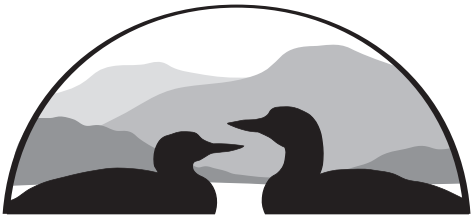
New Hampshire Bird Records

Summer 2012 Vol. 31, No. 2



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Cover Photo: Northern Fulmar by David Lipsy, 6/8/12, Jeffreys Ledge, offshore NH.

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In This Issue

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Photo Quiz

Can You Identify This Bird?

Answer on page 62.
Photo by David Lipsy.

June 1 through July 31, 2012

by Tony Vazzano

The summer of 2012 featured typical weather across most of the state. Rainfall was close to normal although most of June's rain came during the first few days of the month. Temperatures were a little above normal with one heat wave in the middle of July.

Birds were also fairly typical during the season and the number of rare or uncommon birds was fewer than usual. The biggest exception to this humdrum season was the expansion of the Fox Sparrow population in Coos County. They were found in five different locations and breeding was confirmed in at least one of them.

Mississippi Kites were again present in Newmarket. While a nest was not discovered, it is likely that they bred again in this area as they have for the past several years. Other notable birds were an **Acadian Flycatcher** in Concord in early June that was a hold-over from the spring season as was a **Blue Grosbeak** in Nashua, a **Sedge Wren** in Sandwich, and a **Wilson's Phalarope** in Derry. A Little Blue Heron in Rye, a Cattle Egret in Milton and a Black Vulture in New London round out the list of uncommon birds for the season.

Wilson's Phalarope by Stephen R. Mirick, 6/7/12, Derry WTP, NH.

Waterfowl through Grebes

Every summer there are several "out of season" ducks found in the state. The list from this summer includes a Gadwall in Hampton Harbor on July 8, an American Wigeon in Errol on July 25, a Northern Pintail in Hampton on June 16, all three scoters along the coast and a White-winged Scoter on Lake Umbagog in mid-summer, and a Ruddy Duck in Exeter on June 12. Most of these birds are non-breeders. Some of them, like the Northern Pintail, were late "spring" migrants while others, like the Gadwall and American Wigeon, were early "fall" migrants. The White-winged Scoter on Lake Umbagog was more enigmatic; it was reported on June 16 and July 5 indicating that it probably spent the summer. They breed in central and western Canada and into Alaska. A few are usually seen in summer along the coast but inland sightings are almost exclusively in spring and fall. Perhaps this bird had an injury that prevented it from completing its migration.

Ruddy Duck by Len Medlock, 6/11/12, Powder House Pond, Exeter, NH.

Common Loon had a good breeding season although not quite as many surviving chicks as last summer. Nesting pairs numbered 188 compared to 179 last year and a five year average of 170. There were 117 successful nests compared to 121 last year and a five year average of 106. The number of surviving chicks was 134; last year there were 149 and the five year average is 117. These loon numbers are from John Cooley, a biologist with the Loon Preservation Committee in Moultonborough. Pied-billed Grebe reports were more widespread than usual with observations from a half dozen locations. Of the eight reported from Pillsbury State Park, seven were juveniles indicating breeding that was previously unknown from that location. A Red-necked Grebe photographed on Squam Lake in Sandwich on June 23 and 24 was a rather late migrant, the latest one reported in many years. In Beverly Ridgeley's book *Birds of the Squam Lakes Region* he indicates that they are known to occur on the lake through the third week of June.

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Gadwall				
07/08	1		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
American Wigeon				
07/25	1	Errol	Mile Long Pond, Androscoggin R.	M. O'Brien
Blue-winged Teal				
07/31	1	Bradford	Melvin Brook	M. Davidson
Northern Pintail				
06/16	1	Hampton	Meadow Pond	S. Mirick, M. Iliff
Green-winged Teal				
07/13	1	Exeter	Exeter WTP	P. Miliotis
07/17	3	Exeter	Exeter WTP	S. Mirick
Ring-necked Duck				
06/22	4	Errol	Mile Long Pond, Androscoggin R.	W. Lewis
06/29	2	Errol	Lake Umbagog, n. end	W. Lewis
07/03	5	Chatham	Basin Pond	D. Beattie
Surf Scoter				
06/03	1	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S. Mirick
06/10	2		NH coast	S. Mirick
06/16	5	Hampton	Little Jacks Restaurant, Rt. 1A	M. Iliff
07/04	1	Rye	Rt. 1A pullout by stone angel	S.& J. Mirick
07/07	2		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
White-winged Scoter				
06/10	33		NH coast	S. Mirick
06/15	1	Errol	Umbagog NWR, Potter Cove	M. O'Brien
06/16	10	Hampton	Little Jacks Restaurant, Rt. 1A	M. Iliff
06/21	7	Hampton	Hampton Beach	D. Gascoigne
07/04	2	Rye	Rt. 1A pullout by stone angel	S.& J. Mirick

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
07/05	1	Errol	Umbagog NWR, Magalloway/ Androscoggin R. jct.	M. O'Brien
07/07	5		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
Black Scoter				
06/17	7	Hampton	North Beach	A. Meyer
07/02	14	Rye	Concord Point	S. Mirick
07/21	17	Rye	north end of Foss Beach	S. Mirick
Common Goldeneye				
06/29	1	Errol	Lake Umbagog, n. end	W. Lewis
06/30	4	Wentworths Location	Umbagog NWR, Magalloway R.	S. Schulte
Red-breasted Merganser				
06/21	2	Rye	Rye Harbor	D. Gascoigne, M. Bauman
06/23	1	Rye	Rye Ledge	S. Mirick
Ruddy Duck				
06/11	1	Exeter	Powder House Pond	L. Medlock
Spruce Grouse				
06/08	1	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR, Mollidgewock Brook survey	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/10	1	Pittsburg	East Inlet	Z. Cornell
07/21	2	Lincoln	WMNF, Mt. Liberty	S. Schwenk
Pied-billed Grebe				
06/08	1	Derry	Derry WTP	T. Johnson
06/10	1	Brentwood	Brentwood Mitigation Area	D. Skillman
06/30	8	Washington	Pillsbury SP	P. Newbern
07/10	1	Lyme	Lyme Hill Preserve Wetland Trail	J. Norton
07/19	3	Tuftonboro	Copp's Pond	M. Batcheller
07/21	2	Brentwood	Brentwood Mitigation Area	S. Young
07/28	6	Tuftonboro	Copps Pond WMA	H. Grant
Red-necked Grebe				
06/23	1	Sandwich	Squam Lake northeast	R. Marsh
06/24	1	Sandwich	Hoag Island Bay	R. Marsh

Fulmar through Rails

With fairly good coverage offshore during the past several years, Northern Fulmar has been reported more often in summer. This year two were seen on a pelagic trip in early June. Shearwater numbers were low, overall. Cory's Shearwater formerly stayed south of NH waters most years but has become a regular summer and fall visitor in the past few years and there were three reports this summer. Wilson's Storm-Petrels were sparse in early summer but numbers had built by late July when a Leach's Storm-Petrel was also seen on Jeffreys Ledge. Leach's typically occur farther offshore. In the rare-for-New Hampshire heron and egret category there was a Little Blue Heron in Rye in July and a June sighting of a Cattle Egret in Milton.

Wilson's Storm-Petrel by David Lipsy, 7/20/12, Jeffreys Ledge, offshore NH.

Black Vulture, a bird of the south, has become annual in summer in New Hampshire. One was seen in New London in late July. Bald Eagles had a banner year. For the second consecutive year there was a record number of territorial pairs – 5, successful nests – 20, and number of chicks fledged – 33. Two **Mississippi Kites** were seen in Newmarket where they presumably nested for another summer.

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Northern Fulmar				
06/08	2	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.
Cory's Shearwater				
07/03	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	M. Harvey
07/07	6	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	M. Oyler
07/28	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. Mirick

Great Shearwater by Lauren Kras, 7/21/12, Jeffrey's Ledge, offshore NH.

Great Shearwater				
07/07	42	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	M. Oyler
07/19	17	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	B. Devine
07/21	30	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	L. Kras, B. Griffith, J. Lambert, et al.
Sooty Shearwater				
06/08	6	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.
07/06	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	H. Grant
07/21	5	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	L. Kras, B. Griffith, J. Lambert, et al.
Manx Shearwater				
07/27	4	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S.& J. Mirick
Wilson's Storm-Petrel				
06/08	3	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.
07/07	210	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	M. Oyler
07/21	35	Offshore Waters	inside of Isles of Shoals	L. Kras, B. Griffith, J. Lambert, et al.
07/21	325	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	L. Kras, B. Griffith, J. Lambert, et al.
07/28	576	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. Mirick

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Leach's Storm-Petrel				
07/28	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. Mirick

Two immature Northern Gannets, at Jeffreys Ledge, 6/8/12, by Ben Griffith (left) and David Lipsy (right).

Northern Gannet				
06/03	9	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S. Mirick
06/08	35	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.
06/08	1	Rye	Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.
07/25	14		NH coast	S. Mirick
Great Cormorant				
06/08	1	Rye	Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.
07/14	2	Rye	Rye Ledge	S. Mirick
Great Egret				
06/08	8	Hampton	Hampton-Seabrook marsh, Landing Rd. pool	Z. Cornell
07/04	12		NH coast	S.& J. Mirick
07/18	3	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/21	1	Conway	Conway Lake	J. Carroll
07/31	2	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	P. Brown, D. Stokes
Snowy Egret				
07/13	18	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	J. Kelly
07/30	20	Hampton	Meadow Pond	R. Gutberlet, et al.
Little Blue Heron				
07/15	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	J. Kelly
Cattle Egret				
06/12	1	Milton	Applebee Rd., Milton Mills	J. Parks

Black-crowned Night-Heron by Eric Masterson, 7/25/12, Powder Mill Pond, Hancock, NH.

Black-crowned Night-Heron				
06/08	1	Swanzey	Ashuelot River	E. Masterson
06/16	1	Newmarket	River St.	B. Griffith, L. Kras, et al.
07/07	1	Hancock	Antrim Rd.	P. Brown
07/21	3	Hampton	Meadow Pond	S. Mirick

date	#	town	location	observer(s)
Black-crowned Night-Heron—continued				
07/25	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/29	2	Dover	Royalls Cove, Dover	B. Griffith
Glossy Ibis				
06/17	2	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	A. Meyer
07/08	4	N. Hampton	Philbrick Marsh	S. Mirick
07/28	13	Rye	Rye Harbor	S. Mirick
Black Vulture				
07/22	1	New London	King Hill Rd.	T. Keene
Mississippi Kite				
07/20	1	Newmarket	Gonet Drive	D. Hubbard
07/22	2	Newmarket	Gonet Drive	S. Mirick
Northern Harrier				
06/19	2	Stewartstown	Creampoke Rd.	A.& F. Molesso
06/20	1	Errol	w. of Errol	W. Lewis
06/23	1	Whitefield	Airport Marsh	R. Shaw, A. Meyer
07/18	1	Pittsburg	Minnon-Young Trail	G. Billingham
Sora				
06/24	1	Concord	South End Marsh	D. Howe
07/07	2	Concord	South End Marsh	R. Woodward
07/25	2	Concord	South End Marsh	R. Woodward

Plovers through Alcids

This Short-billed Dowitcher was one of a number of shorebirds found by Eric Masterson during a drawdown at Powdermill Pond in Hancock, NH. Photo taken 7/25/12 by Eric Masterson.

Life is never easy for nesting birds on busy beaches. Piping Plovers had an especially difficult start this year with seven nests lost to high tides, predation, or human disturbance. In the end, there were six nests that produced chicks this season according to biologists at New Hampshire Fish and Game. While 12 chicks hatched, only four fledged; last year those numbers were four nests and eight chicks fledged.

Overall, shorebirds were seen in average numbers this summer. One exception was over two dozen Spotted Sandpipers seen on a canoeing field trip along the Merrimack River from Boscawen to Penacook. That number is amazing enough but the trip leader noted that they were all

adults and speculated that high water earlier in the season may have washed nests away. Reports of a few species illustrate the short span of time that shorebirds do *not* migrate through New Hampshire in summer. As examples, the last "spring" Ruddy Turnstones seen were on June 8 and the first southbound migrants were on July 16. The last northbound migrant Greater Yellowlegs was seen on June 10 while the first southbound migrants were recorded the last couple of days of June. Interestingly, these first "fall" migrant yellowlegs were seen at Lake Umbagog instead of the coast.

A major water drawdown at Powdermill Pond in Hancock made for suitable shorebird habitat and the birds responded dramatically. On July 25 there were 22 Solitary Sandpipers, an unusually high number for anywhere in the state and 27 Lesser Yellowlegs, a high count for an inland area. A White-rumped Sandpiper found at the pond during the drawdown in late July was a rare sighting for inland. Other shorebird reports from Powdermill Pond are listed. A Wilson's Phalarope was an unusual sighting in early June. It would have been odd enough if it had been seen along the coast but it is very rare for an inland location such as Derry. They are a rare and local breeder as close as coastal Massachusetts. The Red-necked Phalaropes seen during a pelagic trip on June 8 were northbound migrants.

Lesser Black-backed Gull is uncommon in this season and the one seen the last day of July barely made it into the summer season. The Caspian Tern seen June 21 was more unusual. They are a rare spring and fall migrant, but are very rare in summer. On the Isles of Shoals, Common Tern nests numbered 2577 compared to 2811 the previous summer. Roseate Terns had 63 nests and Arctic Terns 5 nests. To see how this compares to other years, see Table 1. Black Guillemot has nested some years on the Maine side of the Isles of Shoals but it is an extremely rare nester in New Hampshire. This year a broken egg was found on White Island indicating nesting. The last confirmed nesting in the state, and the only other known, was in 1985, also at the Isles of Shoals. According to the *Atlas of Breeding Birds in New Hampshire*, the 1985 record was the first nesting record for the state and the southernmost extreme for the species' breeding range.

Year	Common Tern	Roseate Tern	Arctic Tern
1997	6		
1998	45		
1999	141		
2000	446		
2001	809	1	
2002	1687	26	1
2003	2414	65	6
2004	2582	112	7
2005	2480	67	9
2006	2464	38	8
2007	2539	57	6
2008	2227	40	8
2009	2377	40	7
2010	2615	53	6
2011	2811	50	5
2012	2577	63	5

Table 1. Numbers of nesting terns at the colony on White and Seavey Island since the inception of restoration efforts in 1997. Source: personal communication from biologists Dan and Melissa Hayward.

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Black-bellied Plover				
06/02	16		NH coast	S. Mirick
06/10	9		NH coast	S. Mirick
06/23	3		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/13	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop	M. Resch
07/26	5	Rye	Rt. 1A wooden bridge	L. Kras
Killdeer				
07/26	72	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
Spotted Sandpiper				
06/01	14	Derry	Derry WTP	S. Mirick
06/09	18	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
07/14	26	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
Solitary Sandpiper				
07/14	1	Whitefield	Airport Marsh	S. Wheelock, C. Schlotterbeck, et al.
07/18	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/18	1	Rochester	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
07/20	6	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/25	22	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/29	7	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
Greater Yellowlegs				
07/14	20	Hampton	Meadow Pond	S. Mirick
07/25	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
Lesser Yellowlegs				
07/14	20	Hampton	Meadow Pond	S. Mirick
07/14	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/18	7	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/25	27	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/29	10	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
Upland Sandpiper				
06/06	1	Newington	Short St. & Arboretum Dr.	Z. Cornell
06/30	1	Portsmouth	Pease Int'l. Tradeport	N. Gibb
Whimbrel				
07/13	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop	M. Resch
07/19	2		NH coast	L. Kras
07/21	1		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/28	1		NH coast	S. Mirick
Ruddy Turnstone				
06/08	4	Rye	Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.
07/16	1	Rye	White Island	S. Kloiber
07/28	2	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop	J. Scott, B. Crowley
Red Knot				
06/13	6	Rye	Jenness/Sawyers Beach	B. Crowley
07/19	1		Hampton Harbor	L. Kras
07/29	1		Hampton Harbor	C. Borg, S. Mirick, et al.

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Sanderling				
07/14	1	Rye	Rye Ledge	B. Griffith, S. Mirick
07/19	40		NH coast	L. Kras
07/28	2	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/30	2	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
Semipalmated Sandpiper				
07/11	2	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	J. Kelly
07/15	3	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/19	18	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/20	24	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/21	300		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/26	25	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
Least Sandpiper				
07/09	10	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/11	10	Rochester	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick
07/14	8	Amherst	Ponemah Bog	C. Sheridan
07/14	11	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
07/14	100	Hampton	Meadow Pond	S. Mirick
07/18	70	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/20	98	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/26	60	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/30	45	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
White-rumped Sandpiper				
06/08	2	Hampton	Little Jacks Restaurant, Rt. 1A	S. Mirick
07/25	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/26	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson, P. Brown
Pectoral Sandpiper				
07/24	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/25	5	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/30	11	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
Stilt Sandpiper				
07/14	4	Hampton	Meadow Pond	S. Mirick
07/19	1	Hampton	Rt. 101E pools by pumping station	L. Kras
Short-billed Dowitcher				
06/08	4		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/03	10	Rye	Rye Ledge	M. Harvey
07/14	225	Hampton	Meadow Pond	S. Mirick
07/25	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson
07/26	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	P. Brown, E. Masterson
07/28	1	Hampton	Hampton-Seabrook marsh, Rt. 1, Taylor R.	P. Miliotis
Wilson's Snipe				
06/01	4	Second College Grant	Dartmouth Grant	W. Lewis
06/11	2	Danbury	Bog Pond	R. Quinn
06/13	1	Hancock	Brown Farm	P. Brown
06/24	2		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/ Whitefield	D. Govatski
07/26	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Wilson's Phalarope				
06/07	1	Derry	Derry WTP	S. Mirick, B. Griffith, L. Kras, C. Borg

Red-necked Phalarope by Benjamin Griffith, 6/8/12, Jeffreys Ledge, NH.

Red-necked Phalarope				
06/08	5	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.
Bonaparte's Gull				
06/02	40		NH coast	S. Mirick
06/30	154	Hampton	Plaice Cove	S. Mirick
07/31	8	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop	J. Kelly

Laughing Gull by Benjamin Griffith, 6/8/12, Jeffreys Ledge, offshore NH.

Laughing Gull				
06/02	2		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
06/08	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.
06/11	8	Hampton	Hampton Beach	J. Kelly
07/23	2		between Portsmouth and Isles of Shoals	S. Kloiber
Lesser Black-backed Gull				
07/31	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop	R. Gutberlet
Least Tern				
06/07	2	New Castle	Fort Constitution	J. Kelly
06/23	2		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/14	3	Rye	Rye Ledge	S. Mirick
07/28	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop	J. Scott, B. Crowley
07/29	3		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick, et al.
Caspian Tern				
06/21	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach	D. Gascoigne, M. Bauman
Black Tern				
06/18	1	Errol	Umbagog NWR, Leonard Marsh	M. O'Brien
Roseate Tern				
06/08	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	D. Skillman
06/26	20		Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/29	23	Hampton	Hampton Harbor, Hampton R. Marina flats	L. Medlock

date	#	town	location	observer(s)
Parasitic Jaeger				
06/08	1	Offshore Waters	Jeffreys Ledge	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.
Black Guillemot				
06/08	3	Rye	Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, et al.

Cuckoos through Crows

Both Yellow and Black-billed Cuckoos were reported in average numbers this summer. Eastern Screech-Owl has become more common across the southern tier of the state during the past several years but there were no reports this summer. Common Nighthawk continues to be a localized breeder in the state (see page 43) while Eastern Whip-poor-will is a little more widespread. The nesting status of these two species has changed little in the past few years.

American Kestrel by Christine Sheridan, 7/14/12.

This was the 32nd breeding season for Peregrine Falcon in the post DDT recovery era for New Hampshire. The 20 occupied territories tied a record. According to Chris Martin, raptor biologist for New Hampshire Audubon, there were 17 incubating pairs but only eight productive nests compared to 12 or 13 productive nests during the past five years. There were several more reports of American Kestrel than the past few summers but this may be a result of the huge volume of reports that eBird results in. Nevertheless, the reports were widespread, from all areas of the state being reported from 26 localities compared to 16 the previous summer.

A Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was seen on Mt Sunapee in early July. This is probably as far south as they breed in the state. The **Acadian Flycatcher** found in May in Concord lasted into the summer season with the last report on June 3. This flycatcher is typically found in the eastern U.S. south of our state but is occasionally found in southern New Hampshire; the last summer season report was in 2007.

date	#	town	location	observer(s)
Yellow-billed Cuckoo				
06/10	1	Concord	Turkey Pond	R. Woodward
06/16	1	Bradford	Bradford Elementary School	P. Newbern
06/17	1	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd./Suncook River	A. Robbins
06/18	1	Center Harbor	Squam Lake (overall)	W. Batsford
06/19	1	Croydon	Rocky Bound Pond	L. Lee
07/03	1	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	J. Merrill
07/04	1	Hancock	Antrim Rd.	P. Brown
07/21	1	Concord	State Prison farm & quarries	R. Woodward
07/29	1	Hancock	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Black-billed Cuckoo				
06/01	1	Exeter	Rt 85 powerlines	P. Chamberlin
06/07	1	Hanover	Dartmouth Riding Center, Etna	J. Norton
06/08	1	Concord	Mast Yard SF east	P. Hunt
06/08	1	Landaff		P. Brown
06/08	1	Sugar Hill		P. Brown
06/09	1	Dublin	Pumpelly Rd.	T. Warren
06/09	1	Freedom	Freedom Town Forest airstrip	T. Vazzano
06/09	1	Rumney	Buffalo Rd.	J. Williams
06/10	1	Concord	Turkey Pond	R. Woodward
06/11	2		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/16	1	Madison	Winter Rd. Silver Lake	J. Mullen
06/17	4		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	B. Griffith
06/28	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge	T. Vazzano
07/06	1	Boscawen	Couch Pond shore	R. Quinn
07/07	1	Deerfield	Old Center Rd.	P. Newbern
07/17	1	Sandwich	Thompson WS	L. Kras
07/20	1	Center Harbor	Coe Hill Rd.	J. Merrill
07/24	1	Northwood	Old Mt. Rd.	S. Young
07/29	1	Hanover	Pipers Lane	A. Wagner
Northern Saw-whet Owl				
06/09	2	Albany	Camp Bear Moose, Bear Notch Rd.	P. Brown
06/12	1	Jefferson	Bailey Rd.	D. Govatski
06/29	1	Albany	J J Campground	T. Pirro
Common Nighthawk				
06/09	2	Concord	Curtisville Rd.	R. Quinn, R. Suomala
06/09	2	Westmoreland	Hatt Rd.	G. Seymour
06/10	8	Concord	Project Nighthawk coordinated watch	R. Suomala, et al.
06/21	5	Keene	Project Nighthawk coordinated watch	B. Thelen, et al.
06/21	3	Concord	Industrial Park Drive	L. LaPierre, R. Quinn
06/30	4	Madison	coordinated watch, West Branch Pine Barrens	R. Suomala, et al.
06/30	4	Freedom	coordinated watch, Red Baron Rd.	R. Suomala, et al.
07/03	4	Grantham	Dunbar Hill Rd.	S. Brown
Eastern Whip-poor-will				
06/01	6	Hopkinton	Mast Yard SF	P. Hunt
06/01	2	Jefferson	Bailey Rd.	D. Govatski
06/05	3	Hopkinton	Mast Yard SF	R. Quinn
06/12	4	Milford	Amato property	T. Young
06/28	23	Freedom	Freedom Town Forest airstrip	P. Hunt, et al.
07/02	9	Hopkinton	Mast Yard SF	P. Hunt, R. Quinn, L. LaPierre
Chimney Swift				
06/07	40	Concord	Durgin Block parking garage	D. Howe
06/08	40	Derry	Derry WTP	T. Johnson
06/09	15	Nashua	Nashua River at Merrimack River	C. Sheridan
07/14	40	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
07/20	250	Concord	Durgin Block parking garage	R. Quinn
Red-bellied Woodpecker				
06/02	2	Chatham	Green Hill Rd.	B. Crowley
06/09	1	Warren	White Horse Ln.	D.& R. Lash

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				
06/05	5		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/09	2	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
06/16	6	Woodstock	Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest	A. Meyer
06/23	5	Canaan	Prospect Rd. residence	M. Bassett

Black-backed Woodpecker by Len Medlock, 7/1/12, Mt. Magalloway, Pittsburg, NH.

Black-backed Woodpecker				
06/08	2	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR, Mollidgewock Brook survey	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/08	3		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/08	3	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
06/09	4	Jefferson	Pondicherry NWR	E. Pavlis
06/11	2	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
06/15	2	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/16	2	Pittsburg	Perry Stream Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/17	1	Bethlehem	Trudeau Rd.	P. Hunt
06/18	4	T&M Purchase	WMNF, Caps Ridge Trail	V. Zollo, et al.
06/20	3	Pittsburg	Smith Brook Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
07/07	2	Berlin	Kilkenny Ridge Trail s.	S. Schulte
07/10	1	Lincoln	0.5 mi. from Zealand Mt. summit	T. Pirro
07/13	1	Errol	Greenough Pond Rd.	R. Quinn
07/21	2	Pittsburg	Magalloway Mountain	G. Billingham
Merlin				
06/06	1	Pittsburg	East Inlet area	B. Pfeiffer
06/16	1	Second College Grant		W. Lewis
06/22	2	Gorham	Moose Brook SP	P. Hunt
06/23	1		Squam Lake	W. Batsford
06/23	1	Whitefield	Airport Marsh	R. Shaw, A. Meyer
06/29	1	Wentworths Location	Umbagog NWR	S. Schulte
07/04	1	Hampton	offshore near Great Boar's Head	S. & J.Mirick
07/08	1	Wentworth	Shawnee's Store	J. Williams
07/10	1	Errol	Umbagog NWR, Sweat Meadow	M. O'Brien
07/13	1	Errol	Androscoggin R. at Errol dam	R. Quinn
07/18	6	Carroll	Paquette Dr., Twin Mountain	J. D'Urso
07/20	1	Pittsburg	Camp Otter Trail	G. Billingham
07/24	1	Concord	Green Street	P. Brown
07/24	2	Rumney	post office	J. Williams
07/30	1	Freedom	Berry Bay area	A. Robbins
Olive-sided Flycatcher				
06/05	1		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/09	1	Canaan	Canaan Street Lake	M. Bassett
06/11	2	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR Mollidgewock Brook Survey	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/12	1	Lyman	Dodge/Partridge/Moore survey	S. Turner

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Olive-sided Flycatcher—continued				
06/15	2	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/16	2	Pittsburg	Smith Brook Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/18	2	Pittsburg	Deer Mountain Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
07/15	1	T&M Purchase	WMNF, Caps Ridge Trail & Trudeau Rd.	J. Normandin
07/17	1	Sandwich	Thompson WS	L. Kras
07/31	2	Pittsburg	Day Rd., Perry Stream	T. Vazzano
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher				
06/05	7		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/06	6	Pittsburg	East Inlet area	B. Pfeiffer
06/08	5	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR, Mollidgewock Brook survey	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/09	8	Franconia	Cannon Mt.	A. Moncrieff
06/10	12	T&M Purchase	Mt. Jefferson, Caps Ridge Trail	A. Meyer, K. Dorsey
06/15	10	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/16	20	Sargents Purchase	Davis Path, Stairs Mtn.	M. Oyler
07/08	1	Newbury	Mt. Sunapee SP - Andrew's Brook Trail	P. Hunt, et al.
Acadian Flycatcher				
06/01	1	Concord	NH State Prison fields	P. Hunt
06/03	1	Concord	NH State Prison fields	K. Wilmarth
Willow Flycatcher				
06/05	1		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/08	2		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/19	7	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
06/23	2	Whitefield	Airport Marsh	A. Meyer, R. Shaw
07/18	4	Dover	Strafford County Farm	D. Hubbard
Yellow-throated Vireo				
06/08	1	Sandwich	end of Diamond Ledge Rd.	T. Vazzano
06/09	1	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
06/12	2	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
06/17	1	Cornish	Saint Gaudens NHS	D. Doubleday
06/19	2	Deerfield	Pawtuckaway SP, Reservation/Tower Rd. loop	K. Dorsey
07/05	4	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
Blue-headed Vireo				
06/09	7	Thornton	Welch Dickey Loop Trail	R. Buchsbaum
06/15	2	Lebanon	Boston Lot Lake trail, powerline corridor	W. Cripps
06/15	6	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/16	1	Northwood	Woodman Marsh WMA	P. Miliotis
06/16	8	Pittsburg	Smith Brook Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/17	1	Tuftonboro	Lower Beech Pond	A. Prazar
06/24	4	Chesterfield	Madame Sherri Forest	P. Brown
06/30	6	Lincoln	Flume Slide & Liberty Springs Trails, Mt. Flume & Mt. Liberty	A. Burnett
07/01	1	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
07/14	1	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
Warbling Vireo				
06/09	17	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
06/19	10	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Philadelphia Vireo				
06/05	1		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/06	2	Pittsburg	East Inlet area	B. Pfeiffer
06/10	1	Pinkham's Grant	Wildcat Mountain	G. Hawkins
06/10	1	Pittsburg	Scott Bog Rd.	Z. Cornell, C. Borg
06/15	1	Low & Burbanks	Jefferson Notch Rd.	T. Johnson
07/25	1	Carroll	Crawford Depot	J. Mays
07/31	1	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd., mile 11	T. Vazzano
Gray Jay				
06/08	4	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
06/10	2	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
06/15	15	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/16	3	Pittsburg	Perry Stream Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/17	3	Pittsburg	Indian Stream Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/17	2	Pittsburg	Smith Brook Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/19	4	Pittsburg	Scott Bog & East Inlet Roads	L. Waters, J. Sweeney, A. O'Neill
07/07	5		Kilkenny Ridge Trail, Mt. Starr King to Mt. Weeks	S. Schulte
07/08	2	Kilkenny	Mt. Cabot cabin	S. Schulte
07/10	1	Lincoln	Zealand Hike	T. Pirro
07/13	1	Errol	Greenough Pond Rd.	R. Quinn
07/23	3	Pittsburg	Magalloway Mountain	C. Groff
07/24	2	Beans Grant	Mizpah Hut	S. Walker
07/31	2	Pittsburg	Deer Mountain SP	T. Vazzano
Fish Crow				
06/09	1	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
06/14	1	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd. /Suncook River	A. Robbins
06/20	1	Madison	Silver Lake beach, Rt. 41	J. Mullen
07/01	5	Kingston	Powwow River	P. Cosgrove, J. Lightbody
07/15	5	Dover	Rt. 9 at Rt. 108	S. Abbott
07/21	6	Auburn	Massabesic Yacht Club	J. McKibben

Swallows through Waxwings

It appears that New Hampshire is down to only one viable Purple Martin colony – the long standing colony at Funspot in Weirs Beach. While a pair of martins was observed in East Conway, where there has been a colony for many years, a couple of subsequent visits by birders failed to turn up any. It is easy for a birder to miss them when there are so few and it is possible that a pair nested there this year. The martin houses occupied in previous years in Effingham were also checked a couple of times by different birders but no martins were seen.

A cooperative **Sedge Wren** was discovered in Sandwich in the middle of July and treated several birders to good looks during its three day stay as it sang frequently from a wet meadow. Sedge Wren breeds mostly to our west, throughout the Midwest, and it is possible that drought conditions there pushed some birds eastward. There were a few more reports of Carolina Wren this summer than in the past few but the only report north of Merrimack County was in Lyme in southern Grafton County.

For the second summer in a row, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher reports were relatively sparse, coming from only four locations. Like the Yellow-bellied Flycatcher seen there, a Swainson's Thrush on Mt Sunapee was about as far south as they are found in New Hampshire. A couple of American Pipits seen flying near Mt. Liberty in late June may be an indicator that these birds are trying to expand from their Mt. Washington location into other available tundra habitat.

Sedge Wren by Lauren Kras, 7/17/12, Sandwich, NH.

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Northern Rough-winged Swallow				
06/09	8	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
06/10	1		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Pettee
07/02	2	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd. /Suncook River	A. Robbins
07/03	4	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd. /Suncook River	A. Robbins
Purple Martin				
06/04	1	Newington	Great Bay NWR	J. Kelly
06/10	1	Seabrook	Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	S. Mirick
06/10	2	Wakefield	Scribner Brook	K. Wilmarth
06/12	2	Conway	Rt. 302	B. Griffith, J. Lambert
06/25	2	Laconia	Funspot	J. Williams
Bank Swallow				
06/09	100	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
06/10	15	Westmoreland	Connecticut River boat launch	A. Burnett
06/17	25	Canterbury	sod farm	R. Quinn, L. LaPierre
06/18	12	Jefferson	Meadows Rd.	V. Zollo, et al.
07/14	40	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
07/29	20	Westmoreland	Connecticut River boat launch	A. Burnett
Cliff Swallow				
06/07	16	New Castle	Fort Constitution	J. Kelly
06/11	36	Danbury	Smith River Meadows	R. Quinn, B.& H. Janeway
06/15	12	Pittsburg	Tabor Rd.	E. Nielsen
07/25	14	Dummer	Magill Bay, Androscoggin River	C. Groff
07/28	10	New Castle	Fort Constitution	S. Mirick
Boreal Chickadee				
06/10	4	T&M Purchase	Mt. Jefferson, Caps Ridge Trail	A. Meyer
06/15	13	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/18	4	Pittsburg	Deer Mountain Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/24	4	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
07/19	5	Benton	Beaver Brook Trail, Mt. Moosilauke	E. Pilotte

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Winter Wren				
06/07	14	Franconia	Cannon Mt.	E. Pandolfino
06/10	12	Bethlehem	North and South Twin Mt.	T. Pirro
06/10	12	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR Mollidgewock Brook Survey	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/11	14	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
06/16	23	Pittsburg	Smith Brook Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
07/07	18	Berlin	Kilkenny Ridge Trail, Mt. Starr King to Mt. Weeks	S. Schulte
Sedge Wren				
07/16	1	Sandwich	Thompson WS	T. Vazzano, R.& P. Ridgely
07/18	1	Sandwich	Thompson WS	S. Lee
Marsh Wren				
06/08	1	Hampton	Little Jacks Restaurant, Rt. 1A	M. Watson
06/08	25		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
07/17	4	Sandwich	Thompson WS	L. Kras
07/26	10	Stratham	Chapmans Landing	P. Hunt
07/30	2	Hampton	Meadow Pond	R. Gutberlet, et al.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher				
06/12	1	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
06/14	1	Concord	Tow Path Lane	D. Lania
06/20	1	Dover	Strafford County Farm	D. Hubbard
07/22	2	Concord	Morrill's Farm, Penacook	P. Hunt
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				
06/08	9	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
06/15	11	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/24	1		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
Veery				
06/10	34	Concord	Turkey Pond	R. Woodward
06/19	10	Deerfield	Pawtuckaway SP, Reservation/Tower Rd. loop	K. Dorsey
07/06	10	Madison	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve	J. Swanson
Bicknell's Thrush				
06/02	4	Benton	Mt. Moosilauke	P. Chaisson
06/07	4	Greens Grant	Mount Washington Auto Road	M. Goetschkes, S. Grinley
06/09	5	Franconia	Cannon Mt.	A. Moncrieff
06/15	8	T&M Purchase	WMNF, Caps Ridge Trail	T. Johnson
06/16	15	Sargents Purchase	Davis Path, Stairs Mtn.	M. Oyler
06/23	3	Beans Purchase	WMNF, Wildcat Ridge Trail	P. Hunt, H. Grant
07/02	11	Lincoln	Kinsman Pond & Kinsman Ridge Trails	T. Pirro
07/07	5	Berlin	Kilkenny Ridge Trail, Mt. Starr King to Mt. Weeks	S. Schulte
07/08	6	Kilkenny	Mt. Cabot & The Horn	S. Schulte
07/10	10	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush				
06/08	1	Concord	Contoocook River Park/Island Shores Estates, Penacook	P. Hunt
06/08	2	Concord	Mast Yard SF east	P. Hunt

date	#	town	location	observer(s)
Swainson's Thrush				
06/09	12	Sargents Purchase	Mount Washington Auto Road	G. Hawkins
06/10	12	Bethlehem	No. N and S Twin vis N twin trail	T. Pirro
06/15	26	T&M Purchase	WMNF, Caps Ridge Trail	T. Johnson
06/16	30	Hadleys Purchase	Davis Path, Stairs Mtn.	M. Oyler
06/19	26	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/30	19	Lincoln	Flume Slide & Liberty Springs Trails, Mt. Flume & Mt. Liberty	A. Burnett
07/02	20	Lincoln	North & South Kinsman from Rt. 3	T. Pirro
07/07	26	Berlin	Kilkenny Ridge Trail s.	S. Schulte
07/08	1	Newbury	Mt. Sunapee SP, Andrew's Brook Trail	P. Hunt, et al.
Brown Thrasher				
06/05	1		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/17	6	Concord	Concord Airport	D. Lania
07/07	4	Concord	USFWS Karner Blue easement	C. Sheridan
07/19	4	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
American Pipit				
06/30	2	Lincoln	Flume Slide & Liberty Springs Trails, Mt. Flume & Mt. Liberty	A. Burnett
07/14	2	T&M Purchase	Mt. Washington	W. Batsford
07/24	6	Beans Grant	Mizpah Hut	S. Walker
Cedar Waxwing				
06/03	42	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd. /Suncook River	A. Robbins
06/08	20		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/09	26	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
06/24	25	Meredith	Three Mile Island	M. Autin
07/09	30	Madbury	Kelley Road Pond	S. Snyder
07/14	25	Boscawen	Merrimack River to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
07/30	27	Concord	West Portsmouth St.	D. Lania

Warblers through Finches

A Magnolia Warbler, a Mourning Warbler and two Blackpoll Warblers in Hampton in early June were late spring migrants; the Wilson's Warbler in Jefferson on June 8 probably was also. All other reports of warblers were within the expected range in a New Hampshire summer for both location and quantity.

This summer's encore presentation award goes to Clay-colored Sparrow for being found singing in the same area of Newington for the fourth consecutive summer. Most of the population of this sparrow is to our west, in the upper Great Lakes and Plains. It has yet to be confirmed as a breeder in New Hampshire. Vesper Sparrow is a sparse breeder in the state and it is encouraging to see reports from a few areas where they haven't been seen in the past few years. Nelson's Sparrow breeds sparingly near the coast in New Hampshire and they were found in their usual locations and one in a fresh water marsh in Rye on June 10 may or may not have been a late migrant as they sometimes use freshwater habitat in New England. Of course, the western population of this sparrow, in the Plains, has no saltwater marshes available.

Fox Sparrow by Will Lewis, 6/10/12, Dixville Ridge, NH. See the article on page 45

Last summer was the first time in over a decade that Fox Sparrow was seen in the state during the breeding season. This summer the reports were a little more widespread with four males singing from one area; three were close together and the fourth was about 500 yards away on Dixville Ridge, near the site of last year's discovery. They were found in five different areas in Coos County. One observer in the White Mountains commented that she heard one in the same area the previous summer. This expansion of the Fox Sparrow range has possibly been going on a bit longer than the past two years but there is no data to confirm that as birding coverage in northern New Hampshire is sparse in many localities. See the article on page 45 for more details on this summer's Fox Sparrow reports and confirmation of breeding. A **Blue Grosbeak** discovered in Nashua in late May was last seen on June 12.

Grassland birds, in general, continue to decline across the region. This summer there were four reports of Eastern Meadowlark with a maximum of four in one location, all in southeastern New Hampshire. Birders are encouraged to report all sightings of grassland species in the state. Rusty Blackbird is a declining species throughout its range. The trail to Guinea Pond in Sandwich Notch had breeding Rusty Blackbirds up until just a few years ago. In some years past, they were also seen nearby at the Halls Ponds but they have not been seen there for several years. It was exciting to see a report of at least one at Halls Ponds. Even more exciting was seeing the video the observer sent showing an adult on a perch with food in its mouth and then flying into the brushy, shrubby area below with the food. Carrying food is considered confirmation that a bird has young to feed and has therefore bred in the area. With the exception of one other report from Franconia in the White Mountains, all the rest of the Rusty Blackbirds were farther north in Coos County, mostly in Pittsburg.

House Finch was more widespread across central New Hampshire many years ago but populations were decimated by disease. Now they are usually confined to the southern half of the state; this summer the northernmost report was in Holderness in the northern Lakes Region. A dozen reports of Red Crossbills came from scattered areas across the state while a similar number of White-winged Crossbill reports were nearly all from the north and central part of the state, the exception being one report from Jaffrey near the southern edge of New Hampshire. Pine Siskin numbers typically vary widely from year to year. This season they were widespread across the north and the White Mountains but there were no reports farther south.

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Louisiana Waterthrush				
06/03	1	Concord	Contoocook R. Park/Island Shores Estates, Penacook	P. Hunt
06/16	6		Cheshire County	P. Brown
06/20	1	Madison	Winter Rd. Silver Lake	J. Mullen
07/30	3	Lee	North River	S. Young
Northern Waterthrush				
06/11	4		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/17	5	Pittsburg	Indian Stream Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/19	1	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
06/19	1	Deerfield	Pawtuckaway SP, Reservation/Tower Rd. loop	K. Dorsey
06/20	1	Dover	Strafford County Farm	D. Hubbard
06/20	1	Sandwich	Thompson WS	T. Vazzano
06/24	1	Fitzwilliam	Rhododendron SP	P. Brown
07/27	2	Lincoln	Lincoln Woods Visitor Center	T. Knittel
07/29	1	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt

Blue-winged Warbler by Scott Young, 6/1/12, Old Mill Rd. WMA, Lee, NH.

Blue-winged Warbler				
06/01	1	Concord	Langley Pkwy.	Z. Cornell, P. Hunt
06/07	1	Dover	Strafford County Farm	D. Hubbard
06/07	1	Exeter	Newfields Rd residence	P. Chamberlin
06/09	1	Westmoreland	Hatt Rd.	G. Seymour
06/19	1	Lee	Old Mill Rd. WMA	S. Young
06/19	2	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
07/14	2	Durham	Bunker Creek	S. Young
07/15	1	Temple	Miller State Park, Wapack Trail	K. Allen
Nashville Warbler				
06/08	10	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR,	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/08	9		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield Mollidgewock Brook survey	D. Govatski
06/10	11	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
06/11	8	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR Mollidgewock Brook Survey	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/16	13	Bethlehem	Trudeau Rd. trails	J. Sweeney, A. O'Neill, L. Waters
06/19	19	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
Mourning Warbler				
06/02	1	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
06/07	1	Pittsburg	Scott Bog	J. Kent
06/09	3	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR, Mollidgewock Brook survey	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/09	1	Warren	White Horse Ln.	D.& R. Lash
06/10	1	Hampton	Church St. water tower parking lot	J. Mirick
06/10	2	Pittsburg	Scott Bog Rd.	Z. Cornell, C. Borg
06/16	12	Pittsburg	Smith Brook Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
06/17	5	T&M Purchase	WMNF, Caps Ridge Trail	K. Marshall, E. Labato
06/23	1	Canaan	Prospect Rd. residence	M. Bassett
Northern Parula				
06/08	9		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/17	23	Pittsburg	Indian Stream Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/30	16	Wentworths Location	Umbagog NWR, Magalloway R.	S. Schulte
07/01	1	Nottingham	Mile Brook, Deerfield Rd.	P. Miliotis
Magnolia Warbler				
06/06	2	Hampton	Church St. water tower parking lot	S. Mirick
Bay-breasted Warbler				
06/07	1	Franconia	Cannon Mt.	E. Pandolfino
06/08	1	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR, Mollidgewock Brook survey	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/15	1	T&M Purchase	WMNF, Caps Ridge Trail	T. Johnson
06/16	2	Pittsburg	Perry Stream Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/18	3	Pittsburg	Scott Bog Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/19	11	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
Blackburnian Warbler				
06/01	8	Woodstock	Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest	A. Meyer
06/19	6	Strafford	Parker Mtn. /Evans Mtn./ Strafford Town Forest	S. Young
07/15	4	Temple	Miller State Park, Wapack Trail	K. Allen
07/20	6	Webster	Call Rd.	R. Quinn
Chestnut-sided Warbler				
06/05	6		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/10	6	Warren	Batchelder Brook Rd.	D.& R. Lash
06/15	15	Lebanon	Boston Lot Lake trail, powerline corridor	W. Cripps
06/16	17	Pittsburg	Smith Brook Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/17	20	Pittsburg	Indian Stream Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
07/08	8	Webster	Little Hill Rd.	R. Quinn
Blackpoll Warbler				
06/01	15	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
06/05	18	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
06/06	2	Hampton	Church St. water tower parking lot	S. Mirick
06/09	15	Franconia	Cannon Mt.	A. Moncrieff
06/10	34	T&M Purchase	Mt. Jefferson, Caps Ridge Trail	A. Meyer
06/16	22	Hadleys Purchase	Davis Path, Stairs Mtn.	M. Oyler
06/30	36	Lincoln	Flume Slide & Liberty Springs Trails, Mt. Flume & Mt. Liberty	A. Burnett
07/07	38	Berlin	Kilkenny Ridge Trail, Mt. Starr King to Mt. Weeks	S. Schulte
Black-throated Blue Warbler				
06/08	15	Woodstock	Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest	D. Narango
06/30	27	Lincoln	Flume Slide & Liberty Springs Trails, Mt. Flume & Mt. Liberty	A. Burnett
07/08	9	Newbury	Mt. Sunapee SP, Andrew's Brook Trail	P. Hunt, et al.
07/16	15	Greens Grant	WMNF, Nineteen Mile Brook Trail	P. Hunt

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Palm Warbler				
06/01	1	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
06/05	3		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/07	1	Effingham	Huntress Bridge Rd.	T. Vazzano
06/08	14	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR, Mollidgewock Brook survey	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/11	1		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
06/25	8	Dummer	bog west of Pontook Reservoir	P. Hunt
07/14	1	Jefferson	Pondicherry NWR, Mud Pond	C. Schlotterbeck
Prairie Warbler				
06/01	4	Exeter	Rt. 85 powerlines	P. Chamberlin
06/08	3	Concord	Mast Yard SF east	P. Hunt
06/23	8	Concord	Concord Airport	R. Woodward
06/24	5	Chesterfield	Madame Sherri Forest	P. Brown
06/24	11	Madison	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve	T. Vazzano
07/04	5	Amherst	Hertzka Drive	C. Sheridan
Canada Warbler				
06/10	5	Errol	Lake Umbagog NWR Mollidgewock Brook Survey	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/11	3	Jefferson	Pondicherry NWR, Mud Pond	S. Turner
06/15	7	T&M Purchase	WMNF, Caps Ridge Trail	T. Johnson
06/19	9	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/19	3	Sandwich	Thompson WS	P. Brown
07/15	1	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
07/24	1	Fitzwilliam	Little Monadnock	J. Shamgochian
Wilson's Warbler				
06/06	2	Pittsburg	East Inlet area	B. Pfeiffer
06/08	1		Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	E. Pandolfino
06/18	1	Pittsburg	Deer Mountain Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/18	2	Pittsburg	Scott Bog Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
07/31	1	Pittsburg	Deer Mountain SP	T. Vazzano
Clay-colored Sparrow				
06/06	1	Newington	Short St.	Z. Cornell
Field Sparrow				
06/06	5	Newington	Short St. & Arboretum Dr.	Z. Cornell
06/09	4	Hopkinton	Mast Yard SF	R. Woodward
06/23	7	Concord	Concord Airport	R. Woodward
06/24	2	Madison	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve	T. Vazzano
07/21	2	New Ipswich	Wapack Trail, Binney Pond to Windblown Ski Area	K. Allen
07/28	2	Westmoreland	Woodward Rd. area	A. Burnett
Vesper Sparrow				
06/05	2	Concord	Concord Airport	Z. Cornell
06/09	1	Boscawen	Crete Farm	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT
06/24	1	Swanzey	Dillant-Hopkins Airport	P. Brown
06/24	1	Tuftonboro	Federal Corners Rd.	D. Duxbury-Fox
07/14	1	Boscawen	Crete Farm	R. Quinn, Capital Chapter FT

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Grasshopper Sparrow				
06/05	1	Portsmouth	Pease Int'l. Tradeport	J. Kelly
06/16	4	Amherst	cemetery fields	C. Sheridan
06/23	1	Concord	Concord Airport	R. Woodward

Nelson's Sparrow captured during a UNH research project on Great Bay. Photo by Pam Hunt, 7/26/12, Stratham, NH. UNH research project on Great Bay

Nelson's Sparrow				
06/10	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	S. Mirick
06/23	1	Stratham	Chapmans Landing	J. Kelly
06/24	1	N. Hampton	Philbrick Marsh	S. Mirick
07/08	2	N. Hampton	Philbrick Marsh	S. Mirick
07/26	6	Stratham	Chapmans Landing	P. Hunt
Saltmarsh Sparrow				
07/07	2	Newmarket	Lubberland Creek Preserve	K. Dorsey
07/08	20	Hampton	Hampton salt marsh	S. Mirick
07/26	15	Stratham	Chapmans Landing	P. Hunt
Fox Sparrow				
06/07	1	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
06/09	1	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
06/09	1	T&M Purchase	WMNF, Caps Ridge Trail	C. Borg
06/10	3	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
06/25	4	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
07/07	1	Errol	Greenough Pond Rd.	W. Lewis
07/07	1	Randolph	Vyron D. Lowe Trail	S. Warren
07/13	1	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
07/17	1	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
Lincoln's Sparrow				
06/13	1	Wentworths Location	Umbagog NWR, Magalloway R. Trail	W. Lewis
06/16	4	Pittsburg	Smith Brook Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/20	1	Pittsburg	Coon Brook Bog	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/20	2	Pittsburg	Magalloway Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/20	4	Pittsburg	Smith Brook Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/25	3	Dummer	bog west of Pontook Reservoir	P. Hunt
07/03	2	Rumney	Quincy Bog	D. Lash
07/31	1	Pittsburg	Scott Bog Rd.	T. Vazzano
Blue Grosbeak				
06/07	1	Nashua	Four Hills Landfill	M. Medeiros
06/12	1	Nashua	Four Hills Landfill	M. Medeiros
Bobolink				
06/04	15	Westmoreland	Woodward Road area	A. Burnett
06/27	18	Hillsborough	Spring Meadow Farm	P. Brown
07/02	40	Dover	Bellamy River WMA	S. Young
07/07	35	Dover	Strafford County Farm	D. Hubbard
07/29	54	Westmoreland	Woodward Rd. area	A. Burnett

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
Eastern Meadowlark				
06/06	1	Portsmouth	Pease Int'l. Tradeport	J. Scott, B. Crowley
06/28	1	Derry	Derry WTP	S. Mirick
06/30	4	Portsmouth	Pease Int'l. Tradeport	N. Gibb
07/04	1	Durham	Woodmen Horticulture Research Farm	S. Snyder
07/15	1	Dover	County Farm Rd.	S. Abbott
Rusty Blackbird				
06/16	9	Pittsburg	Perry Stream Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/18	16	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/18	4	Pittsburg	Scott Bog Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
07/14	1	Errol	Greenough Pond Road, Errol	W. Lewis
07/16	1	Sandwich	Upper Hall Pond	M. Batcheller
07/21	1	Franconia	AMC Greenleaf Hut	D. Narango

Orchard Oriole by Christine Sheridan, 6/27/12, Nashua, NH.

Orchard Oriole				
06/01	1	Concord	NH State Prison fields	P. Hunt
06/01	2	Durham	Surrey Lane Marsh	S. Snyder
06/02	1	Dover	Bellamy River WMA	D. Hubbard, G. Tilman, Seacoast Chapter FT
06/09	1	Nashua	Nashua R. at Merrimack R.	C. Sheridan
06/12	1	Concord	SPNHF Merrimack River CA	D. Lania
06/14	1	Salem	Hawkin's Farm, below Wheeler Dam	K. Wilmarth
06/17	1	Cornish	Saint Gaudens Nat'l. Historic Site	D. Doubleday
06/27	6	Nashua	Nashua R. at Merrimack R.	C. Sheridan
06/28	2	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
07/03	1	Boscawen	Merrimack River	D. Lania
07/14	3	Dover	Bellamy River WMA	S. Young
07/29	1	Amherst	Ponemah Bog	C. Sheridan
Purple Finch				
06/14	6	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd. /Suncook River	A. Robbins
06/15	12	T&M Purchase	WMNF, Caps Ridge Trail	T. Johnson
07/08	11	Lyman	Dodge Pond	S. Turner
07/18	13	Greenfield	Ravenwood Farm	T. Shiel
House Finch				
06/17	1	Holderness	Science Center Rd.	D. Lash
06/29	1	Laconia	Funspot	J. Heaney
Red Crossbill				
06/10	2	T&M Purchase	Mt. Jefferson, Caps Ridge Trail	A. Meyer
06/11	2	Woodstock	Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest	A. Meyer
06/17	1	Pittsburg	Smith Brook Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/19	10	T&M Purchase	WMNF, Caps Ridge Trail	D. Narango

date	*#*	*town*	*location*	*observer(s)*
06/30	2	Woodstock	Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest	A. Meyer
07/02	1	Concord	McLane Audubon Center, Silk Farm Rd.	P. Brown
07/07	2	Hancock	Antrim Rd.	E. Masterson
07/08	1	Newbury	Mt. Sunapee SP, Andrew's Brook Trail	P. Hunt, et al.
07/24	1	Hancock	Antrim Rd.	P. Brown
07/30	4	Freedom	Berry Bay area	A. Robbins
07/31	2	Rochester	Fowler Farm	D. Hubbard
White-winged Crossbill				
06/06	5	Pittsburg	East Inlet area	B. Pfeiffer
06/07	2	Greens Grant	Mount Washington Auto Road	S. Grinley, M. Goetschkes
06/07	12	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
06/09	2	Jaffrey	Mt. Monadnock	R. Schain
06/09	5	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd./Suncook River	A. Robbins
06/11	2	Dixville	Dixville Ridge	W. Lewis
06/15	8	Pittsburg	East Inlet Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/22	1	Gorham	Moose Brook SP	P. Hunt
06/30	2	Woodstock	Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest	A. Meyer
07/30	3	Freedom	Berry Bay area	A. Robbins
Pine Siskin				
06/06	1	Hancock	Antrim Rd.	P. Brown
06/06	15	Pittsburg	East Inlet area	B. Pfeiffer
06/07	5	Franconia	Cannon Mt.	E. Pandolfino
06/07	11	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
06/10	10	T&M Purchase	Mt. Jefferson, Caps Ridge Trail	A. Meyer
06/14	15	Millsfield	Kelsey Ridge	W. Lewis
06/18	11	Pittsburg	Scott Bog Rd.	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
Evening Grosbeak				
06/03	2	Webster	Call Rd.	R. Quinn
06/06	1	Gilmanton	Middle Route	B. Sens
06/12	4	Strafford	Lakeview Drive	S. Young
06/17	1	Concord	Turkey Pond	R. Woodward
06/22	3	Landaff	Coventry Rd.	R. Shaw
07/01	2	Nottingham	Mile Brook, Deerfield Rd.	P. Miliotis
07/13	3	Bartlett		K. McFarland
07/16	6	Greenfield	Ravenwood Farm	T. Shiel
07/30	1	Freedom	Berry Bay area	A. Robbins

Research and Volunteer Opportunities

MAPS Returns to Massabesic Audubon Center

by Jay Barry

Red-eyed Vireo at a nest by Debbie LaValley.

MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship) is a cooperative effort among public agencies, private organizations, and the bird banders of the continental United States, Canada, and Mexico to provide critical, long-term data on bird populations for over 100 landbird species. The program utilizes standardized, constant-effort mist netting and banding during the breeding season at an extensive network of stations. The MAPS methodology provides annual indices of adult population size and post-fledgling productivity.

The MAPS Program (which is under the direction of the Institute for Bird Populations, IBP) began in 1989 with 16 stations and now, in 2012, has approximately 500 stations across the continent. There are strict guidelines in place for each station to maximize the consistency of data between stations. Some of the protocols that each station must follow include:

- Each station is roughly a square or circular shape approximately 20 hectares in area.
- Ten 12 meter mist nets are uniformly distributed over a core area of about eight hectares.
- MAPS is strictly a breeding season study — banding is done on one day in seven 10 day periods from late May until early August.
- All nets are opened in a window from 30 minutes before to 30 minutes after sunrise and are closed six hours later.
- All stations record the same banding data on specialized MAPS forms and the data is sent to IBP at the end of each season.

In 1997, Dorothy Fitch and John Munier began a MAPS program at the Massabesic Audubon Center, which they continued until 2007 when they moved to another state. During this time, they banded over 450 birds as part of the program. This average of approximately 45 birds per year may not seem like a large number, however, in a forested habitat you simply do not capture the same numbers as in a shrub habitat or at a migration oasis such as the Isles of Shoals.

In 2012, I re-established the MAPS station at Massabesic. In the Fall of 2011, I was able, with the help of Becky Suomala of New Hampshire Audubon, to locate the re-bar (used to hold the banding poles) for all of the 10 net locations that Dorothy and John used. It was important to set my nets in the exact locations as theirs for any data comparison to be meaningful.

The results for 2012 were, to me, surprising. Where John and Dorothy averaged approximately 45 birds per year, I managed to capture only 19 birds (and two repeats). This was in roughly 420 net hours of effort, about the same as John and Dorothy's net hours (MAPS is designed for constant effort from year to year). There were actually two days of the seven when zero birds were captured. The 19 captures were:

Black-capped Chickadee - 1
Eastern Bluebird - 4
Eastern Phoebe - 2
Hairy Woodpecker - 1
Indigo Bunting - 1
Northern Cardinal - 2
Pine Warbler - 1
Red-eyed Vireo - 1
Scarlet Tanager - 2
Tufted Titmouse - 2
Veery - 1
White-breasted Nuthatch - 1

Repeats are birds that have already been banded. One of the two repeats was a Tufted Titmouse that had been banded by John and Dorothy in 2006. The other repeat was an Eastern Phoebe that I banded on June 16 and recaptured on July 7 (2012).

So, my total was less than half of the average for 1997-2007. The species diversity was also considerably down; John and Dorothy averaged about four or five more species per year. They typically had 4-5 Wood Thrush, Hermit Thrush, and Ovenbird per year. My total was zero for each of these. While making my net rounds, the lack of song by these species was noticeable. This is just one year of data. I will be anxious to see if we get the same low results in 2013, or if the station returns to the numbers that Dorothy and John were getting. A recent paper in *Diversity and Distributions* (S. Chollet and J. Martin. 2012. Declining woodland birds in North America: should we blame Bambi?) points the finger at increasing deer populations; destruction of the forest understory taking away food and nesting resources for woodland species.

If you would like to assist or visit a MAPS banding session, please contact the Massabesic Audubon Center for a schedule. Dates may be shifted from day to day according to predicted weather conditions.

Jay Barry has been banding birds for forty-four years and is a volunteer educator and naturalist at the Massabesic Audubon Center.

Spotlight on the Breeding Shorebirds of New Hampshire

by Benjamin Griffith

Juvenile Spotted Sandpiper by Jonathan Smith, 7/8/12, Manchester, NH.

To many birdwatchers, shorebirds elicit visions of flocks of hundreds of small brownish birds feeding on a frustratingly distant coastal mudflat. During the breeding season, however, shorebirds lead a very different life. On their breeding grounds, shorebirds do not form flocks and many of them perform elaborate displays or sophisticated songs. In New Hampshire, seven species have been documented nesting, ranging from some of the most common and widespread species to some of the state's rarest breeders.

Killdeer

The Killdeer is perhaps the most familiar of New Hampshire's breeding shorebird species. It is a large plover that is easily distinguished from other species by its double "necklace." Killdeer are well adapted to virtually any open environment. In addition to airports, farms, and other short cut fields throughout the state, Killdeer can be found nesting on gravel rooftops, athletic fields, and even parking lots. They are also at home in more typical shorebird habitats, breeding in salt marshes and foraging with other shorebirds in salt pans and flooded fields.

Piping Plover

Unlike the Killdeer, New Hampshire's other breeding plover, the Piping Plover, is one of the state's rarest and most local breeding birds. Piping Plovers resemble the more common (and non-breeding) Semipalmated Plover, but are pale sandy brown, providing perfect camouflage on the sandy beaches and dunes where they breed. In New Hampshire, their breeding habitat is restricted to Hampton Beach State Park and Seabrook Beach where no more than three pairs have bred in recent years. Within their limited breeding range in the state, Piping Plovers are threatened by disturbance by human beachgoers, as well as unleashed dogs and feral cats. The breeding Piping Plovers are carefully monitored by the NH Fish and Game Department, and metal mesh "exclosures" are placed around their nests in hopes of deterring predators.

Willet

The Willet is a large, long-legged, mottled brown sandpiper that is found strictly coastally. Although subtly patterned while perched, their striking black and white wing pattern distinguishes them from other shorebirds in flight. Although they likely

bred in the state historically, they were hunted to near extinction around the turn of the 20th century. Since the Migratory Bird Treaty was passed they have slowly recovered, and birds were first documented breeding again in the state in 1985. They are now common breeders in the extensive salt marshes of Hampton, Seabrook, and Rye.

Spotted Sandpiper

For much of the year Spotted Sandpipers look nondescript with brown upperparts and white underparts, but it acquires its namesake spots on its breast during the summer months. At all times of year, it nervously bobs its tail as it walks along rocky or muddy shorelines. Like the Killdeer, Spotted Sandpipers are widespread breeders in the state, but are much less conspicuous. Nesting Spotted Sandpipers are associated with a variety of wetland habitats including rivers, lakes and ponds. They're also found along rocky shorelines, and one of the state's highest densities is actually found on White Island at the Isles of Shoals.

Upland Sandpiper

The Upland Sandpiper is easily recognized by its small head with a large eye and its yellow bill. True to its name, Upland Sandpipers are not associated with water, but instead prefer open fields. The Upland Sandpiper was once common and widespread in the state, but as fields were overgrown and became forests, the species declined. Now, the only remaining breeding population of this shorebird is at Pease International Tradeport, where the population is carefully monitored.

Wilson's Snipe

The Wilson's Snipe is a squat shorebird with an exceptionally long bill that is unlikely to be confused with anything except perhaps the next species, the American Woodcock. The two, however, are easily distinguished as the snipe is darker and lacks the buffy underparts of the woodcock. During the breeding season, Wilson's Snipe are common in bogs and ponds in the northern part of the state, and uncommon in the western highlands. During this time, a male snipe is easily detected during its flight display in which it flies high into the air while making an eerie deep whistle with its tail feathers (this behavior is usually referred to as "winnowing").

American Woodcock

The American Woodcock is perhaps the least "shorebird-like" of our shorebirds. It is primarily nocturnal and eschews the open habitats of its relatives for early successional woodlands. It is a very stout shorebird, with a warm buffy coloration overall that blends in perfectly with the leaf litter of the forest floor. The only hint of its taxonomic association is the long, slender bill which resembles that of the Wilson's Snipe. Beginning in early March, woodcocks can be found giving a spectacular display at dusk in clearings near their woodland nesting grounds. During the display, the male utters single, deep, nasal notes ("peents") from the ground, flies high into the air, and produces a rapid twittering with his wings upon descent.

Other Possible Future Breeders

Both the American Oystercatcher and the Wilson's Phalarope breed in Maine and Massachusetts, and appropriate habitat appears to exists in New Hampshire. It seems possible that either species could attempt to breed in the state. American Oystercatch-

ers breed on beaches or in salt marshes associated with mussel beds. They're expanding their range northward, and both Hampton and Rye Harbors contain appropriate habitat for potential breeding if their northward expansion continues. Most Wilson's Phalaropes breed primarily in alkali lakes in the Great Plains, but small numbers breed in salt pans along the Atlantic Coast. New Hampshire's salt marshes provide an abundance of this habitat and Wilson's Phalaropes have been seen in appropriate habitat during the breeding season at least once.

Where to Bird

Birding Mount Kearsarge

by Robert A. Quinn

"Oh mountain solitary and grand;
Whast though placed here to guard the land,
O'er all these hills, was this thy charge,
To keep watch and ward, Oh Kearsarge?"

- Charles F. Goodhue, Sept 1915

Spruce and fir-covered Mount Kearsarge, at 2,937 feet, is an excellent southern outpost of breeding boreal birds with spectacular views, easy access, fascinating glacial geology, and decent trails. Bicknell's Thrush used to nest here (as recently as 1977) and Swainson's Thrush and numerous warblers still do. The mountain, in the towns of Warner and Wilmot, is crowned by two state parks and its shoulders are easily accessible by roads (seasonal). Several trails through wonderful forests finish the climb to the summit from both the north and the south. These trails provide ready access to excellent spruce-fir habitat and the birds that inhabit it. In fact, because Kearsarge is wooded almost all the way to its summit, it may have more acres of spruce-fir than Mounts Monadnock or Cardigan, and it is almost on a par with the long conifer covered ridge culminating in Mount Sunapee's peak. Better yet, the trees near the summit of Kearsarge are stunted spruces which are perfect habitat for

Ledges and view from Mt. Kearsarge.

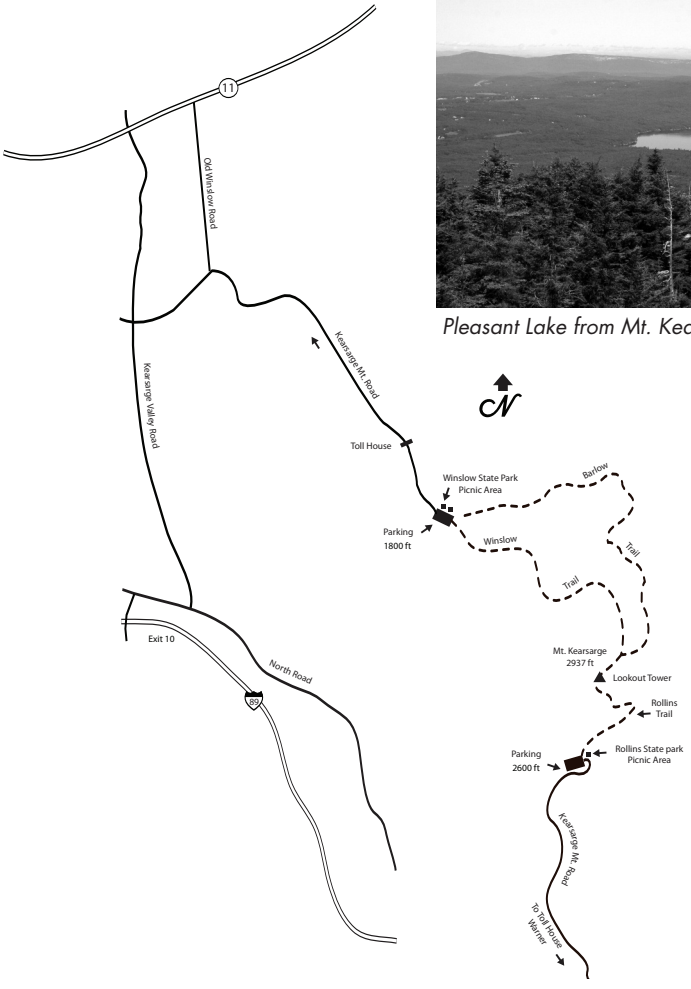
Bicknell's Thrush and Blackpoll Warbler. It is only about 25 miles north and west of Concord in Merrimack County and easily accessed from Interstate 89.

Luckily, we have reasonable bird data from this dominant peak in northwestern Merrimack County as far back as the 1930s courtesy of Kimball Elkins, Tudor Richards, Bob Vernon and a few others. Better still, we have an article written by Kimball in 1953 that included an annotated list of the birds seen on or near the mountain, as well as an excellent description of the habitats as they existed then. Finally, New Hampshire's first Wildlife Action Plan identified a huge block of lands around Mount Kearsarge as being of the "highest ranked habitat" for wildlife in New Hampshire.

Birding strategies

Birding is at its best for the spruce-fir breeders in late spring and through the summer. The song period lasts from mid-May through early July and feathered families can be seen until late August. In September and October, it has proven to be a good

Pleasant Lake from Mt. Kearsarge by R.A. Quinn.



hawkwatch site too. It is a very popular hike on weekends so birding is best during the early morning hours on weekdays but if you start early enough, weekend birding is fine too.

Best birding route for boreal species: Approach the mountain from the north and drive to **Winslow State Park** (modest entry fee; trail map available) on the Wilmot side. There should be brown state park signs along the way. From Rt. 89 take exit 10 and go to the stop sign at the end of the ramp. Turn right and go 0.1 mile to another stop sign. Turn right on North Road (unmarked here). Go 0.4 miles on North Road then left on to Kearsarge Valley Road. Follow Kearsarge Valley Road for 3.0 miles then turn right onto Kearsarge Mountain Road which leads uphill for 2.5 miles to the gate for Winslow State Park. There is a parking area (at 1,800 feet elevation) with picnic tables and restrooms. You have two trail choices, but for birding, I favor going up the steep, one mile long Winslow Trail which soon enters tall red spruces before reaching some ledges and the first stunted spruces. The tall spruces are good places for Winter Wren, Blackburnian Warbler, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and maybe Ruby-crowned Kinglet (rare). Then, it is worth spending an hour or two birding the forested edge near the summit while enjoying the wide views. The most common species around the summit include Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, and Yellow-rumped Warbler, but this is also the place to watch and listen for Swainson's Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler, and the very rare possibility of a Bicknell's Thrush. A few seemingly "out of place" birds on the summit in recent years have been Mourning Doves, apparently nesting around the buildings at the top, Cedar Waxwings which come up to eat the mountain ash berries and abundant insects, and, on July 8, 2007, I even noted some early migrant Tree Swallows winging their way south over the summit. Once you are done at the summit, I suggest that you return down the 1.8 mile Barlow Trail which is less steep and longer but still goes through nice spruce-fir habitat above 2,300 feet. This includes wet boreal forest that is good for Magnolia Warbler and possibly Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (rare). The mature mixed woods at lower elevations are full of common species such as Black-throated Green Warbler and Hermit Thrush. This route can be covered in a morning.

As an alternative, if time is short or you are not up for the moderately strenuous Winslow Trail (1,100 foot elevation gain in a mile or so), drive up from the south side to **Rollins State Park** (fee, map), then make the modest hike of one-quarter mile and 300 feet elevation rise that begins at the parking area. To get to Rollins State Park from Rt. 89, take exit 8 in Warner. (There should be brown state park signs along the way.) At the end of the ramp turn left and go 0.3 miles to a stop sign at Route 103. Turn right and follow Rt. 103 1.3 miles to downtown Warner. Turn right in the center of the village on Kearsarge Mountain Rd. and follow it for 5.1 miles to the park toll gate. The limitation here is that the gate has restricted hours and the road extends for 3.7 miles beyond it to the parking area and trail head. They usually open the gate on weekends after Memorial Day and then full time sometime in June. In June 2012 they closed the gate to traffic going up the mountain at 4:00 pm. There is good birding along this road but it is mainly for lower elevation hardwood species and it takes so long that you'd miss the boreal songsters. Both gates are closed for the winter season shortly after Columbus Day.

Regularly occurring breeding birds of note: Mourning Dove (at the summit!), Blue-headed Vireo, Swainson's Thrush, Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, about 12 species of warblers including Nashville, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Blackburnian, and Canada, plus White-throated Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco and Purple Finch.

Irregular, rare, or possible breeding birds (based on actual records): Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (at the southern limit of its breeding range), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (ditto), Tennessee Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, both crossbills, and Pine Siskin.

Former breeders that should be watched for: Olive-sided Flycatcher, Bicknell's Thrush, Bay-breasted Warbler, and Mourning Warbler. These species are unlikely now due to habitat changes (Olive-sided Flycatcher and Mourning Warbler) and possibly climate change (Bicknell's Thrush and Bay-breasted Warbler) or both. That is another reason for you to go birding there!

Fall birding and Hawkwatching

It is possible to do some limited hawkwatching from the north side of Mt. Kearsarge without any hiking at all since there is a decent view to the north from the Winslow State Park picnic area (see directions above). It has not been used as a regular hawkwatch site, but a few highlights from earlier years (when most species of hawks were much fewer in number than today) gives us a tantalizing peek into what could be tallied:

September 17, 1955: Osprey-15

September 16, 1955: Northern Harrier-4 (probably more common then), Sharp-shinned Hawk-13, and Cooper's Hawk-3

September 19, 1951: Bald Eagle-4

September 21, 1969: Broad-winged Hawk-1,000

September 27, 1986: Golden Eagle-2

Most of these numbers compare rather well with the numbers recorded at official hawkwatches today and indicate that more effort could be quite rewarding. In recent years, a few hours of hawkwatching have consistently produced decent flocks of Broad-winged Hawks, suggesting Kearsarge may be along a migratory corridor for this species, and also that this elevation is not too high for good counts. The summit is quicker and easier to access from the south side (Rollins State Park) by way of the short but moderately steep and rough Rollins Trail.

Later in the fall, the woods can attract thrushes, warblers, and finches (spruce cones), and, also, the open summit attracts occasional Horned Larks, American Pipits, and Snow Buntings. Winter birding in good spruce cone years could be productive but the access roads are closed and the trails and ledges are usually treacherously icy.

Special Notes

Hiking Mount Kearsarge should not be taken lightly. It is a nearly 3,000 foot peak with some rough and steep sections to the trails and you need to be prepared for much colder weather and wind at the summit. That being said, on a nice day, there are fewer hikes in southern New Hampshire with such wonderful rewards for so little effort, especially from the Warner side. Also, not to be confused with this site, there is

another mountain with almost the same name (Mount Kearsarge North with nearly the same elevation!) in the town of Chatham in the White Mountains just north of North Conway.

The combination of interesting birds, great scenery, and easy access should make Mount Kearsarge a regular destination for more birders. To quote Kimball Elkins in 1953:

> "Undoubtedly there are interesting discoveries still to be made on Kearsarge and other mountains of our southwestern uplands."

This is still true today! So here is another opportunity for you to have some fun birding in a grand setting and add to our knowledge of New Hampshire's bird life.

Other Nearby Sites

If you have time before or after hiking Mt. Kearsarge, there are several interesting wetlands in the low country to the west and north of the mountain that can easily be checked. The most significant ones are Cascade Marsh in Sutton and Danbury Bog in Danbury. Both can be checked from roadsides though paddling a boat through them is more productive for birding. The easiest access for Cascade Marsh is via Cotton Hill Road, off Baker Road, and Kearsarge Valley Road. The best way to check Danbury Bog by car is where Ragged Mountain Road crosses the wetland less than a mile south of Rt. 104 in Danbury. King Rail, Least Bittern, and nesting Northern Harriers have occurred at these wetlands in the past. Pied-billed Grebe used to be a regular breeder at Cascade Marsh. These sites get little coverage today, so who knows what you might find. In the summer of 2011, I tallied American Bittern, Virginia Rail, and Wilson's Snipe in these marshes.

The Sunapee-Ragged-Kearsarge Greenway is an "emerald necklace" of 75 miles of hiking trails in the larger region. www.srkg.com

Of cultural interest, the Mount Kearsarge Indian Museum in Warner is fantastic and definitely worth a couple of hours. www.indianmuseum.org

Resources

New Hampshire State Parks web site: www.nhstateparks.org
http://www.nhstateparks.com/rollins.html
http://www.nhstateparks.com/winslow.html
Mt. Kearsarge Trail Map:
http://www.nhstateparks.org/uploads/pdf/KearsargeHikingMap_Web.pdf
New Hampshire DeLorme Atlas & Gazetteer

References

Elkins, Kimball. 1953. Notes on the Birds of the southern Mount Kearsarge. *New Hampshire Bird News*. Volume 6, Number 1.

Bob Quinn has birded throughout New Hampshire (and the world) for almost 40 years. For 20 years, he was the Summer Editor for New Hampshire Bird Records*, and is still an active volunteer. He was a founding member of the NH Rare Bird Committee and has a keen interest in the status of birds in New Hampshire. In 2010, he was honored with New Hampshire Audubon's prestigious Goodhue-Elkins award.*

Dustbathing and Passive Anting by a Male Spruce Grouse

by Chris K. Borg

Male Spruce Grouse dust bathing at the summit of Mt. Waumbek. Photo by J.R. Stockwell, 6/17/12.

The Spruce Grouse *(Falcipennis canadensis)* is a species of dense northern coniferous forest. In New Hampshire, it is an uncommon resident inhabiting both high elevation and lowland spruce-fir communities and can be found from the White Mountains north to Pittsburg. Despite its nickname "fools hen," the seemingly surreptitious nature of Spruce Grouse allows only few observers into its world.

On June 10, 2012, I was fortunate to be afforded a brief glimpse into the daily life of a Spruce Grouse, albeit somewhat comically at first. I was showing a friend the basics of boreal forest birding along East Inlet Road in the town of Pittsburg (Coos County). After a couple of stealthy hours of grouse searching, we had all but given up. It was shortly past noon, warm (72°), and quite buggy, but nevertheless, we proceeded slowly in silence. After emerging from a dense spruce thicket, movement to the far right caught my peripheral vision.

At first glance the bird, a Spruce Grouse, was frozen in its tracks, motionless with its right wing splayed out on the ground and partially covered with dust. This immedi-

ately gave me the impression the bird was about to feign a broken wing, but something wasn't quite right. This grouse was a male. In fact, the bird was so well camouflaged in dust that only its brilliant red eye combs gave its gender away. Additionally, the bird was atop a mound of swarming ants! "What bird in its right mind… and what male grouse would…?"

Logic quickly prevailed and we suspected the bird was "dust bathing." After cautiously putting some distance between us and the bird, it soon resumed normal behavior. We watched intently, momentarily oblivious to the feasting black flies. The grouse literally rolled on the mound, flicked sand and dust onto its back with splayed wings, and casually consumed ants as suggested by routine pecking at the swarm. The hapless ants apparently returned the favor although clearly lacked the upper hand.

While flicking dust with alternating wings, the grouse would often lurch its body forward, and at times be virtually prostrate on the ground. It followed this by rolling completely onto its back. After returning to an upright position the bird shook vigorously, ruffling feathers from head to tail. It then pivoted its belly on the mound in a clockwise and counter clockwise fashion. This motion carved a perfect "cup" into the ant mound; determined later to be 18 cm in diameter and 7 cm deep. All this occurred simultaneously as ants crawled through feathers of the intruding, but evidently unperturbed grouse. Clearly, the bird was on this mound for a purpose; to "dust bathe" and perhaps even to passively "ant."

"Dusting" is a commonly documented behavior in at least two dozen bird families worldwide. By facilitating the removal of excess feather oils, frequent dust bathing helps maintain optimal feather conditions, and can therefore prevent plumage matting. Additionally, it is postulated that dusting also controls certain ectoparasites (external parasites such as feather lice), but surprisingly few studies have tested this hypothesis. Dusting may also simply offer soothing relief to irritated skin during periods of molt.

"Anting" behavior has also been well documented in birds worldwide with over two hundred reported examples. The purpose of this behavior, however, is not well understood and somewhat controversial. The most plausible explanation suggests the behavior is a way for birds to acquire compounds from ants (or other arthropods) that act as insecticides, fungicides, and/or bactericides, thus further aiding feather maintenance.

After watching this peculiar behavior for quite some time, we chose to leave this grouse to its own company. It is plausible that wet lowland spruce-fir habitats may confine grouse to relatively few natural dusting sites. It is reasonable to further suggest then, that ant mounds offer grouse a safe and important dusting alternative to logging roads, and may offer birds the added potential benefits associated with anting. Although Ruffed Grouse *(Bonasa umbellus)* are known to select ant mounds as dusting sites, this observation is one of the first to formally document the behavior in Spruce Grouse.

C.K. Borg is a conservation biologist and naturalist. He holds a bachelor's of science degree in wildlife biology and a master's of science degree in ecology and evolutionary biology. He is currently a Land Protection Specialist with the Society for the Protection of NH Forests.

Field Notes Summer 2012

compiled by Robert A. Quinn and Rebecca Suomala

Adult Peregrine Falcon, D2, at Brookfield Renewable Power in Berlin on 6/11/12. Photo by David Lavorgna.

Falcon Rehabilitated Six Years Ago Seen in Berlin, NH

A 9-year old adult female Peregrine Falcon banded as a chick at Devils Slide in Stark, NH in 2003 was identified outside the Brookfield Renewable Power offices next to the Androscoggin River in Berlin on June 11, 2012. This observation confirms the successful rehabilitation of this bird nearly six years ago by Maria Colby at Wings of the Dawn Bird Sanctuary. In early July 2006, the bird was found injured in a yard at Cascade Flat Road near the Androscoggin River in Gorham, NH. She was examined by Dr. Michael Dutton of the Weare Animal Hospital, found to have no major injuries, and rehabbed for several weeks. On July 24, 2006, NH Audubon Senior Biologist, Chris Martin and NH Fish & Game Department Biologist, Jill (Kelly) Kilborn released the bird at the Nansen Wayside Area along the Androscoggin in Milan. The 2012 observation is the first confirmation of her survival since that release. It is likely she holds a breeding territory somewhere in the Berlin/Gorham area.

American Goldfinches Raid the Garden Patch, for the Yellow?

by Catherine Fisher of Lee, NH
From a post to the NHBirds e-mail list, 6-22-12

Both my dad and I have yards with good-sized American Goldfinch populations. We each maintain several year-round birdfeeders. In addition, my yard has large swathes of anise hyssop *(Agastache foeniculum)*, the seed of which goldfinches adore. With a sizable flock of goldfinches comes many eyes to discover beet seedlings.

During the summer of 2012, I went out to my vegetable garden in time to catch the American Goldfinches doing something that my dad and I have observed for three years now. Apparently there's something in beets and chard that goldfinches relish. If we don't cover newly emerged seedlings with agricultural fleece or meshed plastic, the goldfinches absolutely clean out the bed. Until my dad mentioned seeing them

engaging in this activity, I'd always attribute the wiped-out beet seedling beds to slugs, but having replanted and then watched the beet beds for yellow trespassers, I saw for myself the goldfinches engaged in this activity. Since then I've compromised by covering the beets I intend to use and planting extra "finch rows" between rows of other plants. It's fun to watch them pulling up their beet greens.

Beets are so full of nutrients and betalains (a class of red and yellow pigments) that it's easy to imagine the many benefits goldfinches derive from their consumption.

Comments from the Compiler –

John Williams in Rumney followed up with an e-mail saying:

> *"They (American Goldfinches) used to punch holes in the chard leaves, and nibble the edges. I have watched them doing both."*

There is a lot of very interesting information on the topic of coloration and forage choices that you can find online. Here's a link to one study involving American Goldfinches and Northern Cardinals:

http://www.auburn.edu/cosam/faculty/biology/hill/lab/documents/78.pdf

Thanks for bringing it up! RAQ

A Flock of Baltimore Orioles!

by Christine Sheridan
Taken from a post to the NHBirds e-mail list, 7-20-12

Ponemah Bog can be interesting this time of year, as birds drop in and out to sample (and gorge on) the berry and insect crops. On July 19, I saw a phenomenon I'd never witnessed before – a flock of juvenile Baltimore Orioles. Ten (or more) of these orange youngsters were darting and swooping about the pond and bog area, chasing one another, dining on berries and bugs, and, most interestingly, harassing Eastern Kingbirds and even Blue Jays. (Pretty bold birds, these!) The object seemed to be to get the kingbird or jay to drop the food it was carrying, so that the oriole could snarf it down.

One of 10 Baltimore Orioles at Ponemah Bog in Amherst, NH on 7/19/12. Photo by Christine Sheridan.

In one case, a kingbird carrying a large dragonfly (Widow Skimmer, I think) dropped its prey as it flew away from the marauding oriole. In another, a young oriole is gobbling its ill-gotten gains, while a Jay provides commentary.

Kestrel Want a Cracker? – More Messing with the Order of Things

by Pam Hunt

It wasn't all that long ago (Summer 2011 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* (NHBR): Vol. 30, #2), that I hinted at some major rearrangement of the falcons on the avian evolutionary tree. The exact quote was: "which may be closer to parrots, but that's another story." Indeed it is, and because you may have a little difficulty finding the falcons in this issue of NHBR, the time for that story has come sooner than we thought.

To recap, it was recognized in 2011 that falcons were not actually all that closely related to the more traditional hawks. This evidence came from three independent studies of DNA, including one study that also tried to calibrate DNA changes against the fossil record. In 2012, the Falconiformes was officially moved from after the hawks to a new and exciting neighborhood; next to the passerines along with parrots (which were also moved significantly). Parrots and passerines are now considered to be more closely related to each other than either is to any other group of birds, and the next closest group to these is the falcons (see Figure 1). Taken another way, a Peregrine Falcon is a closer cousin to a Ruby-crowned Kinglet than it is to a Bald Eagle. Sort of humbling, isn't it?

I won't go into all the exciting details about "Mesozoic retropozons" and "gene jackknifing," (two of the tools used to determine the new relationships) and instead share some thinking about why we might have been so wrong for so long. Hawks and falcons are clearly quite similar, what with their raptorial talons, strongly hooked

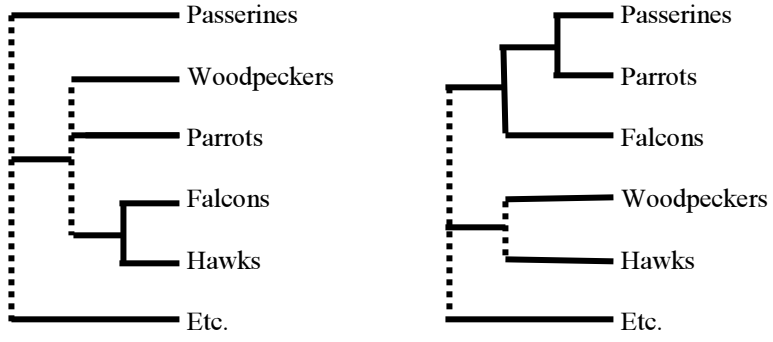


Figure 1. Simplified diagram showing relationships among groups of birds mentioned in this article. The left diagram represents how these groups were classified prior to the recent rearrangement of parrots and falcons, while the right shows the new relationships. Groups connected by shorter lines are considered more closely related than those connected by longer lines. Dashed lines indicate that not all families of birds in a given grouping are shown in the diagram.

beaks, remarkable eyesight, and migratory habits. Except for the migration part, however, these characters are also shared with owls, and it's been a long time since anyone lumped owls with the diurnal birds of prey (obviously there are some pretty significant structural differences involved!). All these predatory adaptations are just that; adaptations among species sharing a very similar lifestyle. Hawks, falcons, and owls are the avian epitome of this trend, but several other groups have evolved parts of the package. Jaegers, for instance, have strongly hooked bills that facilitate a vole-based diet on the breeding grounds, as do shrikes, which now turn out to be close cousins to the falcons anyway. Interestingly, shrikes and falcons are the only birds with something called a "tomial tooth," (see photo) a secondary "tooth" on the upper mandible just in from the hooked tip. The point here is that it's pretty easy to find similarities among birds that may or may not be all that closely related.

This whole "lifestyle dictates morphology" thing is called "convergent evolution," and it explains a lot of what we see in the natural world. Keeping within birds of prey, both harriers and owls have well-developed facial disks that aid in locating prey through hearing, but no one is saying they're close relatives because of this. Just as we wouldn't say that shrikes and falcons are in the same family because of a tomial tooth. Morphology has a way of standing out to visual creatures such as humans, but deep under all the feathers it's the genes that are really running the show. When we take a closer look at those genes, we can sometimes find some pretty interesting stuff! Including the fact that falcons are not really raptors.

There is, of course, no guarantee that this state of affairs is permanent. Not all that long ago, DNA-DNA hybridization (a technique to measure the relatedness of species; see *New Hampshire Bird Records*, Winter 1998-99, Vol. 17, No. 4, p. 36) was all the rage, but some of those analyses have since fallen from grace. The fact that three separate studies using different genes all propose this falcon-parrot-passerine group, however, suggests that it may be a pretty solid relationship. We'll just have to get used to it!

Peregrine Falcon bill showing the "tomial tooth" on the upper bill. Photo by Norm Smith.

Common Nighthawk 2012 Breeding Season Summary

by Rebecca Suomala and Jane Kolias

Common Nighthawk nest site at Seacoast Scaffold and Equipment Corp. in Concord, NH (6/18/12) and the female with the fledged chick (7/17/12). Photos by Rebecca Suomala.

It was a very busy summer for Common Nighthawk research activity in New Hampshire. NH Audubon's Project Nighthawk volunteers monitored two nests in Concord and did the first coordinated watch for nighthawks in the Ossipee area.

In Concord, two females were tallied, both at active nest sites, as well as 12 males. Restricted access to one of the nest sites limited observations but the behavior of both adult birds indicated successful nesting with at least one chick. We had excellent access to the second nest, thanks to the generous cooperation from the business owners of Seacoast Scaffold and Equipment Corporation and its employees. Workers first saw the female on the ground on June 11 and two eggs were observed the next day. Only one egg was viable and the chick hatched on June 29. With the help of dedicated volunteers we recorded observations almost daily for six weeks. Volunteers recorded behavior including incubation, chick feeding, and successful fledging. The female and chick were last observed on July 24.

On June 30, we held the first ever coordinated nighthawk watch in the Ossipee area. A crew of ten watchers spread out to eight locations across the West Branch pine barrens. We tallied eight males but were unable to confirm a female, although the most activity was in the area of last year's nest site.

Thanks to Brett Thelan of the Ashuelot Valley Environmental Observatory, a nest was confirmed in Keene; the first since Project Nighthawk began in 2007. It is also the first confirmed successful rooftop nest in the state since 2007 (the other two rooftop nests in Concord were unsuccessful). Brett learned of the nest after the chicks had

fledged but fortunately pictures had been taken of the two chicks before they fledged. A security guard, who approached Brett in the evening as she was searching for any remaining activity, was able to provide a photo of one of the fledged chicks!

We also received reports of nighthawks in Antrim, Lempster, and Grantham during the breeding season (June and July). Nighthawk migration can begin in August, so any reports during that time may not be local breeding birds.

If you are interested in volunteering for Project Nighthawk, please contact Project Coordinator, Becky Suomala at 603-224-909 x309 or bsuomala@nhaudubon.org. For a full summary of the 2012 season check the Project Nighthawk web page: http://www.nhbirdrecords.org/bird-conservation/swallow-core.htm

Field Trip Report

A Trip up Mount Sunapee in Search of Boreal Birds

by Rebecca Suomala

Lake Solitude on Mt. Sunapee. Photo by Pam Hunt.

Mount Sunapee is the second highest peak in Merrimack County and, at just over 2700 feet, is high enough to have some spruce-fir habitat on top. As a result, there are historic records of several boreal species here such as Blackpoll Warbler and Bicknell's Thrush. There have been few reports in the past decade but that could be because no one has been looking. Are boreal species still there or have they abandoned the area the way they appear to have at places such as Mount Monadnock and Mount Kearsarge? In an attempt to answer this question, Pam Hunt led a field trip on July 8, 2012 to the top of Mount Sunapee via the Andrew Brook Trail to Lake Solitude and then on to the summit, a distance of 2.9 miles.

Pam, as New Hampshire's dragonfly expert, also had an ulterior motive to search Lake Solitude for unusual odonates. Thus the group that gathered at the trailhead in the morning was an interesting mix of dragonfly and bird aficionados. Despite this mix of expertise, the first thing we saw up close was a Spring Salamander found by Scott Young as he searched under the rocks in the stream bed.

The majority of spruce-fir habitat is in the vicinity of Lake Solitude and up towards the summit. The birds on the lower portion of the trail were the expected species of hardwood forests, such as Ovenbirds in abundance (15), and Black-throated Blue and

Black-throated Green Warblers. Finally, as the forest began to change to spruce-fir, we encountered one of the sought after boreal species, a Swainson's Thrush. It was singing just below Lake Solitude. Just above the lake we had our one other boreal species, a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher.

The ski trails at the summit fragmented the spruce-fir and we found things like Indigo Buntings instead of forest birds. The dragonfliers, however, were excited to find the first county record for Lake Emerald, a species generally restricted to ponds over 1500'. They also heard a Red Crossbill calling at Lake Solitude as they searched the pond for more dragonflies.

We guessed that in spring we might have found a few more Swainson's Thrushes and maybe a few other species that were quiet by the time of this trip. It would be valuable to also check the long conifer covered ridge that is south of Lake Solitude. Thanks to Pam Hunt for organizing a fun summer birding trip.

New Hampshire's Summer 2012 Fox Sparrows

Breeding Fox Sparrows Confirmed

by Will Lewis

One of the Fox Sparrows captured at Dixville ridge in Coos County, NH. Photo by Will Lewis, 6/10/12.

For two months this past summer, I had the privilege of working on top of the Kelsey and Dixville ridges in northern New Hampshire. I was part of a NH Fish and Game Department and Plymouth State University project assessing the potential impacts of a newly-erected wind farm on a known population of Bicknell's Thrushes that breed on the mountaintops. Part of the project involved hiking the ridgelines and performing surveys for thrushes and other breeding birds. These surveys led to an interesting discovery; a breeding population of Fox Sparrows in New Hampshire.

On the way up to the Dixville ridge the first morning of the field season, Clint Parrish, the Plymouth State graduate student leading the investigation, mentioned to me that the previous year they had found Fox Sparrows on the site and the sparrows were

believed to breed there. I was dubious at first, but within half-an-hour of arriving on the mountaintop, we heard a Fox Sparrow giving its distinctive song from a fir thicket. Hearing, and occasionally seeing the sparrows was a (nearly) everyday occurrence, as we estimated there to be at least six males on Dixville and two on Kelsey ridge. Now the skeptics out there may be saying, "just because there were singing males doesn't mean that there were females present or nesting." Our Bicknell's Thrush project, thankfully, provided the breeding evidence. As part of the project, we were using mist nets to capture the thrushes, but the nets do not discriminate based on species, and one day in mid-June we caught two Fox Sparrows, one male and one female. Not only did the female have a fully-developed brood patch (when a female loses the feathers on her belly to facilitate heat transfer to the eggs while sitting on a nest), but we were also able to see a not-yet-laid egg in her oviduct. We also captured a male in a separate territory which was carrying a grub, indicating that it was bringing the food back to hungry nestlings.

Why are the Fox Sparrows breeding on these mountaintops? The answer, it seems, is human-caused disturbance. In the late 1990s, sections of the upper Kelsey and Dixville ridges were clear-cut and in the past 15 years these areas have regenerated into incredibly dense, three meter tall stands of fir and spruce, providing perfect breeding habitat for the Fox Sparrows. Indeed, the logged-and-regenerating spruce-fir waves (alternating bands of younger and older trees created by disturbance) were so favored by the sparrows that they were the only spots on the mountains where we found them. These spruce-fir waves did not need to be on mountain tops to attract Fox Sparrows. One day in early July, we were hiking in the lowlands north of Errol after hearing that Carol Foss of New Hampshire Audubon believed she had heard a Fox Sparrow singing near Greenough Pond. The habitat looked exactly like the spruce-fir stands that we encountered on the mountaintops and, within 10 minutes, we heard a Fox Sparrow singing from the middle of the regenerating thicket. It seems that Fox Sparrows are willing to breed in an area as long as they can find their optimal habitat, regardless of elevation. If you ever find yourself walking through a regenerating softwood stand in Northern New Hampshire, make sure to keep an ear open for Fox Sparrows.

Will Lewis is an ornithologist and avid birder. He is currently pursuing a Master's degree at the University of Southern Mississippi investigating the gut microbiota of migratory songbirds.

But Wait, There's More on Fox Sparrows!

An Addendum by Pam Hunt

The discovery of Fox Sparrows at Dixville ridge in the summer of 2011 was only the third time the species had been recorded in New Hampshire during the breeding season (the previous records were in 1996 and 1997 in Pittsburg). Since birds were not detected by the Bicknell's Thrush team at Kelsey ridge in 2011, it's reasonable to

assume they were not there and that the species is still in an active expansion phase. Indeed, in addition to the 2012 Dixville/Kelsey and Errol birds that Will mentions above, there were also three records in the White Mountains in 2012 (data source: eBird). The first of these was a bird near the "pothole rocks" on the Caps Ridge Trail (Mount Jefferson) on June 9, which did not seem to stay around (or at least was not reported by any other birders later in the season). Later in June, another was heard near Huntington Ravine on Mount Washington and a third was reported from the north side of the Presidential Range.

So why all these Fox Sparrows all of a sudden? As Will notes above, the species is fond of dense early-successional growth, and the leading theory ties the range expansion to extensive logging in northern and western Maine over the last 20 years or so. Historically, the species bred in much of the Gaspe Peninsula and northwest New Brunswick, with scattered birds on the United States side of the border. In the last 10-20 years, however, Fox Sparrows have shown a dramatic increase as breeders in Maine and it was only a matter of time before they spilled over into northern New Hampshire. Time will tell if they establish a permanent population, since a lot will depend on continued disturbance in appropriate habitat.

Confronting the Challenges Facing Squam Lake's Common Loons

by Tiffany Grade

Following a sudden decline of Common Loons on Squam Lake in 2005, the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) began extensive research as part of its Squam Lake Loon Initiative (SLLI). The objective of the research was to understand the nature of the decline, the impact of various stressors (including contaminants) on the loons, and to recover a healthy population of loons on the lake. This research is ongoing, and we still have many questions to answer about the challenges facing Squam's loons.

The Squam Lake Loon Initiative began in 2007 and includes a monitoring, research, management and outreach effort that has entailed:

- determining the overall survival and reproductive success of Squam's remaining loon population
- assessing causes of nest failure and collecting unviable eggs from failed nests for analysis of a wide range of contaminants and pathogens
- rescuing sick or injured loons to increase loon survival whenever possible
- finding and collecting loon carcasses, determining causes of death, and testing liver samples for contaminants and pathogens
- banding loons to allow us to identify and track individual birds and collecting blood and feather samples for analysis
- determining survival and breeding success of banded and sampled loons, and relating survival and breeding success of individuals to their levels of contaminants and pathogens

- incorporating results into an explanatory model to determine the relative contributions of a wide range of possible stressors on the mortality and reproductive failure of loons on Squam Lake
- and restoring and maintaining a healthy and stable population of loons on Squam Lake as a component of a healthy statewide population of loons.

Background

Common Loon by Chris Hatch.

Between the fall of 2004 and the spring of 2005, Squam Lake lost seven of its loon pairs. The decline from 16 to 9 pairs represented 44% of its loon population, a drop unprecedented on Squam or any other large lake in LPC's 35-year history of monitoring loons throughout New Hampshire. It also brought Squam's loon population to its lowest level since LPC began to survey the lake in 1975 (Figure 1). The population decline was believed to be the result of a mortality event, as loons that were marked with color bands were not resighted elsewhere.

In 2007, LPC recorded three new pairs of loons on the lake after two years of record low loon populations. However, this welcome news was tempered by the near-complete reproductive failure of the loon population. Only three chicks were hatched on Squam Lake, and only one survived to late August and was presumed to have fledged. Loons on Squam had not experienced a reproductive failure of this magnitude since 1978, the year LPC petitioned, successfully, to have loons added to the Endangered and Threatened Species List in New Hampshire. Although the number of territorial pairs on the lake has nearly returned to the level before the decline, the reproductive success of loon pairs has remained far below pre-2005 levels (Figure 2). The average number of chicks surviving since the critical years of 2005-2007 is only 3.3 vs. 6.6 in the ten years prior to the decline. Net productivity after 2007 has been 0.24 chicks surviving per territorial pair (CS/TP), compared to a non-Squam statewide average of 0.45 CS/TP. A rate of 0.48 CS/TP is necessary to maintain a viable population.

Hypotheses on the Causes of the Decline

Although the loss of adult loons in 2004-2005 occurred over the winter while loons are on the ocean, the timing and localized nature of the event suggested that the cause of the mortalities originated on Squam Lake. LPC hypothesized that a contaminant acquired on Squam Lake that was bound to fat cells could have played a role in this decline. In the summer months, loons generally enjoy a neutral or positive energy balance; the food they take in equals or exceeds their energy requirements, resulting in the creation of fat reserves. Many contaminants in the environment are lipophyllic (attracted to fat cells) and bind to these cells, where they are sequestered and not circulating in the blood stream.

In the fall when loons molt, they grow an almost entirely new set of feathers. Since feathers are made of protein, this is an energetically costly process. Loons draw on their stored energy reserves and metabolize fat cells during molt. As fat cells are mobilized, contaminants bound to these cells can be released into the blood stream, resulting in a flush of contaminants through a loon's system. The stress of feather molt is followed by the stresses of the fall migration to wintering grounds and physiological changes associated with a change from a freshwater to a saltwater environment. We hypothesized that if loons arrive at their ocean wintering grounds in a compromised state, they could be expiring on the ocean. Another hypothesis is that the effects of pathogens (disease-producing agents like parasites, bacteria, viruses, and fungi) in the Squam Lake ecosystem could become acute during the fall and contribute to winter mortality.

Isotope Tests to Determine Sources of Contaminants (Squam Lake vs. Ocean)

LPC's data indicates that ocean contaminants and pathogens, while present, are unlikely to be the driving force behind the decline of loons on Squam. Data from banding done by LPC and the Biodiversity Research Institute in Gorham, Maine, indicate that Squam's loons do not migrate or overwinter as a group. Loons breeding on Squam probably overwinter over a large stretch of the Atlantic from Maine to Rhode Island and not in one specific location where they could have acquired a contaminant load. Therefore, any contaminants or pathogens picked up on the ocean would affect loons on many lakes and not be specifically focused on Squam as these declines seem to be.

A subset of unviable or abandoned loon eggs collected from Squam by LPC was analyzed for stable isotope concentrations. Sulfur, carbon, and nitrogen stable isotope values can be used to distinguish local freshwater from marine nutrient sources for eggs and to determine changes in food source over time, such as a shift in the forage base female loons rely on as they produce eggs. Other stable isotope studies have shown that migratory and non-migratory aquatic bird species like terns, gulls, and cormorants rely on their local, recent diet to produce eggs (Hobson et al. 1997, Hebert et al. 2008). Our stable isotope results for ten Squam loon eggs indicate that Squam loons also rely primarily on recent dietary uptake to produce eggs, rather than on nutrient reserves from the marine wintering environment. Although Squam loons probably rely on a mixture of reserves and recent uptake to produce eggs, the stable isotope results clearly indicate that the primary nutrient source is recent uptake. Contaminants found in the eggs are therefore likely to be primarily from Squam Lake rather than the ocean wintering grounds.

Contaminants in Squam Lake Loon Eggs

LPC staff collected 41 unviable eggs from failed loon nests on Squam Lake from 2001 to 2011. LPC has tested 17 of these eggs and four eggs from control lakes to date for a wide range of heavy metals and other contaminants. Eggs collected from Squam between 2005 and 2007 revealed high levels of a number of contaminants, including PBDE (flame retardants), PCB (industrial insulating/cooling agents), and chlordane (a pesticide). Statistical analyses of contaminants showed that levels of contaminants in eggs collected during the decline and subsequent reproductive failure of loons (2005-

2007) were significantly higher than levels in Squam Lake loon eggs collected after this period. Eggs collected in the years before this period suggest a gradual increase in contaminant levels, but further research is necessary. Levels of contaminants from Squam during 2005-2007 were also significantly higher than levels found in eggs collected from other lakes in New Hampshire, as well as eggs collected from Maine and New York lakes by BioDiversity Research Institute (Figure 3). Other contaminants including DDT, PFOS (stain guards), and strontium were also present in generally higher levels in Squam loon eggs collected during the 2005-2007 period than in eggs collected before or after this period, or in eggs collected on reference lakes (Figure 3). However, differences were not statistically significant or only marginally significant. Larger sample sizes of eggs may reveal statistically significant differences in levels of these contaminants as well.

In addition to metals such as strontium, the other contaminants found in the loon eggs belong to a class of contaminants known as persistent organic pollutants (POPs). These include a mixture of new and emerging contaminants, such as PBDEs and the PFOS, and legacy contaminants, such as PCBs, DDT, and chlordane. Beginning in the early 1970s, these legacy contaminants were banned in the United States; however, they persist and remain bioavailable in the environment without breaking down for decades. The presence of these contaminants in the Squam Lake loon eggs is testimony to their persistence in the environment and the potentially deleterious effects all of these POPs may have on loons and other wildlife.

Our knowledge of the effects of these contaminants on loons, and especially combinations of contaminants, is very limited. However, some of these contaminants were present in loon eggs collected from 2005 to 2007 at levels that have been shown to affect the physiology, health and/or reproductive success of other species, and some were present in Squam Lake eggs at levels that were many times greater than in eggs from other lakes.

Causes of Mortality of Squam Lake Loons

Staff from Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine and the University of New Hampshire Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory examined ten adult loons from Squam Lake that were found dead between 2004 and 2011. Five loons died from ingesting lead fishing tackle, two loons were killed by boat strikes, one died from wounds inflicted by another loon, and one died as a result of a gunshot wound (Figure 4). One of the lead-poisoned loons was collected on the coast in Massachusetts but had ingested a freshwater jig. It is unknown whether she ingested this jig on Squam or elsewhere in migration. Necropsies on these loons did not reveal excessive parasite burdens or identify other pathogens that might have contributed to the declines on Squam. Many more Squam Lake loons missing during this time period remain unaccounted for and are presumed to have died on their ocean wintering grounds. LPC's monitoring of the health of Squam's loons (see below) has revealed the impact of parental impairment on attacks by intruding loons and subsequent loon chick mortality. Most of the dead loon chicks collected by LPC on Squam in recent years were killed by intruding loons. In 2010, an intruding loon killed the chick at Great Island while its parent was suffering from lead poisoning after ingesting a lead-headed fishing jig. In the same year, two other chicks at the Yard Islands were killed after one of

the parents tested positive for high bile acids, indicating liver dysfunction. We will continue to collect any dead loons found on Squam and collaborate with Tufts University and the University of New Hampshire to necropsy loons and analyze and/or archive tissues. Please report any sick, injured, or dead loons found throughout the state to LPC.

Banding and Health Tests

A team of biologists from the Loon Preservation Committee, the Biodiversity Research Institute, and Tufts University captured 38 loons on the Squam Lakes and banded 18 previously un-banded loons from 2007 to 2011. Blood and feather samples were taken from each captured loon to test for mercury, and eight blood samples taken in 2008 were tested for a number of pathogens. Analyses of these blood samples did not reveal blood parasites or elevated white blood cell counts that would indicate disease. Blood serum was tested for disease agents including bacteria and viruses. A Little Squam female loon tested positive for aspergillosus, a fungal pathogen that affects birds with compromised immune systems. This bird was later entangled in monofilament fishing line and eluded our attempts to capture her and remove the line. She has not been re-sighted on Little Squam Lake or any other New Hampshire lake to date and is presumed to be deceased. A Moultonborough Bay female tested positive for exposure to avian influenza. She survived to return to Moultonborough Bay in 2009-2010 but did not return in 2011-2012 and has not been re-sighted elsewhere.

Similar health tests were performed on Squam loons in 2010. Notably, heterophil/lymphocyte (H/L) ratios were dramatically higher in 2010, indicating a higher level of chronic stress in loons sampled in 2010 than 2008. Hot weather during the 2010 breeding season is one possible explanation for this shift, since H/L ratios have been shown to indicate heat stress (among other stressors) in domestic poultry. Besides the loon from Yard Islands with high bile acids, blood tests identified another individual with potential health problems. A Great Island female showed signs of blood loss anemia, possibly from a conspecific injury. She returned to nest in 2011 but did not return in 2012. Also in 2010, a male from Rattlesnake Cove was entangled in fishing line late in the summer, eluded our attempts to capture him and remove the fishing line, and has not been re-sighted. He is presumed deceased.

Over time, the existence of a significant number of banded loons on Squam Lake will allow us to track the survival, breeding success, and wintering locations of Squam loons and the influence of a wide range of environmental stressors on these parameters. Banding can also reveal other poorly-understood life history aspects of loons. For example, a chick hatched on Moon Island in 2001 was re-sighted in 2007 as one of a mated pair of loons on Pleasant Lake near New London, a remarkable distance from its natal lake. She has returned to that lake every year since 2007.

The Squam Lake Ecosystem Model

LPC is working to integrate results of all of the above analyses into a model to better understand recent changes in Squam's loon population. This model seeks to gain insight into whether any given stressor is enough to drive the population decline or, as might be expected in such a complex system, is enough to compromise the integrity of loons such that, in concert with other stressors, it threatens the population. The model

will help LPC and others make more informed decisions to protect Squam's loons and the ecological integrity of Squam Lake.

Data gaps, including a lack of quantifiable data on populations of prey fish and populations of many egg and chick predators, have resulted in much uncertainty in the estimates of many relationships within the model. However, simulations suggest several possible causes of the recent declines in adult loons and reproductive success of loons on Squam. These include: contaminant levels in eggs; increasing temperature trends that could potentially result in changes in human use of lakes, the ability of loons to remain on their nests during incubation, and increased egg predation and cyanobacteria concentrations; low- and high-powered boating; and changes in fish populations. The model is still preliminary, and definitive statements regarding causes of the loon decline and how to better manage loons and Squam Lake to prevent future declines are not yet possible. However, new data can be incorporated into the model as they become available, and current information in the model reveals interrelationships of factors and identifies probable contributors to the decline.

Next Steps

The Squam Lake Loon Initiative has already provided critical baseline data on contaminants and other environmental stressors on loons which will be invaluable to assess changes in, and effects of, contaminants and pathogens in the future. The collaboration of researchers formed as a result of the decline of loons on Squam Lake is unprecedented, and the testing being done on loon samples is the most comprehensive undertaken anywhere to date. The achievement of the Squam Lake Loon Initiative objectives will result in an accurate record of loon populations and productivity on Squam Lake in future years. We anticipate that this initiative will: help avoid future declines of loons on Squam and on other lakes; bring to light what could be a much larger, more systemic problem on Squam indicated by the decline of loons; inform other LPC initiatives such as the New Hampshire Loon Recovery Plan; and help LPC and others make more informed decisions to protect Squam's loons, other wildlife, and the ecological integrity of Squam Lake, as well as lakes throughout New Hampshire.

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Hobson K., K. Hughes, P. Ewins. 1997. Using stable-isotope analysis to identify endogenous and exogenous sources of nutrients in eggs of migratory birds: applications to Great Lakes contaminants research. *Auk* 114:467-478.

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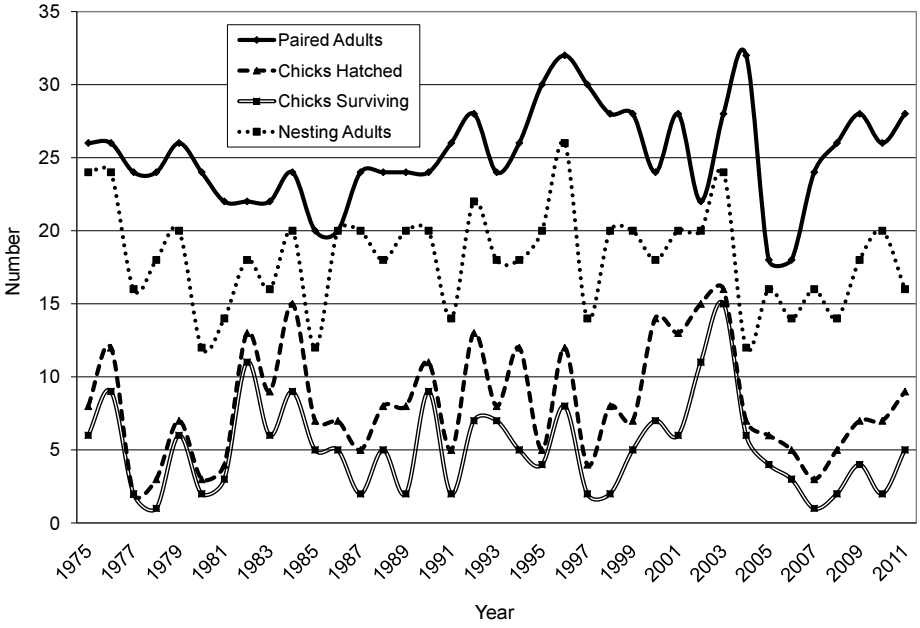

Figure 1. Common Loon population of Squam Lake, NH, from 1975 to 2011.

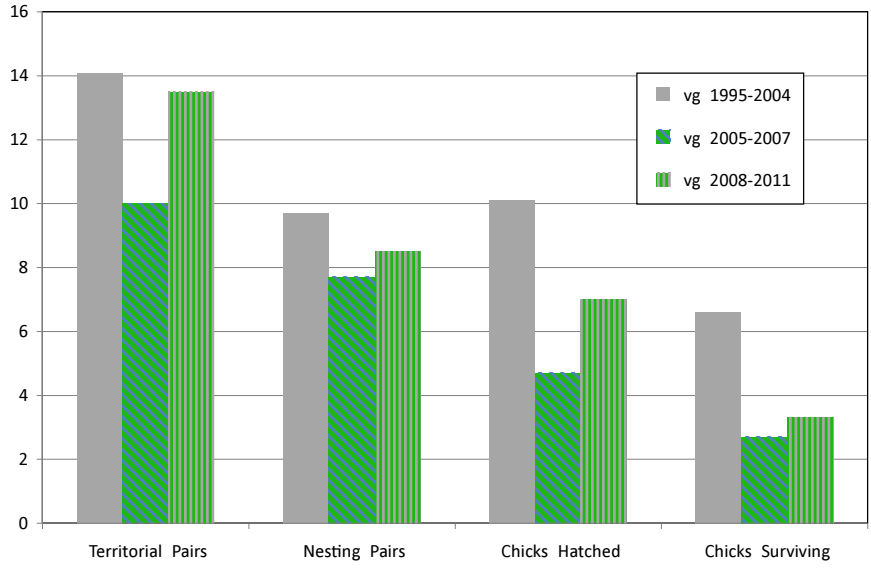

Figure 2. Common Loon populations and breeding success on Squam Lake, NH, before, during and after the 2005-2007 period.

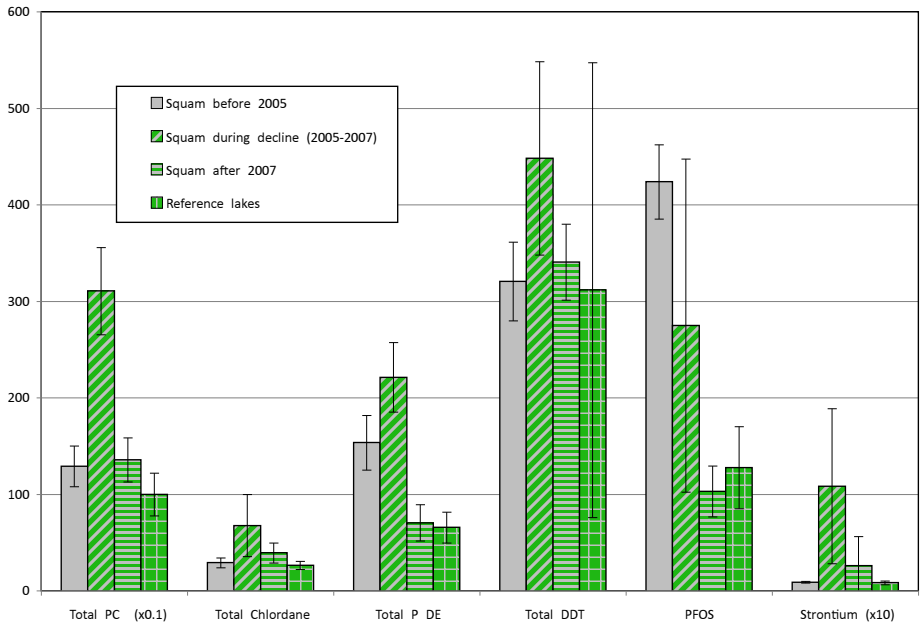

Figure 3. Level of toxins in Common Loon eggs collected on Squam Lake, NH, during the decline, outside the decline, and from reference lakes.

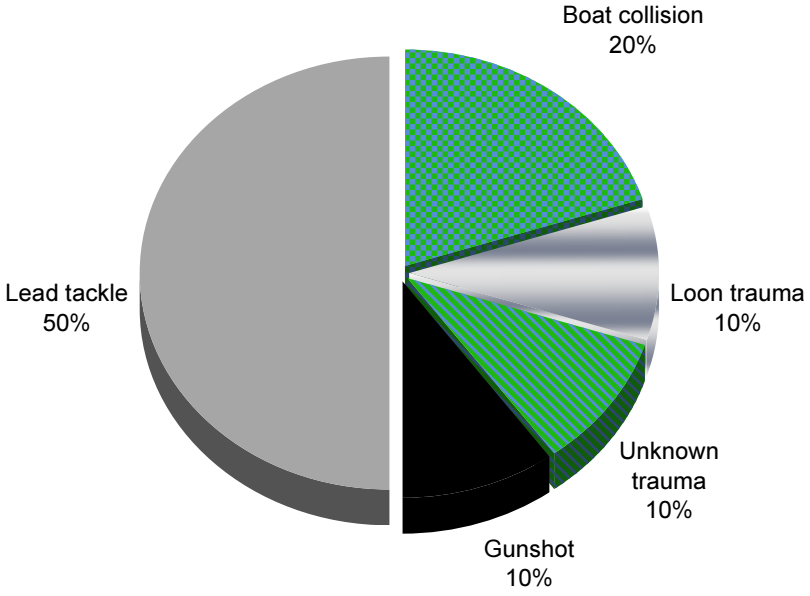

Figure 4. Causes of death of necropsied adult Common Loons collected from Squam Lake, NH, 2004-2011. Adults missing in 2005 and presumed dead on wintering grounds are not included in these totals.

New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee Report

Committee Year: 2010

David B. Donsker, Chair (2011-2012)

This report from the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee (NHRBC) contains the decisions for records voted on by the Committee during the calendar year 2010.

The NHRBC reviews unusual sightings in an effort to maintain accuracy and scientific integrity of the bird records in New Hampshire. It is independent of *New Hampshire Bird Records (*NHBR) and New Hampshire Audubon. All sightings are evaluated based on details submitted. The Committee requires a vote with not more than one dissention for acceptance of a record. Any new state record requires a unanimous vote.

A rejection is not necessarily an indication that the identification was incorrect but that the information received was not sufficient to allow its inclusion in the state record. Unfortunately, several birds during this time period were rejected for lack of documentation. Adequate documentation is key to whether a report is accepted or not. For information on the Committee and its decision-making process, see the articles in the Summer 1996 and Winter 2005-06 issues of NHBR. The Fall 1996 issue has an article on how to document rare sightings.

In 2010, the voting members of the Committee were Dennis Abbott, Ralph Andrews, Eric Masterson, Hector Galbraith, David Donsker, Tony Vazzano, Rob Woodward (Chair) and Stephen Mirick. Steve Mirick continued in his capacity as the acting Committee Secretary.

New Hampshire State Bird List

In its April 20, 2010 meeting, the NHRBC approved an official New Hampshire State Bird List based on research of the state's historical records made by a subcommittee consisting of Dennis Abbott, Stephen Mirick and David Donsker. This list is inclusive of those species that the NHRBC believes have been reasonably documented to have occurred in the state based on published records. It includes historically extinct and extirpated species as well as a separate listing of hypothetical species. At the time of its acceptance, the list included 399 species + 11 on the hypothetical list. The list will be maintained and updated by the NHRBC to reflect new additions, taxonomic changes, or future challenges to the approved list.

A copy of the current New Hampshire State Bird List can be accessed through the NHBR web site, www.nhbirdrecords.org.

Summer 2009

Records accepted by the Committee

Red-billed Tropicbird	6/23/2009	Rye	First State Record
Red Phalarope	6/8/2009	Littleton	
Long-tailed Jaeger	7/4/2009	Offshore Waters	(two reports)
Sabine's Gull	6/26/2009	Rye	(three reports)
Sabine's Gull	7/3/2009	Seabrook	

Royal Tern	6/26/2009	Seabrook
Royal Tern	6/10/2009	Rye
Summer Tanager	6/6/2009	Hancock
Painted Bunting	6/2/2009	Portsmouth
American Tree Sparrow	6/23/2009	Enfield

Records not accepted by the Committee

Nelson's Sparrow	6/13/2009	Surry	Inland records of Nelson's Sparrow in the spring are extremely rare in New Hampshire and none could be recalled by committee members. The written description was lacking in details and it was felt that a detailed report was required for a sighting of this magnitude.

Fall 2009

Records accepted by the Committee

Tundra Swan	11/9/2009	Chatham	
Gr. White-fronted Goose	11/7/2009	Rye	
Eurasian Wigeon	10/30/2009	Exeter	
Eurasian Wigeon	11/9/2009	Exeter	
Black Vulture	11/3/2009	Newmarket	
Clapper Rail	10/2/2009	Seabrook	(two reports)
Long-tailed Jaeger	8/15/2009	Offshore Waters	
Long-tailed Jaeger	8/16/2009	Offshore Waters	(two reports)
Long-tailed Jaeger	8/18/2009	Offshore Waters	
Long-tailed Jaeger	9/8/2009	Offshore Waters	(two reports)
Franklin's Gull	8/24/2009	Rochester	(two reports)
Thayer's Gull	11/30/2009	Rochester	
Royal Tern	8/9/2009	Hampton	
Common Murre	10/31/2009	Rye	
Rufous Hummingbird	10/22/2009	Hollis	
Rufous Hummingbird	10/30/2009	Hollis	
Red-headed Woodpecker	9/28/2009	Dublin	
Western Kingbird	11/13/2009	Rochester	
Western Kingbird	1/15/2009	Rochester	
Bell's Vireo	10/1/2009	Rye	(two reports)
Nelson's Sparrow	9/26/2009	Penacook	
Yellow-headed Blackbird	10/30/2009	Greenland	
Nelson's Sparrow	10/25/2009	Concord	

Records not accepted by the Committee

Pacific Loon	10/3/2009	Rye (two reports)	The members who did not accept this record felt that details were not sufficient enough for acceptance. Loons in flight are difficult to identify and the details regarding neck pattern were not detailed enough. It was also felt that the underwing pattern, which can be difficult to ascertain, was given too much weight in the identification.
Long-tailed Jaeger	8/15/2009	Offshore Waters	The members who did not accept this record felt that the photographs were insufficient to ID the bird. In addition, one member added that the fact that the observers did not submit written documentation reflects a certain ambiguity of the observers' opinions of the ID.

Winter 2009-2010

Records accepted by the Committee

Ivory Gull	1/11/2010	Hampton	Although some of the descriptions were not ideal, the sum of all three and the individual documentation from one of the observers swayed the committee with consideration given to the influx of sightings of this species this winter.
"Sooty" Fox Sparrow	12/11/2009	Barrington	The detailed analysis of this individual originally published in the Winter 2009-2010 issue of NHBR was judged to be overly analytical. Details of what were concluded to be features of a probable P.i. altivagans -"Sooty" Fox Sparrow hybrid were contradicted by photos on the internet and by discussion with birders from Washington state which suggested that the features shown on the Barrington bird were quite consistent with the features thought to be diagnostic for Sooty Fox Sparrow.

Records not accepted by the Committee

Tundra Swan	2/17/2010	Merrimack	The photo provided clearly showed a swan; however, the specific identity could not be safely determined due to the very poor quality of the photo. Supporting description was not provided. While Tundra Swan is certainly a possibility, the photo alone could not support this conclusion.
Slaty-backed Gull	1/7/2010	Rochester	Some members of the committee thought the overall description and especially primary pattern was good enough to accept this species. Other members expressed concern regarding the apparent pale gray mantle coloration and lack of any dark gray mantle or scapular feathers. The written description, in fact, described the mantle feathers as being "whitish with pale grayish centers brown shaft streaks and chevrons." After reviewing many photos of second winter Slaty-backed Gull s from Japan, all of which showed dark gray mantle/scapular feathers (to varying degree), members came to the conclusion that this single conflicting field mark (which wasn't discussed in the submitted documentation) was enough to reject the sighting.

Spring 2010

Records accepted by the Committee

Leach's Storm Petrel	5/23/2010		
White-faced Ibis	4/25/2010	North Hampton	(two reports)
Gr. White-fronted Goose	3/6/2010	Hinsdale	
Gr. White-fronted Goose	3/18/2010	Charlestown	
Gr. White-fronted Goose	3/17/2010	Greenland	
Cackling Goose	3/7/2010	Hinsdale	
Cackling Goose	3/10/2010	Hinsdale	
Eurasian Green-winged Teal	4/8/2010	Hampton	
Mississippi Kite	5/6/2010	Kensington	
American Oystercatcher	5/21/2010	Seabrook Beach	
Mew Gull	3/2/2010	Exeter	First state record
Royal Tern	4/10/2010	Hampton	
Arctic Tern	5/19/2010	Charlestown	
Common Murre	3/10/2010	Rye	
Common Murre	4/7/2010	N. Hampton	
Acadian Flycatcher	5/23/2010	N. Hampton	
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	5/18/2010	N. Conway	
White-eyed Vireo	4/14/2010	Hampton	

White-eyed Vireo	4/18/2010	Rye
White-eyed Vireo	5/12/2010	Wentworth Location

Records not accepted by the Committee

Yellow-throated Warbler	5/1/2010	Tuftonboro	Although the description sounded somewhat convincing, the fact that the sighting occurred at 3,000' elevation and the fact that there were TWO birds together raised questions in most/all present. There was also some concern that the observer had limited experience and that some of the identification was made "after the fact".
Yellow-throated Warbler	5/21/2010	Conway	Some members of the committee voted to accept based on the reliability, experience and background of the reporter. Others were concerned with accepting this record solely based on vocalizations. Given the fact that an adequate visual was not obtained and the possibility of other species singing abnormal songs, the sighting was not accepted.

Earlier Records

Records accepted by the Committee

Red-headed Woodpecker	8/12/2004	New London
Red-headed Woodpecker	5/22/2007	Dalton

Records rejected by the Committee

Gr. White-fronted Goose	3/17/2009	Hinsdale	Although one of the committee members actually saw this bird, the description provided was lacking detail. No bill was seen and no details of leg color or size were provided. The description could just as easily fit for Pink-footed Goose.

Answer to the Photo Quiz

by David B. Donsker

The subject of this issue's Photo Quiz is a swimming duck-like waterbird. Its body is uniformly dark gray. This contrasts slightly with its paler gray head and neck. The head itself sports a darker, slightly erect crest which is peaked at the back or posterior portion of the crown. A flash of white in the secondary flight feathers just peaks through the folded wings. Perhaps most striking of all in this uniformly gray-toned bird is its fairly thin, bluntly tipped, pale bill.

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 of their body shapes, bill structure, or plumage patterns, none of which conform to those of the species featured.

This bird lacks the massive, sabre-like bill of the gannet or the long, pointed sword-like bill of our loons. 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, long-necked like a cormorant, nor delicate and small-headed like a phalarope. Neither is it gull or jaeger-like. Most of our waterfowl have broad, flattened or short triangular bills.

Three of our thinner-billed grebes, Eared, Horned and Red-necked, bear some serious consideration. As with our featured bird, these waterbirds have slightly crested heads and have tapered, pointed bills. All have white secondaries. In breeding plumage, there can be little confusion with our featured bird. Eared Grebe has a distinctive fan-shaped array of yellow plumes at the side of its head. Horned Grebe has an equally distinctive yellow head patch or "horn" behind the eye. Red-necked Grebe has a striking white cheek patch. These distinctive features are lost in non-breeding plumage however. The two smaller species, Eared and Horned Grebes, in non-breeding plumage have more delicate, sharper and darker bills than our featured bird. The winter plumaged, dusky Eared Grebe generally has a dark ear patch which is not seen in our photograph. Additionally, the crest of its crown peaks over the eye, rather than at the rear of the head. Like our bird, Horned Grebe has a crest that peaks at the rear of its crown, but in winter plumage it is a distinctively black-and-white bird, not a uniformly gray species.

On the other hand, in winter, Red-necked Grebe has many features in common with the bird in the photograph. Like our featured bird, it is a generally gray-bodied species with a dark, posteriorly peaked crown and distinct, somewhat elongated neck which is also gray colored. As with all of the thinner billed grebes, it has white secondary flight feathers. Most compelling of all, its relatively long, tapered bill is pale yellow. These similarities are so striking that it's not hard to conclude that our featured bird is Red-necked Grebe in winter plumage.

There is something not quite right with that conclusion however. Despite the similarities, this bird lacks some features that are characteristic of Red-necked Grebe. Its tapered bill is not quite long enough or dagger-like to be the grebe. Although the white-cheek patch of breeding plumaged Red-necked Grebe is lost in winter, that species does retain a crescent-shaped, faint pale ear patch which is completely lacking in the bird in the photograph. Further, and more subtly, our featured bird has a long tail. It's hard to notice this at first, but it can be distinguished in the photograph trailing in the water behind the bird. Grebes are virtually tailless.

If this is not Red-necked Grebe, it would appear that we are out of candidates, but we are not. In swimming waterbirds, long tapered bills are almost invariably associated with piscivorus, or fish-eating species. Although we dismissed most of the waterfowl due to bill shape, there is one group of waterfowl that primarily catch fish for a living – the mergansers. These unique ducks have long, thin, serrated bills that are ideally suited for that task. In fact, if you look very carefully at the photograph, you can see fine serrations or "teeth" along the lower edge of the upper bill of our featured individual. Indeed, this bird is a merganser.

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, non-breeding males and juveniles are all relatively sombre with generally gray bodies.

The two larger mergansers, Red-breasted and Common, are really not serious candidates for confusion with this bird. Female and eclipse male Common Mergansers have prominent white chins and breasts. The foreparts of Red-breasted Merganser are

duller with less contrast than Common Merganser and with a gray body somewhat reminiscent of the bird in the photograph. It has a long, shaggy crest quite unlike our featured bird however. Further, both mergansers have darker, red or reddish bills rather than pale bills.

The small Hooded Merganser in non-breeding plumage, however, has many features that resemble our subject. It is dark gray overall, proportionally longer-tailed than its larger cousins, and sports a distinctive posterior crest. Even in winter plumage, its crest is much more prominent than the faintly erectile crest of this individual and, especially in males, its bill is darker.

On the other hand, juvenile Hooded Merganser, unlike the adult, is pale billed and has a shorter, less well developed crest. This juvenile plumage is retained by young birds throughout the summer. Indeed, this juvenile Hooded Merganser was photographed by David Lipsy on the Merrimack River in Penacook in mid-July, 2012.

It's especially important in summer and early fall to consider juvenile plumage when trying to identify birds. Juvenile plumage is not consistently illustrated in field guides and we often don't carry an image of this temporary plumage in our visual "data base". Birds in this plumage can be confusing to the unwary and can inadvertently lead to misidentifications. The examples are many. Juvenile shorebirds are typically brighter than adults with more sharply defined feather edges. Thus, for example, juvenile female Semipalmated Sandpipers may be mistaken for Western Sandpipers. Juvenile Cedar Waxwings are streaked, unlike adults, and have much shorter crests leading to potential confusion with other streaked species. Juvenile Eastern Phoebes have distinctive wing bars which frequently causes confusion with Eastern Wood-Pewee. Young Chipping Sparrows are streaked, quite unlike the clear-breasted adults, leading to all kinds of confusion. The examples are numerous.

So, when birding in summer and early fall, have fun, but beware of the youngsters. They can be tricky.

References

Peterson, R. 2008. *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, New York, NY.

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Abbreviations Used

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

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Juveniles of Summer

Barred Owl chicks by Rick Gott, 6/30/12, Base Hill Rd., Keene, NH. These young may be able to fly or just branching out. The parents will still be feeding them.

Common Merganser female with seven chicks by John Williams, 6/21/12, Baker River, Rumney, NH.

Eastern Whip-poor-will chick found by Pam Hunt on 6/15/12 during her research project on the habitat use of this species in Hopkinton, NH.

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