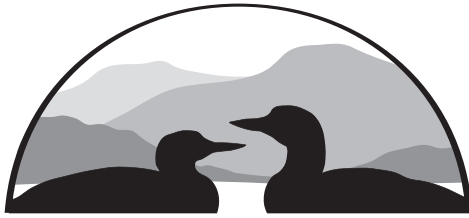


New Hampshire Bird Records



Winter 2011-12

Vol. 30, No. 4



New Hampshire Bird Records

Volume 30, Number 4

Winter 2011-12

- Managing Editor:* Rebecca Suomala
603-224-9909 X309, bsuomala@nhaudubon.org
- Text Editor:* Dan Hubbard
- Season Editors:* Eric Masterson/Iain MacLeod, Spring; Tony Vazzano, Summer; Lauren Kras/Ben Griffith, Fall; Pamela Hunt, Winter
- Layout:* Kathy McBride
- Assistants:* Jeannine Ayer, David Deifik, Dave Howe, Margot Johnson, Elizabeth Levy, Susan MacLeod, Marie Nickerson, Carol Plato, William Taffe, Tony Vazzano
- Field Notes:* Robert A. Quinn
- Photo Quiz:* David Donsker
- Photo Editor:* Ed Larrabee
- Web Master:* Kathy Barnes
- Where to Bird:* Phil Brown
- Editorial Team:* Phil Brown, Hank Chary, David Deifik, David Donsker, Ben Griffith, Dan Hubbard, Pam Hunt, Lauren Kras, Iain MacLeod, Eric Masterson, Robert A. Quinn, Rebecca Suomala, William Taffe, Tony Vazzano, Jon Woolf

Cover Photo: Cape May Warbler by Karen Batchelder, 1/22/12, Odiorne Point SP, Rye, NH.

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Published by New Hampshire Audubon's Conservation Department



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IN MEMORY OF
Kay Dymont



This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by Pat Niswander on behalf of the Concord Bird and Wildflower Club in memory of long time member, Kay Dymont. Kay was a long time birder who led many field trips for the Club, and was a long-time volunteer for NH Audubon, both in the office and in the field.

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From the Editor

Volunteer Update

Welcome Ed Larrabee

We are delighted to welcome Ed Larrabee as the new Photo Editor. Ed is not only interested in birds, he is also willing to help with databases and has already been designing a new database for the Backyard Winter Bird Survey. Fortunately, he is a long-time veteran of high technology. He has been in New Hampshire since 1978 and lives with his wife Claire and two cats named Zip and Spunk. I am especially grateful that he was willing to jump in with both feet and tackle this issue even though the winter season was long past by the time he started in the position. If you have photos that you are willing to share with *New Hampshire Bird Records*, please contact Ed at elarrabe@gsinet.net.

Welcome Kathy Barnes

Kathy Barnes has been helping out with the *New Hampshire Bird Records* web site behind the scenes for quite a few months now. We've been grateful to have her help during an especially busy time for Len Medlock and she has now taken over as Web Master. She brings web design expertise and numerous ideas for the site as well as an interest in birding. We are excited to have her as part of the *New Hampshire Bird Records* team. We very much appreciate all that Len Medlock accomplished as Web Master. Thank you Len!

Time to Renew!

This is the last issue of this subscription year and your renewal notice is enclosed with this issue. (If you have already renewed or just begun your subscription you will have a different notice stating that you do not need to renew.) Thanks for your subscription and support of *New Hampshire Bird Records*.

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. 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.

We are especially grateful to the generous donors who established the New Hampshire Bird Records Endowment Fund and those who have contributed to it. This fund will help build a secure base of long-term support for the collection, organization, publication, preservation and storage of New Hampshire bird sighting information.

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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Photo Quiz



Can You Identify This Bird?

Answer on page 64.
Photo by Len Medlock.

Winter Season

December 1, 2011 through February 28, 2012



Pam Hunt

by Pamela Hunt

According to climatologists, mild Novembers in New England tend to be followed by mild winters, and 2011-12 followed this pattern in spades. New Hampshire averaged 5° F above the long-term average in December and this trend continued essentially unabated straight through the rest of the winter, making it the second warmest winter in 117 years (only beaten by 2001-02). Precipitation averaged roughly 80% of normal for the season as a whole, but was marked by near normal levels at the start and ranked near the bottom third by February. Also, because it was so warm, much of the precipitation that did fall came as rain. Snow was largely limited to the northernmost or highest areas and when it fell in the south it rarely persisted for long. There weren't even any major coastal storms to add diversity to the season.

As presumably befits such a mild winter, "half-hardies" were far more widespread than usual, especially Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, and Chipping Sparrow. Then there were the warblers, nine species of which appeared in New Hampshire at some point during the season. The star of the show was, without doubt, Odiorne Point State Park's **Cape May Warbler**, but a **Tennessee Warbler** in Rye on December 23 was noteworthy for being the latest ever for anywhere in New England, and **Northern Parula** and **Black-throated Green Warbler** in Greenland provided first winter records for the state.

Waterfowl benefitted from extensive open water by wintering well north of their usual haunts and in larger numbers to the south. Included in the list of notables were multiple Gadwall, Redheads, and Ruddy Ducks, as well as, Red-breasted Merganser and Common Loon well north in Coos County. The star of the waterfowl group, however, was undoubtedly the state's third **Barnacle Goose**, discovered in Rollinsford in mid-December and seen by numerous birders for roughly a month.



Barnacle Goose by Jason Lambert, 12/15/11, Rt. 4, Rollinsford, NH.

Colorful western vagrants included two **Varied Thrushes**, a **Western Tanager**, a **Painted Bunting**, five **Dickcissels**, and two **Yellow-headed Blackbirds**. From the north there was, well, not very much. Perhaps the most noteworthy arctic invader was Snowy Owl, of which at least 6 appeared in the state as part of a major irruption farther to the west. Finch action, however, was limited, with the dominant species being Pine Siskin. Even then, most of these were in the north, as were the significantly smaller numbers of other boreal seed-eaters.

Waterfowl

The star of the season as far as waterfowl goes was New Hampshire's third record of **Barnacle Goose**. First found in Rollinsford on December 14, this arctic goose wandered about a little during its month-long stay, including visits to neighboring Dover and Berwick, Maine. A few Brant and Snow Geese added some variety, with increasing reports of the latter in late February, clearly a sign that spring migration was now under way.

Despite the mild winter, there were very few Wood Ducks in mid-winter. Those listed here represent all records between December 10 and February 20 (any before and after this range were likely migrants). It seems as if at least three Gadwall spent part of the winter in New Hampshire. Sorting them out was greatly facilitated by observers' noting the sex of birds in the eBird comments field. All are encouraged to provide as much detail as possible when submitting data, especially for unusual species. Returning to Gadwall, two females spent a few days in Exeter in early December, but one was replaced by a male in early January. At the same time, a female appeared in Rochester, and then, the last bird of the season was another male in Durham. Clearly there were three, as evidenced by the records on January 3, but did one of the Exeter females move to Rochester, and did the Exeter male move to Durham? Just think, a few years ago Gadwall was a "good bird" at almost any time in New Hampshire and now we're trying to figure out how many we have!

After a good fall showing, only a single male Eurasian Wigeon managed to linger on Great Bay into the first half of December. As noted in previous summaries, Northern Shovelers are increasing as a winter bird in New England (there were up to 32 just over the border at Plum Island this winter), but New Hampshire's only record this season was a female in Nashua. A dozen or more Northern Pintails were scattered all over the southeastern part of the state, with two in the Lakes Region being unusually far north. Also unusual in the Lakes Region was a male Green-winged Teal. As for our more mundane dabbling ducks, a flock of Mallards at the Exeter Wastewater Treatment Plant peaked at 1300-1400 the first week of February, but was consistently over 400 for much of the winter thereafter. Beginning in mid-to-late February, small numbers of northbound Wood Ducks,

wigeon, pintail, and teal started to appear in coastal New Hampshire and along the Merrimack River.

Extensive open water allowed diving ducks to show up in all sorts of unexpected places. Both Canvasback and Redhead spent significant portions of the winter on Great Bay; in both cases, birds were probably either late or early migrants. Also on the Bay, an intriguing *Aythya* duck that just might have been a Tufted Duck



Northern Pintail by Len Medlock, 2/22/12, Sunset Farm, Greenland, NH.

was seen on January 31. Unfortunately, the bird was very distant and hard to pick out among the abundant Greater Scaup. There is still no record of this Eurasian species for New Hampshire, although it is almost annual in winter in eastern Massachusetts and has also occurred recently in Maine and Vermont. A large flock of Lesser Scaup at Exeter dwindled from over 80 to around 20 by early February, but had started growing again by the end of the winter, probably the result of newly arriving migrants. A smaller flock of Lesser Scaup at Eel Pond went from six birds to one before the pond finally froze in mid-January.

Inland diving ducks of note were mainly in southwest New Hampshire and the Lakes Region, including White-winged Scoters at two locations. Most unusual, however, was a female Red-breasted Merganser far north at First Connecticut Lake. Numbers of sea ducks along the coast were generally not remarkable and are not published below. There were at least seven Barrow's Goldeneyes this season, a total that is well above average. The handful of Ruddy Ducks reported in early December was not unexpected given the exceptional fall for the species in the Northeast.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Snow Goose				
01/18	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	L. Medlock, D. Hubbard
02/23	5	E. Kingston	Bodwell Farm	S. Mirick, D. Skillman, P. Miliotis
02/24	5	E. Kingston	Bodwell Farm	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
Brant				
12/01	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	S. Young
01/02	1	Rye	Wallis Sands State Beach	D. Hubbard, et al.
01/03	3	N. Hampton	near Fuller Gardens	I. MacLeod
Barnacle Goose				
12/14	1	Rollinsford	Rt. 4	J. Lambert, et al.
01/13	1	Dover		J. Knapp
Wood Duck				
12/17	1	Walpole	Saxtons River CBC	D. Clark
01/11	1	Nashua	Fields Grove	C. Sheridan
02/07	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert
02/19	1	Nashua	Millyard Technology Park	C. Sheridan
02/24	2	Exeter	Exeter WTP	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
02/25	3	Boscawen	Merrimack River, Big Bend	R. Suomala
02/29	2	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook River	A. Robbins
Gadwall				
12/01	2	Exeter	Exeter WTP	B. Griffith
12/06	2	Exeter	Exeter WTP	S. Mirick
01/01	1	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	L. Kras, B. Griffith, L. Medlock
01/03	2	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert
01/03	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	J. Lambert
02/01	1	Durham	Crommets Creek	J. Lambert
Eurasian Wigeon				
12/03	1	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Lambert, B. Griffith, L. Kras
12/17	1	Greenland	Sunset Farm	S. Mirick, et al.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
American Wigeon				
12/10	20	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Lambert
01/21	1	Exeter	Wheelright Creek	S. Mirick
01/21	1	Hampton Falls	Brown Rd.	S. Mirick
01/22	1	Hampton Falls	Brown Rd.	J. Lambert
02/02	3	Greenland	Sunset Farm	D. Hubbard
02/06	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	A. Moser
02/06	1	Nashua	Joyce Park & Wildlife Sanctuary	C. Sheridan
02/15	2	Exeter	Exeter WTP	P. Miliotis
02/18	1	Canterbury	Merrimack R. opposite Boscawen boat landing	D. Sanders
02/28	1	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
Northern Shoveler				
02/05	1	Nashua	Verona St. overlook	C. Sheridan
02/12	1	Nashua	Fields Grove	C. Sheridan



American Wigeon
by Lauren Kras, 2/3/12,
Hampton Falls, NH.



Where's Waldo? A lone Northern Pintail in a flock of resting Greater Scaup on Great Bay. Photo by Len Medlock, 1/2/12, from Sunset Farm, Greenland, NH.

Northern Pintail				
12/31	1	Moultonborough	Sibley Road	T. Vazzano
01/09	1	Ashland	Squam River Pond	I. MacLeod
01/09	1	Moultonborough	Sibley Road	T. Vazzano
01/09	2	Nashua	Fields Grove	C. Sheridan
02/16	7	Greenland	Sunset Farm	S. Mirick
Green-winged Teal				
12/01	10	Exeter	Exeter WTP	B. Griffith, S. Young
12/06	8	Exeter	Exeter WTP	S. Mirick
12/29	1	Moultonborough	Sibley Road	T. Vazzano
01/06	1	Northwood	Northwood Lake	J. Lambert
01/09	1	Moultonborough	Sibley Road	T. Vazzano
02/07	1	Charlestown	Great Meadow	E. Masterson
02/23	5	E. Kingston	Bodwell Farm	S. Mirick
02/23	3	Kingston	Powwow Pond	S. Mirick
02/29	3	Durham	Jackson Landing	S. Young
Canvasback				
01/30	1	Greenland	Sunset Farm	L. Medlock, J. Lambert
02/25	5	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	C. Borg
02/27	1	Greenland	Sunset Farm	B. Crowley, J. Scott

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Redhead				
12/03	3	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Lambert, B. Griffith, L. Kras
01/31	4	Greenland	Great Bay	L. Kras, B. Griffith
02/01	4	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. Mirick
Ring-necked Duck				
12/03	17	Concord	Penacook Lake (Long Pond)	C. Borg, P. Hunt
12/15	1	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
01/07	4	Rollinsford	Vaughn Woods SP, NH side	B. Heitzman
02/13	1	Ashland	Squam River Pond	I. MacLeod
02/23	4	Kingston	Powwow Pond	S. Mirick
02/27	5	Exeter	Exeter WTP	B. Crowley, J. Scott
Greater Scaup				
12/10	970	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Lambert
12/31	2	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	B. Griffith, et al.
01/01	5	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
01/01	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	L. Medlock
01/02	1	Rye	Eel Pond	P. Benham
01/31	1000	Greenland	Great Bay	B. Griffith, L. Kras
02/29	17	Exeter	Exeter WTP	Z. Cornell
Lesser Scaup				
12/01	81	Exeter	Exeter WTP	B. Griffith
12/03	1	Hinsdale	Hinsdale setbacks	K. Klapper
12/16	6	Rye	Eel Pond	D. Rankin
01/02	7	Greenland	Sunset Farm	L. Medlock
01/03	2	Rye	Eel Pond	J. Kelly
01/14	1	Rye	Eel Pond	D. Blezard, Seacoast Chapter FT
02/27	37	Exeter	Exeter WTP	B. Crowley, J. Scott
Aythya sp.				
01/31	1	Greenland	Great Bay	L. Kras, B. Griffith
Harlequin Duck				
12/28	1	N. Hampton	cove at Rye town line	L. Medlock
12/31	1	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	B. Griffith, et al.
White-winged Scoter				
12/04	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
12/26	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
01/02	2		Winnisquam Lake	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
Bufflehead				
01/05	2	Meredith	Two Mile Island	I. MacLeod
Common Goldeneye				
01/02	161		Winnisquam Lake	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
01/12	200	Manchester	Merrimack River	L. Kras
02/05	133	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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*Barrows Goldeneye by David Lipsy, 1/16/12,
Merrimack River, Manchester, NH.*

Barrow's Goldeneye

12/04	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach from Church St.	J. Mullen
12/13	1	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Young
01/02	1	Sanbornton	Winnisquam West - Laconia/ New Hampton CBC	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert
01/12	2	Manchester	Merrimack River	L. Kras
01/17	2	Hampton	Great Boars Head	J. Scott, B. Crowley
01/26	1	Durham	Adams Point WMA	J. Lambert

Hooded Merganser

12/03	125	Concord	Penacook Lake (Long Pond)	C. Borg, P. Hunt
12/13	58	Northwood	Jeness Pond	A. Robbins
12/18	68	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/29	8	Madison	Silver Lake	J. Mullen
01/01	24	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
01/02	15	Hinsdale	Hinsdale setbacks	J. Atwood
01/02	55		Winnisquam Lake, south section	P. Hunt
01/10	60	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	E. Masterson
02/05	40	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
02/12	14	Rye	Eel Pond	J. Scott, B. Crowley

Red-breasted Merganser

12/06	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	E. Masterson
12/22	1	Pittsburg	First Connecticut Lake, Pittsburg CBC	K. Klapper, P.& J. Brown, K. Fenton
12/26	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
01/02	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett

Ruddy Duck

12/01	2	Exeter	Exeter WTP	S. Young
12/01	2	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick, S. Young
12/06	15	Rochester	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick, D. Hubbard
12/09	14	Rochester	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard

Grouse through Falcons

One of the best birds of the season was a **Pacific Loon** seen at the inlet to Hampton Harbor on January 14. Although annual in coastal New England, great care should be taken when identifying this western vagrant, but in the case of this individual, the excellent photos by Len Medlock were diagnostic. While not relocated in New Hampshire, this bird had a deformed bill that allowed it to be recognized when it showed up later in the winter just to the south in Salisbury, Massachusetts. Despite the relatively

late ice-in, the latest inland Common Loons were on the seemingly early date of January 10, with the exception of a bird far to the north on the Androscoggin River in mid-February. Not quite so late, but equally remarkable was one in Pittsburg for the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) in late December.



Pacific Loon by Len Medlock, 1/14/12, Hampton Harbor inlet, Hampton, NH.

Six Pied-billed Grebes is above-average for December, but perhaps not unexpected in this mild year. Far more amazing was a total of 61 Horned Grebes on Lake Winnepesaukee on December 19, with a couple still there in early January. Four December Red-necked Grebes inland is about average. The day is fast approaching when New Hampshire will have its first December record of Great Shearwater. This species is becoming expected off eastern Massachusetts in early winter. This year we came extremely close when a dozen or so were seen just south of the state line on Eric Masterson's December 11 pelagic trip. In stark contrast to the previous winter, there were no Great Cormorants along the Merrimack River. As might be expected in a mild winter, a small number of Double-crested Cormorants were reported along the coast, but none are listed specifically here.

A **Black Vulture** seen with a small group of Turkey Vultures over Portsmouth on February 7 may have been the same bird seen over Falmouth, Maine three days later. Turkey Vultures overwintered at a few locations in the southeastern part of the state, with a few birds unusually late or early in inland areas as well. The species really started to show up during the last week in February, particularly in the Merrimack Valley. This season's mid- and late-winter Bald Eagle counts tallied 56 and 55 birds in January and February, respectively, both around average for recent years. Eagles were also incubating at several locations by late February; a new record early date for the state. Also notable was a Golden Eagle near Great Bay during the early survey, perhaps the same bird seen over Exeter back in December.

Northern Goshawks were nicely represented from all corners of the state, with the most noteworthy record being one near the coast on December 17. As befits the mild winter, there were more Red-shouldered Hawks than usual, with at least nine reported from the southern quarter of the state. In stark contrast, there were only two American Kestrels. This declining species is most definitely outnumbered by Merlin now as a wintering bird. The 6-10 reports of Merlins for this winter spanned the state from Bartlett to Keene and the seacoast. It's worth pointing out, however, that there is potential to misidentify an accipiter as this small falcon, and some of the descriptions submitted to eBird are inconclusive on this point.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Spruce Grouse				
01/01		Waterville Valley	Sabbaday Brook Trail, WMNF	K. Pelletier
02/03	1	Beans Grant	Crawford Path at 3400'	D. Govatski
Pacific Loon				
01/14	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	G. Tillman, Seacoast Chapter FT

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Common Loon				
12/18	2	Concord	Penacook Lake (Long Pond)	R. Quinn
12/22	1	Pittsburg	Pittsburg CBC - sector 3	K. Klapper, P.& J. Brown, K. Fenton,
01/02	5		Winnisquam Lake, south section	P. Hunt
01/10	5	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	E. Masterson
01/10	1	Meredith	Meredith town dock	J. Mullen
02/16	1	Cambridge	Androscoggin R. off Rt. 16	R. Hunt
02/18	1	Milan	Androscoggin R.	G. Tillman, Seacoast Chapter FT
Pied-billed Grebe				
12/04	1	Northwood	Northwood Lake	M.& R. Suomala
12/09	1	Kingston	Powwow Pond	S. Mirick
12/09	1	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
12/11	1	Nashua	Joyce Park & Wildlife Sanctuary	C. Sheridan
12/17	1	Greenland	Greenland Sector - Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, et al.
12/26	1	Durham	Great Bay Buffalo Farm	S. Mirick
Horned Grebe				
12/19	54	Moultonborough	Blueberry Island	I. MacLeod
12/19	5	Moultonborough	Garnet Point Road	I. MacLeod
12/19	2	Moultonborough	Long Island Road Bridge	I. MacLeod
01/02	2	Moultonborough	Blueberry Island	I. MacLeod
Red-necked Grebe				
12/09	1	New London	Pleasant Lake	J. Esten
12/17	1		Nubanusit Lake	P. Brown
12/31	2	Laconia	Bartlett Beach	P. Hunt
Northern Fulmar				
12/11	7	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	E. Masterson, et al.
01/11	33	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	E. Masterson, S. Mirick
Northern Gannet				
12/11	9	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	Z. Cornell, E. Masterson, et al.
12/15	97		NH coast	S. Mirick
Great Cormorant				
01/09	1	Gilford	Dockham Shore Estates	I. MacLeod
American Bittern				
12/01	1	Hampton	Rt. 101E pools by pumping station	S. Mirick
Black Vulture				
02/07	1	Portsmouth	Rt. 95	J. Knapp
Turkey Vulture				
12/16	1	Concord	White Farm	P. Hunt
01/20	11	E. Kingston	South Road	P. Brown
01/28	4	Newmarket	Bass St.	P. Brown
02/03	1	Concord	Wildemere Terrace	D. Howe
02/05	13	E. Kingston	South Road	M. Watson
02/08	1	Milford	Souhegan River	J. Broyles
02/11	7	Laconia	Lake Opechee, n. end	D. Perry
02/25	5	Concord	Thirty Pines area, Penacook	P. Hunt

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
02/25	38	Nashua	Nashua High School	D. Smith
02/29	50	Nashua	Nutmeg Drive	J. Besada
Northern Goshawk				
12/04	1	Barrington	Warren Farm	S. Young
12/05	1	Chatham	Green Hill Road	B. Crowley
12/17	1	Rye	Long John Road	P. Hunt, M. Harvey, C. Borg
01/13	1	Bartlett		M. Oyler
01/30	1	Meredith	Vearsey Shore Rd.	I. MacLeod
02/10	1	Swanzy	Dillant-Hopkins Airport	K. Klapper
02/16	1	Lancaster	Lost Nation	P. Hunt
Rough-legged Hawk				
12/17	1	Greenland	Greenland Sector - Coastal CBC	S. Mirick
01/05	1	Colebrook	North Country Community Rec. Ctr.	D. Killam
01/17	1	Jefferson	Rt. 115A marsh/grassland	D. Govatski
01/24	1	Hampton	Landing Road	G. Billingham
01/25	1	Candia	Route 101	S. Mirick
Golden Eagle				
12/04	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. O'Shaughnessy
01/07	1	Newington	Great Bay NWR	E. Willard, S. Bloomfield, K. DeCoster
American Kestrel				
12/25	1	Epping	Main Street area	G. Tillman
01/18	1	Portsmouth	Pease Int'l. Tradeport	B. Griffith, L. Kras, K. Klapper, D. Fallon, C. Seifer

Rails through Alcids

A Virginia Rail flushed out of a marsh in Hampton Falls is one of only a handful of late winter records for the state. Like Ruddy Ducks, American Coots were more common than usual the previous fall, and significant numbers lingered into early winter. Most notable was the group of 154 on Great Bay during the Coastal CBC, followed closely by 120 at the more traditional spot of Powwow Pond.

A single Black-bellied Plover spent most of the winter in Hampton Harbor for the second winter in a row, and other out-of-season shorebirds included Greater Yellowlegs, Ruddy Turnstone, and Pectoral Sandpiper. The expected winter shorebirds – Sanderling, Purple Sandpiper, and Dunlin – were generally scarce, although Dunlin appeared to have started moving north just as the season came to a close. Given the mild winter, it was surprising that no Killdeer were reported from the state until migrants started arriving in late February. The first snipe and woodcock also took advantage of the late February warmth to make their “spring” appearances in the extreme southeastern part of the state.

It was generally an uneventful season for gulls. Kittiwakes seemed a little more frequent than usual along the immediate coast, while a diminishing flock of Bonaparte's Gulls frequented Hampton Harbor through mid-February. Iceland and Glaucous Gulls



Razorbill by Jason Lambert, 1/14/12, Hampton Harbor, NH.

seemed more common than usual, and there were certainly more inland reports from the Connecticut and Merrimack River Valleys. Also inland was a possible **Thayer's Gull** in East Kingston that awaits review by the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee (NHRBC). In a departure from recent years, there may have only been four Lesser Black-backed Gulls in total. Alcid activity was generally unexceptional, even on the two winter pelagics, although an excellent total of Razorbills was reported along the coast in mid-February and a Dovekie found on land was quite a remarkable story (see Field Notes on page 48).

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Virginia Rail				
01/28	1	Hampton Falls	Blakes Lane	P. Brown, K. Klapper, D. Fallon, C. Seifer
American Coot				
12/01	2	Exeter	Exeter WTP	S. Young
12/01	7	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
12/03	3	Hinsdale	Hinsdale setbacks	K. Klapper
12/06	3	Hinsdale	Hinsdale setbacks	E. Masterson
12/09	120	Kingston	Powwow Pond	S. Mirick
12/09	8	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
12/14	45	Kingston	Powwow Pond	S. Mirick
12/15	2	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
12/17	154	Greenland	Greenland Sector - Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, Z. Cornell, J. Silver, M. Frandzel
12/30	16	Durham	Adams Point WMA	R. Eriksen
01/09	1	Nashua	Fields Grove	C. Sheridan
01/24	1	Nashua	Fields Grove	C. Sheridan



American Coot by Christine Sheridan, 1/14/12, Fields Grove, Nashua, NH.



Black-bellied Plover by Clifford Otto, 12/5/11, Rye Harbor, NH.

Black-bellied Plover

12/04	1	Hampton	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
12/05	1	Rye	Rye Harbor	C. Otto
01/24	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	J. Scott, B. Crowley

Killdeer

02/22	1	Durham	Rt. 155A fields (Moore/Tecece)	J. Lambert
02/23	4	E. Kingston	Bodwell Farm	S. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
02/24	1	Concord	Silk Farm WS	E. Masterson
02/25	1	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	S. Mirick
02/27	1	Walpole	Malnati Farm, Rt. 12	D. Clark
Greater Yellowlegs				
12/04	2	Hampton	Meadow Pond	S. Mirick
Ruddy Turnstone				
12/18	1	Rye	Concord Point	S. Mirick
Sanderling				
12/09	75		NH coast	S. Mirick
12/24	260	Hampton	North Beach	S. Mirick
02/29	5		NH coast	S. Mirick
Pectoral Sandpiper				
12/01	1	Greenland	fields off Portsmouth Ave.	S. Mirick
Purple Sandpiper				
12/31	88	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	B. Griffith, et al.
01/24	31	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	B. Crowley, J. Scott
Dunlin				
12/03	5	Hampton	Hampton River jetty	B. Griffith, J. Lambert, L. Kras
01/09	4	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	K. Klapper, C. Newton
01/22	6	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	I. MacLeod
01/28	20		Rockingham County	D. Fallon, C. Seifer, P. Brown, K. Klapper
02/29	475		NH coast	S. Mirick
Wilson's Snipe				
02/24	1	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	J. Lambert, M. Thompson
American Woodcock				
12/15	2	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
02/21	3	Exeter	Newfields Rd. residence	P. Chamberlin
Black-legged Kittiwake				
12/11	5	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	Z. Cornell
12/15	14		NH coast	S. Mirick
12/31	1	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	J. Kelly
01/11	31	Offshore waters	Jeffreys Ledge	E. Masterson, S. Mirick, et al.
01/29	4	N. Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	G. Tillman
02/23	3		Little Boars Head	S. Mirick
Bonaparte's Gull				
12/22	35	Rye	Eel Pond	A. Winters, L. McKillop, J. Pietrzak
01/08	36	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	A. Winters, L. McKillop, J. Pietrzak
01/14	20	Hampton	Seabrook Jetty, Seabrook	B. Griffith, J. Lambert, L. Kras
01/19	9	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	B. Crowley
02/15	5	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	D. Ely
Thayer's Gull				
02/17	1	E. Kingston	South Road	D. Finch

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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Iceland Gull by Stephen R. Mirick, 2/11/12, s. of Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook, NH.

Iceland Gull

12/09	1	E. Kingston	Bodwell Farm	S. Mirick
12/11	1	Nashua	top of High St. garage	C. Sheridan
12/25	2	East Kingston	South Road	D. Finch
12/26	1	Durham	Little Bay	S. Mirick
01/07	3	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard, S. Young
01/10	1	East Kingston	South Road	D. Finch
01/12	1	Manchester	Merrimack River	L. Kras
01/17	2	Exeter	Exeter WTP	M. Thompson
01/17	9	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	S. Mirick
01/23	2	Fremont	Martin Rd.	P. Miliotis
01/25	3	Farmington	floodplain forest	S. Young
02/05	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
02/07	2	Durham	Jackson Landing	J. Lambert

Lesser Black-backed Gull

12/14	1	Fremont	Martin Rd.	S. Mirick
01/01	1	Dover	McDonald's parking lot	B. Griffith, J. Lambert, L. Kras
01/11	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	J. Lambert
01/12	1	Manchester	Merrimack River	L. Kras

Glaucous Gull

12/11	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	Z. Cornell
01/05	1	Manchester	Manchester st.	M. Thompson
02/07	2	Durham	Jackson Landing	J. Lambert
02/21	2	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	S. Young
02/27	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	B. Crowley, J. Scott

Dovekie

12/11	7	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	E. Masterson, et al.
12/23	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	M. Gimpel, D. Small
01/11	22	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	E. Masterson, S. Mirick
01/16	1		NH Coast	J. Lambert, B. Griffith
01/28	1	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	P. Hunt

Common Murre

12/11	4	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	Z. Cornell
01/11	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	E. Masterson, S. Mirick

Thick-billed Murre

12/03	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	J. O'Shaughnessy
01/11	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	E. Masterson, S. Mirick
01/24	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	J. Scott, B. Crowley
01/25	1		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Common/Thick-billed Murre				
01/22	1	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	C. Sheridan
Razorbill				
01/11	10	Portsmouth	Portsmouth harbor	E. Masterson, S. Mirick
01/14	6	Hampton	Seabrook Jetty, Seabrook	J. Lambert, B. Griffith, L. Kras
01/26	8	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	S. Mirick
02/15	20		NH coast	L. Waters
02/15	98		NH coast	S. Mirick
02/23	20		NH coast	S. Mirick
Black Guillemot				
02/15	11		NH coast	S. Mirick
Atlantic Puffin				
01/11	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	E. Masterson, S. Mirick

Owls through Nuthatches

News of this winter's Snowy Owl invasion was all over the local and national media, but the scale of the movement in New England was simply above average (in comparison to the Midwest and Great Plains). Nonetheless, New Hampshire had a good share of the action, with at least three birds on the coast and 3-4 individuals inland (counting Great Bay). Without trips to the Isles of Shoals after the CBC, it's impossible to know whether the birds from Star Island eventually shifted to the mainland. To put these numbers in a broader perspective, I estimate over 50 Snowies in



NH Fish & Game's Officer LaCrosse picked up this Snowy Owl at the Merrimack Station power plant on River Road in Bow and brought it to wildlife rehabilitator, Maria Colby, 1/5/2012. It was diagnosed with severe anemia and also had a low body weight. Once it recuperated, the owl was released. Photo by Maria Colby.

New England for the winter, roughly 24 of which were long-staying birds. On the continental scale, the Midwest, Great Plains, and Pacific Northwest were practically inundated with the things, and one even made it to the Honolulu airport! Consensus in the ornithological community is that the invasion was the result of a good breeding season in the arctic, since very few birds seemed to be in poor condition. **Long-eared Owl** is an extremely enigmatic bird in New Hampshire, with very few records. This season there were reports of two individuals, which await review by the NHRBC.

The northernmost reliable area for Red-bellied Woodpeckers continues to be central Carroll County. This winter there were three reported from Sandwich and Tamworth on various dates. Counting birds seen on Christmas Bird Counts, there were at least **twelve** Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers in New Hampshire this winter (including CBCs), almost certainly a new record and testament to the mild winter. Flickers were

similarly more common than usual. There was a modest incursion of Northern Shrikes, with about 15 individuals scattered from the far north to the coast and southern Connecticut River valley. Although increasing as a breeding bird, Fish Crow remains a hard bird to find in the winter. NHeBird reports from three locations in the southeast are about typical for the last few winters.

Perhaps because of the extensive bare ground, Horned Larks were not concentrated in large flocks as they are in some winters. The records listed are all the high counts for traditional locations, and those in late February potentially reflect the beginning of northward migration for this hardy species. Red-breasted Nuthatches were quite scarce away from northern New Hampshire. There were no reports of over five individuals anywhere in the state with the exception of the Errol and Pittsburg CBCs (see the CBC summary). Many people may not be aware that this species is irruptive, and winter distributions are often influenced by local food supplies. In this case, an abundant cone crop in northern New England resulted in fewer Red-breasted Nuthatches wandering south this winter.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Eastern Screech-Owl				
12/17	4	Greenland	Greenland Sector - Coastal CBC	S. Mirick
12/19	1	Nashua	Nutmeg Drive	J. Besada
01/22	1	Exeter	Swasey Pkwy., Squamscott River	J. Lambert, I. MacLeod, K. Klapper, P. Brown
Snowy Owl				
12/31	2	Rye	Star Island, Isles of Shoals CBC	B. Griffith, et al.
01/03	1	Concord	street lamp off Rt. 393 exit 3	C. Yeaton
01/03	1	Rye	Rt. 1A pullout by stone angel	J. Lambert
01/05	1	Bow	Merrimack Station power plant	M. Colby
01/07	2	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	J. O'Shaughnessy, L. Medlock, R. Gutberlet, J. Brighton, J. Satchell
01/15	1	Conway	West Side Rd.	S. Morrison
01/28	1	Rye	Rye Ledge	P. Myers, P. Hunt, A. Robbins, R. Suomala
02/01	1	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Lambert
02/18	2		NH coast	S. Mirick
02/27	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	J. Scott, B. Crowley
Long-eared Owl				
12/24	1	Stratham	Stuart Farm	B. Griffith, L. Kras
02/01	1	Walpole		J. Pietrzak
Short-eared Owl				
01/01	1	Rye	Awcomin Marsh	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
Northern Saw-whet Owl				
12/14	1	Lee	Joseph Ford Conservation Easement	P. Brown
12/17	1	Walpole	Saxtons River CBC	D. Clark
12/26	1	Webster	Call Road	R. Quinn
01/02	1	Tilton	School St. at Sherry Dr.	P. Hunt
01/06	1	Henniker	Pats Peak Ski Area	A. Moser
02/14	1	Conway	North Conway	M. Oyler
02/15	1	Hancock	Harris Center	E. Masterson

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				
Dec.	1	Canterbury	Foster Rd.	F. Schneider
12/03	1	Greenland	Great Bay Road	L. Kras, B. Griffith, J. Lambert
12/11	1	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
01/14	1	Lyme	Dorchester Rd.	P. Ackerson
01/14	1	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
01/15	1	Northwood	West St.	J. Lambert
01/31	1	Lyme	Dorchester Rd.	P. Ackerson
02/11	1	Winchester	South Parish Rd.	J. Miller
02/27	1	Exeter	Dewey St.	J. Scott, B. Crowley
Black-backed Woodpecker				
12/23	3		Errol-Umbagog CBC-se. section	K. Klapper, P. Brown
12/23	1		Errol-Umbagog CBC-nw. section	B. Griffith
02/16	2	Jefferson	Pondicherry NWR, Mud Pond	P. Hunt
02/19	1	Bethlehem	A-Z Trail at Mt. Tom spur	R. Moore, P. Maus
Fish Crow				
12/25	1	East Kingston	South Road	D. Finch
01/09	1	East Kingston	South Road	D. Finch
02/06	1	Raymond	Center St.	S. Santino
02/17	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	A. Walsh, S. Santino
Horned Lark				
12/18	13	Westmoreland	Keene CBC	P. Brown
12/23	56	Durham	Rt. 155A fields (Moore/Tecee)	S. Young
01/07	25	Stratham	Stuart Farm	G. Tillman
01/16	30	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	B. Heitzman
01/23	10	Walpole	Sawyer Farm, River Rd.	K. Klapper, C. Newton
02/19	50	Durham	Rt. 155A fields (Moore/Tecee)	S. Young
02/20	14	Concord	Morrill's Farm	P. Hunt
Boreal Chickadee				
12/04	4	Franconia	Walker Brook	J. Stockwell
12/22	25	Pittsburg	Pittsburg CBC - Back Lake section	B. Griffith
01/01	1	Lincoln	Mt. Garfield	M. Mugica
01/17	4	Millsfield	Mt. Kelsey wind farm	N. Dodge
01/28	4	Sargents Purchase	Mt. Isolation	S. Schulte
02/11		Waterville Valley	Mount Passaconaway	K. Pelletier
02/19	2	Benton	Mt. Moosilauke	D. Bates
02/25	2	Pinkham's Grant	WMNF, Pinkham Notch	S. Schulte

Wrens through Snow Bunting

Carolina Wrens, like Red-bellied Woodpeckers, are largely limited to the southern counties of New Hampshire. The bird farthest north this winter was still relatively far south in Hanover (Grafton County). The mild winter certainly allowed more Winter Wrens than usual to linger away from the coast, where a few can be expected in most winters. Most remarkable was a bird north of the White Mountains at Cherry Pond on February 18. It was calling from a brushy area next to open water at the beaver dam,



Varied Thrush by Steve Mirick,
1/16/12, Middle Rd., Dover, NH.

an area most certainly frozen solid in most winters. There was only a single report of Ruby-crowned Kinglet, a species that might have been expected to occur in higher numbers under the mild conditions.

At the risk of getting repetitive, the unseasonably warm and snow-free winter allowed Hermit Thrushes to persist in unexpected numbers and locations. At least 20 birds were reported, with two well to the north in Conway, and most impressively, Lancaster. Although American Robin is clearly established as a winter bird in much of New Hampshire, this was the second winter when numbers seemed a little lower than usual. It's possible that the weather allowed more birds to remain farther north where they were less likely to be detected. Of the five **Varied Thrushes** in New England this winter, New Hampshire hosted two. Both birds stayed for less than a week, with the Ossipee individual lingering into early March. A Brown Thrasher spent nearly two months at Odiorne Point State Park, and there were more than the usual number of Gray Catbirds in the coastal area, but only a couple inland (see also the CBC summary).

A group of five American Pipits in the Connecticut River valley was noteworthy in mid-December. This species is usually gone from the state by winter, with the vast majority of December records coming from the seacoast. Presumably the lack of snow allowed these birds to linger a little later than usual. Bohemian Waxwings took a long time to appear in force this season, with only a couple of reports before mid-January. Later that month, however, large numbers began to appear in northern Coos County, reaching northern Grafton and Carroll counties by mid-February. With the exception of only two birds in the species' traditional stronghold of Plymouth, and a single bird well to the south in Antrim, they did not venture south of the White Mountains. Cedar Waxwings were scattered across the state in relatively low numbers, with the occasional large flocks (over 100) at only a handful of locations. Snow Buntings were concentrated in the seacoast and the Connecticut River valley.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Carolina Wren				
02/11	1	Hanover	Mink Brook Nature Preserve	J. Norton
Winter Wren				
12/07	1	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook River	A. Robbins
12/17	2	Hancock	Hancock-Peterborough CBC, N. Hancock sector	P. Brown
12/18	2	Keene	Keene CBC	K. Klapper
01/02	1	Belmont	Route 140 trailer park	P. Hunt
01/07	2	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	S. Young, D. Hubbard
01/23	2	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
01/23	1	Westmoreland	Partridge Brook Road	K. Klapper, C. Newton
02/05	1	Hopkinton	Branch Londonderry Tpk.	R. Woodward
02/16	1	Jefferson	Pondicherry NWR, Cherry Pond	P. Hunt
Marsh Wren				
01/28	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	S. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				
12/05	1	Concord	Wildemere Terrace	D. Howe
Hermit Thrush				
01/04	1	Conway	North Conway	M. Oyler
02/27	1	Lancaster	Wesson Rd.	D. Skeels
Varied Thrush				
01/14	1	Dover	Middle Rd.	P. O'Connell
01/18	1	Dover	Middle Rd.	A. Moser, M. Watson
02/28	1	Ossipee	residence off White Pond Rd.	E. Patterson
Gray Catbird				
12/03	2	Greenland	Great Bay Road	L. Kras, J. Lambert, B. Griffith
12/10	1	Northwood	West St.	J. Lambert
12/22	1	New Castle	off Rt. 1B	S. Mirick
01/08	2	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	R. & M. Suomala
01/28	2	Hampton Falls	Blakes Lane	P. Brown
Brown Thrasher				
12/01	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	S. Mirick
01/22	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	S. Young
American Pipit				
12/17	5	Westmoreland	Chickering Farm	A. Burnett
Bohemian Waxwing				
12/31	1	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	J. Merrill
01/05	1	Conway	North Conway	M. Oyler
01/17	30	Columbia	~5 mi. south of Colebrook	D. Shoch
01/19	45	Clarksville		M. Thompson, J. Lambert
01/20	20	Wolfboro	residence	W. Chatel
01/21	15	Berlin		K. Dube
01/21	100	Colebrook		B. Crowley
02/03	125	Gorham	Main Street	W. O'Brien
02/05	10	Conway	North Conway	M. Oyler
02/08	2	Plymouth	Plymouth State University campus	M. Bassett
02/11	120	Bethlehem	Rt. 302 vacant lot by Rt. 10	C. Borg
02/16	64	Lancaster	Gore Road	P. Hunt
02/17	70	Wentworth	Route 25	M. Young
02/18	170	Gorham	Union St. near McDonald's	G. Tillman
02/19	15	Carroll	Rt. 3, Twin Mtn.	D. Hubbard
02/20	69	Northumberland	Brooklyn St., Groveton	J. Young
02/22	28	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge	T. Vazzano
02/28	1	Antrim	downtown	P. Brown



Snow Bunting by Jason Lambert, 11/2/11, Hampton Beach SP, Hampton, NH.

Snow Bunting

12/26	50	Boscawen	Boscawen baseball field	J. Nadeau
01/07	31	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	S. Young, D. Hubbard
01/16	32	Westmoreland	Chickering Farm	A. Burnett

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Snow Bunting—continued				
01/24	35	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	J. Scott, B. Crowley
02/06	20	Gorham		W. O'Brien
02/10	48	Swanzy	Dillant-Hopkins Airport	K. Klapper
02/18	30	Milan	Kelley Farm	G. Tillman, Seacoast Chapter FT
02/25	180	Claremont	Grissom Lane at Route 12A	P. Hunt, S. McCumber, D. Lania

Warblers through Finches



Black-throated Green Warbler by Steve Mirick, 12/22/11, Great Bay Road, Greenland, NH.

There were **nine** species of warbler in New Hampshire this winter. In the second half of December, a **Northern Parula** and **Black-throated Green Warbler** in Greenland (in the same general area) and a **Tennessee Warbler** in Rye all represent first winter records for New Hampshire. In the case of the Tennessee, it set a new late date for all of New England. Two widely-spaced Common Yellowthroats also occurred during this same early winter period. Pine Warbler and Yellow-breasted Chat are both “half-hardies” that regularly winter in

southern New England, and as such are not unexpected this far north. This season there were two Pine Warblers at inland feeders and two Yellow-breasted Chats on the coast. An Ovenbird at a Derry feeder was also a great find, and ended up staying well into the spring. Given all these warblers, the scarcity of our most-expected species, Yellow-rumped Warbler, was quite puzzling. There were perhaps only six, with 4-5 towards the coast and one along the Connecticut River in Walpole. This relative rarity was all the more unusual considering that several overwintered in the Champlain Valley of Vermont.

The star of the warbler show in 2011-12 was, without a doubt, the young male **Cape May Warbler** at Odiorne Point State Park. First discovered in late November, this bird managed to go undetected for all of December, only to be rediscovered January 7 in essentially the exact spot it was last seen over a month previously. From this point on, the bird became a celebrity, and rare was the day when there wasn't a phalanx of scopes and cameras pointed at his little portion of the beach. Cape May Warblers normally winter in the Greater Antilles, Bahamas, and southernmost Florida, and it is unlikely that this individual would have survived a “normal” New Hampshire winter, even on the coast. The only previous overwintering Cape May Warbler in New England was at a feeder in Vermont in the early 2000s, where it had the benefit of a guaranteed food supply. In contrast, the Odiorne bird appeared to feed exclusively on

brine flies and other invertebrates in washed up seaweed. If the local temperatures had dropped for an extended period, or a coastal storm taken the piled up seaweed back to the ocean, this bird would likely have perished.


Although a total of only five Eastern Towhees seems low for a winter full of half-hardies, birds well north in Bartlett and Randolph were notable. Seven Chipping Sparrows is certainly an above-average number, but far more impressive were the two **Clay-colored Sparrows**. One spent a few days in Concord, while the other settled in for a month-long stay in Rochester, where it was joined by a Field Sparrow for one day in December. Given the other half-hardies in thickets and at feeders across the state, the six Fox Sparrow reports, none of which appear to have stayed, seems quite low. Several observers noted the relative scarcity of American Tree Sparrow, actually the most expected sparrow over most of the state in winter. A **“Gambel’s” White-crowned Sparrow**, a subspecies that normally winters in the west, visited a Seabrook feeder.

A female **Western Tanager** that spent most of the winter in Campton was one of five reported across New England this winter. Two male **Painted Buntings** photographed in Dover were within a few days of each other in late December and early January, and given that their locations were less than two miles apart, it’s possible that only one individual was involved. There is some speculation that the ongoing drought in the southern Great Plains was responsible for an exceptional fall incursion of **Dickcissels** into the Northeast. Possibly unprecedented numbers lingered into winter in New England, including five in New Hampshire. One female **Yellow-headed Blackbird** spent a month at a feeder in East Kingston, while another female at the very end of February appears to have been associated with a large influx of migrating grackles and other blackbirds. Rusty Blackbirds seemed more common than usual, including a large flock that overwintered near the Merrimack River in Concord. Of three **Baltimore Orioles** reported, two were long-staying birds at feeders in Manchester and Concord.





“Gambel’s” White-crowned Sparrow by Stephen R. Mirick, 2/7/12, Seabrook, NH.

The winter of 2011-2012 will most certainly **not** go down in the record books as being good for finches, unless you were in the north. Purple Finches and Pine Siskins were common to abundant on Coos County CBCs, and numbers continued there throughout the season. The north, and to a lesser extent the west, were also home to a smattering of crossbills and Common Redpolls. The latter were most unexpected, since they tend to appear on a 2-3 year cycle and had just been present the previous winter. The star of the show was without a doubt, Pine Siskin. Numbers on the northern CBCs were mind-boggling (see the CBC summary) and there was some southward spillover into the central and western parts of the state. Only a couple managed to make it to southeastern New Hampshire. Because of abundant crops of birch and spruce, most siskins were out in the woods rather than at feeders.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Ovenbird				
12/31	1	Derry	Miltimore Rd.	B. Horton
01/31	1	Derry	Miltimore Rd.	B. Horton
Tennessee Warbler				
12/23	1	Rye	Rt. 1A condo, s. of Rye Harbor	B. Guay
Common Yellowthroat				
12/10	1	Westmoreland	Woodward Road area	A. Burnett
12/17	1	Newington	Great Bay NWR	J. Kelly, L. Medlock, D. Green
12/18	1	Westmoreland	Woodward Road area	A. Burnett
Cape May Warbler				
01/07	1	Rye	Odiome Point SP	J. Bockius, F. Schneider
02/29	1		NH coast	S. Mirick
Northern Parula				
12/17	1	Greenland	Greenland Sector - Coastal CBC	S. Mirick
Pine Warbler				
12/30	1	Mont Vernon	Tater Street	M. Foley
01/03	1	Litchfield	Stevens Way	L. McKillop
02/08	1	Litchfield	Stevens Way	L. McKillop
02/12	1	Mont Vernon	Tater Street	M. Foley
Yellow-rumped Warbler				
12/01	2	Rye	Odiome Point SP	S. Mirick, S. Young
12/02	1	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	P. Hunt
12/17	1	Greenland	Bayridge Road	S. Mirick
12/17	1	Walpole	Saxtons River CBC	D. Clark
01/03	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	J. Lambert
02/09	1	Rye	Odiome Point SP	T. Vazzano
Black-throated Green Warbler				
12/20	1	Greenland	Great Bay Road	S. Mirick
12/22	1	Greenland	Great Bay Road	S. Mirick
				
<i>Yellow-breasted Chat by Len Medlock, 1/15/12, Landing Rd., Hampton, NH.</i>				
Yellow-breasted Chat				
01/01	1	Rye	Odiome Point SP	S. Young
01/07	1	Rye	Odiome Point SP	P. Hunt
01/15	1	Hampton	Landing Road	S. & J. Mirick, L. Medlock, J. O'Shaughnessy, D. Deifik
01/28	1	Hampton	Landing Road	S. Mirick
Eastern Towhee				
12/11	1	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
12/13	1	Bartlett	Hill N Vale Ln., Intervale	L. Route

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
12/15	1	Portsmouth	Urban Forestry Center	B. Griffith
01/05	1	Goffstown	Hooksett Rd.	L. Hansche
01/07	1	Portsmouth	Urban Forestry Center	J. Lambert
02/02	1	Goffstown	Hooksett Rd.	L. Hansche
02/11	1	Randolph	Durand Road	N. Peters
Chipping Sparrow				
12/17	2	Rye	Brackett Road, central section	M. Harvey, P. Hunt, C. Borg
12/18	1	Concord	Loudon Rd. fields behind PO	R. & M. Suomala
12/24	1	Londonderry	Mack's Apples	M. Harvey
01/03	1	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook River	A. Robbins
01/15	1	Newmarket	New Road	S. Mirick
01/21	1	Middleton	Route 153	H. Grant
01/27	1	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook River	A. Robbins
02/15	1	Harrisville	downtown	P. Brown
Clay-colored Sparrow				
12/06	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
12/18	1	Concord	Loudon Rd. fields behind P.O.	M. & R. Suomala
12/22	1	Concord	Loudon Rd. fields behind P.O.	P. Hunt, M. Harvey
01/05	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	S. Young
Field Sparrow				
12/09	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
02/27	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Road residence	D. Hubbard
Savannah Sparrow				
01/06	11	Stratham	Stuart Farm	J. Lambert
01/20	1	Greenland	Sunset Farm	P. Brown
02/22	1	Westmoreland	Maplewood Demonstration Garden	K. Klapper
Fox Sparrow				
12/17	1	Amherst	Christian Hill	M. & R. Suomala, A. Robbins, P. Myers
01/01	2	Gilmanton	Upper City Road	G. & A. Robbins
01/20	1	Concord	Clinton St. residence	R. Woodward
01/21	1	N. Hampton	Woodknoll Drive	S. Mirick
01/22	1	E. Kingston	Autumn Lane	S. Mirick
02/17	1	Gilsum		M. Wright
White-crowned Sparrow - Gambel's subsp.				
01/22	1	Seabrook	Atlantic Ave.	S. Mirick
02/10	1	Seabrook	Rt. 1A	S. Mirick
Western Tanager				
12/14	1	Campton	Meadow Ln.	S. & W. Fogelman
Painted Bunting				
12/28	1	Dover	Harvest Drive	T. Levasseur
01/02	1	Dover	Fairway Dr.	D. Drasher
Dickcissel				
02/12	1	Exeter	Green Street	M. Schoene
12/16	1	Walpole		J. Russo, D. Clark, et al.
12/17	1	Portsmouth	Portsmouth Scuba	B. Griffith, L. Kras, J. Lambert, et al.
12/17	1	Rye	Wallis Road	P. Hunt, C. Borg, M. Harvey

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Dickcissel—continued				
01/09	1	Nashua	Holts Pond area, nw. Nashua	C. Sheridan
02/11	1	Rye	Wallis Road	S. Mirick
02/23	1	Exeter	Dewey St.	S. Mirick
Red-winged Blackbird				
12/17	148	Milford	N. River Rd. farm fields	R. Suomala, A. Robbins
02/24	75	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert, M. Thompson
02/25	1500	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	S. Mirick
02/26	300	Greenland	Sunset Farm	Z. Cornell
02/27	3000	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Scott, B. Crowley
02/28	87	Surry	library	K. Klapper
Eastern Meadowlark				
01/17	1	Rollinsford	Baer Road	P. Miliotis
Yellow-headed Blackbird				
01/09	1	E. Kingston	South Road	D. Finch, S. Mirick,
02/11	1	East Kingston	South Road	D. Finch
02/24	1	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	J. Lambert, M. Thompson
				
<i>Yellow-headed Blackbird by Len Medlock, 1/29/12, South Rd., E. Kingston, NH.</i>				
				
<i>Rusty Blackbird by Len Medlock, 1/29/12, South Rd., E. Kingston, NH.</i>				
Rusty Blackbird				
12/06	18	Greenland	fields off Portsmouth Ave.	S. Mirick
12/17	14	Milford	N. River Rd. farm fields	R. Suomala, A. Robbins
02/19	1	Conway	N. Conway residence	R. Forsman
01/16	1	Westmoreland	Woodward Road area	A. Burnett
01/17	1	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
01/22	27	Concord	Morrill's Farm	P. Hunt
01/23	1	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
01/29	1	E. Kingston	South Rd.	D. Finch, P. Miliotis, L. Medlock
02/20	27	Concord	Morrill's Farm	P. Hunt
02/24	8	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	J. Lambert, M. Thompson
Common Grackle				
02/12	20	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Scott, B. Crowley
02/19	25	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis, Jr.
02/24	25	Exeter	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert, M. Thompson
02/25	500	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	S. Mirick, M. Watson
02/26	300	Greenland	Sunset Farm	Z. Cornell
02/27	2000	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Scott, B. Crowley
Brown-headed Cowbird				
01/10	127	E. Kingston	South Rd.	L. Kras, B. Griffith, J. Lambert
01/28	100	E. Kingston	South Rd.	J. Lambert
02/05	75	E. Kingston	South Rd.	M. Watson

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
02/24	20	Exeter	Exeter WTP	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
02/25	100	Greenland	Great Bay Farm	S. Mirick
02/27	80	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Scott, B. Crowley

*Baltimore Oriole by Pam Hunt, 1/13/12,
Stickney Hill Rd., Concord, NH.*



Baltimore Oriole

12/26	1	Hampton Falls	Brown Rd.	J. O'Shaughnessy
01/05	1	Manchester	Blodget St.	J. Hills
01/12	1	Concord	Stickney Hill Rd.	H. Butterworth, R. Suomala
02/07	1	Concord	Stickney Hill Rd.	H. Butterworth
02/07	1	Manchester	Blodget St.	J. Hills

Pine Grosbeak

01/19	2	Pittsburg	Rt. 3	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
02/14	2	Jackson		D. Bruns
02/19	2	Benton	Mt. Moosilauke	D. Bates

Purple Finch

12/05	4	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook River	A. Robbins
12/16	6	Newington	Great Bay NWR	J. Kelly
12/21	13	Warner	Howe Lane	M. Wiggan
12/22	74	Pittsburg	Pittsburg CBC - Back Lake section	B. Griffith
12/23	23		Errol-Umbagog CBC - nw. section	B. Griffith
01/08	50	Warner	Howe Lane	M. Wiggan
01/21	6	Middleton	Route 153	H. Grant
01/28	18	Milan	Chickwolnepy Rd.	K. Dube
02/07	12	Warner	Howe Lane	M. Wiggan
02/16	12	Westmoreland	Spofford Road farms	K. Klapper

Red Crossbill

12/21	2	Chatham	Green Hill Road	B. Crowley
12/23	5		Errol-Umbagog CBC - se. section	P.& J. Brown, K. Klapper, K. Fenton
01/01	2	Conway	North Conway	M. Oyler
01/16	4	Bethlehem	Mt. Tom	J. Stockwell
01/17	2	Millsfield	Mt. Kelsey wind farm	N. Dodge
01/26	1	Holderness	Squam Lakes Natural Science Center	I. MacLeod
02/09	2	Pittsburg	Magalloway Rd.	J. Prue
02/11	2		Province Lake, Wakefield/Effingham	C. Lapierre, J. Trimble
02/19	25	Benton	Mt. Moosilauke	D. Bates

White-winged Crossbill

12/02	2	Antrim	Willard Pond WS	P. Brown
12/11	2	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
12/19	4	Moultonborough	Mt. Roberts	M. Harvey
12/22	13	Pittsburg	Pittsburg CBC - sector 3	K. Klapper, P.& J. Brown, K. Fenton
12/23	26		Errol-Umbagog CBC - se. section	P.& J. Brown, K. Klapper, K. Fenton

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
White-winged Crossbill—continued				
01/16	8	Albany	WMNF, Kancamagus Hgwy.	B. Blauvelt
01/19	3	Bethlehem	Trudeau Rd.	J. Lambert, M. Thompson
01/19	6	Pittsburg	Rt. 3	J. Lambert, M. Thompson
01/28	5	Sargents Purchase	Mt. Isolation	S. Schulte
02/05	4	Bartlett		M. Oyler
02/19	10	Warren	Warren school area	D. Bates
02/26	1	Pinkhams Grant	Trading Post, Pinkham Notch	L. Lane
Common Redpoll				
12/02	1	Hebron	Paradise Point WS	P. Brown
12/10	2	Westmoreland	Woodward Road area	A. Burnett
01/02	20	Lincoln	Kancamagus Hgwy.	S. Schulte
01/17	1	Antrim	Buttercup Lane	D. Lyon
01/17	15	Millsfield	Mt. Kelsey wind farm	N. Dodge
01/17	4	Pinkham's Grant	WMNF, Pinkham Notch	D. Bates
01/28	1	Milan	Chickwolnepy Rd.	K. Dube
02/17	1	Greenfield	Ravenwood Farm	T. Shiel
02/19	2	Benton	Mt. Moosilauke	D. Bates
Pine Siskin				
12/15	80	Webster	Call Road	R. Quinn
12/17	16	Hancock	Hancock-Peterborough CBC, N. Hancock sector	P. Brown
12/18	22	Westmoreland	Keene CBC	P. Brown
12/22	687	Pittsburg	Pittsburg CBC - Back Lake section	B. Griffith
12/22	858	Pittsburg	Pittsburg CBC - sector 3	K. Klapper, P.& J. Brown, K. Fenton
12/23	483		Errol-Umbagog CBC - se. section	K. Klapper, P.& J. Brown, K. Fenton
12/23	441		Errol-Umbagog CBC - nw. section	B. Griffith
12/28	20	Carroll	Bretton Woods	L. Bergum
12/31	120	Lyme	Whipple Hill	B. Allison
01/01	145	Webster	Little Hill Road	R. Quinn
01/06	220	Antrim	Rockland Forest (French CE)	P. Brown
01/13	50	Bartlett		M. Oyler
01/19	615	Pittsburg	Rt. 3	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
01/21	50	Colebrook		B. Crowley
01/25	42	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook River	A. Robbins
01/25	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	C. Gordon
01/28	40	Milan	Chickwolnepy Rd.	K. Dube
01/28	60	Sargents Purchase	Mt. Isolation	S. Schulte
01/29	2	Middleton	Route 153	H. Grant
02/11	23	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
02/14	35	Dummer	Pontook Reservoir	J. Scott, B. Crowley
02/16	20	Jefferson	Pondicherry NWR, Cherry Pond	P. Hunt
02/19	50	Livermore	Tripoli Rd. to Mt. Osceola summit	J. Halibozek
02/27	28	Gorham		W. O'Brien
Evening Grosbeak				
12/02	2	Effingham	Watts WS	P. Brown
12/18	2	Carroll	Bretton Woods	L. Bergum
02/13	15	Milan	Chickwolnepy Rd.	K. Dube
02/22	3	Gorham		W. O'Brien

Christmas Bird Count Summary 2011-2012

by David Deifik

This year's Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) were held between December 14, 2011 and January 5, 2012. There are now 19 counts whose center is within New Hampshire borders. Although centered in Vermont, the Barnet and Saxtons River CBCs overlap into New Hampshire as well. Two of the New Hampshire counts have substantial overlap into neighboring states. The Hanover-Norwich CBC extends into Vermont and the Isles of Shoals CBC substantially extends into Maine. Three other counts have minor overlap into neighboring states as well, those being Errol-Umbagog and North Conway into Maine and a tiny bit of Nashua into Massachusetts. Of the New Hampshire counts, all but the Grafton-Bristol Count were run this year. Sightings from the New Hampshire portion of the Saxton's River and Barnet, Vermont counts do not appear on the CBC table.



American Coot by Clifford Otto, 12/5/11, Eel Pond, Rye, NH.

Total species across all counts were 137, one species greater than last year's total. One species, a **Northern Parula** seen on the Coastal CBC, was new to a New Hampshire count this year. This brings the total of species ever seen to 247. The last new species for the state was in 2006, that being a Clay-colored Sparrow seen on the Concord CBC. There were ten species that set new record high counts for the state, two more than the totals for the last two years. Seven of these new records came from the Coastal CBC. There were 78 individual count high records this year, far surpassing the 48 from last year. There were 13 species new to their respective counts. This compares quite favorably to the past few years.

With the count period experiencing temperatures almost five degrees higher than normal, one could expect interesting waterfowl records. For our most numerous ducks, Mallard numbers were just about average. American Black Duck was lower by over 20% from its previous five year average. With extensive open water inland, good waterfowl numbers were seen there. Hooded Merganser records were more than double their five year average with two counts setting new highs. Common Merganser was up by more than 50% as well. Two inland counts, Keene and Pittsburg, both had new records for Red-breasted Merganser. This is an unusual inland species at any time of the year. Inland Common Loon records were unusually numerous with a total of 29 tallied. Unusual, though not first records, were inland reports for Horned Grebe on one count and Red-necked Grebe on three inland counts.

As for raptors, Bald Eagles bounced back from last year's total of 40 birds with 53 birds. This matches the record high previously set in 2008. They were widely distributed with reports from 13 counts, two of those new count highs. As late as 1999, state totals were in the single digits!

In what is now an increasingly common occurrence, no count recorded American Kestrel. Last year's Keene single record was the only one in the last five years. As recently as eleven years ago, American Kestrel was at least seen in the high single digits.

One of the most outstanding records was the new state high count for **American Coot** of 160 birds seen on the Coastal CBC. This is only the third year coot has ever been recorded, all from the Coastal count with the previous high count being 23 individuals!

The Coastal CBC broke the previous record of 16 it set for Eastern Screech-Owl last year with 17 birds this year. Prior to this, the highest count was six birds! The Coastal count also scored a new state high for Northern Saw-whet Owl with five birds. As far as woodpeckers go, Pileated numbers were again above average. Hanover set a new state high of 21, breaking its own record of 20 set in 2009. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker has only been recorded 12 times previously, however, it was outstanding this year with four counts recording a record total of six birds in the state. For North Conway and Sandwich these were first count records.

With the failure of the acorn crop, one might expect there to be an impact on birds heavily dependent on acorns in the winter. Blue Jay is such a species and indeed this seemed to be the case. Overall numbers were just half of the average of the last five years. Contrasting this poor showing was the outstanding numbers of American Crows seen this year. The state total was more than double the average seen over the last five years. Eight counts set new count highs as well. Eastern Bluebird did well with three inland counts recording new highs and a new record for the Littleton CBC. Overall numbers were almost 40% higher than the recent five year average as well. The total for American Robin was about average, but it was quite widespread being recorded on every count (even Isles of Shoals!) this year. Six counts set new count records. Always notable on the CBCs, Gray Catbird was seen on three counts, with one count week record as well.



The Ovenbird that overwintered at a Derry, NH residence and was in the Manchester count circle. Photo by Barbara Horton – see also her comments in Field Notes.

The outstanding bird for the count would have to be a **Northern Parula** recorded on the Coastal CBC. This is a new state record and one of very few records for the whole winter season. Other notable warbler records include an **Ovenbird** on the Manchester count, a first for the count and only the fourth ever for the state. Also notable was Keene's first **Common Yellowthroat**.

Dickcissel is rarely reported on the CBC, and the two from the Coastal count are the first records since 2006. There were five *Icterid* species seen this year.

Nashua set a new state high for Red-winged Blackbird with an impressive 325 birds seen overall. The five year average has only been 43 birds for the whole state. Rusty Blackbird was seen on three counts with Nashua setting its count record. **Common Grackle** and **Baltimore Oriole**, seen on the Coastal count, are notable as well.

As for irruptive finches, Pine Grosbeak and Common Redpoll were virtually absent. The one lone Evening Grosbeak seen this year was somewhat alarming. With one exception, we have gotten 150 or better in the last five years. Pine Siskin was present in numbers greater than three times its recent average. Though largely absent from the counts in the coastal plain, numbers were good on counts at higher elevations and farther north. Errol, Pittsburg, and Sandwich all had count highs for the species.

Individual Count Highlights

Nashua-Hollis

- New state count high: Red-winged Blackbird
- Count high: Mute Swan, Hooded Merganser, Peregrine Falcon, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Rusty Blackbird

Peregrine Falcon was seen for the third time. Pied-billed Grebe and Chipping Sparrow were seen for the fourth time.

Peterborough-Hancock

- Count high: American Black Duck, Common Merganser, Bald Eagle, American Crow, Winter Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing Red-tailed Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Common Raven, and Red-winged Blackbird were all seen at their previous high counts.

Keene

- First count record: Red-breasted Merganser and Common Yellowthroat
- Count high: Ring-billed Gull, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Winter Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, American Goldfinch

Gray Catbird was seen for the second time. An American Pipit was seen during count week. This is the first time this species has been seen on the count.

Coastal New Hampshire

- First state record: Northern Parula
- New state count high: Lesser Scaup, Surf Scoter, Red-throated Loon, American Coot, Eastern Screech-Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Lincoln's Sparrow
- Count high: Wild Turkey, Turkey Vulture, Chipping Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird

Redhead was seen for the fourth time.

Isles of Shoals

- Count High: Ring-billed Gull

Greater Scaup and Peregrine Falcon were seen for the third time.

Lee-Durham

- Count high: Long-tailed Duck, Common Raven
Merlin was seen for the third time.

Concord

- Count high: Common Merganser, Common Loon, Red-bellied Woodpecker
Clay-colored Sparrow was seen for the second time in the state.

Laconia

- Count high: Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Crow, American Goldfinch
Red-necked Grebe was seen at its previous high count (3).

Hanover-Norwich

- First count record: Bufflehead
- New state count high: Pileated Woodpecker (for the second year in a row)
- Count high: Mallard, American Robin, Northern Mockingbird

Baker Valley

Hooded Merganser was seen during count week and is a first for the count.

Littleton

- First count record: Eastern Bluebird
- Count high: American Crow, Tufted Titmouse

Errol-Umbagog

- Count high: American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Pine Siskin
Cedar Waxwing was seen for the third time.



Gray Jay (left) and Boreal Chickadee by Len Medlock during the Pittsburg CBC, 12/22/11.

Pittsburg

- New state count high: Golden-crowned Kinglet
 - First count record: Red-breasted Merganser, Great Black-backed Gull, Cedar Waxwing
 - Count high: Wild Turkey, Bald Eagle, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskin
- Belted Kingfisher was seen for the fourth time.

North Conway

- First count record: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker
 - Count high: European Starling
- Red-bellied Woodpecker, Eastern Bluebird, and Eastern Towhee were seen for the second time.

Lake Sunapee

- Count high: Canada Goose, Bufflehead (second record), Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Horned Grebe (second record), Red-necked Grebe (second record), Red-bellied Woodpecker, American Crow, American Robin

Manchester

- First count record: Ovenbird (fourth state record)
 - Count high: Pileated Woodpecker
- Bufflehead was seen for the second time.

Sandwich

- First count record: Green-winged Teal, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
 - Count high: American Black Duck, Common Goldeneye (second record), Common Merganser, Ring-billed Gull, Belted Kingfisher (second record), Northern Flicker (third record), American Crow, American Robin
- A count week Northern Pintail is a first for the count.

AMC-Crawford

- New state count high: Spruce Grouse
 - First count record: House Finch
 - Count high: Ruffed Grouse, Mourning Dove (third record), American Crow, Brown Creeper (third record), American Robin (third record), American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Pine Siskin (second record), American Goldfinch (third record)
- Purple Finch and Common Redpoll were seen for the third time.

112th Christmas Bird Count: Dec. 14, 2011 - Jan. 5, 2012

Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Isl	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak
Canada Goose	468	334	216	3342	8	1000	273	245	7	CW
Mute Swan	6	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gadwall	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
Eurasian Wigeon	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
American Wigeon	-	-	-	11	-	-	-	-	-	-
American Black Duck	47	10	24	1200	30	174	23	19	6	-
Mallard	432	46	180	998	-	524	412	606	625	-
Northern Shoveler	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Pintail	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Green-winged Teal	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Redhead	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ring-necked Duck	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Greater Scaup	-	-	-	642	2	-	-	-	-	-
Lesser Scaup	-	-	-	**26	-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Eider	-	-	-	58	635	-	-	-	-	-
Harlequin Duck	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Surf Scoter	-	-	-	**289	20	-	-	-	-	-
White-winged Scoter	-	-	2	357	55	-	-	2	1	-
Black Scoter	-	-	-	100	5	-	-	-	-	-
Long-tailed Duck	-	-	-	208	50	2	-	-	-	-
Bufflehead	-	-	-	110	-	170	-	-	*1	-
Common Goldeneye	-	-	-	163	14	29	36	311	13	-
Barrow's Goldeneye	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-
Hooded Merganser	12	87	75	25	-	28	45	151	58	CW
Common Merganser	2	48	48	-	-	5	60	93	80	-
Red-br. Merganser	-	-	*2	263	-	18	-	-	-	-
Ring-necked Pheasant	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ruffed Grouse	-	12	2	1	-	2	3	2	5	1
Spruce Grouse	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wild Turkey	54	65	16	189	-	163	5	11	50	4
Red-throated Loon	-	-	-	**70	3	-	-	-	-	-
Common Loon	-	-	1	78	25	5	2	13	CW	-
Pied-billed Grebe	1	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
Horned Grebe	-	-	-	41	1	-	-	-	-	-
Red-necked Grebe	-	1	-	40	-	-	-	3	-	-
Northern Gannet	-	-	-	23	6	-	-	-	-	-
Double-cr. Cormorant	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-
Great Cormorant	-	-	-	30	12	-	-	-	-	-
Great Blue Heron	6	-	-	21	-	4	2	1	CW	-
Turkey Vulture	-	-	-	17	-	15	-	-	-	-
Bald Eagle	-	6	2	8	-	10	4	6	7	-
Northern Harrier	-	-	-	4	-	1	-	-	-	-
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	1	-	4	-	2	-	1	-	-
Cooper's Hawk	7	-	2	6	-	2	2	2	3	-
Northern Goshawk	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-tailed Hawk	30	8	6	43	-	31	16	11	19	-
Rough-legged Hawk	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Buteo sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Merlin	1	-	CW	1	-	-	-	-	-	-

Lit	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
CW	-	-	-	64	27	17	-	6001
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
-	-	-	-	13	4	43	-	1593
-	7	3	25	73	122	48	1	4102
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	8
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	644
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	693
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	309
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	417
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	105
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	260
-	-	-	-	7	2	-	-	290
-	4	-	-	7	40	6	-	623
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	1	-	71	10	9	-	572
-	6	11	-	76	5	403	-	837
-	-	*1	-	-	-	-	-	284
-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	4
10	14	15	5	2	-	4	6	84
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**5	5
75	20	78	-	18	-	6	1	755
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	73
2	-	2	-	3	2	4	-	137
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	47
-	-	-	-	2	-	CW	-	46
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	42
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32
CW	1	4	1	1	1	2	-	53
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	14
-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	25
1	-	-	1	-	-	CW	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
CW	-	-	1	1	7	1	-	174
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2

112th Christmas Bird Count (continued)

Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Isl	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak
Peregrine Falcon	2	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
American Coot	-	-	-	**160	-	-	-	-	-	-
Purple Sandpiper	-	-	-	69	93	-	-	-	-	-
Dunlin	-	-	-	13	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wilson's Snipe	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
American Woodcock	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bonaparte's Gull	-	-	-	180	5	11	-	-	-	-
Ring-billed Gull	100	8	43	766	6	494	58	155	1	-
Herring Gull	36	2	4	648	150	4000	4	8	4	-
Iceland Gull	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	-
Lesser Bla.-bac. Gul	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Glaucous Gull	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-
Great Bla.-bac. Gull	32	-	-	109	50	891	2	6	CW	-
Bla.-leg. Kittiwake	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Razorbill	-	-	-	26	13	-	-	-	-	-
Black Guillemot	-	-	-	10	10	-	-	-	-	-
Rock Pigeon	672	137	410	867	-	311	618	121	660	2
Mourning Dove	638	127	145	493	-	271	239	126	328	8
Eastern Screech-owl	-	-	-	**17	-	1	-	-	-	-
Great Horned Owl	-	-	CW	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Snowy Owl	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Barred Owl	1	1	1	7	-	1	1	-	2	-
N. Saw-whet Owl	-	-	-	**5	-	-	-	1	-	-
Belted Kingfisher	5	1	-	5	-	3	CW	3	-	-
Red-bel. Woodpecker	25	8	12	20	-	16	13	4	1	-
Ylw.-bel. Sapsucker	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Downy Woodpecker	109	89	60	151	-	90	79	37	88	4
Hairy Woodpecker	39	42	15	30	-	41	43	23	58	4
Bla.-bac. Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Flicker	8	-	1	23	-	9	1	-	2	-
Pileated Woodpecker	5	11	7	6	-	7	9	6	**21	-
Northern Shrike	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	1	1	-
Gray Jay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Blue Jay	225	208	284	278	-	150	181	170	370	52
American Crow	268	457	538	1109	-	343	578	4322	3200	24
Common Raven	6	60	6	-	-	12	3	8	40	-
Horned Lark	-	1	13	91	-	45	-	-	-	-
Black-cap. Chickadee	490	647	449	935	-	1018	573	716	1476	77
Boreal Chickadee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tufted Titmouse	183	127	81	327	-	368	143	86	137	14
Red-br. Nuthatch	2	43	11	3	-	5	-	5	26	-
White-br. Nuthatch	159	161	66	202	-	204	123	75	156	10
Brown Creeper	9	10	3	17	-	10	4	14	21	-
Carolina Wren	13	3	2	9	-	4	5	2	8	-
Winter Wren	1	2	4	5	-	2	1	1	-	-
Golden-cr. Kinglet	7	52	54	18	-	20	22	18	30	3
Eastern Bluebird	121	22	36	117	-	65	28	7	CW	-
Hermit Thrush	2	-	1	9	-	3	1	CW	-	-
American Robin	562	795	487	1267	1	339	1053	731	476	1
Gray Catbird	-	-	1	2	-	1	-	-	CW	-

Lit	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	160
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	162
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	196
-	-	-	-	1	139	8	-	1779
7	-	-	-	-	11	CW	-	4874
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
13	-	*1	-	-	4	-	-	1108
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	39
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20
108	-	6	182	77	220	18	-	4409
57	17	5	123	103	46	180	13	2919
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	17
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	20
-	-	-	1	2	4	1	-	107
-	-	-	*2	-	-	*2	-	6
15	8	12	28	25	22	26	1	844
11	18	9	40	10	6	34	4	427
-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	*1	-	-	3	-	48
6	7	6	3	1	5	4	CW	104
-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	11
-	8	26	-	-	-	-	3	37
104	25	49	173	90	39	58	25	2481
223	43	61	135	218	2034	214	19	13786
25	19	56	20	7	1	7	7	277
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150
473	632	883	409	288	67	349	136	9618
-	3	66	-	-	-	-	10	79
9	-	-	18	19	22	32	-	1566
47	193	267	20	10	-	27	15	674
14	1	1	38	25	13	51	1	1300
7	12	3	6	6	1	17	7	147
-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	48
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
16	96	**267	42	19	3	19	6	692
*2	-	-	8	-	4	6	-	416
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
31	1	7	28	252	17	427	55	6530
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4

112th Christmas Bird Count (continued)

Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Isl	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak
N. Mockingbird	51	1	6	66	1	26	20	4	9	-
European Starling	843	334	222	5102	19	1008	720	342	960	CW
American Pipit	-	-	CW	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bohemian Waxwing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cedar Waxwing	829	399	381	192	-	92	130	149	384	-
waxwing sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Parula	-	-	-	+1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ylw.-rumped Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ovenbird	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Yellowthroat	-	-	*1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eastern Towhee	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Am. Tree Sparrow	90	32	73	162	-	102	85	15	90	-
Chipping Sparrow	1	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	-
Clay-colored Sparrow	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Savannah Sparrow	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fox Sparrow	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Song Sparrow	51	2	8	92	6	17	14	3	1	-
Lincoln's Sparrow	-	-	-	**3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Swamp Sparrow	-	-	-	6	-	1	-	-	-	-
White-thr. Sparrow	42	14	15	128	1	32	24	3	8	-
Dark-eyed Junco	675	590	1052	430	-	577	456	314	583	58
Snow Bunting	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	CW	-
Northern Cardinal	150	52	90	241	8	159	103	31	64	-
Painted Bunting	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-
Dickcissel	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-winged Blackbird	**186	4	-	94	-	2	1	5	30	-
Rusty Blackbird	15	-	-	1	-	-	5	-	-	-
Common Grackle	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Br.-headed Cowbird	-	-	-	7	-	2	-	-	-	-
Baltimore Oriole	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pine Grosbeak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Purple Finch	1	32	28	-	-	7	3	14	63	CW
House Finch	170	1	83	286	-	120	105	76	101	-
Red Crossbill	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whi.-wing. Crossbill	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Common Redpoll	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pine Siskin	1	70	38	3	-	-	3	27	260	79
American Goldfinch	627	455	469	819	-	543	321	823	812	89
Evening Grosbeak	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
House Sparrow	1082	134	277	1930	-	622	236	235	319	-
Number of Species	60	54	56	113	33	70	55	56	49	17
Number of Participants	37	40	29	37	21	26	23	25	27	2

Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 137

CW = Count Week
 Nsh = Nashua-Hollis (12/17/2011)
 Pet = Peterborough-Hancock (12/17/2011)
 Kee = Keene (12/18/2011)
 Cst = Seacoast (12/17/2011)
 Isl = Isles-of-Shoals (12/31/2011)

Lee = Lee-Durham (12/26/2011)
 Con = Concord (12/18/2011)
 Lac = Laconia-New-Hampton (1/12/2012)
 Han = Hanover-Norwich (1/1/2012)
 Bak = Baker-Valley (12/18/2011)

Lit	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	192
22	19	53	412	349	347	170	-	10922
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	9	-	-	CW	-	9
-	7	1	4	326	-	60	-	2954
-	-	70	-	-	-	-	-	70
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	4
7	16	4	47	21	-	5	3	752
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	196
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
-	-	-	-	5	8	1	-	281
23	49	29	207	133	63	187	82	5508
-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	6
3	1	-	4	14	33	6	-	959
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	325
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
39	58	169	1	11	-	7	1	434
-	-	-	9	-	25	-	1	977
-	9	-	2	-	-	8	-	20
-	100	37	-	-	-	5	2	145
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
80	1714	1833	278	17	-	179	162	4744
126	199	102	427	322	121	499	85	6839
CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	1
1	-	-	28	49	102	-	-	5015
30	33	38	41	43	41	48	26	
9	13	14	44	12	7	21	11	

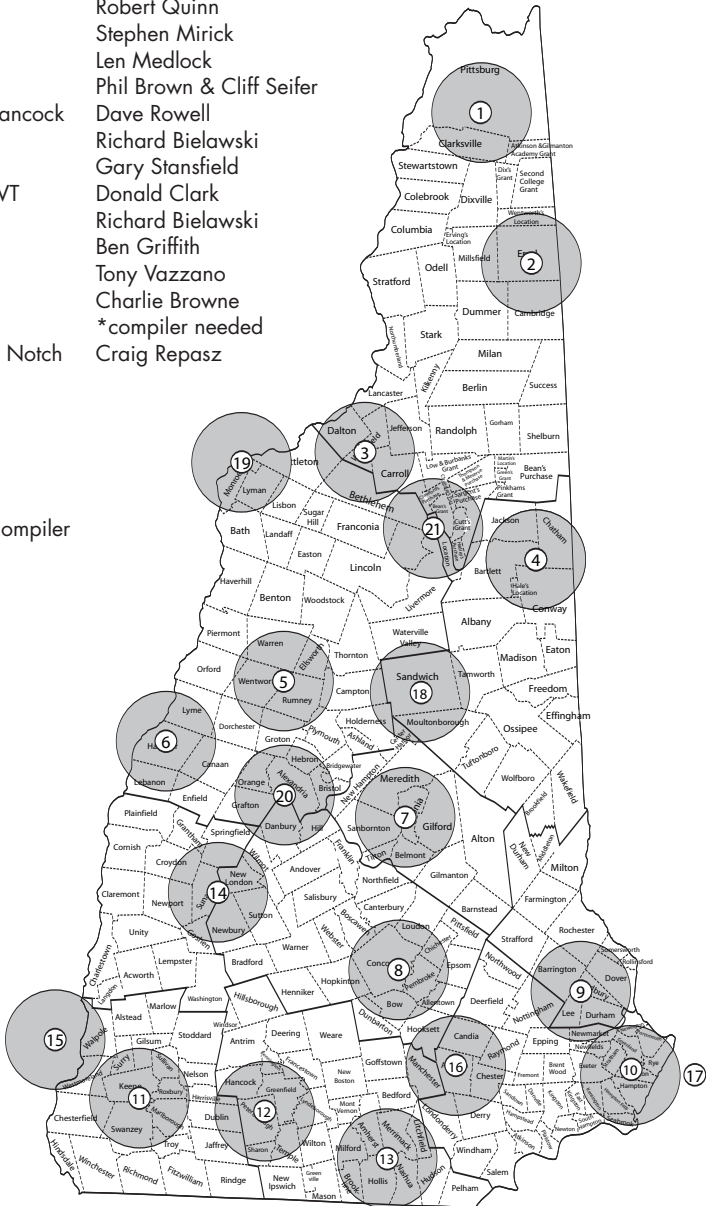
Lit = Littleton (12/18/2011)
 Erl = Errol-Umbagog (12/23/2011)
 Pit = Pittsburg (12/22/2011)
 Cnw = North-Conway (12/30/2011)
 Sun = Lake-Sunapee (12/17/2011)
 Man = Manchester (1/1/2012)
 San = Sandwich (12/29/2011)
 Amc = AMC-Crawford (12/17/2011)

+ = New Species to the State
 * = New Species to count
 ** = New count high for the state
New individual count high

Christmas Bird Count Compilers

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Pittsburg | David Govatski |
| 2 | Errol-Umbagog | Chris Martin |
| 3 | Littleton | David Govatski |
| 4 | North Conway | Tin Mtn. Conservation Ctr. |
| 5 | Baker Valley | Steve Rounds |
| 6 | Hanover-Norwich | Walter Ellison & Nancy Martin |
| 7 | Laconia-New Hampton | Pam Hunt |
| 8 | Concord | Robert Quinn |
| 9 | Lee-Durham | Stephen Mirick |
| 10 | Coastal | Len Medlock |
| 11 | Keene | Phil Brown & Cliff Seifer |
| 12 | Peterborough-Hancock | Dave Rowell |
| 13 | Nashua-Hollis | Richard Bielawski |
| 14 | Lake Sunapee | Gary Stansfield |
| 15 | Saxton's River, VT | Donald Clark |
| 16 | Manchester | Richard Bielawski |
| 17 | Isles of Shoals | Ben Griffith |
| 18 | Sandwich | Tony Vazzano |
| 19 | Barnet, VT | Charlie Browne |
| 20 | Grafton-Bristol | * compiler needed |
| 21 | AMC Crawford Notch | Craig Repasz |

* Grafton-Bristol compiler needed.



2011 Isles of Shoals Christmas Bird Count

by Ben Griffith, Shoals CBC Compiler

All photos were taken by Len Medlock during the Isles of Shoals CBC on 12/31/11.

The Isles of Shoals Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was scheduled to take place on Sunday, December 18, 2011. On Friday night, the forecast for the count looked ideal, with flat seas and calm winds. Unfortunately, the forecast degraded rapidly, and by Saturday afternoon the forecast had changed so much that the count was cancelled for the fifth time in six years. Rescheduling this count is always difficult, but I posted an inquiry to the NHBirds and Maine Birds e-mail lists to gauge interest, and quickly found myself with a half-full boat for the weekend of December 31. Within 24 hours,



Snowy Owl perched near the dock on Star Island in full view of the CBC birders as the Gulf Challenger approached.



CBCers on the Star Island pier.

I had secured the boat and was preparing a trip for New Year's weekend.

December 31 rolled around and we were met with rain and moderate seas, but 21 birders still braved the weather in hopes of seeing alcids, owls and more. The seas made spotting alcids difficult, but we managed to see 13 Razorbills and 10 Black Guillemots, although the latter was a record low number for the count. As we approached Star Island, participants were rewarded with a spectacular Snowy Owl waiting next to the dock. Rain should have made land-birds difficult to find, but we managed to tally more Northern Cardinals on Star Island than any previous year, and found such island "rarities" as Northern Mockingbird (third count record) and American Robin (first count record since 1999), as well as two more Snowy Owls. We circled the islands, adding another Snowy Owl to the total before working our way back to shore.



Black-legged Kittiwake (top) and Glaucous Gull lured in with hundreds of gulls by the chum in the boat's wake.



The deteriorating conditions made the usual trip to Boone Island unadvisable so we headed back towards shore at a leisurely pace. On the way back, gulls were the stars; everyone had stunning views of a third year Glaucous Gull that engorged itself on cat food behind the boat while the occasional Black-legged Kittiwake drifted overhead to assess the situation. Chumming with cat food was an experiment that turned out to be extremely successful and won out over the usual stale bread. Upon reaching shore, we paused briefly for a group photo, before racing to our cars to avoid the steadily increasing rain.



Lauren Kras holding up an empty bag of the successful cat food chum.

Do Birds Have Teeth?

by Brenda Sens

This excellent photograph by Len Medlock clearly shows ridged edges that look very much like teeth on the inside of the beak of a Snow Goose. What is this all about? Do birds have teeth and, if so, why? Known as lamellae, these ridges are characteristic of the beaks of geese, swans, ducks, and a few other waterbirds. They are excellently described by John K. Terres in *The Audubon Society Encyclopedia of North American Birds* as: "... tiny transverse, tooth-like ridges just inside the tomium, or cutting edge of the bill" (p. 585). Using Terres, Frank Gill, Christopher Leahy, and Joe Van Wormer as sources, I learned that these comb-like ridges serve two purposes. Not only do they help waterbirds to rip and cut the vegetation that is an important part of their diet, but they serve as a sieve as well. By pressing its tongue against the roof of its mouth while feeding under water, the bird forces water out of the sides of its bill while keeping solids, insects and fish, inside for swallowing. This is similar to the way whales use baleen to strain fish and small food items from a mouthful of water. Now I wonder, does a chicken really have lips?



Snow Goose by Len Medlock, 1/18/12,
Odiorne Point SP, Rye, NH.

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Where to Bird

A "Superbowl" Strategy for Coastal Birding

by Stephen R. Mirick



The Dickcissel on Wallis Road in Rye, NH that the "4th and Longspurs" were looking for at 6:45am. Photo by Len Medlock, 1/15/12.

It's now 6:45 am on a Saturday morning in late January (2012) and we're standing outside the car on Wallis Road in Rye. The four of us had been up for several hours and we'd been "officially" birding since 5:00 am. We know the dawn strategy is key. There have been several "5-Pointers" scouted and the first team to record these for the day gets three extra bonus points. As we wait for the sun to come up, we also patiently await the first birds to come to the feeder we are watching. We also wonder if we made the right decision. Should we have gone for the amazing overwintering Cape May Warbler first? The Dickcissel has been regular at this feeder, but will we have to wait long? Will it show up at all? How long should we wait? These are all key questions that would run through our minds all day and the answers can make the difference between winning and losing. This is the Superbowl of Birding!

The "Superbowl of Birding" competition is an event organized by the Joppa Flats Education Center of Massachusetts Audubon. Birders from all over the northeastern United States organize their teams and travel to the area to try to see as many species as they can in Essex County, MA and/or Rockingham County, NH within a 12 hour period from 5:00 am to 5:00 pm. Although most teams only compete in Essex County, MA, a small number have regularly competed in the Rockingham County, NH only category. The event is meant to be a fun competition in the middle of the winter and birders meet at the end of the day to socialize, compare results, eat pizza, and hopefully win one of the many prizes contributed by the many sponsors of the event!

My team is called the “4th and Longspurs” and we have now competed in this event every year since the Superbowl was first run in 2004. The number of birds we’ve recorded has ranged from a high of 81 species to as low as 63 species. Knowing the best strategy is important, but luck can often be the more important factor.

In last winter’s article (*New Hampshire Bird Records* Vol. 29, #4), Phil Brown presented the first part in this two-part series of articles highlighting winter birding and the Superbowl of Birding. He focused on where to find birds inland and around Great Bay. In this article, I will focus on finding the key species along New Hampshire’s seacoast.

The coast is a key area during the Superbowl. In fact, the tremendous success that Pam Hunt and the “Twitchers in the Rye” team (which covers only Rye, NH) have had is testament to how many species can be seen from just one coastal town. They average around 58 species from just this single town! There are 14 species that I call the “Must See 14” coastal species. They are all fairly common and are unique to the coast during winter. These include Common and Red-throated Loon, Great Cormorant, Horned and Red-necked Grebe, all three species of scoters, Common Eider, Long-tailed Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, and Purple Sandpiper. Add to this a long list of “might get” birds that are most easily found along the coast, such as Dunlin, Sanderling, Barrow’s Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Bonaparte’s, Iceland, and Glaucous Gulls, Black-legged Kittiwake, Razorbill, Black Guillemot, Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Great Blue Heron, and several others. You now have a good understanding of how important the coast is for winning the Superbowl!

Although there are only 18 miles of New Hampshire coastline, it always seems that there is never enough time to cover it, and sometimes it seems like it takes forever to drive its length when you have limited time. This was the case back in 2008 when I played it too close to the wire, and tried to rush down the coastline at dusk hoping for a Short-eared Owl, only to get to the compilation (in Newburyport, MA) too late and our team was disqualified! A few strategies that need to be considered for birding the coast are as follows.

Scouting. Scouting in the days and weeks before the Superbowl can help to locate any rarities that might be present, but it also lets you know where some of the common species might be congregating. Wintering ocean birds can be territorial and locating both rare and common birds before the event can save you time. The key is to get as many of the common species as possible in the shortest amount of time. Also, make sure you get those “Must See 14”!

Direction. The coast is most often and most easily birded while traveling from south (Seabrook) to north (New Castle and Portsmouth). Traveling in this direction, you have the sun at your back and you don’t need to cross the street to access the many pull-offs. Sometimes traveling from north to south, however, may be your best bet, especially if you are finishing the day along the coast and need to get to the compilation before 5:30 or be disqualified!

Timing. Since both inland and coastal areas need to be covered, you need to decide which to cover first. One of the biggest wastes of time on a Superbowl is driving between stops, so keeping a direct route is usually the best strategy. I like to bird the coast later in the afternoon. At this time, the sun is at your back and birds are more

easily picked out. Besides, it is often best to hit the inland feeder birds first thing in the morning when they are most active. This can backfire, however, depending on weather and sea conditions. On the 2012 Superbowl, our team ran into a seabreeze that cost us the victory as many species of ocean birds (and two of the “Must See 14”!) could not be located in the high seas.

Where to stop. A big advantage of the New Hampshire coast over many other coastal areas in New England is the direct access to the shoreline along much of Route 1A. Many species of ocean birds can be spotted without even getting out of your car! If you are unfamiliar with the coast, or even if you are, I wrote a useful guide called “*Birding the New Hampshire Seacoast and Great Bay*”. It is available from New Hampshire Audubon at their store in Concord and on the web site (www.nhaidubon.org). It has maps and location names for some of the strange sounding birding spots located on New Hampshire’s coast. Below are a few of the more popular spots (from south to north):

Seabrook Beach – Over one mile of beach frontage located south of the Hampton Harbor bridge. There are many access locations including walkways from Haverhill Street and Hooksett Avenue. Permit parking restrictions are waived during the winter months. Scan the beach for Sanderlings. The north end by the harbor inlet can also be good for Dunlin and Purple Sandpiper roosting on the rocks. Scan offshore for Horned Grebe and Red-throated Loon among the other sea ducks. Northern Gannets are sometimes best seen offshore from here.

Hampton Harbor – Best birded from the Yankee Fisherman’s Cooperative/Seabrook Fishing area south of the Hampton Harbor bridge. Key bird species: Dunlin are sometimes seen on the flats at low tide; Iceland and Glaucous Gull are sometimes found with other gulls on the flats or around the parking area just to the south of the Coop. Scan the salt marshes for a possible Northern Harrier or Snowy Owl.

Hampton Beach State Park – May not be accessible if there is snow or ice. There’s no big benefit to walking out to the beach unless unusual birds have been scouted there. The key species include Horned Lark, Snow Bunting, and rarely Lapland Longspur which are often found in the grassy parking area. Occasionally, a Merlin can be seen chasing the flock. A thorough scan of the dunes, rocks, and surrounding buildings can sometimes locate a Snowy Owl in winters when they are present, such as the winter of 2011-12.

Great Boar’s Head – The south side is accessed from the sidewalk and median strip parking at north end of Hampton Beach. In recent years, this spot has been good for Barrow’s Goldeneye, but is also good for Black Scoters and sometimes alcids. Try to locate the water tower off Route 101. Sometimes a Peregrine Falcon can be seen roosting on top of the upper railing.

Bicentennial Park – Located at the intersection of Route 1A and Route 27 at north end of North Beach in Hampton. This is the only reliable bathroom on the New Hampshire coast in winter and it **is heated!** The cove to the north (Plaice Cove) can be good for Bonaparte’s Gull and possibly shorebirds along the beach and rocks. Black Scoters, Red-necked Grebes and possibly alcids can also be found here.

Little Boar's Head – Bird from a large pull-off at the bluff overlook of the ocean just north of North Hampton State Beach – it's not legal, but rarely enforced for a quick stop. The view is sometimes good for setting up a spotting scope and scanning for pelagic species such as Razorbills, Northern Gannets, Black Guillemots, and Black-legged Kittiwakes.

Jenness State Beach – Scan from the parking area or atop the stone berm across from Eel Pond. Search up and down the beach for Sanderlings and possibly Dunlin and white-winged gulls. Eel Pond is almost always frozen at this date, but the surrounding vegetation occasionally holds a Northern Shrike or an overwintering Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Rye Harbor vicinity – Scan the harbor for any ducks or white-winged gulls. Scan the adjacent marshes and creeks for Great Blue Heron, Hooded Merganser, and Belted Kingfisher. The shoreline just north of Ragged Neck (Rye Harbor State Park) can sometimes be good for rarities such as “Ipswich” Savannah Sparrow or American Pipit, a five-point bird that is sometimes recorded on game day.

Seal Rocks to Pulpit Rocks – The rocky coastline north of Wallis Sands State Beach offers several pull-offs for northbound traffic. Scan the rocks for Purple Sandpipers and look offshore for Razorbills and Black Guillemots.



*The Cape May Warbler
that spent the
winter of 2011-12
at Odiorne Point State
Park, Rye, NH.
Photo by
Stephen R. Mirick,
2/10/12.*

Odiorne Point State Park – The long trails in the park are often a “time sink” and are not worth the effort during the Superbowl, particularly if there is much snow or ice. You can spend a lot of time walking and not see many birds. Sometimes, however, a good landbird is scouted out close to the center or parking area and will linger for the Superbowl. This has been the case for a rare overwintering Palm Warbler in 2006 and an even rarer Cape May Warbler in 2012. The offshore areas near the center can also be good for a wide variety of ocean birds.

New Castle – Although it takes a bit of time to drive around the Route 1B loop at the mouth of the Portsmouth Harbor, it may be a good idea to bird this area if there is time. The area is best birded from Great Island Common, which offers excellent views

of the entrance to the harbor and has been one of the better spots for Razorbills and Red-throated Loons in recent years.

Portsmouth Harbor & Vicinity – The inner harbor area can sometimes be good for overwintering dabbling ducks. Search the harbor from Route 1B or from Peirce’s Island. Also, check nearby areas such as South Mill Pond or Sagamore Creek. Northern Pintail have been fairly regular with the Mallard flocks, but also keep an eye out for possible Gadwall, Northern Shoveler, or Green-winged Teal. Scan the bridges and buildings for Peregrine Falcon which nest in the area. Don’t forget to record the Mute Swans which are often wintering here. They can be hard to find elsewhere.

The month of January is a tough time of year for birders as the Christmas Bird Counts have ended and the winter gets more snowy and cold. There seems little reason to bird at all! But the Superbowl provides a wonderful outlet and gives us a good excuse to “dig” for birds we wouldn’t otherwise search for. It also has provided some valuable data for mid-wintering bird populations. My wife and I enjoy it and we hope to encourage more participants from New Hampshire. I hope we’ll see you next year!

Steve Mirick has been participating in the Superbowl of Birding since its first year in 2004. He has three times won the “Rockingham County Rocks” award, which is awarded to the team that gains the highest number of points in Rockingham County, and once captured the “Director’s Cup” award for the highest species total in both Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Steve is the former Fall Editor for New Hampshire Bird Records and author of Birding the New Hampshire Seacoast and Great Bay.

Winter 2011-12 Field Notes

compiled by Robert A. Quinn

Dovekie versus Red-tailed Hawk

by Cliff Otto

I had an unusual experience at the NH coast on the morning of December 5, 2011. I had stopped at Seal Rocks in Rye to check for birds on the ocean and when I was returning to my car, I saw a small black and white bird bounce a couple of times on Route 1A. It then hobbled “one-leggedly” across the road and settled under a bush in front of #871. It was readily apparent that it was a Dovekie. I grabbed my camera, took some pictures, and then headed up to the Seacoast Science Center to ask them who to contact about an injured bird. They put me on the phone to the Center for Wildlife, who told me how to proceed. The people at the Seacoast Science Center gave me a box, a towel, and some soft paper, and I headed back down the road. When I returned to the bird, I found it had left the shelter of the bush and was more or less in the open. I took my eye off of it to take the box out of the car, but when I turned back, the Dovekie was gone. Huh? I looked behind the nearby bushes and then I heard some crows freaking out. I glanced towards them and found a Red-tailed Hawk atop a



Photos by Cliff Otto of the Dovekie and the Red-tailed Hawk that made a meal of it, 12/5/11.

utility pole on Neptune Drive strewn feathers left and right...Dovekie feathers. If I had been there two or three seconds sooner, I probably would have interrupted the hawk. Alas...but the hawk was probably pleased.

Young Hawks Can't be Fussy

by Dan Hubbard

An immature Cooper's Hawk patrolled my yard in Rochester for several months starting in December, 2011. On February 20, 2012, I looked out my back window and saw the hawk standing on the ground, eating something. Expecting it to be a yard bird of some sort (hopefully one of my burgeoning population of 100 House Sparrows), (see Barb Horton's comments! RAQ) I grabbed my binoculars to check more closely and, to my surprise, it was eating a Short-tailed Shrew. Most animals won't touch them (they're pretty rank and have a mildly poisonous bite), but I suppose hawks can't smell. The Cooper's was plucking the fur as it does feathers. Because shrews' fur is very thin and fine, I thought this would take forever, however, the hawk dispatched it rather quickly. As of March 19, 2012, the hawk is still a presence in my neighborhood. I have to wonder if it has been responsible for the end of protracted yard visits this winter from a Clay-colored Sparrow, Carolina Wren, and Northern Mockingbird.



Dan Hubbard's Cooper's Hawk photographed by Scott Young, January 5, 2012.

Comments from the compiler –

First, some identification pointers of the Cooper's Hawk from the photo. There are two salient identification points that are fairly obvious. The first one is the fine "pin-striping" (streaks) on the breast that extend down onto the sides and especially on the flanks and the second point is the noticeably rounded tail with a whitish tip. It is worth studying the structure of this bird closely too. Try to get a sense for the relative size of the head and bill and the relative position of the eye within the face. These are all very subtle characteristics but good practice for separating Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks.

At great risk of tarnishing my reputation, I will discuss House Sparrows a little bit. These non-natives were introduced into the United States over 100 years ago and the ornithologists of the late 1800s conducted a vicious "sparrow war" of words in the literature of the day, debating the pros and cons of the species' place in our bird life. So, you can see that times have not changed that much when birders express their opinions about House Sparrows! RAQ

My Wintering Ovenbird

by Barb Horton

The Ovenbird was first seen under my feeding station on December 31, 2011 and my initial thought was "No way, it must be something else." But later in the afternoon I got great looks and pictures. I went out the next day with sunflower hearts and threw them under my spruce tree. A few days later, I tried putting out a block of suet and watched him stop in front of it, give it a look, and then keep on going. He had to be eating



Ovenbird by Barbara Horton, 1/14/12, Derry, NH.

something, however, and since the temperatures at that time were not too cold, I threw out some live mealworms. A few must have burrowed into the mulch and the next day I saw him find several. So now I had a new plan. I would dig some holes and put the worms in them. That seemed to work well and he found several holes, ate some worms, and would actually sit on the spot at times for well over a half hour, either waiting to feel worm movement underneath him or wanting to keep them all to himself. When the ground froze, I added a fruit, nut, and mixed seed blend to the sunflower hearts. That has been his main food source ever since. He has eaten all kinds of seed, suet balls, and once I even watched him down a large piece of cracked corn. Certainly not the insects he wanted, but when you are hungry, you will try anything!

He seems to prefer the company of Northern Cardinals. During the first weeks he was here, he would arrive to dine with a group of cardinals in the morning. Once, I saw him up in a tree with about six or seven cardinals, male and female. As time passed, he seemed to be more on his own, but I would still often see a cardinal or two around him as if they had taken him under their “wing” so to speak.

I am not sure why he chose my yard, but I do have quite a few feeders and good habitat. I have several large spruce trees throughout the yard, as well as maple, apple, hemlock, larch, willow, birch, and others. There are lots of flowering and berry producing bushes and a very long line of large forsythia bushes too. There is a pond in my front yard and a brook along my side yard, bordered by woods. Then there is the racket made by my “way too many” House Sparrows, that draws in migrant birds. The House Sparrows are a nuisance when it comes to my nesting Eastern Bluebirds, but maybe all that loud bird squawk attracts wayward and lost birds looking for something really good to eat! It has been a mild winter to say the least, but to have an Ovenbird overwinter, and to see him walking around in the snow on the days of bitter cold, has been quite a joy!

Compiler’s note: *Barb’s hardy Ovenbird was seen as late as April 1, 2012!*

Photo Gallery

A Snowy Owl Winter

by Iain MacLeod



Snowy Owl by Len Medlock, 11/13/11, Sunset Farm, Greenland, NH.

The winter of 2011-2012 will go down as an amazing irruption year for Snowy Owls, not just here in New Hampshire, but throughout the continental United States. Snowys were sighted this winter in at least 31 states (and all the Canadian Provinces) including as far south as Kansas and also one remarkable record at an airport in Hawaii! There were a couple of inland sightings in New Hampshire, but the most reliable place was along the seacoast. These wonderful arctic owls were seen regularly around Hampton, Seabrook Harbor and in Rye. Often they were perched on buildings, including on hotels in downtown Hampton Beach. The incredible irruption was presumed to be related to the usual boom or bust cycle of arctic lemmings, which is the owl's primary food source on its tundra home. A bumper population of food produced lots of little owlets which then produced an explosion of dispersing owls into the lower 48.

The first indication that it was going to be a good Snowy year came in November when an owl was found and photographed in Greenland, NH. Then the Isles of Shoals Christmas Bird Count tallied four Snowys on the islands on December 31 and we knew we were in for a fun winter. On January 3, a Snowy was seen in Rye and a couple days later, sightings started coming in daily around Hampton. They became a regular sighting on the coast for the remainder of the winter.



Photo Set 1. A compilation of photos by Stephen R. Mirick.

Top L: 01/07/12. Hampton Beach State Park. Based on the predominance of "spots", I would guess that this is a young male.

Top R: 03/02/12. This is very likely the same bird as above. Note the single spot to the left of the rachis on the upper folded tail feather in the bird in both photos.

Bottom L: 01/14/12. This too looks like the same young male.

Bottom R: 02/11/12. This is a much more heavily barred bird and is almost certainly a female. It also has a more heavily marked cap.

Being very photogenic, many birders snapped wonderful shots of the owls. Below are some photos taken this winter of Snowy Owls in New Hampshire.

Note: a very serendipitous publication of a paper on sexing young Snowy Owls in the December, 2011 issue of *The Journal of Raptor Research* made me look at the photos with a fresh eye. Based on plumage markings on the remiges (wing feathers) and tail, the researchers were able to predict sex using an assessment of bars (defined as markings that touch the rachis, or shaft, of the feather) and spots (defined as markings that do not touch the rachis). Basically females have more bars; males have more spots.

References

Seidensticker, M., D. Holt, J. Detienne, S. Talbot, and K. Gray. 2011. Sexing Young Snowy Owls. *The Journal of Raptor Research* 45 (4): 281-289.



Photo Set 2. A compilation of photos by Iain MacLeod taken 01/03/12. This sequence of photos was taken at Concord Point in Rye of a single owl drinking from a pool (which I assume was sea water!). Note the very heavy barring over the entire body and broad bars on tail. This is almost certainly a female.



Photo Set 3. A compilation of photos by Len Medlock.

Top L: 01/07/12. Hampton. A heavily marked bird with broad bars on tail. Almost certainly a female. Note: Steve Mirick photographed a male on the same day at the same location (see Photo Set 1) sitting on a picnic table. See Photo Set 4 for comment about plumage characteristics.

Top R: 01/22/12. Hampton. Note the lightly "spotted" tail on this bird. Likely a male. I watched this same owl hunting pigeons around the balconies of hotels on the Hampton Beach seafront just moments before Len snapped this shot.

Bottom L: 02/04/12. Hampton. A lovely flight shot of a male. Note the distinct spots on tail feathers.

Bottom R: 02/06/12. Hampton. A very pale bird. We can't see the remiges or tail, but it is almost certainly a male.

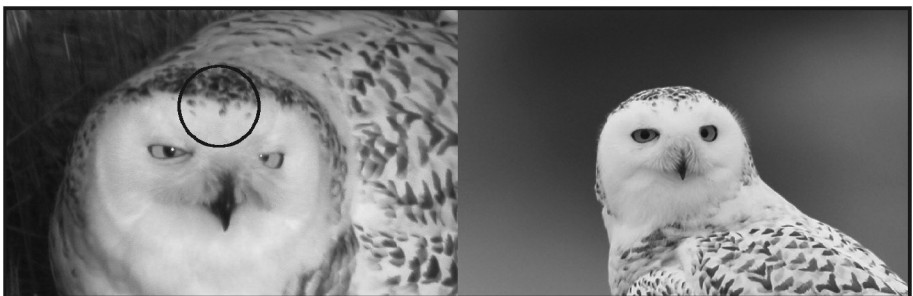


Photo Set 4. The same bird?

L: 01/03/12. Concord Point, Rye. Female Snowy Owl photographed by Iain MacLeod. Note the distinctive group of spots on head.

R: 01/07/12. Hampton Beach State Park, Hampton. Photo by Len Medlock. Note the same pattern on the head. This is very likely the same bird. If you look closely at Steve's photo from 02/11 (Photo Set 1, bottom R), that bird appears to have the same spot pattern.

Volunteers and Research

A Surprising Late-Winter Eagle Watch

by Rebecca Suomala

I volunteered to be part of a coordinated evening watch to check for roosting Bald Eagles along the Merrimack River during New Hampshire Audubon's late-winter eagle watch on February 25, 2012. Chris Martin, the coordinator, placed volunteers all along the river from Concord to Boscawen to try and determine where the eagles might be roosting. I was lucky enough to watch at "The Big Bend" on the Merrimack River in Boscawen.

I arrived at 3:20 pm while there was still plenty of light and a surprising amount of bird activity. I was dismayed to find that there was also some target practice going on at a nearby residence so, for about half an hour, I was concerned that the sound of gun fire was scaring the eagles away, to say nothing of making me nervous. To my delight, there were plenty of other birds to watch, far more than I expected for this time of year. The Big Bend is a great place for waterfowl in the spring, but normally February 25 would be too early, but not this year. Among the Mallards and Common Mergansers was a nice American Wigeon, which others had already reported so I knew to look for it. It was not until later in the evening that three Wood Ducks and a Hooded Merganser appeared.

As I scoped the waterfowl, I found a Killdeer on the bank! A male Belted Kingfisher was also back, rattling almost non-stop until it caught a big fish. Those aren't species I would expect on a February eagle watch! Little did I know this was only the beginning of a flood of early migrants in a March that was to have record-breaking heat. It was not very mild that evening and I was bundled up in parka and long underwear.

As evening approached, the robin show began. There were good numbers of American Robins on the river bank to start, but then they began flying south to roost, and they just kept coming and coming. I tallied 410 by the end of my watch. A flock of Red-winged Blackbirds was a nice bonus – my first of the "spring." The robin action peaked just when the eagle show began. Four Bald Eagles rose out of the trees to the east and I frantically took notes on what they looked like (immature, adult, plumage



Bald Eagle by Dennis Skillman.

notes), what they were doing, where they went, and at what time. Two of them were almost fully adult with white heads and tails, but still with some brown mixed into the white and some white in the brown body and wing feathers. The other two were very brown immatures with lots of white speckling. It takes Bald Eagles 4-5 years to get their full adult plumage. Naturally, the four birds did not stay together and it was challenging to follow them. A second set of eyes would have come in handy. I concentrated on the two near adults which stayed together and headed north.

I ended the watch at 5:45 with lots of eagle notes, 21 species, and a muskrat. It was a very fun watch with such unexpectedly great bird activity for a winter afternoon. I like to contribute to our bird knowledge when I go birding, so I tallied all species during my watch and submitted it as a stationary count in eBird. My eagle notes went to Chris who put them together with other observations from nearby watchers. Dave Lipsy was just to the north of me and saw “my” two near-adult birds just to his south.

If you are interested in helping with a winter eagle watch or other bird project, check the listing of volunteer field opportunities with NH Audubon’s Conservation Department. It’s on the web at: <http://www.nhbirdrecords.org/volunteer/nha-volunteering.htm> under Wildlife Survey Opportunities, or contact me for a copy.

Satellite Tracking Answers Some Questions about New Hampshire Raptors

by Iain MacLeod and Chris Martin

Remarkable advances in micro-technology, GPS mapping, and user-friendly computer interfaces now enable scientists to use satellite tracking devices to remotely follow birds and other animals as they migrate and forage. In the last two years, several of these devices have been employed to track Bald Eagles and Ospreys here in New Hampshire.

Bald Eagle Tracking

Chris Martin

In June 2010, New Hampshire Audubon launched a Bald Eagle tracking project made possible through a grant from the Merrimack River Bald Eagle Habitat Fund administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Three juvenile eagles from two nests in Moultonborough and New Durham were fitted with backpack-style satellite transmitters. All three chicks successfully fledged and their subsequent travels have provided interesting data about first year dispersal of New Hampshire Bald Eagles. A summary of the movements of the three young eagles appear below.

ID 79604: Juvenile eagle from Blueberry Island, Lake Winnepesaukee.

This young female left home in the fall of 2010 sometime between September 16 and September 25 and traveled about 200 miles southwest to southeastern New York.

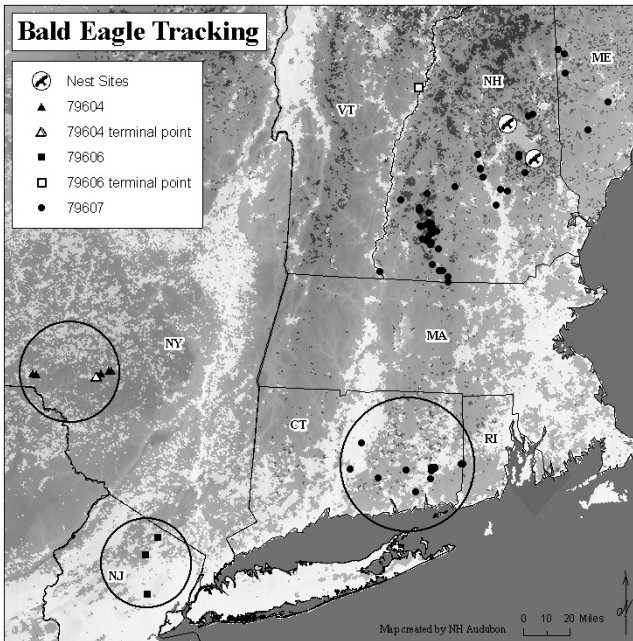


Figure 1. Movements of three New Hampshire-hatched Bald Eagles equipped with satellite transmitters, each symbolized by a different shape. Circled areas indicate winter locations for each bird. Terminal points for birds 79604 and 79606 indicate where each bird died.

On September 25, she was located about 50 miles southwest of Albany and just to the west of the Catskills Park, on the upper end of the Pepacton Reservoir, which is located on the East Branch of the Delaware River near Margaretville, New York.

By October 5, she had moved 30 miles due west and crossed over one major ridge into the West Branch of the Delaware on the Cannonsville Reservoir, where she remained through October 15. By October 25, she had returned once more to the upper portion of Pepacton Reservoir, and was roughly one mile from where she was at the end of September.

On November 11, 79604 was hit by a car while feeding on a raccoon carcass on New York Highway 30 near the shore of the Pepacton Reservoir.

ID 79606: Juvenile eagle from Blueberry Island, Lake Winnepesaukee. (Sibling of 79604.)

In contrast to her sibling, this female remained in her natal area near Blueberry Island through mid-November 2010. In late November, she began her big move to northern New Jersey. On December 5, she was at Canoe Brook Reservoir #1 in Millburn, New Jersey, which is about 10 miles west of Newark near a local water treatment plant and the Short Hills Shopping Mall. By December 15, she had moved about 16 miles north to Butler Reservoir in Kinnelon, NJ, about 10 miles northwest of Paterson. Finally, on December 25, she remained in the same general area of northern New Jersey, but was located about six miles further northeast, on Wanaque Reservoir in Ringwood Borough.

We stopped receiving signals from her transmitter in late December, 2010. Nothing more was known about her until August, 2011. On August 2, 2011, Ken LeClair of Fairlee, Vermont reported a distressed eagle to Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences

(VINS). LeClair said the bird had been seen on the ground on his property near Lake Morey for at least two weeks prior to his reporting it. He said that whenever he approached the grounded eagle, it would fly up into a tree. A Vermont Game Warden responded to the call at the beginning of August, and again the eagle flew when approached.

On August 3, the eagle was reported dead, recovered, and transported to VINS. The transmitter was examined and found to be missing the antenna. The bird was necropsied by the Wildlife Health Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin. She was emaciated and found to have severe chronic aspergillosis (a respiratory infection). So, we know that this young eagle survived its first winter in New Jersey and at some point returned to the Connecticut River valley in Vermont.

ID 79607: Juvenile eagle from Merrymeeting Marsh in New Durham, New Hampshire.

This young male moved 36 miles west southwest to the Warner River on the Sutton-Warner town line in mid-October 2010, but by late October it was back at the Merrymeeting Marsh area once again!

He was still in his natal territory on November 4 but by November 15, he had moved to near the Massachusetts border in the New Hampshire town of New Ipswich near the Rindge town line. On November 24, he had moved south and was located near Beach Pond which straddles the Connecticut-Rhode Island state line, about 140 miles south of his natal area at Merrymeeting Marsh and less than 20 miles from Long Island Sound.

Satellite locations for this bird in December include December 5 at Deep River Reservoir in Colchester, Connecticut, which is 15 miles northwest of New London. By December 15, he had moved about 10 miles to the southeast and was on Lake Konomoc in Waterford, a water body about five miles northwest of New London. Finally, on December 25, he had returned to somewhat familiar surroundings at Beach Pond on the Connecticut/Rhode Island border.

He settled for the winter months on rivers and ponds located in southeastern Connecticut. He was on the tidal Thames River just downstream of Norwich, CT on January 4, and on a tributary, the Shetucket River, just upstream of Norwich on both January 14 and January 24. He remained in this area throughout the month of February and most of March, but in late March, he shifted west from the Thames River watershed into the Connecticut River watershed. On March 25, he was located on the Connecticut River near Middletown about 13 miles south of Hartford. This bird made its big jump at the end of March or the start of April, moving 175 miles northeast to the southwestern shore of Sebago Lake in Standish, Maine by April 14, a location just 40 miles northeast of his natal area. In fact, a straight-line path plotted from Hartford to Sebago Lake in Maine passes just south of his natal area at Merrymeeting Marsh.

On April 23, he overnighted near Ash Cove on Lake Winnepesaukee, possibly within sight of the Blueberry Island nest. The next night, he overnighted on the Merrymeeting River near the Alton traffic circle. The following morning he picked up and flew southwest to Chichester and Loudon, where he seemed to take a liking to rather remote Lynxfield Pond for the next two nights. He remained in the Chichester area until the morning of April 27, but by that afternoon, he had moved 65 miles southwest

to the Connecticut River in Brattleboro, Vermont. He then turned right around and settled for the nights of April 27-28 near Highland Lake in Stoddard, NH. On the afternoon of April 29, he was in Rindge, NH, made a visit the next morning to North Ashburnham, Massachusetts, and then settled for the night at the Cathedral of the Pines in Rindge.

Throughout most of May, he was in the Monadnock region, spending time in Rindge, Jaffrey, Peterborough, Harrisville, Stoddard, Washington, and Goshen before making a big move late in the month. On May 27, he was near Goat Pasture Hill and Manning Lake in Gilmanton, NH.

He returned to the Monadnock region once again, then in late June, he moved over a period of about a week northeast to near Fryeburg, Maine, then to the southeast. On July 1, he was at Lake Arrowhead in Waterford, ME, but by July 3, he had moved about 50 miles west to near the confluence of the Pemigewasset and Winnisquam Rivers in Franklin, NH. For most of the summer, he remained fairly consistently in the section of the Merrimack River just downstream of Franklin.

By the end of August, 79607 had moved to Harrisville in southwestern New Hampshire, but returned to the Merrimack River by the first week of September, when he was located near the wastewater treatment plant in Concord. Mid-September found him farther southwest, on the Connecticut River just below the Vernon Dam at the Hinsdale Bald Eagle nest. He remained there through the end of September.

In October, he was at Spoonwood Pond in Nelson on October 6, near Derry Hill in Acworth (headwaters of the Cold River) on October 16, and on the North Branch of the Contoocook River in Stoddard and Antrim on October 26. He remained in this area through November, 2011.

So, all three youngsters moved south or southwest for portions of their first winter dispersal. One died quickly through a collision with a car, one survived its first winter and returned to northern New England before dying in Vermont and one is still alive and providing data as of this writing.

Chris Martin coordinates statewide monitoring and management efforts for Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, and Ospreys under a contract with NH Fish and Game. Working with a cadre of enthusiastic and knowledgeable field volunteers, he has documented the growth of the state's Bald Eagle population from one to 27 breeding pairs during his 22-year tenure as a raptor biologist at New Hampshire Audubon.

Osprey Tracking

Iain MacLeod

In 2011, the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center launched a new research and education project focusing on tracking the international migrations of Ospreys nesting in New Hampshire using solar-powered satellite transmitters. Each backpack includes a tiny GPS unit that records hourly locations, altitude, speed, and direction. Project funding came from Public Service Company of New Hampshire (PSNH), the Jane B. Cook 1983 Charitable Trust and Squam Lakes Natural Science Center's Innovative Project Fund.

The first year of the project had several challenges. Our initial goal was to capture and tag two breeding males at two target nests in the Lakes Region, then deploy three more transmitters on youngsters at those same two nests (chosen for their ease of access). Our trapping efforts in late May were unsuccessful (our males were too smart to be caught!). A few weeks later, one of our nests was blown out in a freak windstorm, so we were left with one brood to work with. Two transmitters were deployed but only one chick survived its first week of flight, so all our hopes rested on one youngster, a female Osprey chick from a nest at the PSNH Ayers Island Dam in New Hampton. This chick was named Saco.



Figure 2. The 3,600+ mile journey of Saco, a young satellite-tagged female Osprey from a nest in New Hampton, NH to the Caribbean.

After taking her first flight on July 23, Saco spent the next month exploring the Pemigewasset River in the immediate vicinity of the nest and being fed by her father. She got a little more adventurous on August 20 travelling several miles from the nest before returning.

Saco left the nest for the last time on August 22 at 9:11 am and, after a tour of several nearby fishing locations, she headed west and spent her first night perched on the shore of a small beaver pond just south of Pleasant Lake near New London. The next day, she travelled 135 miles to North Canaan in Connecticut. On August 24, she was in New York State, then by the end of the next day she was in New Jersey. On August 26, as Hurricane Irene swept towards the east coast, Saco made a 150 mile push and ended up spending the night near the Holtwood Dam on the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania. The next night, she roosted on the Potomac River near Sharpsburg, Maryland.

On August 28, she made another good push, traveling 132 miles to the coast of Virginia, ending the day perched on the edge of the Rappahannock River just south of Tappahannock. By 10:00 am on August 29, she was on the move again and ended the day on the Greenbrier River in Pocahontas County, West Virginia. By noon on August 30, she was on the move again and, by the late afternoon, she had reached the Elk River near Sutton in Buxton County, WV. No surprise, she was hunting just below a large dam. She decided to take an extended break and spent the entire month of September on the Elk River near Sutton. She obviously found good fishing and decided to fatten up and perfect her fishing skills before continuing.

Saco finally decided to leave the Elk River on October 5. At 11:00 am, she was hunting along the river for the last time. By noon, she was heading due south and, by the end of the day, she was 129 miles away. On October 6, she moved another 207

miles all the way through North Carolina. On October 7, she continued south through South Carolina, past Savannah and ended the day roosting along the Altamaha River in McIntosh County in Georgia.

On October 8, she left Georgia and headed south to Florida, ending the day roosting just north of Gainesville. On October 9-11, she continued her southern push through Florida, through the Big Cypress National Preserve and ending the day on October 11 in the middle of the Everglades about 35 miles west of Miami. By 3:00 pm the next day, she had started out over the Caribbean Sea just south of Vaca Key and made the 100 mile crossing to Cuba in six hours. She landed near Varadero in a very swanky looking resort area.

She took her time moving through Cuba, stopping off to fish and rest, perhaps slowed by Hurricane Rina, which moved through to the south. She left the southeast tip of Cuba somewhere between Rio Seco and Jauco shortly after 3:00 pm on October 24 and reached Ile de la Gonave, an island just off the west coast of Haiti, by nightfall.

By 10:00 am on October 25, she was well on her way heading east southeast. By noon, she had reached the main island of Haiti and was 20 miles west of Port-au-Prince. She ended the day roosting near Oviedo on the southern most tip of The Dominican Republic. By 2:00 pm on October 26, she was more than 100 miles to the south out over the Caribbean. By 7:00 pm, she was another hundred miles to the south southwest about half way to Venezuela. Then, she started veering southwest rather than south and by 10:00 am on October 27, she was 308 miles from the 7:00 pm point (!) still out over the middle of the Caribbean Sea. By 11:00 am, she had slowed down and was heading west (wrong direction) farther away from South America. By noon, she was heading northwest. She was still over 1,000 feet up and moving at 28 kilometers/hour (kph). By 5:00 pm, she was still moving west, still more than 300 feet up and going at 27 kph. She made a course correction and started heading southwest again but her speed and altitude were dropping. At 6:00 pm, having flown continuously for more than 30 hours and covering 640 miles non-stop, she suddenly slowed to a crawl and her next hourly point was just two miles to the north! Her next two points were over a span of just three miles, drifting north; the last point being at 9 pm on October 28. She was about as far from land as she could possibly be (300 miles of open ocean in all directions!) when she ditched in the sea. Radar images showed she got caught up in a strong storm sweeping west through the Caribbean. A sad, but all too common end for inexperienced Ospreys making their first migrations through the treacherous Caribbean.

In 2012, three more Ospreys were tagged with transmitters—an adult male from a nest in Bridgewater and two chicks from a nest in Tilton. To follow these Ospreys, go to www.nhnature.org/osprey_project/overview.html.

Iain MacLeod is Executive Director of the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center in Holderness, NH and former Chairman of the Board of the Hawk Migration Association of North America. Iain has birded in New Hampshire for more than 20 years and is a member of the New Hampshire Bird Records Editorial Team. He lives in Ashland.

Birding by (smart) Phone

A Review of Electronic Bird Guides for the iPhone/iPad

by Jon Woolf

Picture it, a bird guide, complete and unabridged, that fits into any pocket and includes bird sounds as well as illustrations. With a smartphone, you don't have to picture it. You can have it. But which one to get?

I set out to find out. A bird guide was the second or third app I bought for my iPod Touch; the Sibley guide, to be exact. It was good, but not perfect, so eventually I decided to try the e-versions of three more top-notch printed guides: Peterson, National Geographic, and National Audubon's. Here's what I found.

First off, all four of these are intended as electronic counterparts to the printed guides. They include everything the printed guides do – species illustrations, range maps, and descriptive text. All add bird sounds, songs, calls, and behavioral sounds like bill-clacking, etc. All incorporate sophisticated search functions that allow you to enter features such as size, shape, color, and habitat, and then show you a list of possible matching birds. All are available on both the iPhone/iPad platform and the Android platform. At the Apple App Store, the Sibley guide is the most expensive at \$20 (at the time this article was written), while the other three are \$15 each. Like many apps, all four may go on sale for much less.

(PLEASE NOTE: What follows are my opinions of the four guides I chose to review, reflecting my experiences with these guides, the level of birder that I am, and the type of birding that I do. Your experience may be very different.)

The Sibley eGuide to the Birds of North America

Pro: Everything that makes the big Sibley guide great is also in the e-version, including the illustrations of multiple plumages for every species. The e-guide even adds detail in the descriptive text for most species at very little cost, since text takes little memory to store. The sounds include a variety of songs and calls from different parts of the bird's range, so you can get an idea of the dialects. The name-search function is quick and efficient, allowing for finding any species from just a few letters of its name. You can filter the species list by location. For example, if you specify New Hampshire, then species that aren't usually found in New Hampshire don't show in the species list. You can also select two birds and display them side-by-side for comparison purposes.

Con: There's only one list, a life list, and using it is somewhat clumsy. You have to go to the bird's entry, then tap a 'checkbox' icon to add it to your life list. There is no separate feature for simply checking off birds from a long list of species, like a printed checklist. The Sibley suffers greatly from the small screen size of the iPhone/iPod Touch. The bird illustrations are presented as a vertical scrolling image, and it can be tough to compare images of the same bird in different plumages. The illustrations can't be enlarged on the screen either. The comparison feature, as nice as it is, is limited to only two species. There are times when having three or four birds onscreen at once is nice, for example, when you're trying to identify a peep sandpiper. The loca-

tion filter is rigid and screens out anything that isn't supposed to be in your area. This can make it harder to identify vagrants such as the Curlew Sandpiper spotted in fall 2011 at Plaipe Cove.

Verdict: Very good if you know what species you want to look at. Not so good for scanning to identify an unfamiliar bird, because it's so difficult to quickly look at several species. All in all, the Sibley guide seems aimed at the experienced birder. Novices should probably look elsewhere for their first e-guide.

Peterson Birds of North America

Pro: Roger Tory Peterson has left us, but his influence remains. For the beginning birder, there isn't any better field guide in print or electronic form. The species paintings and descriptions are the same familiar, high-quality material as the printed *Field Guide to the Birds*, line for line, almost smudge for smudge. These illustrations can be enlarged on the screen, giving you much closer looks should you need that. The listing function allows multiple lists, year lists, state lists, day lists, etc. There's a useful Help function. There's also a long list of 'extra' articles and other materials, including a very nice guide to bird appearance and all the terms used to describe it. Searching can be done by species name or by group. The use of pages from the field guide allows you to see several related species at once, making it easier to examine similar birds in a hurry.

Con: The controls are not immediately intuitive; you need to read the Help function to figure them all out. The illustrations really suffer from the small screen of a smart-phone, although they'd be right at home on a tablet such as an iPad. You can't go directly to the page with the species that you're interested in. You can either see a single species at a time using direct search, or you can jump to the beginning of a section, and then scroll through pages until you find what you want.

Verdict: While the Sibley guide is probably a better guide for experienced birders, this Peterson guide is a better "birding assistant," field guide, reference library, and field checklist all in one.

National Geographic's Handheld Birds

Pro: The printed National Geographic guide has some good illustrations. The e-guide reproduces those illustrations very well. Unfortunately, once you get beyond that, this guide has little else to recommend it.

Con: No user guide or on-line help. No listing feature that I could find. Some of the controls are counter-intuitive. For example, when you go to a species page, most of the screen is an illustration of a typical adult bird of that species. The obvious thing to do is tap that to see other illustrations. That's not how it works, however. You have to scroll down to a separate 'Images' link and tap there in order to see any other illustrations of the bird.

Verdict: The weakest of the four in my opinion. Like the Sibley eGuide, the National Geographic eGuide is useful for reviewing birds you know, but not very good for identifying unfamiliar birds, and useless for keeping lists.

Audubon Birds – A Field Guide to North American Birds

Pro: As with the printed National Audubon guides, the illustrations are photographs, not paintings, which can give a better impression of the live bird. There's an extensive set of online literature, including a user guide, how-to articles on birding,

and more. A powerful listing feature gives you the ability to enter multiple lists and share them with others.

Con: To save space the photos are small, with little room for enlargement to study details. Response time is slow, probably because of the use of photos instead of paintings. The listing feature, while fairly extensive, requires you to register with the National Audubon Society (not New Hampshire Audubon which is an independent state Audubon Society) before you can use it. It also seems to require a live Internet connection, so it won't always be available.

Verdict: Not the worst, but far from the best. A good concept hampered by inefficient design.

General Summary

Which is best? Which is worst? As usual with field guides, that's a matter of personal preference. These reviews are only my own opinion; yours may be very different. Nor are these the only e-guides that are available for smartphones or tablet computers. With those caveats, my conclusion is that the Sibley e-guide and the Peterson e-guide are both worth the money. Both have stayed on my iPod Touch. Just as with the printed guides, I use the Peterson for building lists and for looking at several birds at a time, while I use the Sibley for looking at all the different plumages that a bird might appear in.

Still, while they're useful tools, I don't think any of these e-guides will replace book and notepad anytime soon. It's still much faster to scan several pages worth of birds with a printed guide, and (at least for me) it's much faster to note species and numbers seen with a pen and pad, rather than trying to tap it out on the iPod's tiny screen and keyboard.

Jon Woolf is a database programmer and web-designer who spends much of his off-work time pursuing several hobbies, including photography and birding.

Answer to the Photo Quiz

by David B. Donsker

The subject of this issue's Photo Quiz is clearly swimming on the surface of the water in a duck-like manner. Its body is strongly speckled dark gray and white with the exception of a contrasting brilliant white breast, sides of neck, and face. The gray crown and back of neck contrast with the white foreneck and face. The white of the face extends above the eye which leaves the dark eye completely surrounded by gleaming white. The bill is pale and is long and tapered, resembling a dagger blade. It is held slightly upturned from horizontal. The body of this bird is proportionally long with a tapered, seemingly tail-less rear end. Careful examination, peering through the water, shows that the legs of this bird are set quite far back on the body.

Swimming behavior is shared by a diverse range of unrelated waterbirds in our state including grebes, loons, shearwaters, cormorants, gannets, waterfowl (ducks, swans and geese), gulls, jaegers, alcids and phalaropes. Most of these forms can be

immediately eliminated because their body shapes, bill structure or plumage patterns do not conform to those of the species featured.

This bird lacks the massive, sabre-like bill of the gannet. Besides, adult Northern Gannets are nearly pure white and young gannets are uniformly dark, lacking white foreparts. The bills of our shearwaters are strongly hooked and have tubular nostrils at the base of the bill. This bird is not dumpy like an alcid, nor delicate and small-headed like a phalarope. None of our gulls or jaegers are similarly patterned or have such a tapered, dagger-like bill. Most of our waterfowl have broad, flattened or short triangular bills.

Our thinner-billed grebes, Eared, Horned, Western and Red-necked bear some serious consideration. Much like this bird, they are virtually tail-less and, in winter plumage, are dark on the back and crown and pale or white on the breast and neck. Eared Grebe is a smaller and shorter-bodied bird with a short thin bill and a foreneck that is grayish rather than white. Horned Grebe has a white face and foreneck, but its dark crown is much more contrasting and it extends down to the level of the eye. Like Eared Grebe, it is a small species with a short tapered bill unlike the long bill of this species. Red-necked Grebe is relatively dusky below rather than pure white and although its pale bill is similarly proportioned to this bird, it is generally angled downward rather than slightly upturned. The two grebes of the genus *Aechmophorus*, Western and Clark's Grebes, perhaps look most like our featured bird. Although these are western birds, there are a few records of Western Grebe for New Hampshire and Clark's Grebe has been seen once in our neighboring state of Maine. Both of these grebes have long, pale, tapered bills and also have gleaming white underparts, fore-necks and extensive white on the face. The dark of the crown of the Western Grebe extends down and completely surrounds the eye, however, on Clark's Grebe, the white of the face completely surrounds the eye much as in this bird. Both of these large grebes, however, are much more slender than the featured bird and have very long, swan-like necks. Their upperparts are blacker and lack the speckling which is so well marked in this subject. All grebes, including these larger species, are shorter bodied than our featured bird.

Cormorants have long, thin bills that are held at an upward angle when swimming, but adult cormorants are largely black, not gray with white breasts. Immature Double-crested Cormorants are paler than adults and have creamy or buffy throats and upper breasts, however, their underparts and face are never gleaming white. Nonetheless, young Double-crested Cormorants do have orange skin on the throat and around the eye. At a distance, this can give the appearance of a pale face, but this closely photographed bird lacks the long, square tail of a cormorant and its bill structure is completely different. Cormorant bills are strongly hooked at the tip and lack the tapered, dagger-like shape of the bill of this bird.

In swimming waterbirds, long thin bills are almost invariably associated with piscivorous, or fish-eating species. Although we dismissed most of the waterfowl due to bill shape, there is one group that primarily catch fish for a living: the mergansers. These unique ducks have long, thin, serrated bills that are ideally suited for that task.

The breeding-plumaged males of our three species of merganser, Common, Red-breasted and Hooded, are amongst the most striking of all ducks with their darkly colored heads and brilliant white or flashy, strongly patterned bodies. On the other hand, the females and males in non-breeding plumage are all relatively sombre with gener-

ally gray bodies and paler foreparts (i.e. the throat and breast). The small, strongly crested Hooded Merganser, because of its size and structure, could not be mistaken for this individual. Both of the larger mergansers in female or non-breeding male plumage could, and do, sometimes cause confusion with our featured bird, especially when observed at a distance. Contributing to the confusion, mergansers can hold their bills at a slightly upturned angle, as in our quiz bird and cormorants. Female and eclipse (or non-breeding plumaged) male Common Mergansers have white chins and breasts, but never have the extensive white on the face and side of neck of this bird. The foreparts of Red-breasted Merganser are duller white and are even less contrasted with the gray body. Further, both mergansers have distinctly crested heads in female and non-breeding male plumage. Also their bills are much thinner and less dagger-like. Although tapered, their bills lack parallel sides and acutely pointed tips. In addition the upper bill of both mergansers is slightly up-sloped and hooked at the tip.

The only group of surface swimming birds left to deal with is the loons and, indeed, our featured bird is a member of this family. Three species of this family have been encountered in New Hampshire: Common, Red-throated and Pacific Loons. Common Loon breeds in freshwater lakes and ponds in our state. Both Common and Red-throated Loon are regularly seen along our seacoast in the winter. Pacific Loon is a rare vagrant that is to be hoped for in the non-breeding season in our coastal waters.

These medium sized swimming and diving waterbirds are long-bodied with legs set far to the rear of their bodies. Their bills are all long, tapered and dagger-like. Although in summer plumage each of these species is very distinctive, in non-breeding or winter plumage they can be maddeningly similar. Confusion between species is made even more complex by variations in plumage and the shape and size of the bill among age groups and individuals. Also, swimming loons are often seen at a considerable distance which makes it harder to judge subtle differences in size and bill shape. In nonbreeding and juvenile plumage, all three species are varying shades of gray on the crown, back of the neck and upper body. All have white underparts and forenecks and have white on their faces. Despite their similarities, with careful observation and attention to detail, in virtually all cases these species can be distinguished from each other.

Common Loon and Pacific Loon share several features. Both are larger, bigger headed and relatively shorter necked than the more delicate Red-throated Loon. Common Loon is also thicker necked. The forehead of Common Loon, and to a lesser extent, Pacific Loon, tends to be steeper than the flat forehead of Red-throated Loon. Both Common and Pacific Loons have dark gray upperparts. These can look plain in adults or can be faintly barred or scalloped in juveniles. Adult Pacific Loons are particularly dark above. In contrast to these two species, the upperparts of Red-throated Loon are speckled or finely spotted. The speckling is more prominent in adults than in juveniles, but at close range can be seen in most juvenile birds. The upperparts of Red-throated Loon are never barred and are generally paler than either of its sister species.

Both Pacific and Common Loons have uniformly tapered dagger-like bills. The bill is generally thick and hefty in Common Loon and thinner in Pacific Loon, but there can be considerable variation in bill size within species (juveniles have smaller bills) and between species. Bill size can overlap between Pacific Loon and Common Loon on the larger end of the spectrum, and between Red-throated and Pacific Loon on the

smaller end. The bill of Red-throated Loon is the thinnest of all the loons and tends to angle upward towards the tip, but this latter feature is more pronounced in females than in males. Regardless, Red-throated Loons tend to swim with their bills pointed slightly above the horizontal which enhances the impression of an upturned bill.

Neck pattern can be very useful in separating species, especially at a distance. In Common Loon, the interface between the dark hindneck and white foreneck is sharply irregular with one or two jagged indentations of the white foreneck into the dark hindneck. The upper indentation is often large enough to produce a partial white collar. In Pacific Loon, the interface between the dark hind neck and white foreneck is perfectly straight and strongly contrasting. Only at the very base of the neck does the dark hindneck extend sharply forward. The contrast between the back of the neck and the front of the neck in Red-throated Loon is less sharply defined than in Pacific Loon, but like the latter, and unlike Common Loon, the interface is not jagged.

All loons have white in their faces, but the pattern of white in the face can be particularly useful in trying to separate these species. Pacific Loon has the least amount of white, generally confined to the lower face. Most importantly, it has no white above or in front of the eye so the dark crown of this species extends to the level of the eye. Common Loon always has some white around the eye. This may not be complete, but there is always some white that separates the eye from the crown. The lower face of Common Loon is white, but the ear coverts are generally dark. In contrast, the face of Red-throated Loon is extensively white (or pale gray in juveniles). The white completely surrounds the eye and extends well back to include the ear coverts. The white foreneck of Red-throated Loon is also more extensive than in either Common or Pacific Loon. Thus, the foreneck, and particularly the face, of Red-throated Loon looks very pale compared to its sister species.

With its strongly speckled back, extensively white face and foreneck and straight, slightly upward angled, dagger-like bill, it is fairly easy to determine that our featured bird is an adult Red-throated Loon in non-breeding plumage. Because the lower mandible is only slightly upturned, one could speculate that this may be an adult male. This lovely portrait was captured by Len Medlock at "Town Line Cove" in Rye on November 20, 2010.

Red-throated Loon breeds in the tundra of Canada and Alaska. It is a fairly common winter visitor to the seacoast of New Hampshire arriving in late September and leaving by the end of May. Rarely, it can be found on large inland bodies of water in the fall during the peak of their migration. With persistence, a visit to the seacoast in fall, winter or spring is likely to produce sightings of this lovely, small, delicate loon.

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Corrections

The following corrections were found after the issue was published. Minor typos are not included. Please let us know of any inaccuracies you find in any issue so we can correct the data.

Spring 2001 (Other corrections from this issue are in Vol. 21 #4)

p. 26 The 120 American Tree Sparrows on 04/11 were Tree Swallows.

Spring 2011

- p. 1 Third line of In This Issue, the Spring Season should read March 1 through May 31, 2011, not March 31.
- p. 11 In the Grouse through Vultures summary, in the first paragraph, second line should read "Two records of Horned Grebe away from the coast was low," not a single record.
- p. 14 Least Bittern. The following sighting was accidentally omitted and is the record of two birds referred to in the summary on page 12 (second to the last paragraph): 05/21/2011, 2, Durham, Surrey Lane marsh, S.& J. Mirick
- p. 16 The 60 Broad-winged Hawks in Hollis were seen on 04/27 not 4/28.
- p. 20 In both Killdeer and Greater Yellowlegs listings on 05/06, the town should be Pittsburg not Clarksville.
- P. 45 In the table, 120 Broad-winged Hawks were seen on 04/25/2000 not 05/25/2000 at Massabesic Audubon Center.

Summer 2011

- p. 22 In the Warblers and Finches summary, the Cape May Warblers and the Wilson's Warbler discussed in the first sentence were not included in the listing.
- p. 36 The title of the first Field Note should read "A Roseate Tern banded in Ireland" not the United Kingdom.

The following sightings listed with the location of "Smarts Mountain trails" should be "Smith Brook Rd."

- p. 17 Black-backed Woodpecker on 06/03; Blue-headed Vireo, 06/07
- p. 18 Red-eyed Vireo 06/07; Gray Jay, 06/03.
- p. 24 Tennessee Warbler 06/06; Mourning Warbler 06/04 & 06/07; Magnolia Warbler 06/07; Bay-breasted Warbler 06/07.
- p. 25 Chestnut-sided Warbler 06/07
- p. 27 Lincoln's Sparrow 06/03 & 06/07

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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Varied Thrush
by Len Medlock,
1/16/12, Middle Rd.,
Dover, NH.



Painted Bunting
by Dane Drasher,
1/2/12, Dover, NH.



Yellow-breasted Chat by Chris Sheridan,
1/22/12, Landing Road, Hampton, NH.



Tennessee Warbler by Barbara Guay, 12/23/11,
Rye, NH.



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