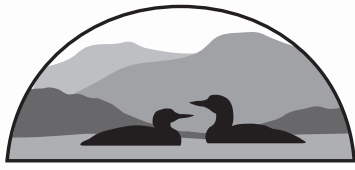


# New Hampshire Bird Records





**NH AUDUBON**  
Protecting our environment since 1914

**NEW HAMPSHIRE BIRD RECORDS**  
VOLUME 34, NUMBER 3  
FALL 2015

**MANAGING EDITOR**

Rebecca Suomala  
603-224-9909 X309,  
rsuomala@nhaudubon.org

**TEXT EDITOR**

Dan Hubbard

**SEASON EDITORS**

Eric Masterson, **Spring**  
Chad Witko, **Summer**  
Lauren Kras/Ben Griffith, **Fall**  
Pamela Hunt, **Winter**

**LAYOUT**

Kathy McBride

**PUBLICATION ASSISTANT**

Kathryn Frieden

**ASSISTANTS**

Jeannine Ayer, Zeke Cornell,  
David Deifik, Elizabeth Levy,  
Susan MacLeod, Marie Nickerson,  
Carol Plato, Tony Vazzano, Phyllis Yaffie

**PHOTO QUIZ**

David Donsker

**PHOTO EDITOR**

Wendy Chatel

**WEB MASTER**

Kathy Barnes

**FIELD TRIP REPORTS**

Phil Brown

**WHERE TO BIRD**

Scott Heron

**EDITORIAL TEAM**

Phil Brown, Wendy Chatel, Hank Chary,  
David Deifik, David Donsker, Ben Griffith,  
Dan Hubbard, Pam Hunt, Lauren Kras,  
Iain MacLeod, Eric Masterson,  
Robert A. Quinn, Rebecca Suomala,  
Tony Vazzano, Jon Woolf

[www.nhbirdrecords.org](http://www.nhbirdrecords.org)

## IN APPRECIATION

This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by Rebecca Suomala in appreciation of family – those who are no longer with us and much missed, those whose presence is still so much valued, and the new additions who bring great joy.



### In This Issue

From the Editor .....	1
Photo Quiz .....	1
Fall Season: August 1 through November 30, 2015 <i>by Lauren Kras and Ben Griffith</i> .....	2
Fall 2015 Field Notes <i>compiled by Rebecca Suomala and Kathryn Frieden</i> .....	20
Color Banded Birds <i>by Stephen Mirick</i>	
Late Cliff Swallow Fledging <i>by Scott Heron</i>	
Berry-eating Coot	
Leucistic Ruby-throated Hummingbird	
Fall 2015 New Hampshire Raptor Migration Report <i>by Iain MacLeod</i> .....	21
Concord Nighthawk Migration Study – 2015 Update <i>by Rob Woodward</i> .....	25
Powder Mill Pond – the Return of the Shorebirds <i>by Eric Masterson</i> .....	26
The Curious Case of Ruddy Ducks <i>by Robert A. Quinn</i> .....	28
Field Trip Reports.....	29
Star Island in September <i>by Rebecca Suomala</i>	
Annual Hawk Migration Watch, Lebanon Airport <i>by Blake Allison</i>	
Shorebird Identification <i>by Stephen Mirick</i> .....	30
Spring and Fall Migrations of the Races of Palm Warbler through New England <i>by Hector Galbraith, Chris Rimmer, Steve Faccio, and Trevor Lloyd-Evans</i> .....	33
Birding New Hampshire's Lake Sunapee <i>by Dylan Jackson</i> .....	35
Research – Does a Reduction in Caterpillars Caused by Exotic Shrubs Lower the Reproductive Success of Common Yellowthroats? <i>by Matt Tarr</i> .....	40
Answer to the Photo Quiz <i>by David B. Donsker</i> .....	43
Corrections .....	44

Cover Photo: Western Meadowlark (top and lower left) by David Lipsy accompanied by Susan Wrisley, 11/16/15, opposite North Hampton State Beach, NH. Note the nearly solid yellow malar area and darker cheek. Compare it with the Eastern Meadowlark (lower right) photographed by Len Medlock in Hampton, NH.

*New Hampshire Bird Records* is published quarterly by New Hampshire Audubon's Conservation Department. Thank you to the many observers who submit their sightings to NH eBird ([www.ebird.org/nh](http://www.ebird.org/nh)), the source of data for this publication. Records are selected for publication and not all species reported will appear in the issue. The published sightings typically represent the highlights of the season. All records are subject to review by the NH Rare Birds Committee and publication of reports here does not imply future acceptance by the Committee. Please contact the Managing Editor if you would like to report your sightings but are unable to use NH eBird.

*New Hampshire Bird Records* © NHA November, 2016

Published by New Hampshire Audubon's Conservation Department

Printed on Recycled Paper



Fall 2015

by Rebecca Suomala

### New Hampshire Bird Records Timing

The publication has been running behind schedule for a number of reasons, including the increase in articles and the vast number of eBird records the Season Editors have to review. In Fall 2015, there were 71,613 bird sightings entered into NH eBird that had to be whittled down to less than 1,000 for publication. In the future, this may necessitate some changes in how we present the data, but for now, we're keeping the same format. The New Hampshire Bird Records Editorial Team settled on the goal of having each issue out about two months before that season starts the following year, with articles related to the season. For example, the Spring 2016 issue should come out in January of 2017 as we all start to get cabin fever and look towards spring birding. Most articles will be focused on the spring so that you can remember what happened the previous spring and get tips on what to look for in the coming spring. We'll see if we can hold to this schedule.

We're always interested in your feedback on *New Hampshire Bird Records*. Let us know what you like, what you don't like, and any suggestions on what you'd like to see in the publication.

### New Hampshire Bird Records Endowment Fund Update

**Thank You** to everyone who contributed to the matching challenge from the two founding donors of the New Hampshire Bird Records Endowment Fund. We have successfully matched the first \$5,000 and are close to matching the second \$5,000. The second donor agreed to extend the time frame to give us a chance to reach the full \$10,000! You can still help us get there.

The Fund was approved by the NH Audubon Board of Trustees to provide long-term support for the collection, organization, quality control, distribution, dissemination, publication, promotion, preservation and storage of New Hampshire bird sighting information. *New Hampshire Bird Records* is the current vehicle and umbrella for these functions and the initial focus of the fund is on supporting all facets of *New Hampshire Bird Records* (both the publication and data aspects, including eBird).

Make a donation by using the form in the brochure enclosed with this issue, or contacting the Managing Editor (see inside front cover).

### Field Notes Compiler Needed

This volunteer gathers stories and photos for the regular Field Notes feature in each issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*. Responsibilities include reviewing the NHBirds e-mail list for potential stories, contacting authors, obtaining photos, and occasionally writing text. The position requires familiarity/interest in birding, the ability to meet deadlines and good editing skills. If you are interested, please contact me (see inside front cover).

## PHOTO QUIZ

### Can You Identify This Bird?

Answer on page 43.

Photo by Steve Mirick.



**August 1, 2015 through November 30, 2015**

by Benjamin Griffith and Lauren Kras

Weather during the fall of 2015 was generally mild.



Temperatures were above average for most of the season and, although the season started off wet, precipitation declined to below-average levels during the latter half of the season. In spite of the warm weather, there weren't unusual numbers of neotropical migrants lingering late into the season.

A cold front that came through on October 17 with flurries and a low of 19 degrees may have contributed to the departure of any long-distance migrants still lingering in the state.

Fall migration may be the season with the most potential for regional vagrants to appear and this year did not disappoint in this regard. Topping the list are reports of:



*Brown Pelican by Mark Hurley, 9/20/15, Newfound Lake, NH.*

- **Brown Pelican** (from three different lakes!), the first report of a live bird in over 100 years.
- **Great White Heron**, only the third record for New England and presumably the first for New Hampshire.
- **Lazuli Bunting**, a first state record if accepted by the NH Rare Birds Committee.
- **Swainson's Hawk**, only the second state record.
- **Western Meadowlark**, the first report in over 40 years and the fifth overall for the state.
- **Franklin's Gull**, the seventh state record and the first since 2009.
- **Townsend's Warbler**, only the eighth state record.

Other major events during the season included a well-studied shorebird show at Powder Mill Pond, widespread Golden Eagle reports, and the early signs of a crossbill invasion.

**Waterfowl through Pelicans**

Goose migration was rather lackluster during the fall with few surprises. **Three Cackling Goose** reports is consistent with the increasing frequency of this relatively new species (prior to 2004, Cackling Goose was considered a subspecies of Canada Goose). As the two species are nearly identical in plumage, it's hard to tell how much of the increase is a result of awareness. It was a good year for wigeon on Great Bay with a maximum of 236 American (second highest count ever) and five Eurasian Wigeon (all

time highest count). Three Redheads on Great Bay were about average for recent years. Two reports of Harlequin Ducks were also roughly typical for recent years during the fall. An apparent **Bufflehead x Common Goldeneye** hybrid was photographed in the southwestern part of the state and represents the first report of this rare hybrid for the state. A relatively mild fall resulted in fewer inland scoters than usual, as all three species (but especially Black) are known to rest on inland lakes during storms.



*Great Shearwater by Scott Heron, taken during the NH Audubon Pelagic field trip to Jeffreys Ledge, 10/11/15.*

Horned Grebes once again staged on Lake Winnepesaukee, with a maximum of 20 counted this year. It was a good year for larger shearwaters with high counts of 118 Cory's and 183 Greats; however, only seven Manx Shearwaters and two Sooty Shearwaters were reported. One of the most remarkable birds of the season was a **Brown Pelican** which was photographed on three separate lakes during a four-day period in September, the first live record of the species in New Hampshire in over 100 years. According to *The Birds of New Hampshire* by Keith and Fox (2013), a Brown Pelican that had been banded at a nest in Maryland was found dead at Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge on January 7, 2007. This record, however, is not on the New Hampshire state list compiled by NH Rare Birds Committee. Although generally regarded as a coastal species, the species does have a history of occurring inland (it's even been recorded in every interior state except for Montana!).

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Snow Goose</b>			
10/24	30	Sherman's Farm, Conway	T. Keith
<b>Brant</b>			
10/11	15	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	M. Wilson
10/16	12	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
11/07	35	Seabrook WTP	S. Mirick
<b>Cackling Goose</b>			
10/22	1	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
10/24	1	Great Meadow, Charlestown	D. Jackson
11/30	1	Hinsdale Setbacks	H. Galbraith

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Wood Duck</b>			
09/09	80	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth
10/06	206	Ten Rod Rd., Rochester	D. Hubbard

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Gadwall</b>			
10/02	1	Hinsdale Setbacks	H. Galbraith
10/13	1	Lebanon landfill	E. Bracey
10/14	3	Cherry Pond, Jefferson	R. Quinn
10/21	3	Derry WTP	C. Sheridan
10/21	1	Horseshoe Pond, Merrimack	J. Maher
10/24	1	Dorr Woolen Mill WTP, Newport	D. Jackson
11/01	5	Rye Harbor SP	J. Lambert
11/12	1	Sunset Farm, Greenland	J. Lambert

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Eurasian Wigeon</b>			
10/05	1	Sunset Farm, Greenland	J. Lambert
11/05	5	Sunset Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick



*Eurasian Wigeon (right) with an American Wigeon by Len Medlock, 10/22/15, Great Bay, Greenland, NH.*

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>American Wigeon</b>			
08/14	6	Magalloway & Androscoggin River jct., Errol	S. Flint
09/03	1	Powder Mill Pond	J. Maher
09/04	4	Exeter WTP	S. Mirick
09/21	1	Powder Mill Pond	C. Sheridan
10/05	71	Sunset Farm, Greenland	J. Lambert
11/05	236	Sunset Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Blue-winged Teal</b>			
08/01	1	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	D. Dionne
08/09	1	Exeter WTP	S. Heron, R. Prieto
08/31	10	Lake Winnisquam	C. Berglund
09/04	25	Exeter WTP	S. Mirick
10/06	16	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Northern Shoveler</b>			
08/05	1	Rt. 1A pools s. of Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye	S. Mirick
08/30	2	Exeter WTP	L. Medlock
11/11	7	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth
11/27	4	Great Bay, Weeks Point, Greenland	L. Medlock

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Northern Pintail</b>			
08/29	1	Exeter WTP	S. Heron
10/15	3	Derry WTP	S. Mirick, J. Maher
10/25	2	Sunset Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick
10/31	2	Great Meadow, Charlestown	D. Jackson

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Green-winged Teal</b>			
09/10	32	Powder Mill Pond	J. Maher
10/23	35	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
11/14	54	Exeter WTP	J. Maher

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Redhead</b>			
11/01	2	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Mirick, BBC FT
11/12	3	Sunset Farm, Greenland	J. Lambert

Date	#	Location	Observer
11/25	2	Sunset Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick, K. Towler, J. Sparrell

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Ring-necked Duck</b>			
08/11	10	Mile Long Pond, Androscoggin R., Errol	D. Hof
10/30	54	Unsworth (Koenig) Preserve, Moultonborough	P. Brown
11/18	171	World End Pond, Salem	J. Maher

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Greater Scaup</b>			
09/23	8	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Heron
10/05	87	Sunset Farm, Greenland	J. Lambert
10/22	30	Great Boars Head, Hampton	S. Mirick
11/01	5	Brindle Pond, Barnstead	J. Lambert
11/01	6	Rye Harbor SP	J. Lambert
11/12	1203	Sunset Farm, Greenland	J. Lambert

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Lesser Scaup</b>			
10/01	1	Water St., Lancaster	S. Stoddard
10/15	3	L. Umbagog, n. end, Errol	P. Brown, R. Quinn, et al.
11/05	11	Willand Pond, Somersworth/Dover	A. Aldrich, A. Murray
11/27	5	Great Bay, Weeks Point, Greenland	L. Medlock

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Harlequin Duck</b>			
11/16	1	Jeffreys Ledge, NH	S. Mirick, J. Lambert
11/19	2	Great Boars Head, Hampton	S. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Surf Scoter</b>			
08/08	1	NH coast	S. Mirick
09/13	4	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
10/01	27	Cherry Pond, Jefferson	R. Quinn
10/09	2	Hinsdale Setbacks	H. Galbraith
10/25	102	NH coast	S. Mirick
11/13	1	Success Pond, Success	S. Stoddard
11/18	1	Dublin Lake	P. Brown

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>White-winged Scoter</b>			
08/08	10	NH coast	S. Mirick
09/24	28	Nubanusit Neighborhood and Farm, Peterborough	N. White
10/01	19	Cherry Pond, Jefferson	R. Quinn, et al.
10/09	8	Hinsdale Setbacks	H. Galbraith, C. Ross
10/28	93	NH coast	S. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Black Scoter</b>			
08/01	12	N. Hampton State Beach	S. Mirick
10/21	25	Echo Lake, Franconia	G. Keeler
10/21	36	Cherry Pond, Jefferson	D. Govatski
10/21	33	L. Sunapee off Jobs Creek	D. Jackson
10/26	75	Lake Massabesic	E. Masterson
11/12	196	Rye Harbor SP	J. Lambert

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Scoter sp.</b>			
10/22	465	Great Boars Head, Hampton	S. Mirick
10/28	223	NH coast	S. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Long-tailed Duck</b>			
10/11	1	NH offshore waters	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, NHA FT
10/20	2	Wilder Dam Reservoir, Lebanon	J. MacQueen
10/26	3	Lower Kimball Pond, Chatham	B. Crowley
10/28	92	NH coast	S. Mirick



# FALL SEASON

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
<b>Long-tailed Duck—continued</b>				<b>Red-throated Loon</b>			
11/11	1	Upper Suncook Recreation Area	J. Lambert	10/10	2	Rt. 1A, Rye	S. Mirick
11/13	1	Success Pond, Success	S. Stoddard	10/25	118	NH coast	S. Mirick
11/15	1	Dorr Woolen Mill WTP, Newport	D. Jackson	10/28	299	NH coast	S. Mirick
11/23	1	Spofford Lake, Chesterfield	A. Burnett	11/01	1	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Mirick, BBC FT
<b>Bufflehead</b>				11/01	93	Rye Harbor SP	J. Lambert
10/18	13	Fort Stark, New Castle	D. Jackson, S. Heron	11/19	109	Great Boars Head, Hampton	S. Mirick
11/21	30	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	J. Scott, S. Crowley	<b>Common Loon</b>			
11/21	29	Dorr Woolen Mill WTP, Newport	D. Jackson	09/13	66	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
<b>Common Goldeneye</b>				10/28	73	NH coast	S. Mirick
08/07	3	Umbagog NWR	D. Hof	<b>Pied-billed Grebe</b>			
08/11	1	Grey Rocks CA, Hebron	D. Schamp	09/07	7	Brentwood Mitigation Area	A. Itz, E. Nathan, S. Heron
10/02	1	Hinsdale Setbacks	H. Galbraith	11/15	8	Cherry Pond, Jefferson	D. Govatski
10/31	2	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	R. Prieto	<b>Horned Grebe</b>			
11/27	64	Great Bay, Greenland	S. Mirick	10/05	2	L. Umbagog, n. end, Errol	R. Quinn
<b>Bufflehead x Common Goldeneye (hybrid)</b>				10/08	3	Sunset Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick
10/28	1	Tolman Pond, Nelson	P. Brown	11/30	20	Boathouse Rd., Moultonborough	I. MacLeod
<b>Barrow's Goldeneye</b>				<b>Red-necked Grebe</b>			
11/14	1	Merrimack R., Stark Landing, Manchester	J. Maher	08/01	1	Hampton Harbor Inlet	S. Mirick
11/22	1	Androscoggin Wayside Park, Errol	L. Charron	08/06	1	Contoocook Lake, Jaffrey	P. Gurn
<b>Hooded Merganser</b>				10/01	3	Cherry Pond, Jefferson	R. Quinn
10/22	54	Basin Pond, Chatham	B. Crowley	10/31	10	Seabrook Beach	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
11/15	42	Wilson Pond, Swanzey	W. Ward	<b>Northern Fulmar</b>			
<b>Red-breasted Merganser</b>				09/26	39	Star Island, Rye	E. Masterson, et al.
09/26	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick, et al.	10/11	10	NH offshore waters	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, NHA FT
10/25	58	NH coast	S. Mirick	10/28	1	NH coast	S. & J. Mirick
11/12	1	Hinsdale Setbacks	H. Galbraith	11/10	2	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
11/13	1	L. Sunapee off Jobs Creek	D. Jackson	11/21	19	Jeffreys Ledge, NH	Z. Cornell
11/19	1	Horace Lake, Weare	P. Brown				



*Ruddy Duck by Steve Liffmann, 11/10/15, Arlington Pond, Salem, NH.*

## Ruddy Duck

09/27	1	Exeter WTP	S. Heron
11/24	173	Beaver Lake, Derry	S. Mirick
11/24	40	Arlington Pond, Salem	S. Liffmann
11/29	37	Willand Pond, Somersworth/Dover	A. Murray

## Spruce Grouse

08/17	2	Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase	G. McKibben
09/27	1	N. Baldface, WMNF	J. Toledano
11/10	1	Ethan Pond, Bethlehem	D. Govatski
11/22	1	Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	C. Sheridan



*Cory's Shearwater by Jon Woolf, 10/11/15, NH Audubon Pelagic.*

## Cory's Shearwater

09/26	118	Star Island, Rye	E. Masterson, et al.
09/30	62	NH coast	J. Lambert
10/11	91	NH offshore waters	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, NHA FT
10/25	7	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
10/28	1	NH coast	S. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Great Shearwater</b>			
08/23	25	Jeffreys Ledge, NH	B. Griffith
10/11	183	NH offshore waters	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, NHA FT
11/21	49	NH offshore waters	Z. Cornell

<b>Sooty Shearwater</b>			
08/13	4	NH coast	R. Menck
08/14	2	NH offshore waters	G. McKibben
08/30	1	NH offshore waters	J. Sparrell, K. Towler

<b>Manx Shearwater</b>			
08/08	1	Jeffreys Ledge, NH	G. Recer, S. Beaudoin
08/16	2	NH offshore waters	S. Heron, S.& J. Mirick, K. Wilmarth, R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
08/28	2	NH offshore waters	L. Kras, R. Prieto
09/30	1	NH coast	J. Lambert

<b>Shearwater sp.</b>			
10/11	22	NH offshore waters	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, NHA FT

<b>Wilson's Storm-Petrel</b>			
08/16	350	NH offshore waters	S. Heron, S.& J. Mirick, K. Wilmarth, R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
08/23	150	Jeffreys Ledge, NH	B. Griffith
08/30	8	NH offshore waters	J. Sparrell, K. Towler

<b>Northern Gannet</b>			
08/11	125	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
09/30	243	NH coast	J. Lambert
10/11	175	NH offshore waters	S. Mirick, J. Woolf, NHA FT
10/25	143	NH coast	S. Mirick

<b>Double-crested Cormorant</b>			
09/11	90	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton
10/01	835	Carter Hill RO, Concord	J. Cosentino
10/25	7751	NH coast	S. Mirick

<b>Great Cormorant</b>			
08/18	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	R. Amuso, R. Wendell
09/26	9	Star Island, Rye	E. Masterson, et al.
10/15	1	L. Umbagog, n. end, Errol	P. Brown, R. Quinn, et al.



Brown Pelican nose to nose with a curious dog. Photo by Mark Hurley, 9/20/15, Newfound Lake, NH.

<b>Brown Pelican</b>			
09/18	1	Newfound L., s. end, Bristol	S. DeBassio
09/18	1	Mascoma Lake s., Enfield	P. Merrill
09/22	1	L. Horace, Weare	C. Lord

## Hérons through Diurnal Raptors

A white heron in Litchfield in November was initially reported as a Great Egret (the most likely species of egret inland), but good photos of the bird revealed it to be a **Great White Heron** (the white form of Great Blue Heron found in the Florida Keys), only the third documented record of this subspecies in New England. Three Yellow-crowned Night-Herons represent a new high count in recent history, but is consistent with a recent trend for this species to occur in small numbers in fall in the Hampton marshes.



Swainson's Hawk by Andre Moraes, 9/22/15, Pack Monadnock, NH.

Once a great rarity in the state, Black Vultures have been roughly annual in fall since 2008; this year two were reported. New Hampshire's second **Swainson's Hawk** was photographed migrating past the hawkwatch at Pack Monadnock on September 22, almost exactly a year after the first was photographed in Hollis. Golden Eagles had their best-ever fall; Pack Monadnock Raptor Observatory set its single-season record with 13 birds. Carter Hill Raptor Observatory recorded its third, fourth, and fifth Golden Eagles in the history of its hawkwatch, all on the same day.

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>American Bittern</b>			
09/02	4	Trask Brook Rd, Newport/Sunapee	D. Jackson
09/07	2	Bedell Bridge SP, Haverhill	J. MacQueen
10/17	1	World End Pond, Salem	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth

<b>Least Bittern</b>			
08/13	2	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth

<b>Great Blue Heron</b>			
08/01	45	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick

<b>Great Blue Heron -White form</b>			
11/27	1	Chase Brook Pond, Litchfield	C. Sheridan
11/30	1	Chase Brook Pond, Litchfield	S. Mirick

<b>Great Egret</b>			
08/22	4	Connecticut River, Charlestown	T. McGary
08/24	5	Horseshoe Pond, Merrimack	M. Jacobson
08/30	110	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick

<b>Snowy Egret</b>			
08/29	55	Hampton Harbor	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Heron
10/21	1	Parsons Creek saltmarsh, Rye	S. Bennett, J. O'Shaughnessy, NHA FT

# FALL SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Little Blue Heron</b>			
08/01	1	Rt. 1A pools s. of Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye	S. Mirick, S. Heron
08/01	1	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
08/27	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	J. Kelly



*Cattle Egret among the decoys by Len Medlock, 10/24/15, Great Bay Farm, Newington, NH.*

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Cattle Egret</b>			
10/24	1	Great Bay Farm, Greenland	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, et al.
11/01	1	Great Bay Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick, BBC FT
<b>Green Heron</b>			
08/09	9	Steeplegate Mall pond, Concord	R. Woodward
10/13	1	Willand Pond, Somersworth/Dover	A. Murray, A. Aldrich
10/18	1	NH coast	C. Sheridan

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Black-crowned Night-Heron</b>			
08/10	3	Nashua River by Nashua Dr.	J. Maher
08/29	35	NH coast	S. Mirick
09/04	1	Antrim Rd., Hancock	E. Masterson
10/17	2	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick



*Yellow-crowned Night-Heron by Nathan Purmort, 8/16/15, Hampton, NH.*

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Yellow-crowned Night-Heron</b>			
08/16	1	Hampton marsh	N. Purmort
08/23	3	Island Path, Hampton	J. Sparrell
09/07	1	Island Path, Hampton	S. Mirick
09/07	1	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	S. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Glossy Ibis</b>			
08/02	10	Parsons Creek saltmarsh, Rye	D. Jackson, S. Heron
08/08	15	NH coast	S. Mirick
08/28	1	saltmarsh s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye	K. Wilmarth

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Black Vulture</b>			
08/31	1	Rt. 286 pools, Seabrook	L. Medlock
09/19	1	Memorial Dr., Somersworth	A. Aldrich, A. Murray

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Osprey</b>			
09/20	16	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton
11/02	1	Saco R. near Attitash Mt., Bartlett	R. Steber
11/02	1	Carter Hill RO, Concord	J. Cosentino, K. Fenton

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Golden Eagle</b>			
10/18	1	Rt. 16 near White Lake SP, Tamworth	S. Mesick
10/23	1	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
10/30	1	Rt. 101, Keene	T. Warren
11/07	1	Mine Falls Gate House, Nashua	M. Nickerson

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Mississippi Kite</b>			
08/02	3	Huckin's Dr., Newmarket	S. Mirick
08/16	1	Breakfast Hill Rd., Greenland	L. Kras, B. Griffith
09/08	1	Dame Rd. at Gonet Rd., Newmarket	N. Houlihan

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Northern Harrier</b>			
09/23	8	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton, PMRO
09/24	8	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
09/24	8	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton, PMRO

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Sharp-shinned Hawk</b>			
09/24	93	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton, PMRO
10/19	65	Carter Hill RO, Concord	K. Fenton, J. Cosentino

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Cooper's Hawk</b>			
09/23	6	Carter Hill RO, Concord	J. Cosentino
10/23	8	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton, PMRO

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Northern Goshawk</b>			
08/24	3	Deer Mountain SP, Pittsburg	J. Esten
10/30	5	Pack Monadnock RO	PMRO

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Bald Eagle</b>			
09/26	7	Carter Hill RO, Concord	J. Cosentino
10/15	7	L. Umbagog, n. end, Errol	P. Brown, R. Quinn, et al.
11/13	9	Miller SP, Pack Monadnock	PMRO

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Red-shouldered Hawk</b>			
10/27	33	Miller SP, Pack Monadnock	PMRO
11/17	24	Miller SP, Pack Monadnock	PMRO

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Broad-winged Hawk</b>			
09/16	3388	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton, PMRO
09/17	2297	Blue Job Mt., Farmington	J. Lambert
09/17	3959	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton, PMRO
09/21	3471	Pack Monadnock RO	PMRO
09/23	1413	Carter Hill RO, Concord	J. Cosentino

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Swainson's Hawk</b>			
09/22	1	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton, H. Walters

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Rough-legged Hawk</b>			
11/16	1	Pack Monadnock RO	PMRO



**Rails through Terns**



*Wilson's Phalarope by Terri Fratus, 8/1/15, Exeter WTP, NH.*

An American Oystercatcher was once again present on the Isles of Shoals late into the fall. This species was not recorded in fall until two years ago, but one individual (possibly the same) has been reported each of the past three years. A Western Willet was documented in Hampton in August. This subspecies is regular on the East Coast in fall, but generally more common farther south. After a four-year drought of fall sightings, Hudsonian Godwits were reported from three locations this fall. Drawn-down water levels at Powdermill Pond – and extremely thorough coverage – resulted in several noteworthy shorebird sightings, including Buff-breasted and Baird's Sandpipers as well as American Golden-Plover. For more details, see Eric Masterson's article later in this issue. Drawdowns such as this occur regularly at dammed lakes, so observers should watch for similar conditions at their local waterbodies. You never know when your local drawn-down lake will turn into a veritable shorebird buffet! Peep (small shorebirds in the *Calidris* genus) numbers were generally modest on the coast. **Wilson's Phalarope** has been annual since 2011; this fall there was one observed at the Exeter Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Thick-billed Murres are generally rare before December, but three separate individuals were reported this fall, foreshadowing a big winter for them. Razorbills, likewise, arrived in late October, several weeks earlier than usual.



*Franklin's Gull, by Aiden Moser, 11/14/15, Sunset Farm, Greenland, NH.*

A **Franklin's Gull** was only the state's seventh record and was part of a large regional influx of the species. Indeed, a

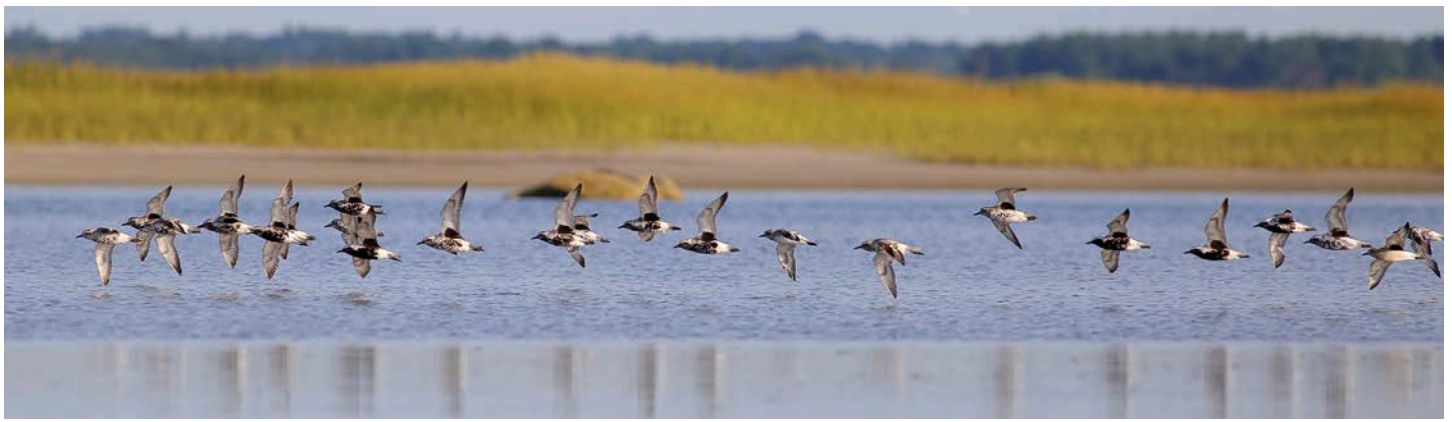
second individual was seen just over the state line on the Connecticut River in Vermont and may have crossed into New Hampshire at some point. The influx was a result of a weather system to our west, described by Nate Swick in the ABA blog on 11/14/15:

*"A persistent low pressure system sitting over the Great Lakes shifted northeast where it sat on Quebec and New Brunswick. Which in turn opened a fire hydrant of wind from the prairie provinces over the Great Lakes and straight out over the Mid-Atlantic from about Virginia to New England. It was as if someone put a funnel on the south side of Manitoba with the end spitting out over New Jersey."*

This wind brought a huge movement of Franklin's Gulls to the northeastern Atlantic coast with the largest flocks at Cape May. For more on this remarkable regional phenomenon, check his blog at: <http://blog.aba.org/2015/11/huge-movement-of-franklins-gulls-in-the-great-lakes-and-the-mid-atlantic.html>. Forster's Terns stage in large numbers during September and October in some years, but no more than four were reported on a single day this fall.

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Virginia Rail</b>			
09/13	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard, Seacoast CFT
10/14	1	Pumpkin Hill Rd., Warner	J. Zablocki
<b>Sora</b>			
09/14	5	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth
10/05	1	Mine Falls Park, Nashua	J. Maher
10/06	1	Fields Grove City Park, Nashua	J. Maher
<b>American Coot</b>			
10/20	25	Sunset Farm, Greenland	N. Houlihan
11/02	1	Horseshoe Pond, Concord	P. Brown
11/10	53	Powwow Pond IBA, Kingston	S. Heron
11/11	1	Exeter WTP	P. Miliotis
11/26	38	Powwow Pond IBA, Kingston	S. Heron
11/26	1	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth
11/27	1	Eel Pond, Rye	S. Stoddard
<b>Sandhill Crane</b>			
08/22	3	Plains Rd., Monroe	J. Esten
11/17	1	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton
<b>American Oystercatcher</b>			
09/09	1	Star Island, Rye	J. Lentz
<b>Black-bellied Plover</b>			
08/15	55	NH coast	S. Mirick
10/11	4	Exeter WTP	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, P. Wolter, P. Miliotis, J. Maher, S. Heron
10/18	53	Seabrook Beach	D. Jackson, S. Heron
10/21	6	Derry WTP	C. Sheridan
11/01	1	Upper Suncook Recreation Area	J. Lambert
11/22	13	NH coast	K. Wilmarth
11/27	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick

# FALL SEASON



*Black-bellied Plovers by Scott Heron, 8/29/15, Seabrook, NH.*

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
<b>American Golden-Plover</b>				<b>Greater Yellowlegs</b>			
09/08	3	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson	09/07	90	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
09/10	2	Powder Mill Pond	Z. Cornell	10/16	130	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
09/20	1	World End Pond, Salem	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth	10/24	22	Adams Pt. WMA, Durham	S. Heron, M. Jacobson, J. Maher, J. Mills-Anderson
09/30	2	Powder Mill Pond	E. Masterson	11/22	1	Henry's Pool, Rt. 101E, Hampton	S. Mirick
10/10	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S.& J. Mirick, Seacoast CFT	<b>Willet</b>			
<b>Black-bellied Plover/golden-plover sp.</b>				08/01	15	Hampton Harbor	S. Heron
09/21	2	Carter Hill RO, Concord	K. Fenton, J. Cosentino	09/16	1	Hampton River Marina flats	J. Maher
<b>Semipalmated Plover</b>				<b>Willet - Western subsp.</b>			
08/05	1	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick	08/22	1	Little River salt marsh, N. Hampton	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Mirick, J. Maher
08/08	518	NH coast	S. Mirick	<b>Lesser Yellowlegs</b>			
08/17	250	Little Jack's restaurant, Rt. 1A, Hampton	C. Nims, J. Scott	08/04	20	Rochester WTP	S. Young
08/21	10	Upper Mt. Lake, Haverhill	W. Hutcheson	08/22	57	Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
08/23	646	NH coast	S. Mirick	11/01	3	Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton	S. Mirick, BBC FT
08/30	2	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton	<b>Upland Sandpiper</b>			
09/04	11	Powder Mill Pond	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell	08/29	2	Pease Intl. Tradeport s., Portsmouth	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
11/07	4	NH coast	S. Mirick	09/05	1	Pease Intl. Tradeport s., Portsmouth	S. Mirick, S. Schlik
11/09	1	NH coast	J. Maher	<b>Whimbrel</b>			
<b>Piping Plover</b>				08/01	4	Hampton Harbor	S. Heron
08/15	6	NH coast	S. Mirick	09/21	1	Hampton River Marina flats	C. McPherson, J. Maher, S. Heron
08/23	2	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	L. Medlock, et al.	<b>Hudsonian Godwit</b>			
08/29	1	Hampton Harbor	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Heron	09/16	1	Hampton River Marina flats	L. Medlock, et al.
<b>Killdeer</b>				10/11	1	Hampton River Marina flats	A. Patia
08/06	62	Runnymede Farm, N. Hampton	S. Heron	10/16	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
08/09	36	Locke Rd. sod farm, Concord	R. Woodward	10/17	1	NH coast	S. Mirick
10/27	43	Sunset Farm, Greenland	M. Watson	<b>Solitary Sandpiper</b>			
11/16	2	Rt. 1A, second pullout s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye	A. Murray	09/03	10	Powder Mill Pond	J. Maher
<b>Spotted Sandpiper</b>				10/17	1	Adam's Pond, Derry	S. Heron
08/05	18	Rochester WTP	S. Mirick	10/17	1	World End Pond, Salem	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth
08/13	23	Merrimack R., Boscawen to Penacook	R. Quinn, Capitol CFT	<b>Hudsonian Godwit</b>			
10/25	1	South Mill Pond, Portsmouth	K. Towler, J. Sparrell	09/16	1	Hampton River Marina flats	L. Medlock, et al.
<b>Solitary Sandpiper</b>				10/11	1	Hampton River Marina flats	A. Patia
09/03	10	Powder Mill Pond	J. Maher	10/16	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
10/17	1	Adam's Pond, Derry	S. Heron	10/17	1	NH coast	S. Mirick
10/17	1	World End Pond, Salem	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth	<b>Hudsonian Godwit</b>			



*Hudsonian Godwit by Steve Mirick, 9/16/15, Hampton, NH.*



Date # Location Observer

**Ruddy Turnstone**

08/16 6 Foss Beach, Rye S. Heron, S.& J. Mirick,  
K. Wilmarth, R. Suomala, Z. Cornell  
08/30 5 Rye Harbor SP R. Suomala  
09/01 1 NH coast C. Sheridan

**Red Knot**

08/01 1 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick, et al.  
08/23 1 Hampton Harbor L. Medlock, et al.  
09/14 1 Eel Pond, Rye B. Crowley, R. Steber, J. Scott, R. Prieto  
10/29 2 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick  
10/31 1 Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.  
R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Heron

**Stilt Sandpiper**

08/15 1 Hampton Harbor S. Heron  
08/23 1 Little Jack's restaurant, Rt. 1A, Hampton C. Sheridan  
09/04 2 Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton S. Mirick, et al.  
09/07 1 Meadow Pond, Hampton A. Altena, K. Wilmarth,  
S. Mirick  
09/29 6 Hampton River Marina flats L. Medlock

**Sanderling**

09/01 1 Newfound Lake, Bristol L. Dunn  
11/07 60 Seabrook Beach S. Mirick

**Dunlin**

09/26 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Mirick, M. Jacobson,  
J. Mills-Anderson, et al.  
10/17 101 NH coast S. Mirick  
10/31 194 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick

**Purple Sandpiper**

10/27 8 Rye Harbor SP J. Maher  
10/31 1 Seabrook Beach S. Heron  
11/15 5 Odiorne Point SP, Rye R. Suomala, S. Heron,  
J. Maher  
11/28 45 Rye Harbor SP D. Jackson  
11/29 14 Bicentennial Park, Hampton D. Hubbard

**Baird's Sandpiper**

09/04 3 Powder Mill Pond E. Masterson, et al.  
09/10 2 Powder Mill Pond J. Maher

**Least Sandpiper**

08/04 70 Rochester WTP S. Young  
10/10 5 World End Pond, Salem K. Wilmarth  
10/26 1 Rochester WTP D. Hubbard

**White-rumped Sandpiper**

08/15 7 NH coast S. Mirick  
09/11 1 Powder Mill Pond C. Sheridan  
10/06 1 World End Pond, Salem A. Altena, K. Wilmarth  
10/07 1 Derry WTP S. Mirick  
10/07 1 Powder Mill Pond P. Brown  
10/17 12 NH coast S. Mirick  
10/31 2 Hampton River Marina Flats S. Mirick, et al.

Date # Location Observer



*Buff-breasted Sandpiper by Scott Heron, 8/25/15, Rye, NH.*

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper**

08/24 1 Rt. 1A, second pullout s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye  
R. Prieto, et al.  
09/10 1 Powder Mill Pond E. Masterson, H. Walters

**Pectoral Sandpiper**

09/25 1 Freedom Town Forest A. Robbins  
09/27 9 Powder Mill Pond E. Masterson  
10/23 12 World End Pond, Salem A. Altena, K. Wilmarth  
10/25 1 Upper Suncook Recreation Area, Barnstead  
J. Lambert  
11/01 1 Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton  
S. Mirick, BBC FT

**Semipalmated Sandpiper**

08/01 550 Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton S. Mirick,  
R. Suomala, Z. Cornell  
08/01 140 Henrys Pool, Rt. 101E, Hampton R. Suomala,  
Z. Cornell  
08/01 160 Rt. 1A pools s. of Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye R. Suomala  
08/23 510 NH coast S. Mirick  
09/03 1 Powder Mill Pond J. Maher  
09/11 1 Powder Mill Pond C. Sheridan  
10/18 13 World End Pond, Salem J. Maher  
10/29 40 Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop. J. Maher  
11/01 2 Hampton Beach S. Mirick

**Western Sandpiper**

08/21 1 Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton S. Mirick  
08/26 2 Rt. 1A, second pullout s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye  
D. Small, M. Gimpel  
09/04 1 Swasey Parkway, Exeter S. Mirick  
09/17 2 Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton D. Jackson

**Short-billed Dowitcher**

08/01 37 Rt. 1A pools s. of Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye R. Suomala  
08/30 21 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick  
10/17 1 Meadow Pond, Hampton S. Heron, S. Mirick

**Wilson's Snipe**

09/20 5 World End Pond, Salem A. Altena, K. Wilmarth  
10/31 7 Upper Suncook Recreation Area J. Lambert  
11/18 1 Horseshoe Pond, Merrimack M. Iliff



# FALL SEASON

Date # Location Observer

## Wilson's Phalarope

08/01 1 Exeter WTP S. Heron, et al.



*Red-necked Phalarope by Jeanne-Marie Maher, 8/28/15, Rochester WTP, NH.*

## Red-necked Phalarope

08/13 2 Jeffreys Ledge, NH J. MacQueen  
 08/14 18 Jeffreys Ledge, NH J. Maher  
 08/18 65 Jeffreys Ledge, NH K. Dorsey  
 08/24 40 offshore waters inside of Isles of Shoals L. Kras  
 08/28 1 Rochester WTP J. Maher, J. Lambert, D. Hubbard  
 09/14 1 NH offshore waters C. Cook  
 09/16 1 Chase Pt., Lake Winnepesaukee G.& P. Gove

## Red Phalarope

08/24 1 offshore waters inside of Isles of Shoals L. Kras

## Pomarine Jaeger

10/11 1 NH offshore waters S. Mirick, J. Woolf, NHA FT

## Parasitic Jaeger

09/30 2 NH coast J. Lambert

## Jaeger sp.

09/13 1 Little Boars Head, N. Hampton S. Mirick  
 09/30 5 NH coast J. Lambert  
 11/21 1 Jeffreys Ledge, NH Z. Cornell

## Dovekie

11/16 3 Jeffreys Ledge, NH S. Mirick, J. Lambert  
 11/21 2 Jeffreys Ledge, NH Z. Cornell

## Thick-billed Murre

11/19 1 Great Boars Head, Hampton S. Mirick  
 11/26 1 Bicentennial Park, Hampton S. Mirick  
 11/27 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Mirick  
 11/28 1 Rye Harbor SP J. Lambert

## Common/Thick-billed Murre

11/22 1 Seabrook Beach K. Wilmarth

## Razorbill

10/22 2 Little Boars Head, N. Hampton S. Mirick  
 10/25 1 Rye Harbor SP S. Bennett  
 10/25 6 NH coast S. Mirick  
 11/19 33 Great Boars Head, Hampton S. Mirick

## Black-legged Kittiwake

10/11 1 NH offshore waters S. Mirick, J. Woolf, NHA FT  
 11/16 13 Jeffreys Ledge, NH S. Mirick, J. Lambert  
 11/21 7 NH offshore waters Z. Cornell  
 11/28 1 Rye Harbor SP J. Lambert

Date # Location Observer



*Bonaparte's Gull by Amanda Altena, 8/1/15, Rye, NH.*

## Bonaparte's Gull

08/01 1 L. Armington/L. Tarleton, Piermont K. Settel  
 08/01 40 NH coast S. Mirick  
 09/21 278 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick  
 10/17 300 Seabrook Beach S. Mirick  
 10/21 3 L. Sunapee off Jobs Creek D. Jackson  
 10/26 5 Moore Reservoir, Littleton S. Turner  
 10/29 1 Rochester WTP D. Hubbard  
 10/31 87 Seabrook Beach R. Suomala, Z. Cornell  
 11/12 1 Mt. Washington Hotel and Resort, Carroll S. Stoddard

## Laughing Gull

08/21 10 Hampton Harbor Inlet S. Mirick  
 09/13 23 Little Boars Head, N. Hampton S. Mirick  
 11/01 3 Rye Harbor SP J. Lambert

## Franklin's Gull

11/14 1 Sunset Farm, Greenland A. Moser

## Iceland Gull

10/18 1 NH coast C. Sheridan  
 10/28 1 cove at Rye/N. Hampton town line S. Mirick  
 10/31 1 Exeter WTP P. Miliotis  
 11/15 2 Rockingham Park, Salem K. Wilmarth  
 11/23 1 Merrimack R., Manchester E. Masterson

## Lesser Black-backed Gull

09/30 4 NH coast J. Lambert  
 11/17 1 Rochester WTP L. Kras

## Glaucous Gull

11/19 1 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick

## Least Tern

08/08 5 Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton S. Heron,  
 C. McPherson, J. Maher, J. Pettipas, M. Jacobson  
 08/15 9 NH coast S. Mirick  
 08/16 1 Little Jacks restaurant, Rt. 1A, Hampton S. Heron

## Caspian Tern

08/24 2 Rt. 1A, second pullout s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye  
 K. Wilmarth, et al.  
 09/13 25 Little Boars Head, N. Hampton S. Mirick  
 09/17 7 Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton D. Jackson,  
 S. Heron  
 10/09 4 Little Boars Head, N. Hampton S. Mirick  
 10/13 1 Little Boars Head, N. Hampton J. Maher

Date # Location Observer



Black Tern by Lauren Kras, 8/24/15, Eel Pond, Rye, NH.

**Black Tern**

08/21	4	Hampton Harbor and Inlet	S. Mirick
08/23	1	Eel Pond, Rye	J. Lambert, S. Mirick, et al.
08/24	2	Eel Pond, Rye	S. Bennett, S. Heron, B. Crowley, A. Altena, R. Prieto
08/28	1	Hinsdale Setbacks	H. Galbraith

**Roseate Tern**

08/01	42	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
08/24	12	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	B. Crowley

**Common Tern**

08/01	400	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
08/21	100	Hampton Harbor Inlet	S. Mirick
11/01	3	Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop.	S. Heron

**Arctic Tern**

08/23	1	Yankee Fisherman's Coop, Seabrook	L. Medlock, et al.
-------	---	-----------------------------------	--------------------

**Forster's Tern**

08/02	4	Hampton River Marina flats	J. Maher
10/16	3	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
10/18	1	Seabrook Beach	D. Jackson, S. Heron

**Doves through Falcons**

A Long-eared Owl was initially identified as a Short-eared Owl, but was fortunately photographed in Hollis. These two species have very similar flight styles and Long-eared Owls can easily be dismissed as the more diurnal Short-eared Owl. Special attention should be given to inland birds and birds in areas with scattered trees (such as the orchard which hosted this bird), as most Short-eared Owls in the state have been recorded at open coastal locations (which more closely resemble their prairie and tundra breeding areas). A Snowy Owl was reported in October, much earlier than usual, but was not a sign of a particularly good year for the species.

A young male Rufous Hummingbird was reported from a feeder in Andover for 11 days this fall. This species is exceptionally challenging to distinguish from Allen's Hummingbird (except as an adult male), but excellent photos of the tail pattern were sent to experts, and careful analysis confirmed the identification.

Long-eared Owl photographed by Chris Sheridan as it was being harassed by crows at the Woodmont Orchard in Hollis, 10/27/15. In the field, watch for the finer barring on the wing tips, orange tint to the outer wing patch and face, and darker belly and back to separate it from Short-eared Owl in flight.



Date # Location Observer

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo**

08/01	1	Call Rd., Webster	R. Quinn
08/02	2	Cowper Rd., Wolfeboro	D. Doherty
08/05	1	Sanborn Rd. pond, Ashland	I. MacLeod
08/13	1	Cowper Rd., Wolfeboro	D. Doherty
09/23	1	Kearsarge Mt. Rd., Wilmot	D. Jackson
09/28	2	Great Bay NWR	S. Bennett
10/24	1	Great Bay Farm, Greenland	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

**Black-billed Cuckoo**

09/16	1	Sherman's Farm, Conway	R. Steber
09/19	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	K. Towler, J. Sparrell
09/27	1	Goss Farm CA, Rye	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth

**Eastern Screech-Owl**

08/01	1	Awcomin Marsh, Rye	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth
10/21	1	Nashua	J. Maher
11/15	1	Highland Ave., Salem	K. Wilmarth
11/17	1	Lakeview Dr., Strafford	S. Young
11/23	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	D. Sherony, G. Chapin
11/29	1	Woodland Rd., N. Hampton	S. Mirick



Snowy Owl by Len Medlock, 10/31/15, Hampton, NH.

**Snowy Owl**

10/31	1	Hampton Beach SP	S. Heron, et al.
11/24	1	Star Island, Rye	A. de Steiguer

**Long-eared Owl**

10/28	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. Sheridan, C. McPherson
-------	---	--------------------------	---------------------------

## FALL SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
08/10	1	Island Path, Hampton	J. O'Shaughnessy

### Short-eared Owl

Date	#	Location	Observer
08/10	1	Umbagog Lake SP boat launch, Cambridge	D. Hof
11/09	1	Call Rd., Webster	R. Quinn

### Common Nighthawk

08/20	1063	Old Hillsboro Rd., Henniker	A. Moser
08/24	721	Capital Commons Garage, Storrs St., Concord	Z. Cornell, R. Woodward
08/29	675	Merrimack	T. Young
08/29	613	Surry Mountain Dam	R. Menck
08/30	1465	Capital Commons Garage, Storrs St., Concord	Z. Cornell, R. Woodward
08/30	1088	Lovejoy Rd., Loudon	E. & J. Robinson
09/11	3	Carter Hill RO, Concord	J. Cosentino
09/25	2	Star Island, Rye	E. Masterson, et al.

### Eastern Whip-poor-will

09/22	1	Durrell Mountain Rd., Gilmanton	N. Mitchell
-------	---	---------------------------------	-------------

### Chimney Swift

08/06	118	KUA powerplant, Meriden	S. Hardy
08/19	250	High St. parking garage, Nashua	J. Maher
08/22	120	Riverside Way, Wilton	G. Coffey
09/17	1	Blue Job Mt., Farmington	J. Lambert
09/17	1	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton
09/19	1	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton

### Ruby-throated Hummingbird

08/31	8	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton
09/01	8	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton
09/27	1	Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham	P. Miliotis
09/27	1	Lakeview Dr., Strafford	S. Young



*Rufous Hummingbird homeowners Stewart Randall and Mary Phinney (center) with some of the many visitors who came to see the Rufous Hummingbird at their home, Steve and Katherine Bennett (left) and Lillian Stokes (right). Photo by Don Stokes, 10/2/15, E. Andover, NH.*

### Rufous Hummingbird

09/27	1	Boston Hill Rd., Andover	S. Randall, M. Phinney
10/06	1	Boston Hill Rd., Andover	S. Randall, M. Phinney

### Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

11/07	1	Abbott Rd. stump dump, Penacook	P. Hunt
11/29	1	Goss Farm CA, Rye	K. Towler, J. Sparrell

### American Kestrel

09/24	14	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton, PMRO
09/25	15	Carter Hill RO, Concord	J. Cosentino

### Merlin

09/04	12	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton, PMRO
-------	----	-------------------	-----------------

Date	#	Location	Observer
09/10	11	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton, PMRO

### Peregrine Falcon

08/08	5	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	D. Dionne
08/31	4	downtown Nashua	C. Sheridan
10/02	5	Miller SP, Pack Monadnock	PMRO

## Flycatchers through Corvids

Empidonax flycatchers represent one of the greatest identification challenges during the fall and caution should be exercised to identify all-too-often silent birds. Photographs are helpful at shedding light on these enigmas, but Alder and Willow cannot be separated even in the hand. Photos have helped confirm that Least Flycatcher is the most expected species after mid-September. An exceptionally late bird was able to be confirmed as this species thanks to good photos. A tantalizing bird was photographed on October 15 at Odiorne Point State Park, showing many characteristics suggestive of Western (Pacific Slope/Cordilleran) Flycatcher, a species which has never been documented in New Hampshire.



*Northern Shrike by Amanda Altana, 10/18/15, Rye, NH.*

Three Northern Shrikes during October was an unusually high number for the month, but this early pulse was not a sign of an irruption. Warbling Vireos are usually uncommon during September, but many birds lingered until the end of the month. Two November Blue-headed Vireos were similarly noteworthy. Blue Jay migration often occurs on a few favorable-weather days each spring and fall. This year's push appeared to occur on September 22, as the two largest counts were on that date. Fish Crows were once only an uncommon local breeder reported in counts of single digits. This fall's counts of 41 and 60 Fish Crows indicate that they are increasingly expected in the greater Salem area, where the species is most common.

Date	#	Location	Observer
------	---	----------	----------

### Olive-sided Flycatcher

08/06	3	Umbagog NWR (overall)	D. Hof
08/08	2	Fowlers Mill Rd., Tamworth	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
09/07	2	Meadow Brook, Sunapee	J. Gamble
09/15	1	Chester Tpk., Hooksett	S. Mirick
09/16	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard, Z. Cornell, Seacoast CFT



Date # Location Observer

**Eastern Wood-Pewee**

09/27 1 Star Island, Rye E. Masterson, et al.  
09/30 1 Woodward Rd., Westmoreland R. Burnett

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**

09/09 1 Ash Brook wetland, Keene A. Milo, L. Wiley  
09/26 1 Star Island, Rye R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

**Alder/Willow Flycatcher (Traill's Flycatcher)**

09/01 4 Hinsdale Setbacks H. Galbraith  
09/19 1 Birch St. Community Garden, Concord R. Suomala  
Z. Cornell  
09/19 1 Trask Brook Rd, Newport/Sunapee D. Jackson

**Least Flycatcher**

08/27 6 Freedom Town Forest airstrip D. Small, M. Gimpel  
10/25 1 Rye Harbor SP S. Bennett, S. Mirick

**Empidonax sp.**

10/15 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye R. Prieto

**Eastern Phoebe**

09/16 22 Sherman's Farm, Conway J. Scott, R. Steber,  
B. Crowley  
09/23 20 Old Monson Village, Hollis/Milford J. Maher  
11/02 1 Willand Pond, Somersworth/Dover A. Murray  
11/26 1 Seabrook WTP S. Mirick

**Great Crested Flycatcher**

08/20 3 James Way, Hudson E. Lai  
09/06 1 Freedom Town Forest A. Altena, K. Wilmarth  
09/06 1 Great East L., Wakefield K. Wilmarth  
09/12 1 Fox Point Rd., Newington A. Murray

**Eastern Kingbird**

08/13 14 Merrimack R., Boscawen to Penacook R. Quinn,  
Capitol CFT  
08/21 42 Hinsdale Setbacks H. Galbraith  
09/17 1 Goss Farm CA, Rye D. Jackson, S. Heron  
09/18 2 Pickering Ponds, Rochester S. Bennett

**Northern Shrike**

10/18 1 Rt. 1A, Rye S. Mirick, et al.  
10/23 1 Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield L. Medlock  
10/27 1 Abbot Hill Rd., Wilton L. Willey, C. Witko  
10/29 1 Base Station Rd., Crawford's Purchase A. Robbins  
11/07 1 Depot Rd., Barnstead J. Lambert

**Yellow-throated Vireo**

09/19 1 Woodridge Park, Durham K. Dorsey  
09/20 1 Foss Farm Rd., Durham S. Mirick



Blue-headed Vireo by Steve Mirick, 11/27/16, Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye, NH.

**Blue-headed Vireo**

09/25 6 Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield D. Hubbard

Date # Location Observer

11/17 1 Silk Farm WS P. Brown, F. Von Mertens, et al.  
11/27 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Mirick

**Warbling Vireo**

09/16 5 Pickering Ponds, Rochester D. Hubbard, Seacoast CFT  
09/24 1 Great Pond, Kingston S. Heron  
09/28 1 Treasure Is., Alton C. Nims, S. McCarthy  
09/28 1 Penacook survey route P. Hunt  
09/30 1 Hinsdale Setbacks H. Galbraith

**Philadelphia Vireo**

09/10 3 Freedom Town Forest airstrip N. Houlihan  
09/19 1 Freedom Town Forest A. Robbins  
09/22 1 Buffalo Rd., Rumney J. Williams

**Red-eyed Vireo**

10/20 1 Pickering Ponds, Rochester D. Hubbard  
10/25 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Mirick

**Blue Jay**

09/22 89 Carter Hill RO, Concord J. Cosentino  
09/22 63 Freedom Town Forest A. Robbins  
10/19 40 Mine Falls Park, Nashua J. Maher

**Fish Crow**

09/21 60 Rt. 125, Plaistow S. Mirick  
10/12 41 World End Pond, Salem K. Wilmarth

**Larks through Waxwings**



Cave Swallow by Len Medlock, and some of the birders, photographed by Steve Mirick, who were lucky enough to see it at North Hampton State Beach, 11/15/15, NH.



Purple Martins had a successful second season at their new colony in Seabrook; an extremely late bird on September 13 may have been a result of that. Any swallow after September is noteworthy and November birds should be especially scrutinized for **Cave Swallows**, which occasionally occur on the coast late in the fall. Three November reports represented three species, including one Cave Swallow, reminding us that we shouldn't assume all late swallows are this species.

A **Sedge Wren** was reported in mid-October from Concord, the fifth report of this species in fall since 2007. Observers hoping to locate the Sedge Wren found a House Wren, a species which is rarely reported as late as October.

## FALL SEASON

Ruby-crowned Kinglets generally pass through in October, but a few birds linger late into November. This year the latest records were from Rye and Westmoreland at the end of November. Most Veerys migrate in August, with smaller numbers passing through in September, so a bird on October 7 was notable. A Brown Thrasher on November 30 was also quite late. Small numbers of Bohemian Waxwings were reported in November, suggesting at least a modest irruption would occur later in the winter (Bohemian Waxwings are most abundant from late January through April).

*Date # Location Observer*

### Horned Lark

09/26 1 Mt. Kearsarge, Warner J. Maher  
 09/27 2 Mollidgewock Rd., Errol G. Chapin  
 11/07 80 West Portsmouth St., Concord D. Lania, A. Robbins  
 11/12 40 Hampton Beach SP J. Lambert  
 11/15 40 Rt. 155A fields (Moore/Tecce), Durham K. Dorsey  
 11/20 175 Chickering Farm, Westmoreland P. Brown

### Northern Rough-winged Swallow

08/04 3 Exeter WTP P. Miliotis  
 08/18 1 Trask Brook Rd, Newport/Sunapee D. Jackson

### Purple Martin

08/01 1 Great East L., Wakefield M. Brengle  
 08/08 29 Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook M. Jacobson, J. Maher,  
 S. Heron, J. Pettipas  
 08/12 5 South Rd., Kensington G. Gavutis Jr.  
 09/13 1 NH coast J. Maher



*Tree Swallows by Scott Heron, 8/29/15, Rye, NH.*

### Tree Swallow

08/21 5423 NH coast S. Mirick  
 08/24 2062 Hampton Harbor, Yankee Fisherman's Coop. J. Lambert  
 08/30 2000 Eel Pond, Rye S. Mirick  
 10/10 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Mirick  
 10/25 2 Eel Pond, Rye S. Heron

### Bank Swallow

08/22 30 Great Meadow, Charlestown C. Caron  
 08/30 23 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Mirick  
 09/16 7 Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton S. Heron

### Barn Swallow

08/25 180 NH coast J. Maher  
 10/25 2 Rye Harbor SP S. Bennett, S. Mirick  
 11/08 1 Bicentennial Park, Hampton S. Mirick

*Date # Location Observer*

### Cliff Swallow

08/14 2 Tin Mt. Conservation Ctr., Albany C. Rosenblatt  
 08/29 2 Mt. Cardigan, Orange J. Young  
 08/30 6 Pack Monadnock RO K. Fenton  
 08/30 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Mirick  
 09/02 2 Pack Monadnock RO K. Fenton  
 09/16 1 Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton S. Heron

### Cave Swallow

11/15 1 North Hampton State Beach S. Heron, et al.

### Red-breasted Nuthatch

09/06 30 Greeley Ponds Trail, WMNF L. Smith  
 09/07 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye B. Heitzman  
 09/28 30 Mountain Pond, Chatham R. Steber  
 11/28 25 Little Cherry Pond, Jefferson K. Wilmarth

### House Wren

10/14 1 Birch St. Community Garden, Concord R. Suomala,  
 Z. Cornell  
 10/17 1 Bog Rd. rail trail, Concord R. Suomala

### Sedge Wren

10/17 1 Bog Rd. rail trail, Concord P. Hunt

### Marsh Wren

10/10 2 World End Pond, Salem K. Wilmarth  
 10/12 1 Hinsdale Setbacks M. Incandenza  
 11/08 1 Exeter WTP P. Miliotis

### Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

08/14 5 Rattlesnake Is., L. Winnepesaukee, Alton D. Wilde  
 08/24 6 Point Breeze Rd., Wolfeboro M. Gold  
 09/24 1 Great Pond, Kingston S. Heron

### Ruby-crowned Kinglet

10/03 17 Freedom Town Forest G. Bailey, S. Wilcox  
 10/10 16 Depot Rd., Barnstead J. Lambert  
 11/23 1 Woodward Rd., Westmoreland A. Burnett  
 11/27 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Mirick

### Eastern Bluebird

09/25 31 Odiorne Point SP, Rye R. Suomala, W. Chatel  
 10/05 40 Woodmont Orchard, Hollis C. Sheridan  
 10/08 30 Bolton Rd., Winchester J. Cormier,  
 S. Cormier-Aagaard, M. Cormier  
 10/21 20 Saco R. fields near Attitash Mt., Bartlett  
 R. Steber, W. Broussard

### Veery

09/03 4 Pickering Ponds, Rochester D. Hubbard  
 09/20 1 Strafford County Complex, Dover  
 D. Hubbard, Seacoast CFT  
 10/07 1 Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham P. Miliotis

### Bicknell's Thrush

08/10 6 Mt. Bond, Lincoln A. Burnett  
 08/23 1 Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase K. Wilmarth

### Swainson's Thrush

10/13 1 Strafford County Complex, Dover D. Hubbard  
 10/20 1 Highland Ave., Salem K. Wilmarth

*Date # Location Observer*

**Hermit Thrush**

10/20 10 Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham P. Miliotis  
 10/21 11 North Rd., E. Kingston P. Miliotis  
 11/30 1 Rt. 16, Errol L. Charron

**Wood Thrush**

10/04 1 Woodridge Park, Durham K. Dorsey  
 10/05 1 Pickering Ponds, Rochester M. Wilson

**Gray Catbird**

09/01 30 Hinsdale Setbacks H. Galbraith  
 09/09 25 Star Island, Rye J. Lentz  
 09/17 25 Hinsdale Setbacks H. Galbraith  
 09/18 26 Strafford County Complex, Dover D. Hubbard  
 11/08 1 Appleton St., Concord R. Suomala, Z. Cornell  
 11/16 1 Ten Rod Rd., Rochester D. Hubbard  
 11/26 1 Huckleberry Ln., Hampton S. Mirick

**Brown Thrasher**

09/29 1 snowmobile trail, Randolph T. Murray  
 10/16 1 Yudicky Farm/Southwest Park, Nashua C. Sheridan  
 11/30 1 Fogarty Rd. Barrington D. Sanders

**American Pipit**

09/15 2 Powder Mill Pond J. Maher, D. Stokes  
 09/29 120 Sherman's Farm, Conway C. Nims, S. Lee,  
 S. McCarthy, B. Crowley  
 10/13 80 Horseshoe Pond, Concord Z. Cornell, R. Suomala  
 10/17 75 Morrills Farm, Penacook R. Suomala, M. Suomala  
 10/25 75 Woodmont Orchard, Hollis C. McPherson

**Bohemian Waxwing**

11/15 19 Cherry Pond, Jefferson D. Govatski  
 11/22 30 Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield C. Sheridan

**Cedar Waxwing**

08/16 100 Pittsburg P. Crosson, D. Ingraham  
 09/22 78 Carter Hill RO, Concord J. Cosentino  
 11/29 150 Hollis-Brookline HS C. McPherson

**Longspurs through New World Buntings**

Snow Buntings did not form their typical large flock at Hampton Beach State Park; the highest count reported was the lowest since 2002. Sixteen Orange-crowned Warblers across the state would historically have been an exceptional number, but it is in line with last year's record-breaking total of at least 16. One Connecticut Warbler was about average for this skulking species. The warbler highlight of the fall was a **Townsend's Warbler** photographed at Pinkham Notch in September, only the eighth record for the state. This bird was particularly notable as most Townsend's Warblers are found in November and December. As usual, a few warblers managed to survive well into November. This year's most notable were a Northern Parula on November 1 and a Wilson's Warbler on November 30.



*Townsend's Warbler by Logan Smith, 9/5/15, Pinkham Notch, NH.*

Three Clay-colored Sparrows were reported during the season; fewer than typical for recent years. There were also three Lark Sparrows reported which is about average in recent years. The western Canadian form of White-crowned Sparrow (Gambel's subsp.) was reported late in the fall from Great Bay Farm; it may be the same bird that previously overwintered at the same location. Vesper Sparrows are generally uncommon in fall, but there were several reports of multiple individuals during the season. A bunting photographed on Star Island on September 26 was identified as a **Lazuli Bunting**. It is an exceptionally rare vagrant to New England and a species undocumented in the state; however, this species is extremely challenging to identify in fall, as there is substantial overlap in nearly all plumage features between this species and Indigo Bunting. The record will be reviewed by the NH Rare Birds Committee before acceptance to the state list. For the first time since 2008, Blue Grosbeak was not reported during the fall season.



*Lazuli Bunting by Ralph Fletcher, 9/26/15, Star Island, NH.*

*Date # Location Observer*

**Lapland Longspur**

10/17 1 Rye Harbor SP S. Mirick  
 11/12 3 Sandwich Fairgrounds T. Vazzano  
 11/15 1 Rt. 155A fields (Moore/Tecce), Durham K. Dorsey  
 11/17 1 Hammond Hollow, Gilsum M. Wright

**Snow Bunting**

10/09 5 Mt. Monadnock, Jaffrey E. Richard  
 10/15 1 NH coast J. Maher  
 11/12 113 Hampton Beach SP J. Lambert

**Ovenbird**

10/05 1 Beaver Brook Great Meadow, Hollis C. Sheridan  
 10/17 1 Church Rd., Rye S. Mirick



# FALL SEASON

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
<b>Louisiana Waterthrush</b>				<b>Mourning Warbler</b>			
08/01	1	Reservation Rd. powerline, Deerfield	C. Caron	09/06	2	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	J. Maher
08/08	1	Contoocook River Park/ Island Shores Estates, Penacook	P. Hunt	09/28	2	Temple Mt., Temple	J. Maher
08/13	1	Woodward Rd., Westmoreland	R. Burnett	<b>Common Yellowthroat</b>			
<b>Northern Waterthrush</b>				08/30	11	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
09/19	1	Urban Forestry Ctr., Portsmouth	J. Sparrell	09/02	18	Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	J. Maher
09/19	2	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick	09/11	11	Woodward Rd., Westmoreland	A. Burnett
09/20	1	Great Bay Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick	09/27	12	Silk Farm WS	T. McShane
<b>Blue-winged Warbler</b>				10/24	2	Horseshoe Pond, Concord	R. Woodward
08/11	1	Old Mill Rd. mitigation area, Lee	K. Dorsey	10/28	1	Antrim Rd., Hancock	P. Brown
08/31	1	Strafford County Complex, Dover	D. Hubbard	<b>American Redstart</b>			
09/09	1	Woodridge Park, Durham	K. Dorsey	08/09	12	Locke Rd. sod farm, Concord	R. Woodward
<b>Black-and-white Warbler</b>				08/27	12	Freedom Town Forest airstrip	D. Small, M. Gimpel
10/12	1	Green Hills Preserve, N. Conway	D. Rudis	09/01	14	Freedom Town Forest airstrip	J. Maher
10/15	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard	10/08	1	University of NH, Durham	J. Mills-Anderson
10/20	1	Atkinson	H. Otto	10/18	1	Willand Pond, Somersworth/Dover	A. Murray
<b>Tennessee Warbler</b>				<b>Cape May Warbler</b>			
08/22	1	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins	08/22	1	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
08/29	4	Mt. Cardigan, Orange	J. Young	08/27	4	Freedom Town Forest airstrip	D. Small, M. Gimpel
09/19	6	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins	08/29	4	Mt. Cardigan, Orange	J. Young
10/01	3	Cherry Pond, Jefferson	R. Quinn	09/19	6	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
10/02	1	White Mountain Bagel Co., Main St., Lincoln	R. Quinn	10/04	1	Northern Rail Trail, Boscawen	J. Maher
10/04	1	Trask Brook Rd, Newport/Sunapee	D. Jackson	<b>Northern Parula</b>			
				09/19	10	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
				10/25	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
				11/01	1	Tilton Hill Rd. /Suncook R., Pittsfield	A. Robbins
				<b>Magnolia Warbler</b>			
				08/15	1	Loudon Rd. fields, Concord	R. Woodward
				08/27	20	Freedom Town Forest airstrip	D. Small, M. Gimpel
				08/29	20	Mt. Cardigan, Orange	J. Young
				10/03	2	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	D. Dionne, L. Charron
				10/04	1	Northern Rail Trail, Boscawen	J. Maher
				10/06	1	Fields Grove City Park, Nashua	J. Maher
<b>Orange-crowned Warbler</b>				<b>Bay-breasted Warbler</b>			
09/18	1	Dahl WS, Conway	S. Mesick	08/06	2	Esther Currier WMA at Low Plain, New London	D. Froehlich
10/03	1	Depot Rd., Barnstead	J. Lambert	08/29	3	Mt. Cardigan, Orange	J. Young
10/03	1	Birch St. Community Gardens, Concord	R. Woodward, et al.	09/22	1	Freedom Town Forest	G.& A. Robbins
10/04	1	Trask Brook Rd, Newport/Sunapee	D. Jackson	09/26	2	Mt. Pemigewasset Trail, Lincoln	M. Faherty
10/10	1	Oyster R. Forest, Durham	K. Dorsey	<b>Blackburnian Warbler</b>			
10/18	1	Urban Forestry Ctr., Portsmouth	D. Jackson, S. Heron	09/01	7	Buffalo Rd., Rumney	J. Williams
10/18	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick, et al.	09/20	1	Mt. Osceola Trail, Livermore	K. Parexus
10/18	1	Rt. 1A, Rye	S. Mirick, et al.	09/25	1	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
10/19	1	Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham	P. Miliotis	<b>Yellow Warbler</b>			
10/20	1	Lebanon Airport	J. MacQueen	08/02	17	Exeter WTP	S. Mirick
10/21	1	Church St. parking lot, Hampton	S. Mirick	08/02	10	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
10/31	1	Silk Farm WS	R. Woodward	09/19	2	Urban Forestry Ctr., Portsmouth	J. Sparrell
11/01	1	Goss Farm CA, Rye	S. Mirick, et al.	09/19	3	Goss Farm CA, Rye	P. Miliotis
11/08	1	Keene State WMA	J. Atwood	<b>Chestnut-sided Warbler</b>			
11/15	1	Great Bay Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick	09/25	1	Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Hubbard
11/21	1	Beckman's Landing, Seabrook	S. Mirick	10/19	1	Highland Ave., Salem	K. Wilmarth
<b>Nashville Warbler</b>				10/25	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
11/11	1	Greeley Park, Nashua	S. Heron, J. Maher				
11/22	1	Great Bay Farm, Greenland	J. Lambert				
<b>Connecticut Warbler</b>							
09/07	1	Brentwood Mitigation Area	A. Itz, E. Nathan, S. Heron				

*Orange-crowned Warbler*  
by Steve Mirick, 10/21/15,  
Hampton, NH.

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Blackpoll Watbler</b>			
08/02	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
08/23	1	Garland Pond WMA, Ossipee	M. Gimpel
09/10	12	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton
09/15	12	Chester Tpk., Hooksett	S. Mirick
09/19	12	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
09/27	10	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
10/25	1	Bicentennial Park, Hampton	S. Mirick
10/25	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
10/27	1	Rye Harbor SP	P. Miliotis

**Black-throated Blue Warbler**

10/20	2	Atkinson	H. Otto
10/20	1	Willand Pond, Somersworth/Dover	A. Murray
10/21	1	Atkinson	H. Otto

**Palm Warbler**

09/11	1	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton
09/22	42	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
09/24	47	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
10/10	39	Depot Rd., Barnstead	J. Lambert
11/15	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	J. Maher, S. Heron
11/19	1	Greeley Park, Nashua	J. Maher
11/22	1	Great Bay Farm, Greenland	J. Lambert, S. Mirick

**Pine Warbler**

09/10	50	Cold River AMC Camp, N. Chatham	N. Houlihan
09/17	17	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve, Madison	T. Vazzano
11/14	1	NH coast	S. Heron
11/25	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson

**Yellow-rumped Warbler**

09/24	204	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
10/03	151	Freedom Town Forest	G. Bailey, S. Wilcox
10/07	100	Great Bay NWR	K. Couture
10/18	100	Rt. 1A, Rye	S. Mirick
10/20	86	Turtle Pond, Concord	A. Robbins

**Prairie Warbler**

08/16	6	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
08/31	6	Freedom Town Forest	C. Nims
10/13	1	Strafford County Complex, Dover	D. Hubbard
10/24	1	Depot Rd., Barnstead	J. Lambert

**Townsend's Warbler**

09/05	1	Old Jackson Rd., Pinkham's Grant	L. Smith
-------	---	----------------------------------	----------

**Black-throated Green Warbler**

08/27	15	Freedom Town Forest airstrip	D. Small, M. Gimpel
09/03	16	Pack Monadnock RO	K. Fenton
10/12	1	Wagon Hill Farm, Durham	S. Heron
10/13	1	Willand Pond, Somersworth/Dover	A. Murray, A. Aldrich

**Canada Warbler**

08/07	5	Old Cherry Mt. Rd., Carroll	F. Hareau
09/16	1	Webb Forest Preserve, Sunapee	D. Jackson
09/17	2	Freedom Town Forest airstrip	S. Mesick

**Wilson's Warbler**

09/01	6	Freedom Town Forest airstrip	J. Maher, S. Mesick
-------	---	------------------------------	---------------------

Date	#	Location	Observer
10/25	1	South Mill Pond, Portsmouth	K. Towler, J. Sparrell
11/29	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick

**Yellow-breasted Chat**

08/30	1	Urban Forestry Ctr., Portsmouth	K. Towler, J. Sparrell
09/27	1	Star Island, Rye	G. Tillman

**Warbler sp. (Parulidae sp.)**

09/06	50	nocturnal flight, Great East L., Wakefield	K. Wilmarth
-------	----	--	-------------



*Grasshopper Sparrow by Rebecca Suomala, 9/17/15, Concord Airport, NH.*

**Grasshopper Sparrow**

08/02	1	Concord Airport	P. Hunt
09/17	1	Concord Airport	R. Suomala

**Nelson's Sparrow**

08/08	5	Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton	J. Pettipas
10/25	1	Rye Harbor SP	S. Bennett, S. Mirick

**Saltmarsh Sparrow**

09/20	5	Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
10/08	1	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Heron

**American Tree Sparrow**

10/17	1	Morrills Farm, Penacook	R. Suomala
11/07	16	Hollis-Brookline HS	C. McPherson
11/19	23	Circumferential Hwy., n. retention basin, Nashua	J. Maher

**Chipping Sparrow**

09/28	108	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
10/10	125	Carter Hill RO, Concord	K. Fenton, J. Cosentino
11/10	4	Greeley Park, Nashua	C. McPherson
11/11	1	Greeley Park, Nashua	S. Heron

**Clay-colored Sparrow**

09/10	1	Carter Hill RO, Concord	J. Cosentino, et al.
09/11	1	Carter Hill RO, Concord	J. Cosentino
10/04	1	Ten Rod Rd., Rochester	D. Hubbard
10/22	1	Great Boars Head, Hampton	S. Mirick

**Field Sparrow**

09/14	12	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	J. Maher
10/07	12	Urban Forestry Ctr., Portsmouth	C. Harcourt
10/10	15	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
11/11	1	Exeter WTP	P. Miliotis
11/14	1	NH coast	S. Heron

**Lark Sparrow**

09/06	1	Woodridge Park, Durham	K. Dorsey
09/25	1	Star Island, Rye	G. Tilman, E. Masterson, et al.
11/09	1	Greeley Park, Nashua	J. Maher
11/13	1	Greeley Park, Nashua	J. Maher, R. Templeton, C. Sheridan

## FALL SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Fox Sparrow</b>			
10/18	1	Rt. 155A fields (Moore/Tecce), Durham	S. Mirick
10/19	2	Meadow Brook, Sunapee	J. Gamble
11/11	5	Abbot Hill Rd., Wilton	C. Witko

### White-crowned Sparrow

09/25	1	Hawkin's Farm, Salem	K. Wilmarth
09/26	1	Sherman's Farm, Conway	W. Rigazio, B. Crowley, R. Steber, J. Simone
09/26	1	Oyster River Forest, Durham	K. Dorsey
10/09	10	Hinsdale Setbacks	C. Ross
10/10	12	Adams Pt. WMA, Durham	C. Breen
10/17	9	Morrills Farm, Penacook	R. & M. Suomala
11/29	1	Rt. 1A, N. Hampton	S. Mirick



A comparison of the Gambel's subspecies (right) of the White-crowned Sparrow with the more common leucophrys subspecies. Note the white lores (area in front of eye) and the smaller, yellowish bill on the Gambel's versus black lores and pink bill on the leucophrys. Photos by Steve Mirick, 11/21/15, Great Bay Farm, Greenland, NH.

### White-crowned Sparrow - Gambel's subsp.

11/15	1	Great Bay Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick
-------	---	---------------------------	-----------

### Vesper Sparrow

09/26	2	Sherman's Farm, Conway	W. Rigazio, R. Steber, J. Simone
10/06	2	Thorne Pond, Bartlett	R. Steber
10/11	3	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
10/27	1	Birch St. Community Garden, Concord	P. Brown

### Savannah Sparrow

10/05	75	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. Sheridan
10/12	55	Birch St. Community Garden, Concord	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
10/14	44	Birch St. Community Garden, Concord	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
11/26	2	Depot Rd., Hampton	S. Mirick
11/29	2	Tullando Farm, Orford	J. MacQueen

### Savannah Sparrow - Ipswich subsp.

10/13	1	NH coast	J. Maher
10/27	2	Rye Harbor SP	P. Wood, P. Miliotis
11/12	3	Hampton Beach SP	J. Lambert
11/29	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	K. Wilmarth

### Lincoln's Sparrow

09/05	1	Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham	P. Miliotis
09/26	6	Birch St. Community Garden, Concord	D. Jackson
09/26	8	Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	C. Sheridan
09/28	12	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt

Date	#	Location	Observer
10/05	8	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. Sheridan
10/10	7	Carter Hill RO, Concord	K. Fenton, J. Cosentino

### Swamp Sparrow

10/10	25	Oyster River Forest, Durham	K. Dorsey
10/12	20	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth
10/18	20	Rt. 155A fields (Moore/Tecce), Durham	S. Mirick
10/21	22	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	J. Maher
11/12	3	Oyster River Forest, Durham	K. Dorsey
11/15	3	Great Bay Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick

### Eastern Towhee

09/05	9	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
09/05	8	Old Mill Rd. mitigation area, Lee	K. Dorsey
09/28	7	Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham	P. Miliotis
11/09	1	Old Monson Village, Hollis/Milford	C. Sheridan
11/12	1	Upper Suncook Recreation Area, Barnstead	J. Lambert

### Scarlet Tanager

10/03	1	Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham	P. Miliotis
10/04	1	Mink Brook point at Connecticut R., Hanover	P. Tizzard
10/05	1	Ten Rod Rd., Rochester	D. Hubbard

### Rose-breasted Grosbeak

08/22	6	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
09/08	6	Hinsdale Setbacks	H. Galbraith
09/29	1	South Mill Pond, Portsmouth	J. Sparrell
10/30	1	Ten Rod Rd., Rochester	D. Hubbard

### Indigo Bunting

08/08	30	Morrills Farm, Penacook	P. Hunt
08/30	20	Morrills Farm, Penacook	P. Hunt
10/18	1	Rt. 155A fields (Moore/Tecce), Durham	S. Mirick
10/18	1	Goss Farm CA, Rye	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth

## Dickcissel through Finches



Baltimore Oriole by Christopher McPherson, 11/7/15, Woodmont Orchard, Hollis, NH.

Eleven Dickcissels were reported across the southern part of the state, primarily at sparrow hotspots (as is typical for the species) such as the community gardens in Concord and Woodmont Orchard in Hollis. While quite regular south of the White Mountains, this species is virtually unrecorded in the North Country. Perhaps this is an artifact of low coverage, but it could be that the extensive forests and high elevation of the mountains are a boundary to this species' movements. A **Western Meadowlark** on November 16 was the first report of the species since 1970 and the fifth overall. Although extremely similar to the more expected Eastern Meadowlark, high quality photos clearly showed feather



detail necessary to identify this stray. Two Baltimore Orioles were reported in November, which isn't atypical for this species that normally departs in early October.

A small flock of redpolls was reported in October, coincident with a massive fall movement of the species in Quebec; however, virtually all of these birds seemed to depart the region, rather than staying for the winter. Both Red and White-winged Crossbills were reported in above-average numbers signaling an impending irruption. Red Crossbills have ten different call types potentially corresponding to different, poorly understood, species (see the article by Matthew Young in Winter 2009-10 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*, Vol. 28, No. 4). Unfortunately, few birds have ever been identified to call type in New Hampshire and the frequencies of call types in the state remains a great mystery.

*Date # Location Observer*

**Dickcissel**

08/27	1	Antrim Rd., Hancock	P. Brown
09/07	1	Woodridge Park, Durham	K. Dorsey, et al.
09/14	1	Goss Farm CA, Rye	J. Lambert
09/18	1	Birch St. Community Garden, Concord	S. Heron, D. Jackson
09/19	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
09/19	2	Goss Farm CA, Rye	K. Towler, J. Sparrell, S. Bennett
09/20	2	Great Bay Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick
10/04	1	Birch St. Community Garden, Concord	R. Suomala, et al.
10/18	1	Rt. 1A, Rye	S. Mirick
11/20	1	Butterfield Hill Rd., Westmoreland	P. Brown
11/30	1	South Rd., E. Kingston	D. Finch

**Bobolink**

08/08	160	Rockingham County Complex, Brentwood	J. Maher, S. Heron, J. Pettipas, M. Jacobson
08/15	40	Trask Brook Rd., Newport/Sunapee	D. Jackson
09/21	8	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. Sheridan
10/12	1	Birch St. Community Garden, Concord	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell



*Western Meadowlark, 11/16/15, North Hampton, NH. Photographed by David Lipsy accompanied by Susan Wrisley.*

**Western Meadowlark**

11/16	1	Rt. 1A opposite N. Hampton State Beach	D. Lipsy, S. Wrisley
-------	---	--	----------------------

**Eastern Meadowlark**

08/24	2	Lebanon Airport	J. MacQueen
09/18	6	Strafford County Complex, Dover	D. Hubbard
10/10	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson

**Rusty Blackbird**

09/25	18	West Locke Rd., Concord	R. Quinn, T. McShane
10/17	45	World End Pond, Salem	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
10/19	22	Fields Grove City Park, Nashua	J. Maher
10/25	38	Upper Suncook Recreation Area, Barnstead	J. Lambert
11/07	30	Morrills Farm, Penacook	P. Hunt
11/22	1	Rt. 1B, New Castle	S. Mirick

**Common Grackle**

11/09	20,000	Follett's Brook WS, Newmarket	P. Brown
-------	--------	-------------------------------	----------



*Baltimore Oriole by Len Medlock, 11/14/15, Exeter, NH.*

**Baltimore Oriole**

08/15	8	Silk Farm WS	R. Quinn, R. Woodward, T. Mott-Smith
08/22	12	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
09/01	7	Hinsdale Setbacks	H. Galbraith
11/07	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
11/14	1	Exeter WTP	L. Medlock

**Red Crossbill**

08/05	3	Umbagog NWR, Mollidgewock Brook Rd., Errol	D. Hof
10/31	15	Base Station Rd., Crawford's Purchase	A. Robbins
11/04	5	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	L. Charron
11/08	1	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
11/11	2	Jefferson Notch Rd., T&M Purchase	J. Maher
11/26	11	Rt. 25A, Orford	J. MacQueen

**White-winged Crossbill**

08/10	2	Mt. Bond, Lincoln	A. Burnett
08/19	2	Umbagog NWR, Mollidgewock Brook Rd., Errol	D. Hof
08/24	12	East Inlet Rd., Pittsburg	J. Esten
09/05	2	Shoal Pond Trail, Lincoln	J. Muller
11/28	12	Blaney Rd., Bethlehem	K. Wilmarth
11/28	3	Little Cherry Pond, Jefferson	K. Wilmarth

**Common/Hoary Redpoll**

10/28	9	Tolman Pond, Nelson	P. Brown
-------	---	---------------------	----------

**Pine Siskin**

08/04	4	2nd NH Tpk., Lyndeborough	Y. Neskey
09/26	1	Freedom Town Forest	A. Robbins
10/07	1	Bartlett Rd., Newbury	D. Jackson
10/22	50	Squam Lakes Natural Science Ctr., Holderness	I. MacLeod
10/28	22	Kearsarge Mt. Rd., Wilmot	D. Jackson
11/22	1	NH coast	K. Wilmarth
11/25	47	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	R. Steber

**American Goldfinch**

11/15	613	Bicentennial Park, Hampton	S. Mirick
11/29	198	Rt. 1A, N. Hampton	S. Mirick

**Evening Grosbeak**

08/04	2	Burnham Rd., Freedom	S. Wilcox, G. Bailey
08/22	2	Blaney Rd., Bethlehem	K. Wilmarth
09/17	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	M. Nickerson
09/30	1	Allens Ave., Lee	L. Mikoloski

# Fall 2015 Field Notes

Compiled by Rebecca Suomala and Kathryn Frieden

## Color Banded Birds

by Stephen Mirick

**B**ird banding is a useful technique for studying birds; however, recaptures are rare, and reading the small bands is almost impossible. For some researchers, boldly marked color bands and flag bands have become an important technique used in their research, particularly with the advancement in digital photography. During 2015, I was able to make some interesting contributions to the knowledge of a few individual birds.

In addition to the photographed birds (right), I was able to read the flag of a different Semipalmated Sandpiper on 8/26/15. This lime-green flag was marked with black ink and read "T12." It turns out this bird had originally been banded on 5/29/14 at the Heislerville Wildlife Management Area along the southern shoreline of New Jersey!



Ring-billed Gull, Blue 61K  
Photo - 11/7/15,  
Seabrook, NH  
Banded - 12/19/13,  
Revere, MA



Semipalmated Sandpiper  
Blue KU1  
Photo - 8/9/15, Rye, NH  
Banded - 1/15/14, Coroa dos  
Ovos, Maranhao, Brazil



Peregrine Falcon  
Black 72 over green AB  
Photo - 6/4/15, Haverhill, MA  
Banded - 5/10/12,  
Manchester, NH

## Late Cliff Swallow Fledging

by Scott Heron

*Taken from a post to the NH Birds e-mail list, 9/22/15.  
September 1 is a remarkably late date for a Cliff Swallow to fledge. Many swallows have completed nesting and are staging for migration by the end of July. Ed.*

**T**his summer, I had the chance to (very casually) keep tabs on a Cliff Swallow colony at the Washington Street mills in Dover. While my incidental observations were in no way a complete summary of this year's breeding season, I was able to observe a few interesting points and gain a little perspective into this species.

On almost every side of One Washington Street can be found swallow nests hanging under the eaves. Few are complete; most are not. In many spots, I could see only remnants of where a nest used to hang. In a couple of the more complete nests, House Sparrows have nested, stuffing them with grass (and of course offspring).

The colony seems to be fairly strong. One count totaled at least 12 active nests with the majority of the active nests located at the southeast corner of the building.

**8/13**

Cliff Swallow nestling (fairly young, measuring ~1.75" long) falls from a nest and doesn't make it.



Scott Heron photographed this large juvenile Cliff Swallow at the nest in Dover on 9/1/15. Could it be fledging?

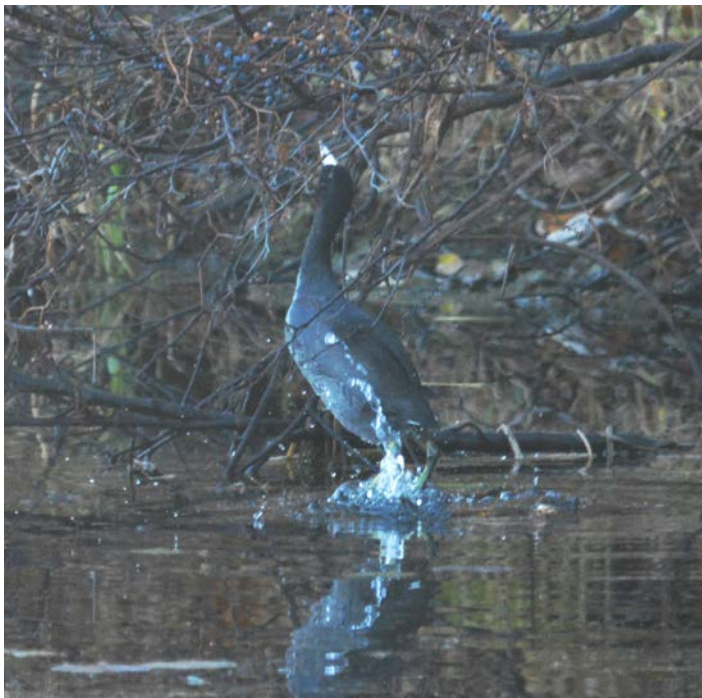
**9/1**

Large juvenile observed at the same nest of 8/13 observation (presumed to be a sibling to the fallen nestling). This may be the fledge date for this individual. No birds are observed at this nest after this date and not long after, no swallows are observed at the mills at all.

Afterthought: Scott wondered if this juvenile could have fledged at some point earlier, and then returned to the nest on 9/1 when he happened to see it there. Even so, it would be a late fledging, as would the sibling that fell from the nest, had it survived.



## Berry-eating Coot



Debbie LaValley took this remarkable photograph of an American Coot at Horseshoe Pond in Concord as it jumped up out of the water to feed on Virginia Creeper berries, 11/4/15.

## Leucistic Ruby-throated Hummingbird



This beautiful photo of a leucistic Ruby-throated Hummingbird was taken by Ashley Polson on 9/1/15 in East Hampstead. She wrote, "The bird enjoyed my zinnias and hummingbird feeder before zipping up and over my house to the north."

# Fall 2015 New Hampshire Raptor Migration Report

by Iain MacLeod

Ye Olde Hawkewatch	Today	This Season
TURKEY BUZZARD ~		136
FISH HAWKE ~		201
BALD-HEADED EAGLE ~		111
MARSH HAWKE ~	1	120
BLUE DARTER ~		1436*
CHICKEN HAWKE ~		112
GOSHAWKE ~		43
CRESCENT-TIPPED HAWKE ~		104
WHISTLING KETTLE HAWKE ~		16593
BELTED HAWKE ~		311
WESTERN HAWKE ~		2nd year record!
BRONZE-HACKLED EAGLE ~	1	11
SPARROW HAWKE ~		118
PIGEON HAWKE ~		120
DUCK HAWKE ~		54
Totals	* = new record	19517

Pack Monadnock Raptor Observatory tally as of 11/10/15 using some unconventional hawk names. According to Seasonal Counter, Henry Walters, "In 2013 we started writing out the names in Latin, then in Spanish, and then making up our own names. The first seven and the last three names on the board are all historically attested (my favorite is "Blue Darter" for the sharpie, which is corrupted to "Blue-dollar Hawk" down South)." The source of the buteo names is uncertain. Check the totals below for some help deciphering the alternative names. Photo by Jeanne-Marie Maher.

## Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory

Fall 2015 marked the eleventh consecutive fall season of daily coordinated counts conducted under the leadership of New Hampshire Audubon and in a formal agreement with the NH Division of State Parks. The full time Seasonal Counter/Interpreter for 2015 was again Katrina Fenton. I was the official counter on Mondays and other days were filled in by Henry Walters, Julie and Phil Brown, and Wendy Ward. Phil Brown served as the Raptor Observatory Coordinator for NH Audubon. Full site coverage was maintained daily from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm EST (or close to), from August 30 to November 20 (except in the case of extreme weather), accounting for 587 hours of observation time. A staggering total of 19,845 individual migratory raptors was recorded. The previous 10-year average was 10,448 (10-year averages



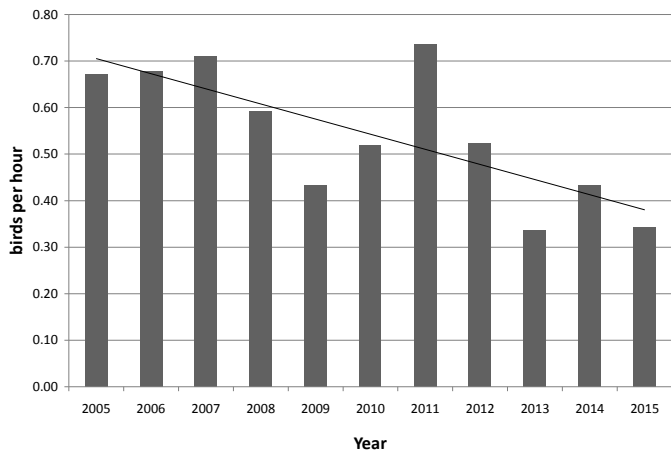


Figure 1. Eleven year Osprey trend at Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory, NH, 2005-2015 (birds/hours of effort). See Graph Note above.

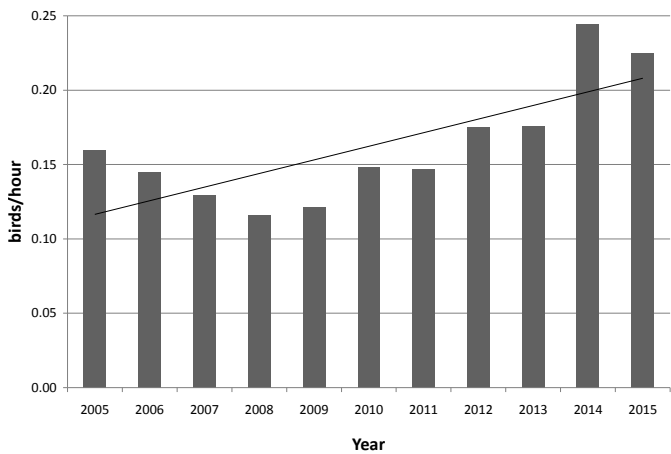


Figure 2. Eleven year Bald Eagle trend at Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory, NH, 2005-2015 (birds/hours of effort).

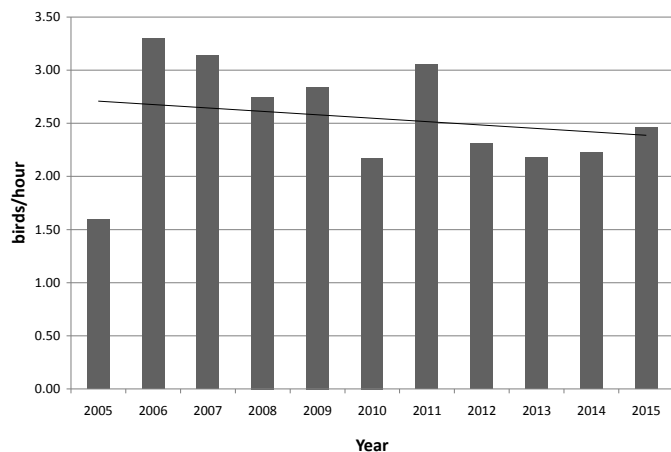


Figure 3. Eleven year Sharp-shinned Hawk trend at Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory, NH, 2005-2015 (birds/hours of effort).

in this account refer to data from 2005-2014). This was the highest annual count for the eleven-year period. New season high counts were recorded for Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle and Peregrine Falcon (tied with 2012).

**Graph Note:** I have included some eleven-year trend graphs for certain species. I ran trends based on count

divided by effort (species season total divided by hours of counting). When looking at the 11-year trend graphs, it's worth noting that in some years there have been more count hours than in others and that in some years (particularly in the most recent five years) there have been more hours put in during November. For a couple of species (notably early-season migrants like Osprey and American Kestrel), these additional late-season hours reduce the birds/hour ratio, but their respective trend lines don't change significantly enough to merit alternate graphs. For all graphs, the birds-per-hour number is derived from data from every day that data was collected within that particular season.

**Turkey Vultures** are seen almost daily through late October, moving in all directions, so the counters are very conservative in what is counted as "migrating." This year, 137 were assumed to be migrating (10-year average = 105).

The **Osprey** count of 201 was well below the 2012 record high (314) and also well below the 10-year average of 249. The peak flight day was September 20, when 16 were counted. Trend analysis (Figure 1) suggests a steady decline. Recent personal communications with biologists in Maine and Michigan suggest increased competition in northern areas between Bald Eagles and Ospreys, with Ospreys almost always being the losers. Osprey nestlings, as well as recently fledged young and even adult Ospreys, are being predated by Bald Eagles in some areas. The positive trend line for Bald Eagles (Figure 2) at Pack Monadnock is a marked contrast to the Osprey trend. The **Bald Eagle** total (132) set a new season high count and was well above the 10-year average of 73. The peak flight day was November 13 when nine Bald Eagles were counted. The **Northern Harrier** total of 125 was a new single-season high (10-year average is 85).

The **Sharp-shinned Hawk** count (1,443) also set a new single-season high (10-year average = 1,155) and was 32% higher than last year's count. The 11-year trend (Figure 3), however, shows a slight decrease. The same trend is true for **Cooper's Hawks**; 115 Cooper's were counted (10-year average = 151). **Northern Goshawks** had an above average year with 48 counted (10-year average = 38).



Red-shouldered Hawk  
by Jeanne-Marie Maher,  
11/10/15,  
Pack Monadnock Raptor  
Observatory, NH.

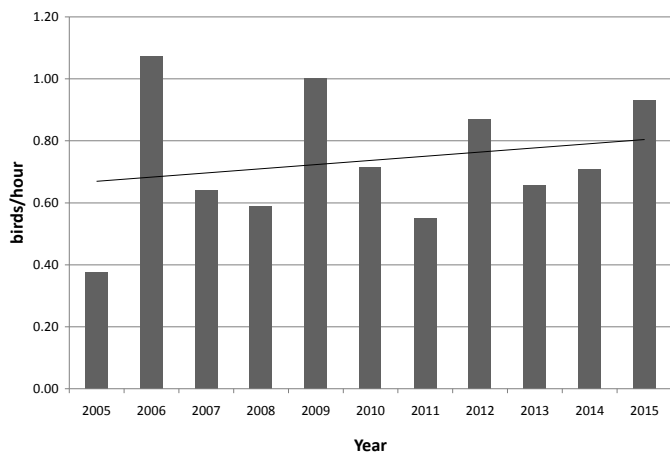


Figure 4. Eleven year Red-tailed Hawk trend at Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory, NH, 2005-2015 (birds/hours of effort).

The **Red-shouldered Hawk** count was 141, which was the second highest season total and well ahead of the average (98). The **Broad-winged Hawk** count at Pack Monadnock was amazing with its highest season total of 16,593 (10-year average 7,806). The previous record was 11,831 in 2011. There were three days of over 3,000 birds; September 16 (3,388), September 17 (3,959), and September 21 (3,471). There were two additional days with 1,000 plus. So, why so many? One big year does not indicate a trend or a population spike – we were just in the right place at the right time. The weather was consistently good during the normal peak flight time and once the flood gates opened, the river ran right over us.

Table 1. Broad-winged Hawk fall migration totals and peak counts at Pack Monadnock, NH, 2005-2015. Source: HMANA's HawkCount.org Database

Year	Total	Highest one-day count	Date
2005	3,978	1,687	09/18
2006	7,595	3,044	09/11
2007	7,776	2,676	09/16
2008	6,835	2,424	09/18
2009	4,322	2,042	09/16
2010	7,557	3,328	09/18
2011	11,831	5,208	09/18
2012	8,848	2,556	09/17
2013	8,221	2,759	09/17
2014	11,043	4,101	09/15
2015	16,693	3,959	09/17

The **Red-tailed Hawk** tally of 546 set a new record and beat the previous 2012 record (522) (10-year average = 333). Overall, the trend line is positive (Figure 4). The graph suggests a pattern of high counts on a three year cycle (highs in 2006, 2009 and 2012). Last year I posed the question of whether this pattern is tied to fluctuations in red-backed vole populations (or other tree mast-dependent mammals) in the Canadian boreal forests and wondered whether 2015 would follow that pattern . . . it did. Peak flight day was November 16 when 71 were counted. For the third straight year, a single **Rough-legged Hawk** was recorded – this year on November 16. The other outstanding buteo for the season was a single

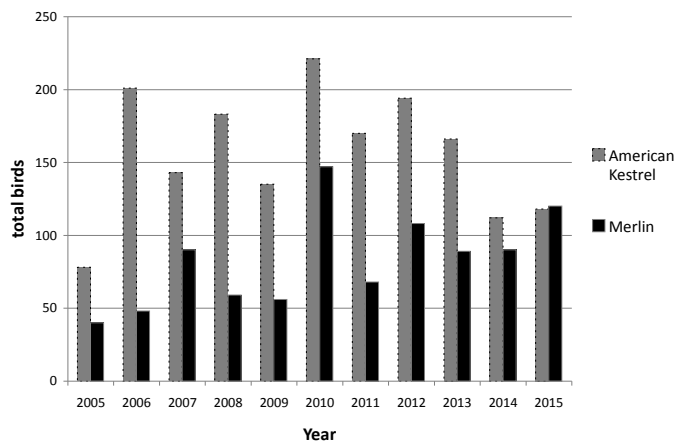


Figure 5. American Kestrel and Merlin totals at Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory, NH 2005-2015.

**Swainson's Hawk** seen and photographed on September 22. This represents only the second officially accepted record of this species for the state. In 2012 a Swainson's was reported on Pack Monadnock (but not photographed) and it did not meet the criteria for acceptance as a first state record by the NH Rare Birds Committee (documentation by three observers or a photo). Thank goodness for digital cameras and a good photographer on the peak when this year's Swainson's flew by.

Thirteen **Golden Eagles** were seen which set a new record (10-year average = 7). As **American Kestrel** numbers have been declining, **Merlin** numbers have been increasing and a tipping point was reached this year when the Merlin count exceeded the kestrel count (Figure 5). The kestrel count was 118 (10-year average = 160) while 120 Merlins were tallied (10-year average = 79). A tally of 54 **Peregrine Falcons** tied the record set in 2012 (10-year average = 37).

## Carter Hill Raptor Observatory

Carter Hill Raptor Observatory logged 553.75 hours between September 1 and November 15 and counted 8,887 raptors (7-year average is 6,195). This is the eighth year for this count, which is organized by NH Audubon. Full time Seasonal Counter/Interpreter for 2015 was Jess Cosentino and counts were conducted in the same fashion as at Pack Monadnock. The 7-year averages used in this section refer to data from 2008-2014. The count season/hours logged has varied greatly and was much lower in 2008 than in subsequent years, but the last three years, in particular, show an increased effort to standardize data.

A total of 299 **Turkey Vultures** were determined to be migrants (7-year average = 222). The **Osprey** count of 132 was below last year and just slightly above the 7-year average of 129. The **Bald Eagle** count of 91 was well below the 2012 record of 152 but still higher than the 7-year average of 73. The **Northern Harrier** count (81) was just a little shy of last year's record for this site and well above the 7-year average of 48.

The 1,164 **Sharp-shinned Hawk** tally was close to the high tallies of the previous two years (7-year average = 682). The 140 **Cooper's Hawks** counted was slightly above last year and slightly below the 7-year average (147). The **Northern Goshawk** count (21) was more than last year and above the average (7-year average of 15).

The count of 45 **Red-shouldered Hawks** was well above last year (25) and well above the 7-year average of 31. The **Broad-winged Hawk** count (6,274) was well above last year's (Table 2) but only the third highest annual count for this site. 7-year average is 4,659. **Red-tailed Hawk** numbers bounced back from a down year last year, 345 were counted this year (7-year average of 156).

Table 2. Broad-winged Hawk fall migration totals and peak counts at Carter Hill, NH, 2008-2015. Source: HMANA's HawkCount.org Database

Year	Total	Highest one-day count	Date
2008	1,904	568	09/13
2009	703	337	09/16
2010	2,422	891	09/18
2011	10,763	7,212	09/18
2012	3,671	1,130	09/20
2013	8,915	4,899	09/19
2014	4,237	1,085	09/13
2015	6,274	1,413	09/23

Three **Golden Eagles** were seen this season which is a new high for this site. The 171 **American Kestrels** counted was a big drop from last year but right at the 7-year average of 172.

Table 3. Fall raptor migration monitoring data, 2005-2015, from Pack Monadnock and Carter Hill, NH. Source: HMANA's HawkCount.org Database

PACK MONADNOCK

	Obs. Hrs.	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	SW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	UR	SE	TOTAL
2015	586.92		137	201	132	125	1443	115	48	141	16593	1	546	1	13	118	120	54	57		19845
2014	491.00		99	213	120	85	1094	126	22	123	11043		348	1	7	112	80	39	53		13565
2013	575.00		142	193	101	100	1254	146	25	118	8221		378	1	11	166	89	48	36	1	11030
2012	600.75		164	314	105	91	1388	181	63	209	8848	1	522	1	7	194	108	54	74		12324
2011	368.00		127	271	54	58	1124	145	21	43	11831		202		9	170	68	40	93		14256
2010	574.75		145	298	85	115	1248	168	66	109	7606		410		10	221	147	53	105		10786
2009	420.75		80	182	51	88	1196	133	25	129	4322		421		6	135	56	30	109		6963
2008	432.75		47	256	50	87	1189	162	28	67	6835		254		3	183	59	17	37		9274
2007	410.25		121	291	53	121	1288	186	49	112	7776		263		5	143	90	44	82		10624
2006	379.25		99	257	55	77	1253	213	68	46	7595		407		11	201	48	29	76		10435
2005	326.00		29	219	52	24	520	47	11	23	3978		122		5	78	40	11	62		5221
Average*	469.58		108	245	78	88	1182	147	39	102	8604	1	352	1	8	156	82	38	71	1	11302

CARTER HILL

	Obs. Hrs.	BV	TV	OS	BE	NH	SS	CH	NG	RS	BW	SW	RT	RL	GE	AK	ML	PG	UR	SE	TOTAL
2015	553.75		299	134	91	81	1164	140	21	45	6274		345		3	171	41	23	55		8887
2014	561.75		170	202	82	87	1151	124	14	25	4237		221			243	64	36	222		6878
2013	572.75		333	165	94	66	1198	137	18	59	8915		355			307	78	17	154		11896
2012	417.75	1	224	234	152	86	1276	207	28	100	3671		273	2	2	305	65	44	472		7142
2011	325.50		149	107	78	32	300	117	15	13	10763		65		1	94	59	19	205		12017
2010	302.00		132	120	60	40	473	211	14	8	2422		72		1	166	43	8	620		4390
2009	249.00		233	38	18	18	251	175	17	6	703		83	1		57	48	17	256		1921
2008	202.50		310	38	28	6	125	56	2	3	1904		23	1		33	17	13	111		2670
Average*	398.13	1	231	130	75	52	742	146	16	32	4861		180	1	2	172	52	22	262		6975

\*all years

Key to Species Abbreviations in Table 3.  
 BV Black Vulture (*Coragyps atratus*)  
 TV Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*)  
 OS Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)  
 BE Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)  
 NH Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)  
 SS Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)

CH Cooper's Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)  
 NG Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)  
 RS Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*)  
 BW Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*)  
 SW Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*)  
 RT Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)  
 RL Rough-legged Hawk (*Buteo lagopus*)

GE Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)  
 AK American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*)  
 ML Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)  
 PG Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*)  
 UR Unidentified Raptor  
 SE Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

The **Merlin** count of 41 was well below recent year counts and below the 7-year average of 53. The **Peregrine Falcon** count is all over the place at this site in recent years. The 23 seen this year was well below last year but right at the 7-year average of 22.

### Little Round Top Migration Observatory

There were no counts conducted at this site this year.

### Data Source

HawkCount.org. Online raptor migration database of the Hawk Migration Association of North America. Pack Monadnock, Carter Hill and Little Round Top.

*Iain MacLeod is Executive Director of the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center in Holderness, NH and is on the Board of NorthEast Hawk Watch and former board chair of the Hawk Migration Association of North America (HMANA). Iain founded the Pack Monadnock Raptor Migration Observatory in 2004 and has studied raptors (particularly Ospreys) for 36+ years. Iain is a member of the New Hampshire Bird Records Editorial Team and New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee. He lives in Ashland.*



# Concord Nighthawk Migration Study – 2015 Update

by Rob Woodward



Rob Woodward and Zeke Cornell watching for migrating nighthawks in Concord, 9/18/15. Photos by Rebecca Suomala.

Zeke Cornell and I met at the same time at the same place – the Capital Commons Parking Garage in downtown Concord on August 17, 2015 – without making any prior arrangements by telephone, e-mail, text or fax. We simply knew, like birds know when to migrate, it was time to start the 2015 nighthawk count, as we have done together for at least the past five years.

We saw just six birds that evening, an indicator that while a few birds may have passed in the days prior, this was probably the beginning of Common Nighthawk migration. I wrote down another number in my notebook that night representing my prediction for the season total: 3,750. A count was conducted on each of the next 23 evenings until we hit zero on September 9, ending the season with a total of 4,479, our second highest ever.

We recorded the highest daily counts on August 24 and 30, with 721 and 1,465 nighthawks respectively. These two dates coincide almost perfectly with a graph of average daily counts from 2008-2013 at this site showing a double peak of season high counts on August 25 and 30 (see the article in the Fall 2013 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*, Vol.32, No.3, also available on-line at: [http://nhbirdrecords.org/all-articles/Vol32\\_No\\_3\\_v\\_CONI\\_article.pdf](http://nhbirdrecords.org/all-articles/Vol32_No_3_v_CONI_article.pdf)). Why do Common Nighthawks consistently exhibit two days of peak numbers on or about the same two days? Answering that question is probably impossible but documenting this migration pattern is very satisfying.

Some 26 visitors stopped by over the season, including one from Montreal, who taught me how to say “bird” in French! She came to Concord because she counts nighthawks in Montreal and noticed large counts from our site on eBird and wanted to see for herself. Our nighthawk site has now achieved international recognition!

Although we are beginning to learn some fundamentals about nighthawk migration, such as when it starts, when it stops, and the double peak phenomenon, we still do not know where all these many thousands of birds are coming from, what migration route they take, and why we see them fly north so often during fall migration. If only we could attach satellite transmitters, we could monitor their daily movements and unravel some of these mysteries. Until then, Zeke and I will continue to stand on the parking garage roof top in Concord, counting migrating nighthawks by the thousands.



Common Nighthawk migrating through New Hampshire, 8/26/15, by Leo McKillop.

# Powder Mill Pond – the Return of the Shorebirds

by Eric Masterson



*Baird's Sandpiper by Eric Masterson, 9/3/15, Powder Mill Pond.*

Sequels rarely surpass the original in quality, but Powder Mill Pond – the return of the Shorebirds, with Baird's Sandpiper and Buff-breasted Sandpiper appearing in leading roles, was the rare exception to the rule.

Directed by Brian Maloy, the environmental compliance officer with Monadnock Paper Mill, Powder Mill Pond (in Hancock, Greenfield and Bennington) was drained in late August, 2015 to facilitate repairs to the dam. This put production back by a month compared to the original 2012 blockbuster drawdown, which was set almost entirely in July. The remake wrapped into late October when repair work was completed and the pond refilled.

The production featured a stellar cast, including the aforementioned Baird's Sandpiper (at least three, and possibly as many as five), a one-day wonder Buff-breasted Sandpiper, a pair of Black-bellied Plovers, two White-rumped Sandpipers, and a steady stream of American Golden-Plovers totaling eight or more individuals. During the course of the drawdown, 15 species of shorebirds were recorded (an additional three species were recorded during the 2012 drawdown).



*Adult and juvenile American Golden-Plover by Eric Masterson, 9/9/15, Powder Mill Pond.*

*Table 1. Significant shorebird sightings by Eric Masterson during the fall 2015 drawdown at Powder Mill Pond, NH.*

8/25/15	White-rumped Sandpiper	1
9/3/16	Baird's Sandpiper	2
9/4/16	Baird's Sandpiper	3
9/8/16	American Golden-Plover	3 (2 ad., 1 juv.)
9/9/16	Semipalmated Plover	19
9/10/16	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	1
9/10/16	American Golden-Plover	1 ad. (#4)
9/13/16	American Golden-Plover	1 ad. (#5)
9/27/16	Pectoral Sandpiper	9
9/30/16	Black-bellied Plover	2
9/30/16	American Golden-Plover	2 (#6 & #7; ad. & juv.)
10/8/15	White-rumped Sandpiper	1

Now that I have wrung this metaphor as dry as the baked surface of the empty pond, I will dispense with further references to Hollywood (well, mostly). The focus



on shorebirds somewhat distracted from an impressive diversity and abundance of scarcer species of waterfowl that were attracted to the marshy shallows, including American Wigeon, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, a high count of 65 Green-winged Teal, and an early Ring-necked Duck first observed in late August. With all this meat on the wing, the raptor show was equally impressive, with Bald Eagles running well into double digits, and a supporting cast including numbers of Merlin and Northern Harrier, and at least one Peregrine Falcon, alongside all of the more common hawk species.



Juvenile Bald Eagle by Eric Masterson, 9/24/15, Powder Mill Pond.

Table 2. Interesting waterfowl sightings by Eric Masterson during the fall 2015 drawdown at Powder Mill Pond, NH.

8/25/15	Ring-necked Duck	1
8/30/15	American Wigeon	2
9/9/16	Blue-winged Teal	2
9/29/16	Green-winged Teal	65
10/9/16	Northern Pintail	2

The drawdown offered a wonderful opportunity to study the inland occurrence of shorebirds in an ephemeral habitat and also an opportunity to contrast it with the first drawdown in 2012 (see the Fall 2012 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*, Vol. 31, No. 3). The earlier event exposed habitat mainly in July, when peak numbers of shorebirds are moving and the age class is skewed toward adults. A greater number of yellowlegs and peeps occurred in 2012, and there were proportionately fewer juveniles. The 2015 drawdown began in late August, about the time the 2012 event ended. The abundance, age class and species mix was decidedly late season, with most birds in juvenile plumage, and the species mix reflected the date, with appearances by late season specialties including American Golden-Plover, Baird's Sandpiper, and Buff-breasted Sandpiper, none of which appeared in 2012.

The whole episode once again underlines the value of habitat relative to geography. If there is appropriate habitat, the birds will find it, with the potential for a thrilling birding bonanza located far from the coast. To illustrate, during a three-day trip to Star Island in the Gulf of Maine, a group of 30 birders recorded seven species of shorebirds from September 25-27, 2015. I returned home to find nine species on Powder Mill Pond later that week. So be sure to catch the opportunity when it comes your way.

The Dam Bureau is responsible for the safety of many, though not all, of New Hampshire's dams, and has earmarked the following dams for repairs in the near future: Mendum's Dam in Nottingham, Dam #15 on the Souhegan in Wilton, Pittsfield Mill Dam in Pittsfield, Ossipee Dam in Effingham, and Pawtuckaway Lake Dam in Nottingham.

May the shorebirds be with you.

There are four species of shorebirds in this photo, taken by Brian Reilly at Powder Mill Pond, 9/16/15. Can you identify the species? Answer at the bottom of the page.\*



Color Hint: All the birds in this photo have yellow/yellowish legs.

\*Shorebird Photo Answer: The four shorebird species in Brian Reilly's photo are: Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper.



# The Curious Case of Ruddy Ducks

by Robert A. Quinn



Ruddy Duck by Amanda Altena, 10/6/15, Salem, NH.

The 173 Ruddy Ducks at Beaver Lake in Derry this fall is the fifth highest tally ever recorded in New Hampshire and seven of the ten highest counts have come in just the last six years. Why?

A number of things make me curious about Ruddy Ducks. We can start with their taxonomy. They are in a sub-family/tribe all by themselves which means that they are different from all the other ducks in North America. They are called “stiff-tailed” ducks because of their uniquely (for ducks) rigid and long tails. They are a small duck with a big head, a large bill, and the aforementioned long tail which gives them a matchless shape among all North American ducks. The breeding season plumage of the males is remarkably brilliant, including their sky-blue bill. Their courtship antics are downright bizarre (check out any video) and their status in our state is a bit of a puzzle! For example, all the records in the table occur in the southeastern part of New Hampshire. Since Ruddy Ducks nest well to the west and north of us, why aren't there any records of large flocks west of the Merrimack River? Or north of Rochester? Also, is there anything special about the few ponds/lakes that these large flocks stop on?

Until a huge flock was seen on Lake Massabesic in December 1999 (see table), Ruddy Ducks were uncommon migrants in New Hampshire, primarily in the fall. Historically, their numbers have fluctuated with occasional “flight years” as noted in Keith and Fox (2013), but now they seem to be more common, albeit still primarily in the fall. Why has there been a change? That is hard to determine, but

the answer could be a combination of more birders looking at more lakes and ponds and/or a change in the patterns of the ducks themselves. This short article cannot go into more detail, but suffice it to say that the more we look, the more we learn. You can help add to our understanding of this intriguing species by maybe finding a new lake or two where they can be found in large numbers. If you do, please take a few notes about the waterbody itself so that maybe we can predict where else they might occur. Have fun and good luck!

Table 1. A complete list of Ruddy Duck records of 100 or more in New Hampshire. Data from New Hampshire Bird Records.

High Count	Location	Town	Date
635	Lake Massabesic	Auburn	Dec. 18, 1999
463	Great Bay	Newmarket	Nov. 1, 2005
242	Great Bay	Newmarket	Nov. 5, 1996
197	Canobie Lake	Salem	Nov. 22, 2013
173	Beaver Lake	Derry	Nov. 24, 2015
127	Great Bay	Newmarket	Oct. 28, 1966
126	Willand Pond	Somersworth	Nov. 12, 2013
122	Pickering Ponds	Rochester	Nov. 24, 2011
120	Great Bay	Newmarket	Oct. 31, 2006
112	Canobie Lake	Salem	Dec. 3, 2013
110	Great Bay	Newmarket	Dec. 4, 2010
105	Beaver Lake	Derry	Nov. 12, 2000
101	Willand Pond	Somersworth	Nov. 21, 2014

## References

- Bellrose, F. 1980. *Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America*. The Stackpole Company and the Wildlife Management Institute, Harrisburg, PA.
- Keith, A. and R. Fox. 2013. *The Birds of New Hampshire*. The Nuttall Ornithological Club, Cambridge, MA.
- Murin, T. and B. Pfeiffer. 2002. *Birdwatching in Vermont*. University Press of New England, Lebanon, NH.
- Veit, R. and W. Petersen. 1993. *Birds of Massachusetts*. Massachusetts Audubon Society, Lincoln, MA.
- [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Ruddy\\_Duck/lifehistory](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Ruddy_Duck/lifehistory)
- <http://www.ducks.org/hunting/waterfowl-id/ruddy-duck>

## Data Sources

*New Hampshire Bird Records* and archives, circa 1960 through 2015. New Hampshire Audubon, Concord, New Hampshire.

# Field Trip Reports

## Star Island in September

by Rebecca Suomala



Lark Sparrow by Zeke Cornell, 9/26/15, Star Island, NH.

Offshore islands can produce spectacular migration fallouts with amazing numbers of birds, but you never know if that will happen when you plan to be there. During my two years of banding songbirds during migration on Star Island in the New Hampshire portion of the Isles of Shoals, I experienced both busy days and those with hardly a bird in the net and few to be seen. On September 25, 2015 when we arrived on Star Island, we were, of course, hoping for one of those busy times.

Eric Masterson had organized a weekend birding excursion to Star Island and about 30 of us arrived Friday afternoon in time for a look around the island before dinner. The weather actually looked poor for a fallout and first impressions were that it was quiet with few birds around and very few migrant warblers – one of those slow times. Things began to look up when Greg Tillman found a Lark Sparrow. With the aid of hand-held radios, the group converged for excellent views. Eric thought he had seen a finch-like bird with an orange breast, but it could not be located and we thought no more about it.

Friday night as we watched the sunset, we were treated to two Common Nighthawks flying around the Summerhouse gazebo – not a common site on the island. The next day, we were out at dawn with the island still seemingly low on birds, when word went out – a Lazuli Bunting! Naturally I was not with the group when the bird was found and by the time I got there, it had disappeared. There were several hours of desperate searching until it was finally located in the “Pel Garden” where it provided great views and photos for many people. The identification of young buntings is tough, but

after viewing the bird, reviewing the photos, and consulting the references, we were convinced we had a Lazuli – a first state record for New Hampshire (if approved by the NH Rare Birds Committee). Word was spread to the mainland birders, but no one was able to make it to the island that day.

Evidently the island wasn't empty of birds! Greg Tillman turned up another great bird, a Yellow-breasted Chat, but by the time we approached, all I saw was a tail disappearing into a bush and the bird never reappeared for anyone else to see. Classic chat behavior! There were good looks at a Rusty Blackbird by the Art Barn pond and a late Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, but the highlight of the afternoon was a pelagic show off the eastern side of the island. Several of us watched with our scopes from the eastern rocks and in one hour tallied good numbers of Northern Fulmars in the distance and an amazing 102 Cory's Shearwaters (possibly a record NH count from land), some of which were quite close. There was only one Great Shearwater in the group, which is very surprising given that they used to be the more common shearwater in New Hampshire and Cory's were a huge rarity. The first Cory's reported during my time with *New Hampshire Bird Records* (1988 on) was in 1993 by a birding group on a boat back from Star Island, and there were only three other sightings until 2008!



Kites flying on Star Island on the last day of the field trip, 9/25/16 by Rebecca Suomala.

The wind shifted to the northwest on Saturday night and on Sunday morning we noted a small influx of Yellow-rumped Warblers. Unfortunately, this wind shift nearly eliminated the pelagic show (or pushed it farther off shore so we could no longer view it from the island) and the Lazuli Bunting was nowhere to be found. Eric Masterson, a veteran of Star Island trips, has often seen this changeover of migrants from one day to the next. Those birders who made a special trip to the island to look for the bunting had to settle for the Lark Sparrow which was still present and a collection of kites (the ones on strings) on the front lawn marking the sailing regatta.

---

## Shorebird Identification

by Stephen Mirick

Sandpipers and plovers are often collectively called “shorebirds” and July through September is the peak of their southbound migration. The New Hampshire coast is the best place to find them and it’s not unusual to see dozens or even hundreds of shorebirds collected in pools or along the beach or rocky shoreline.

Unfortunately, shorebirds can be very challenging to identify. The small “peeps” including the Semipalmated, Least, White-rumped, Western, and Baird’s Sandpipers are sometimes considered the most difficult to identify, but there are many other difficult identifications such as those of the yellowlegs and dowitchers. At times, it may be best to just leave them as unidentified. I offer here a couple of tips for identifying the small “peeps” that you may not find in the field guides.

### Age

Shorebirds in the fall can first of all be separated into adults or juveniles. Try to age the bird first if you can. From the beginning of July into the beginning of August, almost all of the migrating shorebirds are adults. Adults for many species are best identified in the fall by their blotchy, irregular, or worn looking plumage. Least Sandpipers in July look very dark above as the pale feather edges on their backs shown in breeding plumage have worn off. Semipalmated Sandpipers have a blotchy looking appearance as they molt into winter plumage and are much paler than Least Sandpipers. The problem you run into is that **none of the major field guides show this**. I consider *The Sibley Guide to Birds* the best field guide for shorebirds; however, it only shows adult birds in breeding plumage and in winter plumage. For the most part, none of the “peeps” we see in the fall are adults in either breeding or winter plumage! *They are in between!!!*

Juveniles (except White-rumped Sandpipers) start to show up along the coast in early August, and by the end of the month, they outnumber the adults. Juveniles are distinctive and can appear more different from adults of their own species than from other species! Juveniles are birds that were born during the summer and they have a bright new coat of feathers. They don’t molt until late in the fall and there is usually very little feather wear. Most have distinct buffy or pale feather edges on their upperparts giving them a striking scaly appearance. When the first juvenile Least Sandpipers and Short-billed Dowitchers appear on the coast, they are very colorful and contrast strikingly from the dull and dingy adults.

We thoroughly enjoyed this weekend trip, despite the low number of migrant songbirds. Given that our weather was not conducive to migration, the Lazuli Bunting was doubly surprising but there had been a good airflow a few weeks previously that brought Western Kingbirds across the northeast, so perhaps it was a holdover from that. As Eric said, “It just goes to show that you can read weather all you want, but you never know for sure.”

## Annual Hawk Migration Watch, Lebanon Airport

by Blake Allison

On Saturday, September 12, 2015, about two dozen participants joined a morning hawkwatch held at the Lebanon Municipal Airport on Airport Road in West Lebanon, NH and arranged by the Mascoma Chapter of NH Audubon. At the start, conditions were somewhat foggy. This caused flying birds to disappear into the fog at times. Gradually skies cleared, becoming partly cloudy with occasionally a wide expanse of blue sky in advance of more clouds moving in from the southwest. For much of the observation time, there was almost no wind and temperatures were very comfortable.

By late morning, hawks were on the move, but some were at a great distance and hence challenging to identify. Numerous Turkey Vultures were seen early during the watch, but disappeared later in the morning. These vultures apparently were flying up from their West Lebanon roost and not migrating. Here’s our list of migrating raptors:

- Turkey Vulture – 25 (probably an underestimate)
- Accipiter species – 1 (probably Sharp-shinned or Cooper’s)
- Broad-winged Hawk – 14 (7 was the largest number in a single group)
- Red-tailed Hawk – 1
- Unidentified distant hawks – 8
- Falcon species – 1 (likely American Kestrel or Merlin)

Waterbirds included two unidentified flying ducks believed to be mergansers and a Double-crested Cormorant flying swiftly southward. Non-raptor landbirds included numerous American Goldfinches in flight. A flock of European Starlings put on a good display. A number of them were molting and showed a mixture of the drab juvenile plumage and the more conspicuous speckled adult plumage of fall. It was enjoyable to be out to see an early part of the Broad-winged Hawk migration.

*Blake Allison is Chair of NH Audubon’s Mascoma Chapter Steering Committee. He leads birding events for the chapter and regularly posts his sighting activity to the Upper Valley Birders list-serv and NHBirds e-mail list. He occasionally writes bird-related articles for local blogs.*





*Least Sandpiper*  
Adult (top) and Juvenile (bottom)



*Semipalmated Sandpiper*  
Adult (top) and Juvenile (bottom)



*White-rumped Sandpiper*  
Adult (top) and Juvenile (bottom)

Above are three comparisons of Least Sandpipers, Semipalmated Sandpipers, and White-rumped Sandpipers in adult and juvenile plumages.

### Size and Shape

Direct comparison of size and shape can provide good clues, but a single shorebird can be difficult. Fortunately, shorebirds are often in mixed flocks for a more direct comparison. Least Sandpipers are just slightly smaller than Semipalmated Sandpipers with a short fine-tipped bill, but this can be difficult to appreciate unless they are side by side with a different species. With experience, the long-legged and long winged appearance of White-rumped Sandpiper is distinctive from Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers. Baird's Sandpipers have a similar shape and size to the White-rumped Sandpiper, but the back and breast patterns of the juvenile Baird's Sandpipers we get here are distinct and adults almost never occur in New Hampshire. If you get a close look at a shorebird, note the wing tips relative to the tail length. White-rumped and Baird's Sandpipers are the only species where the wing tips extend beyond the tail.

### Leg Color

If it is a small, peep-sized shorebird with distinctively yellow or greenish yellow legs in August, it is a Least Sandpiper or a Pectoral Sandpiper (larger than peeps but this can be less obvious for a single bird). Other peep-sized shorebirds have black legs. Unfortunately, mud can often cover the legs of Least Sandpipers making them look black, so be aware of this limitation in determining leg color.

### Timing and Status of Shorebirds

This is a very complex topic as each of the different species has different characteristics with respect to timing of migration, preferred habitat, and rarity in New Hampshire. It is perhaps one of the most important factors, however. Below are some generalizations about New Hampshire's "peeps" in the southbound (July through November) migration.

**Least Sandpiper** – Common, especially in coastal salt marshes. Adults start migration in early July and are joined by juveniles in early August. By late August, almost all are juveniles. Leaves the state before other shorebirds and most are gone by early October. Most common peep found inland in the state.

**Semipalmated Sandpiper** – Common to abundant, especially on coastal mudflats and rocks. Adults start migration in early to mid-July. Joined by juveniles in early to mid-August. Almost all are juveniles by early September. Lingers into late October or early November.

**White-rumped Sandpiper** – Uncommon, on coastal mudflats and rocks. Adults start migration in early August and often look very gray above by September. First juveniles don't appear until late September or October. Lingering juveniles often seen into mid-November.

**Western Sandpiper** – Uncommon to rare. Almost all sightings are of juveniles. First juveniles generally appear in late August and peak in late August and early September. Most are gone by early October, but may rarely linger later than other peeps.



**Baird's Sandpiper** – Rare. Most often seen along coastal rocks and beaches. Almost all sightings are of juveniles. First juveniles generally appear in mid to late August and peak in late August and early September. Lingers very rarely into early October.

Also remember that 95% of the “peeps” we see in the state are either Semipalmated or Least Sandpipers, so get to know each of these species very well, including the age differences

and variations in plumage! White-rumped Sandpipers make up another 4% and the remaining 1% is left for Western and Baird's Sandpipers.

Obviously, shorebird identification can be challenging..... but also fun! Southbound shorebird migration happens from July through November. Be sure to spend some time to study them. They are wonderful birds that are making a long journey.



8/30/08



8/23/14



8/30/14



8/21/09



8/22/15



9/12/13

*A comparison of Western Sandpiper profiles by Steve Mirick.*



*A comparison of Willets subspecies by Steve Mirick. A Western Willet (right) in N. Hampton and Eastern Willet (left) at Rye Harbor, both taken 8/22/15. Notice the overall paler gray appearance of the Western as compared to the slightly darker, browner appearance of the Eastern.*

# Spring and Fall Migrations of the Races of Palm Warbler through New England

by Hector Galbraith, Chris Rimmer, Steve Faccio, and Trevor Lloyd-Evans



Palm Warbler by Susan Wrisley, 10/5/15, Woodmont Orchard, Hollis, NH. For color photos of the two races of Palm Warbler, see the back cover of the Fall 2014 New Hampshire Bird Records issue (Vol. 33, No. 3).

This article has been revised and reprinted from Bird Observer February 2010, Vol. 38 No. 1.

There are two races of Palm Warbler, *Dendroica palmarum*: the western nominate race, *D. p. palmarum*, and the eastern or yellow race, *D. p. hypochrysea* (Dunn and Garrett 1997). The former breeds from central Ontario west to Saskatchewan and Manitoba and south to the northern Great Lakes. The Eastern Palm Warbler breeds from eastern Ontario east to Newfoundland and south to northern New England. The races are relatively easy to distinguish in the field, especially in breeding plumage. The plumage of the Western Palm Warbler is relatively dull with gray and brown being the predominant colors of the underparts, though the undertail coverts are yellow. Eastern Palm Warblers have bright yellow underparts and rufous caps that contrast with yellow chins, throats, and eye stripes. In fall, the contrast between the two races is less marked, but most birds can be reliably distinguished.

The prevailing view, based on qualitative rather than quantitative evidence, is that Western Palm Warblers are relatively rare spring migrants in New England and that the

vast majority of northbound birds are of the eastern race. In the fall, it has been believed, the western race predominates among southbound birds, although the eastern also occurs. To date, however, no published accounts have quantified patterns of distribution of the two races during their migrations through New England. We used observational and banding data from several New England sites to elucidate spatial and temporal variation of migrant Palm Warblers.

We compiled data on spring and fall migrant Palm Warblers from two sources: (1) records that we and other volunteer birders collected in Vermont, western Massachusetts, and western New Hampshire between fall 2006 and fall 2008; and (2) records of banded individuals from one inland and three coastal banding stations: Woodstock, Vermont, Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences banding station in Manomet, Massachusetts, the Wing Island Banding Station, Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and the Joppa Flats Bird Banding Station on Plum Island in the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. We used only those records (1521 birds) that were assigned to a race.

## Results

### Spring migration

During the spring migrations of 2007 and 2008, 189 Palm Warblers were identified to race in inland areas of Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts (Table 1). Most of these birds were observed from the Lake Champlain Valley eastward across the Connecticut River Valley to central Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Overall, birds of the eastern race predominated at inland locations in early spring (prior to the second week in May), and western birds were rare, conforming to patterns of occurrence in the published literature; however, our results differed from published conclusions in that western birds became relatively common in inland areas in the second half of the season. Between May 1 and May 22, 27% of 77 birds were of the western race.

Date	Eastern (%)	Western (%)	Total
April 8–14	1 (100)	0 (0)	1
April 15–22	58 (100)	0 (0)	58
April 23–30	52 (98)	1 (2)	53
May 1–7	49 (81)	11 (19)	60
May 8–14	2 (20)	8 (80)	10
May 15–22	5 (71)	2 (29)	7
All	167 (88)	22 (12)	189



In contrast, at the Manomet, Joppa Flats, and Wing Island coastal sites, Western Palm Warblers were very rare in spring, accounting for only 1% of all banded birds (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Races of Palm Warblers netted at Manomet, Wing Island, and Joppa Flats banding stations in Massachusetts in spring and fall, 1966–2009.

Season	Eastern (%)	Western (%)	Total
Spring	622 (99)	4 (1)	626
Fall	150 (27)	400 (73)	550

## Fall migration

At Manomet and Wing Island, Western Palm Warblers predominated in fall, although 27% of birds were of the eastern race (Table 2). The situation may have differed at the Joppa Flats Bird Banding Station, where only three of 28 birds caught between 1998 and 2009 were westerns. The sample size at this site was small enough to make extrapolation problematic. Inland, the situation was reversed, with only 15% being of the western race and 85% of the eastern race (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Races of fall migrant Palm Warblers observed inland in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Vermont in 2006–2008, and netted at the Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS), Woodstock, Vermont, in 1981–2000.

Year	Eastern (%)	Western (%)	Total
2006	44 (90)	5 (10)	49
2007	3 (43)	4 (57)	7
2008	18 (72)	7 (28)	25
VINS 1981–2000	68 (91)	7 (9)	75
Total	133 (85)	23 (15)	156

## Discussion

The results confirm that the races of Palm Warbler migrating through New England show marked differences in timing and distribution in both spring and fall; however, our findings also suggest that patterns reported previously have been oversimplified.

In spring, the majority of birds moving north through New England are of the eastern race, as previously reported (Wilson 1996, Veit and Petersen 1993). In contrast to published accounts, however, western birds are not absent during this season; they occur relatively commonly in western Massachusetts, western New Hampshire, and Vermont during the second half of the migration season, when they can comprise up to 27% of birds. This difference in timing may be due to the departure of Western Palm Warblers from their wintering areas later in the spring than the eastern birds (Wilson 1996). It is likely that because of

their location farther west, the interior study areas are grazed by the easternmost edge of the northward movement of Western Palm Warblers.

During fall, western birds do indeed predominate at coastal sites, with eastern birds being present in much smaller numbers. However, the reverse occurs farther inland, where western birds are relatively uncommon and Eastern Palm Warblers make up the great majority of migrants. It is surprising that such marked differences exist between the inland sites and the coast, a relatively short distance away. Presumably, some western birds begin their migration by flying east until they reach the coast, where they are forced to turn south. It is not known whether the relative scarcity of eastern birds on the coast is due simply to swamping by larger numbers of western birds or whether their southward movements have a more westerly component. A more exhaustive analysis of observational and banding records from multiple sites throughout the migratory range is needed to more fully document variations in migration patterns of Palm Warblers.

## Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the large number of dedicated birders and banders who contributed data to this project including Don Clark, Pat Folsom, Doug Hardy, Pam Hunt, Dave Johnston, Byard Miller, Tom Pirro, Cliff Seifer, Taj Schottland, Mark Taylor, Julie Waters, and Terry Wright. We also thank the Joppa Flats and Wing Island banding stations for allowing us access to their data and Steve Faccio for summarizing banding data from the Vermont Institute of Natural Science.

## Literature Cited

- Curson, J., D. Quinn, and D. Beadle. 1994. *Warblers of the Americas*. Houghton Mifflin, New York, NY.
- Dunn, J., and K. Garrett. 1997. *A Field Guide to the Warblers of North America*. Houghton Mifflin, New York, NY.
- Veit, R., and W. Petersen. 1993. *Birds of Massachusetts*. Massachusetts Audubon Society, Lincoln, MA.
- Wilson, W. 1996. Palm Warbler (*Dendroica palmarum*). In *The Birds of North America*, No. 238 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds.). The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, PA, and The American Ornithologists Union, Washington, D.C.

# Birding New Hampshire's Lake Sunapee

by Dylan Jackson

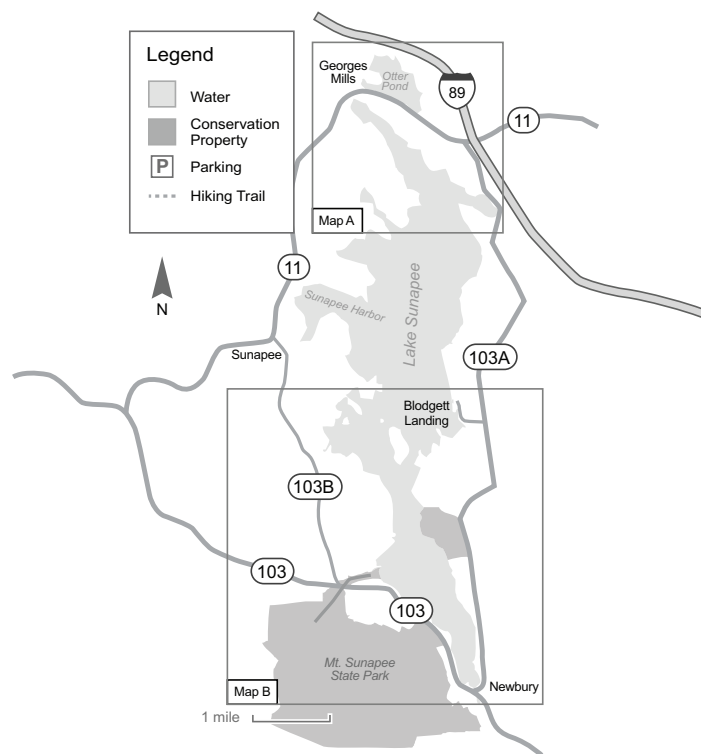
It can go without saying that spring and fall migrations are probably the most exciting times of the year for birders.



*Ring-necked Duck pair at Sunapee Harbor by Dylan Jackson.*

These biannual events are a welcome experience after the gloom of winter and the quiet post-breeding months of summer. In New Hampshire, it's well known that places like the seacoast and the major river valleys throughout the state are the hottest spots to catch the best birds during the seasons. Meanwhile, the interior of the state is sometimes widely overlooked. We in New Hampshire are lucky to have a state with an abundance of inland water bodies ranging from large lakes to small ponds. Between the freeze of winter and calamity of water-going vacationers throughout the summer, many of the larger lakes and ponds are not often the most desirable birding locations for much of the year, but for only a few months, things really get exciting.

While there is a plethora of lakes and ponds throughout the state, I've had the unique opportunity to observe the waters and surrounding habitats of Lake Sunapee. Growing up in Sunapee, I spent much of my childhood in, on and around the lake. It wasn't until about half a decade ago that I became a birder and it was around that same time I started a job which takes me to properties all around the lake on a regular basis. When I first started birding, I always saw my home town as a bleak place to find birds, but the observations I have made as time passed would certainly prove me wrong. Though the lake plays host to an array of species throughout the year, it's during migration that the waters welcome a wide variety of birds that make it more reminiscent of the seacoast. The surrounding forests also welcome an amazing diversity of woodland birds as they return to breed or just pass through.



## Where to bird

Unfortunately, Lake Sunapee's beauty may also be its folly. Because of its splendor, it has become a desirable location for many people to build their vacation homes. This means that much of the land around the lake is privately owned, but there are still a few good locations to view the open waters and explore the rich surrounding habitat.

### George's Mills

The harbor at the northern tip of the lake in the village of George's Mills provides a good view of a large bay located there. The harbor is located at the end of Cooper Street which can be a good location to view waterfowl taking refuge from the sometimes harsh conditions of the middle of the lake. From Rt. 89, take Exit 12 and head west on Rt. 11. Cooper Street is off Rt. 11 across from the entrance to Springfield Road just east of the Sunapee Cove Assisted Living facility.

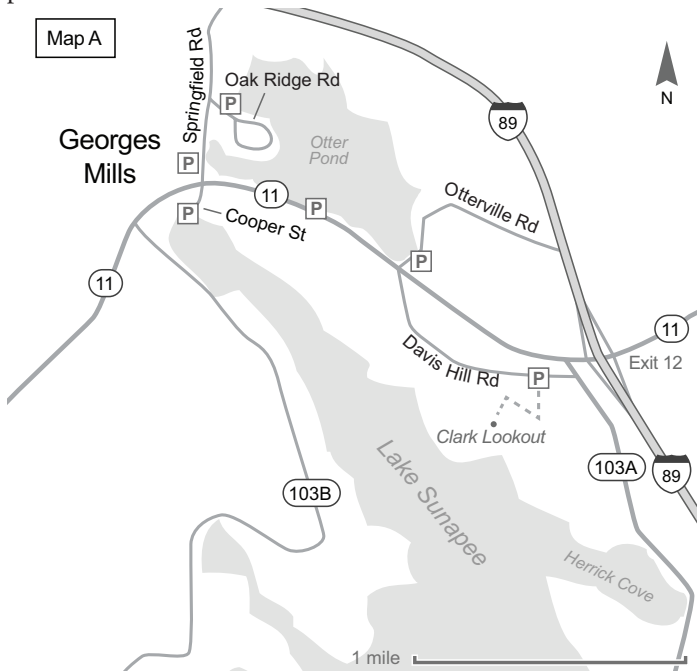
### Otter Pond

Just across Rt. 11 from the harbor is another smaller body of water called Otter Pond (coming from Rt. 89, it will be on your right before Cooper St. and George's Mills). A lot of waterfowl visit the pond during migration and there are a few good spots to get views of the water from some of the surrounding roads. Along Rt. 11, there is a small dirt parking area on the north side of the road just east of the entrance to John Avery Road. This lot is right on the water and it is easy to view much of the pond from this location.

On Springfield Road in George's Mills, there is another dirt parking area on the west side of the road just a couple hundred feet north of Rt. 11. This is a good place to park but the best views are across the street on the east side of Springfield Road.

Just 0.3 miles north of the Springfield Road parking area is Oak Ridge Road. Turn right onto Oak Ridge Road. This road is just a loop mostly surrounded by private property, but one can view the northwest corner of the pond by parking along the road before it splits into the circle. From there, it's only about a twenty to thirty foot walk through the woods on the northern side of the road to reach the edge of the water.

Finally, Otterville Road borders the eastern end of the pond in New London, about 0.8 miles east of the intersection of Rt. 11 and Springfield Road. Immediately upon turning left onto the road from Rt. 11, there will be plenty of parking on either side of the road and a fairly long public beach from which to view the water.



### Clark Lookout

One can acquire a great scoping vantage point over Lake Sunapee from Clark Lookout off of Davis Hill Road in New London. There is a short, easy hike through the woods ending at an open hillside clearing where one can get expansive views of the majority of the lake. From Otterville Road, cross Rt. 11 onto Davis Hill Road. The entrance to the trailhead is located on the south side of Davis Hill Road only a few hundred feet from the intersection of Rt. 103A. Parking for this location is best done at the NH Park & Ride right across Rt. 103A from the entrance of Davis Hill Road.

### Herrick Cove

Herrick Cove is another small bay of the lake that can hold some interesting species of waterbirds during migration.

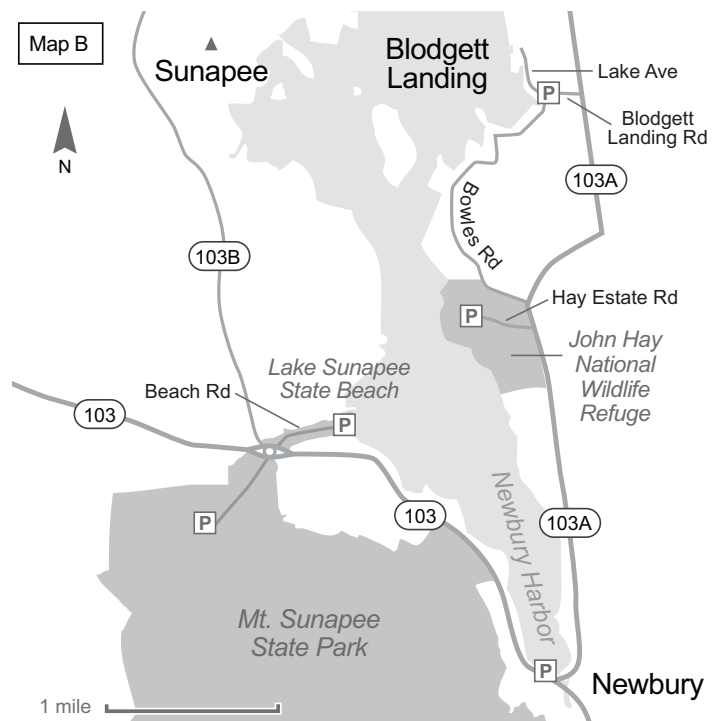
The cove is located about 0.8 miles south of Davis Hill Road along Rt. 103A near its intersection with Columbus Avenue in New London. Because Rt. 103A curves around this bay as a sharp corner, it's safest to park along the side of Columbus Avenue then walk to the edge of Rt. 103A to view the water.

### Blodgett Landing

Farther south along Rt. 103A in Newbury is the small community of Blodgett Landing. Though busy in the summertime, this community becomes very quiet during the migration months and visiting is never a problem. From Rt. 103A, turn right onto Blodgett Landing Road. After 0.2 miles, parking is found in a small dirt lot at the intersection of Blodgett Landing Road and Bowles Road. There is a small beach right in front of the parking lot and from there one can get a good view of the middle of the lake. Both the parking and access to the beach area is open to the public and more views of the lake can be found by walking north along the shore on Lake Avenue.

### Newbury Harbor

At the southern tip of the lake is Newbury Harbor which is located right near the intersection of Rts. 103 and 103A. Across from Bubba's Restaurant is a small public parking lot adjacent to a public park and a few public docks. From these spots, one can get good views of the lake's southern bay.



### Lake Sunapee State Beach

About two miles north of Newbury Harbor along Rt. 103, is the Lake Sunapee State Beach. The State Beach is located at the end of Beach Road in Newbury, which is the first right turn off the Mount Sunapee Traffic Circle as you enter from the southeast. This is a good spot to visit during the quiet



migration months, where one can get a fairly expansive view of the lower end of the lake. It's a spot that tends to draw a lot of migrating waterfowl. While there is a fee to visit the beach in the summer months, there is no fee during the migration seasons.

During the off season, Baypoint Road off Beach Road may be worth a check. There are a few spots to view the lake, especially when the leaves begin to fall. This is a road where it's best to drive until you find an opening, but please respect the residents when finding a place to pull over and park.

### **Mount Sunapee State Park**

Mount Sunapee State Park is also accessed from the Mount Sunapee Traffic Circle, on Sunapee Park Road to the southwest. The entrance is clearly marked by a large sign. The park has several trails including the Summit Trail which begins on the side of the Lower Ridge ski trail near the main parking area and takes you all the way to the top.

The Andrews Brook Road trail is another trail which scales the entire mountain. The trailhead for the Andrews Brook Trail is located on Mountain Road which is south of Newbury Harbor off of Rt. 103. From Rt. 103, turn right onto Mountain Road. The trailhead will be on the right after 1.2 miles.

The Solitude Trail begins near the summit of the mountain and takes you to the small mountain-top pond called Lake Solitude. The Newbury Trail continues from the Solitude Trail and both the Rim and Eagles Nest Trails are shorter routes connected to the Newbury Trail. The trails are all fee-free and the mountain's ski trails are also open to hiking except for during the ski season.

More information on the mountain's trails can be found on Mount Sunapee's website ([www.mountsunapee.com](http://www.mountsunapee.com)).



*Bohemian Waxwing at Sunapee Harbor by Dylan Jackson.*

### **Sunapee Harbor**

Farther north, on the western side of the lake is a goose head-shaped bay called Sunapee Harbor. Here is where the Sunapee Harbor community and Dewey Beach are located which both provide good views of the bay. Dewey Beach also provides distant views of the main body of the lake

and can be a good scoping vantage point. Follow Rt. 103B north to the junction with Rt. 11 and continue north on Rt. 11 for a short distance to a right turn onto Main Street. The community of Sunapee Harbor is found at the eastern end of Main Street in Sunapee by the intersections of Lake Avenue and Burkehaven Hill Road. Here there is plenty of parking all over during the quiet months and lots of viewing area from the public docks and the small park there. Dewey Beach is located about a half mile north of the harbor community along Garnet Street (off Main Street) just before the intersection of Jobs Creek Road.

### **Sunapee**

In the town of Sunapee, Lake Avenue, Burkehaven Hill Road, Garnet Street, Garnet Hill Road and Jobs Creek Road all go through mature deciduous and coniferous forests and some provide good vantage points overlooking the lake and its bays. Lake Avenue, Burkehaven Hill Road and Garnet Street are located at the eastern end of Main Street and are usually bustling during the summer months; however, as the migration seasons set in, things quiet down a lot. It's easy to drive and park along the side of the roads to get views of the lake and explore the surrounding habitat. Jobs Creek Road is accessed from both Garnet Street and Rt. 11. This is also a stop-and-park kind of road for exploring the surrounding forests and there also are a few spots to view the lake. In particular, a good view of Gardner Bay can be found by stopping along the road immediately north of the intersection with Granliden Road. Farther north along the road, there is a spot to view the thin bay at Jobs Creek and the swampy inlet there. This spot is found along the section of road between Fernwood Road and Woodland Road. There is no sign or other marking for this spot, but it's the only piece of the road with short stretches of guardrail on either side of the street. Garnet Hill Road is a small, looping road with two entrances along Jobs Creek Road. This road has little viewing area of the lake but does meander through mature hemlock forests filled with an array of woodland bird species.

### **Newbury**

Newbury is home to the John Hay National Wildlife Refuge. Included as part of the refuge is the historic Hay Estate, also known as The Fells. The main parking area for the refuge and the Hay Estate is located along Rt. 103A about two miles north of the Rt. 103 intersection at the south end of Lake Sunapee. It is just south of the entrance of Bowles Road. The refuge trails can be accessed from the Hay Estate and during the summer season there is a \$10 fee to enter the estate and refuge. The estate is closed in the late fall through early spring, but there is also another trail access area on the side of Rt. 103A, a short distance south of the main

parking area clearly marked with a sign. There is no fee to pay at this entrance. The refuge contains hiking trails through the mature lakeside forest as well as one of the lake's largest stretches of undeveloped shoreline. The estate is an historical location with lavish gardens that attract Ruby-throated Hummingbirds as well as resident and migrant passerines. It's also likely a good location for butterfly enthusiasts as well.

There are also several roads and parks on the east side of the lake that not only provide vantage points overlooking the water, but also take you through some of the different types of rich lakeside forest. Some of the better roads include Bowles Road and Rollins Road in Newbury. Bowles Road (just north of the entrance to the Hay Estate) has no public viewing areas of the lake, but its rich mature beech forests area is a great place to find some interesting woodland birds. Bowles Road is a quiet road and parking can be found almost anywhere along the roadside.

Rollins Road brings you up a small mountain along the edge of the lake. The change in altitude brings an assortment of species including some which breed nowhere else around the lake (at least to my knowledge) such as Eastern Towhee and Nashville Warblers. This is also a quiet road where one can park on the side of the road almost anywhere. Its side streets, High Meadow and High Point Roads are also great roads to check out with High Meadow Road providing a stunning view of the entire lake which could be a good but distant scoping location. Rollins Road is on the east side of Rt. 103A south of the Hay Estate.

## Birds of Lake Sunapee

For the sake of this article, the species accounts are primarily based on my personal observations. I've had a unique opportunity to access many of the lakeside properties around Sunapee, New London and Newbury through my job. It's this exclusive access that's allowed me to collect a lot of observational data throughout the years. Some eBird records have been used for the sake of this article, but one must be careful when citing eBird data as it can be unreliable. Checklists with attached documentation photos or those submitted by reliable contributors are the best sources of data to trust. Some historical records like Christmas Bird Count data have also contributed to this piece.

### Waterbirds

Lake Sunapee's breeding waterfowl only consists of a few species. Mallards and Canada Geese are common breeders. It didn't become apparent to me that Common Mergansers and Wood Ducks breed on the lake until I saw young of both species here in 2016. I've never found breeding evidence of American Black Ducks or Hooded Mergansers on the lake, but both species breed in the lake's main outflow, the Sugar River, as well as some of its other tributaries. The most

notable breeders on the lake as of late are Common Loons. In 2015, the lake saw its first breeding loons in over 40 years with two chicks hatched near Fisher's Bay. The success was followed up with another single chick born in 2016 near the same area.

When migration season arrives, the lake plays host to a wide variety of visiting waterfowl. Ducks like Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye and Ring-necked Duck are a common find around the lake, especially in the early stages of the migration season. Red-breasted Mergansers are an infrequent but regular visitor and other less frequent visitors I've seen around the lake include Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Pied-billed Grebe and Greater Scaup (I saw two drakes on Otter Pond in the spring of 2016).

Red-necked Grebe is a regular spring and fall migrant and had an impressive showing on Lake Sunapee in the spring of 2016 with a total of 29 seen on the lake at once. Other visiting waterbirds in both the spring and fall seasons include Long-tailed Ducks, Horned Grebes and both Surf and White-winged Scoters. Black Scoters are also a regular migrant, but are usually only fall visitors. Black Scoters usually visit the lake in greater abundance than the other scoter species and have been seen in rafts of hundreds of individuals. Red-throated Loons are a rare visitor to the lake in the spring and fall. One was seen here by two different observers in November, 2012 and I was also lucky enough to get a glimpse of one in May, 2014.

### Shorebirds

While not providing the most ideal habitat for migrant shorebirds, a number of species still find their way to the lake and can be found by the lucky birder. The beaches usually harbor the majority of visiting shorebirds while others can be found on the many rocky outcrops found throughout the lake. Killdeer as well as Spotted and Solitary Sandpipers are the most common species found during migration, but other species like Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers as well as Greater Yellowlegs are less common visitors. American Woodcock can be found calling and performing mating displays in some of the lake's marshy tributaries in early spring. Sometimes the lake and some of its neighboring locations can hold some big surprises. In 2004, A locally rare Semipalmated Plover was found along the shore of Otter Pond. A nor'easter in May of 2006 brought a dozen Red-necked Phalaropes and two Red Phalaropes to Mount Sunapee State Park in Newbury and a Ruddy Turnstone was seen on the rocks around the lighthouse outside Sunapee Harbor in 2014.

### Gulls and Terns

Several gull species have been found around the lake throughout the years. Interestingly, as time has passed, the

composition of resident and visiting gull species has changed. While a regular resident today, Ring-billed Gulls were once occasionally outnumbered by Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls. Records from Christmas Bird Counts in the early 1990s show large winter roosts of both Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls on the lake near the lighthouse outside Sunapee Harbor, but now both species are a rare occurrence. In fact, I've never seen a Great Black-backed Gull on the lake and only saw my first Herring Gull here in the spring of 2016. The disappearance of these large roosts likely coincides with the closing of open dump sites at the areas surrounding transfer stations. While Ring-billed Gulls are the dominant species over the lake for much of the year, Bonaparte's Gulls are fairly regular visitors during migration. Personally, I've found that Bonaparte's usually occur in small groups, but I observed a large group of 34 outside Sunapee Harbor in the spring of 2016.

Terns are a much more rare occurrence on the lake during migration, but I've been fortunate enough to see Common Terns here on two occasions. I found one in May of 2014 and two in the spring of 2016. On both occasions the birds were seen flying over the main body of the lake outside Sunapee Harbor. The unpredictable occurrence of species such as these terns over the lake indicates that it's likely to play host to other species that have yet to be observed here.

### **Raptors**

The lake and its surrounding habitat holds a wide variety of raptors. Species that have been confirmed to be breeding in the area have included Bald Eagles and Broad-winged Hawks. Other species commonly seen throughout the year and also likely to breed around the lake include Sharp-shinned, Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks, as well as Merlin. Northern Goshawks may breed in the area, but my only supporting evidence of this came in the form of one juvenile seen on Brown's Hill Road in Sunapee in the summer of 2012. Other raptors I've seen around the lake that are likely passing migrants include American Kestrel, Peregrine Falcon, Red-shouldered Hawk and Osprey.

### **Passerines**

The rare sightings of seabirds on Lake Sunapee comprise much of the excitement during migration, but the rich forests and other habitat around the lake hold an incredible array of passerines throughout the year. During the winter months, species like Horned Larks, Snow Buntings and Common Redpolls are fairly regular visitors. The winters of 2015 and 2016 brought an influx of Bohemian Waxwings to the area. They are frequently found feeding in the ornamental fruit trees planted on many shoreline properties. Other unpredictable species like Pine and Evening Grosbeaks

as well as Red Crossbills have historically been found around the lake.

As winter progresses into spring, the forests around the lake become inundated with a vast array of migrating songbirds. May, in particular, brings an amazing assortment of warblers. Throughout the years, at least 24 species of migrant and breeding warblers have been recorded along the lake's shores. The lake's varying types of surrounding forest attract at least twelve breeding species. Yellow-rumped, Pine, Blackburnian and Black-throated Green Warblers tend to be the dominant breeders in the mature Hemlock forests while Ovenbirds, Black-throated Blue and Black-and-white Warblers are masters of the mature deciduous forests. Because there has been so much development along the shores of the lake over the years, there is now an array of different habitats. This brings in a whole other group of breeding warblers that include specialists of secondary growth habitats like Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart and Chestnut-sided Warblers. Some of the most exciting warblers are those that only briefly visit on their way to and from their breeding grounds to the north. Notable migrant species include Cape May, Tennessee, Bay-breasted, Orange-crowned, Mourning and Wilson's Warblers.

### **Conclusion**

While the seacoast and river valleys can offer an abundance of migrant birds in the spring and fall, there's something special about finding these birds on the state's inland lakes and ponds. One species that might be run-of-the-mill over the ocean can become incredible when found over a lake or pond deep inland from the seacoast. Over the years, many birders have visited Lake Sunapee, but only a very few, including myself, regularly survey the lake's resident and visiting bird species. Because of this, Lake Sunapee has far less observational data than the other more popular birding destinations throughout the state. The little data that exists and the unpredictability of species occurrence provide an allure to birding these inland lakes and ponds. Every year, we learn more about the patterns of inland migration by birding the state's interior water bodies and I look forward to finding out more about what species visit the lake that I call home.

*Dylan Jackson began birding immediately after graduating from Plymouth State University in 2011 when he took on an internship assisting in the study of Bicknell's Thrush in northern New Hampshire. From then on birding has become an enormous part of his life and he's taken on the personal mission of documenting the bird species which reside and visit his home patch in the Lake Sunapee area.*



# Research

## Exotic Shrubs, Caterpillars and Common Yellowthroats

by Matt Tarr

Caterpillars are especially important food for breeding songbirds and they are the preferred food items that adults of most species feed to their nestlings. When adult birds have access to abundant caterpillars, they are able to forage more efficiently and provide their nestlings with abundant, high-quality food. This can improve nestling growth and survival, and for some species, increase the likelihood that adults can raise more than one successful brood of chicks in a single season. As a result, habitat factors that reduce caterpillar abundance can have important negative consequences to bird survival and reproductive success. Specifically, plant species composition is one of the most important factors influencing caterpillar availability to birds and recent research indicates that non-native “exotic” plants (i.e., those introduced from another country) support a lower abundance of caterpillars than native plants. This is concerning because many habitats throughout the United States are becoming dominated by invasive exotic plants that can outcompete native plants and reduce native plant diversity. It is, however, unclear how exotic plant invasion influences caterpillar availability and the reproductive success of birds. In 2013, I conducted a study comparing caterpillar abundance on native and exotic shrubs and also investigated whether birds breeding in habitats dominated by exotic shrubs experienced lower reproductive success than those breeding in habitats dominated by native shrubs. The following is a brief background of my study and results.

Entomologists have long recognized that the caterpillars of most moth and butterfly species are specialized to eat only a limited number of closely-related plant species with which they have evolved. This specialization by caterpillars is due largely to the chemicals that plants produce to discourage herbivores. Plants within the same genus (e.g., all oaks, all dogwoods, all roses) often use the same or similar chemicals for their defense. Over evolutionary time, each caterpillar species has evolved different ways for dealing with the specific chemicals produced by their host plants. For example, milkweed produces toxic compounds that kill most insects, but monarch caterpillars have evolved the ability to use these chemicals for their own defense by sequestering the chemicals into their skin. For most caterpillars, the chemicals produced by non-host plants will either kill the caterpillar outright, reduce the caterpillar’s development, or act as a repellent, whereas the chemicals produced by their host plants often serve as taste or scent cues that allow the caterpillar to



Figure 1. A male Common Yellowthroat banded with a numbered aluminum band and a unique combination of three colored bands that allow this individual bird to be identified with binoculars. This bird was identified as Light blue over Silver, Gray over Black (LbuS\_GyBlk) and his territory is mapped in Figure 2. Photo by Eric White.

identify the correct plants to eat. As a result, most caterpillars are incapable of surviving on exotic plants that are unrelated to native host plants.

In the early 2000s, Dr. John Litvaitis and graduate student Johanna Fickenscher from the University of New Hampshire determined that the invasive exotic shrubs glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*) and autumn olive (*Eleagnus umbellata*) are eaten by few or no caterpillars and that shrubby fields dominated by these exotic shrubs supported lower caterpillar abundance than those dominated by native shrub species. This study, along with other publications including the book *Bringing Nature Home* by Douglas Tallamy, questioned whether the reduction in caterpillars caused by exotic shrubs could lead to lower reproductive success in songbirds.

To answer this question, I conducted a study in southeastern New Hampshire on three shrubby powerline rights-of-way (ROW) that differed in their level of invasion by glossy buckthorn and autumn olive. These varied in the shrub composition in bird territories:

“Exotic” ROW – exotic shrubs composed 55 to 85% of the shrub composition

“Mixed” ROW – exotic shrubs composed 6 to 43% of the shrubs

“Native” – exotic shrubs composed 0 to 8% of the shrubs

These ROW were maintained by Eversource Energy (Northern Utilities) by periodic brush mowing and were last mowed two winters before the beginning of my study. Powerlines such as these are known breeding habitats for a variety of shrubland bird species, including Eastern Towhees, Prairie Warblers, Field Sparrows, Brown Thrashers, Chestnut-sided Warblers, and Common Yellowthroats. I focused my study on Common Yellowthroats because they were the most abundant shrubland bird species at my three sites and the only species to occur in any abundance at the “Exotic” site.

Further, Common Yellowthroats foraged almost exclusively within the mowed ROW and caterpillars comprise a large proportion of nestling yellowthroat diets. My study had the following primary objectives:

- 1) Quantify differences in caterpillar abundance on the dominant native and exotic shrub species at each study site.
- 2) Determine if differences in the native/exotic shrub composition between sites influenced the total number of young produced by each breeding pair of yellowthroats, nestling growth rates, the size of nestlings at fledging, or the types of arthropod prey adults fed to nestlings.

## Study Methods

I used nets to collect caterpillars from the dominant native shrubs, exotic glossy buckthorn, and exotic autumn olive at each study site on three occasions during the 2013 bird breeding season. The net I used allowed me to enclose an approximate known volume of live foliage from each shrub. I beat the foliage into the net and extracted any dislodged caterpillars, dried and weighed the caterpillars, and estimated the weight of caterpillars on each shrub species at each site.

At each study site, I used decoys and recordings of Common Yellowthroat songs to lure yellowthroats into mist nets. I banded every male yellowthroat at each site with a unique combination of three colored leg bands that allowed me to later identify individual birds with binoculars (Figure 1). I located each male every other day and recorded male locations with a hand-held GPS unit. I overlaid GPS points collected from each bird on a recent aerial photo of each study site and mapped each male's breeding territory by connecting the outermost GPS locations from each bird (Figure 2). Breeding pairs of yellowthroats rarely forage outside of the male's mapped territory boundary, so the condition of their nestlings and the food items they feed their nestlings should be closely related to the plant composition and food availability inside each pair's mapped territory.

In each yellowthroat territory, I found the yellowthroat nest and measured the weight and tarsus length of nestlings every one or two days when nestlings were between one to seven days old. From these measurements, I calculated an average nestling growth rate for each territory. Common Yellowthroat nestlings fledge (i.e., leave the nest on their own) when they are eight days old, so I did not handle nestlings older than seven days old in order to avoid causing the nestlings to fledge before they were ready. I used my measurements collected from seven day-old nestlings as my estimate of the average size of nestlings at fledging for each territory. I placed a video camera at each nest when nestlings were seven days old, allowed the camera to run continuously between 7:00 am and noon, and used these videos to identify the different types of arthropods that adults delivered to nestlings in each territory. I calculated the reproductive success of each territory as the total number of fledglings produced by all successful nests in the territory during the 2013 breeding season. Finally, I estimated the total foliage volume of each shrub species in each bird territory by taking measurements at points located every 3.5 meters throughout each territory.

## Study Results and Implications

As expected, the exotic shrubs glossy buckthorn and autumn olive supported among the lowest caterpillar abundance of all shrub species I sampled; however, certain native shrubs, including red maple, northern arrowwood, dogwood, and red oak also supported low caterpillar abundance similar to the exotic shrubs. These results indicate that during the 2013 breeding season, bird territories dominated by certain native shrubs, particularly red maple, could have supported as low or lower caterpillar abundance as territories dominated by exotic shrubs. Caterpillar abundance varied among native shrub species and was greatest on birch, speckled alder, willow, meadowsweet, aspen, winterberry holly and blueberry. These results indicate that simply identifying whether a bird territory is dominated

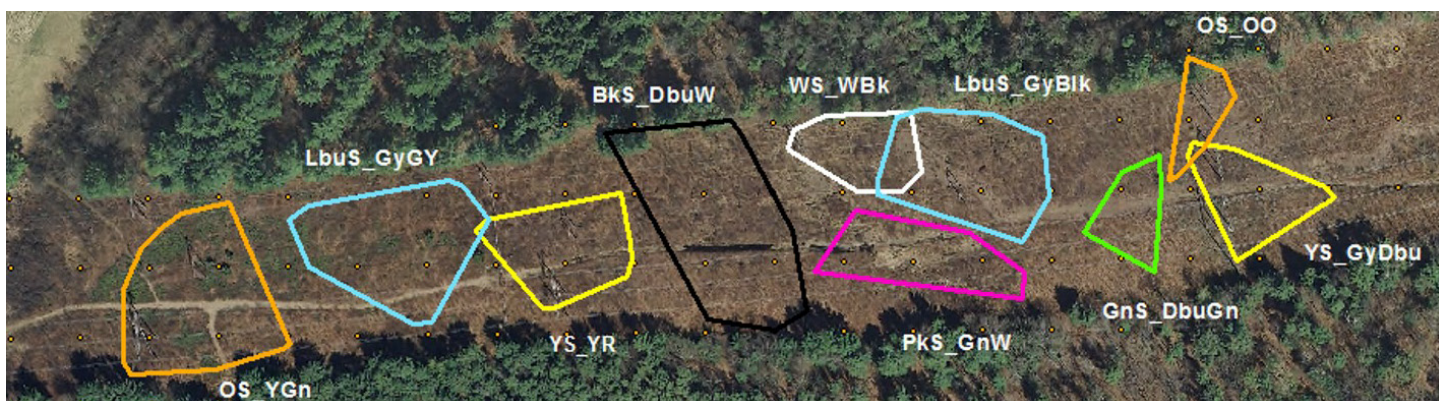


Figure 2. Common Yellowthroat breeding territories mapped from GPS locations collected from males that were marked with colored leg bands. The codes indicate the unique band color combination of each male.



by “native” or “exotic” shrubs could tell you little about the potential of that area to provide caterpillars for birds. Instead, caterpillar availability to birds is most likely influenced by the combination of the specific native shrub species, the specific exotic shrub species, and the relative abundance of each shrub species in bird territories. Low caterpillar numbers on one shrub species (e.g., buckthorn or red maple) may be offset by high caterpillar numbers on other shrub species (e.g., birch or alder) that are especially abundant within a territory.

Common Yellowthroat territories differed significantly in their shrub species composition between study sites. Territories at the “Exotic” site contained lower overall shrub species diversity than the other two sites due to very aggressive invasion by glossy buckthorn. Territories among all sites differed significantly in the amount of glossy buckthorn they contained, with the greatest proportion in territories at the “Exotic” site and lowest at the “Native” site. Territories at the “Exotic” site also contained significantly more exotic autumn olive and less native birch than the other two sites.

Common Yellowthroats occurred in their greatest density at the “Native” site and their lowest density at the “Exotic” site. Further, the overall number of breeding shrubland bird species was lowest at the “Exotic” site and greatest at the “Mixed” site which included the greatest variety of microhabitats. These results suggest we should expect that habitats where invasive shrubs are abundant to the point of reducing overall plant diversity likely provide birds with fewer habitat options (e.g., preferred foraging/nesting structure and substrates) than habitats that contain a wider diversity of plant species. Habitats that contain a variety of plants, even if some are exotic, are likely to support the greatest variety of bird species.

Surprisingly, there were no significant differences in the average total number of young produced, average nestling growth rates, or the average size of nestlings at fledging when yellowthroat territories were compared among study sites. Typical of yellowthroats, most pairs produced only a single brood in 2013, but two pairs produced two broods; one at the “Exotic” site and one at the “Mixed” site. From these results, I have to conclude that exotic shrubs did not lead to lower reproductive success of Common Yellowthroats in 2013 and overall food resources did not appear to be limiting for these three populations of yellowthroats during my study.

Adult yellowthroats at the “Exotic” site, however, responded to lower caterpillar abundance there by feeding their nestlings a greater proportion of alternate food items. At all three sites, caterpillars and grasshoppers were the most common food items adults fed to nestlings. At the “Native” and “Mixed” sites, these food items accounted for 82% of nestling diets, but only 66% of nestling diets at the

“Exotic” site, which was a significantly lower proportion. Compared to adults at the “Mixed” and “Native” sites, adults at the “Exotic” site fed their nestlings a significantly greater proportion of non-caterpillar/grasshopper food items, specifically, spiders, flies/bees, adult moths and butterflies, and teneral (tender immature) dragonflies/damselflies.

In conclusion, Common Yellowthroats are flexible in the foraging substrates and arthropod foods they use and this enabled them to provide their nestlings with adequate food, even when caterpillar abundance was reduced by exotic shrubs. While other shrubland bird species are expected to have preferred foraging substrates and food items, most also appear relatively flexible with regard to where they forage and what arthropods they feed to nestlings. This study suggests that low caterpillar abundance on exotic plants may not significantly reduce the reproductive success of shrubland birds, as long as overall arthropod food resources in a habitat remain abundant; however, habitats where exotic shrubs have significantly reduced overall plant diversity should be expected to support a lower abundance and diversity of shrubland bird species than habitat composed of a variety of plant species. The presence of exotic plants is not necessarily negative for birds, but managing habitats to be dominated by a diversity of native plants will likely provide the most favorable breeding conditions to the greatest variety of bird species.

Homeowners interested in attracting birds to their yard should encourage and maintain a variety of native plant species which together, will provide caterpillars, flowers and fruits for as many months of the year as possible. Many properties already contain native alders, blueberries, dogwoods, viburnums and hazelnuts which support a variety of caterpillars and produce fruits and seeds eaten by many birds and small mammals. These shrubs grow, flower and fruit best in direct sunlight, so removing trees that overtop and cast shade on these shrubs is a great way to improve their health and value to wildlife. The New Hampshire State Nursery ([nhnursery.com](http://nhnursery.com)) is a great source for native shrubs which can be planted to augment wild-growing shrubs on a property.

*Matt Tarr is Associate Extension Professor – Wildlife Specialist for the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. He works in partnership with the NH Fish and Game Department to assist private landowners and communities improve habitat for wildlife. His current research focuses on the habitat use and dispersal of shrubland-dependent birds, use of transmission line rights-of-way by shrubland and mature forest birds, and the role that non-native plants play in providing habitat for songbirds.*



---

# Answer to the Photo Quiz

by David B. Donsker

The subject of this issue's Photo Quiz is admittedly difficult. The fact that this is a black-and-white photograph makes the challenge that much greater. The answer is one of the classic surprises of field identification in North American birding.

Our subject is a small, fairly plain, perching bird with a sharp, pointed, rather heavy, uniformly dark bill. Its underparts are uniformly pale gray and its crown and back are slightly darker and also nearly uniform. Despite its rather plain appearance, it does have three notable plumage features: it has a distinct, thin, complete eye-ring; there are two prominent wing bars; the tail has white outer feathers. In addition, there is one other significant feature that deserves attention, the bird's posture. Notice that the longish tail is partially cocked upward and the pointed wings are slightly drooped.

There are a fair number of species of perching birds that share many of the characteristics of this bird. Let's deal with each of these one-by-one.

The combination of two wing bars and an eye-ring is shared by several species of tyrant flycatcher, including Eastern Wood-Pewee and our five small flycatchers in the genus *Empidonax*: Alder, Willow, Least, Yellow-bellied and Acadian. The eye-ring of the wood-pewee and the two closely related Alder and Willow Flycatchers, however, is quite a bit weaker than the distinct round eye-ring of the featured bird. The other three "empids" have bolder eye-rings. The shape of the eye-ring in these three species is slightly thicker behind the eye than in front of the eye, so it is not quite as perfectly round as the one of the bird in the photograph. But there are more obvious differences between the flycatchers and this bird. All of the flycatchers, except Acadian Flycatcher, have a dusky breast that contrasts somewhat with a paler throat. Our featured bird has uniformly colored underparts. All six flycatchers have smaller, less stout bills with pale lower mandibles and none have white outer tail feathers. Perhaps most immediately noticeable of all, the posture of the flycatchers is quite different from that of this bird. Flycatchers perch quite vertically upon branches, whereas this bird has a horizontal posture.

The horizontal posture, cocked tail, obvious eye-ring and white outer tail feathers might recall Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. But the gnatcatcher's tail is proportionally much longer, its bill is smaller and, most importantly of all, it lacks the two wing bars.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet is another small perching bird that has a bold eye-ring and two prominent wing bars. It also

has a horizontal posture when perched, but the eye-ring in the kinglet is less symmetrically round. It is thicker behind and in front of the eye than it is above and below the eye. In addition, the kinglet has a small, thin bill which is quite unlike the stout bill of this bird. It also lacks the white outer tail feathers.

Townsend's Solitaire is a rare vagrant to our state from the American West. Like this bird, it has a bold eye-ring and white outer tail feathers, but the solitaire is a larger, lankier bird than this one. It has a proportionally longer tail and smaller bill. It lacks two wing bars but, instead, has a bold, buffy wing patch. Its posture when perched is quite vertical.

Several vireos found in New Hampshire have two wing bars and prominent eye-rings. They include Blue-headed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, White-eyed Vireo and the rarely encountered, accidental, Bell's Vireo. In all four vireos, the eye-ring is really more of a spectacle, that is, the ring extends forward to include the lores (the space between the eye and the base of the bill). The spectacle is less prominent in Bell's Vireo, but so is the eye-ring in general. Further, that species has much less distinct wing bars than this bird, and the upper wing bar is often difficult to discern. In addition, the bill of each of the vireos is less sharply pointed and slightly hooked at the tip. The hook is hard to appreciate in the field, but would be very evident in this close photograph.

The only group of birds left to consider is the wood-warbler family. Many of these are quite boldly patterned species, the "eye-candy" of spring migration. Some are much plainer, but only a few of the plainer species also have wing bars and an eye-ring. Of the plainer species, Nashville Warbler might come to mind when looking at this bird, because it also has a prominent round eye-ring, but it lacks the wing bars. The related Orange-crowned Warbler can have a very faint eye-ring, but it also lacks wing bars. Connecticut Warbler is another plain-plumaged bird that has a bold, round eye-ring. But Connecticut Warbler also lacks wing bars, has a hooded appearance and has a proportionally shorter tail. None of these species has white outer tail feathers.

Although none of the boldly patterned warbler species resemble this individual in the spring; many wood-warblers have much plainer plumage in the fall. This is especially true for female or first winter male individuals. These forms account for the group of "confusing fall warblers." We can dismiss some rather plain fall plumaged species that lack wing bars and eye-rings such as American Redstart, Black-throated Blue Warbler, and Yellow Warbler. Others, such as Cape May Warbler, have only faint wing bars or are slightly streaky below. Pine Warbler has two wing bars and white outer tail feathers, and is fairly plain, not only in fall plumage but also in breeding plumage, but it lacks the bold eye-ring.

Instead, Pine Warbler may have very indistinct spectacles and is also faintly and blurrily streaked below. Two warbler species that are boldly patterned in the spring have quite shockingly plainer plumages in fall. These are Blackpoll and Bay-breasted Warbler. Both, like this bird, have bold white wing bars and white outer tail feathers. Blackpoll Warbler, however, even in the duller of plumages, is faintly streaked on the sides of the breast. Bay-breasted Warbler has an unstreaked breast and is plainer below than the similar Blackpoll Warbler in the fall, but, most importantly, both species lack the bold eye-ring of this bird. At most, they may show very subtle spectacles and both have proportionally shorter tails than this individual.

Amongst the wood-warblers with the most striking differences between its bold breeding plumage and that of its fall plumage is Chestnut-sided Warbler. As we all so well know, in the spring, both adult male and adult female Chestnut-sided Warblers treat our eyes with their yellow crowns, bold yellow wing bars, black facial markings, boldly streaked backs and rich chestnut flanks. They are unmistakable. In the fall, however, many of these features disappear. Although winter adults and first fall males all retain two bold yellowish wing bars and generally, but not always, retain the chestnut flanks, most of the other bold patterning seen in spring adults is gone. Instead, the back is only faintly streaked, and the bold black facial markings are replaced by a plain gray face punctuated with a prominent, complete, white eye-ring. First fall females are the plainest of all. They have no chestnut on the flanks and the back is almost unmarked with only very faint, dusky streaks. Although these birds are rather plain, they are far from dull. The back of even the plainest of individuals is lime green. This contrasts beautifully with the solid silvery-gray face and underparts. It is quite a striking bird. A feature of Chestnut-sided Warbler that helps to make field identification of even the duller birds easier is its characteristic posture. Chestnut-sided Warbler typically cocks its tail and droops its wings, whether it is in its glorious spring plumage or its plainer, but distinctive, fall plumage.

This handsome portrait of a Chestnut-sided Warbler, likely a first fall female, was taken by Steve Mirick at Odiorne Point State Park in Rye, New Hampshire on October 25, 2015. This is a record late date for New Hampshire.

Chestnut-sided Warbler is a fairly common, widespread breeding resident throughout the state. It prefers early stage, secondary growth, brushy habitats of abandoned farms and orchards, clearings, and young deciduous woodlands. Because it favors secondary growth, this species is much more common today in our state than it was in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The abandonment of farms in New England for greener pastures farther west, and widespread logging created the habitat so favorable to this species.

Arrival of this species in spring in New Hampshire is usually in the second week in May. Despite its boldly patterned plumage, its presence is usually first revealed by its characteristic song which is rather similar to Yellow Warbler. After breeding season, most birds leave the state by mid-September to winter primarily in Mexico and Central America.

Finding Chestnut-sided Warbler in our state is not a difficult task. Recognizing the strikingly different plumage of this species in the fall, especially that of first fall females, is a much harder challenge and, when the bird is recognized for what it is, frequently a big surprise.

## References

- Dunn, J. and K. Garrett. 1997. *A Field Guide to the Warblers of North America*. Houghton Mifflin, New York, NY.
- Keith, A. and R. Fox. 2013. *The Birds of New Hampshire*. The Nuttall Ornithological Club, Cambridge, MA.
- Sibley, D. 2014. *The Sibley Guide to Birds*. Second Edition. Alfred A. Knopf. New York, NY.
- Foss, C., ed. 1994. *Atlas of Breeding Birds in New Hampshire*. Audubon Society of New Hampshire, Concord, NH.

---

## Corrections

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

### Winter 2012-13

- p. 24 & p. 25 The location for the 02/16 sighting of a Lapland Longspur and a Snow Bunting is Kelley Farm not Kelly Farm.

### Spring 2013

- p. 1 The Photo Quiz photo was taken by Len Medlock not Jon Woolf.
- p. 5 In the Turkey through Cranes summary, third paragraph, first line should be "Surrey Lane Marsh" not "Surry."
- p. 6 The Horned Grebe sighting on 05/24 should be a Sooty Shearwater – the heading was omitted.
- p. 12 The Willow Flycatcher of 05/18 was seen at Horseshoe Pond, Concord not Hampton Harbor, Hampton River Marina flats.
- p. 23 In the Fallout article, fifth paragraph, second line should read "Church St. water tower parking lot" not "church parking lot."

# New Hampshire Bird Records Endowment Fund

Donations to this fund provide long-term support for all facets of *New Hampshire Bird Records*, from the publication to the collection, organization, quality control, dissemination, preservation, and storage of New Hampshire bird sighting information.

Leave a **Legacy for the Birds** with a bequest in your will to the Fund:

I give and bequeath \_\_\_\_ % or my residuary estate (or a specific sum of \$ \_\_\_\_ ) to the New Hampshire Bird Records Endowment Fund, a permanently restricted fund of the Audubon Society of New Hampshire, 84 Silk Farm Rd., Concord, NH.

For more information, contact the Managing Editor (see inside front cover).

Rare Bird ALERT ☎ 224-9909

Available twenty-four hours a day!  
Also online at [www.nhaudubon.org](http://www.nhaudubon.org)

## Abbreviations Used

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

## NHBR Subscription Form

I would like to subscribe to *NH Bird Records*.

NHA Member \$25.00  Non-member \$35.00

*All renewals take place annually.*

*Mid-year subscribers will receive all issues published in the subscription year.*

I would like to join NHA and receive *NH Bird Records* at the member price.

Family/\$55  Individual/\$39  Senior/\$24

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Payment is by:

check enclosed— payable to NH Audubon

MC  VISA

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to:** Membership Department, NH Audubon,  
84 Silk Farm Rd., Concord, NH 03301

*Subscribe online at [www.nhbirdrecords.org](http://www.nhbirdrecords.org)*



# Fall 2015 Highlights



*Cave Swallow by Len Medlock, 11/15/15,  
North Hampton State Beach, NH.*



*Lazuli Bunting by Eric Masterson, 9/26/15, Star Island, NH.*



*Black Tern by Len Medlock, 8/23/15, Eel Pond, Rye, NH.*



*Rufous Hummingbird by Lillian Stokes, 10/2/15, E. Andover, NH.  
Juvenile Rufous Hummingbirds are difficult to tell from Allen's Hummingbirds  
but Lillian Stokes captured a photo of the tail showing the diagnostic notch in R2  
(the tail feather next to the central tail feather).*

