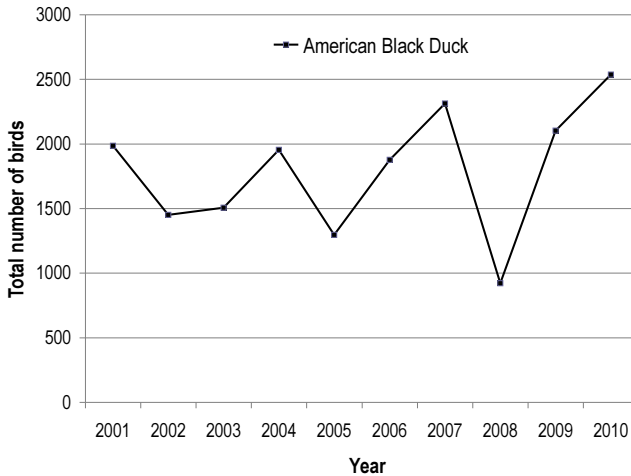
This year's Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) were held between December 14, 2010 and January 5, 2011. There are now 21 counts in the state, although two of these are principally centered in Vermont. Nineteen counts were run this year. The Isles of Shoals count was run for the first time since 2005 (see page 46). Though organized and run as a New Hampshire count, much of the count circle is actually in Maine. There was no data submitted for the Grafton-Bristol count and it appears it was not run. The Manchester

count was not held this year and needs a compiler (if you are interested, please contact Kevin Reid, 887-3440; twinsdaddy41@yahoo.com). Sightings from the New Hampshire portion of the Saxton's River, and Barnet, Vermont counts do not appear in the CBC table on page 48.

The species total across all counts was 136, four species more than last year's total. There were eight species that set new record high counts for the state, identical to the total of last year. As is usually the case, the majority of these new records came from the Coastal CBC. There were 48 individual count high records this year compared to only 30 last year. This was still a bit less than the average of the two years before 2009. There were seven species new to their respective counts, barely more than half of last year's total. No species were new to a New Hampshire count this year leaving the aggregate total of species ever seen at 246. The last new species for the state was in 2006 (Clay-colored Sparrow on the Concord count). The most unusual species this year was Ovenbird seen for only the third time. Close to that in rarity was Yellow-breasted Chat seen for the fourth time statewide. Both of those species were recorded on the Coastal count.

With the exception of Hooded Merganser, inland waterfowl numbers were not particularly impressive this year. The total number of Hooded Mergansers was up by 30% compared to last year. The Nashua-Hollis, Keene, and Hanover-Norwich counts all set new count highs for this species. Also notable was the second occurrence of Lesser Scaup on the Keene count. Three inland counts recorded the usually absent Ring-necked Duck as well. American Black Duck had its best showing in ten years, about 20% better than the average of the best years of the past decade (Figure 1). Unusual species were well represented with records of Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Harlequin Duck, and Ruddy Duck.

Figure 1. Total number of American Black Ducks on all 18 New Hampshire Christmas Bird Counts (see Table on page 48 for a list of counts) from 2001 through 2010 (the 101st through 110th CBC).



Wild Turkey just missed making an appearance in all counts; exceptions were for the far northern Pittsburg count and, of course, the Isles of Shoals count. Although the totals for the state were a bit below previous records, three counts did set record highs – the Coastal, Lee-Durham and AMC-Crawford counts.

For raptors, Bald Eagle was a bit off last year's total with 40 birds seen versus 52. Hanover-Norwich did set a new count high this year with seven birds. For the third time in five years, the Coastal count set a new state record for Red-tailed Hawk with 72 tallied. Both Nashua-Hollis and Peterborough-Hancock set new count highs as well. The Keene count sighting of one American Kestrel was the first in the state in four years. As recently as nine years ago, close to 10 Kestrels were seen across the state. Three Merlins on the Nashua-Hollis count equals the previous state high set by the Coastal count. Four counts recorded Peregrine Falcon with Isles of Shoals setting a new count high of three. One of those birds was seen in Maine waters. Concord recorded its first Peregrine Falcon.

Both the Lee-Durham and the Coastal counts recorded Lesser-Black-backed Gull this year which they missed last year. Alcids were well represented with Dovekie seen on two counts and count highs for both Razorbill and Black Guillemot on the Coastal count. Atlantic Puffin was notable as well; two were found on the Isles of Shoals count in Maine waters.

The Coastal count broke the previous record of 11 that it set for Eastern Screech-Owl last year with 16 birds this year. Prior to this, the highest count was six birds! As far as woodpeckers go, Pileated Woodpecker numbers were the most notable. The Pileated count was 40% higher than last year. Four counts had new highs with Sandwich only one bird shy of tying last year's count record of 20 set by the Hanover-Norwich count. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker has only been recorded 11 times previously. Records this year for the Nashua-Hollis and Laconia-New Hampton count are therefore quite notable.



Yellow-breasted Chat by Nathan Purmort at Odiorne Point State Park, Rye, on the day of the Coastal CBC, 12/18/10. Nathan recognized that the bird was rare for the season and immediately posted it to the NH.Birds e-mail list for confirmation. The post alerted the CBC watchers in that sector (at least those with modern technology at their fingertips) and they searched for the bird, but unsuccessfully. Thanks to Nathan's photo and quick notification the species could be added to the CBC for that day.

Carolina Wren numbers bounced back well after having decreased somewhat since the record highs of three years ago. The Coastal count set a new state high and there were two other count highs. Warblers are never a prominent feature of New Hampshire CBCs, with only Yellow-rumped Warbler found on a consistent basis. Quite unusual was a first Orange-crowned Warbler for the Sandwich count. This year, the Coastal count had an amazing five species of warblers including its first Ovenbird! It also recorded Yellow-rumped Warbler, Pine Warbler, Common Yellowthroat and a Yellow-breasted Chat (third ever for the state). Lee-Durham had two Pine Warblers, a count high. There were no unusual sparrows this year save for the lone White-crowned Sparrow recorded on the Nashua-Hollis count. Bohemian Waxwing made a good showing this year and was found on nine counts. Only a single bird was seen last year. Among the five blackbird species recorded across the state, Eastern Meadowlark and Rusty Blackbird were particularly noteworthy. Eastern Meadowlark was found on the Peterborough-Hancock count. Rusty Blackbird was seen on the Nashua-Hollis (for the first time), Coastal, and Laconia-New Hampton counts. Compared to last year's virtual absence of irruptive finches, all of them were recorded this year. Isles of Shoals found its first White-winged Crossbills. Besides good numbers of Common Redpolls, two counts reported the far rarer Hoary Redpoll.

Individual Count Highlights

Nashua-Hollis

- First count record: Rusty Blackbird
- Count high: Red-tailed Hawk, Merlin (tied state high)

Peregrine Falcon was seen for the second time. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen for the third time.

Peterborough-Hancock

- First count record: Eastern Meadowlark
- Count high: Red-tailed Hawk, Barred Owl, Northern Flicker, Carolina Wren

Keene

- First count record: Peregrine Falcon
 - Count high: Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Flicker (third record), Pileated Woodpecker (one short of a new state high), Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren (third record)
- Great Horned Owl was seen for the second time.

Coastal

- New state count high: Red-throated Loon, Razorbill, Eastern Screech-Owl, Carolina Wren, Winter Wren
- First count record: Ovenbird
- Count high: Wild Turkey, Black Guillemot, Pileated Woodpecker, Carolina Wren, Winter Wren

Northern Shoveler was seen for the second time tying the state count high. Turkey Vulture was seen for the third time. Yellow-breasted Chat was seen for the third time.

Isles of Shoals

- New state count high: Peregrine Falcon (includes one bird in Maine)
- First count record: White-winged Crossbill
- Count high: Common Loon, Dunlin

Lee-Durham

- New state count high: Tufted Titmouse
- Count high: Wild Turkey, Pine Warbler (third count record)

Northern Shoveler was seen for the second time tying state high. Eastern Screech-Owl was seen for third time.

Concord

- Count high: Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Eastern Bluebird, House Finch Merlin and Peregrine Falcon were seen for the third time.

Laconia-New Hampton

- Count High: Belted Kingfisher

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen for the second time. Rusty Blackbird was seen for the third time.

Hanover-Norwich

- Count high: Hooded Merganser, Bald Eagle, American Crow

Great Blue Heron was seen for the second time. American Robin tied the previous count high.

Littleton

- Count high: Rock Pigeon
- Chipping Sparrow was seen for the second time.

Errol-Umbagog

- Count high: European Starling

Cedar Waxwing was seen for the second time. Hoary Redpoll was seen for the third time.



(above) Boreal Chickadee by Ben Griffith, taken on the Pittsburg CBC, 12/21/10.



(right) Gray Jay by Ben Griffith, taken on the Pittsburg CBC, 12/21/10.

Pittsburg

- New state count high: Gray Jay
- First count record: Gull species
- Count high: Golden-crowned Kinglet, Bohemian Waxwing

North Conway

- New state count high: Common Raven
- Count high: Snow Bunting

Gray Jay was seen for the third time.

Lake Sunapee

- Count high: Barred Owl, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren
- Ringed-necked Duck was seen for the third time.

Sandwich

- First count record: Belted Kingfisher, Orange-crowned Warbler
- Count high: American Black Duck, Pileated Woodpecker (one short of new state high), Snow Bunting

Hoary Redpoll was seen for the third time.

AMC-Crawford

- First count record: Black-backed Woodpecker
 - Count high: Wild Turkey, Herring Gull (second record), Rock Pigeon, Pileated Woodpecker (second record), American Crow, Snow Bunting (second record)
- Second records for: Spruce Grouse, Pileated Woodpecker, Common Redpoll

111th Christmas Bird Count: Dec. 14, 2010 - Jan. 5, 2011

species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Isl	Lee	Con	Lac
Snow Goose	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-
Canada Goose	765	3	22	3453	85	895	42	32
Mute Swan	-	-	-	52	-	-	-	-
American Wigeon	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
American Black Duck	51	-	14	2001	46	330	35	11
Mallard	502	-	27	1748	2	487	185	514
Black X Mallard sp.	-	-	-	-	-	15	-	-
Northern Shoveler	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	-
Northern Pintail	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Ring-necked Duck	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Greater Scaup	-	-	-	1631	-	-	-	1
Lesser Scaup	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Common Eider	-	-	-	140	259	-	-	-
Harlequin Duck	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-
Surf Scoter	-	-	-	252	5	-	-	-
White-winged Scoter	-	-	-	546	9	-	-	-
Black Scoter	-	-	-	130	5	-	-	-
Long-tailed Duck	-	-	-	231	115	-	-	-
Bufflehead	-	-	CW	132	-	75	-	-
Common Goldeneye	-	-	-	308	10	35	24	181
Barrow's Goldeneye	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Hooded Merganser	11	-	82	4	-	4	2	86
Common Merganser	67	1	64	5	-	2	31	36
Red-br. Merganser	-	-	-	327	16	36	-	-
Ruddy Duck	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Ruffed Grouse	2	9	2	1	-	1	2	CW
Spruce Grouse	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wild Turkey	28	131	109	167	-	175	46	39
Red-throated Loon	-	-	-	**47	-	-	-	-
Common Loon	-	-	1	118	52	5	-	4
Horned Grebe	-	-	-	53	-	-	-	-
Red-necked Grebe	-	-	CW	56	5	-	-	-
Northern Gannet	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	-
Double-cr. Cormorant	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-
Great Cormorant	-	-	-	66	33	-	-	-
Great Blue Heron	1	-	-	6	-	-	-	-
Turkey Vulture	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Bald Eagle	3	3	1	8	-	6	3	3
Northern Harrier	1	1	-	1	-	CW	-	-
Sharp-shinned Hawk	4	2	1	1	-	5	5	1
Cooper's Hawk	6	-	3	15	-	6	9	-
Northern Goshawk	CW	-	-	-	-	2	2	-
Red-tailed Hawk	52	8	8	**72	-	29	12	3
Rough-legged Hawk	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
American Kestrel	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Merlin	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Peregrine Falcon	1	-	*1	-	3	-	1	-
Black-bellied Plover	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Sanderling	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-
Purple Sandpiper	-	-	-	38	250	-	-	-

Han	Bak	Lit	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	San	Amc	Total
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
-	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	5301
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
3	10	4	-	-	1	11	19	-	2536
239	2	2	-	-	75	187	13	-	3983
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1632
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	399
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	257
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	555
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	135
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	346
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	207
4	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	563
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
110	-	-	2	-	-	2	5	-	308
95	-	CW	13	6	-	2	-	-	322
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	379
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	1	1	12	4	1	1	5	1	43
-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2
200	18	103	9	-	64	82	121	12	1302
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	47
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	180
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	53
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	61
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	99
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
7	1	-	4	1	-	-	1	-	41
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	1	-	CW	-	20
2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	42
-	-	CW	-	1	-	-	-	-	5
12	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	198
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	288

111th Christmas Bird Count (continued)

species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Isl	Lee	Con	Lac
Dunlin	-	-	-	50	108	-	-	-
Black-headed Gull	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Bonaparte's Gull	-	-	-	204	13	-	-	-
Ring-billed Gull	107	-	1	639	1	302	31	72
Herring Gull	92	1	2	1060	275	3819	5	8
Iceland Gull	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-
Lesser Bla.-bac. Gul	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-
Glaucous Gull	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Great Bla.-bac. Gull	86	-	-	93	50	307	-	4
Gull sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bla.-leg. Kittiwake	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-
Dovekie	-	-	-	2	5	-	-	-
Razorbill	-	-	-	156	28	-	-	-
Black Guillemot	-	-	-	11	19	-	-	-
Atlantic Puffin	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Rock Pigeon	672	115	551	1380	-	408	668	53
Mourning Dove	608	260	143	535	-	215	173	337
Eastern Screech-owl	-	-	-	**16	-	1	-	-
Great Horned Owl	-	-	1	4	-	2	-	-
Barred Owl	2	4	5	3	-	2	2	-
N. Saw-whet Owl	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Belted Kingfisher	9	-	CW	5	-	4	1	7
Red-bel. Woodpecker	39	4	3	20	-	32	4	1
Ylw.-bel. Sapsucker	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Downy Woodpecker	152	72	76	118	-	148	77	45
Hairy Woodpecker	56	74	53	35	-	58	36	32
Bla.-bac. Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Flicker	10	2	2	25	-	3	1	1
Pileated Woodpecker	11	10	15	10	-	7	9	14
Northern Shrike	2	CW	1	1	-	1	1	1
Gray Jay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Blue Jay	668	360	343	543	-	568	294	254
American Crow	351	132	148	786	-	463	667	123
Common Raven	3	20	13	4	-	9	6	4
Horned Lark	-	-	-	57	-	-	41	-
Black-cap. Chickadee	811	841	938	904	1	1365	662	522
Boreal Chickadee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tufted Titmouse	299	95	134	205	-	**410	168	88
Red-br. Nuthatch	4	26	28	18	-	10	5	12
White-br. Nuthatch	221	142	143	177	-	277	155	91
Brown Creeper	12	9	14	6	-	15	9	4
Carolina Wren	10	7	3	**18	-	7	3	1
Winter Wren	2	-	2	**9	-	4	CW	-
Golden-cr. Kinglet	8	40	39	20	-	34	7	4
Eastern Bluebird	58	11	7	112	-	42	26	1
Hermit Thrush	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
American Robin	276	19	49	742	-	248	113	55
Gray Catbird	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Northern Mockingbird	72	-	1	69	-	15	14	5
European Starling	1026	134	375	6306	23	1712	748	458

Han	Bak	Lit	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	San	Amc	Total
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	158
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	217
-	-	9	-	-	-	3	1	-	1166
-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	5266
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	546
-	-	-	-	1	CW	-	-	1	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	184
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
549	2	283	-	-	20	107	38	5	4851
401	29	97	-	14	74	59	191	CW	3136
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	8
1	CW	1	-	-	-	3	5	-	28
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
2	-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	29
-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	1	-	104
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
57	1	6	17	13	23	33	44	8	890
62	3	18	13	13	38	31	76	6	604
-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	44
10	1	4	5	4	4	2	19	2	127
2	-	-	-	-	CW	-	1	-	10
-	-	-	3	**32	2	-	-	7	44
488	46	110	60	41	70	229	192	11	4277
5140	27	60	18	27	66	65	19	16	8107
37	2	34	26	18	**114	10	21	3	324
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	98
1225	202	349	488	647	424	613	846	130	10968
-	-	-	1	28	-	-	4	6	39
97	2	5	-	-	23	38	47	1	1612
28	6	26	87	114	24	18	45	5	456
136	10	12	5	2	56	66	117	2	1612
3	-	-	4	4	4	1	12	CW	97
5	-	CW	-	-	-	2	-	-	56
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17
7	-	23	88	77	2	13	8	4	374
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	267
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
86	-	2	-	-	-	3	7	-	1600
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	181
562	1	44	39	5	63	39	54	-	11589

111th Christmas Bird Count (continued)

species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Isl	Lee	Con	Lac
American Pipit	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Bohemian Waxwing	-	-	CW	-	-	1	1	71
Cedar Waxwing	69	7	142	93	-	101	214	267
Orange-cr. Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ylw-rumped Warbler	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Pine Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-
Ovenbird	-	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-
Common Yellowthroat	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Yellow-breasted Chat	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Eastern Towhee	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Am. Tree Sparrow	266	76	119	367	-	207	104	94
Chipping Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Field Sparrow	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-
Savannah Sparrow	8	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Fox Sparrow	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-
Song Sparrow	82	-	4	96	4	29	18	2
Swamp Sparrow	-	-	-	5	-	5	-	-
White-thr. Sparrow	46	2	2	87	-	43	22	2
White-cr. Sparrow	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dark-eyed Junco	761	129	274	605	-	620	191	71
Sparrow sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Snow Bunting	-	2	-	47	-	-	-	-
Northern Cardinal	267	48	78	197	-	197	111	26
Red-winged Blackbird	3	-	-	38	-	-	-	-
Eastern Meadowlark	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rusty Blackbird	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Common Grackle	1	-	-	64	-	-	-	-
Br.-headed Cowbird	-	-	-	14	-	-	-	-
Pine Grosbeak	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Purple Finch	-	1	3	3	-	11	-	10
House Finch	282	37	85	279	-	113	387	15
Red Crossbill	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whi.-wing. Crossbill	-	-	-	-	*2	-	-	-
Common Redpoll	101	15	23	1	1	33	70	57
Hoary Redpoll	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pine Siskin	7	93	13	25	-	28	15	36
American Goldfinch	454	226	167	594	1	661	322	83
Evening Grosbeak	-	6	3	-	-	-	-	-
House Sparrow	1086	104	236	1419	-	869	364	287
Number of Species	61	47	57	109	33	67	55	54
Number of Participants	35	44	26	38	17	22	22	15

Total Number of Species
Across all CBCs: 136

CW = Count Week

Nsh = Nashua-Hollis (1/2/2011)

Pet = Peterborough-Hancock (12/18/2010)

Kee = Keene (12/19/2010)

Cst = Seacoast (12/18/2010)

Isl = Isles-of-Shoals (12/19/2010)

Lee = Lee-Durham (12/26/2010)

Con = Concord (12/19/2010)

Lac = Laconia-New-Hampton (2/2/2011)

*= New species to count

**=New count high for the state

New individual count high

Han	Bak	Lit	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	San	Amc	Total
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
323	-	8	-	24	49	20	1	-	498
188	-	-	1	-	26	18	12	-	1138
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
70	12	8	-	1	42	-	14	-	1380
-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
3	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	240
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
11	-	2	1	-	1	2	-	-	221
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
182	4	2	3	1	24	10	7	-	2884
-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	8
75	-	-	-	2	300	-	42	11	479
71	1	4	2	-	5	18	3	-	1028
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	41
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	65
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
-	CW	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	7
1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	31
186	-	-	-	-	-	5	11	-	1400
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	2	2	3	-	-	-	-	9
209	9	19	87	111	233	18	259	4	1250
-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	2
9	-	2	-	-	10	7	39	CW	284
188	1	33	2	3	53	53	179	-	3020
-	-	48	65	-	17	7	4	-	150
183	-	35	-	-	65	73	39	-	4760
48	23	36	31	28	36	42	46	22	
21	5	12	16	16	41	16	21	18	

Han = Hanover-Norwich (12/31/2010)
 Bak= Baker Valley (12/19/10)
 Lit = Littleton (12/19/2010)
 Erl = Errol-Umbagog (12/22/2010)
 Pit = Pittsburg (12/21/2010)
 Cnw=North Conway (12/28/10)
 Sun = Lake-Sunapee (12/18/2010)
 San = Sandwich (1/2/2011)
 Amc = AMC-Crawford (12/18/2010)

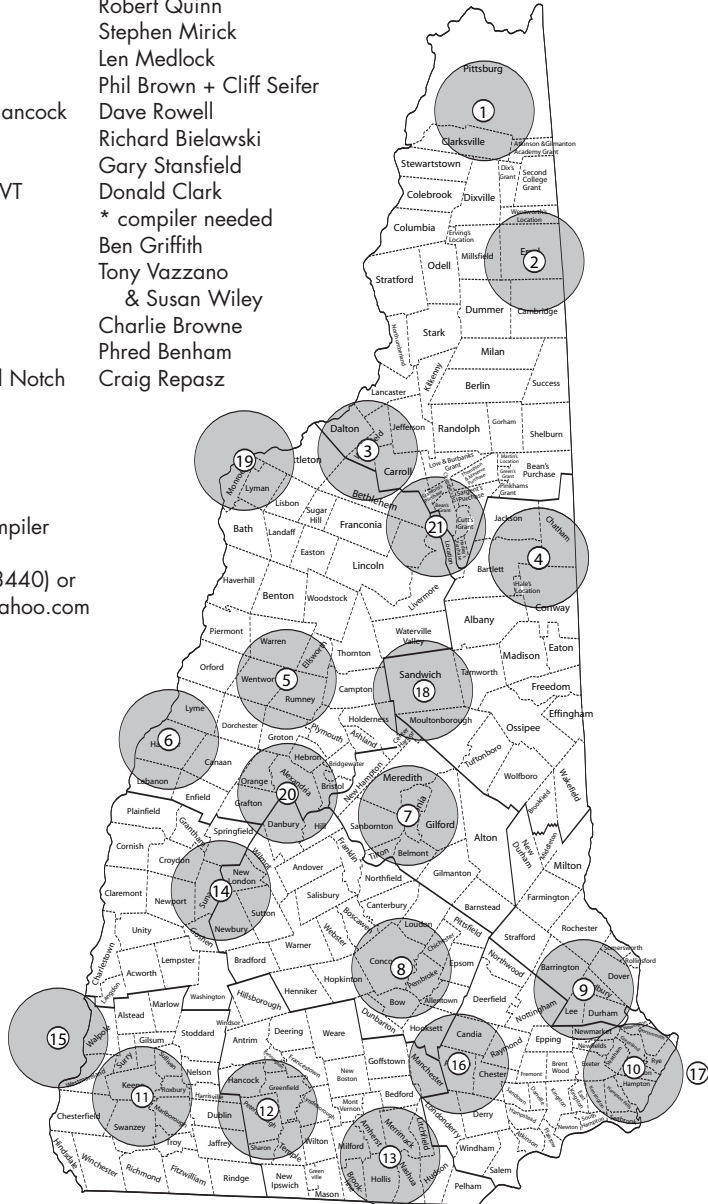
Christmas Bird Count Compilers

- 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
- Len Medlock
- Phil Brown + Cliff Seifer
- Dave Rowell
- Richard Bielawski
- Gary Stansfield
- Donald Clark
- * compiler needed
- Ben Griffith
- Tony Vazzano
- & Susan Wiley
- Charlie Browne
- Phred Benham
- Craig Repasz

* Manchester compiler needed. Contact Kevin Reid (887-3440) or twinsdaddy41@yahoo.com



The Isles of Shoals Christmas Bird Count

by Benjamin Griffith

All photos taken during the Shoals Christmas Bird Count, 12/19/10.

The Isles of Shoals Christmas Bird Count was scheduled to take place on December 19, 2010, but I was a bit pessimistic. The count had not run since I took over the compilation and I began to wonder if I might be a jinx. In each of the past four years, it had been cancelled due to weather. In the week approaching the count, forecasts called for high seas and it appeared that the count would be cancelled for the fifth straight year. Thankfully, the forecast improved and the count was on. Seventeen people boarded the Gulf Challenger in New Castle and were treated to calm seas and mild weather; on Star Island, the temperature exceeded 40 degrees!

On the way out, we found our first alcids, a handful of Black Guillemots and Razorbills. Thanks to the calm seas, we were able to land on Star Island for a bit of a break from the boat and made an attempt to find some overwintering landbirds. Although landbirds were in short supply, we did have the first count record of White-winged Crossbill. We also had a Common Redpoll and a Black-capped Chickadee, the latter being quite rare on the island and only marking the fourth count record. The real highlight of the island visit, though, was a Dovekie, very close off the south-east end of the island.



Atlantic Puffin by Len Medlock.



Razorbill by Len Medlock.



Long-tailed Duck by Len Medlock.



R/V Gulf Challenger on the dock at Star Island, by Jon Woolf.

After leaving Star Island, we circled the Isles of Shoals and travelled north to Boon Island in Maine. We began throwing bread off the stern of the boat to “chum” for gulls. Although we had below-average gull numbers, we had nice views of six Black-legged Kittiwakes, and even had a Razorbill following the boat! The trip north featured a few more Dovekies as well as extended, close views of two Atlantic Puffins! We wrapped up the trip with a group of six Harlequin Ducks at Boon Island before heading back to shore.

Benjamin Griffith is a Master’s Student at the University of Vermont. He has birded actively in New Hampshire for about 10 years.

The hearty group of Isles of Shoals CBC participants, by Ben Griffith.



*Dovekie
by Doug Hitchcox.*

NH eBird – Rare Sightings

by Stephen R. Mirick and Rebecca Suomala

NH eBird has a system that automatically “flags” unusual reports for independent review. You will know if a sighting is unusual and has been flagged because you’ll be asked to confirm it after you’ve entered it. You will also notice that unexpected species do not appear on the list of species that you first see at Step 3 – you have to click “show rarities” to have unusual species appear.

If you enter a rare species, or if you enter an unusually high count of a more common species, the report will be “flagged” for review. Sightings are flagged based on “filters” which are established by month and by location in the state. When you enter a flagged sighting, you will be asked to confirm the report, and a box will appear below the species name which says “Comments.” It is important that you enter information here to support your report.

The *New Hampshire Bird Records* Season Editors review all of the flagged reports. They evaluate the records and determine whether more information is needed. Species Comments are essential for reviewers and are helpful even for other eBird users. Every flagged sighting should have at least something in the species comments field. It doesn’t always have to be a lot, but even a small amount of detail may mean the reviewer doesn’t need to ask you for more information. Examples of simple but helpful comments include:

- Photographs available.
- Bird well seen from 50 feet for several minutes. Field marks noted (preferably followed by a list of the significant markings seen).
- Coming to feeder with House Sparrows.
- Same Lark Sparrow as discovered by C. Sheridan on 11/13.
- Eurasian Wigeon continues on Great Bay with scaup flock.
- Olive green with gray head and eye line. Small bill. Yellowish wash to undertail coverts.
- Full documentation report has been written up/submitted (to *New Hampshire Bird Records*).
- Careful count of migrating birds over 4 hours.
- Flock sizes of 23, 54, and 18
- In large single flock mixed in with starlings
- Careful count of birds roosting in Hampton Beach State Park
- Complete count of 50-acre farm.

The Species Comments is also a great place to record information on plumage or nesting activity – even for common species. The new version of eBird will also have a place to record breeding codes. This kind of information can be valuable, especially for confirmation of breeding, studies on timing of nesting, or other behavioral information.

For some records you may still be asked to fill out a documentation form – especially if it is a species on the NH Rare Birds Committee mandatory review list

(available on the *New Hampshire Bird Records* web site, www.nhbirdrecords.org). If so, you will receive an e-mail with a link to the New Hampshire documentation form. This helps document unusual reports for future generations and maintains quality control of the data base. Writing documentation is an important part of every birder's contribution to our knowledge of birds in the state. Even a rarity that 20 people saw still needs documentation from at least one person for the historic record. So don't consider it a personal affront to your birding knowledge, look at it as a valuable contribution that will last beyond your life time.

Answer to the Photo Quiz

by David B. Donsker

This issue's Photo Quiz pairs images of two raptors. At first glance, these birds seem very different from each other. The bird on the left is generally light colored. Particularly pale are its underwings, lower breast and head. The only large regions of black involve the belly and the rectangular carpal patch at the bend of the wing or wrist. In contrast, the bird on the right is generally black. Only the flight feathers of the underwing and the feathers at the base of the tail are pale.

On close examination, however, the birds share many traits in common. Both appear to be fairly large raptors with proportionally long, narrow wings and relatively long tails. If you discount the fact that the underwing coverts of the pale bird are pale and those of the dark bird are black, the pattern of the underwings of both birds is identical. Both have large dark carpal patches. Both have pale flight feathers with contrastingly dark tips on both the primary and secondary wing feathers. Although it is harder to see the undertail in the pale bird, both raptors have a two-toned tail characterized by a broad, black subterminal tail band and a pale base.

In fact, both birds belong to the same species. Both are Rough-legged Hawks (*Buteo lagopus*), but each represents a different color morph of this species. The dark morph, often less accurately referred to as "dark phase," represents a form of melanism (increased melanin pigment in the feathers) that expresses itself in some individuals in the population of some species of birds. Although melanism is usually rare in birds, it is particularly common in hawks in the genus *Buteo*. Most species of *Buteo* occur as both light and dark morphs, but some species are more likely to display this phenomenon. In the East, only Rough-legged Hawk is frequently found in both forms. Dark morphs of other buteos, however, are more common elsewhere in the country. Dark forms of Red-tailed Hawk predominate in many western subspecies including the very distinctive Harlan's Hawk. Dark morphs of the western Swainson's Hawk are not uncommon. In southern Florida, dark morph Short-tailed Hawks are to be expected, even though light morph birds are more commonly encountered in the Neotropics. Dark morph Broad-winged Hawks are very rare but can be found in populations that breed in western and central Canada. The western Ferruginous Hawk also exhibits a rare dark morph.

Although Rough-legged Hawk is a *buteo*, it is much more likely to be confused with raptors from other families or genera than it is with other *buteonine* hawks. Each morph presents its own identification challenges. Light morph individuals, with their pale heads, could be mistaken for adult Bald Eagle at quick glance, particularly when perched or roosting on the ground. The tail and underwing pattern of Rough-legged is very different, however, from the solid white tail and solid dark body and underwing of the adult eagle. The bill of the eagle is huge, that of the hawk much more delicate. Because it often flies low over marshy areas and, from above, has a pale rump, the long-winged Rough-legged could be incautiously dismissed as a Northern Harrier. Careful observation of structure and other plumage features would clear that up quickly, however. Red-tailed Hawk has a dark belly band and a pale breast which might recall the dark belly and pale breast of pale morph Rough-legged Hawk. In flight, Red-tailed Hawk has a dark patch on the leading edge of the underwing (patagial mark) which could be confused with the dark carpal patch of Rough-legged Hawk. The crown of the Red-tailed Hawk, however, is dark and the tail is either reddish in adults or finely banded in juveniles. Neither of these tail patterns recalls the two-toned tail of Rough-legged. The dark patagial mark on the underwing of Red-tailed Hawk is located closer to the body. It is not at the "wrist" which in Red-tailed Hawk is actually pale.

Dark morph Rough-legged Hawks may be more confusing, in part because they are less frequently encountered or expected. Although the striking white underwings and contrasting dark tips to the flight feathers are shared by some other dark morph *buteos*, dark morphs of the other *buteos* such as Harlan's Hawk or Broad-winged Hawk are essentially absent in New England and present no significant identification issue. If they should occur, they can be separated from Rough-legged Hawk most reliably by carefully examining size, structure and tail pattern. More likely, dark morph Rough-legged Hawk may be confused with two raptors in completely different groups. The two-toned wing of the dark Rough-legged recalls that of Turkey Vulture. Both birds are dark bodied and fairly long-tailed, adding to the potential confusion. In addition, Rough-legged Hawk often soars and glides with its wings held in a moderate dihedral or V-shaped flight profile which we typically associate with Turkey Vulture. But the tail of the vulture lacks the two-toned effect of the hawk. Besides, the vulture has a small, naked head, not the larger, fully feathered head of the hawk. Dark Rough-legged Hawks can and have been confused with Golden Eagle. Like the hawk, juvenile Golden Eagles are dark bodied and have tails that are white at the base with a dark terminal tail band. However, unlike Rough-legged Hawk, young Golden Eagles lack extensive silvery white underwings. Instead, the white of the underwing is restricted to white patches at the base of the primary flight feathers. The eagle is a significantly larger bird with broader wings which are held flat or, at most, in a shallow dihedral.

Unique among our large raptors, Rough-legged Hawk frequently hovers, kestrel-like, over a fixed spot.

Rough-legged Hawk is a bird of open country. It breeds in the arctic tundra. Unlike other North American *buteos*, it is holarctic. That is, it is native to the northern hemispheres of both Eurasia and North America. Its nearest relatives, other than the west-

ern Ferruginous Hawk, are all Old World buteos or “buzzards.” In winter, the Rough-legged population in North America moves south into very southern Canada and much of the Lower 48 states except the southeastern United States. On their wintering grounds, they prefer open areas such as marshes, farmlands and airfields. It is an uncommon, but usually annual, winter visitor to New Hampshire generally arriving in November and leaving before the end of April. Watch for them in winter in Seacoast marshes and open country and farmland throughout the rest of the state, particularly in the Connecticut River Valley.



These hawks were both photographed in Westmoreland on December 19, 2010 during the Keene Christmas Bird Count. The dark morph Rough-legged Hawk (right) was photographed by Phil Brown. The light morph individual (left) was digitally captured by Eric Masterson.

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

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Winter 2010-11 Highlights



Spotted Towhee by Ben Griffith, 02/02/11, Old Town Farm Rd., Peterborough, NH.



Hooded Warbler (female) by Jim Hully, 12/05/11, Seabrook Wastewater Treatment Plant, NH.



There were many reports of White-winged Crossbills at feeders. This one was photographed by Scott Young, 01/11/11, in Strafford, NH.



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