

New Hampshire Bird Records





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IN MEMORY OF
Chandler S. Robbins

This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored in memory of ornithologist Chan Robbins, in honor of his legendary contributions to the study and protection of birds and to his New Hampshire connections.

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Cover Photos: These photos represent some of the New Hampshire species whose population trends are tracked by the Breeding Bird Survey created by Chan Robbins, for whom this issue is dedicated. Clockwise: Indigo Bunting by Leo McKillop, Bobolink by Scott Heron, American Redstart by David Forsyth, Rose-breasted Grosbeak by Jane Kelley.

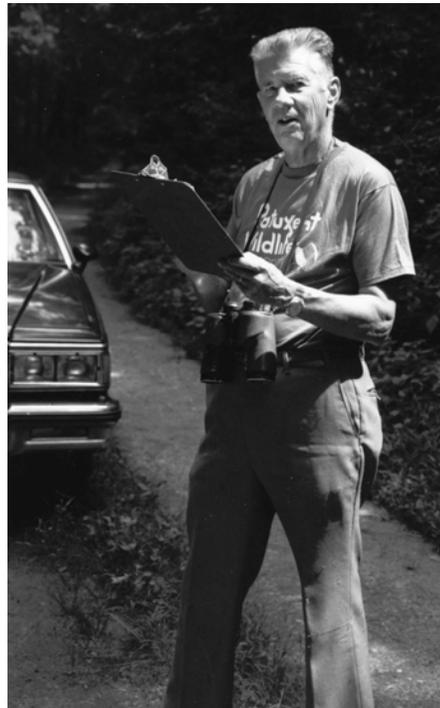
New Hampshire Bird Records is published quarterly by New Hampshire Audubon's Conservation Department. Thank you to the many observers who submit their sightings to NH eBird (www.ebird.org/nh), the source of data for this publication. Records are selected for publication and not all species reported will 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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Chan Robbins created the Breeding Bird Surveys in the 1960s, laying the foundation for what is now the primary source of data on bird trends. His youngest son, George, helped him with the beta testing as they decided on the number of stops, interval between stops, and time allotted for counting birds at each stop. Chan was co-author of the “Golden Guide” – *A Guide to Field Identification of Birds of North America*, wrote about research on the effects of DDT before *Silent Spring*, and banded (and re-discovered) the oldest known bird, a Laysan Albatross named Wisdom. Chan spent summers in New Hampshire since he was a young boy, devoted many hours to the *New Hampshire Breeding Bird Atlas*, and even took part in a couple of now obsolete Christmas Bird Counts in New Hampshire’s White Mountains. His son, George, and wife, Andrea, live in New Hampshire and continue his birding tradition.



Chan running a Breeding Bird Survey route.
Photo by Barbara Dowell.

FROM THE EDITOR

Summer 2016

by Rebecca Suomala

Welcome Chad Witko!

We are very happy to welcome Chad Witko as the new Summer Season Editor. Chad is an avid birder and eBird user who is currently a graduate student at Antioch University New England in Keene, NH. He grew up in Upstate New York and has been a birder for just over 30 years, despite his young age. He has done bird surveys and banding from New York to California. As part of his Master’s, he is conducting research at NH Audubon’s Kensan-Devan Wildlife Sanctuary, doing bird surveys and habitat assessment before and after a forest management harvest to improve wildlife habitat. Chad takes over the Summer Editor reigns from Tony Vazzano and we are glad to have him on board.

PHOTO QUIZ

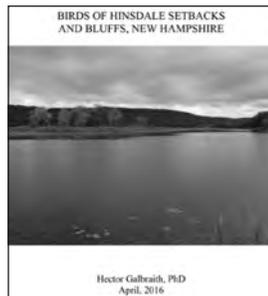
Can You Identify These Birds?



Answer on page 38. Photos by Jeanne-Marie Maher (left) and Stephen R. Mirick (right).

New Ebook—*The Birds of Hinsdale Setbacks and Bluffs, New Hampshire*

by Hector Galbraith



With world class birding sites such as Parker River National Wildlife Reserve (NWR), Odiorne Point State Park, and Great Bay NWR only a couple of hours drive away, it is easy for some of us in inland New England to forget just how ornithologically important some of our inland sites are. This is definitely the case with Hinsdale Setbacks and Bluffs in Cheshire County, southwest New Hampshire. Situated on the Connecticut River only about four miles north of the Massachusetts state line and comprising a rich mixture of habitats, including emergent marsh, open water, and riparian scrub and forest, the Setbacks and Bluffs are one of the most diverse and productive birding sites in inland New England, and probably in the top ten. Since bird records began there in the 1930s, a total of at least 244 species have been recorded, equaling or exceeding most other sites in inland New England. Many of these species are migrants, the site being particularly known for its waterbird migration in the spring and fall, when just about any goose, duck, loon or grebe species can turn up. Also, while many of the birds recorded are those that might be expected in the Connecticut Valley, many are much less common, including such rarities as Swallow-tailed Kite, Acadian Flycatcher, and Barnacle Goose. So, birding the Setbacks and Bluffs can combine high bird diversity with the attention-getting prospect of seeing a rare bird.

Given the data that have been collected over the decades and what we know about the Setbacks and Bluffs, it is high time that we attempted to summarize their avian occurrence, abundance and seasonality in a readable book. This is what I have attempted in the free ebook, *The Birds of Hinsdale Setbacks and Bluffs*. The 70 pages of text, bar charts and photos provide a detailed review of the two sites, their birds, and birding opportunities. So, if you intend visiting the sites or are just interested in bird migration through the Connecticut Valley, you need to obtain and read this ebook. It can be accessed on the web: hinsdalebirds.wordpress.com in your search engine and saving the resulting download to your computer. Simple! You will not regret it! If you have problems with this procedure, simply email me at hg2@myfairpoint.net and I will email you a copy back.

New Resource for Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge

by Joanne P. Jones

The Friends of Pondicherry have recently launched a new website (www.friendsofpondicherry.org) that offers a wide range of information about the Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge in Jefferson and Whitefield. Easy to navigate and mobile-friendly, the site has three main sections: About the Refuge, Activities, and Directions/Info. About the Refuge has pages on the history, geology, vegetation, and wildlife at Pondicherry. The Activities section includes pages on hiking, bicycling, and cross-country skiing/snowshoeing at the refuge, as well as a page on birding with links to the checklist of all the birds seen at Pondicherry since 1899 and to a printable checklist for recording bird sightings at the refuge. Directions/Info has pages with directions for the five access points to the refuge, tips for visiting Pondicherry, and information about purchasing the *Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge Map & Guide*. There is also a link on every page of the site to Facebook, where one can follow the Friends' activities such as International Migratory Bird Day in May and the Big Sit in October.

The website complements the *Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge Map & Guide*, published by the Wilderness Map Company and the Friends of Pondicherry. This publication features an annotated, full-color map of the refuge that shows all the access points to Pondicherry and the hiking trails. There is also a large-scale Heart of the Refuge map that highlights the Cherry Pond and Little Cherry Pond area. In addition, there is information on exploring Pondicherry, as well as on the establishment and growth of the refuge, its wildlife, and its natural history. If you would like to purchase a copy of the *Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge Map & Guide*, it can be found at NH Audubon's Nature Store at the McLane Center in Concord, the Mountain Wanderer bookstore in Lincoln, Bondcliff Books in Littleton, and other locations in the North Country.

Joanne Jones is a retired librarian who now volunteers at New Hampshire Audubon and, with her husband Kevin, at the Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge. In addition to creating the Friends of Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge website, she has also written an article for New Hampshire Bird Records on the history of Waumbek Junction at Pondicherry. If you have any suggestions for the website, please use the contact form in the Directions/Info section of the website.

June 1 through July 31, 2016

by Chad Witko



For many birders, summer is considered a slow time of year and the perfect time to hang up the binoculars until fall migration. At first thought, one can understand this line of reasoning. By late-June, vegetation is at its most lush, making sighting birds difficult, and by mid-July, birdsong has greatly diminished. The end of summer, after young

have fledged, is also a period of stillness when many eastern songbirds such as thrushes and warblers begin to molt their body and flight feathers for the long migration ahead. During these periods, they can be surprisingly difficult to find and evidence from eBird has shown dips in the overall number of birds reported for some of these species as a result.

To say that birding in summer is truly slow and worth skipping, however, is both fallacious and unfair. With elevations ranging from sea level to 6,288-foot Mount Washington, there is no shortage of habitats to find breeding birds in New Hampshire during the summer months. In fact, many of these habitats can even be reached within a single day due to the state's modest size. From Saltmarsh Sparrows on the coast to boreal specialties in the White Mountains to American Pipits above tree line on Mount Washington, birding opportunities available in the summer really are quite exceptional and should not be overlooked.

If one needs further convincing on the available opportunities of summer birding, consider the fact that summer is among *the* best times of year to find species that *do not* breed in the state. Several species of seabirds, particularly shearwaters and storm-petrels, visit our offshore ledges and canyons during the summer in high numbers, even if seabird diversity is highest in the fall. Post-breeding dispersers from our south such as herons, egrets, and terns



Yellow-crowned Night-Heron by Scott Heron, 7-23-2016, Seabrook, NH.

give us unexpected excitement when discovered among the usual cast of characters. For some species, such as arctic-nesting shorebirds that failed to produce young on the tundra just weeks prior, summer marks the start of their southward migration and many can be found scattered across New Hampshire as early as mid-June.

Of course, countless birders still define a birding season by the number of rarities found. The summer of 2016 had big shoes to fill after the unprecedented spring with its four first-state records. Even if they were not the caliber of state-firsts, the summer season did see several noteworthy rarities of seasonal and state-level significance. These included **Redhead, Little Blue Heron, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Golden Eagle, Royal Tern, Rufous Hummingbird, and Golden-winged Warbler**. Additional highlights, perhaps the most relevant in regards to the time of year, came in the form of the breeding success of Bald Eagles and Piping Plovers along with the continued persistence of Mississippi Kite and Sandhill Crane within our borders.

Overall, the summer of 2016 proved to be quite warm and very dry across New Hampshire with pervasive drought conditions south of the White Mountains. North of the Whites saw some reprieve with moderated conditions mirroring that of neighboring Québec; however, even if it was not in a state of drought, it was still very dry. Despite June starting off cool in Concord, temperatures for June and July were above average overall (1.2 and 2.5 degrees higher respectively) with a total of 13 days of 90° F or above. Even with a few isolated severe storm events and scattered showers, recorded rainfall in Concord only totaled 3.59 inches for the summer, a full 2.97 inches (45%) less than normal. These dry conditions were the likely cause of a decline in reports in at least a few of the species outlined in the pages to follow.

Waterfowl through Grebes

Summer is far from peak season for observing waterfowl in the Granite State; however, this year saw a few noteworthy records. Typically an inland migrant during the mid to late periods of May, a flock of **Brant** were heard migrating north over Penacook in Concord right before the stroke of midnight on June 3 (see the Field Notes article). Despite their status as a common breeding duck on Plum Island just south of our border, Gadwall are surprisingly lacking from our summer avifauna with only a few records each summer. This year, only a single male **Gadwall** was discovered in Exeter at the wastewater treatment plant (WTP) on July 29. An **American Wigeon** was present along the Magalloway River in Errol, this time an adult male on June 14. This species first bred in New Hampshire at this location in 2015 and is worth keeping an eye on.

SUMMER SEASON

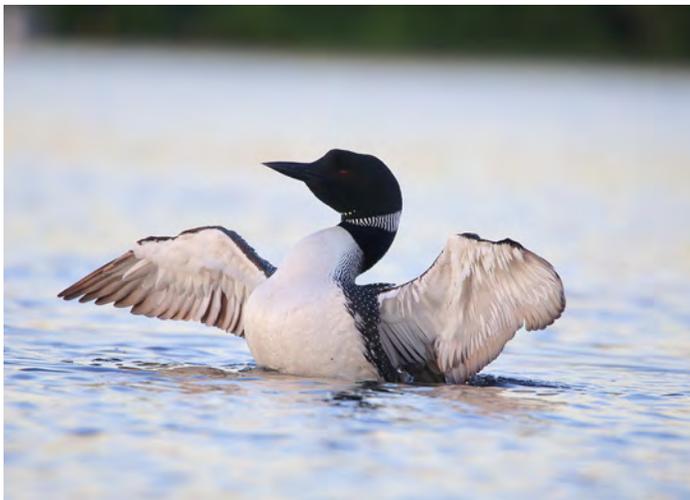
A single **Northern Shoveler** was discovered on June 4 in Hampton with another four at the Exeter WTP on July 29. Noteworthy dabbling ducks were rounded off with the sighting of Green-winged Teal in both early June and late July with the latter observations being early fall migrants. However, the presence of the three Green-winged Teal at Pondicherry NWR in Jefferson on June 11 raises hopes of this species once again breeding there as it has in the past (in 1957 according to *The Birds of New Hampshire* by Keith and Fox, 2013). This was not indicated from the report and remains unlikely.



Redhead by Sheila McCarthy, 6-20-2016, Lancaster WTP, NH.

As for the diving ducks, there was an incomparable summer record for **Redhead** when a single male was first discovered in Lancaster on June 18 where it persisted until June 24 resulting in only the second summer record for the Granite

State! While a disjunct population of Redhead breeds in extreme southern Québec along the upper St. Lawrence River and in the Lac-Saint-Jean region, this species chiefly breeds in the seasonal wetlands of the prairie pothole region of the Midwest. A lone **Ruddy Duck** was present at the Rochester WTP on June 7 and another was at the Exeter WTP during the latter half of July. Ruddy Ducks are infrequent summer stragglers across New Hampshire with no evidence of breeding. Interestingly, the Ruddy Duck is also a species that primarily breeds in the prairie pothole region with isolated breeding populations in Ontario east of Lake Huron and along the lowermost St. Lawrence River in extreme southern Québec.



Common Loon by Scott Heron, 6-21-2016, Kingston, NH.

In 2016, Common Loons in New Hampshire experienced a moderate year of success with a total of 293 territorial pairs across the state. This only represents a one percent increase over last year, and John Cooley, Senior Biologist with the Loon Preservation Committee in Moultonborough, reports that this marks the third straight year of little or no growth. Fortunately, the number of territorial pairs across the state remains over 25% higher than the average before the implementation of the Loon Recovery Plan which began in 2009. This year, nearly 71% of territorial pairs attempted nesting while 61% of all nesting pairs successfully hatched at least one chick. In total, 198 chicks hatched statewide with 147 of these surviving until the end of routine monitoring in August. This number equals 0.50 chicks surviving per territorial pair, the manner by which reproductive success of loons is measured. This is slightly below the long-term average of 0.51 (1975-2016), but remains greater than the threshold of 0.48 needed to maintain a stable population. Overall, the warm and dry summer conditions, along with a strong black fly season which causes incubating adults to abandon their nests, looks to be the main cause of nest failures for loons across the state. The 2016 breeding season also brought additional cases of loon mortalities from Bald Eagles, boat strikes, and lead fishing tackle, as well as other causes.

Date	#	Location	Observer
Brant			
06/03		Contoocook River Park/ Island Shores Estates, Penacook	P. Hunt
Gadwall			
07/29	1	Exeter WTP	N. Houlihan, P. Moynahan
American Wigeon			
06/14	1	Umbagog NWR	R. Quinn, P. Brown, F. Nevers, NHA FT
07/23	1	Exeter WTP	S. Bennett, S. Wisley
Northern Shoveler			
06/04	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/29	4	Exeter WTP	N. Houlihan, P. Moynahan
Green-winged Teal			
06/11	3	Pondicherry NWR access trail	P. Brown
07/25	1	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
07/27	2	Exeter WTP	L. McKillop
07/28	1	Exeter WTP	A. Murray
Redhead			
06/18	1	Water St., Lancaster	S. Stoddard, A. Griffin, P. Charron, L. Charron
Ring-necked Duck			
06/29	1	Boston Lot Lake, Lebanon	S. Sturup
07/22	5	Pudding Pond, Conway	C. Nims

Date	#	Location	Observer
Surf Scoter			
06/01	5	NH coast	J. Maher
06/22	1	Ossipee Lake	M. Aronson
07/09	3	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/17	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	J. Garrett
07/22	1	Leavitt Bay, Ossipee	A. Bouffard

White-winged Scoter			
06/04	7	Great Boars Head, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/09	1	North Hampton State Beach	S. Mirick
07/24	1	North Hampton State Beach	S. Mirick
07/24	2	Rye Harbor SP	M. Papula

Black Scoter			
06/04	2	Bicentennial Park, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/03	5	North Hampton State Beach	S. Mirick
07/24	5	North Hampton State Beach	S. Mirick

Long-tailed Duck			
06/04	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	A. Murray
06/25	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	A. Norton

Common Goldeneye			
06/03	5	Sherman's Farm, Conway	B. Crowley
07/05	2	Magalloway R. Trail, Umbagog NWR, Wentworths Location	L. Charron, D. Dionne
07/09	1	Eagle Pond, Wilmot	J. Gamble
07/24	5	Lonesome Lake, Lincoln	M. Beyly
07/28	4	Bear Brook, Wentworth's Location	M. Wilson

Red-breasted Merganser			
06/04	1	Rye Harbor	S. Mirick

Ruddy Duck			
06/07	1	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
07/17	1	Exeter WTP	S. Mirick
07/31	1	Exeter WTP	P. Farr, A. Murray

Spruce Grouse			
06/10	1	Rt. 3, Pittsburg	N. Andersen
06/17	1	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	S. Miller, C. Dengler
06/18	1	Mt. Pierce, Beans Grant	B. Bucy
07/13	4	Appalachian Trail, Ethan Pond to Galehead Hut	W. Strobel
07/16	1	Carter-Moriah Trail, Beans Purchase	A. Nicole
07/21	1	Mt. Chocorua, Albany	G.& J. Robbins

Red-throated Loon			
06/04	1	Great Boars Head, Hampton	S. Mirick

Pied-billed Grebe			
06/11	4	Copps Pond WMA, Tuftonboro	G. Bailey, S. Wilcox
06/11	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	P. Brown
06/25	1	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
07/11	1	Bridge St., Henniker	G. Denton
07/16	1	Surrey Ln. marsh, Durham	K. Dorsey
07/23	1	Brentwood Mitigation Area	J. Sparrell
07/29	1	Elm Brook Park, Hopkinton	R. Quinn
07/31	5	Copps Pond WMA, Tuftonboro	S. Wilcox, G. Bailey

Red-necked Grebe			
06/01	1	Rye Harbor SP	J. Maher
07/03	1	North Hampton State Beach	S. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/11	1	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	J. Scott, B. Crowley
07/24	1	North Hampton State Beach	S. Mirick

Shearwaters through Cranes



Three of six immature Yellow-crowned Night-Herons seen together at Worthley Rd. in Seabrook on 7-23-2016. Photo by Zeke Cornell.

New Hampshire is regrettably not renowned for its seabirding opportunities, particularly when compared to neighboring Massachusetts; however, at times the seabirding can be fantastic, even from shore in the summer! This was perfectly exemplified during the early part of July when a massive shearwater flight was documented along the New Hampshire coast by Jane and Steve Mirick on July 10. This flight, just offshore, resulted in a state record-high 1,172 Cory's Shearwaters, shattering the previous high of 280 offshore on August 16, 2009! See the Species Spotlight by Steve Mirick.

July also produced another state record-high count, this time when seven **Yellow-crowned Night-Herons** were observed in Seabrook on July 23, only two days after first reported in this area this season. Rounding out the waders, on July 31, a juvenile **Little Blue Heron** was picked out of 40 Snowy Egrets in Parsons Creek Saltmarsh in Rye and **Least Bitterns** were again seen at World End Pond in Salem where they first nested in 2014.

In the post-DDT era, it has never been easier to find Bald Eagles in the Granite State. Per New Hampshire Audubon Senior Biologist Chris Martin, 2016 saw a record-high 56 territorial pairs of Bald Eagles, a 24% increase from the 45 pairs confirmed a year ago. Record-high numbers for Bald Eagles this year also included 42 pairs incubating (45% increase from 2015), 31 successful nests (29% increase), and 51 young-fledged (19% increase). Since Bald Eagles first began re-nesting in New Hampshire nearly 30 years ago, more than 25% of all fledgling Bald Eagles have been produced in just the last two breeding seasons.

SUMMER SEASON



Mississippi Kites by Leo McKillop, 6-19-2016, Newmarket, NH.

A classic example of a southern species moving north in recent years, **Black Vultures** are now appearing in the southern tier of New Hampshire with regularity. This year there were several observations of Black Vulture, all in Cheshire County, including two at the same time in Westmoreland on July 17. Conversely, a raptor of the north, a lone **Golden Eagle**, was observed in Errol on June 2. Over the past several years, few species in New Hampshire, raptor or otherwise, have received as much attention in the summer as the **Mississippi Kites** of Newmarket. Fortunately, they continued their well-known and celebrated residency this year including the discovery of a new nest site that resulted in a single nestling that fledged in the fall.



Sandhill Cranes by Scott Heron, 6-12-2016, Monroe, NH.

During June and July, one or two Sandhill Cranes were observed in Monroe, continuing a tradition going back to 1999. Local residents reported the absence of one of the birds for a period of time, indicating an apparent nesting attempt that subsequently failed. Another single Sandhill Crane was observed in Hopkinton along Route 127 for the latter half of July. This individual was later joined by a second bird on two occasions during the month of August which might be a good sign for future breeding attempts of this species next year.

Date	#	Location	Observer
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Cory's Shearwater

06/26	3	Jeffreys Ledge (NH)	S. Mirick, J. Maher, et al.
07/05	45	offshore waters, NH	K. Wilmarth, H. Otto
07/10	1172	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/10	21	Rye Harbor SP	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala, S.& J. Mirick
07/30	13	NH coast	J. Maher

Great Shearwater

07/03	1	Jeffreys Ledge (NH)	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala, S. Bennett
07/10	2	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/10	3	Seabrook Beach	M. Sovay
07/11	49	offshore waters, NH	J.& G. McKibben



Sooty Shearwater by Kyle Wilmarth, 7-5-2016, offshore waters, NH.

Sooty Shearwater

06/04	1	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/03	4	Jeffreys Ledge (NH)	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala, S. Bennett
07/05	6	offshore waters, NH	K. Wilmarth, H. Otto
07/10	206	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick

Manx Shearwater

06/26	1	Jeffreys Ledge (NH)	R. Prieto, J. Maher, S. Mirick, H. Otto, K. Wilmarth, et al.
07/09	2	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/18	1	offshore waters, NH	M. Rockmore

Shearwater sp.

07/10	50	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
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Wilson's Storm-Petrel

06/18	60	offshore waters, NH	E. Masterson
06/26	30	Jeffreys Ledge (NH)	J. Maher, S. Mirick, et al.
07/03	240	Jeffreys Ledge (NH)	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala, S. Bennett
07/10	46	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
07/10	35	Rye Harbor SP	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S.& J. Mirick
07/30	18	NH coast	J. Maher

Leach's Storm-Petrel

07/06	1	Jeffreys Ledge (NH)	J. Swanson
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Northern Gannet

06/01	1	New Castle to Isles of Shoals	R. Suomala
06/04	1	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/10	15	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/10	4	Rye Harbor SP	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S.& J. Mirick
07/30	4	NH coast	J. Maher

Date	#	Location	Observer
American Bittern			
06/02	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray
06/11	1	Copps Pond WMA, Tuftonboro	P. Brown, R. Quinn, NHA FT
06/16	4	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	S. Bennett, S. Wrisley, J. Pettipas, D. Lipsey
07/10	2	Smith R. Meadows, Danbury	J. Gamble
07/28	2	McDaniels Marsh WMA, Springfield	J. Gamble
07/31	2	Copps Pond WMA, Tuftonboro	G. Bailey, S. Wilcox

Date	#	Location	Observer
Least Bittern			
07/10	4	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
07/24	1	World End Pond, Salem	J. Maher, K. Wilmarth

Date	#	Location	Observer
Great Egret			
06/24	1	McIntosh Rd., Danville	P. Bielecki
07/05	50	NH coast	K. Wilmarth
07/07	1	Cemetery Fields, Amherst	P. Hunt
07/21	1	Elm Brook Park, Hopkinton	D. Ellis
07/21	68	NH coast	J. Maher
07/22	8	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray, A. Kurdt
07/23	79	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	S. Mirick
07/25	1	Meetinghouse Pond, Marlborough	I. Gavrín

Date	#	Location	Observer
Snowy Egret			
07/02	24	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/16	44	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/22	10	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray
07/23	41	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	S. Mirick
07/31	40	Parsons Creek saltmarsh, Rye	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala

Date	#	Location	Observer
Little Blue Heron			
07/31	1	Parsons Creek saltmarsh, Rye	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala, et al.

Date	#	Location	Observer
Black-crowned Night-Heron			
06/06	1	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	C.& J. Lentz
06/28	1	Dodge Pond, Lyman	S. Turner
07/04	5	Hampton Harbor	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/19	2	Nashua R. above Margaritas, Nashua	J. Maher
07/29	5	Worthley Rd., Seabrook	N. Houlihan, P. Moynahan



Yellow-crowned Night-Heron roosting at Hampton River Marina, by Zeke Cornell, 7-31-2016.

Date	#	Location	Observer
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron			
07/21	2	Worthley Rd., Seabrook	J. Maher
07/23	6	Worthley Rd., Seabrook	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S.& J. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/23	1	Rt. 1A, Seabrook	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, S.& J. Mirick
07/31	1	Hampton River Marina	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala

Date	#	Location	Observer
Glossy Ibis			
07/16	36	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/22	14	Great Pond, Kingston	S. Heron
07/28	3	Bellamy Reservoir, Madbury	A. Bisig

Date	#	Location	Observer
Black Vulture			
06/08	1	Woodward Rd., Westmoreland	A. Burnett
06/18	1	Hilltop Dr., Keene	S. Spangenberg
07/17	2	Woodward Rd., Westmoreland	R. Burnett

Date	#	Location	Observer
Golden Eagle			
06/02	1	Rt. 26, Errol	B. Griffith



Where's Waldo? How many Mississippi Kites are in this photo? Was this really taken in New Hampshire? (Answers: 3, Yes) Photo by Steve Mirick, 6-18-2016, Newmarket, NH.

Date	#	Location	Observer
Mississippi Kite			
06/01	1	Piscassic St., Newmarket	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
06/18	4	Piscassic St., Newmarket	S. Mirick
06/24	1	Bennett Rd., Durham	S. Mirick
07/23	4	Huckin's Dr., Newmarket	S. Mirick
07/30	1	Oyster R. Landing, Durham	K. Dorsey

Date	#	Location	Observer
Northern Harrier			
06/01	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	C. Breen
06/11	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	S. Stoddard
06/15	2	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	P. Brown, R. Quinn, NHA FT
07/28	1	East Inlet, Pittsburg	H. Bauer

Date	#	Location	Observer
Northern Goshawk			
06/04	1	Smith R. Meadows, Danbury	J. Gamble
06/15	1	Rt. 10, Lyme	J. MacQueen
06/19	1	Hoyt WS	S. Wilcox, G. Bailey
07/11	1	Lyme Town Forest	B. Allison

Date	#	Location	Observer
Red-shouldered Hawk			
06/01	3	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook R., Pittsfield	A. Robbins
06/03	1	Cherry Pond, Pondicherry NWR	A. Griffin

SUMMER SEASON

Date # Location Observer

Red-shouldered Hawk—continued

06/04 3 Cannon Mt., Franconia S. Bennett, J. Pettipas,
S. Wisley, D. Pettee
06/04 2 Berry Bay, Freedom A. Robbins
06/17 2 Buckmeadow Rd. at Ridge Rd., Nashua C. Sheridan
07/22 2 Pleasant Lake, New London D. Jackson

Virginia Rail

06/01 4 Hoit Road Marsh WMA, Concord R. Quinn
06/03 11 Pickering Ponds, Rochester D. Hubbard
06/11 3 Cops Ponds WMA, Tuftonboro P. Brown,
R. Quinn, NHA FT
06/30 1 Campton Bog P. Hunt
07/06 3 Red Water Creek at Rt. 103B, Sunapee D. Jackson
07/10 7 World End Pond, Salem K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
07/19 2 Surrey Ln. marsh, Durham A. Murray, P. Farr
07/23 2 Borthwick Ave. marsh R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

American Coot

07/27 1 Exeter WTP A. Hamlin, L. McKillop

Sandhill Crane

06/12 2 Plains Rd., Monroe S. Heron, J. Sparrell
07/19 1 Rt. 127 fields e. of Hopkinton Dam, Hopkinton
Z. French
07/22 2 Plains Rd., Monroe S. Bennett, S. Wisley
07/31 1 Rt. 127 fields e. of Hopkinton Dam, Hopkinton
B., C. & R. Baker

Plovers through Terns

Piping Plover had a stellar year in New Hampshire with seven nesting pairs on Seabrook and Hampton beaches fledging a total of 15 chicks, the most since 2001. Of these, three pairs on Seabrook Beach produced 10 chicks while the four pairs at Hampton Beach successfully raised five chicks. Early in the summer of 2016, NH Fish & Game Piping Plover monitors at Seabrook Beach discovered that two plovers were outfitted with pink leg bands, each with a unique identification number. It turns out that both plovers were originally banded in November 2015 in the north end of the Bahamas at Joulter Cays National Park and that the bands were assigned by a joint team of researchers from National Audubon, The Bahamas National Trust, and Virginia Tech! If ever there was a clear example of the need to demonstrate the power of migration and the fact that our birds are a shared global resource requiring protection in both their breeding and wintering grounds, along with migration pathways, this is it! A shorebird of grasslands, Upland Sandpiper is another regionally sensitive species monitored by the biologists at NH Fish & Game. Per John Kanter, Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program Supervisor, a minimum of five successful nesting pairs fledged 15 chicks at Pease International Airport in Portsmouth. This is the sole known breeding location for this species in New Hampshire.

Despite the increased presence of shorebird-appropriate habitat due to lower water levels, there was a relative lack of shorebirds across inland areas of the state this summer and few records to note. A limited number of noteworthy shorebirds were discovered on the coast, however, including a **Purple Sandpiper** on June 2 out at White and Seavey Islands at the Isles of Shoals. This locale appears to be a favorite haunt for this uncommon summer-visitor if ever there was one. A surprising flyby **American Oystercatcher** at Hampton Beach State Park on June 6 was also of note while a lone **Red Knot**, an early southbound migrant in breeding plumage, was first discovered at Hampton Harbor on July 29 where it persisted until the end of the month.



Piping Plover adult (top) by Len Medlock, 6-21-2016 and chick by Steve Mirick, 6-19-2016, Hampton Beach, NH.



Least Tern family by Len Medlock, 6-21-2016, Hampton, NH.

In a draft report from biologists working at the Isles of Shoals, 2016 was a record-breaking banner year for breeding populations of the state-threatened Common Tern (2,989 pairs) and the state- and federally-endangered Roseate Tern (83 pairs during the peak nesting period; 103 pairs total). As in recent years, Arctic Terns continued to breed there as well, but in low numbers with only three pairs present. This year, two pairs of state-endangered Least Tern nested at Hampton Beach State Park, but were unable to successfully fledge any young. One of the true standout birds this summer came when a single Royal Tern, a rare visitor from the south, was observed by Jane and Steve Mirick on July 9 as it flew north past Little Boar's Head.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
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American Oystercatcher

06/06	1	Hampton Beach SP	J. Kelly
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Black-bellied Plover

06/01	16	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	D. Moulton
07/31	7	Hampton Harbor	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala

Semipalmated Plover

07/17	12	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/23	15	pools s. of Odiorne SP, Rye	P. Farr, A. Murray
07/23	74	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/31	165	Hampton Harbor	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala

Piping Plover

06/01	2	Hampton Beach SP	Z. Cornell
06/20	6	NH coast	S. Bennett
07/08	5	Hampton Beach SP	P. Farr, A. Murray
07/10	7	Seabrook Beach	M. Sovay
07/24	6	Seabrook Beach	H. Otto

Upland Sandpiper

06/06	2	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington	D. Hubbard
07/31	10	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington	S. Cooper



An early south-bound Whimbrel that tied photographer Steve Mirick's personal early fall arrival date; seen 7-9-2016 in Rye, NH.

Whimbrel

07/09	1	saltmarsh s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye	S. Mirick
07/10	1	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
07/15	2	Meadow Pond, Hampton	K. Wilmarth
07/21	1	Hampton Harbor	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
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Ruddy Turnstone

06/19	1	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	J. MacQueen
07/27	4	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	C. Lentz

Red Knot

07/29	1	Hampton River Marina	J. Sparrell, K. Towler
07/31	1	Hampton Harbor	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala, S. Heron

Sanderling

07/17	12	Hampton Beach SP	D. Jackson, S. Heron
07/23	20	Seabrook Beach	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala

Purple Sandpiper

06/02	1	White & Seavey Islands, Isles of Shoals	L. Berigan
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Least Sandpiper

07/05	10	Chapmans Landing, Stratham	J. Garrett
07/10	2	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
07/15	57	pools s. of Odiorne SP, Rye	M. Sovay
07/17	2	Willand Pond, Somersworth/Dover	A. Murray
07/18	3	Fields Grove, Nashua	J. Maher
07/24	8	Water St., Lancaster	D. Dionne
07/28	85	NH coast	J. Maher
07/31	96	NH coast	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala, K. Dorsey

White-rumped Sandpiper

07/29	4	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	N. Houlihan, P. Moynahan
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Pectoral Sandpiper

07/24	1	Little Jacks restaurant, Rt. 1A, Hampton	J. Pettipas, S. Wrisley, S. Bennett
07/29	2	Rochester WTP	J. Sparrell, K. Towler

Semipalmated Sandpiper

06/01	32	Hampton Salt Marsh	J. Maher
07/05	15	NH coast	K. Wilmarth
07/17	64	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/18	9	Fields Grove, Nashua	J. Maher
07/19	2	Derry WTP	S. Mirick
07/23	266	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/31	200	NH coast	K. Wilmarth

Short-billed Dowitcher

06/29	5	Little River saltmarsh, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/09	7	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/17	19	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/28	6	NH coast	J. Maher
07/31	4	Hampton Harbor	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

Solitary Sandpiper

07/12	1	The Balsams, Colebrook	D.& G. Dionne, P. Charron
07/13	1	Diamond Ledge, Sandwich	T. Vazzano
07/17	3	saltmarsh s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye	S. Wrisley
07/18	3	Fields Grove, Nashua	J. Maher
07/21	5	Fourth Iron Campground, Harts Location	C. Nims
07/24	3	World End Pond, Salem	J. Maher
07/31	3	Sugar R., Newport	D. Jackson

Greater Yellowlegs

06/01	4	NH coast	J. Maher
06/10	1	Water St., Lancaster	S. Stoddard
07/28	21	NH coast	J. Maher

SUMMER SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
Willet			
07/03	33	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/04	53	Hampton Harbor	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/17	28	NH coast	S. Mirick

Lesser Yellowlegs			
06/03	2	Rt. 1A wooden bridge, Rye	A. Hamlin
06/11	1	Hampton Salt Marsh	S. Mirick
07/03	4	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/17	38	NH coast	S. Mirick

Jaeger sp.			
07/10	1	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick

Black Guillemot			
06/01	3	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	L. Berigan
07/09	3	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/30	2	NH coast	J. Maher

Bonaparte's Gull			
06/04	2	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	M.& P. Wolter
07/09	7	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/31	7	Kinneho Island, L. Winnepesaukee	D. Swartz

Laughing Gull			
06/04	1	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick
06/27	9	Seal Rocks, Rye	M. McCann
07/30	8	Foss Beach, Rye	D. Lania

Lesser Black-backed Gull			
06/04	1	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/24	1	Rye Harbor SP	M. Papula

Least Tern			
06/01	2	Hampton Beach SP	Z. Cornell
06/08	3	Hampton Harbor Inlet	P. Osenton
06/24	4	Hampton Beach SP	S. Wisley
07/17	2	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/17	1	saltmarsh, Seabrook	S. Mirick

Caspian Tern			
07/29	1	Spofford L., Chesterfield	E. Masterson



Roseate Tern adult and juvenile by Scott Heron, 7-23-2016, Seabrook, NH. Note the adult's leg has a color band which Scott has reported to the USGS Bird Banding Laboratory and is awaiting information.

Roseate Tern			
06/14	40	White & Seavey Islands, Isles of Shoals	R. Suomala, D. De Luca, L. Craig, et al.
07/03	10	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/09	22	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/12	30	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
Arctic Tern			
06/14	3	White & Seavey Islands, Isles of Shoals	R. Suomala, D. De Luca, L. Craig, et al.
06/28	2	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	J. Davis

Royal Tern			
07/09	1	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick

Cuckoos through Horned Lark

Cuckoo populations are complex and poorly known, although all indications are pointing to steady if not precipitous declines throughout their distribution, particularly for Yellow-billed. Regulated by food availability, densities of both Black-billed and Yellow-billed Cuckoos vary greatly from year to year and are integrally linked to insect outbreaks of caterpillars and cicadas. In the summer of 2016 there was a relative dearth of cuckoos across New Hampshire and the lack of reports are likely due to an apparent lack of Gypsy Moths. However, just south of us in Massachusetts, Gypsy Moth numbers were reported as higher which might have resulted in the relocation for some of our birds. Eastern Screech-Owl continues to be present in extremely limited numbers throughout the southeastern region of New Hampshire and only three individuals were reported this summer, all during the latter half of July.

Once a common summer breeder, the now state-threatened Common Nighthawk remains extremely limited and threatened throughout the state during the breeding season. Rebecca Suomala, Project Nighthawk Coordinator, reports five confirmed nests, two of which were at previously



Common Nighthawk female and her nearby nest with two eggs by Rebecca Suomala, 7-3-2016, Concord, NH.



unknown sites. For a more detailed summary of Common Nighthawks in New Hampshire for 2016, please see the summary elsewhere in this issue. Other insectivores, including Chimney Swift, are also experiencing precipitous declines across their range. Although the factors behind their decline are not yet fully understood, efforts are being taken to try to stop losses for all our insectivores.

It is well known that in eastern North America there is only one expected hummingbird, the very familiar Ruby-throated. Yet, on occasion, typically in the fall, one of several western species of hummingbirds show up east of the Mississippi River. Summer records of these species do exist, however, and on July 16 an adult male **Rufous Hummingbird** was reported and photographed in Dunbarton. The timing of this corresponds well with the migration pattern of adult males in the west, and this bird was likely an individual experiencing some form of mirror-image migration, heading in the equal and mirror-opposite distance and direction than was intended. Another *Selasphorus* species of hummingbird was reported on July 29 from Greenland but was best identified as a **Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird**. This genus of closely-related and nearly-identical hummingbirds represents one of the most difficult identification challenges in North America. But because Rufous Hummingbirds are notorious vagrants and more expected in the east than Allen's, the individual from Greenland was likely also a Rufous. Out-of-context hummingbirds, particularly first year females as this individual was reported being, are incredibly difficult to identify without photo documentation showcasing specific features and feather groups.

Peregrine Falcons did well in 2016 with 21 occupied territories, only a couple of pairs fewer than the state-record high in 2014. Twenty of these territories saw the incubation of eggs with 14 (70%) producing at least one young (32 total). These 14 successful nests also match the state-record for this species that was first set in 2014. Summer Merlin sightings continue to increase and expand geographically. The sightings listed below represent confirmed or probable breeding.

Alder and Willow Flycatchers can only be reliably separated by their calls. During the Breeding Bird Atlas in the early 1980s, Willow Flycatchers were confirmed breeding in the southern part of the state but were rare in the three northern counties. The species appears to have expanded northward since the Atlas, but the northern sightings listed below are notable. Any northern Willow Flycatcher report should include a description of the call as these did. Alder Flycatcher is the more likely flycatcher of the two in the northern half of the state.

Date	#	Location	Observer
Yellow-billed Cuckoo			
06/02	1	South Rd., East Kingston	D. Finch
06/02	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray
06/08	1	Unsworth (Koenig) Preserve, Moultonborough	D. Hudgins
06/15	2	Powwow R. at Hilldale Ave., S. Hampton	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
06/16	1	Abbot Hill Rd., Wilton	C. Witko
06/23	1	Squam Lake	E. Anders
06/28	1	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook R., Pittsfield	G. Robbins
06/28	1	Camp Pemigewasset, Wentworth	S. Broker
07/07	1	Hammond Hollow, Gilsum	M. Wright
07/13	1	Rt. 111, Hollis	J. Maher
07/25	1	Lakeview Dr., Strafford	S. Young
Black-billed Cuckoo			
06/01	1	Buffalo Rd., Rumney	J. Williams
06/03	2	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	S. Heron
06/04	1	St Paul's School, Concord	R. Woodward
06/05	2	South Rd., East Kingston	D. Finch
06/16	1	Abbot Hill Rd., Wilton	C. Witko
06/17	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	L.& P. Charron
07/04	2	Horse Hill Rd., Roxbury	K. Rosenberg
07/10	3	Smith R. Meadows, Danbury	J. Gamble
Eastern Screech-Owl			
07/19	1	Highland Ave., Salem	K. Wilmarth
07/24	1	Broad St., Portsmouth	C. Duford
07/29	1	Fields Grove, Nashua	C. Sheridan
Northern Saw-whet Owl			
06/06	1	Hubbard Brook, Woodstock	D. Aube
06/16	1	Mt. Kinsman, Lincoln	K. Kittelberger
06/21	1	Old Cherry Mt. Rd., Carroll/Jefferson	S. Stoddard
06/23	1	Sugarloaf 2 Campground, WMNF	Z. Millen
07/16	2	Day Rd., Perry Stream, Pittsburg	L. Waters
07/23	1	Great East Lake, Wakefield	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
Common Nighthawk			
06/02	2	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve, Madison	S. Wilcox, G. Bailey
06/10	3	Keene Coordinated Nighthawk Watch	B. Thelen, et al.
06/11	13	Rt. 114, Grantham	C. Martin, R. Kaszeta, C. Kowalski
06/15	9	Concord Coordinated Nighthawk Watch	R. Suomala, et al.
07/24	9	Ossipee Coordinated Nighthawk Watch	R. Suomala, et al.
07/27	7	Ashland downtown	S. MacLeod
07/28	6	McDaniels Marsh WMA, Springfield	J. Gamble
Eastern Whip-poor-will			
06/11	3	Ossipee Pine Barrens	P. Brown, R. Quinn, NHA FT
06/16	3	Shattigee Rd., Chester	E. Nathan, S. Heron, J. Sparrell
06/16	3	Fowler Farm, Rochester	D. Hubbard, S. Young
06/17	11	Parker Mt./Evans Mt./Strafford Town Forest	S. Young
07/04	5	Freedom Town Forest	D.& P. Paul
07/24	3	Depot Rd., Tamworth	R. Suomala

SUMMER SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
Chimney Swift			
07/19	130	Durgin Block parking garage, Concord	R. Quinn
07/25	100	downtown Nashua	C. Sheridan
07/30	140	KUA powerplant, Meriden	S. Hardy

Rufous Hummingbird			
07/16	1	Ordway Rd., Dunbarton	N. Jay

Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird			
07/29	1	Breakfast Hill Rd., Greenland	B. Griffith, L. Kras

Red-bellied Woodpecker			
06/04	1	Water St., Lancaster	R. Hunt
06/08	1	Israel River Campground, Jefferson	J. Caouette
06/15	1	Watts WS, Effingham	S. Mesick



Black-backed Woodpecker by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-18-2016, WMNE, Jefferson, NH.

Black-backed Woodpecker			
06/02	2	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	R. Prieto
06/02	5	Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase	H. Galbraith
06/11	3	Little Cherry Pond, Pondicherry NWR	D. Thompson
06/11	1	Kinsman Mt., Easton	J. Stockwell
06/11	2	East Inlet, Pittsburg	G. & A. Robbins
06/17	1	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	S. Miller, C. Dengler
06/20	2	Little Cherry Pond, Pondicherry NWR	K. Vande Vusse, C. Witko
07/12	1	Appalachian Trail, Lake of the Clouds Hut to Ethan Pond	W. Strobel
07/25	1	Coleman SP, Stewartstown	J. Toledano
07/30	1	East Inlet, Pittsburg	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena

American Kestrel			
06/03	2	Merrimack R., Manchester	G. Coffey
06/26	2	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/05	4	Trescott Water Supply Lands, Hanover	C. McPherson
07/13	3	Water St., Lancaster	S. Stoddard
07/23	7	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/31	5	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington	S. Cooper
07/31	3	Ambrose Gravel Pit, Sandwich	S. Wilcox, G. Bailey

Merlin			
06/30	1	Tuck Dr., Dartmouth College, Hanover	A. Burnett
07/14	2	Suncook L., Barnstead	E. Pilotte
07/15	3	Osceola Rd., Waterville Valley	S. Harvell
07/19	5	Old West Ossipee Rd., Freedom	A., C. & J. Robbins, S. Lamonde
07/27	2	Poor Rd., New London	D. Jackson

Date	#	Location	Observer
Peregrine Falcon			
07/06	4	Holts Ledge, Lyme	P. Ackerson, G. Russ, et al.
07/17	3	Diamond Peaks, Second College Grant	R. Quinn, C. Martin
07/23	3	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron, D. Dionne
07/25	5	downtown Nashua	C. Sheridan
07/28	3	downtown Nashua	C. Sheridan

Olive-sided Flycatcher			
06/01	2	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	H. Galbraith
06/04	2	Rhubarb Pond, East Inlet Rd., Pittsburg	R. & K. Frieden
06/14	3	East Inlet, Pittsburg	C. Dengler, S. Miller
06/18	4	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	C. Nims, S. McCarthy
06/21	1	Nissitissit R. Land Trust, Hollis	C. McPherson
06/30	3	Campton Bog	P. Hunt
07/22	3	McDaniels Marsh WMA, Springfield	J. Gamble

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher			
06/05	14	Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase	T. & D. Swain
06/24	10	turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	R. Prieto, L. Kras
06/24	15	Mollidgewock Rd., Errol	R. Prieto, L. Kras



Willow Flycatcher by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-24-2016, Salem NH.

Willow Flycatcher			
06/04	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	S. Spangenberg
06/15	1	Valley Rd., Jefferson	S. Stoddard
07/12	1	Mud Pond, The Balsams, Colebrook	P. Charron, D. & G. Dionne

Yellow-throated Vireo			
06/11	1	Gilmanton Rd., Barnstead	P. Myers, Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
06/18	1	Fowler Mill Rd., Tamworth	G. Bailey, S. Wilcox
06/25	2	Owl's Head Mt., Franconia	J. Toledano
07/01	1	Reservoir Pond, Dorchester	E. Bracey
07/01	1	Dolly Copp Campground, Martins Location	L. MacKay

Philadelphia Vireo			
06/09	1	Lake Francis SP, Pittsburg	P. Wood
06/16	1	Lower Greeley Pond, Livermore	S. Smith
06/17	1	Akers Pond, north end	D. Dionne
06/18	1	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	S. Miller, C. Dengler
06/19	1	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/27	1	Rt. 113, Chatham	D. Beattie
06/28	1	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	S. Stoddard
07/02	1	Canaan	S. Sturup, L. Reitsma
07/03	1	Douglas Brook, Bartlett	C. Nims
07/17	2	Zealand Trail, Bethlehem	P. Brown
07/19	1	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	L. Waters

Date # Location Observer



Gray Jay (juvenile) by Steve Mirick, 6-25-2016, Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF, NH.

Gray Jay

06/03	6	turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	L.& P. Charron, D. Dionne
06/11	7	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	G.& A. Robbins
06/26	3	A-Z Trail at Mt. Tom spur, Bethlehem	K. Parexus
06/26	4	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	J. Wong, A. Wiegardt
06/27	1	Success Pond Rd., Success	P. Ross
06/30	2	Campton Bog	P. Hunt
07/01	3	Mt. Field, Bethlehem	B. Hillman
07/17	5	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	L. Waters

Fish Crow

06/06	6	Rt.16 at Rt. 25, Ossipee	B. Crowley
06/30	5	Great Pond, Kingston	S. Heron
07/10	15	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
07/12	10	Willand Pond, Somersworth/Dover	A. Murray
07/21	1	Lake Ave., Sunapee	D. Jackson
07/24	18	Willand Pond, Somersworth/Dover	A. Murray
07/27	12	Madbury Rd., Durham	K. Dorsey
07/31	1	Three Mile Is., Meredith	B. Bourgault

Horned Lark

06/14	1	Concord Airport	P. Hunt
07/04	3	Concord Airport	R. Woodward
07/13	1	Concord Airport	P. Hunt

Swallows through Pipits



Purple Martin at the Funspot colony by Jane Kelley, 6-15-2016, Laconia, NH.

Another aerial insectivore receiving conservation efforts in New Hampshire is the Purple Martin. Efforts to restore Purple Martin to the New Hampshire Seacoast continue to prove successful under the guidance of Pam Hunt, Senior Biologist in Avian Conservation at New Hampshire Audubon, and the hard work of volunteers led by Dennis Skillman and Warren Trested (co-recipients of NH Audubon's 2016 John Thalheimer Volunteer of the Year Award). Twelve pairs of Purple Martin reared 57 young to fledging at the colony on Cross Beach Road in Seabrook, now the largest colony in the state. Likely dispersers from Seabrook took up residence at two sites with newly installed housing in Hampton (Island Path) and Rye (Awcomin Marsh) with a single pair each. Scouting martins were also seen at the Portsmouth Country Club in Greenland and with volunteers having recently refurbished the boxes at that location, hopes are high for 2017. Two pairs of Purple Martins were again present in Wakefield, while the long-term colony at the Funspot in Weirs Beach has declined to two or three pair and failed to produce any young. New Hampshire Audubon is hoping to repeat its success on the Seacoast in the Lakes Region, but the Purple Martin population there is getting dangerously close to blinking out.

While the discussion of Purple Martins nearly always centers around colonies, and rightfully so, there was one noteworthy individual found this summer at Fort Constitution in New Castle on July 3. Found by Jane and Steve Mirick, this out-of-place female Purple Martin was color-banded orange over green on her left leg which was only discovered later through a review of photos. See the Field Notes (page 20) for the story on this bird and where it came from!

Since 1991, **American Pipit** has been a rare local breeder above timberline on Mount Washington, the southernmost known breeding location in eastern North America. However, on July 27, two singing male American Pipits were discovered on Mount Lincoln in Franconia, which could represent either local range expansion or post-breeding dispersal.

Date # Location Observer

Northern Rough-winged Swallow

06/09	5	Oliverian Pond, Benton	E. Marie
06/12	5	Howard St., Wilton	C. Witko
06/15	5	Washington St. mills, Dover	S. Heron
07/02	6	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook R., Pittsfield	A. Robbins
07/06	8	Saco R., Conway	R. Steber
07/11	15	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	

P. Moynahan, N. Houlihan

SUMMER SEASON

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
Purple Martin							
06/02	22	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	C. Sheridan	07/08	6	World End Pond, Salem	R.& K. Frieden
07/01	8	Funspot, Laconia	P. Hunt	07/23	6	Exeter WTP	S. Bennett, S. Wisley
07/03	1	Fort Constitution, New Castle	S. Mirick	Carolina Wren			
07/07	5	Island Path CA, Hampton	P. Hunt	06/02	1	Mink Brook Nature Preserve, Hanover	A. Burnett
07/07	4	Awcomin Marsh, Rye	P. Hunt, J. Cavanaugh	06/16	1	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook R., Pittsfield	A. Robbins
07/23	25	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell	07/01	1	Call Rd., Webster	R. Quinn
07/23	1	Great East Lake, Wakefield	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena	07/06	5	Highland Ave., Salem	K. Wilmarth
07/26	50	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	A. Murray	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher			
07/31	22	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell	06/15	8	Powwow R. at Hilldale Ave., S. Hampton	K. Wilmarth, A. Altena
Tree Swallow							
07/02	275	Lancaster WTP	J. Maher	07/02	4	Hinsdale Setbacks	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/17	300	NH coast	S. Mirick	07/15	1	Jackson Village	R. Steber, W. Broussard
07/21	487	NH coast	J. Maher	07/21	1	Unsworth (Koenig) Preserve, Moultonborough	V. Ascrizzi
07/28	420	NH coast	J. Maher	07/26	4	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard
07/29	800	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	N. Houlihan, P. Moynahan	Ruby-crowned Kinglet			
Bank Swallow							
06/05	60	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	T.& D. Swain	06/04	2	Mt. Cube via Cross Rivendell Trail, Orford	J. MacQueen
06/16	25	SPNHF Merrimack R. CA, Concord	J. Nadeau	06/17	13	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	S. Miller, C. Dengler
06/28	50	Dahl WS, Conway	R. Steber	06/26	3	Mt. Moosilauke, Benton	J. MacQueen
07/06	196	Saco R., Conway	R. Steber	07/22	1	McNair Easement, Lead Mine Rd., Madison	S. Wilcox, S. Joyce
07/14	30	Rt. 135, Monroe	S. Turner	07/31	8	Errol	P.& L. Charron
07/23	31	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick	Veery			
Barn Swallow							
07/21	51	NH coast	J. Maher	06/26	52	Turkey Pond, Concord	R. Woodward
07/28	31	NH coast	J. Maher	07/03	18	Dimond Hill Farm, Hopkinton	R. Woodward
07/31	65	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington	S. Cooper	07/03	19	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	M. Brengle, J. Berry, A. Steenstrup, N. Dubrow
07/07	14	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard	Bicknell's Thrush			
Cliff Swallow							
06/04	60	Chinook Trail, Tamworth	R. Steber, J. Scott, D. Scott	06/04	7	Cannon Mt., Franconia	S. Wisley, D. Pettee, J. Pettipas, S. Bennett
06/15	4	Washington St. mills, Dover	S. Heron	06/11	8	Mt. Washington Auto Road at Signal Corps Site	D. Thompson
06/23	25	North Sandwich	W. Batsford, R. Ridgely	06/16	10	Mt. Kinsman, Lincoln	K. Kittelberger
06/28	66	Chinook Trail, Tamworth	R. Steber	06/24	8	Mount Osceola trail, Livermore	J. Maher
Boreal Chickadee							
06/03	3	Day Rd., Perry Stream, Pittsburg	R.& K. Frieden	Marsh Wren			
06/03	9	Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase	D. Govatski	06/04	3	Pondicherry NWR	D. Govatski
06/15	3	Mount Washington Auto Road	R. Ogburn	06/06	6	Powder House Pond, Exeter	M. Inglis
06/16	3	Mt. Kinsman, Lincoln	K. Kittelberger	06/12	6	Thompson WS, Sandwich	S. Wilcox, L. Eastman, P. Moynahan
06/18	4	Starr King Trail, Jefferson	K. Wilmarth	06/16	5	Hinsdale Setbacks	A. Burnett, R. Burnett
06/26	3	Mt. Moosilauke, Benton	J. MacQueen	Bicknell's Thrush			
06/26	3	A-Z Trail at Mt. Tom spur, Bethlehem	K. Parexus	06/04	7	Cannon Mt., Franconia	S. Wisley, D. Pettee, J. Pettipas, S. Bennett
07/06	3	Mt. Whiteface, Waterville Valley	D. Demers	06/11	8	Mt. Washington Auto Road at Signal Corps Site	D. Thompson
07/09	3	Mud Pond Trail, The Balsams, Colebrook	L. Charron, D. Dionne	06/16	10	Mt. Kinsman, Lincoln	K. Kittelberger
07/14	6	Mt. Osceola Trail, Livermore	A. Nicole	06/24	8	Mount Osceola trail, Livermore	J. Maher
07/16	6	Carter-Moriah Trail, Beans Purchase	A. Nicole	Bicknell's Thrush			
07/16	20	East Inlet, Pittsburg	P.& L. Charron, D. Dionne	06/04	7	Cannon Mt., Franconia	S. Wisley, D. Pettee, J. Pettipas, S. Bennett
07/17	8	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	L. Waters	06/11	8	Mt. Washington Auto Road at Signal Corps Site	D. Thompson



Bicknell's Thrush by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-18-2016, WMNE, Jefferson, NH.

Date	#	Location	Observer
06/24	9	Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase	Z. Millen
06/25	7	Kinsman Ridge Trail, Lincoln	T. Pirro
07/02	15	Mt. Adams, WMNF	S. Hale
07/06	7	Mt. Whiteface, Waterville Valley	D. Demers
07/14	10	Mt. Osceola Trail, Livermore	A. Nicole

Swainson’s Thrush

06/16	15	Crawford Depot, Carroll	C. Smith
06/19	15	Mt. Washington Auto Road	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/25	16	East Inlet, Pittsburg	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/26	25	Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase	S. Hale
06/30	20	Mt. Moosilauke, Benton	A. Hulsey
07/03	1	Duck Pond, Long Pond Town Forest, Lempster	P. Hunt, J. Swatt
07/14	48	Mt. Osceola Trail, Livermore	A. Nicole
07/16	16	Carter-Moriah Trail, Beans Purchase	A. Nicole
07/16	16	Day Rd., Perry Stream, Pittsburg	L. Waters
07/17	16	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	L. Waters
07/02	4	Canaan	S. Sturup, L. Reitsma

Brown Thrasher

06/04	3	Riverlands CA, Canterbury	P. Hunt, Capital CFT
06/26	1	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/30	4	Old Tilton Rd., Canterbury	A. Taylor
07/15	4	Jackson Village	W. Broussard, R. Steber
07/20	3	Concord Airport	D. Lania

American Pipit

06/07	3	Mt. Washington Auto Road	K. Elwell, W. Tatro
06/19	4	Mt. Washington Auto Road	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/27	2	Mt. Lincoln, Franconia	H. Galbraith

Warblers through Finches

An exceptional report of a single **Golden-winged Warbler**, heard first before being observed, from a backyard in Peterborough on June 3 was undoubtedly one of the major highlights this summer. No longer breeding in the state, Golden-winged Warblers face a myriad of conservation issues across their range including hybridization with the closely related Blue-winged Warbler, which occurs across the southern part of New Hampshire. Because these two species hybridize producing offspring that share physical traits with their parent species (let alone the issue of backcrossed genetics in subsequent generations), as well as sing each other’s song-type, it is important that clear documentation, photos preferred, is obtained if possible. Golden-winged Warblers are one of over 100 species found on the New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee Review List. These are species that are of sufficient rarity in the state to require review of all reports to maintain the accuracy and scientific integrity of the state’s historic records. For more information on documenting rare birds in the state, please visit: <http://nhbirdrecords.org/>.

Other noteworthy warblers for the summer season came in the form of a Louisiana Waterthrush photographed in

Chatham on July 30, a far north locale for this species, two late-migrating Wilson’s Warblers at Star Island at the Isles of Shoals on June 4 and a somewhat late-migrating Tennessee Warbler on June 1 in Bethlehem. Wilson’s Warbler is a rare summer resident in the northernmost parts of New Hampshire which represents the southernmost edge of that species’ range.



Grasshopper Sparrow by Pam Hunt, 6-22-2016, Manchester, NH.

One-third of all grassland bird species in North America are experiencing steep population declines and threats to habitat. For many of these species, the remaining strongholds are on anthropogenic grasslands, those that are created or maintained by human activity. This appears to be the case in New Hampshire as well. During the summer of 2016, Pam Hunt conducted regular grassland bird surveys at three historic Grasshopper Sparrow sites. Of these, the Concord Airport may hold the most pairs of Grasshopper Sparrow in the state, where she estimates eight to twelve territories. Four territories were also found at the closed Manchester Landfill and an additional two to four at Cemetery Fields in Amherst.

This year, New Hampshire Audubon’s Rusty Blackbird Project found and monitored 33 nests across the Androscoggin Watershed as well as the Blueberry Swamp, Nulhegan Basin (VT), and Pondicherry divisions of the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge. This represents a noticeable decline compared to the 47 and 50 nests found in 2014 and 2015, respectively. These considerably lower than average rates of breeding success are a likely affirmation of the species’ general population decline, although the severe winter in the South paired with the drought in New Hampshire likely did not help. For details on the season and the Project’s work with bird blowflies, see the summary by Carol Foss elsewhere in this issue.

Finches and their allies, birds that belong to the family *Fringillidae*, are not often thought of as summer birds in New Hampshire. Across the state, the greatest diversity of

SUMMER SEASON

finches occurs during the winter months when large flights of Pine Siskins, Red and White-winged Crossbills, Common Redpolls, and Pine and Evening Grosbeaks from Canada irrupt south looking for cone and seed crops. Nevertheless, finch highlights this summer included 11 reports of the ever-nomadic **Red Crossbill**, with the 10 individuals observed in Jackson on June 2 being the only report statewide containing more than three individuals. Conversely, **White-winged Crossbills** were only reported four times this summer with a high of 10 individuals in Franconia on July 20.

Date # Location Observer

Louisiana Waterthrush

06/04 1 Two Rivers CA, Epping G. Tillman
 06/14 1 Hurricane Mt. Rd., Conway S. Mesick
 06/20 3 Nissitissit R. Land Trust, Hollis C. McPherson
 07/15 1 Diamond Ledge, Sandwich T. Vazzano
 07/30 1 Upper Kimball Pond, Chatham B. Crowley

Northern Waterthrush

06/04 3 Pondicherry NWR D. Govatski
 06/12 3 Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem P. Brown
 06/17 4 Penacook survey route P. Hunt
 06/17 10 Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg C. Dengler, S. Miller
 07/02 5 Canaan S. Sturup, L. Reitsma

Blue-winged Warbler

06/03 2 Great Bay NWR E. Edwards
 06/04 2 Two Rivers CA, Epping G. Tillman
 06/07 2 West Foss Farm, Durham A. Murray, P. Farr
 06/07 2 Oyster R. Forest, Durham K. Dorsey
 06/17 4 Middle Rd. powerline behind WOKQ, Dover W. Ward
 06/18 2 Bellamy River WMA, Dover R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
 06/22 2 Pickering Ponds, Rochester D. Hubbard

Golden-winged Warbler

06/03 1 Nichols Rd., Peterborough R. Frechette

Tennessee Warbler

06/01 1 Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem H. Galbraith
 07/04 1 East Inlet, Pittsburg J. Maher

Mourning Warbler

06/01 2 Blueberry Swamp, Columbia K. Fenton
 06/02 2 Rt. 26, Errol B. Griffith
 06/03 3 Base Station Rd., WMNF C. Nims
 06/03 18 Dixville Notch B. Griffith
 06/04 1 Pickering Ponds, Rochester J. Sparrell, K. Towler
 06/09 1 Dahl WS, Conway G. Bailey, S. Wilcox
 06/11 1 Pondicherry NWR S. Heron, J. Sparrell, B. Henderson
 06/18 3 Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg C. Nims, S. McCarthy
 06/24 8 turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville R. Prieto, L. Kras
 06/25 3 East Inlet, Pittsburg R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
 07/03 1 New Canada Rd., Wilmot P. Newbern

Bay-breasted Warbler

06/11 3 Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg G.& A. Robbins
 07/01 1 Cathedral Ledge, Bartlett J. Lemons

Date # Location Observer
 07/02 1 Old Bridle Path Trail, Franconia J. Arnett
 07/02 1 Arethusa Falls Trail, Livermore M. Pagliarini
 07/02 1 Pinehill Rd. at Cleveland Hill Rd., Tamworth S. Wilcox, G. Bailey
 07/16 3 East Inlet, Pittsburg L.& P. Charron, D. Dionne
 07/31 2 Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase S. Hale

Blackburnian Warbler

06/14 8 Mountain Pond, Chatham G.& A. Robbins
 06/16 7 Wantastiquet Mt. Natural Area A. Burnett
 06/19 9 Ashuelot R. Headwaters Forest, Lempster D. Jackson
 06/21 8 Mt. Moosilauke, Benton A. Burnett, et al.
 06/25 8 Green Mt., Effingham J. Young
 06/26 8 Signal Ridge Trail, Livermore J. Young
 07/01 7 Kimball Wildlife Forest, Gilford P. Hunt
 07/06 10 Mt. Whiteface, Waterville Valley D. Demers
 07/19 20 Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg L. Waters

Chestnut-sided Warbler

06/02 12 Everett Dam conservation lands, Weare J. Maher
 06/04 10 West Side Rd., Conway W. Broussard, R. Steber
 06/05 8 Bog Rd., Enfield D. Jackson
 06/24 25 turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville R. Prieto, L. Kras
 07/02 8 Canaan S. Sturup, L. Reitsma
 07/05 8 West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve, Madison J. Swanson
 07/19 20 Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg L. Waters



Blackpoll Warbler by David Forsyth, 6-27-2016, Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF, NH.

Blackpoll Warbler

06/07 10 Mt. Washington Auto Road W. Tatro, K. Elwell
 06/18 30 Mt. Washington S. Zhang
 06/19 20 Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase R. Hull
 06/26 32 Mt. Moosilauke, Benton J. MacQueen
 06/30 21 Mt. Moosilauke, Benton A. Hulsey
 07/14 24 Mt. Osceola Trail, Livermore A. Nicole
 07/31 22 Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase S. Hale

Black-throated Blue Warbler

06/16 14 Hubbard Brook, Woodstock A. Hulsey

Date	#	Location	Observer
06/24	11	Kensan-Devan WS, Marlborough	C. Witko
06/25	13	Owl's Head Mt., Franconia	J. Toledano
07/14	12	Mt. Osceola Trail, Livermore	A. Nicole
07/22	12	Nash Stream SP, Stratford	J. Toledano

Palm Warbler

06/12	1	Watts WS, Effingham	P. Brown, R. Quinn, NHA FT
06/15	3	Mollidgewock Brook Rd., Errol	P. Brown, R. Quinn, NHA FT
07/06	4	Jackson-Webster Trail, Hart's Location	B., C. & L. Baker
07/19	3	Greenough Pond Rd., Errol	C. Caron

Prairie Warbler

06/11	5	Russell-Abbott SF, Mason	S. Lemire
06/12	8	Hertzka Dr./Northern Blvd., Amherst	C. Sheridan
06/12	6	USFWS Karner Blue easement, Concord	J. Sparrell
06/25	5	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. Sheridan
07/18	15	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve, Madison	T. Vazzano, K. Klapper

Canada Warbler

06/01	4	Pillsbury SP, Washington	S. Rinard
06/03	4	Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase	D. Govatski
06/05	1	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
06/12	8	Canaan research site	D. Jackson
07/02	7	Canaan	S. Sturup, L. Reitsma
07/03	5	Ashuelot River Headwaters Forest, Lempster	P. Hunt, J. Swatt

Wilson's Warbler

06/03	1	Hubbard Brook, Woodstock	A. Hulsey
06/04	2	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick
06/11	2	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	G. & A. Robbins
06/15	1	Unknown Pond, Kilkenny	P. Gagarin
06/28	1	Jefferson Notch Rd., T&M Purchase	S. Stoddard



Grasshopper Sparrow by Jim Sparrell, 6-12-2016, Short St., Pease Int'l. Tradeport, NH.

Grasshopper Sparrow

06/09	5	Manchester landfill	P. Hunt
06/09	1	Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey	K. Vande Vusse
06/10	1	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington	K. Towler

Date	#	Location	Observer
06/30	14	Concord Airport	P. Hunt
07/02	8	Cemetery Fields, Amherst	C. Sheridan
07/13	8	Concord Airport	P. Hunt

Nelson's Sparrow

06/11	2	Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
06/25	1	Pollock Dr. saltmarsh, Rye	C. Witko
07/08	2	Chapmans Landing, Stratham	M. Cahill
07/23	3	Pollock Dr. saltmarsh, Rye	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

Saltmarsh Sparrow

06/09	5	Chapmans Landing, Stratham	J. Garrett
06/11	8	Hampton Salt Marsh	S. Mirick
06/20	4	Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton	Z. Cornell
07/05	12	Chapmans Landing, Stratham	J. Garrett

Field Sparrow

06/02	4	Concord Airport	R. & K. Frieden
06/18	3	Benton	S. Benedetto
07/13	7	Concord Airport	P. Hunt
07/25	4	Old Mill Rd., Lee	K. Dorsey

Fox Sparrow

06/02	1	turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	J. Scott, B. Crowley, C. Nims
06/06	1	Magalloway Mt., Pittsburg	R. & K. Frieden
06/11	1	Fourth Connecticut L., Pittsburg	B. Lipson
06/19	1	Mt. Washington Auto Road	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/24	1	Mount Osceola trail, Livermore	J. Maher
06/25	1	Cannon Mt., Franconia	T. Pirro
07/11	3	Bondcliff Trail, WMNF, Lincoln	H. Batcheller

Vesper Sparrow

06/14	3	Concord Airport	P. Hunt
07/02	1	Ossipee Lake Rd. pine barrens, Freedom	C. Whitebread
07/02	1	Pinehill Rd. at Cleveland Hill Rd., Tamworth	S. Wilcox, G. Bailey
07/22	1	Elm Brook Park, Hopkinton	H. Bauer

Lincoln's Sparrow

06/04	1	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick
06/16	2	Magalloway Rd., Pittsburg	S. Miller, C. Dengler
06/18	1	Thompson WS, Sandwich	S. Wilcox, G. Bailey
06/24	1	turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	R. Prieto, L. Kras
06/26	2	Day Rd., Perry Stream, Pittsburg	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/28	1	East Inlet, Pittsburg	H. Bauer

Eastern Towhee

06/10	10	Palmer-Bartell Forest CA, Brookline	C. McPherson
06/13	20	Farley Meadow WS, Nashua	C. Sheridan
07/13	14	pine barrens, Freedom	R. Quinn
07/18	22	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve, Madison	T. Vazzano, K. Klapper
07/21	15	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve, Madison	S. Mesick

SUMMER SEASON

Date # Location Observer

Bobolink

06/09 17 Pondicherry NWR B. Boekelheide
 06/11 28 Trask Brook Rd., Newport/Sunapee D. Jackson
 06/23 18 North Sandwich W. Batsford, B. Ridgely
 06/24 20 Copson Corp. lot, Fremont
 E. Nathan, N. Fiske, A. Itz
 06/27 75 Rockingham County Complex fields E. Nathan
 06/30 20 Wildcat R. Valley trails, Jackson
 R. Steber, L. Smith, et al.
 07/02 20 Canaan S. Sturup, L. Reitsma
 07/06 20 Strafford County Farm Complex, Dover D. Hubbard
 07/22 40 Elm Brook Park, Hopkinton H. Bauer

Eastern Meadowlark

06/06 2 Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington
 D. Hubbard
 06/22 4 Manchester landfill P. Hunt
 06/25 2 Strafford County Farm Complex, Dover D. Hubbard
 07/04 1 Concord Airport R. Woodward
 07/04 2 Mountain Rd., Concord R. Woodward
 07/21 1 Elm Brook Park, Hopkinton D. Ellis
 07/31 3 Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington
 S. Cooper

Rusty Blackbird

06/01 3 Blueberry Swamp, Columbia K. Fenton
 06/02 2 Elbow Pond Rd., Woodstock J. Williams
 06/15 2 Mollidgecock Brook Rd., Errol
 P. Brown, R. Quinn, NHA FT
 06/17 1 Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg C. Dengler, S. Miller
 06/17 2 Back Pond, Stewartstown B. Hacker
 06/25 4 East Inlet, Pittsburg R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
 07/02 1 Cone Brook, Daniel Webster Hwy., Columbia
 J. Maher
 07/16 4 Campton Bog P. Hunt
 07/17 2 Base Station Rd., WMNF C. Caron

Orchard Oriole

06/01 2 Horseshoe Pond, Concord D. Lania
 06/03 2 Pickering Ponds, Rochester D. Hubbard
 06/06 1 Westmoreland Boat Launch A. Burnett
 06/10 2 Wagon Hill Farm, Durham A. Murray
 06/11 2 Lovewell's Pond CA, Nashua C. Sheridan
 06/18 2 Bellamy River WMA, Dover R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
 06/24 4 Pickering Ponds, Rochester D. Hubbard
 07/11 2 Pickering Ponds, Rochester D. Hubbard

Purple Finch

06/01 3 Gillis Hill Rd., Bennington P. Eppig
 06/01 4 Pillsbury SP, Washington S. Rinard
 06/05 8 Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase T.& D. Swain
 06/25 2 Kensan-Devan WS, Marlborough C. Witko
 06/30 8 Watts WS, Effingham G. Bailey, S. Wilcox
 07/16 8 Northern Rail Trail, Boscawen J. Maher
 07/16 5 Applewood Ln., Temple S. Wolfe
 07/17 8 Chapman Sanctuary/Visny Woods, Sandwich
 S. van der Veen, J. Shields
 07/19 8 Dodge Pond, Lyman S. Turner
 07/30 6 Watts WS, Effingham R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

Date # Location

Red Crossbill

06/02 10 Wildcat R. Valley trails, Jackson R. Steber
 06/05 3 Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase T.& D. Swain
 06/11 1 Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem L. Waters
 06/16 3 Mt. Kinsman, Lincoln K. Kittelberger
 06/16 2 Dolly Copp Rd., Gorham C. Smith
 06/18 3 Starr King Trail, Jefferson K. Wilmarth
 06/25 2 dePierrefeu-Willard Pond WS P. Brown
 07/02 2 Mt. Monadnock, Jaffrey T.& D. Swain
 07/07 1 Sawyer Pond Trail, Albany C. Nims
 07/19 1 Old West Ossipee Rd., Freedom A. Robbins

White-winged Crossbill

06/01 3 Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem H. Galbraith
 07/11 1 Cannon Mt., Franconia J. Swanson
 07/20 10 Cannon Mt., Franconia B. Hardway
 07/30 2 Caps Ridge Trail, T&M Purchase S. Cooper

Pine Siskin

06/01 4 Buffalo Rd., Rumney J. Williams
 06/04 5 Boundary Pond, Pittsburg R.& K. Frieden
 06/11 6 Old Cherry Mt. Rd., Carroll/Jefferson
 C. Nims, J. Scott, SSBC FT
 06/11 25 Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg G.& A. Robbins
 06/16 4 Mt. Kinsman, Lincoln K. Kittelberger
 07/03 2 Cogswell Mt. CA, Gilmanon M. Cahill
 07/23 1 Old Hillsboro Rd., Henniker A. Moser



Evening Grosbeak by Donna Ellis, 6-1-2016, Henniker, NH.

Evening Grosbeak

06/01 2 Tanglewood Dr., Henniker D. Ellis
 06/08 3 Plainfield Anonymous
 06/09 5 Burnham Rd., Freedom S. Wilcox, G. Bailey
 06/12 2 Dorchester Rd., Lyme P. Ackerson
 06/13 2 Green Hill Rd., Chatham B. Crowley
 06/13 2 Antrim Rd., Hancock E. Masterson
 07/04 3 Horse Hill Rd., Roxbury K. Rosenberg
 07/06 1 Willard Pond, Antrim N. Moreau
 07/12 2 Antrim Rd., Hancock E. Masterson
 07/22 1 Pingree Rd., New London M. Vernon

Summer 2016 Field Notes

Compiled by Rebecca Suomala and Kathryn Frieden

You Never Know When You'll Get Your Next Yard Bird!

by Pamela Hunt

My home office is in the third floor loft of my condo in Penacook. It has a skylight that allows both light and sound to remind me that the real world is just outside the roof, but at 9:30 pm on June 3, it was already dark and I was not expecting much of interest in the sound department. Certainly there was traffic on the nearby street and maybe even a dog somewhere, but given the hour, I was mainly focused on a last check of e-mail before going to bed. Then I heard what sounded like geese overhead and paid a little closer attention to my little window on the night sky. The sound was geese alright, but it wasn't the loud honking of the expected Canadas, or the sharp and often higher pitched calls of Snow Geese. No, this call was a little different and it took me a while to place it. The honks were softer and I described them in my eBird checklist as "unk unk," which is vaguely reminiscent of the contact calls I'd heard Brant make when I've seen them foraging along the coast of New England or New Jersey in winter or migration. I knew that some Brant migrate relatively late in the spring and that many also cut overland from the mid-Atlantic states to Hudson Bay, and from thence to their arctic nesting grounds. While the calls were still fresh in my mind, I went online and listened to a variety of Brant and Snow Goose flight calls and found – as I'd suspected – that those of Brant were a perfect match. This "coastal" goose turned out to be the 128th species of bird I've recorded in my yard since moving to Penacook in January of 2005 and I didn't even need to leave my office!

A record like this is more than just a tick on a list. It's an excellent opportunity to tell a little story about bird migration. As I noted above, most Brant that winter along the Atlantic coast of the United States migrate north overland to staging areas on James Bay (at the southern end of Hudson Bay). Most take the Hudson River/Lake Champlain route and then cut northwest over the St. Lawrence River. According to the species account in "The Birds of North America," this movement starts in late May after birds from farther south have gathered in New York and New Jersey. A few individuals, presumably including a significant number of New England birds, take a longer route through the Maritime Provinces of Canada to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and then travel west to James Bay. The bulk of the latter movement apparently takes place in early June. Obviously, not all birds are going to take one of these two main routes and a few will just cut overland toward southern Quebec

from wherever they happen to find themselves when the urge to migrate finally spurs them north. These are the birds that a lucky observer may hear or see inland in northern New England in late spring. Looking at data in eBird, there are only eight inland New Hampshire records of Brant in May and June over the last ten years. With the exception of two from the Connecticut River in Hinsdale, all occurred between May 21 and June 3, which corresponds perfectly to the time when New England birds are moving north. There is even another nocturnal record; a flock detected over Mast Yard State Forest by Rob Woodward on May 25, 2008.

The lesson here is twofold. Firstly, you never know what you might hear while working on your computer at night during migration, so be sure to leave a window open! Secondly, knowledge of the timing and routes of migration of all species can set you up to make unexpected discoveries. You just have to be ready for the sight or sound that isn't quite right and come up with the species to match it. Rarity is a relative term and night-flying Brant in Concord in early June are probably rare only because relatively few birders are out listening for geese after dark! Get out there and see what you can learn – both for yourself and the greater body of ornithological data in New Hampshire.

Waterville Valley Merlin Triplets

by Sharon Harvell



Merlin triplets by Scott Harvell, 7-15-2016, Osceola Rd., Waterville Valley, NH.

Sighting Merlins in New Hampshire, particularly during migration, is not especially difficult. Happening upon three recently fledged Merlins, and spending an early evening with them, was quite an experience. Osceola Road in Waterville Valley is a dead-end street which abuts cross country ski trails and the Mad River. It was apparently the perfect homestead environment for a Merlin pair to breed. On previous visits to this area, I had noticed a single Merlin, although never a hint of a nest nearby. During an evening stroll on July 15, odd sounding calls drew us to a tree and suddenly we were staring up at three Merlin kiddos. It was total teenage antics. One would fly off to a nearby tree, quickly followed by the other two, and then return to the base tree, although not always making a

perfect landing. Then, they would preen a bit and chatter amongst themselves, likely joking about the two humans transfixed by them and taking their photos. They were not the least bit fazed by our presence and continued their games. Entertainment like that is hard to beat! Eventually, as darkness drew near, our time with the “Three Musketeers” ended. We are hopeful that in the weeks ahead they would fine-tune the flying/hunting skills necessary for their survival and we are certainly expecting them to migrate over one of NH Audubon’s hawkwatch platforms this autumn and fly in close with a wing wave!

Nesting Kestrels

by Alichia Kingsbury



After a little sleuthing, Alichia Kingsbury found and photographed these American Kestrel nestlings under the eaves of her house in London on 7-31-2016.

The birds had been making a ridiculous racket for what seemed like several weeks. At the end of July, I was upstairs and looked out the window to try to see in the eaves where the noise was coming from. On a whim, I made a clicking sound and, when I did, a little face appeared. We originally had suspected that there was a rowdy bunch of sparrows in the eaves. After getting a glimpse, I was shocked at its soft fuzzy appearance, huge eyes

and ability to turn its neck much like an owl. It was clear it was something else! It was much larger than any baby bird I had set my eyes on.

Over the next several days, I was able to “introduce” my new friend to several friends and family members. Each time, I would call to the bird and the same bird (it seemed to me) would come out to say “Hi.” The day I took the picture, there was a second bird, but this was the only time I saw them together. I sent the photo to Chris Martin at NH Audubon who confirmed that they were juvenile American Kestrels.

We went away August 3-10 and did not see them again after returning home from vacation.

Purple Martin from Connecticut visiting NH!

by Pam Hunt



Banded Purple Martin photographed by Steve Mirick, 7-3-2016, at Fort Constitution in New Castle, NH.

On July 2, Steve and Jane Mirick were birding the NH coast and came upon a female Purple Martin at Fort Constitution in New Castle. With only a handful of nesting pairs on the coast, and most of these in Seabrook, the bird was a rare find for this spot. Steve took some pictures and, when he looked more closely at them later, he was shocked to see that the bird was color-banded: orange over green on her left leg. He didn’t even know it while he was watching it! Steve did a bit of sleuthing and found that this bird came from a colony at the Knox Preserve in Stonington, Connecticut! It may have been a 1st year bird wandering far from her natal territory. Steve’s observation was not her first appearance in New Hampshire, however. On June 17, John Cavanaugh saw a banded female martin at his gourd rack in Awcomin Marsh in Rye. She was there off and on all summer, part of a group of four sub-adults that hung out near the nesting pair at this site.

This wasn’t the first time a Purple Martin from Connecticut has made the journey to the Granite State. On May 27, 2015, Chris McPherson photographed a banded martin at the Seabrook colony. This bird had an aluminum band on its right leg and an orange one on its left. After making inquiries, the Seabrook martin volunteers tracked the bird down: it probably came from a colony managed by Phil Donahue (yes, THAT Phil Donahue) and was banded in 2011 or 2012. This is a different bird from the one seen in New Hampshire in 2016. It is likely that improved management of martins in Connecticut is boosting productivity and this in turn results in more birds dispersing in search of new colonies (a CT bird has also been seen at Plum Island, MA). As our own coastal martin population continues to grow, it will provide dispersing birds of its own and, hopefully, new colonies will become established for this threatened species.

Anting Birds

On June 18, 2016 Steve Mirick posted the following to NH Birds:

“While driving out on Salmon Street toward the kites, Jane and I saw a tight group of four crows huddled together in a front lawn. They were shoulder to shoulder and three of them flushed when we stopped the car to look at them. When we saw the single bird that remained, it looked as if it was in a trance. Closer examination showed that it was covered with ants! Sadly, I couldn’t get a photo before it flew off. Anting is a common (but rarely seen from my experience) behavior among birds.”

This peculiar activity was described by Chris Borg in the Summer 2012 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* (Vol. 31 No. 2). While exploring the East Inlet area in Pittsburg, Chris came upon a male Spruce Grouse atop a mound of swarming ants. As Chris wrote in his article,

“The grouse literally rolled on the mound, flicked sand and dust onto its back with splayed wings, and casually consumed ants as suggested by routine pecking at the swarm. While flicking dust with alternating wings, the grouse would often lurch its body forward, and at times be virtually prostrate on the ground. All this occurred simultaneously as ants crawled through feathers of the intruding but evidently unperturbed grouse.”

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

For more information, check out the website that Steve mentioned in his post:

<http://www.birdwatchingdaily.com/blog/2013/10/09/anting-widespread-fascinating-purpose-uncertain/>

Field Trip Report

NH Audubon’s North Country Nature Tour

by Phil Brown

The summary below is excerpted from NH Audubon’s Afield newsletter.



Gray Jay photographed on the tour by David Forsyth, 6-14-2016, Errol, NH.

A delightful mix of nine returning and new participants enjoyed NH Audubon’s five-day North Country Nature Tour during the height of breeding bird season in mid-June (June 11-15, 2016). The third annual running of this tour was another grand success with discovery around every bend, plenty of wildlife and natural history highlights, and plenty of opportunities for learning and adventure. Tour leaders, Phil Brown and Bob Quinn, and a host of special guest guides, shared some of the many natural wonders of this special part of the state, including several of NH Audubon’s renowned wildlife sanctuaries – Thompson, Dahl, Hoyt, Watts, and Pondicherry. The group enjoyed getting more familiar with some of these special places and observing firsthand how management is benefitting bird and wildlife species. Special evening presentations and time for relaxation complemented full days in the field.

The group tallied an impressive 122 bird species on the tour, many of which provided memorable looks, such as

Chimney Swift with Worn Plumage

This nicely detailed photo of a Chimney Swift by Kyle Wilmarth taken on 7-11-2016 in Salem shows the tattered appearance of its worn feathers. According to the Identification Guide to North American Birds by Peter Pyle (the bird bander’s bible), adult Chimney Swifts do a complete molt on the summer grounds,

but it can be completed during fall migration or even on the winter grounds. The outer primaries (wing feathers) are the last feathers to be replaced. This bird has not yet replaced any tail feathers or primaries, as evidenced by the feather wear.



state-endangered Pied-billed Grebes at Cops Pond and Northern Harriers at Pondicherry, as well as boreal specialists like the ever-pleasing Gray Jay. The tour included behind-the-scenes opportunities to learn about conservation species that NH Audubon biologists and volunteers are monitoring: Rusty Blackbird, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Eastern Whip-poor-will, and Common Nighthawk. Sightings of moose and bear were requisite, as was the special boat tour of scenic Lake Umbagog, which has become a “must” on this tour. The group had time to explore distinctly northern boreal bogs and take in the high-elevations of the White Mountains with a tram ride up Cannon Mountain (complete with singing Bicknell’s Thrushes near the summit) capping off the northern New Hampshire experience on a high note.

Highlights included a close Virginia Rail and distant American Bittern at Cops Pond in Tuftonboro, close viewing of songbirds along with a Brown Creeper family group from the Thompson Sanctuary boardwalk, an evening walk into the Ossipee Pine Barrens for whip-poor-will and Common Nighthawk, the variety of breeding birds at the Dahl Sanctuary, a very cold but birdy boat tour of Lake Umbagog, exploring back roads of Errol in search of target birds and mammals, an early morning trip to Mollidgewock Brook Road bog for excellent birding; and an informative picnic lunch at scenic Mud Pond with Dave Govatski.



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker by David Forsyth, 6-14-2016, Lake Umbagog NWR, NH.

Spotlight on Cory’s Shearwater (*Calonectris diomedea*)

by Stephen R. Mirick



Cory’s Shearwater by Kyle Wilmarth, 7-5-2016, offshore waters, NH.

Background and Breeding

The Cory’s Shearwater is an oceanic bird in the taxonomic order *Procellariiformes*, a group of birds which are often called “tubenoses” because of the tubed nostril sheath on the top of their bill. This order of birds includes shearwaters, fulmars, gadfly petrels, and storm-petrels and, like other species in this order, the Cory’s Shearwater is strictly an oceanic species, rarely seen from shore. It navigates the oceans using its keen sense of smell to find food, which includes fish, squid, and crustaceans, as well as offal discarded from fishing boats. Off the coast of New England, the primary food source is believed to be herring and sand lance.

Unlike Sooty and Great Shearwaters, which nest south of the equator during our winter months, the Cory’s Shearwater breeds in the northern hemisphere during our summer months. Its primary nest sites are offshore islands in the eastern North Atlantic off the coasts of Spain, Portugal, and Morocco. Up to 85% of the species nest on the islands of Madeira and the Azores. Cory’s Shearwaters nest in burrows in the ground where they lay a single egg. The species is long-lived and does not start nesting until it is between seven and 13 years old.

Away from its breeding colonies, the Cory’s Shearwater is strictly a pelagic bird and is rarely seen from land. During the summer months, immature and non-breeding individuals wander west across the Atlantic and are routinely seen off the east coast of the United States, typically in the warmer waters from Florida north to Cape Cod in Massachusetts. During the winter months, the species crosses the equator and winters south to offshore areas of Brazil and South Africa.

Historic Records for New Hampshire

Cory’s Shearwaters have historically been considered as irregular, but common to abundant in warmer waters

off the Atlantic coastline south of Cape Cod. The species rarely wandered north of Cape Cod and reports from New Hampshire and Maine were rare or absent. The first report for New Hampshire waters was of a single bird seen flying south between the Isles of Shoals and the mainland on August 18, 1950. There were no subsequent reports for New Hampshire, however, until 1979, when the first well documented sightings were recorded for the State on offshore boat trips. On September 3, 1979, 19 birds were reported, and subsequent boat trips that fall produced a high count of 250 birds on September 16, 1979.

Following this major incursion, there were only two individuals reported in 1980. Then over the next 27 years until 2008, there were only four reports of six birds in total! The summer of 2008 brought about a tremendous change in the status of Cory's Shearwater in New Hampshire. With the noteworthy exception of 2013, the species has been regularly reported offshore and, at times, has been the most common shearwater reported. A summary of sightings in New Hampshire over the years is shown in the graph in Figure 1.

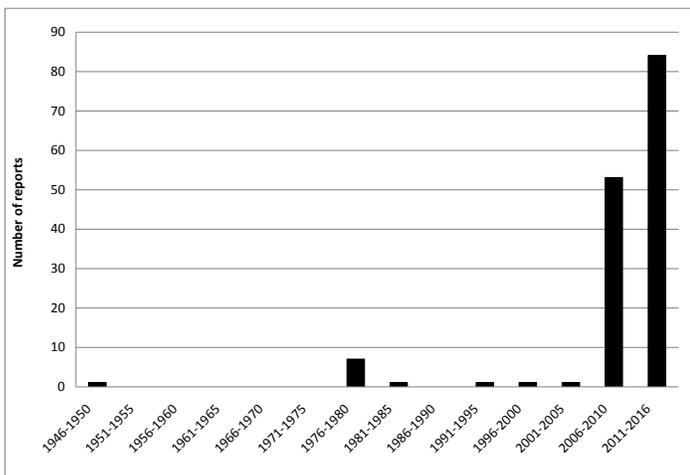


Figure 1. Cory's Shearwater sightings in New Hampshire by year from 1946-2016. Data sources listed below.

The reasons for this increase in sightings northward into New Hampshire are uncertain. Cory's Shearwater had previously been thought of as a warm water specialist, preferring ocean waters south of Cape Cod and water temperatures of 64 degrees (F) or warmer (Veit & Petersen). Some have speculated that the recent increase in sightings may be due to increased ocean temperatures from global warming (Veit et al). However, non-breeding oceanic birds are well known for wandering the seas in response to changes in food abundance. This recent change may be much more complex, and may reflect a temporary shift or change in traditional food resources.

Historically, Cory's Shearwater was thought to occur more often in the fall, especially with warmer ocean temperatures in September and October. Since 2008, however, reports

have been scattered from late June through October (Figure 2). The earliest report being from June 24 and the latest being October 28.

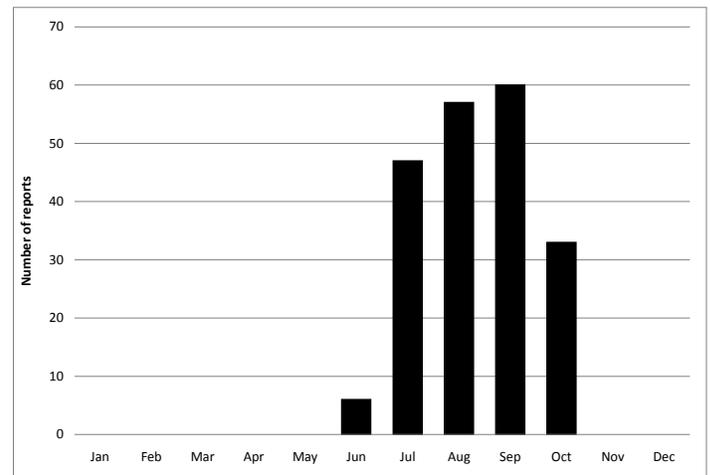


Figure 2. Cory's Shearwater sightings in New Hampshire by month from 1946-2016. Data sources listed below.

Although the counts have varied over the last nine years, most reports of Cory's Shearwater are of less than 50 birds with only three reports in excess of 100 birds. These include a report of 118 from the Isles of Shoals on September 26, 2015, 280 from the Jeffrey's Ledge area on August 16, 2009, and an incredible coastal report of 1,172 from Little Boar's Head in North Hampton on July 10, 2016 (see below).

As stated earlier, Cory's Shearwater is a pelagic species and most reports have been from offshore on boat trips. However, this species has a tendency to wander closer to the shoreline than other shearwaters and, while still uncommon to rare, it has actually been the most likely shearwater to be seen from shore over the last 10 years!

Flight of July 10, 2016 – a personal account

The flight of July 10 was foreshadowed by reports from farther south. On July 8, 5,000 Cory's Shearwaters were estimated off Wellfleet, MA on Cape Cod. Then on July 9, 3,160 were counted off Race Point, MA, heading west into Cape Cod bay, and 360 were counted off Cape Ann. That same day in New Hampshire, a vast expanse of bird activity was noticed far offshore at the limit of visibility. The birds were difficult to identify because of the distance; however, it was clear that most of the visible birds were gulls, but that there were large numbers of shearwaters mixed in with the group. The birds appeared to be foraging, not moving in any direction, and they covered much of the ocean waters, far offshore, stretching from the Isles of Shoals south to Cape Ann.

July 10 started out cloudy with scattered showers, fair visibility, and light northeast winds. Jane and I joined Becky Suomala and Zeke Cornell in the late morning for some sea watching off Rye Harbor State Park. Despite the somewhat limited visibility, we were able to tally a relatively

impressive 21 Cory's Shearwaters heading north in two hours of scanning. After brunch, Jane and I were heading home, but the visibility looked like it was improving, so we stopped at Little Boar's Head in North Hampton at about 2:15 pm to do some more sea watching. We noticed a few Cory's Shearwaters heading north, so we decided to stay. By 3:00 pm, we had counted 57 birds and I started using a clicker. By 4:30 pm, we had counted 220 birds, but then over the next hour, the birds really started moving north in a nearly continuous stream, interspersed with Sooty Shearwaters zipping by. Most of the birds followed a line which had them passing just east of the green navigational buoy approximately 3/4 of a mile offshore. Many of them also passed inside of the marker and gave great views. All of the birds were heading north. Only around 6:30 pm, when the flight had slowed appreciably, did the birds start to circle and forage. The final totals:

Cory's Shearwater - 1,172

Sooty Shearwater - 206

Great Shearwater - 2 (only)

Manx Shearwater - 0 (surprisingly)

The mysterious flight appears to have been ephemeral.

No subsequent flights were noted and the remainder of the summer saw more typical counts of Cory's Shearwaters from shore and offshore boats.

Data Sources

The following data sources were searched for records of this species:

New Hampshire Bird Records and archives, circa 1963 through November 31, 2012. New Hampshire Audubon, Concord, New Hampshire.

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<http://www.audubon.org/field-guide/bird/corys-shearwater>

<http://www.arkive.org/corys-shearwater/calonectris-diomedea/>

Goldfinch Talk

by David Killam



American Goldfinch by Bob Basile.

A goldfinch sat in my yard one day
 And bubbled over with things to say.
 Amazing all the sounds I heard
 Come pouring forth from that wee bird.
 So serious and sincere his tone,
 An oratory all his own,
 A bit of gossip, a spate of chat,
 A diatribe about that cat,
 A warbling, bobbling monologue,
 An avid, avian analogue,
 Then last a monstrous wheezy sigh
 Emergent from the tiny guy
 As off he sailed into the sky.

I watched and solemn turned my head,
 Agreed with every note he'd said.

Backyard Birder

Cooper's Hawk Fledglings

by Kathryn Frieden

The Cooper's Hawk is the most common breeding accipiter in the lower 48 states and is one of the most likely to be seen in our backyards and at our feeders, although this was not always the case in the Granite State. Not long ago, Sharp-shinned Hawks were the more numerous accipiter and Cooper's Hawks were uncommon. Cooper's nest in large trees and, in New Hampshire, most nests are found in hemlock or spruce, although they are known to use a variety of trees. The male builds a new nest every year, but Cooper's Hawks tend to have fidelity to nesting sites, returning year after year to the same area. The female incubates the eggs for about three weeks. The clutch is usually four or five eggs, but only rarely do more than four young survive. They are born altricial, meaning they are helpless and naked with eyes closed, and are totally dependent on their parents for food. The babies in the nest are fed mostly small birds, but also snakes, frogs, and insects.

The young fledge at three to four weeks old, usually mid- to late-June, and remain in the nesting area until late August through October. Initially, flight is awkward, but they soon learn to fly well. They can be noisy, using a high-pitched rising *sweee* when begging for food. Parental care continues for up to two months, until they become competent hunters.

How does this information translate into the joy of backyard birding? Jen Esten has been fortunate enough to have Cooper's Hawks growing up in her yard for several years. In an email she wrote:

"In August I usually slept on my screened-in porch. Every morning I would wake up to the hawks flying all around the porch, chasing each other and calling; even landing on the roof and running around. One morning I saw four birds all in the same tree!"



*Fledgling Cooper's Hawks enjoying Jen Esten's backyard.
Photos taken by Jen Esten, 7-3-2015 in New London, NH.*

Birding Durham – Snack Stops Included

by *Kurk Dorsey and Robbie Prieto*

Durham's Lesser Known Spots

by *Kurk Dorsey*

In 2007, my wife and I welcomed our first child into the world, and absolutely nothing changed. Well, there might have been a few extra diaper changes than before, just a bit less sleep, and maybe 99% fewer spontaneous birding days, but other than that.... We found a nice wooded lot near a park, and by coincidence, it had a house. With all of that, someone else's bumper sticker, "bird locally, think globally," became my default and I started to find places that I could bird for an hour at a time in the interest of staying employed and married.

Durham has a number of well-known spots, such as Moore Fields, the town landing, Foss Farm, and the Surrey Lane wetland. Three lesser known spots will be the subject of this piece: The Nature Conservancy's Lamprey River Preserve, the town's Oyster River Forest, and the Woodridge Park and playing fields. All are easily accessible and just a few minutes apart by car, have a nice array of land birds including rarities, and make good stops for people at the University of New Hampshire or nearby towns looking for an hour or two of birding.



Dickcissel at Woodridge Park in Durham, found by Kurk Dorsey and photographed by Zeke Cornell, 9-10-2015.

The house we bought appealed to my wife because it was close to a playground and to me because it was in a great wooded location. The houses in the Woodridge Road neighborhood were built around 1970, and the developer apparently forgot to cut down all the trees, so the neighborhood is in the midst of a fairly mature forest. The nearby park, off Mill Road at the intersection of Fogg Lane and Fogg Drive (approximately two miles from the intersection of Mill Road and Main Street), was established in 1980 and consists of playing fields surrounded by thick shrubbery. The mature forest makes great habitat for tanagers, thrushes, vireos, and many warblers (even a visiting Cerulean Warbler in 2016 as part of 29 warbler species within a block of the park), but the park edges can be spectacular in migration, turning up Olive-sided Flycatcher, Yellow-breasted Chat, Dickcissel, and Lark Sparrow in the last few years, as well as regular Connecticut Warblers and Philadelphia Vireos in the fall. Winter birds have occasionally included both crossbills and both winter grosbeaks. The parking lot edge in the early morning and the area around the batting cage (which basically abuts Foss Farm) all day are the best spots. A small slough nearby between Meserve and Bartlett Roads can also be very productive, turning up such rarities as Brewster's and Connecticut Warblers. The park can be very busy on weekends and after school hours.

Not far away (0.8 miles) from the Woodridge Park is the recently preserved Oyster River Forest, Durham town land that abuts the Spruce Hole National Natural Landmark and the town's new solar array (which for some reason is actually in Lee). The entrance to this 200-acre preserve is just north of the intersection of Mill and Packers Falls Roads, across from 357 Packers Falls Road, with a small gravel parking area. Beyond a gate, a gravel road runs straight through a young forest for less than half a mile, with side roads to the left (the solar array) and right (Spruce Woods retirement community). A marked trail to the left runs to Spruce Hole itself, a natural kettle hole bog. The main trail comes out in a broad field and then leads down to the Oyster River, a small creek, and a mature pine forest, then along the banks of the river farther than I've been able to go at a birding pace. The property is essentially the other side of the road from Moore Fields, so it is evident that field birds like American Kestrel, Bobolink, Killdeer, and some sparrows move back and forth. The wooded section is fantastic for Hermit Thrushes, woodpeckers, and migrating warblers. The field and river edge are alive with birds almost any time of year, with many sparrows and towhees, both waterthrushes, and Blue-winged and Prairie Warblers. Northern Shrike was seen here several years ago, and the habitat is very good for it and other winter visitors. In 2016, the preserve hosted Lincoln's and White-crowned Sparrows in migration and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

and Black-throated Blue Warbler into June. The warbler count just in the last two years is 24 species.

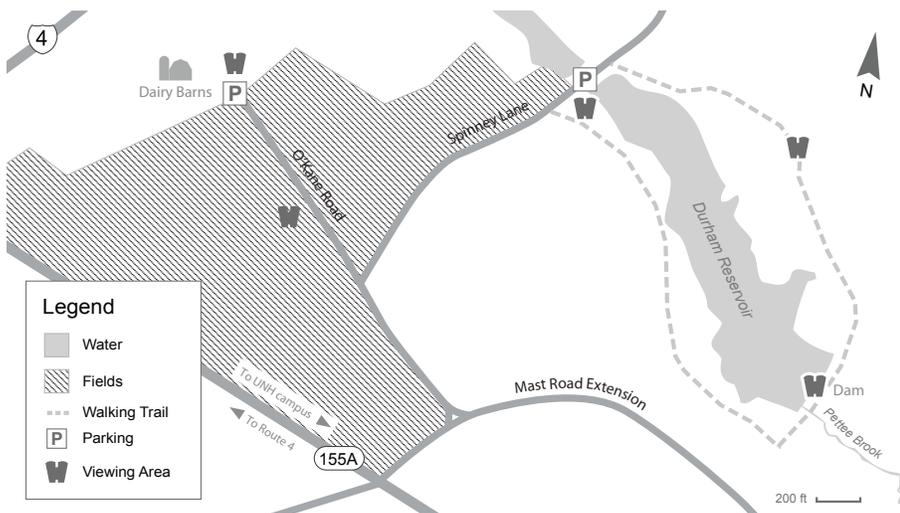
From the Oyster River forest, head south on Packers Falls Road, making a quick detour to the end of Surrey Lane (at 0.6 miles) for wetlands birds such as Pied-billed Grebe, Least Bittern, or various rails. Continue on Packers Falls Road to the 240-acre Lamprey River Preserve, the entrance of which can be found at 156 Packers Falls Road (2.3 miles from Oyster River Forest). A dirt road runs from a gate through a forest that holds both cuckoos to a large field. Beyond the field is a mature mixed forest that houses Ruffed Grouse and Barred Owls. The open field has a low swale on the south or right side that is very productive for sparrows and field warblers, especially Blue-winged Warblers. A few years back, a Lawrence's Warbler spent three springs in that field. In the winter, Snow Buntings and Northern Shrikes are occasional. The main trail runs left along the edge of the field, which hosts numerous Bobolinks in season, down to the Lamprey River. The river is deep enough to host diving ducks in migration and Wood Ducks year round. Along the river, the marshy spots in the winter have had Winter Wrens, Hermit Thrushes, and even a Ruby-crowned Kinglet on one Christmas Bird Count. The trail peters out along the river, but the forest is contained between the river and the railroad tracks so one does not need to be Grizzly Adams to explore it.

Durham has a range of great habitat and these three locations could keep a birder busy for quite some time (and there's almost never beach traffic!). Also, depending on when you're done, you can stop at Young's for pancakes or Sigma Nu for directions to the library.

Spinney Lane and Durham Reservoir

by Robbie Prieto

One of our favorite places to bird in Durham is the area around Spinney Lane and O'Kane Road, located just north of the intersection of Main Street and Mast Road. This includes the University of New Hampshire (UNH) Dairy Barn, fields



Great Blue Heron by Heidi Hutchinson.

that are hayed a couple of times each year, the Durham Reservoir, and the trails around the reservoir. There's year-round interest here and, since we live less than 15 minutes away, we find ourselves checking things out a few times each week, sometimes daily during warbler season.

We usually start at the cow barns at the end of O'Kane Road, parking in the dirt lot on the right as you pull into the area. Directly around the parking lot and on top of the various barns and buildings, there always seem to be plenty of Rock Pigeons, European Starlings, and House Sparrows, often sharing food with the cows. The excitement comes when you get to watch American Kestrels and Red-tailed Hawks put them up and chase them around. Bushes around the barns are worth checking for sparrows, and Northern Cardinals and Gray Catbirds (in season) are often around as well.

Surrounding the cow barns and all along O'Kane Road are fields that attract Bobolinks, Red-winged Blackbirds, Eastern Bluebirds, Eastern Kingbirds, Killdeer and swallows when the grass is growing. We have watched Eastern Kingbirds, Eastern Bluebirds and Barn Swallows feeding fledglings on

the power lines, which is always special. Tree Swallows, sometimes in large numbers, hunt for insects over the fields, and hawks and kestrels sometimes pass close by. After haying and in the colder seasons, Canada Geese can often be found there by the dozens. It's fun to pick through the flocks looking for rarities such as Cackling and Greater White-fronted Geese. Also, at various times of year after manure has been spread, you can see flocks of gulls looking for tasty tidbits and incredible numbers of blackbirds doing the same.

Heading back towards Spinney Lane from the cow barns, turn left onto Spinney. Drive



Ovenbird by Christopher Gagnon, 5-13-2016 - Chichester, NH.

past the UNH Observatory on your right, and then you'll find two dirt pull-offs along the Durham reservoir; you can park in either one. This is a great spot to see Wood Ducks (sometimes with young trailing behind), Great-Blue Herons fishing, and Eastern Phoebes flycatching. In the spring,

we've watched 10 or more phoebes together, darting around and perching on snags. Also in spring and summer, the bushes between the road and the reservoir are a good spot to look for Common Yellowthroats. Sparrows abound, orioles sing from the trees, and Yellow Warblers are common. During various visits, we have lucked into Marsh Wrens, a Pied-billed Grebe, and even a Northern Goshawk flying out over the trees and water before disappearing into the forest beyond.

Just past the pump house on the right, a UNH-maintained trail enters the woods running along the north side of the reservoir. This trail is marked as a cross-country horse trail, but you will often see UNH students and others either jogging or walking along. We bird this often in the spring, sometimes daily, although blackflies sometimes mean more swatting than birding. Fall and early winter are also interesting times to try the trail. In summer, it grows in enough to make it less fun for our taste, so when it's hot we stick mostly to what we can see from the road. During a spring visit, just a little ways into the trail you can find multiple warbler species, including Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Black-and-white, Pine, Yellow-rumped, and Canada Warblers, and Ovenbirds. Continuing along, we have watched chickadees excavate nest cavities and been scolded by more than a few yellowthroats. Occasional views of the reservoir through the trees offer more views of ducks and geese. A little farther up the trail, there is an opening that is full of horse jumps and obstacles. The bushes around this area often hold more sparrows and warblers. It's fun to search through them before either turning back to where you began or heading off to the right into the deeper woods, where the trail continues across a dam and then loops around the reservoir and back out again right next to the Observatory. There are other off-shoots of the trail back there as well and again, many times you'll encounter students walking or jogging as they connect to different parts of campus.

A couple of hours in this area can yield many great views of a variety of species of birds. There may be nothing super-rare, but the time spent searching, watching, and enjoying make this spot well worth checking out. Plus, afterward you can always head into campus for an ice cream at the UNH Dairy Bar!

Photo Gallery

Manchester's Nesting Peregrine Falcons

by Rebecca Suomala and Chris Martin

NH Audubon conservation biologists and many dedicated volunteers have worked tirelessly to advance Peregrine Falcon population recovery in New Hampshire. NH Audubon first became involved in the early 1980s, as organized releases of captive-bred falcons were ending and monitoring of wild-breeding pairs began. From a single cliff-nesting pair that fledged two chicks in Franconia Notch in 1981, to nearly 25 breeding territories, NH Audubon observers have been there for more than 30 years!

Since 2003, NH Audubon has offered live streaming video of the Peregrine Falcon nest at 1750 Elm Street in Manchester, NH, thanks to in-kind donations of hardware and bandwidth provided by our partner, Single Digits, Inc., and facility access from Brady-Sullivan Properties. At the beginning of the 2016 breeding season, Single Digits (which in 2014 acquired original camera host SpectraAccess) installed two new high-resolution cameras that significantly improved nest viewing!

One fixed camera focuses on the perch extending from the nest box. A second PTZ camera enables technicians at Single Digits to rotate and zoom. This camera also has night-viewing capabilities, which exposes a whole new aspect of Peregrine Falcon behavior during hours when birders rarely watch raptors.

There are fantastic views of not only the nest box, but also of prey items the adults brought in to feed their chicks – sometimes surprising species!

The pair produced four chicks that were banded on 5/24/16 by master bander Jay Barry and Chris Martin. The noisy chicks captivated a large crowd that included the press as well as then NH Audubon President Mike Bartlett, who was eye-to-eye with one of the chicks as the cameras rolled. All banding photos by Dyanna Smith.

The new cameras received over 300,000 views from 51 different countries and an amazing community of Peregrine-watchers who connected via the cam. NH Audubon is incredibly grateful to Single Digits for their interest and their support, and to Brady-Sullivan Properties for hosting the nest box for more than 15 years. The web camera is viewable during the nesting season at: <http://www.nh Audubon.org/conservation-2/peregrine-web-cam/>.



A Peregrine Falcon's view of downtown Manchester from one of the new cameras at the nest box on the Brady-Sullivan Tower.



This photo from the Peregrine cam shows the adult Peregrine Falcon preparing a Common Nighthawk breakfast for the nestlings on 5-28-2016. Since there are no nighthawks nesting in downtown Manchester, this bird was likely a migrant.



A green parakeet-like bird brought into the nest box as prey on the evening of 5-17-2016 was most likely an escaped Peach-fronted Parakeet. A Manchester resident contacted NH Audubon the next day reporting that a pet Peach-fronted Parakeet (also called a Conure) had escaped on the evening of 5-17-2016. It was last seen on Notre Dame Street less than 3/4 mi away from the Brady-Sullivan Tower.



Mike Bartlett, eye-to-eye with one of the chicks as the cameras rolled.



Chris Martin prepares to band the chicks which had been temporarily removed from the nest box and were returned after banding.



Jay Barry (left) and Chris Martin (right), assisted by Paul Nickerson, current NH Audubon trustee and former Endangered Species Chief for the US Fish & Wildlife Service Region 5.

Common Nighthawk 2016

Nesting Season

by Rebecca Suomala



A female Common Nighthawk being protective of her nearby chick, found and photographed by Brett Thelen, 7-6-2016 on a Keene rooftop.

NH Audubon's Project Nighthawk tallied five confirmed Common Nighthawk nests in the state in 2016. Two confirmed nests were in Concord, one on the ground in the same area we had a rooftop nest last year. This nest fledged one young and we had a rare opportunity to watch it learning to fly and feed itself while still being fed by its parents. The other was at Steeplegate Mall, which we confirmed by behavior of the adults. There were nine adults tallied in the Concord area overall during the summer, down from the usual 12-14.

Our partners at the Harris Center for Conservation Education documented apparent nesting behavior on a Keene State College rooftop, then discovered the roof was scheduled to be replaced beginning in a week. Jane Koliass (Project Nighthawk volunteer) and I assisted in a thorough search of the roof during a hot, 90 degree day and confirmed no nest was present before construction started. Nighthawk activity abruptly tapered off two days before our search, so we believe there was a nest that failed. Brett Thelen of the Harris Center then discovered a nearly fledged chick on a rooftop in downtown Keene! This is only the second confirmed nest in Keene since the project started in 2007. Interestingly, this chick was in the same area where a fledged chick was found several years ago from an unknown nest site. When last seen, the chick had taken its first flight and was on the granite stoop of a nearby building.

There was a probable nest in Franklin, but we didn't find it in time to confirm nesting, although we suspect they fledged young. Overall numbers were down at traditional sites in the

Ossipee pine barrens and we were never able to confirm a nest in what is usually a hot spot of activity.

New this year were two mountain top nests, one on Bayle Mt. in Ossipee found by Lynne Hart who reported defensive behavior on July 4, and the other found by Tin Mountain Conservation Center on their property in East Conway. We were unable to confirm chicks at either site, but suspect they had fledged from Bayle Mt. before we could check. Volunteers are key to nighthawk monitoring and both Bob Quinn and Jane Koliass have been long time watchers. This year they investigated several nighthawk nest sites that required a hike – and remember the watch time is 8-9:30 pm, so the hike out takes place in the dark! The story of their adventures on Bayle Mountain follows.

Project Nighthawk was funded by donations and a grant from the Blake-Nuttall Fund and the Gertrude Couch Trust. The full 2016 report is on the web site: nhbirdrecords.org/bird-conservation/project-nighthawk.

Bayle Mountain – Bears, Bobcats and Nighthawks

by Jane Koliass



View from the summit of Bayle Mountain, Ossipee, NH by Jane Koliass.

Bayle Mountain sits in the middle of the Ossipee ring dyke (a visible remnant of a Cretaceous stratovolcano from 125 million years ago). The top of Bayle, at 1853 feet, is a smooth rocky cone studded with small red pine and tons of blueberry bushes. There was a fire in May of 2015 that resulted in a very open summit. The view is 360 degrees and includes Ossipee Lake, White Lake, Silver Lake and Mt. Cranmore. A beautiful view for a moderate effort and apparently Common Nighthawks like it too as reports indicated a male booming over the top of the mountain on

July 4. Bob Quinn and I headed up there to investigate this activity.

It was a very warm evening when we started up the trail armed with binoculars, headlamps, notepad, bug spray and our Subway dinner. The hike up took a little over an hour, we moved slowly in the heat, sweat dripping off our brows, swatting at the incessant black flies. The trail was somewhat challenging as it included traversing a boulder field, areas of loose gravel and fairly steep ledge slopes. We put orange flagging at strategic spots to mark the path at some of the more obscure twists and turns... we'd need them...we were looking for nighthawks and that meant our descent would take place after dark.

We reached the summit well before any expected nighthawk activity, which meant plenty of time to eat dinner and explore the top of the cone...maybe finding a nighthawk nest. We soon discovered that we were not alone...but it wasn't a nighthawk...a small black bear was dining on blueberries along the bottom edge of the rocky cone. Our upwind scent did not give us away and he was far too involved with eating to notice us watching him.

Shortly before 8:00 pm, we stationed ourselves for optimal nighthawk viewing and we were not disappointed. Over the next 45 minutes, we tallied a total of four nighthawks flying off to the west including one male which flew over to peent and boom along the western edge of the cone. There was enough activity to warrant a second trek up the mountain, but for now, at 8:45 and darkness falling, we decided to begin our descent with enough light left to find our way off the rock summit to the trail head. It was a slow trek down and we had to stop briefly several times to make sure we were still on the trail. Our flagging helped point the way and we walked out of the woods close to 10:00 pm.

A few weeks later, we had the opportunity to go back up and with fewer flags planted during the ascent, we made our way up the trail to the sound of distant thunder. The thunderstorms were to the south, moving directly from west to east, so posed no weather problem and the cumulonimbus clouds were spectacular to look at once we cleared the tree line. It was getting towards the end of nighthawk season, but recent reports indicated that nighthawks were still active around the mountain. It was another warm night, the black flies were still troublesome until we reached the breezy summit, and it appeared the black bear, having eaten most of the topside blueberries, had moved on.

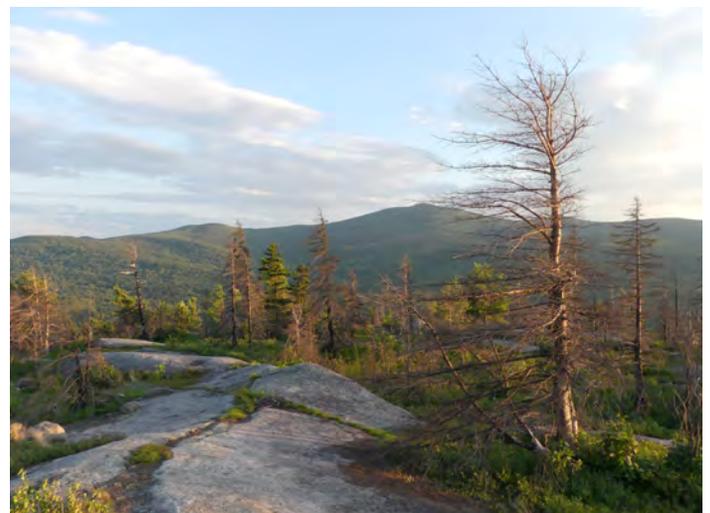
The shortening daylight was evident as I positioned myself at the top of the cone and Bob took up a viewing area about midway down the cone, both of us scanning the dimming sky for nighthawks. On one of my panning scans, I noticed Bob waving his arms above his head to get my attention and a second later, I caught a glimpse of the tawny object he was

trying to silently point out to me. I saw brownish/reddish hindquarters disappear between a gap in the rocks midway between Bob's position and mine. In a second, my mind said "it's red... a fox, no there's a white tail... a deer, no...a black tip...*a bobcat!* Yes! A bobcat out on its nightly prowling had walked right in front of Bob, stopped and looked at him long enough for him to get a picture, then continued his route which took him off the cone just under my position. I ran over to the edge of the cone, my ears following his footsteps in the crunchy leaf litter below, and caught another brief glimpse of his backside as the scolds of a red squirrel escorted him out of the area. Very Cool!

Back atop the cone, as our excitement over seeing the bobcat waned, so did the daylight, and at 8:40, we had seen no sign of nighthawks so decided to begin to make our way off the cone to the trailhead. It took a few minutes to find the trail, but soon we were headed downhill. After descending for 10 minutes, I was just about to turn around and ask Bob: "What would you do if we heard a nighthawk now?" and to my surprise there it was: "Peent, Peent". "Are you kidding me?!" I exclaimed. Quickly, we turned around and scrambled back up to the cone...it was very dark...too dark to see a nighthawk fly overhead or nearby. And there was silence...no more peents. Perhaps the territorial male was just making a post nesting season flyby...but we won't know for sure...not this year.

The trek down the mountain demanded our attention but, surer of the path than we were on our maiden hike, we moved along with more confidence. A Barred Owl greeted us as we emerged from the trail at the logging road that would lead us out of the woods and to the parked car.

Did nighthawks nest up there this year? Behavior indicates that, yes, they did. Perhaps the bear and the bobcat know, but they're not saying. Maybe next year, if we're lucky, nighthawks will come back to Bayle Mountain and we'll have another chance to find out.



*Bayle Mountain's rocky summit and trees killed by the 2015 fire.
Photo by Bob Quinn.*

Rusty Blackbird Project Summary 2016

by Carol Foss



Rusty Blackbird male singing by Len Medlock.

Whether it was the drought in New Hampshire, the severe winter in the South, or a continuation of the species' general population decline, Rusty Blackbird pairs were difficult to find in northern New Hampshire and adjacent areas during the 2016 breeding season. After monitoring 47 and 50 nests in 2014 and 2015, respectively, the research team worked very hard to come up with 33 nests in 2016.

Our Androscoggin Watershed study area for 2016 included Atkinson and Gilmanton Academy Grant, Cambridge, Dix's Grant, Dixville, Errol, Milan, and Millsfield, NH and Grafton, Magalloway Plantation, and Upton, ME. A second crew conducted surveys in the Blueberry Swamp (NH), Nulhegan Basin (VT), and Pondicherry (NH) divisions of the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge.

Of 23 pairs with known outcomes, 15 fledged young – a 65.2% success rate. This is considerably lower than recent years, with an 82.0% success rate (50 pairs with known outcome) in 2015 and an 82.9% success rate (41 pairs with known outcome) in 2014. Estimated dates for the onset of incubation at 28 nests ranged from May 1 to June 3. Five nests where incubation began after May 20 likely were re-nests after initial failures.

The team banded 83 nestlings from 21 nests, of which 75% had four or five nestlings. Weights of eight adult females banded ranged from 50.3 to 57.2 grams and averaged 53.1 grams. Weights of 13 adult males banded ranged from 56.8 to 65.9 grams and averaged 62.7 grams. These weights are well within the range of 47.3-62.8 grams for females banded in previous years and of 53.5-70.0 grams

for previously banded males.

In 2015, we discovered larvae of the bird blowfly *Protocalliphora shannoni* parasitizing Rusty Blackbird nestlings. While bird blowflies had been documented previously from the nests of Brewer's, Red-winged, and Yellow-headed Blackbirds and Common Grackle, they had never been documented from Rusty Blackbird nests. Bird blowfly larvae are blood-sucking parasites of nestling birds that may cause anemia or mortality at high levels of infestation. Analysis of 39 Rusty Blackbird nests from our study area in 2015 by blowfly specialist Dr. Terry Whitworth documented parasitism in 69%, with puparium numbers ranging from one to 77 in parasitized nests. In 2016, we installed cameras at Rusty Blackbird nests in the three territories with high parasitism levels in 2015 and determined that female flies apparently enter the nesting material to lay their eggs during blackbird incubation. After blackbird fledging, we placed the three nests in insect rearing cages and documented adult fly emergence from June 27 – July 14. Dr. Whitworth's analysis of 25 nests from the 2016 breeding season documented *Protocalliphora* puparia in 17 (68%), including *P. metallica* in addition to *P. shannoni*. Puparium numbers ranged from one to 32 per nest. Six nests contained puparia of *P. shannoni* only, five contained *P. metallica* only, and six contained both species.

Plans for 2017 field work include determining the status of previously known Rusty Blackbird territories, exploring new areas of potential habitat, locating and monitoring nests, banding as many individuals as possible, deploying pinpoint geolocators on a sample of adults, assessing nestlings for anemia and other blood abnormalities, and collecting used nests for parasite analysis.

The 2014 field crew included Carol Foss, Patti Wohner, Shannon Luepold, Charlotte Harding, and Cassandra Lavoie working in the Androscoggin watershed of Maine and New Hampshire and Grace Mitchum and Katrina Fenton working at the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge. The 2016 field season was supported by: The Charles Blake Fund of the Nuttall Ornithological Club; the Conservation Biology Research Fund at the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation; the US Fish and Wildlife Service Northern Forest Land Management, Research, and Demonstration Program; and Wagner Forest Management, Ltd..

Unfortunately for birders, a visit to most of New Hampshire's Rusty Blackbird breeding territories requires a challenging bushwhack from a remote logging road in Coos County. Somewhat more accessible areas supporting activity in recent years include the vicinity of Elbow Pond in Woodstock, the Guinea Pond Trail in Sandwich, wetlands along the Zealand Trail in Bethlehem, and NH Audubon's

Thompson Wildlife Sanctuary in Sandwich. These birds forage in beaver ponds and nest in young or stunted spruce and fir, so any area with these from the White Mountains north is worth checking in May and June. You may be able to put a new location on the eBird map!

And here's a real teaser for the birding community! Despite the fact that more than 800 Rusty Blackbirds have been banded in northern Coos County and adjacent Maine since 2009, nobody has ever seen one of these banded Rusty Blackbirds south of the breeding area. So whenever you encounter a Rusty Blackbird during the non-breeding season, take an extra close look at its legs! If it is wearing one or more bands, try to get a photo! We have had nearly 40 banded birds return to our study area, including one male banded in 2010 who was back in the same territory in 2016. You could find a clue to the route these birds are taking to and from their wintering areas.

For more information on how you can support the Rusty Blackbird Project, please visit: <http://www.nhaidubon.org/rusty-blackbird-project/>.

Status of the Olive-sided Flycatcher in New Hampshire

by Pamela Hunt



Olive-sided Flycatcher by David Forsyth, 6-1-2016, Berlin, NH.

The Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Contopus cooperi*, hereafter OSFL) is a large flycatcher found in coniferous forests across the boreal zone of North America from Alaska to Newfoundland and south in appropriate habitat in the

Pacific coastal ranges, Rocky Mountains, and Appalachians. Unfortunately, OSFL populations are in decline throughout this range and the species may only be 20% as abundant as it was 50 years ago. In the Northeast, repeated Breeding Bird Atlases in New York, Vermont, and Massachusetts found OSFLs in roughly a third fewer blocks than 20-30 years previously. Near the southernmost range edge, it largely disappeared from New York's Catskill Mountains between Atlases and was not confirmed as breeding anywhere in Massachusetts from 2007-2011. In 2007, the OSFL was listed as a threatened species in Canada. It is considered "Special Concern" in New Hampshire.

In light of these declines, NH Audubon decided to collect up-to-date information on OSFL distribution in the state. The baseline was the *New Hampshire Breeding Bird Atlas*, which documented the species in 82 priority blocks during the 1980s (Figure 1a), with probable or confirmed breeding in 43 of these. The species was fairly widespread in the northern half of the state (63 blocks), with most other records in the western highlands (14 blocks). To assess current range, OSFL sightings from 2000-2013 were taken from *New Hampshire Bird Records* and eBird and assigned to 7.5 minute topographic quads (hereafter "quads") that matched the overall sampling scheme from the Atlas. Quads were assigned four priority categories that reflected both historical and recent presence of OSFL. Of greatest interest were "Priority 1" quads, where OSFL were found during the Atlas but *not* since 2000. Sometimes this absence was simply because no one had looked, so I recruited birders to as many Priority 1 quads as possible. In contrast, quads where OSFL were found from 2010-2013 were "Priority 4," and assumed to still support the species. These quads didn't require any additional survey effort.

From 2014 to 2016 volunteers fanned out across northern and western New Hampshire in search of OSFL. They first identified suitable habitat – bogs, beaver meadows, and timber harvests – in their assigned quads and then surveyed those specific sites at least three times during June and July. In the end, 25 observers collected data in 82 quads, 54 of which were surveyed at least two times (Table 1). Volunteer effort was especially encouraged in the Southwest, which was the area with the most Priority 1 quads as well as the part of the state where OSFL was more likely to disappear first (as seen in the New York and Vermont Atlases).

OSFL detections declined markedly from north to south, and with only a single bird detected in a Priority 1 quad in the entire Southwest region (Sullivan, Cheshire, and western Merrimack and Hillsborough counties). The other three OSFL detections in the southwest (Figure 1b) were also single incidental sightings that may not represent regularly-occupied sites. By most measures, OSFL did not decline as

Table 1. Overview of Olive-sided Flycatcher survey quads and results by region. P1-4 indicate priority categories as designated at the start of the project in 2014.

Region	Number of Quads					P1-2 Quads only		
	Total	P1	P2	P3	P4	E2-3 ¹	OSFL ²	%w/ OSFL ³
North	38	9	6	5	18	5	4	80%
West Central	35	7	6	13	9	8	3	38%
East Central	34	10	13	5	6	11	3	27%
Southwest	40	14	23	1	2	17	0	0.00
Total	147	40	48	24	35	41	10	24%

¹ Number of priority 1 or 2 quads which received at least two survey visits during 2014-16 (effort codes 2 and 3).

² Number of E2-3 quads where Olive-sided Flycatchers were detected.

³ Percentage of E2-3 quads where Olive-sided Flycatchers were detected.

significantly in the central portion of the state. The survey started with more occupied quads in this region, suggesting that birds persisted in the higher or more northerly portions (Figure 1). Farther south however, in Belknap and southern Carroll and Grafton counties, only a few surveyors managed to find the species. Overall, only a third of Priority 1 quads in central New Hampshire were found to contain OSFL. The status of OSFL is most secure in northern New Hampshire, where the overall range does not appear to have changed significantly since the Breeding Bird Atlas (Figure 1). Even so, the species went undetected in 20-30% of priority quads in this region. At the larger scale, these losses were countered by the discovery (often incidentally) of OSFL in quads where they were not reported during the Atlas.

Taken together, these data suggest that the distribution of OSFL in New Hampshire is gradually retracting to the north. The species is all but absent from areas it formerly occupied in the southwestern portion of the state, and may not occur regularly. Farther north the decline is more noticeable south of the White Mountains than in the mountains themselves, although there have been losses in the latter as well. Only in Coos County has the range not changed significantly.

This pattern of larger losses to the south matches range retractions documented in New York, Vermont, and Massachusetts during recent Breeding Bird Atlases. It also corroborates population declines derived from the Breeding Bird Survey for the state and region. At this point, however, there are still limited data with which to evaluate potential factors behind the decline. Hypotheses about the decline include habitat loss (including in South America), changes in insect populations, and the effects of pesticides and other pollutants. The recent New Hampshire surveys will not shed light on the factors behind OSFL declines, but they do give us a better picture of the species' distribution, which prove useful for future conservation efforts that involve habitat assessment or management. If you see or hear an OSFL in

June or July, please enter it as accurately as possible into eBird and, ideally, revisit the site multiple times to see if birds persist. This species is a late spring migrant and birds in early June are often still moving north and thus not actually using the sites where people find them!

Figure 1. Comparison of Olive-sided Flycatcher range (by 7.5' survey quads) in New Hampshire during the Breeding Bird Atlas (Figure 1a, data from 1981-86) and since 2000 (Figure 1b). Data collected in 2014-16 informed the current range map. Paler shading on the right hand map indicates areas where OSFL was found in 2000-2009, but not 2010-16.

FIGURE 1a

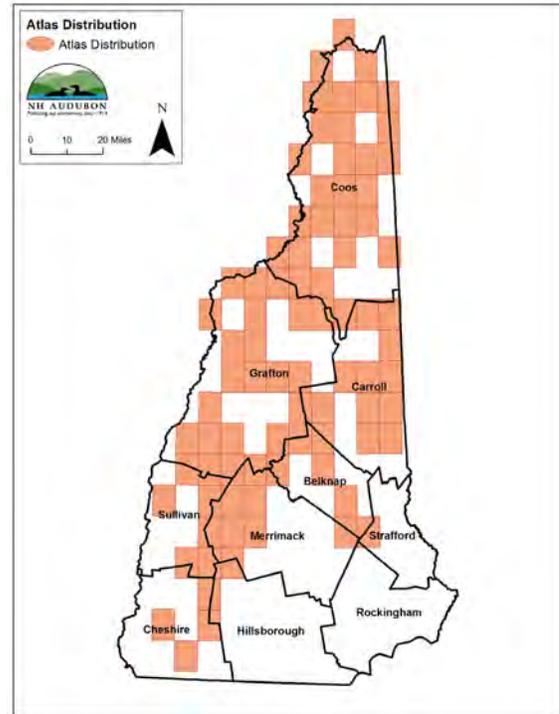
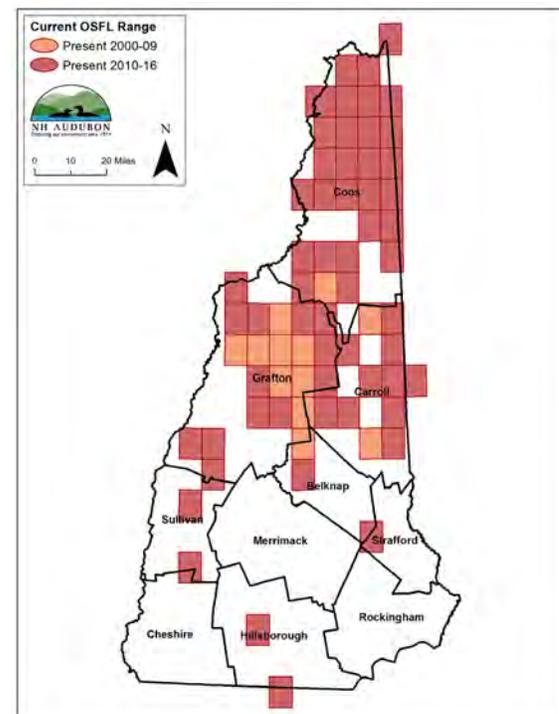


FIGURE 1b



Research

Fifteen Years of Intimacy with the Canada Warbler in Canaan, NH

by Len Reitsma

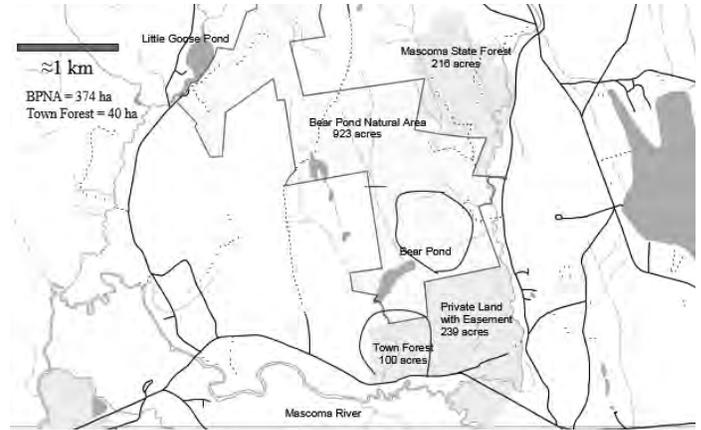


Canada Warbler about to be released after banding as part of Dr. Reitsma's research project. Photo by Dylan Jackson, 6-12-2016, Canaan, NH.

When in graduate school, I had the good fortune of studying migratory warbler populations in their wintering grounds and fell in love with that type of bird science. Marking individual birds in local populations provides the unique opportunity to get to know different bird personalities over many consecutive years. I returned to this focus in the 1990s in a collaborative effort working on Northern Waterthrushes in Puerto Rico with colleagues including NH Audubon's own Pamela Hunt. After nine years of characterizing this species' use of habitat along coastal mangrove/dry secondary forest complexes, I was ready for a shift to the breeding grounds. Two colleagues, Dan Lambert and Jim Chace, had become interested in the Canada Warbler, in part because of its rates of decline indicated by the Breeding Bird Survey (currently more than 6% per year in New Hampshire). Dan and I made a quick assessment of the Canaan Town Forest and thought the habitat looked

good for this species: forested wetlands with thick stem densities and complex ground cover. So, in the spring of 2003, we embarked on what has now become a long-term population study of this species that has yielded much new information about this beautiful woodland Nearctic-Neotropical long-distance migrant warbler.

Figure 1. Canada Warbler study site in Canaan, NH.



We started that spring by marking individuals and mapping their territories with the goal of figuring out more precisely the habitat features they most prefer. Features of importance included high stem densities of either or both conifers and deciduous species in small and large size classes, and texturally rich and complex ground substrate including lots of woody debris and trees that emerge from the sub-canopy for song perches. In 2005, we expanded to the north and within five years we published a paper on their habitat preferences, age-specific reproductive performance (pairing and fledging success), and general breeding biology.



Len Reitsma showing a Canada Warbler that he removed from the mist nests used to capture birds for banding. Photo by Dylan Jackson.

From 2005-2010, we searched for their very cryptic ground nests and, based upon blood samples from parents and nestlings of more than 115 nests, we determined they have high extra-pair paternity. Almost 60% of nests have one or more young sired by a male other than the one delivering

food, but almost 60% of all nestlings are being fed by their biological father. In some cases, males sired young in nests more than a kilometer from their own nests. There also seemed to be a trade-off in which males either sired most of the nestlings in their own nests or mostly young in other nests at the cost of having fewer of their own young in their own nests. During this period of nest-searching, we also did a more detailed characterization of the specific locations within territories used for selecting nest sites. Not surprisingly, these nest sites within territories had the thickest stem densities and were concealed more than at random sites both on and off territories. We can certainly attest to their concealment given the difficulty in finding nests!

Currently, we are collaborating with several Canadian bird labs to address connectivity and migration patterns. We are using geolocators (light-loggers) fitted to birds with a harness to deduce their migration timing and routes, and to approximate where individuals are spending the nonbreeding period, an interval considerably greater than the time they spend on the breeding grounds. This is critical information in establishing an effective management strategy for this species given the complexity of its annual cycle and the distance it travels during migration. Preliminary results suggest the individuals from the population in Canaan, NH migrate down the east coast, avoid a direct flight across the entire Gulf of Mexico by going overland through eastern Mexico, and then pass through eastern Central America before spending the overwinter period in Colombia and Peru. This is based upon only six individuals outfitted in June 2015 and recaptured in June 2016. More geolocators (30) were deployed in 2016 so the pattern will become clearer if additional geolocators are retrieved in 2017.

These patterns summarize key findings over 15 years, but one of the real joys of working on a single population for this long a time period is the special observations of specific individuals. For example, during two field seasons we did telemetry on some adults and fledglings and the male on the back cover lost one fledgling to a milk snake two days after it left the nest. The following photos show a few more examples.



Canada Warbler O-AY was the parent of three young that came back as mature breeders to our study site. Photo by Dylan Jackson.



Females deliver much more food to the young than males as documented by video cameras placed on nests and also by direct observations by Marissa Goodnow, a graduate student from 2006-2009 at Plymouth State University. Photo by Marissa Goodnow.



Perhaps one of the most extraordinary individuals in the 15 years of working this study site is this male who was captured this past breeding season (2016) after returning to the site for the 8th consecutive year. He was caught as a one-year-old in 2008 (making him 9 years old). Based upon the preliminary analyses of the geocator data, these New Hampshire birds travel more than 6,000 km (3,728 miles) one way to and from their breeding and nonbreeding grounds. Thus, this bird has traveled nearly 110,000 km in his lifetime just during migration. Photo by Christian Burns.

When one has the privilege to work so closely with one species, and indeed one population, for so many years, one gains insights into the amazing feats of athleticism, and the extraordinary persistence demonstrated by these small birds.

We are now working closely with many Canadians in developing a comprehensive conservation plan for this species, especially now that the species is listed as threatened in Canada. It is our hope that many of the insights gained from this long-term study, both past and future, will add needed detail to this plan. One current effort is to test an efficient method of rapidly assessing the age class structure and reproductive performance across broader areas to find out more about why they are declining. We are also working on disseminating information to the forestry community about practices that might enhance post-harvest habitat quality for this species that colonizes young forest patches. The last 15 years have intensified my respect and admiration for this beautiful bird and I look forward to working with students and collaborators into the future to learn more about its ecology and the causes of its decline.

Len Reitsma has taught and conducted avian ecological research at Plymouth State University since 1992. He received the Distinguished Teaching Award in 2005 and the Distinguished Scholar Award in 2015. He started bird-watching in earnest at 15 years old and has traveled far and wide continuing to pursue that passion while also studying the ecology of specific populations. He is married for 40 years with two daughters and five grandchildren and takes every opportunity to show them cool birds.

New Hampshire Rare Birds Committee Report

Winter 2012-13 through Fall 2013

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 2012-13, Spring 2013, Summer 2013, and Fall 2013.

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*.

The Committee has recently reviewed a number of records where submitted documentation was unfortunately of limited quality. For instance while reviewing a recent written summary of a Worm-eating Warbler sighting, the Committee noted that the documentation did not eliminate the possibility that the observer had actually seen a Whimbrel! 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 on-line on the *NHBR* web site 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 complete 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 were not photographed. The photograph should be just one part of the overall record of the sighting to be submitted to the NHRBC.

If you are in doubt about how many details to provide, the more the better. After all, we don't want your Worm-eating Warbler to be confused with a Whimbrel or vice versa.

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 2012-13

Records accepted by the Committee

Cackling Goose	12/6/2012	Concord
Cackling Goose	12/11/2012	Pittsfield
Great Gray Owl	2/3/2013	Hanover
Red-headed Woodpecker	12/13/2012	Alexandria
Red-headed Woodpecker	2/16/2013	Dover
Townsend's Solitaire	1/11/2013	Gilford
Townsend's Solitaire	1/12/2013	Gilford
Varied Thrush	1/11/2013	Bow
Varied Thrush	1/16/2013	Dunbarton
Varied Thrush	1/19/2013	Bow
Varied Thrush	1/23/2013	Bartlett
Varied Thrush	2/2/2013	Nashua
Varied Thrush	2/9/2013	Hopkinton
Varied Thrush	2/25/2013	Barnstead
Dark-eyed Junco – Oregon subsp.	12/15/2012	Greenland
Common Redpoll (<i>rostrata</i>)	1/7/2013	Strafford
Hoary Redpoll (<i>exilipes</i>)	1/1/2013	Strafford
Hoary Redpoll	1/10/2013	Penacook
Hoary Redpoll	1/15/2013	Concord
Hoary Redpoll (<i>bornemannii</i>)	1/23/2013	Strafford

Records not accepted by the Committee

Cackling Goose	12/20/2012	Durham
This bird was a flyover with a short viewing time. The Committee felt that a small race of Canada could not be eliminated given the limited description of the sighting		

Spring 2013

Records accepted by the Committee

Cackling Goose	3/25/2013	Litchfield
Cackling Goose	3/13/2013	Charlestown
Cackling Goose	3/16/2013	Hinsdale
Cackling Goose	3/21/2013	Charlestown
Northern Lapwing	3/10/2013	Loudon
Curlew Sandpiper	5/22/2013	Hampton
Yellow-throated Warbler	5/29/2013	Hampton

Worm-eating Warbler	5/25/2013	New Castle
Summer Tanager	5/6/2013	Exeter

Record not accepted by the Committee

Yellow-headed Blackbird	5/28/2013	Stratham
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This bird was seen briefly in flight from the road with no optics. Given this out-of-season sighting, a more detailed sighting would have been preferred to accept the record.

Summer 2013

Records accepted by the Committee

Long-tailed Jaeger	7/4/2013	Between Jeffreys Ledge and Isles of Shoals
Chuck-will's-widow	6/3/2013	Newton
Red-headed Woodpecker	6/2/2013	Belmont
Acadian Flycatcher	6/9/2013	Concord
Yellow-headed Blackbird	6/2/2013	Hinsdale
Yellow-headed Blackbird	7/16/2013	Benton

Records not accepted by the Committee – None

Fall 2013

Records accepted by the Committee

Leach's Storm-Petrel	10/12/2013	Rye
Clapper Rail	9/24/2013	Rye
American Oystercatcher	9/20/2013	Rye
Long-billed Dowitcher	10/3/2013	Hampton
Wilson's Phalarope	8/31/2013	North Hampton
Black Skimmer	10/1/2013	Seabrook
Calliope Hummingbird	10/6/2013	Manchester
Rufous Hummingbird	9/14/2013	Durham
Rufous Hummingbird	10/9/2013	Langdon
Western Kingbird	11/2/2013	Sutton
Sedge Wren	9/29/2013	Concord
White-eyed Vireo	11/10/2013	Exeter
White-eyed Vireo	11/10/2013	Portsmouth
Yellow-throated Warbler	8/10/2013	Rye
Blue Grosbeak	9/23/2013	Concord
Lark Sparrow	10/5/2013	Penacook

Records not accepted by the Committee

Gray-cheeked Thrush	9/5/2013	Pittsfield
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This was a nocturnal heard-only bird. The Committee felt that it is very difficult to separate Gray-cheeked and Bicknell's Thrushes by call only, and thus Bicknell's could not be eliminated.

Gray-cheeked Thrush	9/28/2013	Beans Grant
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This was a heard-only bird in song. Given the extreme rarity of a singing Gray-cheeked in fall in NH, a visible sighting and/or a more detailed description of the song would have been required to accept the record.

Answer to the Photo Quiz

by David B. Donsker

The herons (family *Ardeidae*) are one of the more characteristic bird families to recognize, so identifying these long-necked, long-billed, white wading birds as members of this rather uniform appearing family is the easiest part of this exercise. The purpose of this Photo Quiz, however, is to show just how difficult it can be at times to distinguish between similar species in this group.

Although there is no scientific distinction between the birds that we refer to as “herons” and those that we call “egrets,” in general, the more delicately proportioned and/or white plumaged birds are considered egrets and the larger and/or darker species, herons. But it’s not that simple. Great Egret, though a pure white bird, is more closely related to Great Blue Heron than it is to our other egrets. Great Blue Heron has a pure white morph that breeds in southern Florida called “Great White Heron,” which has recently been recorded once as a rare vagrant to New Hampshire. Reddish Egret, which is extralimital to New Hampshire, famously has both white and dark morphs. Little Blue Heron and Tricolored Heron, both dark birds in adult plumage, are in the genus *Egretta* and are actually “true” egrets as is Snowy Egret. This relationship is more easily appreciated in the former, at least, by its white juvenile plumage.

So, approaching the identification of a white-plumaged egret-like member of the heron family requires more than a cursory glance. It requires an understanding and knowledge of the seasonal and age variation of the plumages and the soft part coloration of the bill, face and legs of the members of this group, and the structure, posture and foraging behavior that is typical of the various species.

With that in mind, let’s more carefully examine the images of these two birds. At first impression, they are extremely similar. Both are pure white. Although size is hard to judge without other birds in the photos by which to compare, both of these birds appear to be small to medium sized species of superficially similar structure, which are assuming an upright stance. Neither has any evidence of head plumes, back plumes or aigrettes (head plumes) so they are most likely juveniles or adults in non-breeding plumage. Both have long, tapered, bicolored bills, which are pale gray in their basal portions, but are black at the tips. We can see the entire lower extremities of the bird on the left, which are fairly uniformly pale from thighs to toes, but the front part of the lower legs of this bird is subtly darker than the back sides. If you are examining the colored image on line, you can see that the legs are olive green, but the toes are subtly yellowish. Although the legs of the bird on the right are partially

submerged, its thighs and ankle are also rather pale (greyish-green in the colored image). If you could see its lower legs and toes, I will tell you that they would be essentially identical in color to the exposed thighs. In the black-and-white photos, the skin of the lores (the space between the eye and the base of the bill) appears pale gray in both birds. In the colored images, however, we can see a difference between these two individuals. The lores of the bird on the left are yellowish, but they are gray in the bird on the right. There are other, more subtle features that distinguish these birds from each other, but those will be discussed later in this article.

So, which white herons/egrets can we eliminate from our consideration?

Great Egret, in addition to its tall stature and very long neck, is characterized by a long, pure yellow bill. That feature alone would eliminate it as a candidate for either of these individuals with their distinctly dark-tipped bills. Great Egret, regardless of age or time of year, also has distinctive blackish legs and feet, which are not present in either of these birds.

“Great White Heron,” the white morph of Great Blue Heron, is rather similar to Great Egret, but is even larger and more heavily built with a massive yellow bill and yellow to buffy legs. Structure, bill size and leg color eliminates this one-of-a-kind vagrant to our state as a possibility.

Similarly, adult Cattle Egret also has a pure yellow bill. In juvenile plumage, its bill is black, but it never demonstrates the bicolored bill of these birds. Besides, the structure of Cattle Egret is different from that of these birds. Cattle Egret is stockier, with a proportionally shorter bill and neck. Also, the color of the legs is different. Adults in breeding plumage have red-orange legs. Non-breeding adults and juveniles have blackish legs and feet.

Little Egret is a rare vagrant to New Hampshire from the Old World, which has been reported only a handful of times in the last several decades. The adult in breeding plumage has a pair of longish head plumes, grayish or yellow lores, and a thin black bill. The non-breeding adult and juvenile lack the plumes but always have grayish lores. Juveniles are similar to the non-breeding adults, but show a pinkish base on the lower mandible. The upper mandible is totally black, however. Their blackish (or greenish-brown in the juvenile) legs have yellow feet. Even though we cannot see the legs and feet of the individual on the right, the distinctly bicolored bill of either bird eliminates this rare species.

That leaves us with only two species of white “egrets” to consider: Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) and Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*) in its white juvenile plumage. These two species are surprisingly similar. They are virtually identical in size and can be similar in plumage and soft part coloration. As such, they are frequently confused with each other. Many

field guides tend to illustrate the more typical appearances of these similar species, which further contributes to confusion in their field identification for the unwary.

For simplicity of the discussion, it is best at this point to reveal that the left bird is a juvenile Snowy Egret and that the bird on the right is a juvenile Little Blue Heron. We know that the Snowy Egret must be a juvenile because it lacks the shaggy head plumes, has greenish, rather than black legs, lacks bright yellow toes and has a bicolored bill. We know that the Little Blue Heron must be a juvenile because it is white rather than slaty-gray.

So, let’s re-examine the images of these two individuals and look beyond their striking similarities more to the subtler differences that separate these similar species in soft part coloration, structure and foraging behavior/posture. We’ve already pointed out the differences in the color of the skin of the lores which is yellowish in the Snowy Egret and gray in the Little Blue Heron, but this is not always the case. Juvenile Snowy Egret typically has yellow to yellowish-green lores and, although the lores of Little Blue Heron are usually gray, they may rarely be yellow-green as well. Toe color does help, but only if the toes can be seen which is not always the case when the birds are wading and the feet are submerged. But Little Blue Heron never has yellowish toes. Snowy Egret in all plumages does, but this can be hard to distinguish at times, especially in juvenile birds, in which the toes are more greenish-yellow.

There are other differences that were not pointed out earlier. Let’s start with the general structure of the birds. Note that Little Blue Heron has a subtly rounder crown compared to the flatter crown of Snowy Egret. Little Blue Heron also has a proportionally larger eye than Snowy Egret which can give it a “wide-eyed” expression. Less subtle is the structure and appearance of the bill. Compared to the bill of a Snowy Egret, that of a Little Blue Heron is proportionally shorter and is thicker at the base, so it appears more tapered. It is more crisply bicolored and has a slightly rounded upper mandible or culmen. This difference in bill shape and coloration is one of the better morphological features to use to separate these similar species. In Little Blue Heron, the lower legs are uniformly dull grayish-green. Snowy Egret in juvenile or non-breeding adult plumage lacks the completely black legs of the adult. Rather, the foreparts of the lower legs are usually blackish, however, when seen from the back, as when the bird is walking away, the legs of juvenile Snowy Egrets appear greenish-yellow, so be careful.

Perhaps the most reliable feature of all is to be aware of the differences in posture and foraging behavior that distinguishes these birds. Snowy Egret typically feeds actively with a shuffling gait as it stirs up material from the bottom. It frequently crouches when feeding. Although both species

have necks that show the classic heron “S” curve when not fully extended, the Snowy Egret neck is much more coiled than that of Little Blue Heron. This is particularly notable while the bird is foraging. Snowy Egret forages with a tightly coiled neck which, as in a rattlesnake, is ready to spring into action when it stabs at its prey. In contrast, Little Blue Heron has a relaxed, slow and deliberate foraging style. It typically forages with its neck outstretched and held at an upward angle with its bill pointed downward. This feature can be nicely seen in the photograph that is below. This difference in foraging behavior and style is often helpful when looking at distant birds. Juvenile Little Blue Heron can often be picked up by this behavior alone.



Snowy Egret is a common and familiar resident in coastal New Hampshire throughout the spring, summer and early fall. Little Blue Heron is most often encountered as an irregular post-breeding visitor in our coastal marshes in late summer and early fall from its more southern nesting grounds or from rare and local breeding sites in Maine and Massachusetts. Discovering a white juvenile Little Blue Heron amidst the scores of Snowy Egrets that frequent these marshes at that time of year is a challenge and satisfaction worth the effort, but be mindful of the pitfalls in making the identification and beware of juvenile Snowy Egrets!

The image of juvenile Little Blue Heron was taken by Steve Mirick on August 24, 2014 in the marshes in North Hampton. The photographs of foraging juvenile Little Blue Heron (above) and juvenile Snowy Egret (page 1) were obtained by Jeanne-Marie Maher. The former on August 10, 2016 at the saltmarshes south of Odiorne Point; the latter on July 28, 2016 at the first pullout south of Odiorne Point.

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Corrections

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

Spring 2015

- p. 19 Varied Thrush on 03/01, S. Spangenberg was misspelled.
- p. 33 Photo credit should read “Photo by Dave Govatski” not Charlie Nims.
- Back Cover The date for Summer Tanager should be 04/14/15, not 4/14/16.

Summer 2015 – None

Fall 2015 – None

Winter 2015-16

- p. 4 The Green-winged Teal and Green-winged Teal (American) should be combined with no sub-species. Not all records listed as (American) were designated as such in the data.
- p. 7 The Turkey Vultures on 12/20 were observed by K. Dorsey, not Dorse.
- p. 8 The Sandhill Crane was observed by A. Murray not Murra.
- p. 9 The Iceland Gull and Iceland Gull (kumlieni) should be combined with no sub-species. Not all records listed as (kumlieni) were designated as such in the data.
- p. 15 The White-crowned Sparrow and White-crowned Sparrow (*leucophrys*) should be combined with no sub-species. Not all records listed as (leucophrys) were designated as such in the data.
- p. 28 The Belichukars Win the Cup was excerpted from a post to NHBirds on 1/31/2016, not 1/1/2016.

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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
PMRO	Pack Monadnock Raptor Observatory
PO	Post Office
R.	River
Rd.	Road
RO	Raptor Observatory
Rt.	Route
SF	State Forest
SP	State Park
SPNHF	Society for the Protection of NH Forests, Concord
T&M	Thompson & Meserves (Purchase)
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
WMNF	White Mountain National Forest
WS	NHA Wildlife Sanctuary
~	approximately
WTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

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Summer 2016 Highlights



Rufous Hummingbird by Nicole Jay, 7-17-2016, Dunbarton, NH.



Sandhill Crane by Aiden Moser, 7-20-2016, Rt. 127 fields, Hopkinton, NH.



Nelson's Sparrow doing a display flight (above) and perched in the salt marsh (left). Photos by Steve Mirick, 6-19-2016, Rye, NH.



Least Bittern by Scott Heron, 7-16-2016, World End Pond, Salem, NH.



Len Reitsma banded this Canada Warbler as part of his research study in Canaan, NH. This male lost one fledgling to a milk snake two days after it left the nest. Read more about his results inside. Photo by Jim Block.

