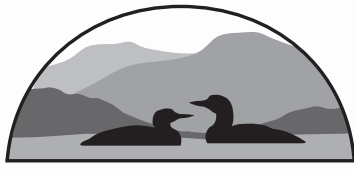


# New Hampshire Bird Records





**NH AUDUBON**  
Protecting our environment since 1914

**NEW HAMPSHIRE BIRD RECORDS**  
VOLUME 35, NUMBER 4  
WINTER 2016-17

**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**  
Jim Sparrell/Katherine Towler, **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

**PHOTO QUIZ**

David Donsker

**PHOTO EDITOR**

Wendy Chatel

**WEB MASTER**

Kathy Barnes

**FIELD TRIP REPORTS**

Phil Brown

**WHERE TO BIRD**

Scott Heron

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IN MEMORY OF  
**Polly Perry**

This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by NH Audubon in memory of Polly Perry, a volunteer and longtime supporter of the organization. Polly loved birds and was passionate about environmental education, providing annual camperships for children in need. Her bequest will help NH Audubon continue this work.



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*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.

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## Winter 2016-17

by Rebecca Suomala

### Welcome Jim and Katherine!

With this issue we welcome Jim Sparrell and Katherine Towler as Winter Season Editors. Jim and Katie have been actively birding in the state for ten years. Many of you will know them from either the birds they've found, the photos Jim has posted, or the presentations they've given about their birding trips.

They got their start when a Yellow-breasted Chat visited their yard in 2007 and they went searching for the field guide to try to figure out what that bright yellow bird was. They live on South Mill Pond in Portsmouth and love watching for the common birds and rare visitors in the back yard and on the pond.

Katie has published three novels and most recently a memoir titled *The Penny Poet of Portsmouth*. She teaches in the MFA Program in Writing at Southern NH University. Jim has a Ph.D. in clinical psychology and does both clinical work and work in the Portsmouth schools. He has led an after school birding group for elementary school students for the past four years. He also teaches at Goddard College, where he

has made bird walks a regular activity with interested students and faculty during the teaching residencies.

Please welcome them into this new role!

### 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).

### Time to Renew!

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

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## PHOTO QUIZ

### Can You Identify This Bird?



Answer on page 39.  
Photos by Scott Heron.

## Thank You to Donors

We are very grateful to everyone who has donated to *New Hampshire Bird Records*, sponsored an issue, or supported the “Twitchers in the Rye” during the Superbowl of Birding. Subscription revenue does not cover the full costs of *New Hampshire Bird Records* and your contributions help make it possible for New Hampshire Audubon to bring you this publication and maintain the quality of the records. We are especially grateful to those who have contributed to the New Hampshire Bird Records Endowment Fund. This fund is building a secure base of long-term support for the collection, organization, publication, preservation and storage of New Hampshire bird sighting information. Support for data compilation and management was also received from New Hampshire Audubon’s Dr. Margery J. Milne and Dr. Lorus J. Milne Biological Science Research Fund.

The following list acknowledges donations received from November 2, 2016 to September 30, 2017 with the exception of the Fall 2016 sponsorship (listed in that issue). We apologize if we inadvertently omitted you or mis-spelled your name – please let us know.

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*Peregrine Falcon by Kyle Wilmarth.*

## December 1, 2016 through February 28, 2017

by Katherine Towler and Jim Sparrell



*Katie and Jim in full birding mode on a trip to California. Photo by Bruce Aird.*

The winter of 2016-2017 was a study in contrasts from one month to the next. December seemed to presage a fairly typical winter with normal temperatures and snowfall. After an extremely cold start in January, mild weather for the rest of the month brought the average temperature to 7.9 degrees above normal. Little snowfall in most of the state and a couple of 50-degree days made for birding that felt almost

spring-like. February continued the trend of higher than normal temperatures. The mercury hit 69 in Concord and over 70 in other southern New Hampshire towns at the end of the month to break records that had stood since the late 1800s, welcoming a flurry of spring migrants. Despite the record warmth, two northeasters with heavy snow arrived in the middle of the month, for a monthly snow total of 11.9 inches above normal. Following on the winter of 2015-2016, which brought the warmest temperatures since consistent records have been kept in New Hampshire, this year continued the pattern of higher temperatures overall. Snowfall in December and February was welcome for southern portions of the state still under drought conditions.

The periods of mild weather in January and February meant there was open water on rivers, ponds, and streams in many parts of the state. In southern counties, sightings of Wood Ducks were notable. The early arrival of spring migrants at the end of February also stood out, with blackbirds, American Woodcock, and Killdeer all recorded. As in recent years, this winter found an impressive assortment of half-hardy birds present, among them Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Gray Catbird, Eastern Towhee, and Pine Warbler.



*Townsend's Solitaire by Dylan Jackson, 2-23-17, Orford, NH.*

The most exciting find of the winter was the **Great Gray Owl** discovered at the end of February in Newport. After it was rediscovered in March, it brought birders from all over New England and beyond, but that's a story for the next issue. Other standout rarities included **Black Vulture**, **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Varied Thrush**, and **Townsend's Solitaire**.

### Waterfowl through Grebes

Early in the season, open water throughout the state brought widespread sightings of waterfowl, with Mallards and Snow Geese reported in Coos County in December. Snow Geese were not observed along the coast during the winter season and Brant showed up only in mid- to late-February. The warming trend in February also brought high numbers of Canada Geese into the Connecticut River Valley and a single report of a Cackling Goose, but did not result in a dramatic arrival of other waterfowl. Wood Ducks, which typically reach the northernmost edge of their overwintering range in southern New England, were reported throughout the season in all southern counties. The birds seen in December were likely lingering, while early arrivals were noted in February as far north as the Squam River in Sandwich.



*Harlequin Duck by Steve Mirick, 12-24-16, Rye, NH.*

Great Bay hosted several Gadwall, a **Eurasian Wigeon**, and briefly a **Redhead**, along with the expected waterfowl. Small flocks of Green-winged Teal arrived in late February and some were noted to be copulating, as ducks tend to form pair bonds on their wintering grounds or early in spring migration, rather than on summer breeding territory. A female **Harlequin Duck** was seen twice at Rye Harbor, but there were few other uncommon waterfowl and no reports of Ruddy Duck, King Eider, or Pacific Loon. Away from the coast, the only sea ducks reported inland were three Long-tailed Ducks and a flock of 150 Common Mergansers on Squam Lake in December, and three Red-breasted Mergansers in Manchester and one in Sunapee, also in December. Barrow's Goldeneye were observed at Great Bay, Lake Winnisquam in Laconia, the Hinsdale Bluffs,

# WINTER SEASON

Sanbornton, and a good count of three together in the Merrimack River in Manchester. The only Pied-billed Grebes seen were in December along the Seacoast and one on Great Bay.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
-------------	----------	-----------------	-----------------

## Snow Goose

12/04	1	Rt. 16, Milan	D. Lipsy, S. Wrisley
02/23	1	River Rd., Walpole	K. Cox
02/23	1	Chickering Farm, Westmoreland	D. Clark, S. Heller
02/28	1	Rt. 12 by Malnati Farm, Walpole	Z. Cornell

## Brant

02/15	2	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
02/25	14	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	D. Ellis
02/25	15	Rye Harbor SP	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
02/27	3	North Beach, Hampton	A. Hamlin

## Cackling Goose

02/28	1	Great Meadow, Charlestown	J. Russo
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*A possible Cackling Goose was seen in Rye and North Hampton in December, 2016, but even with photos could not be confirmed. Although a small goose, the bill size and shape was inconclusive. Identification requires a careful study of the head shape and bill size and shape. Photo by Jason Lambert, 12/11/16, Eel Pond, Rye, NH.*

## Canada Goose

02/25	885	Squamscott Rd., Stratham	S. Mirick
02/27	1200	Great Meadow, Charlestown	D. Clark
02/27	1800	Rt. 12 by Malnati Farm, Walpole	D. Clark
02/28	3500	Great Meadow, Charlestown	J. Russo

## Wood Duck

12/08	3	Westmoreland boat launch	A. Burnett
12/10	1	Pulpit Rocks, Rye	S. Mirick
12/11	1	Summit Ave., Gilford	R. Robertson
12/11	3	Powwow R. at Whitehall Rd., S. Hampton	K. Wilmarth
12/13	1	Westmoreland boat launch	A. Burnett
12/23	1	Horseshoe Pond, Merrimack	M. Jacobson
02/25	13	World End Pond, Salem	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth
02/27	2	Rt. 12 by Malnati Farm, Walpole	D. Clark
02/28	2	Great Meadow, Charlestown	K. Cox
02/28	5	South Rd., Kensington	G. Gavutis Jr.
02/28	4	Fields Grove City Park, Nashua	C. Sheridan

## Gadwall

12/07	4	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Mirick
12/09	1	Exeter WTP	P. Brown

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
12/09	2	Hinsdale Setbacks	H. Galbraith
12/25	1	Rt. 286 pools, Seabrook	M. & R. Suomala
01/03	2	Oyster R. Landing, Durham	A. Murray
01/29	3	Oyster R. Landing, Durham	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
02/22	2	Jackson's Landing, Durham	P. Farr, A. Murray

## Eurasian Wigeon

12/07	1	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Mirick
01/08	1	Bayridge Rd., Greenland	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
01/16	1	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	H. Stevens
01/28	1	Meloon Rd., Greenland	L. Medlock

## American Wigeon

12/07	22	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Mirick
12/07	1	offshore, inland of Isles of Shoals	J. Lambert, S. Mirick
01/30	4	Oyster R. Landing, Durham	M. Wilson
02/11	1	Exeter WTP	L. Medlock
02/24	47	Bayridge Rd., Greenland	S. Mirick
02/25	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
02/28	1	Sucker Brook, Auburn	J. Pettipas

## Mallard

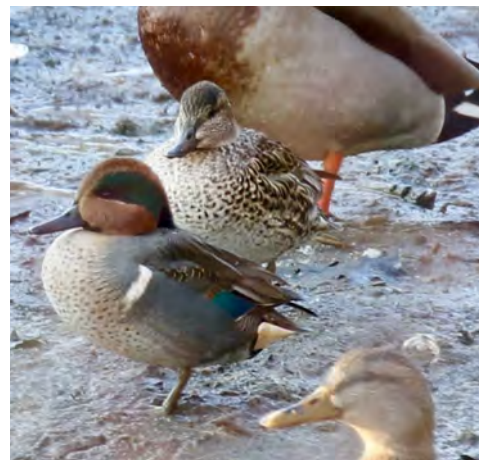
02/25	10	Squam R. at River St., Ashland	K. Klapper
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## Northern Shoveler

12/03	5	Exeter WTP	J. Pettipas, S. Wrisley
12/07	5	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Mirick
02/25	2	Sunset Farm, Greenland	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala

## Northern Pintail

12/07	1	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Mirick
12/08	1	W. Massabesic Rockingham Trail, Manchester	J. Maher
12/08	1	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
12/23	1	Exeter WTP	L. Medlock
12/28	1	Nashua Airport	C. McPherson
01/07	1	Powwow R. at Small Pox Rd., Kingston	S. Heron
01/12	1	Fields Grove City Park, Nashua	K. Fenton
01/15	1	Mascoma R., Lebanon	T. McLane, K. Jones
01/27	1	Small Pox Rd., Kingston	K. Wilmarth
02/25	6	Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton	J. Lambert, S. Mirick
02/28	1	Water St., Antrim	P. Brown
02/28	1	Horseshoe Pond, Merrimack	C. Sheridan



*Green-winged Teal by Jim Sparrell, 2-5-17, Exeter, NH.*

Date # Location Observer

**Green-winged Teal**

12/11 4 Exeter WTP L. Medlock  
 01/02 1 Eager Is., Laconia R. Suomala, D. Howe, S. Brailler  
 01/22 1 Meadow Pond, Hampton S. Mirick, H. Bauer  
 02/05 2 Downing Ct., Exeter K. Towler, J. Sparrell  
 02/24 1 Powwow R. at New Boston Rd., Kingston S. Heron  
 02/25 14 Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton J. Lambert, S. Mirick  
 02/26 1 Monadnock Branch Trail, Rindge C. Caron

**Redhead**

01/08 1 Bayridge Rd., Greenland Z. Cornell, R. Suomala  
 01/14 2 Great Bay, Weeks Pt., Greenland  
 J. Pettipas, S. Wrisley, S. Bennett  
 01/28 1 Great Bay, Weeks Pt., Greenland K. Towler, J. Sparrell

**Ring-necked Duck**

12/06 6 Hinsdale bluffs S. Lamonde, K. Vande Vusse  
 12/18 1 Spofford Lake, Chesterfield P. Brown  
 02/08 2 Merrimack R. at Hall St., Bow D. Lipsy  
 02/08 2 Exeter WTP J. Swatt  
 02/14 2 Canobie Lake, Salem K. Wilmarth  
 02/24 25 Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland S. Mirick  
 02/25 30 Powwow Pond, Kingston S. Mirick, S. Heron, B. Green  
 02/28 20 Sucker Brook, Auburn J. Pettipas  
 02/28 96 World End Pond, Salem K. Wilmarth

**Greater Scaup**

12/04 8 Whittemore Lake, Bennington P. Brown  
 01/02 1 Lower Bay Rd., Sanbornton J. Lambert, B. Griffith  
 01/04 460 Sunset Farm, Greenland J. Lambert  
 01/15 2 Seabrook Beach N. Werth  
 01/22 800 Sunset Farm, Greenland B. Griffith  
 02/19 200 Bracketts Pt., Greenland K. Fenton

**Lesser Scaup**

12/12 1 Lake Sunapee D. Jackson  
 12/13 1 Sewells Falls Beach Trail, Concord A. Kallenbach  
 01/01 3 Lower Bay Rd., Sanbornton I. MacLeod  
 01/29 5 Great Bay, Weeks Pt., Greenland  
 P. Moynahan, N. Houlihan  
 02/01 4 Exeter WTP L. McKillop  
 02/25 27 Exeter WTP J. Lambert

**Common Eider**

12/11 35 Hampton Harbor R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, et al.  
 01/25 60 NH coast J. Maher  
 02/18 420 Hampton Beach SP C. Caron

**Harlequin Duck**

12/04 1 Seabrook Beach K. Wilmarth  
 12/24 1 Rye Harbor S. Mirick  
 12/27 1 Rye Harbor SP M. Cahill

**Surf Scoter**

12/08 30 NH coast R. Prieto  
 01/22 56 NH coast J. MacQueen

**Black Scoter**

12/06 22 North Beach, Hampton H. Bauer  
 01/08 50 Seabrook Beach Z. Cornell, R. Suomala  
 01/29 693 Seabrook Beach S. Mirick  
 02/20 1000 Seabrook Beach A.& G. Robbins

Date # Location Observer

**Long-tailed Duck**

12/10 3 Squam Lake, Holderness T. Michel  
 12/18 1 Great Bay, Durham S. Mirick

**Bufflehead**

12/10 1 Stark Landing, Manchester D. Lipsy  
 12/26 22 Peirce Island, Portsmouth R. Karchnyak  
 01/10 1 Stark Landing, Manchester D. Lipsy  
 01/16 25 Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland K. Dorsey  
 01/19 11 Bellamy River WMA, Dover A. Murray  
 02/03 1 Silver L., Lochmere Dam, Tilton/Belmont  
 S.& D. Stoddard

**Common Goldeneye**

12/01 9 Lower Kimball Pond, Chatham B. Crowley  
 12/04 17 Locke Lake, Barnstead J. Lambert  
 12/06 1 Connecticut R. at Rt. 142, Dalton S.& D. Stoddard  
 12/11 96 Stark Landing, Manchester J. Maher  
 12/20 4 Connecticut R., Lebanon J. MacQueen  
 12/25 3 Androscoggin R. at Errol dam L. Charron  
 01/06 150 Lower Bay Rd., Sanbornton D. Perry  
 01/08 55 Hinsdale bluffs H. Galbraith  
 01/09 106 Merrimack R., Manchester S. Mirick  
 01/22 224 Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland S. Mirick



*Barrow's Goldeneye by Leo McKillop, 1-15-17, Stark Landing, Manchester, NH.*

**Barrow's Goldeneye**

12/07 1 L. Winnisquam, Laconia S. Brallier  
 12/09 1 Hinsdale bluffs H. Galbraith  
 12/11 3 Stark Landing, Manchester J. Maher  
 01/01 1 Lower Bay Rd., Sanbornton I. MacLeod  
 01/02 1 Sunset Farm, Greenland L. Medlock  
 01/08 1 Hinsdale bluffs H. Galbraith  
 01/28 1 Bayridge Rd., Greenland G. Dupont, A. Wiebe,  
 L. Kahle, S. Heinrich  
 02/17 1 Stark Landing, Manchester F. Marengi, J. Dwyer  
 02/24 1 Bayridge Rd., Greenland S. Mirick

**Hooded Merganser**

12/02 4 Airport Marsh, Whitefield D. Hubbard  
 12/04 63 Locke Lake, Barnstead J. Lambert  
 01/02 56 Lower Bay Rd., Sanbornton J. Maher  
 02/18 26 Connecticut R. below Bellows Falls Dam, Walpole  
 D. Jackson  
 02/28 22 Fort Eddy boat launch, Concord S. Mirick

# WINTER SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Common Merganser</b>			
12/04	41	Locke Lake, Barnstead	J. Lambert
12/07	14	Androscoggin R., Rt. 16, Errol	L.& P. Charron
12/10	150	Squam Lake, Holderness	T. Michel
12/11	265	Boathouse Rd., Moultonborough	I. MacLeod
02/25	54	Exeter WTP	J. Pettipas, S. Wisley
<b>Red-breasted Merganser</b>			
12/03	120	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
12/11	3	Front Park, Lake Massabesic	J. Maher
12/11	1	Lake Sunapee	D. Jackson
12/11	92	North Beach, Hampton	S. Mirick
12/15	2	Spofford Lake, Chesterfield	C. Ross
01/02	75	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	R. Prieto
<b>Spruce Grouse</b>			
12/13	1	Mud Pond, Jefferson	G. Chretien
01/22	1	Carter Dome, Beans Purchase	J. Jong
<b>Wild Turkey</b>			
02/28	123	Spring Meadow Farm, Hillsborough	P. Brown
<b>Red-throated Loon</b>			
12/06	6	North Beach, Hampton	H. Bauer
12/21	6	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	M. McCloy
<b>Common Loon</b>			
12/01	1	Lower Kimball Pond, Chatham	B. Crowley
12/06	2	Lake Sunapee	D. Jackson
12/07	2	Mascoma Lake, Enfield	J. MacQueen
12/11	1	Union Ave., Laconia	R. Robertson
12/11	1	Boathouse Rd., Moultonborough	I. MacLeod
12/26	25	NH coast	S. Heron
01/04	1	Meredith Town Docks	D. Lipsy, S. Wisley
01/25	36	NH coast	J. Maher
02/13	18	Rye Harbor SP	K. Fenton
02/20	30	Seabrook Beach	A.& G. Robbins
<b>Pied-billed Grebe</b>			
12/18	1	Great Bay, Durham	S. Mirick
<b>Horned Grebe</b>			
12/05	1	Lake Sunapee	D. Jackson
12/11	26	Boathouse Rd., Moultonborough	I. MacLeod
01/02	15	offshore waters, NH	J. Nadeau, D. Perry
01/17	5	Great Boars Head, Hampton	C. Nims, S. McCarthy, B. Crowley, J. Scott
<b>Red-necked Grebe</b>			
12/03	1	Sunapee State Beach, Newbury	D. Jackson
12/11	2	Boathouse Rd., Moultonborough	I. MacLeod
12/11	12	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	K. Couture
12/21	19	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	M. McCloy
01/21	21	Pulpit Rocks, Rye	K. Fenton, J. Lambert

## Northern Fulmar through Gulls

Several pelagic trips in December yielded good numbers of Northern Gannet, Black Guillemot, Black-legged Kittiwake, and Razorbill, but no reports of Northern Fulmar or Atlantic Puffin this season. A distant jaeger was observed and photographed on one of the pelagic trips in

mid-December, when Pomarine is most likely, although both Parasitic and Pomarine Jaegers were being observed off of Provincetown at that time. Common Murre, although present in small numbers, were more plentiful than Thick-billed Murre, for which there were only a handful of observations along the coast. **Dovekie** were noted only twice, with one flying bird seen from the coast and another bird that was found dead in Seabrook after a storm that brought a number of Dovekies inland in Massachusetts.

A few Double-crested Cormorants lingered along the coast into January with one reported in early February. Several Great Blue Herons were observed throughout the winter season, as is often the case in mild winters. In Cheshire County, a late **Black Vulture** was seen in December and then one in January, setting a first county record for the winter season and joining a handful of winter records for this species over the years in New Hampshire. Range expansion during the winter season is apparent with Turkey Vultures, who now overwinter regularly and were observed in consistent roosting spots, particularly in southern counties. Several Red-shouldered Hawks were observed throughout the winter season as well.



*Sandhill Cranes by Phil Brown, 12-9-16, Exeter WTP, NH.*

A small group of late-migrating **Sandhill Cranes** was seen in early December in Exeter, one of only a few December records for this species. A Virginia Rail was found at Meadow Pond in Hampton in mid-January when it nearly ran across the observer's feet! The

record warmth at the end of February precipitated a slightly early return for some Killdeer and American Woodcock, not record dates, but certainly more widely reported for February than usual. There were only three reported sightings of Sanderling, all included below, and only one sighting of Dunlin.

A sighting of Thayer's Gull offshore, near Jeffrey's Ledge, and another on Eel Pond, generated excitement, although it was short-lived with the announcement by the American Ornithological Society that Thayer's would no longer be recognized as a separate species, but is now lumped as a subspecies of Iceland Gull. Iceland, Lesser Black-backed, and Glaucous Gulls were reported from Pickering Ponds/Rochester WTP in addition to those seen closer to the



coast. Iceland Gulls were seen in a number of inland towns, including Derry, Nashua, and Manchester, continuing a trend of more inland sightings for this bird in recent years. A group of 28 Bonaparte's Gulls was seen in late December and then none were reported after early January.

*Date # Location Observer*

**Northern Gannet**

12/07 15 offshore waters, NH J. Lambert, S. Mirick  
 12/11 81 Jeffreys Ledge R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Wrisley,  
 J. Sparrell, J. Pettipas, S. Bennett  
 12/14 90 offshore waters, NH J. Maher

**Great Cormorant**

12/08 13 NH coast R. Prieto  
 01/16 15 Concord Pt., Rye B. Griffith  
 02/02 16 cove s. of Odiorne Point SP, Rye P. Laipis, et al.  
 02/22 39 NH coast J. Maher

**Double-crested Cormorant**

12/05 1 Oyster R. Landing, Durham K. Hochgraf  
 12/11 8 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick  
 01/08 1 Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook M. Wilson

**Great Blue Heron**

12/01 1 Royal Ridge Mall, Nashua A. Moreira  
 01/14 2 NH coast A. Altena, K. Wilmarth  
 02/05 1 Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton Z. Cornell, R. Suomala

**Black Vulture**

12/19 1 Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd., Walpole K. Cox,  
 D. Clark  
 01/01 1 Woodward Rd., Westmoreland R. & A. Burnett

**Turkey Vulture**

12/31 19 Lincoln Street School, Exeter L. Medlock  
 01/04 30 Exeter B. White  
 02/01 7 Kimball Rd., Kensington P. Moynahan, N. Houlihan  
 02/05 1 Rt. 101A, Nashua C. McPherson  
 02/19 4 Concord St., Nashua J. Gray  
 02/23 5 Eastern Ave., Manchester L. McKillop  
 02/24 1 Rt. 28, Barnstead J. Lambert  
 02/25 23 communications tower, Goffstown K. Cole  
 02/25 15 Black Brook Rd., Keene T. Parody  
 02/27 23 Hannaford, Goffstown K. Cole



*Northern Harrier  
 by Christopher  
 McPherson, 2-25-17,  
 Woodmont Orchard,  
 Hollis, NH.*

**Northern Harrier**

12/04 2 Charlestown WTP D. Jackson  
 12/08 1 Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook R. Prieto  
 12/10 1 Woodmont Orchard, Hollis C. McPherson  
 12/10 1 Pickering Ponds, Rochester A. Murray  
 02/21 1 Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey P. Kirkhart

*Date # Location Observer*  
 02/25 1 Bodwell Farm, E. Kingston J. Lambert  
 02/25 2 Chickering Farm, Westmoreland P. Brown

**Northern Goshawk**

12/24 1 Dogford Rd., Hanover S. Merker  
 12/31 1 Rt. 101 at Exit 8, Brentwood K. Towler  
 01/03 1 Great Rock Rd., Sandwich K. Klapper, K. Fenton  
 01/09 1 Springfield A. Cooper  
 01/10 1 Hammond Hollow, Gilsum M. Wright  
 01/14 1 Stark Landing, Manchester M. Zagarella  
 01/15 1 Woodmont Orchard, Hollis C. McPherson  
 01/15 1 Newmarket town landing K. Dorsey  
 02/26 1 Rt. 109A, Wolfeboro G. Bailey  
 02/27 1 Range Rd., Sandwich K. Klapper

**Bald Eagle**

01/16 10 Lincoln Park, Gilford I. MacLeod



*Red-shouldered Hawk  
 by Steve Mirick, 1-21-  
 17, Stratham, NH.*

**Red-shouldered Hawk**

12/10 1 Front St., Exeter L. Medlock  
 12/11 1 Hammond Hollow, Gilsum M. Wright  
 12/23 1 Rt. 108, Newfields E. Norton  
 12/25 1 Rt. 97, Salem K. Wilmarth  
 12/31 1 Lafayette Rd. at Rt. 107, Seabrook P. Miliotis  
 01/06 1 New Ipswich K. Fenton  
 01/07 1 Ten Rod Rd., Rochester D. Hubbard  
 01/15 1 Rt. 28, Chichester A. & G. Robbins  
 01/16 1 Osgood St., Concord D. Lipsy  
 01/21 1 Union Rd., Stratham S. Mirick  
 01/24 1 River View Rd., Newport B. Baker  
 01/30 1 saltmarsh s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye J. Lambert  
 02/05 1 Swasey Pkwy., Exeter B. Crowley  
 02/23 1 Newton Rd., Plaistow A. Altena, K. Wilmarth  
 02/25 2 Coolidge Way, Raymond S. Santino

**Rough-legged Hawk**

12/06 1 Chickering Farm, Westmoreland D. Clark  
 12/29 1 NH coast D. Narango  
 01/01 1 Rye Harbor SP K. Towler, J. Sparrell  
 01/01 1 Washington Rd. at Rt. 1A, Rye K. Fenton  
 02/06 1 Squamscott R. marsh, Rt. 108, Stratham T. Crossman  
 02/10 1 Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook S. Bennett, J. Pettipas,  
 S. Wrisley  
 02/20 1 Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey P. Brown

# WINTER SEASON

*Date # Location Observer*

## Virginia Rail

01/21 1 Meadow Pond, Hampton B. Griffith

## Sandhill Crane

12/09 4 Exeter WTP P. Brown

## Killdeer

02/24 1 Millican Nurseries, Chichester J. Lambert

02/24 1 Maglaras Park, Dover S. Heron

02/24 2 Exeter WTP C. McPherson, P. Miliotis

02/24 10 Sunset Farm, Greenland S. Mirick

02/24 3 Joslin Land, Milford S. Lemire

02/25 9 Bodwell Farm, E. Kingston J. Lambert, S. Mirick

02/25 7 Woodmont Orchard, Hollis C. McPherson

02/25 3 Black Brook Rd., Keene T. Parody

02/26 1 Tullando Farm, Orford J. MacQueen

02/27 2 Great Meadow, Charlestown D. Clark

02/28 4 Rt. 12 by Malnati Farm, Walpole C. Ross

## Sanderling

01/31 10 Bicentennial Park, Hampton H. Bauer

## Dunlin

12/14 4 Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook J. Maher

12/17 2 Seabrook H. Stevens

02/20 8 Odiorne Point SP, Rye F. Marenghi

## Purple Sandpiper

12/03 15 Seal Rocks, Rye J. Pettipas, S. Wisley

12/14 35 Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook J. Maher

02/18 22 Rye Harbor SP C. Caron



*American Woodcock  
by Len Medlock,  
2-26-17, Deer Hill  
WMA, Brentwood,  
NH.*

## American Woodcock

01/12 1 Breakfast Hill Rd., Greenland B. Griffith

02/23 1 James Way, Hudson E. Lai

02/24 1 Badger Farm Rd., Wilton S. Lemire

02/25 1 Sanborn Rd., Sanbornton B. Crosby

02/27 3 Newmarket Rd., Warner F. Moltz, et al.

02/28 5 Hawkin's Farm, Salem K. Wilmarth

## Jaeger sp.

12/11 1 Jeffreys Ledge R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Wisley,  
J. Sparrell, J. Pettipas, S. Bennett

12/14 1 offshore waters, NH J. Maher

## Dovekie

01/21 1 Seabrook Beach (dead) H. Otto

02/12 1 Rye Harbor SP K. Fenton

## Common Murre

12/11 4 Jeffreys Ledge R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Wisley,  
J. Sparrell, J. Pettipas, S. Bennett

*Date # Location Observer*

## Thick-billed Murre

01/21 1 Pulpit Rocks, Rye K. Fenton

01/21 1 Pulpit Rocks, Rye J. Lambert

02/12 1 Great Boar's Head, Hampton A. Hamlin

02/24 1 Hampton Harbor northside jetty R. Lambeth

## Razorbill

12/07 5 offshore waters, NH J. Lambert, S. Mirick

12/08 1 Pulpit Rocks, Rye D. Currier, A. Kallenbach

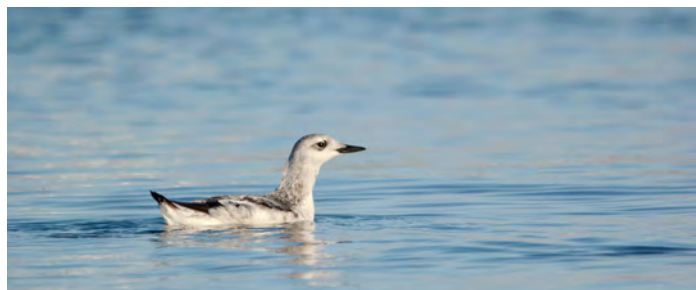
12/11 25 Jeffreys Ledge R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Wisley,  
J. Sparrell, J. Pettipas, S. Bennett

12/25 43 Odiorne Point SP, Rye M. & R. Suomala

01/14 12 Odiorne Point SP, Rye P. Hunt, Capital CFT

## Large alcid sp.

12/11 19 Jeffreys Ledge R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, et al.



*This Black Guillemot spent much of the winter in Rye Harbor, NH.*

*Photo by Kyle Wilmarth, 12-30-16.*

## Black Guillemot

12/11 11 Jeffreys Ledge R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Wisley,  
J. Sparrell, J. Pettipas, S. Bennett

12/14 9 offshore waters, NH J. Maher

12/25 3 Rye Harbor M. & R. Suomala

02/15 2 Seabrook Beach S. Mirick

## Aloid sp.

12/11 4 Jeffreys Ledge R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, et al.

02/12 4 Rye Harbor SP K. Fenton

## Black-legged Kittiwake

12/07 5 offshore waters, NH J. Lambert, S. Mirick

12/11 11 Jeffreys Ledge R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Wisley,  
J. Sparrell, J. Pettipas, S. Bennett

12/14 14 offshore waters, NH J. Maher

12/24 1 Seabrook Beach S. Mirick

01/02 1 Seabrook Beach Z. Cornell

02/05 1 Seabrook Beach Z. Cornell, R. Suomala

## Bonaparte's Gull

12/07 4 Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland S. Mirick

12/11 12 Rye Harbor SP K. Couture

12/25 28 Odiorne Point SP, Rye M. & R. Suomala

01/03 1 Eel Pond, Rye J. Lambert

## Iceland Gull

12/08 1 Hedgehog Pond, Salem K. Wilmarth

12/11 3 Jeffreys Ledge R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S. Wisley,  
J. Sparrell, J. Pettipas, S. Bennett

12/18 1 Nashua Airport C. McPherson

12/21 2 Pickering Ponds, Rochester J. Lambert

12/29 4 Rochester WTP M. Harvey

Date	#	Location	Observer
01/16	1	Eel Pond, Rye	B. Griffith
02/14	2	Hedgehog Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth
02/17	1	Stark Landing, Manchester	F. Marengi, J. Dwyer
02/20	2	Exeter WTP	K. Klapper, K. Fenton
02/28	2	Derry WTP	S. Mirick

**Iceland Gull - Thayer's subsp.**

12/11	1	Jeffreys Ledge	J. Pettipas, et al.
12/29	1	Eel Pond, Rye	J. Lambert

**Lesser Black-backed Gull**

12/26	1	Peirce Island, Portsmouth	R. Karchnyak
01/03	1	Hampton Beach SP	J. Lambert
01/08	1	Huckleberry Ln., Hampton	C. Caron
01/10	1	Rye Harbor SP	J. Maher
01/14	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	J. Pettipas, S. Wrisley, J. Lambert, A. Murray
01/16	1	Hampton Harbor parking lot, Seabrook	J. Lambert, K. Fenton, B. Griffith
01/25	1	Eel Pond, Rye	H. Bauer
01/28	1	Hampton Harbor inlet	C. Ross
02/05	1	Eel Pond, Rye	K. Fenton



*The Seabrook Glaucous Gull returned for its ninth winter, taking up its usual perch on the bathtubs by Hampton Harbor, photographed there by Leo McKillop, 12-24-16.*

**Glaucous Gull**

12/06	1	Mascoma R., Lebanon	S. Weaver
12/18	1	Oyster R. Landing, Durham	S. Mirick
12/21	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	J. Lambert
12/24	1	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	M. Watson, S. Mirick
12/25	1	Merrimack R. between Granite St. & Notre Dame Bridge, Manchester	J. Maher
01/04	1	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard, A. Murray, Z. Cornell
01/17	1	Rye Harbor SP	S. McCarthy, C. Nims. B. Crowley, J. Scott
02/26	1	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	S. Mroz

**Owls through Wrens**



*Great Gray Owl by Gerald E. Lynch, 2-25-17, Newport, NH.*

Snowy Owls, frequently the stars of the birding show on the Seacoast, were present for less than one month of the winter season, from January 9 to 28, with several sightings away from the coast in early February. They were not observed again until the spring season. The most excitement was generated just at the end of the winter season when a **Great Gray Owl** was located in Newport on February 25 and reported to NH Audubon. This sighting was part of an irruption that began in the Montreal area in January and extended to Ottawa and Kingston, Canada, eventually bringing birds to northern New York, Maine and New Hampshire. At the end of January the number of Great Gray Owls in Montreal was amazing (a quick review of the eBird data by Charlie Nims indicates upwards of 20-25 individuals), with one park hosting three different owls (and hundreds of photographers). Previous records reflect major incursions of this species in New Hampshire. For the winter of 1978-1979, Keith and Fox (2013) list a handful of reports ranging from Hancock to Bristol to Stratham, with two separate birds seen in Rye and then in Portsmouth. In the winter of 1985, they note that five owls were reported, ranging from Hillsborough to Concord, Rochester, Campton, and Monroe. In the winter of 2015-2016, there were multiple reports of Great Grays at various spots in the Northeast, including western Massachusetts, Maine, and Quebec, with at least three distinct birds seen in Montreal. Incursions are thought to relate to fluctuating rodent populations related to varying cone crops.

Another cooperative bird of the winter season was a **Red-headed Woodpecker** in Epping that was coming to a feeder. The homeowner, Lisa Alexandropoulos, was an exceptionally gracious host and over 25 different people provided eBird reports on this particular bird. About 60 miles to the north another Red-headed Woodpecker was frequenting a feeder on Lake Winnisquam in late January and early February. Red-bellied Woodpeckers were widely reported in the southern part of the state with winter season reports as far north as Hanover and Conway. Reports of Black-backed Woodpecker were scarce, with David Govatski's observations of them at Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge at the end of February being the only reports for the winter season.



*Red-headed Woodpecker by Steve Mirick, 2-18-17, Epping, NH.*

# WINTER SEASON

There were only two overwintering American Kestrels reported, one at Connor Farm in Exeter and the other at Woodmont Orchard in Hollis. There were no reports of Eastern Phoebe during the winter season, in contrast to the previous year when several were noted, including a late record established at the end of February. Northern Shrike reports while not numerous were widespread, with sightings in nine of the ten counties. Fish Crows appear to be on their way to becoming regular winter residents now with 14 observed in Salem in early January that were consistently hanging out at the shopping mall. A smaller group was observed in Exeter periodically from January 31 to February 22. Since 1950, the first New Hampshire record for Fish Crow was in 1971, by Davis Finch, et al. (*The Birds of New Hampshire*, Keith and Fox, 2013).

A Boreal Chickadee spent the winter at a feeder in downtown Littleton, an unusual location for this boreal species. While not taking Coos County by storm, there continued to be Tufted Titmouse reports in the north country during the winter season. Winter Wrens were observed as far north as Hanover and across the southern counties. Carolina Wrens were reported as far north as Jackson, Littleton, and Lisbon.

*Date # Location Observer*

## Eastern Screech-Owl

12/07	1	Greeley Park, Nashua	J. Maher
12/10	1	Hollis	J. Pettipas, S. Bennett, S. Wisley
12/17	2	Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick
12/17	1	Portsmouth East sector, Coastal CBC	L. Kras, B. Griffith
12/18	1	Beckwith Ballfields, Dover	J. Lambert
01/04	1	Edgewood Cemetery, Amherst St., Nashua	J. Maher
01/05	1	Hollis/Brookline HS	S. Wisley
01/07	1	Rt. 122 at Monument Square, Hollis	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
01/07	1	Cushing Ave., Nashua	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
01/16	1	Highland Ave., Salem	K. Wilmarth
01/18	1	Lake Shore Rd., Gilford	M. Coskren
01/28	1	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	K. Dorsey, K. Fenton

## Snowy Owl

01/09	1	Awcomin Marsh, Rye	S. Bennett, S. Wisley
01/09	1	Portsmouth Ave., Stratham	V. Porter
01/10	1	Hampton Beach SP	S. Bennett, K. Fenton, N. Marchessault, R. Prieto, A. Kallenbach
01/15	1	Hampton WTP	J. Lambert
01/22	1	Rye Harbor SP	L. McKillop, et al.
01/28	1	Awcomin Marsh, Rye	Z. Cornell, et al.
02/08	1	Briar Rd., Bedford	M. Matson

## Great Gray Owl

02/25	1	Belknap Ave. at Pine St., Newport	G. Lynch
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*Date # Location Observer*

## Northern Saw-whet Owl

01/02	1	Little River saltmarsh, N. Hampton	J. Pettipas, S. Wisley
01/28	1	Rye Recreation Area	Z. Cornell, P. Hunt, et al.
02/05	1	South Rd., Kensington	G. Gavutis Jr.
02/23	1	Rye Recreation Area	K. Towler
02/27	1	Lancy Brook wetland, Brookline	C. McPherson

## Red-headed Woodpecker

02/04	1	Bayshore Dr., Sanbornton	R. Johnson
02/12	1	Molly Way, Epping	L. Alexandropoulos
02/27	1	Molly Way, Epping	P. Kirkhart

## Red-bellied Woodpecker

12/17	15	Greenland Sector, Coastal CBC	S. Mirick
01/01	1	Lyme Rd., Hanover	J. & P. Norton
01/02	1	Loon Rock Rd., Holderness	I. MacLeod
01/21	1	Rt. 16, N. Conway	D. Walters

## Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

12/08	1	St. Joseph Cemetery, Bedford	T. McShane
12/19	1	Columbia Ave., Nashua	J. Maher
01/07	1	Badger Farm Rd., Wilton	S. Lemire
01/15	1	Hayes Park, Exeter	S. Mirick
01/31	1	Old Landing Rd., Durham	K. & F. Hochgraf
02/17	1	Oyster R. Landing, Durham	A. Murray
02/26	1	Webster St. at Bartlett Ave., Nashua	Z. Cornell

## Black-backed Woodpecker

02/24	3	Little Cherry Pond, Jefferson	D. Govatski
02/25	2	Mud Pond, Jefferson	D. Govatski



American Kestrel by Kyle Wilmarth, 1-27-17, Exeter, NH.

## American Kestrel

12/14	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
01/02	1	Conner Farm, Exeter	J. Sparrell
01/29	1	Conner Farm, Exeter	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
02/25	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson

## Merlin

12/18	1	Goodrums Crossing Rd., Westmoreland	P. Brown
12/30	1	Nashua Airport	C. McPherson
01/01	1	Manchester-Boston Regional Airport	R. Steber
01/02	1	Martel's Bait Shop, Laconia	R. Suomala
01/04	1	Strafford County Complex, Dover	D. Hubbard
01/07	1	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	J. Sparrell
01/10	1	Cedar Pt., Durham/Dover	R. Prieto
01/16	1	Lake St., Nashua	C. Sheridan

Date	#	Location	Observer
01/17	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	S. Wisley
01/17	1	Geremonty Dr. marsh, Salem	K. Wilmarth
01/19	1	Rye Harbor SP	J. Sparrell
02/28	2	Webster Ave., Hanover	A. Burnett

**Northern Shrike**

12/01	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
12/04	2	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
12/04	1	Upper Valley Plaza, W. Lebanon	K. Jones
12/05	1	Ten Rod Rd., Rochester	D. Hubbard
12/08	1	Nubanusit Neighborhood & Farm, Peterborough	N. White
12/14	1	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
12/16	1	Stockwell Rd., Lancaster	S.& D. Stoddard
12/17	1	Stone Hill Rd., Rumney	J. MacQueen
12/18	1	Seabrook Back Dunes	K. Wilmarth
12/21	1	Sugar R., Rt. 11, Sunapee	D. Jackson
12/23	1	Maglaras Park, Dover	S. Heron
12/30	1	Green Hill Road, Chatham	B. Crowley
01/17	1	Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey	C. Witko
02/02	1	Kimball Rd., Kensington	R. Steber, J. Scott
02/26	1	Warren St., Plymouth	I. MacLeod
02/28	1	Long Woods Rd. marsh, Deering	P. Brown



Gray Jay by Donna Ellis, 12-31-16, Mt. Jackson, NH.

**Gray Jay**

12/10	1	Mt. Pierce, Carroll	N. O'Reilly
12/11	2	Mt. Field, Bethlehem	M. Ocampo, N. O'Reilly
12/31	2	Webster-Jackson Trail, WMNF	D. Ellis
01/14	2	A-Z Trail at Mt. Tom spur, Bethlehem	D. Ellis
01/14	3	Mt. Field, Bethlehem	D. Ellis
01/20	9	Webster-Jackson Trail, WMNF	S. Heinrich
01/22	4	Deer Mountain SP, Pittsburg	S. McCarthy, C. Nims
02/16	2	Rt. 26, Errol	L.& P. Charron
02/24	2	Wildcat Mt. Ski Area, Pinkhams Grant	J. Keator
02/25	1	Management Ctr., Second College Grant	A. Burnett
02/26	2	Kendall Pond Trail, Second College Grant	A. Burnett, et al.

**American Crow**

12/14	2000	Hough St., Lebanon	K. McFarland
01/01	600	Merrimack R. between Granite St. & Notre Dame Bridge, Manchester	R. Steber

**Fish Crow**

01/04	1	East Ridge Rd., Merrimack	M. Jacobson
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Date	#	Location	Observer
01/08	14	Barnes & Noble, Rt. 28, Salem	K. Fenton
01/20	2	Kimball Rd., Kensington	K. Fenton
01/31	2	Lincoln St., Exeter	B. White
02/13	1	Caldwell Rd., Nashua	C. Sheridan
02/21	3	UNH, Durham	M. Jacobson
02/24	3	Great Pond, Kingston	S. Heron
02/25	6	Great Pond, Kingston	S. Heron
02/28	2	Horseshoe Pond, Merrimack	C. Sheridan

**Common Raven**

12/09	58	Hill Rd. meat pile, Dummer	R. Steber, C. Nims, J. Scott
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**Horned Lark**

12/08	2	Millican Nurseries, Chichester	J. Lambert
12/10	165	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
12/18	32	Morrills Farm, Penacook	P. Hunt
01/02	50	Hampton Beach SP	R. Prieto
01/07	75	Rt. 155A farm fields, Durham	K. Dorsey
01/07	62	Pease Int'l. Tradeport	K. Fenton
01/14	150	Stuart Farm, Stratham	S. Mirick
01/15	133	South Rd., E. Kingston	K. Wilmarth
01/21	92	River Rd., Stratham	S. Mirick
02/10	82	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd., Walpole	D. Clark
02/18	185	Pinnacle Ln., Walpole	D. Clark
02/20	1	Berlin Rd., Dummer	J. Lambert
02/24	90	Exeter WTP	C. McPherson
02/26	1	Pontook Reservoir, Dummer	B. Crowley
02/28	10	Lower Meadow, Charlestown	J. Russo



Boreal Chickadee by David Govatski, 12-25-16, Littleton, NH.

**Boreal Chickadee**

12/19	2	Wildcat Mt. Ski Area, Pinkhams Grant	J. Keator
12/22	2	Mt. Tecumseh, Waterville Valley	S. Heinrich
12/24	7	Pittsburg, NH	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth
12/25	1	Owen Dr., Littleton	D.& M. Boulanger
01/08	6	Carter Notch, Beans Purchase	B. Lagasse
01/20	4	Webster-Jackson Trail, WMNF	S. Heinrich
01/21	3	Mt. Madison, Low & Burbanks Grant	J. Toledano
01/26	2	Loon Mt. north peak	B. Schultz
01/31	1	Owen Dr., Littleton	Z. Cornell
02/18	2	Lafayette Campground, Lincoln	N. O'Reilly
02/26	1	Kendall Pond Trail, Second College Grant	A. Burnett, et al.

# WINTER SEASON

*Date # Location Observer*

## Tufted Titmouse

12/15	1	Akers Pond, Errol	D. Govatski, C. Repasz, L. Charron, C. Martin
01/10	1	Water St., Lancaster	S.& D. Stoddard
02/05	1	Water St., Lancaster	A. Griffin
02/26	1	Akers Pond, Errol	L. Charron

## Winter Wren

12/11	1	Westmoreland boat launch	A. Burnett
12/11	1	Woodward Rd., Westmoreland	A. Burnett
12/26	1	Sagamore Ave., Portsmouth	S. Mirick
12/28	1	South Rd., E. Kingston	D. Finch
01/01	1	Occom Pond, Hanover	S.& D. Hardy, E. Hack
01/01	1	Milford Fish Hatchery	R. Suomala
01/11	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	C. Breen
01/12	1	Horseshoe Pond, Merrimack	M. Jacobson
01/22	1	Blake's Ln., Hampton Falls	S. Mirick
02/11	1	Great Meadow, Hollis	C. McPherson
02/21	2	Yudicky Farm/Southwest Park, Nashua	C. Sheridan

## Carolina Wren

12/18	1	Green Hill Rd., Jackson	J. Maher
12/25	1	Owen Dr., Littleton	D.& M. Boulanger
01/12	1	Akwa Marina, Laconia	I. MacLeod
02/20	1	Mascoma R., Lebanon	K. Jones
02/21	1	Central St., Lisbon	K. Hiller

## Kinglets through Waxwings

A Ruby-crowned Kinglet delighted birders in Rye with regular visits to a feeder at a home where one was seen throughout the previous winter, leading to speculation about whether it could be the same individual. In February, a **Townsend's Solitaire** made a brief one-day stop in Jeff MacQueen's yard in Orford, and several birders were able to observe it. This bird joins fewer than 10 accepted reports for Townsend's in the state since it was first documented during the Seacoast Christmas Bird Count in 1981 (*The Birds of New Hampshire*, Keith and Fox, 2013).



*Varied Thrush by homeowner Butch Thompson, 1-23-17, Swanzey, NH.*

A **Varied Thrush** visited a feeder in Swanzey from December 12 to February 19. The homeowners and neighbors were gracious and patient in allowing birders to watch for the thrush. Approximately 50 different birders filed

eBird reports of this single bird. There were far fewer reports of Hermit Thrush and Gray Catbird in the winter season, which can skew the eBird data to leave the impression that Varied Thrush was more plentiful. Another Varied Thrush was reported in New Ipswich in mid-February and had been coming to feeders for about three weeks.

A nice group of 10 American Pipits was observed at Rye Harbor State Park in January, a high count for this winter season in the state. Bohemian Waxwings voraciously ate their way south, but none were observed in any of the southern counties (Cheshire, Hillsborough, and Rockingham) during the winter season.

*Date # Location Observer*

## Ruby-crowned Kinglet

12/02	1	South Mill Pond, Portsmouth	J. Sparrell
12/16	1	Woodward Rd., Westmoreland	A. Burnett
12/17	1	Hinsdale Setbacks	C. Ross
12/30	1	West Rd., Rye	B.& H. Blanchard
01/14	1	Dearborn Rd., Greenland	S. Mirick
01/16	1	Prospect St., Hinsdale	C. Caron
01/28	1	West Rd., Rye	P. Hunt, et al.

## Eastern Bluebird

12/13	18	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard
01/02	19	Hunkins Pond Rd., Sanbornton	J. Lambert, B. Griffith
01/14	16	Hollis/Brookline HS	C. McPherson
01/21	40	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson

## Townsend's Solitaire

02/23	1	Rt. 25A, Orford	J. MacQueen, et al.
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## Hermit Thrush

12/05	1	South Rd., Kensington	G. Gavutis Jr.
12/06	1	Surry Mountain Lake	P. Kirkhart
12/18	1	Sunnyside Dr., Durham	S. Mirick
12/23	1	Great Bay NWR	A. Alamshah
01/11	1	Brookside WS, S. Hampton	G. Gavutis Jr.
01/14	1	Airfield Dr., Rye	S. Mirick
01/15	1	Contoocook R. Park/Island Shores Estates, Penacook	P. Hunt
01/25	1	Douglass St., Keene	S. Weber
02/18	1	Great Meadow, Hollis	C. McPherson

## American Robin

12/09	200	South Rd., Kensington	G. Gavutis Jr.
01/29	500	Brookdale Fruit Farm, Hollis	C. McPherson
02/03	200	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
02/22	200	Silent Way, Keene	E. Synnott

## Varied Thrush

12/12	1	Westport Village Rd., Swanzey	F.& G. Thompson
02/12	1	Mason Rd., New Ipswich	E. Benjamin
02/19	1	Westport Village Rd., Swanzey	S. Surner

## Gray Catbird

12/17	1	Squamscott Rd., Stratham	S. Mirick
12/17	1	Portsmouth East sector, Coastal CBC	L. Kras, B. Griffith

Date	#	Location	Observer
12/18	1	Cocheco St., Dover	J. Lambert
12/19	1	Malnati Farm by Rt. 12, Walpole	D. Clark
12/26	1	Woodland Rd., N. Hampton	S. Mirick
12/26	1	Farm Ln., Seabrook	S. Mirick
01/21	1	Beckman's Landing, Seabrook	S. Mirick
02/07	1	Cotton Farm Ln., N. Hampton	S. McNeff
02/25	1	Sawyer Farm, River Rd., Walpole	P. Brown



American Pipit by Leo McKillop, 1-19-17, Rye Harbor SP, NH.

**American Pipit**

12/07	1	Rye Harbor	H. Otto
12/19	1	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd., Walpole	K. Cox, D. Clark
12/20	2	Rye Harbor SP	J. Lambert
01/19	10	Rye Harbor SP	L. McKillop
02/23	1	Rye Harbor SP	M. Watson

**Bohemian Waxwing**

12/11	60	Berlin	B. Crowley
12/11	2	Plymouth State University	J. Sullivan
12/12	250	Gorham	W. O'Brien
12/23	7	Boat Landing Rd., Orford	J. MacQueen
01/02	178	Great Rock Rd., Sandwich	K. Klapper, K. Fenton
01/05	400	Mt. Forist St., Berlin	W. O'Brien
01/14	56	Dahl WS, Conway	S. McCarthy, C. Nims
01/23	7	Sargents Place, Gilford	I. MacLeod
02/04	210	Starbucks, Rt. 16, Conway	M. Foster
02/18	150	Plymouth State University	N. Sharp
02/19	225	Wildcat River valley trails, Jackson	J. Maher
02/19	42	Merrymeeting Rd., New Durham	J. Lambert
02/21	60	Sunny Ln., Sunapee	D. Jackson
02/25	100	Hutchins St., Berlin	K. Dube, Seacoast CFT

**Longspurs to Finches**

Single Orange-crowned, Nashville, and Black-throated Green Warblers were all noted in December. Other warbler species reported were four Pine Warbler sightings and two Wilson's Warblers, also in December. A Pine Warbler spent most of the winter season coming to a feeder

in Newmarket. The only reports of Yellow-rumped Warbler or Common Yellowthroat for the winter season were in mid-January.




Rusty Blackbird by Len Medlock, 1-28-17, Kensington, NH.

A few Field, Chipping, Fox, and Swamp Sparrows lingered into the winter. A Fox Sparrow was reported from Errol in early December, an apparent first record for Coos County in the winter season. A single **Lincoln's Sparrow** was seen in Kensington in February, joining less than a dozen reports of the bird in previous winter seasons (*The Birds of New Hampshire*, Keith and Fox, 2013). A small flock of Rusty Blackbirds coming to a feeder in Kensington in January and February provided nice opportunities for observation. Large mixed flocks of Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, and Brown-headed Cowbird arrived on the Seacoast with the record warmth in late February, an early date for these species at these numbers, and several reports of flocks were noted as far north as Errol, as well, where they typically arrive much later. There was only one Baltimore Oriole this winter, at a feeder in Rochester, as compared with five last winter.

A group of eight **Red Crossbills** was found along the Seacoast and one was seen in Amherst, but there were no reports of White-winged Crossbills this winter. Common Redpoll sightings were scarce; however, a group of 40 birds was seen in Milan. Pine Siskins were few with the largest flock being a group of 12 in Littleton. Evening Grosbeaks were seen in Merrimack and Strafford counties and all of the western counties (Coos, Grafton, Sullivan, and Cheshire). Chickwolnepy Road in Milan provided the most sustained sightings and highest counts for this species throughout the winter.

Date	#	Location	Observer
<b>Lapland Longspur</b>			
01/07	3	Pease Golf Course, Portsmouth	J. Lambert
02/16	1	Agway, Main St., Walpole	C. Ross
02/23	1	Chickering Farm, Westmoreland	D. Clark, S. Heller

# WINTER SEASON

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>				
<b>Snow Bunting</b>				<b>Field Sparrow</b>							
12/29	50	Rt. 25C, Warren	K. Settel	12/20	1	Strafford County Complex, Dover	D. Hubbard				
01/07	400	former Cate's Farm, Rt. 25C, Warren	E. Marie	01/03	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson				
01/08	75	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson	01/19	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	S. Wong				
01/10	140	Rt. 155A farm fields, Durham	K. Dorsey	02/11	1	Nashua Airport	C. McPherson				
01/19	25	Kelley farm, Milan	K. Dube, Mass. Audubon FT	02/19	1	Nashua Airport	C. Sheridan				
01/21	30	Hampton Beach SP	G. Tillman	<b>Fox Sparrow</b>							
02/15	40	Exeter WTP	D. Hubbard	12/04	1	Tracy Dr., Errol	L.& P. Charron				
02/18	90	Walton Rd., Seabrook	J. Lambert	12/05	1	N. River Rd., Epping	G. Tillman				
<b>Orange-crowned Warbler</b>				12/05	1	South Rd., Kensington	G. Gavutis Jr.				
12/09	1	Maglaras Park, Dover	S. Heron	12/05	1	Packers Falls Rd., Lee	M. Hatfield				
<b>Nashville Warbler</b>				12/10	1	Seabrook Greyhound Park	J. Lambert, S. Mirick				
12/10	1	Seabrook Greyhound Park	J. Lambert, S. Mirick	12/18	1	Appleton Rd., Concord	R. Suomala				
12/11	1	Seabrook	K. Wilmarth, S. Mirick	12/18	1	Polly Ann Park, Dover	J. Lambert				
<b>Common Yellowthroat</b>				01/14	1	Caswell Dr., Greenland	S. Mirick				
01/14	1	Woodland Rd., N. Hampton	S. Mirick	02/09	1	Mack Hill Rd., Amherst	J. Reisert				
<b>Pine Warbler</b>				02/09	1	Pleasant St., Goffstown	K. Cole				
12/05	1	Bay Rd., Newmarket	H. Chary	<b>Savannah Sparrow</b>							
12/18	1	Lamprey R. Preserve, Durham	K. Dorsey	12/01	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson				
12/25	1	Pilgrim Dr., Litchfield	R. DeMidio	12/02	1	Hawkin's Farm, Salem	K. Wilmarth				
12/31	1	Bohanon Bridge Rd., Brookline	C. McPherson	12/11	10	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. Sheridan, C. McPherson				
02/13	1	Pickpocket Rd., Brentwood	E. Shipley	12/17	5	Squamscott Rd., Stratham	S. Mirick				
02/21	1	Bay Rd., Newmarket	H. Chary	12/19	1	W. Portsmouth St., Concord	D. Lania				
<b>Yellow-rumped Warbler</b>				12/21	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	M. McCloy				
01/22	1	Dearborn Rd., Greenland	B. Griffith	12/28	8	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson				
<b>Black-throated Green Warbler</b>				01/08	8	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson				
12/04	1	Greeley Park, Nashua	C. Sheridan	01/27	3	Newington Rd., Greenland	B. Griffith				
<b>Wilson's Warbler</b>				02/03	7	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson				
12/04	1	South Mill Pond, Portsmouth	J. Sparrell	<b>Lincoln's Sparrow</b>							
12/10	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	L. McKillop	02/01	1	South Rd., Kensington	G. Gavutis Jr.				
<b>Chipping Sparrow</b>				<b>Swamp Sparrow</b>							
12/18	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson	12/18	6	Oyster R. Sector, Lee-Durham CBC	S. Mirick				
12/30	1	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook R., Pittsfield	G. Robbins	12/31	1	N. Pepperell Rd., Hollis	M. Resch				
01/21	2	River Rd., Stratham	S. Mirick	01/07	2	Walton Rd., Seabrook	S. Mirick				
01/29	1	River Rd., Stratham	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala	01/15	1	Borthwick Ave. marsh, Portsmouth	S. Mirick				
02/25	1	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook R., Pittsfield	A. Robbins	<b>Eastern Towhee</b>							
				12/12	1	Kenney Rd., New Ipswich	N. Moreau				
				12/18	1	Taylor Rd., Dover	J. Lambert				
				02/09	1	Newmarket Rd., Durham	D. Mooney				
				02/17	1	Kenney Rd., New Ipswich	N. Moreau				
				<b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>				02/23	100	Borthwick Ave. marsh, Portsmouth	G. Tillman
				02/24	200	Goss Farm, Rye	S. Mirick				
02/25	1000	Bodwell Farm, E. Kingston	S. Mirick								
02/25	1	Tracy Dr., Errol	L. Charron								
02/25	120	Exeter WTP	J. Lambert								
02/25	30	Pinkham Notch	L. Lane								
02/25	23	Pinkham Notch	S. Shapiro								
02/25	150	Rt. 12 by Malnati Farm, Walpole	P. Brown								
02/26	30	Fisk St., Groveton	M. Annis								
02/27	240	Airport Rd., Swanzey	C. Witko, S. Lamonde, F. King								

Field Sparrow by Christopher McPherson, 2-13-17, Nashua Airport, NH.



Date # Location Observer



Rusty Blackbird by Steve Mirick, 2-11-17, Kensington, NH.

**Rusty Blackbird**

12/07	1	Rt. 137, Hancock	P. Brown
12/08	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard
12/12	1	South Rd., E. Kingston	D. Finch
01/15	7	Kimball Rd., Kensington	D. Lipsy
01/20	6	Kimball Rd., Kensington	K. Fenton
01/21	6	Kimball Rd., Kensington	M. Watson
01/29	6	Kimball Rd., Kensington	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
02/18	5	Kimball Rd., Kensington	C. Caron

**Common Grackle**

12/05	1	Mechanic St., Gorham	W. O'Brien
12/09	7	Campton	D. Dodge
02/17	25	Plaice Cove, Hampton	C. Kuzminski
02/23	100	Borthwick Ave. marsh, Portsmouth	G. Tillman
02/24	100	Hawkin's Farm, Salem	K. Wilmarth
02/25	1	Rt. 26, Errol	L. Charron
02/25	120	Downing Ct., Exeter	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
02/26	500	Chapmans Landing, Stratham	S. Mirick
02/28	3	Milan	L. Charron
02/28	100	Peanut Trail, Newton	H. Burns

**Brown-headed Cowbird**

01/15	28	Hampton WTP	J. Lambert
02/25	5	Bean Rd., Center Harbor	K. Klapper
02/25	15	Rt. 111, Kingston	S. Mirick
02/25	100	Boggy Meadow Farm, River Rd., Walpole	P. Brown
02/26	20	Rt. 107A at Rt. 108, E. Kingston	K. Towler, J. Sparrell

**Baltimore Oriole**

12/12	1	Ten Rod Rd., Rochester	K. Dillon
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**Pine Grosbeak**

12/09	23	downtown Berlin	C. Nims, J. Scott, R. Steber
12/11	15	Lancaster school	S.& D. Stoddard
12/15	40	Veterans Memorial Park, Berlin	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
12/18	3	Dogford Rd., Hanover	S. Merker, N. Krauss
12/23	25	Pittsburg	A. Altena, K. Wilmarth
12/28	12	Valley Cross Rd., Jackson	R. Steber
01/26	9	Soft Touch Farm, Ctr. Sandwich	K. Klapper
02/16	23	Rt. 26, Errol	L.& P. Charron
02/25	9	Lancaster school	S.& D. Stoddard

Date # Location Observer

**Purple Finch**

12/04	4	Piscassic Greenway, Newfields	S. Dennett
12/07	2	Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham	P. Miliotis
12/18	1	Madbury	L. Medlock
01/04	1	Thoreau's Landing, Nashua	J. Maher
01/06	10	Berlin	W. O'Brien
02/21	1	Ranger Rd., Hollis	C. Sheridan

**Red Crossbill**

12/03	8	N. Hampton State Beach	J. Lambert, et al.
01/01	1	Ponemah Bog WS, Amherst	P.& J. Brown

**Common Redpoll**

12/14	4	Crawford Rd., Pittsburg	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
12/17	2	Seabrook	H. Stevens
12/18	1	Strafford County Complex, Dover	L. Medlock
01/09	4	Jackson village	J. Maher
01/29	40	Chickwolnepy Rd., Milan	T. Peterson
02/06	15	Mechanic St., Gorham	W. O'Brien
02/17	1	Barker Rd., Sutton	R. Gray

**Pine Siskin**

12/20	1	Federal Hill Rd., Milford	M. Nickerson
12/22	4	Woodward Rd., Westmoreland	A. Burnett
12/25	1	South Rd., Kensington	G. Gavutis Jr.
01/20	12	Kilburn St., Littleton	R. Suomala
01/23	4	Sargent Hill Rd., W. Chesterfield	J. Burge
02/20	5	Goffstown	M. Palomino
02/21	3	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook R., Pittsfield	A. Robbins
02/26	3	Old Walpole Rd., Keene	T. Parody

**Evening Grosbeak**

12/03	11	Hammond Hollow, Gilsum	M. Wright
12/07	40	Water St., Lancaster	S.& D. Stoddard
12/12	26	Bailey Rd., Jefferson	D. Govatski
01/07	29	E. Whitefield Rd., Whitefield	S.& D. Stoddard
01/28	70	Lancaster school	S.& D. Stoddard
01/29	90	Chickwolnepy Rd., Milan	T. Peterson
02/10	10	Village Cemetery, Church St., Marlow	C. Ross
02/18	25	Balsam Ridge Tree Farm, Canaan	S.& R. Weaver
02/26	36	Cornish	D. Jackson



Phil Brown took this "selfie" of his team by Third Connecticut Lake on the Pittsburg Christmas Bird Count, 12-14-16: left to right, Katrina Fenton, Glen Chretien, Henry Walters, Phil. Turn the page for the Christmas Bird Count Summary.

# Christmas Bird Count Summary 2016-2017

by David Deifk



*Christmas Bird Count volunteer compilers on the Errol-Umbagog CBC, from left to right, Craig Repasz AMC-Crawford Notch compiler, Chris Martin Errol compiler, and David Govatski Littleton compiler and Pittsburg co-compiler. Photo by Lori Charron, 12-15-16.*

This year's Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) were held between December 14, 2016 and January 3, 2017 (the official count period ends January 5). There are 19 counts whose center is within New Hampshire borders. Only 18 counts were run this year as the Isles of Shoals Count was cancelled for the second year in a row because of weather issues. Although centered in Vermont, the Barnet and Saxtons River CBCs overlap into New Hampshire as well. Two of the New Hampshire counts have substantial overlap into neighboring states. The Hanover-Norwich CBC extends into Vermont and the Isles of Shoals CBC extends substantially into Maine. Three other counts have minor overlap into neighboring states as well, those being Errol-Umbagog and North Conway into Maine and a tiny bit of Nashua into Massachusetts.

Total species across all counts were 123 versus 148 last year. This is somewhat emblematic of the overall results this year that I would characterize as being lackluster. A major factor seems to be weather conditions on the Coastal NH count (see the article by Scott Heron on page 25). Total species was only 87 versus the usual average of well over 100. This would certainly depress the state total as well. Coastal NH set no state highs or even count highs this year either.

There were no new species for the state this year. The total of species ever seen remains at 249. There was only one species, Wild Turkey on the Lee-Durham count, that set a new record high count for the state; however, Nashua's four Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers were equal to the state high set by the Coastal NH CBC in 2013. Last year there were seven state highs which was about average. There were only 19 individual count high records this year versus 52 last year which was a typical average. There were only three species new to their respective counts versus 13 last year. The new

species were Northern Pintail in North Conway, Eastern Screech-Owl on the Hanover-Norwich count, and Ruddy Duck for the Laconia count.

As for waterfowl, American Black Duck was substantially lower and Mallard modestly lower than last year's count. There was one inland scoter record, a White-winged on the Keene count. All other scoters were recorded on the Coastal count. Hooded Merganser numbers fell off of last year's high to a more typical number. Common Merganser was about half its historic average.

Bald Eagles had set a new record in 2015 with a total of 72 birds being seen statewide on 14 counts. This year that record was exceeded with 77 birds, also on 14 counts. There were two additional count week records. This is the third year in a row setting a record. As late as 1999, state totals were only in the single digits.

As for irruptive finches, Purple Finch fell to only 41 from a notable high of 1,800 last year. This was even less than two years ago. Common Redpoll was virtually absent, similar to last year. Pine Siskin also fell off of last year's 3,006 to a minimal 42. Evening Grosbeaks have been on a downward slide over the last 25 years. Last year, they were virtually absent with only three seen in one count (Keene). They bounced back to a total of 66 birds seen on five counts.

There was one outstanding report from the Saxtons River (Vermont) count. A Black Vulture was seen on the New Hampshire side. This is only the second CBC State Record. Previously, Nashua had the only record (1994).

## Individual Count Highlights

### Nashua-Hollis

- Count High: Cooper's Hawk, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker which tied the state high of four

### Peterborough-Hancock

- Count High: Tufted Titmouse, Eastern Bluebird
- Barred Owl equaled previous count high

### Keene

- White-winged Scoter was seen for the third time. This was the only inland scoter in the state. Wild Turkey, Bald Eagle, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Mockingbird and Eastern Bluebird had their second highest counts.
- A new addition to the count was a Varied Thrush seen during the Count Week. There are only four previous count day records for the entire state making it a very rare find.

### Coastal NH

- Peregrine Falcon had its second highest count as did Gray Catbird. Orange-crowned Warbler was seen for the fourth time, one of only three warblers seen in the state this year.



David Hoitt first heard about the Varied Thrush in Swanzeey when he was covering his Keene CBC sector on 12-18-16. It did not appear that day, but the homeowners, Francis (Butch) and Ginny Thompson, saw the bird during count week and provided a good description to David. He went back on 12-28-16, saw the bird, and got photo confirmation. He also loaned the Thompsons a camera with which they took this photo later in January. By then the thrush was being enjoyed by many birders.

#### Lee-Durham

- New state count high: Wild Turkey (only state count high in the state this year)
- Count high: Lesser Black-backed Gull tied its previous count high, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, and Eastern Towhee.
- Tufted Titmouse had its second highest count.

#### Concord

- Count high: Rock Pigeon and Tufted Titmouse. Bald Eagle tied the previous count high.
- Mallard, Wild Turkey, and Northern Mockingbird had their second highest counts.



Stan Brailler watching for ducks at sunset on Lake Winnisquam during the Laconia-New Hampton CBC, 1-2-17 by Rebecca Suomala.

#### Laconia-New Hampton

- Count high: Lesser Scaup, Eastern Bluebird
- New to Count: Ruddy Duck
- Pileated Woodpecker and Red-bellied Woodpecker had their second highest count.

#### Hanover-Norwich

- First count record: Eastern Screech-Owl
- Count high: Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Mockingbird, Eastern Bluebird

#### Baker Valley

- Bald Eagle and Hairy Woodpecker had their second highest counts.

#### Littleton

- Bohemian Waxwing had its second highest count. Yellow-rumped Warbler was seen for the second time, one of only three warblers seen in the state this year.

#### Grafton-Bristol

- Mallard and Eastern Bluebird had their second highest counts.

#### Errol-Umbagog

- Count high: White-breasted Nuthatch tied its previous high.



Three Gray Jays on the Errol CBC, 12-15-16 by Zeke Cornell, and a group of Pine Grosbeaks in the road on the Pittsburg CBC, 12-14-16.

#### Pittsburg

- Count high: Bald Eagle tied its previous high.
- Second count record: Ring-billed Gull

#### North Conway

- First count record: Northern Pintail
- Peregrine Falcon was seen for the first time during count week.

#### Lake Sunapee

- Mallard and Belted Kingfisher had their second highest counts.

#### Manchester

- Count high: Barrow's Goldeneye, Cooper's Hawk
- Eastern Towhee was seen for the third time; one of only three for the state this year.

#### Sandwich

- Count high: Wild Turkey, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Snow Bunting, Bohemian Waxwing, Barred Owl tied previous high counts.

#### AMC-Crawford Notch

- Hairy Woodpecker had its second highest count.

# 117th Christmas Bird Count: Dec. 14, 2016 - Jan. 3, 2017

Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak	Lit	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
Canada Goose	581	-	11	2206	224	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	21	1	-	-	<b>3051</b>
Wood Duck	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Gadwall	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Eurasian Wigeon	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
American Wigeon	-	-	-	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	55
American Black Duck	14	-	60	1151	297	11	20	4	-	5	5	-	-	-	8	6	4	-	<b>1585</b>
Mallard	280	-	86	918	598	514	753	497	-	-	80	6	10	14	230	311	1	-	<b>4298</b>
Northern Shoveler	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Northern Pintail	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*2	-	-	-	-	4
Green-winged Teal	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Green-winged Teal	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ring-necked Duck	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Greater Scaup	-	-	-	806	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>807</b>
Lesser Scaup	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Common Eider	-	-	-	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
Surf Scoter	-	-	-	70	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
White-winged Scoter	-	-	1	48	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49
Black Scoter	-	-	-	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
Long-tailed Duck	-	-	-	13	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
Bufflehead	-	-	-	33	160	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	197
Common Goldeneye	19	-	-	192	33	11	194	2	-	-	2	6	-	-	6	82	-	-	547
Barrow's Goldeneye	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	5
Hooded Merganser	16	-	6	18	9	4	156	10	-	-	3	1	-	-	22	1	3	-	249
Common Merganser	85	-	2	21	10	7	45	16	-	-	13	9	1	-	4	26	8	-	247
Red-br. Merganser	-	-	CW	109	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	121
Ruddy Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4
Ruffed Grouse	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	1	1	1	CW	1	1	2	16
Wild Turkey	27	260	164	53	**382	134	162	234	48	5	16	6	46	86	71	11	<b>190</b>	CW	<b>1895</b>
Red-throated Loon	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10
Common Loon	-	-	-	38	1	-	8	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	49
Pied-billed Grebe	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Horned Grebe	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Red-necked Grebe	-	-	-	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25
Double-cr. Cormorant	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Great Cormorant	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Great Blue Heron	1	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Turkey Vulture	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Northern Harrier	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2

Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 123

CW = Count Week

Nsh = Nashua-Hollis (1/1/2017)

Pet = Peterborough-Hancock (12/31/2016)

Kee = Keene (12/18/2016)

Cst = Coastal NH (12/17/2016)

Lee = Lee-Durham (12/18/2016)

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Grf = Grafton-Bristol (12/26/2016)

Erl = Errol-Umbagog (12/15/2016)

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Sun = Lake Sunapee (12/17/2016)

Man = Manchester (12/18/2016)

San = Sandwich (1/2/2017)

Amc = AMC-Crawford Notch (12/17/2016)

\* = New Species to a Count

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***Bold italic=new individual count high***

Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak	Lit	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
Sharp-shinned Hawk	4	CW	3	-	4	4	3	-	-	-	1	-	-		CW	1	CW	-	<b>20</b>
Cooper's Hawk	<b>15</b>	1	4	7	5	5	2	4	-	-	-	-	-		CW	7	-	-	<b>50</b>
Northern Goshawk	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	CW	-	<b>1</b>
Bald Eagle	5	4	6	4	<b>17</b>	5	5	7	2	1	CW	5	10	1	CW	3	3	-	<b>78</b>
Red-tailed Hawk	43	6	15	9	29	17	4	7	-	-	CW	1	1		-	11	1	-	<b>144</b>
Dunlin	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>2</b>
Purple Sandpiper	-	-	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>20</b>
Razorbill	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Ring-billed Gull	102	-	9	165	377	29	236	-	-	-	-	-	1		CW	113	2	-	<b>1034</b>
Herring Gull	62	-	1	567	1609	7	19	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	13	1	-	<b>2279</b>
Iceland Gull	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>5</b>
Lesser Bla.-bac. Gull	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>3</b>
Glaucous Gull	-	-	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>5</b>
Great Bla.-bac. Gull	45	-	1	43	253	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	22	-	-	<b>365</b>
Rock Pigeon	750	91	342	630	283	<b>929</b>	313	690	1	127	60	-	2	23	54	358	25	CW	<b>4678</b>
Mourning Dove	412	132	391	244	342	232	249	344	36	51	10	10	9	85	83	76	112	9	<b>2827</b>
Eastern Screech-owl	<b>2</b>	-	-	3	1	-	-	*1	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>7</b>
Barred Owl	1	4	4	2	2	1	-	4	-	2	-	-	-	CW	1	-	6	-	<b>27</b>
N. Saw-whet Owl	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Belted Kingfisher	6	-	4	4	6	1	2	-	-	-	CW	-	-		2	-	1	-	<b>26</b>
Red-bel. Woodpecker	51	22	16	35	53	16	11	<b>6</b>	-	-	-	-	-		CW	17	<b>6</b>	-	<b>233</b>
Ylw.-bel. Sapsucker	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>4</b>
Downy Woodpecker	103	91	45	72	109	70	81	48	9	14	4	9	4	35	15	58	46	10	<b>823</b>
Hairy Woodpecker	37	55	30	11	29	28	41	46	4	18	3	12	8	19	17	17	57	11	<b>443</b>
Bla.-bac. Woodpecker	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Northern Flicker	-	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	2	CW	-	<b>7</b>
Northern Flicker	7	-	-	-	2	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>13</b>
Pileated Woodpecker	12	13	7	3	2	9	14	6	1	CW	-	2	4	5	1	3	13	1	<b>96</b>
American Kestrel	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Merlin	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>5</b>
Peregrine Falcon	CW	-	-	2	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	<b>6</b>
Northern Shrike	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	-	2	1	CW	-	1	-	-	<b>8</b>
Gray Jay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	12		-	-	-	1	<b>18</b>
Blue Jay	523	536	353	306	565	299	575	389	124	76	200	16	19	252	126	194	454	10	<b>5017</b>
American Crow	166	116	316	128	161	182	509	1843	42	26	45	9	23	80	50	105	50	2	<b>3853</b>
Fish Crow	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>CW</b>
Common Raven	10	27	13	1	11	4	11	39	5	16	4	22	28	32	3	2	13	5	<b>246</b>
Horned Lark	11	-	90	68	2	32	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	<b>203</b>
Black-cap. Chickadee	576	962	702	511	833	522	1018	888	123	271	300	322	524	417	261	224	761	178	<b>9393</b>

Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 123

CW = Count Week

Nsh = Nashua-Hollis (1/1/2017)

Pet = Peterborough-Hancock (12/31/2016)

Kee = Keene (12/18/2016)

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\* = New Species to a Count

\*\* = New high species count for the state

***Bold italic=new individual count high***

# 117th Christmas Bird Count: Dec. 14, 2016 - Jan. 3, 2017 — continued

Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak	Lit	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total
Boreal Chickadee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	27		-	-	-	9	<b>39</b>
Tufted Titmouse	250	235	132	180	406	212	215	106	16	7	11	1	1	33	33	113	118	-	<b>2069</b>
Red-br. Nuthatch	2	70	25	8	12	7	8	17	2	18	1	32	66	27	4	2	25	8	<b>334</b>
White-br. Nuthatch	167	179	102	78	195	109	158	121	15	13	12	11	2	47	22	47	118	5	<b>1401</b>
Brown Creeper	10	5	3	-	11	1	2	1	-	2	-	2	4	4	1	3	8	CW	<b>57</b>
Winter Wren	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>3</b>
Carolina Wren	15	2	3	10	14	7	3	6	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	5	-	-	<b>67</b>
Golden-cr. Kinglet	3	6	2	4	21	4	21	3	-	6	-	16	13	1	1	1	4	23	<b>129</b>
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>CW</b>
Eastern Bluebird	115	84	57	69	113	44	55	12	-	-	10	-	-	-	9	5	-	-	<b>573</b>
Hermit Thrush	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>3</b>
American Robin	271	104	199	203	258	167	145	83	CW	13	15	-	-	3	9	43	77	-	<b>1590</b>
Varied Thrush	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>CW</b>
Gray Catbird	-	-	-	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>6</b>
N. Mockingbird	51	1	11	14	27	26	13	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	-	-	<b>167</b>
European Starling	1054	272	470	1077	664	1134	308	566	-	4	120	-	20	68	50	267	36	-	<b>6110</b>
American Pipit	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Bohemian Waxwing	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	73	-	-	1	3	-	-	178	-	<b>255</b>
Cedar Waxwing	220	118	169	1	145	126	106	87	-	-	3	-	-	45	133	48	163	-	<b>1452</b>
Snow Bunting	3	1	12	64	26	-	20	91	-	-	-	-	-	-	CW	-	78	-	<b>295</b>
Orange-cr. Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Pine Warbler	CW	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Ylw.-rumped Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Am. Tree Sparrow	218	84	144	169	105	86	53	95	8	25	-	22	4	22	17	12	29	1	<b>1094</b>
Chipping Sparrow	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Field Sparrow	CW	-	-	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>CW</b>
Fox Sparrow	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>3</b>
Dark-eyed Junco	521	189	417	347	561	297	230	261	55	10	50	12	-	29	48	191	40	-	<b>3287</b>
White-thr. Sparrow	18	4	12	57	57	18	7	14	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	13	CW	-	<b>202</b>
Savannah Sparrow	4	-	-	6	-	CW	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>10</b>
Song Sparrow	59	-	9	114	44	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	<b>236</b>
Swamp Sparrow	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Eastern Towhee	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	<b>3</b>
Northern Cardinal	177	62	102	226	210	140	110	106	13	8	5	5	-	24	36	52	37	-	<b>1313</b>
Red-winged Blackbird	-	-	-	23	3	3	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	<b>36</b>
Rusty Blackbird	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Common Grackle	-	-	-	7	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>9</b>
Br.-headed Cowbird	-	CW	-	3	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>6</b>
Pine Grosbeak	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	41	-	38	70	12	1	-	8	2	<b>175</b>
House Finch	99	30	49	71	109	87	73	125	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	18	-	-	<b>667</b>

Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 123

CW = Count Week

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Species	Nsh	Pet	Kee	Cst	Lee	Con	Lac	Han	Bak	Lit	Grf	Erl	Pit	Cnw	Sun	Man	San	Amc	Total	
Purple Finch	-	28	-	3	1	-	1	5	-	2	-	-	-	5	-	-	1	-	46	
Red Crossbill	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	
Common Redpoll	-	-	-	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	-	-	5	-	14	
Pine Siskin	-	2	12	1	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	2	2	1	-	1	1	1	43	
American Goldfinch	397	460	367	266	467	266	255	146	44	56	22	114	-	50	45	160	84	25	3224	
Evening Grosbeak	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	28	-	1	26	-	-	-	-	-	66	
House Sparrow	1354	144	248	1050	766	417	648	341	39	6	80	-	-	10	50	398	28	-	5579	
Number of Species	59	38	54	87	74	50	56	50	20	36	27	34	32	35	35	50	43	18	123	
Number of Participants	37	31	27	19	27	20	20	29	8	9	3	17	15	34	9	10	18	26		

Total Number of Species Across all CBCs: 123

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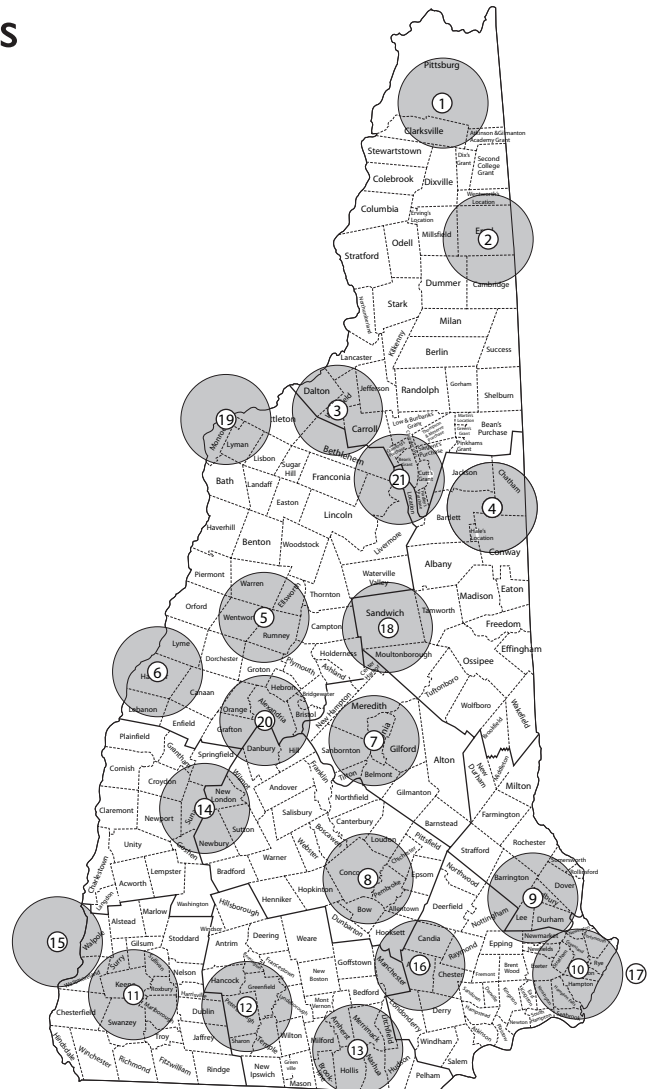
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## Christmas Bird Count Compilers

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



# Winter Field Notes

## 2016 – 2017

*Compiled by Rebecca Suomala and Kathryn Frieden*

### Close Encounter with a Red-tailed Hawk

*by Katherine Towler*



*This stare-down between cat and Red-tailed Hawk was photographed by Katherine Towler on 2-20-17 at her back door in Portsmouth. After having its lunch, the visitor attacked the door, and the cat prudently disappeared.*

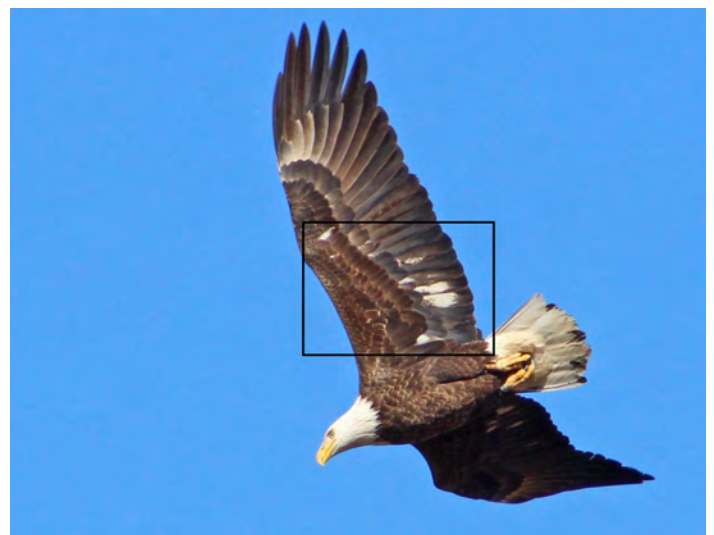
On February 20, I came into the kitchen for lunch and found one of my cats at rapt attention, pressed to the storm door leading to the deck. I assumed she was watching a squirrel, but when I went to investigate, I discovered to my surprise that there was a Red-tailed Hawk at the foot of the deck, on the walk leading to the house. I thought at first the bird might be injured, as it was simply sitting there and did not react to me or the cat behind the door. Then, I saw it tugging at something under the deck steps. Moments later, it pulled out an obviously just-caught squirrel and began tearing it to pieces. Just what I wanted to watch

while eating lunch. I turned away to make a sandwich and after a few minutes heard a strange, scraping sound, which I determined was the hawk squeezing under the deck steps. The bird spent close to an hour under the deck enjoying its lunch. When it emerged, the hawk climbed the deck steps one at a time while the cat and I watched. The bird came right up to the glass door and stared at us, or so we thought. When it suddenly flew at the glass, wings spread, and sent the cat running for cover under a bed, I realized the hawk was reacting to its reflection in the glass. I closed the inner door and pulled the shade, but not before getting a couple of impressive photos. We frequently see Red-taileds in our Portsmouth backyard in winter and have observed them catching squirrels in the past, but we have never had one come this close to the house before. The cat did not come out from under the bed for three hours.

### Bald Eagle Detective Work

*by Chris Martin*

High resolution photos like these taken by NH Audubon wildlife volunteers can help us better understand home ranges and movements of our state's Bald Eagles. Compare left underwing patterns in these two images of orange-banded transitional adult eagles taken 16 days apart in two different New Hampshire Seacoast towns. The first image is by Debra Powers at Awcomin Marsh in Rye on 1-25-2017 and the second image is by Steve Bennett at Seabrook Harbor on 2-10-2017. Based on details of white feathers on the left underwing in both photos (and several other details in common), it looks like the same individual eagle in both shots. Working with Tom French at Mass Wildlife, we identified the Rye bird as "Orange P8," an eagle banded as a nestling on the Powwow River in Amesbury, MA in spring 2013. Based on these and other recent observations, we think



*Note the underwing detail in this photo by Debra Powers taken at Awcomin Marsh in Rye on 1-25-17.*





*Can you identify the age of this Bald Eagle landing at Seabrook Harbor? The photo was taken by Steve Bennett on 2-10-17.*

that “Orange P8” may now have a breeding territory near the Hampton/Seabrook estuary.

## Double Barred Owl Sighting in Campton

*by Duane Cross*

*Taken from a post to the NH Birds email list, 12-7-16.*

I was making a delivery late at night on Bog Road in Campton. As I was passing the Pulsifer farm, I saw a large bird fly across the road ahead and land on a fence post beside the road. I slowed the truck down and, when I reached the spot, I angled the truck so I could light up the bird. It was a Barred Owl! He put up with the bright lights for about three seconds and then flew off across the field. About ten minutes, two deliveries, and a half mile later, I saw another large bird fly across the road and land on a rock in the woods. I stopped and focused my headlamp into the woods and spotted another Barred Owl sitting on a rock. This time, I left first. I doubt it was the same owl, but it is possible he could have been expecting a package and was following me. Customers will do that sometimes.

## Northern Saw-whet Owl in Merrimack

*by Tom Young*

On the evening of Tuesday, February 21, my daughter and I were returning from her weekly basketball practice to our home in Merrimack. At about 8:45 pm, as we got out of the car, I immediately heard the distinctive, repetitive “toot, toot, toot” call of a Northern Saw-whet Owl. As our extreme good fortune would have it, the bird was evidently calling from the forested area immediately behind our house! In 17 years of living here, I’d only once heard a saw-whet in the neighborhood, so this was the first one ever on our property. For my daughter, who is a somewhat more than casual birder with a life list of about 250, it was a life

bird. We dashed into the house to alert my wife and grab my camera, and the three of us quickly (but quietly) hustled back outside to stand in the driveway, where I imitated the owl’s call to try to attract it closer. My imitations worked like a charm, as the owl almost immediately swooped in to land on a power line right above the driveway, allowing us great views and providing me the opportunity to snap a few photos such as the one shown here. After a couple of minutes, we returned inside and let the owl go back to hunting in peace.

This brief, exhilarating encounter was reminiscent of the owl sighting that set me on the road to becoming a birder, way back in 1978, an Eastern Screech-Owl parent feeding two fledglings on an apple tree branch, illuminated by a neighbor’s flashlight. My feet seemingly did not touch the ground for hours afterward in both instances!



*Tom Young photographed this Northern Saw-whet Owl in his yard in Merrimack on 2-21-17.*

## Red-throated Loon on Lake Sunapee

*Information summarized from an Intertown Record newspaper article of 1-10-17 and a post to NH Birds email list 1-12-17 by Dylan Jackson.*

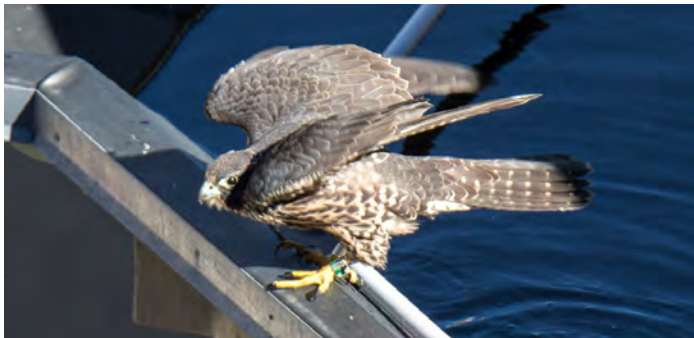
On December 20, the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) received a call that loons were iced-in on Lake Sunapee, swimming around near the center of the lake. According to LPC volunteer Kittie Wilson, “The loons were at least half a mile from shore and several eagles were keeping a hungry eye on them” (*Intertown Record* 1-10-17). The following day, Harry Vogel, Executive Director of the LPC, led a rescue attempt. When the opening in the ice was closely approached by Harry and the two firemen assisting him, there was too much open water for them to safely reach the loons and rescue them. Surprisingly, Harry did note that one of them was a Red-throated Loon. The loons were observed over the next several days, and by Christmas, they had all left. Due to a strong wind and an increase in the amount of open water, it was believed that they had been able to fly away.

The Red-throated Loon breeds in the Arctic, and can be seen in coastal New Hampshire during fall and spring migration, as well as regularly overwintering there. The peak fall migration period is late October and early November and

is generally over by mid-December. Inland fall migrants are uncommon and are usually seen in the Connecticut River valley and on major lakes (*The Birds of New Hampshire* by Keith and Fox, 2013). According to eBird, since 2009, there are just two previous records from Sunapee Lake: 11/17/12; and even rarer, a spring migrant on 5/1/14. Ed.

## Travels of a Young Peregrine Falcon

by Stephen Mirick



TOP: This photo shows the newly banded and released fledgling in Haverhill, MA. It was taken by Craig Gibson on 6-17-16.

CENTER: "Our" Peregrine Falcon traveled south to Providence, RI where it was photographed by Peter Green on 10-10-16.

LEFT: The bird in this photo, taken by Jason Lambert on 12-27-16 at Hampton Beach State Park, is not just any Peregrine Falcon!

During December 2016, an immature Peregrine Falcon was seen at Hampton Beach State Park. Closer views and photographs showed that it was a banded bird and I was delighted to find that it was one of "my" birds. It was a female hatched in 2016 underneath the Basiliere Bridge in Haverhill, MA, a nest site that my wife Jane and I had discovered on May 21, 2016 and had monitored for the next few weeks.

This bird was the "runt of the litter" of four youngsters. She fledged from the nest, but was found on June 15 wandering around on the streets of Haverhill, unable to fly. Fortunately, she was not injured and after two days of rehabilitation, and with a new colorful band on her leg, she was released back into the wild on June 17. From there, she decided to travel. The black and green color band "22/BE" was placed on her leg by Tom French of Mass Wildlife and then, the bird was followed through reported sightings as she flew around New England, first flying down to Providence, RI in October and then back up to Hampton Beach, NH in December and January!

## Snow Bunting Flock in Warren



Almost 400 Snow Buntings were tallied by Elaine Faletra on 1/17/17 in Warren, NH. She added arrows to the original photo in order to count them. She also photographed the tiny weed seeds that they were feasting on in the beautiful fields on Rt. 25C. According to Elaine, the area is now called the Ines and Frederick Yeatts Wildlife Sanctuary but for many years it was a working dairy farm known as the Cate Farm. The property contains meadows and wetlands, and two brooks. Beautiful views of Mt. Moosilauke and Mt. Carr can be seen in the distance while walking the meadows.

*Our current best guess on the weed is Lamb's Quarters, Chenopodium album. — Ed.*

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# Field Trip Report

## Christmas Bird Count in the Snow

by Scott Heron

Since 2014, I've been lucky enough to participate in the Christmas Bird Count's Coastal New Hampshire count for three years in a row, each year covering a different sector. In 2016, I volunteered to cover the Newfields sector. Bruce Goodwin, who historically covers this sector, had plans to welcome a new grandson to his family and would be out of the state during count day. Fortunately, he was available the weekend prior and kindly agreed to take me on a tour of the sector, showing me all of the nooks and crannies of the area that I might have otherwise missed. After having written nearly a page and a half's worth of notes, I felt prepared to take on the challenge.

The biggest challenge, and the part that had me somewhat dreading count day, was the waterfowl. The Newfields sector, which includes much of the western shore of Great Bay up to Adams Point in Durham, typically sees waterfowl in high numbers. We're talking about the potential for over 12 species of waterfowl including Canada Geese, American Black Ducks, and Greater Scaup in the hundreds, and the possibility of rarities like Eurasian Wigeon, Redhead, Canvasback, and Barrow's Goldeneye. That makes the Newfields sector, along with the neighboring Greenland sector, important when it comes to the Coastal Count's overall tally.

The daunting task of counting the enormous flocks of waterfowl left me a bit uneasy going into count week, so I asked Zeke Cornell to join me. He had covered this sector once before, so I happily took advantage of his more advanced knowledge of the area. Having the added pair of eyes would no doubt help bolster species counts and ensure more accurate numbers. The addition also meant that we would have the advantage of travelling in what has come to be known as the "Zekemobile," a large Chevy truck that seems almost impervious to whatever adverse weather conditions it might encounter.

As count day approached, the promise of snowfall seemed to be a certainty. Sure enough, Saturday morning (December 17) came around and with it came the snow. The forecast had projected totals of three to six inches. The count compilation for the evening had been cancelled, but the weather wasn't enough to stop several hardy New England birders from conducting their surveys. Thick, snowy conditions made driving and navigating the roads a bit difficult, but undeterred, we persisted in our pursuit of birds.

We made a decent effort despite the non-stop, falling snow. The morning started off well enough, knocking off Cooper's Hawk, Horned Lark, and the bulk of our common



*Cooper's Hawk in the falling snow, photographed by Zeke Cornell during the Coastal CBC with Scott Heron, 12-17-16.*

feeder birds on River Road in Stratham. Recent commercial development on this road along Route 108 came as a disappointment as a once brushy patch (now turned dirt lot) had in the past been a lucrative spot for finding some less common species. Despite this, we spent a good portion of our morning here, scouring the feeders, bushes, and fields.

From River Road, we moved north, stopping at Stuart Farm in Stratham which we inherited from a neighboring sector. Here we found large numbers of European Starlings, Rock Pigeons, and House Sparrows (the invasive trifecta!) and picked up several Song Sparrows, a few more Horned Larks, and our only Savannah Sparrow of the day. En route to a few spots along Great Bay, we continued to tally the usual suspects at feeders and along roadsides, picking up Wild Turkey, White-throated Sparrow, and Northern Mockingbird.

Up at Adams Point, our first stop along the bay, we were greeted with thick fog and few birds. A Belted Kingfisher rattled in the mist and an immature Bald Eagle cruised overhead, undaunted by the limited visibility.

One week before, during my tour of the sector, Bruce and I had stopped at a private property on Bayview Drive in Newmarket. This was expected to be the most productive spot in the sector. On the Sunday before count day, it was. In close, with unhindered visibility, was a large variety of waterfowl including Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneyes, Red-breasted Mergansers, Hooded Mergansers and Canada Geese as far as the eye could see. It was easy pickings at the time.

On count day, the conditions were quite contrary to my experience the week prior. This time, the ice had advanced far into the bay and the visibility was limited by an insurmountable wall of white haze about 100 yards offshore. All we could hear was an unknown number of Canada Geese taunting us from deep within the fog.

Reluctantly, we decided to abandon the bay, but hoped to return to it later if conditions improved. Having been continually battered by the snow all day, dodging plows, and watching other vehicles slip and slide on the slick roads, we soon decided to abandon our sector altogether. We ended our short day with 33 species, completely deficient on waterfowl numbers. Luckily, Steve and Jane Mirick over in the Greenland sector stuck it out until after the storm cleared and came through with big numbers on the bay.

# Backyard Birder

## The “Winter Phoebe”

by Iain MacLeod

One of the very first signs that winter is on its way out and spring is not too far away is the lovely two note whistling song of the male Black-capped Chickadee. This song is sweet and mournful and a welcome sign of the turning of the season. I usually hear my first singing chickadees in February. All it needs is a bit of sun on a crisp morning and the hormones stir and nudge them into thoughts of courtship and territoriality.

A cold blast and return to winter weather will quiet them down . . . until the next sunny morning. Right about this same time, I start to see reports on the NHBirds email list of “phoebes.” During many bird classes and walks that I have lead over the years, I have often surprised beginners by pointing out the singing chickadee. “You mean the phoebe?” they might respond. So, after a couple of reports again in February this year of “early phoebes,” I thought it would be good to offer a quick primer on telling them apart.

Everyone is familiar with the Black-capped Chickadee’s “chickadee-dee” call, but they, like most birds, have a wide array of other call notes and songs. Each has a different meaning and use. Only the male chickadee sings the high two-note “dee-dee” territorial song. The second note is lower than the first. It’s a very easy song for us to mimic and whistle back to them.

Eastern Phoebes typically arrive in New Hampshire in the last couple of weeks of March. Being flycatchers, they are not able to survive in New Hampshire’s bug-free winter. Their song is made up of raspy whistled phrases that Sibley describes as “seeriddip” and “seebrrr.” With a little imagination you could turn that into “pheebee or “pheebeo.” They will sing emphatically from a perch near a house or other man-made structure; almost all Eastern Phoebes nest on our buildings. Phoebes also have a rather manic song flight where they fly above the tree canopy omitting bursts of “pheebee” notes. The phoebe song is *not* something that we can whistle back (certainly I can’t). It is too buzzy and lacks the clear tone of a whistled note.

To hear a little audio tutorial check out these links:

<http://birdnote.org/show/voices-and-vocabularies-clever-chickadees>

<http://birdnote.org/show/phoebe-and-pewee>

The best way to learn their songs of course is to hear them in the field, so take some time and listen closely to the phoebes around your neighborhood in April and May and remember, if you think you hear a phoebe in January or February. . . chances are it’s a chickadee.

# Birding the Lake Massabesic area

by Jon Woolf and Jenna Pettipas



Meaning “place of much water,” Lake Massabesic sits on the eastern outskirts of and serves as a drinking water source for the city of Manchester. With easy access and dozens of fire roads that double as hiking trails, the lake is a popular destination for nature seekers of all sorts.

Our starting point is Massabesic Audubon Center at 26 Audubon Way. From Route 101, take Exit 1 and head south past the traffic circle on Route 28 Bypass. In two miles, turn left on Spofford Road and Audubon Way will be on the left in 0.3 miles. The Center always has bird feeders and the feeders attract the usual variety of birds: American Goldfinch, Black-capped Chickadee, Northern Cardinal, Tufted Titmouse, Blue Jay, Mourning Dove, and more. In wintertime, Dark-eyed Juncos are the most common bird here. During migration, Savannah, Fox, White-throated and occasionally White-crowned Sparrows may appear. Pine Siskins show up about one year in three, while Common Redpolls might also visit the feeders during very cold winters.

Head out on the trails to find other birds of field and forest. In addition to the usual year-round residents, spring and summer find an array of songbirds both seen and heard: many species of warbler, Gray Catbird, Red-eyed and Blue-headed Vireos, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Phoebe, Scarlet Tanager, and both Red and White-breasted Nuthatch. Checking the pond, you may find a Belted Kingfisher or Great Blue Heron, as well as a pair of Mallards. There are usually several pairs of Eastern Bluebirds around; one pair in each field along with numerous pairs of Tree Swallows. On a



*Common Redpoll at the Massabesic Audubon Center feeders by Jon Woolf.*

quiet morning in May or June, you might hear the flutelike trill of a Wood Thrush or the spiraling song of a Veery. All four of the common New Hampshire woodpeckers are likely: Downy, Hairy, Red-bellied, and Pileated. I've also had Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and Northern Flickers here too.

Battery Point and Blueberry Point are both good places from which to scan the lake itself. Along the shore, you can find Wood Ducks, Mallards, and American Black Ducks. Out in the open water, there are usually Common Loons, Ring-billed Gulls, and Double-crested Cormorants. In wintertime, when the lake is frozen, birds are rare here, but one never knows. During the great Snowy Owl invasion in 2014, I found a Snowy sitting on one of the rocky islands in the lake and, during another winter, there was a flock of Snow Buntings feeding on something scattered on the ice near the Osprey blind.

In winter, things are quieter, but you can still find the woodpeckers along with winter sparrows and other winter residents. One of the first signs of spring is the chickadees and titmice starting to practice their singing in late February and early March.

Lake Massabesic is part of the hunting territory for a pair of Bald Eagles that nest on the lower Merrimack River and the adult eagles are seen over head every now and then. Young eagles also appear occasionally. Broad-winged Hawks routinely nest in the woods. Red-tailed, Cooper's, and Sharp-shinned Hawks all put in regular appearances too.

Leaving Massabesic Audubon Center, you can head either north or south along the Route 28 Bypass. Head north and, in a mile or so, you come to Deerneck Bridge and a small boat launch for canoes and kayaks only. The narrow strait that the bridge crosses is one of the last parts of the lake to freeze in winter, so you can find open water here long after the rest of the lake is frozen over. Ducks know this too, so you can often find Hooded and Common Mergansers, Mallards, American Black Ducks, and Buffleheads enjoying this small area of open water in deep winter.



*Horned Grebe at Front Park on Lake Massabesic by Jon Woolf.*

In another mile or so north, you come to Front Park on the east side of the road looking out onto the northernmost part of the lake. From here, you can scan a large arc of open water with binoculars and scope. Ring-billed Gulls are ever-present, usually second-year birds, but with an occasional first-year or adult bird mixed in during the winter season. Occasionally, they're joined by Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls. Common Loons can often be seen or heard from here, especially in fall before they migrate. Sharp (and lucky) eyes might also find a Pied-billed or Horned Grebe. Once, I had an American Coot swimming in the reeds and, on one very special occasion, a Leach's Storm-Petrel, blown inland by a storm, chose to land at Front Park. With a scope you can check farther out on the lake for waterfowl during migration, such as Ruddy Ducks or flocks of scoters.

Just north of Front Park is the Auburn Traffic Circle at the junction of Route 28 Bypass and Candia Rd./Manchester Rd. (Rt. 121). Take the eastern exit from the traffic circle (Route 121) to travel around the north end of the lake. There are several places you can pull off to watch and listen for birds. After a couple of miles, you'll come to a four-way stop at the junction with Hooksett Road (Rt. 121 turns right). Turn right to head south along Chester Road through Auburn town center and, in about half a mile, you'll come to a boat launch on the right; this is Clair's Landing. From here, you can scan nearly half the lake with binoculars and scope. The marshy area to the right is actually the mouth of Sucker Brook, one of the lake's feeder streams. The moving water means that this is another area that freezes only reluctantly, thaws quickly, and retains open water when most of the lake is frozen over. As a result, Clair's Landing and Sucker Brook are popular places for ducks of all kinds. Hooded Merganser, Wood Duck, Mallard, American Black Duck, Ring-necked Duck, and Bufflehead can all be found in this area during migration, along with Canada Goose and an occasional heron. Even when the lake is frozen, Clair's Landing is still worth a stop because one might just find a Bald Eagle hunting or scavenging.

South from Massabesic Audubon Center along Route 28 Bypass, there's one area that is always worth a look, the marshy ponds along Priscilla Lane, near the Auburn town baseball fields. For some reason, I rarely find ducks here, but I have found Tree Swallows, several kinds of warblers, Belted Kingfisher and Solitary Sandpiper. Be careful if you visit here on a workday, because Priscilla Lane is a commercial area with several active businesses.

Finally, as you drive the roads around Lake Massabesic you'll often see metal gates with multicolored plastic tubing on them. These gates mark the entrances to some of the fire roads that provide emergency access to the lake area for Manchester Water Works vehicles (should that ever be

necessary). The fire roads are wide and flat enough for easy walking and give good access to the lake and the forests around it. One such road is Fire Road 41, located off Spofford Road near Canfield Cove. From the Massabesic Audubon Center, turn left on Spofford Road (instead of right towards Route 28 Bypass) and go about one mile. Fire Road 41 will be on the left. There is a pull off for parking across the street from the trail. The trail is about 0.6 miles long but the most active area is the first quarter mile closest to the Spofford Road. This area of the trail has a marshy area and has produced a few goodies, including Belted Kingfisher, Green Heron, Louisiana Waterthrush and a nesting pair of Red-shouldered Hawks.

## Photo Gallery

### Offshore in December

by Rebecca Suomala

On December 11, 2016, a group of birders went out on a fishing boat to Jeffrey's Ledge. It was a regularly scheduled fishing trip by Eastman's out of Seabrook, NH but birders are welcome along with the fisherman. We usually stay on the upper deck so we don't take up space on the lower deck where the fishing action takes place. As usual with these trips, there was an initial long ride out to Jeffrey's and then a series of stops at various fishing spots along the way. If the fishing is good, gulls are attracted by the supply of "throw back" fish, too small to keep. On this trip, we had fairly calm seas and a good selection of birds as highlighted in the photos.

*The Birders: Zeke Cornell, Becky Suomala, Steve Bennett, Jenna Pettipas, Jim Sparrell, and Susan Wrisley (photographer, not pictured).*

*The Birds: All photos were taken 12-11-16.*



*A Great Black-backed Gull trying to steal food a Black-legged Kittiwake picked up by the boat. Photo by Jim Sparrell.*



*A jaeger of unidentified species by Susan Wrisley.*



*A "Thayer's Gull" that Jenna Pettipas identified after the trip from her photos. This is now considered part of the Iceland Gull complex.*



*One of the 11 Black-legged Kittiwakes on the trip, all adult. Photo by Steve Bennett.*



*All three Iceland Gulls were in this typical immature plumage. Photo by Jim Sparrell.*



*Northern Gannet by Jenna Pettipas. There were 81 tallied, many flying close to the back of the boat.*



*Common Murre by Susan Whisley.*



*Two of the four Common Murres tallied on the trip. Photos were helpful in confirming the Common Murres. Razorbills were more common (25 total) and we had 19 large unidentified alcids. Photo by Steve Bennett.*

# Wood Duck “Intersex”

by Christine Sheridan



Female Wood Duck showing a dark greenish crest more typical of a male. Photo by Christine Sheridan, 01-25-17, Merrimack, NH.

During the winter of 2016-2017, a female Wood Duck lingered at Horseshoe Pond in Merrimack, NH, an oxbow pond tucked between the Merrimack River and the Daniel Webster Highway and a nice hotspot for migrating and wintering waterfowl in southern Hillsborough County.

Extensive ice cover that winter meant few ducks stayed over. The Wood Duck, often accompanied by a male Mallard, kept to the ice-free channels feeding the pond. (Conveniently for birders, the channels ran along the side of Island Drive which provides access to the pond and residences around it.) Initially quite shy, she eventually became more tolerant of visitors. One morning, I got a nice close-up look at her in bright light and noticed something odd. Her crest was streaked with green and she had traces of the “bridle” head markings characteristic of a male Wood Duck. Despite her brownish plumage and conspicuous teardrop-shaped eye patch, there was something unusual about this hen.

Wintering Wood Ducks are not uncommon in this area when there is open water and I knew from experience that adult males are in full breeding plumage and ducks hatched the previous breeding season have attained adult plumage long before January. A classic article by Arthur C. Bent (1923) describes the molt sequence and timing succinctly.

A bit of research revealed that our bird was most likely an older (possibly quite old) hen which was developing male plumage characteristics due to a change in the balance of her

hormones.

Unlike mammals and most other birds, male coloration is the “default” in ducks. Female plumage develops when female hormones override androgens to produce the more subdued colors of the hens. An aging female or one with damage to her ovaries may produce less estrogen, and the default male coloring begins to assert itself. In a captive flock of wild Mallards, for example, this change began to occur at around 10 years old and intensified over the years (Gustavsson 2015).

Photos of ducks in transition can be found online by searching for “Intersex Wood Ducks,” although the term “intersex” seems to be a misnomer, as these are almost always normal hens showing signs of age (Irons 2013). While females may become quite flamboyant, they retain their distinctive eye patch and dark bill, they continue to act as females, and other ducks treat them as females. (It has been speculated that at least some of the birds we often take for Mallard/Black Duck hybrids, males with hen-like plumage, odd-colored bills and green head markings, may actually be such aging females.)

As the pond opened up in spring, migrant ducks began to move in, and the little female was freed from her icy channel. She probably joined the flock of Wood Ducks which began to gather at the far side of the pond and its back coves, or even moved on with the migrants. Possibly her advanced age explains why she did not fly out last fall, so she may well be among the birds that continued at the pond. It would be interesting to follow her plumage development.

These so-called “intersex” ducks are said to be fairly common. Look for birds with female-type eye patches, dark bills (vs. the red and white pattern for males), and anything from slight indications of male color and patterning to the spectacular full-blown colors of the male Wood Duck.

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*Chris Sheridan is an accomplished wildlife photographer and birdwatcher who resides in Nashua, NH.*



# Volunteers and Research

## Reporting Bird Bands

by Kathryn Frieden and Rebecca Suomala



In this photo taken by Eric Masterson on 5-14-17 while on Star Island, NH he focused carefully on the leg band rather than on the Gray Catbird itself.

While Eric Masterson was leading his annual spring weekend trip to Star Island at the Isles of Shoals, he photographed a Gray Catbird in a bush that had a band on it! Thanks to the wonders of digital photography, he was able to read the band and then report it to the Bird Banding Laboratory. Usually a report of a banded songbird only comes in if the bird is dead or captured at a banding station other than the one where it was originally banded. A live recovery is much more exciting for the banders. After reporting the catbird band, Eric received a certificate (Figure 1) and learned that it had been banded two years earlier on 8/17/15 on Appledore Island. At the time of its banding it was a hatch-year bird, meaning it was born that summer and was likely hatched from a nest on Appledore, as catbird migration had not yet begun when it was banded. It evidently returned to the Isles of Shoals, where catbirds are known to breed, and had set up a breeding territory on Star Island.

The Appledore Island Migration Station (AIMS) is a banding station that was first opened in 1974 and has banded over 120,000 birds, all by trained and dedicated volunteers and students. These intrepid bird banders spend time in rugged areas with challenging conditions to perform what is often a labor of love. Bird banding is an important research tool in the US and Canada, as described in the following notice that is received along with the certificate.

### The North American Bird Banding Program

“Bird banding is important for studying the movement, survival, and behavior of birds. About 60 million birds representing hundreds of species have been banded in North America since 1904.

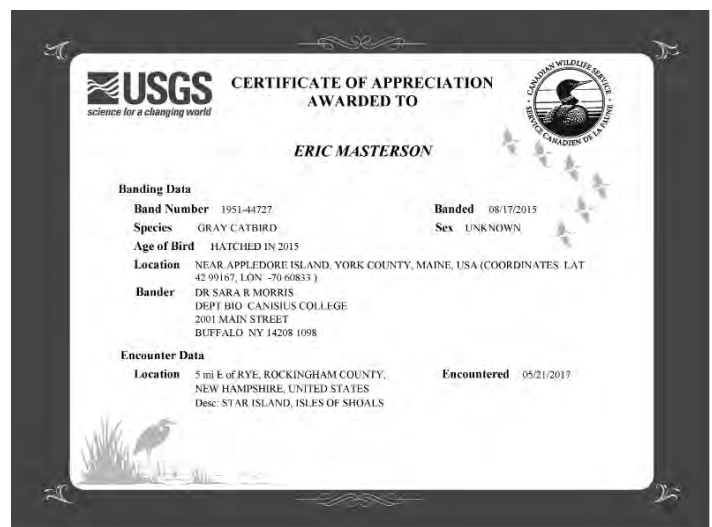
About 4 million bands have been recovered and reported.

Data from banded birds are used in monitoring populations, setting hunting regulations, restoring endangered species, studying effects of environmental contaminants, and addressing such issues as Avian Influenza, bird hazards at airports, and crop depredations. Results from banding studies support national and international bird conservation programs such as Partners in Flight, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, and Wetlands for the Americas.

The North American Bird Banding Program is under the general direction of the U.S. Geological Survey and the Canadian Wildlife Service. Cooperators include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Mexico’s National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity, and Secretary of the Environment and Natural Resources; other federal, state and provincial conservation agencies; universities; amateur ornithologists; bird observatories; nature centers; nongovernmental organizations such as Ducks Unlimited and the National Audubon Society; environmental consulting firms; and other private sector businesses. However, the most important partner in this cooperative venture is you, the person who voluntarily reported a recovered band. Thank you for your help.”

We can’t all become trained bird banders, but we can help their efforts pay off by reporting bird bands whenever we find one, either in a photograph or on a dead bird. The process is easy and can be done either by phone or by computer. Please Report Bands at [www.reportband.gov](http://www.reportband.gov) or call 1-800-327-BAND.

Figure 1. Eric Masterson received this certificate after reporting the catbird’s band number.



# Revision of New Hampshire's Threatened and Endangered Species List

by Pamela Hunt

Roughly every ten years, the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department (NHFG) is required to revise the state's list of threatened and endangered species. The completion of the state's new Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) in 2015 set the stage for the most recent revision, which was undertaken during 2016. The new list became final in March of 2017.

The starting point for this endeavor was a list of 169 "Species of Greatest Conservation Need" (SGCN) identified by NHFG and its partners which included NH Audubon. All of these are wildlife species showing strong declines, subject to significant threats, restricted to sensitive or rare habitats, or combinations thereof. Each received a detailed species profile for the WAP, including information on population size and trend, distribution, habitat needs, important threats, and proposed conservation actions. Each SGCN was evaluated by a team of taxonomic experts (e.g., a bird team, fish team, dragonfly team, etc.) from both New Hampshire and neighboring states and these teams ultimately proposed which species should be on the list. The next steps involved further review by an internal committee of NHFG and partner staff and a public comment period. Since the threatened and endangered species list is technically a rules update rather than a law, the final step was approval by a committee of the State Legislature.

Birds comprised a significant portion of New Hampshire's list of SGCN, with 63 species total. Fifteen of these were already on the threatened and endangered list from the 2008 revision. After the dust settled in 2016, we ended up with 17 species on the list, with five additions and three removals as discussed below.

Five birds were added to the threatened list:

1. Red Knot. The *rufa* subspecies of this declining shorebird was listed as Threatened by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in 2014. Although knots are actually quite rare as migrants to our coast, the state law dictates that any federally listed species that occurs here is automatically listed.
2. Purple Martin. Martins are a little problematic



*Cliff Swallow was added to the NH Threatened and Endangered Species List in 2017. This nest was photographed by Len Medlock in Pittsburg, one of the few remaining strongholds for this species in the state.*

because their close association with humans (they don't nest in natural conditions anywhere in the East!) makes it hard to justify conservation in the traditional sense; however, the number of colonies in New Hampshire has declined from 25 to five in the last three decades, and most of the remaining colonies are quite small. We really don't know what's affecting martin populations in New England, but we do know that they respond quite well to careful management, as recent successes in coastal New Hampshire attest. Listing them as Threatened acknowledges their dramatic decline and focuses attention on restoration efforts.

3. Cliff Swallow. Like the Purple Martin, Cliff Swallow colonies in New Hampshire are restricted to man-made structures (bridges and buildings) and are decreasing in both number and size. Similar trends are seen elsewhere in the Northeast, although the species is doing well elsewhere across its extensive range. By focusing outreach efforts toward sites that support colonies, we hope that we can at least minimize local threats while researchers elsewhere continue to study the larger declines.
4. Cerulean Warbler. New Hampshire has long been at the extreme northeastern corner of this species' range, with only two or three "reliable" locations in the southern part of the state. The species is declining

everywhere, however, making it a continental priority and it has long been considered “special concern” here. Recent data suggest it has declined at, if not disappeared from, its former stronghold at Pawtuckaway State Park, a trend which has elevated it to threatened status. With luck, targeted surveys at historic locations in 2017 and 2018 will provide better information on population size and distribution, which in turn could lead to more effective conservation.

5. Eastern Meadowlark. As the grasslands of New Hampshire get developed or abandoned, grassland birds will be forced into smaller and smaller portions of the state. This is especially true of two species already on the list, Upland Sandpiper and Grasshopper Sparrow, which are now found at only one and five sites respectively. Eastern Meadowlark appears to be following in their footsteps. Not only do broad trend data show a strong decline, but a recent resurvey of grassland sites in the Upper Valley found a 35% decline at sites that held meadowlarks in the mid-1990s.

Two species were removed from the list because a reevaluation of the data indicated that their occurrence in the state is highly sporadic, and both are better viewed as extremely rare and infrequent residents. Sedge Wrens only appear during the breeding season every 5-10 years, and haven't been known to breed for decades. In their core range in the Midwest and Great Plains, they appear to be doing well. The last verified sighting of an American Three-toed Woodpecker was in 2000, and while it may still occur irregularly, it is not a tenable conservation target here. This woodpecker requires large areas of dead or dying conifers (e.g., after a fire or insect outbreak) and such conditions are unlikely to occur in northern New Hampshire in the near future.

The third species to be removed is a true success story. From a single pair in the late 1980s, the state's nesting population of Bald Eagles has grown to almost 60 and shows no sign of slowing down any time soon. Bald Eagles were down-listed from endangered to threatened in 2008, at which point, the statewide population was only 15 pairs. With this number now doubling every five years, eagles are clearly no longer in danger. They will continue to be monitored to ensure that the recovery continues and as a means of watching for new threats.

The final list of threatened and endangered birds in New Hampshire is below. For the full list of all species, and links to species profiles from the NH Wildlife Action Plan, go to: <http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/nongame/endangered-list.html>

#### Endangered

Northern Harrier  
Golden Eagle  
Piping Plover  
Upland Sandpiper  
Least Tern  
Roseate Tern  
Common Nighthawk

#### Threatened

Common Loon  
Pied-billed Grebe  
Red Knot (added)  
Common Tern  
Peregrine Falcon  
Purple Martin (added)  
Cliff Swallow (added)  
Cerulean Warbler (added)  
Grasshopper Sparrow  
Eastern Meadowlark (added)

#### Removed

Bald Eagle (recovery)  
American Three-toed Woodpecker (peripheral)  
Sedge Wren (peripheral)

*Pam Hunt is a Senior Conservation Biologist with NH Audubon and coordinated the 2016 revision of the Threatened and Endangered Species List for all species.*



*Bald Eagle by Steve Mirick.*

# Technology Series

## Why are Detailed eBird Locations Important?

by Rebecca Suomala

eBird is now the go-to place for bird data, not just for birders, but also for researchers, planners, and conservationists. For example, as a nighthawk researcher, I look for summer reports that may reflect possible breeding sites we don't know about. Pam Hunt has been checking for past Cliff Swallow nesting sites to revisit and determine if they are still active. In New Hampshire, data now goes to the NH Natural Heritage Bureau for species that they track for environmental review. *New Hampshire Bird Records* volunteers review the data and work to improve the accuracy and usability of the sightings. One of the frequent issues has to do with plotting the location of a sighting and naming it. This article will hopefully explain what you can do to help make your data as valuable as possible and why you may get an occasional email asking you to make a change in your location.

### Choosing the Location

When you enter a bird sighting in eBird, you have several options for plotting the location. Plotting the specific location on a map by zooming in to the exact spot is the ideal, but sometimes that's not practical for each and every sighting. There's a balance between providing the exact information and making it reasonable to enter your data. eBird provides Hot Spots which we encourage people to use, but sometimes even they are not as specific as we might like (the NH coast Hot Spot being a classic example). When a bird is rare (i.e. Varied Thrush, Townsend's Solitaire) or sought after by birders (i.e. American Golden-Plover, Bicknell's Thrush), then birders want to know exactly where you saw the bird so they can look for it. When the species is threatened or endangered, researchers want to know the habitat it was found in. Making notes in your checklist is one way to help provide more location information.

Here's an example. In 2016, Zeke Cornell and I had a sighting of a Pied-billed Grebe in June at Scott Bog in Pittsburg. Zeke entered it in eBird for the Scott Bog Road Hot Spot (Figure 1). A short while later, I received a request from Pete Bowman of the NH Natural Heritage Bureau for more information on the bird's location. Pied-billed Grebe is a threatened species in New Hampshire and the sighting was during the breeding season, representing potential nesting. Pete was making sure the data was in the Natural Heritage Bureau so the information would be available in any environmental reviews of proposed actions for the area. In reviewing the coordinates for the eBird Hot Spot, he did not think it looked like appropriate grebe habitat, "from looking

at various aerial photos of the site, I can't see much in the way of open water." Of course, we actually saw the bird at Scott Bog itself and not along the road where the Hot Spot is located. I explained that to Pete so he could map it in the correct location.

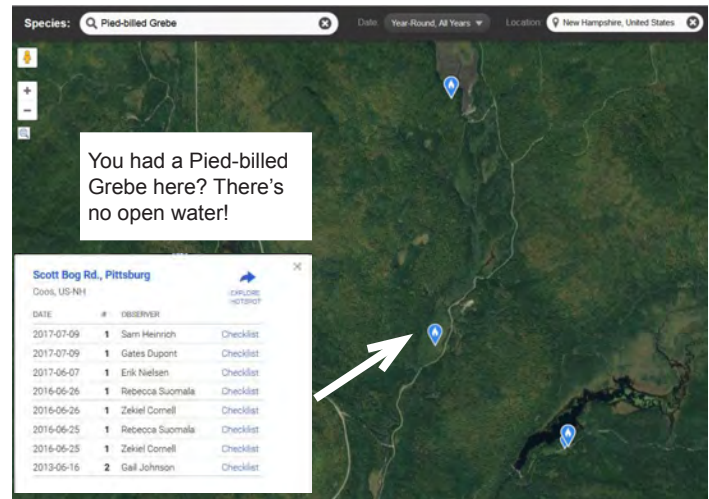


Figure 1. Map showing the Scott Bog Hot Spot and the Pied-billed Grebe report where there is no habitat for the species.

It was a lesson in how good notes can be helpful for sightings that are not plotted at the specific point of occurrence. I should have added a note to the Pied-billed Grebe entry with the exact location or made a separate entry for this sighting at the exact location. Using the Hot Spot was great for most of the species on our checklist and very helpful, but for the more unusual species, more specific notes were warranted, especially since the Hot Spot covers a wide area. The more specific a location is in eBird, the better for anyone who uses the data for habitat related purposes. For a more generic spot, it helps birders and researchers alike if you add a note with the location, especially for the more unusual species and any species on the Threatened and Endangered Species list (see the article on the updated list on page 33) or Species of Special Concern (see below).

Here's another example. I was reviewing recent reports of White-rumped Sandpipers in New Hampshire to see where I might be able to find one when I went birding on the weekend. In addition to reviewing the NHBirds email list, I also checked eBird, using the Explore Data tab and reviewing a species map. (Steve Mirick wrote an article about how to do this in the Fall 2010 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* and it's available on-line at: <http://nhbirdrecords.org/all-articles/NHBR-Fall2010.pdf>.) When I checked White-rumped, there were four reported for the NH coast Hot Spot, but there were no notes to explain where they were seen. That's a frustrating experience. Fortunately for me, another birder had reported the same four White-rumped and had added notes on where he saw them (see Figure 2), as well as a

Pectoral Sandpiper (thanks Steve Mirick)! I can't say I had the same luck, but at least I knew where to look.

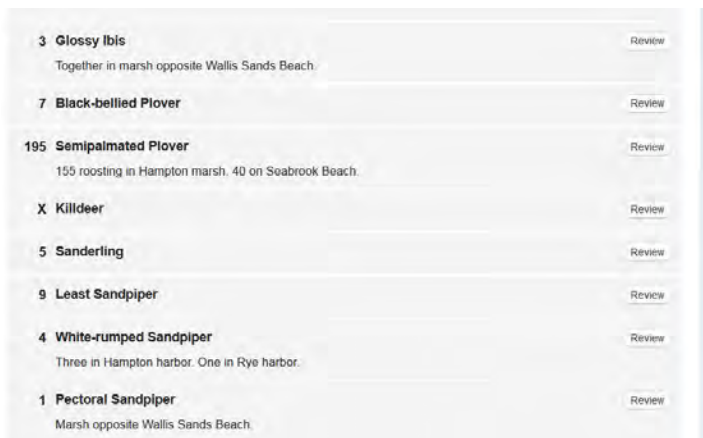


Figure 2. A checklist for the NH coast Hot Spot (S. Mirick, 7-29-17) showing the comments on where the White-rumped Sandpipers and other interesting and/or unusual birds were seen.

Here are a couple of examples of why using a Hot Spot is helpful. As a birder, I research good birding places when I travel by using eBird. With the Explore Data feature, I can Explore Hot Spots and see what Hot Spots are in the area I'll be going to and what's been seen at them recently. That only works if people select the Hot Spot when they enter their sightings. If someone plots a personal location in the same place as the Hot Spot, that data won't show up under the Hot Spot. Hot Spots can also be useful for environmental issues. At NH Audubon, Carol Foss was reviewing a hydro-dam relicensing application and we checked eBird to see if there was a Hot Spot for the location so we could review the birds that might use the water body.

### Helpful Location Names

A good name for the location is also helpful. It may not seem like the site name should be important when you are also mapping the location, but it is. People use eBird for a variety of reasons and in a variety of ways. Researchers who download the data find a good location description helpful. Here at *New Hampshire Bird Records*, we also download the data for the Season Editors, who review it to select which records to publish, determine what to write about, and to spot errors. Figure 3 shows just a part of what the data looks like in Excel. When reviewing these Boreal Chickadee records, the location name is very helpful since this species is only found in certain habitat. The county helps, but there are many places in Coos County that are not suitable habitat for Boreal Chickadees. The location name consisting of only the latitude/longitude requires more detailed review to determine exactly where it was. That's where a descriptive location name really helps. The others in this example include the town and other information that makes it clear where the birds were. It also allows confirmation that the point was mapped correctly. If we have any questions, we can compare the name with the

COMMON NAME	SUBSPECIES	DATE	COUNT	COUNTY	LOCALITY
Boreal Chickadee		08/31	4	Grafton	Cannon Mt., Franconia
Boreal Chickadee		08/31	4	Grafton	Cannon Mt., Franconia
Boreal Chickadee		08/31	4	Grafton	Cannon Mt., Franconia
Boreal Chickadee		09/03	1	Coos	45.1744x-71.1800 - Sep 3, 2016, 9:57 AM
Boreal Chickadee		09/05	3	Coos	Pondicherry NWR--Little Cherry Pond, Jefferson/Whitefield
Boreal Chickadee		09/14	1	Grafton	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem
Boreal Chickadee		09/15	3	Coos	White Mt. NF--Jefferson Notch Rd.
Boreal Chickadee		09/24	15	Coos	Rt. 16 boreal bog (4 mi. from Rt. 26), Errol
Boreal Chickadee		09/24	15	Coos	Rt. 16 boreal bog (4 mi. from Rt. 26), Errol
Boreal Chickadee		09/30	1	Grafton	Dartmouth Skiway, Lyme

Figure 3. A portion of the eBird data when it is downloaded into Excel showing just a few of the data columns to show how locations names can be helpful. The Boreal Chickadee entry with just the coordinates as a location name makes it very difficult to tell at a glance where the birds were and if it was appropriate habitat.

point on the map and see if they match.

Also, when you use eBird's View and Explore to research where a particular species has been seen, it initially shows just the location name. In that case, it's really helpful if the person entering the sighting has named the location in such a way that it is recognizable. You can zoom in on the map, but a good name allows it to be found with a web search. Location names are also helpful for researchers like myself who are monitoring certain species. When I was reviewing 2016 Common Nighthawk sightings, there were two at a location named "Chocorua" which was too vague for me to tell if the pin was located where the birds were actually seen or if it was a more generic spot for multiple sightings from the area (Figure 4). I couldn't tell if this was a potential nesting site. A sighting by Bob Quinn had a good name that allowed me to look at the satellite view for that spot and see if there was potential nesting habitat (Figure 5). Names such as "Home" or "my backyard" are not especially helpful, but simply adding the street and town can turn it into a much more informative location name, i.e. "home, Silk Farm Rd., Concord." If you use a name that has no meaning to anyone but yourself, then an eBird user will not be able to make sense of it. Yes, an accurate point location is the most important from a strict data standpoint, but eBird is most effective the easier it is for everyone to use. Also, keep in mind that we use eBird sightings in the *New Hampshire Bird Records* publication and that also relies on a text description of the location that makes sense to others.

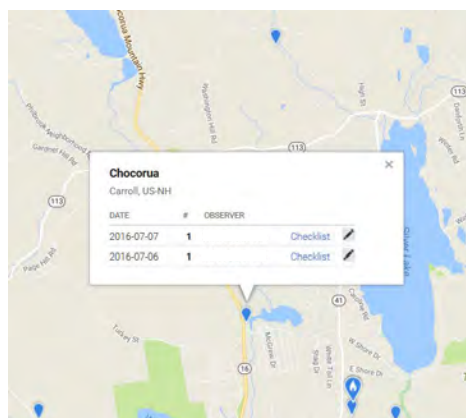


Figure 4. A Common Nighthawk sighting location in eBird for which the name was too vague to determine the actual sighting location and therefore, potential nesting.

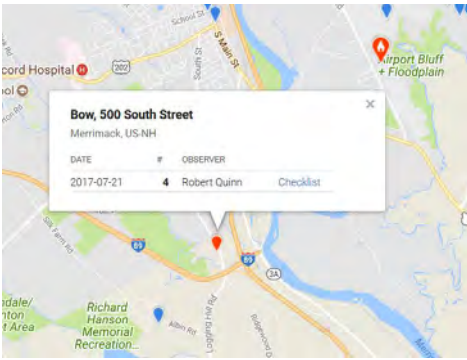


Figure 5. A Common Nighthawk sighting location in eBird with a name that was very helpful for determining if there was nesting habitat in the area.

## Sightings from Your Town

If you want to enter multiple sightings from various locations in your town, please don't plot a point for your entire town using "Find it on a Map." It won't reflect the habitat where the sightings actually were. Instead choose "Select an entire city, county, or state" under Submit Observations (Figure 6). When you plot the town yourself, we can't tell from the data that your point doesn't necessarily reflect the exact location (and habitat) of the bird, but if you use eBird's official town selection, then the data reflects that, and we know the sighting could be anywhere in the town. This feature of the eBird mapping system is meant to be used as a last resort, mostly for older records where specific location information is lacking. Of course, it's best to plot sightings more specifically, but if you do use the town or county level, please include notes on where the sightings were, especially for more unusual species. Note that when you enter data at the state or county level, it can only be used for a limited number of analyses. It will be invalidated and the sightings won't appear on the eBird maps. Invalid doesn't mean it will disappear from your personal records, it just means it won't be used for analysis or mapping.

## Which Species Warrant Location Information

Throughout this article I've been talking about adding more information to records of unusual species or those that

are sought after by other birders. How do you know when a species fits those criteria and when it's a good idea to add comments? That may take some experience and it can be influenced by time of year and number of birds. Threatened and Endangered Species, Species of Special Concern, and species tracked by the NH Natural Heritage Bureau are all good candidates for more information.

Threatened and Endangered Species list and the Species of Special Concern can be found on-line at: <http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/nongame/endangered-list.html>

For a list of species that are tracked by the NH Natural Heritage Bureau, go to:

<http://www.nhdf.org/library/pdf/Natural%20Heritage/TrackingList-AnimalGeneral.pdf>

To complicate things, species of interest can change with time. Cliff Swallow nests were widespread in the state during the Breeding Bird Atlas in the early 1980s, but now they are scarce and we're more interested in exactly those buildings that once housed the nests. If it's a bird species you are interested in seeing, then it's a pretty good bet that other birders are also. You can get an idea of how common a species is at various times of the year from the bar charts of abundance in *A Checklist of the Birds of New Hampshire* (available from NH Audubon) and also in eBird under the bar charts feature of Explore Data. If the species "trips the filter" in eBird, meaning you are asked to confirm the record, then comments on both the identification and the location are a good idea. If in doubt, add more information. Someone 50 years from now may be very glad you did!

Researchers, conservationists, and states are turning more and more to eBird for data on bird locations. We want your data to make a difference and accuracy in locations is one important component of that. So, if you're wondering why you keep getting requests to adjust your eBird entries, please understand it's part of an overall effort to make your data the most useful it can be.

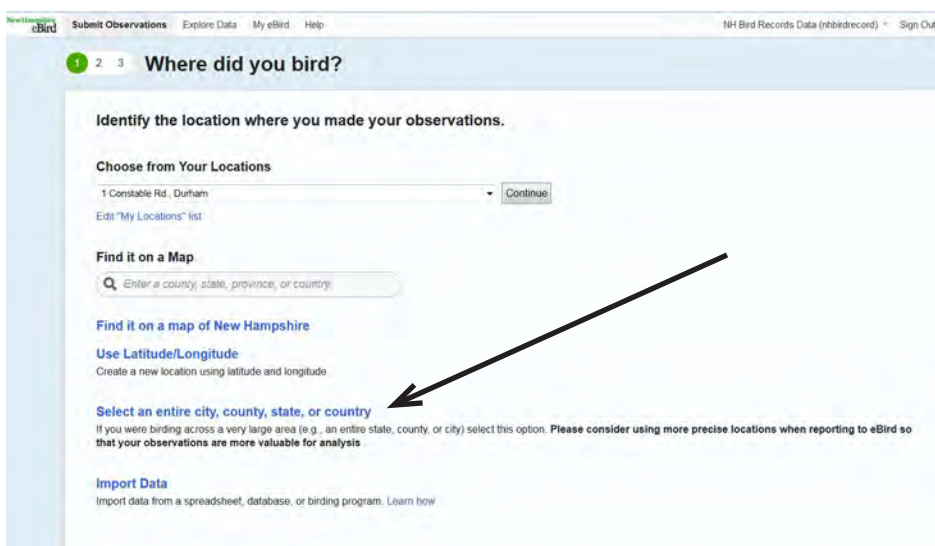


Figure 6. eBird's Submit Observations screen with the arrow pointing to the appropriate selection for a general point in a town.

# New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee Report

Winter 2013-14 through Fall 2014

*Hector Galbraith, Chair*

*Michael Resch, Secretary*

This report from the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee (NHRBC) contains the decisions for records voted on by the Committee for four seasons; Winter 2013-14, Spring 2014, Summer 2014, and Fall 2014.

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

A rejection is not necessarily an indication that the identification was incorrect, but that the information received was not sufficient to allow its acceptance as a state record. Adequate documentation is key to whether a report is accepted or not. For information on the Committee and its decision-making process, see the articles in the Summer 1996 and Winter 2005-06 issues of *NHBR*.

These seasons included several notable first sightings that were accepted by the Committee:

Anhinga – two birds seen circling overhead on 5/7/14 in Hanover. This species is on the New Hampshire list as a hypothetical species, based on three prior sight records (as reported in *The Birds of New Hampshire* by Keith and Fox). Note that a “hypothetical” record is defined as one that lacks documentation from at least three observers, a specimen, a photograph, a video recording, or an audio recording. Although the 2014 record was accepted, this species continues in hypothetical only status.

Black-necked Stilt – seen by multiple observers on 5/20/14 in Stratham. This is the first New Hampshire state record (removing it from the hypothetical list) and is #401 on the official state list.

Swainson’s Hawk – seen on 9/21/14 in Hollis. This is the first New Hampshire state record (removing it from the hypothetical list) and is #402 on the official state list.

Sandhill Crane – documentation submitted for two adults successfully nesting and fledging one immature in Monroe. This is the first New Hampshire breeding record for this species, which is expanding in New England and elsewhere in the East.

Least Bittern – documentation submitted for two adults nesting with at least three young at World End Pond in Salem. This is the first New Hampshire breeding record for this rare and elusive species.

The Committee has recently reviewed a number of records where submitted documentation was unfortunately of limited quality. One of the best ways to ensure your sighting is accepted by the NHRBC is to prepare and submit adequate documentation of the sighting. By far the best way to submit documentation is to use the “New Hampshire Bird Sighting Documentation” form, which prompts you to address all the salient topics to support the observation. This form can be obtained online at:

<http://nhbirdrecords.org/your-sightings/reporting-rare-and-unusual-bird-sightings/documentation-forms-for-rarities/>

Furthermore, we recommend that you complete a Documentation form even if you are submitting photographs of the bird(s). Recently, the NHRBC has received photographs of many of the sightings that have been submitted for review; however, the quality of these photos isn’t always the best and supplemental information contained on a completed Documentation form can be crucial in gaining acceptance of the record.

Speaking of photographs, just because you don’t have a photograph of your bird doesn’t mean it won’t be accepted by the Committee. In fact, many of the recently accepted sightings have been non-photographed birds. The photograph should be just one part of the overall record of the sighting to be submitted to the NHRBC.

The members of the Committee voting on the records in these four seasons were: David Donsker, Kurk Dorsey, Iain MacLeod, Eric Masterson, Mike Resch, Rob Woodward, and Hector Galbraith (Chair). Mike Resch served as the Committee Secretary.

## Winter 2013-14

### Records accepted by the Committee

Gyr Falcon	12/15/2013	Hampton
Thayer’s Gull	1/8/2014	East Kingston
Thayer’s Gull	1/12/2014	East Kingston
Common Murre	2/12/2014	Jeffreys Ledge
Red-headed Woodpecker	1/4/2013	Alstead
Red-headed Woodpecker	2/15/2014	Newmarket
Spotted Towhee	1/27/2014	Rye
Dark-eyed Junco – Oregon subsp.	1/21/2014	Hampton
Dark-eyed Junco – Oregon subsp.	1/21/2014	Hampton

### Records not accepted by the Committee

Gyr Falcon	12/21/2013	Peterborough
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Since the observer was not 100% sure of the identification of the bird in question, the committee could not accept this record of an often confusing falcon species.

Nelson's Sparrow 12/18/2013 Hampton  
 A very late Saltmarsh Sparrow could not be eliminated  
 based on the submitted description.

## Spring 2014

### Records accepted by the Committee

Anhinga	5/7/2014	Hanover
Ross's Goose	4/7/2014	Charlestown
Black-necked Stilt – first NH record	5/20/2014	Stratham
Wilson's Phalarope	5/27/2014	Seabrook
Acadian Flycatcher	5/24/2014	Durham
Northern Wheatear	5/26/2014	Easton
Gray-cheeked Thrush	5/23/2014	Rye
White-eyed Vireo	5/4/2014	Rye
Cerulean Warbler	5/5/2014	Kingston
Cerulean Warbler	5/13/2014	Merrimack
Worm-eating Warbler	5/6/2014	Peterborough
Summer Tanager	5/10/2014	Rye
Summer Tanager	5/17/2014	Rye
Yellow-headed Blackbird	4/7/2014	Charlestown

### Records not accepted by the Committee

Common Eider –  
*borealis* intergrade 3/2/2014 Hampton  
 Neither the observer nor the Committee could eliminate  
 the possibility of a hybrid.

Forster's Tern 5/1/2014 Sunapee  
 The possibility of other *Sterna* species could not be  
 eliminated.

Common Murre 5/26/2014 Jeffrey's Ledge  
 The Committee could not accept the record since the  
 observer was not sure of the identification.

## Summer 2014

### Records accepted by the Committee

Pacific Loon	7/12/2014	Rye
Pacific Loon	7/12/2014	Rye
Least Bittern - first NH breeding	6/11/2014	Salem
White Ibis	7/11/2014	Rye
Sandhill Crane - first NH breeding	6/22/2014	Monroe
Royal Tern	7/14/2014	Rye
Royal Tern	7/14/2014	Rye
Common Murre	6/28/2014	Offshore waters (near Jeffrey's Ledge)
Western Kingbird	6/9/2014	North Hampton
Western Kingbird	7/6/2014	Newington
Hooded Warbler	6/24/2014	Newington
Summer Tanager	6/20/2014	East Kingston
Harris's Sparrow	6/5/2014	Rye

### Records not accepted by the Committee

American Three-toed  
 Woodpecker 7/20/2014 Newport  
 The possibility that this could have been a yellow-capped  
 immature Hairy Woodpecker could not be eliminated.

Gray-cheeked Thrush 6/16/2014 Carroll

The Committee could not eliminate the possibility that  
 this heard-only bird could have been a Bicknell's Thrush  
 in what was good habitat and the appropriate season for a  
 singing Bicknell's.

Snowy Egret x

Tricolored Heron	7/19/2014	Hampton
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The Committee could not eliminate other potential  
 parentage if the bird is a hybrid, nor could eliminate the  
 potential for leucism as the cause for the white plumage.

## Fall 2014

### Records accepted by the Committee

Pacific Loon	10/26/2014	New Castle
Cackling Goose	10/18/2014	Nashua
Broad-winged Hawk	11/28/2014	Hampton
Swainson's Hawk – first NH record	9/21/2014	Hollis
Red-necked Phalarope	8/15/2014	Croydon
Common Murre	10/25/2014	Hampton
Northern Wheatear	10/10/2014	Nashua
Northern Wheatear	10/12/2014	Warner
White-eyed Vireo	10/21/2014	Hinsdale
Worm-eating Warbler	10/29/2014	Portsmouth
Blue Grosbeak	8/17/2014	Penacook (Concord)
Blue Grosbeak	10/17/2014	Portsmouth
Blue Grosbeak	10/5/2014	Concord

### Records not accepted by the Committee

Snow Goose x Ross's Goose 9/16/2014 Tamworth  
 The description of this very tame bird could not eliminate  
 the possibility that the bird was a farmyard goose.

Cackling Goose 11/16/2014 Greenland  
 The Committee felt that the description could not  
 eliminate Canada Goose.

Cackling Goose 11/21/2014 Rochester  
 The Committee felt that the description could not  
 eliminate Canada Goose.

Western Kingbird 9/13/2014 Concord  
 Although this bird was most likely a Western Kingbird,  
 it was only seen in flight and the description could  
 not eliminate other kingbird species. The sighting was  
 accepted as a "Yellow-bellied" Kingbird.

Western Kingbird 10/19/2014 Hampton  
 Although this bird was most likely a Western Kingbird,  
 it was only seen in flight, and the description could  
 not eliminate other kingbird species. The sighting was  
 accepted as a "Yellow-bellied" Kingbird.

Gray-cheeked Thrush 9/17/2014 Nashua  
 The Committee could not eliminate the possibility that  
 this bird was another *Catharus* thrush.

Gray-cheeked Thrush 10/12/2014 Rye  
 The Committee felt that Bicknell's Thrush could not be  
 eliminated. Therefore, the sighting was accepted as Gray-  
 cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush.

Western Tanager 11/5/2014 Plymouth  
 The description was insufficient to accept this rare western  
 vagrant.



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# Photo Quiz

by David B. Donsker

The subjects of this issue's Photo Quiz are paired images of two types of waterbirds swimming on the surface of the water in a duck-like manner. Though somewhat different in proportions, the birds are rather similar in many ways. Both are essentially black-and-white species. They both have dark crowns that extend down over the eye, white on the cheeks and throat and a dark hind neck that contrasts with a paler fore neck and clear white breast. Both have a dark back, well-defined necks of medium length in proportion to the remainder of the bird and thin, pointed bills. There are differences as well, however. Although it is hard to judge size in the absence of any surrounding structures for comparison, the species on the left looks smaller and more diminutive than the birds on the right. The left bird has whitish flanks streaked with gray while the right species has gray flanks streaked with white. Perhaps the most striking difference is that the bills of these two species differ in proportion. The bill of the bird on the right is longer and more dagger-like than the smaller, thinner bill of the left hand bird.

Swimming behavior is shared by a diverse range of unrelated waterbirds in our state including grebes, loons, shearwaters, cormorants, gannets, waterfowl (ducks, swans and geese), gulls, jaegers, alcids and phalaropes. Most of these forms can be immediately eliminated because their body shapes, bill structure or plumage patterns do not conform to those of the species featured.

Our quiz birds lack the massive, sabre-like bill of the gannet. Besides, adult gannets are nearly pure white and young gannets are uniformly dark. The bills of our shearwaters are strongly hooked and have tubular nostrils at the base of the bill. Cormorant bills are similarly hooked at the tip rather than sharply pointed as in these individuals and neither of our cormorants have the black-and-white plumage of these birds. Our subjects are not delicate, nor as thin-billed and small-headed as phalaropes. Although the small size and black-and-white plumage of the bird on the left may suggest an alcid, it is not short-necked nor as "dumpy" as that group of seabirds. None of our gulls or jaegers is similarly patterned or has such sharply-pointed, tapered bills.

Most of our waterfowl have broad, flattened, or short triangular bills, but thin-billed, fish-eating mergansers are the exception in that family. The colorful, well patterned male mergansers in breeding plumage are not an identification problem in this case. On the other hand, the females and males in non-breeding plumage are all relatively somber with generally gray bodies and paler foreparts that could cause confusion with the featured bird on the right, especially when observed at a distance. Female and eclipse male

Common Mergansers have white chins and breasts, but never have the extent of white on the lower face and side of neck of the featured bird. The foreparts of Red-breasted Merganser are duller white and are even less contrasted with the rest of the body than in the featured bird. Hooded Merganser in non-breeding plumage is dark gray overall and, especially in males, its bill is darker. Further, all mergansers have distinctly crested heads in female and non-breeding male plumage and their bills are much thinner and less dagger-like. Be aware, however, that juvenile Hooded Merganser, unlike the adult, is pale billed and has a shorter, less well developed crest. It can be confused with the species on the right because of these features, but the uniformly dark breast of the Hooded Merganser alone eliminates it as a possibility to the careful observer.



*Juvenile Hooded Mergansers by Keith Chamberlin.*

The species on the right, with its black-and-white plumage, well-defined neck and long, tapered, dagger-like bill might be confused with any of our three loons in winter plumage. In that plumage, loons also share some plumage features similar to this bird. That is, all loons have dark crowns, hind necks and backs, white breasts and fore necks, and white on the face and throat. Common Loon is heavier and larger than the featured bird and has a much heftier bill, but the two smaller loons, Pacific Loon and Red-throated Loon, bear some further consideration. Pacific Loon has a different head shape than the right-hand bird. Its crown is rounder and the back of the neck fuller than the featured bird. Generally, it has a black chinstrap and a dark back that contrasts with its paler gray nape. Its flanks are never as extensively white as the bird in the photograph. Usually, the flanks of Pacific Loon look dark to the waterline, but loons often "roll" on the surface of the water exposing their white bellies, which can be confused with white flanks. The smaller Red-throated Loon looks most like our featured bird including streaked whitish-gray flanks, but adults of this species in winter plumage have extensively white faces. However, juvenile Red-throated Loons have much less white

on the face. The white may be confined to the lower cheeks and throat as seen in the featured bird and the head may be peaked at the rear, a feature that is typical of the right-hand bird, but Red-throated Loon has a different bill structure. It is thinner and the lower mandible is upturned at the tip. Further, the entire bill itself is usually tilted upward which further exaggerates this effect. The bird on the right has a thicker bill and, if not held horizontally, it is frequently tilted slightly downward.

That leaves the grebes as the final group to be considered. Five species of grebes have been recorded in New Hampshire: Pied-billed Grebe, Western Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, Horned Grebe and Eared Grebe. Pied-billed Grebe is the most divergent of the five. Unlike all the others, it has a uniquely thick, short bill which, in adult plumage is white with a black subterminal band giving the bill a pied look. In non-breeding plumage, the bill loses its pied appearance, but this species, unlike all our other grebes, is rather uniformly dark in non-breeding plumage and much stockier than its cousins.

Western Grebe, our largest species, is more like the bird on the right in structure and more like the bird on the left in plumage. Like the bird on the right, it is a larger species with a long, pale, dagger-like bill, a dark crown that extends below the eye and white lower cheek, throat and fore neck. Like the left-hand bird, it is also strongly black-and-white with a gleaming white fore neck and breast. It further differs from the left-hand bird by its much longer bill and larger size, and its less extensively white face and flanks. Unlike both featured birds, however, it has a long, graceful, swan-like neck.

The remaining three grebes, Red-necked, Horned, and Eared Grebes, all belong to the same genus, *Podiceps*. They are quite distinctive and colorful species in breeding plumage, but we rarely have a chance to see them in that plumage in New Hampshire. Unfortunately, as might be expected from closely related, congeneric species, they have shared morphological features that can make them occasionally difficult to tell apart when in non-breeding or transitional plumage, which is usually how we experience them in our state.

Red-necked Grebe is the largest of the three and is generally the easiest to tell apart. However, at a distance, as is often the case along the seacoast, size can be difficult to judge. Unlike Horned Grebe, but similar to Eared Grebe, it has a white throat with a dusker cheek. Also as in Eared Grebe, the white of the throat often extends up behind the cheek, which can further extenuate the dark cheek. Like Eared Grebe, its fore neck is grayer than its breast and throat, but it alone has a long, yellow, dagger-like bill and generally has more extensively dark flanks than either of its smaller cousins.

Horned and Eared Grebes are both small species. Horned Grebe has the most sharply contrasting black-and-white plumage of the three *Podiceps* grebes. Its cheeks and fore neck are more extensively pure white. It has a much smaller, shorter bill than Red-necked Grebe and much whiter flanks. Its head may look slightly peaked well behind the eye, as can that of Red-necked Grebe, but is unlike the crown of Eared Grebe, which is crested above or just in front of the eye.

Eared Grebe is a rare vagrant to our state from the Western US. Although it shares the dusky fore neck and cheeks of Red-necked Grebe, it is more apt to be confused with the similarly small Horned Grebe. In addition to the features mentioned above, other clues help distinguish this species from Horned Grebe. The white rear flanks of Eared Grebe can look fluffy. Its bill is thinner, more delicate and slightly upturned at the tip. The crown peaks above or in front of the eye, rather than behind it.

Now let's return to our two subjects. For all of the reasons given above, both of these birds are grebes in non-breeding plumage. The larger bird on the right, with its long, pale, dagger-like bill, dark gray flanks, and dusky cheeks is a Red-necked Grebe. The more dainty and diminutive, strikingly black-and-white, white-faced bird on the left is a Horned Grebe.

Both of these species were photographed by Scott Heron during the month of December just offshore along the New Hampshire seacoast. The Red-necked Grebe was seen on 12-5-15 from North Hampton. The Horned Grebe was seen on 12-21-14 in Rye.

Both of these species are circumpolar breeders in North America and Eurasia. In North America, both nest on inland lakes and other bodies of fresh water of northwestern US and Canada. Both species are regular spring and fall transients in New Hampshire on inland lakes and on the ocean, regularly wintering along our coast. Although Horned Grebe is somewhat more common in the middle of winter than is Red-necked Grebe, either species or both can be expected to be seen offshore on a dedicated day of birding along the coast from late autumn through early spring.

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## Abbreviations Used

AMC	Appalachian Mountain Club
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
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

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# Winter 2016-17 Highlights



*Thanks to homeowner Lisa Alexandropoulos for sharing this Red-headed Woodpecker with many delighted birders all winter long. Photo by Steve Mirick, 2-18-17, Epping, NH.*



*Evening Grosbeaks by Dylan Jackson, 2-16-17, Cornish, NH.*

## Winter Warblers – Unusual Lingerers



*Common Yellowthroat by Steve Mirick, 1-14-17, Woodland Rd., North Hampton, NH.*



*Nashville Warbler by Jason Lambert, 12-10-16, Seabrook, NH.*



*Pine Warbler by Steve Mirick, 1-15-17, Newmarket, NH.*



*Wilson's Warbler by Leo McKillop, 12-10-16, Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye, NH.*

