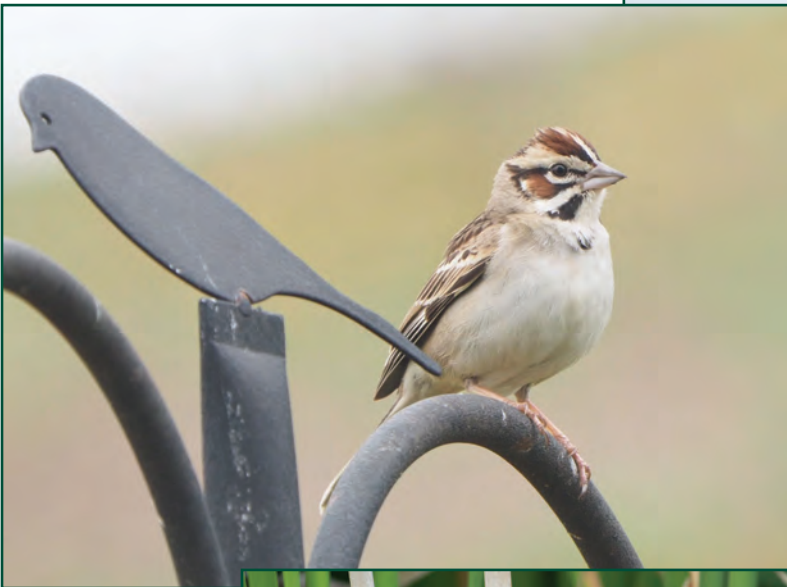
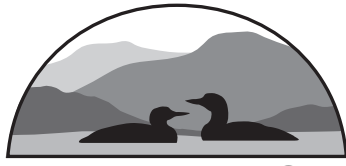


New Hampshire Bird Records





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IN MEMORY OF

Chandler S. Robbins

The 2018 issues of *New Hampshire Bird Records* are sponsored by George C. Robbins in memory and honor of his father, Chan Robbins. Each issue has an article by George about his father, highlighting his father's phenomenal accomplishments in the field of ornithology and connections to New Hampshire.



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Cover Photos: Least Bittern by Jason Lambert, 7-12-18, Madbury, NH (bottom). Lark Sparrow by George Welch, 6-23-18, Loudon, NH (top left) – the first summer record for the state. Royal Tern by Leo McKillop, 7-6-18, Great Boars Head, Hampton, NH (top right).

New Hampshire Bird Records is published quarterly by NH 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. The published sightings typically represent the highlights of the season. Not all species reported will appear in the issue. All records are subject to review by the NH Rare Birds Committee and publication here does not imply future acceptance by the RBC.

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2018 Goodhue-Elkins Award

Presented by Steve Mirick at the New Hampshire Audubon Annual Meeting, September 15, 2018.

The Goodhue-Elkins Award is presented annually by NH Audubon to an individual or individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the study of New Hampshire birds. The award is named for Charles Goodhue, one of the state's great pioneer birders, and Kimball Elkins, the model of critical observation and insightful record-keeping.

NH Audubon is presenting the 2018 award to three educators, in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the education of young people about birds. Each has devoted decades of their lives to educating children through their enthusiasm and love of birds. This year's Goodhue-Elkins co-recipients are Rich Aaronian, Paul Lacourse, and Peggy Meyette.

Rich Aaronian has been teaching at Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter for an amazing 46 years. He developed an Ornithology class in 1975 and continues to teach that class today! The 24/7 nature of the boarding school experience has allowed Rich the opportunity to work with students beyond the classroom and he is constantly bringing his Ornithology students out into the field to experience and learn more about birds. Rich has been an active member of NH Audubon's Seacoast Chapter, a contributor to *New Hampshire Bird Records* for over 40 years, and a contributor to the NHBirds email list since 1999. Rich has also been a regular participant on the Coastal NH and the Lee-Durham Christmas Bird Counts.

Paul Lacourse taught at Winnicunnet High School in Hampton from 1985 until he retired in 2016. Beginning in 1993, he taught science to his students through an Ornithology class that he developed for his school. Paul even traveled with his students to Costa Rica and took the Science Club on camping trips in 1998 and 1999. He still returns to Winnicunnet to help his wife who now teaches Ornithology. He says it's like being a grandfather... all the fun with the kids and none of the responsibilities! He also taught adult education classes in Ornithology and spent many years helping the Seacoast Chapter of NH Audubon, serving as president, leading field trips, and giving programs. Paul is an avid hawkwatcher and has spent many afternoons hawkwatching with his students on the high school grounds. His proudest moments are when he sees former students birdwatching, particularly when he sees them at Cape May, NJ, one of his favorite birding spots. Paul has also been a regular participant on the Coastal NH and the Lee-Durham Christmas Bird Counts.



2018 Goodhue Elkins Award recipients – (left to right) Peggy Meyette, Paul Lacourse, Rich Aaronian. Photo by Dyanna Smith.

Peggy Meyette lives in Plainfield and is a past-President of the Meriden Bird Club – the oldest bird club in the United States. She began a teaching program for Meriden's Junior Bird Club in 1972 and also taught classes on birds at the Plainfield School for many years, beginning in the late 1970s. According to Betty Ann Heistad, the teacher Peg worked with, it all started with Peg helping in the classroom once a week. She brought coloring sheets and calendar pictures of each bird to help children learn and remember the local birds. When Peggy eventually retired, Betty Ann continued her legacy, volunteering in the school using the materials, outlines, and artifacts Peggy came up with years ago. In Betty Ann's words, students are "still being influenced by Peg's love of birds." Peggy also financed field trips for the older grades to places such as Odiorne Point State Park (Rye, NH) and arranged for local children to attend nature camps in the summer. According to Steve Beaupres, former Principal and teacher, the schoolchildren loved having Peg come into the classroom and grew up being well-versed in their local flora and fauna, especially birds, thanks to her. Peggy also installed and monitored bluebird boxes around town and was a stalwart volunteer for NH Audubon during the days of the Breeding Bird Atlas and other field projects such as the annual Osprey count at Lake Umbagog.

All three of these individuals have introduced countless children of all ages to birds and left a lasting legacy of knowledge and caring about birds among the youth of New Hampshire. NH Audubon is honored to present the 2018 Goodhue-Elkins Award to Rich Aaronian, Paul Lacourse, and Peggy Meyette.

Chandler S. Robbins: His second 25 years – 1943-1968

by George C. Robbins

With his first 25 years behind him, my Dad, Chandler S. Robbins, had just moved to Laurel, Maryland to work for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in April of 1943. From then, until the end of World War II in 1945, Dad worked with a group of 30 or more young men at Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel, MD. These men were tasked with creating ponds and roads, and conducting surveys of the plants and wildlife in the refuge. Dad's first assignment at Patuxent was as a biologist in the Bird Banding Laboratory. He was checking banders' incoming records and preparing them for key-punching. Because he had been banding for six years, he was familiar with the codes used by banders.

He also was involved with many bird surveys at Patuxent, starting in those early years. He remarked at how surprised he was that even though the refuge was barely six years old, it had already been surveyed into 100 meter grids complete with permanent survey markers every 100 meters and trails throughout the grid system. This enabled wildlife observations to be accurately pinpointed whenever they were recorded. Also, in 1943, a vegetation type grid map was completed for the 2,670 acre refuge. Surveys of breeding birds were conducted along the grid during the 1943 breeding season by four biologists, including Robert Stewart and Dad. For the next two years, Dad was tasked with continuing the baseline bird population studies and habitat mapping, among other duties at Patuxent.

Following the end of WWII, in December of 1945, Chandler S. Robbins was officially hired as a biologist at Patuxent Research Refuge (then under the US Fish & Wildlife Service), where he would continue as a paid employee for the next 60 years (until his retirement in December 2005.) Simple math will tell you that Dad did not retire until age 87!

Robert Stewart, who was the senior bird biologist at Patuxent in the 1940s, worked with Dad on many projects in those years, including compiling records on avian distribution over the entire state of Maryland. Dad participated in censuses of breeding birds in Maryland and, with Bob Stewart, he helped create a network of information among the state-wide Christmas Bird Counts in Maryland.

During this time, the Patuxent biologists also studied

the direct impacts that DDT was having on songbird populations. This was in conjunction with research being done by another US Fish & Wildlife employee, Rachel Carson. What Dad and the other biologists discovered was that when DDT was sprayed over mature woods, only the American Redstart (which feeds in the canopy) was significantly impacted. This indicated that most of the spray was contained in the canopy, so that species that foraged or nested in the understory, or lower, were not subjected to the poison. However, when DDT was sprayed on an open environment (such as an area recovering from a forest fire),

three of the most common species there (Common Yellowthroat, Prairie Warbler, and House Wren) had their populations reduced by 80%.

Another ongoing study at this time (mid to late 1940s) concerned nocturnal migration of songbirds. Many nights Dad and Bob Stewart would go to the Washington Monument in DC and retrieve the birds that had hit the monument and fallen to the ground, concussed or worse. The survivors were banded and released the following day at Patuxent. Casualties would be made into study specimens. It was also a location where Dad would learn nocturnal flight calls, many of which were vastly different from diurnal calls.

Dad also relayed how one of his

first dates with my Mom was to the Washington Monument to pick up the fallen birds. Mom was already a birder, and although I'm not sure where they met, it was probably on a local bird walk. My Mom, Eleanor Cooley, married my Dad in April 1948, and they were together for the next 60 years. Eleanor's father was Dr. J.S. Cooley, a plant pathologist at the USDA in Beltsville, MD. Between 1949 and 1956, my sisters Jane and Nancy, my brother Stuart, and I were born. Although we all had an interest in nature and birds (how could we not?), I was the one who, if Dad was taking his binoculars and was willing to take me with him, was all in.

Much of the information from which this is written comes directly from the field notebooks which Dad meticulously kept while birding. The first reference of me in his notebooks, was a sighting of two robins on the lawn (first of the year) on February 7. I was four years old at the time. His field notebooks started when he first arrived at Patuxent in 1943



Chan Robbins in his office at the Patuxent Research Refuge during the years covered in this article.

and continued until his death.

In 1948, Dad began audio taping (using a reel to reel tape recorder with a separate hand-held parabola with microphone) to record songs and calls of North American birds. He would continue for nearly 30 years. He also began work on his Master's thesis at this time, *The Ecological Distribution of Breeding Parulidae of Maryland* (about wood warblers), which he completed in 1950 and received a Masters of Science degree from George Washington University in DC. Yes, he was also attending school while working!

In 1950, he began traveling to the Gulf States during the winters in order to study the winter distribution of Wilson's Snipe. From 1952-1954, he spent parts of the summer months travelling into Canada, to Nova Scotia, Ontario, and west to the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, studying the breeding distribution of Wilson's Snipe.

Meanwhile, when back at home, night migration studies were still on Dad's mind. He continued to go to the Washington Monument on cloudy nights (that is when migrating birds would become confused by the artificial lights on the monument) or he would sit outside his apartment in downtown Laurel and count thrushes migrating overhead (by tabulating their calls). On the night of September 29, 1950, he counted for several five minute intervals spaced a half hour apart. The high counts during those five-minute intervals were of 65 Olive-backed (Swainson's) Thrushes and 30 Gray-cheeked Thrushes. He then extrapolated for the entire span of night that 1,896 Olive-backed and 994 Gray-cheeked Thrushes had migrated overhead. On other nights, he would count birds flying in front of the full moon. During the night of September 22-23, 1953, he counted 2,188 birds passing in front of the moon. Extrapolating out how many birds there would be if they were flying in a continuous stream a mile long, he theorized that 230,000 birds were traveling overhead.

On May 8, 1954, a Bachman's Warbler was discovered in Lorton, Virginia. Because of the expected uproar over this rare sighting, the area (on private property) was immediately closed to the public.... except for the following two Saturdays with strictly guided tours. Dad, however, was able to secure special permission to bring in a small group of birders under the condition that they did not disturb the bird, nor breathe a word to anyone about the visit. Dad, keeping that visit a strict secret, only released his notes from that day nearly 60 years later, after everyone else who had

sworn him to secrecy was long since deceased. In his notes, Dad described how he was able to see and hear the bird sing:

"May 11, 1954, 9:30-10:00 am EDT. Singing male observed in moist floodplain habitat with dense understory. It sang almost continuously while we were there, generally giving 6 songs per minute. The song was first recognized at a distance of about 150 yards, by its Parula-like form, but unmusical quality and unchanging pitch. Although the quality bore a resemblance to the Worm-eating Warbler's song, it struck me as even more similar to the quality of the Golden-wing. It was as though a Golden-wing omitted the first (the higher) note of its song and instead sang 7 or 8 short, rapid notes. To my ear the pitch of the last part of the Golden-wing song would fit the Bachman's very closely. I saw the bird for only about a minute. It was perched in a bare spot on a small branch, 20 to 25 feet off the ground."

Although seen sporadically over the ensuing few years, it was never seen with a mate. Sadly, Bachman's Warbler has been presumed extinct for more than 50 years, so Dad's sighting was one of the last.

In 1958, Robert E. Stewart and Dad published the book, *Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia*, compiling all of the data that they had collected over the previous 15

years. Also beginning in 1958 (and continuing until 1967), Dad was to spend 3-6 weeks of every winter on the islands in the Midway Atoll in the Pacific Ocean. He was tasked with finding a solution to the albatross/aircraft collisions that were occurring there. Tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of Laysan and Black-footed Albatrosses nested every year on those Pacific Islands. The proximity of their nests, in the sand near where the aircraft were taking off and landing, put the flight crews in constant danger. Over a nine year period, many possible solutions were posed, tried, and failed. The birds paid no attention to

the loudest of noises, relocations, etc.. They simply showed no fear of humans or aircraft. Finally, the solution lay in paving large sections of the sand adjacent to the runways, and leveling the affiliated dunes that the albatrosses were using for updrafts to fly across the runways.

While on those Pacific Islands, Dad banded about 100,000 albatrosses and petrels, including a bird whom some of you may remember. In 1956, Dad banded a female Laysan Albatross, which was presumed to be at least five years old at



Chan Robbins counting birds against the moon, with wife Eleanor Cooley Robbins. The photo by Frank Sartwell, Jr. was from the *Washington Star Pictorial Magazine*, 11-23-52.

that time. That famous bird, named Wisdom, is still alive and breeding today (with another egg hatched in February, 2019)! That makes her the longest-lived wild bird ever known – and a minimum of 68 years old!

Sometime in the early 1960s, a letter from a concerned lady from the midwest landed on Dad's desk. She had witnessed dead and dying birds on campus lawns (from DDT) and wondered what the long term, big picture of the songbird populations would be. Dad responded to her that neither he, nor anyone else, really knew, but that he would give it some thought. That was to be the inspiration for, in my estimation, Dad's greatest accomplishment: the Breeding Bird Survey (BBS). On his own, he asked for volunteers who would be willing to start a half-hour before sunrise, travel 25 miles by car, and stop every half mile to count birds for three minutes per stop. Specific routes were set up and his supervisor said that, as long as it wasn't going to cost the government any money, go for it! Thus, in 1966, the Breeding Bird Survey was born! The survey went nationwide and into Canada within the first few years. Today, more than 50 years later, 6,000 volunteers run BBS routes in all 50 states, Canada, and northern Mexico. The information collected during the surveys represents a real database showing the increases in some and declines in many of our breeding species.

Dad's other most important contribution to birding in general, also took place in 1966. (He was a busy man in those years!) For quite some time, Herbert Zim had been after Dad to author a field guide for birds. Because Roger (Tory Peterson) was his friend and already had a well-known field guide, Dad did not want to compete with him and frankly did not see the need, but finally, Zim warned Dad that either he do it or Zim would find someone else! So Dad agreed, with some stipulations. First, he wanted the illustrations to be opposite the text, not all clumped together. Next, the illustrations would depict representative habitat. Third, the pages would include range maps and sonograms as well. The sonograms would be produced from Dad's recordings. After several years in development, the *Guide to Field Identification: Birds of North America* was published in 1966 by Golden Press. Chandler S. Robbins was the senior author, Bertel Bruun was the junior author, Arthur Singer was the artist, and Herbert S. Zim was the editor of what would become a very popular

and innovative field guide in its time. In 1968, along with Ted Van Velzen, Dad also published a checklist, *The Field List of the Birds of Maryland*.

Starting in 1966, Dad began to take his family with him on major trips. I will go into more detail about that in the next installment! Because Dad (and his family) lived more than 500 miles from New Hampshire (during those very busy years), he did not travel to the state very often, but, he did have some interesting sightings (as found in his field notebooks) during both working and vacation trips. On August 4, 1955, he had four Olive-sided Flycatchers (three singing males), Blackburnian, Black-throated Blue and Bay-breasted Warblers, and a Pine Siskin during a hike up Mount Pequawket Trail (Mt. Kearsarge North trail). On that same visit he noted sightings of three Eastern Meadowlarks in Dover, a Cliff Swallow in Pinkham's Grant, and American Bittern, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Spotted and Least Sandpipers, Purple Martins, Field Sparrows and eight Eastern Towhees at Berry Bay in Freedom. During a family vacation trip to Freedom in the first two weeks of July, 1957, he noted Ring-billed Gull, American Bittern and Brown Thrasher at Berry Bay. On a hike up Mt. Liberty on July 10, 1957,



Chan Robbins at the dedication of the Pondicherry Wildlife Sanctuary at NH Audubon's 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting in June 26-28, 1964. Photographer Tudor Richards noted: "Chan Robbins near Cherry Pond having just recorded Wilson's Warbler."

he observed eight Olive-backed (Swainson's) and three Gray-cheeked (Bicknell's) Thrushes, 18 Blackpoll Warblers and eight Yellow-bellied Flycatchers. He made notes of Cliff Swallows "still in the nest on the store in Effingham Falls" on July 9, he recorded 35 Tree Swallows flying over Berry Bay on July 12, and he had Bank and N. Rough-winged Swallows in Effingham on July 15. During a 1960 trip to the state, he recorded 20+ Swainson's Thrushes flying over Berry Bay, Freedom in the pre-dawn of August 27 and he noted that Purple Martins and whip-poor-wills were there as well. In 1967, he had a female Common Goldeneye with four young in Dummer on July 14 and a Black-crowned Night-Heron at Berry Bay

that same day. On July 16, there was a whip-poor-will with two young and on July 17, he had Wood Thrush, Brown Thrasher, and Green Heron, all at Berry Bay, Freedom. Also, on July 17, he had three Common Nighthawks in Ossipee.

This brings to a close Dad's second 25 years. His next 25 years will be detailed in the next issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* as I continue the story of his outstanding contributions to the field of Ornithology.

June 1 through July 31, 2018

by Chad Witko



A total of 238 species were reported to eBird during the summer of 2018. This is a very slight decrease (1.66%) from the 242 species observed in 2017. Perhaps more than any of the other seasons, summer often produces a very static cast of characters since most species are on breeding territory during

the months of June and July. Of course, there are occasional northbound spring migrants that trickle into the summer period as well as early southbound fall migrants that help to bolster the season's total. Thrown into the mix are post-breeding wanderers, many of which come from the south. In 2018, all of these seemed to be present in one way or another. Compared to the summer of 2017, the rarities of this summer moderated back from the level of first state-records to rarities that are more of seasonal significance for the state. Highlights included an **American Coot**, the fifth-ever record for the summer season, while a **Lark Sparrow** represented a summer first for New Hampshire. Other noteworthy species from this season include **Common Eider** (inland record), **Parasitic Jaeger**, **Atlantic Puffin**, **Royal Tern**, **Little Blue Heron**, **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**, **Acadian Flycatcher**, **shrike species** (unconfirmed), and **Cerulean Warbler**.



Royal Tern by Leo McKillip, 7-6-18, Hampton, NH.

June was an overall dry month with a total precipitation of 3.06 inches (0.63 below normal) despite the passage of warm and cold fronts producing 1.13 inches of rain on June 28 alone (all weather measurements out of Concord). This is

a full 2.11 inches less than 2017's very wet June. July would follow in the footsteps of June with a very dry first three weeks. This would be followed by a very wet final week to the month, including July 28 when 1.64 inches of rain fell. Total precipitation for July would end up at 4.87 inches (1.13 above normal). Measured against the long-term average, the mean temperatures for June was 0.2°F below normal at 64.7°F. It was during this month that a relatively noticeable cold snap occurred which impacted several of our nesting species, including Purple Martin. July was 3.1°F above normal at 73.1°F. A total of 12 days of 90°F or higher were recorded this summer (three in June and nine in July), with the majority falling within the heat wave during the first five days of July. The maximum temperature for the season was 96°F which occurred on July 1.

Finally, before we delve into the season summary, a quick note on taxonomy. Many keen-eyed readers will notice that the order of species and taxonomic groups have changed from past issues. This change reflects recent taxonomic knowledge on splits, lumps, name changes, and most importantly changes in the sequence of species based on recent research. A prime example of this is that warblers now sit towards the end of the taxonomic list whereas finches are now placed before sparrows and blackbirds. For more on this, see Pam Hunt's article on page 38.

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Waterfowl through Grebes

On June 17, a **Brant** was reported from Little Boars Head in North Hampton. This would be the first in a series of sightings of a single Brant along the coast this summer. Presumably the same individual, sightings ranged from North Hampton State Beach during the middle-end of June, north to Concord Point in Rye during the middle of July. On June 10, an adult **Blue-winged Teal**, likely the same individual as last year, was once again observed at the Lancaster Wastewater Treatment Plant. Less than two weeks later, on June 22, two adult males were observed and photographed along the bank of the Androscoggin River in Gorham. Not surprisingly, once again, only a single report of **Gadwall** was to be had this summer, this time from a single individual discovered at the Exeter Wastewater Treatment Plant on July 28. As this individual was among a group of

SUMMER SEASON

Mallards, it exemplifies the greater need to work over flocks of our more common species more thoroughly, particularly during the times of the year when they are at their drabbest.



Brant by Steve Mirick, 7-13-18, Rye, NH.

This was a particularly good summer for finding **Green-winged Teal** across the state, with several observations of multiple birds being reported, primarily during the month of July. Nesting most abundantly in the river deltas and forested wetlands of Canada and Alaska, this diminutive dabbling has shown irregular breeding records across the state where it is scarce and localized at best, as was touched upon in last summer's summary. Future detections of this species during the breeding season, particularly lingering individuals around suitable breeding habitat such as sedge meadows and dense thickets near ponds in the North Country, should be noted. A family of Ring-necked Ducks at the Balsams Panorama Golf Course in Colebrook was well-documented throughout the summer period and was a nice addition to the list of confirmed breeders this summer.

Unprecedentedly, an adult male **Common Eider** was photographed on Long Pond in Lempster on June 3. Integrally linked to marine habitats throughout all cycles of life, more than any other sea duck, inland reports of this species across its range are a rare occurrence. While there are a few sightings along the lower stretches of the St. Lawrence River or the Great Lakes during the summer months, this short- to medium-distance migrant only rarely shows up inland away from large bodies of water, making this sighting particularly noteworthy. Representing late spring migrants or summer stragglers, a smattering of scoters consisting of all three species were found along the coast, primarily during the month of June. Likewise, a male **Long-tailed Duck** was observed from Rye Harbor State Park on June 12.

Persisting since the early days of March 2018, an immature male **Common Goldeneye** was reported from the Exeter Wastewater Treatment Plant several times during

the month of June with the last report coming on June 30. Additionally, several female Common Goldeneyes with ducklings were reported in both Pittsburg and Errol this summer. While there appears to be a dearth of confirmed breeding records for this species in recent years, it is likely an annual occurrence in remote areas of Coos County. Very infrequent as a summer straggler in the state, an adult male **Ruddy Duck** in bright plumage was first discovered at the Rochester Wastewater Treatment Plant on June 6. Persisting for two weeks, this stiff-tail was a colorful punctuation to the season's waterfowl. The Balsams Panorama Golf Course in Colebrook produced another confirmed breeding record in the form of an active Pied-billed Grebe nest. The nest was already occupied by the start of summer on June 1 with the first chick making its appearance on June 12. Over the course of the summer, the family of grebes would swell to include six chicks and would be observed through the end of July (see the article by Lori Charron elsewhere in this issue).



Ruddy Duck by Alan Murray, 6-14-18, Rochester WTP, NH.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
Brant			
06/21	1	N. Hampton State Beach	R. Prieto
07/06	1	Rye Harbor SP	S. Mirick
07/14	1	Concord Pt., Rye	S. Mirick
Mute Swan			
06/22	1	Blue Star Tpk., Portsmouth	J. Irons
06/27	1	World End Pond, Salem	R.& K. Frieden
07/27	1	World End Pond, Salem	H. Bauer
Blue-winged Teal			
06/10	1	Lancaster WTP	D. Dionne, L. Charron
06/22	2	Androscoggin R., Gorham	D. Gesualdo
Gadwall			
07/28	1	Exeter WTP	L. McKillop
Green-winged Teal			
06/05	1	Reed's Marsh WMA, Orford	E. Bracey
06/10	2	Exeter WTP	S. Mirick
06/23	1	Wilson's Landing, Hanover	E. Bracey

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/09	3	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/12	5	Page Pond and Forest, Meredith	R. Woodward
07/28	4	Exeter WTP	L. McKillop
07/30	2	Rochester WTP	L. McKillop

Date	#	Location	Observer
06/30	1	Exeter WTP	L. McKillop
07/20	1	Lake Francis SP, Pittsburg	F. Morello
07/28	6	Umbagog NWR, Leonard Pond, Errol	C. Martin, L. Newell



Green-winged Teal by Kyle Wilmarth, 7-8-18, Hampton, NH.

Ring-necked Duck

06/01	2	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
06/08	10	Umbagog NWR	D. Lania
06/30	1	Great East L., Wakefield	A.& K. Wilmarth
07/07	12	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	D. Dionne, L. Charron
07/22	3	Rt. 16, Wentworths Location	L. Charron
07/29	5	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	D.& G. Dionne, P. Charron

Common Eider

06/03	1	Long Pond, Lempster	A.& K. Ulrich, S. Hunt
06/23	816	NH coast	S. Mirick

Surf Scoter

06/06	6	NH coast	J. Maher
06/23	4	NH coast	S. Mirick

White-winged Scoter

06/04	1	Long Pond, Lempster	E. Masterson
06/10	1	Hinsdale Setbacks	P. Desjardins
06/23	7	NH coast	S. Mirick

Black Scoter

06/02	14	Bicentennial Park, Hampton	S. Mirick
06/06	4	NH coast	J. Maher
06/09	1	Rt. 1A, N. Hampton	D. Dionne, L. Charron
07/15	1	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick

Long-tailed Duck

06/12	1	Rye Harbor SP	C. Duffy
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Common Goldeneye

06/02	1	Exeter WTP	L. McKillop
06/02	6	Metallak Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen
06/23	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	R.& K. Frieden

Ruddy Duck

06/06	1	Rochester WTP	S. Lauerermann
06/20	1	Rochester WTP	J. Sparrell, Z. Cornell

Spruce Grouse

06/07	1	Mt. Garfield Trail, WMNF	T. Hochhausler
06/10	2	Starr King Trail, WMNF	A. McTammany
06/14	1	Webster-Jackson Trail, WMNF	J. Buonpane
06/29	7	East Inlet, Pittsburg	B. Griffith
07/20	6	Crawford Path, WMNF	T. Maclay
07/23	1	Guyot Shelter, WMNF	G. Turner

Pied-billed Grebe

06/01	2	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
06/02	1	Brentwood Mitigation Area	J. Sparrell
06/10	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	B. Tucker
07/02	1	Quincy Bog, Rumney	T. Grover
07/07	7	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	D. Dionne, L. Charron
07/08	1	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	D. Dionne, L. Charron
07/18	6	Copps Pond WMA, Tuftonboro	J. Blount
07/28	1	Connecticut R. near River Rd., Hanover	G. Clark, Mascoma CFT

Red-necked Grebe

06/23	1	Seal Rocks, Rye	S. Mirick
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Cuckoos through Sandhill Cranes



Common Nighthawk female brooding two chicks, 6-22-18, Keene NH. Photo by Rebecca Suomala.

NH Audubon's Project Nighthawk once again monitored the breeding efforts of its namesake across the Granite State with funding from grants and private donations. With a total of six individuals, Concord recorded the lowest-ever number of adult Common Nighthawks since the Project's inception in 2007. Fortunately, there were three confirmed

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nests, all of which successfully fledged at least one young. In the Monadnock Region, Keene had one confirmed nest, which failed a few days after hatch, as well as a suspected second nest at Keene State College. The Ossipee Pine Barrens produced four confirmed nests this year, more than ever before thanks to the efforts of graduate student Jason Mazurowski. Jason's work was part of a collaborative effort with the Nature Conservancy investigating habitat management in relation to the occurrence of pine barren-specialty birds. His work also highlights the contributions that countless graduate and undergraduate students make each year in the field of avian conservation.

An **American Coot** was reported from Pondicherry National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) at Little Cherry Pond on June 2. As was highlighted in the introduction, this is a rather significant sighting for the season as it is only the third time in the last 10 years and only the fifth time ever that one has been recorded during the summer period. **Sandhill Cranes** continue to be found breeding in the Granite State, and for the first time there was nesting beyond the traditional location in Monroe. While it was a little difficult this year to pull together the complete picture for New Hampshire due to incomplete records and second-hand reports, it appears as if there were at least three nesting pairs found in the state including one each in Amherst, Nottingham, and Monroe. In a post to the NHBirds email list (7-27-18), Alan Johnson reported that friends had been watching a pair of Sandhill Cranes that had apparently "fledged an offspring" in Amherst near the LaBelle Winery on Rt. 101. Unfortunately no other reports were ever posted or entered in eBird. A pair of cranes in Nottingham was reported with one young on May 27, but despite summer reports of two adults in the area, there were no subsequent reports of a youngster with them so it appears this nesting attempt failed. There was a third-hand report of a youngster with two adults in Monroe, posted to the NHBirds email list on May 25 and an eBird report of a family group of three on August 21 so this pair appears to have been successful. Please continue to enter reports of any nesting Sandhill Cranes in eBird, even if you think it's "old news" or already entered by other birders. The increase in this species is a fascinating story and we would like to document their colonization of the state.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
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Yellow-billed Cuckoo

06/01	3	South Rd., E. Kingston	D. Finch
06/01	2	Lindon St. at Exeter R., Exeter	C. Guindon
06/02	2	Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham	P. Miliotis
06/24	2	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson
07/01	2	Old Monson Village, Hollis/Milford	C. McPherson
07/28	2	Lake Winnepocket, Webster	M. Schrimpf

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
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Black-billed Cuckoo

06/02	1	Pittsburg	A.& K. Wilmarth
06/03	2	Bennett Rd., Durham	A.& G. Robbins
06/08	2	Green Rd., Kingston	S. Heron
06/09	2	Strafford County Complex, Dover	S.& D. Stoddard
06/12	5	South Rd., E. Kingston	D. Finch
06/18	2	Old Rt. 10, Swanzey	D. Hoitt
07/12	2	Pillsbury Lake, Webster	R. Quinn, et al.



Black-billed Cuckoo by Christopher McPherson, 6-29-18, Brookline, NH.

Common Nighthawk

06/01	1	Drake Hill Rd., Albany	J. Mazurowski
06/02	2	Post Office Square, Plymouth	I. MacLeod
06/03	1	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. Sheridan
06/08	2	McDaniels Marsh WMA, Springfield	D. Jackson
06/12	1	Gilmore Pond Rd., Jaffrey	C. Heys
06/15	1	Glover's Ledge, Antioch NE, Langdon	J. Dunham
06/17	2	Joppa Rd., Merrimack	K. Burt
06/21	1	Paris Rd. power lines, Milan	P.& L. Charron
07/03	1	Airport Rd., Swanzey	S. Lamonde
07/11	5	Depot Rd., Tamworth	R. Suomala, J. Mazurowski
07/12	1	Melanie Ln., Bow	Z. Cornell

Eastern Whip-poor-will

06/09	13	Hertzka Dr., Amherst	C. Sheridan
06/09	1	Mud Pond, Pondicherry NWR	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/15	5	USFWS Karner Blue easement, Concord	A. Kallenbach, M. Suomala
06/16	1	Page Hill Rd., Northumberland	A. Griffin
06/20	8	Depot Rd., Tamworth	S. Lee
06/21	9	Parker Mt., Strafford	S. Young
07/01	3	Griffin Rd., Deerfield	P. Newbern
07/24	5	Freedom Town Forest	G.& A.& J. Robbins

Chimney Swift

06/03	30	Rt. 111 at Depot Rd., Hollis	C. Sheridan
06/25	18	Laconia	R. Woodward
06/25	35	Amoskeag Fishways, Manchester	S. Keller, M. Henry
06/26	24	Central St. at Pemigewasset R., Franklin	R. Suomala
07/01	50	Gorham	Ö. Sjögren
07/05	180	Durgin Block parking garage, Concord	R. Quinn
07/22	40	Nashua R. above Margaritas, Nashua	J. Maher
07/22	34	World End Pond, Salem	J. Maher

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/26	18	White Mt. Hwy., N. Conway	F. Holloway
07/27	26	Main St., Warner	R. Quinn
07/30	17	Bridge St., Berlin	A. Longley, B. MacMillan



Juvenile Virginia Rail by Roger Frieden, 7-21-18, World End Pond, Salem, NH.

Virginia Rail

06/02	1	Coon Brook Bog, Pittsburg	A.& K. Wilmarth
06/03	2	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	P.& L. Charron, D. Dionne
06/04	2	Surrey Lane marsh, Durham	K. Dorsey
06/07	2	Ballard Pond, Derry	R. Quinn
06/16	3	Geremonty Dr. marsh, Salem	A.& K. Wilmarth
06/21	2	Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey	S. Jaffe
06/24	3	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Mirick
07/15	4	Quincy Bog, Rumney	A. Cooley, D. Gildersleeve
07/19	5	World End Pond, Salem	S. Wrisley, J. Pettipas

Sora

06/03	1	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	P.& L. Charron, D. Dionne
06/16	1	Geremonty Dr. marsh, Salem	A.& K. Wilmarth
06/23	1	Geremonty Dr. marsh, Salem	C. McPherson

American Coot

06/02	1	Little Cherry Pond, Pondicherry NWR	W. Broussard
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Sandhill Crane

06/03	2	Pawtuckaway SP, Boulder Trail, Nottingham	R. Osgood
06/10	1	Church Hill Rd., Durham	S. Snyder
07/22	1	Rt. 16, Second College Grant	J. Keator
07/29	1	Harper's Meadow, Umbagog NWR, Errol	M. Litchfield

American Oystercatchers through Terns

American Oystercatchers continue to be observed around the Isles of Shoals during the summer period and continue to confound those trying to confirm its status as a breeder in the state. Current belief is the birds are prospecting around the Isles, particularly Lunging Island, if not nesting already out of sight. Across from the Isles of Shoals, along the Seacoast, it was a record-setting year

for state-endangered **Piping Plover**. According to the NH Fish and Game Department, there were nine known nests, hatching 32 chicks of which 17 fledged – all record high metrics for this popular beach lover. The only major metric that was not record setting was the overall productivity of 1.8 (chicks surviving/nesting pair), which is still above the long-term average of 1.3 (1997-2018). At the time of writing this report there was limited data to draw upon, but the NH Fish and Game Department reports Upland Sandpipers fledging at least 10 chicks this season.



Piping Plover and chick by Debra Powers, 7-20-18, Seabrook Beach, NH.

A **Parasitic Jaeger** was identified and reported from a July 29 whalewatch in offshore waters. Because jaeger identification is difficult under the best conditions, another jaeger observed on that trip was unidentified to the species level due to distance. This was the same story on July 22, when a storm with modest east-northeast winds produced another two jaegers from shore at Rye Harbor State Park that ultimately would be left unidentified by their observers. This same location and weather system also produced an **Atlantic Puffin** which flew north past the point, close to shore. With this charismatic alcid on the rise in Maine in recent years, particularly at some of its southern colonies, it stands to reason that puffins could be observed in New Hampshire during the summer months with enough effort and patience. There is, however, a very complex picture being painted in the Gulf of Maine that might contradict that assumption. Across the Gulf of Maine, sea surface temperatures are generally on the rise and, consequently, impacting the composition of feeder fish species throughout the gulf. This change in available diet has huge implications to the nesting success of alcids and other seabirds as the preferred feeder fish are moving north to stay with cold waters, being replaced by warm water species such as the butterfish which are often too large for puffins and other seabird chicks to swallow.

Once a rare stray to North America, Lesser Black-backed Gull has become an uncommon migrant and visitor to New

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Hampshire ever since its first record at Jeffrey's Ledge on November 16, 1975 (Keith & Fox 2013). While detections are much less common during the summer months than other seasons, its presence in the state is stabilizing if not increasing thanks to the ever-westward expansion of this species into Iceland, Greenland, and beyond. In July, several records of this species occurred across the coastal zone of New Hampshire including an offshore record from the Granite State Whale Watch on July 3 and a sub-adult on July 22 from Eel Pond in Rye.



Adult Least Tern by Christopher McPherson, 6-2-18, Seabrook, NH.

According to the NH Fish and Game Department, the Seacoast region hosted a dozen **Least Tern** nests, one at Hampton Beach State Park and 11 on the main part of Seabrook beach between Chelmsford and Andover Streets. This is a major increase from the four nests in 2017, but only one chick successfully fledged this year due to high levels of predation. Compared to 2017, this represents an 80% decrease in new young recruited for this emblematic state-endangered beach-nester.

The mixed-species tern colony at White and Seavey Islands at the southern end of the Isles of Shoals continued to host three species of nesting terns. For the state- and federally-endangered Roseate Tern, 65 nests were detected in 2018, a noticeable decrease from the 83 nests in 2016 and 92 in 2017. Comparatively, there was a much higher number of breeding state-threatened Common Terns totaling 2,175 nests. Falling on the heels of two subsequent all-time record-breaking years in 2016 and 2017 (2,989 pairs and 3,210 pairs respectively), it marked a noteworthy downturn. Predation from an injured Snowy Owl that was present into June impacted nesting and caused some abandonment. Despite this, we shouldn't lose sight of how far this colony has come from its humble beginnings in 1997 when five

Common Tern nests fledged a total of seven chicks after being successfully lured back to the island to restore this historic colony after many years of its absence. Arctic Terns had only one nest confirmed on White and Seavey Islands. In 2017 there were two nests.

On July 6, a **Royal Tern** was observed and photographed from Great Boars Head after it flew south from Ragged Neck. A common nester of low-lying sandy islands, including man-made dredge-spoils, along the Mid-Atlantic and Gulf Coast, this large tern is a famed but uncommon post-breeding disperser to New Hampshire and other New England states.

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

06/09	1	Lunging Island, Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick
06/12	3	White & Seavey Islands, Isles of Shoals	A. Litterer, L. Craig, C. Bowman
06/25	1	Star Is., Isles of Shoals	J. Davis

Black-bellied Plover

06/02	2	Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye	S. Mirick
07/12	15	Hampton-Seabrook marsh	G. Gavutis Jr
07/27	10	Blackwater R. marshes, Seabrook	G. Gavutis Jr
07/31	18	NH coast	J. Maher

Semipalmated Plover

06/09	2	cove s. of Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Cooper
06/22	1	NH coast	J. Maher
07/14	15	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/28	117	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/28	420	NH coast	J. Maher
07/29	70	Meadow Pond, Hampton	N. Houlihan, P. Moynahan
07/29	1	Trinity Farms, Orford	W. Scott, D. Gildersleeve, A. Cooley
07/30	6	Rochester WTP	L. McKillop

Piping Plover

06/02	2	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
06/22	5	Hampton Beach SP	H. Burns
06/27	6	Hampton Harbor	L. Medlock
07/14	6	Seabrook Beach	S. Mirick
07/25	4	Hampton Beach SP	R. Bonner
07/28	6	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	R. Suomala

Upland Sandpiper

06/02	2	Great Bay NWR, Newington	K. & R. Horn
06/22	10	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Portsmouth	P. Hunt, B. Ferry
07/21	2	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington	D. Jackson

Whimbrel

07/07	1	Hampton Harbor	A. & K. Wilmarth
07/15	2	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/15	1	Hampton Harbor	A. & K. Wilmarth
07/23	2	Rye Harbor SP	R. Prieto
07/25	1	Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye	S. Heron
07/28	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. & J. Mirick
07/28	3	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. & J. Mirick

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Date	#	Location	Observer
07/28	5	Hampton Harbor	S.& J. Mirick
07/28	1	Star Is., Isles of Shoals	C. Lentz

Date	#	Location	Observer
06/22	1	NH coast	J. Maher
07/09	2	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/21	82	Hampton Salt Marsh CA	D. Jackson
07/23	90	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard
07/23	10	Reflection Pond, Shelburne	J. Stahl, N. Desnoyers



*Whimbrel by
Kyle Wilmarth,
7-7-18,
Hampton, NH.*

Ruddy Turnstone

07/22	1	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/26	3	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/27	4	Hampton Harbor	S. Heron
07/28	1	Hampton Salt Marsh CA	S.& J. Mirick, R. Suomala

Stilt Sandpiper

07/27	1	Blackwater R. marshes, Seabrook	G. Gavutis Jr
07/28	8	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/29	3	Meadow Pond, Hampton	P. Moynahan, N. Houlihan
07/30	5	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer

Sanderling

06/18	1	Rt. 1A second pullout s. of Odiorne SP, Rye	K. Martyn
07/22	10	Jenness & Sawyers Beach, Rye	S. Mirick
07/26	18	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/27	1	Rochester WTP	S. Wisley, J. Pettipas
07/28	16	Rye Harbor SP	J. Maher
07/29	25	Drake Lane, Rye	J. Butler



Least Sandpiper by Steve Mirick, 7-21-18, Seabrook, NH.

Least Sandpiper

06/02	3	South Mill Pond, Portsmouth	J. Sparrell
06/03	1	Exeter WTP	L. McKillop

White-rumped Sandpiper

06/09	1	cove s. of Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Cooper
06/09	1	Massacre Marsh at Parson's Creek, Rye	C. Rasmussen
07/23	2	NH coast	J. Maher
07/24	2	Rochester WTP	J. Maher
07/28	9	Hampton Harbor mudflats	J. Maher
07/30	4	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer

Pectoral Sandpiper

07/23	1	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard, S. Laueremann
07/28	1	Hampton Salt Marsh CA	S.& J. Mirick, R. Suomala
07/28	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/30	1	Trinity Farms, Orford	W. Scott, J. MacQueen
07/31	2	Rt. 1A second pullout s. of Odiorne SP, Rye	C. Duffy

Semipalmated Sandpiper

06/18	1	Rt. 1A pools s. of Odiorne SP, Rye	J. Benningfield
06/22	1	NH coast	J. Maher
07/08	1	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/21	222	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/22	4	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson
07/28	800	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/29	100	Rt. 1A pools s. of Odiorne SP, Rye	N. Houlihan, P. Moynahan

Short-billed Dowitcher

07/07	3	Little River saltmarsh, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/09	14	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/28	198	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/28	97	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S.& J. Mirick
07/28	13	Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye	S. Jolly
07/28	5	Rt. 1A wooden bridge, Rye	S. Jolly
07/28	14	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/29	70	Meadow Pond, Hampton	N. Houlihan, P. Moynahan

Wilson's Snipe

06/07	3	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	D. Heitzmann, L. Carberry
06/08	6	McDaniels Marsh WMA, Springfield	J. Gamble, M. Chadwick

Solitary Sandpiper

07/08	1	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson
07/08	1	Little Cherry Pond, Pondicherry NWR	D. Jackson, S. Heron
07/24	6	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson

Greater Yellowlegs

06/12	4	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray
06/24	1	NH coast	J. Maher
07/04	1	Hampton Salt Marsh CA	S. Mirick
07/09	34	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/18	1	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
07/28	23	NH coast	J. Maher
07/31	21	NH coast	J. Maher

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Date	#	Location	Observer
Willet			
06/10	5	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	P. McNeil
06/23	8	Rt. 1 at Taylor R., Hampton	N. Main
06/24	24	NH coast	J. Maher
07/11	23	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/12	20	Hampton-Seabrook marsh	G. Gavutis Jr
07/14	50	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick



Willet by Scott Heron, 7-27-18, Seabrook, NH.

Lesser Yellowlegs

06/24	1	NH coast	J. Maher
07/04	2	Hampton Salt Marsh CA	S. Mirick
07/04	2	Little River saltmarsh, N. Hampton	S. Mirick
07/12	16	Hampton Salt Marsh CA	J. Lambert
07/28	20	Hampton Salt Marsh CA	S.& J. Mirick, R. Suomala
07/28	10	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/31	25	Little Jacks restaurant, Rt. 1A, Hampton	C. Duffy

Parasitic Jaeger

07/29	1	offshore waters, NH	S.& J. Mirick, R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
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jaeger sp.

07/22	2	Rye Harbor SP	S.& J. Mirick, J. Lambert, L. McKillop
07/29	1	offshore waters, NH	J. Mirick, R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

Black Guillemot

06/02	1	Rye Harbor	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/09	6	Star Is., Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick
06/10	4	White & Seavey Islands, Isles of Shoals	R. Suomala
07/15	1	Rye Harbor	K. Towler, J. Sparrell

Atlantic Puffin

07/22	1	Rye Harbor SP	S.& J. Mirick, J. Lambert, L. McKillop
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Bonaparte's Gull

06/23	19	NH coast	S. Mirick
07/08	9	NH coast	J. Maher
07/22	8	Jeness & Sawyers Beach, Rye	S. Mirick
07/31	6	Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye	P. Hunt, U. Dienes

Laughing Gull

06/11	2	White & Seavey Islands, Isles of Shoals	R. Suomala
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Date	#	Location	Observer
06/18	1	Eel Pond, Rye	H. Bauer
06/21	6	NH coast	R. Prieto
07/22	6	Rye Harbor SP	S.& J. Mirick, J. Lambert, L. McKillop

Lesser Black-backed Gull

07/03	1	offshore waters, NH	D.& P. Paul
07/18	1	Borthwick Ave., Portsmouth	M. Lawlor
07/22	1	Eel Pond, Rye	S. Mirick, J. Lambert
07/28	1	Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye	S. Jolly

Least Tern

06/02	9	Seabrook Beach	C. McPherson
07/28	11	Meadow Pond, Hampton	S. Mirick
07/30	8	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer

Black Tern

07/13	2	Jeffrey's Ledge	E. Masterson
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Roseate Tern

06/07	6	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	S. Mirick
06/23	7	Hampton Beach	L.& L. Medlock
07/26	8	Little Boars Head, N. Hampton	S. Mirick



Roseate Tern by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-24-18, Seabrook, NH.

Common Tern

06/07	101	Yankee Fisherman's Coop., Seabrook	S. Mirick
06/08	200	Piscataqua R., Portsmouth	R. Sanders, A. Cullen
07/02	20	Rt. 4 Scammell Bridge, Dover	M. Malby, P. Farr

Arctic Tern

06/10	2	White & Seavey Islands, Isles of Shoals	R. Suomala
06/21	1	Seal Rocks, Rye	R. Prieto

Royal Tern

07/06	1	Great Boars Head, Hampton	L. McKillop
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Loons through Waders

During the 2018 breeding season, the Loon Preservation Committee (LPC) and a team of hundreds of volunteers surveyed 357 lakes throughout New Hampshire, encompassing 502 Common Loon territories. Loon pairs were found on 309 of these territories, an increase from the

296 pairs recorded in 2017. This was the first year in LPC's 44-year monitoring history that saw over 300 pairs of loons within the state. The new pairs established their territories in different ways; some colonized new lakes and ponds, such as Pool Pond in Rindge and Great Pond in Kingston. Others established new territories on already occupied lakes, including Ossipee Lake in Ossipee and Lake Wicwas in Meredith.



Common Loon by Rebecca Suomala, 6-9-18, Basin Pond, Chatham.

Of the 309 loon pairs in the state, 226 (~74%) nested, hatching a cumulative total of 224 chicks. When LPC ended its routine monitoring in mid-August, 157 (70%) of those chicks were still surviving. This amounted to 0.511 chicks per territorial pair in the state, a marked increase in productivity from 2017, when only 0.43 chicks survived per territorial pair. Although 2018 productivity levels were much better than last year, when compared to the long-term average they represent only a modest success. The number of loon pairs within the state has been slowly increasing since 1975, but productivity levels have remained largely the same; 2018 was on par with the long-term average (0.51 chicks hatched/territorial pair, 1975-2018). In 2018, data collected through resighting banded loons continued to expand our understanding of loon life history. The female banded at Sweat Meadow on Lake Umbagog in 1993 once again returned and fledged a chick with her mate, who was banded as a juvenile in 1994. The male of this pair is 25 years old, and the female is at least 29. These are two of the oldest known loons in New England and their continued reproductive success indicates that there may still be much to learn about loon longevity.

This year, LPC biologists resighted four loons that were rescued from the ice on Lake Sunapee in the winter of 2016. LPC biologists also recaptured a loon on Martin Meadow Pond in Lancaster that was rescued and treated for lead poisoning in 2014. The Martin Meadow Pond loon and two of the four ice-rescued loons fledged chicks this year, suggesting that loon rescues do not just help the affected

individual but also have the potential to contribute to the growth of the population. Although the Martin Meadow Pond loon is a success story, most loons that ingest lead fishing tackle are not so lucky. In 2018, lead continued to be a major threat to New Hampshire's loon population and over the course of the breeding season, LPC collected eight loons that had died as a result of lead poisoning. As always, reports by members of New Hampshire's birding community of band resightings, loons in need of rescue, and breeding activity were integral to LPC's conservation work in 2018! To find out more, please visit: <http://www.loon.org/>.

Tubenoses, specifically storm-petrels and shearwaters, are a remarkable component of New Hampshire's avifauna during any season and truly a tale of two hemispheres with Manx Shearwaters the northernmost breeding species of shearwater and Great Shearwaters nesting on some of the world's most remote islands in the South Atlantic. It was an overall slow summer for viewing Wilson's Storm-Petrels from shore, with the 18 trickling north past Rye Harbor State Park on July 22 a notable exception. Also viewed that day from the State Park on the same east-northeast winds were three Great Shearwaters and a single Manx Shearwater. Predominately



Cory's Shearwater by Steve Mirick, 7-29-18, Rye, NH

breeding across the Pond, Manx Shearwater is a relatively new addition to North America's breeding avifauna first found nesting in Massachusetts in 1973 and Newfoundland in 1976. These tubenose sightings, along with the jaegers and Atlantic Puffin, highlight the incredible potential for late summer viewing of pelagic species from shore under the right conditions and a little bit of patience. Outside of diligent seawatching from shore, getting offshore during the latter days of July is usually fruitful and really the best way to view these oceanic species. Whalewatches are wonderful opportunities to do just that, like the one on July 29 that also produced seven Cory's Shearwaters and two Sooty Shearwaters.



Least Bittern by Kyle Wilmarth, 7-21-18, Salem, NH.

On July 26, a small flight of 21 Northern Gannets were detected moving south past Little Boars Head. Great Cormorant was observed at Star Island at the Isles of Shoals on June 9, a more expected location for this species that we typically see in winter only. **Least Bittern** put in another fine showing across New Hampshire with sightings in four counties during the months of June and July. With eight individuals detected on July 8, it should come as no surprise that World End Pond in Salem remains the epicenter of activity for this furtive species. This species may not be as rare in the state as is often suspected. Diligent searching in appropriate habitat could yield more. This is highlighted by lone individuals detected at Hinsdale on June 17, Madbury on July 12, and the Cranberry Pond wetlands behind Price Chopper in West Lebanon, July 15-20 where breeding was suspected last year. This boom of Least Bitterns in recent years may represent a range expansion to the north, across portions of southern New Hampshire.

An adult **Little Blue Heron**, the only individual of the summer, was observed on July 30 from Pickering Ponds in Rochester. Away from the coast, **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was detected on June 19 from Pennichuck Brook in Nashua, July 13 at both



Great Shearwaters with one Cory's Shearwater (right), by Rebecca Suomala, 7-29-18, offshore waters, NH.

Pondicherry NWR in Jefferson and Canaan, and the Nashua River on July 25. Comparatively, **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** was only observed across the southeastern corner of the state with sightings ranging from Londonderry on June 23, Durham on July 7, and Rye on July 29. Omitted from recent summer summaries, Glossy Ibis continues to prove itself a coastal species best observed during the month of July with the 12 observed from Hampton Saltmarsh Conservation Area on July 4, the largest flock counted this season from a single location.

Date # Location Observer

Red-throated Loon

06/07 1 Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye T. Aronson

Wilson's Storm-Petrel

07/01 12 Jeffrey's Ledge J. Nealon
 07/13 50 Jeffrey's Ledge E. Masterson
 07/22 18 Rye Harbor SP S.& J. Mirick, J. Lambert, L. McKillop
 07/31 48 offshore waters, NH J. Maher

Cory's Shearwater

07/26 3 Little Boars Head, N. Hampton S. Mirick
 07/29 7 offshore waters, NH S. Mirick,
 R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
 07/31 3 offshore waters, NH J. Maher

Great Shearwater

06/30 1 offshore waters, NH C. McPherson
 07/01 6 Jeffrey's Ledge J. Nealon
 07/13 10 Jeffrey's Ledge E. Masterson
 07/29 29 offshore waters, NH S.& J. Mirick,
 R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

Sooty Shearwater

07/03 2 Jeffrey's Ledge D.& P. Paul
 07/13 2 Jeffrey's Ledge E. Masterson
 07/21 2 offshore waters, NH E. Bracey
 07/29 2 offshore waters, NH R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

Manx Shearwater

07/22 1 Rye Harbor SP S.& J. Mirick, J. Lambert, L. McKillop
 07/26 1 Little Boars Head, N. Hampton S. Mirick
 07/31 1 offshore waters, NH J. Maher

Date # Location Observer

Northern Gannet

06/06 1 Hampton Beach SP G. Hill
 06/17 6 offshore waters, NH R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
 07/18 13 NH coast R. Prieto
 07/26 21 Little Boars Head, N. Hampton S. Mirick
 07/29 13 offshore waters, NH S.& J. Mirick,
 R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

Great Cormorant

06/09 1 Star Is., Isles of Shoals S. Mirick

American Bittern

06/01 7 Fort Hill WMA, Stratford M. Johnson
 07/09 4 Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey S. Jaffe

Least Bittern

06/17 1 Hinsdale Setbacks K. Wilmarth
 07/08 8 World End Pond, Salem A.& K. Wilmarth
 07/12 Bellamy Reservoir, Madbury J. Lambert
 07/15 1 Cranberry Pond wetlands, Rt. 12A, W. Lebanon D. Jackson

Great Egret

06/04 27 Parsons Creek saltmarsh, Rye A.& F. Diaz
 06/07 1 Peverly Meadow, Canterbury N. Dorian
 07/16 51 NH coast J. Maher
 07/17 1 Stonedam Is., Meredith F. Bouchard
 07/25 1 Rt.16 pond, Milan D. Dionne, L. Charron
 07/27 1 Saint-Gaudens NHS, Cornish K. Jones
 07/28 39 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick
 07/28 1 Tilton K. Wilmarth
 07/31 5 Pickering Ponds, Rochester A. Murray,
 K. Bedard, H. Burns

Snowy Egret

06/24 22 NH coast J. Maher
 06/28 1 Newfields Rd., Exeter A. Parsons
 07/12 15 Ocean Blvd., Rye B. Guay
 07/27 16 Hampton Harbor S. Heron
 07/28 1 Cranberry Pond wetlands, Rt. 12A, W. Lebanon K. Charles
 07/31 20 Meadow Pond, Hampton C. Marchant

Little Blue Heron

07/30 1 Pickering Ponds, Rochester A. Murray



Black-crowned Night-Heron by Scott Heron, 7-27-18, Hampton, NH.

Date # Location Observer

Black-crowned Night-Heron

06/19 1 Rt. 101A at Pennichuck Brook, Nashua S. Wrisley
 07/13 1 Cove Rd., Canaan N. Milkie
 07/13 1 Cherry Pond access trail, Pondicherry NWR D. Sherony
 07/14 8 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick
 07/25 1 Nashua R., Nashua J. Maher
 07/31 5 Rt. 1A, Seabrook J. Maher
 07/31 5 Meadow Pond, Hampton J. Maher

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron

06/23 1 Kendall Pond, Londonderry J. Pare
 07/07 1 Cedar Pt. Rd., Durham B. Finnegan
 07/29 1 Rt. 1A wooden bridge, Rye C. Duffy

Glossy Ibis

07/04 12 Hampton Salt Marsh CA S. Mirick
 07/13 1 Pickering Ponds, Rochester I. Smith
 07/21 10 Meadow Pond, Hampton H. Bauer
 07/21 15 Appledore Ave. & Bouters Cove, N. Hampton S. Mirick
 07/28 12 Hampton Harbor S. Mirick
 07/30 10 Meadow Pond, Hampton H. Bauer

New World Vultures through Falcons

Black Vultures continue to be observed with increasing regularity across the state throughout every season. This summer, some 11 individuals were observed across four of New Hampshire's counties. Black Vultures have yet to be documented as breeding in New Hampshire, but with the increased frequency of sightings, particularly around places like Westmoreland, this is something that we should expect soon. As such, it is still important to document the presence and expansion of this species across the state, even if they are now an expected component of our avifauna at certain locations.



Black Vulture by Steve Mirick, 7-14-18, Newmarket, NH.

This year saw the first confirmed nesting attempts of **Mississippi Kites** outside of Newmarket since they were first confirmed nesting over a decade ago, despite additional territories being observed as early as 2017. With a total of three confirmed nesting territories in Durham, Newmarket, and Stratham, this sleek and acrobatic raptor is continuing to solidify its base in the southeastern portion of the state

SUMMER SEASON

(see the article by Steve Mirick elsewhere in this issue). Discovered on July 24, the nest in Durham was perhaps the most well visited by birders of the three, even receiving some television airtime. While technically discovered after the summer period on August 1, the Newmarket nest was found at a new location following last year's tragedy on Huckin's Drive. The female of this pair may or may not be the same that survived from the existing territory in 2018. The nest in Stratham was also first discovered on August 1 at a private residence. In addition to the amazing nesting efforts this year, an amazing early-summer sighting of a single Mississippi Kite came from Sullivan County in Langdon on June 8. This represents the westernmost detection of this species in the history of the state and an obvious first for Sullivan County. A special thanks to Steven Mirick for all the detailed reports and monitoring of this species this year and in years past (for more detail on this season see his article elsewhere in this issue).

It seems as if superlatives are the only appropriate words now for describing Bald Eagle nesting in the state. Chris Martin, Senior Biologist for NH Audubon, reports another record-high number of territorial pairs of Bald Eagles at 65, a 10% increase from the 59 territorial



Mississippi Kite by Steven Lamonde, 6-8-18, Glover's Ledge, Langdon, NH.

pairs found in 2017, and nearly twice as many as six years ago. Down just slightly from last year, 53 pairs of incubating eagles were confirmed with a record-high 39 successful nests; once again nearly double the number of successful nests as six years ago. From these 39 successful nests, there was a total of 70 fledged young, yet another record-high number, up 19% from the 59 fledglings documented in 2017. The highest level in more than a decade, the ratio of young fledged per territorial pair was 1.08 young/pair in New Hampshire. To best grasp how successful this species has been in recent years, it is important to know that a grand total of 497 eaglets have fledged from nests within the state over the last 30 years with more than 26% of all those fledglings (129 total) having been produced in just the past two years alone!

A single report of **Eastern Screech-Owl** came from Meredith on July 17. In total, there were six reports of Northern Saw-whet Owls this summer including an

individual in Canterbury on June 1. On July 29, a probable family of six American Kestrels was observed in Newport. Raptor populations have generally been on the rise since DDT was banned in the 1970s, except for the American Kestrel, which may be the new poster species for pesticide use. However, our most colorful and diminutive raptor is facing many other factors contributing to their decline, which include less food, changing climate, and of course, habitat degradation and loss across their breeding range. In fact, it is this latter factor that researchers believe might be the biggest cause for their recent and puzzling decline. It appears that loss of habitat through a myriad of factors may be the reason that some populations of American Kestrels are shrinking in size, losing both body weight and length of their wing chord, which has huge implications to their survival on an annual basis. With half of the population being lost in the last 50 years, it is crucial that current nest boxes be monitored and submitted to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's NestWatch program (<https://nestwatch.org/>) or that new boxes and appropriate habitat be managed whenever possible.

Summer 2018 marks the best year ever for Peregrine Falcon's breeding in New Hampshire since recovery efforts began around 1980. Chris Martin once again reports a state record-high of 25 territorial pairs for our most powerful falcon with new all-time records for all statistical categories that are measured annually to determine breeding success. A total of 23 incubating pairs (92% of all territorial pairs) included 17 successful pairs (74% of those incubating) that fledged at least one young per pair. From these efforts a total of 43 young fledged in 2018, an average of 1.87 young fledged per nesting pair. For the first time in the post-DDT era, more than 40 young Peregrine Falcons were successfully fledged in a single breeding season in New Hampshire. If ever there was a time to observe this species in the state, it is now.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
Black Vulture			
06/07	1	Rt. 3, Nashua	J. Keyes
06/09	2	Epping Rd, Exeter	A. Parsons
06/12	1	Woodward Rd., Westmoreland	R. & A. Burnett
06/17	1	Hinsdale Setbacks	K. Wilmarth
07/14	1	Honeycomb Way, Newmarket	S. Mirick
07/31	3	Cranberry Pond wetlands, Rt. 12A, W. Lebanon	J. Norton

Mississippi Kite			
06/02	3	Madbury Rd., Durham	J. Sparrell, K. Towler
06/07	1	Sandy Point Rd., Stratham	S. Mirick
06/08	1	Glover's Ledge, Antioch NE, Langdon	S. Lamonde
06/11	1	Tidewater Farm Rd., Greenland	J. Maher
06/24	1	S. Main St., Newmarket	S. Mirick

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/14	1	Bennett Rd., Newmarket	S. Mirick
07/24	3	Madbury Rd., Durham	S. Mirick



Mississippi Kite by Debra Powers, 7-27-18, Durham, NH.

Northern Harrier

06/02	1	Rt. 3, Colebrook	P. Brown, R. Quinn
06/08	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	K. Dorsey
07/02	2	Pondicherry NWR	D. Govatski
07/05	1	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
07/29	2	Coffin Brook, Alton	R. Simmons
07/29	1	Rt 104., Danbury	S. Andujar



Northern Goshawk by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-2-18, Pittsburg, NH

Northern Goshawk

06/09	1	Ossipee Pine Barrens Preserve, Freedom	A.& G. Robbins
06/15	1	Brookline	C. McPherson
06/25	1	Parker Mt., Strafford	A. Murray
07/08	1	East Inlet, Pittsburg	Z. Cornell
07/14	1	Tabor Rd., Pittsburg	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/16	1	Cherry Pond access trail, Pondicherry NWR	K. Toomey
07/27	1	Washington	C. Goertz

Eastern Screech-Owl

07/17	1	Stonedam Is., Meredith	F. Bouchard
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Date	#	Location	Observer
Northern Saw-whet Owl			
06/01	1	Baptist Hill Rd., Canterbury	V. Chase
06/03	1	Rt. 3, Thornton	K. Bird
06/09	1	Sugarloaf Campground, Carroll	K. Dorsey
06/09	1	Mud Pond, Pondicherry NWR	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

Black-backed Woodpecker

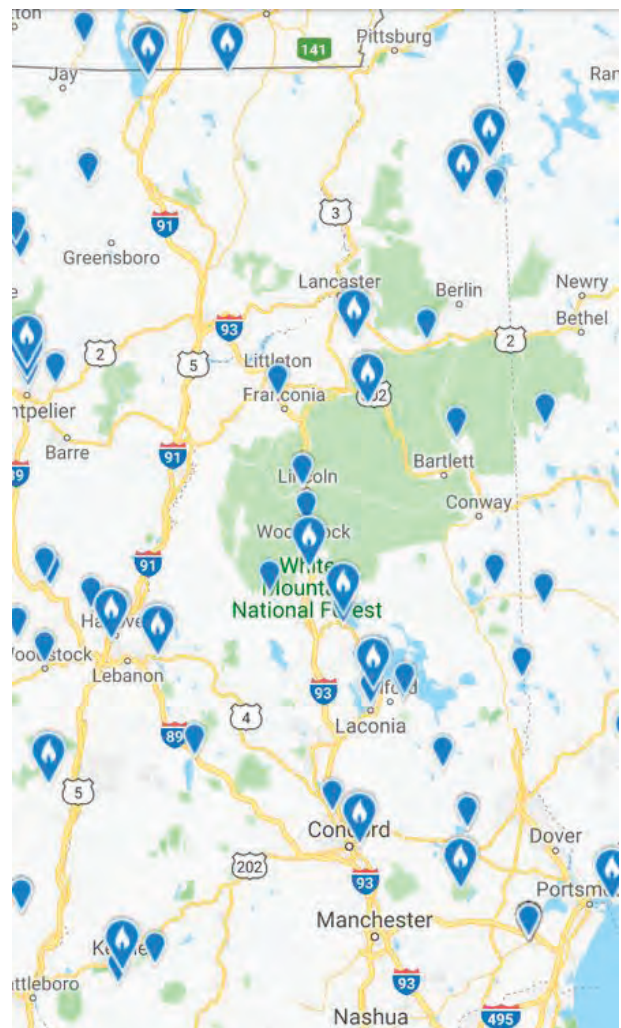
06/01	1	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	D. Hubbard
06/06	2	Zealand Trail, WMNF	T. Hochhausler
07/07	1	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	D. Hof
07/10	2	Mollidgewock Rd., Errol	P. Charron
07/25	2	Mt. Liberty, WMNF	E. Sharkey
07/26	2	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	J. Peters

American Kestrel

06/10	2	Concord Airport	M. McCarthy, N. Dorian
06/14	4	Rt. 63 fields, Westmoreland	A. Burnett
07/09	3	New Rd., Barnstead	J. Lambert
07/14	3	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/19	2	Lancaster WTP	D. Forsyth
07/29	6	Bald Mt. Rd., Newport	D. Jackson
07/31	4	1785 Inn, Conway	W. Broussard

Merlin

A map of the widely scattered Merlin sightings in eBird, June and July 2018.



SUMMER SEASON

Flycatchers through Swallows

Situated in the southeastern corner of the state, there is perhaps no better place in New Hampshire to find southern breeders at the extreme northern limits of their range than Nottingham's Pawtuckaway State Park. Highlighting this was an **Acadian Flycatcher** discovered on June 8. An occasional breeder at this site in years past, this large, long-winged, and greenish *Empidonax* is best identified by its voice, an explosive "peet-sah", which is often heard in mature, broadleaf forests near water. On June 5, an unidentified and undocumented species of **shrike** was observed carrying a mouse at the grounds of the former Balsams in Dixville. It is rather unfortunate no photo documentation of this bird was able to be obtained as either of the likely candidates for species would be an exceptional summer record for New Hampshire and potentially the Lower 48. Loggerhead Shrike, the only one of the world's 30 true species of shrikes to be found exclusively in North America was last observed in New Hampshire during the summer months on July 18, 1997. An historic breeder across New England, by 1950 Loggerhead Shrike had been extirpated from breeding in New Hampshire and has been subsequently removed from the official state list of breeding birds in 2000. The other possible candidate for the Balsams' shrike is Northern Shrike. A denizen of boreal habitats, Northern Shrikes breed along the taiga/taiga-tundra ecotones of North America and Eurasia and very rarely venture south during this period. An expected component of our avifauna during the winter, the idea of a Northern Shrike during the summer months in New Hampshire is unprecedented. To date, only one entry on eBird for this species exists in the Lower 48 during the months of June and July, and details are substantially lacking. Despite the lack of evidence, regardless of what species the Balsams' shrike was, it is one of the highlights of the season.

Philadelphia Vireo was reported twice this summer from the southern third of the state, including individuals at Great Bay NWR on June 6 and Saint-Gaudens National Historic Park in Cornish on July 29. This species is a rather late spring migrant compared to other vireo species, with a mean arrival date of May 18 (Keith & Fox 2013). The individual on June 6 represents a presumed late migrant; however, the individual in July was well ahead of the first south-bound migrants, which are expected by mid-August and the peak migration period of late August to mid-September (Keith & Fox 2013). With this species posing a myriad of identification pitfalls for beginning birders, including its visual similarity to fresh-plumaged spring Warbling Vireos which can be strongly washed in yellow, or to the auditory similarity of Red-eyed Vireos and their song, documentation of this species during

the summer months outside of medium-elevations in the White Mountains or Coos County is encouraged.



Philadelphia Vireo by Jason Lambert, 7-14-18, Millsfield, NH.

On July 18, 57 Fish Crow were observed in Salem at the intersection of Rockingham Park Boulevard and Route 28. This is over eight times the next highest number of the season for this species which is increasing at several locations across the state with each subsequent year. Horned Lark was reduced to one sighting in summer 2018, a lone individual observed at the Portsmouth International Airport at Pease on June 22. Limited to mowed areas around airstrips during the breeding season in New Hampshire, access to suitable viewing areas might be the limiting factor for documenting this species during the summer months.



Purple Martins by Jason Lambert, 6-23-18, Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook, NH

According to Pam Hunt, Senior Biologist in Avian Conservation for NH Audubon, Purple Martin productivity for 2018 was on par with the previous two years, but there was a 30% decline in productivity at the Seabrook Colony which fledged 44 young out of 89 eggs across 18 nests. Highly vulnerable to spells of cold and

rainy weather during the spring and early summer, this notable decline was due to a cold snap during the month of June which caused several nests to fail. This noted decline at the state's largest and most known colony was compensated largely by the colony at Rye, composed of four nests, 20 eggs,

and 17 young. The third colony, at the Portsmouth Country Club, hosted a single nest which fledged two young after several years of visitation by prospecting martins. In total, across the state, three sites comprising 23 nests, fledged 68 young of this large, colorful swallow. There were no reports from Wakefield, the only nesting site left outside of the Seacoast in 2017.

Survey-wide results from the North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) indicate no overall change in the population of Cliff Swallows across their overall range from 1966 to 2013 (*Birds of North America* 2015). Despite this apparent homeostasis, significant decreases have occurred in the Northeast. This population decline, along with that of other aerial-insectivores, is suggested to be related to an apparent decline in aerial insects across this region. Bearing all that in mind, it is worth noting that breeding colonies of state-threatened Cliff Swallow are still readily observed in the North Country at a few key sites, including Tabor Road in Pittsburg, or just north of the Lakes Region at Steele Farm in Tamworth.

Date # Location Observer

Olive-sided Flycatcher

06/02	6	Pittsburg	A.& K. Wilmarth
06/02	1	Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye	C. Michaud, G. Clucas
06/03	1	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
06/03	2	Pickering Ponds, Orford	B. Hancock
06/08	1	Old Monson Village, Hollis/Milford	S. Miller
06/16	1	Baxter Rd. trailhead, Hollis	S. Wisley
06/24	8	East Inlet, Pittsburg	R.& K. Frieden
07/02	1	Old Monson Village, Hollis/Milford	C. McPherson
07/21	2	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	D. Dionne, L. Charron
07/21	1	Mason Pond, Orford	J. MacQueen

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher

06/03	11	Sophie's Ln., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/08	7	Cannon Mt., Franconia	P. Hunt
06/10	4	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/10	8	Sandwich Dome	D. Scott
06/17	12	Huntington Ravine Trail, WMNF	M. Oyler
06/30	11	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	S.& J. Mirick

Acadian Flycatcher

06/08	1	Pawtuckaway SP, Round Pound Rd., Nottingham	K. Wilmarth, R. Prieto
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Loggerhead/Northern Shrike

07/05	1	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	L. Charron
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Yellow-throated Vireo

06/14	3	Blackwater R. at Warner Rd., Salisbury	P. Hunt, L. Deming
06/20	3	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	R. Woodward
07/01	2	Boston Lot L., Lebanon	W. Scott
07/15	6	Powwow R. at Hilldale Ave., S. Hampton	A. Wilmarth

Date # Location Observer

Philadelphia Vireo

06/05	1	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	J. Maher
06/06	1	Great Bay NWR, Newington	G. Hill
06/07	3	Basin Pond, Chatham	C.& T. Wills
06/29	2	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	S. Glynn
06/30	2	Weeks SP, Lancaster	A. Griffin
07/12	2	Mt. Garfield Trail, WMNF	J. Neill
07/14	1	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	K. Fenton
07/29	1	Saint-Gaudens NHS, Cornish	J. Hanfman



Gray Jay by Kyle Wilmarth, 6-1-18, Pittsburg, NH.

Canada Jay

06/02	7	Day Rd., Perry Stream, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/07	7	Mt. Garfield Trail, WMNF	T. Hochhausler
06/20	5	Guyot Shelter, WMNF	J. Buonpane
06/26	3	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	B. Crowley
07/01	3	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	P.& L. Charron, D. Dionne
07/07	5	East Inlet, Pittsburg	D. Hof
07/12	3	Hell Gate Pond, Second College Grant	C. Harding
07/30	9	Wiley Range Trail, WMNF	S. Griesemer

Fish Crow

06/10	6	Great Pond, Kingston	S. Heron
06/25	6	Concord Airport	M. McCarthy
06/25	4	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	S.& D. Stoddard,
			C. Morneau, J. Landry
07/03	3	Antioch U. New England, Keene	S. Lamonde
07/18	57	Rt. 28 at Rockingham Park Blvd., Salem	K. Wilmarth
07/19	5	Rt. 16 at Rt. 25, Ossipee	B. Crowley
07/24	1	Livermore Beach, Squam L., Holderness	J.& T. Wojtanowski
07/27	5	Madbury Rd., Durham	S. Zhang
07/28	7	Tilton	K. Wilmarth

Horned Lark

06/22	1	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, n. infield island, Newington	P. Hunt, B. Ferry
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Northern Rough-winged Swallow

06/01	10	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	M. Johnson
06/21	6	World End Pond, Salem	H. Otto
06/23	5	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	R.& K. Frieden
06/29	8	Saint-Gaudens NHS, Cornish	K. Kull, K. Jones
07/15	14	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson

SUMMER SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
Northern Rough-winged Swallow (con't.)			
07/19	10	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard, S. Laueremann

Purple Martin

06/22	32	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	D. Skillman
07/27	16	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	S. Heron
07/28	1	Dingman Farm, Kensington	D. Finch

Tree Swallow

07/14	200	Hampton Harbor	S. Mirick
07/21	250	Meadow Pond, Hampton	H. Bauer
07/21	1400	Cross Beach Rd., Seabrook	D. Jackson
07/31	200	Rochester WTP	D. Hubbard



Bank Swallow by Steve Mirick, 7-21-18, Seabrook, NH.

Bank Swallow

06/12	30	Mountain Rd., Concord	D. Eneguess
06/14	10	Westmoreland Boat Launch	A. Burnett
06/15	14	Dahl WS, Conway	K. & K. & I. Carlsen
06/26	20	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	L. McKillop
06/29	40	SPNHF Merrimack R. CA, Concord	R. Paradis
06/30	11	Pemigewasset R. s. of Cross Rd., Thornton	J. Aliperti
07/12	12	River Rd., Hanover	K. Duret
07/14	13	Dodge Rd. gravel pit, Allenstown	P. Miliotis
07/15	10	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson

Barn Swallow

06/22	40	Isles of Shoals	J. Maher
07/13	40	Sherman's Farm, Conway	S. Joyce, S. Wilcox
07/23	92	NH coast	J. Maher
07/31	60	NH coast	J. Maher

Cliff Swallow

06/07	40	Tabor Rd., Pittsburg	C. Boisseau, L. Carberry, D. Heitzmann
06/25	35	Chinook Trail, Tamworth	P. Moynahan, N. Houlihan
07/10	10	Methodist Church, Pittsburg	P. Hunt, U. Dienes
07/10	10	Pittsburg School	P. Hunt, U. Dienes
07/11	9	Three Rivers Farm, Dover	D. Tucker

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/11	16	Partridge Rd. cabins, Pittsburg	P. Hunt, U. Dienes
07/14	30	Tabor Rd., Pittsburg	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell

Chickadees through American Pipit

On June 29, several family groups of Boreal Chickadee were observed along East Inlet in Pittsburg, totaling 14 individuals. Noted for its tameness, this species can be surprisingly difficult to observe and, during the breeding season, it is often best detected by covering several miles of trail in the White Mountains or Coos County. Ideal locations for viewing Boreal Chickadee include Dixville Notch, the Caps Ridge Trail or East Inlet in Pittsburg. On June 29, a Swainson's Thrush was detected singing on territory at Duck Pond in Lempster for the third year in a row. This individual was detected by several birders over the next several weeks with the final detection occurring on July 19. On July 28, a Swainson's Thrush was heard singing from the summit of nearby Silver Mountain in the Ashuelot River Headwaters Forest.



American Pipit by Zeke Cornell, 7-4-18, Mt. Washington Auto Road, NH.

During the summer months, Brown Thrasher is a surprisingly uncommon occurrence along the Seacoast. On June 2, an individual was detected at Odiorne Point State Park in Rye while another individual was observed in Seabrook on June 6. From the Seacoast we move to the summit of Mount Washington where American Pipits topped last year's season-high count by one on July 31 when a total of seven individuals were observed along the Mount Washington Auto Road. On light southwest winds, a total of 201 Cedar Waxwings across 12 flocks were observed migrating north along the New Hampshire coast on June 2. High counts of migrating waxwings often come during the latter days of May, but it is worth keeping an eye out during the first week of June for late migrants, particularly along the coast or other places that offer good vantage points along known migration routes.

Date	#	Location	Observer
Boreal Chickadee			
06/17	6	Huntington Ravine Trail, WMNF	M. Oyler
06/29	14	East Inlet, Pittsburg	B. Griffith
07/01	6	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	P.& L. Charron, D. Dionne
07/05	8	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	K. Duret
07/12	9	Mt. Liberty, WMNF	C. Dalton
07/13	8	Mt. Flume, WMNF	J. Neill

Date	#	Location	Observer
Marsh Wren			
06/02	8	Exeter WTP	L. McKillop
06/22	3	Hinsdale Setbacks	S. Keller, M. Henry
06/27	10	World End Pond, Salem	R.& K. Frieden
07/02	6	Moorhen Marsh, Pondicherry NWR	D. Govatski
07/08	8	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	D. Dionne, L. Charron
07/25	1	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron
07/28	10	Chapmans Landing, Stratham	C. Michaud, G. Clucas

Date	#	Location	Observer
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher			
06/06	7	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	A. Murray
07/05	4	Wheeler Rd., Hollis	S. Wrisley
07/05	4	Dingman Farm, Kensington	D. Finch
07/06	4	S. Main St., Newton	H. Burns
07/15	4	Powwow R. at Hilldale Ave., S. Hampton	A. Wilmarth

Date	#	Location	Observer
Ruby-crowned Kinglet			
06/16	10	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	S. Miller
06/29	10	East Inlet, Pittsburg	B. Griffith
07/01	10	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	P.& L. Charron, D. Dionne

Date	#	Location	Observer
Veery			
06/08	27	Turkey Pond, Concord	R. Woodward
06/16	21	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	S. Mirick
07/07	12	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Lipsy
07/08	13	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
07/12	14	Page Pond and Forest, Meredith	R. Woodward

Date	#	Location	Observer
Bicknell's Thrush			
06/01	12	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	C. Gregory, E. Hynes, A. Scarfe, B. McLintock, B.& T. Tillman, R. Koopendrayser
06/07	10	Mt. Garfield Trail, WMNF	T. Hochhausler
06/08	7	Cannon Mt., Franconia	P. Hunt, J. Kilborn, L. Deming
06/15	9	Mt. Moosilauke, Benton	N. Dorian
06/17	12	Huntington Ravine Trail, WMNF	M. Oyler
06/21	6	Mt. Osceola Trail, WMNF	N. Dorian
07/07	6	Mt. Moosilauke	A. Burnett
07/12	10	Mt. Liberty, WMNF	C. Dalton
07/13	16	Franconia Ridge Trail, WMNF	J. Neill
07/13	9	Mt. Lincoln, WMNF	A. Barndt
07/14	6	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	A. Kallenbach, M. Suomala
07/20	7	Mt. Adams, WMNF	A. Hulsey

Date	#	Location	Observer
Swainson's Thrush			
06/17	20	Huntington Ravine Trail, WMNF	M. Oyler
06/29	1	Long Pond Town Forest, Lempster	J. Swatt
06/30	25	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	S. Mirick
07/09	20	Mt. Moosilauke, Benton	T. Pirro
07/11	20	Mt. Hancock, WMNF	T. Pirro
07/12	20	Mt. Liberty, WMNF	C. Dalton

Date	#	Location	Observer
07/13	34	Franconia Ridge Trail, WMNF	J. Neill
07/14	38	East Inlet, Pittsburg	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/15	22	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/19	1	Long Pond Town Forest, Lempster	J. Swatt
07/28	1	Silver Mt., Lempster	J. Swatt



Swainson's Thrush by Dylan Jackson, 7-8-18, Mt. Jefferson, NH.

Date	#	Location	Observer
Brown Thrasher			
06/02	1	Odiorne Point SP, Rye	S. Mirick
06/06	1	Lafayette Rd., Seabrook	G. Hill
06/07	4	USFWS Karner Blue easement, Concord	P. Benham
06/07	3	Powder House Pond, Exeter	P. Benham
06/09	4	Ossipee Pine Barrens Preserve, Freedom	A.& G. Robbins
06/23	4	Gorham	K. Toomey
06/24	4	Birch St. Community Garden, Concord	R.& M. Suomala
07/07	2	Krif Rd., Keene	K. Rosenberg
07/14	3	Pickering Rd., Rochester	C. Wennerth
07/18	3	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	D.& G. Dionne, P. Charron

Date	#	Location	Observer
American Pipit			
06/05	1	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	R. Steber
07/04	3	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/31	7	Mt. Washington Auto Rd.	F. Izaguirre

Evening Grosbeak through Sparrows

Evening Grosbeak remained a localized breeder across the state with the probable family group of four observed on July 8 in Roxbury the season's high count for a single checklist. With irruptions of the past linked to Spruce Budworm outbreaks, it appears that subsequent breeding efforts in newly colonized areas across the Northeast were bolstered by the presence of Box Elder (widely planted for shade in the early 1900s, with seeds which remain on the tree into winter), Pin Cherry, and the ever-increasing presence of sunflower seeds at bird feeders. Now listed as a species of special concern in Canada, Evening Grosbeaks appear to be experiencing significant population declines as was

SUMMER SEASON

highlighted by Breeding Bird Survey data from the period of 1980-1999 (*Birds of North America* 2015).

Although individual Grasshopper Sparrows most likely hold territories at places like the Dillant-Hopkins (Keene) Airport in Swanzey, this state-threatened species was officially only reported from three locations this year. These locations included the Concord Airport, the Portsmouth International Airport at Pease, and Cemetery Fields in Amherst, which on June 24 held seven individuals, a season-high total. On June 1, the Concord Airport held the next highest total for the season at five. Loss of habitat, conversion of pasture to intensive agriculture and suppression of fire are leading causes for the strong decline of this species across North America with the BBS data showing an annual decline of 3.9% (*Birds of North America* 2015). Here in New Hampshire, Grasshopper Sparrows share the fate of many of our grassland birds and are relegated to breed at anthropogenic grasslands, primarily airports or reclaimed fields. On June 23, a **Lark Sparrow** was observed and photo-documented in Loudon near the center of the state. This unprecedented sighting is the first-ever summer sighting of this species in the Granite State and one of only a handful of sightings ever across New England in June or July. This large and boldly-patterned sparrow from the west is a near annual visitor to New Hampshire during the fall where it is most often discovered along the Seacoast or at the Isles of Shoals.



Lark Sparrow by George Welch, 6-23-18, Loudon, NH.

With each passing year, Fox Sparrows are being detected with greater regularity during the summer months across Coos and Grafton counties. First detected as a breeder in 1997 in Pittsburg, the persistence of singing males on territory in recent years indicates an apparent increase in breeding success, which would mirror a similar increase in northern and western portions of Maine (Keith & Fox 2013). Showcasing a marked increase in its status as a breeding species within the state, substantiating evidence either through photo or audio recordings for this species

during the summer season is encouraged. As expected, the bulk of Vesper Sparrow sightings this summer came from Concord at either the Concord Airport, including a season-high six on June 6, or the nearby US Fish & Wildlife Service Karner Blue easement. Although limited to just one individual each, other noteworthy sightings and locations for Vesper Sparrow this summer included the Ossipee Lake Road pine barrens in Freedom on June 9 and the West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve in Conway on July 20. Historically a common and widespread breeder in the state, this species formally known as the Grass Finch and the Bay-winged Bunting is now extremely localized and uncommon. This status is unfortunately substantiated by long-term New Hampshire BBS data which from 1966-2009 and 1999-2009 shows a population decline averaging about 16.5% per year (Keith & Fox 2013).



Saltmarsh Sparrow by Kyle Wilmarth, 7-8-18, N. Hampton, NH.

Saltmarsh Sparrow, formerly considered a single species (Sharp-tailed Sparrow) with its close relative the Nelson's Sparrow, is creeping dangerously close to extinction. Threatened by habitat loss from sea level rise, recent data suggests that this salt marsh obligate is declining at 9% per year range-wide (*Birds of North America* 2015). While it remains common in suitable habitat in New Hampshire, the NH Fish and Game Department lists it as a Category "1R" Species of Conservation Concern; a species that could become Threatened in the foreseeable future if no action is taken ("1"), as well as a regional responsibility species where at least 50% of their continental range occurs in the northeastern United States ("R"). With this kind of status, any detections of this species are noteworthy and the 12 detected from Chapmans Landing in Stratham on June 18 were both a season-high and encouraging. On June 9, four Saltmarsh Sparrows were observed at Massacre Marsh in

Rye and another four at the pools south of Odiorne on July 14. Historically, Little Jack's Restaurant along Route 1A in Hampton has been a prime location to find this denizen of *Spartina*, including the two detected there on July 21; however, it should be noted that during the early parts of 2019, the owner of Little Jack's announced a plan to tear down the 64-year-old counter-service restaurant to replace it with 36 condos, whose impact to accessibility to view this part of Hampton Marsh is yet to be determined.

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
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Evening Grosbeak

06/04	2	Elm Brook Park, Hopkinton	F. Benham
06/10	2	Mason Rd., Wilton	G. Coffey
06/14	2	Old Chesham Rd., Marlborough	S. Jaffe
06/16	2	Rt. 103 at Rt. 114, Bradford	M. Wiggan
06/27	2	Warton Rd., Nashua	A. Moreira
07/08	4	Horse Hill Rd., Roxbury	K. Rosenberg
07/13	2	Saint-Gaudens NHS, Cornish	S. Mortillo, K. Jones

Purple Finch

06/02	10	Pittsburg	A.& K. Wilmarth
06/08	10	Bradford Bog	D. Williams, M. Nelson
06/11	7	Belknap Mt., Gilford	R. Woodward
06/15	8	Mt. Moosilauke, Benton	N. Dorian
06/21	9	Lost Nation Rd., Northumberland	M. Centner
07/01	8	Penacook survey route	P. Hunt
07/08	8	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	D. Jackson, S. Heron
07/25	7	Highland L., Stoddard	J. Anderson

Red Crossbill

06/05	3	Bradford Bog	L. Burford
06/06	9	Zealand Trail, WMNF	T. Hochhausler
06/06	20	Wapack Trail, Temple Mt., Peterborough	B. Robo
06/09	15	Lonesome Lake, Lincoln	T. Hochhausler
06/09	8	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	K. Dorsey
06/12	32	Hubbard Brook Exp. Forest, Woodstock	A. Burdo
06/19	10	Gunstock Mt., Gilford	J. Landry
06/20	4	Osgood Hill, Nelson	E. Masterson
07/05	8	Cannon Mt., Franconia	B. Hardway

White-winged Crossbill

06/02	40	Pittsburg	A.& K. Wilmarth
06/05	8	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	J. Maher
06/06	25	Zealand Trail, WMNF	T. Hochhausler
06/07	30	Mt. Garfield Trail, WMNF	T. Hochhausler
06/09	20	Lonesome Lake, Lincoln	T. Hochhausler
07/11	6	Mt. Hancock, WMNF	T. Pirro

Pine Siskin

06/02	25	East Inlet, Pittsburg	R. Quinn, P. Brown
06/05	25	Smith Brook Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/08	2	Mt. Kearsarge, Warner	M. Nelson, D. Williams
06/26	1	Silver Doe Ln., Merrimack	C. Wennerth
07/11	20	Mt. Hancock, WMNF	T. Pirro

Grasshopper Sparrow

06/01	5	Concord Airport	N. Dorian, M. McCarthy
06/03	1	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, McIntyre Rd., Newington	A. Murray

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
06/24	7	Cemetery Fields, Amherst	C. Sheridan
07/18	1	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, Short St., Newington	R. Prieto

Field Sparrow

06/03	4	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. Sheridan
06/05	8	Concord Airport	N. Dorian, M. McCarthy
06/27	5	Morse Preserve, Alton	R. Woodward
07/19	9	Freedom Town Forest airstrip	R. Woodward
07/20	4	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve, Madison	S. Lee

Lark Sparrow

06/23	1	Lilac Dr., Loudon	G. Welch
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Fox Sparrow

06/03	1	Mt. Pierce summit, WMNF	R. Breteler
06/08	2	Cannon Mt., Franconia	P. Hunt
06/17	1	Crawford Path, WMNF	C. Nims
06/17	2	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	L. Burford
07/01	2	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	S. Schwenk, R. Bogart

Vesper Sparrow

06/03	4	USFWS Karner Blue easement, Concord	S. Mirick
06/06	6	Concord Airport	N. Dorian, M. McCarthy
06/09	1	Ossipee Pine Barrens Preserve, Freedom	A.& G. Robbins
06/13	1	Bedell Bridge SP, Haverhill	S. Turner
07/07	1	Green Hill Rd., Chatham	C. Nims
07/20	1	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve, Madison	S. Lee

Nelson's Sparrow

06/18	3	Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton	K. Martyn
06/24	1	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Mirick
07/21	2	Hampton Salt Marsh CA	C. Guindon, C. Duffy
07/21	3	saltmarsh off Pollock Dr., Rye	D. Jackson
07/28	3	Marsh Road Pond, Rye	J. Lambert

Saltmarsh Sparrow

06/02	2	Lubberland Creek Preserve, Newmarket	K. Dorsey
06/09	4	Massacre Marsh at Parson's Creek, Rye	C. Rasmussen
06/18	12	Chapmans Landing, Stratham	K. Martyn
06/24	1	Great Bay Discovery Ctr., Greenland	S. Mirick
07/14	4	Rt. 1A pools s. of Odiorne Pt. SP, Rye	J. Sparrell, K. Towler
07/18	4	Philbrick Marsh, N. Hampton	J. Sparrell, K. Towler
07/21	4	Hampton Salt Marsh CA	C. Guindon, C. Duffy



Lincoln's Sparrow by Jason Lambert, 7-14-18, Millsfield, NH

Lincoln's Sparrow

06/02	2	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	P.& L. Charron, D. Dionne
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SUMMER SEASON

Date	#	Location	Observer
06/05	2	Smith Brook Rd., Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/09	1	Star Is., Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick
06/29	2	Coon Brook Bog, Pittsburg	B. Laffey
06/29	3	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	S. Glynn
07/14	2	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	K. Fenton

Eastern Towhee

06/04	11	Lancy Brook Rd., Brookline	J. Maher
06/08	12	Old Monson Village, Hollis/Milford	S. Miller
06/15	11	Terrell Homestead CA, Nashua	C. Sheridan
06/22	11	Ponemah Bog WS, Amherst	C. Sheridan
06/23	12	Nottingcook Forest, Bow	A. Kallenbach, Capital CFT
06/27	18	Morse Preserve, Alton	R. Woodward
07/20	15	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve, Madison	S. Lee

Blackbirds through Warblers

On June 3, an impressive 80 Bobolink were observed from Dingman Farm in Kensington for the season-high count. At the other end of the season, Woodmont Orchard in Hollis produced a noteworthy 45 on July 28. In between, 40 Bobolink were detected on June 25 in Sandwich. While numbers fluctuate year to year, the number of reported Bobolink was up considerably from last year at some of these sites where high counts previously hovered around 30 individuals. As was mentioned last summer, if you are a conservation-minded donor and want to help conservation-minded farmers conserve our grassland birds, please visit the Bobolink Project at www.bobolinkproject.com. Started in Jamestown, Rhode Island in 2007, NH Audubon joined the Bobolink Project in 2017. With its who's who list of partners and collaborators, many of which are among the most recognizable avian conservation institutions and organizations in New England, the Bobolink Project is working hard to support one of our most distinguished avifauna.



Eastern Meadowlark by Debra Powers, 6-9-18, Rollinsford, NH.

Another species which greatly benefits from many of the same grasslands and fields that Bobolinks call home is the

Eastern Meadowlark. In recent years, there appears to be a relative dearth of Eastern Meadowlarks in New Hampshire during the breeding season, which reflects the same declining trend reported from BBS data (1966-2009) (*Birds of North America* 2015). As expected, this declining population has primarily been attributed to the disappearance of suitable nesting habitat due to changes in land use. This summer, no more than four meadowlarks were ever detected at once with most of the sightings coming from the Portsmouth International Airport at Pease in Newington, Dillant-Hopkins Airport in Swanzey, or the Dingman Farm in Kensington. As you can see, there are very limited locations within the state where grassland-nesting obligates can thrive. In the North Country, Rusty Blackbird monitoring by Carol Foss and a small group of technicians and volunteers found activity at 31 of 63 previously known territories, although logistical challenges appear to have disadvantaged some of their efforts. In total, 25 nests were located and monitored in 2018 with 18 (69%) being successful. Seventy-nine percent of nests also succumbed to bird blow fly parasitism, higher than in previous years. Along with radio transmitters attached to 12 nestlings, pinpoint geolocators provided by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center were attached to three adult males by the Rusty Blackbird team and their recovery will be a high research priority for 2019.

Occasionally, it is worth noting what was not seen during a given season as much as what was. Despite their persistence into the last third of May, the two Golden-winged Warblers that were found in spring along Federal Hill Road in Milford did not make an appearance in summer. While their disappearance from the summer list might indicate that they had moved on before the first of June, it is also possible that the males were present and not detected. This is a common question many researchers face when investigating presence/absence of a given species at a research site. Nevertheless, for anyone who birds this area in the future, it will be interesting to see if Golden-winged Warblers show up again and if they can once again be confirmed as a breeding species in the state. Tennessee Warbler is a very uncommon breeder in the state whose numbers are directly tied to Spruce Budworm outbreaks. This summer saw more detections of this boreal zone specialist than the previous two seasons combined with the two on June 22 at the Balsams' grounds in Dixville representing the season high. Also, of note for this species was an early southbound migrant photo-documented at Pickering Ponds on July 20.

Across their range, Cerulean Warblers have exhibited significant declines according to North American BBS data (1966-2009) (*Birds of North America* 2015). A rare breeder in the state, there have been very few sightings in

recent years and none in 2017 despite searches of prior breeding areas by NH Audubon's Pam Hunt. Cerulean Warblers are at the northern extremes of their range in New Hampshire, requiring pioneering individual birds and increasing populations to establish a foothold once again. Encouragingly, for the first time in several years, **Cerulean Warbler** was reliably reported this summer from two of its historic summer haunts. The first came from Pawtuckaway State Park on June 8, the first confirmed at this location since May 6, 2015. The second sighting for this summer came just a day later, on June 9, from the Wantastiquet Mt. Natural Area along the Connecticut River on the western side of the state. This was the first sighting at this location since June 11, 2010. Because of the propensity of other warblers to sing Cerulean-type songs in New Hampshire, particularly Black-throated Blue Warbler and even American Redstart, it is imperative that visual or photo documentation of suspected Cerulean Warblers be obtained for a record to be confirmed. Nearly all vocal-only descriptions of suspected Cerulean Warbler will not be accepted, even from the two locations listed above, due to the amount of vocal overlap that occurs among these species.

Along the Seacoast, northbound migrant warblers lingered into the first few days of June, including a Northern Parula observed singing from the lobster traps at the Yankee Fisherman's Coop. in Hampton on June 2. With migration for this species generally over by the last week in May, this approaches the latest date this species could be expected to be observed in migration. On July 19, a Palm Warbler was observed at the West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve in Madison. At Airport Marsh in Whitefield, a Prairie Warbler was heard singing on the far side of the marsh on July 14. To date, this represents the northernmost detection confirmed for this species in New Hampshire. Now a meaningful member of our avifauna and a localized breeder north to the Lakes Region, Prairie Warblers were largely absent from the state during colonial times and we likely have sheep to thank for their presence now. In the early 1800s, the sheep boom created a largely deforested landscape across New Hampshire that converted several decades later to early successional habitat preferred by Prairies once sheep farmers moved west to greener pasture.



Palm Warbler by Rob Woodward, 7-19-18, Pine Barrens Trail, Madison, NH.

Date	#	Location	Observer
Bobolink			
06/03	80	Dingman Farm, Kensington	D. Finch
06/25	40	Rt. 113, S. Tamworth	N. Houlihan, P. Moynahan
07/08	30	Elm Brook Park, Hopkinton	R. Quinn
07/11	12	Prescott Farm, Laconia	R. Woodward
07/15	25	River Rd., Lyme	E. Bracey
07/16	25	Strafford County Complex, Dover	D. Hubbard
07/26	40	former Cate's Farm Rt. 25C, Warren	E. Marie
07/28	45	Woodmont Orchard, Hollis	C. McPherson

Eastern Meadowlark			
06/03	2	Dingman Farm, Kensington	D. Finch
06/05	2	Dillant-Hopkins Airport, Swanzey	S. Jaffe
06/22	4	Pease Int'l. Tradeport, n. infield island, Newington	P. Hunt, B. Ferry
06/22	2	Henderson Rd., S. Tamworth	S. Vittum
07/08	2	Elm Brook Park, Hopkinton	R. Quinn

Orchard Oriole			
06/03	1	Ponemah Bog WS, Amherst	R. Cassady
06/12	1	Westmoreland Boat Launch	A. Burnett
06/29	3	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard
07/01	2	Baboosic Lake Rd., Merrimack	R. Bielawski
07/12	6	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard
07/19	3	Hawkin's Farm, Salem	K. Wilmarth
07/24	1	Lancy Brook Rd., Brookline	J. Maher

Rusty Blackbird			
06/02	2	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	P.& L. Charron, D. Dionne
06/02	2	East Inlet, Pittsburg	R. Quinn, P. Brown
06/09	1	Mud Pond, Pondicherry NWR	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
07/08	1	Fort Hill WMA, Stratford	D. Dionne, L. Charron
07/13	2	Mollidgewock Rd., Errol	P.& L. Charron

Louisiana Waterthrush			
06/03	1	Dahl WS, Conway	W. Broussard
06/03	1	Woodward Rd., Westmoreland	R. Burnett
06/07	3	High Rd., Lee	M. Malby, P. Farr
06/12	1	Buffalo Rd., W. Rumney	J. Williams
06/18	2	Tin Mt. Conservation Ctr., Albany	J. Pinder
06/20	4	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	R. Woodward
07/07	2	Horse Hill Rd., Hemlocks	K. Rosenberg

Northern Waterthrush			
06/03	4	Watts WS, Effingham	S. Mirick
06/05	6	East Inlet, Pittsburg	L. Carberry,
			C. Boisseau, D. Heitzmann
06/17	6	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	S. Miller
06/19	4	Blackwater R. at Warner Rd., Salisbury	P. Hunt
06/24	3	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. McPherson
07/15	4	Mollidgewock Rd., Errol	P.& L. Charron, D. Dionne
07/27	4	SPNHF Merrimack R. CA, Concord	R. Paradis

Blue-winged Warbler			
06/06	4	Great Bay NWR, Newington	G. Hill
06/09	1	Hatt Rd., Westmoreland	G. Seymour
06/16	1	Silver Mt., Lempster	P. Wood
07/19	3	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	D. Hubbard

SUMMER SEASON

<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Observer</i>
Tennessee Warbler				Blackpoll Warbler			
06/05	1	East Inlet, Pittsburg	L. Carberry, C. Boisseau, D. Heitzmann	06/07	35	Mt. Garfield Trail, WMNF	T. Hochhausler
06/22	2	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	L. Charron	06/09	20	Lonesome Lake, Lincoln	T. Hochhausler
06/29	1	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	S. Glynn	06/12	13	Cannon Mt., Franconia	M. Maxwell
07/11	2	Mt. Tecumseh, Waterville Valley	J. Keator	06/15	22	Mt. Moosilauke, Benton	N. Dorian
07/14	1	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	A. Kallenbach, M. Suomala	06/21	20	Mt. Osceola Trail, WMNF	N. Dorian
07/20	1	Pickering Ponds, Rochester	H. Burns	06/30	32	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	S. Mirick
Mourning Warbler				07/11	15	Mt. Hancock, WMNF	T. Pirro
06/02	1	Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham	P. Miliotis	07/12	22	Mt. Liberty, WMNF	C. Dalton
06/05	1	Mt. Monadnock, Jaffrey	J. Peters	07/13	21	Franconia Ridge Trail, WMNF	J. Neill
06/10	2	Prospect Hill Rd., Canaan	D. Jackson	Black-throated Blue Warbler			
06/17		Leavitt Pond, Grantham	S. Brown	06/23	16	Long Pond, Benton	H. Stevens
06/17	2	Indian Stream Rd., Pittsburg	S. Miller	06/26	19	Tin Mt. Conservation Ctr., Albany	J. Pinder
06/24	1	Strafford County Complex, Dover	V. Long, D. Hubbard	07/12	20	Mt. Garfield Trail, WMNF	J. Neill
06/24	2	East Inlet, Pittsburg	R. & K. Frieden	Palm Warbler			
06/27	3	Turbine access road, Millsfield/Dixville	D. & G. Dionne	06/02	2	Pondicherry NWR	S. Wisley, J. Pettipas
07/03	2	Cherry Mt. Trail, WMNF	S. Griesemer	06/10	4	Blueberry Swamp, Columbia	K. Fenton
07/04	2	Weeks SP, Lancaster	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell, A. Griffin	06/29	2	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	S. Glynn
Cape May Warbler				07/08	6	Mollidgewock Rd., Errol	D. Hof
06/02	1	Rt. 3 near Big Brook, Pittsburg	R. Quinn, P. Brown	07/18	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	D. & G. Dionne, P. Charron
06/05	2	Panorama Golf Course, Colebrook	L. Charron	07/19	1	West Branch Pine Barrens Preserve, Madison	R. Woodward
06/09	2	Jefferson Notch Rd., WMNF	K. Dorsey	Prairie Warbler			
06/16	1	Bunnell Notch Trail, WMNF	J. Maher	06/03	6	Stevens Hill Rd., Nottingham	P. Miliotis, C. McPherson
06/29	4	East Inlet, Pittsburg	B. Griffith	06/06	6	Concord Airport	M. McCarthy, N. Dorian
07/14	1	Mt. Tecumseh, Waterville Valley	J. Maher	06/07	5	High Rd., Epping	M. Malby, P. Farr
Cerulean Warbler				06/09	7	Ossipee Pine Barrens Preserve, Freedom	A. & G. Robbins
06/08	1	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	R. Prieto	06/20	9	Old Monson Village, Hollis/Milford	C. Dengler, S. Miller
06/09	1	Wantastiquet Mt. NA, Chesterfield/Hinsdale	B. Griffith	06/22	6	Nottingcook Forest, Bow	A. Kallenbach
Bay-breasted Warbler				06/25	6	Lancy Brook wetlands, Brookline	C. Sheridan
06/02	10	East Inlet, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet	07/14	1	Airport Marsh, Whitefield	A. Kallenbach, M. Suomala
06/09	2	Caps Ridge Trail, WMNF	K. Dorsey	Canada Warbler			
06/30	1	Livermore Cove, Squam L., Holderness	T. Michel	06/02	6	The Balsams & trails, Colebrook	P. & L. Charron, D. Dionne
07/01	2	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	R. Prieto	06/02	6	Hubbard Brook Exp. Forest, Woodstock	A. Burdo
Blackburnian Warbler				06/03	6	Pondicherry NWR	A. Hulsey
06/02	10	Pittsburg	A. & K. Wilmarth	06/06	8	East Inlet, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/06	9	Wapack Trail, Temple Mt., Peterborough	B. Robo	06/09	5	Watts WS, Effingham	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/08	9	Mt. Kearsarge, Warner	M. Nelson, D. Williams	06/09	5	Mountain Rd., Lempster	D. Jackson
06/10	8	Old Marlborough Rd., Marlborough	T. Parody	06/10	5	Trudeau Rd., Bethlehem	R. Suomala, Z. Cornell
06/17	8	Wantastiquet Mt. NA, Chesterfield/Hinsdale	K. Wilmarth	06/10	5	Canaan Town Forest	D. Jackson
06/20	7	Pawtuckaway SP, Nottingham/Deerfield	R. Woodward	06/30	7	Long Pond Town Forest, Lempster	D. Jackson, J. Swatt, D. Hoitt, S. Wisley, J. Pettipas
06/24	8	Mt. Chocorua, Albany	M. Oyler	Wilson's Warbler			
07/14	9	Wapack Trail, Temple Mt., Peterborough	B. Robo, M. Sovay	06/01	2	Derry	M. Getter
Chestnut-sided Warbler				06/02	3	East Inlet, Pittsburg	E. Nielsen, S. Sweet
06/02	10	Pondicherry NWR	S. Wisley, J. Pettipas	06/09	1	Star Is., Isles of Shoals	S. Mirick
06/03	8	Trescott water supply lands, Hanover	R. Atkins	06/15	1	Joe English Rd., New Boston	K. Plourde
06/21	8	Smoky Camp Brook, Errol	D. Dionne	06/29	1	Scott Bog Rd., Pittsburg	S. Glynn
06/27	8	Morse Preserve, Alton	R. Woodward				

Summer 2018 Field Notes

Compiled by Diana Talbot

Amazing Nest Camouflage



This lichen-covered nest was made by a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and photographed by Rebecca Suomala on the Pickering Ponds field trip (Rochester, NH) led by Dan Hubbard and Zeke Cornell, May 13, 2018. The nest blended in so well that it wouldn't have been seen except that Alan Murray had already found it as it was being built. Alan documented with photos the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher building its nest and feeding its young.

Blue-gray Gnatcatchers migrate to New England from Central America and the Gulf States and the breeding season begins in late April and early May. The male and female of this species build a deep, neat cup of plant fibers, grasses, bark and feathers. They bind it together with spider webs for support and cover the outside of the nest with flakes of lichen. It is camouflaged for protection from predators and looks like an extension of the branch itself. They build their nests in birch, pine and red maple trees, usually 30-60 feet off the ground. Most clutches have 4-6 eggs. The Blue-gray Gnatcatcher began moving north to New England in the 1960s and continued to expand its range into the 1980s and 1990s.



Getting started, 5-7-18.



Almost done, 5-9-18.



Incubating, 5-10-18.



Feeding young, 6-6-18.

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- Harrison, C. 1978. *Field Guide to Nests, Eggs and Nestlings*. Stephen Greene Press, Brattleboro, VT.
- Foss, C., ed. 1994. *Atlas of Breeding Birds in New Hampshire*, Audubon Society of New Hampshire, Concord, NH.

Red-tailed Hawk Raises Chick in Downtown Manchester

A Red-tailed Hawk was spotted with its chick in a nest built on top of the building's sign at the Elliot at River's Edge off Rt. 293. The nest was spotted on the north side of the building by Chris Martin on June 6, 2018. The Elliott building is home to many medical offices. Photos by Chris Martin and Diana Talbot.



House Finch Begs from Brown-headed Cowbird

by Dan Hubbard

On July 24, 2018, I was sitting on my deck watching the bird activity (possibly with glass of wine) and reading the newspaper (probably depressing), when I noticed something odd. A juvenile House Finch was begging (not unusual), but it wasn't begging from an adult House Finch. It was begging from an adult female Brown-headed Cowbird (the notorious nest parasite). The cowbird was a bit perplexed and tried to avoid the begging, but the House Finch chased it about for a few minutes. This not being the natural order of things, I was a bit perplexed also. Brown-headed Cowbirds lay their eggs in other birds' nests, so they are the ones usually doing the begging from a parent of a different species. The only theory for this behavior, in my humble opinion, is that the finch survived sharing a nest with a bully cowbird parasite and imprinted upon it.

Successful Eagle Re-nest!

by Chris Martin and Diana Talbot

The first nesting attempt of the Bald Eagle pair at Merrymeeting Marsh in New Durham in March, 2018 failed during incubation. The pair then laid a second clutch of eggs, hatched at least one, and was

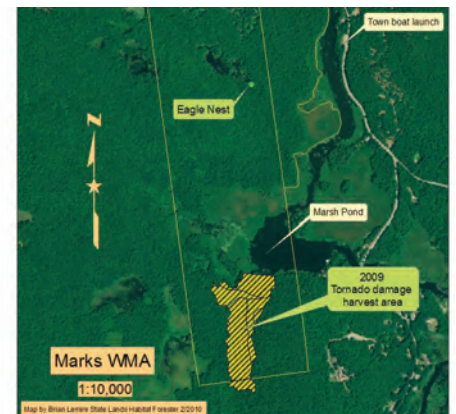


The first successful re-nest by Bald Eagles to be documented in New Hampshire at the Merrymeeting Marsh in New Durham, NH. Photo by Libby Corbin of the same pair in 2015 (3-21-15). Map by Brian Lemire.

successful in raising one chick. Due to their late re-start, it was probably the very last eagle nest to fledge young this season. The Bald Eagle parents tended to the fledgling all summer. The eagle chick finally flew from the nest around August 21 and the re-nest was confirmed as a success!

This nesting site has been monitored by Senior Biologist Chris Martin and his volunteers since 2010. The chick had been out of the nest for about a month when Chris witnessed the juvenile perched in a tree adjacent to the nest still shrieking for food. "It was probably screaming because it was hungry", Chris said, "similar to human children." This is the first time that a successful re-nesting has been documented in New Hampshire and the event was well documented by NH Audubon volunteers. Chris stated that this particular Bald Eagle pair has probably been at this same nest for over a decade.

Eagle young spend 10 to 11 weeks in the nest after incubation. After fledging occurs, the nest remains the focal point of activity well into the fall. The bulk of the summer diet consists of fish and they are opportunistic feeders as well, often feeding on carcasses of other animals. Young birds are highly transient during their four to five year development into adulthood. Prime nest and perch sites are intrinsically attractive to the species and eagles may return to the same nest generation after generation to raise their young.



Osprey Nest Moved to Better Location at Tuscan Village

In conjunction with the development of the Tuscan Village project in Salem, Biologist Daniel Geiger succeeded in relocating an Osprey pair from their old nest located on a light pole in the parking lot of the former Rockingham Park to a brand new nest platform installed nearby, adjacent to a small wetland. Ospreys fly south for the winter and return in April to nest. The old light pole with nest was taken down while they were away and the new platform was ready for them upon their return! They even attached an eight foot, green predator guard at the bottom of the new pole.

Photos by Dan Geiger.



Installing the new nest platform before the Ospreys returned, 3-6-18.



Two fledgling Ospreys almost ready to leave the nest on the new platform, 7-18-18.

Daniel Geiger is a Certified Wildlife Specialist who works with Oak Hill Environmental Services. Dan has worked on Osprey and Bald Eagle nest building with NH Audubon and other collaborators since the mid-1990s. This Osprey project had been in the works since October of 2017.

Piping Plover Chicks of Two Different Ages



On July 19, 2018, Jon Woolf photographed an adult Piping Plover at Hampton Beach with a very young chick and an older juvenile nearby. The older youngster was already fledged, likely from a nest in the Hampton-Seabrook area. The very young chick may have been from a second nesting after a failed first attempt, resulting in young of very different ages on the beach the same day. All photos by Jon Woolf, 7-19-18.



The very young chick.



The older, fledged juvenile.

Color Banded Semipalmated Sandpiper



This color banded Semipalmated Sandpiper was seen and photographed on July 28, 2018 by Steve Mirick in Hampton, NH. It was originally banded at the Heislerville Wildlife Management Area in NJ on 5-22-18.

Chukars Everywhere!

by Kathryn Frieden

Well, not everywhere, but there was a sudden increase in sightings in many diverse places in New Hampshire this spring and summer (Table 1). The Chukar is a middle-eastern species, one of eight in the partridge family, which was introduced to North America as a game bird in the late 1800s. They are now established breeders in the Great Basin of the western United States. In New Hampshire, they are either escaped from someone with a permit to raise them, or from a sport-shooting club. For more on Chukars see the article in the Fall 2016 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records* (Vol. 35 No. 3) also available online:

https://nhbirdrecords.org/all-articles/Vol35_No3_v-6_Chukar.pdf

Table 1. The locations of Chukar sightings in June and July, 2018 (one bird at each location).

06-02	Foss Beach, Rye
06-02	Massacre Marsh at Parson's Creek, Rye
06-05	Whitelaw Dr., Conway (found dead in road in area 07-03)
06-12	Miller SP, Pack Monadnock
06-20	Pettingill Hill Rd., Lyndeborough
07-03	Rt. 302, Conway
07-04	Ossipee Lake, Freedom

Chukar by Chris Sheridan, 6-12-18, Pack Monadnock, Miller State Park.

Boat Changes at Rye Harbor for 2018

by Jon Woolf



The new Uncle Oscar leaving Rye Harbor, bound for Star Island. Photo by Jon Woolf.

Veteran seabirders found some changes at Rye Harbor when the Spring 2018 season kicked off. The *Atlantic Queen*, the deep-sea-fishing/whale-watching “Big Blue Boat,” was gone for good. Her owner decided to retire, so he sold the boat and closed down his business. This left the old “Atlantic Queen” building vacant, so Pete Reynolds bought it and moved Granite State Whale Watch (GSWW) into these new, larger, much nicer quarters.

Pete’s mother Sue Reynolds, owner and operator of Island Tours that ran regular trips to the Isles of Shoals, also retired. Her boat, the converted lobster boat *Uncle Oscar* chugged off to a new name and a new home down south. However, Pete took over Island Tours and merged its operations with GSWW, running both out of his new office. To go with the larger office, he bought a larger boat for Island Tours, a sixty-foot-long tour boat that can hold up to fifty passengers. This new boat was renamed *Uncle Oscar*, so when the summer season started, there was still an *Uncle Oscar* running between Rye Harbor and the Isles of Shoals.

While they’re now located in the same building, Granite State Whale Watch and Island Tours retain their separate websites:

Granite State Whale Watch:

www.granitestatewhalewatch.com

Island Tours: www.uncleoscar.com



Field Trip Report

Early Tram to Cannon Summit, July 7, 2018

by Amanda Kallenbach

Inspired by one of those “wouldn’t-it-be-great-if...” ideas, I made a few inquiries in June and, before you know it, we had ourselves an early tram ride to the summit of Cannon Mountain with NH Audubon’s Capital Chapter in search of Bicknell’s Thrush. This tram would get us to the summit before it opened to the public.

At 7:30 am on July 7, twenty-nine of us piled into that tram with the maintenance crew on their inspection run (an amazing feat of courage and balance as they climbed atop the cars to check cables!). Previewing what



One of six Blackpoll Warblers tallied on the Cannon Mountain Field Trip with NH Audubon’s Capital Chapter. Photo by Rebecca Suomala.

was to come, a couple of Black-throated Green Warblers and a thrush or two vocalized en route. It was a beautiful summer day, sunny and a brisk 38 degrees at the summit (4,080 feet).

Expertly led by Zeke Cornell and Becky Suomala, our group meandered the summit trails encountering White-throated Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos, Red-breasted Nuthatches, White-winged Crossbills, Pine Siskins, Purple Finches, Winter Wrens, Cedar Waxwings, Red-eyed Vireos and a couple of Swainson’s Thrushes and – Yes, five Bicknell’s Thrushes were heard in various places at the summit. A lucky

handful of us, who lingered after the trip officially ended, saw them, too!

Not forgetting the warblers, we saw Blackpoll, Yellow-rumped, and Black-throated Green Warblers, an Ovenbird, an American Redstart, and Chestnut-sided and Magnolia Warblers.

Having the summit all to ourselves for the first 90 minutes on that gorgeous morning was such a treat! It was an unforgettable experience and I’m hoping the adventure becomes a regular tradition for the Chapter.

Amanda Kallenbach is a birder, photographer and environmental steward. She currently serves on the town of Bow’s Conservation Commission.

Lempster Town Forest and Ashuelot Headwaters Field Trip

by Jack Swatt

Taken from a post to NH birds e-mail list on 6-30-18.

The heat and humidity did not deter 16 participants from venturing into the Lempster Mountain forests on the joint NH Audubon Capital Chapter and Forest Society field trip on Saturday, June 30, 2018. Dylan Jackson and I led the walk through some of the Lempster Town Forest and Ashuelot Headwaters Forest trails. Highlight of the trip should have been the Swainson’s Thrush that had set up a territory in the Lempster Town Forest for the third year in a row. It was singing yesterday and this morning before the walk, but we could not coax it to sing or make an appearance for the crowd. Surprisingly, the photogenic bird of the day was a singing Winter Wren perched up on a short snag for all to see. Warblers were singing, but were hard to coax into view although most participants were able to get views of Canada Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Blackburnian Warbler. When we reached the twin bridges over the Ashuelot River the finale was a Cooper’s Hawk circling overhead with a mouse in its talons.



The field trip group posing on the Cannon Mountain summit building. Photo by Rebecca Suomala.

Mississippi Kites Nesting in New Hampshire in 2018

by Steve Mirick

New Hampshire's famous Mississippi Kites rebounded from last year's disastrous nesting season with at least three successful nests in the State. They also expanded their limited range in the State with the first confirmed nesting outside of Newmarket since the kites were first found nesting in New Hampshire in 2008.

There were three active pairs of kites reported in New Hampshire in 2018. Additional birds included a wandering adult in Langdon (!) on June 8 and a first summer bird in early spring in Newmarket. This means that there were at least eight individual adult or sub-adult birds reported this spring/summer in New Hampshire. Aside from the bird seen in Langdon, all of the sightings were near the three nesting territories in Newmarket, Durham, and Stratham in southeastern New Hampshire.



Mississippi Kite by Steve Mirick, 7-4-18, Newmarket, NH.

As in past years, the nest sites continue to be in residential neighborhoods, often in front or rear yards! The specific nest locations in Newmarket and Stratham have been kept a secret in order to protect the residents of the neighborhood. The birds, however, seem to be fairly tolerant of human activity on the ground below the nest.

Below is a summary of the nest sites from each town.

Newmarket

Following last year's disasters on Huckin's Drive (death of the male and the chick, see the Summer 2017 issue of *New Hampshire Bird Records*), it appears the female found a new mate and established a new territory. The specific location has been kept a secret; however, the nest was first discovered on August 1, high in an oak tree in a front yard within a residential neighborhood. The single chick was first noted "branching" with weak flight on August 19 and was still in the area being fed by an adult as late as September 1 (13 days after leaving the nest).

Durham

This territory was first noted in 2017, but there was little follow-up and no nest was confirmed; however, it is likely

that there was at least a nest attempt in 2017. This year, the nest was first discovered on July 24 high in a white pine tree in a back yard along Madbury Road in Durham. Thanks to the accommodating property owners, the nest was visited by hordes of birders. The nest was even shown on television when Channel 9 out of Manchester broadcast a segment on the birds! The baby was first reported "branching" as early as August 10, and as of August 26 (16 days after leaving the nest), it was doing well and still being fed by the parents.

Stratham

This territory was first noted in 2017, and I believe they attempted to nest (copulation observed), but I couldn't find the nest despite a lot of searching. In 2018, the nest was discovered on August 1, high in an oak tree in the front yard within a residential neighborhood. The specific location has been kept a secret. The young bird was first noted "branching" with short flights on August 12. On August 29, the juvenile was making long sustained flights and chasing flying insects, but as of September 1 (20 days after leaving the nest), the young bird was still being fed by the parents and even flew back to the nest site to be fed!

In summary, it appears 2018 was a great year for the kites in New Hampshire with three nests and three fledged young (one from each nest). Kites typically only have a single chick in New Hampshire. The only other kites nesting in New England that I know of are in Connecticut where there are reportedly one or two nest territories which have been kept a secret.

Pied-billed Grebes Nesting in Dixville Notch

by Lori Charron

Photos taken by Lori Charron at the Panorama Golf Course.

In 2017 I discovered a nesting pair of Pied-billed Grebes at the Panorama Golf Course in Dixville Notch (Colebrook portion). They were in one of several ponds that had not been maintained since the golf course closed and they had become great habitat for grebes.

They returned in 2018 and on May 20 I observed that they had a nest. On June 12 I saw my first chick. On July 5 I had my first look at the grebe family – six in all! How exciting! I spent many hours observing this family. The first thing I noticed was the chicks were at different ages and stages. By July 12 one adult had left leaving the other adult to raise the chicks. It was fascinating to see how the adult could hide all six on its back (see the photo on the back

cover). By July 16 the chicks were no longer allowed on the adult's back. The oldest chick was pretty independent by this time.

On August 1 the adult had moved to another pond adjacent to the nesting pond and by August 3 the chicks were left on their own. It became a challenge to locate them each day as they moved around from pond to pond. They would be found in three ponds, all close together. By September 10 all but one grebe had left. This one began to hang out with a Mallard family. One month later the last grebe left.

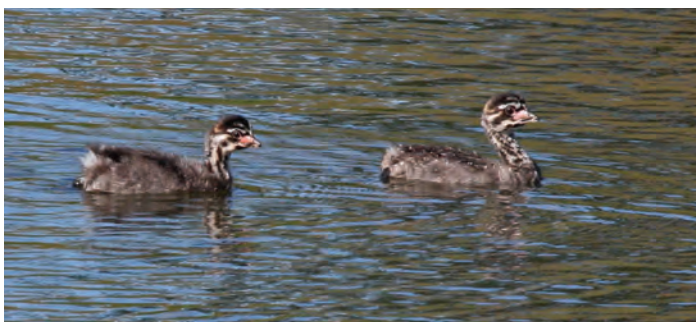
For five months I watched this family grow. Even though I spent almost every day down by the ponds the adult was quick at rousing the young chicks to get on her back. She also taught them to head for the reeds and hide. I never saw them fly. I did observe the last one practicing take off. It was shortly after that, that the ponds were empty. I am anxious to see what next year brings!



Pied-billed Grebe pair, 5-28-18.



Pied-billed Grebe family of six young, 7-16-18.



Two juvenile Pied-billed Grebes, 7-25-18.

How Should We Count the Barred Owls?

by Kathryn Frieden

We live in Nottingham near the end of a mile-long dirt road. There are woods lining the road that extend for several miles in each direction and we have heard adult Barred Owls calling many times during spring and summer nights. On July 19, 2018 we were driving home around 9:00 pm. When we reached the dirt road,



Juvenile Barred Owl by Kristen Ward.

we rolled down the windows of the car as usual to listen for owls. Immediately, we heard a series of hissing, shrieking calls that made one think an animal was dying. Looking up in the trees, we saw two juvenile Barred Owls perched near the side of the road and realized they were responsible for all the noise. There was also a third one calling from out of sight. We then proceeded slowly with the windows open, but heard nothing else until reaching home about five minutes later. We got out of the car and were immediately barraged by those same loud hissing calls. There were three young Barred Owls clearly visible in the trees next to the house! They stayed almost the whole night calling within earshot.

Were there **six** juvenile Barred Owls in two family groups, or were there just **three** that had followed us home?

The Barred Owl is New Hampshire's most common owl. They nest primarily in mature mixed/deciduous forests. There have been numerous studies looking at territory size, concluding that the average is around one square mile. There were higher densities in areas that were nearer water, as well as in suburban parks. The woods around us are contiguous with both Pawtuckaway Lake and some marshy areas associated with several brooks, so would seem to be able to support more than one Barred Owl territory.

In New England, Barred Owls lay their eggs during late March or April, averaging a clutch of two or three. The incubation period is one month. Flightless fledglings can leave the nest at one month of age, well before they can fly. They perch on nearby branches, remaining near the nest while continuing to be fed by the parents. They don't begin short flights until approximately ten weeks of age and by twelve weeks, they can manage longer flights (Soucy 1976).

This timeline would put them in the age-range of twelve to sixteen weeks when we saw them and therefore capable of flying away from the immediate nesting area. Both adults of the breeding pair bring prey to the young and prey delivery continues into late summer and early fall, gradually decreasing as the young learn to hunt on their own. In mid-summer, they would still be receiving a good part of their diet from their parents, hence the noisy begging behavior.

According to Dr. Robert Bierregaard (personal communication), who researched Barred Owls while teaching at the University of North Carolina, the most likely answer to the question about counting is that there were two families of Barred Owls. Although by mid-July they would be extending their flight distances, it is unlikely that all three birds would travel a whole mile together as a family group. The habitat here would be capable of supporting a higher density than average, so it is probable that there were two nests within reach of our road.

In conclusion, we count “our” Barred Owls at **six!**

Note: Barred Owls are known to use nest boxes, so if your yard includes some forest habitat, consider putting one up to attract these interesting birds. Here is a link to information about the box specifications and where to place it: <https://nestwatch.org/learn/all-about-birdhouses/birds/barred-owl/>.

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Backyard Birder

Why do some Scarlet Tanagers have orange feathers?

by Brenda Sens

While a great many people find birds and their lives an endless source of fascination, there are those who found a kindred spirit in Woody Allen when he said, “Nature and I are two.” Even the most dedicated of these urbanites, however, have at some point found themselves admiring the brilliant coloration of a member of the avian world. It is no surprise that unusual coloration in an individual bird makes an impact and raises questions.

At times people report the sighting of a bird whose coloration is unusual, like Scarlet Tanagers with feathers more of an orange hue. Red, orange, and yellow feathers have

something in common with fall foliage. These warm colors depend on the pigments called carotenoids. There are more than 600 varieties of them and they are produced through the process of photosynthesis. Plants are adept at their production, but birds obtain them second-hand from the foods they eat such as berries and other fruits. In a very real sense, birds with red, orange or yellow feathers truly are what they eat. It is no surprise, however, that there are other factors involved.

Being a feather isn't easy. They are exposed to numerous damaging factors: dirt accumulation, exposure to ultraviolet radiation, and attacks by parasites and microbes. Attracting a mate is so dependent on a healthy appearance that maintaining feathers is a major preoccupation and this is accomplished through preening. Birds produce preen wax in a gland located near the base of their tails. This wax keeps keratin, the substance feathers are composed of, flexible, makes it possible for feathers to stay water-repellent, and protects against the ravishes of bacteria. In addition, it makes the feathers appear to have a deeper, more vibrant color.

As with most subjects, the more we know the more we question. The dominant pigment produced from carotenoids is yellow so it is necessary for some birds to convert this to red. Geoff Hill, an ornithologist at Auburn University, in his research into the process, learned of an early twentieth-century attempt by breeders to produce a red canary. They managed to obtain a bird called the Red Siskin from the Amazon and got it to breed with a domestic canary resulting in young with traits of both. By breeding the offspring, they eventually developed a bird that was mostly canary, but had enough of the siskin genes to make it red. A lab led by Miguel Carneiro, a geneticist at Universidade de Porto in Portugal, studied the genomes of Red Siskins, yellow canaries, and the hybrid red canaries. Two regions of the red canary's genome that had been inherited from the Red Siskin were found. Working with the ornithologists in Hill's lab and the molecular biologists in Joseph Corbo's lab at Washington University in St. Louis, MO, they discovered what the genes in those regions do. They learned that one of the genes, called CYP2J19, makes an enzyme that interacts with carotenoids. That particular gene is found in the livers, skin, and feathers of Red Siskins and red canaries so it is thought to be essential for producing red plumage. Research into the genetics of red feathers is going on and the scientists involved have recently acquired genetic material from a yellow cardinal that they expect to be of enormous assistance in their work. (Google yellow cardinal photos for images of this unique bird.)

Now to return to the original question, “why are some Scarlet Tanagers orange”? For now the answer would seem to be the food the birds are eating, their general health and preening habits, and the influence of genes. There is clearly more to be learned on the subject.

Birding in Randolph – “A Little Stretch of Nothing”

by David Forsyth

All photos by the author.



Belted Kingfisher pair. The female, on the right, is the more colorful of the pair.

Randolph, NH was once described as “a little stretch of nothing” by a motorcyclist who was trying to meet up with another motorcyclist at an arbitrary location on the map, namely Randolph on Rt. 2. When they couldn’t find each other, one of them stopped me as I was birding and asked where Randolph was. I explained that there are just three widely separated commercial establishments on Rt. 2 that are part of Randolph and the rest of the village is hidden north of Rt. 2 on side roads. He then called his buddy who said he had been through Randolph and it was “a little stretch of nothing.” Of course a little stretch of nothing is a good place to look for birds.

The Town of Randolph sits between Jefferson and Gorham in northern New Hampshire with Rt. 2 along its southern edge. Rt. 2 passes north of the Presidential Range of the White Mountains so that Randolph, which lies mostly on the south-facing slopes of Mounts Crescent (3230 ft.) and Randolph (3070 ft.), has marvelous views of the taller Mounts Madison, Adams and Jefferson. From the height of land along Rt. 2 in Randolph, the Moose River flows east, emptying into the Androscoggin River that flows out to the Gulf of Maine. To the west, the Israel River flows towards the Connecticut River that drains to the Long Island Sound along the Connecticut coast. Much of the land in Randolph is forested but there are also open areas, beaver ponds, and marshes. Elevations in the town vary from about 1,000 feet to over 3,000 feet.

Randolph owns a Community Forest of over 10,000 acres that mostly lies north of the populated village and borders the White Mountain National Forest in its northern

section. The Randolph Mountain Club (RMC) maintains over 100 miles of hiking trails in both the Town itself and on the north slope of the Presidential Range. The Appalachian trailhead in Randolph on Rt. 2 serves as a starting point for several RMC trails as well as for Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) trails leading to Mounts Madison and Adams and the AMC’s Madison Spring Hut. A rail trail called the Presidential Recreation Trail parallels Rt. 2 through the Randolph section.

Forest birding in Randolph is particularly easy due to the plethora of RMC hiking trails, many of which are easy-going or lead to streams, waterfalls, and viewpoints – not just to peaks. The rail trail provides easy access to birding at beaver ponds, marshes, and meadows. Birds associated with lakes can be found at Durand Lake, lying between Rt. 2 and the Moose River and at the Pond of Safety at the northern edge of the town. Although some winter birding opportunities present themselves at some of the locations below, most of the locations are describing the breeding bird season and migration time periods.

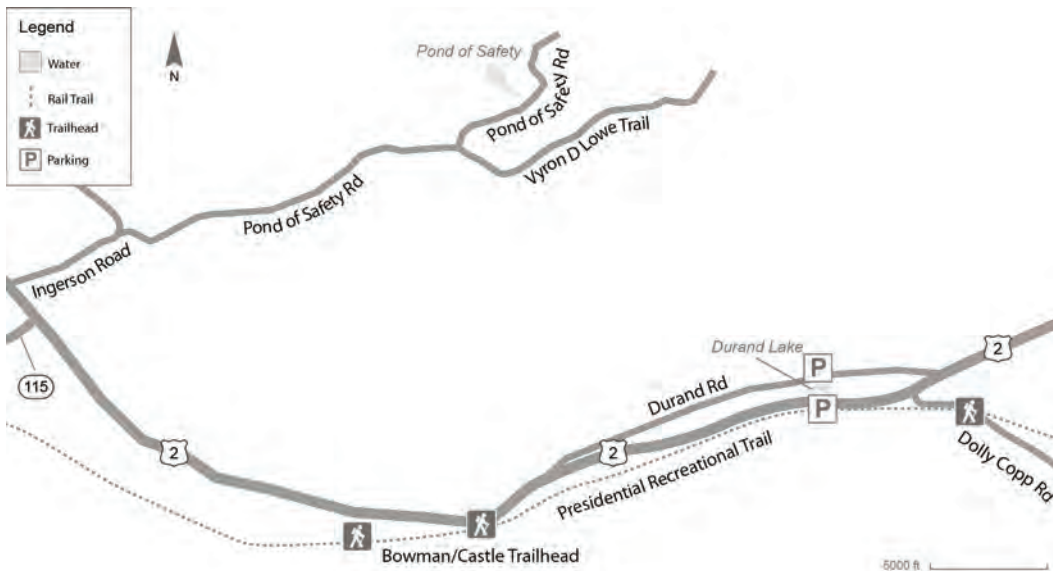
Access to the Randolph area is via Rt. 2. Most travelers approach from the south by Rt. 93 through Franconia Notch, then take the Rt. 3 exit towards Twin Mountain shortly after the Notch. Stay on Rt. 3 through the junction with Rt. 302 and shortly after turn right on Rt. 115 towards Jefferson. At the end of Rt. 115, turn right on Rt. 2 towards Gorham.

Information about the extensive hiking trail system maintained by the Randolph Mountain Club can be obtained through their website, randolphmountainclub.org, including a map and trail booklet, *Randolph Paths*. Rail trail information can be found at friendsofthepresidentialrailtrail.org and information about the Community Forest at Randolphforest.org.

Presidential Rail Trail East from Dolly Copp Road

Overall, the rail trail stretches about 18 miles from Gorham in the east to the Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge in the west. The rail trail is closed to motorized equipment except in the winter, so it provides quiet enjoyment for bicyclists, walkers, and birders. To access the rail trail in Randolph, one point of entry is from the Dolly Copp (Pinkham B) Road, which intersects Rt. 2 at 7.9 miles east of the Rt. 115/2 intersection. Parking for the Presidential Recreation Trail is available near the Randolph Emergency Services Building (44.3557; -71.3608), about 0.5 mile along the Dolly Copp Road after its intersection with Rt. 2.

Starting on the Presidential Recreation Trail where it intersects the Dolly Copp (Pinkham B) Road in Randolph, there is about a half mile stretch heading east towards



Gorham that provides quite productive birding. The first portion heads through mostly deciduous and fairly dense woods with a small amount of slowly moving water along part of it. Next, you reach a stretch of more open area with beaver ponds and wetlands for about a quarter of a mile. After that, you get into a segment of mostly coniferous woods at the base of a ridge of Mount Madison. Thus, the habitat varies significantly over a short distance. The open area near the beaver ponds is the most productive for birding and sometimes you can spot other wildlife such as beaver, otter, bear or moose. Overall, this 0.5 mile section of rail trail is a quite intimate setting, with the birds in close proximity to the trail.



Pileated Woodpecker.

In the deciduous woods at the start, you may see Red-eyed Vireo, Black-capped Chickadee, Hermit Thrush and Veery, although you are more apt to hear rather than actually see these species. Similarly, Pileated Woodpecker might be heard or glimpsed here, as well as further down the trail. Wild Turkey wander along or across the trail occasionally and Ruffed Grouse can be heard

drumming.

At the beaver ponds, flycatchers are well-represented, with very common sightings of Least Flycatcher, Alder Flycatcher and Eastern Phoebe, and somewhat less common occurrences

of Eastern Kingbird. In migration, you may also see Olive-sided Flycatcher. You can almost always see small flocks of Cedar Waxwing that often behave like flycatchers. It's not unusual to see flocks of 10 to 20 waxwings any time from mid-May well into fall. A Belted Kingfisher or two can usually be spotted checking for prey in the ponds. One or two Solitary Sandpipers can be expected during their fall migration periods. Occasionally, other wading birds appear, such as Great Blue

Heron or American Bittern. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds visit the flowers alongside the trail here.

Overhead, you will undoubtedly see and hear American Crow and Blue Jay fly by or perch. Broad-winged Hawk are very common, with less frequent sightings of Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks, American Kestrel and Merlin. In the woodpecker family, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Northern Flicker frequently occur. Black-billed cuckoos are observed occasionally. The number and variety of ducks is small, depending somewhat on the water level in the beaver ponds, but it is not unusual to see Hooded Merganser, Wood Duck and Mallard.

Songbirds are varied and change a lot with the season, although some clearly nest here. You can expect to see American Goldfinch and sparrows, most commonly Song, Savannah, Swamp and White-throated Sparrows. Warbler observations are quite seasonal, of course, but most frequently include Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat and Yellow-rumped and Chestnut-sided Warblers. Others less commonly observed include Palm, Black-and-white, Blackburnian and Magnolia Warblers. The latter warblers are most often found where the conifers begin toward the end of the 0.5 mile section of trail, along with Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch and kinglets. Red-eyed Vireo are always around during the summer and, especially during migration, Blue-headed Vireo and occasionally Philadelphia Vireo may be seen. Rusty Blackbird, Eastern Bluebird, and American Pipit are fun species to spot here, again, usually in migration.

Rail Trail West from Bowman Trailhead

Another site along the rail trail that provides a mostly similar range of habitats is the section from the Bowman trailhead running 0.85 miles west to the Randolph

Community Forest extension on the south side of Rt. 2, sometimes called the Farrar tract after the previous owner. The trail starts out in a forested section with intermittent small ponds on the right, then through a wetter section featuring many snags and then to the Farrar tract, a portion of which was formerly a farmer's field. The field is mowed occasionally to keep it open as a meadow area for wildlife. A more closely mowed path extends from the rail trail about 100 yards down to the Israel River. A large beaver pond borders the other side of the river from the path and is a good place to see Belted Kingfisher. A patch of willow grows near the river and Willow Flycatcher can actually be found there. The meadow attracts Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and sparrows, among others, and the river also attracts Spotted Sandpipers. The open area provides good viewing overhead to see hawks and an occasional eagle flying over. The hawks seem to fly low over this spot more frequently than elsewhere in Randolph.

The section of rail trail between the Bowman trailhead and the Farrar tract can be accessed from either end, although the Bowman end is easier to find. A trailhead sign on Rt. 2 marks the entrance to a small parking area at Bowman (start of the Castle hiking trail, 44.3574; -71.3447). The trailhead is 4.2 miles from the 115/2 intersection. On the other hand, the automobile entrance to the Farrar tract is unmarked at 3.2 miles from the 115/2 intersection. It is a dirt road leading right (south) from Rt. 2 and is opposite a multi-vehicle garage. The dirt road winds downhill, past a former gravel pit. Parking is best before reaching the rail trail, at the point where the road becomes a narrow, rutted track.

Durand Lake

Durand Lake is a small, artificially enlarged lake with a walkable berm on two sides and a wide, mowed trail that circles the entire lake, covering a distance of about 0.6 mile. Beavers and human swimmers frequent the lake in the summer, but no motor boats are allowed. The lake sits only about 100 yards from Rt. 2, but is shielded from view by a barrier of trees. On the north side, the Moose River is about 70 yards away and Durand Road a short distance further away.

The Appalachia trailhead (44.3554; -71.3609) on Rt. 2 can serve to access Durand Lake, but the parking lot can be quite crowded at peak hiking times. There is a gap in the fence on the opposite (north) side of the highway (be careful crossing the busy road!) with a trail leading to the lake. Alternatively, there is some parking available on Durand Road at 2.0 miles east of the start of the road at Rt. 2. Durand Road starts at 5.1 miles east of the 115/2 intersection. From Durand Road, proceed down a slope and over a bridge to a recreation area, then turn left to follow a

wide path to the lake.

Durand Lake is shallow over much of it, and that, along with human activity, means that water birds do not stay for long periods. Double-crested Cormorant and Hooded Merganser are the usual species, with other ducks making shorter appearances, such as Common Merganser, Mallard and additional species in migration. Great Blue Heron are often present, and Osprey sometimes fish here. Belted Kingfisher find it a productive place for small fish and they



Sharp-shinned (top) and Broad-winged Hawk.

also range up and down the nearby Moose River. Blueberries and apple trees in the area around the lake attract birds and other wildlife. The most frequent species seen from the path in the surrounding brush and woods are Chestnut-sided Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Gray Catbird, American Goldfinch and Cedar Waxwing. Other nesting warblers include American Redstart, Ovenbird, and Black-and-white, Black-throated Green and Black-throated Blue Warblers. Chimney Swifts and swallows, mainly Tree Swallow, hunt over the lake, as well as migrating Common Nighthawks. Indigo Bunting are seen less frequently, while Red-eyed Vireo sing constantly for most of the summer. You can also see, or more commonly hear, Hermit Thrush, Veery and Swainson's Thrush. A small, open recreation area about 100 yards to the west of the lake includes a seasonally dammed swimming hole on the Moose River. The recreation area is good for Spotted Sandpiper, Northern Flicker, American Robin, Blue Jay, American Crow and Eastern Phoebe.

Pond of Safety

The Pond of Safety is a relatively remote and isolated site with a history dating from the Revolutionary War Period. It

now has an accessible trail leading to an observation point at its edge, although the dirt road leading there from the town of Jefferson is only seasonally accessible. It is a shallow lake with an adjoining marshy area that attracts moose. The pond borders the northern edge of the Randolph Community Forest and is actually in the section of the White Mountain National Forest north of Mounts Crescent and Randolph. RMC trails lead from the Randolph village area through the woods and around Mount Randolph to this site.

At the Pond of Safety, you may find migrating ducks and frequently, both Common and Hooded Merganser. Other species include Pied-billed Grebe, Solitary Sandpiper, Belted Kingfisher, Common Loon and many woodland songbirds in the surrounding forest. There are various birding sites along the way to the pond and along the road continuing about a mile past the pond. There is a meadow opening maintained for American Woodcock and deer about halfway to the pond, as well as wetlands near the pond, and more open meadow areas along the road just beyond the pond.



Black-and-white Warbler.

The route to the Pond of Safety starts in the town of Jefferson. From Rt. 115, turn left (west) on Rt. 2 and proceed 0.4 mile to a right (north) at Ingerson Road. After 1.0 mile, the dirt road called either the Pond of Safety Road or Stag Hollow Road (depending on the map source) heads off to the right as Ingerson Road turns left. (Logging roads can make the route a little confusing at times, but there are a couple of significant corners where keeping left keeps one on track.) Follow the Pond of Safety Road about 4 miles to a left entrance to a small parking area for the pond.

Doves Near Ducks, What the Heck?

The Changing Taxonomic Order

by Pamela Hunt

It's been a while since I've written an article on taxonomic changes in North American birds, but when I did there were some pretty significant revisions afoot. In "A Shrubful of Warblers and Other Taxonomic Stories" (Summer 2011, Vol. 30, #2), I talked about rearrangement of pelicans and herons, separation of falcons from hawks, and spent a fair bit of time trying to explain how warblers were reclassified. In the years since, the American Ornithological Society (AOS) has adopted some even more dramatic changes to how species are ordered in our lists and it's high time I tried explaining them to the readers of *New Hampshire Bird Records (NHBR)*. This is particularly timely because the changes I'm about to discuss were only just adopted by eBird, whose species order we use in *NHBR*. If you're unclear what "taxonomic order" is all about, you're encouraged to read "The Order of Things" in the Fall 2005 issue of *NHBR* (Vol. 24 #3 by Kathie Palfy).

But first, a bit of a refresher. Birders like to joke about how changes in the taxonomic order are part of a plot to sell more field guides, but it's a lot more fascinating than this. The order we list birds is meant to reflect their evolutionary relationships, with groups that have more recently diverged from the main path of avian history placed toward the end. There was a time when birds near the beginning were mistakenly considered "more primitive," but this is far from the case – their branches of the tree simply split off closer to the roots. If a species is around today, be it an ostrich or a tanager, by definition it has been evolving for the same amount of time. The difference is that the ostrich lineage has been ostrich-like for a *lot* longer than the tanager one has been tanager-like. They *both* date back to the first dinosaurs that discovered feathers were a pretty neat idea.

Two of my older articles for *NHBR* discussed earlier attempts to sort out the avian family tree. Way back in Winter 1998-99, I talked about DNA-DNA hybridization, at the time the first effort to look at all of bird diversity using the same technique (Vol. 17, #4, "Dump Storks and Other Rearrangements"). Until then, much of our thinking was based on structural differences rather than molecular ones, although the latter was increasingly used to help sort out things at the species level. Then, in the Summer 2003 issue, I discussed the then-radical change, involving molecular genetics, that moved ducks and chickens to the front of the list (Vol. 31 #2, "Ducks and Chickens to the Front"). Genetic techniques continue to improve and in the last ten

years, several researchers have applied these techniques to no less a puzzle than “how has avian evolution proceeded since the demise of the dinosaurs?”

In case you're getting a little nervous, I don't intend to spend any time in this article trying to explain the various methodologies used in the studies that informed the new arrangement. Suffice it to say that these authors are employing techniques that are widely recognized as the best thing we currently have and that, while their results don't always line up with each other exactly, they've tended to point in the same direction. The resulting relationships of orders and families is getting close to being a good representation of how these groups actually evolved, although there is still room for some fine tuning as I point out below. To help keep everything in perspective, I'm going to cover all major groups of birds in this article, not just those that have been rearranged most recently or that occur in New Hampshire. With the exception of the songbirds at the very end, I'll also not dig deeper than the order level. So with all that behind us, let's buckle our seat belts and get ready for the ride!

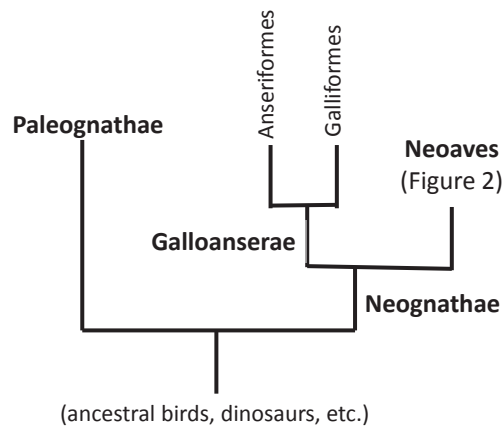


Figure 1. Evolutionary tree showing the relationships among the three main groups of living birds.

Long ago, the family tree of “modern” birds (i.e., those that survived the extinction of their dinosaur ancestors) diverged into two main branches. The smaller branch is the Paleognathae, comprising things like ostriches, emus, kiwis, and tinamous. All these birds are either flightless or have limited capacity for flight (the tinamous). The second branch, the Neognathae, in turn has two main branches. One, called the Galloanserae, includes two orders: Anseriformes (ducks, geese, and swans) and Galliformes (quail, pheasants, grouse, and turkeys). All other birds are in the second branch of the Neognathae: the Neoaves. These three groups (Paleognathae, Galloanserae, and Neoaves) had already formed prior to the

catastrophic extraterrestrial impact that caused the extinction of the dinosaurs 66 million years ago. When the dust settled (literally!), surviving lineages diversified into the 10,000 or more species of birds we know today. The relationships among these three core groups are represented in Figure 1 and from now on I'll be focusing entirely on the Neoaves, since that's where all the recent taxonomic changes have occurred.

Long-time readers of *NHBR* have been used to seeing grebes near the head of the list, following waterfowl, grouse, and loons. They've held that position for some time and until this most recent shake-up were still considered closely related to loons (which are now much later in the list). But while they might remain next to loons in your field guides (at least for a while), the two groups are not really that similar after all and the closest living relatives of grebes turn out to be – wait for it – *flamingos!* This relationship appears pretty solid, and is borne out by multiple studies, but this is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the Neoaves. Although there are two well-defined groups of slightly more recent origin (see below), the rest of the Neoaves is a relatively messy grouping (often called the “basal Neoaves”) that started splitting off quite early in the initial evolutionary history of modern birds. In this new classification, the closest relatives of the flamingo/grebe group are the doves, and along with a few additional taxa not in North America, these comprise the “Columbea,” which probably split off the rest of the Neoaves just before the end of the Cretaceous. All remaining birds are in the group “Passerea.”

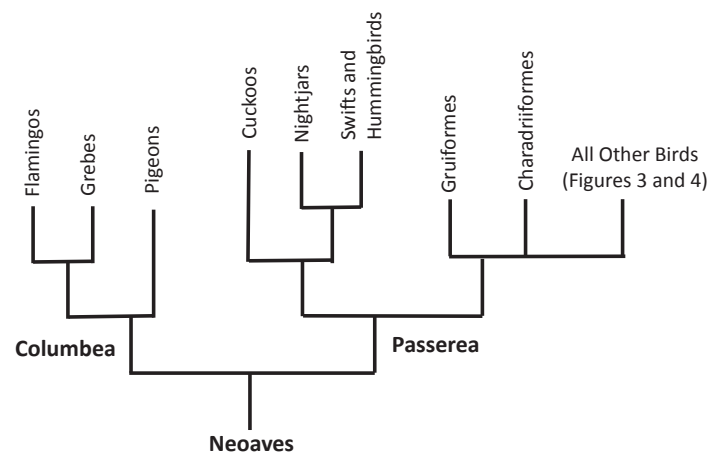


Figure 2. Evolutionary tree showing relationships among the “basal Neoaves.”

Within the Passerea, most evidence indicates that cuckoos (Cuculiformes) are most closely related to a group that includes both nightjars (Caprimulgiformes) and swifts and hummingbirds (Apodiformes). Harder to pin down are two fairly large groups: the Gruiformes (rails, coots, and cranes) and Charadriiformes (plovers, sandpipers, auks, and gulls).

Both are believed to be of more recent origin, but where exactly they fall in the tree varies among studies. For our purposes I've placed them as sequential divergences just before we get to the final two large groupings of birds, as shown in Figure 2.

Next up are two groups that are *much* more understood, and which can also be conveniently labeled according to their general ecology. They appear to have diverged slightly *after* the Cretaceous extinction event, and include roughly three quarters of living birds. First up is what we now refer to as “core waterbirds,” a group containing loons, tubenoses, cormorants, pelicans, and herons. The broad relationships among these groups are shown in Figure 3, along with a couple of smaller groups just for fun. These latter two – the Sunbittern and tropicbirds – are *usually* considered closely related to the core waterbirds, but in some classifications are placed closer to the rails or pigeons. As I noted in an earlier article (Summer 2011, Vol. 30, #2), pelicans are now in the same order as herons, whereas historically they were with cormorants and gannets. All in all, the actual *order* of the remaining core waterbirds hasn't changed, it's just that grebes, rails, shorebirds, and gulls have all been moved much earlier in the list.

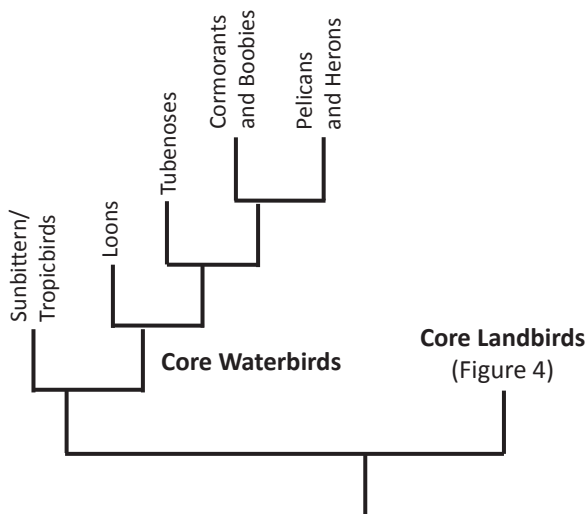


Figure 3. Evolutionary tree showing relationships among the “core waterbirds” and their close relatives.

Finally we come to the landbirds, or more accurately the “core landbirds.” Once doves, cuckoos, nightjars, swifts, and hummingbirds have been moved out, we're left with two final major radiations (Figure 4). One, often named “Afroaves” because many of its groups have high diversity in Africa, includes hawks, owls, trogons (not in the figure), and two large diverse groups that contain kingfishers and woodpeckers. In the new arrangement, hawks and vultures are now in two separate orders that diverged earlier than the rest (Figure 4), although as a fortuitous bonus the owls directly follow them, resulting in most birds of prey now

being in one part of the list.

The exception to the latter is the falcons, which are part of the “Australaves” rather than the “Afroaves.” This huge group is believed to have evolved when Australia, Antarctica, and South America were still joined and many groups within it (e.g., parrots, songbirds) are particularly diverse in Australia or South America. As noted in my Summer 2011 and Summer 2012 articles (Vol. 30, #2; Vol. 31, #2), falcons were the first major lineage to split off within the Australaves, followed by the parrots (Figure 4). What's left are the passerines, sometime called “songbirds” (although some non-passerines can sing) or “perching birds” (although *most* non-passerines can perch). This single order is thus the most recently evolved major group of birds (40-50 million years ago) and also the most diverse, containing roughly 60% of all living species.

I could write an entire article on passerine evolution (so watch this space!), but for our current purposes will only dwell on two key things. For starters, passerines split very early on into two large lineages, the suboscines and oscines, which differ in the structure of their vocal apparatus (among other things). The suboscines are incredibly diverse in South America, but only one family, the tyrant flycatchers, is well represented north of Mexico. Other groups will be more familiar to those who've travelled south: antbirds, mannikins, woodcreepers, ovenbirds (not the same as our Ovenbird!), and cotingas. Within the oscines, there is a complicated early radiation of groups now largely restricted to Australia – and loosely called the “Corvida.” Only three of these families made it to the Western Hemisphere: vireos, shrikes, and jays and crows. All other passerines are in the Passerida, which still contains over a third of the world's birds, some 3,500 species. Relationships among the Passerida are complicated and still not well understood, but you will still notice some changes in the order (finches before sparrows, blackbirds before warblers). But that story is best saved for another time.

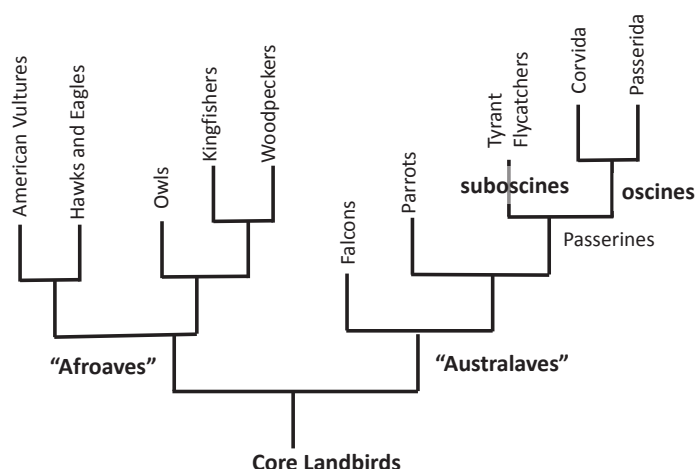


Figure 4. Evolutionary tree showing relationships among the “core landbirds.”

If you followed all that, congratulations, you're well on your way to becoming a bird systematics geek. If you tried, but got bogged down in jargon and family trees, my apologies. The bottom line is that the new order in which species appear in *NHBR* is based on a rapidly consolidating view of avian evolution and reflects how we think each major group arose over time. If converted to a linear order (such as we use in this publication), you get the list below. If you get familiar with this, you'll soon be able to find the species you're looking for in any list of birds that follows it. I'm sure there'll be a few tweaks now and then as we continue to learn, but current trends suggest these will be minor. I make no promises about where everything is going to appear in the next version of your favorite field guide!

Ducks and Geese
 Quail and Grouse
 Grebes
 Doves
 Cuckoos
 Nightjars
 Swifts and Hummingbirds
 Rails and Coots
 Shorebirds, Alcids, and Gulls
 Loons
 Shearwaters and Petrels
 Cormorants and Boobies
 Herons and Ibises
 Vultures and Hawks
 Owls
 Kingfishers
 Woodpeckers
 Falcons
 Tyrant Flycatchers
 Shrikes, Vireos, and Crows
 Larks, Swallows
 Titmice, Nuthatches, Creepers
 Wrens, Gnatcatchers, Kinglets
 Thrushes, Mimics, Starlings
 Waxwings, Pipits, Longspurs
 Sparrows, Blackbirds
 Warblers, Cardinals, House Sparrow

End Note

Not all recent taxonomic changes have been in the sequence of orders and families. The major species-level change to affect birders in New Hampshire was the "loss" of Thayer's Gull (a rarity in the state). Many years ago, Thayer's had been split off from Herring Gull, but increasing amounts of data, and the reevaluation of old data, indicated that it is more closely related to Iceland Gull. In fact, the latter relationship is so strong that the two have been lumped, and

Thayer's Gull relegated to subspecies status. In other words, you need to take it off your lists (unless you didn't have Iceland Gull!).

Annotated List of References

American Ornithological Society. North American Checklist Committee website: <http://www.americanornithology.org/content/north-american-classification-committee>. This site contains links to all annual updates to the "*Checklist of North and Middle American Birds*." At the bottom of the home page are links to other valuable resources.

Boyd, J. III. 2007-2016. *Aves: A Taxonomy in Flux*. <http://www.jboyd.net/Taxo/taxo1.html>. This is a very well-researched and well-organized website, although the taxonomic decisions made by its author are not necessarily the same as those by other authorities such as the AOS (above) and Clements (below).

Cornell University. 2012. The eBird/Clements Checklist. <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/clementschecklist/>. This is the checklist order used by eBird. It differs slightly from that of the American Ornithological Society, partially because it needs to account for all the world's birds, not just those of the Americas.

A very good overview of the recent major changes is available at the website for the AOS's "South American Checklist Committee." This document references the original molecular studies and includes several examples of the phylogenies generated by those studies. <http://www.museum.lsu.edu/~Remsen/SACCprop723.htm>

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- Palfy, K. 2006. The Order of Things. *New Hampshire Bird Records*. Fall 2005, 24(3):59-60.
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Photo Gallery – Watching Robins Grow!

The Summer issue covers the nesting season when our breeding birds are busy raising young. Jane Kelley photo chronicled this American Robin nest from eggs to fledging in Gilford, NH. Robins usually have more than one clutch in a season and given the late date of hatching, this nest was at least a second attempt for this pair.



Three eggs, 7-25-18. American Robin clutches usually include four eggs, but sometimes three or five. The female incubates the eggs for 11-14 days.



Hatch on 8-2-18.



All three chicks begging for food, 8-6-18. The robin's diet includes earthworms, beetles, moths and a wide variety of fruits.



Getting bigger, 8-9-18.



With feathers, 8-13-18.

The last day the chicks were in the nest, 8-15-18. They fledged the next day when the young were 14 days old. Young robins often leave the nest before they can fly well. Sometimes young birds start out hopping on the ground or take just short flights. The young make loud begging calls and the adults continue to feed them wherever they land. If you find a young robin with feathers that can't fly, that's normal. Just leave it alone or shepherd it to a safe location. The adults will find and feed it.



Answer to the Photo Quiz

by David B. Donsker

In this issue of the Photo Quiz, we return to the problem of identifying birds with simple plumages. Our subject is basically a small, short-necked, olive-green and yellow passerine, or perching bird. It has brownish olive upperparts and flanks and a bright yellow throat that contrasts sharply with its grayish-olive cheeks. There are no real facial markings other than an inconspicuous, thin, eye-ring. The belly is pale greenish-gray and the undertail coverts are greenish-yellow. The tail is relatively long, extending well beyond the undertail coverts. The dark bill is fairly thin and pointed. The legs and feet are brownish-pink. That's about it. There are no streaks, stripes, bars, tail spots, or other strong markings. A very important feature to look for when identifying small passerines is the presence or absence of wing bars. This bird has none.

Where can we start? Its very plainness is, in itself, a type of field mark. That, coupled with its generally olive and yellow coloration eliminates a host of strongly marked or colorful species, and leaves us with a relatively small pool of potential contenders. These include some small flycatchers, tanagers, finches, vireos, and warblers.

Some of our small flycatchers deserve fleeting consideration. All have olive-green upperparts and heads. Some, especially young birds and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, are variably yellowish below. Others, like Willow and Alder Flycatchers, have thin, inconspicuous eye-rings. But in all of our flycatchers that have yellowish underparts, the yellow is strongest on the lower breast and belly, rather than strongest on the throat (or at least as strong on the belly as the throat), quite unlike the quiz bird. Nor is the yellow likely to be as intense as in this species. Further, most of the potentially confusing flycatchers have distinct wing bars. Additionally, these flycatchers characteristically sit in a vertical or upright posture which is unlike the more angled, horizontal posture assumed by this bird.

Female Summer Tanager as well as female and male Scarlet Tanager in non-breeding plumage are generally olive-green, unmarked birds with yellowish to greenish yellow underparts. In both species, the underparts are more yellowish on the throat than the rest of the underparts. But in both species, the yellow throats aren't nearly as contrasting or as brightly yellow as in the featured species. More importantly, our tanagers are more robust birds with stout, rather conical bills that are unlike the small, pointed bill of this bird.

Like this individual, female and non-breeding male American Goldfinch are olive-green above and on the flanks, with yellow underparts that are more strongly yellow on the throat and upper breast. But, completely unlike this bird, the goldfinch has

strong wing bars and a short, conical bill.

Two of our vireos are small passerine birds with yellow throats that require further consideration. Yellow-throated Vireo, as its name implies, has a strikingly yellow throat like our featured bird. But this vireo has two strong white wing bars and distinctive yellow "spectacles" which surround the eye and extend to the base of the bill. The facial pattern is quite unlike our rather plain-faced quiz bird. Philadelphia Vireo, more like this bird, may have a bright yellow throat and lacks wing bars. Further, it has a fairly plain face in comparison to other vireos. But, although the face of Philadelphia Vireo is plainer than most, it is more strongly marked than our featured bird. It has a contrasting darkish crown, a prominent eyebrow and dark line through the eye that extends to the base of the bill. All vireos have a different bill shape than this bird. The bill of vireos is shorter and stouter, and is slightly hooked at the tip.

Yellow-breasted Chat shares with this species a bright yellow throat, unmarked, olive wings and olive upperparts, and a grayish belly. But the similarities end there. Quite unlike this relatively plain-faced bird, it has a strong facial pattern which consists of white spectacles and dark lores. It also has a heavy, stout bill and black, not pinkish-brown legs and feet.

That only leaves species in the New World warbler family to consider. Although the majority of our warblers are colorful and strongly marked, some species are very plain. This is especially true for those warblers, often females and immatures, that lack streaks, prominent facial markings, or wing-bars, and which add to the confusion of bird identification, especially during late summer and fall migration. Many of these are olive-green above and yellow below. The species to consider include Orange-crowned, Tennessee, Nashville, Hooded, Wilson's, Yellow, Connecticut, Mourning, and MacGillivray's Warblers, and Common Yellowthroat.

Let's deal with each of these in turn. Orange-crowned and Tennessee Warblers, both members of the genus *Oreothlypis*, are uniformly greenish above. Orange-crowned Warbler has variably yellow underparts, as do immature and female Tennessee Warblers. In Tennessee Warbler, the yellowest tinge is strongest on the throat and breast. But Tennessee Warbler is different from our featured bird in a number of ways. It has a definite supercilium or eyebrow and a dark eye-line. Its cheek is fairly pale and doesn't contrast with its yellow throat. The yellow of the throat is never this intense. Unlike this bird, it has white or whitish, rather than yellowish, undertail coverts. Further it has dark legs and a notably short tail.

Orange-crowned Warbler is more similar to this bird. Like this bird, it has a very narrow, indistinct eye-ring, but unlike the featured bird, it also shows a thin, dark eye-line. Although in the northeast, Orange-crowned Warbler is generally rather dingy and dull colored, some individuals, perhaps vagrant western birds, can be surprisingly yellow below. Further, in

all plumages, it has yellow undertail coverts. A major feature of Orange-crowned Warbler is that its breast is marked with indistinct, blurry, olive streaks. Close examination of the bird in the photograph seems to show that feature on its lower breast, but these are the impressions of the unfeathered tracts between rows of feathers, not feather streaks themselves. But, quite unlike the quiz bird, and very like Tennessee Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler has dark legs and feet, and a much thinner, pointed bill.

Nashville Warbler, also in the genus *Oreothlypis*, is a yellow-throated species in which the yellow throat strongly contrasts with its cheeks, rather like the bird in the quiz. It also has yellow undertail coverts. But Nashville Warbler in all plumages has a distinctly gray hood (head and cheek, combined) and a much bolder, complete eye-ring.

Although the males of Hooded, Wilson's and Yellow Warblers are all very distinctive, the females of all three species are basically green-backed birds with yellow underparts and pale legs. Unlike the featured bird, the females of all three species are uniformly yellow below. They also all have yellow faces that lack the contrast between the grayish-olive cheeks and yellow throat of this bird. In addition, Hooded Warbler also has striking white outer tail feathers.

Connecticut and Mourning Warblers, like Nashville Warbler, are also "hooded" species with yellow undertail coverts and with proportionally short tails. In Connecticut Warbler, this is associated with elongated undertail coverts. The Connecticut, like Nashville Warbler, also has a complete bold eye-ring. In adults the hood on this species is quite extensive and extends to the upper breast, but, confusingly, in young birds, the hood is much less defined and the throat is rather pale. As such, a quick look at a bird in any way resembling this uncommon and desirable species, can briefly cause a rise in the pulse rate of the observer. But the bright yellow throat of our featured bird, rather than the buffy throat of Connecticut Warbler, coupled with its faint, rather than bold, eye-ring, and lack of a short-appearing tail due to elongated undertail coverts, rules out that possibility.

Female and young Mourning Warblers may have faint eye-rings, and young Mourning Warblers also have yellowish throats and olive flanks rather like our quiz bird. But unlike our featured bird, Mourning Warbler is completely yellow below, not just on its throat. Its tail is also relatively short. The closely related, MacGillivray's Warbler, a recent addition to the state list, is similar to Mourning Warbler with a bold broken eye-ring. Further, its tail is longer than that of Mourning Warbler which may recall that of this quiz bird. But its broken eye-ring is much better defined than that of our quiz bird and, like Mourning Warbler, it is completely yellow below.

That leaves us with only Common Yellowthroat to consider. Although adult male Common Yellowthroat, with its characteristic black "raccoon" mask, is one of the more familiar and distinctive of our warblers, the female and first fall male can

be confused with the warbler species mentioned above. But of all the olive-backed, yellow-throated warblers, female and first fall male Common Yellowthroat are distinctive. Regardless of the points of confusion noted above, no other species shows such a strong demarcation between the bright yellow throat and the greenish cheeks of this species. With its strongly yellow throat, contrasting with its olive-green cheeks and olive upperparts, and grayish belly, this rather plain bird can only be a female or first fall male Common Yellowthroat.

A note of caution is necessary here. First fall female Common Yellowthroats may not have the bright yellow throat of the adult female. Many are really quite dull. Peter Dunn in his *Essential Field Guide Companion* puts it this way: "the utter nondescriptness of the immature females virtually distinguishes them." In fact, in most of these birds, the throat is buffy to whitish, rather than yellow. This is especially important to remember when pondering the possibilities of nearly equally dull, buffy throated first fall female Connecticut and, especially, Mourning Warblers. Structure is the best clue to their separation. Both of the latter species are larger and proportionally shorter-tailed than the yellowthroat. Importantly, both have completely yellow underparts, including the belly, which is whitish-gray in Common Yellowthroat.

Common Yellowthroat is one of the most widespread, and certainly one of the best known and familiar warblers in New Hampshire. Although a species that is normally quite furtive, preferring to stay hidden in its preferred habitat of dense vegetation around wet areas, overgrown meadows and clearings, it is especially attracted to "pishing." This is seemingly irresistible to them and soon these animated, curious birds will pop up in full view, allowing them to satisfy their curiosity, and for us to enjoy their perky presence.

This female or first fall male Common Yellowthroat was photographed by Jason Lambert on Old Mill Road in Lee, on September 13, 2012.

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Great Egret by Len Medlock, 4-13-18, Hampton, NH.

Abbreviations Used

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

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Summer 2018 Highlights

Photo Quiz



Can You Identify This Bird?

We are once again able to offer a color Photo Quiz, thanks to George Robbins' sponsorship of all four 2018 issues. See inside for the answer. Photo by Jason Lambert.



Lori Charron photographed this Pied-billed Grebe family on 7-5-18 in Colebrook, NH. See more photos and her article inside.



An orange Scarlet Tanager? Aren't they supposed to be red? Read inside for what causes orange variants like this one photographed by Jennifer McKown.



Green Heron by Debra Powers, 7-2-18, Newmarket, NH.



This robin's nest was discovered in a backyard bush with both eggs and blueberries in it. We can only speculate on why! Photo by Vicki LaPorte, 07-23-18, Peppermint St., Goffstown, NH.

