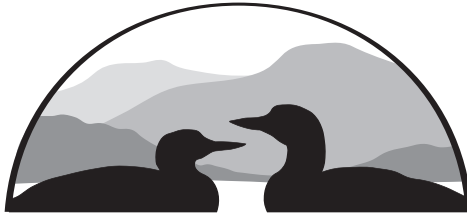


New Hampshire Bird Records



Winter 2012-13

Vol. 31, No. 4



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Volume 31, Number 4

Winter 2012-13

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**IN MEMORY OF
Donald R. Niswander**

“A bad day fishing is better than a good day at work.”

This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by the Niswander family in memory of Donald R. Niswander, son, husband, dad, grandpa, brother, uncle and cousin.



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Thank You to Donors

We are very grateful to those who have donated to *New Hampshire Bird Records*, sponsored an issue, or supported the “Twitchers in the Rye” during the annual Superbowl of Birding. Subscription revenue does not cover the full costs of *New Hampshire Bird Records* and your contributions help make it possible for New Hampshire Audubon to bring you this publication and maintain the quality of the records.

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

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Photo Quiz



Can You Identify These Birds?

Answer on page 66
Photo by Jon Woolf.

Time to Renew!

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

Winter Season

December 1, 2012 through February 28, 2013



Pam Hunt

by Pamela Hunt

In discussing the weather during the winter of 2012-13, it is important to remember that we were pretty spoiled by the winter of 2011-12. That previous winter was significantly warm and snowless, so a return to something approaching normal probably came as something of a shock to those of us getting complacent about climate change. Yet, when the numbers are all crunched, 2012-13 was still warmer than normal by 2.5 degrees, placing it in the top 15% of winters since 1896. As for precipitation, we ended up around the long-term average, but largely because January was very dry and February, as the driveway shovelers in the crowd can attest, brought the Granite State regular doses of snow. In fact, it snowed somewhere in state on 17 of the 28 days that month, particularly in the south. All this snow may have forced species like Barred Owls and Hermit Thrushes closer to roads and feeders.



Barred Owl by Kyle Wilmarth,
1/29/13, Salem, NH.

This winter was relatively good for several irruptive finches, although a predicted “super-flight” generally failed to manifest itself in New Hampshire. See the section on Warblers through Finches for a more detailed discussion. The stars of the show were Pine Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls, the latter accompanied by above-average numbers of the much rarer **Hoary Redpoll**. Another “invasion” came from the west, namely that of **Varied Thrushes**. While six birds may not seem like an invasion, it equals the total number of this species reported in the state during the previous four winters. Other western vagrants included a **Townsend’s Solitaire** and an “Oregon” **Dark-eyed Junco**. In Grafton County, a **Red-headed Wood-**

pecker reliably visited a feeder in Alexandria, but a **Great Gray Owl** in Hanover only stayed a few days and was sometimes difficult to find even then.

Continuing with recent trends, half-hardy species like Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Hermit Thrush were relatively widespread. There was also a nice diversity of waterfowl through the season, highlighted by a couple of cooperative rare geese and a Canvasback influx in mid-January. This diversity also included a few inland oddball waterbirds like a Red-throated Loon on Lake Winnisquam, an American Coot in Wolfeboro, and a Dovekie in Canterbury. Miscellaneous coastal sightings of note included a late Spotted Sandpiper in Durham and an unidentified jaeger off Rye during a December storm.

Waterfowl

A Greater White-fronted Goose spent roughly half the season in Portsmouth, where it generally split its time between North Mill Pond and the Portsmouth traffic circle (where it dodged traffic while grazing with a large flock of Canada Geese). As its visit drew to a close, it also appeared briefly on Great Bay. A second Greater White-fronted Goose spent a few days in the Merrimack Valley along the Suncook River. Farther north, a **Cackling Goose** was present for a couple of days in Concord, after which it may have shifted east to Pittsfield as ponds froze. Another Cackling Goose was reported flying over downtown Durham on December 20, although no details were ever submitted. Brant are generally rare in New Hampshire in winter, so several reports of 1-2 birds spanning the entire season were noteworthy.



Greater White-fronted Goose by Len Medlock, 12/20/12, Portsmouth, NH.

Gadwall used to be a rare duck in winter but in recent years they have become more common as they were again this winter, starting with an impressive group of 11 on Great Bay. One in Nashua in late December seems to have been a one-day wonder, but in mid-February, the start of spring migration brought another four to the Nashua area. In comparison, American Wigeon were less common than usual, especially at their traditional winter stronghold on Great Bay, but among them was a single male **Eurasian Wigeon** in early December. Three or four Northern Shovelers, a handful of Northern Pintail, and a good scattering of Green-winged Teal (including several inland) round out the reports of less common dabbling ducks. As for the more expected American Black Duck and Mallard, the listings below include only the high concentrations. The number of ducks using the Exeter Wastewater Treatment Plant continues to be impressive, but equally amazing was a group of 500 roosting in about 600 square feet of open water in a Penacook retention pond in early February.

An extended period with consistent southwest or southerly flows in mid-January brought several Canvasbacks to northern New England, including four in New Hampshire. The first spent several days along the Merrimack River in Concord, and there were at least three on Great Bay. After a month's absence, another 4-5 Canvasbacks were on the Bay in late February, this time with a single **Redhead**. Could some of the January birds have been present the whole time but undetected, or were the latter birds the vanguard of spring migration which begins early in this species? Exeter continues to host an impressive concentration of Lesser Scaup, the number of which clearly declined over the winter, but also varied considerably from day to day. Other diving ducks were well-represented, until freeze up, at scattered locations from the Connecticut River to the Seacoast.

An immature male **King Eider** made an appearance at the mouth of Hampton Harbor, while a Black Scoter was equally unusual on Great Bay, since this species rarely

strays from the ocean in winter. Inland, there were multiple records of such typical ocean species as Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, and Red-breasted Merganser. Barrow's Goldeneyes were much more common than usual, with five inland, two on Great Bay, and at least three on the coast. Ruddy Ducks were well-represented across Rockingham County in December, with four lingering into January at Exeter. After a gap, a flock of 25 appeared on Great Bay later in January.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Greater White-fronted Goose				
12/05	1	Portsmouth	Commerce Way pond, Liberty Mutual	J. Mazzaglia, G. Tillman
12/13	1		Suncook R. Reservoir, Pembroke/Allenstown	A. Robbins
12/23	1		Suncook R. Reservoir, Pembroke/Allenstown	A. & G. Robbins
01/14	1	Portsmouth	Portsmouth Traffic Circle, NH State Liquor Store	Z. Cornell
01/17	1	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Lambert
Snow Goose				
12/15	1	Greenland	Sunset Farm	S. Mirick, S. Stoddard, K. Dorsey
Brant				
12/01	1	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	S. Mirick
12/15	1		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
01/12	1	Rye	Odiorne Point	E. Masterson
01/26	1	Hampton	Hampton Harbor Inlet	S. & J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, K. Dorsey
02/15	2	New Castle	Great Island Common	P. Brown
02/23	1	Seabrook	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
Cackling Goose				
12/06	1	Concord	Turtle Pond	P. Hunt, Z. Cornell
12/07	1	Concord	Turtle Pond	B. Crowley, D. Lania, C. Sheridan, R. Woodward
12/11	1	Pittsfield	Suncook River	A. & R. Robbins
Canada Goose				
12/04	750	Conway	E. Conway fields	B. Crowley
12/07	300	Rollinsford	Rt. 4	A. Aldrich
12/14	12	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/22	46	Westmoreland	Woodward Rd. area	A. Burnett
12/23	784		Suncook R. Reservoir, Pembroke/Allenstown	A. & G. Robbins
01/17	350	Greenland	Sunset Farm	J. Lambert
02/03	285	Tilton/Belmont	Silver Lake	P. Hunt
02/07	700	Stratham	Stuart Farm	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
02/10	50	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
02/17	27	Sunapee		G. Sweet
02/25	67	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
Wood Duck				
12/01	4	Concord	Sewalls Falls n.	J. Nadeau, R. Vallieres
12/31	1	Exeter	WTP	B. Hall, M. Mahata
01/01	1	Lebanon	Two Rivers CA	P. Hunt

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
01/04	1	Henniker	Contoocook R. off Western Ave.	A. Moser
01/05	1	Nashua	Fields Grove City Park	J. Maher
02/22	2	Exeter	WTP	M. Thompson
02/26	1	Nashua	Fields Grove City Park	Z. Cornell



*Gadwall by Len Medlock,
2/23/13, Nashua, NH.*

Gadwall

12/14	11	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	C. Borg
12/29	1	Nashua	Mine Falls Park	J. Maher
01/14	1	Rye	marsh s. of Odiorne Pt. SP	J. Lambert, M. Thompson
02/19	4	Nashua	Verona St. overlook	C. Sheridan
02/26	3	Nashua	Fields Grove City Park	Z. Cornell

Eurasian Wigeon

12/09	1	Greenland	Great Bay	S. Mirick
12/15	1	Greenland	Sunset Farm	S. Mirick, S. Stoddard, K. Dorsey

American Wigeon

12/15	49		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
12/19	2	Pittsfield	Tilton Hill Rd., Suncook River	A. Robbins
02/05	1	Concord	Bow Brook	J. Lambert, M. Thompson
02/28	3	Greenland	Sunset Farm	L. Medlock, M. Thompson, J. Lambert

American Black Duck

12/06	67	Rochester	WTP	D. Hubbard
01/12	200	Newington	Great Bay NWR, Herods Cove	E. Willard, K. Janes
02/02	30	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
02/10	113	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
02/22	240	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	J. Lambert
02/23	87	Exeter	WTP	P. Hunt

Mallard

12/06	256	Rochester	WTP	D. Hubbard
12/19	140		Suncook R. Reservoir, Pembroke/Allenstown	A. Robbins, M. Reinhardt
01/06	1720	Exeter	WTP	J. Lambert
02/02	470	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
02/02	725	Laconia	Winnepesaukee R. & Opechee Bay	R. Suomala
02/10	199	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
02/23	1576	Exeter	WTP	P. Hunt

Northern Shoveler

12/03	1	Rochester	WTP	D. Hubbard
12/13	1	Exeter	WTP	P. Miliotis
12/19	1	Derry	WTP	S. Mirick
12/22	1	Exeter	WTP	K. Wilmarth, P. Miliotis
01/21	1	Exeter	WTP	B. Crowley, J. Sparrell

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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Northern Pintail female (left) and male by Kyle Wilmarth, 12/24/12, Eel Pond, Rye, NH.

Northern Pintail

12/09	5	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
12/13	1	Ashland	Squam River	T. Vazzano
12/16	1		Suncook R. Reservoir, Pembroke/Allenstown	A. & G. Robbins
02/14	1	Salem	Policy Brook off Lou Ave.	K. Wilmarth

Green-winged Teal

12/01	11	Hampton	Meadow Pond	S. Mirick
12/02	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/03	1	Rochester	WTP	D. Hubbard
01/01	1	Lebanon	Mascoma River, downtown	P. Hunt
01/05	3	Portsmouth	North Mill Pond	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth
02/17	2	Nashua	Verona St. overlook	C. Sheridan
02/19	1	Rochester	WTP	D. Hubbard
02/23	2	Portsmouth	South Mill Pond	D. Tucker, Z. Cornell

Canvasback

01/14	1	Concord	Merrimack River at Hall St.	D. Lippy
01/19	2	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	S. Mirick
01/20	1	Concord	Merrimack R. by Concord WTP	D. Lippy, M. & R. Suomala
01/20	1	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	L. Medlock, S. & J. Mirick, D. Abbott
01/20	3	Stratham	Chapmans Landing	L. Medlock, S. & J. Mirick, D. Abbott
02/22	5	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	S. Mirick
02/28	4	Greenland	Sunset Farm	L. Medlock, M. Thompson, J. Lambert

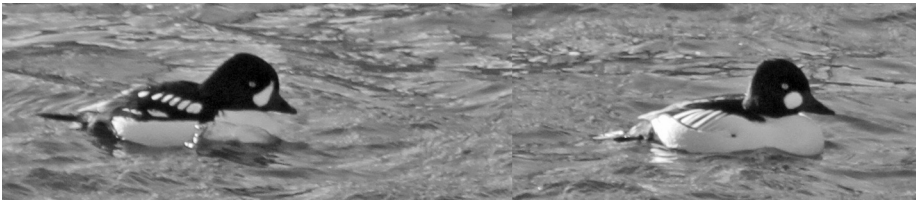
Redhead

02/28	1	Greenland	Sunset Farm	L. Medlock, M. Thompson, J. Lambert
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Ring-necked Duck

12/02	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
12/09	8	Rye	Jeness Pond	A. Robbins
12/14	4	Concord	Penacook Lake (Long Pond)	P. Hunt
12/19	4	Derry	Beaver Lake	S. Mirick
12/22	2	Rye	Eel Pond	M. Harvey, K. Wilmarth
12/22	3	Somersworth	Willand Pond	R. Suomala
12/29	1	Tilton/Belmont	Silver Lake	P. Hunt
01/15	6	Exeter	WTP	P. Miliotis
02/16	1	Exeter	WTP	P. Miliotis
02/23	3	Hinsdale	Vernon Dam, Connecticut R.	P. Brown, H. Walters

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Greater Scaup				
12/15	1200		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
12/29	6	Tilton	Winnisquam Lake, s.	P. Hunt
01/04	1	Manchester	Merrimack River, Line Dr.	A. Altena
01/13	4	Rye	Eel Pond	P. Thut
02/20	1	Rye	Eel Pond	D. Hubbard, A. Kimball
02/28	1500	Greenland	Sunset Farm	L. Medlock, J. Lambert, M. Thompson
Lesser Scaup				
12/02	4	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/02	140	Exeter	WTP	S. Mirick
12/09	43	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
12/15	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
12/25	17	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
01/01	68	Exeter	WTP	L. Medlock, at al.
01/01	7	Rye	Eel Pond	S. Mirick
02/26	2	Rye	Eel Pond	J. Scott, B. Crowley
02/28	24	Exeter	WTP	L. Medlock
King Eider				
02/16	1	Seabrook	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
02/20	1	Seabrook	Seabrook Beach	L. Medlock
Black Scoter				
12/09	1	Greenland	Great Bay	S. Mirick
12/09	175	Hampton	Great Boars Head	J. Scott
Long-tailed Duck				
12/15	1	Sunapee	Lake Sunapee	J. Gamble
02/10	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
02/16	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
Bufflehead				
12/02	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
12/15	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
12/15	2	Sunapee	Lake Sunapee	J. Gamble
02/25	6	Hooksett	Merrimack R. at Hooksett District Court	J. Gamble
Common Goldeneye				
01/19	169	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	S. Mirick
01/25	51	Manchester	Merrimack River	E. Masterson
02/10	284	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
02/22	375	Greenland	Great Bay	S. Mirick
02/25	160	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson



Barrows Goldeneye (left) and Common Goldeneye by Christine Sheridan, 1/10/13, Merrimack River, Manchester, NH.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Barrow's Goldeneye				
12/15	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	A. Moser
12/29	1	Laconia	Lake Winnisquam	S. Brallier
01/02	1	Manchester	downtown	S. Mirick
01/06	1	Rye	Eel Pond	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
01/12	1	N. Hampton	N. Hampton State Beach	D. Blezard, Seacoast CFT
01/14	1	New Castle	Fort Stark	B. Crowley, J. Scott
01/15	1	Concord	Sewalls Falls State Recreation Area	L. Medlock, D. Lipsy
02/16	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
02/19	2	Manchester	downtown	S. Mirick
02/22	2	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	S. Mirick, J. Lambert
02/25	1	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
Hooded Merganser				
12/02	55	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett, P. Brown
12/13	52	Concord	Turtle Pond	A. Robbins
12/15	56		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
12/16	57	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown, M. Einermann, D. Edwards, I. Gillespie
01/01	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
01/01	15	Lebanon	Johnson Is. & Two Rivers CA	P. Hunt
01/01	3	Lebanon	Mascoma River, downtown	P. Hunt
02/10	49	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
02/25	43	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
Common Merganser				
12/02	80	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett, P. Brown
12/15	150	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
01/01	90	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
02/10	78	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
02/25	42	Hinsdale	Lake Wantastiquet	E. Masterson
Red-breasted Merganser				
12/02	7	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown, A. Burnett
01/01	1	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	A. Burnett
Ruddy Duck				
12/02	4	Exeter	WTP	S. Mirick
12/06	6	Rochester	WTP	D. Hubbard
12/09	25	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	S. Mirick
12/13	3	Rye	Jeness Pond	A. Robbins
12/18	1	Windham	Canobie Lake	K. Wilmarth
12/19	34	Derry	Beaver Lake	S. Mirick
12/22	4	Somersworth	Willand Pond	R. Suomala
01/08	4	Exeter	WTP	J. & G. McKibben
01/20	26	Newmarket	Great Bay, Bay View Dr.	S. & J. Mirick, L. Medlock, D. Abbott
02/03	5	Durham	Adams Point WMA	D. Jackson
02/26	14	Durham	Adams Point	D. Lovitch

Grouse through Alcids

Ducks weren't the only diving waterbirds to establish noteworthy inland records in December. Topping the list was a **Red-throated Loon** flying over Lake Winnisquam on the Laconia Christmas Bird Count (CBC), although two Common Loons in Pittsburg (also on a CBC) could be considered a close runner up. Among grebes, Iain MacLeod's flock of 57 Horned Grebes on Lake Winnepesaukee set a new personal record for this location, while a Red-necked Grebe in Concord was unexpected. For a second winter, inland Great Cormorants were scarce, although one was unusually well north in Madison. Steve Mirick tallied an impressive number of Common Loons along the coast on February 10.



Rough-legged Hawk (left) 1/6/13, Little River Saltmarsh, N. Hampton, and Bald Eagle 1/1/13, Exeter WTP, NH. Photos by Len Medlock.

Volunteers for the 33rd Mid-winter Bald Eagle survey in mid-January tallied a record-tying 61 birds, with a record 84 during the surrounding two week period. This is in stark contrast to the total of only seven recorded 30 years ago in 1983. The late-winter count in February located a new record high of 74 Bald Eagles on count day, with 88 for the period. The state's only wintering **Golden Eagle** for the season was along the Connecticut River, as were two of the four Rough-legged Hawks.

An American Coot that appeared in an open section of Wolfboro Bay remained through the remainder of the season; winter coots are rare north of Massachusetts (see the Field Notes in this issue). For the third winter in a row, a Black-bellied Plover lingered in Hampton, this time through January 12. Could this be the same bird returning to a favorite wintering spot? A **Spotted Sandpiper** on the Lee-Durham CBC was an exceptional find, as this species almost always departs New Hampshire by early October. Similarly unexpected was a Ruddy Turnstone in Hampton in late January. Black-headed Gulls have become somewhat rare in New Hampshire in recent years, so a total of three this winter was above average. Among the larger gulls, Icelanders were widespread in the southeast part of the state, including three inland birds in Derry and Salem. Lesser Black-backed Gulls numbered only four or five, with three at the usual spot in Rochester, one in Durham (possibly one of the Rochester birds), and another inland in East Kingston. Another in Rye on the Coastal CBC was not included in the eBird data and is not listed below.

Strong southeast winds on December 21 brought an unidentified **jaeger** close to shore, perhaps the latest jaeger sighting ever for the state. Dovekies were more common than usual in much of New England this winter, with several records along the coast, including some sightings of multiple individuals. The same strong winds that produced the jaeger are also presumed to be responsible for the record of a **Dovekie** at Canterbury, over 50 miles inland. Historically, such Dovekie “wrecks” were much more common, with records as far inland as Peterborough, Charlestown, Haverhill, and, most remarkably, Dalton and Berlin. These records span the period from 1962 to 1973. Since then, there have been only two inland records: two birds two miles from the ocean in North Hampton on December 3, 1990 and one in Wakefield on November 28, 1993. Among other alcids, Thick-billed Murres had a good showing, and higher-than normal concentrations of Razorbills were noted mid-season.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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Spruce Grouse

12/17		Pittsburg	Back Lake Section, Pittsburg CBC	L. Kras
02/28	1	Errol	Greenough Pond Rd.	K. Dube

Red-throated Loon

12/29	1	Belmont	Winnisquam Lake, Mosquito Bridge B. Griffith	
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Common Loon

12/13	4	Moultonborough	Blueberry Island	I. MacLeod
12/15	1	Sunapee	Meadow Brook	J. Gamble
12/16	8	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown, et al.
12/18	2	Pittsburg	Rt. 3, Pittsburg CBC	S. Stoddard
12/31	1	Bristol	Newfound Lake	P. Hunt
01/13	1	Gilford	Belknap Point Rd.	K. Wilmarth, A. Altana
02/10	29	Rye	n. end of Foss Beach	S. Mirick
02/10	64	Rye	Rye Ledge	S. Mirick
02/10	41	Seabrook	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
02/23	34	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor	P. Hunt

Pied-billed Grebe

12/09	1	Greenland	Great Bay	S. Mirick
01/01	1	Nashua	Merrimack River	C. Sheridan, N. Murphy
01/06	1	Portsmouth	North Mill Pond	A. Altana, K. Wilmarth
01/20	1	Hudson	Rt. 111 bridge	C. Sheridan, N. Murphy


Horned Grebe
by Mike Thompson,
2/28/13, Hampton, NH.



Horned Grebe

12/02	2	Chesterfield	Spofford Lake	P. Brown
12/13	57	Moultonborough	Blueberry Island	I. MacLeod
01/07	11	Rye	Rt. 1A just s. of Odiome Pt.	D. Hubbard
02/16	24	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	S. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Red-necked Grebe				
12/03	1	Concord	Penacook Lake (Long Pond)	P. Hunt
12/22	30	Hampton	Bicentennial Park	M. Harvey
Northern Gannet				
12/02	10		NH coast	S. Mirick
01/05	4	Hampton	Shaw St. seawatch	L. Medlock, S.& J. Mirick, J. O'Shaughnessy
02/23	2	Seabrook	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
Double-crested Cormorant				
12/06	1	Northwood	Northwood Lake	J. Lambert
12/09	2	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
12/24	1	Rye	Eel Pond	K. Wilmarth
Great Cormorant				
12/15	24	Rye	Concord Point	P. Hunt, et al.
12/31	1	Madison	Silver Lake	S. Lee
01/03	1	Manchester	Commercial St.	J. & G. McKibben
01/12	25	New Castle	Great Island Common	D. Tucker
Great Blue Heron				
12/11	1	Hancock	Brown Farm	P.& L. Brown
12/25	1	Nashua	Duck Pond	D. Deifik
01/14	1	Jaffrey	Harling St.	B. Ellis
01/26	1	Concord	Sewalls Falls n.	J. Nadeau
02/10	1	Northfield	residence	R. Mills Sr.
02/25	1	Nashua	Mine Falls Park	J. Maher
Turkey Vulture				
01/04	1	Barrington	Warren Farm	S. Young
01/05	1	Nashua	Fields Grove City Park	J. Maher
01/20	2	Londonderry	Home Depot	G. McKibben
02/07	8	Exeter	Deep Meadow MHP	B. Rose
02/15	1	Concord	Market Basket parking lot	D. LaValley
02/26	3	Manchester	Rt. 93	S. Mirick
Golden Eagle				
12/31	1	Stratford	Fort Hill WMA	J. Norton
Red-shouldered Hawk				
01/06	1	Concord	Hoit Rd. at Old Boyce Rd.	L. LaPierre, R. Quinn
01/12	1	Concord	Morrills Farm, Goodwin Pt.	A. Moser
01/13	1	Salem	Arlington Pond Ct.	C. DeCesare
01/17	1	Hampton Falls	Hampton-Seabrook marsh, Depot Rd.	J. Lambert, L. Medlock
01/20	1	Newmarket	New Rd.	L. Medlock, S.& J. Mirick, D. Abbott
01/26	1	Exeter	Rt. 108	S.& J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, K. Dorsey
02/07	2	Stratham	Stuart Farm	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
02/25	1	Salem	Stiles Rd. wetlands	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
Rough-legged Hawk				
01/06	1	N. Hampton	Willow Ave.	L. Medlock
01/29	1	Lyme		M. Green
01/30	1	Newington	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Newington Rd.	J. Lambert
02/25	1	Charlestown	Great Meadow	E. Masterson

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
American Coot				
02/21	1	Wolfeboro	Wolfeboro Bay	W. Chatel
Black-bellied Plover				
12/02	2	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	S. Mirick
01/12	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	D. Blezard, Seacoast CFT
Killdeer				
12/06	1	Rochester	WTP	D. Hubbard
02/28	1	E. Kingston	Bodwell Farm	L. Medlock
Spotted Sandpiper				
12/22	1	Durham	Oyster River Sector, Lee-Durham CBC	S.& J. Mirick, D. & B. Ekstrom
				
<p><i>Ruddy Turnstone</i> by Len Medlock, 1/11/13, jetty at Hampton Harbor inlet, NH.</p>				
Ruddy Turnstone				
01/12	1	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	D. Blezard, Seacoast CFT
01/26	1	Hampton	Hampton Harbor inlet	S. & J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, K. Dorsey
Sanderling				
12/09	100	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth
01/19	120	Rye	Rye Ledge	R. Suomala, A. Robbins
01/20	215	Rye	Jeness State Beach	J. Lambert
02/16	115	Rye	Rye Harbor SP	S. Mirick
Purple Sandpiper				
12/22	16	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	M. Harvey
01/19	13	Rye	Rye Ledge	A. Robbins, R. Suomala
02/19	18	Hampton	Hampton River, south jetty	J. Lambert
Dunlin				
01/06	100	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	S. Mirick
02/16	65	Seabrook	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
American Woodcock				
12/09	1	Hancock	Antrim Rd.	P. Brown
Black-legged Kittiwake				
12/02	5		NH coast	S. Mirick
01/05	10	Hampton	Shaw St. seawatch	L. Medlock, S. & J. Mirick, J. O'Shaughnessy
01/06	5	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	S. Mirick
02/02	10	Seabrook	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
Black-headed Gull				
12/25	1	Rye	Jeness State Beach	S. Mirick
01/01	1	Exeter	WTP	L. Medlock, et al.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
01/12	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	D. Blezard, Seacoast CFT
01/15	1	Exeter	WTP	P. Miliotis



Black-headed Gull by Len Medlock, 1/1/13, Exeter WTP, NH.



Iceland Gull by Steve Mirick, 1/13/13, Hampton Harbor, NH.

Iceland Gull

12/07	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	S. Mirick
12/19	2	Derry	WTP	S. Mirick
12/20	2	Rochester	WTP	D. Hubbard
12/22	3		Lee-Durham CBC, Gonic sector	B. Griffith, L. Kras
01/06	4	Exeter	WTP	L. Medlock, P. Miliotis
01/14	1	Rye	Eel Pond	B. Crowley, J. Scott, J. Maher
01/19	1	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	S. Mirick
01/20	1	Salem		A. Altena, K. Wilmarth

Lesser Black-backed Gull

12/22	3		Lee-Durham CBC, Gonic sector	B. Griffith, L. Kras
01/31	1	Durham	UNH Dairy Barn	J. Lambert
02/23	1	E. Kingston	South Rd.	L. Medlock, D. Finch



Lesser Black-backed Gull by Len Medlock, 2/23/13, E. Kingston, NH.



Glaucous Gull by Aiden Moser, 12/15/12, Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook, NH.

Glaucous Gull

12/15	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	A. Moser
12/22	1		Lee-Durham CBC, Gonic sector	B. Griffith, L. Kras
01/12	1	Exeter	WTP	E. Masterson
01/12	2	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor	E. Masterson
02/25	1	Rochester	WTP	D. Hubbard
02/28	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	C. Sheridan

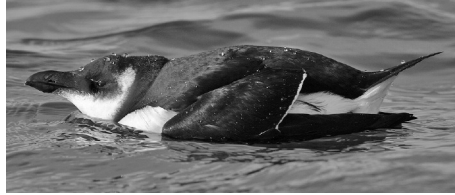
jaeger sp.

12/21	1	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S. Mirick
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<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Dovekie				
12/02	2	Rye	Rye Harbor SP	J. Nugent Jr.
12/21	2	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S. Mirick
12/23	1	Canterbury	Briar Bush Rd.	B. Polston
01/14	1	Rye	Seal Rocks	J. Maher
02/16	1	Hampton	Great Boars Head	J. Atwood
Thick-billed Murre				
12/15	1	Rye	Rye Harbor SP	S. Stoddard
01/12	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	D. Blezard, Seacoast CFT
02/02	1	N. Hampton	Little Boars Head	S. Mirick



Thick-billed Murre by Len Medlock, 1/12/13, Hampton Harbor, Seabrook, NH.



Razorbill by Len Medlock, 1/17/13, Hampton Harbor, Seabrook, NH.

Razorbill

01/05	19		NH coast	S. Mirick
01/12	57		NH coast	E. Masterson
01/17	1	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	L. Medlock, J. Lambert
02/02	17	Seabrook	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick

Black Guillemot

01/12	12		NH coast	S. Mirick
02/16	15		NH coast	S. Mirick

Owls through Crows

The stronghold for Eastern Screech-Owls in New Hampshire remains the Great Bay/Seacoast area, with records elsewhere few and far between. The only such record this winter was of a bird found dead in a Litchfield driveway. After last winter's major invasion, it was not surprising to have almost no Snowy Owls reported. Snowy Owl irruptions are unpredictable and not fully understood but it's unusual to have back to back invasions. Of the two sightings this winter, the one photographed in a spruce tree on the University of New Hampshire campus was certainly the more



Great Gray Owl by Len Medlock, 2/3/13, Appalachian Trail via Trescott Rd., Hanover, NH.

unusual (see the Field Notes in this issue)! One of the stars of the winter was without a doubt the **Great Gray Owl** that spent six days in Hanover during early February. The bird frequented a large wetland off the Appalachian Trail and given that it was not always easy to find, there is a reasonable chance it still lingered somewhere nearby after the last reported date. The bird was certainly part of a southeastward movement of this species that also resulted in several records in eastern Canada. As is typical of Great Gray irruptions, the movement was a result of a crash in small rodent populations in the normal winter range (the boreal forests, south of the Snowy Owl range). Also responding to a prey shortage were Barred Owls. Because this species is a common breeder in New Hampshire, it can be hard to detect influxes of individuals from elsewhere, but such an influx was very apparent to the south, especially from areas where Barred Owls don't breed. However, higher than normal numbers of Barred Owls seen on New Hampshire CBCs probably reflect the irruption, as do multiple sightings near roadsides and bird feeders once the snow started building up in February. At that time, already-stressed owls had an even harder time finding food, and were likely forced to areas where mice would be somewhat easier to find. Owl irruptions are not well understood and while they appear to be related to food, they are highly variable. Prey availability varies regionally in a given year, thus different owl populations are affected by different rodent dynamics.

A picture is worth a thousand words, so I present for your viewing pleasure a map (Figure 1) showing all the towns where Red-bellied Woodpeckers were reported to eBird this winter. Most noteworthy was the bird found far north in Errol during the CBC on December 19, a new northernmost record for the state. In contrast, only 20 years ago Red-bellied Woodpecker was an extremely rare bird anywhere in New Hampshire, and birders were driving for over an hour to see one that had taken up residence in Hollis! How long will it be before they've been documented from every town in the state? The closely-related **Red-**

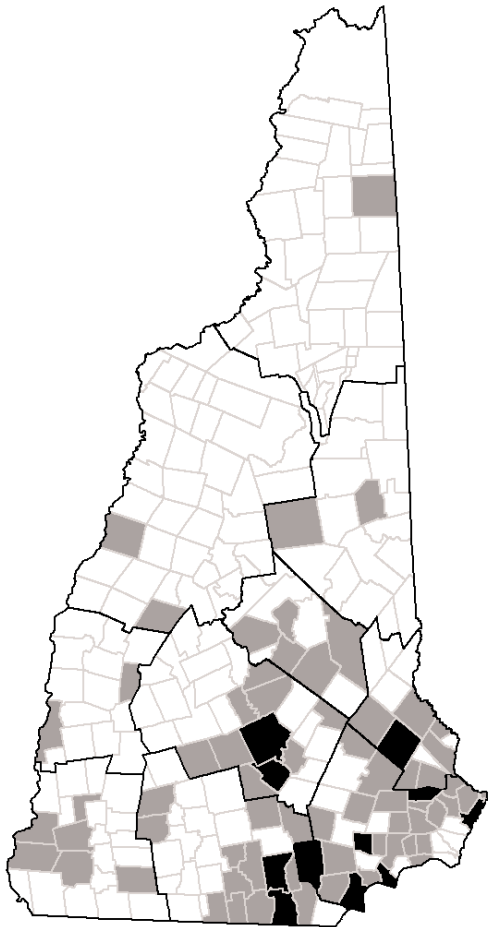


Figure 1. The New Hampshire towns with Red-bellied Woodpecker reports in eBird from December 1, 2012 through February 28, 2013. Darker shading indicates towns with three or more locations for the species.

headed Woodpecker is a far rarer species (many Red-bellieds are mistakenly reported as Red-headed) that breeds primarily in the Southeast and Midwest United States. Vagrants are fairly regular to New England in fall and winter and this season New Hampshire was treated to a long-staying bird at a feeder in Alexandria. Being an immature bird, observers who made multiple visits were able to note the increasing amount of red on its head as the season progressed into spring. A second Red-headed Woodpecker may have made a brief appearance in Dover, but unfortunately no detailed documentation was ever submitted.

Also continuing to make news were Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, at least 10 of which were reported this season (including CBC reports not listed below). This species is becoming increasingly common as a winter bird throughout New England, perhaps a joint result of a warming climate and increasing regional populations. Merlin is another increasing species, both as a breeding and wintering resident, and this season there were at least seven. In stark contrast, there were no reports of the declining American Kestrel whatsoever.

Northern Shrikes staged a moderate incursion, with at least 27 birds (not including CBCs) spread throughout the state from Pittsburg to Marlborough to Stratham. The only reliable place to find a winter Fish Crow in the state remains Salem, but this season there was also a lingering bird in Manchester in December and early-returning migrants in Greenland and Nashua.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
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Eastern Screech-Owl by Len Medlock, 2/2/13, Rt. 1A, Odiorne Point, Rye, NH.

Eastern Screech-Owl

12/15	1		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
01/25	1	Exeter	Webster Ave.	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse
01/26	1	Rye	Odiorne Point SP	S. & J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, K. Dorsey
02/10	1	Portsmouth	Wentworth Coolidge Historical Site	P. Hunt
02/25	1	Litchfield	Nesenkeag Dr.	L. Dampolo

Snowy Owl

02/03	1	Durham	UNH campus, Adam's Tower trail	H. Pederson
02/16	1	Rye	Pulpit Rocks	D. Hughes

Great Gray Owl

02/03	1	Hanover	Trescott Rd.	J. Block
02/08	1	Hanover	Trescott Rd.	G. Clark, C. Crawford, D. Hardy, M. Thompson, J. Lambert, A. Moser, S. Eisenhauer

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Northern Saw-whet Owl				
12/29	1	Tilton	School St. & Sherry Dr.	P. Hunt
02/12	1	Hanover		I. Jenkyn
02/17	1	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis Jr.

*Red-headed Woodpecker by Len Medlock,
1/10/13, Alexandria, NH.*



Red-headed Woodpecker

12/13	1	Alexandria	Grafton Rd.	P. Hollis
02/27	1	Alexandria	Grafton Rd.	P. Hollis

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

12/02	1	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis Jr.
12/14	2	Salisbury	Mountain Rd.	L. Deming
01/04	1	Nashua	Columbia Ave.	J. Maher
01/26	1	Rye	Garland Rd.	P. Hunt, A. Robbins, P. Myers, R. Suomala
01/29	1	Hudson	Benson Park	D. Fallon
02/02	1	Boscawen	Commercial St., old tannery	P. Hunt
02/04	1	Walpole	Old Drewsville Rd.	L. Stolper

Black-backed Woodpecker

12/18	1	Pittsburg	East Inlet dam, Pittsburg CBC	P. Brown, K. Fenton, K. Klapper
02/14	2	Bethlehem	Trudeau Rd.	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
02/19	1	Jefferson	Pondicherry NWR	D. Govatski
02/20	1	Carroll	Bretton Woods X-C Ski Area	L. Lane
02/20	1	Lincoln	Liberty Springs Trail	M. Walker
02/21	1		Franconia Inn XC/Ham Branch Trail	D. Swain

Northern Flicker

12/15	3	Portsmouth	Great Bog, Banfield Rd.	P. Hunt, C. Borg, T. Grade
12/30	1	Walpole	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd.	A. Burnett
02/23	1	Enfield	Lockehaven Rd.	E. Faughnan



*Merlin by Len Medlock, 2/22/13,
Greenland, NH.*

Merlin

12/09	1	New Castle		S. Mirick
12/22	1	Exeter	WTP	K. Wilmarth
12/31	1	Nashua	7th St. at Ledge St.	C. Sheridan
01/13	1	Walpole	North Meadow Plaza	A. Burnett
01/15	1	Bow	Hall St.	L. Medlock, D. Lipsy
02/23	1	Concord	Horsehoe Pond	R. Quinn
02/23	1	Greenland	Portsmouth Country Club	L. Medlock

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Gray Jay				
12/05	3	Lincoln	Hancock Loop Trail	S. Crowley
12/18	3	Pittsburg	East Inlet dam, Pittsburg CBC	P. Brown, K. Klapper, K. Fenton
12/19	1	Errol	Errol-Umbagog CBC, Rt. 16	S. Stoddard
12/24	1		Carter Notch trails	Z. Smart
01/03	1	Bethlehem	Mt. Tom	S. Crowley
02/14	2	Millsfield	Rt. 26, mile marker 26	M. Thompson
02/16	1	Milan	Chickwolnepy Rd.	K. Dube, Seacoast CFT
American Crow				
01/01	8000	Lebanon	roost on Dartmouth-Hitchcock campus	P. Hunt
Fish Crow				
12/03	1	Salem	Hawkin's Farm	A. Altena
12/24	1	Manchester	Beech Street	J. Hills
01/09	1	Salem	Hawkin's Farm	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth
02/22	1	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	J. Lambert
02/28	1	Nashua	Target	B. Griffith

Horned Lark through Snow Bunting



Townsend's Solitaire by Jason Lambert, 1/12/13, Belknap Point Rd., Gilford, NH.

It was a good winter for the group of open country winter songbirds that includes Horned Lark, American Pipit, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Bunting. Perhaps because of limited snow cover through December and January, large flocks of larks and buntings were reported in traditional areas of the Seacoast and the Merrimack and Connecticut River Valleys. Good-sized flocks of buntings were also reported north of the White Mountains (where at some

times there was actually less snow than in the south!). Accompanying the more common species were far more Lapland Longspurs than usual, also including one bird north of the mountains. Then there were the pipits. Not that long ago, American Pipit was unusual in the state after November, but this season there were not only overwintering birds along the coast (the most likely location for overwintering pipits), but also an impressive flock of 35 in Stratham. Perhaps even more remarkable was an apparent overwintering bird along the Connecticut River in Walpole.

Like other half-hardies, Winter Wren may be becoming more common in winter. This season most were in coastal New Hampshire, but outliers were detected as far

inland as Concord and the Monadnock Region. This winter's Marsh Wren was in the Chapman's Landing saltmarsh, where it is a common breeding species. Another apparently increasing half-hardy is Ruby-crowned Kinglet, with at least eight reports south and east of Concord, three of which were long-staying birds at feeders. To wrap up the half-hardy discussion, I can't ignore Hermit Thrush! There were at least 22 at some point this winter, all from the Lakes Region south (see Figure 2). Many first appeared at feeders in February, when heavy snows combined with reduced berry crops forced them out of the woods in search of food.

There are only a handful of New Hampshire records for **Townsend's Solitaire**, most of them in winter. This season's bird spent part of January eating juniper berries at a lake-side house on Lake Winnepesaukee. It was another western thrush that gets top honors for the winter of 2012-13, however. The first **Varied Thrush** was reported from the southern end of Bow on January 11, but was only seen for a day. In the weeks that followed, however, the reports kept coming and in the end, there were six different birds visiting feeders from Bartlett to Nashua.

The original bird may have been a seventh, but given that birds were seen only a few days later within a mile north and south in Bow and Dunbarton, I've opted to err on the conservative side. The full story of the Varied Thrush "invasion" is presented in Table 1 rather than the usual listing format. Note that it was an exceptional winter for this species in New England, with 10 reported (plus another in New Brunswick), but New Hampshire gets top billing with our six!

In contrast to recent years, American Robins were relatively scarce, with only nine reports of over 100 birds. Eastern Bluebirds seemed proportionally more reported than robins, with 261 vs. 520 records in eBird, although this ratio could also reflect that bluebirds are still a greater winter novelty than robins and more often reported. Winter irruptive watchers were ready for an influx of Bohemian Waxwings and while one did manifest itself, it was mostly limited to northern New Hampshire. The largest group

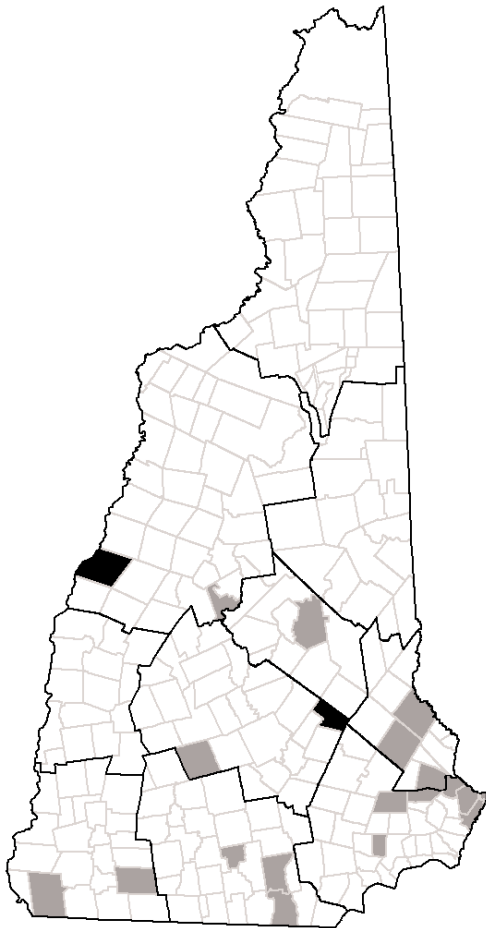


Figure 2. The New Hampshire towns with Hermit Thrush reports in eBird from December 1, 2012 through February 28, 2013. Darker shading indicates towns with two locations for the species.

was at the traditional location at Plymouth State University, while only three individuals were reported south and east of the Lakes Region. Cedar Waxwings were also scarce (only two reports of more than 50) and were most abundant in December and early January.



Varied Thrush by Amanda Altena, 1/26/13, Dunbarton, NH.

Town	Location	Observer	First Date	Last Date
Dunbarton	Montelona Rd.	Kristyne Groves	1/9/13	2/13/13
Bow	Quimby Rd.	Patricia Fleurie	1/11/13	1/12/13
Bow	Salt Marsh Circle	Dave Barker, Gary Deragon	1/19/13	4/16/13
Bartlett	Cobb Farm Rd.	Emily Blake	1/23/13	2/8/13
Nashua	Kim Dr.	Thom Riley	2/2/13	2/17/13
Hopkinton	Maple St.	Andrea Plummer	2/9/13	3/2/13
Barnstead	Province Rd.	Muriel Lariviere	2/25/13	4/6/13

Table 1. Varied Thrushes in New Hampshire during the winter of 2012-13. Observer is the first person to discover the bird; in several cases they hosted many other birders to view the bird.

date	#	town	location	observer(s)
Horned Lark				
12/09	350	Nashua	Nashua Airport Boire Field	D. Fortnam
12/15	32		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
01/01	50	Stratham	Stuart Farm	J. Lambert
01/05	15	Hampton	Hampton Beach SP	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
01/13	150	Walpole	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd.	A. Burnett
01/26	80	Milford	North River Rd.	J. Broyles
02/10	100	Nashua	Nashua Airport Boire Field	D. Fortnam
02/10	200	Walpole	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd.	A. Burnett
02/12	75	Stratham	Stuart Farm	J. Lambert
02/25	200	Charlestown	Great Meadow	E. Masterson
02/26	75	Concord	W. Portsmouth St.	D. Lippy
02/26	75	Rye	Rye Harbor	J. Scott, B. Crowley

Horned Lark by Deanne Fortnam, 12/9/12, Boire Field, Nashua, NH.



<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Boreal Chickadee				
12/05	3	Lincoln	Hancock Loop Trail	S. Crowley
12/09		Waterville Valley	Mount Passaconaway	K. Pelletier
12/18	4	Pittsburg	East Inlet dam, CBC	P. Brown, K. Klapper, K. Fenton
01/12		Beans Purchase	The Carters, WMNF	K. Pelletier
01/19	2	Lincoln	Mt. Liberty, WMNF	J. Baldwin
02/16	2	Errol	Greenough Pond Rd.	K. Dube, Seacoast CFT
Tufted Titmouse				
01/03	2	Lancaster	Grove St.	D. Haas
01/25	1	Milan	Chickwolnepy Rd.	J. Scott, B. Crowley
Winter Wren				
12/15	3	Portsmouth	Great Bog, Banfield Rd.	P. Hunt, C. Borg, T. Grade
12/16	1	Concord	Lakeview Dr. near Long Pond	P. Hunt
12/20	2	Durham	Longmarsh Rd.	S. Mirick
12/22	1	Barrington	Warren Farm	S. Young
01/06	1	New Castle	Rt.1B near Pit Ln.	S. Mirick
01/08	1	Hancock	Old Dublin Rd.	E. Masterson
02/07	1	Portsmouth	Creek Farm	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
02/09	1	Northwood	West St.	J. Lambert
02/22	1	Antrim	Willard Pond WS	H. Walters
02/28	1	Greenland	Great Bay Rd.	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
Marsh Wren				
12/15	1	Stratham	Chapmans Landing	D. Hubbard, G. Tillman, M. Hatfield
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				
12/04	1	Concord	McLane Audubon Center, Silk Farm Rd.	P. Brown
12/11	1	Exeter	WTP	P. Miliotis
12/15	1		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
12/20	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Rd. residence	D. Hubbard
12/22	1		Lee-Durham CBC, Gonic sector	L. Kras
12/22	1	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
01/05	1	Brentwood	River Rd.	H. Hutchinson
01/11	1	Rochester	Ten Rod Rd. residence	D. Hubbard
01/25	1	Greenland	Caswell Dr.	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse
02/18	1	Brentwood	River Rd.	H. Hutchinson
02/22	1	Greenland	Caswell Dr.	S. Mirick
Townsend's Solitaire				
01/11	1	Gilford	Belknap Point Rd.	M. Coskren
01/28	1	Gilford	Belknap Point Rd.	I. MacLeod
Gray Catbird				
12/22	1	Westmoreland	Woodward Rd. area	A. Burnett
American Pipit				
12/15	4	Rye	Rye Harbor SP	P. Hunt, et al.
12/15	35	Stratham	Stuart Farm, Coastal CBC	D. Hubbard, G. Tillman, M. Hatfield
12/30	1	Walpole	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd.	A. Burnett
01/01	6	Stratham	Stuart Farm	J. Lambert

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
American Pipit—continued				
01/26	2	Hampton	Great Boars Head	S. & J. Mirick, P. Lacourse, K. Dorsey
02/02	3	Hampton	Great Boars Head	S. Mirick
02/10	1	Rye	Rye Harbor SP	S. Mirick
02/10	1	Walpole	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd.	E. Masterson
02/12	1	Stratham	Stuart Farm	J. Lambert
02/23	7	Rye	Rye Harbor SP	S. Mirick



American Pipit by Len Medlock, 1/13/13, Rye Harbor State Park, Rye, NH.

Bohemian Waxwing

12/14	12	Lancaster	Portland St.	S. Stoddard
12/20	400	Holderness	Plymouth State University	P. Brown, K. Klapper, K. Fenton
12/22	1		Lee-Durham CBC, Gonic sector	B. Griffith, L. Kras
12/29	1	Tilton	Rt. 132	P. Hunt
01/07	40	Hanover	Dartmouth College	K. Kittelberger
01/21	30	Sunapee	Winn Hill Rd.	K. Doolan
01/26	50	Conway	Flatbread Company	A. Clark
02/03	1	Concord	Mountain Rd.	D. Lania
02/07	64	Plymouth	Plymouth State University	Z. Cornell
02/16	50	Gorham	downtown, Rt. 16	Z. Cornell, Seacoast CFT
02/25	25	Conway	Grindle Center	D. Eddison
02/28	13	Ossipee	Sunny Villa	D. Small, M. Gimpel

Cedar Waxwing

12/03	65	Plymouth	Langdon St., Plymouth State Univ.	D. Hoffman
12/22	180	Durham	Oyster River Sector, Lee-Durham CBC	S. & J. Mirick, D. & B. Ekstrom

Lapland Longspur

12/09	1	Nashua	Nashua Airport Boire Field	D. Fortnam
12/30	1	Walpole	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd.	A. Burnett
01/11	1	Concord	Morrills Farm, Goodwin Pt.	P. Hunt
01/13	1	Rye	Rt. 1A pullout by stone angel	L. Medlock, et al.
01/17	1	Portsmouth	Pease Int'l. Tradeport	D. Doubleday
02/10	1	Exeter	WTP	P. Miliotis, L. Medlock
02/10	2	Walpole	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd.	E. Masterson
02/12	1	Stratham	Stuart Farm	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
02/16	1	Milan	Kelly Farm	K. Dube, Seacoast CFT

Snow Bunting

01/01	25	Lebanon	Lebanon Airport	P. Hunt
01/04	60	Greenland	Sunset Farm	D. Tucker
01/04	27	New Castle	Great Is. Common & Wild Rose Ln.	J. Kelly



Lapland Longspur by Len Medlock, 1/13/13,
Rt. 1A, Rye, NH.



Snow Bunting by Deanne Fortnam, 12/9/12,
Boire Field, Nashua, NH.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
01/05	20	Carroll	Carroll transfer station	N. Mitiguy
01/06	25	Stratham	Stuart Farm	R. Ellwood
01/08	17	Keene	Keene High School & Wilson Pond	A. Burnett
01/10	65	Lyme	River Rd. & North Thetford Rd.	B. Allison
01/11	45	Concord	Morrills Farm, Goodwin Pt.	P. Hunt
01/12	70	Franklin	Webster Place	R. Quinn, L.& A. Garlo
01/12	200	Lyme	River Rd.	J. Norton
01/12	45	N. Hampton	Rt. 1A	S. Mirick
01/19	35	Boscawen	Merrimack County Nursing Home	J. Normandin
01/20	12	Freedom	Cushing Corner Rd.	J. Rhymer
01/22	30	Walpole	Agway	J. Russo
01/24	60	Conway	Sherman Farm	B. Crowley, J. Scott
02/10	100	Nashua	Nashua Airport Boire Field	D. Fortnam
02/16	2	Litchfield	residence	J. Ciemiewicz
02/16	50	Milan	Kelly Farm	K. Dube, Seacoast CFT
02/17	60	Newport	Pinegrove Cemetery	D. Jackson
02/19	30	Barrington	Warren Farm	S. Young
02/25	450	Charlestown	Great Meadow	E. Masterson

Warblers through Finches

For better or worse, last winter's wintering Cape May Warbler did not reappear (although there was one in Andover, MA for part of January!) and warblers in general were less common than in previous winters. There were five Pine Warblers, three of which were at feeders, as was a Yellow-rumped Warbler well inland in Gilmanton. All non-feeder warblers were near the coast, including a few more Yellow-rumped than the last couple of winters.

Unlike many other half-hardies already noted, Eastern Towhees do not appear to be increasing. This season there were only three, all on the seacoast. Perhaps this species' decline as a breeding bird is behind its continued rarity in winter, in contrast to increasing breeders such as Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Winter Wren, and Hermit Thrush. While Savannah Sparrow (including the pale "Ipswich" subspecies) is expected in small numbers near the coast, winter records inland are much rarer. In this context, a group of four in Penacook (Concord) in mid-December was noteworthy; at least one of these birds survived through March. The same location also hosted two White-crowned Sparrows and one Swamp Sparrow for the Concord CBC. In a winter with fewer White-throated Sparrows than usual, one at a feeder well to the north in Carroll on January 9 was somewhat unusual. Last but far from least in the sparrow

group was an “Oregon” **Dark-eyed Junco**, found in Greenland during the Coastal CBC.

Only one Dickcissel graced the state this winter. It was “out west” in Walpole, in roughly the same location as a bird the previous winter. Blackbirds in general were less widespread and common than in 2011-12. The most unusual record was a Red-winged Blackbird well north and west in Wentworth on February 20. Given the date, this might have been an early migrant, as were a smattering of other species in the same time frame. In general, however, the cold and snowy February seemed to have delayed even blackbird spring arrivals until well into March.

Back in the fall, there were abundant signs that the winter of 2012-13 would produce a “super flight:” the simultaneous irruption of all the winter finches. As early as August, there were Red Crossbills scattered across New Hampshire, and by November all species except Hoary Redpoll had been reported as far south as Concord. Then it fizzled! With the exception of a small group of White-winged Crossbills that frequented the coast, crossbills were largely gone by the end of December.



Hoary Redpoll (r) by Len Medlock, 1/18/13, River Rd., Stratham, NH.

Evening Grosbeaks were limited to small flocks in the west and north, and Purple Finches were almost entirely absent. Pine Siskins were at least more widespread, but rarely occurred in groups larger than two and American Goldfinches occurred in unremarkable numbers.

It wasn't a total bust, however. Pine Grosbeaks managed to make it to all corners of the state, from Pittsburg to Westmoreland to Rye. Numbers weren't terribly large and the largest groups were actually in the southeastern quadrant of the state (e.g., Concord, Manchester, Rochester). Almost none of the grosbeaks were the bright pink adult males, although as the season progressed faint tinges of color began to appear on the immature males previously hidden in the flocks. Then there were the redpolls. Common Redpolls staged one of their largest irruptions in recent years (they made it as far south as Arkansas) and like Pine Grosbeaks were seen in all areas of the state. Also, as with the grosbeaks, they were not uniformly distributed. While there were plenty of large flocks, the mega-flocks were limited to a handful of feeders. Ground zero for the redpoll invasion was Scott Young's feeder in Strafford. Scott's counts, often backed up with photographs, regularly exceeded 500 birds and on one remarkable day, he estimated a thousand redpolls flying by in a loose flock. During the peak of their visit, Scott's redpolls were going through over 50 pounds of hulled sunflower a week! Among the hordes of Common Redpolls were probably several of the larger and darker “*rostrata*” subspecies that breeds in Greenland. Finally, there were Hoary

Redpolls. It is impossible at this time to fully assess the extent of the Hoary Redpoll flight, but suffice it to say they were widespread. Not counting Strafford, at least twelve were reported statewide (again, not all verified at this time) and the Strafford mega-flock regularly contained multiple individuals. Some of the latter were also of the larger Greenland subspecies of Hoary Redpoll.

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Common Yellowthroat				
01/06	1	Rye	Highland Park Ave.	S. Mirick
Pine Warbler				
12/31	1	Newmarket	Bay Rd.	H. Chary
01/26	1	Rye	Central Cemetery	P. Hunt, A. Robbins, R. Suomala, P. Myers
02/10	1	Pembroke	Pembroke Hill Rd.	E. Laramie
02/16	1	Newmarket	Ash Swamp Rd.	B. Rudinsky
02/18	1	Newmarket	Bay Rd.	H. Chary
02/25	1	Kensington	North Rd.	L. Medlock
Yellow-rumped Warbler				
12/09	2	Portsmouth	Portsmouth Hospital duck pond	S. Mirick
12/15	1		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
12/20	1	Rochester	Pickering Ponds	D. Hubbard
01/05	1	Hampton	Shaw St.	L. Medlock, S. & J. Mirick, J. O'Shaughnessy
01/08	1	Gilmanton	Pine Circle, Gilmanton Iron Works	W. Arms
02/06	1	Gilmanton	Pine Circle, Gilmanton Iron Works	W. Arms
02/15	1	New Castle	Crosby Conservation Easement	P. Brown
02/24	1	Gilmanton	Pine Circle, Gilmanton Iron Works	W. Arms
Eastern Towhee				
12/15	1		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
12/15	1	Rye	Colbourn Rd.	P. Hunt, C. Borg, T. Grade
01/08	1	Rye	Odiome Point SP	J. Lambert
Chipping Sparrow				
12/02	2	E. Kingston	South Rd.	S. Mirick
12/16	1		Keene CBC	J. Atwood
Field Sparrow				
12/15	1	Hancock	Peterborough-Hancock CBC	P., J. & L. Brown, H. Walters
12/22	1		Lee-Durham CBC, Gonic sector	L. Kras, B. Griffith
12/29	1	Hancock	Moose Brook Rail Trail	P., J. & L. Brown
Savannah Sparrow				
12/02	5	E. Kingston	South Rd.	S. Mirick
12/16	4	Concord	Morrills Farm, Goodwin Pt.	P. Hunt, Z. Cornell
01/13	1	Rye	Seal Rocks	A. Robbins, L. Medlock, P. Myers, P. Hunt
02/02	1	Concord	Morrills Farm, Goodwin Pt.	P. Hunt
02/12	7	Stratham	Stuart Farm	J. Lambert
Savannah Sparrow - Ipswich subsp.				
01/01	1	Seabrook	NH coast	S. Mirick
01/13	1	Rye	s. of Odiome Point	S. Mirick
02/02	2	Seabrook	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	S. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Fox Sparrow				
12/02	1	Concord	Mountain Rd.	J. Nadeau
12/08	1	Concord	Tow Path Lane	D. Lania
12/11	1	Exeter	Newfields Rd.	P. Chamberlin
12/15	2		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
12/29	1	Concord	Tow Path Lane	D. Lania
02/15	1	Exeter	Newfields Rd.	P. Chamberlin
Song Sparrow				
12/17		Pittsburg	Back Lake Section, Pittsburg CBC	L. Kras
Swamp Sparrow				
12/16	1	Concord	Morrills Farm, Goodwin Pt.	P. Hunt, Z. Cornell
12/20	2	Durham	Longmarsh Rd.	S. Mirick
White-crowned Sparrow				
12/02	1	Gilsum		M. Wright
12/16	2	Concord	Morrills Farm, Goodwin Pt.	P. Hunt, Z. Cornell
Dark-eyed Junco - Oregon subsp.				
12/15	1	Greenland	Palm Drive, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
Dickcissel				
01/22	1	Walpole	Agway	D. Clark
Red-winged Blackbird				
02/20	1	Wentworth	Rt. 25 between Dufour Rd. & Lookaway Ln.	H. Downing
Rusty Blackbird				
12/01	1	Henniker	Henniker Airport	A. Moser
12/08	1	Kensington	South Rd.	G. Gavutis Jr.
12/15	1		Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick, K. Dorsey
01/06	1	Rye	Wallis Rd.	S. Mirick
02/25	5	Walpole	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd.	E. Masterson
Common Grackle				
02/10	1	Northfield	residence	R. Mills Sr.
02/16	7	Litchfield	residence	J. Ciemiewicz
Brown-headed Cowbird				
12/02	60	E. Kingston	South Rd.	S. Mirick
02/10	2	Northfield	residence	R. Mills Sr.
02/16	2	Litchfield	residence	J. Ciemiewicz
Pine Grosbeak				
12/01	5	Lancaster	Lancaster School	S. Stoddard
12/02	5	Keene	Elm Research Institute	P. Brown
12/14	9	Gilmanton	Gilmanton Iron Works	W. Arms



*Pine Grosbeak by Jonathan Smith,
1/22/13, Manchester, NH.*

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
12/17	35	Rochester	South Main St.	D. Hubbard
12/18	2	Pittsburg	French WS, Pittsburg CBC	P. Brown, K. Fenton, K. Klapper
12/23	18	Bethlehem	Trudeau Rd.	D. Govatski
01/03	25	Portsmouth	Port City Veterinary Referral Hospital	J. Sullivan
01/03	6	Weare	N. Stark Hwy.	M. Provencher
01/04	18	Londonderry	South Willow St.	M. Thompson
01/06	25	Concord	S. Main St. McDonald's	R. Quinn, L. LaPierre
01/12	11	Conway	North Conway	B. Crowley
01/17	14	Lebanon	Olympus Biotech	E. Faughnan
01/24	30	Manchester	South Willow St.	S. Mirick
01/25	12	Exeter	downtown	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse
02/08	30	Nashua	Trader Joe's	S. Sullivan
02/16	14	Milan	Chickwolnepy Rd.	K. Dube, Seacoast CFT
02/16	11	Shelburne	Carter-Moriah Trail	S. Webb
02/17	15	Plymouth/Campton	Rt. 3	P.& P. Thut

Red Crossbill

12/16	1	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
12/17		Pittsburg	Back Lake Section, Pittsburg CBC	L. Kras
12/19	6	Errol	Errol-Umbagog CBC	P. Brown, K. Fenton, K. Klapper
12/22	2		Lee-Durham CBC, Gonic sector	L. Kras, B. Griffith
12/28	10	Carroll	Twin View Dr.	N. Mitiguy
02/18	12	Carroll	Twin View Dr.	N. Mitiguy



White-winged Crossbill male (left) and female by Mike Thompson, 2/6/13, Hampton, NH.

White-winged Crossbill

12/09	1	Exeter	Newfields Rd.	P. Chamberlin
12/15	18	Rye	Concord Point	P. Hunt, et al.
12/17		Pittsburg	Back Lake Section, Pittsburg CBC	L. Kras
12/21	1	Conway	North Conway PO	A. Costa
12/22	2	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
12/23	6	Bethlehem	Trudeau Rd.	D. Govatski
01/15	1	Henniker	Old Hillsboro Rd.	A. Moser
02/07	12	Hampton	North Side Park	M. Thompson, J. Lambert
02/09	1	Middleton	Rt. 153	H. Grant
02/15	1	Ossipee		A. Costa
02/19	10	Gorham	Spring Rd.	D.& D. LaPlante

Common Redpoll

12/02	70	Concord	Morrills Farm, Goodwin Pt.	P. Hunt
12/02	100	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge	T. Vazzano, K. Klapper
12/02	160	Stratham	River Rd.	S. Mirick

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Common Redpoll—continued				
12/27	60	Chatham	Green Hill Rd.	B. Crowley
12/31	126	Bristol	Wellington SP	P. Hunt
01/02	100	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
01/05	38	Sunapee	Meadow Brook	J. Gamble
01/13	100	Carroll	Bretton Woods	L. Bergum
01/16	75	Marlborough	residence	J. Atwood
01/19	100	Enfield	Main St.	E. Faughnan
01/19	1000	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
01/21	700	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
01/25	27	Newport	River View Rd.	B.& C. Baker
01/26	100	Milford	North River Rd.	J. Broyles
01/27	500	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
02/02	310	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge	T. Vazzano
02/02	800	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
02/03	40	Hampton	Landing Rd.	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
02/08	200	Hancock	Harris Center	E. Masterson
02/09	70	Middleton	Drew Dr.	J. Shaw
02/16	153	Alton	Cascade Terrace	M. Foster
02/16	75	Chesterfield	Winchester Rd.	J. Hammett
02/16	120	Goshen	residence	D. Santti
02/17	52	Peterborough	Sand Hill Rd.	J. Willis
02/17	75	Sugar Hill	Center District Rd.	E. Fraser
02/19	350	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
02/24	130	Jefferson	Bailey Rd.	D. Govatski
02/24	300	Lincoln		J. Fradette
02/26	150	New London	Knollwood Rd.	J. Esten
02/26	65	Westmoreland	Woodward Rd. area	A. Burnett
02/28	220	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
Hoary Redpoll				
12/02	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge	T. Vazzano, K. Klapper
01/01	2	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
01/10	1	Concord	Contoocook River Park/ Island Shores Estates	P. Hunt
01/15	1	Concord	Sewalls Falls State Recreation Area	L. Medlock, D. Lipsy
01/15	1	Marlborough	residence	J. Atwood
01/19	1	Stratham	River Rd.	L. Medlock
01/25	1	Milan	Chickwolnepy Rd.	J. Scott, B. Crowley
01/27	1	Northwood	West St.	J. Lambert
02/02	2	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge	T. Vazzano
02/03	1	Hancock	Antrim Rd.	E. Masterson
02/07	2	Stratham	River Rd.	J. Lambert, M. Thompson
02/09	1	Northwood	West St.	J. Lambert
02/15	4	Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
02/19		Strafford	Lakeview Dr.	S. Young
02/23	1	Sandwich	Diamond Ledge	T. Vazzano
02/28	1	Hancock	Antrim Rd.	E. Masterson

<i>date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>town</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>observer(s)</i>
Pine Siskin				
12/09	20	Concord	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
12/14	2	Laconia	Saint Catherine St.	S. Dionne
01/14	8	Nashua	Mine Falls Park	J. Maher
01/20	3	Greenland	Great Bay Discovery Center	J. Sparrell
02/15	3	Merrimack	Autumn Lane	T. Johnson
02/16	8	Salem	Pumping Station Rd.	K. Lane
02/18	6	Weare		K. Libby
Evening Grosbeak				
12/06	19	Gilsum		M. Wright
12/22	1		Lee-Durham CBC, Gonic sector	L. Kras, B. Griffith
12/26	5	Warner	Howe Lane	M. Wiggin
01/26	8	Woodstock	Daniel Webster Hwy.	J. Salisbury
01/28	13	Chatham	town center	B. Crowley, J. Scott
02/16	5	Jefferson	Ingerson Rd.	L. Holland
02/23	31	Jaffrey	Mountain Rd.	K. Rantilla



Great Gray Owl by David Lipsy, 2/7/13, Hanover, NH.

Christmas Bird Count Summary 2012-2013

by David Deifik



Gray Jay coming to peanuts on Stan McCumber's hand during the Pittsburg CBC, 12/18/12. Photo by Zeke Cornell.

This year's Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) were held between December 14, 2012 and January 5, 2013. There are now 19 counts whose center is within New Hampshire borders. Although centered in Vermont, the Barnet and Saxtons River CBCs overlap into New Hampshire as well. Two of the New Hampshire counts have substantial overlap into neighboring states. The Hanover-Norwich CBC extends into Vermont and the Isles of Shoals CBC substantially extends into Maine. Three other counts have minor overlap into neighboring states as well, those being Errol-Umbagog and North Conway into Maine and a tiny bit of Nashua into Massachusetts. Of the New Hampshire counts, all but the Isles of Shoals count were run this year. Poor sea conditions were responsible for the cancellation of the count. Sightings from the New Hampshire portion of the Saxton's River and Barnet, Vermont counts do not appear on the CBC table.

Total species across all counts were 134. That was three species less than last year's total. There were no new species to the state this year. Thus, the total of species ever seen remains at 247. There have only been two new species in the last six years, a Northern Parula on the Coastal count in 2011 and a Clay-Colored Sparrow for the Concord count in 2006. There were seven species that set new record high counts for the state, about average for recent years. Six of the seven of these new records came from the Coastal CBC, the one exception coming from the Hanover-Norwich Count, which set a new record for American Crow with 6,000 counted. There were 62 individual count high records this year, about average for the last few years. There were 19 species new to their respective counts, also about average for recent years.

We had plenty of open water in inland locations again this year. A Greater White-fronted Goose provided a first for the Concord count. It had previously gone unreported on any count since 1997! For our most numerous ducks, Mallard numbers were about 15% over the average of the last ten years. American Black Duck fared even better being about 40% above the ten year average. Hooded Merganser records were more than double their ten year average for the second year in a row. As in last year,

two counts set new individual count highs. Common Merganser was up by more than 50% for the second year in a row. For the second year, Keene recorded Red-breasted Merganser, which is quite unusual inland. The Coastal count set an outstanding state record of eight Northern Pintails. Inland Common Loon records were again unusually numerous with a total of 25 tallied. Both Keene and Laconia set count records for the species.

Easily the best record of the Christmas Bird Count season was a **Red-throated Loon** recorded for the first time on the Laconia count. Aside from a single record on the Lee-Durham count in 1997, this is the only inland record in New Hampshire CBC history!

As for raptors, Bald Eagles exceeded last year's total of 53 birds to set a new CBC record of 56 birds. The record high of 53 was set in 2008 and matched last year. They were widely distributed with reports from 14 counts, three of those being new count highs. As late as 1999, state totals were in the single digits!

A single American Kestrel was recorded on the Littleton count. This is only the second record in six years! As recently as eleven years ago, American Kestrel was at least seen in the high single digits on an annual basis.

The outstanding woodpecker was a **Red-headed Woodpecker** coming to a feeder on the Grafton-Bristol count. This was the first CBC record in four years.

A **Spotted Sandpiper** found on the Lee-Durham count was a truly outstanding record. This species is usually gone from the state by early October. There is only one other CBC record, which was in 1974 on the Coastal CBC.

Carolina Wren had an outstanding year with a record high of 100 counted. This is almost three times the average of the last 10 years and more than twice the count of last year. The Coastal count set a new state high and five other counts set individual count highs. The story is similar for Eastern Bluebird. The Coastal CBC set a new state high and it was new for the Grafton-Bristol count. Three other counts had record numbers as well. The total was well more than double the 10 year average of 228. American Robin did not have quite as good a year. This year was barely over half the ten year average.

American Pipit invaded the Coastal CBC with a state record 37 birds being seen. The previous maximum was only nine birds recorded on the same count in 1976! One additional pipit was recorded on the Lee-Durham count as well.

If you had a sense that Cedar Waxwing was scarce this winter, the data would support this. The 934 birds totaled were less than one third of the ten year average. The lowest number recently recorded was over 1,100 in 2010. Always quite rare for any CBC, an Eastern Towhee was recorded for the first time on the Hanover-Norwich CBC

As for irruptive finches, Pine Grosbeak and Common Redpoll were virtually absent last year. This year they were quite evident. The redpoll flight in particular was quite strong. All CBCs reported this species. With this good flight, three counts were able to record Hoary Redpoll as well. Both crossbills were present in modest numbers. Last year Pine Siskin was present in numbers greater than three times its recent average. This year they were widely reported, but in very modest numbers. Only 132 were tallied this year compared to last year's 4,741. Littleton did manage to set a count high of siskins. Evening Grosbeak was present in modest numbers which was an improvement from last year's dismal count of one.

Individual Count Highlights

Nashua-Hollis

- Count high: Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Hermit Thrush

Peterborough-Hancock

- First count record: Bufflehead
- Count High: American Black Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker

Keene

- Count high: Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Wild Turkey, Common Loon, Tufted Titmouse, Red Crossbill, Common Redpoll

Coastal New Hampshire

- New state count high: Northern Pintail, Lesser Scaup, Black Scoter, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, American Pipit
- Count high: Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Pileated Woodpecker

Lee-Durham

- First count record: Spotted Sandpiper (second state record)
- Count high: Canada Goose, Common Loon, Great Black-backed Gull, Common Raven, Carolina Wren, Winter Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Common Grackle, Pine Grosbeak

Concord

- First count record: Greater White-fronted Goose, Green-winged Teal
- Count high: Barred Owl, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Bluebird, Savannah Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Northern Cardinal, Pine Grosbeak

Laconia

- First count record: Red-throated Loon (second inland record in the state)
- Count high: Lesser Scaup, Common Loon, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Hoary Redpoll

Hanover-Norwich

- First count record: Eastern Towhee
- New state count high: American Crow
- Count high: Mallard, Carolina Wren

Baker Valley

Great Blue Heron was seen during count week. There are only two previous count records.

Littleton

- First count record: Gray Catbird
Tied last year's count record for Tufted Titmouse.

Grafton-Bristol

- First count record: Red-headed Woodpecker, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush
- Count high: Bald Eagle, Common Redpoll

Errol-Umbagog

- First count record: Red-bellied Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse
- Count high: Bald Eagle, Gray Jay, Northern Cardinal



Becky Suomala and Stan McCumber on a snowy Pittsburg CBC, 12/18/12. Photo by Zeke Cornell.

Pittsburg

- First count record: Hoary Redpoll
- Count high: Northern Cardinal

North Conway

- First count record: Common Merganser, Rough-legged Hawk, Chipping Sparrow
Cooper's Hawk and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker seen for the second time. Hooded Merganser seen for the third time.

Lake Sunapee

- First count record: Long-tailed Duck
- Count high: Ring-billed Gull, White-winged Crossbill
Bufflehead was seen for the third time. Eastern Bluebird, seen during count week, was a first record for the count.

Manchester

- First count record: Lesser Scaup
- Count high: Great Blue Heron, Carolina Wren, Pine Grosbeak
Bufflehead was seen for the second time.

Sandwich

- Count high: Common Goldeneye, Bald Eagle, Mourning Dove
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was seen for the second time. Ring-necked Pheasant and Rough-legged Hawk were seen for the third time.

AMC-Crawford

- First count record: Canada Goose
- Count high: Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Rock Pigeon, Common Raven, Black-capped Chickadee, Common Redpoll

113th Christmas Bird Count: Dec. 14, 2012 - Jan. 5, 2013

species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak
Gr. White-fr. Goose	-	-	-	CW	-	*1	-	-	-
Snow Goose	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Canada Goose	549	165	356	5027	1857	807	174	1	-
Brant	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Mute Swan	3	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	-
Cackling Goose	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-
Wood Duck	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-
Gadwall	1	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-
Eurasian Wigeon	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
American Wigeon	-	-	-	49	-	-	-	-	-
American Black Duck	52	11	44	1955	233	73	36	20	-
Mallard	390	25	89	1378	450	281	845	840	-
Black X Mallard sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-
Northern Shoveler	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Pintail	-	-	-	**8	CW	*1	-	-	-
Green-winged Teal	-	-	-	8	-	-	-	1	-
Ring-necked Duck	1	18	5	-	3	20	1	-	-
Greater Scaup	-	-	-	1201	-	-	12	-	-
Lesser Scaup	-	-	CW	**142	-	-	3	-	-
Common Eider	-	-	-	83	-	-	-	-	-
Surf Scoter	-	-	-	144	-	-	-	-	-
White-winged Scoter	-	-	-	127	-	-	-	-	-
Black Scoter	-	-	-	**623	-	-	-	-	-
Long-tailed Duck	-	-	-	222	-	-	1	-	-
Bufflehead	3	*1	CW	190	74	-	-	-	-
Common Goldeneye	11	-	6	175	13	10	143	1	-
Barrow's Goldeneye	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
Hooded Merganser	19	38	73	71	39	49	123	50	-
Common Merganser	15	45	91	8	2	19	410	70	-
Red-br. Merganser	-	-	3	247	30	-	-	-	-
Ruddy Duck	-	-	-	64	4	-	-	-	-
Ring-necked Pheasant	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	-
Ruffed Grouse	-	8	2	2	-	-	1	-	1
Spruce Grouse	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wild Turkey	8	237	201	135	51	79	97	215	90
Red-throated Loon	-	-	-	30	-	-	*1	-	-
Common Loon	-	-	8	63	9	CW	17	-	-
Pied-billed Grebe	CW	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-
Horned Grebe	-	-	-	67	-	-	-	-	-
Red-necked Grebe	-	-	-	51	-	-	1	-	-
Northern Gannet	-	-	-	40	-	-	-	-	-
Double-cr. Cormorant	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-
Great Cormorant	-	-	-	34	-	-	-	-	-
Great Blue Heron	4	-	-	22	4	CW	-	-	CW
Turkey Vulture	-	-	-	7	3	-	-	-	-
Bald Eagle	-	3	2	8	8	4	3	9	-
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	3	1	2	2	2	1	2	-
Cooper's Hawk	7	-	2	15	5	2	2	4	-
Northern Goshawk	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accipiter sp.	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

Lit	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	5	351	-	*1	9293
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49
-	5	4	-	-	8	-	41	-	2482
-	47	9	16	18	107	151	73	-	4719
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	48
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1213
-	-	-	-	-	-	*2	-	-	147
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	83
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	144
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	127
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	623
-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	-	224
-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	271
-	9	1	-	-	5	62	7	-	443
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
6	3	3	1	1	37	55	3	-	571
-	7	19	12	*1	17	27	5	-	748
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	280
-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	70
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4
6	-	10	10	-	3	-	CW	7	50
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
90	9	-	47	75	121	5	86	38	1584
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
1	2	-	4	-	4	-	-	-	108
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	67
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	52
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34
-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	33
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
-	3	6	2	1	1	1	5	-	56
-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	18
1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	41
-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1

113th Christmas Bird Count (continued)

species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak
Red-shouldered Hawk	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-tailed Hawk	26	4	7	49	19	10	1	9	-
Rough-legged Hawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Hawk sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
American Kestrel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Merlin	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
Peregrine Falcon	CW	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Black-bellied Plover	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Spotted Sandpiper	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-
Sanderling	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Purple Sandpiper	-	-	-	49	-	-	-	-	-
Dunlin	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
American Woodcock	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Bonaparte's Gull	-	-	-	218	19	-	-	-	-
Ring-billed Gull	163	1	7	632	907	50	246	CW	-
Herring Gull	55	-	14	894	4772	9	15	-	-
Iceland Gull	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-
Nelson's Gull	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Lesser Bla.-bac. Gul	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-
Glaucous Gull	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Great Bla.-bac. Gull	27	-	1	163	1605	-	10	-	-
Bla.-leg. Kittiwake	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-
Razorbill	-	-	-	43	-	-	-	-	-
Black Guillemot	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Rock Pigeon	1045	95	208	1361	303	626	171	503	14
Mourning Dove	461	116	208	349	245	234	309	367	42
Eastern Screech-owl	-	-	-	10	1	-	-	-	-
Great Horned Owl	-	2	CW	1	1	1	-	-	-
Barred Owl	1	4	2	2	-	3	-	CW	-
N. Saw-whet Owl	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-
Belted Kingfisher	5	-	1	12	2	3	-	-	-
Red-hea. Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-bel. Woodpecker	31	10	7	26	31	18	7	-	1
Yw.-bel. Sapsucker	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Downy Woodpecker	121	132	81	115	111	90	50	70	5
Hairy Woodpecker	60	61	47	29	41	54	38	58	6
Bla.-bac. Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Northern Flicker	10	-	-	16	8	1	1	-	-
Pileated Woodpecker	10	7	7	11	9	3	10	4	1
Northern Shrike	-	-	1	1	2	1	1	1	-
Gray Jay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Blue Jay	302	152	123	283	299	191	256	271	26
American Crow	179	96	163	525	288	180	111	**6000	96
Common Raven	3	38	21	2	18	9	8	28	3
Horned Lark	57	1	-	62	2	-	-	-	-
Black-cap. Chickadee	427	881	772	849	881	683	751	1509	136
Boreal Chickadee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tufted Titmouse	188	157	149	207	280	168	147	106	18
Red-br. Nuthatch	101	50	44	19	52	90	22	26	7
White-br. Nuthatch	163	181	140	165	218	151	70	135	10

Lit	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
1	-	-	-	2	2	8	2	-	140
-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	1	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	237
4	-	-	-	-	7	238	1	-	2256
13	-	-	-	-	1	16	-	-	5789
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
29	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1835
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
106	86	-	7	120	29	379	10	12	5075
89	38	5	10	100	130	51	225	10	2989
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	1	1	1	-	-	2	-	17
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	25
-	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	*1	-	-	-	7	1	-	140
-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	4
10	15	12	11	23	23	35	31	3	938
27	9	7	10	25	21	10	31	6	540
1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	37
4	1	9	1	3	CW	4	3	1	88
1	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	12
-	-	20	11	-	-	-	-	10	41
109	122	37	16	96	82	47	186	16	2614
71	28	11	21	111	68	102	25	8	8083
63	17	30	26	34	9	4	22	19	354
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	122
458	319	473	553	362	526	216	590	184	10570
-	-	6	52	-	-	-	-	15	73
9	39	*1	-	28	49	51	56	-	1653
29	4	63	100	33	15	23	41	13	732
15	39	4	2	48	60	71	87	5	1564

113th Christmas Bird Count (continued)

species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak
Brown Creeper	5	15	14	9	13	12	6	16	-
Carolina Wren	21	2	5	**23	16	2	4	18	-
Winter Wren	1	1	4	9	6	1	-	-	-
Marsh Wren	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Golden-cr. Kinglet	5	32	53	22	63	17	27	34	-
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-
Eastern Bluebird	94	16	26	**181	141	49	18	-	-
Hermit Thrush	4	-	-	3	2	1	CW	1	-
American Robin	580	25	49	760	246	204	369	32	CW
Gray Catbird	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
N. Mockingbird	63	4	4	73	27	22	4	4	-
European Starling	911	93	403	1552	2408	764	517	585	1
American Pipit	-	-	-	**37	1	-	-	-	-
Bohemian Waxwing	-	-	-	-	1	-	86	38	-
Cedar Waxwing	152	2	-	26	324	320	77	12	-
Yw.-rumped Warbler	1	-	-	2	1	CW	-	-	-
Eastern Towhee	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	*1	-
Am. Tree Sparrow	151	18	92	196	136	181	54	260	-
Chipping Sparrow	-	-	2	-	2	1	-	1	-
Field Sparrow	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Savannah Sparrow	-	-	-	2	-	5	-	-	-
Fox Sparrow	-	-	-	4	-	1	-	-	-
Song Sparrow	42	-	8	107	22	18	1	3	-
Swamp Sparrow	-	-	-	6	3	1	-	-	-
White-thr. Sparrow	18	5	7	118	37	34	-	9	-
White-cr. Sparrow	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	-
Dark-eyed Junco	711	112	324	544	369	396	116	246	9
Oregon Junco	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Sparrow sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lapland Longspur	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-
Snow Bunting	-	-	-	27	CW	-	21	35	-
Northern Cardinal	185	36	91	239	175	170	69	90	4
Red-winged Blackbird	-	-	CW	24	10	4	-	-	-
Rusty Blackbird	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-
Common Grackle	-	-	-	1	10	1	-	-	-
Br.-headed Cowbird	-	-	-	7	5	-	-	CW	-
Small finch sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pine Grosbeak	9	16	11	26	36	151	112	58	8
Purple Finch	1	1	2	1	3	-	7	4	-
House Finch	136	1	44	268	99	87	22	92	-
Red Crossbill	-	3	6	-	2	1	-	-	-
Whi.-wing. Crossbill	-	-	-	21	-	1	-	1	-
Common Redpoll	296	51	266	183	116	179	329	283	73
Hoary Redpoll	-	-	CW	-	-	-	2	CW	-
Pine Siskin	7	18	1	3	3	27	2	2	-
American Goldfinch	281	58	122	396	390	183	124	70	18
Evening Grosbeak	-	18	9	-	1	-	-	14	-
House Sparrow	787	38	153	1647	392	649	132	459	-
Number of Species	61	53	61	117	82	67	62	54	21
Number of Participants	38	38	33	47	32	25	17	31	2

Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 143

CW = Count Week

Nsh = Nashua-Hollis (12/29/2012)

Pet = Peterborough-Hancock (12/15/2012)

Kee = Keene (12/16/2012)

Cst = Seacoast (12/15/2012)

Lee = Lee-Durham (12/23/2012)

Con = Concord (12/16/2012)

Lac = Laconia-New-Hampton (12/29/2012)

Han = Hanover-Norwich (1/1/2013)

Bak = Baker-Valley (12/16/2012)

Lit = Littleton (12/23/2012)

Grf = Grafton (12/31/2012)

Lit	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
7	1	7	2	1	3	2	2	1	116
-	1	-	-	-	1	7	-	-	100
-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	24
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
12	11	19	32	6	3	5	10	5	356
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	*14	-	-	-	CW	27	2	-	568
-	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
1	62	7	1	1	12	271	CW	-	2620
*1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	1	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	208
49	104	13	39	114	75	1102	51	-	8781
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38
-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	126
1	7	-	-	-	CW	13	-	-	934
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
12	11	8	2	12	5	27	25	-	1190
-	-	-	-	*3	-	-	-	-	9
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	208
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
1	1	-	-	-	8	2	1	-	241
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
7	15	3	2	17	19	171	40	2	3103
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
-	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	20
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
-	-	-	-	2	-	-	4	-	89
5	1	4	5	6	24	43	13	-	1160
-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	39
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
75	-	55	27	2	21	9	8	3	627
-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	24
-	2	-	-	2	10	33	-	-	796
-	-	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	24
6	-	24	-	-	4	-	-	9	66
160	316	172	221	188	101	52	330	56	3372
-	-	-	*1	-	-	-	1	-	4
30	-	-	1	13	6	11	1	7	132
35	6	-	1	7	41	89	29	-	1850
1	-	-	-	-	CW	-	18	-	61
4	34	-	-	37	52	258	9	-	4651
36	32	27	29	32	33	38	35	21	
17	10	14	15	28	13	14	22	17	

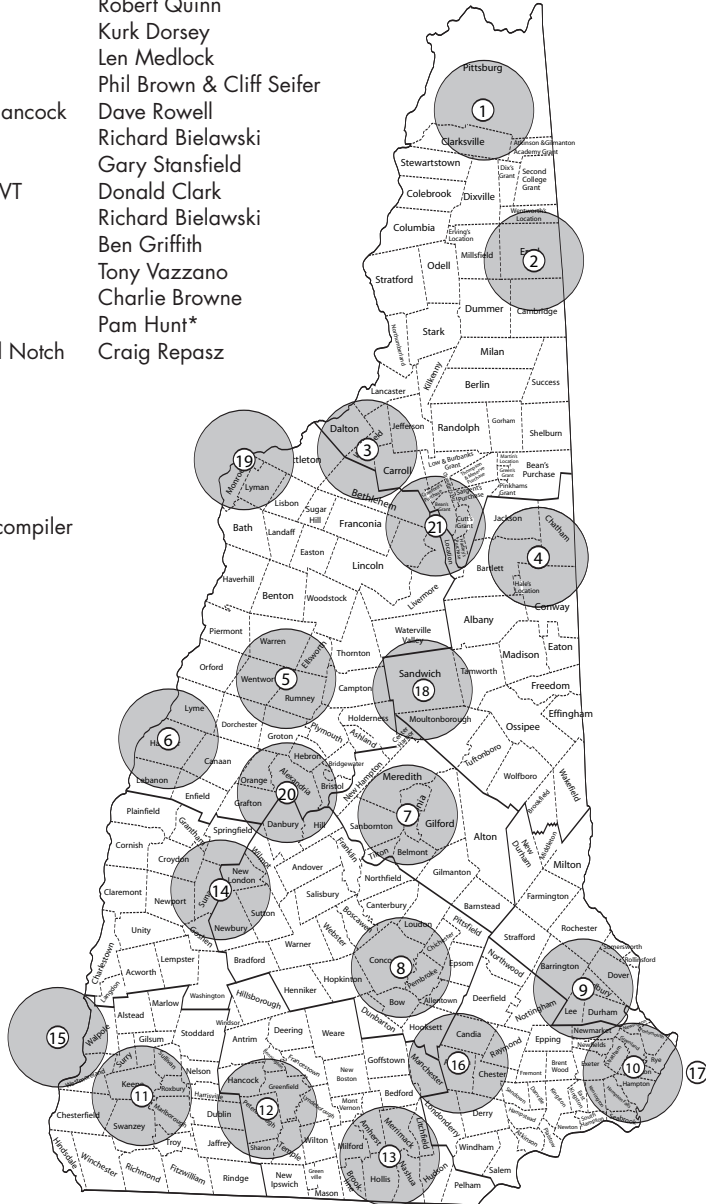
Erl = Errol-Umbagog (12/19/2012)
 Pit = Pittsburg (12/18/2012)
 Cnw = North-Conway (1228/2012)
 Sun = Lake-Sunapee (12/15/2012)
 Man = Manchester (12/15/2012)
 San = Sandwich (12/30/2012)
 Amc = AMC-Crawford (12/15/2012)

*= New species to count
 **=New count high for the state
 New individual count high

Christmas Bird Count Compilers

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

* Grafton-Bristol compiler needed.



Winter 2012-13 Field Notes

compiled by Robert A. Quinn and Rebecca Suomala

Snowy Owl Sighting at UNH

by Hanna Petersen

Hanna is a student at the University of New Hampshire (UNH) and sent us this unusual sighting on the UNH campus in Durham, NH.

While I was walking on the trail next to Adam's Tower towards Edgewood Road, I just happened to look up at an evergreen tree, since it seemed to have quite a bit of snow on it that seemed out of place. That snow turned out to be a Snowy Owl sleeping amongst the branches. He looked down at me for a moment, and realizing I wasn't a threat, just went back to sleep. After watching it sleep for a few minutes, I continued on my way to class. A few hours later, I went back to see if it had woken up and moved, but the owl had left its cozy nook on the tree.



Snowy Owl by Hanna Petersen, 2/3/13, outside of Adams Tower, University of New Hampshire campus, Durham, NH.

Manchester Peregrine Falcon Pair Identified

by Chris Martin

Despite a swirling and very gusty wind on January 31, 2013 at Amoskeag Falls and Public Service of New Hampshire's Energy Park parking lot, Robert Vallieres and I were able to use spotting scopes to read the alphanumeric codes on the color bands on the left legs of both Manchester's resident male and female Peregrine Falcons. In doing so, we confirmed the continued territorial presence of 13-yr old male "black 6 over green 7" and 8-yr old female "black 02 over green Z."

The male, from a nest at Cathedral Ledge near North Conway NH, has lived in Manchester since he was eight months old in January 2001. The female, hatched in 2005 on a building in Worcester, MA, showed up in Manchester as an eight-month old in January 2006. The male has participated in raising all 35 young Peregrines fledged from the urban Manchester territory since it was first successful in 2001 through 2012.

Bald Eagle Family Tree

by Chris Martin

On February 15, 2013, New York wildlife photographer Mark Cronin photographed a 22-month old Bald Eagle with a leg band "Black BB," the larger of two young produced in 2011 at the nest located near Reeds Wildlife Management Area in Orford,



Immature Bald Eagle, "Black BB" photographed by Mark Cronin, 2/15/13, South Bay, NY.



"Black BB" after biologists from NH Audubon and the BioDiversity Research Institute banded the two nestlings at the Orford nest site in June of 2011. Chris Martin is holding the bird in preparation for returning it to the nest. Photo by Judith Lombardi/Golden Acres Photography.

NH. This is the first confirmed sighting of "BB" since dispersal from its nest area in the Connecticut River watershed in the fall of 2011. Cronin photographed "BB" on South Bay in Washington County, NY, which is located about 68 miles west-southwest of its natal area. Coincidentally, during the same week, "BB's" sibling, wearing the color band "Black BA," was identified and photographed by Bob Michaud at the Barnes boat launch on the Connecticut River in Enfield, CT. "Black BA" was located roughly 130 miles south of the Orford nest and 115 miles southeast of its sibling "Black BB."

"BB" is an offspring of an unbanded female and the male "Gold WP2" banded in May 2004 as a nestling near the Vernon Dam on the Connecticut River in Hinsdale, NH. "WP2's" mother was "Gold W30," an eagle raised at a nest at The Oxbow on the Connecticut River by Mount Tom in Northampton, MA back in 1992. "WP2's" father was "Black WW" an eagle fostered into Connecticut's first post-DDT era eagle nest at Barkhamsted Reservoir in 1993. It was produced by a captive pair of eagles (from Michigan and Maryland in the early 1980s) cared for by raptor rehabilitator Tom Ricardi of Conway, MA. This Bald Eagle "family tree" is a microcosm of the way eagles have gradually repopulated the Connecticut River watershed over the past 30 years. Hopefully, with time, we will be able to locate where "Black BB" ends up nesting and we will be able to follow yet another generation of eagles in New England.

American Coot on Lake Winnepesaukee

by Wendy Chatel

While scouting for Bald Eagles on February 21, 2013 as part of the Lakes Region Late Winter Eagle Survey, I encountered this American Coot swimming in Wolfeboro Bay. I had never seen one before and I thought it was a duck, but of course, I couldn't find it among the ducks in my *Sibley Guide to Birds*. So, I sent a photo to Becky Suomala who immediately identified it and said it was an unusual time and place for such a sighting. Throughout the next month or so, I checked on it from time to time. Each time I walked out on the dock, it seemed that when it became aware of me, it swam towards me. Another birder reported the same behavior. Perhaps there were other interested onlookers giving it handouts. The last time I saw it was on March 30. What fun to have a sighting reported in the "Rare Bird Alert."

Comment from Tony Vaz-
zano, *New Hampshire Bird
Records* Season Editor

The American Coot normally winters as close as coastal southern New England. As a result, it is fairly common for it to be in south-east New Hampshire near the coast early in winter and occasionally during the middle of winter. Winter sightings as far north as the Lakes Region, however, are consid-



erably rarer. During the past 20 years, the northernmost New Hampshire sightings were on the Laconia Christmas Bird Count in 1996 and 1999 and also in Laconia on January 8, 1995. Sightings like the recent one in Wolfeboro combined with the older Laconia reports help define the northern inland limits of the coot's winter range.

American Coot discovered and photographed by Wendy Chatel, 2/21/13 on Wolfeboro Bay, Lake Winnepesaukee.

Extreme Tidal Currents Encourage Rapacious Birds

by Steve Mirick

From an e-mail to the NHBirds list dated January 13, 2013, edited by Robert A. Quinn.

My wife Jane and I had a great time along the coast this weekend (January 12 and 13, 2013). I thought I would relate a couple of interesting observations created by the very high (10.5') tides. Strong tidal currents were absolutely screaming in with the incoming tide at Blackwater Creek along Route 286 in Seabrook. These currents were creating lots of strong eddies along the bridge and we pulled over to observe a group of Herring Gulls feasting on green crabs. Many gulls were roosting along the banks of the river, most of them too full to do anything but rest, as others dove for crabs, and got them! Close to 100% of the dives taken by these birds were catching crabs. Small ones were swallowed whole, but large ones were carried to the bank. Time after time, the gulls plunged for the crabs and came up with one every time that we witnessed (except once). There must be an amazing number of crabs that are carried by the currents under this bridge. We've actually seen this event before under similar circumstances.

Nearby, more strong tidal currents were also the likely reason for the Razorbills and a Thick-billed Murre seen well inside of Hampton Harbor on January 12. Even though we didn't see any alcids inside the harbor today, the Hampton Harbor inlet area, visible from the RV camping area of Hampton Beach State Park, has been a wonderful spot for watching (the normally pelagic) Razorbills and Black-legged Kittiwakes. Tidal current conditions are probably best during the strong incoming tide a

little before high tide. Today, a group of four or five Razorbills were constantly diving not far out and two adult Black-legged Kittiwakes were right on them when they came up. I find it amazing that there is such a close association between feeding Black-legged Kittiwakes and Razorbills.

Why Birds Sing in the Middle of Winter

by Robert A. Quinn

Individual quotes are from various posts to the NHBirds e-mail list.

There has long been a belief that there is a burst of bird song on the Winter Solstice (December 20-21). While that is still to be scientifically documented, there is no doubt that under certain conditions several species of birds in New Hampshire will sing during the winter. This short Field Note will discuss a few of those moments and some reasons why they do so, along with an interesting tangent about bird songs. First let's start with the Miricks, then a few other postings about bird song during January 2013.

Steve and Jane Mirick

"...this weekend, January 12 and 13, 2013, along the coast. ... singing birds heard on this warm day included White-breasted Nuthatch, Black-capped Chickadee, three Carolina Wrens, a Tufted Titmouse, and a House Finch!"

Many other observers noted singing Carolina Wrens during this warm spell.

Patti Schippani

"...as a sound therapist, I have always been intrigued by, and have done a lot of study into, the theory that the frequencies of bird songs plays an important role in plant growth and helping buds to bloom. I found this fascinating article and thought I would share it with fellow bird lovers in the hopes that you are as fascinated by it too. Enjoy....<http://www.newphysics.com/dawnchorus.html>"

Iain MacLeod posted on January 13, 2013

"Re birdsong: Maybe the Townsend's Solitaire was trying to make the junipers grow bigger fruit (or not!), as during the whole half hour that I watched it today, it sang quietly to itself. Its bill was closed while singing, but there was a constant chorus of twitters and chirps. If nothing else it brightened up the gray, foggy lakeside."

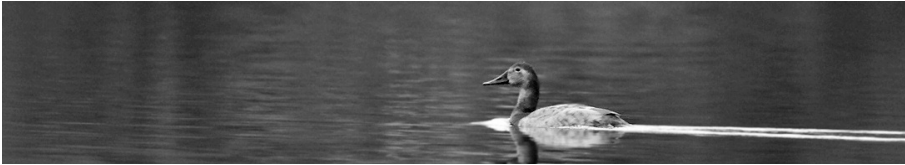
There are several well-known reasons that some birds sing in mid-January. The two primary explanations are increasing day length and defense of winter feeding territories. By January 10, the length of the days are increasing both in the morning and in the afternoon, after almost a month of the very shortest days of the year. Since birds (and other animals) are very sensitive to subtle changes in their environment, these slightly longer days, combined with above average temperatures, probably trigger song in certain species. One such category of species are year-round residents like chickadees, nuthatches, and cardinals. Many of these birds maintain their pair bonds

and sometimes their breeding territories throughout the winter and so start to sing, at least tentatively, well before true spring conditions exist. These same species, plus others such as Carolina Wrens and Northern Mockingbirds, are well known to establish winter feeding territories and they will defend these areas with periods of vigorous song. As Red Sox fans always say, "Hope springs eternal."

Winter Canvasbacks

Why "Cans" Can, and Do (Migrate)

by Robert A. Quinn and Eric Masterson



Canvasback by Len Medlock, 1/15/13, Hall St., Bow, NH.

"**C**ans" is birder short-hand for Canvasbacks and why they move and when they move is frequently different from most other waterfowl which have more predictable migrations south in the fall and north in the spring. Canvasbacks are variable and "...move around considerably during the winter season according to local ice conditions and changing food supply" (Veit and Petersen 1993). On January 15, 2013, David Lipsy discovered a female Canvasback on the Merrimack River in Concord. This would be expected in Massachusetts, not far to the south as the duck flies. They are a regular winter resident on Fresh Pond in Cambridge. Yet in most of New Hampshire, including Concord, Canvasback is a significant rarity at any time of the year. Great Bay is the only place where they occur in winter with any regularity (see Steve Mirick's data below).

This was only the fifth sighting for Concord (the first winter record ever) and it was all the more interesting because it was part of a regional pattern. Numerous Canvasbacks were reported across the northeast during the week beginning January 7 and especially in northern New England during the week of January 14-20, 2013.

The weather during early January was characterized by an Arctic airflow that kept mean temperatures in the 20s and low 30s, but high pressure moved into the region the week beginning January 7, bringing a warm southerly airflow and higher temperatures. The mercury peaked at 62 degrees in Baltimore, MD on January 14 and 57 degrees in Concord, NH on January 15. This warm weather was likely the chief agent behind the Canvasbacks northerly dispersal from wintering grounds along the mid-Atlantic coast. In addition to the bird on the Merrimack, "newly arrived" birds (Figure 1) were recorded on Great Bay (3), in Maine (6), Vermont (2), Massachusetts (76), Connecticut (29), and Rhode Island (9).

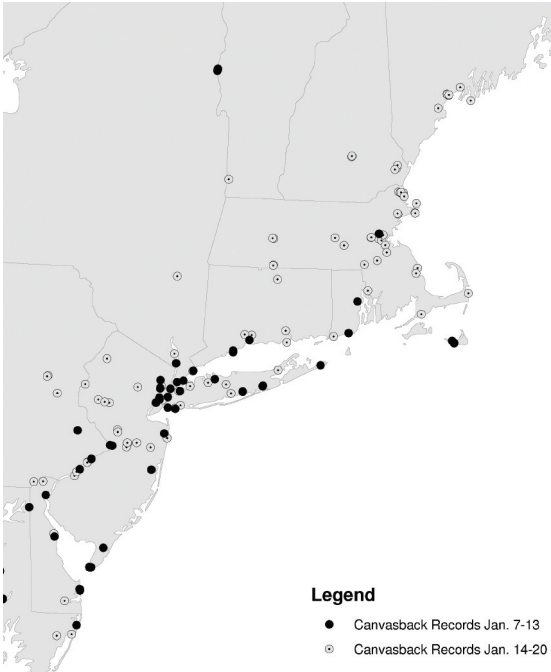


Figure 1. Canvasback records for Northeastern United States from January 7-20, 2013. Data from eBird, Ithaca, NY, available: <http://www.ebird.org>, (Accessed: March 21, 2013).

This pattern fits with observed behavior of Canvasbacks in late winter. Alan Delorey, Winter Editor for *New Hampshire Bird Records*, wrote in his season summaries:

“Northward-bound Canvasback migrants arrived at Great Bay at the end of January, a little earlier than usual.” (Winter 1996-97, Vol. 15, No. 4),

“A Canvasback in December was a late fall migrant, while another in late February was a typical spring migrant” (Winter 1997-98, Vol. 16, No. 4)

“As usual, a couple of spring migrant Canvasbacks slipped through the state in February, pausing ever so briefly at Great Bay.” (Winter 1998-99, Vol. 17, No. 4), and

“Northward-bound Canvasback migrants passed through in February, as usual.” (Winter 2000-01, Vol. 19, No. 4).

Of course, all this assumes that these birds were actually migrating north from south of us. Another possibility, albeit less plausible, is that they were forced out of the Great Lakes region by adverse winter weather. Birds do not always move in ways that are decipherable to us and that is one of the great joys of birding.

Winter Canvasback data from Steve Mirick

Steve used to live on Great Bay and probably has seen more Canvasbacks than anyone else in New Hampshire. He kindly shared the following data. It is interesting to note that the vast majority of Steve’s records pertain to male Canvasbacks, thereby making the Concord record even more intriguing.

Steve wrote:

“I lived on Great Bay from 1996 until about 2003 or so. Certainly, coverage of Great Bay is an important aspect of Canvasback sightings in mid-winter. Coastal areas and Great Bay are usually the only open water areas for Canvasbacks. Where are they coming from, however? Are January birds heading north, or south? Certainly February records are northbound birds. Below are all of my January and February records prior to December 1, 2012.”

Date	#	Location	Sex	Observers
02/29/92	13	Great Bay	11 male, 2 female	S. Mirick
02/15/93	3	Adams Pt., Durham	male	S. Mirick, R & M. Suomala
02/26/95	1	Off of Bay Rd., Newmarket	male	S. Mirick, P. Hunt
12/19/97	1	Great Bay	female	S. Mirick
02/01/97	1	Great Bay - Seacliff, Newmarket	male	S. Mirick
02/22/97	2	Great Bay - Seacliff, Newmarket	male	S. Mirick, P. Lacourse
02/24/97	7	Great Bay - Seacliff, Newmarket	male	S. Mirick
02/25/98	1	Great Bay - Seacliff, Newmarket	male	S. Mirick
02/14/99	2	Great Bay - Seacliff, Newmarket	male	S. Mirick
01/22/00	1	Adam's Point, Durham	male	S. Mirick, S. Lloyd
02/18/01	2	Squamscott River, Stratham	male	S. Mirick, B. Smith
02/02/02	1	Great Bay - Seacliff, Newmarket	male	S. Mirick
01/17/05	1	Exeter WTP	male	S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, et al.
01/26/08	2	Great Bay		S. Mirick, J. Lawrence, D. Abbott, P. Lacourse

Historical Note

Canvasbacks were hunted almost to their destruction in the late 1800s during the so-called “market hunting” days. This was when there were few or no hunting regulations at the same time there was an enormous market in the big cities of the eastern seaboard for birds on the table. With regulations and conservation, their numbers slowly rebounded in the early 1900s, but as late as 1934, there was still illegal shooting around Chesapeake Bay, according to an exhibit at the Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island, Florida. They were still being shot for “...selling them to the night club trade in New York City, Philadelphia, etc.” (from a letter written to Jay “Ding” Darling). Along with this letter, Darling was presented with a confiscated “swivel gun.” These huge rifles were more like small cannons and they were mounted in a boat on a swivel and were capable of taking down as many as 50 birds with one shot! All now illegal, of course.

References

- Veit, R. and W. Petersen. 1993. *Birds of Massachusetts*. Massachusetts Audubon Society, Lincoln, MA.
- Forbush, E. and J. May. 1925. *A Natural History of American Birds of Eastern and Central North America*. Commonwealth of Massachusetts (reprinted by Houghton Mifflin and Bramhall House, 1955).

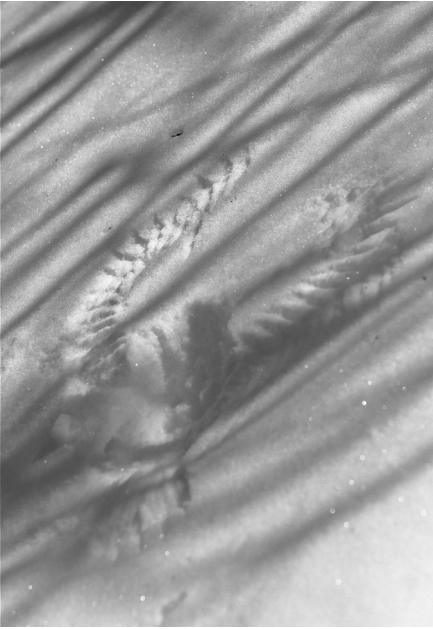
Photo Gallery



Snow Angels

by Brenda Sens

On February 10, 2013, Evelyn Nathan took some beautiful photographs of the impression left in the snow by a landing bird. She found them when she was snowshoeing in the woods and wetlands on her property. Referring to them as “bird snow angels,” the imprints clearly show the position of the wings and tail along with the length of the body. Hawks and owls will often dive into the snow after rodents and even grouse that hide beneath the snow during the winter. However, Evelyn thought these prints were too small to be from a raptor. Although we do not know what bird landed in the snow or why, as there are no indications of prey being present, from the size of the print, a Blue Jay or Northern Cardinal are definite possibilities. Any ideas you may have are certainly worthy of consideration.



Photos by
Evelyn Nathan,
Kingston, NH.

Spotlight on “Winter” Warblers

by Lauren A. Kras and Benjamin Griffith



Cape May Warbler that overwintered at Odiorne Point State Park in Rye during the winter of 2011-12. Photographed by Christine Sheridan, 1/28/12.

Background

The New World warblers or wood-warblers are a group of small passerine birds in the family *Parulidae* that are restricted to the Western Hemisphere. Many species are very colorful, but appearance varies widely between species, and several species are brown in all plumages. Size ranges widely between species; the smallest species weighs less than eight grams, or slightly more than a quarter, and the largest species can weigh as much as 25 grams. Most species are neotropical migrants, which means that they breed in the United States and Canada and winter in the Caribbean and Central and South America. Indeed, warblers are the highlight of the warmer months for many New Hampshire birders. Although warblers are often associated with migration and the breeding season, here we focus on those species which have occurred in the winter in New Hampshire and discuss the circumstances which surround these winter sightings.

Although some individual warblers have been documented throughout the winter, many are seen for shorter periods of time. For birds which were only seen for a short period of time, it is impossible to tell if they were extremely late migrants, wintering birds which went undetected for much of the winter, or wintering birds that died during their stay. It is therefore necessary to come up with a somewhat arbitrary definition for what constitutes a “winter warbler.” For the purposes of this article, any bird that is reported during the winter season (December - February) will be treated as wintering. Except where specifically mentioned, “Myrtle” Yellow-rumped Warbler will not be treated as a “wintering warbler” as it is dramatically more common than any of the other species and sightings of it are far less likely to be reported than rarer species. In particular, eBird has dramatically increased the number of Yellow-rumped Warblers being reported annually, making numbers in recent years less comparable to historical records than for other species.

Table 1. Records of warbler species in New Hampshire during the winter (December through February), 1951-2012 (Feb.).

Species	Number of Records	Species	Number of Records
"Audubon's" Warbler	3	Palm Warbler	15
Black-and-white Warbler	2	Pine Warbler	20
Black-throated Blue Warbler	3	Townsend's Warbler	1
Cape May Warbler	3	Yellow Warbler	1
Common Yellowthroat	27	Yellow-breasted Chat	12
Nashville Warbler	1	Yellow-throated Warbler	3
Northern Waterthrush	1	Hooded Warbler	1
Orange-crowned Warbler	10	Northern Parula	1
Ovenbird	7	Black-throated Green Warbler	1
Tennessee Warbler	1	Total Records	113

Occurrence in New Hampshire

Only one species of warbler is expected in New Hampshire in winter (Yellow-rumped Warbler), however, a total of 18 species have occurred during the winter months and eight of these species (including Yellow-rumped Warbler) have occurred five or more times during the season. In general, the species that winter furthest north are the species which are most regular. A disproportionate number of records have come from the Seacoast, with most of the remaining records coming from the southern part of the state. Species will be discussed in decreasing frequency of occurrence.

Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*)

Yellow-rumped Warbler is by far the most regular species of warbler during winter. "Myrtle" Warbler (*S. c. coronata*), the subspecies which breeds in New Hampshire, occurs commonly along the coast well into December and becomes progressively less common as the winter progresses. Usually, at least a few survive into January, and many years they survive later into the winter. "Myrtle" Warblers are less common inland during the winter, but still occur into late December in the southern tier of towns, and along the Maine border. It should come as no surprise that they have occurred regularly further north. Indeed, it has been recorded on the Pittsburg Christmas Bird Count, in the very northern tip of the state!

The western form of Yellow-rumped Warbler, "Audubon's" Warbler (*S. c. auduboni*) is a rare visitor to New Hampshire. There are only four records for New Hampshire, but three of these have occurred during the winter. The first winter record was at Odiorne Point State Park in Rye in 2001 and it continued there at least through the Coastal Christmas Bird Count. The subspecies made a repeat performance at Odiorne in 2005 and this time was recorded throughout the winter. In January 2009, an "Audubon's" Warbler appeared at a feeder in Newmarket, where it spent most of the month.



Figure 1. Number of records of winter (December through February) warblers in each county of New Hampshire, 1951-2012 (Feb.).

Common Yellowthroat (*Geothlypis trichas*)

Common Yellowthroats normally winter along the coast north to North Carolina and are the second most common wintering warbler in New Hampshire, with 27 records since 1954. They prefer wetlands with emergent vegetation and are generally found in this habitat when they winter in New Hampshire. Records are spread temporally fairly evenly through December, with only five records occurring in January. It could be that many of these are exceptionally late migrants, although if this were the case, there would probably be more of a bias towards the first few days in December. It may be that they are birds that try to “hold out” through the New Hampshire winter, but are rewarded with an unpleasant surprise when winter settles in and the water in their marsh freezes, along with the associated insects.

Pine Warbler (*Setophaga pinus*)

Pine Warbler has a similar winter range in the eastern United States to Common Yellowthroat, but is slightly less common in winter in New Hampshire, with 20 records. It uses a very different strategy from the yellowthroat when it occurs in winter, with many birds occurring in residential areas at feeders. As a result, Pine Warbler is one of the few species that is as likely to occur inland as they are to occur coastally. Only six of the records come from coastal towns, and three of these could be late migrants. Most of the records have still been in the southern part of the state where the winter is milder.

Palm Warbler (*Setophaga palmarum*)

Palm Warbler is yet another species which winters as far north as North Carolina, and has occurred 15 times during the winter season. In stark contrast to Pine Warbler, Palm Warbler is very predictable as to where it occurs during winter; twelve of the records have been on the immediate coast. The remaining three records can hardly be called “inland,” as two were on the shore of Great Bay and the remaining record was from the Exeter Wastewater Treatment Plant; along a tidal creek, just eight miles from the coast and five miles from Great Bay.

As with the Yellow-rumped Warbler, Palm Warbler has two field identifiable forms: birds breeding from Quebec and New York eastward are yellow underneath (“Yellow” Palm Warbler, *S. p. hypochrysea*); and birds breeding from Alberta to extreme western Quebec are brown underneath (“Western” Palm Warbler, *S. p. palmarum*). Counter intuitively, the “Western” Palm Warbler is the more common migrant during fall on the Atlantic coast. This holds true through the winter, and all birds identified to subspecies in the winter have been of the “Western” subspecies.

Yellow-breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*)

The Yellow-breasted Chat is an enigmatic bird, so enigmatic that scientists have not yet determined that it is indeed a warbler, but as it’s currently classified as such, it is included in this article. Its occurrence in New Hampshire is equally mysterious. The chat is a southern species which is extremely rare in spring and summer, but is expected in small numbers along the coast in fall, well into November, and even occurs in winter with some regularity! There are 12 records from the winter season, nine of which have occurred along the coast or Great Bay. As with many of the other wintering warblers, Yellow-breasted Chats are frequently found coming to feeders.

There is a dearth of records between 1969 and 1998, but since then Yellow-breasted Chats have occurred on average every other year in winter.

Orange-crowned Warbler (*Oreothlypis celata*)

The Orange-crowned Warbler is one of New Hampshire's latest migrating warblers, with normal migration occurring through mid-November, however, they are never common in the state. They winter as far north as North Carolina and there are 10 winter records. Two of these records (both on December 5, 2009) likely represented a late push of migrants, but most, if not all, of the remaining eight records appear to have been overwintering birds. As with the Pine Warbler, many of the winter reports of Orange-crowned Warbler have been of birds attending feeders, and Orange-crowned Warblers are equally likely to winter inland as on the coast.

Ovenbird (*Seiurus auricapillus*)

The Ovenbird does not normally winter north of Florida, so its occasional occurrence in winter is somewhat surprising. Although there are only seven winter records of this highly terrestrial warbler, all of them have been since 1991, and six have been since 1997. The cause of the sudden increase in records is a bit of a mystery. There's no evidence that the increase in records is correlated with an increase in population. With the exception of a bird at Odiorne Point State Park, all of the winter records have pertained to birds in residential neighborhoods. Most of the Ovenbirds were observed visiting bird feeders. Perhaps the observed increase is related to an increase in the popularity of feeding birds and an increase in reporting by backyard bird watchers.

Rare Species with 2-4 records

Four more species have occurred multiple times in winter: Cape May Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, and Black-and-white Warbler. Black-and-white Warbler has a similar winter distribution to Ovenbird, but there are only two winter records. Perhaps it is less inclined to visit feeders making it either less likely to survive, or simply less likely to be detected. Black-throated Blue Warbler winters farther south than most of the previously mentioned species, but has been found in residential neighborhoods three times, probably using bird feeders to survive. Cape May Warbler is uncommon in New Hampshire, isn't a particularly late migrant, and winters almost entirely in the Caribbean. Two of the three records were in early December, and the birds likely did not make it through the winter. The third record is of a bird at Odiorne Point State Park during the winter of 2011-12 that first appeared in November, survived December undetected, and was rediscovered in January. The bird was reported almost daily through mid-March. Lastly, Yellow-throated Warbler has occurred three times in New Hampshire during winter, each time coming to bird feeders. As a primarily southeastern species and a rarity in New Hampshire at any time of year, its repeat appearances in winter may come as a surprise. Yellow-throated Warblers are hardy, however, and often seem to wander far to the north and west in winter, with records as far afield as Washington, Idaho, and Newfoundland.

Rare Species with one record

Seven more species have occurred in winter one time each: Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Tennessee Warbler and Northern Waterthrush. Given the rarity

of these species in winter, it's hard to find too many patterns. All of these birds aside from the Northern Waterthrush, which was seen through January, occurred in December, and it looks as if few if any succeeded in surviving the winter. Townsend's Warbler deserves a special note, as it is a western species which winters as far north as British Columbia. In this case, the single record is more likely a reflection of the rarity of the species in New Hampshire (approximately five records in total), than the improbability of its occurrence in the state in winter.



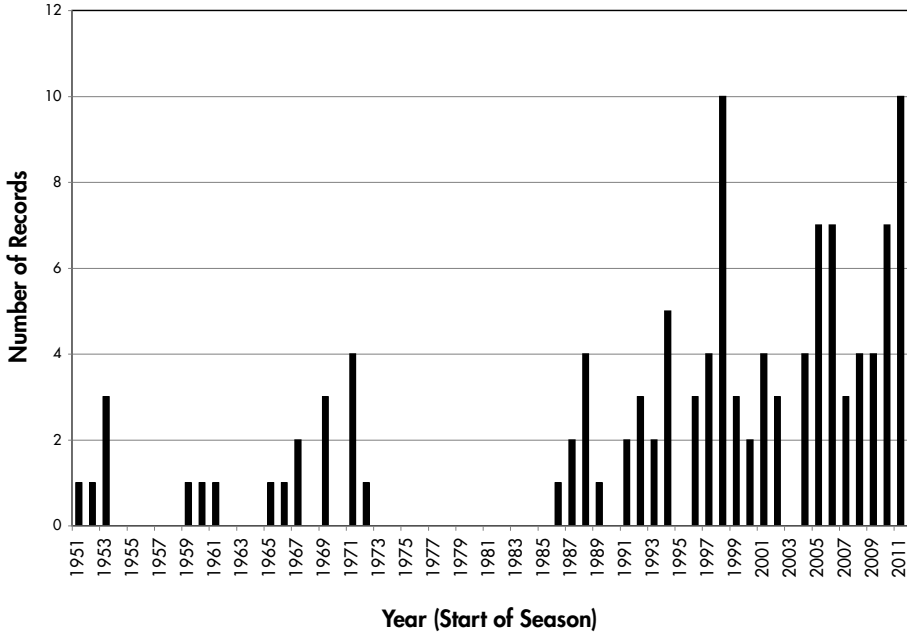
Black-throated Green Warbler by Steve Mirick,
12/22/11, Great Bay Rd., Greenland, NH.

Comments

The winter of 2011-2012 was extremely mild, with above average temperatures and below average snowfall. It therefore follows that there were a large number of winter warblers, with more than 10 reports. This exceeds the previous winter high of 10 set during the winter of 1998-1999. Also interesting is the presence of three of the rarer species during the winter. With the exception of 2005-2006 (which also had three winter records) no other winter has had more than one of the rare species. Two of these rare species, Northern Parula and Black-throated Green Warbler, were at the same site on consecutive days, both of which were the first recorded winter occurrences for the species in New Hampshire. The third, a Cape May Warbler, survived throughout the winter and represented the first winter record after December.

Since 1986, warblers have been reported in all but three winters. In sharp contrast, there are zero records of winter warblers (aside from Yellow-rumped) between 1971 and 1986. Prior to 1971, warblers were reported in approximately half of the winters. There doesn't seem to be any obvious reason for the gap in records. Overall, there is an increasing trend in the number of records, but the cause is not entirely clear. Climate change could be playing a role here by making New Hampshire winters more hospitable for birds, which previously would have wintered farther south, or by causing severe weather events, which would prevent birds from migrating. Birding and bird feeding, however, have become more popular in the past 50 years and technology has improved optics, communication, and clothing. Any of these could result in changes in detection without a change in distribution. Additionally, bird feeders can allow birds which would otherwise be unable to survive the winter to find an easy source of food. We may never know what caused the long term fluctuations in winter warbler populations, but future observations can help us better understand this obscure aspect of our winter bird communities.

Figure 2. Number of records of winter (December through February) warblers by year in New Hampshire, 1951-1966.



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Sword-billed Nuthatch

by Brenda Sens



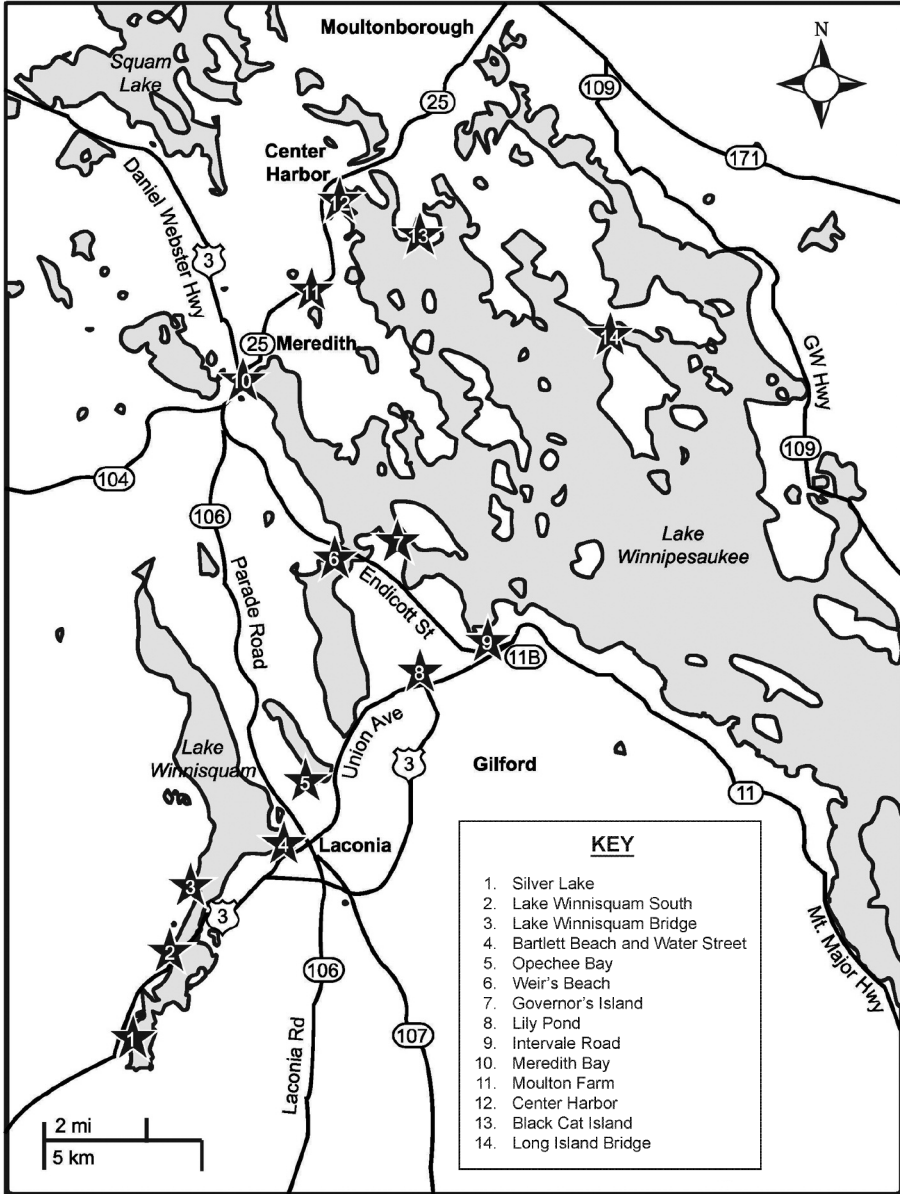
A Red-breasted Nuthatch with a very long, deformed bill photographed by Steve Manifold. The bird came to his feeder in Concord throughout the winter of 2012-13.

Over the last few years, New Hampshire Audubon has received pictures of birds, most notably chickadees and nuthatches, with beaks that are unusually long. The photo by Steve Manifold shows a bill that is exceptionally long. From our efforts to find out what was happening, we learned that this deformity has been found in birds throughout the United States. The US Geological Survey has conducted a study of the problem in Alaska and the Northwest and a notable increase in such cases over the last decade has been documented. The findings by C.M. Handel and wildlife biologist Caroline Van Hemert, both on the staff of the USGS Alaska Science Center, were published in *The Auk*. Keratin, which is a very tough form of protein, is a major component of the outer layer of birds' beaks, and if it becomes overgrown, the result is an elongated and sometimes crossed beak. The phenomenon has come to be called "Avian Keratin Disorder." The deformity appears in adult birds and sometimes affects their ability to feed and preen. As numerous species that use different habitats and food sources have been discovered with the same problem, the scientists suspect that a change in the environment in general may be part of the problem. Although a definite cause has not yet been pinpointed, scientists are seriously considering the presence of pollutants such as organochlorines in water and selenium from agricultural runoff on land. Research, of course, is ongoing.

Where to Bird

Birding Lake Winnepesaukee and Lake Winnisquam

by Iain MacLeod



Lake Winnepesaukee is New Hampshire's largest lake covering about 70 square miles in the counties of Belknap and Carroll. The lake has about 288 miles of shoreline, contains more than 250 islands, and lies within eight towns: Alton, Gilford, Laconia, Meredith, Center Harbor, Moultonborough, Tuftonboro and Wolfeboro. It is at the core of what we call the Lakes Region.

Lake Winnisquam is New Hampshire's fourth largest lake and is really a wide section of the outflow from Lake Winnepesaukee along the Winnepesaukee River. Much of Winnisquam lies in Laconia, with other portions in Meredith, Sanbornton, Belmont, and Tilton. For the purpose of this article, I am including Silver Lake in Tilton, if for no other reason than it's a really good birding spot and always included in my birding tours of the Lakes Region.

Most of the shoreline of the lakes is heavily wooded with predominant second growth white pine, broken up by thousands of homes, from small rustic cabins to vast mansions. Recreational use of the lakes is heavy, with numerous marinas, boat slips and resorts allowing easy boat access to all parts of the lakes. Winter recreation in the form of ice fishing and snowmobiling is more concentrated but still has an impact.

This article will focus primarily on places to see birds in the winter months when ice cover concentrates birds in particular spots, although many of the places mentioned are also good for birding in other seasons. We are also birding from land (i.e., I don't have a boat or a snowmobile, so we are taking our tour by car). In many ways, winter is the best time to explore this area, when summer tourists and cottage renters are not here. Parking is easier and boat ramps are empty allowing for easier viewing.

We'll start our birding tour in the south, in Tilton, an easy access point from Exit 20 off Rt. 93. Within minutes of leaving the highway, you can be birding on Silver Lake. From Exit 20, head east on Rt. 3/11 past the Tanger Outlet Center. Turn right on Silver Lake Road. There is a public boat landing on the north shore which allows good views of half of the lake. Because of the small hydro dam here, there always seems to be open water, even in the coldest of winters. For this reason, this is a good spot for waterfowl. Often large numbers of Common Goldeneye, Common Merganser and Hooded Merganser congregate here. Always check the flock for Barrow's Goldeneye and scaup. Dabbling ducks are also seen around the island. Keep an eye out on the island for Bald Eagles which often perch eyeing the ducks. The shoreline, although heavily developed, does have some pockets of scrubby woodland and many of the dwellings are year-round, so bird feeders can be found. In March 2013, I had a Red-bellied Woodpecker along the north shore, a species which is spreading north in the state and now regular in many parts of the Lakes Region.



Common Goldeneye by Cliff Otto.

Back on Rt. 3/11, we head north along the west shore of Lake Winnisquam. There is no "public" place to park here, but there are a couple of motel parking lots and dirt access roads on the west side of the road where you can pull over briefly to scan the lake. In the area just to the south of Mohawk Island, there is often open water throughout the winter. Common Loons may linger well into December and even into January.

Bald Eagles often perch on Mohawk on prominent pines. Both Greater and Lesser Scaup can be seen mixed in with the goldeneyes and mergansers and late winter/early spring Ring-necked Ducks.

Continuing north on Rt. 3, we come to a bridge that divides the lake in two. From the bridge (known as Mosquito Bridge), you can scan the northern section where there is often a large flock of goldeneyes (always a better chance of a Barrow's in the largest flocks). Scaup and mergansers are often mixed in too. You can get a closer view a short distance up Lower Bay Road (left turn off Rt.3/11 right before the bridge).

Back on Rt. 3, we continue north into Laconia. Where Routes 3 and 11 separate, you have a choice. You can take Route 11, bypassing the town of Laconia, head for Lily Pond and Laconia Airport and then north towards Weirs Beach or east towards Alton, or you can stay on Rt. 3 and check out a few spots in Laconia. We'll start with Laconia. Take a left onto Bay Street, then left on Winnisquam Avenue. The road dead ends in the parking lot of Bartlett Beach. The bay in front of the beach is somewhat sheltered, although often filled with ice chunks and debris blown down the lake. Gulls often congregate here and it's always worth checking for white-winged gulls (Iceland and Glaucous Gulls). Waterfowl also congregate. In the spring, I've seen shorebirds here as it is one of the few beaches on the lake with a "wrack line."

Head back along Winnisquam Avenue keeping an eye on the channel (Winnepesaukee River) for waterfowl. Cross the bridge on Fair Street and then turn left onto Water Street. That road dead ends on the edge of a wooded cove which also offers shelter for waterfowl, particularly mergansers. There is an active beaver lodge here which seems out of place in this very urban setting. There is a public boat ramp nearby which offers more views of the river.

Retrace your path on Water Street and turn left on New Salem Street. Turn left on N. Main Street (Rt. 106). Turn right at the lights on Oak Street, then left on Messer Street. Cross a bridge and pull into the Opechee Bay boat ramp just after the electric substation. With a scope, you can scan the whole bay for ducks, gulls and eagles. Red-tailed and Cooper's Hawks are around throughout the winter and on your way through town check the old brick chimney for a perched Peregrine Falcon. I haven't seen one there but it is tailor-made for one. There is also an Osprey nest on the electric pylon on Opechee Bay.

You can continue along Messer Street to Union Avenue to Rt. 3 to Paugus Bay. Follow Rt. 3 up the east shore. The southern end of Paugus Bay is usually frozen, but at the north end the channel is usually open for waterfowl to congregate. At Weir's Beach, park along the main promenade and scan the bay with a scope. Mergansers and goldeneyes will congregate wherever there is open water. In recent winters, this area has remained open well into December. This is one of the best locations to see Bald Eagles. I saw seven at once here in January, 2013. They perch on the aptly-named Eagle Island which is just off the north tip of Governor's Island. Also scan the far shore. There are several dead tree snags which eagles favor, including along Lighthouse Point Road. On sunny days, scan above the far shore (with the Ossipee Range in the background). Eagles will often circle over this area and "commute" between the various coves and bays of the lake.

From Weir's Beach, take Rt. 11B south and turn left on Summit Avenue. This takes you towards Governor's Island. From the bridge, you can get a good view to the north and south of a sheltered bay. If you can find a safe and legal place to park, there are more good waterfowl areas to view here.

Back on Rt. 11B, we continue south towards Laconia. Turn right on Lily Pond Road. Lily Pond is near the junction with Rt. 3. In deep winter, the pond is generally frozen, but in December and March, open water attracts scaup and Ring-necked Ducks. I've seen Ruddy Duck here and a Redhead was here one spring. Next to Lily Pond is Laconia Airport. Airports are always good places to check in the winter for Snow Buntings, Horned Larks and American Pipits; I've seen all three here. Always look for Snowy Owl (I haven't seen one yet). In the late winter, a Northern Harrier might hunt along the runway edges. There is also good habitat for a visiting Northern Shrike. There is a short access road (Airport Road) that is worth a drive, but most of the airport viewing is from Rt. 3. There are nice wide shoulders to safely pull off, but be careful, traffic can fly along here.

At the far end of the airport, there is a set of lights at the intersection of Old Lake Shore Road and Rt. 11B. Take a right here on Old Lake Shore Road with a left turn onto Intervale Road. The ballfield on the left and corn fields on the right are great in late winter when snowmelt creates muddy ponds for dabbling ducks. There is always a pair of Red-tailed Hawks here that sit on a large snag behind the ball field and in 2006, a Gyrfalcon spent a couple of weeks here and was photographed on that same snag. In early spring, I've seen Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon and Northern Pintail amongst the Mallards and American Black Ducks. This is also a good place for Horned Larks and Snow Buntings in the winter.

Head back towards Rt. 11 and we'll continue north along Rt. 11B, retracing our steps back to Weir's Beach. At the new traffic circle, we'll return to Rt. 3 and continue on up to Meredith. In the center of town, pull into the large parking lot at the town docks. From here, you can get a good view of the north end of Meredith Bay. Loons always linger well into December and Mallards congregate where the water is kept open by bubblers. Ring-billed Gulls are always here and in 2008, I had an Iceland Gull. Don't just scan the water. There are several well-established crab apple trees around the buildings in the downtown which often attract Bohemian Waxwings, American Robins and a Northern Mockingbird or two. This is another good Bald Eagle spot, especially when the bay is full of bob houses. The eagles know that early in the morning and late in the day is a good time to pick up some fish scraps on the ice.

Turn right onto Rt. 25 and we'll head towards Center Harbor and Moultonborough. After a mile or two, we pass by an area of open fields at Moulton Farm. I have never had much luck here, but it always warrants a scan for Snow Buntings and Horned Larks, and one of these springs, someone will find a Sandhill Crane here.



*Bald Eagle by David Lipsy,
Pembroke, NH.*

In Center Harbor, the town dock provides a good view of Center Harbor Bay. The usual mix of waterfowl can be found here. Some years, there can be a really large flock of Common Mergansers close to where the “MS Mount Washington” spends the winter. A Northern Hawk Owl was found, often perched overlooking the bay, here in January 2009.

Continuing along Rt. 25, look for a right turn onto Reading Lane. Follow this road towards Black Cat Island. There is no easy parking here, but if you can find a spot near the bridge, there is a fine view of two bays (Ash Cove to the east and Center Harbor Bay to the west). In November and early December, look for Horned Grebe here. For the last three years, I’ve seen a large flock (up to 57 birds) that congregate near here (see the Field Notes in the Fall 2012 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*, Vol. 31, No. 3). Unfortunately, the best viewing of the flock is from a private residence, but from the bridge, you have a chance of seeing a portion of the flock, especially on the east side. Large flocks of Common Mergansers are often here and several Common Loons linger (with the grebes) well into December.

Back on Rt. 25, we’ll continue north. Take a right onto Moultonborough Neck Road and follow the road all the way down to Long Island Beach. Here you can park and get great views of both the east and west sides of Moultonborough Neck. Horned Grebes are seen here in November and December as well as mergansers and goldeneyes. This is another great place for Bald Eagles. With a scope, scan the miles of shoreline on the mainland and the islands and look for the tell-tale white “tennis ball” in a tree (the white head of an adult eagle can really stand out, even at a great distance).

In the relative quiet of winter, you can explore and find several other boat ramps and lakeside parks that allow further scanning of the miles of shoreline and frozen bays. In writing this article, I realized that I really don’t know the eastern shore of the lake from Alton up through Wolfeboro and back up to Moultonborough very well. I have rarely birded there, so maybe that will have to wait for another author to explore. Winter is the time to do it.

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

Big Year for Concord, NH

by Pamela Hunt

In 2012, I took the lead in a new birding competition, a group attempt to see as many species (collectively) as possible both in Merrimack County as a whole and also just in the City of Concord. Based on posts to NH Birds and especially eBird, I am happy to announce the final results of that endeavor:

Concord = 204 (beats the 2011 record of 202)

Merrimack County = 215 (one short of 2011's 216)

These totals do not include escaped/released "chickens" (e.g., bobwhite, chukar, and pheasant).

The final bird of 2012 for the county was a good one, a **Dovekie** found in a Canterbury yard on December 23 (I collected the specimen). It may have been blown inland by a strong sou'easter on December 21. Other highlights for the year were Cackling Goose (Concord), Red-throated Loon (Newbury), Black Vulture (Concord), Rough-legged Hawk (Concord), Sora (Concord), Snowy Owl (Concord and Bow), Acadian Flycatcher (Concord), Summer Tanager (Franklin), and, of course,



Cackling Goose by David Lipsy, 12/6/12, Turtle Pond, Concord, NH.

the first state record of Say's Phoebe right here in my (almost) backyard. For each of these, 2012 was the first year in the last five (at least!) that the species was recorded in the county. The full list is now posted to the "Concord Birders" website, under "resources:" <https://sites.google.com/site/concordbirders/home>

As a side note, my Human-Powered Year List ended at 176, a new record, with, appropriately enough, the Say's Phoebe on November 18. This set a new personal record by three species despite missing a few fairly easy things. For those not familiar with the concept, my human-powered list includes only those species found using transportation powered solely by me (i.e., walking or biking) from my Penacook home. I regularly do a 17-mile walk to the farm where the Say's Phoebe was found.

A Note on Big Year History

by Robert A. Quinn

From 1960 through 1971 birders in New Hampshire were encouraged (by Vera Hebert, Bob Smart, et al.) to submit their annual bird lists for publication in what was then known as *New Hampshire Bird News*, which became the *New Hampshire Audubon Quarterly* in 1961. The focus started out on personal lists of all species an individual birder had seen statewide in that calendar year but gradually the effort expanded to include town lists and even regional lists (a somewhat vague category). No one apparently ever compiled county lists.

Before Pam Hunt undertook the formal list mentioned above for 2012, I had compiled, with input from the local birders, informal city of Concord lists since 2006 and they averaged right around 200 species annually. To put these recent Concord lists in a statewide perspective here are the **all-time highest** town records for all towns in New Hampshire during the 1960-1971 time frame:

Coastal towns

Rye	214 in 1969
Rye	209 in 1968
Rye	207 in 1970
Rye	205 in 1971
Portsmouth	173 in 1967

“Great Bay” towns

Durham	191 in 1964
Durham	184 in 1963

Inland towns

New Hampton	185 in 1961
New Hampton	172 in 1960

Concord and Rye are the only towns that have ever documented more than 200 species in a year. Setting aside the obvious advantages of the coast and Rye (which includes the Isles of Shoals) the highest totals have always been the result of a big birding effort combined with excellent habitats plus the good record keeping of the local birders. And now with eBird, record keeping is easier than ever.

So why keep lists? Besides being fun, here are the thoughts of the compiler of the 1970 lists (from the *New Hampshire Audubon Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 2, Spring 1971):

“Helen Parker writes of finding a (Goffstown) town list from 1919 which mentions nesting Black-crowned Night-Herons, a whole flock of eight Starlings, and a pair of Loggerhead Shrikes. How times have changed in Goffstown, and in your town and mine. Through our knowledge and observations in a local area, we have a great opportunity to record changes in our environment as well as the status of its bird life...Our bird watching, while fun and personally satisfying, can also be meaningful if we take the time to record our observations.”

Fun plus birding with a purpose, what’s better than that?

Volunteers and Research

Reporting Banded Birds

by Jon Woolf

When birding the New Hampshire coast, or anywhere else for that matter, it’s always a good idea to keep an eye out for banded birds. With smaller birds, you probably won’t be able to read the band, but large birds such as gulls and geese are often tagged with **field-readable** bands along with the standard metal bands. A field-readable band is brightly colored durable plastic and can be read from a distance with binoculars, scope, or telephoto picture.



Second year Herring Gull P02, photographed by Jon Woolf on 6/16/12 at North Hampton State Beach, North Hampton, NH.

In April 2012, I saw and reported my first banded gull, an adult Herring Gull with field-band number T47. Since then, I've reported about 15 sightings of 10 or 12 different birds. Reporting a banded bird is quite easy: just use any web browser to visit www.reportband.gov and follow the directions there. All you need to know is the date and details of the band or marker, location, color of the marker, color of the text, and the text code itself. You don't need to know the bird species if you have the full band number or a unique field-readable band such as the Herring Gull's T47. The species, or at least the general category of bird (i.e. shorebird, gull), is helpful for more generic field-readable markers such as colored leg flags on shorebirds. When the Bird Banding Lab finds a match in its database, they will send you an electronic certificate with information about the bird: where and when banded and how old it was at the time.

It won't take long for you to learn how to read basic information about a banded bird for yourself. For example, an H with a band that is *white text* on a *green background* and has a code that is one letter followed by two numbers was banded on Appledore Island by Dr. Julie Ellis's Appledore Gull Banding Project. Dr. Ellis's team also bands Great Black-backed Gulls, but the bands are obviously different: white text on a black background, and the code is number-letter-number. Banding projects working in other locations use different band color and coding patterns.

The vast majority of gulls that you'll see are not banded, but as Dr. Ellis's team continues its work, her banded gulls are becoming more common. Most stick to the coast, but banded Appledore gulls have been seen inland and as far away as Florida.

Many of the birds that Dr. Ellis bands are hatchlings that haven't fledged yet. This gives an added bonus: if you sight and report such a bird, you will know its age within a few weeks. With Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls, this means that you know exactly where the bird is in the four-year process of maturation. If you take decent pictures of these birds and keep a catalog with field notes, you'll soon have a perfect study guide for that most confusing of birding problems, identifying immature gull plumages.

Note from Eric Masterson

Neck bands are another form of field-readable marker used to identify individual birds, typically geese. Eric Masterson reported a Canada Goose from Walpole in March of 2011 wearing a field-readable neck collar inscribed with the letters GJN. The bird was banded in Greenland, but the Bird Banding Lab coordinates with agencies around the world to make sure the information gets where it needs to. The



Canada Goose, GJN, photographed by Eric Masterson when he found it with a flock of geese on the Connecticut River on 3/29/13.



A group of Canada Geese, including GJN, before being banded in Issungua, Greenland by David Stroud, lead scientist on the Greenland White-fronted Goose Study. Photo courtesy of the Greenland White-fronted Goose Study.

photos he obtained illustrate the story of this individual goose. The bird was seen in the same area in the spring of 2013, indicating a level of site fidelity during migration, information that would not be apparent without banding.



Issungua, Greenland. Photo courtesy of the Greenland White-fronted Goose Study.

Answer to the Photo Quiz

by David B. Donsker

This issue of the Photo Quiz features two very similar-looking, streaky birds sharing the tray of a sunflower seed feeder. If the world were not filled with small, streaky birds, half of the challenge of birding would disappear. Indeed, our mystery birds are clearly streak-breasted, perching birds with relatively short, stout conical bills. With that brief description, it would be easy to conclude that they are “sparrows” of some type. In fact, many of our small, streaked birds with finch-like bills are members of the sparrow family *Emberizidae*, a family that also includes the true buntings of the Old World. Not all birds with these characteristics are sparrows, however, which we will learn subsequently.

Let’s look more carefully at our mystery birds. Although they are quite similar in their streaking, size and shape, there are distinct differences between the two birds.

The most obvious difference is the degree of streaking. Although both individuals exhibit heaviest streaking on the breast and flanks, there is finer streaking on the throat, upper belly and upperparts. The streaking is extensive in both birds, but the bird on the left has finer, uninterrupted streaking. In contrast, the bird on the right has streaking which is quite heavy and discontinuous. In both birds the head is rather large, a feature which is accentuated by their stout, heavy, conical bills. The head, however, is proportionally larger and flatter in the bird on the right. The upper bill of the bird on the left is strongly arched, unlike the straighter upper bill of the right-hand bird. Further, the faces of the two birds are different. In the bird on the right, the face is fairly strongly patterned. There is an interrupted, large dark patch around and behind the eye. There is a dark malar (lower cheek) region. A white supercilium or eyebrow can be discerned which extends well behind the eye. The area below the eye and eye-patch and above the malar spot is pale. In contrast, the face of the bird on the left, other than showing some streaking and vague blotching, is virtually featureless.

Their conical bills rather easily eliminate other streak-breasted birds that can be confused with sparrows, such as pipits, waterthrushes, and some other warblers in fall plumage, and female Red-winged Blackbirds. All of these species have proportionally longer, pointed or thinner bills.

So what about those sparrows? Many of our sparrows are very heavily streaked on the underparts, especially on the breast, just like our featured birds. However, of the heavily streak-breasted group of sparrows many, including Lincoln's Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow and immature birds of a number of other species, have finer, less extensive streaking than the birds in the photograph.

Three sparrows, Savannah, Song and Fox Sparrows, are quite heavily streaked below. The first two of these species, however, have a better defined, sharper malar stripe which is especially distinct in Song Sparrow. Fox Sparrow has a different facial pattern than either of these two birds. Although it has a dark malar region similar to the bird on the right, it lacks a white eyebrow. Furthermore, unlike the featured birds, the breast streaking in these three sparrows frequently converges towards the center of the breast, resulting in a characteristic breast spot. This is best defined in Song Sparrow. In the end, however, it is the bill structure that eliminates all of our sparrows. Although sparrows have conical bills, they do not have the heavy, stout bills that are carried by these two birds. The sparrows' bills are smaller, finer and proportionally longer.

Lark Bunting, a relative of our sparrows, has also been seen in New Hampshire. Like the featured birds, this is a large-billed, dark-legged, large-headed bird. Further, the female and non-breeding male are both heavily streaked below with dark malar regions similar to the bird on the right. The streaking, however, is "messier" and the malar regions bolder in Lark Bunting and both sexes have prominent, broad white feather edges on the greater coverts (the outermost row of feathers that cover the base of the wing feathers), giving most individuals a whitish patch on the upper forewing.

The remaining birds that have large, stout conical bills in our state either belong to the Cardinal/Grosbeak family, *Cardinalidae*, or to the family of true finches, *Fringillidae*. Female Rose-breasted Grosbeak is the only member of the first family that is coarsely streaked below. Unlike the birds featured, however, the grosbeak's bill is very pale and its head is boldly and more sharply striped.

The true finches in New Hampshire include a somewhat diverse group of birds which includes the small-billed *Cardueline* Finches (goldfinches, siskins and redpolls), and large-billed forms (Evening and Pine Grosbeaks, crossbills, and the *Haemorhous* finches represented in our region by Purple and House Finches). The small-billed species are not considerations here, given the stout, heavy, conical bills of these birds. Of the large-billed members of this family, only the crossbills in juvenile plumage and the *Haemorhous* finches in immature and female plumage are heavily streaked below. The featured birds lack the characteristic bill structure of either of our two crossbills.

That leaves us with House and Purple Finch. It is a classic problem of bird identification to separate Purple Finch from House Finch. These two closely related species are frequently confused, both in male and female plumage. In both species, there can be some individual variation, so final identification should be based on analysis of several features. In general, House Finch is smaller headed, smaller billed and slim-

mer than the larger-headed, stout-billed, chunky Purple Finch. The culmen or ridge of the upper bill of House Finch is more strongly curved than that of Purple Finch whose culmen tends to be straighter. The breast streaking of the females and the similarly-plumaged first year males of both species is quite heavy. In Purple Finch, the streaks are broad but short and fairly sharply defined, blurring only slightly at their edges. In contrast, the breast streaks of House Finch are finer and longer. They are also blurry and not as contrastingly dark as those of Purple Finch. Although it cannot be appreciated in this photograph, the undertail coverts of House Finch are broadly streaked, while those of Purple Finch are nearly clear. Perhaps the best feature to use in separating females and first year males of these two similar species is face pattern. Purple Finch has a strong facial pattern. There is a large dark patch on the ear coverts which is set off by white linear stripes above and below. In addition, Purple Finch females and immatures have fairly conspicuous dark malar regions. In sharp contrast, the face of House Finch is practically featureless. Taking all these characteristics into consideration, the bird on the left is a female House Finch and the one on the right is a female Purple Finch.

Purple Finch, our State Bird, is a native resident in open mixed and coniferous woodlands throughout the state. They prefer to build their nests in conifers, especially spruces. Its breeding range extends across the western Canadian provinces to Newfoundland and into the northeastern United States from Minnesota to New England, and south to Pennsylvania. The species extends farther south along the Appalachians in the east and along the Cascades and Sierra Nevada Mountains in the West. Many of our breeding Purple Finches migrate south to the mid-Atlantic region during the winter. Migration begins in early September and peaks in mid-October. Its natural foods are seeds, fruits and buds.

House Finch, a common permanent resident and an integral part of New Hampshire's avifauna, is a relative newcomer to the state. It was introduced to the East Coast from the American West in the mid-twentieth century. Its rapid expansion throughout the East during the remainder of that century is well known. Unlike Purple Finch, which is a woodland denizen, House Finch prefers human habitation and it is most often encountered in cities, suburbs, parks and gardens.

Bird feeders are readily used by both species. So, the occurrence of these sister species at the same feeder, as seen in the photograph, would not be a unique event. When such a fortunate occurrence happens, it gives us a good opportunity to compare these very similar species side-by-side. Such is the case in this photograph taken by Jon Woolf on September 8, 2012 at the Massabesic Audubon Center.

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Abbreviations Used

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

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