

New Hampshire Bird Records





NEW HAMPSHIRE BIRD RECORDS
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MANAGING EDITOR

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

TEXT EDITOR

Dan Hubbard

SEASON EDITORS

Eric Masterson, **Spring**
Chad Witko, **Summer**
Ben Griffith, **Fall**

Jim Sparrell/Katherine Towler, **Winter**

LAYOUT

Dyanna Smith

PUBLICATION ASSISTANT

Kathryn Frieden

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Susan MacLeod, Marie Nickerson,
Carol Plato, Tony Vazzano

PHOTO QUIZ

David Donsker

PHOTO EDITOR

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WHERE TO BIRD

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This issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* with its color cover is sponsored by Pat Niswander with gratefulness for the return of our feathered friends each summer bringing song and color to our backyards, gardens, forests and fields.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (and their young) are one of the delightful visitors that Pat welcomes to her feeders. Photo by Jane Kelley.

In This Issue

New Hampshire Bird Records Volunteer Opportunities 1
 Photo Quiz 1
 Summer Season: June 1 through July 31, 2017 by Chad Witko 2
 Yellow-nosed Albatross on Little Seavey Island, Isles of Shoals, Better than Fireworks!
 by Elizabeth Ford and Taylor Ouellette 24
 The Trials of the Mississippi Kite Family by Stephen R. Mirick 26
 Field Notes compiled by Kathryn Frieden 27
 A Tale of Two Ducks or “Woodies vs. Hoodies” by Iain MacLeod 27
 Broad-winged Hawk Feeds on Roadkill by Phil Brown 27
 Adult Yellow-bellied Sapsucker with No Red on the Head by Robert Quinn 27
 Red Crossbills on the Move by Phil Brown 28
 Is it Really a Cape May Warbler? by Erica Holm 28
 Field Trip Report 29
 NH Audubon Pelagic Trip – Bowhead Whale! by Jon Woolf 29
 North Country Nature Tour by Phil Brown 30
 Bald Eagle and Osprey Conflicts by Iain MacLeod 31
 Bald Eagle Population Recovery Success by Iain MacLeod and Chris Martin 32
 One Hundred Years of Cerulean Warblers in New Hampshire by Pamela Hunt 33
 Backyard Birder – An Unusually Tall Eastern Phoebe Nest by Rebecca Suomala 36
 Birding Pease International Tradeport – There’s an Osprey in the Ammo Dump!
 by Jon Woolf 37
 Rusty Blackbird Research 2017 by Carol R. Foss 39
 Volunteers and Research – Thirty Years of Change on a NH Breeding Bird Survey Route
 by Wendy Ward 40
 Answer to the Photo Quiz by David B. Donsker 42

Cover Photo: Two remarkable first-state records: A Brown Booby by Jason Lambert, 6-11-17, Windham, NH (top), and a Yellow-nosed Albatross by Elizabeth Ford, 7-3-17, Seavey Island, Isles of Shoals, NH.

New Hampshire Bird Records is published quarterly by New Hampshire Audubon’s Conservation Department. Thank you to the many observers who submit their sightings to NH eBird (www.ebird.org/nh), 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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NEW HAMPSHIRE BIRD RECORDS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please contact Becky Suomala (rsoomala@nhaudubon.org).

Office Assistant

We are looking for someone to help in the many and varied tasks needed to keep our publication running smoothly. This volunteer will computerize and maintain our subscription files, maintain publication files, respond to subscribers via email and letters, assist with solicitation of new subscribers, and prepare materials for mailings; including labeling, copying, stuffing envelopes, researching addresses, and comparing names on lists, as well as other duties as assigned. Experience with computers and good attention to detail is required. The position requires a half day, once a week, in the Concord office.

eBird Data Assistant

Assist with error checking and updating the NH database of bird sightings in eBird. The primary task for this position is to research location and information discrepancies in eBird reports and contact observers to resolve questions about their sightings. Additional tasks include requesting additional details on some reports and possible eBird review of older records. Proficiency with computers and familiarity with NH birds required, familiarity with eBird and internet tools preferred. Although some work may be done from home,

most work will take place at the NH Audubon McLane Center in Concord.

Bird Data Special Project

Prepare bird sighting data from 1987 to 2009 for upload into eBird from the *New Hampshire Bird Records* database. Tasks include reviewing and standardizing location names, researching locations that are vague or unclear, and mapping locations in eBird. It requires creative research skills and persistence to find old place names. Familiarity with Excel, eBird and Google Maps preferred. Good record keeping and attention to detail are important and some knowledge of birds (common vs. rare) is helpful. Some work can be done at home, but training and most research takes place in the Concord office.

eBird Reviewer

Review unusual birds sightings entered in eBird in New Hampshire and contact observers for clarification or additional details. Current bird sightings are already being reviewed so this position will concentrate on older bird reports. Reviewer must have a strong knowledge of bird identification and distribution but can focus on a specific area of the state where their knowledge is strongest. Experience with eBird is essential. Work may be done at home.

PHOTO QUIZ

Can You Identify This Bird?

Answer on page 42. Photo by Brian Reilly.



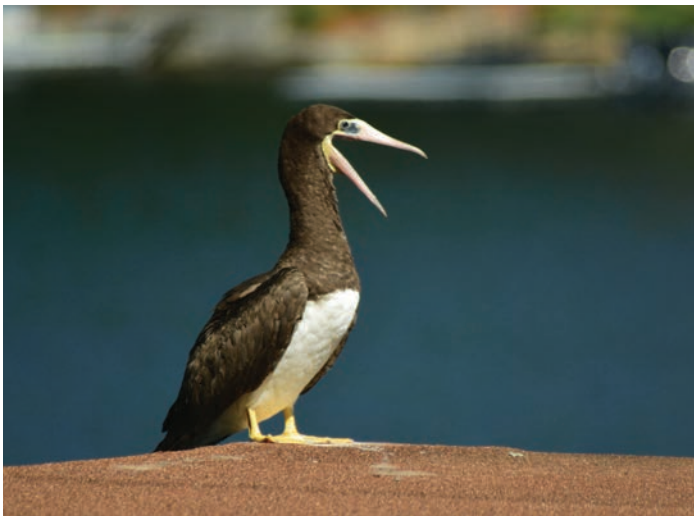
June 1, 2017 through July 31, 2017

by Chad Witko



During the summer of 2017, 242 species of birds were identified and submitted to eBird. From this diverse array of avifauna, without a doubt, seabirds dominated the highlight reel. Despite New Hampshire owning the shortest oceanic coastline of any state at a cramped

18 miles, exceptional seabird rarities showed up in both June and July. The quality of these rarities was superlative with the addition of two first-state records in the form of a **Yellow-nosed Albatross** and a **Brown Booby**. Additionally, a fifth-state record **Brown Pelican** rounded out the marine front while a ninth-state record **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher** was the passerine highlight of the season. Other noteworthy species for the summer of seasonal and state-level significance included **King Eider**, **Little Blue Heron**, **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**, **American Oystercatcher**, **Thick-billed Murre**, **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, and **Red Crossbill**.



Brown Booby by Dylan Jackson, 6-11-17, Windham, NH.

Compared to the drought of 2016 with 45 percent less rainfall than normal, the summer of 2017 stood in stark contrast as an extremely wet June saw 5.15 inches of rainfall alone (1.46 above normal) (all weather measurements out of Concord unless otherwise noted). While an impressive 1.98 inches of rain fell on June 6, it was the constant passage of cold and warm fronts that pushed isolated or scattered showers and thunderstorms across the region on a weekly

basis. This pattern would continue across the central and northern portions of the state during July where normal to above normal amounts of rain occurred (1.32 inches above normal in Sandwich). This pattern of rain, coming on the heels of a wet and cold spring, likely impacted the breeding success of some of our birds, which will be explored later in this summary. The southern tier of the state experienced different conditions during the latter half of the summer where a meager 1.21 inches was recorded (2.53 inches below normal). Measured against the long-term average, mean temperatures for June and July were 1.2 degrees above normal (66.1°F) or normal (70°F) respectively. A total of eight days of 90°F or higher were recorded this summer with a maximum temperature of 97°F recorded on June 12.

Waterfowl through Grebes

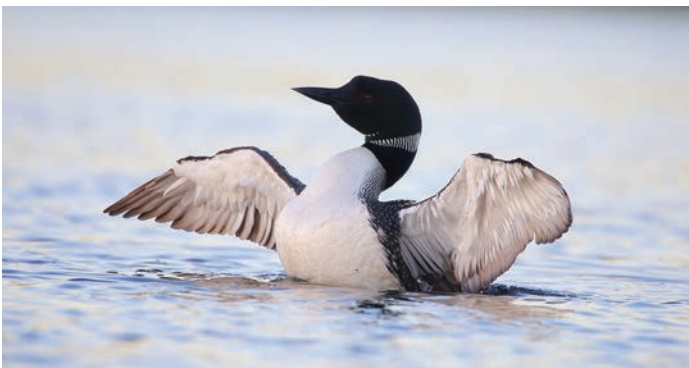
As in 2016, there was only a single report of **Gadwall** this summer, this time a pair that was observed on July 29 in Colebrook at the Panorama Golf Course. An irregular transient through New Hampshire during the spring and fall migration periods, Gadwall continues to be surprisingly rare during the summer months. With a breeding range that was historically centered in western North America, this species now breeds locally in many parts of the East, including wildlife refuges such as Parker River National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in Newbury, MA four miles south of the state boundary. Even with this eastern stronghold just over the border, there remains a relative dearth of summer sightings of this smart-looking dabbling duck in the Granite State.

Teal continue to be rarely present during the summer months here in New Hampshire. On June 23, a lone male **Blue-winged Teal** was observed in the company of Mallards at the Lancaster Wastewater Treatment Plant. Considered a localized breeder in the state, the last documented occurrence of breeding is 2004 at the Rochester WTP. The overall lack of summer reports is likely linked to the scarcity of its preferred breeding habitat (*Atlas of Breeding Birds in New Hampshire*, 1994). **Green-winged Teal**, another scarce localized breeder, was observed just twice this season with a single male at Airport Marsh in Whitefield on June 4 and another in Glen on July 2. A pair of **Northern Shovelers** observed at Pickering Ponds on June 1 in Rochester represent a rare summer sighting of this species.

Diving ducks, particularly those from the *Aythya* genus were well represented this summer. Most remarkably, this representation came in the form of scaup, two closely related species that are rarely documented in New Hampshire during the summer. Two male **Greater Scaup** were observed at Sunset Farm in Greenland by Steve Mirick on July 2, representing the only confirmed summer sighting of this

species in New Hampshire in the last 10 years. Interestingly, these were the first summer records since June 2002 when Steve Mirick had sightings at Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and Sunset Farm on June 8 and 25, respectively. This species primarily nests in the coastal tundra of the Arctic and Subarctic, especially western Alaska. Not to be outdone and of no lesser importance, a single male **Lesser Scaup** was observed and well documented at the Rochester Wastewater Treatment Plant for nearly the entirety of the summer between June 13 and July 29. The only other documented case of Lesser Scaup in New Hampshire during the summer period also occurred in 2002 when an individual was first observed by apparent scaup-sleuth Steve Mirick on July 12 at the Exeter Wastewater Treatment Plant. With some individuals of this species summering and breeding along the lower St. Lawrence River north to Lac Saint-Pierre, birders of the North Country should keep an eye out for vagrants around small semi-permanent wetlands and lakes with emergent vegetation.

Along the coast, an immature male **King Eider**, continuing from the spring season, was observed on three occasions during the month of June and was surprisingly joined by a second individual, a female, on June 4 at Little Boars Head in North Hampton. A hardy sea duck that breeds in remote areas of the high arctic, King Eiders are rare to irregular visitors to New Hampshire's coast and the Isles of Shoals during the fall, winter, and early spring. One to two individuals can sometimes linger into the summer occurring in New Hampshire of every three to six summers (1998-2017). A **Red-throated Loon** was observed and photo-documented on Squam Lake on June 23 and again on July 28 marking the first inland record for the summer season since one spent nine days on Squam Lake in the summer of 1967 (July 12-20). Several other reports for this species occurred along more typical coastal locales during the summer. Because there is the chance for beginning birders to confuse this species with juvenile Common Loons, any sightings from inland lakes during the summer should be photo-documented, if possible.



Common Loon by Scott Heron, 6-21-16, Kingston, NH.

During its 43rd year of field work, the Loon Preservation Committee (<http://www.loon.org/>) with its hundreds of volunteers, had an outstanding season surveying 360 lakes across the state including 503 occupied or potential loon territories in 2017. Loon pairs were found on 200 lakes, occupying 296 territories, an increase of three territorial pairs from last year. For a variety of reasons, not all pairs attempt to nest during a given season, and this year only 202 pairs did (68%). This was a slight decrease from 2016 when 71% of territorial pairs attempted nesting. Of the pairs that attempted nesting this year, 115 (57%) were successful, hatching 168 loon chicks, of which 126 survived until mid-August when the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) ends routine monitoring. This amounted to 0.43 chicks per territorial pair, putting this overall measure of loon productivity well below the long-term average of 0.51 (1975-2017). Only four other years (1998, 2008, 2009, and 2013) in the last 43 have been worse for nesting productivity than 2017.

Black flies continued to be a contributing factor in nest failure for Common Loons, particularly across the North Country. Other factors that contribute regularly to nest failure in Common Loons also seemed to be on the rise this year. This included more nests disturbed by humans, more nest abandonments due to rival loons intruding on territories, and more flooded nests due to the rainy conditions of early summer. In fact, at least five nests were lost due to severe weather that swept through the Sunapee region on July 1 alone. Despite mixed nesting success over the last decade, the breeding loon population has continued to grow by about 1% each year over the last five years. Sitting well below the estimated carrying capacity for the state, the population remains dependent upon focused efforts by humans to increase nesting success and reduce adult mortality for the time being.

In other loon news, band resightings and recoveries by LPC have given greater insight into the longevity and nest fidelity of Common Loons in the state. The 1998 Sand Pond-Marlow male (now at least 23 years old) who was rescued in January 2016 from Sunapee Lake and released in Penobscot Bay that winter, was confirmed back on his recent breeding territory at Millen Pond in Washington this summer. Not to be outdone, the 1993 Sweat Meadow female and the 1994 Magalloway male (banded as a juvenile), who have been paired up on Umbagog for the last decade, were once again successful in hatching a chick. At twenty-three years old for the male, and at least twenty-eight years old for the female, these two are some of the oldest known loons in New England.

SUMMER SEASON



Pied-billed Grebe next to a nest with one egg. Photo by Lori Charron, 6-1-17, Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook, NH.

The Pied-billed Grebes at the Panorama Golf Course had a nest with at least one egg, photographed by Lori Charron. According to Lori, the nest was in a pond that had not been maintained since the course closed and had become good grebe habitat. She believes the nest failed as her last sighting was June 22.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
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Blue-winged Teal

06/23	1	Lancaster WTP	S.& D. Stoddard
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Northern Shoveler

06/01	2	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	K. Couture, A. Murray
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Gadwall

06/29	2	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
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Green-winged Teal

06/04	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	S. Mirick
07/02	1	Goodrich Falls Rd. pond, Glen	N. Staples

Ring-necked Duck

06/04	2	Brentwood Mitigation Area	S. Wrisley, J. Pettipas
06/16	1	Beaver Brook, Plainfield	K. Jones
07/05	19	Umbagog NWR	J. Pietrzak
07/05	19	Umbagog NWR	A. Winters

Greater Scaup

07/02	2	Sunset Farm, Greenland	S. Mirick
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Lesser Scaup

06/13	1	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
07/29	1	Rochester WTP	K. Towler

King Eider

06/01	1	Rt. 1A pullout opposite stone angel, Rye	J. Maher
06/04	2	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
06/24	1	cove at Rye/N. Hampton town line	S. Mirick

Surf Scoter

06/01	18	Rt. 1A pullout opposite stone angel, Rye	J. Maher
06/03	24	NH coast	S. Mirick
06/10	13	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/30	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
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White-winged Scoter

06/03	10	NH coast	S. Mirick
06/06	4	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	B. Friedrichs, M. Todd, H. Forbes
07/23	3	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick

Black Scoter

06/03	33	NH coast	S. Mirick
06/10	17	NH coast	S. Mirick
06/20	5	Rye Harbor SP	A. Vicciarelli
07/19	3	Jeness Beach, Rye	S. Mirick

Bufflehead

06/03	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	A. Murray
06/14	3	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	A. Cullen
06/20	1	cove s. of Odiorne Point SP, Rye	R.& K. Horn, A. Vicciarelli

Common Goldeneye

06/07	1	Metallak Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
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Red-breasted Merganser

06/04	1	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
06/07	1	Rye Harbor	L. McKillop
06/20	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	A. Vicciarelli

Spruce Grouse

06/18	1	Moore Reservoir, Littleton	E.& J. Huestis
06/18	1	Mt. Madison, WMNF	P. Price, J. Wagner
07/05	1	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	J. Sparrell, K. Towler
07/10	1	Chandler Brook trailhead, Mt. Washington	J.& F. Marengi
07/26	1	Guyot Shelter, WMNF	G. Burruss

Red-throated Loon

06/01	1	Seal Rocks, Rye	D. Hubbard
06/04	1	Fort Constitution, New Castle	J. Maher
06/05	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	D. Clark
06/10	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
06/23	1	Livermore Cove, Squam Lake, Holderness	T. Grade
07/28	1	Squam Lake	T. Grade

Pied-billed Grebe

06/01	2	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
06/03	1	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth, Seacoast CFT
06/07	1	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/08	4	Copps Pond WMA, Tuftonboro	G.& A. Robbins
06/16	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	C. Breen
06/22	1	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
07/13	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	C. Nims
07/25	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray

Red-necked Grebe

06/05	1	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	M. Todd
06/24	1	Squam Lake	T. Vazzano
07/02	2	Seal Rocks, Rye	S. Mirick

Albatross through Pelican

On July 4, a **Yellow-nosed Albatross** was photographed on Seavey Island at the Isles of Shoals by Elizabeth Ford and Taylor Ouellette, Tern Restoration Project staff. The

top-billed rarity of the season in this editor's opinion, the individual was also seen by a handful of people on Star Island as it flew low over the waves towards White Island. Found primarily in the Southern Hemisphere, mainly in latitudes 25-50°S, the Yellow-nosed Albatross is considered "casual" by the American Birding Association as a Category 4 species (defined as having at least six or more total records, including three or more in the past 30 years). The only other Yellow-nosed Albatross in New Hampshire was on June 6, 2006, but it was accepted as "hypothetical" by the NH Rare Birds Committee because it did not meet the criteria for a first state record. The sighting was supported by the presence of a Yellow-nosed Albatross 2.5 hours earlier off Cape Ann, MA.



Yellow-nosed Albatross by Elizabeth Ford, 7-3-17, Seavey Island.

The most frequently recorded vagrant albatross in North American waters, Yellow-nosed Albatross has at least 35 records reported between the months of May and August. Many of these records were prior to 1980, but at least 18 reports come from May 2000 to July 2010. This summer's sighting came after a flurry of detections this year along the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast coastlines with sightings at Long Island, NY (May 6), Virginia Beach, VA (May 15), and Pond Island NWR in Phippsburg, ME (June 18). The individual detected in Maine may be the same individual that was observed at the Isles of Shoals just a few weeks later. However, with a species that is as long-lived and far-ranging as an albatross it becomes difficult to determine exactly how many individuals have been seen across seasons.

On June 10, a long overdue first-state record **Brown Booby** was discovered by John Kleschinsky on the railing of his apartment on Cobbetts Pond in Windham. While the albatross was the rarity of the season, the Brown Booby was undeniably the star of the show. Word quickly got out and this rarity was observed by several hundred birders before its last report on June 20. Common in tropical waters

throughout the world including the Caribbean Sea, this sulid (boobies and gannets) is once thought to have bred as far north as the Florida Keys where non-breeding birds still occur year-round at Dry Tortugas National Park. While this collection of low-lying keys might still be the best place to plan a trip to find a Brown Booby in the United States, annual sightings occur along the Gulf and Atlantic Coasts from Texas to Nova Scotia. With records of sightings across all New England states except New Hampshire, Brown Booby was the proverbial low-hanging fruit in terms of our next addition to the state checklist. How overdue was Brown Booby to the official state checklist for New Hampshire? Enough so that it was chosen as *the* most likely candidate for next addition to the state checklist by a panel of experts on the *New Hampshire Bird Records* editorial team (see Iain MacLeod's article "The Next Ten... (or 13) New Species for New Hampshire" on page 39 in the Spring 2016 issue).



Brown Booby by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-13-17, Windham, NH.



The Brown Booby was seen by watchers, frequently perching on a roof at the edge of Cobbetts Pond in Windham. Photo by Rebecca Suomala, 6-11-17.

Notwithstanding the two aforementioned state-firsts, seabirds fared poorly overall this summer as compared to the 2016 season, particularly tubenoses. One clear example of this was the overall scarcity of **Cory's Shearwaters** where a

SUMMER SEASON

meager eight individuals for the season pales in comparison to the 1,172 observed on July 10, 2016 at Little Boars Head alone. Additionally, there was a well documented die off of Northern Gannets on Cape Cod and the south shore of Massachusetts in late spring and early summer from unknown causes (various media outlets). Dead gannets were found in Maine as well but not reported in New Hampshire. There was also a mass mortality event of **Great Shearwaters** in New Jersey that appeared to have starved (*New York Times*, 7-14-17).



Brown Pelican by Steve Bennett, 6-24-17, Rye, NH.

Between June 17 and July 29, at least one immature **Brown Pelican** was observed regularly by numerous individuals between Rye, Seabrook, and the Isles of Shoals. This is apparently the fifth record for the state and the first since 2015 when an individual wandered to interior New Hampshire over a period of four days in mid-September. Although there was an unsubstantiated, albeit likely report of five pelicans just outside Rye Harbor on July 21, this year's documented bird was part of an incursion of at least two or three confirmed Brown Pelicans that made it into northern New England waters.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
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Yellow-nosed Albatross

07/04	1	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	S.& C. Parr
07/04	1	White & Seavey Islands, Isles of Shoals	E. Ford, T. Ouellette

Cory's Shearwater

07/28	2	offshore waters, NH	L. McKillop, J. Pietrzak
07/29	5	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick

Great Shearwater

06/12	1	offshore waters, NH	S. Mirick, NHAFT
07/19	1	offshore waters, NH	C. Nims
07/28	2	offshore waters, NH	L. McKillop, J. Pietrzak
07/31	4	offshore waters, NH	J. Sparrell, K. Towler

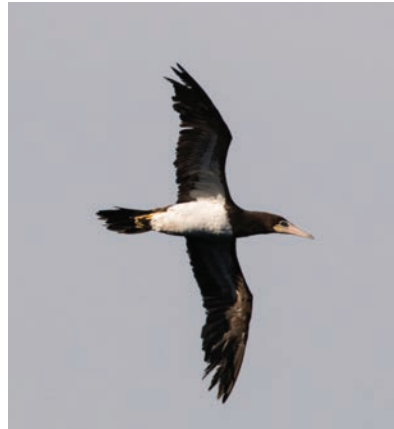
Sooty Shearwater

06/12	1	offshore waters, NH	S. Mirick, NHAFT
07/21	10	Jeffrey's Ledge	S. Lemire

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
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Wilson's Storm Petrel

06/12	36	offshore waters, NH	S. Mirick, NHAFT
07/02	2	offshore waters, NH	E. Walter
07/09	20	inland of Isles of Shoals	B. Griffith
07/15	21	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/19	50	offshore waters, NH	C. Nims, J. Scott
07/31	36	offshore waters, NH	J. Sparrell, K. Towler



Brown Booby by Leo McKillop, 6-12-17, Windham, NH.

Brown Booby

06/10	1	Cobbetts Pond, Windham	J. Kleschinsky
06/20	1	Cobbetts Pond, Windham	K.& R. Horn, J. Teltser, A. Burdo, J. Gray, J. Bourget

Northern Gannet

06/05	2	Rt. 1A pullout opposite stone angel, Rye	T. Bowen
06/12	24	offshore waters, NH	S. Mirick, NHAFT
07/09	8	inland of Isles of Shoals	B. Griffith
07/29	15	Seabrook Beach	J. Lambert
07/29	25	NH coast	S. Mirick

Great Cormorant

07/09	1	Square Rock, Isles of Shoals	B. Griffith
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Brown Pelican by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-25-17, Hampton Harbor, NH.

Brown Pelican

06/17	1	Sawyers Beach, Rye	N. Chouinard
06/23	1	Concord Pt., Rye	G. Tillman
06/24	1	Concord Pt., Rye	S.& J. Mirick, et al.
06/25	1	Gospport Harbor, Star Island, Isles of Shoals	J. Duval
06/25	1	Hampton Harbor	K. Wilmarth, et al.
06/28	1	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	H. Bauer, H. Otto, C. Ross, S. Heron

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/07	1	offshore, Hampton	S. Bronson
07/11	1	Seavey Is., Isles of Shoals	E. Ford, T. Ouellette
07/29	1	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick, K. Wilmarth

Bitterns through Crane

If you want to see Least Bittern in New Hampshire, the general rule of thumb is to go to World End Pond in Salem, not grocery shopping. But on June 22 in Lebanon, the opposite proved to be true when a **Least Bittern** was discovered by Lloyd Bunten in the Cranberry Pond wetlands behind the Price Chopper shopping center. There were no other summer reports of Least Bittern at this site but, not to steal the thunder from the forthcoming fall issue, a fledged juvenile was found here in August indicating potential breeding.



Little Blue Heron by Steve Mirick, 7-20-17, Rochester, NH.

Little Blue Herons continue to be observed with regularity during the summer period with sightings in three counties (Rockingham, Hillsborough, and Strafford). An adult in blue-gray finery was observed at Little River Saltmarsh in North Hampton on June 1, while a mottled individual, transitioning between the white plumage of a juvenile and the all-dark adult plumage was observed at the Lancy Brook wetland in Brookline on June 5. Immature individuals dressed entirely in white were more accessible to birders in July with one lingering in the saltmarsh complex between Pollock Drive and Odiorne Point State Park in Rye from July 15 to at least July 21 (possible resighting on July 29). Another was observed at Pickering Ponds and the adjacent wastewater treatment plant in Rochester beginning on July 20 and persisting into the fall season. Finding a white Little Blue Heron among the multitudes of Snowy Egrets is a worthy pursuit, but one fraught with many pitfalls. We encourage our readers to review the “Answer to the Photo Quiz” by David B. Donsker on page 38 in last year’s summer

edition for great insight into separating small white herons in New Hampshire.

On June 12, a **Black-crowned Night Heron** was detected at Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge in Errol when it called out twice as it flew overhead. This is the second detection at this site in recent years, which is the northernmost known location for this species in the state. A single adult **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was well documented in Greenland between June 15 and July 3. This contrasted sharply with the record-high counts for this species in 2016, primarily comprised of immature birds. A lone **Black Vulture** viewed in Hollis on June 22 was the only individual reported this summer in New Hampshire.



Mississippi Kite chick that fell from the nest in Steve Mirick’s car as rescuers worked to return it to the trees. See the article on page 26. Photo by Steve Bennett, 7-26-17, Newmarket, NH.

An uncommon and localized breeder of riparian corridors and open areas of the Southeast and South Central United States, **Mississippi Kite** continues its extraordinary stint as a breeding species in New Hampshire. With Newmarket remaining the epicenter of its precarious foothold in the state, this species returned to nest for the 10th confirmed successive year. Unfortunately, tragedy struck the nesting kites twice this summer. The first misfortune came on July 13 when the male kite of the nesting pair from Huckins Drive was hit by a car, eventually resulting in his death. The other disaster for the nesting kites came on July 26 when the nestling fell out of its nest some 100 feet up in an oak tree. Discovered on the ground by Steve Mirick, an impressive effort ensued to save the chick, to no avail. You can read about both events in Steve’s article elsewhere in this issue. On a positive note, a new territory of kites was discovered this year in Stratham. Even though no nests were confirmed at this location, it gives hope that our outpost of Mississippi Kites will continue to persist and grow in the years to come.

Bald Eagles continue their meteoric rise in the Granite State as clearly represented by their removal from the New

SUMMER SEASON

Hampshire state list of Threatened and Endangered Wildlife in March, 2017. During a year full of superlatives for the species, Chris Martin, Senior Biologist for New Hampshire Audubon, reports a record-high 59 territorial pairs, a 5% increase from the 56 documented in 2016 and twice as many as we had just six years ago. Furthermore, a record-high 53 pairs of eagles were documented as incubating, up an astonishing 26% in one year from the 42 pairs last year, with yet another record-high 38 successful nests, up 23% from the 31 in 2016. All of this adds up to an impressive record-high 59 young fledged in the state, up 16% from the 51 fledglings counted in 2016. In the post-DDT era, each of these categories established a new high-mark for the state, all of which were documented by countless volunteer observers and photographers.



Sandhill Crane by Debra Powers, 7-12-17, Milton, NH.

There was an outstanding number of summer sightings for Sandhill Crane from various locations around the state including four in Rochester, four in Monroe, two in Nottingham, and singles in both Milton and at Twin Mountain in Carroll. Monroe continues to be the only confirmed breeding site for this species in the state with the pair raising two colts this summer.

Date	#	Location	Observer
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American Bittern

06/01	2	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	D. Aube
06/04	3	Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey	T. Parody, W. Ward
06/07	2	Trask Brook Rd., Newport/Sunapee	D. Jackson
06/13	2	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	C. Nims, S. McCarthy, R. Steber, J. Scott
06/15	2	McDaniels Marsh, Springfield	J. Gamble
06/23	2	North River Pond, Nottingham	J. Carlson
06/30	3	Copps Pond WMA, Tuftonboro	J. McKown
07/28	2	Water St., Lancaster	A. Griffin

Least Bittern

06/04	1	Taylor R. marsh by Sanborn Rd., Hampton Falls	G. Gavutis Jr.
06/10	1	Powwow R., Kingston	S. Heron

Date	#	Location	Observer
06/17	1	World End Pond, Salem	H. Otto
06/22	1	Cranberry Pond wetlands, Rt. 12A, W. Lebanon	L. Bunten
07/04	2	World End Pond, Salem	K. & A. Wilmarth
07/29	2	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth



Least Bittern by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-15-17, Salem, NH.

Great Egret

06/24	56	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/22	54	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/28	1	Bolster Pond, Sullivan	B. Reilly

Snowy Egret

07/17	30	pools south of Odiorne Pt., Rye	S. Mirick
07/21	31	saltmarsh off Pollock Dr., Rye	Z. Cornell
07/24	34	Parsons Creek saltmarsh, Rye	K. & A. Wilmarth
07/30	48	Marsh Road Pond, Rye	S. Bennett

Little Blue Heron

06/01	1	Little River saltmarsh, N. Hampton	D. Czarick
06/05	1	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson
07/15	1	pools south of Odiorne Pt., Rye	L. Kras, B. Griffith, K. Wilmarth, et al.
07/20	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	K. Couture
07/21	1	saltmarsh off Pollock Dr., Rye	Z. Cornell
07/29	1	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/31	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	S. & D. Stoddard, A. Murray

Black-crowned Night-Heron

06/03	1	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	E. Masterson
06/12	1	Umbagog NWR	K. Fenton
06/23	4	Hampton Harbor	Z. Cornell
07/22	9	NH coast	S. Mirick

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron

06/15	1	Sleepy Hollow Dr., Greenland	K. McCormick
07/03	1	Sleepy Hollow Dr., Greenland	M. Watson, K. Wilmarth

Glossy Ibis

06/14	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/11	1	Adams Point WMA, Durham	M. Malby, P. Farr, A. Murray
07/17	3	saltmarsh off Pollock Dr., Rye	J. Maher
07/23	11	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/26	1	Rockingham County Complex, Brentwood	S. Heron
07/26	2	Eel Pond, Rye	Z. Cornell, A. Robbins
07/30	6	Huckleberry Ln., Hampton	C. Michaud
07/30	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray

Black Vulture

06/22	1	Broad St., Hollis	J. Maher
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Mississippi Kite by Debra Powers, 6-30-17, Newmarket, NH.

Mississippi Kite

06/03	2	Huckins Dr., Newmarket	R. Gervais, E. Norton
06/03	3	Sandy Point Rd., Stratham	S. Mirick
06/07	1	Madbury Rd., Durham	S. Hale
06/08	2	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	K. Towler, P. Wood
06/13	1	Follet's Brook WS, Newmarket	P. Moynahan, J. Stevens
07/09	3	Huckins Dr., Newmarket	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters, E. Norton
07/17	1	Depot Rd., Stratham	S. Mirick
07/26	3	Huckins Dr., Newmarket	S. Mirick

Northern Harrier

06/01	1	Copps Pond WMA, Tuftonboro	J. McKown
06/03	1	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. Sheridan
06/07	1	Trask Brook Rd., Newport/Sunapee	D. Jackson
06/09	1	Sophie's Ln., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/15	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	P. Brown, R. Quinn
06/20	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. Sheridan
06/22	1	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
06/25	1	East Inlet, Pittsburg	K. Topping, M. Passmann
06/26	1	River Rd., Dummer	I. MacLeod
07/10	1	pools south of Odiorne Pt., Rye	J. Sparrell, K. Towler

Northern Goshawk

06/01	1	Wildcat Mt. summit, WMNF	A. Burnett
06/04	1	Autumn Ln., E. Kingston	K. Elwell
06/06	1	Pinkham Notch, WMNF	G. Perricone
06/12	1	Lead Mine Rd. at Daniel Ward Rd., Madison	S. Wilcox
06/28	2	Russell-Abbott SF	S. Lemire
07/22	1	Elm Brook Pk., Hopkinton	F. Benham
07/23	1	Pierce Ln., Hollis	P. Cook

Date	#	Location	Observer
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Red-shouldered Hawk

06/04	4	Newton Rd., Plaistow	K. Wilmarth
06/14	1	Nansen Wayside Park, Milan	R. Quinn, P. Brown
06/25	2	Exeter R. by Pickpocket Dam, Exeter	B. Green, S. Heron
07/16	1	Kensan-Devan WS, Marlborough	C. Witko

Virginia Rail

06/02	1	Airport Rd., Swanzey	E. Synnott
06/03	2	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
06/04	2	marsh behind Stella's Italian Kitchen & Market, Lyme	P. Ackerson, B. Taylor
06/06	2	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	L. & P. Charron
06/07	2	Gile Rd. Marsh, Lee	K. Dorsey
06/10	1	Powwow R., Kingston	S. Heron
06/24	2	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	D. Dionne, L. Charron
07/04	6	World End Pond, Salem	S. Bennett, S. Wisley, J. Pettipas
07/12	2	Great Pond, Kingston	S. Heron
07/22	2	Reed's Marsh WMA, Orford	E. Bracey

Sora

06/04	1	Brentwood Mitigation Area	S. Wisley, J. Pettipas
06/06	2	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	L. & P. Charron
06/15	1	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
06/24	1	Geremonty Dr. marsh, Salem	K. Towler, J. Sparrell
06/26	1	Groveton WTP	I. MacLeod
07/18	1	marsh behind Wentworth-Douglass Hospital, Rollinsford	S. Young



Sandhill Cranes by Len Medlock, 7-1-17, Nottingham, NH.

Sandhill Crane

06/11	4	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Powers, P. Stone
06/15	4	Rt. 135, Monroe	J. Cate
06/29	2	Deerfield Rd., Nottingham	S. Crowley
07/01	2	Deerfield Rd., Nottingham	L. Medlock
07/04	1	Rt. 3, Twin Mountain	J. Gutowski, J. Rogier
07/12	1	Milton	J. Ek

American Oystercatcher through Terns

American Oystercatcher put in a nice showing during the month of June with three observations from Rye and the Isles of Shoals. This species has not yet been documented as nesting in New Hampshire, but with individuals continuing to be observed at Lunging Island, including a well-documented family group of five last year, it is likely they are nesting somewhere in the Isles of Shoals. Seven nesting pairs of Piping Plover were documented on Seabrook and Hampton beaches for the second year in a row. Compared to the record-breaking 15 chicks fledged last year, this year's nesting efforts produced five fledged chicks from nine that were hatched, with two and three coming from Hampton and Seabrook beaches respectively. According to NN Fish & Game, this brings the long-term average of fledged chicks to seven per year for the Granite State (1997-2017).



Stilt Sandpiper by Steve Mirick, 7-9-17, Rye, NH.

Information was not available from NH Fish & Game on the Upland Sandpiper breeding season at Pease International Tradeport, the only breeding site in the state. Single **Stilt Sandpipers** found at the pools south of Odiorne Point State Park and at Pickering Ponds in July were noteworthy early fall migrants. The individual observed on July 9 missed tying the mark by one day for the earliest known arrival (July 8, 1976 in Rye from *The Birds of New Hampshire* by Keith and Fox). Other significant shorebird sightings for the summer included a lingering **Dunlin** at the Hampton Salt Marsh Conservation Area on June 1 and single **Short-billed Dowitchers** on the unusual dates of June 10 and 26 representing possible late northbound or even early southbound (non-breeding) migrants.

An impressive summer **Thick-billed Murre** was observed during the first days of June (3-5) between Rye and New

Castle. This is the first summer record in twenty years for this species when an individual was last observed off White and Seavey Islands on July 12, 1997. **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were observed at Hampton Harbor and Rye Harbor State Park for at least the second year in a row. Bonaparte's Gulls were sparse on the coast this summer, as the records reflect.



Least Tern by Debra Powers, 6-2-17, Hampton, NH.

Least Terns doubled their nesting efforts compared to 2016 with a total of four nesting pairs, one at Hampton Beach and three at Seabrook Beach. The nest in Hampton did not fledge any chicks while a total of five chicks were successfully fledged at Seabrook. Farther offshore, the mixed-species tern colony at White and Seavey Islands at the Isles of Shoals experienced a successful year of nesting. According to a report from the biologists working at the Isles of Shoals, a record-high total of 3,210 Common Tern nests were discovered (270 on White Island and 2,940 on Seavey Island), the highest census in the colony's past 20 years. For the state- and federally-endangered Roseate Tern, 92 nests were established on Seavey Island by June 20, the peak of the nesting period, and 97 were documented by season's end. Arctic Terns rounded out the cast of nesting terns with only one nest on White and another on Seavey Island.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
American Oystercatcher			
06/03	5	Concord Point, Rye	S. Mirick
06/12	1	Lunging Island, Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick, NHAFT
06/17	2	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	L. Burford
Black-bellied Plover			
06/01	10	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Wisley, D. Lipsey
06/03	22	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
06/07	6	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	M. Veranth
07/22	1	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/29	7	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/30	6	Hampton Harbor	K.& A. Wilmarth

SUMMER SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
Semipalmated Plover			
06/04	5	Rye Harbor SP	R., C. & B. Baker
06/12	1	pools south of Odiorne Pt., Rye	J. MacQueen
07/09	2	pools south of Odiorne Pt., Rye	S.& J. Mirick, et al.
07/10	18	NH coast	J. Maher
07/25	124	Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/27	115	Jenness/Sawyers Beach, Rye	J. Sparrell
07/28	150	Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/29	195	NH coast	S. Mirick



Piping Plovers by Debra Powers, 7-4-17, Hampton Beach SP, NH.

Piping Plover

06/04	5	Hampton Beach SP	S. Mirick
07/01	7	Hampton Beach	S. Mirick
07/01	8	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
07/09	6	Seabrook Beach	S.& J. Mirick, M. Resch
07/22	1	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick

Upland Sandpiper

06/14	3	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington	M. Suomala, et al.
07/31	2	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, SE end, Portsmouth	S. Wrisley, S. Bennett

Whimbrel

07/11	1	Jenness/Sawyers Beach, Rye	S. Mirick
07/19	3	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/30	2	Hampton Harbor	K.& A. Wilmarth

Ruddy Turnstone

06/03	5	Lunging Island, Isles of Shoals	E. Masterson
07/29	2	Hampton Harbor inlet, s. jetty	K. Towler, J. Sparrell, K. Wilmarth



Stilt Sandpiper by Alan Murray, 7-20-17, Rochester WTP, NH.

Date	#	Location	Observer
Stilt Sandpiper			
07/09	1	pools south of Odiorne Pt., Rye	M. Resch, L. McKillop, et al.
07/15	1	pools s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye	S. Wrisley, S. Bennett
07/20	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray, S.& D. Stoddard

Sanderling

07/22	5	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/26	4	Jenness/Sawyers Beach, Rye	A. Robbins, Z. Cornell
07/27	11	Jenness/Sawyers Beach, Rye	J. Sparrell
07/29	5	NH coast	S. Mirick

Dunlin

06/01	1	Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton	S. Mirick
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Least Sandpiper

06/04	1	Exeter WTP	J. Price
07/04	6	World End Pond, Salem	S. Bennett, S. Wrisley, J. Pettipas
07/06	80	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/09	50	pools s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye	S.& J. Mirick, et al.
07/15	22	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson
07/21	14	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	K. Couture
07/24	80	Rochester WTP	S. Stoddard
07/27	132	Rochester WTP	J. Pietrzak
07/29	4	Charlestown WTP	D. Jackson

White-rumped Sandpiper

06/03	1	Exeter WTP	P. Miliotis
07/23	1	Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/28	2	Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/29	1	Lubberland Creek Preserve, Newmarket	K. Dorsey
07/29	4	NH coast	S. Mirick, K. Wilmarth
07/30	6	Hampton Harbor	K. & A. Wilmarth

Pectoral Sandpiper

07/23	3	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	P. Moynahan, N. Houlihan
07/28	3	Central Rd., Rye	P. Moynahan, N. Houlihan
07/30	2	Hampton Harbor	K.& A. Wilmarth

Semipalmated Sandpiper

06/10	10	pools south of Odiorne Pt., Rye	S. Mirick
06/18	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	T. Rogers, R. Yuen
07/04	50	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/15	60	Hampton Harbor	K. Wilmarth
07/22	386	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/25	700	Hampton Salt Marsh CA, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/30	300	Hampton Harbor	K. & A. Wilmarth

Peep sp.

07/22	766	NH coast	S. Mirick
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Short-billed Dowitcher

06/10	1	pools south of Odiorne Pt., Rye	S. Mirick
06/26	1	Rye Harbor	D. Hudgins
07/02	2	saltmarsh s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye	S. Mirick
07/04	70	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/17	40	saltmarsh off Pollock Dr., Rye	J. Maher
07/29	10	NH coast	K. Wilmarth

SUMMER SEASON

Date # Location Observer

Solitary Sandpiper

07/15 2 Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline C. McPherson
 07/16 1 Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem P. Hunt, et al.
 07/16 5 Exeter WTP P. Miliotis
 07/20 6 Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline C. Sheridan

Greater Yellowlegs

07/03 1 Cherry Pond, Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson
 K. Fleming, M. Hoffman
 07/30 9 Huckleberry Ln., Hampton C. Michaud, G. Clucas

Willet

06/22 7 Little Jacks restaurant, Rt. 1A, Hampton C. Nims
 07/01 5 saltmarsh off Pollock Dr., Rye A. Murray
 07/22 10 NH coast S. Mirick

Lesser Yellowlegs

06/15 1 NH coast J. Maher
 07/06 2 Meadow Pond, Hampton H. Bauer
 07/07 5 Meadow Pond, Hampton H. Bauer
 07/09 11 NH coast S. Mirick
 07/15 20 Hampton Harbor K. Wilmarth
 07/22 14 NH coast S. Mirick
 07/26 7 Meadow Pond, Hampton H. Bauer
 07/28 8 NH coast P. Moynahan, N. Houlihan

jaeger sp.

07/21 1 Jeffrey's Ledge S. Lemire

Thick-billed Murre

06/03 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Wrisley, J. Pettipas
 06/04 1 Fort Stark, New Castle S. Mirick
 06/05 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye B. Friedrichs, M. Todd,
 H. Forbes, D. Clark

Black Guillemot

06/03 6 Star Island, Isles of Shoals E. Masterson
 06/05 2 Odiorne Point SP, Rye
 B. Friedrichs, M. Todd, H. Forbes
 06/12 4 offshore waters J. Maher
 07/16 5 offshore waters J. Price
 07/26 2 Rye Harbor C.& T. Belejack

Bonaparte's Gull

06/10 2 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Mirick
 06/25 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye L. Charron
 07/15 1 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick, K. Wilmarth
 07/20 2 Rt. 1A, second pullout s. of Odiorne Pt., Rye
 M. Watson
 07/22 9 NH coast S. Mirick
 07/24 4 Rt. 1A pullout opposite stone angel, Rye L. McKillop
 07/26 4 Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook P. Paul
 07/29 5 Seabrook Beach J. Lambert
 07/29 12 NH coast S. Mirick

Laughing Gull

06/16 6 Hampton Harbor restroom, Rt. 1A, Seabrook
 S. Mulhall
 06/23 1 offshore waters, Rye J. Pietrzak, A. Winters
 07/11 2 Jenness/Sawyers Beach, Rye S. Mirick
 07/24 1 Hampton Beach SP L. McKillop
 07/31 1 Odiorne Point SP, Rye M. Wilson

Date # Location Observer

Lesser Black-backed Gull

06/16 1 Hampton Harbor restroom, Rt. 1A, Seabrook
 S. Mulhall
 07/11 2 Jenness/Sawyers Beach, Rye S. Mirick
 07/13 1 Rye Harbor SP J. Shenot
 07/15 1 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick, K. Wilmarth



Lesser Black-backed Gull by Steve Mirick, 7-11-17, Jenness Beach, Rye, NH.

Great Black-backed Gull

07/24 2 Weir's Beach, Laconia J. Wojtanowski

Least Tern

06/02 2 Hampton Beach SP J. Kelly
 06/17 3 Seabrook Beach S. Mirick
 06/17 4 Hampton Harbor flats, Seabrook K. Wilmarth
 07/01 3 Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton S. Mirick
 07/01 3 Seabrook Beach S. Mirick
 07/09 5 Seabrook Beach M. Resch
 07/22 12 NH coast S. Mirick
 07/29 12 Seabrook Beach J. Sparrell, K. Towler

Black Tern

07/09 1 White Is., Isles of Shoals B. Griffith



Roseate Tern by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-17-17, Hampton Harbor, NH.

Roseate Tern

06/10 5 Odiorne Point SP, Rye S. Mirick
 06/24 4 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick
 07/09 12 inland of Isles of Shoals B. Griffith

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/29	3	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/30	6	Hampton Harbor	K. & A. Wilmarth

Common Tern

06/10	225	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
06/22	1	Squam Lake	C. Boyd
06/23	300	offshore waters, Rye	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters, L. McKillop
06/24	200	dunes at Rt. 1A bridge, Hampton Harbor	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters

Arctic Tern

06/03	1	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	E. Masterson
07/09	2	White & Seavey Islands, Isles of Shoals	B. Griffith

Large tern sp.

07/09	2	Prescott Park docks, Portsmouth	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters
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Cuckoos through Horned Larks

Despite an apparent increase in recent years across the southern portion of the state, **Eastern Screech-Owl** was only reported twice this summer. Included in this pair of reports was an exceptional and convincing report from Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest in Woodstock where a researcher reported seeing a small gray owl with ear tufts on June 27. This visual detection came several days after other researchers at the forest heard one calling in the night (audio detection was not submitted to eBird). This likely represents the northern most detection of this small owl in New Hampshire in recent years. Elsewhere, an intriguing, yet unconfirmed report of a Long-eared Owl came out of Antrim on June 23. This species is a rare resident in the state with only a few confirmed detections over the last 50 years. Observers should take great caution in reporting this species as even common owl species, particularly juveniles, can produce an array of confusing sounds.



A Common Nighthawk stretching its wing on its daytime perch. This bird was seen roosting at Pickering Ponds but unfortunately it did not stay. Photo by Debra Powers, 6-1-17, Rochester, NH.

Common Nighthawks experienced a poor year for nesting with only one confirmed nest in the state, according to NH Audubon's Project Nighthawk. This comes on the heels of five confirmed nests in 2016. The cool weather in late May and the rainy conditions in June may have affected nesting. The one bright spot, according to Project Nighthawk Coordinator, Rebecca Suomala, was in the Ossipee Pine Barrens (an area that also includes Freedom, Tamworth, and Madison). In addition to the one confirmed nest in Tamworth, volunteers tallied 20 nighthawks during a coordinated watch on July 29, a breeding season record for the Project. Elsewhere numbers were low, especially in Concord where there was a record low of 7-8 nighthawks during the summer.

Peregrine Falcon, once classified as federally endangered and currently listed as state-threatened, continues to grow at a steady but gradual pace in the Granite State. NH Audubon Biologist Chris Martin and volunteers confirmed a state record-high of 24 occupied territories. This is a welcomed increase from the 21 territories observed in 2016 and the previous high of 23 territories in 2014. According to Chris, other markers of breeding success for the falcons were not as strong as hoped. Confirmed incubation of eggs occurred in 19 of the state's 24 pairs (79%), with only 12 of these (63% of incubating pairs, 50% of territorial pairs) successfully fledging at least one young. The 12 successful nests were down from the state-record high of 14 nests just last year. From these nests, a total of 31 young fledged in 2017, an average of 1.63 young fledged per nesting pair, which is just off the state's 37-year average of 1.65 young fledged per nesting pair. For the first time in the post-DDT era in New Hampshire, 30 or more young have fledged each year for four consecutive seasons. With numbers like that it has never been easier to view this impressive raptor.

An uncommon and localized summer denizen of the North Country, Olive-sided Flycatcher is undergoing a slow retraction from historic breeding sites in the southern part of the state. Nevertheless, birders across New Hampshire should be on the lookout for this wonderfully large and stately flycatcher during the early part of the summer season. They are one of New Hampshire's last northbound migrants in the spring passing through as late as the first part of June. Because this late migration can muddy the waters in determining the breeding status from an early June sighting, it is recommended to revisit a site multiple times during the summer to see if earlier detected individuals persist. A prime example of this was the pair that was observed on several occasions at the McDaniels Marsh Wildlife Management Area in Springfield over the course of the summer. Moving from northern *Contopus* flycatchers to southern *Empidonax*

SUMMER SEASON

flycatchers, two **Acadian Flycatchers** found their way north into New Hampshire for the season and were discovered at Meadow Pond on June 1 and Oyster River Forest on July 2. Willow Flycatchers are most common in the southern part of the state but there were a few sightings in Coos County this summer which are included in the listings below.

The breeding population of Fish Crows in the state looks to be continuing its upward trend, particularly in some of the inland river valleys. With late spring sightings around Hinsdale and Keene, it is only a matter of time before new outposts are colonized and thriving during the breeding season. This summer, increasing numbers were reported at the Concord Airport culminating in a total of 16 observed on July 16, whereas the state's season-high was 22 individuals on July 29 at World End Pond in Salem. Because fledglings of the ever-present and ubiquitous American Crow produce begging vocalizations like that of Fish Crow, we encourage birders to observe caution when reporting Fish Crows at new locations and if possible, to record any vocalizations that were heard. An extremely localized breeder with nearly all contemporary breeding records coming from airports, **Horned Larks** were only reported on three occasions this summer from expected haunts.

Date # Location Observer

Yellow-billed Cuckoo

06/11	2	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	S. Mirick
06/12	2	Kensan-Devan WS, Marlborough	C. Witko
06/20	5	Powwow R. by Hilldale Ave., S. Hampton	K. Wilmarth
07/04	1	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. Sheridan
07/04	2	South Rd., E. Kingston	D. Finch
07/04	2	Cowper Rd., Wolfeboro	D. Doherty
07/24	2	Camp Brookwoods Rd., Alton	P. Brown
07/31	1	Beaver Brook Assn., Hollis	C. Sheridan



Black-billed Cuckoo by Leo McKillop, 6-19-17, Pickering Ponds, Rochester, NH.

Black-billed Cuckoo

06/01	2	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray
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<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
06/11	3	South Rd., E. Kingston	D. Finch
06/13	2	Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham	P. Miliotis
06/22	2	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray
07/08	2	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook River, Pittsfield	A. Robbins
07/15	1	Kensan-Devan WS, Marlborough	P. Brown, NHAFT

Eastern Screech-Owl

06/27	1	Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, Woodstock	D. Aube
07/01	1	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	A. Murray

Northern Saw-whet Owl

06/01	1	Mollidgewock Rd., Errol	L.& P. Charron, D. Dionne
06/29	1	Pine St., Swanzey	H. Elliott
07/10	1	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron

Common Nighthawk

06/01	2	Autumn Ln., E. Kingston	K. Elwell
06/04	3	South Rd., E. Kingston	D. Finch
06/14	2	Keene State College	B. Thelen, et al.
06/18	3	Great Bay NWR, Newington	R. Hussey
07/03	4	West Branch Pine Barrens, Madison	S. Lee
07/08	3	Henniker St. lot at Chenell Dr., Concord	R. Suomala
07/20	6	Ossipee Pine Barrens	R. Quinn, L. Hart
07/20	11	Depot Rd., Tamworth	R. Suomala, et al.
07/21	4	South St., Bow	R. Quinn

Eastern Whip-poor-will

06/07	3	Parker Mt., Strafford	S. Young
06/17	3	USFWS Karner Blue easement, Concord	K. Dorsey, et al.
06/28	6	Depot Rd., Tamworth	S. Lee
07/03	5	West Branch Pine Barrens, Madison	S. Lee
07/07	8	Hertzka Dr./Northern Blvd., Amherst	C. Sheridan
07/14	8	Freedom Town Forest	R. Steber, J. Scott, C. Nims
07/20	6	Depot Rd., Tamworth	R. Suomala, C. Nims

Chimney Swift

06/02	22	downtown Nashua	M. Goldthwait, D. Kibbe
06/03	30	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth, Seacoast CFT
07/10	80	Durgin Block parking garage, Concord	R. Quinn
07/21	120	Washington St., Concord	E. Runnells, M. Schrimpf
07/22	24	Killeen St., Walpole	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters
07/25	35	downtown Nashua	C. Sheridan
07/31	10	Contoocook Village, Hopkinton	R. Quinn

Red-headed Woodpecker

06/08	1	Rt. 104, Danbury	W. Palmeira
07/16	1	Dame Rd. at Durham Point Rd., Durham	D. Chick
07/16	1	Russell-Abbott SF, Mason/Wilton	S. Lemire

Black-backed Woodpecker

06/01	1	Mollidgewock SP, Errol	E. Lipton, J. Eckerson
06/04	1	Little Cherry Pond Trail, Jefferson	D. Govatski, S. Mirick
06/08	1	East Inlet, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen
06/25	1	Hancock Loop Trail, WMNF	A. Burnett
06/28	1	Big Brook Bog, Pittsburg	B.& J. Lafley
07/03	2	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	L. Charron
07/19	1	Garfield Pond, WMNF	J. MacQueen
07/29	1	Zealand Mt., WMNF	C. Franklin
07/30	1	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	L.& P. Charron, D. Dionne

SUMMER SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/31	1	Cherry Pond, Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson	E. Bracey, B. Allison
07/31	1	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	P. Paul

American Kestrel

06/03	2	Conner Farm WMA, Exeter	D. Tucker, A. Kallenbach
06/08	2	Loudon Ridge Rd. at Blake Rd., Loudon	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
06/16	2	Concord Airport	S. McCarthy, C. Nims
06/25	2	Hertzka Dr./Northern Blvd., Amherst	C. Sheridan
07/07	2	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
07/26	3	West Side Rd., Conway	R. Steber
07/28	3	River Rd., Stratham	S. Mirick
07/30	2	Rt. 63, Westmoreland	R. Burnett



Merlin by Debra LaValley, 7-15-17, Woodlawn Cemetery, Penacook, NH.

Merlin

06/08	1	Old Cherry Mt. Rd., Carroll/Jefferson	C. Nims, et al.
06/10	2	Deer Mountain SP, Pittsburg	C. Ross
06/21	3	Greenough Pond Rd., Errol	L. & P. Charron
07/08	2	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	L. Charron
07/15	2	Lake Frances SP, Pittsburg	J. Neskey
07/15	1	Woodlawn Cemetery, Penacook	D. LaValley
07/16	5	Lake Sunapee Country Club, New London	J. Gamble
07/20	3	Old W. Ossipee Rd., Freedom	A. Robbins
07/22	2	Pleasant L., New London	L. McElvany
07/24	2	Tanger Outlets, Tilton	P. Fernandes

Peregrine Falcon

06/29	2	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
07/02	3	Rattlesnake Mt., Rumney	D. Bates
07/08	3	Main St., Lancaster	S. Heinrich, G. Dupont

Olive-sided Flycatcher

06/01	2	Mollidgewock SP, Errol	E. Lipton, J. Eckerson
06/03	1	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson
06/04	2	Goodhue Hill, Antrim	H. Walters
06/06	4	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/08	1	McDaniels Marsh, Springfield	D. Jackson
06/25	2	Church Pond Bog, Albany/Livermore	N. Dorian
07/21	2	McDaniels Marsh, Springfield	J. Gamble

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

06/01	22	Wildcat Ridge & Carter-Moriah Trails, WMNF	A. Burnett
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Date	#	Location	Observer
06/02	6	Mollidgewock Rd., Errol	E. Lipton, J. Eckerson
06/02	11	Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, Woodstock	S. Heinrich
06/05	11	East Inlet, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/11	7	York Pond, Berlin	J. Maher
06/11	5	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	D. Lovitch, et al.
07/14	9	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	M. Lyman

Acadian Flycatcher

06/01	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/02	1	Oyster R. Forest, Durham	K. Dorsey

Alder Flycatcher

06/01	6	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook River, Pittsfield	A. Robbins
06/04	6	Watts WS, Effingham	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/04	9	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	L. & P. Charron, D. Dionne
06/06	13	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/25	1	Kensan-Devan WS, Marlborough	C. Witko

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher

07/08	1	Main Rd., Chatham	B. Knowles
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Yellow-throated Vireo

06/04	4	Powwow R. by Hilldale Ave., S. Hampton	K. Wilmarth
06/11	4	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	S. Mirick
06/20	9	Powwow R. by Hilldale Ave., S. Hampton	K. Wilmarth

Philadelphia Vireo

06/03	2	Signal Ridge Trail, Livermore	O. DaRugna, S. Brenner
06/04	1	Mink Brook Nature Preserve, Hanover	S. McInnis
06/05	1	St. Gaudens NHS, Cornish	S. McInnis
06/10	2	Rt. 113, Chatham	S. Riffe
06/17	2	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	A. Abelman, S. Riffe, M. Seaman
06/17	4	Upper Magalloway R., Wentworths Location	A. Abelman, S. Riffe, M. Seaman
07/09	1	Magalloway R. Trail, Umbagog NWR, Wentworths Location	G. Dupont, S. Heinrich



Juvenile Gray Jay by Steve Mirick, 7-4-17, Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF, NH.

Gray Jay

06/11	5	East Inlet, Pittsburg	C. Ross
06/13	6	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	S. McCarthy, C. Nims, R. Steber, J. Scott
06/14	4	Day Rd., Perry Stream, Pittsburg	P. Brown, R. Quinn

SUMMER SEASON

Date # Location Observer

Gray Jay (con't)

06/25 3 Mollidgewock Rd., Errol D.& G. Dionne
 07/17 3 Hancock Loop Trail, Lincoln
 C. Harper, S. Heinrich, E. Filiberti
 07/26 3 Guyot Shelter, WMNF G. Burruss

Fish Crow

06/06 2 West River Rd., Hooksett S. Mirick
 06/28 9 Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland B. Baker
 07/02 1 Antioch Univ. New England, Keene E. Synnott
 07/14 16 Concord Airport N. Dorian, M. McCarthy
 07/24 3 Weir's Beach, Laconia J. Wojtanowski
 07/26 1 Squam Lakes Natural Science Ctr., Holderness
 J. Wojtanowski
 07/27 3 Daniel Webster Hwy., Merrimack M. Timmerman
 07/29 22 World End Pond, Salem K. Wilmarth

Horned Lark

06/01 1 Concord Airport N. Dorian, M. McCarthy
 06/22 1 Concord Airport N. Dorian
 07/02 1 Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington S. Mirick

Swallows through Pipits



Purple Martins by Steve Mirick, 6-10-17, at the colony in Seabrook, NH.

For Purple Martins, 2017 was a year of contrast. The month of May, with its extended periods of cold and wet weather, left ten adult martins from the Seabrook colony dead in their boxes due to starvation and exposure to the elements. The colonies in Hampton and Rye remained unoccupied in early June. This one-two punch sparked concern that the overall Seacoast population, and the overall state population, would suffer dramatically in 2017. Despite all the bad news and early mortality, the Seacoast martins rallied and eventually had a successful season. Thanks to an additional half dozen gourds, the Seabrook colony housed 18 pairs of martins, producing 61 young. By the end of June, single pairs had finally returned to Hampton and Rye, producing two and three chicks respectively. Conversely, the Lakes Region, a former stronghold for this species, no longer

teems with martins. In 2017, only a single pair remained in Wakefield after an apparent abandonment of the Fun Spot colony. As a result, the total population of nesting martins in the state resides almost entirely within the Seacoast.

Swallows of several species continue to decline in both New Hampshire and the Northeast. Increasingly strong evidence suggests that broad-scale changes in insect populations, likely attributed to pesticide use and climate change, is severely impacting these and other aerial insectivores. Two of our more rapidly declining species are Bank and Cliff Swallows, the latter of which was newly listed as state-threatened in 2017. Because conservation efforts for these species are heavily dependent upon colony data, observers are encouraged to locate and report nesting sites to eBird. Highlights for these species from this season include a colony of Bank Swallows observed in Merrimack on June 21 and a large colony of Cliff Swallows on June 14 in Pittsburg, the current stronghold for this species in the state.



An American Pipit sitting on a sign in the fragile alpine area of Mt. Washington on a foggy morning, by Rebecca Suomala, 6-25-17.

On June 26, a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** made an appearance at a private residence in Marlow. This represents the first-ever summer detection of this species for the southwestern corner of the state. A Bicknell's Thrush on Mt. Cardigan is one of only two sightings at this location since 1990. American Pipit continues to be found above timberline atop Mount Washington during the months of June and July and this year a season-high count of six was observed from the Mount Washington Auto Road on July 16.

Date # Location Observer

Northern Rough-winged Swallow

06/01 6 Pickering Ponds, Rochester A. Murray
 06/03 4 Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline C. Sheridan
 06/06 7 Jordan's Furniture, DW Hwy., Nashua C. Nims
 07/09 14 Nashua R. at Merrimack R., Nashua C. Sheridan
 07/09 2 Airport Marsh, Whitefield S. Heron, D. Jackson
 07/17 13 Elm Brook Pk., Hopkinton R. Quinn
 07/20 18 Pickering Ponds, Rochester D. Hubbard
 07/28 10 Home Depot, Rt. 12A, Lebanon E. Bracey, B. Marvil

Date	#	Location	Observer
Purple Martin			
06/10	20	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	S. Mirick
06/14	3	Fort Constitution, New Castle	M. Suomala, et al.
06/24	20	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	S. Mirick
06/27	2	South Rd., Kensington	G. Gavutis Jr.
07/23	3	Great East L., Wakefield	K. Wilmarth
07/27	12	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	J. Maher
07/30	2	Beaver Dam Rd., Kensington	G. Gavutis Jr.



Purple Martin by Kyle Wilmarth, 7-2-17, Great East Lake, Wakefield, NH.

Tree Swallow

07/10	130	NH coast	J. Maher
07/18	120	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray
07/22	100	Hampton River Marina	J. Maher
07/22	1500	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/26	250	Henry's Pool, Rt. 101E, Hampton	A. Robbins, Z. Cornell
07/31	100	Elm Brook Pk., Hopkinton	R. Quinn

Bank Swallow

06/02	22	Upper Suncook Lake, Barnstead	J. Carlson
06/21	30	Thornton's Ferry, Merrimack	D. Currier, A. Kallenback
06/28	10	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	T. Guida, D. Aube
07/03	10	Tullando Farm fields, Orford	B. Hancock
07/17	17	Elm Brook Pk., Hopkinton	R. Quinn
07/23	36	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray

Barn Swallow

06/02	25	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
06/23	50	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters
07/27	85	NH coast	J. Maher
07/31	30	Elm Brook Pk., Hopkinton	R. Quinn

Cliff Swallow

06/06	30	Tabor Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/08	6	Washington St. Mills, Dover	S. Heron
06/10	4	Fort Constitution, New Castle	A. Murray
06/12	7	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
06/14	120	Tabor Rd., Pittsburg	P. Brown, R. Quinn, NHAFT
06/15	16	Smith R. Meadows, Danbury	R. Quinn
06/15	8	Burleigh Farm, Holderness	P. Hunt
06/15	6	Littlemore Farm, Tamworth	P. Hunt
06/15	7	Steele Farm, Wonalancet	P. Hunt

Date	#	Location	Observer
06/22	4	Colby Rd. farm, Whitefield	P. Hunt
06/29	15	Tabor Rd., Pittsburg	J.&B. Lafley



Boreal Chickadee by Steve Mirick, 7-4-17, Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF, NH.

Boreal Chickadee

06/01	3	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	J. Eckerson, E. Lipton
06/01	11	Wildcat Ridge & Carter-Moriah Trails, WMNF	A. Burnett
06/30	4	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters, L. McKillop
07/05	3	Mt. Osceola Trail, Livermore	P. Bradley
07/17	3	Hancock Loop Trail, Lincoln	C. Harper, S. Heinrich, E. Filiberti
07/17	3	Mt. Liberty, Lincoln	J. Koon
07/26	4	Guyot Shelter, WMNF	G. Burruss
07/30	4	Mt. Jackson and Mt. Webster	A. Burnett
07/30	2	Doublehead Mt., Jackson	B. Pendleton



Marsh Wren by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-3-17, Salem, NH.

Marsh Wren

06/03	6	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth
06/04	6	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	L.& P. Charron, D. Dionne
06/15	2	Hinsdale Setbacks	R.& A. Burnett
06/18	6	Exeter WTP	J. Price
06/24	3	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	L. Charron, D. Dionne
07/04	3	Chapmans Landing, Stratham	D. Moulton
07/15	10	World End Pond, Salem	K. Wilmarth, J. Maher

SUMMER SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer	Date	#	Location	Observer
Carolina Wren				Brown Thrasher			
07/21	5	Silver Doe Ln., Merrimack	C. Wennerth	06/01	2	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	D. Aube
07/25	5	Marlboro St., Keene	T. Parody	06/09	3	Freedom Town Forest	G.& A. Robbins
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher				06/11	3	West Locke Rd., Concord	D. Currier, K. McKibben, S. Wrisley
06/07	3	Airport Rd., Swanzey	K. Bergman	06/11	1	East Inlet, Pittsburg	C. Ross
06/20	6	Powwow R. by Hilldale Ave., S. Hampton	K. Wilmarth	06/15	3	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard
07/02	3	West Foss Farm, Durham	K. Dorsey	06/27	4	Concord Airport	N. Dorian
07/10	3	Long Hill Rd. Pond, Hollis	S. Wrisley	07/03	4	Fire Ln. 14, Barnstead	E. Pilotte
07/21	4	Hinsdale Setbacks	M. Morales	07/05	3	Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey	T. Parody
07/23	6	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray	07/21	3	Elm Brook Pk., Hopkinton	R. Quinn
07/31	3	Woodridge Park, Durham	K. Dorsey				
Ruby-crowned Kinglet							
06/01	11	Wildcat Ridge & Carter-Moriah Trails, WMNF	A. Burnett				
06/01	8	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	J. Eckerson, E. Lipton				
06/05	10	East Inlet, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet				
06/26	1	W. Shore Rd., Marlow	C. Edge				
07/04	6	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	D.& G. Dionne, L. Charron				
Veery							
06/11	17	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	S. Mirick				
06/20	16	Powwow R. by Hilldale Ave., S. Hampton	K. Wilmarth				
07/01	14	Lake Massabesic, Manchester	E. Pilotte				
07/02	10	Loveren Mill Cedar Swamp	T. Parody, W. Ward				
Bicknell's Thrush							
06/01	21	Wildcat Ridge & Carter-Moriah Trails, WMNF	A. Burnett				
06/04	6	Mt. Lincoln, Franconia	S. Heinrich				
06/10	15	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	D. Lovitch, et al.				
06/12	5	Dixville Peak	D.& G. Dionne				
06/13	4	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	L.& P. Charron				
06/15	9	Cannon Mt., Franconia	J. Houle				
06/18	2	Mt. Moosilauke	A. Burnett				
07/08	1	Mt. Cardigan, Orange	C. Caron				
07/14	7	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	M. Lyman				
07/17	5	Hancock Loop Trail, Lincoln	C. Harper, S. Heinrich, E. Filiberti				
07/20	6	Carriage Rd., Mt. Moosilauke	A. Burnett				
Swainson's Thrush							
06/01	1	Church St. water tower parking lot, Hampton	S. Mirick				
06/04	6	Sugarloaf Trail, WMNF	L. Gooch				
06/05	1	Moody Park, Claremont	I. Denzer				
06/07	1	Joe English Conservation Land, Amherst	J. Maher				
06/08	16	East Inlet, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen				
06/10	2	Mink Brook Nature Preserve, Hanover	A. Sun				
07/02	15	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	V.& R. Stoll				
07/08	18	Imp Trail, Martins Location	W. Sweet				
07/08	11	Mt. Cardigan, Orange	C. Caron				
07/14	20	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	M. Vernon				
07/15	18	Mt. Moosilauke, Benton	A. Rapp				
07/16	17	Crawford Path, Beans Grant	C. Nims				
07/22	10	Mt. Chocorua, Albany	S. Wilson				



American Pipit by Leo McKillop, 7-16-17, Mt. Washington, NH.

American Pipit

06/10	3	Alpine Garden Trail, Mt. Washington	M. Nation
06/17	4	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	A. Abelman, S. Riffe, M. Seaman
07/15	2	Caps Ridge & Sphinx Trails, T&M Purchase	S. Karkuff
07/16	6	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	L. McKillop

Warblers

On June 1, a female **Golden-winged Warbler** was discovered and photographed at Odiorne Point State Park as it lingered with a mixed flock of Black-capped Chickadees and other warblers. This beautiful warbler is a stunning addition to North America's avifauna and was once a regular breeder in New Hampshire. As highlighted in last year's summer issue, there are many conservation threats listed for this species, including hybridization with the closely related Blue-winged Warbler. New evidence, however, has shown that Golden-winged Warblers are perhaps even more closely related to Blue-winged Warblers than we initially thought (99.97% alike) and the fundamental difference

between the two is simply their plumage. Researchers from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Cornell University's Department of Biological Statistics and Computational Biology, the University of California at Riverside, and Environment and Climate Change Canada have shown that genetic differences between these two species are found in just six regions (or .03 percent) of their entire genomes with one region controlling throat coloration and another body color.



Golden-winged Warbler by Steve Mirick, 6-1-17, Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye, NH.

This evidence raises many questions regarding the conservation efforts of this species and the Blue-winged/Golden-winged complex moving forward. Hybridization between these species has been going on long before the colonization of the Americas and human-caused interactions. Nevertheless, it is always fascinating to observe the hybrid offspring of Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers, and on June 14, a **Lawrence's Warbler**, the recessive form of hybrid offspring, was captured and banded in Rollinsford by Erica Holm, a graduate student working with Matt Tarr (see the Field Notes).



Cape May Warbler caught in a mist net. Photo by Erica Holm, 7-21-17, Rochester, NH.

On July 21, an unexpected female **Cape May Warbler** was caught in Matt and Erica's mist-net banding operation from

a clear cut in Rochester. Captured well south of its breeding range in the state, this individual was clearly a fall migrant that likely departed its breeding grounds early, possibly due to the cold and wet conditions that persisted this spring into the summer (see the Field Notes for more). On July 6, a **Wilson's Warbler**, a rare breeder in the northernmost part of the state, made a highly unexpected appearance in Wilmont near the Danbury line, heard singing during the entirety of a three-minute Breeding Bird Survey stop.

Cerulean Warblers failed to be confirmed in New Hampshire during the summer of 2017. Several heard-only reports were submitted to eBird during this period, but none were confirmed with an actual sighting or photograph, including one in late June from the campground at Pawtuckaway State Park, a former hotspot for this species. Cerulean Warblers are shockingly difficult to identify by voice alone, particularly at the fringes of their range. In the southern portions of New Hampshire and nearby states, Black-throated Blue Warblers often sing a sped-up song that is extremely similar to that of a Cerulean. NH Audubon Biologist Pam Hunt and this author have experienced this phenomenon first hand in the field. With the addition of Cerulean Warbler to the threatened category in the recent revision of New Hampshire's Threatened and Endangered Species List, it is critical to confirm any suspected Cerulean Warblers with a sighting, if not a photograph.

Date # Location Observer

Louisiana Waterthrush

06/04	1	Dahl WS, Conway	C. Nims, S. McCarthy
06/09	2	St. Gaudens NHS, Cornish	K. Jones
06/11	2	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	S. Mirick
06/14	2	Woodward Rd., Westmoreland	A. Burnett
06/22	1	Saco R. near River Rd., N. Conway	C. Caron
07/01	3	Lakeview Dr., Strafford	S. Young

Northern Waterthrush

06/01	4	Scott Bog, Pittsburg	B. Beehler
06/03	4	10-mile survey, Lyman	S. Turner
06/06	15	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/12	4	Kensan-Devan WS, Marlborough	C. Witko
07/02	10	Loveren Mill Cedar Swamp	T. Parody, W. Ward

Golden-winged Warbler

06/01	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
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Blue-winged Warbler

06/04	2	Doe Farm, Durham	K. Dorsey
06/07	2	Branch Hill Farm field, Milton	J. McKown
06/17	1	Kimball Rd., Kensington	K. Wilmarth
06/17	3	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	K. Couture
07/08	4	Oyster River Forest, Durham	K. Dorsey

Lawrence's Warbler (Blue-winged x Golden-winged)

06/14	1	Rollinsford	E. Holm, M. Tarr
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SUMMER SEASON

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
Mourning Warbler							
06/01	3	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	J. Eckerson, E. Lipton	06/01	10	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	J. Eckerson, E. Lipton
06/01	2	Dorchester Rd., Lyme	P. Ackerson	06/04	14	Cannon Mt, Franconia	B. Friedrichs, M. Todd, H. Forbes
06/04	1	Church St. water tower parking lot, Hampton	S. Mirick	06/04	15	Mt. Lincoln, Franconia	S. Heinrich
06/06	2	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet	06/10	13	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	S. Riffe
06/09	3	Day Rd., Perry Stream, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet	06/15	15	Franconia Ridge Trail, Lincoln	B. DeGregorio, V. Buxton
06/10	1	Base Station Rd., Crawfords Purchase	J. Scott, C. Nims, et al.	06/25	16	Hancock Loop Trail, WMNF	A. Burnett
06/14	2	Cherry Pond, Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson	D. Govatski	06/29	15	Mt. Moosilauke, Benton	J. MacQueen
06/24	2	Gale River Road, Bethlehem	N. Mitiguy	06/30	16	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters, L. McKillop
07/17	2	Mud Pond, Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters, L. McKillop	07/31	15	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	P. Paul
Cape May Warbler							
06/06	1	Pinkham Notch, WMNF	G. Perricone	06/11	10	Kensan-Devan WS, Marlborough	C. Witko
06/12	1	R-F Dr., Shelburne	R. & K. Horn	07/08	11	Imp Trail, Martins Location	W. Sweet
06/15	2	Franconia Ridge Trail, Lincoln	B. DeGregorio, V. Buxton	07/09	11	Hurricane Trail, Mt. Moosilauke	A. Burnett
07/03	1	Mt. Chocorua, Albany	S. Heron	07/09	14	Tunnel Brook Trail, Mt. Moosilauke	A. Burnett
07/03	1	Mountain Pond, Chatham	A. Place	Palm Warbler			
07/04	1	Jefferson Notch Rd., T&M Purchase	K. Dorsey	06/01	2	Blueberry Swamp, Columbia	K. Fenton
07/17	1	Mt. Liberty, Lincoln	J. Koon	06/02	4	Mollidgewock Rd., Errol	J. Eckerson, E. Lipton
07/21	1	Rochester	E. Holm	06/10	1	Huntress Bridge Rd., Watts WS, Effingham	G. & A. Robbins
Bay-breasted Warbler							
06/01	3	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	J. Eckerson, E. Lipton	07/03	1	Church Pond Bog, Albany/Livermore	S. Heinrich
06/01	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	R. Prieto	07/22	5	Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	L. Charron, D. Dionne
06/03	1	Star Island, Isles of Shoals	E. Masterson	Prairie Warbler			
06/05	5	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	A. Hulsey	06/07	5	Russell-Abbott SF	S. Lemire
06/15	2	Franconia Ridge Trail, Lincoln	B. DeGregorio, V. Buxton	06/08	12	West Branch Pine Barrens, Madison	T. Vazzano
Blackburnian Warbler							
06/01	5	Birchtoft Trail, Mt. Monadnock	E. Synnott	06/09	10	Freedom Town Forest	G. & A. Robbins
06/01	8	Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, Woodstock	S. Heinrich	06/12	6	Concord Airport	N. Dorian
06/02	5	Wantastiquet Mt. NA, Chesterfield/Hinsdale	P. Hunt	06/16	6	Riley Rd., Hinsdale	L. Burford
06/06	7	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet	06/17	8	Hannah Nutter Rd., Barnstead	J. Lambert
06/24	11	UNH Trail, Hedgehog Mt., Albany	N. Dorian	06/24	6	West Branch Pine Barrens, Madison	N. Dorian
06/25	7	Mt. Monadnock, Dublin	T. Parody	06/25	8	Hertzka Dr./Northern Blvd., Amherst	C. Sheridan
06/25	7	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	S. Mirick	07/03	7	USFWS Karner Blue easement, Concord	S. Mirick
07/02	16	Loveren Mill Cedar Swamp	T. Parody, W. Ward	07/04	7	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. Sheridan
07/08	7	Imp Trail, Martins Location	W. Sweet	Canada Warbler			
07/20	10	Twin View Dr., Twin Mountain	N. Mitiguy	06/04	5	Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	D. Govatski
05/18	10	Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	A. Hulsey	06/06	8	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
Chestnut-sided Warbler							
06/01	10	Cherry Pond access trail, Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson	D. Aube	06/08	7	Old Cherry Mt. Rd., Carroll/Jefferson	C. Nims, et al.
06/04	16	Moody Park, Claremont	I. Denzer	06/29	5	Bradford Bog	T. & D. Swain
06/06	21	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet	06/29	14	Canaan Town Forest	P. Bradley
06/29	8	Reflection Pond, Shelburne	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters	07/02	9	Loveren Mill Cedar Swamp	T. Parody, W. Ward
07/30	8	Parker Reservoir, Hanover	E. Bracey	07/04	7	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	D. & G. Dionne, L. Charron
Blackpoll Warbler							
06/01	30	Wildcat Ridge & Carter-Moriah Trails, WMNF	A. Burnett	07/26	3	Pillsbury SP, Washington	L. Young, J. Seibel
Wilson's Warbler							
06/01	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	R. Prieto, J. Maher	06/01	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	R. Prieto, J. Maher
06/03	1	Church St. water tower parking lot, Hampton	S. Mirick	06/03	1	Church St. water tower parking lot, Hampton	S. Mirick
06/04	1	Gilman Park, Exeter	J. Price	06/04	1	Gilman Park, Exeter	J. Price
06/05	2	East Inlet, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet	06/05	2	East Inlet, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/06	1	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	G. Perricone	06/06	1	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	G. Perricone

Date	#	Location	Observer
06/07	2	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
07/06	1	New Canada Rd., Wilmot	P. Newbern

Sparrows through Finches

Pam Hunt from NH Audubon conducted surveys for Grasshopper Sparrows to update our knowledge of their nesting locations in the state. Highlights from this effort included previously unknown breeding territories (8-10) at the Dillant-Hopkins (Keene) airport in Swanzey, and a presumed breeding pair at the former Hinsdale racetrack.

In both June and July, Fox Sparrows were detected at several high elevation locations in both Coos and Grafton Counties, including three at Mt. Hancock in Lincoln on June 25. In recent years there has been an increase in summer sightings of this shy inhabitant of the boreal zone and observers are encouraged to be substantiated through photographs or audio recordings.

Vesper Sparrows were reported from five of New Hampshire's ten counties this summer, including a season-high 15 on July 14 from Concord Airport, still the state's best location for this species. While annually found at several other locations, Vesper Sparrows have experienced significant annual declines across their range due to an overall loss of grasslands as well as significant changes to hedgerows and mowing practices. On July 29, a summer **Dickcissel** snuck into the Granite State in East Kingston, visiting feeders and persisting until August 1. With breeding Dickcissels as close as Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and even New York this year, one wonders how long before this species pushes farther east and establishes satellite pairs in New Hampshire. The only other modern-day summer record from New Hampshire comes from Pickering Road in Rochester when a male Dickcissel was heard singing on June 10, 1998.

Grassland bird species continue to experience steep declines across the region, and according to *The State of North America's Birds 2016* by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI), 27% of our nation's grassland bird species (of 45 total) are categorized as high conservation concern. In New England, no bird is as emblematic of our grassland habitat and its plight as the arresting Bobolink. Beloved for their backward tuxedo and bubbly song, males of this species are conspicuous additions to our fields and grasslands and were found in all ten New Hampshire counties this year. Unfortunately, significant impacts to Bobolinks occur due to hayfield mowing during active nesting. If you are a conservation-minded landowner with hayfields and would like to help conserve one of our most striking passerines, please visit The Bobolink Project for more information at www.bobolinkproject.com.

Orchard Orioles, an uncommon summer resident, are typically only found in the southeastern part of the state so it was notable to have a young male spend most of July in Orford. Rusty Blackbird is one of North America's most imperiled species, showcasing a devastating and alarming 90% rate of decline since the 1960s. Until recently, very little was known about much of its life cycle requirements, resulting in it being North America's least-known icterid. According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Birds of North America species account, priorities for future research include nest predation, the impact of logging and contaminants, and understanding the loss of key wetland habitat. Fortunately, researchers including those involved with the Rusty Blackbird Working Group and NH Audubon's own Rusty Blackbird Project are working hard at illuminating more about these impacts and more on this species across its range. For a detailed account on Rusty Blackbird research in New Hampshire, including season summaries on nesting success, nest parasites, and banding efforts, see the article by Carol Foss elsewhere in this issue.



Bobolink by Steve Mirick, 6-4-17, Mt. Washington Regional Airport, Whitefield, NH.

Evening Grosbeak was reported with some regularity, including a pair being found along Fish Hatchery Road in Richmond in Cheshire County. Red Crossbill is a complex species consisting of at least 10 different types, each with its own distinctive flight call, bill and body morphology, and associated conifer preference. Known for their nomadic behavior and episodic irruptions across the continent, their annual breeding cycle is primarily regulated by photoperiod and food supply. Thus, breeding records of Red Crossbill do not fit neatly into the typical summer period of June and July. Here in New Hampshire, all confirmed summer records in 2017 were determined to be of the "eastern Type 10" class, thanks to Matt Young of the Macaulay Library at Cornell. Widespread in small numbers across the Northeast and New England, Type 10 individuals are often found in

SUMMER SEASON

the White Mountains during most years. However, with an enormous cone crop this year across the state, Red Crossbills were clustered farther south than normal, likely originating from Quebec and New Brunswick to take advantage of this abundance of food. Reported 63 times compared to only 11 reports from last year, this resulted in eight counties reporting Red Crossbills this summer with high counts of eight coming from both Umbagog NWR on July 9 and a private residence in Errol on July 26. With 2017 shaping up to be the largest irruption in recent history and the first major one since 2012-13, we encourage anyone encountering Red Crossbills to attempt audio recordings to further our understanding of the different types in New Hampshire. If recorded, please enter it as "Red Crossbill" in eBird and send the eBird link to Matt Young (may6@cornell.edu) for assistance with the identification to specific call type.

Just like the explosion of Red Crossbills this summer, **White-winged Crossbills** experienced a similar increase in reports in 2017. Only reported four times last summer, White-winged Crossbills were reported to eBird no less than 34 times with high counts of nine and ten birds reported from Trudeau Road in Bethlehem on July 30 and July 16 respectively. Pine Siskins remained in the north country for the summer save for a report of an individual in Pittsfield and another in Concord both in June in Merrimack County.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
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Grasshopper Sparrow

06/02	3	old Hinsdale racetrack	P. Hunt
06/19	7	Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey	P. Hunt
06/22	6	Concord Airport	N. Dorian
06/22	1	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, McIntyre Rd., Newington	C. Nims
06/27	6	Cemetery Fields, Amherst	C. Sheridan
07/06	7	Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey	P. Hunt
07/14	5	Concord Airport	M. McCarthy, N. Dorian

Nelson's Sparrow

06/01	1	Chapmans Landing, Stratham	K. Dorsey
06/17	2	saltmarsh off Pollock Dr., Rye	Z. Cornell, R. Suomala
07/01	3	Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/01	3	Marsh Road Pond, Rye	S. Mirick
07/16	4	saltmarsh off Pollock Dr., Rye	S. Wrisley, J. Pettipas

Saltmarsh Sparrow

06/04	2	Lubberland Creek Preserve, Newmarket	K. Dorsey
06/22	2	Little Jacks restaurant, Rt. 1A, Hampton	C. Nims
07/04	3	Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton	B. Griffith
07/04	6	Chapmans Landing, Stratham	D. Moulton
07/19	2	saltmarsh off Pollock Dr., Rye	R. Steber, C. Nims, J. Scott

Field Sparrow

06/03	6	Horse Hill Nature Preserve, Merrimack	J. Maher
06/23	10	Concord Airport	N. Dorian
06/25	7	Woodmont Dr., Hollis	C. Sheridan
06/29	6	Pisgah SP, Winchester	H. Elliott, et al.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
07/18	8	Musquash CA, Hudson	E. Lai
07/18	7	Great Bay NWR, Newington	J. Sparrell
07/19	10	Freedom Town Forest	A.& J. Robbins

Fox Sparrow

06/01	2	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	J. Eckerson, E. Lipton
06/12	1	Dixville Peak	D.& G. Dionne
06/19	1	King's Ravine, Low & Burbanks	C. Engstrom
06/25	1	Crawford Path near Mt. Pierce, Beans Grant	R. Bogart, S. Schwenk
06/25	3	Hancock Loop Trail, WMNF	A. Burnett
07/17	1	Mt. Liberty, Lincoln	J. Koon
07/19	1	Mt. Garfield, WMNF	J. MacQueen

Vesper Sparrow

07/03	1	Tullando Farm fields, Orford	B. Hancock
07/14	15	Concord Airport	M. McCarthy, N. Dorian
07/17	1	NHA Massabesic Ctr., Auburn	S. Hale
07/18	3	Riverlands CA, Canterbury	S. Hale
07/20	1	Depot Rd., Tamworth	C. Nims, R. Suomala

Lincoln's Sparrow

06/08	1	Day Rd., Perry Stream, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen
07/12	1	Dead Diamond Rd. swamp, Second College Grant	D. Dionne
07/26	1	Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson/Whitefield	M. Nenadov

Eastern Towhee

06/03	8	Horse Hill Nature Preserve, Merrimack	J. Maher
06/08	12	West Branch Pine Barrens, Madison	T. Vazzano
06/17	12	Hannah Nutter Rd., Barnstead	J. Lambert
06/22	24	Farley Meadow WS, Nashua	C. Sheridan
07/03	12	West Branch Pine Barrens, Madison	S. Heinrich
07/14	10	Concord Airport	M. McCarthy, N. Dorian
07/19	9	Freedom Town Forest	A.& J. Robbins
07/20	11	Ponemah Bog WS, Amherst	C. Sheridan

Dickcissel

07/29	1	South Rd., E. Kingston	D. Finch
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Bobolink

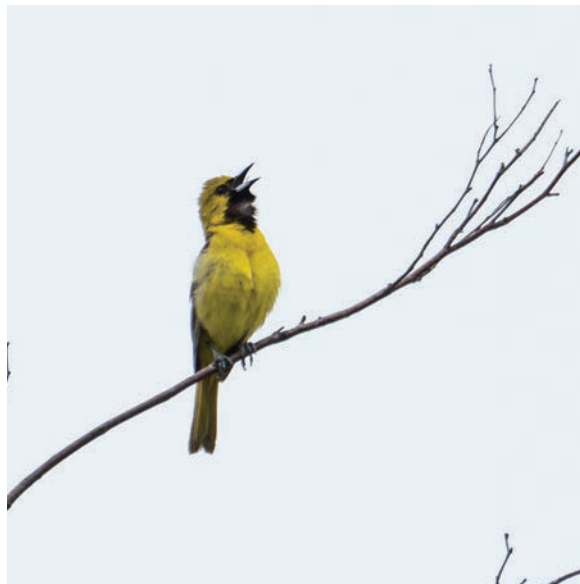
06/04	30	Trask Brook Rd., Newport/Sunapee	D. Jackson
06/08	21	Cold Pond Rd., Unity	C. Abbott
07/03	16	Dennett Rd., Barnstead	E. Pilotte
07/08	18	Jerusalem Rd. fields, Canaan	C. Caron
07/16	31	Pickering Rd., Rochester	R. Quinn
07/17	20	Elm Brook Pk., Hopkinton	R. Quinn
07/19	30	former Cate's Farm Rt. 25C, Warren	E. Marie
07/28	15	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson
07/31	20	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray

Eastern Meadowlark

06/02	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	L. McKillop
06/10	1	Mountain Rd., Concord	J. Nadeau
06/12	2	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, SE end, Portsmouth	K. Dorsey
06/19	2	Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey	P. Hunt
06/25	1	Water St., Lancaster	A. Griffin
07/01	1	Martin Rd., Fremont	M. Burden
07/08	3	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, McIntyre Rd., Newington	K. Dorsey
07/17	2	Elm Brook Pk., Hopkinton	R. Quinn

SUMMER SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/20	1	Morningside Flight Park, Charlestown	E. Masterson
07/24	1	Strafford County Complex, Dover	S. Stoddard
07/31	2	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, SE end, Portsmouth	S. Bennett, S. Wisley



Orchard Oriole by Leo McKillop, 6-18-17, Pickering Ponds, Rochester, NH.

Orchard Oriole

06/02	2	Powwow Pond, Kingston	E. Nathan
06/20	3	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard
06/25	2	Woodmont Dr., Hollis	C. Sheridan
06/28	1	Nashua R. railroad trestle, Nashua	J. Maher
07/02	3	Oyster R. Forest, Durham	K. Dorsey
07/08	1	Richmond Conservation Land, Orford	C. Caron
07/14	3	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard

Rusty Blackbird

06/01	2	Blueberry Swamp, Columbia	K. Fenton
06/05	1	East Inlet, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/12	1	Deer Mountain SP, Pittsburg	P. Brown, B. Quinn, NHAFT
07/17	2	Leonard Brook, Whitefield	J. Pietrzak, A. Winters, L. McKillop

Evening Grosbeak

06/04	3	Sanborn Rd., Ashland	I. MacLeod
06/07	2	Lake Sunapee, Newbury	P. Newbern
06/15	2	Antrim Rd., Hancock	E. Masterson
06/30	2	Gore Rd., Warner	R. Gray
07/02	2	Fish Hatchery Rd., Richmond	J. Jarvis
07/03	4	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson
07/10	3	Dillingham Rd., Roxbury	P. Kirkhart
07/19	1	Silver Mt., Lempster	A. Rapp
07/28	2	Old Bridle Path Trail, Mt. Lafayette	A. Hulsey, K. Marini

Purple Finch

06/09	2	Kensan-Devan WS, Marlborough	C. Witko
06/27	16	10-mile survey, Lyman	S. Turner
07/15	5	Mt. Moosilauke, Benton	A. Rapp
07/23	6	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/23	9	Cherry Pond access trail, Pondicherry NWR, Jefferson	N. Jacob
07/29	11	10-mile survey, Lyman	S. Turner

Red Crossbill

06/01	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
06/27	1	Kensan-Devan WS, Marlborough	C. Witko
06/29	6	Bradford Bog	T.& D. Swain
07/09	8	Magalloway R. Trail, Umbagog NWR, Wentworths Location	G. Dupont, S. Heinrich
07/16	6	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	P. Hunt, et al.
07/23	1	Antrim Rd., Hancock	E. Masterson
07/26	8	Tracy Dr., Errol	L. Charron
07/27	1	Wapack NWR, Greenfield	T. Spahr

White-winged Crossbill

06/14	2	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook River, Pittsfield	A. Robbins
07/09	4	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	G. Dupont, S. Heinrich
07/14	1	Carriage Rd., Mt. Moosilauke	A. Burnett
07/16	10	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	P. Hunt, et al.
07/20	3	Old W. Ossipee Rd., Freedom	A. Robbins
07/30	4	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	J. Maher

Pine Siskin

06/02	1	Tilton Hill Rd. by Suncook River, Pittsfield	A. Robbins
06/05	1	Dodge Pond, Lyman	S. Turner
06/08	1	Hubbard Brook, Woodstock	A. Van Tatenhove
06/19	1	Chesterfield Dr., Concord	J. Pietrzak
06/22	2	Akers Pond, north end, Errol	D. Dionne
06/30	1	Thornton Gore Rd., Thornton	P. Bradley
07/09	1	Magalloway R. Trail, Umbagog NWR, Wentworths Location	G. Dupont, S. Heinrich
07/15	1	Nash Stream Forest, Stratford/Odell	J. Forbes, J. Rose
07/23	1	Ammonoosuc Ravine Trailhead, Sargents Purchase	A. Burnett
07/23	2	Jefferson Notch Rd., T&M Purchase	C. Winstanley



Steve Mirick photographed this Piping Plover with a pink flag T3 on 7-1-17 at Seabrook Beach. It was banded in the Bahamas on 11-27-15 but is a different individual from the one Deb Powers photographed in the New Hampshire Bird Records Spring 2017 issue.

Yellow-nosed Albatross on Little Seavey Island, Isles of Shoals, Better than Fireworks!

by Elizabeth Ford and Taylor Ouellette

On July 4, 2017, around 1:50 pm, we were on our way out of the tern colony after finishing monitoring our Roseate Tern areas for the day when we saw a small flock of shorebirds flying to the far west side of the island. Having the scope with us, we decided to head around to the west side of the island to see if we could get a closer look at the flock. We stopped on the southwest rocks to scan for the shorebirds with our scope when we noticed the terns mobbing a bird in flight. At first, we assumed it was a Great Black-backed Gull, but then as it flew by, we saw its face and realized that it was NOT just another GBBG!



Yellow-nosed Albatross by Elizabeth Ford, 7-4-17, Seavey Island, Isles of Shoals, NH.

Excitement building, we watched it in flight for about five minutes until it settled on Little Seavey (a small rock formation NW of Seavey Island). Now that we had a better look at the bird, we thought to ourselves how it kind of resembled an albatross, although we didn't want to get ourselves too excited without being sure. Still being aggressively mobbed by a small group of terns, it only remained on Little Seavey for approximately 3 minutes, but this gave us a chance to both observe it through the scope and take some pictures. After leaving Little Seavey, it landed in the water, allowing us to watch for a few more minutes

before taking off and heading west towards the mainland.

Neither of us had seen an albatross in person before, so upon returning to the lighthouse cottage, we excitedly searched through all of our guides and consulted our photographs. We positively identified the bird, but still couldn't believe what we had seen. No amount of fireworks could match the thrill of this sighting. It certainly was an exhilarating Fourth of July!

Elizabeth Ford and Taylor Ouellette were Seasonal Seabird Technicians for the Shoals Marine Laboratory, working at the tern colony on White & Seavey Islands at the Isles of Shoals, NH.

The Trials of the Mississippi Kite Family

by Stephen R. Mirick

Birds die and that's just part of nature, but for New Hampshire's Mississippi Kites, even the loss of one bird is difficult to bear. The small group of nesting birds in Newmarket has been one of the most amazing avian stories in New Hampshire's history. Since at least 2008, one or two pairs of birds have been found nesting each year, representing one of the only nesting sites in the northeastern United States. Summer 2017 would end up being a tough year for the kites as well as for many caring kite watchers.

The summer started out strong when five birds were recorded on May 23. This included a returning pair setting up territory in a residential neighborhood off Huckin's Drive in Newmarket and at least three more kites observed for the first time in a neighborhood along the southern shoreline of Great Bay in Stratham. Sadly that was about it for sightings. None of the previous territories in Newmarket saw any kites return and the birds in Stratham didn't seem to nest, or if they did, they didn't appear to produce any young.

Our hopes hung on the Huckin's Drive nest which was going quite smoothly. The adults built the nest high up in the top of an oak where they laid their egg(s) and then a single chick hatched in early July. On July 13, disaster struck. The male of this pair was struck by a car, likely while chasing some low flying insects. Fortunately, a caring person brought the bird to the Center for Wildlife in York, Maine. There it was diagnosed with a fractured ulna. Normally a fatal

injury to a bird of prey, the break was very clean and it was thought that the bird could be bandaged and released back into the wild after the break healed.



Injured adult Mississippi Kite. Courtesy of the Center for Wildlife in York, ME.

Meanwhile, the mother kite struggled to feed the single nestling, a difficult task for a “single mom,” especially when cold New Hampshire winds in July can impact the supply of dragonflies, the primary food item for the young kite. Over the next two weeks, the chick continued to grow until July 26, when the second disaster struck.

While checking on the status of the baby on the afternoon of July 26, I was saddened not to see or hear any activity in the nest. The adult circled overhead, but never came in to feed the baby, a very bad sign. I was almost ready to give up when I heard the plaintive cry of the baby. Not from the nest, however, but **from the ground!** I ran into the back yard of the house where I saw the baby at the edge of the lawn. The bird looked fine and was alert and feisty and loud, but an adult kite won't feed a baby on the ground and the nest was far too high to get it back in. I put the baby kite into my car where it scrambled around on my seats while I called around to see what I could do.

I spent several hours calling many people, but there was little hope for the youngster. It had no hope of survival on

the ground and the staff at the Center for Wildlife said they didn't want the bird because kites are very difficult to take care of. The adult male required constant tube feeding and they said the baby would likely never be releasable back into the wild since they need to learn how to catch insects from their parents. I even called the Newmarket Fire Department, but they wouldn't help with a ladder to get it back into the nest. Finally, Steve Bennett, Susan Wrisley, Rob Prieto and others showed up to help me. We lined a wicker basket with sticks and leaves and secured it as high up as we could in a snag near the tree. Steve climbed up a ladder and placed the baby in the nest where we left it for the night, but alas, our efforts were for naught as the next day saw no activity from our makeshift nest and the mother kite soon disappeared.



Mississippi Kite chick in Steve Mirick's car. Photo by Susan Wrisley, 7-26-17, Newmarket, NH.

Meanwhile, back at the Center for Wildlife, the adult male continued to mend his broken wing and was now flying around an outdoor flight cage and regaining his strength. The months of tube feeding and caring for this high-strung bird by the staff at the Center were about to pay off, but, as incredible as it may seem, the bird was found dead in the flight cage just hours before they were about to release him back into the wild. He had apparently flown into the wall of the enclosure, a devastating blow to the staff at the center and for the kite watching community who had been following his progress.

We can only hope that the birds return next year with more success. The female in Newmarket may find a new mate and hopefully the birds in Stratham have more success. There is also more recent encouraging news that there may have been a new territory in Durham.

Photos of the Kite Chick Relocation

All were taken at Huckins Drive in Newmarket on 7-26-17 by Susan Wisley, except as noted.



Putting up the ladder to reach the top of a high, broken snag where a basket could be attached as an artificial replacement nest for the chick.



Steve Bennett climbing the ladder to attach the basket to the snag.



The basket is in place.



Whew!



The chick in the basket up in the snag. Photo by Steve Bennett.



The chick peeking out of the basket in its new home. Photo by Steve Bennett.

Summer 2017 Field Notes

Compiled by Kathryn Frieden

A Tale of Two Ducks or “Woodies vs. Hoodies”

by Iain MacLeod

As part of a “Critter Cam” exhibit that we created at the Squam Lakes Natural Science Center, we installed a camera overlooking a pond on the Science Center property in Holderness. We also installed a duck nesting box on a pole in the pond. In April 2017, I was delighted to discover a Wood Duck had taken up residence in the box. I positioned the camera to view the front of the box. The camera recorded the comings and goings throughout the incubation period of more than a month. Not long after recording started, we witnessed a fascinating encounter. A pair of Hooded Mergansers arrived on the pond on April 27 and decided they too wanted to claim the box. Mrs. Hoodie flew into the box (while Mrs. Woodie was in there sitting on her eggs) and based on the shaking of the box, there must have been a battle royal inside! After about twenty seconds, the merganser exited. She returned twelve more times over the next few hours and tried to enter the box again, but Mrs. Woodie was ready for her and “head-butted” her out each time.

See the video here: <http://tinyurl.com/2017Woodduck1>

Over the next 30-plus days, Mrs. Woodie sat tight, only leaving the box for a few minutes early in the morning (often before dawn) and again each evening. Finally on May 28, at 12:50 pm, the big moment came and the freshly hatched chicks began to jump from the box. One, two, then three and four leapt from the box, bouncing on the pond’s surface and swimming to join mom, who was calling nearby. Then out came number five. This guy was different, a little darker with a larger head, and when he hit the water, he ran across the surface to the cover of the pond edge. It was a Hooded Merganser baby! That few moments of tussling in the box between the two female ducks had resulted in Mrs. Hoodie depositing an egg under Mrs. Woodie, which she then incubated as if it were her own. Another six Woodie chicks emerged for a total family of eleven.

See the video here: <http://tinyurl.com/2017Woodduck2>

Although it’s long been known that Hooded Mergansers and Wood Ducks will “egg dump” in each other’s nests, it was fascinating to witness and document it on our camera.

Broad-winged Hawk Feeds on Roadkill

by Phil Brown

During the dog days of mid-July, a time I often trade my binoculars for my bike helmet, I hopped on my bicycle

for an evening ride. Just outside of my driveway in Hancock, I had noticed a dead Gray Squirrel on the roadside. Nothing special initially, but a Broad-winged Hawk was perched in a tree nearly above the unfortunate rodent. I cruised past, hoping I wouldn’t scare off the hawk, and glanced back to see the bird down on the ground over the dead squirrel. Broad-winged Hawks are known to eat a wide variety of live prey, including woodland rodents such as squirrels, but the literature on carrion as part of their diet seemed pretty light. Perhaps it was coincidental, I had thought, and after a short time seeing no obvious feeding activity, I decided to continue on with my ride. Within a half hour, I returned past the same location to find...nothing! The squirrel had been removed and any other explanation for picking up a squirrel off of my quiet country road did not sit well. The Broad-winged Hawk must have picked the squirrel up and flown off with its quarry of carrion.

Adult Yellow-bellied Sapsucker with No Red on the Head

by Robert Quinn



It is a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker with a white throat and an all-black crown. An adult male has a red throat and red on the top of the head, while an adult female has a white throat and a red stripe on the head. The white throat rules out an adult male. Juvenile sapsuckers show brownish plumage with no red from July through March. Since this is a June photo showing no brown we can rule out a juvenile, making this bird at least one year old (AHY - after hatch-year). According to Birds of North America Online, some females can have reduced red on the crown of the head, and occasionally none at all, so this is likely one of those variant females.

Red Crossbills on the Move

by Phil Brown

Taken from a post to the NH Birds e-mail list, 6-23-17.

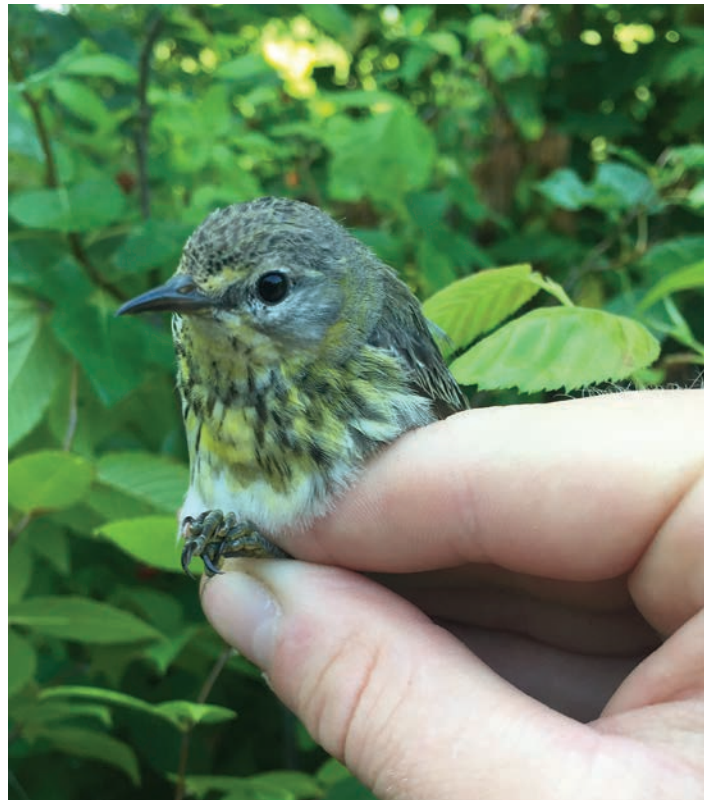
Yesterday, I was surprised to hear a calling Red Crossbill (flyover) in Antrim on a mock Backyard Birding Survey that I run each June, starting in Hancock and ending in Henniker. Then, later in the morning, I heard another one. Last evening, while participating in an event at the Thompson Wildlife Sanctuary in Sandwich, a group of us saw and heard another Red Crossbill. Bob Ridgely and Tony Vazzano say that they have been regulars there lately.

If I hadn't been convinced by three separate records that an invasion of sorts is underway, I now am. As I stepped outside my house this morning, I heard a Red Crossbill calling from the pines at the perimeter of my yard! It even sang a bit. This marks my third spring/summer with observations of this species in my yard and the early trend of this limited dataset (six springs) shows a one year on, one year off pattern.

Is it really a Cape May Warbler?



Erica Holm took these photos on July 21, 2017 in Rochester, NH after the mystery bird was caught in a mist net.



Erica Holm explains, “We run a constant-effort mist netting project for my M.S., investigating how the bird community uses transmission line rights-of-way and conservation program clear-cuts. We caught an unusual looking bird on July 21, 2017, a little before 8:00 am in a clear-cut in Rochester, NH. Identification starts with my field crew, several UNH undergraduate students whose daily responsibilities include recording the net, time of extraction from the net, and a preliminary identification of species for each bird that comes in. Their tentative identification was Prairie Warbler, but with question marks included. Then Casey Coupe (UNH field tech who has worked with us in past years) and I took a look at the bird in hand and thoroughly checked our reference texts we use daily in the field. We were able to make many determinations of what the bird was not, but were stuck between a few options for what it was. The yellowy rump was very distinctive and ruled out many other potential species. We then combined a picture-matching approach of online images of Cape May Warblers with the analytical approach provided by Peter Pyle (*The Identification Guide to North American Birds: Part 1*) to conclude that it was a Cape May Warbler.”

Because of lingering doubts about the identification and the earlier date than expected for southern migration, Erica's photos made their way to Robert Quinn for confirmation. Here is his response.

“A few thoughts on Erica's bird – definitely a Cape May and per the *Peterson Field Guide to North American Warblers* a likely AHY (after hatch-year) female due to quite a bit

of yellow, but no obvious streaking on the back, plus the heavily worn feathers. The Peterson guide also says, ‘In fall migration, occasionally noted south of breeding grounds by the last third of July, but normal movement does not begin before the latter part of August.’ In fact, there are quite a few records of northern warblers found south of their regular breeding range in the month of July in New Hampshire. When you factor in an increase in the spruce budworm up north (equating to more Cape Mays) as well as the periods of cold and rain during the summer of 2017, it is not all that surprising that a few adult-type birds might bail out of their breeding grounds early. From watching weather maps, the rains have been even more severe in eastern Canada (especially Quebec) this year.”

Conclusion: Yes, it really is a Cape May Warbler. As a bonus, while Erica was working on her research project this summer she also banded a Lawrence’s Warbler (hybrid). The most recent previous report in New Hampshire was 5-29-15, by Steve Mirick in Newmarket.



This Lawrence’s Warbler was banded and identified on 6-14-17 by Erica Holm in Rollinsford, NH as part of her master’s research project. It is a hybrid between a Golden-winged Warbler and a Blue-winged Warbler.

Field Trip Report

NH Audubon Pelagic Trip – Bowhead Whale!

by Jon Woolf



Wilson’s Storm-Petrel by Jon Woolf, 6-12-18, NH Audubon pelagic field trip.

Since fall 2008, I’ve been organizing pelagic birding trips for NH Audubon, two per year, one each in the spring and fall, always in partnership with Pete Reynolds of Granite State Whale Watch. Several times we’ve been forced to cancel because of weather. When we do get out, we spend the day looking for seabirds, storm-petrels, gannets, shearwaters, and anything else we can find. Over the years, we’ve accumulated a decent list of seabirds as well as a few errant migrants. We’ve even managed a few rarities: several jaegers, plus a single Sabine’s Gull on a fall trip and a couple of probable Leach’s Storm-Petrels.

Sadly, we don’t always get good birds on these trips, but even when there are virtually no birds, we always seem to find *something* to make the trip worthwhile. The “spring” 2017 trip, on June 12, was a perfect example. We headed northeast out of Rye Harbor aboard the *Granite State* toward the northern part of Jeffreys Ledge, near the area called “the Three Fingers.” Here, we found a number of birds, gannets and shearwaters, and some Atlantic White-sided Dolphins. From there, we cruised south along the ledge. There wasn’t much bird activity and I began to wonder if this was going to be a slow trip.

Then we spotted a spout.

We always look for whales as well as birds on these trips, because where there are whales, there may be birds too. This whale was quickly identified by the crew as a rarity, a Northern Right Whale (*Eubalaena glacialis*). Not a bird, I know, but considering that Right Whales are rare at the best of times, it was a nice sighting to make up for the lack of birds.



Bowhead Whale by Jon Woolf, 6-12-18, NH Audubon pelagic field trip.

After we'd watched the whale dive and surface a couple of times from a distance, the crew began to think there was something odd about it. The skin color was wrong for a Right Whale, gray instead of black, and the shape wasn't quite right either. So, we stuck with it for a while longer and finally, a *very* excited Melanie White (the crew's whale-biologist, from the Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation) announced on the loudspeaker that it was *not* a Right Whale. Instead, it was something that even Pete and his crew, veteran whale-watchers all, had never seen before, a **Bowhead Whale!**

Bowhead Whales (*Balaena mysticetus*) are cousins of Right Whales, but Bowheads are whales of the far north. All known populations of them live in Arctic waters. The nearest one to the Gulf of Maine is in Baffin Bay and Davis Straits, nearly a thousand miles away as the whale swims, but the animals don't care what we say about them. This one certainly didn't. We watched it for twenty or thirty minutes, through multiple dives and surfacings, and there was (and is) no doubt at all of its identity.

Later investigation revealed that a single Bowhead Whale has been seen before in the Gulf of Maine, three times, all in Massachusetts waters, all in the last five years, and all from aircraft doing aerial surveys of the Right Whale population. All three sightings were eventually identified as the same individual whale. Skin markings identified our Bowhead as this same whale, making this the fourth sighting and the first outside of Massachusetts waters.

Eventually we had to be on our way, so we left the Bowhead Whale behind and moved on. In the afternoon,

we encountered several more whales of various kinds, including a Fin Whale that did something very unusual, it "fluked" (raised its flukes out of the water) when it dived. Several other whale species normally do this, but Fin Whales usually don't. We also put out a slick of fish-oil chum, which attracted a number of Wilson's Storm-Petrels. That was about it for pelagic birds, though.



Common Terns near Seavey island, Isles of Shoals by Jon Woolf, 6-12-18, NH Audubon pelagic field trip.

In late afternoon, we spent some time in and around the Isles of Shoals. As always, there was a good show of terns from the White/Seavey Island tern colony, although no one was able to pick out a Roseate or Arctic Tern. We also had the usual island birds, from Common Eiders to the Black Guillemots that nest among the islands' rocks. Several of us caught a glimpse of an **American Oystercatcher** on Lunging Island, which supports a report from last year that Oystercatchers may be breeding somewhere on the Isles.

It wasn't the most successful trip we've ever had, but thanks to the Bowhead Whale it was still one for the record books. Who knows what future trips will bring? It will be hard to top a Bowhead Whale, but never underestimate Mother Nature.

North Country Nature Tour

by Phil Brown

Here are the notable highlights from NH Audubon's 4th annual North Country Nature Tour on June 11-15, 2017, led by Bob Quinn and me. We stayed primarily in Coos County, focusing on Pittsburg, Pondicherry National Wildlife Reserve (NWR), Mt. Washington, and some NH Audubon locations south and west of there.

Overall, weather was unseasonably warm (up to 93 in Pittsburg one day) with the exception of a sunset tour of Mt. Washington via the auto road, where temps were in the mid 30's with a chilly wind. There was virtually no precipitation for this stretch and it was very buggy in places such as

Pittsburg. Some songbirds were hard to find and eluded us, but we eventually caught up with many of our target boreal species. Spring rains and extended cool weather prior to the trip may have impacted the breeding bird season. Some locations in Pittsburg and elsewhere seemed exceptionally quiet. There were plenty of birds at Pondicherry NWR and more southern locations, though. Total bird species was 107 with several highlights:

Ring-necked Duck—a drake our first day at the little pond in Stewartstown on our way to see the Bobolinks and three at Scott Bog.

Northern Harrier—an adult male over the end of the runway at Whitefield Airport.

Herring Gull—two adults flying over Deer Mountain Campground were unusual for the time, place, and age of the birds (sub-adults would be more likely in June).

Black-billed Cuckoo—one flew across road near Errol.

Northern Saw-whet Owl—heard on the owl prowl, a life bird for several in the group.

Olive-sided Flycatcher—one seen well, ultimately, on the Perry Stream Road, Pittsburg.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher—several, mostly heard, with a couple of good scope views.

Gray Jay—three families seen totaling about 14 or 15 individuals.

Cliff Swallow—conservatively we saw 70+ with nests along Tabor Road; there were hypothetically 140 individuals!

Boreal Chickadee—several nice looks at these shy birds.

Bicknell's Thrush—several heard calling and singing on Mt. Washington and glimpsed by a few folks. It is a high-elevation specialty bird with the core of its population breeding in New Hampshire.

Northern Mockingbird—singing at Tabor Road in Pittsburg. It is a species Bob has never seen in Pittsburg before; one of only a few records for this town.

Palm Warbler—a good scope view of one at Cherry Pond.

Blackpoll Warbler—mostly heard, but one or two seen along Route 3 near Third Connecticut Lake.

Wilson's Warbler—one heard only by Phil in Pittsburg (Scott Bog Road).

Rusty Blackbird—one at Moose Falls Flowage (Pittsburg) was displaced by a grackle as seen in the scope!

Red Crossbill—one heard flying over by some.

We also saw a single Moose, two Black Bears (sow and a cub) putting on a good show as they fed and rested on NH Audubon land in Sugar Hill, a North American Porcupine at 3,500' along the Mt. Washington auto road, many Mink Frogs, and many butterflies, a few *Cecropia* moths, and lots of types of invertebrates and blooming plants.

Bald Eagle and Osprey Conflicts

by Iain MacLeod



A nest cam caught a Bald Eagle stealing a fish from an Osprey nest at the Ayers Island Dam on the Pemigewasset River in New Hampton, NH. Photos courtesy of Eversource.

As Bald Eagle numbers increase in New Hampshire (see article on page 32), their smaller cousin and close ecological competitor, the Osprey, has had to get used to the fact that a big bully has moved into town. Eagles and Ospreys don't get along and usually Ospreys get the short end of the stick in their frequent encounters. Eagles will pirate Osprey's fish. The eagle will watch as Ospreys hunt and when the Osprey catches a fish, it will chase the Osprey aggressively forcing it to drop its catch. That sort of piracy, known as kleptoparasitism, can directly impact productivity of Osprey nests if the male Osprey (who is responsible for providing all the meals for his mate and chicks) is constantly losing his catch to eagles. There is evidence that Ospreys will avoid fishing on water bodies where eagles are resident and will abandon nests close to eagle nests. At Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge in northern New Hampshire, we have seen dramatic changes in the locations of Osprey nests over the last 30 years. Very few now nest near the large lake where there are 3-4 nesting pairs of Bald Eagles. Ospreys are now nesting in wetlands away from the big lake or "cluster nesting" on power poles near Pontook Reservoir. It seems likely that Ospreys developed a colonial nesting strategy over eons of fending off eagles.

Nesting competition between these rivals took on a new dimension in Spring 2017 when we found that two long-established and very productive Osprey nests (both on specially-installed platforms on large powerpoles) had been taken over by nesting Bald Eagles. One nest, at Chapman's Landing in Stratham, had been in continuous use by Ospreys since 1992, the other in Jaffrey had been used for a decade.



The Bald Eagles at the former Osprey nest at Chapman's Landing in Stratham. Photo taken by Marjorie Watson, 4-2-17. Stay tuned for further developments in 2018!

The eagles in the Jaffrey nest successfully raised a chick while the Stratham pair failed during incubation. The Ospreys really have no chance of defending their nests against these types of hostile takeovers as the eagles start incubating in March while the Ospreys are still on their wintering grounds in South America. It will be interesting to see if other New Hampshire Osprey nests are commandeered by eagles. The irony is that Bald Eagles have so many nesting sites available to them while the Osprey's choices are fewer and farther between. Eagles will nest in live white pines, which dominate our forests, while Ospreys rarely do.

We are also seeing more direct predation of Ospreys by eagles. Streaming webcams placed near Osprey nests have now documented eagles preying on Osprey chicks. At Hog Island on the coast of Maine, the Osprey nestcam recorded an adult Bald Eagle taking both fledglings from the nest in 2015. See footage of that attack at: <http://tinyurl.com/2015HogIsland-Attack>. In 2016, likely the same eagle grabbed one of the fledglings right as it was ready to fledge. See footage of that attack at: <http://tinyurl.com/2016HogIslandAttack>. At that same nest in 2017, after two chicks were killed by a Great Horned Owl, a third recently-fledged chick was attacked by an immature Bald Eagle and driven into the water. The eagle banked around and was coming back to grab the Osprey youngster, but the juvenile's father drove off the eagle, or at least distracted it for long enough for staff at the nearby Audubon camp to rescue the Osprey. It was released a short time later but within an hour was driven into the water again by the eagle. This time the Osprey had two talon injuries and ended up at a rehab center.

So, there is a shift happening in Osprey-eagle dynamics in the state. Some might argue this is just a return to balance, to the normal state of affairs. Others might see this as working to the Osprey's disadvantage. Either way, we are not going to lose our Ospreys, but perhaps we'll see a slowing of their

recently-robust increases. This is nothing new. Eagles and Ospreys have been competing for millennia and we will get to witness their epic aerial battles a little more frequently in the future.



The Jaffrey nest platform in 2011 with an Osprey nest (top) and in 2017 with a Bald Eagle nest. Photos by Chris Martin.

Bald Eagle Population Recovery Success

by Iain Macleod and Chris Martin

It wasn't that long ago that seeing a Bald Eagle in New Hampshire was a rare event. Iain vividly remembers the excitement at NH Audubon when a pair of eagles built a nest in a historically-used pine tree at Lake Umbagog in 1988. This was a huge conservation event for the state. Now the Bald Eagle population in New Hampshire and throughout the eastern United States is exploding. In March 2017, the NH Fish & Game Department removed the Bald Eagle from the state list of Threatened and Endangered Wildlife! This milestone comes 37 years after the species was placed on New Hampshire's first list of Threatened and Endangered Wildlife back in 1980.

The documented history of Bald Eagles in New Hampshire indicates they were summer residents on our

larger lakes throughout the state in the early 1800s. The widespread deforestation of the southern half of the state to create sheep pasture reached a peak in the mid-1800s, reducing nesting habitat for eagles. Sheep farming would not have been compatible with a healthy eagle population as they were regarded as predators of lambs. Eagles were shot and their nests plundered. Mature white pines (favored by eagles) were specifically targeted for lumber and for ship's masts. Eagles did not receive any kind of protection until well into the twentieth century.

Declining water quality also affected eagles, as pollutants from mills and other industries were pumped into rivers causing huge fish die offs. Overfishing on the coast and damming of rivers inland reduced natural spawning runs of anadromous fish. Eagles lost both food resources and nesting sites. The last documented successful nest in New Hampshire prior to the modern era was in 1949 at Lake Umbagog. The widespread use of DDT in the 1950s and 60s was the death knell for eagles in many parts of North America. It took major conservation efforts, including active reintroductions in many states in the 1980s, to bring them back.

A variety of factors combined to make a dramatic resurgence possible. Thanks to the Clean Water Act and other environmental protections, our rivers and lakes are now cleaner and more productive. Fish stocking and management provides plenty of food and, perhaps most importantly, the age and canopy height of white pines, which now dominate our New Hampshire forests, provides an almost unlimited number of nesting trees for eagles. It's probably not a stretch to say that there is barely a lake, pond, or one-mile section of river in the state that doesn't have at least one white pine that an eagle could nest in.

Chris oversees monitoring of the state's eagles and recently observed that we are now witnessing a doubling of the population every five years (Figure 1):

“In 2017, we confirmed a record-high total of **59 territorial pairs** of Bald Eagles in New Hampshire. This is a 5% increase from the 56 territorial pairs documented in 2016, and twice as many pairs as we had just six years ago. In 2017, we confirmed a record-high **53 pairs incubating**, up 26% in one year from the 42 incubating pairs found in 2016, and more than double the 26 incubating pairs we found five years ago. In 2017, we found a record-high **38 successful nests**, up 23% in one year from the 31 successful nests in 2016, and nearly double the successful nests we found five years ago. In 2017, we confirmed a record-high **59 young fledged**. This is also up 16% from the 51 fledglings counted in 2016.”

Similar population growth is being seen in neighboring northeastern states and beyond, so we can all celebrate an amazing resurgence of our national symbol.

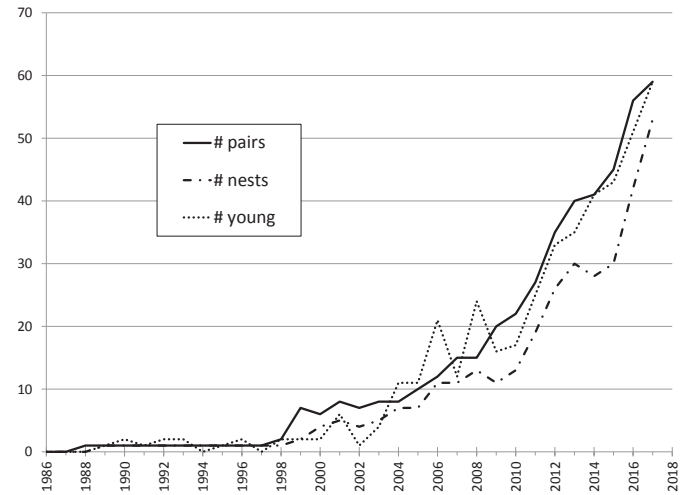


Figure 1. New Hampshire Bald Eagle Productivity, 1987-2017 from NH Audubon.

One Hundred Years of Cerulean Warblers in New Hampshire

by Pamela Hunt

It's a beautiful morning in late May and you're walking through a forest of oaks and pines. All of a sudden you hear an unusual warbler song from high in the trees ahead of you. It's a rapid series of buzzy notes, speeding up and ending in a rapid trill. Although it sounds a little like a Northern Parula or Black-throated Blue Warbler, something's not quite right, so you stop to look for the bird. It sings again, almost directly overhead, and you crane your neck and back to search for movement in the canopy. After what seems an eternity, you finally spot the bird as it forages among the bright green leaves. All you can see at first is a white belly, but at least now you know where it is. You just hope your neck holds out until it presents a better view. An instant later, as it hangs sideways to grab a caterpillar, you catch a glimpse of a black necklace and sky blue top to its head. Your suspicions and hopes are confirmed, a Cerulean Warbler!

The Cerulean Warbler is well named, since its upperparts indeed take on the hue of the sky against which it is often silhouetted. This relatively small warbler is primarily found in the Appalachians and Midwest, although it also just reaches southern Canada. Within this range, it tends to be found in two very different habitats: floodplain forests and upland forests dominated by oaks. Not all forests are equal, however, and the warblers tend to occupy larger tracts and those with some gaps in the canopy. In the fall, Ceruleans migrate to

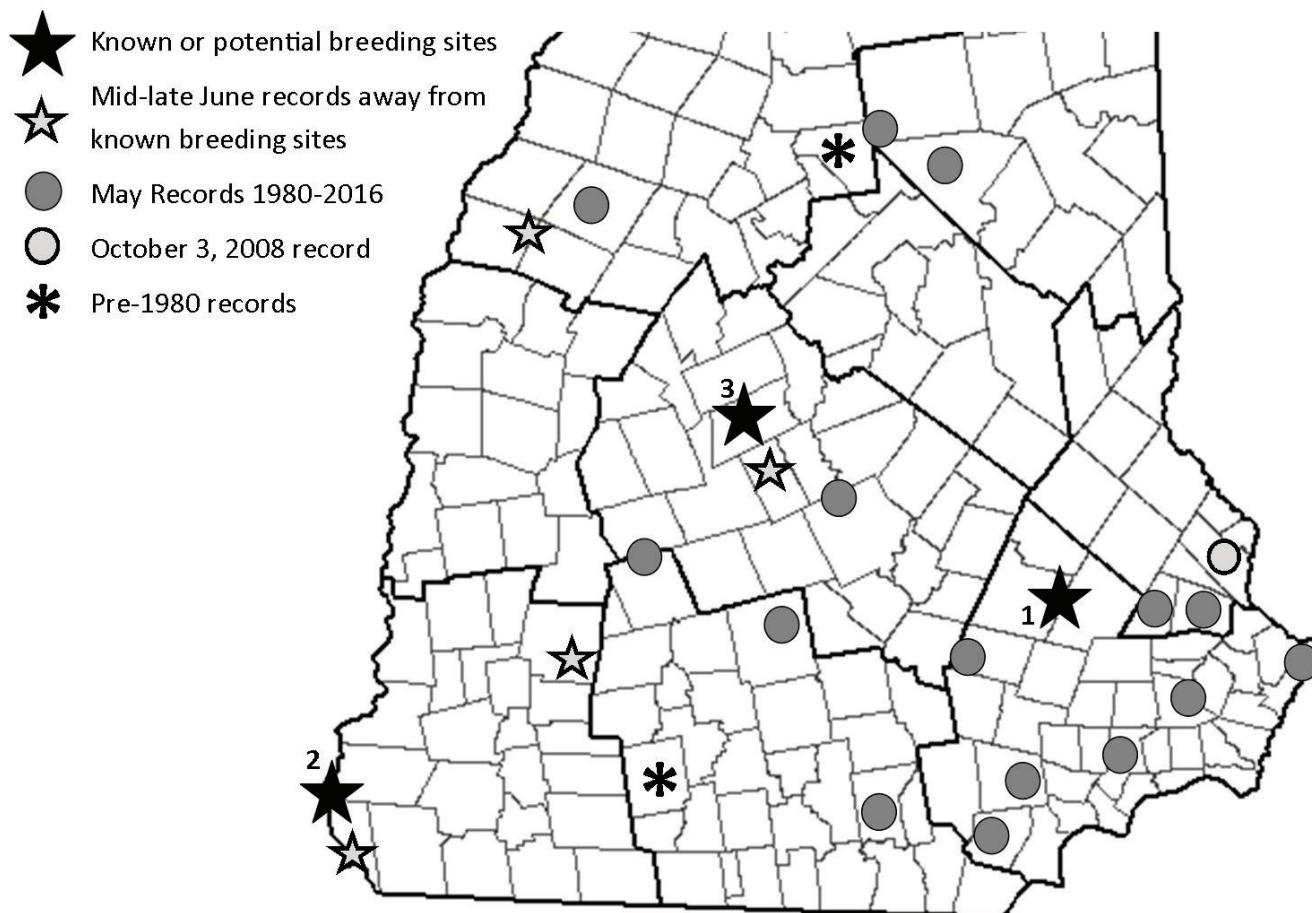


Figure 1. Map of southern New Hampshire showing all known locations of Cerulean Warbler in the state from 1918 to 2016. Known or potential breeding sites are: 1) Pawtuckaway State Park, 2) Wantastiquet Mountain Natural Area, and 3) Blackwater River floodplain. See text for more details.

South America, where they winter in broadleaf forests in the Andean foothills as far south as Bolivia. Like many other Neotropical migrants, they are declining, at roughly 2% per year according to Breeding Bird Survey data. Over 50 years, this has resulted in an estimated loss of over half the population.

Cerulean Warblers have never been common in New Hampshire, although for almost two decades they were reliable at Pawtuckaway State Park in Nottingham. I'll return to Pawtuckaway momentarily, but the story begins considerably earlier. On May 27, 1918, G.W. Hagar reported one from Peterborough and as far as anyone can tell this was the first record of the species in the state. Eleven years later, the second was collected in Holderness in early June, but 50 years followed before the third (although there are probably a couple we don't know about during that half-century).

From 1980 to 2016, there were 21 reports of Cerulean Warblers away from known or suspected breeding areas, with roughly six per decade through the 2000s. The vast majority of these birds (16) were found in May (dark circles on Figure 1). They range in date from May 5-29, with a median around May 22-23 (Figure 2). Another four were in the second half

of June (pale stars in Figure 1) and these are a little more intriguing. Birds in Webster and Hinsdale were near breeding areas, while those in Stoddard and Lebanon were not. The Lebanon bird is noteworthy because it was detected at two locations near Mascoma Lake, 1.3 miles and seven days apart. It was presumed to be a wandering unmated male, which is likely the case for other June records. Cerulean Warblers are early fall migrants. They can be hard to find even at breeding sites after mid-August and are largely gone from the northeastern United States by early September. In light of this, New Hampshire's only fall record, from Dover on October 3, 2008, is remarkable. There are no August or September records for the state and only 4-5 from July (the latter is at least partially because people aren't looking as intently).

Although Cerulean Warblers are declining overall, their range expanded slightly at its extreme northeastern edge (e.g., n. New York, s. Quebec, and w. Massachusetts) during the 1970s and 1980s. Shortly afterward, the species became a reliable summer resident in New Hampshire. Since 1986, three locations have hosted Ceruleans for multiple years and during the breeding season: Pawtuckaway State Park

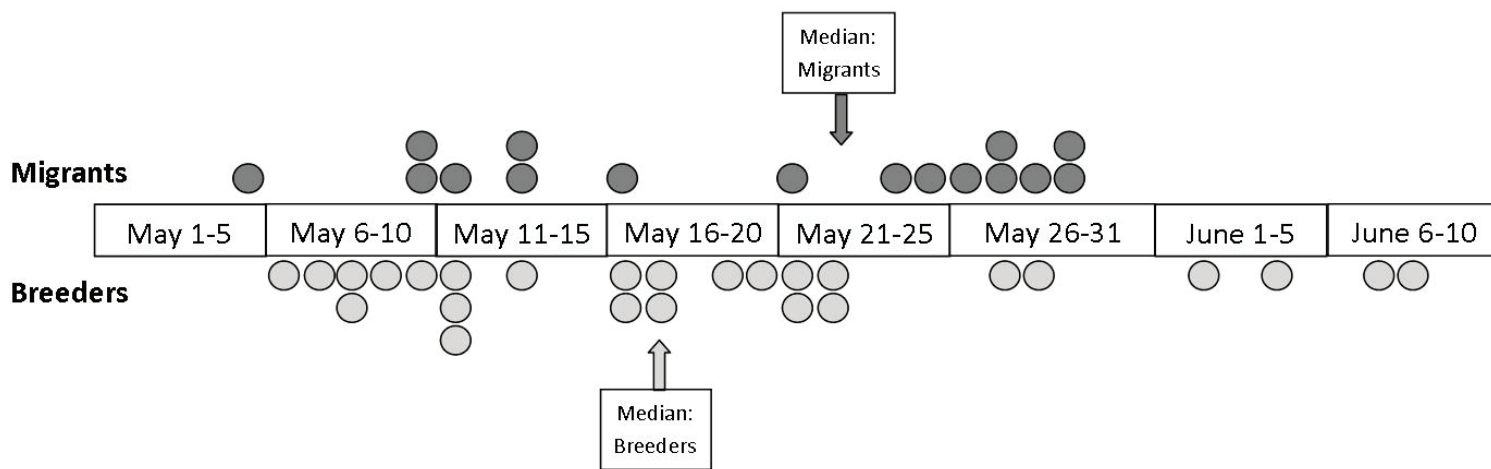


Figure 2. Arrival dates for Cerulean Warblers in New Hampshire, 1980-2016. The dark circles above the bar are single May records away from breeding areas. Pale circles below the bar represent the first date birds were reported at a breeding area in a given year.

(SP), Wantastiquet Mountain Natural Area, and along the Blackwater River in Salisbury (Figure 1). Of these, Pawtuckaway is by far the most well-known, so I'll start there.

Pawtuckaway SP is located in the towns of Nottingham and Deerfield and the area used by Ceruleans is the high elevation portion in the northwest. The most reliable spot has been the area along Tower Road near the Middle Mountain trailhead and up the trail a variable distance. Extensive searching in 2001 also found warblers near North Mountain and Round Pond, but they have never been regular at either site. The first Cerulean found at Pawtuckaway was in May 1986, but none were seen again until 1992. At that point the species became regular and was annual from 1994 to 2010. On May 18, 1996, a female was observed building a nest and Cerulean Warbler was officially added to the list of species officially known to breed in the state. At least three young were produced from this nest. The only other breeding confirmation came in 2004, when a pair was seen feeding two fledglings near the start of the Middle Mountain trail.

At the far southwestern corner of the state lies the second regular Cerulean site in New Hampshire, the Wantastiquet Mountain Natural Area in Chesterfield and Hinsdale. Like Pawtuckaway, the habitat here is a dry oak-pine forest on a slope, but unlike Pawtuckaway, it is visited far less often by birders. Ceruleans have been at Wantastiquet just as long, however, although not as regularly, with records from 1987, 1991, 1992, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2016. Most years only a single male has been reported, although there were two in June of 2010. Unfortunately, because Wantastiquet is not birded as regularly, we don't have a very good idea whether Ceruleans are there each year or not, or how long they stay into the summer.

The final "reliable" location is even less visited and the only reason we know about Ceruleans there is because

biologists were conducting floodplain forest bird surveys in the Merrimack River watershed in the late 1990s. At one of the study sites, along the Blackwater River in Salisbury, they found a singing male through June and into early July in both 1998 and 1999. The bird was clearly on territory, but no further evidence of breeding was obtained and the area has not been visited since. There is one other record in the same general area from May 1988 and a June record from nearby Webster (Figure 1) is also intriguing.

As shown in Figure 2, arrival dates for Cerulean Warblers at breeding areas are almost a week earlier than those for other spring records. This is not atypical for many migrants and birds away from breeding areas later in the season, especially at the extreme edge of the range, may be overshoots from farther south or prospecting for new breeding territories. Presumably, this is how new sites like those in New Hampshire get started, but the same stochastic events can also operate in reverse. After 17 years of regular sightings at Pawtuckaway, Cerulean Warblers all but disappeared from the park after 2010. There was a single report from North Mountain in May of 2012 and another from the traditional Middle Mountain site in June 2015. Given that the latter area still receives considerable birder visitation, this lack of data strongly suggests that Ceruleans no longer breed at this historic location. There has been speculation that a partial timber harvest near the Middle Mountain trail in the winter of 2008 may have influenced the warbler, although there is no direct evidence for this. As noted earlier, Ceruleans appear to prefer areas with canopy gaps and forest management is a common tool to improve habitat conditions in the core of the species' range. Given that the New Hampshire population has always been small, it is equally possible that the birds at Pawtuckaway simply "blinked out," meaning that random events led to fewer birds and their eventual abandonment of the site.

Because of the species' decline in New Hampshire, and across the range as a whole, Cerulean Warbler was listed as "threatened" in New Hampshire in 2017. In order to get a better handle on its statewide status, NH Audubon initiated surveys of historic sites in the summer of 2017. I visited the historically occupied area of both Pawtuckaway and Wantastiquet twice between late May and the end of June and used a combination of playback and careful listening to search for Ceruleans. None were detected and two visits to potential habitat in nearby towns also came up empty. Near the end of June, a singing male was reported from the campground at Pawtuckaway, far from the species' traditional haunts. A follow-up search at the end of the month failed to turn up any evidence, but we'll be checking in 2018. We also still need to revisit the Blackwater River.

Are there still Cerulean Warblers in New Hampshire? We honestly don't know, but efforts to relocate them will intensify in 2018-19. Some of these surveys will be conducted by staff, but more eyes (or ears) are always better and volunteers are encouraged to lend a hand. Be forewarned, as indicated at the start of this article, the song of the Cerulean Warbler can sound a lot like other species, so it will be imperative to get **visual confirmation** of any records, even from Pawtuckaway at this point. If interested in helping out, contact me at phunt@nhaudubon.org.

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Cerulean Warbler by Scott Heron.

Backyard Birder

An Unusually Tall Eastern Phoebe Nest

by Rebecca Suomala



Delores Schnarr took this photo of an Eastern Phoebe nest at her home in Acworth, NH on 6-14-17. The nest is remarkably high but looks normal in all other regards. In researching this odd nest, I found an article by James Hill* describing a similar nest. Phoebes are known to build new nests on top of an old one to cover a Brown-headed Cowbird egg, but the author was able to rule that out by x-raying the nest. The most likely cause is that phoebes prefer to have their "nest rim close to the overhanging ceiling." In the photo above, the ceiling is quite a ways above the support that the nest is built upon. The phoebes appear to have added to the nest until it was not only close to the ceiling, but also at the same angle as the ceiling. Hill went on to speculate why this behavior may have developed:

"The Eastern Phoebe historically nested along stream banks with rocky outcroppings (among other places) and continues to do so... At such relatively exposed sites, any mud nest not placed close beneath some protective overhang would be vulnerable to destruction by rain."

Special thanks to Delores for sharing this unusual nest photo.

* Hill, J. 1987. An exceptionally tall Eastern Phoebe nest. *Wilson Bulletin* 99(3), pp. 501-502

<https://sora.unm.edu/sites/default/files/journals/wilson/v099n03/p0501-p0502.pdf>

Birding Pease International Tradeport

There's an Osprey in the Ammo Dump!

by Jon Woolf

For 45 years, Pease Air Force Base, on the outskirts of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, was an important part of the United States Air Force's network of bases. Strategic bombers stood by in case of war, while fighters, transports, and tankers all flew regular missions from Pease's two-mile-long runway. Then in 1991, Pease AFB was closed as part of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Program and it became Pease International Tradeport. Today, the Tradeport is a moderately active commercial and general-aviation airport as well as an Air National Guard base, a business center, and a very interesting place to go birding.

The "Billboard"

A good place to start is the southern entrance to the Tradeport, Grafton Road off of State Route 33. This intersection is close to the southern end of the single runway (Runway 34). A quarter-mile or so up Grafton Road is a small gravel parking lot on the left, or airport side, of the road. (This is often referred to as "the billboard" by birders for the large wooden wall that looks remarkably like a ground-level billboard with no signs on it.) Here you can park close to the tall chain-link fence that protects the actual airport and scan nearly the entire length of the flight line and the runway. While there can be many interesting metal birds coming and going, our focus is on the ones with feathers. A scan of the grassy areas between the runway and taxiways can find many grassland birds. American Kestrels and Red-tailed Hawks are likely, and other birds of prey are always possible. Killdeer race along the edges of the pavement, while Eastern Meadowlarks may be heard singing. Pease is a known breeding locale for Upland Sandpipers and this is one good place to look for them. This is the best spot to check for Buff-breasted Sandpipers and American Golden-Plovers in the fall. Rarities can also appear here; the Grafton Road overlook was one of the places where a Mountain Bluebird was seen for a couple of weeks in 2015.

The Pease Golf Course is on the opposite side of the runways from the "billboard" and is accessed from Grafton Road. The parking area gives another vantage point on the south end of the airfield and the entrance road is a good place to check for flocks of Horned Larks and an occasional Lapland Longspur mixed in.

Business District

Leave the overlook and continue north on Grafton Road to reach the main Tradeport business district. From here you can turn left onto New Hampshire Avenue or right onto Corporate Drive. Either way, the basic layout is the same. While most of the buildings are new, the Tradeport kept the old base's street layout, a large, roughly circular perimeter road with various smaller side streets. The perimeter road is actually three named streets: New Hampshire Avenue runs the length of the airport; Corporate Drive curves around the eastern and northeastern side of the business district; and Pease Boulevard connects the others at the northern end of the business district. Pease Boulevard and New Hampshire Avenue cross in a four-way intersection that also includes the main entrance to the Air National Guard base.

The entire business district can provide worthwhile birding. There are extensive woodlots, grassy fields and a few marshy areas scattered throughout. Pretty much any land bird that occurs in southern New Hampshire at all is at least possible in this patchwork of habitats, from common ones like American Robins and Blue Jays to more habitat-specific ones like Red-winged Blackbirds. In the early spring, the grassy fields may provide stages for displaying American Woodcock. Some roads have low grassy areas next to them that become mud pools in the springtime and after heavy rains. These are worth checking for Wilson's Snipe.

Trees and brush throughout the Tradeport are likely songbird spots. Common warblers like Yellow Warbler and Common Yellowthroat are, well, common. At any time of year, you might find Cedar Waxwings flying around. Fish Crows are also possible; listen for their distinctive "nuh-uh" call. Red-tailed Hawks can be found patrolling above open areas, while Northern Harriers occasionally appear above marshy spots, and Cooper's Hawks are possible almost anywhere.

Arboretum Drive and Short Street

The best birding at Pease, however, is in the northwestern sector, far from the business district. To reach this area, find your way to the intersection of New Hampshire Avenue and Pease Boulevard, then look for the signs for Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Follow the signs north onto Arboretum Drive. This road winds through woods, then through a traffic circle that leads out to Woodman Drive and the Spaulding Turnpike. Take the third exit from the traffic circle and continue along Arboretum Drive to pass through another section of woods that can offer up Wild Turkeys and an array of typical woodland songbirds.

Eventually, Arboretum Drive curves around to pass close by the northern end of the Pease runway (Runway 16) and



Rough-legged Hawk by Zeke Cornell, 1-27-18, Pease International Tradeport, Newington, NH

the aptly named Short Street. There's a pull-off area at the end of Short Street and several large mounds of dirt, the tops of which provide good viewing. From here, you can scan the northern part of the runway and flight line, which is another likely area for hawks and falcons. In winter, scan for Snowy Owls and Rough-legged Hawks. I've had both male and female American Kestrels in spring and summer, suggesting a nest nearby and in the woods nearby there's often a Common Raven nest. Again, Killdeer can sometimes be seen in the grass along the edge of the paved areas and this is the best place to look for Upland Sandpipers in the grass islands between the runways. A scope is essential as the sandpipers are usually quite far away. Eastern Meadowlarks can often be heard and this is one place to listen for a possible Grasshopper Sparrow (although beware of singing Savannah Sparrows which sound similar, especially at a distance). Flocks of Horned Larks and Snow Buntings are possible from late fall through early spring. Eastern Bluebirds and Song Sparrows routinely perch on the tall fence. Eastern Kingbirds, Eastern Phoebes, and other small flycatchers are possible as well. The brushy areas nearby, are always worth checking for sparrows, especially the area across Arboretum Drive from the runways.

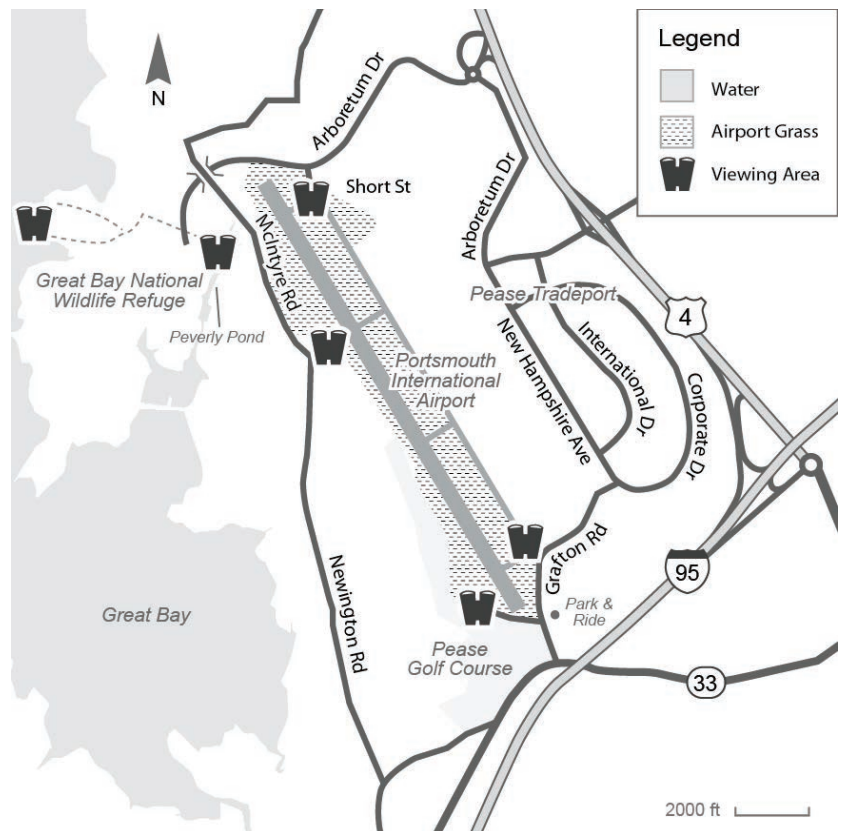
Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Farther along, Arboretum Drive ends at the Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge. On one side of the road is a parking lot and the trailhead for the Peverly Ponds loop trail. Half a mile long, this boardwalk trail winds through an old woodlot that is peppered with dead and dying snags along with many live and healthy trees. This is a great place to look for songbirds in the spring, especially warblers and other migrants. Pine, Palm, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Blackpoll, Black-throated Green, Chestnut-sided, and Black-and-white Warblers

have all been reported, along with Ovenbird and Louisiana Waterthrush. Other songbirds to look for in the spring and summer include wrens, vireos, and brown-backed thrushes. Downy, Hairy, Red-bellied, and Pileated Woodpeckers all work the trees and Brown Creepers and both species of nuthatch pick up whatever the woodpeckers miss. Eastern Phoebes and Eastern Wood-Pewees can be both seen and heard and on one occasion I had a Great Crested Flycatcher in the trees at the edge of the parking lot.

Halfway around the loop trail, there are several places from which you can scan a large pond. This pond is a great place to look for ducks in spring and fall. I've had many species of ducks here: Mallard, Black Duck, Ring-necked Ducks, both species of scaup, Wood Duck, and Common and Hooded Mergansers. In later spring and summer, Tree, Barn, and Rough-winged Swallows zip and zoom over the water. There may also be an eagle or an osprey cruising overhead, and Canada Geese have been known to nest here.

Return to the parking lot and look across the road. There's a large fenced-off area there; the fence is old and weather beaten but still formidable, and for a good reason. This is the old Air Force Base munitions storage area. All of the above-ground structures have been demolished, but the old underground munitions storage bunkers and a handful of light poles remain. The light poles remain, not because the lights are needed, but because the fixtures support at least three Osprey nests. Not every nest is used every year, but there's always at least one active nest. Killdeer also nest here,



and field and edge-habitat songbirds fill the area: bluebirds, flycatchers, sparrows, and warblers.

A walking trail passes along the north end of the munitions area and then goes into the woodlot to the west. In general, this is more typical woodland habitat, but it also has a couple of spots from which you can scan Great Bay and look for tidewater-habitat birds.

McIntyre Road

Along the western edge of the airport, a quarter-mile stretch of the airfield abuts McIntyre Road, offering more views of the runway and airport grass. This is the best spot to find Grasshopper and Vesper Sparrow with the former occasionally offering excellent views while perched on or near the chain-link fence. Upland Sandpipers can be spotted here and in winter, Snowy Owls can occasionally be found as well. American Kestrel and other raptors are often seen here and good looks at Killdeer and Eastern Meadowlark are also a strong possibility.

Getting to the viewing area on McIntyre Road can be mildly tricky as Arboretum Drive and McIntyre Road don't actually connect despite intersecting via an overpass. From Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge and Short Street, travel west on Arboretum Drive toward the traffic circle, taking the third exit onto Woodbury Avenue toward the Spaulding Turnpike. Turn left onto the northbound on-ramp for Spaulding Turnpike and take the first exit off of the highway. Turn left onto Shattuck Way toward Newington town center. At the end of Shattuck Way, turn right onto Nimble Hill Road. After one mile, turn right onto Little Bay Road and after half of a mile, turn left onto McIntyre Road. The viewing area will be on the left in just under a mile.

Coming from the southern part of the airport runway is a little more straightforward. Head south on Grafton Road and turn right on Greenland Road/Route 33. Take the first right onto Portsmouth Avenue and then take the first right onto Newington Road. Newington Road will become McIntyre Road and after two and a half miles, the viewing area will be on the right.

While you should be careful not to get in the way of the businesses or the Air National Guard, Pease Tradeport is a place that rewards the persistent birder with a lot of good sightings and even the occasional rarity. There's something pleasant in the thought that this former military base, a place made to deal out death should it ever become necessary, is now a place of new life, providing nesting habitat for many species both common and rare.

Special thanks to Scott Heron for his contributions to this article.

Jon Woolf is a computer programmer by day, but spends his evenings and weekends as a birder and nature photographer. He

spends a lot of time birding near home in Manchester. He also regularly visits the coast and Pease Tradeport, especially in the spring and during shorebirding season.

Rusty Blackbird Research 2017

by Carol R. Foss



Female Rusty Blackbird with bands. Photo by Carol R. Foss.

The spring of 2017 found field technicians Katrina Fenton, Charlotte Harding, Elizabeth Schatzkin, and Kiah Walker braving cold, mud, frequent rain, and plentiful blood-sucking insects to scour the North Country and adjacent areas of Maine and Vermont for Rusty Blackbird activity and nest sites. The crew conducted presence-absence surveys at 144 locations in nine New Hampshire, five Maine, and three Vermont townships. We documented 56 occupied territories, which was above the average for the previous four years (52); however, our search area was considerably larger than in years past and several breeding areas that recently supported two or three pairs had only a single pair. It is impossible to know at this point whether this represents temporary, lingering effects from the 2016 drought or is a result of the species' long term decline and northward range retraction. The team located and monitored 28 nests, of which 20 (71%) were successful. We also observed fledged young at 10 territories where the nest site was unknown.

The banding crew captured and banded four adult males, eight adult females, and 35 nestlings, bringing the total of Rusty Blackbirds banded since 2009 in our study area to 811 (Figure 1). The availability of a quality camera enabled us to take and enlarge photos of previously banded individuals this year. This greatly improved our ability to determine the identities and histories of these birds. We were able to identify eight individuals, including five males and three females. Seven of these birds had been banded as adults; three were originally banded two years ago and two each three and four years ago. The oldest individual was a six-year-old male that was banded as a nestling on a territory about 2 ½ miles

from its 2017 nest site. Another male was banded as an adult in 2014 and has nested on the same territory every year since.

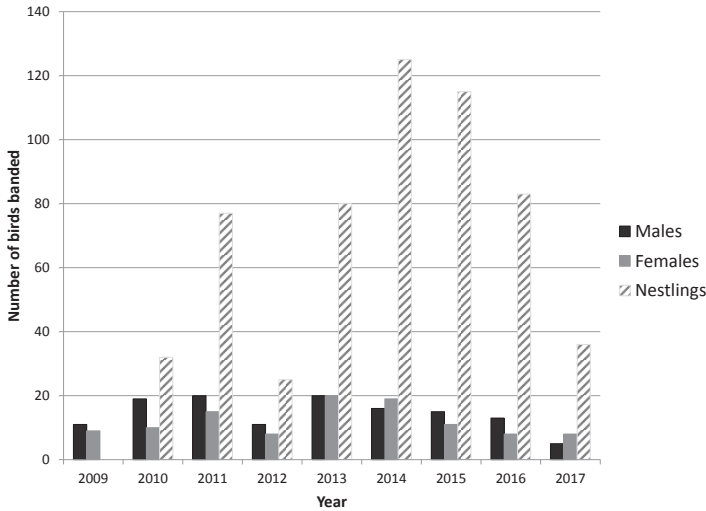


Figure 1. The number of Rusty Blackbirds banded from 2009-2017.

Another six banded birds remained unidentified. These include one individual banded as a nestling, which received no color bands, two individuals for which we were unable to get a good view of both legs, and three individuals that had pecked the striping off their color bands. Our population of Rusty Blackbirds has presented many challenges for color banding. When we initially used the plastic color bands that are typically used on songbirds, we recaptured several the following year and discovered that they had removed their color bands. We then tried custom fabrication, applying auto detailing to metal bands with multiple coats of epoxy. These worked well for several years, but eventually many birds removed the colored detailing, leaving a plain silver band. We are now importing colored metal bands from Australia, which we hope will be a long-term solution!



Rusty Blackbird nestling ready for banding. Photo by Carol R. Foss.

As readers may recall, we discovered bird blow fly larvae parasitizing Rusty Blackbird nestlings in 2015. The only way to document numbers and species of these parasites is to dissect nests after the young have fledged and examine the

blow fly puparia. Dr. Terry Whitworth in Puyallup, WA, has been doing these analyses for us annually. In 2015, he found puparia of a single bird blow fly species in our nests; in 2016 and 2017 two species were present. The proportion of nests infested by bird blow flies in 2017 (52% of 27) was lower than in 2015 and 2016 (70% of 37 and 68% of 25, respectively). We have much to learn about the relationship between Rusty Blackbirds and these parasites. It is too early to relate trends in bird blow fly numbers to weather patterns or nesting phenology. Analyses have shown no relationship between infestation levels and latitude, elevation, or distance to nearest road or wetland. Studies with other bird species have suggested that bird blow fly infestations seldom affect fledging success, but may affect the survival of young birds after leaving the nest. Our plans for 2018 include detailed documentation of nestling condition, blood characteristics of adults and nestlings, and a radio telemetry study of fledgling survival. We hope to shed more light on this host-parasite relationship in the coming years.

We are grateful to: our cooperating landowners, Seven Islands Land Company, Silvio O. Conte and Umbagog National Wildlife Refuges, Wagner Forest Management, and Weyerhaeuser (formerly Plum Creek); the Conservation Biology Research Fund at the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, US Fish & Wildlife Service, and Wagner Forest Management for continuing support of this work; the Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund for enabling us to expand our study area in Maine; and Adrienne Leppold of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife for assisting with banding activities.

Volunteers and Research

Thirty Years of Change on a NH Breeding Bird Survey Route

by Wendy Ward

Wendy is a volunteer observer for the North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS). New Hampshire has 23 BBS routes which have been continuously run since they were established in the 1960s. – R. Suomala, NH BBS Coordinator.

I “inherited” NH Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) route 58003 in 2006 from my dad (Jesse “Chick” Ward), observer of this route since the mid-1970s. I joined Dad as observer in the early 1980s. He lost his upper range of hearing and I, a young adult just past fledgling age, was eager to be part of the BBS. We ran the route together with my mother as driver, recorder and timer for 23 years until 2007 (Dad

passed in 2010). I have continued as observer, 2017 being my 32nd year with my daughter Elise or my friend Henry as recorder and timekeeper. As you can imagine, I have observed a number of changes in both the landscape and the birds in the past 30 odd years.

First, here are a few logistics about the route. Cheshire County NH BBS route 58003 is a 25-mile roadside route. It starts in Fitzwilliam and winds north and south along lowland rural roads through woodland, wetlands, farms, and residential areas of Troy, Marlborough, and Swanzey ending to the west in Winchester. The survey is fifty 3-minute stops at one-half mile intervals. I run the route in mid-June with Father's Day as the backup if bad weather arises. I choose a Sunday morning to minimize interference from human activity and noise. I begin promptly at the designated start time of 4:42 am and try to finish up before 10 am.

Landscape changes I have observed along the route since the 1980s reflect US census changes for Cheshire County, an increase in human population from the 1980s leveling off after the year 2000. The beginning point of the route was at the dead end of a road until about a decade ago when it was widened, paved and connected to a crossroad. Every year the woodland and fields sprouted new houses and there was an increase in vehicles passing us at the stops. Both development and vehicles appear to have leveled off in the past decade. I have seen management intensify in the remaining farm fields since 1985. Shrublands and fields have grown to mature woodlands. Aerial photos from the 1970s to 2015 show this increase in development, disappearance of farms, and maturing of woodlands.



Tree Swallows show the largest declines on Fitzwilliam BBS route in the last 30 years. Photo by Len Medlock.

For the bird changes, I looked at my raw data to confirm or dispel my impressions of declines and increases in birds in the last 30+ years on this route. My guesses for the largest declines were Tree Swallow, Bobolink, Eastern Towhee and Wood Thrush. The data shows Tree Swallow declines were the largest with a high of 86 in 1988 to less than 20 in

the last decade. Bobolink numbers, in the 30s in the mid-1980s, are now less than 10. Eastern Towhees were nine in 1992, dipping to three in the years the powerlines were mowed. Now, I only hear one or two in the powerline cuts in no-mow years, zero in years with mowing. Wood Thrush declined from a high of 20 birds in 1995 to none or just a few in the past decade.

For increases, Tufted Titmouse, Cedar Waxwing, Chipping Sparrow and Common Raven came to mind. The most dramatic (to me) increase was Tufted Titmouse, from zero until 1986 to over 30 in 2014. Cedar Waxwings appear on the rise, but have had ups and downs. Chipping Sparrows increased from the teens to numbers in the 50s and 40s in recent years. Also, Northern Cardinals started in the single digits in 1984 and have steadily increased with 20 recorded in 2016. Perhaps these species' increases are related to the increase in residential areas? However, House Finches have dropped off from a high of 36 in 1989 to just a few to none since 1996. Perhaps conjunctivitis has kept the population low. Common Raven first appeared in 2010 and Red-bellied Woodpeckers were new to the route in 2012. Ovenbirds have steadily increased from single digits to numbers in the 30s. I expect more mature woodlands have boosted their numbers in this region.

Veery remain fairly consistent at counts in mid-teens throughout my count years. American Crow, American Robin, European Starling, Red-eyed Vireo and Mourning Dove numbers appear to be the most consistent higher numbers. There are 25 species I have recorded every year: American Crow, American Goldfinch, American Robin, Baltimore Oriole, Barn Swallow, Black-and-white Warbler, Black-capped Chickadee, Blue Jay, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Common Grackle, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Phoebe, Gray Catbird, House Wren, Mourning Dove, Northern Cardinal, Ovenbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Red-winged Blackbird, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Song Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Veery, and Yellow Warbler. White-breasted Nuthatch, Cedar Waxwing and Bobolink were present every year but one.

Since 1985, total bird numbers were between the mid-500s to a high of just over 900 in 1995 with a typical year being just under 700. Total species numbers ranged from a low of 55 to a high of 80 with a typical year in the mid-60s. Total numbers appeared to be related to weather and timing of the survey (i.e. if I conducted the survey a week later than normal).

After doing this route for so many years, I have memories at just about every stop on the route: woodcock peenting in the road at dawn; Blue-headed Vireos squabbling in mid-air close enough to touch; a Cooper's Hawk rising in the mist silhouetted by the sunrise; Mother getting out of the car

every year at stop 50 hoping to spot a hummingbird as she had years before; and a bleary-eyed father of the bride, still in his rumpled tux, asking why we were making all that racket (his dogs were barking at us).



Red-eyed Vireo is one of the 25 species Wendy has recorded every year on her BBS route. Photo by Leo McKillop.

A few years after Dad passed, Elise was riding shotgun as recorder and timekeeper. As we rounded a turn I told her, “Grampa and I sometimes had deer cross the road here.” As if on cue, a large doe bounded out of the woods and crossed the road in front of us, another BBS memory to store. I hope to continue recording birds and memories on BBS route 58003 until the turnings of time require me to pass this route on to another capable young birder to begin their own journey of observations and memories.

“What is the North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS)?”

The BBS is a long-term, large-scale, international avian monitoring program initiated in 1966 to track the status and trends of North American bird populations.” For more information about the survey <https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/BBS/about/>

Answer to the Photo Quiz

by David B. Donsker

The subject of this issue’s Photo Quiz features the lovely image of a small, proportionally large-headed perching bird, with a small, thin, tapered bill, short neck and medium length tail, which is perched rather vertically or upright in a blossoming tree. Its most distinctive features are two bold, whitish wing bars and a prominent, complete, pale eye-ring, which is slightly thicker behind the eye than it is around the rest of its circumference. There is a faint pale loreal area between the front of the eye and the base of the bill, but this is not very prominent. The head, throat and back are grayish.

The upper breast is dusky, especially towards the sides, but the rest of the under parts, including the lower throat, lower breast, and belly are whitish. The wings are dark with distinct white feather edging. The underside of the tail is dark and lacks any white spots or other prominent white areas.

Several groups of small birds share the combination of double wing bars and some sort of eye-ring. These include some of our wood warblers, vireos, kinglets, and flycatchers.

Some warblers in the large genus *Setophaga* have thin bills coupled with two wing bars and some form of eye-ring, but all of these have some degree of streaking on the under parts or are otherwise boldly marked. Even the duller, least boldly marked Pine Warbler has faint flank stripes. These warblers have indistinct, often incomplete, eye-rings at best, and none has an eye-ring that is this bold. Further, the warblers that might show any possibility of confusion have large white tail spots which are very well defined when seen from below. The underside of the tail of the featured bird lacks these bold white zones.

Four of the vireos in our state have wing bars and eye-rings. Of these, three, Blue-headed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, and the uncommon White-eyed Vireo, also have a very bold loreal region which produces the appearance of “spectacles.” The pale loreal spot on our featured bird does suggest a faint spectacle, but the spectacles of the aforementioned vireos are bold and distinct. Bell’s Vireo, which has only been recorded a few times in our state, is the dullest and least strongly marked of this group and has a much less prominent spectacle, so it must be briefly considered here. Unlike our featured bird, its two wing bars are faint and not nearly so bold. In fact, often the upper wing bar is so indistinct that it can be easily overlooked. The eye-ring in Bell’s Vireo is also very poorly defined and indistinct which is quite unlike the bold eye-ring of this bird. Further, all vireos are stockier, thicker billed birds than our featured species. They also do not perch upright, but rather perch horizontally.

The small, short-tailed Ruby-crowned Kinglet shares many of the plumage features of our featured bird. It has two wing bars, with similarly distributed pale feather edging in the wings, and a prominent pale eye-ring that is thicker behind the eye than it is above and below the eye. It differs from the quiz bird in having an even smaller, diminutive bill and a shorter tail. Its under parts are more uniformly shaded and less pale, and do not contrast with the rest of the plumage color to the degree that is shown in this bird. There is a thick, dark bar beneath the lower white wing bar in the kinglet which is not present in this individual. Importantly, the eye-ring of Ruby-crowned Kinglet is subtly different. Not only is its bold, complete eye-ring wider behind the eye, it is also notably wider in front of the eye and much thinner and

weaker above and below the eye. A very important difference between the kinglet and this bird is its perching posture. This bird is perched upright, the kinglet perches horizontally.

Of all of our candidates, only the flycatchers share the large-headed proportions and upright perching posture of our featured species. The larger, thicker-billed species in this family, the kingbirds, the *Myiarchus* flycatchers (Great-crested and the vagrant Ash-throated) and Olive-sided Flycatcher need not be considered here. Not only are they structurally different, but amongst other features, they all lack bold eye-rings. Eastern Phoebe may have faint wing bars, especially in juvenile plumage, but never has a bold eye-ring. The wood-pewees share many features with the featured bird. Like it, they are fairly small species that have two bold wing bars, pale edges on their wing feathers and are similarly dull plumaged. But wood-pewees have much darker and more extensive sides to their breasts giving them a “vested” appearance. More importantly, although they may occasionally show a very weak eye-ring, they lack the bold, pale eye-ring of this bird.

This leaves only the confusing *Empidonax* flycatchers (Alder, Willow, Acadian, Least, and Yellow-bellied) to consider. There are additional species in this genus that breed in the western United States which occasionally show up in the East as vagrants, particularly in the fall, but since none of these has been recorded in New Hampshire, they will not be addressed here. All *Empidonax* flycatchers have largish heads, two bold wing bars and, in most cases, variably prominent, pale eye-rings. All have slightly dusky breasts, which contrast subtly with their paler throats and bellies.

These five species are similar enough to each other that many people simply give up and merely identify them as *Empidonax* “species” or just “Empid.” Even two of the birding giants of the mid-20th century, Ludlow Griscom and Roger Tory Peterson, stated that it is nearly impossible, short of collecting, to be certain about separating “Traill’s” (Willow and Alder were considered one species then), Acadian, and Least Flycatchers by sight alone in the spring, and that in the fall, it was nearly impossible to do so with any conviction. All are most reliably separated by their distinctive songs and calls and, during breeding season, their favored habitat. Even when not vocalizing, however, as is often the case during migration, we have begun to learn the subtle morphological characteristics that provide some significant hope in identifying them beyond the genus level, at least in some cases.

Once a non-vocalizing flycatcher is determined to belong to the *Empidonax* genus, it is important to concentrate on the structural and plumage characteristics that are useful in separating them at the species level. Ignore the field marks that are common to all species such as pale lores and outer

tail veins, yellow lower belly, and dusky breast. Also, beware of factors that might alter these characteristics, including feather molt and wear, whether the bird is excited or relaxed, and light conditions, age and timing in the molt cycle that might alter the color hue of any individual.

The structural features to try to notice in this group include; the shape of the crown (rounded or crested) and forehead (steep or flat), size and shape of the bill, body proportions (slim or chunky), the color of the lower mandible, the length of the extension of the wingtips of the primary flight feathers beyond the rearmost tertial feather on the folded wing (the tertials are those shorter wing feathers with pale feather edging in this group), and the length and general shape of the base of the tail (constricted vs. parallel sides). Plumage characteristics to specifically notice are the strength and shape of the eye-ring, the general color of the bird, the contrast and hue of the two wing bars, and the contrast of the throat and belly to the bird’s upperparts.

So, let’s apply these principles to the quiz bird. Alder and Willow Flycatchers are such similar appearing species that, until the late 20th century, they were thought to be the same species, “Traill’s” Flycatcher. Separating them in the field when they are not singing or calling is difficult at best and impossible much of the time. Even in the hand, as when examining mist-netted birds, they are not possible to differentiate. So, we will discuss them together for the purposes of this photo quiz as “Traill’s” Flycatcher.

“Traill’s” Flycatcher is a relatively large *Empid* with a fairly large and longish bill. The bill is also fairly wide with a yellow lower mandible. Both Alder and Willow Flycatchers are medium to relatively long-distance migrants that winter in northern South America and from Mexico to northwest South America, respectively. As such, their wings show medium to long primary extension. (Primary extension is a reflection of wing length. Longer wings support longer distance flight better than shorter wings, so primary extension is a rough indication of the distance of migration). Both species have a relatively gently sloped forehead coupled with a crown that may be peaked at the rear. Their tails are medium length and broader at the base than other Eastern *Empids*. Both species have relatively weak to moderately contrasting wing bars (Willow’s wing bars are generally weaker than those of Alder’s). Importantly for this identification, in both species the eye-ring is rather weak and thin (in many Willow Flycatchers, it is even absent. In many Alder Flycatchers, it is typically crisp but still thin).

Since the featured bird is a small *Empid* with short primary extension (note that the tips of the primaries only extend to the base of the tail), a rounded crown, small bill, strong wing bars and a prominent eye-ring, “Traill’s” Flycatcher is the easiest *Empid* to exclude in this

identification.

Like “Traill’s” Flycatcher, Acadian Flycatcher is a large *Empid* and has the largest, broadest bill of any Eastern member of the genus. Its bill has a noticeable yellow lower mandible. It migrates to eastern Central America and northwest South America which is reflected in a long primary extension (the longest of any Eastern *Empid*). Like “Traill’s” Flycatcher it has a shallow forehead and crown that may be peaked. The tail is broad and of medium length. Unlike “Traill’s” Flycatcher, the contrast between the pale throat and pale under parts compared to the rest of the plumage in this species may be quite strong, although these regions may be slightly yellow-tinged. Like our subject bird, Acadian Flycatcher has bold wing bars. Also, unlike “Traill’s Flycatcher,” Acadian Flycatcher has a prominent, crisp white eye-ring. But the eye-ring in Acadian Flycatcher is more uniformly rounded and narrow and not asymmetrically thicker behind the eye compared to the bold eye-ring that our featured bird shows.

The *Empid* that more closely resembles our featured species is Yellow-bellied Flycatcher. Like our subject species, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher is a small *Empid* with a proportionally large head that demonstrates a steep forehead and rounded crown. Also like our subject, it has a short, narrow tail, bold wing bars, and a crisp eye-ring that may be slightly wider behind the eye. Unlike our featured species, however, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher has relatively long primary extension. Its bill is not generally this small. In real life, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher is unique amongst the Eastern *Empids* by having distinctly yellow under parts, especially on the throat. Although this cannot be appreciated in this black-and-white photograph, it is a feature that makes Yellow-bellied Flycatcher one of the easier Eastern *Empids* to identify. Beware, however, that in the fall, “Traill’s” Flycatchers especially can have a yellowish wash on the breast but the throat is still white.

That leaves only Least Flycatcher as a possibility. Indeed, our featured species shows all of the characteristics that are typical of Least Flycatcher. It is a small *Empid* with proportionally large head and rounded crown. It has a small, short, fairly thin bill that lacks a prominent pale lower mandible. The tail is short. The primary extension of the wings is also short, which is reflective of its fairly short-distance migration to Mexico and northern Central America. It has a prominent eye-ring, which is typically thicker behind the eye, and highly contrasting pale wing bars. Its small size, coupled with the short primary wing extension, short and thin bill and bold eye-ring separate it from Willow, Alder and Acadian Flycatchers. In this black-and-white photograph, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher is harder to separate since we can’t see that species’ yellow throat and greenish upperparts, but

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher would have a slightly longer and broader bill with a more prominent yellow lower mandible and longer primary extension.

This lovely portrait of a Least Flycatcher was taken by Brian Reilly at his home in New Hampshire on May 3, 2017.

Least Flycatcher is a fairly common and conspicuous (at least by voice) resident of the lowland deciduous forests throughout our state. Largely because it is a relatively short-distant migrant, Least Flycatcher arrives back in New Hampshire earlier than any other *Empid*. While the others generally arrive in late May, by that date, most Least Flycatchers are already nesting. So, any *Empid* seen early in the spring is more than likely to be this species.

Identification of any *Empidonax* Flycatcher is a challenge. The best way to familiarize yourself with these similar species is to carefully and more leisurely study singing birds in their typical habitats. Like anything in life, the satisfaction of better mastering the tricky identification challenges associated with this genus is well worth the effort.

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Abbreviations Used

BBC	Brookline Bird Club
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey
CA	Conservation Area
CC	Country Club
CFT	NH Audubon Chapter Field Trip
FT	Field Trip
IBA	Important Bird Area
L.	Lake
LPC	Loon Preservation Committee
NA	Natural Area
NHA	New Hampshire Audubon
NHBR	New Hampshire Bird Records
NHRBC	NH Rare Birds Committee
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
PMRO	Pack Monadnock Raptor Observatory
PO	Post Office
R.	River
RA	Recreation Area
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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Birds of Summer 2017



Brown Pelican by Elizabeth Ford, 7-11-17, Seavey Island, Isles of Shoals, NH.



Brown Pelican by Steve Bennett, 6-24-17, Rye, NH.



Least Tern and chick by Len Medlock, 7-23-17, Seabrook, NH.



Steve and Jane Mirick had a remarkable opportunity to see this E. Whip-poor-will chick when they accidentally flushed the female during a walk in Concord, NH.



Note the exposed orange head feathers on this Eastern Kingbird as it tried to drive off a Bald Eagle by Mark Bennett, 7-5-17, Baxter Lake, Farmington, NH.



Yellow-crowned Night-Heron by Steve Mirick, 6-24-17, Greenland, NH.

